

August 20, 1998

98.08.12

**New Definition.**

A preview of the *Oxford English Dictionary's* electronic edition points the way to a new kind of reference work.

98.08.05

**The Lolita Effect.**

What Vladimir Nabokov and Bill Clinton have in common.

98.07.30

**Normandy: 1944**

As *Saving Private Ryan* sweeps the country, learn about the reality behind the celluloid images.

98.07.22

**Investigating the Renaissance**

An interactive exhibit shows how digital imaging can reveal a painting's secrets.

98.07.15

**Miles Ahead**

An elegant multimedia tribute to the music (and commercial appeal) of Miles Davis.

98.07.08

**Eminent Domains**

Making sense of the great Internet land grab.

98.07.01

**Artists in Lab Coats.**

Call it "the work of art in the age of scientific photography."

98.06.24

**Armchair Activism.**

Those too busy (or lazy) for environmental causes have no more excuses.

98.06.18

**Free Truman Burbank!**

For some, television's pernicious influence is no

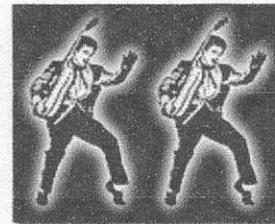


"Kook page or prank?" was the question asked by a certain Ken Alexander not long ago on an online message board. Alexander was puzzled by a peculiar religious manifesto he had recently come across. The opening sentences of the manifesto were predictable enough -- "Greetings, friends, we live in an imperfect world. The Second Coming of Christ is our only hope" -- but things soon took an unexpected turn:

Friends, we can't sit back and wait for Jesus.... Thanks to advances in science we can take DNA samples from the shroud [of Turin] and use them to clone the second coming!... Friends, we should clone a Jesus for anyone who wants one. Why, any woman that wanted to could immaculately conceive Jesus. No more communicating with God through your pastor or priest. If you have a question for God you could just call home and ask him. Just imagine a world with a Jesus in every household. Sounds like heaven.

This appears to be the work of an organization called Christians for the Cloning of Jesus. Are they for real? Has anybody signed up for the cause? The page offers no clues, but for those inclined to wonder whether all of this is in earnest, the site offers (perhaps) a way to find out more: a link to an e-mail address ([goldapple@hotmail.com](mailto:goldapple@hotmail.com)), saying, "Tell us what you think."

Some forty thousand visits have been made during the past year or so to the Cloning of Jesus site. That seems somewhat impressive -- until one discovers that the Americans for Cloning Elvis site has had almost two-and-a-half *million* visitors in its year and a half of existence. The centerpiece of the Elvis site -- the work of Bob Meyer, ACE's "Founder and President" -- is an online petition that reads, "We the undersigned, in our enduring love for Elvis, implore all those involved in cloning to hear our plea. One cell would allow future generations to witness his presence. The technology is here, and this petition



joking matter.

98.06.04

**Alexandria's Ghosts.**

As the Internet makes abundantly clear, the line between an archive and a rubbish heap is a fine one.

is a testament to our will." Meyer has collected thousands of names in support of cloning Elvis; the drive has been so successful, in fact, that he announces sadly on his site that he can no longer keep up with the posting of new names online. The good news, Meyer writes, is that this flood of support "shall provide the momentum to carry our goals into the twenty-first century."

98.05.27

**I Thee Web**

Get me to the church online.

For more, see the complete Web Citations Index.

The cloning of human beings in the next century is indeed possible -- a prospect that troubles some and amuses others. But it has also brought to the fore the vexing double nature of wonder. One wonders *at* cloning technology ("Isn't it amazing?!") and then slips almost imperceptibly into wondering *whether* it can all be for the good ("Might it be horrible?!"). That sort of slippage may well define much of life in the centuries ahead, as science's drive toward certainty continues to open up all sorts of ambiguous terrain. Will Christ come again -- and again, and again? What about the King? One can only wonder.

**Discuss this Web Citation in the Community & Society forum of Post & Riposte.**

---

Copyright © 1998 by The Atlantic Monthly Company. All rights reserved.

[Home](#) [Atlantic Unbound](#) [The Atlantic Monthly](#) [Post & Riposte](#) [Atlantic Store](#) [Search](#)

[Click here](#)