

Abbreviated Title: Inquiry into Reproduction, Birth and Nurture

Anxieties about reproduction are prevalent in contemporary culture. One need only open a newspaper to read debates raging on issues such as cloning, the use of human embryos in medical research, and the desirability of cross-racial or same-sex partner adoptions. With the introduction of new technologies, what has traditionally been billed as a natural act, has taken on unnatural connotations. In divorcing sex from procreation, medical science has complicated reproduction on political, social, and aesthetic levels. This is not only a contemporary phenomenon. In both past and present, anxieties of monstrous births, strange inseminations, and perverse parenting are prevalent and span genres from medical, to legal, to fictional. During the course of the semester, we will examine, debate, and write about the politics of reproduction ranging from *Frankenstein* to the present day.