David Michael Rorvik (1944?)

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David Michael Rorvik is a science journalist who publicized advancements in the field of reproductive medicine during the late twentieth century. Rorvik wrote magazine articles and books in which he discussed emerging methods and technologies that contributed to the progression of reproductive health, including sex determination, in vitro fertilization, and human cloning. During that time, those topics were controversial and researchers often questioned Rorvik's work for accuracy. Rorvik contributed to the field of reproductive medicine by communicating methods of reproductive intervention and contributing to the controversy around new developmental medicine technologies.

Rorvik was born on 1 November 1944 in Circle, Montana, to Frances Rorvik and Alan Rorvik. In 1962, he enrolled at the University of Montana in Missoula, Montana, where he majored in journalism. During his undergraduate career, Rorvik worked as a reporter and editor of The College Daily, the University's student-run newspaper. The topics of Rorvik's articles included the University's peace rallies during the Vietnam War and caused controversy, as they challenged what he described as the provincialism of the region. Rorvik's stories caught the attention of the college president, who often threatened to discontinue the publication of the newspaper under Rorvik's leadership as editor. In 1966, Rorvik graduated at the top of his class with a Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism.

In 1967, Rorvik graduated summa cum laude with a Master of Science degree in journalism from Columbia University. Immediately after graduation, he became a reporter for Time magazine in New York City. Later in 1967, Rorvik received the Pulitzer Traveling Fellowship and traveled to South Africa to investigate the structure of the country's press, which was segregated under the government at that time. Upon returning to Time in New York, Rorvik shifted his focus to science writing and worked as a medical reporter for the next two years. In the early 1969, he left Time and began freelance writing.

In May 1969, Rorvik published an article in New York Magazine titled ?Your Baby?s Sex: Select, Don?t Settle.? In that article he wrote about Landrum Shettles, a physician who specialized in obstetrics and gynecology, which are studies of women's reproductive health. At the time, Shettles worked at Columbia University and was conducting research on sex determinants in sperm cells. He looked at how male sperm cells contributed to the sex of the developing fetus. In ?Your Baby?s Sex: Select, Don?t Settle? Rorvik describes how Shettles developed a method that reportedly enabled couples to directly affect the probability of producing a male or a female child prior to conception. According to Rorvik, Shettles claimed that he could accurately predict the sex of a child by observing the size and mobility of male sperm cells that would potentially fertilize the female egg. One year later in 1970, Rorvik and Shettles co-authored the book titled Your Baby?s Sex: Now You Can Choose in which they elaborated on the methods that would ultimately enable couples to
choose the sex of their fetus. The book consists of various tips for couples to utilize during intercourse to increase their odds of producing a fetus of the desired sex.

In 1971, Rovik published his own book titled *Brave New Baby: Promise and Perils of the Biological Revolution*. In that book, Rovik states that mankind will inevitably alter the course of human evolution through the use of contraceptives. He describes how birth control can be used to combat a lack of resources, which, according to Rovik, contributes to the rapid increase in human population. By selectively enforcing the use of contraceptives, humans would shift the course of evolution to their desire. Rovik suggests that, if evolutionary processes did not occur naturally and reproductive processes were disrupted, humans would have the ability to radically increase life span and utilize drugs to enhance intelligence. The claims Rovik makes in *Brave New Baby: Promise and Perils of the Biological Revolution* began his contribution to the writings on the future of reproductive health.

In addition to writing his own books, Rovik often co-authored publications with physicians and researchers on their methodologies. In 1973, Rovik co-authored a book titled *Decompression Babies* with O.S. Heyns, a physician who specialized in obstetrics and gynecology in South Africa. In that book, the authors present the benefits of prenatal abdominal decompression, which is a method that reduces the atmospheric pressure on a pregnant woman’s abdomen to increase blood flow, and therefore access to oxygen and nutrients for the fetus. The book demonstrates how this method can prevent the development of mother’s high blood pressure during pregnancy, premature birth of the infant, and labor endangerment for both mother and child. At the time of publication, more than 10,000 healthy infants were safely born to mothers who used decompression methods during pregnancy.

On 15 September 1974, Rovik published an article in *The New York Times* titled "The Embryo Sweepstakes," in which he questions the news of the first successful human in vitro fertilization. In vitro fertilization is a technique in which an egg and a sperm are combined outside of the body of an organism to create an embryo in a laboratory setting. In that article, Rovik describes how Douglas Bevis, a physician and researcher at Leeds University in Leeds, United Kingdom, gave a presentation on embryo implantation, the process of implanting an embryo created with in vitro fertilization into a human female. Earlier that year, at the British Medical Association conference, Bevis claimed that three embryos were created in test tubes and successfully implanted in the wombs of three women. He also claimed that all three pregnant women gave birth to healthy infants who were developing normally. In his article, Rovik states that other than the press release, Bevis offered no further information on the matter and did not attribute that work to anyone, including himself. In "The Embryo Sweepstakes" Rovik suggests that Bevis’s claims were fraudulent due to the lack of information. Rovik also describes the work of two physicians from the UK who contested Bevis’s claims: Patrick Steptoe and Robert Edwards. They were leading the field of reproductive intervention at the time. Some predicted that Steptoe and Edwards would be the first to accomplish human embryo implantation. Rovik notes that Steptoe discredited Bevis because his claims were not supported by scientific evidence.

In 1967, Rovik received the Alicia Patterson Foundation Fellowship to study the politics of cancer research in the US. At the time, few journalists each year received that award in the amount of $35,000, which enabled them to pursue independent projects on their topic of choice. With the fellowship, Rovik traveled around the world and investigated the politics of cancer research in different countries. He published his work in *The APF Reporter*, a quarterly
杂志由艾丽卡·帕特森基金会赞助。

尽管拉沃克是一位在生殖健康领域广受欢迎的作家，研究人员经常质疑他工作的有效性。1978年，拉沃克出版了一本非小说类书籍《在它的形象中：克隆人的成功》，他在书中描述了克隆人类的科学努力。在那本书中，拉沃克说一群研究人员招募他来报道这个项目。拉沃克的主张在科学界引起了一场关于克隆技术是否现实可行的辩论。许多科学家，他们之前曾声称克隆技术无害，认为这项技术可以在不久的将来被利用，开始公开否认这一可能性。

1978年5月11日，加州旧金山大学的校报《Synapse》发表了拉沃克对他的书《在它的形象中：克隆人的成功》的回应，他否认了自己的主张，并保护了书中的个人身份。他还质疑了那些科学家的动机，他们曾经支持人类克隆，但一旦拉沃克的主张被公开后，他们开始公开讨论这一过程的危险和困难。

在出版《在它的形象中：克隆人的成功》后不久，拉沃克和出版商J.B.利普金科特公司被起诉，因为他们出版的书籍对他们的损害索赔700万美元。德克布洛姆，一位当时正在研究克隆的英国科学家，对拉沃克提起诉讼。布洛姆声称，拉沃克在书中复制了布洛姆的文凭中的方法，没有经过他的同意。在预审判决中，法官表示这本书是一个骗局，因为拉沃克拒绝提供他来源的真实姓名。这场诉讼持续了四年，直到1982年4月7日，布洛姆将他的指控降低为侵犯隐私，并同意支付10万美元的赔偿。J.B.利普金科特公司公开处理了这场诉讼，宣布他们认为拉沃克的书是欺诈性的。尽管如此，拉沃克仍然坚持他的书是合法的。

1983年，拉沃克成立了一个文学代理公司Proteus，Inc，并于2018年继续担任董事长。同年，他与Shettles共同撰写了第二本书《生物学：生命之前的生活科学证据》，他们提出了这样的论点，即发育中的胚胎是生命的存在，并享有某些权利。2006年是《你的宝宝的性别：现在你可以选择了》连续第35年出版的一年。那一年，纽约市的百老汇书局出版了第六版，书名是《如何选择你的宝宝的性别：科学证据最支持的方法》。2006年，拉沃克与研究微营养和饮食对人体健康影响的科学家和医生 Sheldon Saul Hendler合作。在2008年，他们共同出版了第二版的《营养补充剂的PDR》，该书提供了关于维生素和矿物质等营养补充剂的基于证据的信息。

如2018年，拉沃克住在俄勒冈州波特兰。

来源


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