

Roxanne Bockius

### “Potential Futures”

For my project, I have created three original illustrations that depict three different potential futures of human evolution. “Genes” shows a pregnant woman picking out facial features off of a screen with a scientist. This is portraying the potential for a self-directed course of evolution, in which we ourselves act as the selective pressure, and design our own progeny (Angelle). “Memes” shows a musician, and a younger girl emulating her style. This shows the cultural evolution, the passing along of ideas, fads, and trends. This, of course, is happening right now, but I predict the future holds even wackier memes, as more memes give rise to even further memes (Burbirdge). There is no biological trait being passed down in these illustrations, just cultural ideas. There is not perfect copy fidelity in the illustration, showing that the variation or mutation within meme evolution happens because no one copies anyone else exactly. The third illustration is “Temes,” the evolution of technology to the point where it is in control of human (Blackmore). A man with an iPod plugged into his eye sockets is closed off to the rest of the world, completely at the mercy of the technology that controls his world. All three deals with a different aspect of human evolution, and show three different routes our evolution could take. However, I don’t think that these three scenarios are mutually exclusive. Because each focuses on a different type of evolution, they are not in conflict with each other and all have potential to be reality.

## Annotated Bibliography

Angelle, Amber "Create a Designer Baby," Popular Mechanics, January 1, 2010  
This article served as inspiration for the scene of my second illustration, "Genes," in which a pregnant mother consults with a scientist over the unborn child's facial features.

Blackmore, Susan "The Third Replicator." The New York Times, August 22, 2010.  
This article lent insight to how technology might take over humans, and was the basis for my third illustration "Temes."

Burbridge, David. "Biological Versus Cultural Evolution." *Gene Expression*. 26 Apr. 2003. Web. 19 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.gnxp.com/MT2/archives/000205.html>>.

This article explains the difference between genetic and cultural evolution, which I tried to keep in mind when I created my illustrations. Because all three illustrations focus on *cultural* developments (even "Genes," because it deals with the cultural innovation of picking an unborn child's genes, it does not attempt show the result of such a practice), all of the humans have no physical evolutionary adaptations, and although these illustrations are set in the context of the "future" (which I intentionally left ambiguous), the humans look physically the same as they do today.

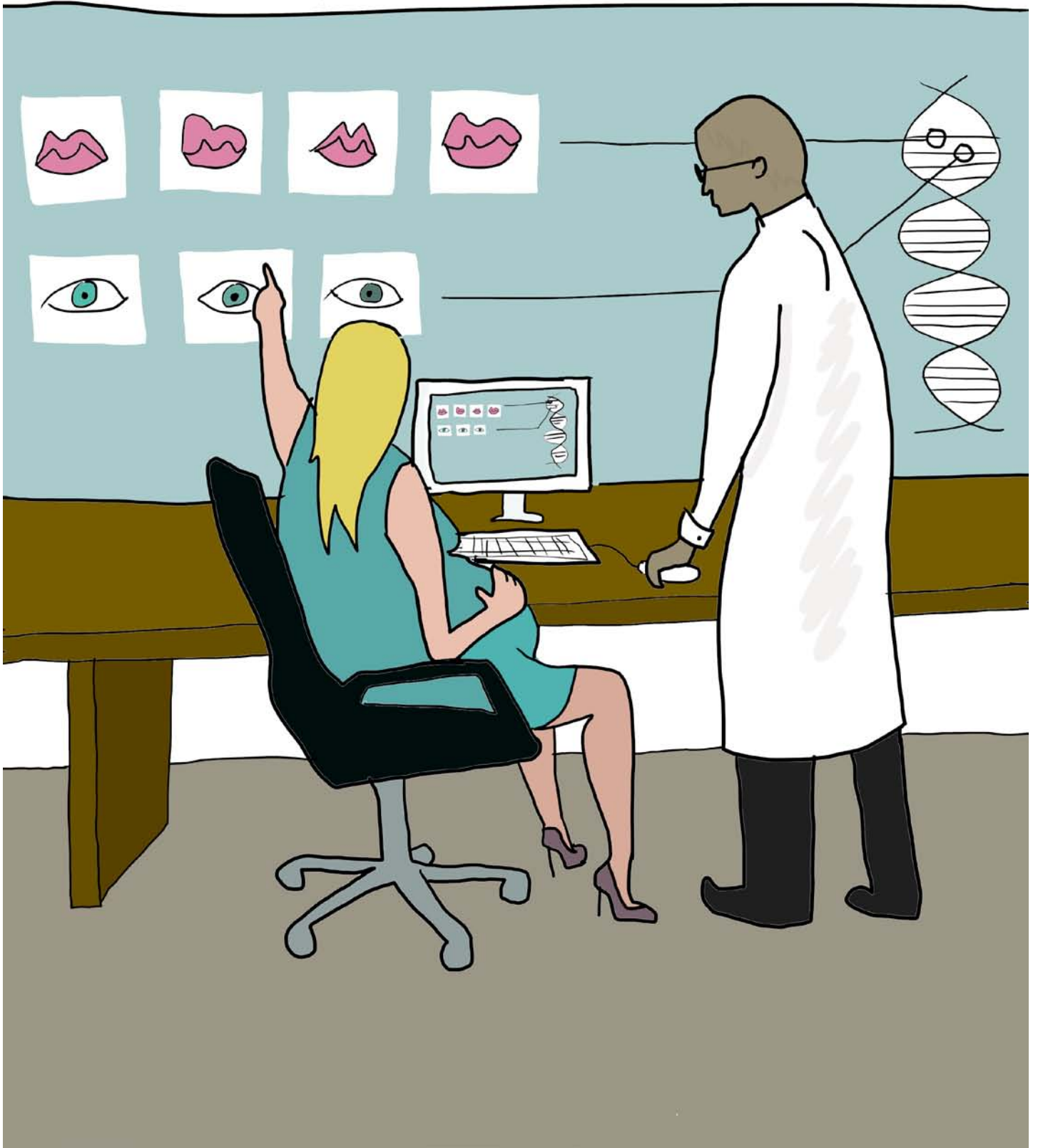
"Meme and Its Types." *Free Articles Directory | Submit Articles - ArticlesBase.com*. Article Base. Web. 19 Apr. 2011.  
<<http://www.articlesbase.com/culture-articles/meme-and-its-types-3795552.html>>.

This article differentiated the types of memes, and informed my illustration "Memes" in which I depict mimetic evolution through "copycat." I also show that there is variation in the copy-fidelity because the girl imitating is not an exact replica of whom she is imitating.

Owen, James, "Future Humans: Four Ways We May, or May Not, Evolve." National Geographic, November 24, 2009.

These four predictions (we evolve, we don't evolve, we use technology to make ourselves immortal and we start off-world colonies) in some ways inspired my three illustrations, but my illustrations are original and based off of my own ideas in that they portray more specific potentials.

genes





times

