

class assignment #6

This assignment is due by 1:30 p.m. on Friday, 8 March. You may respond by e-mail (subject is 102#6 Your Name) or by word processing and turning it in at lecture or slipping it under my office door. Handwritten answers will not be graded. 12 points.

Download and read the article *What's Wrong with Our Sperm?*

1. Why does the author consider human conception to be “almost absurdly inefficient”?
2. What is considered a normal number of sperm *per milliliter (ml)* of ejaculate?
3. Below what number of sperm do the chances of conception “plummet”?
4. Besides lowering numbers, what is the other major problem with sperm that concerns researchers?
5. What does the author of the Book Our Stolen Future suggest is behind these reproductive problems?
6. What other problems may these things be causing?
7. The above-referenced book sounds an alarm. Yet the alarm itself is controversial. Briefly, yet completely, describe the controversy.
8. If sperm counts are truly dropping at the rate that Skakkabaek suggests, how long would it be before the average man would be infertile?

Now download and read the article *Sperm Counts: Some Experts See a Fall, Others Poor Data*.

9. According to Dr. Lipshultz, what is the problem with Skakkebaek's study?
10. Why might it have been inappropriate to include data from New York City in the study?
11. What would happen if the New York City data were removed from Skakkebaek's study?
12. What can be done to determine who is correct about whether or not sperm counts are dropping?