

**TED WILLIAMS: 1918-2002**

STRANGER THAN FICTION

**Novel published two years ago  
imagined cloning of Williams**

By Gordon Edes

GLOBE STAFF

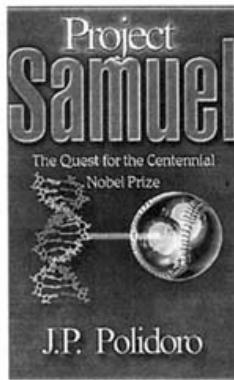
Whether John Henry Williams is planning to freeze his father's body as some futuristic science project remains to be seen. But Jack Polidoro already has cloned Ted Williams, in a recently published novel.

"Oh my God," Polidoro said. "I must have ESP. I always assumed Ted would be buried in Florida, or maybe in the Arlington National Cemetery. I had no clue the guy might be planning something like this."

Polidoro is the author of a self-published novel, "Project Samuel," which came out almost two years ago. The novel imagines Williams's cloning. Samuel is Williams's middle name, and the name selected for the Williams clone.

"When I started that novel, I was thinking about who would I like to clone," Polidoro said. "Somebody famous, somebody still alive. DiMaggio and Mantle were already dead, so it became a fairly easy choice."

The story, in brief: There's a little Italian barber who works near Fenway Park and cuts the hair of ballplayers. He's a baseball fan, and a memorabilia collector, and he takes to putting strands of hair in test tubes, and marking them with a player's initials. A wealthy Texan who works in the biotech



industry has designs on winning the Nobel Prize by developing a human clone. A baseball collector, he comes into possession of the barber's stuff, isolates DNA from the strands of Williams's hair, and the cloning has begun.

"I'm not some crazy guy sitting in New Hampshire with Ted Williams's hair in a test tube," Polidoro said yesterday by phone from his home in Laconia, N.H.

Polidoro is a reproductive biologist by training, with a doctorate in veterinary and animal sciences from the University of Massachusetts. He is a vice president of marketing and sales for

Skeletech, a Seattle-based firm that specializes in osteoporosis research. In his spare time, he writes folk songs and books, and is a baseball fan and collector who once had Williams and Carl Yastrzemski sign a framed piece of the Green Monster he had obtained at a Jimmy Fund event.

The idea for "Samuel" came in 1998 or so, Polidoro said. He had no idea of John Henry Williams's alleged plans until he heard the reports Friday night. Williams's daughter, Bobby-Jo Williams Ferrell, says John Henry told her he wants to sell their father's DNA.

"If he wants the DNA," Polidoro said, "he wouldn't have to go through what he's going through. He could get the DNA from any blood sample, an oral swab, his father's toothbrush.

"No need to keep Ted around in some frozen state, unless he's planning to bring him back to life and cure all his ailments. We're centuries away from being able to do that. And what's he going to do with the head, put it on somebody else's body? Ridiculous."

And cloning Ted Williams, Polidoro said, would not ensure the world of another .400 hitter.

"At the end of my book," he said, "I pay tribute to May Williams," referring to Ted's mother. "I write, 'Rest well, May Williams. There will only be one Ted Williams. Rest in peace.' "