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Autore	Morgan Lynn Marie
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Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Illustrations -- Preface -- 1. A Skeleton in the Closet and Fetuses in the Basement -- 2. Embryo Visions -- 3. Building a Collection -- 4. Inside the Embryo Production Factory -- 5. Traffic in "Embryo Babies" -- 6. Embryo Tales -- 7. From Dead Embryos to Icons of Life -- 8. From Dead Embryos to Icons of Life -- Notes -- References -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	Icons of Life tells the engrossing and provocative story of an early twentieth-century undertaking, the Carnegie Institution of Washington's project to collect thousands of embryos for scientific study. Lynn M. Morgan blends social analysis, sleuthing, and humor to trace the history of specimen collecting. In the process, she illuminates how a hundred-year-old scientific endeavor continues to be felt in today's fraught arena of maternal and fetal politics. Until the embryo collecting project-which she follows from the Johns Hopkins anatomy department, through Baltimore foundling homes, and all the way to China-most people had no idea what human embryos looked like. But by the 1950's, modern citizens saw in embryos an image of "ourselves unborn," and embryology had developed a biologically based story about how we came to be. Morgan explains how dead specimens

paradoxically became icons of life, how embryos were generated as social artifacts separate from pregnant women, and how a fetus thwarted Gertrude Stein's medical career. By resurrecting a nearly forgotten scientific project, Morgan sheds light on the roots of a modern origin story and raises the still controversial issue of how we decide what embryos mean.

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