



The Boys from Missouri

Myths, Lies, and Falsehoods about Embryonic Stem Cell Research

One of the most colorful state mottoes is Missouri's *Show Me!* This exclamation is attributed to Congressman William Duncan Vandiver, who strongly invoked his state's proud opposition to *frothy eloquence*, at a Philadelphia banquet in 1900. *I am from Missouri. You have got (sic) to show me.*

CLONE AND KILL INITIATIVE

Hopefully Missouri's native skepticism will defeat a November initiative, which promises phantom cures from Embryonic Stem Cell Research (ESCR). When placed under the microscope of public scrutiny, the *Missouri Stem Cell Research and Cures Initiative* is an exercise in verbal sleight of hand that will create a constitutional right to clone human embryos for research purposes. While the *Clone and Kill* initiative promises to prohibit cloning in all of its slick ads, it proscribes only reproductive cloning, saying nothing about therapeutic cloning or *somatic cell nuclear transfer* (SCNT).

SCNT involves taking the nucleus from a human egg and replacing it with a somatic (adult cell) nucleus. This transformed cell is stimulated to form a cloned human embryo from which stem cells are extracted. Embryonic stem cells are then harvested and grown into a stem cell line. Just as an identical twin can receive its sibling's kidney without immunosuppressive drugs, a patient's body will not reject treatments from its own cloned cells. The mutilated cell is then tossed aside like human refuse. Both kinds of cloning treat the human cell as a product of manufacturing, robbing it of its proper respect as a human being. According to the moral law all embryos should be accorded the same dignity afforded a full-grown man or woman.

The Missouri Initiative allows the same procedure used to produce Dolly the sheep in 1997. Dolly's short-term success burned out like a comet in the sky. With ESCR they have taken a page, not from Einstein or Fermi, but from Orwell and Huxley. The inherent dangers of this quixotic blend of science and horror are reminiscent of a 1978 Gregory Peck movie, *The Boys from Brazil*, based on Ira Levin's novel. *The Boys* is a

sordid tale about Josef Mengele, Hitler's evil doctor's attempt to clone 94 *little Hitlers*, and rekindle the Nazis' hope of world conquest.

POISONOUS WEEDS

Although the Missouri Initiative promises imaginary cures, its passage will have a much broader impact. It will grant immunity to its proponents from state health and safety regulations. It will protect against lawsuits by injury victims and may even revoke provisions of some abortion laws. For example, a state law prohibits abortion to obtain tissue or organs for transplant. Under the November initiative if a woman wants to abort, as long as stem cells were created from her fetus, her abortion would be legal.

The *Cures Initiative* also has serious dangers for women. Section 6 states: *Valuable consideration also does not include the consideration paid to a donor of human eggs or sperm by a fertilization clinic or sperm bank, as well as any consideration expressly allowed by federal law.* As a result IVF (in vitro fertilization) clinics can pay financially compromised women for their eggs, and then refer them to ESC researchers. Most volunteers do not realize the possible grave risks to their own health. Egg harvesting involves hyperstimulating the ovaries with hormones (FSH and HCG) to induce the production of multiple eggs. Up to 6 % of the time, moderate to severe Ovarian Hyperstimulation Syndrome occurs. This can result in blood clots, infertility, liver damage, kidney failure, stroke, and even death.

Many state and local politicians see this bill as a *cure* for Missouri's economic problems. They envision an elaborate corridor of biotech creativity, stretching from prestigious Washington University to the Barnes/Jewish Hospital complex that will do for Missouri what Silicon Valley did for California. This constitutional entitlement will create a financial windfall for its backers. Private institutions with billion dollar endowments will receive *welfare* payments from the taxpayers to fund what most believe to be an immoral tampering with

Mother Nature. Most importantly the rest of the nation is watching Missouri in November. If *Cures* passes, similar cloned bills, like so many *Boys from Missouri*, will crop up around the country like poisonous weeds.

AN AURA OF FEAR

To create an aura of fear, proponents of Embryonic Stem Cell Research manufacture numbers, much like their kindred sisters in the abortion industry who shamelessly contrived the false claim in 1972 that 10,000 women died annually from back alley abortions. The operating number for ESCR is 100 million patients with *potentially* treatable diseases who will suffer and die unless their Frankenstein-esque research is approved and lucratively funded.

One of the grave injustices of the debate engendered by the Missouri Initiative is the failure of most politicians and the media to address the efficacy of **adult stem cells**. The successes of **adult stem cells** research has been methodically downplayed or ignored by the mainstream media. Ann Coulter's 2006 book *Godless: The Church of Liberalism* lists an entire page of diseases that have been treated with degrees of success over the years.

The media has also linked its opposition to George W. Bush with its ESCR campaign, castigating the President for his courageous veto of legislation that would have opened several new off-line strains of frozen embryos to biotech research in July of 2006. The media falsely attacked him for impeding the progress of critical scientific research.

LIFE'S BLUEPRINTS

Stem cells are present from the very first days of human life after conception. They are the *blueprints of life* because they can divide into many specialized directions, spawning development of organs and tissue in a microscopic explosion of vigorously reproducing cells. Most of the body's cells are distinguished as hair, brain, or skin cells.

The Missouri debate has focused on just embryonic stem cells. ESC research has miles of promise and inches of cure. To date their only human clinical trials have been with Parkinson's disease which they were forced to suspend because of the fatty tumors and uncontrollable physical tremors produced by the embryonic stem cells. Due to the plastic and malleable nature of ESC, researchers have not been able to control how they grow. This has not stopped them from falsely proclaiming that their research was *crucial to potential cures for Parkinson's disease*. In her book Ann Coulter says that this debate is *a hoax designed to trick Americans into yielding ground on human experimentation*.

Adult stem cells, which are found in skin, hair and many other places, have been used for decades to treat dozens of diseases, including Type 1 diabetes, liver disease, and spinal

cord injuries. Placenta or umbilical cord blood is also a vast reservoir for stem cells. Since they do not involve any kind of cloning or embryonic cell destruction, they are moral.

In *Godless*, Coulter relates the story of a South Korean woman, Hwang-Mi-soon, who had been paralyzed for 19 years and who began to walk again with the help of a walker after an injection of umbilical cord stem cells. This corresponded to the time that actor Christopher Reeve died waiting for his ESCR cure. Two paralyzed American women, Laura Dominguez and Susan Fajt, were treated with adult stem cells in Portugal years before Reeve died. Dominguez regained most of her upper body strength and began to walk with braces while Fajt showed remarkable improvement. In Portugal, scientists are using cells from the lining of a patient's nose to treat spinal cord injuries. In Germany, **adult stem cells** have been used to repair skull bone damage in a seven-year old girl. London researchers have used these cells to treat liver diseases. According to National Right to Life News, (Aug.'06) Dr. David Prentice of the Family Research Council has constituted a list of 72 cures or successful treatments from **adult stem cells**. In contrast there is ZERO success of embryonic stem cells. At present there are 1, 175 clinical trials for **adult stem cell**, ZERO for ESC.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

Many proponents of ESCR argue that they are willing to restrict their research to just the *spare parts* left over from In Vitro Fertilization. This is merely a sideshow. Their sinister policy is to open the barn door so that they can be free to do whatever they want. Only a tiny fraction of the 400,000 extra frozen embryos cached around the country are earmarked for such research. Medical ethics has long rejected the Hippocratic Oath because it limited their pragmatic freedom to choose whatever means available for their scientific ends. In doing so, they have turned biotechnology into a *fatal science*. Over 300 years of revolutionary fervor and enlightened thought have eroded the West's dedicated and resolute resistance to medical panaceas that belong more to Mary Shelly's Frankenstein science fiction than they do the New England Journal of Medicine.

Without any moral tradition to guide them, scientists will clone embryos with particular diseases in hope of finding *disease models* for further study. They will chop down the *Tree of Life* as they vainly attempt to purloin God's creative mantle for themselves. Many believe that science operates *by no other moral standard than the promise of a longer and healthier life*, no matter what Machiavellian means it utilizes. Princeton Professor Robert P. George, a prominent Catholic member of President George W. Bush's Council on Bioethics, states that ESC Research has as its long-term goal, establishing a global market for fetal body parts. The biotech industry plans to harvest late embryonic and fetal body parts for use in regenerative medicine

and organ transplantation. This is just another step down the spiraling road away from God and towards man's self-deification that began in earnest with the Enlightenment with stops for Darwin, Freud and Mengele.

A HUMAN FACE

The embryonic vs **adult stem cell** debate raises an important philosophical question: what has science's entry into a world without moral safeguards done to the American people? In the Declaration of Independence, Americans fully recognized their reliance on a Creator who endowed Americans *with certain unalienable rights, among this life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness*. In 1973 Roe v. Wade introduced an exception to this principle. Since then a woman and her doctor could decide to destroy the human life within her body. The ESCR issue has extended this exception to mean that any scientist *in consultation with his lab partner* can do so at the expense of the American taxpayer.

There is also another significant unanswered question. Why has there been a near exclusive push for ESC research to the total neglect of **adult stem cells**? Former New York Times columnist Anna Quindlen says *the battle of personification will assume a different and more sympathetic visage*. The killing of a five-day old embryo does not pose a problem for many scientists and certainly not for the media. The illnesses of Christopher Reeve, Michael J. Fox and Ronald Reagan have put a human face on this issue. The good that is promised from this research will soothe the troubled consciences of the American people who had become seriously disturbed over Partial Birth Abortion.

PROMETHEAN POWERS

No work of fiction better illustrates this bitter debate than Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein*. Science's obsession with ESCR evokes images of Dr. Frankenstein, working diligently in his *laboratory of evil* where he fused the macabre with science, breaching the symbiotic relationship that had characterized science and religion for centuries. Shelly tells the gruesome tale of Victor Frankenstein whose interest in alchemy inspired him to assume the creative characteristics of God by making a living man out of body parts and inanimate matter. His efforts predictably end in horror, despair, and death. Victor rebels against the laws of nature and as a result is ultimately punished by his creation. Like thousands of modern scientists, Frankenstein rejected any interference from religion or philosophy in his solitary pursuit of Promethean powers. The book is an allegory of men's failure to *be like gods*.

CHURCH TEACHINGS

The Church's teachings on ESCR are straightforward. Pope John Paul II said that all research using embryonic stem

cells is *morally unacceptable*. In his 1995 encyclical, Evangelium Vitae (*The Gospel of Life*), the Pope condemned *procedures that exploit living human embryos and fetuses—either...as 'biological material' or as providers of organs or tissue for transplants in the treatment of certain diseases*. Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, the highly respected Education Director at the National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia, warns that by roping off *a part of humanity, just as we did with slavery and the Nazis did with Jews and other non-Aryans*, America is sliding down a slippery slope.

In 2004, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops ran a full-page ad in national newspapers condemning ESCR as an assault on human life, asserting that *science does not have to kill in order to cure*. In his 2005 book *Values in a Time of Upheaval*, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger wrote *a culture and a nation that cuts itself off from the great ethical and religious forces of its own history commits suicide*. Todd Agliarolo, the director of Sophia Institute Press, called ESCR *an iconic battleground in the culture war, combining elements of abortion, cloning, in vitro fertilization, and eugenics*.

The Church has had to deal with science's increasing alienation from Christianity and a growing Catholic apathy. Too many scientists have forsaken the traditional underpinnings of science and many Catholics have hidden themselves behind a diaphanous shield of what George Orwell called *protective stupidity*.

A RAY OF HOPE

In 1995 the St Louis Cord Blood Bank was established and it is affiliated with Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital and St. Louis University. It is now the second largest independent Cord Blood Bank in the world. The Bank collects, processes and stores blood donated from an infant's umbilical cord which contains **adult stem cells**. The cord blood is used to treat acute Lymphocytic Leukemia, Hodgkins Disease, Osteoporosis and severe Immunodeficiency Disorder, among others. The Cord Blood Bank's research and treatments are morally acceptable to the Catholic Church. The Cord Blood Bank Manager J. Mario Alonso stated Nov 4, 2005, that in more than 20 years of embryonic stem cell research around the world, there has not been one single success story in using these embryonic cells in human treatment.

Most Reverend Raymond L. Burke, Archbishop of St. Louis, has Commissioned a Rosary Crusade invoking the intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the patroness of life, to safeguard human embryonic life. Enclosed for you is the gift of the colorful and beautiful Rosary Crusade leaflet. May all of our prayers safeguard the sanctity of human life.

William A. Borst, Ph.D., Feature Editor

Mindszenty Report Reprints

LET'S HIT THE BOOKS—This is a list of 22 excellent new books which we recommend to you under the headings of Faith, Culture, History, and Government. Ask for 9/06

A STYGIAN LIFEBOAT: On The River of Moral Relativism—There is a “new ethics” being used for today's serious moral questions. It is really the old immoral Machiavelli “the end justifies the means”. It becomes a dictatorship of relativism threatening the foundations of moral truth. Ask for 8/06

THE MARXIST ATTACK ON AMERICA'S CHERISHED SYMBOLS—There is a strong effort to eliminate patriotic and religious symbols from the public square. Give support and encouragement to activists such as the Thomas More Law Center, Eagle Forum, Catholic League for Religious & Civil Rights, CMF, etc. Ask for 7/06

1 copy	\$.50	100 copies	\$20.00
20 copies	\$5.00	500 copies	\$85.00
50 copies	\$11.00	1000 copies	\$160.00

ST. MATTHEW 7:7

“Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.”

WILL YOU REMEMBER CMF IN YOUR WILL? If you care to help us continue our work, we would be most grateful! Our legal title is Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation, Inc.

The Mindszenty Report is published monthly by the
Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation,
7800 Bonhomme Ave.
P. O. Box 11321
St. Louis, MO 63105
314-727-6279
Fax 314-727-5897

Subscription rate: \$20.00/year, \$36.00/two years.
Outside the U.S.A. \$28.00

News & Notes

CUTTING THROUGH THE SPIN ON STEM CELLS AND CLONING

Clear • Concise • Catholic



REV. DR. TADEUSZ PACHOLCZYK is the Director of Education at the National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia, and has a Ph.D in neuroscience from Yale University. Fr. “Tad” clearly articulates the life issues of stem cells and cloning in this one hour DVD presentation.

Therapeutic and reproductive cloning are examined scientifically and morally. Careful protection and safeguarding of embryonic human life is stressed and highlighted.

Order **NOW** this excellent DVD for only \$10.

1 copy – \$10
2 copies – \$18 10 copies – \$70
Postage is included

Send payment to:

Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation
P.O. Box 11321
St. Louis, MO 63105

The Mindszenty Report is not copyrighted, and subscribers are invited to have it printed in their local newspapers.

Contributions to the Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation are tax deductible as allowed by law.

Eleanor Schlafly, *Publisher*
William A. Borst, Ph.D., *Feature Editor*
e-mail: info@mindszenty.org
web site: www.mindszenty.org