



# Family Concerns

"Bridging the Information Gap"

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## DESIGNER ETHICS: IF SCIENCE CAN DO IT THEY SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO DO IT

*It is all about building a new tower of Babel*

In the last *Family Concerns* we explored how ethics is morphed into a *carte blanche* for science by changing terminology or by merely stepping over the line because the end justifies the means. Science traditionally has used four concepts in medical ethics dealing with embryonic research. These concepts are in addition to the Hippocratic Oath that states "Do no harm," and the Nuremberg Code which restricted research on any human without consent.

We have seen that science has begun to re-think their original premise that it would be enough to use discarded IVF embryos; in fact there will not be enough embryos to fulfill that wish. They would like us to believe that an embryo killed by harvesting its stem cells really does not have *personhood*, so it is all right to destroy them. We have seen that *utility* is driving the immediate media frenzy concerning this issue; we need these cells to cure diseases in spite of the fact that adult stem-cells have produced more than 58 cures and therapies and to date the score for embryonic stem-cell research is **zero**. **Every dollar that is siphoned off toward embryonic stem-cell research takes \$ away from successful adult stem-cell/umbilical cord stem-cell research.**

### The criterion used by medical ethics

The criterion used to stretch medical research up to the fourteenth day of human life can also be used to stretch the criterion to include much later harvesting of embryonic tissue, even tissue from babies not yet born. Some of you may remember the abortion clinic in Overland Park that made baby body parts obtained by abortion available to labs...with a handling fee of course. According to Saleton, medical ethicists may stretch this line farther by using these four principles to their advantage by utilizing science and scientific terminology:

- **Individuality:** Two weeks after conception, the human embryo develops an alignment of cells called the primitive streak. In California, the line for individuality is drawn at this 14-day line because up to that point twinning could occur. In fact, twinning usually occurs long before that stage so by using this reasoning it would make sense to ban all cloning *before* the blastocyst stage. Embryology states unequivocally that life begins at fertilization, so again the debate is over *personhood*; a relative term amongst scientists, especially those who stand ready to receive lucrative federal grants if this legislation goes through.
- **Organization:** The argument for the "14-day" rule was that embryos aren't persons until they are "organized," that is until they have developed this "primitive streak." Now all of us older moms can remember being told that a baby wasn't really "alive" until you could feel it move or "quicken." However, modern ultra-sonography has shown us marvelous pictures of

babies at the earliest stages of life. My son's wife is in her first trimester and they were incredulous when they saw that little "kidney-bean's" heart beat. The primitive streak is the first thing that the microscope can see as far as differentiation is concerned, but that doesn't mean that technology won't show us an even earlier stage. In fact, some scientists have said that within two divisions after the eight-cell stage there are signs of cells beginning to line up in an organized fashion.

- **Implantation:** This is where many pro-choice folks have tried to redefine the meaning of life. It is the main argument they use for the human pesticide RU-486 which interferes with implantation of an embryo and for the morning-after-pill which often does not prevent fertilization but interferes with implantation. The 14-day rule was applied in the U.S. in 1979 where the principle stated that "no embryos will be sustained in vitro beyond the stage normally associated with the completion of implantation." This was ascertained to be 14 days. Actually some biologists say 12 days and others say seven days, so is this really a criterion that should be used for the proposed unethical research for embryos that are "unwanted" or about to be "discarded?"
- **Neural development** It is okay to dissect and dismember if an organism cannot feel or think pain. This is the basis for the recent article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in which pro-abortion scientists surmised that a fetus cannot feel pain so it is okay to extract or dismember it. They have recently expressed dismay at the seeming bias of the lead author being in the abortion industry. **The Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act will be considered in Congress this fall...call your representatives and urge them to support legislation that recognizes that an unborn child does feel pain.** The "14-day rule" gave science leeway in research; now that even greater possibilities exist in using cloned fetal tissue that has differentiated and is beyond the "14-day rule", they want to use the existence of neural development as justification for using embryos much older than 14 days. They argue that without neural tissue the embryo does not have sentience...an ability of feeling pain, of self-awareness, etc. Dr. Peter Singer of Princeton takes that one step farther ... he believes that parents should have a "window of opportunity" after birth to evaluate whether they should allow a child to live based upon his notion that a new-born is not sentient. Britain's Royal Society, their national academy of science, has rejected the 14-day rule as "unduly restrictive ..." Panelist Michael Gazzaniga, on the current U.S. bioethics council, argues that moral concepts make no sense until the embryo has a brain.

It is clear that science has lost its moral footing in its quest for more knowledge and more control over humanity's fate. They want to make a "name for themselves" and raise themselves up above God's throne. If that sounds familiar, read Genesis 11 to refresh your memory on mankind's eternal quest.

**Call your representative and support the Human Cloning Prohibition Act (S. 658) which bans ALL forms of human cloning.**