

# Lesson

# 4

## Shades of Gray

### Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Consider, analyze and represent viewpoints different from their own.
- Describe the range of positions taken by individuals, organizations, and countries with respect to embryonic stem cells.

### Class Time

1 to 2 class periods.

### Prior Knowledge Needed

- An understanding of different ethical perspectives.
- Some understanding of the liberal/conservative political spectrum is helpful.

### Common Misconceptions:

- An individual's position on stem cell research can be predicted by his or her political party or religious affiliation.
- Members within a political party or religious group have a singular, united view of stem cell research.

### Introduction

Students develop an awareness of the many shades of gray that exist in the stakeholders of the stem cell research debate. In this lesson students participate in an activity where they take the role of a stakeholder and make inferences about that stakeholder's beliefs with respect to embryonic stem cell research. Later, an actual biographical example of such a stakeholder is provided to them. In several cases, the stakeholders do not fit the 'stereotype' of the particular group they belong to, reinforcing the idea that there are many 'shades of gray' in considering the perspectives on stem cell research.

### Key Concepts

- There is a range of positions in society with respect to embryonic stem cell research.
- An individual's position cannot always be predicted by his or her political party or religious affiliation.
- The consideration of the "moral status of the embryo" is at the center of the stem cell debate, and different stakeholders have different views on this central question.
- Bioethical principles can be associated with different stakeholder positions.

### Materials

*Who am I?* Stakeholder Biography Cards

*Shades of Gray* Position Cards

Ethical Issues Statements for Four Corners

Four large signs for each corner of the room reading:

Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

Student Handout 4.1 – *My Stakeholder Thinks...*

A PowerPoint presentation with additional background and pictures of stakeholders can be found at

<http://nwabr.org/education/stemcell.html>.

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## Background

In *Bioethics and the New Embryology*, Gilbert, Tyler & Zackin (2005) write:

Embryonic stem cell research and therapeutic cloning hold out the promise of medical treatments that could alleviate or even eliminate conditions including Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases, multiple sclerosis, diabetes, certain heart conditions and traumatic spinal cord injury (as cited by the National Institute of Health 2000). Research universities, biotechnology companies, and medical institutions generally are anxious to push the field forward; the public at large has been more cautious as they slowly become aware of the positive implications and potential hazards of the work. **Does the destruction of a human embryo at the very earliest stages of development constitute harm that is morally unacceptable when weighed against the potentially monumental gains in the war against human suffering?** (p. 159)

## Moral Status of the Embryo

An important concept considered by ethicists in the stem cell debate is the “moral status of the embryo”, which leads to questions such as these: When does the embryo acquire “personhood”? How should we treat the embryo? What rights does it have? What responsibilities do we have towards it? How do we balance our attitudes towards the embryo with our responsibilities to help others?

Advocates and opponents of embryonic stem cell research both want the same thing – the preservation of human life. The “ethics of embryonic stem cell research” is often about the values we assign to different stages of human development or to cells with the potential to become human beings. One of the challenges in defining when an embryo acquires “personhood” is that human development is a gradual process, but assigning moral standing is based on an “all-or-nothing” model. Attempting to define the moment life begins blurs the lines between science, society and religion.

## When Does Life Begin?

Consider the following four perspectives to this question. Each view has its supporters and detractors.

- **At fertilization:** At conception, a new and unique genome is created by the union of the genes from two parents. Once this genetic blueprint for a new human being is formed, personhood is acquired.
- **At gastrulation:** About day 14, the embryo's cells begin to differentiate into specific cell types. At this point, twins can no longer be formed and the embryo continues on the path to become an *individual*. Some feel that personhood cannot be bestowed before gastrulation since each twin is a distinct person.
- **When an EEG pattern is detected:** Between 24 and 27 weeks, the fetal neurons link to display conscious brain activity. In the United States, death is defined by the *lack* of an EEG (electroencephalogram); this view considers the acquisition of an EEG as the corresponding definition of life.
- **At or near birth:** Some feel that a fetus acquires personhood when it can survive on its own (as early as 22 weeks, with technological assistance) or has gone to full term (40 weeks) and can be seen as an indisputable, distinct individual. For much of human history, it was not uncommon for infants to die shortly after birth; many cultures therefore waited until birth or after to bestow personhood.

Source: Gilbert et al. 2005

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## Relevance to Stakeholder Positions

Each individual's view on when life begins and the moral status of the embryo inform his or her position on stem cell research. The stakeholders in the following activity have diverse views on this subject; some of the general themes are below.

- “Embryos are human individuals and should not be used or destroyed for human research” – This view places the status of the embryo, at any stage of development, above the potential benefits of research. It has been the basis for federal funding policy since 2001 although research on stem cell lines created prior to 2001 has been permitted.
- “Embryos do not have the same status as a baby or fetus and can be used in research” – In this view, the rights of patients or potential benefits of research are given priority.
- “Embryos should not be created for research, but excess IVF embryos could be used if they would otherwise be discarded.” – In this view, nothing is lost if research is allowed.
- “Embryos are a cluster of cells (with no heart, nervous system, etc.) that can be created for research.” If ‘personhood’ does not pertain to the blastocysts stage, this view holds that it does not matter if the embryos are created for research or left over from IVF.

*The PowerPoint presentation that accompanies this lesson (found at <http://nwabr.org/education/stemcell.html>) contains slides that can be used to help present this background to students.*

## Procedure

### A. Before Class

1. Print and cut out the *Who Am I?* stakeholder cards with an individual's biographical sketch and position statement on stem cell research.
2. Cut each card in half along the dotted line, separating the biography portion of the card from the position portion.
3. Attach the **biography** to the **outside** of an envelope. Put the corresponding position statement inside the envelope.
4. Close the envelope (seal it if you are doing this lesson with only one class, otherwise close the envelope but caution students to not look inside and read the biography until given permission to do so).
5. Put up the four signs (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree) in each corner of the room.
6. Make a copy of the Student Handout 4.1 for each student.

## B. Four Corners Activity

1. Ask students, “Who are the stakeholders in the stem cell debate?” (Which individuals and/or institutions have a stake in the outcome of the debate? What do they care about? What are their concerns?). Brainstorm a number of answers.
2. Tell students that they are going to role-play the views of an individual stakeholder, based on a brief biography of that person.
3. Hand out (or let students choose) a *Who Am I?* stakeholder envelope with the biography card attached to the outside.
4. Depending on the students, it may be helpful to define some of the vocabulary (i.e. liberal, conservative, democrat, ethicist, moderate) used on the cards.
5. Read the first statement on Student Handout 4.1, *My Stakeholder Thinks...* (“**It is ethically acceptable to use human embryonic stem cells for medical research**”). Ask students to go to the corner of the room that they think best represents the position of their stakeholder. They can stand in between signs, if needed.
6. Ask students to discuss their position with two or three others near them and to appoint a representative from their group to share the discussion with the class.
7. Probe students with additional clarifying questions and allow them to change positions if necessary.
8. **Repeat** the activity with other statements from Student Handout 4.1. Students may have difficulty knowing where their stakeholder would stand based on the brief biography, but encourage them to make an educated guess.

## C. Shades of Gray

1. After students have had practice representing their stakeholders, re-read the first statement on Student Handout 4.1 and have students go to the corresponding corner. This will align the students/stakeholders into the key groups that are perceived to be for or against embryonic stem cell research.
2. Have students open their envelopes and read the position of the person whose view they have been representing.
3. If the actual position of the person is different from the presumed position, have the students move to the corner of the room which best represents the actual view of that person.
4. Are there any surprising outcomes? Have students read their cards out loud, either in small groups or for the whole class.
5. Debrief and make explicit the nuances in a person’s commitments in reaching a position on stem cells -- there are many shades of gray (for example, being a conservative about other issues in society doesn’t automatically mean that the individual would be against stem cell research).
6. Point out that the corners of the room may be quite heterogeneous at this time—people with diverse views may still agree on unexpected things. It is also important to point out that, even though it’s useful to think about the range of positions a stakeholder might take, students can’t always predict a stakeholder’s position on a subject.

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An important concept considered by ethicists in the stem cell debate is the “moral status of the embryo”, which leads to questions such as these: How should we treat the embryo? What rights does it have? What responsibilities do we have towards it? How do we balance our attitudes towards the embryo with our responsibilities to help others? Point out that different stakeholders have different views on the moral status of the embryo, and the governmental policies that are enacted reflect these differences.

#### **D. Stakeholders and Ethical Principles**

- Have students meet in small groups of 3-4. Using the biography/position cards, have each group try to identify the ethical principle (respect for persons, beneficence/nonmaleficence, justice) most clearly associated with the 3 or 4 stakeholder positions present in their group.
- To debrief as a class, ask if any group had a very clear example of a stakeholder position related to an ethical principle. Debrief some of the most compelling examples as a class. (For example, David Prentice invokes the principle of nonmaleficence, while Orrin Hatch stresses beneficence).
- Next, ask if any student had a stakeholder whose ethical position was harder to determine. Guide the class in trying to discern which principle is most clearly emphasized in the ambiguous cases.

#### **Extensions and Adaptations**

- Have students research their *Who Am I?* cards before beginning the lesson, or for homework after using Student Handout 4.1 but before using Handout 4.2.
- A diagram of the American Political Spectrum (and notes about using it) can be found in the Appendix.
- Shades of Gray can be played as a game:

Have students identify different groups represented by the stakeholders, and brainstorm positions usually associated with each group, especially perceived stances on embryonic stem cell research. It may be helpful to define the terms used on the biography cards (i.e. democratic, conservative, ethicist) before playing the game. Some teachers use a class-generated list of stereotypes to “define” these terms, only they have the stereotypes dispelled as the game is played.

- a. Divide the class into 3-4 teams of 5-10 students facing each other.
- b. Each team receives a packet in which each person’s biography and position statement is on one piece of paper. These papers are then dealt out to each player until they are gone, and kept face down until in use.
- c. The person to the right of the dealer reads a biography.
- d. The other members of the team decide whether the person is “for” or “against” stem cell research, based on the bio.
- e. The person to the right of the reader is the team spokesman, and listens to the team members, then states out loud the team’s position.
- f. The player who read the biography now reads the position statement on the card.

- g. If the team got it right – have a scorekeeper write down 1 point. Each team is competing against the other teams in the class for the most correct answers.
- h. Play continues to the right – the team spokesman is now the reader, and this continues until all of the cards have been read aloud.
- i. The team with the most points wins.

### Homework

- Students can further research their stakeholders, and fill out any portion of Student Handout 4.1 not covered during the four-corners activity.
- If students would like to express their own views in a non-public way, Student Handout 4.1 can be completed from each student's perspective as homework. Since members of the general public are considered stakeholders, students can fill in their own names when asked for the name of their stakeholder.
- Students can also plot some or all of the stakeholder cards along a line showing the range of perspectives about embryonic stem cell research, with FOR and AGAINST at either end of the line.

#### Sources:

Gilbert, S. F., A. L. Tyler, E. J. Zackin. 2005. *Bioethics and the New Embryology*. Sinauer Associates, Sunderland, MA.  
National Institutes of Health. 2000. Stem cells: A primer. <http://www.nih.gov/news/stemcells/primer.htm>

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# Shades of Gray

## Stakeholder and Position Cards

Directions:

Cut each *Who Am I?* stakeholder card below to form strips of paper. Cut the card in half along the dotted lines, separating the “Biography” from the “Position” portion of the card. Attach each **Biography** strip of paper to the **outside** of an envelope. Put the corresponding Position statement inside the envelope. Close or seal the envelope. Participants select a role and assume that point of view for the “Four-Corners” activity.

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### ***Who Am I?* President of the United States**

Barack Obama

**Biography:** My name is Barack Obama and I was elected President of the United States in November 2008. I was born in Honolulu, Hawaii, obtained early education in Jakarta, Indonesia, and Hawaii; continued education at Occidental College, Los Angeles, Calif., and Columbia University, New York City; and studied law at Harvard University, where I became the first African American president of the Harvard Law Review.

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**Position:** On March 9, 2009, I issued Executive Order 13505 titled, “Removing Barriers to Responsible Scientific Research Involving Human Stem Cells.” It states that the federal government may support and conduct responsible, scientifically worthy human stem cell research, including human embryonic stem cell research, to the extent permitted by law.

**Source:** <http://stemcells.nih.gov/policy/2009guidelines.html>

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### ***Who Am I?* A Republican Politician**

Mitt Romney

**Biography:** I am former Republican Governor Mitt Romney of Massachusetts, home to Harvard University which has one of the largest stem cell research facilities in the U.S. I received my B.A. from Brigham Young University, then an MBA from Harvard University. I am also a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon). I have been in the news because I was heavily involved in national and statewide attempts to block the Massachusetts’ Supreme Court’s ruling which legalized same-sex marriage. I have stated that I want to keep abortion “safe and legal in this country.” I ran for the Republican nomination for President in 2008.

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**Position:** Former Governor Mitt Romney has condemned stem cell research that destroys embryos and urged the U.S. Senate to oppose legislation to provide federal funds for such experimentation. Governor Mitt Romney has said that he will reject the state legislature’s bill supporting stem cell research, urging lawmakers to rewrite the measure to prohibit scientists from cloning and to remove a passage that redefines when life begins.

**Source:** [http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2005/05/12/romney\\_urges\\_changes\\_to\\_stem\\_cell\\_bill/](http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2005/05/12/romney_urges_changes_to_stem_cell_bill/); May, 2005

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## Who Am I? A Democratic Politician

Rubén Díaz

**Biography:** I am Rubén Díaz and I was elected as a Democrat to the New York State Senate in November 2002. I was born in Puerto Rico and joined the U.S. Armed Forces and proudly served in the Army until completing my tour of duty with an honorable discharge. I've made New York City my home since 1965. I obtained a Bachelor's Degree, and then in 1978 became an ordained Minister of the Church of God

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**Position:** Democrat Rubén Díaz has made his position on stem cell research very clear, writing: "embryonic stem cell research is another and more sophisticated way for the continued killing of unborn babies in America. I oppose the direct destruction of innocent human life for any purpose, including research. As I said before, embryonic research is simply another form of abortion in America."

**Source:** <http://newyork.democratsforlife.org/diaz/diazstemcellspeech.htm>

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## Who Am I? A Republican Politician

Orrin Hatch

**Biography:** My Name is Orrin Hatch and I am a Conservative Republican Senator from Utah. I am Mormon, and I graduated from Brigham Young University. I am the most senior Republican member of the Senate Judiciary Committee. I also take an active role in the confirmation of all judicial nominations, including justices of the Supreme Court, and have a direct impact on such issues as civil rights, immigration, antitrust and consumer protection, and issues related to the Constitution. In addition, I have the honor of serving on the Board of Directors for the Holocaust Memorial Museum; I am a poet and lyricist and have produced several albums of patriotic and religious music.

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**Position:** Orrin Hatch announced: "I am proud to be here today with all these incredible people who are in support of stem cell research. Leading scientists have told us time and time again that stem cell research, including and especially embryonic stem cell research, holds great promise in uncovering the mysteries of human health and disease and in potentially developing diagnostic tests and therapeutic agents for a multitude of conditions including cancer, heart disease, diabetes, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and many, many others. I am supportive of all forms of stem cell research that can be conducted in an ethical manner. This includes adult stem cell research. This includes embryonic stem cell research conducted through the technology of somatic cell nuclear transfer. This includes cord blood stem cell research."

**Source:** <http://www.lifesciences.umich.edu/research/featured/orrinhatch.pdf> July 2005

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## Who Am I? A Person who is Hindu

Swami B.V. Tripurari

**Biography:** I am Swami B.V. Tripurari. I have spent over 30 years as a Hindu monastic. I was awarded the sannyasa order in 1975, and have studied under several spiritual masters in the Gaudiya lineage. I currently run a Vaisnava monastery in the redwoods of Northern California. I am also the author of several books, including "Bhagavad-Gita; Its Feeling and Philosophy" (March 2002).

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**Position:** According to Hindu scripture, human life begins when the male semen fertilizes the female egg. So there is no debate within Hinduism as to when life begins. Thus abortion involves killing, which in most cases is not acceptable. Although I have not studied the argument, it is likely that on similar grounds Hinduism would oppose stem cell research.

**Source:** [http://www.beliefnet.com/story/104/story\\_10493\\_1.html](http://www.beliefnet.com/story/104/story_10493_1.html)



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## Who Am I? A Conservative Christian

Anne Graham Lotz

**Biography:** I am Anne Graham Lotz, the daughter of Rev. Billy Graham. I am the President and Executive Director of Angel Ministries, a non-profit organization offering Christian outreach. My husband Daniel and I reside in Raleigh, North Carolina. My father has Parkinson's disease. I have a son who has cancer, a mother who has degenerative arthritis and I have a husband who has diabetes. And those are four very close family members, each one of whom has a disease that I have read, anyway, could be possibly affected by stem cell research.

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**Position:** Anne Graham Lotz has stated "I would not want any one of my family members to benefit from the willful destruction of another human life...An embryo, as tiny as it is, is still a human life, created in the image of God, with the capacity and the maturity to know the creator. And to destroy that human life willingly, for any reason, is abhorrent to me. It comes close to thumbing our nose in God's face."

**Source:** <http://abcnews.go.com/ThisWeek/TheList/story?id=780096>; May, 2005

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## Who Am I? An Ethicist

Ron Green

**Biography:** My name is Ronald M. Green and I am faculty director of the Ethics Institute at Dartmouth College. I have written over eighty articles and five books in the fields of ethical theory, religious ethics, and applied ethics, including medical ethics and business ethics. I am a member of the Bioethics Committee of the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation. I serve on the Ethics Advisory Board of Advanced Cell Technology, a biotechnology company.

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**Position:** I served on the National Institute of Health Human Embryo Research Panel along with 18 other scientists, bioethicists, lawyers and specialists in the area of reproductive medicine. Our report recommended funding for stem-cell research. We permitted the deliberate creation of human embryos for research "potentially of outstanding scientific and therapeutic value".

**Source:** [http://www.beliefnet.com/story/153/story\\_15349\\_1.html](http://www.beliefnet.com/story/153/story_15349_1.html) Sept. 2004

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## Who Am I? An Ethicist

C. Ben Mitchell

**Biography:** My name is C. Ben Mitchell and I am an Associate Professor of Bioethics and Contemporary Culture, at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, in Deerfield, Illinois. I serve as editor of the journal *Ethics and Medicine* and Bioethics Consultant to the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention. My Ph.D. is in philosophy with a concentration in medical ethics, and my dissertation focused on the ethical issues in patenting human life. I also serve as a consultant for the Genetics & Public Policy Center of Johns Hopkins University.

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**Position:** In response to a study where Virginia scientists created blastocysts solely for embryonic stem cell research, I said, "Once we begin to approve embryonic stem cell research, all bets are off. Establishing boundaries becomes nearly impossible." I called the work "immoral and unconscionable" and said any research based on embryonic stem cells is "morally tainted."

**Source:** [http://www.health24.com/medical/Condition\\_centres/777-792-1987-1999,13320.asp](http://www.health24.com/medical/Condition_centres/777-792-1987-1999,13320.asp)

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## Who Am I? A Diabetes Patient Advocate

Mary Tyler Moore

**Biography:** My name is Mary Tyler Moore. I was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1937. I began a television career as a "Happy Hotpoint" dancing performer in appliance commercials in 1955. I co-starred in *The Dick Van Dyke Show* from 1961-1966 and have made many television guest appearances. I have received 3 Emmy Awards, a Golden Globe Award, and was named to the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Hall of Fame in 1987.

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**Position:** Actress Mary Tyler Moore says she opposes abortion, but she also doesn't like President George W. Bush's reluctance to expand research using stem cells from human embryos to achieve medical breakthroughs.

Moore, diagnosed more than 30 years ago with juvenile diabetes, likened the harvesting of stem cells from unused, donated fertilized eggs to organ donations.

"It is the true pinnacle of charity," she said, appearing Wednesday with House of Representatives members who want new lines of stem cells made available for research. "Federal support for stem cell research . . . is the best way to ensure it is undertaken with the highest of ethical standards," she said.

**Source:** April 2004 [http://www.jdrf.org/index.cfm?page\\_id=101204](http://www.jdrf.org/index.cfm?page_id=101204)

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## Who Am I? A Liberal Christian

Rev. Dr. Joanne C. Sizoo

**Biography:** My name is Rev. Dr. Joanne C. Sizoo and I am a pastor of the Norwood Presbyterian Church in Cincinnati, OH. I am also the chair of the General Assembly's Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns. I served for a number of years on the board of More Light Presbyterians. I am also known for my advocacy of Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender issues.

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**Position:** Excerpts of a letter from clergy written to Republican Senator Frist. Dr. Joanne C. Sizoo was one of the many clergy who signed this letter.

...We believe that as a nation, it is far better to pursue a path where there is common moral ground. One place of agreement is the shared belief among major religions that we have an obligation to relieve suffering and heal the sick. **The enormous potential of embryonic stem-cell research to treat the sick and injured is, in our view, an embodiment of this religious view.**

Moreover, the proposed legislation limits federal funding to embryos that remain frozen in fertility clinics and would otherwise be destroyed. Couples who no longer need these embryos for reproductive purposes should be allowed to donate them for research and treatment of disease, to relieve suffering and promote healing. Such an act, through informed consent, lies within the well-developed ethics and tradition of organ donation, which is also supported by major religions...

**Source:** June 2005. [http://theocracywatch.org/stem\\_cell\\_letter.htm](http://theocracywatch.org/stem_cell_letter.htm)

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## Who Am I? A Moderate Christian

Barb Edwards

**Biography:** My name is Barb Edwards, and I consider myself to be pro life. I am a member of The United Methodist Church (as is President Bush). The United Methodist Church has no formal position on research involving human stem cells. However, the denomination's Board of Church and Society supports a ban on embryonic stem cell research based on the church's opposition to any procedure that creates waste embryos. I have a son Alex, who was paralyzed from the chest down after a car accident on September 11, 1999, due to a spinal cord injury.

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**Position:** "I'm pro life - my child's life," says Barb Edwards. "Cells are sitting in dishes doing nothing and they could help my son," she says, referring to extra embryos at fertility centers that are no longer needed after a couple conceives a child through *in vitro* fertilization.

**Source:** [http://www.interpretermagazine.org/umns/news\\_archive2002.asp?ptid=&story=%7B1B0CBD36-A605-4D88-89F7-1FF039C14DD4%7D&mid=2399](http://www.interpretermagazine.org/umns/news_archive2002.asp?ptid=&story=%7B1B0CBD36-A605-4D88-89F7-1FF039C14DD4%7D&mid=2399); August, 2002.

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## ***Who Am I? A Democratic Politician***

John F. Kerry

**Biography:** My name is John Kerry and I am a United States senator from Massachusetts. I was the Democratic candidate for president in 2004. I graduated from Yale University in 1966 and joined the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam War. I attended Boston College Law School and worked as a prosecuting attorney before jumping into politics. After two years as Lieutenant Governor, I was elected to the U.S. Senate for the first time in 1984, and I've been there ever since.

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**Position:** I think we can do ethically guided embryonic stem cell research. We have 100,000 to 200,000 embryos that are frozen in nitrogen today from fertility clinics. These weren't taken from abortion or something like that, they're from a fertility clinic, and they're either going to be destroyed or left frozen. It is respecting life to reach for that cure. It is respecting life to do it in an ethical way. Bush's chosen a policy that makes it impossible for our scientists to do that. I want the future, and I think we have to grab it.

**Source:** Second Bush-Kerry Debate, in St. Louis MO Oct 8, 2004

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## ***Who Am I? An Advocate for Aging Americans***

Daniel Perry

**Biography:** My name is Daniel Perry, and I am the President and CEO of the Alliance for Aging Research, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the health and independence of aging Americans through public and private funding of medical research. I was appointed during the first Bush Administration to the Federal Task Force on Aging Research. I was also named by President Clinton to the Advisory Board of the White House Conference on Aging and served as a delegate to the 1995 and 2005 White House Conferences on Aging.

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**Position:** Our organization agrees with the 80 Nobel Laureates who wrote to President Bush urging him not to halt federal funding of embryonic stem cell research. "It would be tragic to waste this opportunity to pursue the work that could potentially alleviate human suffering." Shutting off federal funds for university research would still allow the research to go on in private labs and biotechnology companies in other countries. This would eliminate the matter of public accountability and oversight that is the best protection against abuses in the use, sale, and transfer of human embryonic tissues.

**Source:** <http://www.npr.org/programs/specials/stemcells/viewpoints.perry.html>

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## ***Who am I? A Parkinson's Disease Patient Advocate***

Michael J. Fox

**Biography:** My name is Michael J. Fox. I was born in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada in 1961 and attended high school in Vancouver, Canada. I dropped out of school in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade and received my GED in 1995. I married Tracy Pollan in 1988. I began acting professionally at age 15. Though I would not share the news with the public for another seven years, I was diagnosed with young-onset Parkinson's disease in 1991. Upon disclosing my condition in 1998, I committed myself to the campaign for increased Parkinson's research.

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**Position:** In an article in the New York Times about the presidential race, Michael J. Fox who suffers from Parkinson's disease, wrote: "The outcome is likely to have a dramatic bearing on my prognosis — and that of millions of Americans whose lives have been touched by Parkinson's, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, spinal cord injury, Huntington's disease, Alzheimer's disease and other devastating illnesses. That's because one question that may be decided on Tuesday is whether stem cell research — which holds the best hope of a cure for such diseases — will be permitted to go forward. Campaign aides to George W. Bush, who has not publicly addressed the issue, stated on several occasions that a Bush administration would overturn current National Institutes of Health guidelines and ban federal funding for stem cell research...Mr. Bush favors a ban on stem cell research, one aide said, 'because of his pro-life views.' "

**Source:** November 2005; [http://www.religioustolerance.org/res\\_stem3.htm](http://www.religioustolerance.org/res_stem3.htm)

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## Who Am I? A Spinal Cord Injury Patient Advocate

Christopher Reeve

**Biography:** My name is Christopher Reeve and I was born on September 25, 1952, in New York. I studied at Cornell University, while at the same time working as a professional actor. In my final year of Cornell, Robin Williams and I, who became a life-long friend, were selected to study at the Julliard School of Performing Arts. I've since appeared in many feature films (most notably Superman), TV movies and some 150 plays. In May, 1995, I was thrown from my horse during a riding event, and, landing on my head, broke the top two vertebrae in my spine. Left paralyzed from the neck down, I became an active advocate for bringing greater public awareness to the needs of those with spinal cord injuries. My wife and I created a fundraising foundation called the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation to raise research money and provide grants to local agencies that focus on quality of life for the disabled. (Note: Christopher Reeve died in 2004 and his wife, Dana, died in 2006, but their foundation continues to be active)

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**Position:** Christopher Reeve's testimony on the topic of NIH funding and stem cell research:

We must pursue research on embryonic stem cells. With the life expectancy of average Americans heading as high as 85 to 90 years, it is our responsibility to do everything possible to protect the quality of life of the present and future generations. A critical factor will be what we do with human embryonic stem cells. These cells have the potential to cure diseases and conditions ranging from Parkinson's and multiple sclerosis to diabetes and heart disease, Alzheimer's, Lou Gehrig's disease, even spinal-cord injuries like my own. They have been called the body's self-repair kit...

...Fortunately, stem cells are readily available and easily harvested. In fertility clinics, women are given a choice of what to do with unused fertilized embryos: they can be discarded, donated to research or frozen for future use. Under NIH supervision, scientists should be allowed to take cells only from women who freely consent to their use for research. This process would not be open ended; within one to two years a sufficient number could be gathered and made available to investigators. For those reasons, the ban on federally funded human embryonic stem cell research should be lifted as quickly as possible.

**Source:** April, 2000 <http://www.chrisreevehomepage.com/testimony-nih.html>

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## Who Am I? A Citizen/Taxpayer who is Conservative

Judie Brown

**Biography:** My name is Judie Brown and I am President of the American Life League, which I cofounded in 1979. It is a pro-life organization in the United States and is committed to the protection of all innocent human beings from the moment of creation to natural death. I live in Stafford, VA. I attended St. Mary's Academy from 1958-1962, El Camino Junior College from 1962-1963, and the University of California – Los Angeles from 1963-1965.

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**Position:** "As deeply concerned as we are about the treatment and cure of disease, we don't believe the average American wants to see tiny embryonic boys and girls, little children, used as experimental material," said Judie Brown, a spokeswoman for the American Life League. "The problem we have with this particular type of research," said Brown, "is that you have to kill a person to get these stem cells. That's unethical."

**Source:** March 2001 [http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0103/08/i\\_ins.00.html](http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0103/08/i_ins.00.html)

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## **Who Am I? A University Science Professor**

David A. Prentice

**Biography:** I am David Prentice, and I spent nearly 20 years as a Professor of Life Sciences at Indiana State University, and as an Adjunct Professor of Medical and Molecular Genetics at Indiana University School of Medicine. I am now a Senior Fellow for Life Sciences at Family Research Council. I am a founding member of the organization Do No Harm: The Coalition of Americans for Research Ethics, a national coalition of researchers, health care professionals, bioethicists, legal professionals, and others.

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**Position:** Funding for human embryonic stem cell research is illegal, unethical and unnecessary. Destroying living human embryos for research violates the basic tenet of the healing arts: "first do no harm." There is ample published scientific evidence showing that adult stem cells can and do provide an adequate alternative to using embryonic stem cells.

Source: <http://www.npr.org/programs/specials/stemcells/viewpoints.prentice.html>

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## **Who Am I? A Former First Lady who is Conservative**

Nancy Reagan

**Biography:** I am Nancy Reagan. I am a republican and was first lady when my husband Ronald Reagan was President. Soon after graduating from high school I became a professional actress. I met Ronald Reagan in 1951, when he was president of the Screen Actors Guild. The following year we were married in a simple ceremony in Los Angeles in the Little Brown Church in the Valley. I soon retired from making movies so I could be the wife I wanted to be...A woman's real happiness and real fulfillment come from within the home with her husband and children. We have a daughter, Patricia Ann, and a son, Ronald Prescott.

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**Position:** She said she believed stem cell research "may provide our scientists with many answers that for so long have been beyond our grasp". I believe the research could lead to a cure for Alzheimer's disease, which afflicted my husband, Ronald Reagan. The Bush administration has blocked public funding of this type of research because of his party's ethical reservations about embryo research. At a fundraising dinner for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation in Hollywood, I said my husband was now in "a distant place where I can no longer reach him. I just don't see how we can turn our backs on this... We have lost so much time already. I just really can't bear to lose any more."

Source: <http://www.kansascures.com/quotes.php>; May, 2004

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## **Who Am I? A Biotechnology CEO in the U.S.**

Dr. William Haseltine

**Biography:** My name is Dr. William Haseltine and I founded the company Human Genome Sciences, Inc. located in Rockville Maryland in 1992. Human Genome Sciences, Inc. is a company with the mission to develop products to predict, prevent, detect, treat and cure disease based on its leadership in the discovery and understanding of human genes. I have a doctorate from Harvard University in Biophysics and was a Professor at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard Medical School and Harvard School of Public Health from 1976-1993 before joining Human Genome Sciences. I have had many years of experience with biotechnology companies. Since 1981, I have founded seven companies, each in a different area of medicine. In 1996 I was the recipient of the American Academy of Achievement Golden Plate Award and was also chosen by Ernst & Young as the Greater Washington (D.C.) Entrepreneur of the Year.

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**Position:** People who want government to fund ES cell research are expecting taxpayers to pay for science projects that knowledgeable investors will not. William Haseltine, ES cell research advocate and CEO of Human Genome Sciences said, "The routine utilization of human embryonic stem cells for medicine is 20 to 30 years hence. The timeline to commercialization is so long that I simply would not invest. You may notice that our company has not made such investments."

Source: [http://www.maclaurin.org/article\\_detail.php?a\\_id=62](http://www.maclaurin.org/article_detail.php?a_id=62) July 2005

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## Who Am I? A High School Student

Heather Hanson

### Biography:

My name is Heather Hanson. I was born on June 3, 1990 and I am a junior at Eastside Catholic High School in Bellevue, Washington. History and English are my favorite subjects in school. I have played soccer since I was in elementary school, and I now play on a year-round select team. I also like to ski and hang out with my friends. I am active with the Youth Group at my church in Seattle. I have been on three mission trips with this group; one to Arkansas, one to Florida and one to the US/Mexican border. I have an older sister in college and I live with my mother and my father.

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**Position:** Heather wrote in a school paper: "It [using blastocysts from *in vitro* fertilization clinics] is not the 'taking of human life,' but the use of resources which would otherwise be thrown away. With the couples' consent, they could be used for this cutting edge research and provide hope and healing to millions of people. These embryos would not be wasted. A great amount of use would come from them, and the quality of life for people currently suffering from various neuro-related ailments would improve." Heather was skiing with her father on March 7, 2001, when, on the last run of the day, he fell and broke his neck. He is now partially paralyzed and has gone through therapy to learn to walk with some aid. Heather and her parents have lobbied in Washington, DC for a bill that would allow some embryos to be used in federally funded stem-cell research to cure paralysis. Heather's church, The United Church of Christ, doesn't object to research on blastocysts, as long as it's conducted with respect and not done for reproductive purposes.

**Source:** Phone interview, June 17, 2007

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## Who Am I? A Conservative Columnist

Ann Coulter

**Biography:** I am Ann Coulter. I graduated with honors from Cornell University School of Arts & Sciences, and received my J.D. from University of Michigan Law School. After practicing law in private practice in New York City, I worked for the Senate Judiciary Committee. From there, I became a litigator with the Center For Individual Rights in Washington, D.C., a public interest law firm dedicated to the defense of individual rights with particular emphasis on freedom of speech, civil rights, and the free exercise of religion. I am now a New York Times best selling author of books such as *Slander: Liberal Lies About the American Right* (June 2002). I am a frequent guest on many TV shows, including Hannity and Colmes, Scarborough Country, HBO's Real Time with Bill Maher, The O'Reilly Factor, and Good Morning America; and I have been profiled in numerous publications.

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**Position:** Ann Coulter wrote in her column: "So what great advance are we to expect from experimentation on human embryos? They don't know. It's just a theory. But they definitely need to start slaughtering the unborn. Stem-cell research on embryos is an even worse excuse for the slaughter of life than abortion. It's either a life or it's not a life, and it's not much of an argument to say the embryo is going to die anyway. What kind of principle is that? Prisoners on death row are going to die anyway; the homeless are going to die anyway, prisoners in Nazi death camps were going to die anyway. Why not start disemboweling prisoners for these elusive "cures"?"

**Source:** <http://www.jewishworldreview.com/cols/coulter072601.asp>; July, 2001

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## Who Am I? A Person involved in Biomedical Research

Alfred E. Mann

**Biography:** I am Alfred Mann, and I am the chairman of three companies:

- Advanced Bionics Corporation which develops, manufactures and markets systems for neuromuscular electrostimulation systems and at this time sells cochlear stimulators to restore hearing for the profoundly deaf.
  - Second Sight is an early stage company developing a visual prosthesis to restore sight to the blind.
  - AlleCure is developing vaccines for eliminating allergies.
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**Position:** The Alfred E. Mann Institute for Biomedical Engineering at USC is a nonprofit corporation engaged in biomedical research and development. Its mission is to conduct biomedical research and to foster the development and commercialization of biomedical devices and other biomedical technologies. AMI-USC collaborates with the USC faculty to identify, validate, develop and transition to private industry new concepts for use in promoting public health. Its aim is to move promising new technology from the idea stage to successful commercialization in a short period of time. This requires the use of stem cells.

**Source:** <http://bme.usc.edu/research/ami-usc.htm>

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## Who Am I? A Person who is Jewish

Elliot Dorff

**Biography:** I am Elliot N. Dorff a Conservative rabbi, a professor of Jewish theology at the University of Judaism in California, author, and a bio-ethicist. I am considered to be an expert in the philosophy of Conservative Judaism, Bioethics, and acknowledged within the Conservative community as an expert in Jewish law. I was ordained as a rabbi from the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1970, and earned a PhD in philosophy from Columbia University in 1971.

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**Position:** According to Elliot Dorff, "In light of our divine mandate to seek to maintain life and health, one might even argue that from a Jewish perspective we have a duty to proceed with that research." Under Jewish Law, genetic materials outside the womb are morally neutral. Even in the womb during the first 40 days, the status of genetic materials is "as if they were simply water."

**Source:** [http://www.uscj.org/Embryonic\\_Stem\\_Cell\\_5809.html](http://www.uscj.org/Embryonic_Stem_Cell_5809.html) Spring, 2002

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## Who Am I? A Person who is Catholic

Pope Benedict XVI

**Biography:** I am Pope Benedict XVI. I was born Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger in Bavaria Germany in 1927. After spending a few months as a POW near the end of WWII, I entered the seminary and became an ordained priest in 1951. Prior to the death of Pope John Paul II, I served as a member of the Congregation of Bishops, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, the Congregation for Catholic Education, the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, the Council for Christian Unity, the Council for Culture, the Commission Ecclesia Dei, and the Commission for Latin America.

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**Position:** The Roman Catholic Church is opposed to all Embryonic Stem Cell Research. All life is sacred from the moment of conception. Adult Stem Cell Research is approved when no embryo is harmed. The Pope has said, "Experience is already showing how a tragic coarsening of consciences accompanies the assault on innocent human life in the womb, leading to accommodation and acquiescence in the face of other related evils such as euthanasia, infanticide and, most recently, proposals for the creation for research purposes of human embryos, destined to be destroyed in the process."

**Source:** <http://www.vermontcatholic.org/FamilyLife/StemCell.htm>  
<http://www.americancatholic.org/newsletters/CU/ac0102.asp>

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## Who Am I? A Former Member of the President's Council on Bioethics

Leon Kass

**Biography:** My name is Leon Kass and I was Chairman of the President's Council on Bioethics from 2002 to 2005. I am a native of Chicago and earned both my B.S. and M.D. degrees at the University of Chicago. I then got a Ph.D. in biochemistry at Harvard. I have written many popular essays about biomedical ethics and have dealt with issues raised by *in vitro* fertilization, cloning, genetic screening and genetic technology, organ transplantation, aging research, euthanasia and assisted suicide, and the moral nature of the medical profession. My wife and I have two married daughters and four young granddaughters.

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**Position:** Leon Kass opposes *in vitro* fertilization, and all types of cloning, including therapeutic cloning. When speaking about a new technique for establishing embryonic stem cell lines from an early human embryo without destroying it he said, "I do not think that this is the sought-for, morally unproblematic and practically useful approach we need." He has also said, "It would be better to derive human stem cell lines from the body's mature cells, a method researchers are still working on."

**Source:** <http://www.iht.com/articles/2006/08/24/healthscience/web.0824stem.php>

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## Who Am I? A Professor of Law and Medical Ethics

Alta Charo

**Biography:** I am Alta Charo and I was born in 1958 in Brooklyn, NY. I am a Professor of Law and Bioethics at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. I offer courses on health law, bioethics and biotechnology law, food & drug law, medical ethics, reproductive rights, torts, and legislative drafting. In addition, I have also served on the UW Hospital clinical ethics committee, the University's Institutional Review Board for the protection of human subjects in medical research, and the University's Bioethics Advisory Committee. In 1994 I served on the NIH Human Embryo Research Panel, and from 1996-2001, I was a member of President Clinton's National Bioethics Advisory Commission. I am fond of poker, foreign language study, cats, home renovation, Harry Potter books, old movies, roller coasters, salsa music, Jane Austen novels and Star Trek.

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**Position:** When speaking about a new technique for embryonic stem cell research, Alta Charo said, "Anything that makes it possible for science to advance in this area is to be applauded." She also said, "But this [new technique] should not be used as an excuse not to finance the most promising forms of research we already know about," referring to work done on blastocysts already slated for destruction at fertility clinics.

**Source:** <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/09/22/AR2006092201377.html>

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## Who Am I? A Person who is Muslim

Dr. Gamal Serour

**Biography:** I am Dr. Gamal Serour, an Egyptian Muslim. I am currently a Professor at Al-Azhar University and Consultant in Obstetrics and Gynecology, specializing in infertility treatment. I developed the bioethics curriculum and oversee its implementation in the medical school. I am also the Director of the International Islamic Center For Population Studies and Research. In addition, I am the clinical director of the Egyptian *in vitro* fertilization clinic in Cairo.

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**Position:** Dr. Serour argues that excess early embryos (less than 14 days old) are not yet human beings. "Instead of leaving them to perish, why not use them for research for the benefit of human beings?" Some Islamic scholars hold favorable views toward embryonic stem-cell research from the perspective of sharia (Islamic law). Most of these scholars believe ensoulment of the embryo occurs on the 120th day of the pregnancy, and that is the point when it gains its moral status or rights as a legal person. Other Islamic scholars, however, say ensoulment occurs on the 40th day. In broad terms, Islam tends to favor stem cell research because of its potential to promote human healing.

**Source:** <http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/0622/p15s02-wogi.html> June 2005

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**My Stakeholder Thinks...**

Read each of the following statements. Circle the letter(s) that you think represent how the stakeholder you stand for feels. You can't know for sure, so *use your best judgment*.

My Stakeholder: \_\_\_\_\_

SA = Strongly Agree    A = Agree    D = Disagree    SD = Strongly Disagree

SA    A    D    SD	1. It is ethically acceptable to use human embryonic stem cells for medical research.
SA    A    D    SD	2. It is ethically acceptable to use adult stem cells for disease treatments, such as those involving bone marrow transplants.
SA    A    D    SD	3. The federal government should use taxpayer money to pay for research using human embryonic stem cells.
SA    A    D    SD	4. Conducting research using human embryonic stem cell is immoral and unconscionable.
SA    A    D    SD	5. The embryo at the blastocyst stage is a human being and should be considered equal to a fully formed human being.
SA    A    D    SD	6. New stem cells lines should be created for the purpose of research.
SA    A    D    SD	7. Blastulas left over from IVF clinics are still human lives and should not be willfully destroyed.
SA    A    D    SD	8. It is possible to do ethically-guided human embryonic stem cell research.
SA    A    D    SD	9. Life begins at conception.
SA    A    D    SD	10. It would be tragic to waste the opportunity to pursue research that could potentially alleviate human suffering.