



16 June 2007

Human Cloning and Other Prohibited Practices Amendment Bill 2007

The key question has already been answered – many times and very well.

An SCNT human clone is human life.

This conclusion has nothing to do with moral law or religious principles.

The Lockhart Committee acknowledged thisⁱ and every high school biology student knows it. The SCNT clone with 46 human chromosomes is as capable of an independent existence if given the same chance as any IVF/ARTⁱⁱ embryo. Dolly the sheep is the non-human equivalent and we have all seen her photo.

Any MP who denies this is flying in the face of biological fact.

There are three questions that follow on from this that all MPs must answer before making a decision on the cloning bill:

Does this early human life have intrinsic value because it is human?

If it does not have value now, when does it and why?

In the field of medical science should we ever sacrifice one life for another?

The doctors of *Medicine With Morality* want to state very clearly that we should never create human life for the purpose of destruction, whether for research or for stem cells or for organ transfer.

The doctors of *Medicine With Morality* want to remind you that there are already prominent Australian voices calling for the sacrifice of later-stage embryos with formed organs instead of using stem cellsⁱⁱⁱ. We must not tread the pathway of devaluing human life at any point.

The doctors of *Medicine With Morality* want to state very clearly that in the field of medical science we should never sacrifice one human life for another.

Although the doctors of *Medicine With Morality* believe that medicine must hold to certain moral absolutes, this argument is not just one of moral law. Sacrificing one human life for another places us in the invidious position of ultimately deciding which lives are worthy to be lived, of weighing one disability or defect against another, or even of one age against another.

The doctors of *Medicine With Morality* want to state very clearly that sacrificing human embryos to get stem cells is not necessary. There is proven success of non-embryonic stem cells^{iv} and these are also showing they can behave as embryonic cells^v.

NO confusion! We must not devalue human life!

We cannot afford to devalue human life at any point and we plead with you not to give legal approval for such devaluation.

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ⁱ Lockhart report, section 17.4 page 170

The Committee agreed that human embryo clones are human embryos and that, given the right environment for development, could develop into a human being. Furthermore, if such an embryo were implanted into the body of a woman to achieve a pregnancy, this entity would certainly have the same status as any other human embryo, and were this pregnancy to result in a live birth, that child would enjoy the same rights and protection as any other child.

ⁱⁱ ART Assisted Reproductive Technology is a more encompassing name for IVF.

ⁱⁱⁱ University of Oxford Professor Julian Savulescu, Director of the Oxford Uehiro Centre for Practical Ethics, an expatriate Australian at Oxford University:

“Indeed, it is not merely morally permissible but morally required that we employ cloning to produce embryos or fetuses for the sake of providing cells, tissues or even organs for therapy” *Journal of Medical Ethics* 25.2 (April 1999): p87.

^{iv} <http://www.stemcellresearch.org/alternatives/111newreasons.html>

^v Okita, K., Ichisaka, T. & Yamanaka, S. *Nature* doi:10.1038/nature05934 (2007).
<http://www.nature.com/stemcells>

signatories to *Medicine With Morality* on following pages