

Chairmen and members of the committee, my name is Becky Stockton and I reside in Helena and I represent myself.

I strongly oppose SJR 18.

President Bush did not ban stem cell research – to ban something means to prohibit it completely, which he didn't. He just limited it to the stem cell strains we presently have and not to use new human embryos anymore to protect the sanctification of the unborn child. There are plenty adult stem cells that scientists can work with that have been producing better scientific results to conquer diseases and disabilities, than the embryonic stem cells. BrainStorm's President and CEO, Yaffa Beck told Israel 21C that the advantage of adult bone marrow cells is that they can be taken from the patient, so there is no rejection or infection. The body identifies the cells as belonging to the patient. While embryonic stem cells have been known to mutate and form tumors and are also known to be rejected by the body because they are abnormal to that particular person. An example of what adult stem cells can do was recently reported to the public from a team of Korean researchers that they planted adult stem cells into a 37 year old female patient who wasn't able to stand in 19 years because she was paralyzed from an accident, but today she is learning to walk because of the treatment. Why doesn't the press pick up this story?

The biggest controversy is where do the scientists get the cells? The media today has formed most of our opinions for us because they control what we hear and see regarding this issue and many other moral and political issues. They have made this a political issue depicting Christians and others who believe in the sanctification of life that we are against the progress of stem cell research and the saving of lives, which is not true! What we are against is the taking of someone else's life (the human embryo) to save another person's life. Essentially, we are selecting as to who lives or dies, as in the Terri Schiavo case. Who is to say that my life is better to save than it is the human embryo? For some political reason the media are protecting the right to use human embryos when we have plenty of adult stem cells (because every one of us produces them on a daily basis). Is it because they want to protect the right of the abortion clinics to function or to provide therapeutic human cloning?

My biggest worry is that the continued use of embryonic stem cell research, with our tax payer's money to fund this, will lead to more widespread creation and destruction of human embryos and a greater devaluing of human life, like cloning instead of us reproducing the normal way. Let's put our money behind something that is proven to be clinically successful, safe and effective and that is the use of adult stem cells and not promote embryonic stem cell research.

Please do not support this proposed legislation. Thank you.

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Subject: Stem Cell Research [REDACTED]

The Business Journal of Kansas City - February 28, 2005  
<http://kansascity.bizjournals.com/kansascity/stories/2005/02/28/editorial3.html>  
<<http://www.bizjournals.com/kansascity/stories/2005/02/28/editorial3.html>>

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## OPINION

From the February 25, 2005 print edition

Guest column

Stem cell research will offer no 'advance' for society

John Morris

What horrifies us most about the medical experiments of Josef Mengele, Tuskegee or Willowbrook is that they actually happened. Human beings -- sick or merely disenfranchised -- were exploited for the "advancement" of medicine.

In recent weeks, the issue of embryonic stem cell research and its connection to the process known as somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT) has heated up in the Missouri Legislature. Kansas Citizens have been bombarded in the local media with claims that banning SCNT will cost us billions of dollars in lost biotech industry, prevent local researchers from finding cures for diseases such as Alzheimer's and diabetes, and label Missouri as anti-science.

Examination of the science, however, raises fundamental ethical concerns.

First, researchers do not "create" embryonic stem cells -- they "harvest" them from an embryo when it is about 5 days old in a process that destroys that embryo. In human research, this embryo is not just a "clump of cells," but rather is a self-developing organism with a complete "human" genome. Noted doctors from the Mayo Clinic, including C. Everett Koop and Edmund Pellegrino ("Stem Cell Research: Why Medicine Should Reject Human Cloning"), observe that the "human embryo is a living human organism. Structurally, the embryo is genetically complete." (Mayo Clinic Proceedings August 2003;78:1010-1018).

Thus, SCNT -- by producing a human embryo from which to harvest stem cells -- actually produces a new, genetically complete human life for the sole purpose of destroying it. This simply cannot be tolerated in any civilized society.

Second, most media gloss over an important distinction regarding stem cell

research. One form is called embryonic stem cell research. As noted above, these stem cells can be obtained only from a developing embryo in a process that destroys the embryo itself. Because the stem cells harvested from embryos are difficult to work with and consistently form tumors when transplanted, this type of research has not led to a single cure for any human patient after 20-plus years of laboratory work.

On the other hand, there have been incredible breakthroughs in adult and umbilical cord blood stem cell research, in which no one is harmed (see [www.stemcellresearch.org](http://www.stemcellresearch.org) <<http://www.stemcellresearch.org/>> ). Banning SCNT will actually save money that could go toward adult stem cell research that is helping patients today. This is where the Kansas City biotech industry should be focusing its resources -- on ethical research that can save lives now!

Finally, supporters of SCNT often claim that this research offers the best hope of finding cures for terrible diseases such as Alzheimer's and juvenile diabetes.

However, as one group of doctors who oppose embryonic stem cell research noted in a letter to presidential candidate John Kerry last October, "there is strong scientific consensus that complex diseases such as Alzheimer's are unlikely to be treated by any stem cell therapy. ... Similarly, autoimmune diseases like juvenile diabetes, lupus and MS are unlikely to benefit from simple addition of new cells unless the underlying problem-- a faulty immune system that attacks the body's own cells as though they were foreign invaders -- is corrected." ([www.stemcellresearch.org/pr/kerry.pdf](http://www.stemcellresearch.org/pr/kerry.pdf)).

Local supporters of SCNT and embryonic stem cell research must stop exaggerating the "promise" of this research, which raises false hopes.

In the end, much good will come from adult stem cell research. But those who live and work in Missouri should neither support nor allow unethical research such as SCNT to occur, lest Kansas City join the ranks of such infamous places as Tuskegee or Willowbrook, where human beings were mistreated in the name of science.

John Morris is associate professor of philosophy at Rockhurst University and special adviser for the Catholic Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph on issues of stem cells, cloning and human embryos.

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**Date:** 3/29/2005 8:56:13 AM  
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Embryonic stem cell research as an obsession

Donald R. May (back <<http://www.nochimera.com/May20050214.shtml>> to web version) | <[http://www.nochimera.com/esc\\_obsession.htm##](http://www.nochimera.com/esc_obsession.htm##)> email to a friendSend

February 14, 2005

"I will work with Congress to ensure that human embryos are not created for experimentation or grown for body parts, and that human life is never bought and sold as a commodity."

-- President George W. Bush, State of the Union address, February 02, 2005.

Twenty-first century society was not prepared for the fact that human life could be produced for the purpose of harvesting cells or body parts for the benefit of others. Only a few years ago we thought this was still science fiction from some futuristic Star Trek age.

Rapid scientific advancements have made it possible to produce new human life in the laboratory. We can no longer put off the ethical questions surrounding the use of embryos and clones.

President Bush was correct to address the embryonic stem cell controversy and to provide money to fund it with appropriate limitations and safeguards. His courage to address problems quickly and definitively, and not defer them to future administrations, may well be his greatest legacy.

Bone marrow stem cell transplants save the lives of thousands each year and have been performed for more than four decades. The medical therapies developed from stem cell research (SCR) have produced successful results far beyond our expectations.

With all this scientific success and with more than 15,000 patients benefiting from SCR each year, why are some people apoplectic? The answer is both simple and perplexing. The scientific breakthroughs and the medical

therapies have all come from adult stem cells and none as yet have come from embryonic stem cells. Rather than welcoming the results and pursuing support for what works, there are paradoxically increasing demands for the recognition and funding of embryonic SCR.

A dangerous combination of political and social ideology is determined to make embryonic SCR succeed. The problem is an apparent obsession with destroying human life to provide medical therapies. Looking from the outside, one might imagine that embryonic SCR supporters are advocating a pagan ritual of human sacrifice to treat disease?

It appears there is also a need to prove President Bush wrong. Do they believe that if embryonic SCR were to produce useful results, President Bush and his supporters would somehow be discredited?

Embryonic SCR supporters have resorted to political action to force its funding. As it has not been successful, and private funding is drying up, public subsidies from the National Institutes of Health and other government sources appear to be the only way to keep embryonic SCR viable.

It is of concern that government funding is apparently being directed preferentially to research based on embryonic SCR. Researchers such as Dr. Kathy Mitchell of the University of Kansas have reported that their grant applications to the National Institutes of Health are being turned down specifically because her stem cells are adult stem cells harvested from umbilical cords. Dr. Mitchell's research is directed at repairing kidney damage resulting from diseases such as leukemia and diabetes.

As Lynde Langdon reported in "Miracle  
<<http://cf.townhall.com/linkurl.cfm?http://www.worldmag.com/subscriber/displayarticle.cfm?id=10284>> cells" (World, February 5, 2005):

The National Institutes of Health has shunned her grant applications three times. In one grant review, a fellow scientist commented that her stem cells come from tissue inside umbilical cords, not days-old embryos. 'We already have a good source of stem cells,' the grant reviewer wrote, 'Why do we need another?'

Ms. Langdon further writes:

The NIH . . . has funded only 30 projects involving stem cells from umbilical cords. In contrast, it has funded 634 projects involving embryonic stem cells.

California voters, some led by ideology and others by emotion and guilt, passed Proposition 71. It will provide \$3 billion in embryonic SCR funding over the next 10 years and take \$6 billion in taxpayer money to pay off the bonds issued for its support. Going into debt to subsidize political ideology is of serious concern. Other state governments are pushing to enact similar publicly funded mandates for embryonic SCR. It appears the logic is similar to that of fighting poverty or supporting failing schools -- provide more money and eventually it might work.

Politics, science, religion, morals, and ethics all meet head on in embryonic SCR. Adult stem cell research has shown significant success. As it is not politically correct research, it does not receive the credit and

the funding that it deserves. As a result, future productive research will be slowed, and people will suffer and die from diseases that might have otherwise been treated earlier. The positive results from adult SCR are minimized and even disparaged. We have seen little news of the South Korean woman who was paraplegic for 20 years and is now starting to walk, or the leukemia patients who have survived, after adult stem cell therapy.

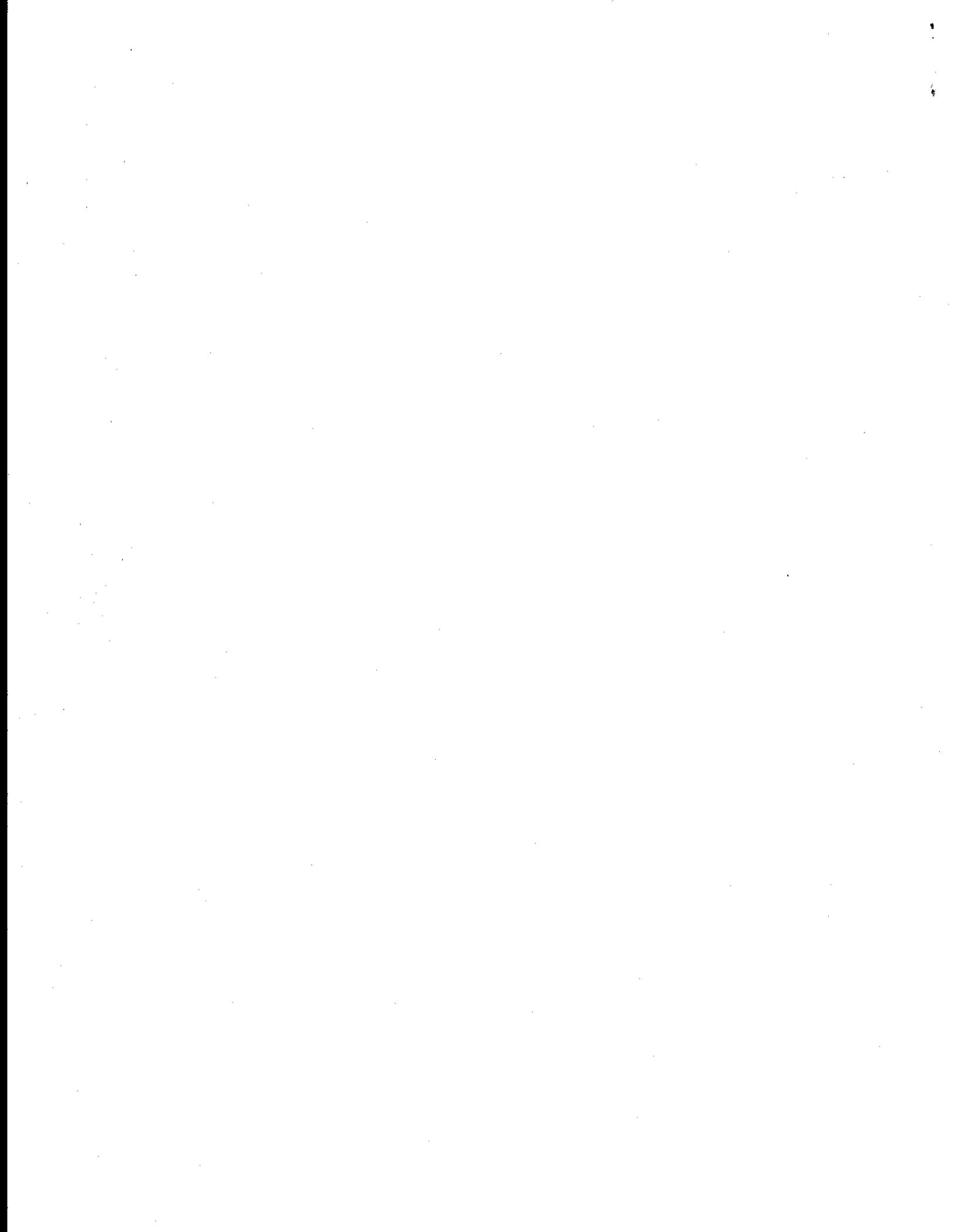
The supporters of embryonic SCR are apparently not as concerned about meaningful scientific results as they are about political and ideological success. They do not give the impression of being interested in curing illness or saving lives unless it is the result of embryonic stem cell therapy. Ignoring research that is working and supporting research that is not working plays into the hands of those who oppose scientific thought and factual evidence.

For the present, ethics, scientific integrity, honest scientific competition, and the free economic marketplace are best suited to determine which research to pursue and to fund. As embryonic SCR is producing no useful results, the alternative of adult SCR appears to be the better choice.

C2005 Donald R. May

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Subject: Stem Cell Research - [REDACTED]

National Review Online - September 09, 2004, 8:35 a.m.

The "Wrong" Cure

Adult stem cells get the shaft.

By Wesley J. Smith

Members of the liberal media elite have become rather choosy when it comes to advocating stem-cell cures for degenerative medical conditions. To these commentators, cures using adult stem cells just aren't the "right" cures. For stem-cell therapy to really count, it has to come from embryos. Indeed, even the most astonishing research advances using adult cells are ignored by these arbiters of public policy as if they never happened. And since liberal elites dominate public discourse in the stem-cell debate, the American people remain generally unaware of these astonishing scientific advances.

No media personality epitomizes the elite liberal media mindset more than CNN's Larry King. It thus came as no surprise that King cared nothing about adult-stem-cell research breakthroughs when the noted artist, evangelist, and disability-rights activist Joni Eareckson Tada <<http://www.joniandfriends.org/>> raised the issue in an August interview <<http://www.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0408/03/kl.00.html>> .

Tada has been quadriplegic since breaking her back in a diving accident at age 17. In recent years, she has become an outspoken opponent of human cloning and of federally funded embryonic-stem-cell research. It was in this context that Tada accepted King's offer to introduce her to Christopher Reeve, the paralyzed former movie star who has become the world's most famous advocate for using human cloning and embryonic stem cells to find cures:

King: He [Reeve] thinks he's going to walk.

Tada: That may very well happen using incredible therapies...using adult-stem-cell research. It is absolutely amazing what is happening. Dr. Carlos Lima in Lisbon, Portugal, has helped restore bladder and muscle control to people with paralysis using stem cells from their own nasal tissue.

Take a moment and think about what Tada told King. Paralyzed people with serious spinal injuries like those afflicting Tada and Reeve have regained feeling in their bodies using adult-tissue therapies. Assuming that King was unaware of these advances - always a good assumption, given that King prides himself on not preparing for interviews - he should have been thunderstruck by this big news. Tada's assertion should have prompted an immediate follow-up question demanding more details. Had King done this, Tada might have then told him that one of the paralyzed women treated by Dr. Lima with her own olfactory tissue had recently appeared before a Senate subcommittee and presented videos of herself walking with braces!

But King never even attempted to follow up. Indeed, he wasn't the least bit curious about the tremendous news that human patients with serious

spinal-cord injury may be able to walk again if these early human trials using adult tissue pan out. Instead, almost reflexively, he promoted embryonic-stem-cell research, stating, "Everyone says it will be faster if embryonic is also used. Nancy Reagan is going to campaign strongly for that."

Tada told King patiently that she opposes embryonic-stem-cell research, in part because she advocates channeling scarce resources "into [adult] therapies which have the most promise, which are the most effective." She then told King about the dangers associated with embryonic stem cells of which he might be unaware, such as tissue rejection and tumors.

King shrugged this off, asserting that problems always happen in the beginning of research studies. "That's true," Tada acknowledged. And then she tried again to get King to just hear how far adult-tissue research has already advanced. "Right now," she said, "incredible therapies" are happening "with their own stem cells, whether dental pulp or nasal tissues, or bone-marrow tissues."

For a second time in two minutes Tada had presented King with the opportunity to provide his audience with a wonderful educational opportunity. Had he followed up, even skeptically, by demanding that Tada give examples of these incredible breakthroughs, she could have told him about human heart patients who have already benefited from treatment with their own bone marrow or blood stem cells. She could have given great hope to people with Parkinson's disease by describing the successes already achieved treating patients with adult cells and their derivatives. Perhaps she would have mentioned the wonderful news that in an early human trial, a patient with multiple sclerosis so advanced that he experienced bouts of blindness appears to have been put into almost total remission using his own stem cells.

But King's viewing audience was not allowed to learn any of this, because King did not inquire. Instead, he demanded to know who is harmed by embryonic-stem-cell research and asked whether she would agree to debate Christopher Reeve. Then, it was quickly on to other matters. Clearly, for King, stem-cell medical advances only count if they come from embryonic sources.

King is not alone in this incredibly myopic approach to the stem-cell debate. Other elite liberal commentators are just as narrow in their views about adult-stem-cell research. For example, Laura Bush's recent defense of her husband's stem-cell policy sent several elite liberal commentators into apoplectic orbit. Cynthia Tucker's August 13 syndicated column, "Bush's <[http://news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&u=/ucas/20040814/cm\\_ucas/bushspolicyonstemcellresearchhasnogooddefense](http://news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&u=/ucas/20040814/cm_ucas/bushspolicyonstemcellresearchhasnogooddefense)> Policy on Stem-Cell Research Has No Good Defense," was especially nasty - and typically ignorant of the current state of the science.

Charging that only religious extremism stands in the way of stem-cell advances, Tucker accused the president of limiting research "that could...lead to cures for Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis and even some cancers. Some of those cures could be decades away. But we can't get there until we get started."

Tucker either didn't take the time to discover, or doesn't care, that we are

already well under way to finding such cures! As stated above, human patients with the very diseases Tucker mentioned have already benefited from adult-tissue therapies. Animal studies have advanced even further. For example, mice with advanced-stage juvenile diabetes have been cured with adult cell therapies. Yet instead of embracing these advances, Tucker complained, "I certainly don't understand a 21st-century superpower that devotes billions to building smart bombs to destroy life efficiently but refuses to fund the research that could save or enhance the lives of millions of its citizens."

Ignorance, thy name is Tucker. Apparently she is unaware that the federal government poured more than \$200 million into adult-stem-cell research and about \$25 million into embryonic-stem-cell research in 2003. In addition, private investors have abundantly invested in adult-stem-cell research, while generally shunning embryonic and human cloning research, largely because adult therapies are so much closer to fruition than embryonic approaches.

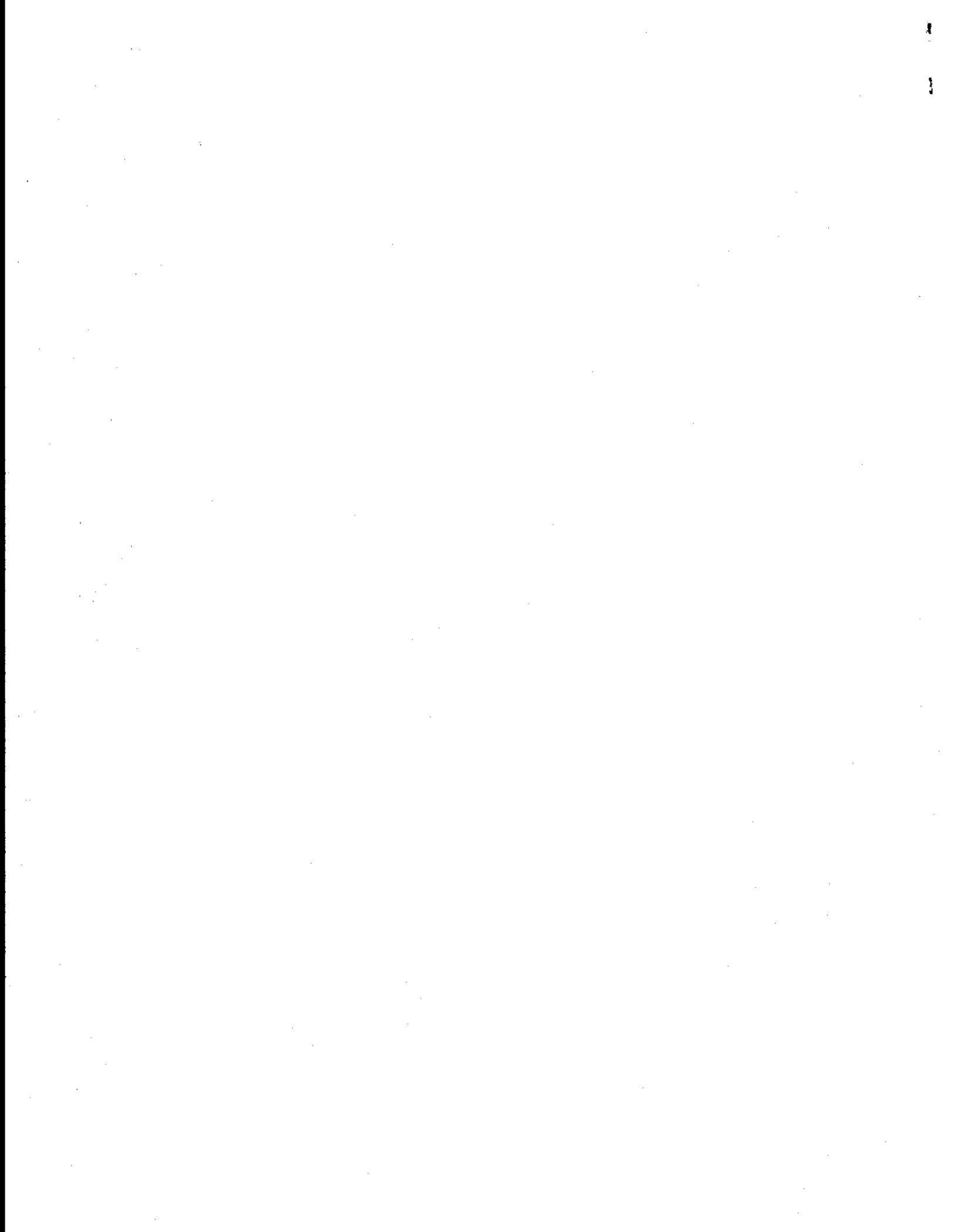
Apparently, Tucker would put her political views before the current state of the science and reverse this funding ratio. But this would be most unwise. It could delay bringing regenerative cures to the American people by diverting resources away from adult-cell cures already in early human trials and toward embryonic research that can't even be done safely in humans - a point made by Joni Eareckson Tada that bounced off Larry King's forehead.

Amazingly, the ideological fervor in favor of using nascent human life in stem-cell treatments is so intense that it prevents even liberal media elites who suffer from these diseases from embracing emerging treatments that use adult cells. Michael Kinsley, the editorial page editor of the Los Angeles Times, is a puzzling case in point. Kinsley has Parkinson's. One would think he would be extremely interested in the successful experiment involving fellow Parkinson's patient Dennis Turner, who five years ago received an 83 percent reversal of his symptoms after a treatment using his own brain stem cells. Kinsley should also find great hope in the results of another human trial in which five Parkinson's patients, treated with a natural body chemical known as glial cell-line-derived neurotrophic factor (GDNF), improved so significantly that three regained their senses of taste and smell.

But Kinsley is blind to this wonderful news. In a diatribe <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A64016-2004Aug13.html>> against Laura Bush and the president, Kinsley claimed that "stem cell research has been drastically slowed" by the president's stem-cell policy (again, apparently, the only real stem-cell research is embryonic-stem-cell research). Working himself into a blind rage, Kinsley accused President Bush of "ensuring there is no hope at all" for people like him who suffer from Parkinson's disease - a statement exhibiting sheer indifference to the very facts that hold out true hope for Kinsley's own health problems.

Media opponents of President Bush's stem-cell policy often accuse the president of deciding science questions based on religious beliefs. But they are the ones whose ideological predilections and personal antipathy for political opponents are making them incapable of appreciating the evidence. As the old saying goes, none are so blind as those who will not see.

- Wesley J. Smith is a senior fellow at the Discovery



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**Date:** 3/29/2005 8:57:56 AM

**Subject:** Stem Cell Research [REDACTED]

The Weekly Standard

### A Stem Cell Tale

Why one type of stem-cell research gets fawning media coverage and another is all but ignored.

by Wesley J. Smith

12/22/2004 12:00:00 AM

IT NEVER FAILS. If an embryonic stem cell researcher issues a press release touting a purported research advance, the media trip over each other to give the story full dramatic fanfare. But if an even better adult or umbilical cord blood stem cell advance comes to light--even when the experiments involve humans--you can usually hear the crickets chirping.

The latest examples of this phenomenon involve contrasting coverage about experimental embryonic and adult stem cell therapies to treat paralysis. Last week, a purported breakthrough in embryonic stem cell research for spinal cord injury shot across the media firmament like lightning through an Iowa summer sky. Embryonic stem cell researcher Hans Keirstead claimed to have transformed embryonic stem cells into a cell that "help the brain's signals traverse the spinal cord." He then injected these cells into paralyzed rodents and reported that they appear to have "repaired damaged rat spines several weeks after they were injured."

If this research pans out, it would indeed be an important breakthrough. But one wonders why this particular story was written at this specific time and received so much play, given that Keirstead didn't actually make any news. As noted in the story, Keirstead has been playing videos of formerly paralyzed rats walking to various audiences for two years. Moreover, the only apparent news hook for the current story is that he hopes to begin human trials using this technique in about two years.

This is cause for headlines? If human trials were actually beginning, that would be a story worth touting. But until then, it is more hype than fact. Indeed, it is worth noting that Keirstead has made similar statements before--and they didn't pan out. For example, in a March 18, 2002 story reported in the San Francisco Chronicle, the researcher was quoted as planning to begin human trials with his technique "in about a year."

Now contrast this much-hyped, mostly non-news event with actual recent news

involving adult and umbilical cord blood stem cells that received muted or no coverage in the mainstream media. For example, most readers probably don't know that paralyzed human patients are apparently being successfully treated with their own adult stem cells by Dr. Carlos Lima in Lisbon, Portugal. The experimental therapy uses a paralyzed patient's own olfactory (nasal) stem cells and nerves, which are extracted from the patients and then injected into their injured spinal cords. So far, more than 20 patients have received this therapy with most receiving measurable benefit.

On July 14, 2004, two of Dr. Lima's American spinal cord injury patients testified before the Senate Commerce Subcommittee on Science, Technology, and Space. Their reports about their individual improvement after receiving Dr. Lima's experimental treatments were breathtaking. For example, Susan R. Fajt testified:

I have recovered some functional improvement through Dr. Lima's procedure, such as the ability to hold my bladder and at times even void on my own. Sensation has been restored, though it is not completely normal. When concentrating, I am now able to contract my thighs slightly . . . this was impossible before my surgery in Portugal. But most important on my way to recover is that I can now walk with the aid of braces. I am now preparing to shed the shell of this wheelchair . . . to more and more use my braces and walker for mobility. This is something my doctors in America told me would never be possible with my level of injury and to accept my fate. [emphasis added]

Similarly, 19 year-old Laura Dominguez, "paralyzed from the neck down" in an auto accident, testified at the same hearing about the improvements she received from Dr. Lima's adult stem cell procedure. Within 6 months of the surgery, she testified:

I had regained feeling down to my abdomen. Improvements in my sensory feelings have continued until the present time. I can now feel down to my hip level and have started to regain feeling and some movement in my legs. My upper body has gained some more strength and balance. Another one of the most evident improvements has been my ability to stand and remain standing, using a walker, and with minimal assistance. When I stand I can contract my quadriceps and hamstring muscles. I can also stand on my toes when I am on my feet. And more importantly, while lying down in a prone position, I am able to move my feet. [emphasis added]

A press conference was held to tout these hopeful stories, but it was as if nobody came. Where were the screaming headlines? Where was the Larry King Live interview? Where was the high-profile 60 Minutes report? They didn't happen.

PERHAPS THE DEARTH IN COVERAGE can be explained by the truth that much research and peer review remains before we can say that Dr. Lima has found an efficacious treatment for spinal cord injury. But if that is true about the remarkable and measurable improvements in Fajt, Dominguez, and about two score others, isn't it more so about Keirstead's rats?

This general propensity in the American media to downplay non embryonic stem cell successes was evident just this month in the scant coverage given to a similar potential breakthrough in the treatment of human paralysis, (a story generally well covered in Europe). South Korean researchers have apparently

helped a woman who has been paralyzed for 20 years regain the ability to walk after being treated with umbilical cord blood stem cells. Indeed, the woman has progressed so well that she took a few steps unassisted in front of a bank of television cameras.

If either Dr. Lima's or the South Korean experiments eventually pan out, they would appear to be a better choice for treating spinal cord injury than embryonic stem cells. First, there is no moral controversy with either adult or cord blood stem cells. Thus, we could have medical cures without the accompanying heated political controversy. Second, unlike embryonic cells, neither adult nor umbilical cord blood stem cells have been found to cause tumors. Third, Dr. Lima's approach would not require immune suppressing drugs since the stem cells come from the patients' own bodies. This isn't necessarily true of umbilical cord blood stem cells. But their unique characteristics appear to make them less likely than embryonic stem cells to trigger an immune response. With tissue typing, it is possible that immune suppression would not even be necessary.

It is important to emphasize that a few patients' physical improvement--no matter how dramatic--do not new cures make. Much research remains to be done in adult and umbilical cord blood stem cell therapies before we can confidently predict ultimate success. But if less newsy stories involving embryonic stem cells are worthy of enthusiastic coverage, surely the more hopeful and advanced breakthroughs, albeit no sure things, warrant at least equivalent levels of media interest. Perhaps if the media stopped taking sides in the ongoing political debates over biotechnology, a more balanced picture would emerge.

Wesley J. Smith is a senior fellow at the Discovery Institute and a special consultant to the Center for Bioethics and Culture. His current book about the moral, scientific, and business aspects of biotechnology is *Consumer's Guide to a Brave New World*.

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