

# CALIFORNIA RIGHT TO LIFE EDUCATION FUND

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Established 1981

June/July 2006

## Adult and Non-Embryonic Stem Cell Research Advances and Updates

### Stem Cell Hope for Liver Patients

British doctors reported treatment of 5 patients with liver failure with the patients' own adult stem cells. Four of the 5 patients showed improvement, and 2 patients regained near normal liver function. The authors noted: "Liver transplantation is the only current therapeutic modality for liver failure but it is available to only a small proportion of patients due to the shortage of organ donors. Adult stem cell therapy could solve the problem of degenerative disorders, including liver disease, in which organ transplantation is inappropriate or there is a shortage of organ donors."

—*Stem Cells Express*, Mar. 30, 2006

### Heart

Adult stem cells may inhibit remodeling and make the heart pump better and more efficiently. — Researchers in Pittsburgh have shown that adding a patient's adult stem cells along with bypass surgery can give significant improvement for those with chronic heart failure. Ten patients treated with their own bone marrow adult stem cells improved well beyond patients who had only standard bypass surgery. In addition, scientists in Arkansas and Boston administered the protein G-CSF to advanced heart failure patients, to activate the patients' bone marrow adult stem cells, and found significant heart improvement 9 months after the treatment.

— *Journal of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery*, Dec. 2005; *American Journal of Cardiology*, Mar. 2006

### Buerger's Disease

Scientists in Korea using adult stem cell treatments showed significant improvement in the limbs of patients with Buerger's disease, where blood vessels are blocked and inflamed, eventually leading to tissue destruction and gangrene in the limb. Out of 27 patients there was a 79% positive response rate and improvement in the limbs, including the healing of previously non-healing ulcers. — *Stem Cells Express*, Jan. 26, 2006

### Bladder Disease

Doctors at Wake Forest constructed new bladders for 7 patients with bladder disease, using the patients' own progenitor cells grown on an artificial framework in the laboratory. When implanted back into the patients, the tissue-engineered bladders appeared to function normally and improved the patients' conditions. "This suggests that tissue engineering may one day be a solution to the shortage

of donor organs in this country for those needing transplants," said Dr. Anthony Atala, the lead researcher. — *The Lancet*, Apr. 4, 2006; reported by the AP, Apr. 4, 2006

### Lupus

Adult Stem Cell Transplant Offers Promise for Severe Lupus — Dr. Richard Burt of Northwestern Memorial Hospital is pioneering new research that uses a patient's own adult stem cells to treat extremely severe cases of lupus and other autoimmune diseases such as multiple sclerosis and rheumatoid arthritis. In a recent study of 50 patients with lupus, the treatment with the patients' adult stem cells resulted in stabilization of the disease or even improvement of previous organ damage, and greatly increased survival of patients. "We bring the patient in, and we give them chemo to destroy their immune system," Dr. Burt said. "And then right after the chemotherapy, we infuse the stems cells to make a brand-new immune system."

— *ABC News*, Apr. 11, 2006; *Journal of the American Medical Assn*, Feb. 1, 2006

### Stroke

Mobilizing adult stem cells helps stroke patients— Researchers in Taiwan have shown that mobilizing a stroke patient's bone marrow adult stem cells can improve recovery. Seven stroke patients were given injections of a protein—G-CSF—that encourages bone marrow stem cells to leave the marrow and enter the bloodstream. From there, they home in on damaged brain tissue and stimulate repair. The 7 patients showed significantly greater improvement after stroke than patients receiving standard care.

— *Canadian Medical Association Journal* Mar. 3, 2006  
<http://www.cwalac.org/images/content/ascupdate0406.pdf>

**Do you know someone who might be  
considering abortion?**

**Make sure they get the facts first!**

**A LIFE depends on it...**

**1-800-395-HELP (4357)**

## New Poll: Americans Continue to Oppose Funding Stem Cell Research That Destroys Human Embryos

WASHINGTON, May 31 /PRNewswire/ -- A new poll shows that 48% of Americans oppose federal funding of stem cell research that requires destroying human embryos, while only 39% support such funding. The poll, conducted by International Communications Research (ICR), surveyed over one thousand adults by telephone May 19-23. It was commissioned by the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

Legislation to fund such embryonic stem cell research (H.R. 810), approved by the U.S. House of Representatives a year ago, may soon be considered in the Senate.

When survey respondents were informed that scientists disagree on whether stem cells from embryos, or from adult tissues and other alternative sources, may end up being most successful in treating diseases, 57% favored funding only the research avenues that do not harm the donor; only 24% favored funding all stem cell research, including the type that involves destroying embryos.

"Congress should not be misled on this important issue," said Richard M. Doerflinger, Deputy Director of the USCCB's Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities. "Most Americans do not support federally funded research that requires destroying human embryos. Our opponents also know this. No doubt this is why their public statements -- and many of their own opinion polls -- either ignore or misrepresent what this research involves, while irresponsibly hyping its potential for miracle cures."

The new poll also shows overwhelming opposition to human cloning, whether to provide children for infertile couples (83% against) or to produce embryos that would be destroyed in medical research (81% against). A comparison with identical polls conducted by ICR in the last two years shows a fairly consistent level of moral concern on this issue on the part of the American public. Federally funded embryonic stem cell research has never garnered majority support in this poll, reaching a high of 43% in August 2004. For the third year in a row, when informed of their options, most Americans support funding only stem cell research that does not require destroying embryos.

The ICR polls also consistently show opposition of 77% or higher to human cloning, whether for reproduction or medical research. The new poll's figure of 81% opposed to cloning human embryos for research is the highest in three years.

The International Communications Research poll questions and results follow. USCCB press releases on the August 2004 and May 2005 polls are available at <http://www.usccb.org/comm/archives/commarc.shtml>.

Questions asked by International Communications Research, a national research firm headquartered in Media, Pennsylvania. A weighted sample of 1022 American adults was surveyed by telephone May 19-23, 2006, with a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percent.

1. Stem cells are the basic cells from which all of a person's tissues and organs develop. Congress is considering the question of federal funding for experiments using stem cells from human embryos. The live embryos would be destroyed in their first week of development to obtain these cells. Do you support or oppose using your federal tax dollars for such experiments?

Support	38.6%
Oppose	47.8%
Don't know	11.9%
Refused	1.7%

2. Stem cells for research can be obtained by destroying human embryos. They can also be obtained from adults, from placentas left over from live births, and in other ways that do no harm to the donor. Scientists disagree on which source may end up being most successful in treating diseases. How would you prefer your tax dollars to be used this year for stem cell research? (Options rotated)

Supporting all methods, including those that require destroying human embryos, to see which will be most successful 23.6%

Or supporting research using adult stem cells and other alternatives, to see if there is no need to destroy human embryos for research. 56.8%

Neither (volunteered)	11.1%
Don't know	7.2%
Refused	1.3%

3. Should scientists be allowed to use human cloning to try to create children for infertile couples?

Yes	9.7%
No	83.4%
Don't Know	5.9%
Refused	1.0%

4. Should scientists be allowed to use human cloning to create a supply of human embryos to be destroyed in medical research?

Yes	11.4%
No	81.2%
Don't Know	6.6%
Refused	0.8%

SOURCE: U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

## Recent Polls Show Measurable Shift to Pro-Life Attitudes

WASHINGTON—According to recent nationwide opinion polls, support for *Roe v. Wade* is waning. Deirdre McQuade, Director of Planning and Information at the USCCB's Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, notes that "public opinion has moved

progressively away from supporting unqualified access to abortion.”

“This is a real sign of hope,” she said, “for both women and their unborn children.”

A May 4 Harris poll — which misleadingly asked about support for *Roe v. Wade* as if that decision made abortion legal during only the first three months of pregnancy — found that support has dropped below 50% for the first time in 30 years. It also showed that 44% of Americans said they would support a law in their own state like South Dakota's, banning all abortions except to save the mother's life.

“An April 2006 survey by the Polling Company, Inc./WomanTrend found that 54% support limiting legal abortion to the extreme circumstances of rape, incest, and to save the life of the mother,” Ms.

McQuade said, “and an additional 21% would limit abortion to only the first trimester – a far cry from the abortion license established by *Roe v. Wade*, which allows abortion for virtually any reason throughout the nine months of pregnancy.”

In March, a Zogby poll found majority support for abortion regulations such as informed consent laws for women and parental notification laws, with 69% favoring such measures for girls under 17 years old. “We expect that Americans will continue to trend pro-life as they learn more about abortion and its impact on women, men, and society,” Ms. McQuade said.

## Pro-Life Unity Project

by Fredi D'Alessio

*Dear Friends,*

*Is anyone interested in helping to compile a list of locations where sidewalk counseling and prayer are being conducted throughout the Bay Area? I've done my best to compile a list of killing centers (<http://hgpi.blogspot.com/2005/10/bay-area-killing-centers.html>). I think it would be helpful to the entire pro-life activist community to know which of these facilities currently have a pro-life presence outside and who among them can be contacted by newly interested parties.*

*I would like to have at least one contact person, but preferably more, for each location. There are people in San Rafael, San Francisco, Oakland, Mountain View, Walnut Creek, San Jose and/or Santa Clara. I also know someone who is planning on starting a group in Santa Rosa. I believe there are people in Napa and Sacramento. Where else?*

*We should know and support each other. Perhaps we could join together and organize larger events now and then.*

*I submit the following questions to you:*

*Can we increase our numbers?*

*Can we be more united in thought and action?*

*Can we be more supportive of each other?*

*Can we be better organized?*

*For an overview about sidewalk counseling and prayer at abortion mills see*

<http://hgpi.blogspot.com/2005/10/sidewalk-counseling.html>

*Let me know if you can help. I may be reached at [dalessio@catholicexchange.com](mailto:dalessio@catholicexchange.com)*

## Readers' Corner Goes to the Movies - Gattaca

*Summer is here, so let's take a break from the books and go to the movies - by Cecelia Cody*

In college I had an assignment to write an essay on “Talent” vs. “Determination and Drive.” The movie *Gattaca* answers this in a futuristic world-view.

*Gattaca* takes place sometime in the not too distant future, where one's destiny is determined by genes: all babies (except for a few "accidents," known as "invalids") are genetically engineered to near-perfection, through a process we have come to know as Pre-Implantation Genetic Diagnosis. In this future world the moment a baby is born, a blood sample is taken and a full genetic panel is done and parents/society know the probability of every known malady from a heart problem to obesity to depression. Based on this DNA analysis, society determines where each person belongs in life; people are hired on the basis of their genetic profile, and the imperfect products of accidental births are relegated to low-status menial jobs.

*Gattaca Corp.* is an aerospace firm in the future. The main character Vincent is an in-valid, conceived not through in vitro fertilization and PGD, but rather as a “God Child” in the backseat of a car. At birth Vincent is tested and determined to have a heart condition that has a high probability of his life span being around 30 years, which eliminates his chances of space travel, his lifetime dream. We journey with Vincent as he attempts to achieve his dream.

There is no gene for free will/ for desire/ for ambition. We aren't just our genes. We are a product of our upbringing, our environment, and our hereditary predispositions. We are more than just a sum of different characteristics, traits that can be tagged to a repeated sequence in our DNA. There is no science for personality or for fate.

Gattaca challenges us to pause and consider the whole field of bioethics, from pre-implantation genetic diagnosis to nano-technology (the idea of implanting a microchip into a human brain to increase our intelligence) to genetic testing. Hardly a week passes without claims by scientists that they have isolated the

***There Is No  
Gene For The  
Human Spirit.***

gene for some particular disease or trait.

Increasingly we are told that mental and emotional characteristics (a religious susceptibility for instance)

can be attributed to our DNA. Insurance companies want to increase genetic testing in order to identify high-risk applicants for life insurance. More and more we are being defined by our genetic make-up. Gattaca explores these issues.

The future is now, and we must be aware in order to protect the sanctity of the human person, from fertilization to natural death.

*If you would like to borrow a copy of this DVD, contact our office at 925-944-5351 or [callife@calright2life.org](mailto:callife@calright2life.org).*

## WHO IS CALIFORNIA RIGHT TO LIFE?

This is the newsletter of California Right to Life **Education Fund**, a 501-c-3 organization established to educate the public about pro-life issues. Donations to the EDUCATION FUND are **tax-deductible** and can be sent to P.O. Box 4343, Walnut Creek, CA 94596-0343.

California Right to Life **Committee, Inc.** is a 501-c-4 organization providing information on legislative issues affecting the right to life, and pro-life political advocacy. **CRLC, Inc. is not permitted**, under IRS regulations, to offer a tax deduction for donations. \$24.99 annually is requested for a subscription to the CRLC legislative email updates list and can be sent to 1920 Monument Blvd #309, Concord, CA 94520.

Both are affiliates of American Life League, headed by Judie Brown, and share the same “no-exceptions, no excuses” beliefs and the same dedication to promoting the Culture of Life, respecting all innocent human life from the single-cell stage to natural death.