

27 September 06.

The Chair

Senate Community Affairs Committee

Parliament House

CANBERRA.

Dear Sir,

Both my wife and I are strongly opposed to any extension to embryonic stem research and cloning, as recommended by the Lockhart Committee and proposed by Senator Despoja's Bill.

From a moral/ethical point of view, every embryo is human, irrespective of what spin certain scientists may put on it, otherwise it would not be useful for the proposed research. Being human it must be guaranteed protection afforded to all human life. It is immoral to use one human being for the very doubtful, in this case, benefit of another human being. Whereas, adult stem cell research, while crossing no moral or ethical boundaries, has already produced cures for some of the up till now incurable diseases.

All scientists are not paragons of Christian morality. Like many others in this world they are influenced by the prospect of gaining recognition and wealth from their work and research. The prospect of patent and intellectual property rights could easily overshadow the morality of their work.

As the Lockhart Committee obviously see the need to overcome the shortage of human oocytes, when they recommend the use of animal oocytes (# 24), there will be a great temptation to buy human ova from women particularly in the developing world. These women will be easily exploited for they will be ignorant of the great health risks associated with the procedure, and the prospect of "easy" money will be very hard to resist.

We urge the Committee to resist any extension to the status quo.

Yours faithfully

Philip and Veronica Robinson