

To: Senate Committee on Patenting of Genes
From: Dr M Campbell.

Genes should not be patented for a number of reasons.

(1) They are not inventions -- knowledge of them is made by a process of discovery.

(2) The fact that corporations pay large sums of money in order to identify genes and some of their products or effects is not justification for the issuing of patents.

(3) No natural products should be patented. If we kept ourselves and our environment healthy, nature would supply us with all our true needs.

(4) In a properly functioning scientific community all research results would be open and shared.

(5) When human beings are used as guinea pigs the knowledge so obtained should be given back freely to them.

(6) Genes or gene products do not act in isolation within our bodies. They act in cooperation with other genes and their products in a complex multi-faceted system. Using them in isolation may produce an effect sought, but may also produce other results not sought and not understood, and not necessarily beneficial.

(7) The imposition of human ends distorts the natural system. Nature's ends are always directed towards stability and are morally right.

(8) Corporate ends -- profits for shareholders -- at the expense of the sick are morally wrong.