



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN ... *Pastor Deane Detlefsen*



Stem cell research is a relatively new scientific discovery that holds out promise of great value especially to bodies battling a variety of diseases and afflictions. New discoveries, new cures, new uses of stem cells in treating disease are being confirmed with the pass-

ing of time. Yet half truths and serious, deliberate myths peddled by media and others abound.

This is bringing ever increasing pressure on scientists, lawmakers, researchers, funding organizations and the Christian Church to keep up with the work so that real hope remains available but not at the cost of sacrificing human embryos in the process.

An excellent summary on this work by Nigel M. de S. Cameron offers great clarity to the intense debate surrounding this issue. The main parts of his article follow.

"Nancy Reagan's intervention in the debate over federal (U. S.) funding of destructive embryo stem-cell research has given fresh heart to those pressure groups, and biotech enthusiasts who are seeking to overturn the governments position announced on August 9, 2001.

"There is so much misunderstanding abroad that it is difficult for honest people to come to honest conclusions. The press is now further confounding the issue. It's never been more important for those of us who have thought long and hard about these issues to get the word out and clarify thinking.

"Here are some of the common misunderstandings, some of which have been deliberately, shamelessly purveyed by the press and advocates of destructive embryo research:

Myth 1: *The Bush Administration Banned Stem Cell Research.* There is no law banning stem cell research of any kind. There has long been a ban imposed by Congress (during Clinton's administration) on federal funding of destructive embryo research. The Bush decision of 2001 permitted funding of embryo stem cell research. The permission extended to cell-lines cultured from embryos that had already been destroyed, so that there would be no encouragement to destroy further embryos. And, of course, there is no restriction at all on 'adult' stem cell research.

Myth 2: *Cures Are Right Around The Corner If Only The Administration Changes Its Mind.* This is one of the cruelest myths ever put out by the press. The implication is clear: aunts and uncles and parents who are now sick could be cured, perhaps even President Reagan could have been saved and all that stands in the way is this funding ban. Even the more honest advocates of embryo stem cell research have admitted that cures are a long, long way off. The proof lies in the market place. If a whole new world of cures were on our doorstep, there would be massive investment from venture capitalists pouring into embryo stem cell work. The markets have spoken on this issue-the best-informed people around, the biotech investors, have taken a walk. And, of course, that is why there is such pressure for public money.

Myth 3: *Adult Stem Cells Are Second Best* "At the Experimental Biology Conference in Washington, D.C. earlier this year an adult stem cell expert, talked about patients with what had been thought to be incurable diseases going home from the hospital cured. You may read some of the latest research at www.stemcellresearch.org and tell your friends, pastor, physician, neighbors, local newspaper, M. P. and M.L.A., kids, sick relatives - everyone you know - to go there and read the facts.

Myth 4: *They Only Want To Use The 'Spare' Embryos That Will Die Anyway.* The celebrity-led, emotionally-driven case for using embryos for research is built on the idea that it will result in one-on-one medications, using embro-derived tissue to regenerate and replace tissue cells that have gone bad. This is what has been deceitfully called 'therapeutic cloning,' and involves mass-production of embryos by the hundreds of millions and the production of an identical twin for each patient so that the twin embryo can be destroyed to produce the cure. This idea is horrific, and the horror is by no means confined to pro-lifers. This therapeutic cloning has already been banned in many countries: Germany in 1990, Australia last year. Canada has been the latest country to do so.

"So the 'spare embryo' argument is a red herring. In any case, these embryos should be adopted and given a chance to live. We should stop freezing embryos. To be stored in dead-frozen vats is not a proper use of God's gift of life.

Continued Next Page

"These arguments and the facts behind them need to get into our local media and into the mailbags and offices of our local, provincial and federal politicians. They need to get into the hands of fellow church members.

One of the greatest debates of our generation-some say, the greatest-is the struggle for human dignity in the face of these amazing, and potentially terrible, new technologies.

Pro-Life Christians need to be in the forefront, and that means all of us!

Visit:

www.cloninginformation.org,
or
www.stemcellresearch.org.

Yours for ethical biotech, Nigel M. de S. Cameron

You will notice that this newsletter is very different. For many years we have prayed for a NATIONAL LUTHERANS FOR LIFE and for this reason we are including the 'fresh from the printer' brochure to tell you about it and encourage you to join.

If you submit your membership before January 2005, you will be included in the list of 'CHARTER MEMBERS.' Thank God for this opportunity. We pray for His guidance and blessing now and always.

For ALL LIFE. – *Shirley Witt*

Pembroke & Area LFL, Correspondence Secretary

NATIONAL LFL MAILING ADDRESS:

***Lutherans For Life - Canada
220 Steel Street
Barrie, ON L4M 2G9***

*Donations of any amount are most welcome.
LFL is currently applying for charitable status.*



because of you

When you support what God is doing at Focus on the Family, you help make a difference in lives around the world. Here's a glimpse ...

In 1997 I was just three years into a 12-year prison sentence. I discovered Christian radio and became a faithful listener to "Focus on the Family."

One afternoon you aired a program called "Hush Little Baby," that dealt with abortion. I'd had an abortion 11 years earlier and thought I'd dealt with all the feelings.

After hearing the broadcast, I realized I could use my abortion experience to help other women, so I wrote the only person I remembered from the program, Sydna Massé, then director of Focus on the Family's crisis pregnancy ministries. (*Note: now known as Pregnancy Resource Ministries*)

I told Sydna about my life, my abortion experience and what I wanted to do to help others. She read between the lines, realized that I had not dealt with my own abortion and was courageous and caring enough to tell me so. Then Sydna connected me with a counselor from a local crisis pregnancy center.

Unbeknownst to Sydna, this woman was at a crossroads in her own life, feeling it was time to branch out in her work. She thought about doing prison ministry but had no idea how to make it happen.

Honouring my privacy, Sydna first asked the counselor if she would consider counseling a post-abortive woman in prison. She agreed. Then Sydna gave me the counselor's contact information. After I contacted her, she came to see me.

We talked at length about the needs of the women incarcerated here. Eighty percent of them have had at least one abortion! Many have been physically and/or sexually abused. Many women have a desperate need for grief and loss counseling. The counselor, along with Sydna and a volunteer here at the prison, put together a program called "A Time to Heal," a 16-week, faith-based program that addresses grief and loss.

To date, several hundred women have completed the program. Focus on the Family was instrumental in connecting people who were passionate about our healing; and hundreds of women have found hope after the pain of abortion and abuse.

Because of you. – Deb Riley, Lincoln, Ill.

*Reprinted from the October/November 2004 issue of Focus on the Family magazine published by Focus on the Family.
Copyright © 2004 Aurora Murabayashi. All rights reserved. International copyright secured. Used with permission.*



TASHA DANVERS-SMITH

*From the Executive Director
- Bradley Mattes*

Tasha Danvers-Smith had Olympic gold on her mind, and with good reason. She was one of Britain's most promising prospects for bringing

home the highest honour from the Summer Olympics. Tasha's event is the 400-meter hurdles. Life was good from her perspective. She had gold in her sights and had recently married Darrell Smith, her trainer, in November. They were happily settled into Los Angeles, concentrating on training for the upcoming Olympics.

Physically, she didn't feel quite right. Her period was late, but considering her rigorous training, that didn't worry her. However, she was also frequently tired, so she took a pregnancy test to eliminate this unlikely possibility. Then, Tasha got the shocking news. She was pregnant!

All of a sudden, Tasha's world was turned upside down! The pressure to have an abortion was enormous, and Tasha admitted that she briefly considered it. She was the breadwinner of the family. Continuing the pregnancy would jeopardize their financial well-being. Not only that, the winners of Olympic gold frequently receive lucrative endorsement offers. These generate large amounts of income for the athlete. By having the baby, she and Darrell would be giving up a lot.

In spite of the pressures, abortion didn't linger in Tasha's mind very long. She kept thinking of Matthew 16:26, "What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?" Tasha and Darrell knew a gold medal wasn't worth their souls, and it wasn't worth the life of their baby. They decided against abortion.

I was amazed by Tasha and Darrell's firm commitment to life and their faith. Money is often the god of choice in today's society. It seems to influence a majority of our decisions. Many women faced with Tasha's situation would have opted for abortion.

That's why I presented Tasha with Life Issues Institute's "Hero At Heart" award. It's presented to those who demonstrate outstanding courage or compassion on behalf of innocent life. I then announced this award on my daily radio program, Life Issues, which is heard on about 500 stations throughout the nation. One of our staff was working to get Tasha's contact information so we could mail the award to her when she contacted us.

tered an avalanche of criticism for giving up her Olympic dreams to have a baby. Some pretty ugly and hurtful things were written about her. One night, because she was unable to sleep, Tasha surfed the Internet, looking to see what other negative critiques existed. During her search, she came upon our web site and read that she had received this prestigious pro-life honor. She was moved to tears and e-mailed us to express her gratitude.



Tasha wrote, "I was beginning to think that no one else but my family thought I wasn't an idiot for giving up this 'opportunity of a lifetime.' You have helped me keep holding my head up high, and one day I will be able to show this to my child. It will impress that his or her life is not just special to my family and me, but to people all over the world." Tasha also added Darrell's appreciation, because he had gotten out of bed to see what all her tears were about!

It broke my heart that Tasha had been inundated with negative feedback when she and her husband so unselfishly chose to do what was right. I want to change all that. We've set up a special way for you and others to e-mail a message of encouragement to Tasha and Darrell. Simply go to our web site (www.lifeissues.org). Click on Tasha's picture on the home page. It will provide you with more information. More importantly, you will be able to write your own personal letter to this true "Hero At Heart." We will see that she and Darrell get them.

Please tell others about Tasha. My goal is to receive thousands of e-mails, expressing supportive good wishes that we can give to these expectant parents.



Tasha's baby is due December 3, 2004. What do you say we generate a few mementoes for their baby's scrapbook? Someday they'll be able to share your kind words with this now unborn child that he or she is truly loved and wanted. They will also say this child is much more important than the temporary glitter and excitement of an Olympic event.

The race Tasha and Darrell have decided to run is one for their child. It's a race that will take a lifetime to complete, and it's certain to provide countless blessings along the way. Let's help these new parents get this race off to a wonderful start. Send your letter of encouragement today!



"Walking" in the womb? Professor Stuart Campbell of London's Create Health Clinic has perfected an ultrasound technique that not only produces 3D images, but also shows fetal movement in real time (4D). For example, he has produced pictures of a 12 week-old fetus "walking," the same kind of movement of the legs seen when you hold

a newborn under the arms with his or her feet dangling. Professor Campbell says his work shows for the first time that unborn babies engage in complex behaviour very early in their lives. He states, "This is a new science for understanding and mapping out the behaviour of the baby." According to a BBC Internet news article (www.bbc.co.uk), the images have shown:

- From 12 weeks, unborn babies can stretch, kick, and leap around the womb - well before the mother can feel movement.
- From 18 weeks, they can open their eyes, although most doctors thought eyelids were fused until 26 weeks.
- From 26 weeks, they appear to exhibit a whole range of typical baby behaviour and moods, including scratching, smiling, crying, hiccupping, and sucking.

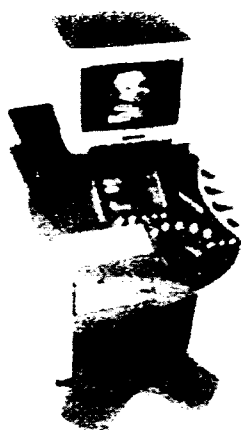
Conventional ultrasound, of course, has shown much of this for quite some time. But these 4D images make it all seem more real. As a spokeswoman for a British pro-life organization said, "The images show the delightful reality of the humanity of the unborn baby. We cannot believe that anybody could continue supporting abortion when they see these extraordinary pictures." Other pro-lifers offered similar affirmation.

I agree. Ultrasound changes the minds of those considering abortion. It helps educate about the wonders of the womb. Its use should be encouraged for such things. Now if you are sensing a "but" coming here, you are right. But - a word of caution. Such technology may also run the risk of reinforcing the idea that our value is based upon what we can *do* as human beings rather than upon the fact that we *are* human beings.

A blastocyst—that five-day-old human being that is destroyed to obtain his or her stem cells—cannot smile or walk or hiccup. He or she, however, has as much value as a human being as the 12 week-old walking

in the womb or the 16 year-old not wanting to walk and asking for the keys to the car! We need to be careful not to fall into the trap of giving value to the unborn only when they start looking like babies or behaving like babies. Otherwise we not only devalue those in earlier stages of development, but what happens if the ultrasound shows an abnormality and limited function? What happens after we are born and lose a particular function because of injury or disease or aging? It is not how we function but who we are that gives us value.

We who base our pro-life views on the Word of God can take that one step further. It is whose we are that gives us value. God is the author of life and the giver of life. We are His because He made us. We are His because He has "purchased and won us" through the once-upon-a-time blastocyst, Jesus Christ. The baby "walking" in the womb is someone created by God and redeemed by Jesus. But so is the blastocyst who doesn't have legs yet and the child who can't walk and the grandma who can't remember.



GE 4D Ultrasound

Lutherans For Life is active at various levels in promoting and supporting ultrasound technology. One of our chapters purchased an ultrasound machine and provides a part-time technician to offer free ultrasounds. Our state presidents have developed guidelines for initiating such a project. We will continue to share the message of the importance of showing what these little ones can do before they are born. It saves lives. We will also continue to share a message that goes further than assigning human value based on what a human can do. We will continue to share the fundamental, Biblical message of human value

based on what God has done.

