ORGAN DONATION: WHAT’S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT?

Jennifer C. Lahi, Executive Director
The Center for Bioethics in Culture
(Oakland, CA)

The topic of organ donation prompts us to consider many ethical issues, such as resource allocation, xenotransplantation (the transplantation of animal organs into humans), futility of care, and the complex issues raised by having a child in order to produce a suitable organ for transplantation into an ill relative. All of these issues are driven by the fact that there is indeed a shortage of human organs for transplantation; therefore, this article will focus on identifying and evaluating some suggested methods for alleviating the critical shortage of organs that is of concern to both society and the medical profession alike.

Many of these suggestions clearly take the concept of “donation” out of organ donation and move us away from the spirit of altruism toward the commodification of

When President Bush was faced with the daunting task of deciding whether federal funds would be appropriated for research on human embryonic stem cells, he diligently sought out and considered the views of both proponents and opponents of the controversial research. For assistance in reaching a final decision on the matter, he turned to Dr. Leon Kass, M.D., Ph.D., an esteemed University of Chicago professor who has established himself in the fields of bioethics, medicine, and education.

While Kass has declined to reveal the exact nature of his advice to the President – or the extent to which that advice was followed – one aspect of the Kass/Bush relationship is clear: it will be ongoing. During the nationally-televised August 9, 2001 address announcing his long-awaited decision on the stem cell issue, Bush declared his plans to appoint an advisory council to monitor stem cell research, as well as to address the complex medical and ethical questions prompted by other biomedical advances. Bush also revealed that he had selected Leon Kass as his choice to chair this council comprised of prominent scientists, physicians, ethicists, lawyers, theologians, and other professionals.

In addition to bringing a passionate expertise in bioethics to the stem cell debate, Kass has also been quite engaged in the deliberations over human cloning. In publications on this issue dating back to 1972, Kass worries that human cloning will inevitably usher in what he calls a “post-human future,” with negative and irreversible implications for all.

Articulated in his June 20, 2001 testimony before Congress, Kass holds the conviction that human cloning must be prohibited in both what is commonly referred to as the “reproductive” and “therapeutic” sense. That is, in order to prevent the kind of future that Kass dreads, legislators must move quickly to proscribe not only the implantation and birth of human clones, but also the laboratory creation of cloned embryos intended only for use in research – regardless of the alleged benefits of such research. Kass stated
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-Crimes of religious or ethnic motive are considered a moral condition that should be achieved.

**Paper:**

*Christian Leadership and Public Policy, Making a Difference,* Dr. Non.

-Dr. Brian Mabonmoc, M.P., Ph.D.

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The idea that creating such a child via cloning is a good idea. In his concluding remarks, FitzGerald stated that the human cloning issue has enormous implications for our concepts and experience of freedom. He declared that, "Freedom is not necessarily merely the exercise of choosing this notion rather than that option, but also the exercise of discovering one's self [...] and as a community. When we attempt to control all the various elements of our lives to the extent that this [...] technology seems to indicate we have in a sense chosen to relinquish some of that freedom (whether we are successful or not). We can no longer be the creatures that we were before."

-FitzGerald argued that the cloning debate is not about making a decision that is right or wrong, but about the questions it raises. He concluded that the issue of cloning is a complex one that requires the engagement of all stakeholders, including scientists, ethicists, and policymakers.