



BRET FURTWANGLER | GRAPHIC ARTIST

■ Editorial

Arguments against stem cell research are foolish

When Senate Majority leader and Republican Bill Frist announced his favor of stem cell research just days ago, Republicans nationwide were taken by surprise.

Unfortunately, President Bush this week confirmed his stance (already law) that restricts research to stem cell lines collected before 2001. Although stem cell research is becoming less and less of a partisan issue, many Republicans still agree with research restriction on the "moral" basis that using cells of destroyed fetuses is akin to condoning murder.

With Frist's bold shift in favor of stem cell research, the time has come for other conservatives to re-evaluate their stance on the science of stem cells. The arguments against research are simply not sound.

To begin with, President Bush has claimed the presence of an "ethical dilemma" in dealing with stem cell research, asking if he can "allow the destruction of life in order to advance science." Because the beginnings of life are subjective both personally and within national policy, Bush's "ethical dilemma" regarding stem cells is really a religious dilemma. As long as separation of church and state exists, President Bush has no right to impose his religious beliefs on America's scientific legislation.

Although it is an obvious violation of the church and state divide, the threat of wasting fetuses continues on as the main argument against stem cell research. Religious activists seem to believe that if stem cells are desirable to the scientific community, women nationwide will terminate their pregnancies in the name of science. Of course, such a claim is unwarranted, and insulting to the intelligence of women.

As long as there is a policy that stem cells will only be used for research if they would otherwise be discarded, there is no moral problem. Why Bush has failed to just put such a policy in place is beyond many Americans; it means that other countries will get ahead on stem cell research because America can't just make regulations and do the best research possible into stem cells.

Another interesting angle to consider is that stem cell research is a unique scientific venue, wherein research, results and profits will be produced outside of America's corporate atmosphere. Universities do most stem cell studies, and the results of that research will not benefit pharmaceutical companies — the same companies who gave so much support to President Bush during his campaign.

Similar to an organ transplant, cell and gene therapy could eventually eliminate the need for many prescription medications. We can easily assume that America's pharmaceutical companies are well aware of that fact, and probably have few qualms about letting the Bush administration know exactly how they feel.

The right wing is using stem cells as just another outlet to let the world know exactly how it feels about infanticide. However, it is science, women and the future of our country that take the biggest hit from this religious zealotry.

Todd Huffman is a pediatrician and writer in Eugene.

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■ Guest commentary

Londoners exhibit example of how to win the 'war on terror'

The recent terror attacks in London have heightened worries amongst Americans of an encore performance here in the United States, either on our transportation system or something more spectacular, such as on the level of Sept. 11. Many Americans are even resigned to that likelihood, knowing that it is really not a matter of if but when.

Were an attack to occur in the United States, one can only hope that Americans would respond with the poise and undeterred spirit of Londoners, who were not cowed by these despicable acts of violence. The speed with which Londoners returned to the Underground and to their daily lives was nothing short of astonishing. Their example, if followed, shall prove in time an antidote to the venom of terrorism.

Terrorist attacks are designed to frighten us even more than to kill us. By controlling our own fears, we control the damage done by terrorism. Were an attack to occur, Americans must do as Londoners have and maintain the appearance if not the spirit of normalcy. To do otherwise would be to give terrorists the very thing that they want.

After all, terrorism takes its name not from the violence itself, but from the emotion that the violence brings. The "war" on terror is not waged with weapons — it is waged in the head. The front line is in our minds.

Terrorism is a tactic, not an enemy. It is a method of using violence against innocent people to gain a political

objective. People resort to terrorism to change the terms of a political conflict they were otherwise losing.

Therefore, there can really be no "war" on terrorism in any conventional military sense, as military force cannot be unleashed on a tactic or method. Moreover, a "war" on terrorism can never truly be over; there can be no armistice, no treaties signed, no holidays to celebrate its end. Terrorism is simply too cheap, too effective, and too available to ever be eradicated.

We can only win this "war" by first recognizing that we are, in fact, fighting three battles. The first is against the enemy that is our fear. Fear is what the terrorists intend to produce. If we are all afraid of terrorism, we are all its victims. The more we allow terrorism, and the fear of terrorism to distort our domestic life, the more we do the terrorists' work. By changing ourselves we do the job the terrorist couldn't personally achieve.

The second battle we must win is against the terrorists themselves, who must be thwarted, captured or killed by every diplomatic, financial, and military means available. Those who would target and kill noncombatants indiscriminately must be pursued by all nations to the ends of the earth.

The third battle is found in confronting the injustices that terrorists (and their nationalist and religious brethren) see themselves as suffering, injustices believed to be perpetuated by the United States and its allies. Let us not be misled by our politicians: We are under attack not for what we think

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