Bioethics

Stem Cell Research In cases of genetic disorders or the failure of irreplaceable organs, people must learn to cope with this due to the fact that there is little that medical science can provide them with. However, in recent years the field of biotechnology and being able to clone has expanded. A cornerstone of the research has been with stem cells. Stem cells are essentially “ blank slates” in that they are undifferentiated. This means that they have not been programmed for their task yet, meaning that they can fulfill the role of any kind of cell in the body. This is exciting for scientists because being able to harvest these cells means that there would be ways in which organs and disorders could be fixed. However, the highest concentrations of stem cells are found in developing embryos because they are still growing and developing. There are clearly ethical parameters regarding this due to the sensitivity of the use of unborn embryos and fetuses for scientific research. This stems from the religious and political conservatives that believe that these types of matters are crossing into a domain in which humans should not have direct control over. Even though there is much opposition to stem cell research, I think that it is the future of the evolution of biomedical science. Because stem cells have no pre-existing programming and can be turned into anything, it could eliminate cancer by replacing cancer cells with healthy cells. In addition, they could be used in gene therapy to rewrite damaged code or mutated code. In order to harvest the cells, I believe scientists should be able to take them from aborted fetuses and adults. In this way, it is not taking away the natural rights of the unborn individual and it is making use of biological material that would otherwise be discarded. Instead, it can be used to save lives. Yes, the government should subsidize research in stem cell research because it will

benefit the general population as far as providing future healthcare options to those with terminal illness and disease. In the case of deciding what kind of embryos to use, the government should only consider using aborted fetuses. This is because these fetuses are already dead. These can be considered inert biological material. Leftover embryos from fertility clinics pose a more ethical problem. This is due to the fact that these embryos are frozen and are neither necessarily dead nor alive. This presents a gray area and in the case of ethical research, it is better to leave this area of uncertainty alone. Embryos should not be raised strictly for use in research. This is because it is not only violating the laws of nature, but it is violating the natural rights of the individual. In order to harvest stem cells, the embryo must develop to a point. The embryo would be more than just a collection of cells, but a developing person. Therefore, you cannot treat them as inert biological material. This also has grounds, which cross with that of cloning in that it violates the way in which nature intended the creation of a person to occur. As such, humans would be violating these natural laws.