

Stem Cell Club

Stem Cells, Ethics, and Policy

Following the talk, attendees' comments about the regulation of stem cell research in Singapore, will be solicited. These will be summarized in a communiqué, and submitted to the Ministry of Health. Come, have your say, and make a difference.

(Organised by the Stem Cell Research, Singapore, Website Committee, <http://www.stemcell.edu.sg>)

Date: 22nd Feb. 2005, Wednesday

Time: 5.15-8.00pm

Venue: Breakthrough Theatre, Matrix, Biopolis

Speaker Justine Burley (NUS)

Time **Title**

5.15-6.15 *Arming stem cell researchers for engagement with the media, the public, and policy-makers, on the morality of research involving human embryos*

6.15-8.00 *Cheese and Wine*

All present are invited to voice their hopes for the regulation of stem cell research in Singapore.

This event is sponsored by

 **invitrogen**[™]

Arming stem cell researchers for engagement with the media, the public, and policy-makers, on the morality of research involving human embryos

Justine Burley, National Graduate School for the Integrative Sciences and Engineering (NGS), National University of Singapore (NUS).

Scientists have a responsibility to engage in well reasoned debate about the rules that govern their research. As noted in various fora over recent weeks, many stem cell researchers in Singapore are concerned about the current lack of concrete rules, and have tabled worries over the content of pending legislation. When the legislative product of other nations is scrutinized, it becomes immediately apparent that scientists must take a share of the blame for certain restrictions that have been imposed on research involving human embryos. Scientists often do disservice to their research when debating it in the wider socio-political context. Justine Burley, through examination of extant legislation elsewhere, and the arguments deployed in its drafting, aims to encourage a sound approach to moral reasoning about this difficult and controversial issue. Researchers will be encouraged to re-examine the ways in which they justify research involving human embryos, and also the sort of regulatory framework they favour. The style of moral reasoning that scientists employ when engaging with the media, members of the public, and policy-makers can influence attitudes positively, and aid in the development of sound regulatory policies.

Following the talk, stem cell researchers are invited to voice their concerns about and hopes for the regulation of stem cell research in Singapore. The Stem Cell Club will then submit a communiqué arising from the discussion, to the Ministry of Health.

The 22 February Stem Cell Club meeting will be followed later in the year by Part II: The Regulation of Stem Cell Research in Singapore, and the Rest of the World. This will be a jointly delivered talk by a Singaporean official involved in drafting the new legislation (pending at the time of this posting), and Justine Burley who will compare and contrast the new rules in Singapore with policies elsewhere.

About the speaker

Justine Burley is currently Adjunct Associate Professor at the Graduate School for the Integrative Sciences and Engineering, National University of Singapore. She obtained the Gold Medal for her Honours B.A. at UWO, Canada, and went on to pursue post-graduate studies (M.Phil and D.Phil) in political philosophy at the University of Oxford, where she also obtained an MSc in Neuroscience in 2000. She is currently reading for an LLB degree through the University of London.

Justine was appointed to a Lectureship at Oxford in 1993, a post she held for the following nine years concurrently with a Fellowship in The Institute of Medicine, Law,

and Bioethics (1995-98), and then a Simon Fellowship (1998-2002), University of Manchester, UK.

Justine publishes in both philosophy and science journals. She is the editor of and contributor to: *Ronald Dworkin and His Critics* (Blackwell, 2004); (with John Harris) *A Companion to Genethics* (Blackwell, 2000; rev.ed. 2004); and *The Genetic Revolution and Human Rights* (Oxford University Press, 1999). She has two monographs forthcoming: *The Age of Biological Control* treats a set of philosophical issues connected to developments in the biosciences; *Human Cloning: For and Against*, lays out the principal arguments on that topic in the form of a Socratic dialectic.

Justine has worked for the Human Genome Organisation, The European Commission, the European Parliament, and a number of Registered Charities in secretarial or directorial posts.