

Preface

This book had its genesis in 2006, when both authors became interested in the role of the media and legislators in promoting the passage of the Stem Cell Research Act of 2006 in Maryland. Our research subsequently expanded to include other states and the role played by the media, particularly during the Bush Administration, in framing the debate. The focus expanded again in 2009 and 2010, when the Obama Administration extended federal funding for additional human embryonic stem cell lines. By this time, a number of states had jumped on the bandwagon and were actively promoting and funding stem cell research.

The idea of an interdisciplinary text emerged when Towson University (Maryland) adopted a new core curriculum that promoted critical thinking and writing to improve student analytical skills. This topic became a perfect vehicle through which to explore the various disciplines that were discussing human embryonic stem cell research from their own perspectives. The student activities at the end of the substantive chapters are a way to help our readers think about the issues as viewed by the various disciplines. Our motto is: think like a scientist, or a journalist, or an economist, and so forth. That task is more complicated than it initially appears to be.

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