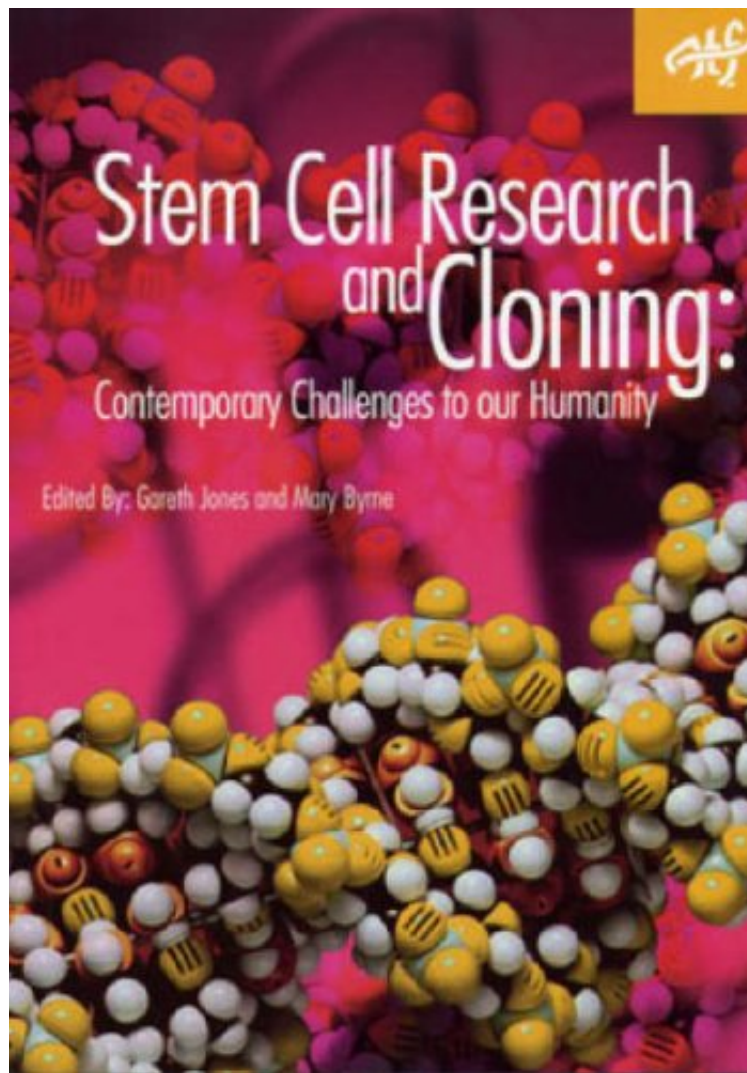


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In August 2004 the government in Britain approved the granting of licenses to research groups who wished to research and develop the cloning of human embryos for therapeutic purposes. The main focus of such research is the attainment of embryonic stem cells, and the development of therapies from such cells. Already some of this research is reported to be happening in South Korea. While they were initially discussed as separate issues in ethical and theological debates, they are now closely intertwined. The first group in England to receive a license predicts that they will be successful within the next few years. This adds an intensity to our need to understand the dimensions of this science and its impact on our life as well as our desire to put a meaning to these developments.

About the Author Mary Byrne was previously a research officer at Plunkett Centre for Health Ethics in Sydney, and continues to work in health care in New South Wales. D. Gareth Jones is Professor of Anatomy and Structural Biology at the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand. He is a neuroscientist, with an active interest in bioethics.