

Stem Cell Controversy: Ethics or Science?

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Whether stem cell research is acceptable has been a controversy ever since the idea of using stem cells for a bigger purpose has come into existence. The primary concern is retrieving the stem cells and what it implies for the fetus. It becomes an issue of religion and legality involving the life of the fetus. In 2009, President Obama made a speech stating that the government officially improves on stem cell research by allowing the government to provide funding for stem cell research. President Obama, in his speech relating to stem cell research, used his personal situation, a well organized text of the argument as well as oppositional statements, and an extreme word selection to help increase his credibility as a speaker on the topic and convince his viewers that it was the right choice to approve of government funded stem cell research. He was very good in making the speech work for a wider audience and gave the impression that he is doing everything that he can to help make America, in general, a better place to live and keep it ahead of other nations with medical breakthroughs.

President Obama not only used his faith but his views as an American citizen to help persuade the public that stem cell research is a good thing not only for the future benefits that it may provide for health, but keeping up American ideals. The issue surrounds whether or not removing the stem cells are killing a life or not. Do these unborn children have a right to life just like us? By destroying the embryonic cell, you are destroying that future life. But the question becomes if the rewards are worth it. President Obama assured that, "As a person of faith, I believe we are called to care for each other and work to ease human suffering." (Obama) He is allowing the audience to view the bigger picture of the situation. The stem cell research will lead to results that can lead to the saving of so many lives stricken with terrible diseases. This showing of his ethical well being makes the opposing side seem like they are heartless. How dare they not allow this research that can have the potential to save lives.

The President not only uses his position as a man of religion, but his values of being an American citizen to help persuade his audience that his values are the best. As an American citizen should realize, the government comes separate from the practices of faith. In that sense, there is not scientific evidence that verifies the disapproval of stem cell research according to the government. Why should the government limit innovation because of the beliefs of a few? As a nation of opportunity, we advocate for free thinking and opportunity for our citizens to explore and reach new limits. "From life-saving vaccines, to pioneering cancer treatments, to the sequencing of the human genome - that is the story of scientific progress in America." (Obama) He sees America as a place of innovation not just in a new type of car or fancy new phone, but in medical breakthroughs as well, and the more restrictions and road blocks that are put up, the less exploration in medicine we are allowing from our citizens.

His fluid organization of the information helped increase his credibility as a speaker. He had his ideas clearly laid out and does not leave room for the reader to get confused about where the next paragraph or part of the speech is going. He started out by stating what he is planning on doing and why this is such a good idea. There is no question how he feels on this issue. The introduction paragraph gives a nice outline of the major points the speech will be discussing. Another benefit to this organization is that the speech does not draw out for an indefinite period of time. As a college student myself, I do not have time to listen to a 50 minute speech that gave a point I could have comprehended within the first 10 minutes. The President makes sure to get right to the point. He discusses how there is no real guarantee that magical cures will be found within the next year or two, but at least we are putting forth the effort into working towards progress.

Not only is his organization pristine, but his mentioning of both sides of the argument further strengthens his credibility. Just because something is now permitted

by the government does not mean that everyone will be happy with the decision. His mentioning of “strict guidelines” put on the research will hopefully provide some reassurances for those not happy with the research to begin with. Taking into account both sides of the argument makes the reader think that he is not just obsessed with drilling you his own ideals, but that he has taken the time to think about everyone’s ideals. This shows good ethical values in an individual and an even stronger reason to want to support not only the speaker’s point of view, but the speaker himself.

With such a compact speech involving such a controversial topic, strong language is a good tool to make a long lasting impression in fewer words. “But scientists believe these tiny cells may have the potential to help us understand, and possibly cure, some of our most devastating diseases and conditions. To regenerate a severed spinal cord and lift someone from a wheelchair. To spur insulin production and spare a child from a lifetime of needles. To treat Parkinson's, cancer, heart disease and others that affect millions of Americans and the people who love them.” (Obama) This passage shows how strongly used adjectives can grab the attention of the reader. Curing the most “devastating diseases and conditions” makes you just want to pick up the phone and donate some money to your nearest stem cell research facility. Who wouldn’t want to be a part of such ground breaking research? As someone who wants to go into the medical field, I feel that stem cells hold a lot of promise and if you had the chance to find a cure to some of the world’s worst diseases, why wouldn’t you try?

President Obama builds up his own ethical values within the speech and shows his audience how much he cares not only about the lives that can potentially be saved by this research, but holding up the American ideals that have made this country what it is today. Afterall, that is his job. He is the President of the United States and he has to follow those values and show the people who elected him why they elected him in the first place. At this point the people who are arguing against stem cell research don’t care if you end up with a certain percent success rate of the research working, but how

the stem cells are being used and how far will the government allow the research to go. Repeatedly reminding the viewers that stem cell research does not have free reign to do what it wishes allows them to feel more secure about this action. Even though they did not get their way their fight wasn't for nothing.

President Obama's personal values, his organization, and word choice all helped influence the viewer that stem cell research is not as bad as it is made out to be, but just in case, the government will still keep its eyes on its progress and use of the stem cells.