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ABSTRACT

The creation of pharmacotherapies, such as Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs), for the treatment of depression was hailed as a great breakthrough in mental health care. However, since that time, serious questions have arisen as to their safety and the way they are prescribed without full information being provided to patients about a range of important issues, including the possible aetiologies of depression, and the efficacy and potential side-effects of medication. These issues have been especially important in the care and treatment of young people, as there is evidence that SSRIs may be implicated in increased suicidal behaviour. In this article, we examine the experiences of five individuals who were prescribed an SSRI in their late teens or early twenties, and discuss some of the ethical issues that arise from their accounts.

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Reproductive cloning and arguments from potential

Justin Oakley

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ABSTRACT

The possibility of human reproductive cloning has led some bioethicists to suggest that potentiality-based arguments for fetal moral status become untenable, as such arguments would be committed to making the implausible claim that any adult somatic cell is itself a potential person. In this article I defend potentiality-based arguments for fetal moral status against such a reductio. Starting from the widely-held claim that the maintenance of numerical identity throughout successive changes places constraints on what a given entity can plausibly be said to have the potential to become, I argue that the cell reprogramming that takes place in reproductive cloning is such that it produces a new individual, and so adult somatic cells cannot be potential persons.

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SYMPOSIUM on ethics, multiculturalism and health research

Mental health research, ethics and multiculturalism

Marion J Bailes, I Harry Minas and Steven Klimidis

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ABSTRACT

In this paper we examine ethical issues relevant to conducting mental health research with refugees and immigrant communities that have cultural orientations and social organisation that are substantially different to those of the broader Australian community, and we relate these issues to NH&MRC Guidelines. We describe the development and conduct of a mental health research project carried out recently in Melbourne with the Somali community, focusing on ethical principles involved, and relating these to the NH&MRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans, and the NH&MRC document Values and Ethics: Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research.

The experience of conducting mental health research with the Somali community highlights the fact that the principles of inclusion and benefit enunciated in the NH&MRC document Values and Ethics are particularly pertinent when conducting research

with refugees and immigrant communities that are culturally distant to those of the broader Australian community. These principles inform issues of research design and consent, as well as guiding respectful engagement with the participating community and communication of the research findings.

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