



*Photograph by Robert Ladd*

## Stem Cell Ethics

Dr. Smithies: There've been ethical considerations that various people have about whether you can make an embryonic stem cell because you're destroying life. My response to that is that it's the wrong way round. That people who worry about it have got the situation inverted. That, in fact, life began and whether you think it began through some strange accident of the universe or whether you think that some higher being first started life. Life began many millions of years ago and it's been one continuous stream ever since. And when we have a fertilized egg, for example, that's still alive. And when you make an embryonic stem cell from it, it's still alive. If that embryonic stem cell is used to help somebody, it's never lost its life. Its life was perpetuated. If you throw it away, you destroyed life. So that's my feeling about the ethics of embryonic stem cell.