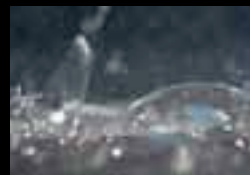


Contemporary Issues in Science & Christianity

Dr Ruth Bancewicz, Research Associate & Project Leader, Test of FAITH
The Faraday Institute for Science & Religion, Cambridge
Lay Congress, Diocese of Leicester, 2011

www.testoffaith.com





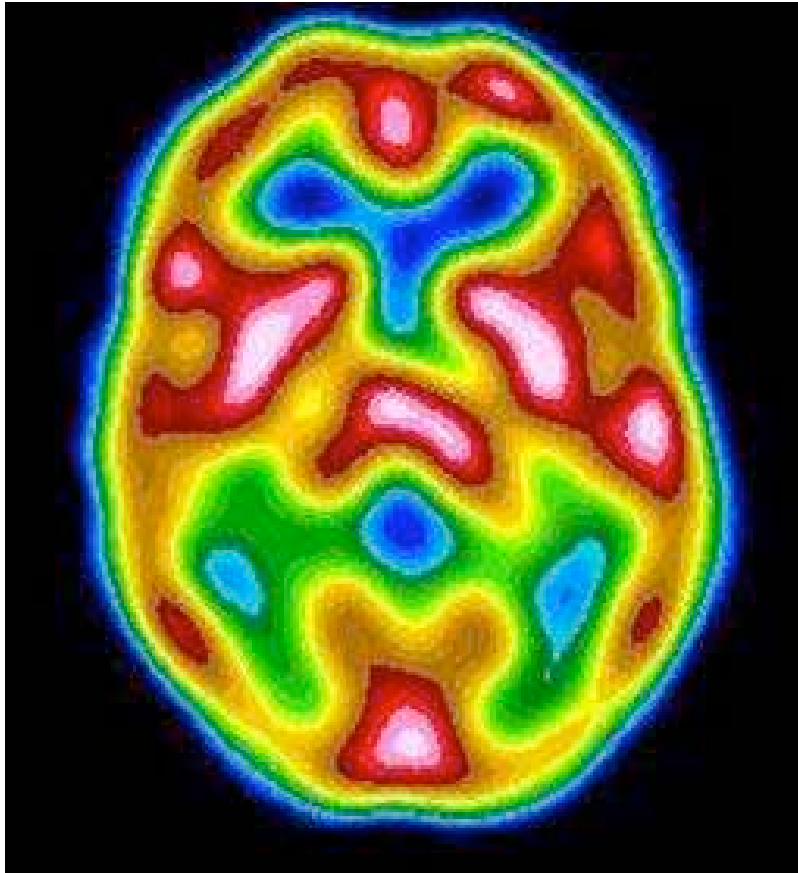
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Outline - contemporary issues

- Neuroscience
- Bioethics
 - Ethical toolkit
 - Cloning Case study
- Feedback & discussion



Neuroscience - A God Spot?



[There's] a place in the brain for everything. You know there's a Jennifer Aniston spot and there's a hamburger spot in my brain and in yours. Anything you know anything about, anything you have any bunch of beliefs about, there's got to be something in your brain that's holding those.

Prof Daniel Dennett



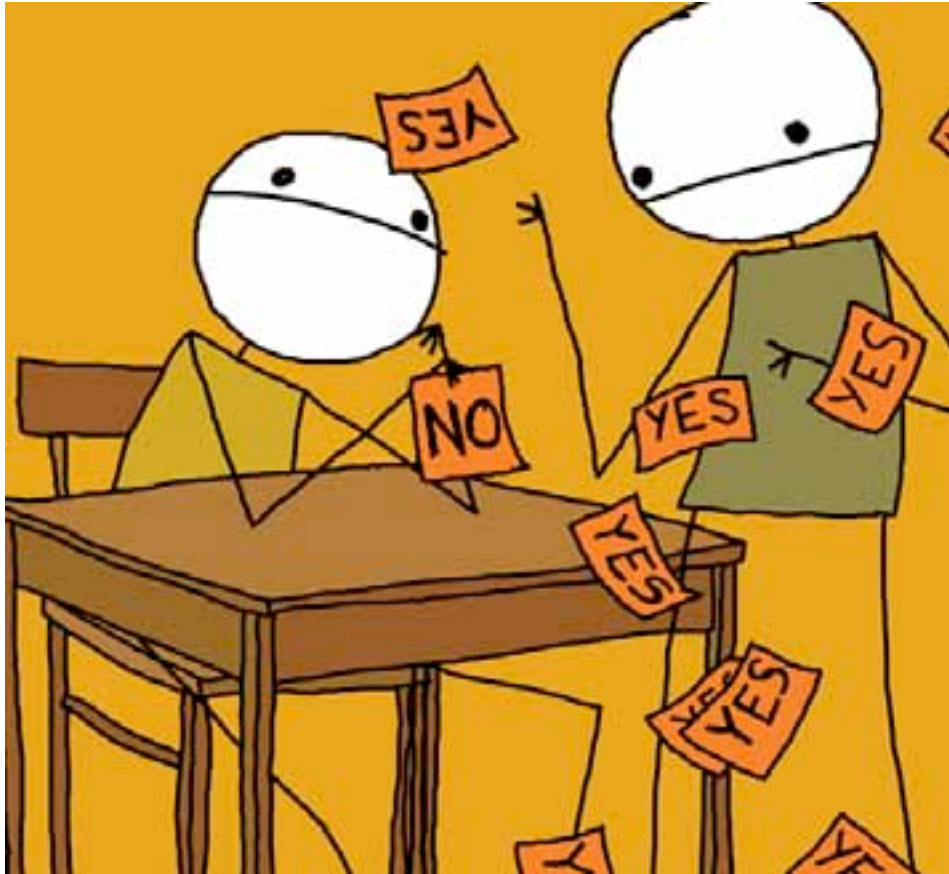
Neuroscience - Whole Persons



- The importance of being embodied
- The disembodied eternal soul - an ancient Greek idea rather than a Christian one?
 - Theologians & Biblical scholars
 - Neuroscientists



Neuroscience - Freewill?



- Constraint - nature & nurture
- Top-down causation
 - Behaviours that lead to brain changes



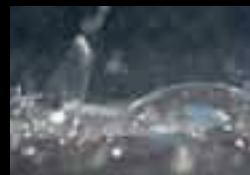


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Bioethics

- Some of the issues
 - GM crops/animals
 - IVF & prenatal gene diagnosis
 - Gene testing/prenatal diagnosis
 - Stem-cell therapy
 - Gene therapy/genetic enhancement
 - Cloning





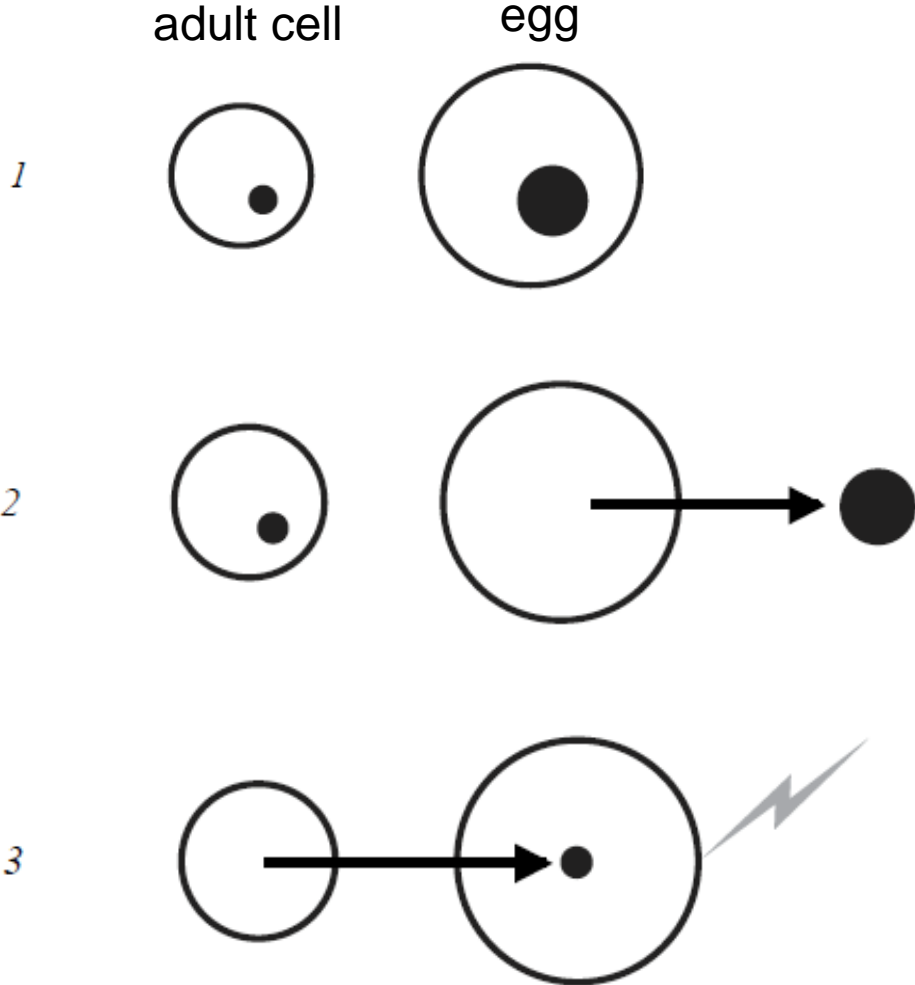
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An ethical toolkit

- Genesis 1:26–27 Made in God's image: value & dignity of human life
- Gal 3:26–29; Rom 12:4–8 Importance of individuals regardless of abilities
- Mark 12:31; Philippians 2:3–4 Care for others
- Deuteronomy 10:18 Care for the vulnerable
- Matthew 25:31–46 Care for the suffering
- Psalm 127:3–5 Children as a good gift of God



Using your ethical toolkit - cloning



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Using your ethical toolkit - cloning

Q1: Some babies born naturally are genetic clones of each other – identical twins! Thinking about any identical twins that you know, what can you tell about how much our genes determine our different characteristics?

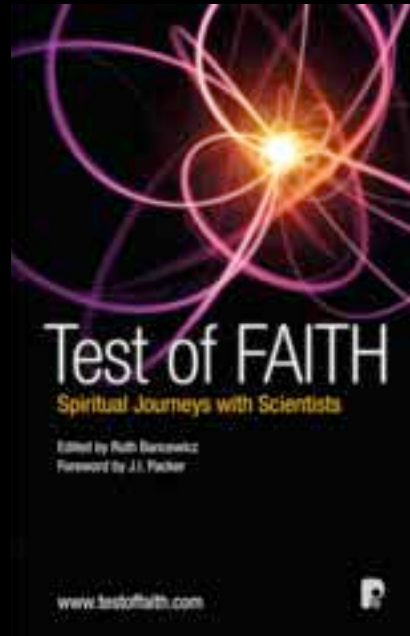
Q2: Why do you think someone might want to artificially ‘clone’ a person?

Q3: Can you anticipate some of the consequences of cloning this child? How might it affect the resulting clone, their family, and the rest of society?

Q4: Can you anticipate some of the consequences of people cloning themselves and bringing these clones up as their own children? On the children? The parents? Society?



Test of FAITH DVD, book & course



- 3 x 30 min documentary series on DVD (£7)
- Book of 10 scientists' life stories (£6)
- Study Guide for group members (£2.50)
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- Starter pack (£30)



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