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Science Chicago Wants to Know What You Think About Stem Cells, Animal Testing and other Controversial Medical Issues

Public invited to shape expert debate on the contentious bioethics issues that affect our lives

CHICAGO [July 20, 2009] – Is it ethical to refuse to vaccinate your child against deadly diseases that are thought to be eradicated? Should researchers be allowed to cause human diseases in animals in order to develop new treatments? How are the ethics of doctors and scientists regulated by the government? These and other controversial questions of medical ethics will be up for debate as part of Science Chicago's *Bridging the Gap: Medical Humanities, Bioethics and Society* event on Wednesday, July 29.

Through social media sites like the [Science Chicago blog](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), Science Chicago is soliciting questions and comments from the public on the many current and looming bioethical issues facing our society. Issues likely to be addressed include, stem cell research, animal testing, childhood vaccines, cutting-edge surgical advances, nanotechnology and genomics. The public's submissions will help steer the direction of Wednesday's panel discussion.

The debate event will feature bioethics experts Laurie Zoloth, Ph.D., Director of Northwestern University's Center for Bioethics, and Mark Siegler, M.D., Director of The University of Chicago's MacLean Center for Clinical Medical Ethics, and will be moderated by Chicago Public Radio's Gabriel Spitzer.

"As biological and medical research continues to advance, ethical boundaries continue to be reshaped," said Cheryl Hughes, Executive Director of Science Chicago. "Through our online channels and events, Science Chicago is giving Chicagoans an opportunity to engage top experts on these types of hot-button science issues that impact their lives."

The year-long Science Chicago initiative, considered to be the world's largest science celebration, wraps up in August. Since the launch of the program in September 2008, more than 300,000 people have engaged with Science Chicago programs and online communities.

"The success of the program thus far proves that Chicago is indeed a science city with incredible scientific resources," said David Mosen, President and CEO of the Museum of Science and Industry and Vice Chair of the Science Chicago Board of Advisors. "The Museum of Science and Industry is proud to lead this collaborative effort, along with the more than 140 public and private institutions that have provided thousands of unique opportunities for Chicagoans to awaken their inner scientist and discover the scientific resources of the region."

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Join the Debate:

To submit your thoughts and questions in advance of the bioethics debate, please email Lifeisalab@gmail.com by Sunday, July 26 or visit:

- **Science Chicago blog:** <http://sciencechicagoblog.com/>
- **Twitter:** <http://twitter.com/ScienceChicago>
- **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/ScienceChicago

Event Details:

Bridging the Gap: Medical Humanities, Bioethics and Society is FREE and open to the public ages 16 and up, however, reservations are recommended. To reserve, call 773-947-3150 or email rsvp@sciencechicago.com.

Date: Wednesday, July 29
Time: 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm
Location: Arthur Rubloff Building, Room 175, Northwestern University School of Law
375 East Chicago Avenue
Chicago, IL

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About Science Chicago

The Museum of Science and Industry is spearheading Science Chicago, a collaboration of more than 140 public and private institutions that have come together to present the world's largest science celebration. Designed to awaken the inner scientist in each and every one of us, thousands of dynamic and interactive activities will provide hands-on learning; spur thoughtful debate; enhance classroom learning; and build enthusiasm for the pursuit of cutting-edge science while establishing the critical value of science and math education.

For more information, visit www.sciencechicago.com.