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# Sydney Bioethics Seminar Series

## Cloning and Stem Cell Research: Towards More Flexible Regulation

*Professor Loane Skene*  
*University of Melbourne*



5.00 pm – 7.00 pm  
Thursday, 1 June 2006

**Auditorium, Kerry Packer Education Centre, RPA Hospital, Missenden Road, Camperdown**

**Followed by Refreshments**  
**Free and Open to the Public**

Please RSVP to Diana Freeman at [ahpiadmin@med.usyd.edu.au](mailto:ahpiadmin@med.usyd.edu.au) or phone (02) 93512818

For more information about this and other events of the series visit:  
<http://www.usyd.edu.au/bioethics/news/index.shtml>

**Convened by:**

Australian Health Policy Institute (AHPI)  
Centre for Values, Ethics, and the Law in Medicine (VELIM)  
Unit for History and Philosophy of Science (HPS)

**Sponsored by:**

Centre for Human Aspects of Science and Technology (CHAST)  
Faculty of Medicine  
Research Institute for Humanities and Social Science (RIHSS)



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Thursday, 1 June 2006, 5 to 7 pm

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## Speaker:

Professor Loane Skene

## Title:

Cloning and Stem Cell Research: Towards More Flexible Regulation

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**Abstract:** The legal regulation of scientific activities in an area of rapid development presents particular challenges for the law. The community, both international and domestic, typically calls for legislation to prohibit particular conduct (like reproductive cloning) and to impose restrictions on other types of research, such as permitting it only with a licence. However there are numerous traps in drafting and administering legislation of this type. It is inevitably difficult to anticipate and to regulate in advance discoveries that will be made later. Many legislative provisions in Australia have been found almost immediately to be defective in regulating embryo research. Some activities are clearly covered by the legislation but for others it is uncertain whether they are covered or not. The recent federal Legislation Review Committee on cloning and stem cell research, chaired by the late Hon John Lockhart AO, made a novel suggestion to promote flexibility. It recommended that the Licensing Committee should be permitted to give 'rulings' on the interpretation of the legislation, with an obligation to report to Parliament immediately afterwards. People who act in good faith on the basis of the ruling should have statutory immunity.

**Professor Loane Skene LL.B. (Hons) (Melb), LL.M. (Mon)** is a Professor of Law in the Law Faculty and an Adjunct Professor of Law in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences at the University of Melbourne. She has served on many federal and state advisory committees, especially in relation to the legal regulation of genetic testing. She was recently a Member of the federal Legislation Review Committee for the Review of the Prohibition of Human Cloning Act 2002 and the Research involving Human Embryos Act 2002 (Lockhart Committee). In 2003, she was awarded a Centenary Medal for 'Service to Australian Society through the Exploration of Legal and Ethical Issues of Health Care'.

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The **Sydney Bioethics Seminar Series** is convened by The Australian Health Policy Institute (AHPI); the Centre for Values, Ethics and the Law in Medicine (VELIM); and the Unit for History and Philosophy of Science (HPS); with support from The Centre for Human Aspects of Science and Technology (CHAST), the Faculty of Medicine, and the Research Institute for Humanities and Social Science (RIHSS). For more information see: <http://www.usyd.edu.au/bioethics/news/index.shtml>.

For information about the new postgraduate **Sydney Bioethics Program**, see: <http://www.usyd.edu.au/bioethics>.