

Exploring Social Issues through Design

Some of the most powerful and meaningful art ever created was made in reaction to the important social issues of that time. Picasso painted *Guernica* in protest of the Nazi bombing of Gernika, Spain during the Spanish Civil War. Goya's *The Third of May* was painted as a result of the shootings of innocent civilians by Napoleon's armies. These are two examples of art that addressed important social issues. What issues are we faced with today? Which issues are important to you?

1. List some important social issues we face today:

war	healthcare	nuclear proliferation
abortion	capital punishment	teen pregnancy
global warming	economy/unemployment	gang violence
animal cruelty/testing	taxes	gun control
poverty	STDs	assisted suicide
illiteracy	child abuse	climate change
immigration	racism	child soldiers
same sex marriage	war on drugs	sex education
legalization of marijuana	human trafficking	
obesity	stem cell research	

2. Which of these issues are most important to you, or which issue do you want to address in a poster?

I chose to address stem cell research. I think stem cell research is important because it can potentially change how we treat human diseases including cancer, Parkinson's, and a number of other diseases & disorders.

3. **Research Topic:** Find a news article or other information on your topic. Read your article(s) and summarize the issue below.

Information source(s) (LA Times, CNN, Wikipedia, etc): _____

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy - Ethics of Stem Cell Research

4. If you chose a debate issue, according to the article you chose, what are some of the different viewpoints on this issue? If you chose an awareness issue, summarize the issue in detail (where, when, why, who).

The argument for stem cell research is based on the potential for stem cells to change how we are able to treat/cure diseases that otherwise have no cure or treatment available.

Opponents of stem cell research say that the process of harvesting embryonic stem cells is unethical and wrong because it requires the destruction of the human embryo, which is equivalent to killing an innocent human life.

5. Debate Issue: What side of the debate do you support? Give **3 reasons based on research/data** why you support this viewpoint. Cite the source of your evidence.

Awareness Issue: Why do you think this issue is being ignored? Give **3 reasons** that show why this issue should be addressed immediately. Use statistics/research to better demonstrate how serious this problem is. Cite the source of your data.

Stem Cell research should be allowed and fully funded -

1. Most human embryonic stem cells are derived from embryos created for infertility treatment but were in excess of what was needed for pregnancy. These cells are usually destroyed. The potential for these cells to be used for healing purposes should outweigh the consequences of destroying the cells that would be disposed of otherwise.

- from Stem Cell Research and Applications, American Association for the Advancement of Science and Institute for Civil Society

2. Embryos at this early stage are not considered to be equivalent to human life and with more research, the destruction of the embryo may not be necessary to extracting the stem cells.

- from Stem Cell Research and Applications, American Association for the Advancement of Science and Institute for Civil Society

3. Stem cells can also be used to create organs and tissues that would otherwise not exist in the numbers needed for the all of the people in need of organ transplants.

- Stem Cell Information, National Institute of Health