

Dialogue 141

# The Business of Bodies: Regulations and Ethics for Human Tissue Use

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In the past, the use of cadavers for teaching and research was culturally taboo, and convicted criminals were publicly dissected to add to their punishment. With the establishment of medical schools, a demand for human tissue increased and a trade in grave robbing developed to meet this demand. This in turn led to laws for the acquisition and use of human cadavers. Recent controversies, including public “plastination” displays and unregulated selling of human materials, have led to a re-examination of the ethics and regulations behind the use of human tissue. Questions to be addressed include: Should all human tissues be treated equally? Should informed consent be required for all donated tissue? Should HIPAA rules cover cadaver use?

Dr. Champney is an Associate Professor of Cell Biology at the Miller School of Medicine at the University of Miami. He received his Ph.D. in Biomedical Research from the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. His ethics interests focus on the responsible conduct of scientific research and the ethical use of cadavers. He also teaches first year medical students gross anatomy, histology and neuroanatomy, and did 20 years of research on the pineal gland and its hormone, melatonin.

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