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HHMI Releases New Bioethics Resources

Sharply divergent viewpoints about the ethical questions raised by basic biomedical research show up in newspaper headlines and television talk shows on a daily basis. Yet the scientists facing these ethical issues don't have many resources to help them teach the next generation of researchers how to think critically about the broader implications of their work.

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute is helping to remedy this lack of resources with new multimedia teaching tools about ethics in biomedical research that will be shared freely with the scientific community. The new DVD, "Ethics in Biomedical Research," and its companion web site - www.hhmi.org/bioethics—are specifically tailored to the needs of the laboratory research environment.

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— **Thomas R. Cech**

"We hope that scientists will be able to use these materials as the starting point for lively discussions within their research groups and in the classroom," said Dr. Thomas R. Cech, HHMI's president. "We're not providing all the answers. Instead, we are providing different points of view and, we hope, posing questions that will prompt reflection."

Those questions are challenging, but as Cech noted, "The boundaries of scientific discovery do not remain fixed in time or space. As we break new ground in science, we must make sure our students and the general public have the tools to evaluate the societal and ethical impact of the new science."

The DVD features interviews and comments from more than 30 scientists, ethicists, social critics, patients, and graduate students. It opens with a general introduction to bioethics - including a discussion of research that involves human subjects - and contains three shorter, independent videos about the use of animals in research, the ethics of genetic alteration, including human

embryonic stem cell research, and scientific integrity. The companion web site includes discussion questions, historical documents, case studies, and explanatory presentations. It will be updated on a regular basis.

Under Cech's leadership, HHMI has emphasized the importance of incorporating consideration of ethical issues into the decision-making process, and the Institute now has a Bioethics Advisory Board that provides guidance to the Institute's leadership, its investigators, and their students. Members of the BAB were involved in development of the DVD and have participated regularly in the Institute's science meetings.

How to Order: The DVD "Ethics in Biomedical Research" is available free of charge and can be ordered through the HHMI web site, www.hhmi.org/bioethics.

What you will receive: The DVD "Ethics in Biomedical Research" contains four separate videos that can be viewed at one time or used individually. The structure of the companion web site - www.hhmi.org/bioethics - parallels that of the DVD. Each chapter includes an introduction, questions to consider, historical documents, relevant links, and case studies developed by HHMI's scientific staff and members of its Bioethics Advisory Board.

Overview (28 minutes) Animal Subjects (19 minutes) Genetic Alteration (17 minutes) Scientific Integrity (15 minutes)

Featured experts:

Thomas R. Cech, president of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute HHMI Investigators (in order): Mario Capecchi, University of Utah; Douglas Melton, Harvard University; Michael Rosbash, Brandeis University; Richard Lifton, Yale University; Todd Golub, Dana Farber Cancer Institute; Eric Kandel, Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons; William Newsome, Stanford University; Christine Seidman and Gary Gilliland, Brigham and Women's Hospital; Joel Habener, Massachusetts General Hospital. Other scientists, ethicists and social commentators (in order): Philip Bereano, University of Washington, Seattle; Ronald M. Green, Dartmouth College; Ruth Faden, Johns Hopkins University; The Rev. Kevin FitzGerald; Georgetown University Medical Center; Gerald Fink, Whitehead Institute; Michael Gilman, Biogen Idec Inc.; Thomas Regan, author; Rebecca Dresser, Washington University School of Law; Thomas Murray, the Hastings Center; Maxine Singer, Carnegie Institution Institution; LeRoy Walters, Georgetown University. Members of Congress, patients and their families, students, laboratory staff.

Credits: "Ethics in Biomedical Research" was directed by Werner Schumann; the executive producer was W. Emmett Barkley, Ph.D., Director of Laboratory Safety, HHMI; the writer was Nathan Antila; the associate producers were Margot Reid, Cheryl Warfield, Nan Allendorfer Waffan.