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 - The Organic Revolution in Science and Implications for Science and Spirituality
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Being Human: Science, Ethics and Our Rights An ICA/Index Debate

Speakers:

Colin Tudge, Research Fellow, Centre of Philosophy at LSE

Germaine Greer, author of the *Whole Woman*

Alan Colman, Scientific Director at PPL Pharmaceuticals

By Angela Ryan
Molecular Biologist
Open University

The ICA/Index debate on being human in a scientific, ethical and human rights context demonstrated a genuine lack of confidence in talking about such a fundamental issue. The speakers did not dare to put forward defining statements on what being human is in our world of scientific and technological advancement. They stood back from it and revealed the general lack of focus and cross talk between the arts and sciences regarding this very important question.

Colin Tudge spoke about the history of science and how we had arrived at today's scientific perspectives on being human which are embodied in the concepts of neo-darwinism. He spoke about the difference between science and technology and how technology relies on science but is tightly framed by profitability. Science is liberated and fundamentally a philosophy in pursuit of the truth about how the world works. Modern science is definitely

fragmented and he is amazed at just how little physicists know about biology and likewise. Scientists are also uneducated in the philosophy of science nowadays and this is a major shortcoming for our modern scientific world.

Alan Colman recounted his experience of making 'Dolly the sheep'. He told of how little he understood ethics before she was born. He described his ongoing scientific dilemma, on the one hand his job is to address unmet medical needs but on the other he is totally against human cloning and thinks it wholly unethical.

Despite being the only non scientist at the table, Germaine Greer did at least manage to grasp hold of the nettle. She said that science and technology had defined an elite, giving us all a superiority complex. And we use it. Ethics should be about our priorities and rights should be about our duties. What on earth are we doing discussing human cloning when most people do not benefit from science at all. Very little funding is injected into research that may help the poor. The first priority of science and technology is to improve the lot for humanity, not pamper to the vanities of a minority.

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