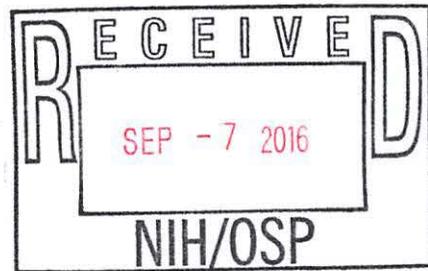


Robert A. Nicolotti, PhD
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St. Louis, MO 63129

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Office of Science Policy NIH Comments
National Institutes of Health
6705 Rockledge Drive, Suite 750
Bethesda, MD 20892



Dear Office of Science Policy Comments:

I object strongly to the NIH's proposal to rescind its moratorium on funding of human-animal chimeras. To use my tax dollars for grossly unethical research involving the creation and manipulation of part-human, part-animal, beings violates my constitutional freedom of conscience and religion.

It is the height of scientific arrogance to foolishly consider that anything good can come from tinkering with human evolution, which placed human beings at the pinnacle of the created universe. The understanding of human epigenetics, the influence of environmental factors in the complex unfolding of gene expression in embryogenesis and throughout life, is in its infancy. The complex genetic and epigenetic interactions in the genesis of disease and mental health are largely unknown. Even the genesis sexual preference is shrouded in mystery. There is simply no way of knowing the untoward genetic and behavioral effects of inserting human genes into non-human cells; the subtlest cross breeding of African with South American bees, which generated "killer bees," has caused devastating harm to human health and the environment.

This proposed research raises all the ethical problems of human embryonic stem cell research in general and serious additional problems related to the creation of human-animal beings with partly or substantially human brains and human gametes.

I also object strongly to the NIH's apparent lack of consideration for the ethical issues implicated by this research. Indeed, the NIH pledged to "undertake a deliberative process to evaluate the state of the science in this area, the ethical issues that should be considered, and the relevant animal welfare concerns associated with these types of studies" when the moratorium was put in place in 2015. No individual can give informed consent to the adulteration of their heritable genes because the gene pool belongs to the common good of the human race.

NIH, a governmental institution that exists to protect the common good of society, has a grave responsibility to protect human genetic diversity, rather than pollute it.

Sincerely,

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