



Concerned Women for America of Illinois presents:

Stem Cell Fact of the Day #9

“It's a little creepy. But it's not going to get up and say, ‘Hi, I'm Mickey’.”

~ Professor Henry Greely, director of the Stanford committee
approving the human-mouse project.

Stanford gets OK to try human cells in mouse brain

Mercury News, 2-14-05 (<http://www.mercurynews.com/mld/mercurynews/living/health/10895548.htm?1c>)

Massachusetts- Stanford University researcher has gotten a preliminary go-ahead to create a mouse with a significant number of human brain cells -- as long as the creature behaves like a mouse, not a human.

The research team, led by Stanford biologist Irving Weissman, has no immediate plans to build a mouse with an entirely human brain. But it remains a theoretical possibility.

The federal government does not regulate the creation of such chimeras; named after the mythical Greek creature that is part-man, part-animal.

“We concluded that if we see any signs of human brain structures . . . or if the mouse shows human-like behaviors, like improved memory or problem-solving, it's time to stop,” said law and genetics Professor Henry T. Greely, director of the Center for Law and the Biosciences and leader of the committee....

Critics warn against crossing this scientific frontier... [T]he human brain is the seat of the soul in human consciousness, something uniquely human, they said. Others oppose the prospect, however remote, of creating animals with mental abilities like our own.

“Biotechnology is becoming dangerously close to raging out of control. Biotechnologists like Weissman are charging ahead at mach speed toward the proverbial brave new world,” wrote Wesley J. Smith of the Discovery Institute in the conservative Weekly Standard.

“If there is anything that might suggest some risk that there is anything that might remotely be viewed as ‘humanness’ being transferred to a mouse, we’ve asked him to stop,” Greely said. **“It's a little creepy,” he conceded. “But it's not going to get up and say, ‘Hi, I'm Mickey.’** Our brains are far more complicated.”

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CWA endorses adult and umbilical cord stem cell research but condemns embryonic stem cell research as immoral.

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