Reviewer’s report

Title: Ethical Arguments Concerning Human-Animal Chimera Research: A Systematic Review

Version: 1 Date: 13 Dec 2019

Reviewer: Reviewer 3

Reviewer's report:

PEER REVIEWER ASSESSMENTS:

OBJECTIVE - Full research articles: is there a clear objective that addresses one or several testable research questions? (Brief or other article types: is there a clear objective?)

Yes - there is a clear objective

DESIGN - Is the current approach (including controls and analysis protocols) appropriate for the objective?

No - there are major issues

EXECUTION - Are the experiments and analyses performed with sufficient technical rigor to allow confidence in the results?

Not sure - key details are missing from the manuscript

STATISTICS - Is the use of statistics in the manuscript appropriate?

N/A - there are no statistics in this study

INTERPRETATION - Is the current interpretation/discussion of the results reasonable and not overstated?

No - there are minor issues

OVERALL MANUSCRIPT POTENTIAL - Has the author addressed your concerns sufficiently for you to now recommend the work as a technically sound contribution? If not, can further revisions be made to make the work technically sound?

Maybe - with major revisions
PEER REVIEWER COMMENTS:

GENERAL COMMENTS: I welcome this manuscript of immense relevance in the empirical bioethics debate. However, major issues raised in the previous reviews have not been adequately addressed. I highlight a few issues I consider of acute importance, to be addressed before this manuscript is further processed for publication. The writing is extremely difficult to follow, and the input of a native English speaker could render the manuscript more palatable. The research questions has not been clearly answered in this paper. Many of the statements provided are simply generic, and at times unjustified, as authors fail to clearly describe how they arrive at certain authoritative conclusions.

1. Authors make mention of the methodology of Strech and Sofaer (lines 180). I agree that using a reasons based methodology is adapted in this case. Can authors confirm that this was a reasons based review? If yes, the research question needs to be changed or modified.

2. The results are extremely cumbersome, in the abstract and main manuscript. Lines 503 - 511 as well. What specific ethical arguments/reasons did you find? In my opinion, I do not find an answer to the questions: This paper attempts to remedy this, by providing a systematic review of ethical reasons in academic publications on human animal chimera research [lines 39-41]

What ethical reasons have been given for or against conducting human-animal chimera research, and how have these reasons been treated in the ongoing debate? [105 - 107]

3. Methodology: A lot is said here regarding the strengths and limitations of the paper, which is more appropriate for the limitations section of the paper.

4. Limitations section: This section is extremely extensive. Authors have to carefully summarize this section, and provide only the most necessary facts.

5. Line 54: I am struggling with the justification of the use of the word "conspicuous" here.

6. It is unclear why authors delve into a theological-legal-political discussion here. This is a systematic review with clearly defined research questions.

7. Line 618: what are these categories?

8. Lines 617-628: The intention was NOT to provide a framework as authors claim in the conclusion section of the paper. To me, this is untrue.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No
Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

No

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

Declaration of competing interests
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

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