

The Human-Pig: Is C.S. Lewis' 1944 Prediction Coming True?

Science always seems to be coming up with experiments which push the limits in the ethical realm. One of these occurred last fall when scientists announced that they had produced the first baby with [three biological parents](#). Most recently, scientists now believe they are able to create a new type of creature by crossing a human with an animal. Brave new world, meet [the human-pig](#):

"Scientists from the Salk Institute – a biological research organisation in California – have taken cells from pigs and people to create an embryo that was then inserted into a female pig.

...

The team are now on the brink of creating a genetic chimera – an organism made up of cells from multiple species' DNA – that is part human, part pig.

The hope is that the scientists will eventually be able to grow organs in pigs that will be suitable for human use via transplants."

But while all this can sound like a wonderful medical advancement for those who need organ transplants, are we playing with fire when we try to use science to such an extent?

C.S. Lewis would have said yes. In his 1944 work, [The Abolition of Man](#), Lewis explained what happens when man manipulates nature in efforts to create the societal conditions wanted:

"We reduce things to mere Nature in order that we may

'conquer' them. We are always conquering Nature, because 'Nature' is the name for what we have, to some extent, conquered. The price of conquest is to treat a thing as mere Nature. Every conquest over Nature increases her domain. ... The wresting of powers from Nature is also the surrendering of things to Nature. As long as this process stops short of the final stage we may well hold that the gain outweighs the loss. But as soon as we take the final step of reducing our own species to the level of mere Nature, the whole process is stultified, for this time the being who stood to gain and the being who has been sacrificed are one and the same. This is one of the many instances where to carry a principle to what seems its logical conclusion produces absurdity. ... It is the magician's bargain: give up our soul, get power in return. But once our souls, that is, our selves, have been given up, the power thus conferred will not belong to us. We shall in fact be the slaves and puppets of that to which we have given our souls. It is in Man's power to treat himself as a mere 'natural object' and his own judgements of value as raw material for scientific manipulation to alter at will. The objection to his doing so does not lie in the fact that his point of view (like one's first day in a dissecting room) is painful and shocking till we grow used to it. The pain and the shock are at most a warning and a symptom. The real objection is that if man chooses to treat himself as raw material, raw material he will be: not raw material to be manipulated, as he fondly imagined, by himself, but by mere appetite, that is, mere Nature, in the person of his dehumanized Conditioners."

Do you think Lewis is right? Will our efforts to manipulate mankind through science only end in dehumanizing our own selves?

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