

Irony: As Babies are Killed in Late-Term Abortions, Scientists Create Artificial Sperm to Make Babies

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It is a profound irony that as we allow even very late term fetuses to be aborted on one hand, scientists are finding radical nature-bending ways to assist people have babies—including methods that could shatter familial norms. Newest possibility: Artificial sperm and ova. [From the Guardian story:](#)

Speaking at the Progress Educational Trust annual conference in London this month, Azim Surani, director of germline and epigenetics research at the University of Cambridge's Gurdon Institute, said he and colleagues had passed a significant milestone on the path to producing sperm in the laboratory. The team is thought to be the first to have reached the halfway point on the developmental path from human stem cells to immature sperm.

The study hints that one day it may be possible to manufacture sperm and eggs from stem cells or even adult skin cells.

This could, at least in theory, permit men to become biological mothers, and with genetic engineering, women to become fathers:

Fertility clinics in Britain are currently banned from using artificial sperm or eggs to treat infertile couples. However, if scientists perfected the ability to produce germ cells in the lab – something Surani predicts is at least a decade away – regulators could face pressure to revise the law to reflect the new possibilities.

For instance, two men could potentially have a baby that was genetically related to both of them by using skin cells from one to make an egg and cells from the other to make the sperm. Then, a woman would be hired or would volunteer to become a surrogate mother of a baby with two male biological parents. Or, if some get their way, one of the men could have a uterus transplanted so that he could gestate and give birth via caesarean section. That has been seriously advocated by such bioethics luminaries as Joseph Fletcher.

Now, add in CRISPR gene editing, three-parent IVF techniques, and the “no limits” mentality of some in science and society, and the atomizing *Brave New World* possibilities become endless. By the way, the (phony) ban mentioned in the article is typical of what we see in biotech all the time: Outlaw what can't be done today to permit the research to be performed that will permit it to be done. Then, once that succeeds,, lift the ban—meaning the prohibition was really meant to give false assurance and public space to work out the technology.

This is recipe for the transhumanist dream of radical individualistic procreation, baby manufacture, and radical family restructuring. If that's what we want—I don't think it should be permitted, but I don't have a monopoly on wisdom—it is what we want.

We should at least have a serious societal discussion before these things can be done, to determine—through democratic means—the breadth and scope of regulations that should govern these technologies. Otherwise, we are heading toward an anarchic procreative society.

LifeNews.com Note: Wesley J. Smith, J.D., is a special consultant to the Center for Bioethics and Culture and a bioethics attorney who blogs at [Human Exeptionalism](#)