

Is it time to make human-chimp hybrids?

Jerry Bergman and Jeffrey Tomkins

Darwinism teaches that humans are simply another animal produced in the continuum of evolution. Researchers have produced many hybrids, even between two animals once classified as different species.¹ Some of the many examples include tigers, the offspring of a male tiger bred with a female lion. Ligers are the offspring of a male lion bred with a female tiger. A jaguar and a leopard mix produces a jagulep. A leopard and a lion produce a leopon. As far as known, all of the big cats can interbreed.² Many creationists would place most cats in a single cat ‘kind’, so these results that would surprise most people are well within a biblical framework of origins. The elaboration of creationist kinds (baraminology) and the paradigm of discontinuity in the continuum of life have been tackled at length previously.^{3–16}

Based on an evolutionary perspective that humans and chimpanzees are closely related, David Barash, Professor Emeritus of Psychology at the University of Washington, recently stated in a widely read blog, that it is “... by no means impossible or even unlikely that a hybrid or a chimera combining a human being and a chimpanzee could be produced in a laboratory. After all, human and chimp (or bonobo) share, by most estimates, roughly 99 percent of their nuclear DNA.”¹⁷

He adds that the gene-editing tool CRISPR provides scientists with the ability of adding and deleting targeted genes. Consequently, “it is not unreasonable to foresee the possibility—eventually, perhaps, the likelihood—of producing ‘humanzees’ or ‘chimhumans’. Such an individual would ... be neither human nor chimp: rather, something in between.”¹⁷

He added: “Doing so would be a terrific idea” to quell the most harmful “theologically-driven myth of all times: that human beings are discontinuous from the rest of the natural world, ... specially created and endowed with souls, whereas ‘they’—all other creatures—were not.” Producing ‘chimhumans’ would be, Barash argues, the capstone proof of evolution. It would “drive a stake into the heart of that destructive disinformation campaign of discontinuity, of human hegemony over all other living things.”¹⁷ This statement attacks the view that, as Genesis teaches, man is created in God’s image and to have dominion over the animals:

“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth’” (Genesis 1:26, ESV).

The chimhuman goal is important to some Darwinists because it “is almost impossible to imagine how the most die-hard advocate of humans having a discontinuously unique biological status could continue to maintain this position if confronted with a real, functioning, human-chimp combination”.¹ Barash concluded: “faced with individuals who are clearly intermediate between human and ape, it will become painfully obvious that a rigid distinction between the two is no longer tenable”.¹

A major mistake in the evolutionary reasoning of Barash is the error that “human and chimp (or bonobo) share,

by most estimates, roughly 99 percent of their nuclear DNA”. Evolutionists need close to a 99% similarity to make human evolution from an ape-like ancestor seem plausible within the last 3 to 6 Ma. However, even leading evolutionists disagree with this figure. Todd Preuss, a leading primate geneticist stated: “It is now clear that the genetic differences between humans and chimpanzees are far more extensive than previously thought; their genomes are not 98% or 99% identical.” Preuss then goes on to claim a 96% similarity for the alignable regions of the human and chimpanzee genomes.

In a reassessment of six different research papers comparing human and chimpanzee DNA that seemed to support a 96 to 98.5% similarity, Tomkins and Bergman discovered that large amounts of data had been omitted to achieve an outcome favourable to evolutionary expectations. In fact, when the amount of omitted non-aligning data was factored back into the estimates, overall genome similarities between humans and chimpanzees of 81 and 87% were obtained.¹⁸ These results were similar to a later study done using raw chimpanzee DNA sequences aligned onto human in which an overall DNA similarity of 85% was achieved.¹⁹ Clearly, the genome similarity between humans and chimpanzees is much less than the level needed to make human evolution from an ape-like ancestor plausible.

Professor Barash advocates creating a human-chimpanzee hybrid using biotechnology because he assumes its success will encourage humans to treat animals better, since the divide that now exists between humans and all lower forms of life, especially apes, will be reduced. In fact, such a scheme would likely have the opposite effect. If humans are just another animal, a different type of primate, it will likely influence them to further de-humanize other humans. After all, they are just

animals. This is exactly how Nazi Germany justified mistreating certain people, including Slavs, Jews, and Roma, that led to the Holocaust.⁵

David Barash is not a fringe scientist, but a leading researcher in evolutionary psychology and a popularizer of Darwinian ideas in general. He has written, edited, or co-authored 40 books and written over 230 scholarly articles. He is also a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. And he is soon to be releasing a new book focused on promoting human evolution and the degradation of the status of mankind being created in God's image. The opening description of the book on Amazon.com states:

"Human beings have long seen themselves as the center of the universe, the apple of God's eye, specially-created creatures who are somehow above and beyond the natural world. This viewpoint—a persistent paradigm of our own unique self-importance—is as dangerous as it is false."²⁰

Emphasizing the importance that the academic establishment is placing on this effort are editorial reviews raving about the new tome from such evolutionary luminaries as Richard Dawkins, Michael Ruse, Michael Shermer, Louis Leakey, and Donald C. Johanson.

Efforts in the past

Prior to the modern era of transgenic technologies that allow the transfer of DNA between completely different organisms, human-ape breeding experiments had been tried.²¹ The first scientific attempt was in the mid-1920s at a laboratory then part of French Guinea in Africa. The work was done by a leading Soviet scientist, Professor Ilya Ivanovich Ivanov (figure 1). Ivanov was a world-famous breeder of hybrids specializing in the field of artificial insemination and the interspecific hybridization of

animals. His results were reported to be sensational, especially among horse breeders from many parts of the world.

Ivanov attempted, without success, to inseminate female chimpanzees with human sperm. He also attempted a set of experiments involving ape sperm and humans, but was unsuccessful for several reasons. He used Negro women because in his day they were believed to be biologically closer to apes, thus, he reasoned, the experiment would more likely be successful.²² This belief was based on the writings of Darwin and other evolutionists of the time period.

Darwin expected that, at some future point, "not very distant ... the civilized races of man will almost certainly exterminate and replace throughout the world the savage races", thus making the gap between humans and apes even greater than it is now.²³ Eminent evolutionist Professor

Carl Vogt "distinguished, as did most biologists in the second half of the nineteenth century, between crosses of 'allied' races [such as negroes and apes] and 'distant' ones, such as white humans and apes".²⁴ The scientists of that era believed hybridization of the alleged lowest human type and the highest ape type would vindicate Darwin and serve as powerful evidence of evolution.²⁵

Both the Scriptures and Christian history condemn these failed attempts based on evolutionary ideals. The Bible is very clear: "For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish" (1 Corinthians 15:39–40, ESV). While the Bible does not specifically address the practice of artificial insemination of humans with animals, multiple scriptures do command the death penalty for bestiality (Exodus 22:19; Leviticus

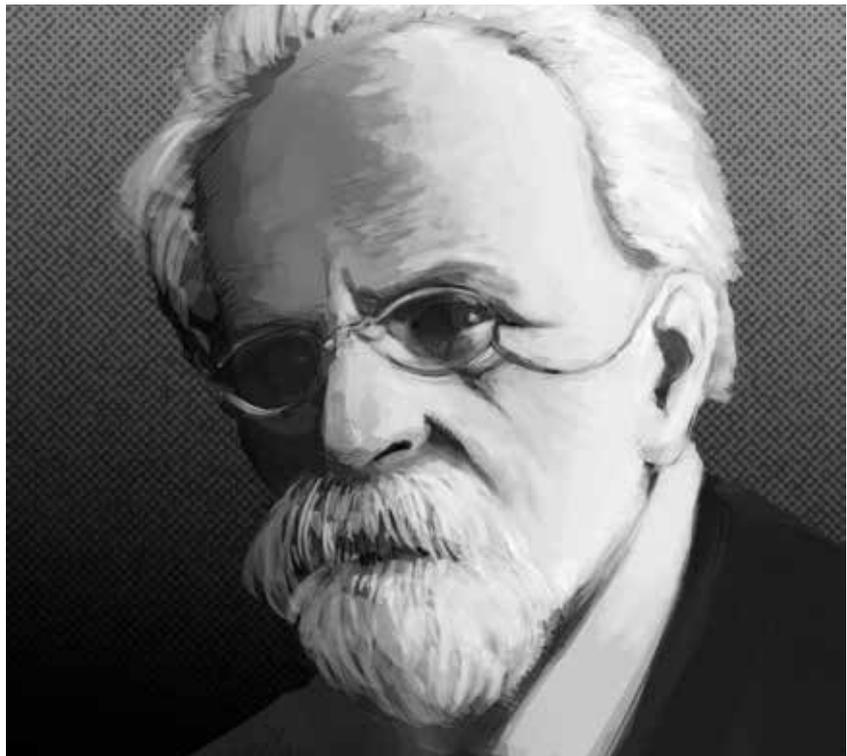


Figure 1. Soviet scientist Professor Ilya Ivanovich Ivanov was a world-famous breeder of hybrids, specializing in the field of artificial insemination and the interspecific hybridization of animals. He made extensive attempts at creating human-chimpanzee hybrids in the mid-1920s at a laboratory in French Guinea, West Africa.

18:23, 20:15–16; and Deuteronomy 27:21). Thus, it is not a moral stretch to apply this clear biblical restriction to the issue at hand in this article.

A real concern is the distinct possibility of using modern transgenic technology, such as the CRISPR/Cas9 genome engineering techniques²⁶ to transfer human DNA to chimp or vice versa that will ultimately further erode human value and encourage inhuman experiments. This is essentially what Barash is proposing, in the historical wake of the failed human chimpanzee hybridization studies promoted and performed by his early evolutionary forbearers. Now the morally warped dream of evolutionists is within reach, but will it really prove or substantiate evolutionary theory? The answer is a resounding ‘No’. Foreign DNA has been transferred across the eukaryotic kingdom of life by scientists since the 1980s using earlier transgenic techniques. The very fact that such complicated technologies have had to be used to accomplish the integration of diverse genomes outside of traditional interbreeding is actually confirmation of the concept of the discontinuity of life, an idea directly associated with biblical kinds described in the opening chapter of Genesis.

In that Barash admits humans and chimpanzees cannot hybridize and that the only recourse is to use transgenic technologies, he is unwittingly debunking the evolutionary myth of close human-ape relatedness and evolutionary continuity that he wishes to promote. Clearly life is discontinuous as the Scriptures describe with humans being especially unique as being created in God’s image.

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