



Comment on Reproductive Ethics

Att:  
Dr Bettina Schmietow  
Nuffield Council on Bioethics  
28 Bedford Square  
WC1B 3JS

29 January 2016

Subject : Genome Editing: open call for Evidence

We welcome this current Nuffield initiative which addresses the hugely complex matter of genome editing and trust it will examine the significant ethical issues involved in the various proposed manipulations of the human genome with greater acuteness than has been the case so far in the United Kingdom.

Comment on Reproductive Ethics (CORE) is a public interest group founded in 1994 to encourage informed debate on the issues associated with the new reproductive technologies. It was formed in the wake of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990 and the establishment of the Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority (HFEA).

CORE's ethical focus is on the various issues associated with assisted human reproduction, with an absolute commitment to respecting the integrity of human life from the embryonic stage onwards. We are opposed to any forms of destructive experimentation on human embryos and totally against modification of the human germline.

We participate regularly within the UK and European networks at conferences and debates, and have delivered presentations on relevant issues including the '3-parent embryo' proposals both within the European Parliament and the Council of Europe. We also have effective links with organizations in the US, not only with those who share our pro-life position on the human embryo, but also with purely secular organizations who are currently hugely concerned about the UK proposals to manipulate the human genome.

We note that many of our objections to genetic modification of the human embryo, not least our opposition to germline modification, are shared widely by various significant secular academics and groups both across Europe and of course the USA.

At times such opposition may be based more on precautionary rather than our absolutist pro-life principles, but we find it extraordinary how little account has been taken within the UK of the seriously informed critical or extremely cautious positions of so many highly professional secular international players.

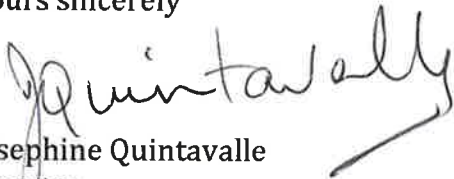
Much of this opposition can be found on the website of the Center for Genetics and Society

<http://www.geneticsandsociety.org/>

We particularly recommend that your committee members listen to a discussion which took place this week online between US Professors Knoepfler and Comfort:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=10MYV2G6u2M&feature=youtu.be>

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Josephine Quintavalle". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Josephine Quintavalle  
Director