

Human fetal biology is much more complex than the personhood movement is equipped to handle

What if at the very beginning stages of development you absorbed your twin's cells? You'd be twins—a phenomenon called a chimera. Would you suddenly feel extra special because you are really more than just one person? Threatened and confused about your identity?

News of chimerism and genetic mosaicism is not completely new, nor are the ethical and practical questions associated with them. Yet as a society, we often take a heads-in-the-sand approach to addressing what such developmental complexities mean. Bioethical and policy discussions have instead largely focused on responses to laboratory creations of cross-species combinations that lead to chimeras, hybrids, or genetics mosaics. But they miss the fact that people and politicians care deeply about what it means to them to be human and how we can protect “life.” The personhood movement, and proposed legislation discussed below, show the urgent need to understand what we are really talking about. As the political season for congressional and local campaigns heats up, some candidates will surely make promises or proposals about embryos and reproduction that do not fit the facts.

**Read the full, original story: [Politics in Your DNA](#)**