

Number LANCS-D4.3-RN-Humanity-2.0 A-PI--

Title	Research Note (RN) for D4.3
Subtitle	Issues in Focus : Humanity-2.0

PROBLEM	SOLUTION	Research Note	X	Selected Annotation
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Categories: | | |

Summary:

This note addresses issues associated with humanity 2.0 and takes examples of how they draw attention to our relationship with progress, to inequalities in the distribution of physical and mental abilities, conceptions of deity and lived experience.

CONTEXT

Body modification and enhancement technologies disclose a future world of more capable, healthier and longer lasting bodies and minds, even super-soldiers and super-intelligence. Recent developments play a role in cultivating these visions, the use of implants, the use of 'smart' prosthesis, advances in reconstructive surgery, development of assistive robotics—i.e., what these developments currently deliver, but also what they promise the future could look like.

(Key readings include, Fuller, 2011; Savulescu, 2009; Turkle, 2007; Bostrom, 2005; Bibel et al, 2004; Bibel, 2005; Nordmann, 2004; Roco and Bainbridge, 2002; European Commission, 2011; Garreau, 2005; Kjølberg et al, 2008; Wolpe, 2002).

FACTS

The origin and fate of our biological roots is one possible defining human feature. However, historically we transcend biology via humanism and egalitarianism and other ways of ordering societies where persons, at least in principle, are equal in rights and responsibilities.

COMMENT

Visions of enhanced humans draw attention to the existing inequalities in the distribution of physical and mental abilities, stirring fears about a new forms of superiority to the detriment of those 'left behind'. They also draw attention to existing inequalities in wealth and well-being, stirring fears about unequal access to modification options.

1. Modifications may lead to new abilities but we need to ask what 'enhancement' actually stands for.
 - What is the relationship between the use of mind-altering drugs, piercing, tattooing and body-art more generally, and modifications that promise enhancement?
2. Modifications are used for therapeutic purposes and we need to ask about justice in the distribution of therapy.

3. Modifications are experiential, stirring excitement about unique phenomena of lived experience and being in the world.
4. Modifications can change perceptions of self and identity.

Visions of enhanced humans draw attention to deity and religious orientations to justify progress and to speculate on our collective role in it.

1. What is the role of aspirations to make a transition from animals to gods?
2. What if humans (in divine capacity) could take 'full' control of a techno-scientific (re)creation of the entire world, thereby facilitating evolution into humanity 2.0?
3. Are divine aspirations the way to direct human modification away from the pitfalls of inequality and injustice.