

Study on Nick Bostrom's Idea of Human Enhancement

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Abstract: Read Nick Bostrom's books and articles on human enhancement at nickbostrom.com. Then, analyze and summarize Nick Bostrom's position on human enhancement, especially the ethical, legal and social impact of enhancement technology. This study is conducive to promoting the relationship between human and society, seeking a balance between human and technology. It is of great significance for human enhancement technology to improve human welfare.

1. Introduction

The problem of human enhancement technology is a social problem with more ethical disputes at the end of the 20th century with the development of modern technology. The particularity and complexity of its research object, as well as a series of major and realistic aspects related to the immediate survival and health of human beings and the development of the society in the future, so this problem have become the interdisciplinary frontier issues that experts and scholars in various fields are concerned about and hotly discussed. The research on human enhancement technology is not only a concern in the field of science and technology, but also a concern in the field of ethics and morality. Human beings have not only moral responsibility but also practical responsibility for the social impact caused by science and technology. In order to live and act ethically, it is urgent to promote the ethical research and discussion on the application of technology practice. This paper analyzes the ethics of human enhancement by renowned scholar Nick Bostrom, It is hoped that the ethical issues involved in the practical application of human enhancement technology can be used for reference so as to improve human welfare.

2. A Brief Introduction of Nick Bostrom

Professor of Applied Ethics and founder and director of the Future of Humanity Institute at the University of Oxford. Nick Bostrom's academic background includes physics, computer science, mathematical logic, and philosophy. He holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy, mathematics, logic and artificial intelligence from the University of Gothenburg. A master's degree in philosophy and physics from Stockholm University and a master's degree in computational neuroscience from King's College London. He received his PhD from the London School of Economics in 2000. He was a professor at Yale University (2000-2002) and a postdoctoral Fellow at the British Academy at the University of Oxford (2002-2005). He is the author of more than 200 publications, including *Human Selection Bias* (Routledge, 2002), *Global Catastrophe Crisis* (Oxford University Press, 2008), *Human Augments* (Oxford University Press, 2009) and *Super intelligence: Pathways, Dangers and Strategies* (Oxford University Press, 2014).

In 2009, he was awarded the Eugene R. Gannon Award (one person selected each year from philosophy, mathematics, arts and other humanities and natural sciences worldwide). In 2012, Nick Bostrom and Max Moore founded the World Transhumanist Society. He wrote the eight principles of trans humanism Declaration, emphasizing that while transforming to post-human, corresponding preventive measures should also be taken. He was named to Foreign Policy's "100 Top Global Thinkers" in 2009 and 2015.

3. Nick Bostrom's Definition of the Concept of "Human Enhancement"

Nick Bostrom sees human enhancement as a more positive approach to technology policy that creates opportunities for us to live longer and healthier lives, enhance our memory and other intellectual abilities, improve our emotional experience, and increase our subjective sense of well-being. In general, to have more control over our own lives. At the same time, Nick Bostrom stresses that human enhancement is not technological optimism.^[1] We need to see the great potential of future technologies, but they can also be misused to cause great harm and even lead to the demise of intelligent life, namely ourselves.

4. Nick Bostrom's Core Idea of Human Enhancement

Nick Bostrom studies the possibility of the emergence of mass-destructive and easily accessible technologies. He believes new technology could provide solutions to some of the world's most problems, but it could also lead to humanity's self-destruction if we're not careful.^[2] While humanity has created technologies with the potential for mass destruction, such as nuclear weapons, this development has been limited by many factors, including the cost and scarcity of the materials needed to make them. According to Nick Bostrom, it's simply because we've been lucky so far. He explained that we have yet to achieve what he calls "fragile world" technology, and that so far we have succeeded in achieving technologies that are beneficial to society. He was referring to the "white" ball pulled from the imaginary urn, something like a nuclear weapon that can be thought of as black. One of the most obvious techniques of the black ball is that it can easily exert enormous destructive power. Such as advances in biohacking, which will enable people with basic training to cause huge disease. Nick Bostrom argues that so far we haven't extracted a single black ball. The reason is not that our technology policy is particularly prudent or wise, it's because we've been lucky. To prevent the destabilization of civilization, the world must take drastic precautions, says Nick Bostrom. There may be extremely effective preventive policing or an attempt at effective global governance. Each situation presents a set of challenges and potential consequences. We can let the world rest in its sweet slumber and hope with confidence, but when the alarm goes off, we jump out of bed and take the necessary action.

Nick Bostrom discussed and analyzed the five ethical issues of life extension, physical enhancement, emotional enhancement, cognitive enhancement and genetic enhancement. At the beginning of the paper, Nick Bostrom points out that the distinction between enhancement and therapy is blurred, and he explains the reasons. The difference between enhancement and treatment is also the common contradiction of many scholars in the world. Nick Bostrom argues that enhancement is usually contrasted with treatment. Generally speaking, the purpose of therapy is to fix what has gone wrong by treating a specific disease or injury, while the purpose of enhancement is to improve the state of the body beyond its normal healthy state. However, the distinction between treatment and enhancement is blurry. So transhumanists (advocates of human enhancement) are not affected by the issues that distinction between enhancement and therapy. Nick Bostrom thinks that we should seek to develop and provide options for human enhancement to protect and expand life, health, cognitive, emotional well-being, and the lives that individuals may wish to improve. For life extension, we conclude that the arguments we have considered do not succeed in showing that radical life extension would cause any insuperable social problems, nor-as Williams believed-that it would reduce the quality of life of those who make use of it.^[3] He is agnostic about whether performance-enhancing drugs should be allowed in sports to enhance physical fitness. Whether performance-enhancing drugs should be allowed to be used in competition ultimately depends on what is the fundamental value people think they have in competition. For mood and personality enhancement, he says prozac, for example, is good for personality. Prozac can make people outgoing and self-confidence. He argues that it is better to use drugs for value than not to use them at all. Mood and personality enhancement technologies have the potential to have a considerable positive impact on our lives. For cognitive enhancement, Such as language, education, mental skills, drinking coffee, meditation, exercise, sleep, taking herbs, vitamin supplements, modafinil, ritalin, Transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) can play a role in improving all aspects of our cognitive abilities. When it comes to genetic enhancement, various individuals can possess

very different capacities and yet be equal in moral status. ^[4]We have no reason to oppose the use of genetic interventions to select the best child, but consider the best interests and future welfare of children who have no voice.

Nick Bostrom focuses on the different aspects of Dignity, the relationship between Dignity and Enhancement. He argues that dignity and enhancement interact in complex ways, that our human dignity lies in our capacity for self-enhancement and in the dignity we gain through the exercise of that capacity. The greater the capacity acquired through artificial enhancement, the greater the dignity actually. It also reveals some fundamental problems in the theory of value that the effect of any particular enhancement must be evaluated in its proper empirical context. Through enhancement, however, it is possible to better appreciate and secure many forms of dignity that are overlooked or missing under current conditions. In a post-human world, dignity as a quality, ^[5]as organized behavior, will become ever more important.

As a whole, Nick Bostrom supports the development of human enhancement technology, but he is also aware of the dangers of human-enhanced technology. It calls on us not to blindly pursue technology, but to take precautions in advance of the storm. This is an urgent need to improve the ethical norms, protect and safeguard the well-being and interests of human beings, so that the whole society forward better.

5. Conclusion

By Nick bostrom enhance human research, combined with the reality of our national condition, we should be guided by an ethical vision of responsibility and inclusion in formulating policies regarding the application of enhancement technologies in our country. We pay attention to any opportunities and risks, and respect autonomy and individual rights. We concern about the interests and responsibilities of all people, including our future generations. So keep the balance among technology, human beings and society, we can enjoy more well-being.

References

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