



POS 494-1005 (35117 Science and Society) Human Enhancement and Democracy: the Political Implications of Convergent Technologies

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Tuesday and Thursday 4:30-5:45pm

SS 304

In this course we will explore the social and political implications of what some scholars and pundits have referred to as man's "directed evolution". The permanent, physical incorporation of technology into the human body is a process which has already begun and some claim is accelerating at an exponential pace concurrent with general technological development. Human enhancement will impact individual identity, human identity, and the social systems we rely upon to govern our interactions and facilitate our daily lives. The potential effects of unregulated human enhancement on the economy and our place within it will be profound and potentially devastating for socio-economic classes already at a distinct disadvantage relative to those groups with the financial and social wherewithal to provide their young with the best available childhood nutrition, primary, secondary, and college education. We will attempt to parse the phenomenon of human enhancement in ways which transcend the already antiquated moral and economic arguments commonly encountered within the literature and we will apply a variety of analytical perspectives that are more agile, nuanced, and capable of providing meaningful policy recommendations for governing the development of these powerful and intimate technologies.