

# Techno-Hyperhumanism

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**In this short position paper, we will attempt to define Techno-Hyperhumanism and why it is needed to counter the Transhumanist agenda. We argue that through the use of current technology humans have fallen prey to the digital feed that directs us on how to behave, what to have, what to achieve and what to aspire to. By choosing entertainment over culture, humans are degrading themselves to be part of this feed and as a consequence immediate gratification, confirmation bias and neglect are taking control. Social media technology has been used to subjugate us and capture our attention, this makes it difficult for us to gain sovereignty over ourselves and the way we use these technologies. Techno-Hyperhumanism is also a call to remember our natural capacity to shift states, to look toward both traditional practice and modern technology. This combination acts as a guide towards collaborative and integrated levels of consciousness, both internally, between our sensory and cognitive capacities and externally, with one another and our planet.**

*Hyperhumanism. Techno-Hyperhumanism. Ontological Design.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

It is ironic that many developers in the 1990's assumed that they were creating technology in order to free up more time for us to spend in more meaningful ways. Instead that technology has enslaved us into an illusory world, which in some cases has become more real than materiality itself.

Rather than live in an age of enlightenment, humanity has been plugged itself into *the feed*, and whilst being connected to this *feed*, we have largely become passive consumers. We are populating and occupying our minds almost entirely with input from this feed, it holds our attention and suffocates our perceptual bandwidth, making us prisoners of the digital panopticon. This has direct knock-on effects including the destruction of our societies.

We have become a 'fast-food thought' generation and through this over stimulation we are easy targets for media neuro-hacking. Technology is not the problem in and of itself, but rather the way we have (mis)used it. Technology has primarily become a means of entertainment, and as we become locked into endless projected realities, we have forgotten that technology could instead be used to develop a broader range of states of awareness.

Today we understand, more than ever, that technology is not working for us and that it is intentionally being designed to work against us. The major risk is that the next generations will be working with less cognitive functions than that of today. Humanity has to decide and critically, find the will, to use tech for good.

As Viktor Frankl a celebrated Austrian psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor states:

Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way (Frankl 1963).

## 2. DEFINITION

What is the difference between i) Humanism, ii) Transhumanism and iii) Hyperhumanism (Posthumanism)?

- (i) Humanism emphasises the value and agency of human beings, individually and collectively.
- (ii) Transhumanism involves enhancement of all kinds (but humans are still considered to be the most important species).
- (iii) Hyperhumanism (a form of Posthumanism) involves the deconstruction of the human

and understanding that the human condition is not a fixed, but an open notion (where humans are no longer seen as the most important species but just one part of a nested ecology). Hyperhumanism is focused on combining our innate human abilities (community, empathy, compassion, imagination, kindness) with the carefully designed use of technology (where it acts primarily as a stimulus to reveal our own untapped abilities, potential and resources).

## **2.1 Transhumanism vs techno-hyperhumanism**

Transhumanism forces us to become utterly dependent on technology, which subverts our ability to develop the skills for ourselves. For example, one of the taglines of the mindware company Cyborgnest is “We do not want to wear technology, we want to become technology” (Cyborgnest 2020) this dependence on technology is fundamentally a Transhumanist trait.

In contrast, Techno-Hyperhumanism utilises technology as a catalyst for developing our own innate human abilities. Transhumanism in some ways could be considered one of the brightest upgrades to humanism, but its heavy reliance on technology, the individual ego and corporate driven agendas makes it hard for humans to implement it collectively (so as to be used productively for community driven goals).

While Techno-Hyperhumanism also thrives on an individual growth basis, its social structure is based on diminishing human needs as much as possible in order to help others achieve the resources needed for achieving such a state.

In summary, the main difference between Transhumanism and Techno-Hyperhumanism is the final goal: While one fights to control materiality and information, the other strives for becoming a better self, while helping others to become better selves in their own right.

## **2.2 From techno-hyperhumanism to hyperhumanism**

Currently Hyperhumanism appears to be out of reach, this is primarily because we are living in a hyper-illusory reality that functions through the hijacking of our attention. Hyperhumanism requires a mental control that would only have been available for masters like Pythagoras, but by utilising available technology, we can achieve different states of awareness and forms of sensory clarity that may help us to develop a path towards a stable state of Hyperhumanism. In other words, Hyperhumanism is the goal but we argue that we can use Techno-Hyperhumanism to be the bridge

to get us there. The Pythagoras’ Mystery School (known as The Invisible College) is still active today and was the first organisation to look at the development of Hyperhumans (Mishlove 1993).

Within Techno-Hyperhumanism, technology acts as a temporary and supportive container (scaffolding) that nurtures the development of new skills. Skills that are innate and currently unexercised, that we can reignite to generate a form of human enhancement prosthetics. These prosthetics are designed to awaken us to our natural capacity for states of expansion and flow.

The aim of hyperhumanism is to enhance perception across three levels:

- (i) From within, and about yourself.
- (ii) About your surroundings
- (iii) About your relations.

## **2.3 Features of techno-hyperhumanism**

- Techno-Hyperhumanism focuses on how we can use technology as a bridge to reach a state of Hyperhumanism.
- Techno-Hyperhumanism means using technology to undo the damage caused by poorly designed technology (technology as a design problem).
- Techno-Hyperhumanism helps us to reclaim our attention by becoming conscious of what we pay attention to.

Rodrigo Montenegro, a brain computer interface (BCI) expert is working on an ‘antidote’ to Musk’s Neuralink by focusing on our ability to use technology as a stimulus to tap into our own innate abilities.

My hope is not that we get to a point in technological advancement where we don’t need implants to boot our brains but we use technology in order to be empowered by it. To empower consciousness to ultimately overcome technology, not to become dependent (Montenegro 2020).

A counter argument to the dependence argument is that homosapiens are a species made possible through technology (language, tool-use etc.) and that we have never existed as a technology-less species.

However, it is clear that humanity has to decide to use tech for good or for bad, to become ever more dependent or not. Today we understand more than ever that technology is not working for us but is actually being intentionally designed to work against us.

We must expand our abilities and senses beyond what we think is normal or even possible. The promise of future brain-computer interfaces is to give us insight into who we actually are. This will be achieved by unveiling the superpowers our consciousness already has naturally, beyond the pathologies we currently demonstrate. I believe that we are at the edge of a revolution, which will allow us to read and re-write our neural behaviours in order to take control of our cognitive evolution. The best thing we can do now as a species, is to work on our cognitive adaptability whilst also increasing our humanity via enhanced empathy and humility (Montenegro 2020).

### 3. TECHNO HYPER-HUMANISM SOLUTIONS

The Center for Humane Technology has a fascinating model involving the redesigning of technology to protect the vulnerabilities of human nature whilst supporting the social fabric. This model relates directly to Hyper-Humanism.

The race for our attention is the underlying cause of human downgrading. More than two billion people -- a psychological footprint bigger than Christianity -- are jacked into social platforms designed with the goal of not just getting our attention, but getting us addicted to getting attention from others. This is an extractive attention economy.... By exploiting human weaknesses, tech is taking control of society and human history.... Technology has been downgrading our well-being, while upgrading machines (Harris 2019).

According to the Center for Humane Technology there are three ways to catalyse the development of this Humane Technology:

- (i) Humane Social Systems
- (ii) Humane AI, not overpowering AI
- (iii) Humane Regenerative Incentives, instead of Extraction

Crucially the model concludes that if we design our systems to protect humans then we can not only avoid downgrading humans, but actually achieve an upgrade in human capacity.

#### 3.1 Techniques of techno-hyperhumanism

We have to find ways to use technology that help us liberate ourselves from the all-consuming feed and scroll rot. The following are the elemental aspects that would be developed in a techno hyper human:

- Awareness – biological senses
- Consciousness – abstraction and analysis
- Rationality and logic
- Emotional management
- Empathy

- Intuition
- Knowledge
- Conduct
- Health and fitness
- Physical development
- Nootropics
- Nutrition and awareness of food origins
- Integration with nature

We cannot grow effectively using the current technology standards and inadequate protocols for human cognitive and emotional growth. Techno-hyperhumanism involves technologies and techniques that act as scaffolding for a short period in order to allow the development of skill that you can then exercise yourself once the scaffolding is removed. Techniques include:

- Building up your immune system,
- Slowing down your metabolism,
- Fasting
- Darkness immersion
- Sensory deprivation
- Different forms of meditation
- Different forms of dance (whirling dervish etc.)
- Dreaming (learning lucid and parallel dreaming)
- Enhanced memory (through memory palace techniques and smart drugs)
- Sense making leading to meaning making: developing sensory augmentation using a variety of senses and combining senses to create whole new forms of experience
- Language and how it affects cognition and the way you filter reality i.e. research has shown that being bilingual increases brain plasticity and makes them twice as likely to recover from a stroke (Dockrill 2015)

#### 3.2 Technologies of techno-hyperhumanism

Ontological Design (OD) is the design of a way of becoming, not just creating crutches with technology but actually facilitating the evolution of human capability (Willis 2006).

OD encourages us to use technology to enhance our existing reality. This can be achieved through ontological technology such as: neuromodulators, mind and/or emotion inducers, cognition enhancing edibles, quantified self-algorithms, thought recollection devices, non-invasive health analysis technology and empathy enhancing techniques.

These are not the tools of science fiction but tools that will allow us to get to know ourselves better, through the use of feedback loops that will in turn allow us to enter and practise different states of awareness. One of the main goals is to increase

experiences of flow and resiliency in the face of challenges.

Another Techno-Hyperhumanist technology is neurohacking. Neurohacking implies the deliberate manipulation of the brain in order to induce it into a specific mental state. Neurohacking now allows us to improve the desired results with either chemicals, electrical stimulation, magnetic transduction and even specific audio sequences, like the ones used for neuroware development.

#### 4. ETHICS

With any technological development, either in terms of hardware, software or philosophy there is always the ever-present danger of the double-edged sword; the hidden trap between the proper use of a tool and the risk of becoming subservient to the tool and the philosophy behind the tool itself (which is often the case with transhumanism). Indeed, it is the misguided use of technology that has taken us to our current state of unconsciousness driven by the hijacking of our attention vs embodied presence, curiosity and choice.

#### 5. CONCLUSIONS

Hyperhumanism means combining our innate human abilities for empathy, compassion, imagination, kindness with technology as a stimulus to tap into your own resources.

As much as hyperhumanism is a movement towards the future. It is also a fundamental return to our roots, while also applying the learning from our modern understandings of neuroscience. We have lost touch with our innate capacities as humans and once we remember them, we can then move forward with the expansion and integration of our capacity to state shift – and the reflection and support both science and technology can offer toward this state of remembering, connection and expansion.

#### 6. FUTURE WORK

In future work the history of the term Hyperhumanism will be explored through the positioning of hyperhumanism and technohyperhumanism in the literature. The impact on human identity of Hyperhumanism and Techno-humanism will be reviewed. Finally, examples

comparing Transhumanist technologies with Techno-Hyperhumanist technologies will be carried out alongside the ethics of the technology of improvement.

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#### 8. DEDICATION

My contribution to this paper is dedicated to Dr Kim Veltman. Kim inspired me with the knowledge that during the 19th century, 'extra dimensions of humans' had a very negative orientations; the Übermensch and Superman got caught up in euthanasia plans to get rid of the weak. As a result, I am determined to work towards reversing that trend.

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