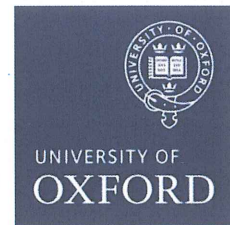


CSB



**wellcome
centre
ethics+
humanities**



Enhancement: Cognitive, Moral and Mood; Part II

27-28 April 2020, Belgrade

The Center for the Study of Bioethics

in partnership with

**Wellcome Centre for Ethics and Humanities,
University of Oxford**

The Center for the Study of Bioethics in partnership with the University of Oxford's Wellcome Centre for Ethics and the Humanities (WEH), are jointly organizing the international conference, "Enhancement: Cognitive, Moral and Mood; Part II". The event will take place at the Center for the Study of Bioethics in Belgrade, Serbia, 27-28 April 2020.

In May 2013, the Center for the Study of Bioethics and the Oxford Centre for Neuroethics jointly organized the conference “Enhancement: Cognitive, Moral and Mood.” Julian Savulescu, Peter Singer and John Harris were among the presenters.

The 2020 conference will be a follow-up of the 2013 event. It will be a 2-day gathering, with CSB and WEH as partners in the event. The conference theme will be the state of enhancement in 2020. Part of the conference’s focus will also be on what has changed in the enhancement debate relative to 2013: April 2020 as compared to May 2013.

The 2020 conference also builds on the Center for the Study of Bioethics’ tradition of bringing together top experts in the field of bioethics to discuss novel issues. In October 2015, the Center for the Study of Bioethics and The Hastings Center already carried the 2013 debate one step further with the conference “Enhancing Understanding of Enhancement”. The keynote speakers were John Harris and Erik Parens. This event was also organized in Belgrade. In 2017, the Center for the Study of Bioethics partnered with the Division of Medical Ethics in NYU School of Medicine Department of Population Health and The Hastings Center for the conference “Genome Editing: Biomedical and Ethical Perspectives”. Arthur Caplan was one of the keynote speakers. Other keynote or invited speakers include Nick Agar, Josephine Johnston, Anders Sandberg and Katrien Devolder.

The conference also coheres with the Wellcome Centre for Ethics and Humanities’ mission to support research on pressing challenges presented by advances in neuroscience, big data, genomics, and global connectedness, and by their convergence. Through its research and public engagement activities, WEH aims to lead debate on the ethical requirements for scientific research and technological innovation capable both of improving health and of commanding well-founded public trust and confidence.

Conference Theme and Purpose

Human enhancement is one of the most prominent themes in bioethics. Enhancement is uncontroversial *in principle*; there is nothing contentious about the aspiration to enhance someone’s abilities *per se*. However, enhancement becomes controversial when it is achieved via bio-medical means, and when it is assumed that it is morally justifiable to use biomedical interventions for non-medical purposes, that is, with the aim of enhancing normal functioning. Proponents of bio-medical enhancement, however, have also developed differing positions among themselves, particularly with regards to the issue of the relationship between cognitive and *moral* enhancement by bio-medical means.

As the scholars who will attend the 2020 conference are some of the most important global figures in the enhancement debate, and as this debate is one of the most relevant debates in contemporary biomedicine, the April 2020 conference in Belgrade is expected to be a key scientific event of 2020.

Envisioned Conference Results

One envisioned result of the conference dialogue is a further development and clarification of various perspectives on enhancement. It remains to be seen to what extent this result will imply the discovery of new common ground among the proponents of various positions, or whether it will develop the debate in the direction of a multiplication and deepening of existing differences. But no matter whether

some of the differences among the positions will be relaxed or deepened, the enhancement debate itself will acquire additional content. In that sense, this debate will be enhanced itself. Furthermore, by exploring the idea of moral enhancement as a possible companion to other forms of enhancement, the conference will contribute to the search for a moral justification of human enhancement.

The conference will cover various aspects of enhancement and will aim both at searching for enhanced enhancement opportunities, as well as for an enhanced understanding of the concept of enhancement. *Hence, the conference is expected to enhance the enhancement debate itself.*

An outcome of the conference might be the publication of an edited volume or a journal's special issue "*Enhancing Enhancement*". In this publication the conference participants will have the opportunity to publish the papers they presented at the conference or other texts that foster the enhancement debate.

Summary

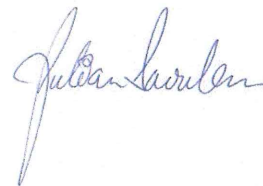
On 27 and 28 April 2020, The Center for the Study of Bioethics and the Wellcome Centre for Ethics and the Humanities of the University of Oxford are organizing a conference on the issue of enhancement, largely as a follow-up on the May 2013 conference, realized by The Center for the Study of Bioethics in partnership with the Oxford Centre for Neuroethics. The conference shall again be held in Belgrade and with the same or similar themes as 7 years previously.

Invitation

We invite you to participate in the conference with a paper presentation no longer than 20 minutes. Abstracts are due on 1 November 2019. Notification of acceptance will be sent to the authors by 14 November 2019.



Vojin Rakić
Director of CSB



Julian Savulescu
Co-director of WCEH

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

**ENHANCEMENT: COGNITIVE, MORAL
AND MOOD; PART II**

1 – 2 March, 2021, Belgrade, Serbia

B O O K O F A B S T R A C T S

Marc Roux, Association Francaise Transhumaniste

Evolution of moral/cognitive enhancement in France since 2013: a transhumanistic point of view

In December 2013, a few months later, after the first conference "Enhancement: Cognitive, Moral and Mood", the French National Consultative Committee of Ethics (CCNE) published a report (n° 122) entitled « Recours aux techniques biomédicales en vue de « neuro--amélioration » chez la personne non malade » (« Use of biomedical techniques in view of « neuro enhancement » in the non-sick person »). This publication seemed to mark a real awareness on the part of the French academic community concerning the potential and the stakes of mental enhancement. Six years later, where are we in France? We will propose a reflection on the difficulties and the opportunities which have appeared since, as well in the scientific field as in that of the legislation or the perception by the society. Above all, we will explore different ways in which it seems to us that the acceptance of moral, cognitive and mood enhancement is possible, even if it undoubtedly requires a real medical paradigm shift. We will not dodge the question of the preservation of free will. Finally, we will try to show that a transhumanist technoprogressist thinking, that is to say, particularly attentive to the health, environmental and social consequences of these advances, has a crucial role to play in the construction of these possibilities.

Marina Budić, Marko Galjak, Institute of Social Sciences, Belgrade

People's Attitudes towards Moral Bioenhancement

The paper represents an empirical study of public attitudes towards moral bioenhancement. Moral behavior is essential to human society nowadays. The issue of moral enhancement is important since moral behavior and humanity are, along with rationality, a precious and essential value that constitutes us as human beings. Cognitive and scientific progress allows people to increase their capabilities and use them for both good and bad. Scientific advances offer a possible solution for some forms of the immoral behavior, misbehavior and crimes:

moral enhancement of human beings through biomedical and biotechnological means, provided they are safe and effective. Bioenhancement implies *biomedical interventions that are used to improve human form or functioning beyond what is necessary to restore or sustain health*. Moral enhancement can be defined as an increase in the moral value of the actions, motives or the character of a moral agent. It implies the improvement of moral dispositions.

Vigorous debate over the moral propriety of moral enhancement exists, but the views of the public have been largely absent from the discussion. In this paper we have examined people's attitudes towards moral bioenhancement. It is important to know public attitudes and the level of the familiarity with this topic. We have carried out a survey in order to obtain quantitative data on public attitudes towards moral bioenhancement. To gain insight into the reasons the public may have for endorsing or eschewing pharmacological moral enhancement, we used empirical tools to explore public attitudes towards these issues. We have examined whether factors like the level of education and familiarity with the topic have impact on public attitudes. Factors that could have impact on people's attitudes towards bioenhancement are inequality, identity change, unnaturalness, restricted freedom, the need for the enhancement, feasibility, efficacy, safety, and the means, some of which we have isolated in the questionnaire. We were interested in the reasons why people approve or disapprove this form of enhancement. Further, we want to highlight the importance of querying and understanding the public on this issue. Morality at societal level is highly contextual. It is important to examine whether there is a gap between the learned opinion of philosophers and scientists, and the opinion of the general public, because that would suggest that something must change in order for bioenhancement to be useful and effective. One more worry about this issue is whether we engage in a form of social engineering that runs counter to public opinion or not. We have questioned if the familiarity with the topics is one of the reasons why people accept or reject bioenhancement. If this is the case, scientists and educators should focus on the education of people, especially young.

Margit Sutrop, University of Tartu/Helsinki Collegium of Advanced Studies

How can AI enhance moral agents and how can we align AI with human values?

Various proposals have been made on how ethics could be integrated into AI systems, ranging from the suggestion of general frameworks of “ethics by design” or “value alignment”