

PART 3

Imagining Society and Politics: Transhumanism and Its Incompatibilities

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Transhumanism

INTRODUCTION

Who is the creator and determining god of such new creatures as cyborgs or Frankensteins – society, parliament, corporations or a whole new body of people: why not a machine?

Should any or some, or all of this be our fate? If so, I think our connections with each other will change profoundly. Let's start with the much touted 150 year life span. Death, birth and marriage surely will appear rather different. The brain becomes more complex and encompassing and so obviously thinking processes change intersecting with existing societal rules, cultures and structures. Bodies likewise change even totally re-evolve or even de-evolve and we have many rules, written and unwritten about bodies attached to brains. We will not and cannot avoid profound social consequences.

Transhumanism as a top to bottom revolution

The embedding of Transhumanism is a revolution from top to bottom and if we do not assess it, prepare for it, foretell it and anticipate its consequences, we may well be more socially and politically deranged than in other period of history. While the science might progress in increments the social consequences require great concentrations of social energy, if we wish to preserve what we value and aspire to in other fields. Transhumanism envisages a leap of such magnitude that the implications are not readily restrained within a hierarchical calculus of rewriting subordinate legislations, or regulations, protocols for trialling new medicines and applying to the therapeutics goods administration to market new medical products or technological objects interacting with humans. Incremental change this is not! Transhumanism is revolutionary for better or worse.

Imagine flying with our own new genetically augmented wings or meeting our new and very bouncy, super strong basketball players. Wouldn't we want guarantees that those with augmented powers have "balance"? What balance? Whose balance? A 3 meter super strong person will need deft feet should they want to jump on to a crowded bus (must include soccer star gene pool and a bus with a high ceiling). How easy is it to negotiate houses, streets and shops and work with the great diversity of abilities incorporated into post human or quasi human forms? What of governing, living in, sharing a society with such genetic diversity and risk? Here we see the glaring of the oft repeated science fiction scenario of classes differentiated genetically as well as economically and politically.

Productivity is central to our society and this Transhumanism merely names a new productive model of society where we make ourselves rather than just externalised objects. However, we should assume as with the emergence of industrialism or feudalism, following slavery that other changes will emerge. Will markets provide solutions, will government and family stay the same? What will be the significance of greater risk of adverse outcomes as we meddle or recreate what took millions of years to evolve?

Just as ominous Transhumanism rather might provide the armaments industry with a logic base/blueprint for continuous war with disposable, compostable cyborgs, whose manufacture might

draw most of our resources. I assume something more general: that the creative model of our society, the place where we focus investment, intellectual work, and resources will be the place making humans. If this includes an arms race in effect we may need a post-human, non-proliferation pact. Perhaps we already do need it. We need to stop and think with our unaugmented brains. We are the authors of the imagined post –human society. We could create it or be created by it – in more senses than one. *There are a multitude of interests in this future from families with genetic disadvantages to companies wanting Mars mining stations. Interest implies conflict and political debate. So there should be! However democracy is fragile. I will argue here it may not survive the Transhumanist agenda.*

My method in giving an answer to this question about what sort of society is compatible with the agendas of Transhumanism is to work through a number of problems. The strong case of Transhumanism I will argue in Section 1 will invite or require dictatorship. Even a strongly transforming transhumanist agenda that relies on simple competition and market principles may lead to its opposite - dictatorship. That is because as a productive process a Transhumanist agenda requires a state or corporate ruling elite with great influence over its citizens and employees.

In Section 2, I look more expansively at the tension between Transhumanism and democratic society. Is Transhumanism compatible or not with democratic cultures and newer or reinvigorated criticism of our society in ideas about autonomy, freedom, community, equity and opportunity. This critique of autocracy, nonparticipation and political blockage in our society might involve a Transhumanist solution. Under these headings, we can examine Transhumanism as incompatible to democracy yet needed in view of the manifest failures of same today? We would need to take account of both that current incompatibility and further, though with emerging claims for a more participatory democracy.

(1) Strong Transhumanism: democracy, dictatorship, militarisation and the productive process

I am drawing from Alain Touraine's (1977) comments in *The Self Production of Society* about post industrial society, where he anticipates a scenario of growing authoritarianism concomitant with technological investment. His is a generalised comment in reference to investment requirements, as society shifts from production, to invention of production as the principal source of wealth/ added value. We have witnessed already Transnationals much bigger than many states. That will be so with Transhumanisms but even more so. Transhumanisms will locate, I argue, with in the Translations which already control the corporate state thus further enfeebling the Nation State.

Against this we might posit a laissez faire ideology. A market freedom position is taken by the author *Liberation Biology* (Bailey). "You can get what is around at the price". If it's extra sensitive hearing, that allows me to hear conversations 500 meters around me well lucky me, if I was deaf I have some catching up and if I wasn't well now I have an advantage which could be put to good purpose. I think this apolitical position to be irresponsible.

Invention implies freedom but its reference point will contract into research on this all-embracing project. Here the stakes are so high in terms of capital and intellectual property. There will be long lead times before profit is returned to investment. A corporation taking on such a responsibility

could not only become a state within a state but also draw the public state into the realm of the private one, even more than now. That is frightening without further reflection.

Transhumanist logic base

I believe, to embark on this post human project requires a total deep democratic revolution of production like the industrial revolution was, in replacing feudalism. Otherwise we will reflect, in our production of post-humans, our current over-investment in our acquisitive and materialist individualist, and may I say entropic, logic base or, if from the Socialist world, a more conforming, sociable, and obedient logic into our sentient technology or post -humans. Further and much more specifically my concern here is the type of society required to create post-humans. Production and research will be securitised and compounded - enclosed. It will require immense investment of resources in particular security— internal, international and cross corporate, based on prodigious requirements for protection of capital, realised technologies, intellectual property, effect rewards and profits too. Cost pressures will force down wages of the 'less important' to allow transhuman capital to be 'grown' and hasten a more repressive and restrictive society as requisite preparation for wonderful inventions with not so wonderful price tags.

Governments and NGO's will be drawn into and submerged by these large scale developments. Lacking the capacity to understand complex systemic The need to invest in education to service these developments, provide tax incentives to corporations and so delay other's rewards through taxation revenue due to long lead times for 'product development, will drag governments into the fray. Such reduced tax receipts will mean the government will guard the coffers ever more stringently and purposefully. Civil liberties will be more at risk because such societies will harbour stronger cycles of repression and protest. **This is not an apolitical project.**

The Transhumanist project already has military and quasi involvement since the Space Race, where NASA has considered such a project. The nuclear race threatened dire consequences but is always limited by the threat of mutual retaliation: all very obvious. One could hardly miss a nuclear war! One could easily miss a post human invasion. It is possible the new post human may be a winner-takes – all scenario.

If we faced a situation where the two military - oriented prototypes competed - European and Chinese production based posthumans, then the conflict would likely escalate. That is because other stakes in belief such as civil liberties, qualities of life, expansive individualism and selfishness would all become political. Everything about humans would be political. Do we want more of this and less of that in our post human? The most obvious answer to this would be to create a totalitarian environment, the other is to expand democracy to scrutinise the project. The winner- takes- all possibilities suggest the great priority governments and corporations will afford these projects. The need for security threatens public scrutiny. We need to find ways around this not just let it happen, by deeming scrutiny over such a profound change, out of our range.

Those most able to simulate complex human behaviours, or better them and augment them with weaponry will surely defend their product to the bitter end. The risks commercially will be compounded by military ones. The post human race will force the most authoritarian measures on its production and since such a huge resource investment underlies it, justification will be easier. This is no ordinary machine/logic base but an ultimate victory or total war scenario. The post human may be a special war weapon where the guerrilla's blending in and stealth combines with

technological devastation potentials. The capacities of both sides in the Vietnam or Afghanistan war so applied symmetrically and asymmetrically. Dictatorship then is a likely consequence of the post human social arrangement.

Let's consider the type of intellectual property that must be protected - both the scale and complexity and the significance to production and its cost. The pursuit of Transhumanism goals will lend itself to conglomerated dealings of complex legal and technical interactions with legislatures and courts. The need to have large scale enterprise may just flow from the amount of likely legal complexity alone. The need for massively -conglomerated corporate power will ensue. Patents and legal authorisation, regulation and political support, gathered. However this I think preliminary to the capturing of political power by the Transhumanist corporations.

Transhumanism will meet the democratically spirited at the cross roads of expensive litigation and political upheaval. To control the State might be the only way to secure appropriate capital, intellectual resources and security. The State is best prepared and politics the more relevant route. Democracy is too unstable only dictatorship produces long term security. Dictatorship is the best guarantee or so people think.

To a significant degree this part has assumed a *strong* post-human agenda. In the next section I look at other conflicts between Transhumanism and Democracy, Transhumanism and contemporary thinking about the humanist agenda and its failings in excluded communities and Transhumanism and utopia. This involves not only the *weak* case but explores a more general themes in other area of our beliefs and society where Transhumanism may be at odds with things we value or at odds with some of them in certain ways.

I want in this section to imagine Transhumanism within a project of augmenting, and transforming democracy including meeting its evident challenges. Perhaps you will be able to vote for Apples or Oranges, two parties with two projects to transform us into post-humans. However I argued in the strong case that such is possible only if democracy survived the more likely entrenchment of Transhumanist corporate elites defending militarised production and research zones. My focus here is on the weak case for Transhumanism of gradual and never fully realisable change, or something more in between.

Will Transhumanism's role be to help or hinder or engage in transformation of democracy that comes as a consequence of Transhumanist demands and other changes, criticisms and crises of democracy already surfacing? Can Transhumanists work with advocates of greater democracy with existing societies where doubt grows about its viability? The fact that democracy implies an agreement between communicating subjects while Transhumanism looks to the augmentation of subjects with machines and processes whose effect on the thinking, feeling, voting subject are not addressed adequately at all, worries me. I suspect because Transhumanism has at its disposal so far only objects of enhancement not dialogue, this prevents such attention not its complex connection to the democratic project and its flaws.

What I find is that we will both have to augment ourselves and our democracy for the Transhumanism agenda to validate itself. I did not want to set up the proverbial straw persons of democracy being perfect and unchangeable and Transhumanism being the evil other. Unfortunately

I think this is hard going to find the points of similarity other the mutual imperfections, but I do see the value in looking at the problem so we can consider the issues.

To be or not to be Democratic?

On the surface, Transhumanists have intended to augment at least the cognitive powers of humans surely thereby enhancing democracy. The Enlightenment's scientific truth questioning, and interest in technological benefits were crucial to the formation of the democratic spirit of human autonomy and intelligence. "I can understand and change the world". Fatalism was washed away.

Transhumanism proposes to use technologies which now are at the forefront of our views of progress and appear fully oriented to augmenting this enquiring mind at the heart of the Enlightenment and democracy. Progress and democracy have gone hand in hand. We can hope that a Transhumanist augmented longevity will give weight demographically and democratically to wisdom. However will the connected mental states involved in conscience, sociability, conflict resolution abilities, imagination, empathy, creativity, autonomy, capacity to love and be reflective about self be automatically enhanced or crowded out? Who decides? If you say as Transhumanists seem to – the individual - then problems arise.

However there is complexity about this. We have largely reversed the wisdom and aging association in any case, so eldership no longer counts for anything much in our modern Western culture. Just as all abstractions especially ones without technological and scientific substitutes like; wisdom, society, morality, justice, solidarity, we now view with greater scepticism. 'Progress' in the form of transformation of all values in the cauldron of techno-commerce and to a minor degree by science and literature, philosophy and politics, now works at undermining with, of course legitimate, doubt, gnaws at the roots of democracy . Yet democracy itself unlike any other system permits this. Critical democratic theory redresses these emergent challenges I will argue.

What about Transhumanism? Transhumanism located in such a society and culture needs to identify its intentions. It seems almost inevitable that it will follow the trend so apparent in the literature to accept a corporatised party contest run like an advertising campaign for Coca Cola to which much contemporary, especially European political literature alludes. Commerce replaces politics. Transhumanism is commerce. **Apples v Oranges in the Transhumanist election:** one post-human or another prototype at best. At worse no election eventuates as politics has become too commercially sensitive in enquiring about post human production here the market is conflated with democracy. Transhumanism will live off the cynicism about abstract concepts like democracy.

Transhumanism democratic score card

Let's examine the score card and see if Transhumanism poses more than a highly complex yet technological solution to everything. I argue technology does not solve the fundamental dimensions of the problem of corrupted democracy: those about power, participation and inducements. A better democracy returns to some old roots and extends new shoots. Such democracy because it implies deeper communication, free of force and power, about culture, society and person is not compatible with just technological reworking - whatever that would mean. I know Transhumanism promises greater intelligence but democratic cultures need community, tolerance, reflective potentials, empathy. In other words democratic intelligence, including empathy, rationality and the concept of humanity constantly reworked. This logic base needs to enter the post-human prototype and prove itself so.

We will look at some of the key precepts of democracy and here going beyond the political and economic to issues like the implied view of autonomy, the brain, the body, liberty, equality, community or fraternity, and participation, rationality and inclusion through opportunity. Is Transhumanism really a transforming movement given these complexities or an advertisement for a new commodity “us”. ‘Us’, or more correctly, ‘them’ refashioned in the eyes of huge corporations, already owning political power.

Others I realise herald this freedom from abstraction and ideas, like democracy and community as liberation. I don’t accept these older ideas are meaningless but words whose meaning we need to negotiate and readdress. Some cultural theorists called post modernists have put a somewhat more feral cat amongst the pigeons. Here the ambitious claims of the autonomous rational citizen are matched contemptuously with the brutal, apparently democratically and humanist inspired, colonising of Indigenous groups and non-conforming sexual communities. Therefore some post-modernists suggest that there is a hidden part of the democratic arrangement which needs outing. It is an ignorance of difference which humanist or not, needs recognition. While Transhumanism has some synergies with this doubt about the ‘special’ human mind their ideas are part tangential part co-derivative from common cultural and scientific ideas with this postmodernism. Transhumanism still fails to hitch its wagon to much that is culturally profound or political profound in this criticism adequately to engage its richness, if we might still find both ideas problematic ultimately.

I wonder how much Transhumanism and the ‘good society’ - there is one of those awful abstractions again- are at odds.

(2)Democracy and moderate or weak Transhumanism

It is as well to recall that democracy elevated the subject - the autonomous person with personal needs, societal needs and responsibilities and cultural understandings. These concepts of the subject were about what people were like and why they needed democracy. These have been far than adequate but they presented a relationship between subject and world that was softened by facilitated opinion exchange and through rights and political process and beliefs – in democracy. We may well see social, cultural and especially economic systems as objects in that that they are systems infused with power and interests outside the individual. Yet they ideally are interactive, in the originating idea. They were idealised as specially adapted to human use to forge a society with the minimum of imposed rules and beliefs. What we find in Transhumanism that the respect for these interactive and theoretically inclusive and empowering systems do not rate much mention. Such a situation lends itself to seeing Transhumanism as conceived as an individualist and technologically driven and very narrow object augmentation i.e. the augmentation of processes rather than looking forward from a good society to augmentation.

In the following, I look to community liberty and equality as they relate to Transhumanism invoking current and now new potential limitations and possibilities.

A) Community and democratic compatibility

What really matters to us deep down? Is it; trust, security, love, opportunity, empathy, mutuality, solidarity, working autonomously with our hands, head and heart or is it material fulfilment? Well, if you are thinking about community, while all of these might be desirable some are more important

than others – the capacity to trust seems critical. How do these fit into productivity or domination or profit driven marketing? Do we have no say in who will be or what sort of, post-human is produced and with which attributes? Designer babies are going to be smarter, stronger, more handsome of course, since we live in the age of celebrity. Are we really going to design ourselves in terms of our desires realised in a private world that has taken us to the brink of extinction? Or should we reconsider the once central idea of community and democracy as synergists.

Currently it seems Transhumanism relies on individualism to encapsulate its program of augmentation. However perhaps that is inevitable since it transforms individuals into cyborgs linked no doubt by undisclosed processes discussed at least in science fiction. Ideas of community have no automatic connection and so we would need to envisage a specific focus upon that. Those who fear that our current lack of community wears away the power of people to challenge authority and generate specific situated responses to their own social needs will get little satisfaction from Transhumanism. **Critically implied in Transhumanism are great differences between post – humans and humans.** It is demonstrably hard for citizens to achieve new multiple and complex augmentations and accommodations of difference, while democratic process as so compromised and undervalued and nourished. Yet this may be no argument per se as it is reminiscent of arguments against multi-culturalism for example.

Let then begin by seeing how Transhumanism fits with the importance of community or fraternity One of the personally inspired yet bizarrely naïve books I read on Transhumanism is called *Liberation Biology* which simply proposes a shop front availability for human augmentation . Given his own and his family's devastating experience of genetic disease, the author's logic rightfully cuts across restrictions on stem cell research and the like. I want to suggest that the problem of over complex differences stemming from this laissez- faire outlook is so pronounced that I can think of no worse a situation.

Isn't the evident greater diversity in a Transhumanist society - as value democrats articulate. Some Transhumanists want to do away with current species boundaries not just that other boundary between humans and machine. Much as these species delineations change in some areas of nature, in reality much of the natural world is populated by long standing genetic types - horses, pigs, eagles, cows, platypi, cockatoos and kangaroos for Australians. These complex animals surely have the most compatibility with humans even if the most complex genetic types may not be, for other reasons. There are in some views powerful reasons not to alter these¹.

I am not normally drawn to Conservatism but greater difference in physical powers and cognitive powers I think provokes the possibility of a society of castes of more or less entitled as does Francis Fukuyama in his 2002 work². I question if we will 'memetically' modify democracy by adding the appropriate complexity to include such a variety of beings. I do rather think democracy in part appeals because we share similar vulnerabilities.

You wouldn't want I think to live in a street where some people can hear what you say in every room in your house, others can see through your walls and others interfere with your normal neurone

¹ <http://www.facebook.com/ecovisionslc> .

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Our_Posthuman_Future.

firing sequences. I think you just have to remember how easily privacy and community have lost out to technology already. Community needs privacy and vice versa.

If only with large mammals initially, the idea of augmenting humans with animal parts and vice versa may have scientific currency. We humans (I will in the future need to specify such since another animal may be reading this), of course have pigs valves in our hearts and other cross species implants. People contend the division between animal and humans. It is clearly not biologically rigid and we share an ecology very broadly. Humanist thinking wrongly posits a rigidity but what might be the consequences?

Is the prospect of negotiating the rights of say a dolphin or an half elephant half person, who demands an educational course tailored to her needs, very challenging? We would require in fact an independent stream of schooling, rights, duties, non discriminations, and graded opportunity settings: seemingly far-fetched but necessary for different species³. Alright, we are so used to imagining the impossible as our immediate opportunities to live differently seem to shrink! But how impossible? It seems like heresy to not imagine a solution. From a community we expect; respect, solidarity, some degree of conformity, a sense of mutual interest and shared activities. As these disappear now due to people's engagement in a privatised world I simply cannot see complex new and very differentiated genetic identities managing to create community. I say this because community is so evidently in decline.

These days there seems little of the local surviving despite local food movements and environmental ones. To slowly include new beings we would at least need very resilient and active communities and then obviously their permission, since empowerment is part of the solution to their current debilitated state. Yet while our democratic processes are historically preferable to dictatorship, they are not so robust, engaging and even seriously taken that such changes could apply, I think we should consider. We really have to imagine how such a complex world simply introduces too many differences where much identification with others is impossible. A community could not survive without a graduated and regulated set of rights and duties and a robust and resilient participatory ethos to work them, renegotiate them and grow them and spend a great deal of time in this political mode.

If there were massive differences in these requirements it might become extremely difficult to define say threatening behaviour, or culpability given genetically engineered changes in centres to do with speech or empathy, much as we see today with US Drone attacks where it is acceptable to kill many civilians inc. women and children. I think this has implications for democracy. Community is part of democracy much as it is now very undervalued. It resided once in the cultures of nation, state, language and race and now it is various but is it dispensable?

We need to feel connection. I think I share a widely held if underplayed view. We need to have the proximate sense for our own wellbeing, not just isolation or digital connection. World community or just familial intimacy seems a recipe for disaster. Private Transhumanist corporate utopias (Zones of

³ For instance a more immediate one could well be 'rights of robots', viz. McNally, P. and S. Inayatullah (1988). Rights of Robots, Korea recently legislated for same. *Futures* 20 2: 119-136 and further explored in the article on *Forms Of Life* by P Wildman in this Issue of CRAFT

Transhumanist Augmentation) will make it worse rather than unravelling what we know of small community benefits and global outlooks with institutions empowering peace between them.

B) Liberty

If liberty is the right to exercise our capacities, we have not only different abilities in the same areas but commensurate liberties assumed – free speech. However let's add some complexity.

Contemplate the right to demand to go to university when you are three years old because you can do the maths to that standard. What of the right to cry at will and then have a sleep for an hour half way through and be given half an hour extra at the end. Bizarre yes but Transhumanism is bizarre and this is not an inconceivable problem –or something like it even if exams are no longer the flavour of the day.

Try imagining legislating liberty with people who demand the right to sleep for 10 minutes every hour since it's their biological necessity. They don't have the circadian rhythms like humans because having that and a new endocrine system and really extended longevity are incompatible with then current genetic technology. I don't think that is necessarily unreasonable behaviour just very difficult to accommodate.

Liberty requires you to have rights to express and experience the world to its utmost and so if you want to extract ten times the oxygen from the air than others in a closed work space you can and should since you have rightly enhanced yourself freely for greater productivity it. The others can carry oxygen to work. Such conflict may be minimal compared with what comes from Transhumanism when freedom to express includes trunk trumpeting in the middle of the day or night in your street or just a rebalance of nocturnal and daylight life to free up work opportunities by creating post humans with no Vitamin D needs etc and hoping they don't mate with others with ramped up, reverse melatonin.

Liberation Biology represents an example of the very shallow understanding of the implications of these patterns of infinitely complex liberties. Of course you might share the author's desire to get on with cutting genetically transmitted diseases– those that his own kids suffer as an example. However that is not what Transhumanism is about. **It is not about just eliminating sickness and redefining it to include curable old age: its about a new 'product' – an unrecognisable, mutated or changed 'us'.**

It is difficult not to use such examples, if apparently bizarre, but my intention is to indicate that these are qualitative differences in exercising liberty which require profound societal thought of which we are now bereft as we only find value in things that "work". Human democratic liberty ironically implies some similarities for the liberties to be granted and exercisable. That's a very dangerous idea I know but I think there are other dangers of exercising 'humanly' intolerable liberties.

C) Equality

A concept of equality is a most important question in a democracy as *the Spirit Level* points out. Since most commentators suggest equality rapidly dropped from the lexicon of democratic practices, Transhumanism may well signal its death knell or conversely reinvigorate it. Enhancement will make people unequal, different in multiple ways and exaggerated ways, it dispenses with the natural person. Of course the natural person is not equal either- far from it- but in democracy this fiction is constantly maintained. Abstract ideas are important. We really think little now about

equality. It has largely been dropped from political discussion. Equity and difference are rightly alternative concerns but they remain rallying cries of sorts, still.

However the abstract idea equality is like the proverbial rubber band. If its implications are so totally ignored that the idea itself becomes arcane and irrelevant then we lose a key component of our heritage – equality before the law, in voting rights, in general social interchange and respect. To expand a concept already so taut or overstretched seems problematic-highly so. We are, or are deemed to be reasonably in need of similar goods like security, wealth, peace, right to due process. This equality too seems on the path to complexity like liberty in Transhumanism.

What if you have say 25% of people with the computational skills of four 'natural' humans. I think it is still possible to imagine equality but only I suggest by making copious efforts. If there were massive differences in various abilities it might become extremely difficult to define say threatening behaviour, or culpability given genetically engineered changes. What if we change centres to do with speech or empathy?

Let's then see how this relationship between democracy, including its current limitations, and Transhumanism might play out. We should digest the significance of escalating inequality as the relatively recent publication the *Spirit Level* authored by Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett insist. Greater inequality is the heart beat that drives a great deal of the vexed community issues in modern democracy. Matters of crime, marital breakdown involving children, sickness, abuse and poverty correlate well with more inequitable societies. Of course inequality is not the sole cause but it ramps up all these, as comparative analysis shows. This recent study really puts equality at the forefront indicating more equal countries have more economic growth. So will Transhumanism increase equality. There is absolutely nothing to suggest it will.

Ironically for some –the very people who might be CEO of Transhumanist projects - greater inequality rather provides greater economic growth so they think going on their billionaire wages despite the GFC some of them helped produce. One only has to listen to Conservative parties blaming unions for all the evils to see this. This concept as noted is contended. Yet we have built inequality into the lifeblood of democracy in liberal democratic societies. Just as we have uncompleted democratic processes in other countries. These differences should not be solved in the private economy as they threaten society in general. How might we go about addressing this problem exacerbated by the proposals or implications of Transhumanism. **Transhumanism rests on the back of failing democracy without offering a solution.**

We might imagine a parliament that allows for several types of different post humans or even multiple ones but machinery would be complex, contended and require a great deal of focus, negotiation, mediation, administrative law and legal challenge to follow. A third tier of parliament addressed at the axis of difference/equity and equality including augmentation issues, founded on representations of communities of inequality. In order to imagine a society capable of such deliberations I think we need to prepare the way to a generally more participatory parliament that represents various skills, trades or occupations and preoccupations.

3 Enhancing democracy in the face of Transhumanism

Public scrutiny and debate of Transhumanism – a concrete suggestion

As far as my argument about democracy goes, I recommend Transhumanism needs scrutiny – not only general, intelligent scrutiny but also expert, and democratic scrutiny. The implication is that we have a very well educated public and the requisite models of engaging us all in such a project of assessment of Transhumanism democratically.

I think there is a suitable, rotatable and elected, broader political class that might be groomed into involvement but one with emphasis on representation, education and participation - 5% of the population paid to do this at any one time, on a rotating basis – somewhat like in Ancient Greece. It would involve education, examination and discussion not unlike any other job of a more autonomous type and should also reflect industry cohorts of agriculture commerce, industry, education and creative endeavours and social and community ones in parenting, caring for the infirm and community interactions.

That opportunity might equate to a once a lifetime stint of three years. I invite further discussion about this as I have no illusion about either its cost or necessity. It would require participation in further education, willingness and legitimacy. It is an intolerable burden on democracy to only allow just the usual razzamatazz to operate at the public level with the problems we currently face let alone Transhumanism's arrival on the landscape of complexity. This group would be, diverse not lobby based nor party political and oriented to problem-solving .

Public- funded such forums should make public their best understandings. In Australia the role of the Reserve Bank, and the ABC indicate how some independence can devolve to institutions whose expertise is regarded as critical. Much as this analogy has many limitations and is far too independent as an example, I don't think this subverts democracy but rather is necessary for it to meet the times. It would be part of public education.

I suggest widening democracy to include forums of expertise constituted by consumers and producers of such expertise and technology. These forums should educate and publicise considered opinions. We need a far more relevant education system on public issues. We need to gravitate to a society that changes its agenda from wasted production to informing about and facing risk and delivering worthwhile products that add to both comfort and sustainability.

Transhumanists need to join this campaign for greater democracy, whether their solution is one of the ones ultimately chosen. While conscious this is all sounds like froth and bubble I can only say "Yes! That's I all I've got". Others need to refine this idea of a specialised and participatory democracy Oppression does motivate, if its outcomes are not always ideal. In this regard I welcome any contributions from readers.

CONCLUSION

In summary then, fraternity, liberty and equality are all key ideas of democracy. They are ideals, beliefs and wholistic values. When we analyse them we find much of them "hollowed – out", losing critical driving power or in fact excluded in the modern corporatised parties of modern democracies. Equally so, are the crony capitalist Mediterranean style or the state capitalist Marxist models, which exclude the key elements of democracy but in more decrepit or authoritarian style. Nevertheless, liberal democracy appears the most robust, with the Chinese model hot on its heels. Transhumanism raises many problems and few solutions per say. The marriage between Transhumanism and

democracy requires a longer courtship, and more attention to the absent connections and reference points to centrality of working democracy equality liberty and fraternity to a good human or post-human society. The marriage perhaps is doomed since neither have adequate credentials to make democracy work well.

However if we cannot talk mathematically about equality, liberty, fraternity and tolerance, we can still form an understanding. To disavow these abstractions is to give up the democratic project. If we cannot establish frameworks without science's authorisation we need to ask if science could arise without democracy. We have very less secure ways of validating these abstract ideas - admitting, both to their uncertainty and necessity. Without them we must assume with de Chardin that a mystical moment must arise to authenticate the post-human society. The Second Coming - Bill Gates spliced to Mother Theresa reborn, with an IBM based on genetic material, in the package?

Both Transhumanism and corrupted or State controlled democracy have this in common. They both are reducing humans to objects in the sense of working at the level of manipulation rather than encouraging a society that underwrites a capacity to judge deep implications. In the former case, it's done by their inability to deliver or conceptualise soft systems of governance, economy and culture. In the latter, it's the corporatisation of parties, their aggregations of special and powerful pleadings and the reduction of politics to personal gossip while the majority do not have the opportunity to make a difference.

This corrupt or truncated democracy remains a critical theme. **Transhumanism then evolves within a flawed systematised, manipulated and elitist democratic practice and logic base** - ours to pass onto our children and 'our' post-humans? Transhumanism needs to adopt a road map to greater democracy, since it portends the opposite currently. Practically speaking, like minded people need to get together to form a preparatory engagement with the Transhumanist ideal and its challenges to democracy. This then is a key rationale in the formulation and foundation of CRAFT. A forward thinking and acting, practical political party or thoughtful and broad social movement needs to emerge to distil some political resistance and understanding and, where we thought desirable, some points of negotiation.

I hope this is a site for such discussion. I favour the Greens in Australia as a potential source of support however parties can be fickle and politics distant from the tasks of coming to grips with reality.

This edition of Craft will initiate a forum or point to existing forums that encourage discussion of Transhumanist themes.

Readers Note: References for all of Dr Jim Prentice's articles are included in one document under the tile 'references'.