

**Dossier de synthèse inversée – Gp 1 : Hamza, de Bouvier, Le Viavant , Carbonnaux, Tanu**

**En vous appuyant uniquement sur les documents du dossier thématique qui vous est proposé, vous rédigerez une synthèse répondant à la question suivante**

***Why is human enhancement so controversial ?***

**Votre synthèse comportera entre 450 et 500 mots et sera précédée d'un titre. Le nombre de mots rédigés (titre inclus) devra être indiqué à la fin de votre copie.**

Ce sujet comporte les 5 documents suivants :

- Transhumanism: billionaires want to use tech to enhance our abilities – the outcomes could change what it means to be human
- Placing ethics at the heart of emerging technologies | SIENNA Project | Results in brief | H2020 | CORDIS
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10172256/>
- <https://theweek.com/political-satire/1023885/neuralink-research>
- <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/02/01/computer-chips-in-human-brains-how-americans-view-the-technology-amid-recent-advances/>

**DOCUMENT 1 : Transhumanism: billionaires want to use tech to enhance our abilities – the outcomes could change what it means to be human**  
***The Conversation, January 16, 2024***

Many prominent people in the tech industry have talked about the increasing convergence between humans and machines in coming decades. For example, Elon Musk has reportedly said he wants humans to merge with AI “to achieve a symbiosis with artificial intelligence”. [...]

Transhumanists often advocate for the three “supers” of superintelligence, superlongevity and superhappiness, the last referring to ways of achieving lasting happiness. There are many different views among the transhumanist community of what our ongoing evolution should look like.

For example, some advocate uploading the mind into digital form and settling the cosmos. Others think we should remain organic beings but rewire or upgrade our biology through genetic engineering and other methods. A future of designer babies, artificial wombs and anti-aging therapies appeal to these thinkers.

This may all sound futuristic and fantastical, but rapid developments in artificial intelligence (AI) and synthetic biology have led some to argue we are on the cusp of creating such possibilities.

Tech billionaires are among the biggest promoters of transhumanist thinking. [Indeed] they could be the central protagonists in the most important moment in history.

Creating so-called artificial general intelligence (AGI) – that is, an AI system that can do all the cognitive tasks a human can do and more – is a current focus within Silicon Valley. AGI is seen as vital to enabling us to take on the God-like role of designing our own evolutionary futures.

That is why companies like OpenAI, DeepMind and Anthropic are racing towards the development of AGI, despite some experts warning that it could lead to human extinction. [...]

Our misuse of the planet’s resources has set in train a sixth mass extinction of species and a climate crisis. In addition, ongoing wars with increasingly potent weapons remain a part of our technological evolution.

There’s also the pressing question of whose future will be transhuman. We currently live in a very unequal world. Transhumanism, if developed in anything like our existing context, is likely to greatly increase inequality, and may have catastrophic consequences for the majority of humans. [...]

If we’re really on the verge of creating an enhanced version of humanity, we should start to ask some big questions about what being human should mean, and therefore what an enhancement of humanity should entail.

If the human is an aspiring God, then it lays claim to dominion over nature and the body, making all amenable to its desires. But if the human is an animal embedded in

complex relations with other species and nature at large, then “enhancement” is contingent on the health and sustainability of its relations.

If the human is conceived of as an environmental threat, then enhancement is surely that which redirects its exploitative lifeways. Perhaps becoming more-than-human should constitute a much more responsible humanity.

One that shows compassion to and awareness of other forms of life in this rich and wondrous planet. That would be preferable to colonizing and extending ourselves, with great hubris, at the expense of everything, and everyone else.

## **DOCUMENT 2 : Placing ethics at the heart of emerging technologies | SIENNA Project | Results in brief | H2020 | CORDIS**

AI includes systems that support human decision-making, are able to analyse large data sets and can recognise faces and behaviours. [...] “AI can autonomously make decisions and perform actions in ways that were previously reserved for human beings,” says Brey. “But this means that it can also do all the bad things that humans can do. [...] Who is accountable if intelligent machines do bad things?” Human genomics is a powerful technology that could improve human health. “Yet there are important ethical implications here too,” he notes. “For example, Genome sequencing can raise significant privacy issues, as third parties become aware of one’s detailed genetic make-up. This information could be used to discriminate against employees or insurance policyholders.” Finally, human enhancement is about the improvement of human performance beyond the typical range. Such enhancements might include superior eyes and ears, or legs and arms with improved strength and endurance. “Many people think the very idea is wrong,” says Brey. “In any case, there are health and safety risks, and concerns about loss of human identity and inequality.”

The EU-supported SIENNA project set out to identify and analyse the ethical and human rights issues connected with these three technologies. It then sought to develop tools and methods to help stakeholders better address and mitigate these concerns. “We wanted to map out current issues as well as challenges that could be expected over the next 20 years,” explains Brey. “We also wanted to know about the concerns and viewpoints of stakeholders.” To achieve this, hundreds of stakeholders were consulted, and some 11 000 citizens surveyed across 11 countries. [...] “Based on our understanding of these issues, we developed proposals and solutions,” adds Brey. “We also drew up ethics guidelines. This was particularly needed for human enhancement, as no guidelines existed.” Regulatory and policy recommendations concerning these three technology fields were also put forward. For human genomics, an international code of conduct for data sharing was developed. Recommendations for including ethical and human rights requirements in legislation and regulation were drawn up. An Ethics by Design approach for AI was also put forward. [...] “The European Commission will use our research ethics guidelines for AI and human enhancement, and our Ethics by Design approach in its ethics review procedure in the new Horizon Europe research programme. This means that potentially hundreds of new research projects will make use of our tools and insights.” Ultimately, SIENNA has highlighted the fact that ethics and human rights must be central considerations

in the development and use of emerging technologies, and not afterthoughts. “General ethical guidelines can be an important first step for creating awareness of ethical issues,” says Brey. “But they need to be supplemented with specific tools and methods, like research ethics frameworks, professional ethics codes and Ethics by Design approaches.” This has been the project’s critical contribution, as Europe stands on the threshold of a new era in technological innovation

### **DOCUMENT 3 : Weak transhumanism: moderate enhancement as a non-radical path to radical enhancement, April 2023**

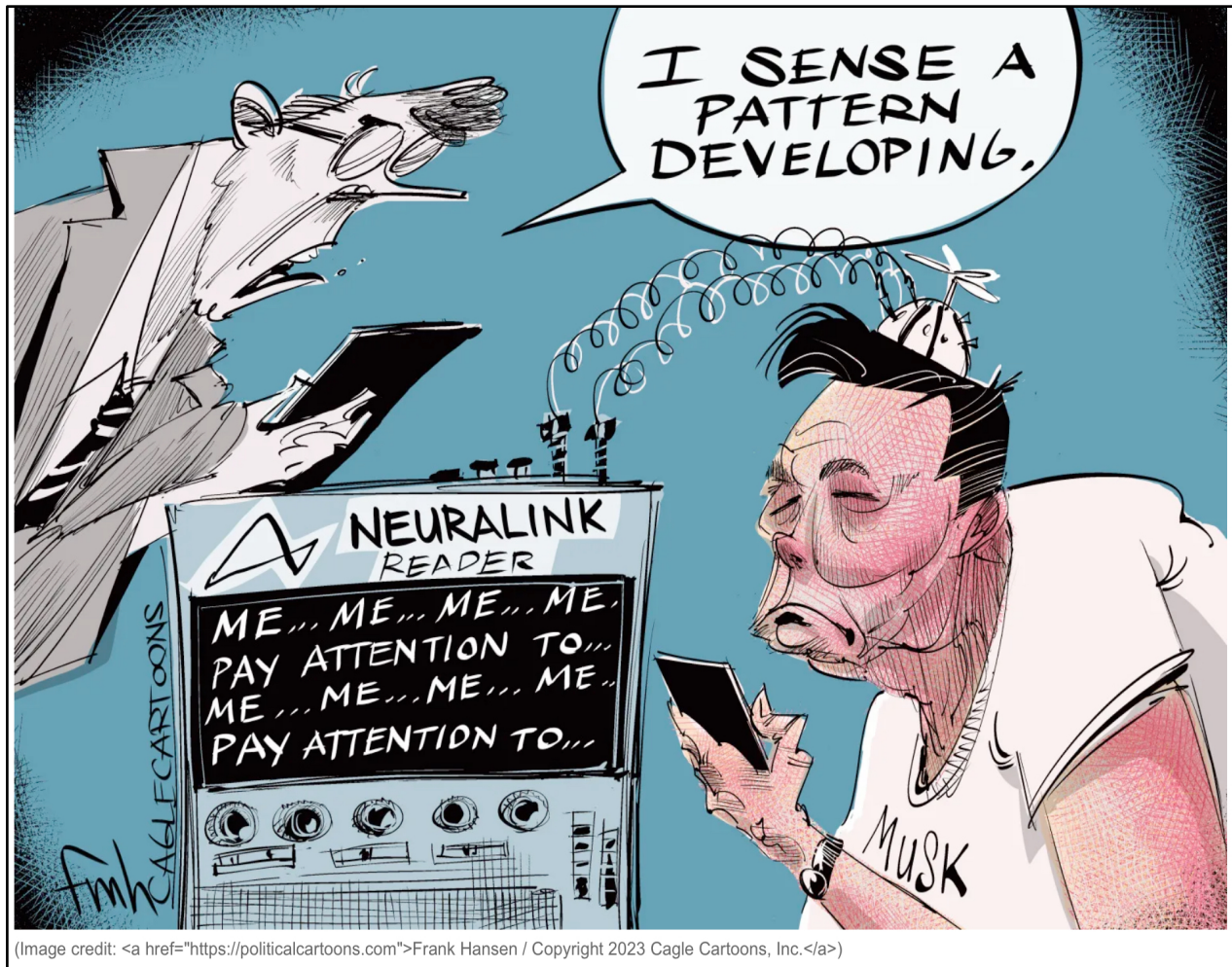
The human enhancement debate is for some, centred around the two polarized positions of strong bioconservatism and transhumanism. The former opposes any form of human enhancement, whereas the latter advocates for all possible human enhancements. However, many philosophers engaged in the continuing debate hold a more nuanced view in favour of some enhancements while rejecting the transhumanist *carte blanche* approach. Some examples of these biomoderate views include A. Buchanan’s (2011) anti-anti-enhancement position, [...] N. Agar’s (2014) truly human enhancement, where he advocates for some moderate enhancement while rejecting all radical enhancement. Agar defines moderate enhancement as improvements in significant attributes and abilities that fall within or just beyond what is currently possible for human beings, and radical enhancements as improvements in significant attributes and abilities that fall far beyond what is currently possible for human beings.

Agar’s anti-radical enhancement position is bolstered by the many sub-arguments he provides. [...] his arguments only present good reason for preventing radically enhancing effects. The aim of this paper is to provide transhumanists with a route to radical enhancement that circumvents the problem of radically enhancing effects. To do this, I present the position of ‘weak transhumanism’ or ‘non-radical radical enhancement,’ which takes Agar’s endorsement of moderate enhancement as a starting point and suggests that this process could well be repeated, involving the addition of moderate enhancements on top of moderate enhancements that would eventually lead to a radical enhancement, from the perspective of the unenhanced. I refer to this version of transhumanism as ‘weak transhumanism’ on the basis that I take it to be a form of transhumanism in its aims but not in its execution. I grant that many transhumanists will not find weak transhumanism appealing, but I argue it provides the best option if radical enhancement is to be achieved. [...]

The arguments against radical enhancement put forward by Agar were highly convincing and presented a serious problem for the transhumanist. However, Agar’s presupposition that radical enhancement would always be applied to an unenhanced adult population, along with his endorsement for moderate enhancement provides a way for the transhumanist to overcome his skillfully expressed objections. With this assumption in mind, one can see that Agar’s concerns seemed to be directed at radically enhancing effects rather than radical enhancement itself. My proposal of weak transhumanism, involving incrementally applying moderate enhancements to future human beings, avoids this problem of agents experiencing radically enhancing effects (except for cases of ‘radical enhancement as catching up,’ but these cases

would entail that radical enhancement had already been achieved by society at large). The 'weakness' within this transhumanist view comes in the form of various conditions and restrictions: each generation will have a say on the continuation of the radical enhancement project; many enhancements will have to be applied prenatally or within an agent's formative years; the feasibility of the project will be informed by the science; and only moderate enhancements can be used at any incremental stage.

DOCUMENT 4 : <https://theweek.com/political-satire/1023885/neuralink-research>



## DOCUMENT 5

### Majority says brain chip implants for improved cognitive abilities would be bad idea for society; public more open to other applications of human enhancement and AI

% of U.S. adults who say the widespread use of each of the following artificial intelligence and human enhancement applications has been/would be a ...

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE APPLICATIONS	Good idea for society	Bad idea for society	Not sure
<b>Facial recognition technology</b> that would be used by police to look for people who may have committed a crime or to monitor crowds	46	27	27
Computer programs, called <b>algorithms</b> , used by social media companies to find false information on their sites	38	31	30
<b>Driverless passenger vehicles</b> that are equipped with software allowing them to operate with computer assistance, and expected to be able to operate entirely on their own	26	44	29
HUMAN ENHANCEMENT APPLICATIONS	Good idea for society	Bad idea for society	Not sure
<b>Robotic exoskeletons</b> with built-in artificial intelligence computer systems that would greatly increase strength for manual labor	33	24	42
<b>Gene editing</b> that would greatly reduce a baby's risk of developing serious diseases or health conditions over their lifetime	30	30	39
<b>Computer chip implants</b> in the brain that would allow people to far more quickly and accurately process information	13	56	31

Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown. Respondents were randomly assigned to answer questions about artificial intelligence applications or human enhancement applications.

Source: Survey conducted Nov. 1-7, 2021.

"AI and Human Enhancement: Americans' Openness Is Tempered by a Range of Concerns"

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