
Bioethical issues on genetic enhancement : between conservatism and transhumanism

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Abstract

Genetic enhancement refers to the use of genetic engineering to modify a person's non-pathological human traits ; mostly physical and mental abilities. France has addressed these ethical issues in 2010 with a preparatory report to the revision of the bioethics laws. It made two recommendations (No. 79 and No. 80): the development of a public debate and a monitoring mission. The social and metaphysical issues are important indeed: which society and which humanity do we want? These are questions we propose to analyze in the light of secular and postmetaphysical values. In a secular world, there is no more sacred human "nature" and human beings must choose their own values, references and limits. Should we adhere to conservatives' caution? Or refuse any limitation to technoscience and adhering to the transhumanist precepts? If not, what are the ethical principles - in accordance with secular and postmetaphysical values - that can guide us in a society more and more technoscientific? The challenge is big but its ethical urgency is undeniable.

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