




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Upgrading Humans Via Implants - Why Not?

Kevin Warwick

Abstract

In his forum paper, Prof. Kevin Warwick considers four different examples of how the use of implant technology is opening up the possibility of upgrading human abilities, particularly in terms of mental cognition. The main thrust is an overview of Prof. Warwick's own research, which led to him receiving a neural implant linking his nervous system bi-directionally with the internet. With this implant in place, neural signals were transmitted to various technological devices to directly control them, in some cases via the internet, and feedback to the brain was obtained from such stimuli as the fingertips of a robot hand, ultrasonic (extra-) sensory input and neural signals directly from another human's nervous system. A view is taken as to the prospects for the future, both in the short-term as a therapeutic device and in the long-term as a form of enhancement, including the realistic potential, in the near future, for thought communication – thereby opening up tremendous commercial potential. The therapy/enhancement dichotomy is considered here, as well as military and medical issues. Clearly though, an individual whose brain is part human/part machine can have abilities that far surpass those who remain with a human brain alone. Will such an individual exhibit different moral and ethical values to those of a human? If so, what effects might this have on society?

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