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Humanity Enhanced: Genetic Choice and the Challenge for Liberal Democracies by Russell Blackford.

The topic of this book is the crucial question of the emergence of technologies of genetic choice and their role in liberal democracies. Throughout, this book is a crisp, analytical and well-ordered moral argument that supports the permissive use of emerging technologies of genetic choice within liberal democracies. Adjoined to this is the argument that a disproportionate fear of these technologies threatens liberal tolerance itself.

There are particular ways in which the author succeeds in making his case. By eschewing the common error of making overblown assertions when writing about technology, the author achieves a nuanced position between the stale technology utopianism/pessimism dichotomy. Crucial to this is Russell Blackford's strategy whereby he offers generous yet critical assessments of the common arguments against enhancement technologies (such as violations against nature and the autonomy of genetically engineered children) before objecting to them, which supports his argument strongly. The way this is done without being blithely dismissive of his opponents should be appreciated.

Furthermore, the book achieves some interesting theoretical heights, particularly in chapter 3 where liberal equality is spun on its head *in favour* of compulsory genetic enhancement. Finally, it is often the case with books about politics and technology that they are inconclusive; often with disappointing democratic platitudes. However, this book excels in being able to build an argument that leads naturally towards a final chapter of comprehensive policy recommendations that support the use of technologies of genetic choice. This does so much more than simply say that we should be democratic; it shows how.

Within the contours of liberal political theory, the book stands up well. However, there is a feeling that the book perhaps skirts the deeper issues of human nature and subjectivity-typical objections. This is reflected in the selection of reviewed literature. However, although in fairness the author makes no claims in relation to these issues, this book is arguably at odds with the resurgence of these themes in other areas of political thought that tackle technology.

This book is an effective and original contribution to the political theory of technology. Liberal scholars and policy-makers are the obvious readership, who will be pleased with its careful navigation of a thorny

ethical issue. Yet, I think it should also find itself a place on the shelves of post-humanist and ontopolitical scholars for providing an auspicious counterposition. Ironically, these are the positions with which the book does not engage.

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