



Unit 4: Transhumanism

Question Bank

- A bank of questions students have asked or might ask on this topic accompanied by appropriate and sample answers.

1. What does “permanent” change exactly mean? What are the legal limits or details of either permitting or forbidding this type of change?

A: The generalized answer is that it is unlawful to beautify a human being by effecting *significant*, **permanent** change, but medical treatment is permissible.

Shaitan is saying that he will command human beings to change the creation of Allah (swt) (part of this is changing other human beings). Because this “changing” is a command or influenced by Shaitan, the fuqaha have stated its impermissibility (again, along with proofs from these ahadith).

- Legal limits??

2. What are some guidelines for me to be able to differentiate between therapy and enhancement?

A: The line between therapy and enhancement is very fuzzy. There are 3 ways that biomedicine demarcates the lines.

- 1) Whatever doctors who are licensed do is therapy; i.e. all interventions that are societally structured within the ‘house’ of medicine are socially constructed to be labeled as therapeutic
- 2) When a patient has a procedure that restores function to an individual’s norm or to a species-specific norm that is therapy; anything beyond that is enhancement/augmentation
- 3) The base condition of a person who undergoes a therapeutic intervention is that they have reduced functioning/capacity; while someone who undergoes enhancements has normal functioning/capacity

Abstract

Transhumanism is a "technoprogressive" socio-political and intellectual movement that advocates for the use of technology in order to transform the human organism radically, with the ultimate goal of becoming "posthuman." To this end, transhumanists focus on and encourage the use of new and emerging technologies, such as genetic engineering and brain-machine interfaces. In support of their vision for humanity, and as a way of reassuring those "bioconservatives" who may balk at

Therapy vs. Enhancement

○ Dividing lines

- Medical practice vs. non-medical practice
 - Whatever doctors/allied health professionals do as licensed practitioners = therapy
- Restoring to **normal** function vs. augmenting function
 - Species typical function is the goal of therapy
 - If an intervention creates equality of opportunity in society = therapy
- Treatments address maladies while enhancements target **normal** being

