

People Power for the Third Millennium: Technology, Democracy and Human Rights

BioCentre is pleased to invite you to the second symposium of the series:

Transhuman minds? Is cognitive enhancement a human right?

Tuesday 11th March 2008

The Royal Society of Medicine, London

3-6pm, followed by drinks reception

The development of cognitive enhancement has meant the phrase "give your brain a boost" now brings with it a range of connotations which have never been experienced thus far in human history. The convergence of nano-, bio- and information technology with cognitive science promises many interesting forms of cognitive enhancement. Neurobiology is expanding our understanding of how the brain works in association with neural systems and information technology is providing vastly improved signal processing capabilities for use in neurobiological research. Accompanying such advances, cognitive neuroscience is pushing back the traditional boundaries of cognitive psychology to broaden understanding with regard to the interaction between brain structure, function and cognition.

The prospect of being able to enhance human cognition presents a nexus of questions associated with future ambitions, hopes and concerns. Should individuals be allowed the freedom and the right to decide for themselves how best to use enhancement technologies? Is government intervention and regulation required in order for both individuals and society to thrive through the use of enhancement technologies? Or does the very notion of human essence prohibit enhancement in all its forms?

BioCentre invites you to an assessment of what cognitive enhancement promises and how best to harness its potential informed by leading specialists in the field.

Speakers will include:

➔ **Professor Ruud ter Meulen**

Professor of Ethics in Medicine, University of Bristol

Speaking on: *Will enhancement make us better? Ethical issues of the use of biotechnology to enhance our (cognitive) capacities.*

➔ **Dr. Anders Sandberg**

James Martin Research Fellow, Future of Humanity Institute, Oxford University

Speaking on: *Morphological freedom: best served by institutions or rights?*

➔ **Dr. Donald Fitzmaurice**

Director of ePlanet Ventures, former Professor of Nanotechnology, University College Dublin

Speaking on: *Mind over Market – An Investor Perspective on Cognitive Enhancement*

➔ **Dr. Daniela Cerqui**

Social and Cultural anthropologist, University of Lausanne, Switzerland