



Online Ethics Center  
FOR ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

# Ethics of Human Enhancement: Multimedia Resources

## Author(s)

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## Year

2018

## Description

This collection of TED Talks, recorded lectures, and documentaries, covers topics related to the ethics of Human Enhancement, including applications in reproduction, aging, medicine, and more.

## Body

**Bennet, James, Darnovsky, Marcy, and Nita A. Farahany. "In Depth: Should We Design Our Babies?" The Aspen Institute, 2014.**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQso93V2wLs>.**

- The discussion of "designer babies" often revolves around gender or hair color, but the medical debate is far more complicated. Should we screen embryos for disease or other genetic modifications? These considerations raise ethical questions and call into question the validity of surrounding research. The lack of regulation and oversight make this particular biotechnology frightening to some, while the potential for disease eradicating techniques excites others. But how far is too far? What are the major scientific and ethical hurdles to assuage the skeptics? Underwritten by Booz Allen Hamilton.

**Bostrom, Nick. "The End of Humanity." TEDxOxford, 2013.**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P0Nf3TcMiHo>.**

- Swedish philosopher Nick Bostrom began thinking of a future full of human enhancement, nanotechnology and cloning long before they became mainstream concerns. Bostrom approaches both the inevitable and the speculative using the tools of philosophy, bioethics and probability. TEDxOxford is organised by University of Oxford students, aiming to bring together the young minds of tomorrow's world with the movers and shakers of today. TEDxOxford is kindly sponsored by Neptune Investment Management - <http://www.neptunefunds.com>.

**Devolder, Katrien, and John Harris. "Should We Genetically Modify Humans? Interview with Professor John Harris." Practical Ethics Channel, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kIMOp9uZbk>.**

- Should parents be entirely free to choose the genetic characteristics of their children? Should deaf parents be allowed to use #GeneEditing to have a deaf child? Can we trust parents' decisions on what genes would be good for their child? In this interview with Katrien Devolder, Prof. #JohnHarris argues that we should gene-edit human embryos, not only to prevent disease but also for the purpose of #enhancement.

**Henschke, Adam. "The Real Life Creation of Super Soldiers | The Future Of War." International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 2017.**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TXBybQEGt0M>.**

- Modern technologies that actively seek to converge bio, nano, info and neuro elements can give us the ability to 'enhance' human beings in ways that we want. This ability - to make soldiers more capable of defeating their enemies and/or surviving the perils of conflict - is of strong interest for militaries throughout the world. By Dr Adam Henschke, ethicist.

**Knoepfler, Paul. "The Ethical Dilemma of Designer Babies." TEDTalk. 2015.**

**[https://www.ted.com/talks/paul\\_knoepfler\\_the\\_ethical\\_dilemma\\_of\\_designer\\_babies](https://www.ted.com/talks/paul_knoepfler_the_ethical_dilemma_of_designer_babies)**

- Creating genetically modified people is no longer a science fiction fantasy; it's a likely future scenario. Biologist Paul Knoepfler estimates that within fifteen years, scientists could use the gene editing technology CRISPR to make certain

"upgrades" to human embryos -- from altering physical appearances to eliminating the risk of auto-immune diseases. In this thought-provoking talk, Knoepfler readies us for the coming designer baby revolution and its very personal, and unforeseeable, consequences.

**Little, Maggie. "Introduction to Bioethics: Bioethics & the Human Body." The Kennedy Institute of Ethics, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h0qnGKYjPY>.**

- On April 15th, 2014, the Kennedy Institute of Ethics at Georgetown University launched the world's first Introduction to Bioethics MOOC on the edX platform. Each of the course's six weeks opens with a TED-style talk from Institute director Dr. Maggie Little. This talk focuses on bioethics and the human body, with topics ranging from reconceptualizing and ethically understanding disability, to challenging the boundaries of what counts as human with genetic, pharmacologic, and surgical enhancement.

**Nicolelis, Miguel. "A Monkey That Controls a Robot with Its Thoughts. No, Really." TEDTalk, 2012.**

**[https://www.ted.com/talks/miguel\\_nicolelis\\_a\\_monkey\\_that\\_controls\\_a\\_robot\\_with\\_i](https://www.ted.com/talks/miguel_nicolelis_a_monkey_that_controls_a_robot_with_i)**

- Can we use our brains to directly control machines? Miguel Nicolelis suggests yes, showing how a clever monkey in the US learned to control a robot arm in Japan purely with its thoughts. The research has big implications for quadraplegic people -- and in fact, it powered the exoskeleton that kicked off the 2014 World Cup.

**Pew Research Center. "The Scientific and Ethical Elements of Human Enhancement." Pew Research Center, 2016.**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uc6grg9ES2s>.**

- (Overview) Human enhancement may be just around the corner. How do Americans view these emerging technologies that may one day enhance our human capabilities? Read the full report here:  
<http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/07/26...> Read the full essay here:  
<http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/07/26...>

**Provoost, Veerle. "Do Kids Think of Sperm Donors as Family?" TEDTalk, 2016.**

[https://www.ted.com/talks/veerle\\_provoost\\_do\\_kids\\_think\\_of\\_sperm\\_donors\\_as\\_fam](https://www.ted.com/talks/veerle_provoost_do_kids_think_of_sperm_donors_as_fam)

- How do we define a parent -- or a family? Bioethicist Veerle Provoost explores these questions in the context of non-traditional families, ones brought together by adoption, second marriages, surrogate mothers and sperm donations. In this talk, she shares stories of how parents and children create their own family narratives. (12:27)

**Resnick, Richard. "Welcome to the Genomic Revolution." TEDTalk, 2011.**

[https://www.ted.com/talks/richard\\_resnick\\_welcome\\_to\\_the\\_genomic\\_revolution](https://www.ted.com/talks/richard_resnick_welcome_to_the_genomic_revolution).

- Cheap and fast genome sequencing is about to turn health care (and insurance, and politics) upside down. Richard Resnick shows how, in this accessible talk. (10:56)

**Sandel, Michael. "The Perfect Human Being Series E13 - Michael Sandel on the Values of Being a Human Being." vpro extra, 2016.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tK3GyjnA3Yc>.

- In this video, Heijne and Sandel talk about what it means to be human, the difference between healing and enhancing, and the future of humanity. For the tv series De Volmaakte Mens, Heijne went on a personal quest to discover what defines 'being human' in our increasingly technological society. He interviewed philosophers, technologists and scientists around the world, in search of the future of the human species. This interview is an excerpt from the Dutch science programme De Volmaakte Mens ("The Perfect Human Being"), episode 4 'The Bionic Human'. The six-part science series De Volmaakte Mens was broadcast on Dutch television in Spring 2015.

**Savulescu, Julian. "Pills That Improve Morality." TEDxBarcelona, 2013.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DhtIFTrjQJ4>.

- In his talk, Julian shows us that technology advanced rapidly but morality did not. Ethics and religions do not have the answers to the questions nowadays, also because the world - thanks to technology - is a completely different one than it was when moral rules were defined and written down. These rules need to be enhanced. The talk has been recorded at TEDxBarcelona on the 17th of May 2013. For more information please visit [www.tedxbarcelona.com](http://www.tedxbarcelona.com).

**Savulescu, Julian. "The Perfect Human Being Series E01 - Julian Savulescu on human enhancement." vpro extra, 2016.**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4qary81ymWk>**

- Do we have the means necessary to create the perfect human? Do we have a moral responsibility to do so? This interview is an excerpt from the Dutch science programme De Volmaakte Mens ("The Perfect Human Being"), episode 1 'Designer Baby'. The six-part science series De Volmaakte Mens was broadcast on Dutch television in Spring 2015. In this video, Heijne and Savulescu talk about designer babies, natural versus artificial reproduction, responsibility of parents and freedom of choice. For the tv series De Volmaakte Mens, Heijne went on a personal quest to discover what defines 'being human' in our increasingly technological society. He interviewed philosophers, technologists and scientists around the world, in search of the future of the human species.

**Torres, Gabriela. "Can Ageing Be Delayed, Stopped or Even Reversed?" BBC News, 2018. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p\\_4UPdFqgIQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p_4UPdFqgIQ).**

- Is aging a disease? One that can be 'cured'? BBC's Gabriela Torres meets the self-experimenters and scientists who are trying to dramatically extend our lives.

**Turner, Cole. "Germline Editing Ethics." Vimeo, 2016.**

**<https://vimeo.com/175713188>.**

- Drs. Parens and Cole-Turner presented their views on how to best integrate secular and religious moral values into public policy around germline editing. Dr. Parens asked the committee to promote conversations about existing ethical concerns about new technologies, and to see genetic enhancement as it relates to human flourishing. Dr. Cole-Turner pointed out that proponents of germline editing may find surprising support in the Christian community, many of whom have not ruled out germline editing entirely. He described Christian support for safe, effective edits that result in healing and benefit to humanity.

**vpro. "The Perfect Human Being." vpro YouTube Playlist, 2015.**

**[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzLGaX\\_JvmJrpl0g9le1k5tErctIqOFR](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzLGaX_JvmJrpl0g9le1k5tErctIqOFR).**

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### **Resource Type**

Bibliography

### **Parent Collection**

Ethics of Human Enhancement Collection

### **Topics**

Human Enhancement

### **Discipline(s)**

Life and Environmental Sciences

Biotechnology