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Technology and Its Impact on People

Humans have consistently been attempting to improve society through technology. Whether these improvements consisted of improving physical attractiveness through cosmetic surgery or decreasing the likelihood of hereditary diseases, they have become a very controversial topic in society. Generally, human enhancement is defined as the use of technology to overcome physical and mental limitations of the human body and brain. Transhumanist ideas have some legitimate views, but overall disability rights supporters provide a better view of the impact of technology on human society. There are negative impacts of technology shown in both the documentary *Fixed: The Science/Fiction of Human Enhancement* and the movie *Iron Man*.

The documentary *Fixed: The Science/Fiction of Human Enhancement* provided several negative impacts of technology in society. In it, Cressida Heyes talks about the negative impact technology has had on people and teenagers in today's society at (11:25). She emphasizes that teenagers and modern-day people are using these enhancements for physical enhancements that they may not necessarily need, such as enhancing physical attractiveness. The world has built a society in which not looking a certain way makes you "unattractive", therefore, making people want to implement these changes. Moreover, if people continue to use these enhancement

technologies, they will be extremely reliant on them for their survival. At (12:19) Patty Berne discusses the problems of using human enhancement technology with the lack of healthcare in the United States. Patty also emphasizes the fact that everyone is not going to be able to afford these human enhancement technologies, such as lower-class people who are more likely to be treated as outcasts and considered abnormal. Enhancements could possibly only affect those who are wealthy or create insecurities by providing a false sense of beauty that not everyone can afford. This is a major concern as enhancements advance in society. At (31:11), Patty Berne begins her argument by asking the question "How would people have equal access to enhancement technologies that require money?" She emphasizes her point by stating that it will be hard to distribute enhancements equally given the lack of healthcare in the United States. Furthermore, proving her point that there might not be a need for human enhancement technology. Much of the film discusses and goes in depth into both sides of transhumanism supporters and disability rights supporters alongside each argument of whether technology has been more harmful or if it has posed a more of an improvement in society. A very big and important question raised by disability rights advocates are whether human enhancements are there to genuinely help with the everyday life of disabled individuals or if they're just being made to make them look "normal" to fit in with society. Gregor Wolbring is a biochemist who believes that humans are better off when they accept imperfection (9:16). He decided to live his life independently despite not having prosthetics.

The documentary provided several examples of people using technology to benefit their daily lives. It opens with a woman in a wheelchair being shown scuba diving which is an experience she may not have been able to enjoy without the help of this technology. Another example is of Fernanda Castelo; she tells her audience about being a test pilot for a company

developing a wearable exoskeleton after an injury that happened to her sixteen years ago left her unable to walk (3:33). The wearable exoskeleton made it possible for her to walk again. Hugh Herr, a Transhumanist, talks about the positive impact technology had on his life through an avalanche accident he had at seventeen years old (4:47). He emphasizes how his amputations made him change his view of himself. He no longer saw himself as a disabled individual but as a better climber than he was before. At (14:56), it specifically discusses the question of whether now in society things are becoming able bodied people versus disabled people in all aspects of life from building accessibility to affordable technological advancements such as wheelchairs. Some people with disabilities feel like the wheelchair is necessary for them to live a "normal" life compared to able bodied individuals, but many times, there are occasions where those with wheelchairs have limited access to public places. The cinematic film *Iron man* portrays how technology can improve a person's sense of being. Tony gets involved in warfare causing shrapnel to get lodged in his heart in which he has Yinsen place in electromagnet in his heart in order to save his life at (16:25). Through the visual upgrades of the special magnet, Tony elevates his life where it will give him many years with ease. Although these films show positive impacts of technology, overall society poses legitimate negative effects of technology on humans.

The film *Iron man* demonstrates both positive and negative effects of technology on humans in society but shows overall using enhancement technologies can be very dangerous. In the film Tony was making and selling missiles for the purpose of creating peace. The moment he realized what the missiles had caused for everyone around him he made the decision to stop distributing them. It also shows that the suit Tony Stark made had an overall negative impact on everyone

around him. At (01:44:30), Tony goes to save Pepper Potts and the city from Obadiah Stane. As an intent to gun down Pepper Potts, Obadiah Stane created a modified version of Tony's suit and in response Tony goes to fight Obadiah. The detrimental effect caused by Tony's suit shows the negative impact human enhancement technologies can have on people. Correcting this misperception will lead to more understanding of why technology should not be used as much as it is today. While many people with disabilities find ways to work around their potential struggle, many disability rights supporters believe these advances being made are only to form everyone into what society looks at as "normal".