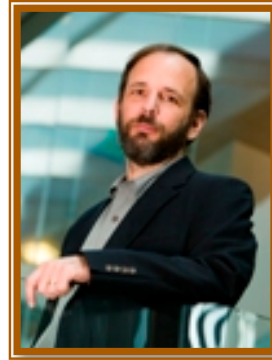




Braden Allenby



Steve Fuller



Daniel Sarewitz

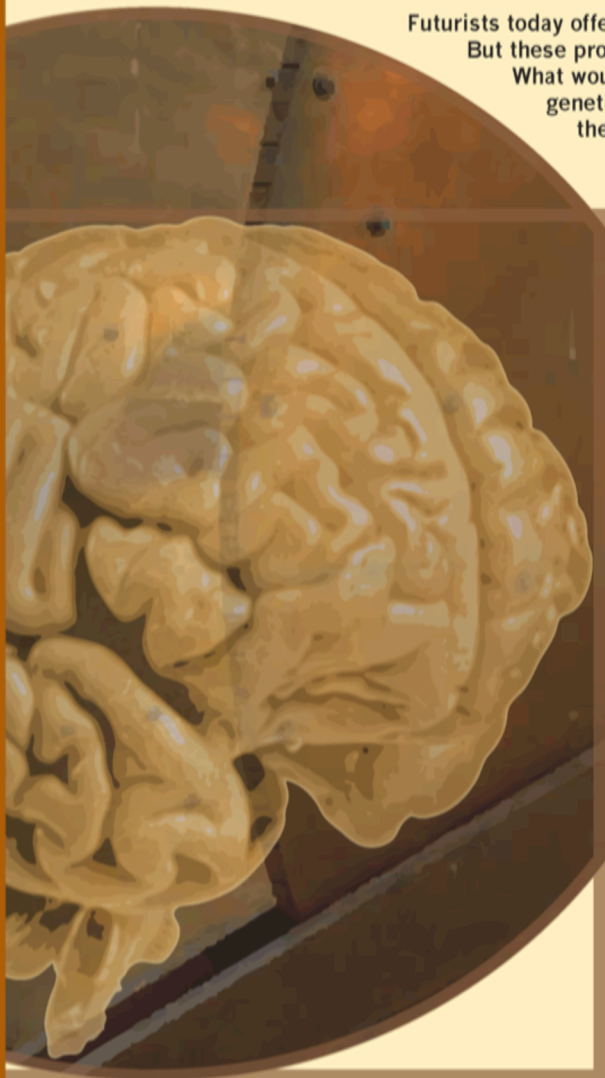
The Techno-Human Condition
Braden Allenby & Daniel Sarewitz
MIT Press, 2011

In this latest version of humanity, we are equipped with a fully re-engineered immune system; the latest set of cultural assumptions about gender, ethnicity, and sexuality; and a suite of customized enhancements, including artificial joints, neurochemical mood modulators, and performance-boosting hormones. In *The Techno-Human Condition*, Braden Allenby and Daniel Sarewitz explore what it means to be human in an era of incomprehensible technological complexity and change. They argue that if we are to have any prospect of managing that complexity, we will need to escape the shackles of current assumptions about rationality, progress, and certainty, even as we maintain a commitment to fundamental human values. Humans have been co-evolving with their technologies since the dawn of prehistory, when tool making and meat eating co-evolved with brain development and social complexity. What is different now is that we have moved beyond external technological interventions to transform ourselves from the inside out—even as we also remake the Earth system itself. Coping with this new reality, say Allenby and Sarewitz, means liberating ourselves from such categories as "human," "technological," and "natural" to embrace a new techno-human relationship. Describing the terms of this relationship, and exploring sociotechnical systems ranging from railroads to modern military technology, Allenby and Sarewitz ultimately locate individual authenticity in the quest for a new humility in the face of the rapidly disappearing moorings of the Enlightenment.

Humanity 2.0
Steve Fuller
Palgrave Macmillan, September 2011

What does it mean to be 'human' in the 21st century? *Humanity 2.0* draws on fields ranging from biology to theology to provide the first synthesis of the historical, philosophical and sociological insights needed to address this question in a thoughtful and creative manner. The result is one of the most sustained attempts to determine what features of our past are worth projecting into the future as 'Humanity 2.0'.

Fuller begins by tackling head on the twin taboos that have always hovered over the scientific study of humanity: race and religion. Far from disappearing, they are being reinvented. On the other hand, the disciplines most closely associated with the study of humanity – the social sciences – have suffered repeated identity crises and now face challenges from both the postmodern humanities and evolutionary biology. Fuller argues that the set of proposals that travel under the name of 'transhumanism' offer a potentially creative way out of this situation by forcing us to decide which features of our current way of life – not least our bodies -- are truly needed to remain human. This line of thought is pursued in two directions: first, the vogue in science policy circles to 'enhance' the human body through artificial intelligence and nano- and bio-technological interventions; second, the long-standing theological preoccupation with cosmic intelligence and physical resurrection. The final chapter considers the implications of these extensions of the human condition for ethics and social values more broadly, as focused through a discussion of suffering, a threshold for moral judgment that presupposes the sort of traditional, unenhanced view of the human body that the 21st century is bound to challenge.



Futurists today offer promises of a golden age for humanity. But these promises also raise fundamental questions: What would it mean if we could live twice as long, genetically alter our abilities, or download all there is to know?

Join us for an evening with
3 cutting edge thinkers

--Steve Fuller,
author of *Humanity 2.0*

AND

Braden Allenby &
Daniel Sarewitz,
co-authors of
*The Techno-Human
Condition*

Wednesday
September 7, 2011
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