



The Proactionary Imperative: A Foundation for Transhumanism

Steve Fuller, Veronika Lipi?ska

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The 'proactionary principle' was introduced by transhumanists. Whereas precautionaries believe that we are on the brink of environmental catastrophe because we're too willing to take risks, proactionaries believe that humans stand apart from the rest of nature by our capacity for successful risk taking. In terms of current environmental problems, therefore, solutions lie not in turning our backs on our love affair with technology but by intensifying it – through finding new energy sources or even looking at the possibility of inhabiting other worlds.

In this fascinating new book, Steve Fuller and Veronika Lipińska explore attitudes towards the transformation of human nature. They point out that, politically, both those on the right and the left contribute to different sides of the precautionary-proactionary debate, and argue that it will be this distinction, between caution and action, that will come to dominate the political landscape and create new political divisions.

Drawing on perspectives from both theology and biology, and completing a trilogy of works exploring 'Humanity 2.0', Fuller and Lipińska ultimately endorse the proactionary position, which supports individuals taking risks – for example with new health treatments, as they try to expand their life chances. They accept that such a risk-taking culture may result in set-backs and failures, but argue that this simply requires a new conception of the welfare state. The results may be an incredibly diverse society that will challenge our notions of tolerance, creating a world where 'traditional' humans live side by side with those who have artificial organs or have received substantial genetic modification. Humans have yet to treat all 'normal' members of Homo sapiens with proper respect and dignity and the proactionary principle opens up new challenges to our conceptions of equality. The book ends with a Manifesto that draws together the arguments to present a challenging vision for the future.

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