

# Human Enhancement Technologies & the Bio-Politico-Ethics of Sport

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Over the last 5 years, the world has encountered considerable developments in human enhancement technologies. Yet, beyond their technical successes and failures, stem-cells, genetics, nanotech, and information technologies have all featured in the everyday *sociologies of the future* that abound within media and scholarly texts. The world of sport has encountered a wide range of these applications and the positioning of sports medicine in relation to experimental medical technologies invites rich and complex speculations on the development of performance in elite sport. In this paper, I discuss the role of bio(ethics) in cultural studies and its bearing on the human enhancement debate by drawing on Zylinska (2005). Within the UK, the most recent instantiation of this debate is through the public inquiry into *Human Enhancement Technologies in Sport* (Science and Technology Select Committee, 2006), the first evidence session of which heard from former 100m Olympic champion Linford Christie. I discuss the political positioning of sports institutions in relation to these technologies and how they reflect a broader bio-politico-ethical stance against human enhancement (Garnier, 2006; WADA, 2006). Moreover, I suggest that this positioning is broadly indicative of a fundamental tension within the world of medicine over its legitimate role, and the ends of a commercial model for human modification. These circumstances limit the possibility of open debate about the relevance and merit of anti-doping programmes and weaken the credibility of sport's judicial ethos, the latter of which is highlighted by responses from athletes to Linford Christie's involvement with the public inquiry. Finally, I conclude that these characteristics of sport's political economy inhibit nations from developing *technoprogressive* approaches to the human enhancement debate.

## References

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