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## REFERENCES

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- 1 *Transhumanism and Posthumanism in Twenty-first Century Narrative*, edited by Sonia Baelo-Allué and Mónica Calvo-Pascual, presents an overview of the main concerns of critical posthumanism expounded in contemporary examples of film, Tedtalks, and literature. The need for discussion about our ever-accelerating artificial intelligent (AI) environment and transhumanism is urgent and this work seems to successfully tackle a myriad of topics through the lenses of transhumanism and posthumanism.
- 2 The book consists of thirteen chapters where different authors offer an array of perspectives on transhuman and posthuman texts. The introduction sets the ground for an in-depth appraisal of many of the current posthuman and transhuman discussions on the use of technology for the so-called human perfectibility and enhancement. On the one hand, transhumanism endorses the basic transhumanist tenet that merging the organic and the technological will drastically and positively transform our efficiency, speed and wellbeing (Kurzweil 2005). On the other hand, critical posthumanism is concerned with the dangers inherent in the use of technology in the quest of perfectibility and thus, its consequences on human existentialism. A thought-provoking posthumanist critique is presented in every chapter of this book,

which discuss the possible effects of technology on emotional, physical, social, political behaviour.

- 3 Following a brief introduction of the key concepts related to transhumanism and posthumanism by the editors, the first chapter, “Before Humanity, Or, Posthumanism Between Ancestrality and Becoming Inhuman” by Stefan Herbrechter, poses the primordial question of what being human may entail, urging us to reconsider ourselves through history and past ecologies in order to try to discern when and how humans developed—with the hope that the information gained will help humans understand what it means to be human.
- 4 Techno utopianism and anthropogenic values are examined in chapter two, “From Utilitarianism to Transhumanism: A Critical Approach,” as Maite Escuderos-Alías likens utilitarianism self-improvement to transhumanism, underlining white Western male notions of shared “imagined projections of kinship based on exclusion” (33). The argument put forward is that utilitarianism and transhumanism are both based on the premise of self-improvement for all, but both ignore that not everyone is in the same position to be able to self-improve. Escuderos also fervently defends insightful, slow, offline reading that implies ponderous and unhurried reading of non-digital texts. In chapter three, “Posthuman Modes of Reading Literature Online,” Alexandra Glavanakova recognizes, given how technological developments have transformed the way we access information, the current negative aspects of online reading like skimming, superficial reading and the lack of constant attention. By doing so, she wonders if a halfway negotiation between online and offline reading standpoints might be, for instance, social online reading. Glavanakova considers this communal form of reading as a way to ameliorate the negative impacts of online reading. Moreover, Glavanakova reminds us that we began to read only approximately 5000 years ago, and that reading does not depend on one area of the brain—which indicates human capacity for evolutionary plasticity.
- 5 Loredana Filip’s chapter, “Vigilance to Wonder: Human Enhancement in TED Talks,” examines the apparent and contradictory sales techniques of emotional stimulation and awe-inspiring mathematics in transhumanist enhancement Tedtalks. Filip examines how the use of complex and seemingly sublime maths—communicated via apparent authority—instils the emotion of awe. In this manner, humans alongside such stunning complexities appear to be weak and inferior and therefore, in need of transhumanist enhancement.
- 6 In his chapter titled “Patterns of Posthuman Numbness in Shirley & Gibson’s “The Belonging Kind” and Eggers’s *The Circle*” Francisco Collado-Rodríguez brings to the forefront issues of human numbness, failing critical abilities and bamboozling sales talk through a literary analysis of John Shirley and William Gibson’s “The Belonging Kind” (1981) and David Eggers’ *The Circle* (2013). According to Collado-Rodríguez, *The Circle* lures people into believing that they are backing total transparency when in fact what they are backing is total control.
- 7 In the following chapter, Margalida Massanet Andreu follows on with U., the corporation anthropologist in McCarthy’s *Satin Island* (2016). Massanet explores whether continual data saturation is instrumental in inhibiting our capacity to extract meaning. If humans are not able to disconnect from the constant information flow, there will be no time or space to think or ponder.

- 8 In the seventh chapter, “The Paradoxical Anti-Humanism of Tom McCarthy’s *C: Traumatic Secrets and the Waning of Affects in the Technological Society*,” Susana Onega addresses melancholy and affect in the technological society at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The discussion revolves around McCarthy’s take on communication, technology obsessions, emotionally barren families, necronautism and sexual practices.
- 9 Ethics in contemporary capitalist society along with healthy/unhealthy affective responses and transience/permanence are investigated by Carmen Laguardo Bueno in Don DeLillo’s cryonics novel *Zero K* in her chapter “Don DeLillo’s *Zero K* (2016): Transhumanism, Trauma, and the Ethics of Premature Cryopreservation.”
- 10 In chapter nine, “A Dystopian Vision of Transhuman Enhancement: Speciesist and Political Issues Intersecting Trauma and Disability in M. Night Shyamalan’s *Split*,” Miriam Fernández-Santiago illustrates how Christian ethics is entangled in the intersection of disability and transhumanism. Disability prosthesis is for infra humanity and transhuman prosthesis is for supra humanity (i.e., because transhumanists consider humans to be inferior and suffering, they will automatically be purified). Ipso facto if the disabled are not considered inferior, they will not be automatically purified and will have to suffer. Fernández-Santiago also asks the important judgemental question of just how decentralist posthumanism is.
- 11 In chapter ten, “The Call of the Anthropocene: Resituating the Human Through Trans- & Posthumanism Notes of Otherness in Works of Jeff VanderMeer and Cixin Liu,” Justus Poetzsch contrasts Cixin Liu’s *Remembrance of Earth’s Past* (2014) with VanderMeer’s *Southern Reach* trilogy (2014) to elucidate values in the Anthropocene and Post Anthropocene. Liu’s narrative justifies high-tech power aggression in an environment of limited resources as being necessary in order to survive, whereas VanderMeer demonstrates that humans adapt, accept and change their ways of thinking and communicating.
- 12 VanderMeer’s novel *Borne* (2017), analysed by Mónica Sousa in her chapter “Am I a person?”: Biotech Animals and Posthumanist Empathy in Jeff VanderMeer’s *Borne*,” also reflects on communication (verbal/non-verbal) and empathy achieved through imagination with organic and nonorganic creations.
- 13 In “Posthuman Cure: Biological and Cultural Motherhood in Margaret Atwood’s *MaddAddam*,” Esther Muñoz-González extends the idea of a posthuman cure, which functions as the recognition of biotech personhood of the cultural/biological mother figure. The chapter also discusses others’ superior ability to communicate more widely than humans and contemporary tech business fronts of one attractive public project, which funds a second secret undertaking.
- 14 The last chapter, “Transhuman Transformation in Helen Marshall’s *The Migration*,” is written by Sherryl Vint. Near-future adults die from J2, but when Kira’s body is placed into the woods it undergoes a metamorphosis of animalistic features and becomes a “nymph” or spirit of the woods and rivers. Disease, viruses and bacteria have evolved in a symphysistic way with humans. It is unknown what may happen if we rid ourselves of them. As Kira’s sister Sophie, whose name means wisdom, says “Nature finds a way when it’s threatened, doesn’t it?” (225).
- 15 This collection of chapters puts forward a stimulating overview of the pressing critical posthuman-transhuman debate and triggers a riveting discussion on particular representations of the transhuman. The editors, Sonia Baelo-Allué and Mónica Calvo-

Pascual, have compiled a resourceful volume from a new viewpoint backed up by extensive research to bring forth further discussion on transhumanism. Many themes have been brought up for debate. However, the lenitude of law and legislation in today's fast-moving capitalist society, which is one of the most critical issues for transhumanism and posthumanism, has not been given any consideration in the volume. Technology manufacturing and merchandising risks and benefits also need to be discussed in the context of transhumanism and posthumanism. What is more, the questions of who controls the switches and what would happen in the case of complete technological breakdown have to be considered, perhaps, in a second volume edited by Baelo-Allué and Calvo-Pascual.