

Contents

1	Introduction to the Transhumanity Debate	1
	Presenting the Transhumanity Debate	2
	Transtechnologies and Society	4
	Discourse of Concern and Discourse of Hope	6
	Transhumanity and Modernity	7
	Suspect Modernity	7
	Modernity in the Balance	8
	The “New Enlightenment”	9
	On Capitalism	11
	Conclusion	11
2	Transcend or Transgress?	13
	Transcendence: Cosmic, Personal and <i>Civitas</i>	14
	Cosmic Transcendence	15
	Personal Transcendence	15
	Civitas Transcendence	16
	Compromise between Versions	17
	Transgression	18
	Critique of Cosmic Transcendence	18
	Critique of Personal Transcendence	21
	Critique of Civitas Transcendence	23
	Transcendence nor Transgression?	24
3	Transformation of Body and Mind	25
	Radical Transformation	26
	Mind over Body	26
	Of Substrates and Cyborgs	28
	Religious Critique: Escape the Body, Lose the Soul	30
	Secular Critique: Escape the Body, Lose the Self	32

Moderate Transformation	34
Moderate Transformation as Value Gained	35
Moderate Transformation as Value Lost	36
Defending Posthuman Dignity	37
Taboo or Tolerance	39
4 Rhetoric of Risk	41
The Social Construction of Risk	42
Risk and Social Movements	43
Risk Narratives	44
“End Times” Narrative	44
Market Exploitation Narrative	45
New Enlightenment Narrative	46
Risk Campaigns	47
Trust	48
Oversight Based on the Precautionary Principle	49
Oversight Based on the Proactionary Principle	50
Assignment of Liability	51
Contested Objects	54
GNR Terrorism	54
Genetically Modified Food	56
Neuropharmaceuticals	58
Protecting the “Risk Object Portfolio”	59
Conclusion	59
5 Inevitability	61
Rhetoric of Inevitability	62
Transhumanity and Fatalism	62
Strong Claims of Inevitability	63
Evolution	63
Homo Cyberneticus	65
Technological Momentum	65
Conservationist Critique of Strong Claims	67
Religious Conservationist Counterargument	67
Secular Conservationist Counterargument	68
Moderate Claim: Social Conditions are Ripe	68
Relinquishment	71
6 Closure	73
No Easy Resolution	73
Balancing Act with Inevitability Claims	74
Scenarios	75

Contents	xi
About the Author	79
References	81
Index	87