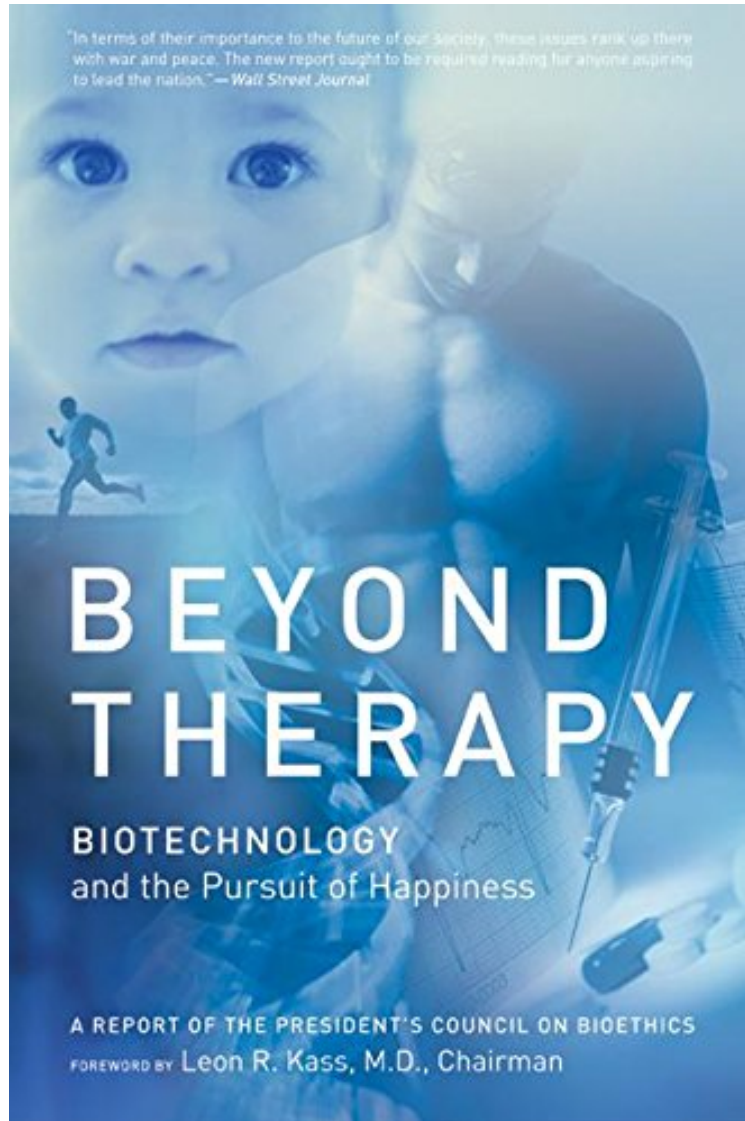


(Download) Beyond Therapy: Biotechnology and the Pursuit of Happiness

Beyond Therapy: Biotechnology and the Pursuit of Happiness

The President's Council on Bioethics

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The President's Council on Bioethics : Beyond Therapy: Biotechnology and the Pursuit of Happiness before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Beyond Therapy: Biotechnology and the Pursuit of Happiness:

31 of 38 people found the following review helpful. Will be standard reference for the field By A Customer This is a thorough and comprehensive study of the issues, more than 300 pages with ample references. The report is organized into sections covering the following topics: Biotechnology and the pursuit of happiness; Better children; Superior

performance; Ageless bodies; Happy souls; General reflections. The text was carefully prepared, various viewpoints on each issue are brought in, and the writing is very clear. The membership of the Council that prepared this report is outstanding. It is one of the best ever assembled to study a scientific policy issue. Thirteen of the seventeen members hold named professorships at leading universities. Their expertise covers the full range of relevant fields, from basic biology through clinical medicine to philosophy, religion and law. The volume is very timely, given widespread concern over the reappearance of eugenics in recent years. All who are interested in the impact of biotechnology on human life should read this volume. 21 of 26 people found the following review helpful. A first-rate consideration of the human condition

By Shalom Freedman This work goes well beyond the framework of a President's Commission Report to be an informative and challenging inquiry into the current state of biotechnological research, and its philosophical implications. It considers in separate chapters the work that is being done to increase human performance- level in sport, to as it were 'produce better children', to prolong and increase the quality of human life, and to bring us closer to 'human happiness'. The tone of this work is measured and responsible, the information presented that which has been weighed and tested. Above all in considering each of these areas the debate is carried on with a broad-minded and deep consideration of the meaning of what it is to be human. Thus there is neither the 'gung-ho' utopianism of certain kinds of over-optimistic futurists, nor the paralyzing pessimism of various over-protectors of their own narrow conceptions of the human past. In each of the areas a balanced discussion provides the reader, not with definite and final answers to the problems and possibilities raised, but with suggestions for thought. We have long since learned that scientific and technological advances usually have their 'price' in one way or another. Here trade-offs in the various areas are made explicit. The new technology which enables us to decide upon the sex of the child has already led to tremendous imbalances in among other areas, the populations of China and India. The prolonging of life is in many cases the prolonging of what seems to be senseless suffering. The ability to enhance moods through chemical means raises the question of what happiness means when it is devoid of the context of human relationship. The possibility of prolonging life indefinitely raises the question of what this might mean for future generations, and the whole spirit of renewal that the birth of a new generation gives to the world. Leon Kass a moral thinker of the first order, and the director of this enterprise has often been unjustly accused of being a 'super-conservative' and even 'fundamentalist'. Such nonsense does not do justice either to Kass impressive scholarly enterprise, or to the great human feeling and consideration with which he approaches these subject. It seems to me that his position is much closer to that of what might be called a traditional liberal meliorist, who is looking to see how the human condition can be improved without those improvements leading to its radical undermining. His understanding in this sense of the place of the family and of human relations in the good life, and in happiness starkly contrast him with those ivory-tower 'transhumanists' and 'cyber-champions' who would replace mankind with their own solipsistic minds. This is an important work not for its definite conclusions but for the serious contribution it makes to the ongoing quest of humanity to understand itself and define and realize its varying conceptions of the good life. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Against the American Brain

By born into this I can do no better than quote Carl Elliott writing in Slate: "As much as it pains me to admit that anything worthwhile could come from a council appointed by the Bush administration, *Beyond Therapy* is a remarkable document: gracefully written, thoroughly researched, ideologically balanced, and philosophically astute. It will be a benchmark for all future work on the topic."

A groundbreaking new exploration of the promises and perils of biotechnology -- and the future of American society. Biotechnology offers exciting prospects for healing the sick and relieving suffering. But because our growing powers also enable alterations in the workings of the body and mind, they are becoming attractive to healthy people who would just like to look younger, perform better, feel happier, or become more "perfect." This landmark book -- the product of more than sixteen months of research and reflection by the members of the President's Council on Bioethics -- explores the profound ethical and social consequences of today's biotechnical revolution. Almost every week brings news of novel methods for screening genes and testing embryos, choosing the sex and modifying the behavior of children, enhancing athletic performance, slowing aging, blunting painful memories, brightening mood, and altering basic temperaments. But we must not neglect the fundamental question: Should we be turning to biotechnology to fulfill our deepest human desires? We want better children -- but not by turning procreation into manufacture or by altering their brains to gain them an edge over their peers. We want to perform better in the activities of life -- but not by becoming mere creatures of chemistry. We want longer lives -- but not at the cost of becoming so obsessed with our own longevity that we care little about future generations. We want to be happy -- but not by taking a drug that gives us happy feelings without the genuine loves, attachments, and achievements that are essential to true human flourishing. As we enjoy the benefits of biotechnology, members of the council contend, we need to hold fast to an account of the human being seen not in material or mechanistic or medical terms but in psychic, moral, and spiritual ones. By grasping the limits of our new powers, we can savor the fruits of the age of biotechnology without succumbing to its most dangerous temptations. *Beyond Therapy* takes these issues out of the narrow circle of bioethics professionals and into the larger public arena, where matters of this importance rightly belong.

About the Author Leon R. Kass, M.D., P.h.D., is chairman of the Presidents Council on Bioethics. He is the Addie Clark Harding Professor in the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago and Hertog Fellow in Social Thought at the American Enterprise Institute. Also the author of *Toward a More Natural Science: Biology and Human Affairs*, *The Ethics of Human Cloning* (with James Q. Wilson), and *Life, Liberty, and the Defense of Dignity: The Challenge for Bioethics*, he lives with his wife, Amy Apfel Kass, in TK.