

The brain microchip implants philosophy essay



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In 2009 biosensors held a world market value of 13 billion, with glucose measurement holding nine tenths of that value. A couple of decades ago it was bizarre to fancy a world of humans with working electronics implanted in them; now it's a foreseeable reality. The world has finally emerged.

Microchips are coming to a brain near you. Once what was a brave concept of science fiction has now elevated to production status in the new millennium. The 'Tri-Corder' from Star Trek that scanned the body of those who were sick was a preview into the future of devices implanted in our body transmitting our health status. Science, medicine, and technology have merged to bring forth an accurate and reliable measure of our wellbeing to anticipate, alert and prevent a wide array of human body maladies encapsulated in an implantable microchip. The concept was commercially introduced to domestic animals then implanting them with microchips in their skin to identify them in the event they were lost and found by a veterinary clinic. This same technology has progressed to implanting microchips into American soldiers to monitor their "health on the battlefield and keep doctors constantly abreast about potential health problems."(Knibbs 2012) Microchips are a progressive piece of technology that have been found to become beneficial in prospective to giving sight to the visionless even if it is the detection of light and outlines of certain objects (Pederson 9) and implanted microchips that deliver medication drugs automatically.(Boyles) Recent developments from microchip manufactures point toward the use of these devices for personal use in the near future. Intel, the world's leading semiconductor manufacture, reported that by 2020 a keyboard and mouse will no longer be needed to control your computer. (Gaudin 2009) Intel further reports that they will achieve this concept by <https://assignbuster.com/the-brain-microchip-implants-philosophy-essay/>

implanting sensors in the brain to pick up on brain waves emitted by the action requested. Mind control through microchips is not far from us. Puzzlebox has developed the world's first brain controlled toy helicopter, "Power up the controller, slip on the headset, and start concentrating." (Miot 2012) That headset will soon become an implantable microchip in our brains that allow us to control our phones, televisions and home automated devices without ever having to lift a finger, per say. Google is currently in development of Google Glasses that one can place like regular glasses showing an overlay of screens, controlled by voice control and iris movement that will show the status of your phone without ever having to take it out. (Goldman 2012) This gateway of technology advancements will all lead to smaller and less power consuming devices that will give birth to implanted microchips for everyday consumer use. The possibilities are endless since the human body is extremely adaptable to change. Microchips showing headway towards successful trails is demonstrating the superior power of this product. Microchips are revolutionizing how the physical and digital world are coming to one and leaving the humans that roam this earth one choice, should we accept or reject this technology? Great power requires governance and there is no doubt the government has capitalized on this technology. The execution of microchip implants would introduce threats that would threaten the people who were targeted to help. Amongst those threats, there is a potential risk of exposure to privacy of personal information, health instability, and the possibility of irreversible social repercussions should want to discourage generations ahead from us to accept the manufacture of implantable microchips for personal use.

The implant of microchips would introduce the authorization to violate a person's right to privacy. Aforementioned, it was introduced that domesticated animals had an implanted microchip into their skin. This process is called micro-chipping. The chip has a tag or code that identifies the identity of the animal along with any other information embedded. This technology has proven to be successful since its introduction by returning lost animals to their owners. According to Homeagain. com,

“ A recent study showed that less than 2% of cats without microchips were returned home. However, if a cat is microchipped, the return-to-owner rate is 20 times higher than if the cat was not microchipped.”

One can assume that it would be acceptable to adopt the idea of implanting microchips in our brain would be safe. The microchip would contain the person's digital identity such as their name, home address, birthdate, marital status, children/s name, etc. Also, the way a person utilizes the Internet would interact with this microchip. An interview on search engine giant, Google, the company's co-founder Sergey Brin reported that by observing a person's search query on google. com, it is possible to understand his or her trends and gain more insight into their private or public life.(Bartirromo 2010) Lastly, instead of tracking individual whereabouts on the Internet via IP address, activity conducted by brain will be traced back to the implanted microchip. The endless information provided within these microchips will be available and accessible to anyone who has a device readily made to read them. The private data on these microchips will be on anyone's radar seeking to take advantage of their personal information or deploy a harmful scheme against society. Imagine an identity thief's dream to gain access to <https://assignbuster.com/the-brain-microchip-implants-philosophy-essay/>

the only information we can hide (our minds) and using it clone your chip then act on your behalf to cause chaos and have it all lead back to the original person since your implanted microchip would link every action back to you. This would render the victim helpless. Imagine a college student passing the LSAT with a perfect score then being expelled from law school after campus authorities revealed his microchip showed a recent search on the Internet regarding " Passing LSAT". Information would be scrutinized to the advantage of the authorities (nothing new). As if daily spam e-mail wasn't enough and ad's on everything the human sight hears or sees, imagine marketing companies gaining access to brain implanted microchips and being able to directly spam the brain with ads. Surely the government would have to step into this breach of private information because a branch of the system will always believe in regulation. The regulation would provide protection in respect to private information. With regulation there are current rules about advertising to specific groups of age, race, and beliefs. This would limit the kind of general advertising of alcohol, guns, and tobacco industries would have on children that are underage. Current laws protect our privacy and confidentiality agreements hold information secure to those with privileged access only. There have been those glitches in secure infrastructures that have been breached in the past and identity theft continues to be the popular choice amongst hackers. Quite simply put, in order to protect any valuable information, companies would have to protect their network like the United States Secret Service fights against intruders daily attempting to obtain missile launch codes.(Keneally 2012)

Unfortunately, there is no reason for companies to do so since they are possibly run by either the manufacturer or the government, with its due

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diligence to protect the citizens' rights mixed in with corruption and lobbying. Having small chance that an organization is committed to efficiently protecting the private information from being broken into, the microchip implant would become an open door violating a person's personal data and rights.

Implanting microchips into the brain would carry a multitude of health risks. The brain is the center of the nervous system and executes innumerable tasks: it regulates the body, accepts information regarding an individual's environment through their senses, controls physical movement, preserves memory, and enables learning and thinking (Saunders, 2007). To accomplish these tasks, it relies on a network of neurons all over the body with which it sends and receives data through electrical impulses. For a brain implant to work, it would need to be able to receive information from the brain or the neurons. Consider the real world examples given in the first paragraph: without a connection from implant to brain, the business professional would be unable to relay the intended words to her chip to compose her email message; without a connection from implant to neurons corresponding to the eye, the college student would be unable to relay the image of the book to his chip to obtain book reviews. Therefore, to successfully function as intended, the brain implant would have to act as a conductor of electrical impulses, wired to the human network between the brain and the body's neurons. If the chip were to malfunction, it would disrupt the connection between brain and neuron and effectively affect electrical impulse transmission. A man attempting to wave his arm would find his body responsive only after a delayed amount of time, if it were to even respond.

Of course, that would be the least of his problems: with his brain's ability to regulate the body affected, his body temperature and heart rate would race out of control, killing him in a matter of minutes. Even if he managed to be resuscitated and his body regulated by an external medical device, he would still either be in a coma or a vegetative state, due to potential brain damage (Martin 2010). A number of factors could cause a malfunction, such as hardware failure and sensory overload (when too much information being spread inhibits the implant's ability to process them). Additionally, brain implants maintaining connections to the Internet could expose the brain to the radiation from data communication networks, possibly leading to cancerous tumors in the nervous system (Daniels 2006). Now, supporters of a personal brain implant would be quick to point out that a majority of researchers have found no correlation between cell phone radiation and cancer, and that perhaps they suggest that wireless radiation does not affect human beings (Christensen 2004). They would also insist that a malfunctioning chip would be impossible, stating that health agencies (such as the FDA) would never allow a manufacturer to sell the brain implants without examining and declaring them safe for use. While a majority of researchers may have found no link between cell phone usage and cancer, that still does not rule out the fact that several researchers did arrive on an opposite conclusion. Additionally, a brain implant maintaining a connection to the Internet for long periods of time would generate significantly more exposure to radiation, not to mention directly to the nervous system (Daniels). Also, even if a manufacturer were able to pass a health agencies rigorous testing, human error, the mysterious workings of the brain, and other unforeseen problems could still nonetheless cause a chip to

malfunction. With the means to possibly cause the loss of human life, the human implant represents a serious danger to its carrier.

The introduction of personal brain implants to the general population would trigger undesirable effects in society. As new technologies integrate themselves into people's daily lives, over time it can affect the way in which they live. The advent of the Internet, the search engine, and knowledge databases such as Wikipedia has simplified the process of acquiring information. However, this has also affected the manner in which one interprets information. A study regarding online research habits conducted by the University College London found that " users are not reading online in the traditional sense; indeed there are signs that new forms of " reading" are emerging as users " power browse"..."(Carr 2008). In Plato's " Phaedrus", Socrates lamented the invention of writing, fearing that " people would come to rely on the written word as a substitute for the knowledge they used to carry around inside their heads..." (Carr). He suspected that greater access to knowledge would translate to less retention of knowledge. With the rise of Google and Wikipedia society sunk lower, for man traded away comprehensive understanding for shortened instant gratification. With personal brain implants representing the next technological advancement, users would continue down a dangerous path that would see their intelligence " flattened into artificial intelligence." The brain implants would also reflect a more depersonalized society, with interaction heavily based upon the brain implants as a platform. Individuals capable of communicating wirelessly would find little reason or need to meet in person or ever open their mouths again. Proponents for personal brain implants would insist that

they represent a step in the right direction, with speed, accessibility, and convenience resulting factors from the technological advancement. They would go on to say that the new technology could be used for good to benefit society as a whole: for example, firemen with brain implants could access Google maps and find quicker routes, saving precious time and lives. Independent blogger Alex White said it best: “ everyone sheepishly falls head over heels for technology” (White 2009). Many of the features the brain implant would offer already exist in some shape or form; is it really worth upgrading to shave off a few seconds? A taxi driver with a street map and decent knowledge of the city theoretically could perform his or her duties just as well as taxi driver with a brain implant. As for the “ good for society” argument, what’s not to say the opposite couldn’t happen? As mentioned before, couldn’t this convenient technology be abused? While a fireman may benefit from employing his implant to assist him in locating a fire hydrant, a thief could benefit from employing his implant to help him steal jewelry. While the personal brain implant may represent a step forward in technological advancement, it would simultaneously fuel social decline.

Just because an opportunity presents itself does not mean one is required to take it. The buzz surrounding new ideas often tend to be exaggerated, as most people are quick to embrace something fresh without fully considering it. Brain implant technology is certainly an exciting concept with radical tools to offer; however, there exists no practical method that could fully integrate them into a future generation without generating chaos. With its health risks, invasion of individual privacy, and the potential to spark social relapse,

personal brain implants simply bring up too many “ what ifs”, and are too dangerous to ever see the light of day.