

Bork Petersen Franziska

Human Enhancement and Utopia

standard lecture

My paper addresses the question: What is enhancement of the body and how do human enhancement and utopia relate? It is part of a larger research project on utopianism and human bodies.

The paper investigates what role 'the better' plays when bodies themselves become sites for utopia. Drawing on Ernst Bloch's utopianism I investigate how notions of 'excess' versus a real or perceived lack figure in the idea of 'improving' bodies.

As an example, the structure of sports has been described as utopian, on the basis of its organisation of a ceaseless revision of records. I investigate competitive sports events as the first field in which medication for the treatment of ill bodies has been used to enhance perfectly healthy bodies with the goal of creating excessive achievements. The care of the (physical) self continues way beyond the point where illness ends.

Bio:

Franziska Bork Petersen is a postdoctoral fellow at the Department of Arts and Cultural Studies at the University of Copenhagen. She completed her PhD in Theatre Studies in a collaboration between Stockholm University and Freie Universität Berlin, and is currently working on a book about how notions of the body and utopianism relate.

