Young Explorers

The concept of a superhuman can also mean something that isn’t human, but considered to be “super” to humans in some ways. They could be godlike, exceptional, or extraordinary gifts.

Who is a Superhuman?

The dictionary definition of a superhuman as an entity with intelligence or unusual abilities exceeding normal human standards. Superhumans can also mean something that isn’t human, but considered to be “super” to humans in some ways. They could be godlike, exceptional, or extraordinary gifts.

How does a Superhuman evolve?

All our comic books and science fiction stories are filled with examples of superhumans. Superhumans evolve through genetic engineering or as cyborgs.

Mutants: One type of superhuman described in science fiction stories, particularly during the Atomic Age, derives from the concept of mutation. In such tales, a human being could mutate into or give birth to a superhuman species. Mutants powers vary seemingly without limit. Some of these powers include incredible strength, agility, or senses. Mutant powers can grow and increase in the mutant’s body, and sometimes it becomes apparent immediately after birth. Superman, the X-Men, in Marvel comics and Ninja Turtles are examples of mutant superhumans.

Genetic Engineering: Superhumans can also be genetically engineered. Human genetic engineering has the potential to change human beings’ appearance, adaptability, intelligence, character, and behavior. It may potentially be used in creating more dramatic changes in humans. For example, Spiderman is bitten by a genetically engineered spider that alters his own DNA structure. The 1930 novel Gladiator, featur- ing a man granted super-strength and durability through prenatal chemical experimentation.

Cyborgs: Superhumans could also be a cyborg, a cybernetic organism that has both artificial and natural systems. It is a human being whose body has been taken apart in whole or in part by electromagnetic devices—a synthesis of men and machine. Cyborgs are often portrayed with physical or mental abilities for exceeding a human counterpart. Characters like Frankenstein’s monster in the novel and the Terminator are examples of cyborgs.

Do Superhumans exist only in stories?

While superhumans may have been introduced to us through stories and mythology, today biotechnology and genetic engineering has made it possible for man to design his own evolutionary progress. Scientists can now pinpoint many specific genes including being tall, living a long life, improved self-healing and having an improved memory among many other in- credible traits. They also believe that these genes can be manipulated in ordinary humans, creating Superhumans.

Can Superhumans be created today?

The options are nearly limitless. Theoretically, if a gene exists in another species, it can be brought over to a human cell. Imagine some of the incredible traits of the animal kingdom that humans miss out on—night vision, amazing agility, or the ability to breathe underwater. Work on this front is already being done. Experimental mice, for example, were successfully given the human ability to see in color. If animals can be engineered to have human traits, then humans can certainly be mutated to have desirable animal traits.

It is even thought possible that Human enhancement technologies could so drastically alter human genotypes that a type of superhuman species could emerge —the latest being using cells of a dead person. The idea is that you could borrow skin cells from a living or dead person to grow your child a genetic enhancement. If we had a few skin cells from Albert Einstein, or anyone else in the world, you could have a child that is say 10 per cent or 70 per cent Albert Einstein by just injecting a few of their cells into an embryo.

What are Human enhancement technologies (HET)?

Human enhancement technologies (HET) are techniques that can be used not simply for treating illness and disability, but also for enhancing human characteristics and capacities, roughly synonymous with human genetic engineering. It is used most often to refer to the general application of the con- vergence of nanotechnology, biotechnology, information technology and cognitive sci- ence to improve human performance.

SUPERHUMANS THROUGH THE YEARS

Superman was the first true superhero concepted way back in 1938. The original story of Superman relates that he was born Kal-El on the planet Krypton, before being rescued by Earth as an infant by his scienti- st father Jor-El, moments before Krypton’s destruction. Discovered and adopted by a Kansas farmer and his wife, the child is raised as Clark Kent and imbued with a strong moral compass. He displays superhuman abilities from childhood, which upon reaching maturity he resolves to use for the benefit of humanity.

Unlike many superheroes, Batman has no superpowers. Batman’s secret identity is Bruce Wayne, a wealthy industrialist, play- boy, and philanthropist. Witnessing the murder of his parents as a child, Wayne trains himself both physically and intellectu- ally and dons a bat-themed costume in order to fight crime.

A bite from a scientifically enhanced spi- der causes a variety of changes in the body of Peter Parker, giving him superpowers such as the ability to climb walls, superhuman strength, a sixth sense (“spider- sense”) that alerts him to danger, perfect balance, as well as superhuman agility. He is intellectually gifted, excelling in applied science, chemistry and physics.

From powers such as instant healing, flying, reading minds, and so on, X-Men are a unique breed of superheroes in that they are outliers in terms of society, yet all the X-Men mutants have pooled together for the benefit of society.

A recent entry into the superheroes cate- gory is The Terminator, a seemingly unstoppable cyborg assassin who has been sent back from the year 2029 by a race of artificially intelligent computer-controlled machines.

The Real Superhumans and the Quest for the Perfect Fantastic is a special show on Discovery Channel which follows people with real-life superhuman abilities, genetic engineering and the progress of human evolution. So... just watch out!

Once upon a time, there was a monster who killed many people. Then one fine day, came the super hero who killed the monster and made all of us live happily ever after.

Superheroes through the ages, our stories have always been complete with the sort of a happy ending. A superhuman, a symbol of courage and nobility and who has abilities beyond those of normal human beings, al- ways comes to the rescue to free us from all evil.

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From Superman to the Terminator; superhumans have fascinated us from time immemorial…and today, with human enhancement technologies the era of ‘real’ superhumans could be back again. You unravel the making of a Superhuman.

Superhumans from the story "Spiderman, our very own Krissh or the terminator: superhumans have fascinated us from time immemorial…and today, with human enhancement technologies the era of ‘real’ superhumans could be back again. You unravel the making of a Superhuman."