

ART OF MEDICINE

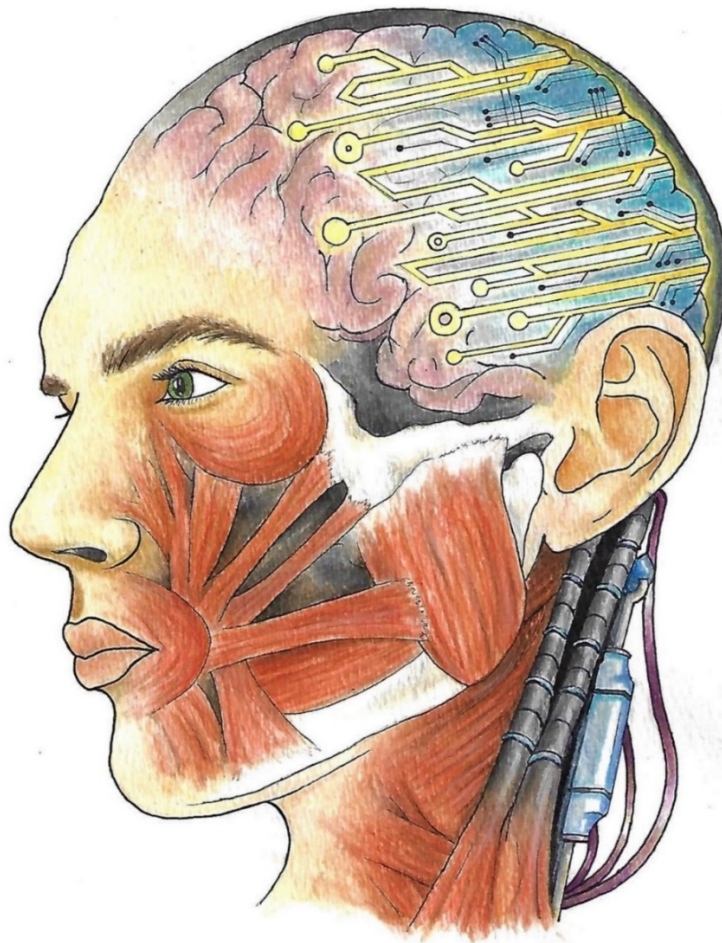
Technological Transformation

Elisabeth Miller

Abstract

Technology has enabled bionics and artificial intelligence, each of which can have important applications in health care. As we continue to substitute body parts with machinery, however, we might wonder, “What makes us human?” This drawing interrogates the relationship between humanity and embodiment, specifically in neck and facial musculature and brain structures.

Figure. *Technological Transformation*



Media

Water color pencils and black pen on paper.

This image represents humankind's union with technology. It shows the brain turning into a collection of integrated computer circuits and the neck muscles evolving into mechanization-ready cables, pumps, and wires. In artificial intelligence (AI), boundaries distinguishing life and technology are challenged. We wonder, "Is it possible for machines to think? Are our own brains just complex organizations of biological microchips?" Medical students are well positioned to appreciate how intimately technology is becoming part of human life. From wheelchairs and artificial limbs to new antibiotics and imaging, innovations are constantly growing in number and playing larger roles in our existence. If science unlocks the origins of thought, therapies for patients with neurocognitive or psychiatric problems could be enabled. Progress in AI will generate the need in medicine to explore ontological and ethical relationships among brains, minds, selves, and healing.

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