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New Ways of Being Human – with the help of your neighbourly pharmacist¹!

While in general the question ‘What is the human today?’ does indeed become more and more fuzzy in current times, one thing we can be sure is that humans are not getting healthier. While the life expectancy rises and life quality improves it does not reduce the number of prescriptions written or doctor visits, this number rather seems to be increasing.

In my presentation I wish to address this peculiarity of Western society and explore how being human is increasingly being equated with being medicated in one way or the other. By drawing on works from Peter Conrad, Irving Zola and others I hope to illustrate how the (chemical) road to success has become the new normal and the effects of this on our understanding of human body and everyday experience.

By engaging critically with preconceived notions of what is part of the medical field and how it comes to be I hope to contribute to the discussion on human enhancement, genome editing, biotechnology, by showing how these processes grow from practices already present in the society and how have they been subverted.

¹ Drug dealer