

Essay: Ethics and responsible innovation on films: "Robot and Frank" & "Her"

Written by: Zhumagaliyev Alibek SE-1902

In this essay I will dive into the subjects of ethics, ethical innovations, and creations, conducting my own opinion on the topic after films revision. Both discussed films "Her" (2013) and "Robot and Frank" (2012) have common features in the form of a genre - fantasy comedy-drama, "Her" albeit being more romantic.

While both movies central theme is relationships between human and a machine intellect, "Robot and Frank" tackle it in realms of friendship and comradeship, asking the question can a robot become a friend? And giving a clear and optimistic answer- yes. Through the film Frank and his unnamed robot bond, have fun together, care deeply for each other and even display such level of devotion to be ready to self-sacrifice to save the other, robot willing to go through process of full memory wipe and Frank willing to go into hiding to keep that from happening.

Question presented to the audience in "Her" is can an artificial intelligence and human love each other? The answer to that question is a lot more ambiguous. Main character of the film Theodore Twombly and his ai partner Samantha go through the process of emotional bonding and develop feelings for each other. Throughout the entire film Samantha is full of character, she shows emotions and experiences them not so different than humans do.

But the main question that the audience is faced with are those feeling real? Can a robot designed to become friends with humans can experience real friendship or is it all just an illusion? Are artificial life forms just an illusion of life? programmed to mimic the emotions and trick human minds. Number of questions this theme raises are vast and vary in complexity. Should they even be allowed to feel emotions? That and questions alike are up for greater minds of ethics to answer. But I am afraid answering them would not be an easy task.