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Essay, first draft

Essay Question: Do you think which one needs to be considered? Legislation to protect humans from robots and/or Legislation to protect robots from humans.

NEW DARK AGE LIES AT THE HORIZON

The machine species’ capabilities were once the subject of science fiction, but it is part of the reality we live in today. Some works of fiction and their creators were once convinced that some laws might be needed, such as Asimov’s I-robot and the 3 laws of robots mentioned in the book. It seems that today we really have to sit down and seriously consider some legal regulations. While doing this, we should pay special attention to two things. First of all, since these machines will act according to the directives they receive from their software, many potential problems they might cause can actually be solved by regulative arrangements in the design and coding stages. On the other hand, these regulations should not only be aimed at protecting humankind, but also, just as Asimov wrote years ago, machines should have their own rights, such as maintaining their existence. There is no doubt that we need legislations for both humans and robots. These legislations should be enacted to ensure that potentially undesirable situations do not occur, such as: ensuring that generations born into a world with robots in the near future continue to perceive what reality is; ensuring that robots can stay away from potential accidents by enabling them to have advanced algorithms that can analyze the unpredictable and extraordinary situations of nature, and to prevent sensitive robots from being used for malicious purposes.

Without a doubt, we would not desire to surrender our children to a distorted reality and future. The reason to say this is that there is a possibility that the children of the near future may be unaware of the knowledge of what reality is. As the line between robots and humans becomes blurred, we may lose our awareness. Agrawal states, “If we do end up creating sentient beings, which can rival us in most aspects, how will we discern between who’s a Robot, and who’s a human being? As the field of Robotics progresses further, the thin line that lies between us and robots will start to blur out and eventually disappear” (5). Agrawal’s argument about reality warp in his own words is extremely useful because it sheds light on the problem of misperception. The only way to avoid being tricked is to implement some form of aesthetic characteristic that will easily assist humans in identifying a robot in a population. Someone has to be conscious of their nature, if they are a human or a human looking, otherwise we will suffer from a variety of mental and behavioral diseases associated with alienation and uncertainty about our own identity. Hence the need for legislations that will make designers create robots that can be distinguished from humans exists.

The phenomenon, called the “Technological Singularity”, which refers to the machine species to go beyond the potential of humankind in terms of both physical and mental development, is almost about to happen. It seems that this is inevitable. In this reality, it is predicted that robots not only learn what is happening around them but also process the information they learn. This is basically the main function of the human brain. What makes us different is our ability to feel. However, scientists are skeptical of the claim that this ability is impossible for robots to learn. It is crucial to provide these sensitive robots, which Kurzweil calls “Spiritual Machines”, a feature that will be emphasized shortly. Asimov stated that his 3rd law, which is the law of self-protection of robots, works with the sufficient condition of the first two laws. However, I think that robots’ self-preservation instinct can form the basis of why they should protect other humans and living things, just like we humans do. If there is such a possibility that robots might be an augmented version of humans, and if we, as humans, desire to safeguard ourselves from possible risks of this circumstance, we must first encode empathy and self-protection instinct in their software. Robots can thus have a better perspective on why we humans should protect ourselves.

Asimov claimed that this works in reverse. According to him, robots must first defend humanity before developing a defense system for themselves. However, we witness that this situation, which works in theory, does not fully work very well even in the I robot book that introduced 3 laws of robotics. Authors Murphy and Woods criticize this situation

as follows: “In most situations, although the robots usually behaved “logically,” they often failed to do the “right” thing, typically because the particular context of application required subtle adjustments of judgment on the part of the robot (for example, determining which law took priority in a given situation, or what constituted helpful or harmful behavior)” (14). What authors state is valid because we live on such a volatile planet that it is almost impossible to make a perfect image of our life and code it. Teaching robots how to survive will make things easier, just as we teach our children how to adapt to the conditions of this volatile planet. Legislations enable robots to be designed with fulfill and comprehensive algorithms are of vital importance.

Another aspect of the matter is that we have some personal and social relations with these spiritual machines, and as a result, some ethical problems might come with our interaction. Today, it is mentioned that many robots are mistreated. We have previously witnessed that developers ignored our moral and ethical principles for the name of “Individual Liberty”. For instance, tons of games that include all types of violence and misbehavior actions are accessibly without age restriction on game platforms. Author Whitby complains about this matter as following words: “The fact that we have already allowed a high degree of violent abuse in the context of computer games is not an argument for continuing to do so.” (330). I am in the same opinion as Whitby because there should always be limits. We could lose control of order on social life if we allow every individual’s desire. What if somebody tends to use robots as sexual toys or something to torture? The use of humanoid robots for mistreated purposes is of course unacceptable. Although we are the ones who design them as sentient creators to such feelings, it would be unfair not to avoid such kind of corrupted behavior. Either we should design them as human-like and enact some laws accordingly or we should avoid attempting this development of human likeness.

In conclusion, it seems that a future full of robots lies at the edge of tomorrows. Instead of evaluating this future with the fictional laws written years ago, we should be inspired by them and enter a new evaluation process. While doing this, it would be wisest to act by considering both robots and humans rights. It would also be beneficial to deal with this multidimensional situation in all its aspect and to make win-win based legislations which should also aim to protect both sides from potential dangers of deviants. The dissemination of information about why these regulations are necessary for the sustainability of the social order is also essential. Society needs to be ready in every aspect of this topic.

WORK CITATION

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