

Value-Sensitive Design and Technology Ethics

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Damaging someone else's property is obviously unethical. However, the boundary becomes less clear when the property of interest is our own. We argue in the following paragraphs that damaging our own social robot is inherently unethical for a multitude of reasons. Of particular interest are the health benefits it provides to us as the user and the economic value of the robot. The social robot has been intentionally designed to benefit us. Some of the benefits could range from emotional care from Paro to situational and informational assistance from Siri. Intentionally destroying a robot that's destined to improve our livelihood is unethical because this indirectly leads to self harm. In addition, robots are an assembly of valuable resources, all of which are finite and most of which are expensive. We believe that destroying a valuable, finite resource is unethical. Finally, we believe that damaging the robot is counterproductive to our ethical values. The main ethical values at stake are self-discipline, care, respect, and environmental consciousness.

Aside from hitchBOT, the listed social robots are designed to directly help humans. One could argue that the findings from hitchBOT will help humans but for argument's sake we will only consider the consumer robots. Green (2019) argues that because humans are the only known species capable of morality, "as the ground of all moral argument, the most fundamental human moral obligation is to avoid extinction." Inherent to this argument is self-preservation. Therefore, any action that has negative consequences to our life is unethical because morality depends on our existence. This is a common argument why excess drug and alcohol use are unethical. Because the robot is designed to improve our life, destroying the robot is harming our self-preservation ability.

Aside from destroying the robots ability to help us (immediate self-harm), the act of destroying property also has consequences on our ability to reproduce (long term self-harm). Virtue signaling is a common way to express our moral beliefs to others. However, intentionally destroying a robot is a strong signal that we don't value objects that are intended to help society. Displaying this action to others is likely to weaken our social network. This weaker network will limit future social support and also limit our pool of potential partners to produce offspring. Society has many norms and violence is almost always considered a negative attribute and sometimes this is also connected with mental illness, as Marie E. Rueve and Randon S Welton in the journal elaborate on how society interlinks violence with mental illness.

In addition to limiting our reproductive abilities, the economic loss limits the future evolutionary success of our offspring. This mechanism is through the typical wealth transfer common in most societies. If we destroy the robot, those economic resources vanish for all future generations. Chetty et al.'s results showed that economic status is related to our life expectancy. Thus, destroying the robot is harming our future progeny. Although most societies make a difference between parents and children, biologically, our children are an extension of our DNA. Economic loss through destruction is therefore a cause of long term self-harm and inherently unethical.

Another unethical part of destruction is the violence we show toward the robot. Violence towards the robot can make us less empathetic towards human violence. Also, this can be understood from the study on video games by Carnagey, Anderson and Bushman which study how the effect of violent video games desensitize one to real-life violence, there can also be anxiety issues which could lead to hypertension, tachycardia. And the violence also increases the aggression issue which in turn could have health problems as many Scientific studies show that aggression has a negative effect not only on mental health but also on physical health. Aggression could lead to coronary heart disease, which in turn could lead to other health problems. The other possible health implication could be that if the robot has some electronic or electrical part or some other harmful component while destroying it one could seriously damage themselves. The health problems for the perpetrator of violence can be understood from the chapter by Anne L. Ganley on the health problems faced by the offender of domestic violence. This shows that even the perpetrator goes through all kinds of psychological health problems.

Humans have many ethical values, one of which is environmental consciousness. The wastefulness in destroying the social robot is clearly against environmental stewardship. Not only are we generating waste when the robot is destroyed, but we also increase the scarcity of the finite materials required to construct it. Wasteful acts like this go against our ethical values to protect the natural world. In addition to environmental destruction, the act of damaging or destroying shows how we treat things that serve us a purpose. This behavior can eventually get reflected on human beings around us. We might end up not valuing people around us, hurting and taking them for granted.

A robot's actions or purpose is only as pure as that of the creator. It is essential at all times to remain calm and composed in order to react in a compassionate manner towards a social robot. The moral values possessed by the owner plays an important role in reacting politely. If violence and recklessness is a natural way of the person, destructive actions towards the robot would be an obvious reaction. The ability of the person to control their actions and

stick to a predefined plan can influence an ethical interaction with a social robot. Therefore self-discipline plays a crucial part in the destruction caused towards a robot.

A social robot's purpose is to emulate or support human emotions in an empathetic manner. Therefore it is integral that we as humans resonate the same feeling towards a robot. Destroying it would mean that we as humans are not integral with our actions. A social robot is a creation involving time, effort and resources. At the end, destruction results in not only wasting all the involved resources but also disrespecting the effort put into creating them. Hence it is unethical to destroy a social robot as it resonates a sense of disrespect.

Limitation on how humans can behave towards robots is one consequence of their possessing moral status. The level of human attachment to a robot can be based on the interplay of three factors: physicality, perceived autonomous movement, and social behavior. These factors make certain robots elicit emotional reactions from people similar to how we react to animals or other people. Such robots target our involuntary biological responses and generate a projection of intent and sentiment onto the robots' behavior. This is particularly strong when the robot exhibits a "caregiver effect." We have discussed concerns that disseminating social robots undermines the value of authenticity in society, replacing human social interactions, and increasing the dangers of manipulation and invasions of privacy. There are, however, some extremely positive social uses of social robots, particularly in the areas of health and education. Preventing robot abuse would protect societal values, prevent traumatization, and prevent desensitization. Social robot abuse protection laws could effectively follow the analogy of animal abuse protection laws.

In conclusion, The act of destroying one's personal social robot is unethical in our understanding as this could have some negative implications for us, as we have presented in the above paragraphs that destroying personal social robot could be self damaging as this could pertain to several losses to us in the form of monetary implications, causing stress to our health both mental and physical, and this act of destroying one's robot could also disregard the ethical values and principles, like self preservation, which is one of the main goal of human life, this could also give the negative perception about us to the society which damaging our image and standing in the society, this also reflects the being we are and values we hold true, like our self discipline, damaging robot shows our attitude towards others.

Works Cited

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