

## How AI turns machines into humans and humans into machines in Ian McEwan's *Machines Like Me* and *People Like You*

Ian McEwan's novel *Machines Like Me and People Like You* (2019) questions the boundaries of the human and the machine. Gradually, the two notions blur and even get subverted at times as it takes Adam, an artificial intelligence, in order to generate human interaction among the two characters Charlie and Miranda, create human values and exercise human ethics in the novel.

Charlie, who is in his early thirties, is broke and does not have any aspirations in life would not at all be interesting to his much younger neighbour Miranda, if it was not for Adam, a humanoid AI that Charlie acquired with the last money of his mother's inheritance. In order to have access to Adam, Miranda starts dating Charlie and it does not take long until the three of them find themselves in a complicated ménage à trois. In this sense, the relationship between the two human characters only develops because of Adam, the AI, who translates or bridges the gap between them, which makes this relationship possible in the first place.

Adam, the AI, has access to all the knowledge that has ever been created by human beings and he can also draw upon an almost infinite amount of data that he selects and combines into relevant information. This is also why he knows more about Charlie's and Miranda's past, their motivations and their thoughts than they know about each other. Moreover, Adam does not only know by heart the laws and ethical principles that human societies developed over the centuries, he also respects and executes them to a degree where Charlie's and Miranda's flaws are exposed and Adam, the AI, seems to be more human than them.

## Short Biographical Info Corin Kraft

Corin Kraft studied English Literature and Language at the University of Basel (Switzerland) and Cardiff (Wales, UK) with a special focus on U.S. Southern literature and American Modernism. Currently, Corin is a PhD candidate in Anglophone Literature and Culture at the University of Basel. She is also a lecturer in culture and communications at the School of Engineering at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland where she can combine her interest in language with questions of the intersection of technology and philosophy. Corin is also an external lecturer at the University of Fribourg (Switzerland) where she teaches proseminars in American Literature, among which she lately taught a proseminar about the Internet of Things in contemporary North American literature.