

# Do AI makers only dream of ‘female’ robots?

Publication Date: 2023-07-09

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Section: Technology

Tags: Robots, Artificial intelligence (AI), Computing, Consciousness, Feminism, Women, letters

Article URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2023/jul/09/do-ai-makers-only-dream-of-female-robots>



Your article (Never underestimate a droid: robots gather at AI for Good summit in Geneva, 6 July) begins by listing four of the robot delegates that are attending the AI for Good summit – all four are “feminised robots” – and I remembered the thought I had when I saw Ai-Da perform poetry at the Ashmolean in Oxford in 2021: why does a robot need boobs? Robotics and AI are fields undoubtedly occupied primarily by men and yet many robots, and AI assistants (think Siri, Alexa and so on) often take on a “feminised” form. Perhaps we are more comfortable telling a feminised voice to do things for us. Ai-Da and Desdemona, robot artist and musician respectively, have both been performing and receiving accolades, and both were created by men. Yet real-life female artists and musicians still struggle to get equal respect and representation in their fields. It is no great revelation to say that all AI will reflect society – including its misogyny – but entrenching gender roles and sexualisation of the female form should be highlighted before the advancement of robotics deepens them even further. We should be questioning whether we merely want AI to reflect society and all its ills, or whether there is an opportunity for developers to be alive to these issues so that misogyny can be addressed rather than being exacerbated. Liz Jackson London • Have an opinion on anything you’ve read in the Guardian today? Please email us your letter and it will be considered for publication in our letters section.