

PHI334 : Some Questions on Blade Runner

1. **Identity and Self-awareness:** In “Blade Runner,” replicants are nearly indistinguishable from humans in terms of their behavior and emotions. What does this suggest about the nature of consciousness and self-awareness? Can artificial beings ever truly understand or claim their own identity?
2. **Memory and Experience:** The replicants in the film have implanted memories, which shape their personalities and emotions. How does this challenge our understanding of memory as a cornerstone of personal identity? If we could implant or modify memories, what ethical implications arise?
3. **Empathy and Morality:** The Voight-Kampff test in “Blade Runner” measures a being’s capacity for empathy to determine if they are human or replicant. Is empathy the defining characteristic of humanity? Can artificial beings be moral agents if they can simulate or even genuinely feel empathy?
4. **Mortality and Purpose:** The replicants’ short lifespan gives them a heightened sense of mortality. How does the human experience change when faced with a defined, limited lifespan? How might artificial life understand or grapple with its own mortality?
5. **Creator and Creation:** Tyrell, the creator of the replicants, is seen almost as a godlike figure. What responsibilities do creators have to their creations, especially when those creations have the capacity to suffer? Should there be limits to what humans can create?
6. **Integration and Isolation:** If artificial lifeforms were to coexist with humans, what rights should they have? Would they be entitled to the same rights as biological humans, or should there be a distinction?
7. **Nature vs. Design:** The replicants, though designed and manufactured, exhibit human-like desires and emotions. What does this suggest about the nature vs. nurture debate? Can experiences and emotions be engineered?
8. **Ethical Boundaries of Creation:** Is there an ethical boundary to creating life, especially when that life is designed for servitude or to perform specific functions for its creators?
9. **Existential Crisis:** If artificial beings become aware of their artificiality, would they undergo an existential crisis similar to humans? How would they navigate their purpose and place in the universe?
10. **The Essence of Humanity:** At its core, what makes someone or something truly human? Is it biology, consciousness, emotions, morality, or a combination of these? And if artificial beings can replicate or even surpass these attributes, how does that redefine humanity?