

Ethical Problems of Robotics – Image Problems or Real Problems?

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So, you are in robotics?

You know, people don't really trust you.

In fact, you don't really trust yourself, do you?

Sure, you like what you are doing. It's cool.

So what? Is it good for society? Is it good?

Are you doing good?

- ⌘ “What should I do?” (I. Kant)
- ⌘ We judge actions and people according to *values* (e.g. justice, honesty) and *consequences* (utility)
- ⌘ Ethical (moral) dilemmas involve conflicts of values or consequences, e.g. politeness vs. honesty

1. Ethics

- ⌘ We are getting hints:
 - ⌘ ERF starts off with a panel on ... “Robots or Jobs?”
 - ⌘ *Süddeutsche Zeitung* now runs article series on “Work of the future” - by readers’ demand
 - ⌘ Journalists want to talk about ethics, not about technology
- ⌘ ... let’s not ignore these hints
- ⌘ Technology is not transparent, people are worried, their perception is shaped by misrepresentation and hype (movies, papers, ...).

2.1 Perceived Problems

- ⌘ Perception can kill a discipline
(see: genetically modified food crops)
- ⌘ Perception can make a discipline
(AI is living off a vision - and is now scared of
being killed by another vision: robots take over)
- ⌘ Image problems are real problems and need real
measures:
 - ⌘ Active engagement of the robotics community
with ELS issues
 - ⌘ Active engagement with the public

2.2 Image Problems are Real Problems

- ⌘ Threatening safety - at the workplace and elsewhere (like cars and other machines?)
- ⌘ Threatening a 'humane' environment, human dignity?
- ⌘ Reducing or worsening employment?
- ⌘ Undermining responsibility and legal liability?
- ⌘ Another nail in the coffin of privacy?
- ⌘ Another 'digital divide'?
- ⌘ Enabling undesired human enhancement?
- ⌘ Enabling uncontrollable crime?
- ⌘ Enabling more wars, more war crimes?

Is robotics really protecting values and increasing overall utility, in the long run? (Or are we gaining and they are losing?)

3 There Are Real Problems

- ⌘ Tackle the *real image problems*: active engagement inside the community and with the public
- ⌘ Tackle the *real problems*: research, public engagement, community-building, regulation, policy, ...

We are only at the beginning...

Now for action!

Thank You!

