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HUMAN OR NON-HUMAN?: FRANKENSTEIN'S MONSTER AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Abstract:

This preliminary study started in a liberal arts course for undergraduate science students, where discussion of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) led to the hypothesis that the Monster's mind develops similarly to strong AI based on Deep Learning or unsupervised machine learning. In order to test science students' basic criteria in granting or denying human status to artificial or AI creatures, with reference to the mind-body relationship, 5 fictional characters were selected, each in variously extreme conditions of mind and body, for two types of questions regarding their human status. 46 students were first asked Yes/No questions regarding the human status of the three self-aware artificial creatures, *Frankenstein's Monster* and the two AI androids, Rachel in *Blade Runner* (1982) and Ava in *Ex Machina* (2014). Then, the students were asked to relatively mark the three artificial creatures on a scale from 'not human' to 'fully human', along with two human characters, one with no sign of a conscious mind and the other with an extremely deformed body. The main findings are (A) that the dividing line is between the bodies of human derived matter (the Monster and Rachel) and the robotic body (Ava), not between the Monster and the AI androids, and (B) that the respondents, despite their science background, have considerable reserve about granting full human status to even the strongest imaginable type of AI in a reproductively capable body (Rachel), when its mind or consciousness is an implant, unlike the Monster's, which 'emerges' from accumulated sense experience. It is open to further studies how the result would vary, for example, with non-science majors or with different sets of comparison.

Keywords:

Frankenstein's Monster, AI, human status, mind, body, emergence