The Future of the Human Machine: Emotions

Timo Airaksinen

Philosophy

University of Helsinki

The source

This presentation is based on my book:

"Ihmiskoneen tulevaisuus" (The Future of the Human Machine), in Finnish, WSOY 2005).

Anti-dualism

- I want to argue that humans are machines and that the post-human world can be understood accordingly.
- This goes against religious *dualism*: mind and body, soul and matter. In other words: mind is soul and body is matter.
- I don't know if body is matter, but if a human being is a machine, he/she cannot have a soul.

Two types of machines

- Therefore, the human future is that of machines. We are now discussing technological matters.
- *Natural* machines and *technological* (man made) machines are possible.
- Before technology develops, we cannot say what a human being is. We miss a crucial, defining metaphor, and later a simile (analogue) and identification.

History of ideas

- La Mettrie said that "man is a machine" (17??).
- This was truly scandalous.
- What was his argument like?
- What could the argument for this type of a claim be like?

Cyborgs and androids

- The argument is:

  -the artificial machine works (Turing test)

  -everything can be explained scientifically (how it works)

  -analogous technological machines can be found or created.

- This is to say that a technological human being is possible.

- Let us call it "cyborg" or "android".

Why analogy?

- The post-human androids must be somehow *analogous* to natural humans, if they are going to have *emotions*.

- These machines cannot just produce the same results as the humans do.

Four difficulties

- Four difficulties exist:

    -Moral (we love our genetic heritage)

    -Motion (difficult to replicate)

    -Meaning (Searle's "Chinese Room")

    -Emotions

- Cognitions are easier.

- Let us discuss emotions:
  -think of Moravec's suggestion

  -where does he put emotions?

  -the minimal def. of emotions:

  -bodily component

  -feeling tone

  -belief (cognitive component)

  -social significance

Problems

- All these present special problems:

  -an emotion needs its body (this can be made)

  -body/brain needs (self) consciousness (these processes present a conceptual riddle)

  -cognitions are essential (we have AI)

  -emotions are shared (androids need a *community*)

- In an android community emotions are typical of *their* community and its life.

- These emotions are not necessary the same we (people in this room) typically experience (Rodney Brooks, 2002).

- Moravec's suggestion cannot work: one box is not enough!

- Notice that Max and Min case exists:

  -Min: cyborgs are just tech-modified humans

  -Max: androids are fully tech-created and artificial
- I want to discuss the Max-case.

Conclusion

-We will experience cyborgs and androids in the future.

-But they will be different from us, e.g. emotionally.

-Then the future world will not be fully human, although it is "human".

-This is also to say that use of the term "post-human" is justified. The human world will be different in the future, but not wholly.