

THE IMPORTANCE OF ETHICS IN THE WORLD OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND ROBOTICS



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In this stage of hasty transition in which we live, in which more and more artefacts are used for mechanical and other relatively intelligent tasks, we must stop - if only for a few moments - to think about what we need (or want) robots and new forms of intelligence for in our everyday world.

Of course, any cultural change presupposes, in the end, an ethical rethink, even if this is not made explicit on many occasions. At the present juncture, open public debate is indispensable. To live without ethics, at any time, ends up leading to lamentable situations. For that reason, all decisions to be taken in the immediate future, both individual and collective, must be inspired by an interest in improving people's rights and social welfare.

If we point clearly in the direction you want to go, we won't end up living in an unwanted environment.

It is true that, with the advance of new technologies, we have already taken some steps in ethical issues such as data protection or security, among others. Undoubtedly, long-term decision-making in more complex scenarios in the future will be conditioned by what is responsibly judged today to be admissible, not only by the legislator, but by each of the parties involved with the capacity to influence the implementation of these robotic and intelligent

systems connected to reality.

In robotics and artificial intelligence, it is imperative that the quality of "inclusive" be applied to research and innovation processes, as well as to products, taking into account their consequences for all the stakeholder groups (not only the of vulnerable people or of those with certain

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biases). On the other hand, the problem of autonomy and agency arises, with the substratum that human responsibility is diluted by having multiple actors in relationships that are to a certain extent impersonal, in which the reasoning that justifies a given action is unknown. Either algorithms may not be known (or self-explanatory); or digital skills may be lacking to decipher them and understand them minimally. In our days the gap is patent and

requires a large investment in interdisciplinary education, without neglecting the promotion of basic skills, ultimately avoiding the atrophy of our ability to think and decide.

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and their frequent use, adapting them to our relationships with others. If we are going to transfer our prejudices to them, if we are going to reproduce in them one or another vision of the world, if we are going to prioritize certain values... In this sense, the behaviour of people in front of robots and what we feed them with does become unusually important.

This inevitably leads us to a discussion of the data, from which the superstructures that can be seen on the horizon are configured and which will condition our way of life and that of future generations. It is necessary to work to maintain equal opportunities, the reliability of the information provided, and the fairness of the criteria used in its selection. In any case, it is peacefully admitted that there should be no margin for discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion or age (whether older or younger). Since robotics and artificial intelligence in themselves are not discriminatory, the necessary constant reinforcement of social responsibility policies in public and private organisations must be called upon when introducing them.

Throughout history, civic and professional ethics have been critical in the evolution of society. That is why the moral norms that govern the thinking and conduct of human beings are essential to avoid making this technological leap in the void. This requires an awareness of the duties that are incumbent on everyone in transit, for example, who to advocate for and what to defend. The call to become aware of the need to act with respect for human dignity (also through intelligent robots) is permanent.

If necessary, individual and collective behaviour should be regulated in relation to desirable minimums and the correction of the progress made should be periodically evaluated. Special attention should be paid to the kindness in what and how of the novelties. Beyond phobias and phobias, the public perception of this phenomenon is a highly sensitive point. Thus, how the costs and benefits of innovation are equitably shared will depend to a large extent on the agreement of the stakeholders (who will assess the virtue and capacity to include them in a timely manner). It is possible to make civil society understand that technological diversity does not necessarily imply inequality, if we act with prudence, subjecting to values and norms (moral or legal) the technological tools made available to individuals and institutions.

In short, it is important that the system that we design is ethical and that, within it, it promotes

ethical behaviour. Now, we often know what is ethical, but not how to achieve it. This is the main challenge that the current rules and conceptual systems in the field of Law and Philosophy have to face when integrating robotics and artificial intelligence.

Despite their changing nature, which sometimes surpasses the (extra)territorial or international to develop in the virtual, and their vocation to transform economic and social reality (since robotics and artificial intelligence affect the community in which they are integrated, altering the existing balance in the actors involved), the truth is that universally there are common principles that can guide the interaction of men with machines. Therefore, from a legal perspective, changes can be expected in some international Conventions (such as the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities and children, or in issues of environmental sustainability).

It cannot be overlooked that the way of ordering the world has consequences for individual freedom (which can be restricted by technical limitations, or if characteristics such as the versatility or docility of robots are not considered). In addition to having due diligence in public-private partnerships, it is unavoidable to guarantee transparency.

The last degree of autonomy lies in control. The "reserve of humanity" is crucial here, because only people will be able to decide how and in what way intelligent robots can support human autonomy. In order to achieve a more inclusive society in the future, there is a need for ethics by, in and for the design of robots and artificial intelligence.

Either we learn to live with each other (using the potential of robots and artificial intelligence for good), or we will perish as fools -updating Martin Luther King's clairvoyant observation.

NOTE

* Principal Investigator in the INBOTS project "Inclusive Robotics for a better Society" (UCM-WP2), Horizon 2020 Program, Robotics and Artificial Intelligence Unit (780073) <http://inbots.eu> <https://www.ucm.is/project-certification/> Although the responsibility for what is written here lies solely with the author, these paragraphs have been written with the discussions held with the philosophers participating in the team: Mark Coeckelbergh and Michael Funk (University of Vienna), Vincent Mueller (University of Leeds), Txetxu Ausín, Mario Toboso, Daniel López and Aníbal Monasterio (CSIC Institute of Philosophy) and Fiachra O'Brolchain (Dublin City University).