Topics in the Philosophy of Technology: Thinking Machines

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Pre-requisites: Students must have completed one full year of study.

Course Description	This course aims to train students to think philosophically about our rapidly changing—and ever more intimate—relationship with machines. We focus in particular on the following subjects: artificial intelligence, robots, cyborgs, automation and science fiction speculation.
Assessment	• Three 6-8 page research papers (60%) • One group research project (20%) • Attendance and participation (20%)
Reading List	
Week 1: The Natural and The Artificial	
	• Descartes, René*Principia philosophiae*. Amstelodami: Ludovicum Elzevirium. 1644. Selections. • Leibniz, G.W. *New System of Nature*. 1695. Selections. • Butler, Samuel. *The Book of Machines, Erowhon.* 1872.
Week 2: Artificial Life	
	• Riskin, Jessica. "Eighteenth-century wetware." Representations 83, no. 1 (2003): 97-125. • Mary Shelly, Mary. *Frankenstein*. 1818. • Wiener, Norbert. *God and Golem*, 1964. Selections.
Week 3: Artificial Intelligence I: Historical Context	

	• Turing, Alan. "Computing machinery and intelligence " Mind 59, no. 236 (2007): 433. • Block, Ned. "Psychologism and behaviorism." The Philosophical Review 90, no. 1 (1981): 5-43. • Jackson, Frank. "Block's challenge." *Ontology, Causality, and Mind: Essays in Honour of David Armstrong*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge (1993): 235-248.
Week 4: Artificial Intelligence II: Philosophical Issues	
	• Searle, John R. "Minds, brains, and programs." *Behavioral and brain sciences* 3, no. 3 (1980): 417-424. • Schwitzgebel, Eric, and Mara Garza. "A defense of the rights of artificial intelligences." *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 39 (2015): 98-119.
Week 5: Artificial Intelligence III: Scientific Issues	
	• Nick Bostrom and Anders Sandberg, “Whole Brain Emulation: A Technical Roadmap”, Technical Report #2008-3, The Future of Humanity Institute, Oxford University, 2008.
Week 6: Simulation	
	• Bostrom, Nick. "Are we living in a computer simulation?." *The philosophical quarterly* 53, no. 211 (2003): 243-255. • Chalmers, David. ‘The Matrix as Metaphysics’. In *Philosophers Explore the Matrix*, edited by Christopher Grau, 1st edition., 132–76. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
Week 7: Superintelligence and The Singularity	

	• Nick Bostrom, *Superintelligence: Paths, Dangers, and Strategies*, Oxford University Press, 2014. • Chalmers, David. 'The Singularity: A Philosophical Analysis'. *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 17, no. 9–10 (2010): 7–65. • Chalmers, David. "The singularity: A reply." *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 19, no. 7-8 (2012): 141-167. **Screening:** • Ptolemy, Robert Barry. *Transcendent Man*. Documentary. Ptolemaic Productions, Therapy Content, 2011.
Week 8: Existential Risk	
	• Price, Huw, and Jaan Tallinn. "Artificial intelligence–can we keep it in the box." *The Conversation* (2012). • Bostrom, Nick "Existential Risk Reduction as Global Priority," in *Global Policy* 4, no. 1 (2013): 15-31. • Posner, Richard A. *Catastrophe: risk and response*. Oxford University Press, 2004. Selections • Land, Nick. "Transcendental Risk." Collapse: Philosophical Research and Development (2014): 361-84.
Week 9: Robots	
	• Brooks, Rodney and Anita Flynn, "Fast Cheap and Out of Control: A Robot Invasion of the Solar System," in *Journal of the British Interplanetary Society* 42 (1998): 4778-485. • Moravec, Hans. Mind children: The future of robot and human intelligence. Harvard University Press, 1988. Selections • **Screening:** • Fren, Allison de. *The Mechanical Bride*. Documentary, Fantasy, Sci-Fi, 2012.
Week 10: Cyborgs and Cybernetics	

	• Hayles, Katherine. *How we Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*. University of Chicago Press, 1999. Selections. • Wiener, Norbert. *The human use of human beings: Cybernetics and society*. No. 320. Da Capo Press, 1988. Selections. • Clark, Andy. *Natural-Born Cyborgs: Minds, Technologies, and the Future of Human Intelligence*. Oxford New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. Selections.
Week 11: The Ethics of Human Modification	
	• Liao, S. Matthew. "Selecting children: the ethics of reproductive genetic engineering." *Philosophy Compass* 3, no. 5 (2008): 973-991. • Liao, S. Matthew, Anders Sandberg, and Rebecca Roache. "Human engineering and climate change." *Ethics, Policy & Environment* 15, no. 2 (2012): 206-221.
Week 12: Cyberfeminism	
	• Haraway, Donna. “A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century” In *Socialist Review* (1985). • Plant, Sadie. *Zeroes and Ones: Digital Women and the New Technoculture*, Doubleday, 1997. • Irigaray, Luce. *This Sex Which is Not One*. Cornell University Press, 1985. Selections. • Cuboniks, Laboria. The Xenofeminist manifesto: a politics for alienation. Verso Books, 2018. Selections.
Week 13: Capitalism & Automation	

	• Parisi, Luciana. 'Instrumental Reason, Algorithmic Capitalism, and the Incomputable'. *In Alleys of Your Mind: Augmented Intellligence and Its Traumas,* edited by Matteo Pasquinelli, 125–37. Lüneburg: meson press, 2015. • Crary, Jonathan. 24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep. Verso Books, 2014. Selections. • Karl Marx, "The Fragment on Machines", in Grundrisse der Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie, [1858] 1939. • Mason, Paul. *Postcapitalism: A Guide to Our Future*. Reprint edition. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017. Selections.
Week 14: Science Fiction Speculation	
	• Shaviro, Steven. *Discognition*. London: Repeater, 2016. Selections • Schneider, Susan, ed. *Science Fiction and Philosophy: From Time Travel to Superintelligence*. 2nd edition. Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2016. Selections. • Dery, Mark, ed. *Flame Wars: The Discourse of Cyberculture*. Illustrated edition. Durham, NC: Duke University Press Books, 1994.