

Prompt

Find scholarly/public discussion of the technology or similar technologies. What is the "public" debate about with regard to the ethics of the technology? Summarize the debate, with links supporting your claims, making sure to present the "public" pros and cons. ~500 words.

Essay 2

Word Count: 500

With any new technology, there are arguments for and against it. Brain emulation is no exception. Brain emulation is a digitized copy of an individual's brain that shares the same memories and thought processes as the original person's brain. Though this technology is still in the conceptual stages of development, many philosophical and theoretical arguments are being discussed surrounding the ethical implications of this technology.

One of the main arguments regarding brain emulation is whether an emulated brain is considered a human or not and whether these entities then have rights. While the definition of a human is broad and heavily debated, a widely accepted definition is that humans are seen as self-aware mammals that possess the ability to rationalize, speak, and use complex tools. Susan Schneider, a philosopher from the University of Connecticut, believes that despite the emulation having the thoughts, feelings, and memories of the human brain it was emulated from, that because the emulation lacks a human body, it is not actually human.

The answer for Nick Bostrom, a philosophy professor at Oxford University, revolves more around the topic of when, not if, artificial intelligence is seen as human. Nick assumes that eventually, emulated brains will have rights, but will these rights be as sophisticated as modern human's rights? Human rights are defined as universal and unalienable rights given to humans and protected by governmental law without discrimination. According to Nick, in theory, an emulated brain in a different vessel would not be given complete freedom if it wanted to reproduce indefinitely, due to it potentially depleting available resources, yet modern humans are not given a limit on their offspring limit (with the exception of China). With the limits on rights being murky, Nick believes the best course of action is to start implementing the rights and responsibilities of artificial intelligence prior to it becoming a real issue.

A neuroethics blog article by Yunmiao Wang, brought up another issue on the topic of human rights. As an uploaded consciousness, you are taking away the carbon form and digitizing the information of your mind's contents to code. If the uploaded consciousness is anything like the Black Mirror episode, *Black Museum*, where the minds are under stress and show mental anguish and pain, then they could be afforded rights.

However, not everyone is convinced of the pain debate though. James Hughes, a sociologist and the Executive Director of the Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies, believes that two important thresholds are the capacity to experience pain and self-awareness. In humans, these traits usually develop naturally, but there is a possibility that artificial intelligence can feel pain but is not self-aware or is self-aware but cannot feel pain. In either case, James argues that artificial intelligence would not be seen as a human with rights. With multiple

definitions and opinions, the most difficult issue regarding artificial intelligence and human rights, is whose opinion will be given preference when the time comes to create laws on artificial intelligence and their rights?