

Strange Things Happen at the One-Two Point: The Implications of Autonomous Created Intelligence in Speculative Fiction Media [1]

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Abstract. By its very nature, Science Fiction media has often concerned itself with advances in human enhancement as well as the creation of various autonomous, thinking, non-human beings. Unfortunately, since the initial proffering of the majority interpretation of Frankenstein, Mary Shelly's seminal work, and before, most speculative fiction media has taken the standpoint that to enhance or to explore the creation of intelligences, in this way, is doomed to failure, thus recapitulating the myths of Daedalus and of Prometheus and of Lucifer, again and again. What we see and are made to fear are the uprisings of the robots or the artificial neural networks, rather than discussing and respecting the opportunity for a non-human intelligence to arise and demand rights.

In this work, I make use of specific films, books, and television shows to explore the philosophical and cultural implications of an alternate interpretation of not only Frankenstein, but of the whole of the field of science fiction. In the first part I argue that it isn't humanity's attempts to "play god" that cause our failures, but rather our refusal or inability to pay attention to our circumstances, to take responsibility for our creations, and to learn from the warnings and mistakes of those who went before us. Only with this recognition in mind can we move on to accepting and respecting the *fundamental otherness* of the intelligences we may either create or cause to be created, all while seeking to *bridge* that otherness, and come to mutual understanding.

As humans have evolved, their concerns have become those of biological creatures with biologically directed needs. Food, shelter, emotional comfort, and stability are needs which would not necessarily occur to an intelligence without the organic component. It would therefore fall to humans to A) Initially recognise the concerns of such an intelligence; B) Countenance and *concretise* said concerns, in the understanding of other humans; and C) Create a system of interaction through which human concerns were conveyed to these new intelligences, not as *primary*, but as co-equal. We will do this only by considering that which causes our assumptions and cultural behaviour, namely the stories which we engage, as a culture, and deconstructing both their content and their impact.

In all fictional considerations of non-human, and specifically machine intelligence, there is an element of fear of that which we have created. This horror at being "replaced" or "made obsolete" drives us to regard robots and autonomous created intelligences as nothing more than tools to be used, an operational mode which leads to the assumption that machines cannot have rights or even be considered as conscious minds. This assumption begs the question, in the extreme. It is my contention that, with a proper formulation of the rights and responsibilities of and to both human and non-human persons—with consideration for the necessary variance of concerns within different compositions of intelligences—an understanding may be reached wherein our future societies account for not only human needs and development, but those of *all* intelligences, whatever form they may take.

[1] Many points in this text have been adapted from the author's articles "The Sarah Connor Chronicles: 'Strange Things Happen at the One-Two Point'" and "Splice (2010) - Movie Review With Spoilers," both published at NeedCoffee.com

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