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What do sex robots teach?

Lily Frank & Sven Nyholm explain that people learn how to interact with human partners in the discourse of the sexual interaction with sex-robots (2017). Therefore, the interaction with sex-robots must require consent, thereby training people that consent is the requirement of any sexual interaction. I consider three proposals for how it is possible – technologically – to embed the ability of granting consent into sex-robots: 1) Ritual-based methods, 2) Randomization-based methods, 3) Rejecting-based methods. I argue that while the second and the third proposals have certain advantages, each of the proposals would solidify distorted attitudes about the nature of consent and sex in general. People buy sex-robots (in the cases of the commercialized personal sex-robots) and they know that these robots exist exclusively to provide sexual services (in the case of the robots who are rented or serve in brothels). Therefore, if people assimilate sex-robots to humans, the emergence of sex-robots would promote rape-culture, irrespective of whether the robots announce consent. I conclude that we must focus on the question of how to design and regulate the production and the commercialization of sex-robots in the way that people could always acknowledge the difference between sex-robots, on one hand, and humans and other intelligent robots, in the other. If I am right, requiring consent in the interaction with sex-robots can be counterproductive, as it may misguide people to conceive sex-robots as persons.