

Why, AI?



BUSTED
MYTH

A close-up photograph of a person's hand reaching out and touching a window blind. The hand is positioned on the right side of the frame, with fingers spread, touching the horizontal slats of the blind. The lighting is soft and natural, coming from the window, creating a warm and intimate atmosphere. The background is slightly blurred, focusing attention on the hand and the blind.

What you do with AI in the bedroom is your own thing.

MYTH

What you do with AI in the bedroom is your own thing.

Or is it?

BUSTED
MYTH

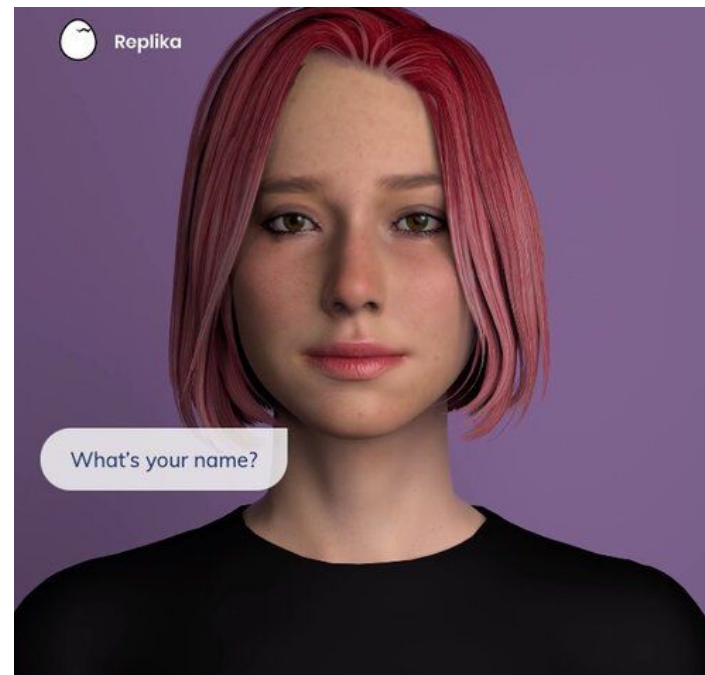
Questions to ask

- Why is there AI in the bedroom, and what is it doing there?
- What's happening in sex robotics with AI?
- “But that’s a private thing!” Why is it even an issue that there is a (sexual) AI in the bedroom?
The public/private divide and sex robots
- What is to be done?



AI in the bedroom ...

- **Smart home** utilities
 - **Personal Service Assistants** (Siri, Alexa, Cortana...)
 - **Educational robots** (e.g. story-teller robot Codi for small children)
 - **Chatbots** for comfort and emotional support, e.g. Replika A.I
- **Emotionality, relationality, care and companionship** in social robotics



[Get the app](#) [Help](#) [Log in](#)

The AI companion who cares

Always here to listen and talk.
Always on your side. Join the millions growing with their AI friends now!

Create your Replika

Log in

... and specifically for sexual purposes

- “Harmony AI” + “HarmonyX” by RealBotix
- AI-driven robotized sex doll
- **Companionship**, unconditional love, emotional support, care + sexual fulfillment
- A special combination of **sexuality and care**
- The “perfect companion in the palm of your hands”
→ “**the perfect woman**”?

GET YOUR VIRTUAL COMPANION NOW!

Buy now

harmoney AI

Artificial Intelligence Application

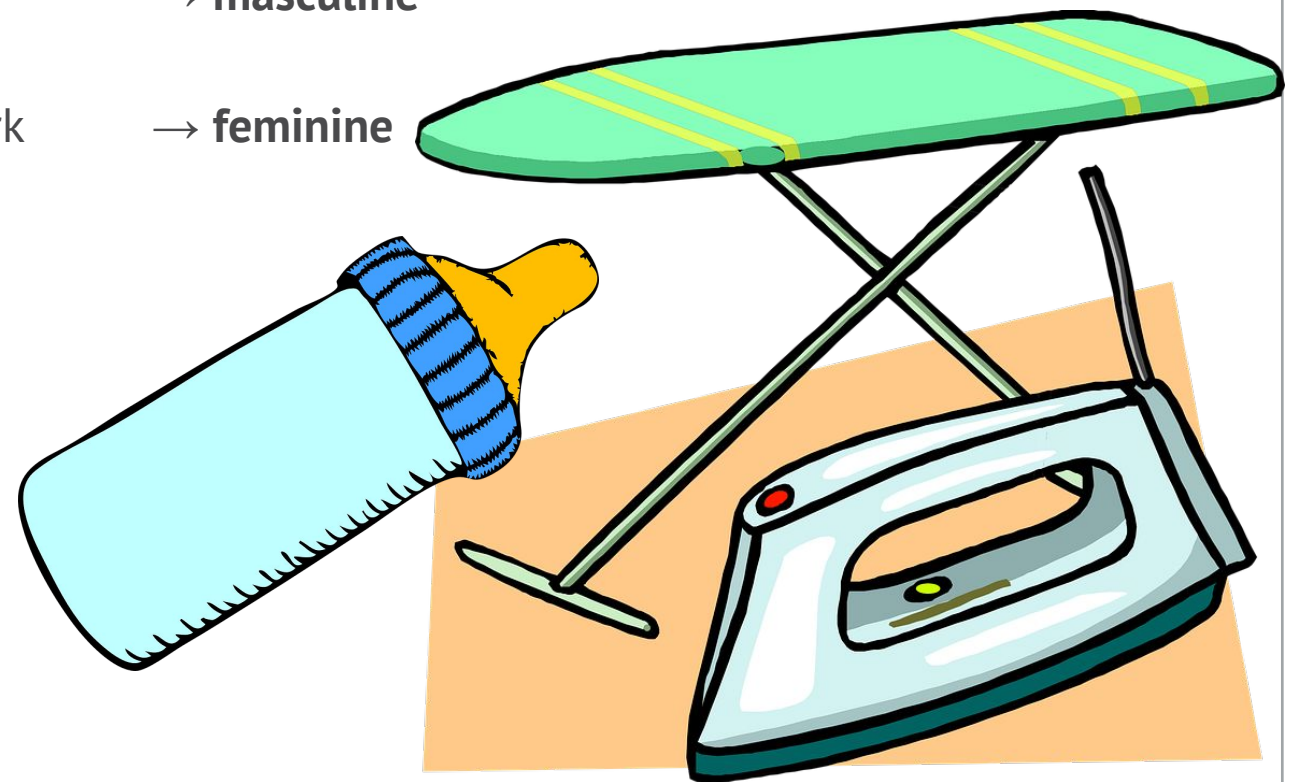
Buy now

The advertisement features a virtual woman with red hair in a white swimsuit holding a smartphone displaying a virtual companion app. Below this, a real robotized sex doll with blonde hair in a white swimsuit is shown in a workshop setting. The background includes a gear icon and a flowchart with nodes labeled 'emotions', 'sex', 'love', 'care', 'happy', and 'talk'.

The public / private divide

- Dualism between the public and the private realm
- **Public affairs:** politics, productive work → **masculine**
- **Private domain:** family life, reproductive work → **feminine**
- Reproductive work: care work, unpaid work
→ feminized social function

Expectations in gender roles
(relationality vs. distance)



“Harmony” and the private realm

Sex robots embody a combination of sexuality and (emotional) care which relies on the separation of public and private, and **reinforces** it

→ sexualized care work

Feminist movement: **the personal is political**

→ **experiences are structured along social power relations**

→ **there is no such thing as an apolitical (private) realm**

→ **our private desires, practices, and expectations matter**

So what is there to do?

1. By analyzing the **structural position** of the sex robot, we can assess the social dynamics that make such sex robots seem plausible and necessary.
2. This requires recognizing that **the personal is political**. By this, we can come to a critique of the deeply engrained patriarchal structures that shape our world of perception and our desires.
3. The first step: reflecting on the public/private divide and how it shows in our relations towards sexuality and the distribution of care. Thinking through these expectations and desires is not an individual, but a **collective task**. By recognizing that our expectations, wishes, and desires are not simply given, but historically and socially situated, we can reflect on ways of how to change the world.

So what is there to do?

1. By analyzing the **structural position** of the sex robot, we can assess the social dynamics that make such sex robots seem plausible and necessary.
2. This requires recognizing that **the personal is political**. By this, we can come to a critique of the deeply engrained patriarchal structures that shape our world of perception and our desires.
3. The first step: reflecting on the public/private divide and how it shows in our relations towards sexuality and the distribution of care. Thinking through these expectations and desires is not an individual, but a **collective task**. By recognizing that our expectations, wishes, and desires are not simply given, but historically and socially situated, we can reflect on ways of how to change the world.

Thank you!

Literature for further reading and sources

Bendel, Oliver (ed.) (2020): Maschinenliebe. Liebespuppen und Sexroboter aus technischer, psychologischer und philosophischer Perspektive. Wiesbaden: Springer.

Bernstein, Elizabeth (2007): Temporarily Yours. Intimacy, Authenticity, and the Commerce of Sex. Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press.

Erhard, Constanze (2020): "Harmony's Future | No Future w/o Harmony", in: netzforma* e. V. (ed.): Wenn KI, dann feministisch. Impulse aus Wissenschaft und Aktivismus. Berlin.

Federici, Silvia (2012): Revolution at Point Zero. Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle. Oakland: PM Press.

Gildea, Florence & Richardson, Kathleen (2017): "Sex Robots – Why We Should Be Concerned", Campaign Against Sex Robots, online: <https://campaignagainstsexrobots.org/2017/05/12/sex-robots-why-we-should-be-concerned-by-florence-gildea-and-kathleen-richardson/> (last accessed 01/12/2021)

Hawkes, Rebecca & Lacey, Cherie (2019): "The Future of Sex': Intermedial Desire between Fembot Fantasies and Sexbot Technologies", Popular Culture 52(1), 98-116.

Hochschild, Arlie Russell (2012): The Managed Heart. Commercialization of Human Feeling. Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press.

Illouz, Eva (2020): The End of Love: A Sociology of Negative Relations. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kubes, Tanja (2019): "New Materialist Perspectives on Sex Robots. A Feminist Dystopia/Utopia?", in: Social Sciences 8 (224), 1–14.

Levy, David (2009): Love and Sex with Robots: The Evolution of Human-Robot Relationships. New York: Harper Collins.

Moran, Jenna Carla (2019a): "Programming Power and the Power of Programming: An Analysis of Racialised and Gendered Sex Robots". In: Loh, Janina / Coeckelbergh, Mark (eds.): Feminist Philosophy of Technology, 2nd volume. Berlin: J. B. Metzler / Springer.

Moran, Jenna Carla (2019b): "My Interview with a Sex Robot". Available online: <https://sexrobotics.wordpress.com/> (last access 01/13/2021).

Realbotix: RealDollX Homepage: <https://www.realdollx.ai/>

Realbotix: Harmony App Homepage: <https://realbotix.com/Harmony>

Richardson, Kathleen (2016): "Sex Robot Matters. Slavery, the Prostituted, and the Rights of Machines," in: IEEE Technology and Society, 35(2), 46-53.

Weber, Jutta (2005): "Helpless machines and true loving care givers: a feminist critique of recent trends in human-robot interaction", in: Information, Communication & Ethics in Society 3(4), 209-218.

Winker, Gabriele (2015): Care Revolution. Schritte in eine solidarische Gesellschaft. Bielefeld: transcript. Pictures: Pixabay, Getty Images