ARE ROBOTS PEOPLE?

Course Description:

This course explores what makes a person a person and whether robots can be considered people too. We begin by considering whether sentience is merely some sort of intelligence or whether it must involve a living, breathing body with biologically-generated emotions and self-awareness. Does it matter whether feelings and intelligence are artificially generated instead of naturally occurring? Does a robot count as a person if a human has genuine emotions for it (e.g., love, respect, goodwill)? If robots are people, do they have rights? We’ll also consider how sentience might apply to different types of robots in the real world as well as in fiction, TV, and film.

Course Requirements:

- Presentations on different types of robots as well as potential robot persons in fiction and film.
- Two analysis papers completed in stages over the course of the semester.
- Three exams