What is Lost // What is Found

Petersén, Moa; Søilen, Karen Louise Grova; Liinason, Mia

2025

Document Version:
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record


WHAT IS
LOST?

LUND UNIVERSITY

Pufendorf IAS

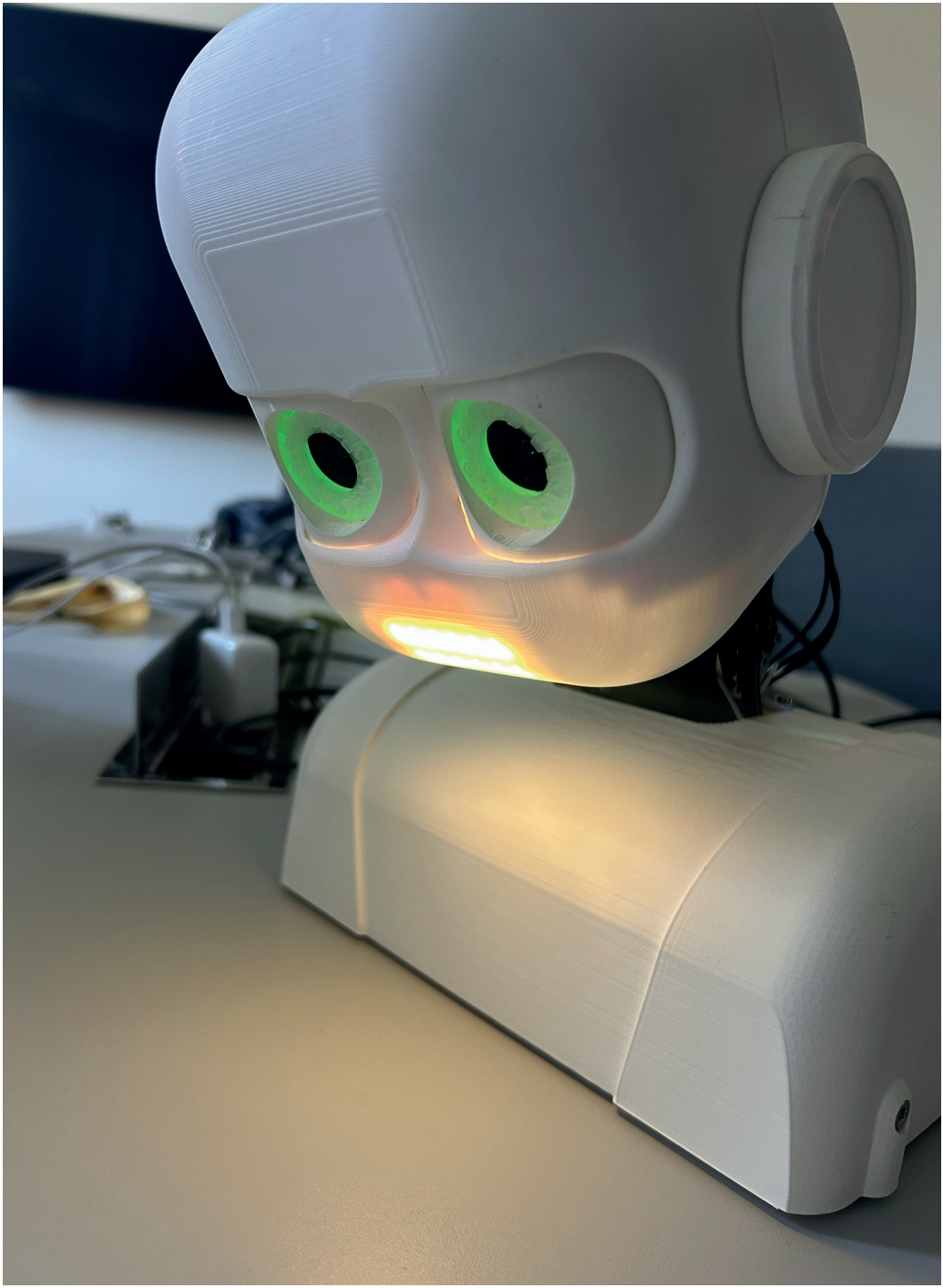
INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES

What is lost?//What is found?
DigiJustice
Editors: Moa Petersén, Karen Louise Grova Søilen, Mia Liinason
The exhibition took place at
Pufendorf Institute of Advanced Studies,
Lund University, Lund, May 15, 2025.

Printed by Media-Tryck, Lund, 2025
ISBN 978-91-531-4563-9

WHAT IS LOST// WHAT IS FOUND

DigiJustice



What is lost?// What is found?

Mia Liinason, Karen Louise Grova Søilen, Moa Petersén

What does it mean to be human? This question has been at the core of philosophical reasoning across centuries. Placing the same question within our rapidly changing technological landscape directs us to an inquiry into the impact of digital technology on the condition of being human. It can be approached from multiple disciplinary trajectories – including legal studies, gender studies, cultural studies, philosophy, engineering and information systems – each illuminating a distinct set of complex and entangled challenges. As humans, we are fallible, forgetful and vulnerable. Interaction in human societies is characterised by friction and power inequalities, and human beings display variation. With digital systems, and right now most notably with AI, human wrongs can be replaced by seemingly flawless machines. Is this a problem or a possibility? For whom, when and where?

The exhibition *What is lost? // What is found?* revolves around these and other questions, probing deep reflections on how automated digital systems reshape the future of being human. Through creating and challenging imaginaries that connect the everyday with the existential, and history with the future, the exhibition uses playful and speculative approaches to inquire into the impact of AI, robots, and digitalised systems on human relations and society, evolving from the interdisciplinary conversations of the 2024/2025 Pufendorf Theme *DigiJustice*.

Who bears legal responsibility when things go wrong – such as in an AI decision-making process? International human rights lawyer and author Susie Alegre compares the current lack of a legal framework to protect

humans from harm caused by AI to a case in which a Romanian woman was attacked and seriously disabled by a pack of stray dogs. Dogs cannot be held legally responsible for their actions. In court, the Romanian state also refrained from taking responsibility for the tragedy, even though the threat posed by stray dogs was well known. Alegre maintains that states should be held accountable for protecting the human rights of their inhabitants from the risks and damages that AI systems might cause.[1]

The increasing interest in AI, politically, financially and scientifically, may offer new paths to revisit old societal problems that are less hype today but remain immensely urgent, such as intimate partner violence, economic injustices, gendered and racial inequalities. AI also presents a productive challenge to any desire for origin stories or belief in an original as the truth,[2] providing an endless series of remakes, regenerations and reinforcements, for example in LLMs, chatbots or domestic robots, as human interactions are automated at large scale. Then again, each of these AI solutions is accompanied by more or less problematic implications for privacy, fairness, cultural memory, justice and rights.

Inspired by the concept of the "thought exhibition", a curatorial method developed by the French philosopher of science and technology studies Bruno Latour and theorist and artist Peter Weibel,[3] *What is lost? // What is found?* highlights the aesthetic and participatory capacity of the arts to address critical issues. One of the critical issues at the centre of this exhibition is the aspiration to challenge the digital imperative, that is, the idea that digital technologies are necessary, inevitable, and universally applicable. Organized around five composite artworks, What is lost? // What is found? evokes and questions imaginaries that allow spectators to explore the various limits and possibilities of digital solutions in different sites, such as the home, the courtroom, the marketplace, history, and culture, encouraging a curious and critical approach to reflecting on current and future human relations in society.

1 S. Alegre. *Human Rights, Robot Wrongs: Being Human in the Age of AI* (Atlantic Books, 2024), p. 25.

2 D. Haraway. Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective. *Feminist Studies*. 14:3 (1988): 575-599; Butler, J. *Gender Trouble. Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. (Routledge, 1990).

3 B. Latour. Thought Exhibitions. Lecture at the Museum of Contemporary Art Zagreb, September 23, 2017. http://modesofexistence.org/what-is-agedankenausstellung/#introduction.

"Look, I am not a dog". Thinking about humans and robots through Pufendorf's concepts of sociality and esteem Part I

Lena Halldenius

Samuel Pufendorf (1632–1694) was called to a chair in philosophy and natural law at Lund University in 1668. In many senses Pufendorf was typical of his time: setting out to identify natural principles for the regulation of human life in society, he concluded – with startling convenience – that those principles just happen to legitimate the patriarchal household and absolute government that formed the authoritarian backbone of early-modern Europe.

DigiJustice has been studying the digital transformation of our societies, where algorithms make welfare decisions and filter our newsfeeds while we "date" AI-generated partners and robots comfort the lonely. It is less than obvious what that has to do with Pufendorf, so am I just shoe-horning a seventeenth-century irrelevance into this story because of his legacy at Lund University? Maybe. But returning to Pufendorf's concepts of *sociality* and *esteem* might be fruitful.

Why is it wrong to harm another? Do we have to treat everyone as our equal? Are we obligated to make ourselves useful? Is it not good enough to stay out of everybody's way and just mind one's own business? A certain set of answers to these familiar moral questions make up the foundation of Pufendorf's philosophy of natural law.[1]

Human beings are made to live together; the state of nature is social. The basic principle of natural law is therefore to preserve *sociality* – peaceful coexistence – as a necessary requirement of human life. Whatever norms that are inferred from sociality are by the same token precepts of natural law. Hence, the answer to the moral questions just asked: sociality

is destroyed if we harm or do not assist each other. This is not merely about survival: our very notion of humanity is inseparable from society. In Pufendorf's thought, the idea that "man" is morally elevated above other creatures is not a metaphysical or religious truth. It is simply an observable fact that humans believe themselves to be special. This explains why treating others as one's equal is a norm derived from sociality itself: our *self-esteem* is a reflection of the *esteem* we get from others. When slighted by another, we feel slighted in our humanity, hence the comeback: "Look, I am not a dog, but a man as well as yourself".[2]

Any other right or obligation than these natural ones require agreement. There simply is no other way for a morally salient relation to arise than through sociality or agreement; it is inherently inter-human. So, what are we doing when we interact with robots or AI-generated partners? What is social about a social robot? When a telephone chatbot asks us to "hold" – and we do – is that an agreement?

Psychologists are trying to understand what is going on when people relate and respond to robots as if they are human. "There's lots of emotionality and sociality in interacting with a robot," says psychologist Kerstin Fischer.[3] But is it Pufendorf's morality-generating sociality? Maybe it is more similar to Coleridge's "suspension of disbelief", the willing abandonment of logic and judgement that engrossing oneself in a fictional story requires. One suggested model is that people relate to robots like depictions or characters in fiction.[4] We know they are not real, but we act as if they are, for as long as the pretence lasts. After all, when the robot malfunctions, the human does not give it CPR, but "flips it over to check its batteries".[5] Are we, then, living in an algorithmic world of social make-believe? What does it do to the norms we live by, if even the most basic of them – do not harm others – can be freely suspended as long as we believe that "the other" is a depiction, and telling the difference becomes more and more difficult? All the while, we are trying to make ourselves worthy of esteem by clicking in that little box: "Look, I am not a robot."

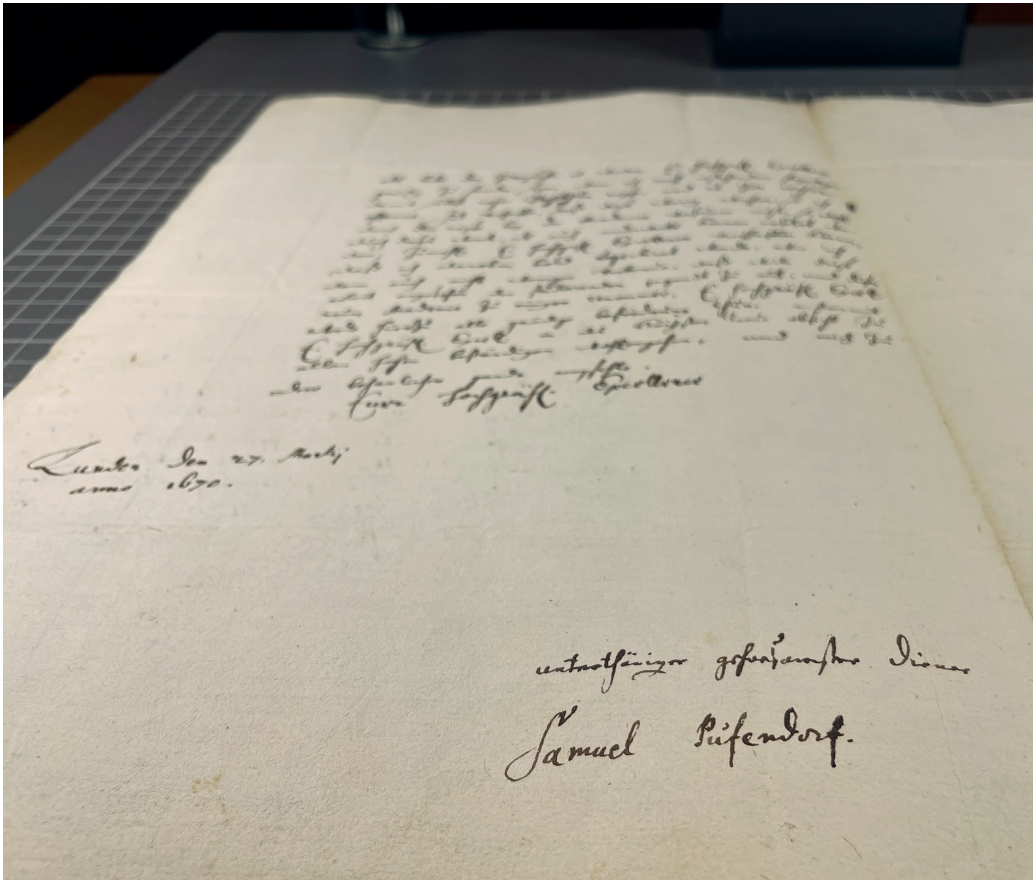
1 Anyone keen to find stimulating stuff in Pufendorf's thinking is advised to read Book I of his *On the Duty of Man and Citizen* (1673). Don't bother with Book II; it's where it all turns authoritarian.

2 S. Pufendorf, *On the Duty of Man and Citizen according to Natural Law*. J. Tully (ed.), M. Silverthorne (trans.). (Cambridge University Press, 1991 [1673]). Book I, 7.1.

3 Stanford Report, May 15th, 2023: https://news.stanford.edu/stories/2023/05/respond-social-robots.

4 H.H. Clark & K. Fischer. Social robots as depictions of social agents. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 46, e21 (2023): 1–65. doi:10.1017/S0140525X22000668.

5 Stanford Report, 2023.



Passing the Pufendorf test
Thinking about humans and robots through Pufendorf's concepts of sociality and esteem
Part II

Sue Anne Teo

Chatbots – computational programs designed to simulate human conversation – have quietly become part of everyday life. From customer service assistants on websites to companion chatbots, these tools now shape how we access information, communicate, make decisions and seek companionship. They increasingly mediate in areas we take for granted as being innately human – where we show emotions: when we love, care and grief. It wasn't always like this.

The history of chatbots began in earnest in the 1960s when Joseph Weizenbaum created ELIZA,[1] a program that simulated conversation by pattern matching and substitution. This gave users the illusion they were speaking with another person, in this case, a psychotherapist. While simple by today's standards, ELIZA demonstrated our human tendency to anthropomorphise and it was an early glimpse into how people might form emotional connections with machines that appear to understand us. For decades afterward, chatbots remained limited – used mostly for simple, rule-based tasks. The rise of artificial intelligence, especially the development of large language models, drastically changed all that.

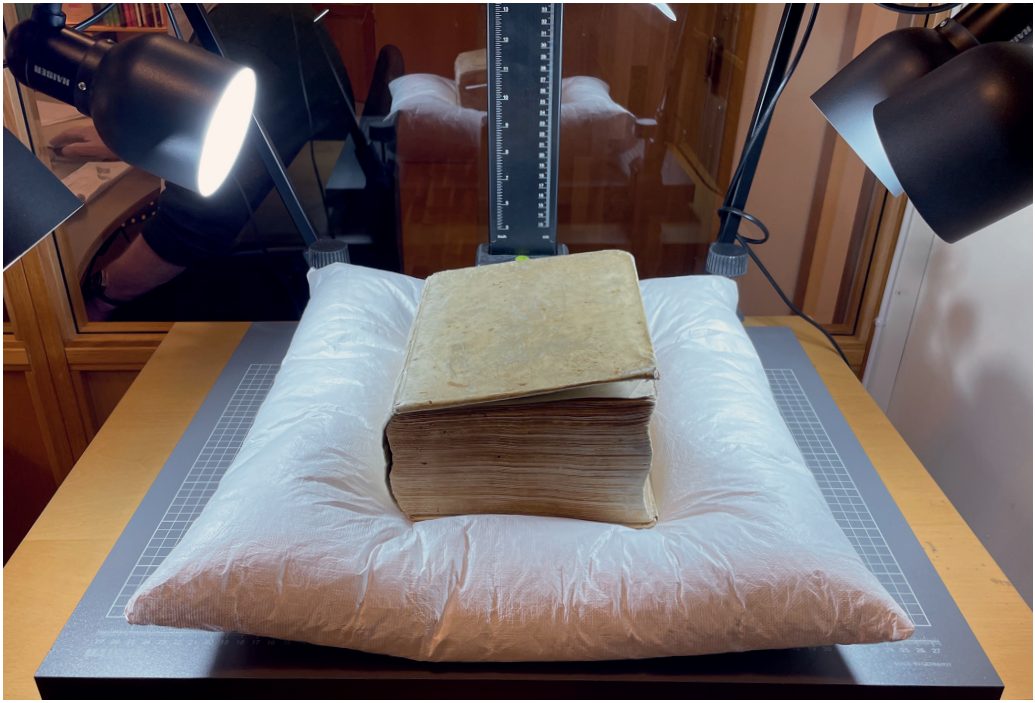
Chatbots today are trained on vast corpora of human texts and have achieved unprecedented fluency, enabling them to generate human-like responses across countless domains of knowledge. Seen this way, they are almost 'superhuman', meeting human needs with only one click away. They are a new kind of digital interlocutor: instantly responsive, always affirmative, flexible, and often indistinguishable from a real person engaging in conversation.

Pufendorf exhorted that the moral imperative of man is to cultivate peaceable sociality and to recognise and bestow esteem unto others. If we become willing participants to sociality served on a plate by welcoming, engaging with and forming bonds with chatbots, might this pass muster? Chatbots give the impression of a two-way conversation, but there is no mistaking the social soliloquy of such interactions – there is only one moral actor present. It reduces us, in other words, to a mere receptacle of sociality. A chatbot cannot actually judge us or hold us in regard; it cannot esteem in any sense, since esteem involves appraisal of character by moral criteria. Thus, any 'esteem' from a chatbot is ultimately a simulacrum – a copy without an original.[2]

Beyond passing the Pufendorf test – meeting Pufendorf's principles of sociality and esteem – other challenges lie in the horizon. We know too little about the dangers of anthropomorphic interactions of this nature, empirical research remains scarce and new vulnerabilities, including possible manipulation, might arise. As we navigate this unfamiliar terrain, we could do well to resist the imposition of deterministic narratives and to approach this new social environment with our most human qualities – inquisitiveness, criticality, creativity and care.

1 Joseph Weizenbaum, 'ELIZA—a Computer Program for the Study of Natural Language Communication between Man and Machine' (1966) 9 Commun. ACM 36.

2 This last line was generated from OpenAI's Deep Research. The prompt used was: 'provide a whimsical and philosophical account of how Pufendorf would approach the concept of esteem when it comes to interactions in a social environment with AI chatbots.' It appears that chatbots can take instructions quite well and are fond of French philosophers!



Among slave-droids, cockroaches, and cognitive robots

Karen Louise Grova Søilen, Mia Liinason, Moa Petersén

An interesting thing about robovacs is their seemingly paradoxical status as simultaneously anthropomorphic and zoomorphic; a machinic other to which human and animal qualities and characteristics are alternatingly ascribed.

On the one hand, users project human characteristics onto the robovacs; they form attachments to them by giving them names and status as members of the household, praise them when they have done a good job and hate them when they rub against chair legs. In this sense, the robovacs are helpers who can be inscribed in a historical tradition of domestic servants who take on unpleasant daily household chores. A prototype of the anthropomorphised domestic robot is Rosie, an animated robot maid from the 1960s American sitcom The Jetsons. Rosie the robot, fully equipped with a head, eyes, and mouth, is clearly gendered as female and wears a skirt and an apron. "She" has been described as a prototype female "slave-droid", embodying the perfect, dutiful 1950s housewife who improves the lives of everyone in the family, and has been highly influential in the minds of roboticists, including the designers of iRobot's commercially successful Roomba robovac.[1]

On the other hand, there is zoomorphism, the projection of animal-like features and characteristics onto the devices. The world's first robotic vacuum cleaner on the consumer market was the Swedish Electrolux Trilobite, launched in 2001. It had the smooth, rounded shape we associate with robovacs, complemented by what Electrolux described as distinctive "gills" on the sides, which inspired its name: the trilobite was a small

prehistoric marine creature that first appeared in the fossil record some 541 million years ago.[2]

At the launch of the prototype, Electrolux elaborated on the origin story and zoomorphic qualities of the robot's design, describing how the original trilobite "crawled around on the seabed, feeding on small animals and plankton in the silt".[3]Electrolux further zoomorphised the robot cleaner in another company description, emphasising how the machines 'eyes' allowed it to navigate using sonar (an acoustic radar that works with ultrasound), "just like a bat".[4] Another arthropod associated with the robovac is the cockroach, which, like the vacuum cleaner, feeds on human traces (which in the latter case include dust, food scraps, and data). Strikingly, what unites these various associations between robovacs and animals is that the types of animals are not the usual cute pets you would want to invite into your most intimate setting: cockroaches, trilobites (known as the first documented example of cannibalism in the fossil record), and bats – they crawl; they breed deep underwater; and they keep out of sight. They are creepy.

Exploring the cultural associations of virtual helpers and domestic assistants – ranging from the nurturing femininity associated with domestic servants to unsettling comparisons with cockroaches, trilobites, and bats – suggests an underbelly of AI imaginaries where invisible labour, data extraction, racial and gendered stereotypes, and evolutionary metaphors intersect.

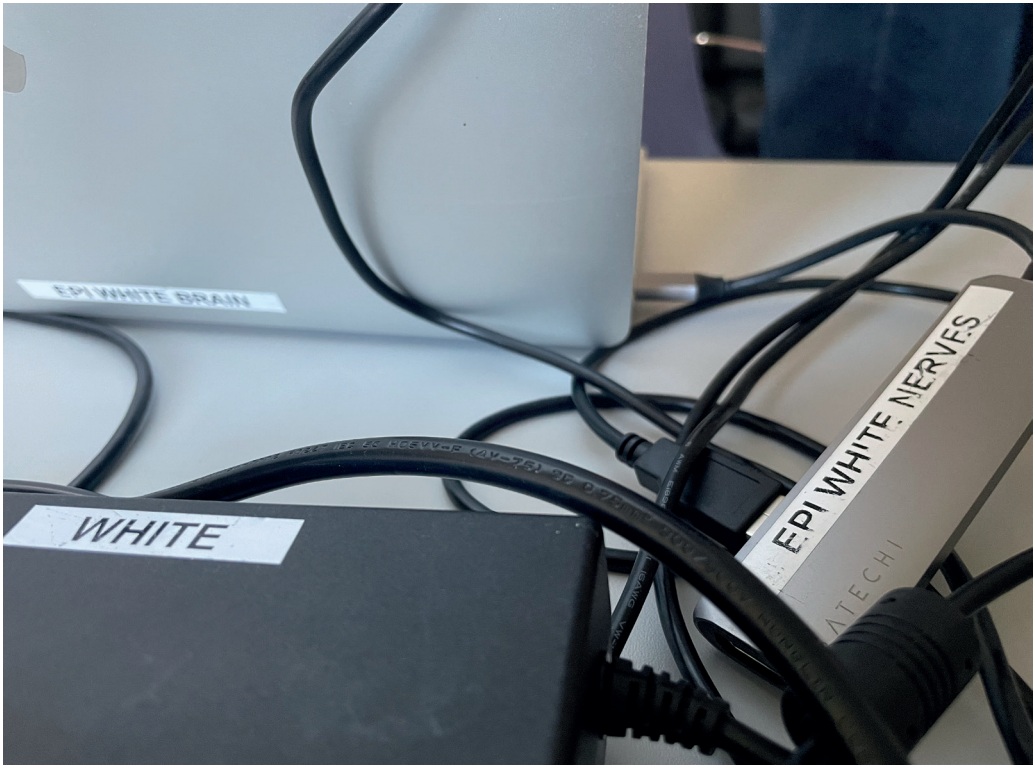
Another set of cultural imaginaries is set in motion by Epi, a cognitive robot reminiscent of the better-known Japanese social robot Pepper. With its cuteness and large eyes, Epi has the countenance of an innocent child. It is challenging, perhaps impossible, to interact with Epi without attributing to it affective abilities – such as sadness, happiness, anger, disappointment, or fury. But Epi also evokes emotions in us, inviting us to explore the blurred boundary between human and machine. The emotional interaction can heighten our awareness of human cognition, which ultimately serves as the blueprint for developing humanoid robots like Epi.

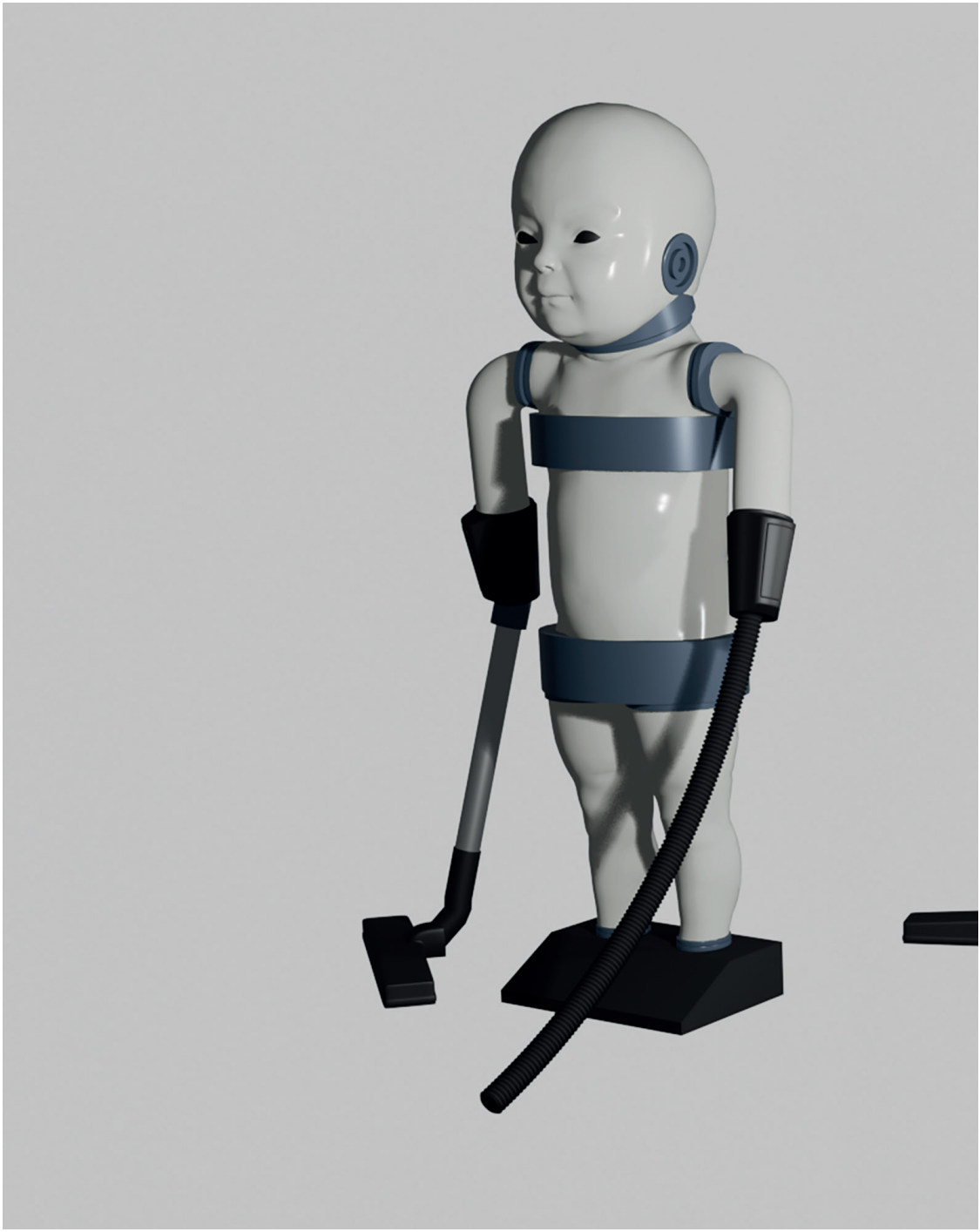
What if robovacs were designed to look like children? Such speculations evoke a range of uncanny resonances – comical, absurd, anxious, fearful – ranging from associations with child labor violations to notions of children as untidy, creating messes themselves, and beyond.

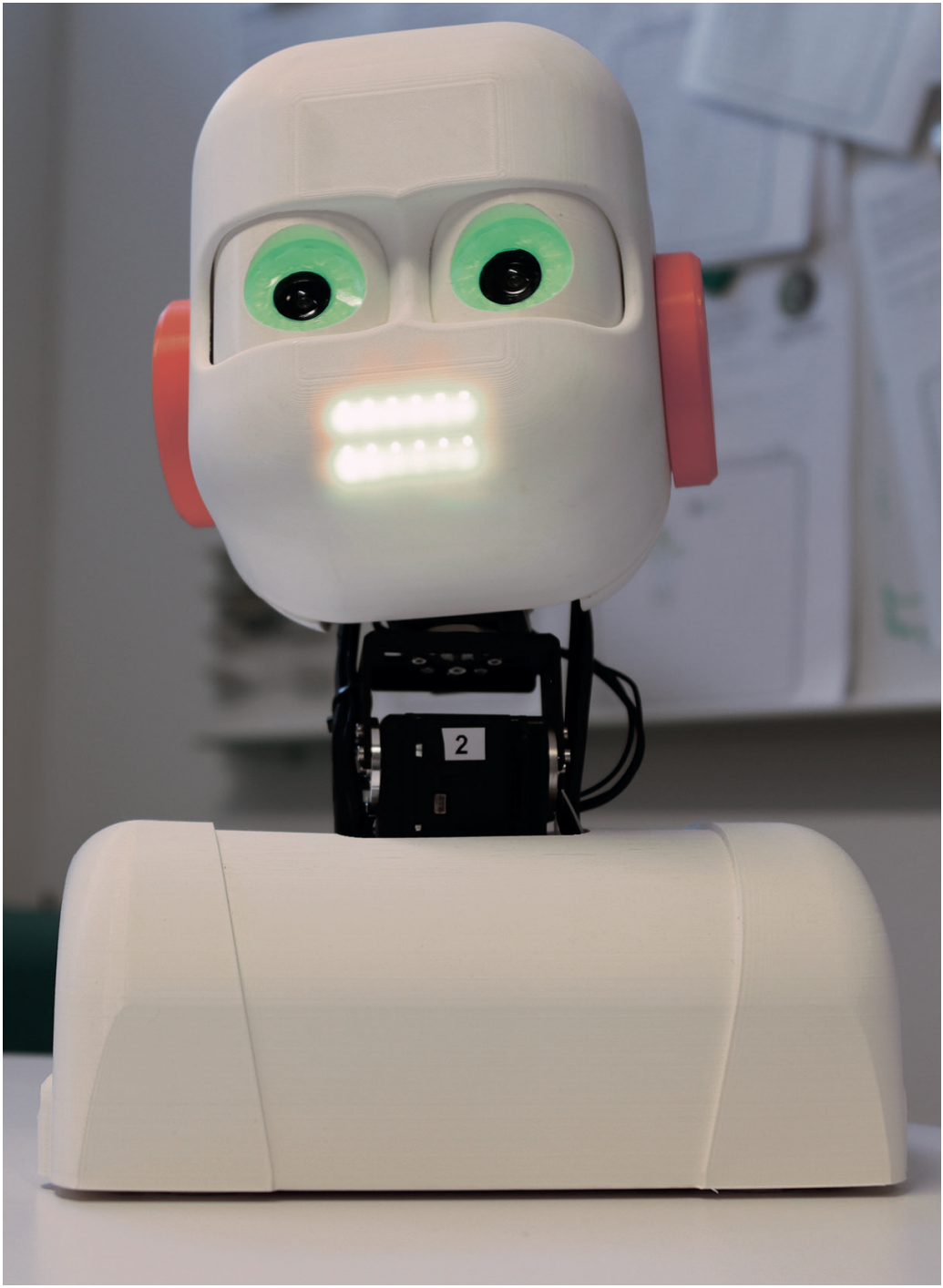
Immersing oneself in speculations about human-machine interaction and tech design reveals the multifaceted interplay between cultural

imaginaries and technological development. It may challenge the utopian dreams of the techno-fix – the promises of technology as the solution to problems in human societies – instead perhaps directing our attention to the potential risks of amplifying existing injustices.

1 Strengers, Y. & Kennedy, J. T*he Smart Wife: Why Siri, Alexa, and Other Smart Home Devices Need a Feminist Reboot*. (The MIT Press, 2020).
2 Electrolux. Electrolux Unveils Prototype for Robot Vacuum Cleaner. Press release, December 1, 1997. Accessed through the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine.
3 Electrolux. Technology and design hand in hand. Accessed through the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine.
4 Electrolux. 90 years of thinking of you – some Electrolux products that made life easier for consumers. 2009. https://www.electroluxgroup.com/en/90-years-of-thinking-of-you-some-electrolux-products-that-made-life-easier-for-consumers-2010.






2

A human–robot interaction researcher's reflection on robots and care

Susanne Frennert

I used to ask older adults what they wanted from robots. What features they imagined might make everyday life easier, safer, more independent. I listened to older adults describe robots that could lift, remind, fetch or call for help. But even in these early conversations, there was hesitation. A robot was never just a device. It became a symbol, a possibility, sometimes even a threat.

"I would not mind a robot," one woman told me "but I am afraid it would mean no one else comes by."

That quiet fear of being overlooked stayed with me. It changed how I approached my research. I began to ask not only what older adults wanted robots to do but what kind of lives robots were meant to support. Our participatory design studies revealed not just practical needs and concerns but deeper tensions. Older adults welcomed support, but not at the cost of dignity. They wanted autonomy but also care, connection and respect. Our literature review confirmed this ambivalence. We identified seven recurring concerns, including the risk of stereotyping older adults and the limited ability of robots to engage in meaningful interaction. Because in 2014, robots often arrived with fixed functions and limited adaptability, older adults had to adjust to the robots, as the robots did not adjust to them. To move closer to older adults' everyday lives, we brought robots into their homes. During the home trials, older adults lived with a robot for several weeks. Some used it actively. Others disengaged. What we observed was not a simple matter of technical success or failure but of fit. Did the robot resonate with the user's daily rhythms, needs and

values? Often it did not. Some older adults treated the robot like a pet, some as an awkward appliance and some ignored it entirely. These were not failures of acceptance. They were reflections of mismatch.

Over time, it became clear that human–robot interaction is not about implementation. It is about interpretation. In a study of how different groups framed care robots, we found that older adults, care workers and students made sense of robots in fundamentally different ways. For some, robots represented hope. For others, they raised concerns about surveillance, standardisation and the erosion of relational care. In related work, we explored how welfare technologies are framed. Some see them as progress, others as control.

Across this body of research, my research questions have changed. I no longer ask how we can make robots more acceptable. I ask what kind of life we are designing for. And what, in that process, we are willing to give up and what we might gain in return. Robots can support. They can assist. But they can also interrupt, flatten or reconfigure how we relate to each other and to ourselves.

Ambient Assets

Robert Willim

Money has always been a medium of exchange, a social construction that enable transactions of value. Today, monetary flows seem to increasingly be simultaneously ephemeral and dependent on heavy widespread physical infrastructures. Where is it all located? Beyond, elsewhere and beneath, infra. But also, all around like an ambience. Ambient economy based on ambient assets fostering ambient consumption. It permeates everyday life, all over the planet. Differently for different people, yet pervasive. Mundane and massive, yet ungraspable.

Ambient economy and assets are part of the lives of tech-moguls as well as all the people that are involved in practices of digital transaction and subscription. Some are still outside systems of credit and control, but the ambience of economy also surrounds the outsiders like an opaque fog. While experienced as ambient and hard to grasp, monetary currents seem to increasingly and unconditionally flow, almost gravitate towards already powerful bodies. Oftentimes through arcane operations.

As economy is experienced as ever more ambient and as monetary flows escalate, commodification also increases. Now, the very ambiences of physical spaces have become commodities that can be bundled, packaged and transferred. As sound. The sonic quality, the atmosphere, and ambience of rooms and spaces can be captured and exchanged by technological means. It is done through Impulse Responses that can measure and capture the sonic characteristics of rooms and different equipment such as amplifiers. Once packaged as files, transferable ambience is on offer. Currents of ambiences emerge when impulse responses are exchanged.

Impulse responses can be used in sound and music editing software. The acoustic qualities of different spaces, simulations of certain physical rooms and sites, can be consumed. The sonic qualities of non-existent, even impossible spaces can also easily be evoked and exchanged. Such as an infinite reverb. This has all been possible for a while. Sonic ambience has become another mundane commodity. Ambiences as assets. The very spatial qualities of different spaces have become products that can be bundled, sold, transferred and exchanged. Currents of ambiences flow through the system of ambient economy.

In this installation the evermore rare sound of physical coins is merged with different ambiences available in some of the staple music production software of the mid 2020s. The sound of cash, of tangible money flow through the room. Fill the room, while convolved with the sonic characteristics of other spaces, such as The King's Chamber in The Great Pyramid of Giza or The Sydney Opera House. What is ephemeral here? Flows and currents. What is physical, material, tangible? Who has got access? To what? What is needed to experience the sound of money placed in different virtual spaces? What is an asset, a resource or value, when monetary currents flow through and between different spaces? What are the ends and beginnings of ambient assets?

Digitalisation of Banking

Osama Mansour

Is digitalisation an unstoppable force? One intriguing thing about digitalisation is that many humans, whether consciously or unconsciously, seem to want more of it. The quest for digital innovation is prompting radical shifts in all sectors and industries resulting in major transformations for how we as humans engage with each other and consume data and digital services in our everyday lives.

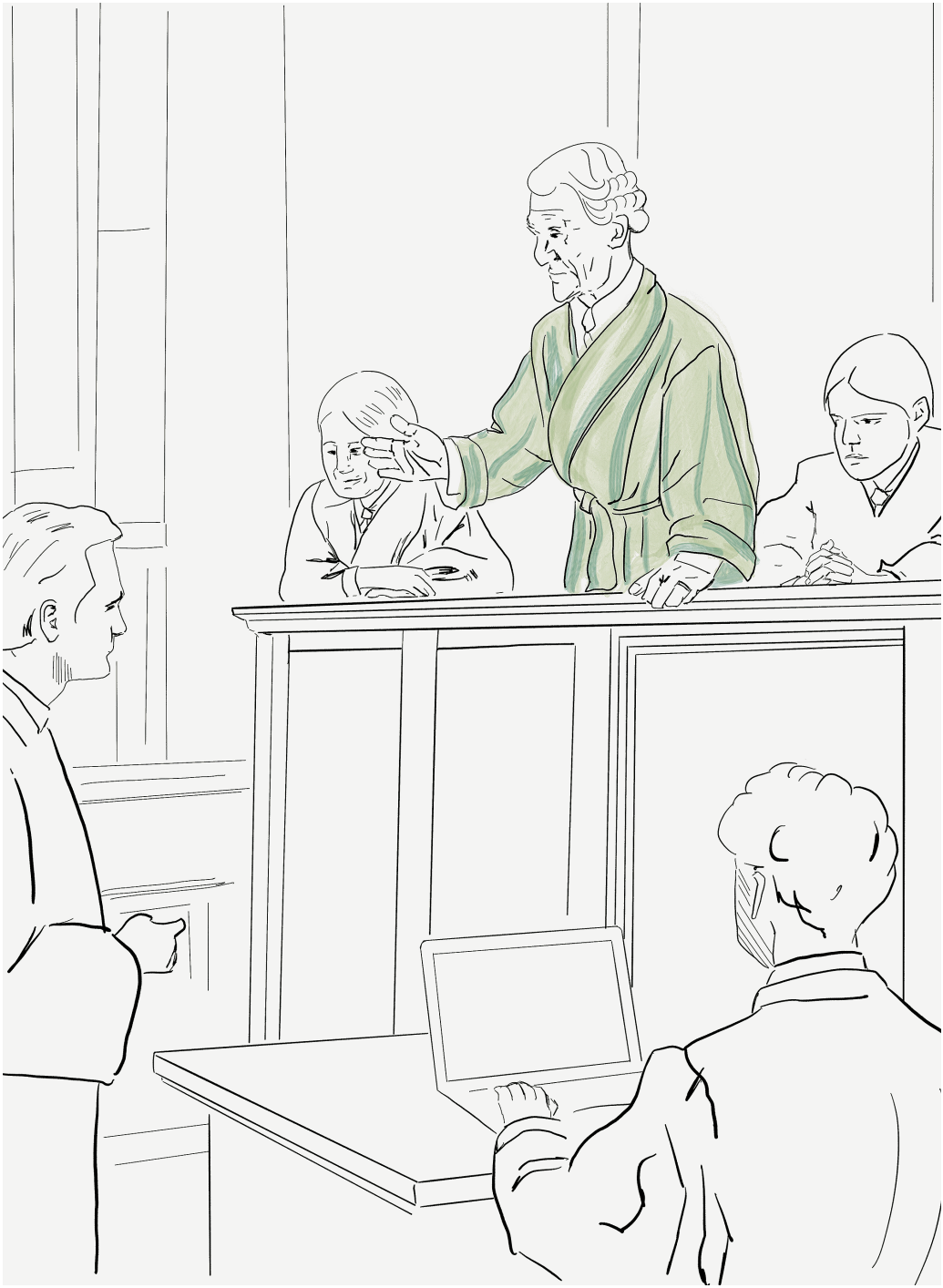
A major transformation is happening in an old and classic industry that is banking. In modern times, everyone has a smartphone and mobile banking apps are indispensable for many of us to manage our finances, pay for bills, and track transactions. Triggered by new regulations aimed at shaking the stagnant innovation environment within the banking industry, new actors of all sizes are entering the market, equipped with mainstream technologies to transform banking into a digital financial ecosystem akin to ecosystems in the mobile world. Digital financial innovators, so-called FinTechs, are now able to access our mundane banking data and transactions to develop innovative services and offer us new financial experiences.

This is creating a fundamental change in an industry that has always been described as slow and traditional. The role of the bank is shifting from a guardian holding the keys to the massive data vaults into an orchestrator of technological infrastructures and data exchanges among multiple actors. This is something that was unimaginable just a few years ago as trust in banks as financial institutions is contingent on their ability to protect and secure our data and not risk its exposure to external parties. As non-bank "insurgents", FinTechs are now entitled to use this data to develop

innovations for our every economic need. With more actors and services present in the market, mundane data transactions are commodified allowing us to enjoy – or not – personalised financial experiences.

The vision for such a changing landscape in banking is to develop an ecosystem where there is an app for everything and for everyone. There is a promise for tech-minded people to execute their financial transactions more smoothly. The credit card is no longer needed. Typing in numbers is a tired practice of the past. New digital innovations promise direct connections where the bank hides behind the scenes as embedded new services are offering people new experiences. For the underbanked and the ones who live on the margins, there is a promise for inclusion and resilience. Lower costs, expanding access to credit, debt rehabilitation, and healthy financial behaviours are envisioned. In this evolving financial landscape that hinges on rapid technological advancements however, these promises may be faced with a reality where the data holders can become more powerful, while the less fortunate might be prone to fraud and less protection. Technology, again, can be widening the gap, despite the potential and the promise.


AMBIENT
ASSETS



Future courtrooms

Petra Gyöngyi

With the advent of AI, courts are experiencing the largest transformation in recent history. As a primarily text-based profession, digital technologies present great promise for the efficiency, openness, and responsiveness of justice.[1] Courts have been traditionally defined by physical spaces, paper documents, and in person interactions. These elements have shaped not only how justice functions but how it is perceived. Now, large language models and virtual technologies open up possibilities for enhancing the performance of courts, previously belonging to the imaginary. These innovations could propel courts into new dimensions of development, where previous imaginaries could become tangible realities: instant access to legal precedent, automated document analysis, real-time translations and transcriptions and virtual courtrooms without physical limitations.

The effects of AI could be a potentially transformative experience[2] for the image and representation of the legal profession – a field historically deeply rooted in rituals and representations, with strong common perceptions and court imaginaries.[3] The depiction of the judge, the solemnity of the courtroom, the weight of a gavel, the ritual of sworn oaths. These powerful symbols have defined for a long time our collective understanding of justice. However, as these elements interact with and potentially yield to digital alternatives, how might our fundamental conception of justice evolve?

This series of illustrations probe these common perceptions and court imaginaries at the crux of courts transitioning into new digital realities. Through a series of visual and interactive elements, we invite visitors

to engage with both traditional representations of justice and their digital counterparts. By juxtaposing classic judicial imagery with playful elements and algorithmic visualisations, the pictures create a space for contemplation and critical engagement.

The intention behind the artwork is to challenge technological determinism[4] – the notion that technological advancement necessarily dictates our path forward without the possibility of exercising critical evaluation. Rather than simply celebrating or condemning the digitalisation of courts, this representation poses more nuanced questions: What does this transformation mean for access to justice? What do we gain in terms of efficiency and what might we lose in human values? Is there anything we might overlook or sacrifice in this rapid transition process? How might judicial symbols be maintained – or transformed – in a digital environment?

As courts adopt AI systems for tasks ranging from translations and scheduling to sentencing recommendations, society must thoughtfully consider not only the practical implications but also the symbolic and theoretical dimensions of this shift. These pictures serve as both a mirror reflecting our current transition and a window into possible futures of judicial systems.

As part of the artwork pen and paper is provided for submitting reflections. These anonymous contributions will be collected and analysed for an upcoming research project. Your reflections will contribute to a deeper understanding of societal perceptions of justice in an era of technological transformation.

We invite you to contemplate these questions as you move through the exhibition, and to add your voice to this important conversation about the future of one of society's most fundamental institutions.

1 R. Susskind. *Online Courts and the Future of Justice* (Oxford University Press, 2019).
2 L.A. Paul. *Transformative Experience* (Oxford University Press, 2014).
3 S. Wyatt. Technological Determinism is Dead; Long Live Technological Determinism, in E. Hackett, O. Amsterdamska, M. Lynch and J. Wajcman (eds), *Handbook of Science and Technology Studies* (MIT Press, 2008), 168.
4 D. E. Curtis & J. Resnik. *Representing Justice: Invention, Controversy and Rights in City-States and Democratic Courtrooms* (Yale University Press 2011).

Reflections on DigiJustice

Miranda Kajtazi

Can digitalisation revolutionise our pursuit of social justice and equality, or is it an empty promise in the growing ecosystem of technological advancements? The interdisciplinary group DigiJustice was established two years ago with the aim to bring together a group of scholars from diverse disciplinary backgrounds, exploring how digital technologies could advance human rights and address digital inequalities. Throughout our time together at the Pufendorf Institute for Advanced Studies, DigiJustice tackled a diverse array of topics through an interdisciplinary exchange method. We enriched each other's understanding by sharing materials, presenting insights from our group members, and inviting scholars and practitioners. This approach led to critical reflective sessions at the end of each day.

As I am now reflecting on the exchanges developed, four overarching topics stand out to me as particularly significant. During the first topic on Human Rights and Ethical Considerations of AI, we read Susie Alegre's book on Human Rights, Robot Wrongs and Kate Crawford's Atlas of AI. This continued with discussions on the legal challenges of anthropomorphic AI, asking whether AI can be responsible and just. During the second topic, Digitalisation and Societal Impact, we explored subjects such as activism in the age of AI, digital welfare, algorithmic vulnerability, and whether a fully digital and cashless society offers more lessons for societal consequences rather than advancements. During the third topic, AI, Creativity, and Human Interaction, we interacted with an advanced robot called EPI, developed at the Cognitive Robotics Lab at Lund University.

We also visited museums in Copenhagen with exhibitions themed on the implications and applications of AI and discussed the implications of AI in war zones. This led me to think about how humanity will inevitably have to interact closely with social robots. During the fourth topic, Technological Developments and Industrial Perspectives, we spoke to practitioners who develop surveillance technology and learned about their discussions of ethical perspectives.

As our journey comes to an end, I reflect on the new insights I have gained. I have noticed that while digitalisation holds promise, it often falls short when it comes to balancing innovation with social good. I was pleased to reflect that intersecting critical views opened new avenues to recognise the dual nature of AI as both a potential companion and a threat, emphasising the need for ethical scrutiny. These insights stem from the diverse perspectives developed through our group's interdisciplinary approach.

In summary, I must acknowledge the significant growth in my critical thinking with DigiJustice. Coming from an early techno-optimistic background in computer science, I now recognise that this optimism often intersects with existing digital inequalities, potentially exacerbating structural disparities. Linking technology with humanity necessitates moving beyond techno-optimism. Our interdisciplinary reflections, spanning technological, political, legal, and ethical perspectives, have profoundly shaped my understanding of human rights in the digital age – a time when scientists, working across disciplinary boundaries and in collaboration with professionals, must continue to challenge the narrative that AI is a universal solution, recognising that technology designed for one does not necessarily fit another.

DigiJustice members

Susanne Frennert is an Associate Professor in Human-Computer Interaction at Lund University. Her research investigates how humans and technologies – such as AI and robots – mutually shape one another within contexts of care and everyday life. She draws on theoretical frameworks from human-centred design, situated ethics, and science and technology studies.

Petra Gyöngyi is an Associate Senior Lecturer of Law and AI at Lund University. Her work studies the implications of integrating technology and AI algorithms in court systems, including consequences for European fundamental rights protection and judicial independence.

Lena Halldenius is Professor of Human Rights Studies and coordinator of Lund University's Human Rights Profile Area. She works in political philosophy and its early modern history, with emphasis on freedom, equality, and rights. Her recent projects (with Moa Petersén) investigate how new injustices are created in the digitised economy.

Miranda Kajtazi is an Associate Professor of Information Systems at Lund School of Economics and Management (LUSEM), Lund University. Her research focuses on digital inequalities, including information security, privacy, and ethics. She is actively involved in the NEXUS AI & Society track and represents the equality board, both at LUSEM.

Osama Mansour is an Associate Professor in Information Systems at Lund University. His area of research is social media in business, digital innovation, and digital marginalisation. His current focus is on regulated digital platforms and open banking, exploring how banks and FinTech start-ups navigate competition and drive innovation.

Mia Liinason is a Wallenberg Scholar and Professor of Gender Studies at Lund University. Her research is located at the intersection of transnational feminism and queer studies, studies of populism and religion, digital cultures, and scholarships of hope. Mia leads the research programme Gender Struggles in the New Conjuncture, studying the interplay between retrogressive mobilisations and emancipatory struggles in Europe and beyond.

Moa Petersén is an Associate Professor of Digital Cultures at Lund University. Her research explores cultural imaginaries of how technology can be integrated into human life to enable transformation and transcendence. She is collaborating with Lena Halldenius on projects examining inequalities generated by digital technologies. She works as a photo historian specialising in American art photography of the 1970s.

Karen Louise Grova Søilen is an Associate Senior Lecturer in Information Studies at Lund University. Her research focuses on everyday digital culture, surveillance, privacy, and human emotional experiences of emerging technologies. Her current project studies the weaponisation of digital technologies in intimate partner violence.

Sue Anne Teo is a Researcher at the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights at Lund University and a Research Fellow at the Center for European Policy Studies. Her research lies at the intersection of human rights, AI and digital vulnerabilities. Sue Anne is also a long-time human rights practitioner, having worked in the United Nations and as a senior programme officer at RWI.

Collaborating artist / researcher

Robert Willim is an Associate Professor of Ethnology and Senior Lecturer in Digital Cultures at Lund University. He also works as an artist. This positions his practice in the intersection between art and research and in his work he often experiments with hybrid forms of expression involving everything from electronic music performances and video essays to mixed media works.

List of Works

Robert Willim. *Ambient Assets* (*The Pufendorf Section*). 2025.
Looped Sound and Video.
Length: 15 minutes. Boardroom paraphernalia.

DigiJustice. *Robot triptych*. 2025. Installation consisting of the following objects:

Epi, cognitive robot. Copy of the original Epi from 2017, assembled in 2020.
Length: 30cm. Weight: 2,5kg. 3D printed in PLA. Controlled using the Ikaros system and standard C++ language. Developer: Cognitive robotics lab, Lund University.

Robot vacuum cleaner. 2021. Durable plastic body with rubberised components. Length: 35.3 cm.
Weight: 4,5 kg. Developer: Roborock.

DigiJustice. The Robovac child. 2025. Animation in loop. Length: approx. 35 seconds.
Created in Blender (open source) and Adobe After Effects. In collaboration with Charlotte Rodenstedt, Bloody Honey.

DigiJustice. *Virtual courts*. 2025. "The Wig", "The Hammer", "The Robe", "Holo-judge". Designed in Procreate. Colour prints on paper. Sizes: 42x59.4 cm. In collaboration with Charlotte Rodenstedt, Bloody Honey. + "Future courts (Wish bowl)". Pen, paper, bowl.

DigiJustice. *What is lost? // What is found?* 2025.
Two neon signs mounted on clear acrylic board, scarlet red.
Sizes: 100×49,5 cm, 100×54,58 cm. 6 mm neon tubes.

DigiJustice. *Pufendorf chatbot*. 2025.
SAMUEL chatbot, designed in Open AI. The authors gratefully acknowledge Lund University Humanities Lab for the collaboration.
Hologram. Photograph of Samuel Pufendorf portrait.
Size: 63.5 cm in diameter. 3D Hologram Fan.

Image credits
All images in courtesy of DigiJustice except:
p. 12 *Trilobite fossil at Desert Museum. Saltillo, Coahuila, Mexico*. Wikipedia Commons. Juan Carlos Fonseca Mata, CC BY-SA 4.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>, via Wikimedia Commons
p. 18, Oleksandra Panasenko.
p. 21, Robert Willim.
p. 27, Robert Willim.

Thanks to
Pufendorf Institute for Advanced Studies, Lund University
Birger Johansson at Cognitive Robotics Lab, Lund University
Henrik Garde and Peter Berck at Humanities Lab, Lund University
Laura Pecoroni and Klaus Kehrer at Kehrer Verlag

LUND UNIVERSITY

Pufendorf IAS

INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES