

Will we always be special? Extending humanity, reducing uniqueness

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Abstract— In general, the list of uniquely human characteristics has been reduced over history, with the definition of humanity extending progressively to accommodate more members (from an initial definition that, for instance, included only adult white males in Western cultures).

This paper reflects on apparent trend of extending humanity and reducing uniqueness and its moral implications, with a special emphasis on the issues brought forth by functionalism and the ideas of some transhumanists, particularly the ones that defend extensive humanisms. We propose that although extending humanity is the morally correct course of action when dealing with living beings, it could pose some threats when reflecting about intelligent machines. We defend that the existence of a subject is a necessary condition for humanity. Given that this is not objectively verifiable, we propose an objective proxy for subjectivity based on the strong emergence of seemingly conscious behaviour.

Index Terms—

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