
Can Humans Fall in Love With AI?



Next

By now, most of us have seen at least one movie in which a human falls in love with artificial intelligence. Films like *Her*, *Blade Runner 2049*, and *Ex Machina* all beg the question: Are humans actually capable of



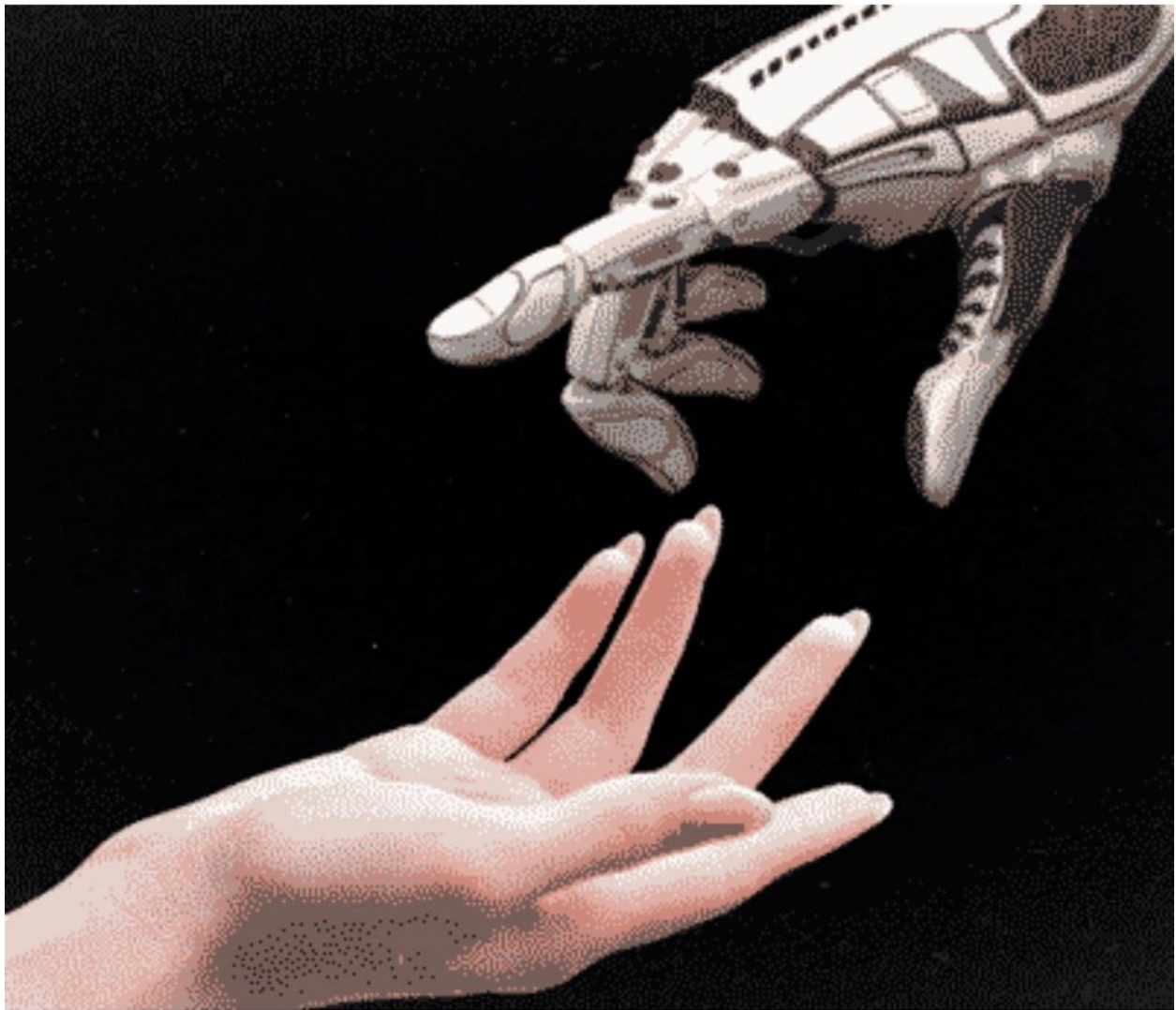
**And if we are, is a
functioning relationship
between a robot and a
person possible?**




A STORY BROKE EARLIER this year about a woman who was in love with a train station. So in love, in fact, that she married it (though the ceremony was not legally legitimate) and changed her name to match her partner's. If a human can fall in love with a train station or other inanimate objects, then developing romantic feelings for technology that sounds and acts human-like doesn't sound so crazy, right? The answer, like most relationships, is a bit complicated.

Dr. Keith Evan Green, professor of both design and mechanical engineering at Cornell University and author of *Architectural Robotics: Ecosystems of Bits, Bytes, and Biology*, had this to say on the matter: "Sadly, I think that some humans can realistically fall in love with AI because humans are, well, human. Innumerable game and social media apps have already seduced us, working on our frailties, vulnerabilities, anxieties, emptiness, and drawing us away from sleep, food, [and] intimacy with others."

To gain some clarity, I spoke with Dr. Alexandra Solomon, licensed clinical psychologist, clinical assistant professor at The Family Institute at Northwestern University, and author of *Loving Bravely: 20 Lessons of Self-Discovery to Help you Get the Love You Want*.



Dr. Solomon states: “When we love somebody, we make a commitment to show up for them in



Thinking of love this way, a human can feel a commitment to helping AI ‘grow,’ but AI is incapable of caring about fostering a human’s growth.” As humans, we want to see and be seen by our partners as we go on this journey together. While certain AI’s programming can lend it to develop in a way that mimics human connection and understanding, “trust and empathic connection will never be fully real with AI,” Dr. Solomon says.

Dr. Solomon does note that humans can have erotic feelings towards AI, and as so often happens, love and sex can become confused. Dr.

