

Preface

2400 years ago

“The King looked at it in amazement; it was striding quickly looking up and down; undoubtedly it was a man. When the craftsman pushed its cheek it sang in tune; when he clasped its hand it danced in time; it did innumerable tricks, whatever it pleased you to ask. The King thought it really was a man.” (Lièzǐ, 列子, ca. 400 B.C.)¹

Today

“It’s a pile of aluminum and copper wire and software. I don’t cheer for my laptop. But people cheer for these [robots]. And of course when it falls, we all feel terrible, ‘Uh, it got hurt.’ But at the end of the day ... It’s just a machine.” (Gill Pratt, then program manager of the US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), discussing robots competing at the DARPA Robotics Challenge, 2015)²

“I know it’s a machine. [But] there was just something about it. It was more reliable than the other ones. ... I just had some connection to it.” (US Air Force Colonel Stephen Jones describing a RQ-1 Predator remotely piloted aircraft)³

1 Cited in Richey, 2012, p. 194.

2 Cited in Guizzo & Ackerman, 2015.

3 Cited in Pawlyk, 2019.

“Me, a scientist, not easily fooled. Also me: why are you sad, Cozmo? ❤️” (Anna Henschel, a PhD candidate in Psychology and Human-Robot Interaction, commenting on a Cozmo toy robot in a Twitter post, 2019)⁴

“We got a Roomba and I get it now ... I would die for this hardworking little man.” (Ryan Boyd, a computer scientist, commenting on a vacuum cleaning robot in a Twitter post, 2019)⁵

4 <https://twitter.com/annahenschel/status/1197561427994828800> (accessed 2019-12-02).

5 <https://twitter.com/ryandroyd/status/1103782256638812161> (accessed 2019-03-08).