

Anni Kunnari

**LORE'S MORAL PATIENCY AND AGENCY
IN *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION***
The Morally Problematic Treatment of a Humanlike AI

Faculty of Information Technology
and Communication Sciences
Bachelor's Thesis
January 2020

ABSTRACT

Kunnari, Anni : Lore's Moral Patiency and Agency in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*

Bachelor's Thesis

Tampere University

Degree Programme in English Language, Literature, and Translation

January 2020

This thesis examines what kind of moral patiency and agency an android character Lore is granted in the science-fiction television show *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.

It employs philosophical theories of morality in analyzing Lore's treatment by different characters.

Keywords: Moral Agency, Moral Patiency, Machine, Consciousness, Instrumental Theory, Functionalism

The originality of this thesis has been checked using the Turnitin OriginalityCheck service.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	2
2. Theory	3
2.1. Machine Moral Agency and Patiency	3
2.2. The Consciousness of Machines	4
2.3. The Instrumental Theory	5
2.4. Functionalism of Machine Agency	6
3. The Moral Patiency and Agency of Lore.....	6
3.1. Data’s Hypocritical Stance on Lore’s Moral Status.....	7
3.2. Soong’s Creator Responsibility over Lore	9
3.3. Lore Against Agency and For Patiency	11
4. Conclusion	13
Bibliography.....	15

1. Introduction

This thesis examines what kind of moral agency and moral patiency an android Lore is granted in the American science-fiction television show *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. The show lasted seven seasons from 1987 to 1994 and was followed by four movies from 1994 to 2002. It follows the starship Enterprise and its crew on various explorational and political missions. Lore is the brother of the Enterprise crewmember Lieutenant Commander Data and he appears in four episodes: “Datalore” (season 1, episode 12), “Brothers” (season 4, episode 3), “Descent Part 1” (season 6, episode 26), and “Descent Part 2” (season 7, episode 1), all of which are examined in this thesis.¹ Particular focus is directed at “Brothers”, because it displays the most nuanced depiction of Lore and his treatment.

“Datalore” introduces Lore as the Enterprise finds him disassembled on the planet Omicron Theta. Data opts for reassembling him and they do so; Lore then attempts to gain Data’s trust, yet he fails and consecutively attempts to destroy the Enterprise by impersonating Data. Consecutively, he fails again, as Data manages to stop him by transporting him to space. In “Brothers”, the androids’ creator Doctor Soong inadvertently captures Lore, attempting to only capture Data to speak with him. When the three are reunited on a secluded planet, Lore argues with Soong extensively over his treatment in the past. Eventually he murders Soong and steals an emotion chip meant for Data as compensation for Soong’s past actions. “Descent Part 1” and “Descent Part 2” follow Lore’s attempt to destroy the Federation and establish a new dominance of artificial life-forms with the assistance of the Borg. He feeds Data negative emotions and disables his ethical program to persuade him to join the cause and succeeds momentarily; however, when the program is reactivated, Data terminates Lore.

In these four episodes other characters treat Lore in morally problematic ways, questioning his moral patiency continuously and his moral agency occasionally. Moral patiency means that how one is treated is moral or immoral whereas moral agency means that one’s actions towards others are either moral or immoral. This thesis examines Lore’s moral status – an umbrella term for having both moral agency and patiency – by examining how different characters treat him. David J Gunkel notes: “Human beings not only get to define

¹ This thesis utilizes the pronoun “he” to refer to Lore. It personifies and genders Lore, which makes it possibly controversial. The utilization of “he” is based on two facts: 1) Almost all of the characters in the show refer to Lore as “he”, except for a few notable cases of “it”. 2) Lore is constructed to be male in both physique and voice, and his performance is by a male actor.

the standard qualifying criteria, which are often based on and derived from their own abilities and experiences, but also nominate themselves both judge and jury for all claims on personhood made by or on behalf of others” (67). This thesis argues the idea can be additionally extended to moral agency and patiency. Humans are those who decide the moral status of others, and those decisions become apparent in the treatment of those others. That is why Lore’s treatment is the basis for examining his moral status.

Previous research into the show has been focused on the android Data’s quest to become human and the antagonistic collective of the Borg, as well as representations of gender and race.² This thesis adds to the research of the show’s representation of AI, currently focused solely on Data, by examining Lore who has not been researched. The goal is to gain a better overall understanding of the representation of AI in *The Next Generation*. Although it is an older show, its topics are now more relevant than ever since autonomous AI is turning science fiction into reality. In addition, the show was and is still massively popular. It has inspired creators for decades, making its ideas and representations widespread, and its popularity is rising again since the show’s sequel *Picard* will be released in 2020. The rise of real-life AI and the show’s popularity are why analysing the previously ignored avenues of the show’s AI is important.

This thesis applies philosophical theories that focus on the question of machine morality and its problems as its theory base. These include the definition moral agency and patiency and its application to machines, as well as machine consciousness in the view of the show, the instrumental theory of technology and functionalism. Both the instrumental theory and functionalism are represented in characters’ opinions, whereas the other theories are relevant for establishing the terminology of the analysis. After introducing these the thesis undertakes the analysis of Lore’s treatment.

2. Theory

2.1. Machine Moral Agency and Patiency

Luciano Floridi and J.W. Sanders define moral agents as entities whose actions are moral and moral patients as entities towards which moral actions can be done (349-50). Stated in simpler terms, moral agents can do moral and immoral deeds, and actions done to moral

² See Consalvo.

patients can be moral or immoral. The standard position of moral status means that “all entities that qualify as moral agents also qualify as moral patients and vice versa”; contrarily, the nonstandard position means that having moral patiency does not automatically grant moral agency to a being (Floridi and Sanders 350).

Gunkel introduces two different outcomes of using the standard position in research of AI and ethics: it has been a justification for either excluding the machine from moral patiency completely, or for arguing that if a machine obtains moral agency, its moral patiency must be considered as well (95-96).

David Levy likewise argues for the latter outcome. His focus is the question of machine patiency, which he forms as: “Is it ethical to treat robots in such-and-such a way?” (209). Levy’s stance is that robots will be treated in a somewhat similar way to humans because they have consciousness, and because of this similar treatment we will treat them likewise in other ways as well, “for example by regarding these robots as having rights” (214). Gunkel explains that for Levy, what separates those deserving ethical treatment and those who do not is consciousness (97). This raises the important issue of defining consciousness that is addressed in the next chapter.

2.2. The Consciousness of Machines

Comprehensively defining consciousness appears impossible. Gunkel even claims that “if there is any general agreement among philosophers, psychologists, cognitive scientists, neurobiologists, AI researchers, and robotics engineers regarding consciousness, it is that there is little or no agreement when it comes to defining and characterizing the concept” (54-55). Different criteria have been suggested for consciousness, yet they all fail in some way or another. Nevertheless, consciousness must be defined to be able to discuss the moral agency and moral patiency of machines.

Victor Grech argues that in “the *Star Trek* canon consciousness resides within the physical brain” (33). He gives an example from *Star Trek: The Original Series* where Spock’s brain is removed, leaving his body unconscious and his brain conscious. It follows the classic mind/body argument, where the mind is something separate in nature from the physical body. In addition, the mind appears as an emergent property since it emerges from the brain while it is not reducible to it.

Thus, consciousness seems to be understood as an emergent property of the brain the *Star Trek* universe. This causes an issue when considering Lore and Data, since their brains

are not biological, and instead artificially constructed positronic nets. Can these positronic brains produce similar emergent consciousness? When one examines how other characters treat Lore and Data, it appears they believe that consciousness can be deduced from external actions and that the two androids are indeed conscious. For example, when Chief Engineer Argyle activates Lore in “Datalore”, he explains that the nonreacting Lore has not displayed any “signs of consciousness” (00:18:01-00:18:03). When Lore eventually awakens and speaks, the other characters begin to consider him conscious. Therefore, it appears the characters believe even a positronic brain can produce emergent consciousness.

This thesis adopts the same position to consciousness as the characters: Lore and Data are both conscious, because they act so. It is done so that the argument of consciousness is manageable in size for this thesis as well as to keep the focus of the discussion on the moral status of machines instead of metaphysical discussions about consciousness. It must be acknowledged, however, that deducing internal states from external actions is a problematic and philosophically questionable stance. External actions are not an undeniable indication of an intentional, conscious state; Lore, for example, could only be programmed to act “conscious”. This decision, therefore, is not directly generalizable to larger concepts beyond the discussion of this show in this thesis.

2.3. The Instrumental Theory

The instrumental theory of technology, developed by Martin Heidegger, explains that technological artefacts are generally understood to be tools (Gunkel 25). Gunkel defines a tool as “a prosthesis or extension of human agency” (31), which highlights that they are utilized by the morally responsible humans and do not have agency themselves. Complex technological artefacts such as the androids Lore and Data, however, cannot be considered tools; they are rather machines because they “occupy ... the place of agency” (Gunkel 32) in some way or another since these machines replace the humans instead of being utilized by them.

The instrumental theory, therefore, is not compatible with the redistributed place of agency of machines. In addition, the theory is increasingly problematic due to its anthropocentrism. Anthropocentric theories are inherently dependent on the assumed place and value of humans. Gunkel identifies the two main problems of anthropocentrism: it relies on the definition of “human” and as a centrism it is automatically exclusive (29-30). How “human” is defined has always been under change and it has been an inseparable part of

ideological and social arguments (29), making the instrumental theory a subjective, political tool for its advocates. The problem of anthropocentrism's exclusivity is two-fold: Firstly, the question of who is allowed to decide the membership of others is very subjective (Gunkel 30), as was discussed in the introduction. Secondly, the division into members and non-members is violent, despite the used criteria (Gunkel 30).

2.4. Functionalism of Machine Agency

As an approach to machine agency, functionalism refuses to answer the question of whether machines can be moral agents, claiming it is not necessary for the examination of "real-world consequences of increasingly autonomous machine decision making" (Gunkel 75). The theory's attention is on the effects of moral acts, especially on the actions of machines towards humans, and functionalist approaches mainly attempt to ensure "the humane treatment of human beings" when considering these machine actions (Gunkel 85).

Gunkel recognizes two problems with functionalism out of which the first one is important for this thesis. The problem is that despite the fact that functionalist approaches allow other beings in addition to humans to be moral agents, it is only done to protect humans (85). These approaches, then, examine "the responsible programming of machines" (Gunkel 85) in an anthropocentric way. The aforementioned anthropocentrism, concerned with the status and value of humans, is a problem for other beings since their value is largely neglected from consideration, which in this case is moral consideration.

3. The Moral Patiency and Agency of Lore

This section examines Lore's treatment by characters essential for analysis. First, it investigates the treatment of Lore by his brother Data. Second, Lore's treatment by his creator Doctor Soong is explored. Finally, the section studies how Lore himself observes his status and how he argues he should be treated. Data and Soong were selected due to their unique viewpoints: Data is another android, Soong is the androids' creator. Lore's stance on himself was chosen because it is contradictory.

3.1. Data's Hypocritical Stance on Lore's Moral Status

This chapter examines how Data treats Lore. Firstly, Data's own moral status must be determined to understand whether he can decide others' moral statuses. Secondly, the chapter examines whether Data treats Lore as a moral agent and what is problematic and controversial about this treatment. Finally, it examines Data's increasingly questionable stance on Lore's moral patiency which is caused by Lore beginning to oppose Data.

Data, similar to Lore, is an android built by Doctor Soong, and he and Lore are considered brothers. Data is the younger brother since he was constructed last, yet the androids are, in Soong's words, "virtually identical, except for a bit of programming" ("Brothers" 00:31:46-00:31:54). They have two programming differences: Lore has emotions whereas Data does not, and Data has an explicitly mentioned ethical program whereas Lore's is never discussed.³

Data has both moral agency and patiency which are never doubted by the crewmembers of the Enterprise.⁴ His actions are always deemed his own and hurting him is viewed as immoral. For example, Chief Engineer Argyle explains in "Datalore" that they must examine Data's physique to make Lore functional, and that it must be done "without disassembling you [Data], of course" (00:14:11-00:14:15). This reveals that the others consider disassembling Data to be self-evidently against his rights. Data's moral status is questioned once in "A Measure of a Man" (season 2, episode 9), when Starfleet argues that he is their property without rights; Data, however, wins the trial and becomes a legally self-determinate person with a complete moral status.

Data initially appears to grant Lore the same moral status he has been granted. On their first encounter, he calls Lore "he", disregarding the fact that Lore is merely a disassembled android body at the moment ("Datalore" 00:12:20-00:12:22). Hence Data is the first character to personify Lore and consider him conscious. Continuing in the same manner, Data deems Lore is a moral agent since he does not attribute any of Lore's actions to programming or Soong. Data appears to believe Lore to be his equal, yet further analysis reveals Data's contradictory ideas.

³ Because the show does not discuss Lore's ethical programming despite mentioning a difference in the androids' programs, two opposing readings are formed: either Lore has an ethical program, which turns the discussion to machine ethics, or he does not, which turns the discussion to the metaphysical nature of morals. Since both topics are so extensive, they are excluded from the analysis.

⁴ Except for Doctor Pulaski in season 2, who does not initially recognise Data to be a person, yet who eventually changes her stance.

Data's first double standard concerns moral agency, because he views Lore as a moral agent yet excuses his own responsibility by appealing to programming. Data claims that emotions were responsible for how he hurt his friend Geordi ("Descent Part 2" 00:43:22-00:43:25), and those emotions were fed to him by Lore, who is constantly under the influence of those same emotions. Data does not, controversially, extend this shift in responsibility to Lore; Lore is in control of himself despite the emotions.

Data's second double standard is that he believes he himself is a moral patient whereas Lore is not. When the crew first discovers Lore's disassembled body, not knowing who or what it is, Data claims the body requires reassembling. His motivation is questionable at best, as he demands: "It is very important for me to know that [the android can become alive], sir. I never dreamed it was possible that I might find some link with a form like my own" ("Datalore" 00:12:31-00:12:43). Instead of a person with a right to live, Lore appears as a means to an end for Data to uncover his own past.

When Lore changes from this tool of personal discovery to a threat to the Enterprise in "Datalore" and to the entire Federation in "Descent Part 2", Data ceases to consider even the possibility that Lore might be a moral patient. In "Datalore", he is responsible as the senior officer for ordering Lore to be transported into space. In "Descent Part 2", he shoots Lore in self-defence, incapacitating him, which is in itself unproblematic. Yet, despite rendering Lore harmless by the blast, Data terminates his conscious state and informs Captain Picard that Lore "must be disassembled so that he is no longer a threat" (00:41:24-00:41:28). Data knows that disassembly is essentially the same as death for an android. He does not believe Lore requires a trial and appealing to Lore's threatening nature to humans as support for this judgement makes Data support functionalism introduced in the theory section, which further reduces Lore's moral status. Data appears even more extreme in "Brothers" where he argues against his brother's self-conscious state and free will by begging Soong to "not reactive" Lore from a zombie-state (00:27:29-00:27:32). Although Data argues both that he has a right to free will ("A Measure of a Man") and that he has a right to risk his own life ("Descent Part 1") – implying that he is both alive and a person with rights – he does not grant these rights to Lore and denies him moral patiency. It becomes another double standard.

Therefore, Data does not treat Lore as of an equal moral status despite suggesting in "Datalore" that Lore could be another him. He explains to Picard that if they use "it" to refer Lore, both androids appear as things instead of persons ("Datalore" 00:19:12-00:19:18), yet regardless of this Data himself treats Lore as a thing with no moral patiency on several

occasions. These double standards are unexpected when one considers that Data is another AI who has had to argue for his own moral status.

3.2. Soong's Creator Responsibility over Lore

This chapter examines what kind of a moral status Doctor Noonien Soong, the cyberneticist who built the androids, grants to Lore. Soong has a full moral status as a human, thus he can decide Lore's moral status as a member of the group. This is why his motivation for creating Lore is studied first; it is the initial decision on his status. After this, Soong's stance on Lore's moral agency is explored. Finally, the chapter analyses Soong's uncertain opinion of Lore's moral patiency.

Soong's motivation for building the androids is morally problematic because he appears to have initially viewed them as objects. He compares his desire to build Data, and assumedly Lore as well, to that of Michelangelo creating his statues ("Brothers" 00:24:25-00:24:52), making the androids parallel to works of art and objects instead of persons. His view, however, gradually changes in "Brothers". He takes a paternal role with Data whereas with Lore he takes the role of the creator, and, because of this, Lore is more of an object to Soong than Data is. This causes Soong's double standard in the treatment of the brothers.

The issue of moral agency is especially important with Soong, since he is the only other character who questions Lore's moral agency besides Lore himself. He has a double standard with the moral agency of the brothers, which originates from the difference between creator and father: Lore is not a moral agent, because Soong has the responsibility over his actions as the creator, whereas Data is a moral agent, because Soong is more of a father for him. Soong explains that he has granted Data free will: "I gave you the ability to choose whatever you wanted. To do whatever you wanted" (Brothers" 00:23:14-00:23:21). Therefore, he is clearly no longer in control of Data's actions and it leads to what Andreas Matthias calls a "responsibility gap", that is, "the manufacturer/operator of the machine is *in principle* not capable of predicting the future machine behaviour any more, and thus cannot be held morally responsible or liable for it" (175). Soong allows any moral responsibility to go to Data.

That, nevertheless, is not the case with Lore, despite the fact that Soong is faced with a similar "responsibility gap" because Lore is also an autonomous AI. Instead of allowing Lore moral responsibility, Soong fills the gap himself by claiming he is still in control as the creator. For example, when he is reactivating Lore from the zombie-state and Data begs him

not to, Soong responds with: “In any case, he’ll obey me. He always did” (“Brothers” 00:27:39-00:27:44). Although Lore has rebelled against him on numerous occasions by this time, he nevertheless believes he is in control.

This is what causes Soong to take responsibility over several of Lore’s actions, which in turn denies Lore moral agency. In “Brothers”, Soong claims that in the past, when they were still living together with the colonists, Lore had not been “functioning properly” (00:31:22-00:31:24) and that he had been “unstable” (00:32:16-00:32:23), which show that he decided, and still decides, when Lore is working appropriately and when not. This instability is also what forced Soong to disassemble Lore, because he had become a threat to the colonists they were living with. By this, Soong advocates functionalism, where securing human safety is the most important reason to control machines (Gunkel 84-85) – an argument that is identical to Data’s. Supporting it reduces Lore’s moral status to non-existent, because Lore becomes a mere apparatus completely under its creator’s control.

Since Soong treats Lore as not a moral agent, Lore could not be a moral patient either if Soong supported the standard position of morality. His position on the android’s moral patiency, however, is not clear, because of two issues. Firstly, he treats Data as both a moral agent and moral patient and therefore could support the standard position. Secondly, Soong appears ambiguous on Lore’s moral patiency: On one hand, he frequently ignores all moral responsibility to him. On the other hand, he occasionally expresses regret over his immoral acts towards him.

Soong periodically neglects his responsibility as a moral agent to Lore who is a potential moral patient. In the past, he had disassembled Lore without concern for his right to life by appealing to human safety. When he explains Lore’s bitterness to Data, Soong asserts that “he wasn’t given the chance you and I were given. To live” (“Brothers” 00:35:21-00:35:26), distancing himself from his actions. Similarly, when Lore demands to know why Soong didn’t “fix” him (“Brothers” 00:32:32-00:32:37), Soong deflects Lore’s argument for moral treatment by appealing to logic to explain why he built Data instead (00:32:35-00:32:41). He also excuses his own failures when building Lore by claiming it was “the emotion” in Lore that “turned and twisted” (“Brothers” 00:33:30-00:33:40) instead of admitting that his own questionable actions and possible programming errors caused Lore to become emotionally unstable.

Yet Soong is not completely against Lore’s moral patiency. He regrets what happened in the past, as he claims he was “plagued by what went wrong” (“Brothers” 00:33:15-00:33:20). He also damages his argument for the logic of building Data by claiming he

nevertheless planned to repair Lore (“Brothers” 00:32:41-00:32:45). The most important argument for Lore’s moral patency that Soong makes, however, is when he indirectly admits that when he disassembled Lore, he essentially killed him: “I didn’t know you were alive” (“Brothers” 00:38:57-00:38:59). It is an acknowledgement that he does have moral responsibilities towards Lore that he failed to fulfil in the past. Consequently, Soong can never fulfil them as in a cruel twist of fate the confession causes Lore to become violent and murder him. Nevertheless, it makes it possible that Soong supports the nonstandard position of morality with Lore.

Soong, therefore, is adamant that Lore is not moral agent, whereas his moral patency is possible, which strongly suggests that Soong supports the nonstandard position of morality. His overall stance, however, is questionable. He has a double standard with the androids, advocating the standard position with Data and the nonstandard position with Lore. He also diminishes Lore’s position as a person by supporting functionalism whereas he directs no such argument at Data. It appears that Soong’s opinion is dependent on how “successful” his creations are by his own standards, which in itself is anthropocentric and therefore problematic.

3.3. Lore Against Agency and For Patency

This chapter examines Lore’s opinion of his own moral status. It proceeds by first analysing his more contradictory arguments of moral agency and then his clearer arguments for moral patency. Finally, the chapter briefly analyses how even academic scholarship ignores Lore’s arguments.

Lore acts as a moral agent in “Datalore”, “Descent Part 1” and “Descent Part 2”, never questioning his own agency and taking responsibility for his actions. The appearance of Doctor Soong in “Brothers”, however, causes Lore to question his moral agency, since it allows him to shift responsibility for his actions to Soong. Initially, Lore acknowledges he was in control of his actions by declaring: “I would have proven myself worthy to you if you’d just given me a chance” (“Brothers” 00:31:01-00:32:06). He believes he could have affected the outcome by acting and does not mention any programming faults that he himself could not fix. Nonetheless, Lore relinquishes his moral agency almost immediately, as he demands an answer from Soong to the question: “Why didn’t you just fix me? It was within your power to fix me” (00:32:32-00:32:37). Brokenness undoes his moral agency because Lore ceases to be in control of his actions and the responsibility for the faults shifts to Soong.

Lore implicitly employs the instrumental definition of technology, where the human creator is responsible for the status of the apparatus, although it cannot be applied since Lore is an autonomous machine that renders the definition obsolete. Lore's claim for not having moral agency, therefore, is inherently flawed.

While he denies his moral agency himself, Lore nonetheless believes he is a moral patient, which shows he supports the nonstandard position of morality. This becomes apparent when he attempts numerous times to highlight his immoral treatment by expressing distress and anger over his treatment as well as mocking other people's words.

The strongest argument for moral patiency Lore presents is the argument he has with Soong about having been disassembled in the past:

LORE: You did what you had to do? What kind of an answer is that?

SOONG: The only one I can give you. You were not functioning properly.

("Brothers" 00:31:15-00:31:24)

Lore acts amusedly, with melodramatic hand gestures, and this appears exaggerated even for such a sarcastic, emotionally volatile character. This way of acting suggests that he believes he has been mistreated and that the given answer is not only inadequate but also offensive as a moral justification. He therefore believes he is a moral patient and he attempts to force Soong to admit that disassembling him was immoral. He insists on the argument, despite the lack of progress and the overall attention beginning to turn to Data, by angrily asserting to Soong: "You disassembled me. You took me apart" ("Brothers" 00:31:34-00:31:39). The less animated, but angrier argument is a differently styled attempt to make Soong admit his offense.

Lore's arguments formatted like this, nonetheless, do not succeed. To further highlight the injustice he feels, Lore changes his approach by focusing on what he was denied despite having a right to it instead of what was done to him. When Lore demands to know why Soong did not repair him – the aforementioned argument that denies his moral agency – Lore also shows that he believes that, as a moral agent, Soong has a responsibility to him as a moral patient. This approach continues when he declares to Soong: "You didn't fill Data with substandard parts, did you, old man? No. That honour was bestowed upon me. You owe me, old man. Not him. Me" ("Brothers" 00:38:23-00:28:37). "Substandard parts" are evidence that Soong is at least partly responsible for what failed in Lore's construction and Lore attempts to make Soong see the injustice in that. More importantly, Lore claims Soong owes him; it is a forceful demonstration that he believes he is a moral patient with rights. This approach in argumentation is more successful for Lore, as Soong's stance becomes

increasingly ambiguous and eventually admits his failure after Lore demands he is owed compensation.

Noticeably Lore criticizes Data only once for his immoral actions as he sarcastically thanks him from dooming him to drift in space in “Brothers”. The continuing critique towards only Soong highlights his importance in Lore’s life as a failed father figure. Sue Short discusses the same idea in her article, but from Data’s point of view. To her, the “most significant influence” in Data’s life is “having an educated liberal and moral man” in it as his father figure, namely Captain Picard, since he can guide Data, defend his rights, and show humanity “in its most virtuous light” (221). Short does not extend this same consideration to explain the actions of the so-called “deranged” brother (219), even though Lore’s only contact with humanity is his morally inconsistent father. Short is not the only one who reduces Lore to faulty parts and madness; for example, Esther Rashkin describes Lore as “Data’s sociopathic ‘evil twin’”, and suggests it was Lore’s emotions that made him the way he is instead of the immoral treatment he received (322). This reveals that even academic scholarship ignores the moral responsibility of the creator to the created AI even when the AI itself argues for moral patiency.

Surprisingly, then, Lore appears as an advocate of the nonstandard position of morality. He believes he is a moral patient with rights, yet simultaneously he denies his own moral agency. He wishes for moral treatment from his father and compensation for his suffering. His arguments, however, are largely ignored by characters and academics alike.

4. Conclusion

Lore’s moral status is an asymmetrical and contradictory position in which none of the analysed characters grant him a complete moral status, not even Lore himself. Lore is the only one to argue for his moral patiency, yet he is also the one who denies his moral agency alongside with Soong. Data’s position is surprising, because he is a similar android as Lore who has had to argue for his own moral status. Soong’s position is more typical, because he is the creator who takes responsibility for his creation; nevertheless, his double standard of treating Lore and Data differently despite their identical nature that Soong himself proclaimed is remarkable. Lore’s position, however, is the most surprising because of how he treats his own moral agency.

Data and Lore appear as supporters of the nonstandard position of morality. In opposition, Soong appears as a possible advocate of both the nonstandard and the standard position due to his double standard, which appears morally inconsistent. What is more dubious, however, is Data supporting functionalism despite being a machine himself.

It is notable that neither Data nor Soong ask themselves Levy's question, namely, "Is it ethical to treat robots in such-and-such a way?" (209). It is an important question for discussion on morality, and especially important for Soong as the creator since he is not shown to have considered the ethical implications of building the androids. It is a possible topic for further analysis in this thesis' topic. The analysis can also be continued by examining Lore's treatment by other characters, such as Captain Picard, or by Starfleet in general.

In conclusion, *Star Trek: The Next Generation* is less inclusive of admitting machines into moral consideration than it appears. Data, an android who is not dangerous to humans and instead admires them considerably, is easily granted a moral status. Conflictingly, Lore is deemed increasingly dangerous and thus denied moral status. Despite the show attempting to display open-mindedness towards AI, the show anthropocentrically prioritises human safety over machine rights, and therefore does not support its ideal of equality between humans and machines. *The Next Generation*, therefore, fails in its own argument because of Lore's moral status.

Bibliography

Primary Material:

“A Measure of a Man.” *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, created by Gene Roddenberry, performance by Brent Spiner, season 2, episode 9, Paramount Domestic Television, 1989, *Netflix*, www.netflix.com/watch/70177897.

“Brothers.” *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, created by Gene Roddenberry, performance by Brent Spiner, season 4, episode 3, Paramount Domestic Television, 1990, *Netflix*, www.netflix.com/watch/70177939.

“Datalore.” *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, created by Gene Roddenberry, performance by Brent Spiner, season 1, episode 12, Paramount Domestic Television, 1988, *Netflix*, www.netflix.com/watch/70177875.

“Descent Part 1.” *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, created by Gene Roddenberry, performance by Brent Spiner, season 6, episode 26, Paramount Domestic Television, 1993, *Netflix*, www.netflix.com/watch/70178014.

“Descent Part 2.” *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, created by Gene Roddenberry, performance by Brent Spiner, season 7, episode 1, Paramount Domestic Television, 1993, *Netflix*, www.netflix.com/watch/70178015.

Secondary Material:

Consalvo, Mia. “Borg Babes, Drones, and The Collective: Reading Gender and the Body in Star Trek.” *Women's Studies in Communication*, vol. 27, no. 2, 2004, pp. 177-203.

Floridi, Luciano, and J. W. Sanders. “On the Morality of Artificial Agents.” *Minds and Machines*, vol. 14, no. 3, 2004, pp. 349-79.

Grech, Victor. “Qualia on a Chip: The De-Zombification of Data.” *Foundation*, vol. 47, no. 129, 2018, pp. 33-50.

Gunkel, David J. *The Machine Question: Critical Perspectives on AI, Robots, and Ethics*. MIT Press, 2012.

Levy, David. “The Ethical Treatment of Artificially Conscious Robots.” *International Journal of Social Robotics*, vol 1, no. 3, 2009, pp. 209-16.

Matthias, Andreas. “The Responsibility Gap: Ascribing Responsibility for the Actions of Learning Automata.” *Ethics and Information Technology*, vol. 6, no. 3, 2004, pp. 175-83.

Rashkin, Esther. “Data Learns to Dance: Star Trek and the Quest to be Human.” *American*

Imago, vol. 68, no. 2, 2011, pp. 321-46.

Short, Sue. "The Measure of a Man?: Asimov's Bicentennial Man, Star Trek's Data, and being Human." *Extrapolation*, vol. 44, no. 2, 2003, pp. 209-23.