

## Robots, consciousness, and cooperation

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### Abstract:

A range of research on human-machine interaction indicates that participants will treat robots and computers as if they are conscious – as if they have feelings (e.g., Bartneck & Hu 2008, Nass et al. 1994, van't Wout 2006). In previous work, we have argued that attributions of consciousness are driven by two quite different processes (Arico et al 2011, Fiala et al. 2012). One of these processes, the “high road”, is slow and reflective, drawing on a range of considerations. The other process, the “low road”, is fast, automatic and triggered by simple cues (like faces and contingent interaction). This talk will argue that the attribution of consciousness to robots and computers is a result of the fast, automatic low-road process. This has implications for economic interactions with machines. For on this view, people should be more likely to sacrifice money for the sake of a computer when the machine is designed to trigger the low-road for attributing consciousness to the machine.