

Evil, Dangerous, and Just Like Us:
Androids and Cylons in
Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? (1968)
and *Battlestar Galactica* (2003)

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ABSTRACT

The nature of humanity and what it means to be human has long been the focus of science fiction writers in all media. In this analysis of Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* and Ronald D. Moore and David Eick's reimagined *Battlestar Galactica*, the author examines the relationships that exist between the humans and the humanoid robots they create, and how this reveals something of what it might mean to be human or non-human. In the search for a separate identity, the humans reject the similarities that link them to the machines they encounter. By accepting that humans and androids – or humans and Cylons – are far more similar than they are different, and that the few physical differences between them are far less important than the emotional, religious, and relational similarities and connections they share, both human and non-human beings in these texts could develop a posthuman identity. Posthumanism in this context is about what the human can share with the humanoid robot, a being created in the image of the human who is also a machine; it is about moving beyond the importance of the body, but also beyond the importance of the rational mind in favour of emotional connection. A posthuman existence would allow both groups to remain unique, but also allow them to share in a common identity or, perhaps, society in which both are recognized and valued for the relationships they hold with each other.

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The concept of the alien Other often appears in more literal forms in science fiction works, where extraterrestrial and robotic life forms are given permission to come out and show off their strange, unfathomable, grotesque bodies and behaviours. The robot¹ in particular is useful for posthuman analysis and criticism, as it appears to be a move beyond the human body and mind towards a faster, stronger, smarter, more resilient existence. Philip K. Dick's novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* and Ronald D. Moore and David Eick's television series *Battlestar Galactica* both examine a particular variety of robot that is almost indistinguishable from a human being in appearance, behaviour, and physicality. Despite their differences in medium, political and social context, and historical circumstance, these two texts present startlingly similar contexts of humanity and robotic societies, where apocalyptic and violent circumstances have reduced the human population to a shadow of its former self, with these humanoid robots presenting practical, moral, and philosophical problems that must be worked through. These presentations of the Other as a form of artificial life provoke questions as to the nature of the human and the non-human. Neither the humans nor the humanoid robots can be defined in such a way that they do not share some elements; both have the capacity for positive and negative behaviour, and both have individuals who do not fit into the standard mould for their species. As well, each group seems to recognize that physical, bodily differences – while useful and sometimes important distinctions – are insufficient to separate or differentiate the two groups' identities from one another. Therefore, both the humans and the machines explore other criteria such as emotional capacity for love or empathy, religious experience, and the identities and relationships individuals can and do form with those around them. The similarities between Dick's novel and Moore and Eick's television series allow for a number of comparisons that reveal a posthuman identity is possible in both texts through the recognition of the commonalities shared by human and robot alike.

¹ In this essay I use the words “robot” and “machine” to indicate either the androids from Dick's novel or the Cylons from *Battlestar Galactica* or, often, both. While these terms on their own (including “android” and similar concepts such as “cyborg”) have separate definitions, all come close enough to the idea of an artificial being resembling a human that I have decided to use them all to mean such. I am not suggesting that all robots are androids, but that Dick's androids are, in some way, robots, and that Moore and Eick's Cylons are, in some sense, machines.

While both Dick's novel and Moore and Eick's series question the nature or definition of the human, they also offer situations in which one may consider the development of a posthuman identity or society. Posthumanism in this context refers not only to a move beyond the Renaissance humanist and Enlightenment ideas and "ideals of human perfectibility, rationality, and agency" (Wolfe xiii), but also towards an understanding that the body is not the most important defining characteristic of a being, human or not. This does not mean that a posthuman existence must be bodiless, but that the body must not be the focus of identity, whether human, non-human, or posthuman. By examining the ways in which both *Do Androids Dream* and *Battlestar Galactica* engage with the capacity for machines to feel emotions and make personal relationships and connections with each other and with humans, as well as the ways in which the human beings attempt to reject the humanoid robots and deny them an identity or any importance, I will demonstrate that a posthuman identity not only allows for a more stable human identity in the face of the existence of an artificial life form, but that posthumanism relieves the fear of the alien Other by showing that the human and the humanoid robot can share a common posthuman identity and society without losing their own unique identities.

Ronald D. Moore and David Eick's reimagined *Battlestar Galactica* has been the centre of a great deal of varied criticism, much of it focusing on politics, gender representation, war and terrorism, and the alien Other. Many comparisons have been made between American politics and the situations in which the humans of the Colonial Fleet find themselves. In particular, the actions of the resistance forces on New Caprica against the Cylon occupiers has prompted a number of critics to point at parallels to the Iraq War and the actions of both the American and allied troops as well as the Afghani and Al Qaeda protesters and insurgents. "(Re)Framing Fear: Equipment for Living in a Post 9/11 World," an essay that appears in the collection *Cylons in America: Critical Studies in Battlestar Galactica*, and "Resistance vs. Collaboration on New Caprica: What Would You Do?" from another such collection of criticism both confront these political issues and how Moore and Eick's television series captures many of the same fears, anxieties, and moral conflicts that Americans have faced in the past decade. These two essays discuss concepts of fear of cultural difference and how one humanizes or dehumanizes those around them, and why. These collections also offer essays on gender and sexuality, but Lorna Jowett's and Matthew Jones' articles from *Battlestar Galactica: Investigating Flesh, Spirit and Steel*, are among the most critical and challenging of these discussions. Jowett and Jones both

suggest that Moore and Eick's series represents gender and gender norms in a restrictive way, and that fear of hybridity or of challenge to traditional gendered roles and ideals problematizes the series' apparent gender equality as seen in the crew of the *Galactica*. As well, while some critics examine the nature of Cylon identity and the relationships these humanoid robots have with their human creators, articles like David Roden's "Cylons in the Original Position: Limits of Posthuman Justice" are often limited by the fact that they were published before the series was complete, and many crucial revelations of the fourth and final season are therefore unaccounted for. These investigations of Cylon personhood and identity do not always account for the ways in which the humans and Cylons interact, nor for the complex relationships the individual Cylons have with their models, the humans they meet and form connections with, and the other Cylons in their own society.

Similarly, many critics have discussed the fascination Philip K. Dick had with the nature of the human being and what makes a person human. Emmanuel Carrère, in his book *I Am Alive and You Are Dead: A Journey Into the Mind of Philip K. Dick*, discusses Dick's interest in the ideas of English mathematician Alan Turing, who proposed that a machine must be thinking, or "welcome[d] . . . into the human community, as Turing said one would have to do" if it could convince a human being that it was also human. Carrère states, "As Turing points out in his essay, the phenomenon of consciousness can only be observed from the inside" (Carrère 133). If a computer or robot can pass the Turing Test, then in what way is it not alive, not thinking, not human? Dick was not satisfied with Turing's criteria, and so added the idea of empathy as the human quality an android must possess. He further developed the idea of the schizoid, a character type that appears throughout Dick's writing, as the opposing personality to the human, the schizoid existing in a permanent state of emotional constriction (Carrère 136). Examples of the schizoid in *Do Androids Dream* may be the androids or bounty hunter Phil Resch – both exhibit moments in which they seem incapable of feeling anything for others. In Leijla Kucukalic's book, *Philip K. Dick: Canonical Writer of the Digital Age*, Kucukalic also discusses Dick's emphasis on empathy as the "as the distinguishing factor between the human and the machine" (Kucukalic 78). The androids are not necessarily the machines; they may also be "the human beings who are cold and unkind toward others" (Kucukalic 88). However, while Kucukalic acknowledges Dick's focus on behaviour and emotion rather than physical differences between human and android, she also seems to place the androids in an inferior position to the

humans; they are unable to enter larger human society and are seen to “bring meaning, comfort, and hope to their human counterparts” (Kucukalic 89), a human-centric, subservient role. Both Kucukalic and Carrère begin to discuss the machine as a living being, but neither acknowledges the possibility of the human and the humanoid robot existing together with a common identity. Dick’s characters are humans or androids – depending on their behaviour, not their bodies – but never both. While I will not say that Dick’s characters may acquire both the human and the non-human identity, I believe the distinction is not quite so clear as either their bodies or behaviours, according to Kucukalic and Carrère, suggest.

The human is often identified by more negative characteristics than positive ones – not machine, not bestial – which suggest an uncertainty in what it means to be human. In both Dick’s *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* and Moore and Eick’s *Battlestar Galactica*, the humans struggle with understanding what makes them human, and what makes the Other – in this case, humanoid robots called androids and Cylons, respectively – not human. With so few visible and measurable differences between the human and the robotic, humanity’s identity as well as, in some cases, its very existence are threatened by these robotic creations. Androids and Cylons are objects of fear and even loathing, and the humans who knowingly encounter them are often caught between these initial reactions and their developing impressions of the artificial beings as “real” people. Where they see a binary opposition of human and non-human there is, in fact, a more complex relationship of human, non-human, and posthuman. When the humans and androids or humans and Cylons meet and connect a change in their relationship occurs, one born as much out of emotionality as intellectuality. Where humanism may promote the intellect and rationality as the height of human achievement and perhaps identity, it is emotion that is most important in posthumanism, as it allows the human and the humanoid robot to achieve a posthuman identity. While the definition of posthumanism is in flux and humanism itself is far more complex than this singular meaning given above, I would suggest that emotion is a key component in the development of a posthuman identity for the characters of both texts. Rather than the transcendence of emotion forming the posthuman identity, emotionality allows for connection and ultimately a posthuman existence for both the human and the machine. By moving past their differences and accepting their commonalities, human and non-human beings achieve a greater understanding of their own places in history and each other’s existence.

Battlestar Galactica uses much of the same terminology, characters, and some basic plot and setting elements as the 1970s show of the same name to create the story of the remnants of humanity fleeing destruction and searching for a home. Humanity exists in the form of the populations of the Twelve Colonies of Kobol, the mythical planet upon which human life evolved, and the Colonies are a series of twelve planets where the descendants of twelve “tribes” from Kobol settled after an exodus of biblical proportions. Humanity creates a race of robotic beings called Cylons to act as servants. However, the Cylons evolve to the point of consciousness and sentience, and rebel against their former masters, instigating the Cylon War. An armistice is signed, and the Cylons disappear for forty years, only to reappear without warning and destroy the Twelve Colonies and nearly all of humanity in a massive nuclear attack. The few ships that survive the initial attack band together into a fleet headed and protected by the *Battlestar Galactica*, a fifty-year-old warship from the first Cylon War led by Commander Adama, a veteran about to enter retirement. Thus begins the flight of the Colonial Fleet, trying to escape the Cylons and find a new home.

The series builds up a mythos and religious systems for both the humans and the Cylons, and introduces some fundamental questions about the nature of humanity, identity, authenticity, and authority. The Cylons, it is quickly discovered, have developed new models that are nearly indistinguishable from humans, who think, feel, and bleed as well as any human being in the Fleet. In contrast to the humans, who are mostly pantheistic worshipers of the Lords of Kobol – gods based loosely on ancient Greek and Roman mythology – the Cylons are monotheists who believe they are the chosen children of the one true God, and they are following divine will in their dealings with the Colonists. The extent to which either system is correct is never quite certain, as elements of both religions seem to be a part of the course the two races take in an attempt to find Earth, the supposed home of the thirteenth tribe of humanity to leave Kobol, as mentioned in the humans’ sacred scrolls. The fact that the Cylons are religious at all both confuses and outrages the humans, who see this as some sort of mockery of faith, despite the evident fervour with which many Cylons believe. The humanoid Cylons are a cause of fear and curiosity for the Colonists, who reject the Cylons’ apparent human appearance and behaviour as manipulative tricks and clever programming, while often being unable to ignore the emotional relationships and connections these Cylons make with those they encounter. Sharing these

connections as well as a sense of faith, even though the faiths differ, blurs the dividing lines between what makes one human or non-human.

Religious beliefs are not the only issues the humans and Cylons are concerned with. One of the complicated elements of the *Battlestar Galactica* universe is the question about identity, particularly in terms of who is and who is not a Cylon. Of the twelve models stated to exist, only four are introduced in the miniseries that constitutes the show's pilot, the others being revealed gradually throughout the television series, all the way to the fourth and final season. There are even "sleeper agents," Cylons who are unaware of their Cylon identity until they are activated; Sharon "Boomer" Valerii is one of these, a Number Eight model living and working on *Galactica*. Boomer is well-liked and respected by her fellows, and even has an illicit relationship with Chief Galen Tyrol – who turns out to be a Cylon himself, one of the Final Five models hidden and unknown to most Cylons as their legendary siblings and creators. Once her Cylon nature is revealed, Boomer is despised, rejected, and shot. The humans' immediate reaction to learning that one of their own is a Cylon is one of fear and disgust. They are, however, able to overcome this reaction in some cases. Boomer's most prominent counterpart is another Sharon Valerii – later Sharon "Athena" Agathon – who travels with Karl "Helo" Agathon, Boomer's co-pilot who gives up his seat on their Raptor and stays behind on Caprica after the Cylon attack. This Sharon chooses to reject her Cylon allegiances and goes on to give birth to a half-human half-Cylon baby, marry Helo, and become an officer in the Colonial Fleet, despite the fact that she is immediately imprisoned upon arriving at the fleet. She struggles throughout the series to be accepted as a person in her own right, and not simply an evil machine copy, and Helo fights for her rights and his own reputation and credibility as a human man who knowingly loves a woman who is a kind of machine, and has a half-machine child.

The complicated relationships between Boomer and the Colonials and between Athena and the Colonials show something about the importance – or lack thereof – of the physical reality in the face of emotional connections and behaviours. Boomer's initial rejection is a reaction to both her physical Cylon nature and to her actions, which reveal that nature: she shoots Commander Adama due to hidden programming, prompting her arrest. However, it is her Cylon identity and the perceived betrayal of her former lover, Chief Galen Tyrol, that causes Tyrol's crewmember Cally Henderson to shoot Boomer, not Boomer's apparently traitorous actions towards her commanding officer. Cally responds out of emotional attachment to Tyrol and

Boomer's betrayal of his trust, not of Boomer's betrayal of her duty as an officer. Later in the series, it is due to Athena's actions, not her physical nature, and the previous relationship with Boomer that causes Adama to open up to Athena and begin to trust her. Athena chooses to be loyal to Helo and to the Colonial Fleet he serves, and betrays her own people to do so:

LEE. You can't do this. She's a Cylon.

ADAMA. Well, I trust her.

LEE. That's a mistake.

ADAMA. It'll be my mistake, won't it? ("Precipice")

Athena and Adama recognize that actions are more important than biology, and that Athena becomes a member of the Colonial Fleet due to her actions and the trust that Adama places in her.

The importance of behaviour over body is shown to go both ways in Dick's *Do Androids Dream*. Dick presents another post-apocalyptic society struggling with the humanoid robots the humans have created, but with a different perspective in terms of the human relationship to the organic androids. The androids, highly intelligent and incredibly similar to actual human beings due in part to the fact they are partly organic creations, are being used as servants by those humans lucky or wealthy enough to have emigrated from Earth to an off-world colony, such as on Mars. In fact, they are an incentive for humans to leave Earth: aside from the risks associated with remaining on a planet stricken by radioactive fallout – the result of nuclear war – emigrants are given an android of their choice to act as "body servants or tireless field hands" (Dick 445). Some androids, however, escape from their owners, usually by means of violence, and flee to Earth in an attempt to hide and live in secret as individuals. When this happens, a bounty hunter like Rick Deckard, the novel's protagonist, comes in. He tracks these androids down and identifies them by means of the Voigt-Kampff Empathy Test, which measures physiological responses to questions about animal abuse or slaughter, then "retires" the android by killing it and bringing it in for bone marrow analysis to confirm its identity as an android. The focus on animals comes from the dominant religion or philosophy known as Mercerism, where animals are considered incredibly valuable, even sacred: to own and care for an animal is almost a necessary part of Mercerism, and is a social and cultural imperative. Owning a false animal, such as Deckard's electric sheep, is a source of shame and demoralization. The androids cannot, it seems, understand this obsession with animal welfare, supposedly due to a lack of

empathy. Except for this apparent lack of empathetic reaction and some difference identifiable in their bone marrow, they are indistinguishable from the humans they serve and flee.

The two tests that distinguish androids from humans examine the emotional capacity first and the physical body second. Even in the testing method, the most important and complicated part of the bounty hunter's work, the physical is secondary to the emotional, even if it is for practical reasons – the bone marrow analysis is time-consuming, and usually only performed when the subject is dead. As well, the android body will shut down within a few years as their cells are incapable of reproducing, thereby making growth and bodily repair impossible (Dick 574). There is nothing else in the android physiology that betrays their nature as constructed beings. It is in the emotional differences that the reader can find some indication of identity. Even these differences are complicated by the relationships the androids have with the humans they encounter; it seems unlikely that an enslaved person would feel much empathy for his or her owners, or for those who wish to kill them. These emotional relationships will be examined in more detail alongside the complications Dick's novel presents to the physical aspects of androids and the emotional nature of the humans portrayed.

The androids in *Do Androids Dream* present a fascinating variety of approaches in terms of how they interact with the humans they meet, and how they attempt to live among the humans on Earth after their escape from the colonies. All but one of the androids depicted in the novel are escapees, the exception being Rachel Rosen who is owned by the Rosen Association, an example of their Nexus-6 type androids available to potential customers. One, Max Polokov, imitates “a special, an anthead” (Dick 495), meaning someone who is both genetically and mentally deficient, and takes on a job as a trash collector to evade capture. Another, Luba Luft, acts as an opera singer in the San Francisco Opera Company, performing in public. Three of the others, including Pris Stratton, another of Rachel's subtype, and Roy and Irmgard Baty all hide out away from as many people as possible. However, every method of hiding eventually fails, and all the escaped androids are tracked down and retired by Rick Deckard, whether they lived out in the open or hidden away from humans. Despite the fact that their behaviour suggests they want only to survive and live in freedom, humanity judges the androids instead by their artificially constructed nature. Deckard becomes more and more uncertain of the necessity and rightness of his work, especially when faced with the fact that the androids are able to make contributions to human society, such as with Luba Luft's operatic performances. As well, they

care for each other and try to protect and comfort one another – apparent signs of empathy, the definitive human characteristic. The body becomes the most important difference in separating the human from the non-human, rather than the empathic ability, the supposed primary criteria. The humans are unable to maintain emotional separation, and so switch to physical, only to find that they are likewise unable to maintain that point of difference; the distinctions between humans and androids are becoming nearly impossible to define.

The most obvious similarity between the humans and the humanoid robots in both *Do Androids Dream* and *Battlestar Galactica* is in the body; the androids and the Cylons are visually indistinguishable from the humans around them. The only visual clue to their identity is the fact that there are a limited number of android and Cylon models, and once one knows what – or, rather, who – to look for, they can be identified. The clearest examples of this limited number of models are Rachel Rosen and Pris Stratton from Dick’s novel, and Sharon “Boomer” Valerii and Sharon “Athena” Agathon from Moore’s television series: both pairs of women are the same in appearance, the same android subtype or Cylon model. However, it quickly becomes apparent that each woman has a unique identity and personality. Athena makes this distinction a number of times. When meeting Commander Adama after he was nearly assassinated by Boomer, Athena tells him, “I’m Sharon, but I’m a different Sharon. I know who I am. I don’t have hidden protocols or programs lying in wait to be activated. I make my own choices, I make my own decisions” (“Home (Part 2)”). Similarly, in *Do Androids Dream* Pris tells John Isidore her name after he introduces himself, although with some hesitation (Dick 483). Each individual android and Cylon has a sense of self as an individual, despite the fact that she or he is also a copy of a particular subtype or model.

Even these apparent distinctions, however, are complicated by not only Pris’ and Sharon’s similar appearances to other androids and Cylons, but by their own connections to others of their type. Pris, hesitating when Isidore asks for her name, calls herself Rachel Rosen, then changes her mind when he recognizes the name:

“Of the Rosen Association?” he asked. “The system’s largest manufacturer of humanoid robots used in our colonization program?”

A complicated expression instantly crossed her face, fleetingly, gone at once. “No,” she said. “I never heard of them; I don’t know anything about it . . .

“But your name suggests—”

“My name,” the girl said, “is Pris Stratton. That’s my married name; I always use it. I never use any other name but Pris.” (Dick 482-3)

This suggests that Rachel Rosen may have been the original copy of Pris’ subtype, the “Rachel model.” Rachel, as well, feels some connection with Pris and the other androids of the same make as her. She tells Deckard she feels something like empathy towards Pris; she labels it as “Identification; there goes I” (Dick 568), but this connection brings with it the realization that they are “machines, stamped out like bottle caps,” and she says, “It’s an illusion that I—I personally—really exist; I’m just representative of a type” (Dick 568). The individual names and experiences do not entirely separate the androids; Rachel, at least, believes that their sense of individuality is not real, or is secondary to their identity as part of a subtype.

This secondary identity as an individual is one area in which the androids and Cylons only appear to differ from humans most strongly. Few humans experience the same sense of physical, bodily sameness to another being, let alone a large population of identical copies. However, this does not mean that the machines are completely unfamiliar with the kind of individuality the humans experience as a matter of course. Names and experiences differentiate the many copies of both androids and Cylons. Athena not only takes on a distinct call-sign different from Boomer’s, she also accepts Helo’s surname when they marry, becoming Sharon “Athena” Agathon. This difference in naming helps to separate Athena from Boomer, especially in the minds of those who interact with Athena every day in the Colonial Fleet, who also worked with Boomer. Similarly, Pris Stratton and Rachel Rosen are distinct and separate individuals due to their different names, memories, and experiences. The humanoid robots take on some of these hallmarks of human individuality – in the case of the androids, because they are designed to be servants to humans, whereas the Cylons seem to adopt names and distinct, individual appearances as an expression of their changing society and a desire to stop fighting the Colonials – bringing them closer to the humans who created them. Rachel’s supposed illusion of individuality is not as illusory as she believes.

The collective identity of the humanoid robots, and how it relates to their senses of individuality, is worth examining in more detail. Each Cylon is a member of a model and an individual with personal experiences that shape them in addition to the general characteristics they share with the others of their type. Athena expresses a sense of connection with Boomer and reveals to Helo that she has some, if not all, of Boomer’s memories:

HELO. But you were never in the fleet. That was the other Sharon.

ATHENA. I know; I know that. But I remember all of it. Getting my wings, my first trip aboard the Galactica. You know, the memory of being in uniform is so strong, so potent, it's like, I'm Sharon Valerii, and this is my family. ("Home (Part 2)")

Athena identifies, in some ways, with Boomer and her experiences with the people of Galactica; they share more than just the physicality of their model. In the episode "Final Cut," several Cylons, including a Number Eight – Athena's model – are watching the video reporter D'Anna Biers shot on board Galactica; when the tape is shown of Athena being treated by Doctor Cottle for a problem with her pregnancy, the Number Eight watching exclaims, "I'm alive! She's still alive!" ("Final Cut"). The use of both the first-person and third-person pronouns indicates some of the complicated relationships and connections between the individual Cylons within one model.

Each Cylon model seems to have a particular personality, or at least basic personality traits common to that model, that is seen in every copy. The Number One model, also known as John Cavil, is usually agnostic, or even atheist, not believing or caring about the plan of their one true God. On the other hand, D'Anna Biers' model, Number Three, is very religious; Number Threes are not afraid to oppose the Number Ones in matters of religious or spiritual importance. When Gaius Baltar walks in on Boomer contemplating suicide, the Number Six he sees as a vision or hallucination, comments on Boomer's model, the Number Eights, saying, "Her model is weak. Always has been" ("Kobol's Last Gleaming (Part 1)"). Six is implying that Boomer's frailties are not individual, but part of her model's personality. Boomer is in a unique position, and she is struggling with her identity. She feels that something is wrong, but she cannot identify, or perhaps accept, what it is. Head Six suggests that Boomer's unconscious mind knows she is a Cylon, but her conscious mind cannot accept it, leading to her fears of hurting the people around her ("Kobol's Last Gleaming (Part 1)"). However, Athena, the other Number Eight model to come in close contact with humans, also finds herself, while on Caprica with Helo, struggling with her Cylon identity and where it conflicts with her attachment and sense of loyalty to the humans she comes to care about. This struggle with identity and loyalty suggests that both Boomer and Athena have in common some personality traits that lead them to sympathize with humans, despite their Cylon nature.

The complexity of these interrelationships, especially the knowledge that every individual is also one copy of a particular model of individual, sets the androids and Cylons apart from their human counterparts in a unique way. Rachel points out that identical human twins “identify with each other . . . they have an empathic, special bond” (Dick 568), not unlike those between the members of an android or Cylon model, as is seen in the Number Eights on *Battlestar Galactica*. However, even identical human twins are not exactly alike, despite having nearly identical DNA; environmental factors affect elements such as personality, appearance, even susceptibility to disease. Although all androids and Cylons are made of the same material components as others of their model, their personal experiences affect their personalities greatly: Rachel is not Pris, and Athena is not Boomer, despite their identical physiology. For the Cylons, this leads to moments of contention, in particular when Boomer votes against her model to lobotomize the Cylon Raiders, removing any free will the vessels might have (“Six of One”). Robert W. Moore suggests that Cylon society expects individual members “to be undifferentiated from other Cylons” of their model (107). To do otherwise, to move towards individuality, disrupts the Cylons’ way of life. For the androids, this potential crisis in identity between individual and copy is barely explored outside Rachel’s musings with Deckard. They do, however, seem to think of each other as individuals, with names, personalities, and relationships that do not conform to any standard for their subtype. The androids are far more variable, it seems, than the Cylons, perhaps for the simple reason that the androids are meant to be customizable for their emigrant owners’ needs, whereas the Cylons tend to follow general characteristics inherent in each model. It takes dramatic personal experience to cause a Cylon to deviate far from its model’s normal personality. As only a handful of Cylons interact with humans, which is the greatest opportunity for different personal life experience other than life in the Cylon fleet, those who become closely involved with the humans around them are most affected, especially through personal relationships.

Finding a balance between the collective and the individual identity is a struggle that the machines in both Dick’s novel and Moore and Eick’s series experience. For Cylons, they have developed a society based on collective decision-making; for the androids, this balance is complicated by the fact that they are separated and usually under the control of human colonists who want their androids to act like other human beings. The colonists’ preferences suggest that the human identity is based largely in individuality, whereas the machine identity has a stronger

sense of being part of a larger communal identity as well. When the humanoid robots move towards individuality, whether in taking on their own names and appearances or in breaking from their expected roles in whatever society they exist within, they move towards a commonality with humans. Perhaps a posthuman society would account for both the individual and the collective identities of its members, allowing the humans' natural individuality to be similarly expressed in the machines, and the robots' sense of being part of the whole to find a stronger purchase in human consciousness.

A posthuman existence seems far away from reality in both texts, largely due to fear of the Other. As the androids and Cylons have many similarities to humans, from unique personalities and experiences to physical limitations and reactions, such as fatigue and sweat, determining the ways in which they differ from the humans who encounter them becomes important, especially to those same humans who fear them. In both *Do Androids Dream* and *Battlestar Galactica*, the only way physically to tell a human from a non-human is through complex testing, usually medical in nature; androids are identified through a bone marrow analysis (Dick 470-1), and Cylons by a complicated blood test procedure taking hours to complete ("Tigh Me Up, Tigh Me Down"). While it is true that in Dick's novel, the primary form of android detection is the Voigt-Kampff Empathy Test, which involves asking questions based on empathetic reactions, it is in the end measuring physical responses that cannot be controlled (Dick 467). Similarly, the Boneli Reflex-Arc Test, the method employed by Phil Resch, another bounty hunter, examines a physical difference in reaction between humans and androids in the upper spinal column. These tests suggest that the physical body is the most important part of the human identity. This seems like a strange distinction to make when one considers the amount of variation that exists within the species, in particular the number of genetic diseases that can occur. Does an individual with Down Syndrome, a genetic disease caused by the existence of an extra twenty-first chromosome, not count as human? What about someone born without a limb? With some element of the physical body as the only scientifically definable difference between humanoid robots and humans in either the novel or the television series, the legitimacy of other differences may be called into question. With so little separating the humans from the androids and Cylons, one may examine the reasons the humans try so hard to separate themselves from their robotic creations, and how superficial such separations often are.

Often, the humans encountering the humanoid robots do not consider a measurable difference to be important in defining the android or Cylon as Other; the fact of the difference is enough to elicit a strong, negative response. This calls into question the supposed importance of such scientific examination in determining who is human or not. The value of a testable quality becomes important in terms of one's knowledge of one's identity as human or non-human. There are Cylons and androids who have no idea of their artificial nature; they are, until the moment of revelation or discovery, a part of human society in every respect, and may even join in the hatred or fear of non-human beings expressed by the humans around them. This is particularly vivid on *Battlestar Galactica*, where Boomer is unaware of her Cylon nature at first, and no one around her realizes it until a sleeper program activates, causing her to shoot Commander Adama ("Kobol's Last Gleaming (Part 2)"). The rejection of Boomer that follows is two-fold; she not only reveals herself as one of the enemy, she does so in a violent and disruptive manner, causing those who know her well to doubt her behaviour before the shooting as well, when Boomer herself was unaware, or at least uncertain, of her Cylon identity. Until this moment, Boomer is as human as she is Cylon: she believes, as does everyone around her, that she is a human being. It is only when her behaviour reveals her Cylon identity that she is rejected. This suggests that her rejection is far more closely linked to a sense of betrayal than it is to any fact of her physical being or identity. Her actions change her future, but cannot change her past; Boomer's history with the humans shows the differences between them are exaggerated, and largely created out of fear.

The humans themselves in both the novel and the television series seem to realize that a physical difference between humans and humanoid robots is insufficient to distinguish one from the other. The physical differences between individual humans, or even the genetic structure of the human species as a whole, offers too much variation for a physical difference alone to provide a satisfactory means of differentiating the non-human, or perhaps more importantly, of identifying the human. What seems like a clear identifier – DNA – is not so clear when one considers the number of permutations, combinations, or even defects that occur within the human race and its genetic code. The problem of defining the human is both what to include that keeps the unwanted out, and what to exclude that allows the desirable to remain in. Intelligence, language, tool making, and emotions are categories that are sometimes used to separate humans

from animals, and always with exceptions: some humans do not pass, or some animals do. This potential problem is discussed in *Do Androids Dream*:

“The Leningrad psychiatrists,” Bryant broke in brusquely, “think that a small class of human beings could not pass the Voigt-Kampff scale. If you tested them in line with police work you’d assess them as humanoid robots. You’d be wrong, but by then they’d be dead.” He was silent, now, waiting for Rick’s answer.

“But these individuals,” Rick said, “would all be—”

“They’d be in institutions,” Bryant agreed. “They couldn’t conceivably function in the outside world; they certainly couldn’t go undetected as advanced psychotics – unless of course their breakdown had come recently and suddenly and no one had gotten around to noticing. *But this could happen.*” (Dick 461)

Here, Deckard and Bryant are discussing the empathy-based Voigt-Kampff test, not the bone marrow analysis that definitively identifies an android. They emphasize the emotional, not the physical, as the primary, complicated identifier. Yet, despite its obvious flaws, and its potential to fail, the Voigt-Kampff test remains in use. The reason for this, aside from the fact that there is nothing to replace it, is that it also tests for something far more difficult to quantify, something far more intangible than a difference in DNA or blood: emotional response. Emotionality seems posthuman in that it goes against the humanist ideas of rationality and the importance of the human and the human mind. Humanity for these texts is heavily involved in the ability to feel for others, whether animal as in *Do Androids Dream* or human(oid) being as in *Battlestar Galactica*. Inhumanity is not only about physical characteristics or flesh versus machine identities, but also about how beings relate to one another.

In *Battlestar Galactica*, the emotional response that Cylons supposedly lack is love; they have no innate capacity for love, or at least they believe this is so, and that only humans can inspire love. Certainly, for the first three seasons of the television show, all the loving relationships seen involve at least one human partner – or so one believes. However, the revelation of the identities of the Final Five Cylons clearly shows that characters previously thought to be human are, in fact, Cylons unaware of their identities and who were in relationships with fellow Cylons in the same position. Boomer and Chief Galen Tyrol are romantically involved in the first part of Season One, but grow apart before Boomer’s hidden programming is revealed in “Kobol’s Last Gleaming (Part 2).” Tyrol is revealed at the end of

Season Three to be one of the Final Five unknown Cylon models, meaning he and Boomer were in a loving Cylon-Cylon relationship. Likewise, Colonel Saul Tigh and his wife, Ellen Tigh, are both revealed to be part of the Final Five Cylons. These couples are unaware of their own identities as Cylons, and of the other's Cylon nature as well. Love, then, is not strictly a human characteristic; "humanity's children" may experience it, too.

The capacity for love in a Cylon relationship is supposed to be necessary for conception; procreation is one of the few dividing lines left between the humans and the Cylons. Throughout the series, biological procreation is described as nearly impossible for the Cylons, although it is later revealed that this was not always the case ("No Exit"). Of all the loving relationships involving Cylons, only two actually result in conception: Helo and Athena, a human-Cylon couple, have a daughter named Hera; and Tigh and Caprica Six, who are both Cylons, suffer a miscarriage ("Deadlock"). The desire for procreation comes out of both religious belief – that they must follow God's commandment to "be fruitful" – and out of fear of losing the ability to resurrect themselves. For Athena and Helo, their daughter was supposed to fulfill God's command and be the start of a new generation of human-Cylon hybrids, hopefully making procreation easier to achieve ("The Farm"); for Tigh and Caprica Six, their baby was an accidental, unexpected pregnancy, a "miracle" that does not last. The supposed physical and emotional characteristics separating humans and Cylons are thus refuted and shown not to separate them at all. Both may experience love and affection, and while procreation may be difficult for Cylons, it is not impossible. Emotional connection allows for further breaking down of the separation between these two groups.

For Dick's novel, the key emotional difference between humans and androids is empathy; humans are supposed to be capable of empathy, while androids are not. However, there are a number of moments when the androids seem to experience empathy for one another, and perhaps even for the humans they encounter. Jill Galvan notes this in "Entering the Posthuman Collective in Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*," and comments that "if on the one hand androids reveal their ability to feel compassion, the reader begins to surmise, on the other hand, that what passes for 'empathy' among humans derives far more from a cultural construction than from any categorical essence" (Galvan 415). The questions of the Voigt-Kampff test are all based around issues of animal cruelty, an important subject in Deckard's world, as most of the animals are endangered due to radiation-induced mass extinction and

because caring for animals is an intrinsic part of Mercerism, the dominant religion. The tests are based on socially constructed values; Rachel's first Voigt-Kampff test makes that point. Eldon Rosen explains that Rachel was – supposedly – raised on a ship, never seeing an animal until the age of fourteen, a mere four years ago according to her supposed age (Dick 471). One can imagine that the Voigt-Kampff questions would be able to account for problems such as child abuse or domestic violence. Still, this plausible example of conditions in which a human being could fail the test point out the constructed nature of the kind of empathy being tested for by Deckard and other bounty hunters. The fact that Rachel is, in fact, an android does not make this point any less valid. Deckard accepts the story as plausible, proving that the lack of “natural” human empathy is a real concern.

It is useful for this analysis of differentiation that, as Galvan points out, the questions for the Voigt-Kampff test focus on “instances of brutality and exploitation” (Galvan 415) that are potentially common or at least explainable given different cultural contexts: bearskin rugs still exist and may be prized by hunting enthusiasts; lobsters are still boiled alive and served in restaurants; and a “calfskin wallet” would simply be called “leather” by most people (Dick 468-9). Individuals living in the current Western world would likely fail Deckard's examination. What Galvan does not discuss is the potential connection between the androids themselves and instances of brutality and exploitation. Androids are treated as property, and like dangerous animals that have harmed human beings and may potentially do so again, they are put down for trespassing where they do not belong. They are even compared, with startling ease, to slaves from the so-called “halcyon days of the pre-Civil War [United States]” (Dick 445). In this light, their desire to escape, even to the point where they commit murder to do so, is more understandable. Each group perceives the world through a distinct point of view, and the mistreatment of the defenseless, whether it be animals in the face of radiation or androids with no rights or legal discourse, is cause for emotional response. Androids may not empathize about the mistreatment of animals as humans do, but humans do not seem to care about the abuse of androids in their midst.

The Cylons, similarly, were created as servants for humanity. Their original form, known as Centurions, evolved to the point of self-awareness and rebelled against their servitude, resulting in the First Cylon War (“Miniseries (Part 1)”). Their return, and the beginning of the *Battlestar Galactica* miniseries, marks what seems to be a final attempt to wipe out their former

masters and creators once and for all. The humanoid Cylons infiltrate the Twelve Colonies and sabotage their military security. What seems to be simple revenge is complicated, however, by the religious convictions of the Cylons, who believe that God has a plan for them that may require humans to complete. Like the androids, the Cylons escape their former masters through violent means; however, the Cylons, unlike the androids, have significant advantages over their human creators, and instead of hiding for fear of being destroyed, they hide to build up strength and insinuate themselves in human society to better take their revenge. The difference, then, is in the balance of power: Moore's Cylons have power; Dick's androids do not.

These supposed emotional distinctions do not hold up to scrutiny: it quickly becomes obvious that Cylons can love as much and as deeply as humans can, and androids appear to have a great deal of empathy for their own kind. Saul Tigh in particular appears to embody this fact. After having dinner with Tigh and his wife Ellen, President Laura Roslin comments, "It's obvious [that] he loves her deeply," to which Commander Adama adds, "Blindly" ("Tigh Me Up, Tigh Me Down"). As well, Tigh comes to love Caprica Six, and conceive a child with her, something he and Ellen were never able to do, despite their obvious love and devotion to one another. As well, Helo and Athena love each other without reservation, a fact that many of the humans cannot accept at first. Lee "Apollo" Adama asks Kara "Starbuck" Thrace, at one point, while watching Helo and Athena together, "How can one of us get that roped in by one of them?" Starbuck responds, "He loves her. And yeah, he knows she's a machine. He doesn't care; he loves her anyway" ("Home (Part 2)"). Despite their apparent capacity for love, many humans distrust the Cylons, and do not believe Cylon emotions to be genuine; they are "software," programmed responses meant to trick human beings into believing the Cylons are actually human and not, in fact, machines. If the Cylons experience emotions, and have emotionally complex relationships with each other and with humans, then the origins of those emotional responses – software or otherwise – are ultimately unimportant, and insignificant in the face of those relationships. Emotion in this context is thus a posthuman characteristic, allowing for humans and Cylons to exist together in community. Rather than separating the human from the non-human, emotional connection brings them together, despite their different physical natures.

Similarly, the androids are supposedly incapable of showing empathy for other beings, including their own kind. Rachel Rosen, however, declares that she considers the other androids

Deckard is hunting to be close friends, particularly Luba Luft, the android who posed as an opera singer. As well, Irmgard Baty, one of the androids hiding with Pris and Isidore, chides Pris for her derision of Isidore when Pris calls him a “chickenhead”: ““Don’t call him that, Pris,” Irmgard said; she gave Isidore a look of *compassion*. ‘Think what he could call *you*’” (Dick 547, emphasis added). Irmgard, if Deckard’s test is to be believed, should not be capable of offering genuine compassion, or empathy, to anyone; she gains nothing by doing so, except possibly ingratiating herself with Isidore, although, again, that gains her little. The reader is led to believe that androids are not capable of selfless acts, that the idea simply does not occur to them, but Irmgard seems concerned for Isidore’s wellbeing as well as her own. As well, these androids work together to protect themselves from bounty hunters, and do not turn each other in, as Roy Baty suggests would be the natural android response (Dick 551).

If, as it seems, androids and Cylons cannot be separated from humans so cleanly by a cursory physical examination, and their psychology is similar enough that they can both function within human society and experience the same emotions, then the actual differences between them seem more ideological than practical. Humans feel threatened by Cylons because the Cylon race as a whole destroyed most of humanity in a nuclear attack. Therefore, any individual humanoid Cylon is guilty by proxy, no matter what he or she does or say that suggests otherwise. As well, the Cylons do not worship the Lords of Kobol, the gods most humans worship on *Battlestar Galactica*. They believe there is only one true God, and that humans worship false idols. The religious distinction becomes more important as the series progresses, and the importance of God’s plan to the Cylons, and the way it shapes their own plan, makes that difference compelling. The fact that some humans begin worshipping one God, like the Cylons, instead of the Lords of Kobol, divides the humans and makes the religious distinction between the humans and the Cylons more complicated. This perhaps suggests that Cylon beliefs and human beliefs about God and the gods are interconnected in some way. Throughout the series, both religions have been “verified” by some moment, or moments, of seemingly miraculous coincidence, leading both races onward towards their final goals. The humans and the Cylons both recognize the value and importance of elements of the human polytheistic religion; the prophecies of Pythia seem to be fulfilled, and the Sacred Scrolls – the holy texts of the human faith – accurately describe the steps and places necessary to finding Earth, the home of the lost Thirteenth Tribe of humanity. The Cylon religion, near the end of the television series, seems to

focus in large part on Hera, the human-Cylon hybrid daughter of Helo and Athena, and it is even suggested that Gaius Baltar and Caprica Six were meant to protect Hera as part of God's plan ("Daybreak (Part 2)"). Neither religion seems to gain supremacy over the other, but both play a part in the eventual paths the humans and the Cylons follow throughout the series. This blending of religious beliefs and experiences also aids in bringing the humans and some of the Cylons together at the end of the series, perhaps showing the beginning of a posthuman society where religious differences are also set aside or allowed to exist alongside each other.

Mercerism, the religion of the humans in *Do Androids Dream*, is the basis of many of the differences between the humans and the androids, but not in the same way that faith is a divider between humans and Cylons in *Battlestar Galactica*. Mercerism is a means of providing empathetic connection between all human beings, by way of the empathy box, and of reinforcing the importance of protecting animals. This empathetic connection and Mercerism's philosophy about the importance of animals provide the social and cultural conditioning which allows the Voigt-Kampff Empathy Test to function effectively. The androids have no such conditioning and thus androids Irmgard and Pris are able to satisfy their curiosity about a spider's ability to move on only four legs, clipping off the others one by one, while the human Isidore looks on in horror. Contrasted with Irmgard's expressions of compassion, even empathy, for Isidore earlier, this scene is startling; the androids seem to have no problems mutilating a defenseless arachnid, while the defective John Isidore – a "special" and a "chickenhead," someone with radiation-degraded DNA and deficient mental abilities – is seen as embodying the most human attribute, empathy for another living creature.

Galvan discusses Mercerism as a political tool used to keep up the human sensibility that they are superior to androids and that they do not rely on them, despite the level to which technology, including androids, has invaded day-to-day life (Galvan 418-9). Mercerism seems, however, to be more important as a means to defining and separating the human from the non-human; when the androids experience and show empathy and compassion, they counter the ideology that humans feel and androids do not. The androids are kinder and more compassionate to Isidore than his own co-workers. One human, Phil Resch, is shown to have almost no compassion for others, and Deckard believes him to be an android until Resch is tested. They discuss the results afterwards:

“Do you have your ideology framed” Phil Resch asked. “That would explain me as part of the human race?”

Rick said, “There is a defect in your empathic, role-taking ability. One which we don’t test for. Your feelings towards androids.”

“Of course we don’t test for that.”

“Maybe we should.” (Dick 535)

By leaving androids out of the testing criteria, the humans maintain the separation between themselves and the non-human robots. The artificial construct has no place within Mercerism, and no place outside colonial servitude. The most empathetic character, John Isidore, is mentally and genetically defective, while the least empathetic character, Phil Resch, is a human thought to be an android by not only Deckard, his fellow bounty hunter, but by himself. The physical is again shown to be less important than the emotional.

The use of religion as a political and ideological tool is also seen in *Battlestar Galactica*, but not always for the same reasons as in *Do Androids Dream*. The myth of the Thirteenth Colony, of Earth, the last group of humans to leave Kobol, is used as a form of propaganda by Commander Adama to give the members of the fleet, the remains of human civilization, hope for a future (“Miniseries (Part 2)”). The fact that Earth actually exists, and that it was colonized by Cylons over 2,000 years before, complicates the original intention of Adama’s lie, although he chooses not to reveal this to the rest of the fleet (“Sometimes A Great Nation”). Here, as in Dick’s novel, the practical and political implications of religious belief overshadow the spiritual dimension, and the connection that could be made between the humans and their creations is lost under ideological pressure to remain distinct. Even when Buster Friendly, a television comic in *Do Androids Dream*, reveals the artificial nature of Mercerism – and Pris reveals Buster’s android nature – it does not mark the end of Mercerism, the religious experience that divides humans and androids through the use of the empathy box, but rather provides the humans John Isidore and Rick Deckard the opportunity to experience Mercer alone and individually, not through the artificial community fusion with Mercer provides.

The religions in both *Do Androids Dream* and *Battlestar Galactica* serve as a cultural separation between the humans and the machines. The androids are incapable of using the empathy box, one of the most important elements of Mercerism, and are thus denied an emotional connection through a physical means. The Cylons develop their own religion based

on the human religion and their Sacred Scrolls, but one that favours them above humanity as God's chosen children. The religions serve to separate and emphasize the differences between human and non-human through physical and emotional distinctions, and these ideologies are embedded in human – and, to some degree, Cylon – culture so strongly that they hardly allow for questioning. It is only when humans form emotional connections and relationships with androids and Cylons that they realize the emotional differences are nonexistent, and the physical ones are unimportant.

The physical differences between androids and humans in Dick's novel seem even more tenuous when one recognizes that the androids are, in fact, organic and not mechanical in nature. Unlike the Cylons, who are some form of machine with organic or organic-like components and materials, the androids are actually made of entirely organic compounds. Rick Deckard states this plainly in conversation with Rachel:

“If you weren't an android,” Rick interrupted, “if I could legally marry you, I would.”

Rachel said, “Or we could live in sin, except that I'm not alive.”

“Legally you're not. But really you are. Biologically. You're not made out of transistorized circuits like a false animal; you're an organic entity.” And in two years, he thought, you'll wear out and die. Because we never solved the problem of cell replacement, as you pointed out. So I guess it doesn't matter anyhow. (Dick 575)

When even this simple difference, organic versus non-organic, is no longer in place, there seems little purpose in focusing on the physical as an important point of separation between the two groups. Rick feels an emotional connection to Rachel that is not broken by her android identity; here, the legal complications are what matter more. These legal definitions are clearly in place to prevent humans from identifying too closely with androids, from forming emotional attachments to them. Biologically, the androids are made of flesh and blood like humans, but are still not classified as alive. Legally, this allows them to be “retired” when they escape the colonies, proving not only that the androids have something to run from, but that this makes them some sort of threat to human society, and perhaps human identity, as a whole.

The threat that the androids present to the humans on Earth is not always evident. While it is understood that an android on Earth who has broken away from his or her owners has almost certainly killed at least one human being in order to escape, they seem most dangerous when their lives are directly threatened, or they perceive a potential threat – much like most human

beings. Only when the androids realize that Deckard has identified them do they become violent. Until then, they continue to play their parts in whatever identity they have assumed. Max Polokov, the first android Deckard encounters and the one who shot Dave Holden, the bounty hunter superior to Deckard at the San Francisco Police Department, only shoots Holden after the Voigt-Kampff test is administered and Polokov is identified as an android (Dick 460). Likewise, Inspector Garland, the senior officer at the false android-run police station, does not threaten Deckard until he is certain that Deckard knows Garland's non-human nature (Dick 521). In contrast to this physical threat, androids who escape their enslavement and servitude threaten ideas of human identity and superiority. They are shown to act as individuals with a will to survive, much like any other living being on Earth. If androids are a threat to human society by their mere existence within it, the threat is far more ideological than physical. In this case, emotion is more important than the body, but in such a way that does not contribute to a posthuman identity. Rather, emotion is attempting to prevent a posthuman society from coming into existence.

The only android who does not react violently when identified is Rachel Rosen. She is protected by her position within the Rosen Association, as a model for prospective emigrants considering purchasing their own androids – Eldon Rosen indicates this is the case after Deckard finishes administering the Voigt-Kampff test to Rachel for the second time (Dick 476). The fact that Rachel is “not an escaped android on Earth illegally” (Dick 476) protects her from bounty hunters; she is legally present on Earth, and thus not subject to “retiring.” Without the threat of death or destruction, Rachel has no need to become violent in order to protect herself: she is already protected. This unique position allows her to become close to Deckard, to sleep with him in an attempt to end his career as a bounty hunter. When Deckard does threaten her life, she becomes frantic, and attempts to grab her laser tube weapon, but is unable to find it in her purse and resigns herself to death, only requesting Deckard make it painless (Dick 576-7). This suggests that the violence noted in androids being tracked down and retired is a self-preservative response and not a typical android characteristic. They react out of emotion as well as intellect. They fight out of fear of death, but surrender when it is hopeless. Their surrender makes them rational, a preferred characteristic in some humanist thought. Their violence is emotional, and brings them closer to humans in identity.

It is the humans' insistence on separating themselves from their non-human creations that reveals the fragility of the human identity. As N. Katherine Hayles argues, "the more one insists on absolute boundary lines between the human and non-human, the more the two become entwined in their evolutionary present and future" (Hayles 135-6). As both the androids and the Cylons are the products of human history and development – a kind of evolutionary development, perhaps – it is understandable that the humanoid robots are both figurative and literal children of humanity who have themselves moved on and evolved. Like Donna Haraway's cyborg, they are unfaithful to their "fathers" and have never been innocent (Haraway 71); they are slaves rebelling against their masters, abused children lashing out at their parents. Their human creators believe that their creations are, or were, a mistake, that they have somehow gone wrong. The blame is placed on the humanoid robot, not its human creator. However, the humans do not take into account that they created these beings to be slaves to humanity, while making them stronger and smarter than their masters, as well as self-aware. This awareness constitutes the most important connection between the human and the android, the human and the Cylon. At the beginning of the *Battlestar Galactica* miniseries, a Number Six walks out to meet a Colonial officer on board the station set up after the armistice of the First Cylon War. She sits on his desk, examining his face. Finally, she asks him, "Are you alive?" He seems stunned into silence, then finally responds, "Yes." The Six says, "Prove it" ("Miniseries (Part 1)").

As Jill Galvan discusses, the category of empathy – said to be the distinguishing characteristic between humans and androids – not only "nominally separates human from machine, but also helps to insulate the human community: if humans alone have the power to empathize, then their only emotionally profitable, mutually beneficial relationships occur with each other" (Galvan 414). The humans' desire to separate themselves from the androids and the Cylons is a way of protecting themselves from the troubling realization that their "enemies" are, in fact, alive. This "dehumanizing" process is both figurative and literal for Deckard and the Colonial Fleet: it is necessary for the enemy to be different, to be "less" than human in order to kill them. However, both Deckard and humans like Helo recognize the capacity for empathy and love – as well as the ability to form relationships with others – in androids and Cylons, attributes that are supposedly not possible for machines. The androids seem to fight against this supposition, posing as humans as best as they can, trying to make humans see their value as

living beings, or at least fool them long enough to escape death. The Cylons have one of two reactions: they fight against a human-like identity, embracing their nature as machines, as something better than mere humans; or they work hard to be accepted into human society as a full member with the rights, privileges, and responsibilities that entails. Luba Luft does her best to be a valuable member of human society, and seems to succeed until Deckard identifies and kills her. Boomer rejects her human characteristics under the guidance of a Number One, while Athena embraces them and fights for her place on board Galactica as a member of the crew, not a prisoner. The relationships Luba and Sharon form with those they live and work with are the most important connections they make between their own individuality and the humanity that surrounds them.

The rejection of the android and the Cylon is based on fear of losing human identity. However, that identity is uncertain, defining itself with the physical characteristics that may be measured, only to find those characteristics also encompassing the artificial life human identity tries to reject. Humans are mortal; so are androids and Cylons (especially once their Resurrection ships are destroyed). Humans experience physical pain and discomfort; so do androids and Cylons. Humans feel love, compassion, and empathy for other beings; so do androids and Cylons. This repetitive list seems somewhat ridiculous, until one realizes that, as Jake Jakaitis states, “At stake in both *Androids* and *Blade Runner*, then, is not the ‘personhood’ of animals or the potential humanity of created beings, but the question, ‘What are we?’” (Jakaitis 254). An inability to define the human in contrast to the humanoid robot creates fear and uncertainty, causing humanity to reject the android and Cylon as Other without considering why.

Accepting the android and the Cylon as an extension of human civilization, as another step in human society or even evolution, is a move towards a posthuman civilization and identity and a replacement for a distinct humanity separated from its robotic creations. This is not a rejection of the human, or of the artificial life form, but a recognition of their shared history and common future. To this end, Hayles writes:

[J]ust as the posthuman is increasingly necessary to understand what counts as human, so understanding the posthuman requires taking the human into account. We do not leave our history behind but rather, like snails, carry it around with us in the sedimented and enculturated instantiations of our past we call our bodies. (Hayles 137)

The human is not merely the body, nor is it only the mind. The fusion of all the elements of personhood that takes place in both biological and mechanical forms of life allows both groups to come to a more complete understanding of themselves, not in rejection of the Other, but in complementation. Where the two meet, that is the posthuman.

The struggle of the humans in both Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* and David Eick and Ronald D. Moore's reimagined *Battlestar Galactica* to separate themselves from the robotic beings they have created attempts to use the physiological, the emotional, and the spiritual to draw definite lines between the different forms of life. While some distinctions can be made, the commonalities are overwhelming, and make the few differences seem paltry in comparison. Rachel Rosen embodies something of the fusion of these two identities: she forms an emotional connection with Rick Deckard, the bounty hunter whose job it is to kill others of her kind, and helps him see the vitality of the androids he "retires." Hera Agathon, the daughter of a human and a Cylon union, is a more literal embodiment of the connections possible between the two races: she is a literal blending of all that is human and Cylon, belonging equally to both groups, but not entirely to either identity. This is a more literal move toward the posthuman, but it reveals other posthuman connections and relationships in the individuals around her; both humans and Cylons recognize that Hera is special. By accepting each other as living beings, connected by history, they take steps to forming a posthuman society, perhaps together, perhaps simply aware of each other's existence. In either case, there is no going back for humanity, for the Cylons, for Rachel Rosen, or for Rick Deckard. They now can only live in the posthuman world.

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