Ethics and Information Technology (2026) 28:1
https://doi.org/10.1007/s10676-025-09878-7

ORIGINAL PAPER

Contextual negation by moral opposition: rethinking the ethics of (Rape) simulations

Mathilda Marie Mulert[1]

Abstract
This paper draws a moral comparison between technologically facilitated rape simulations and rape simulations between humans. Specifically, it investigates a previously unexplored ethical puzzle: while many regard the use of 'rapebots'—sex robots designed specifically for rape simulations—as morally impermissible, the practice of consensual non-consent (CNC), i.e. consensual rape role-play between human partners, appears less troubling. Yet, both are instances of rape simulations where all individuals capable of granting or withholding consent *do* consent. Are rapebot use and CNC, therefore, morally equivalent? I argue that they are not. Although rapebot use and CNC share similar content, they differ structurally: the former involves a solitary individual enacting fantasies unilaterally, while the latter occurs within a relational framework, foregrounding consent, negotiation, and respect. To explain why this structural difference matters morally, I introduce the mechanism of *contextual negation by moral opposition*. This mechanism posits that simulations of wrongdoing can be morally mitigated when their context explicitly affirms the values the simulated act would violate. While this can apply to CNC, it necessarily fails for rapebot use. Therefore, although some cases of CNC are morally permissible, the use of rapebots is always impermissible. This argument has broader implications for the ethics of technologically facilitated simulations.

Keywords Sex robots · Rape simulations · Ethics of simulation · Consent · Consensual non-consent (CNC) · BDSM

Introduction

The ethics of technologically facilitated simulations are murky. This is, in part, because our moral intuitions often falter in the face of complex virtual scenarios. Is it, for instance, wrong for a video gamer playing the role of God to throw digital heretics into a volcano?[1] Even when simulations mirror real-world harms, it is unclear how—and whether—real-life ethical commitments should apply. Are all actions morally permissible in simulations, or do certain boundaries exist? For example, a lively debate has emerged around Morgan Luck's (2009) 'Gamer's Dilemma', which questions why virtual murder appears morally permissible, while virtual child abuse does not (e.g., Patridge, 2011; Tillson, 2018). Faced with this obscure ethical terrain, one productive approach is to examine a case where our intuitions *do* seem clear. For example, many find the use of sex robots designed specifically for rape simulations—I call these 'rapebots'—intuitively morally troubling.[2] In this paper, I use the case of rapebots to investigate what makes certain simulations morally objectionable and, thereby, gain broader insights into the ethics of simulatory technologies.

Although advances in artificial intelligence (AI) have recently drawn increased attention to technological simulations (Young, 2025), simulations also frequently occur between humans. For instance, role-play involving domination, pain, or even rape—often called 'consensual non-consent' (CNC)—is common in BDSM practices (Dunkley & Brotto, 2020). In a recent controversy, game developers invoked precisely this analogy to defend technologically facilitated rape simulations. In March 2025, the video game *No Mercy* was released on the global gaming platform Steam (Hoddinott, 2025). The game, a self-proclaimed incest and

[1] See the game *Deisim.*

[2] This is evidenced by the public outcry following the release of one such robot (see e.g., Timmins, 2017; Bates, 2017; Norris, 2017).

✉ Mathilda Marie Mulert
mathilda.mulert@oii.ox.ac.uk

[1] Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK

Published online: 25 November 2025

rape simulator, centers on a male protagonist who aims to "become every woman's worst nightmare" and "never take[s] no for an answer" (Luck, 2025). Following widespread public outrage and bans in Australia, Canada and the UK, the developers defended the game in an open letter, by comparing it to CNC: "If someone plays [non-consensual sex scenarios] with their partner at home, should we label them as sick and call them rapists, check their computer and lock them in prison?" (Zerat Games, 2025).

This defence draws on an interesting moral puzzle: while technologically facilitated rape simulations seem impermissible to many, rape simulations between consenting humans appear less troubling. Yet, to date, no serious moral comparison between these two cases has been drawn in the philosophical literature. Is the intuitive moral divergence justified? If the normative concern with rapebots (and rape video games)[3] lies in the simulation of rape, why is CNC not equally troubling? One might argue that the simulated rape victim *consents* in human-human but not in human-machine scenarios. However, this justification is flawed. Since rapebots are inanimate objects, they cannot consent or withhold consent (Frank & Nyholm, 2017). Thus, in both cases, all individuals with the capacity to consent *do* consent. Should we, therefore, treat these simulations as morally equivalent?

I argue that we should not. CNC can, indeed, be morally permissible while rapebot use is always impermissible. To arrive at this conclusion, I begin by clarifying the term 'rapebot' and arguing that their use constitutes a *pro tanto* wrong in section II. Then, I demonstrate that—despite similar content—CNC and rapebot use are *structurally* different in section III. While CNC is grounded in a relational framework of consent, negotiation, and respect, rapebot use involves only one user enacting their fantasies. To explain why this structural difference matters morally, I introduce a mechanism I call *contextual negation by moral opposition* in section IV. In short, this mechanism posits that simulations of wrongdoing can be morally redeemed when their context foregrounds the very values the simulated act violates. This mechanism applies to (some instances of) CNC. However, as I argue in section V, it necessarily fails for rapebots. Here, I also discuss broader implications for the ethics of (technologically facilitated) simulations: what matters normatively is not just the *content* of a simulation, but its *structure*. Because human-machine simulations involve only one individual (the human), they lack the relational structure that may redeem their human-human counterparts. Therefore—somewhat counterintuitively—simulations of wrongdoing may be *more* morally problematic when performed on machines, than humans. Finally, I conclude in section VI.

What's wrong with rapebots?

While films like *Ex Machina*, *Subservience*, and *2050* have long imagined sexual encounters with humanoid machines, this future is now edging closer to reality. In 2024, Berlin opened 'Cybrothel,' its first brothel offering clients verbal and physical interaction with AI-enabled sex robots (Smith, 2024). Similar venues had already appeared across North America and Japan (Lamoureux, 2018). Many sex robots come with pre-programmed personalities—such as 'Wild Wendy' or 'S&M Susan' (Timmins, 2017) and can simulate emotions, respond to touch, or move parts of their bodies. Some companies even allow users to combine personality traits to design their ideal robotic partner (Lamoureux, 2018). Beyond physical realism, the appeal lies in the perceived safety and control of the encounter. As the founder of Cybrothel puts it, customers prefer sex with robots "because the machine […] doesn't judge" (Smith, 2024).

Technologically, sex robots (sexbots) are enhanced sex dolls: life-sized, anatomically shaped figures, fitted with animatronic movement, speech capabilities, or AI interfaces that make sexual encounters more interactive (Hanson & Locatelli, 2022). In this paper, I assume that sexbots are neither conscious, nor moral patients in any other way. This assumption matters normatively. If sexbots were conscious or moral patients, then sexual (and especially non-consensual) encounters with them would no longer be *simulatory* and could constitute direct harm. On the assumption that they are not, I treat sexbot use as a form of simulation and set aside concerns around harm to the robots themselves.

A controversial subset of sex robots are those specifically designed for rape simulations. I call these 'rapebots.' To analyse these simulations normatively, I begin by clarifying the term 'rapebot' and distinguishing them from sexbots in this section. Drawing on hypothetical examples and public reactions, I argue that, for many, the use of rapebots elicits intuitive moral discomfort. Since this perceived wrongness seems intrinsic to the simulation, I suggest it is best explained by Tillson's (2018) view that simulating wrongdoing is a pro tanto wrong because it disrespects the real people implicated in the simulation.

Some complexities arise in distinguishing sex robots from rapebots. For example, Danaher (2017, p. 74) notes that, under the definition of rape as non-consensual sex, "any act of robotic sex would seem to be trivially non-consensual: if the robot is not a moral agent, then it is not capable of granting consent". However, this reasoning is based on an

[3] This paper focuses on rapebots rather than video games as the analogy to role-play seems strongest here. However, Zerat Games' appeal to this analogy in defending *No Mercy* shows how relevant this puzzle is. Since my arguments concern human-machine simulations broadly, they extend to video games.

over-broad conception of 'non-consent' as the absence of consent from any entity. Instead, 'non-consent' should be understood as the absence of consent from an entity *whose consent would be morally required* to legitimise sexual acts. This is because the incapacity to consent only creates morally meaningful non-consent for certain kinds of beings. For instance, children cannot grant sexual consent. This incapacity makes any sexual contact with them necessarily non-consensual (and abusive). By comparison, socks also cannot consent. However, this incapacity does not make sexual acts with socks 'non-consensual' in any analogous way. The crucial difference is that children are humans—beings whose consent matters morally—while socks are inanimate objects, a category of entities whose consent is morally irrelevant. Sex robots, as I have defined them, also fall into the category of objects. Thus, just as it would be strange to describe the penetration of a sock as 'non-consensual,' sex with a robot does not meaningfully qualify as 'non-consensual.' Sex robots may *simulate* consent or its absence, but they do not actually give or withhold consent.

Given that sexbots only ever simulate (non-)consent, we cannot define rapebots as sexbots that withhold consent. The first logical revision, then, defines rapebots are sexbots that *simulate* non-consent. But what does simulated non-consent look like? A natural starting point is to imagine straightforward cases, like sexbots programmed to resist users' sexual advances. For instance, a sexbot that screams "STOP" when touched clearly simulates non-consent and would qualify as a rapebot. We might, then, be tempted to define rapebots as sexbots that simulate non-consent through resistance. This definition would align with the 'no means no' approach to consent—a widely adopted sexual consent model, emphasising the need to respect women's resistance to sexual advances (Little, 2005; Harris, 2018). However, defining rapebots in terms of simulated resistance quickly proves inadequate and normatively undesirable. Resistance is not a necessary condition for non-consent. In fact, real-world sexual violence often occurs without resistance—for instance, when a person is reluctant or incapacitated (e.g., asleep, intoxicated, unconscious). By mirroring the 'no means no' consent framework too closely, our definition risks replicating its most serious flaw: the presumption that consent exists *by default* unless explicitly revoked (Conaghan, 2019). This assumption not only overlooks cases where resistance is impossible but places the burden of refusal on the victim. Further, a resistance-based conception of non-consent risks reinforcing what Conaghan (2019, p. 165) calls "the 'real rape' stereotype": the culturally dominant image of rape as a violent, stranger-perpetrated assault involving physical and vocal resistance. This stereotype, Conaghan (2019, p. 165) argues, "functions discursively, providing a normative paradigm which structures the rape debate." Consequently, victims whose experiences deviate from this paradigm are often discredited, marginalised, or even blamed (ibid.). To avoid contributing to this stereotype, we must revise the rapebot definition again.

What, then, is the ameliorative alternative to defining rapebots as sexbots that simulate resistance? A promising approach is to align our definition with the broader development of the consent debate. In response to feminist critiques of the 'no-means-no' model, a new framework with the slogan 'only yes means yes' emerged (Little, 2005). This model reversed the presumption of consent and shifted responsibility onto the sexual initiator to ensure that their partner had given clear, enthusiastic, and affirmative consent (Little, 2005; Featherstone et al., 2024). Instead of conceptualising non-consent as resistance to sexual advances, proponents of 'only-yes-means-yes' argued that *all sex* was non-consensual, *unless* affirmative consent had been given (ibid.). Applying this framework to the case of sexbots, we arrive at a new definition: rapebots are sexbots that simulate non-consent as *the absence of affirmative consent*. Put differently, all sexbots that do not simulate affirmative consent are rapebots. While this definition is more ethically stringent, it also introduces grey areas. For example, many basic sexbots lack the sophisticated interactive elements (e.g., speech capabilities) necessary to simulate affirmative consent. While these sexbots may certainly be problematic (e.g. Hanson & Locatelli, 2022), I exclude them to maintain a focussed analysis. Therefore, I propose a final narrower definition: rapebots are sexbots that possess the technological affordances to simulate affirmative consent, but, *by design*, do not do so. Within this class, simulated non-consent can manifest along three key dimensions: incapacity, reluctance, and resistance.[4]

A rapebot that simulates incapacity might, for instance, have an 'asleep' or 'drunk' mode, in which it either appears unconscious, or imitates slurred, incoherent speech to mimic the absence of consent. Rapebots simulating reluctance might imitate signs of discomfort or require users to 'persuade' them. Rapebots of this sort exist already. For example, users of the sex robot Roxxxy can select a pre-programmed bot personality called "Frigid Farrah" (Young, 2025).[5] TrueCompanion, the company behind Roxxxy, advertised this setting by stating "if you touched her in a private area, more than likely, she will not be too appreciative of your advance" (Danaher, 2017, p. 74). Since little further detail is available on Frigid Farrah, it is unclear whether it also simulates resistance. Rapebots in this third

[4] Further grey zones may exist (e.g. simulated asymmetric power dynamics). I set these aside to focus on clearer instances of rapebots along these three dimensions.

[5] See also the personality setting "Young Yoko", advertised as "oh so young (barely 18) and waiting for you to teach her" (Timmins, 2017).

category might simulate physical resistance, for instance by attempting to keep their robotic legs closed or by kicking and swinging their limbs. These bots might also simulate resisting verbally by screaming for help, crying, or begging the user to stop. Given the existence of models like Frigid Farrah and the popularity of pornography showing violence against women (e.g. DeKeseredy & Corsianos, 2015; Shor & Seida, 2022), it does not seem farfetched that rapebots of the latter sort will eventually become available.

Thinking through these examples, many would agree that rapebots provoke a strong sense of moral discomfort. At the very least, the idea of performing sexual acts on increasingly life-like robots that scream and beg for help seems morally dubious. Less extreme models, like Frigid Farrah, have triggered widespread public backlash (see e.g. Timmins, 2017; Bates, 2017; Norris, 2017), suggesting that discomfort extends beyond the most violent instances. Why is that? Of course, one might argue that rapebots increase the risk of real-world sexual violence. But much like debates over violent video games and actual aggression, the empirical evidence for such a causal link is, at best, inconclusive (Danaher, 2017; Sparrow, 2017). Furthermore, even if we assume that rapebots have no extrinsic effects, the intuitive moral unease persists. If somebody, for instance, used a rapebot in complete isolation—say, they live and die alone on a deserted island—this would still strike many as wrong. This suggests that the perceived wrongness is *intrinsic*. But, given that the violated non-consent is merely *simulated*, what—if anything—is wrong with rapebot use?[6]

To answer this question, we can draw on broader debates about the ethics of simulations. Tillson (2018, p. 206) argues that "simulating wrongdoing is (as such) a *pro tanto* wrong[7] by virtue of constituting a disrespectful act" that "does not turn on any effects". On his view, the moral problem lies in the act's expressive content: simulating wrongdoing is wrong in that it disrespects the morally salient group whose suffering is being represented. Simulating rape, in this light, expresses a disregard for those who have suffered sexual violence or are disproportionately exposed to it. While I broadly endorse Tillson's view that simulated wrongdoing can constitute a pro tanto wrong in virtue of its expressive content, the argument developed in this paper will qualify my support for this claim. Not all simulations of wrongdoing are disrespectful in the same way. As I argue later, the moral meaning of a simulation depends, among other factors, on its context. For present purposes, the key point is that simulating wrongdoing can be a pro tanto wrong because it expresses disrespect toward the real people implicated in the simulation. The use of rapebots, then, is a pro tanto wrong because it simulates rape and thereby disrespects those most affected by it—namely children, women, and survivors of sexual violence. This explanation is particularly compelling for two reasons. First, it captures the intuition that rapebot use is *intrinsically* wrong. Secondly, it draws on the moral salience of disrespect—a concept that carries intuitive weight. Using a robotic replica of a woman crying, screaming, and begging to be left alone for sexual gratification seems clearly disrespectful—not towards the robot, but towards the real women whose suffering is being eroticised.[8] This analysis clarifies what makes rapebots morally troubling—and sharpens the question I turn to next: if rapebot use is wrong because it simulates rape, is rape role-play between consenting human partners similarly troubling?

Is consensual non-consent different?

So far, I have argued that rapebot use is morally troubling because it simulates rape in a way that disrespects those most affected by real-world sexual violence. But if the moral problem lies in the simulation of rape, should this concern not extend equally to other forms of rape simulation, like consensual non-consent within BDSM practices? This assumption—that technologically facilitated rape simulations and human-human rape simulations are morally equivalent—underpinned the defence strategy of the developers behind the controversial video game *No Mercy*. Likening their virtual rape simulator to CNC practices, the company wrote: "We fully understand that for many people such things may be disgusting, but during sex, people should really do what they want, as long as they don't harm anyone" (Zerat Games, 2025). In other words, if CNC and games like *No Mercy* are morally equivalent, and CNC is permissible, then so too must be their game. Contrary to Zerat Games, however, I argue that human-human and technologically facilitated rape simulations are not morally equivalent. Specifically, while certain instances of CNC may be morally permissible, the use of rapebots is always impermissible. This moral divergence arises from a structural difference: while CNC occurs within a relational context of shared agency, negotiation, and consent, rapebot use involves a solitary actor imposing their fantasies without boundaries. This section focuses on demonstrating that this structural

[6] I do not address the ethics of rapebot production, commercialisation, or sale here.

[7] Meaning a kind of wrong that holds in principle but may be outweighed by other considerations.

[8] This argument echoes feminist critiques of pornography that similarly address the eroticisation of sexual inequality (e.g. Crabbe & Corlett, 2011; DeKeseredy & Corsianos, 2015; Cawston, 2019). I set these discussions aside because my concern lies with the *agential simulation* of sexual violence, rather than the consumption of its depictions.

difference exists by situating CNC within BDSM consent norms, without yet arguing for its normative significance.

The acronym BDSM stands for 'bondage and discipline, dominance and submission, sadism and masochism' (Dunkley & Brotto, 2020) and describes a range of sexual activities that incorporate elements of power play and/or pain. Although BDSM remains severely stigmatised today (Hansen-Brown & Jefferson, 2023), its practices have a long-standing history (Tupper, 2018). While the first depiction of BDSM is difficult to trace, contestants date back to ancient Pompeii (ibid.). The earliest confirmed account of sexual flagellation appeared in 1503, and subsequent centuries saw numerous references to BDSM-like activities in Western plays, literature and brothel records (ibid.). Victorian England, for instance, was notorious for brothels offering services like spanking and whipping, colloquially referred to as the 'English Vice' (Lamos, 1995). From the 1870 s to the 1920 s, women's magazines featured coded letters advertising spanking practices and facilitating secret gatherings for sexual flagellation enthusiasts (Tupper, 2018). Therefore, although BDSM only entered mainstream discourse in the 1970 s, it had long been a pervasive, if hidden, part of Western culture. Recent research continues to indicate a widespread interest in BDSM worldwide (Schuerwegen et al., 2024), with studies estimating that up to 70% of people in Belgium (Holvoet et al., 2017) and Canada (Renaud & Byers, 1999) have BDSM-related fantasies. Despite the prevalence of such fantasises, significantly fewer people—commonly described as a 'substantial minority'—self-identify as BDSM practitioners (e.g. Dunkley & Brotto, 2020; Tarleton et al., 2025; Schuerwegen et al., 2024).

Consensual non-consent (CNC), sometimes called 'rape-play,' is a subset of BDSM practices (Dunkley & Brotto, 2020), where nonconsensual sex is simulated within a framework of consent (Tsaros, 2013; Szpilka, 2023). CNC practices are varied and can be mapped onto the three dimensions of non-consent conceptualised earlier (resistance, reluctance, incapacity). For instance, scenes where one person pretends to be asleep during sex are encompassed by CNC just as much as role-play of violent abduction and rape under resistance. The common denominator of all CNC, however, lies in the extensive and pre-negotiated structures of consent that frame the role-play scene and protect those involved from violations (Dunkley & Brotto, 2020; Tsaros, 2013). Research on the prevalence of CNC remains limited. However, in a recent US college survey, Herbenick et al. (2025) found that 10% of students in their sample ($n = 1440$) had previously engaged in some form of CNC.

The structural difference between CNC and rapebot use stems from the integral role of continuous and affirmative consent in CNC. This principle is stressed throughout the broader BDSM literature (e.g. Tsaros, 2013; Klement et al., 2017). Dunkley and Brotto (2020), for instance, conclude that consent is the one factor that unifies all BDSM practices: it distinguishes BDSM from abuse. Crucially, this consent is not reducible to a simple 'yes' or 'no', but involves "an ongoing interactive and dynamic process that entails several precautionary measures, including negotiations of play, open communication of desires and boundaries, mutually defining terms, the notion of responsibility and transparency, and ensuring protection from harm through competence and skill" (Dunkley & Brotto, 2020, p. 661). Safe words play a central role in this framework, functioning as a mechanism for the immediate withdrawal of consent that overrides any simulated power dynamics. Failure to respect a safe word constitutes a breach of consent and transform the scene into sexual assault (Dunkley & Brotto, 2020). Negotiation typically covers safe words, hard and soft limits, triggers, and desires, and extends into the post-scene period through practices of 'aftercare' that support emotional ad physical wellbeing (ibid.). CNC scenes distinctively require an additional layer of negotiation to establish shared expectations about how expressions that typically indicate non-consent (e.g., saying "no") should be interpreted in-scene. This aims to ensure that all simulated non-consent is grounded in genuine, affirmative consent.

This comprehensive, communication-focussed consent framework serves not just to protect, but to *foreground* the bodily integrity and sexual autonomy of all participants. Unlike the distorted portrayals in popular media like the *Fifty Shades* series, BDSM practitioners aim to *avoid* genuine power imbalances (Barker, 2013; Leistner & Mark, 2016). Regardless of their in-scene role, they engage as equal sexual partners, with mutual respect for each other's desires and boundaries. These consent norms are so deeply entrenched in BDSM culture that they measurably shape practicioners' attitudes toward issues like rape and women's agency: Klement et al. (2017) study the relative prominence of rape-supportive beliefs across various demographics, and find that BDSM practitioners held significantly lower levels of rape myth acceptance, victim blaming, and benevolent sexism than college students and adult AmazonTurk workers. To explain these results, the authors point towards both the norm of negotiated consent and the clear acknowledgment of women's agency and autonomy in the BDSM community. For similar reasons, many scholars have called for the BDSM consent framework to serve as a role model for consent in more conventional sexual practices (Dunkley & Brotto, 2020; Bauer, 2021; Barker, 2013; Leistner & Mark, 2016).

The consent framework fundamentally grounds CNC in relational dynamics and shared agency, distinguishing it structurally from the solitary practice of rapebot use. However, complexities and nuances remain. As Dunkley and

Brotto (2020, p. 666, emphasis added) write: "Although advocates of the BDSM community draw a concrete line between consensual activity and nonconsensual abuse, *this line can be blurred in reality*". For example, imbalanced power dynamics in the personal relationship between partners may taint their equal footing in-scene. Further, miscommunication and discrepancies in definitions of mutually agreed scenes can lead to accidental consent violations (Dunkley & Brotto, 2020). For example, two partners might agree to a 'slapping' scene, but one interprets this as light facial slaps while the other understands it to include harder body strikes. Moreover, while consent norms are highly stringent in the BDSM community, they are not entirely inflexible. Tarleton et al. (2025), for instance, analyse the nuances in BDSM consent norms depending on relationship context. While consent norms overall were strong, participants were more lenient with their consent requirements for long-term relationships than sexual encounters between new partners. Similarly, while participants did not overall endorse intoxication during pre-scene consent negotiation, they punished it less for long- than short-term partners.

In the context of CNC specifically, some raise concerns around the origins of rape fantasies. Herbenick and colleagues (2025), for instance, found a positive correlation between engagement in CNC and a recent history of intimate partner violence (IPV) among students. While BDSM scholars (e.g. Leistner & Mark, 2016) have critiqued portrayals of BDSM fantasies as pathological trauma responses as stigmatising and incorrect, this correlation still raises concerns. Herbenick et al. (2025, p. 235) speculate that, although CNC may serve as an empowering coping mechanism, IPV victims could also face a disproportionate risk of being pressured into CNC or may engage in it out of "sexual compliance". Next to accidental or indirect consent violations, boundaries may be intentionally disregarded. Dunkley and Brotto (2020), for instance, note that individuals interested in sexual abuse may use the BDSM context to legitimise assault. These scenarios are exacerbated by the fact that victims face additional barriers to reporting the assault to the police due to the stigma surrounding BDSM (Hansen-Brown & Jefferson, 2023). When their assault is not taken seriously, this can lead victims to ex-post doubt that a violation occurred.

I do not have the space to discuss these instances of imperfect, violated, or ambiguous BDSM consent further. However, acknowledging that these issues exist is crucial to avoid an uncritical glorification of BDSM consent as the perfect framework. For the remainder of this paper, when I speak of BDSM and CNC, I mean 'best practice' BDSM and CNC. That is, those practices where the comprehensive framework of consent and negotiation before, during and after scenes is adhered to, and where those involved meet as equal partners, freely engaging and mutually foregrounding the other's sexual autonomy and bodily integrity. This context marks a structural distinction between rapebot use and CNC: whereas the former involves the solitary and unilateral enactment of sexual fantasies, the latter is fundamentally grounded in cooperation, compromise and shared agency. Still, it remains unclear why this difference should carry normative weight. After all, just like in CNC, every individual involved in the rapebot case (that is, the sole user) does consent. Why, then, should the solitary nature of the simulation make a moral difference? This is the question I turn to next.

Contextual negation by moral opposition

So far, I have argued in line with Tillson (2018) that simulations of rape are wrong because they disrespect those implicated in the simulation. This argument applies to both rapebots and CNC, since both simulate rape. I have also shown that these two forms of simulation differ in crucial ways—most notably, CNC is embedded in an intersubjective context of consent and negotiation, while rapebot use is not. However, it is not clear yet whether this distinction makes a moral difference. In this section, I argue that it does by offering a novel theoretical mechanism I call 'contextual negation by moral opposition.' This mechanism aims to explain how the pro tanto wrong of simulating wrongdoing can be negated when the surrounding context actively foregrounds values that morally oppose the central wrong simulated. CNC offers a paradigm example of how this mechanism operates. However, its applicability may extend beyond sexual contexts, as I show through further examples.

To introduce the mechanism, consider again the nature of CNC practices. As the name reveals, CNC combines two elements: consent and non-consent. This takes a highly specific form, where the two components do not contradict, but structurally oppose one another. As Dunkely and Brotto (2020, p. 664, emphasis added) describe it, CNC is "nonconsensual sex *within an invisible structure of pre-negotiated consent.*" This contrast, therefore, goes beyond superficial role play, and characterises the underlying moral structure of the practice. This is because CNC scenes simulate rape, and thereby the violation of sexual autonomy and bodily integrity—arguably the central wrong of rape.[9] Simultaneously, the CNC act is staged in a context that expressly

[9] Although rape is a politically and socially contested concept with no universal 'essence' (Conaghan, 2019), many theorists (e.g. Archard, 2007; du Toit, 2009; Conaghan, 2019) agree that, in a Western heteronormative and patriarchal context, its central wrong lies in the violation of sexual autonomy or subjectivity. For instance, du Toit (2009, p. 33) describes rape as a "violent erasure of a woman victim's sexual subjectivity", a harm rooted in the socio-symbolic order that

foregrounds and protects those very values. Therefore, what is being simulated stands in direct moral contrast to the context in which the simulation occurs - and this matters normatively.

The mechanism of contextual negation by moral opposition captures how this contrast operates. It consists of two interrelated components. First, moral opposition, in my sense, describes a situation in which the values expressed and foregrounded by the context of a simulation stand in direct opposition to the values violated by the simulated wrong. In the case of CNC, this condition is fulfilled because the central wrong being simulated—the violation of sexual autonomy and bodily integrity—is directly opposed by the context of consent and respect, which foregrounds sexual autonomy and bodily integrity. Crucially, this consent context is not merely a background condition but forms the morally transformative heart of CNC: once it is breached, the act is no longer simulatory and becomes actual sexual violence (Dunkley & Brotto, 2020).

This moral opposition, in turn, leads to the second component: the contextual negation of the pro tanto wrong. Here, the crucial point is that the moral opposition transforms the nature of the simulation. In the CNC case, what initially appears to be a simulation of the violation of sexual autonomy and bodily integrity becomes, instead, an expressive act of respect for and exercise of those values. The context, by embodying values antithetical to real rape, works to negate the pro tanto wrong of the simulation. To summarise, the mechanism proceeds in two interrelated steps: First, the context of the rape simulation foregrounds respect for sexual autonomy and bodily integrity, establishing a clear moral opposition to the simulated wrong (rape). This moral opposition transforms the act from a simulated violation to an affirmation and celebration of these values. Secondly, this transformation negates the pro tanto wrong of the simulation.

For the mechanism of contextual negation by moral opposition to work, the values affirmed in the simulatory context must directly oppose the *specific* values that the simulated wrong would violate in the real world. To illustrate this, imagine the following scenario: Lilly and Max are a heterosexual couple active in the BDSM community. They often engage in CNC scenes involving the simulation of violent rape. However, in these scenes, Lilly impersonates real women who have been raped and whose cases were publicly reported. For instance, Lilly pretends to be Sarah Everard, while Max simulates her violent rape. Even though this simulation is conducted within a negotiated and consensual framework, I take it to be morally impermissible. The proposed mechanism can account for this: although the context affirms the bodily integrity and sexual autonomy of Lilly and Max, it cannot affirm or foreground that of Sarah Everard. The simulated wrong is no longer abstract but directly tied to the violation of a specific person. Since this person is not involved in the simulation, the context cannot morally oppose the specific wrong being simulated. Hence, the mechanism of contextual negation by moral opposition fails, and the simulation remains morally problematic.

This example shows that the key to assessing whether the mechanism succeeds in a given simulation lies in identifying *what wrong* the simulation is tracking. It is this wrong that the simulatory context needs to oppose. In the previous example, the wrong (fairly unambiguously) pertained to the violation of the impersonated real woman—and the context clearly did not oppose this wrong. However, many cases are less straightforward. Imagine, for instance, a CNC scene between two men, where the simulated victim pretends to be a woman. If you feel that the wrong of this simulation tracks the violation of *female* sexual autonomy and bodily integrity, then the simulatory context—only involving men—cannot morally oppose it and the mechanism fails. However, should you see this wrong as pertaining to the violation of, say, *human* autonomy and integrity, then the context may sufficiently affirm those values and negate the wrong.

While CNC offers a paradigm case for illustrating this mechanism, contextual negation by moral opposition may extend to other simulations. More generally, we can say: the pro tanto wrong of simulating wrongdoing can be negated by a context that explicitly affirms the same values the simulated wrong would violate. To test whether this mechanism applies to a given simulation, one must ask: (1) what is the wrong of the simulation tracking? and (2) does the simulatory context morally oppose this wrong? Consider, for instance, the case of students performing scenes of verbal abuse or social exclusion as part of an anti-bullying workshop. The context of this simulation explicitly affirms the very values—empathy, kindness, dignity—that the simulated act (bullying) would violate, and the pro tanto wrong of the simulation is thereby negated. A similar logic might apply to clinical applications of deepfake technology. In therapeutic settings, clinicians have recently used this technology to generate realistic avatars of perpetrators, whose responses are controlled by the therapist (Hoek et al., 2024). This allows the patients to simulate confronting their abusers in a safe and guided therapeutic setting (ibid.). Although the therapist plays the role of a perpetrator, the simulation unfolds within a context explicitly designed to support the survivor's healing and restore her sense of agency. Therefore, the pro tanto wrong of both the simulations of bullying and of the perpetrator may be negated by the morally opposed contexts of these simulations. Whether one agrees

simultaneously enables and denies rape's reality. Because children lack sexuality, I also refer to violations of 'bodily integrity.'

that the mechanism applies in these cases will depend on the answers to the two questions above. However, even if one judges that contextual negation fails here, this does not undermine the mechanism itself—so long as that judgement rests on the view that the context does not, in fact, morally oppose the specific wrong the simulation is tracking.

This section has shown why the relational structure central to CNC matters: it can negate the pro tanto wrong of the simulation by transforming it from the simulated violation of sexual autonomy and bodily integrity into an expression and celebration of these values. This contextual negation by moral opposition mechanism helps to explain why some—though not all—instances of CNC are morally permissible. Still, important questions remain. Most pressingly, even if the mechanism explains CNC's permissibility, does it tell us anything about the case of rapebots? In the next section, I argue that it not only explains the impermissibility of the rapebot scenario but has crucial implications for human-machine interactions more generally.

Moral opposition in Human-Machine simulations?

Earlier, I highlighted a key structural difference between CNC and rapebot use. While CNC involves at least two partners and is based on mutual respect, shared agency, and collaborative boundary-setting, rapebot use is a solitary and unilateral enactment of the user's erotic fantasies. In the previous section, I showed that this relational structure allows the mechanism of contextual negation by moral opposition to succeed in (certain instances of) CNC. Now, I return to the case of rapebots to argue that this mechanism not only fails here, but that it is *structurally precluded* in most human-machine simulations. That is, the solitary nature of human-machine simulations renders moral opposition (and thereby, contextual negation) impossible in most cases.

To assess whether the mechanism of contextual negation through moral opposition can succeed in the case of rapebots, we need to return to the two questions: what is the wrong of the simulation tracking? and does the simulatory context morally oppose this wrong? Just like in CNC, the central wrong of the simulation tracks the violation of sexual autonomy and bodily integrity. However, where the context of CNC can morally oppose this wrong, the rapebot context lacks the relational structure that would be required to foreground respect for another being. Put differently, for a context to affirm and foreground the value of respecting *others'* sexual autonomy and bodily integrity, it is a necessary condition that more than one being is involved. If the simulatory context only includes one person (here, the user), then *there is no genuine other* whose autonomy and integrity *could* be foregrounded, even if this were desired.

One might propose that we could artificially introduce moral opposition into the rapebot scenario, by programming rapebots to simulate the consent negotiations that typically precede a CNC scene. Imagine a 'CNC-bot,'designed to mimic pre-scene negotiation, consent, and collaborative boundary-setting. Could this not mimic the relational dynamics of CNC close enough to create a context that foregrounds (respect for) sexual autonomy? In short, no. Even if the CNC-bot imitated the CNC consent framework highly realistically, it would remain just that: a *simulation* of respect for another person and shared agency. However, the simulated violation of sexual autonomy can only be morally opposed by the *genuine* respect thereof. But this kind of respect cannot be expressed in a simulation where only one being exists—the interaction would remain wholly predetermined and unilateral. What results is a simulation of a (permissible) simulation of rape, that lacks the mutual recognition and relational structure that underpins moral opposition. Without the need to adhere to boundaries, honour a safe word, or acknowledge the otherness of another person, the disrespect (and pro tanto wrong) of the simulation remains unmitigated.

At this point, one might object that my argument treats simulations of right- and wrongdoing asymmetrically. I have argued that simulating rape is a *pro tanto* wrong because it is disrespectful. But if the simulation of rape constitutes genuine disrespect because it implicates real people, then why could the simulation of consent with the CNC-bot not constitute genuine respect by a similar mechanism of implication?[10] To justify this asymmetry, we need to take a closer look at the moral structure of respect and disrespect themselves. As Darwall (2006) argues, genuine respect is a recognitional or "second-personal" attitude: it consists in acknowledging another being as a source of moral claims and as a participant in relations of mutual accountability. Such respect presupposes an other whose moral standing can be recognised. Disrespect, by contrast, can operate expressively: it can manifest unilaterally, through acts or symbols that demean or objectify others and thereby deny their moral standing—even when those others are absent or unaware. As Tillson (2018) argues, simulated wrongdoing is wrong not because of its effects but because it expresses a demeaning attitude toward those implicated in the simulation. Thus, disrespect can be performed through solitary or representational acts, while genuine respect requires a relational structure capable of real recognition. This asymmetry is familiar in other contexts. Consider, for example, somebody burning or raising an LGBTQ+flag alone in

[10] I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for raising this objection.

their room. While the former clearly expresses disrespect towards the LGBTQ+community, the latter act does not confer genuine respect in an analogous way (even if it may express solidarity). Similarly, simulating rape with a rapebot genuinely disrespects women (as well as children and survivors of sexual violence), while simulating consent negotiations with a sexbot does not express genuine respect in any comparable sense.

Another possible objection to my argument draws on Garry Young's 2025) discussion of the morality of simulating rape. Young argues that there is no morally relevant difference, based solely on motivation for enjoyment, between engaging in rape simulations through different media—like role play, video games, or sex robots. He distinguishes between "enjoyment *qua* simulation" which "denotes enjoyment of the fiction itself" and "enjoyment *qua* substitution" where "one desires what the simulation represents, rather than the simulation *qua simulation*" (Young, 2025, p. 7, original emphasis). On this basis, Young suggests that the use of rapebots—and even child rapebots—may be morally permissible, as long as the enjoyment obtained from this simulation pertains to the simulation of a taboo itself, instead of serving as a proxy for real rape (ibid., p. 10).[11] Importantly, Young does not claim that all media used to simulate rape are morally equivalent in every respect; rather, his analysis is confined to the question of motivational differences. Although Young does not deny that other facts might bear moral relevance, his focus on motivation might challenge the argument developed here. If the moral status of rape simulation depends primarily on whether the simulator's enjoyment concerns the simulation itself or what it represents, then the structural differences I have identified between human-human and human-machine simulations would appear secondary.

However, although Young's distinction holds intuitive weight (a rape simulation enjoyed as a proxy for real rape indeed seems more morally concerning than one enjoyed for the thrill of simulating a taboo), it does not address and so cannot resolve the underlying problem of expressive disrespect. Even when enjoyment is derived solely from the simulation itself, the *pro tanto* wrong associated with simulating rape remains. That is, the disrespect expressed toward those implicated in the simulation—women, children, and survivors of sexual violence—is not neutralised by the agent's motivation or by the purely simulatory nature of their enjoyment.[12] Therefore, even if, as Young argues, rape simulations enjoyed qua simulation are *less* condemnable than those enjoyed qua substitution, they are not thereby morally permissible. In short, while Young's analysis may show why motivational differences alone do not generate a moral distinction between different media used to simulate rape, it leaves the structure of these simulations untouched. The mechanism of contextual negation by moral opposition identifies precisely this dimension: only simulations embedded in a relational context that genuinely foregrounds another's sexual autonomy and bodily integrity (such as best-practice CNC) can negate the pro tanto wrong of simulated rape. Because rapebot use lacks this relational structure, the disrespect it expresses remains unmitigated, regardless of the user's mode of enjoyment.

This resolution of the rapebot-CNC puzzle gives rise to broader insights about the ethics of (technologically facilitated) simulations. What matters normatively is not only the *content*, but also the *structure* of a simulation. More specifically, the failure of the contextual negation by moral opposition mechanism in the case of rapebots is a direct consequence of its unilateral structure. Therefore, it has a serious broader implication: in most cases of simulated wrongdoing, the unilateral structure of human-machine simulations renders contextual negation by moral opposition impossible. This is because most moral wrongdoing is perpetrated against another being (see e.g. Darwall, 2010).[13] Granted, some wrongdoing may be directed against oneself, or against, say, the environment, without directly involving other beings. However, let's set these cases aside for now. Because contextual negation relies on moral opposition, the simulatory context must *mirror* the structure of the simulated wrong: if the simulated wrongdoing—such as disrespect—involves another being, then the opposing value—like respect—must also be directed towards another being. Hence, when the simulated wrong involves more than one party, the moral opposition must too. Therefore, the participation of multiple beings is required for simulations of interpersonal wrongs to be contextually negated. Human-machine simulations of wrongdoing lack this relational infrastructure. As a result, the moral structure that might otherwise redeem the simulation is *necessarily precluded*.

[11] To be precise, he argues that some instances (where the enjoyment pertains to the simulation itself) of (child) rapebot use are at least not immoral *by virtue of what they represent*, though he concedes they may be immoral for other reasons (e.g. bad taste, anti-social behaviour).

[12] As an anonymous reviewer helpfully pointed out, one might argue that the way in which a person engages in a rape fantasy could be seen as a form of 'negotiation with oneself.' For instance, a fantasist that limits their desire to the fantasy itself, instead of desiring what the fantasy represents may be seen to be acting under moral constraint, thereby reflecting a moral position that stands in opposition to the simulated act. While this is an intriguing possibility, it raises difficult questions: can one meaningfully "say no" to oneself, and in what sense would such self-address amount to genuine negotiation? Even if such internal negotiation were possible, it would seemingly lack the interpersonal Structure necessary to foreground another's sexual autonomy and therefore could not generate genuine moral opposition to rape. A more extensive exploration of this question of self-negotiation would require further research.

[13] I use 'beings' to include animals but not non-sentient robots.

This insight, in turn, implies that the medium through which wrongdoing is simulated matters morally. Specifically, if the mechanism of contextual negation by moral opposition is unavailable in (most) human-machine simulations of wrongdoing, these simulations may be inherently more morally problematic than their human-human counterparts. This conclusion is somewhat counterintuitive: one may assume that it is morally preferable to simulate wrongdoing on a machine rather than a human. The reasoning here is that it seems less morally objectionable to simulate violence, domination, or harm on an entity that cannot feel, understand, or suffer. However, while a human-human simulation of wrongdoing can offset its inherent disrespect through a relational context that opposes the simulated wrong, human-machine simulations lack this relational structure—leaving that disrespect unmitigated.

The conclusion that many human-machine simulations of wrongdoing are *more* morally problematic than their human-human counterparts is further striking because it suggests that the use of technology can, in some cases, alter the moral status of an act. Typically, when technology is introduced into a moral scenario, the ethical fundamentals remain unchanged. For instance, reading someone's diary is ethically similar to hacking their phone: although the degree of invasiveness may differ, the *wrong* (here: privacy violation) remains the same. However, in the case of simulated wrongdoing, the introduction of technology changes the ethical evaluation of the act. This shift invites further inquiry into the ethics of human-machine interactions more broadly, particularly as other forms of human-machine interaction, like AI companion apps become increasingly popular (see Shevlin, 2024).

Conclusion

To investigate the ethics of technologically facilitated simulations, I have examined an intuitive moral puzzle in this paper: while rape simulations with specifically designed robots (rapebots) seem morally impermissible, consensual non-consent practices appear less problematic. Drawing on Tillson (2018), I have argued that rapebot use constitutes a pro tanto wrong because the simulation of rape is disrespectful towards those disproportionately impacted by real rape. This equally applies to CNC practices. Nonetheless, I have argued, the two are *not* morally equivalent. While some instances of CNC are morally permissible, the use of rapebots is always morally fraught. This is because of the distinct moral structure that arises from the way these simulations are relationally or unilaterally framed. Specifically, CNC scenes can, in certain cases, instantiate a mechanism I have called 'contextual negation by moral opposition.' Here, the pro tanto wrong of simulating wrongdoing is negated by a simulatory context that explicitly foregrounds the very values the simulated wrong would violate. In the CNC case, this mechanism applies because the context of consent transforms the rape simulation from a simulated violation of sexual autonomy and bodily integrity into an expression and celebration thereof. This moral structure is not only missing but *structurally precluded* by the solitary framing of the rapebot scenario. This argument carries broader implications for the way we should normatively evaluate (technologically facilitated) simulations. Crucially, it suggests that the moral permissibility of a simulation cannot be assessed solely by its content, but must also take into account its framing, and resulting moral structure. Human-human simulations can accommodate morally significant dynamics like resistance, recognition, and mutuality. Human-machine simulations, by contrast, necessarily lack this reciprocity. Therefore, simulations of wrongdoing may often—somewhat counterintuitively—be more problematic when enacted with machines than sentient beings. Returning to our introductory example, this is precisely why Zerat Games' defence of *No Mercy* as equivalent to role-play fails: the moral structure of human-human simulations simply does not carry over to their human-machine counterparts.

Acknowledgements I am grateful to Dr Claire Benn for her invaluable feedback on earlier drafts of this paper.

Author contributions M.M. is the sole author and solely responsible for all aspects of the manuscript.

Funding No funding was received to assist with the preparation of this manuscript.

Data availability No datasets were generated or analysed during the current study.

Declarations

Competing interests The authors declare no competing interests.

References

Archard, D. (2007). The wrong of rape. *The Philosophical Quarterly, 57*(228), 374–393. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9213.2007.492.x

Barker, M. (2013). Consent is a grey area? A comparison of understandings of consent in Fifty shades of grey and on the BDSM blogosphere. *Sexualities, 16*(8), 896–914. https://doi.org/10.1177/1363460713508881

Bates, L. (2017). Opinion | The Trouble With Sex Robots. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/17/opinion/sex-robots-consent.html

Bauer, R. (2021). Queering consent: Negotiating critical consent in les-bi-trans-queer BDSM contexts. *Sexualities, 24*(5–6), 767–783. https://doi.org/10.1177/1363460720973902

Cawston, A. (2019). The feminist case against pornography: A review and re-evaluation. *Inquiry : A Journal of Medical Care Organization, Provision and Financing, 62*(6), 624–658. https://doi.org/10.1080/0020174X.2018.1487882

Conaghan, J. (2019). The essence of rape. *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies, 39*(1), 151–182. https://doi.org/10.1093/ojls/gqy034

Crabbe, M., & Corlett, D. (2011). Eroticising inequality: Technology, pornography and young people. *Redress*, *20*(1), 11–15. https://doi.org/10.3316/informit.132445715718161

Danaher, J. (2017). Robotic rape and robotic child sexual abuse: Should they be criminalised? *Criminal Law and Philosophy, 11*(1), 71–95. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11572-014-9362-x

Darwall, S. (2006). *The Second-Person standpoint: Morality, Respect, and accountability*. Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1bzfp0f

Darwall, S. (2010). But it would be wrong. *Social Philosophy and Policy, 27*(2), 135–157. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265052509990185

DeKeseredy, W., & Corsianos, M. (2015). *Violence against women in pornography*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315652559

du Toit, L. (2009). *A philosophical investigation of rape: The making and unmaking of the feminine self*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203397855

Dunkley, C. R., & Brotto, L. A. (2020). The role of consent in the context of BDSM. *Sexual Abuse, 32*(6), 657–678. https://doi.org/10.1177/1079063219842847

Featherstone, L., Byrnes, C., Maturi, J., Minto, K., Mickelburgh, R., & Donaghy, P. (2024). What Is Affirmative Consent? In L. Featherstone, C. Byrnes, J. Maturi, K. Minto, R. Mickelburgh, & P. Donaghy (Eds.), *The Limits of Consent: Sexual Assault and Affirmative Consent* (pp. 23–40). Springer Nature Switzerland. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-46622-9_2

Frank, L., & Nyholm, S. (2017). Robot sex and consent: Is consent to sex between a robot and a human conceivable, possible, and desirable? *Artificial Intelligence and Law, 25*(3), 305–323. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10506-017-9212-y

Hansen-Brown, A. A., & Jefferson, S. E. (2023). Perceptions of and stigma toward BDSM practitioners. *Current Psychology, 42*(23), 19721–19729. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-03112-z

Hanson, K. R., & Locatelli, C. C. (2022). From sex dolls to sex robots and beyond: A narrative review of theoretical and empirical research on human-like and personified sex tech. *Current Sexual Health Reports, 14*(3), 106–117. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11930-022-00331-0

Harris, K. L. (2018). Yes means yes and no means no, but both these mantras need to go: Communication myths in consent education and anti-rape activism*. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 46*(2), 155–178. https://doi.org/10.1080/00909882.2018.1435900

Herbenick, D., Fu, Tsung-chieh, Carver, Dasha, N., Brandenburg, Dakota, Balle, Mary,and, & Eastman-Mueller, H. (2025). Prevalence and Correlates of Sexual Choking and Consensual Non-Consent (CNC) Among College Students: Findings from a Campus-Representative Survey. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, *51*(2), 224–242. https://doi.org/10.1080/0092623X.2025.2458173

Hoddinott, H. (2025). Fury over rape and incest game that tells players to be 'women's worst nightmare', as Tech Secretary slams PC giant. *LBC*. https://www.lbc.co.uk/tech/steam-violent-misogyny-video-game-no-mercy/

Hoek, S., Metselaar, S., Ploem, C., & Bak, M. (2024). Promising for patients or deeply disturbing? The ethical and legal aspects of deepfake therapy. *Journal of Medical Ethics*. https://doi.org/10.1136/jme-2024-109985

Holvoet, L., Huys, W., Coppens, V., Seeuws, J., Goethals, K., & Morrens, M. (2017). Fifty shades of Belgian gray: The prevalence of BDSM-related fantasies and activities in the general population. *The Journal of Sexual Medicine, 14*(9), 1152–1159. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsxm.2017.07.003

Klement, K. R., Sagarin, Brad, J., & Lee, E. M. (2017). Participating in a culture of consent may be associated with lower rape-supportive beliefs. *The Journal of Sex Research, 54*(1), 130–134. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224499.2016.1168353

Lamos, C. (1995). James Joyce and the English vice. *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction, 29*(1), 19–31. https://doi.org/10.2307/1345537

Lamoureux, M. (2018). Sex Doll Brothels Are Here and They're Here to Stay. *VICE*. https://www.vice.com/en/article/sex-doll-brothels-are-here-and-theyre-here-to-stay/

Leistner, C. E., & Mark, K. P. (2016). Fifty shades of sexual health and BDSM identity messaging: A thematic analysis of the Fifty Shades series. *Sexuality & Culture, 20*(3), 464–485. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12119-016-9337-2

Little, N. (2005). From no means no to only yes means yes: The rational results of an affirmative consent standard in rape law. *Vanderbilt Law Review, 58*(4), 1321.

Luck, M. (2009). The gamer's dilemma: An analysis of the arguments for the moral distinction between virtual murder and virtual paedophilia. *Ethics and Information Technology, 11*(1), 31–36. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10676-008-9168-4

Luck, F. (2025). Video game encouraging rape and incest removed from major gaming platform in the UK after LBC investigation. *LBC*. https://www.lbc.co.uk/tech/video-game-banned-steam-women-uk-no-mercy/

Norris, S. (2017). A rape-able sex robot makes the world more dangerous for women, not less. *New Statesman*. https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2017/07/rape-able-sex-robot-makes-world-more-dangerous-women-not-less

Patridge, S. (2011). The incorrigible social meaning of video game imagery. *Ethics and Information Technology, 13*(4), 303–312. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10676-010-9250-6

Renaud, C. A., & Byers, E. S. (1999). Exploring the frequency, diversity and content of university students' positive and negative sexual cognitions. *Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality, 8*(1), 17–30.

Schuerwegen, A., Huys Wim, W., Elise, Goethals, Kris, Coppens, Violette, Jennifer, D., Tarleton, M., Hannah, L., Sagarin, Brad, J., & Morrens, M. (2024). BDSM in North America, Europe, and Oceania: A Large-Scale International Survey Gauging BDSM Interests and Activities. *The Journal of Sex Research*, *61*(9), 1389–1399. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224499.2023.2241451

Shevlin, H. (2024). All too human? Identifying and mitigating ethical risks of Social AI. *Law Ethics & Technology, 1*(2). https://doi.org/10.55092/let20240003

Shor, E., & Seida, K. (2022). Key Trends in Pornography. In R. Weitzer (Ed.) *Sex For Sale* (3rd ed.). Routledge

Smith, N. (2024). Concern rises over AI in adult entertainment. *BBC News*. https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c2qqxqgp9yno

Sparrow, R. (2017). Robots, rape, and representation. *International Journal of Social Robotics, 9*(4), 465–477. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12369-017-0413-z

Szpilka, J. (2023). Do to me what I could never ask of you: Consensual Non-Consent in BDSM and the limits of affirmative consent. In Franklin, S., Piercy, H., Thampuran, A., & White, R. (Eds.) *Consent*. Routledge.

Tarleton, H. L., Mackenzie, T., & Sagarin, B. J. (2025). Consent norms in the Bdsm community: Strong but not inflexible. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 54*(2), 549–559. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-024-03038-6

Tillson, J. (2018). Is it distinctively wrong to simulate doing wrong? *Ethics and Information Technology, 20*(3), 205–217. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10676-018-9463-7

Timmins, B. (2017). New sex robots have 'frigid' setting which allows men to simulate rape. *The Independent*. https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/sex-robots-frigid-settings-rape-simulation-men-sexual-assault-a7847296.html

Tsaros, A. (2013). Consensual non-consent: Comparing EL James's Fifty shades of grey and Pauline Réage's story of O. *Sexualities, 16*(8), 864–879. https://doi.org/10.1177/1363460713508903

Tupper, P. (2018). *A lover's pinch: A cultural history of sadomasochism*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Wheeler, K. (2014). Indigenous video game designer takes stand against Custer's Revenge. *CBC News*. https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/indigenous-video-game-designer-takes-stand-against-custer-s-revenge-1.2851104

Young, G. (2025). On the morality of enjoying simulated rape with robots and by other fictional means. *Journal of Applied Philosophy, 42*(1), 217–233. https://doi.org/10.1111/japp.12751

Zerat Games (2025). *Steam: No Mercy :: Important News about No Mercy* [Online post]. Events to No Mercy. Available at: https://store.steampowered.com/news/app/3299570/view/588390482275467287