

Androids' Rights?

I ran across an interesting question on Quora: When we do start making humanoid androids, should they be afforded civil rights?

I answered this way:

Not unless you can be sure they are sapient— or at least sentient. But even if they are, they would be a separate species, and rights don't really transfer across species lines. A mouse has no right to not be caught, tortured, killed, and eaten by a cat, nor does a human have the right to not be mauled and eaten by a bear. (Both have the right to fight back against the attack.)

So, the androids would need to first demonstrate that they have rights by the way they interact with each other (ignoring the outliers like we would hope they ignore human bad guys), then maybe we could reach an agreement between our two species where we agree to respect each other's rights as though we were the same species. I would be willing.