Inimitable Human Intelligence
and
The Truth on Morality

Less than two decades ago, Hollywood films brought unimaginable modern creations to life, such as 3D projectors and flying cars. In fairy tales, magical spells are cast to make ordinary everyday objects do their jobs unsupervised. Sure, these ideas were introduced to us as elements of our imagination, but in our world today, we have technologically advanced so far that these ideas hardly seem far-fetched anymore. But as the field of A.I expands, questions as to whether or not machines can be considered to have genuine human intelligence are coming into light. Through examining the capabilities of A.I, the meaning of true intelligence, and the ethical dilemmas involved in this field, I will defend the position that machines do not possess true human intelligence and that they should not have moral rights.

Artificial intelligence is defined as the ability for a machine or program to do a task that, if accomplished by a human, would require a certain level of intelligence. However, it is not the definition of A.I, but the definition of intelligence that will drive the purpose of this essay. What does it mean to possess genuine intelligence? As a living being, my senses gather data and pass this data to my brain through electrochemical impulses, which allows me to respond to my surrounding environment. Comparably, a machine seems to do the same thing. A server processes an input and an output response follows. So what is the difference between human and computer intelligence? Is there one?

The first argument against the ability for A.I to possess genuine human-like intelligence stems from an examination of the actual capabilities of A.I machines. It is important to think about what exactly these machines are doing when they mimic human capabilities. Fundamentally, machines operate in binary, performing calculations using only ones and zeros. In John Searle's Chinese Room thought experiment, he reasons that though machines are able to perform functions, these functions are meaningless to them. Take, for example, a man trapped in a room with nothing but paper, pencils, and a Chinese syllabus allowing him to match given phrases to appropriate output responses. The person in the room could, theoretically, make a Chinese speaker outside the room believe they can speak Chinese by accurately responding to their messages, but the person would not actually understand Chinese. Similarly, a computer, no matter how effectively it is able to mimic human intelligence, does not really understand what it is doing.

Opposers of the Chinese Room may argue that it is not the person trapped in the room who understands Chinese, but rather the system as a whole. However, it is neither the system nor the person that understands Chinese since the system has no understanding of the output it is generating - the system only allows for a response to be possible. To the system, the output response is meaningless, even though a recipient of this message who speaks Chinese would be able to extract meaning from the phrase. If this is the case, then how can we come close to comparing human intelligence with that of machines? Thus, no matter how advanced A.I becomes, its intelligence will always be, at most, artificial and not genuine.

Moreover, the methods of acquisition of intelligence are just as important as what that intelligence allows us to accomplish. Human intelligence is unique because it is self-learned from the start. From birth, we observe the people and processes around us to build layers of knowledge that eventually make up our intellect and allow us to do complex actions. A.I machines, on the other hand, have their 'intelligence' programmed into them, which automatically distinguishes their intelligence from that of humans. Even if A.I machines are able to gather sense data from their environment and 'learn' from their surroundings, they are programmed to do so, whereas humans do so automatically. Intelligent beings should be able to display basic 'survival' skills (such as observation and reaction) without instruction. I would argue that all intelligence exhibited from A.I machines is simply a reflection of the intelligence of their creator.

While opposers could assert that humans are taught just as computers are instructed, I would argue that responsibility falls upon the individual to learn, while an inanimate machine is simply given its intelligence. Even more, not all intelligence involves being able to collect and express knowledge, but rather the ability to reason. Rationalist philosophers such as Plato and Descartes both doubt senses as primary sources of knowledge as they are unreliable and wear down over time. If we remove the use of our senses as sources of knowledge, we are left with reason and intuition - two human qualities that make us intelligent beings. The 'gut feeling' that people sometimes get when there is something wrong cannot be paralleled in a machine. Humanity cannot be paralleled. Machines do not have genuine human intelligence.

Issues regarding the ethics of A.I development spark another interesting debate. Even if we could build these intelligent machines, should we? There are worries that creating machines with human capacities would undermine the meaning of humanity. Would it be ethical to make machines that look human and possess human intelligence? If we were to make such advanced A.I, it would be our responsibility to enforce tight regulation and ensure that there is a clear line between human rights and the treatment of A.I. One of the most important ways this can be done is to hold off on creating A.I that mimic human appearance. The fact is that moral agency is often attributed to human-resembling machines solely because of their appearance. But if we take all the abilities of a robot and put it into something that evokes less meaning for us, for example, a toilet, would we still be concerned about its morality?

To determine if A.I should have moral rights is to determine if they are morally considerable beings. That is, a being who can be wronged. Since a morally considerable being is defined, for the purposes of this essay, as a being who can be wronged, I will attempt to establish why a machine cannot be wronged. A machine cannot be wronged because of its inability to feel pain, whether it is physical or sentimental. When we say that someone has wronged another being, it means that the person has extracted a sentiment of hurt from its victim. Morality itself is a manmade definition. We have defined what is right or wrong based on the fact that some actions, such as killing and lying, hurt others. Kierkegaard would even suggest that our morality is a result of our accountability to God. But since A.I do not have the ability to feel these sentiments or have their own moral values (whether religiously or societally based), they would only be

able to know that they have been morally wronged because of the programmed definitions of wrongdoing that we have created as a society. They themselves would never actually feel hurt. Furthermore, the proverbial saying goes: "Those who give are those who get." If A.I do not have understanding of their actions or the ability to reason, how can we trust them to be morally conscious? Thus, they are not morally considerable beings and therefore should not have moral rights.

A counterargument to this claim would be that many beings do not consciously act morally. Babies and animals, for instance, do not live with a moral understanding of their actions. Does that mean it is morally right to wrong them? What differentiates babies and animals from machines is that they have the ability to feel suffering. When a dog is conditioned to receive a treat everyday, but is one day suddenly deprived of this expectation, the dog will feel disappointment. In addition, babies have the potential to feel emotionally hurt when they grow older. Therefore, the recipients of moral rights are not always those who reciprocate, but rather those who either feel hurt when wronged or who have the potential to do so at a later stage of life.

However much A.I machines exhibit outward intelligence that can be harnessed to advance society, there still exist key distinctions that make human intelligence unique. Unlike A.I, humans have the capacity to understand the essence of what they are doing and extract meaning from their actions. Additionally, human intelligence is a product of our own selves and not solely comprised of consciously developed thoughts, but also unconscious reason and intuition. Undoubtedly, A.I will hold a large presence in the

future of our world; it is up to us to decide how we will handle this powerful tool responsibly. One can never know what the future holds for the age of technological advancement, but let us cherish the one thing that mechanical minds can never take away from us: the authenticity of humanity.