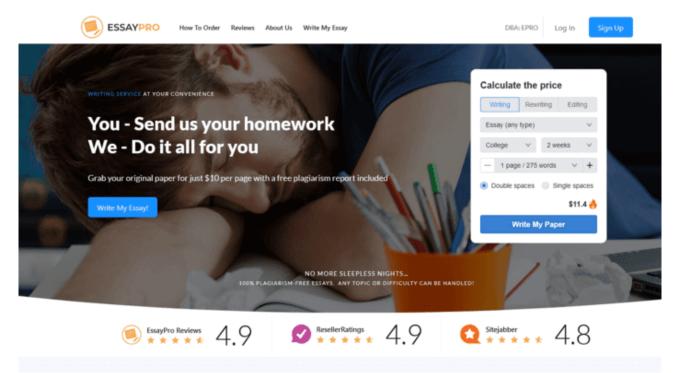# Subjective Intelligence

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Subjective Intelligence

The human aspiration to create intelligent machines has appeared in myth and literature for thousands of years, from stories of Pygmalion to the tales of the Jewish Golem. After thousands of years of fantasy, the appearance of the digital computer, with its native, human-like ability to process symbols, made it seem that the myth of man-made intelligence could become reality. However, when will we know when we have reached that critical point when a machine becomes a mind? What is it that distinguishes real intelligence from the mere processing of symbols and interpretation of stimuli? When is intelligence achieved? To answer these questions one needs a concrete definition of intelligence in order to formulate the criteria necessary to evaluate the intellectual capability of machines and men.

Webster's dictionary defines intelligence as, "The ability to learn and understand."[1] This is a very broad definition and allows for as much interpretation as the concept we are trying to define. Furthermore, this definition fails to account for the full range of cognition that the human brain is capable of. Webster's definition does not account for the critical aspects of emotion, free will and personality.

A second definition given by the Encarta encyclopedia is the "general mental capability to reason, solve problems, think abstractly, learn and understand new material and profit from past experience."[2] All of these are traits of the human mind. Therefore it would follow that if a machine does not possess one of these human characteristics it cannot be considered intelligent. Furthermore, it necessitates that an intelligent machine must be human-like. If this is so, a machine could then be described with the same qualifying words we use to describe a human. Is a machine then bright, smart, stupid or clever?

If we define intelligence as ""a likeness to the human mind,"" the human characteristics that Webster failed to capture in its definition, are encompassed in a separate humanistic definition of intelligence. However, where Webster and Encarta are too broad, the humanistic definition may be too tight. It is commonly agreed that humans are all intelligent beings, however it does not necessarily follow that humans are the only intelligent beings. Therefore by defining intelligence in such a way one could be ruling out different forms of intelligence that are intelligent by nature, but then not by definition.

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