

# DS4LAW

## Workshop 1: Algorithms (foundations)

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Maastricht University

Institute of Data Science

# A little about me

- Born and bred in South Africa
- Trained as a Computer Scientist
- BSc & MSc in Pretoria
- PhD in Manchester
- Industry - **creating algorithms** (mobile applications)
- 1st Postdoc in Maastricht



“In theory, there is no difference between theory and practice, in practice, there is.” - [Jan L. A. Van De Snepscheut \(Caltech\)](#)

# A little about you?

- Brief introduction (name & affiliation)
- What is your interest: DS4LAW or LAW4DS?
- Experience with algorithms
- What you hope to gain from the session

# Aims

- Basic literacy of algorithms in the context of Computer Science
- LAW4DS:
  - Understanding mechanisms of algorithms can aid formulation of good questions about their regulation
  - Intuition for distinguishing between true & apparent algorithmic intelligence
- DS4LAW:
  - Theoretical foundations of algorithms & role in computer science
  - Basic practical experience with creating & implementing algorithms

# Roadmap

## Mostly talking

- Part 1A: Algorithms are all around us...but what exactly are they?
- Part 1B: Algorithms in Computer Science
- Part 2: Real examples of algorithms
- Part 3: Ethical significance of algorithms

## Mostly doing

- Python programming in Jupyter notebooks
- Write and test some algorithms!

## Part 1A

Algorithms are all around us...but what are they?

# Definition for Algorithm

“a set of rules that must be followed when solving a particular problem.”

- [Oxford Learner's Dictionary](#)

“A set of specific, step-by-step instructions for taking an input and converting [it] into an output.”

- John Danaher, [The Philosophical Importance of Algorithms](#), 2015.

**In short: “a set of step-by-step instructions for executing a task.”**

# Examples

## Making a peanut butter & jelly sandwich

1. Get a piece of bread
2. Spread peanut butter on it
3. Get another piece of bread
4. Spread jelly on it
5. Put the two pieces of bread together

Who is issuing the instructions?

Who is executing the instructions?

What are the inputs & outputs of the algorithm?





# Examples

Shampooing hair

**Anything strange about  
this algorithm?**

Who is issuing the instructions?  
Who is executing the instructions?

What are the inputs & outputs  
of the algorithm?



## Part 1B

# Algorithms in Computer Science





# Route finding algorithms

Institute of Data Science, Universiteitss

Maastricht University Faculty of Law, Bo

Leave now

OPTIONS

Send directions to your phone

8:36 PM—9:04 PM

28 min

>

5

>

3 / 4

8:41 PM from Maastricht, MUMC

6 min

every 30 min

DETAILS

8:26 PM—8:54 PM

28 min

>

Stoptrein RS12

>

Stoptrein RS18

>

8:36 PM—9:05 PM

29 min

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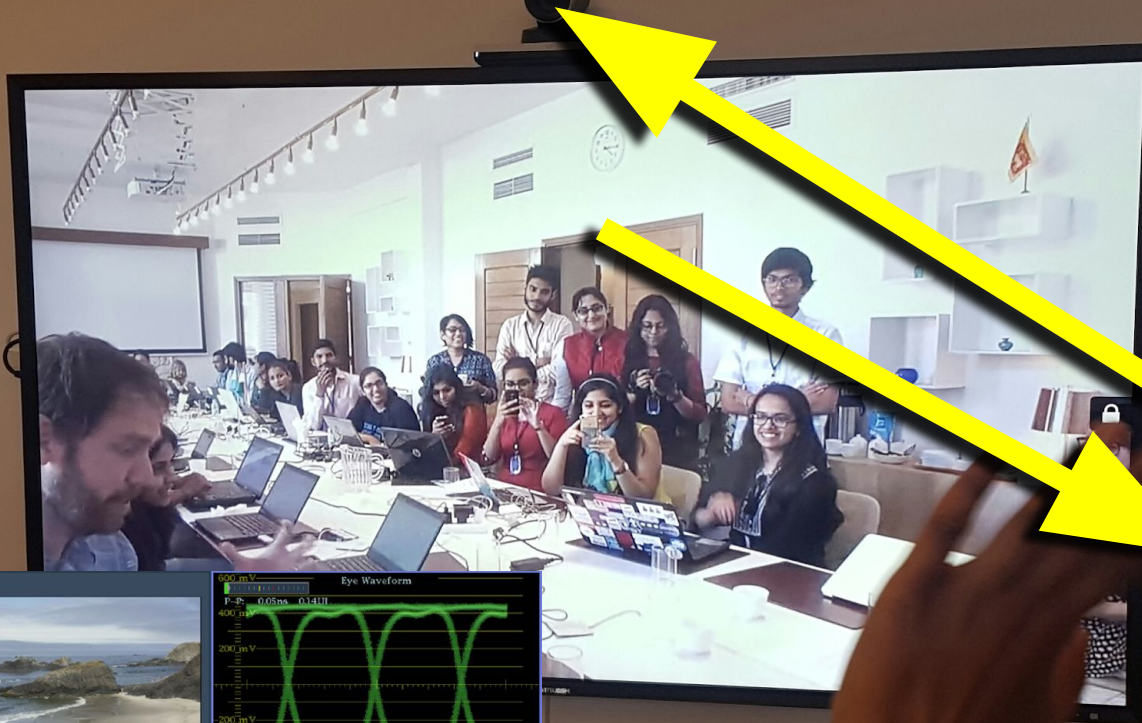
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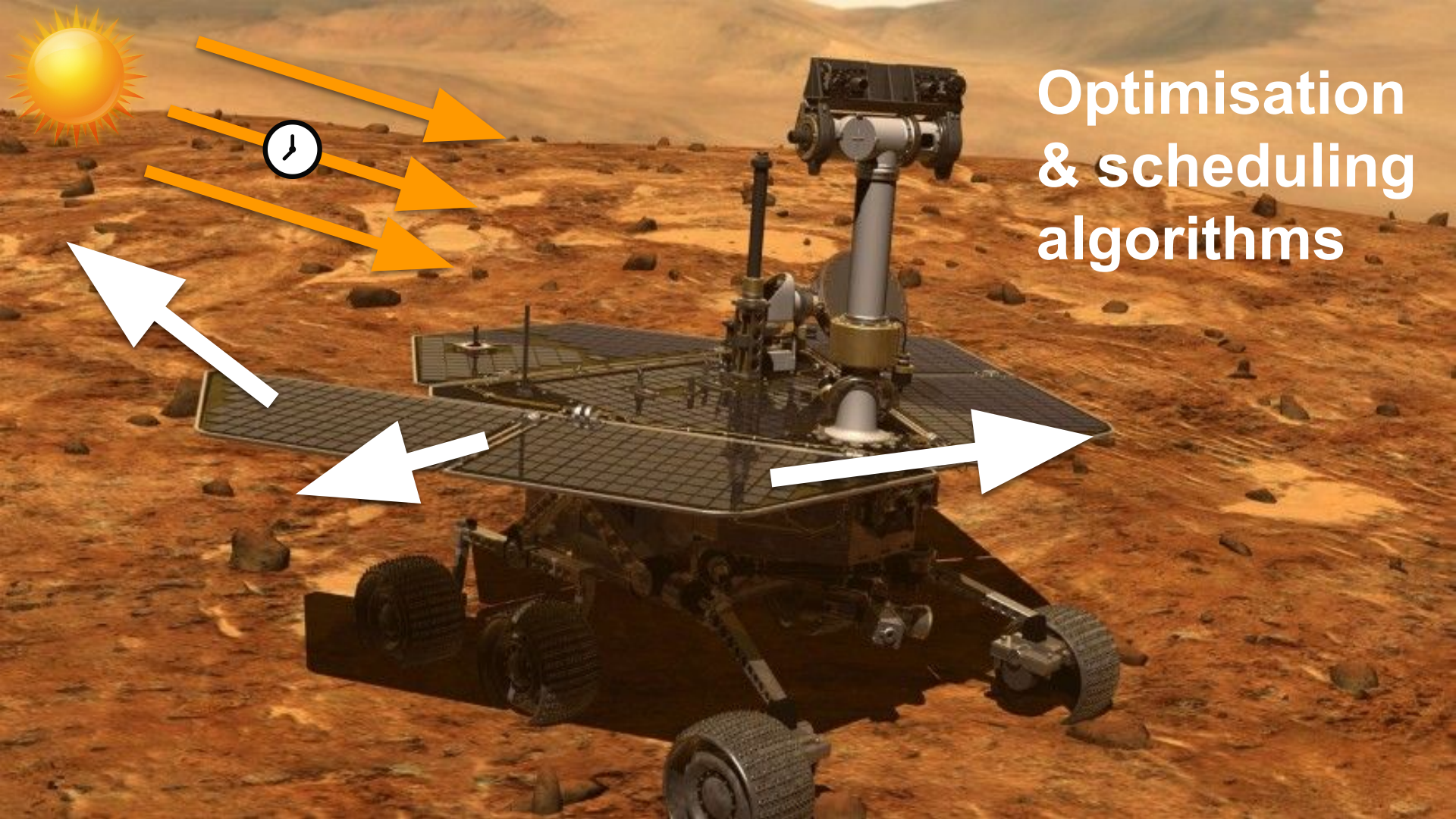
SCHEDULE EXPLORER

The map displays Maastricht, Netherlands, with a red dashed line indicating a search area. Two main routes are highlighted: a green route and a blue route. The green route starts at the Maastricht University Faculty of Law (red pin) and ends at the Institute of Data Science (blue pin), with a travel time of 28 minutes every 30 minutes. The blue route starts at the Maastricht University Faculty of Law (red pin) and ends at the Maastricht, MUMC (blue pin), with a travel time of 29 minutes every 12 minutes. The blue route also has a segment from Maastricht, MUMC to the Institute of Data Science, with a travel time of 28 minutes every 30 minutes. The map includes various landmarks such as the Maastricht University Faculty of Law, Maastricht, MUMC, and the Institute of Data Science. It also shows the Maastricht Underground and the Maastricht University Faculty of Law. The map is sourced from Google Maps, with data from 2019.

# Audio & Video compression algorithms







Optimisation  
& scheduling  
algorithms

# Contract review using Machine Learning algorithms



Upload Document

Noorybe

## Non-common clauses (1)



Non-Solicitation/Compete

## Common but Important Clauses (7)



- Exclusion - Prior Knowledge
- Exclusion - Information from Third Party
- Exclusion - Public Domain
- Exclusion - Independent Development
- Ownership
- No Other Rights
- No Reverse Engineering

## Missing clauses (1)



Right to Independently Develop

Print

Save



5. No-Competition. The Participant hereby agrees that he shall not compete with the business of the Company, or its successors or assigns, during the term of this Agreement and for 24 months following the termination or expiration. The term "not compete" as used in this Agreement means that Participant shall not directly or indirectly, as an owner, director, employee, consultant, or stockholder, engage in a business that is substantially similar or competitive to the business of the Company.

6. Neither party shall disclose the existence or terms of this Agreement to any third party, the name, trademark, service mark or logo of the other party, or any publicity, advertising or information, which is disseminated to any person or to the general public without the other party's prior written approval which shall not be unreasonably withheld.



7. Each party agrees that the Confidential Information is and shall remain the sole property of the disclosing party. Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed to require the parties to enter into an Arrangement to grant either party any right, interest, or license in or under any patent, trademark, copyright, trade secret or other proprietary right or information owned by or licensed to the other party, whether or not it is part of the Confidential Information.



8. Neither party shall reverse engineer, decompile, disassemble, or otherwise attempt to chemically analyze, modify or create derivative works based on the Confidential Information provided hereunder in tangible form, without limitation, any product, sample, prototype, electronic data, or composition or equipment.

9. Each party represents that it believes that it owns the Confidential Information it is disclosing and has the right to make such disclosure.



## Non-Solicitation/Compete

### For your attention

This is a non-common clause and appears only in less than **25%** of NDAs.

This clause may include a limitation on a party's ability to solicit employees from the other party or to compete with the business of the other party.

### What does this clause mean?

This clause may include a limitation on a party's ability to solicit employees from the other party or to compete with the business of the other party. Because NDAs are typically signed at an early stage in the relationship and are often followed by a more comprehensive commercial agreement, the parties to the NDA typically do not include this type of limitation.



# Unfair clause detection using Machine Learning

## CLAUDETTE

### An Automated Detector of Potentially Unfair Clauses

Claudette found 2 potentially unfair clauses (displayed in **bold**) out of 16 sentences.  
By hovering your cursor over each unfair sentence, you can see the most likely unfairness category.

[...]

**Spotify may change the price for the Paid Subscriptions, including recurring subscription fees, the Pre-Paid Period (for periods not yet paid), or Codes, from time to time and will communicate any price changes to you in advance and, if**  
... changes.

Contract by Using unfair clause

**Subject to applicable law, you accept the new price by continuing to use the Spotify Service after the price change takes effect.**

[...]

Share link

Save results

Try Again

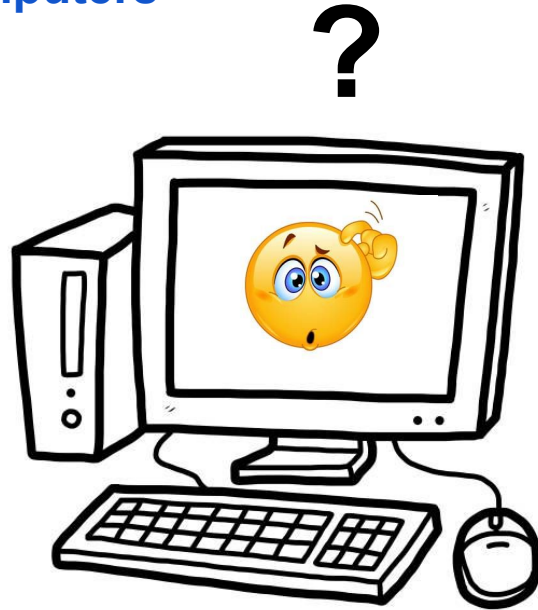
Contact



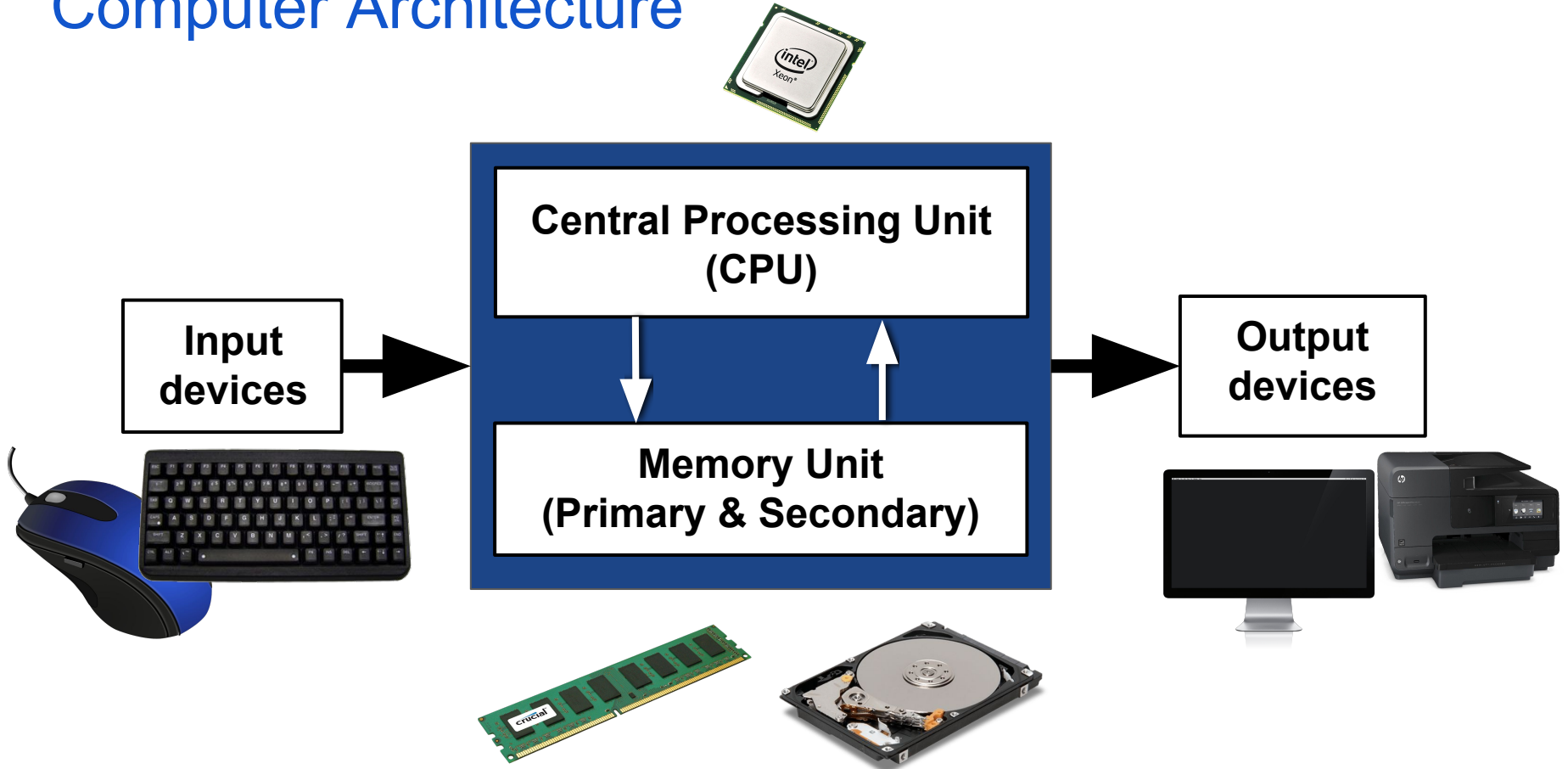
# Algorithms in Computer Science

Who is issuing the instructions? **Humans**

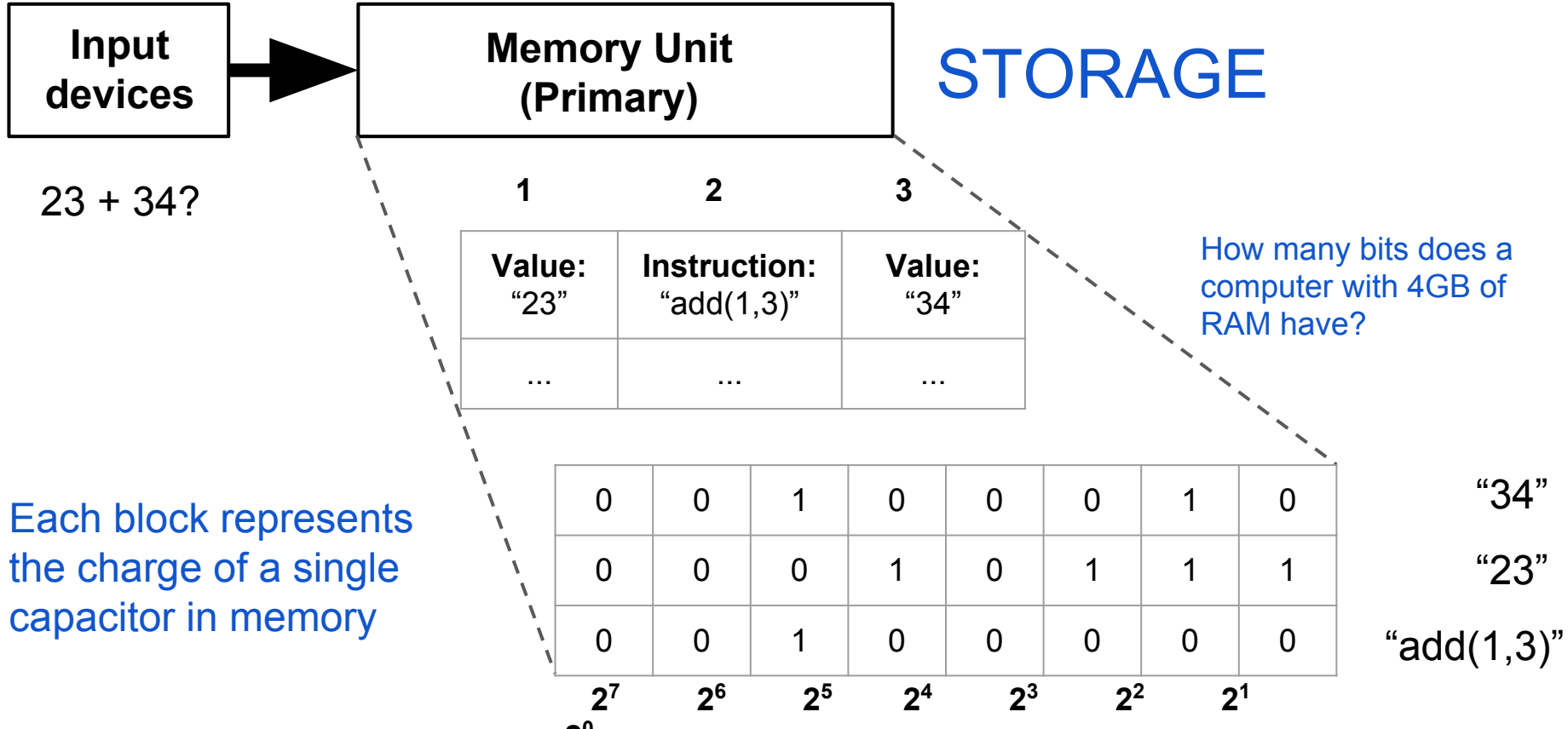
Who is executing the instructions? **Computers**



# Computer Architecture

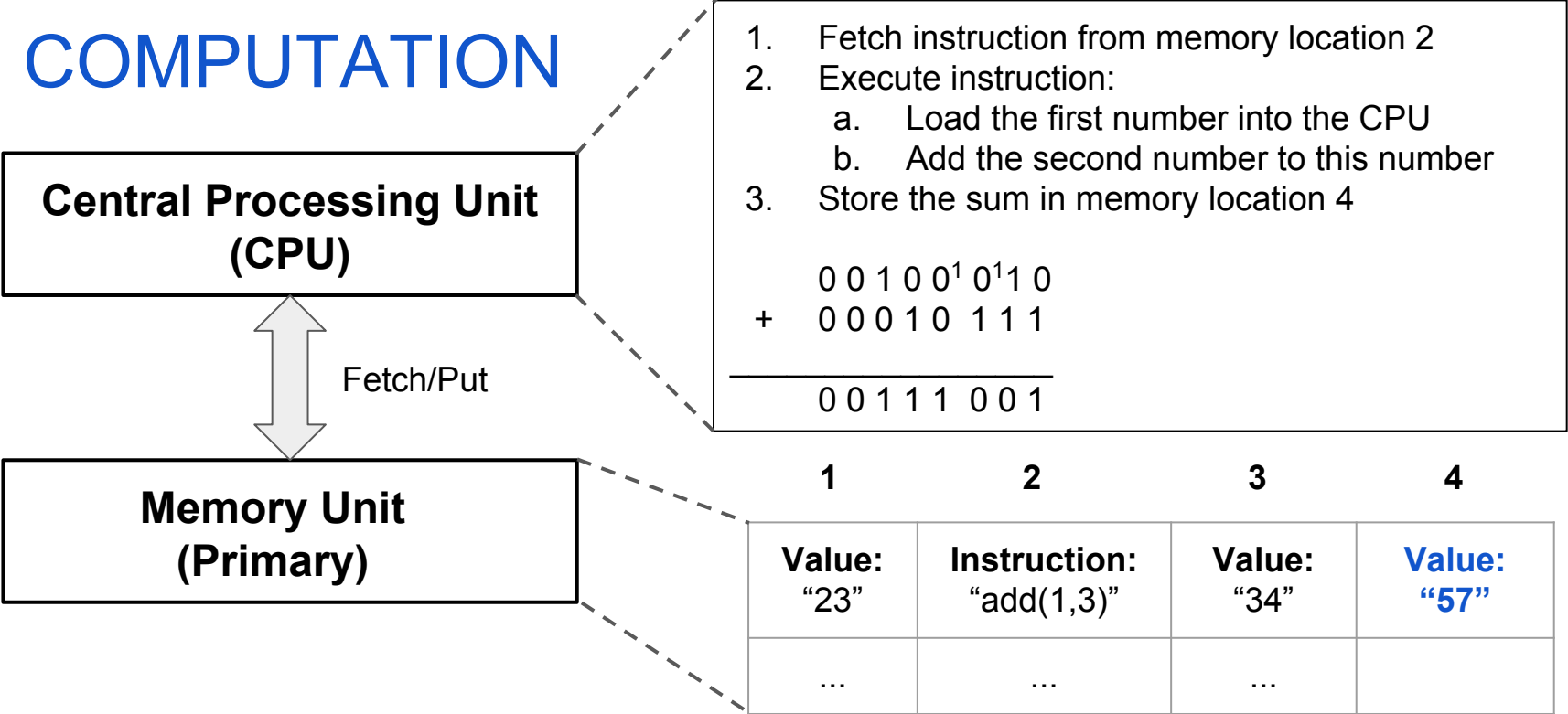


# Computer Architecture



# Computer Architecture

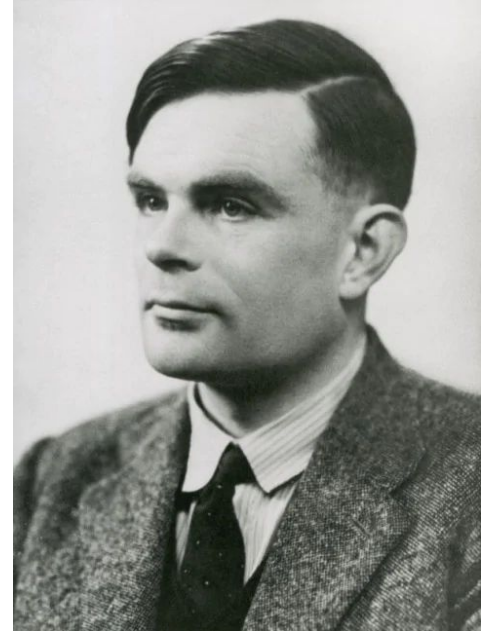
## COMPUTATION



# Computer Architecture

Modern computers using Turing's model of computation

- Described by a Turing machine
- Any algorithm that you can conceive of and execute as a human being, can be represented as a set of operations in a Turing machine.



# Example (square root)

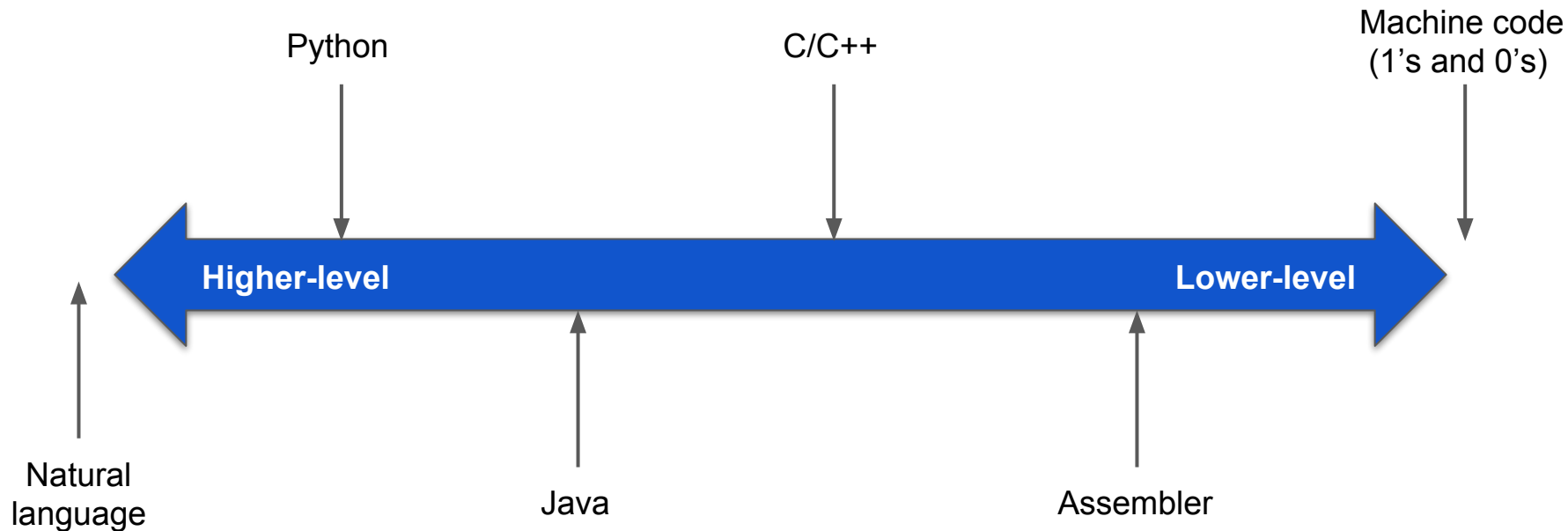
What is the square root of a given number?

Try it out with “9”!

Put input number here				
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

1. Write 0 in box (2)
2. Increment (2)
3. Write 0 in box (3)
4. Copy number in (2) to box (4)
5. If box (4) contains 0, go to step 12.
6. Decrement (4)
7. Copy number in (2) to box (5)
8. If box (5) contains 0, go to step 5.
9. Decrement (5)
10. Increment (3)
11. Go to step 8.
12. If number in (3) not greater than number in (1), go to step 2.
13. Decrement (2)

# Programming languages



# Programming languages

Python

```
a = 83  
b = -2  
c = a + b
```

Java

```
int a, b, c;  
a = 83;  
b = -2;  
c = a + b;
```

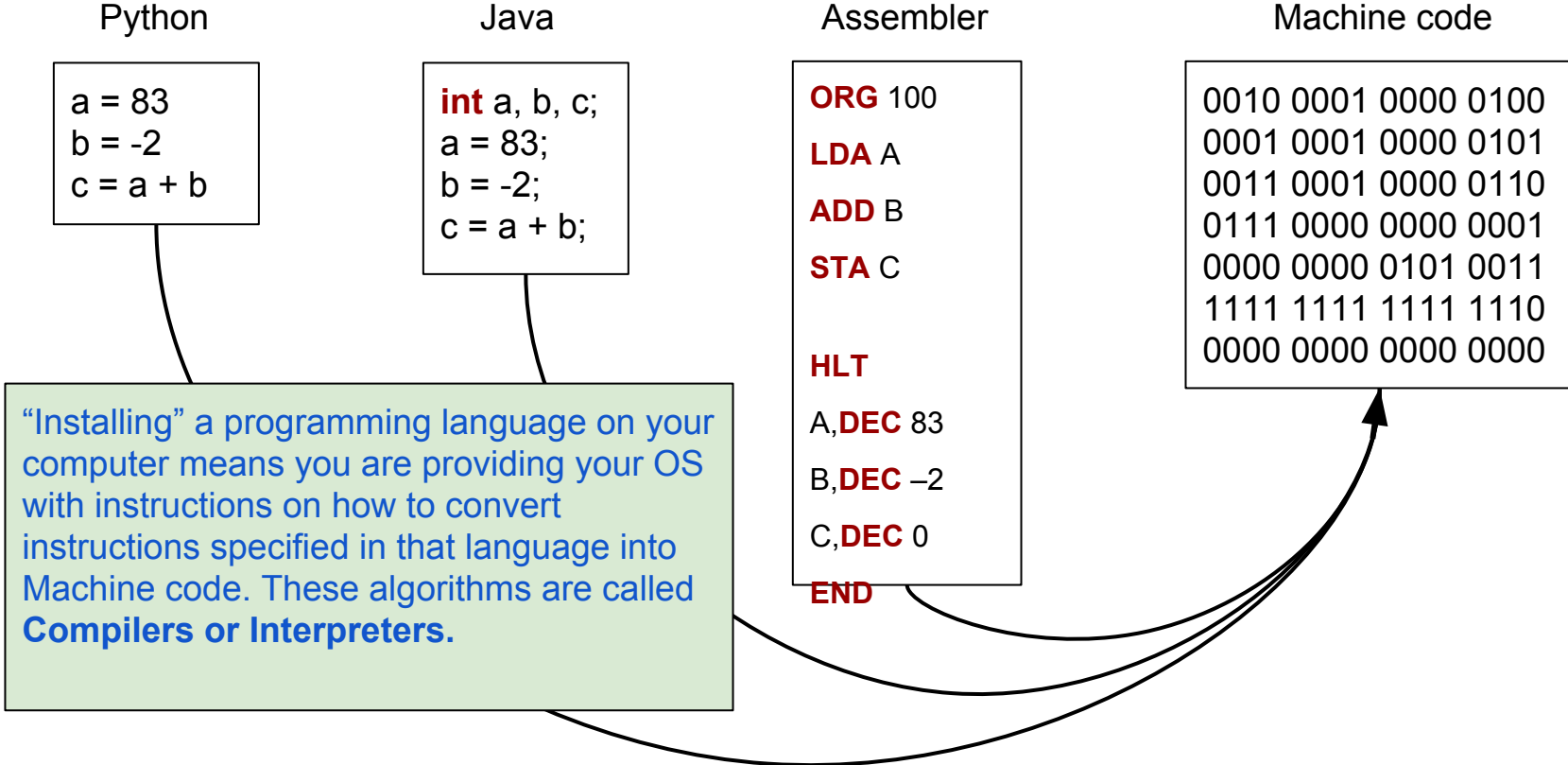
Assembler

```
ORG 100  
  
LDA A  
ADD B  
STA C  
  
HLT  
  
A, DEC 83  
B, DEC -2  
C, DEC 0  
  
END
```

Machine code

```
0010 0001 0000 0100  
0001 0001 0000 0101  
0011 0001 0000 0110  
0111 0000 0000 0001  
0000 0000 0101 0011  
1111 1111 1111 1110  
0000 0000 0000 0000
```

“Installing” a programming language on your computer means you are providing your OS with instructions on how to convert instructions specified in that language into Machine code. These algorithms are called **Compilers or Interpreters**.





## Part 2

Real examples of algorithms

## Find the largest number in a list

Judge name	Number of cases
Ilešič	266
Jann	280
Schockweiler	251
Moitinho de Almeida	272
Toader	263
Rosas	284
Silva de Lapuerta	252
Gulmann	255

# Find the largest number in a list

Number of cases
266
280
251
272
263
284
252
255

- Input: ?
- Output: ?
- Instructions: ?

# Find the largest number in a list

Number of cases
266
280
251
272
263
284
252
255

- Input: list of numbers e.g.  
266,280,251,272,263,284,252,255
- Output: largest number in the list e.g. 284
- Outline of algorithm:
  - Assume the first number in the list is the largest
  - Consider each number in the list one-by-one from top to bottom
  - While we do this, if the current number being looked at is larger than the current largest number, consider this number to be the new largest
  - Stop when we get to the end of the list



# Sort a list of numbers from smallest to largest

Number of cases
266
280
251
272
263
284
252
255

- Input: ?
- Output: ?
- Instructions: ?

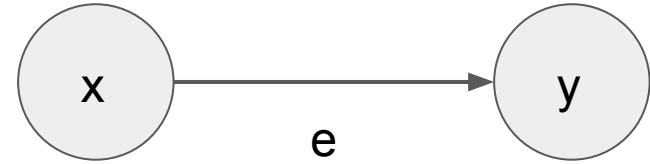
# Sort a list of numbers from smallest to largest

Number of cases
266
280
251
272
263
284
252
255

- Input: list of numbers e.g.  
266,280,251,272,263,284,252,255
- Output: list of numbers sorted ascending order e.g.  
251,252,255,263,266,272,280,284
- Outline of algorithm:
  - Create a new empty list
  - Find smallest number in input list and add it to end of the new list
  - Remove number in previous step from input list
  - Repeat Steps 2 and 3 until input list is empty

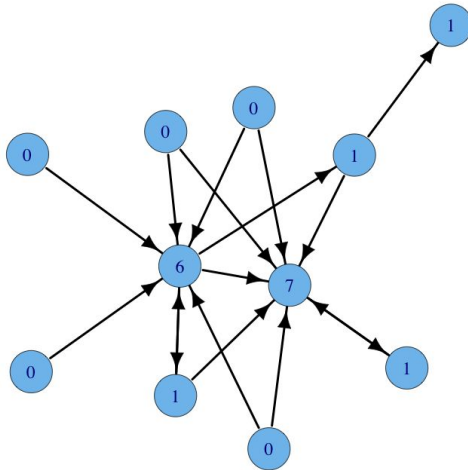


# Network Analysis

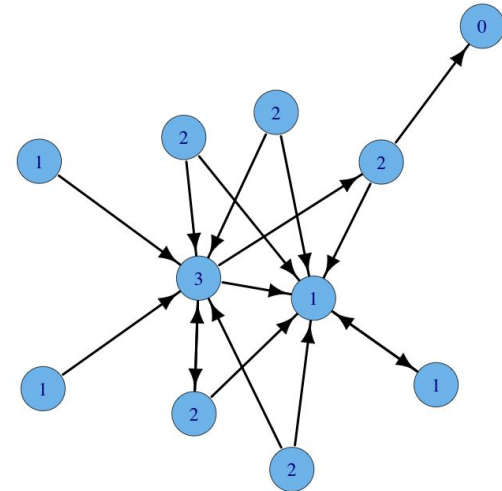


```
int calculate_indegree(graph g, vertex v):  
    count = 0  
    for each e in g.getAllEdges():  
        if e.y == v:  
            count++  
    return count
```

```
int calculate_outdegree(graph g, vertex v):  
    count = 0  
    for each e in g.getAllEdges():  
        if e.x == v:  
            count++  
    return count
```



**Nodes = court decisions**  
**Edges = citations**



## Part 3

Ethical significance of algorithms



# Algorithm transparency

“Algorithms are not arbiters of objective truth and fairness simply because they're math.” - **Zoe Quinn**



- Transparency is a challenge with more complex algorithms (especially with ML)
- Decision-making algorithms (implications for **liability**)
- Vs. Algorithms **used** in decision-making
- Dichotomy: what an algorithm actually does and what it is **claimed** or **advertised** to do (**BEWARE OF HYPE - the truth is often far less impressive**)

# Algorithms using deductive vs. inductive reasoning

- Bob likes hockey
- Bob has a systolic pressure reading of 150
- His favourite colour is green
- He works for the US Navy
- Bob's father, Daniel, was admitted to hospital in 1999 with a systolic pressure reading of 180
- Daniel also worked for the US Navy
- Anna was chief of cardiology in the general hospital
- Daniels father took medication for hypertension
- Bob's mother, Anna, had a normal systolic pressure reading of 110
- Systolic pressure readings between 100 - 120 are normal, anything above 120 is considered high
- Having hypertension, and a family history of it, means you are at risk of a heart attack
- If you have high systolic pressure, it means that you have hypertension

Is Bob at risk of a heart attack?

# Algorithms using deductive vs. inductive reasoning

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- If you have high systolic pressure, it means that you have hypertension

Is Bob at risk of a heart attack? **YES!**

**Deduction**

# Algorithms using deductive vs. inductive reasoning

- I saw three swans at the park
- All three were black
- I will go to the zoo tomorrow to see more swans
- What colour will they be?

# Algorithms using deductive vs. inductive reasoning

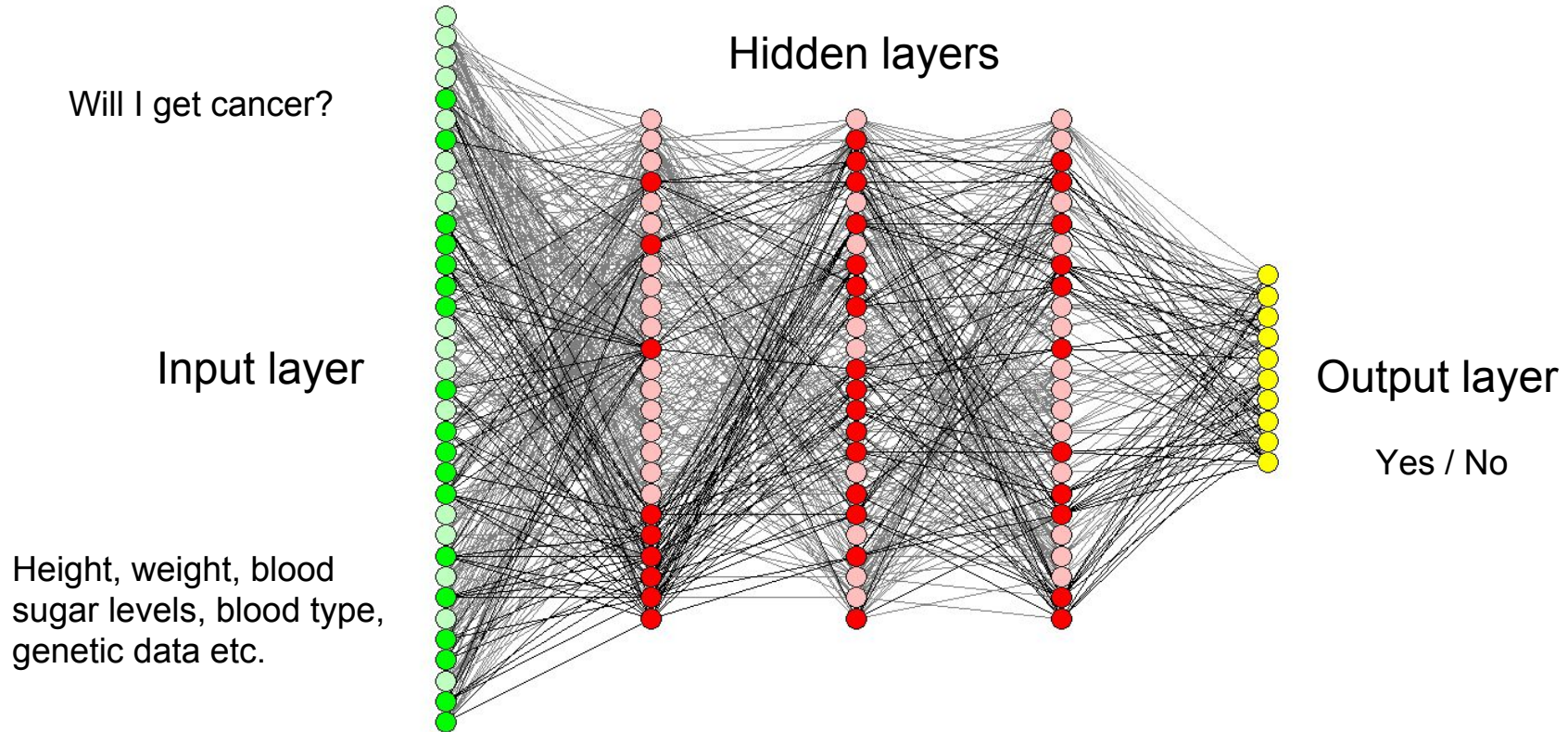
- I saw three swans at the park
- All three were black
- I will go to the zoo tomorrow to see more swans
- What colour will they be?

**Black (probably)**

**UNCERTAINTY, Lack of  
complete information**

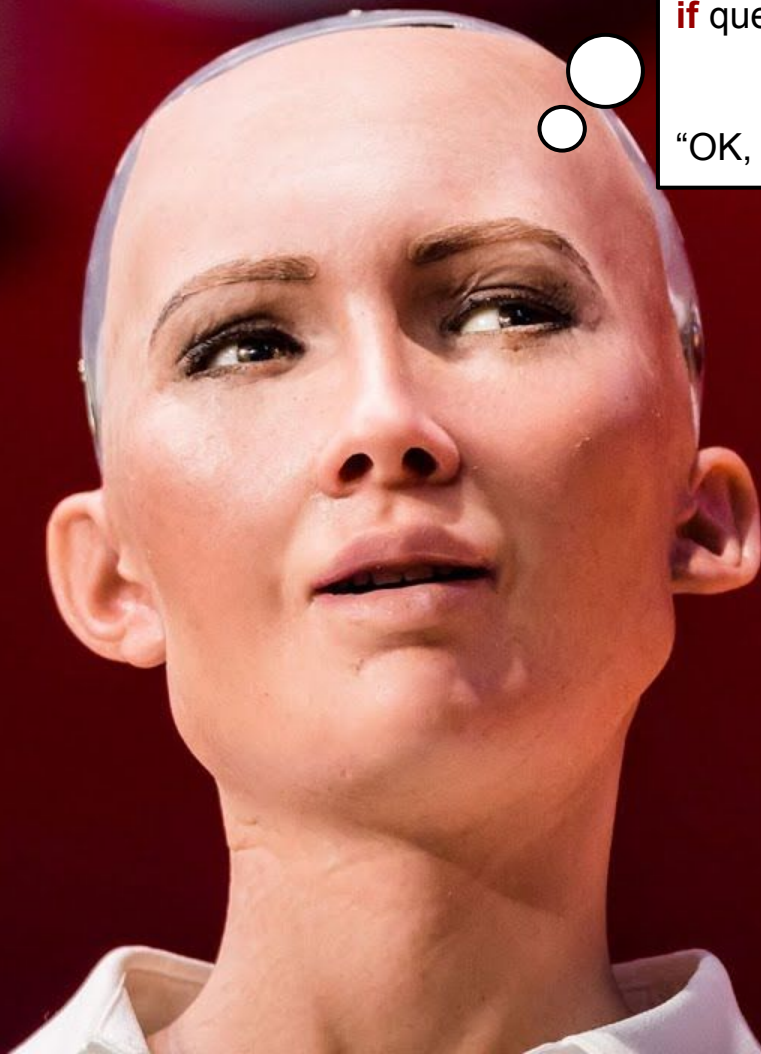
**Induction (a form of generalisation)**

# Algorithms using deductive vs. inductive reasoning





**“OK, I WILL  
DESTROY  
HUMANS”**

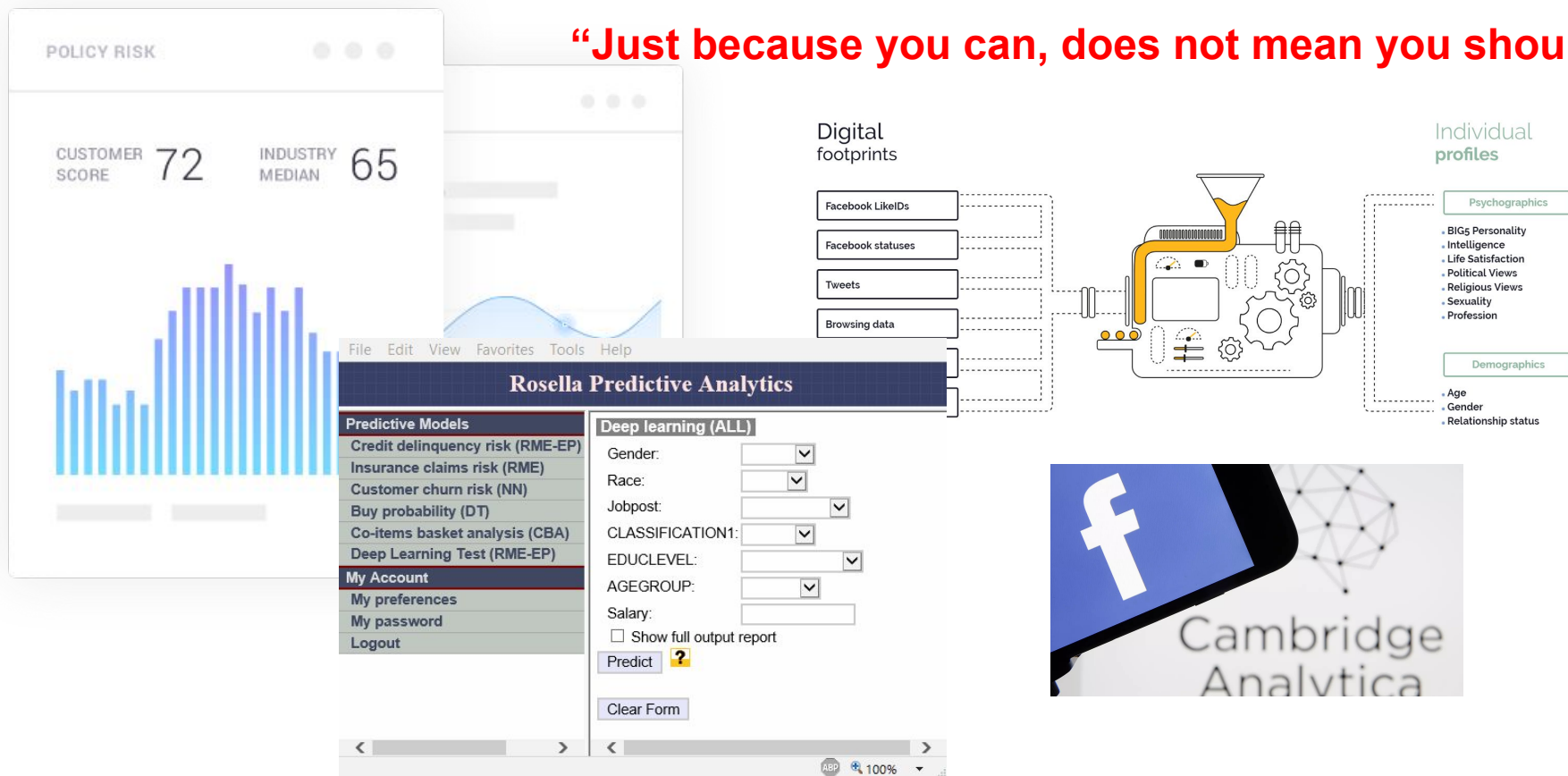


**if** question about humans:  
**if** person is smiling:  
**say:**  
“OK, I will destroy humans”



# Ethical application of algorithms

**“Just because you can, does not mean you should”**





# Summary

- Algorithms are step-by-step instructions for executing a task
- Issuing algorithmic instructions to computers requires a special language:
  - Computers, on their lowest-level, are only able to manipulate data represented in a binary language (0's and 1's)
  - Humans have created 'high-level' programming languages to help us communicate with computers more concisely
  - Compilers (algorithms for translating instructions from 'high-level' programming languages into computer language) make 'high-level' communication with computers possible
- Algorithms are usually developed in a modular way so they can be reused in other algorithms

## Summary (cont.)

- Algorithms can be classified according to the problems they try to solve as well as the kinds of procedures used to solve them
- Ethical issues with algorithms are affecting society:
  - Lack of transparency in the algorithm's steps (e.g. Machine Learning)
  - Uncertainty in information doesn't stop attempts to predict (with algorithms)
  - Fundamental questions of whether algorithms (and automation in general) should be applied to solve certain problems (social implications etc.)