

Essay #1: My Understanding of A.I. and life

Analysis of Weekly media:

Reading the article ‘We’ve got human intelligence all wrong’ and after reading chapter 1 from the textbook, I now feel that there is so much more to human intelligence which further distinguishes us from other animals. The article touches on some particular dimensions which I did not take into account and further related back to the textbook. The example of bees and their memory really stuck out to me because it made me realize that awareness of the past, present, and future is a very distinct ability that us humans have over any other animals. The articles explanation of episodic memory helps to explain how our intelligence vastly differs from other forms of life. I feel this dimension of intelligence is crucial too because it propels us in life to try new things and draw from our past experiences. Since intelligence is the ability to learn in new ways to handle new trying situations (as described in textbook for COSC490), having the ability to remember years into the past, and foresee many years to come into the future, I believe this is what allows us to continue to thrive in society.

Another contrast the article defines is brain size amongst different animals. Because as humans our brains are bigger, we can process more information quickly and multi-task. The article also describes probably the biggest distinction in our mental functions: our expression. Even though other animals such as bees, elephants, and birds’ have the ability to communicate, none of those animals can communicate as thoroughly and concise as humans can. As stated above, since we can recall past events we can also communicate about past events. This article makes me question why is it that our intelligence is vastly superior to that of other animals? I understand that they are intelligent in their own right, but it seems that our intelligence allows us

to further advance our race to a point where we can predict our lifespan based on how we live our lives.

Analysis of Weekly reading:

The reading in the textbook discusses intelligence in several different manners but also asks many interesting questions that further warrant discussion. In the text, it is presented that we create agents with intelligence and these agents then act out and carry on what they do. The text then asks “what if these agents could design an experiment to test their own reality” which made me realize how vast the meaning of intelligence is. Not only is it available in this physical world, but we can also manifest it artificially to where an “agent” can think for itself. Since it is possible the agents can question their reality, test to see if it is real, get a result, I believe we as humans can come close to testing whether our reality is actually real or just a simulation.

The reading from the textbook also ask an interesting question on page 4: What would make a human or artificial program want to inquire or figure out if their reality is real or not? Then asking if it could be a “natural inquisitiveness”. This question makes me feel that perhaps natural curiosity is common amongst all types of life. Whether the life is artificial or real, if the lifeform has the ability to think, then it also has the ability to question and wonder. A bird for example might not be able to question its own existence, but it can be skeptical if it looks at some bushes and sees movement that is quick and loud. In terms of the topic on A.I., I believe this is very important since we in society always need constant improvement for our functions (i.e. data transfer, medicine, education, finance, etc.) and A.I. can greatly help enhance productivity within these different fields. If the A.I. has the ability to make questions and wonder about even the decisions of their creators (us), then I believe that could mean the A.I. would be able to correct our mistakes that we would not have been able to quickly foresee.

The explanation of A.I. from the text and question on curiosity leads me to believe that being skeptical and wanting to know more is what propels animals and artificial beings in their development. I believe that if any type of lifeform is not curious, then it does not want to expand and learn from new experiences. Because A.I. is able to do this, I believe that is what allows our technology to advance further, which leads into my thoughts on space and the universe. If we know A.I. is able to think for itself and make decisions, does this mean that we can further advance this intelligence into space for even deeper findings?

I understand we have made countless explorations with planets, solar systems, and stars but in terms of finding other intelligence we have not found any. With how A.I. is able to survive with a power source and some sort of system, then maybe we as humans can propel A.I. into space to continuously monitor and search for other types of intelligence. I believe since A.I. as stayed in the text is like a child begging for attention, it still has many years to grow and prosper. In the future, I believe the discovery of new life will be much more attainable for humans with the coming advancements for A.I.

Both the media reading and chapter reading have expanded my knowledge on what exactly intelligence is and how vastly it differs amongst different walks of life. I feel that our major difference from other forms of life is that we have the ability to recognize what intelligence is whereas they are just oblivious and living off of their natural instinct. And because we have the ability to question not just about survival, but why things are the way they are, we are able to make significant advancements for ourselves with technology. It is what allows us to design experiments and actually create beings to handle our tasks. These readings have also given me more questions for further learning of A.I. such as: can created intelligence decide to defy the orders of their creator? Since we as humans create this being, can it in turn perform

more interpersonal care for our world such as teaching, fitness instructing, and more  
communitive aid in everyday life?