He who lets the world, or his own portion of it,
choose his plan of life for him,
has no need of any other faculty than the
ape-like one of imitation.

John Stuart Mill
[Deciding What's Right, page 3]

3

Alan Turing famously proposed the "***Imitation Game***," defining a machine as intelligent if it could deceive a human into believing it was human.

Alan Turing

Take any action allow'd to be vicious: **Wilful murder**, for instance. Examine it in all lights, and see if you can find that matter of fact, or real existence, which you call *vice*. In whichever way you take it, you find only certain passions, motives, volitions, and thoughts. There is no other matter of fact in the case. The *vice* entirely escapes you, as long as you consider the object. You never can find it, till you turn your reflection into your own breast, and find a sentiment of disapprobation, which arises in you, towards this action. Here is a matter of fact; but 'tis the object of feeling, not of reason. It lies in *yourself*, not in the object.

So that when you pronounce any action or character to be vicious, you mean nothing, but that from the constitution of your nature, you have a feeling or sentiment of blame from the contemplation of it. *Vice and virtue*, therefore, may be compar'd to sounds, colours, heat and cold, which according to modern philosophy, are not qualities in objects, but perceptions in the mind; and this discovery in morals, like that other of colours, sounds, heat and cold, is of the last consequence.

David Hume
[Theories of Ethics, page 6]

I cannot forbear adding to these reasonings an observation, which may, perhaps, be found of some importance. In every system of morality, which I have hitherto met with, I have always remark'd, that the author proceeds for some time in the ordinary way of reasoning, and establishes the being of a God, or makes observations concerning human affairs; when of a sudden I am surpriz'd to find, that instead of the usual copulations of propositions, *is* and *is not*, I meet with no proposition that is not connected with an *ought*, or an *ought not*. This change is imperceptible; but is, however, of the last consequence.

David Hume
[Theories of Ethics, page 7]

Unable to give an objective, reasoned justification for his own convictions, he may turn from dogmatic certainty to total skepticism. And from total skepticism it is but a short step to an "amoral" life... Thus the person who begins by accepting moral beliefs blindly can end up denying all morality.

Paul W. Taylor
[Deciding What's Right, page 3]