

## Artificial Intelligence: Is the Fear Real or Artificial?

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Tweet Summary: AI research should be pursued because of the contributions it can have, but kept in check because of its dangers.

Since the advent of computers, computation speed and power has increased significantly and rapidly. Today, most people carry an iPhone or an Android phone which dwarfs the power and speed of the earliest computers by a magnitude of thousands. The first computer, the ENIAC, was a monster, consuming tons of power, and ate a lot of space. The machine itself weighed thirty tons and was eighty feet long, while phones fit into our pockets. With this increasing computing power has come an increasing desire to make “smarter” computers; thus the field of Artificial Intelligence was created.

Artificial Intelligence is basically the field in which computers are made to be smarter, to be able to accomplish various kinds of tasks independently, only using their own perceptions. The biggest example of Artificial Intelligence in recent history is probably something like IBM’s Watson, which went onto *Jeopardy* and beat two of the show’s most successful participants. Watson was a machine designed to answer questions posed in natural human language. Watson, at the time, took up about as much physical space as a bedroom, compared to ENIAC’s eighty foot length.

A question which is often posed to the Artificial Intelligence community is whether or not creating an AI is ethically right, or safe. On one side of the issue, people like Elon Musk or Bill Gates are concerned about having machines as or more intelligent than

humans, saying that since human evolution is restricted by biology, and a machine's would not be, we would quickly be superseded by machines and wiped out or left behind, much like in *Terminator 2: Judgement Day*. On the other side are people such as Ray Kurzweil or Peter Diamandis who look forward to the advancements AI can bring. Using the present as an example, they look at advances like speech recognition, machine learning, and autonomous cars as good signs. Specifically, they say that if a machine becomes super smart, it can help us to better understand our own minds, allowing us to improve on ourselves.

The advances above refer more to a weaker form of Artificial Intelligence. The form of AI most people fear is called "Full AI" meaning the Intelligence created is at least as smart as people; it can reason on par with people. Most AI development is not in this sort of AI, and even Watson isn't close to a Full AI, because Watson does not reason like a person does, it just looks up information to answer questions. Full AI is dangerous, as it not only could spell the end of humanity as we know it, but raises huge ethical concerns: if a machine could be as smart as humans, but we limited it intentionally to keep it doing dumb work for us, is this a kind of slavery? As such, AI research should continue as is, since it can give so many incredible benefits along the lines of automation of tasks, but also kept in check to make sure we are being ethical in our choices, and being sure we also aren't wiping ourselves out in the process.