# Why People Think Computers Can't

Minsky, Marvin L.

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***BY: AIMAL KHAN (p20-0028)***

## 1 Summary

The paper "Why People Think Computers Can't" by Marvin L. Minsky explores the reasons why people think that computers cannot replicate human intelligence. The author argues that these beliefs are rooted in common misconceptions about the nature of intelligence, which he believes is not a single, fixed thing, but rather a collection of different abilities that can be simulated and emulated by computers. He explains that people often underestimate the complexity and diversity of human thinking and overestimate the uniqueness and originality of their own mental processes. He suggests that the best way to overcome these biases is to study and compare the different forms of intelligence found in humans and other animals, and to develop computer systems that can model and incorporate these diverse forms of intelligence.

Turing goes on to discuss the possibility of building machines that can learn, and he suggests that a machine can be made to learn by adjusting its weights according to feedback from its environment.

## 2 Opinion

The paper makes a compelling argument that people's beliefs about the limitations of computers are often based on a misunderstanding of the nature of intelligence. The author highlights the importance of studying and understanding the different forms of intelligence found in nature, and the potential for computers to emulate and surpass these forms. However, the paper was written in 1982 and some of the arguments and examples may be outdated or less relevant today. Additionally, the author does not address some of the more recent challenges and criticisms of artificial intelligence, such as the potential biases and limitations of machine learning algorithms.

## 3 Improvements

One way to improve the approach presented in the paper would be to incorporate more recent research on artificial intelligence and cognitive science. This could include a more nuanced understanding of the challenges and limitations of current AI systems, as well as a deeper exploration of the similarities and differences between human and machine intelligence. Additionally, the paper could benefit from more concrete examples and experiments that demonstrate the potential of AI to replicate and enhance different forms of intelligence.

## 4 Questions

1. How has the field of AI evolved since the publication of this paper, and what new challenges and opportunities exist today?

2. To what extent do biases and limitations in human intelligence limit our ability to create AI systems that can truly replicate human-level intelligence?

3. How can we best balance the potential benefits and risks of advanced AI systems, particularly in areas such as autonomous weapons and decision-making?