

## Homework 7 Part 2B

Q3. How can you prove that qualia is something that can or cannot be experienced by machines?

I maintain my stance that machines cannot experience qualia. The opposing team argued that machines are conscious, but their definition of consciousness was the ability to produce an output when given an input. The other team defined consciousness as exhibiting self-awareness, the ability to purposely choose to stray from a target task, and qualia. While my general stance has not changed that machines are not conscious, I now believe this question is open for interpretation. Humans cannot determine whether machines are conscious until we are able to establish the definition of consciousness. Both teams in the debate had vastly different outlooks on what it means to be conscious and what it means to be aware. While I agree with the latter team's definition, many others do not.

In order for machines to be conscious, they must experience qualia. Humans create and program machines, and technically control every aspect of their existence. Humans must therefore be able to quantify qualia in order to create that experience in machines. Since qualia is not something we are able to measure or even communicate to one another, we would be unable to program machines to experience it. Qualia is the sense of being. Something cannot have qualia unless there is some sense of what it is like to be that thing. We are unable to create this sense, it must exist naturally. Therefore, computers cannot have qualia.

Q1. (for Extra Credit) If we were organisms that communicated not through language, but could somehow communicate directly through our minds, sharing experiences as we experience them, would it be possible to describe qualia?

I think if we were organisms that communicated by sharing experiences telepathically, we would certainly be able to share our qualia with one another. We would not be able to describe it in words but would be able to directly experience another person's qualia from the experience they shared. I think it would still be impossible to describe qualia in any other way besides having the another person 'live' one's experience. This would be a very interesting way to communicate, as we would be able to better understand what it is like to be another person, at least in terms of the experiences they share. Perhaps with this enhanced knowledge and understanding of qualia, we might be able to extend this communication to computers and machines in order to allow them to experience qualia as well. If machines did experience their own qualia, we might be able to prove it in this way by experiencing their qualia ourselves.