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12.02 Real World Recursion Responses

1. Explain how you use the principle of recursion to create your image.

First, I divided my image into two sections with a line, then divided one of the sections with another line that was perpendicular to the previous line. I continued dividing like this while taking into account a complex corner and the simple corner. Afterwards, I colored each section so that it followed the guidelines for the ratio of white space to color.

1. Briefly describe a plan for how you might write a program to produce Mondrian art.

1. The image is randomly split into two sections with either a horizontal or vertical line

2. A line perpendicular to the previous line is added to one of the sections

3. Steps 1-2 are repeated as many times as the user would like. The added lines are more heavily concentrated in the complex corner than in the simple corner.

4. The sections are colored in with appropriate colors, and they maintain a 2:1 ratio of white space to color.

1. If a computer, with no human intervention, produced Mondrian art indistinguishable from an original masterpiece, would it diminish the accomplishments of a human?

If a computer, with no human intervention, produced Mondrian art indistinguishable from a so-called “original masterpiece” (I will assume that “original masterpiece” in this case is a piece of artwork that releases a “significant” amount of brain chemicals associated with appreciating beauty from the majority of the present human race), it would not *objectively* diminish the accomplishments of a human. Humans are not that different from computers in certain ways--both humans and computers operate under the same consistent laws of the universe, and they both produce “information” by manipulating discrete symbols mechanistically and deterministically. Although their compositions and sets of potential abilities may differ, the same can be said about individual humans. For example, humans have varying sets of potential abilities--some humans are extremely smart while others are dumb, some humans can process sound better than other humans, some humans handle information more holistically than others, etc. Also, humans may have different compositions, like cyborgs (humans with pacemakers, prosthetic legs, etc.). I think that many would agree that an intelligent person (with a pacemaker) who produces a piece of art does not somehow diminish the accomplishments of a human more than a less intelligent person without any internal mechanic device who produces the exact same piece of art. Nothing objectively and universally can draw a clearly defined boundary between these two humans, declaring that one human’s work is somehow more significant in relationship to the accomplishments of humans than the other. That is, there is no universally right answer when someone asks, “Exactly, how many mechanical devices must be implanted into a person before their accomplishments diminish that of a ‘human’? How strangely or differently must a person’s mind be, metaphorically speaking, ‘wired’ before their same artwork somehow diminishes the accomplishments of other humans?” This lack of clear universal distinction and categorization can be applied to computers and humans--nothing universally declares that one of them is inherently more special or “meaningful” than the other in the case of creating the same hypothetical “original masterpiece.” Therefore, one of them does not objectively diminish the accomplishments of humans more than the other.