

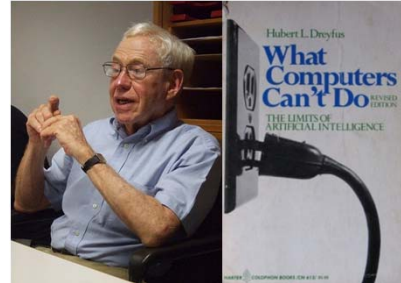


DAVID HUME (1711-1776)

- *Treatise of Human Nature, An attempt to introduce the experimental method of reasoning into moral subjects*, written while he was living in France between 1734-1737. (between 23 and 27 years of age)

- 3 books:
 - 1. the understanding,
 - 2. the passions
 - 3. morals.

Hubert Dreyfus



Dreyfus's critique of artificial intelligence (AI) concerns the four primary assumptions of AI research.

- **The biological assumption** is that the brain is analogous to computer hardware and the mind is analogous to computer software.
- **The psychological assumption** is that the mind works by performing discrete computations (in the form of algorithmic rules) on discrete representations or symbols. Dreyfus claims that the plausibility of the psychological assumption rests on two others:
- **The epistemological assumption** is that all activity (either by animate or inanimate objects) can be formalised (mathematically) in the form of predictive rules or laws. (i.e. intelligence is the same as formal rule-following)
- **The ontological assumption** is that reality consists entirely of a set of mutually independent, atomic (indivisible) facts. (i.e. human knowledge consists entirely of internal representations of reality)

if cognition is the manipulation of internal symbols by internal rules, human behaviour can be called **context free**.

In that case a truly scientific psychology is possible. It will busy itself by detailing the 'internal' rules of the human mind, in the same way the laws of physics detail the 'external' laws of the physical world.

But is this the case?
 Can we understand our own behaviour *in the same way* as we understand objects in, for example, physics or chemistry?
 Can we consider ourselves as things whose behaviour can be predicted via 'objective', context free scientific laws?

According to Dreyfus, a context free psychology is a contradiction in terms.

According to Spinoza this would require an impossible level of knowledge

Heidegger argued that our being is in fact highly context bound, which is why the two context-free assumptions are false.

Dreyfus says that we can *choose to see* human (or any) activity as being 'law governed', in the same way that we can *choose to see* reality as consisting of indivisible atomic facts...if we wish.

But because we want to or can see things in this way that *it is therefore an objective fact that they are the case*. Spinoza and the pragmatists would agree...

Dreyfus argues that they are *not* (necessarily) the case, and that, therefore, any research program that assumes they *are* will quickly run into profound theoretical and practical problems. Therefore the current efforts of workers in the field are doomed to failure.

to get a device (or devices) with human-like intelligence would require them to have a human-like being-in-the-world, which would require them to have bodies more or less like ours, and social acculturation (i.e. a society) more or less like ours. (This view is shared by psychologists in the embodied psychology (Lakoff and Johnson 1999)

For Dreyfus human problem solving and expertise depend on our background sense of the context, of what is important and interesting given the situation, rather than on the process of searching through combinations of possibilities to find what we need. It is the difference between "knowing-that" and "knowing-how", based on Heidegger's distinction of present-at-hand *vorhande sein* and ready-to-hand *zuhanden sein*

Knowing-that is our conscious, step-by-step problem solving abilities. We use these skills when we encounter a difficult problem that requires us to stop, step back and search through ideas one at time. At moments like this, the ideas become very precise and simple: they become context free symbols, which we manipulate using logic and language.

Knowing-how, on the other hand, is the way we deal with things normally. We take actions without using conscious symbolic reasoning at all, as when we recognize a face, drive ourselves to work or find the right thing to say. We seem to simply jump to the appropriate response, without considering any alternatives. This is the essence of expertise, Dreyfus argued: when our intuitions have been trained to the point that we forget the rules and simply "size up the situation" and react.

Our sense of the situation is based on our goals, our bodies and our culture—all of our attitudes and knowledge about the world. This "context" or "background" (related to Heidegger's *Dasein*) is a form of knowledge that is not stored in our brains symbolically, but intuitively or in movements through practise and habituation. It affects what we notice and what we don't notice, what we expect and what possibilities we don't consider: we discriminate between what is essential and inessential. The things that are inessential are relegated to our "fringe consciousness" (borrowing a phrase from William James): the millions of things we're aware of, but we're not really thinking about right now.

I think this means.....



Pure reason cannot arrive at a decision, it just goes on and on, it is not situated.

A body is situated.
A situated body reasons about something, about his body in his environment...

Pure reason cannot reason that lying is wrong without taking account of the context in which lying is possible and useful.
Lying is an embodied act

a decision needs a context, a wish, a portrait (with what is important centred and what is less important peripheralised)

We need to practise

- Building a view
- Justifying an opinion
- Knowing what it is good to want
- Learn how to realise the quality we want
- Knowing what we want..

If freedom means I am able to do
what I want, then what should I
want?



Wishing machine