

Jeremy anderson

Psychology



Jeremy Anderson TOK Essay Can a Machine Know? A machine is something that is manmade and essentially has no mind to think on its own. Therefore, when the question proposed is, "Can a machine know", most people would answer by saying no, a machine can not know. The answer to this question is actually yes, a machine can know. If the question were changed from "can a machine know" to "can a machine know as much as a human", the answer would be completely different. A machine can only know to the extent at which it is programmed. A machine can begin to know if it is self-conscious. If the machine can think and see on its own, then it is an entity in itself. How can a machine be self-conscious if it is made by a human? Wouldn't the machine just be mimicking the acts and thoughts of humans? Yes, a machine can be self-conscious even if it is made by a human. There would have to be a program installed into the machine so that it is not aware of that acts as an artificial brain. This brain would act just like a human's, sending electrical signals to the rest of the body so that the machine can feel, smell, and taste things just like any human. Yes, a machine would be "mimicking" a human, but it is only "mimicking" humans because we see machines as a different species, the same way that we see dogs and plants. Dogs "mimic" humans the same way that machines will "mimic" humans. A machine of this caliber would be very complex and difficult to make, however it is not impossible. Another component necessary for a machine to know is a blank memory and a program installed into the "brain" that allows the machine to make its own decisions. The machine can have no knowledge of the software within it or else it can affect the decisions that the machine makes. After the software is installed into the brain the machine will be able to act on its own. Another issue is, "Can a machine have emotions?" According to Plato, knowledge

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must be justified true belief. A machine has to believe in the proposition and be justified in his proposal. A machine has to have feelings in order to know right? This is correct and the program that was installed into the machine's brain will give the machine the ability to have emotions, and the way that his brain transfers information to the rest of his body will allow him to feel. The answer to the question proposed " can a machine know", is yes. The technology to make a machine know is extremely complex and probably still years away from 2012. It is not impossible however and maybe one day, machines will walk among humans as a separate entity.