

Lipson's Self-Aware Machines; And, IF...

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This is from 2 emails that I sent yesterday. Slightly edited.

Subject: Quanta Magazine article on self-aware machines by Columbia University's Lipson – SO EXCELLENT!!!

<Recipient>

Joy and Glee!

Now THIS is an excellent article, along with some of the others from before (like the one on multi-part viruses). In the article, Lipson is doing exactly, precisely the correct thing.

IF ONLY psychiatrists could find 'the self-aware', and 'sensation, action, self-modeling' (and world-modeling), in this very world! But they can't see these even in humans, much less animals – and certainly not with respect to the world-space! Probably an article like this, for psychiatrists, would be seen as TOO CONFUSING and IRRELEVANT. But the article is clarity itself, and apropos.

I see, in this article, direct and inferential implications for the individual, dilemma or no dilemma.

Curious About Consciousness? Ask the Self-Aware Machines

<https://www.quantamagazine.org/hod-lipson-is-building-self-aware-robots-20190711/>

Minsky starts in "The Society Of Mind" with the human mind and ideas on how it works – I think from some pretty sharp observation and internal self-reflection. BUT he then applied in his book a novel concept: start with the simplest of activities – playing with blocks, as children – to see what we might do – and derived and explained some fundamentals to his theories from there.

But Lipson is also on precisely the right track. Just 2 approaches.

SO HELPFUL!!!

Kevin

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Further Notes On Lipson's Self-Aware Machines And Mvo-P

If you read this article on Lipson's self-aware machines, you'll recall that there's the 'infant babble phase' where the robot thrashes around or moves around observing itself and its environment until it learns – from scratch (given only say some rules of physics and means to observe and learn) – about how to maneuver itself in this environment, expertly.

Socrates said, "Know thyself." I'd say, "Know thyself, and that all is interdependent and mutually co-arising."

:-)

But I had this thought, my main point: What if those individuals encountering a new, difficult mental, existential, social, societal, experiential, or physical event were to be given the chance to re-orient, perhaps with new tools, a new "grounds"? This would be fundamental to mvo-p. Not only would mvo-p look for explanation, in cases of the justified action, but would look toward explanation, description, a dimensional view, and resolution, in cases of difficulty and dilemma.

And with the social networks mentioned by Open Dialogues (Seikkula, et al.), everybody "learns" renewed orientation – that's another of the basis-points for why Open Dialogues works, I think.

To extend and etch my point, with respect to Lipson's self-aware robots: the robots are given some laws of physics and means of observation and learning, then asked to 'orient themselves and find out about their environment and how to work within it'. This is functional (an important word, for me). Also, in the psych unit setting, or perhaps with Open Dialogues (not in the psych unit, usually), the individual could be provided new or renewed grounds for "laws (principles, maybe also akin to studying the Way in Zen Buddhism or Taoism, or spiritual principles in other religions, or philosophical ideas and statements from various points of view)" and "orienting ideas" so that re-orientation can be found. (Or, the individual may already be centered and justified, and simply needs to have reason and merit and standpoint and view 'on the table', providing explanation, in a psych unit – a right and praxis currently denied, contradicted, and refuted by psych unit psychiatry.) Then, after these laws, principles, ways, statements, and orienting ideas are introduced to the individual, per individual and situation and the mvo-p framework, the individual is encouraged to develop inquiry, and resolve dilemmas, and ask questions, and try out ideas and ways of the mind or perception or the physical or feeling or thought, etc. and work with his or her context and circumstance, a period of re-orientation with reliance on expert mvo-p practitioners who can help navigate perhaps difficult perhaps not so difficult mental, existential, social, societal, experiential, and/or physical territory. In other words, a period of experimentation, re-orientation, inquiry, new or renewed resources and their interpretation, establishment of parameters (for safety and structure and guidance and principle), flexi, and so forth – with a stable or helpfully dynamic world before the individual, if possible – would be set up with the individual (as participant). Then perhaps after a time the individual can maneuver, function, and operate fully again, fully appropriate to circumstance (and circumstance would be considered as well).

One further point: in most current psych units, the individual is isolated. (Once for me there were excellent, participatory classes – but the psychiatry was dismal, isolating, highly distorted. The other times the entire experience was isolating, bleak, desultory, devoid of meaning, except for one

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psychiatrist who at one point took an interest in my expression of Zen.) I feel this 'to isolate the individual' is a part of psych unit psychiatry's theory/praxis, and is fundamental to it. I'd re-interpret psych units in a redefined framework mvo-p to be places of 'a simplified environment, where, with connection, the individual can participate and reflect' – given that the individual in question needs to be in the psych unit in the first place, ... to re-orient! This would be a fundamentally different standpoint.

Of course, this is to refute, sidestep, dimension and describe an alternative to, and negate the entire 'diagnosis of absolute deficiency' and 'permanent neurobiogenetic malfunction' disorder idea so definitive of current psych unit theory/praxis.

So Lipson's self-aware robots have made it into a paper with the above ideas, toward mvo-p, a replacement of psychiatry meant for academic study and practice.

Subject: IF...

<Recipient>

It occurs to me that *if*:

- Psychiatrists saw that voices, etc., are just one feature of the mind, the domain of the mind (precisely stated, there are sounds of the body, and sounds of the mind; one could add, there are perceptions of the body (sensation) and perceptions of the mind (mental perceptions). Along with this, there are pleasant sounds, neutral sounds, and unpleasant sounds (of the body, or of the mind). Along with this, there are pleasant feelings, neutral feelings, and unpleasant feelings.) (Some of this is taken from Buddhism, and some is put in my own language, derived from this and from the experiential-observational.) This normalizes things around the actual data (what people experience, and what is likely the actual fact[1]) and puts it in useful language – and I think a language that makes things relatively or entirely tractable.

- Psychiatrists worked with ‘all of the above’. (My own ideas in ‘MVO: 2019 Thesis’.)

- Psychiatrists worked with ‘self-awareness’, ‘adaptability’, ‘deep learning’, ‘learning’, ‘self-modeling’, etc. (Lipson’s terminology and space).

- Psychiatrists worked with ‘understanding’, ‘thought’, ‘speech’, ‘action’, ‘livelihood’, ‘effort’, ‘awareness’, ‘concentration’ (to reference the Buddha's Eightfold Noble Path) and ethical conduct, wisdom, and mental discipline (to reference on dictionary description of Buddhism – the New Oxford American Dictionary), and acknowledged both religious and secular expression (Moncrieff says that Wittgenstein says that “Essence is expressed in grammar.” – yet the individual is not permitted to bring any material to the table, in a psych unit, including language, much less language as a sign of logic, coherence, awareness, and intelligence).

... *then* psychiatry would self-correct and self-enhance, and become as adaptable, insightful, capable, and aware as ... (drum roll please) ... these Lipson robots ... and MORE!!!

(to reference Minsky's idea ‘society of more’ in TSOM (“The Society Of Mind”)).

Kevin

P.S. Right now, psychiatry is not intelligent. It can’t even find intelligence on Planet Earth.

Footnotes

1. Gravity is not visible. Each of us feels gravity according to the same universal laws. We are constant- and mutually-co- arising with it. But each of us feels gravity according to our own standpoint – and this is varied. Some are tai chi artists. Some just walk. For each of us there are the four positions that Dogen mentions: lying, sitting, standing, walking. If one further scrutinizes the body-

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and mind- space to all function (the title to one of Dogen’s essays in his work “Shobogenzo” is “Zenki” – “All Function”) we see a very dynamic, multi-perspective, nondual space and domain. We can note from Shibayama (his book “The Gateless Barrier: Zen Comments On The Mumonkan”) that this is Absolute Subjectivity – so the record of each standpoint should be noted. Furthermore, psychiatrists allow all their thousands of studies to speak – but not the individual, in a psych unit. There, it’s a-priori decisis, where the individual is thus rendered in terms of absolute deficiency, pointing to (the theory goes) permanent neurobiogenetic malfunction. But this omits standpoint, reason on the table, the individual’s logic, and the features innate in language and its potential to express coherence, awareness, logic, and intelligence. And it omits the entire world-space of the individual, and how that mutually co-arises with that of others. It omits the relational: the thought-relational, the social-relational, entity-relational, and perception-relational. Etc. Thus, a representation of the individual is not created at all in realistic terms – and then arbitrary at-will things are said by the psych unit psychiatrist about the individual, citing expertise (in a nation that has been the cult of expertise) and these thousands of studies (with their own givens and so forth) and his or her own at-will summary, that are nearly impossible to defend against, to others, say in a hearing, with the limits of time, resource, and legal representation. But it should be the responsibility of the psych unit psychiatrist in the first place to seek out ‘all of the above’ and the infinite possible perspectives and resource that it points to. This is true, productive, realism skill. Expertise does exist: it is from a depth understanding, where one can defend givens, logic, and basis. Even there there are multiple perspectives, and assumptions can be challenged, even in science. Absolute Subjectivity says that one has to reason for himself or herself; while one can be supported by or find insight from others, ultimately – toward one’s own understanding – it has to be dealt with directly, and this is one of the lessons from Zen.

United States
2019

References

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“Inventive Minds” by Marvin Minsky.

“The Gateless Barrier: Zen Comments On The Mumonkan” by Zenkei Shibayama.

Curious About Consciousness? Ask the Self-Aware Machines, <https://www.quantamagazine.org/hod-lipson-is-building-self-aware-robots-20190711/>.

“On Human Nature and Its Implications for the Mind-Body Problem” by Joanne Moncrieff, 2019 May 9, Mad In America, <https://www.madinamerica.com/2019/05/human-nature-implications-mind-body-problem/>.

Related Papers

“Object-Oriented Programming, Messages, And The Psych Unit”

““Mvo-P””

““All Of The Above””

“Nagarjuna, Real Practice And Real Action, The Individual, And The Psych Unit”

“It Is The Mind, That Psychiatrists Should Consider”

“The Neurobiogenetic View, Zen Buddhism, And ‘All Of The Above’”

“Psych Unit Psychiatrists: At Present They Are Not This Way At All”