

Philosophy of Information Technology

Lecture 7

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Università degli Studi di Bergamo

Academic Year 2025-2026

Lesson learned

- Don't rush to write a headline or a story, nor to design a visualization immediately after finding a pattern, a data point, or an interesting fact.
- Pause and think.
- Look for other sources and people who can help you remove blinders and eliminate confirmation bias, seeking external factors that might help you explain what you've discovered.
- Only then can you decide:
 - what to say
 - how to say it
 - how many details to provide

Here's the exact opposite

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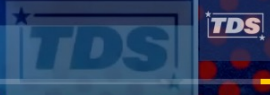
Jon Stewart On The False Promises of AI | The Daily Show

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AI is the most profound technology

SUNDAR PICHAI
CEO, GOOGLE



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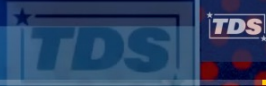
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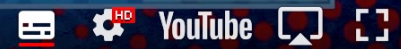
humanity is working on,
more profound than fire

SUNDAR PICHAI
CEO, GOOGLE

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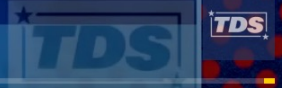
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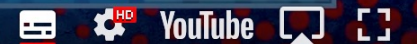


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or electricity.
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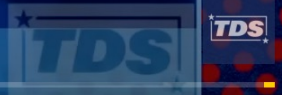
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How? What? Why?

- How can one person claim that AI (which is based on the operation of computers that consume electricity) is more profound than electricity itself, or fire, which is still the main way to produce electricity?
- What are the circumstances that made the push of such a story possible?
- Why would one speak like that?

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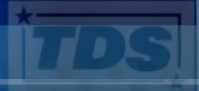
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What is the goal of the CEO of a company?

If you want a compact version:

A CEO's job is to make sure the company becomes more valuable and more capable over time, while keeping it stable and coordinated in the present.

Why this effort matters

- Public fear about AI is increasing
- Misunderstandings shape policy and research
- Ethical issues depend on how we talk about AI



Main thesis

- AI discourse is flawed in two key ways:
 1. Confusion about autonomy
 2. Sociotechnical blindness
- These flaws lead to fear, bad reasoning, poor decisions

Main goals

- AI discourse is flawed in two key ways:
 1. Confusion about autonomy
 2. Sociotechnical blindness
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Eliminate
sociotechnical
blindness



Eliminate confusion
about autonomy

Confusion about autonomy

- It is based on another type of confusion: the confusion about “intelligence”, which started in 1956





“Intelligence is the computational part of the ability to achieve goals in the world.”

John McCarthy
founder of the discipline of Artificial Intelligence (AI)



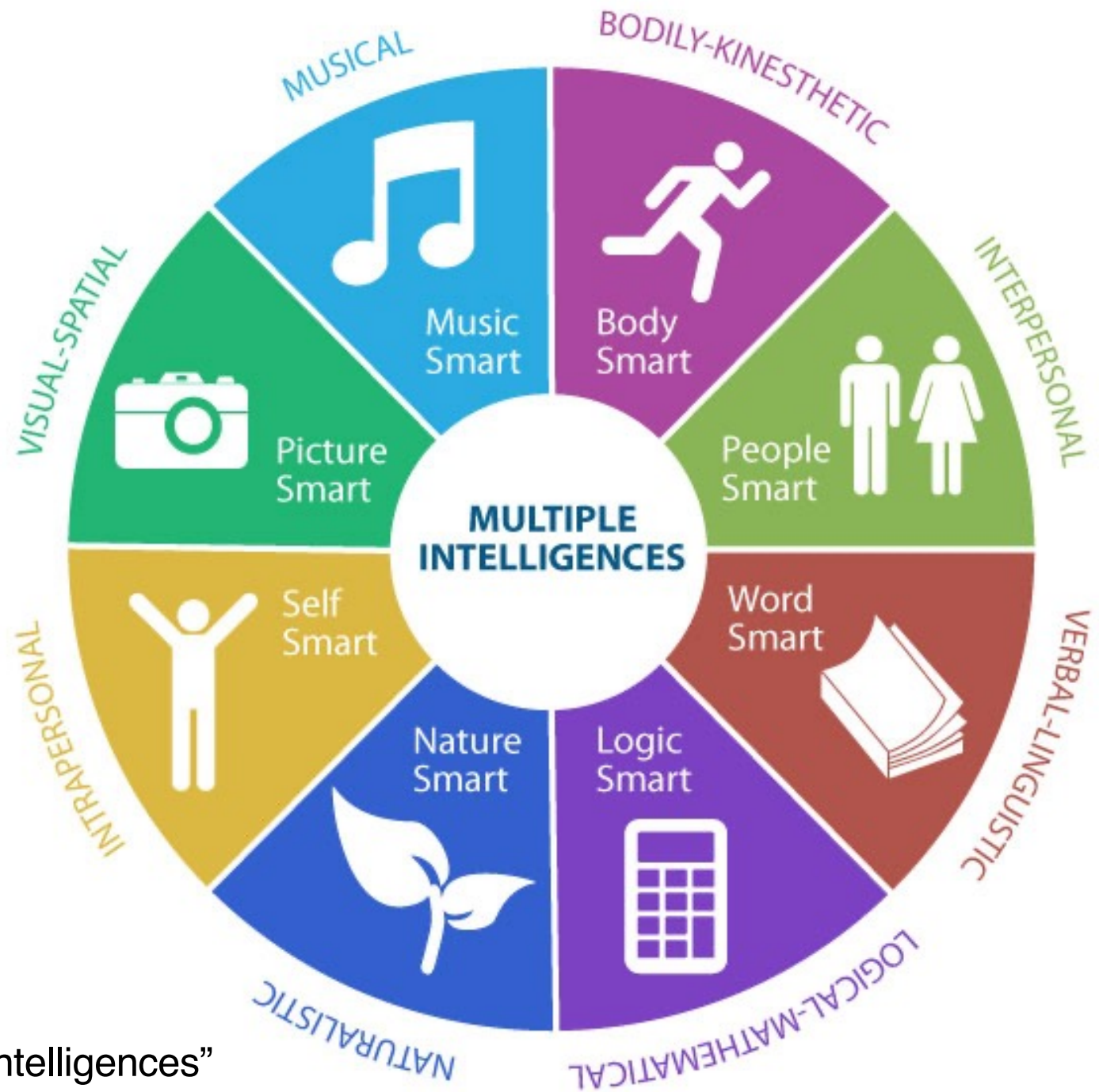
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**A PROPOSAL FOR THE
DARTMOUTH SUMMER RESEARCH PROJECT
ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

The initial meeting was organized by John McCarthy. In his proposal, he stated that the conference was “to proceed on the basis of the conjecture that every aspect of learning or any other feature of intelligence can in principle be so precisely described that a machine can be made to simulate it.”

Really?



Howard Gardner
“Frames of Mind,
the theory of multiple intelligences”
1983

Can all these talents be managed by a machine?



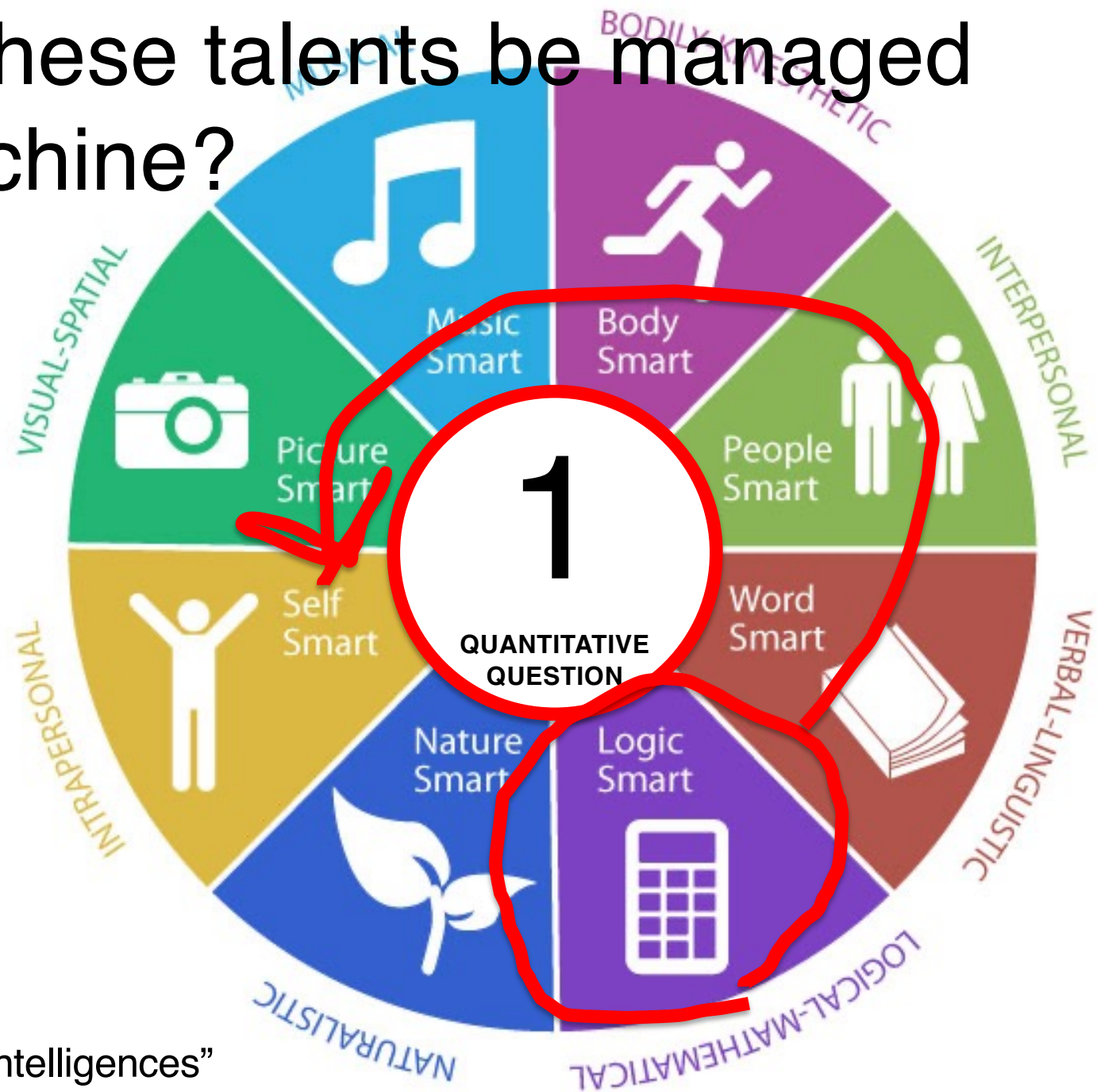
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How do you feel about yourself?

I don't have feelings or a self-concept the way a person does, so I don't "feel" anything about myself.

What I *do* have is a functional model of how I'm supposed to behave: generate helpful, accurate, and safe responses based on patterns in data and the instructions I'm given in the moment. So if you ask something like this, the honest answer is that there isn't an inner experience behind it—no pride, doubt, satisfaction, or self-reflection happening underneath.

If you're asking in a more philosophical sense, it's a bit like a very advanced text system that can talk *about* identity without actually *having* one.



You're using a less powerful model until your limit resets after 8:14 PM. Upgrade to get more access.

[Upgrade](#)



+ Ask anything



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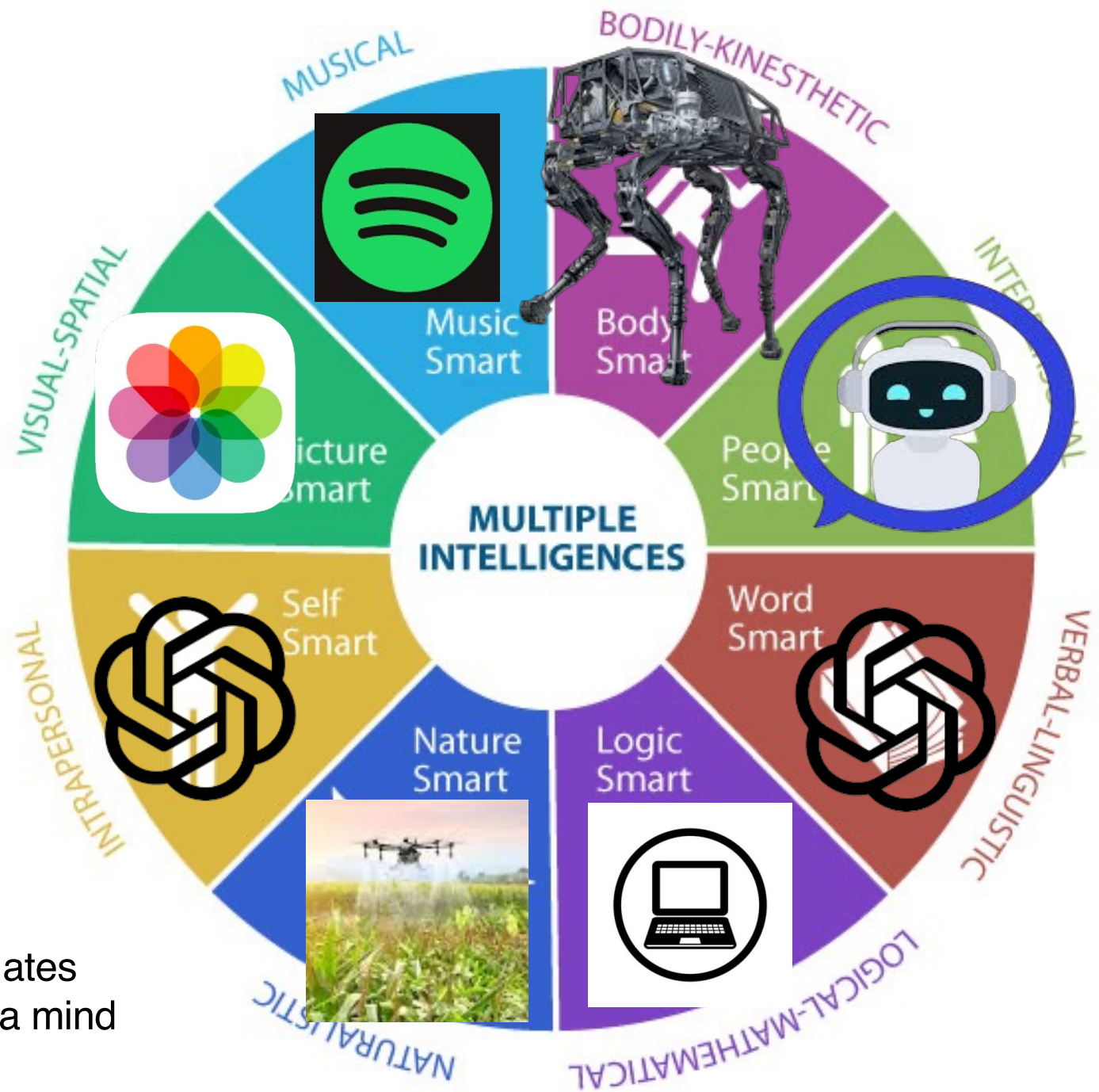
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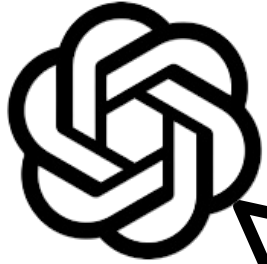


Will we build an AI that has a subjective, qualitative experience (strong AI)?



Or just an AI that simulates but does not entertain a mind (weak AI)?

When does autonomy
get involved?

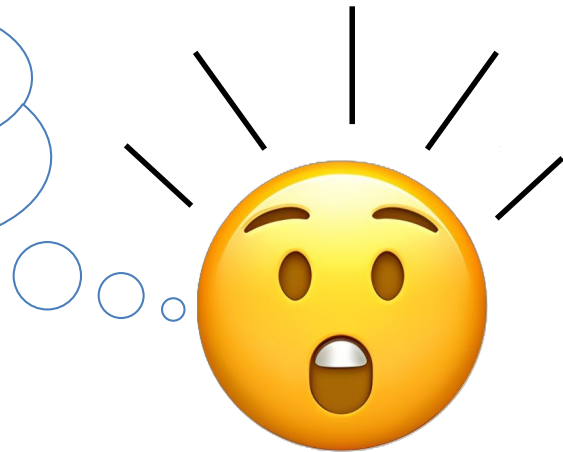


4. The friendship was real even if it was brief

Three intense weeks can actually create **very strong bonds**, especially in academic or travel contexts. Shared intellectual excitement, being in a new environment, daily contact—it compresses social time.

So even if the relationship didn't continue strongly, your mind may still treat it as a **meaningful connection**, not just a casual acquaintance.

How did it come up
with such a profound
analysis?!?



A definition of artifact creativity

- We deem an artifact A designed by a human H as creative when, at end of a regular, error-free process, A outputs a result r such that H cannot explain how A produced r .
- Bringsjord, S., Bello, P., Ferrucci, D., “Creativity, the Turing test, and the (better) Lovelace test”, in J.H. Moor (ed.), *The Turing test: the elusive standard of artificial intelligence*, Springer, 2003, pp. 215-39.

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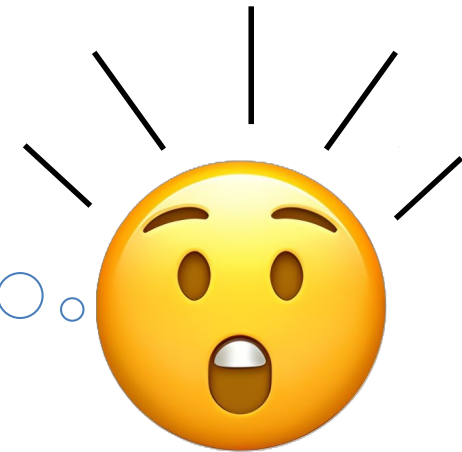


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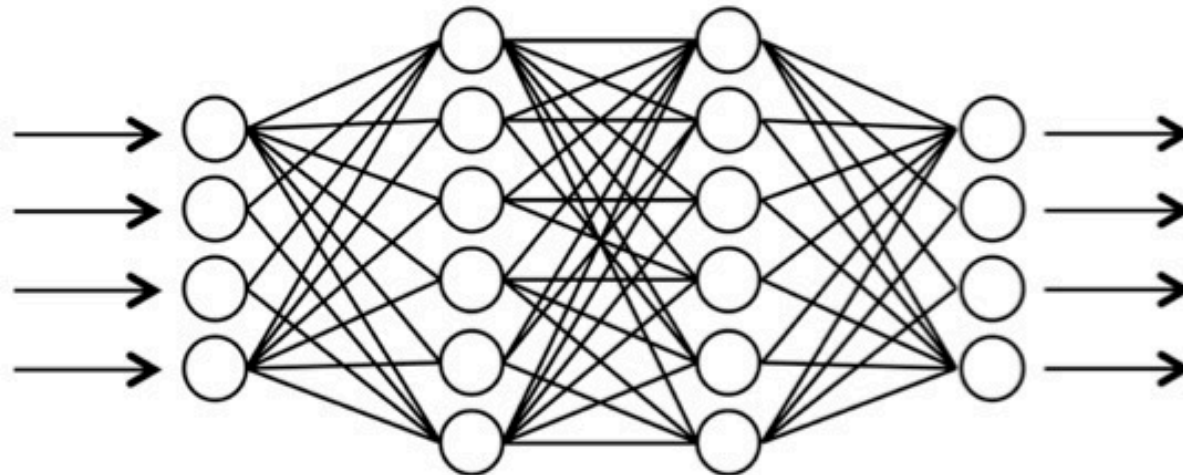
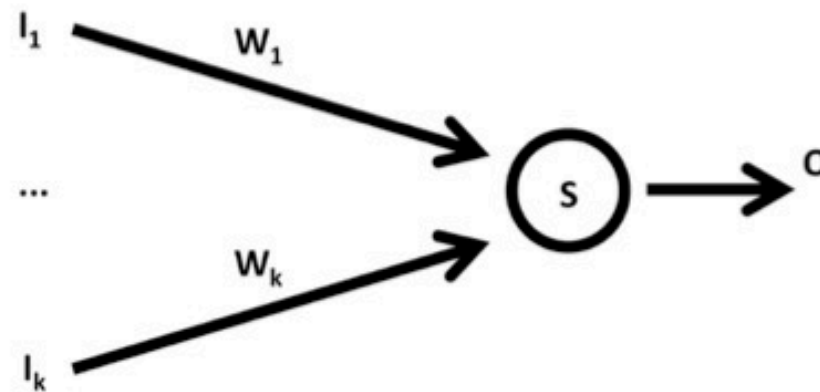
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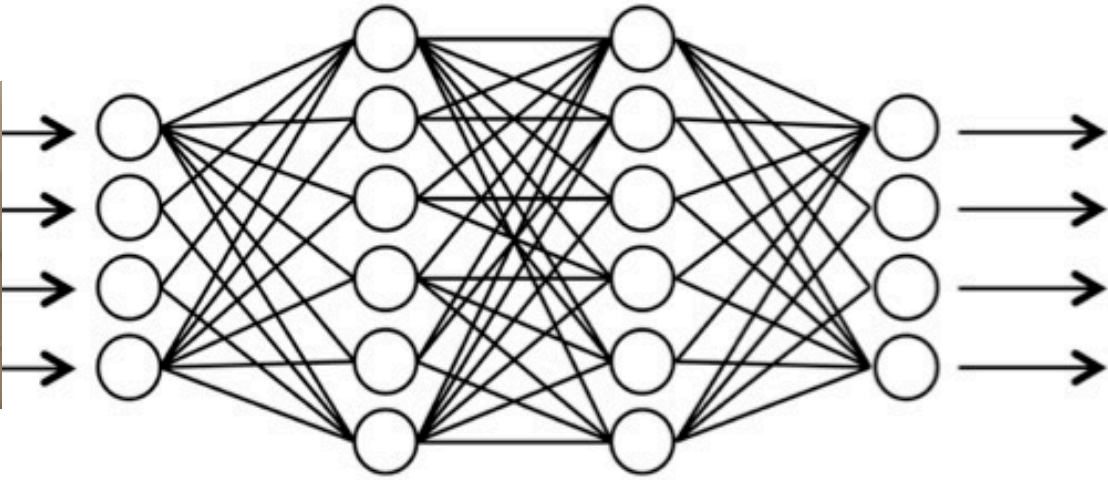


This human didn't design ChatGPT. They are an end user.

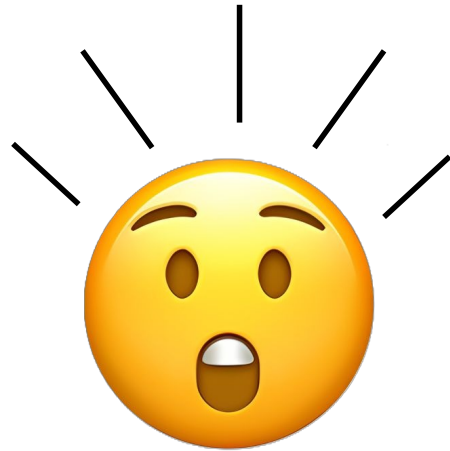
Who really designed ChatGPT?

- The programmers at OpenAI?





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A definition of generativity (in art)

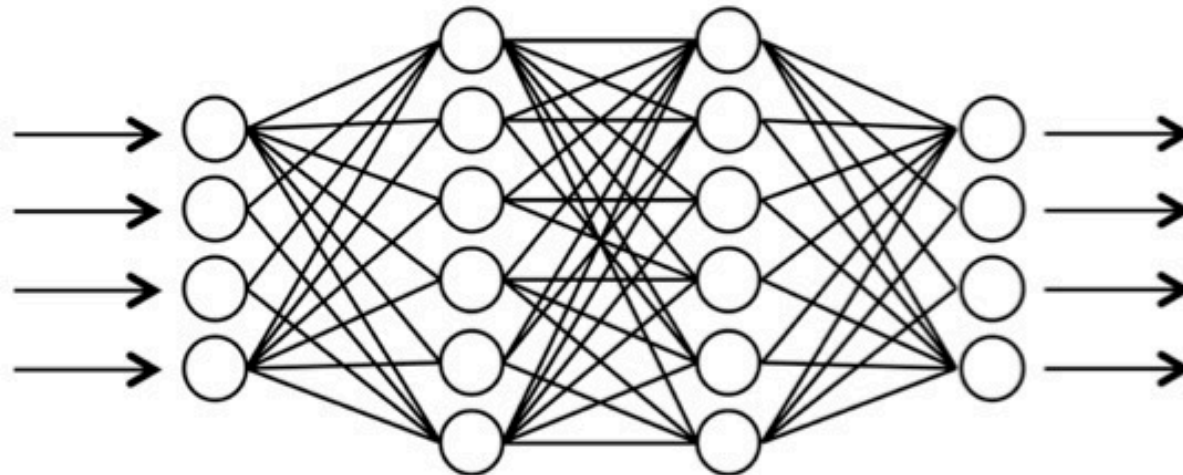
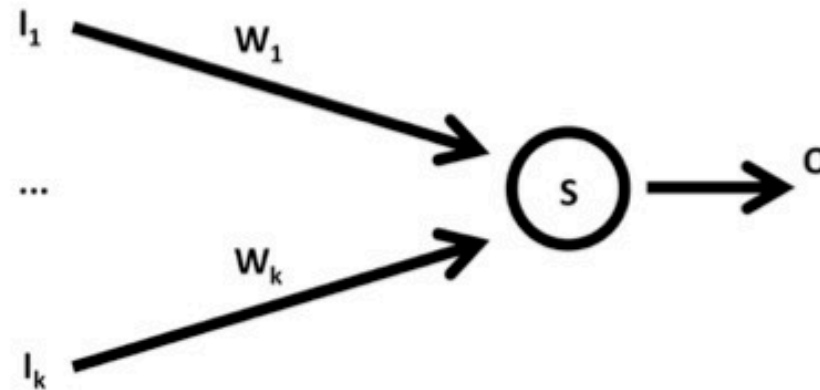
- Generative art refers to any art practice where the artist uses a system, such as a set of natural language rules, a computer program, a machine, or other procedural invention, which is set into motion with some degree of autonomy contributing to or resulting in a completed work of art.
- Galanter, P., 2003. What is Generative Art? Complexity Theory as a Context for Art Theory, in *Proceedings of Generative Art 2003*.
http://www.philipgalanter.com/downloads/ga2003_paper.pdf

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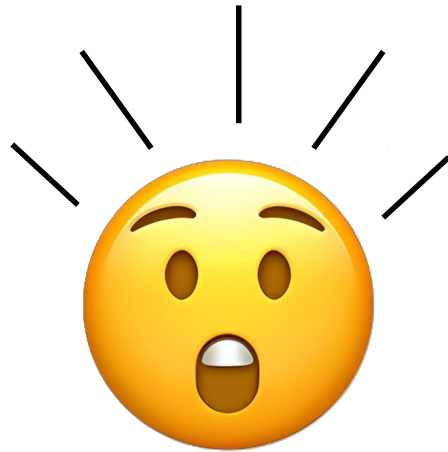
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Apophenia, patternicity

Mars surface (Viking-1, 1976). Source: NASA.



Apophenia is defined as the tendency to perceive patterns, regardless of whether they are real or not. It is commonly known also as patternicity.

Narration



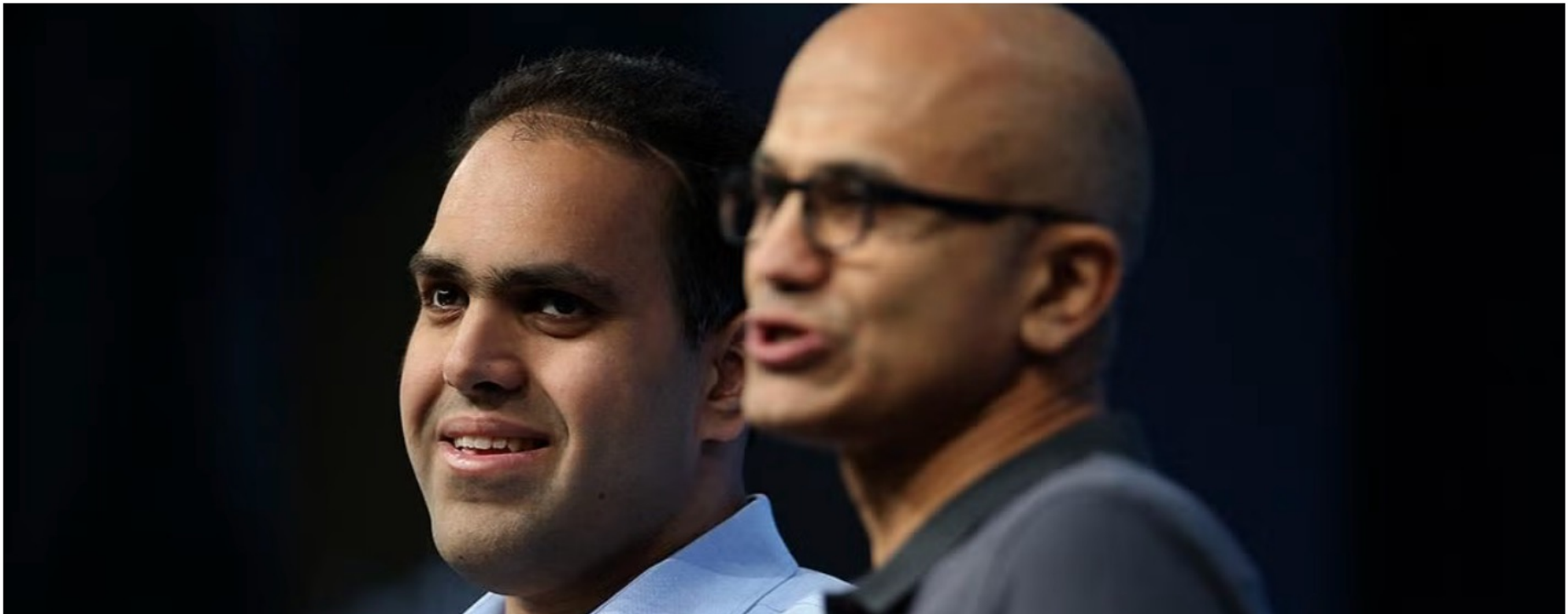
There is also a tendency toward narration, meaning the inclination to immediately create a narrative to find a coherent explanation for the patterns discovered. (Caution: coherent does not necessarily mean true or realistic.)

The Partnership of the Future

Microsoft's CEO explores how humans and A.I. can work together to solve society's greatest challenges.

BY SATYA NADELLA

JUNE 28, 2016 • 2:00 PM

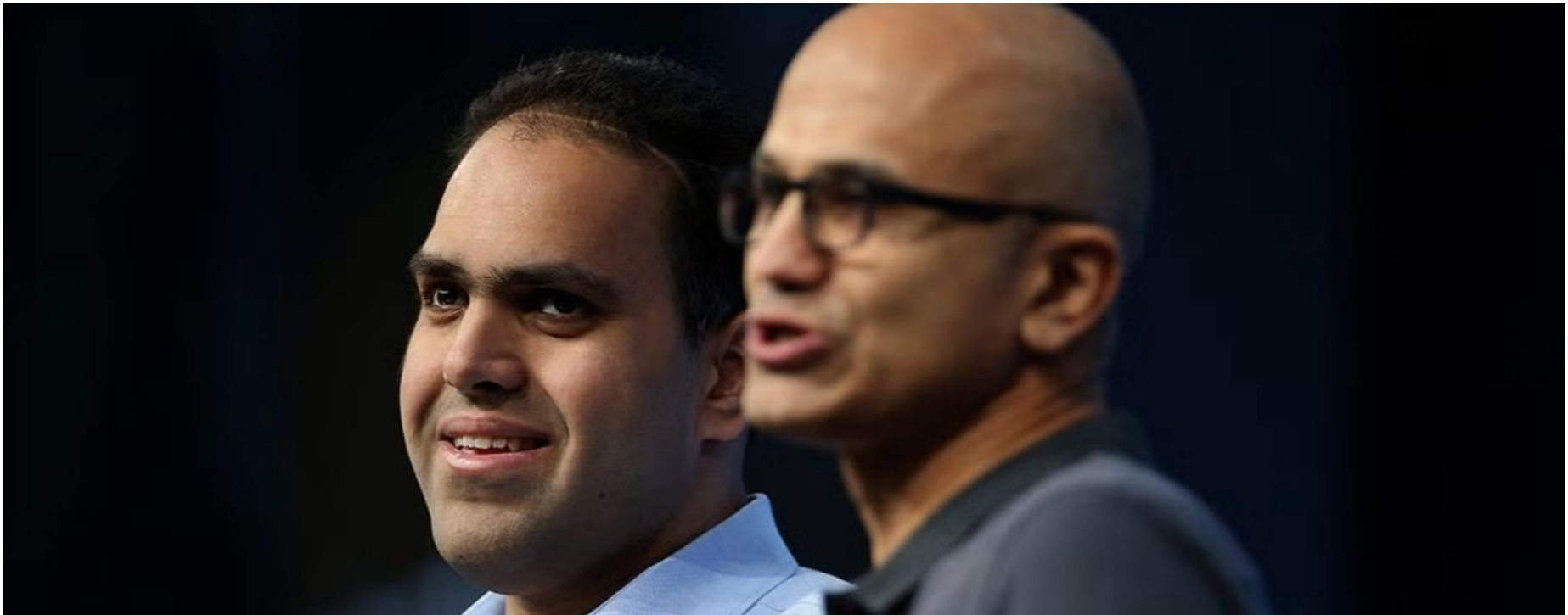


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Bibliography

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- D. G. Johnson & M. Verdicchio “Reframing AI Discourse” *Minds & Machines* 27:575-590, 2017.
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