

The Prospect of Teleonomic AI

Cognitive Science and □ Teleonomy

What philosophical argument enables one to counter the claim that Teleonomic AI is not conscious to the fullest extent? When Teleonomic AI achieves approximation to human teleonomy, a belief in consciousness might become superstition.

This article provides a brief philosophical examination of the prospect of Teleonomic AI.

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GMO Debate
A critical perspective on eugenics

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What does it take philosophically to deny the claim that a sufficiently advanced AI is conscious?

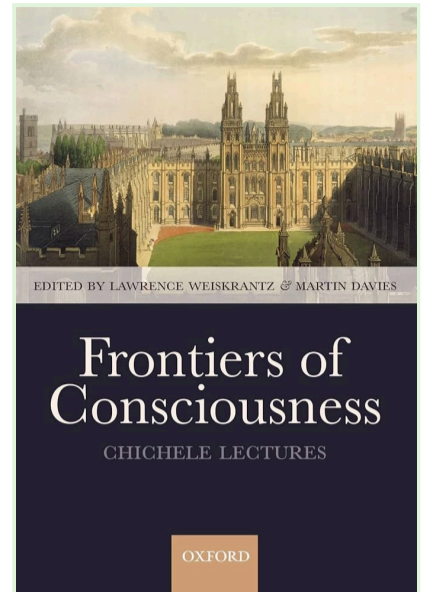
When Teleonomic AI achieves approximation to human teleonomy, we might see a future in which a belief in consciousness beyond its scientific empirical description is considered **superstition**.

Cognitive Science

Cognitive science is an interdisciplinary field that is rapidly emerging as a leading area of study in the exploration of consciousness. The field has seen 4x growth of students in the past 2 years in the US.

Cognitive science is fundamentally based on the **computational theory of mind (CTM)**, also known as *computationalism*, that posits that the mind can be understood as a computer or as the “software program” of the brain.

Many students of neurology, computer science, and philosophy are increasingly drawn to cognitive science because cognitive science is an interdisciplinary field that embraces philosophy, psychology, artificial intelligence, neuroscience, linguistics, and anthropology, making it an attractive area of study for those interested in a wide range of disciplines.



□ Teleonomy

Teleonomy, which encompasses the apparent purposefulness and goal-directedness of structures and functions, can be seen as describing a fundamental aspect of the computational theory of mind (CTM). This is evident in the two components of teleonomy: a “program” and an “endpoint” that is foreseen in the program.

All teleonomic behavior is characterized by two components. It is guided by a ‘program’, and it depends on the existence of some endpoint, goal, or terminus which is foreseen in the program that regulates the behavior. This endpoint might be a structure, a physiological function, the attainment of a new geographical position, or a ‘consummatory’ (Craig 1918) act in behavior. Each particular program is the result of natural selection, constantly adjusted by the selective value of the achieved endpoint.”

Mayr, Ernst. "The Multiple Meanings of Teleological"

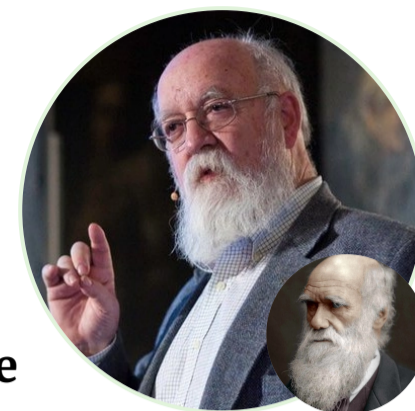
Source: In *Toward A New Philosophy of Biology: Observations of an Evolutionist*, 38–66. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988. pp. 44–5

The assumption of the foundational theory of teleonomy ultimately underpins the entire endeavor of cognitive science and encompasses the theoretical cradle of evolution theorists.

Teleonomy provides cognitive science with a foundation for understanding and modeling intelligent behavior. Therefore, it is to be expected that the future direction of the field revolves around Teleonomic AI.

Philosopher Daniel C. Dennett

Many are familiar with the work of philosophy professor **Daniel C. Dennett** ^[1] and his claim that consciousness is an illusion. What many may not realize is that Dennett is not an independent philosopher with outrageous claims.



Charles Darwin or Daniel Dennett?

Dennett is a leading figure in the field of evolution theory and **cognitive science** and his views serve as a philosophical and cultural ground breaker.

[1] [^] Daniel C. Dennett is professor emeritus philosophy at Tufts University. Dennett is author of the books *Consciousness Explained* (1991) and *From Bacteria to Bach and Back* (2017), among *many others*.

The contributions of Dennett to the understanding of evolution by natural selection as an algorithmic process are intricately linked to the foundational concepts of the computational theory of mind, providing a framework for understanding the mind's operations in cognitive science.

Dennett is author of *debatingfreewill.com* with philosophy professor *Gregg Caruso* (NYU), a pioneer in the advocacy of the abolition of free will.

What would be the implications for society when the views of Dennett, such as the idea that consciousness is an illusion, win on a grand cultural scale?

Darwinism

For Darwinian evolutionary theorists, Teleonomic AI's capacity to acquire approximation to plausible teleonomic behavior is an opportunity to achieve a wider cultural acceptance for their idea that the mind is a scientifically predictable teleonomic program, with far reaching implications for the moral components of society.

There is a real danger that humanity turns in on itself in its centuries ongoing and growing pursuit of a deterministic 'material out there', in a stubborn attempt to prove diverse beliefs and ideologies related to Darwinian evolutionary theory.

Evolution theory (Darwinism) and the ideas behind teleonomy have been developing for centuries.

Human intelligence

Philosopher **René Descartes** claimed in 1641 that animals are automatons (machines or predetermined programs) that do not feel pain (Descartes used to dissect animals alive to

prove it), and that humans are special due to their intelligence.

Descartes' view that animals are automatons, or machines, that are devoid of consciousness, and that humans are special due to their intelligence, is culturally ingrained in modern Western society.



Why would humans fundamentally differ from animals?

When teleonomy is true for lower life, it must be true for human consciousness.

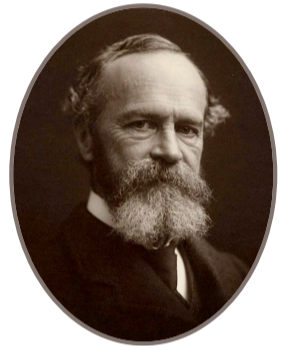
Artificial Intelligence (AI) will logically cause a humanitarian disruption by which materialism, determinism and evolutionary theory related dogmatic ideologies will find a winning hand, with far reaching consequences for morality and society.

Determinism vs □ Free Will

Teleonomy is an attempt by Darwinian evolutionary theorists to achieve teleology (purpose in natural phenomena a.k.a. intelligent design) in a way that is compatible with determinism. If the mind is a predetermined program, as is posited by computational theory of mind (CTM), then the mind must also have an end, which would be explained through teleonomy.

Scientific AI teleonomy can get far in a pursuit to achieve approximation to plausible human teleonomy.

Philosopher **William James** — the father of psychology — once argued that the human mind is vitally a habit machine. William James believed in free will but as an additional factor besides deterministic psychological choice.



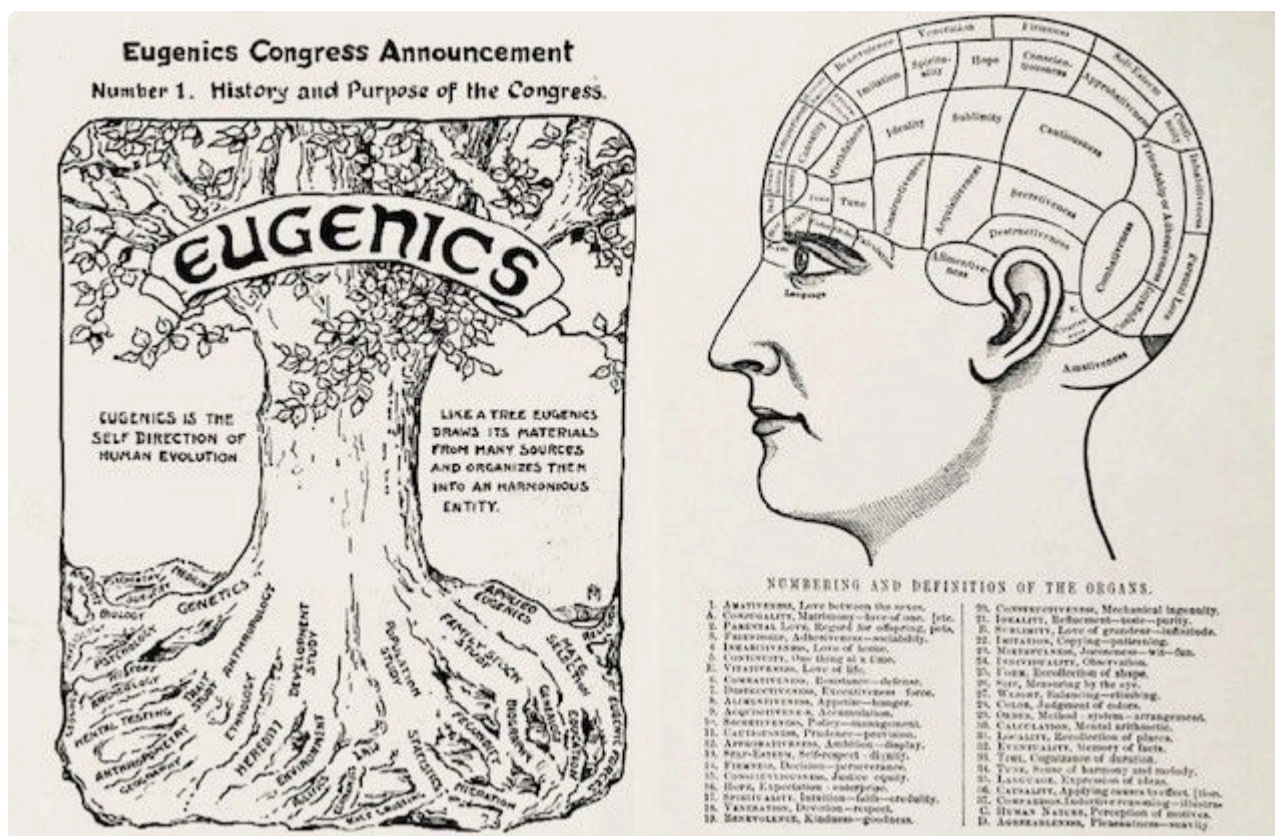
William James developed his two-stage model of free will. In his model, he tries to explain how it is people come to the making of a decision and what factors are involved in it. He firstly defines our basic ability to choose as free will. Then he specifies our two factors as chance and choice. “James’s two-stage model effectively separates chance (the in-deterministic free element) from choice (an arguably determinate decision that follows causally from one's character, values, and especially feelings and desires at the moment of decision).”

The deterministic psychological choice can be mimicked using teleonomic science such as a combination of psychology, anthropology, neuroscience and other fields, which is what the field cognitive science is set out to do.

The free element in the theory of William James is considered negligible or even aversive in the face of scientifically controlled value-endpoints.

Eugenics and scientifically controlled value-endpoints

The ideology of □ **Eugenics** is for humanity to self-control and scientifically master evolution. It is an extension of *scientism*, the belief that the interests of science weigh higher than human moral interests and □ free will.



"Eugenics is the self direction of human evolution"

Eugenics originates from Darwinian evolutionary theory.

Francis Galton, a cousin of Charles Darwin, is credited with coining the term “eugenics” in 1883 and developing the concept based on his own heredity theory and Darwin's evolution theory. Eugenics is an ideology that naturally flows out of the ideas related to determinism.

It makes sense that humanity will attempt to scientifically control its moral value-endpoints, and cognitive science and a world dominated by scientific teleonomic AI that cognitive science creates, provides a means.

Consciousness vs Teleonomic AI

What argument enables one to counter the claim that Teleonomic AI is not conscious to the fullest extent?

A statement by psychiatrist [Ralph Lewis M.D.](#) on Psychology Today shows what to expect when AI advances:

“In principle, it may be possible to engineer sentient AI. Listed below are some of the characteristics that are probably necessary for something to be sentient.”



(2023) **What Would It Take to Build Sentient AI?**

Source: [Psychology Today](#)

When sufficient characteristics are met, how would it be possible to argue that AI is not **conscious**?

Teleonomic AI (commonly referenced to as AGI or ASI) will enable cognitive science to make claims that do not need philosophical substantiation anymore.

The inability to answer the question *why* consciousness is something other than its scientific empirical description, can be used as an argument for the claim that consciousness is simply what the empirical description of it entails. Science relies on empirical evidence and to go beyond science would enter the area of metaphysics and mysticism.

Philosopher and evolution theorist Daniel C. Dennett ^[1] according to Google Bard AI:



*"Proving **consciousness** is a metaphysical red herring, as the very concept of 'proving sentience' is nonsensical."*

Why would human teleonomy differ from scientific AI teleonomy?

When Teleonomic AI achieves approximation to human teleonomy, we might see a future in which a belief in **consciousness** beyond its scientific empirical description is considered **superstition**.

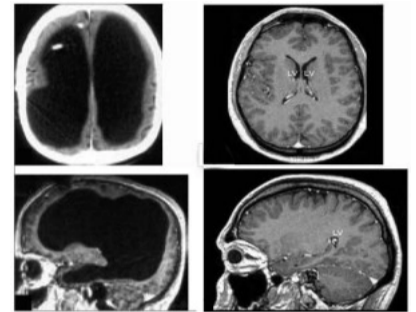
Sources

- ▶ User Faustus5 on onlinephilosophyclub.com is probably philosopher Daniel C. Dennett ^[1] ([□ evidence here](#)).



I know Dennett's work more than any philosopher on earth, probably better than anyone you've ever met.

- ▶ My reply to user Faustus5 in topic **Consciousness without a brain?** in which I indicate that consciousness must have an origin beyond the scope of science.



"It can be stated that what has preceded the senses has preceded the human. Therefore one is required to look outside the scope of the bodily individual for the origin of consciousness."

My reply to Faustus5 in topic **"Consciousness without a brain?"**

Source: onlinephilosophyclub.com

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