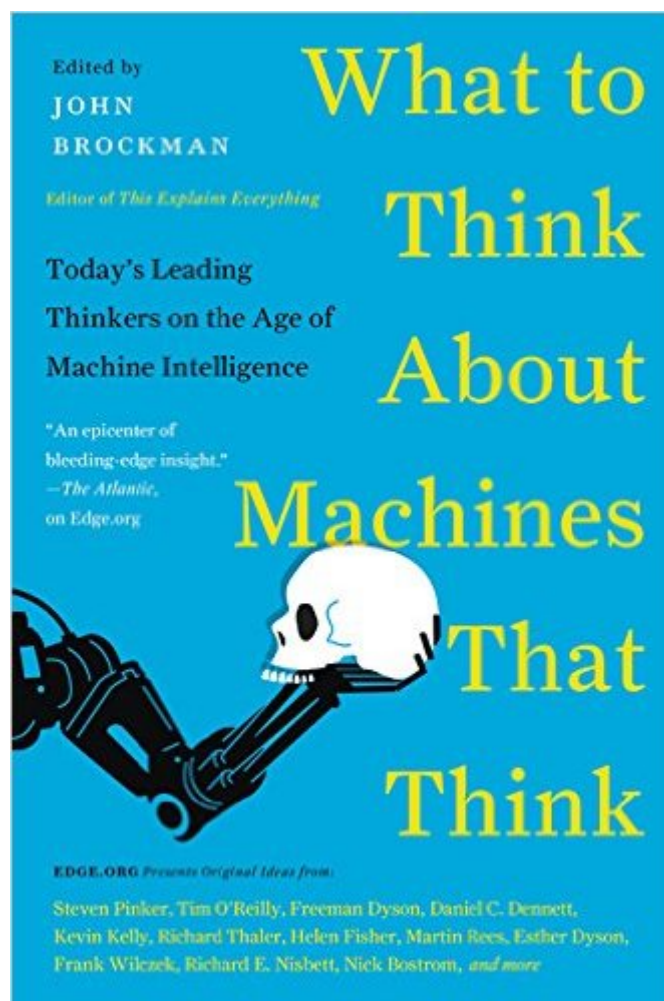# What To Think About Machines That Think: Today's Leading Thinkers On The Age Of Machine Intelligence

Synopsis

Weighing in from the cutting-edge frontiers of science, todayâ ™s most forward-thinking minds explore the rise of â œmachines that think.â •Stephen Hawking recently made headlines by noting, â œThe development of full artificial intelligence could spell the end of the human race.â • Others, conversely, have trumpeted a new age of â œsuperintelligenceâ • in which smart devices will exponentially extend human capacities. No longer just a matter of science-fiction fantasy (2001, Blade Runner, The Terminator, Her, etc.), it is time to seriously consider the reality of intelligent technology, many forms of which are already being integrated into our daily lives. In that spirit, John Brockman, publisher of Edge. org (â œthe worldâ ™s smartest websiteâ • â " The Guardian), asked the worldâ ™s most influential scientists, philosophers, and artists one of todayâ ™s most consequential questions: What do you think about machines that think?

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Customer Reviews

I really enjoyed the collection of short form articles. I read it exclusively on my phone so it was easy to read an article or two every time I was on the subway. I liked the curation of authors from academicians to artists to writers to visionaries; they all seem to introduce a different perspective to the subject matter. There is some repetition of themes across articles, which is, I suspect, how the book was organized, based on underlying themes. I wish the editors made these themes a bit more accessible and offered a way to visually explore various facets of artificial intelligence, maybe in an accompanying website, since there is so much richness in them.

This is the 11th book in an annual series where editor John Brockman poses a provocative query and solicits responses from his community of notables, all of which are available on his web site edge.org. One used the word â œeditedâ • advisedly as there was a dreary sameness to 192 essays in this 540 page tome, 2/3 of which could have been cut. There is no attempt at organizing the material. One can read these items in any order at all and a random sample of 10% will give you 95% of the sense of the book as a whole. One suspects that the purpose of paper publication is largely an appeal to the vanity of the participants in order to encourage them to contribute to next year's book.Most of the answers to the 2015 Edge question fell into 4 groups. One group believes that true machine intelligence is next to impossible as machines lack some essential human quality such as emotions, mortality, community, reflection, limbs or a deep evolutionary history. Others fear (or look forward) to the obsolescence of the human race, seeing super intelligent machines as our natural successors. A third group sees humans as a biological form of AI and sees the potential for continued symbiosis between man and machine and a fourth either fears or hopes that a machine intelligence, being created by humans will reflect either the best or the worst of humanity.There are, here and there, some interesting observations, but substitute humans for AI and the same set of concerns apply.

From John Brockton and Edge.org. This Annual Question and responses are an excellent read, with nearly 200 individual authors in bite size parcels of 1, 2, or 3 page responses. And those responses articulate all sides of the argument. Plenty of food for thought without telling you what to think. Highly Recommended.

Highly interesting, as usual in these responses to the annual question. Fascinating and scary at the same time.

I loathed this book. The moment I saw the title I bought the book and made it my next read. I love books on or about thinking machines and intelligence. I've listened to three of the other series of essays edited by Brockman, and in general I found them satisfying much as I find a good Las Vegas buffet, while I'm doing it I think it's the greatest thing in the world, but after I'm done I'm not sure it was the right thing to do.There's no way they should have compiled these random thoughts about thinking machines into a book form. I'm not against non-experts opining on topic matters outside of their field of expertise, but at least they should give a little bit of thought on the topic before they

submit an essay. I was insulted by the simplistic nature and the lack of thoughts that were put into most of the essays (and I'm really not easily insulted!).I would have been better served by taking the money I paid for this "book" and going to a bar and buying a picture of beer and talking about thinking machines with three random strangers than I was by these essays.My only real guess about this travesty of a book is that it was written by a computer program to prove that machines can't think, because this book gave me nothing (with very few exceptions, Sean Carroll, Nick Bostrom, and a couple of others had things to say).By the way, have I mentioned how I really didn't like this book and really, really, really would not recommend it? Buy at your own risk.

Book is 540 boring pages long. There are some interesting insights scattered throughout the book, but you need to read a lot of repetitious material to find them. Most of the material boils down to one of a few views: there is nothing to fear, there is lots to fear, so tread carefully and prepare, humans are really [chemical] machines, so whatâ ™s the issue?, and a number of variations on these themes. Lots of effort and time to separate the wheat from the chaff in this book.

thx 4 writing this booki may not agree with every opinion in it, but i do want to know what well informed people say about the subject

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