



AI: Many. Humans: Still One

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Artificial intelligence first proved its mettle by beating game experts. Deep Blue famously beat chess champion Gary Kasparov as early as 1997, and more recently the AlphaGo AI algorithm beat masters of the Japanese board game Go, playing (the masters said) with innovative and sometimes mysterious strategies that seemed as if they were playing an alien. Poker-playing robots have been demonstrated to bluff effectively to deceive their human opponents. In 2011, Watson beat the best humans at Jeopardy.

In all those cases, the artificial intelligence algorithms ‘trained’ by playing millions of games against each other, testing different strategies and ‘learning’ from what worked and what didn’t, what information to access and when. And with millions of game situations to draw from, the AI programs were able to recognize positions and respond with what has worked in the past much more quickly than the human mind.

So that means AI will beat humans in all games, right? Interestingly, there is still one game where trained AI algorithms lose to expert human players. The game is Bridge, which involves precise bidding techniques, assessment of opponent strategies and educated guesses about the lay of the cards. A program called Nook is on the case, but we might be heartened to learn that there are still a few things where humans are still superior to the machines.

Sources:

<https://www.lesswrong.com/posts/yHxmJch8dJoH6dwwz/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AlphaGo_versus_Lee_Sedol

<https://www.axios.com/2021/02/13/ibm-watson-jeopardy-win-language-processing>

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