

## Mind versus Machine Essay

“Just be yourself” is a motto that is widely overused in many countries around the world, whether it is in a classroom setting or a quote tacked up by your parents. However, its interpretation has never been altered such as in the article “Mind versus Machine.” Writer Brian Christian published “Mind versus Machine” this March in The Atlantic to make a point on artificial intelligence and its relation to human reactions. But despite the rapid advancement of technology, it can only improve to the point of filling in human inadequacies. Humans only need to be themselves in order to prove we are human; in no way will technology be able to replace our emotions and feelings, ability to make decisions, and experience and growth.

Firstly, the 1950’s introduced Turing Test failed to complete a full analysis and imprisoned itself within a narrow-scoped mindset. Basing human intelligence on a five minute conversation and subjugating personality and characteristics to a few stereotypical elements is ignorant. Communication should not be conversed over a computer screen, tone and expressions are crucial in conveying a message. Humans think “four minutes and 43 seconds left” and feel the jittery butterflies wavering in our stomachs. We feel the sweat forming in our palms and clench our fists for relaxation. We sense the tension and fear, we become impulsive and irrational. Our work habits and results are based on our health, mood, and mental condition. There is no need as writer Christian says to work harder to show we are human. Computers have everything plotted down to the last second and harbor no feelings; they make the “right choices.” Machines have no senses, they cannot hear and see, smell and breathe. Although technology is a human offspring, it is far off from a replica of what we are capable of processing mentally. Simply because it is able to solve the mathematical calculation faster, respond to the emergency better, does not prove it is “humane.” There is barely any difference between one Macbook Pro and another sitting across from it. By simply being ourselves, the most a machine can be

categorized under is “fake human.” But the more we act, the more we try, in turn we become the “fake machine.”

Author Christian brings a valid point to the table by being himself, the human. “I’d never attended the event, but I felt I had to go—and not just as a spectator, but as part of the human defense.” He could not believe the blasphemy of the mind versus human and had to act as part of the human defense. Computers do not make choices, but humans do. Humans are affected by changes. “His [Loebner] utopian future, apparently, is one in which unemployment rates are nearly 10 percent and virtually all of human endeavor and industry is outsourced to intelligent machines.” The unemployment rate is always a hot topic during election years. The blood pulsing through our veins, the thoughts forming in our brains force us to face issues that determine our well-being in this “survival of the fittest” society. Technology faces no such dilemma; they have no needs and face no barriers. As novelist Max Frisch once said “Technology... the knack of so arranging the world that we don't have to experience it.” Life is about experiences, walking the path full of obstacles and forging through. As Frisch mentioned, technology is a painkiller. It numbs discomfort and avoids confronting the problem directly. Recently the United States drone attacks against Pakistan have caused an uprising. Arguments have been made against Americans weighing their soldiers’ lives above foreign warriors with the disrespectful usage of the drone, a representative of highly developed technology. This discussion formed because the controller is not physically at the site, it is much easier to morally press a button and watch a life disintegrate thousands of miles away than to physically pull the trigger. Can technology really replace humans? The answer is so defined, the two so separated. If humans act naturally, we will only accentuate the differences.

Of course, the argument much depends on how we define “human.” However, simply limiting the definition to a generic dictionary one-sentence description is far from adequate. The evidence in the article does not complicate my argument because they are invalid due to the one-sided viewpoint it was

generated from. On the contrary, it does provide an interesting perspective on the widely increasing domination of human reliance on physical, mental, and emotional aid. Rarely do we see people jogging without their musical devices, driving with both hands on the wheel and eyes peering forward. Instead of “Mind versus Machine,” the article has enlightened me on the topic of how the mind’s over dependence on machines.

“Just be yourself.” You hear these over-quoted three words from your lecturing parents, as advice offered by a teacher, it is everywhere and used for everything. But it was not until I read the article “Mind versus Machine” did I see the quote used in the context to win an absurd award by the title of Most Human Human. In author Brian Christian’s “Mind versus Machine,” there were suggestions stating artificial responses could possibly exhibit human characters; 21<sup>st</sup> technology has advanced to the point it can fill in for our inadequacies, the day where machines will “train and prepare for tennis competitions, spelling bees, standardized tests, and the like” will never come.