CPS 170
Introduction
Ron Parr

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About Me
• My second year at Duke
• Bachelor’s degree in philosophy (Princeton)
  – Philosophy of mind
• Ph.D. in computer science (Berkeley)
  – Hierarchical planning under uncertainty
• Current interests:
  – Planning under uncertainty
  – Probabilistic reasoning
  – Game theory
  – Reinforcement learning

Requirements
• Reasonable programming skills:
  – C, matlab, or lisp
• Some mathematical sophistication
  – Short proofs
  – Basic probability concepts
  – Basic algorithmic concepts
    • Complexity
    • Analysis of algorithms

Major Topics Covered
• Search
  – A*, Games, SAT, CSPs
• Logic and Knowledge Representation
  – First Order Logic
  – Prolog
• Planning
  – Classical, stochastic
• Reasoning under uncertainty
  – Bayes nets, decision theory, HMMs, tracking
• Learning
  – Decision trees, Neural nets, Reinforcement learning

Major Topics Not Covered
• Natural Language
  • Vision
Class Mechanics

- **Textbook:** *Artificial Intelligence, A Modern Approach*, Russell & Norvig
- **Homeworks:** 15%
  - Discussion OK, write-up must be your own
- **Projects (2):** 15% each
  - Discussion OK, coding, write-up must be your own
- **Midterm:** 25%
  - Closed book, in class, no collaboration
- **Final:** 30%
  - Closed book, finals week, no collaboration

Why Study AI?

- Important innovations have grown out of AI
  - Linked list manipulation (Lisp)
  - Time sharing
  - X
  - Formalization of search techniques
  - Heuristics for intractable (NP hard) problems
  - Pattern recognition methods
- Cool tools
- Cool applications

Cool AI Applications

- AI is lurking in more places than you think:
  - My PDA
  - This Program
  - E-commerce
  - Dragon Naturally Speaking
  - Deep Blue
  - Mobile robotics
  - Space exploration
  - Logistics planning

So, what is this AI stuff?

- Make machines *think* like humans
  - Is this enough?
  - Is this too much?
- Make machines *act* like humans
  - Is this sufficient?
  - Is this desirable?

Turing Test

- Computer must be indistinguishable from a human based upon written exchanges
  - Does this imply intelligence?
  - How could the computer cheat?
  - Does intelligence imply a certain type of computation?
  - Could an intelligent machine still fail the test?
- Does our notion of intelligence transcend our concept of humanity?

Ideal Intelligence

- Intelligence means making optimal choices
- Is anything truly intelligent?
- How do we define optimality?
- Is there a more modest goal?
Ron's Compromise Definition

Artificial Intelligence is the task of developing general purpose algorithms with which machines can accomplish tasks which, if performed by a human, would be considered indicative of intelligence.

The Moving Target

- What is human intelligence?
  - At one time, calculating ability was prized
    - Now it is depreciated
  - Calculators permitted earlier and earlier in school
  - Chess was once viewed as an intelligent task
    - Now, massively parallel computers use not very intelligent search procedures to beat grand masters
    - Some say Deep Blue wasn’t AI
  - Learning once thought uniquely human
    - Now it’s a well-developed theory
    - Best backgammon player is a learning program

Artificial Flight

- Even seemingly unambiguous terms such as “flight” were subject to biological chauvinism.

- Demonstrable, unambiguous success ended chauvinism

Intelligence: A web of abilities

- Intelligence is hard to define in isolation
- We are an odd mixture of special purpose and general purpose hardware
  - Special purpose
    - Recognizing visual patterns
    - Learning and reproducing language
  - General Purpose
    - Theorem proving
    - Learning and excelling at new tasks
- Seamless integration

Early Efforts: General

- Good news:
  - Many problems can be formalized as instances of
    - Search
    - Logical deduction
  - The space of all proofs is a (somewhat) searchable space
  - A theorem proving engine + a knowledge base provide a satisfying picture or reasoning, knowledge and learning
    - Tell PC:
      - All men are mortal
      - Socrates is a man
    - Ask:
      - Is Socrates mortal?

Bad news for general methods

- Searching in proof space is hard
- Even if searching were easy, representing knowledge is hard
  - What is a chair?
- Knowledge is interconnected in strange ways
  - Chairs
  - People
  - Gravity
  - Customs…
Early Efforts: Special Purpose Methods

- Neural networks attempted to reproduce the function of human neurons
- Wing-flapping mechanical flying machine?
- Success at reproducing low-level tasks
  - Pattern recognition, associative memory
- Huge gap between low and high level
- Nearly became a religion

Middle of the Road
(This Class)

- Study broad classes of problems
- Restrict problem somewhat:
  - Develop a crisp input specification
  - Develop a well-defined success criterion
- Develop results with
  - provable properties
  - broad applicability
- Extract and study underlying principles behind successful methods

Modern AI: The worst case

- We fail to solve the general AI problem, but solve a bunch of less general problems
- We leave behind a many interesting and powerful tools for solving these problems
  (This is already happening.)
- Nobody gets upset with us for promising too much

Modern AI: The best case

- We achieve the seamless integration that humans have achieved
- We use pattern recognition and learning to shape and guide more general reasoning processes
- The amount of work required to engineer each new success goes down
- We can no longer explain away the intelligence we have created by calling it “artificial.”

Conclusion

- We want to solve hard problems that would traditionally require human-level intelligence.
  (Most we consider are at least NP-hard.)
- We want to be good computer scientists, so we force ourselves to use well-defined input/output specifications.
- We aim high, but we let ourselves simplify things if it allows us to produce a general-purpose tool with well-understood properties.