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Are You a 1 or a 0: Decision Making in the Age of Computers

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Are You a 1 or a 0?: Decision-Making in the Computer Age

By Brady Petrik

Mentor: Dr. Dionisio



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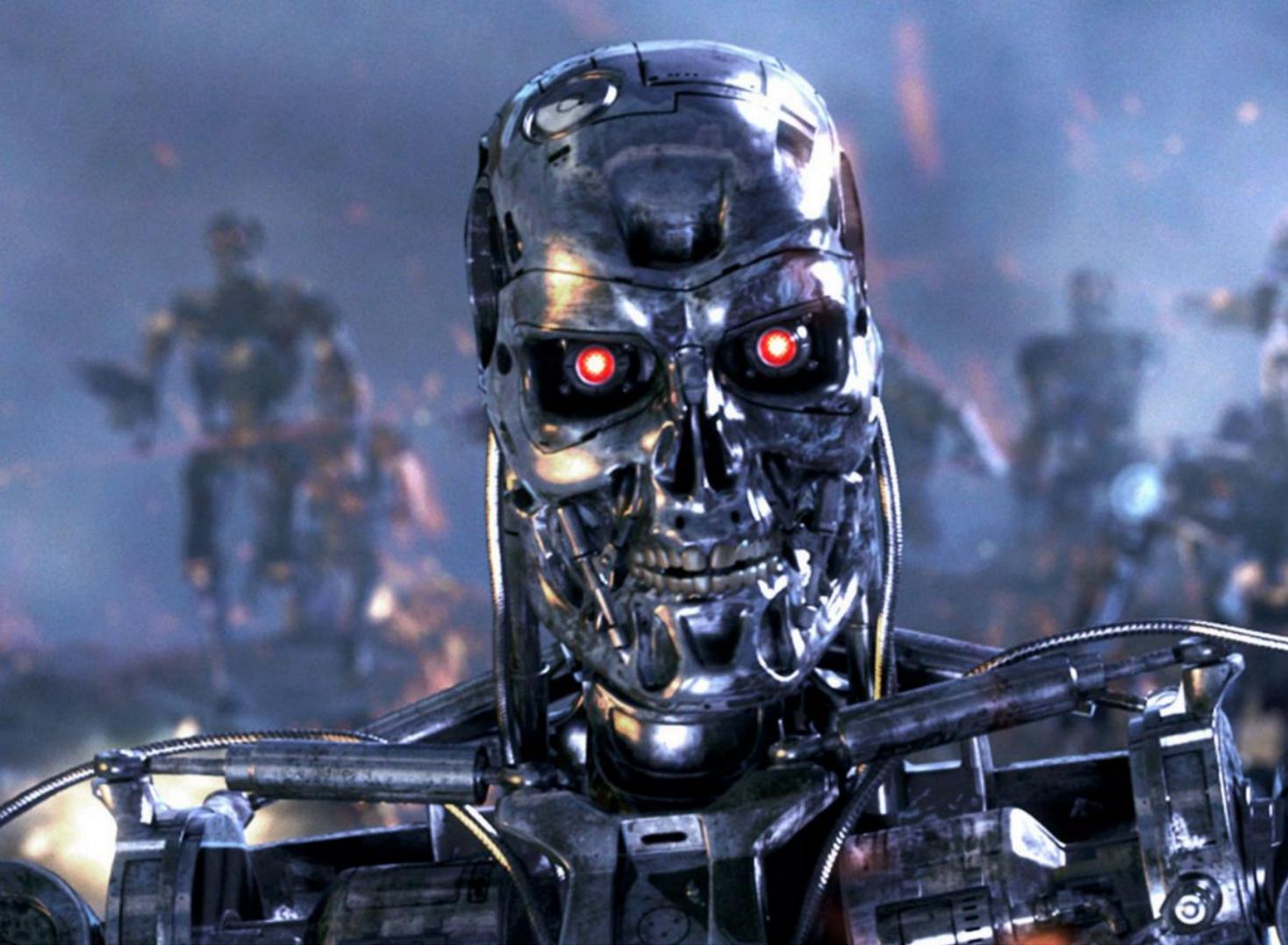


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There is a computer that can determine whether you want to live or die.

The National Institute of Health has created a computer that uses an algorithm to determine whether an unresponsive patient would want to live or die.

The algorithm is based on surveys taken of responsive patients who are similar in age, ethnicity, gender, etc. to the unresponsive patient. The results are then shared with the family of the patient in order to reach a consensus of action. The family still has final say on whether or not to end the patient's life.



Is this right?

Photo Credit:
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/mark-hughes/2016/01/28/how-to-save-the-terminator-franchise/2/#4a914316e496>

To determine if it is right for a computer to make a human decision, one must first define “right” and “human”.

This requires:

- Using key philosophical texts to create a concrete definition of “right” through the study of ethics and morals as they pertain to choice
- Identifying the decisions that computers are making today
- Connecting the philosophical findings with the real-world decisions in order to determine what decisions computers are capable of making, and which should be left to humans given the required moral input

After researching these factors, I will attend the 2017 Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems

The conference takes place in Denver this upcoming spring. I will work at the conference as a Student Assistant and help run the operations of the conference.

During this time, I will have full access to the conference floor, talks, meetings, and all other aspects. This will give me an unprecedented opportunity to see people and programs on the razor's edge of the industry of computer decision-making.

With this information, I will be able to determine what part ethics play in modern computing, and what the best way to implement them is in order to assure a happy medium between progress and humanity.

Anticipated Budget

Average round-trip plane ticket from LAX to Denver when booked in advance - \$110

7 night hotel stay (May 5-11) at Quality Inn Denver Central - \$776

Anticipated meal costs - \$12 per day x 7 days = \$84

Anticipated transportation costs - \$1.50 for bus to and from convention center per day + \$11 for shuttle from Denver Airport to hotel (and back) = \$40

Unexpected expenses: \$70

Total cost: \$1,080

Works Cited

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Maule, A. J., Can computers help overcome limitations in human decision making?. *British Computer Society*. 2009.

Thibodeua, P. Machines make better decisions than humans, says Gartner. *ComputerWorld.com*. 18 October 2011.