



Knowledge and Knowledge Attribution in Neural Networks

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ABSTRACT

Theoretical discussions of artificial neural networks (ANNs) routinely credit them with knowledge: AlphaGo Zero is said to have “discovered a remarkable level of Go knowledge during its self-play training process” and FaceNet is said to learn to recognize identities from photographs. One might wonder whether these attributions are metaphorical or inappropriately anthropomorphic. If we examine the features of machine learning that are parallel to biological learning, we can defend the attribution of knowledge to ANNs, while also gaining a fresh perspective on the nature of knowledge and the function of knowledge attribution.

Jennifer Nagel is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Toronto. Her research focuses on knowledge, belief, and our capacities to track these states in ourselves and others. She is interested in the history of epistemology, both in the Western tradition back to Plato, and in the Classical Indian and Tibetan traditions. She also works in contemporary philosophy of mind, with special interests in metacognition and mental state attribution.



DATE AND TIME

24/25 JUNE 2021

9 AM 25 Jun MELBOURNE
12 AM 25 Jun LONDON
7 PM 24 Jun NEW YORK

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