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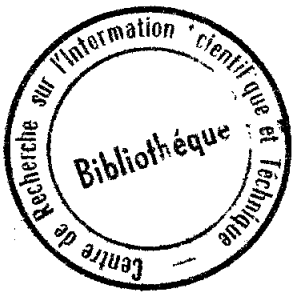

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Semantic Information Processing

Marvin Minsky, Editor

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Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England

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Preface

How can one make machines understand things? This body is a collection of studies in *artificial intelligence,* the science of making machines do things that would require intelligence if done by men.

Most of the chapters are slightly edited Ph.D. theses, and the book is to serve two purposes: to make the results of these dissertations more available to scientists, and to exhibit the work to students searching for new problems in this area. Abbreviated versions of such studies, as usually presented in scientific journals, rarely suffice as a basis either for further work or for critical evaluation. Besides, the uncompressed original dissertations are usually easier to read and understand.

Each of the projects described in this book has already inspired more ambitious attacks. I hope to collect reports of those that succeed into a second volume within the next year or two.

In the long introduction that is Chapter 1, there are scattered remarks about contributors to this work. I want to acknowledge explicitly the influence of my own collaborators, John McCarthy and Seymour Papert, on the work that was done at M.I.T., and the support of that work, in its early years, by the M.I.T. Research Laboratory of Electronics and the M.I.T. Computation Center and, in recent years, by the Advanced Research Projects Agency through M.I.T.'s Project MAC. I want also to thank Edmund C. Berkeley for demanding and helping to get the papers collected and published.

Cambridge, Mass.
July 1968

Marvin Minsky

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