Herbert Simon (1916–2001)*

Herbert Simon (1916–2001) received the ACM Turing Award for computing in 1975 and the Nobel Prize in Economics in 1978.

In economics, he pioneered the theory of bounded rationality. He argued that individuals had only limited resources to evaluate their options, so rather than rationally choosing the best possible option, they would search within a constrained space to find a ‘good enough’ option. He called this strategy “satisficing”.

In computing, he was one of the pioneers in artificial intelligence (AI). With Allen Newell, he built systems for symbolic reasoning in logic. They developed the important AI tool called ‘heuristic search’, to sift through a large tree of possibilities towards a desired goal state.

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