

Beyond the Imitation Game: Why Passing the Turing Test Makes the Case for AI Juries

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Introduction

As [Neuroscience News](#) mentioned this week, a milestone cognitive science study unveiled the first definitive evidence that modern artificial intelligence ('AI') can pass the Turing Test.

Perhaps this comes at a good time given another court case has resulted in a hung-jury and a judge in the UK is under review due to lenient sentencing¹.

While it may seem like a radical theory to suggest outsourcing jury service (and perhaps even judgements to AI), given the recent discussions about stopping jury service in the UK, I am clearly not alone in thinking that refinement is needed.

There are several considerations included in this paper:

- The backlog of court cases happened during COVID-19 and due to the pandemic, human behaviour in general was impacted.
- Social media has developed more in recent years creating an addictive environment where truth is hard to distinguish, especially with mainstream media outlets using clickbait and misleading headlines.
- AI in general has made great strides in developments. In academic and corporate spheres, 'AGM' frequently refers to Artificial General Intelligence which researches making

¹ The focus of this paper will be on juries rather than judges. While there has been a story in the press recently of a judge being 'unduly lenient' in a rape case, which is currently under review, this is determined to be an unusual incident rather than the norm. Overall, judges play an important role in the legal system to ensure that there is a fair and just trial.

artificial intelligence more human-like and focuses on developing machines that possess advanced cognitive, emotional, and autonomous abilities.

The Turing Test

In 1950, British mathematician and computer scientist Alan Turing proposed a simple question: 'Can machines think?' To find out, he designed a behavioral benchmark known as the 'Imitation Game', also known as the Turing Test.

For more than seven decades, it stood as an elusive, unmet standard for machine intelligence. However, a landmark study from the University of California San Diego, published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, reveals that AI has officially cleared this hurdle.

In a series of randomised, controlled trials, researchers discovered that advanced Large Language Models ('LLMs') can mimic human conversation so convincingly that real people cannot tell them apart from actual humans.

When equipped with customised 'persona' prompts instructing them to adopt a distinct human communication style, OpenAI's GPT-4.5 achieved a 73% human deception rate.

It was actually selected as 'human' significantly more often than the real human participants in the study.

The study's co-authors, Cameron Jones and Ben Bergen, noted that these advanced systems did not win over the human interrogators through a raw display of calculation or absolute perfection. Instead, they succeeded by exhibiting natural human traits such as casual humor, conversational directness, socio-emotional nuance, and strategic fallibility, making minor mistakes just like a real person would.

As AI draws closer than ever to perfectly mirroring human behavior and understanding our social realities, this technological milestone arrives at a good time for society. Specifically, it offers a revolutionary solution to a growing crisis in the British legal system, the increasing bias within those making the decisions of a person's fate.

The Problem of Human Bias in UK Courts

The foundational pillar of the UK legal system is the right to a trial by a jury of one's peers, an impartial group tasked with weighing evidence objectively. However, modern human juries are becoming increasingly susceptible to cognitive, cultural, and systemic biases.

From unconscious racial and socioeconomic prejudices to the overwhelming influence of social media and 'trial by public opinion', ensuring a completely neutral verdict has become

exceptionally difficult as it seems that it is perfectly acceptable to give your opinion at any point, with little need to quantify it.

This is where the evolution of human-like AI becomes vital. While the UC San Diego study proves that AI can now mirror human reasoning, tone, and emotional nuance, an AI system possesses a unique advantage over a human counterpart, it lacks a personal ego, deep-seated societal prejudices, or an emotional stake in the outcome. There is also no fear of bumping into family members of the accused which may sway and opinion, out of fear.

By implementing AI juries, the justice system could introduce a perfectly impartial arbiter. An AI jury would understand the subtleties of human testimony and behavior, yet evaluate a case strictly on the evidence presented (which is a key point), and establish legal precedents. It would remain completely unswayed by a defendant's appearance, a barrister's theatrical charisma, or pre-existing media narratives.

Financial relief and temporal efficiency

If this theory were to come true, transitioning from human juries to an AI-driven system also presents profound practical, economic, and systemic advantages for everyday individuals and the country.

Eliminating financial strain

Jury duty often carries an immense financial burden even with the subsidy. When everyday individuals are summoned to court, it often means taking weeks off work, resulting in potential loss of income (depending on the work criteria and contract), disrupted careers, childcare expenses, and operational strain on local businesses.

While the government provides minor allowances (as set out below), it rarely compensates for the true economic disruption.

UK jury service expenses:

- More than 4 hours at court: up to £64.95
- 4 hours or less at court: up to £32.47

For longer trials, these limits increase from day 11 onwards:

- More than 4 hours at court: up to £129.91
- 4 hours or less at court: up to £64.95

Additional Allowances:

- Food & Drink: £5.71 for up to 10 hours; £12.17 for over 10 hours.
- Travel: Standard public transport fares or up to 31.4p per mile if driving.
- Childcare: Can be claimed, but the total claim including loss of earnings cannot exceed the daily maximum.

An AI jury system would eliminate this civic burden entirely, ensuring that citizens do not face financial penalisation simply for the legal system to function, and to 'do their duty'.

Saving valuable public time

The wheels of British justice turn notoriously slowly, with Crown Court backlogs regularly hitting historic highs. Weeks are spent selecting juries, instructing them on complex legal frameworks, and waiting through days of deliberation.

An AI jury, operating at computational speeds while utilising human-level comprehension, could synthesise thousands of pages of evidence, medical records, and legal precedents instantly.

Deliberations that take human juries days of emotionally charged debate could be completed in minutes, dramatically accelerating the legal process and giving victims and the accused swift closure.

Interestingly, and as a side note, most evidence in criminal court is still being handed over to juries as hardcopy printouts, therefore keeping it as electronic as possible would also be better for the environment.

This would not overrule (excuse the pun), the need for barristers, as arguments and defences are crucial in legal cases, both sides need to be heard and need to be argued, therefore to remove this element, would not be sensible.

Slashing taxpayer costs

Managing jury logistics, accommodations, security, and administrative oversight costs the taxpayer millions of pounds annually. Transitioning to automated, highly secure AI tribunals would drastically lower the overhead costs of funding prolonged trials, saving the country vital resources.

A new era for modern justice

When Alan Turing conceptualised his test, he envisioned a future where machines could seamlessly integrate into human society by mastering our modes of thought and communication.

He argued that the true measure of a machine wasn't its raw computing power, but its ability to

navigate the complexities of human nature.

As AI has officially passed the Turing Test, we must look beyond using this technology for mere automation or entertainment. If the UK legal system is to remain a true beacon of fairness, it must adapt to an era where human bias can finally be engineered out of the courtroom, and it can be argued that perhaps humans need to take more responsibility and take the decision making seriously, but having been on jury service twice and witnessing the uncertainty, the fear, the bullying and in some situations the lack of comprehension, for the sake of the defendant, changes are needed.

Implementing AI juries is no longer a science-fiction concept; it is a financially sound, time-saving, and profoundly equitable evolution for modern justice.

The idea of replacing the traditional 12 person British jury with an AI system is a frequent topic of debate among UK legal scholars. While the UK judiciary actively utilises AI for minor administrative tasks, and issued updated judicial guidelines cautioning against algorithmic hallucinations, using AI to actually determine guilt remains a highly controversial, theoretical concept.

It presents a sharp trade-off between mechanical efficiency and the deeply human elements of common law justice.

The primary pros and cons of implementing AI juries in the UK legal system include:

Theme / Category	Pros (The Case for AI Juries)	Cons (The Case Against AI Juries)
Efficiency & court backlogs	Instant resolution: Can analyse massive volumes of evidence and deliver verdicts in minutes, helping clear the massive backlog in Crown Courts (which sits at over 65,000 cases). It eliminates trial delays caused by juror absences, scheduling conflicts, or illness.	Rigidity: Cannot adapt to unexpected human nuances in real-time testimony or witness behaviour. A technical glitch or system outage could completely paralyse the judicial pipeline.

<p>Bias & objectivity</p>	<p>Elimination of human prejudice: Removes human flaws like racial, gender, or socioeconomic prejudice, as well as a jury's susceptibility to emotional manipulation or theatrical arguments by barristers.</p>	<p>Amplified algorithmic bias: AI learns from historical court data. If past UK policing and sentencing trends contain systemic biases, the AI will codify, legitimise, and potentially amplify those unfair patterns.</p>
<p>Moral judgment & nuance</p>	<p>Strict factual adherence: Evaluates a case purely on concrete data and exact legal definitions, ensuring highly standardised, predictable applications of the law.</p>	<p>Loss of jury equity: In the UK, human juries have a historic right to acquit a defendant out of conscience if they feel a law is unjust in that specific context (known as a 'perverse verdict²'). AI cannot apply mercy, common sense, or evaluate the 'spirit' of the law.</p>
<p>Security & interference</p>	<p>Immune to physical tampering: AI cannot be bribed, blackmailed, intimidated, or doxed by organised crime groups, a persistent risk with human jurors in high-profile trials or in general trials by family members of the defendant.</p>	<p>Vulnerability to cyberattacks: The system could be hacked or manipulated via 'data poisoning.' Sophisticated deepfakes or altered digital evidence could deceive an algorithm far easier than a human panel.</p>

² In the UK legal system, a perverse verdict is a decision by a jury in a criminal trial that completely contradicts the evidence presented or disregards the judge's instructions on the law. Example cases, the Clive Ponting Case (1985) and The Colston Four Case (2021).

<p>Legal frameworks & trust</p>	<p>Drastic cost reductions: Saves millions in taxpayer money spent on juror expenses, loss of earnings allowances, and long-term court administrative infrastructure.</p>	<p>Erosion of public trust: Violates the fundamental constitutional principle of being tried by a 'jury of one's peers.' It faces severe legal hurdles under Article 6 of the Human Rights Act (Right to a Fair Trial) due to the unexplainable 'black box' nature of deep learning algorithms.</p>
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Summary

While an AI jury offers unmatched speed and financial savings for a strained UK court system, it fundamentally lacks the capacity for moral reasoning. In English common law, justice is not merely a calculation of probabilities, it relies heavily on community standards, empathy, and collective human deliberation, which a machine simply cannot replicate.

So a more collaborative solution, one that does not create a potential societal divide could be to unite with AI and use combined knowledge to not only accommodate the backlog, but also take us into a new evolutionary generation that minimise bias and focuses on the goal at hand - to accurately decide on a person's fate based on evidence and certainty.

During my experiences of jury service, I mentioned it would be good to focus on those who would like to volunteer for jury service, or liaise with those likely to have more time (such as those who are retired or out of work). This would still provide a random cross-section of society, but they would be willing volunteers rather than doing jury service out of duty.

A collaborative workflow could also be created for the minor crimes:

- First stage:** Evidence passes through deep thinking AI and a decision is given.
- Second stage:** The response is run through AI as a first stage quality check.
- Third stage:** Compare the differences between the first response and quality check response.

If too many outliers or abnormalities are identified based on a threshold criteria, then the responses go through to 1-2 humans randomly picked from a group, who can work remotely and deliver a final decision. They can also be given the opportunity to escalate the task to another 1-2 humans who are different from the previous humans, if another check is needed.

Fourth stage: Submit to a judge for a fairness review and then issue a sentence.

This workflow would not only speed up the process, it would help with the backlog and save time and money for the court service and individuals involved.

With this workflow, there is not a full reliance on technology, but working with technology innovatively to ensure a decision is made, but complementing the traditional ways of the UK legal system.

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