Computers

Piccinini, Gualtiero (2004) Computers.

Full text available as:
Microsoft Word - Requires a viewer, such as Microsoft Word Viewer

Abstract

According to some philosophers, there is no fact of the matter whether something is either a computer, or some other computing mechanism, or something that performs no computations at all. On the contrary, I argue that there is a fact of the matter whether something is a calculator or a computer: a computer is a calculator of large capacity, and a calculator is a mechanism whose function is to perform one out of several possible computations on inputs of nontrivial size at once. This paper is devoted to a detailed defense of these theses, including a specification of the relevant notion of " large capacity" and an explication of the notion of computer.

Keywords:	computer
Subjects:	Specific Sciences: Computer Science
ID Code:	2016
Deposited By:	Piccinini, Gualtiero
Deposited On:	25 October 2004