

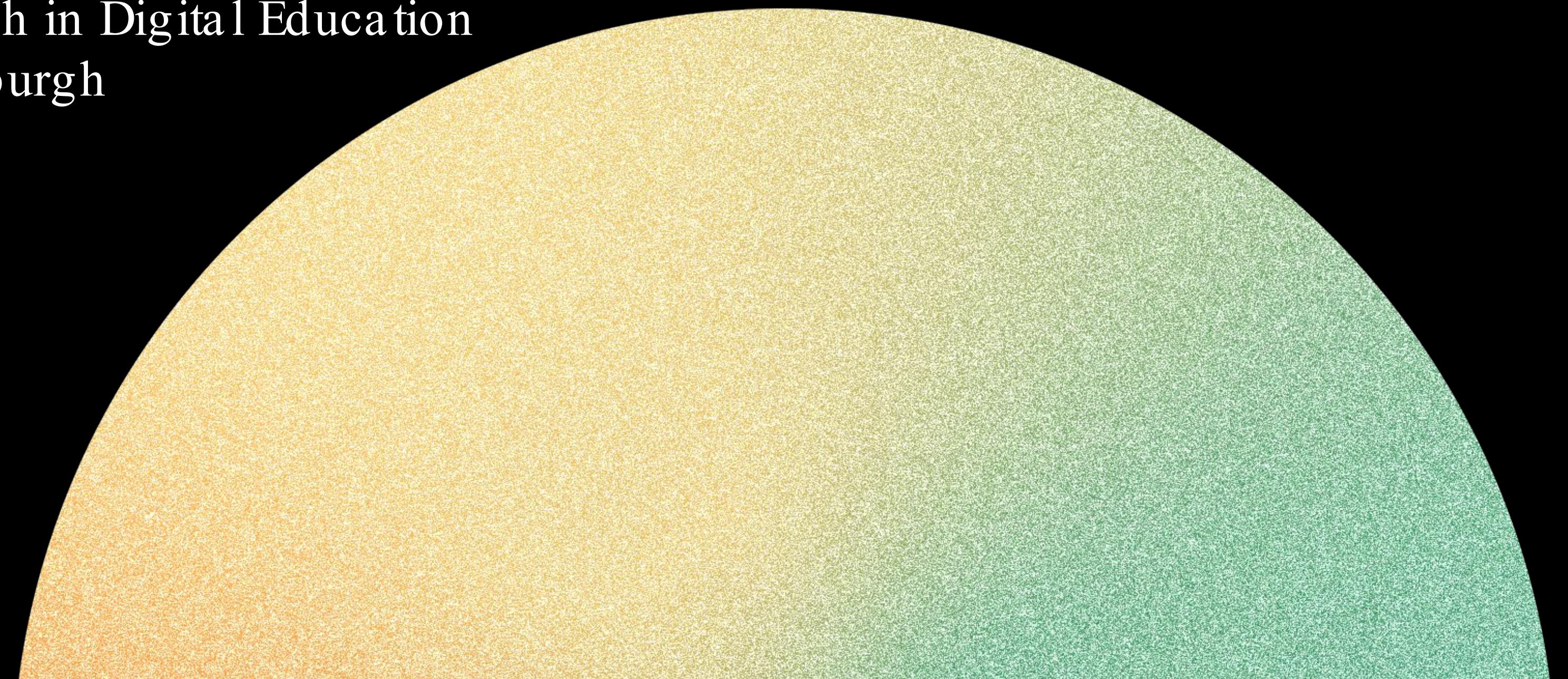
The machine is us: education and cyborg theory after AI

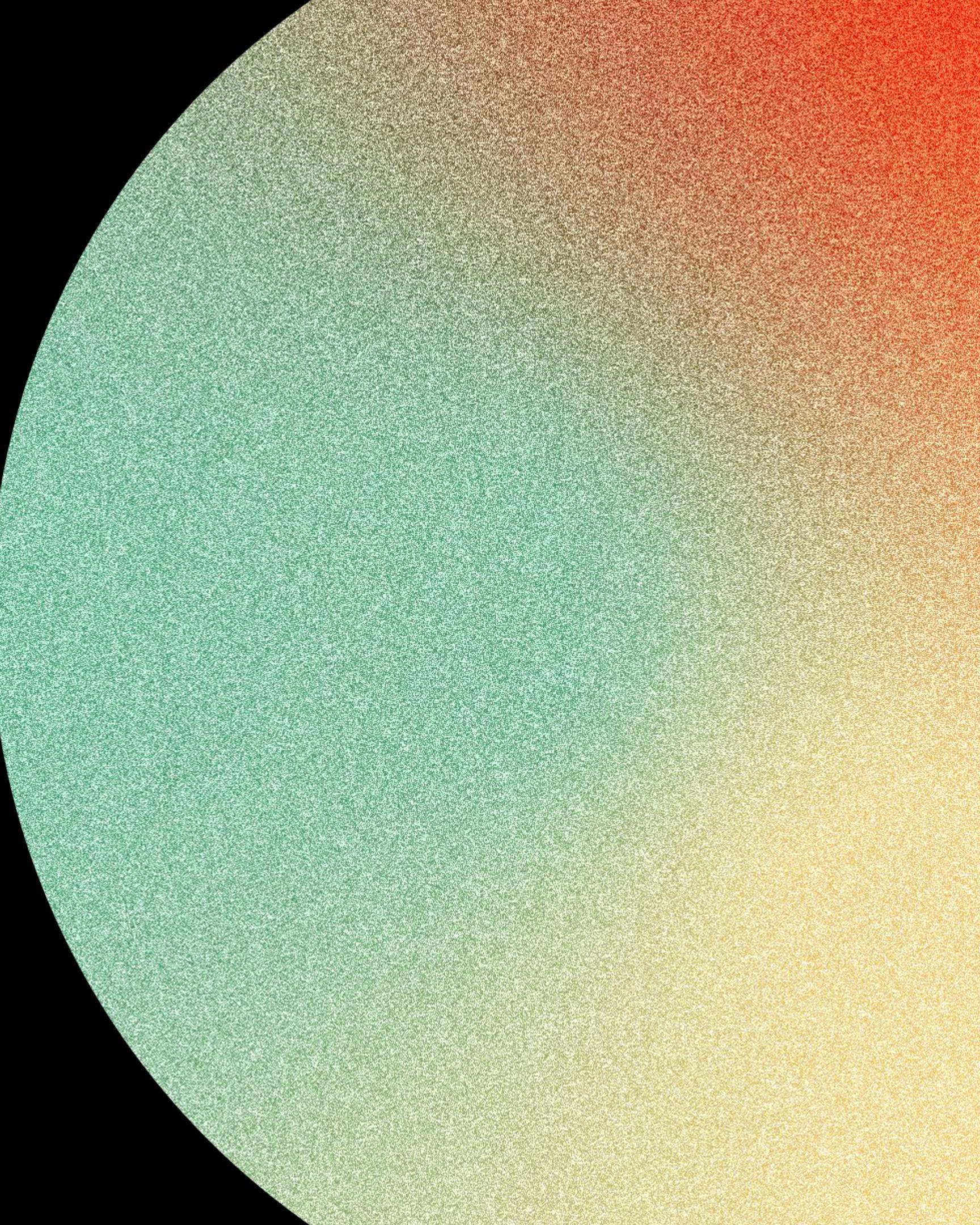
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1 Haraway's cyborg manifesto: possibilities and rifts post-AI

2 What does this mean for critical edtech?

3 Three examples of pleasures, experiences and powers with serious potential for changing the rules of the game

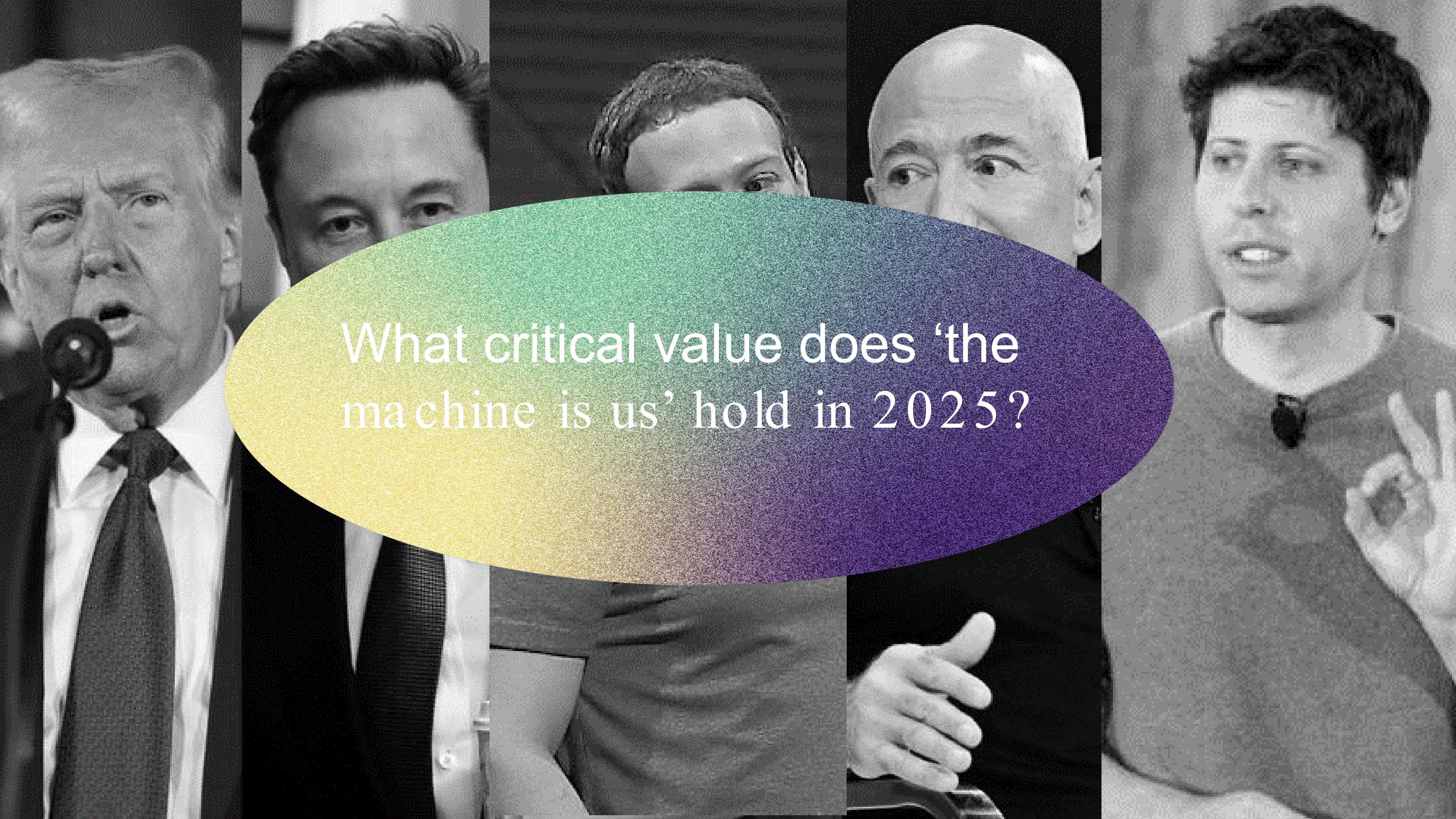
1 The cyborg manifesto: possibilities and rifts post^{AI}

Haraway, D. (1991) 'A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century.' *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*. 149 –181.

a socialist-feminist take on the question of political subjectivity and an (ironic) interrogation of the relation between organism and machine as a 'border war'

the transgressive potential of boundary breakdowns and departures from traditional categories of difference:
human – animal
human – machine
physical – non-physical

'The machine is us, our processes, an aspect of our embodiment. We can be responsible for machines; they do not dominate or threaten us. We are responsible for boundaries; we are they.' (p180)



What critical value does 'the
machine is us' hold in 2025?



‘There is no fundamental, ontological separation in our formal knowledge of machine and organism, of technical and organic. The replicant Rachel in Blade Runner stands as the image of a cyborg culture’s fear, love, and confusion.’

p178

‘What we are doing with Lattice is to deliver as much autonomy across that entire kill chain to put that human being on-the-loop so that they can make better decisions faster...because they have an intelligent system that’s incorporating sensor data, platforms, vehicles.’

Anduril chief strategy officer Chris Brose in *Defense One*, October 10th 2024



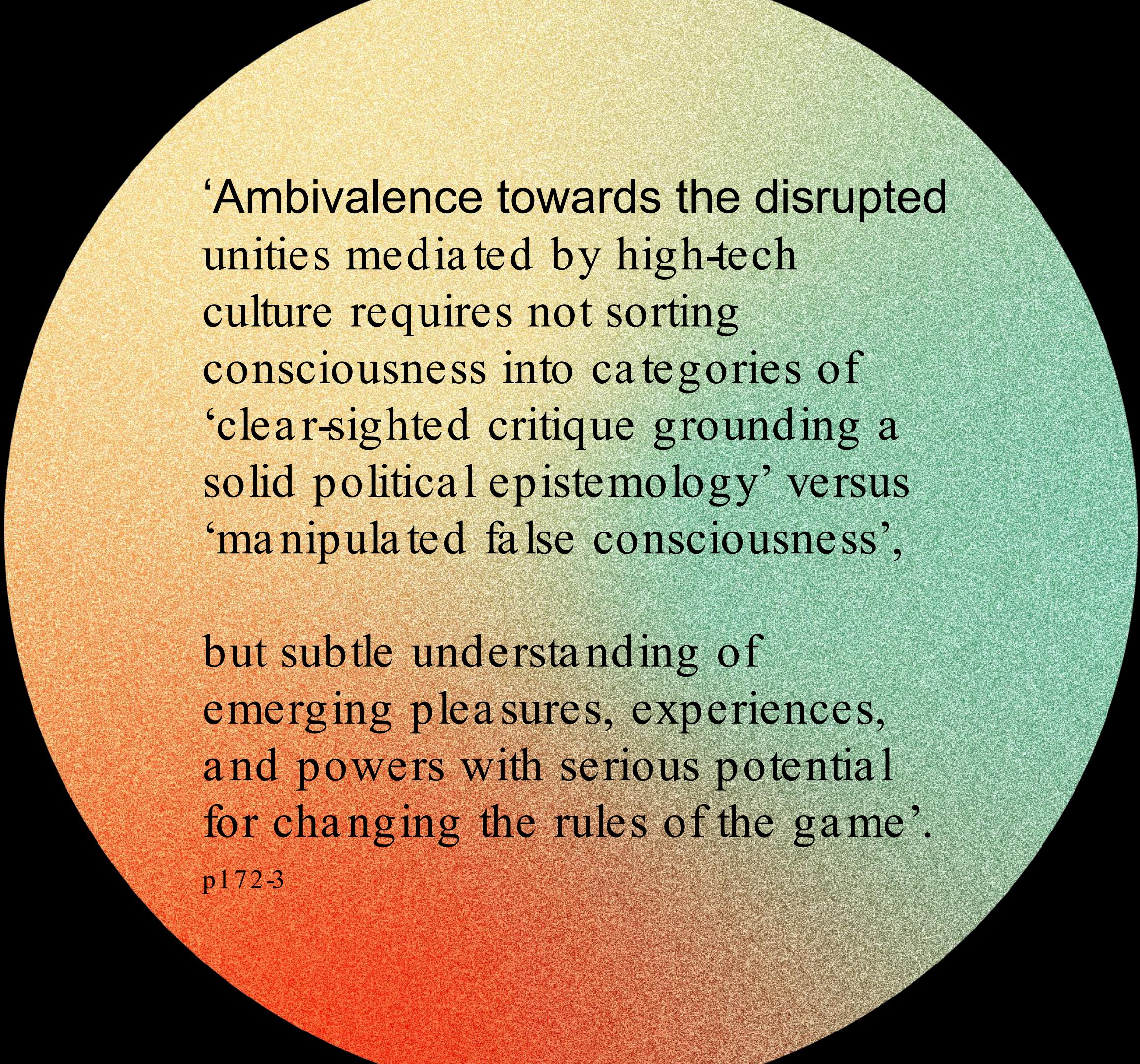
The Bolt drone pushes right up to the limits of the Pentagon principle that robotic weapons should always have a person involved in lethal decisions.

2 What does this mean for critical edtech?

‘From one perspective, a cyborg world is about the final imposition of a grid of control on the planet...

From another perspective, a cyborg world might be about lived social and bodily realities in which people are not afraid of their joint kinship with animals and machines, not afraid of permanently partial identities and contradictory standpoints.

The political struggle is to see from both perspectives at once because each reveals both dominations and possibilities unimaginable from the other vantage point.’



‘Ambivalence towards the disrupted unities mediated by high-tech culture requires not sorting consciousness into categories of ‘clear-sighted critique grounding a solid political epistemology’ versus ‘manipulated false consciousness’,

but subtle understanding of emerging pleasures, experiences, and powers with serious potential for changing the rules of the game’.

3 Three kinds of pleasures,
experiences and powers with
serious potential for changing the
rules of the game

Acceleration

Can we *accelerate* AI... 'to rupture the habits and memories of education?'.

'The opportunity of the present moment may be to let go of the desire for control that underpins the policy sciences... rather than to pursue control of a different kind.'

Webb, P. Taylor, Sellar, S. and Gulson, K. N. (2020). 'Anticipating Education: Governing Habits, Memories and PolicyFutures'. *Learning, Media and Technology* 45 (3): 284 –97. p.294.



‘the unknown unknowns of both the subject and the political imagination can only be taken back and built anew by enacting a political affinity with the machine, and by way of considering its very logic.

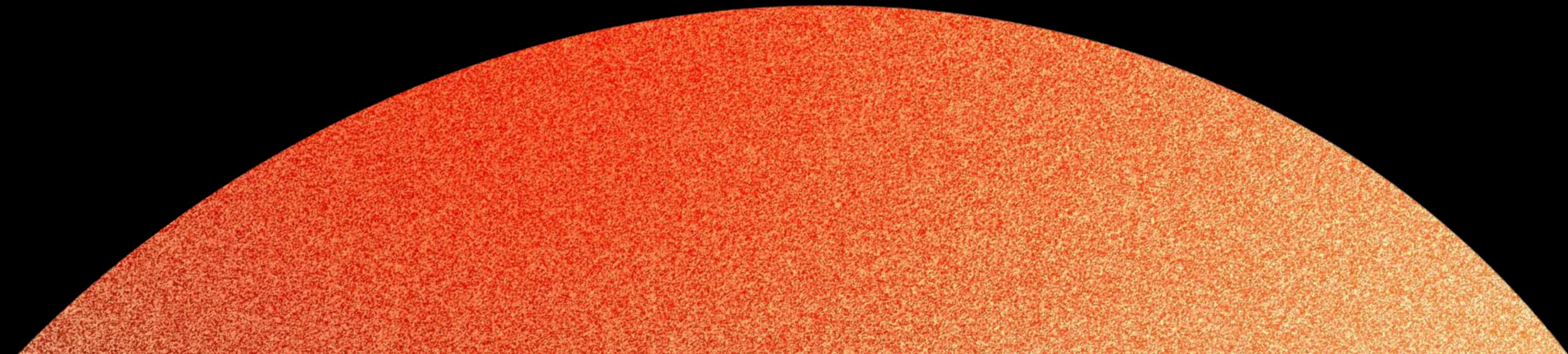
Might this affinity become a path for developing an entirely new, inhuman logic of becoming-subject ...beyond the white-male constructs of paranoid humanism?’.

Majaca, A. and Parisi, L (2016) The Incomputable and Instrumental Possibility. *EFlux*77: 1 –6. p.3.

Desire

‘Thinking directed
towards changing the
world and informing the
desire to change it.’

Bloch, Ernst (1986). *The Principle of Hope*
Vol. 1. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.



‘The point is not for utopia to assign ‘true’ or ‘just’ goals to desire but rather to educate desire, to stimulate it, to awaken it – not to assign it a goal but to open a path for it....

Desire must be taught to desire, to desire better, to desire more, and above all to desire otherwise.’

Abensour, Miguel. 1999. ‘William Morris: The Politics of Romance’. In *William Morris: The Politics of Romance* San Francisco: City Lights Books. p.145.



Bayne, S. (2023). Digital education utopia.
Learning, Media and Technology, 49(3), 506 –521.

Education should be more like music

‘can we reconceive education as having its own unique aesthetic qualities, like art or music, which have the power to elicit emotion and are thus affective?’

Osberg, D. and Biesta, G. (2021). ‘Beyond Curriculum: Groundwork for a Non-Instrumental Theory of Education’. *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 53 (1).



Thank you

'The relation to this world makes music, particularly in social terms, seismographic, it reflects cracks under the social surface, expresses wishes for change, bids us to hope.'

Bloch, Ernst (1986). *The Principle of Hope* Vol. 1. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.