

# IT AND ETHICS

A philosophical view on how "things", technology,  
influence human acquiring of knowledge  
- what designer's should do in accordance

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**Peter-Paul Verbeek**

PHILOSOPHICAL  
REFLECTIONS  
ON TECHNOLOGY,  
AGENCY,  
AND DESIGN

**What Things Do**

PETER-PAUL VERBEEK



# THE VIEW

**To study technology in terms of the relations between human beings and technological artifacts, focusing on the various ways in which technologies help to shape relations between human beings and the world**

# A MACRO VIEW

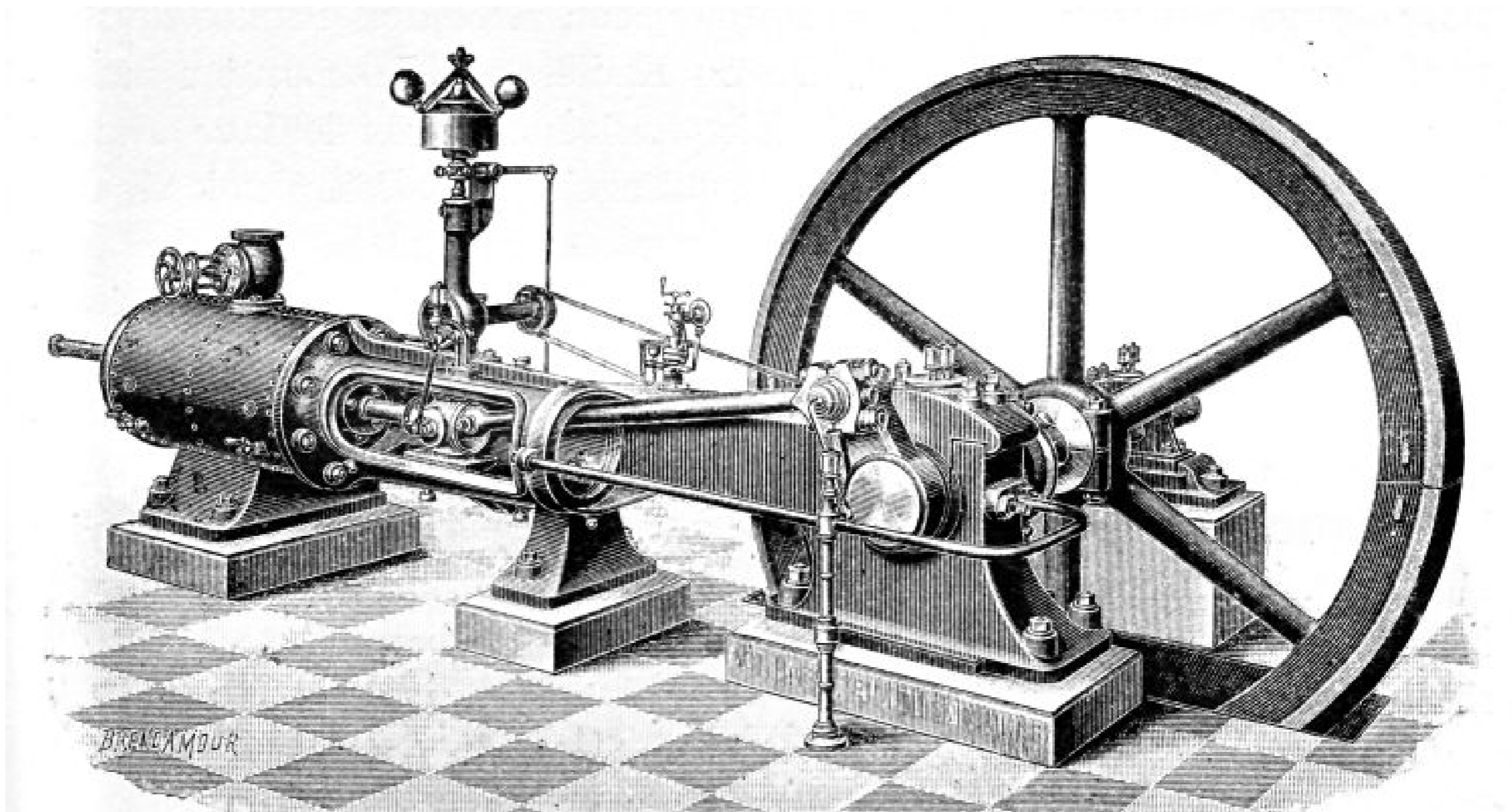
A satellite view of Earth showing a large-scale weather system, likely a cyclone or storm, over the Indian Ocean. The text 'A MACRO VIEW' is overlaid in white, sans-serif font across the top of the image.

Gun's don't kill  
people. People  
kill people



# Instrumentalists

Technology is neutral



# Substantivists

Technology is an independent power, that can alter culture drastically



**Western  
wayfinding**



**Inuit  
wayfinding**



# **Postphenomenological view**

Both perspectives assume, that technologies can be spoken about as independent of the human beings that engage with it and the culture in which it functions.





A MICROVIEW



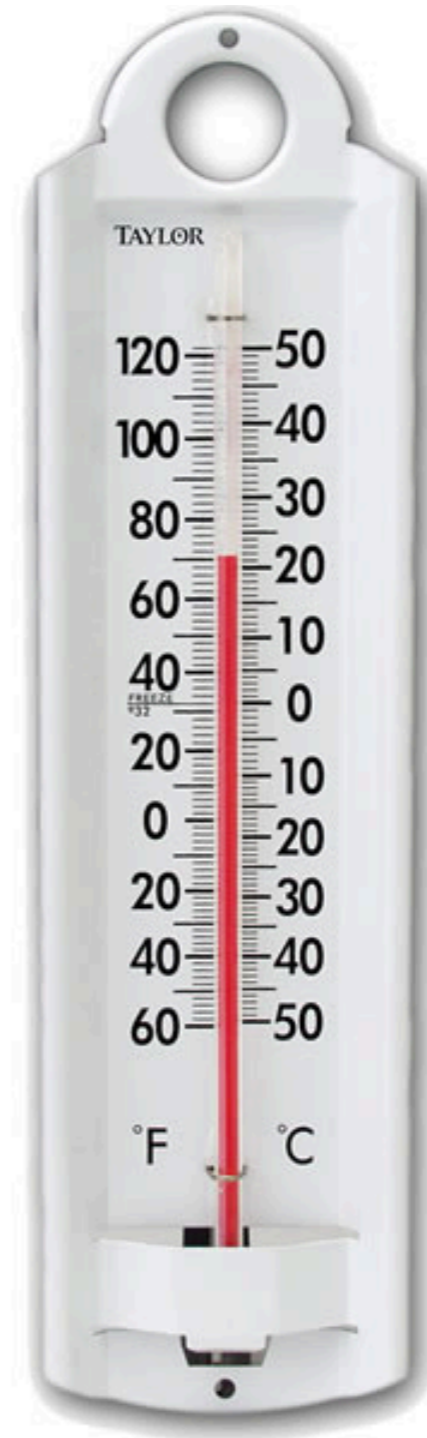
# **Following philosopher John Ihde**

**3 main types of ways to describe the interrelation  
between human beings and the world through  
technology**

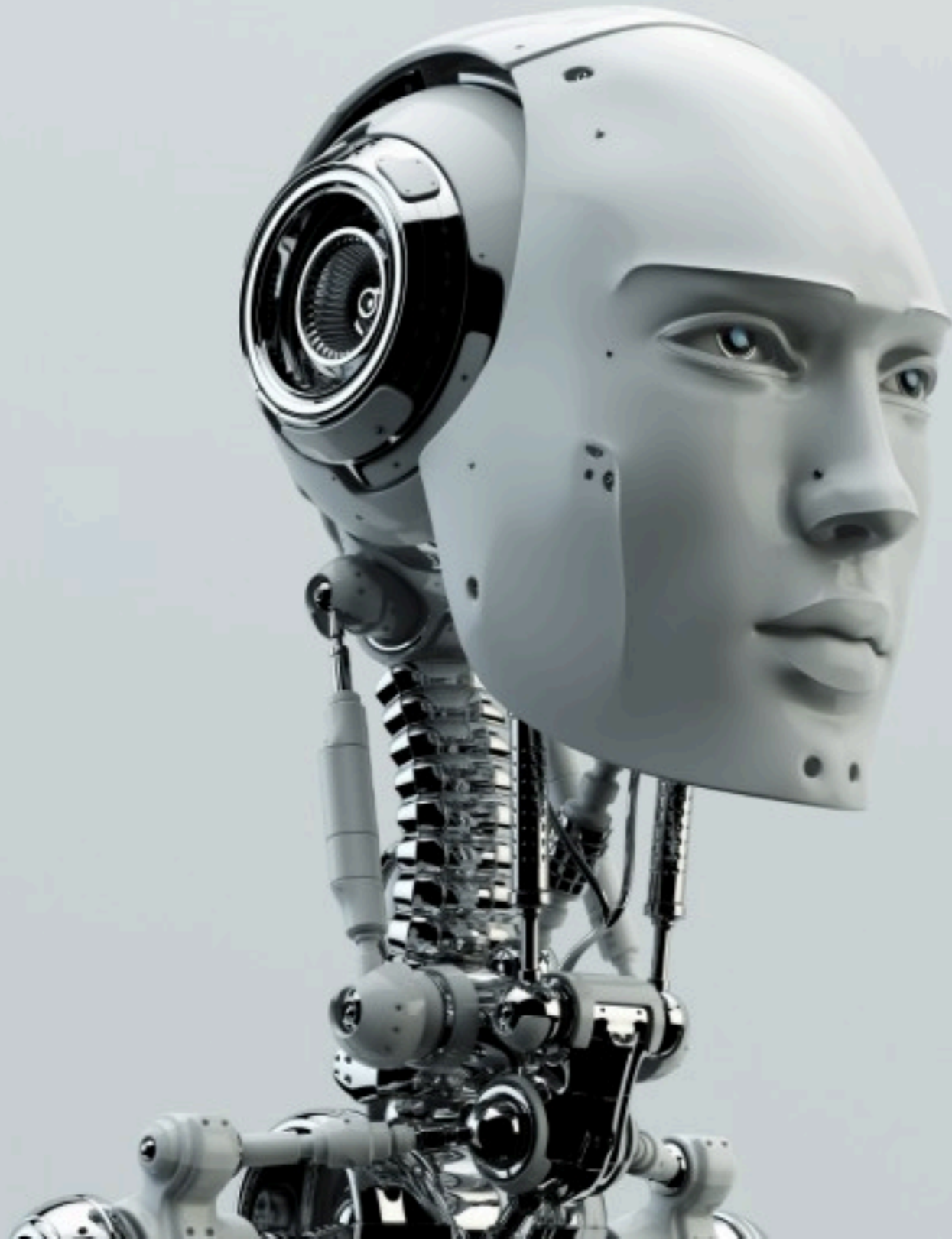
# Embodiment



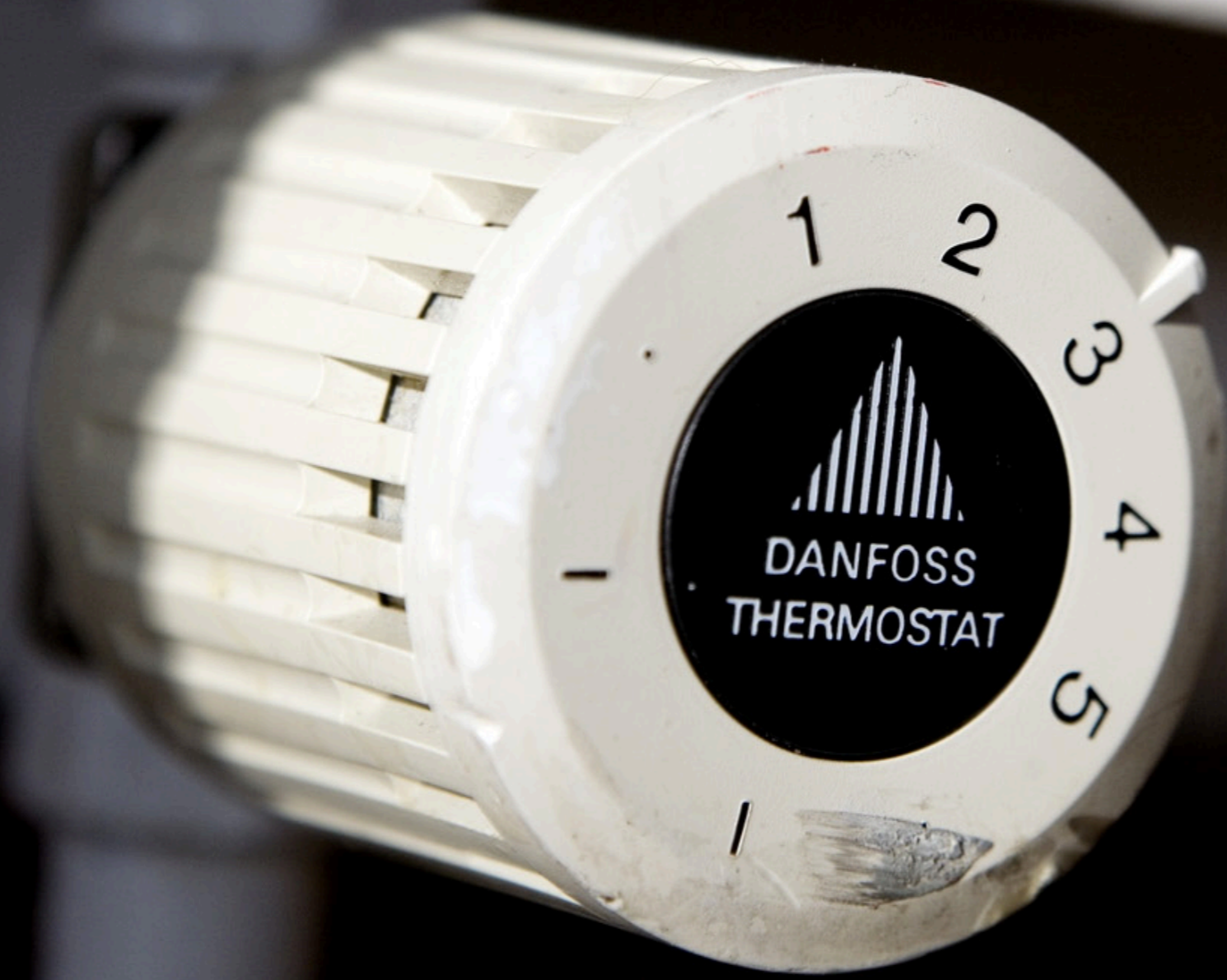
# Hermeneutical (interpretation)



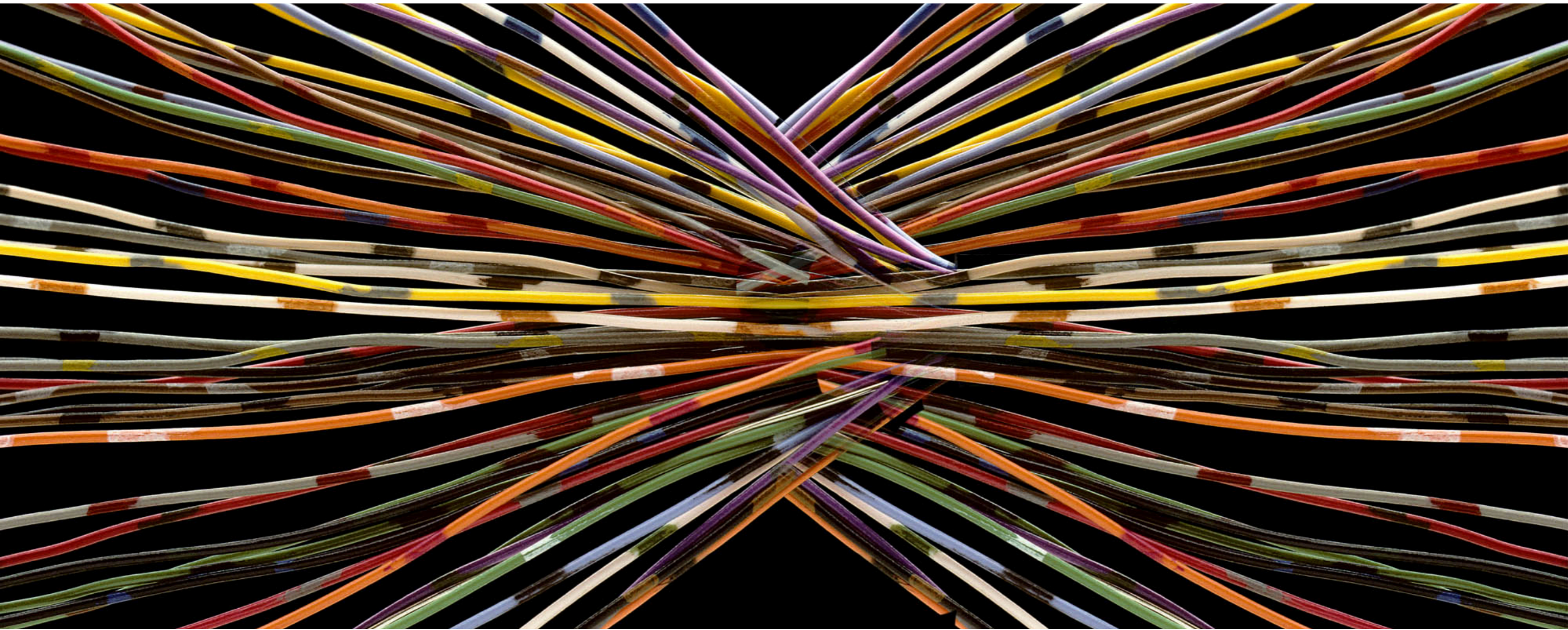
# Mediation



**Alterity**



**Background**



# **Subject/object as mutually interwoven**

**Technology provides specific forms of  
access to reality**

I perceive the world differently  
with and without glasses

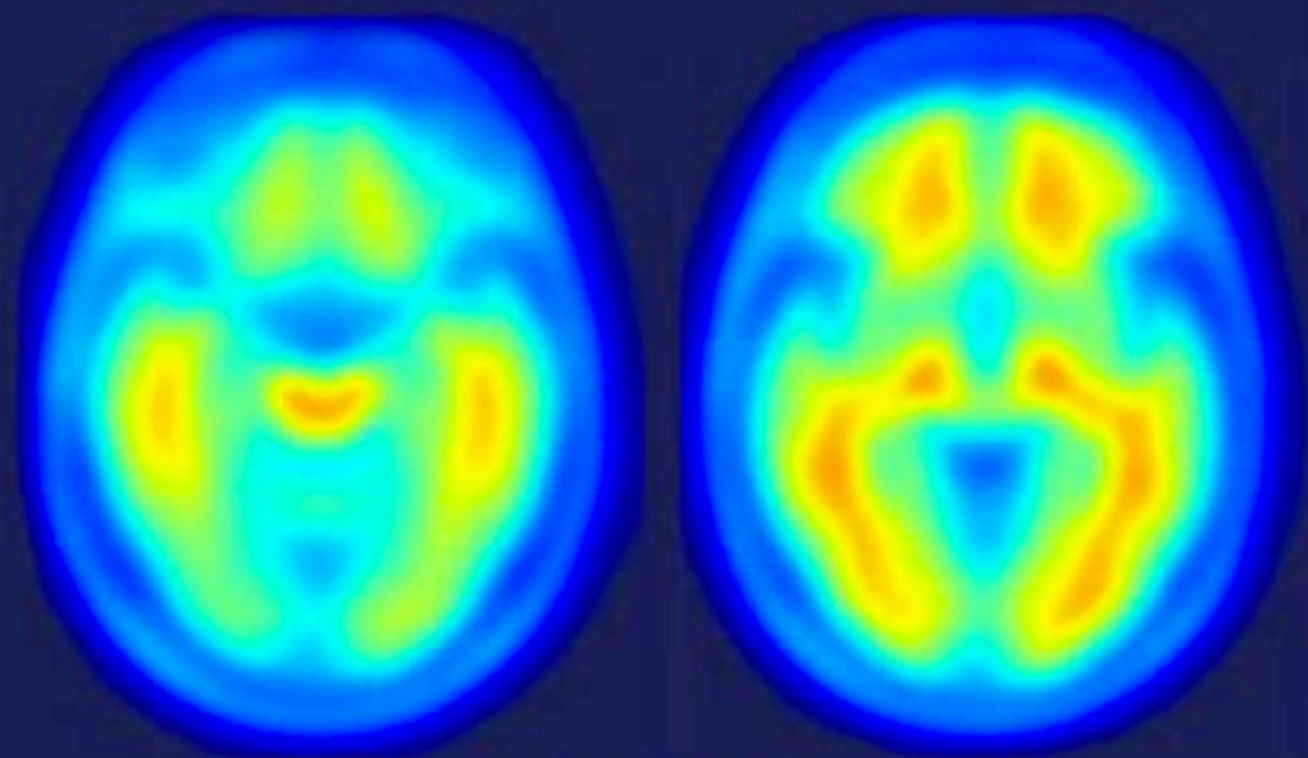


# Artefacts mediate

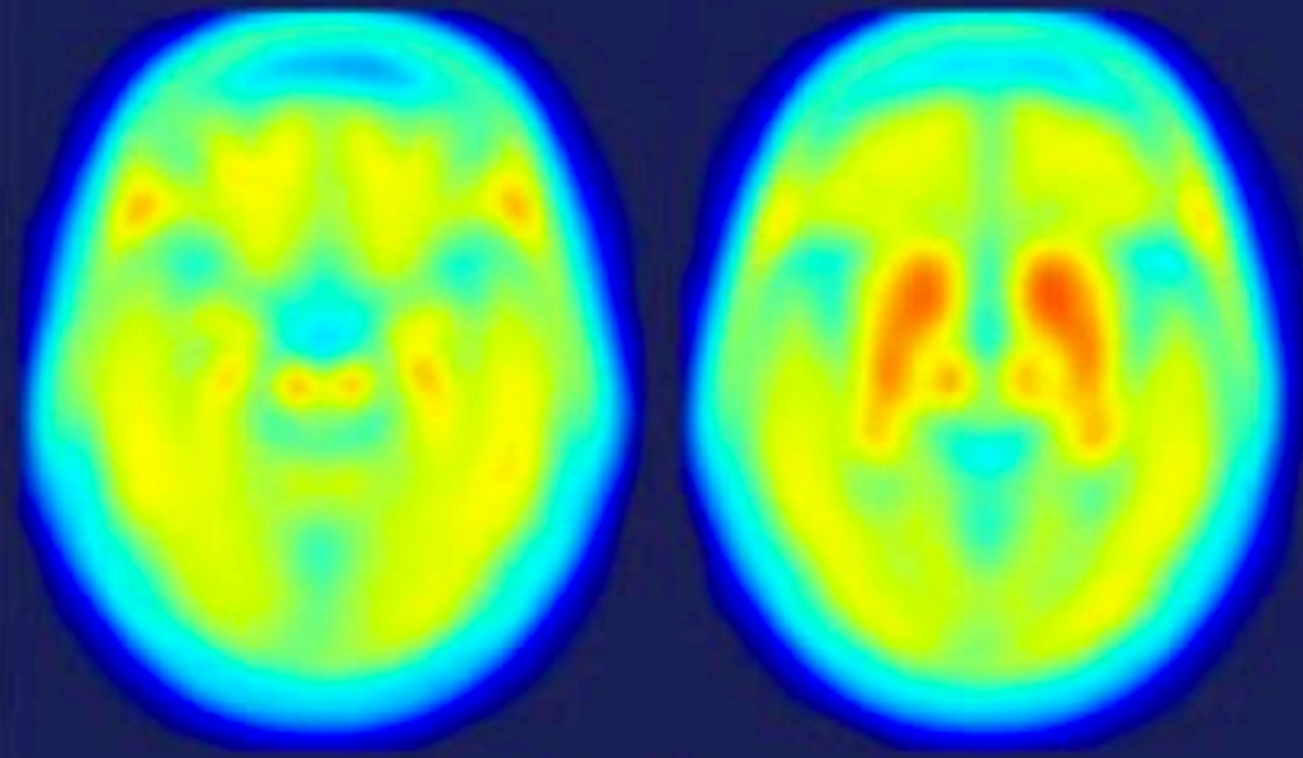
Mediation cannot be regarded as a mediation "between" subject and object. They mutually constitute each other

Mediation **coshapes** subjectivity and objectivity. Mediation always strengthen specific aspects of reality perceived and weakens others.

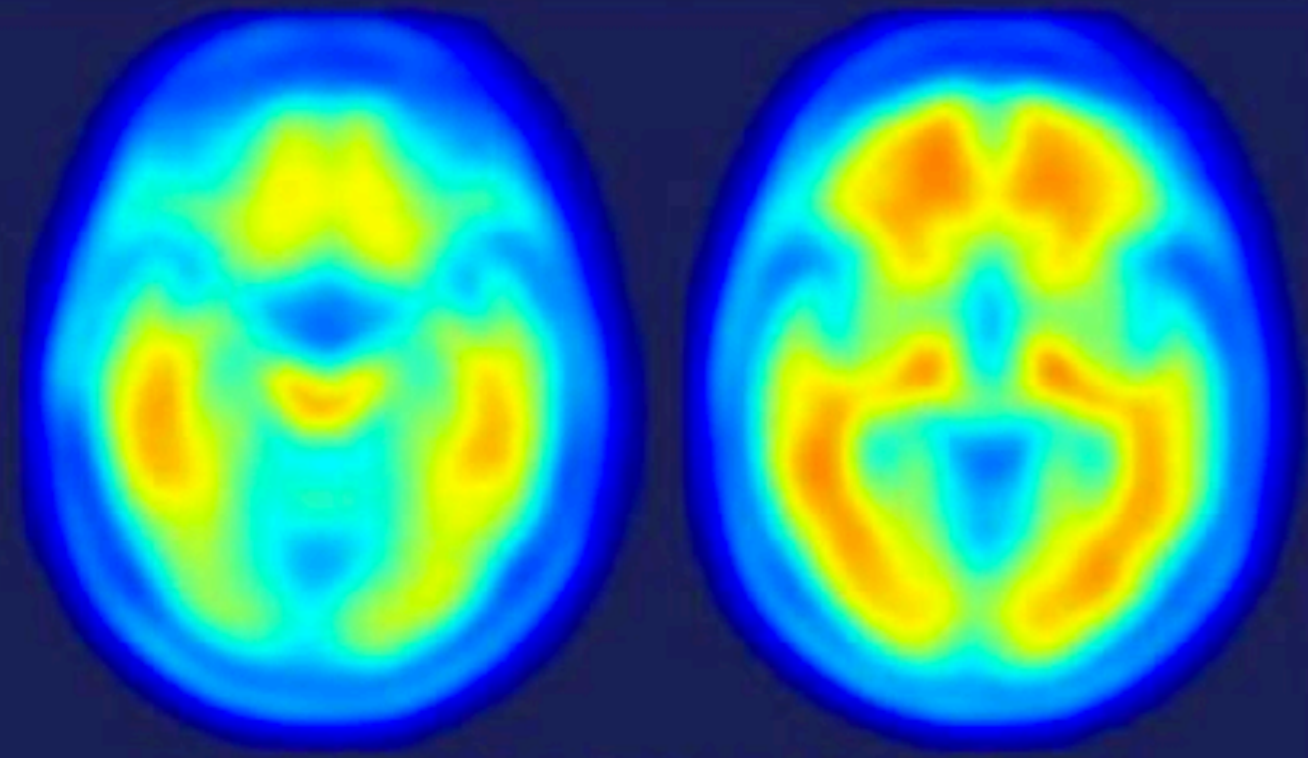




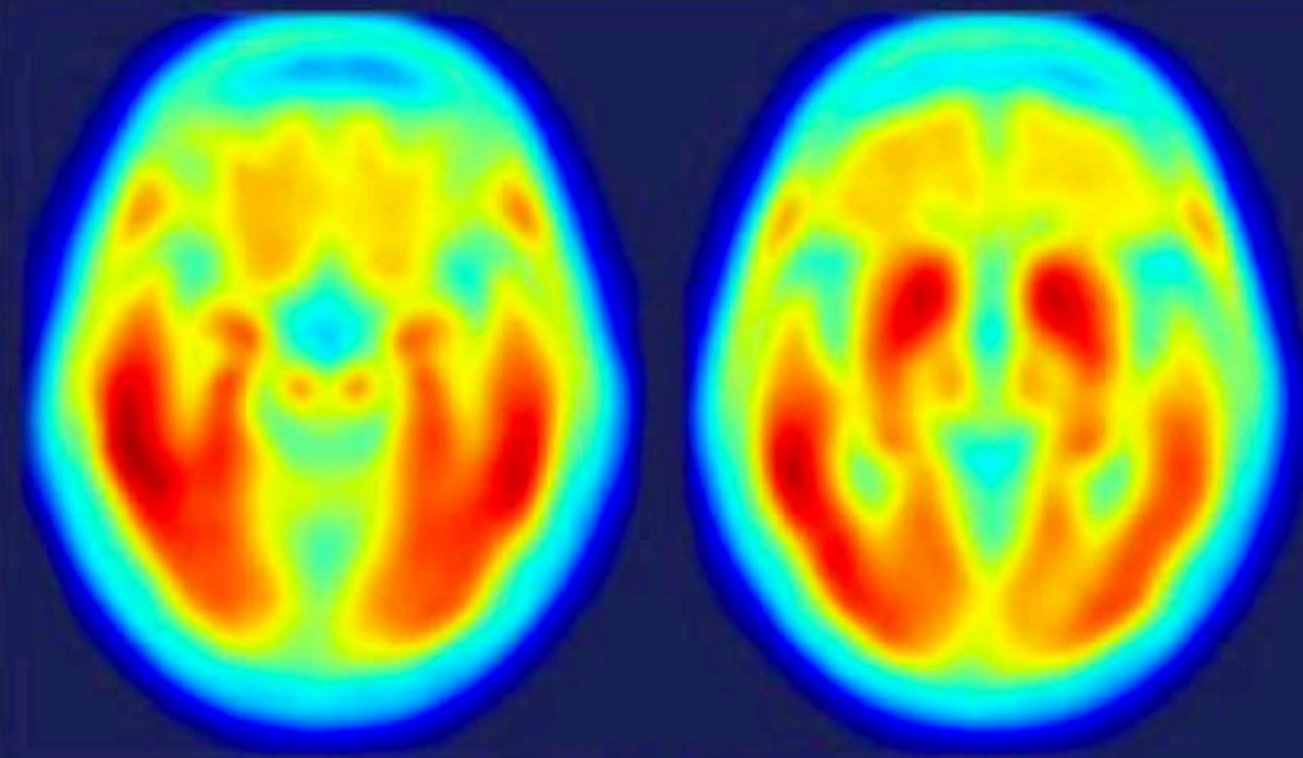
HEALTHY A-BETA



HEALTHY TAU



ALZHEIMER'S A-BETA



ALZHEIMER'S TAU

# New Scientist

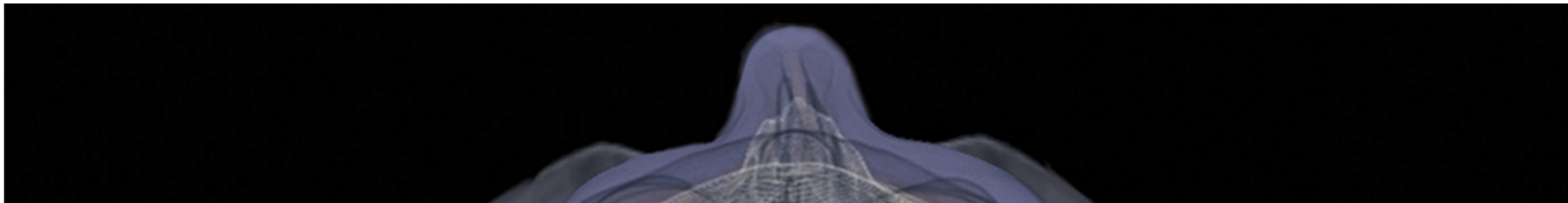
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BRAIN SCANNER 18 July 2016

## Thousands of fMRI brain studies in doubt due to software flaws

**Brain Scanner** is **Simon Oxenham**'s weekly column that sifts the pseudoscience from the neuroscience



SO WHAT  
SHOULD  
DESIGNERS DO?

# Material aesthetics

When things are used, people take up a relation to the world that these things, thanks to their "handiness", co-shape.

The meaning of aesthetics in design then comes to include not just style and beauty, but also the relations between people and products, and the way in which products co-shape the **relation between humans and the world**



**Design ethics requires  
that artefacts be treated  
as members of the moral  
community conceived as the  
community in which morality  
assumes a shape**



**Is this interaction meaningful?**

Browser address bar: //localhost/HeliosBanking/hsEditor/Processing/frmPreclosureCharges.htm

Browser tabs: Helios Banking System: Loa...

Navigation: Favorites Tools Help

Menu: Security Directory Loan Processing Accounting Transactions Welcome Mo

Buttons: New Update Delete Preview OK Cancel

Applied By: KESH KUMAR SINGH, MAL KUMAR SHARMA, NDRA KUMAR SINGH

Message:

Precloser No	NEW	Precloser Date	/ /
Loan No	L2013033000001	Loan A/c No	TEST-LOAN-AC
Loan Application Date	02/02/2013	Applicant Name	PRAKESH KUMAR SINGH
Loan Amount	370000.00	Loan Term	
Principal Balanced	374850.02	Interest Rate	
Monthly EMI	12540.09	Penalty Amount	
Loan Start Date	15/02/2013	Loan Close Date	/ /
Preclosere Amount		Cash/DD or Cheque Bank	
Cheque/DD No.		Cheque/DD Date	/ /

Naration

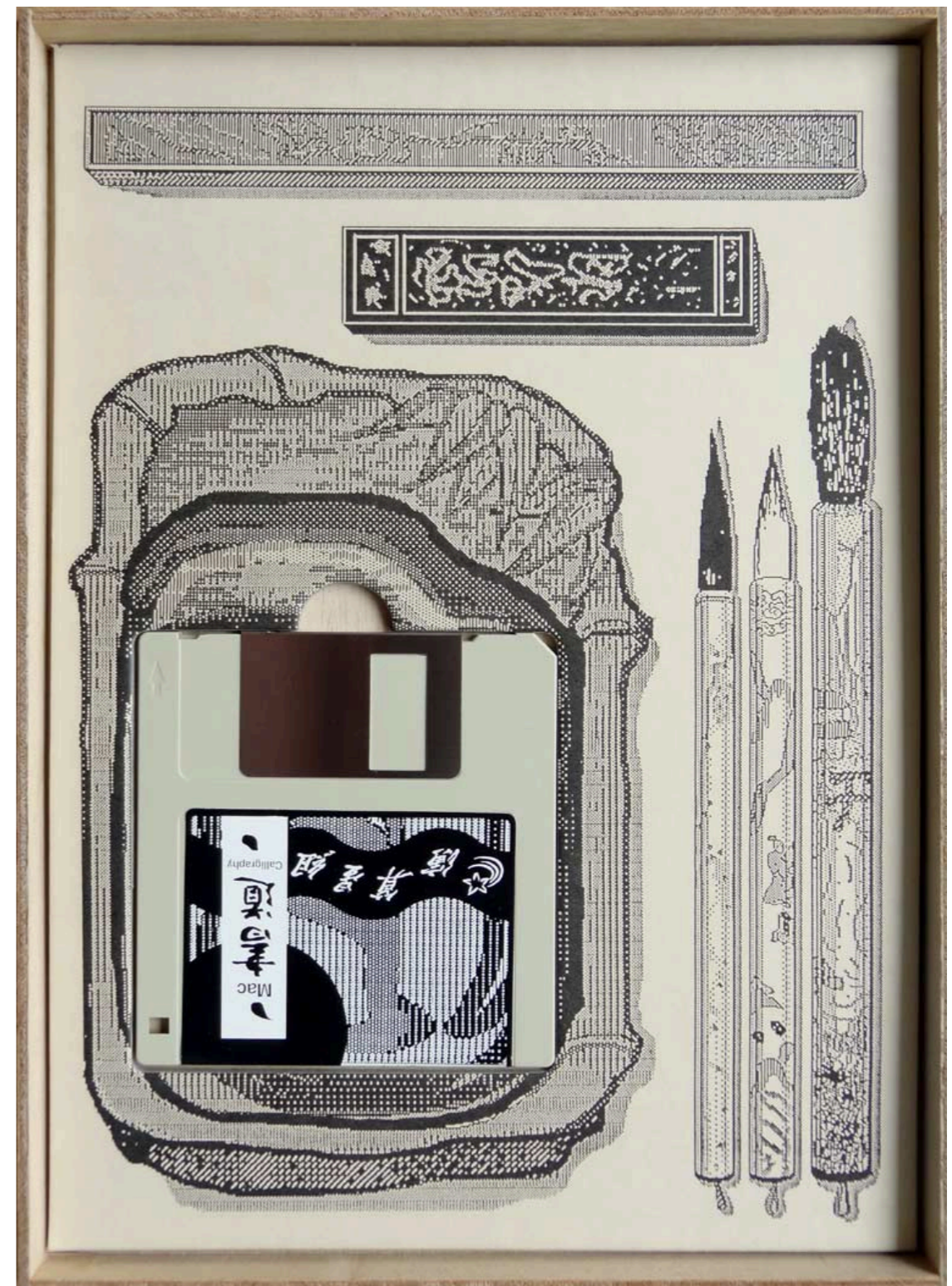
A/c Code	Account Name	Dr/Cr	Debit Amount
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**Does this design support creativity, happiness at work?**





**Could one think of a more meaningful interaction?**



# MacCalligraphy 1989



**Eternally yours**

**... thank you - [ela@eal.dk](mailto:ela@eal.dk)**