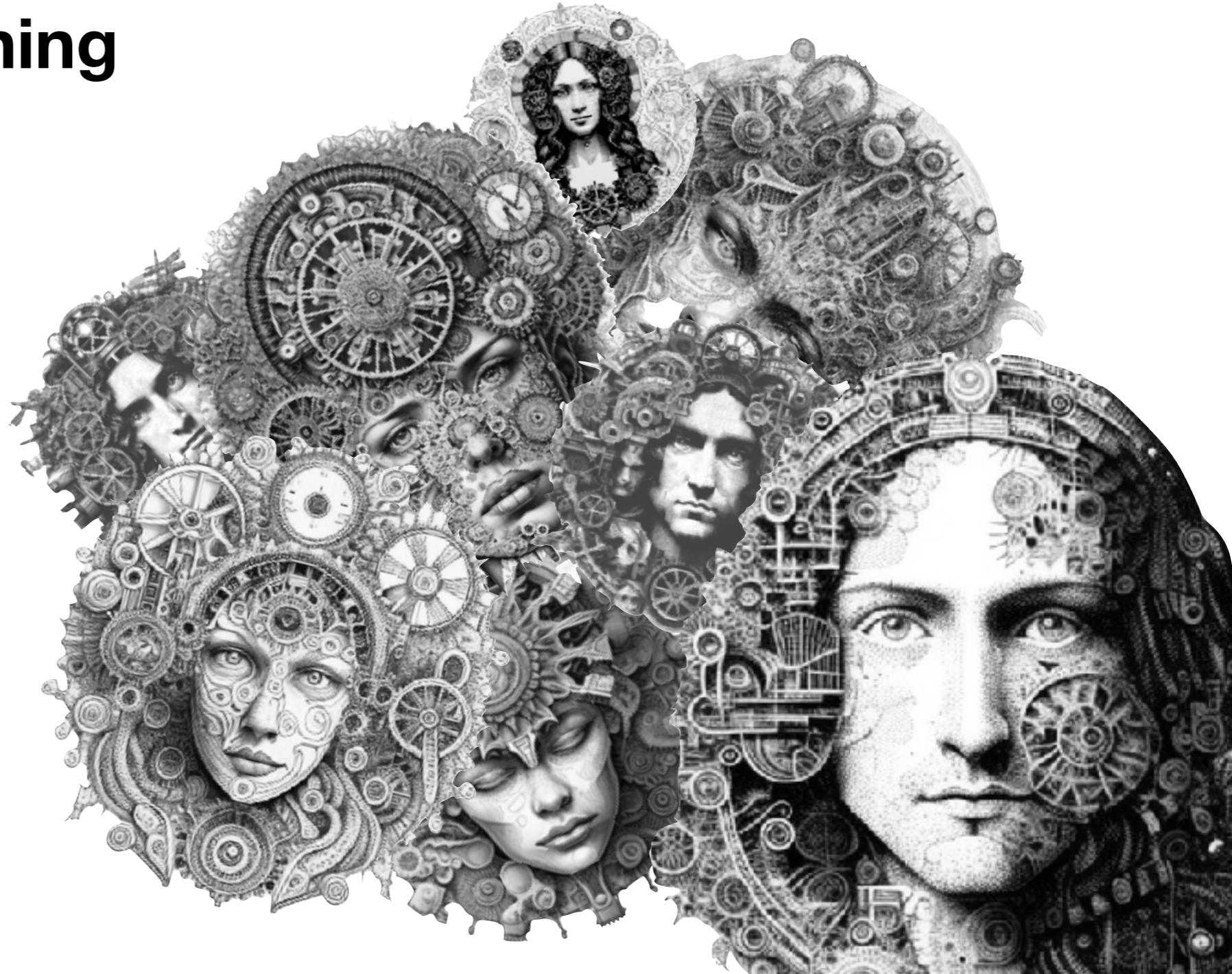


# Not one distance

## Understanding distance in complexivist learning

Jon Dron, June 21, 2023



# Generations of distance pedagogy

<b>Pedagogical families</b>	<b>Patterns</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Teacher role</b>	<b>Example theories and theoretical families</b>
<b>Objectivist</b>	content/skill-oriented fixed targets, directed, individual, objectives- based	teaching	Sage on the stage	learning styles, spaced learning, behaviourism, cognitivism
<b>Subjectivist</b>	learner-oriented situated, diverse paths, social groups, collaboration, guided, outcomes-based	learning	Guide on the side	constructivism, social constructivism, constructionism
<b>Complexivist</b>	knowledge oriented, distributed, diverse learning, cooperation, social networks, embedded, personal, emergent outcomes	knowledge	Fellow traveller, role model	connectivism, communities/ networks of practice, distributed cognition, rhizomatic learning

**All matter**

# Existing concepts of distance

**physical distance:** in-person <-> not

**transactional distance:** high structure <-> high dialogue

## Community of Inquiry

teaching presence <-> **teaching distance**

cognitive presence <-> **cognitive distance**

social presence <-> **social distance**

emotional presence <-> **emotional distance**

agency presence <-> **agency distance**

**temporal distance:** synchronous <-> asynchronous

**proximal development distance:** achievable with help <-> unachievable

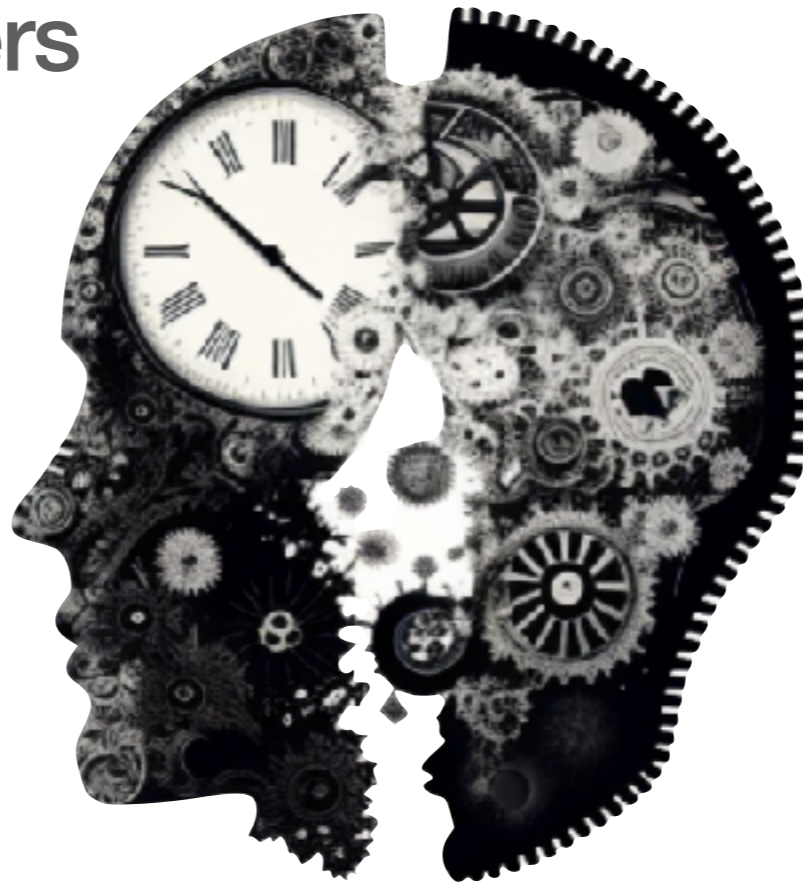


**All assume objectivist or subjectivist learning in a conventional educational context**

# Teaching as building technologies in learners' minds

## Hard learning

Creating cognitive gadgets in the minds of learners



## Soft learning

Helping learners learn how to use those cognitive gadgets

# Thousands of teachers

**designated  
teachers**

**regulations**

**admin processes**

**pedagogical models**

**architecture**

**software**

**computers**

**other  
learners**

**professional bodies**

**classrooms**

**timetables**

**textbooks**

**web sites**



**The Learner**

quizzes  
boards of governors  
instruction manuals  
whiteboards  
conversations  
bookshelves  
news stories  
pens  
interaction designs  
essays  
papers  
exams  
radios and radio shows  
learning designers  
editors  
syllabi

boats  
email servers  
Stack Exchange  
labs  
legislation  
cleaners

Google Search

cafes and bars  
corridors  
libraries  
support staff  
common rooms  
Wikipedia  
whiteboards  
past teachers  
letters  
lighting designers  
signs and notices  
gardens  
chairs  
caterers  
windows

arguments  
curricula  
notebooks  
clothing

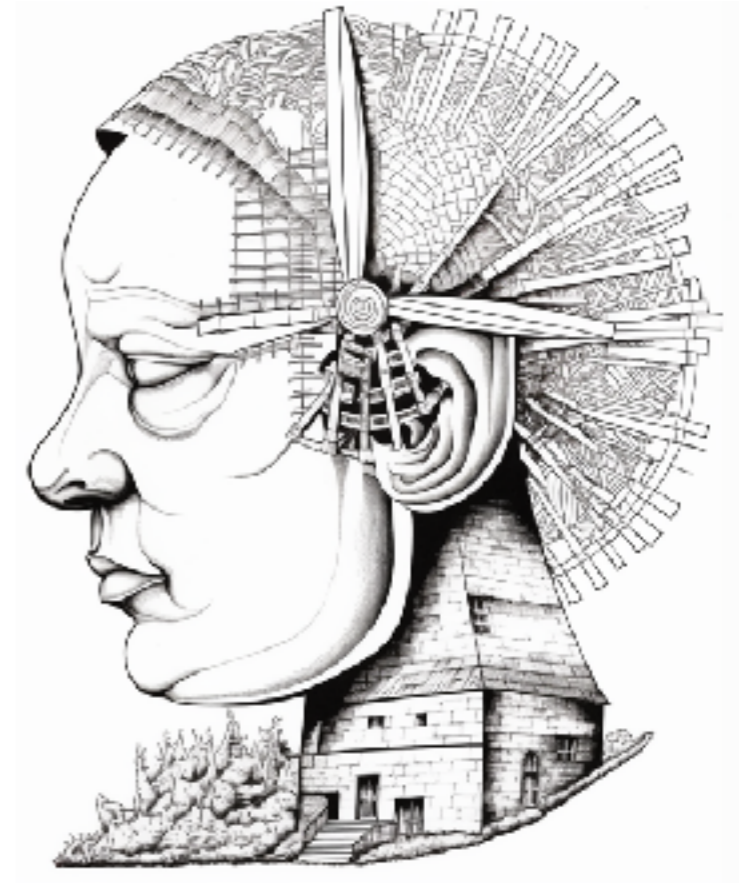
LMSs

# Technological distance

the sum of the gaps between the technologies we possess and those that we need in order to learn.

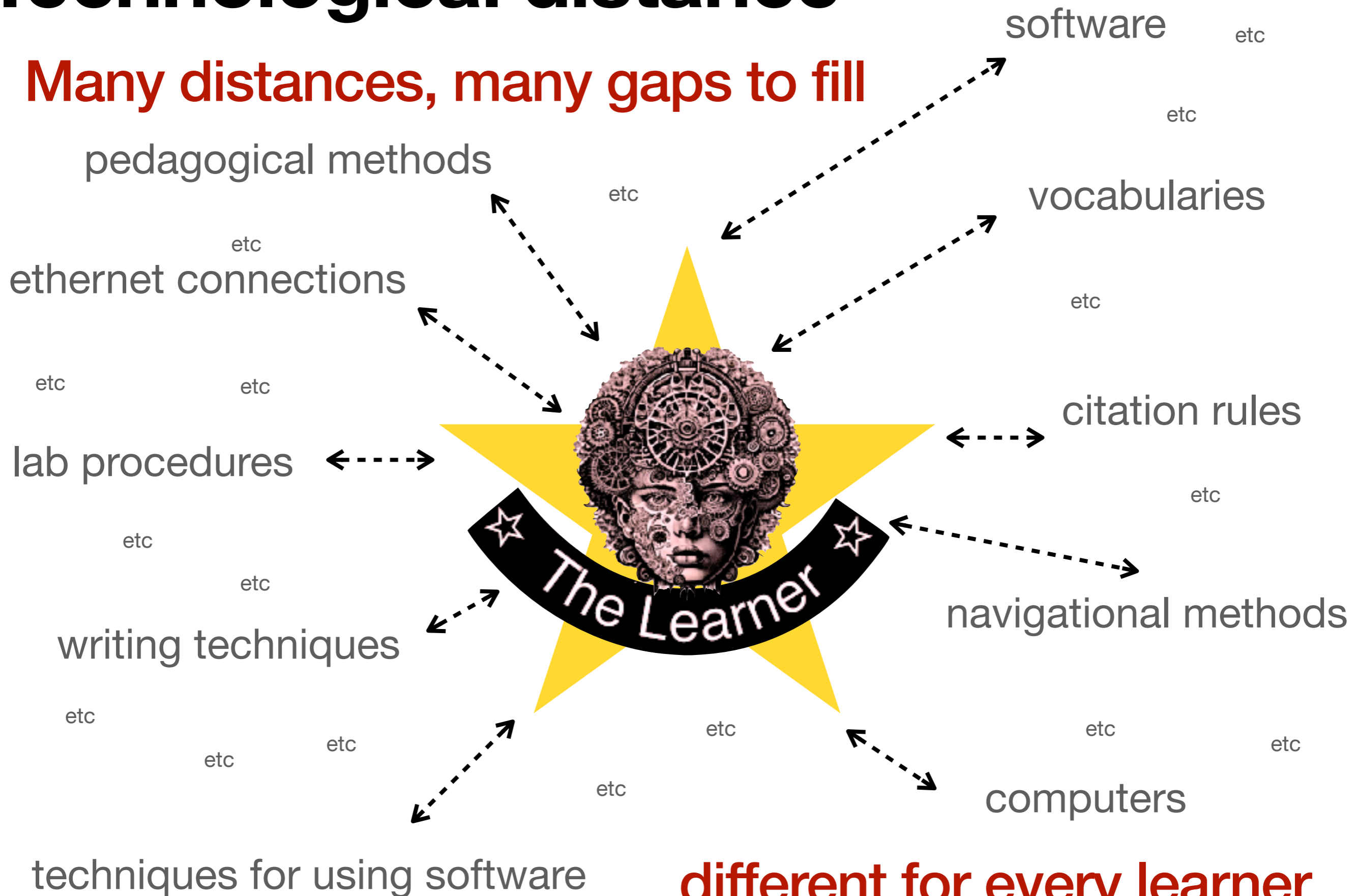
*All* the technologies.

Not just the grist but the mill  
The physical *and* the cognitive  
The tools *and* the techniques  
The process *and* the product  
The hard *and* the soft  
Pedagogies *and* the result of them



# Technological distance

**Many distances, many gaps to fill**



# Basic principles for complexivist teachers

**We cannot be in control: we must let go**

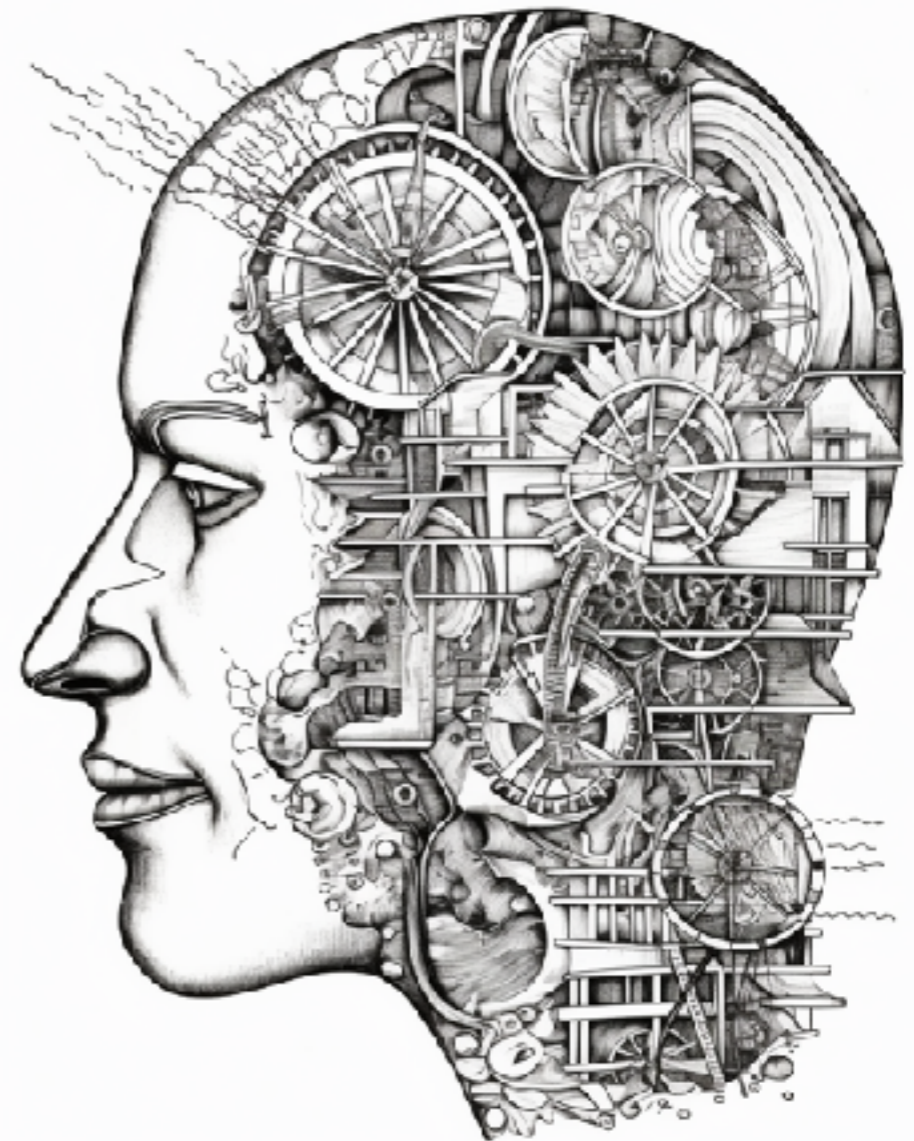
We must understand the cognitive gadgets our students already have.

We must understand how they are assembling new ones.

We must understand the whole.

But...

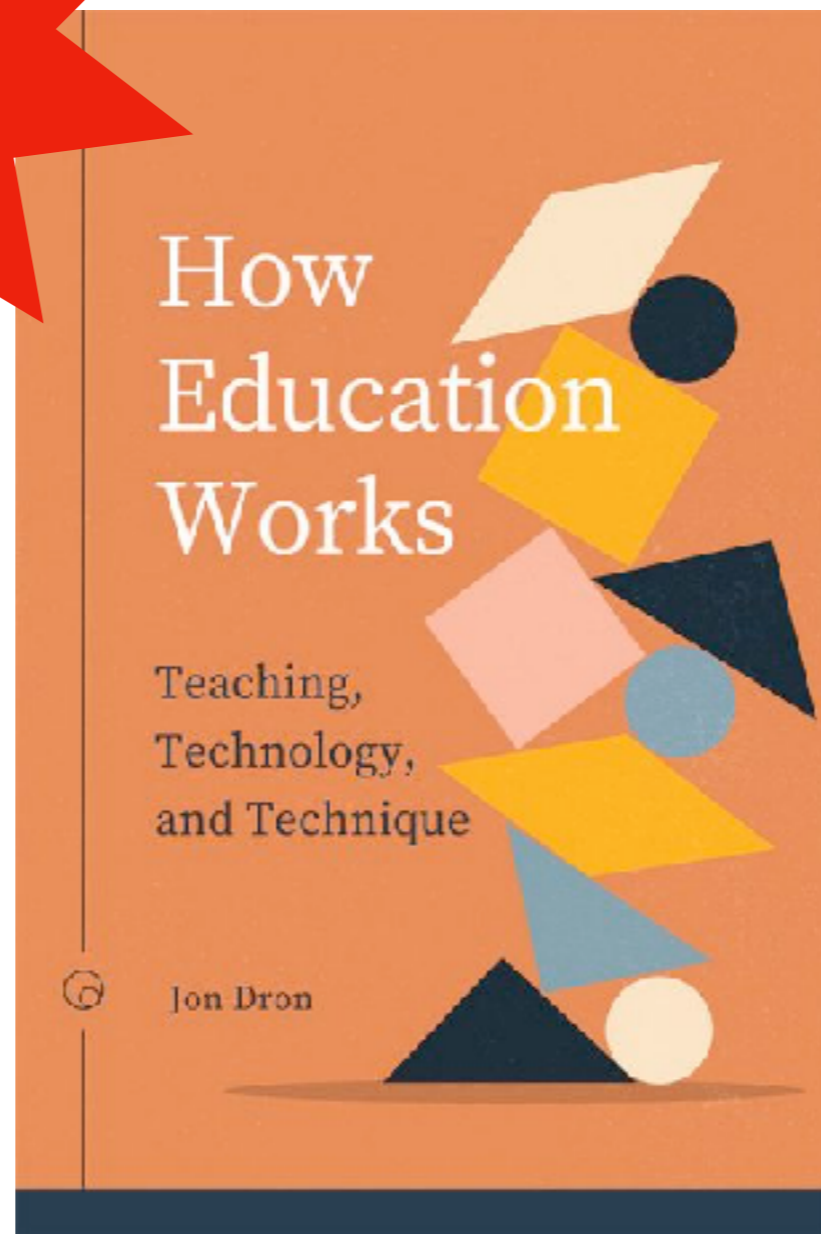
We cannot look inside their heads.



**Learning itself, not just its products, must be visible.**



Due literally any  
day now!



<https://howeducationworks.ca>