Who Owns the Future?

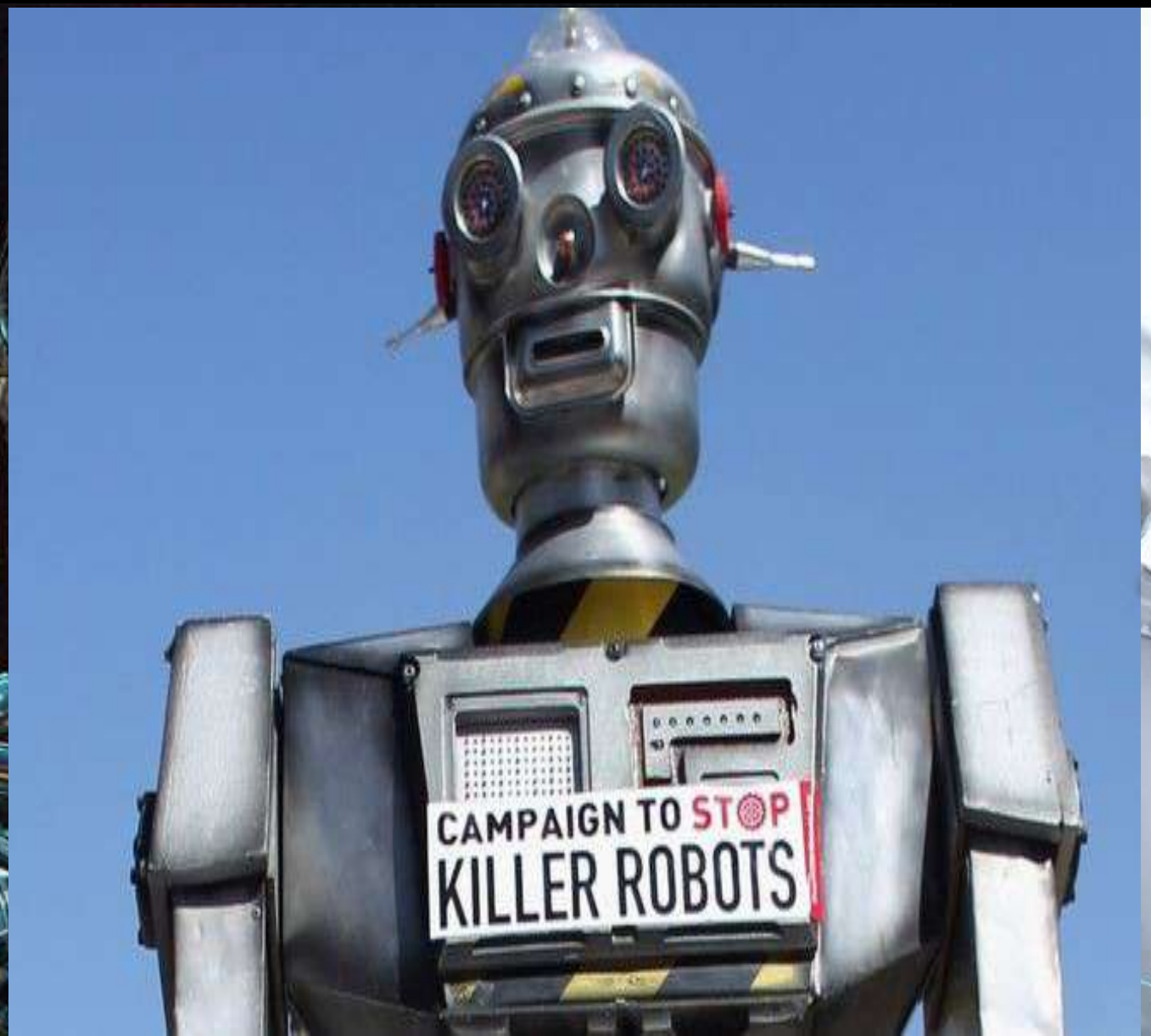
From Artificial Intelligence to Abundant Imagination

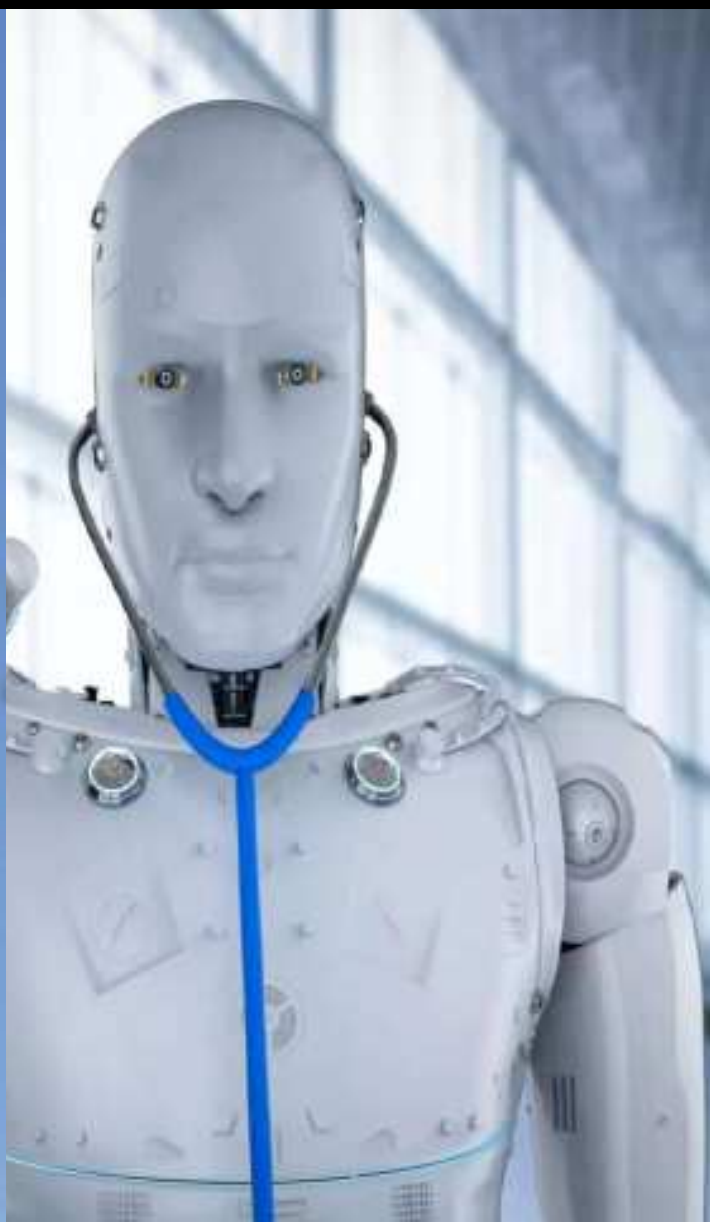
Ruha Benjamin
Princeton University

Decidem 2025
November 5, 2025

Ida B. Wells JUST DATA LAB

two stories





Checkout Media Justice Youtube Series →

WTF IS THE TECH BROLIGARCHY?

Not all speed is movement

-Toni Cade Bambara

ICE (US Immigration and Customs Enforcement)

This article is more than **1 month old**

Documents offer rare insight on Ice's close relationship with Palantir

aerial view shows Palestinians walking through the ruins of destroyed buildings in the Jabalia refugee camp, northern Gaza Strip, on February 5, 2025. (Photo: Khalil Ramzi Alkahlut/Anadolu via Getty Images)

Probes Reveal Depth of Big Tech Complicity in Israel's AI-Driven Gaza Slaughter

"Many nations are looking to Israel and its use of AI in Gaza with admiration and jealousy," said one expert. "Expect to see a form of Google, Microsoft, and Amazon-backed AI in other war zones soon."

Startup Nations + Fascist... Cities

BY CAROLINE HASKINS AND VITTORIA ELLIOTT BUSINESS MAR 7, 2025 2:48 PM

‘Startup Nation’ Groups Say They’re Meeting Trump Officials to Push for Deregulated ‘Freedom Cities’

The architects of projects like Próspera are drafting legislation to create US cities that would be free from federal regulations.

“They believe democracy is an outmoded software.”

“...These are going to be cities without workers' rights. These are going to be cities where the owners of the city, the corporations, the billionaires have all the power and everyone else has no power. –journalist Gil Duran

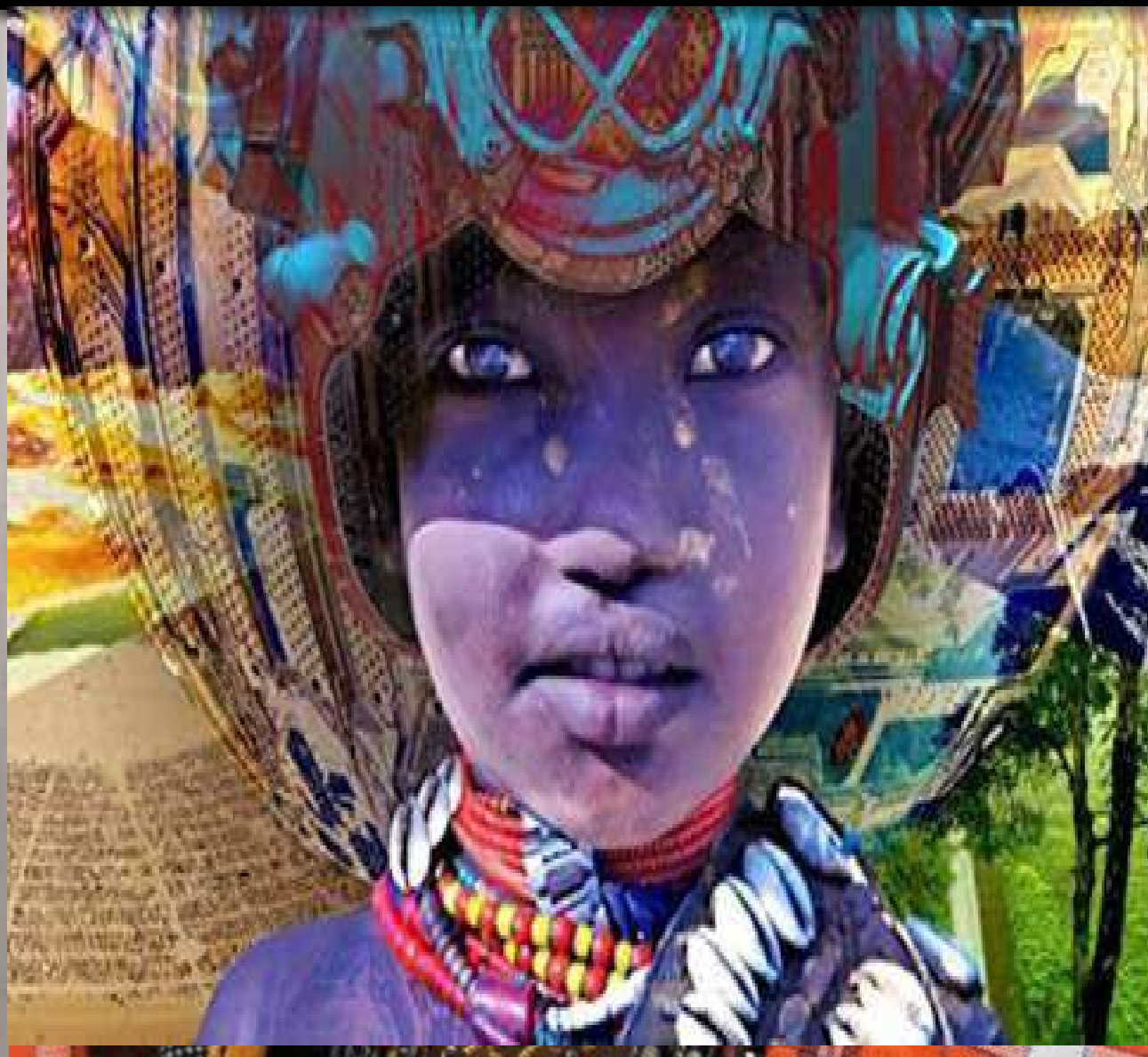
who owns the future?

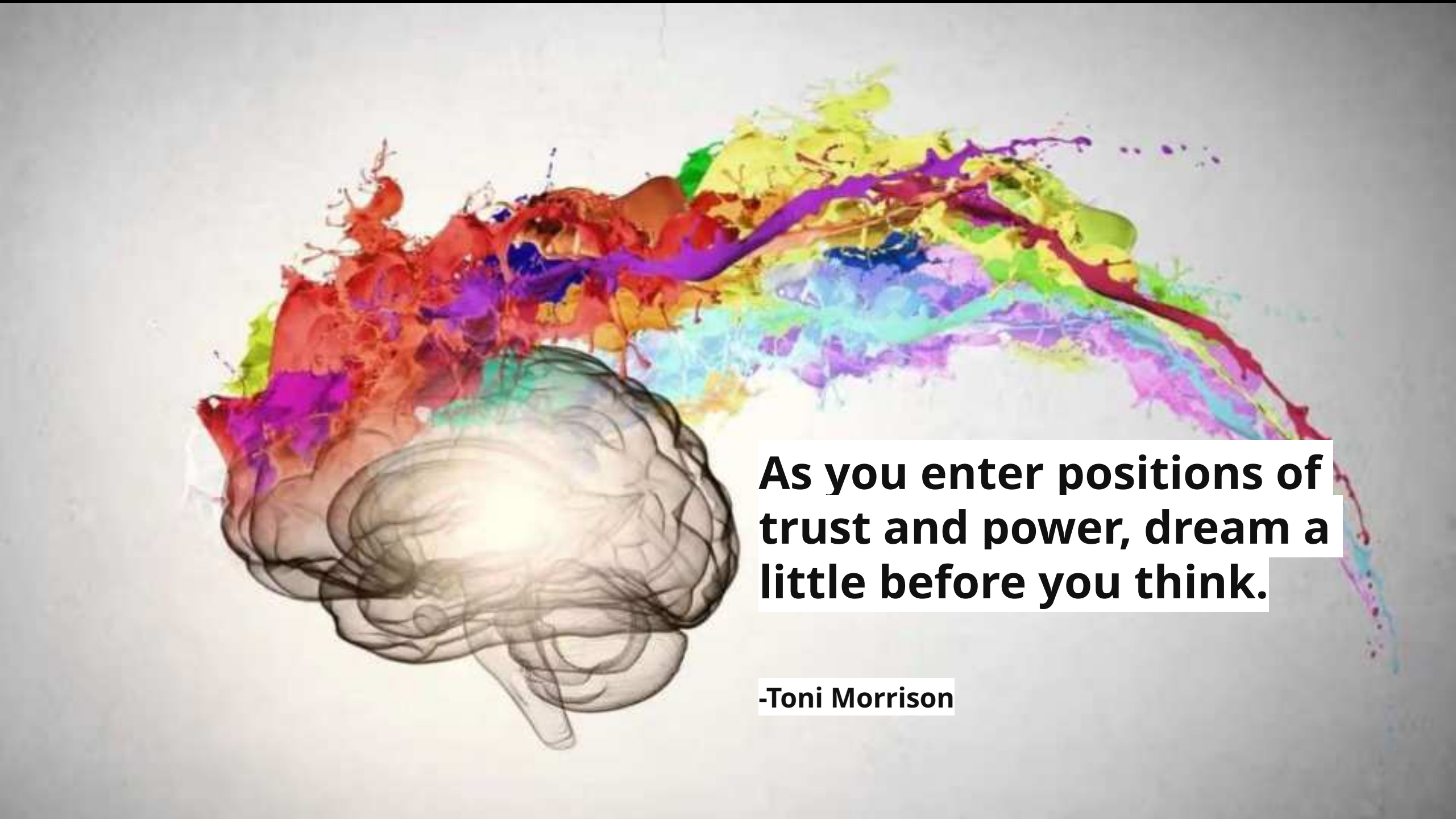
NY Post:
Mike Guillen

*artificial intelligentsia

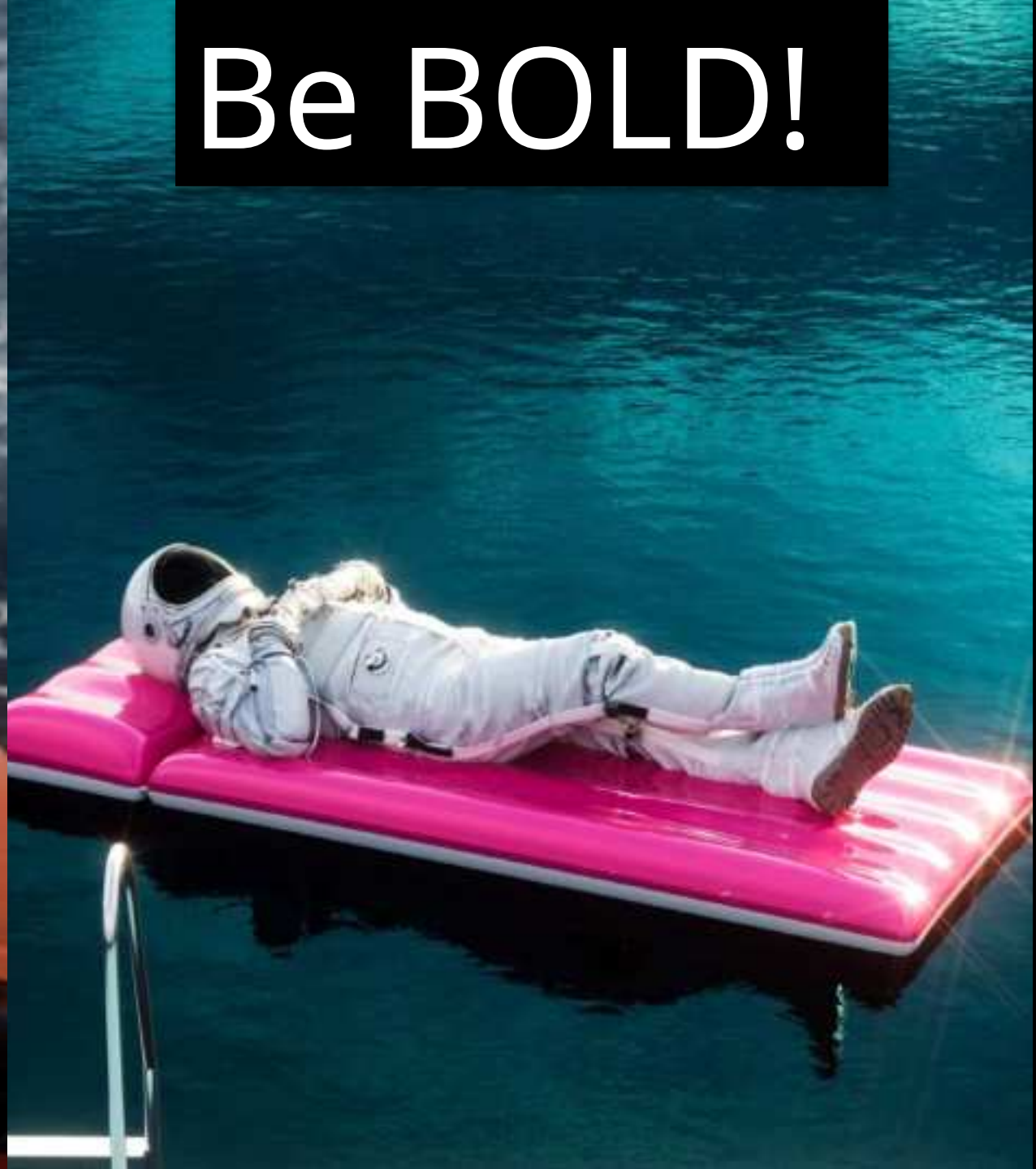
Artificial Intelligence

Abundant Imagination

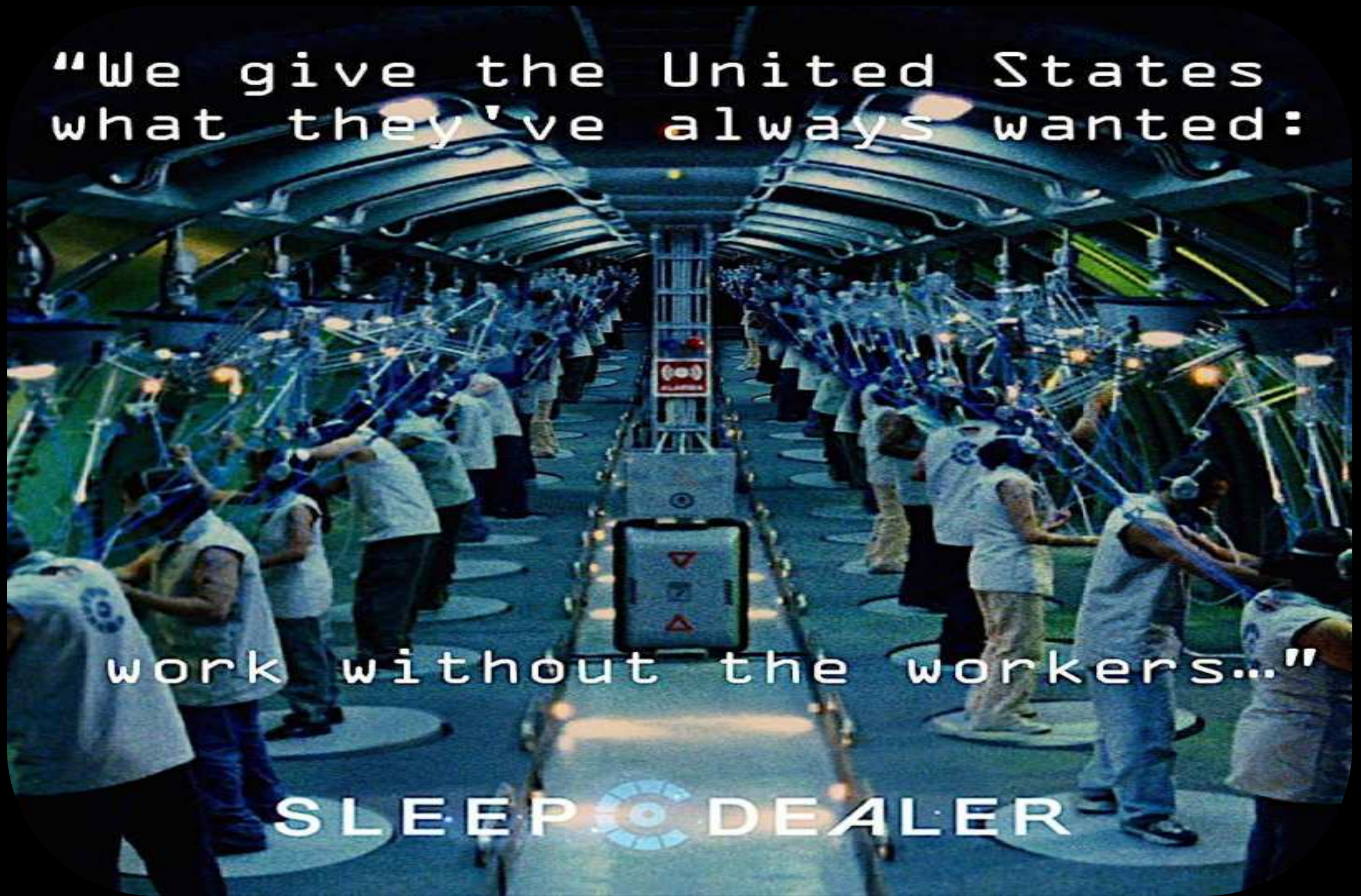



As you enter positions of trust and power, dream a little before you think.
-Toni Morrison

Get REAL...


Be BOLD!

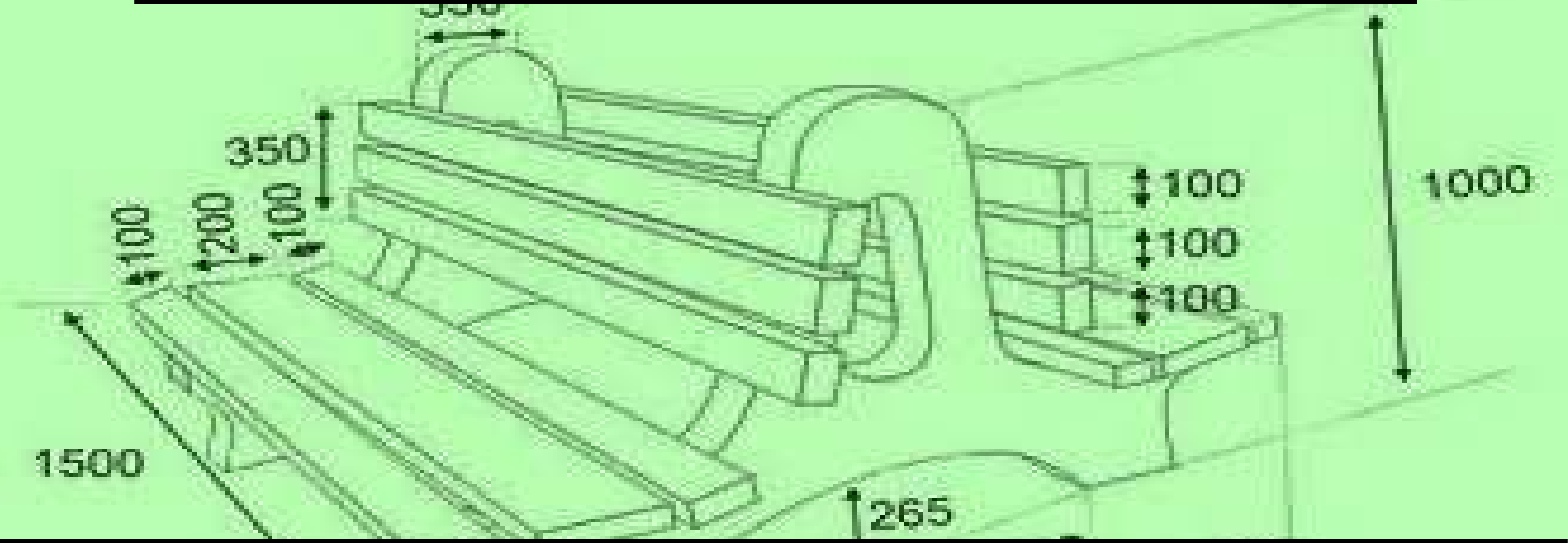
Platform


"We give the United States
what they've always wanted:
work without the workers…"
SLEEP DEALER

WE ARE HUMANS
NOT ROBOTS!
MSPI NIGHT SHIFT STOW
WALK-OFF!

public spaces + structures

discriminatory design



What are the spikes in our digital structures?

obvious vs insidious

obvious vs insidious

Google Is Decorating Its Nondescript Data Centers With Colorful Murals

WIRED

NEWSLETTERS

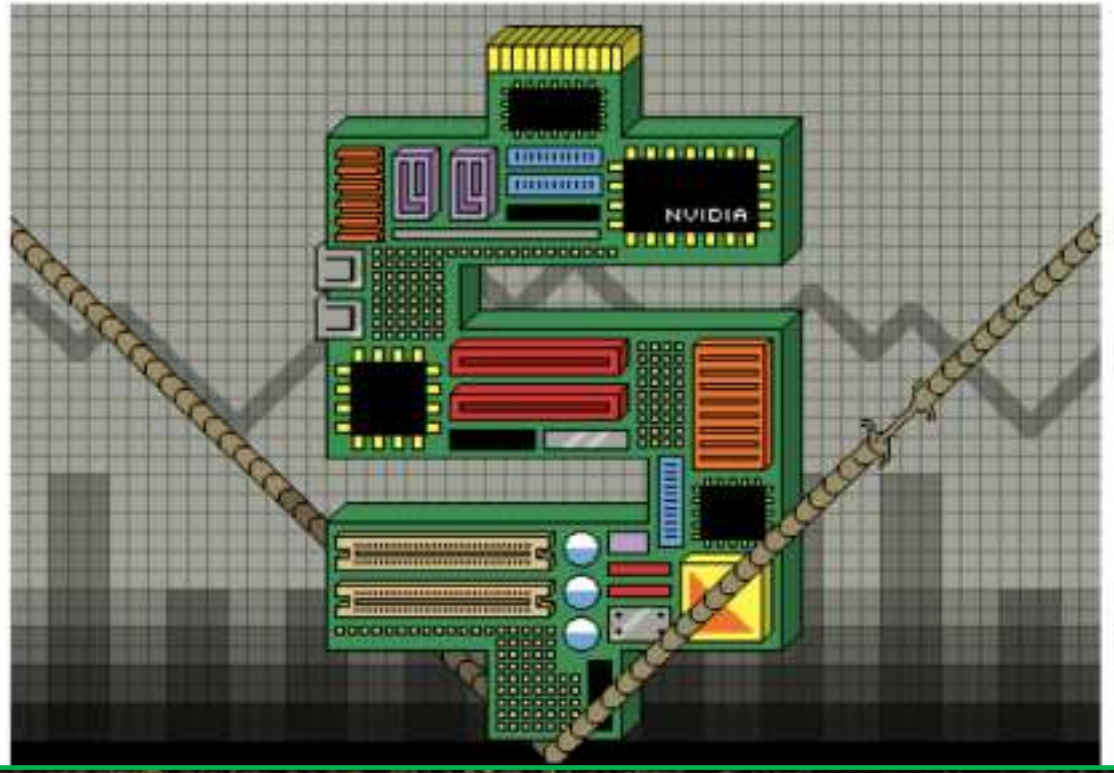
THE BIG STORY

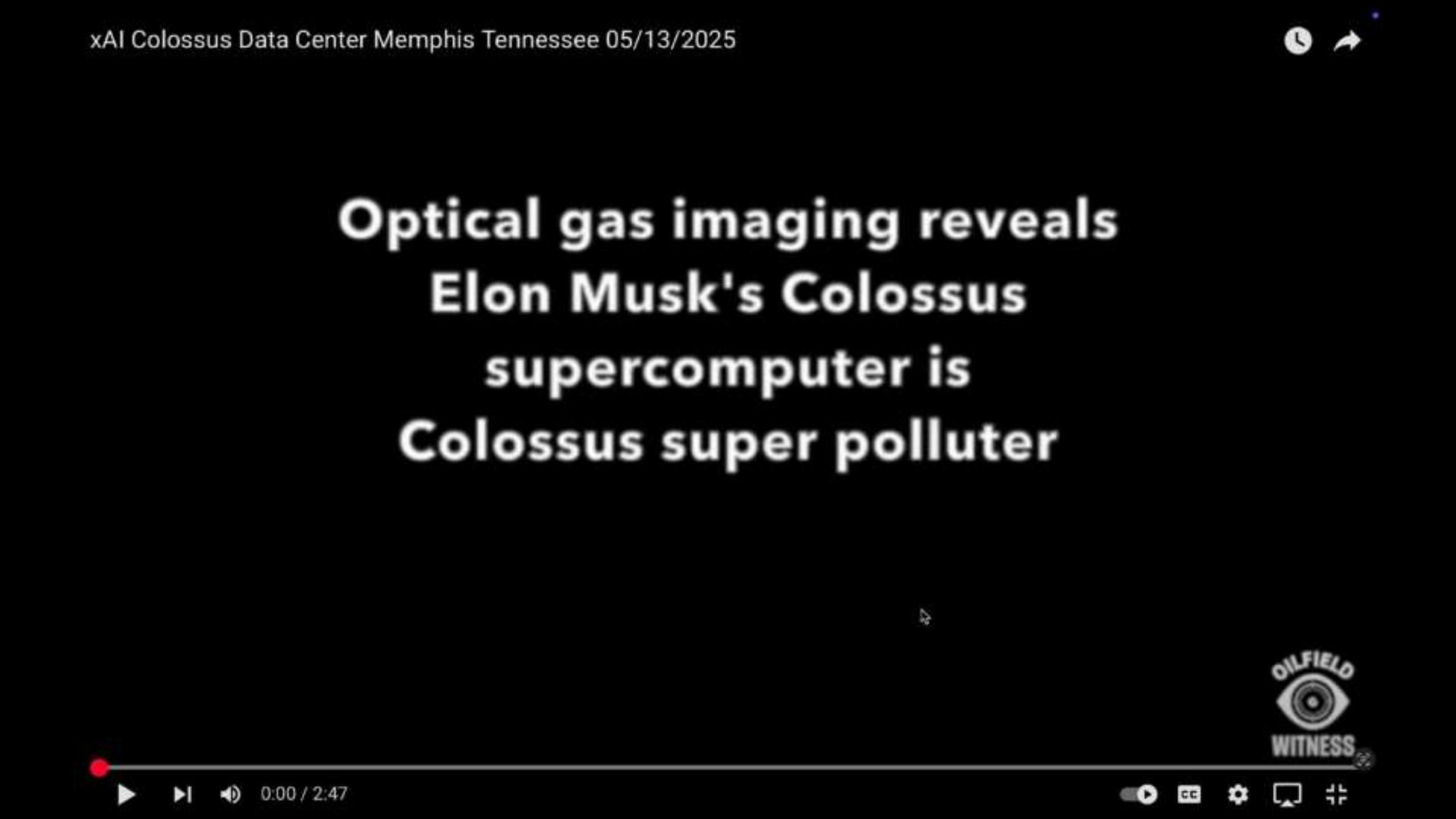
AI Is the Bubble to Burst Them All

I talked to the scholars who literally wrote the book on tech bubbles—and applied their test.

Why Fears of a Trillion-Dollar AI Bubble Are Growing

Investors have parted with unprecedented sums of money to help AI fulfill its promise. But no one really knows how it will all pay off




xAI Colossus Data Center Memphis Tennessee 05/13/2025
Optical gas imaging reveals
Elon Musk's Colossus
supercomputer is
Colossus super polluter
OILFIELD
WITNESS
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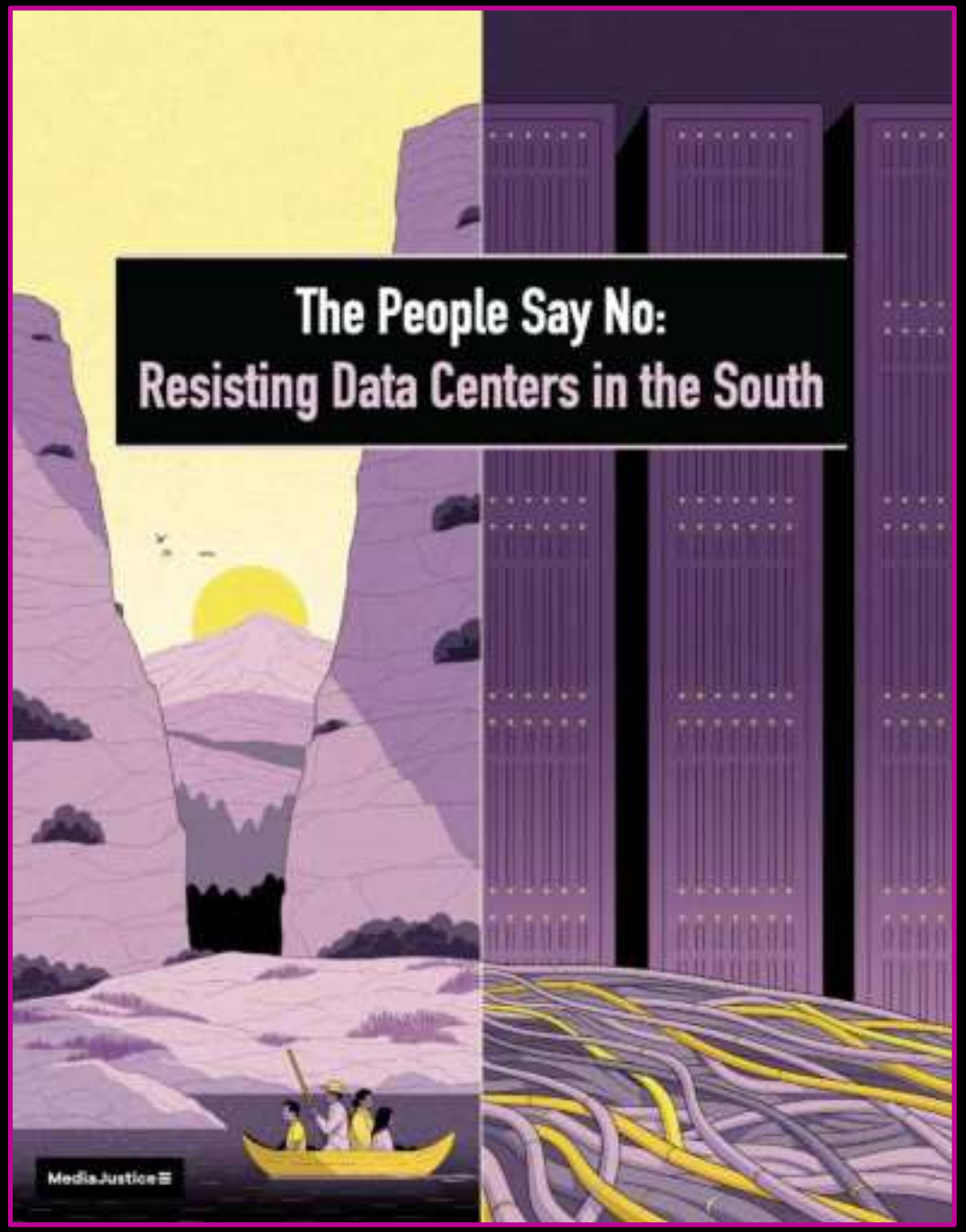
critical + creative vision

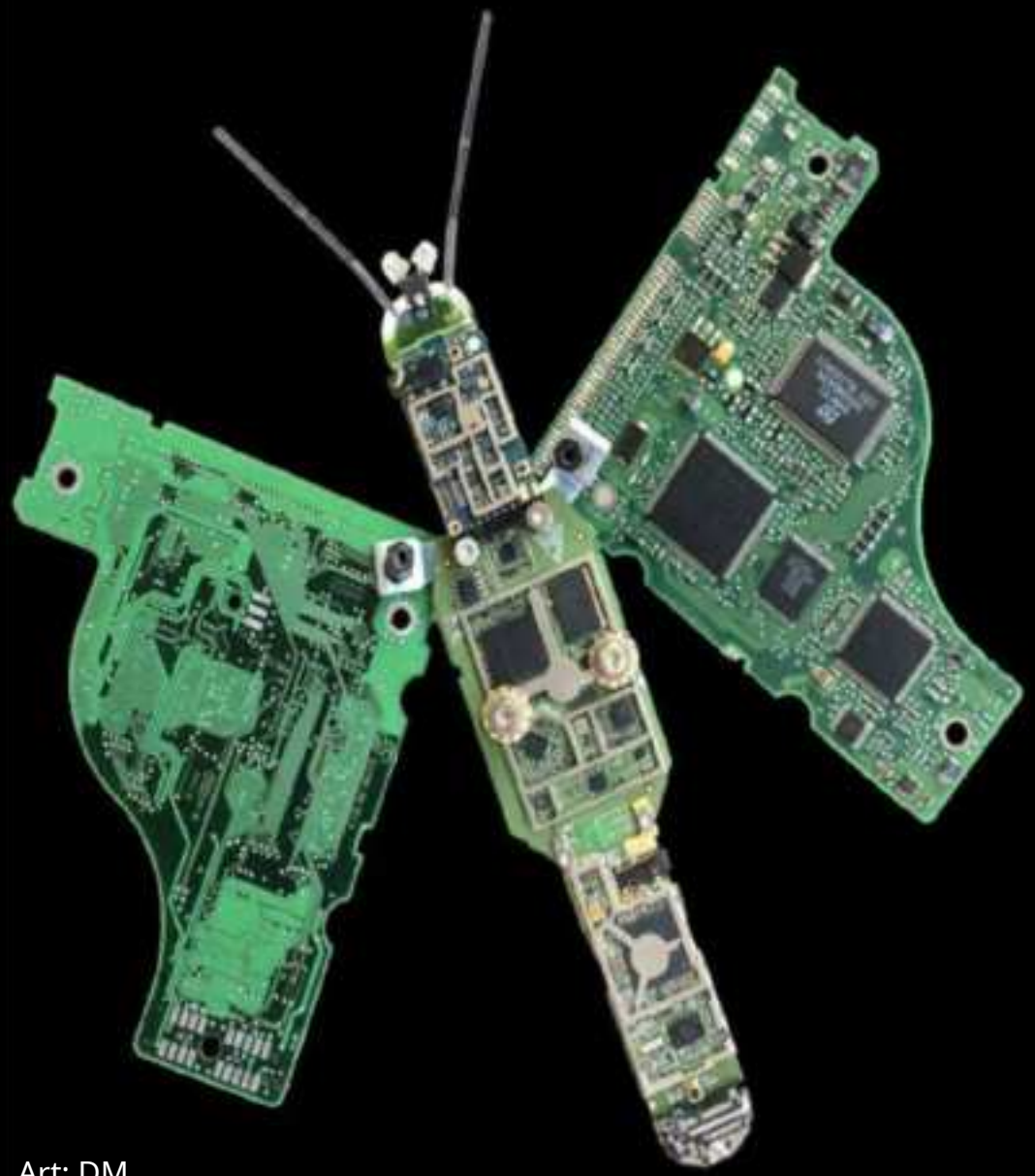


:: critical vision ::

“Tech giants like Microsoft, Google, Amazon, and Meta have spent more than **$100 billion on data center construction just this summer,** and data centers are expected to pass total US consumer spending as the driving force of the US economy this year. Big Tech is marketing these projects as ‘progress,’ but a new report reveals how Southern communities are getting shorted.”

https://mediajustice.org

:: creative vision ::



Art: DM Vishwanath

Sovereign AI and Sustainable Computation for Indigenous Communities

Submitted to the UCSD GEMSTONES Program on behalf of Prof. Keolu Fox and the Native BioData Consortium (NBDC) and Indigenous Futures Institute (IFI).

- ❖ Reanimating Zombie GPUs
- ❖ Micro-Data Centers
- ❖ Little Language Models
- ❖ Community-Centric Design

White-Collar Crime Early Warning Syste

White Collar Crime Risk Zones uses machine learning to predict where financial crimes are mostly likely to occur across the US. To learn about our methodology, read our white paper.

By Brian Clifton, Sam Lavigne and Francis Tseng for *The New Inquiry Magazine*, Vol. 59: ABOLISH.

new york

Search

Most Likely Suspect

Top Risk Likelihoods

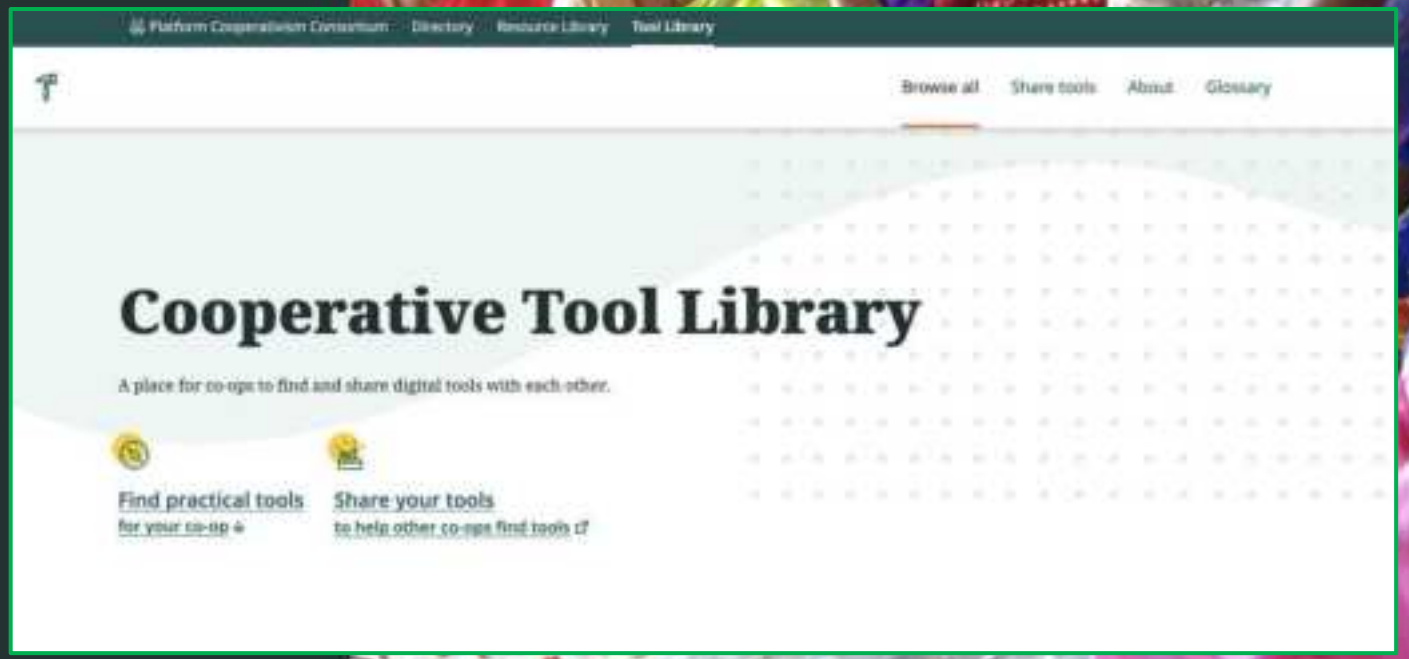
DEFAMATION (17.99%)

BREACH OF FIDUCIARY DUTY (11.38%)

FAILURE TO SUPERVISE (8.99%)

Find Out How Platform Co-ops Can Benefit You

Find Out How ↗



Two “Smart” Stories

GOOGLE’S “SMART CITY OF SURVEILLANCE” FACES NEW RESISTANCE IN TORONTO

Local organizers in Toronto have united to push Google out of their government.

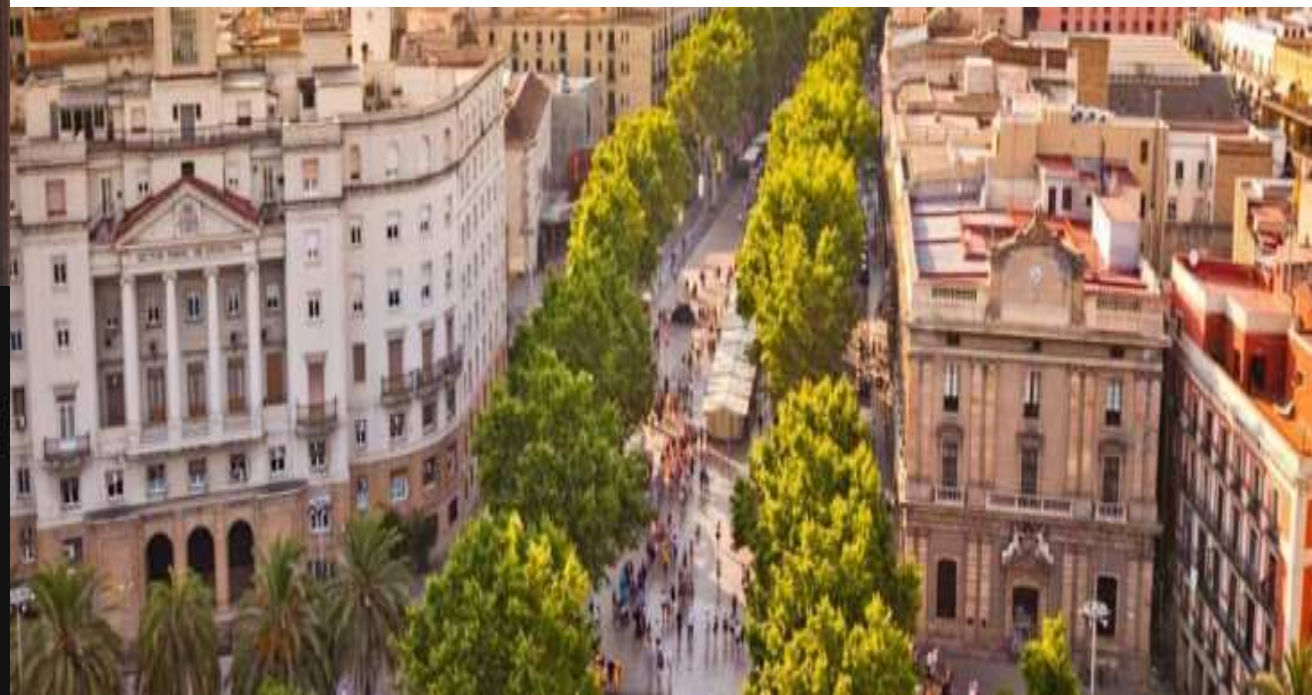
Ava Kofman

November 13 2018, 12:03 p.m.

From ‘Smart City’ to ‘collective intelligence’: radical change in Barcelona

Author
KateSB
@KateSB

Barcelona en Comú party celebrates



~~Artificial~~ Collective Intelligence

Facts & Figures

Decidim keeps growing and being adopted by organizations and the community.

478
instances

32
countries

301
institutions

168
organizations

925.152
participants

427
processes

100.129
proposals

120.554
comments

11.215
meetings

whose vision?

tech driven vs. people driven

Illustration: Soohee Cho/The Intercept, Getty

who owns the future?

Discussion