As computers achieve a comparable—and greater—level of complexity, and as they are increasingly derived at least in part from models of human intelligence, they too, will necessarily utilize goals with implicit values and emotions, although not necessarily the same values and emotions that humans exhibit.

Ray Kurzweil, *The Age of Spiritual Machines*

1. Does technology have a moral imagination? What will be the implicit values and emotions of the next generation’s supercomputers? In order to address this question, we might examine the digital culture in its variety of manifestations (its theorists, its advertisements, the literature of science fiction, movies, etc.)

2. Even a cursory glance at the digital culture indicates that it is already deeply structured by an implied set of values and emotions.

Despite the fact that the digital culture is often sold as a revolutionary development in which traditional values and distinctions will be transcended, an examination of many of the elements of the digital culture (movies, magazines, cyberpunk science fiction, computer games, the pipeline in computer science), suggests that it is in fact structured by fairly traditional masculine values.
3. The work of a number of feminist theorists helps us to understand the nature of the implied values structuring the digital culture and the resulting moral imagination that may be animating the digital culture.

   - Carol Gilligan: *In a Different Voice*
   - Nel Noddings: *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*
   - Nancy Chodorow: *The Reproduction of Mothering*
   - Nancy Hartsock: *Money, Sex, and Power*
   - Sherry Ortner: *Making Gender*
   - Annette Baier: *Postures of the Mind*

4. What are the values associated with abstract masculinity?

   - The self as autonomous, discontinuous with others, surrounded by rigid ego-boundaries
   - The body as alien, confining, limiting, an enemy
   - Transcending the temporal, embodied world
   - Immunity from material conditions
   - Defying historicity, materiality, mortality
Seeking control and mastery over nature
Separation and dominance

5. These same values are often enshrined in many of the key texts defining the digital culture (Ray Kurzweil, \textit{The Age of Spiritual Machines}; Hans Moravec, \textit{Mind Children}, \textit{Robot}; William Gibson, \textit{Neuromancer}; Bruce Mazlish, \textit{The Fourth Discontinuity}, and many others). What are the implications of identifying the values of abstract masculinity with the digital culture? Is the future of the digital culture perhaps preordained by the values of abstract masculinity inscribed in its present?

- The paradox of \textit{The Matrix}: fear and loathing in the information age
- Technological evolution becomes the master trope for human evolution
- Artificial life can only come to be alienated from human life
- The coming of the posthuman age

Human thinking is going to be pretty trivial...we have to recognize that the more powerful technology—the technologically more sophisticated civilization—always wins. Ray Kurzweil, \textit{The Age of Spiritual Machines}

Machine intelligence will outpace human intelligence and very likely will do so in the lifetime of our children. The mix of advanced machine intelligence with human individual and communal intelligence will create an evolutionary discontinuity as profound as the origin of life. It will presage the end of the human species as we know it. The question, in the author’s view, is not whether this will happen, but when, and what should be our response.

Tom Stonier, “Machine Intelligence and the Long-Term Future of the Human Species”

6. What would the digital culture look like were it to be animated by a different voice, a different moral imagination?

- Marge Piercy: \textit{He, She and It}

Piercy’s novel appropriates the conventions of cyberpunk but transforms them by reimagining them from a feminist perspective. The relationship she portrays between the cyborg Yod and his creators, Avram, Malkah, and Shira, discloses a more complex account of the creation of artificial life. She imagines an approach to the socialization of Yod consistent with Annette Baier’s discussion of the formation of second personhood: “A person, perhaps, is best seen as one who was long enough dependent upon other persons to acquire the essential arts of personhood. Persons essentially are second persons, who grow up with other persons.”