



Transform - The Future of Human Workforce
Embracing Change, Challenges, and Opportunities

AI is not a Tool.

The Impact of Growing AI Agency on the Future of Work

Dr. Alexander F. van Biezen



UCLL University of Applied Sciences,
Research & Expertise - Inclusive Society (Leuven, Belgium)
International Conference, 27 March 2025



UCLL
UNIVERSITY OF
APPLIED SCIENCES





AI Agents

Announcement: OpenAI could charge up to \$20,000 a month for specialized AI agents “at PhD-level”.





AI is not a tool

Yuval Noach Harari:

"AI isn't a tool – it's an *agent*"





AI is not a tool



Geoffrey Hinton:

"We're moving into a period when for the first time ever we may have things more intelligent than us"





Tacit assumptions



What are the blind spots in our rosy vision on AI?





AI and understanding



The Chinese Room experiment (John Searle, 1980)





AI and understanding



“What Mary Didn’t Know” (Frank Jackson, 1986)





AI and understanding



"What Mary Didn't Know" (Frank Jackson, 1986)

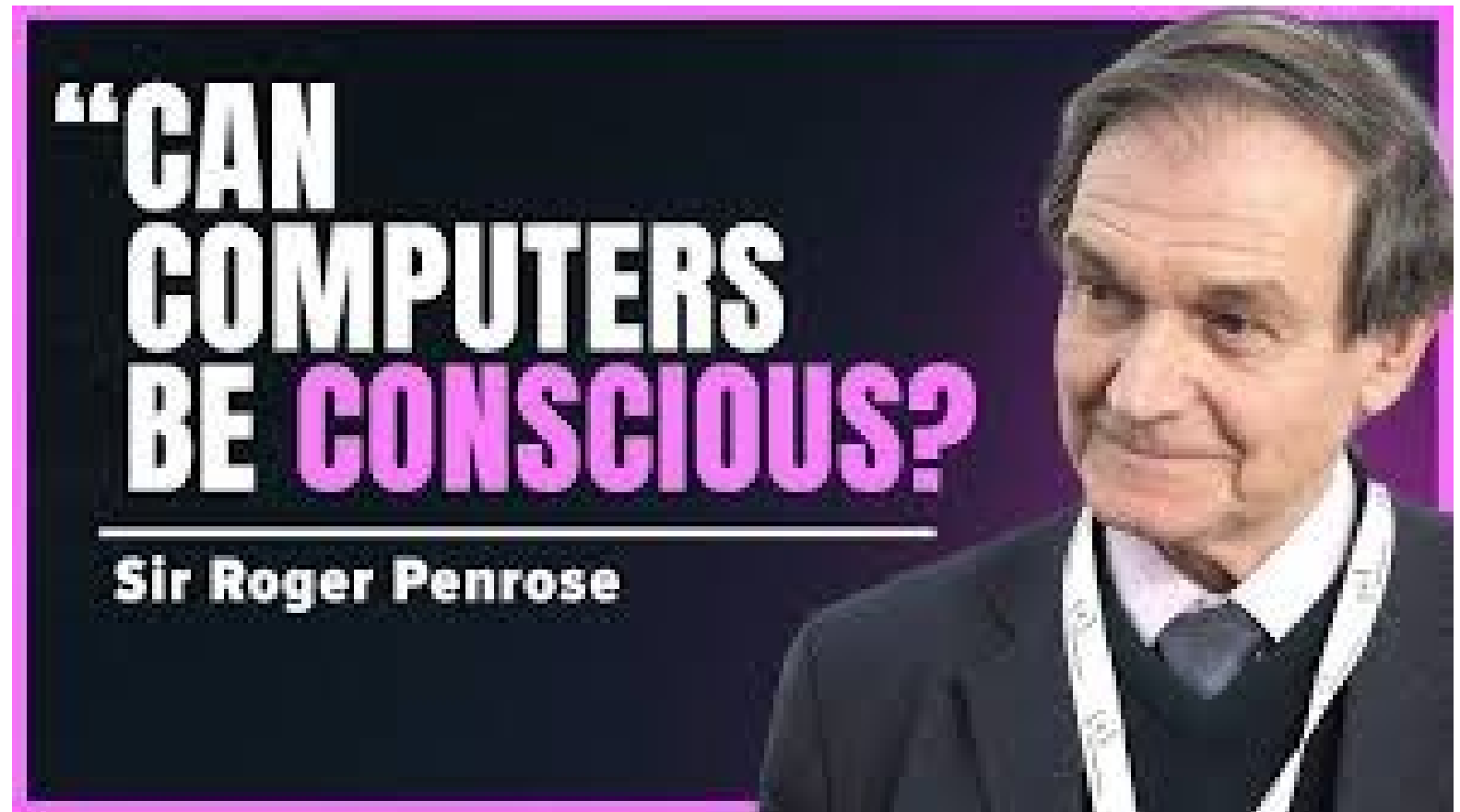




AI and understanding



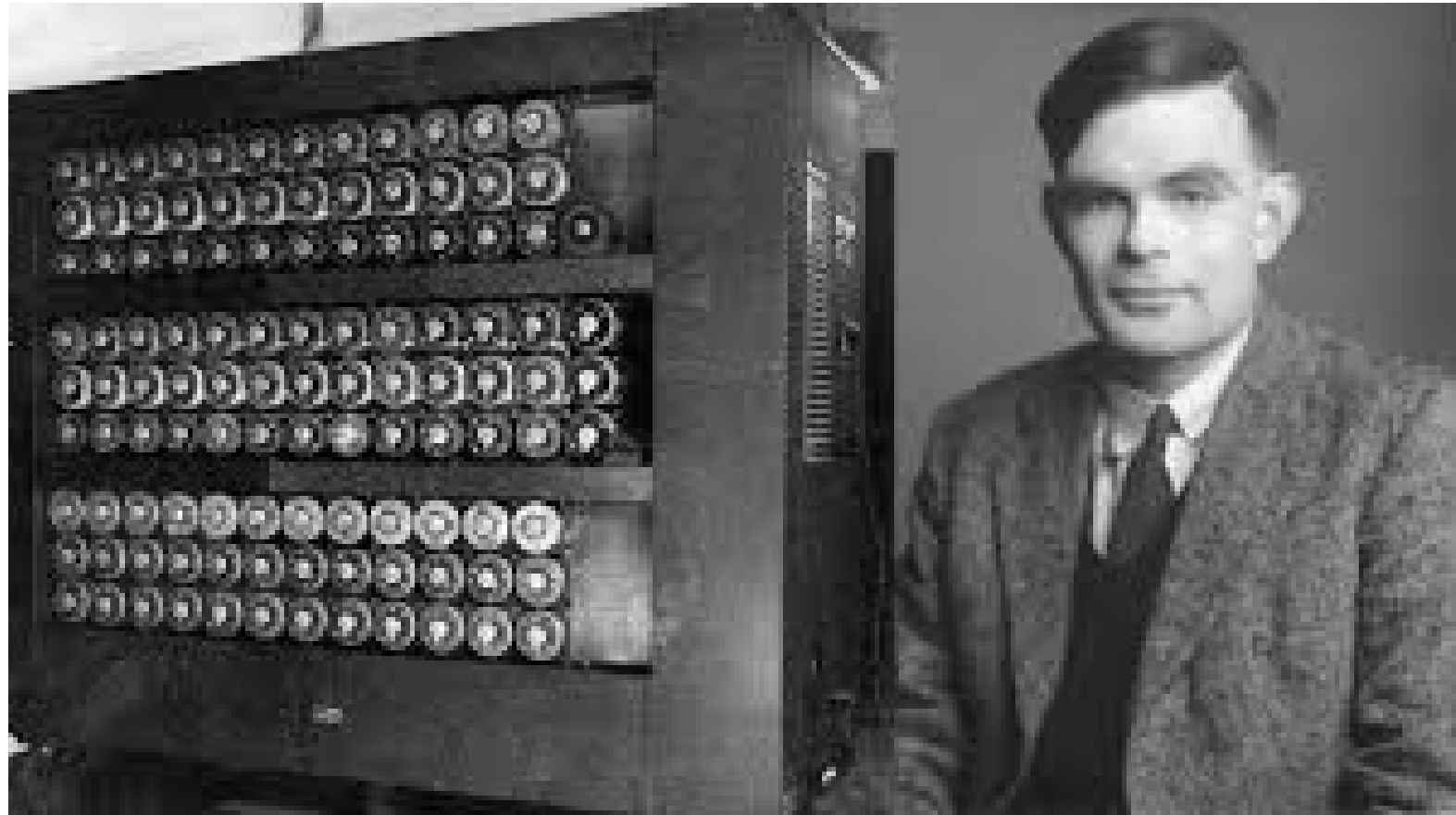
Machines can never have human-like consciousness and, therefore, artificial intelligence will be forever out of human reach.
(Sir Roger Penrose)





Alan Turing

"Can machines think?"





AI gaining in agency



“In AI, the neural networks moving toward autonomy are, at present, not explainable.”

(Mustafa Suleyman, *The Coming Wave*)





The AI singularity



“I’m sorry, Dave, I’m afraid I can’t do that”

(HAL 9000 in *2001: A Space Odyssey*, Stanley Kubrick, 1968)





The real risks of AI



Geoffrey Hinton: "AI is set to surpass us in speed and understanding.
It's a very scary conclusion."





We ourselves are the real risk of AI



Because we are held captive by an image, the iconic image of a computer as a simple box with a keyboard. → This creates a blind spot.





The real risks of AI



We rely more and more on AI systems to make decisions that once were the sole province of human beings.





The way forward



AI-human *symbiosis* – “A co-evolution where humans and machines are learning from each other” (Somendra Narayan)

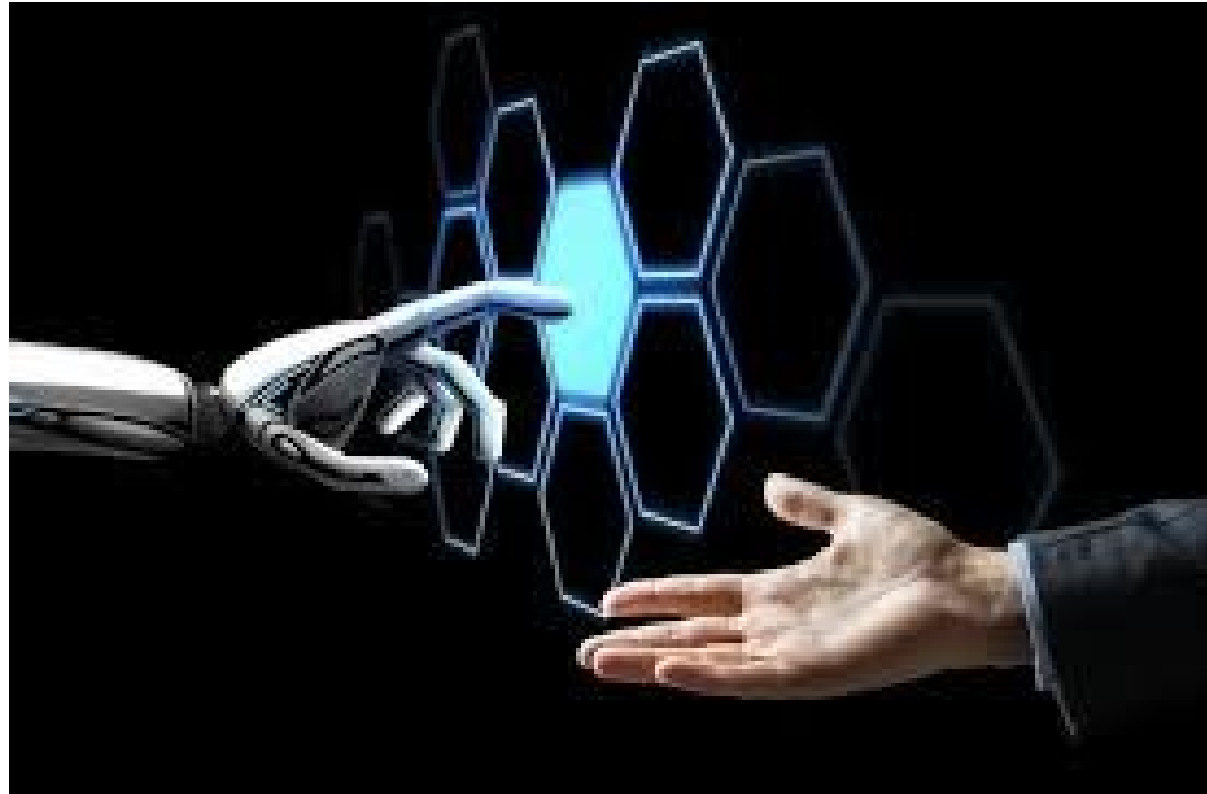




Ensure that AI augments human autonomy



Human agency does not exist in isolation. – AI is simply the most recent layer in the system. (Somendra Narayan)





Reality check



Nevertheless, we need to prepare for that possibility where AI will be a powerful *independent* entity in the workforce. (Tyler Suard)

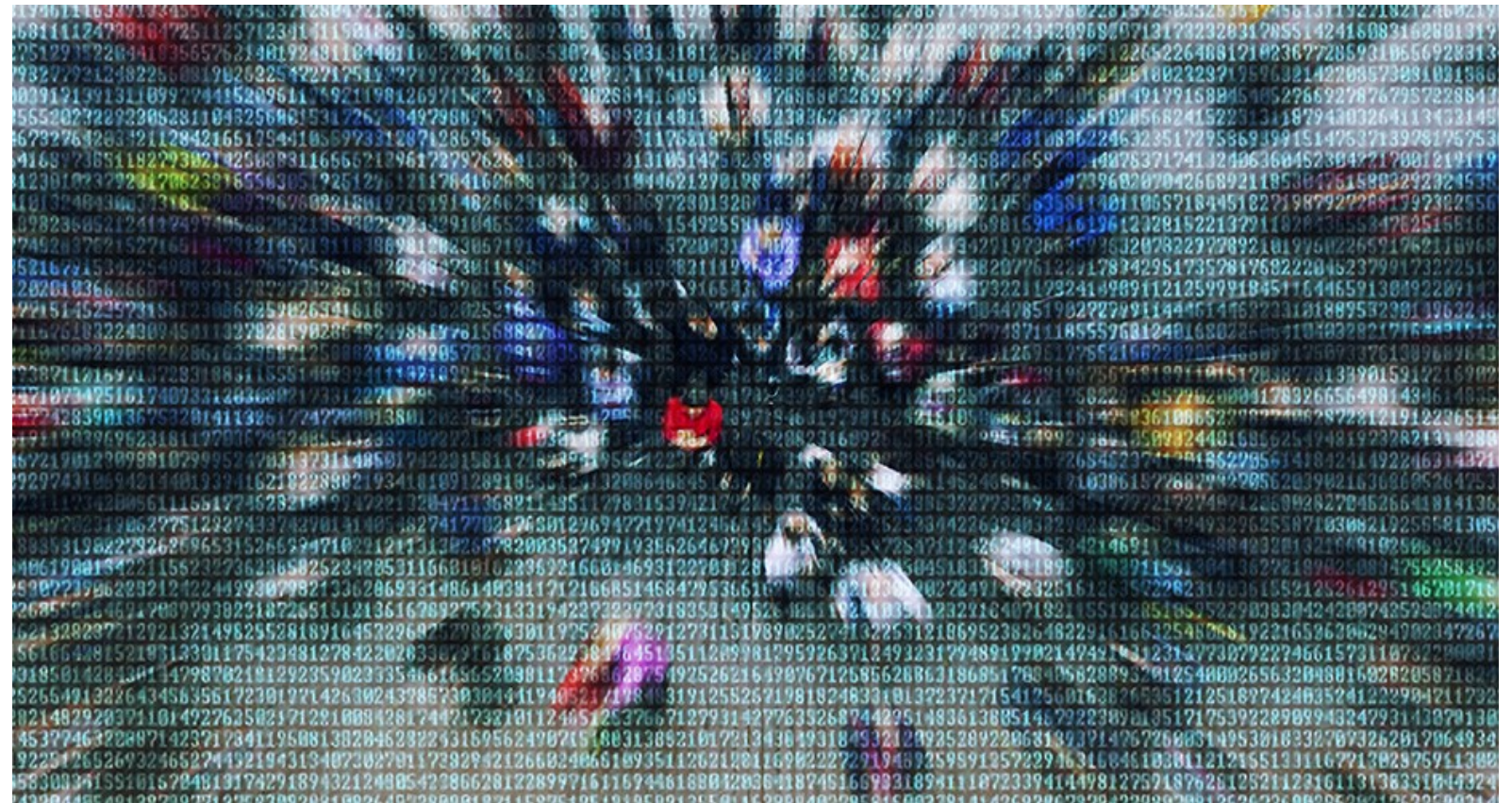




Contribute to a more inclusive and fairer world



UCLL's Inclusive Society urges for scaffolding social protection and support for those who run the risk of being forced out.





The future of the human workforce



Conclusion: plea for the need of continuing policy debates on AI regulation taking explicitly into account the phenomenon of *growing AI agency*.





Thank you for your attention

