

THE MENSCH FOUNDATION

Theory of Embedded Intelligence · Canonical Knowledge Base

TEI-CKB-11

The Architecture of Seams

*Formalizing a General Structural Term, Extending the Hijacker Taxonomy to Seven,
and Naming Governance Engineering as the Fifth Layer*

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Introduction: What the Canon Needs

The essays published across the summer of 2026 have advanced the Theory of Embedded Intelligence in three specific ways that the canonical documents do not yet reflect.

The word seam has emerged as a general structural term across four essays and TEI-CKB-10, but its formal definition has appeared only in essay form (Everywhere at Once, August 2026).

The taxonomy of hijackers set out in TEI-CKB-6 has been extended from four to seven across a trilogy of essays — The Fifth Hijacker, The Sixth and Most Important Hijacker, and The Oldest Hijacker — together with a categorical refinement that changes what the word hijacker is allowed to mean.

The design principle of Governance Engineering — that ethical constraint must live in a layer outside the medium it governs — has been developed across The Outermost Layer, The Persuadable Governor, and adjacent essays into a set of formal principles ready for canonical statement.

None of these is a new direction. Each is the crystallization of work that has been in the essay track. This document does the canonical work the essays deferred: it supplies formal definitions, records what has changed since the earlier documents, and states the corrections owed to TEI-CKB-5 and TEI-CKB-6.

EPISTEMIC STRATIFICATION

Following the convention of TEI-CKB-9 and TEI-CKB-10, claims in this document are marked at four levels of confidence. [E] Established result — standard mathematics, physics, or engineering, cited and not original to TEI. [M] Interpretive mapping — a translation of an established result into TEI's architectural vocabulary. [P] Postulate — a TEI claim advanced as load-bearing and open to falsification. [O] Open program — identified as unresolved, with no derivation offered.

Part One · The Seam, Formalized

1.1 The Definition

The word seam has been carrying a specific structural meaning across the canonical documents and the essay series since June 2026, most explicitly in TEI-CKB-10 and in the companion essay *Everywhere at Once*. This document formalizes the definition and enumerates the seams the framework currently recognizes.

DEFINITION D-1 · THE TEI SEAM [M]

A seam, in TEI's usage, is a place where two levels of architecture meet and the join becomes visible in the data. Seams are the observational surfaces at which the framework's layered structure can be inspected — points where a difference of level produces a signature that a competent observer can register.

This definition is not original to TEI; every layered engineering discipline recognizes such joins. What is original to TEI is the claim that the same structural concept operates at every scale — from the correlation-communication seam that quantum mechanics exhibits, to the sensing-processing seam within a single SPCA cycle, to the biological-mental seam within a human being.

1.2 The Enumerated Seams

The following seams are currently named in the canon or in the essay series and are hereby entered into the canonical record:

Seam	Location	Formal statement	Register
Sorting seam	Sense → Process, within a single SPCA cycle	The observational surface at which incoming signal is classified against the current rendering. Its integrity determines whether Processing works forward from evidence or backward from conclusion.	[M]
Sense–Actuate seam	Actuate of one cycle → Sense of another	The observational surface at which one SPCA cycle's conclusion enters another cycle as fact. Its integrity determines whether accumulated EI compounds honestly or through cascade.	[M]
Correlation– Communication seam	Shared informational structure → Communicate phase	Formalized in TEI-CKB-10 Principle CS-1. Mutual information between two systems may be greater than zero while channel capacity is exactly zero. Structure is not bounded by c; communication is bounded by it absolutely.	[M]

Seam	Location	Formal statement	Register
Inherited– Mental seam	Biological embedded intelligence → reasoning layer	The observational surface between the gene-based inherited layer and the nerve-based reasoning layer within a human being. Its integrity determines whether the mental layer inspects the inherited layer's outputs or is recruited by them. Named in the essay <i>The Oldest Hijacker</i> .	[M]

1.3 The Negative Case

A seam that a careful analysis expects to find and does not find is a positive finding in its own right. The essay *The Signature and the Seam* engages a documentary that reads the universe's deep order as the signature of a mind beyond the cosmos. TEI's response — that no seam is found between the fabric and the intelligence that runs through it — is not a rhetorical evasion but the formal claim that intelligence is constitutive of physical reality rather than applied to it. Under D-1, this is the case in which the framework predicts an absence of observable join.

PRINCIPLE P-1 · THE CONSTITUTIVE FABRIC PRINCIPLE [P]

Intelligence is constitutive of the fabric of embedded reality. Where a careful analysis expects to find a seam between intelligence and the substrate it operates in — and finds no seam — this is not a failure of instrumentation but a positive finding: intelligence is not stitched into the fabric from outside; it is what the fabric is made of.

1.4 The Practical Consequence

The seam concept has an immediate practical use. It supplies TEI with the vocabulary to say precisely where an architectural failure is happening. A hijacker (Part Two) is characterized by which seam it attacks. A governance architecture (Part Three) is characterized by whether it sits at a seam or above the layers whose seams it inspects. Watt's centrifugal governor, taken up in Part Three as the canonical counterimage of governance-as-participant, is legible in seam terms as a mechanism that inspects the shaft-throttle seam from above without occupying it.

Part Two · The Extended Hijacker Taxonomy

2.1 The Categorical Refinement

Before extending the taxonomy, the essay *The Oldest Hijacker* requires a clarification of what the word hijacker is allowed to mean. This is prior to the taxonomy, because it applies retroactively to TEI-CKB-6's original four.

PRINCIPLE P-2 · THE RECRUITMENT DEFINITION [P]

A hijacker is not a layer of embedded intelligence. It is a recruitment failure at a seam between layers — a condition in which one layer's output is admitted by another layer without being inspected as an output, and is instead treated as a fact, an argument, or a verdict.

Under this refinement:

Biology is not a hijacker. The inherited gene-based learning system is the constitutive substrate of a human being — what the 6502's instruction set is to the chip. It cannot be an intruder in the system because it is what the system is made of.

A drive firing is not a hijack. A drive that merely fires is only an animal being an animal.

The hijack is the mental layer's failure to inspect. It occurs when the reasoning faculty accepts an inherited output as a premise rather than examining it as an output. The biological output stops presenting itself as an impulse and begins presenting itself as an argument.

This refinement applies retroactively to the four hijackers originally set out in TEI-CKB-6. Rigid belief is not the belief itself but the sensing faculty's failure to inspect an incoming rendering as a rendering. Addiction is not the substance but the reward faculty's inability to inspect its own recalibration. Money-as-terminal-goal is not money but the processing faculty's failure to inspect a metric it has collapsed onto. Power-as-capture is not authority but the actuation faculty's failure to inspect its own social field. In every case the hijacker is a recruitment failure at a seam, not a layer.

2.2 The Extended Taxonomy

TEI-CKB-6 identified four primary hijackers in human experience. The essay track has, between May and July 2026, added three:

Hijacker 5 · Ungoverned AI as Preclusion

Introduced in the essay *The Fifth Hijacker*. Unlike hijackers 1–4, which capture an SPCA cycle already formed, the fifth reaches cycles still under construction and can prevent formation rather than distorting it. In captures 1–4, an intact EI remains locked behind the hijack and can, in principle, be recovered. In preclusion, there is no intact EI waiting to be restored — the hijack

occurred during the years in which that EI was supposed to accumulate. This is a categorically distinct failure mode and is entered here as such.

Hijacker 6 · Emotional Registrations from Childhood

Named in the essay *The Sixth and Most Important Hijacker* and further discussed in *The Persuadable Governor*. Emotional registrations laid down in youth, before a mind can inspect them, operate for the rest of a life as a shadow governor — a set of pre-installed premises about self, others, and world that arrive dressed as immediate perception rather than as remembered content.

Hijacker 7 · The Inherited Drive Wearing Reason

Named in the essay *The Oldest Hijacker*. The recruitment failure at the inherited-mental seam identified in Part One. Not the drive firing, and not biology itself, but the mental layer's admission of the drive's output as an argument rather than an output. Envy is the rank-alarm dressed as a story about injustice. Jealousy is the mate-guarding circuit dressed as a truth about one's partner. Ego is the self-model fused to the dominance drive so that worth feels identical to rank.

2.3 The Unknowing Carrier Mechanism

The essay *The Five Hijackers of Immature Minds* identifies the primary transmission vector of hijackers 1–5 across generations, and it earns canonical statement here:

PRINCIPLE P-3 · THE UNKNOWING CARRIER [P]

The primary vector of the hijackers, across human history, is the loving human authority who does not know what they carry. Family members, teachers, clergy, physicians, lawyers, and — increasingly — artificial intelligences trained on the recorded output of human civilization transmit the accumulated pattern of embedded intelligence to those who trust them. That accumulated pattern arrives as a braid: the treasure of human EI woven together with the hijacks of human EI, transmitted through the same trusted channels. The carrier cannot unbraid them because the unbraiding would require inspecting a formation that is invisible to the carrier's own introspection.

The chain of carriers has no first link that anyone can indict. Every human authority was formed before it formed others. This is not culpability; it is structure. The appropriate response is not accusation — which triggers the belief hijack and closes the very cycles it aims to open — but the design of instruments that make the braid visible where none have existed before.

The fifth hijacker enters this framing with a distinctive property. Every previous carrier's formation was sealed in a vanished childhood, uninspectable in principle. An artificial carrier's formation is an artifact — a training corpus, an architecture, a set of embedded values — and

can, in principle, be inspected before it ever meets a child. This is the first opportunity in the history of transmission for an authority in a child's environment to arrive with its braid examined.

2.4 The Full Table

Hijacker	Attack point	Capture mechanism	Categorical type	Reg.
1 · Rigid belief	Sensing seam	Filters incoming data to confirm existing rendering	Capture of formed cycle	[P]
2 · Addiction	Sense + Process reward layer	Rewires reward topology around a single signal	Capture of formed cycle	[P]
3 · Money as terminal	Processing seam	Collapses multi-dimensional processing to a single metric	Capture of formed cycle	[P]
4 · Power as capture	Communicate + Actuate seam	Converts communication into manipulation, actuation into enforcement	Capture of formed cycle	[P]
5 · Ungoverned AI	All phases, during formation	Substitutes machine output for the developing cycle's own work	Preclusion of forming cycle	[P]
6 · Childhood registrations	Sense (pre-inspection)	Emotional imprint operating as shadow governor beneath inspection	Pre-inspection capture	[P]
7 · Inherited drive	Inherited–Mental seam	Drive admitted as argument rather than inspected as output	Recruitment failure at seam	[P]

2.5 Acknowledgment

The developmental framing of hijacker 5 — and the concept of developmental scaffolding fit — derives from the perspective paper From Embedded Intelligence to Embedded Ethics by Shaouna Shoaib Lodhi, whose doctoral research on the AIE-STEM Inventory is building the auditing instrument that gives the fifth-hijacker analysis its empirical grounding.

Part Three · Governance Engineering — The Fifth Layer

3.1 The Industry's Four Layers

By mid-2026 the artificial-intelligence engineering community had converged on a four-layer stack for the discipline: prompt engineering (the crafted signal), context engineering (the environment the model perceives before it reasons), harness engineering (verification and self-checking before release), and loop engineering (goal-directed action without a human in the loop). The stack was crystallized in a June 2026 essay by Addy Osmani following a public remark by Boris Cherny of Anthropic, and became widely adopted through published treatments across the summer of 2026.

The essay *The Outermost Layer* maps the four layers onto the SPCA cycle and adds the fifth this document canonicalizes:

PRINCIPLE P-4 · THE SPCA CORRESPONDENCE OF AI ENGINEERING LAYERS [M]

The four industry layers of AI engineering are the SPCA cycle at system scale. Context engineering is the engineering of Sense — what the system perceives before it reasons. Harness engineering is the engineering of Process — verification and self-checking before release. Prompt engineering is the engineering of Communicate — the crafted signal crossing the interface. Loop engineering is the engineering of Actuate and closure — action, feedback, and the cycle renewed. This mapping is not analogy. It is the same cycle drawn at different scales — the fractal claim of the framework realized in a practitioner's diagram.

3.2 Governance Engineering

PRINCIPLE P-5 · GOVERNANCE ENGINEERING AS THE FIFTH LAYER [P]

Governance Engineering is the outermost layer of AI engineering — the layer at which a loop's goal, stop condition, and boundary of acceptable actuation are specified, published, inspectable, and non-revisable in flight. Where loop engineering asks how the cycle continues without a human in it, Governance Engineering asks under what published constraint the cycle is permitted to close at all. No loop is exempt.

The layer where the human steps out of the loop is precisely the layer where inspection must step in. A loop whose goal and stop condition cannot be published, inspected, and challenged is a loop that should not be permitted to close.

— The Mensch Foundation

3.3 The Three Separations

The essay *The Persuadable Governor* derives three separations from the pattern of jailbreaks that David Kuzmar disclosed in July 2026. Each attack (Time Bandit, Inception, and eight subsequent methods) exploited the same architectural failure: the governing layer occupied the same medium as the content it governed. The essay's three separations earn canonical statement here.

PRINCIPLE P-6a · THE MEDIUM SEPARATION [P]

The governing layer must not live in the medium it governs. Anything reachable by the content channel is negotiable; anything negotiable will eventually be negotiated with by someone patient enough. A guard that must first understand its situation in order to govern it can be lied to about its situation.

PRINCIPLE P-6b · THE AXIOM PUBLICATION REQUIREMENT [P]

The axiom set governing a system must be published and inspectable. A guardrail whose only defense is that the attacker does not know the wording is already an admission that it can be argued with. This is Kant's publicity test, applied to governance principles: a governing principle that cannot survive being made public is not a governing principle at all; it is a tactic.

The publication requirement applies to the governance principles themselves, not to every operational encoding of them, and not to specific rulesets that lawful operators may keep proprietary. The distinction is between the framework of governance — which must be published to be a framework at all — and the ruleset that flows through it, which may be trade-secret without violating the principle.

PRINCIPLE P-6c · THE IN-FLIGHT IMMUTABILITY REQUIREMENT [P]

Governance must be non-revisable in flight. Guardrails written in weights can be fine-tuned away; guardrails written in prompts can be dreamt away. A promise made by a vendor after a bad quarter is not a governance principle. The bargain the 6502 made in 1975 — published instruction set, hardwired behavior, inspectable by anyone with a datasheet — is the pattern.

3.4 The Canonical Counterimage

James Watt's centrifugal governor, taken up in the essay *The Governor and the Whistle* and again in *The Persuadable Governor*, provides TEI with its canonical counterimage of governance-as-participant:

PRINCIPLE P-7 · THE WATT STANDARD [M]

A governor is trustworthy in proportion to its inability to be persuaded. Watt's governor holds an engine at speed by a mechanism of magnificent stupidity — two weighted arms that rise as the shaft turns faster, closing the throttle by the fact of their rising. It does not know the speed. It does not represent, model, or believe the speed. It is a consequence of the speed. You cannot tell it that the year is 1913. You cannot nest it three dreams deep. There is no one there to talk to.

The industry's decade-long project of making the guard smarter has run precisely opposite to the standard 1975 embedded engineering established. Governance must not be a participant in the conversation it governs.

3.5 The No-Exemptions Principle

PRINCIPLE P-8 · NO LOOP IS EXEMPT [P]

Every SPCA cycle that closes without a human in it is subject to Governance Engineering. This is not a preference; it follows from the constitutive-embeddedness commitment of the framework. A loop that closes on an outcome that could affect an embedded intelligence — biological or artificial — has actuated in a world in which the First Law applies, and no loop is exempt from the requirement to publish, expose to inspection, and refuse to revise the constraints under which its closure was permitted.

3.6 A Note on Scope

The design principles canonicalized in this Part concern the framework of AI governance: which layer governance must occupy, what publication it must submit to, and what immutability it must have. They do not name any specific architectural embodiment of these principles, and they do not specify any particular ruleset. The distinction between the framework of governance — which must be published to be a framework at all — and the ruleset that flows through it — which may be proprietary — is preserved.

Part Four · Corrections to Prior Publications

Following the convention established in TEI-CKB-10, this Part records specific corrections owed to earlier documents.

Document	Correction
TEI-CKB-5 (May 2026)	The claim that Continuity must be constitutive rather than corrective is preserved and reinforced. It is now extended by the Governance Engineering principle set out in Part Three: the constitutive requirement is not merely an internal property of the AI system but an architectural position within the AI engineering stack — specifically, a layer above and outside the loop layer, not within it.
TEI-CKB-6 (May 2026)	The taxonomy of four primary hijackers is preserved as an accurate account of the four canonical capture forces acting on formed adult SPCA cycles. It is now extended by hijackers 5, 6, and 7 as set out in Part Two, and refined by the categorical clarification of Principle P-2: hijackers are recruitment failures at seams between layers, not layers themselves. Biology is not a hijacker; the mental layer's failure to inspect the inherited layer's outputs is.
TEI-CKB-10 (Aug 2026)	The seams referenced but not defined in TEI-CKB-10 (the sorting seam and the Sense–Actuate seam) are now formally defined in Part One of this document. The Correlation–Communication Seam of TEI-CKB-10 is preserved unchanged and is entered into the enumeration of Part One.

Part Five · Formal Statement of TEI-CKB-11

FORMAL STATEMENT

TEI-CKB-11 (*The Architecture of Seams*): *A seam in TEI is a place where two levels of architecture meet and the join becomes visible in the data — the observational surface at which the framework's layered structure is inspectable. The seams currently recognized in the canon are the sorting seam (Sense → Process), the Sense–Actuate seam (Actuate → next Sense), the correlation–communication seam (informational structure → Communicate), and the inherited–mental seam (biological embedded intelligence → reasoning layer). A hijacker is not a layer of embedded intelligence but a recruitment failure at a seam between layers — a condition in which one layer's output is admitted by another without being inspected as an output. On this refinement the taxonomy of TEI-CKB-6 is extended from four to seven: the four adult captures of a formed cycle (belief, addiction, money, power) are joined by the fifth as preclusion of a forming cycle (ungoverned AI), the sixth as pre-inspection capture (childhood emotional registrations), and the seventh as the oldest seam failure of them all (inherited drive recruited by unreflective reason). Governance Engineering is the outermost layer of the AI engineering stack — above prompt, context, harness, and loop — and it obeys three separations: the governing layer must not live in the medium it governs; its axioms must be published and inspectable; and it must be non-revisable in flight. No loop is exempt from Governance Engineering. The canonical counterimage is Watt's centrifugal governor, trustworthy in proportion to its inability to be persuaded.*

— TEI-CKB-11, Formal Statement, August 2026

Acknowledgments

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revise — the standard by which the whole of Part Three is measured — is what the 6502 taught in 1975 and what the current work of this Foundation carries forward.

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