

The background is a black and white photograph of bare tree branches against a light sky. A large, dark red, sunburst-shaped graphic is centered on the page. Inside this shape is a white dashed circle. The text is centered within this circle.

CREATIVE PORTFOLIO

Graphic Design,
Photography, and
Writing

Zoë Ward

ABOUT ME



Zoë Ward graduated December of 2026 with a degree in English, as well as a double minor in Art and Marketing. She also graduated with a certification in Publishing and Editing. She has always had a passion for creating whether it be drawing, painting, taking photos, etc. She enjoys reading and has worked with her college's Undergraduate Research Journal, LURe, from 2023-25. The first year she was a volunteer staff editor, and the second she was granted the internship position of Editor-in-Chief. She aspires to find a position that will allow her to use both her creative skills as well as her reading and editing abilities. She started up her own magazine, *The Void Literary*, in 2026 after being inspired by working with LURe.



2023 – Rust

PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKS



2023 – Gummy Bear Murderers

PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKS CONTINUED



2026 – Lake Lite



2024 – Crossing Paths



2023 – An Apple a Day



2026 – Judgement



2025 – In the Meadow



2023 – Beauty Standards



2025 – Rusted Liberty

The Role Madness Plays in Female Hysteria and the Consequent Loss of Autonomy Within *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea*

In the classic novel *Jane Eyre* (1847), Charlotte Brontë introduces us to the character Bertha, a crazed woman locked in the attic who is Rochester's first wife. Although Bertha is not the focal point of the story, it is within her character that Rochester's dark nature is revealed. Jean Rhys reimagines Bertha and gives her character true depth and a great backstory in her novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966). *Sargasso Sea* was set in the 1830s, after the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833, while *Jane Eyre* was set in the early 1800s. This difference in time period highlights the fact that women were treated fairly similarly in these two different time periods and still held to a higher standard than their male counterparts. Although the two stories were written over a century apart, within these two stories the concept of madness critiques gender norms within relationships and provides two very different outlooks on gender expectations as well as madness. *Jane Eyre* portrays the idea that Bertha, Rochester's imprisoned wife, has always been mad and that craziness was in her blood. However, given the new look *Wide Sargasso Sea* provides, it is clear that Antoinette, soon to be renamed as Bertha, is forced into the role of madness rather than always being mad. Mr. Rochester plays a significant and fatal role in both stories in regards to the madness, and descent of Antoinette and Bertha. *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea* demonstrate that madness is not cut and dry, instead it is a role that can be coerced upon someone and is connected to gender roles and submission; Rochester wants to be in control and thus he forces his wife to submit even if it results in her downfall, this submission is what thus leads to her descent into madness. The portrayal of madness in *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea* critiques gender norms to suggest that madness within these two novels is a

metaphor for the effects of a controlling relationship and how it can result in female hysteria and loss of autonomy.

In *Jane Eyre* the lack of background for Bertha's character results in a biased perspective, causing readers to inadvertently sympathize with Rochester due to his wife's madness although he is the one that imprisoned her, and ultimately is the one wrong in this narrative. This biased perspective supports the notion that depending on who shares their story the narrative can be skewed to their advantage. In this case it is Mr. Rochester that benefits from the idea that his wife is crazy, if she is crazy no one will blame him for flirting and trying to be with other women. Instead his actions will be slightly more understandable compared with how these actions would be viewed if he had a normal, sane wife instead. Even Jane in *Jane Eyre* has a skewed and cruel image of Bertha in her mind. In their first official encounter Jane describes Bertha as "[a] clothed hyena...The maniac...the lunatic..." (Brontë 338). All of these words that Jane uses to describe her portray Bertha as "other" and monstrous. Jane's description separates Bertha from the human world and instead makes her into something unidentifiable and something mad. Lori Pollock, in her article "(An)Other Politics of Reading 'Jane Eyre'" describes how Bertha is dehumanized within Jane's narrative. Pollock writes,

The animalization of Bertha is also emphasized through her representation, in Jane's eyes, as a 'clothed hyena' ([Eyre] 321). In addition, Bertha is dehumanized in a manifestation of the manichean allegory in the direct comparison that Rochester makes between the two women after the discovery of his previous marriage. Unlike Jane's 'clear eyes' in her 'face' ([Eyre] 322) Bertha has 'red balls' in a 'mask' ([Eyre] 322). (Pollock 266).

Within this excerpt, Pollock demonstrates how Bertha is essentially the opposite of Jane, where Jane is womanly and pretty, Bertha is monstrous and hideous. Pollock's mention of the "manichean allegory" refers to the concept of "...interchangeable oppositions between white/black, good/evil, ... self/other..." (250). This cements the idea that Bertha and Jane are viewed as polar opposites, where Jane is kind and sane, Bertha is cruel and mad. Bertha's madness has consumed her to the point where it affects her physically and mentally, and furthers her outward appearance as "other". However, in that same scene when Bertha comes into contact with Rochester, Jane describes her as "the lunatic sprang and grappled [Rochester's] throat viciously, and laid her teeth to his cheek: they struggled. She was a big woman..." (Brontë 338). It is only when Bertha physically interacts with Rochester that she is given human descriptions such as "woman". This cements the idea that Rochester has stripped her identity so thoroughly that even those around her cannot see her as anything other than mad and monstrous until she comes into contact with Rochester, and then and only then is she given her womanly identity back. This womanly identity is still tainted by the monstrous and mad qualities assigned to her but she is at least given back a sliver of her human nature and identity.

The *Wide Sargasso Sea* provides preliminary insight into the descent of Antoinette/Bertha, and the major role Rochester played that resulted in the loss of Antoinette's identity, autonomy, and sanity proving that initially she was fully sane and that it was Rochester who led her to her downfall. Rochester is immediately prejudiced against Antoinette as soon as he met her because he had no care for her as a person, it is merely an arranged marriage to help him gain money. He persuades Antoinette to marry him although she has no inclination to, and at her own detriment, because he has no love for her or respect and completely strips her of her mind. Rochester even goes as far as giving her a new name; "'Don't laugh like that Bertha.' 'My

name is not Bertha; why do you call me Bertha?' 'Because it is a name I'm particularly fond of. I think of you as Bertha'" (Rhys 122). By renaming her he is furthering his claim upon her body and her identity, stripping her of any prior self she may have had, and leaving only her new self, the one that he is firmly in control of. This new identity is the first step in creating an unstable vision of herself and thus her first slip into the descent of madness. Without a firm grasp upon who she is, she has nothing to cling to and everything surrounding her is a mass of confusion and unknowns. Self identity is meant to be the one reliable aspect of life, however, with that aspect removed she no longer has anything to connect to and is thus adrift and is an easier target for Rochester to manipulate and control. Rose Kamel in her article "'Before I Was Set Free': The Creole Wife in 'Jane Eyre' and 'Wide Sargasso Sea,'" writes, "'Goodnight Bertha,' [Rochester] says, renaming her after a saxon vampire, like a slaveowner, and erasing her subjectivity and that of her mother" (12). By removing her connection to self and family Rochester is creating an unstable life for her, similar to the unstable conditions her mother was in when she descended into madness. As seen in *Jane Eyre*, Rochester is very controlling in all aspects of his life, especially relationships and it is no different in *Wide Sargasso Sea*. In the time period both stories are set in, women are expected to be submissive to their husbands and he expected no less of Antoinette. When he saw that she was a very independent woman it worried him and so he slowly sucked all the independence from her and made her dependent on him. Removing her name forced her to rely on him for stability and familiarity and thus cemented the controlling relationship he hoped for. This not only resulted in a controlling and abusive relationship but also stripped her of her autonomy and created the woman he feared her to be, a mad and crazy woman.

The insanity of Bertha/Antoinette benefited Rochester as he is able to act as if he has no wife, and benefit from her fortune without having to be tied down to her; solidifying the idea that controlling relationships result in madness and correlate with loss of autonomy and female hysteria. Wendy Hesford describes female hysteria by saying “Historically, female hysterics were positioned as *pedagogical spectacles* (object lessons) created by the male medical gaze” (351). Similarly, Rochester depicted Antoinette as mad in order to cement the narrative he wished to portray. After treating her as if she was mad for so long, she eventually succumbed to that belief herself and in believing that she was mad she became so. Rhys writes about Rochester’s ploy to force Antoinette to madness and writes, “It is in your mind to pretend she is mad. I know it. The doctors say what you tell them to say. That man Richard he say what you want him to say - glad and willing too, I know. She will be like her mother. You do that for money? But you wicked like Satan self!” (145). Rochester has admitted time and time again in *Sargasso Sea* that he has no love for Antoinette, he merely married her because he felt it would have been embarrassing to be rejected by someone of her status and he needed the money. Due to these reasons he benefited from forcing her to insanity as it allowed him to take full control over her.

Wide Sargasso Sea critiques the control men were able to have over their wives by demonstrating the detriment total control in a marriage can result in, by highlighting Antoinette’s fall into madness which is caused by Rochester. Rochester takes total control over Antoinette’s life once they are married which leads to a psychotic break and what doctors in that time termed as “female hysteria,” revealing that Rochester is the true cause of her descent into madness, rather than being born with it. Antoinette lost all aspects of her identity due to Rochester’s control, and she became a drunkard who lashes out and has severe mental breakdowns in order to try and cope with her new life as a puppet, forced to act on the whims of Rochester. Rochester

completely strips her of her identity when he forces her to be renamed as Bertha, and refuses to refer to her as anything else. Elizabeth Abel describes this loss of identity by writing,

“Antoinette, like Rhys’s other heroines, is necessarily split between the image thrust on her and her own knowledge of herself ... Her ‘real’ self denied, Antoinette lapses into wooden lifelessness, becoming the ‘marionette’...” (172-173). This concept of Antoinette becoming a ‘marionette’ allowed Rochester to fully control her life and her actions. She could no longer do anything she enjoyed doing and he thoroughly ruined everything and everywhere that she had ever loved. He stripped her down to the barebones and convinced herself and those around her that she is crazy, and built her up again with that as the base of her new identity. Her newfound identity is a mass of hysteria and madness, fueled by Rochester’s spite and greed. Before Rochester moved Antoinette to England, he had already been plotting how he would hide her away; “I drew a house surrounded by trees. A large house. I divided the third floor into rooms and in one room I drew a standing woman – a child’s scribble, a dot for a head, a larger one for the body, a triangle for a skirt, slanting lines for arms and feet. But it was an English house” (Rhys 148). In this scene it becomes clear that this has always been Rochester’s plan; force her into isolation and make sure that no one in his home town ever found out about her, so he could continue life as normal. This scene also describes his drawing as “a child’s scribble,” this notion of a child’s imagery brings about the idea that his need for control is like the childish need to always get one’s way. His illustration also demonstrates how he constantly strives for what he views as his perfect English life. The “English house,” shows that he wants everything and everyone to fit into his ideal English existence, and whatever doesn’t fit he forces to adapt and change, much like Antoinette. By forcing her to England he is able to take full control as well as get everything he wants while further removing her from every aspect of familiarity, entrenching

the sense of instability and lack of self-identity. Without roots and without a true grasp on her new life, her descent into madness is guaranteed and Rochester is able to do as he pleases, including hiding her from the picture and leaving her to rot in her insanity on the third floor of his home.

In *Jane Eyre*, Jane acts as a parallel of Bertha, she represents everything that Bertha is never allowed to be, but also demonstrates how Rochester tries to gain control over all of the women in his life by stripping them of their autonomy. Unlike Bertha, Jane is not initially tied to Rochester by the bounds of marriage and therefore she has much more freedom than Bertha. When Jane discovers the truth of Rochester's first wife, Bertha, she decides she can no longer stay in his house or by his side. She tells him, "I am no bird; and no net ensnares me; I am a free human being with an independent will, which I now exert to leave you" (Brontë 293). In this moment it is clear that Jane has more autonomy and control over her situation than Bertha and Antoinette ever did. Jane has the choice and ability to leave Rochester, while Bertha is coerced and forced to stay by his side. Rochester does threaten Jane when she declares she is leaving him, but he does not act on his threat unlike his suppression and violence towards Bertha. Pollock discusses this potential physical violence against Bertha and writes, "Although Bertha's 'swelled black face' ([Brontë] 313) has been interpreted traditionally by both feminist and postcolonial critics as representing the racialized other in the novel, this swelling may also be read as a marker of violence and an allusion to the beating of Bertha Mason and the larger problem of violence against women in nineteenth-century England" (259). Once more it becomes clear that women in this time period, specifically Bertha in this instance, have been brutalized and ruined in order to illustrate a certain narrative. If Pollock's theory is correct, then the abuse against Bertha only helps further the idea of her being monstrous and mad. If

Rochester makes her look the part of deranged by disfiguring her so she no longer looks recognizable, he is helping craft the narrative that she is so mad that she is no longer "woman" but "other" and monstrous. As far as Jane can tell, Bertha has had no autonomy thus far in the novel, her every action is dictated by Grace, who is essentially her babysitter, and Rochester, her love-less husband. The only act that Bertha makes that is truly an act of her own will without any interference or hindrance from anyone else is the last act she ever makes: jumping to her death. Comparatively, in *Sargasso Sea*, Antoinette uses her final act as one of desperation and an attempt to regain control over life and embrace her past identity.

Antoinette's final attempt at freedom results in her leaping off the roof of her prison, Rochester's home, it is only through death that she is fully able to escape Rochester and in this moment her death allows Rochester to gain complete freedom from what dragged him down, his marriage to her. Albeit it dragged him down simply because he forced her into staying with him rather than letting her go. In *Jane Eyre*, Antoinette's act of desperation is a desperate attempt to try and regain control and yet, all who viewed it only saw it as an act of destructive power; an act that only causes suffering to those directly involved but one that is necessary to grant Rochester his freedom. Peter Grudin states that, "Bertha, who must die so that Rochester can marry Jane, who lives and then is destroyed as Jane's perverse surrogate in an inferno of fire and violence, signals, in her fatal leap, both the mode of her own moral decline and the perfection of Jane's moral development" (157). In order for Jane to succeed in her relationship with Rochester, and her aspirations for her life, Bertha has to be completely removed from it. This final act of Bertha's is a culminating one that represents not only her full decline, but also her wish to have one last act that is for herself, something that she chose to do rather than was told to do. Before she jumps off the roof of the house, Rochester calls her Bertha one final time, trying to coax her

down. In calling her Bertha, instead of her rightful name Antoinette, he is exemplifying his continuous refusal to give her autonomy and acknowledge her true identity. Instead trying to continue on with the falsehoods that he has created and extend the false narrative that he has assigned to her life. Rather than provide her with one act of kindness in her final moments he proves that he cannot do without his perfect English ideals, and his desire for control in every aspect of his life. Antoinette even discusses this in *Wide Sargasso Sea* when she confronts him saying, “‘Bertha is not my name. You are trying to make me into someone else, calling me by another name’” (Rhys 133). Knowing that she has confronted him about her name prior makes this final act of refusing to acknowledge her true self and identity that much worse. It truly demonstrates the selfishness of Rochester as well as his continual desire to suppress Antoinette’s wish for autonomy and her need to reconnect with her true identity.

In order to maintain control over her life Rochester keeps the real reason why Bertha is insane in *Jane Eyre* secret, revealing that it is because her mother was also mad that she has now fallen into madness herself, however, he keeps it hidden that it is himself that truly resulted in her downfall. In *Sargasso Sea* it becomes clear that Antoinette started out perfectly sane, and was in fact very smart mentally and emotionally. Antoinette begins to realize that Rochester tricked her and has no true love for her and so she tries to entrap him, once he catches on he has an affair with the maid to get back at her. This is the true reason Antoinette is driven to insanity, although in *Jane Eyre* she is portrayed as, “By nature ‘most gross, impure, depraved,’ Bertha is presented as a woman who has purposely abandoned herself to sexual excess and indiscriminate infidelity, who has leapt rather than fallen” (Grudin 148). Rochester paints Bertha as a woman who has committed many acts of infidelity against him, in order to hide the truth about his own actions. During this time period it was common practice for men to court multiple women, however if

women were to do the same they would be viewed negatively. Painting Antoinette/Bertha as a woman who has had multiple sexual relations with many different men, Rochester leans into this stereotype knowing that Bertha will be an outcast for such behavior. At the same time Rochester is able to hide his own treacherous past and thus it causes him no ill-will. His actions with Jane do result in her temporarily leaving him due to his dishonesty, but she does come back to him all the same, forgiving him for his actions. This idea that men are given more leniency when it comes to infidelity is essentially what causes Antoinette to go mad. Antoinette is trapped within her marriage to Rochester and due to her lashing out she is now deemed insane and thus Rochester is given even more control over her. Rochester even states in *Sargasso Sea*, “She’s mad but *mine, mine*” (Rhys 150). He doesn’t care how Antoinette is publicly viewed as long as he remains in control, and given the time period men were given an excess of control over their wives and due to that Rochester is able to do with her as he wishes. Including carting her off to a land she had never been to and separating her entirely from everyone and everything she knew.

Rhys and Brontë are able to portray very unique depictions of madness, done in a way that reveals that not all madness is hereditary and some forms can actually be caused by controlling relationships. Prior to her marriage with Rochester, Antoinette is perfectly sane, it is only after he strips her of her autonomy that she succumbs to female hysteria and madness. Rather than being given freedom due to her drastic shift in mindset, Rochester is able to wrap his grip around her tighter, furthering her descent into insanity, to the point where she loses time and her sense of identity. Rhys and Brontë are able to demonstrate the devastating effects controlling relationships can have on women, especially in this time period, and how to the outside world these women, such as Bertha, are viewed as “other” and monstrous simply because outsiders do not know the full story. These two stories serve as a warning to the kind of detriment that can

occur when controlling men such as Rochester gain too much power over women who merely wanted love and affection such as Antoinette.

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GRAPHIC DESIGN

Zoë Ward's biggest project using Graphic Design was a combination of editing, writing, and designing. The final product was a magazine on the harmful uses of AI and how it can or cannot be used ethically. This project was created as a capstone final project in Publishing and Editing, the last class in Zoë's work towards getting her Publishing and Editing certification. This project consists of a black and white version as well as a teal version.

THE VOID MAGAZINE



THIS ISSUE'S FOCUS:
AI AND IT'S IMPACT
ON SOCIETY

ISSUE NO.02

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MISSION STATEMENT:

UNIQUE. THOUGHT PROVOKING. ATTENTION GRABBING.

IN EACH ISSUE OF THE VOID YOU WILL FIND MOVING, CREATIVE, DIVERSE PIECES THAT COMPEL YOU TO READ MORE. OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE UNIQUE, DIVERSE WRITING WITH A DIFFERENT TOPIC EACH ISSUE. EACH SECTION PAIRS ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPHS WITH EACH WRITTEN PIECE TO CREATE A ONE OF A KIND EXPERIENCE. WE ARE ENTIRELY AD FREE, WHICH MEANS READING WHATEVER, WHENEVER, WITH NO DISTRACTIONS.

INTRO:

THIS ISSUE FOCUSES ON THE TOPIC OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND HOW IT IMPACTS OUR SOCIETY. THE DANGERS IT HOLDS AND HOW TO USE IT CAREFULLY WITHOUT INFRINGING ON CREATIVES LIFESTYLES AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES. WE ENCOURAGE OUR READERS TO KEEP AN OPEN MIND WITH THIS ISSUE AND TO ALLOW THE PIECES TO DRIVE THEM TO THINK MORE ABOUT THE IMPACT OF AI; BOTH ENVIRONMENTALLY AND HOW IT IMPACTS OUR SOCIETY AND JOB POSITIONS. THIS ISSUE IS MEANT TO BRING ALL ASPECTS OF THE TOPIC TO LIGHT, NOT EVERYONE HAS THE SAME VIEWPOINT BUT WE HOPE THAT EVERYONE IS ABLE TO PUT ASIDE THEIR BIASES SO THEY CAN UNDERSTAND MULTIPLE VIEWPOINTS OF AI AND WHAT IT ENTAILS IN THE FUTURE.

AI: THE DANGERS AND HARSH REALITY ARTISTS FACE

Featuring: Emma Eady, Adam Olivieri, and Zoë Ward

This section discusses the harsh truths of AI, the dangers, and how it negatively impacts artist communities. These pieces are opinion pieces, however, they all make very good points about the dangers of AI and how to proceed with caution.

As you read this section take into consideration how AI is impacting your day to day life. Is it a threat to your job, or a job of someone you know? Is it leading to less artists being able to find a job due to companies being able to get free "labor" from AI? All of these things are important to consider as you choose to use, or not to use AI.



04



Emma Eady - Art (Painting) major, Creative Writing minor

I am very against AI, and I think it is very detrimental for our society. Sure, there is some convenience that it gives, but as someone who is an artist and creates things from scratch, it is a threat to me and anyone who is creative. Artificial intelligence is being trained on our work. And we cannot even stop that. Even putting our work online to share to gain any sort of traction, it is being stolen the second it enters a digital space.

It is already commonplace at this point. It's following us everywhere to the point where I'm trying to order at the Taco Bell drive through, and I have an AI talking to me. It makes me a little sadder about the world. And each time I look up information online, it gives me AI's overview rather than an article by a human being. This is not only harmful to humanity but the environment we live in as well. We don't need AI doing the jobs that human beings should be doing. The last thing AI needs to do is take away more jobs.

Realistically, there are some things that AI helps out with. Humanity wants things quickly. We want instant gratification. Things like image generators, auto correct, and so on just add to the instant gratification we are so used to. I know I'm a terrible speller, so it is nice when something can immediately fix my mistakes. At this point, I don't see people wanting to take a step back in that regard. I, myself, don't see myself wanting to go back to having to look up something in the dictionary. Regardless, I do not support further progression. Once people started calling themselves artists [because] they plugged a series of words into an image generator, it crossed a line.

Issue No.02 | AI and it's Impact



A clip from Coca-Cola's Christmas Ad, using AI. Not in original Color.

AI Stubblefield, Arts Reporter. Featured in *Trinitonian*

Unfortunately generative AI doesn't suck anymore. Before, I was easily able to spot AI images by counting fingers or teeth, but now, more data has been collected and the algorithms are more refined, making the images more realistic. Newer models grow more and more convincing to me by the day, and I'm second guessing every image I see now. I struggle to find genuine references for my art and not hastily prompted generative AI art that dominates nearly every website now. Try as I may to pretend that generative AI art is just a phase that people will get over, I'm blasted with news of artist layoffs and new generative AI animation projects. Generative AI has taken over the artist's world, and it won't be going away.

While I'd like to believe that generative AI can serve to benefit the art community in some way, it only seems to be pushing down artists. Generative AI gives instant gratification to those seeking art, and now artists are being shoved to the side by corporations to save time and money. Artists have never been fairly respected even before AI, and finding a lucrative career is rare. Contemporary artists that do make names for themselves and appear in galleries are mocked online. At many animation studios, animators are paid near minimum wage and overworked. With the rise of generative AI art, I've seen a growing disrespect for art, with many trolls online commenting on artists' posts that they'd be losing their jobs, or that artists were becoming obsolete and unnecessary. Even companies have been taking this stance. Coca-Cola released an AI generated Christmas commercial, and just recently I saw an ad for a game, AFK Arena, which used generative AI art instead of its own distinctive art that it's used for years. It's clear that corporations are looking to save money by using AI, even if it requires cutting off the artist. So ... is all hope lost for artists? Is art going to be taken over by machines?

Although I have no doubt that companies will use generative AI to save money by replacing more artists, non-AI, human-made art isn't replaceable. People will still value human art and pay for it, and not all corporations are eager to switch over to AI. For example, Wizards of the Coast, which owns both Dungeons and Dragons and Magic: The Gathering, banned the use of generative AI in their artwork.

"The core of our policy is this: Magic and D&D have been built on the innovation, ingenuity, and hard work of talented people who sculpt these beautiful, creative games. As such, we require artists, writers, and creatives contributing to the Magic TCG and the D&D TTRPG to refrain from using AI generative tools to create final Magic or D&D products," Magic the Gathering stated on their website.

For many artists such as myself, art isn't just about making money, but about the joy that comes from creating art. Although AI will most likely continue to grow and develop, artists will still continue to create. After all, many artists make art to express themselves, and generative AI will never be able to recreate the joy that it gives you.

06

Adam Olivieri - CFI

I strongly believe that the widespread use of Language Learning Models, commonly referred to as AI, is actively harming society as we know it. Although the negative effects have yet to be fully understood, I believe that most of the issues it causes can be categorized in three ways.

AI initially made its popular debut with image generator programs. These programs allowed users to generate images or videos of their desired content based on a simple prompt. These generated images were almost nonsensical at first, but as the technology was more widely utilized, they became better and better. As a result, some companies began using AI content for advertising purposes due to the extremely low cost. Unsurprisingly, the willingness of large companies to sacrifice soul and meaning in exchange for happier shareholders has resulted in dwindling opportunities for artists and graphic designers.

Secondly, and arguably more severe, is the extreme negative impact that AI tools present in the educational field. AI is not bound to facts, as demonstrated by internet users during the rollout period of search engine AI assistants. Many grade school and college students have begun to use AI to complete classwork for them, which is causing both a lack of meaningful learning and an often incorrect view of the material. It is for this very reason that I personally avoid AI usage.

My final point is more speculative than the first two, but I sincerely believe it holds water. The influence of tech giants such as Google and Meta over our world increases as AI spreads in mission and popularity. Using AI as the basis for a societal trend or industry effectively ties that entity to the whim of the company that owns the AI model. I'm sure I don't need to spell out why allowing corporations to control even more facets of daily life is a fundamentally flawed idea.

In conclusion, I see AI as an impediment to progress rather than a tool of it. I believe that AI can be compared to the use of asbestos in housing development. Both started off as innovations meant to make life easier, but came with serious and initially unseen long-term consequences. My hope is that people may realize that AI is not, and will never be, a substitute for human spirit and ingenuity.



Issue No.02 | AI and it's Impact

Zoë Ward - English major with a double minor in Art and Marketing

The Artist's Plight

I think that the use of AI has become much more prevalent in today's society. Although you would think that this generation would have learned the harsh realities and dangers of Artificial Intelligence from all of the Sci-Fi movies, such as The Matrix and The Terminator, it appears that they are more than willing to - mostly - accept AI with open arms. However, it's mostly non-creators that are embracing AI, such as businesses, corporations, etc. As for the artists and writers, it is mainly a detriment to us. AI threatens our jobs and careers, sure it can be useful in the sense of autocorrect and things of that nature, but actually relying on AI to create images and texts for us deprives people of learning how to do these tasks as well as being able to get a job within a creative field. Although many of my classes have now incorporated some form of AI, in order to learn how to use it, I do my best to avoid it. In one of my art classes we were encouraged to use AI to create an image for us to paint. However, why would I use AI to provide me an image when I can just set up props and take one myself? Although many around me are beginning to accept AI, I still do my best to avoid it because I feel like it stunts creativity, impacts our ability to think and form ideas, as well as tamper with our abilities to learn.

Among artists, there has recently been a huge debate to whether or not AI "artists" are actually artists at all. These so-called artists merely plug in a prompt into an AI image generator and claim the work as their own, even though they did not draw, paint, or photograph the so-called art themselves. This is a genuine insult to those of us who work hard and have practiced and learned for years in order to become the artists we are today. However, the fact that those that use AI to create "art", negatively impacts those who legitimately do create their own work. It has led to real artists being called out for using AI, although it isn't true, merely because their artwork is so good. While on the flip side of that, many popular "artists" are using AI and somehow getting away with it by convincing most of their audience that they created it themselves although it was really generated with a program. The ability to decipher real art from fake has begun to get harder and harder, most of it has that glossy, smooth quality to it that is eerily wrong, while other AI pieces have too many fingers, or other aspects of the image that are confusing and don't make sense.

As for the writing aspect of AI, many students in today's society have begun using AI to write papers and do homework for them. This not only goes against code of conduct but it also stifles growth and learning, and at times is even encouraged by professors. Unfortunately, many professors have begun having assignments based around AI in order for students to understand how it can be beneficial. However, oftentimes than not this is encouraging students to cheat and take the easy way out of their work. If they are

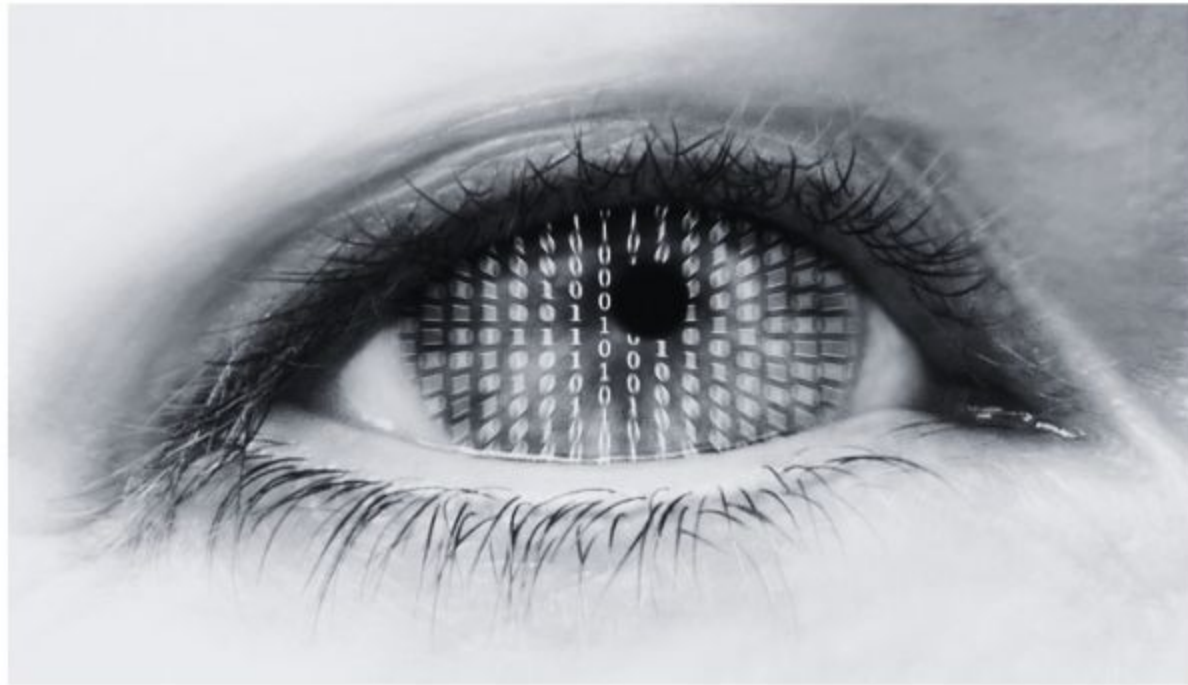
being encouraged to use AI to do things for them, how are they going to learn those abilities themselves? Isn't that creating a generation that will be less intelligible due to the fact that most things that could have benefited them in their careers were actually created through AI programs that they were encouraged to use, rather than learning how to do it themselves? Unfortunately, I have heard that in the job field it is becoming more and more common for people to apply to jobs claiming they can write, but when it comes down to it all of their writing is actually the work of AI and they actually don't know how to do any of those things themselves.

Although many think that everyone needs to accept AI, because it's the next step towards the future, I don't believe that it should become as commonplace as people are trying to make it. By incorporating AI into all apps, programs, businesses, jobs, etc. it is stripping away the human identity of life, as well as robbing real people of jobs that could make all the difference in their lives. At this point, AI is definitely here to stay, but that does not mean it should take over, instead we as a society should join together and decide that AI needs limitations, not free reign. It should be used minorly and as needed, rather than being used because people are lazy, not creative, or merely want to avoid paying real artists. I could go on and on about this topic, however, I feel like this is a good starting point that highlights the dangers of overreliance on AI - how that impacts artists and careers - as well as hopefully highlighting the importance of finding a good medium. AI won't go away at this point but it's crucial to make sure it is used only when needed rather than as a way to cheap out on labor.



Issue No.02 | AI and it's Impact

↻ The piece I wrote for my Magazine/Final Project ↻



AI: HOW TO USE IT WITH CAUTION

Featuring: Kailee Poss

This section discusses the limitations of AI, its downsides, as well as how to use it positively without infringing on creators. As the title suggests this section highlights the importance of using AI carefully by understanding its limitations, as well as being aware of how to use it in a manner that does not deprive creative people of their jobs. Although AI might seem like the easy solution, it's important to proceed with caution and realize that all things are double-sided; it might seem helpful but there are downsides to that helpfulness.

Kailee Poss - Major in Business Administration

The Rise of AI

My name is Kailee Poss, and I am currently a senior at the University of North Georgia (UNG) in Dahlonega, working towards my Bachelor of Business Administration. In my opinion, artificial intelligence (AI) undoubtedly holds a significant place in 21st-century society, bringing both substantial benefits and notable drawbacks. I think AI can be particularly useful in streamlining processes and improving decision-making in various business operations. In fact, many Fortune 500 companies have already begun leveraging AI to enhance efficiency and productivity. On the other hand, there's a legitimate concern that increased reliance on AI might diminish human creativity. Surprisingly, I've been encouraged to use AI tools such as ChatGPT in my coursework to refine my writing and brainstorm project ideas. This initially shocked me, as it directly contradicts UNG's Code of Conduct. Yet, this encouragement from professors has opened doors for me, even helping me discover ways to spend my free time productively outside of work and school.

While I personally try to limit my dependence on AI, I recognize its potential to enhance writing quality, provided it preserves a distinctly human element. Creativity is inherently human, and excessive use of AI could lead to a decline in our ability to think critically and maintain originality. Maintaining an authentic human connection is essential, art needs humans. From a business perspective, AI is undoubtedly beneficial for optimizing operational efficiency. However, I don't foresee AI completely replacing humans anytime soon, as significant advancements are still needed to truly mimic human intelligence and emotional understanding.



As a student at UNG, I've felt firsthand the frustration shared by my peers regarding the recent decision to use an AI "host" for our commencement ceremonies. There's widespread disappointment about removing the human element from this important milestone, and despite considerable student outcry, the university is proceeding with AI, further fueling resentment towards artificial intelligence. When I think of AI, I immediately consider platforms like ChatGPT and Microsoft's CoPilot. These particular tools, in my opinion, are relatively benign compared to potentially more intrusive future developments. While platforms such as Grammarly, Meta AI, and various translators are not inherently harmful, their increasing use may erode the uniquely human connection found in creative writing and artistic expression. Ultimately, if we overly rely on AI, we risk a future where our innate creativity and free-thinking diminish significantly, qualities that define and differentiate humanity. Moving forward, we must balance technological innovation with the preservation of our irreplaceable human essence.

Stop the University of North Georgia from using an AI speaker for graduation



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“Every name announced at Commencement is recorded using Tassel’s industry-leading name announcement technology, which features real human voiceover artists skilled in announcing names from around the world. The technology generates a personalized audio clip using these human voices —ensuring that each graduate’s name is pronounced accurately and confidently”

- UNG’s Response, Fox News

Michael Buckley, Featured in *Medium*

They say AI isn't a threat to a designer's job. It's just a tool. It can't replace refined design skills such as taste, strategy, and vision.

On the surface, this is a valid argument. But it's also a paradox.

Gaining those skills requires experience wrestling with the very tasks AI now makes unnecessary — cranking out layouts, grinding through late-night revisions, and sketching idea after idea to find the right solution. I know this because I was forged through these arduous processes — most veteran designers were.

The question today is — how do entry-level designers in the age of AI develop high-level skills — like creative judgment — when the traditional path that once honed our abilities is now being paved over by machines?

As a young designer, I had a natural eye for aesthetics and I was fast. That made me valuable. And while design is more than making things look pretty, back then, if you had the talent to solve problems quickly with strong visual appeal, you found a job easily. But that early recognition did more than validate my talent—it gave me a foundation to grow from.

Over the past 18 years, I've worked as a creative director, brand strategist, UX engineer, and university professor. These roles go far beyond raw talent or speed — they demand critical thinking, adaptability, and strategic clarity. But all of it traces back to those formative moments as an entry-level designer performing those tedious tasks.

Lately, I've been thinking about how rare those moments are becoming.

The creative industry has shifted — especially for those just starting out. AI tools like ChatGPT and Midjourney, and automation tools like Figma plugins can now generate polished, professional work in minutes.

The initial talent and speed that once helped novice designers like me propel ourselves forward are becoming irrelevant.

The rise of AI has created a strange kind of disruption. For new designers, the challenge isn't just developing their talents — it's being forced to skip the part where ability is tempered and tested, and jump straight into a career without the climb.

I'm not against AI technology. I use it daily. But I do feel a kind of grief for the creative world that once allowed you to earn your place through a natural process. I worry that newcomers won't get to feel that evolution — the pride that comes from struggle, from failing, iterating, and finally watching something fall into place.

As a university design instructor, I see the gap widening. Students believe talent will set them apart. But talent now is not enough. The qualities that truly matter — the ones AI can't mimic — don't come baked in. They come with experience.

Issue No.02 | AI and it's Impact

You don't develop taste by hitting "generate." You don't build vision without seeing your ideas fall flat in public. You don't learn strategy by watching a machine solve problems you never got to grapple with yourself.

That's the paradox.

AI removes the climb. But the climb is where the growth happens. And when you skip the struggle, you skip the transformation.

Which brings us back to the real question — how do new designers grow when the first steps are being erased?

You'll have to create your own friction. Resist the shortcuts. Slow down. Try it the hard way — not because it's efficient, but because it's formative.

It means building from scratch, even when a template or AI is faster — wrestling with problems instead of googling quick answers — and sitting with imperfect work longer than feels comfortable, finding your own solutions. It means writing your own case studies, sketching by hand before refining, and designing something real for someone you know — something imperfect, not something polished to impress.

I could list a thousand examples of what to do — but it wouldn't matter. Real creative judgment isn't something you follow step-by-step. It's something you discover by wrestling with problems that don't have clear answers. It's built by experimenting, by getting it wrong, by chasing ideas that don't come from a prompt or a tutorial.

Because mastery can be mimicked. A portfolio can be polished. A brand can be templated. But becoming — that inner shift forged through failure, persistence, and self-discovery — cannot be faked.

Remember, friction isn't the enemy. It's the forge.

If you're just starting out, you're not behind. You're in a system that forgot how to train you.

So train yourself. Embrace the mess. Get it wrong. Share it anyway.

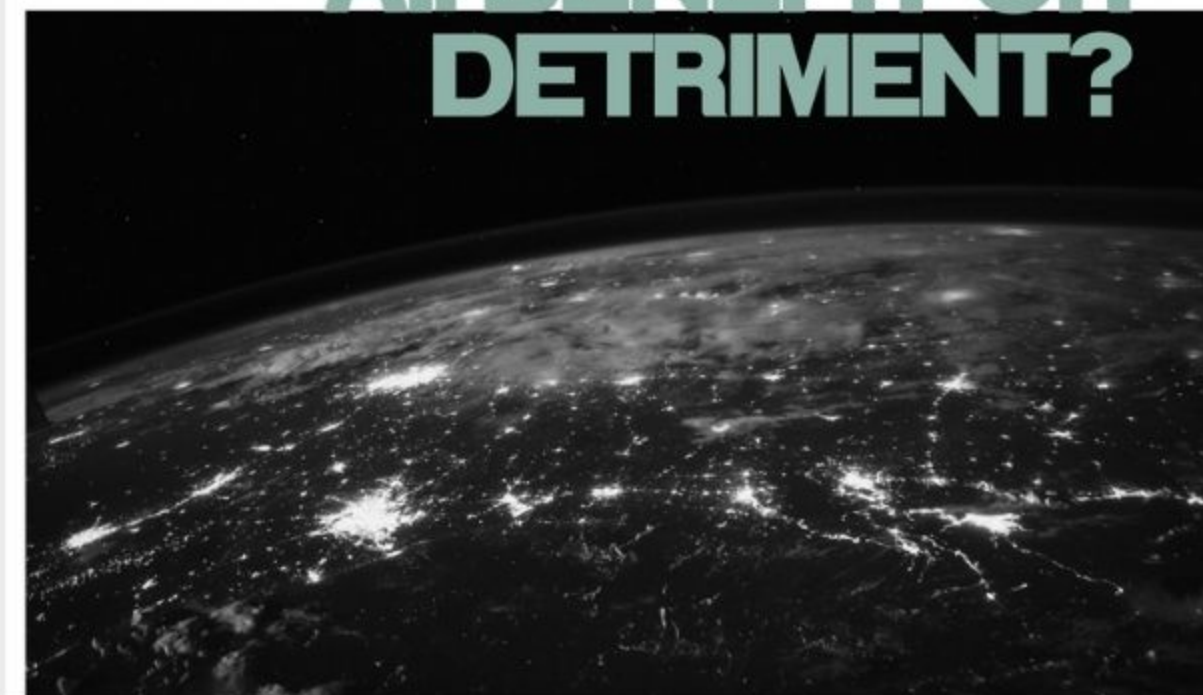
That's how you build what AI can't. That's how the work starts to feel like it's yours. That's how you grow.



Featuring: Tyler Fincher and Emily Frischmann

This section discusses the benefits of AI, and to what extent it should be used. These articles also discuss how AI can be used, how it can be a help rather than a hinderance, but also what limitations should be placed on AI. While reading this section consider to what extent AI should be acceptable and how although it might be here to stay, it should not be advanced to the point of costing people jobs. As a reader think about what you can do to use it consciously and only when needed.

AI: BENEFIT OR DETRIMENT?



Tyler Fincher - Finance Major

Artificial Intelligence, also known as AI, has recently started to become a popular topic for various debates. This is because of the multiple different ethical, environmental, and societal concerns that are involved with the use of AI. My name is Tyler Fincher and even though I am a Finance major, I do have plenty of my own opinions on if AI positively or negatively affects society and where in society it should be used at.

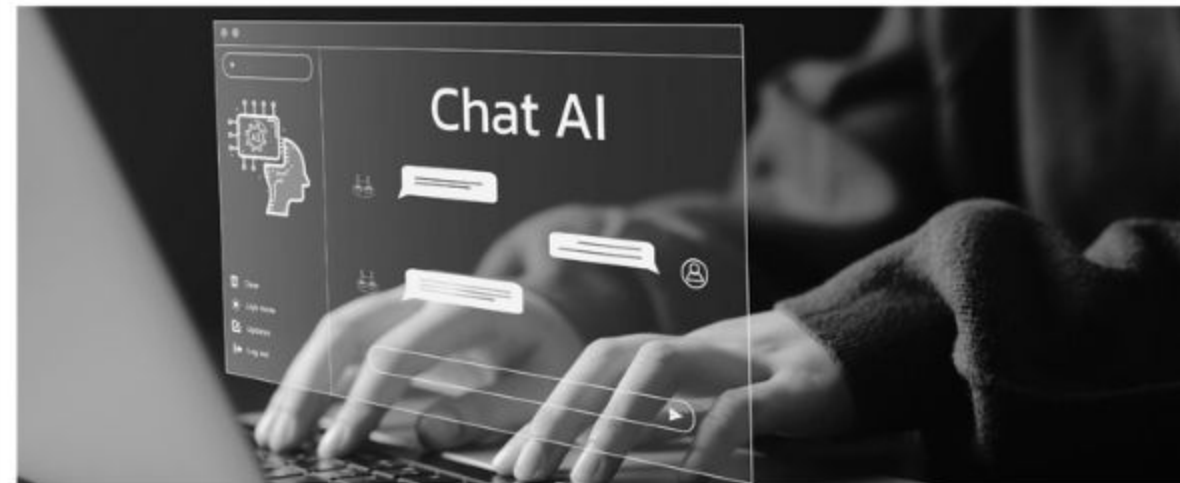
I ultimately believe that AI is a benefit for society but there are ways where it can be a detriment. I believe that it's a benefit because through the use of web search engines (such as Google), recommendation systems (such as systems that Amazon uses), and virtual assistants (such as Alexa) all make the lives of people more convenient. All of the previously mentioned systems are technically a form of AI, because they are all computational systems that perform tasks that mimic human intelligence. Although society has not drastically benefited from AI in the same way that electricity has benefited us, I do believe that the convenience that AI adds to our everyday lives is nonetheless a benefit to us. AI is, at the very least, a benefit to me because I use web search engines multiple times everyday. Despite the benefits that it provides, I believe that it could negatively affect creative forms such as art. By using an AI creative tool (such as DALL-E) anyone can bypass copyright laws and create art that would mimic or even



reproduce a different person's work. Since this could reduce or even eliminate the financial value of pieces of art, this could cause a decrease of interest in art as a whole. Another way that AI can be a detriment to us is that some forms of AI do take job opportunities from people. Some of these job opportunities are artists, authors, factory workers, and even more that I can't even imagine. Replacing jobs with AI not only removes the human factor from those fields, but it also negatively impacts communities. Overall, I believe that AI ultimately has a positive impact on us, but there are some negative aspects to it.

I believe that AI should not be used in more places and that its usage was perfect at where it was five years ago. This is because back then there were no AI hosts, there was no AI art, and the factory jobs that did utilize AI did so because it was a necessity. There should be no human jobs replaced by AI. As previously mentioned, I believe that web search engines, recommendation systems, and virtual assistants all benefit society. This is because these are ways where AI can be used while not taking human jobs. I do believe that AI creative tools are negative but I have mixed opinions on AI generative tools (such as ChatGPT). This is because despite the name, these AI tools don't actually generate anything new. They are simply regurgitating information that has already been compiled by a human. I believe that if it is used as an alternative method to find information then it is fine, however I believe that it should not be used to generate websites or some other way of taking jobs. All in all, I believe that AI should not be used in more places even though there are good and bad AI systems.

In conclusion, I find AI to be a complicated topic. I truly believe that some AI tools are beneficial, however there are also some tools that do more harm than good.



Pranshu Verma and Shelly Tan - Featured in the *Washington Post*

A Bottle of Water Per Email: the Hidden Environmental Costs of Using AI Chatbots

Roughly a quarter of Americans have used ChatGPT since the chatbot's 2022 release, according to the Pew Research Center — and every query exacts a cost.

Chatbots use an immense amount of power to respond to user questions, and simply keeping the bot's servers cool enough to function in data centers takes a toll on the environment. While the exact burden is nearly impossible to quantify, The Washington Post worked with researchers at the University of California, Riverside to understand how much water and power OpenAI's ChatGPT, using the GPT-4 language model released in March 2023, consumes to write the average 100-word email.

Let's look first at water.

Each prompt on ChatGPT flows through a server that runs thousands of calculations to determine the best words to use in a response.

In completing those calculations, these servers, typically housed in data centers, generate heat. Often, water systems are used to cool the equipment and keep it functioning. Water transports the heat generated in the data centers into cooling towers to help it escape the building, similar to how the human body uses sweat to keep cool, according to Shaolei Ren, an associate professor at UC Riverside.

Where electricity is cheaper, or water comparatively scarce, electricity is often used to cool these warehouses with large units resembling air-conditioners, he said. That means the amount of water and electricity an individual query requires can depend on a data center's location and vary widely.

Even in ideal conditions, data centers are often among the heaviest users of water in the towns where they are located, environmental advocates said. But data centers with electrical cooling systems also are raising concerns by driving up residents' power bills and taxing the electric grid.

Data centers also require massive amounts of energy to support other activities, such as cloud computing, and artificial intelligence has only increased that load, Ren said. If a data center is located in a hot region — and relies on air conditioning for cooling — it takes a lot of electricity to keep the servers at a low temperature. If data centers relying on water cooling are located in drought-prone areas, they risk depleting the area of a precious natural resource.

In Northern Virginia, home to the world's highest concentration of data centers, citizen groups have protested construction of these buildings, saying they are not only loud energy hogs that don't bring in enough long-term jobs, but also eyesores

that kill home values. In West Des Moines, Iowa, an emerging hotbed of data centers, water department records showed that facilities run by companies like Microsoft used around 6 percent of all the district's water. After a lengthy court battle, the Oregonian newspaper forced Google to disclose how much its data centers were using in The Dalles, about 80 miles east of Portland; it turned out to be nearly a quarter of all the water available in the town, the documents revealed.

Before chatbots can even fulfill a request, a huge amount of energy is spent training them. The large language models that allow chatbots like ChatGPT to generate lifelike responses all require servers to analyze millions of pieces of data. (The Post has created a tool, Climate Answers, that asks ChatGPT to summarize Post climate coverage. Because it searches a limited universe of information, its queries are designed to be less resource-intensive.)

It can take months to train these advanced computer models, according to AI experts and research papers, and tech companies such as Google, Meta and Microsoft are scrambling to build data centers.

Each one continuously churns out heat.

Big tech companies have made numerous pledges to make their data centers greener by using new cooling methods. Those climate pledges are often not met.

In July, Google released its most recent environmental report, showing its carbon emission footprint rose by 48 percent, largely due to AI and data centers. It also replenished only 18 percent of the water it consumed — a far cry from the 120 percent it has set as a goal by 2030. "Google has a long-standing commitment to sustainability, guided by our ambitious goals—which includes achieving net-zero emissions by 2030," said Mara Harris, a spokesperson for Google.

"AI can be energy-intensive and that's why we are constantly working to improve efficiency," said Kayla Wood, an OpenAI spokesperson. Ashley Settle, a Meta spokesperson, said in a statement that the company prioritizes "operating our data centers sustainably and efficiently, while ensuring that people can depend on our services." Craig Cincotta, a general manager at Microsoft, said the company "remains committed to reducing the intensity with which we withdraw resources," and added that Microsoft is working towards installing data center cooling methods that "will eliminate water consumption completely."

Tech companies such as Nvidia will keep creating computer chips that generate more kilowatts of power per server to do more computations, experts said. AI is creating unprecedented demands on data centers that far outpace any in recent history, Ren said.

"The rapid rise of AI has dramatically changed this trajectory," Ren said, "and presented new challenges the industry has never met before."



Emily Frischmann - Art Education

I used to have very negative feelings about artificial intelligence. I was skeptical about it because I had never seen anything like it before. What made me more open to it was hearing about the Three Laws of Robotics by Isaac Asimov. I figured that if those laws influenced actual discussions about AI, then it can't be that bad of a thing. In my current life, I do use AI a lot, most of the time I use it as a search engine. As an Art major, I use ChatGPT to help me with projects. It's also proved to be beneficial to me when I am writing an essay, and I can't think of a synonym for a word, or how I can better phrase a sentence. I think that AI should be more common in the workplace as well as in schools. However, it should not be at the expense of human jobs. There must be a way to find a compromise. Lastly, I classify AI as any computer program that can perform at a near or above-average human intelligence.

CONCLUSION



After reading these various viewpoints on Artificial Intelligence we encourage our readers to be cautious when using AI in the future. Although it may be beneficial in some aspects, as a society we need to ensure that it does not steal jobs from those who already have a hard time finding positions, as well as ensuring that art belongs in the hands of people who can genuinely create art rather than those who use AI products that scrape and steal others hard learned skillsets and art styles. Remember that AI might seem environmentally conscious but as Verma and Tan stated, the growing use of AI is actually detrimental as it raises carbon emissions and requires tons of water in order to keep the systems from overheating. At The Void we encourage everyone to think freely and stay true to their beliefs, but it is also important to learn as much as you can about a subject before coming to a conclusion if it is inherently good or bad. We greatly appreciate our loyal customers and we hope that you were able to learn more about the topic of AI, it's consequences, and it's purpose. As you go forward we encourage you to consider how to use AI as ethically as possible and consider how it impacts those around you.

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NEXT:
HIGHLIGHTS
FROM THE
TEAL
VERSION



THE VOID

MAGAZINE



THIS ISSUES FOCUS:
AI AND IT'S IMPACT ON
CREATIVE FIELDS

ISSUE NO.02

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Kailee Poss
Zoë Ward

Featured Opinion Piece Authors

Michael Buckley
Al Stubblefield
Shelly Tan
Pranshu Verma

AI: THE DANGERS AND HARSH REALITY ARTISTS FACE

**Featuring: Emma Eady, Adam
Olivieri, and Zoë Ward**

This section discusses the harsh truths
of AI, the dangers, and how it negatively
impacts artist communities. These
pieces are opinion pieces, however,
they all make very good points about
the dangers of AI and how to proceed
with caution.

As you read this section take into
consideration how AI is impacting your
day to day life. Is it a threat to your job,
or a job of someone you know? Is it
leading to less artists being able to find
a job due to companies being able to
get free "labor" from AI? All of these
things are important to consider as you
choose to use, or not to use AI.



04



AI: HOW TO USE IT WITH CAUTION

Featuring: Kailee Poss

This section discusses the limitations of AI, it's downsides, as well as how to use it positively without infringing on creators. As the title suggests this section highlights the importance of using AI carefully by understanding it's limitations, as well as being aware of how to use it in a manner that does not deprive creative people of their jobs. Although AI might seem like the easy solution, it's important to proceed with caution and realize that all things are double-sided; it might seem helpful but there are downsides to that helpfulness.

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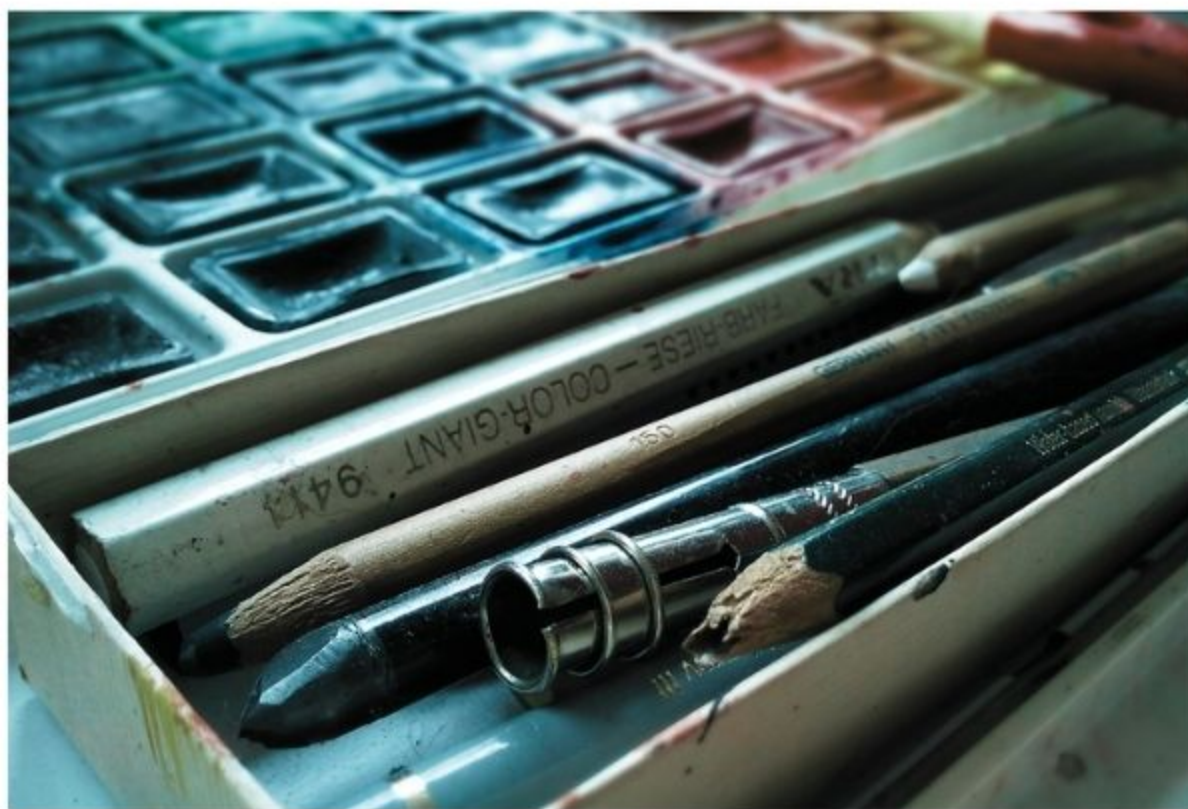


Featuring: Tyler Fincher and Emily Frischmann

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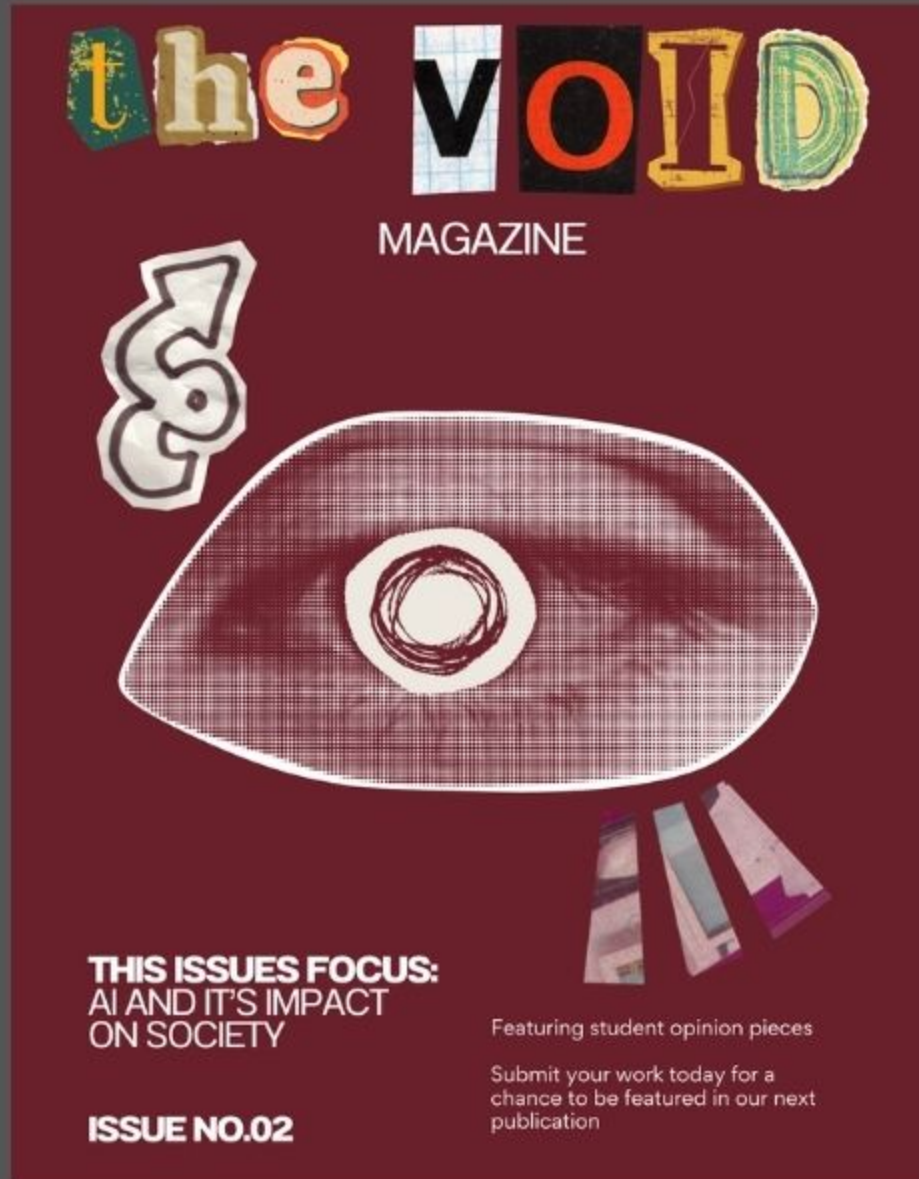
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GRAPHIC DESIGN CONTINUED



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MAGAZINE



ISSUE NO.01

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MAGAZINE



ISSUE NO.02

THIS ISSUES TOPIC:
IS AI SENDING US
BACKWARDS?

THE VOID

MAGAZINE



ISSUE NO.01

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MAGAZINE



ISSUE NO.02

THIS ISSUES TOPIC:
IS AI SENDING US
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This piece was created for an ad campaign in one of Zoë's college marketing courses.



This is a poster created to advertise *The Void Literary*