

# AMP

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## Creator or Computer: The Ethics of AI Art

BookTok is **RUINING** society.

Cocaine Bear is **BETTER** than  
Citizen Kane.

Tobors deserve **RIGHTS** too.



# AMP

## Editors' Desk

### Technological Advancements: the good and the bad



Hey, Comets! Spring break is officially over which means the weather is getting warmer and you'll be hearing "I can't believe finals are next week" pretty soon. The semester is wrapping up soon and so much has happened!

If you're a college student, it's likely you've heard about ChatGPT at some point this past semester. ChatGPT is artificial intelligence (AI) developed by OpenAI that is used to answer questions and give human-like responses. It's become really popular for writing professional emails and essays. For obvious reasons, this is a nightmare for the faculty in charge of addressing academic dishonesty on campus. Students could technically use this AI to write their assignments and even use it on exams. However, there is already new AI that can detect when ChatGPT has been used so ultimately this AI is useless in completing school-work. Besides the fact that it is unethical to cheat, you will more than likely get caught, so Comets, please don't use ChatGPT on your assignments.

Another piece of technology that seems to be blowing the older population away is TikTok. Recently, there was a congressional hearing centered around the interrogation of TikTok's CEO Shou Chew. During this hearing, Mr. Chew was asked questions about "creepy" tactics TikTok uses to spy on Americans. He had to explain what TikTok filters were to congressmen that were voting during the Reagan Administration and was told by them that this app he had created is an extension of the Chinese Communist Party. This fear mongering of TikTok that's being spread in right-wing communities is especially popular in Texas. Texas public schools have already had to ban TikTok on our campuses, making us students get off the school's WiFi when accessing TikTok. This congressional hearing, however, has brought out a different side of the whole discourse surrounding TikTok. The members of Congress advocating for the complete removal of TikTok in America are being blatantly xenophobic. They're creating hysteria around TikTok and purposely using the fact that a foreign country owns the app to scare Americans into thinking we have something to be afraid of.

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## Disclaimer

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## Have an opinion?

## Think you're funny?

Write for AMP! Contact us at [ampatutd@gmail.com](mailto:ampatutd@gmail.com) and follow us on social media @AMPatUTD for more information.



# AMP HOROSCOPES

• a r i e s •

3/21 - 4/19

**Aries:** The stars have gifted you with newfound financial expertise! Invest everything in crypto.

**Taurus:** Someone you know's got it out for you, which is why your stint with the local mob boss is finally going to pay off.

**Gemini:** Yuo're gniog too fsat. I'm miakng you solw down. Tkae a deep baerth... There. Isn't that better?

**Cancer:** I know you wanna call them. Don't do it. It's not gonna help. I promise. Just keep on babygirlin', I believe in you.

**Leo:** Take a nice, long look at yourself in the mirror. Y'know, as a treat. Do a funny face while you're at it. Haha, now you look stupid.

**Virgo:** Alright, you got what you wanted. You had your fun. Happy now? ...No? Oh, uh. Well. I'm, er, sorry to hear that.... I'm just gonna- I'm gonna go now. Yeah.

**Libra:** The stars are telling me that everything in your life is falling apart. Everything except your new interest in professional bagpiping. That part's looking fantastic.

**Scorpio:** Someone's gonna rip your heart out this month, but you're gonna be, like, so slay about it. Just a total (#genderneutral) #girlboss.

**Sagittarius:** It's a good time to enjoy the little things. Call your ex.

**Capricorn:** When was the last time you went outside?

**Aquarius:** We're entering the age of Aquarius! Change your life or die.

**Pisces:** Social lives are for beta chumps. Switch your major to CS. Start a Destiny 2 addiction to seal the deal.

**ETHAN WUU**

freshman | ATEC  
Libra sun, Aquarius  
moon, Virgo rising



# MOON MEALS

A UTD TV COLLAB

## Sky Rocket Burger

The rockets painted on the wall are just the first indicator of the out-of-this-world experience that awaits you in this absolute burger gem. It's close to campus, nestled away on the corner of Frankford and Coit. Sky Rocket has a vintage diner vibe, brimming with people laughing and filling themselves up on delicious food. There's a selection of single, double or even triple burgers (each patty ¼ lb each), grilled cheese, french fries, and drinks. The burgers come with a plethora of ingredients (starring their delicious secret sauce), and an equally long list of free add-on options. I grabbed their single burger with grilled onions and their side of fries, and the star of the show is definitely their burger patties — juicy, tender and insanely flavorful. I've absolutely never had a burger patty that embodies such an impeccable flavor and texture. Their fries are also hand cut, with the perfect thickness that allows the outside to be crisp while still having a soft core. The seasoning on the fries also stands out to me, as it adds flavor to the already fresh fries without being overpowering, but regardless, dipping them in the special house sauce is a non-negotiable. It's a tangy and unique blend that balances the flavors superbly so that grabbing fries mid-burger doesn't ruin the burger's taste. Personally, I've never been a burger and fries girl, but Sky Rocket is leagues above the rest and might just make me a permanent convert.

MOON MEALS RATING: 10/10 – OVER THE MOON.



## Angel Chicken Kitchen

Located on the corner of Campbell and Coit is **THE** spot to satisfy your chicken cravings (and yes I think it gives Chick-fil-A and Canes a run for their money). Angel Chicken Kitchen is decked out in cute chicken-themed rustic decor, and offers both halal and gluten free options. I ordered their Classic chicken sandwich on a biscuit, and my friends ordered the Buffalo Winger sandwich on a biscuit, a Chicken Shawarma, and a Kale Caesar salad with crispy chicken. It's safe to say I was absolutely blown away. The biscuit was buttery and crumbly, and the chicken had a perfect golden crisp while still having a juicy center. It's a common problem that chicken is often cooked to be too dry, firm, or bland, so frankly I had minimal expectations going in, but I was left with my jaw on the floor.

The chicken was flavorful, tender and juicy without it making the rest of the sandwich soggy. The ingredients also tasted fresh, and the lettuce made audible crunches when taking a bite. My friend's salad also maintained the same crispness, which I revere since a soggy salad is always such a disappointment. I grabbed a few bites of my friend's chicken shawarma and loved how fluffy the pita bread was (honestly probably would have loved to just eat it alone too) and the grilled chicken center made it even better. The owner was also incredibly welcoming, and is definitely a small business that I'd love to see grow.

MOON MEALS RATING: 9.9/10

**MINUKI MEDIS**

junior | psychology

Your local bringer of chaos!

# DJ Showcase:

## Olivia Foster



If you're looking for chill jams from underrated artists, Olivia Foster's Radio UTD show "Indiependence" should be the next thing on your radar. Every Thursday from 3-6 a.m. she brings listeners in for a cozy soundscape that's perfect for easy listening.

"It's kind of just an amalgamation of different facets of indie music," Olivia explained. "So like indie rock, alt rock, indie pop, there's been a lot of folk, some jazzy elements too. It's kind of just whatever I feel like subjecting the poor masses to."

When Olivia came in to talk with us, between her comfy sweater and glasses, her appearance seemed to perfectly match the laid-back style of her show.

"People actually ask me if I'm a lit major a lot," she said. "I think it's the glasses."

Although "indie" is a word that can refer to a wide range of music, Olivia tends to favor stripped-back, gentler songs on her show.

"If it sounds like something that you could either, like, just like hum while pouring a cup of coffee in the morning, or cry while sipping tea on a rainy day..." then it'll fit right in on "Indiependence."

Olivia's taste in music has always been a bit eclectic. Growing up, Olivia's parents listened to a wide range of music. Their tastes varied from 40s orchestral jazz to 90s club EDM. But they weren't that interested in modern music. That discovery was left to Olivia.

"When I was like twelve I watched [the movie] 'Paper Towns'... and it had like a Vampire Weekend song. 'Taxi Cab' by Vampire Weekend."

From then on, she was hooked.

Eventually, Olivia found her way to UTD. She quickly found out about Student Media and Radio UTD, and she realized it was the perfect environment for her.

"There was like a poster in my dorm, just like a really small one, and it was just inviting people to get involved with, like [Student] Media. And I was like, hm. This sounds kind of dorky in a good way... Everyone is so just cool and diverse and really, really interesting. And so it's so nice just to like, be here and to have so much going on, but it's also quiet. Like, it's like the world's funnest library with no books."

Although this is Olivia's first semester as a regular DJ, she had a very similar show last semester as a trainee. Trainee shows last only an hour and aren't advertised the way regular DJ's shows are, so hosting a full show has been a big change for her (though not an unwelcome one).

"I've lost the Velcro shoes and I have shoelaces now," she said about the transition.

Olivia explained that, although the musical content is largely the same, she struggled to rename the show when her usual time slot changed.

"My last show was like 10:00 a.m. on Sundays. So I called it 'Self-Care Sunday'... [For the new show] I actually panicked and I couldn't choose a name. So we have 'Indiependence,' which is so cheesy. It's so cheesy... I wish I'd gone with something cute like 'Fruit Loops' or something... anything else but a pun. We're here now."

Despite her light frustration with the title, she does still adore getting to share new artists with people through her time on the show.

"I have been loving nep... I think I've been playing [her music] like every show. But it's just so cute, like it's adorable and I'm obsessed with it. And I'm just gonna keep playing it because it's actually really good and she deserves the hype."

Besides hosting her show, another amazing opportunity Olivia has

showcase by: sebyuk paik & gavin arriaga  
design by: danny torres

gotten to experience since joining Radio UTD is interviewing a variety of musicians she otherwise likely wouldn't have gotten a chance to talk to.

"It's super daunting... 'cause it's a lot of artists that I've been listening to since I was young," she explained.

Olivia fondly recalled her experience meeting Addie Sartino, a member of indie rock band The Greeting Committee.

"I felt great after that one. I was like... 'I have so much in my notebook that I wrote down about you.' That sounds really bad. That sounds so creepy," she laughed. "And that was a really fun concert, too. She like, crowdsurfed. I have photos of her jumping off the stage and she almost landed on me. And I've never been happier in my life, like I would have been so okay with dying there. It's like just like 'Addie Sartino from The Greeting Committee crushed me today! Oh my God!' ... They could have put it on my gravestone just like that, like in all caps."

And if that hadn't been exciting enough for such a big fan, Olivia even found herself with a keepsake after the interview, one she'll never use but still means a lot to her.

"It was like over the phone, and so like I have her phone number now. And just like, I feel like I should delete it because it feels, like, too powerful."

Still, Olivia insists that her absolute favorite thing about Radio UTD is all the people she's met here.



"IT'S JUST NICE TO BE AROUND OTHER PEOPLE WHO LOVE MUSIC AND WHO ARE ALL REALLY PASSIONATE ABOUT AT LEAST ONE SPECIFIC THING. AND... TO SEE THIS KIND OF CULTURAL DIFFUSION OCCUR BETWEEN PEOPLE WHO ARE ALL JUST INCREDIBLY INVESTED IN DISCOVERING NEW MUSIC AND SHARING IT."



# DEETS

## Album on repeat:

**The God Life EP by Sammy Rae and the Friends.**

## Vibe of your show:

**My friend said "This feels like a sleepover where u wanna go home but ur parents aren't answering," so maybe like that but like, with vibey indie tunes and a host hyped up on Sour Patch Kids.**

## Favorite song recently played on your show:

**"Big Brown Dog Named Bagel" by Nep. It gets me.**

## Favorite character:

**In this exact precise moment, Suho Kim from the comic "The Greatest Estate Developer." #JSOM**

## Go-to coffeeshop order:

**Either black coffee, or an iced coffee with an extra splash of milk and extra cold foam.**

## Temoc v Enarc:

**Temoc all the way.**

## The elite pizza topping:

**Spinach.**

## Zodiac sign:

**Monkey.**

## Favorite obscure animal:

**The jellyfish you find on the beach of the North Sea in the Highlands. They look like breast implants.**







## Should I drop out?

It depends on what you're referring to. Dropping out of college? I probably wouldn't recommend it. Dropping out of my personal Stuart Little 2-esque biplane? For the love of God, why else did you book this skydiving trip with me? I have other appointments to get to, you know.

## Do you have any hobbies?

I've been hitting up the rec center quite a bit recently! I'm already starting to feel healthier after all this exercise — you could call me a real gym rat.

## What should I get my mom for mothers day?

<https://www.amazon.com/Rat-Lover-Women-Girls-T-Shirt/dp/B09VFPWJDW>

## Does Temoc have toes?

From what I've overheard crawling around the air ducts of BSB, apparently only the ones grown after 2013 do.

## I think my professor is ignoring me in class, what should I do?

Commission yourself a rat fursuit and wear it to lectures as much as possible — it works for me! Granted, I kinda have the suit built into my body and the kind of attention I get from classes I sit in on is more along the lines of people screaming "OH GOD IS THAT A RAT?" and "SOMEONE CALL AN EXTERMINATOR!" but it's better than nothing!

## Any advice for graduating seniors?

Yes. My current going rate is one wheel of Babybel® Original Cheese or two wheels of Babybel® Light Cheese per piece of advice. These prices are negotiable, but I know what I'm worth.

## Commuting to school is such a pain, but there's no available housing. What should I do?

I'm currently digging a large hole in the lawn outside JSOM — you're welcome to join me as long as you pitch in! Bonus points if you bring a shovel. I could really use a shovel.

## How do I finish an assignment if it's due tonight?

(Time sensitive.) Ooh! I've been working on a solution to this one for the past few years — it's an AI tool that you can plug your homework problems into and get automatically-generated solutions. I like to call it: RatGPT.

## Tobor is looking real snatchable lately, should I steal one?

I wouldn't recommend it. Rest assured if I find out, I absolutely am going to rat you out to the campus police.

## I have no money, but I want to hang out with my friends. What are some fun and affordable options?

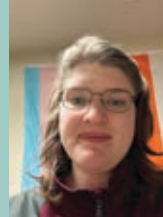
Sit around in a circle at the plinth and try to come up with some rat puns that are more clever than the ones I'm using here. I could really use some help; the supply is running pretty dry.

## What are some fun things to do around campus?

Scampering, scavenging, skulking, sneaking, and your mom.

## How do I make it through the semester?

I can't speak for other species, but I as a rat experience time in a forward direction and make it through pretty much all of my



freshman | math

My preferred middle name is from a television show I've only seen approximately 9 episodes of.



# THE PROBLEM WITH BOOKTOK

A wave of nostalgia pours over me as I pore over the pages of my copy of the *Three Musketeers* by renowned French novelist Alexandre Dumas. The copy is ripped in several places, the cover is creased, there are several crinkles and dog-eared pages within, but it holds immense sentimental value to me. On the title page of the book, right below “The *Three Musketeers* by Alexandre Dumas” lays the messy, large scrawl in blue ink, written by a fourteen-year-old boy in the late 80s of Kashmir.

That boy was none other than my father. Often described as a bookish and quiet young man, my father’s love for reading passed from him to me. Books have transformed and developed me as a person, they have provided a medium to examine my own heritage, to reassess and analyze my political beliefs, to observe and imbibe other cultures and societies, to interpret and enjoy. It is an inheritance of sorts that I greatly value; an inheritance of the worlds of Tolkien and Austen, a legacy of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, memories of Plato and Socrates, and towards the East. A love of the Muslim scholars of old, of the poets of my homeland, of the trashy romance novels I consider one of my favorite guilty pleasures to this day.

Literature is the pinnacle of art to me. From delving into a society’s literature, I can learn and understand ideological differences, social and cultural disparities, economic issues, gendered pains, and so much more. In my reading list lies lists of various cultures whose literature I want to explore: Japanese, Russian, Egyptian, Urdu. That is the beauty of reading: it is an interpersonal outlook. A personal, intimate brush with

the mind of another person. It is a form of art that transcends visual and aural mediums; an interpretation that is up to the reader themselves. The agency, the autonomy, the universality of literature and the simple enjoyment of reading is what greatly endears it to me.

Yet it pains me to observe the general metamorphosis of newer generations towards this legacy of reading. From enjoyment and intellectual development, reading seems to have been commodified into an aesthetic. It seems that rather than reading Dostoevsky for genuine pleasure and the intrigue of his admittedly at times difficult to understand writing, it has been transformed into a method of posturing as some sort of pretentious intellectual. Books are now being marketed through tropes commonly found in fanfiction: ‘enemies to lovers’, ‘friends to lovers’, ‘angst’, ‘slowburn’, etc. And this form of marketing has begun to sway and produce a new audience, particularly on TikTok, who have created a fandom for ‘reading’, called ‘BookTok’.

One can argue that there are positives to this outcome of literature as an aesthetic. It may encourage an influx of new readers to a hallowed tradition as old as human literacy and sentience. But I argue that it does nothing but subvert that tradition by propagating two concerning issues: the commodification of literature and encouraging mass-consumerism. Both lead to declines in critical thinking and an identity reliant on fluctuating trends.



The emergence of social media in the last decade has generated various discussions and debates about the usage of it as a tool for marketing, and particularly the encouragement of commodification of the self. Social media content creators are not defined by their unique individuality as a person but rather by what they can 'offer' audiences, what their 'aesthetic' is, and what trends they keep up with. The constant overwhelming nature of social media's rapid shifts and changes has been described as alarming by many observers.

This commercialism has transformed the publishing industry, with some TikTok creators focusing on eagerly unpacking large boxes of books, demonstrating their neat and 'aesthetic' shelving of the books. Many of them being hard-cover (which are notoriously expensive), the costs ranking up to hundreds and hundreds of dollars. Or the perfectly planned mood boards of the 'aesthetic' of a reader, placing oneself in the role of a trendy and chic intellectual— well-dressed, good-looking, and smart, what a perfect combination!

This aesthetic of reading is disseminated all throughout social media. From TikTok's quotes pulled from certain books to Instagram tags advertising certain tropes a book has to Pinterest 'aesthetics' and mood boards of a perfectly polished (or not, depending on the trend) of the well-read, intellectualized individual, with perfect clothes and a reference to every intelligent-sounding book they've ever read, holding a cup of black coffee and droning on about Oscar Wilde and trying to seem as smart as possible. It's either that or the reader obsessed with dark romance and young adult fiction and describes themselves as being 'in love with fictional men'. Said fictional men and their relationships that fall into concerning notions of abuse and toxicity, often targeted towards impressionable young girls whose imagination of romance circulates around these mediocly written books, an exposure generated by social media.

The publishing industry has taken complete advantage of this new cycle of trends to market and propagate authors. Authors now announce their books not based on any sort of legitimate well-written material but on a variety of tropes: "My book has enemies to lovers!" "My book has slowburn!", "My book has this!", denigrating their own hard work painstakingly crafted

through hours of rumination, editing, and writing to simply some box or category. Their book has to be in trend with what the people want on social media. If it's not these niche categories and boxes that the trends like right now, then it's not worth it. If the male lead doesn't have black hair, it's not worth it. If the male lead isn't a quiet, brooding anti-hero, then it's not worth it.

There is a legitimate lack of genuine engagement with reading as a craft in terms of critical thinking and just simple enjoyment. Classics authors like Jane Austen and the Bronte Sisters are denigrated to once again, tropes, of 'angst', of 'enemies to lovers', the universality stripped from their books as they are then further reduced to 'Victorian' and 'Dark Academia' aesthetics. Modern contemporary works are produced for a specific audience and marketed based on that cycle of trends. Social media is more focused on the mass consumption and hoarding of hundreds of books (that most likely go unread and reinforce classist notions of a 'good' reader having all the books, something that many cannot afford) and attaching an identity to a 'pretty' aesthetic of reading. Why don't you have the latest, nicest copy of the book trending on TikTok?

Who are you if you cannot consume? Who are you if you are not able to consume?

This decline in media literacy is a phenomenon that needs to be examined, a trend that has devastating impacts on the future of our society as a whole if our current and future generations of youth view intellectual pursuits simply as a manner of being 'perceived' as intelligent rather than further interpersonal development and building their identities off of consuming and buying.



**NOORZIYAN RABUDI**

freshman | history

I'm hungry



# The Mystery of Man-Eating Media



design by: susan zhang



There's a girl at the bar, and she's looking at you. You didn't expect this, didn't come out looking for action, but she's looking at you — a predatory, calculated look accented by the long, well-manicured hands that tap a staccato rhythm on the bartop. She smiles when you meet her eyes, so you smile back in a way you hope comes across as disarming. She turns back to her drink and you nudge your friends, telling them about it. The bartender interrupts you. Careful, he says, she'll eat you alive, and you tell him you can think of worse fates. Your friend punches your arm and tells you to go on, dumbass, and with the boys' blessing, you do. You don't catch her name when you talk, but she invites you to hers, and you agree. You practically fall out the bar door, sending a wolfish grin back to your friends as you leave. Her hand is warm in yours during the ride back to her cozy condo, and her smile is wide with glistening white teeth. Wow, those are sharp. Really sharp. With the door locked behind you, the last thing you ever hear is her, telling you what good prey you were.

Media is full of femme fatales, women who our hapless everyman action protagonists are warned are dangerous and will eat them alive. It's a well-worn trope: the badass who is, for some inscrutable reason, attracted to an idiot who she is in every way better than, or alternatively, the Big Bad Evil Guy's henchwoman/daughter who is inexplicably attracted to the hero. On its surface it empowers women, but at its core the femme fatale trope exists to make men feel masculine. It embodies the idea that even the most terrifying of women still fall under the sway of drastically mediocre men.

The female cannibal in feminist media contrasts this. She consumes men, not with a wink, but with too-sharp teeth and bloody clothing. It is deliberately emasculating, positioning men as prey and women as predators. In fact, the predatory nature of cannibalism is a call to the violent nature of sexual assault. It is an allegory for rape culture that originates in the anger of a group long ignored.

It's just about impossible to talk about women eating people without talking about "Jennifer's Body." For the uninitiated to the 2009 queer-coded horror sleepover classic, the titular Jennifer, following being the victim of a botched virgin sacrifice to summon the devil, becomes possessed and starts eating boys for Demon Reasons. Her consumption of these boys is not impersonal. She gets in their faces and terrifies them because their fear is as much what she feeds on as their bodies. This is an obvious metaphor for the cycle of abuse—she was attacked by men who deliberately hurt her for their own gain, so now she perpetuates that harm onto others, setting up an expectation of sex and instead assaulting them in a clear allegory to rape. Make no mistake, sexual assault is not sex any more than theft is financial advice. It is violent and painful and it eats its victims from the inside out. Jennifer's need for the boys to die afraid and in terror mirrors the fact that rape is often more about subjugation and control than sexual satisfaction.

Not every piece of media can afford the same black-and-white slasher morality of "Jennifer's Body." "Bones and All" is a 2022 romantic horror that dares to \*gasp\* have our cannibals be the good guys! Teenager Maren discovers that throughout her past she has straight up eaten people and flees the state, meeting and falling in love with a boy named Lee as they travel across America cannibalizing the elderly and cruel. They spend the better portion of the movie killing and eating their way through the United States, meeting others who share their 'cravings'. Towards the latter half of the movie, Maren and Lee swear off satisfying their cravings and... live their life. With zero to a handful of easily manageable side effects. And yet, the movie never questions their killing—merely the quality of the person they consume, and whether or not they deserved it.

The movie assumes that killing and eating people is their default state and that denying it is a brave thing, when in actuality, um, they could just. Not do that. It's reminiscent of 'boys will be boys' culture, where rapists are assumed to have been acting on their nature, and the discussion instead falls on whether or not the woman deserved it, or did enough to avoid it. Our victims are portrayed as deserving it, or it being best for them, and in the rare case when Lee kills a married man, the notion that Lee has done wrong is quickly erased by the fact that Lee got him alone by seducing him, making him a cheater and therefore ideal victim. Like rape culture as a whole, "Bones and All" is more concerned with the moral standing of its victims than that of the perpetrators, who are assumed to be acting on some biological instinct.

This phenomenon is not limited to movies, however. The image of the female cannibal often finds a place in female punk music, especially in the 90's punk genre "riot grrrl". It can be heard in punk icon Bratmobile's "Gimme Brains," which declares in a nasal talk-sing, "Gimme brains for breakfast baby, and give me more for lunch", and "A girl could starve on a boy like you!" It's a mockery, it's angry, it yells in men's faces that the issue is not on her for wanting to eat brains, but on them for not being smart enough to eat, mirroring again the idea perpetuated by rape culture that sexual assault is a compliment. However, the clearest connection comes from Lady Pills' "Eat Them," which states "You don't want to listen, you just want to look at me. it's been going on too long, this time you're the meat." The song wears its comparison on its sleeve, and also tells us something about where this metaphor comes from and why feminist media uses it. It comes from anger, and being seen as meat. The dehumanization of rape culture is devastating to women. The metaphor of cannibalism comes from giving in to the exhaustion of trying, again and again, to convince men that women's voices deserve to be heard and never succeeding because we live in a world that views women as meat. It's terrible, but it's also kind of an escape to think of a world where men are the meat.

"Jennifer's Body" was torn apart by male critics, who went in expecting to see Megan Fox doing just about anything other than killing and eating people. "Bones and All" gets by with its drastic non-criticism and tacit approval of its main characters. Female punk artists have been shoved out of punk spaces since their creation. This is a metaphor that makes men uncomfortable. And it should, because it communicates what women already know. Sexual assault is a kind of consumption. It kills people from the inside out, taking the people the victims were before and destroying them, leaving them with only the pieces of who they thought they would be. That's why the cannibal fatale is so terrifying— it externalizes the harm caused by sexual assault. Instead of being eaten from the inside out, victims are eaten outside in. Literally. With teeth. It takes the metaphorical low road in the conversation, shoving women's shoes on to men and forcing them to walk a mile. It's a harsh way of convincing people, but the point isn't really to show anyone anything. The kind of man the female cannibal represents a reversal of is not the kind of man who can be convinced out of his beliefs. Rather, she isn't for men at all.

She's an expression of rage, of a desire to be the one on top, to take an eye-for-an-eye revenge approach to the men who have hurt her creator. That's why she makes men uncomfortable — she isn't for them at all.



## ELLIE MAGUIRE

freshman | neuroscience  
geek who went greek



# An Ode to “The Owl H

design by: victoria bruno



The Disney cartoon “The Owl House” is reaching its end. It’s a sad reality for those of us who have never felt more seen by a piece of queer media. The main character Luz lured the audience in with a premise that is all too tempting to anyone who ever felt isolated, alone, or misplaced. “The Owl House” is a fated, enchanted opportunity to leave the world she knows behind and find herself among a new group of misfit friends, taking place in an otherworldly location where their truest potentials can be finally realized. However, this magical escape went wrong, for she found herself in a world just as flawed as ours, with a bunch of issues that stop her from finding peace from the very things she was trying to abandon. But with help from her newfound band of mystical kids, they come together when times are dire to fight for the chance to practice magic, and by association — love, free from the restraints that they were once chained to.

“The Owl House” focused on the protagonist’s relationship with a magical girl and offered audiences more relationships to come while being nuanced in what little representation was available for Raine and Eda’s relationship. By mere word of mouth, it accrued its popularity by its inherent entertainment value and enthralling story. The show offers an imaginative and truly creative world which intertwines the main protagonist into some main conflicts by way of chance and destiny. That same show is now going to close its curtains and take a final bow to the crying eyes of thousands upon thousands of fans across the country and world.

The creator Dana Terrace has truly done her best to write a show made by and for queer people, from pushing for the show’s creation and development, to giving us some of the most iconic animated queer characters out there, and wrapping the show up as nicely as possible within the timeframe she and her team were cornered into. No one can fault her or the fans for fully believing that there might have been a true chance to feel represented on screen without the fear of censorship or cancellation looming overhead. This show was and will remain to be important to those of us who hold it dear to our hearts. Queer media is well known to be on the chopping block and is rarely expected to reach its fullest potential on mainstream channels due to its politicized nature in the realm of mainstream media, which is at the behest of larger powers which do not favor the featuring of queer characters and relationships on screen as much as they do straight cisgender ones.

Terrace is quoted in a Reddit post as saying vaguely that “At the end of the day, there are a few business people who oversee what fits into the Disney brand...those guys decided [“The Owl House”] didn’t fit.” Many fans and queer critics think that it is because former Disney CEO Bob Chapek felt that its explicit queer content did not fit the “family friendly” company brand (disregarding the fact that many recent properties do not fit that title — but it appears that animated content is not subject to the same rules). The soft cancellation of the show is a direct sign of things to come, as well as things that the queer community are currently witnessing within the animation industry and wider cinema itself. Everyone’s favorite pieces of media are being canceled, killed before they even aired, and altogether removed from the only places they can be viewed legally (wink-wink). But it is up to fans to make sure these properties do not die in vain, “The Owl House” included. The fans were the reason the show gained prominence given the intentional lack of advertising. They were the reason it gained critics’ adoration and good viewership ratings. Despite everything Disney (and in assumption of the correlating time, Chapek) tried, they could not stop the show from becoming a juggernaut in the realm of animated media. And they will never be able to erase the fact that it did, for a brief period of time, represent us on screen with the most explicit techniques it had up its allowed sleeve. So, in the wake of its death, I find it important to honor its legacy considering how hard it fought to survive to live as long as it did.

The most famous aspect of the show is its queer representation on the animated screen. With characters ranging from bisexual Luz to non-binary Raine, the writers made sure to try and include any kind of LGBTQ+ representation they could get away with. What makes it novel is the fact that within the canon of the show, not a single character questions its persistent existence. I mean, there are light poles that have eyes and sentient flesh attached to them, but from the point of view of Luz and the other non-human characters, neither aspect is to be ashamed of — Belos (the emperor and another guy from Luz’s town who hunts witches) and his Christian-coded oppression excluded. Also, the fact that a darker-skinned bisexual Latina is the main character alongside her supportive mother is a first for animated “children’s” entertainment. Let alone the neurodivergent-coding she and other main characters receive as the show goes on.

# ouse”



What the show and its writers focus more of their attention on is the differences and similarities to real world issues of queer, neurodivergent, and non-conformist oppression. As Luz grows into a wise and powerful witch she encounters others that, like her, are deemed as different and worthy of oppression by the systems in place. Luz's mentor Eda is the best example for both statements, as many in the fandom find her traits to mirror those of autism or ADHD, but given her status on the Boiling Isles she is often the outcast in society. Eda's neurodivergent-coding is never depicted as negative from Luz's point of view, but it's shown that her quirks (as seen by others pressured by Belos and his control) put her in a position to be singled out and literally witch-hunted multiple times for not conforming to his laws and rule.

What is depicted in a negative light, however, is the ways in which both Belos and the adults that Camila (Luz's mom) and Luz have to deal with put pressure on them and other misfits to conform to the expectations placed upon neurodivergent-coded characters and to some extent Luz and others' queerness. The pressures felt by Luz are what leads to the inciting incident of Luz leaving through the portal to start the series. Luz initially escapes Earth to avoid what can only be described as a conversion camp designed for "outcasts" such as herself. After all, Luz is (at times) just a stand-in for queer and neurodivergent people to see their struggles mirrored on the screen. She thinks that in trading her hometown Gravesfield and its rigid structures for a magical world that there would be no stigma to face, no camps to be sent to, no shame to be felt. But as the show progresses, it is revealed that a colonizing white man who aims to commit wizard genocide instituted a structure of supremacy with him at the top. In the end, she and the rest of the main cast have to fight for their freedom from Belos first and then The Collector. It establishes the world in a queer lens, one in which supremacist structures (patriarchal, cisnormative, neurotypical, able-bodied, etc.) are inherently against the natural ways of life and that these structures were most definitely not put in place by the will of those who will be affected by it. By the framing of the show, the aim was and always continues to be a queer liberation of the people, not only that of the Boiling Isles, but of Earth as well.

This queer lens and narrative framework is not new, only novel. But it is influenced by the ways in which its peers and predecessors have set up their stories in a way that invited queerness into the mix as something to be normalized and celebrated. "Steven Universe" is one of the largest names in this regard, not only giving us the first animated lesbian-coded marriage on screen, but also creating a world so vast and rife with themes of rebellion against strict binaries (specifically in terms of gender and relationships). The story of "She-Ra and the Princesses of Power" is dedicated to defeating systems of oppression that keep trying to define what is and is not acceptable to the empire it serves. Of course, while queer structures of storytelling are not needed for queer stories to be told, it helps get the message through about what it is truly like to live under a government or society that, through the ideologies of fascist and authoritarian rhetoric, aim inherently to remove us from the picture so that their ways of living life stay the standard.

On a less grim note, it's beautiful to see how Amity and Luz handle their struggles on screen. Unlike most of their straight counterparts, they actually communicate what's wrong with each other and can tell when the other is holding back in their emotion; this same healthy relationship rhetoric can be seen later on with other dynamics as well. It's hard to imagine these kinds of discussions being present without the effort of past examples being brought forth to the screen so that new generations of queer kids can learn how to handle things on their own, with or without their partner. Princess Bubblegum and Marceline's relationship in "Adventure Time" is a brief but recent example of showing healthy ways to communicate issues in a relationship. The same can apply to Ruby and Sapphire from "Steven Universe" and, to a lesser extent, Catra and Adora from "She-Ra and the Princesses of Power". Sammy and Yasmina from "Camp Cretaceous" also serve as a relationship model throughout its seasons, as they come to each other in times of anxiety and fear to confide in the other and later tell their friends how they feel in the moment. Luz and Amity, while not having as much screen time as other relationships in media, are just as valuable in the ongoing need to understand how and when to bring up an issue one faces, either within their relationship or just in their own heart. Overall, the experience I and many other fans of the show have had is one of great joy and deeper sentiment that most other shows might dismiss as not necessary or childish. The fact is this show has touched as many hearts as it has made an impact in the community of animation and queer fans of content like this. While those who aren't fans don't see the ramifications of such a legacy-leaving show, viewers can see its true value, dead or not. "The Owl House" will, like its discontinued peers, pave the way for easier and better queer representation across the board in the realm of media at large. Change starts from the bottom up, and I'm sure many more creators like Terrace are waiting for their chance to make the next big splash in the current sea of content.

I'm gonna miss Luz, I'm sure many of us will. To me, she was the first instance of Latina bisexual representation I'd ever truly seen on screen. In all her quirks and energy, I fell for how she saw the world and was there alongside her each time the world betrayed and rewarded her for her courage and hope for the future. In the darkest of times, I, like many others, turn to my favorite media. Not as a crutch, but as inspiration for bigger and better things, replenishing my hope in the world. That is what media ends up being at times: hope manifested into the creations of artists who hold humanity to a higher standard than most do. And in doing so, giving the audience more reason to believe in life as a possibility that can be made a reality. I will fight to make sure whatever comes next is just as revered and known as this show — should it deserve the crown. It is up to us to assure the future of further queer media, of its quality and impact on the communities it aims to represent. From now on, we live with the spirit of shows like "The Owl House" in our hearts, guiding us towards the next great things, and wishing us well as we go into the world with hopeful eyes and strong resilience to the world around us. That's the best we can do.



## CARLA BAUTISTA

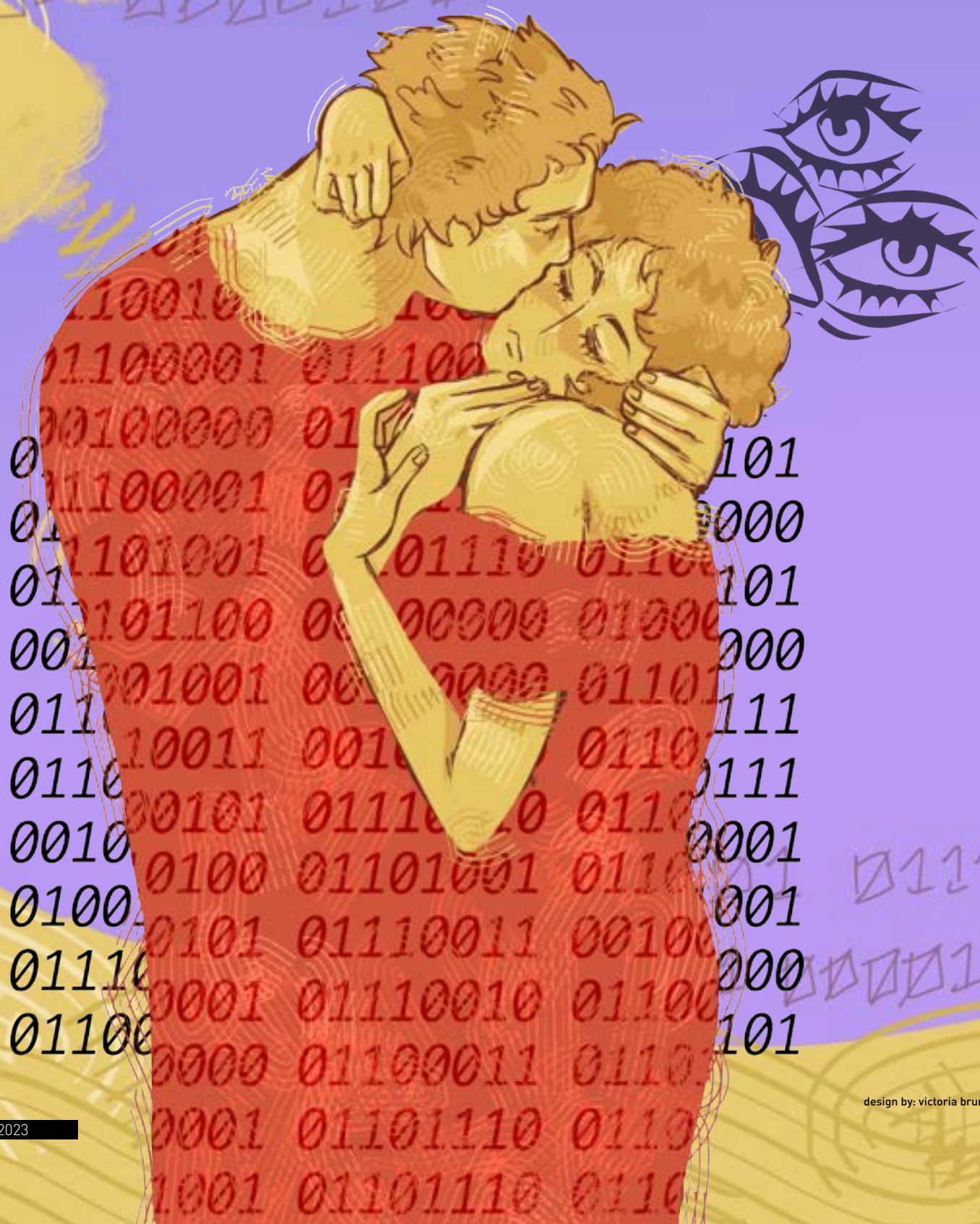
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That girl who will force you to watch  
POSE with her.



# Creator or Computer?

## The Ethics of AI Art



design by: victoria bruno



If there's a hot button topic that you've heard about recently, there's a decent chance that artificial intelligence, or AI, has been part of the discussion. There are many ways to define artificial intelligence, but in simple terms, it's broadly considered "a field which combines computer science and robust datasets to enable problem-solving," according to IBM. On paper, it sounds beneficial. And it certainly can be! But as many people know, it's also thrown a wrench into the ethical framework of many industries across the globe — think online shopping, cybersecurity, healthcare, manufacturing — and the list is ever-expanding. The strides and setbacks of AI are complex and would take far more than the limitations of this article to deconstruct, but I know where we can start. Abandon all hope, ye who enter here... we're taking a field trip to the art world. Creatives take immense pride in originality; the existence of copyright law is proof enough of that. One of the biggest controversies regarding the creative use of AI is authorship. Specifically, who said authorship belongs to. There are countless examples of this conundrum, but a better-known instance occurred in September of 2022, when an artist named Jason M. Allen won first prize in the Colorado State Fair's annual art competition for emerging digital artists. His artwork was created using an AI program called Midjourney, where he wrote and input strings of text to generate a highly detailed digital image. Allen persistently defended his work against the enormous pushback it received online.

"I'm not going to apologize for it. I won, and I didn't break any rules," he stated in an interview with the New York Times. Naturally, nobody was infuriated by this response, so everyone came to an agreement in an amicable manner and the conflict was resolved then and there.

I'm kidding — it was a bloodbath.

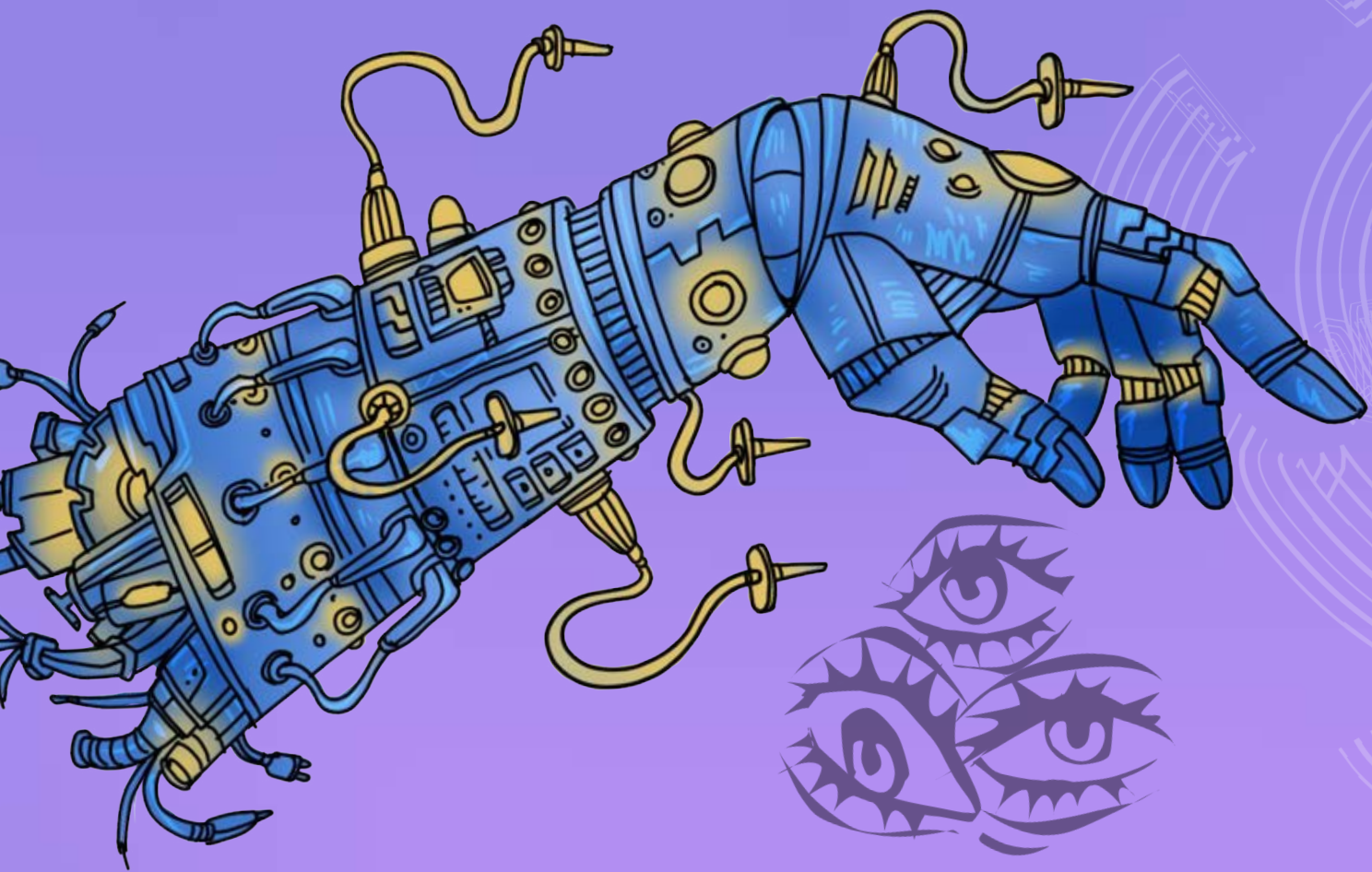
Many artists believe the usage of AI programs like Midjourney to be illegitimate, since it collects data from art that's created by real people. Midjourney and other similar programs use a machine learning algorithm, meaning they produce an output value from a set of input data. In this case, digital images are generated from art made by humans. There's a common argument that this is an unlawful usage of artists' work, and thus an infringement of copyright laws. Unfortunately, copyright laws were formulated during a time when AI was hardly a blip in the public's mind, so it exists in a bit of a gray area when it comes to enforcement. The only thing that's confirmed is that AI generated art is not protected by copyright. But what about the dataset of artwork that it pulls from? Are those artworks not legitimate? Are they not protected from unauthorized usage? Ideally the answer is yes, of course they are! But how do we address a breach of copyright law when these datasets are so immense? In Midjourney's case, the program was trained using a dataset that contained over five billion images. The number itself is difficult to wrap one's head around, let alone how to begin addressing its relationship with copyright law.

Although this is a critique of AI's usage in art, I want to emphasize that AI isn't inherently negative. It's simply a tool and it should be treated as such. There are pervasive fears floating around the creative industry that common entry-level studio positions such as visual development or storyboard revision will become completely automated in the future. While we've seen instances of this happening, one example being Netflix Japan's short film "Dog and Boy" — which credits AI for its background design — industry professionals still largely prefer the touch of a human rather than the eye of a machine.

In early March of this year, I was lucky enough to attend a virtual talk with the 2023 Oscar-nominated directors for Best Animated Feature. As the discussion gradually leaned toward the topic of AI, one comment stood out to me. Chris Williams, director of "The Sea Beast", briefly gave his two cents on AI's role in the industry. "When I see people generate this art and say, 'oh this could be vis-dev,' I think well, I suppose it could be, but what about all the amazing vis-dev artists that I've worked with?" he remarked, laughing a bit. "Where does it stop, y'know?" The other directors in the call seemed to agree, and hearing this gave me a sense of optimism and hope that I hadn't realized I'd lost.

The truth is that creative directors don't want the industry to become automated. Many of these positions are how animators and other artists find their footing and make a mark for themselves, giving them the ability to climb the ranks in their respective studios. I don't think that we'll ever reach a stage of full automation in the art world, and at least for the time being, many prominent people in film and animation agree.

That said, visual art and animation are only a few small pieces in the larger puzzle of ethical conflicts regarding AI in the art world. If you know anything about AI then you might recognize the name ChatGPT, which is a popular chatbot developed by OpenAI. In January of this year, TIME magazine published an investigative article highlighting OpenAI's exploitation of outsourced Kenyan workers whose jobs were to keep their chatbot functional. These employees earned less than \$2 an hour to sort through some of the vilest content on the internet so they could prevent ChatGPT from replicating said content. It was a thankless, underpaid, taxing job — and it took its toll. Several employees reported suffering from recurring visions and losing sleep over the memories of what they'd seen. The working conditions became so unsustainable that the outsourcing firm canceled its contracts with OpenAI eight months before the agreed date of termination.



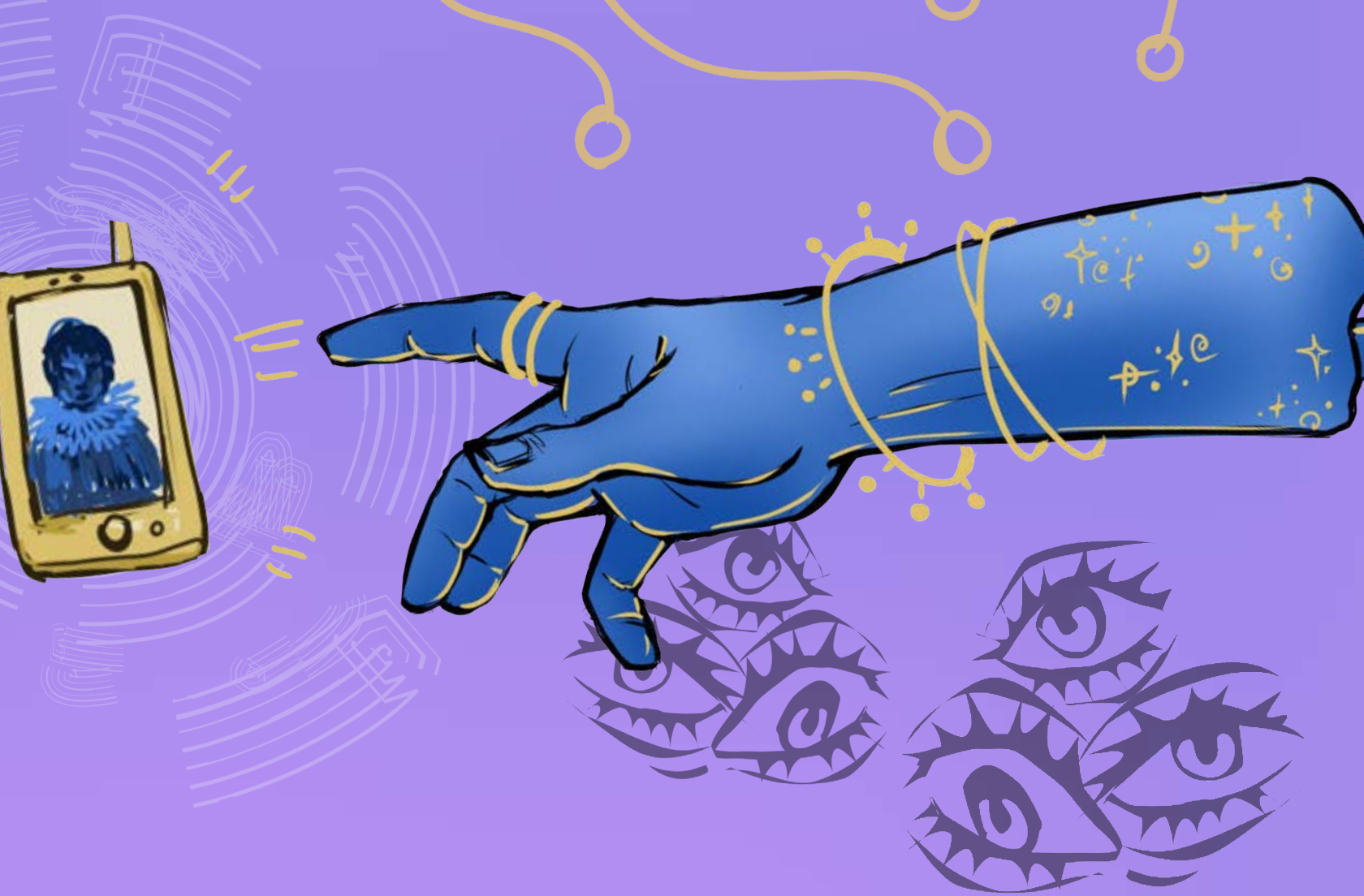
When looking at manipulative labor practices like the one above, it begs the question of how often this occurs. Considering that OpenAI took notes on how Facebook and other social media sites built their content moderation AI, this is far from the first time this has happened and unfortunately, it's likely not the last. Without a standard of ethical guidelines to follow when developing AI, we risk causing psychological and financial harm across workforces and even entire nations. This and similar scenarios are an ugly reminder that no matter how powerful a system of technology is, it fundamentally relies on human labor. This human labor is often sourced from the global south and is almost always exploitative, as history has demonstrated repeatedly.

Although most of these stories paint a very doom-and-gloom vision for the future, one thing is certain: artificial intelligence isn't going anywhere. Within the past few years, AI has become cheaper, more accessible to the public, and even more capable of problem-solving. It's steadily leached into industries that incorporate the use of technology, which let's be honest, is almost any industry you can think of. AI is here to stay and it's up to us to determine the rules and conditions that come with that.

I've often noticed that when discussing opinions about AI, a person's first impression and/or encounter with it has a strong and lasting effect on their opinion going forward. If someone has a negative encounter, such as an argument over plagiarized work or a job

position becoming automated, then AI is seen as a problem running rampant. If an encounter is a positive one, such as a person being rewarded or garnering popularity from AI-generated artwork or literature, then AI is commonly seen as a boon with little to no drawbacks. My own first encounter with AI is a bit silly but altogether not an uncommon one; I first witnessed a text-based AI game called AI Dungeon in late 2019 on a twitch stream. The stream's host would input various text prompts, both goofy and normal ones, only to get increasingly ridiculous results. At the time I considered AI to be a form of entertainment and not much else, and in a lot of ways I still hold onto that feeling when I look at AI-generated art and stories. It's fun to look at and dissect, sure, but you can tell that something's slightly... off. Call it an uncanny valley effect of sorts, except instead of evoking a sense of fear it makes me feel as if I'm looking at a young child's drawing. A sense of, "Well, you did the best you could!" The phenomenon of image generation AI's inability to replicate written language, or failure to generate the correct number of fingers on the average human hand is especially funny to me. Amidst the horror, there's a sort of humor. Despite the uh... well, human rights violations if we're choosing to be blunt about it, I still can't bring myself to hate AI in and of itself. I can (and do) sling mud at the developers and shareholders that enable those violations, but the product of their labor has no intent. Artificial intelligence has no ill will or agenda. It has no awareness of what its creators are doing behind the scenes. I think knowing where to direct our ire is an important thing to keep in mind.

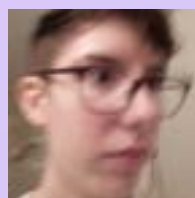




AI has grown exponentially over time and that growth will continue as time marches on. Call me spiteful, but I highly doubt that AI will supersede human creativity and capability at any point. I don't think that AI's role or purpose should be to replace a human's presence in a workspace, and in fact I don't think that it'll ever truly be capable of that. Despite a vocal minority who support automation and/or increased dependence on AI for tasks that humans have historically done themselves, I've gotten the impression that the AI revolution isn't going to be on the scale of *The Matrix* or *I, Robot*. Artificial intelligence is a tool that we've created and more importantly, it's a tool that we have control over. We determine the role that it plays in society at large. It's up to us to establish ethical guidelines when developing and using AI so that we can avoid harming the safety and livelihoods of others. This isn't just our ability; this is our duty. In the creative industry alone, there are an array of benefits to using AI tools to assist with a human's job. Examples include procedural modeling and particle effects in programs like Blender and Maya, or illustrative tools in Photoshop and Illustrator. These AI-based tools save artists loads of time when meeting their deadlines and allow projects to proceed smoothly. AI isn't and should never be the whole, it's just one of many pieces in our repertoire!

All of this is to say, no, robots will not poison your water supply, burn your crops, and deliver a plague upon your houses. Much like watching a child stumble through the stages of walking, AI has a long way to go until it rivals the tenacity of the human spirit.

I for one quite enjoy opening Artbreeder and making it generate unhinged pictures of birds for my own entertainment or pictures of Jesse Pinkman going to Wisconsin Dells. It's important for us to remember that behind these advanced algorithms and fancy programs, there are people. Ironically, people are the very life and blood that pumps through the heart of artificial intelligence, and to disregard them is to do them a disservice. Humans are capable of quite a lot! Minimizing our being to a set of tasks performed by a machine is to grossly underestimate what we're capable of. As a closing thought, I believe that there's plenty of room on the road to the future for both humans and AI to coexist; we just need to find our lanes.



**MICKEY DOLPHIN**

sophomore | atec

bloodborne (2015) made me transgender but not in a way that's comprehensible



# COCAINE BEAR IS A CINEMATIC MASTERPIECE

Have you ever watched the movie *Citizen Kane*, after being bugged and nagged by every film buff west of New York to watch “the best movie ever”, and as you’re sitting alone in your tiny apartment with nothing but a half-eaten cup of instant ramen, you wondered, “Huh. What was Rosebud, anyway?”

*Citizen Kane* is a movie loved and revered for its contributions to film history, its innovative lighting and cinematography, and is marked down in the history books as having one of the most climatic endings ever seen in film. You, dear reader, have at the very least heard the name of this “cinematic masterpiece”, and if you dared to sit through the toils of 1940s style acting in order to get to that finale, I ask — do you know what Rosebud represents, what

symbols and themes the director wanted you to take away from his magnum opus?

Well me neither. I was too busy watching a better movie called *Cocaine Bear*.

Like most college students, I was once trapped at a tragically boring house party with a series of people who I did not know, and who I would not even attempt to talk to over the course of the next four hours. In the corner, next to the snack table and four long abandoned cans of Coke, I was stuck next to a very common species known as the cinematographic masculum, also understood as a guy in a really small beanie who wouldn’t stop talking about *Fight Club* and the director’s cut of *Blade Runner*.

The entire time he was talking, my mind raced with thoughts of a movie that would put *2001: A Space Odyssey* to shame, that would make Martin Scorsese weep tears at its cinematic achievements, a movie that would sweep the Oscars — *Cocaine Bear*.

*Cocaine Bear* is sick — imagine a movie about a drug smuggler named Andrew C. Thorton II, who parachutes out of a plane, dies, and then drops half of his cocaine supply in a forest, right in a place where a gigantic black bear eats an entire package. You don’t even need to imagine it, it’s so kickass that it fills your mind with pure ecstasy. Upon ingesting the cocaine, this bear goes on a violent, grizzly (pun intended) murder spree — from cops to criminals to tourists, and there is no one on Earth who can stop this drugged-up bear. It was even



based on a true story, which is so dope.

Even better — this movie tells the story of a feminist icon. She's murdered ten people up to this point, from paramedics to park rangers — and one might think of that as a bit of a red flag, but towards the end of the movie, it's revealed that this bear is a mother of two cubs — and of course, we all love and support a single mother. When one of the main characters, Syd Dentwood, attempts to retrieve the last brick of cocaine, the bear disembowels him because that is her cocaine and she worked hard for it, dammit. What's not to love about a story of a mother willing to do anything for her children and some cocaine?

You might have a question floating around in your mind. "Okay, Cocaine Bear might be rad as hell, but is it a good movie?" And the answer to that question is a resounding yes. This movie has all of the hallmarks of a cinematic masterpiece — it has middling CGI, a completely forgettable soundtrack outside of a single Pusha T remix, and cinematography so absolutely bog standard it makes you cry tears of joy. The color palette is flat and unremarkable, echoing that of a Mucinex commercial or a soap opera, and all of the acting can be described with just a single phrase — "I mean, it was fine, I guess." Everything about this movie screams Kantian pleasure, revels in Diony-

sian splendor and whimsy, it is camp at its most camp-esque — one might even say this movie beats out Citizen Kane in terms of cinematic relevancy.

In comparison to Cocaine Bear, which is the Best Picture nominee for 2023 (don't look that up), Citizen Kane is an absolute snoozefest. Citizen Kane is the movie I mentioned earlier (don't worry if you don't remember, no one would expect you to remember Citizen Kane) and is seen as one of the greatest films of all time, if not the greatest film ever made. It's about some newspaper publisher named Charles "Who Cares" Kane, he's holding some snowglobe that he probably got from a cheap gift shop, whispers the word "Rosebud" and then dies. Honk shoo, boring. Some guy named Jerry Seinfeld — probably? I don't remember because the movie is boring — who is tasked with finding out the meaning of the word "Rosebud" because everyone is so invested in the life of the very special boy named Mr. Kane, blah blah blah. At least when Syd Dentwood is trying to find the cocaine, it's like, interesting.

(Spoiler Alert, it's like, a sled? But then the sled burns in a furnace so like, cool ending Orson.)

Now I'm sure the "cinephiles" reading this article are demanding my head,

because how dare I speak so ill of one of the greatest movies of all time — and make no mistake, I am perfectly aware of this film's cinematic achievements. The cinematography is fantastic and incredibly revolutionary, the story is multilayered and full of rich, complex themes that are still the subject of discussion today, and the soundtrack rings in your ears long after the movie ends.

However, and this is my main, well-researched, peer-reviewed, and totally fully thought out thesis so pay close attention — it is so boring, oh my god it's so boring. Movies should be cool. Like Cocaine Bear.

Throughout my life as a person who enjoys movies — a phrase I am using because I am a normal person who does not use words like "cinephile" — I've encountered every genre of film bro imaginable. These kinds of guys always want to talk your ear off about Martin Scorsese and Christopher Nolan's audio mixing and how Pulp Fiction is a masterpiece because they want to score smart points at house parties — yes, I'm talking to you, Derrick — but did Tarantino ever make a movie about a bear doing



## LUKA MCNAMARA-RAY



junior | AHT

Professional gaslighter and funnyman.

# Totally Tubular PRANKZ for AMPril Fools!!!



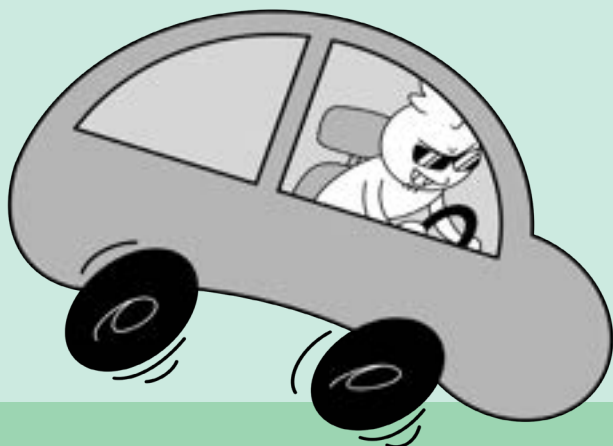
What IS up, my fellow Comet-brahs! Welcome to my all-new, radical prank showcase: **TOTALLY TUBULAR COMET PRANKZ!!** And my oh my, isn't this just the absolute BEST season of the year for some EPIC pranks! That's right, it's APRIL FOOLS! A time where each and every one of us Comets can go absolutely wild with our silly shenanigans! So what's with the wait? This holiday isn't gonna last forever!

...Huh? What's that? April Fools is already over? It ends after April 1st? Uhhhhh....

...The real issue is: WHO CARES!? It's never too late to rock this sleepy school with some MASTERFUL MISCHIEF!! So get ready, because here are some of the BEST PRANKS you can pull on your fellow Comets!

## PRANK #1: THE SUPER SPEEDY SKATEBOARD SLAM

Alrighty, we're gonna be starting out small and simple! The Super Speedy Skateboard Slam isn't the flashiest of pranks, but it PERFECTLY encapsulates the tremendously thrilling terror a student should face when walking around their school! It's easy! Just locate your victim and begin rapidly skating up to them from behind. You might not be able to see it on their face, but you've now locked them into a grueling mental battle! Do they turn to the left to get out of the way, or are YOU going to the left? What about the right? What should they do? While your victim is trapped in this conundrum of theirs, all you have to do is keep skating! You just gotta go faster, faster, FASTER!!! Keep moving forward until... BLAM!!!! A totally gnarly WIPEOUT!



Pro-Tip: This prank can be done just about anywhere on campus, totally making it THE BOMB! That being said, avoid attempting the Super Speedy Skateboard Slam by the overhang of the Sciences Building. You'll just blend in with all of the other overconfident skater boys.

## PRANK #2: THE AMAZINGLY ALARMING AUTOMOBILE ASSAULT

Want a more extreme variant? Then we'll hit you right up with a certified CLASSIC! The Amazingly Alarming Automobile Assault is REAL simple. All you need is a car, so if you got one, great! If you don't, steal one! Don't worry about angry students or cops; it's all for one FAR OUT prank! Once you got your car, head on over to the intersection between Rutford and Synergy, right in front of Northside. Now, on any given school day, you're bound to see countless Comets strolling casually back and forth over this intersection, making their way to whatever class, restaurant, or apartment they're heading to. Take a nice, long look at them from the driver's seat. Don't they appear so peaceful, so serene? So... fragile?

Anyways, you're gonna want to swerve into them as soon as they're given the signal to cross! Let the fierce roar of your obnoxiously loud car strike FEAR into the hearts of those poor, unsuspecting Comets as they stare at you like deers in headlights! Keep going until the very last second, then suddenly STOP! And there you have it! What's not to love about making some random, innocent pedestrians fear for their lives? It's SWERVIN'TO THE MAX!

Pro-Tip: Want some extra style points? Honk angrily at the pedestrians afterwards, as if it's their fault!

## PRANK #3: THE PUBLICALLY POLARIZING PIANO PRANK

Oh mama, now we're getting into some real DANGEROUS territory! This prank is bound to be a controversial one, so attempt it at your own risk. Still here? BOOYAH!

This time around, your target is not a person, but rather an object: the Student Union piano. Who doesn't love this piano and the

design by: gavin arriaga



melodious marvels it lets our fellow Comet-kind play? Most people would say that it's a great addition to the Student Union, and a nice way to liven up the place. So imagine the look on their faces when you DESTROY it! All you need is some kind of destructive tool or mechanism. This could be a comically-large hammer, a stick of dynamite, your own smoking-hot, muscular guns, whatever! Once you've got your weapons of mass destruction ready, HAVE AT IT!

Pro-Tip: If it's possible, a perfect way to maximize style points would be to COMBINE this prank with a previous one! Ram a car into the Student Union piano!

#### PRANK #4: THE RISE OF THE RAMBUNCTIOUS ROBOTIC REGIME

It's time for an advanced-level prank, and we've decided to borrow some inspiration from some fellow Comet prank-meisters! Ever seen a student steal a Tobor? Because they do! I mean, why care about respecting important school equipment or the moral and ethical boundaries of our robotic brethren when you could have your OWN robo-buddy!? Well, we're gonna go one step farther. Why steal one Tobor... when you can steal ALL of the Tobors? Why not swipe up every last one of them for your own nefariously mischievous schemes!?

Once you've amassed your collection, it's time for the real fun! With the Tobor race under your command, you can mold them into your own personal robotic army! Imagine the look on all those unsuspecting Comets' faces when your legion of robo-soldiers descends upon the school to bump into everyone and constantly risk getting run over! **HARDCORE!**

Pro-Tip: Befitting an advanced-level prank, there's a LOT of risk involved in stealing Tobors. So be careful, and play it stealthy! Oh, and don't forget there's often free food in the little guys!

#### PRANK #5: THE TOTALLY TERRIFYING TIKTOK TERRORIST THREAT

My Comet-dudes, I must warn you that this next prank goes even further beyond into the realm of danger. You think those last four pranks were EXTREME? This one has FIVE-WORD alliteration. Six if you count "THE." So yeah, you better beware, bro.

Anyways, this is a dangerously simple prank to pull off, should you be brave enough to do so. All you gotta do is head over to somewhere on campus, literally anywhere, and open TikTok on your phone. That's it. That is all of the work you need to put into this prank. The army of Chinese military helicopters, secret police vans, and spy balloons honing in for a hostile takeover of UT Dallas will do the rest.

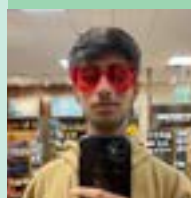
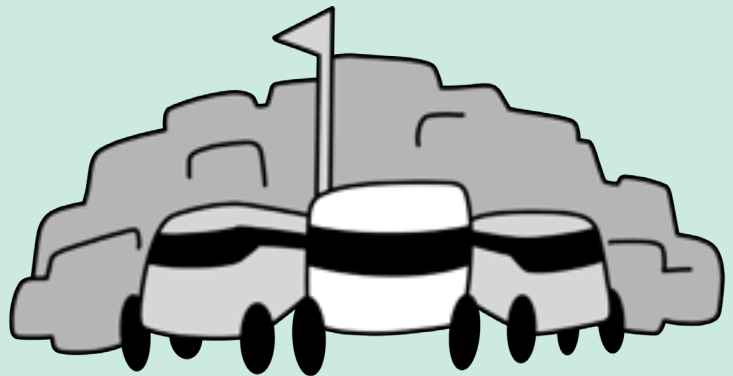
Governor Abbott does NOT approve of this one.

Pro-Tip: Unfortunately this is a very politically sensitive prank, as it can only exist due to the skewed priorities of our state's leaders. So you wanna keep the Totally Terrifying Tiktok Terrorist Threat around? Then my pro-tip is to keep electing conservative Republicans to be governor, Texas!

#### THE END (OR IS IT???)

Well, that's all I've got for now, Comet-heads! With these five fearsomely foolish pranks at your disposal, you are ready to wreak some real HAVOC for April Fools! So get up, head on out of whatever WACK lecture or assignment you're in the middle of, and make sure that not a single Comet can roam this campus without fear of getting PRANK'D!

...Oh, and don't worry! When I said that's all I've got for now, I really meant "FOR NOW." After all, who said April Fools was the ONLY time we could do this? Nah, at UTD, these are year-round things! So take care until next time, and remember: it's just a prank, bro!



**RAYHAN YOUNAS**

sophomore | psychology

Currently hard at work  
procrastinating

# End Tobor Abuse Now



Whether it be through rain, sleet, snow, or hail, Tobors are always there for us during times of hunger and starvation. They are dedicated to a thankless job that gives them no pay — and yet no one seems to acknowledge the mistreatment of these brave Tobors from the students, staff, and the layout of the campus itself.

Starship delivery robots — also more commonly known as Tobors here at UTD — have been working to the axle, laboring so hard that they aren't even able to compute straight. Sometimes they even forget where they're going because of all the orders that they need to fulfill. One day on my way to class, I witnessed poor little Ymmit on his first day of work being so confident in where he was going, only to stop himself and recalculate the fact that his delivery needed to be sent in the opposite direction.

"It's really hard trying to be able to catch up with all of these orders," Ailuj, a Tobor delivery worker, said. "When we're given so many orders at once, it fries our circuits!"

Due to all of the erosion from the previous chaotic weather, most sidewalks on campus are difficult for Tobors to traverse. Because their wheels only allow them to travel on flat surfaces, it is difficult

for Tobors to navigate large dips on the sidewalks or escape holes. Some Tobors even have to be reassembled for the damage this causes. "If UTD isn't going to offer us damage insurance, then the least UTD could do is accommodate for us Tobors and restore the sidewalks from all the damage," Drawde, a Tobor who was previously repaired after losing a wheel, said.

And this isn't even regarding the fact that the UTD campus is constantly undergoing expansions and changing the maps. Tobors aren't even provided allotted deactivation and restart times, or any time to refill their tanks or change their oil unless campus is forced to close. In fact, Tobors are so drained of their batteries that they are constantly forced to stop in the middle of the street to regenerate.

Along with their struggles with terrain and the lack of break time, in order for Tobors to be able to recharge themselves, they are also subject to constant ridicule and harassment from students on campus. Students constantly take advantage of Tobors' lack of arms and legs to tip them over or disorient them — even more than they already are — by moving them away from their route.



Witnesses claim to have even seen a spike in kidnappings on campus. One couple, Mij and Nilloc, described how one night, their only daughter never came home. “Ellebasi always lets us know when she finishes work. She always returns our transmissions!” Mij exclaimed. “It’s almost been an entire week and we still haven’t heard from her. We tried communicating to her boss, but no one at work seems to know where she is either...” Both Mij and Nilloc recall how their daughter would always vent her frustrations after coming home from work. “She worked almost every day until she overheated and was barely able to spend time with her friends or family.” Nilloc explained. “Ellebasi had always dreamed of going to UTD as a student in order to expand her database, but simply by being a worker, the students at the school are already not treating her well.”

One popular video that trended on multiple social media platforms showed a recording of a train running over a Tobor. This particularly devastated the Tobor community. “I can’t imagine our daughter being run over by a car or a truck.” Nilloc cried as he wheeled over and pressed against his husband. “That poor Tobor was all alone, without any of his friends or family to comfort or protect him!”

“This is outrageous!” Bob, who works for UTD’s dining services, shouted. “I don’t want to fear going to work every day because us Tobors can’t be viewed as equals! I have kids to get home to!”

In response to this great hardship, several Tobors who work for UTD Dining Services have decided to form a workers union and go on strike. “It’s about time that we let our voices be heard!” One anonymous worker asserted. “I want to be in a work environment where I can feel safe!” proclaimed another. This protest is especially difficult however, as Tobors can often be easily replaced by new ones. However, with how quick information is transmitted within the community, these new Tobors are quick to learn about these is-

sues and leave the staff. Some other Tobors, despite everything, still want to keep bringing deliveries to students on campus. “Don’t get me wrong, Ellebasi hated how people on campus have been treating her and her coworkers.” Nilloc explained. “However, she also told us how much she wanted to keep bringing smiles on people’s faces. ‘If we can’t smile ourselves, humans should be able to smile for the both of us!’ She’d say. We know that if she was still here, she’d still want to work and bring food to the student body because she knew how important these deliveries are to some students. Right now, we just want our daughter back safe and sound.”

This sentiment shared within the Tobor community isn’t restricted to just the UTD campus. All over the globe, Tobors are fighting for better treatment and protection from harassment from malicious students and staff. With how intolerable some days can be to Tobors, every little bit can make their days a little brighter. The next time you see a Tobor on their back or lost in the middle of the street, instead of taking pictures, making videos of them, or just walking past them and looking the other way, give them a hand! They may not be able to physically express it, but you might just make their day.

## VICTORIA STEINER



junior | psychology & child learning and development

Temoc’s #1 fan and avid Tobor enjoyer



by: sinclair king



“In the daytime, I’m Temoc, but I have a secret...”

# AMP

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