



Editorial Team: Hailey Jennato '24 Samson Shen '24 Clara Williams '25



HOW AI IS IMPACTING THE BENTLEY CLASSROOM AND EDUCATION OVERALL

By Nayeli Franco '24

"In an era defined by technological advancement, artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as a transformative force reshaping the landscape of education" (OpenAI, 2023).

What if I were to tell you the easiest, most convenient way to do your homework has become publicly available in the past few years and can be accessed instantly? Or that you could look up any question on an accounting test with a high probability this technology will get it correct? Let's be completely honest, such a phenomenon sounds highly appealing and at the very least piques the interest of most. It's not every day that groundbreaking research leads to one of the most advanced public domains in the world. Sites such as ChatGPT can generate essays, computer code, or solutions to accounting problems in seconds. There are even TikTok filters that generate photos of you with different backgrounds using Al! No need to get dressed in a suit to go take headshots anymore.

However, there is one—or a few caveats to this technology in real-world practices. Most of these are related to education and the debate for AI to coexist with a learning environment. There was seemingly no transition between the reveal of AI and the need for faculty to rush to meetings regarding its use in the classroom. It was almost as if professors and teachers across the country were preparing for a new evil that would put even more space between them and their students. Immediately, educational forces were on the defense against the adversarial AI.

I don't know about everyone reading this article, but personally, all the syllabi for my classes this semester contained sections dedicated to artificial intelligence and have mostly banned its utilization without exception. Bentley (Continued on page 7)

A BEAUTY OF DIVERSITY

By Yun Song '26

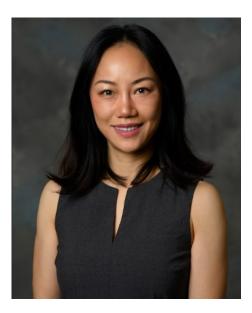
When considering diversity in a college, what pops out in your mind? Affirmative action, people of color, and first-generation college students undoubtedly play a pivotal role in shaping the diversity landscape on campuses nationwide. However, it is crucial to recognize that diversity is a multifaceted concept that goes far beyond just ethnicity or one's socialeconomic status. My journey as a 45-year-old sophomore at Bentley University, actively engaged in both the Honors Program and the Peer-to-Peer Program, highlights an often-overlooked facet of diversity: age.

Upon my first in-person meetings with Undram, my Honors Program Peer Mentor, and Hannah, my Peer-to-Peer Mentor, I could sense their surprise and perhaps even a touch of astonishment. This reaction was understandable since we had communicated primarily through email before our meeting in person. What led to their initial reactions was my age! Undram and Hannah hadn't expected this fact, and it challenged their preconceived notions. They had never imagined that a woman who could be older than their mothers would be their peer.

In higher education, it is crucial to realize that diversity transcends the boundaries of race, gender, age, or class. My journey exemplifies how age should be an indispensable element of diversity. Hailing from China, where the retirement age for a female blue-collar worker is typically 50, I have seen firsthand how women above 40 often encounter

substantial challenges in securing decent employment. My mother, a textile worker, had no choice but to enter "early retirement," which is an euphemism for unpaid retirement. Since then, she has been relegated to staying at home and doing household chores. Women like my mother are considered useless at 40 years old. To start a new life by going back to school at the middle age? Unthinkable. In contrast, the American education system offers individuals of all ages a unique opportunity to pursue their dreams. At my age, I am mentally and physically equipped to take on challenges. I transferred to Bentley University with a near-perfect GPA from Oakon, IL, my local community college, where I even established a dance club and led my members to perform at school events. Why should a 45-year-old woman be consigned to retirement in just five years or be deemed useless? After their initial surprise, Undram offered encouragement and said, "It is never too late." This sentiment was echoed by Hannah and all my professors, reflecting the inclusive and supportive environment that Bentley fosters.

My presence at Bentley University as a non-traditional student underscores the importance of embracing diversity in all forms. My academic and personal experience challenges stereotypes and preconceptions about age and education. They serve as a testament to the notion that the pursuit of knowledge and personal growth knows no age boundaries.



Furthermore, my story underscores the value of creating an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere within educational institutions. Bentley's acceptance of students from diverse backgrounds, regardless of their age, enriches the educational experience and promotes a more comprehensive understanding of the world. It fosters an environment where students can learn from each other's unique life experiences, perspectives, and wisdom, transcending age and cultural differences.

In conclusion, non-discrimination of age is an essential part of diversity. As a 45-year-old sophomore, I challenge stereotypes and underscore the importance of inclusivity in higher education. My journey proves that education is a lifelong journey. There is never "too late" when it comes to pursuing your dreams.

RESURRECTING THE DEAD THROUGH COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY: HONORING THEIR MEMORY OR EXPLOITING THEIR LEGACY?

By Hailey Jennato '24



See You Again by Wiz Khalifa and Charlie Puth plays in the background as Dominic Toretto's voiceover beautifully pays tribute to his relationship with Paul Walker's character, Brian O'Conner. Then, O'Conner's Toyota Supra Mark IV drives off the main road and into the sunset. It's a surprisingly touching moment in a franchise known for fiery explosions, epic car chases, and extravagant stunts. But what many viewers don't know about this iconic scene from Furious 7 is that it's not really Paul Walker driving off the screen and into our hearts; it's a computergenerated recreation. When Walker died in a car accident before finishing his part in Furious 7, the film had to be heavily rewritten. Universal Studios decided to use computer generated imagery (CGI) to complete the story of Brian O'Conner. Walker's brothers stood in as body doubles during filming, and his face was superimposed over theirs during post-production (Levine, 2021). But Paul Walker isn't

the only famous actor who's been revived digitally.

Recent advancements in technology have made it possible to design hyperrealistic digital doubles, allowing actors to achieve "a kind of immortality that would have been otherwise impossible, with careers that go on long after their lives have ended" (Velasquez, 2023). Designing digital doubles is no easy feat, often requiring massive amounts of data (like images, photos, and audio clips of the actor), significant computer power, and sophisticated artificial intelligence (Al) algorithms.

Besides Paul Walker, CGI has been used many other times to complete projects when an actor passed away during production, like with Roy Scheider in *Iron Cross* and Oliver Reed in *Gladiator* (Levine, 2021). Technology has also allowed characters of deceased actors to return later in a franchise or series. Grand Moff Tarkin originally appeared in the 1977 film *Star Wars: A New Hope*. CGI, along with the motion capture performance and voice of actor Guy Henry, brought him back in 2016 for *Star Wars: Rogue One*, even though actor Peter Cushing had passed away in 1994 (Ratterree, 2022). Carrie Fisher reprised her role as Princess Leia in *Star Wars Episode IX: The Rise of Skywalker* through technology. Rather than just repurpose unused footage of the late actress, VFX supervisor Roger Guyett explained that they used "a live-action face with a digital hair, head, and body" for the older Leia. (Guyett qtd. in Levine, 2021).

But some productions have taken it a step further, digitally resurrecting actors for completely new projects. For example, iconic American actor James Dean, who died in a car accident in 1955, is supposedly the star of the upcoming film *Back to Eden*, where he interacts on screen with living actors (Velasquez, 2023). The digital clone will also interact with audiences through augmented and virtual reality. Some brands have even brought back dead celebrities in their advertisements. Coca-Cola used digital compositing to pair living singer Elton John with Louis Armstrong, Humphrey Bogart, and James Cagney in a Diet Coke commercial, Johnnie Walker Whisky built a computer model of martial arts star Bruce Lee for an ad, and Galaxy Chocolate created a realistic, completely digital double of Audrey Hepburn for their 2014 TV spot (Prasad, 2021; Levine, 2021). (Continued on page 8)

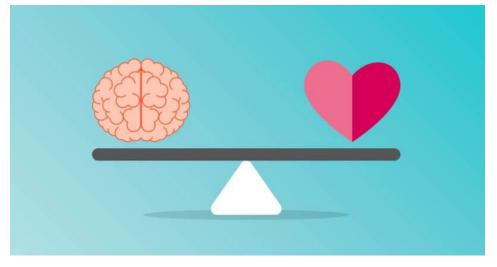
THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

By Isa Ramirez Perdomo '26

Not too long ago I was asked a very interesting question by a friend. What is the most admirable feature a person could have? At first it caught me off guard, but then I immediately knew what my response would be: having developed their emotional intelligence. I know it might sound weird, but think about it. Having emotional intelligence consists of being able to manage your emotions and understand them enough to know how to respond or react without a situation spiraling out of control. To clarify, managing and suppressing are two different things, and in no way am I incentivizing anyone to suppress their emotions.

I am known to speak my mind, defend myself when I have to, and to not be afraid to voice my own opinions. However, I am aware of how I should do these things without causing an uproar. A few years ago, I wouldn't pay attention to how I reacted or even defended myself, and this cost me a lot. Not only did it create problems, but it also created differences with other people. Over time, I learned that it's not about what you say, but how you say it and who you say it to. It is important to understand that not everyone shares your own values, opinions and perceptions in life, and that is completely fine. We should be aware of its importance at an early stage in our careers. Developing your emotional intelligence can help you lead and be successful, as well as thrive in your workplace and perform your tasks gracefully without encountering any problems with your team and with yourself.

Emotional intelligence is very important in a workplace, especially if you strive



to be a leader. According to Lauren Landry's article from Harvard Business School Online's Business Insights Blog, there are four components to emotional intelligence: 1) Self-awareness, 2) Selfmanagement, 3) Social awareness, and 4) Relationship management. Beginning with the first component, self-awareness serves as the core of everything; it is the ability to recognize your own strengths and weaknesses as well as the effect they may have on you and your team. Self-management is the ability to manage your emotions and the reactions you may have under stressful situations, as "leaders who lack self-management tend to react and have a harder time keeping their impulses in check" (Landry, 2019). Social awareness focuses on having empathy, being able to read a room, and understanding your colleagues' perspectives and emotions, which enables you to communicate with them as well as to solve the problem more effectively. The final component, relationship management, is being able to lead when a conflict arises. It is important to tackle problems as they

arise. One does this by being a mentor and a role model on how these problems should be solved effectively.

I hope that the key takeaway from this article is that developing your emotional intelligence can be a stronger asset than you think. Again, emotional intelligence does not incentivize suppressing your emotions; rather, it's about learning to manage them in order to achieve more happiness around you and within you. It is important to understand how to express yourself depending on the scenario you find yourself in. A few years back, I would act without thinking about the repercussions I could face. Today, after somewhat developing my emotional intelligence, I can say that I have a more positive outlook on many things and have been able to express myself without causing any conflicts that could harm a relationship, someone I care about, and even myself.

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FROM STRUGGLE TO STRENGTH: THRIVING AS AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT

By Ledion Hoti '25

Being a student is often one of the most stressful periods of one's life. You have to take care of yourself, make your own schedule and stick to it, take responsibility for your own actions, do well in classes, find a job, and so on. Now add the following elements, and you may just come close to having an idea of what it feels like to be an international student: You don't get to see your family for (sometimes) a year at a time. You're living in a country that doesn't speak your native language. You're eating different kinds of food from what you're used to. You can't simply find a job anywhere because lots of firms don't take internationals. You cannot underperform. because you'd be throwing your family's life savings away, especially when coming from a third-world country, and you have to be close to (if not entirely) perfect. It seems like a lot of pressure to make it in life, but what separates the ones who do and the ones who don't is whether they look at them as excuses or as motivators and fuel for energy.

I came to the US as an exchange student during high school, and I faced all of those changes right from the jump. I had no choice but to adapt to a new environment and get comfortable outside my comfort zone. From then on, I learned a couple of things that every international student should consider before they think the odds are stacked against them. These principles served me as a strategy plan to conquer my fears and realize my goals, and at the same time, prove to myself that I have the discipline to do what needs to be done to succeed:

1. Getting through the tough beginning:

The idea of living outside your comfort zone (metaphorically and literally) and learning to enjoy it and see it as a developing opportunity.

You arrive at a foreign land in the quest for knowledge and realize you're on your own. Your family and friends aren't there, so you have no safety net to fall back on. How about building a new safety net? You take charge of the things you can control, and you don't lose sleep over the things you cannot. You meet new people, and you realize that you aren't the only one having these self-doubting feelings about yourself. You realize that you can trust people, you can start letting your guard down, and while nothing replaces home, some things at least give you a temporary feeling of peacefulness. You seek to learn as much as you can, and you try to understand the culture of this new world that you aim to succeed in. Every now and then, you think about home, but your focus quickly shifts back into the present, and you make sure you're staying on track toward your end goal. The people you meet create that new safety net for you, and suddenly, you realize everything is not that bad anymore. You realize that you belong here, that excuses get you nowhere, and that you need to be disciplined on your path uphill against the odds.

2. Gauging the competition: Never underestimate your abilities in an unknown environment and hold your core values close to your heart.

You start to get matched up against your



competition, and you're unsure of your ability to perform. You underestimate yourself, think you're not good enough and that you don't deserve to be there, but then you stop yourself. You remember your upbringing, what brought you here, the hours of practice and work you dedicated to earning a spot playing at the big table, and your mentality switches. You use your pain as a weapon and become ruthless in front of competition. Your weakness becomes your strength, and you realize that you're capable of things your mind cannot even perceive.

3. Reaching your potential and setting new standards: Executing your plan, getting the most out of your investment, and using your unique international background to your advantage.

You're earning your spot. Now, you believe you have what it takes to succeed, but it's time for everyone else to believe it, too. You create a strategy, you visualize your goals, and you clearly see the path to achieving them. All the months and years of work finally start to show off, and you come to see that when you put your mind to something, you become untouchable. You realize that you must never shy away from your background. You wear your perceived weakness as a pride necklace and aren't insecure about showcasing it. You display it as a reason for people to want you in their team and not the opposite. You use your unique, rich origin to your advantage, and you realize you have something a lot of people lack. Perspective.



CHASING BUTTERFLIES

By Alyssa Galin '27

Whenever I see a butterfly, my first instinct is to exclaim "Butterfly!" and chase after it. After all, that's what I grew up doing. It would ultimately fly away, in a hurry to escape the running, screaming child who's obnoxiously flailing her arms at it. Then I'd get upset and pout, saying, "The pretty butterfly flew away!" But of course, that didn't stop me from doing the exact same thing to the next butterfly I saw, ending in the same result.

Butterflies represent joy, positivity, grace, and even perseverance, but to my 9-year-old self, I only cared about the fact that they were pretty. They got to fly around the whole world and sit on flowers. I wanted to see the world and sit on flowers. It wasn't fair. Why did they get to live carefree while I had responsibilities? To everyone around me, my obsession with butterflies was so cute. Not once did it occur to anyone to tell me that butterflies are more than just pretty little beings. Before my seventh-grade science teacher came along, I never realized why I admired butterflies so much. Butterflies pollinate and help plants and flowers grow. They are essential to the ecosystem despite their fragileness. They reminded me of me. As it turns out, the butterfly had always been my spirit animal before I even knew what a spirit animal was.

The butterfly doesn't have a long lifespan, only two to four weeks, so it lives day and night, making the most of its time on this planet. Flying freely, moving from flower to flower as it pleases. Butterflies have the ability to move with ease and lightness, covering great distances with their travels. As someone who's always loved to travel, it is so apparent that I am just like a butterfly, eagerly seeking new places to visit, new things to try, and new people to meet. Thanks to its optimism, a butterfly never shies away from a challenge, reminding you that nothing is insurmountable: you can do anything you set your mind to.

As we close the last chapter of our lives and open this one, we hold the pen. For many of us, high school was the last moment where we "lived with no consequences," but now, we have our whole life ahead of us. There is great power in endings. It takes us to the beginning of whatever was meant for us next. Anything we dream of, anything we set our minds to, is achievable. It's our moment to be whoever we want to be, make our own decisions, and finally live our own lives, just like a butterfly. Though that might be intimidating, we're free now. In four truly short years, we will break out of our cocoon into the world to make our own stories, our own moments, and our own memories. So, while you're here, it's up to you to build the life you've always dreamed of, do the things you were always scared to do, and make yourself happy. Become the best version of yourself and be the person you've always dreamed you'd be.

No matter how scary that sounds, there are always people here to help.

Sometimes, the smallest step in the right direction becomes the biggest step of your life, but you'll never know until you try. And yes, it might be hard, and it might hurt, but who's to say it's not supposed to? Maybe life isn't about avoiding all the bruises. Maybe it's about collecting the scars to show that we've been there, we've done that, and we've survived. When butterflies have a damaged wing, they compensate with more rapid wingbeats. So when you're down, what's stopping you from brushing it off and trying again? Yes, we'll fall, we'll break, and we'll fail. But we will also rise, heal, and overcome everything that's in our way.

If you're chasing butterflies, they'll always fly away. But if you build a garden full of flowers, the butterflies will come to you. If you work to make the best version of yourself that you can be, everything you want will come to you. With a little bit of hard work, perseverance, and some help here and there, you can make your dreams come true. So maybe the moral of the story is: don't chase the butterfly, become it.



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has held workshops and educational seminars on AI after its recent advancements, but the consensus of faculty remains skeptical. Whether I'm in an accounting, law, computer science, or business foundation class, a forewarning exists of the big bad AI capabilities. Though some professors provide their two cents on whether or not AI is beneficial for the educational setting, most stick to the generic paragraph that explains how it may compromise academic integrity. A year ago, I didn't even know this kind of technology was in the works, and currently being prohibited from using it for the purposes of schoolwork honestly makes me more curious about its potential. Why is it discouraged instead of being embraced? Doesn't the development of technology provide opportunities for more advanced lesson plans? It is also mentioned that "educators see opportunities to use Al-powered capabilities like speech recognition to increase the support available to students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and others who could benefit from greater adaptivity and personalization in digital tools for learning" (OET, 2023). As an individual who was raised by parents with

language barriers and has seen the difficulties faced when catering to individual student needs, it is easy to see the power and potential AI brings to education. The divide between educators in favor of and against (or skeptical of) AI then starts becoming clearer.

When you look closely at the matter, there is some truth and reason for uneasiness on behalf of the educators. Change is scary, especially when arising technology is in a position to minimize the motivation for students to learn. Many professors may have grown up before the internet was a universal tool, whereas information and answers now are at the fingertips of all their students. In its current form, ChatGPT and other sites are not a middle ground for enhancing memory on skills already learned, but rather a shortcut for exhibiting skills one has yet to learn. "Higher order" critical thinking skills are less likely to develop in individuals who are interacting more with technology than with people (Rauf, 2020). AI technology may have been developed to provide tools for learning, yet we have seen the negative impact that it can have by contributing to a prevalent "work smarter, not harder" mentality.

Overall, there is little balance between the goals of education and the use of Al's potential thus far. Some sources explain the dangers of incorporating Al into the classroom environment, while others encourage its usage. Exploration of new territory is never a simple transition, and each individual has their own opinion separate from a professional or educational setting. I see technological advancements such as generative AI as windows for opportunity, so long as they are controlled by the user(s) and not the other way around. As students, we should prioritize learning in a way so that we can adequately contribute inside and outside of the classroom, our careers, and beyond.

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But is any of this even legal? Laws regarding the use of an actor or celebrity's name, image, and likeness (NIL) after their death are incredibly nuanced but usually offer limited protection. "Right to publicity," or protection against the exploitation of NIL for commercial purposes, usually passes from the celebrity to next of kin unless the will grants the rights to another party. Therefore, a celebrity's heirs and estate have the power to determine how their name and likeness are used after their death. In an extreme example, this means an actor could appear posthumously in a pornographic film if their estate consented to it (Velasquez, 2023). To make matters more complicated, celebrities that die unexpectedly often do not have a will in place, making it easier for their estate to exploit their right to publicity.

Only about half the states in the U.S. recognize a postmortem right of publicity, which is "essentially a right to profit from and control commercial use of the deceased's name, voice, signature, photograph or likeness" (Townsend, 2022). These laws basically require consent from the deceased's heirs before their persona can be used for any commercial purpose.

According to attorneys Erik Kahn and Pou-I "Bonnie" Lee, the duration of the right after a celebrity's death varies from 10 to 100 years, depending on the state. In some states, postmortem rights laws are only applicable to those who died after the laws were enacted. In Illinois, for example, the statute does not protect any celebrity that died before January 1, 1999 (Kahn & Lee, 2016). Some states, like Texas and California, require that the deceased's persona have commercial value at the time of death, meaning their laws do not apply to the average citizen. Other states' postmortem rights laws only apply if

the individual was domiciled or resided within the state at the time of death (Townsend, 2022).

Even when covered by a postmortem right law, the "use of name or likeness may be permissible under the First Amendment" if the work is expressive or is creative content that is "related to the deceased" or "transformative" (Kahn & Lee, 2016). For example, California's postmortem right statute only applies to the unauthorized use of a deceased celebrity's NIL on or in products, merchandise, goods, services, or the advertisement/solicitation of such things. The statute makes it clear that a creative work is not considered a product or service "if it is fictional or nonfictional entertainment, or a dramatic, literary, or musical work" (Townsend, 2022). In other words, the First Amendment offers broad protections for those using a dead (or living) celebrity's name and likeness, even without the direct consent of the celebrity's heirs or estate.

The Lanham Act offers some federal protection for celebrities in terms of trademark infringement and false/ misleading advertising, but only when "the use of the personal identification 'be likely to confuse as to the sponsorship or approval of a defendant's goods'" (Kahn & Lee, 2016). Overall, there are few legal regulations for how a celebrity's name, image, and likeness can be used after their death, meaning there is little protecting them from a digital revival. It's important to note that most of these laws only protect individuals with well-known personalities. Average citizens have far less control over how their likeness and data are used when they die.

Legal issues aside, the ethics of resurrecting dead actors and celebrities are even thornier. There's a big

difference between using CGI to finish scenes when an actor dies before production wraps and reviving someone for a completely new project that's unrelated to their legacy. Further, relying solely on content the actor created when they were alive, like archived footage and audio recordings, poses less of an ethical issue than a completely artificial digital clone at the mercy of VFX artists. As computer technology advances, it will become more difficult for audiences to tell real from fake. This might lead to confusion whether a digital double is in fact the real actor. or that the deceased authorized the actions of the double.

Some may argue that this advanced technology allows an actor to keep performing and provides a way to honor their memory. These digital doubles are more than just an impression of the deceased because data from the real actor trains the double's performance so that it acts, speaks, and moves just like them. Regarding Carrie Fisher's digital clone in Star Wars Episode IX, Guyett explained that "when you see her in the movie and you're looking at her face, that's her performance, and it's just the rest that's like a magic trick" (Guyett gtd. in Levine, 2021). Further, this technology opens a wide range of new creative opportunities and provides important solutions when an actor dies before their character's story is complete. Yet it becomes difficult to ensure that the production company or the executors of the estate aren't exploiting the celebrity's legacy for their own benefit.

While Galaxy Chocolate received praise for the stunning effects in their commercial with Audrey Hepburn, audiences also heavily criticized them for turning one of the classiest American icons into a chocolate solicitor (Levine, 2021). Johnnie Walker's commercial with Bruce Lee caused an uproar because the martial arts star was known for living (Continued on page 9)

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a healthy, sober lifestyle. Edwin Lee, a Hong Kong filmmaker, argued that Lee's revival "to promote a product [and] lifestyle he never conformed to nor has a choice in this matter is, I feel, immoral and shows you the lowest depravity of mass marketing these days" (Lee qtd. in Abad-Santos, 2013). The Bruce Lee commercial proved valid actors' fears of their CGI doubles saying or doing things they would not have consented to.

Besides the fact that the dead can't give consent to how their NIL is used, there's also the sentiment that the most respectful thing to do is to let the dead rest in peace. Francis Lawrence, director of The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part 1 and Part 2, chose not to use digital trickery to recreate the late Philip Seymour Hoffman's performance as Plutarch Heavensbee, Gamemakerturned-rebel. Instead, they rewrote the script and conveyed his parting wisdom to Katniss Everdeen through a letter (Freeman, 2014). In an interview with HuffPost Live, Lawrence stood by his decision, stating that "He was one of the greatest actors, I think, of all time and I just think to try to fake a Philip Seymour Hoffman performance would have been catastrophic" (Lawrence qtd. in Freeman, 2014). In terms of Peter Cushing's return

to Star Wars, fan reaction was mixed, with some calling the performance "thrilling" while others felt "bringing Cushing back was both unnecessary and disrespectful" (Levine, 2021).

Another ethical conundrum comes with digital clones taking opportunities from living performers. Voice actors are especially concerned, as they fear studios will use AI to replicate the voice of original actors perpetually rather than hire someone new. But others are quick to point out that while employing dead actors might limit acting opportunities, technology will create many new technical jobs in the industry.

There must be better regulations in place to protect how an individual's name, image, and likeness can be used after their death, for both famous personas and the average citizen, and limits to how the entertainment industry creates and utilizes digital doubles. At the end of the day, is it right to reduce the complexities and nuances of an actual human being and all their lived experiences to a computer algorithm?

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Editorial Team



Hailey Jennato '24

Chief Editor Major: Marketing Minors: Media Arts and Society LSM (She/Her/Hers)



Samson Shen '24

Major: Quantitative Economics Minors: Mathematics and Sociology (He/Him/His)



Clara Williams '25

Major: Accounting Minors: ESG and Public Policy (She/Her/Hers)

Contributors



Nayeli Franco '24 Major: Accounting Minors: Law and Computer Information Systems (She/Her/Hers)



Isabella Ramirez Perdomo '26

Major: Corporate Finance and Accounting Minor: Politics (She/Her/Hers)



Alyssa Galin '27 Major: Undecided Minor: Undecided (She/Her/Hers)



Yun Song '26 Major: Business Economics Minor: Business Administration (She/Her/Hers)



Major: Finance and Computer Information Systems Minor: Business Administration (He/Him/His)

Honors students, keep an eye out for the opportunity to write for the Spring 2024 Issue of *Columnas.*