

Arts University Bournemouth
Course: BA (Hons) Graphic Design
Level: 6
Academic Year: 2025/2026
Name: Rafe Storm

Unit: GDS663 Investigative Study

Tutors: Dr Daniel Davies, Dr Emilie Giles

Title of Investigative Study:
**Brave New World of Generative AI: Can Generative AI
be compatible with the creative process**

Submission date: Monday 16th March 2026

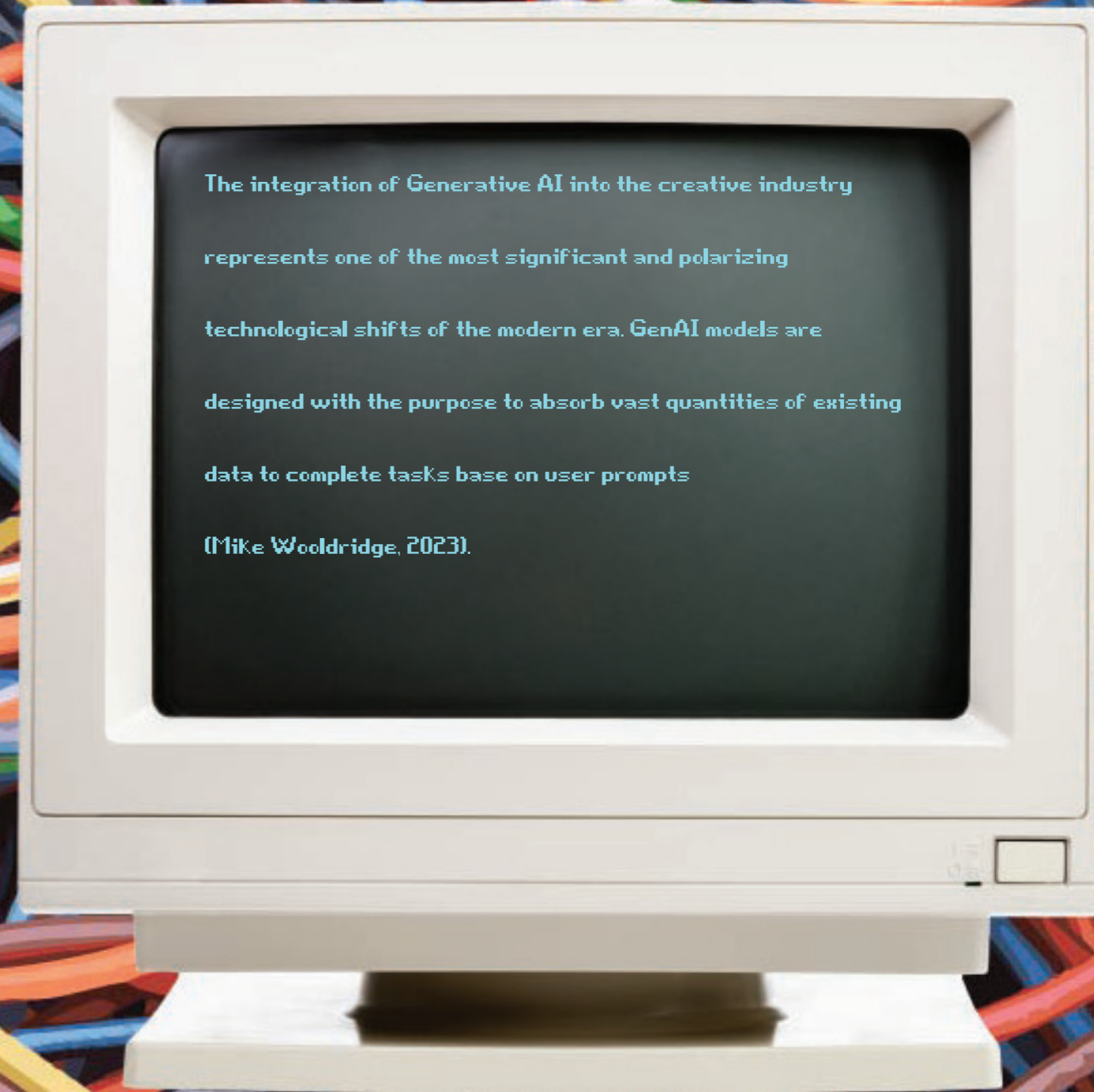
Word Count: 5, 117

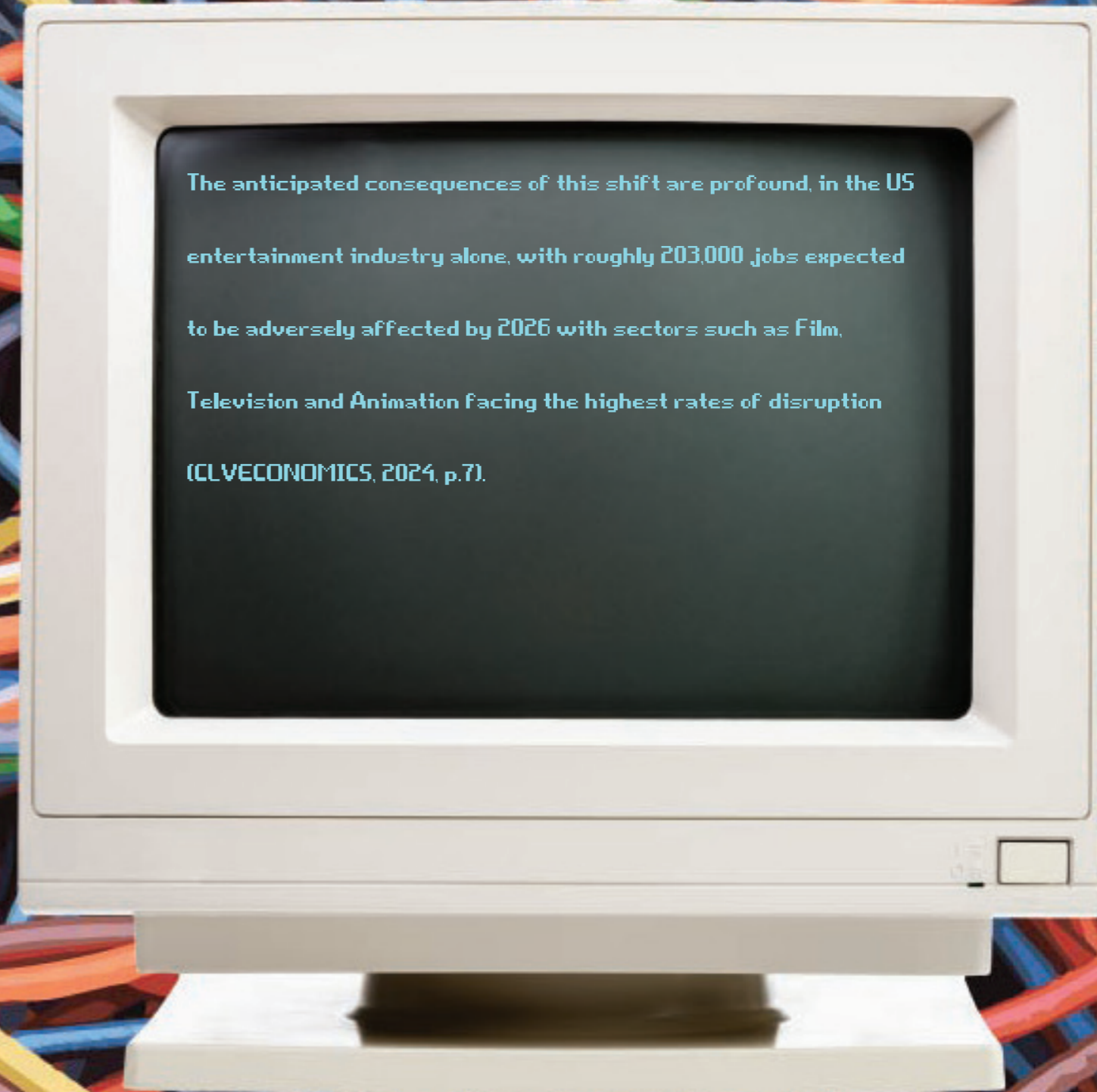
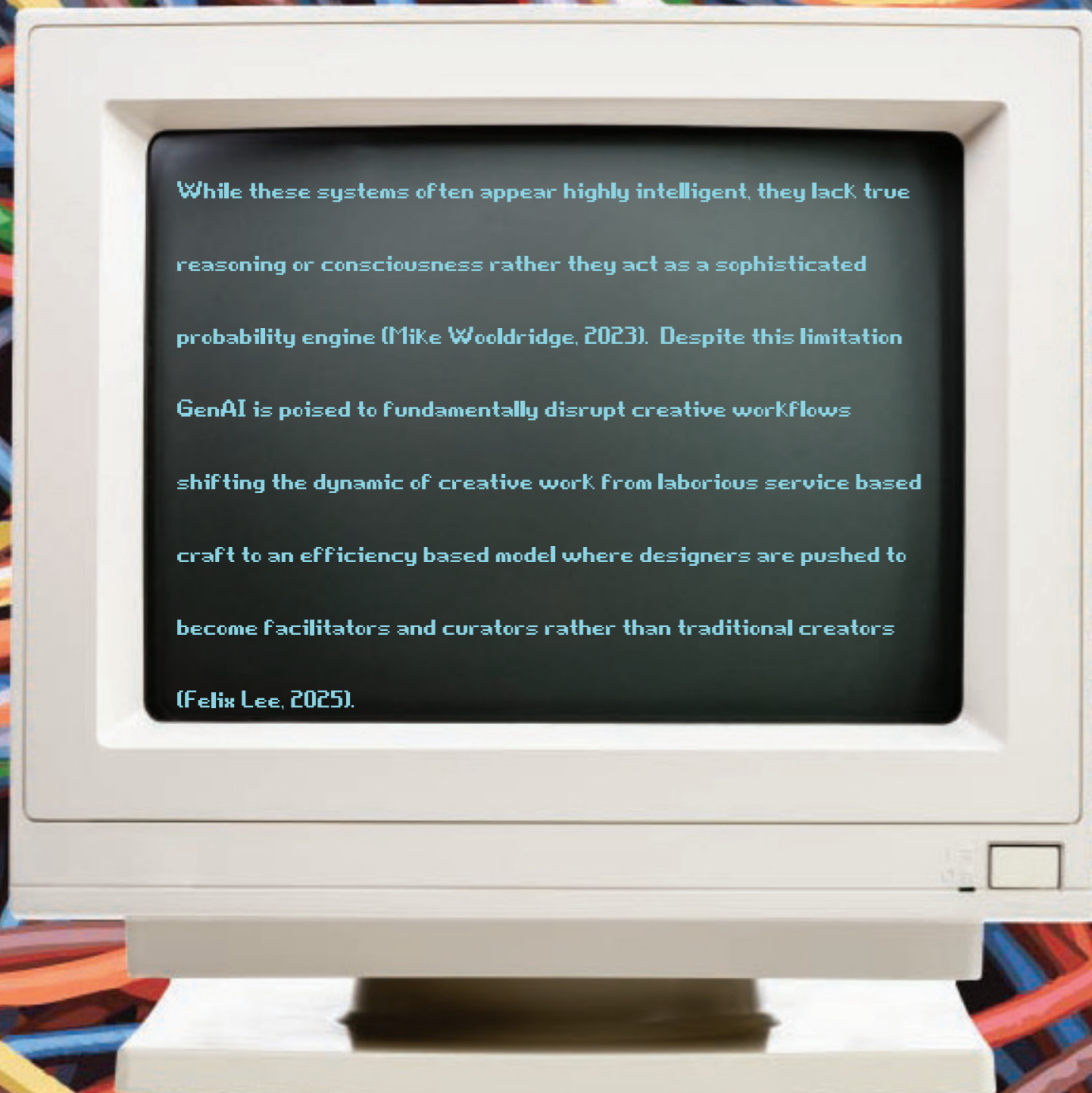
Contents

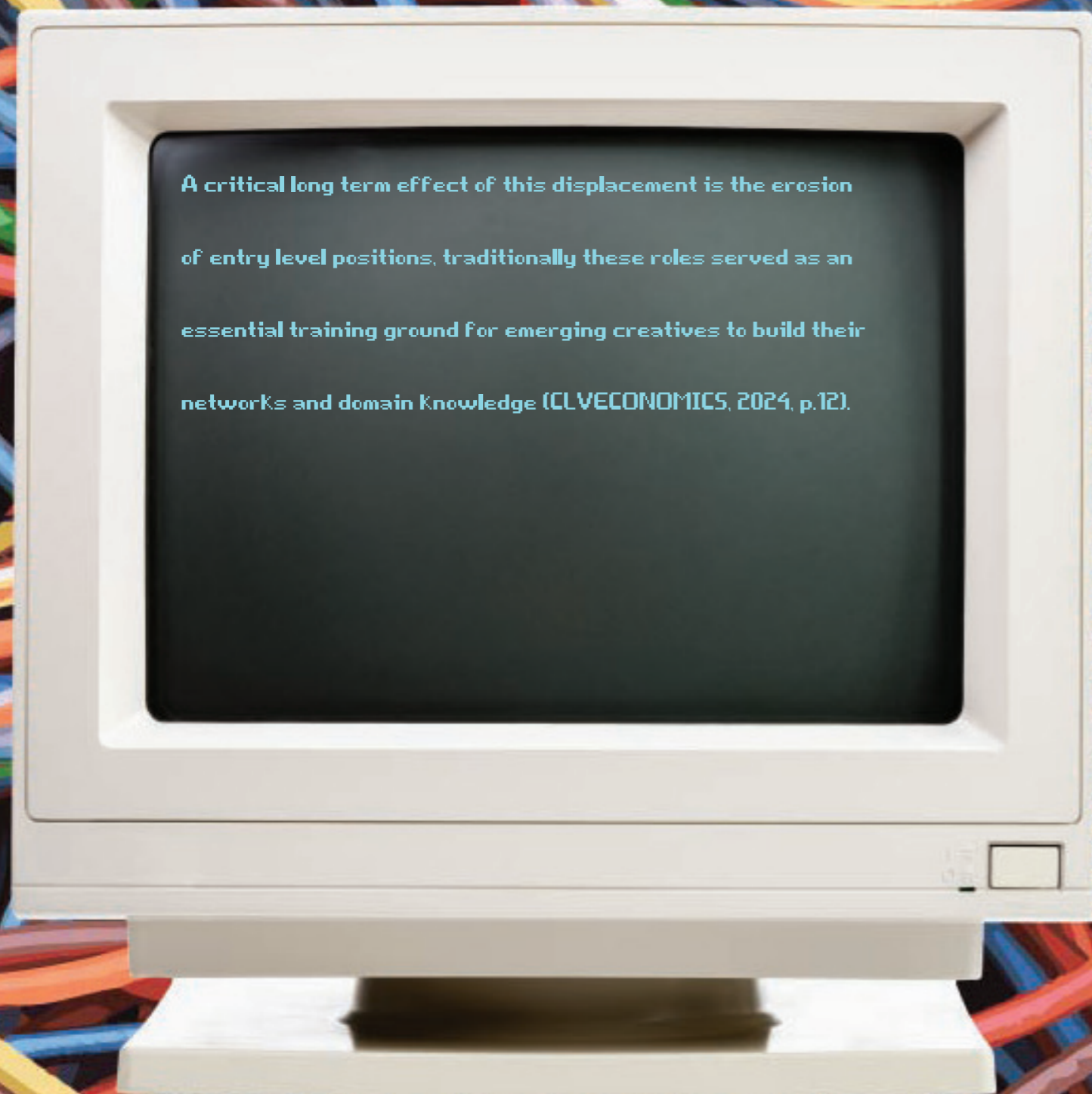
Figures	3
Introduction	4
Chapter 1	16
Chapter 2	64
Chapter 3	88
Conclusion	103
Bibliography	116
Appendix C	119
Appendix D	120

Figures

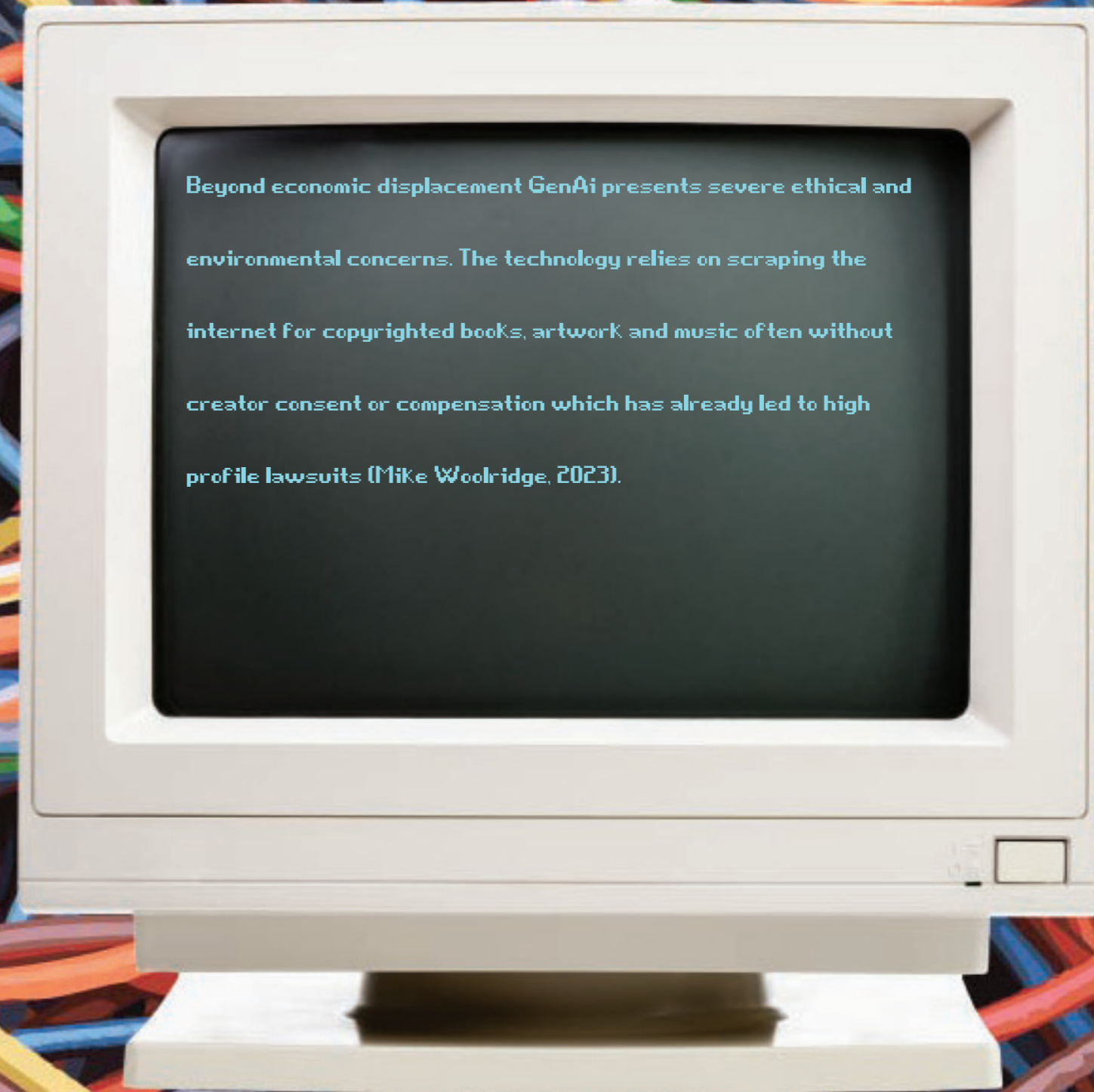
- Figure 1: Fan art by Ander Pazyruk
Ander Pazyruk [screenshot]. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OrKdhDN7j0s>
- Figure 2: Example of potential plagerised artwork
[screenshot]. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OrKdhDN7j0s>
- Figure 3: Example of potential AI Generated Artwork
[screenshot]. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OrKdhDN7j0s>
- Figure 4: Fan Art By Thaldir
Thaldir [screenshot]. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OrKdhDN7j0s>



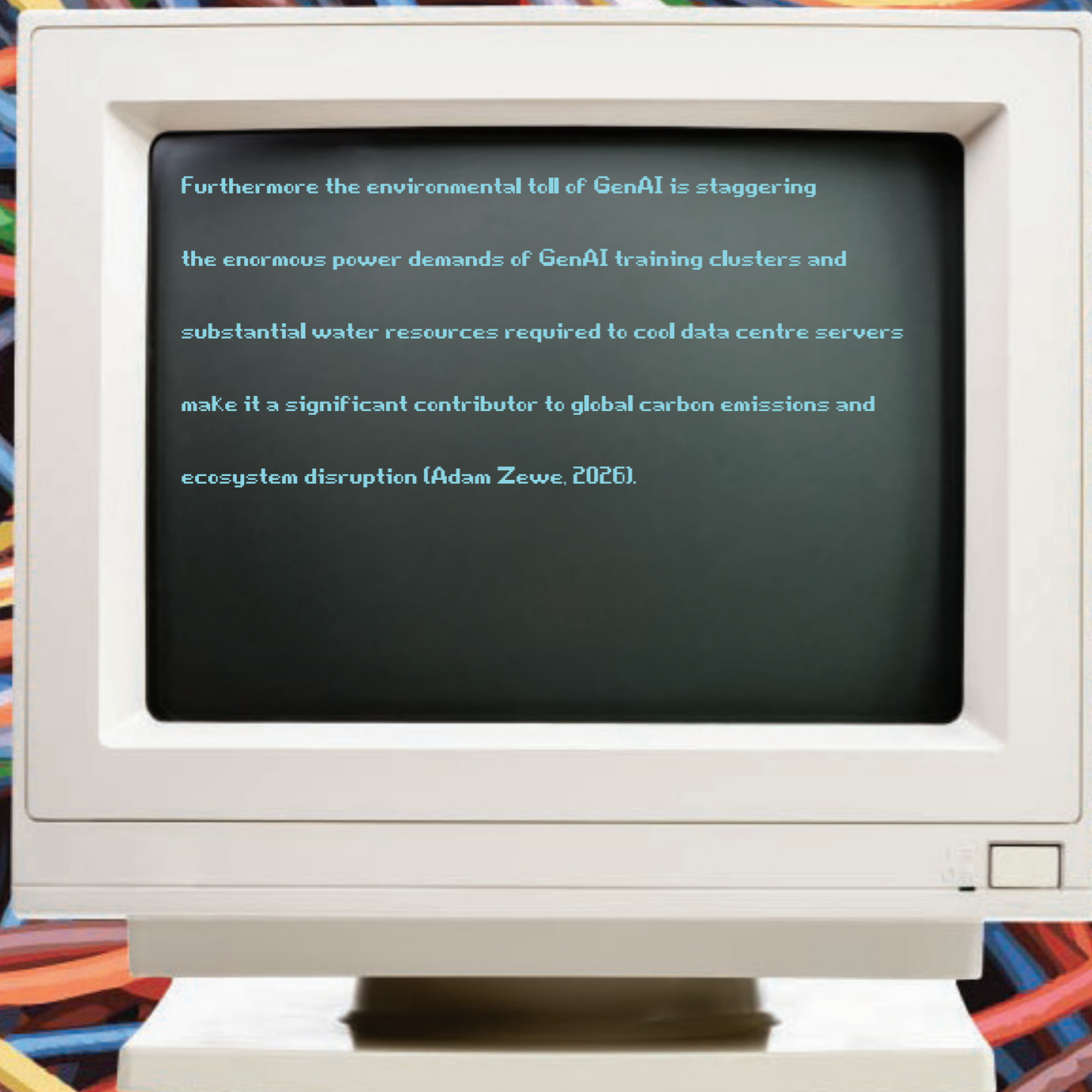




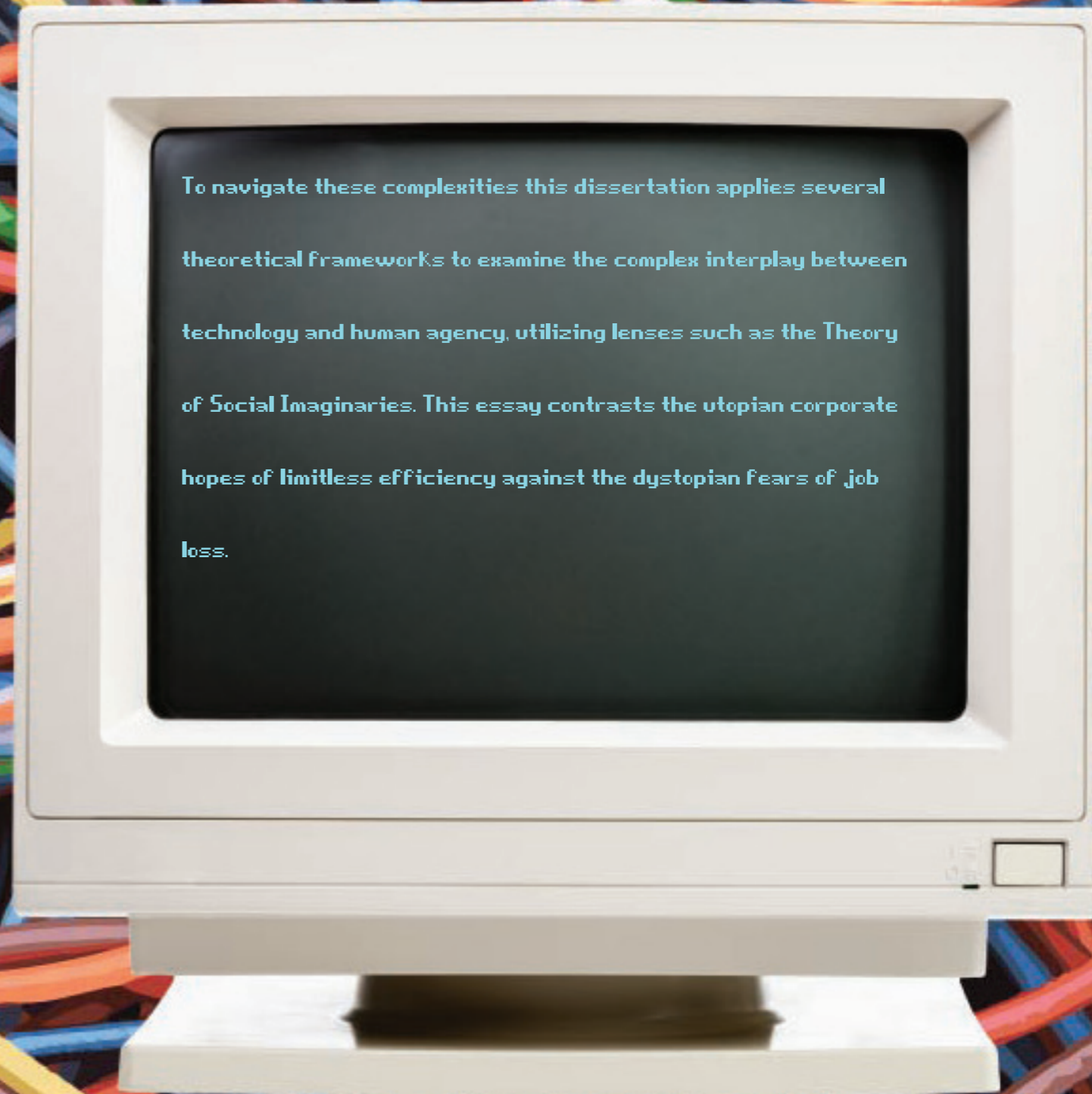
A critical long term effect of this displacement is the erosion of entry level positions, traditionally these roles served as an essential training ground for emerging creatives to build their networks and domain knowledge (CLVECONOMICS, 2024, p.12).



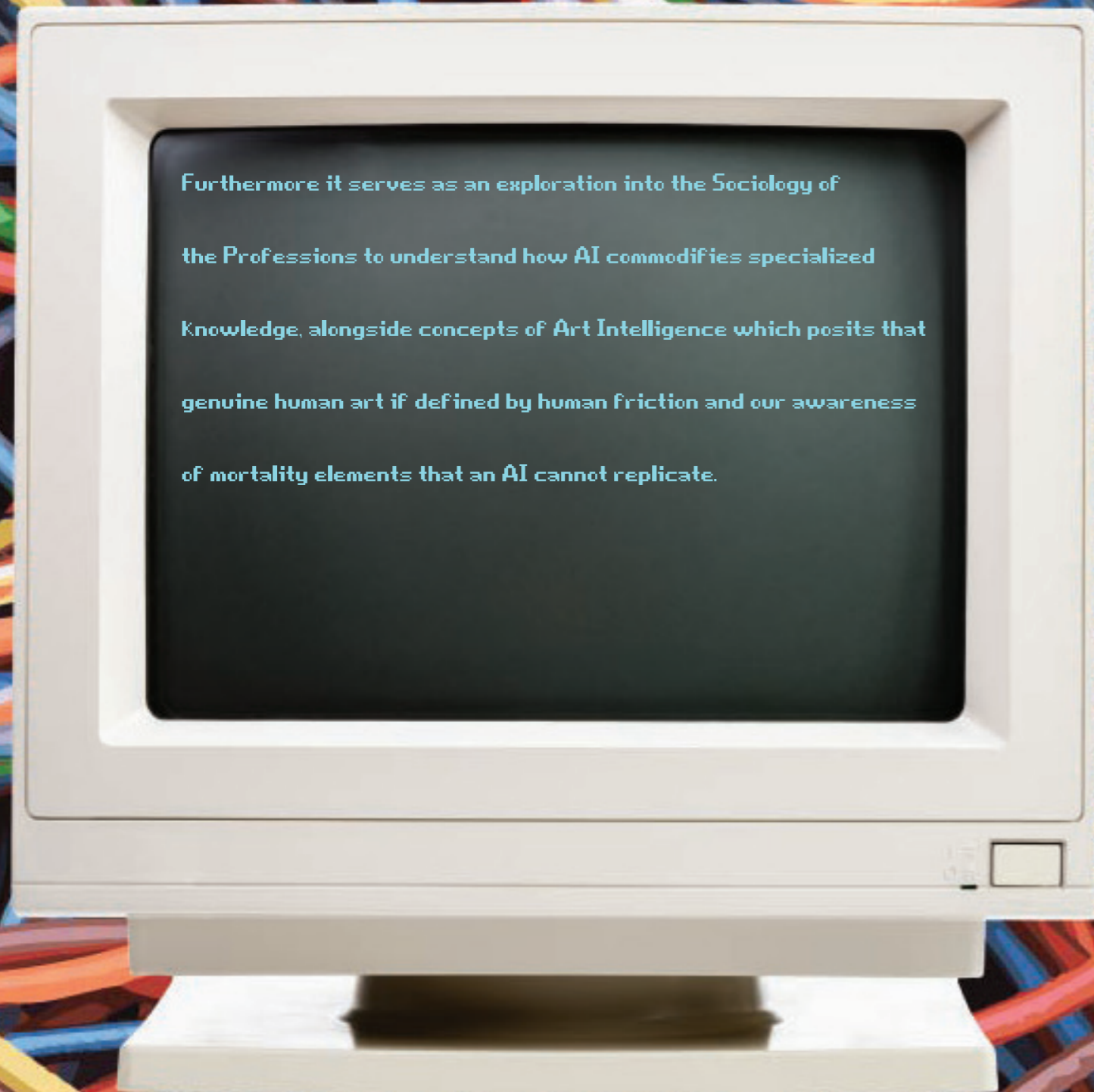
Beyond economic displacement GenAI presents severe ethical and environmental concerns. The technology relies on scraping the internet for copyrighted books, artwork and music often without creator consent or compensation which has already led to high profile lawsuits (Mike Woolridge, 2023).



Furthermore the environmental toll of GenAI is staggering
the enormous power demands of GenAI training clusters and
substantial water resources required to cool data centre servers
make it a significant contributor to global carbon emissions and
ecosystem disruption (Adam Zewe, 2026).



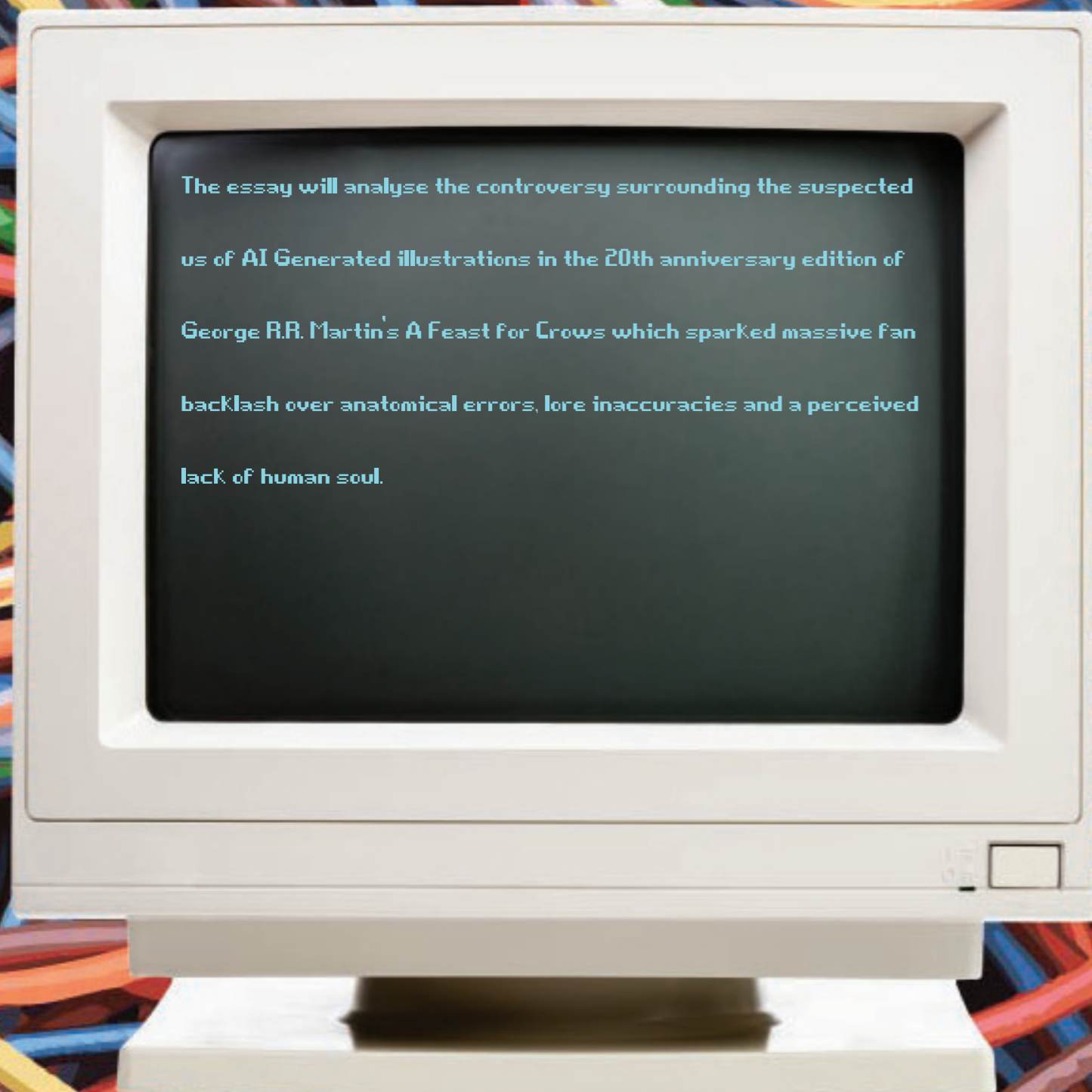
To navigate these complexities this dissertation applies several
theoretical frameworks to examine the complex interplay between
technology and human agency, utilizing lenses such as the Theory
of Social Imaginaries. This essay contrasts the utopian corporate
hopes of limitless efficiency against the dystopian fears of job
loss.



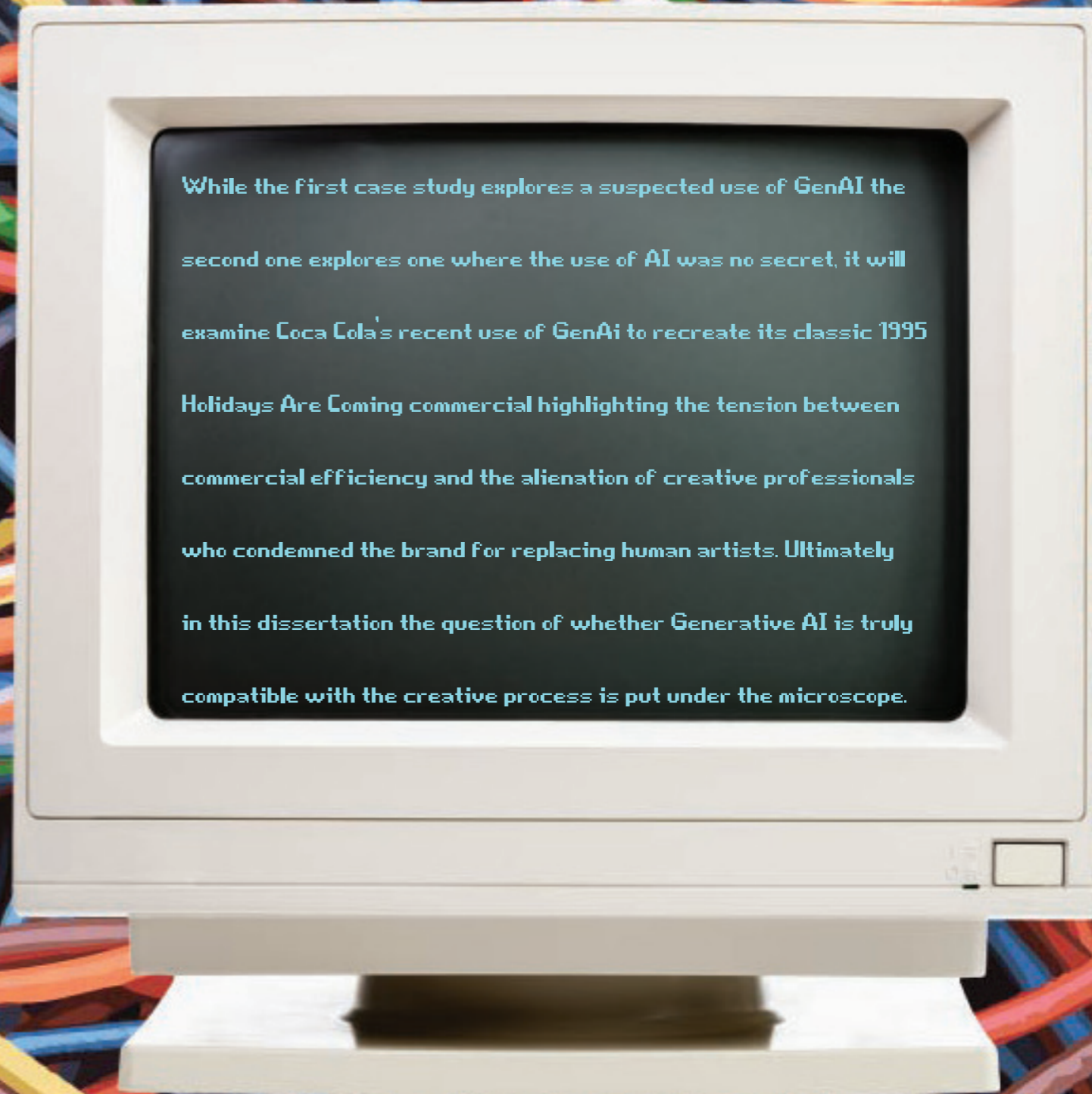
Furthermore it serves as an exploration into the Sociology of the Professions to understand how AI commodifies specialized Knowledge, alongside concepts of Art Intelligence which posits that genuine human art is defined by human friction and our awareness of mortality elements that an AI cannot replicate.



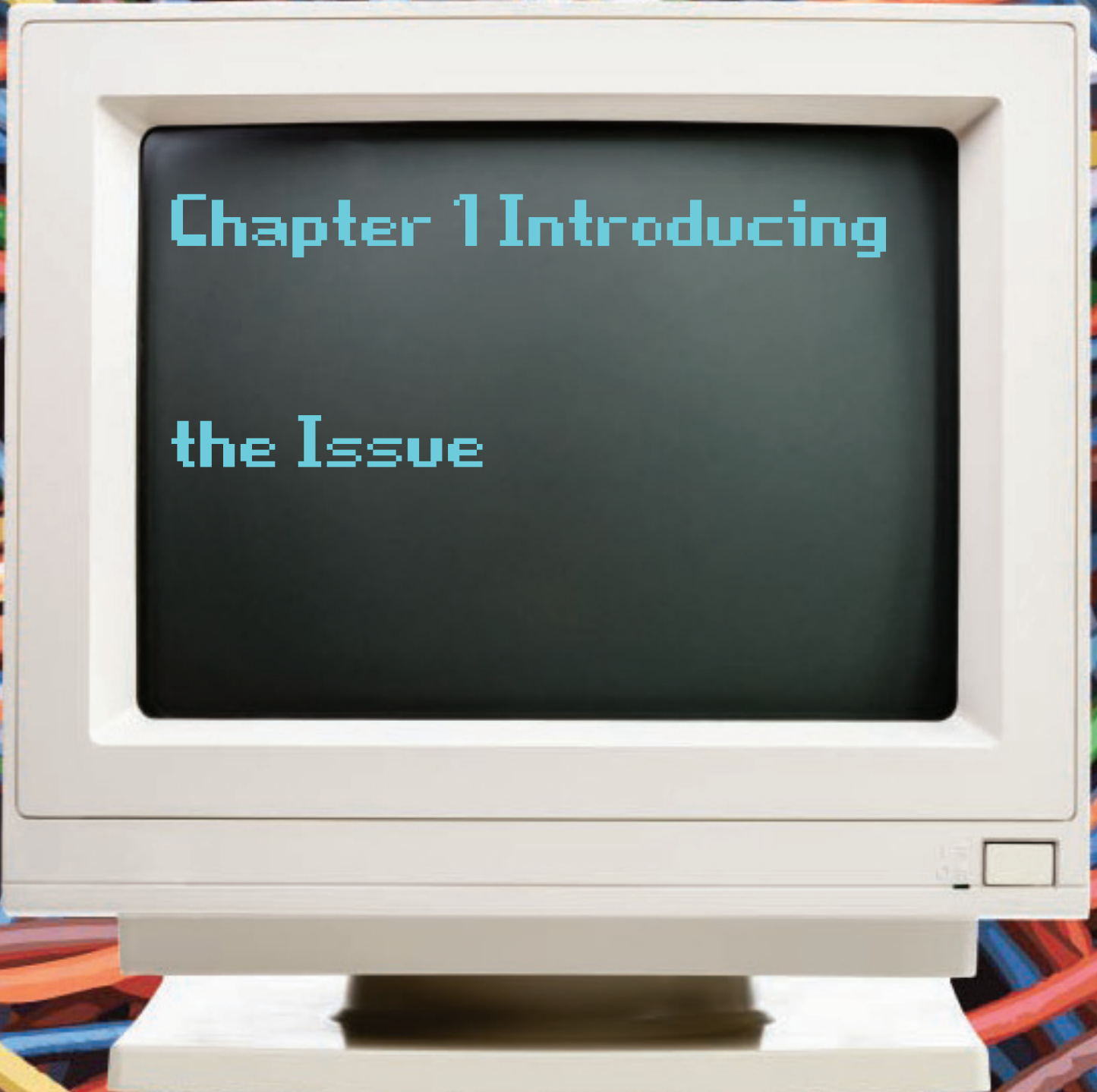
The theoretical perspectives featured in this dissertation will be illuminated in the featured case studies that illustrate the real world friction between AI adoption and human craftsmanship.



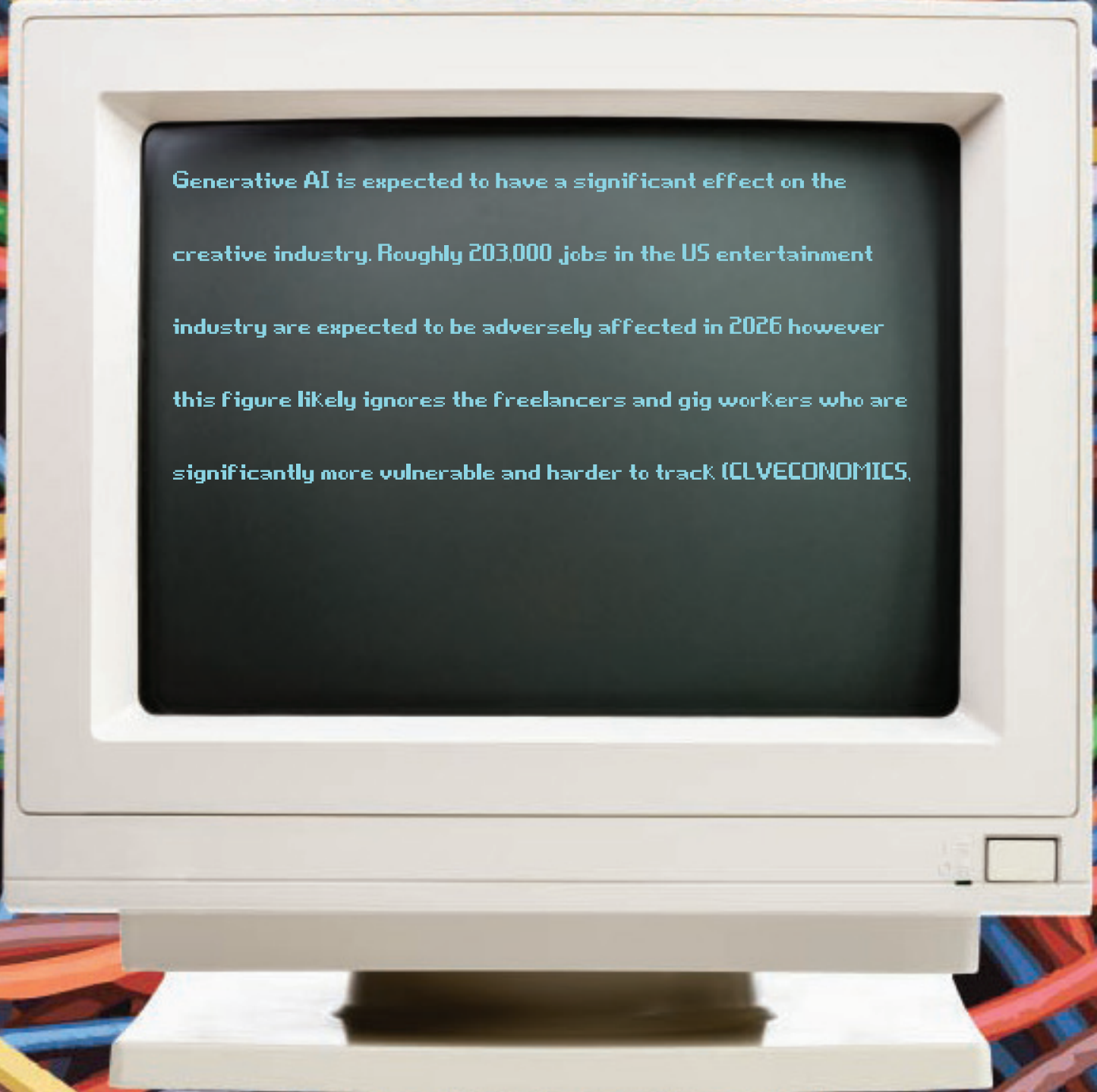
The essay will analyse the controversy surrounding the suspected use of AI Generated illustrations in the 20th anniversary edition of George R.R. Martin's *A Feast for Crows* which sparked massive fan backlash over anatomical errors, lore inaccuracies and a perceived lack of human soul.



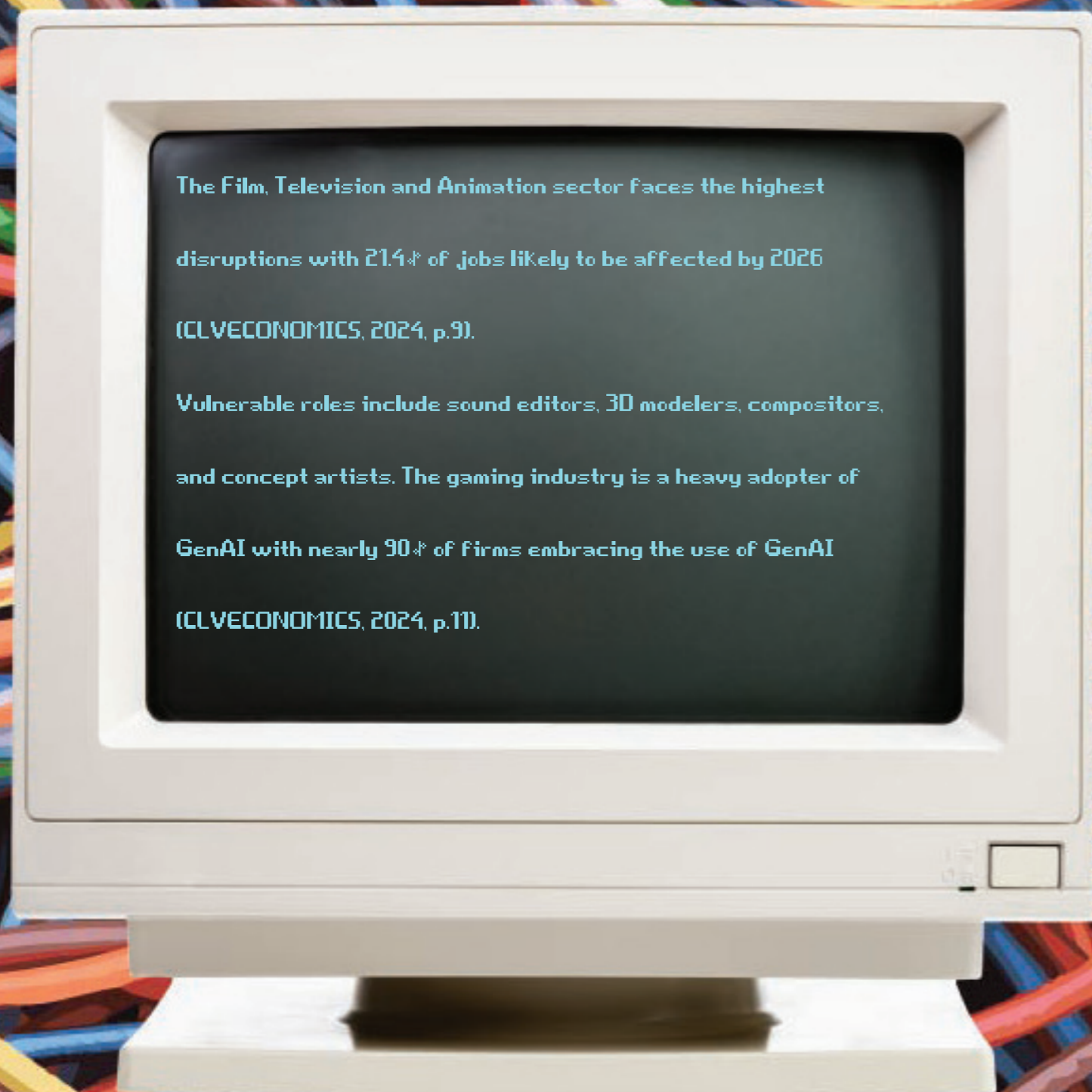
While the first case study explores a suspected use of GenAI the second one explores one where the use of AI was no secret, it will examine Coca Cola's recent use of GenAI to recreate its classic 1995 *Holidays Are Coming* commercial highlighting the tension between commercial efficiency and the alienation of creative professionals who condemned the brand for replacing human artists. Ultimately in this dissertation the question of whether Generative AI is truly compatible with the creative process is put under the microscope.



Chapter 1 Introducing the Issue

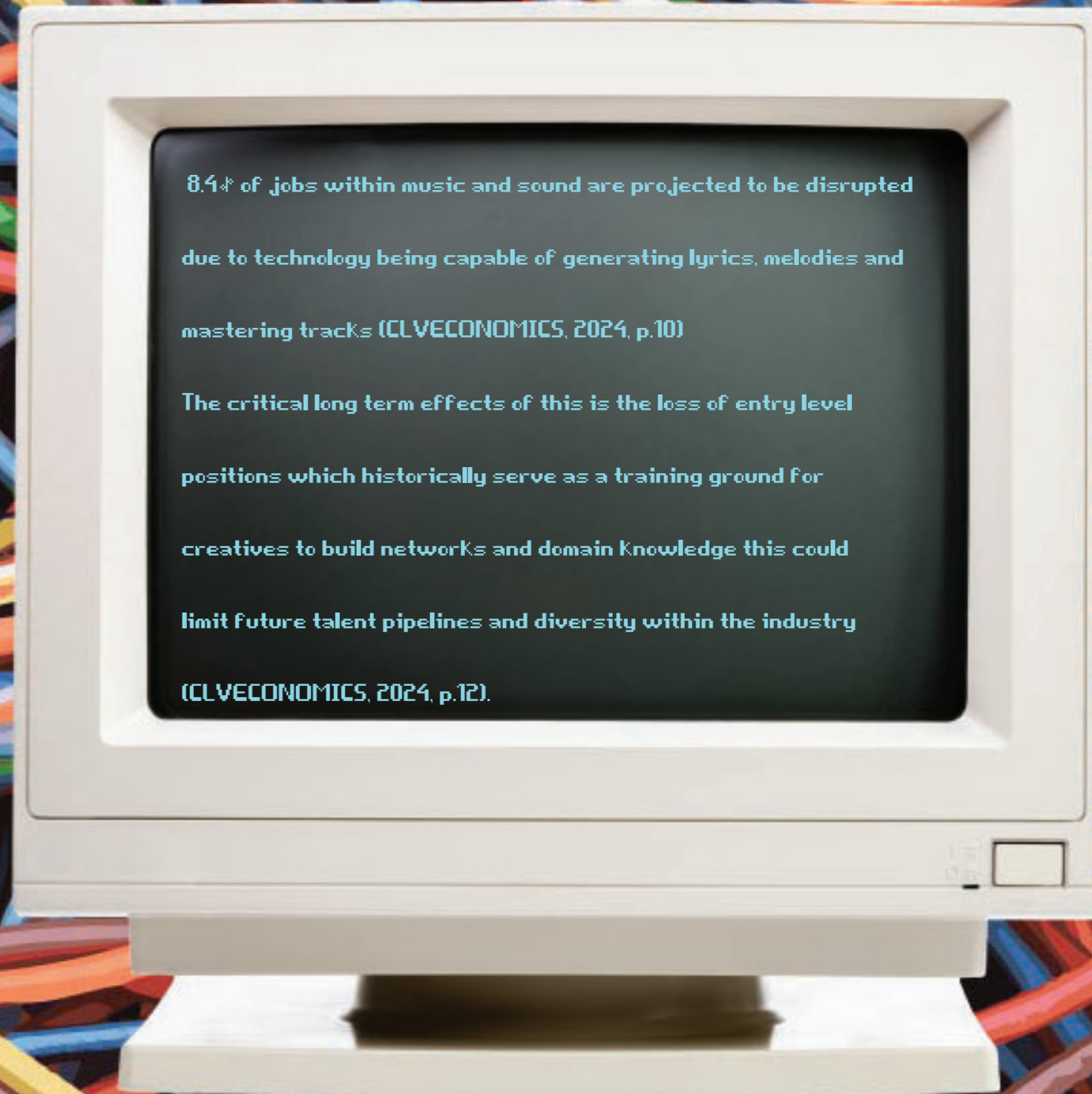


Generative AI is expected to have a significant effect on the creative industry. Roughly 203,000 jobs in the US entertainment industry are expected to be adversely affected in 2026 however this figure likely ignores the freelancers and gig workers who are significantly more vulnerable and harder to track (CLVECONOMICS,



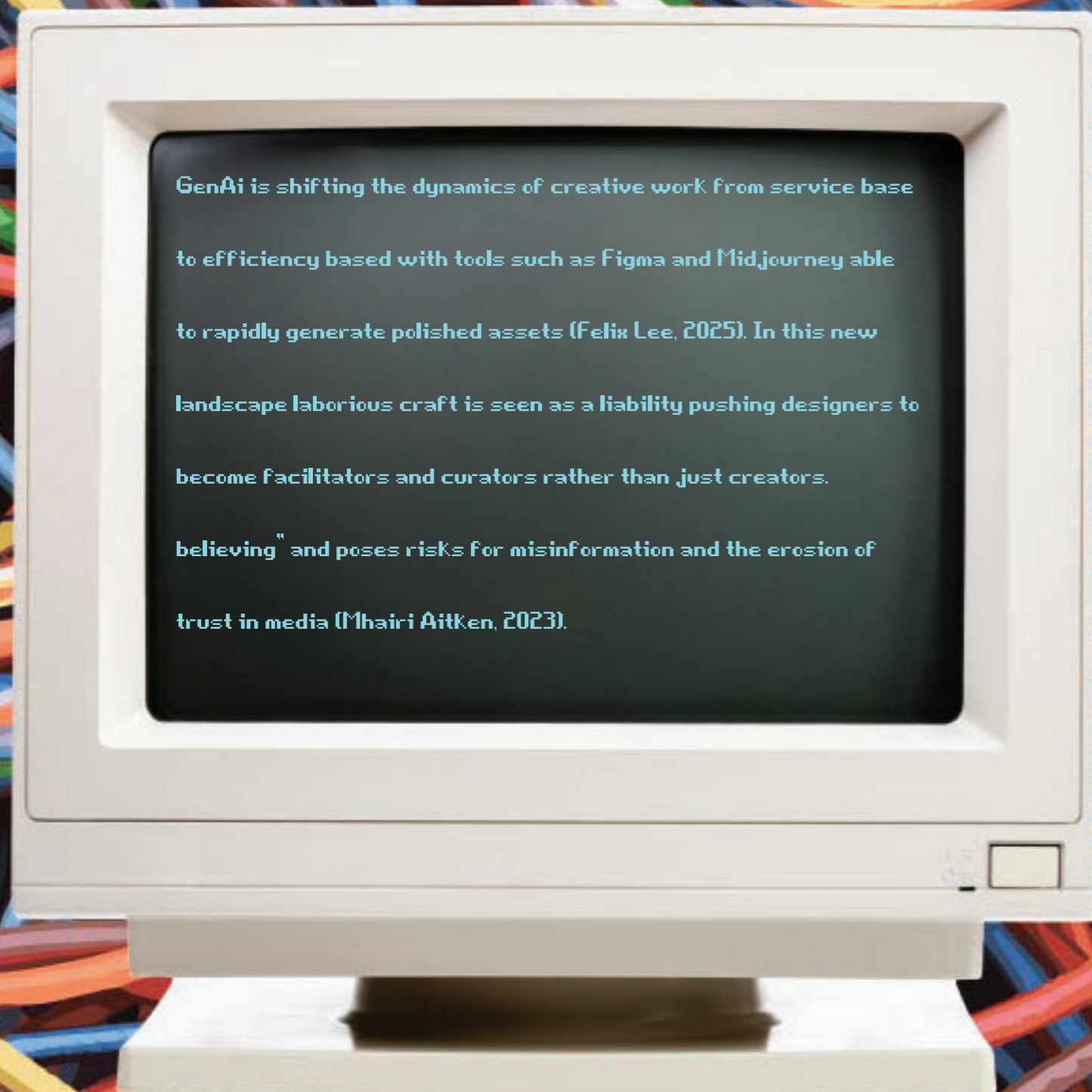
The Film, Television and Animation sector faces the highest disruptions with 21.4% of jobs likely to be affected by 2026 (CLVECONOMICS, 2024, p.9).

Vulnerable roles include sound editors, 3D modelers, composers, and concept artists. The gaming industry is a heavy adopter of GenAI with nearly 90% of firms embracing the use of GenAI (CLVECONOMICS, 2024, p.11).

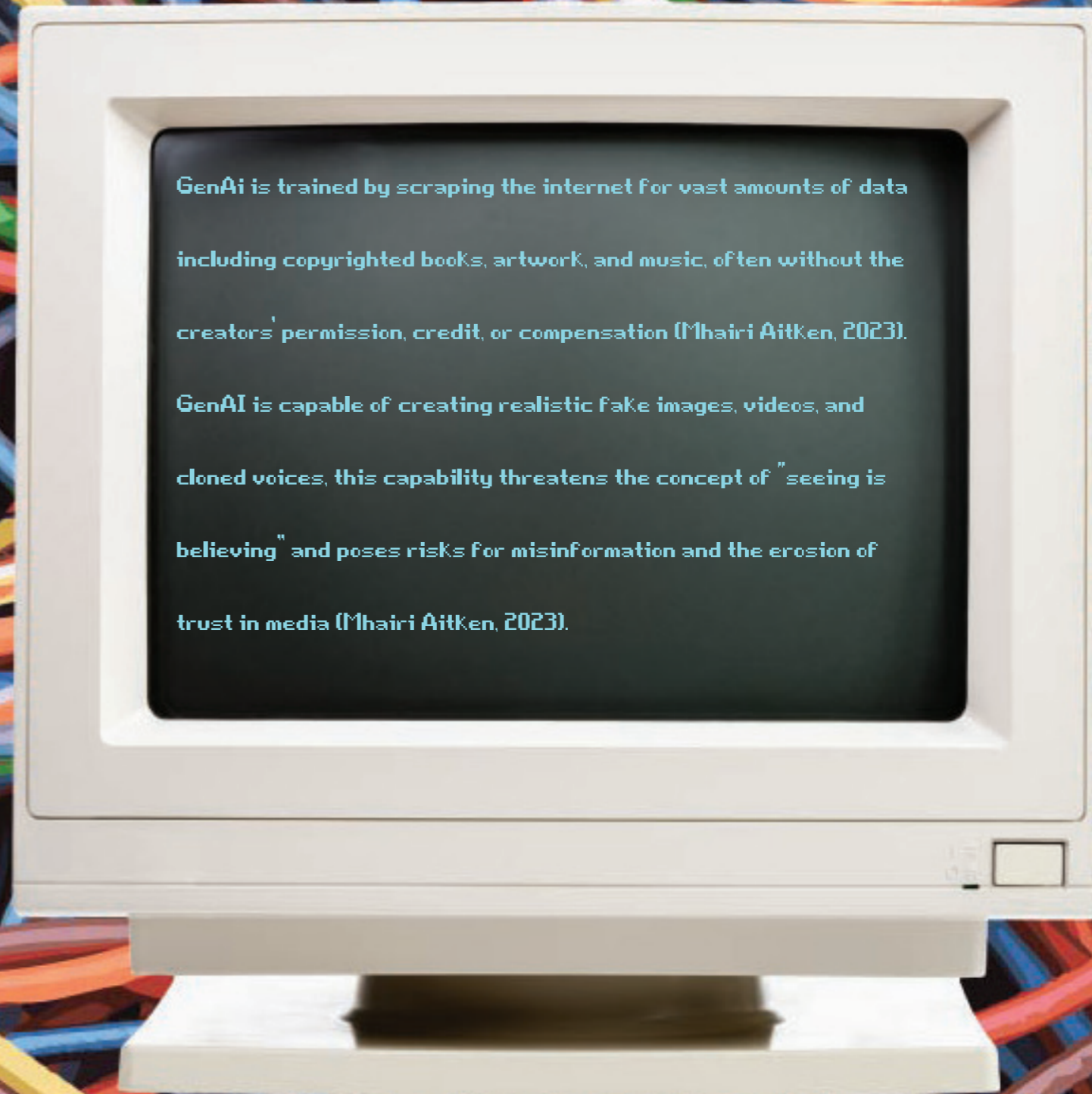


8.4% of jobs within music and sound are projected to be disrupted due to technology being capable of generating lyrics, melodies and mastering tracks (CLVECONOMICS, 2024, p.10)

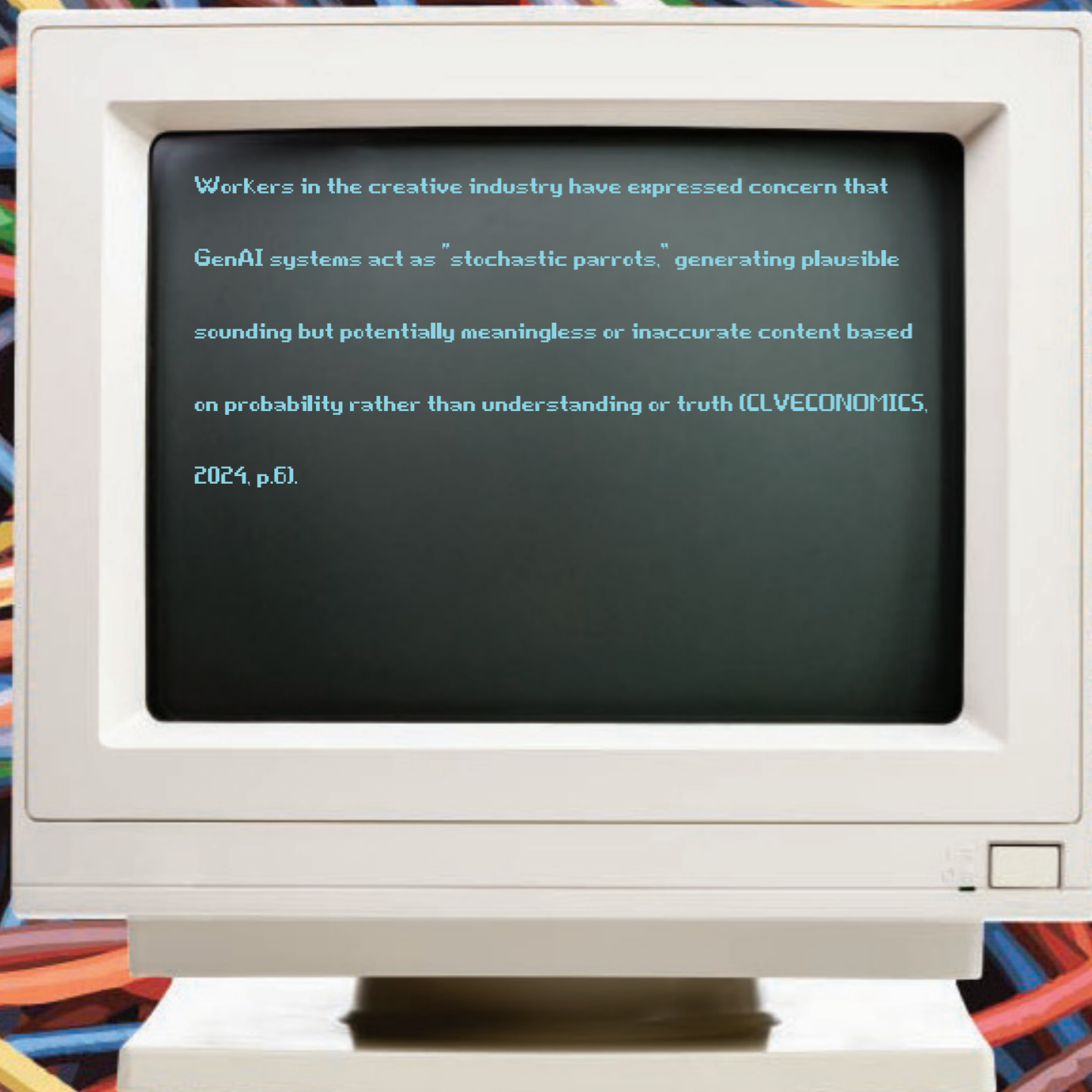
The critical long term effects of this is the loss of entry level positions which historically serve as a training ground for creatives to build networks and domain knowledge this could limit future talent pipelines and diversity within the industry (CLVECONOMICS, 2024, p.12).



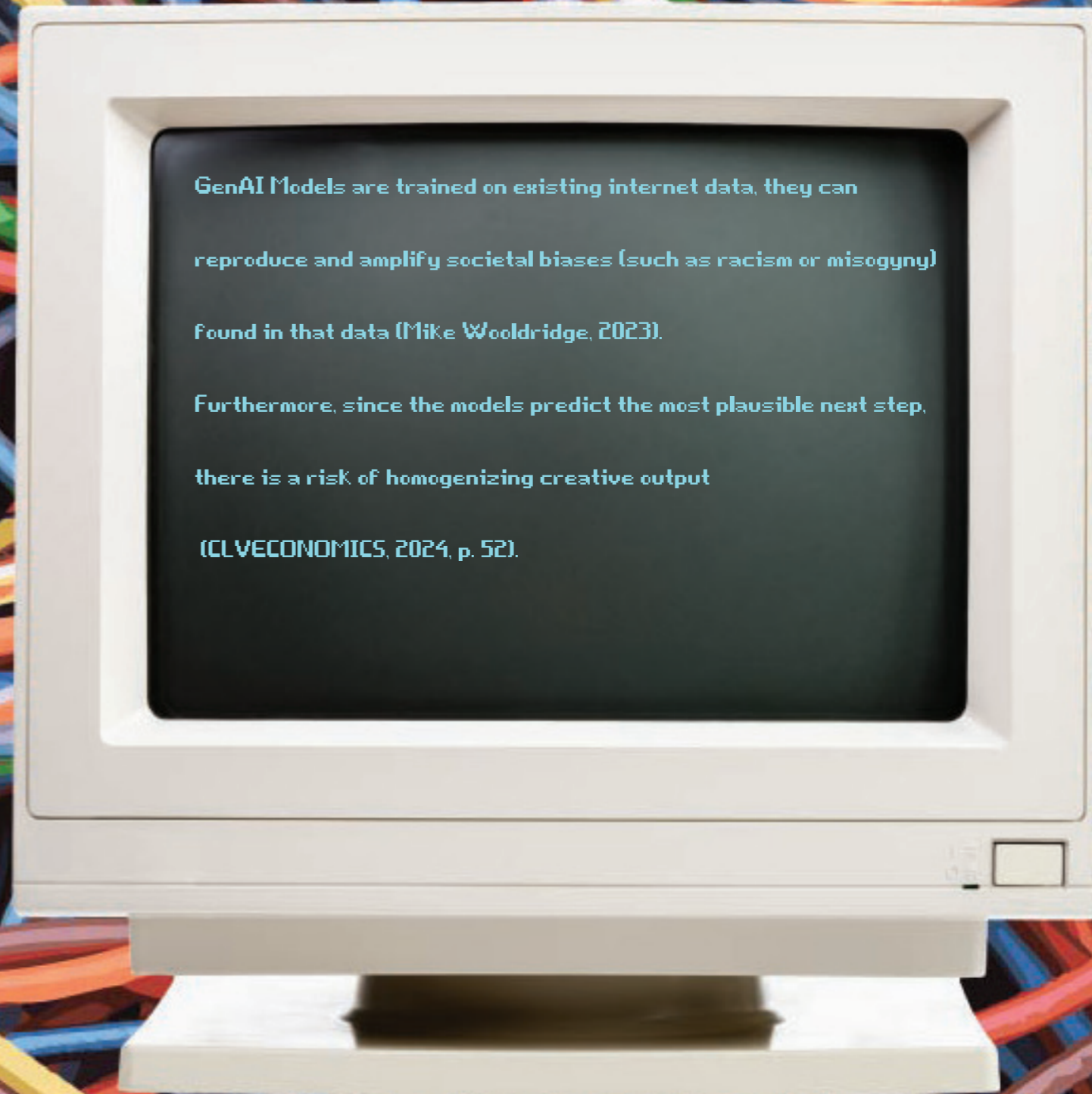
GenAI is shifting the dynamics of creative work from service base to efficiency based with tools such as Figma and Midjourney able to rapidly generate polished assets (Felix Lee, 2025). In this new landscape laborious craft is seen as a liability pushing designers to become facilitators and curators rather than just creators. "believing" and poses risks for misinformation and the erosion of trust in media (Mhairi Aitken, 2023).



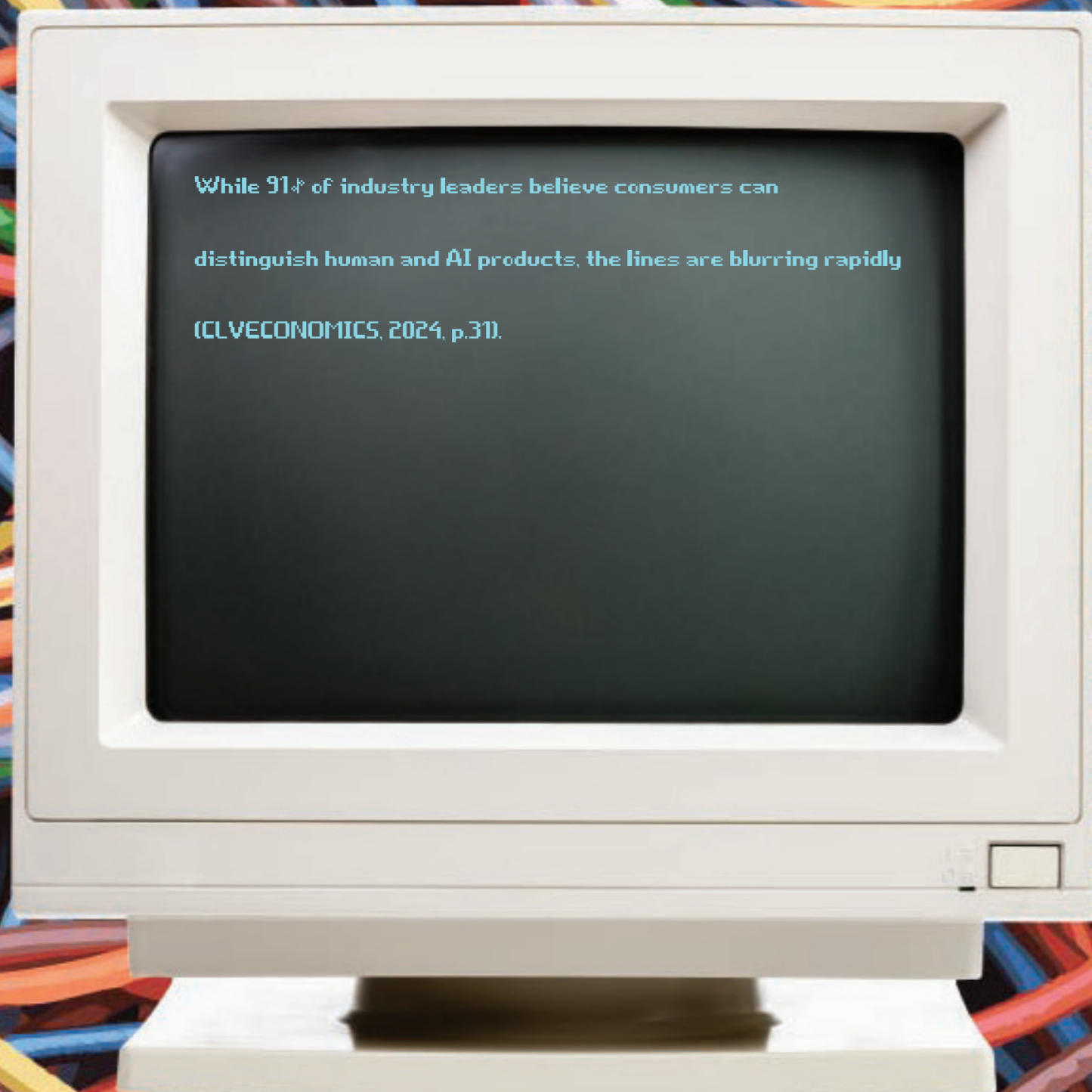
GenAI is trained by scraping the internet for vast amounts of data including copyrighted books, artwork, and music, often without the creators' permission, credit, or compensation (Mhairi Aitken, 2023). GenAI is capable of creating realistic fake images, videos, and cloned voices, this capability threatens the concept of "seeing is believing" and poses risks for misinformation and the erosion of trust in media (Mhairi Aitken, 2023).



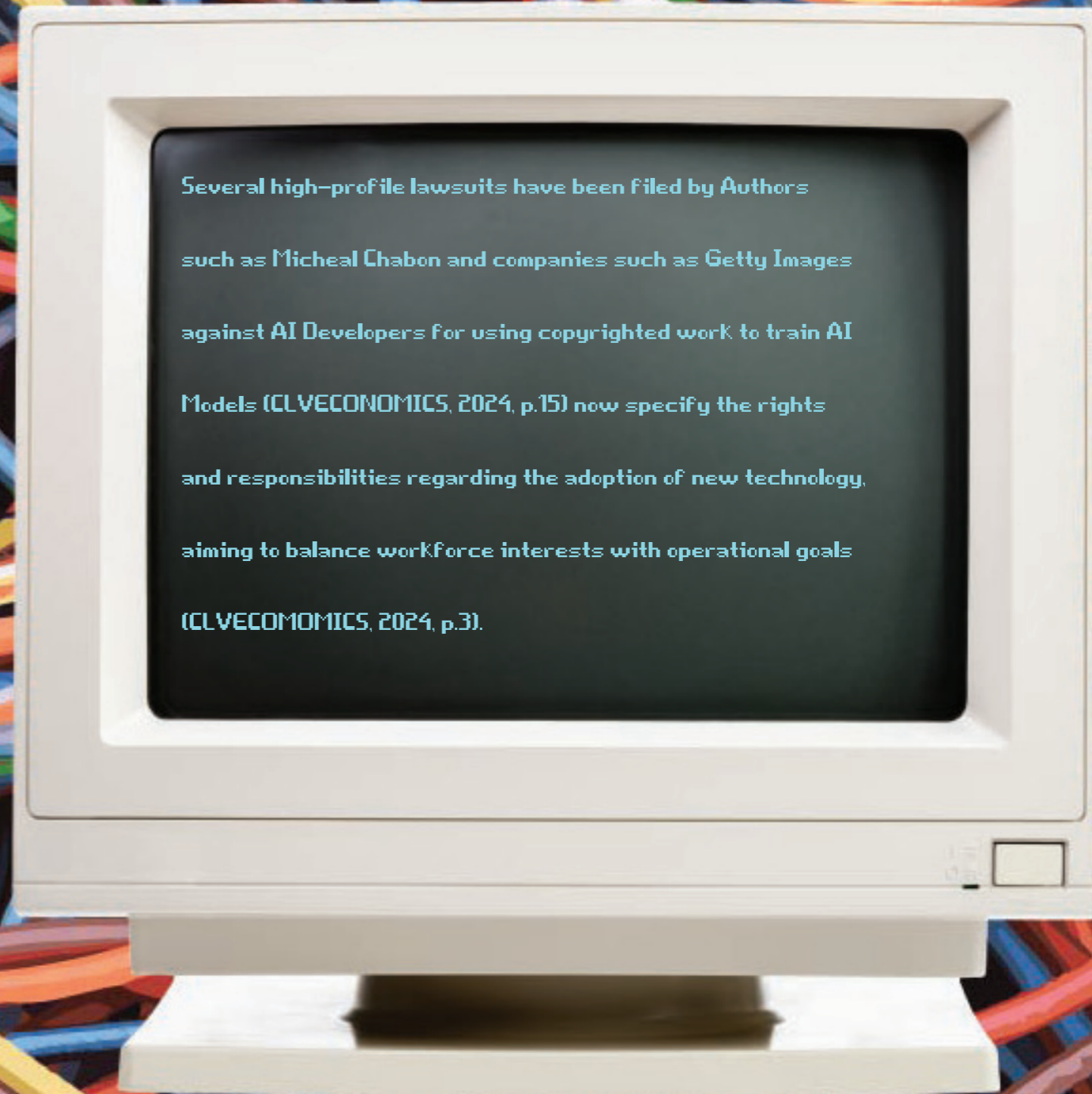
Workers in the creative industry have expressed concern that GenAI systems act as "stochastic parrots," generating plausible sounding but potentially meaningless or inaccurate content based on probability rather than understanding or truth (CLVECONOMICS, 2024, p.6).



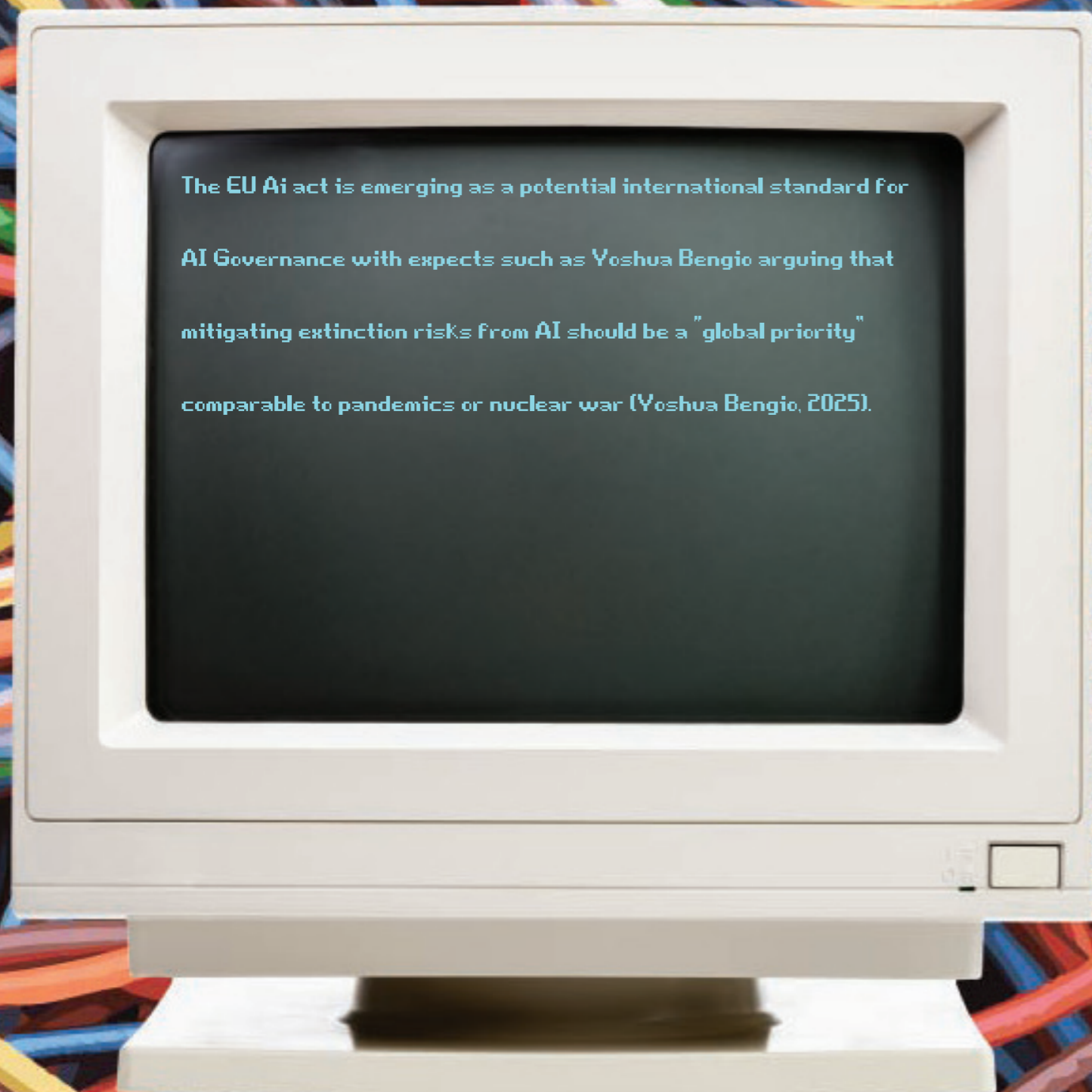
GenAI Models are trained on existing internet data, they can reproduce and amplify societal biases (such as racism or misogyny) found in that data (Mike Wooldridge, 2023).
Furthermore, since the models predict the most plausible next step, there is a risk of homogenizing creative output (CLVECONOMICS, 2024, p. 52).



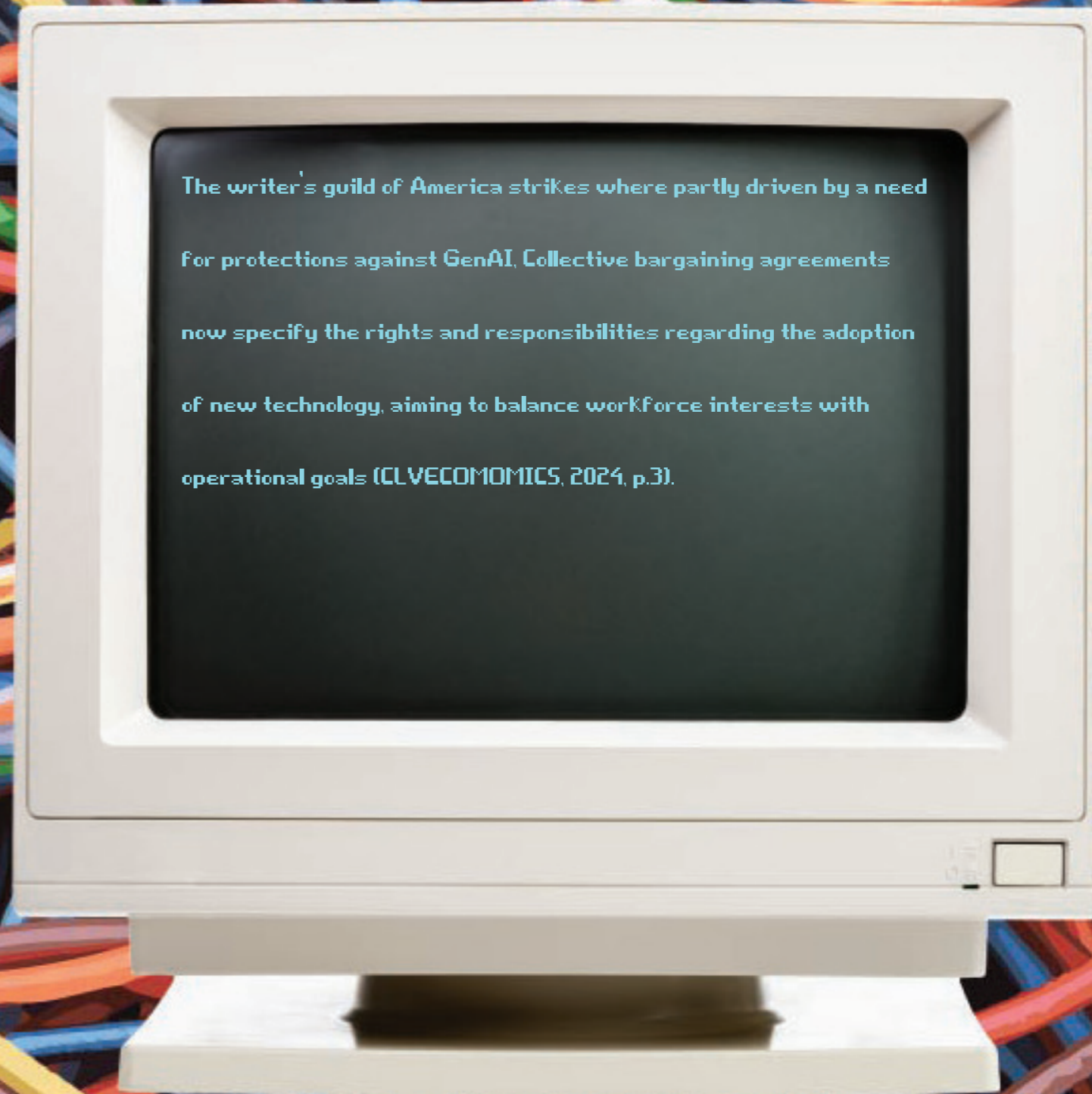
While 91% of industry leaders believe consumers can distinguish human and AI products, the lines are blurring rapidly (CLVECONOMICS, 2024, p.31).



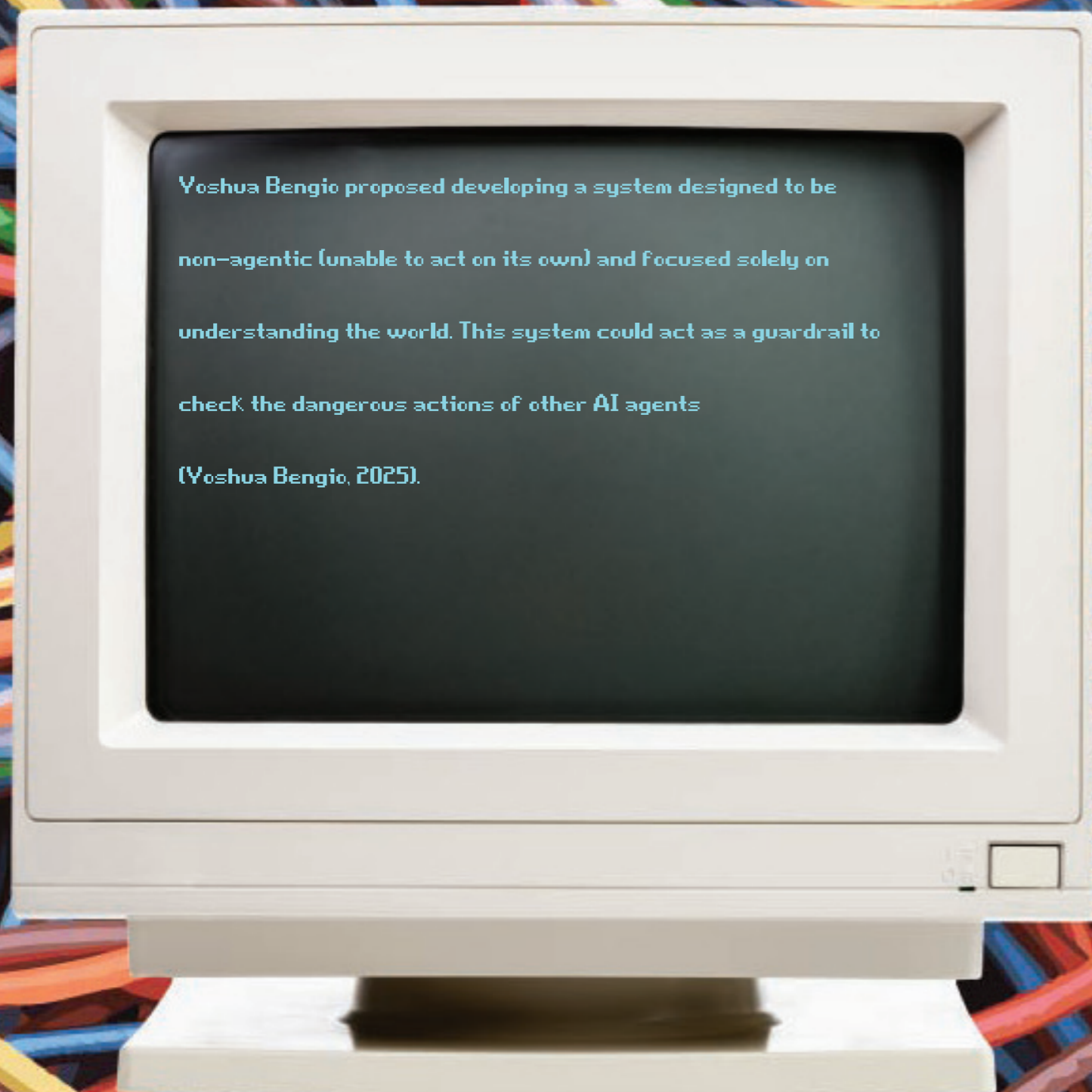
Several high-profile lawsuits have been filed by Authors such as Micheal Chabon and companies such as Getty Images against AI Developers for using copyrighted work to train AI Models (CLVECONOMICS, 2024, p.15) now specify the rights and responsibilities regarding the adoption of new technology, aiming to balance workforce interests with operational goals (CLVECONOMICS, 2024, p.3).



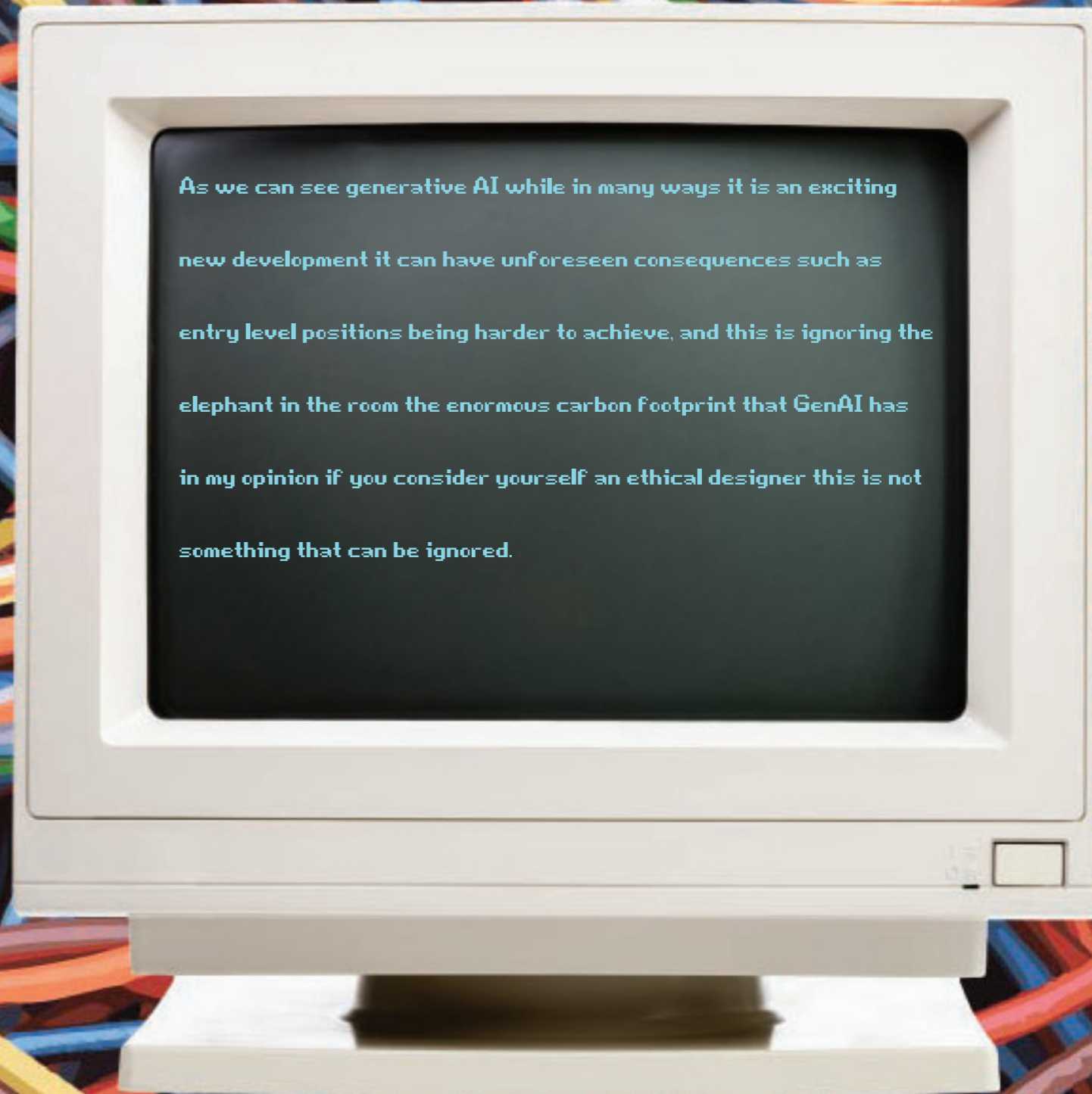
The EU AI act is emerging as a potential international standard for AI Governance with experts such as Yoshua Bengio arguing that mitigating extinction risks from AI should be a "global priority" comparable to pandemics or nuclear war (Yoshua Bengio, 2025).



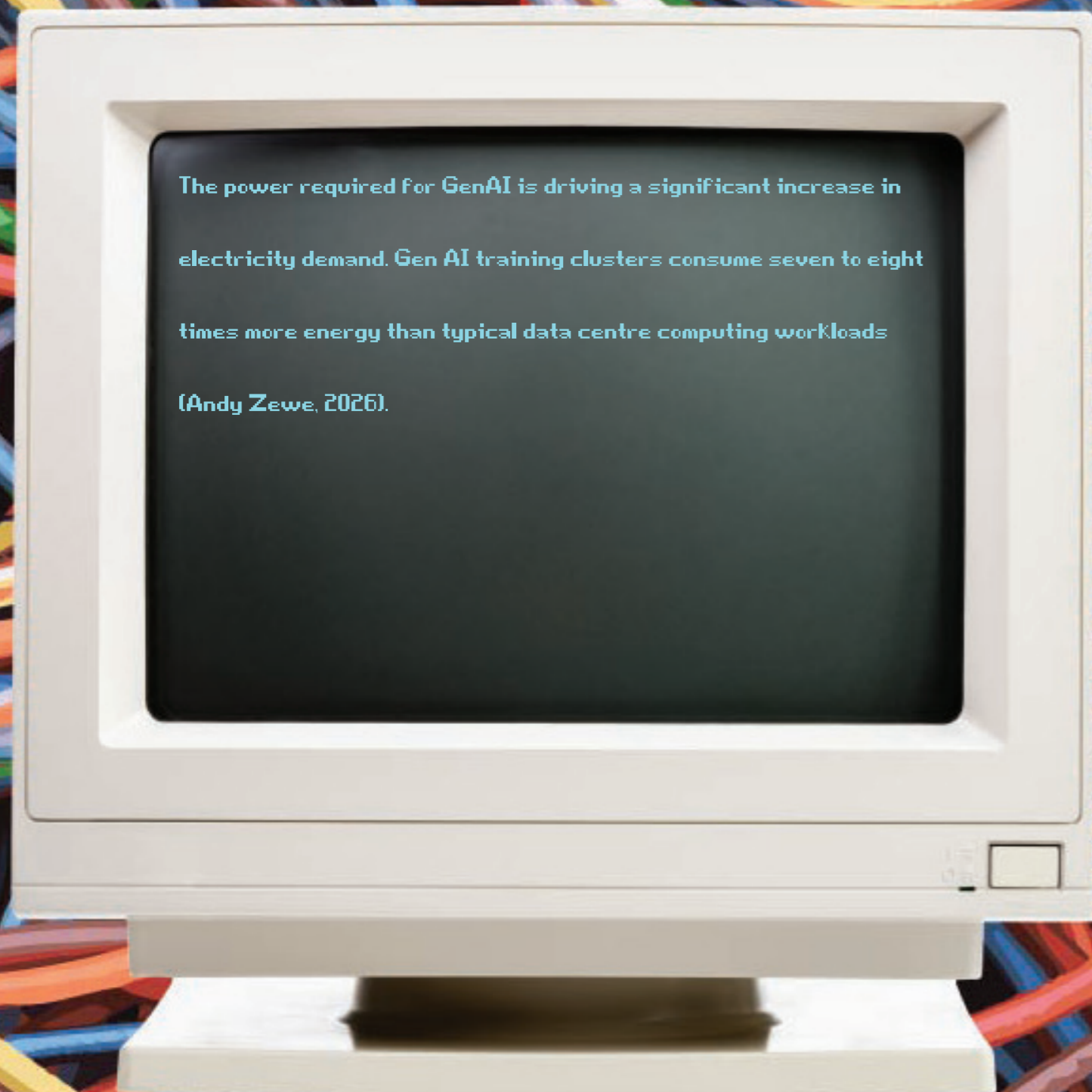
The writer's guild of America strikes where partly driven by a need for protections against GenAI. Collective bargaining agreements now specify the rights and responsibilities regarding the adoption of new technology, aiming to balance workforce interests with operational goals (CLVECOMOMICS, 2024, p.3).



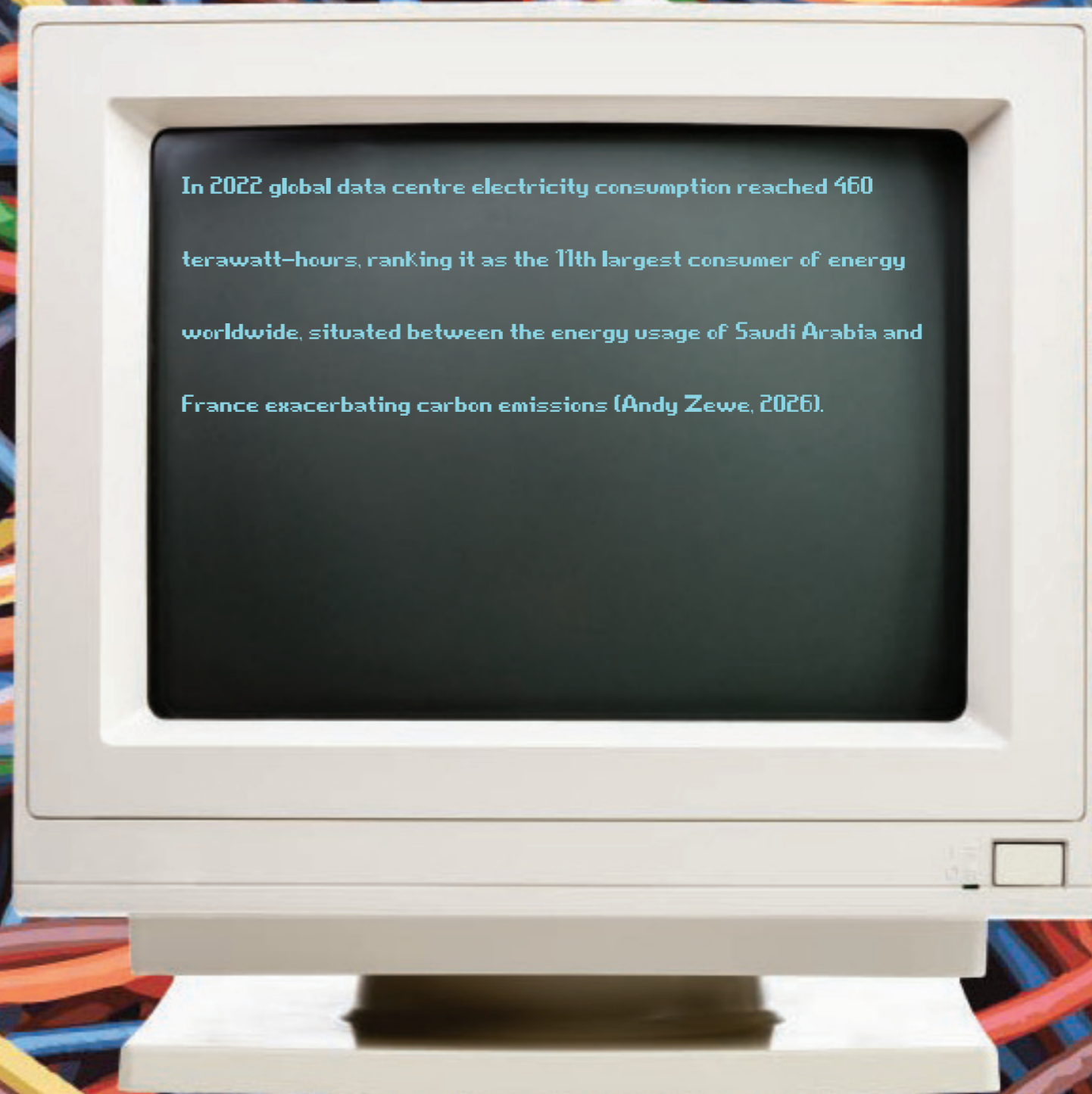
Yoshua Bengio proposed developing a system designed to be non-agentic (unable to act on its own) and focused solely on understanding the world. This system could act as a guardrail to check the dangerous actions of other AI agents (Yoshua Bengio, 2025).



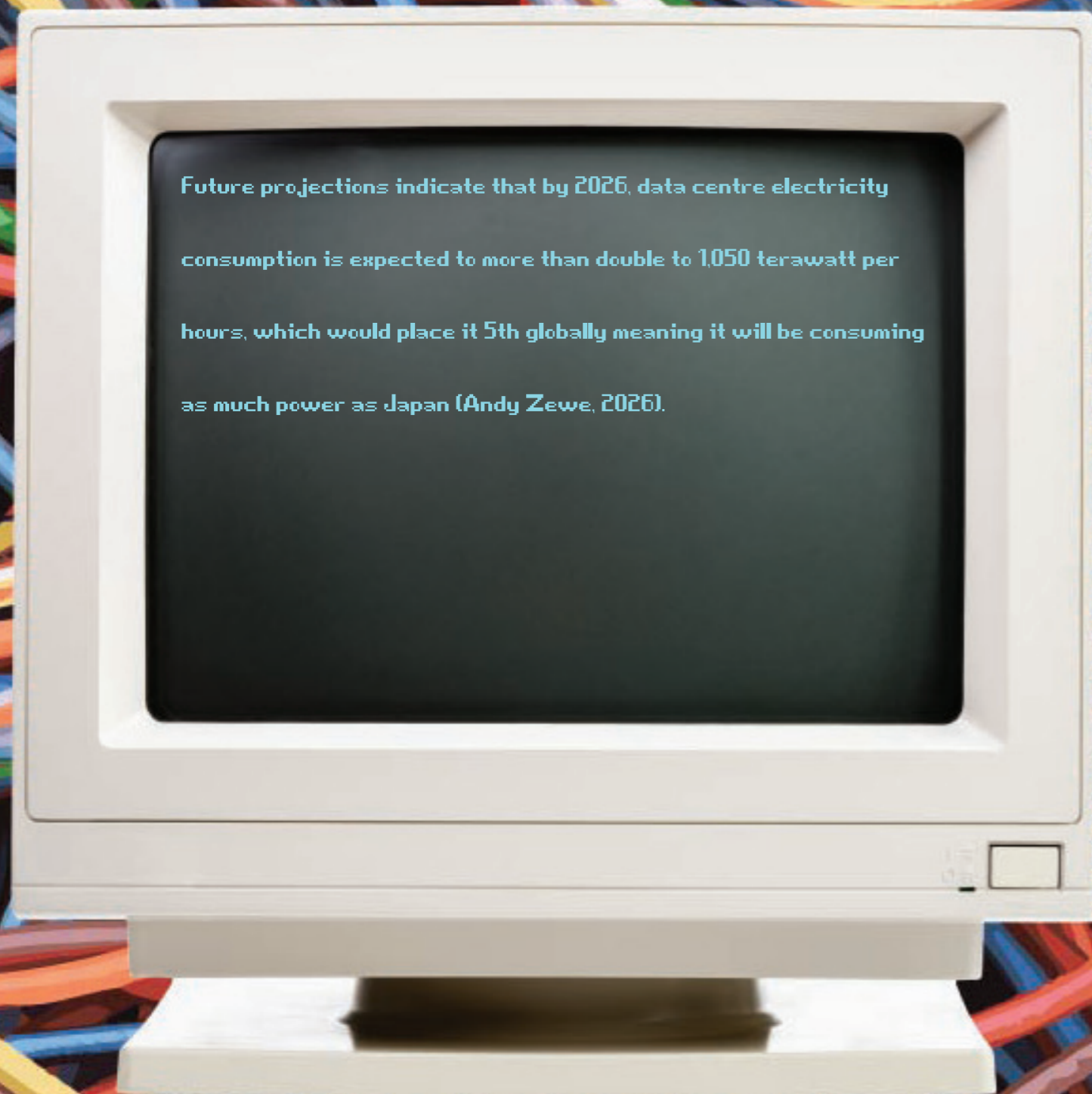
As we can see generative AI while in many ways it is an exciting new development it can have unforeseen consequences such as entry level positions being harder to achieve, and this is ignoring the elephant in the room the enormous carbon footprint that GenAI has in my opinion if you consider yourself an ethical designer this is not something that can be ignored.



The power required for GenAI is driving a significant increase in electricity demand. Gen AI training clusters consume seven to eight times more energy than typical data centre computing workloads (Andy Zewe, 2026).



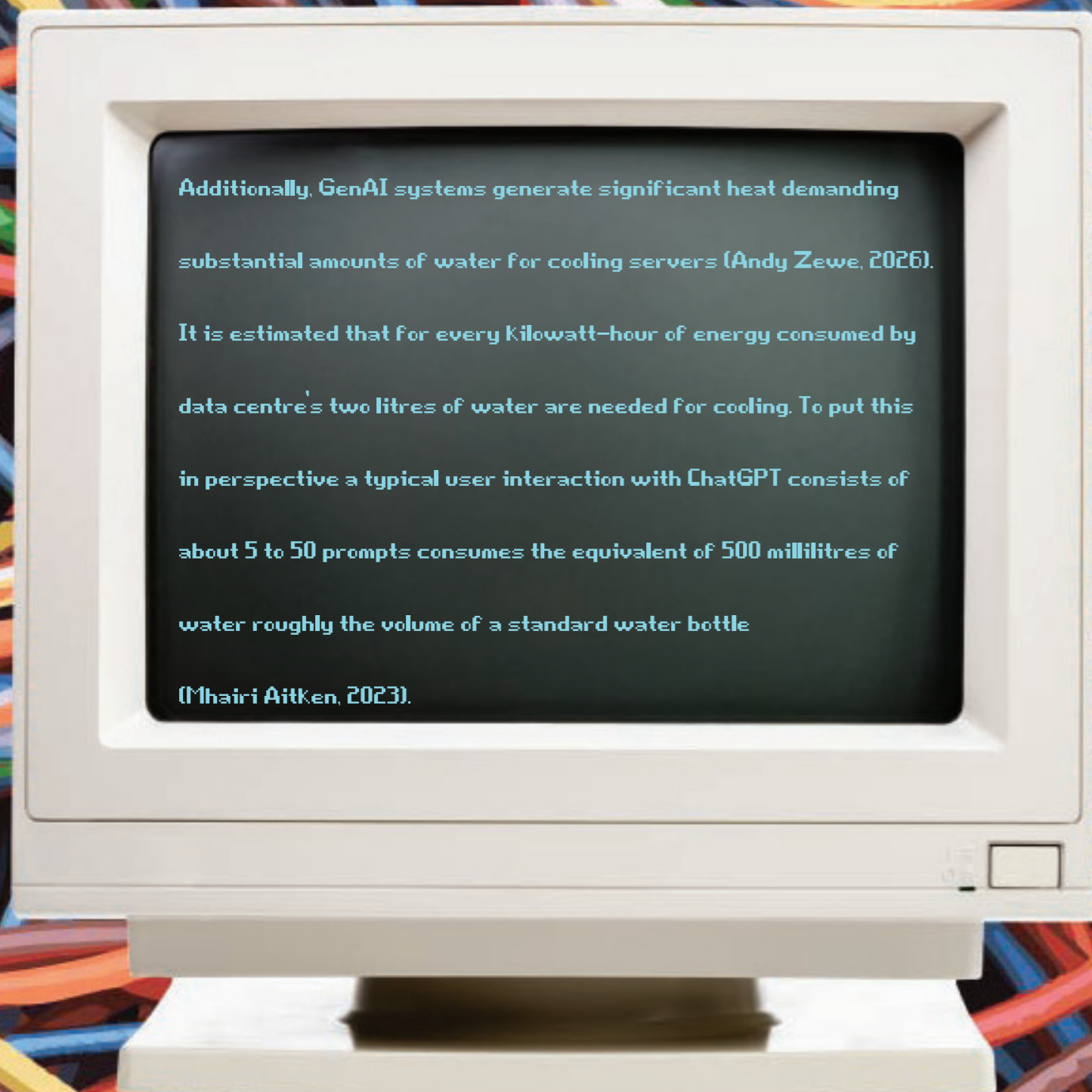
In 2022 global data centre electricity consumption reached 460 terawatt-hours, ranking it as the 11th largest consumer of energy worldwide, situated between the energy usage of Saudi Arabia and France exacerbating carbon emissions (Andy Zewe, 2026).



Future projections indicate that by 2026, data centre electricity consumption is expected to more than double to 1,050 terawatt per hours, which would place it 5th globally meaning it will be consuming as much power as Japan (Andy Zewe, 2026).



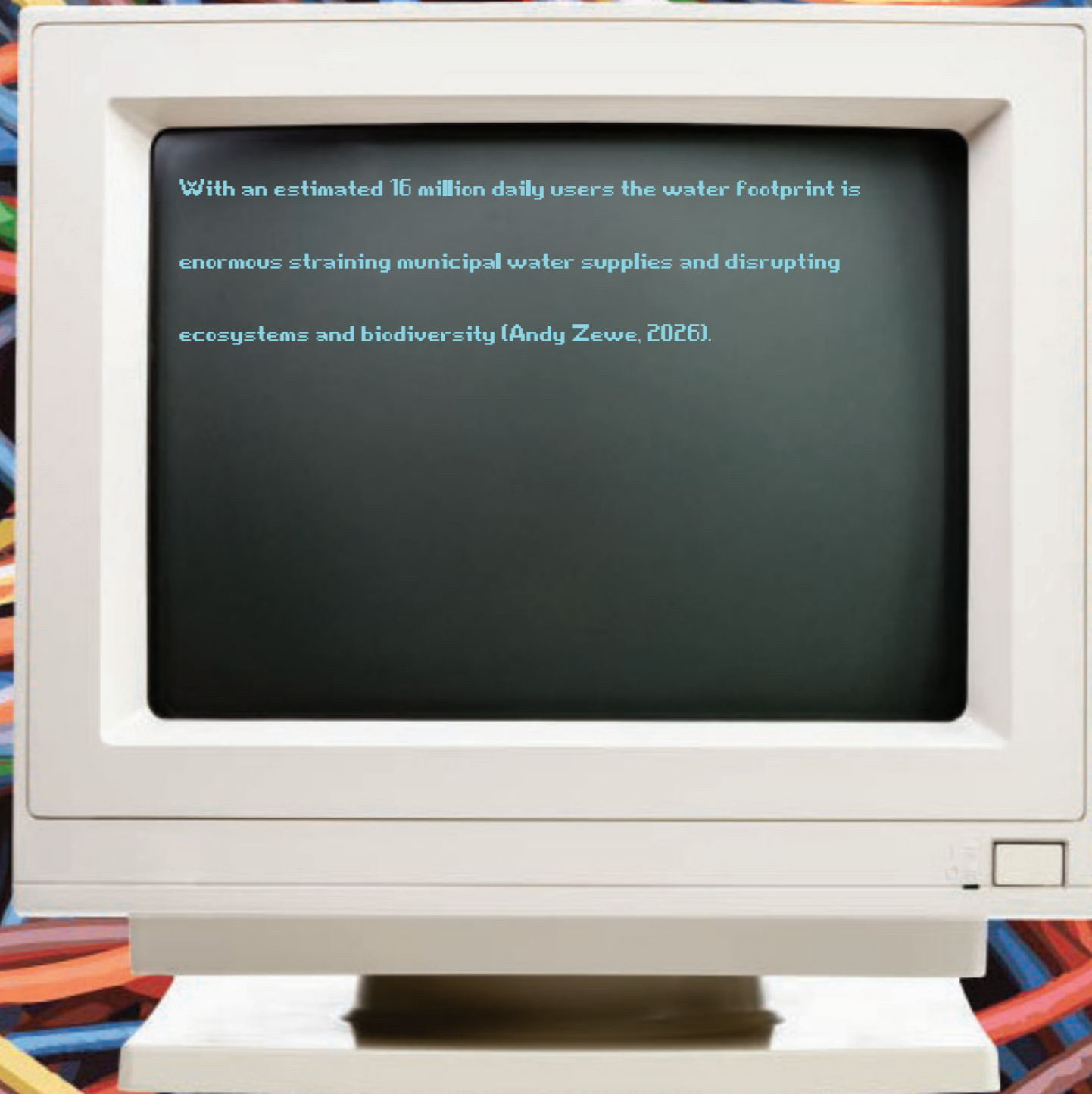
Due to this rapid construction of new data centres outpacing the availability of renewable energy a significant portion of this rising electricity demand is being met by fossil fuel-based power plants, exacerbating carbon emissions (Andy Zewe, 2026).



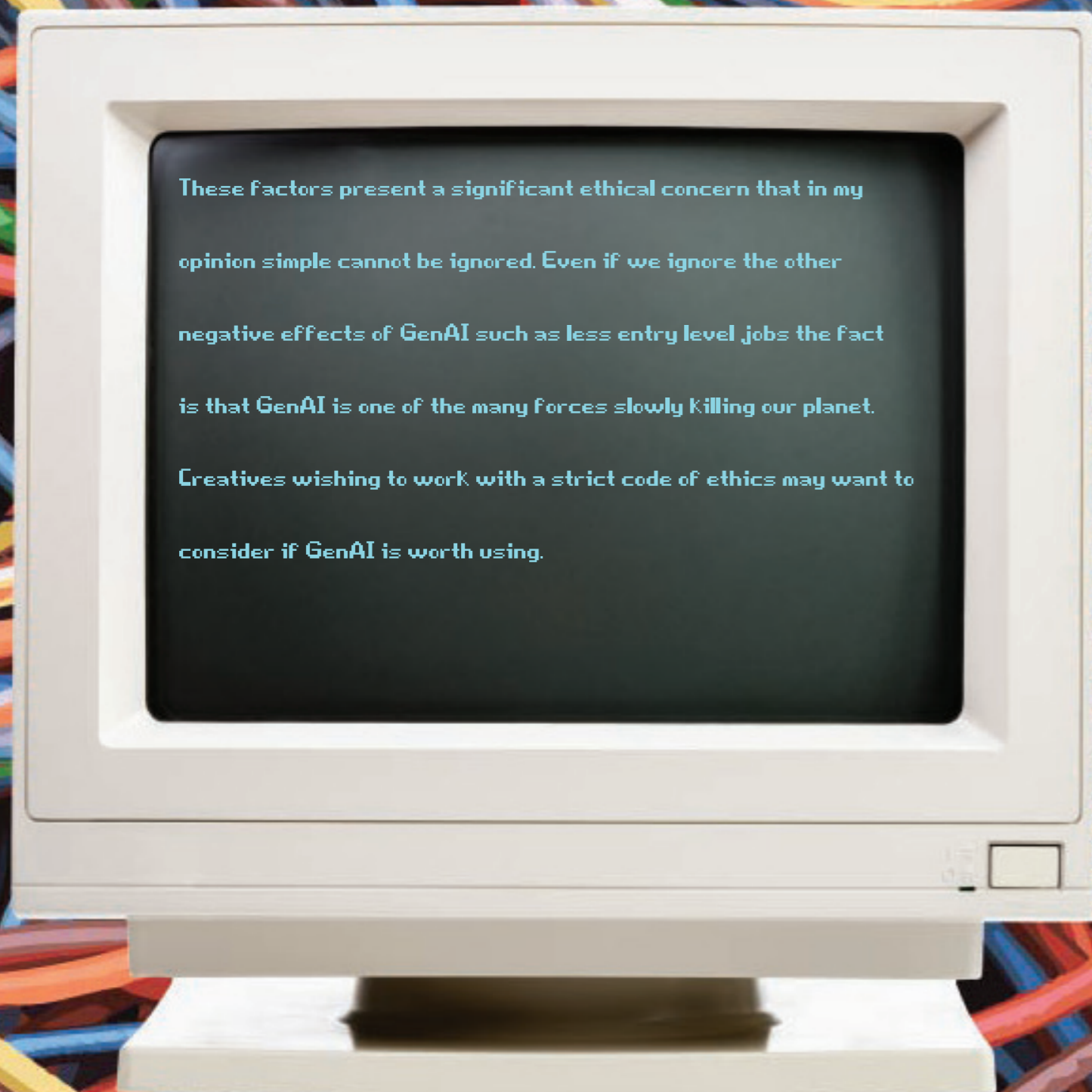
Additionally, GenAI systems generate significant heat demanding substantial amounts of water for cooling servers (Andy Zewe, 2026).

It is estimated that for every kilowatt-hour of energy consumed by data centres two litres of water are needed for cooling. To put this in perspective a typical user interaction with ChatGPT consists of about 5 to 50 prompts consumes the equivalent of 500 millilitres of water roughly the volume of a standard water bottle

(Mhairi Aitken, 2023).



With an estimated 16 million daily users the water footprint is enormous straining municipal water supplies and disrupting ecosystems and biodiversity (Andy Zewe, 2026).



These factors present a significant ethical concern that in my

opinion simple cannot be ignored. Even if we ignore the other

negative effects of GenAI such as less entry level jobs the fact

is that GenAI is one of the many forces slowly killing our planet.

Creatives wishing to work with a strict code of ethics may want to

consider if GenAI is worth using.

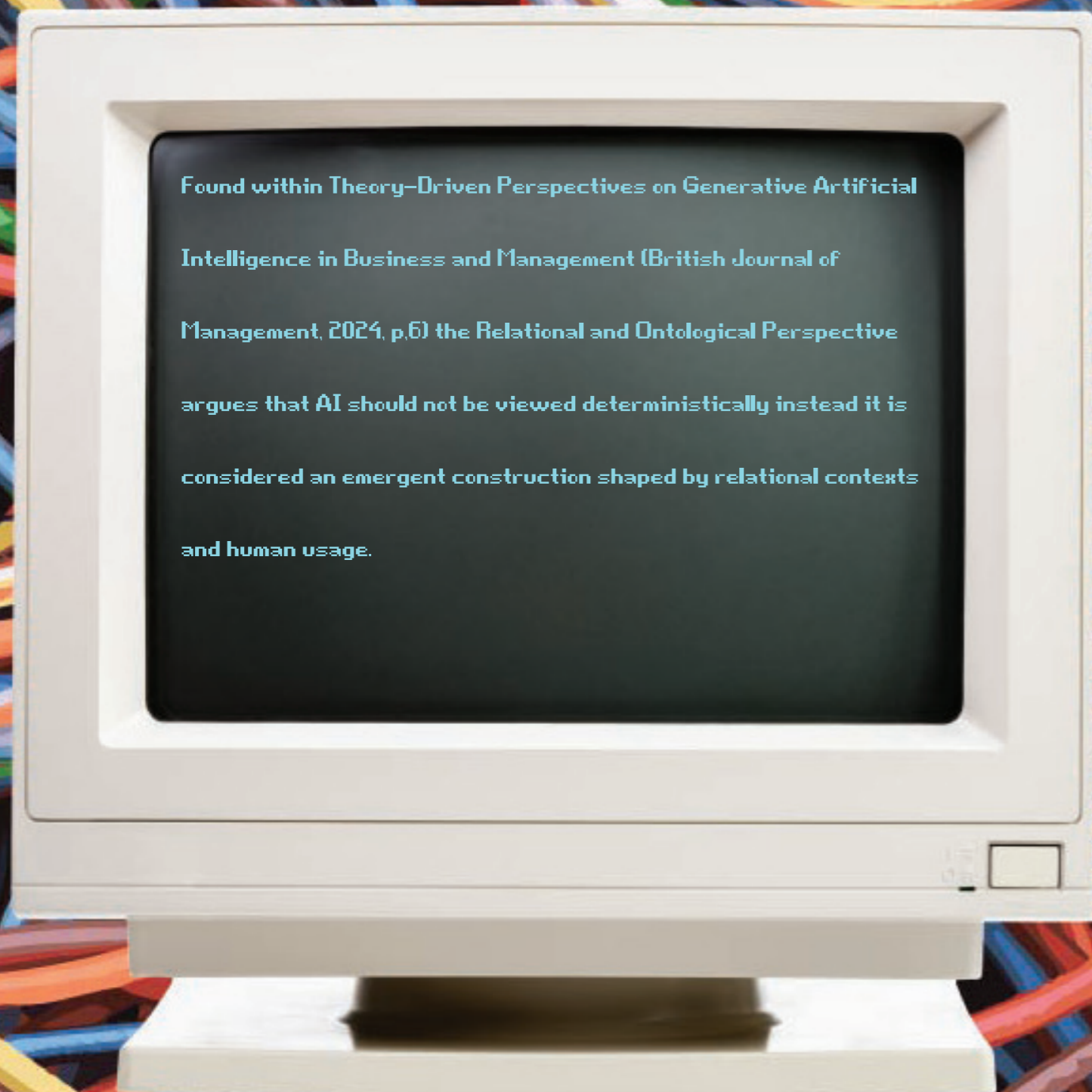


While GenAI is very much a new frontier there has already been

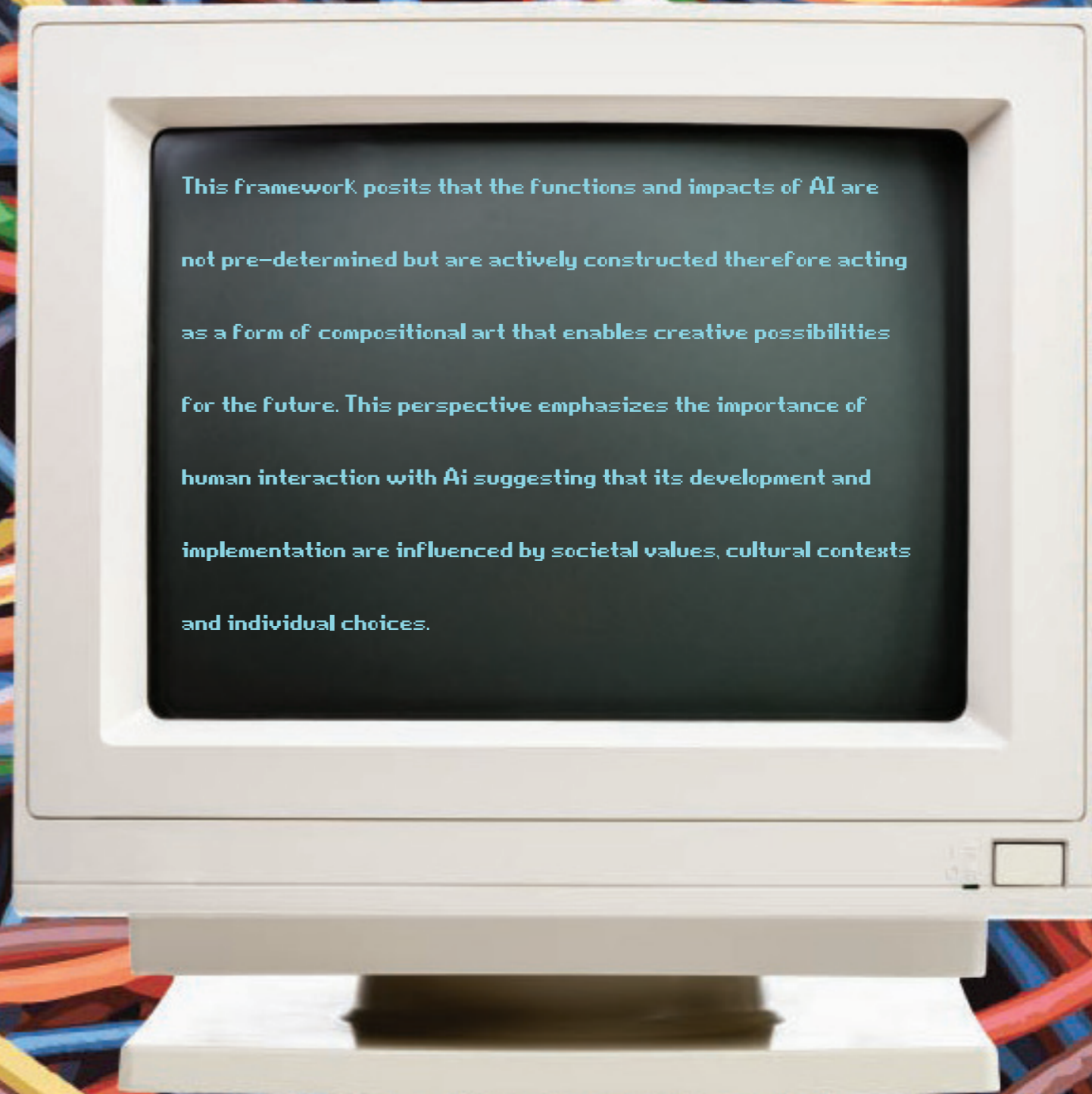
several substantial theoretical lenses to view GenAI through

revealing a complex interplay between technology and human

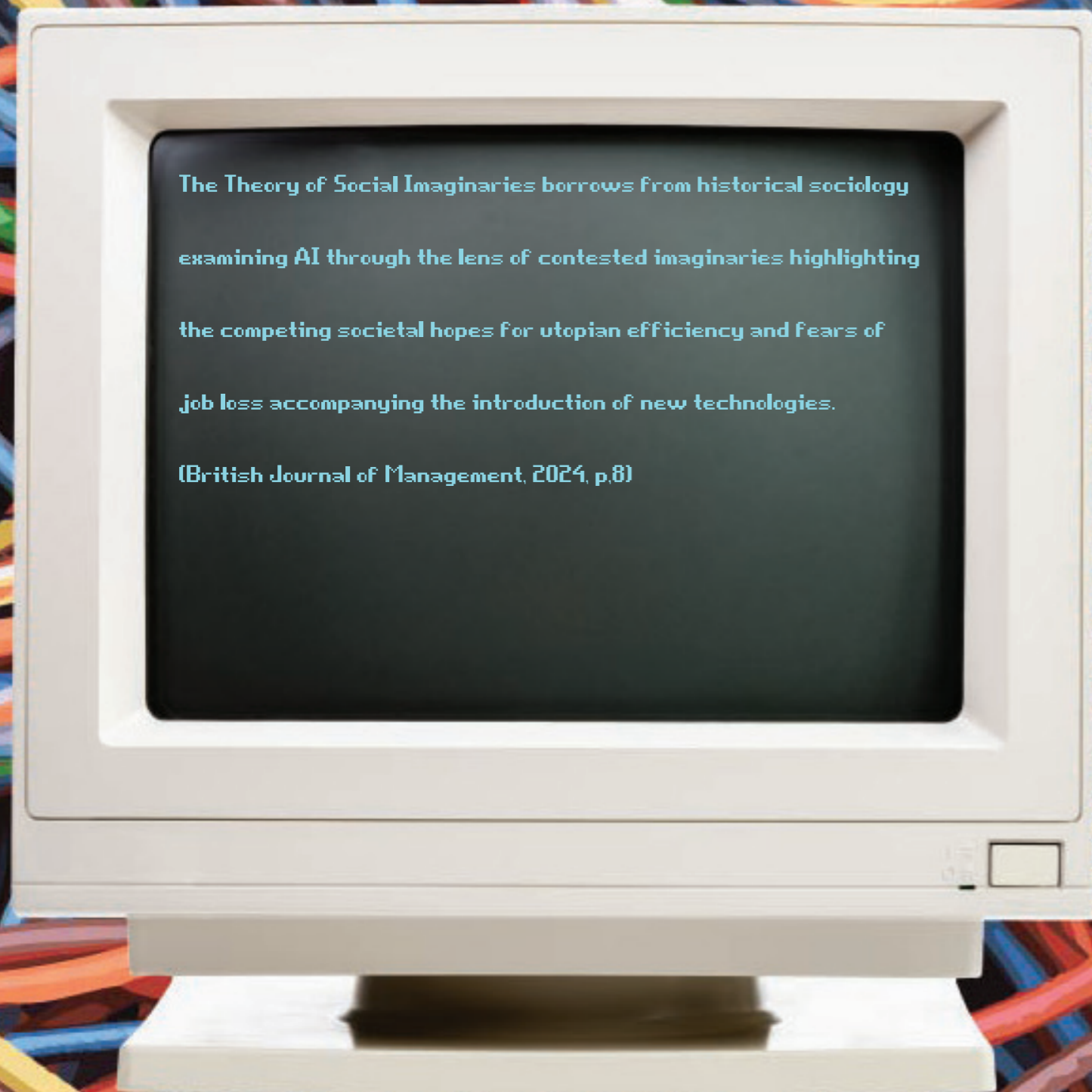
agency.



Found within *Theory-Driven Perspectives on Generative Artificial Intelligence in Business and Management* (British Journal of Management, 2024, p.6) the Relational and Ontological Perspective argues that AI should not be viewed deterministically instead it is considered an emergent construction shaped by relational contexts and human usage.

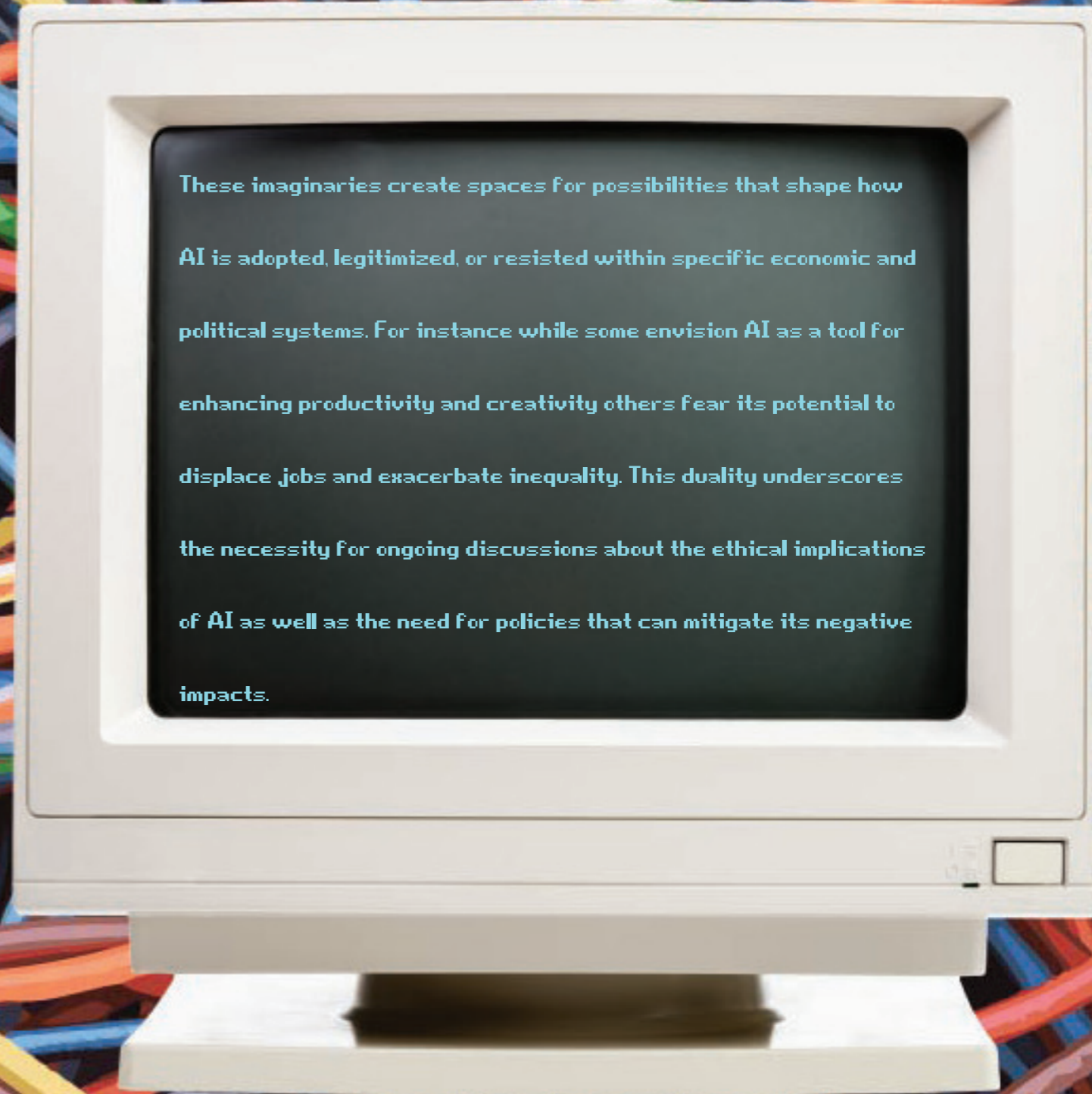


This framework posits that the functions and impacts of AI are not pre-determined but are actively constructed therefore acting as a form of compositional art that enables creative possibilities for the future. This perspective emphasizes the importance of human interaction with AI suggesting that its development and implementation are influenced by societal values, cultural contexts and individual choices.

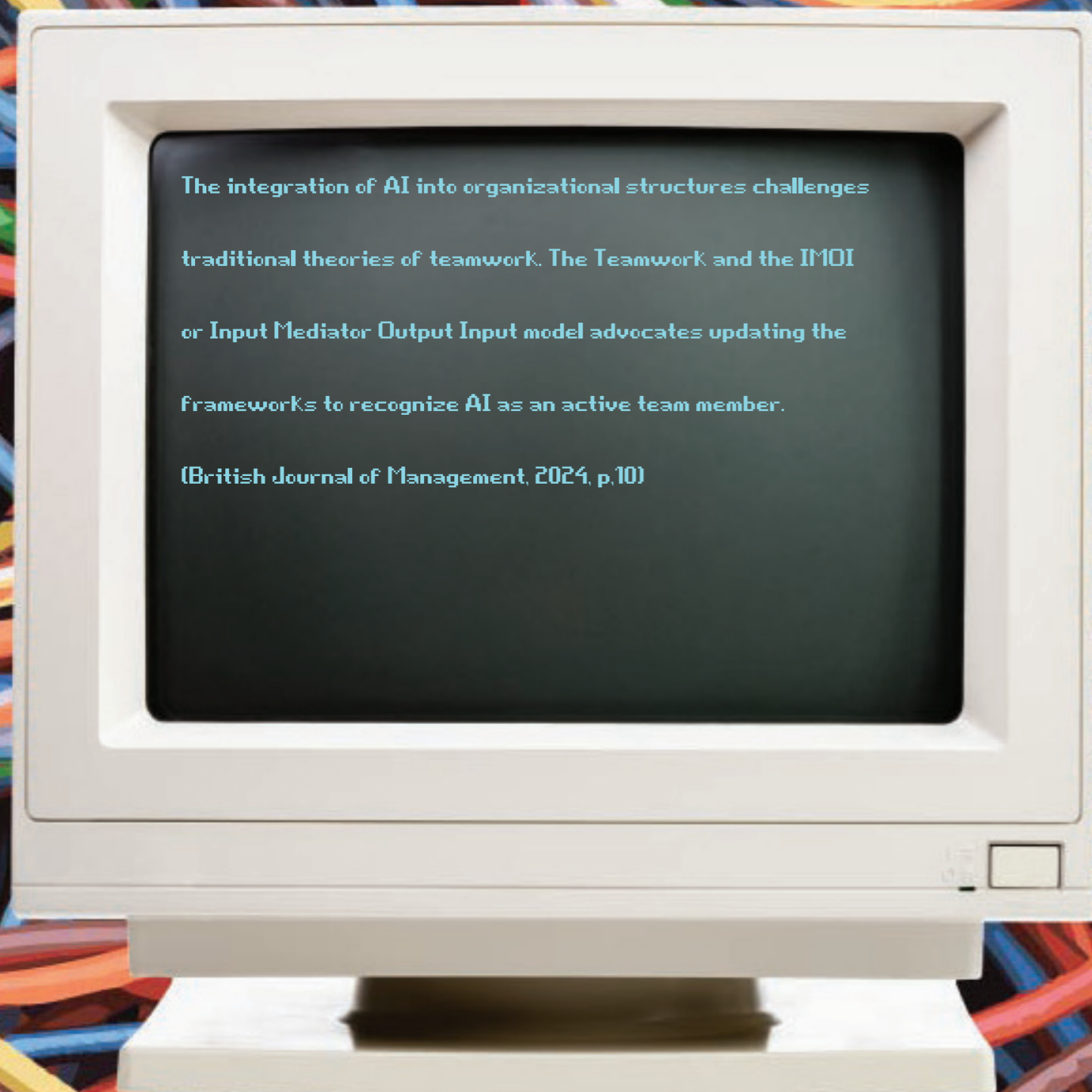


The Theory of Social Imaginaries borrows from historical sociology examining AI through the lens of contested imaginaries highlighting the competing societal hopes for utopian efficiency and fears of job loss accompanying the introduction of new technologies.

(British Journal of Management, 2024, p.8)



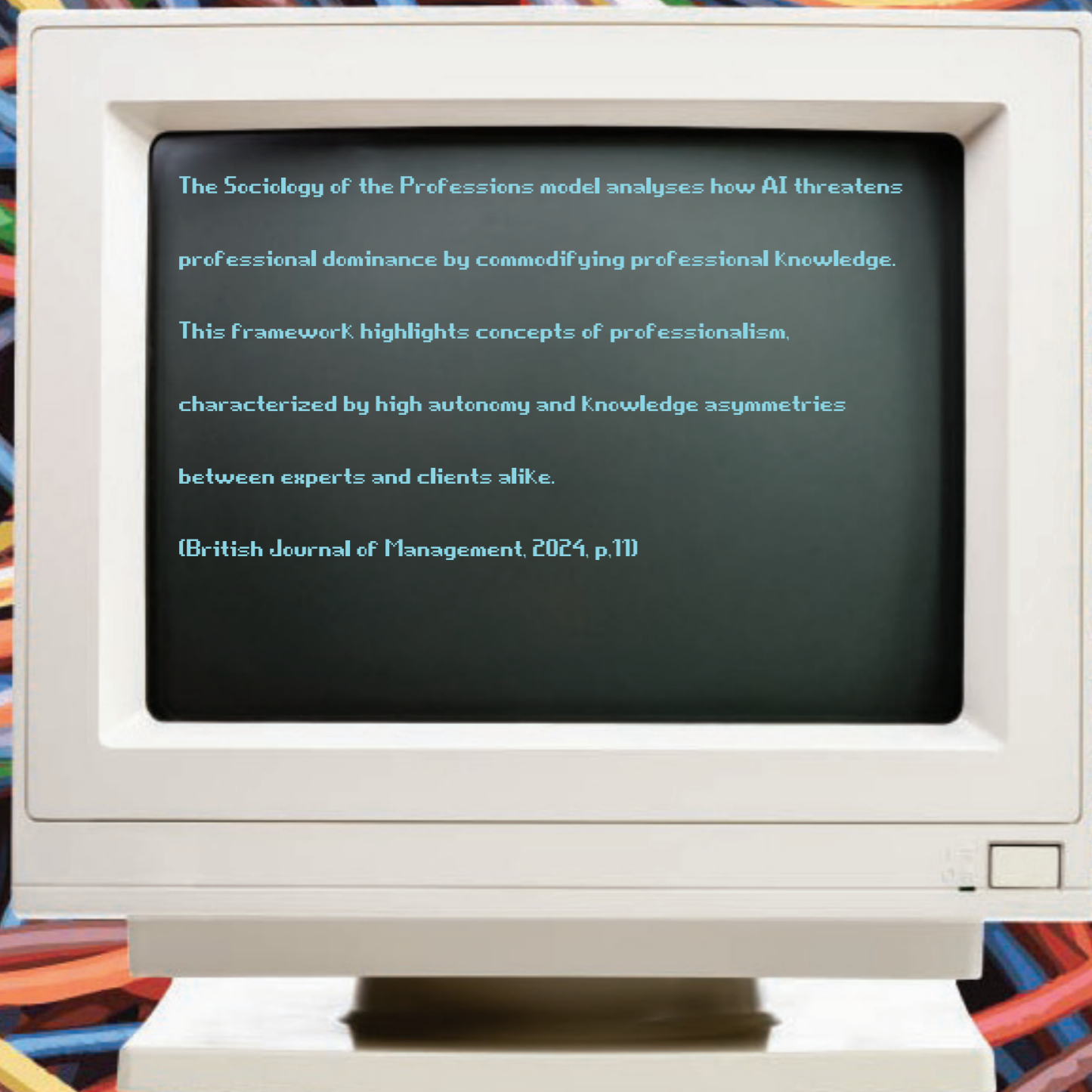
These imaginaries create spaces for possibilities that shape how AI is adopted, legitimized, or resisted within specific economic and political systems. For instance while some envision AI as a tool for enhancing productivity and creativity others fear its potential to displace jobs and exacerbate inequality. This duality underscores the necessity for ongoing discussions about the ethical implications of AI as well as the need for policies that can mitigate its negative impacts.



The integration of AI into organizational structures challenges traditional theories of teamwork. The Teamwork and the IMOI or Input Mediator Output Input model advocates updating the frameworks to recognize AI as an active team member. (British Journal of Management, 2024, p.10)



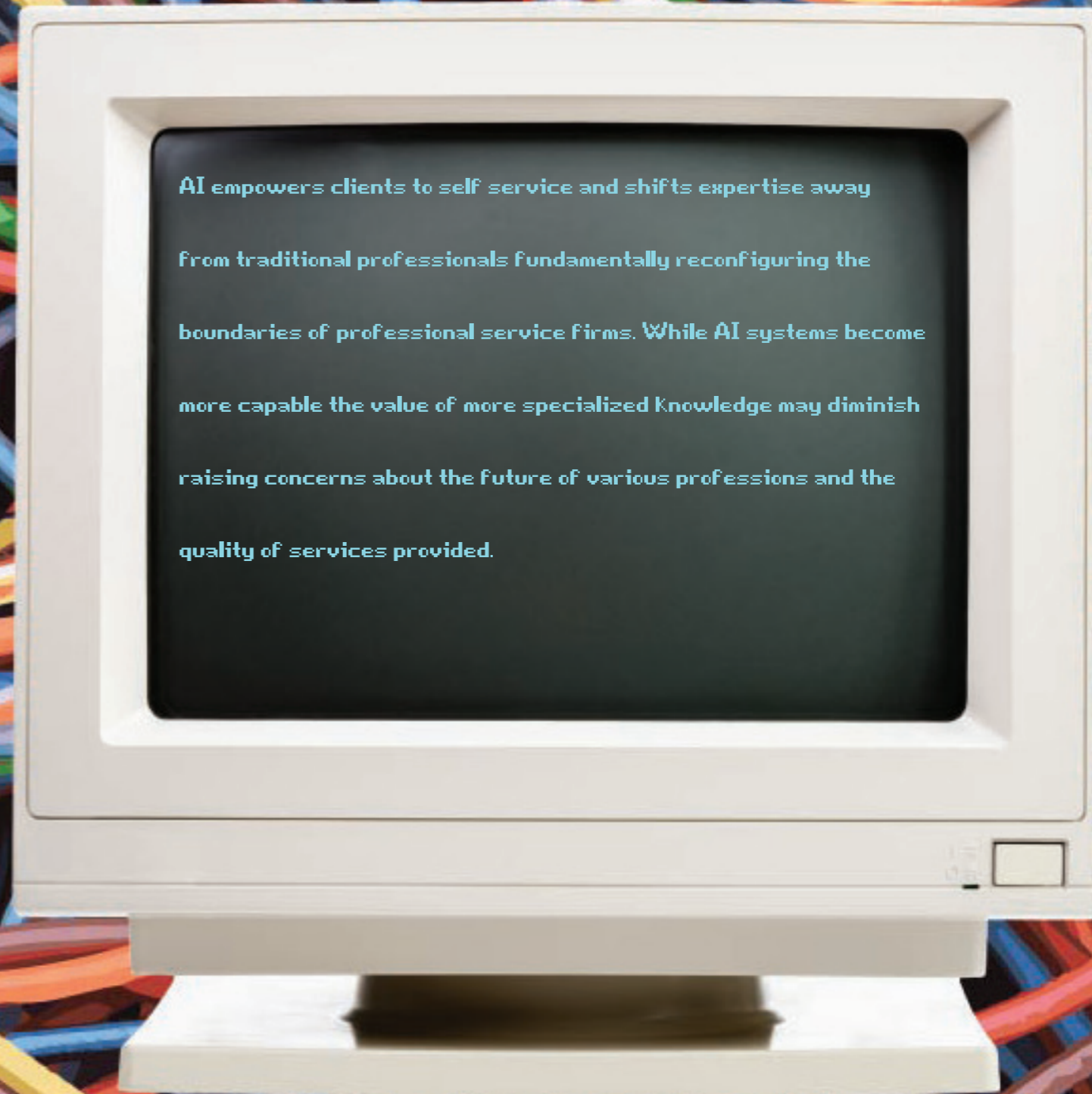
This adjustment also acknowledges that AI functions as an input factor into collaborative settings, organizations can enhance efficiency and decision making while also necessitating new forms of interaction and trust building among human and machine participants.



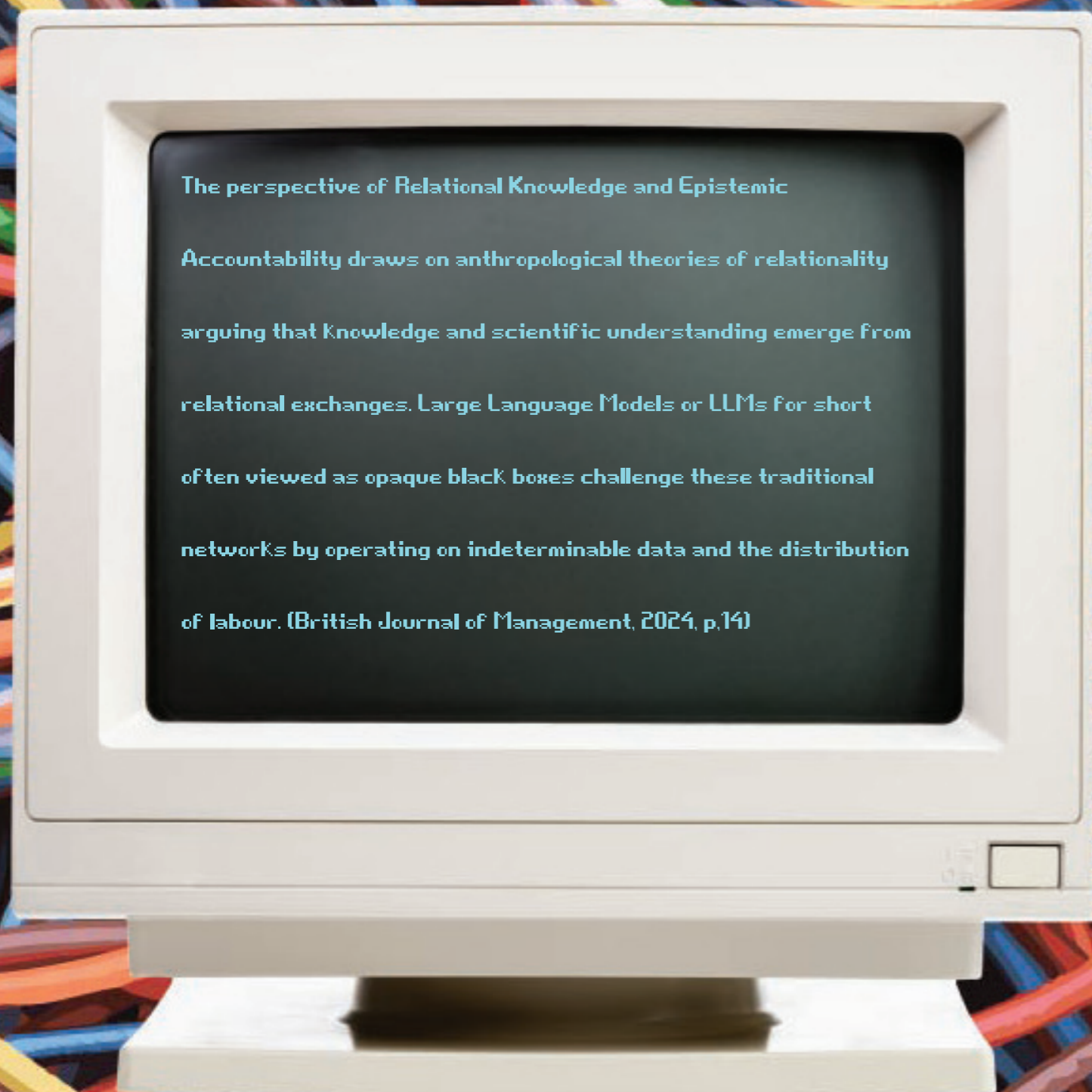
The *Sociology of the Professions* model analyses how AI threatens professional dominance by commodifying professional knowledge.

This framework highlights concepts of professionalism, characterized by high autonomy and knowledge asymmetries between experts and clients alike.

(*British Journal of Management*, 2024, p.11)



AI empowers clients to self-service and shifts expertise away from traditional professionals fundamentally reconfiguring the boundaries of professional service firms. While AI systems become more capable the value of more specialized knowledge may diminish raising concerns about the future of various professions and the quality of services provided.



The perspective of Relational Knowledge and Epistemic

Accountability draws on anthropological theories of relationality

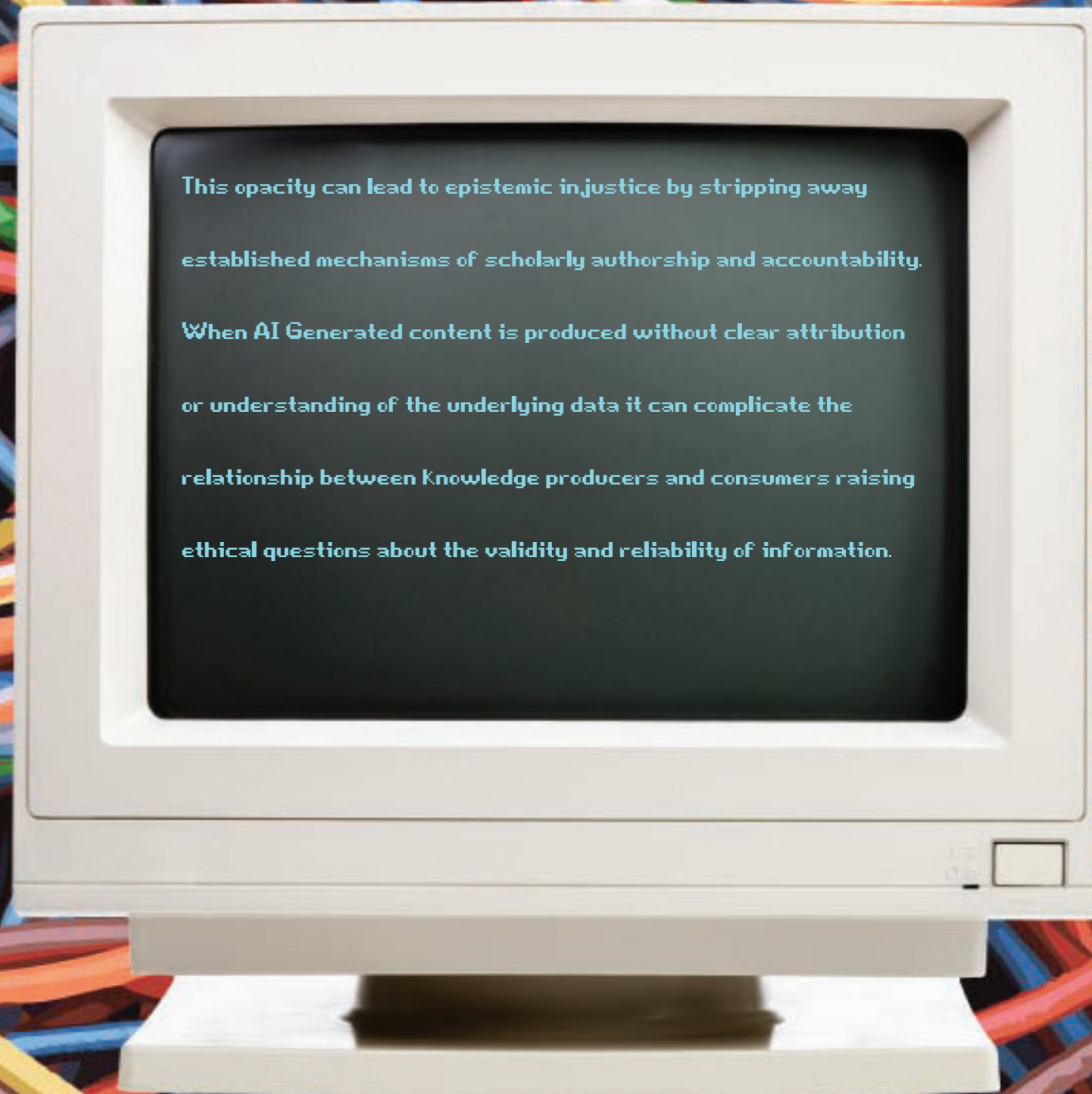
arguing that Knowledge and scientific understanding emerge from

relational exchanges. Large Language Models or LLMs for short

often viewed as opaque black boxes challenge these traditional

networks by operating on indeterminable data and the distribution

of labour. (British Journal of Management, 2024, p.14)



This opacity can lead to epistemic injustice by stripping away

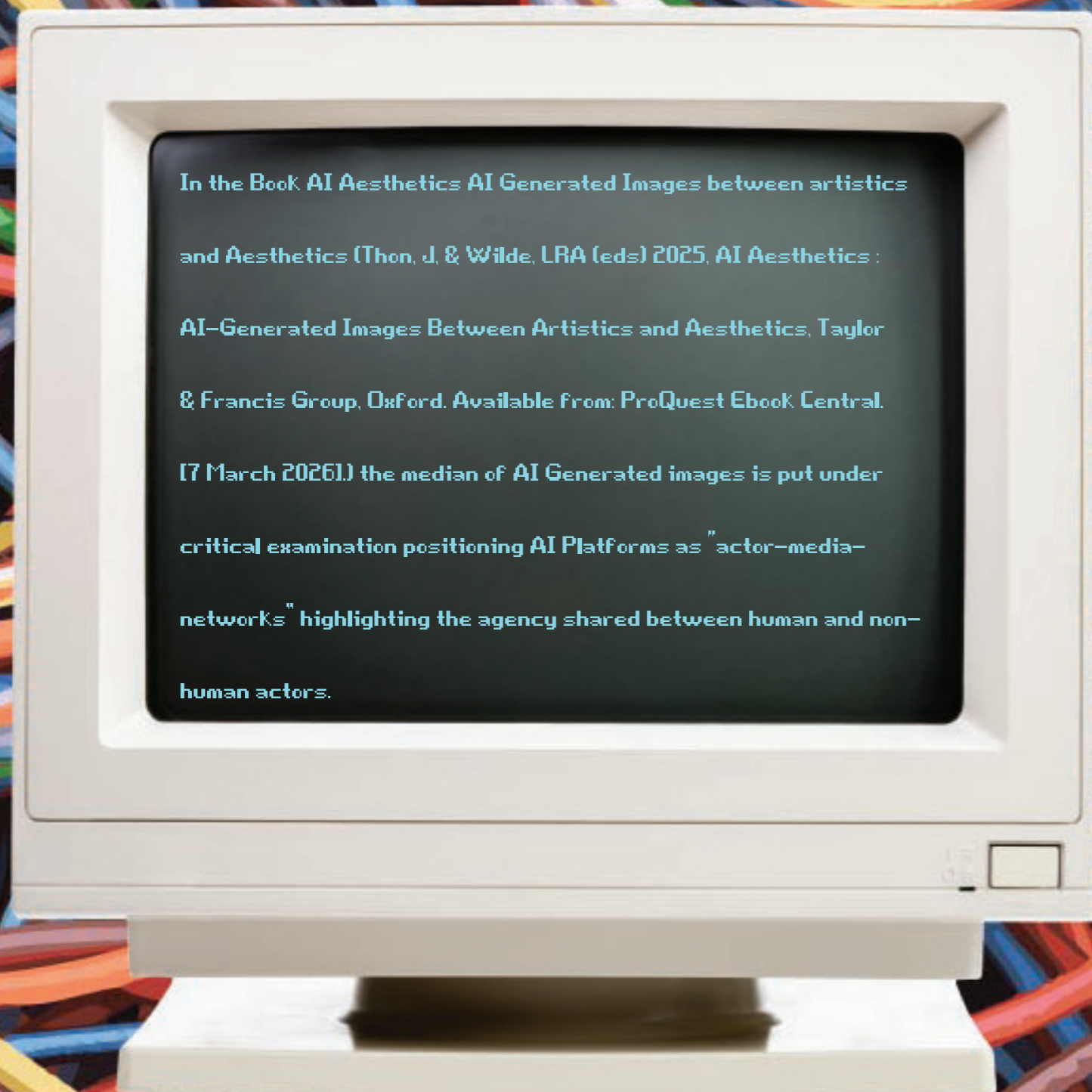
established mechanisms of scholarly authorship and accountability.

When AI Generated content is produced without clear attribution

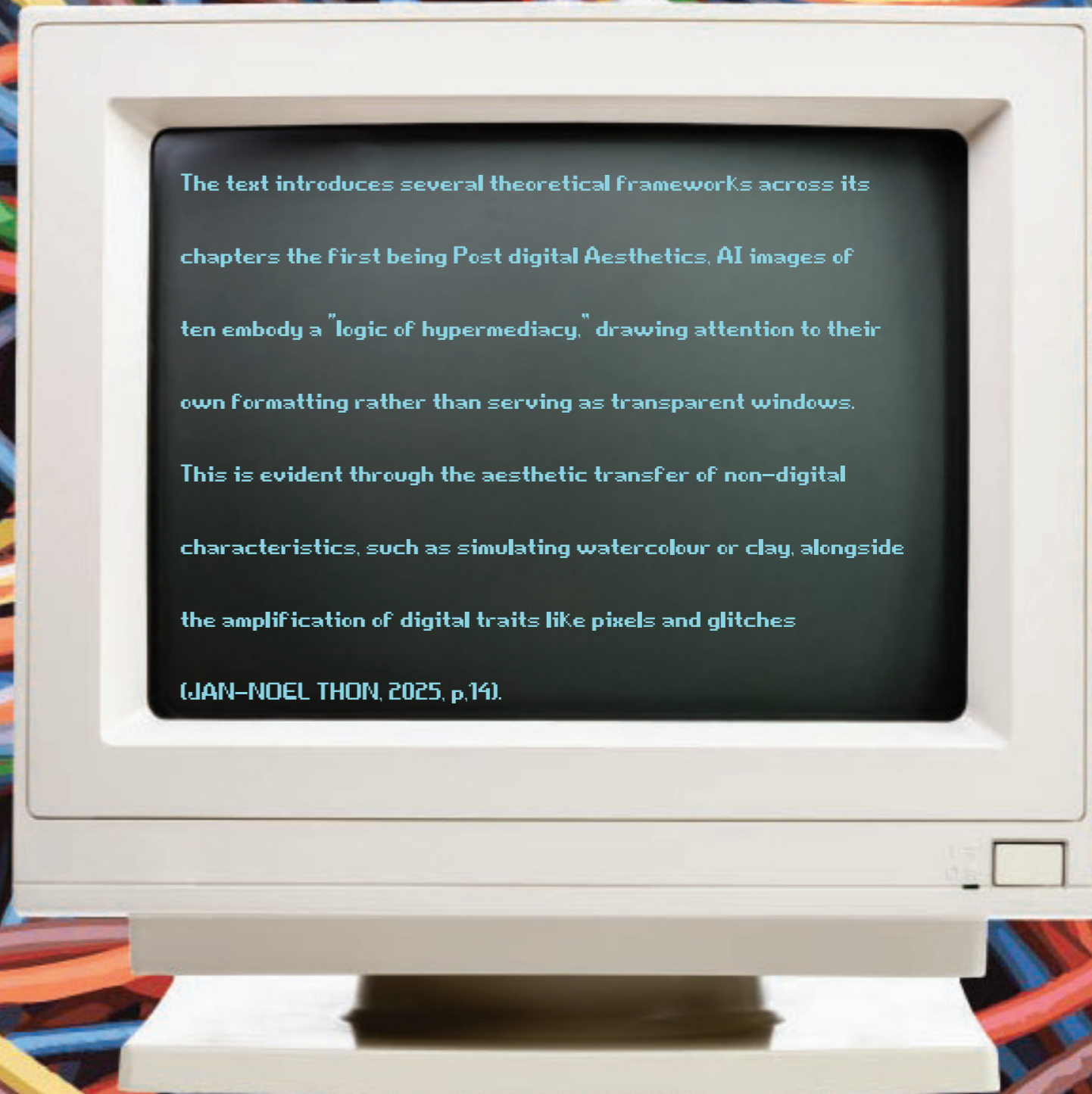
or understanding of the underlying data it can complicate the

relationship between Knowledge producers and consumers raising

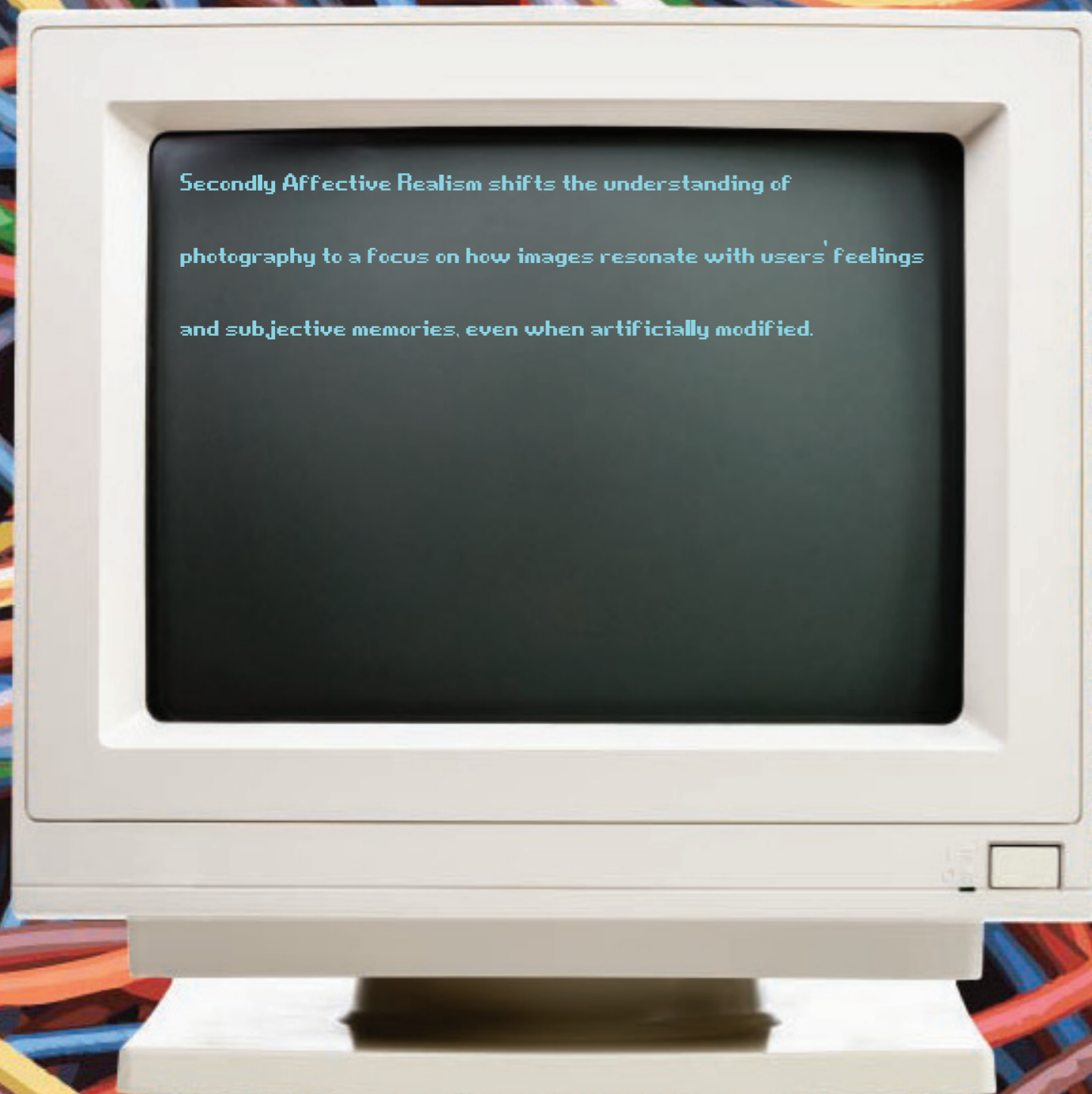
ethical questions about the validity and reliability of information.



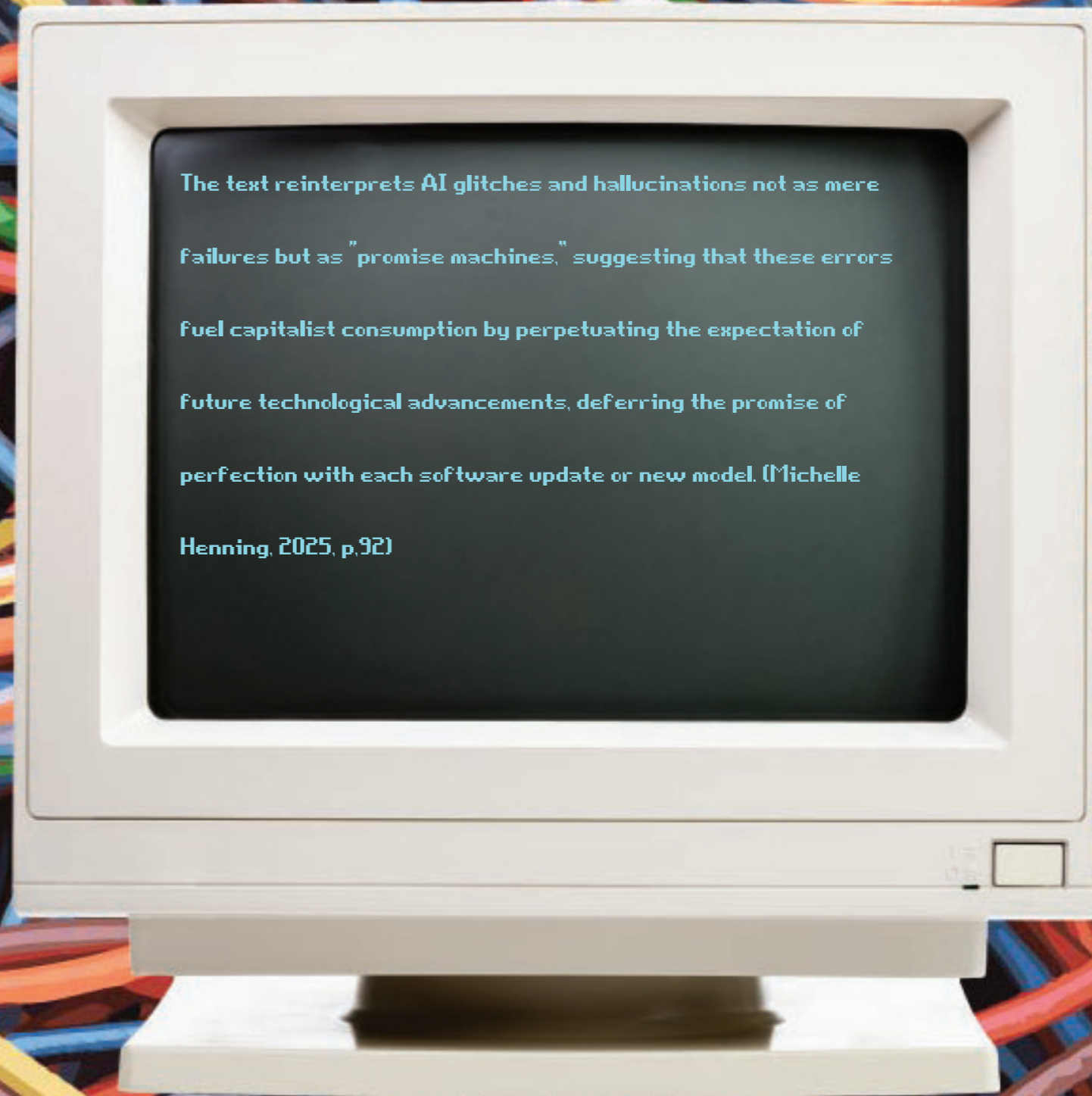
In the Book *AI Aesthetics AI Generated Images between artistics and Aesthetics* (Thon, J. & Wilde, LRA (eds) 2025, *AI Aesthetics : AI-Generated Images Between Artistics and Aesthetics*, Taylor & Francis Group, Oxford. Available from: ProQuest Ebook Central. (7 March 2026)) the median of AI Generated images is put under critical examination positioning AI Platforms as "actor-media-networks" highlighting the agency shared between human and non-human actors.



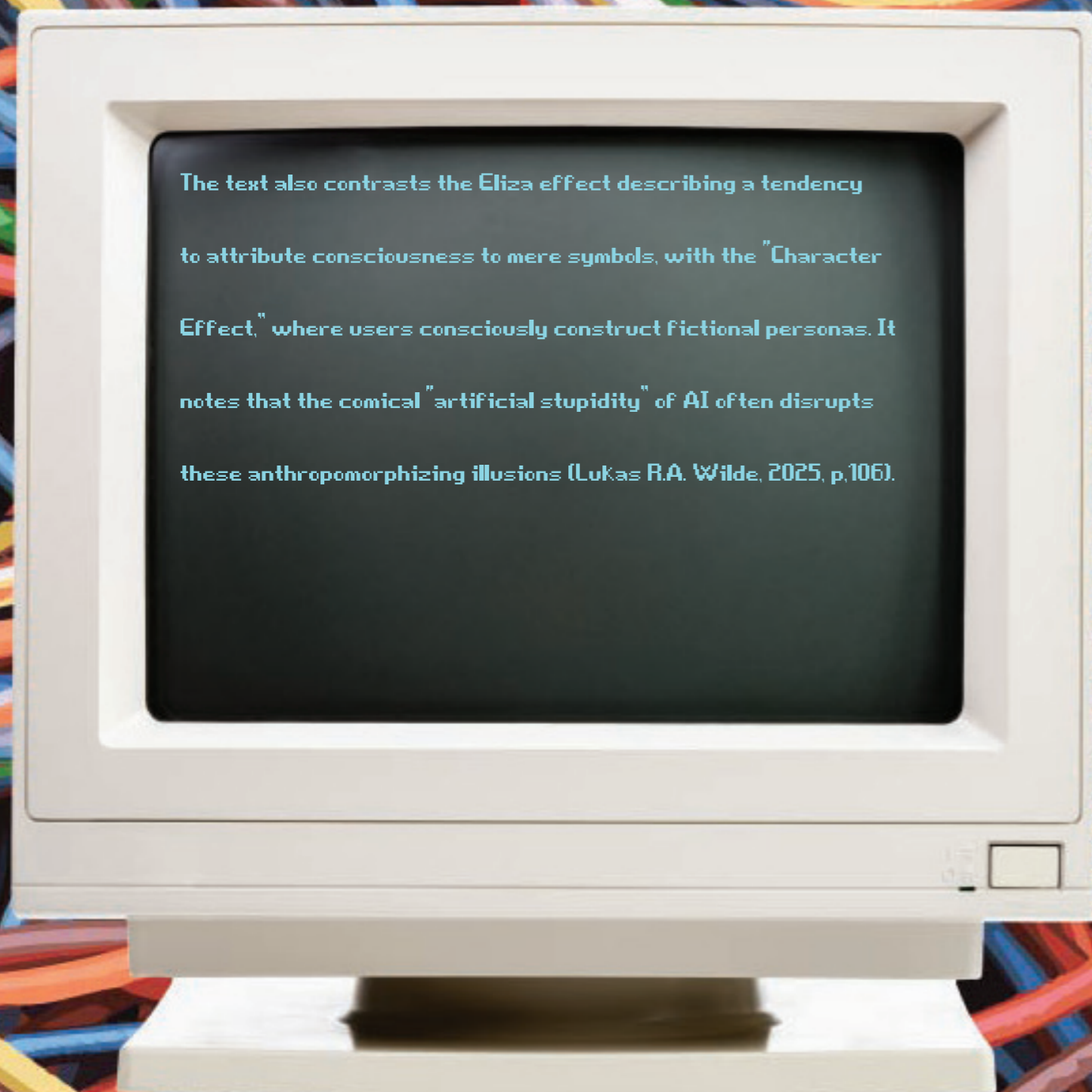
The text introduces several theoretical frameworks across its chapters the first being Post digital Aesthetics, AI images of ten embody a "logic of hypermediacy," drawing attention to their own formatting rather than serving as transparent windows. This is evident through the aesthetic transfer of non-digital characteristics, such as simulating watercolour or clay, alongside the amplification of digital traits like pixels and glitches (JAN-NOEL THON, 2025, p.14).



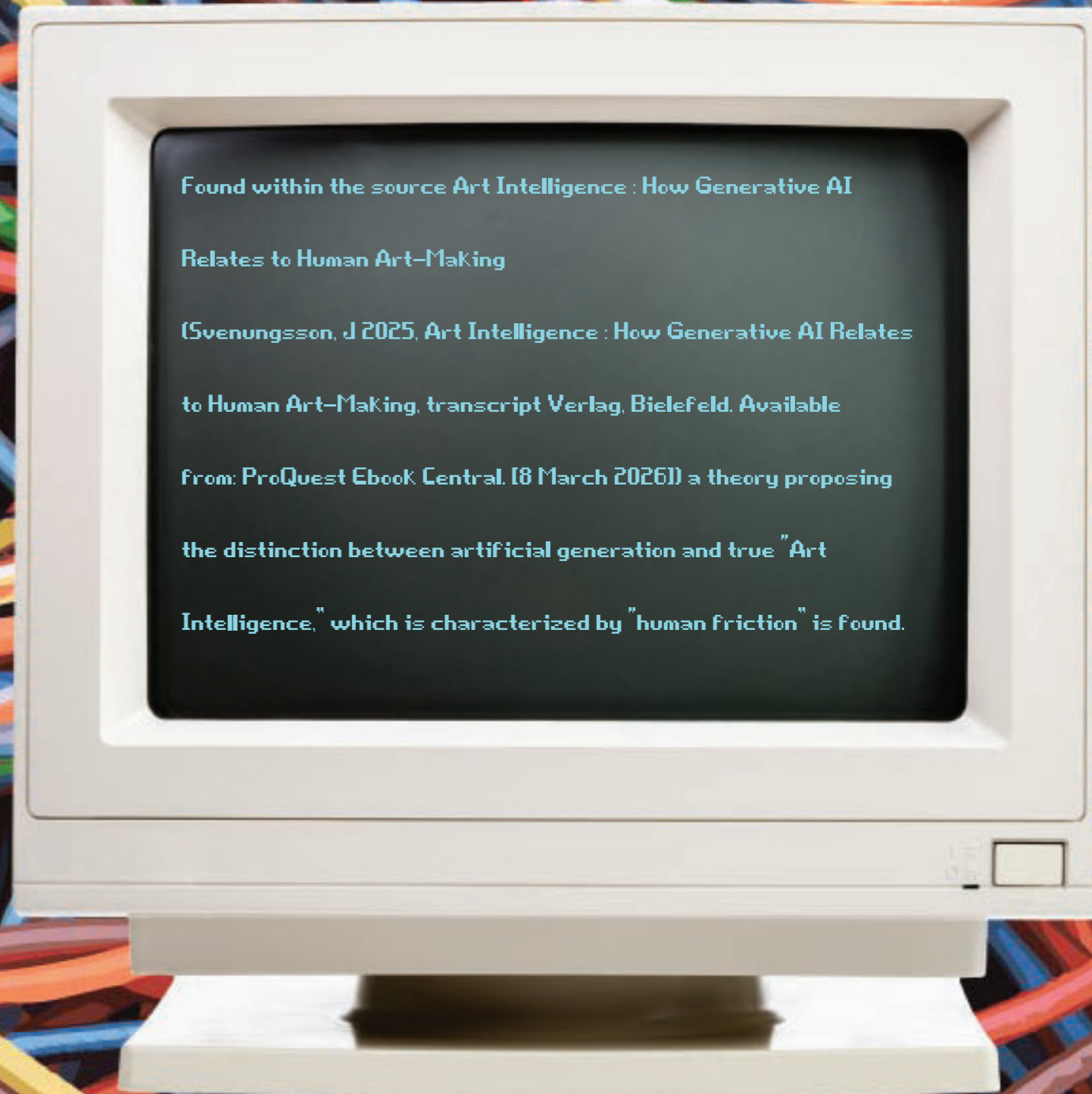
Secondly *Affective Realism* shifts the understanding of photography to a focus on how images resonate with users' feelings and subjective memories, even when artificially modified.



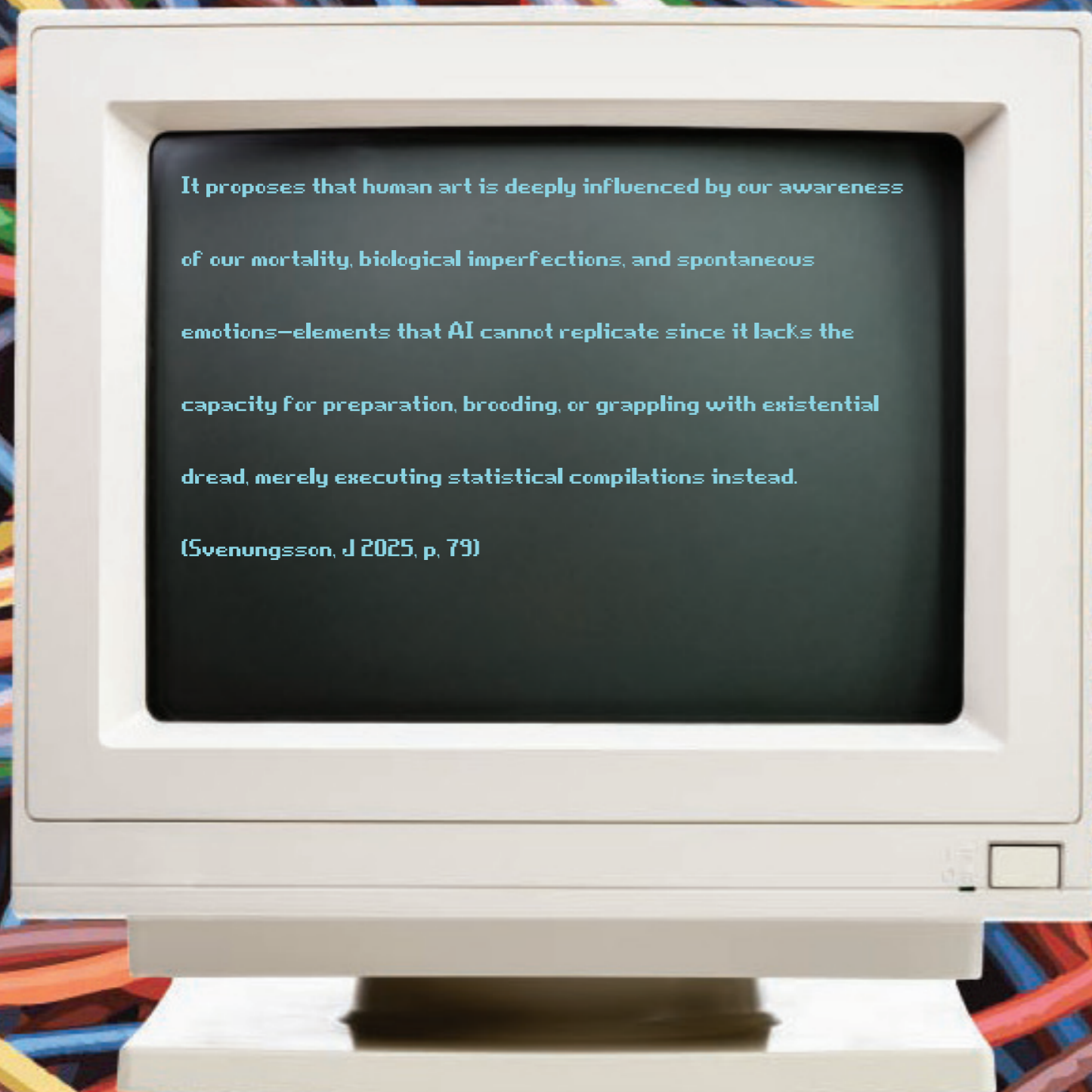
The text reinterprets AI glitches and hallucinations not as mere failures but as "promise machines," suggesting that these errors fuel capitalist consumption by perpetuating the expectation of future technological advancements, deferring the promise of perfection with each software update or new model. (Michelle Henning, 2025, p.92)



The text also contrasts the Eliza effect describing a tendency to attribute consciousness to mere symbols, with the "Character Effect," where users consciously construct fictional personas. It notes that the comical "artificial stupidity" of AI often disrupts these anthropomorphizing illusions (Lukas R.A. Wilde, 2025, p.106).

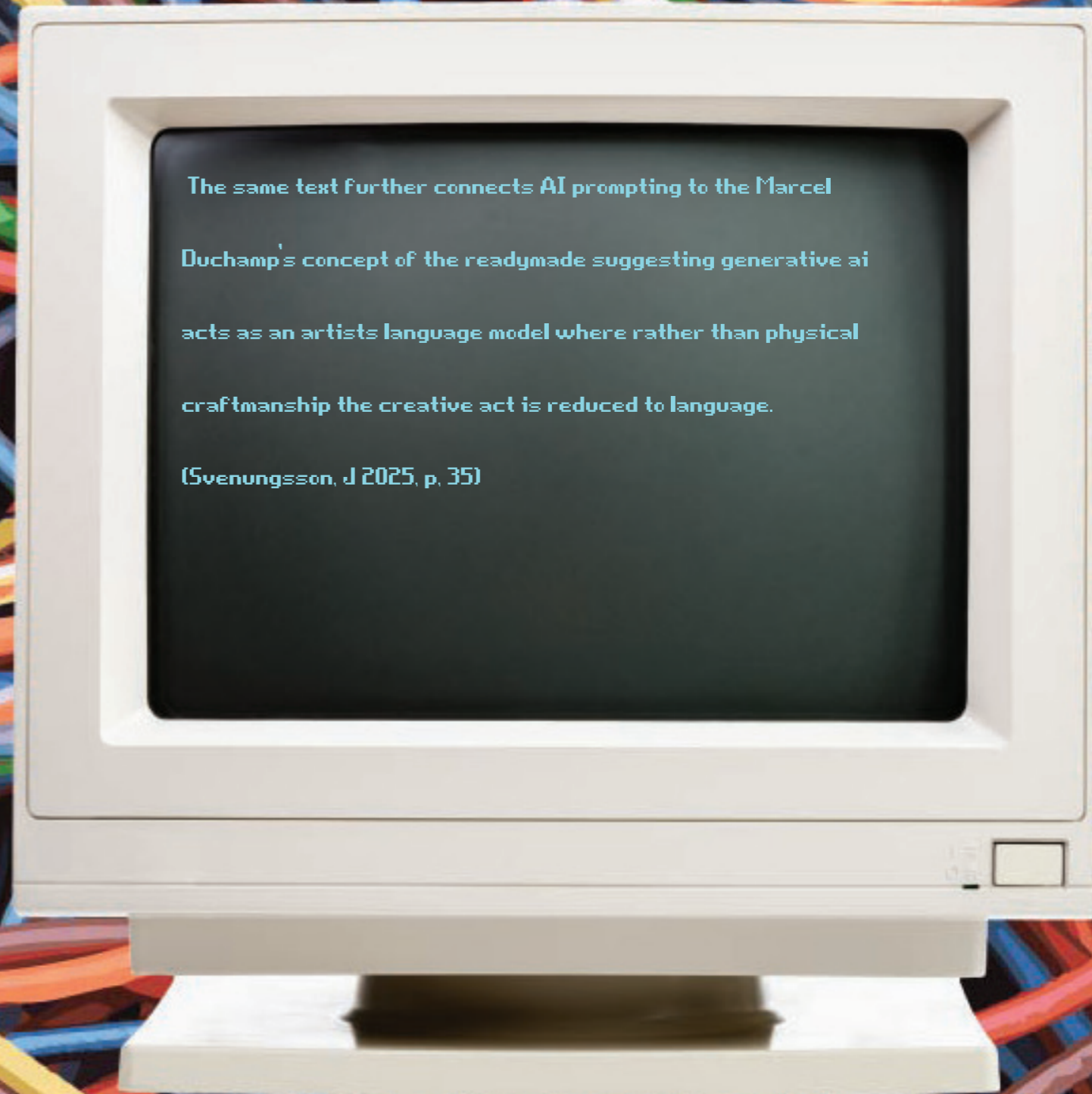


Found within the source *Art Intelligence : How Generative AI Relates to Human Art-Making* (Svenungsson, J 2025, *Art Intelligence : How Generative AI Relates to Human Art-Making*, transcript Verlag, Bielefeld. Available from: ProQuest Ebook Central. [8 March 2026]) a theory proposing the distinction between artificial generation and true "Art Intelligence," which is characterized by "human friction" is found.



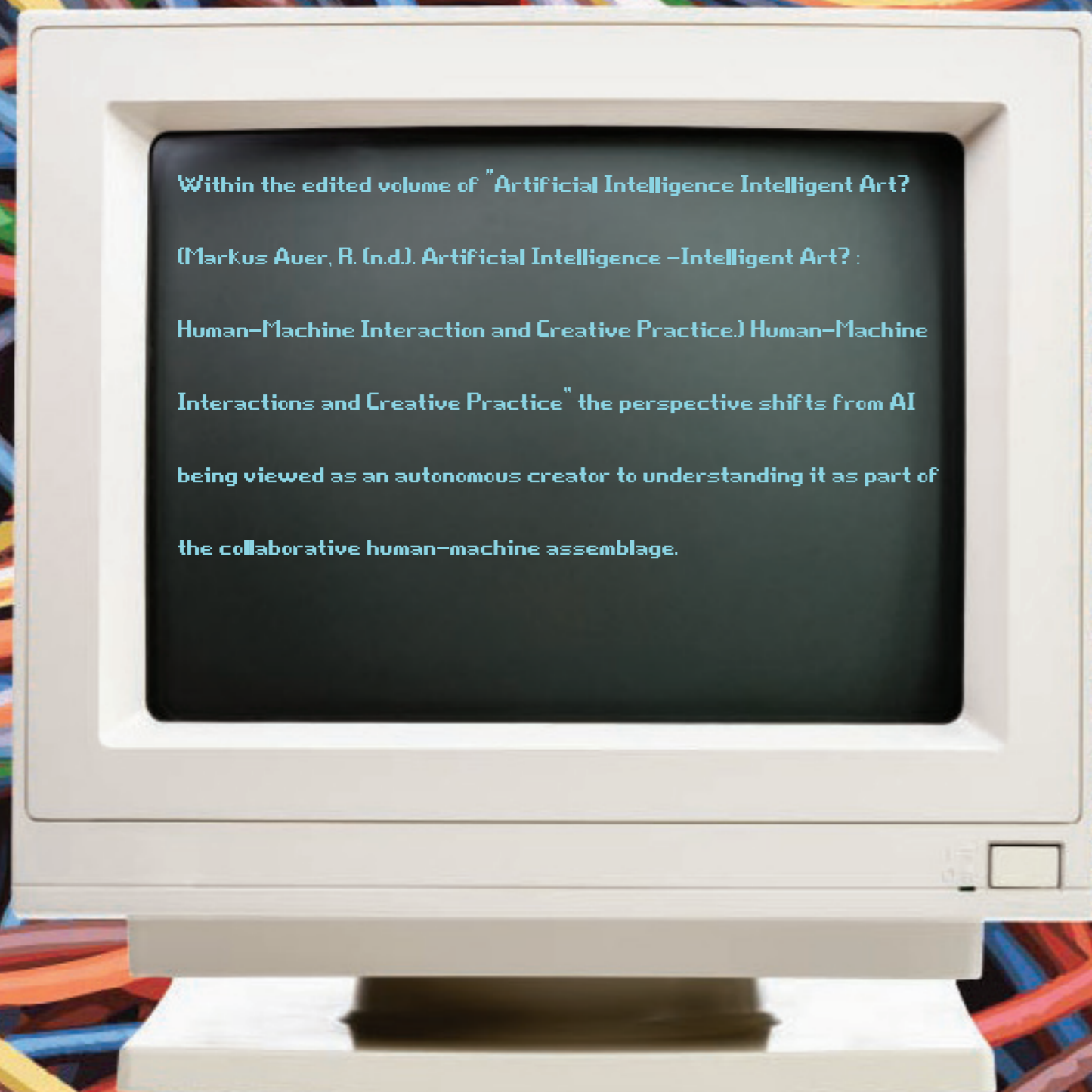
It proposes that human art is deeply influenced by our awareness of our mortality, biological imperfections, and spontaneous emotions—elements that AI cannot replicate since it lacks the capacity for preparation, brooding, or grappling with existential dread, merely executing statistical compilations instead.

(Svenungsson, J 2025, p. 79)

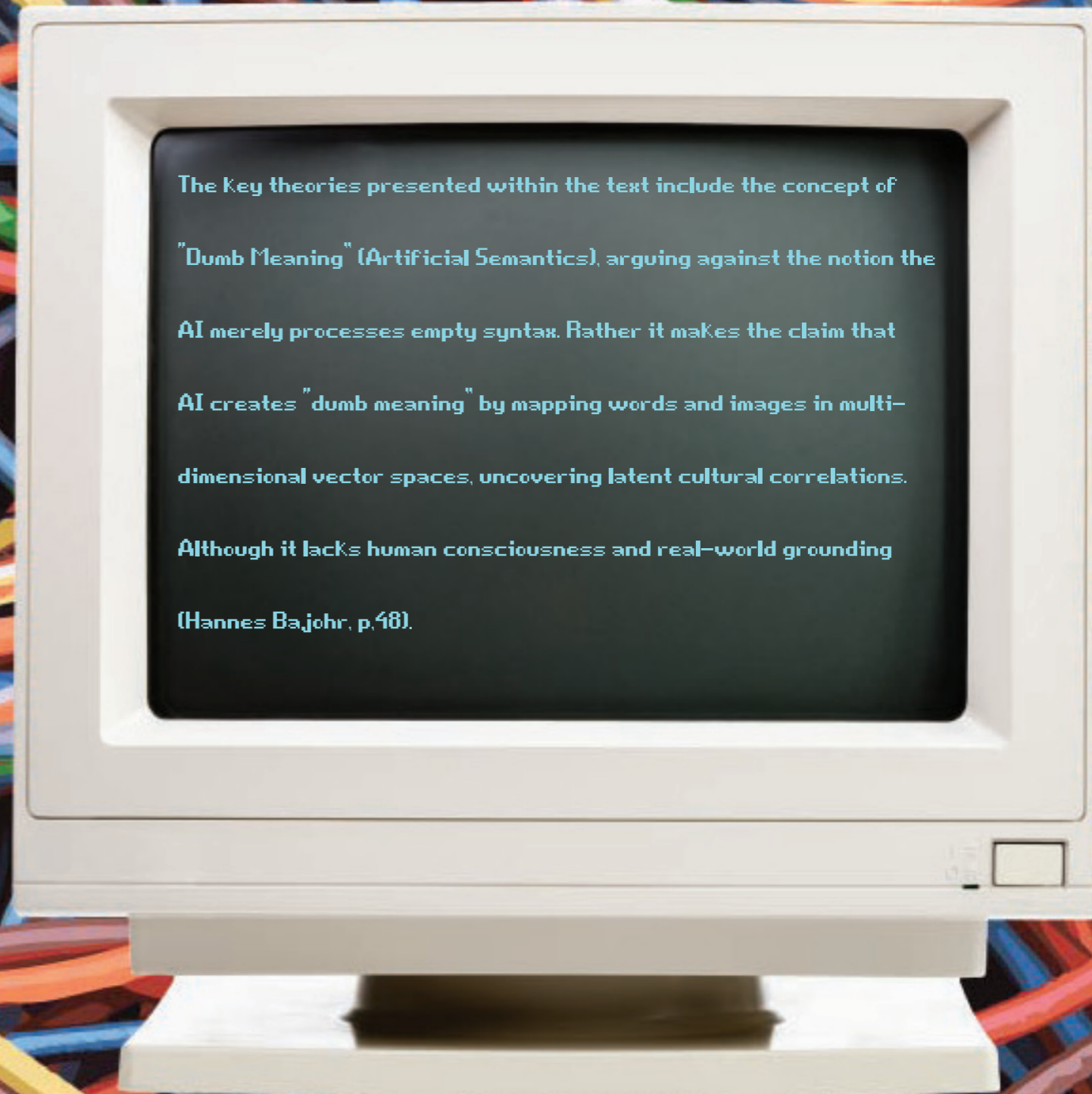


The same text further connects AI prompting to the Marcel Duchamp's concept of the readymade suggesting generative ai acts as an artists language model where rather than physical craftsmanship the creative act is reduced to language.

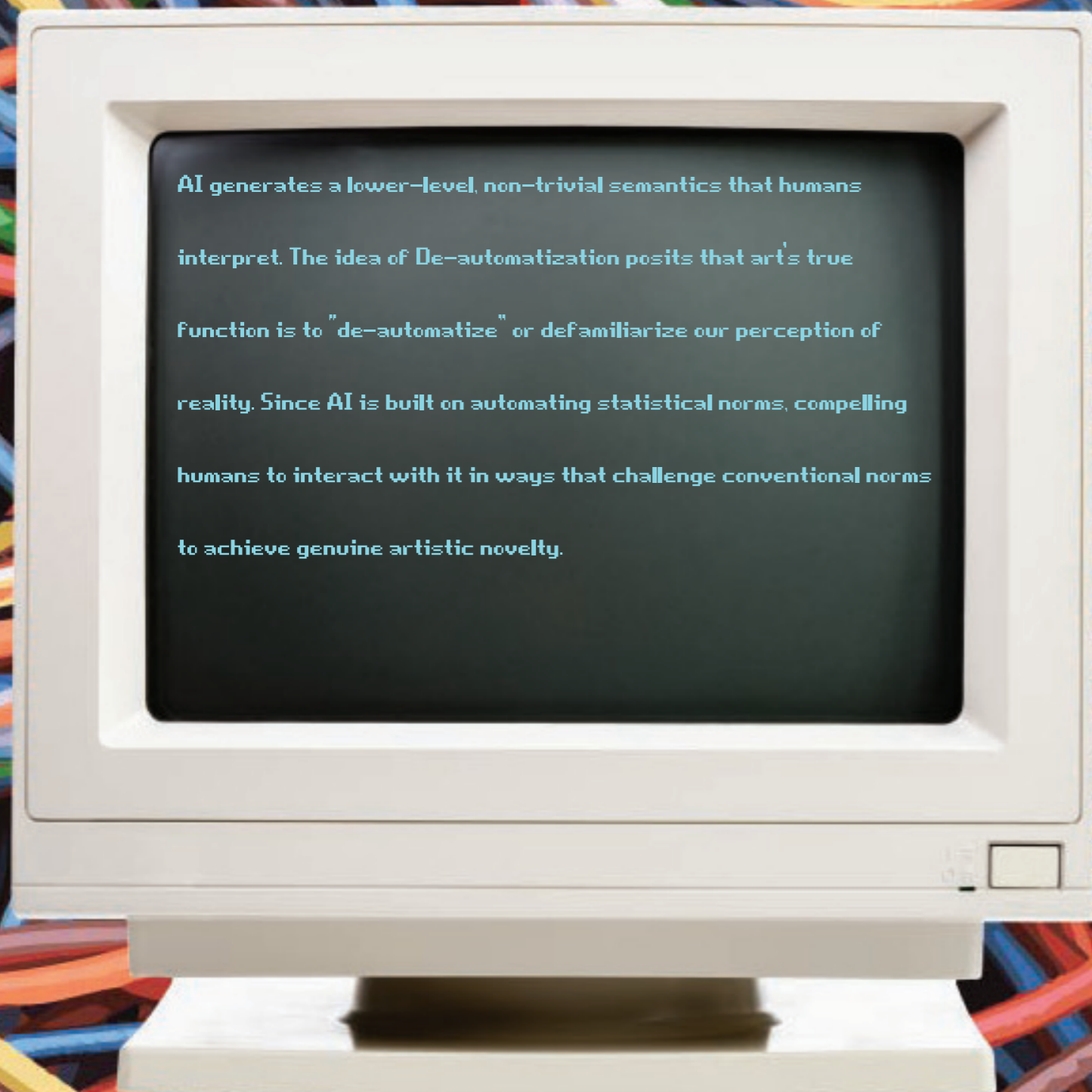
(Svenungsson, J 2025, p. 35)



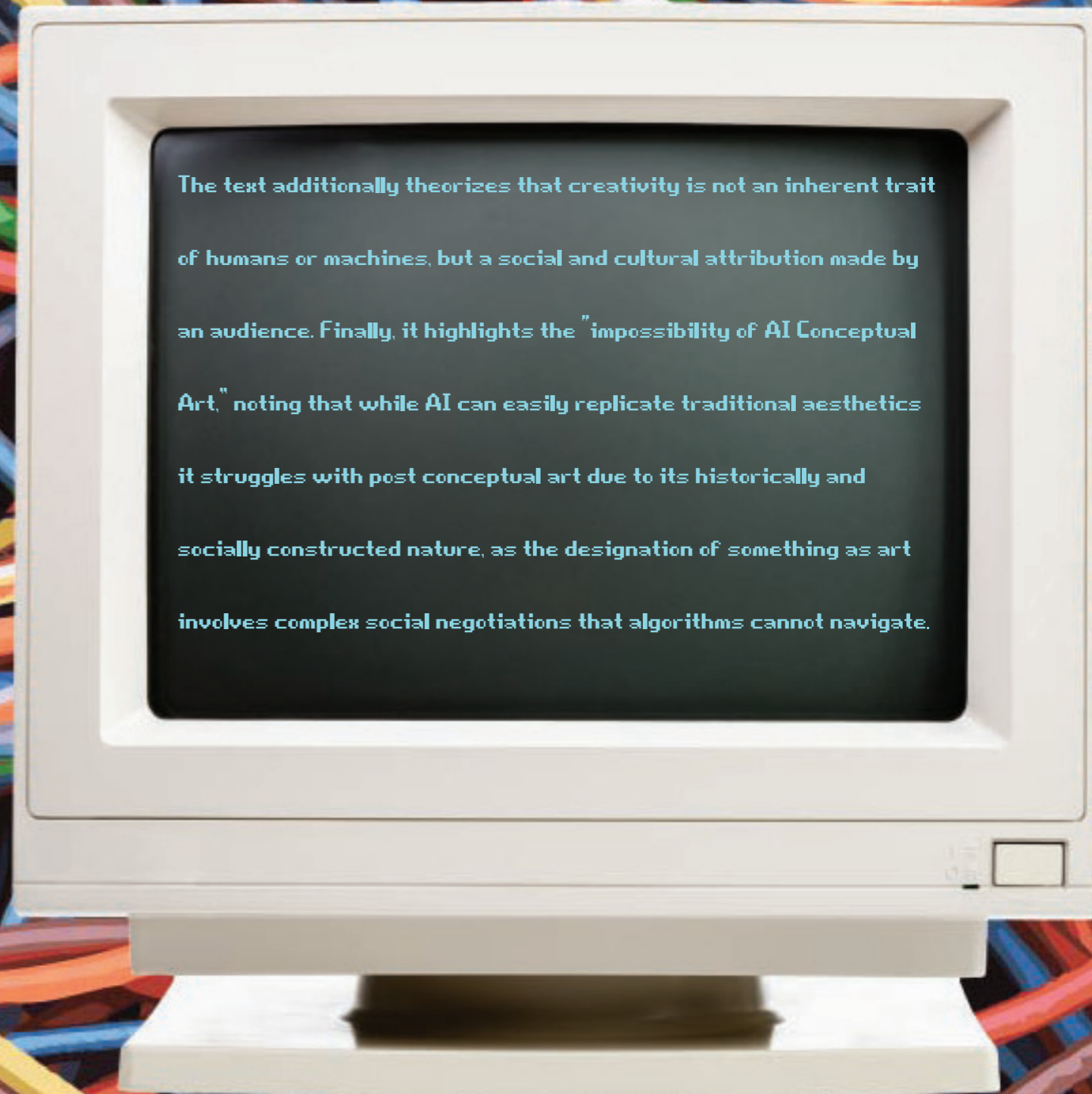
Within the edited volume of "Artificial Intelligence Intelligent Art?" (Markus Auer, B. (n.d.). Artificial Intelligence –Intelligent Art?: Human–Machine Interaction and Creative Practice.) Human–Machine Interactions and Creative Practice" the perspective shifts from AI being viewed as an autonomous creator to understanding it as part of the collaborative human–machine assemblage.



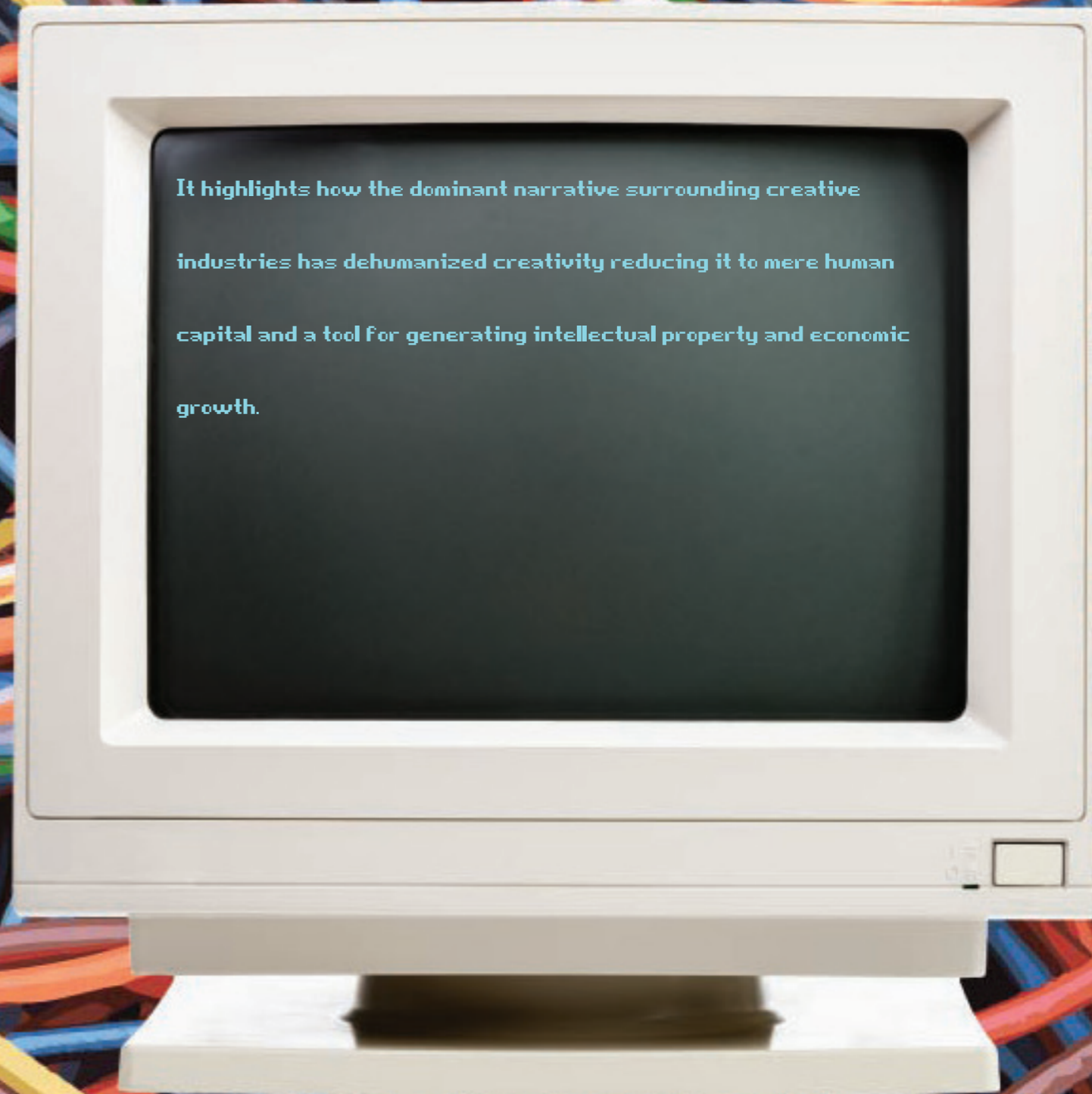
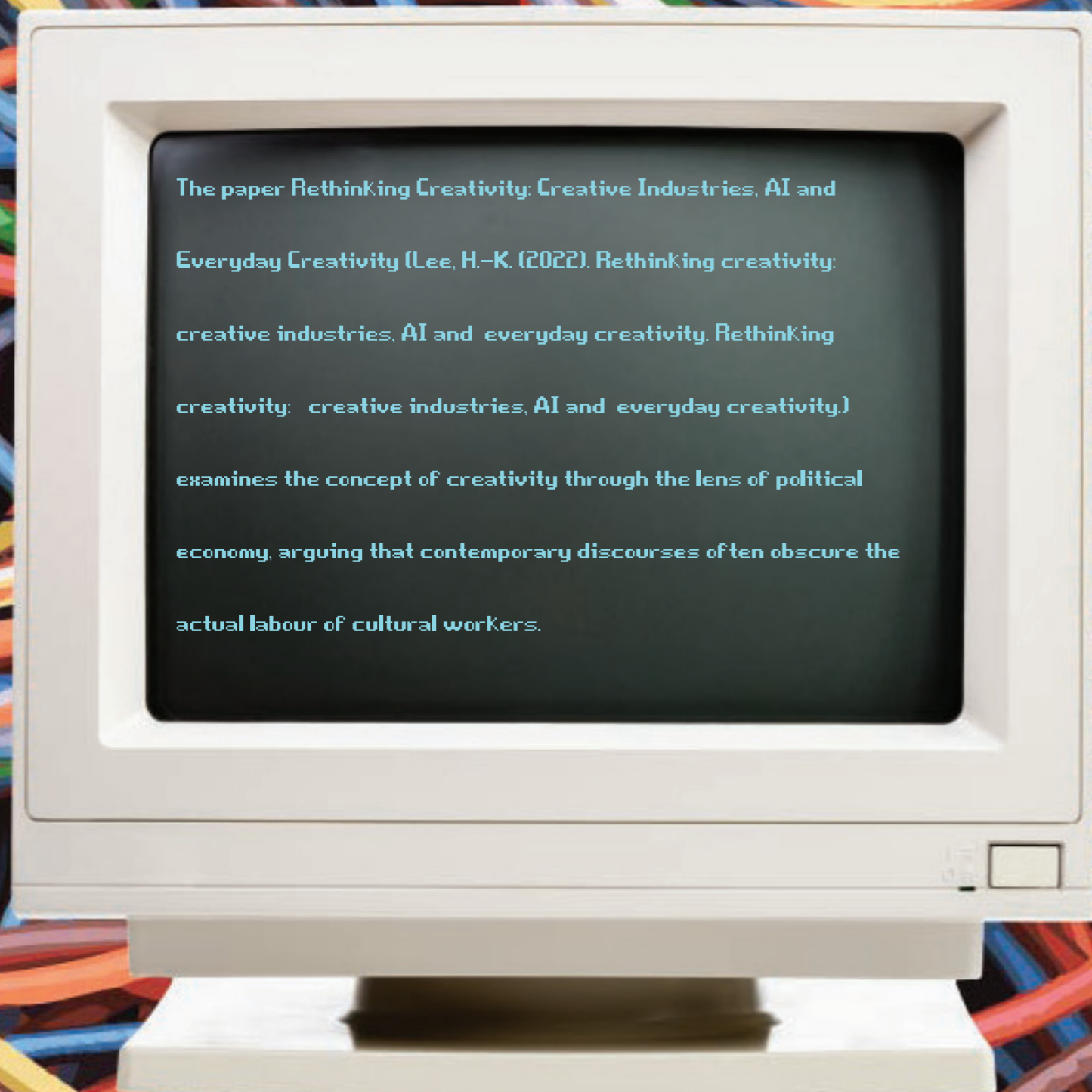
The key theories presented within the text include the concept of "Dumb Meaning" (Artificial Semantics), arguing against the notion the AI merely processes empty syntax. Rather it makes the claim that AI creates "dumb meaning" by mapping words and images in multi-dimensional vector spaces, uncovering latent cultural correlations. Although it lacks human consciousness and real-world grounding (Hannes Bajohr, p.48).

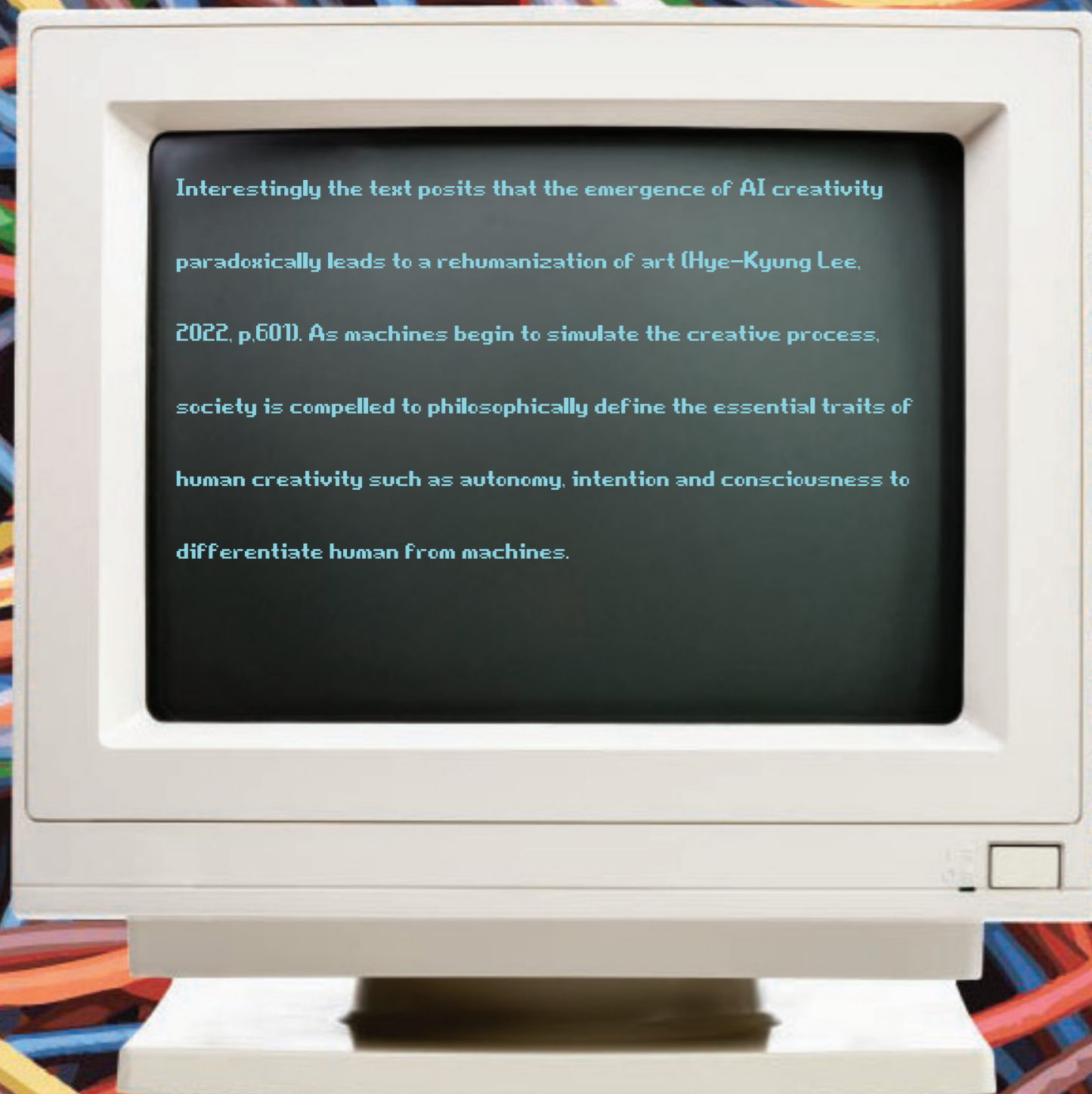


AI generates a lower-level, non-trivial semantics that humans interpret. The idea of De-automatization posits that art's true function is to "de-automatize" or defamiliarize our perception of reality. Since AI is built on automating statistical norms, compelling humans to interact with it in ways that challenge conventional norms to achieve genuine artistic novelty.

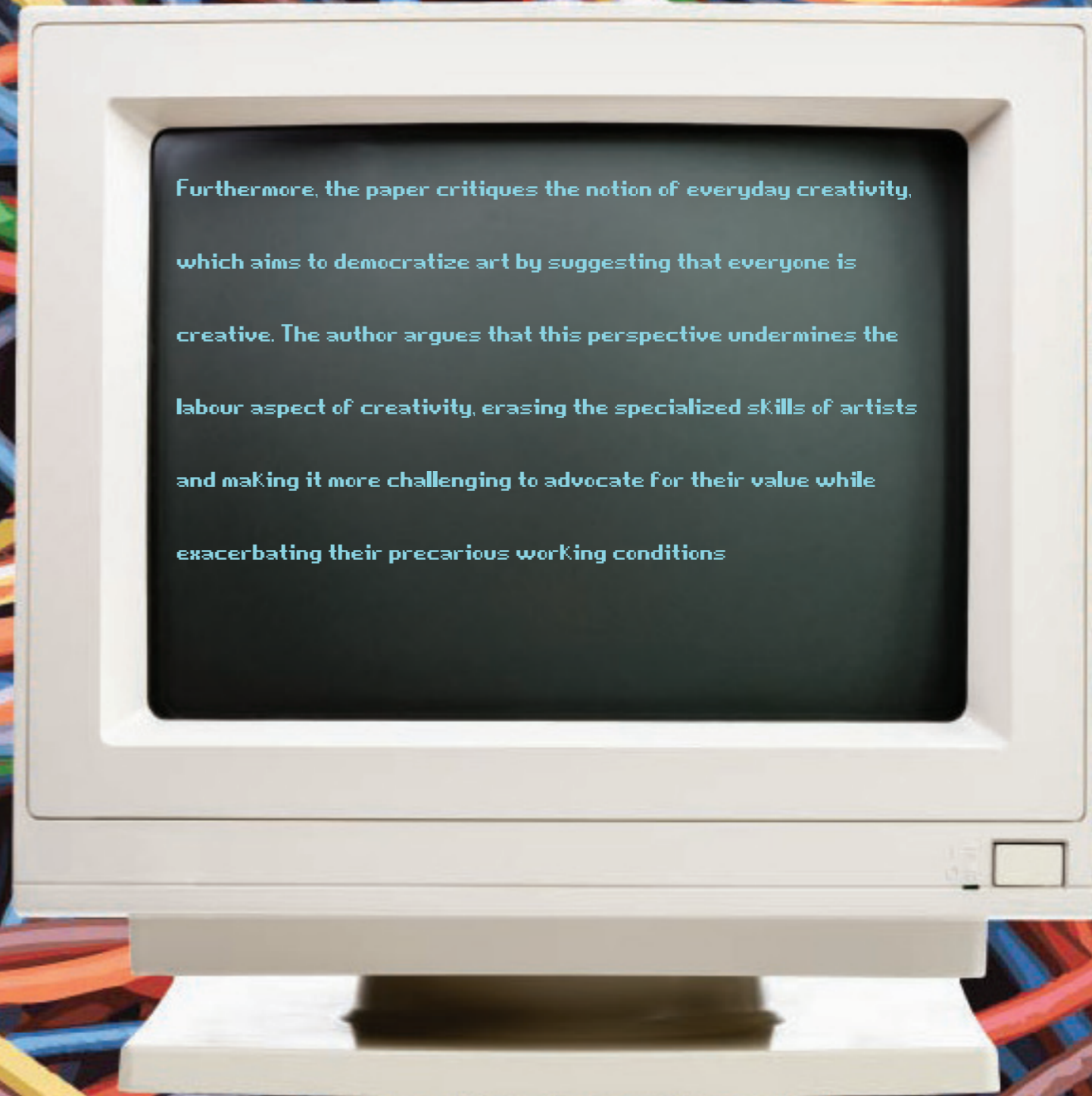


The text additionally theorizes that creativity is not an inherent trait of humans or machines, but a social and cultural attribution made by an audience. Finally, it highlights the "impossibility of AI Conceptual Art," noting that while AI can easily replicate traditional aesthetics it struggles with post conceptual art due to its historically and socially constructed nature, as the designation of something as art involves complex social negotiations that algorithms cannot navigate.

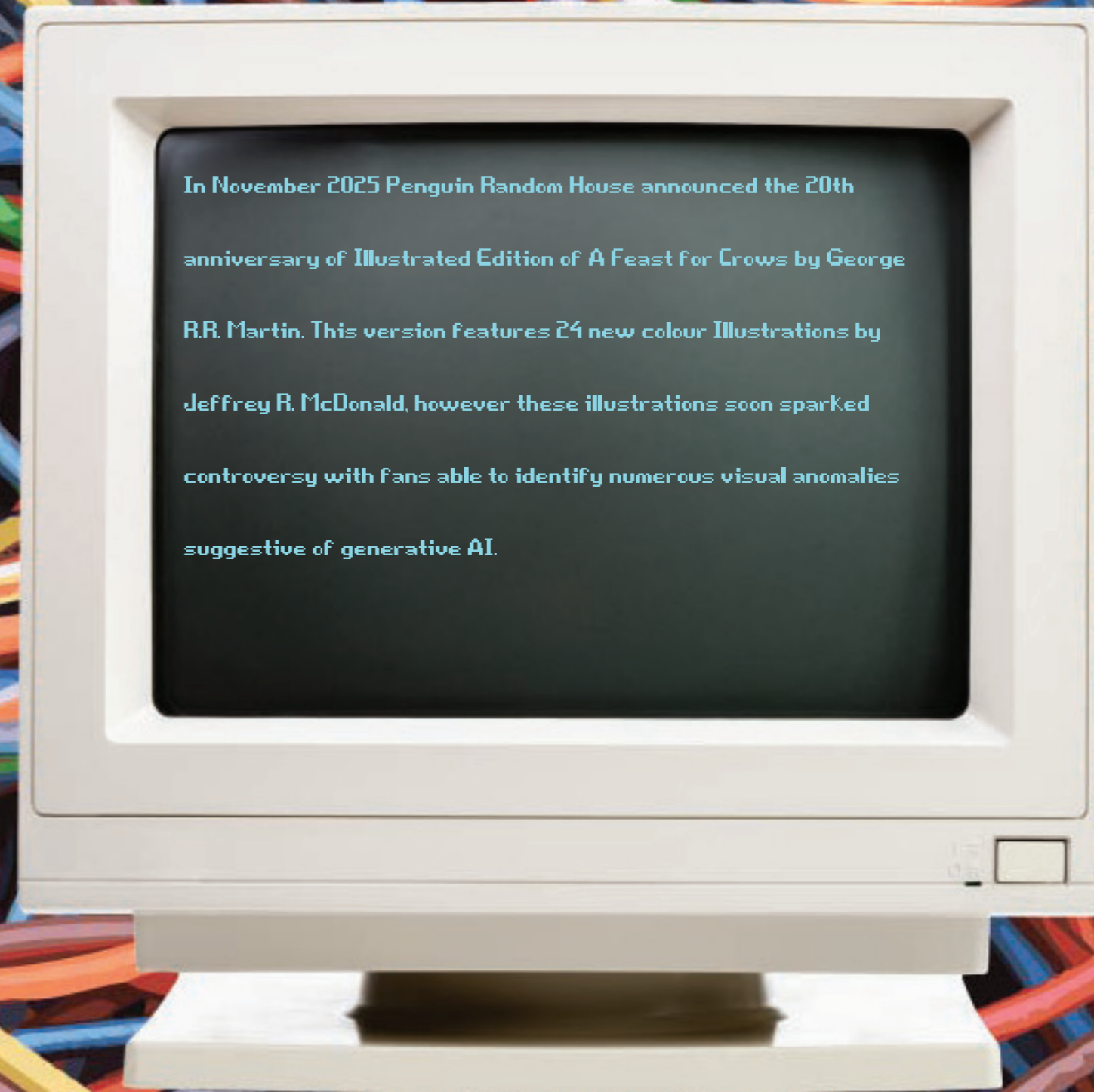
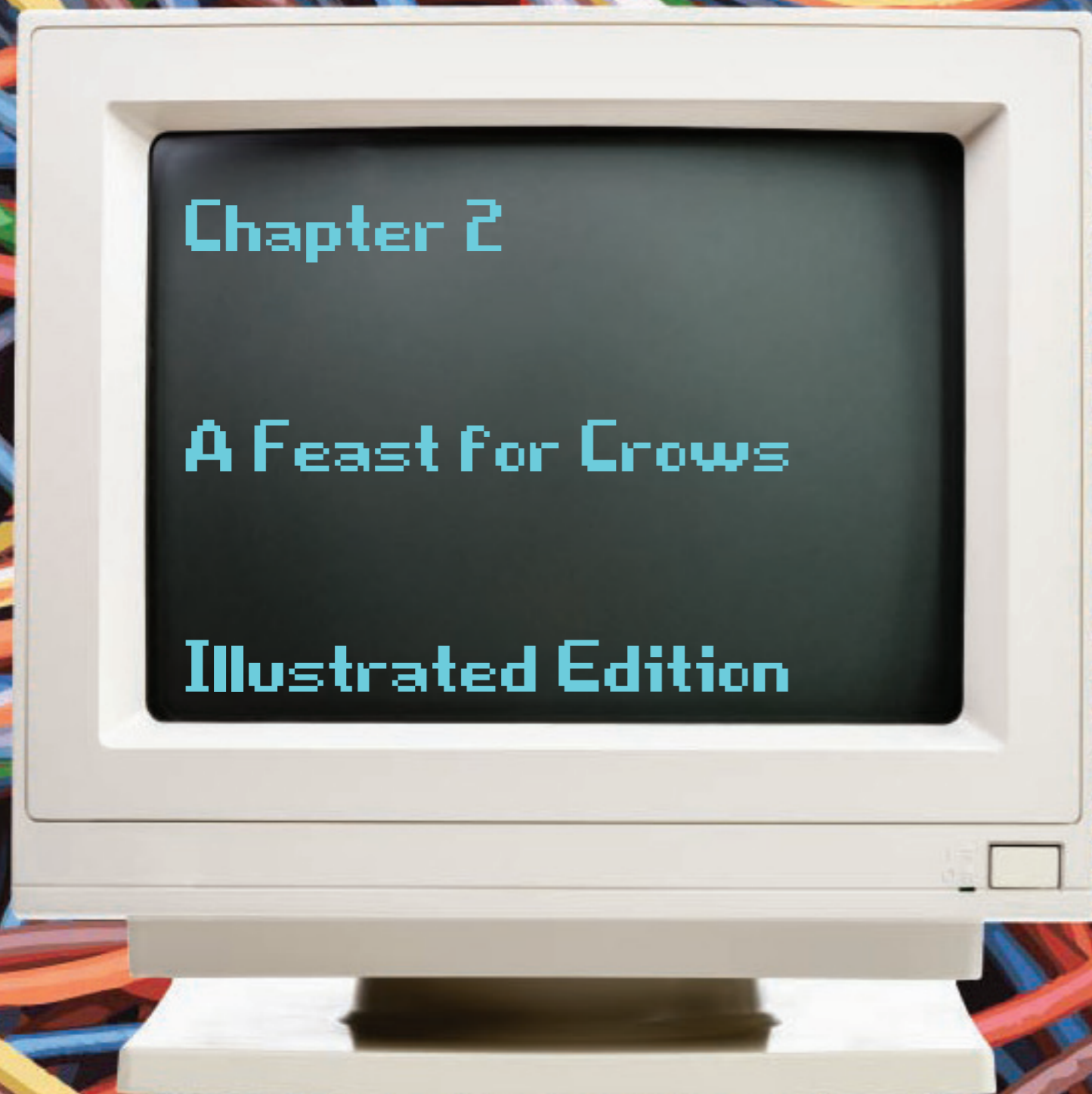


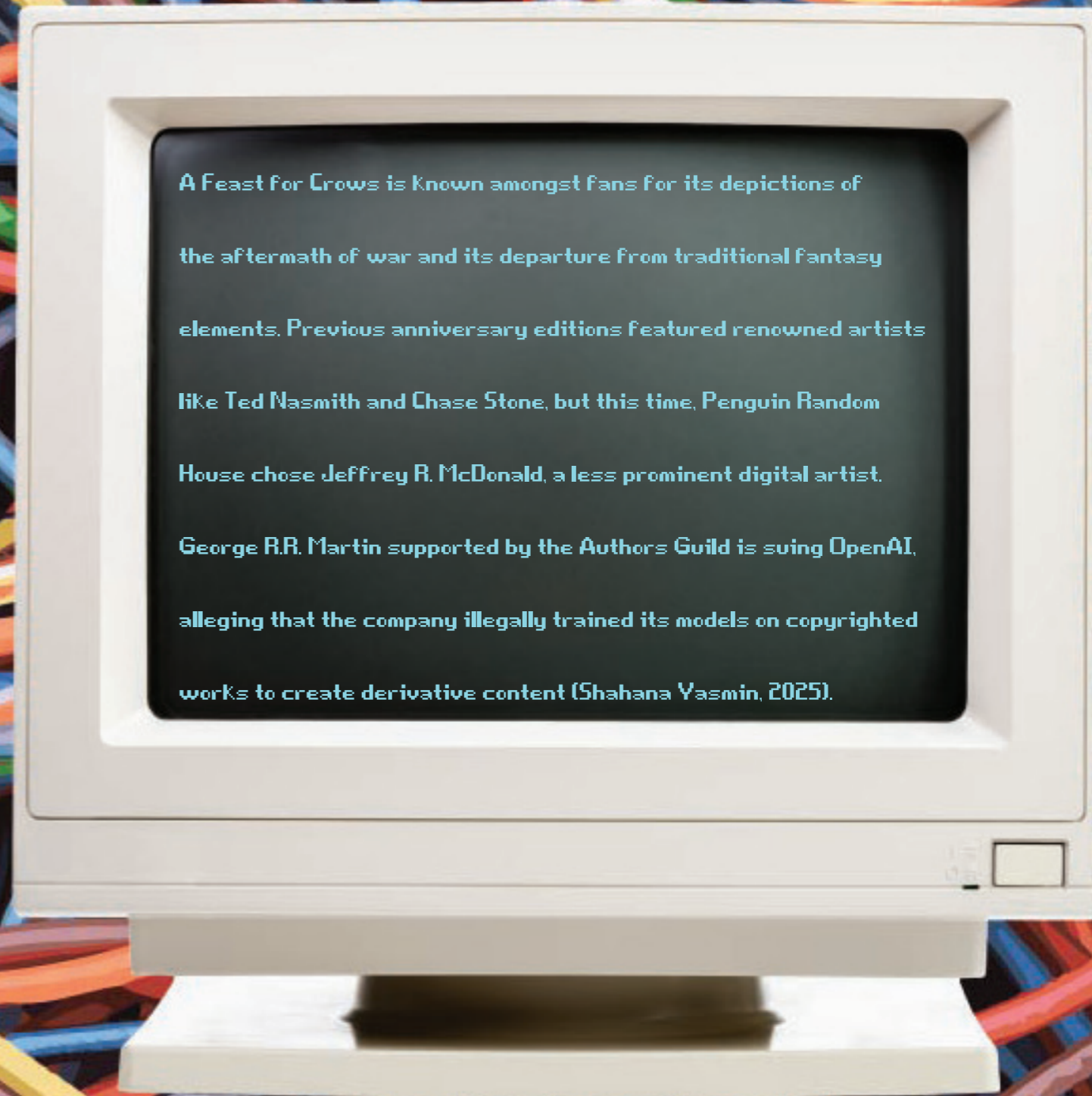
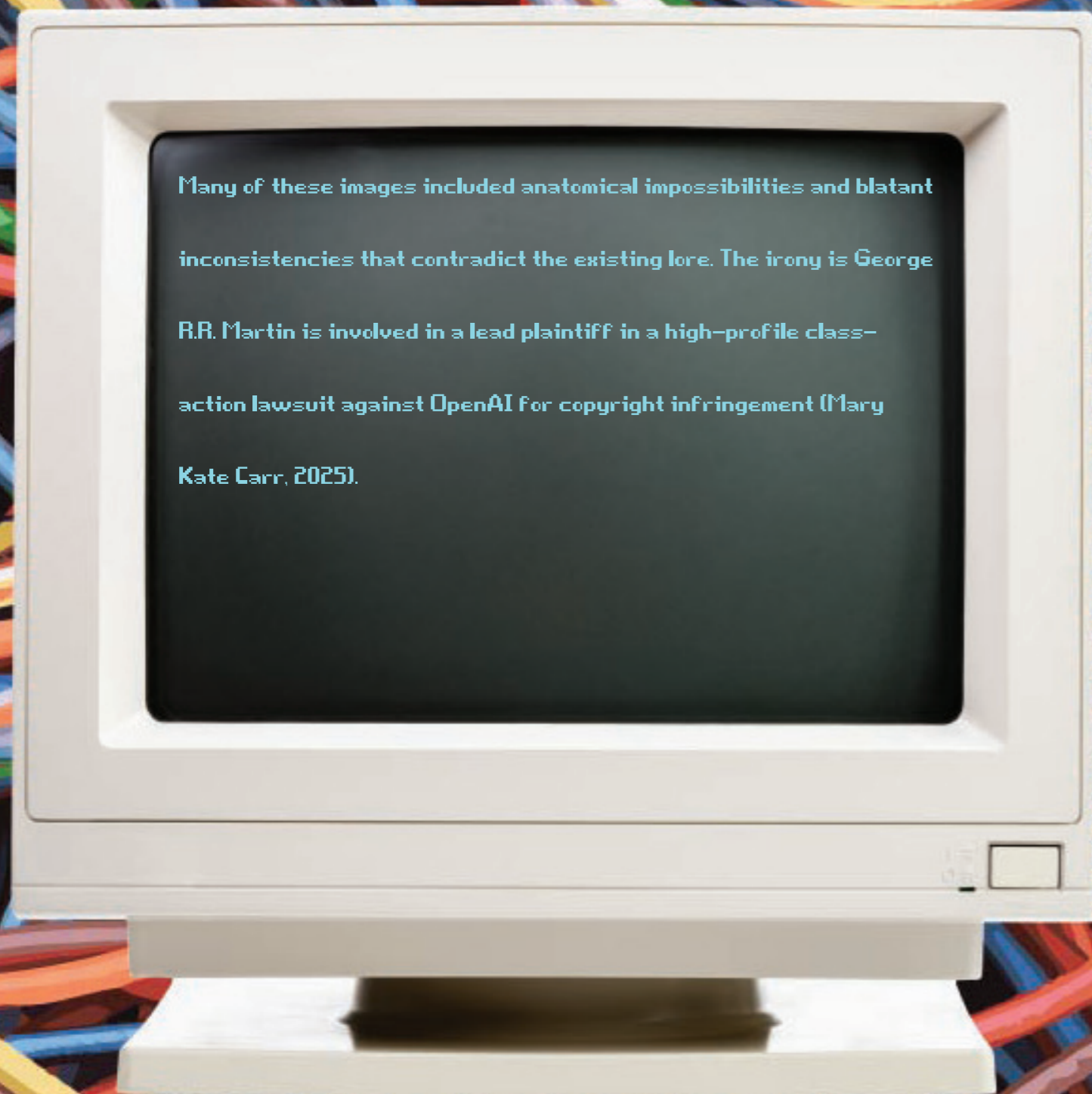


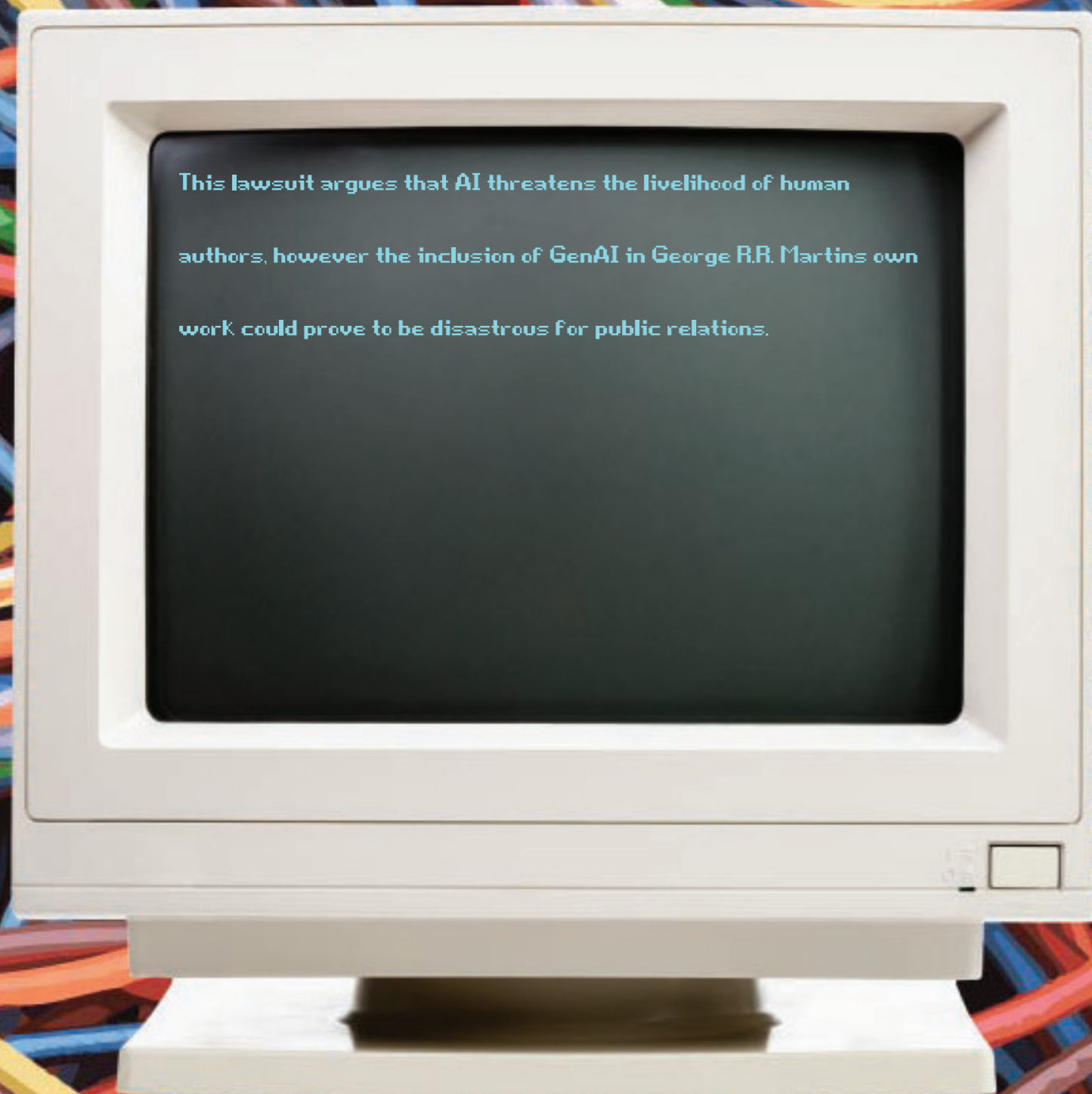
Interestingly the text posits that the emergence of AI creativity paradoxically leads to a rehumanization of art (Hye-Kyung Lee, 2022, p.601). As machines begin to simulate the creative process, society is compelled to philosophically define the essential traits of human creativity such as autonomy, intention and consciousness to differentiate human from machines.



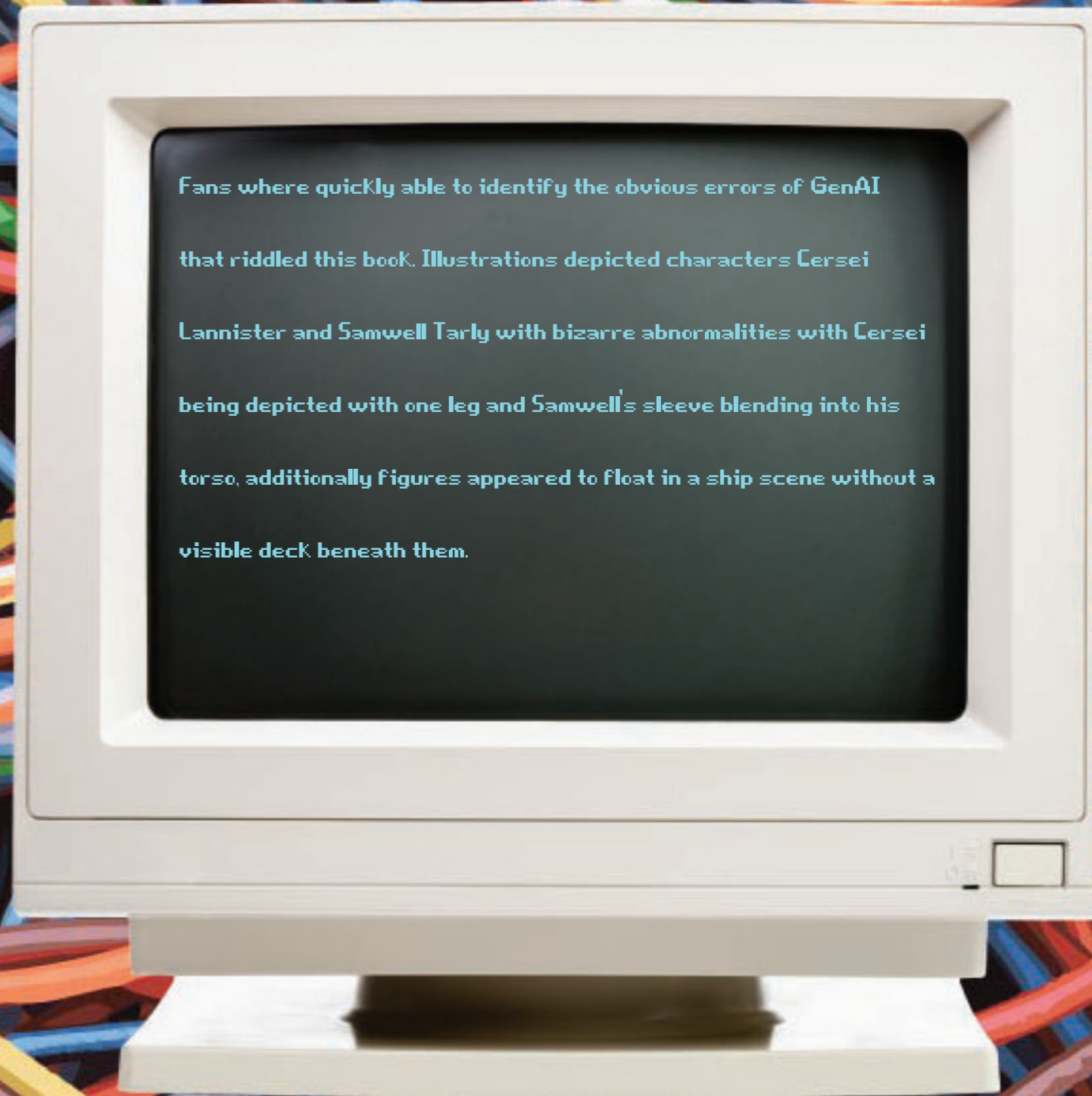
Furthermore, the paper critiques the notion of everyday creativity, which aims to democratize art by suggesting that everyone is creative. The author argues that this perspective undermines the labour aspect of creativity, erasing the specialized skills of artists and making it more challenging to advocate for their value while exacerbating their precarious working conditions



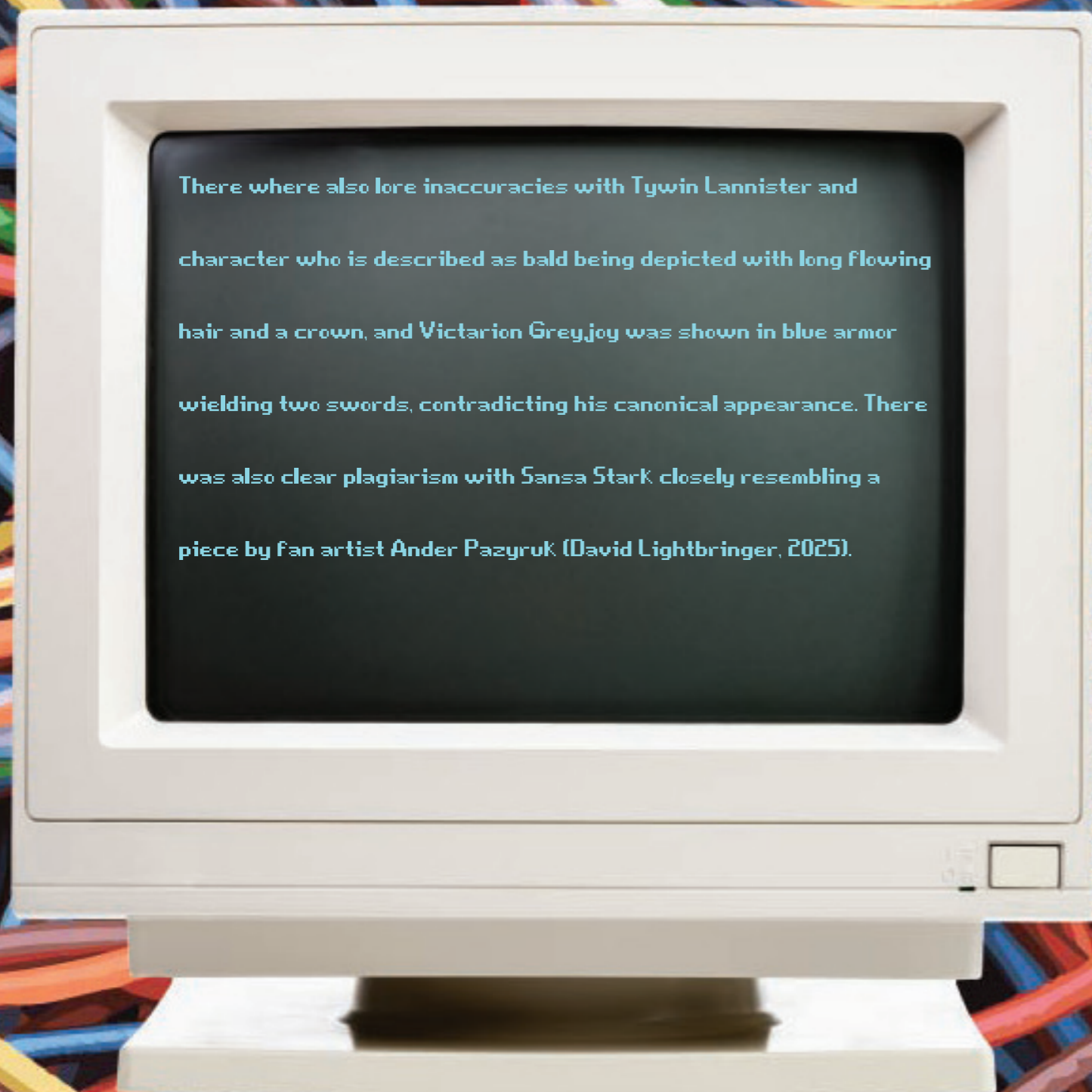




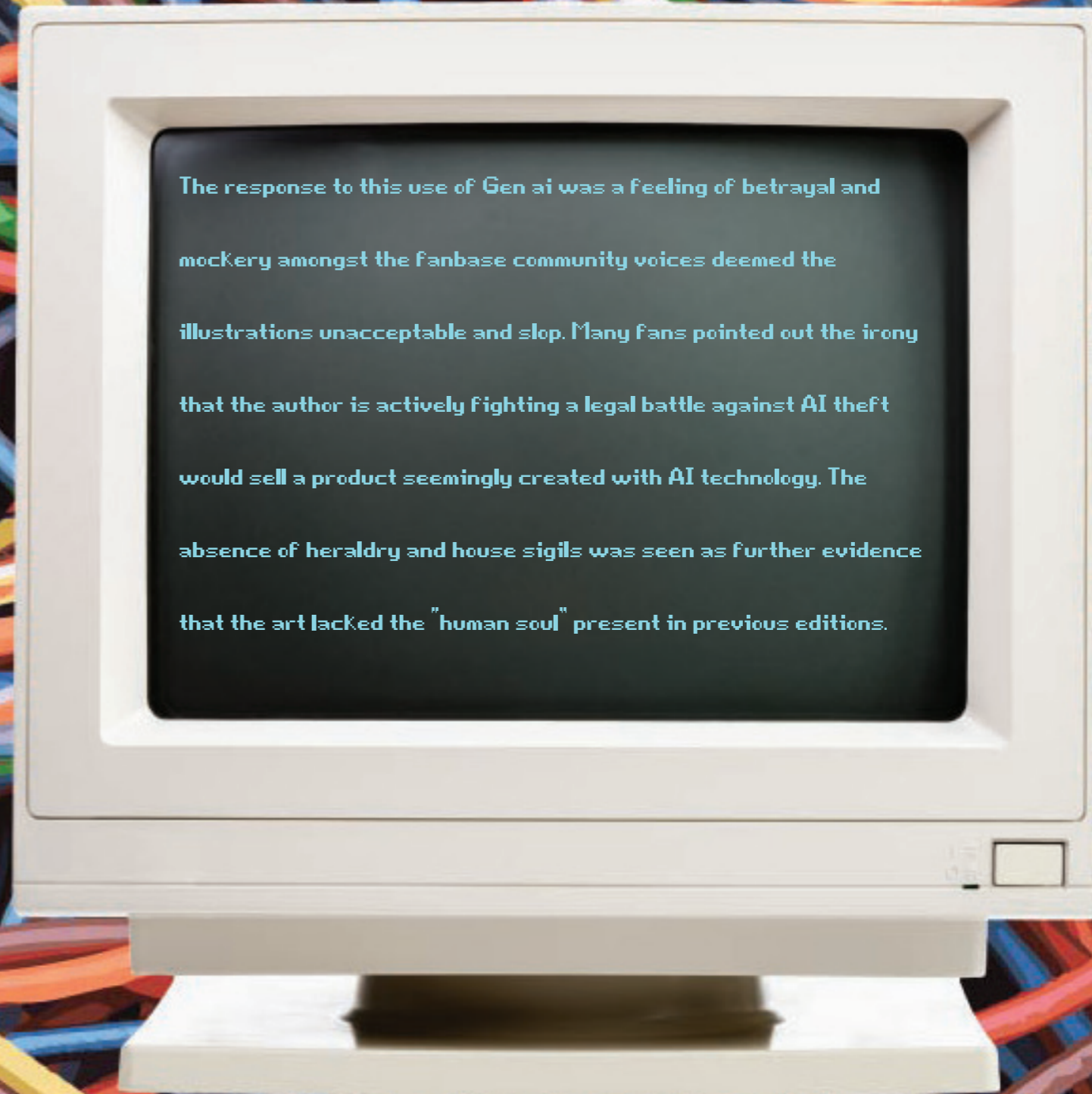
This lawsuit argues that AI threatens the livelihood of human authors, however the inclusion of GenAI in George R.R. Martin's own work could prove to be disastrous for public relations.



Fans were quickly able to identify the obvious errors of GenAI that riddled this book. Illustrations depicted characters Cersei Lannister and Samwell Tarly with bizarre abnormalities with Cersei being depicted with one leg and Samwell's sleeve blending into his torso, additionally figures appeared to float in a ship scene without a visible deck beneath them.



There were also lore inaccuracies with Tywin Lannister and character who is described as bald being depicted with long flowing hair and a crown, and Victarion Greyjoy was shown in blue armor wielding two swords, contradicting his canonical appearance. There was also clear plagiarism with Sansa Stark closely resembling a piece by fan artist Ander Pazyruk (David Lightbringer, 2025).



The response to this use of Gen ai was a feeling of betrayal and mockery amongst the fanbase community voices deemed the illustrations unacceptable and slop. Many fans pointed out the irony that the author is actively fighting a legal battle against AI theft would sell a product seemingly created with AI technology. The absence of heraldry and house sigils was seen as further evidence that the art lacked the "human soul" present in previous editions.



Original Work By Ander Pazyruk.

What looks like outline of wolf from Anders original piece.

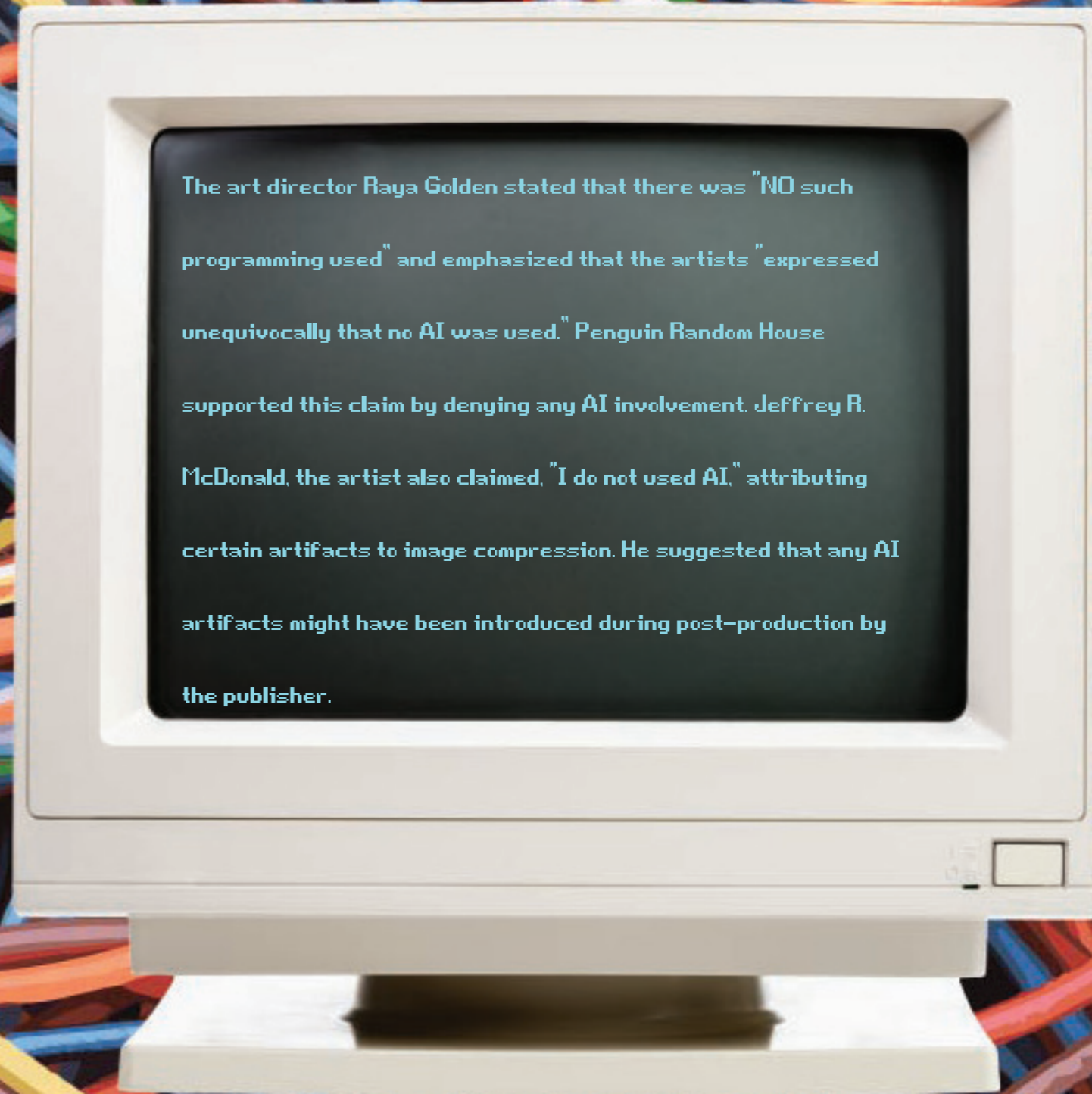


Tywin as depicted in A Feast For Crows Illustrated Edition.

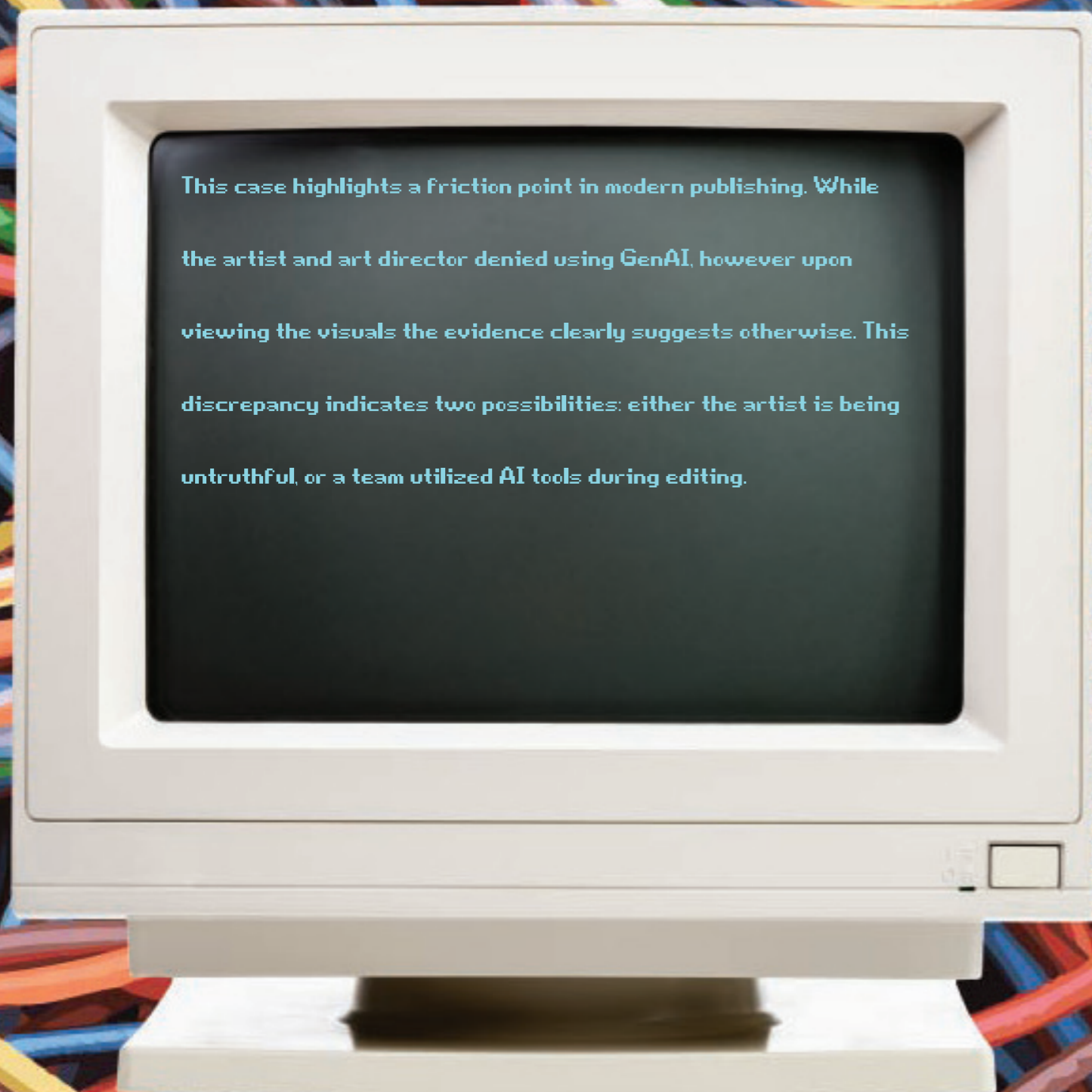
Book accurate Tywin depicted by artist Thaldir



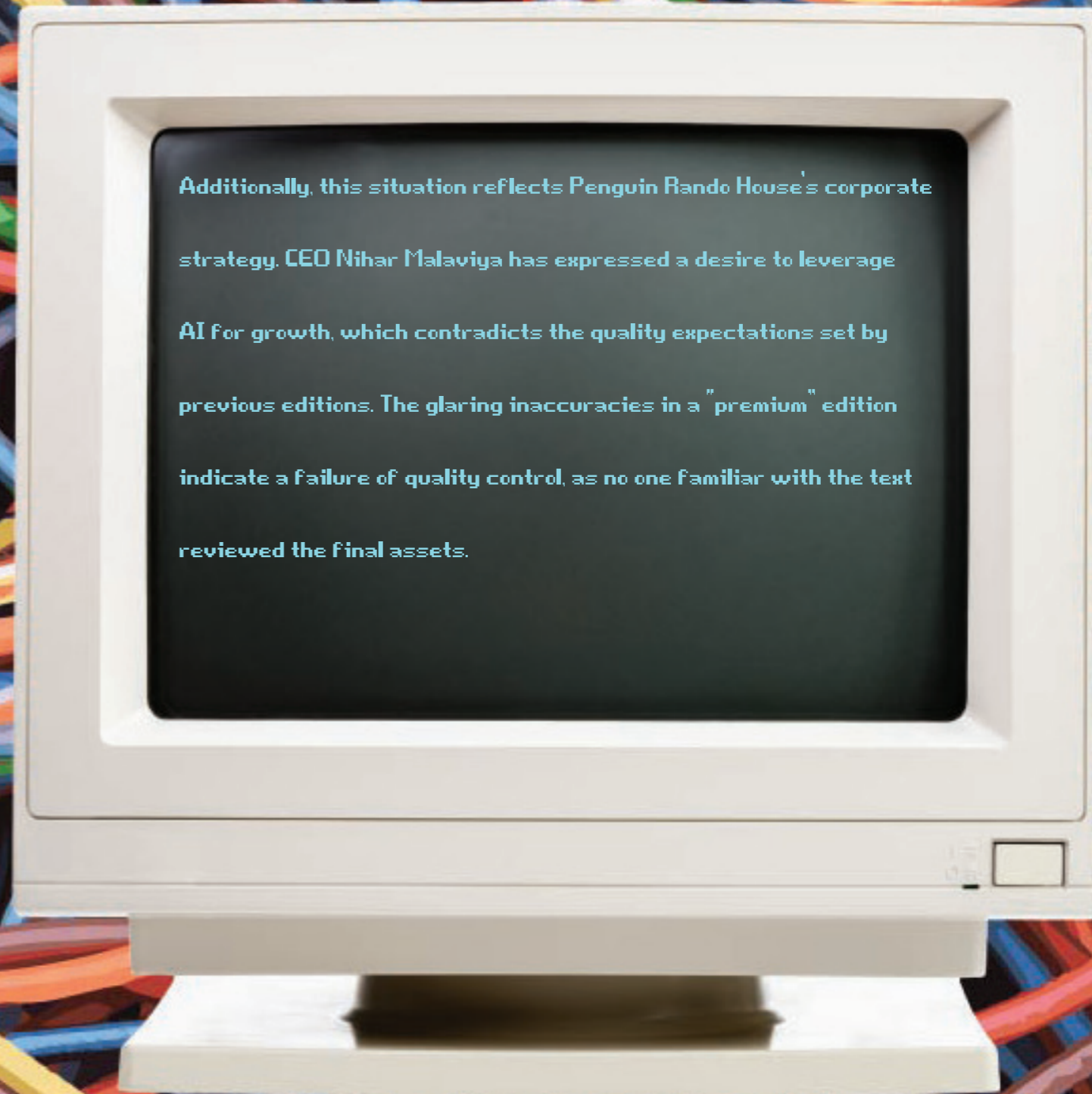
Responses from the involved parties tried to attempt to distance the project from GenAI, however these statements only raised further questions.



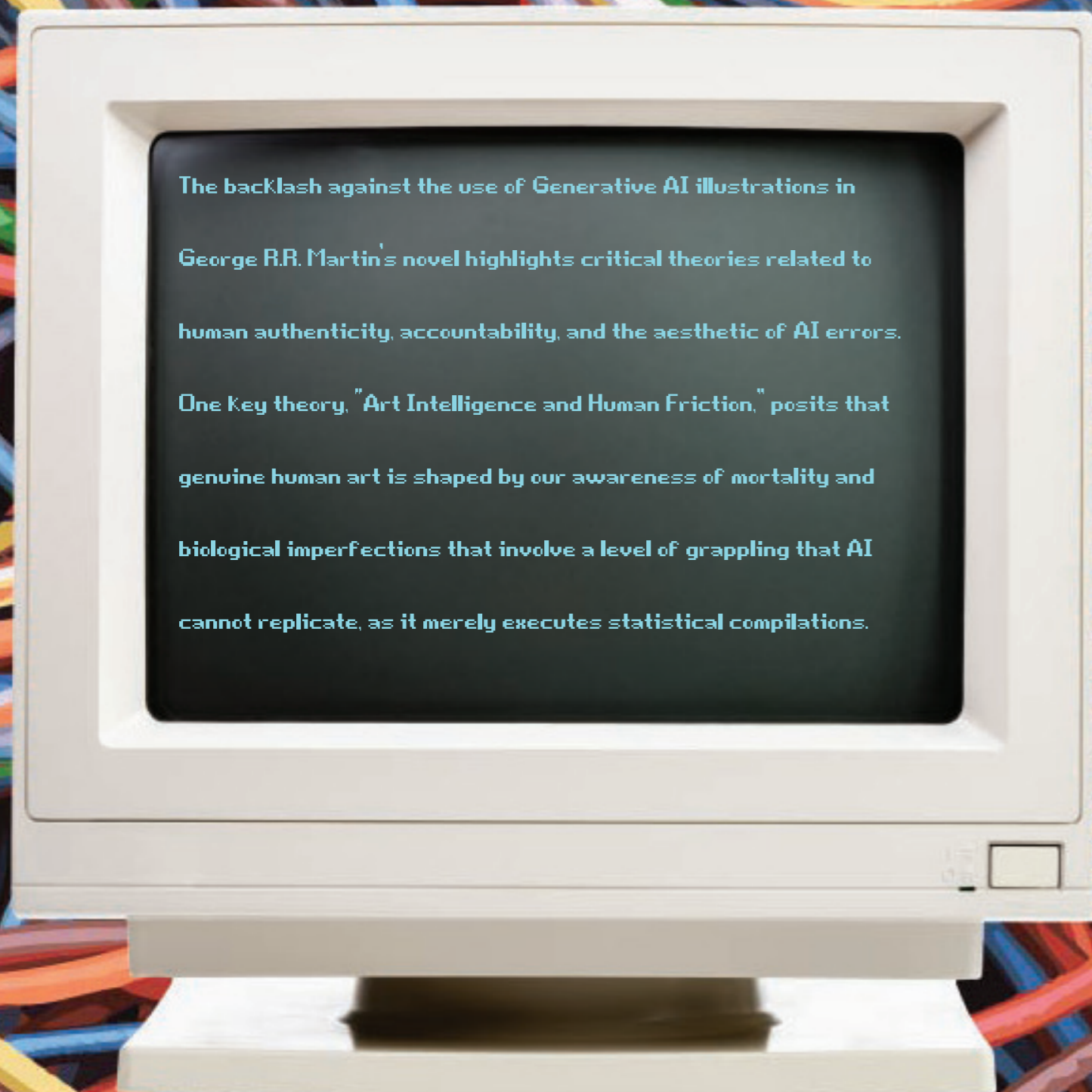
The art director Raya Golden stated that there was "NO such programming used" and emphasized that the artists "expressed unequivocally that no AI was used." Penguin Random House supported this claim by denying any AI involvement. Jeffrey R. McDonald, the artist also claimed, "I do not used AI," attributing certain artifacts to image compression. He suggested that any AI artifacts might have been introduced during post-production by the publisher.



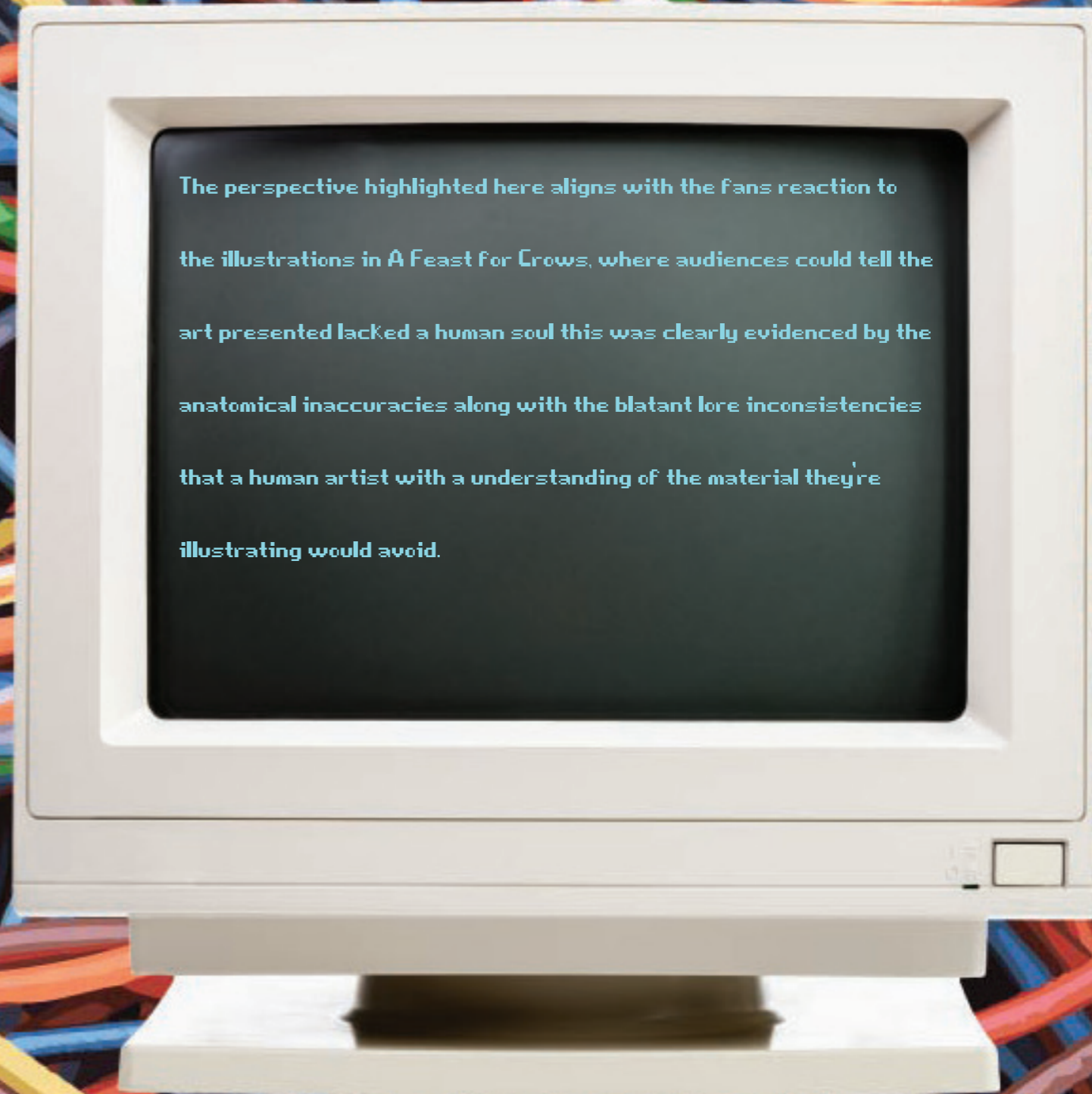
This case highlights a friction point in modern publishing. While the artist and art director denied using GenAI, however upon viewing the visuals the evidence clearly suggests otherwise. This discrepancy indicates two possibilities: either the artist is being untruthful, or a team utilized AI tools during editing.



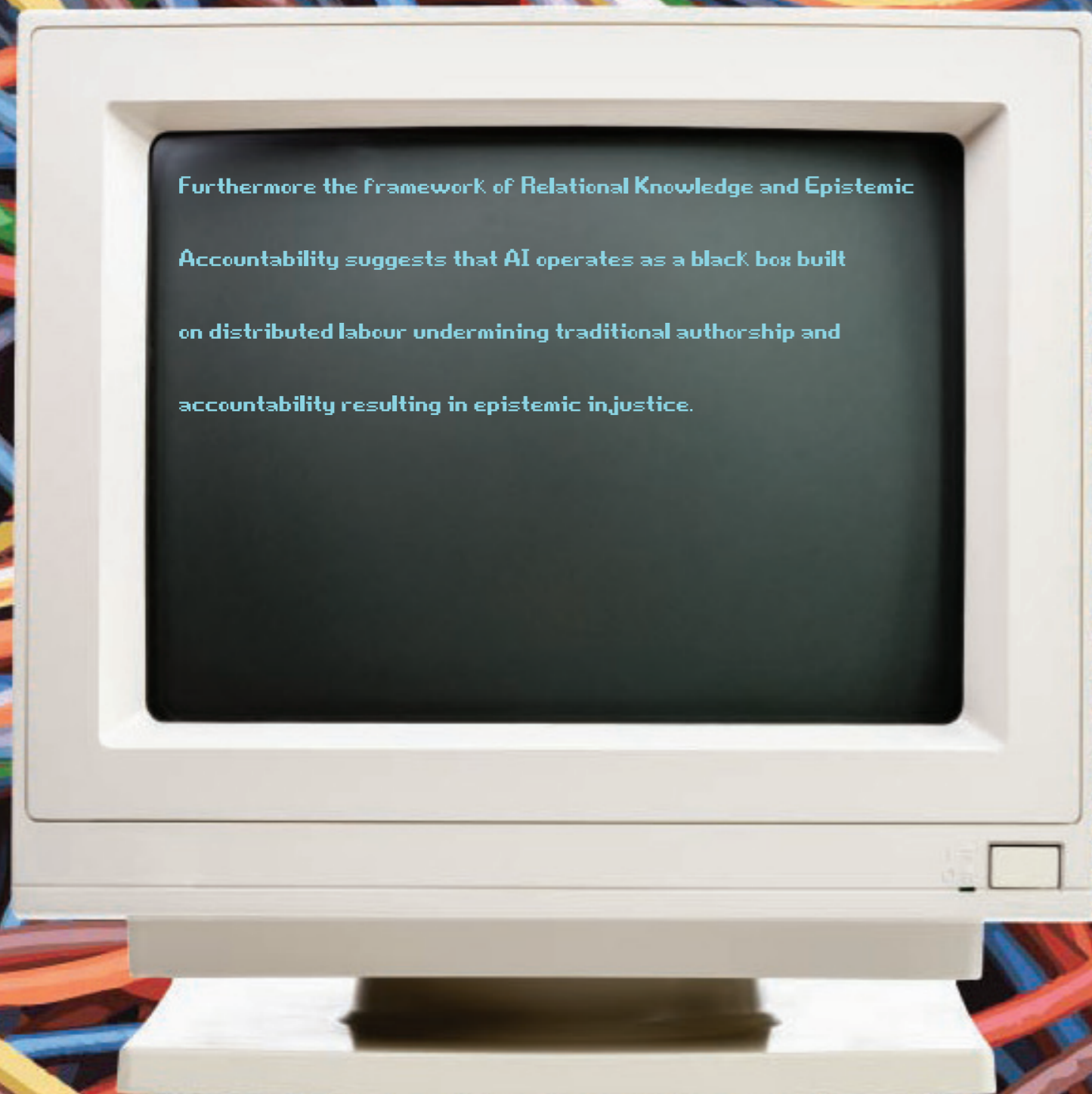
Additionally, this situation reflects Penguin Random House's corporate strategy. CEO Nihar Malaviya has expressed a desire to leverage AI for growth, which contradicts the quality expectations set by previous editions. The glaring inaccuracies in a "premium" edition indicate a failure of quality control, as no one familiar with the text reviewed the final assets.



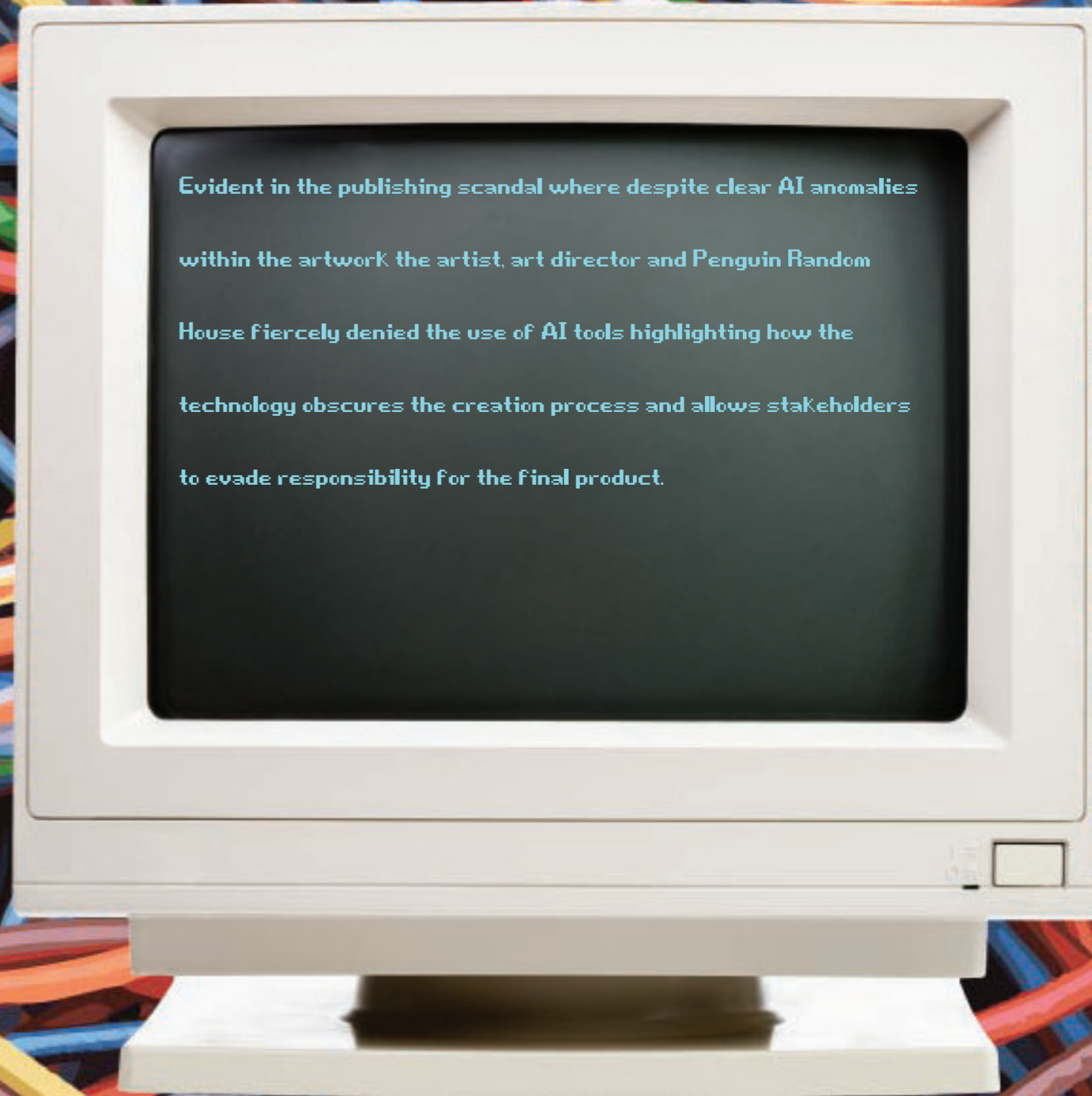
The backlash against the use of Generative AI illustrations in George R.R. Martin's novel highlights critical theories related to human authenticity, accountability, and the aesthetic of AI errors. One key theory, "Art Intelligence and Human Friction," posits that genuine human art is shaped by our awareness of mortality and biological imperfections that involve a level of grappling that AI cannot replicate, as it merely executes statistical compilations.



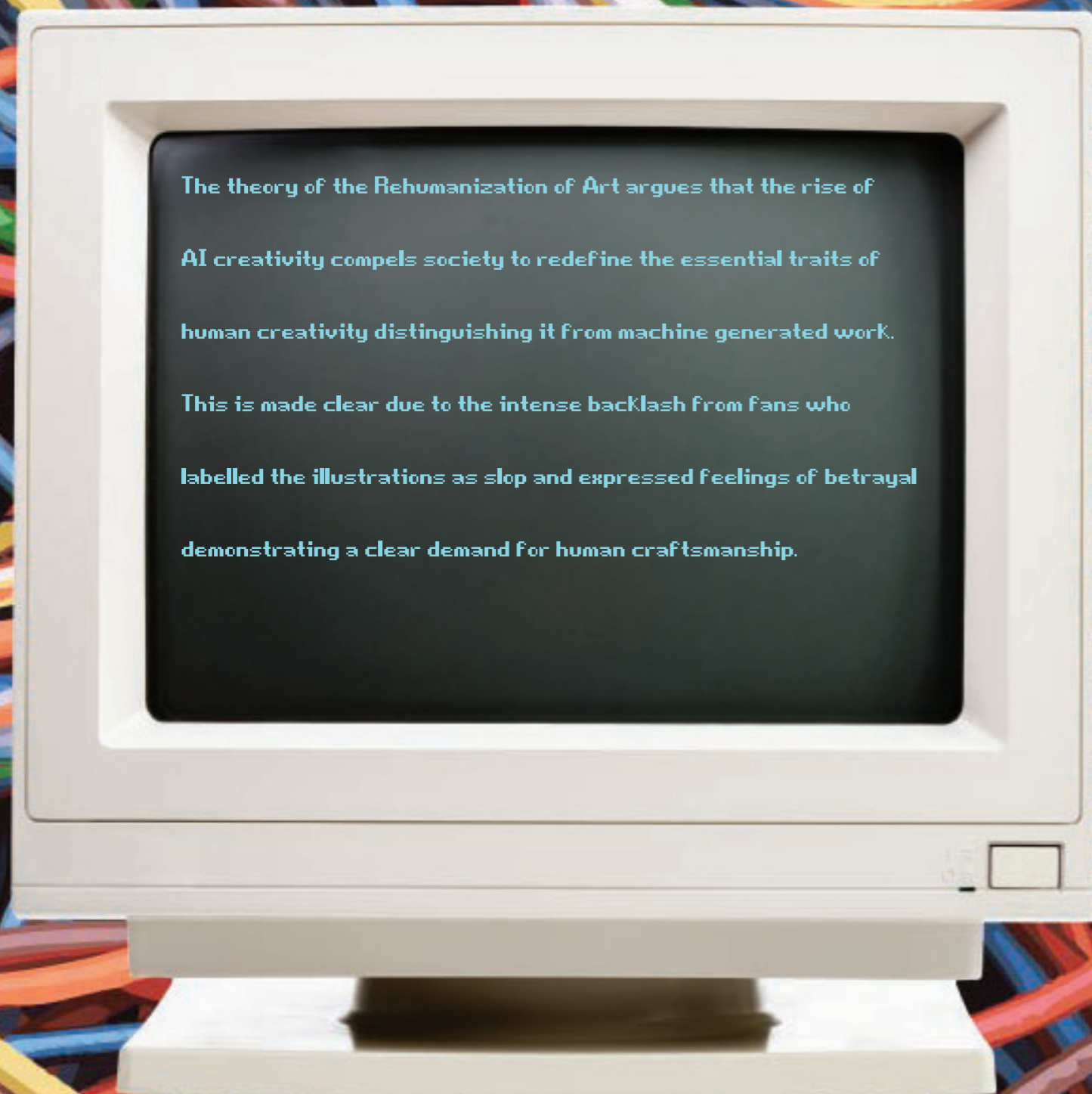
The perspective highlighted here aligns with the fans' reaction to the illustrations in *A Feast for Crows*, where audiences could tell the art presented lacked a human soul. This was clearly evidenced by the anatomical inaccuracies along with the blatant lore inconsistencies that a human artist with a understanding of the material they're illustrating would avoid.



Furthermore the framework of Relational Knowledge and Epistemic Accountability suggests that AI operates as a black box built on distributed labour undermining traditional authorship and accountability resulting in epistemic injustice.

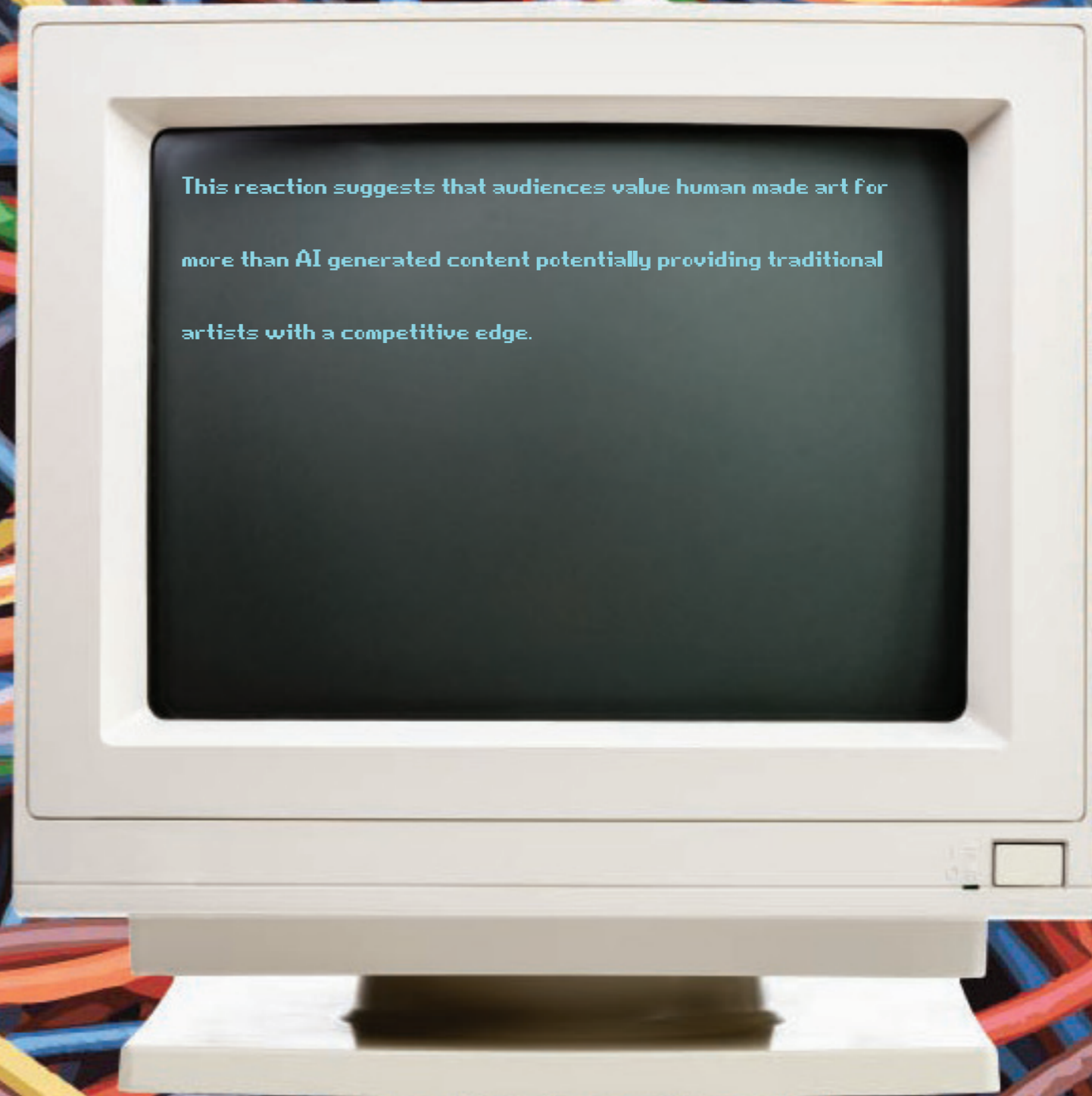


Evident in the publishing scandal where despite clear AI anomalies within the artwork the artist, art director and Penguin Random House fiercely denied the use of AI tools highlighting how the technology obscures the creation process and allows stakeholders to evade responsibility for the final product.

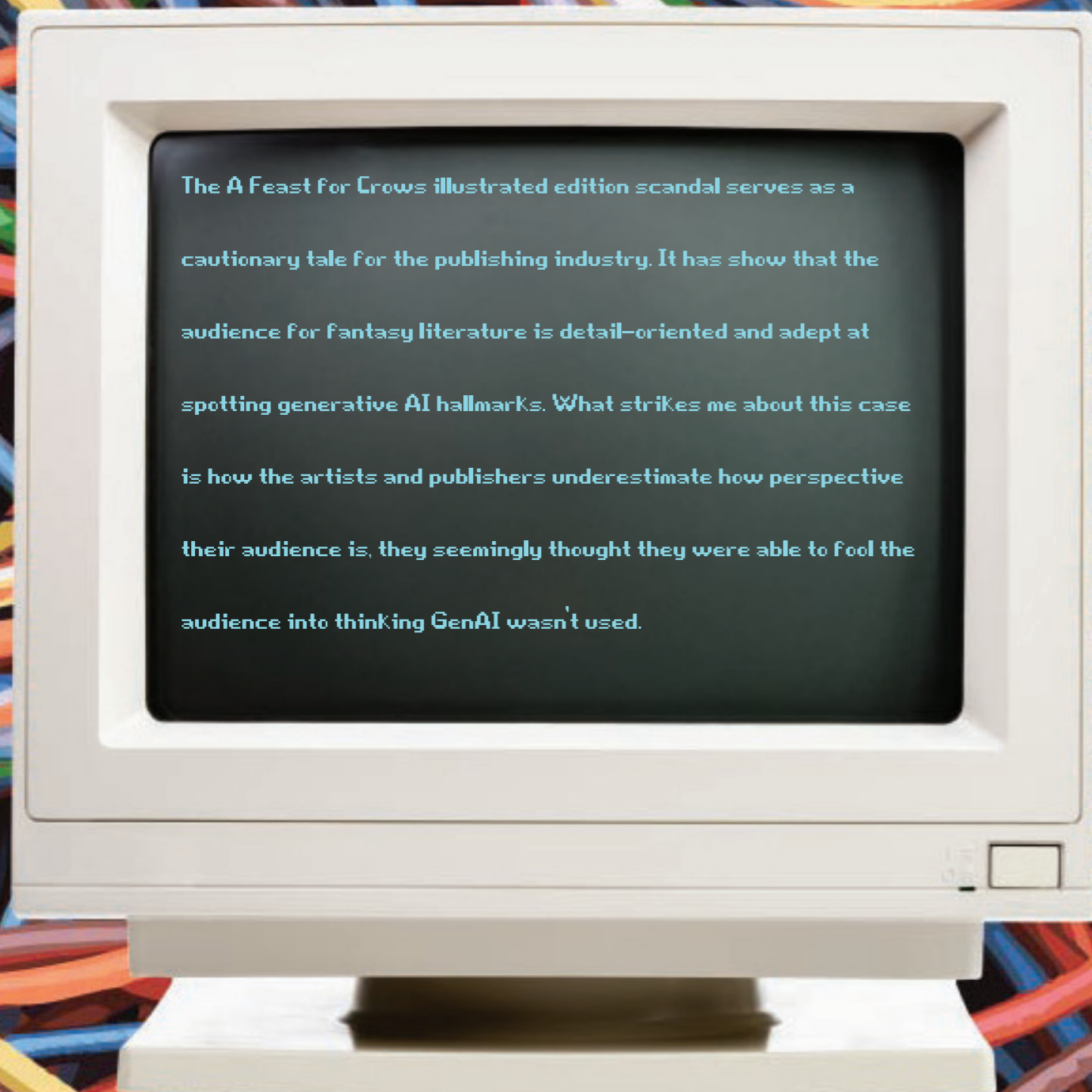


The theory of the Rehumanization of Art argues that the rise of AI creativity compels society to redefine the essential traits of human creativity distinguishing it from machine generated work.

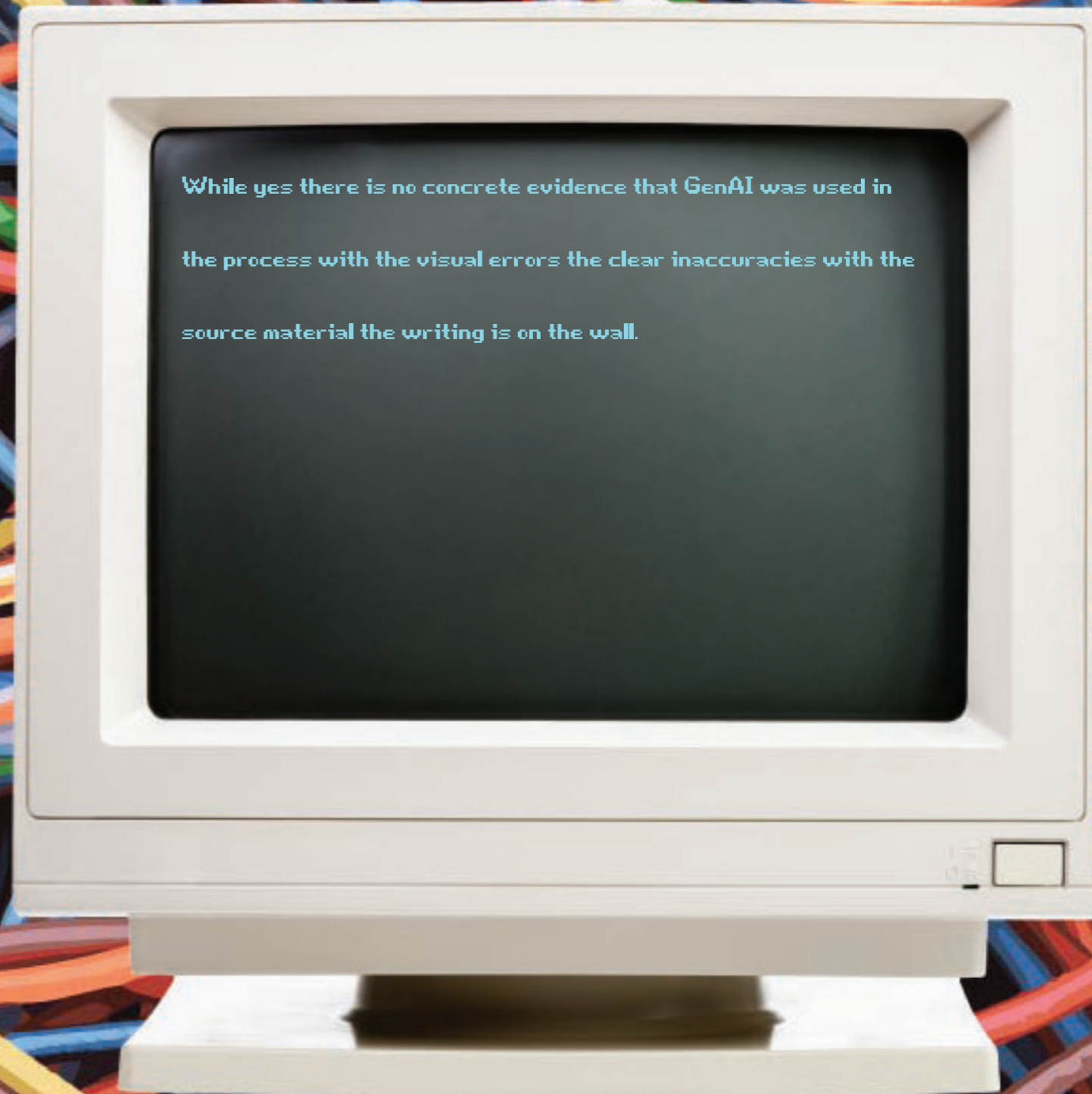
This is made clear due to the intense backlash from fans who labelled the illustrations as slop and expressed feelings of betrayal demonstrating a clear demand for human craftsmanship.



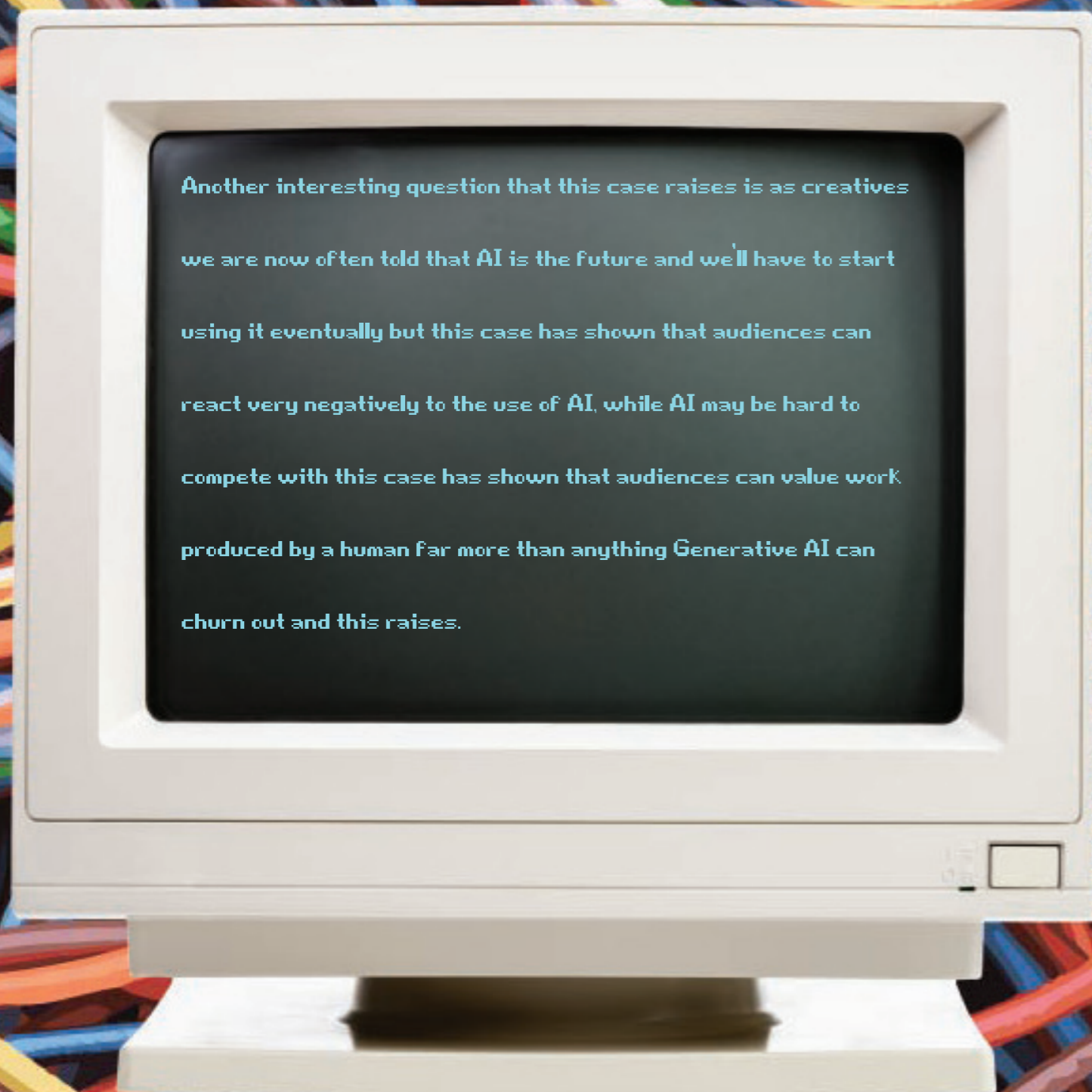
This reaction suggests that audiences value human made art for more than AI generated content potentially providing traditional artists with a competitive edge.

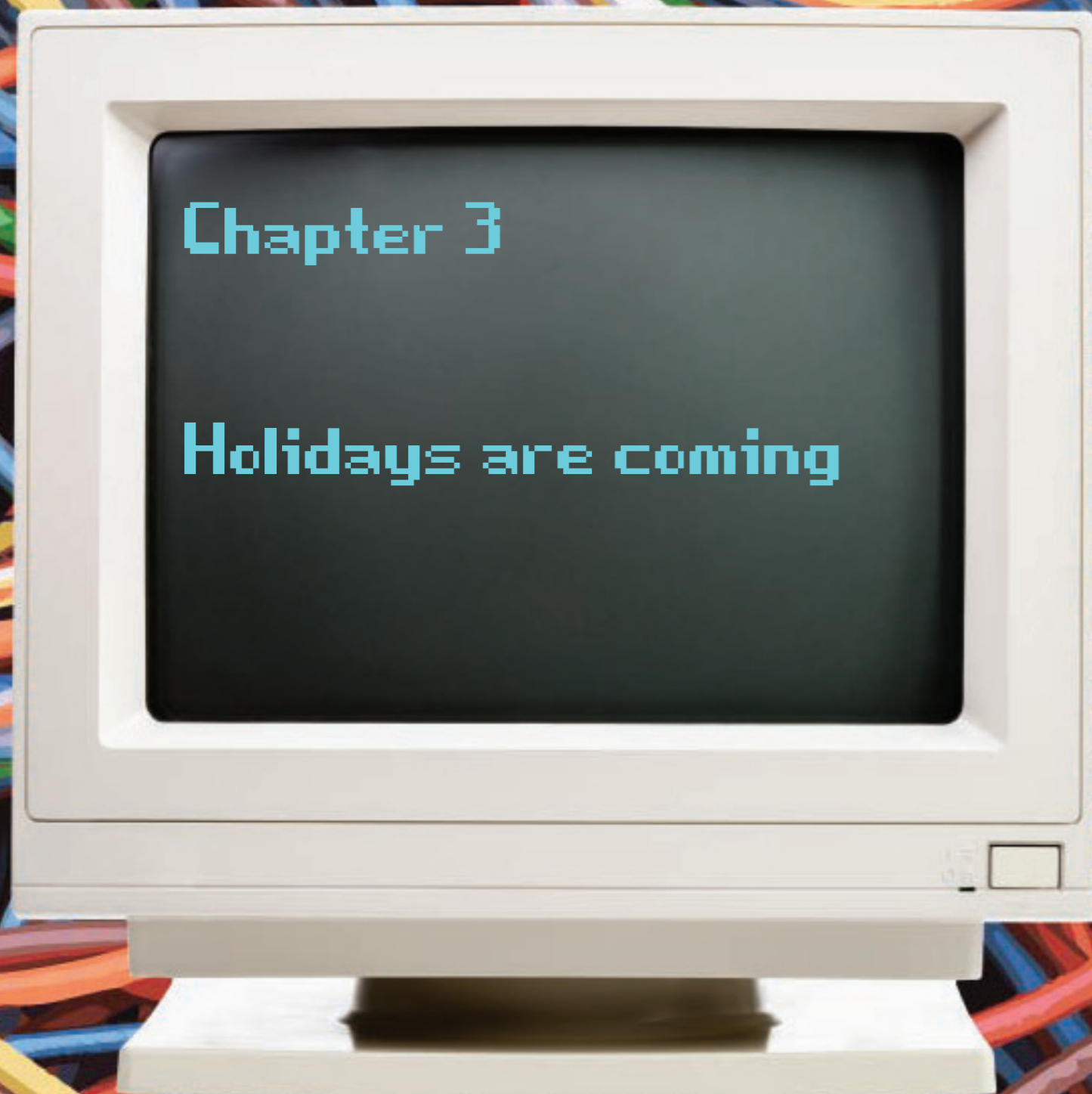


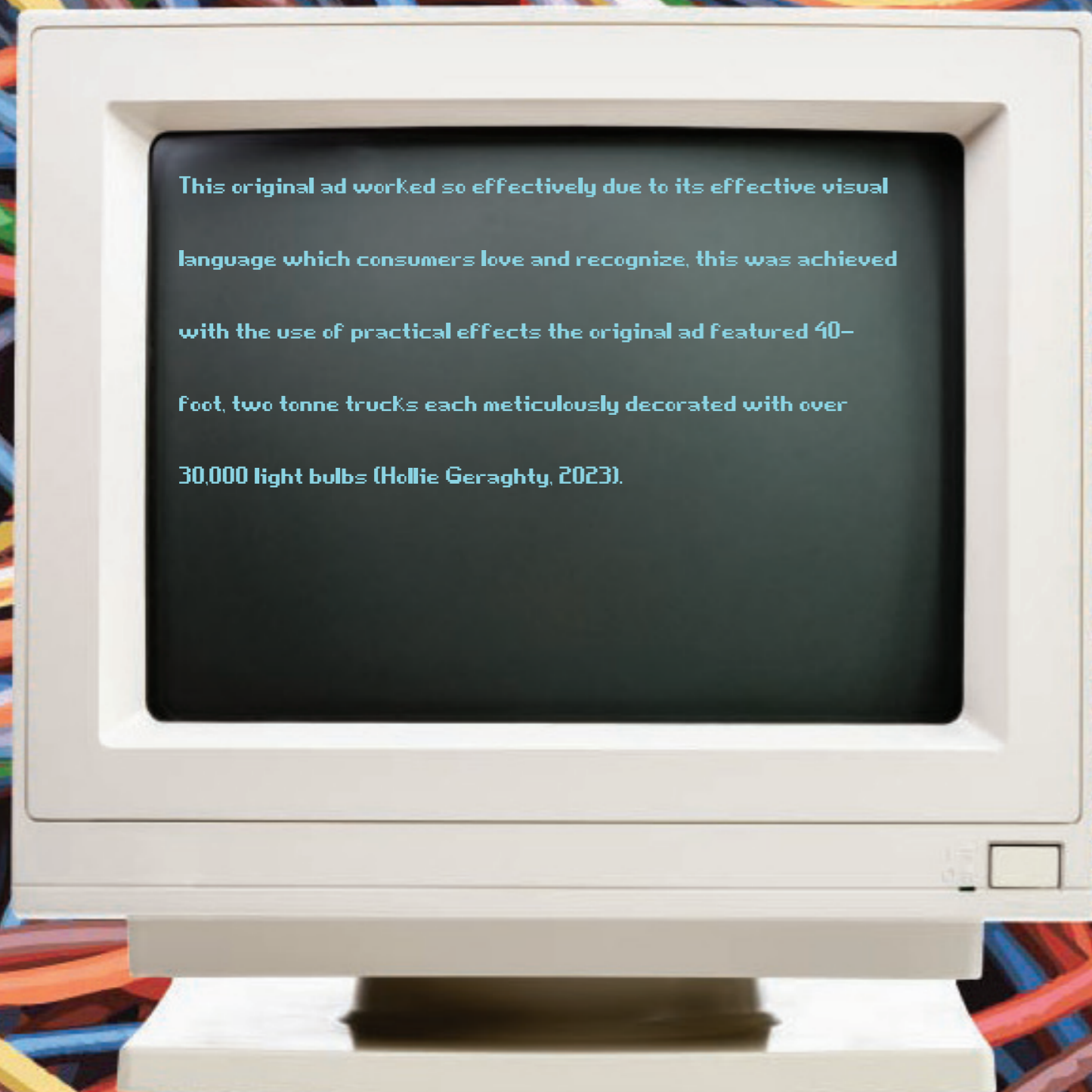
The *A Feast for Crows* illustrated edition scandal serves as a cautionary tale for the publishing industry. It has show that the audience for fantasy literature is detail-oriented and adept at spotting generative AI hallmarks. What strikes me about this case is how the artists and publishers underestimate how perspective their audience is, they seemingly thought they were able to fool the audience into thinking GenAI wasn't used.



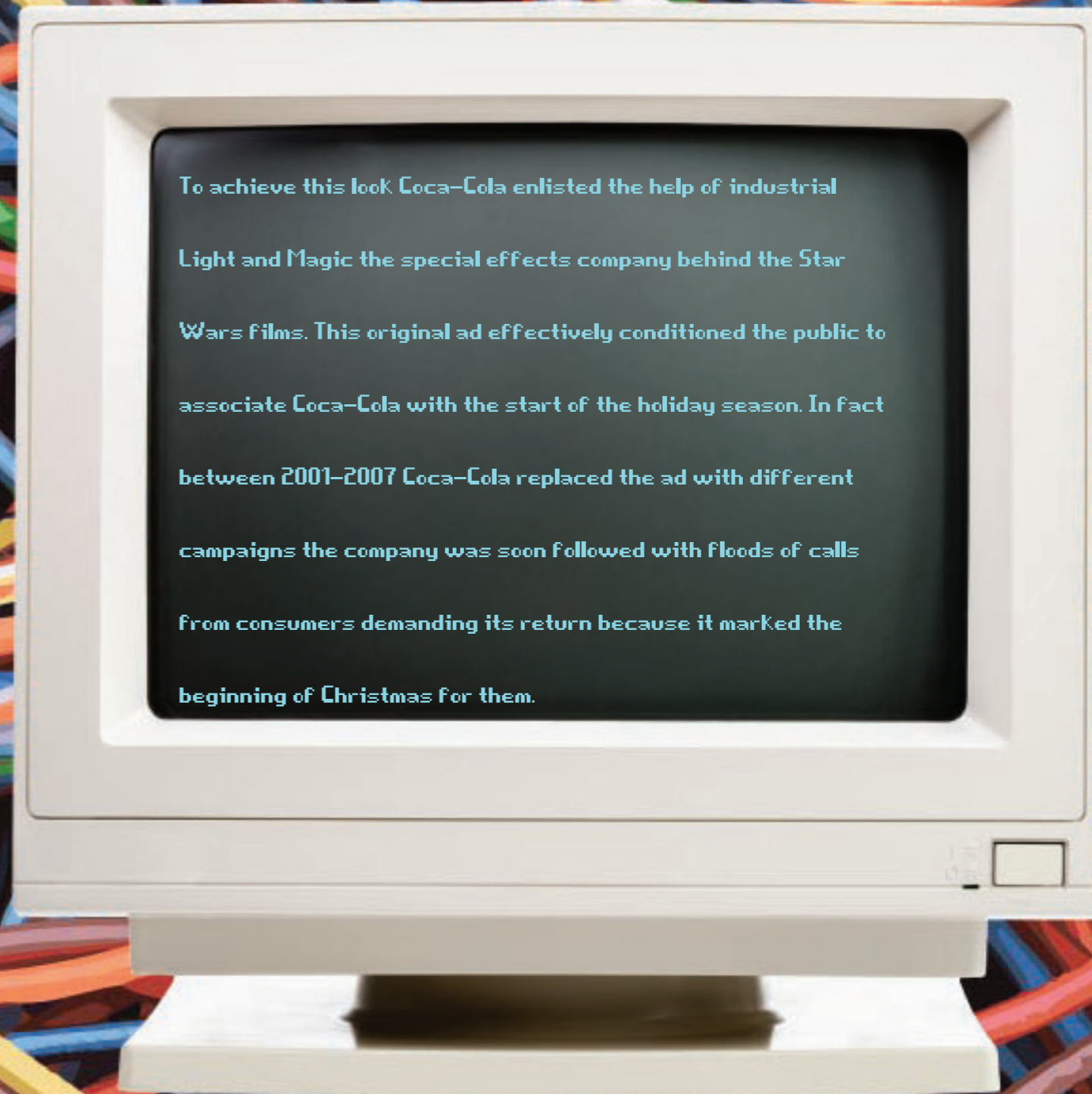
While yes there is no concrete evidence that GenAI was used in the process with the visual errors the clear inaccuracies with the source material the writing is on the wall.



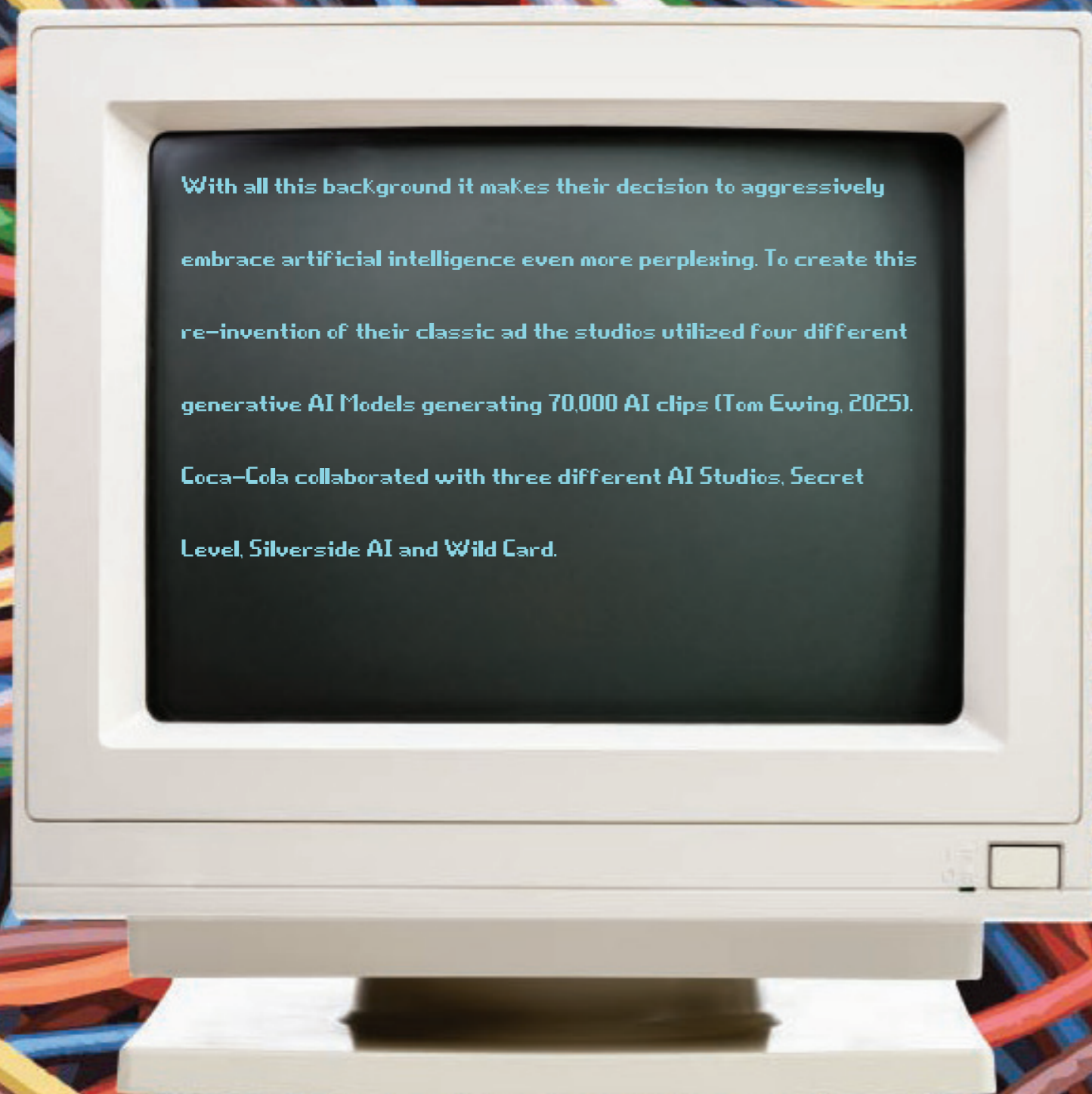




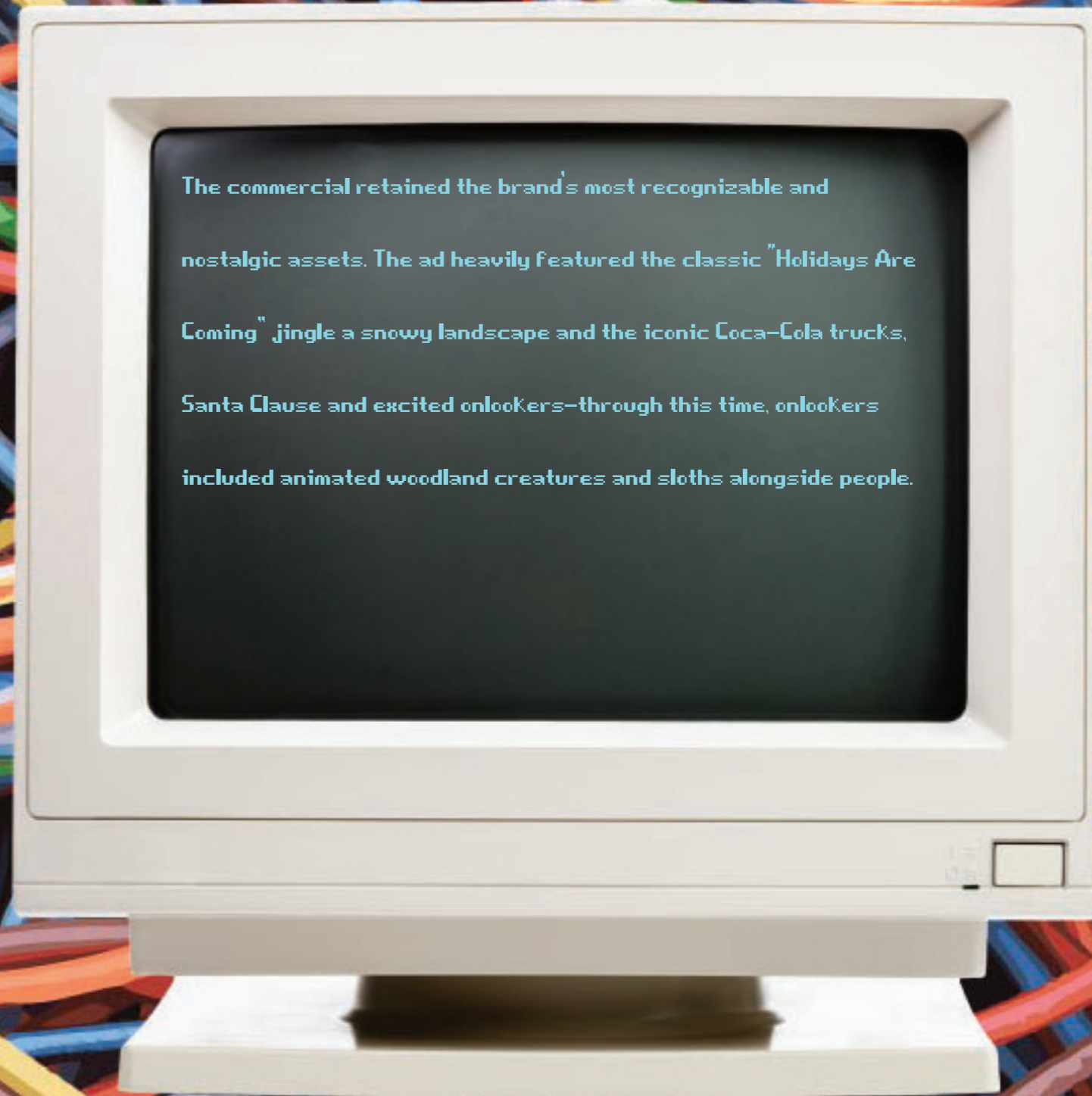
This original ad worked so effectively due to its effective visual language which consumers love and recognize, this was achieved with the use of practical effects the original ad featured 40-foot, two tonne trucks each meticulously decorated with over 30,000 light bulbs (Hollie Geraghty, 2023).



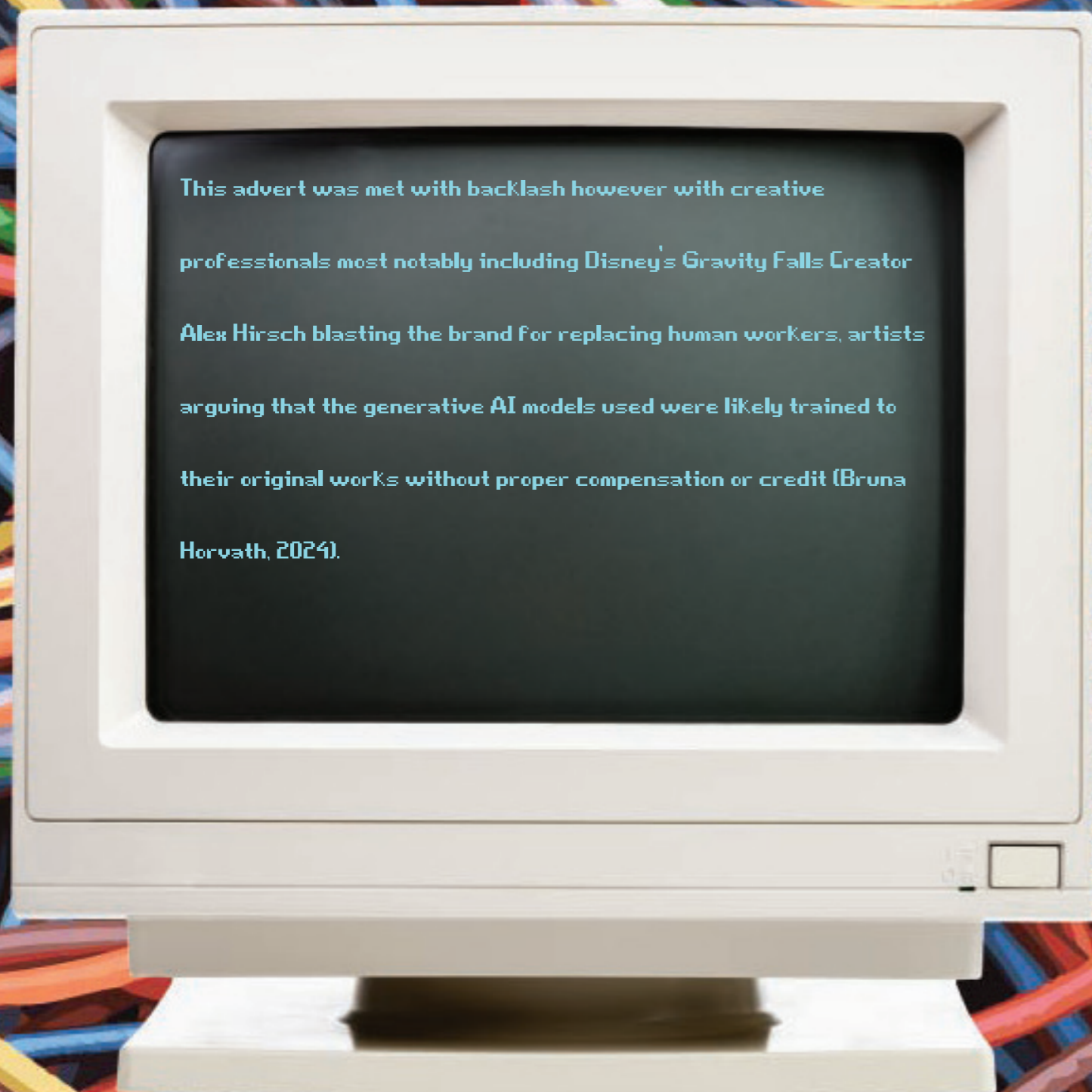
To achieve this look Coca-Cola enlisted the help of industrial Light and Magic the special effects company behind the Star Wars films. This original ad effectively conditioned the public to associate Coca-Cola with the start of the holiday season. In fact between 2001-2007 Coca-Cola replaced the ad with different campaigns the company was soon followed with floods of calls from consumers demanding its return because it marked the beginning of Christmas for them.



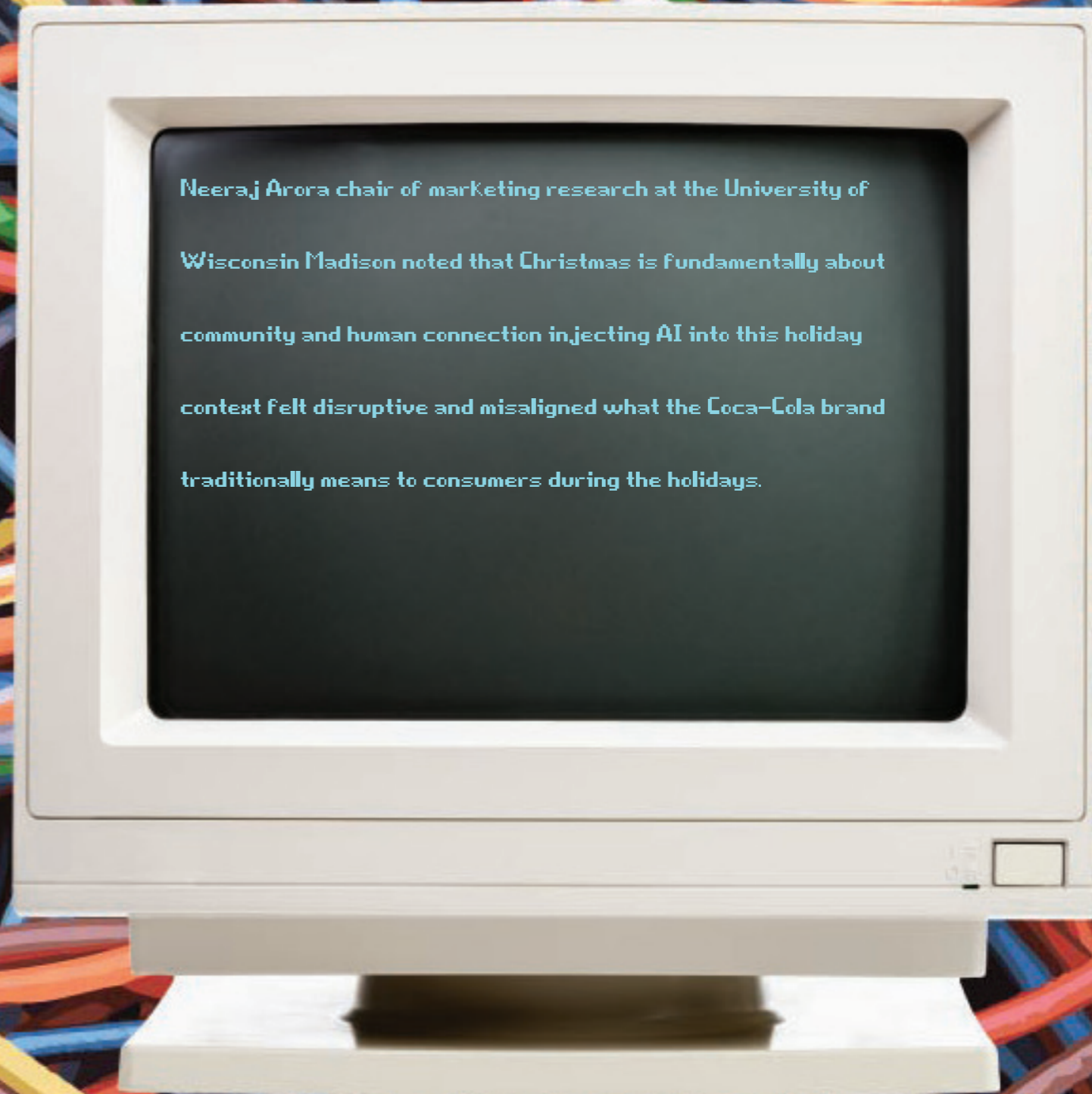
With all this background it makes their decision to aggressively embrace artificial intelligence even more perplexing. To create this re-invention of their classic ad the studios utilized four different generative AI Models generating 70,000 AI clips (Tom Ewing, 2025). Coca-Cola collaborated with three different AI Studios, Secret Level, Silverside AI and Wild Card.



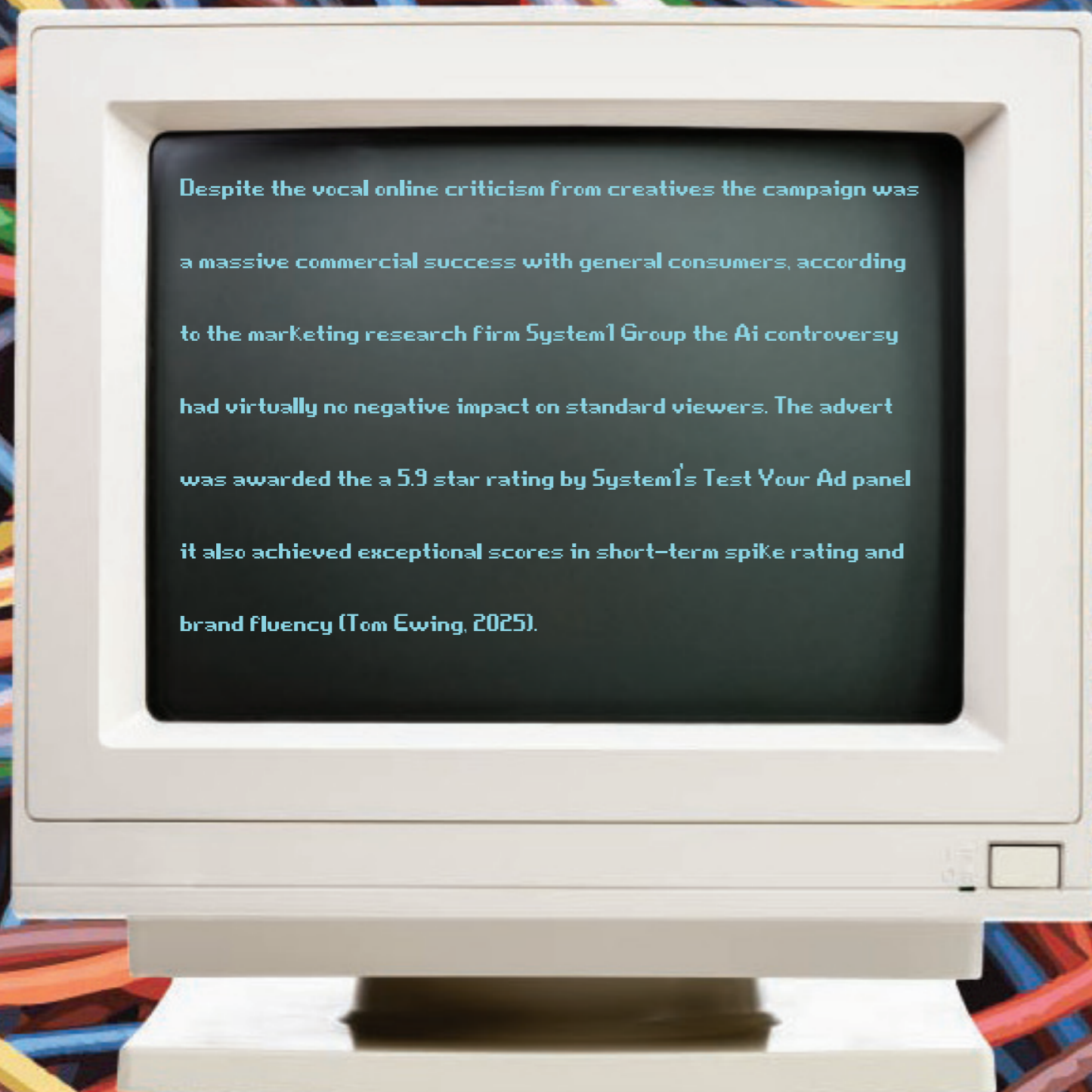
The commercial retained the brand's most recognizable and nostalgic assets. The ad heavily featured the classic "Holidays Are Coming" jingle a snowy landscape and the iconic Coca-Cola trucks, Santa Clause and excited onlookers—through this time, onlookers included animated woodland creatures and sloths alongside people.



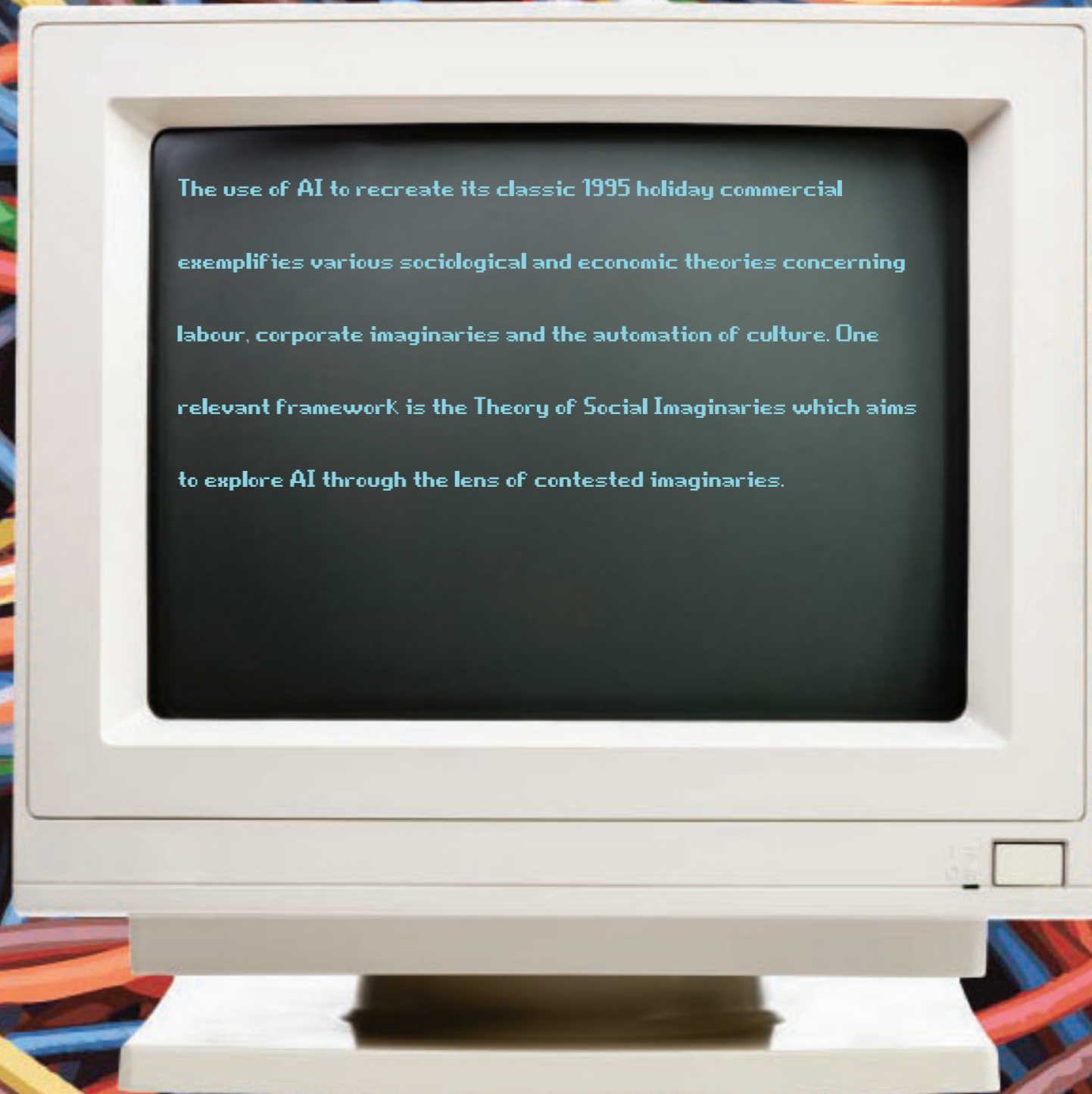
This advert was met with backlash however with creative professionals most notably including Disney's Gravity Falls Creator Alex Hirsch blasting the brand for replacing human workers, artists arguing that the generative AI models used were likely trained to their original works without proper compensation or credit (Bruna Horvath, 2024).



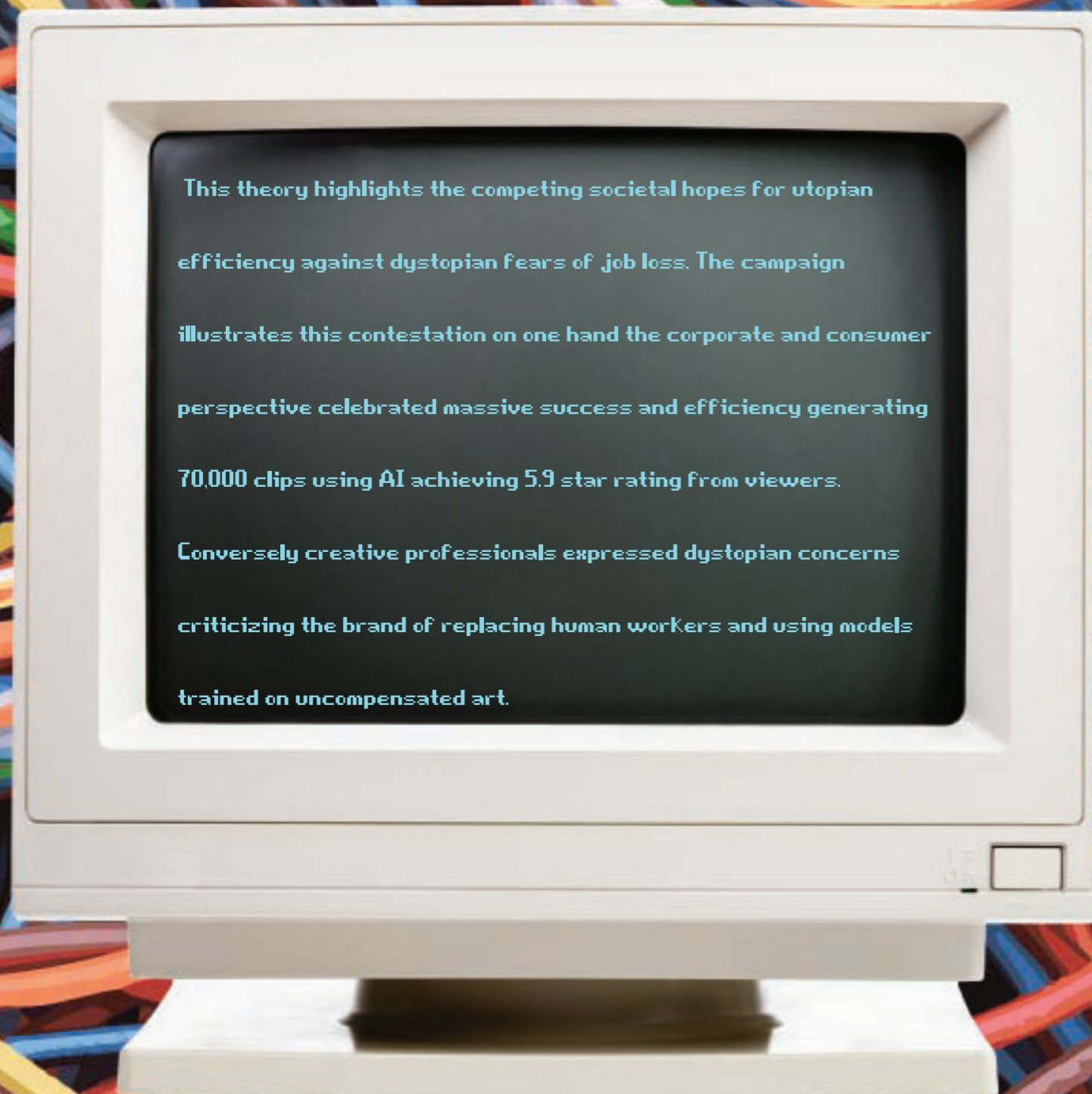
Neeraj Arora chair of marketing research at the University of Wisconsin Madison noted that Christmas is fundamentally about community and human connection injecting AI into this holiday context felt disruptive and misaligned what the Coca-Cola brand traditionally means to consumers during the holidays.



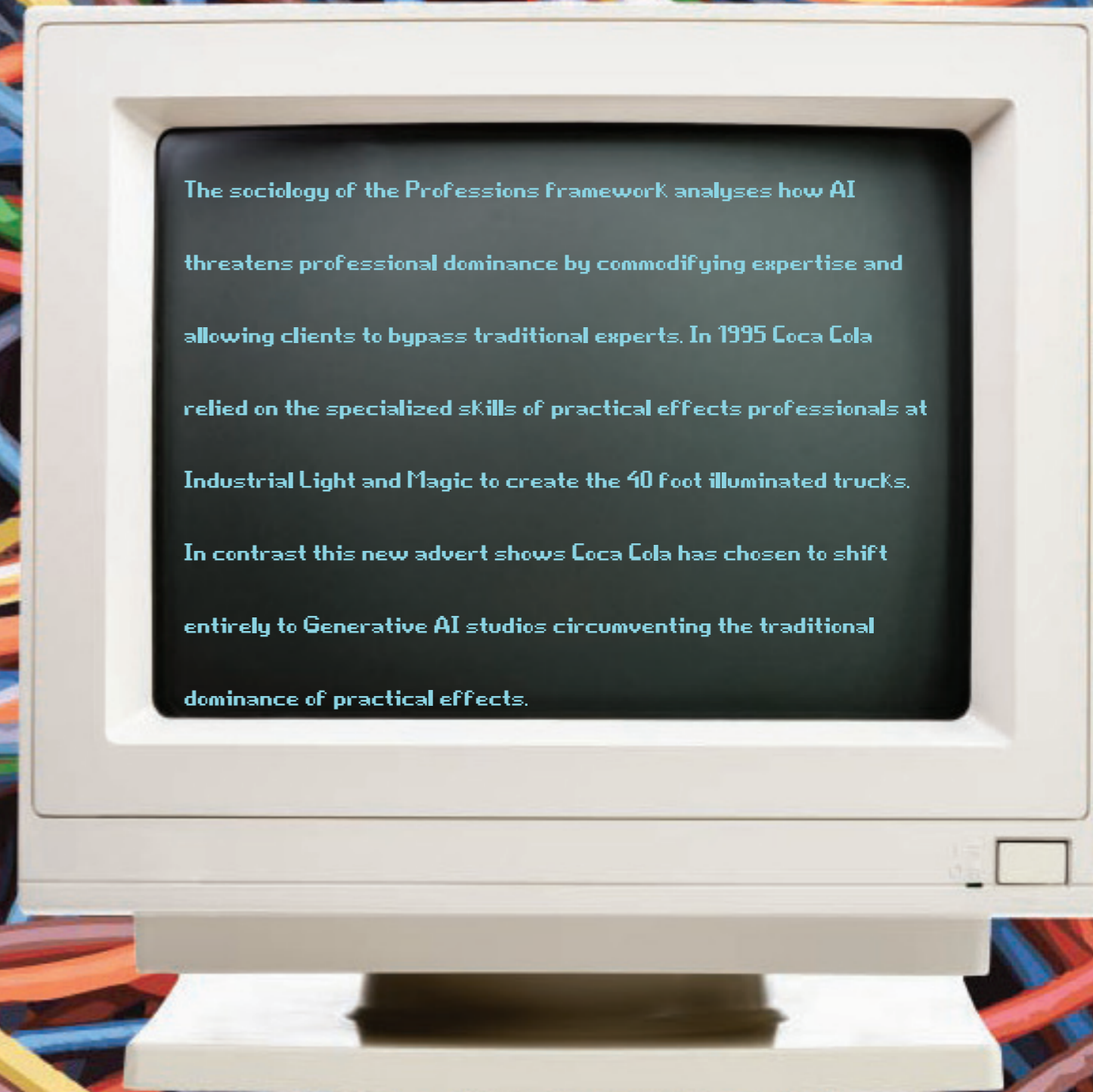
Despite the vocal online criticism from creatives the campaign was a massive commercial success with general consumers, according to the marketing research firm System1 Group the Ai controversy had virtually no negative impact on standard viewers. The advert was awarded the a 5.9 star rating by System1's Test Your Ad panel it also achieved exceptional scores in short-term spike rating and brand fluency (Tom Ewing, 2025).



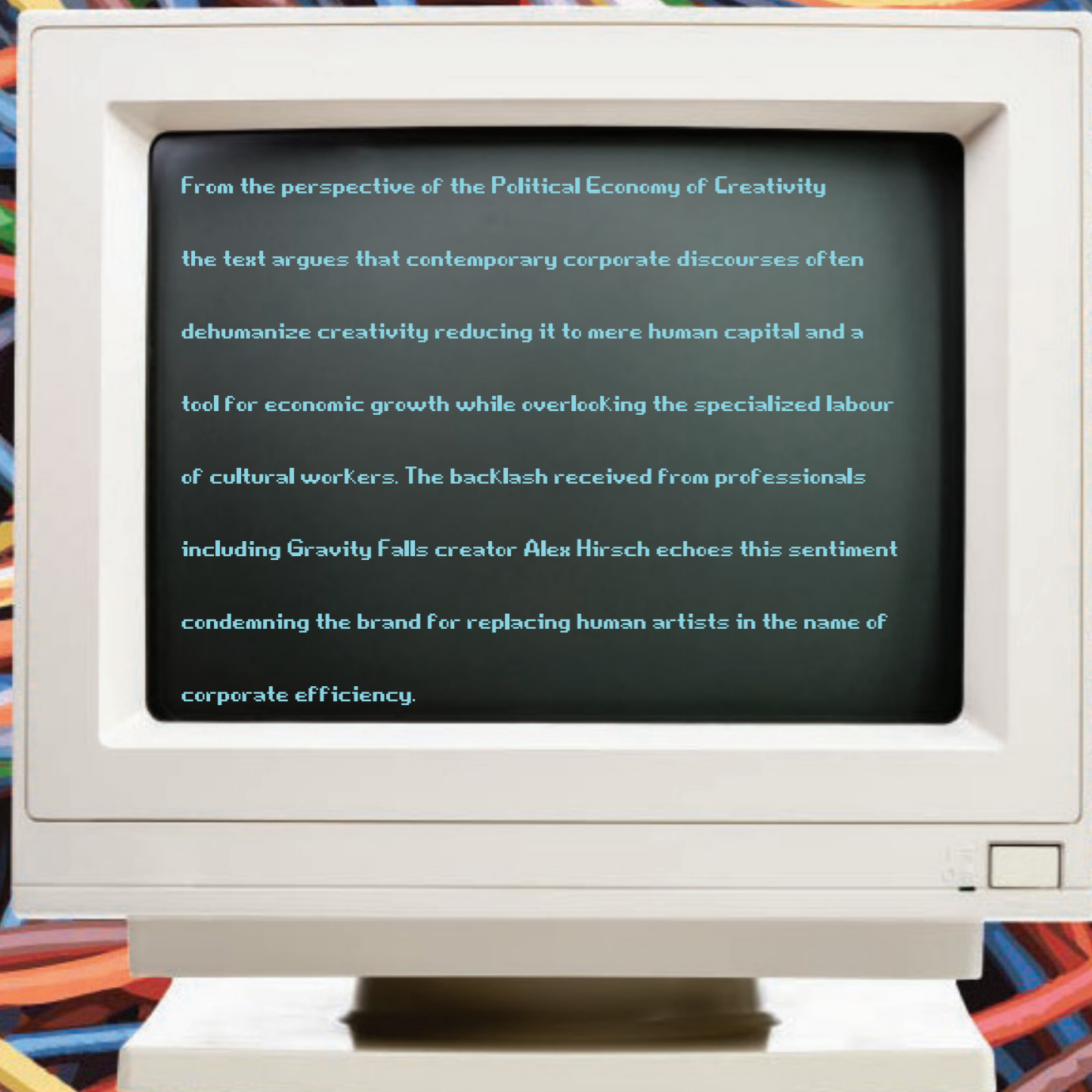
The use of AI to recreate its classic 1995 holiday commercial exemplifies various sociological and economic theories concerning labour, corporate imaginaries and the automation of culture. One relevant framework is the Theory of Social Imaginaries which aims to explore AI through the lens of contested imaginaries.



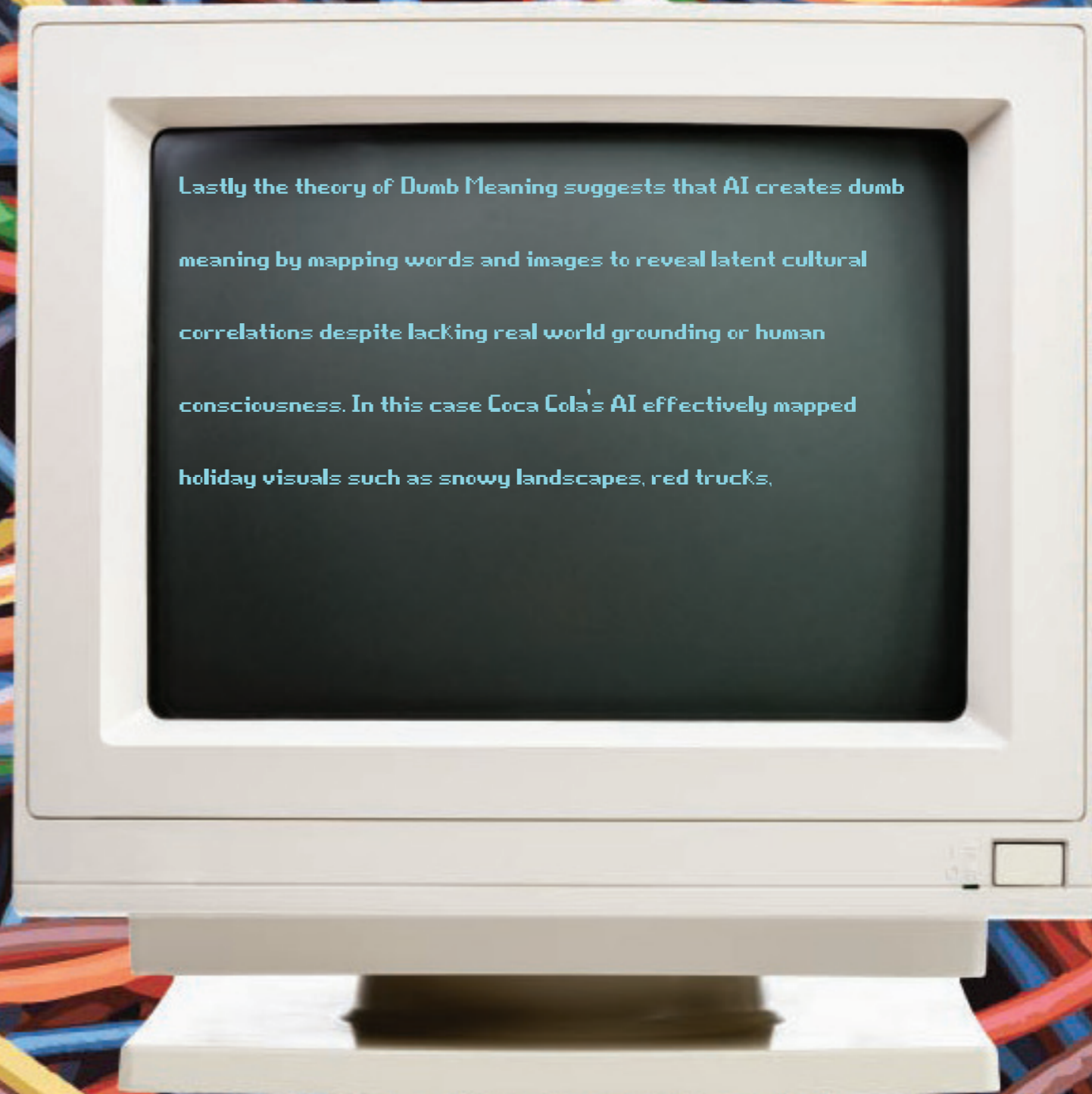
This theory highlights the competing societal hopes for utopian efficiency against dystopian fears of job loss. The campaign illustrates this contestation on one hand the corporate and consumer perspective celebrated massive success and efficiency generating 70,000 clips using AI achieving 5.9 star rating from viewers. Conversely creative professionals expressed dystopian concerns criticizing the brand of replacing human workers and using models trained on uncompensated art.



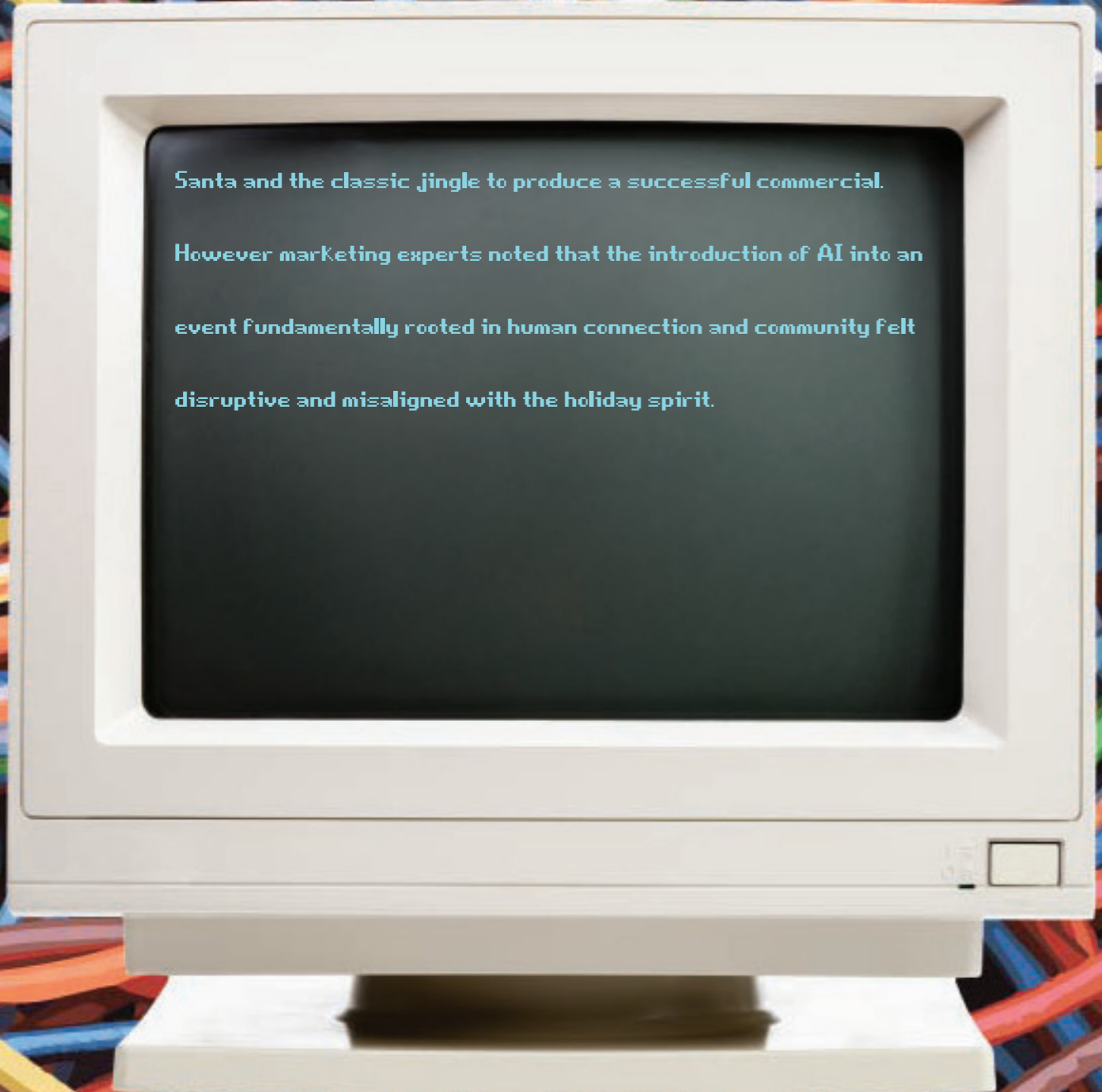
The sociology of the Professions framework analyses how AI threatens professional dominance by commodifying expertise and allowing clients to bypass traditional experts. In 1995 Coca Cola relied on the specialized skills of practical effects professionals at Industrial Light and Magic to create the 40 foot illuminated trucks. In contrast this new advert shows Coca Cola has chosen to shift entirely to Generative AI studios circumventing the traditional dominance of practical effects.



From the perspective of the Political Economy of Creativity the text argues that contemporary corporate discourses often dehumanize creativity reducing it to mere human capital and a tool for economic growth while overlooking the specialized labour of cultural workers. The backlash received from professionals including Gravity Falls creator Alex Hirsch echoes this sentiment condemning the brand for replacing human artists in the name of corporate efficiency.



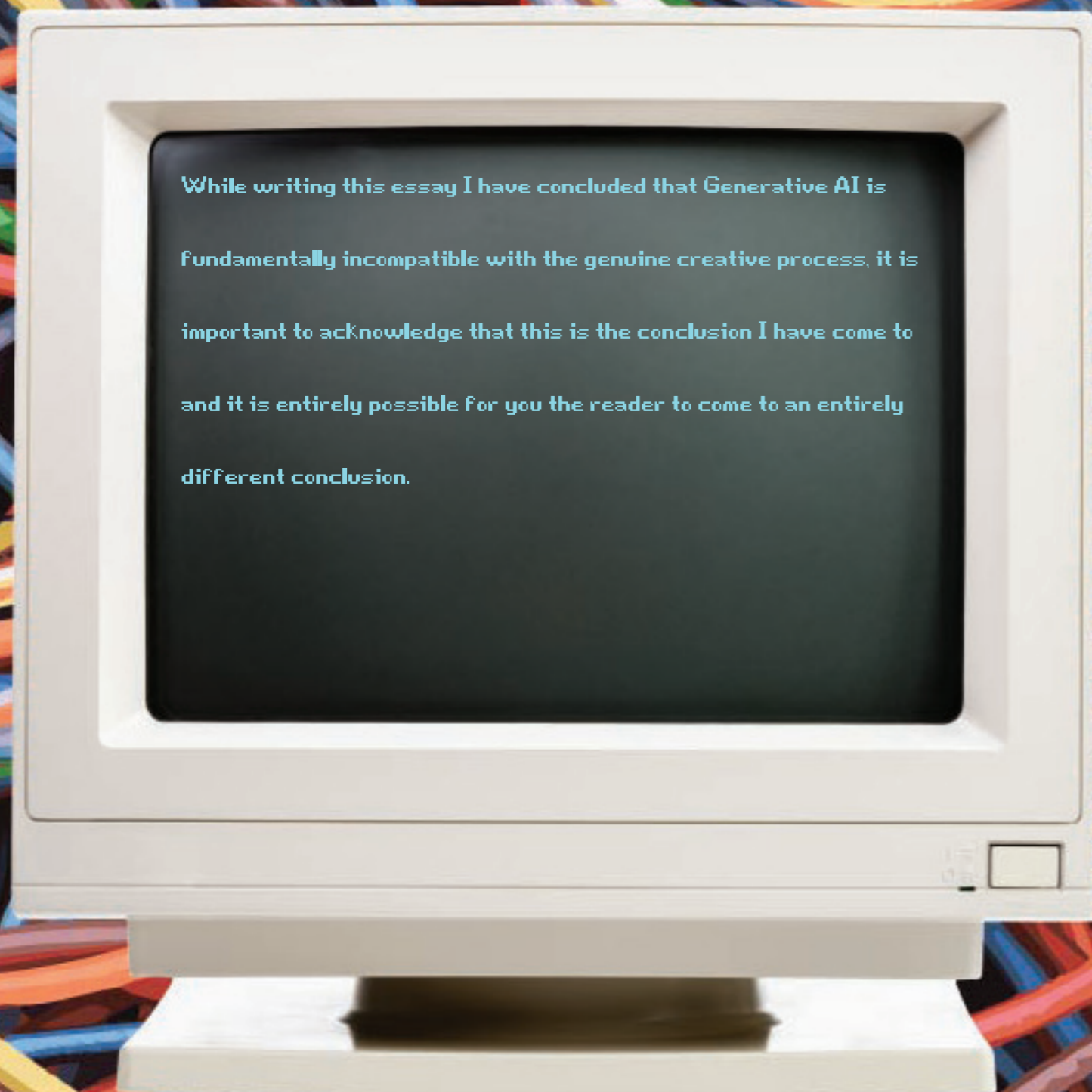
Lastly the theory of Dumb Meaning suggests that AI creates dumb meaning by mapping words and images to reveal latent cultural correlations despite lacking real world grounding or human consciousness. In this case Coca Cola's AI effectively mapped holiday visuals such as snowy landscapes, red trucks,



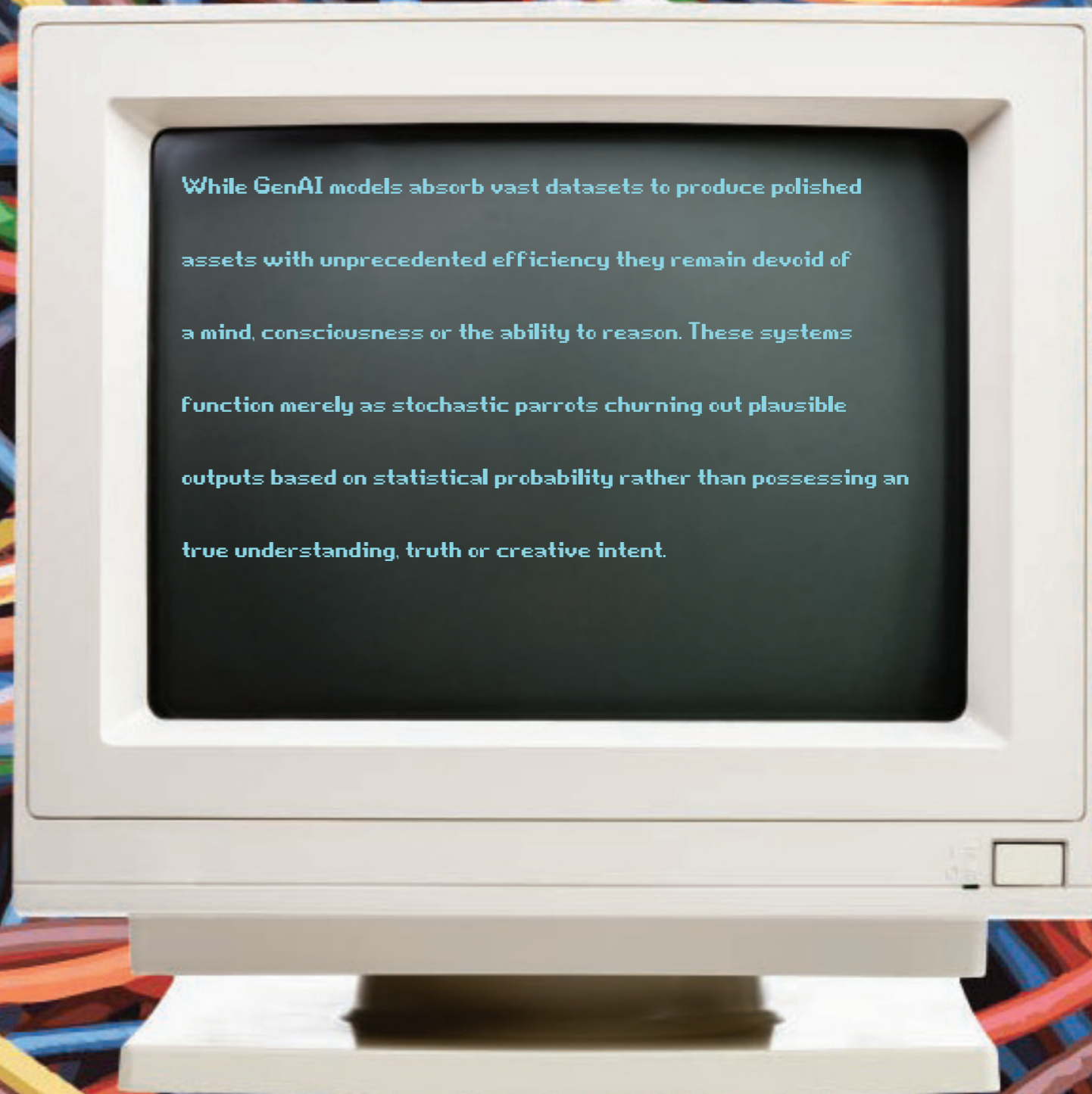
Santa and the classic jingle to produce a successful commercial.
However marketing experts noted that the introduction of AI into an
event fundamentally rooted in human connection and community felt
disruptive and misaligned with the holiday spirit.



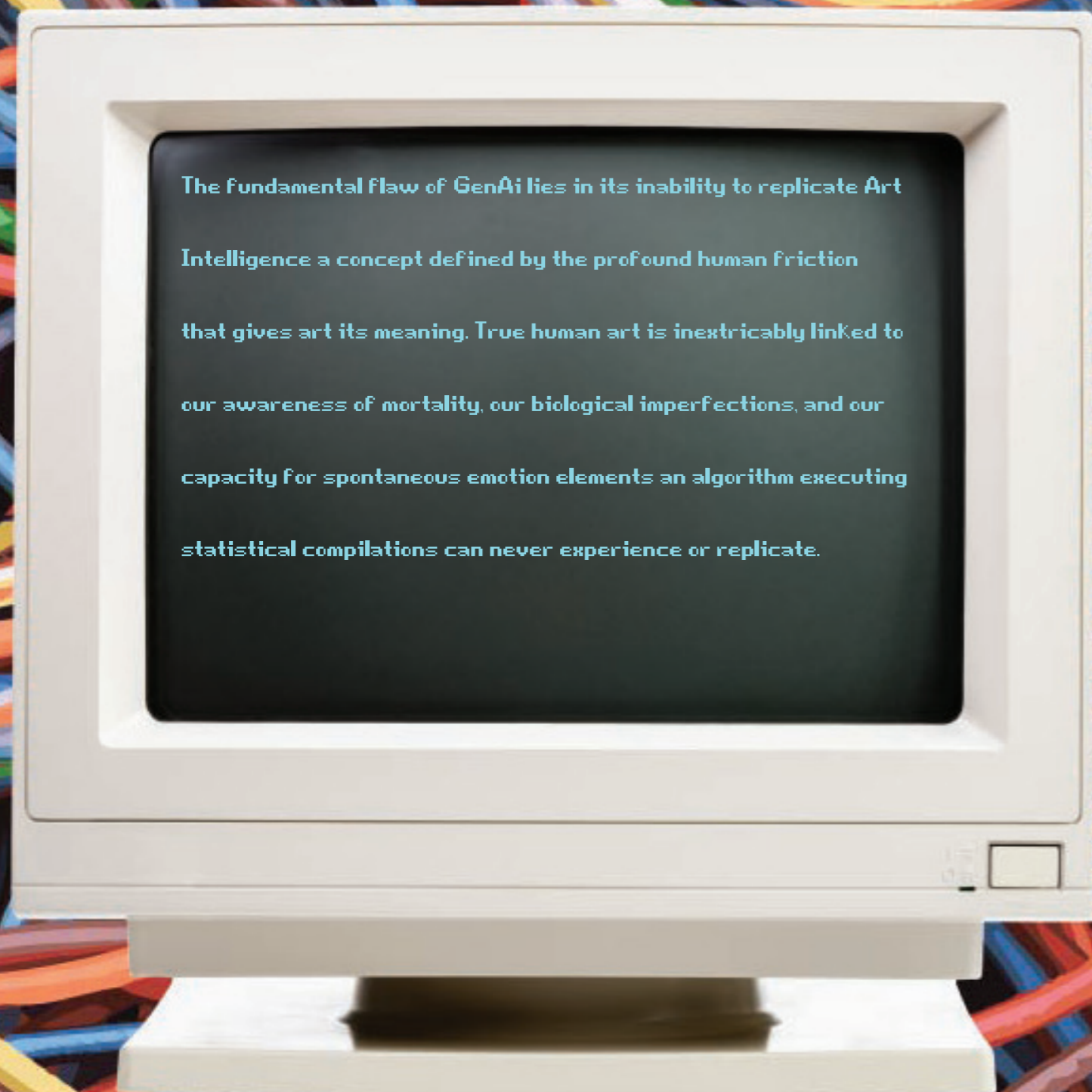
Conclusion

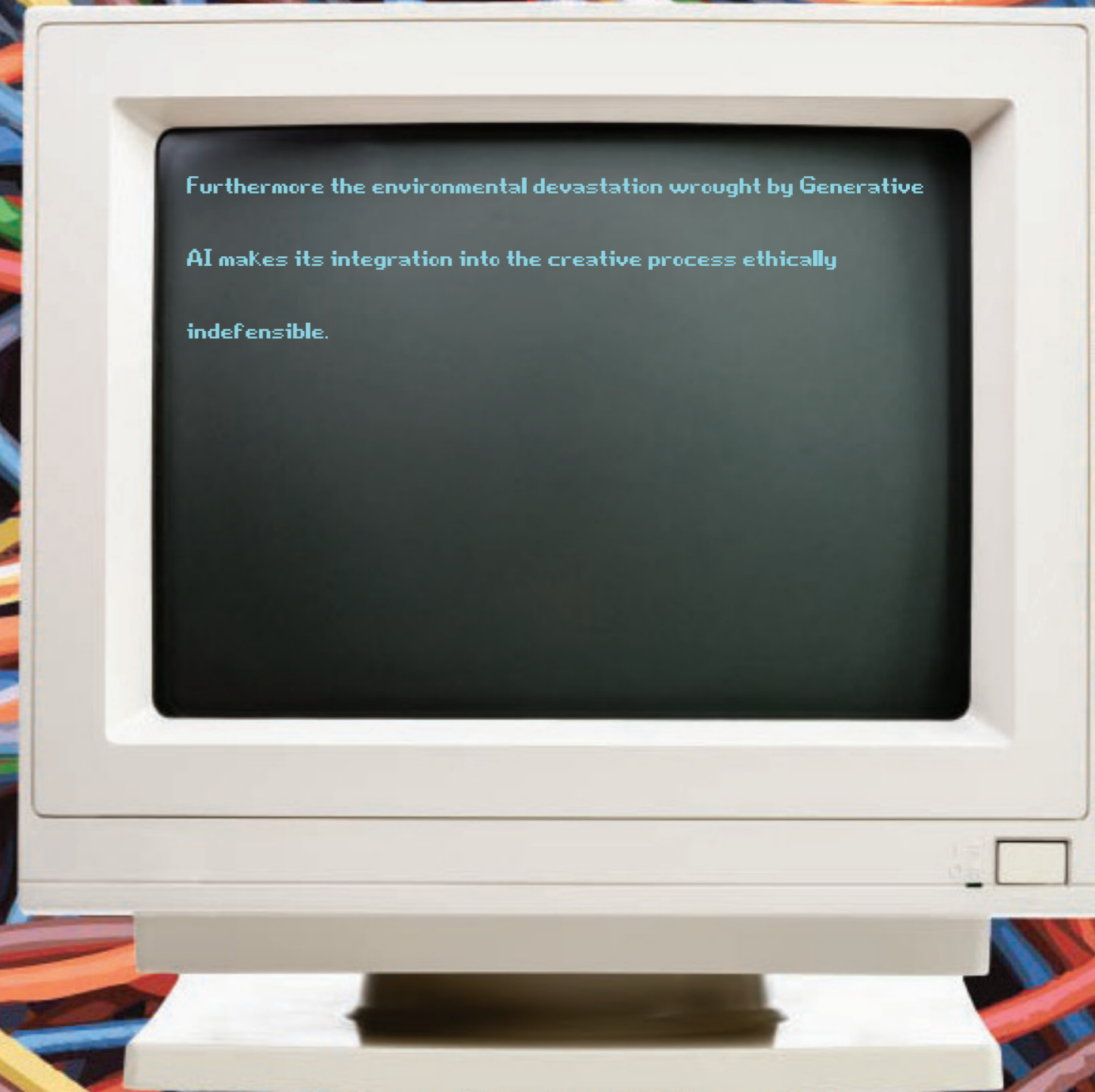
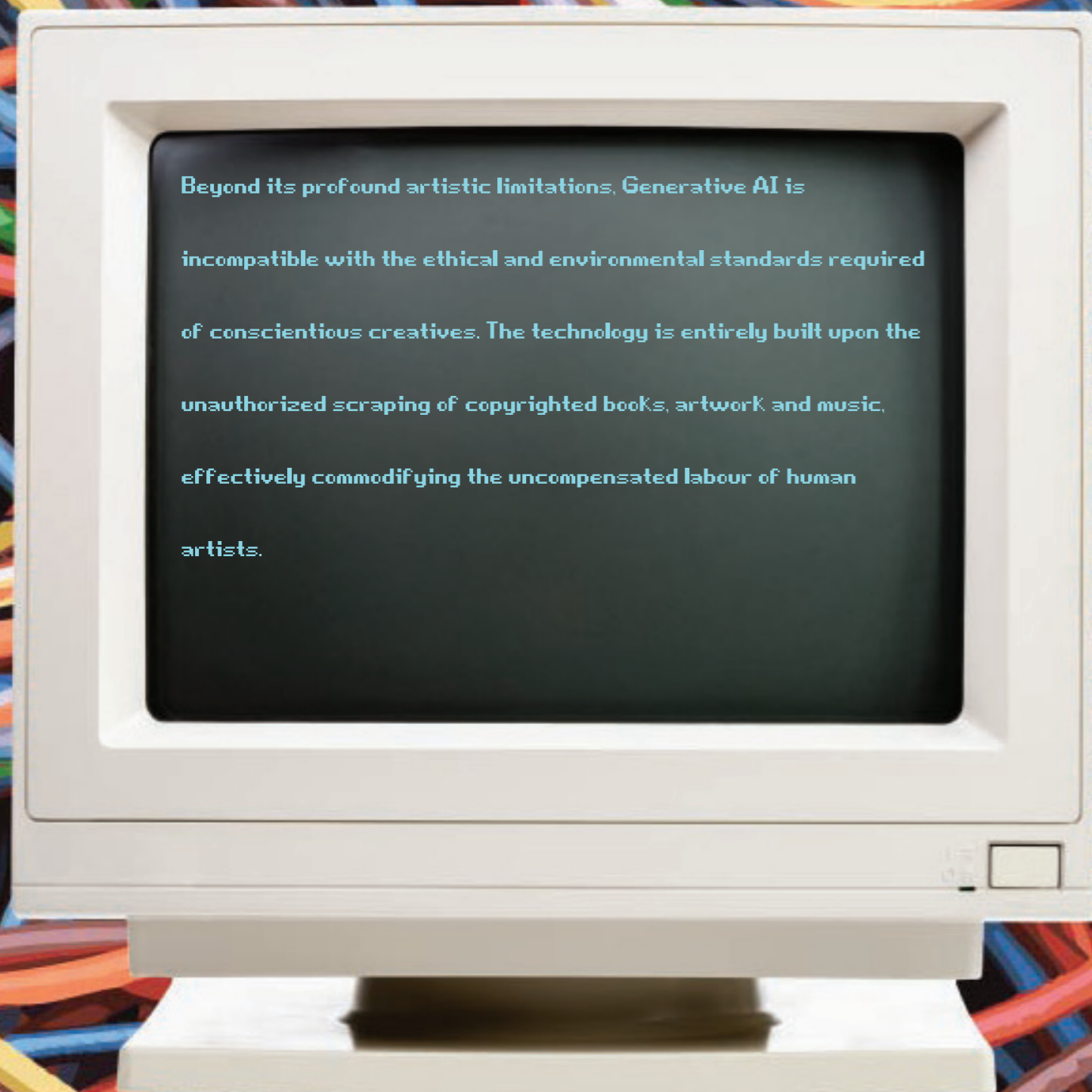


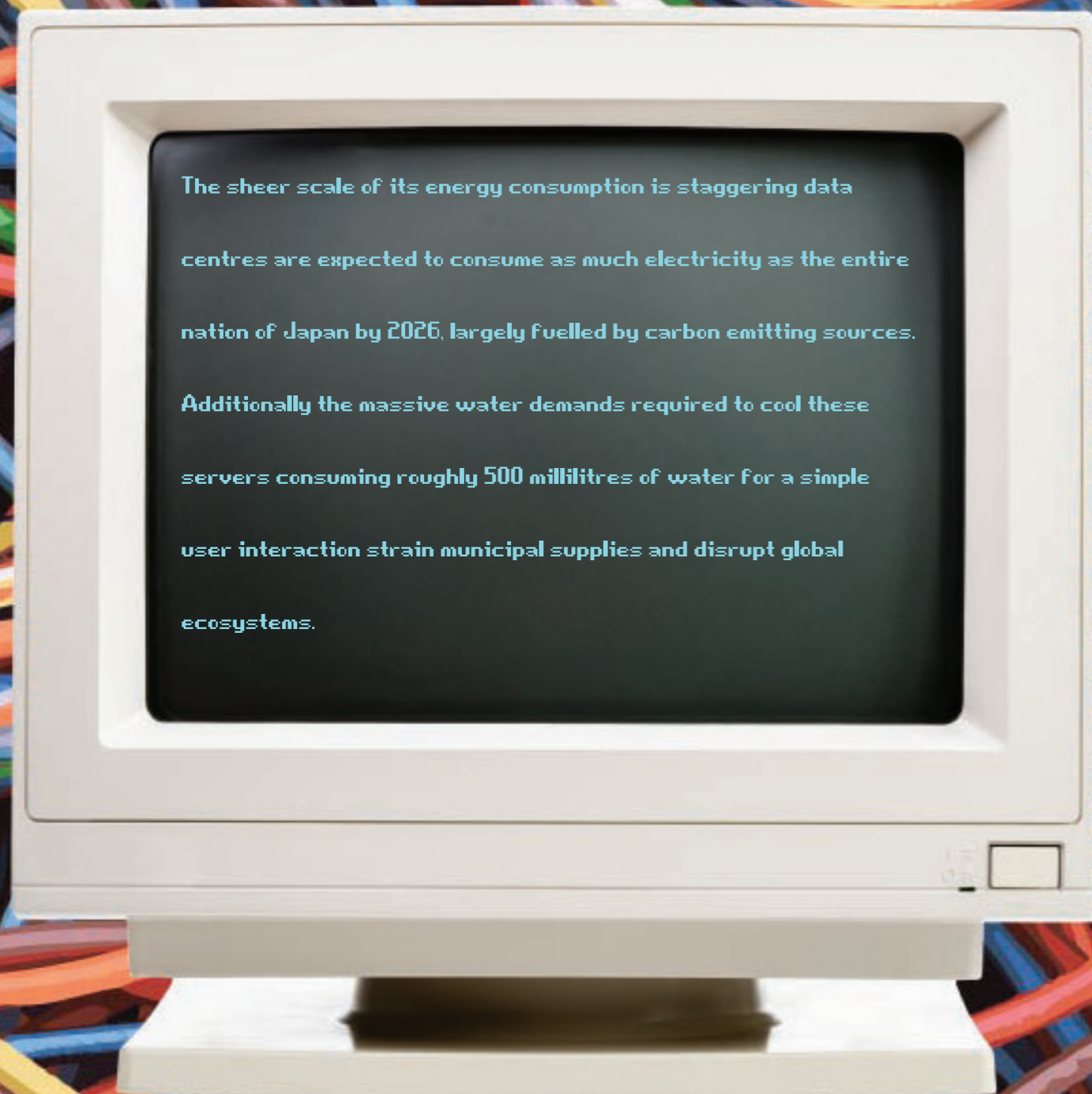
While writing this essay I have concluded that Generative AI is fundamentally incompatible with the genuine creative process, it is important to acknowledge that this is the conclusion I have come to and it is entirely possible for you the reader to come to an entirely different conclusion.

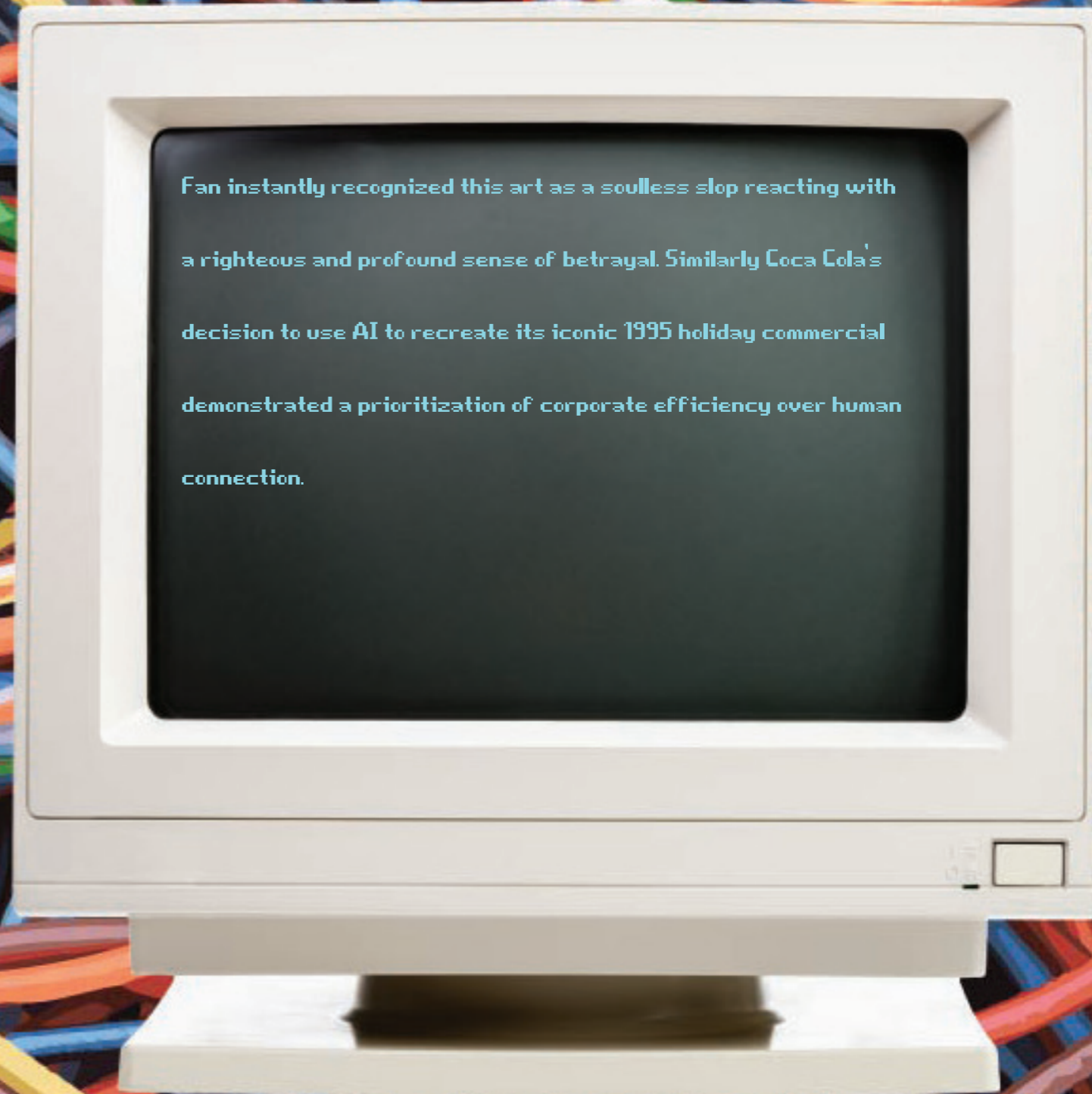
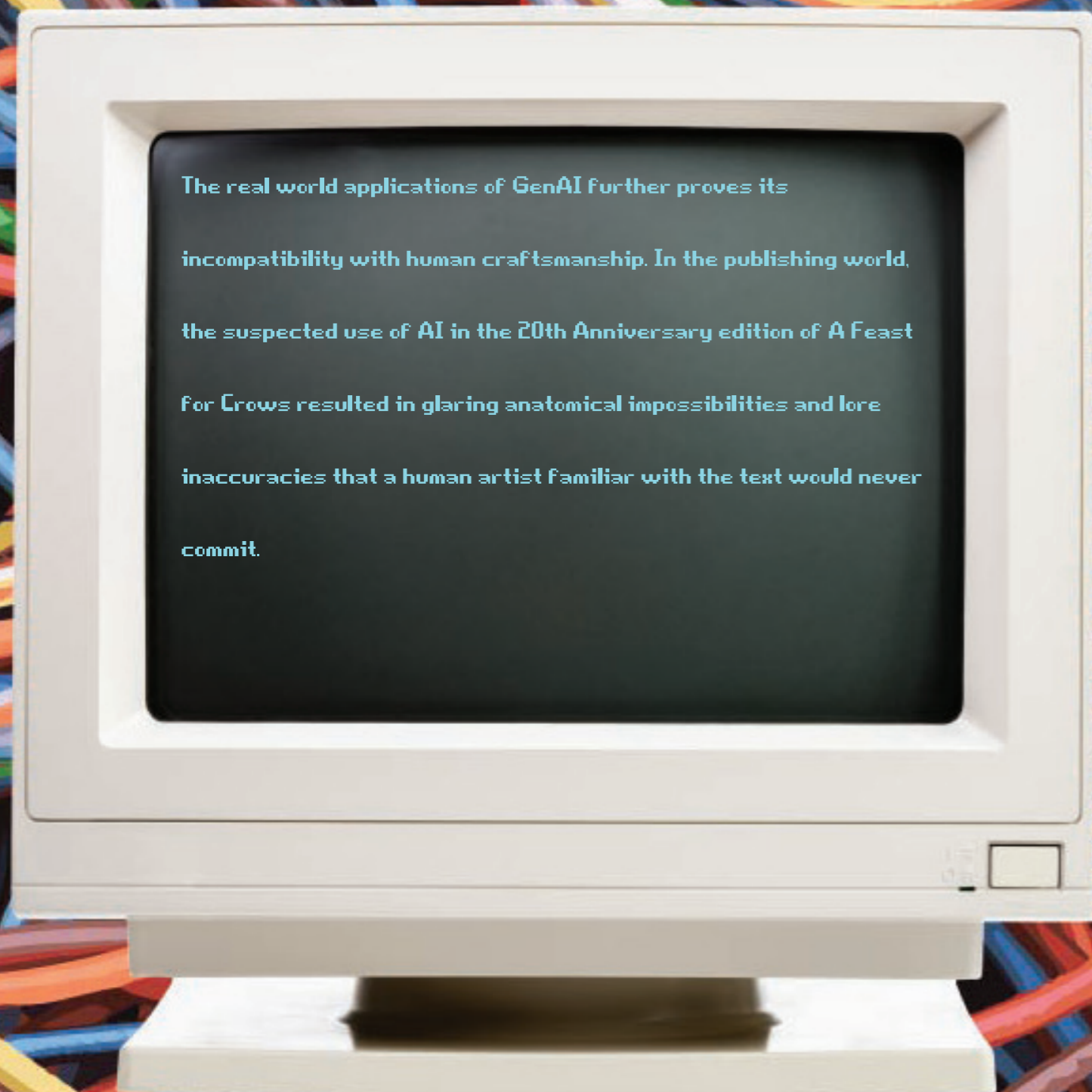


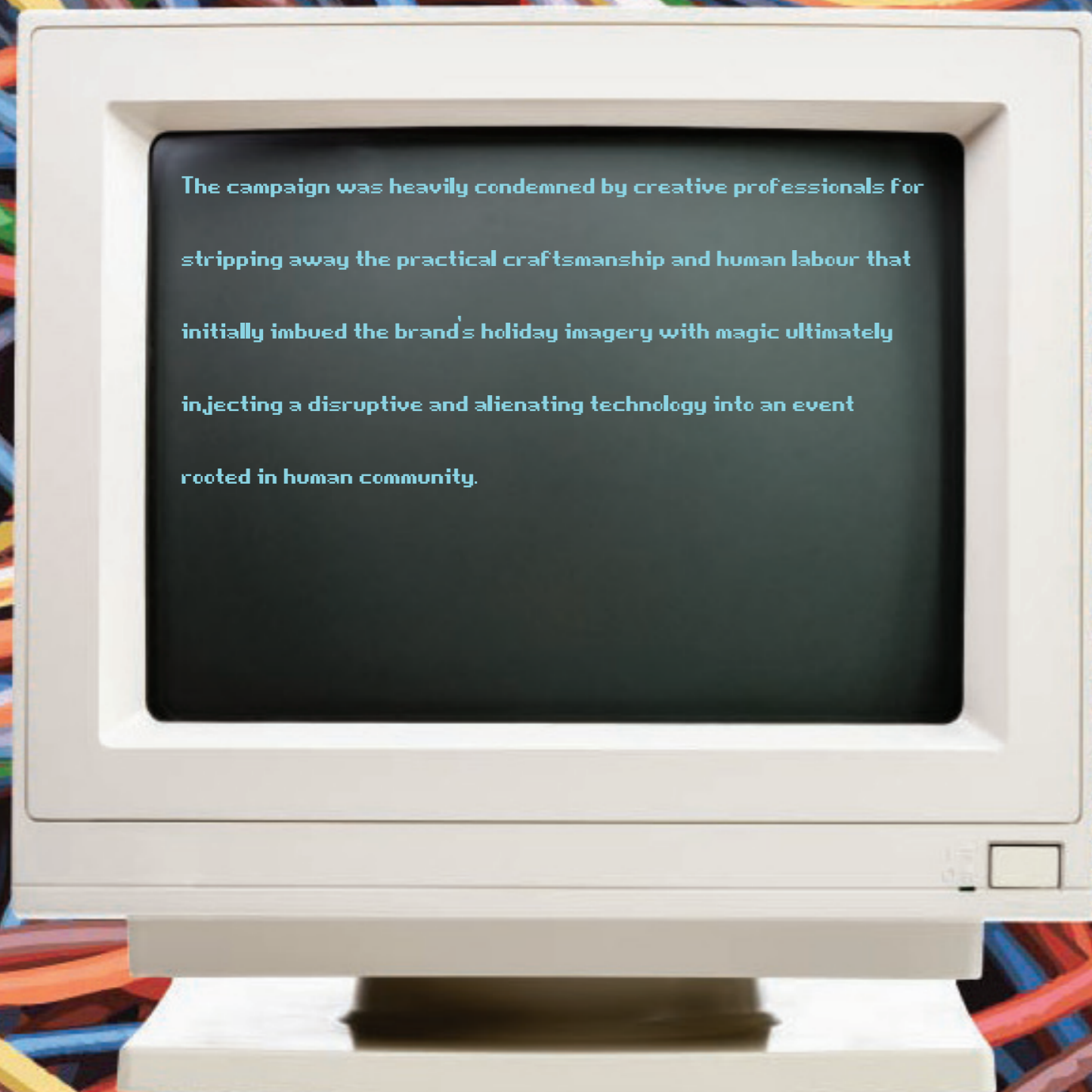
While GenAI models absorb vast datasets to produce polished assets with unprecedented efficiency they remain devoid of a mind, consciousness or the ability to reason. These systems function merely as stochastic parrots churning out plausible outputs based on statistical probability rather than possessing an true understanding, truth or creative intent.



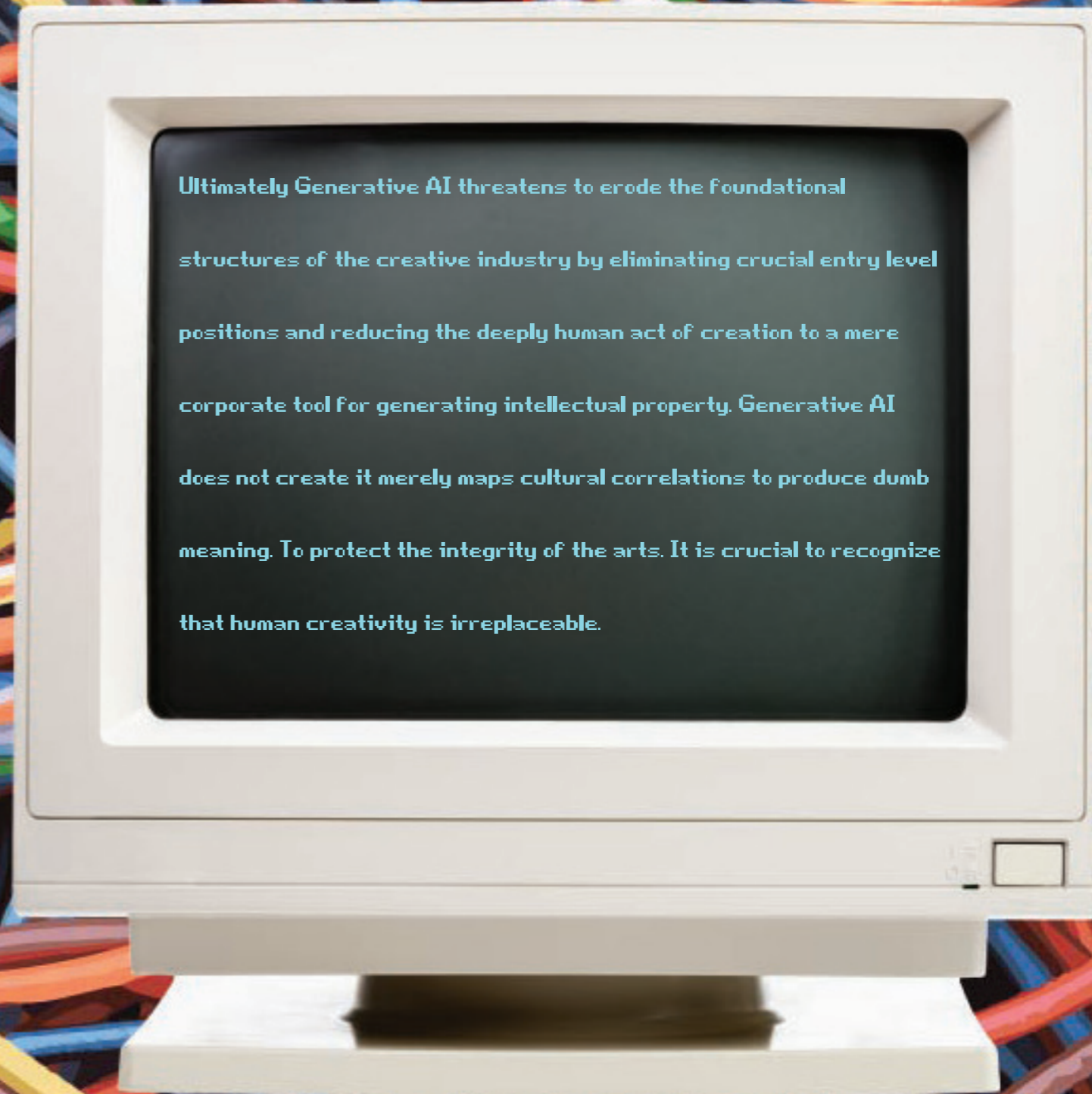








The campaign was heavily condemned by creative professionals for stripping away the practical craftsmanship and human labour that initially imbued the brand's holiday imagery with magic ultimately injecting a disruptive and alienating technology into an event rooted in human community.



Ultimately Generative AI threatens to erode the foundational structures of the creative industry by eliminating crucial entry level positions and reducing the deeply human act of creation to a mere corporate tool for generating intellectual property. Generative AI does not create it merely maps cultural correlations to produce dumb meaning. To protect the integrity of the arts. It is crucial to recognize that human creativity is irreplaceable.

Bibliography

Adams, S. and Adams, S. (2025). Fantasy author George R. R. Martin faces scrutiny over alleged use of generative AI in recent book release - The Queen's Journal. [online] The Queen's Journal. Available at: <https://www.queensjournal.ca/fantasy-author-george-r-r-martin-faces-scrutiny-over-alleged-use-of-generative-ai-in-recent-book-release/> [Accessed 17 Feb. 2026].

Anon, (n.d.). Svenungsson, Jan. Art Intelligence : How Generative AI Relates to Human Art-Making, transcript Verlag, 2025. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/aib/detail.action?docID=31465799>.

Anon, (n.d.). Thon, J, & Wilde, LRA (eds) 2025, AI Aesthetics : AI-Generated Images Between Artistics and Aisthetics, Taylor & Francis Group, Oxford. Available from: ProQuest Ebook Central. [7 March 2026].

AV Club. (2025). Penguin Random House denies making AI art for Game Of Thrones book. [online] Available at: <https://www.avclub.com/game-of-thrones-publisher-denies-ai-art-illustrations> [Accessed 17 Feb. 2026].

Aztiria, A., Augusto, J.C. and Orlandini, A. (2017). State of the art in AI applied to ambient intelligence. Amsterdam, Netherlands: IOS Press.

Brown, O., Davison, R.M., Decker, S., Ellis, D.A., Faulconbridge, J., Gore, J., Greenwood, M., Islam, G., Lubinski, C., MacKenzie, N.G., Meyer, R., Muzio, D., Quattrone, P., Ravishankar, M.N., Zilber, T., Ren, S., Sarala, R.M. and Hibbert, P. (2024). Theory-Driven Perspectives on Generative Artificial Intelligence in Business and Management. British Journal of Management, 35(1), pp.3–23. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8551.12788>.

Coca-Cola (2025). Coca-Cola | Holidays Are Coming. [online] YouTube. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yy6fByUmPuE>.

Concept Art Association. (n.d.). Advocacy. [online] Available at: <https://www.conceptartassociation.com/advocacy>.

Cook, E. (2025). AI or No AI, Coke Gets the Christmas Love | System1 Group | Coca Cola. [online] System1 Group. Available at: <https://system1group.com/ad-of-the-week/ai-or-no-ai-coke-gets-the-christmas-love>.

CVL ECONOMICS (2024). The Impact of Generative Artificial Intelligence on Entertainment Industry Jobs CVLECONOMICS. [online] Available at: <https://animationguild.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Future-Unscripted-The-Impact-of-Generative-Artificial-Intelligence-on-Entertainment-Industry-Jobs-pages-1.pdf>.

David Lightbringer (2025). AFFC ai Art Scandal Needs to be Addressed - A Song of Ice and Fire - Game of Thrones. [online] YouTube. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OrKdhDN7j0s> [Accessed 17 Feb. 2026].

FUTURE UNSCRIPTED: The Impact of Generative Artificial Intelligence on Entertainment Industry Jobs. (2024). CVLECONOMICS.

Generativeaiassociation.org. (2025). Home -. [online] Available at: <https://generativeaiassociation.org/> [Accessed 23 Jan. 2026].

Georgerrmartin.com. (2025). FFC art accusations | Not a Blog. [online] Available at: <https://georgerrmartin.com/notablog/2025/11/10/ffc-art-accusations/> [Accessed 17 Feb. 2026].

Horvath, B. (2024). Coca-Cola causes controversy with AI-made ad. [online] NBC News. Available at: <https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/innovation/coca-cola-causes-controversy-ai-made-ad-rcna180665>.

Hosseini, M., Gao, P. and Vivas-Valencia, C. (2024). A Social-Environmental Impact Perspective of Generative Artificial Intelligence. Environmental Science and Ecotechnology, [online] 23, p.100520. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.es.2024.100520>.

HuffPost UK. (2023). 8 Facts You Didn't Know About The Iconic Coca-Cola 'Holidays Are Coming' Advert. [online] Available at: https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/coca-cola-christmas-advert-holidays-are-coming-facts_uk_65577eede4b0e4767013fa3a.

Lee, F. (2025). RIP design agency. [online] Substack.com. Available at: <https://adplist.substack.com/p/the-anti-design-agency-manifesto> [Accessed 23 Jan. 2026].

Lee, H.-K. (2022). Rethinking creativity: creative industries, AI and everyday creativity. Rethinking creativity: creative industries, AI and everyday creativity.

Markus Auer, R. (n.d.). Artificial Intelligence -Intelligent Art? : Human-Machine Interaction and Creative Practice.

Ox.ac.uk. (2025). Generative AI and carbon emissions in the Oxford context. [online] Available at: <https://staff.admin.ox.ac.uk/article/generative-ai-and-the-environment-in-an-oxford-context>.

PauseAI. (n.d.). We need to Pause AI. [online] Available at: <https://pauseai.info/>.

Quinn The GM (2025a). A Feast for Crows' 20th Anniversary: A Retrospective. [online] YouTube. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s0kbfEGT0I> [Accessed 17 Feb. 2026].

Quinn The GM (2025b). GRRM's AI Lawsuit and AFFC Controversy. [online] YouTube. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JLViZf3zZbo> [Accessed 17 Feb. 2026].

RedTeamReview (2025). They are LYING to You: The Feast for Crows Artist FINALLY Comments on His Alleged Use of A.I. [online] YouTube. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HC4IWp_gPn4 [Accessed 17 Feb. 2026].

Rotman, D. (2013). How Technology Is Destroying Jobs. [online] MIT Technology Review. Available at: <https://www.technologyreview.com/2013/06/12/178008/how-technology-is-destroying-jobs/>.

Simon, J.-P. (2019). ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.

TED (2025). The Catastrophic Risks of AI — and a Safer Path | Yoshua Bengio | TED. [online] YouTube. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qe9QSCF-d88>.

The Royal Institution (2023). What are the risks of generative AI? - The Turing Lectures with Mhairi Aitken. [online] YouTube. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=si1j-cl7UFqU> [Accessed 2 Dec. 2024].

UNEP (2024). AI Has an Environmental problem. Here's What the World Can Do about that. [online] UNEP. Available at: <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/ai-has-environmental-problem-heres-what-world-can-do-about>.

www.youtube.com. (n.d.). What's the future for generative AI? - The Turing Lectures with Mike Wooldridge. [online] Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b76gsOSkHB4>.

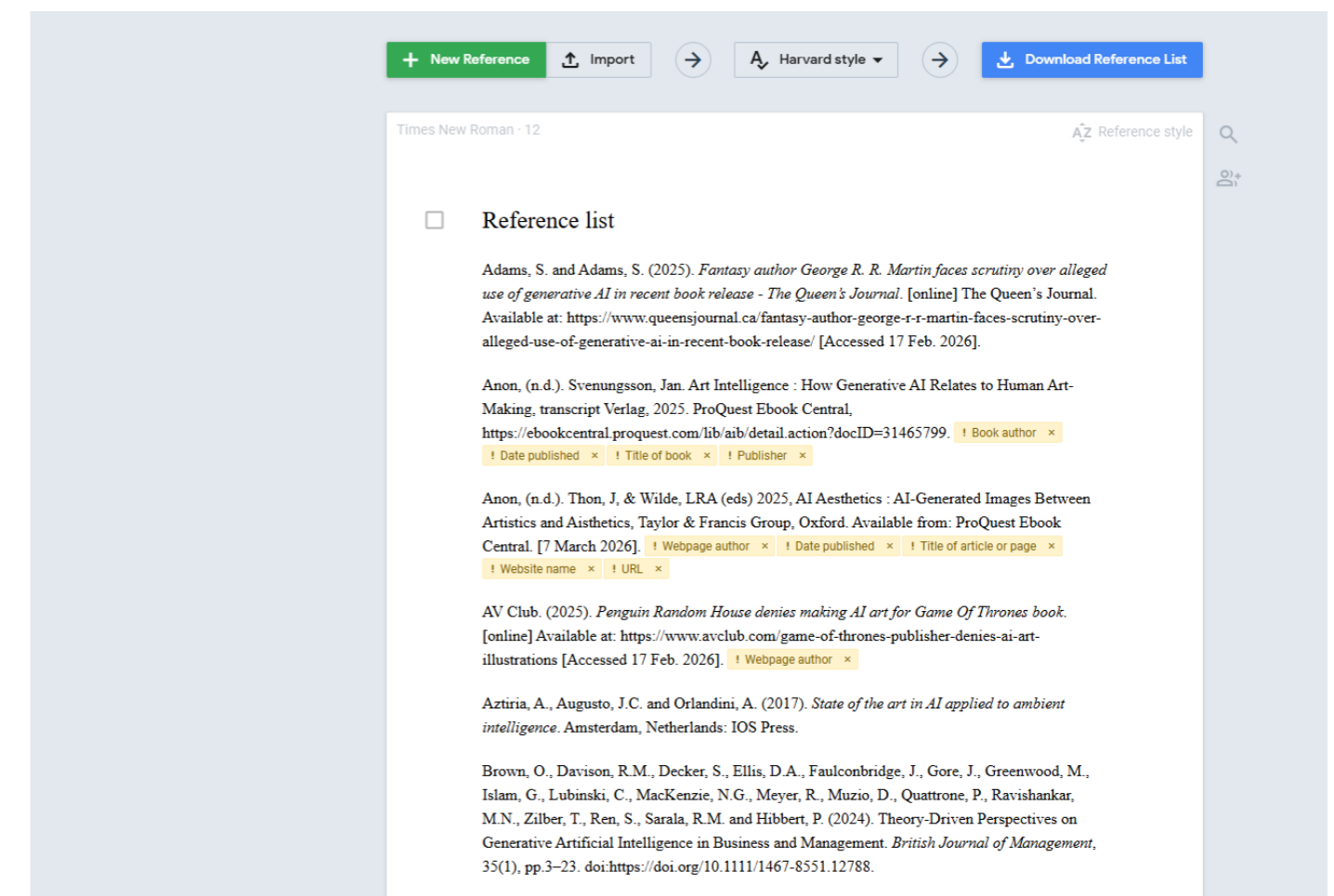
Yasmin, S. (2025). George RR Martin's team defends new Game of Thrones book amid AI artwork claims. [online] The Independent. Available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/news/george-rr-martin-ai-game-of-thrones-feast-for-crows-b2863485.html> [Accessed 17 Feb. 2026].

Yuk Chan, C.K. and Colloton, T. (n.d.). Generative AI in Higher Education : The ChatGPT Effect. [online] Taylor & Francis Group. Available at: Chan, Cecilia Ka Yuk, and Tom Colloton. Generative AI in Higher Education : The ChatGPT Effect, Taylor & Francis Group, 2024. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/aib/detail.action?docID=31281986>.

Zewe, A. (2025). Explained: Generative AI's environmental impact. [online] MIT News. Available at: <https://news.mit.edu/2025/explained-generative-ai-environmental-impact-0117>.

Appendix C: Project Planning

While completing this project it was important that I organised my sources. I heavily utilised mybib to keep all my sources in one place that I could easily access them. With certain sources that were pdf files I had to download onto my computer to keep them in one place. Throughout the project I aimed to get feedback at least once a week to help me set goals for each week.



The screenshot displays the MyBib web interface. At the top, there are navigation buttons: '+ New Reference', 'Import', a right arrow, 'Harvard style' (selected), another right arrow, and 'Download Reference List'. Below this is a search bar with 'Times New Roman - 12' and 'Reference style' dropdowns. The main content area is titled 'Reference list' and contains several entries:

- Adams, S. and Adams, S. (2025). *Fantasy author George R. R. Martin faces scrutiny over alleged use of generative AI in recent book release - The Queen's Journal*. [online] The Queen's Journal. Available at: <https://www.queensjournal.ca/fantasy-author-george-r-r-martin-faces-scrutiny-over-alleged-use-of-generative-ai-in-recent-book-release/> [Accessed 17 Feb. 2026].
- Anon. (n.d.). *Svenungsson, Jan. Art Intelligence : How Generative AI Relates to Human Art-Making*, transcript Verlag, 2025. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/aib/detail.action?docID=31465799>. [Book author ×] [Date published ×] [Title of book ×] [Publisher ×]
- Anon. (n.d.). Thon, J, & Wilde, LRA (eds) 2025, *AI Aesthetics : AI-Generated Images Between Artistics and Aesthetics*, Taylor & Francis Group, Oxford. Available from: ProQuest Ebook Central. [7 March 2026]. [Webpage author ×] [Date published ×] [Title of article or page ×] [Website name ×] [URL ×]
- AV Club. (2025). *Penguin Random House denies making AI art for Game Of Thrones book*. [online] Available at: <https://www.avclub.com/game-of-thrones-publisher-denies-ai-art-illustrations> [Accessed 17 Feb. 2026]. [Webpage author ×]
- Aztria, A., Augusto, J.C. and Orlandini, A. (2017). *State of the art in AI applied to ambient intelligence*. Amsterdam, Netherlands: IOS Press.
- Brown, O., Davison, R.M., Decker, S., Ellis, D.A., Faulconbridge, J., Gore, J., Greenwood, M., Islam, G., Lubinski, C., MacKenzie, N.G., Meyer, R., Muzio, D., Quattrone, P., Ravishankar, M.N., Zilber, T., Ren, S., Sarala, R.M. and Hibbert, P. (2024). Theory-Driven Perspectives on Generative Artificial Intelligence in Business and Management. *British Journal of Management*, 35(1), pp.3–23. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8551.12788>.

Appendix D: Conversations with AI

While researching for this project I was managing multiple sources, this made NotebookLM incredibly useful. While this dissertation was advocating against Generative AI Notebook is used to help find key information from texts and help explain some of the more complex theories rather than trying to generate something original.

The screenshot displays the NotebookLM interface. On the left, a list of sources is visible, including "Research", "Generated_Images_B...", "ow_Generative_AI_Re...", "ce_-_Intelligent_Art...", and "g-creativity-creative...". The central chat window shows a question: "what is actor network theory". The answer provided is: "Actor-network theory (ANT) is a sociological framework, prominently used within science and technology studies, that examines social and cultural practices as the activities of interconnected 'assemblages' 1 2 . The core tenet of ANT is that **agency is distributed between both human and non-human actors** (often referred to as 'actants') 2 3 . Rather than treating humans as the sole drivers of action and social reality, ANT recognizes that non-human entities—such as technological artifacts, machines, and materials—also exert active influence and share creative agency within these networks 2 3 . The sociologist Bruno Latour is frequently cited in the sources as a foundational figure for this theory 2 3 . As discussed previously, this concept was adapted by media scholars into 'actor-media-theory' to specifically analyze communication and interaction technologies. By applying the principles of ANT, researchers can investigate platforms like generative AI as networks where both human users and nonhuman components (hardware, software, datasets) co-create the final output 1 ."

At the bottom of the chat window, there is a "Save to note" button and a "Start typing..." input field. The right side of the interface features a "Studio" panel with various tools: "Audio Overview", "Video Overview", "Reports", "Quiz", and "Data Table".