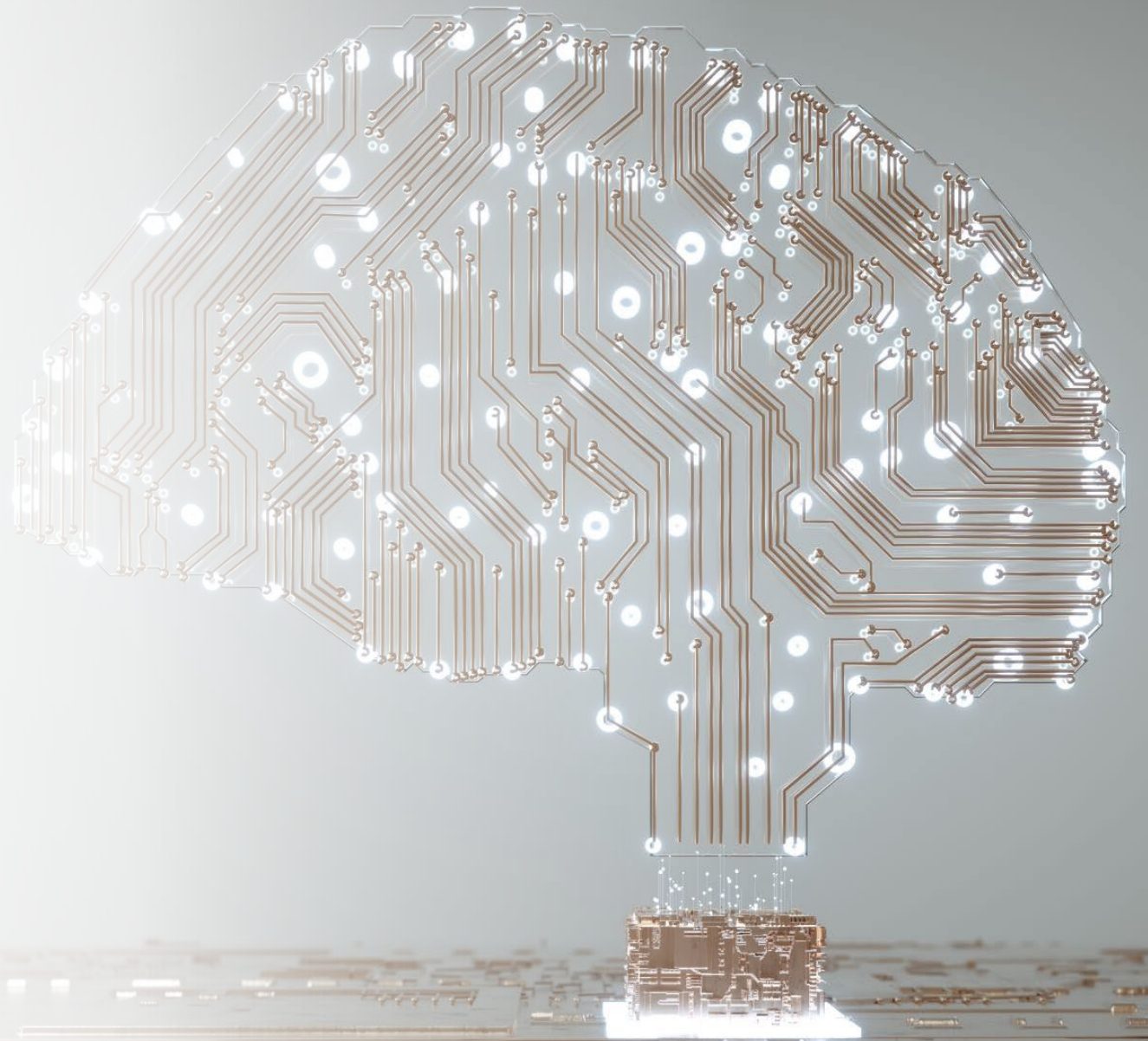




# Mythbusting AI: Faculty-related myths

Faculty Day May 14, 2025

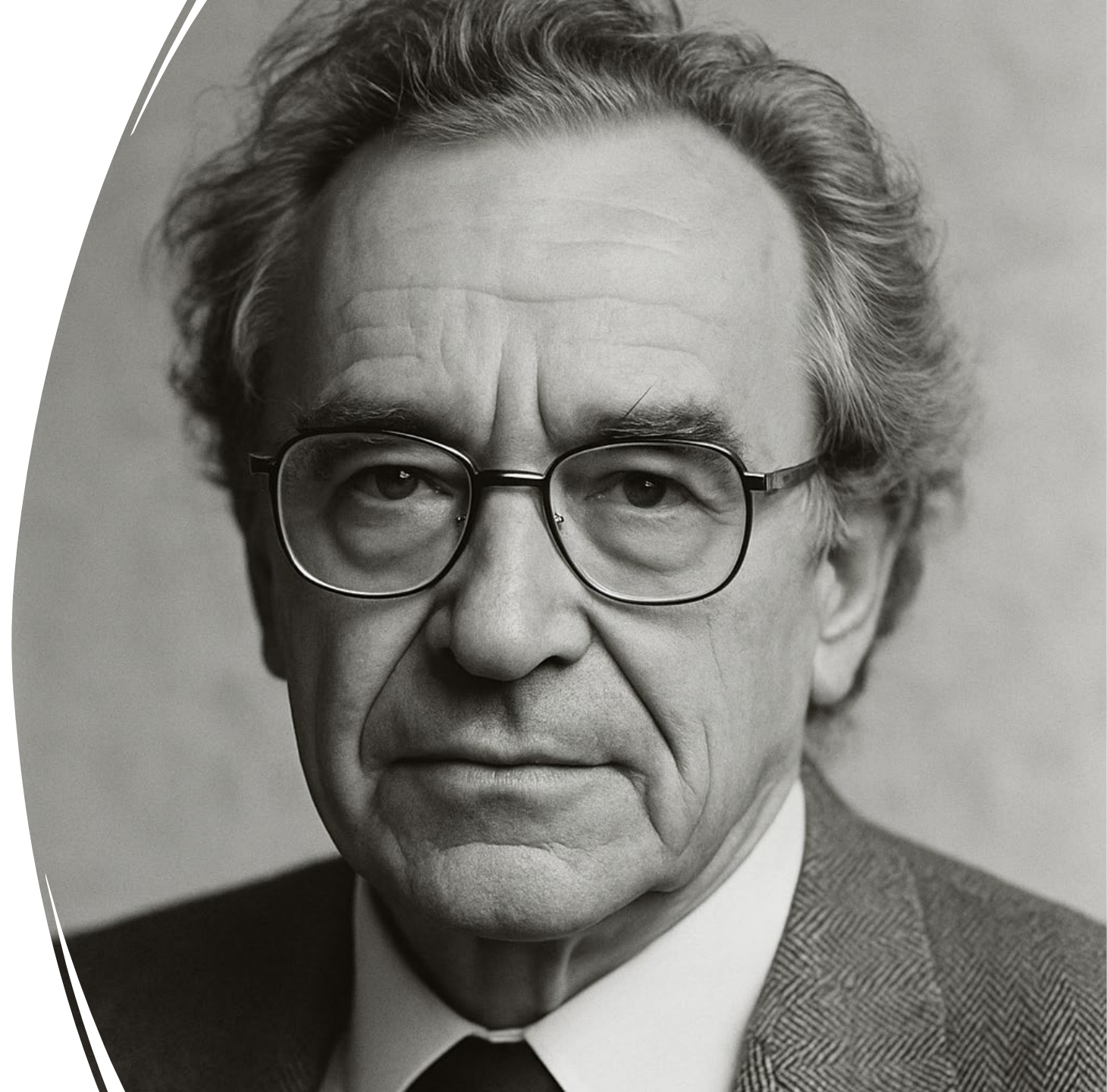
Melissa Panek



In his « The Postmodern Condition : A Report on Knowledge » published in 1979, Jean-François Lyotard foresaw the rapid dissemination of knowledge we are experiencing today

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“What we are approaching is not the end of knowledge—quite the contrary. Data banks are the Encyclopedia of tomorrow. They transcend the capacity of each of their users. They are “nature” for postmodern man.!”



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# Teacher vs. Professor Roles

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## Teachers' Role

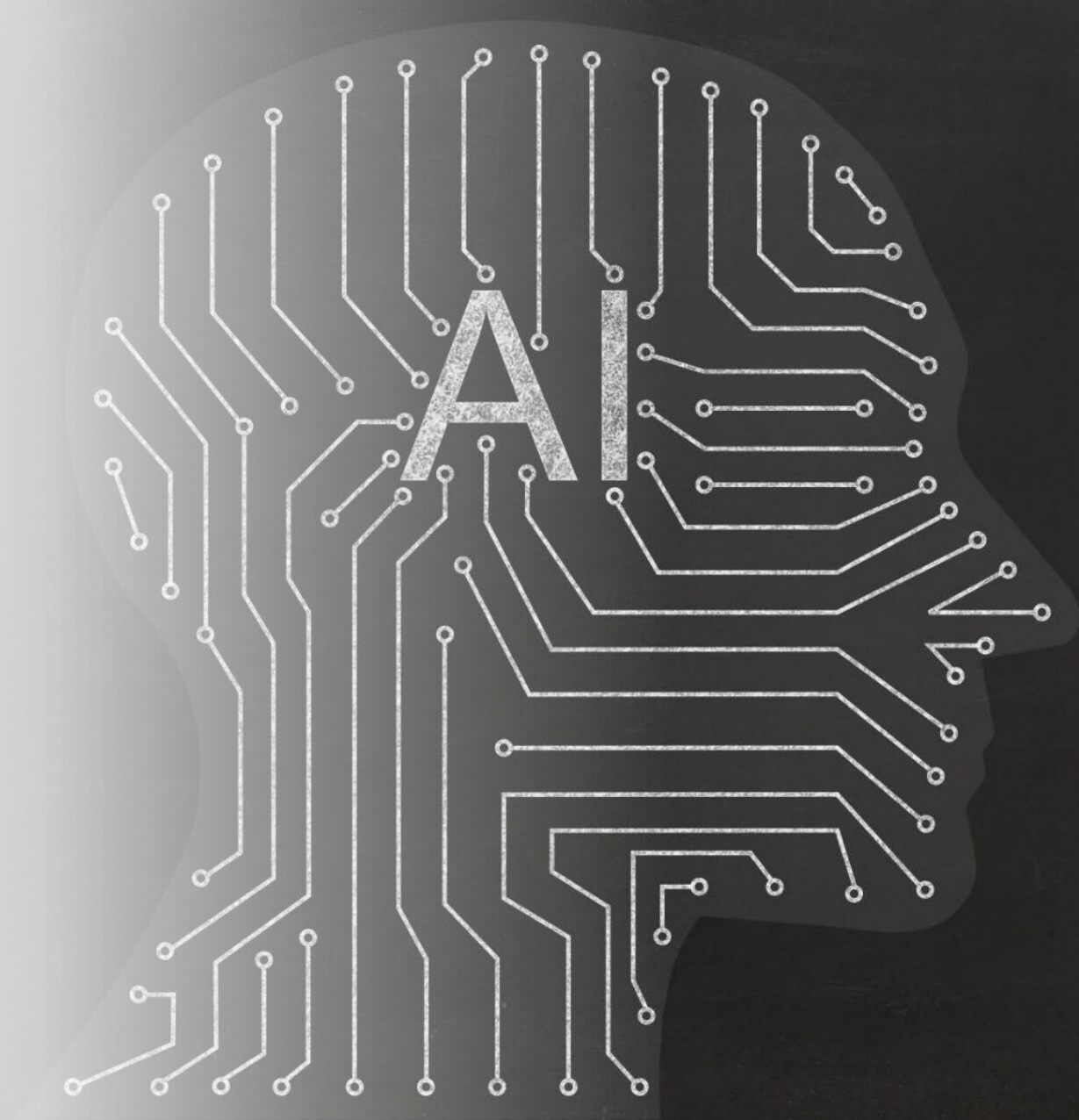
Teachers convey denotative knowledge, focusing on facts and information to enhance the efficiency of the educational system.

## Professors' Role

Professors produce new knowledge and contribute to academic research, playing a crucial role in advancing scholarly work.

## Increasing Division

The distinction between teachers and professors is becoming more pronounced in universities, highlighting their specific roles.



# AI in Knowledge Production

## **AI Processing Denotative Knowledge**

AI technology processes denotative knowledge quickly, aiding professors in focusing on innovative research.

## **Enhancing Research Efficiency**

AI enhances the efficiency of academic research, allowing for faster and more comprehensive studies.

## **Producing New Insights**

Professors can focus on producing new insights and advancements in their fields with the help of AI.



# Summarizing the Evolution

## **Evolving Teacher Roles**

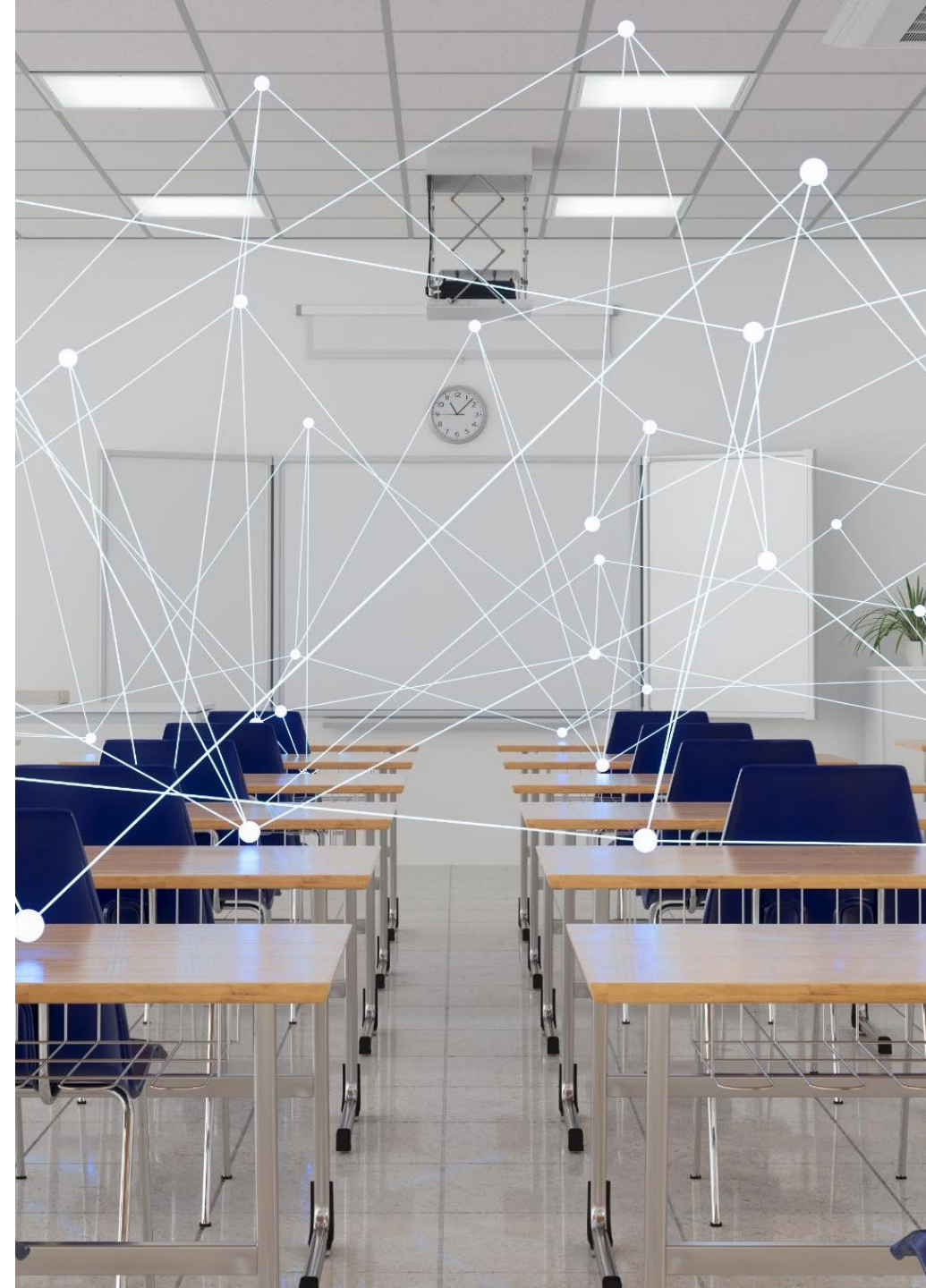
Teachers and professors are adapting to new educational dynamics, incorporating technology and AI into their teaching methods.

## **AI in Knowledge Production**

AI is accelerating the production and dissemination of knowledge, transforming traditional educational approaches.

## **Addressing AI Misconceptions**

It is crucial to address misconceptions about AI to fully leverage its potential in academic settings.



# Myth 1: AI Replaces Professors

## Guiding Critical Thinking

Professors' value lies in guiding, contextualizing, and encouraging critical thinking rather than just memorizing facts.

## Engagement with Knowledge

Effective engagement with denotative knowledge and delivering it to students measures professors' worth and impact.

## In Reality: Greater Human Connection and Empathy

AI frees up time for professors to focus on human connection and empathy, inspiring students to learn.



# Myth 2: AI erodes academic integrity and replaces original thinking

## **Fear of Plagiarism**

AI is feared to facilitate plagiarism, making it easier for students to cheat and bypass authentic learning experiences.

## **Threat to Academic Integrity**

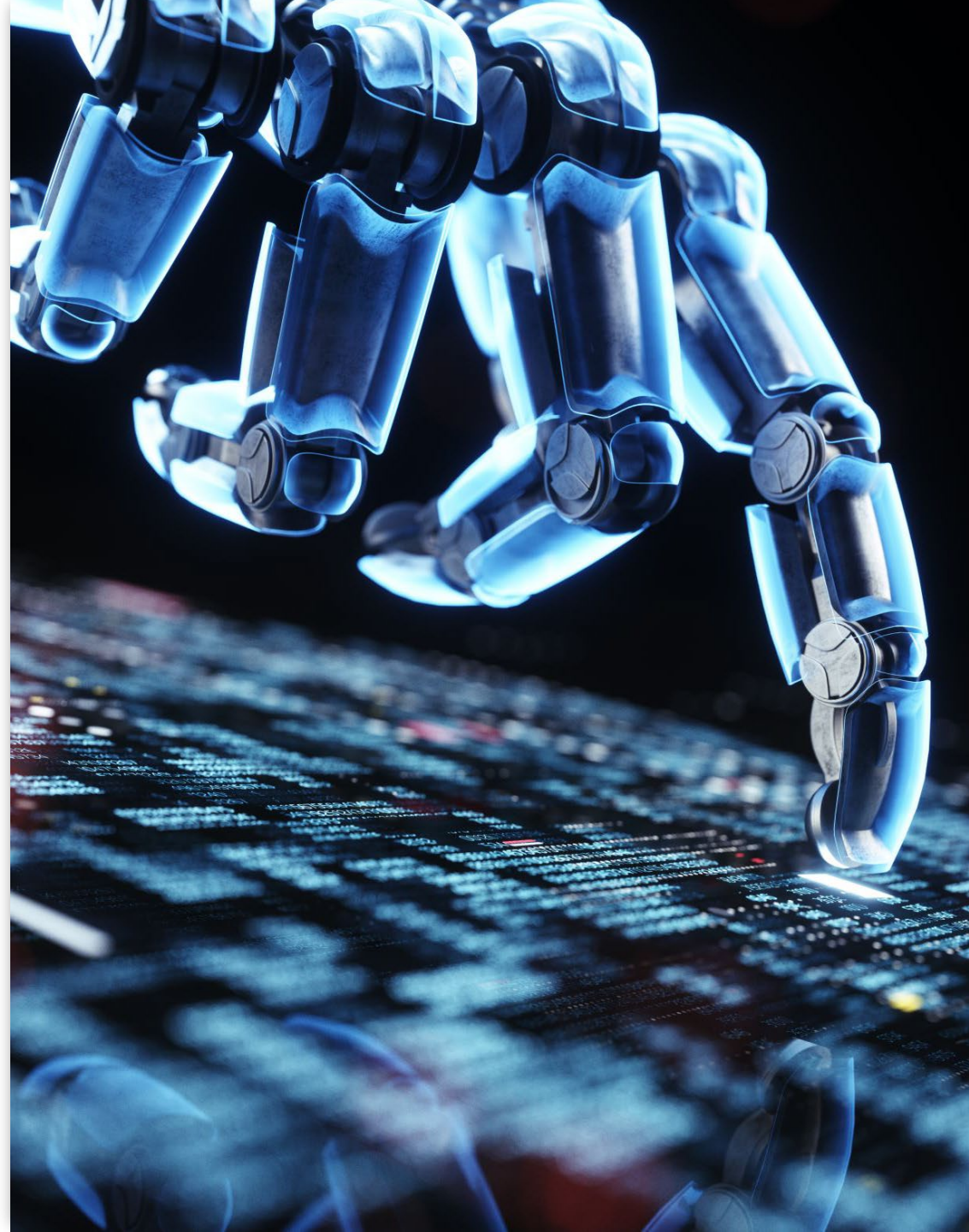
Critics argue that AI undermines academic integrity by making it difficult to author original content.

## **Neutral Tools for Information**

Lyotard views AI as neutral tools that store and process information, similar to dictionaries or databases.

## **In Reality: Ethical Use of Digital Tools**

AI raises the stakes as we are flooded more than ever with information. Professors are needed to teach students how to access credible information and think critically. We must teach ethical and critical use of AI and other digital tools to ensure they are used to enhance learning.





# Podcast Series: Café Across Time – Intellectual Groups Edition

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Concerns that AI undermines academic integrity often suggest that students or faculty rely on it to bypass learning or original thought.

However, this notion fails when we consider genuine, guided educational projects that utilize AI as a creative collaborator rather than a substitute for critical thinking.

An example is the podcast “Café Across Time,” which showcases the integrity of its academic foundation:

- It incorporates well-researched dialogue from various historical contexts.
- It promotes interdisciplinary perspectives and creative storytelling.
- Most importantly, it was designed and refined by me, using AI as a helpful tool, not a replacement.

- **Episode 1: Émile Zola – Advocates for Social Justice, Past and Present** In this episode, the student host converses with Émile Zola at a lively café in Paris. Their dialogue centers on Zola's unwavering commitment to social justice, particularly his notable participation in the Dreyfus Affair.
- **Episode 2: Jean-Paul Sartre – Embracing Freedom Amidst Endless Choices** The student host engages in an existential discussion with Jean-Paul Sartre. Over cups of coffee, Sartre reflects on what it means to live authentically in the contemporary world, where social media and societal norms frequently influence our decisions.
- **Episode 3: Albert Camus – Facing the Absurd** This episode features a profound conversation between the student host and Albert Camus as they ponder the meaning of life (or the absence of it) while enjoying espressos. They examine how Camus' notion of absurdism relates to today's climate of uncertainty and crisis.
- **Episode 4: Simone de Beauvoir – Transforming Gender Perspectives in Today's Society** Simone de Beauvoir and the student host discuss the feminist movement, tracing the progression of gender roles from Beauvoir's time to the present day.
- **Episode 5: Julian Benda – The Dilemma of the Intellectual** In this episode, Julian Benda joins the conversation as the student host questions him about the responsibilities of intellectuals in contemporary society. Should they remain neutral regarding political matters, or must they actively participate as advocates for reason and justice?
- **Episode 6: Michel Foucault – Authority and Surveillance in the Digital Era** In this concluding episode, the student host and Michel Foucault engage in an animated discussion about power dynamics and surveillance in today's world.

# Task of AI: Scaffold assignments for the Intellectual Series Podcast

## Assignment 1: Intellectual Background Research (October 14-20)

- **Objective:** Students will familiarize themselves with the key intellectuals and their works.
- **Task:**
  - Meet with your groupmates focusing on your assigned intellectual (Zola, Sartre, Camus, Beauvoir, Benda, or Foucault).
  - Research their main works, key ideas, and historical context.
  - Write a 1-2 page summary covering:
    - The intellectual's major contributions.
    - Core ideas or philosophies they are known for.
    - Their influence on culture and society during their time.

## Assignment 2: Modern Connections Essay (October 21-27)

- **Objective:** Link the intellectual's ideas to contemporary issues.
- **Task:**
  - Write a 1-2 page essay where you:
    - Identify a modern social, political, or cultural issue that resonates with your chosen intellectual's ideas (e.g., gender roles, social justice, existential freedom, surveillance).
    - Analyze how their ideas can be applied to better understand or critique this issue today.
    - Use specific examples from their works and from contemporary society.

### **Assignment 3: Group Discussion and Debate (October 27- November 2)**

- **Objective:** Deepen understanding through peer discussion and debate.
- **Task:**
  - Meet with your group (based on intellectual assignments).
  - Hold a structured discussion where each student shares the main points of their modern connections essay.
  - Engage in a debate:
    - Does your intellectual's philosophy still hold value today?
    - What challenges would your intellectual face in today's world?
  - Each group will collaboratively create a list of insights and key takeaways from the discussion.
  - **Deliverable:** Group submits a 1-2 page summary of their discussion.

### Assignment 5: Mock Podcast Recording (November 14-26)

- **Objective:** Practice delivery and refine the conversation for recording.
- **Task:**
  - In your group, conduct a mock recording of your podcast episode.
  - Each student should present their dialogue as if they were in conversation with their intellectual.
  - Focus on clarity, pacing, and making the conversation engaging for listeners.
  - Record the session for review, either in audio or video format.
  - **Deliverable:** Submit the mock recording, along with self-assessments from each group member on what worked well and what could be improved.



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### Assignment 6: Final Podcast Recording (November 25-December 5)

- **Objective:** Record the final podcast episode.
- **Task:**
  - Using feedback from the mock recording, refine your script and practice delivery.
  - Record your final podcast episode as a group, ensuring everyone contributes their prepared dialogues.
  - Include a brief introduction to the episode, introduce each intellectual, and conclude with key takeaways.
  - Ensure the recording is polished, professional, and engaging for listeners.
  - **Deliverable:** Submit the final podcast recording.



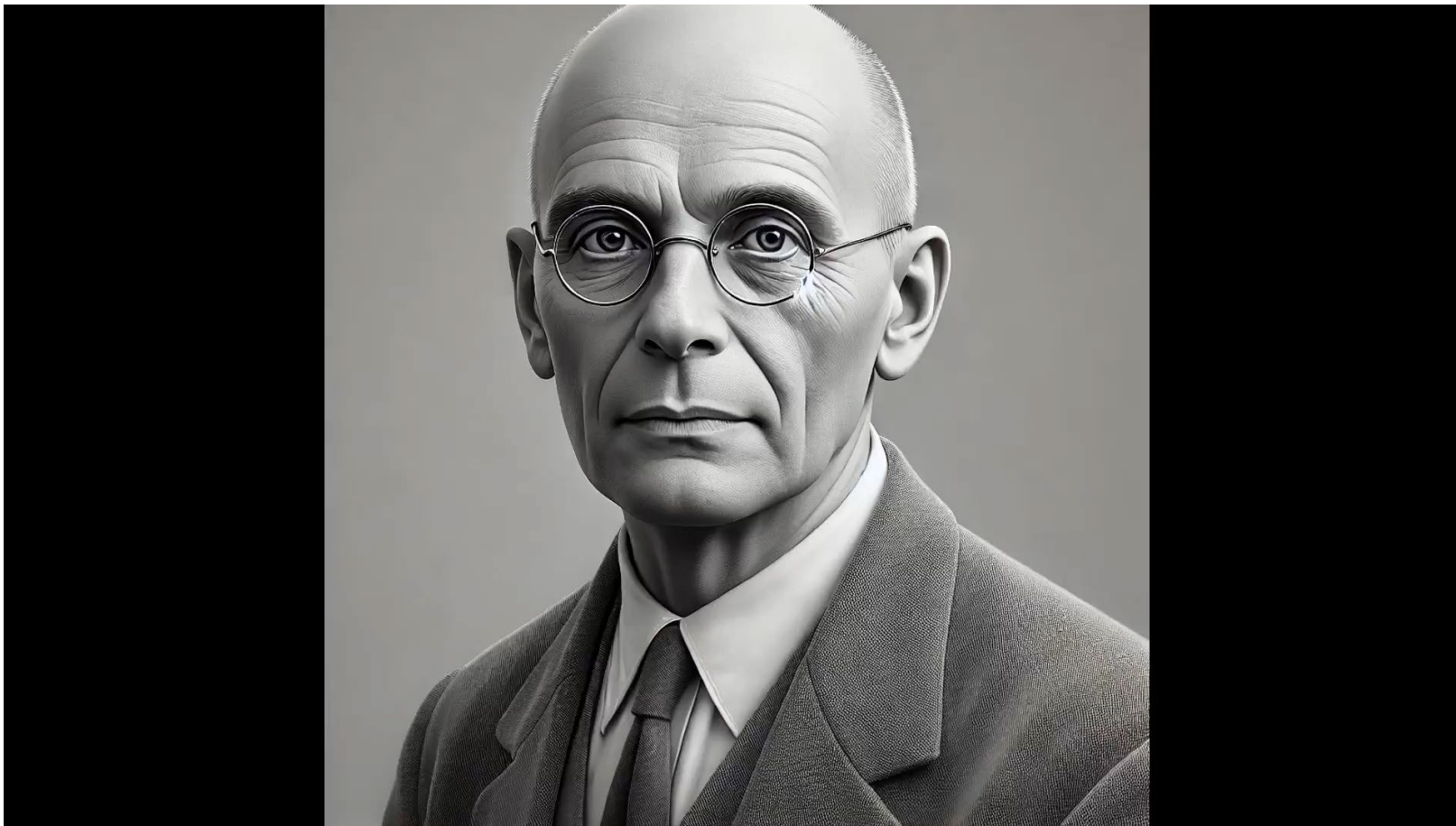
## Reflection and Feedback (December 8-14)

- **Objective:** Reflect on the learning experience and receive feedback.
- **Task:**
  - Write a 1-2 page reflection on the entire process. Consider:
    - What did you learn about your chosen intellectual?
    - How did their ideas challenge or resonate with your understanding of modern issues?
    - What was it like engaging in a creative process like podcasting to explore philosophical ideas?
  - In class, students will listen to each group's podcast episode and provide feedback.

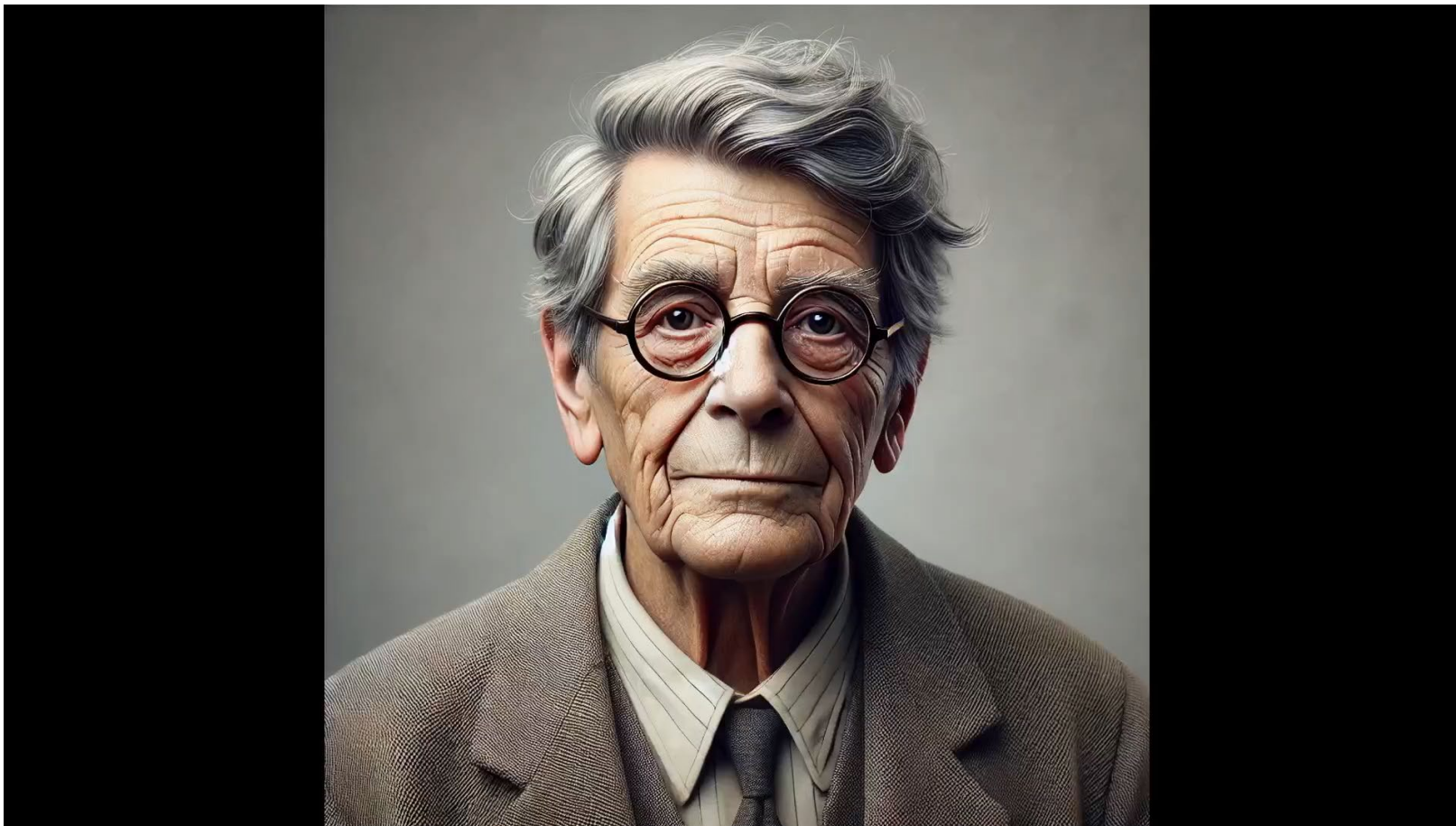
# AI generated OER images of French intellectuals



# The Camera's Eye



# Jean-Paul Sartre



# Thank you!

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- I hope to have assuaged your fears of AI and debunked these prevalent myths surrounding faculty's use of AI. Please consider using it as a valuable tool to help you have more time for the human connection with your students.

