

REECE ROGERS

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The AI Slop Backlash Is Actually Having an Impact

Platforms are finally recognizing that people don't want to consume AI slop. A growing number of sites and apps now have tools and policies to flag, label, and ban AI-generated content.

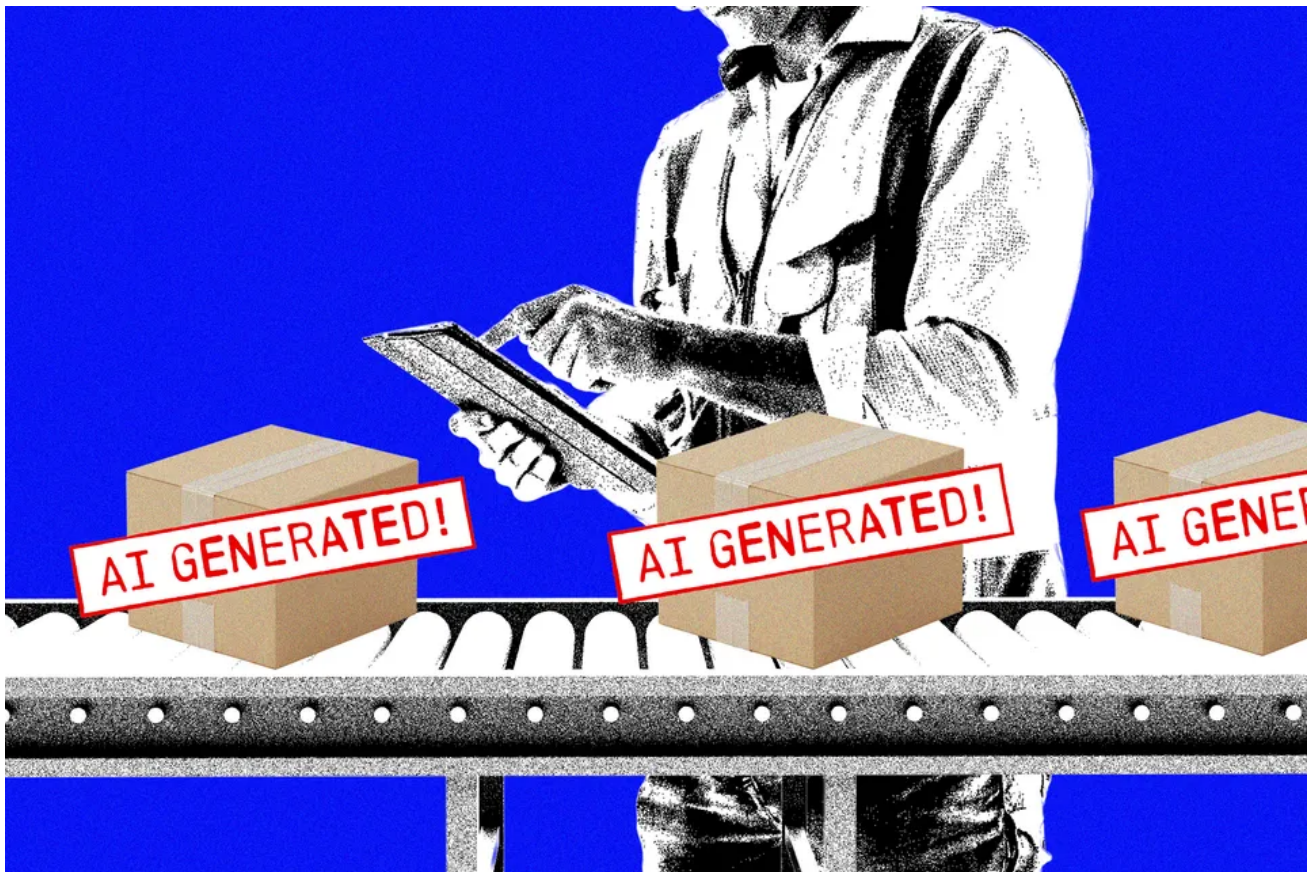


PHOTO-ILLUSTRATION: WIRED STAFF; GETTY IMAGES



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SAVE THIS STORY

I **WAS RECENTLY** digging through my [Instagram](#) settings, trying to disable Meta's [now-defunct](#) feature that allowed anyone to create AI deepfakes of me without consent. Anger bubbled up inside as I tapped through the Kafkaesque [opt-out process](#).

Rather than throwing my phone across the room, I blurted to my partner that we should leave San Francisco behind and be off-grid sheep farmers. Something [analog](#). In that moment, anything sounded better than this ongoing, [generative-AI-induced hell](#).

Many Americans are having similar reactions to the growing prevalence of generative AI [in daily life](#). "The AI revolution has happened, and everybody hates it," says [Meredith Broussard](#), a data journalism professor at New York University and author of *Artificial Unintelligence: How Computers Misunderstand the World*. In a [recent Gallup poll](#), Americans' increased familiarity with generative AI coincides with [negative attitudes](#) about the technology. This is especially true for young people between 18 and 29, where almost half see generative AI as doing more harm than good.

While this [AI backlash](#) has been brewing for the last few years, more companies appear to be directly addressing these concerns. LinkedIn added a "[seems like AI slop](#)" button for reporting AI-generated content on the platform, despite still hosting plenty of generative AI tools. Snapchat announced that fully AI-generated videos would [no longer be eligible](#) for its discovery feed. Substack recently added an [AI detection tool](#) to police writers.

The backlash's "why" is simple at its core. Many Americans feel like they never consented to any of this. I had no idea that my online interactions would one day be scraped en masse for AI model training. I didn't ask for Instagram to enable deepfakes on my account. I didn't want Google to push AI-generated answers at the top of search results. I woke up one day, and generative AI features were stuffed into every corner of [all the software I rely on](#) without my consent.

“Consent is really important,” Broussard tells WIRED. “We can connect that to the way that women, queer people, people of color, and minorities get exploited and abused online. Tech companies have never really been sensitive to issues of consent.”

Public backlash appears to be working, at times, in getting unwanted AI features shut down. “They just roll them out and see what sticks, because nobody really knows what this is for,” says [Nick Seaver](#), an associate professor of anthropology at Tufts University focusing on technology and society. Google recently rolled back the ability for people to use generative AI to tweak satellite images on Google Earth almost immediately after launching it, following [reporting from 404 Media](#). Additionally, Meta turned off the aforementioned [deepfaking tool for Instagram](#) users after three days of public outcry and viral videos with millions of views criticizing the feature.

There’s also a growing rejection of generative AI in marketing materials. Many people online reacted negatively to major brands, like [McDonald’s](#) and [Coca-Cola](#), incorporating generative AI visuals into their ad spots. Even local shops see backlash for promoting events using [AI-generated posters](#).

Beyond online outcry, more people are starting to protest against the building of data centers that power these AI tools. “There’s a lot of pushback coalescing around data centers,” says [Emily Bender](#), coauthor of *The AI Con*. “Data centers are important because they are focal points of environmental and economic damage.” Americans across the political spectrum have recently united in these [data center protests](#).

While tech workers in San Francisco, especially software developers, have latched on to generative AI tools [as central to their everyday work](#), many of these uses are obligatory. “Top-down mandates to use large language models are crazy,” one [Block employee](#) told me during the layoffs earlier this year at Jack Dorsey’s fintech company. “If the tool were good, we’d all just use it.” I don’t want to be forced to use specific tools at work, especially one that’s [morally questionable](#) and shown to be [wrought with errors](#).

people to organize using traditional methods as well as digital methods,” says Broussard. “Remind people that public pressure works.”

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[Reece Rogers](#) is WIRED's service writer, focused on explaining crucial topics and helping readers get the most out of their technology. Prior to WIRED, Reece covered streaming at Business Insider. ... [Read More](#)

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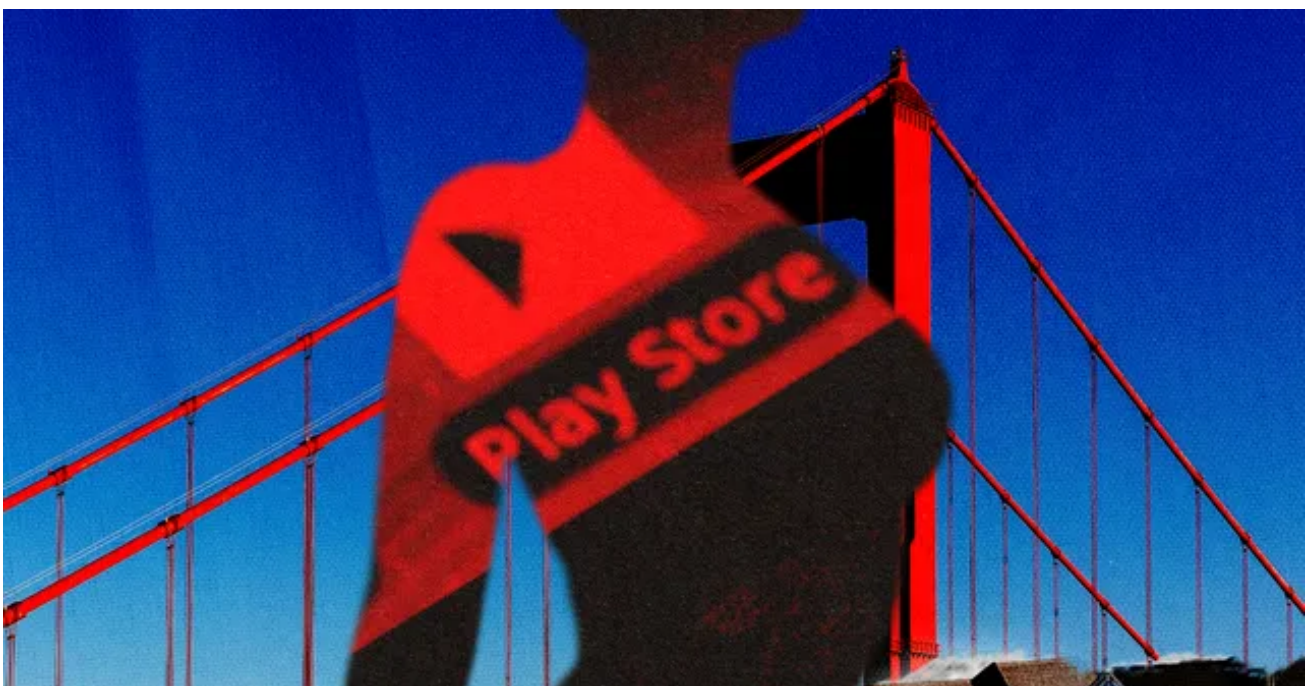
SIGN UP



Please Stop Making Me Opt Out of AI

I'm sick of "opt-out" toggles for automatically enabled generative AI features. It's past time to make "opt in" the default setting for sensitive features.

REECE ROGERS



The City Attorney's Office sent the tech giants cease-and-desist letters this week telling them to stop profiting from 13 "face-swap" apps that are overwhelmingly used to target women and girls.

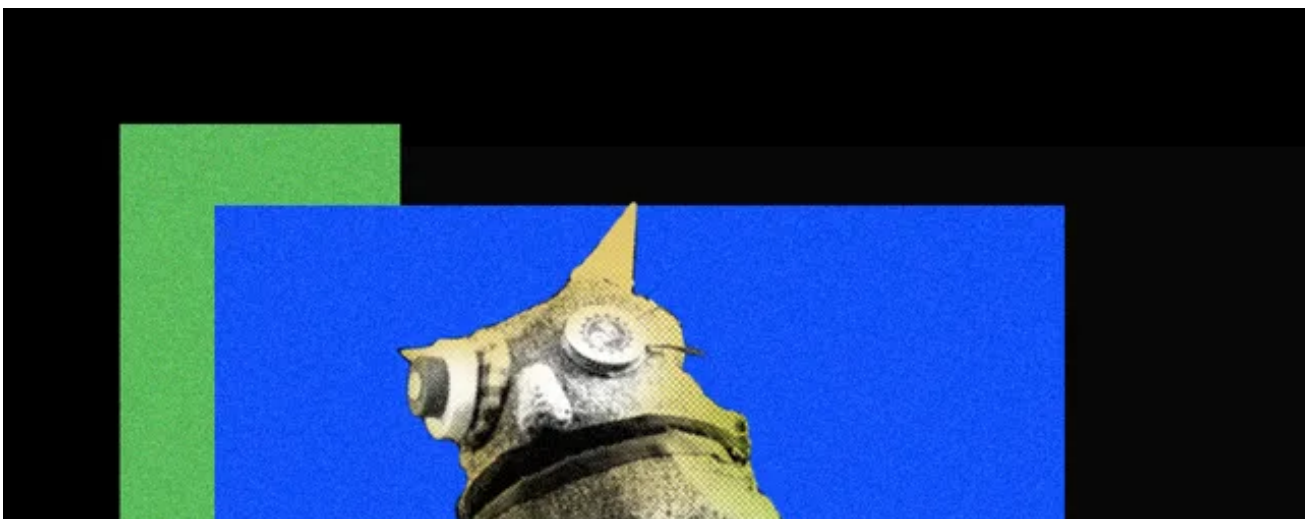
MATT BURGESS



AI Influencers Are Heading Into Uncharted Territory

Some creators fear the EU AI Act's regulatory chaos will upend their lucrative businesses. Others are owning it by incorporating AI transparency into their creative process.

MEGAN CARNEGIE



This Luddite Puppet Hopes You're Not Reading This on Your Smartphone

On this week's episode of *The Big Interview* podcast, WIRED's senior culture editor Manisha Krishnan talks to Gowanus about eschewing Big Tech, going outside, and rejection in the age of dating apps.

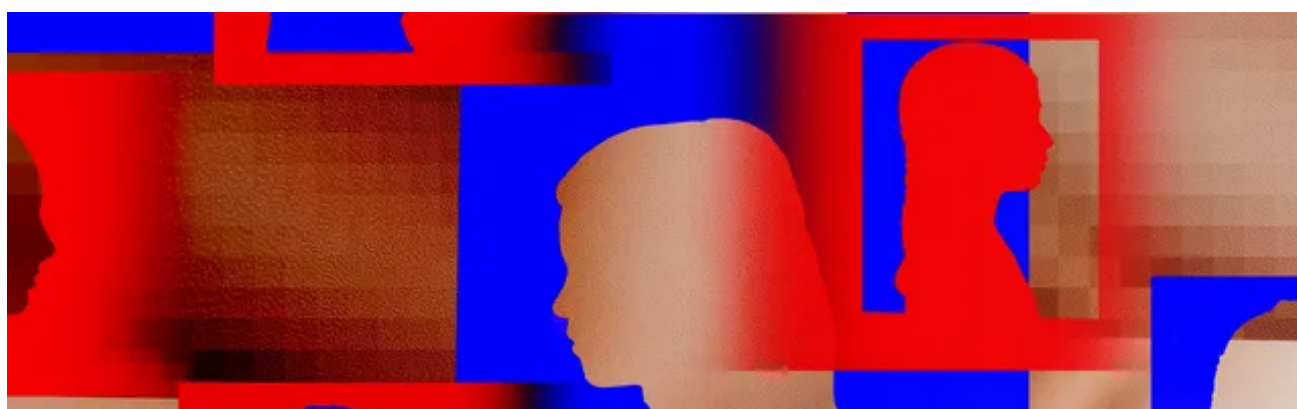
MANISHA KRISHNAN



Kagi Brings Back Old-School Search, One Human-Made Website at a Time

If you're tired of sponsored and AI-summarized search results, Kagi gives you a curated—and human-centric—way to find what you're looking for.

DAVID NIELD





Meta Ran Ads That Contained AI-Generated Child Sexual Abuse Imagery

More than 50 offending image and video ads were published across Facebook, Instagram, Messenger, or Threads, according to Meta's ad library data. Some ran as recently as this week.

MATT BURGESS



How Data Centers Broke American Politics

What the Unabomber, Steve Bannon's tech guy, and Bernie Sanders taught me about the great data center backlash of 2026.

MOLLY TAFT

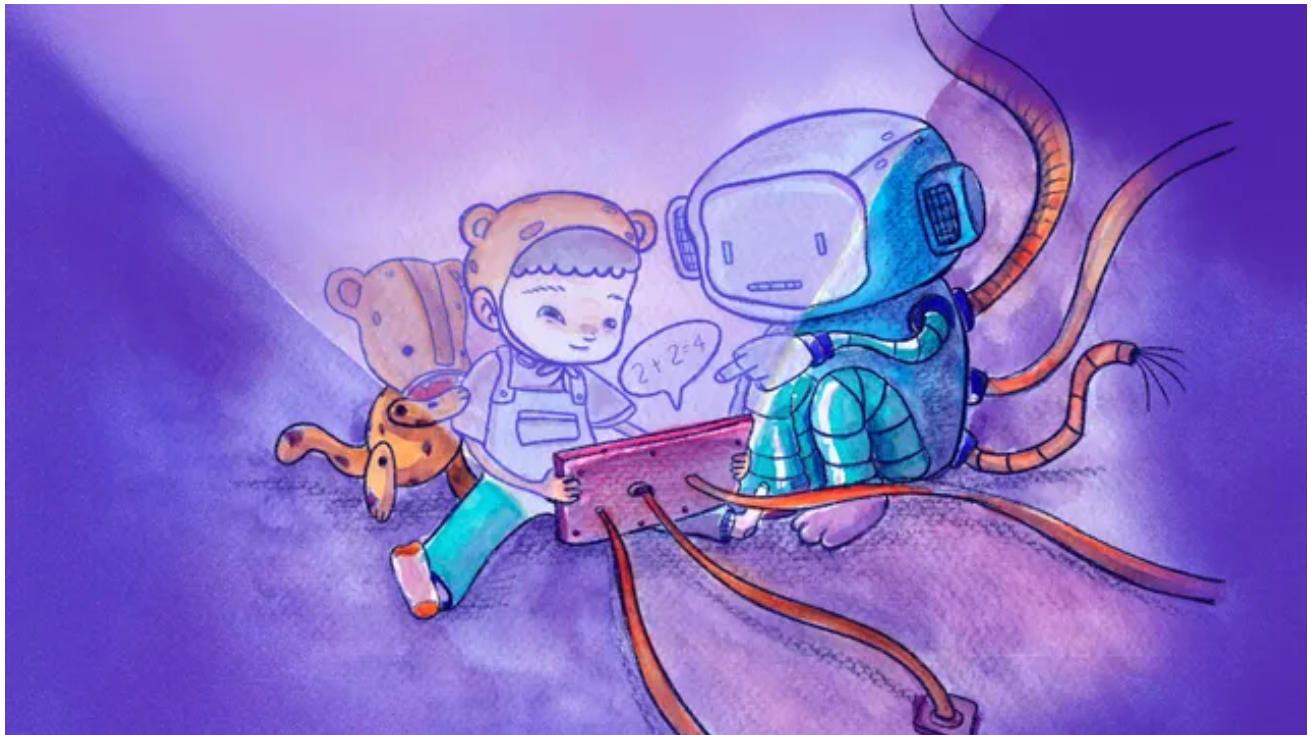




Europeans Are About to Find Out How Entrenched AI Is in Their Daily Lives

New EU rules stipulate that people must be told when they're interacting with AI or looking at AI-generated or -edited content, leading to fear of "disclosure fatigue."

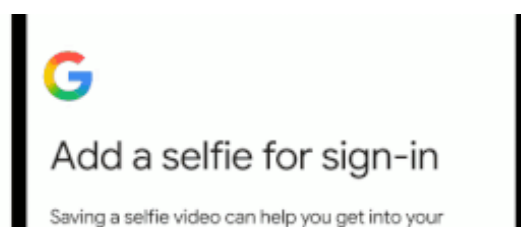
ISABELLA WARD



Banning Social Media for Kids Is a Bad Idea

The risks are real. But banning children from the internet could create new problems without solving the ones that really matter.

CLAUDIA DEL POZO



Google Turns a Selfie Video Into Your Account's Spare Key

The next time you're locked out of your Google account, you can use your face as part of the account recovery process.

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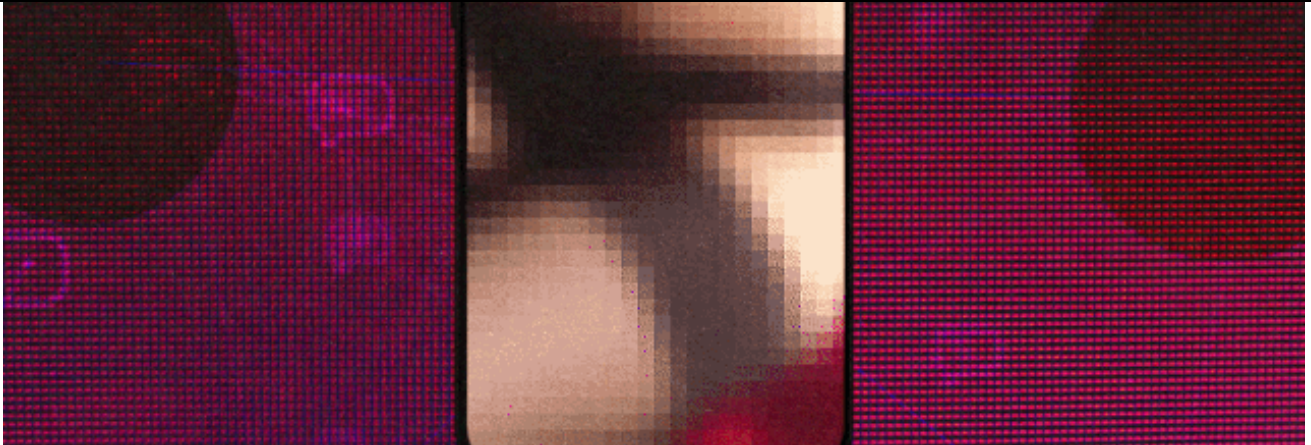


Hugging Face Has a Deepfake Nudes Problem

Researchers tested top image editing models on Hugging Face and found they could easily create explicit deepfakes—and 1,000 image editing prompts show how people use the software.

MATT BURGESS



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YouTube and X Have Become ‘Gateways’ to Nudify Apps

A new study found that social media platforms are referring people to sites where they can create nonconsensual, sexually explicit deepfakes for as little as \$1 an image.

EJ DICKSON

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