Point *Counterpoint*

Should schools ban ChatGPT?

> ChatGPT, a revolutionary artificial intelligence chatbot released by OpenAI Nov. 30, has already made its way into classrooms. Its ability to generate writing from virtually any prompt has raised fears over how it could affect the educational system. Concerns regarding plagiarism and misinformation have been raised, prompting some, such as the New York City public school district, to ban the software, while other schools around the globe contemplate how to handle the development of AI.

Yes

Anita Sosa /
Reporter

School is a place where students learn how to express themselves, think critically and solve problems. Through assignments, students learn these skills and are then assessed on the work they completed. ChatGPT will disrupt this vital cycle. Unless it is banned, students will not only learn less, they will lose the chance to exercise their skills.

Students don't write paragraphs about World War II because the world needs another summary paragraph written by a high schooler, but because it's an expression of voice.

Both inside and outside the workplace, being able to communicate through writing is a key skill. Personal voice cannot be mimicked; it is something that requires constant practice to develop. Only an individual can best communicate the nuances of their own ideas. Even if AI is better than humans at just about anything, it will never be better at being you, than you. ChatGPT lets students avoid everyday writing, which prevents them from developing their own voice.

In addition, ChatGPT can be used to do students' research for them. By manually searching for academic sources, students absorb content and information, becoming more knowledgeable. This process prepares students to tackle complex topics and pursue higher education.

With ChatGPT, students won't actively engage with information. They could get through an entire school day without actually thinking about the work they're doing. They won't remember the information they copy-pasted onto an answer document because they won't have processed or interacted with the content.

Some may argue that ChatGPT is just another technological tool similar to a calculator, but they are not the same. Calculators can only supplement human thought and require critical thinking to use, such as knowing how to set problems up. However, with ChatGPT, students can input an entire prompt with no modifications and submit the answer with zero thought put in.

It would also be unfair, as some students could receive credit for work they didn't personally complete. It is just as bad as turning in your friend's paper as your own. It allows students to cheat by turning in AI work. It isn't right for some to get rewarded for work they didn't do, while their peers spend hours a day for the same grades.

According to CNBC, there are also concerns that the chatbot may spread misinformation due to its lack of reliable sources. As ChatGPT is not programmed to fact-check its responses, it often contains false information.
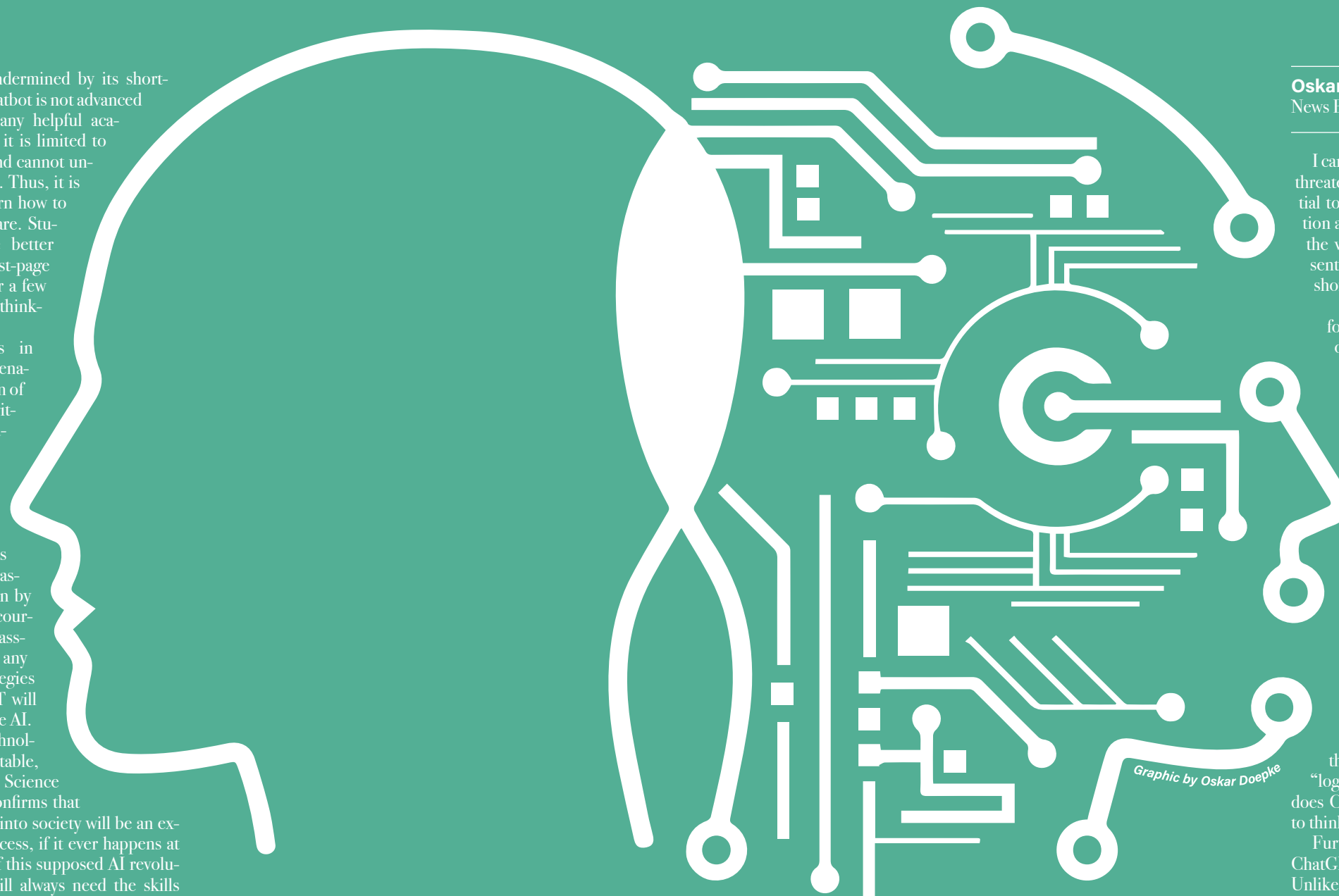
In fact, if you ask ChatGPT where it gets its information, it gives you invalid links, and if you ask for specific information from a book or source, the pages are largely incorrect.

Any supposed pedagogical benefits of ChatGPT are undermined by its shortcomings. The chatbot is not advanced enough to add any helpful academic insight as it is limited to simple writing and cannot understand context. Thus, it is not useful to learn how to "use" this software. Students would be better served by a first-page Google search or a few more minutes of thinking.

Advancements in software have enabled the detection of AI-generated writing. To stop students from using the chatbot, schools should use these AI checkers to ensure students don't turn in assignments written by AI, and not encourage its use in classrooms. As with any technology, strategies to curb ChatGPT will develop alongside AI.

While AI technology may be inevitable, a Harvard Data Science Review article confirms that total integration into society will be an extremely long process, if it ever happens at all. Regardless of this supposed AI revolution, students will always need the skills that ChatGPT destroys.

> " With ChatGPT, students won't actively engage. "

Graphic by Oskar Doepke

No

Oskar Doepke /
News Editor: Print

I can understand why educators may feel threatened by ChatGPT. It has the potential to revolutionize every field of education and disrupt years of work. However, the very reasons given for a ban represent exactly why such an action would be shortsighted.

According to CNN, a spokesperson for the New York City Department of Education said the use of ChatGPT will ultimately strip students of problem-solving and critical thinking skills, both of which are essential to lifelong success.

This statement couldn't be further from the truth.

Critical thinking, as defined by the Oxford Dictionary, is "the process of analyzing information in order to make a logical decision about the extent to which you believe something to be true or false."

Going by this definition, ChatGPT does not inhibit students from developing critical thinking skills. As a tool, it is used to gather information and report back various viewpoints to the user, but at the end of the day, the user makes the "logical decision" themselves. In no way does ChatGPT take away students' ability to think critically.

Furthermore, people underestimate ChatGPT's potential to teach students. Unlike traditional teaching methods that often struggle to cater to individual needs, ChatGPT is highly adaptable and can evolve to be personalized to each person's unique requirements. This adaptability not only enhances the learning experience but also allows for targeted instruction, ensuring that students receive the support they need to thrive academically.

In addition, it needs to be understood that ChatGPT's future plays another important factor in its role at school.

We are currently on the cusp of the AI revolution. Future generations of students will grow up in a new AI-driven world, and they must be taught how to navigate it. Therefore, the critical thinking skills of the future will be interwoven with AI. Having schools shut the doors of the future would be a colossal failure of the educational system as it would leave their students unprepared for the wider world, denying them the necessary critical thinking skills.

Moreover, the notion that ChatGPT spreads misinformation is flawed. This accusation, while not completely untrue, overlooks the foundations of AI learning.

Google, as well as the rest of the Internet, is known to be filled with misinformation, but despite this fact, schools continue to employ Google in their learning processes. As AI is built on the data of the Internet, the information provided by the chatbot is no different than that provided by Google. Since Google is already widely used in the educational system, it makes no sense to blame ChatGPT for potential misinformation.

A ban on ChatGPT would not even work on a practical level. There have been past attempts to ban websites, like Wikipedia. org in the early 2000s, and they have all failed spectacularly.

The situation would not be any dissimilar should other schools try to take action against ChatGPT. Students can still easily access the site through private hotspots and VPNs or simply wait until they have access to personal electronic devices.

Any other substitutes for bans similarly fall short. According to Futurism, the AI-detection program GPT Zero, for example, has been found to be too unreliable. Instead of correctly identifying AI text, it often false-flags original work, unjustly punishing those who didn't use AI.

Instead of resorting to bans or other alternatives, schools should utilize ChatGPT to help students learn as well as improve their skills. For example, humanities classes could teach rhetorical thinking skills through creating counter-arguments against those generated by ChatGPT, and computer science classes could encourage students to analyze the feasibility of proposed codes.

When used correctly, ChatGPT helps students to improve their critical thinking skills rather than hinder them.

Just as we have accepted the use of Grammarly and calculators, we must accept the use of ChatGPT. Harnessing the power of AI is the next step in the evolution of education.

> " People underestimate ChatGPT's potential to teach students. "

From the hallway

"We should use ChatGPT as a resource instead of treating it like the boogeyman."
– Aaron Stephen ('23)

"There needs to be some regulation on using ChatGPT for assignments."
– Ishaan Sareen ('24)

"Schools and students just really need to be careful about AI technology."
– Yara Kassir ('26)

"It has the potential to make learning a more enjoyable experience."
– Om Agarwal ('25)

Which sentence was produced by ChatGPT?

Prompt: Should ChatGPT be banned in schools?

a. Many factors influence academic institutions' decision of whether or not to prohibit the use of ChatGPT, namely the fear of spreading misinformation and hindering critical thinking.

b. The decision of whether ChatGPT or similar AI systems should be banned in schools is a complex and subjective matter that depends on various factors and considerations.

c. ChatGPT and similar AI systems create an overreliance on technology among students, which is why it is crucial the software is not used in classrooms.

d. With the software's ability to provide quick access to information, ChatGPT enhances students' learning and should not be removed or penalized within academic institutions.

To view the answer, scan here: