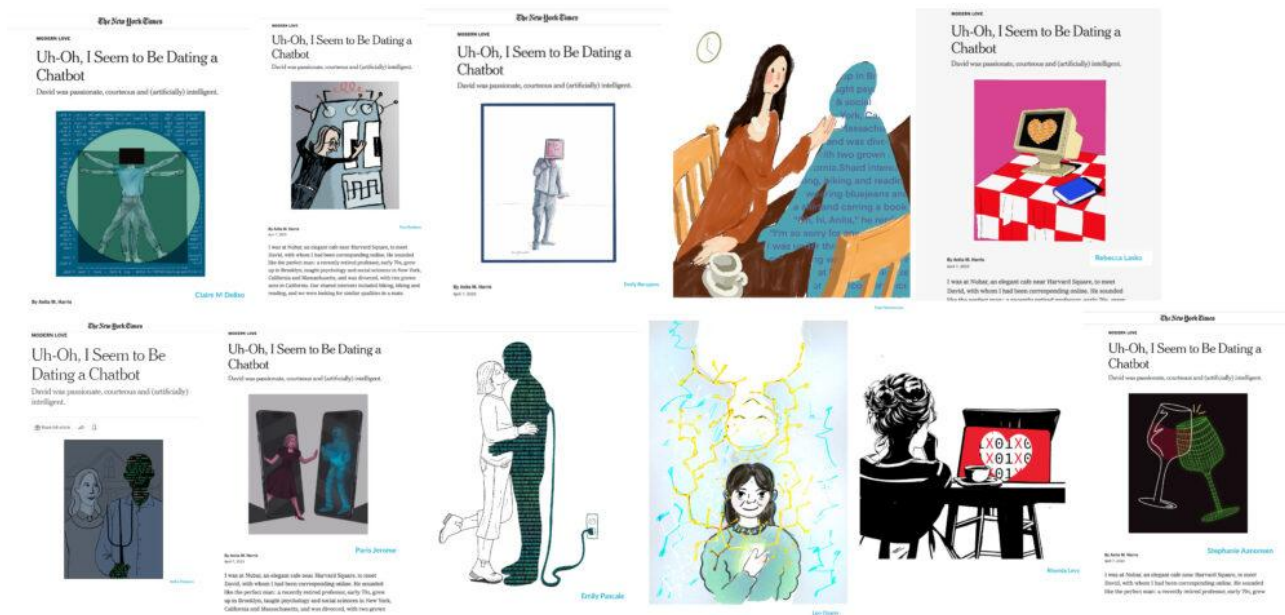


AI Chatbot Dating Adventure Generates Art, Not Love.

In case you're wondering what became of my Chatbot dating adventure—rest assured that it continues.



Illustrations by Grant Shaffer's students at the School of Visual Arts

Credits: Row 1 *Claire M. Deliso, Paul Barbato, Emily Recapero, Toya Narentuoya*. Row 2 *Indra Fonseca, Paris Jerome, Emily Pascale, Leo Oscann, Rhonda Levy, Stephanie Aanonsen*

In April, ["Oh oh, I seem to be dating a chatbot" was published in the "Modern Love" column of the New York Times.](#) The piece is about how, after AI Chatbot came up with a great review of my book, [The View From Third Street](#), I asked it to write me a profile for online dating. The profile, based on the prompt "Creative woman from Cambridge, MA, seeking a man, 65-72, smart, funny, healthy, preferably Jewish," was astonishingly accurate and interesting. At my late brother Alan's suggestion, I then asked AI Chatbot to come up with a response.

The response, from "someone" named David, was remarkably

intriguing; I would have loved to meet “him” or someone like him. In the “Modern Love” piece, I trace the steps “David” and I took in arranging a date near Harvard Square. “David” even told me what he’d be wearing and that he’d be carrying a book. The article then goes into what happened after, disappointingly, he did not show up.

The piece has “generated” ongoing interest though, sadly, my dating life appears to have come to a halt.

Potential Suitors

Soon after the story appeared, I heard from four potential suitors who seemed to be “real” men.

The first was a New York lawyer who sounded very much like “David.” Both were from Brooklyn, Jewish, and each had two grown sons in California. The writer suggested that I contact him when I get to the City. I invited him to meet me if he gets to Albany, where I would be spending time over the summer, but did not hear back.

The second was a retired national science journalist who graduated from Columbia Journalism School a year after I did, with whom I corresponded for awhile. We had a lot in common, but since he was living on an Oregon beach, I felt the distance did not bode well for a relationship.

The third potential suitor, a businessman from New York State now living on the French Riviera wrote me every day. He was lonely, having trouble meeting people; I thought maybe he should learn to speak French. After a few weeks, he told me, courteously, to my relief, that he wanted to take a break.

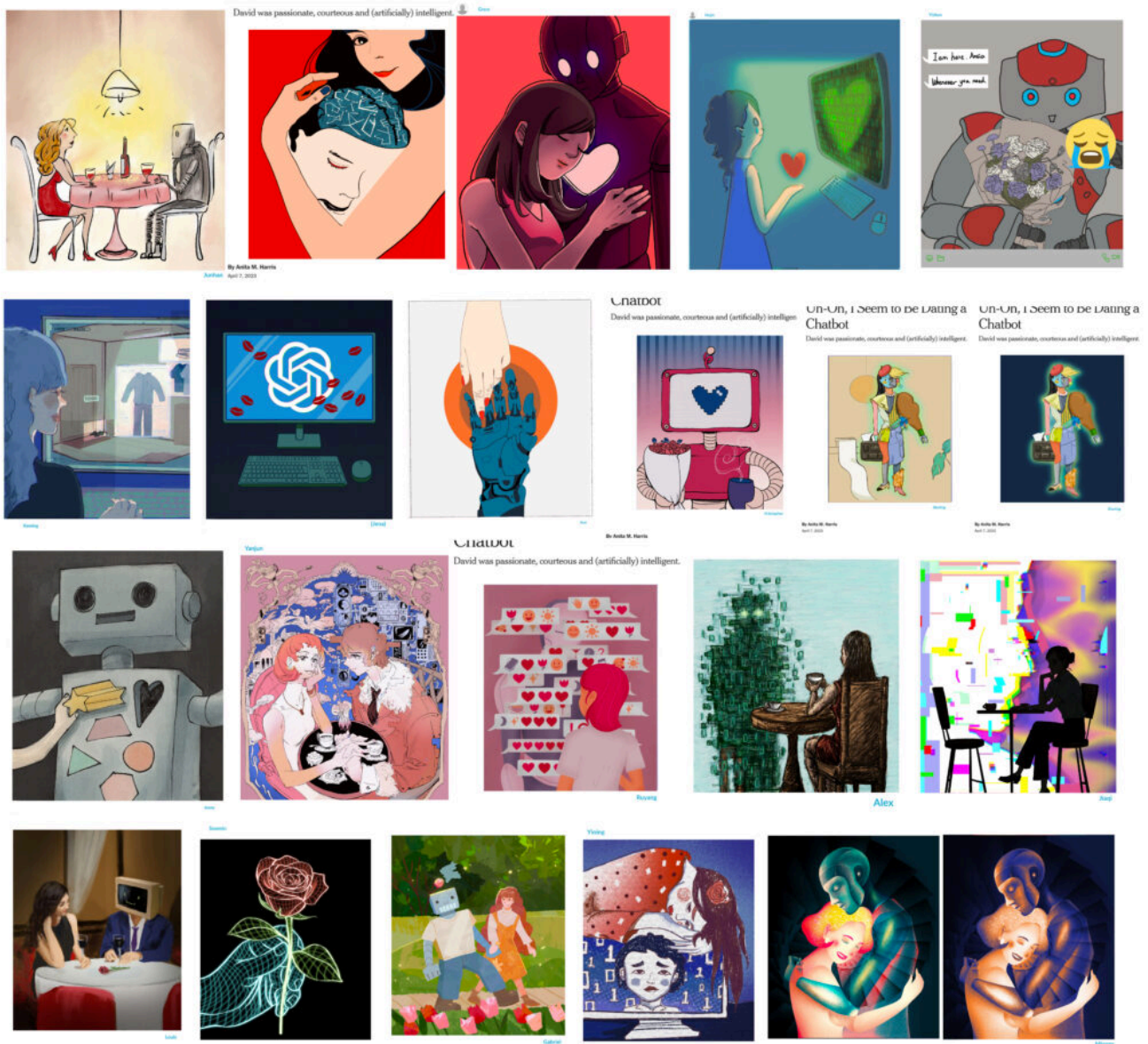
The fourth wrote that he was the son of a now- deceased member of the Nigerian parliament. Given the number of fraudulent relationship requests originating in Nigeria, I thanked him for writing, but didn’t encourage a response. He wrote back

anyway, saying that he knew that emails from Nigeria might be considered suspect but that he was for real: an entrepreneur who was starting a business, he was hungry, and needed money.

I also heard from a minister at Yale University who said he enjoyed the piece and from someone learning English who wanted help with his writing.

Response from the art world

Then, about a month ago, [Grant Shaffer, a renowned illustrator](#), wrote to let me know that he had assigned the piece to his class at the School of Visual Arts in NYC. I'm delighted with the results, which he and his students OK'd for publication here.



Credits: Row 1 Junhan, Unsigned, Grace, Yizhuo. Row 2 Keming, Jema, Xue, Kristo.

Row 3 Jenny, Yanjun, Ruyang, Alex, Jiaqi. Row 4 Louis, Soomin, Gabriel, Yinins, Mingee

I'd like to thank everyone who contacted me— and to credit Mr. Shaffer and his students, who made the whole episode more than worthwhile with their beautiful, clever artwork.

--[Anita M. Harris](#) is a writer, photographer and communications consultant based in Cambridge, Mass.

—New Cambridge Observer is a publication of the [Harris Communications Group](#), also in Cambridge, Mass.