

# **Unfollowing the Herd: A Creative Narrative Art Book About the Influence of the Bandwagon Effect in Social Media Using Digital Illustrations and Augmented Reality**

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## **Abstract**

Human behavior has always been a delicate balance between individual choices and the sway of societal influences. Throughout history, humans have displayed a tendency to follow the crowd, sometimes to the detriment of their own judgment. “The tendency to conformity in our society is so strong that reasonably intelligent and well-meaning young people are willing to call white, black.” (Asch, 1956). A lot of people have fallen victim to this innate human behavior, a phenomenon that frequently leads people to give up their sense of identity in favor of conformity. This behavior is known as The Bandwagon Effect (Kelly, 2023). In the age of social media, the bandwagon effect is amplified by the constant exposure to the opinions, preferences, and actions of others. Social media platforms, such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, can create information cascades that influence people’s decisions and behaviors, regardless of their own beliefs or preferences (Networks, 2014). This project seeks to explore the Bandwagon Effect, shedding light to its influence and how it can potentially compromise one’s self-identity in favor of conformity. The primary objective is to increase awareness of this effect and emphasize the importance of individuality and independent critical thinking. This goal will be achieved through an immersive Augmented Reality-integrated Art Book that seamlessly combines printed and digital media, engaging the audience with immersive illustrations.

**Keywords:** The Bandwagon Effect, conformity, individuality, social media, Augmented Reality (A.R.), art book

## **Introduction**

Human behavior has always been a delicate balance between individual choices and the sway of societal influences. Throughout history, humans have displayed a tendency to follow the crowd, sometimes to the detriment of their own judgment. “The tendency to conformity in our society is so strong that reasonably intelligent and well-meaning young people are willing to call white, black.” (Asch, 1956). A lot of people have fallen victim to this innate human behavior, a phenomenon that frequently leads people to give up their sense of identity in favor of conformity or social approval. This behavior is known as The Bandwagon Effect (Kelly, 2023).

Social media is a common area where the bandwagon effect affects people’s behavior and decisions. Social media platforms provide users with cues and feedback, such as likes, shares, comments, followers, and hashtags, that can create a sense of social validation, conformity, popularity, or trendiness. However, this can also lead to negative outcomes, such as misinformation, polarization, echo chambers, filter bubbles, and reduced diversity of thought (Lee & Ma, 2012).

This project focuses on exploring the Bandwagon Effect, shedding light to its influence and how it can potentially compromise one's self-identity in favor of conformity. It also gives an

example of how different factors when growing up can cause an individual to seek approval from others. The primary objective is to increase awareness of this effect and emphasize the importance of individuality and independent critical thinking. This goal will be achieved through an immersive AR-integrated Art Book that seamlessly combines printed and digital media, engaging the audience with immersive illustrations.

The Bandwagon Effect is the tendency for people to adopt certain behaviors, beliefs, or trends simply because others are doing so. It transcends time and culture, manifesting itself in various forms, from political movements and consumer preferences to social media trends. Understanding this phenomenon is crucial, as it sheds light on how individuals navigate social influence, conformity, and the dynamics of social groups (Kelly, 2023). In Robert C. Kelly's analysis, he explores the Bandwagon Effect, which has an impact on numerous areas of life and is fueled by the need for social acceptance and the fear of missing out (FOMO). He cautions against blind conformity because it can result in herd mentality-influenced irrational decisions. The Illusory Truth Effect is another topic covered in Kelly's research, and Kelly emphasizes the importance of fact-checking and critical thinking as guarantees against false information and the pervasive effects of social agreement.

Moreover, the vulnerability to the Bandwagon Effect can be linked to early life when developmental elements are important. Llorca-Mestre et al. (2017) explore how methods of parenting and peer attachment relate to each other and how it affects kids' emotional stability. It demonstrates how some parenting styles, especially those that are extremely restrictive or devoid of nurturing aspects, may unintentionally encourage kids to turn to their peers for emotional support. The children's desire for social acceptability may increase because of this change toward peer dependency, which could cause emotional instability throughout the critical late childhood and early adolescent years.

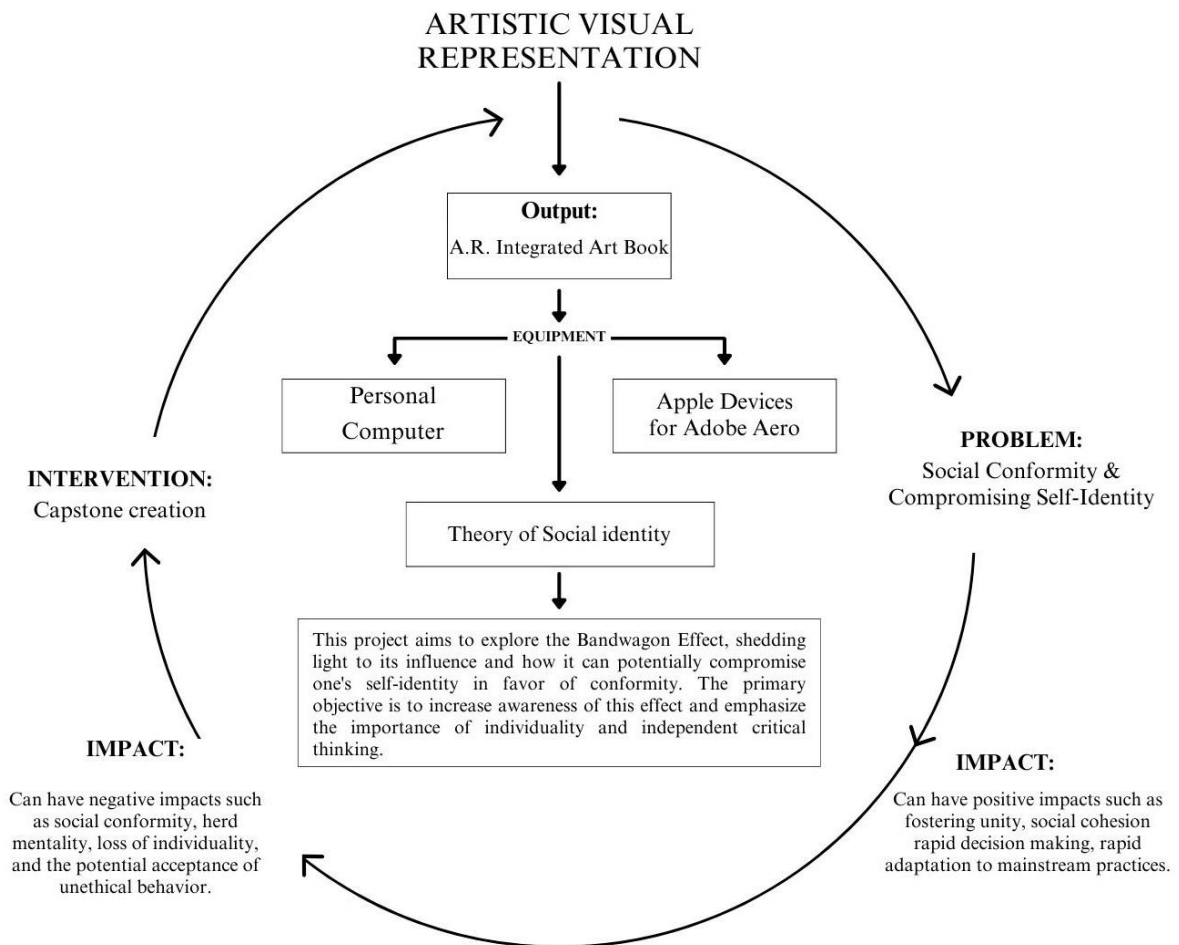
This dynamic reminds us of the Bandwagon Effect, which holds that children's need for peer approval is only an outgrowth of people's natural desire to fit in with the majority to feel validated. Peer approval serves as a stand-in for parental guidance, which affects their emotional stability and reactions. If left unchecked, this habit could continue into later developmental phases and further ingrain the person in the never-ending cycle of pursuing social acceptance.

The philosophy in creating this project is to explore the bandwagon effect and highlight the importance of individual thinking. As we look at real-world examples that clearly show how powerful the bandwagon effect can be as well as what could cause individuals to be vulnerable towards this phenomenon, we encounter stories that remind us of the benefits as well as the dangers of simply going along with the crowd and not thinking independently. By blindly following the crowd, individuals may compromise their own well-being and fail to make informed decisions based on their unique needs and values. Throughout this project's output, I will also share firsthand experiences, complemented by a series of illustrations intended to reflect and raise awareness among individuals (Cherry, 2020; Kelly, 2023).

The final presentation of this project will feature a printed art book with more than 20 pages that tells a story about an individual who is struggling with the influence of the bandwagon effect within his life. It will focus on the influence of the bandwagon effect within social media.

This project will be under the framework of Social Identity Theory. This focuses on how individuals identify with and categorize themselves and others into various social groups. It explores how group memberships and social identities influence our behavior and attitudes (Britannica, 2023). The bandwagon effect is often driven by social identity considerations. When

people perceive that a particular trend, belief, or behavior is associated with a social group they identify with or want to belong to, they are more likely to adopt that trend or behavior. This is because it reinforces their social identity and helps them fit in with the group.



**Figure 1** Framework Visual Representation of Overall Concept and Methods of Thesis Project: Unfollowing the Herd: A Creative Art Book

This project investigates the Bandwagon Effect, a psychological phenomenon that influences people to follow trends and conform to group behavior, often without critical thinking or awareness of the consequences. The main goal is to raise awareness of this effect and stress the importance of being oneself and thinking independently. This aim will be accomplished through an interactive AR-integrated Story Telling Art Book that blends print and digital media, captivating the audience with immersive illustrations. There will be 12 illustrations for the final output, each corresponding to each part of the story.

The **research design** is based on a Story Telling art book that integrates AR technology to enrich the narrative. The art book consists of several chapters, each telling a story of an individual who is struggling with the bandwagon effect in the domain of social media and other platforms that connect with it. The AR element adds an interactive layer to the illustrations, revealing hidden details, emotions, and messages that the bandwagon effect conceals or distorts. The art book invites

the reader to use the AR element throughout the narrative, creating a sense of curiosity and discovery.

The project concludes with a reflection on the influence of the bandwagon effect, what can cause someone to be vulnerable towards it, and how it can potentially compromise one's self-identity in favor of conformity. The project also invites the reader to act and make positive changes in their own lives and communities, by providing some resources or links for further learning and engagement.

The inspiration for the art book comes from my interest in interactive visual art and social psychology due to firsthand experiences of losing identity due to conformity. To create the immersive experience in my illustrations, I will use an analogous color scheme, which consists of three colors that are next to each other on the color wheel. An analogous color scheme creates a harmonious and pleasant look, as it reflects the colors that are often found in nature. The dominant color will set the mood and tone of each chapter, while the supporting and accent colors will add contrast and variety.

The **target audience** includes teenagers to young adults who are unaware of the bandwagon effect and its impact on individuals and society. Additionally, this project aims to stimulate discussions and reflections on the bandwagon effect and its consequences, and to encourage informed decision-making and individual empowerment. Beyond that, it caters to artists and individuals who appreciate the combination of print and digital media, as well as those seeking a creative and engaging way to convey a message.

For the **design process**, I first gathered styles and references that would perfectly suit the theme that I am aiming for. I gathered various concept designs as well as art works that I can use as inspiration for the style of my art book, all of these can be seen in the Related Works section. I then composed the story for my art book to give context for the illustrations I will be creating.

#### **Narrative Shape:**

- **Introduction/Exposition:** Leo is a teenage boy who loves video games and dislikes social media. He thinks he is happy and content without following the trends and the popular people.
- **Inciting Incident:** Leo meets Jake, an online gaming friend who persuades him to join social media platforms and connect with his other friends.
- **Rising Action:** Leo enjoys the attention and the feedback he gets from his online peers, but he also feels pressured to conform to their interests and opinions. He changes his appearance, his music taste, his hobbies, and his values. He also spends too much money and compromises his morality to follow the trends on social media.
- **Climax:** Leo realizes that he is living a fake and superficial life, where he has no real friends or connections, let alone being true to himself to the point where he's also compromising his health. He decides to disconnect from social media and find his own voice and happiness.
- **Falling Action:** Leo explains his decision to Jake, who understands and supports him. They agree to remain in touch through gaming and other means.
- **Resolution/Conclusion:** Leo explores new hobbies, activities, and causes that interest him outside of gaming. He reconnects with his family and old friends, who support and encourage him. He feels more confident, happy, and fulfilled in both virtual and offline interactions. He learns to balance online engagement and real-life connections.
- **Epilogue:** Leo continues to navigate the digital realm, but with a different perspective and attitude. He is no longer influenced by trends and the popular people, but by his own interests and values. He is no longer pressured to conform, but to express his authenticity and genuine expression. He is no longer living a lie, but a life that is true to himself and his happiness.

## Figure 2 *Unfollowing the Herd Narrative Shape Summary*

Having crafted the storyline, I proceeded to finalize the characters and their descriptions. The story would center on two main characters, without any secondary or background characters, to highlight the protagonist's journey and struggles with the influence of the Bandwagon Effect. With this, I did not necessarily identify Jake as an antagonist but a catalyst, because he is the one who introduces Leo to social media platforms and triggers his journey of self-discovery and fulfillment. Jake is not necessarily an antagonist, because he is not intentionally trying to harm or oppose Leo. He is more of a friend and a mentor, who helps Leo expand his social circle and explore new possibilities. However, he also represents the positive and negative effects of social media and the bandwagon effect on one's self-identity and well-being.

### Characters:

- **Leo (Protagonist):**
  - Leo is a teenage boy who loves video games and dislikes social media. He has brown eyes, brown hair, and usually wears casual clothes, such as jeans, t-shirts, and hoodies. He is indifferent to the trends and the popular people, and thinks he is happy and content without them. He is passionate about online virtual adventures, where he can escape into different worlds and have fun. He is also curious and adventurous, willing to try new things and explore new places. He is loyal and honest, but also stubborn and independent. He tries to value his individuality and happiness but would sometimes conform to others' expectations. He is the protagonist of the story, who goes through a journey of self-discovery and fulfillment after disconnecting from social media.
- **Jake (Catalyst):**
  - Jake is an online gaming friend of Leo, who shares his passion for online virtual adventures. He has blue eyes, blond hair, and a friendly smile. He wears trendy clothes, such as leather jackets, sunglasses, and hats. He is popular and influential on social media platforms, where he has many friends and followers. He is outgoing and charismatic, always ready to chat and joke with others. He is also adventurous and competitive, always looking for new challenges and games. He is supportive and understanding, but also persuasive. He values his social circle and his online reputation and likes to follow the trends and popular people. He is the catalyst of the story, who persuades Leo to join social media platforms and connect with his other friends.

## Figure 3 *Character Descriptions*



**Figure 4** *Character Designs*

### **Texture and Techniques**

The technique I will be integrating into this project involves utilizing the references gathered for the design of my illustrations as well as testing and polishing different art styles to decide which is to be used for this project. This process will display the collaboration between myself and the inspiration of different art works from different artists.

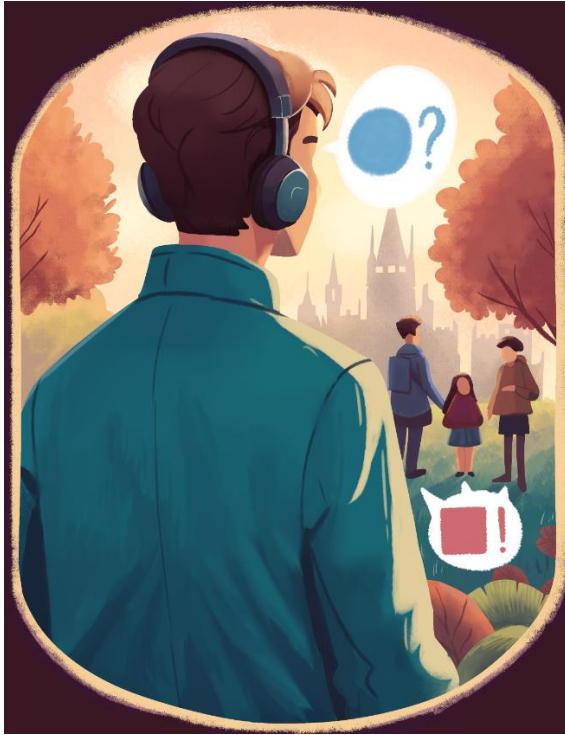


Figure 5, 6, 7 Sample Works

## Purpose of Color

The purpose of this color palette is aligned with an associative approach. Each color is strategically chosen to evoke specific emotions and associations in the audience.

### Color Progression:

- Introduction/Exposition: a hint of **Cool and muted colors**, such as blues, grays, and greens, to depict Leo's indifference and skepticism towards social media and his preference for video games.
- Inciting Incident: **Warm and bright colors**, such as yellows, oranges, and reds, to show Leo's initial excitement and curiosity about social media and his connection with Jake and his other friends.
- Rising Action: **Dark and saturated colors**, such as purples, blacks, and browns, to illustrate Leo's pressure and struggle to conform to the interests and opinions of his online peers.
- Climax: **Cool and muted colors**, but with a lighter and softer tone, to represent Leo's decision to disconnect from social media and find his own voice and happiness.
- Falling Action: **Warm and bright colors**, but with a more balanced and harmonious hue, to depict Leo's exploration of new hobbies, activities, and causes that interest him outside of gaming.
- Resolution/Conclusion: **Warm and bright colors**, but with a more balanced and harmonious hue, to depict Leo's exploration of new hobbies, activities, and causes that interest him outside of gaming.
- Epilogue: **Cool and muted colors**, but with a lighter and softer tone, to represent Leo's decision to disconnect from social media and find his own voice and happiness.



**Figure 8 & 9** *Color Progression & Color Tiles*

I will be using an analogous & a split-complementary color scheme which can enhance the story by matching the mood and tone, as well as reflecting Leo's character as the story progresses. It can also create a feeling of harmony and balance, which is Leo's end goal in the story. The color progression will be mainly applied to the AR Layer of the illustrations, rather than the illustrations



themselves, so that the AR Layer will not only enrich the viewing experience, but also provide a color theme that immerses the viewer deeper into the story.

### **Logline**

Unfollowing the Herd: An AR Art Book that illustrates the story of a young adult who disconnects from social media and finds his own voice and happiness, after realizing how the bandwagon effect in social media was compromising his individuality and well-being.

### **Synopsis**

Unfollowing the Herd is a story that explores the bandwagon effect in social media and its impact on individuality and happiness. Leo's story is about finding real friends and being true to yourself in a world where everyone is online. Leo grew up with parents who were hard to please, so he found happiness in video games, away from their criticism. When he got older, he moved out and lived by himself, working part-time. In the gaming world, he met Jake, who became a good friend. Jake introduced him to social media, but soon, Leo started to care too much about getting likes and changed himself to fit in.

Leo realized he was losing who he really was, just like when he tried to please his parents. He decided to quit social media and go back to what he loved: gaming, drawing, playing guitar, and writing stories. He joined a group of artists and felt happy again. Jake understood why Leo left social media and they kept their friendship through games. Leo learned that being liked online isn't as important as being yourself and doing what you love.

In the end, Leo's life got better when he stopped worrying about being popular online. He used his art to help others express themselves and be happy with who they are. Leo's experience shows us that happiness comes from living honestly, loving what you do, and having real friends. His story encourages us to be 'unfollowers'—to live life our way and find joy in our own choices.

### **Pre-Production Phase**

The pre-production phase of the researcher's project involves critical planning, including conceptualization, research, and canvassing for the final output. This encompasses studying various artworks, art styles, character designs, and environmental concepts to determine the most suitable elements for the researcher's art book. Simultaneously, the researcher conducts extensive research to collect articles that contribute to a deeper understanding of the Bandwagon Effect and related theories. Furthermore, the investigation extends to identifying different applications that use Augmented Reality in digital art. During this process, the researcher will be testing applications such as MyWebAR, Adobe Aero, Spark AR, Unity AR, and more to determine which of these applications are most accessible to the public.

To assist in this creative phase, the researcher will be getting references from different artists as well as utilize AI software tools for the inspiration in creating the art style for the project. To ensure clarity, the references are meticulously organized and labeled to distinguish between those generated by AI and those created by artists.

In addition, the researcher is actively canvassing prices from various stores to find those that align with the budget allocated for printing the art book. By the end of this phase, the researcher should have a clear concept of how the art book will flow to immerse the viewer. They should also have a few sketches and finalized most of the gathered materials, thereby moving closer to the production phase of this project.

## Production Phase

After refining design ideas, organizing references, and determining the workflow for creating the artbook, the researcher will embark on the production phase of the project wherein these concepts and ideas come together. The researcher will focus on creating these illustrations digitally and will continue experimenting and finalizing with their chosen software tools.

The production phase will be a continuation of sketching and the utilization of all the gathered references. Subsequently, the researcher will proceed with more sketching and tracing the finalized sketches, followed by the coloring, and rendering process, transforming them into finalized illustrations.

### **Title: Unfollowing The Herd**

#### **Introduction: Leo**

Leo is a boy whose world was never lit up by the glow of likes or the buzz of notifications. He found his joy in the quiet corners of video games, where he could be anyone and achieve anything. This was his chosen life after living in a house filled with self-discouraging expectations.

#### **Scene 1: The "Perfect" Family**

The family Leo grew up with was many things but a considerate, supportive family. Being the only child, his parents always had high expectations toward him, they were perfectionists. It got to a point where his mistakes were more of a spotlight than all his small achievements. His hobbies and career choices were always judged, and he was always treated like he had no direction in life. This made the gap between him, and his parents only widened over time and their disapproval became a constant echo.

#### **Scene 2: Forced Independency**

So, when Leo was old enough, he made a choice. He left the family home, moved into a small apartment, and supported himself with a part-time job. It was a tough life, but it was his. This independence was precious to him, and it was the same reason he was constantly isolating himself, because of the repeated disapproval he felt from his family. Now he only seeks comfort from the virtual worlds in his video games, where he found an escape from reality and a sense of belonging that he never felt at home.

#### **Scene 3: Gamers Unite**

In the virtual world where Leo spent his free time, he met Jake, an online player who was initially his rival. Their rivalry in the game slowly turned into a strong alliance as they traverse the landscapes of the virtual world. They fought battles together, celebrated victories, and shared defeats. Their online chats were also filled with more than just game talk, there were sharing of experiences and mutual understanding. For Leo, who had distanced himself from his family's critical gaze, this friendship was rare.

#### **Scene 4: Invitation to Connect**

Jake, who was as much a social media enthusiast as he was a gamer, invited Leo to join him on various platforms. "It's like an extension of the game," Jake said, "a place to gather more friends and share our victories." Leo was hesitant, but the thought of expanding his circle was appealing. He wondered if the sense of community he found in gaming could be replicated online. With cautious optimism, he created his first profile, stepping into a world he had long avoided.

#### **Scene 5: Approval Adrenaline**

Simple enough, Leo's first post was a screenshot of his most recent gaming victory. It was an unexpected and quick reaction. Comments and likes were pouring in, each one a tiny confirmation that he was relevant, important, and worthwhile. This was such a change from his previous environment, where he often faced rejection for his decisions. After years of feeling neglected, the encouraging comments on social media served as an adrenaline rush for him.

#### **Scene 6: Transformation**

As Leo's online presence grew, so did his willingness to adapt to what was popular. Aside from merely just sharing gaming related posts, he wanted to be more appealing for other people. He began to change his appearance and interests to match the trends he saw online. His posts became less about his virtual adventures and more about what would get the most likes. It was a slow change, but one that took him further from the person he was in his quiet apartment, away from the world's eyes.

#### **Scene 7: Cost of Conformity**

His constant chase for likes led him to spending money on things that were popular online, even if they held no personal interest for him. He used to carefully manage earnings, once set aside for necessities and his hobbies. But now, he spends impulsively, funneling into keeping up an online appearance. It was a cycle that left him with settling for unhealthy cheap meals as well as having unpaid bills, feeling hypnotized by the approval he gets online.

**Scene 8: Echo Chamber**

Aside from his finances, Leo slowly felt the pressure to conform even with his ideologies. He echoed the popular opinions and trends, even when they didn't align with his own beliefs. It was reminiscent of the conformity expected at home, where standing out meant standing alone. The fear of losing his newfound online community kept him from expressing his true thoughts.

**Scene 9: Illusion of Friendship**

Despite the growing number of friends on his profile, Leo felt a disconnect. The conversations were superficial, centered around what was trending rather than genuine interests. He longed for the connections he used to get in the gaming community, even though they weren't deep, they were still genuine. Whereas he always felt like people in social media are always wearing a façade.

**Scene 10: Loss of Self**

Leo was at the high of his online persona. He was consistent with chasing trends and maintaining his online identity, lost from who he truly is. One evening, as Leo scrolled through his profile, he paused at a recent photo. The person in the image was smiling, surrounded by the trappings of online popularity, it was Leo, but it wasn't the real Leo. The realization that he had lost sight of his true self in the pursuit of likes was sobering.

**Scene 11: The Disconnect**

That was the night that Leo realized what he was doing in social media was the same thing he was doing when he was still living with his parents, seeking approval from other people, and molding himself and his identity that wasn't genuine to who he really is. Leo made the decision to step away from social media. He removed his profiles, one by one, each click reaffirming his desire to reconnect with his true self. It was a daunting step, but one that felt necessary.

**Scene 12: The True Connection**

This was when Jake noticed Leo's absence in the online space and decided to reach him out. Leo explained his reasons for leaving, it was very confusing at first, but after Leo told Jake about his past, he eventually understood. They agreed to keep their friendship through gaming, the place where their connection had started.

**Scene 13: The Rediscovery**

With social media behind him, Leo returned to his passions. He went back to gaming, but not only that, he picked up his sketchpad, strummed his guitar, and let his imagination run wild in his stories. He joined a local art group, where he met people who appreciated his creativity. He felt a sense of fulfillment that had been missing.

**Scene 14: The New Chapter**

Leo's life became filled with meaningful pursuits. He eventually used art to tell his story, teaching people to express themselves in ways they wanted. He didn't immediately reconnect with his family, but he was making healthier ways to heal from what he had experienced in the past, finding a new level of understanding. People might not always agree with his choices, but in the end, he finally valued his happiness.

**Conclusion: The Unfollower's Path**

Leo's journey through the world of social media ended not with more followers, but with a clearer understanding of himself. He learned that true happiness comes from living authentically, pursuing passions, and forming genuine connections. He found a balance between his online and offline worlds, engaging with each on his own terms.

**Figure 10 & 11 *Unfollowing The Herd***

During the production phase, I will also finalize the art book's story, which consists of 16 segments. Each segment will correspond to an illustration in the book.

After this creative process, the researcher will then organize all elements in the desired order for the art book, distinguishing between those intended for print and those designated as digitized illustrations. This is where Augmented Reality (AR) becomes a key element. Struggling with which AR application to choose, the researcher was divided between choosing Adobe Aero or an alternative web-based AR software that is compatible with both android and IOS, in the end, Halo AR was chosen. The researcher will integrate all the produced digital illustrations with the printed ones into the art book. Since this is still a work in progress, the researcher will conduct testing using preliminary printouts rather than the final versions before finalizing everything. This integration allows viewers to scan the page and have the illustrations appear interactively, enhancing the overall experience of the artbook.

### **Post-Production Phase**

The researcher will continue creating the remaining illustrations. Once all the illustrations are finalized, the researcher will carefully review each piece to ensure there are no errors and that everything is arranged and illustrated correctly. The next step involves producing three printed copies of the art book, using high-quality matte, hard bound, for a quality presentation.

After this, the researcher will finalize the digitized AR illustrations and integrate them into the final version of the book, ensuring that everything functions smoothly, and each page can be easily scanned. Simultaneously, the researcher plans to create a demo video to aid in the presentation at the exhibit and capture the audience's attention before viewing the art book.

Upon completing these tasks, the outputs will be ready for defense and exhibition, marking the conclusion of the project's production phase.

### **Review of Related Literature**

This section contains literature related to the project. During my research, I evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of the sources I have chosen, along with presenting their conclusions, perspectives, and how it helps aiding my project's topic. This entire approach is designed to provide a sophisticated and insightful examination of the Bandwagon Effect, emphasizing its significance and the impact it has on individuality and the dynamics of social groups.

### ***What is the Bandwagon Effect?***

The bandwagon effect, often termed a herd mentality, refers to the human tendency to adopt others' behaviors and opinions without consideration for personal convictions. This theory is significant in politics, consumer behavior, and financial choices, emphasizing the importance of understanding this phenomenon in the current digital era.

The bandwagon effect arises from psychological and societal pressures, as people naturally seek to conform and belong to a community. Individuals embrace beliefs or behaviors due to the influence of others, driven by the desire for social acceptance and fear of missing out (FOMO). In addition to the bandwagon effect, the article emphasizes the role of heuristics, cognitive shortcuts that play a vital part in decision-making. These mental shortcuts simplify complex decisions by following what others are doing. Such mechanisms can contribute to the bandwagon effect, where individuals embrace trends or viewpoints after repeated exposure (Investopedia, 2023).

In conclusion, the article discusses how social conformity and FOMO drive the bandwagon effect, impacting decision-making across various domains. It underscores the importance of employing critical thinking and fact-checking to mitigate the influence of heuristics and make informed choices in our ever-connected world (Investopedia, 2023).

### ***The Illusory Truth Effect***

The Illusory Truth Effect, or the Illusion of Truth, describes how repeated exposure to false information can cause people to accept it as true, even when they initially recognize it being false. In today's age of easy access to information, this tendency is particularly relevant as false information can significantly impact public opinion and the integrity of democratic societies (The Decision Lab, 2018).

This cognitive bias is caused by our natural tendency to favor mental shortcuts and ease of processing, which can lead us to believe information to be true when we encounter it frequently. Familiarity plays a pivotal role, making information seem more accurate the more we encounter it, even subconsciously. Notably, politicians and propagandists intentionally use this effect to manipulate information, posing a considerable threat to democracy and society. Awareness of the Illusory Truth Effect and related biases is essential for fostering critical thinking in the face of misinformation.

Understanding the Illusory Truth Effect would be helpful for this project. By exploring how this cognitive bias influences individuals' adoption of information and behaviors in the digital age, it can help with the social dynamic ideas of the bandwagon effect. Moreover, it can contribute to enhancing awareness and critical thinking, equipping individuals to navigate an information-rich but potentially misleading world, providing a deeper understanding of the cognitive underpinnings that drive human behavior and beliefs.

### ***Asch's Conformity Experiment***

Solomon E. Asch's famous study from 1956, "Studies of independence and conformity: I. A minority of one against a unanimous majority," holds a central position in the realm of social psychology, investigating the complexities of conformity within group dynamics. Asch explored how individuals can conform to group pressure, even when they know the group adheres to incorrect information. This study sheds light on how we behave in social situations.

Asch's experiment revealed the potential influence of group dynamics on individual decisions, uncovering how the desire for conformity can override personal critical thinking. This insight has a direct bearing on the thesis project, seeking to explore the Bandwagon Effect through the utilization of digital illustrations and augmented reality, extending Asch's pioneering research into contemporary settings, to illuminate the influence of conformity within modern society.

In summary, drawing from Asch's findings and experimental techniques, this project has the potential to offer a fresh, engaging perspective on the Bandwagon Effect in the digital age. Through the integration of digital art and augmented reality, it aims to create a captivating, immersive experience for its audience, enabling them to witness the dynamics of conformity in a visually compelling manner. This, in turn, contributes to a deeper understanding of the human inclination to follow the crowd.

### ***Simulacra & Simulation***

Jean Baudrillard's influential 1981 work, "Simulacra and Simulation," has had a profound impact on modern philosophy and cultural theory. Baudrillard's exploration of how simulations and copies often overshadow real experiences provides a valuable context for understanding two cognitive biases: the Illusory Truth Effect and the Bandwagon Effect.

Baudrillard's idea of "hyperreality" relates to the Illusory Truth Effect. In a world filled with simulations, it becomes increasingly challenging to distinguish real from fake. The Illusory Truth Effect shows that when we repeatedly hear something, even if it is not true, we tend to believe it more, especially in a world filled with simulations (The Decision Lab, 2018). Similarly, the Bandwagon Effect is influenced by Baudrillard's ideas. In a society where simulations heavily shape our beliefs and actions, people are more likely to follow the prevailing trends and conform to the popular beliefs. Baudrillard's work emphasizes the power of collective influence, making people more likely to follow the crowd, which is the essence of the Bandwagon Effect.

In conclusion, Baudrillard's "Simulacra and Simulation" provides valuable insights into how simulations and copies often overshadow reality. This helps us understand two cognitive biases: the Illusory Truth Effect, which makes repeated information seem more believable, and the Bandwagon Effect, which leads people to follow prevailing trends and conform to collective narratives. Baudrillard's work underscores the importance of critically examining how simulations influence our thinking, shedding light on the complexities of truth, perception, and conformity in our modern society (Baudrillard, 1981).

### ***The Spiral of Silence Theory***

The "Spiral of Silence" theory, developed by Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann in 1974, explores why people often stay silent when they feel their opinions are in the minority and are more likely to speak up when they perceive their opinions as popular (Noelle-Neumann, 1974).

The "Spiral of Silence" is closely related to the Bandwagon Effect. The Bandwagon Effect suggests that people tend to go along with what they perceive as popular or widely accepted (Lee & Aaker, 2004). This aligns with the "Spiral of Silence" because it illustrates how individuals are influenced by their perception of the majority opinion. In the context of this theory, if people think an opinion is widely held, they are more likely to express it, and if they believe their opinion is in the minority, they tend to stay quiet.

In summary, the "Spiral of Silence" theory reveals how people's fear of being different can lead to silence, which can impact public discussions. Understanding this dynamic is crucial in today's digital age, where public sentiment can be significantly influenced by what is perceived as popular opinion, particularly through social media and online communities.

### ***Pakikisama***

In his 2018 article, "Pakikisama: What It Means to Be a Friend in the Philippines," Joshua Kho discusses the significance of "pakikisama" in Filipino culture. This concept emphasizes the importance of fitting in and going along with the majority, even when it goes against your own beliefs. It plays a crucial role in how Filipinos make decisions in social situations.

Kho explains that "pakikisama" can have both positive and negative effects. On one hand, it can lead to good outcomes when friends encourage each other to do the right thing, like attending a useful seminar. On the other hand, it can be harmful when it causes people to compromise their values or ignore their responsibilities.

In the context of the Spiral of Silence Theory, this article shows how the fear of standing out or being isolated can make people keep their true opinions to themselves. It is also related to the Bandwagon Effect, where people often follow the majority, even if it goes against their beliefs. Understanding how "pakikisama" works in Filipino friendships can help us understand these social behaviors better, especially in the Filipino context (Kho, 2018).

### ***News Sharing in Social Media: The Effect of Gratifications and Prior Experience***

The article explores the factors that influence news sharing in social media, which has become a phenomenon of increasing social, economic, and political importance. The authors draw from the uses and gratifications (U&G) and social cognitive theories (SCT) to examine the effects of information seeking, socializing, entertainment, status seeking and prior social media sharing experience on news sharing intention.

The authors conducted a survey with 203 students in a large local university and used structural equation modeling (SEM) to analyze the data. The results showed that respondents who were driven by gratifications of information seeking, socializing, and status seeking were more likely to share news in social media platforms. Prior experience with social media was also a significant determinant of news sharing intention (Lee & Ma, 2012).

This article can help my research by providing insights into the motivations and behaviors of users in social media platforms. The bandwagon effect is a psychological phenomenon where people tend to follow the opinions or actions of others, especially when they are uncertain or lack information. The article suggests that news sharing in social media can be influenced by gratifications such as information seeking, socializing, and status seeking, as well as prior experience with social media. These factors can affect how people perceive and evaluate the credibility and popularity of news sources and content, and thus influence their decision to share or follow news in social media.

### ***The Impact of Parenting Styles towards Attachment on Children's Emotional Stability***

This research has delved into the intricate relationship between parenting styles, peer attachment, and their combined effect on children's emotional stability. The study conducted by Llorca-Mestre et al. (2017) presents a compelling analysis of how the way parents raise their children, coupled with the children's connections to their peers, can serve as a predictor for emotional instability during the pivotal stages of late childhood and early adolescence.

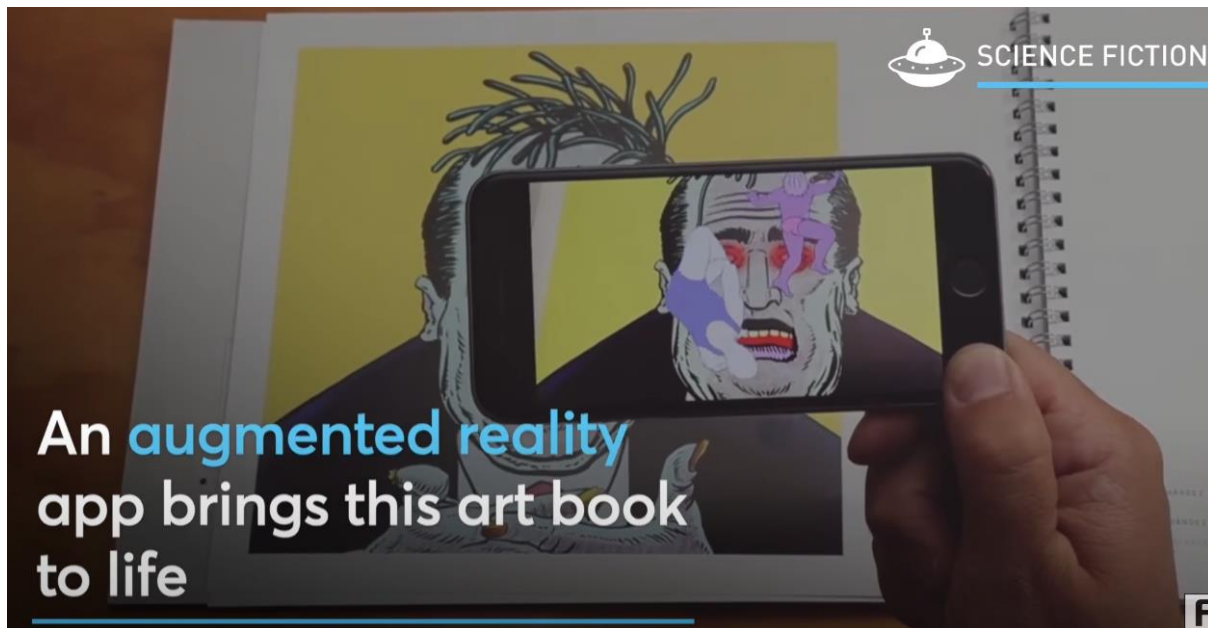
The research highlights that parenting methods that are overly controlling or lack supportive elements can eventually push children towards seeking emotional support from their friends or other people. This shift towards peer dependency can intensify the children's need for social approval, which, in turn, has the potential to destabilize their emotional and mental health. Relating it to the Bandwagon Effect, this dynamic reflects the human tendency to align with the majority for validation. In the context of children, the quest for peer approval can be seen as an extension of this effect, where the approval becomes a substitute for parental support, thereby influencing their emotional responses and stability, and this may go on longer in their stages of growing up when not dealt properly.

In summary, the study shows the significant role that parenting styles and peer relationships play in shaping the emotional landscape of individuals. It suggests that a balanced approach to parenting, one that avoids extremes of control or detachment, is crucial for nurturing emotionally stable individuals.

## **Review of Related Works**

**Figure 1** *Futurism, (2017). AR Seamlessly Blends with Print in This Art Book*





This AR Art Book highlighted by Futurism exemplifies the seamless fusion of augmented reality with the traditional realm of printed illustrations. It offers a striking demonstration of how AR can breathe dynamic life into otherwise static printed artworks, adding an engaging layer of interactivity and innovation to the visual experience.

**Figure 2** *Yacha Toueg, (2018). AR Art Book*



Just like in the previous figure, this AR Art Book by Yacha Toueg also highlights how augmented reality can be implemented in a traditional Art Book, However, in this instance, the emphasis is placed on incorporating 3D elements, rather than solely enhancing flat designs with augmented layers.

**Figure 3** Heather Dunaway Smith, (2021). *White Washing* - AR Art Print



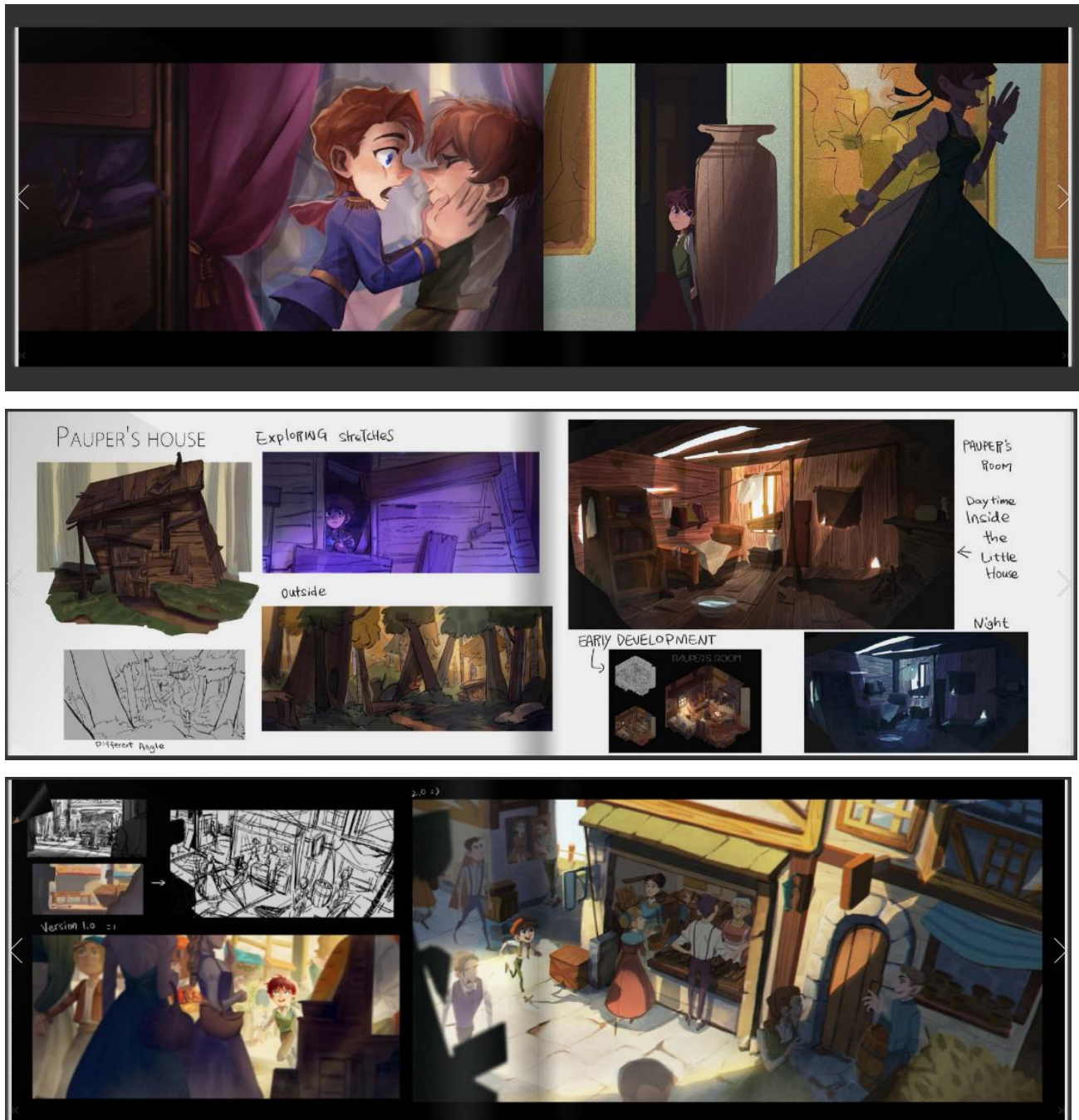
This artwork serves as a compelling example of AR integration, allowing participants to engage with specific elements such as the snake, hands, and other preexisting layers within the composition. It provides invaluable inspiration for the development of the output for this project which is an AR Integrated Artbook.

**Figure 4** *Susi Vetter, (2021). Take me there (2/3) AR*



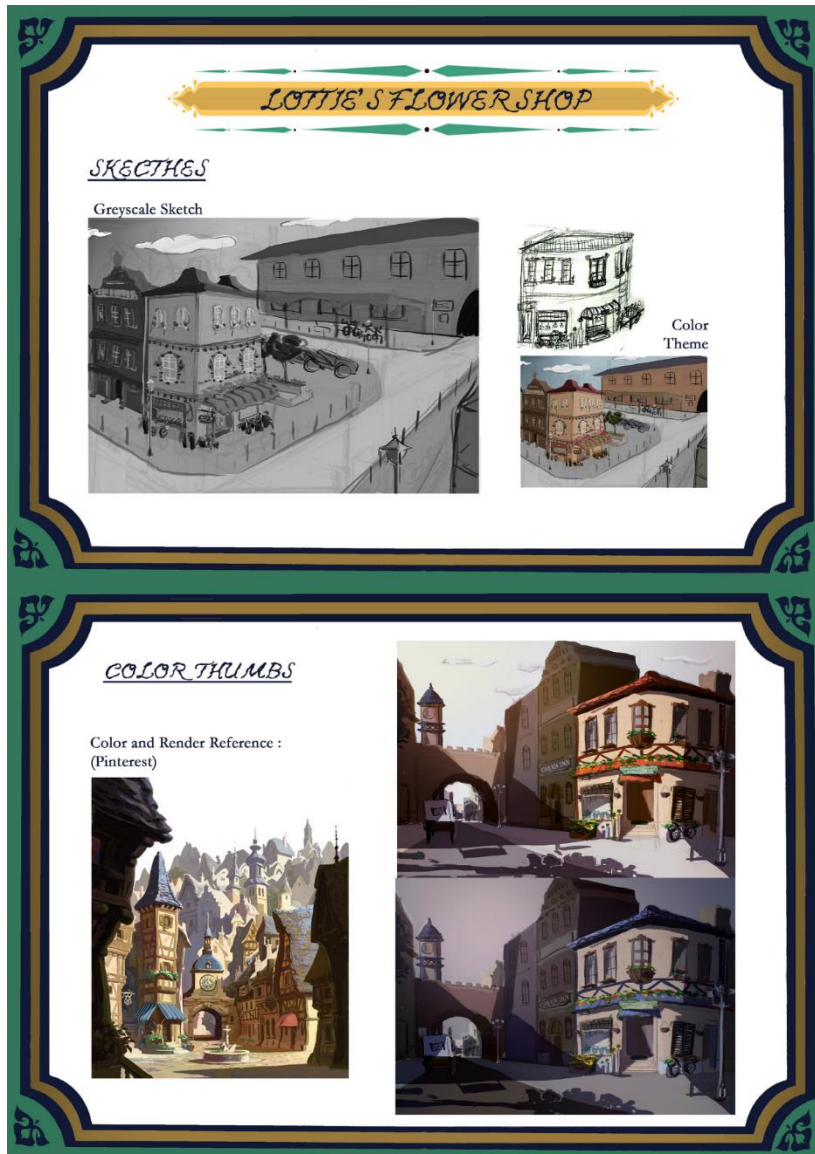
This artwork will also serve as additional inspiration for the project. It consists of a series of three illustrations titled "Take me there," which explores the power of storytelling through augmented reality. The intention is to reveal the blurred human perception of reality by incorporating elements from architecture and nature, creating a window to diverse, surreal, and magical worlds.

**Figure 5** Kas Xuan, (2023). *The Prince & The Pauper*, Art of Kas Xuan



The art book's art style will take inspiration from Kas Xuan's Art Book Thesis, which is a reimagined version of the classic American tale "The Prince & The Pauper." In this project, Xuan exhibits a wide variety of carefully created environments, expressive color palettes, detailed set designs, and character illustrations, all thoughtfully designed to capture the essence of this timeless tale's unique interpretation.

**Figure 6** Feby Carissa, (2023). Concept Art Project - *The Prince and the Pauper*



Another inspiration for the art style also comes from another adaptation of the Prince & the Pauper, a project by Feby Carissa. In this project, the concept art is more focused on the environment design, showing different sketches, color themes, and set angles for the final output.

**Figure 7** ZMO.AI, (2023). *AI Generated Children's Art Book Art Style*



For character design inspiration, I am going to use AI-generated illustrations from ZMO.AI as my reference for how I want my characters to look. I will make sure to capture their round shapes and smooth, vector-like appearance. I also want to give them a friendly, kid-friendly vibe, while still making them interesting for grown-up viewers.

**Figure 8** *Sprouts*, (2022). *Asch's Conformity Experiment on Groupthink*



This video is about Solomon Asch's series of Conformity Experiments which was conducted in the 1950s. It serves as an example of how individuals often conform to group consensus, even when it contradicts their own critical judgement. These findings connect to the Bandwagon Effect today, showing that people often follow trends or conform because they want to fit in or avoid being different.

## Results and Discussion



In this study, I delved into the phenomenon of the bandwagon effect in social media and its implications on individual self-identity. The study focused on the utilization of augmented reality (AR) technology to enhance the narrative of an art book, which tells a story of a teenager named Leo as he navigates the complexities of online trends and their influence on his personal development.

The bandwagon effect, a form of social proof, was observed to have a significant impact on individual's choices and behaviors. This psychological phenomenon, where individuals adopt beliefs or behaviors because they perceive others are doing the same, was evident in people's interactions with social media. The desire for acceptance and fear of missing out (FOMO) often led individuals to conform to the prevailing trends, despite their personal preferences.

The main difficulty I faced was with the selection of available applications to proceed with my project. I also struggled with telling a story in which viewers can relate to and see how the bandwagon effect can change an individual in social media, especially ones that are already struggling with their individual identity. The process led me to revise my story several times as well as switch from application to application to see what's more convenient and effective.

Throughout the narrative, AR technology was employed to bring to life the internal and external conflicts the main character faced. The interactive elements of AR allowed readers to immerse themselves in the main character's world, experiencing firsthand the pressures and dilemmas he encountered. This integration of technology served not only as a storytelling device but also as a commentary on the pervasive influence of digital media in shaping our perceptions and actions.

The study revealed that while the bandwagon effect can provide a sense of belonging, it can also stifle individuality and critical thinking. The main character's struggle to maintain his authenticity amidst the cacophony of online voices was a testament to the challenges faced by many in the digital age. The art book's narrative, enhanced by AR, underscored the importance of self-awareness and resilience in preserving one's identity against the tide of collective opinion.

As an artist, I've realized the significance of independent self-expression. While drawing inspiration from others' work has its merits, true progress lies in valuing and applying my own knowledge and creativity. This study has not only helped me recognize this but also motivated me to further develop my self-identity.

## **Conclusion**

The exploration of the bandwagon effect through an artistic lens highlighted the dual nature of social media as both a connector and a divider. The use of AR technology in the art book not only enriched the storytelling experience but also served as a powerful tool for reflection on the impact of social trends on personal identity. As we move forward in an increasingly digital world, it is crucial to remain mindful of the influences that shape our choices and to foster a culture that values individual expression and diversity.

## **Recommendations**

### ***Research Topic***

As this project delves into the bandwagon effect in social media through an interactive art book, future research could expand on the psychological aspects of social conformity. It would also be beneficial to gather a broader range of data on user interactions with AR technology and its effectiveness on presenting a material. Further exploration into the color associations and their psychological impact within the AR layers could provide deeper insights into user engagement. The story could also be improved with its relatability, collaborating with individuals experiencing the same phenomenon could enhance the narrative's authenticity and storytelling value.

### ***Creative Process***

To elevate the art book's immersive experience, it is recommended to experiment with various AR software to find the most user-friendly and responsive options. Considering the narrative of Leo navigating the bandwagon effect, the AR layers could be designed more to reflect his emotional journey, using colors and imagery that evolve with the story. This approach not only enriches the visual experience but also reinforces the thematic elements of the narrative. In terms of production, better scheduling as well as seeking artists that also use AR technology could provide access to advanced tools and platforms, potentially enhancing the quality of the AR layers. Also, presenting the art book where there's an option for the audience to view the book even without AR could also be a way to reach a broader audience.

For the artist, engaging in continuous learning and workshops related to AR technology and psychological theories can refine the skills necessary for this project. Balancing the creative workload with personal well-being is crucial; incorporating mindfulness practices and regular breaks can sustain the creative process. Documenting the journey through a blog or vlog could serve as a reflective practice and a promotional tool, inviting feedback and a community around the project.

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