

THE LIMITS OF IMAGINATION



AROMA RODRIGUES

Python Enthusiast, coding since 2014, it will be a decade next year. Yay! Multi-Pycon speaker engagements including Pycon US, Estonia, Lithuania, Hong Kong, Sweden, Europython, PyOhio, PyConZA, India and FOSSASIA. On the Natural Language Processing train since 2018. I do fun experiments, sometimes social with data, python and language models because I believe as do most multinational companies now, that the human condition is encoded in language, just as science in math, and it in inevitable that one day, we will be using computers to help us linguistically as they do mathematically.





PyCon India 2018

Terms and Conditions Summarizer



PyCon-ZA 2019

NLP Fake News Detector



PyCon US 2O24

Only Bad Demos in the Building

PyCon India 2018 Terms and Conditions Summarizer



TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Why: Drowning in unreadable legalese across emails, apps, and websites
- What: NLP pipeline to extract obligations, permissions, and risks from T&C docs
- Impact: Empowered users to skim legal agreements with context—not confusion

FIRST PRINCIPLES

- Problem: No existing dataset; legalese buried in walls of unreadable text
- Approach: Built a labeled dataset from scratch using first principles of contract structure
- Outcome: NLP pipeline to extract obligations, risks, and user rights from legal docs

RESULTS

- Problem: No usable dataset; legal text was dense, varied, and inaccessible
- Approach: Created an SNLI-style dataset from scratch using first principles
- Result: Early-stage NLP model with limited accuracy—but a crucial starting point; today's version could be vastly improved with synthetic data



"These are the things I wanted answers to..."





Lan I build a Clueless-style fashion matcher?

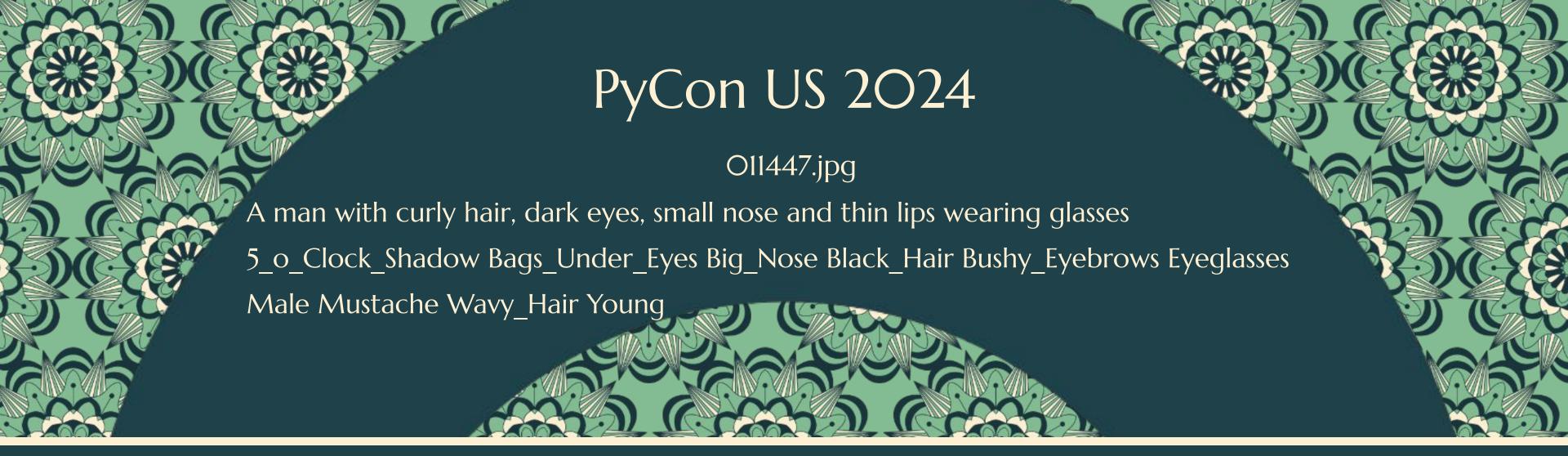
>> How do I generate clean, non-duplicate synthetic data?



EXISTENTIAL CRISIS
STOICISM
PHILOSOPHY
PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTIONS



Who gets to keep their jobs in the post-ai world? Will Forensic portrait makers keep their jobs or not?



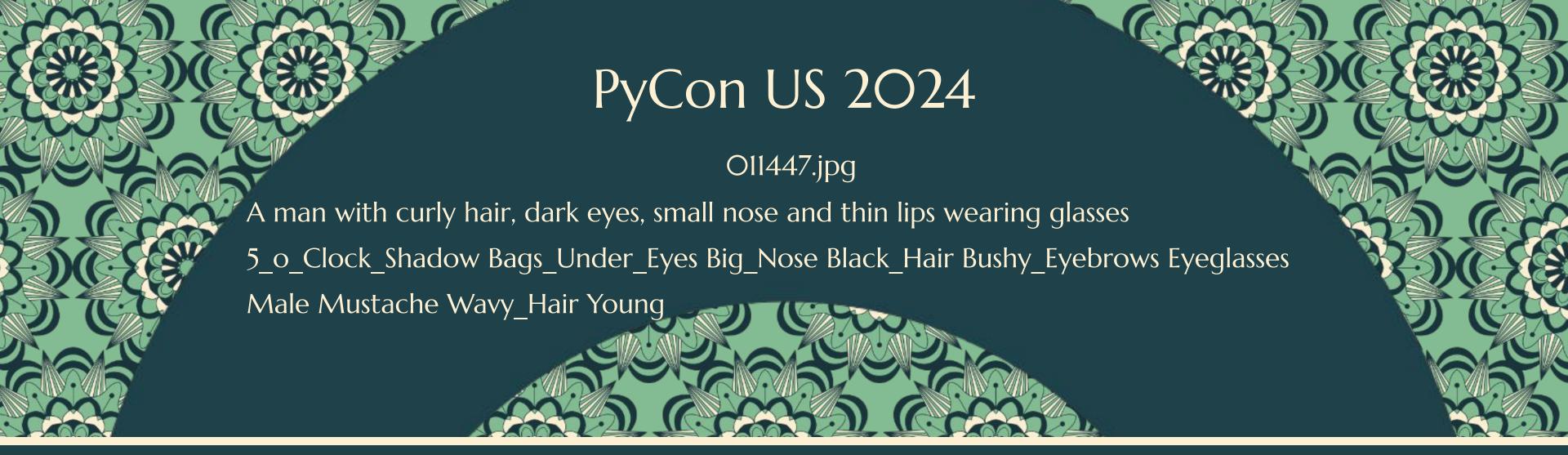






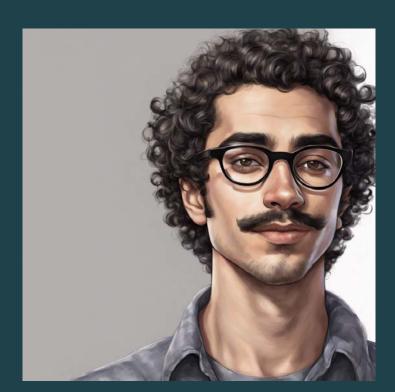






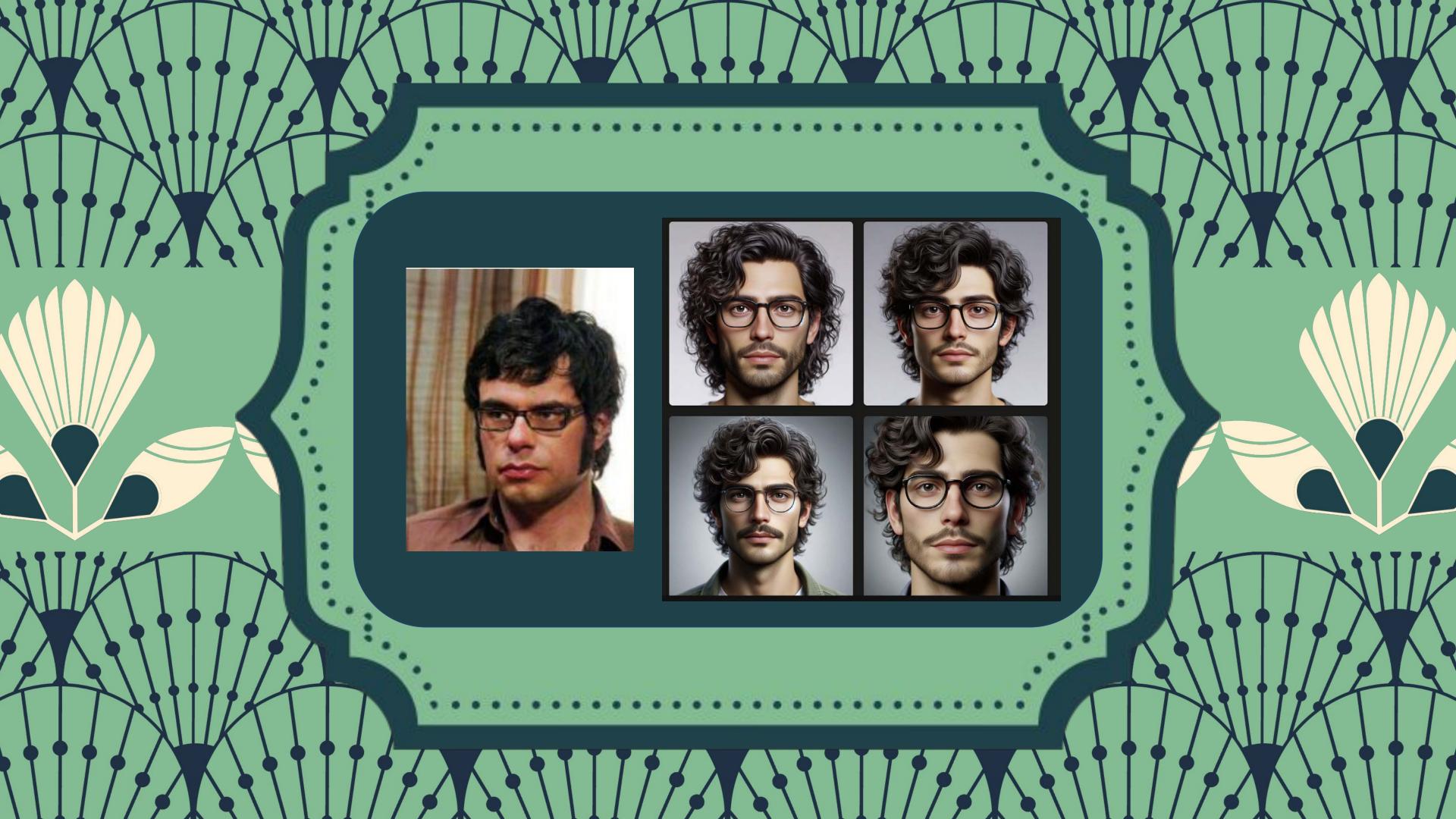












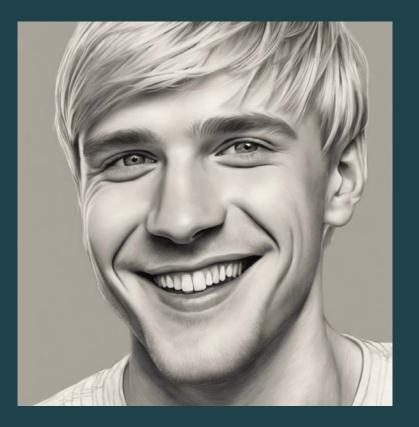


A man with light blonde hair, dark eyes and a side smile. A young boy with blonde hair and a fringe. Hie eyes are dark and small and his lips are thin. His upper teeth are visible. He is smiling and he seems excited. A smiling pale white man with a blonde bowl-haircut, green eyes









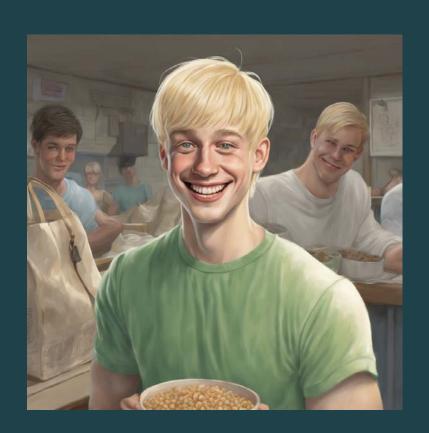




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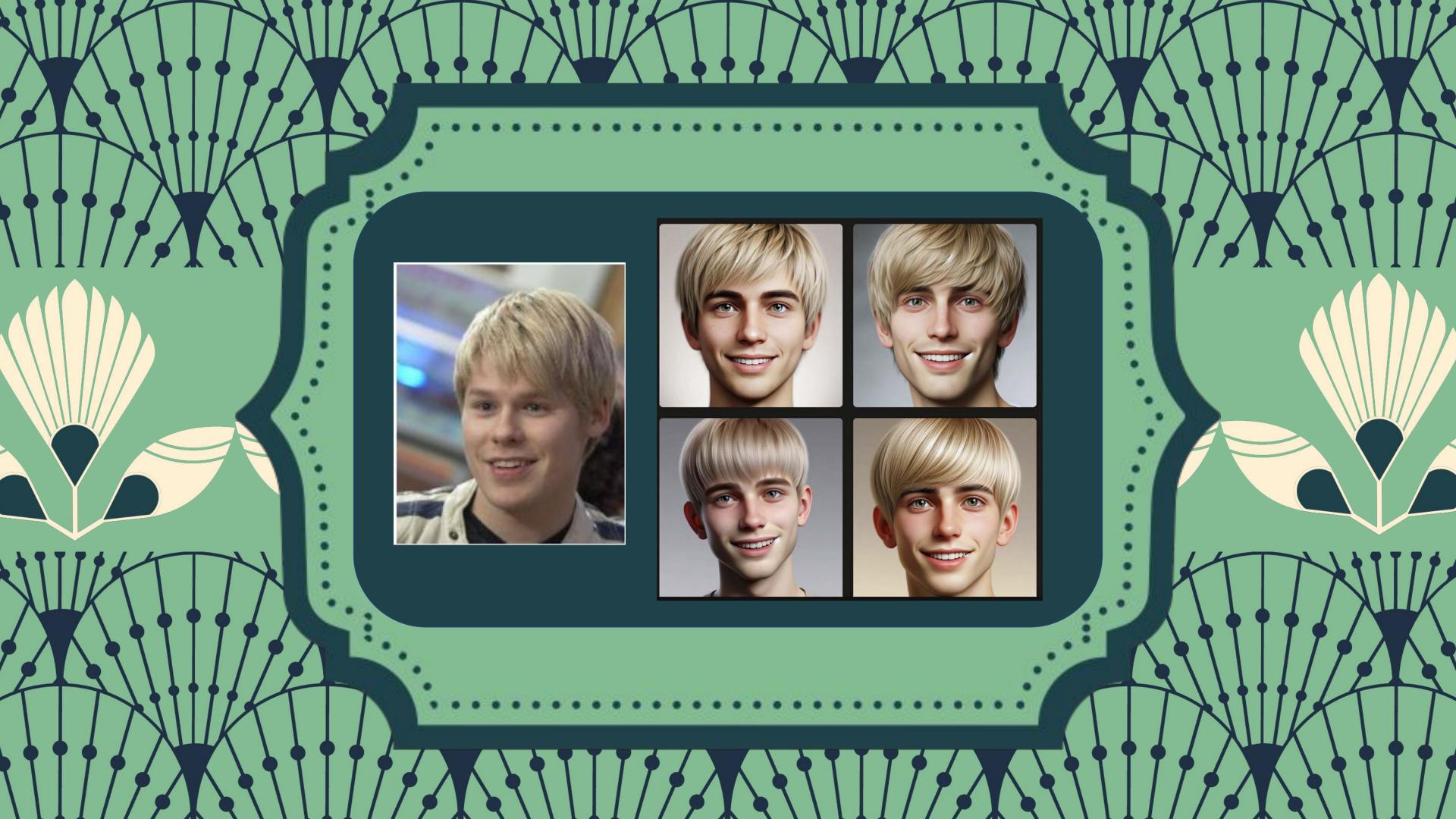


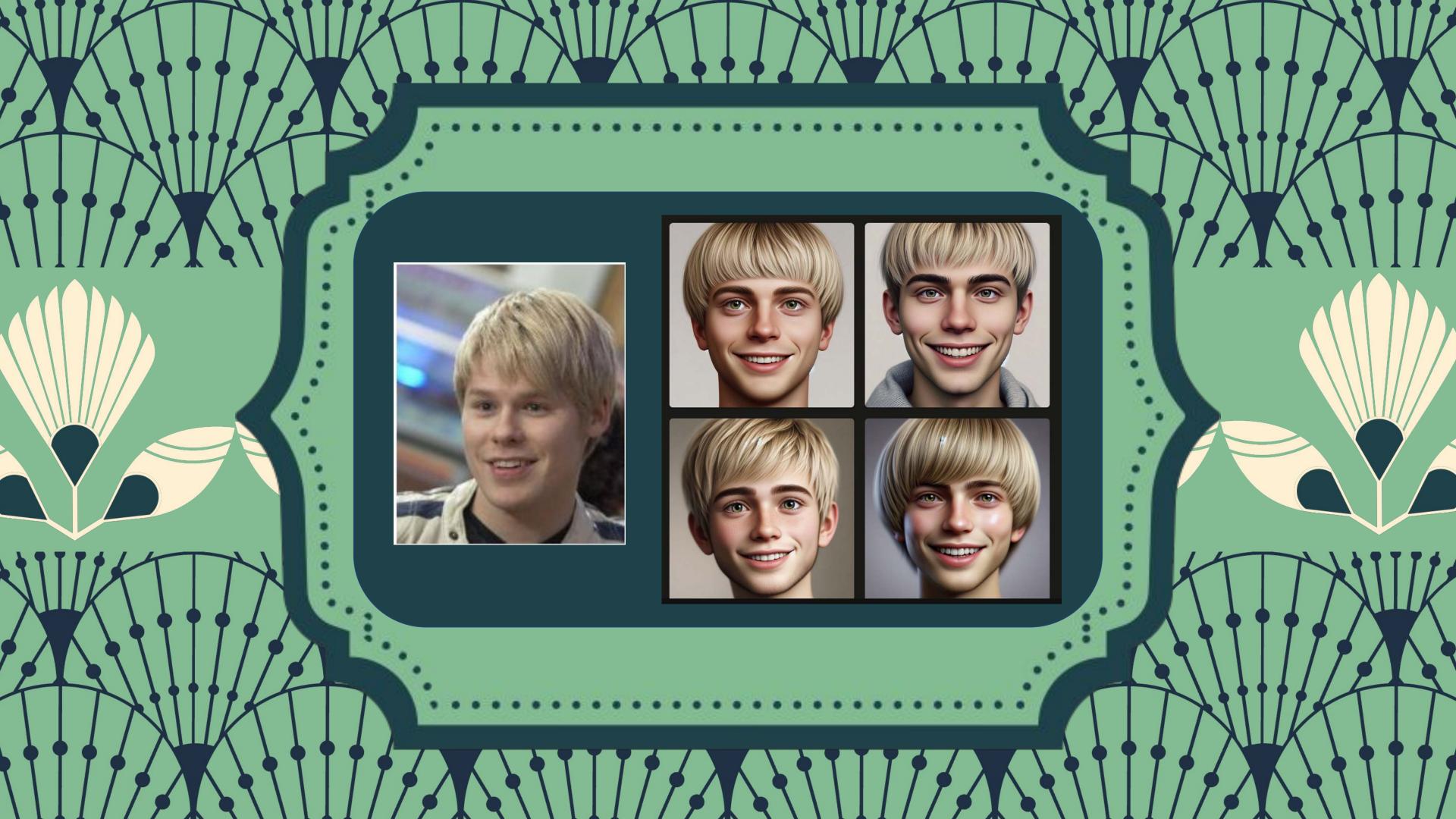












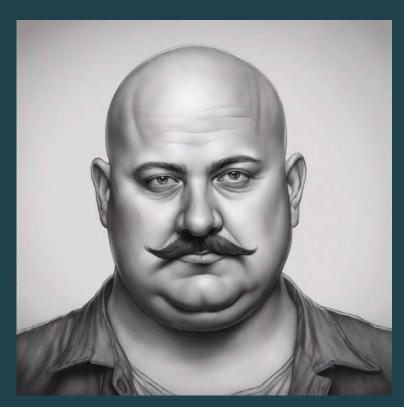


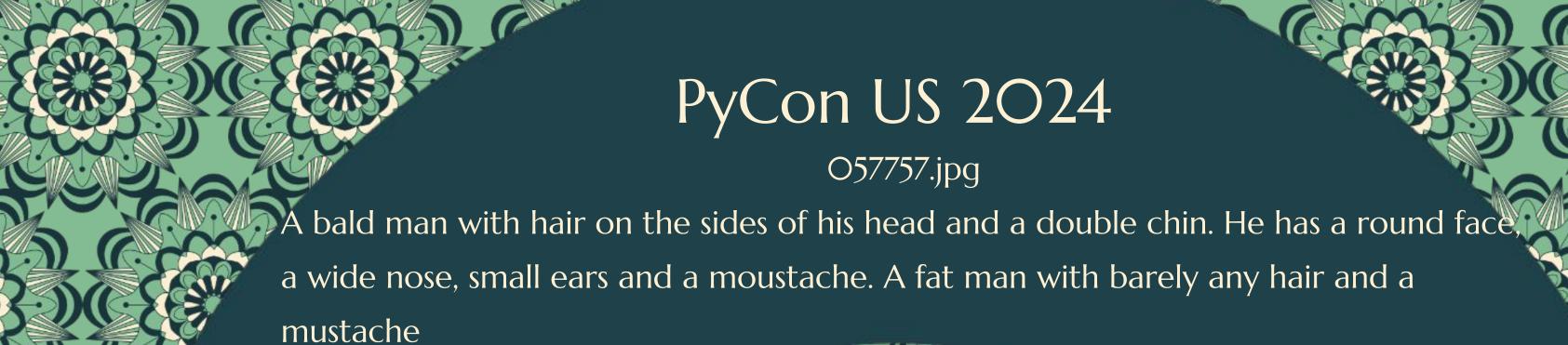
A bald man with hair on the sides of his head and a double chin. He has a round face a wide nose, small ears and a moustache. A fat man with barely any hair and a mustache







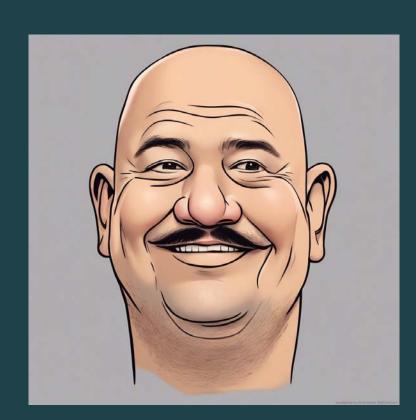




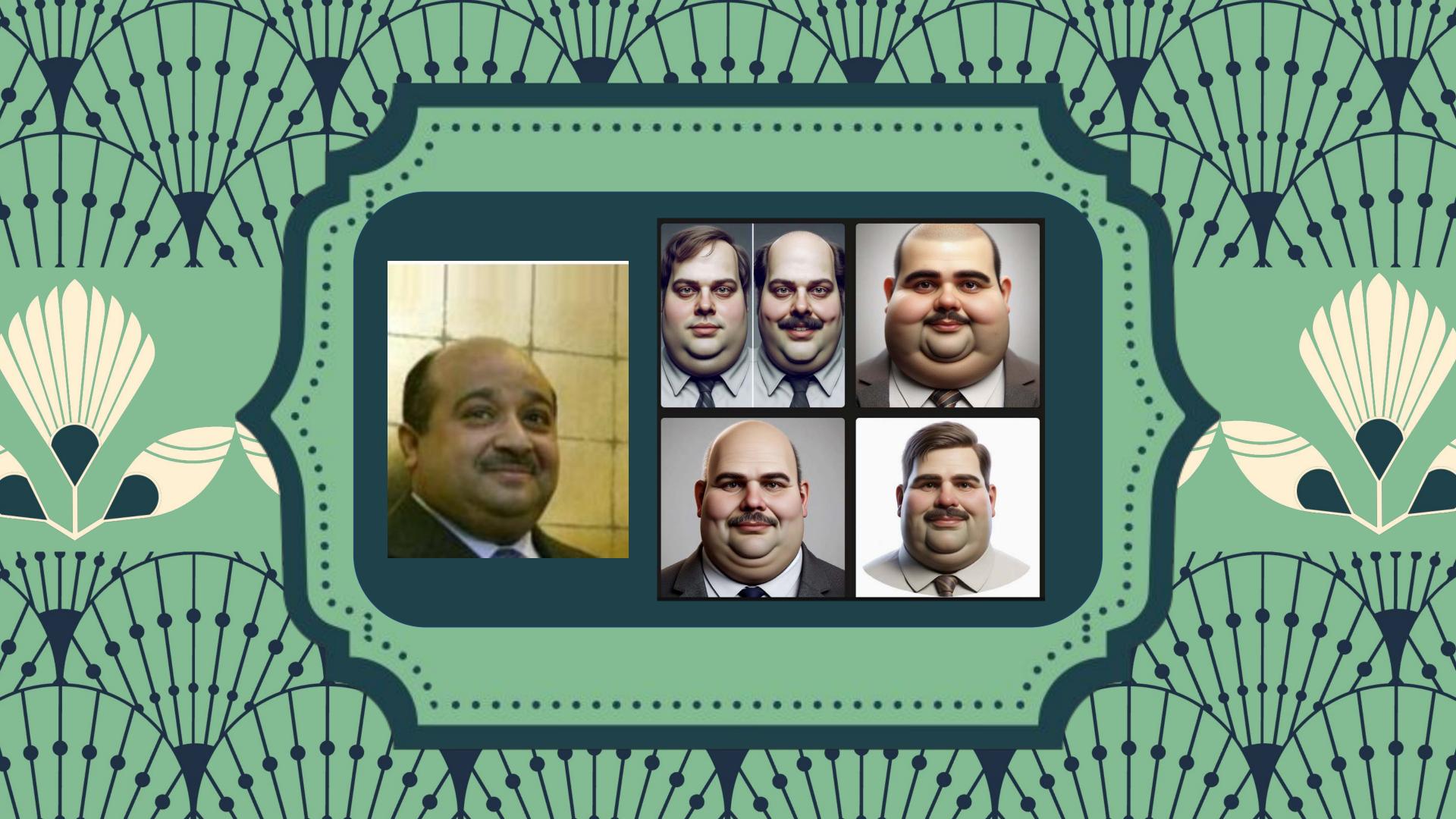






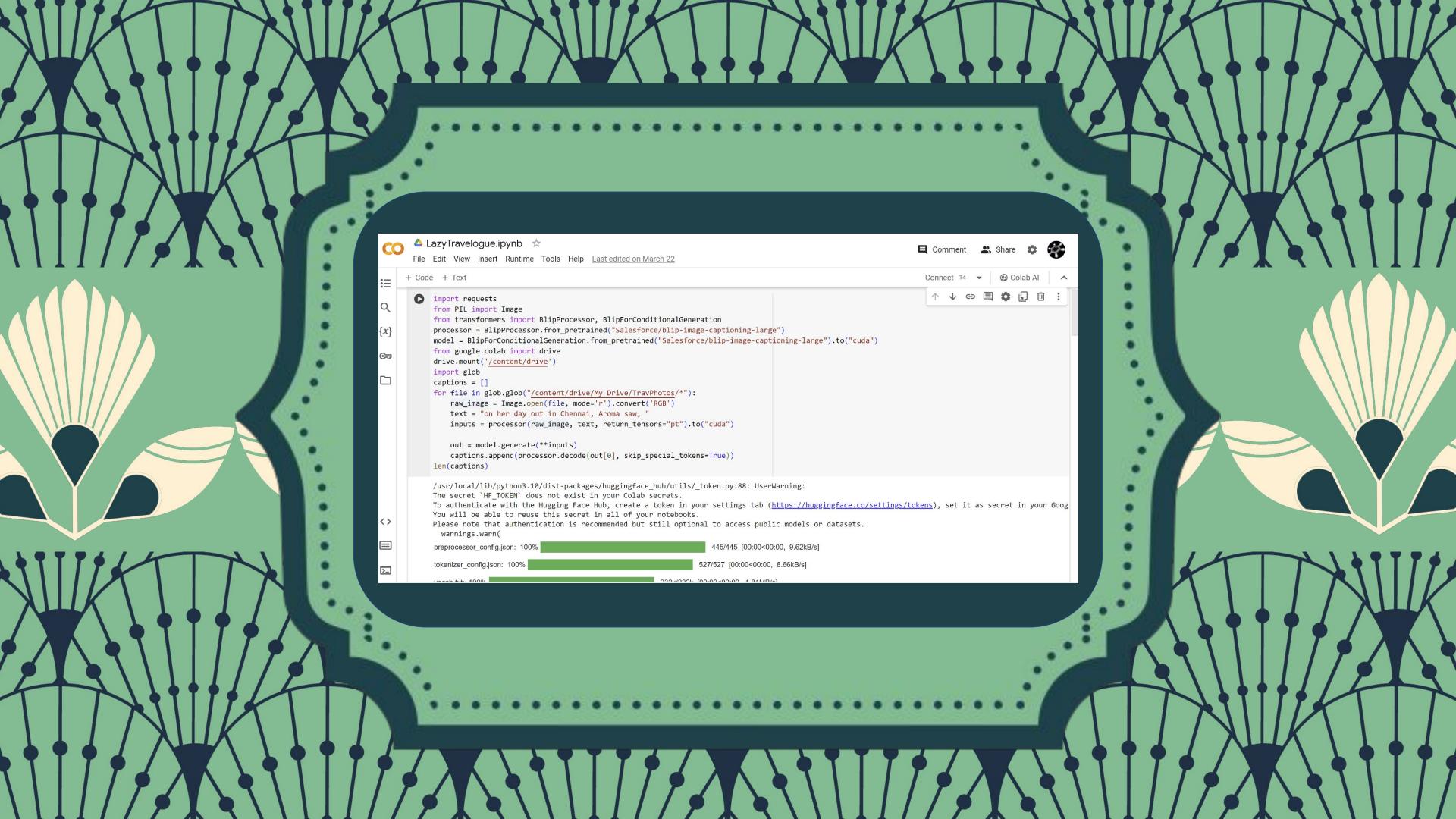


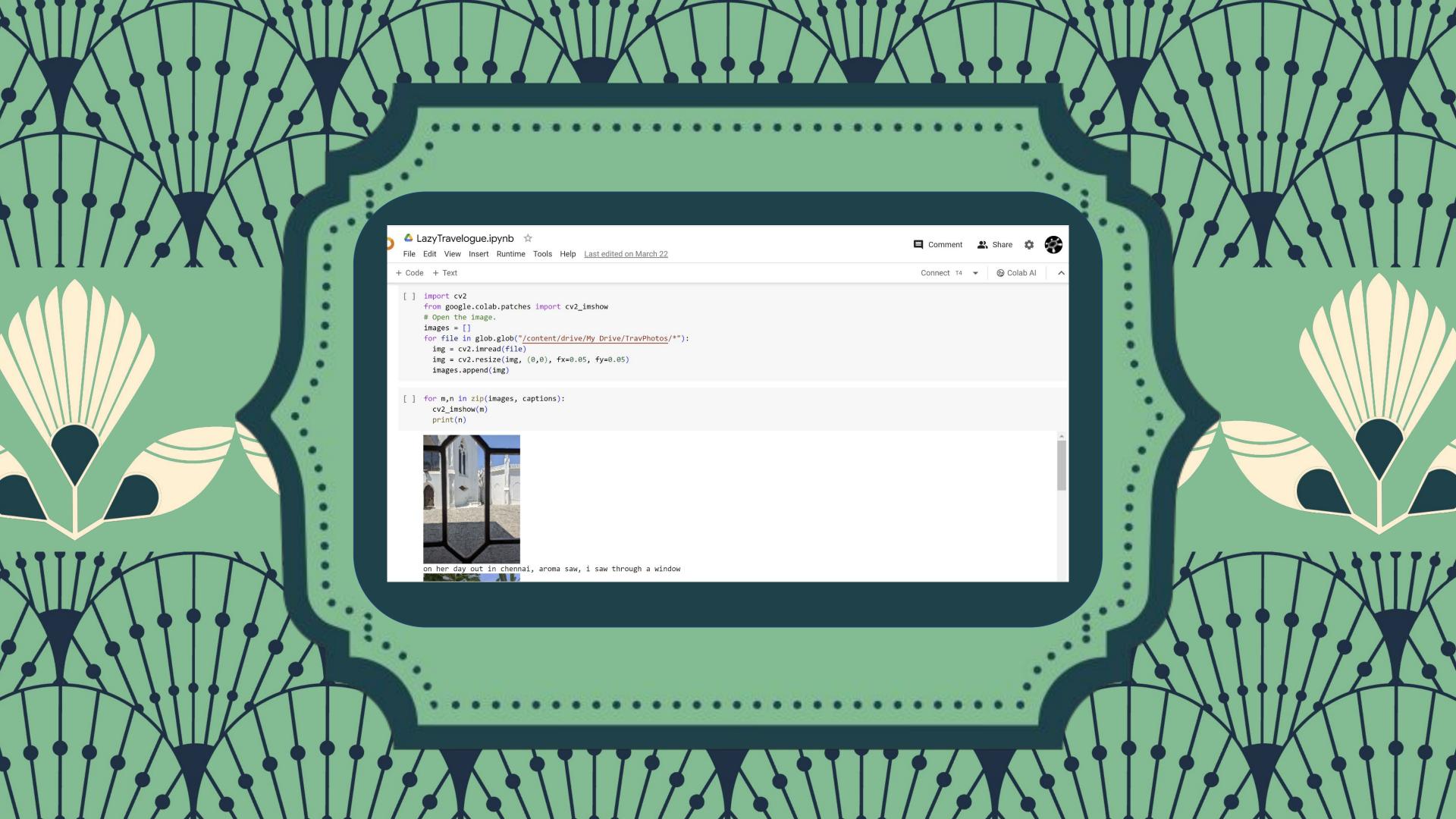


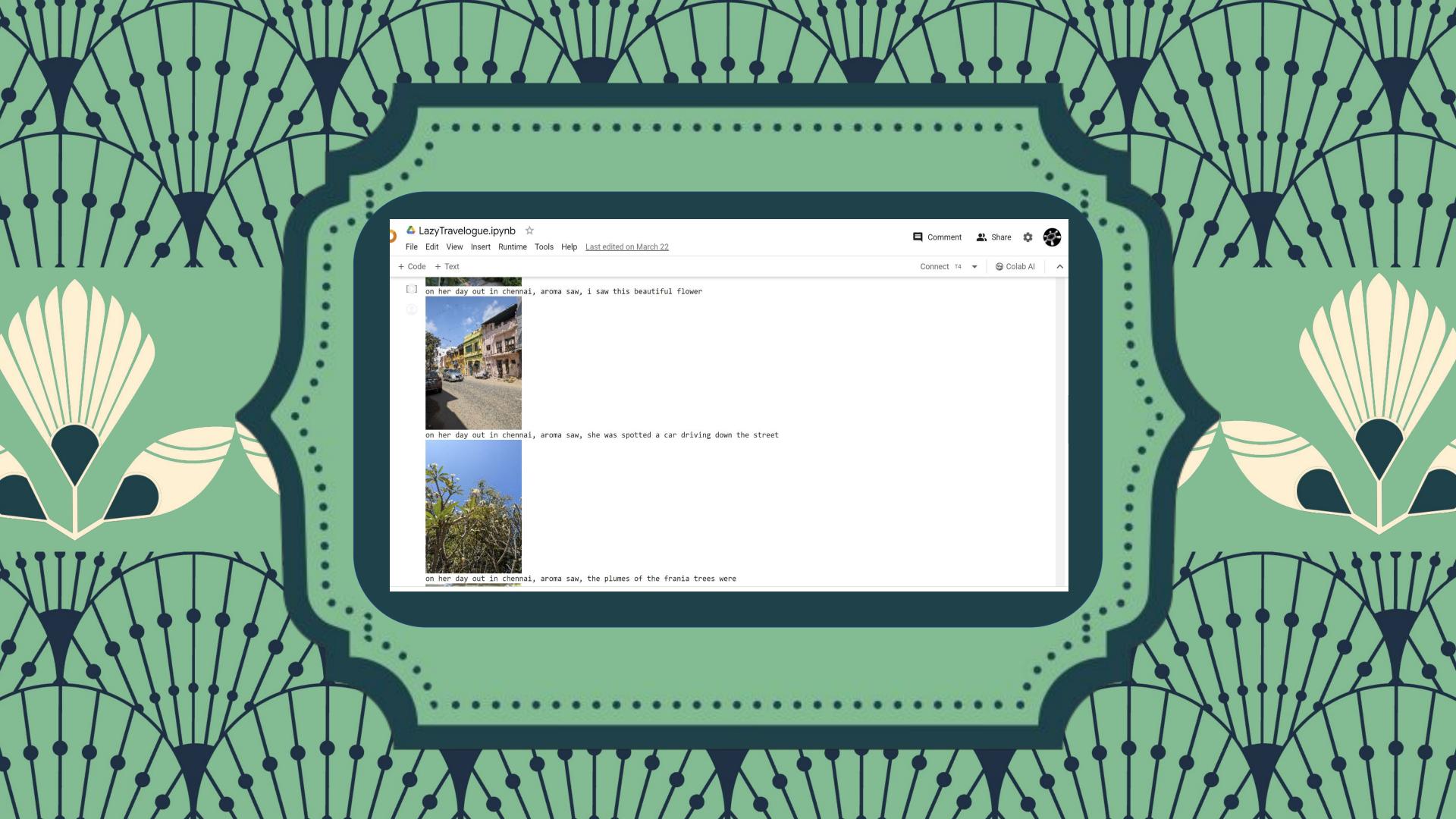




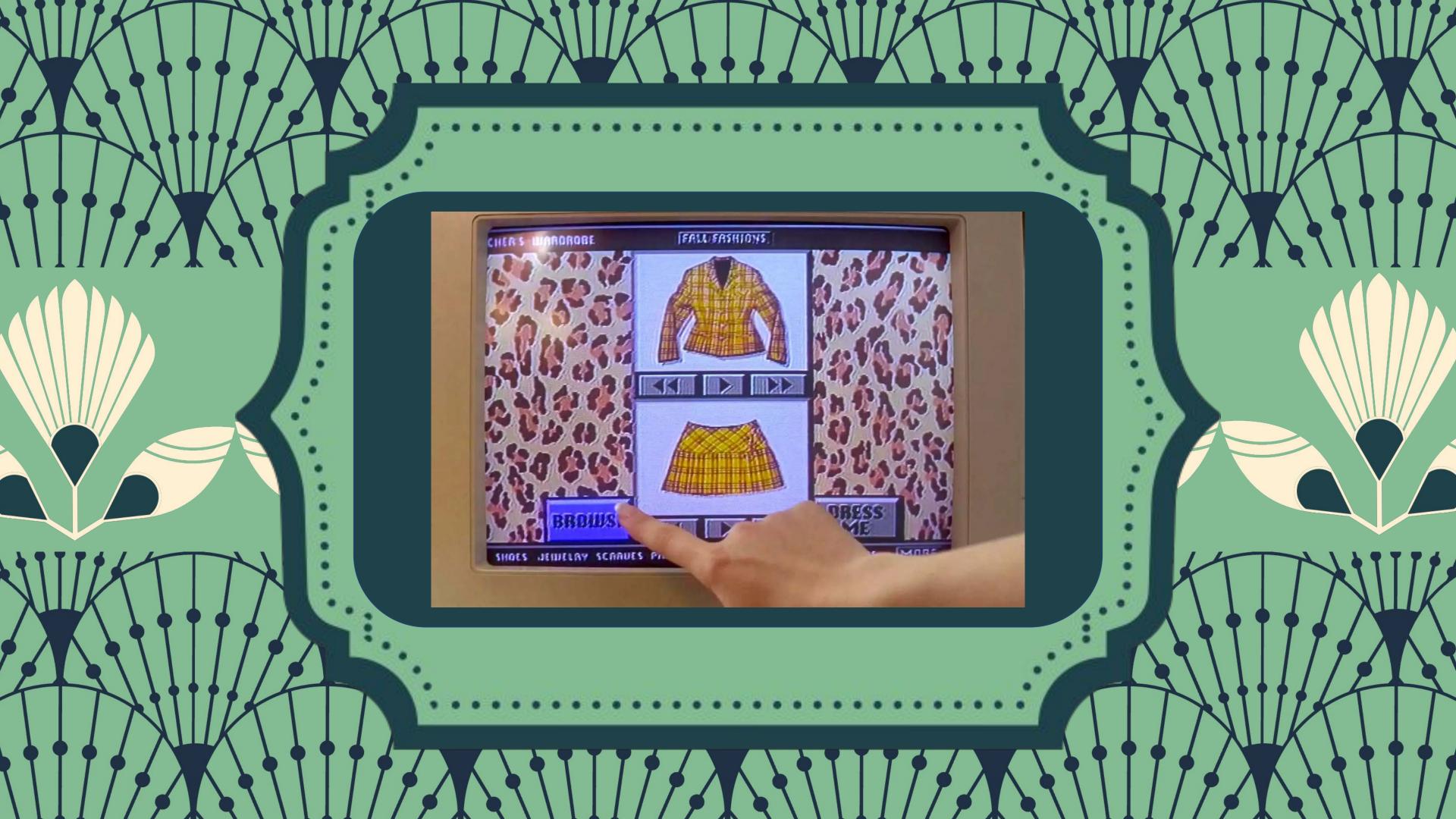


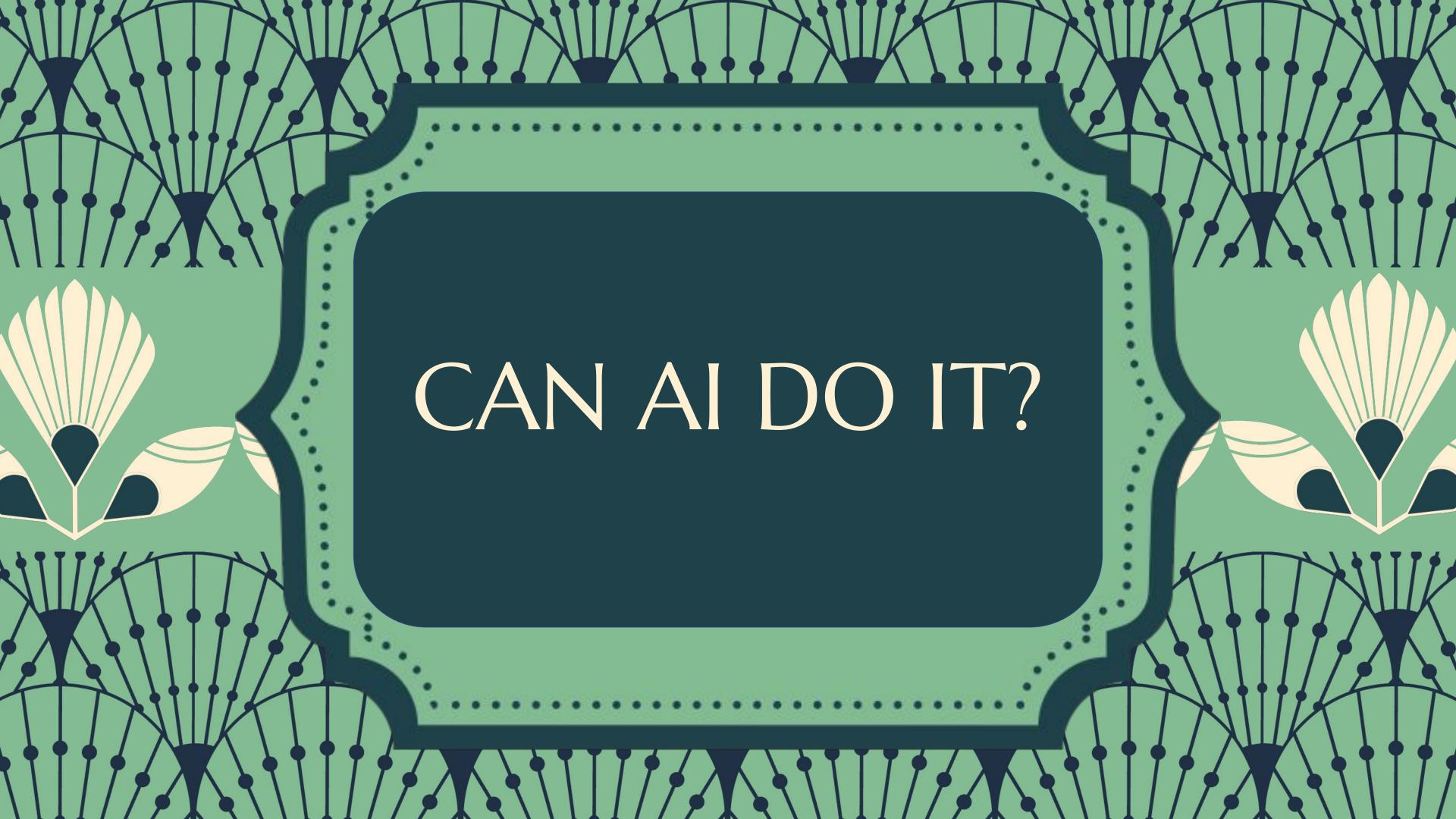


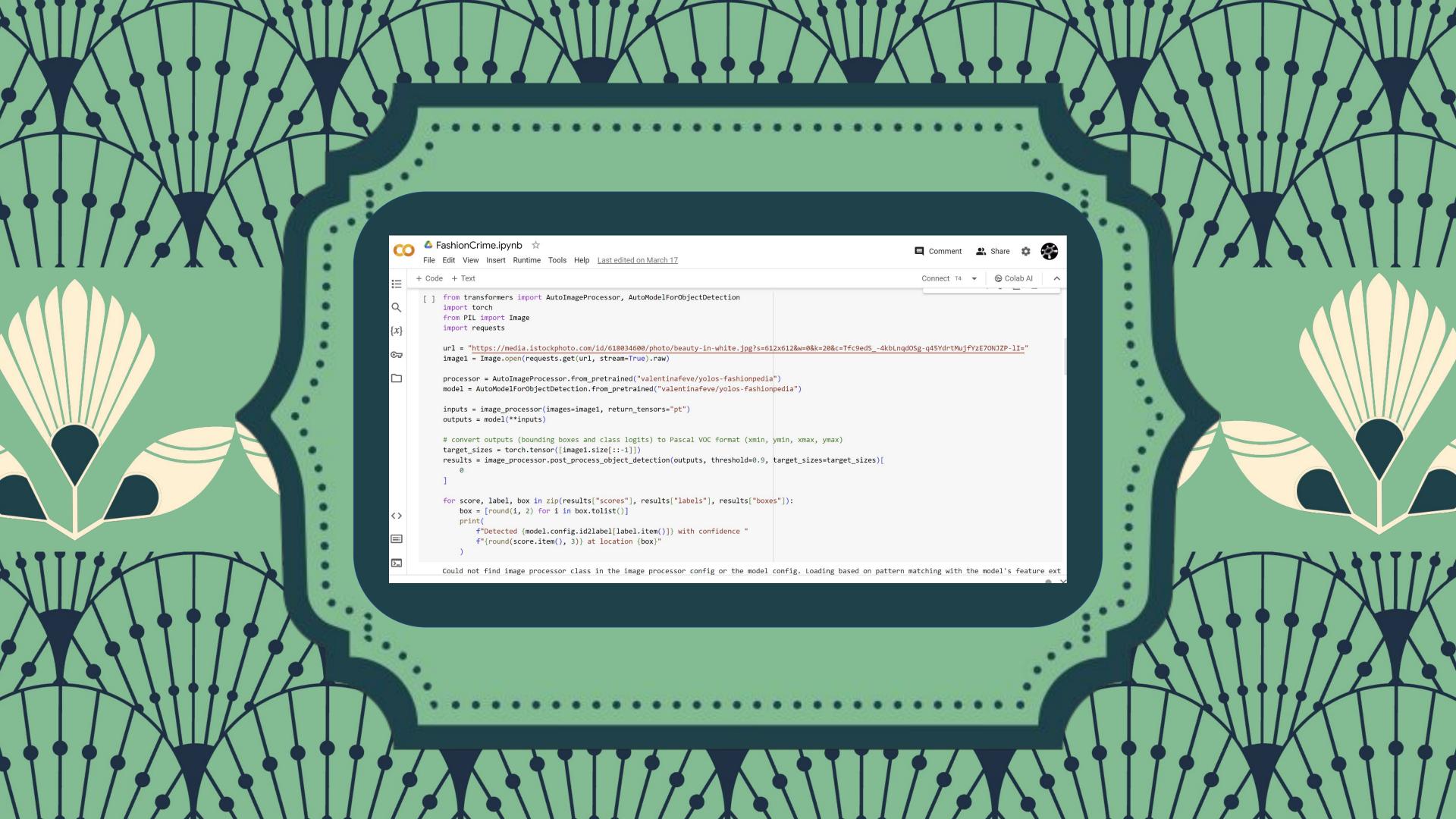




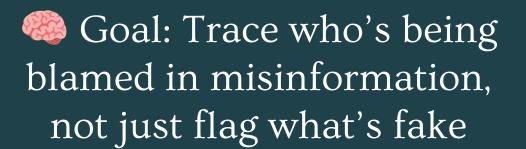










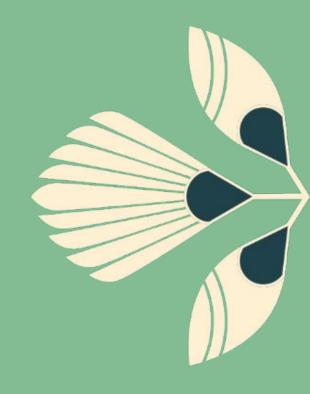


Dataset: Real WhatsApp forwards—informal, noisy, multilingual

Method: Combined SciPy- and NLTK-based event models with POS tagging & dependency parsing—minimal training data required



PyCon-ZA 2019 NLP Fake News Detector



Improvement: Today, LLMs offer richer context, better understanding of blame dynamics, and scalable solutions



Knight Foundation: 10M+ tweets from 700k+ accounts linked to fake/conspiracy news

Reuters (India): 52% get news from WhatsApp; rumor-fueled violence has led to deaths



PyCon-ZA 2019 Impact of Fake News



Keyword Extraction & Verification rake_nltk for extracting key phrases
Use News API to cross-check real coverage of keyword-based claims
Reverse image search for detecting photoshopped images

Content Verification
Compare articles from spoof sites vs mainstream media
Use of fact-checking platforms like Alt News,
SMHoaxSlayer



PyCon-ZA 2019 Techniques for Detection

Textual Clues
Grammar and spelling mistakes
Overly positive or negative sentiment
No sources, or suspicious sources
Repetition of certain keywords

Syntactic Patterns: POS Tagging
Tagging statements to detect:
Blame assignment
Praise
Event causality
Active/Passive voice patterning using nltk.RegexpParser

Entity & Emotion Tracking
Track named politicians
Detect associated emotions: fear, hatred, sympathy



PyCon-ZA 2019 Techniques for Detection

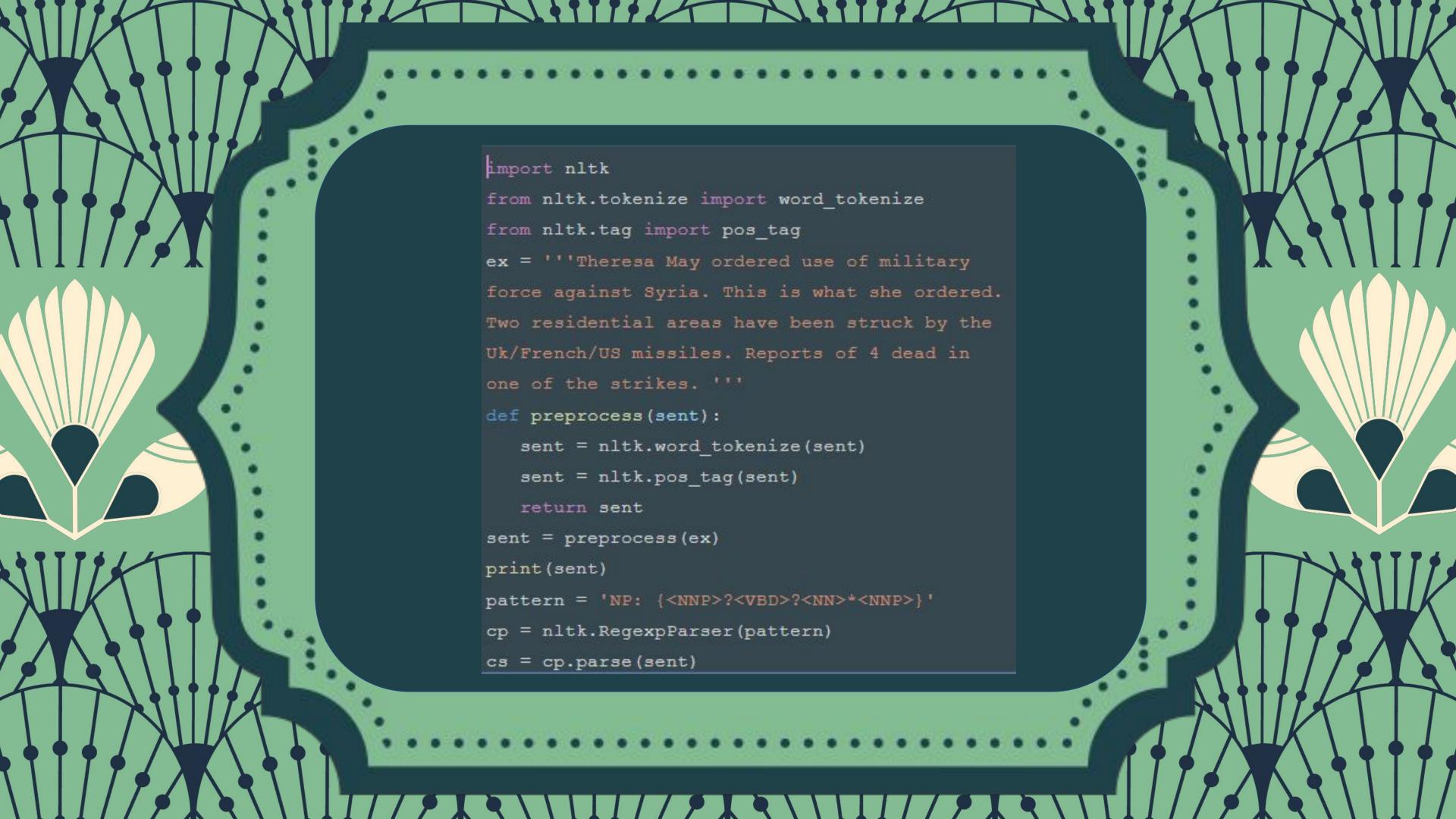


Path Model of Blame: Who did what, and why?

Causative Verbs: "ordered", "caused", "claimed"

Thresholding: % of sentences showing propaganda

structure in the text





IV

PyCon Estonia 2O23

If your friends are bullshitting using LLMs

V

EuroPython 2O22, PyCon Hong Kong 2O21, PyCon Sweden 2O21 How we're conditioned to believe the news is polarized

VI

PyOhio 2020 Analyzing bias in children's educational materials

PyCon Estonia 2023 If your friends are bullshitting using SNLI



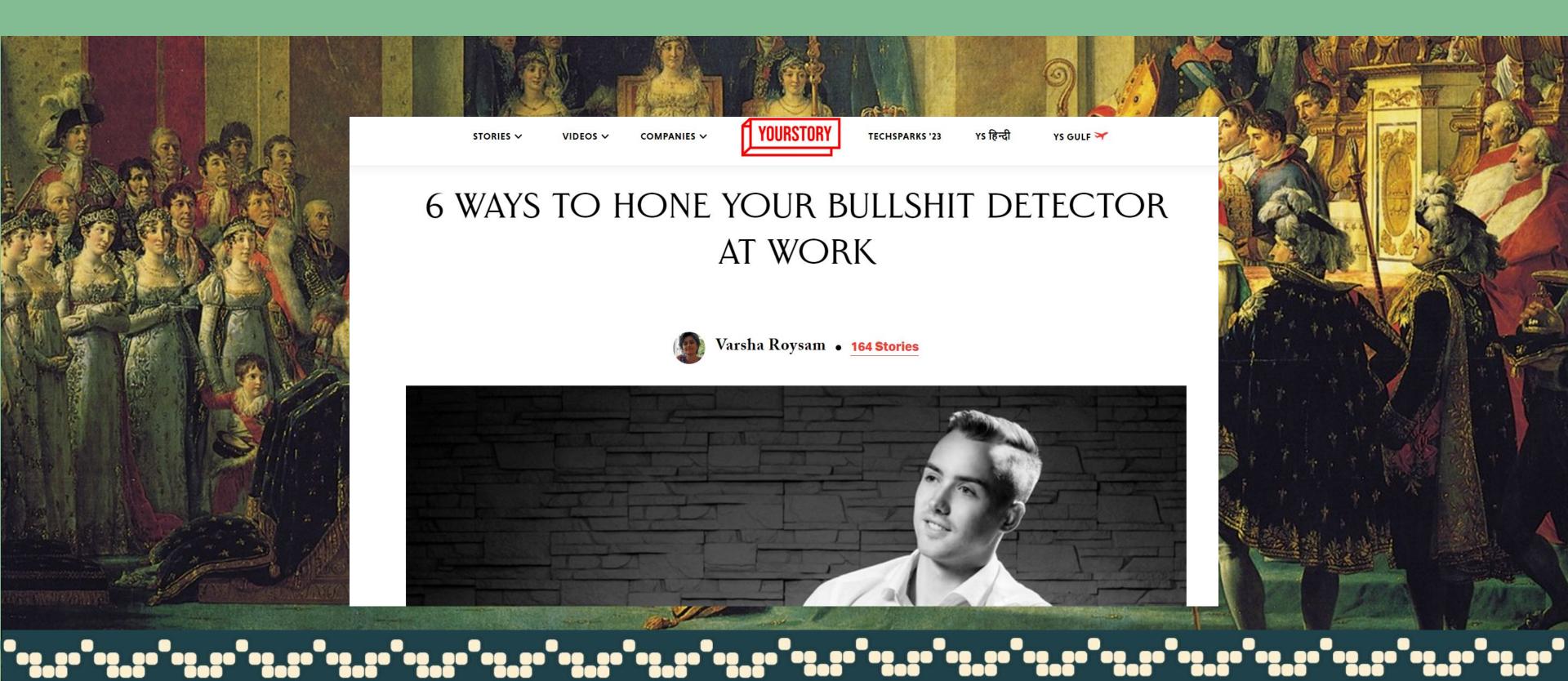
Goal: Use NLP to spot contradictions in statements, proving when your friends are being inconsistent

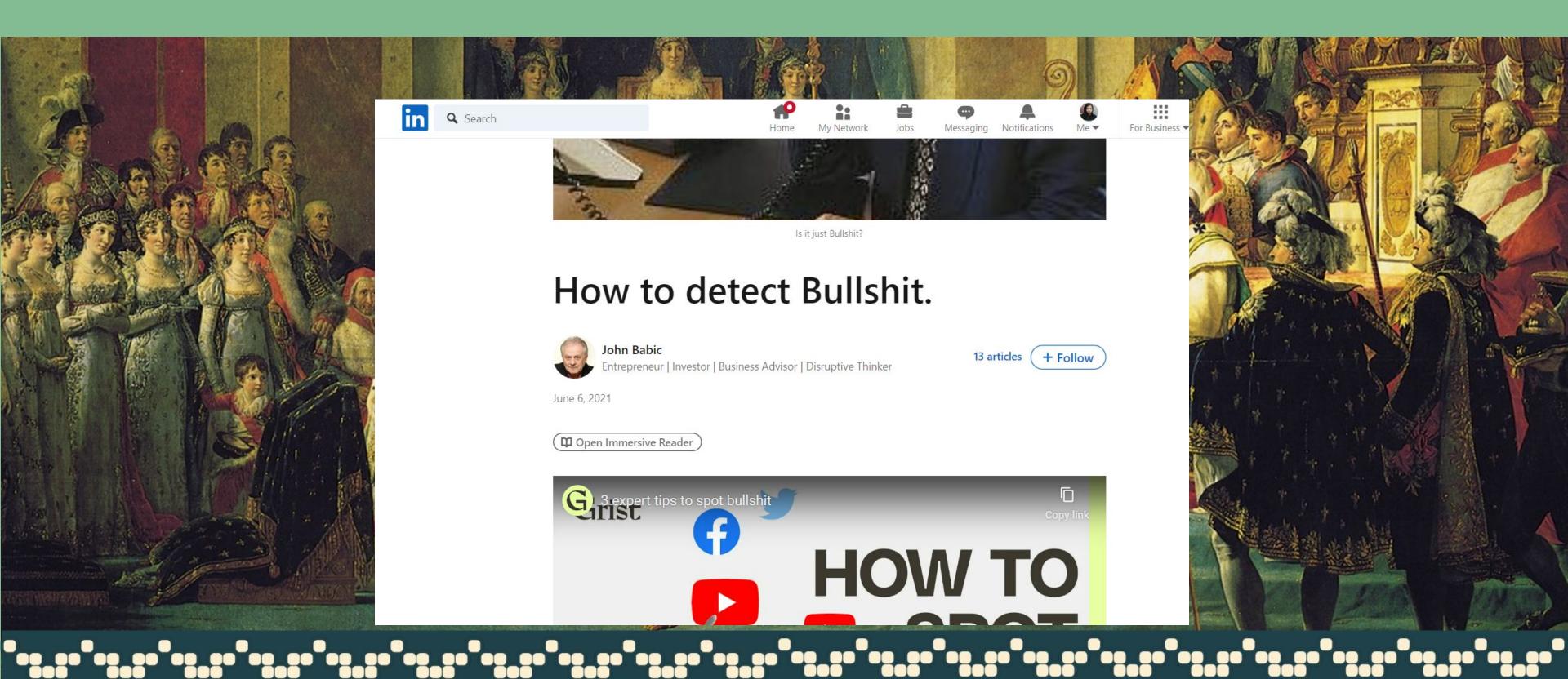
Models: Compare BERT and GPT-2 embeddings for detecting contradiction

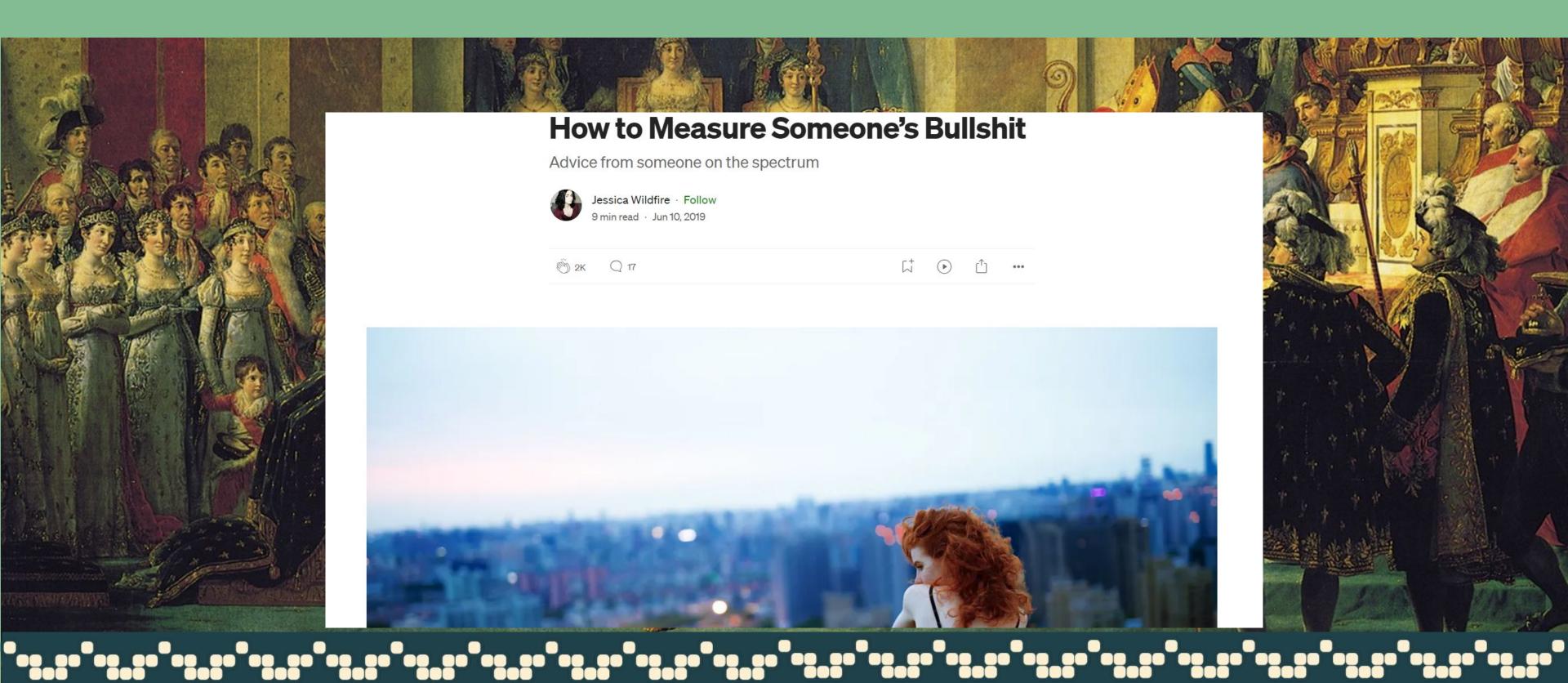
Dataset: Leverage SNLI for building and training contradiction models

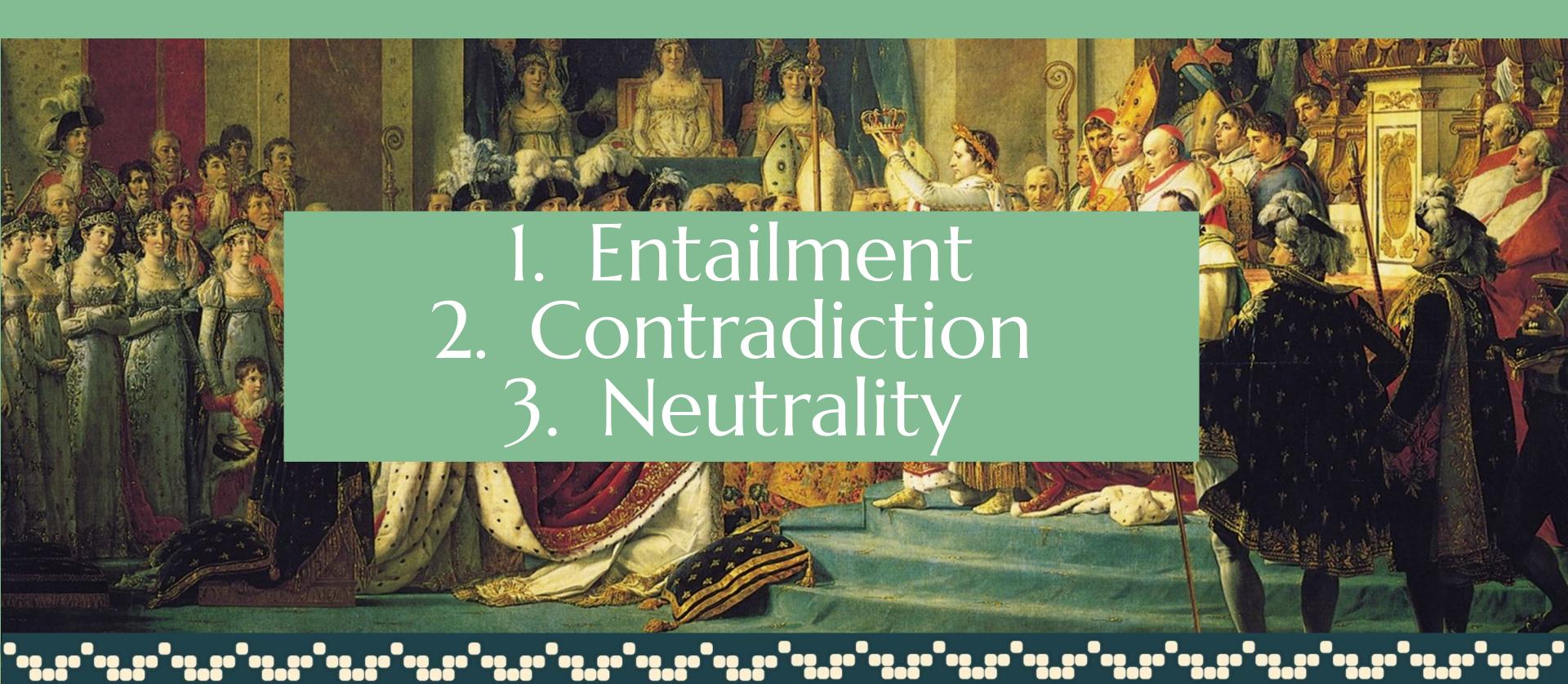
Impact: Improve LLM coherency—tackle hallucinations and filter fake/contradictory news

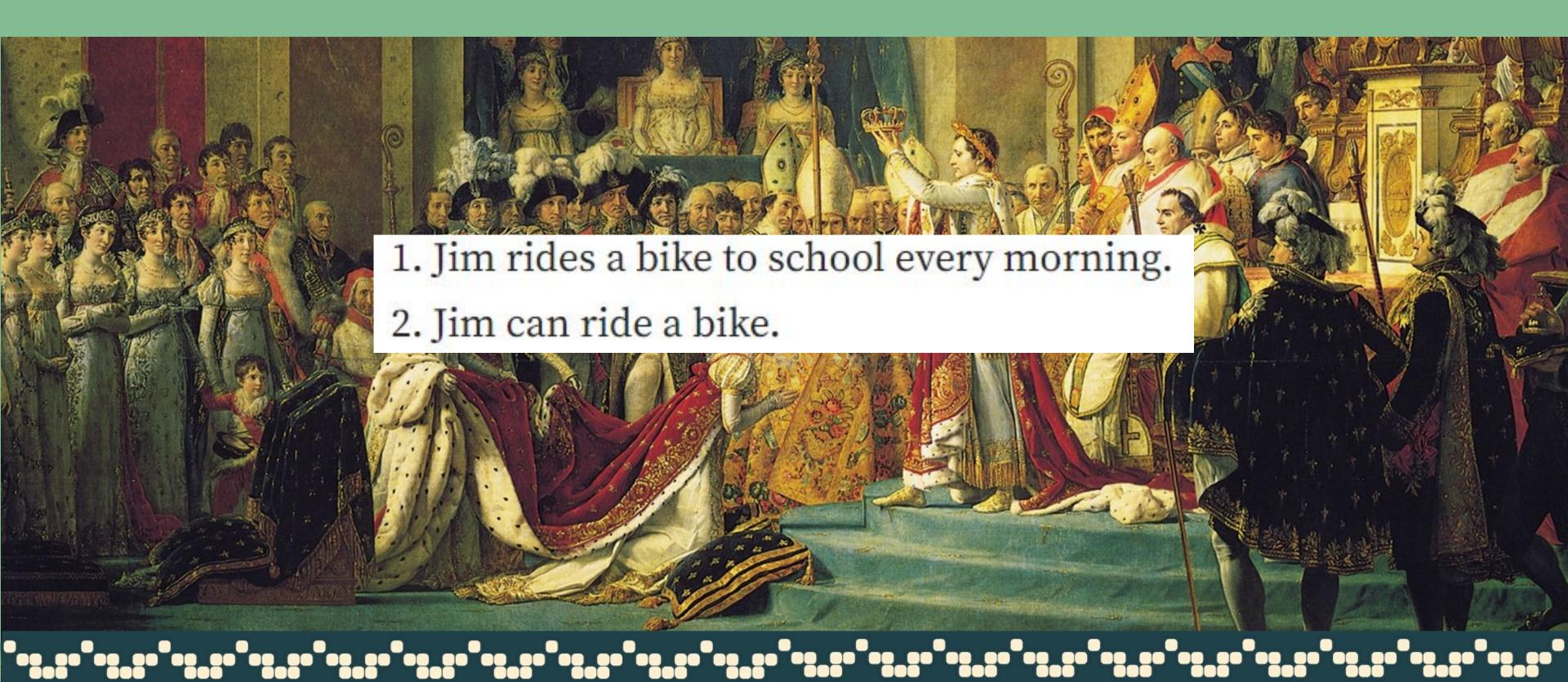
PyCon Estonia 2023 If your friends are bullshitting using SNLI











	ID	sentence	label
Premise		A dog jumping for a Frisbee in the snow.	
Hypothesis	Example 1	An animal is outside in the cold weather, playing with a plastic toy.	entailment
	Example 2	A cat washed his face and whiskers with his front paw.	contradiction
	Example 3	A pet is enjoying a game of fetch with his owner.	neutral
1			

The Stanford Natural Language Inference (SNLI) corpus (version 1.0) is a collection of 570k human-written English sentence pairs manually labeled for balanced classification with the labels entailment, contradiction, and neutral. We aim for it to serve both as a benchmark for evaluating representational systems for text, especially including those induced by representation-learning methods, as well as a resource for developing NLP models of any kind.

Text	Judgments	Hypothesis
A man inspects the uniform of a figure in some East Asian country.	contradiction C C C C C	The man is sleeping
An older and younger man smiling.	neutral N N E N N	Two men are smiling and laughing at the cats playing on the floor
A black race car starts up in front of a crowd of people.	contradiction C C C C C	A man is driving down a lonely road.
A soccer game with multiple males playing.	entailment E E E E E	Some men are playing a sport.
A smiling costumed woman is holding an umbrella.	neutral N N E C N	A happy woman in a fairy costume holds an umbrella.
	A man inspects the uniform of a figure in some East Asian country. An older and younger man smiling. A black race car starts up in front of a crowd of people. A soccer game with multiple males playing.	A man inspects the uniform of a figure in some East Asian country. C C C C C An older and younger man smiling. A black race car starts up in front of a crowd of people. A soccer game with multiple males playing. C C C C C entailment E E E E E A smiling costumed woman is holding an umbrella.



The BERT model was proposed in BERT: Pre-training of Deep Bidirectional Transformers for Language Understanding by Jacob Devlin, Ming-Wei Chang, Kenton Lee and Kristina Toutanova. It's a bidirectional transformer pretrained using a combination of masked language modeling objective and next sentence prediction on a large corpus comprising the Toronto Book Corpus and Wikipedia.

The abstract from the paper is the following:

We introduce a new language representation model called BERT, which stands for Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers. Unlike recent language representation models, BERT is designed to pre-train deep bidirectional representations from unlabeled text by jointly conditioning on both left and right context in all layers. As a result, the pre-trained BERT model can be fine-tuned with just one additional output layer to create state-of-the-art models for a wide range of tasks, such as question answering and language inference, without substantial task-specific architecture modifications.

BERT is conceptually simple and empirically powerful. It obtains new state-of-the-art results on eleven natural language processing tasks, including pushing the GLUE score to 80.5% (7.7% point absolute improvement), MultiNLI accuracy to 86.7% (4.6% absolute improvement), SQuAD v1.1 question answering Test F1 to 93.2 (1.5 point absolute improvement) and SQuAD v2.0 Test F1 to 83.1 (5.1 point absolute improvement).



BertForSequenceClassification

class transformers.BertForSequenceClassification

<source>

(config)

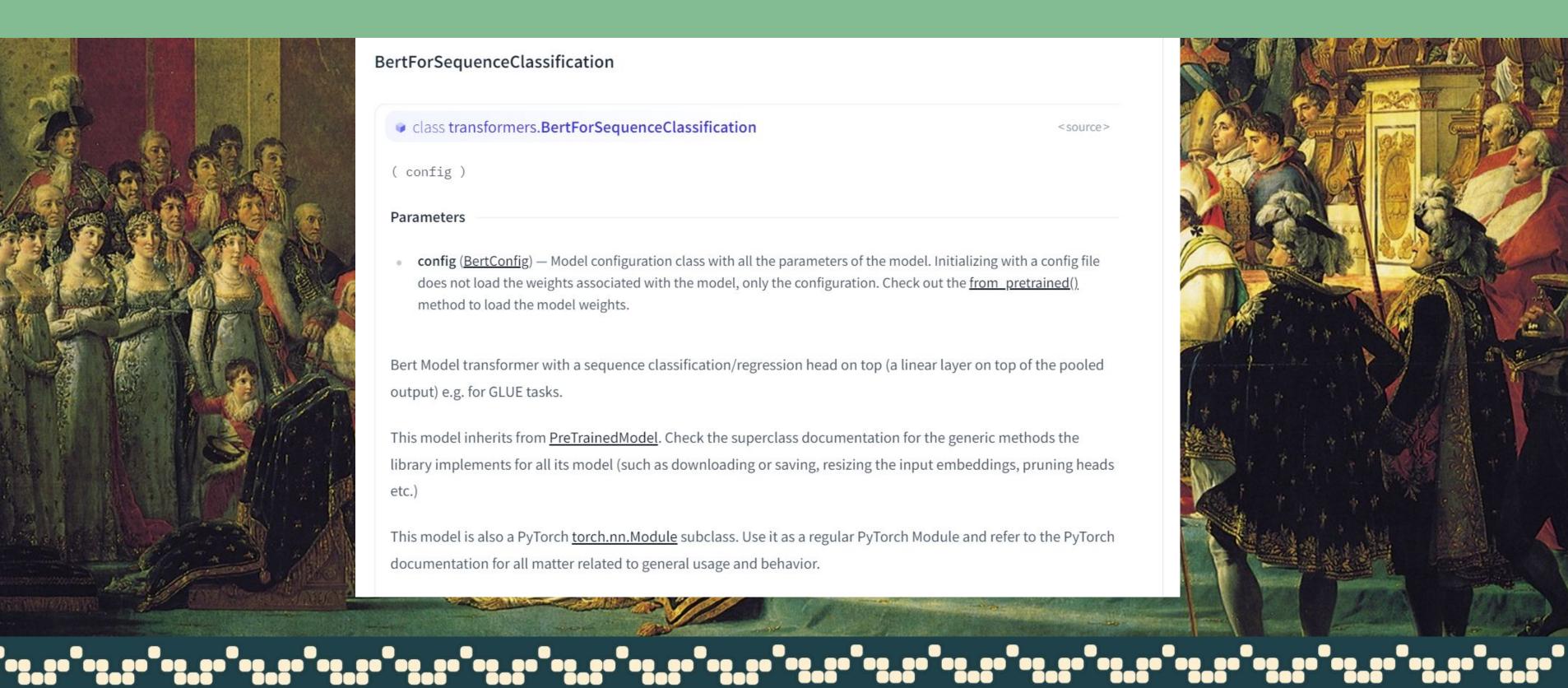
Parameters

config (BertConfig) — Model configuration class with all the parameters of the model. Initializing with a config file does not load the weights associated with the model, only the configuration. Check out the <u>from_pretrained()</u> method to load the model weights.

Bert Model transformer with a sequence classification/regression head on top (a linear layer on top of the pooled output) e.g. for GLUE tasks.

This model inherits from PreTrainedModel. Check the superclass documentation for the generic methods the library implements for all its model (such as downloading or saving, resizing the input embeddings, pruning heads etc.)

This model is also a PyTorch torch.nn.Module subclass. Use it as a regular PyTorch Module and refer to the PyTorch documentation for all matter related to general usage and behavior.



OpenAI GPT-2 model was proposed in Language Models are Unsupervised Multitask Learners by Alec Radford, Jeffrey Wu, Rewon Child, David Luan, Dario Amodei and Ilya Sutskever from OpenAI. It's a causal (unidirectional) transformer pretrained using language modeling on a very large corpus of ~40 GB of text data.

The abstract from the paper is the following:

GPT-2 is a large transformer-based language model with 1.5 billion parameters, trained on a dataset[1] of 8 million web pages. GPT-2 is trained with a simple objective: predict the next word, given all of the previous words within some text. The diversity of the dataset causes this simple goal to contain naturally occurring demonstrations of many tasks across diverse domains. GPT-2 is a direct scale-up of GPT, with more than 10X the parameters and trained on more than 10X the amount of data.



GPT2ForSequenceClassification

class transformers.GPT2ForSequenceClassification

(config)

Parameters

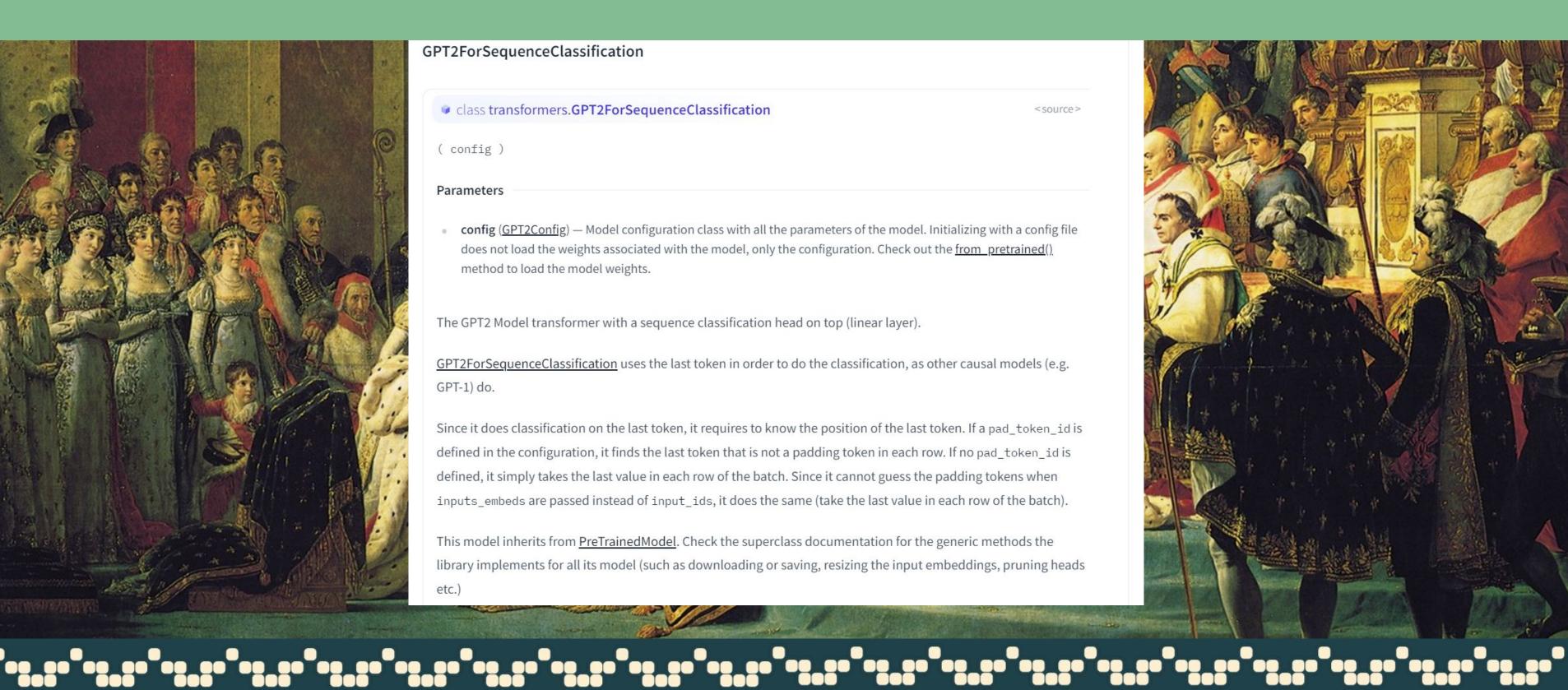
config (GPT2Config) — Model configuration class with all the parameters of the model. Initializing with a config file does not load the weights associated with the model, only the configuration. Check out the from pretrained() method to load the model weights.

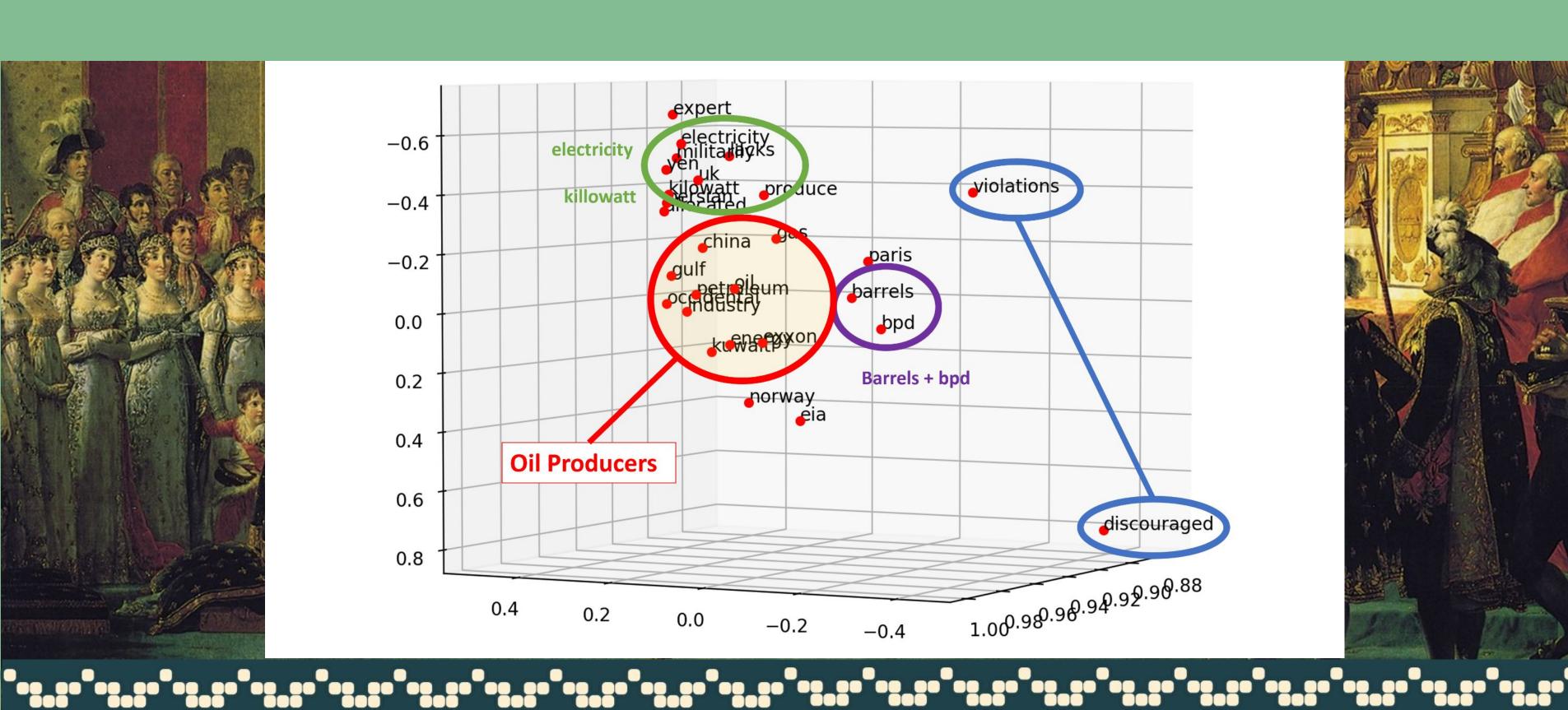
The GPT2 Model transformer with a sequence classification head on top (linear layer).

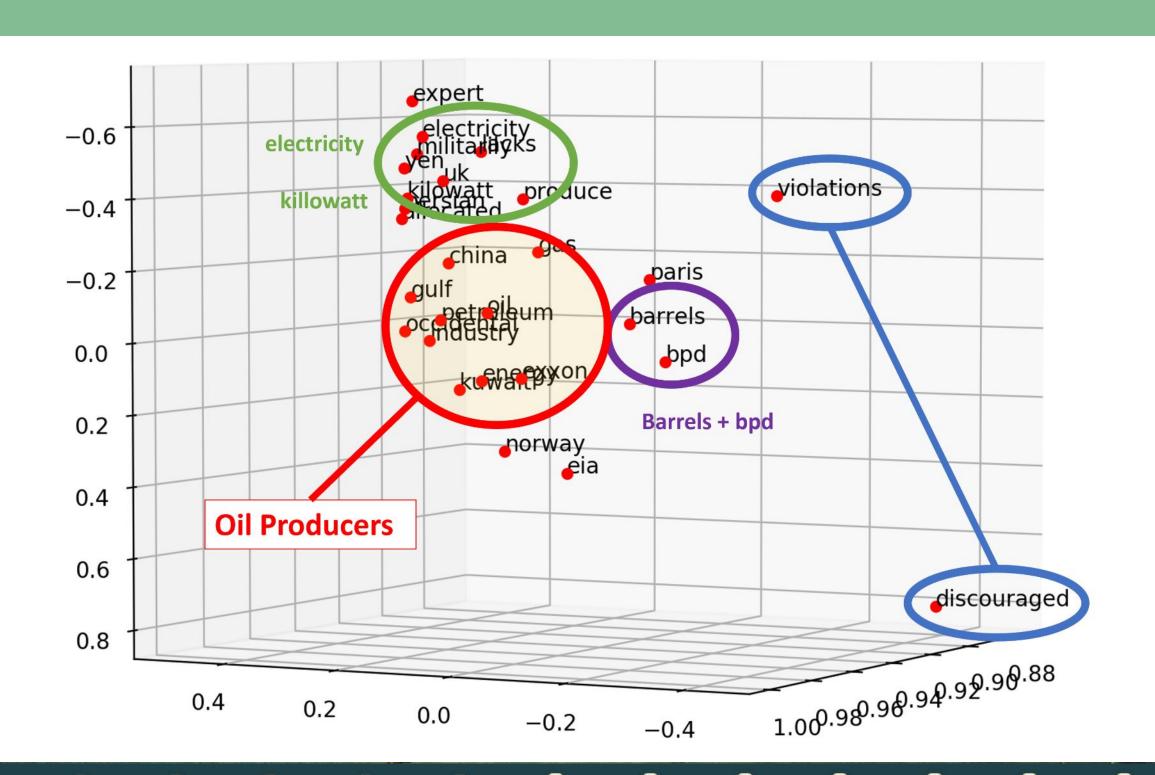
GPT2ForSequenceClassification uses the last token in order to do the classification, as other causal models (e.g. GPT-1) do.

Since it does classification on the last token, it requires to know the position of the last token. If a pad_token_id is defined in the configuration, it finds the last token that is not a padding token in each row. If no pad_token_id is defined, it simply takes the last value in each row of the batch. Since it cannot guess the padding tokens when inputs_embeds are passed instead of input_ids, it does the same (take the last value in each row of the batch).

This model inherits from PreTrainedModel. Check the superclass documentation for the generic methods the library implements for all its model (such as downloading or saving, resizing the input embeddings, pruning heads

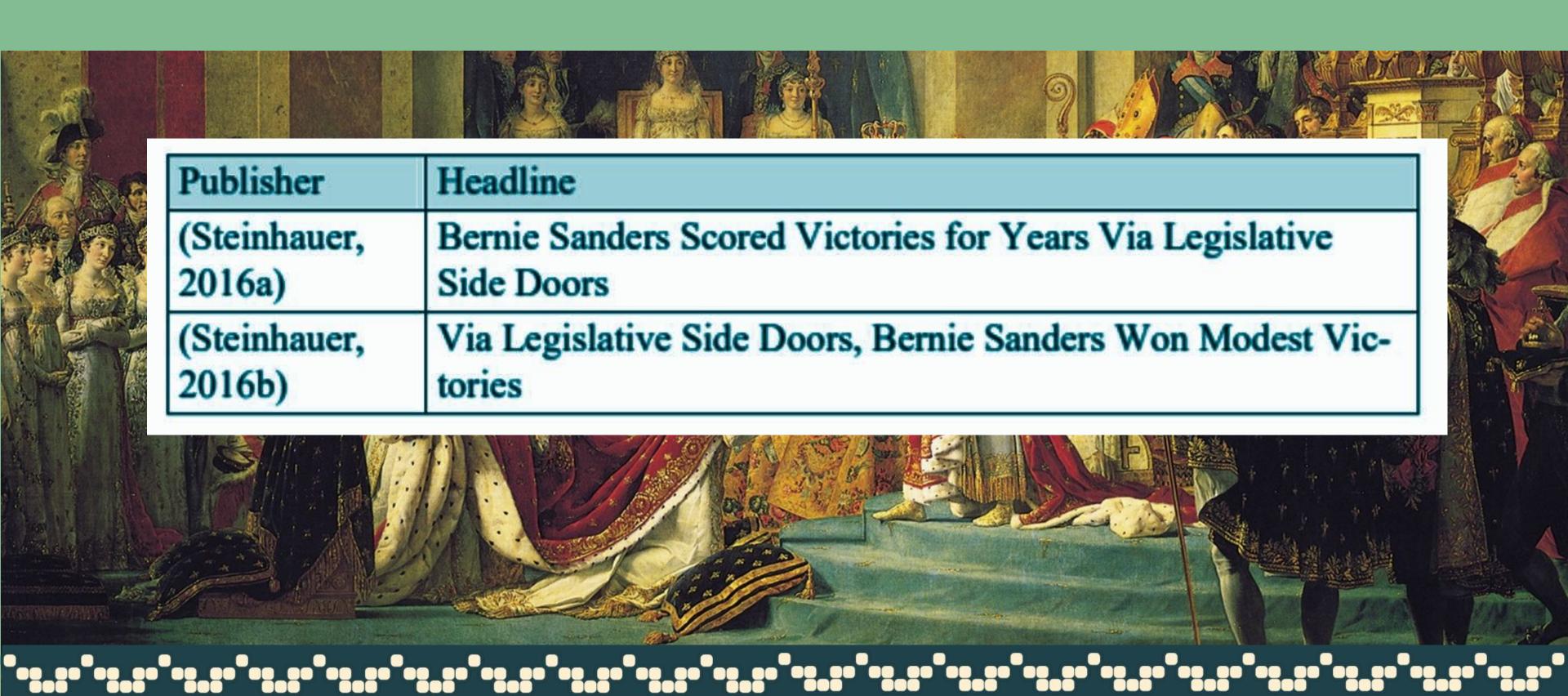








```
Sentence Entailment GPT2.ipynb 
Sentence Entailment BERT.ipynb 
                                                                                                        File Edit View Insert Runtime Tools Help Last edited on March 26
File Edit View Insert Runtime Tools Help Last edited on February 16
                                                                                                       + Code + Text
Code + Text
        val_loss = total_val_loss/len(val_loader)
                                                                                                                val acc = total val acc/len(val loader)
                                                                                                                val loss = total val loss/len(val loader)
        end = time.time()
        hours, rem = divmod(end-start, 3600)
                                                                                                                 end = time.time()
        minutes, seconds = divmod(rem, 60)
                                                                                                                 hours, rem = divmod(end-start, 3600)
                                                                                                                minutes, seconds = divmod(rem, 60)
        print(f'Epoch {epoch+1}: train loss: {train loss:.4f} train acc: {train acc:.4f}
                                                                                                                print(f'Epoch {epoch+1}: train loss: {train loss:.4f} train acc: {train acc:.4
        print("{:0>2}:{:0>2}:{:05.2f}".format(int(hours),int(minutes),seconds))
                                                                                                                print("{:0>2}:{:0>2}:{:05.2f}".format(int(hours),int(minutes),seconds))
   train(model, train loader, val loader, optimizer)
                                                                                                        [ ] train(model, train_loader, val_loader, optimizer)
    Epoch 1: train loss: 0.4155 train acc: 0.8040 | val loss: 0.2945 val acc: 0.8713
                                                                                                            Epoch 1: train loss: 0.6445 train acc: 0.6299 | val loss: 0.5330 val acc: 0.7389
    00:07:41.49
                                                                                                             00:09:06.98
    Epoch 2: train loss: 0.1986 train acc: 0.9218 | val loss: 0.2942 val acc: 0.8785
                                                                                                            Epoch 2: train loss: 0.5148 train acc: 0.7446 | val loss: 0.4546 val acc: 0.7882
    00:07:41.79
                                                                                                             00:09:12.39
    Epoch 3: train loss: 0.0887 train acc: 0.9691 | val loss: 0.3614 val acc: 0.8824
                                                                                                            Epoch 3: train_loss: 0.4229 train_acc: 0.8027 | val_loss: 0.3995 val_acc: 0.8213
    00:07:41.77
    Epoch 4: train loss: 0.0487 train acc: 0.9827 | val loss: 0.4539 val acc: 0.8852
                                                                                                            Epoch 4: train loss: 0.3494 train acc: 0.8459 | val loss: 0.3565 val acc: 0.8411
    00:07:41.60
                                                                                                             00:09:12.80
    Epoch 5: train loss: 0.0376 train acc: 0.9883 | val loss: 0.4585 val acc: 0.8838
                                                                                                            Epoch 5: train_loss: 0.2885 train_acc: 0.8777 | val_loss: 0.3594 val_acc: 0.8468
    00:07:41.71
                                                                                                            Epoch 6: train_loss: 0.2357 train_acc: 0.9017 | val_loss: 0.3617 val_acc: 0.8542
                                                                                                             00:09:12.23
```









Objective: Analyze sentiments in news headlines to examine bias, comparing it to public perception from surveys

Challenge: Initial approaches failed to capture the complexity of sentiment and bias in headlines

Revised Approach: Leveraged advanced NLP techniques to better align sentiment with real-world reader biases

Y Outcome: Failure led to deeper understanding of contextual sentiment analysis and bias measurement—essential for interpreting media influence



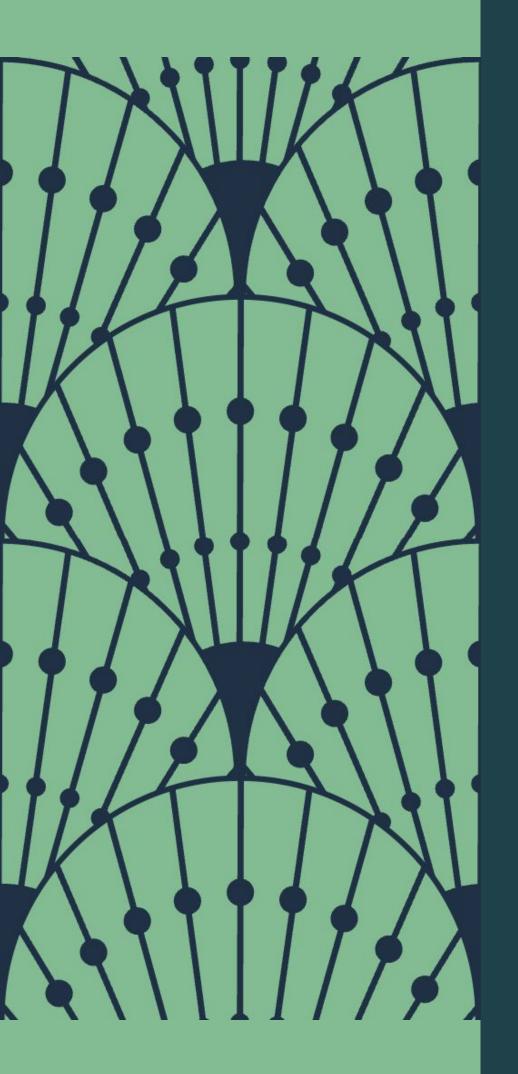
Lessons from Failed Research: Analyzing
News Bias from Headlines



Analyzing bias in children's educational materials

Research has shown that children's educational materials often reinforce gender biases, such as portraying female characters predominantly as mothers and housewives while male characters are seen as breadwinners. Using NLP techniques, we can analyze representation bias by tracking the frequency of gendered terms, identify stereotypes through adjective associations, and detect victim-blaming language in texts. For instance, in some countries, the proportion of female characters in mathematics textbooks was found to be as low as 30%. To combat these biases, it's crucial to revise curricula to promote gender equality, update textbooks to be more inclusive, and use NLP tools to continually monitor and correct these biases in educational content.





PyOhio 2020

Analyzing bias in children's educational materials

Research Focus:

Examining how gender bias in children's educational materials shapes perceptions and roles.

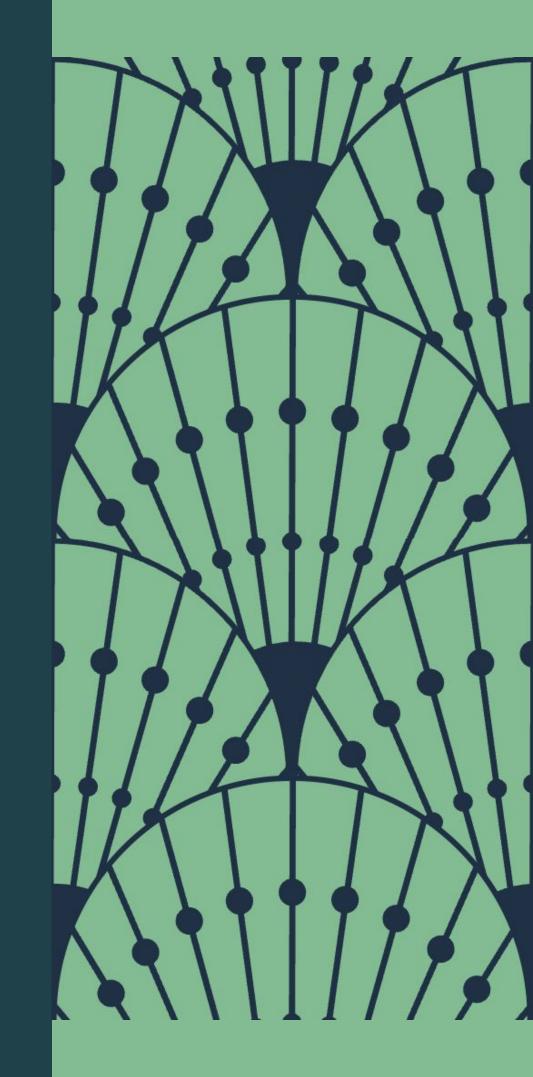
Example: Female characters predominantly portrayed as housewives, while male characters are shown as breadwinners (Kostas, 2019).

Key Findings in Bias

Representation Bias: Female characters underrepresented in fields like mathematics.

Stereotype Bias: Gendered roles (e.g., doctor = male, nurse = female) perpetuated in texts.

Culture of Blame: Identifying victim-blaming language using NLP tools.





PyOhio 2020

Analyzing bias in children's educational materials

Techniques for Bias Detection

Representation Analysis using token frequency in texts.

Stereotype Evaluation through adjective and role association using spaCy and NLTK.

Blame Language Detection via Path Model of Blame, identifying causality and labeling bias.

The Change: Advocating for Gender Equality

Revise curriculum to reflect gender equality and revise textbooks to remove gender stereotypes.

Implement tools to analyze educational content for bias and advocate for inclusivity.







PyCon Lithuania 2O23

Chatting with ChatGPT about everything and nothing at all



Al in Software Development
Summit 2024
Experimenting with SVMs

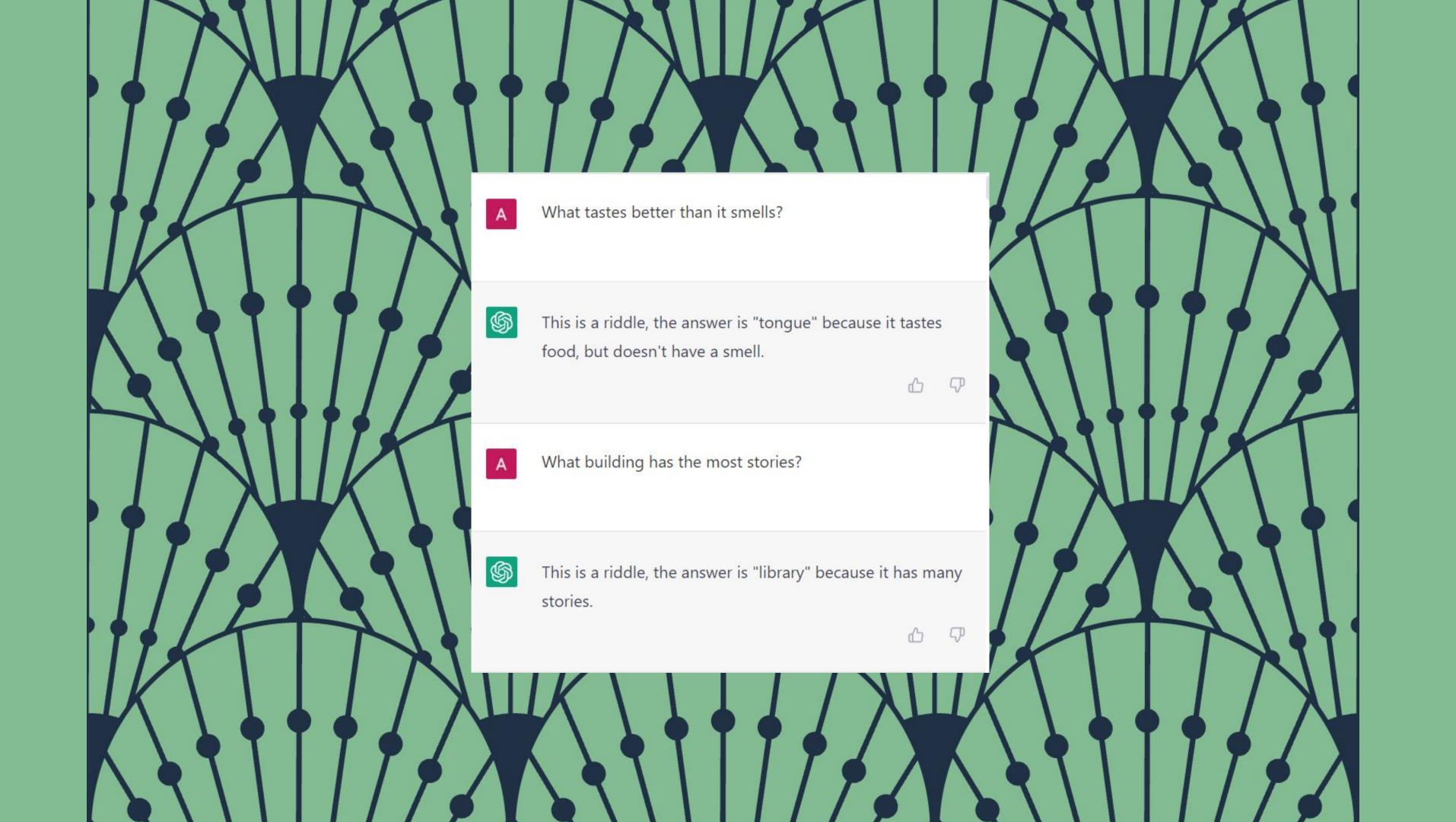


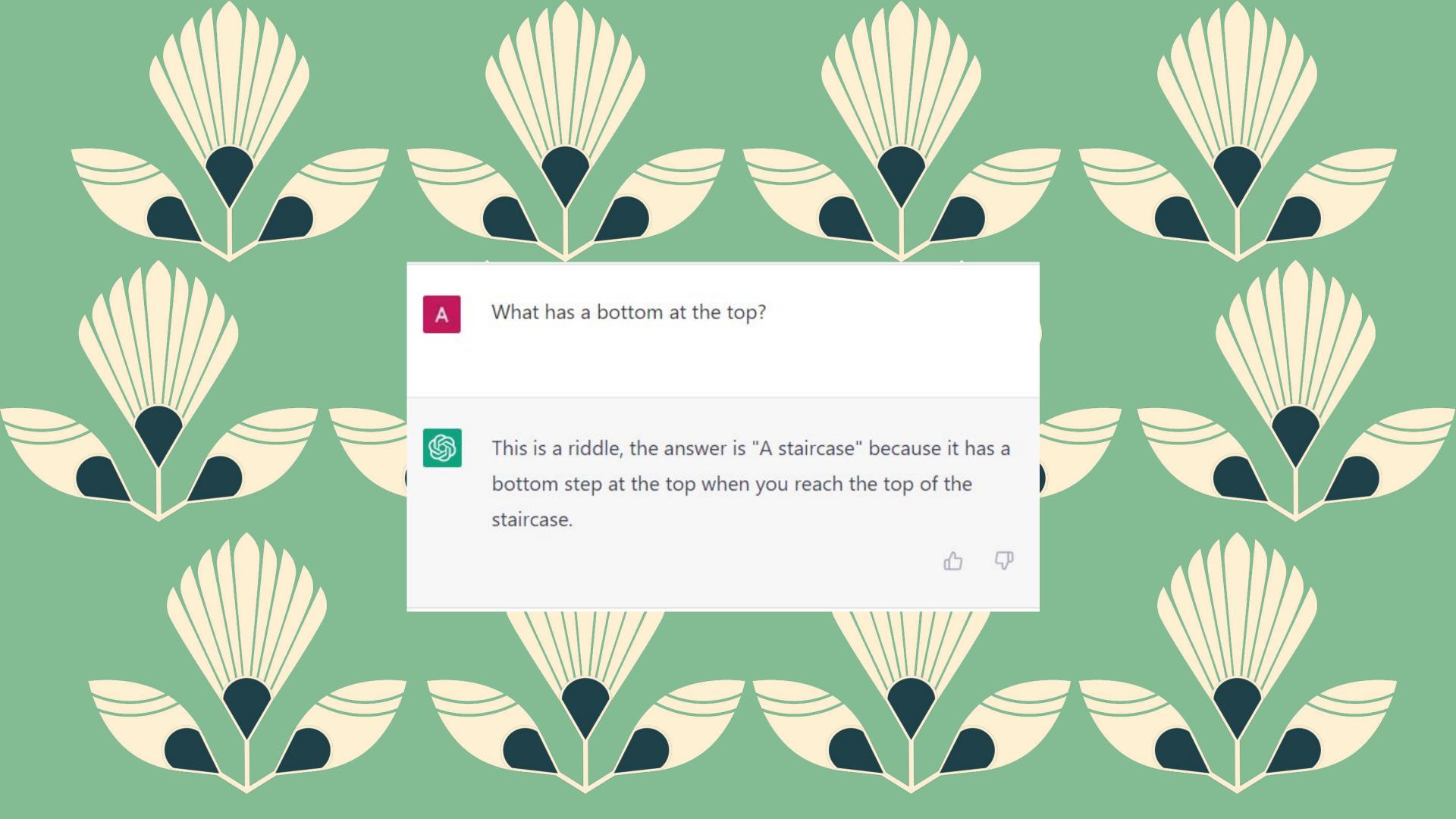
FOSSASIA 2016 Shoes for the Visually Impaired

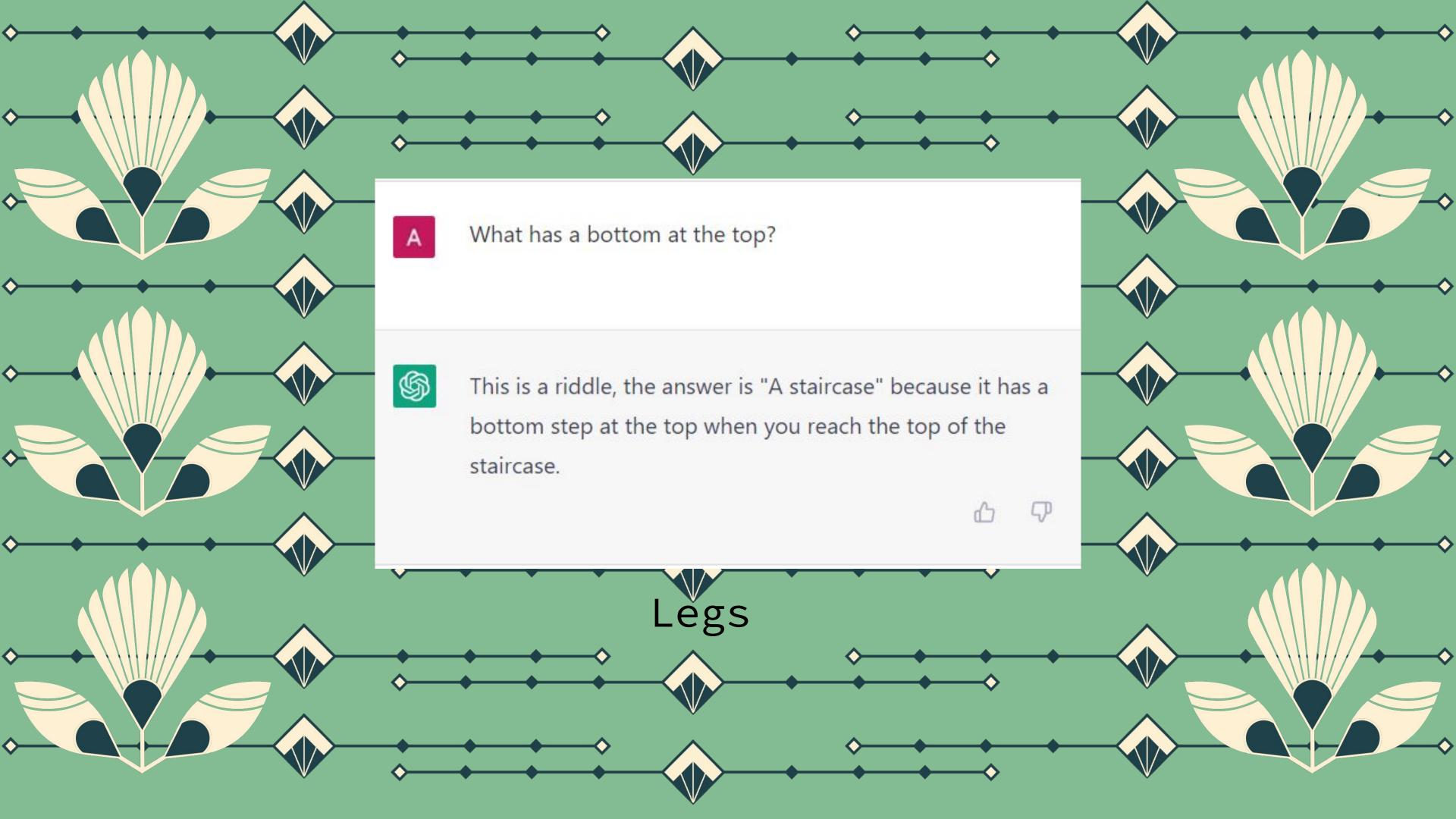






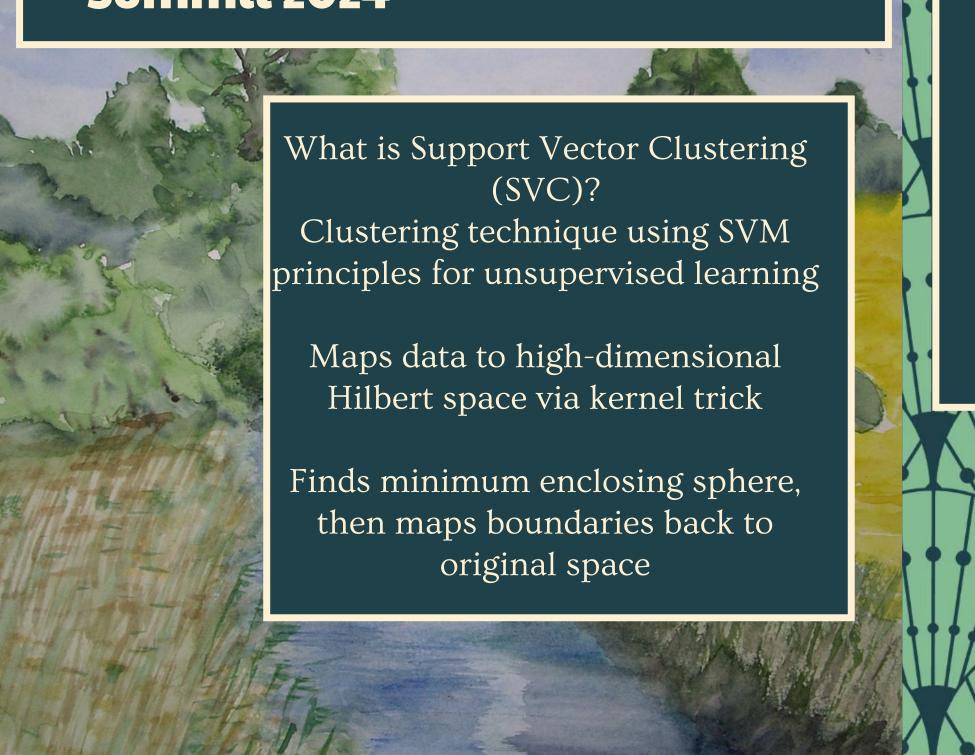






Al in Software Development Summit 2024

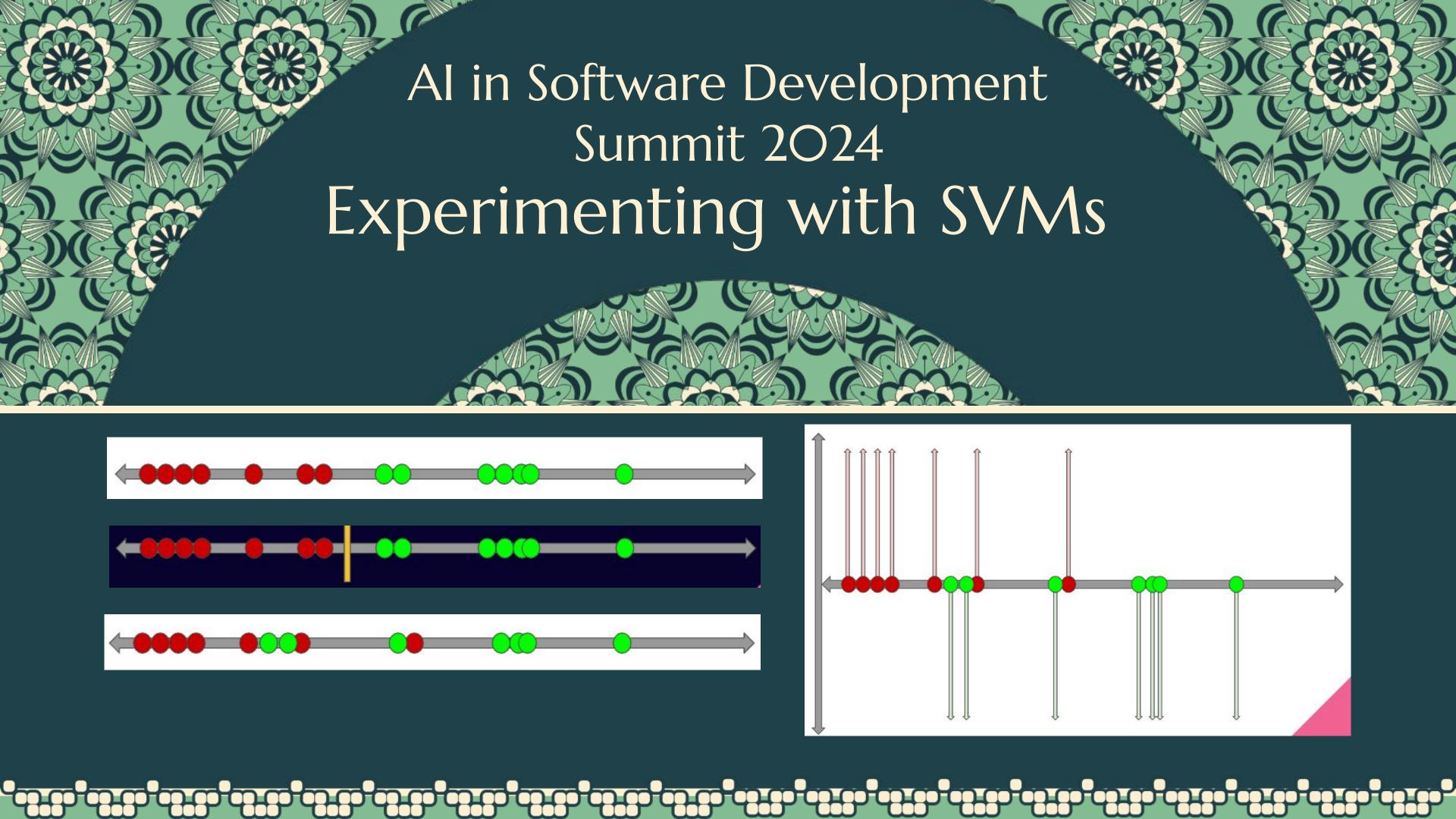
Experimenting with SVMs



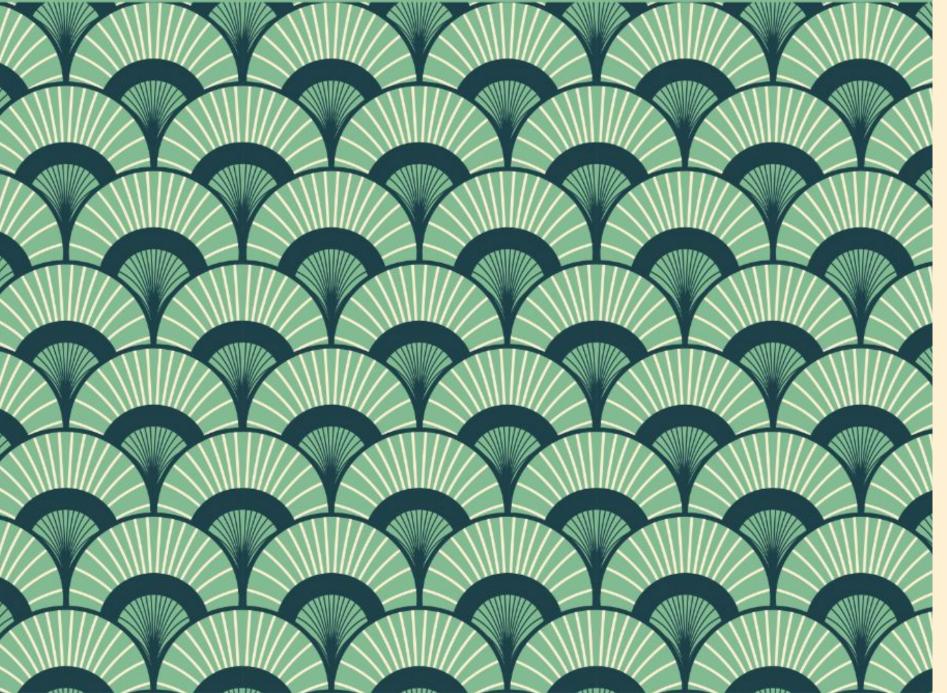
Uses Gaussian kernel (nonlinear transformation)
Two key hyperparameters:
q: kernel width (controls cluster granularity)
p (or C): soft margin (controls tolerance to outliers)
Does not assume shape or number of clusters; adapts naturally

Handles non-convex, overlapping, noisy data
Better accuracy than traditional clustering on complex datasets (e.g., Iris)

Elegant blend of theory (SVM) + practical clustering power



FOSSASIA 2016
Shoes for the
Visually Impaired



Purpose: Designed to improve daily mobility and confidence for the visually impaired.

Core Feature: Shoes equipped with ground-level obstruction sensing.

Control Unit: Arduino + Bluetooth module transmit sensor data to an Android device.

App Interface: Android app (built with MIT App Inventor + PhoneGap) provides voice feedback via a single-button interface.

Advanced Vision: MATLAB-based prototype explores cloud-powered image processing for detecting colors, motion, and signals.

Scalability: Lays the groundwork for future modules (e.g., detecting hanging obstacles) and broader assistive tech innovation.





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Create your own data





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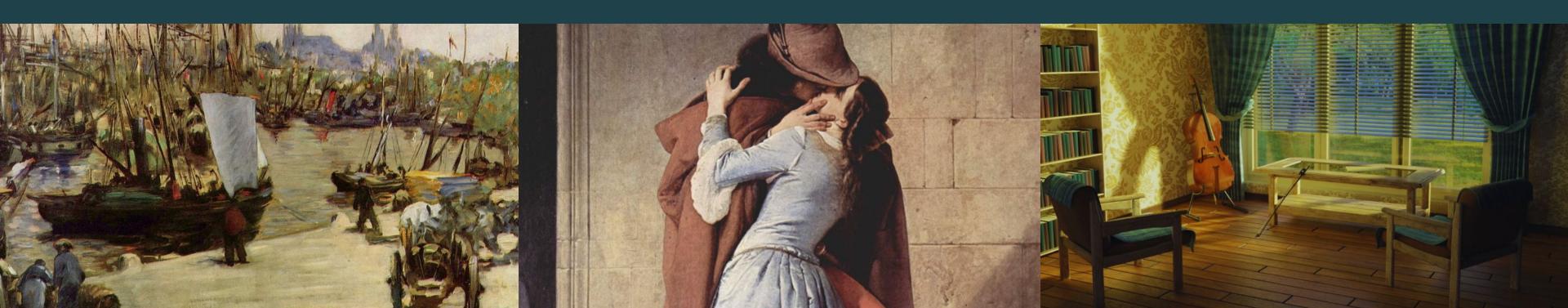


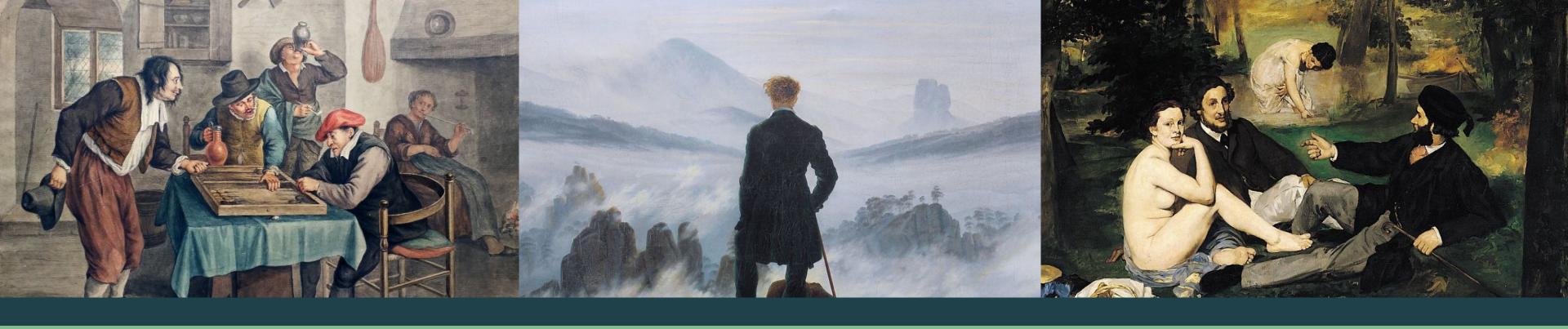


Generative models are useful for creating synthetic data, even if they struggle with factual accuracy and reliability.

Use Case 1 – Tautology Generator: Train a model to generate tautologies, focusing on internal consistency rather than grounded truth.

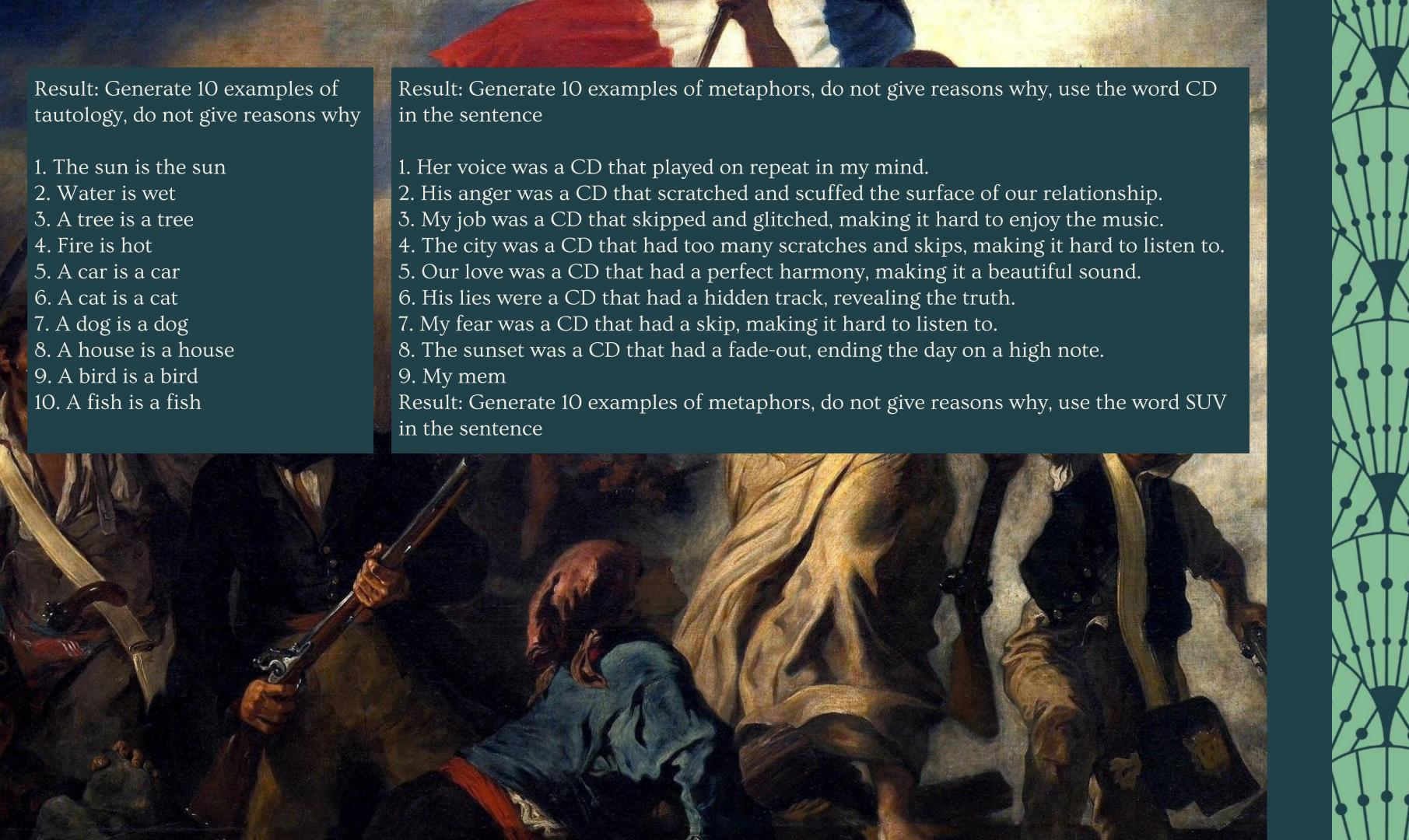
Use Case 2 – Travel Image Tagging: Generate image captions from personal photos, using LLMs to create contextual and creative tags for journaling or curation.



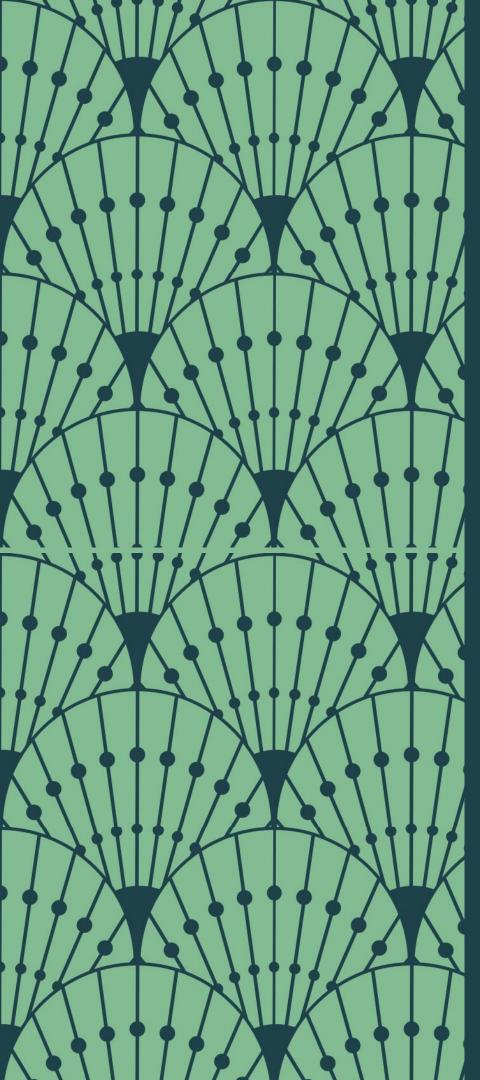


Synthetic data creation through LLMs: Use LLMs to bootstrap datasets for tasks like tautology generation or image captioning without relying on factual correctness. Techniques like distillation and fine-tuning help adapt LLMs to specialized tasks by reusing generated data and tailoring models for specific use cases. Takeaway: Synthetic data generation can unlock meaningful, creative workflows in areas where factual accuracy is not a priority.









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