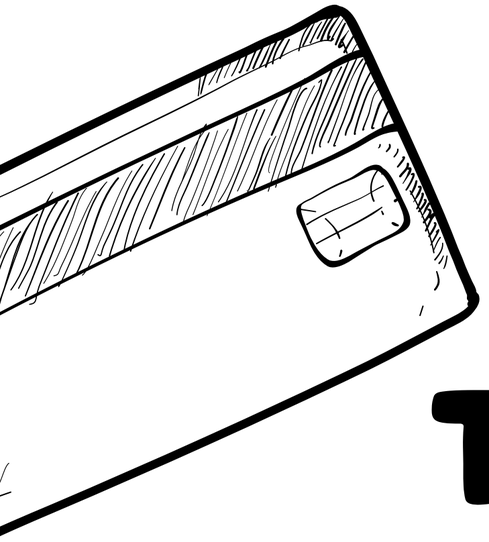
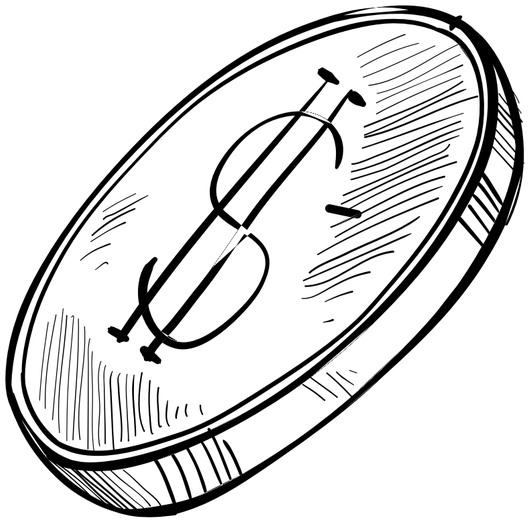






The Price of Progress

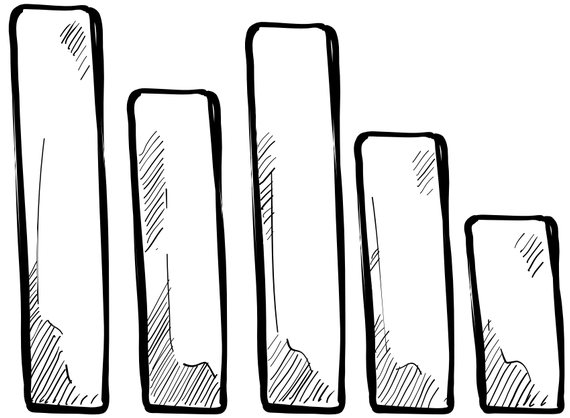
AI and Creative Livelihoods

KETURAH MOODY

2026 Emerging Leaders Initiative Fellow — Minnesota Responsible AI Institute

FROM KETURAH'S ARTICLE

“Everyone deserves to define success on their own terms, but having the freedom to pursue that vision can also require a certain level of economic security.”





Keturah Moody

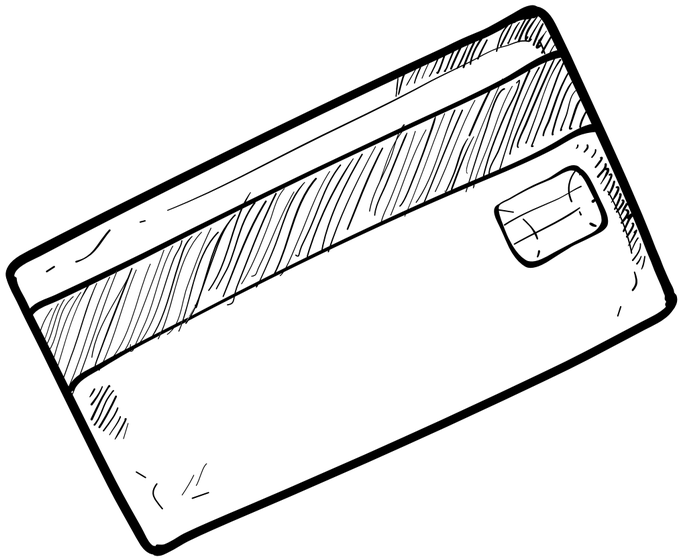
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THE ARTICLE

THE PRICE OF PROGRESS: AI AND CREATIVE LIVELIHOODS

BY KETURAH MOODY
2026 MNRAI EMERGING LEADERS INITIATIVE FELLOW

Success, to me, is deeply personal. Society and family can influence what we believe we should accomplish, but ultimately, I think success comes down to what makes someone feel fulfilled and content with their life.



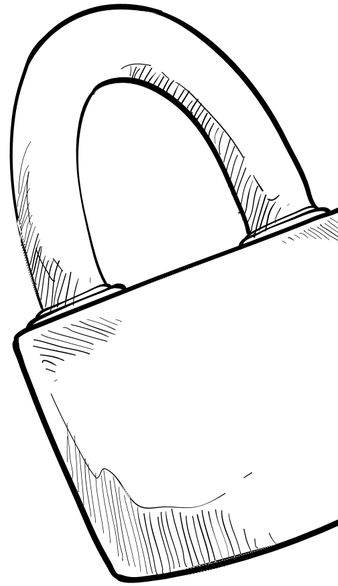
One person may find that fulfillment in earning multiple degrees and leading a company. Another may find it in being a mother who stays home and builds a family. Some may want the best of both worlds. **Everyone deserves to define success on their own terms, but having the freedom to pursue that vision can also require a certain level of economic security.**

Our choices often depend on earning a sustainable living. That is why the economic success promised by AI raises questions about the job security of creatives.

As someone who has worked with small business owners and startup companies, I am seeing a growing question: Why pay a creative professional for something AI can generate?



I understand the appeal of saving money, especially when resources are limited. But how are those savings being weighed against creatives' income, expertise, and future opportunities?



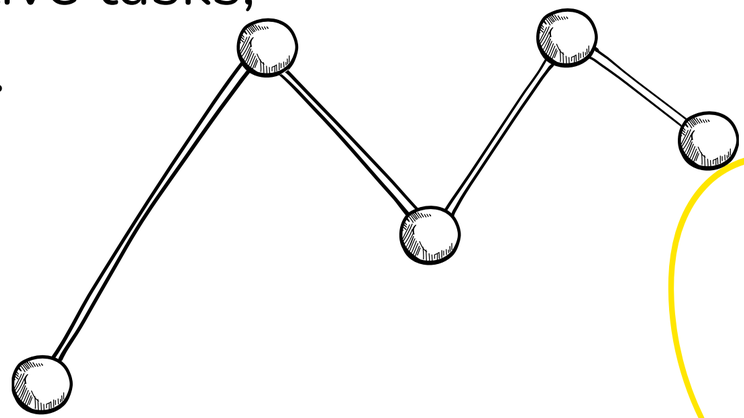
The concern extends beyond losing a job. Clients may expect lower rates because they assume AI makes creative work easier. Businesses may expect smaller teams to produce more content, while freelancers could spend time correcting material generated by AI for less compensation. Increased productivity could benefit a business without improving the worker's financial security.

A caption can be grammatically correct and still miss a brand's voice.

A polished graphic can fail to communicate a meaningful message. In my experience, interest in AI can grow even when the resulting content may not resonate with the intended audience. Producing something quickly does not eliminate the value of strategy, cultural understanding, or creative judgment.

I can envision AI helping creatives manage repetitive tasks, explore ideas, and make time for thoughtful work.

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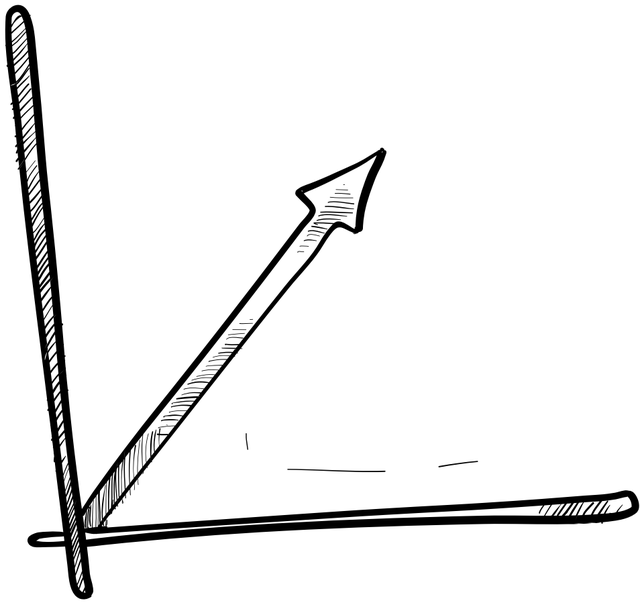


However, businesses must recognize the expertise behind the finished product

and allow workers to benefit from greater efficiency through fair compensation, manageable workloads, and opportunities to grow.



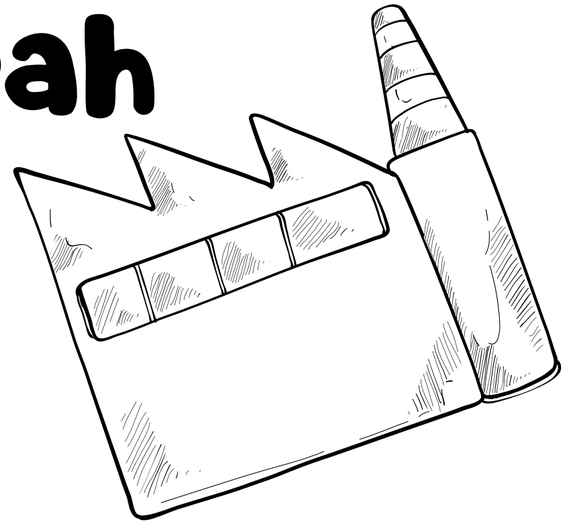
This returns me to my guiding question: How can AI support rather than replace human creatives while protecting their value, dignity, and economic opportunities?



Progress should allow creatives to build sustainable careers and fulfilling lives. Businesses' economic success and workers' financial security should be considered together.

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Two Questions Keturah Leaves Us With



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WHY PAY A CREATIVE PROFESSIONAL FOR SOMETHING AI CAN GENERATE?

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