Our identity is special, and it should be one of the most crucial factors in our social life. In modern context, a significance part of our identity is rooted within technology. We learn from the internet. We criticize the internet. We create different identities from the internet. Generation Z appear heavily influenced and involved as good chunk of them swear by the internet, as Haley Nahman in *Always Watching* notices that “TikTok is full of self-conscious teens who want, just once, to feel like the protagonist, like something more than just themselves.” The idea of having filters and memes is to help document our lives, making our lives more fun and providing efficient socialization. It sounds nice, but there are many people too hyperfixated with showing themselves in a consumable identity, purely for the internet. People will deviate to trends they don’t enjoy or follow famous celebrities to fit in. As a result, identities infused with the internet aren’t as true, “But you can’t just walk around and be visible on the internet – for anyone to see you, you have to *act*,” as Jia Tolentino wrote in *The I in the Internet*. With so much acting, won’t it be difficult to develop deep relationships? Some of us got along with each other because we acted to become a slightly different version of ourselves. Of course, you can’t carter to everyone, so the quest of becoming friends with everyone inevitably fails, even with the power of the internet.

As I used to think, the Hawthorne effect doesn’t necessarily apply to just naturalistic observation. With our cameras and the ability to store thousands of files, we document ourselves often in a technology-driven world. The Hawthorne effect applies there too, where we act for the camera. With the FreezeFrame filter, which captures a moment in time in a video, “Users are meant to give a ‘real’ laugh while filming themselves and freeze the frame right when they do it so they can see what they look like when they laugh.” (Nahman). Moderately, documenting your life with technology is great as you won’t be able to visually see it as well with pen and paper. It allows us to gain a perspective on ourselves that we can’t find otherwise. Once time I was recording myself *The Great Gatsby* rhetorical analysis presentation for AP English and after attempt 50 something, I decided to take a break, using my phone to talk to friends. About 20 minutes later, I realized that I was still recording. Looking at the footage, it was so weird to see myself because this was not how I imagined I would act. I was licking my lips as they were dry from all of the speaking and I sat weirdly, sometimes with one foot up like an iPad kid. I’d still have to watch myself act in public though, because this was just my room.

Most of us have had our fair share of conformity versus individuality and social media has only amplified that. As someone who is interested in studying computer science, working with the internet and computers, I have to acknowledge the many flaws the internet has provided. The internet is temporary life, where people are allowed to be whoever they want. But it’s also quite toxic, in fact, “A large white seabird named Nigel had died next to the concrete decoy bird to whom he had devoted himself for years. An outraged writer tweeted, ‘Even concrete birds do not owe you affection, Nigel,’ and wrote a long Facebook post arguing that Nigel’s courtship of the fake bird exemplified… rape culture.” (Tolentino). Why is it that people hate on a bird who has done no objective harm to society? The social polarization on X, formerly Twitter, has sky rocketed, especially after Elon Musk obtained it. The power to have temporary identities on the internet is something people should not take for granted. While it is true that the internet has shown more good and bad in the world, humans are more likely to remember negative events over positive ones due to our nature. Take MrBeast, for example, who has helped numerous people with their vision and hearing problems. You may pose that this sounds good, why would anyone dislike this? But MrBeast was disliked for documenting himself helping people because people think helping others should not be documented. There should not be any problems with documenting to show other people what you enjoy doing, but people will almost always be criticized for it on the internet.

One of the perks of the internet is being able to have multiple identities. You could act differently on Discord servers for your French class or trading in *Animal Crossing: New Horizons*. Subreddit communities such as r/calculus and r/csMajors are helpful to talk in with your calculus struggles or computer science nerd identity. And of course, there has been a significant emphasis on race, gender, and sexuality with the internet. In our modern world, we look for labels and ways to identify ourselves such as using pronouns in the Instagram biography or Discord About Me. For the labels concerning transgender people and sexuality, when the time is more normalized for people to be transgender and LGBTQ, would those labels have the same value? To people searching for their identity, they can appreciate how simple or complex identities can be. In *What We Believe About Identity*, Julia Alvarez, a Dominican ethnic writer, has written works that helped Latinas integrate into unfamiliar societies. As she immigrated to the United States, she felt like both an American and immigrant at the same time. She started writing about stories about her identity and how later “We all needed vocabularies, stories and testimonials, and over the 50-year stretch of my writing and publishing life, I’ve increasingly seen those needs satisfied.” In many ways, Alvarez is a pioneer, just as how Larry Page and Sergey Bin founded the Google search engine. Google has paved pathways to people to join communities and create identities.