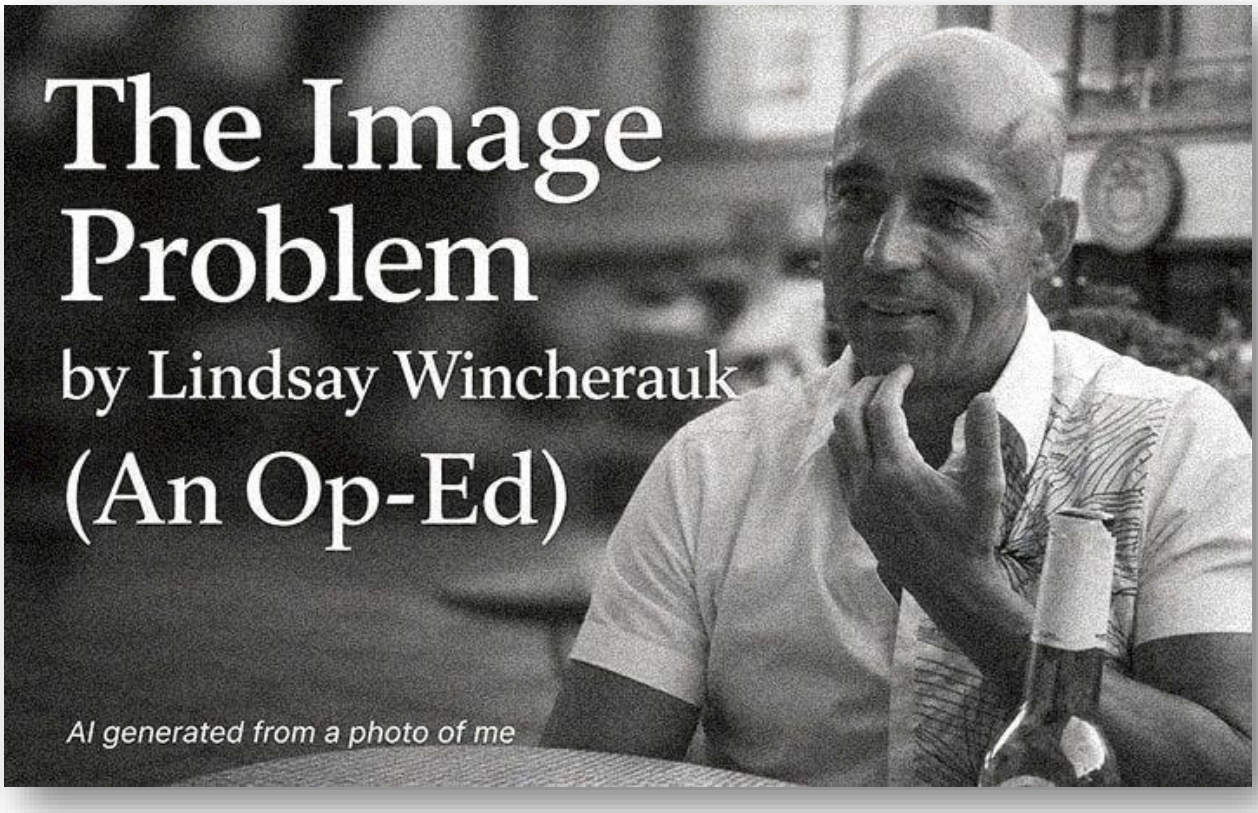
The Image Problem
by Lindsay Wincherauk
(An Op-Ed)
AI generated from a photo of me

The Image Problem

By Lindsay Wincherauk

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MANY OF THE IMAGES on my website (and in my posts) are AI-generated.

I like prompting AI to see what it can create.

I never thought much about it—until someone told me I was stealing. Plagiarizing.

That stopped me.

How can a writer use an AI-generated image to encourage people to read something real?

A conundrum. Not fully formed. Still sitting with me.

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Creative people are under pressure.

If an artist wants to sell a painting, how many are using AI to help describe it?

If a writer can't find a word, do they hire an editor every time? Or do they ask AI?

Most people use tools where they're weak.

We always have.

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For a moment, the digital camera—and then the smartphone—made everyone a photographer.

And it did.

But only those who actually saw survived.

The rest flooded the world with flowers. Sensory overload.

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Everyone can't be a writer.

Not because they don't have stories.

Because telling the truth—about yourself, about the world—costs something.

AI can't live a life.

It can't sit on a seawall and feel something crawl under the skin

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I prompt images.

It's part of my process.

The writing isn't.

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I understand the concerns around AI.

I'm using it as a tool to visually represent moments from my own writing—not to replace artists or claim authorship over any style.

My writing is entirely my own.

That's what matters to me.

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This debate isn't settled.

It's unfolding—in courts, in studios, in comment sections.

We're all participating, whether we mean to or not.

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Warm regards,

Lindsay

Keep writing. Keep creating. Keep discussing.