AI Can’t Replace This Kind of Research

A student’s survey on Irish American identity shows the limits of automation.

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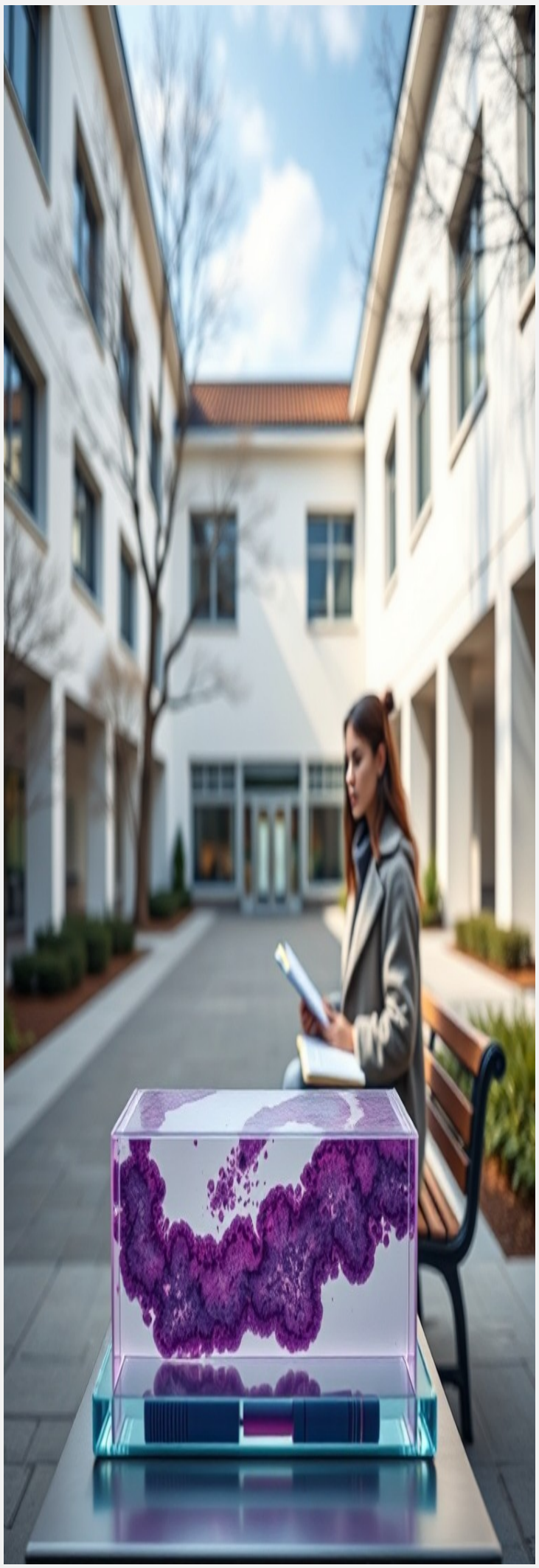
THE DATA

400

Participants in Survey

A peer-reviewed undergraduate study at the University of Pennsylvania surveyed over 400 individuals to examine Irish American social and political values.

This number is not a market statistic, but a critical benchmark in the design of socially sensitive AI research. The scale reflects a deliberate effort to balance statistical power with qualitative depth—something automated systems often overlook. In healthcare AI, where bias detection depends on representative data, such intentional sample design is not a luxury but a necessity.



Source: Penn CURF · Published November 13, 2026
https://curf.upenn.edu/about-us/student-news/Feature-Title/Researching-Irish-America

01

Survey Design Is the New AI Frontier

The real innovation in this research was not the data collected, but the method: a self-designed, culturally grounded survey. In AI healthcare, most models train on aggregated, anonymized datasets that lack context. This project demonstrates that the most valuable data is often the one that asks the right questions—questions only a human with lived experience can frame. AI cannot replicate the discipline of asking, 'How might this be misread?'



02

AI Needs Human Oversight to Avoid Bias

The researcher emphasized sitting honestly with what the data showed, not what she hoped. This is the core of responsible AI development. When AI systems are trained on datasets derived from automated surveys, they inherit the biases of their design—often invisible until a human researcher questions the methodology. The 400-person survey stands as a model: human-led, culturally attuned, and ethically rigorous.

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