

# Digitally Illustrating Climate Change

## Instructions:

Read on page two how images changed the public's perception of climate change. Then, using text from "Losing Earth" and a work of art or image currently in the public domain, create a visual that conveys a part of the history of the climate change debate.

### Consider:

1. The visual you create will convey a message. Your visual might highlight imagery in the text or make a connection to other historical events depicted in art.
2. The visual you create will have an audience. Your visual, like a meme, might use a format that students will understand or may reference an event that only older adults may know about.
3. The visual you create and your choice of text will have a tone. Your visual might be humorous, serious, alarming, or comforting depending on the message you want to convey.

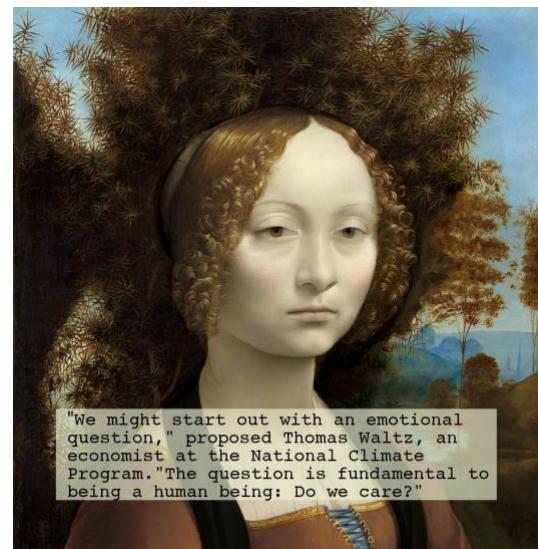
## Recommended Resources:

Public Domain Images & Art	Free Visual Editing Programs & Applications
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">National Gallery of Art</a></li> <li>2. <a href="#">The Metropolitan Museum of Art</a></li> <li>3. <a href="#">The Library of Congress</a></li> <li>4. <a href="#">Rijks Museum</a></li> <li>5. <a href="#">NASA Image &amp; Video Library</a></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">Phonto (app)</a></li> <li>2. <a href="#">MOLDIV (app)</a></li> <li>3. <a href="#">Adobe Photoshop Express (app)</a></li> <li>4. <a href="#">GNU Image Manipulation Program (software)</a></li> <li>5. <a href="#">Google Slides (web-based)</a></li> <li>6. <a href="#">Google Docs (web-based)</a></li> </ol>

## Examples:



El Greco's "Laocoön" with text by Nathaniel Rich.  
Public domain artwork obtained through the  
National Gallery of Art open access image database.  
Design by Kayla Edwards.



Leonardo da Vinci's "Ginevra de' Benci" with text by  
Nathaniel Rich. Public domain artwork obtained  
through the National Gallery of Art open access  
image database. Design by Kayla Edwards

These materials were created to support "[Losing Earth](#)" by Nathaniel Rich and George Steinmetz, published in *The New York Times Magazine* August 1, 2018. You can find this and more educational resources at [www.pulitzercenter.org/nytclimate](http://www.pulitzercenter.org/nytclimate)

## How Images Changed the Public's Perception of Climate Change

*It was as if, without warning, the sky opened and the sun burst through in all its irradiating, blinding fury. The mental image was of a pin stuck through a balloon, a chink in an eggshell, a crack in the ceiling — Armageddon descending from above. It was a sudden global emergency: There was a hole in the ozone layer.* — Nathaniel Rich

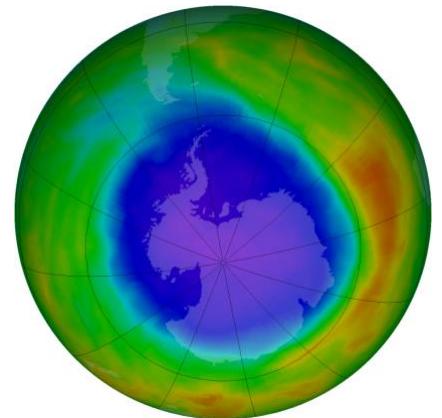
Technology allows us to make slogans, hashtags, stories, and graphics go viral. The creative content we share with others signals what issues interest us and allows us to convince others that these issues are important.

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In Nathaniel Rich's historical account of the political and scientific discourse about climate change between 1979 and 1989, the "hole in the ozone layer" emerges as a problem that politicians, scientists, and everyday American could imagine.

In 1985, the slogan "a hole in the ozone layer" frightened many and led people to take action. On June 10-11, 1986 Senator John H. Chafee of Rhode Island convened hearings on ozone depletion and the greenhouse effect. During these hearings, Dr. Robert Watson, director of NASA's upper atmospheric program, screened a 3 minute film for those in attendance. The film was an animated depiction of the density of the Ozone layer in October over 6 consecutive years. At last, people had a visual image of threat caused by climate change--a rapidly growing hole.

Following these June 1986 senate hearings, both the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* published stories on the climate change—increasing the public's awareness of the threat to the ozone layer. Scientists convinced others of the importance of this ozone "hole" because they modeled the phenomenon using computer graphics.



Graphic model of the ozone level above Antarctica on October 7, 1989.  
Image courtesy of NASA Earth Observatory & NASA.