



Division of Academic Affairs
**Eugene H. Fram Chair in
Applied Critical Thinking**

Fram Focus volume 12:3 – October 2026

Fram Signature Events

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Fram Signature Lecture

- **2026 Fram Signature Lecture: Is AI Just a Stochastic Parrot — Or an Apocalypse Waiting to Happen? *A critical thinker's guide to cutting through the hype and the fear* with Kerrie Holley.** November 3, 3:30 – 5:00 pm.
- **We're seeking RIT faculty, students, clubs, and collaborators to showcase at our Signature receptions.** (e.g., posters, digital displays, 3D-printed materials, clubs, etc. Re-use of exhibit materials encouraged!).

Fram Finds

- **Brick City Homecoming & Family Weekend:** October 16 – 18, 2026.

A Few Thoughts

- **Shal Khazanchi**, Associate Dean, Saunders College of Business.

From Gene Fram

- *Protecting human skills is vital as AI advances into the workplace*
- *Use AI as a sparring partner, not an oracle*
- *Are employers hiring for today's labour market or the one they already know?*
- *New IBM CHRO Study: AI Puts Critical Thinking at the Center of Workforce Priorities*
- *Yours truly. ChatGPT: I used an AI detector for a month. What I found from my peers, dates, and heroes horrified me*

FRAM SIGNATURE LECTURE

- **2026 Fram Signature Lecture: Is AI Just a Stochastic Parrot — Or an Apocalypse Waiting to Happen? *A critical thinker's guide to cutting through the hype and the fear* with Kerrie Holley.** November 3, 3:30 – 5:00 pm, Ingle Auditorium. A reception will follow in the Fireside Lounge, where light refreshments will be served.

Abstract: Two years ago we asked whether AI was nothing more than machine learning. Today the debate has divided into camps: those who dismiss large language models as "stochastic parrots" mindlessly remixing text, and those who warn that AI is an existential threat waiting to happen. Both mislead the same way: they turn a sprawling landscape of models and systems into a single story about "AI," handing you a verdict instead of a way to think. The questions that actually matter — which system, doing what, with what capabilities, under what context and control — is one you can keep asking, because it changes every time the technology does. We'll trace how AI evolved into today's models and open the hood on how they really work: tokens, attention, next-token prediction. This is not a technical detour, but what lets you navigate alongside AI instead of just reacting to it. Then we'll weigh it: real breakthroughs in healthcare, STEM, and accessibility,

against real harm: deepfakes, AI-enabled fraud, and eroding trust in what we see and hear. You'll leave with a playbook: a handful of questions that sort any AI claim into demonstrated, plausible, or speculation, ready for the next model, and the one after that. The parrot and the apocalypse are both stories about a technology. What they can't do is think for you. You can. That's YOUR power in the age of AI.

Bio: Kerrie Holley is a technologist and engineer whose career spans more than five decades of computing. Since beginning his career in 1969, he has engineered systems across a variety of technology eras, from banking mainframes and the web to e-commerce, cloud financial platforms, and AI-powered healthcare. Holley has helped create technology at some of today's most influential companies, including Google, Cisco, IBM, and Optum, the world's largest healthcare company. His contributions to technology have been recognized through his induction into the National Academy of Engineering (2023) and the National Inventors Hall of Fame (2025).

For Student registration, click [HERE](#).

For RIT Faculty, Staff, and Community members, click [HERE](#).

- **We're seeking RIT faculty, students, clubs, and collaborators to showcase innovative activities (e.g., posters, digital displays, 3D-printed materials, student clubs, etc. Re-use of exhibit materials encouraged!).** Two receptions will feature these:
 - **Monday, Nov. 2 | 5:30–6:30 PM**
University Gallery – Invite-only audience
 - **Tuesday, Nov. 3 | 5:00–6:00 PM**
Fireside Lounge – Open to the RIT community (any and all interesting topics)

Register to exhibit [HERE](#) by October 16, 2026. Any questions? ritframchair@rit.edu

FRAM FINDS

- **Brick City Homecoming & Family Weekend:** October 16 – 18, 2026, all day. Room/Location: Main Campus. Brick City Homecoming & Family Weekend is a longstanding RIT tradition of celebrating families, students, alumni, staff, and friends of the University with one spectacular weekend. For more information, click [HERE](#).

A FEW THOUGHTS

In this issue, meet:

- **Shal Khazanchi**, Associate Dean, Saunders College of Business. Read Shal's thoughts related to critical thinking [HERE](#).

FROM GENE FRAM

- "[Protecting human skills is vital as AI advances into the workplace](#)" by Philip Morris International, September 10, 2026.
- "[Use AI as a sparring partner, not an oracle](#)" by Marc Schmitt, Nature, September 9, 2026.
- "[Are employers hiring for today's labour market or the one they already know?](#)" by Sue Duke, Yahoo Finance, September 3, 2026.
- "[New IBM CHRO Study: AI Puts Critical Thinking at the Center of Workforce Priorities](#)" by IBM, September 21, 2026.
- "[Yours truly, ChatGPT: I used an AI detector for a month. What I found from my peers, dates, and heroes horrified me](#)" by Aki Ito, Business Insider, September 28, 2026.

