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Writer-Librarian viewpoint: AI's foreseeable impact on literature

Zhe Benedict YEO

Singapore Management University, benedictyeo@smu.edu.sg

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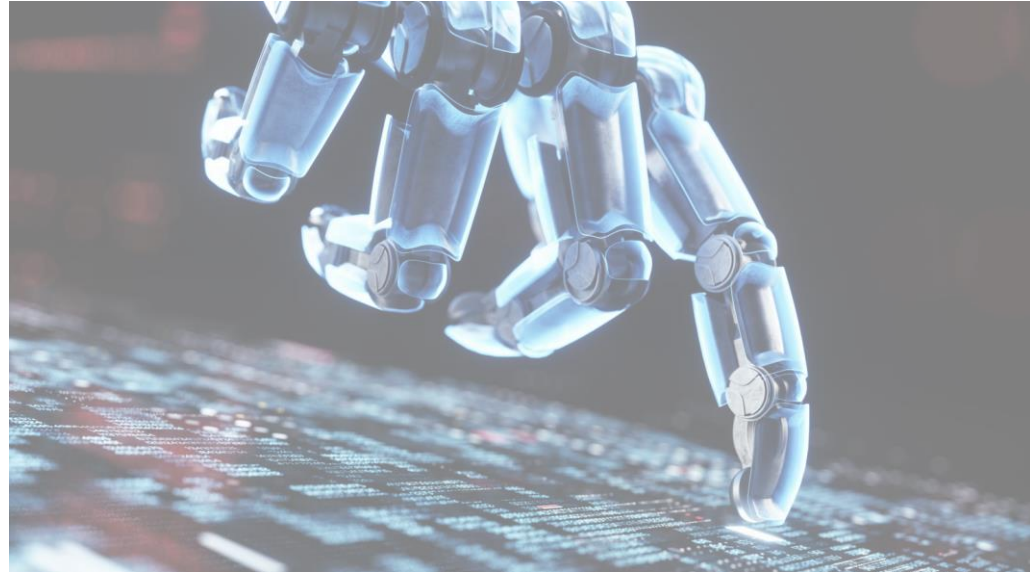
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NLB-LAS sharing Writer-Librarian viewpoint: AI's foreseeable impact on literature

Benedict Yeo
Research Librarian, (Social Sciences)

Benedictyeo@smu.edu.sg



National Library Board
Singapore



About me

Benedict Yeo is the Research Librarian for the Social Sciences at **Singapore Management University**.

He also sits in the **Digital and Information Literacy Community of Practice** set up by NLB, which sees representatives from IHLs and Ministries.

He has worked across public, academic and special libraries.



"Benedict Yeo" AND "Zed Yeo"

Zed Yeo is an author of 15 books, including *Half Ghost* and the bestselling *Saurus Series*.*

He is a recipient of the **National Arts Council's P&P Grant** and spoken at **Asian Festival of Children's Content** and **Young Writers Festival**.

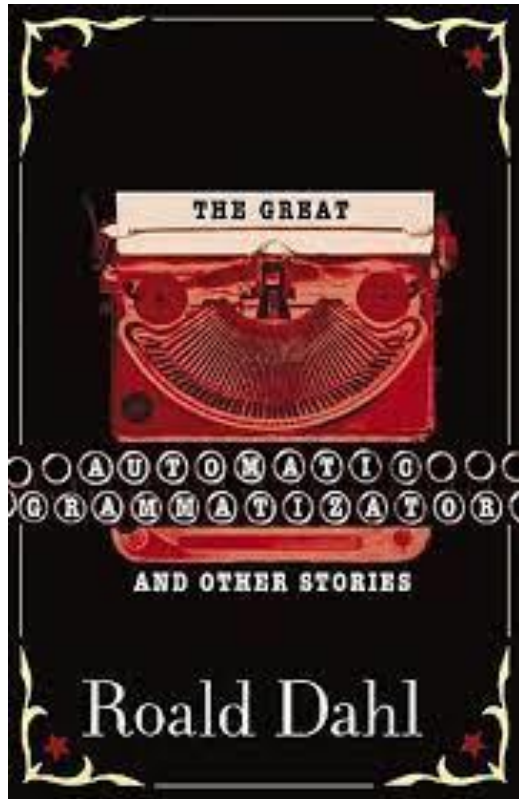
*Kinokuniya weekly
bestseller

Why I think this talk is important

Literature = Stories

Stories shape identity

So what does it mean for **humans** when machines (**AI**) write our stories?

**Audio Books:**

- *"The Great Automatic Grammatizator"* read by Will Self

<https://www.nlb.gov.sg/biblio/200168266>

In 1982, Roald Dahl

wrote a short story about a supercomputer which solves the world's big factual questions in seconds. Next, they used it to generate stories.

What do you think happened?

Is ChatGPT is the cusp of this change?

CONTENTS

1. Why should we talk about AI and literature
2. What do local authors think about use of AI and impact of AI
3. Current event: Writer's strike
4. What can AI write, right now
5. For librarians and authors:
 - Copyright and credits
 - Classification or normalisation?
6. Walking with innovation and technology

2. WHAT DO LOCAL AUTHORS THINK ABOUT

- Use of AI
- Impact of AI



Raymus Chang is a creative producer and with eight years of experience and has produced over 30 short films.



Victor Fernando R. Ocampo is a Singapore-based Filipino writer. He is the author of **The Infinite Library and Other Stories** (Math Paper Press, 2017) and **Here be Dragons** (Canvas Press, 2015).



Melanie is the author of 15 children's books including the **Amazing Ash & Superhero Ah Ma series** and **Out & About Singapore** series. She is also a communications lecturer and freelance writer.

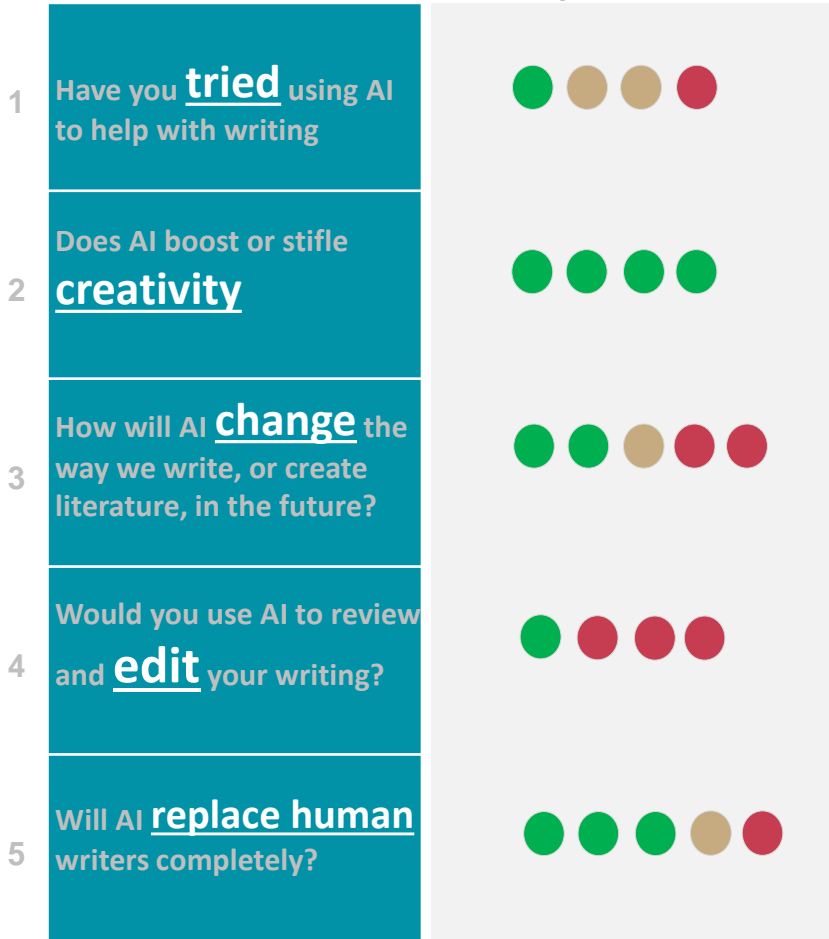


Adan Jimenez is a writer, editor, and translator. He is one half of **AJ Low**, authors of the bestselling **Sherlock Sam** children's series. He loves comics, video games, science fiction, and sandwiches.

I asked 5 questions to the writers

Question

Response



Insights

- 3 of 4 writers have tried ChatGPT (for writing, in some ways)
- AI is expected to **boost creativity**
- Mixed attitudes** on influence of AI
- Preference for human editors
- On being replaced: **Copywriters at risk**, but creative writing for entertainment, maybe less so

Legend




Each orb represents a comment

Green = welcome / optimistic

Red = aversive / fearful


Yellow = neutral

Note: Questions abbreviated for length

Have you tried using AI to help with writing 	Does AI boost or stifle creativity 	How will AI change the way we write, or create literature, in the future? 	Would you use AI to review and edit your writing? 	Will AI replace human writers completely? 
<p>get general story ideas</p>	<p>generates some useful leads idea generator or sounding board</p> <p>absolutely boosts suggesting outlines quickly</p> <p>rewrite my work / new structures</p> <p>Boosts. It tells me what not to write.</p>	<p>indispensable tool for me. In time, more writers will use it.</p> <p>hope : as tools, in the same way we use thesaurus.com or Scrivener</p>	<p>use it to edit</p>	<p>Only for basic tasks or simple and derivative ones</p> <p>Creative writing, especially writing for entertainment and growth will continue to exist.</p> <p>many companies will try in the short run, but will eventually realize this is actually a bad idea. So, no, I don't think ChatGPT or other AI tools will replace human writers completely.</p>
<p>limited in fiction translation</p>		<p>new development in literature. contentious but interesting. there might be significant work from it. open minded to it, but may never use it.</p>		<p>will infiltrate the creative writing industry but won't take it over completely.</p>
<p>Never</p>		<p>I expect writing to be churned out faster > publishers' timelines > pressurise authors to churn out > possible decline in the quality of writing.</p> <p>fear: is that it will be used as a replacement</p> <p>Companies are replacing humans with AI programs > WGA strike tries to ensure this doesn't happen in film & TV</p>	<p>No. A human reaction to it is more rewarding. ChatGPT does not have a face and a voice (for now)</p> <p>I still rely on my trusted group of beta (human) readers (especially when seeking out emotional responses to my manuscripts.</p> <p>Honestly, probably not. I'd rather use a trained, experienced editor</p>	<p>copywriting will be replaced</p>

3. CURRENT EVENT: WRITERS' STRIKE

- Over 11,00 screenwriters who are members of the Writers Guild of America (WGA) have been on a strike which began since 2 May 2023

NewScientist Sign in  Enter search keyword

Technology

Why use of AI is a major sticking point in the ongoing writers' strike

The writers' strike was initially about compensation in an era of streaming services. Now the role of AI has also become a major point of contention in negotiations between the Writers Guild of America and companies such as Disney and Netflix

By [Jeremy Hsu](#)

 15 May 2023

Writers Guild of America West Retweeted

 **Skip Torvinen** @itsskip · May 16

Walked the line to support my #AbbottElementary family and the @WGAWest @PMSchumacker @BisHilarious @JustJoya @LisaAnnWalter #katepeterman #iasupports



AI-content not Literary Material?

The WGA has drawn a line in the sand around minimum staffing and minimum weeks. Those issues will have to be addressed but there may be all kinds of creative ways to get there. AI — if I had to guess now, it will be some kind of statement giving WGA the cover it seeks — AI-produced content cannot be considered “literary material,” which is an important designation in the WGA contract.

How And Why AI Is Part Of The 2023 Writers Strike

to existing lines... to future programs that greater viewership. Require transparency regarding program views.	
AD-SUPPORTED FREE STREAMING SERVICES	
High-budget programs made-for AVOD get TV weeklies and script fees and improved residuals.	Rejected our proposal. Refused to make a counter.
PENSION & HEALTH—TEAMS	
Each member of a team gets P&H contributions as if they were writing as an individual.	Rejected our proposal. Refused to make a counter.
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE	
Regulate use of artificial intelligence on MBA- covered projects: AI can't write or rewrite literary material; can't be used as source material; and MBA-covered material can't be used to train AI.	Rejected our proposal. Countered by offering annual meetings to discuss advancements in technology.
TENTATIVE AGREEMENTS	
SCRIPT FEES FOR STAFF WRITERS: Staff Writers receive	
SPAN: Increase span cap from \$400,000 to \$450,000 protection to writers on limited series.	
OPTIONS & EXCLUSIVITY: Increase earnings cap	
PILOT & BACKUP SCRIPT PREMIUM FOR HBSVOD: premium apply to programs made-for HBSVOD.	

The Minimum Basic Agreement (MBA) is the collective bargaining agreement that covers the benefits, rights, and protections for most of the work done by WGA members.



Striking Hollywood writers fear AI will write them out of the script

Will AI take over?

While this may sound like a sci-fi plot twist — where the writer gets written out of the script by a robot — digital developers warn this tech does have the potential to replace workers in many creative industries.

Writers rage against the machines

"A new literary idea that is put down in script form needs to be written by a human and it can't be rewritten by a machine," Addelman said.



Workers and supporters of the Writers Guild of America protest outside Universal Studios Hollywood on May 3. (Mario Anzuoni/Reuters)

4. WHAT CAN AI WRITE, RIGHT NOW?

ChatGPT

- ChatGPT is the general generative AI text tool
 - Easily accessible
 - Not specialised

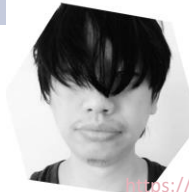
<https://www.instagram.com/gweezilla/>

LS Hey ChatGPT, what would Lee Kuan Yew say to me (Gwee Li Sui) if he were still alive today? Can you answer in the form of a letter from him?



 Dear Gwee Li Sui,

I hope this letter finds you in good health and spirits. I must admit, I am a bit surprised to be writing to you after all these years. But as I reflect on my life's work, I realize that one of the most important things I did was to inspire a younger generation to lead Singapore into the future.



Gwee Li Sui

Singapore

Gwee Li Sui likes to write and draw. He doesn't like to talk much lately - but SWF is OK. He has published many collections of verse (try Googling!), some non-fiction books (all of them are hits), and not enough comics. He is also a professional hermit.

<https://www.singaporewritersfestival.com/writer-presenter-details/gwee-li-sui>

LS Hey ChatGPT, can you speak Singlish?



Sure, lah! Singlish is a creole language that incorporates English, Malay, Chinese, and Tamil, among other languages. As a language model, I am trained to understand and generate text in various languages and dialects, including Singlish. So what do you want to know, sia?






Can ChatGPT write fiction?

[My experiments]


M

Write a super sad tragic story that turns into a screwball comedy with a happy ending 



One
in a
we
dev
alc

M

Write the next episode to the story above, when a new villain named the Clown King appears 

But their success would not last forever. A new villain appeared on the scene, calling himself the "Clown King". He was a sinister and powerful clown who had a personal vendetta against Sarah and Jerry.

It can write a short story and a sequel. This is rather impressive. But it cannot do complex world building yet.

AI Writing Tools available on the market

 **Writer**
<https://writer.com>

Writer - Generative AI your people will love

Create original content that actually sounds like your company wrote it. **Writer** is the only **AI writing** platform that can be trained on your own best-performing ...


[AI Content Detector](#) · [Ask Writer](#) · [Writer for Chrome](#) · [Writer for Figma](#)

 **Rytr**
<https://rytr.me>

Rytr - Best AI Writer, Content Generator & Writing Assistant

Rytr is an **AI writing** assistant that helps you create high-quality content, in just a few seconds, at a fraction of the cost! ; killer content, effortlessly.

[AI email writer](#) · [Conversion AI alternative](#) · [Shortly AI alternative](#) · [Rytr vs. Copy.AI](#)

 **Simplified**
<https://simplified.com> · [ai-writer](#)

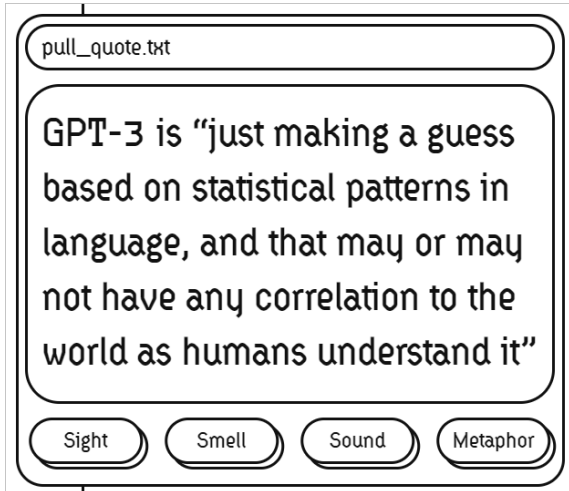
Free AI Writer - Text Generator & AI Copywriting Assistant

Simplified **AI Writer** is a free **ai** copywriting assistant that generates high-quality content for blogs, articles, product descriptions, websites & social ...

A Search on Google for
AI Writer

Sudo Write

- specialised AI tool for fiction writing



<https://www.theverge.com/c/23194235/ai-fiction-writing-amazon-kindle-sudowrite-jasper>

Each word is guessed one at a time

Starlight fell across their faces as they walked hand in hand across the floating boulevards of the city. The night was alive with the music of a thousand stars, and the air was filled with the sweet smell of the sea. They smiled at each other and the w

in the beauty of the r	stopped = 21.39%
the stars, marveling a	laughed = 17.01%
the infinite possibili	smiled = 7.23%
the stars seemed to t	were = 7.14%
	walked = 6.47%

Total: -2.63 logprob on 1 tokens
(59.24% probability covered in top 5 logits)

It's virtually impossible to get the same result twice, depending on the input.

Sudo Write

Tools like “describe” generates a description of a character for the ~~writer~~ user

marketing copy, Sudowrite is designed for fiction writers. Authors paste what they’ve written into a soothing sunset-colored interface, select some words, and have the AI rewrite them in an ominous **tone**, or with more inner **conflict**, or propose a **plot twist**, or generate **descriptions** in every sense plus metaphor.



example

“Nutmeg’s hair is red, but her bright green eyes show that she has more in common with creatures of the night than with day,” the program returned.

Sudo Write

- One **specialised fiction-writing AI tool** is Sudowrite
 - built on OpenAI's language model GPT-3
 - where most of these tools are meant to write company emails and marketing copy, Sudowrite is designed for fiction writers
 - Authors paste what they've written, select some words and certain **writer tasks** can seemingly be performed:
 - AI rewrite them in an ominous tone, or with more inner conflict
 - propose a plot twist
 - generate descriptions in every sense plus metaphor

Workshops on AI at 2023 AFCC

Let's Play with A.I. Writing Tools

25 MAY | 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM
WORKSHOP | L3, DRAMA CENTRE FUNCTION ROOM 2



The Role of the Translator in the Age of AI

28 MAY | 9:00 AM - 10:15 AM
PANEL | L16, THE POD



The Chatbot Made Me Do It

28 MAY | 10:45 AM - 12:00 PM
PANEL | L5, POSSIBILITY ROOM

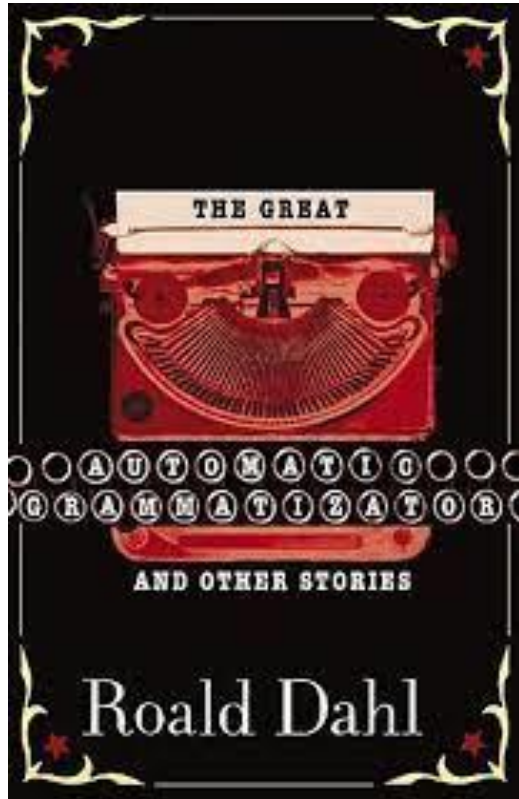


6. FOR LIBRARIANS AND AUTHORS

- Copyright and Credits
- Classification or normalisation?

This section comprises the presenter's opinion

Remember Dhal's story? How did it end?



Audio Books:

- [“The Great Automatic Grammatizator”](#) read by Will Self

<https://www.nlb.gov.sg/biblio/200168266>

Spoiler Alert

- “**over half of all** the novels and **stories** published in the English language” are now created by Adolph Knipe on the Great Automatic Grammatizator.
- Successful writers have their names (and styles) bought over, and **AI** writes in their style

Volume of AI-generated Works Will Increase

- The corpus of work generated by AI will likely gain traction over time
- What begins as a niche genre (AI-fiction) may become the norm

Classification / Genre

Future works *largely* produced by AI may be categorised as AI generated works

- When you enter an art gallery, you do not see photos
- At a photography exhibition you do not see art
- They are different genres / mediums

Authorship, Credits and Royalties

Scenario 1: AI Works may be credited and differentiated in some way from human work

Some possible ways to credit AI works:

- AI-fiction edited by (prompter)
- AI-fiction in the style of (training data writer names), edited by (prompter)
 - It could be similar to creative commons, derivative works
 - Writers whose works are used to train AI could be paid royalties

Audience Attitudes

This is hard to predict now

- Will consumers simply lap up whatever is cooked up by AI as long as it is entertaining?
 - like instant noodles over hand-made noodles?

Normalisation

Scenario 2: It is also possible that **AI-generated fiction simply becomes accepted** with little distinction from human-written content.

For instance, we may not vigorously distinguish digital paintings over traditional paintings. Digital art is quite the norm.

In this scenario, classification and meta-tags do not label and distinguish most ai-generated fiction and works, as they become normalised

WALKING WITH
6. INNOVATION
&
TECHNOLOGY

It continues to appear that

there is a **humanistic value** in knowing that a human wrote those stories

- For instance, people are not interested in watching a chess match between two supercomputers, but there is a demand for watching human grandmasters
 - The same extends for many human type activities

What's humanistic value?

In this presentation, I'm defining humanistic value as follows:

"A thing has humanistic value if we can go "That's amazing" if and because it was done by a human"

Walking with Innovation and Technology

SMU allows students to use ChatGPT to write stories, make short films, to complete assignment

04 Apr 2023



Photo: Lianhe Zaobao

[All in the Storytelling for Organisations and Brands course, taught by SMU Associate Professor of Communication Management Mark Chong](#)

- SMU takes an open approach to new technologies
- SMU Libraries also shares this enterprise, as with fellow libraries, in the adoption and experimentation with new technologies
 - Active in seeking partnership with staff, industry, and fellow libraries

[NEW] Storytelling Through AR by The MeshMinds Foundation
An introductory workshop where you will learn how digital storytelling and augmented reality (AR) is used for art, culture and heritage. You will be guided on how to use Meta Spark Studio, one of the world's leading AR platforms, to create your first AR effect.

See list of SMU Libraries [Bite-Sized Library Workshops](#)

Summary

1. Authors interviewed identify AI as a tool to boost creativity.
2. Authors believe much copywriting will be done by AI, but creative writing for entertainment may be less affected.
3. Strike by Writers Guild of America argues that AI-generated material cannot be “literary material” or “source material” and materials in MBA cannot be used to train AI.
4. Presenter opinion: ChatGPT 3 can generate short stories, story outline, mimic writing voices with some competency, but not yet able to do complex storytelling tasks (novels, worldbuilding).
5. Introduced one specialised fiction writing AI tool.
6. Discussed two possibilities where AI-generated fiction categorisation / crediting or widespread normalisation makes crediting of AI-generated work ‘unnecessary’.
7. As technology advances, Libraries grows alongside these developments with partners and stakeholders to deliver value.

Credits

The conversations from interviews, sharings on social media, and exchanges among colleagues helped form my personal opinions for this sharing. My appreciation goes to:

- Writers **Raymus, Melanie, Adan** and **Victor** who have shared their thoughts with me
- **Dr Gwee** for sharing his adventures with ChatGPT on Instagram
- Chats with my colleague, **Redzuan**, and notes on presentation material from colleagues, **Lip Hwe** and **Rajen**

Thank you



Benedict Yeo

Research Librarian, (Social Sciences)



Benedictyeo@smu.edu.sg

EPILOGUE

Salman Rushdie on AI writing

So I don't know, it seems to me **the thing that makes a writer a good writer** is not just the technical skill with language, not even being able to find and tell a good story, it seems to me that first of all there's a **relationship with language** that the best writers have, which is very much their relationship.

If we read to Hemingway we would know it's Hemingway because he has a particular relationship with the language; if we read James Joyce or William Faulkner **we know it's them**, and if we read Garcia Marquez same thing.

Salman Rushdie on AI writing

And then finally the **greatest writers**, the best writers have a vision of the world that is personal to themselves, they **have a kind of take on reality** which is theirs and out of which their whole sensibility proceeds.

Are you good at seeing the world in an interesting way?

Salman Rushdie on AI writing

“Now to have all of that in the form of artificial intelligence — I don’t think we’re anywhere near that yet.”

So I’m **not saying never**, I’m just saying I don’t see that we’re there yet.

Survey Response

Name	Have you ever tried using a tool like ChatGPT to help you with your writing?	Do you feel like ChatGPT boosts your creativity or stifles it when you use it for writing?	What are your thoughts on how ChatGPT and other writing assistance tools will change the way we write, or even literature, in the future?
Melanie Lee	Yes, just to get general story ideas .	I think it generates some useful leads which help with my creativity and inspiration.	I think in general, the working world will expect writing to be churned out faster with such generative AI tools. This may affect publishers' timelines which may in turn pressurise authors to churn out books constantly in order to stay relevant. I think this may lead to a possible decline in the quality of writing .
Raymus Chang	Never .	Boosts. It tells me what not to write.	There will be a new development in literature . It will be contentious but interesting . Perhaps there might be significant work from it. I am open minded to it, although I may never use it.
Adan Jimenez	I have not used ChatGPT in my own writing, but I did use it at my previous job [as a localisation editor] to help with translation	I think it depends on how one uses it. If it's used as a sort of sounding board or idea generator, it can help creativity. However, if it's used to generate an entire story from (nearly) scratch, then it would stifle creativity.	My hope is that they will be used as tools , in the same way we use thesaurus.com or Scrivener or any other tool a writer may or may not use to aid in creating and crafting a story, but my fear is that it will be used as a replacement for writers, at least in the short run (until they realize this is actually a terrible, shortsighted idea). Companies are already replacing humans with AI programs in various capacities, and the current WGA strike is trying to ensure this doesn't happen in film and television.
Victor Fernando R. Ocampo	Yes, I was an early adopter of ChatGPT (and generative AI in general) and I have used it extensively in my non-fiction work. It's extremely useful for generating summaries and creating marketing copy. Its use is more limited in fiction , where I have used it mostly for research or to try out new writing styles.	It absolutely boosts your creativity, if you know how to use it. Engineering prompts is a useful skill to teach writers as ChatGPT is only as good as what you ask it to do. ChatGPT cannot write a good story to save its existence. However it's great for suggesting outlines for chapters. It has also allowed me to quickly rewrite my original work - sometimes using entirely new and experimental structures, without much effort.	It's already an indispensable tool for me. It's just a matter of time before more writers use it. Here's an article I wrote on how it can help you when you get writer's block - https://medium.com/@victorfernandorocampo/got-writers-block-chatgpt-can-help-5e423bb1d8f0

Survey Response

Name	Would you be open to using ChatGPT to review and edit your writing?	Do you think that in the future, writing tools like ChatGPT will take over creative writing or replace human writers completely? Why or why not, or to what extent?
Melanie Lee	I may but I won't take its suggestions wholesale. I'd still rely on my trusted group of beta (human) readers (especially when seeking out emotional responses to my manuscripts).	I think it will infiltrate the creative writing industry but won't take it over completely . I'd still like to think books written painstakingly by humans have naturally more heart and richness too the narrative.
Raymus Chang	No. A human reaction to it is more rewarding. ChatGPT does not have a face and a voice (for now)	Corporate copywriting will be replaced (heavily). I am worried for human writers. Creative writing , especially writing for entertainment and growth will continue to exist .
Adan Jimenez	Honestly, probably not. I'd rather use a trained, experienced editor to edit my work.	As I said before, I think many companies will try in the short run, but will eventually realize this is actually a bad idea . So, no, I don't think ChatGPT or other AI tools will replace human writers completely. Even if/when an AI becomes properly sentient, they'll hopefully be content to share the stage rather than take it over :P
Victor Fernando R. Ocampo	I already use it to edit . I am not sure what you mean by "review" in this context.	Only for the most basic, simple and derivative of creative tasks . As a copywriter, I know that generative AI cannot form its own prompts and clients in general cannot precisely describe what a piece of writing is supposed to contain.