

Writer's Memo: "William Shakespeare?: AI and the Quest for Creativity"

Armaan Kalkat

The original reason for the creation of this work was for an assignment for a course entitled "The Posthuman Condition." Being a linguistics major, I had already been interested in the way language shapes our identities and how we define what it means to be human, and considering the focus of the course on how technology may alter human existence, I found it natural to explore the intersection between artificial intelligence and creativity—specifically, creative writing. While the work itself was a research paper and was therefore focused on the technical aspects of these innovations, I found myself drawn to the broader implications of the amazing work done by these researchers. Reading the huge diversity of viewpoints on the topic, ranging from those who claim that AI can never reach the level of human creativity to those who decide to forge ahead anyway and continue searching for new ways to expand on its abilities, I felt as if I were viewing a microcosm of the human experience itself. So much of our history has been devoted to understanding our innate drive for self-expression, and I believe that one of the vital turning points in this quest will come as a result of innovation like that which is the topic of this paper, when humans look for way to reverse-engineer our own traits and come to better understand ourselves through our work attempting to impart them to other beings. Of course it can appear to be an exercise in narcissism and self-aggrandizement, but it can simultaneously be an act of beautiful creation and in the pursuit of knowledge. What else is human nature if not whatever is in between?