

After 5 years of thinking about computers and writing, I'd say:

Computers might soon be like digital photography, making writing easy (too easy?) for lots of kinds of writing.

But the best writing—the kind we really care about—requires a strong vision, and computers are nowhere near (imo) providing that for you.

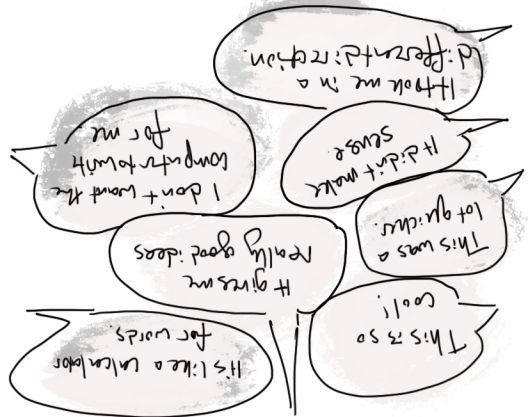
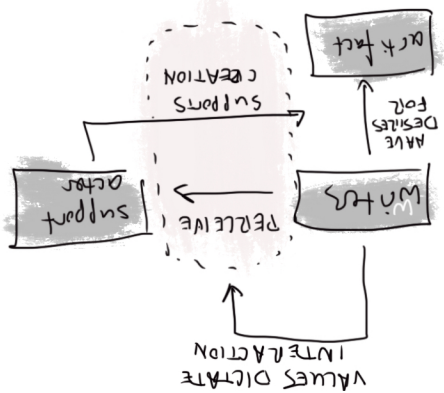


AI & the Writer

a dissertation zine

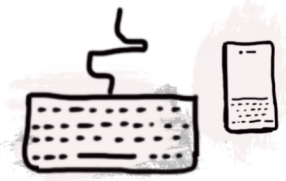


So I did in-depth interviews with 20 writers about different kinds of influence: peers, mentors, but also computers, developing a model of the factors that impact a support interaction.



As I studied these systems, I realized writers had a wide range of attitudes towards a computer influencing their writing. This was a huge confounding factor in understanding if a computer was actually helpful or useful.

You probably do a lot of writing on your computer:



from the keyboard to the smartphone, computers have definitely changed **how** we write.

But what if computers could change **what** we write?



Can a computer give you a good idea, or turn of phrase?

I designed two systems that generate text to give writers ideas. Instead of trying to finish your sentence, I take more narrow goals that allow the computer to better adhere to the writer's intention.

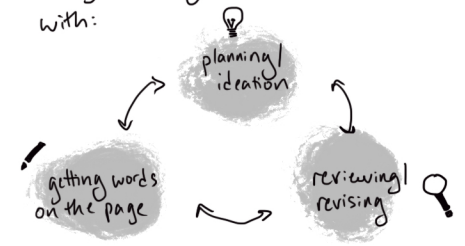
Sparks generates ideas for technical explanations.

e.g. One application of human-computer interaction research is...



In studies where writers brought their own topic to write about, thus, systems produced new ideas that were creative and adhered to logical + technical constraints.

Imagine things a computer could help with:



COGNITIVE PROCESS MODEL OF WRITING

This thesis is about helping planning/ideation, in particular constrained ideation.

I call this helping with **Constrained, creative** writing tasks.

