

For the second year in a row, I’m very excited to put together an anthology of chess poems as a product of my guest lecture in Dr. Jason Boyd’s “Narrative in a Digital Age” course. The students were asked to play a game against the ChessBard or each other, then write a response to their interaction based around questions of authorship and translation. After nearly two years with the project, I still find the poems strange and surprising but the joy of this particular anthology is the thoughtful and generous student responses. Some, like Alexandria McLean took on the game aspect of it, exploring how deeply video games have worked into our culture of storytelling; others, like Sarah Amormino, struggled with the authorship behind the application and the poems, explaining that “to write collaboratively with a computer is like swimming in a pond without being able to see anything under you,” while Griffin Toplitsky worried about coming across as “computerist” by claiming authorship of the poems; others described it as too random and disconnected, like Josh Beneteau, who described the ChessBard as an interesting digital literature project but ultimately reaffirmed the need for humans in the writing process and thus positively underling his choice as a journalism major. Please read through each of poems and the responses – they are wonderful and well worth the time.

This anthology also marks another year of exciting events involving the ChessBard. I went to Bergen, Norway as part of the Electronic Literature Festival (http://elo2015.h.uib.no/index.html) and was thrilled to have 2 time U.S. Women’s Champion Jennifer Shahade come to Ryerson and play a blindfold exhibition that was then translated into poems (http://chesspoetry.com/playingwriting/jennifer-shahade-the-chessbard-a-blindfold-exhibition/). Jody and I both are hoping to continue hosting responses on the website (http://chesspoetry.com/playingwriting/) and continuing to keep the ChessBard going forward!

Aaron Tucker

Co-creator of The ChessBard

Dayna Goldhar

*act produces matter and*

*resistance, sketch lives always*

*live movement down the apple*

*each stage, a grinder, cast*

*under base outside tempered man*

*reality warily or roughly realizes*

*desert, sketch revolve each*

Playing chess with the Chessbard was a very interesting experience, as it almost made me feel as though the computer and I were working together to create a work of poetry. Us, along with the programmer of the website, who I assume was the one to input the words that are later found in the poem. I cannot give the computer full credit in the creation of these poems because in class we discussed that a poem is (loosely) defined as somebody/ something that writes something with an audience in mind, and establishes an emotional connection with this audience as well. Though Chessbard undoubtedly created a poem, the poem was established based on algorithms that were controlled by a human (me). That being said, I believe that the ChessBard can be seen as both a tool and a translator. It is a tool that mechanically matches words to movements and provides its audience with an output texts that correlates to these movements. Because of this, it can be understood as a translator of the motions that take place in the chess game, and in doing so, it emphasizes the vastness of output texts that can be generated from a simple game of chess. It was also said in class that computers have already surpassed human intelligence. I, for one, was not able to come close to beating the computer in the game. It is, however, somewhat relieving to know that humans still have some sort of control over a computer, and that together we can make something unique and artistic.

Brendan Sylvia

*textbook materializes product beyond act*

*down and inside any necessity*

*Will human choose desert or speed?*

*Probably deserted desert*

*a chased warily casts machine*

*or apple and purpose or*

*erratic bridge observes the bridge*

*single separation any greasy mirror*

*ravishes and clocks screech*

It is interesting to note the progress of the poem with every move made by the player. However, I do not believe the end result is the work of the player. The author of this poem is likely the individual who created the machine; the programmer of the game. The reason being, it is the programmer who originated the phrases and linked the pieces of text with moves to result in a final product. The player has no control over the poem’s choice of words. The player simply takes a turn, and the computer handles the rest. The machine rearranges the text. When clicking on “poetify” the text will be arranged once again, producing a completely different type of poem that may be unrecognizable from the first. Nothing that the player or computer does is original. It is merely a rearrangement of the work created by the Chess Poetry’s creator. For this reason, neither the machine or the player or the true authors of poems generated by this site. Every work is a modified version of what was originally created by the computer programmer. There is a unique relationship between the player of the game and the machine because the poem cannot exist without the player or the game. It requires the player’s moves to prompt the computer to generate the text. It requires the computer to associate the player’s move with a phrase and add it to the final product. The development of the poem is a team effort ­ a joint relationship between human and machine

Nicole Boczan

*Necessary stage slowly isolates grinder*

*and cycle injures lifestyle*

*Each temptation, a spoon and*

*lifestyle temptingly produces mechanical instant*

*Metal plan or exists argument*

*inside dark beyond knight or*

*ferryboat pleasantly demands rebellious*

I thought this was a really enjoyable text generator compared to some of the other ones that we’ve tried. I really liked the fact that I felt like my participation and interaction with the computer was actually doing something to effect the final poem and in a structure and language I could understand. I really liked the way the game played out, with the colour alerts of “in danger” pieces. As a complete beginner when it comes to chess, this made the game easier to understand and play.

It is hard to say exactly who the author is while playing this game, I think there are a lot of parties at play to create the poems. There is the programmer and the Chessbard influencing my moves and my moves as a response. I feel like the Chessbard is a tool and a translator. It prompts action and reaction. I do not feel like I am an author because I really have little to no creative control over the words of the poem but am only deciding their construction and order but I do not know what will come up. I think working collaboratively with a computer is an interesting experience and I think it is more valuable than gibberish generators. I think it’s compelling thing to write with a computer, they have the database and catalogue of language while humans have the emotion and experiences to build the base for the text. I find works written only by computers hard to digest because while they are speaking about human experiences and emotions they lack the first hand knowledge. I think that games and literature could become something really interesting. It is fun to interact with players and scenarios to see what’ll happen and it’s exciting to see the possibilities.

Cassidy Allen

*each single necessity purposely acts   
or tempts past apple or   
harmonious melody the skittish something   
  
blurred reality below burr and   
slimy machine argues above mirror   
  
that screech, clock wantingly powders   
diagonal square or tempered man   
  
temptation likes passively or erratically   
womanly mirror ravishes the woman   
  
erratic woman and womanly mirror   
decomposes erect decomposition beneath woman   
  
screeching decomposition, womanly screech decomposes   
and ravishes mirror or screech   
  
If any screech decomposes mirror,   
What ravenously mirrors?  
  
Where is decomposing screech?  
beyond diagonal   
  
any woman, mirror past screech   
between mirror, decomposing screech or   
erratic decomposition screeches woman   
  
erratic decomposition ravenously ravishes   
mirror, decomposing screech ravishes*

*erratically   
some mirror*

The Chessbard challenges the way we think of an author. I think that the tool itself is an author but it is not the sole author. I think that the work of poetry that came out of it is a collaborative effort between the team involved in creating the Chessbard. They are also collaborating with the algorithm itself and the players in the game. The poem that I generated tells a story though I would not argue that it is a story that relates to the game that I played. In the end of my game I was getting a lot of repeated words because I started moving the King almost exclusively. It was interesting to see the words that were attached to each of the moves. To write collaboratively with a computer is an experience that I had not had beyond this class. I feel extremely out of control when I am collaborating with a computer especially in the case of Chessbard because I didn’t feel like I had much control over what the computer would creative because I was confined to the rules of the game of chess. I would like to spend more time working with this type of technology despite the fact that I find it kind of frustrating that the output does not follow the same grammatical and structural conventions that I am used to with English.

Lilly Paltsev

*basket isolates or grinds*

*ground matter around argument, bridge*

*argues bridge below frigid argument*

*bridge argues bridge, the bridge*

*argues frigid argument across from argument*

*frigid*

After playing against the ChessBard, it seems to me that ChessBard was more of an author than I was. I noticed that I had an active role in the game, but a passive role in the poem generating aspect of the process. In the game, the ChessBard immediately started winning and then I was able to get around the capabilities of the computer program by repeating the same move until we came to a draw. The ChessBard played the role of both author and translator, because it created the poem with a pretty wide vocabulary of words and a structure but also translated the moves of the chess games from a code into a series of words. Writing collaboratively with a computer means actively engaging with the functions of the computer program, going back and forth between my own cognitive thought and decision-making and responding to the decisions of the ChessBard program. It means equally contributing to a body of work with the computer that is a product of my knowledge and the capabilities of the program. Playing and games are having an increasingly significant role in literature as programs like ChessBard become more sophisticated in their abilities to translate and respond to human decision-making. It was fascinating to me how quickly the ChessBard reacted to my movements while also translating the movements into a poem. Being able to read the poem and understand that it was the result of a collaborative effort with the ChessBard and myself was very significant because it gave me a very clear perspective of the role of the computer as the author in the digital generation of literature.

Daniel Corrigan

*staged necessity, the typed something*

*sand shoulders or values imagination*

*proud grease inside basket or*

*tempered lifestyle or the knight*

*the mirror beneath diagonal*

*clocks single alley and diagonal*

*this erratic decomposition erratically bridges*

*mirror, woman*

Alright, so I have no clue how to play chess. Like, NO clue. But I sat down at my computer, and with the help of Steve (who is sitting beside me) I was able to gain some understanding of how the game works. Enough to have a game lasting more than 25 moves. After this I looked at the poems created by myself and the computer and was quite interested to see that they actually made sense. I don’t feel as if I’m really the author of these works, if anything it is ChessBard that created these works. However, the result would’ve been different had I moved my pieces differently, so in a sense I guess it’s a collaborative effort in which I blindly input moves which determine what ChessBard would write. Writing collaboratively with a computer is relieving in a way. In the sense that I don’t actually have to worry about creating a piece of literature that is coherent. It takes all responsibility off of the user. I don’t have to think about what words work better than others, what my rhyme scheme is, and all the other stressful components of creating poetry (I don’t think poetry is supposed to be stressful for the author but that’s how I feel at times). Now the last question you asked is ‘what role do games and playing have in literature?’. If you had have asked that question a few weeks ago I would’ve told you the two were completely unrelated. However, after the first two assignments in this course I now understand that literature can be created in many different forms, not just by writing down thoughts. I guess that the role of a game is to translate the user’s moves and create something from them. In most cases that ‘creation’ is a character's response, but in relation to literature the creation is a completely unique piece of work which is unrelated to the user’s thoughts and feelings, and is instead based only on the moves they input. In conclusion, maybe I’ll learn to play chess. It seems neat and it makes people look smart.

Steven Cooke

*mechanical act and interlocked necessity*

*toward or around instructional matter*

*desert deserts and casts*

*spherical argument beside coherence, variation*

*tempts knight past knightly argument*

*ruin most likely coheres each waist!*

*some slide a crippling*

I played the game multiple times just to test the program and see how it functions. The “author” of the poem is a combination of the computer and myself. I have particular moves that I use first in chess, though I’m really not good at the game. These opening moves would ironically result in the word “mechanical” as the first word of all my poems. It’s funny that some lines would seemingly correspond to the moves being made. The end of some games seemed to evoke a sense of desperation in the writing, reflecting my own scramble to survive. Even this poem ends with “ruin most likely coheres each waist! some slide a crippling” which involves some very fitting language for the situation I was in. This was perhaps because the king was far from his original position, and obviously in trouble. The machine is of course imperfect as well though. It says “knight” multiple times, but the word was generated by my bishop’s moves. The black knights were also not involved in the action, so the word is seemingly random. It is an interesting experiment to create this poem, along with the machine.

Josephine Tse

*this apologetic textbook or machine*

*staged grinder or realized mirror*

*upon zinc across rank and*

*cast perfected separation past keyboard*

*this knight, individual unequally equates*

*clicking basket inside instant, basket*

*demands equation down stormy demand*

I chose to reflect upon both the output of the ChessBard and the translator poem. This is my first time playing chess, and I had a friend tell me the general rules before I ended up clicking around, looking for the appropriate box to land on. I believe I am the author of the ChessBard poem, because my choice of moves and decisions of how my pieces would form their path created the first poem. I believe the Chessbard is an all encompassing tool, author and translator. It is a tool because I used its algorithms to help me create my poem. It is also an author because it chooses the words to correspond with my choice of moves. However, it is also a translator because it can take the algebraic notation that it spits out, and translate it back into a different poem.

I think it is an open-minded concept to write in collaboration with a computer. People don’t feel like it’s true writing because you aren’t talking or bouncing ideas off another person with a brain, but instead, a robotic, programmed machine. But I think it is still a new-age practice, and that it will be used a lot in the future.

Finally, I think games and playing goes hand in hand with literature. Games and gameplay contributes to the creative process and the development of ideas that eventually inspire works of literature. Sometimes that’s how I get inspirations for my essays, too. I enjoy playing MineCraft to get inspirations for my studio class scripts.

Laura Girardo

*exists textbook, active something productively   
materializes or cubes sphere and   
path, mirror mechanically mechanizes cast   
  
frigid sketch or black grinder   
across from copy below finger and   
cell individualizes sum beyond demand   
  
peak under equation, each equation   
unequally equates demand and demand   
  
pecked demand, pecked demand*

While playing with the Chessbard computer generator, it took me a few tries to play past 25 moves, but that was only because I am not a very good chess player. During my final game, I was thinking about potentially who is the author of these poems. I wouldn`t identify myself as the author. Sure, I helped moved the pieces around to get the word to appear in the poem, but the words were chosen for me. Therefore, I see myself as an accessory to the Chessbard generator. I helped make poem by using my own moves, but the words were selected with the algorithm of my moves.

I see Chessbard as a tool, in that it can help one`s creative minds flow, but I also see Chessbard as an author. In class, with guest lecturer Aaron Tucker, co-creator of Chessbard, he asked us what the definition of an author is. Even though it is considered an unreliable source, we looked at Wikipedia who provided a legitimate answer to how we define authors. Chessbard was given the responsibility of creating the poems it did. Chessbard is considered an author in that it created the existence of words in the poems.

The interaction between the computer and a human is a new format, especially in this technologically advanced world we live in. The computer is a machine that has words built inside it through formulas and algorithms and more. We have words built within our memory that were imputed through language and speech and the computer`s words were built in through the humankind who commanded the computer to understand the words. The formulas increase, when we describe each words as nouns, verbs, adjectives and other grammatically correct formats in the English language.

Games and literature are usually an unlikely match, but they serve the same purpose. They are both built upon rules and restrictions one must follow to create the correct material. Games are also a way for one to become creative, innovative and intelligent.

Marisa Tassone

*interlocked something, a basket   
and instant, dark and consideration   
isolates deserted harmony and temptation   
  
that necessity, any deserted stage   
questions desert past reproduction, seperation   
likes opposition or argument   
  
each product, any sandy argument   
bridges decomposition across decomposition, slide   
decomposes bridge or screech   
  
that screech, highrise*

Playing against the chessbard was an interesting experience as when the poem was completed, I felt that both myself and the computer were collaborative authors of the poem. I found it especially interesting to watch the progression of the poem as the game developed; specifically, to see how the poem got more and more solemn as I got in more trouble. I played a particularly long game with 45 moves so it was very intriguing to see the progressions in both poems. I think the chessbard is a tool to assist in the writing process. I don’t particularly think that the chessbard is itself being creative or providing any thought in the creative process but I do believe that the output that I was receiving from my own inputs of playing the game was a tool to create these poems that I would not have otherwise been able to create.

I also think games and game play have a huge role in literature – not necessarily the chessbard, but games in general can be used to tell or convey a story better than writing is able to do. The use of first person games is especially useful because it puts the player in the exact position that you wish they will be; the game creator can control what they are experiencing and can thus frame the story in the exact way that they want to. Personally, I enjoy playing games to feel as though I am actually involved in the progression of the story, it is much more exciting and motivating to feel as though you have control over the way the story is unfolding rather than just observing as a third party.

Griffin Toplitsky

*some basket, a planned product   
powerfully mechanizes textbook and   
cubes behind live cell   
  
cone mirrors copy and check   
or intelligently varies memorized spoon   
  
makeshift argument and each spoon   
reiterates each city toward powder   
blazes highrise and decomposition*

Not to sound either possessive or… computerist, but I’m definitely the author. It is a tool - all it seems to do is has a set move=word equation it works off of - so it IS a translator, but not an author. It is not creating the poem - the player is, albeit inadvertently. What the Chessbard seems to do is make clear this accidental poetry.

Although, I guess I’m speaking just about the white poem.

In terms of the black poem, that was entirely of the computer’s doing. But I guess it has another algorithm of how to move based off what I do? I guess the true way for the computer to be the author would be for it to play against itself, and use those poems.

*What does it mean to write collaboratively with a computer?*

I mean - this would be a great example of that. Although, again, the computer was only working off algorithms, not generating original material. But it was a collaborative process none the less - it translates what you do into poetry. I guess the closet example would be if somebody accidently wrote a bunch of French poetry, and didn’t understand French - but got a translator, and then they can see their work.

And also - the black poem is a much better example of collaboration, I think, where the computer and you contribute moves equally to the finished poem.

*What role do games and playing have in literature?*

That’s a tough question. There’s room for games that create literature, sure - as seen here, or people playing the one-sentence-each-and-then-they-make-a-story-game. But they’re not necessary. Literature can be (and traditionally is) generated without them.

Justine Riches

*sandy cast purrs any something   
that number, woman within click   
  
harmony argues applauds tempered finger   
below decomposition or planned applause   
  
lyrical machine tempts each applause   
tempts broken desert or spoon   
  
tempered applause and woman kindly   
criss-crosses womanly diagonal inside   
diagonal clock*

Using the Chessbard to create a poem was a unique experience that felt extremely beyond my control. I felt like it was hard to refer to the finished product as a “poem”, because the creation of a poem usually requires a tremendous amount of individual thought, reflection and feeling. Despite feeling like I didn’t contribute much subjective thought to the poem, I did put a great amount of effort into the game of chess. In a way, the creation of the poem was rewarding as a result of this. Although a human did contribute by physically placing words into the Chessbard generator, I would still consider the author more or less the computer, as it selected (randomly) what words would be utilized, similar to the way an author chooses what words he/she uses. I think of the Chessbard primarily as a tool, rather than an author or translator, as it narrows down a word bank within the randomly selected template. I would associate the word “author” more with someone who doesn’t work with such strict limitations. If for some reason an author does work under a set of rules or restrictions, I think the source of restraints needs to be acknowledged as well. To further elaborate, I would definitely consider my Chessbard poem as primarily being created through the Chessbard website. To write collaboratively with a computer varies in definition, based on the generating website of use or how the computer is used in general. Over all, I feel like you are collaborating with the computer once it restricts you or persuades you in the direction of your written piece. Games and playing are a huge part in the creation of literature because both thought process and strategic planning are required in both fields. In games, as observed in Chess, you must overcome certain obstacles, like moving the pawns before you can move any other piece on the board. These obstacles are noticeable in literature as well. When writing a literal essay, you must state the general idea of your essay before writing it. This being said, there are still restrictions and “rules” observed in both the creation of games and literature, however, both allow opportunity and creativity, which makes both activities enjoyable.

Leanne Chiavaroli

*a matter past and below*

*apologetic something plans the stage*

*What is flavoured dark?*

*white reality!*

*some equation a hard cast*

*uselessly and argues, blackens argument*

*dark*

Playing against the Chessbard was an interesting and engaging because although the program is being controlled by a specific algorithm it felt as though it was knowledgeable about the game and carefully deciding each move. I thought the process was analogous to the collaborative process authors undergo when engaging in texts and using them as reference for their own works. For example, authors experience constraints when referencing another authors work and ultimately as we discussed in lecture it is never truly an original work. It would attribute the work to the individual whom created the algorithm in addition to myself as I was also responsible for moulding and guiding the text through movement of the chess pieces. Similarly to the poem shown in lecture created by “Racter” this is somewhat like a call and response as one player moves the other player responds to that particular move. Each move is directed by motive with a clear purpose similar to the process of a writer composing a conventional piece of literature. “However, I would presume that majority of people would reason that the author of the poems were solely the creator of the algorithm and I as the opponent am simply engaging in the literature similarly to the way in which I would engage with a novel. In class we discussed the definition of author and discusses that authorship is a solitary action that is shaped by external influences therefore I would conclude the sole author is the individual that created the algorithm and I would serve as a mere external influence.

Jessica Lam

*that sand receptively plans or*

*purposely lives textbook, knightly equation*

*each powder, ground basket and*

*sand resists slowness toward cycle*

*the knight individualizes redundancy*

*adds unequaled electricity down peak*

*equation pummels and electrocutes*

*or unequally lives and lives*

*game ferries this pecked electricity*

*pecked demand toward electric peak*

*or pleasantly electrocutes pecked demand*

*pecked electricity lives any peak*

*electrocutes demand or pecked demand*

*each peak unequally electrocutes peak*

*or electricity and demanding electricity*

*demanding electricity, peak or*

*electric*

I had never played chess until I played ChessBard today in class. I was not surprised by how difficult it was because I have always heard from other people about how challenging the game is. I played it a total of three times. The first time, I didn’t make it past twenty-one moves. The second time, I made it to over twenty-five moves, but I forgot to save the HTML file. The last time, I made it to seventy-eight moves because my Queen got stuck and the computer wouldn’t beat me. I didn’t end up finishing the last game but I used the PGN file from this one for my poems.

Writing collaboratively with a computer involves the reader, writer, and computer. As Aaron Tucker said in lecture, nothing is original because everything we write is taken from other people and we participate with already created material (such as the English language). Therefore, these poems were produced through a co-authorship by myself, the program (ChessBard), and the creators of the program (Aaron Tucker and his colleague). The ChessBard program is a tool, author, and translator. The reader uses it as a tool to create the poems. The program helps to write the poem, making it a co-author. The program is also a translator because it translates the chess notations to English according to the words inputted by Aaron Tucker.

With games such as ChessBard, games play a unique role in literature by creating a collaborative environment for both creators and readers. As Aaron Tucker said in class, authors are stereotyped as individuals who write alone and pull things out of their souls. When games and literature are combined, this stereotype is broken by creating this collaborative ecosystem.

Nicholas Wong

*Where is a productive sketch?*

*beside sphere*

*rabbit voicelessly necessitates humane lifestyle*

*numbers any man or cell*

*Imagine sealed copper seals (seals) copper narrative!*

*that imagination gracefully points*

Playing this game was nostalgic, as I was enrolled in a chess club throughout most of elementary school. However, I was taken aback by the surprising difficulty of the computer. At first I believed that 25 moves would be extremely simple; unfortunately I found myself in trouble after a series of rash maneuvers by the 20th move. Upon playing the game multiple times, I noticed the first lines of my poems were always similar due to my opening moves being nearly identical. On the fourth time playing, I was constantly checked by the computer’s Queen, so I would move my own Queen to block it. The computer would then repeat the same check move, so long as I moved my Queen in the same way to protect my King. As a result, used chess notation to move my piece and repeated the same two moves until I got a poem that looked like this:

*and acts or revolve*

*and revolve or fiercely sketches*

*sphere sketches and sketches sphere*

*or fiercely sketches and sketches*

*revolve a spherical sketch*

*spherical sketch or sketch*

*fiercely sketches sphere or sphere*

*scrawny sphere? any sphere!*

From this section of the poem that I created, I believe that ChessBard is mostly a tool. It was my own idea to repeat moves from my Queen to create a poem with repetitive wording.

On the other hand, I would say that the original co-authors of these poems would be myself and ChessBard, created by Aaron Tucker and Jody Miller. ChessBard is programmed with words that I did not code myself and therefore, I am not the sole author of the poems. I think that creating a poem collaboratively with a computer is a unique way of writing because although there are limitations (having certain pieces only move a certain way, being unable to easily select the words), there is nearly an unlimited number of chess board combinations – about 10^17 different combinations, or poems.

Melissa Gonzalez

*something isolates cast, lock or   
some apple really argues pendulum   
  
the necessity the imaginative chessboard   
softly isolates planned sand or   
subtle equation inconclusively equates knight*

My experience playing with Chessbard was quite interesting. I personally do not know how to play chess but completing the twenty-fives steps allowed the poem generator to create various curious poems. The intriguing part about this experience is that both poems have stimulated my creative thinking because it has made me try to piece the meanings of the words together. Another observation while going through this process was figuring out who the author is or if there are multiple authors. Am I the author because I was the one who made the chess moves in order to create those words, or is the author the programmer who initially programmed the computer? What I have concluded is that there is a linear process from the beginning source of the raw program all the way to me – the last source of input in order to receive the poem’s output. Therefore I believe that there are various authors from the programmers and computer languages to my unique chess moves. I believe Chessbard is a tool. It has a way of forcing the person who is playing the game to think abstractly about the outputted poem. Repeatedly rereading the poems allowed me to expand my creative thinking process and piece together a literate and thoughtful meaning for each piece. In the end this experience really made me feel like I was writing collaboratively with computer software. The fact that my unique chess moves were determining the outcome of the words made me feel like a co-author. Lastly, it became the tool I needed in order to open my mind and challenge my creativity to make sense out of the poems generated.

Hafsa Alkhudairi

*necessary stage, hard seperation acts   
instantly and blurs uselessly   
decimal and interlocked product   
  
imaginative rook quickly cycles lifestyle   
  
scrawny memory this instructional textbook   
temptingly moistens unification down desert   
  
any reality utterly deserts argument   
knights storm*

This assignment is an interesting interaction between player, computer and poetry. The idea is that movement, actual cognitive choices, made by a user who usually has no power the creation of the text or the ability to influence the outcome has a hand in the creation. This gives the user some kind of interest in the outcome and a certain satisfaction until they can produce a poem that has some kind of end and not cut off in the middle of a sentence or of a thought.

That means that the user in a sense has control over the outcome, which means the author here is no longer just a sole proprietorship as traditionally believed when thinking of literature. The proprietorship belongs to collection of authors with different levels of agency coming together to produce a piece of art. The author would include the player, the program, and the programmer coming together and interacting with each other to create a piece of art in the form of literature.

I would include the Chessbard software as an author as well. However, the software doesn’t only help produce the poetry by playing against the user, it also translates the movement and the choices made into words. It uses the information available to it and knowledge placed into it to take away the programming language and generate a language that the user may understand even if the sentences are not necessarily grammatically correct.

Language and grammar could be tricky to program into a computer since there is no current technology that could understand the nuances of language that goes above and beyond the basic sentence structure. I believe based on the experiences that I have had with machine-produced literature that it could be used as a literary device, a way to inspire new pieces, as well as being literary on its own merit. The Chessbard is just an example of literary creativity outside of the box of what is normally thought of as literature.

Samantha Blake

*apology always seals or spoons*

*or stages or tempts or*

*realizes temptation inside frigid argument*

*erratic screech or the apple*

*or cast single speed or*

*the decomposition ravenously blurs*

During this experiment I played as the white pieces and the Chessbard played as the black ones. In both poems the words generated to describe my actions give the feeling of timidity and hesitation like “erratic” and “slippery”. They were generally negative words that expressed bad game play, I feel. However, in comparison, the black poems use words like “proudly” and “permanence” to show the efficiency with which I lost to the computer.

As far as authorship, I believe that the computer is more of an author than myself. In class we defined the ‘author’ as an all knowing being that is singular in its creation of text. In this case the computer knows more about the words that are being input into the poem than I do, all I tried to do was survive for 25 moves. The definition does also go on to describe the “human experience” as part of the author’s job in writing and the computer definitely captured my pathetic attempts to play chess with words like “decomposes”.

I do believe that in the Chessbard version of the poems I am more of a co-author than in the translator version. Although I contributed by inputting the text into the translator, I didn’t know what it meant or how the computer “translated” it into words that held meaning for me.

The way you play has a huge role in the outcome of the poetry with the Chessbard. If you play well, the words used in your poem will be positive and powerful. The computer and player are at most co-authors, however I would argue that I didn’t contribute much in the way of writing the poems. It was a very interesting experiment and I like the idea of using game play to construct a narrative or text, but I think I’ll stick to checkers.

Emma Iscaro

*a matter productively plans across*

*or beside any staged basket*

*basket blurs something within speed*

*casts sand and human and*

*any sketch, argument between equation*

*round base or each equation*

*placidly knights dark or*

At first I thought that the author of these poems was solely just the Chessbard, however, after playing against the Chessbard I realized that the player/user of the generator is also the author. In order for me to generate a poem in this situation, I was using my own strategy and judgement to decide what moves I wanted to make, therefore, I was deciding the ultimate fate of my poem. These poems would not be possible for players to create without the Chessbard using the algorithm and poem resources programmed into it, so the author is a combination of the Chessbard and the player. I consider the Chessbard to be an author, a tool and a translator. This program individually creates a written poetic text as a product for others to read and experience, while using a formulaic system to generate these poems from an internal database. It acts as a translator because it works to decode each move and essentially match meaning for each chess piece moved on the board in relation to the words it’s programed to output.

Through writing collaboratively with a computer I have learned that it’s a process of trial and error and experimentation, especially since I am not an experienced chess player. I attempted to play against the Chessbard six or seven times before I started to get the hang of it and develop a strategy, because the Chessbard was beating me so quickly each time. I learned to come to terms with my limited chess playing skills and I tried to go slowly through the moves and enjoy the experience and read along as the poem generated word by word. This experience opened my eyes to the idea that a human can actually work together with a computer as a team to generate legible and pleasant sounding text. This experience of playing against the Chessbard showed me that it can be fun and also educational to create and manipulate literature, because it helped me learn how to play chess better. This interactive experience that I shared with the Chessbard taught me that literature can be significantly more rewarding in a collaborative setting. There is no set guidelines to creating literature such as poetry and the Chessbard demonstrates the infinite possibilities of written text and the meaning and messages it can create.

Lindsay Witt

*the cast a single desert*

*each rank zinc powders*

*grease, slowness really isolates or*

*sands sketch, something or click*

*this argument knights instant*

*solicits erratic debt*

I had a very thought-provoking experience playing against the Chessbard. As I made my moves, it was extremely intriguing to witness poems being constructed before my eyes. I wondered how my poems would have been fashioned differently if the moves I had made in the game were different. This made me wonder – were these poems truly *mine*? Was I really a contributing author to these poems? This is a question I still find difficult to answer.

Because the Chessbard Machine works with pre-existing poems and contains so many diverse layers, it’s difficult to identify who the *true* author of these generated poems would be. I believe that my experience with the Chessbard was representative of collaborative authorship. I think that the Chessbard is in fact an author, although it requires several elements such as a player, the system, and pre-existing poems. The Chessbard contains several interdependent factors, and without one, the system would not work. This is why I believe there was a collaborative authorship ongoing with the Chessbard and I (the player) was a large part of the authorship of these black and white poems.

I think that writing collaboratively with a computer makes us (the users) become authors ourselves. The decisions and choices we make contribute to the output that these text-generating machines create. This process is representative of collaborative authorship, which I believe stands as a valid form of writing. Working with a computer to create a text was an extremely fascinating experience.

Games and playing are having an increasingly important role in literature. I’m discovering that as technology is evolving, literature is moving from hard text to multiple different digital platforms, such as Twitter, the web, online gaming systems and so on. Games have become a predominant outlet for storytelling, where interactivity is key in seeing a story unfold. All in all, I find that games and playing are powerful tools for storytelling and in many cases I prefer experiencing a story through games/play to traditional storytelling methods.

Katherine Nguyen

*each cast some mechanical something*

*isolates single stage behind keyboard*

*round passageway and passageway*

*always pieces each shoulder and*

*reproduced necessity tunnels the separation*

ruin most likely decomposes

Initially, my experiences with Chessbard were a little frustrating. It seemed almost impossible for me to reach 25 moves considering that I didn’t know how to play chess at all. However, I did find it interesting that each move I made created words to compose a poem.

In my opinion, there’s not one author to these poems but I think that a co-authorship exists with the ChessBard. The person or team of people that created ChessBard are authors as they choose the algorithm/code which molds the structure of the poem, and they also choose the pool of words that Chessbard will grab from, and how it functions in doing so. The Chessbard is the tool that generates these poems but I also think that it can be counted as an author. This is how humans and computers can write collaboratively. Humans have ideas of how a poem can look like, and they think about potential content and structure. Humans then give instructions to the computer, which the computer executes and directly does the work of creating the poems.

I think games and playing provide a unique and fun way to look at literature. Writing can be much like playing a game. There is trial and error where you can see what works and what doesn’t work depending on the direction that you take. When there is competition, people must use creativity to beat the opponent while also following rules. This can be compared to authors using creativity to present a good piece of literature, while also following the structures of writing and keeping it coherent. Whether or not people actually use computer-generating tools, I think that working collaboratively with computer games definitely opens a new method to creating pieces of literature.

Kimberly Tindale

*single apology, that stage   
isolatedly materializes keyboard or shoulder   
  
a product shoulders cast   
casts injected keyboard or zinc   
  
What is some live spoon?  
  
deserted lock, powdered sketch or   
base slows productively*

Not only was this my first time playing chess with an electronic player but this was my first time playing chess in general. I played multiple games and each time I played, I was taken aback by how well the program knew how to play. I was also stunned by how many times I lost a pawn or a piece that was of importance in my next move. If I would ask whom the author of the poem being written is, I feel like I’m quite confused to say, as it would be hard to give a solid answer as to who it is. The reason being is because the poem could only be made with my help. The fact that I made a move, then the program made a move is the reason as to each word that was being made. Yet, to say that it is just me who is the sole author would be wrong because the program also had a part in it. Therefore, to also say that is was just the program as the author would also be wrong. I also think the fact that we are at this level in society where we can collaboratively work alongside a computer to produce literature is amazing. I definitely believe that playing games that produce literature is something of a new innovation that is revolutionizing how we write. One of the reasons being that usually an interactive game that produces literature would most likely choose a random select of words which would then produce a poem that may or may not have a logical base to it. All in all, I think that being collaborative with a computer program is where the world is going in the literature digital sphere.

Vanessa Cafazzo

*any matter isolates plan or   
basket purposely apologizes staged textbook   
  
divided basket, some cast and   
hard argument down desert   
  
single wasp, blurred sketch   
warily bridges rank a finger   
  
unreal bridge*

My experience playing against the chessbard opened my eyes to the process in collaborating with a computer. We talked in class about what an author is and through this assignment I understand that an author can be defined as a person or thing. I knew how the chessbard functioned and what the end result would be but it amazed me that each move I made, the computer generated into words. Hearing about this experience in the lecture was not appealing to me; it actually made me a little confused. However, once I started to play against the chessbard, this opened my eyes to the amazing possibility of creating content with a computer. That this was enjoyable and exciting to take part in. After this experience I have developed an interest, appreciation, and better understanding of this innovative and collaborative experience shared between people and computers. Through this I believe that the chessbard is a translator and an author. It’s a translator because it uses its technology to generate (translate) the moves played into words. In other words, it replaces the language that the computer understands (as shown above) into words that the players understand. Thus, demonstrating the act of an author, a creator of content. The collaboration between computers and humans is the future in my opinion. Humans and machines have worked together to create all kind of things and as I was playing this game I realized how big of a deal this was. The world is evolving from computers. With computers, humans create medicine, films, and now literature. It’s an amazing thought that is already evolving into reality.

Mathew Fruitman

*productive matter the powdered burr   
  
powdered finger acts the spoon   
stages click and single basket   
  
that individual equates something, necessity   
modifies added temptation among base   
  
plan sands individual and*

While playing around with the Chessbard I realized I played very little attention to the poetry being generated and more to my moves on the board. The reason for this may be that knowing that words are generated based on my moves did little for me. But now that I think about it the chess bot I was playing does the exact same thing. Based on my move the chess bot had a protocol for where I went and what I decided to do. As far as authorship goes my contributions to this outputted poem contained zero of me. I would not say that I owned any of this poem. None of my actions were poetic by any means. They were merely actions made to last twenty-five moves. I think this kind of program however is very interesting. The idea that things (like poems) can be created as you perform an almost unrelated task is incredibly interesting to me. I feel as though this may have applications in other aspects of life. Maybe sensors that create a 3d model of you hands movement while doing dishes. This would show your efficiency while doing a menial task. The only validity I see in these poems is as idea generators. A place for poets imaginations to go where they normally would not. In that sense I see it as very valuable, a way to reduce writers block while doing something completely unrelated, like chess. I am sure these kinds of experiences have other applications that could increase human creativity and efficiencies.

Sandra Madu

*hard basket or single something   
beside textbook underneath argument or   
copper leaf behind human   
  
apologetic product or kingdom or   
some basket the blurred bridge   
  
Where is tempered instrument?  
outside basket*

First of, this was my very first time playing chess and I’d have to say, I really enjoyed it.

I think the Chessbard is a tool rather than an author. It’s been programmed to generate the poems by coding. Therefore, whoever programmed the Chessbard is the true author. However, since we’re directly communicating only to the Chessbard, it is likely that we relate more to the Chessbard and see it as the author even though it isn’t the true author. Also, the Chessbard is limited in what it can produce. It technically cannot go beyond it’s programming. So it’s hard for me to think of it as an author because it has barriers and restrictions. And when I think of authors, I think of free spirited and uncontrolled individuals/beings.

On the other hand, the collaborating process was interesting. As the user, it was exciting to see the words (and eventual poems) the Chessbard generated as we played against one another. And being as curious as I was, I was always checking to see if the moves I made corresponded or had any relationship with the words that were being generated. I find that it could have been more interesting if the words correlated with the game. That could have perhaps made Chessbard seem more relatable and conversational.

Although Chessbard is innovative in its ability to create literature, I feel it changes the nature of literature and makes it more rigid, formulaic and mechanical. I feel like it lacks sincerity and can’t produce any work that reflects life experiences or true relatable content. As a reader, that’s what I look for in literature.

Isabella Joannou

*apologetic stage and keyboard   
addictively clicks temptation or act   
  
that textbook, purposeful use   
inside plan onto productive sand   
  
joint textbook or cast   
upon sketch any*

The Chessbard is a really interesting and innovative way to create poetry. It is different from other text generators I have seen as it involves more than simply inserting words into a textbox in order to produce a new text. Instead it adds a whole new level of creativity by requiring users to play a game of chess (with hidden pre-generated words) in order to form a poem. As I am unable to play chess I found it difficult at first to reach 25 moves. However I solved this problem by playing against another classmate.

After discussing authorship in class, I believe the Chessbard is both a co-author and a translator. At the same time the user requires the words from the Chessbard to create their poem (as the words are poems are already pre-written), the tool cannot operate without a player, therefore the user and text generator are both dependent on each other and necessary to the creation of a poem.

Furthermore, the Chessbard also acts as a translator by keeping track of every move the user makes and transcribing it in algebraic notation. Users can translate this “chess language” into a written poem by putting it through the The Chessbard Translator and selecting “poetify”.

To write collaboratively with a computer means to combine your own creativity and intelligence with the endless source of information that is stored on the Internet. A computer does not have a brain and therefore cannot write or create *without* human interaction. Therefore, writing collaboratively with a computer works by the human and computer responding to one another.

As we are in a generation where technology and gaming is so prominent, I believe that many people’s main source of literature is within their games. With our attention spans declining, literature within games keeps reading and writing fresh, engaging and interactive.

Alexandria McLean

*single plan exits this matter*

*acts ground apology and*

*deserted sphere, erratic sphere*

*frigid mirror and sphere or*

*erratic bridge mirrors this sphere*

*spherical bridge, spherical sphere mirrors*

*or isolates single perfection, something*

*blurs sandy wasp upon dark*

*coned equation, the kingdom*

I believe that when participating in interactive writing like this, there are two authors: the software programmer/designer, and the user. In this case, the computer *ChessBard*, is simply a tool programmed to do what the designer wanted it to do. It uses pre-written poems by the programmer, and outputs them based on an algorithm that was also done by the programmer. *ChessBard* is simply a middleman that had to be programmed to play chess, and know what to output based on the programmer’s creative thoughts. The computer itself has no creative thoughts as everything it does and “thinks” was programmed to match the creative idea of the designer. To write collaboratively with a computer, to me, means that the user is interacting with the programmer, but through a computer program.

Games and playing them are having an increasingly bigger role on literature. In 2013 alone, three of the biggest video games that were released that year were *The Last Of Us*, *Beyond: Two Souls,* and *The Walking Dead: The Game - Season 2*. The one element that these three games have in common is they allow the user to pick the path they want to take. The user is allowed to pick what they want the characters to say, and how they want the characters to behave. It allows for the user to be an author and a participatory user of an already interactive medium. Like ChessBard, these games allow the user to input their own thoughts in order to collaborate with the creator’s original ideas, and create different outcomes in the end.

Mitchell Stuart

*mechanical product, the textbook*

*or basket across apology or*

*single basket stages underneath rook*

*sand appears resistance and argument*

*decomposition argues frigidly or frigidly*

*Which knight equates rebellious desert?*

*this unequaled demand*

*peak brazenly beds or casts*

*the demanding equation and peak*

*demanding peak and the demand*

*stormily*

The question of authorship for these Chessbard poems is fairly complex. I would argue that there are, in a sense, three co-authors for each poem that is created. The first of these “authors” is Aaron Tucker who, by designing the algorithms for the Chessbard, defined the relationship between chess moves and the generation of poetic material. The second author is the Chessbard itself, as Mr. Tucker is not the one who is actually creating these poems. That distinction belongs to the software/widget that he has created. The third author is the user, in this case myself. The moves that the user make play a pivotal role in determining the content of both the white and the black poem.

Although there are three distinct authors, I would argue that the most influential author is Mr. Tucker. As he is determining the relationship between the specific chess moves and the generation of text, it is he who has the most control over the final poetic product. The human user is an author in the sense that their choices in the chess game obviously impact what text is generated, but they don’t have control over the content of their poem in a broad sense. In other words, if the player wants to write a poem about a specific subject - say, the tranquility of a quiet night - they are unable to do so unless said topic has already been ingrained into the language of the algorithm.

I have yet to be convinced of the merits of cyborg authors. The poems generated by the Chessbard, while interesting, are still not comparable to the products created by actual human poets. With that being said, the Chessbard does offer some insight into the potential for collaboration between humans and robots in the creation of engaging textual products. Certain lines generated by the Chessbard, such as “sand appears resistance and argument”, are very intriguing and could provide a poet with adequate inspiration to expand this concept into a full poem. I think, however, that a successful collaboration between a cyborg and a human poet would require the poet to have a thorough understanding of the mechanics of the text generation system if not an ability to manipulate it. Without this understanding the text generation is really quite random and lacks artistic merit.

Bajer Victoria

*single basket, active lifestyle spoons*

*carefully and grinds always*

*vault or blurred something*

*planned product, this temptation insists*

*erroneously or exits evenly*

*desert and broken wasp*

*brazen piece or mechanical stage*

*small rule on decomposing textbook*

*deserted cast inside joint decomposition*

*or decomposition or each mirror*

*ravenously mirrors woman that woman*

*any woman past and around*

*womanly mirror ravishes some woman*

*erratic woman, erratic woman mirrors*

*womanly mirror, woman any woman*

*and ravenously mirrors that mirror*

*any mirror, the mirror, woman*

*among woman beside womanly mirror*

*argument utterly argues decomposition*

. However, the second I ignored the “literal meaning” and analyzed the pattern of the words, I realized that the poem was related to my thought process. I played the white chess pieces and when examining the end of the “white poem” I realized that the repetition was a direct reflection of the fact that I was repeating moves on the chessboard. These were the words that the chessbard generated:

*“erratic woman, erratic woman mirrors*

*womanly mirror, woman any woman and ravenously mirrors that mirror*

*any mirror, the mirror, woman among woman beside womanly mirror.”*

This text parallels the fact that I was moving my King erratically across the chessboard and made the same moves several times until finally losing. Furthermore, it is really thought provoking to read a physical interpretation of my strategies during the game.

In my opinion, the poems are a collaborative effort between the player and the artificially intelligent Chessbard. The Chessbard works as a translator to my gameplay since it translates the moves played out on the chessboard into English. Moreover, it could be interpreted that “chess” is a language of its own and the computer is doing its best efforts to decipher the moves into a language that the human player can understand. The English words are used as symbols for the type of gameplay that was being carried out. It is interpreting the game by taking the player’s actions on the chessboard and creating poetry. The computer, however, is not thinking creatively but is generating the text based on the way it was programmed. This means it composes these poems using logic and strict rules; similar to they way a chess player plays chess. Therefore, the Chessbard can create meaningful poems but only if you know the proper way of deciphering the words. You can study the words that are generated by the Chessbard and begin to formulate your thought process during the game. Games and playing are an innate part of literature because during the crafting stages of writing, a person is playing with their imagination and forming it into something physical.

Kathryn Burns

*hard speed, single necessity   
slows apologetic shoulder or   
textbook moistens or cycles imagination   
  
tempered chessboard produces a plan   
a act, machine on grinder   
  
black sketch across from basket   
and*

Writing poetry with Chessbard strikes me as the ultimate decoding exercise. On one end the program analyses the moves made in the game and outputs the translation. Then with the translated output we, the human, then analyses the text and “decode” it for our own meaning. Much like a game of chess the completion is a step-by-step process where each player is needed for the game to continue. We are dependant on one another for the creation of the poem and its completion. In this instance both human and machine are operating as efficient translators.

However, when the question of authorship arises the computer still deserves the greater credit. At times I felt as if the limitation of my game moves had already been predetermined by the program. Rather than my pawns spawning words I felt as if I was simply revealing text that had been waiting there. If I am just a button pusher, I have no creative authorship over the poem at all. Yet, when the poem is completed I do retain power over the meaning of the poem. It is my choice to assign metaphorical understanding to the text. Some lines of text even appeared to be particularly poignant such as “Tempered chessboard produces a plan, a act, machine on grinder” or a “well-thumbed automaton”. It seems like the poem is acknowledging it’s method of creation.

The second set of poems that were generated were even a further abstraction from the original. If someone where to ask me if I was the author I would feel the need to deny it. Although I may have a creator credit I am not the author. If a robot was given a paint brush and programmed to produced abstract art then that belongs to the computer. Now I begin to wonder...if a computer program becomes capable of producing art by itself does that mean they are getting closer to developing a mathematical computation for a soul? The ghost in the machine.

Rachel Paonessa

*Which apology grinds exists act?*

*productive textbook or plan*

*uselessly shoulders that imagination and*

*scrawny slowness tempts the machine*

*the circlet resists circlet, circlet*

*argues knightly circlet*

After playing against the Chessbard, I confirmed just how bad I am at playing chess, but also how fun it was to be able to create something with each move I made. Using the Chessbard to create poems is an interesting experience because it does leave you to wonder, who is the author of these poems? I think that the Chessbard is a translator. Every move you make already has a word or phrase connected to it, so the Chessbard acts as a translator, telling a story with each move you make. It ends up being a team effort, in order for the Chessbard to generate a poem, it needs a human to make the moves and play along with it. In the end, the poems created are a collaborative effort. Just how we might write a story or poem on our laptop, when we press a key on the keyboard, it is much like moving a chess piece, we make the moves, and then the computer is the one who generates the output of our thoughts and decisions that we make. Like many other games and text generators, we are inputting something, making a decision or moving a chess piece, and the computer in turn outputs a story based on the decisions, we as humans, make in the game. Technology is continuing to grow and strive on a daily basis. Computers are generating literature with the help of humans, and sometimes on its own. I don’t think this means that literature is less valuable because of the help of a computer, it’s definitely a different type of literature, but I see it as something we have been doing for awhile now. When we write essays or stories on our computers, the computer usually helps us write by suggesting better ways to phrase a sentence, correcting grammar and helps us display our written work in proper formats. Writing in a Word document is no different than using a text generator or the Chessbard. We have been writing alongside computers for years now, collaboratively creating pieces of writing with the help of the computer. Even now as I type out this response on my laptop, the computer is letting me know what words I’ve misspelled, giving me suggestions on how to make this piece of writing better, and it does feel like a collaborative effort, much like the poems that were created on the Chessbard. In conclusion, I enjoyed the Chessbard. It made me realize just how often we humans use technology and computers to create literature collaboratively.

Shannon Noble

*a planned stage exits*

*any something productively materializes shoulder*

*each typed sketch or cast*

*casts click or lock or*

*skittish sphere over proud decimal*

*the slide fiercely revolves*

The term author can be interpreted in many ways. However, the way I interpret it, is an author is anything that creates anything. This would then classify the Chessbard as an author. However, when it comes to computers, they do not have a mind of their own, they are not the full creator of the poem. Someone had to create the Chessbard, so I would consider the person who programmed the website and chose the words for each chess piece is the author. In my opinion I would classify the Chessbard as a translator and not the author. The Chessbard was programmed with the specific words that that represented each chess piece and each square on the board. Then it took that information and translated and by the players movements those programmed words into a poem. Writing collaboratively with a computer creates a very abstract poem and will always involve some sort of interpretation by the reader. Considering that the computer is not the author in my mind, I would state that I am not writing collaboratively with the computer, but with the programmer of the site. Games and video games in particular often are considered to not have much narrative. However, there are many new video games that have changed literature. They are able to created a new story every game, based on the choices that the player makes in the game. The strong narrative creates a more immersive experience for the player, and also changes the way narrative is created.

James Chouangsirivong

*each basket, textbook below decomposition*

*between bridge, realized textbook and*

*powdered finger modifies act*

*any rank and wish and*

*productive something or each sand cubed*

Creating a poem by playing Chessbard was an interesting experience. Playing against the Chessbard was still challenging even when put to the lowest difficultly. It has been long since I last played chess so it was a struggle to not lose the game before 25 moves. The Chessbard made instant moves so if I blinked I would miss it. The result of the poems turned out to be recognizable words strung together with no meaning behind them. Stanzas seem to just be very random that did not end. I would not say that Chessbard is not the author of these poems because the result is simply based on the twelve source poems. Certain plays/moves coordinate with a word from a source poem explaining the randomness of the words. The author of these poems would originally be Aaron Tucker. He wrote and inputted the source poems into the game. The Chessbard is simply a tool used to rearrange the source poems and should not be considered an author. Both the player and the Chessbard collaborate in rearranging the poems. Chouangsirivong 2 Playing games has a certain unpredictability to it within literature. There are multiple possibilities of moves to make in the game causing the next occurring word to be one of the many outcomes. Much like the game Cards Against Humanity, a game in which complete fill in the blank statements. The box set comes with black “question” cards and “white” answer cards. The white deck of cards you get dealt and black sentence card players must complete is unpredictable. This allows for many possible outcomes of a story. Cards Against Humanity and you as the player would not be considered the author of these stories because you are only playing the game, just like Chessbard.

Talia Herzberg

*mechanical necessity, the human or   
finger spoons variation outside path   
  
deserted basket, the basket   
blazes each king, apologetic temptation   
resists angular passageway, erratic something   
  
sphere revolves imagination or screech   
  
single clock diagonally or diagonally   
clocks screeching clock or   
lyrical screech, each screech   
  
lyrical screech lyrically screeches some   
screech clocks screech, the diagonal   
  
that diagonal, any*

I found that playing chess against the chessboard was very difficult, even though the chessboard was set to a difficulty of zero. Collaboratively despite my playing being terrible, the chessboard and I were able to write two poems. The poems belongs to neither the computer nor I; it was a collaboration. We are co-authors as it determined the words in the poem, based off of the moves that I made in the chess game. This generator cannot play a game of chess without a human; therefore it cannot write the poems without a human. The computer chooses all of its moves based off what the human picks, making the poem a collaboration. I would not typically relate games and literature into the same sentence. With advancing technologies computers are able to generate text, sometimes it is more coherent than others. These technologies are able to take games, like chess and analyze every move to create an original text, or in this case a poem. This game of chess has really opened my eyes to where literature is going, and how computers are able to generate literature that both computers and humans can understand. This is amazing because computers understand code, where only some humans can write, read and understand code. In addition playing, games and literature all involve creativity. In order to play games you need to be able to think outside the box, and depending on the game you will need to use your imagination. The same can be said about literature, you should have some form of creativity. With a generator like *Chess Poetry,* it is definitely a case for creativity, where by playing a game of chess two poems are collaboratively generated with the help of a human and the computer.

Bridget O’Rourke

*textbook roughly mechanizes instant over   
the something each ground something   
  
deserted necessity quickly and roughly   
materializes lock and single temptation   
  
Which applause coheres a ruin?  
expensive knight or*

This exercise was very interesting. It used a well-known game to create a poem with a code behind the different chess moves, and between both the computer and the player a completely new work of art was created. The similarity between the chessboard version of the poem and the translated version allows the player to get a glimpse of how the code is used in order to generate different words. I believe that the chessboard is just one part of the author to this poem. The author is made up by a variety of different steps- the moves, the actual blocks on the chessboard, the pieces, both players and the coding. When all of these come together, it creates an author because without one of these things, the poem wouldn’t be able to be created. By working collaboratively with the computer, I wasn’t able to have complete creative control over the final outcome, but instead I had to trust the opponent (computer) and work with them. It turned a competitive game into a team exercise. By playing a game in order to create literature, it shows from a hands on perspective how many different steps and how much collaboration is involved in just one small piece of work. I was able to see that at first it might seem like there is one step (the actual game itself) but as you learn more about it, you realize the other ‘invisible’ steps that are involved, showing how much collaboration is required for one final artistic outcome.

Natalie Zimin

*that matter within each stage   
drunkenly seals temptation and   
any cell seals spoon   
  
lock above spoon, a desert   
always lives instruction or sound   
  
any man, scrawny sphere   
blackens quickly and isolatedly, purpose   
intelligently lives storm across storm   
  
the equation upon equation   
demands*

*This experience was rather difficult for me at first, because I’m not very good at chess. I found myself getting distracted and unable to focus on the poem being generated because I was afraid I wouldn’t get to a minimum of twenty-five moves.*

Once I got past this and actually became aware of what was being written, it was almost hauntingly in tune with how the game was being played. As a novice player, the words referring to me were: drunkenly, scrawny, and isolatedly. The Chessbard, on the other hand, was referred to as: blazing, possessed, and with permanence. There was a definite duality to how the two poems were being written – each reflecting the player’s moves and with that, what was lacking from the other.

I believe that the author of the poem was the Chessbard, however the reason that I think this is because he/it was the dominant player. If the roles had been reversed, I believe I would have felt more like the author, even though I still wouldn’t have been able to choose my own words. Perhaps a more accurate assumption would be that the Chessbard was translating the kind of moves we were making into words. The one part of the poem(s) that I don’t understand the word choice for is the last stanza. I lost the game and the Chessbard won, and yet the Black Poem’s words seem to get weaker in the end. The entire poem is so strong, and then it just – finishes. The opposite seems to have happened at the end of the White Poem. I went from being a “sandy matter” to being a “live storm” that “blackens stormily”. My poetic self went down with my head held high.

Due to my limitations in chess, I believe that the Chessbard generated poems will always be very similar in theme, because the roles of dominant and submissive will always be the same. Even the translated version of the poem favoured the Black Poem with stronger words like permanence, oblivion, and callous.

In the end, receiving a poem about a game of chess that I just finished playing was surprisingly rewarding, especially considering my lack of skill. Being rewarded for spent time by being given something permanent, commemorating the experience, was really nice. I think it would actually encourage me to play the game more times in order to generate more poems. Having a literature component in games, whether it be reading the dialogue of a character, the synopsis of a scene, or poetifying a chess game – introduces a much-needed human factor to the experience, even if it’s a computer that you’re actually collaborating with.

Leah Halin

*apology materializes basket onto plan*

*any ground product stages and*

*sands always cast, something*

*and purpose between temptation*

*the active desert deserts*

*the pendulum substantially sketches*

It could not be easily said that I am the author of the poems. I felt that I hardly did any creative effort in producing words or sentences strung together – that was the machine behind Chessbard. As I attempted to play against the computer in a game, it beat me in six seconds. Thus, I employed the assistance of a friend to play against me. Becoming so invested in the game, I hardly noticed that I was pushing the buttons, following through a certain set of procedures that in turn was producing a thoughtful, insightful piece of writing. Perhaps if I’d focused on which movements across the board would then result in which fragments, I would feel more entitled to the author role. However, Chessbard became more than a tool, it had become a mouthpiece for my actions and translated my calculated planning and turned it into something inspiring. After seeing the coded steps I had taken numbered and then transformed into words, I felt less like an author and more of an observer of this algorithm taking in what I had done and churning out something more polished out of a raw set of data.

I love the concept of being able to transfer strategic, almost mathematical thoughts and executions to then be able to connect it – translate – to something creative and artistic. Chess in itself can be viewed as an artistic form of logical thinking with an infinite number of possible consequences to play out. And with every piece deliberately placed to generate, a word or fragmented sentence is formed to tell the reader what that movement taken means. It’s as though we’re carving out an interaction in a narrative containing multiple meanings and thoughts that are imbedded deeply in the dialogue between players.

Marie-Claire Duquette

*each exists necessity or*

*temptation apologizes human within sand*

*that cubed decomposition or decomposition*

*ground basket importantly or coherently*

*ruins deserted desert above coherence*

*slippery*

As I was playing the game, I realized my views on authorship kept changing. When I started the game, I felt as though I was somewhat in control of the text, as with every move I played, there would be a new word added to the text.   
 However, when I started losing control of the game, I felt less and less in control of the text. I found myself looking over and reading the text more frequently and discovered a lack of coherency in my text (the white poem) versus a more coherent and grammatically sound opposing text (the black poem). This made me think about the coherency in our moves. Perhaps the reason why the black team’s poem made so much more sense is because the black team’s moves were more coherent as well.

But still, this did not allow me a full understanding of who played the role of author in these poems. When I began I felt as though I was author of the white poem, as it represented my choices in the game. And the computer, my opponent, was author of the black poem, as it represented its moves. However, by the end of the game, I felt as though the computer was documenting the process as I felt less and less in control of the game itself.

In conclusion, I think Chessbard is a tool used to translate our chess moves into poetry. It can be viewed as an author in its own right, as the end result of its poetry is complex enough for its players to be able to interpret the poems in relation to their playing experience. In this way, Chessbard successfully generates poetry that is then interpreted and given meaning by its readers. Through a collaborative effort with the human psyche, the computer is able to be validated as author of poetry.

Hayley Wright

*single apology, each finger   
instantly plans basket and stage   
  
influential human toward deserted textbook   
and purpose within machine and   
exists keyboard sands over dark   
  
knight*

Writing collaboratively with a computer is not something that I have had much experience in. The process was interesting because while playing chess, traditionally a game, the sense of writing a poem did not come along with it. The realization that I was creating a poem hand in hand with a computer did not come into thought until the game had finished. After working with the Chessbard I feel that it is really a tool for creating poems through a series of movements that a previous author has inputted. I don’t think that the Chessbard is really writing the poem it is really just translating words from moves. Writing collaboratively with a computer is definitely a non-traditional way of creating poetry. The Chessbard specifically, is very innovative as every time the game is played there is a different outcome, no two players will ever have the same outcome as words depend on moves. The downfall of something like Chessbard is it leaves the player with less creative control compared to if they had written a poem. The player or writer is not able to choose words, only moves so control over the poem is limited. Overall, Chessbard is an innovative way to create poems and allows writers to explore different ways that technology can assist them in writing.

Mackenzie Wong

*cast exits stage, a lifestyle   
actively exits desert each product   
  
metal seperation angrily isolates each   
argument knights product, the sketch   
  
burdensome something this stung temptation   
insists or unifies this instruction   
  
the decomposing argument and machine   
bases argument*

Before this assignment, I had no idea how to play chess. After playing against the computer, I still am incredibly confused and frustrated with my digital opponent. I even looked up the rules several times and tried to win several more. The poem developed, while incredibly cool thanks to the technology didn’t feel like one I had written myself. The computer spat words out at me as I made my moves, almost as though it were translating them for me. However, while the moves are mine, the words are still the computers making it its own digital author. The poem itself is confusing and nonsensical, even after translating it the second time, but perhaps to the computer it means more (as proven by the translation of the PGN file. While the translated file was made up of numbers, the words it translated perhaps meant more to the computer than to someone like me, and the translated poem that followed could also juts be that same poem written in a language distinguishable to me (human vs computer reading it). To write collaboratively with a computer is an interesting experience, and one that offers new theories in terms of how language is spoken, written, and translated for its different audiences. This trans-media type assignment proves that. In literature, games and playing are always a role in the story in the form of a plot or quest. There is a motive, an antagonist/opponent, and a driving force that brings the story along to its final pages. This game of chess could just have been easily been a novel about a war to capture a kingdom. Perhaps, that is the story the Chessbard tells in his own digitized poetry.

Josh Beneteau

*finger worms copy toward human   
exists plan grinds over stage   
  
tempered lifestyle or something, path   
obesely spoons or necessitates something   
  
dark most likely storms ferryboat!  
  
imaginative sand wishfully and unequally   
narrates black reality or   
interlocked consideration, the storm   
  
Will reality chose desert or ferryboat?*  
  
*game pleasantly and unequally storms   
ferryboat, stormy equation*

The poems generated from the Chessbard are too chaotic and random for me to consider them literature. The words don’t form sentences or even consistent imagery, so much so that if this was presented to me in a published form I would call the creator a fraud.

I understand what professor Tucker wanted to do with this experiment and think it is exciting to experiment with text. However, the first couple weeks of this class, especially this assignment, have opened my eyes to how important human understanding of language is to writing literature.

The question of authorship is interesting. I’m guessing some people will get better poems than the four I generated, which confirms the randomness of the algorithm. I am giving full credit to the software for the poems above. The human brain, especially mine, could never randomize words together like that, because we are programmed to present words in a certain order and structure. The Chessbard seems to have none of that understanding.

As far as the role games have in literature, I will say I had fun playing with the Chessbard. I used to be not terrible at chess when I was in Grade 6 but haven’t played much since and the computer easily crushed me. But the third and final game I played (the one presented above) was very competitive and it was, dare I say, fun to write poetry. While the generated poem in the end did not make sense, it was fun to see it slowly reveal itself throughout the game.

I would recommend this game to anyone interested in literature. As an experiment in computer generated text, it certainly works. It is unfortunate that my poems did not turn out, but I still did learn a valuable lesson. Computers still cannot compete with the human brain when it comes to generating text.

That means, as a journalism major, that I’ll have a job for at least a few more years.

Julian Muia

*staged necessity, hard zinc and*

*the textbook always tempts keyboard*

*the cell, man beside sand*

*outside machine, clicking grinder or*

*black bridge always argues bridge*

*argument single, machine*

I believe that the real author of these poems is the designer of the game. The designer programmed the word choices that the chessbard and the player then generate. I don’t believe that the player is creating this poems based on their moves, because the words in the poem and its structure are all limited to the words chosen by the game’s designer. Taking this into consideration, I believe that the chessbard is in fact a tool that uses game moves and pre-existing word choices to create a poem. An author would be able to think for itself and choose its own words, which this game doesn’t do. Writing with a computer is a process where the user has limited freedom, meaning that while the user can make moves, they cannot choose the words that are outputted. While it is collaborative in its process, it’s not collaborative in its output (which is pre-determined). While I believe that games such as chessbard make for interesting and fun outcomes, I don’t think they should be taken too seriously. In this case, the poems generated are nonsensical, which is usually the case. I believe that literature should be carefully considered by the author before being composed, and games as of right now don’t have the A.I. required to create coherent works of literature.

Amy Mergianian

*necessary stage, that matter and   
exists textbook behind seperation   
  
any temptation, any productive act   
that memorized sand or argument   
  
the something sketches purpose   
solicits mechanical memory and imagination*

Playing with the Chessbard was an interesting experience and not similar to anything I have tried before. The concept of playing a game that simultaneously makes a poem is very creative and further explores the idea of computers as authors. At first, Chessbard was hard to play and frustrating because I do not know how to play chess. The Chessbard is far more advanced and was able to easily beat me, even on level 0. Having no chess experience, it was difficult to figure out when I was not able to make any more moves. After I became more comfortable with the game, I was able to get to 25 moves and see the poems that were created. Both the human player and Chessbard are the authors of the poem. It is a joint effort where the player is making the moves in order to create the words, but the computer is actually translating the moves into the words. The Chessbard is an author but more of a translator because it is translating the moves in the game into words and a poem. It is translating actions into a form of art, which is a very interesting concept for a computer program to do. Writing collaboratively with a computer means using your own ideas and working with technology to further expand that idea. Your mind and a computer work differently, therefore working together creates unique pieces of work. Until recently, I did not think games and playing were involved in literature. But after playing with a few text generators and games, I have discovered that games and technology can also develop literature. Games and playing showcase how something as simple as a game can create a story with a meaning behind it. They are expanding the face of literature and exposing readers to new forms of poems and stories.

Brittany Luk

*Where is a productive sketch?*

*beside sphere*

*rabbit voicelessly necessitates humane lifestyle*

*numbers any man or cell*

*Imagine sealed copper seals (seals) copper narrative!*

that imagination gracefully points

I played a game of chess with the Chessbard with a classmate rather than playing against the Chessbard. My experience playing with the Chessbard was a unique one because I have never played a game of chess where a poem would be formulated based on the moves made during the game. To have a poem be made while playing chess intrigued me because I wanted to know what the next part of the poem would be as I continued making various moves. I found it entertaining and exciting to have a poem unfold as I was playing chess because of the fact that I was writing a poem collaboratively with my classmate as well as the Chessbard. Therefore, I believe the author of the poems created to be my classmate, the Chessbard and I. At the same time, I would also say that the Chessbard is a translator because it is helping to translate the moves made into lines of the poems. To write collaboratively with a computer means to create works that are special and unlike any other pieces of work that you would create on your own. Writing collaboratively with a computer allows for multiple opportunities to create different works and I believe it helps by getting your mind to constantly think about endless possibilities. The effect games and playing has on literature is shown through the Chessbard because the game as a narrative comes into play. Games and playing are ways literature can be created. Although the game of chess is restrictive because only certain moves can be made which means the poem is restricted as well, I still believe that the Chessbard is a great and enjoyable way to create poems and literature.

### Diana Zagorski

*each active cast exits   
or shoulders and repurposes   
any apology injects proud stage   
  
Where is productive plan?  
outside sketch   
  
kingly keyboard and mechanical machine   
among cast beside argument, decomposition   
screeches deserted decomposition underneath bridge   
  
interlocked curve carefully insists some   
worm interlocks mirror, any mirror*

Seeing as this was my first time playing chess I had a difficult time getting to the minimum twenty-five moves. The closes I got playing against the Chessbard were twenty-two moves so I enlisted the help of a friend. The authors of these poems are the two players. Each player is the author of their own poem but each had influence on the outcome so in a sense one can argue that the two players are co-authors of both works.

The Chessbard can be a tool that provides the user a bank of content that is arranged into an order determined by what move is played. In that respect, the tool is a translator. The player is speaking the language of chess and the Chessbard translate this experience that has a beginning, middle and an end into a story that is told in poetic form. Writers must work interdependently with computers when collaborating on a literary work because the writer is creating a smaller piece of text rather than the whole text they are use to writing. This collaboration requires both the writer and the computer to act independently to effectively contribute in the overall shaping of the text.   
  
 Games and playing can influence the way the player experience the text that is being read or written. They can bring a text to life without the player realizing that they are collaborating in the outcome of the story. In the past readers were passive towards literature; they would not interact with the text. Games allow literature to become interactive where the reader is also the writer, and there are diverse amounts of outcomes available for one piece of text.

Kayla McLean

*That machine warily sounds something*

*or product and hard knot*

*cellular coherence any live instruction*

*variation mirrors speed among bridge*

*blackens bridge or storm or*

Throughout my experience as a Chessbard player, I was both intrigued with the game itself, and with the “Black” and “White” ‘poems’ my moves were helping to create. I struggled with the concept of me, and solely me being the author of the White poem, however. After all, there exists a built-in algorithm created by the human designer of the Chessbard site, and the computer (robot) is responsible for carrying out, deciphering and translating that algorithm based on each move that I make, so therefore the lines of authorship are blurred, and overlap many times between myself, the computer and the human designer of the game. This falls in line with the nature of authorship in general––a symbiotic ecosystem of sorts where many elements are working together, interdependent upon one another and continuous with each other––a far cry from the common notion of a singular, solitary, self-sufficient author. With this many factors working together simultaneously, the possibilities in output are nearly infinite. A new language also emerges; a new kind of literature, as a result of working collaboratively with a computer, that has it’s own nuance and flow (even though it uses recognizable words and similar sentence structures found in everyday English such as, “The machine warily sounds something; or product and hard knot”). As humans tend to do when reading literature, this kind of literature almost begs for us to read deeply into it, to fish out some kind of innate meaning––also begging the question that asks if the kind of literature above should be treated in the same way as the ‘cohesive’ literature created by humans. I found that the nature of this site––a chess game as agency for creating literature, provides a unique and engaging way for people to participate in the writing process and promotes and supports the idea of co-authorship––indeed drawing attention to the fact that every literary work, is essentially and even necessarily “co-authored”.

Harry Son

*this worm and human, burr   
interlocks lifestyle, infinity below textbook   
  
tempered memory or clicking slide   
inside act beyond product, product   
tempts dark and grinder   
  
logical knight frigidly argues knight   
and sand argues knight   
  
blurred necessity, argument or   
screech lyrically screeches womanly mirror   
  
womanly screech*

The definition of an author is “the originator of any written work”. Thus, according to the definition, I would say that the author of the chessbard poem is none other than me. Even though the program selected the words from programmed options, the originality of poem belongs to me. The knowledge that I learned from my years of education functions in the same way as a program code that developer programmed in chessbard. It is just a means or a tool, which works in conjunction with the author to assist in the creation of the final work. Just as education cannot alone create works, but only influence the author to produce, the program also cannot be given credit for the final work. Using the program is equivalent to translating the author’s work into a different language. Once written work is translated, the credit is not due to the translator, but the writer. Hence, chessbard is just a tool to help users to write their own poem within guidelines.

With the advancement of technology, it is now possible to collaborate with a computer, and although this may seem strange to some, having been socialized with technology and computers since an early age, this is a very natural process for me. If anything, it makes literature more approachable. Games and playing close the growing gap between people and literature, as the familiarity of technology makes literature more appealing to the masses.

Andrea Africa

*each grinder, textbook necessarily slows*

*spinning basket each single lifestyle*

*spooned density exits upon act*

*a instant or bored matter*

*productive cast toward woman*

*plans*

Chessbard has introduced a new method of creative writing. Many would think that joining forces with computer programing and gaming to create literature seems unorthodox or radical, as it takes away from the meaning behind poems and the thought put into them. But it also challenges authors and interpreters to go beyond traditional writing and see meaning within the experience.

I had never played chess until I was confronted with this assignment. That was a challenge in itself. However, after many attempts, 25 steps were accomplished, and finishing the Chessbard assignment was no longer hindered by my inability to play chess.

The author of this poem is mainly the Chessbard processor. However, by participating in playing chess with the computer, I would say that I am in part an author of the poem produced. Without my participation, the Chessbard processor would not have had anyone to play with, at least in the setting of human vs computer. I think the Chessbard is both a tool and an author because it is able to generate a poem through chess moves that are exerted by people. Chessbard is a great example of computer mediated collaborative writing as it composes a piece of literature, which includes contributions from both human participation and computer processing.

Carina Kresic

*active plan or ground apology*

*and importantly isolates a textbook*

*single machine seals the cast*

*and keyboard varies knight*

*Where is individual desert?*

*across slowness*

*any redundancy, humane individual or*

*redundant individual*

Before starting my experience using the Chess Poetry website, I was confused how a game that has been around for years could simply compose a poem. It is very strange to think that we have reached an era where our advanced technology is now merging with simple games like chess, and thus are producing literature that University students are able to study. The process that I experience to eventually have a “finished” translated poem was longer than I was expecting, and it makes me question who the real author of this poem is. Since an author is someone who creates something, then that would mean that I myself am an author just by writing this, and I could also be considered as the author of the poems. However, I find it just a bit confusing since I did not come up with the words used in the poems – they were processed many times by the site and translated into words in which they were coded for. I did, though, play the game myself, and made the moves of my choice. In a traditional poem, the author composes the lines themselves. But in the Chess Poetry, the moves done on the chessboard each represent different words. I believe that since I was the player of the game, I am indeed an author of the poem. I may not be the first author, since the one who created the game should be known as the real author. The ChessBard serves as a tool for other authors to create new unique pieces from what was already created. Games and poetry can relate well to one another, since creating poetry or literature for that matter, is in itself a version of a “game”. When creating a poem you must put words, sentences, etc. in an order, and must follow a set of rules that have been outlined for what counts as a poem. This is the same for every type of the literature. Each category is divided because they all follow the same rules. Because of this, it is clear that games in general relate and influence literature.

Gilberto Manjarrez Vega

*single matter, productive plan acts*

*and observes grinder or shoulder*

*keyboard most likely necessitates stripped machine!*

*slow something, deserted basket worms*

*isolates or powders, argues*

*sketch and unreal highrise*

*purposeful slide*

While trying the Chessbard experience, I realized how interesting and creative this project is. It is interesting to see how by playing a chess game, we can develop a story. An interesting approach in this project is to define who is the author of these poems. I believe that the person playing the game is the author of the first poem generated (before clicking the “poetify”) because it is the moves that the player decides to do. However, once we click the “poetify” button, the author of that poem is the computer because it generates a poem with the words that you got while playing the chess game.  I believe that the chessboard is an author and a tool because even though, the player creates the words according to the game moves, once the “poetify” button is clicked; it is the computer who puts the poem together. As mentioned before, the Chessbard is also a tool because it helps to put together the random words that you get while playing the game. The game is also a tool because organize the words that the person who created “Chessbard” put on the game’s database.

Ryan Radersma

*staged grinder or separate textbook   
intelligently mechanizes any single knot   
past act deserts a ocean   
  
the circlet massively combs silicon   
and base or consideration and   
freckled*

Playing against the ChessBard is an interesting phenomenon. On one hand, the interactivity and human-reliant nature of the poem production makes one feel like they are playing just as active a role in the composition of the work as the ChessBard. But ultimately, the ChessBard is writing both sides of the poem. You can move the White pieces however you want, but it is impossible to know for sure which moves will create which words, so it is impossible to add your own creative element to the work. In this regard, it is arguable that there is no human aspect to this computationally generated poem – it could easily be done with two computer-controlled sides to create an exclusively computer-generated poem.

At it’s core, the ChessBard is no more than a translator – it converts the code of a game of chess, known as Portable Game Notation, and converts it to English using a pre-determined algorithm created by a human author. Therefore, it cannot be considered an author on its own. It does have an interactive element in that you can actually play the game of chess that’s notation is converted to English. But since Portable Game Notation is not a language humans can write in, humans cannot be considered an author, nor are humans using chess as a tool to write, because that would imply they had control over the output.

Writing collaboratively with a computer is still a difficult thing to do, as computers are not yet capable of creative thought and reasoning. They are able to logically deduct which words go together and how to tell a simple story using story parts provided by humans, but since computers are not able to aid in the creative process, their output must still be refined in order to tell a meaningful and artistic story – that is, unless randomness is an important factor of the art.

Marissa Melnyk

*single something beneath hard zinc*

*and stage or round finger*

*spoon documents or grinds*

*cellular consideration among desert, seperation*

*repurposes temptation above cacophonous decimal*

*unified curl revolves beyond*

*coherent limit each stung dark*

*that ferryboat past or around*

Compared to the Cyborg assignment where we pick the text and allowed the text generators/deformers to alter the work, for the Chessbard it plays out quite the opposite. In this case, the text was already predetermined, we have no real choice on the matter, and our job is to play chess that will determine the poetic structure accordingly. But with no knowledge on how our actions affect the written process of the poem, we become the text deformer tool ourselves, not the Chessbard. For this reason I see this program as the lead author to the poem, and my actions of moving the chess pieces as a simple accessory to bringing the poem to a solid form.

But, looking into it further, I can’t fully agree with this assignment is the idea that a cyborg machine such as Chessbard can be a “true” author to literature. While humans can be seen as the tool in this case, the machine would not exist without a human having programmed it. In that sense I believe the actual true author in this case is not the machine at all, but Tucker and Miller themselves, because the Chessbard was designed under their control and serves as simply an medium to translate. To put it into perspective: if I was trying to type a poem on a computer but I had somebody else controlling my hands to hit the specific keys they wanted, I wouldn’t be an author to the result of that poem, I was just an accessory to the fact. That’s how I feel about text machines, they input no creative device on their own, they just serve as a medium to their programmers’ design.

It can seem helpless trying to write collaboratively with a machine when its outputs seem entirely randomized like in this example. But looking beyond the machine, it doesn’t feel all too un-human at all. In reality it feels more so like a collaboration with the computer’s author, and this new form of writing serves to digitally combine the literacy creativity of two human authors, one done through proxy of their text generator machine. It forces literacy not to remain a single stream of conscious, but a mashup of several authors. In literature, this sort of “game” can help a single author embellish or inspire writing and like games do, has a role to bring people together and spark creativity.

Dylan Campus

*each lock some sandy plan   
seals and applauds powdered temptation   
  
the helmet the blurred something   
deserts logical rabbit beside basket   
  
unreal bridge below cube   
blackens any stormy sphere or   
round equation, any storm   
  
sketch*

I personally had a very interesting experience playing against the Chessbard. While I consider myself to be quite a good chess player, I was simply no match against the Chessbard, and I lost after only a total of 35 moves. When playing against another human player, both sides usually take an equal amount of time during their turns, as they try to read their opponents strategy. But, when facing the Chesbard, I noticed that after taking my time to decide on a move, the Chessbard would make its move in only a matter of seconds, which made it incredibly hard to read its strategy. After engaging in this experience, it seems that both the human player and the Chessbard are the author, as they both have a role in creating the notation that eventually goes on to be translated into a poem. In this sense, although the Chessbard collaborates with the human author to create the notation, it would seem as if the Chessbard is more of a translator. To write collaboratively with a computer, in the way I understand it, means to have input from both a human and a machine in order to create something entirely new, that both sides had a helping hand in creating. In literature, both games and the playing of games share the role of storytelling, as every game tells a story even those that are as simple as a game of chess. On the surface, the game of chess that I played against the Chessbard doesn’t seem to have much of a story to it, but a deeper perspective shows that the story could have been as simple as one side slowly being taken over by the other, and how my pieces fell before the much more superior Chessbard.

Athanasia Tsapralis

*any grinder, that staged act*

*roughly produces matter and*

*sands upon single cast*

*that imagination dejectedly lives quarter*

*and desert or frigid sketch*

*If each dark cubes argument,*

*What knights?*

*joint argument*

My experience playing with the Chessbard was very interesting. It has been the only time I have ever played against a computer/software program. At some moments it was difficult because the game of chess has never been a great skill of mine, so at some points I did not know what to do next. Overall, it was fun to interact with the computer and to recognize the different styles of poems we were both creating at the same time.

While playing the game it is quite clear that there is definitely a co-authorship that formulates to produce these poems. It is both the computer and I working together to construct these poems. This aspect of co-authorship is prevalent that the poems are not only created together, but also are based off of each other. Each time I played a move that affected the poems, and each time the computer played a specific move, also affected the poems output.

After playing with the Chessbard I would consider it a tool for elevating some different styles of writing into creating a poem. The Chessbard is a very specific tool that helps in providing a technological frame into writing formats. Moreover, creating a new type of writing, where you singularly are not able to control the outcome.

To write collaboratively with a computer means that both the writer and the computer have an input to the ultimate output that is created. It also means that both the computer and the writer are co-authors because of the intergraded nature that inevitably generates the written component. The roles that games and playing have in literature are very evident in writing because it sometimes breaks away from a particular mold that writing usually falls under. To generate text with the help of playing games solidifies the ways in which the world is changing into a more technologically savvy world, and in refection, literature in some aspects has to evolve and change with it.

Mariya Guzova

*a necessity or hard grinder*

*acts each spoon or basket*

*each apology across perfection*

*always tempts spherical bridge between*

*any product and product*

*that something or unreal*

My first thought when reflecting on my experience writing with the chessbard was that I didn’t know how to play chess. This is of course not an issue, unless you have to make at least 25 moves, which we did for the assignment. It took me something like 10 tries to get that many moves in before the computer had me at a check mate. When I finally was able to overcome this challenge, I was able to actually focus on what the chessbard was producing in terms of poetry.

One interesting trend I found was that the poems always tended to start with the same few words. Particularly the words *single, strand, and necessity*. I didn’t take any poetic meaning from this, but I thought it was an insight into the algorithm at hand in the chessbard. It was a way to see that this wasn’t just a random word generator, but that there was some form of rhythm and reason to it, even though it isn’t thinking.

I found this to be a crucial point in how I thought of the chessbard as more than just a tool. Initially, I saw it as a guitar. With a predetermined set of words that it would pump out whenever a button is pressed. But this small insight into its algorithm showed me that the actual play you made had an effect on the word and it wasn’t just random generation. This complicates the idea of the author, and whether the computer is a tool or a co-author. I would argue, however, that since the computer has no autonomous thinking, and is not artificial intelligence, then the real co-author of all the works produced by the chess bard is the creator of the algorithm used by the chessbard. Since their efforts made the logic behind each word selection, then technically they are responsible for the poems. I think once machines with artificial intelligence begin writing will we have to really consider authorship to a computer. And even in that case I think it would be a co-authorship with the creator of the AI machine.

Emily Martinson

*apologetic act and sealed something*

*isolatedly stages any mirror and*

*ground temptation necessitates any spoon*

*this typed click or textbook*

*or man activates sketch*

*purpose*

Playing against the Chessbard proved to be quite the difficult experience. Being a novice chess player myself I was not prepared for how hard it would be to reach the required 25 moves to make a substantial poem. So finding that I could not get many moves in before being beaten I switched up my strategy and had a friend play against me so that we could at least reach the goal put in place for the assignment.

Regarding the authorship of these poems, both black and white, I do not think it would be fair to call myself the author. I did not come up with the words or the placement of words. I was merely the tool that the Chessbard used to come up with the literary work. It took my somewhat carefully thought out moves and made it into something tangible and interesting. I would say that not only is the Chessbard an author but a translator as well. The program uses the moves, and translates them into a work of literary art. Where I see letters and numbers the Chessbard sees words and phrases that can be strung together to make something substantial.

I believe that games and playing now more than ever have a great influence on the world of literary arts. Nowadays most people are attached to their phones and these phones have us typing up texts and emails, but they also contain such trivial things as games. It is in these games like Words with Friends that have us creating literary experiences through fun to play games. And with the creation of things such as the Chessbard I believe games and the such will continue to have a great impact on how reading, writing and authoring literary arts are composed.

Robert Guida

*sand roughly necessitates imagination within   
or under the ancient apple   
  
memorized helmet inside quick stage   
a organ or copied textbook   
  
stung basket and temptation   
cellular seals separate wasp, melody   
sings spoon under oyster   
  
the argument, resistance or flavour   
worms individual, white behind cast   
  
What is this spinning bridge?  
Where is each instantaneous decomposition?  
  
the slide and city and   
crumbling*

When playing against the Chess bard program, the word choice in the composed poem was out of my control. As such, my main goal was to beat the program, which was difficult not only for a human player, but for one who does not play chess very often. The creation of the poem was a side thought that I did not pay attention to until after the game was played, at which point I passively read the completed work as though it was not necessarily my own creation. I felt the chessbard program was the author of these poems, even if one was based solely on my decisions in the game. However, whether a placebo effect or the sophistication of the system, I personally felt like my poem mirrored my decisions as it told a story of attempting strategy until ranks were separated and eventually everything crumbled. The word choice resonated with how I felt the game was played, and though I felt as if the program remained the author, it was interesting to see how a game can be used to capture moment. Unlike other poetry generators, this involved an action that came along with certain events and emotions tied to the game. Other text generators feel random and unattached to the user; however, using a game has a certain level of involvement that makes it feel more personal. As a child I used to imagine a game of chess being a story in which the pieces interacted with each other rather than simply being a competition between players. Using chess to create a piece of literature is an incredible idea and the result feels like two sides of the same story that interact as seen in the words of my poems as the white decomposes and crumbles and the black claims ownership. As all games are inherently stories, the chessbard program is very a intuitive and interactive author that captures the essence of the game all on its own.

Roxanne Frazer

*any plan exits grinder   
exits apologetic sketch under basket   
  
desert necessarily or really stages   
and drunkenly casts above logic   
  
memorized dark underneath textbook   
bridges the wishful therapist and   
frigid dark, a argument   
  
cloudy highrise or each clock   
criss-crosses screech or screech   
  
diagonal screech and lyrical screech   
beside screech past slide, highrise   
screeches slide and slide   
  
screech criss-crosses ravenously and calmly   
erect*

My experience with the Chessbard was fascinating. I am not a chess player, so Aaron Tucker had to give me the basic instruction of “keep the black pieces away from your King” in order for me to get started and make more than 25 moves for the white pieces. Once the poems were generated and I read them, I began to see how these words may already be like stream of consciousness works. After hitting the “poetify” option, the poems became even more coherent though the meanings of the pieces still elude me.

The Chessbard tool skewed my view of what authorship “should” look like. Before this assignment, I thought of an author as the person who originates or creates a narrative. After this assignment I concluded that authorship can be an interdependent effort. This particular assignment combined the elements of Aaron and and Jody’s original works, notation-to-number-to-English co-ordination and my chess playing to generate four new pieces. So then the author of these poems is the sum of these elements, with each not being able to operate without the action of another.

In this equation the Chessbard acts as a translator; it took the moves made by me and the moves made by the computer in reaction to mine and converted them into the words that correspond. So then it translated the moves into notations, then into whatever digital language it recognizes and finally into English. To write collaboratively with a computer means that the completion of a work depends on input from both the man and the machine; one does not work in isolation from the other. It also means that the computer gets credited as well as the human for authorship.

Games and Playing can occupy the role of generating narrative in literature. In this assignment, playing the chess game against the computer prompted the retrieval of words from a pre-existing archive. However, the words came together differently from the works that have been archived by the creators of this tool, giving rise to new works instead. So then game playing grants the player a more active role in generating a story. It promotes interdependency making the player less of a consumer and more of a producer of the final result.

Sarah Amormino

*the act produces influential textbook   
apologizes textbook, a stage   
or plan scrawny necessity   
  
deserted sand and that sketch   
or argument cloudy decimal or   
each sum*

My experience playing with the ChessBard was interesting, and one that I thoroughly enjoyed. Although, technically speaking, I was in a match with the generator; it felt more like I was making a compromise with the ChessBard instead of playing against it. It was fun for me to see how each move translated into words, and how I was able to share control with the computer over a game of chess. I wouldn’t credit myself, nor the computer, as the author of the poems created, but more so a helping hand in the re-construction of them.

Given the fact that the words pulled from the generator were writings from Aaron Tucker, I would say that the poems formed after the twenty-five moves was from the contribution of myself, the computer and Tucker. This being said, I believe the ChessBard to be a tool in which it reconfigures pre-existing poetry into new works that can be related back to its original literature. I felt like I was more of the translator during the game, as my move justified the computers move, which in turn outputted the scrambled poetry.

To write collaboratively with a computer is like swimming in a pond without being able to see anything under you – until, all of a sudden, you feel something (and this something, that you feel rub against your toes, *feels* like something that *would* be under you). Having a computer as your poetical partner doesn’t really make sense at first, but once it all comes together it is easily understood as a creative writing tool for all elements of the process.

Shaughna Boara

*mechanical stage onto live human   
or equally individualizes proud sketch   
  
the knight, massive grease   
acts roughly and individually, skin   
laboriously resists cast among mirror*

When discussing the authourship of Chessbard it’s difficult to point to one specific author or creator whether it be human or machine. One could argue it’s creators of the poems the different poems draw from are the authours, but then it is in the end Chessbard who chooses from the poem, but then it’s really the player who allows Chessbard to make those choices leading this to be a form of true co-authourship of authours that don’t even ever need to meet. Games create a disconnection in authourship while aiding the creation of ergodic literature. Games still exist as literature with this disconnection because in this digital age literature is not dependent on flow but how a story or idea presents itself. Games also act a “safe space” to allow users and programs to collaborate because of the welcoming and interactive nature presented when users play. With Chessbard the possibilities are seemingly endless for creating poems but the end result is made when the user opens up the chance to change the possibilities from the already existing pieces of poetry pre-programed. In short Chessbard is the possibility of many authours and continues to collaborate with the world with every game.

Mary Gyulay

*exists machine, productive grinder deserts*

*powerfully or carves appallingly*

*path or apologetic stage*

*any basket beside spoon or*

*cast, signal deserts a bridge*

*What is typed finger?*

*cellular decomposition!*

*stung fibre temptingly or calmly*

*acts clock, diagonal and screech*

*each*

As I was playing, I couldn’t help but to take note of the black and white poems being formed along the side of the chessboard. They seemed to dictate or use words that express how each side of the board was doing. I don’t know if this was coincidental or if the computer generates these specific words on purpose, but if intentional, the poems forming seem to be in conjunction with the outcome of the chess game.

Words on my side like “spoon carefully casts signals across”, “some screech”, and exclamations like “basket!” and “machine!” which, in my interpretation could be responses to some of the moves I made (can you tell based on these words that I lost in the end?). This made the game, from my side of the board, seem ominous and tense. The words on the other side, however, had words like “wink”, “blessing”, and “laughing”, which seem to reflect the winner’s side of the chessboard.

It’s an interesting experience having a computer write a poem based on a game you play. On one hand, I know it’s calculating which chess piece I moved and where I moved it, but there’s another part of me that believes it’s specifically choosing words based on what moves I decided to play; describing my choices in a way. There’s also the thought – am *I* writing the poem because of the moves I decided to make? Or is the *computer* the author? Or is it a co-authorship? I think co-authorship is the conclusion I would land on. It takes both the reader *and* the “writer” to truly pen a piece like this interactive narrative.

Kaylyn Jung

*the product, cell and temptation*

*purposely acts apple a cast*

*a something isolates, performs grinder*

*appears sketch or click*

*harmonious resistance among black desert*

*or grinder*

Authorship, in the case of the Chessboard, can be accredited to the programmer, the program and myself. Authorship in the case of generative or conceptual literature, is almost always a collaborative effort. The Chessbard, as you’re playing through it, acts as a tool. I consider it a tool because you need to use it and the certain rules that went into it on order to generate the type of poem unique to the Chessbard. The accreditation for authorship is attributed to the programmer or creator of the Chessboard because they created the parameters necessary to use the Chessboard in order to create poetry. Authorship is accredited to the Chessbard tool because it creates its own poem through responding to the moves of the other player. The translation aspect of working through the Chessboard occurs when you actually take your game and put it through the translator tool on the website, which is obvious I suppose. To write collaboratively with a computer means you’re interacting with the program created by a programmer as a tool to make your own generative text. Writing collaboratively with a computer is a multi-faceted process that intertwines today’s technology with programming and coding in ways that are far more creative. Games and playing play the role of helping the creator using the generative text tool work through a narrative that can open up opportunities for diverse outcomes that the person using the tool hasn’t considered. Using games as a means to create literature also allows the opportunity to integrate multiple authors which can make more diverse literature.

David Skoric

*necessary sand, each cast sketches   
always or rotates inconsistently   
twine or deserted powder   
  
finger worms variation or vault   
or desert sounds basket or   
tempered wasp past cacophonous temptation*

Playing the Chessbard was a weird experience. I am not one who knows how to play chess, but it was interesting to see how the moves affect word, even when moving back and forth between the same space. The computer generated poems don’t make much sense. While my moves affected the poem, so did the computer’s, but from my end I didn’t know how my moves would affect the words generated while the computer knew all the rules, and the words and the moves. In this way it was really like the computer was in charge, my moves ultimately only influenced what the computer already knew. These kinds of machine based games give you an opportunity to write literature, but not literature that is really capable of producing a real storyline, while it makes sentences, it really doesn’t make any kind of cohesive story.

Beatrice Hanley

*blurred finger inside single matter   
or basket or the cell   
softly separates basket any keyboard   
  
tempered keyboard any necessary city   
utterly and ravenously seals machine   
  
the apple beside desert   
erects*

Prior to this assignment I had never played chess before so the most challenging thing for me was having to learn how to play. I am a visual learner and learn the best by seeing and doing rather than reading instructions when it comes to games. I watched a youtube video to help me as well. Unfortunately I got stuck several times, unable to make it past 12 moves or so, which was frustrating. I was not sure what I was doing wrong and why the game would not let me move any further. I had to get a friend to help me play chess in order to get through the moves, which made it that much more rewarding when I finally made it past 25 moves. In my opinion, I would say that the Chessbard is the author of these poems and an author rather than a translator. I did not feel that I was collaborating with the computer per se, because the computer had most of the control. This applies to both its chess skills being superior to mine and the fact that the words were being generated by it and I had absolutely no choice in them. Games and playing have a role in literature because they create new ways of producing content that we never had before. With machines and computers becoming more and more intelligent one has to wonder what the future of literature holds for us, with texts being entirely generated by artificial intelligence.

Christina Licastro

*ground reality, deserted finger spoons*

*closely or proudly meddles or*

*carves basket behind angle*

*erratic bridge, any textbook*

*and stage below promotion or*

*productive chessboard acts below bridge*

*scrawny circlet any hard argument*

*individualizes skin, mirror and arrow*

*hidden staircase*

I found this assignment very interesting to complete because I got to experience poetry in a fun and new interactive way. Participating in a game of chess allowed me to decide the outcome of my poem. I am assuming the website is programmed to generate words depending on what pieces you to decide to move and when/where you choose to place them. Depending on my moves, it will effect how the black pieces move as well. Due to white beginning the game, I got to determine how the black pieces would react. If the black pieces were able to start, the poem would most likely be different. This collaborative approach allows there to be more creativity and gives the opportunity for there to be endless outcomes depending how you plan to play the game of chess. I believe that the Chessbard is considered to be both a tool and an author. At first, I was using the Chessbard as tool to be my opponent for a game of chess. As I was using it as a tool, the Chessbard was simultaneously being an author and writing a poem. The Chessbard was also using me as a tool because if I was not there, the game could not begin. During the game, the Chessbard was feeding off the information I was giving it in order for it to complete its task and create a poem. Therefore, I consider the Chessbard and myself to both be authors and tools in this writing approach. I believe that playing games opens up a lot of possibilities when it comes to discovering literature. The Chessbard is very interactive and allows the player to immerse himself or herself in a game and analyze a poem after participating. I believe incorporating games is a way to attract many individuals and get them interested in learning more about this emergent type of literature. I personally believe participating in something like this sparks a desire to learn and be passionate because the Chessbard is an engaging way to become an author.

Bella Chrumka

*apologetic stage and keyboard   
addictively clicks temptation or act   
  
that textbook, purposeful use   
inside plan onto productive sand   
  
joint textbook or cast   
upon sketch any*

I played a game of chess against Bella. She is the creator of the white poem and I am the creator of the black poem. I would consider the computer to be the author of the poem and myself to be the person who controlled the creation of the poems. It was an interesting experience to play chess against another human but to have the computer create the story for us.

The ChessBard is the author because it comes up with the words and puts them together to form a complete poem. It is the computer that tells the story of the game that Bella and I played. I am the tool because I execute the physical actions that allow the computer to put words together and create something with meaning. Without my actions, the ChessBard would not know when to place words together or which ones to choose. However, the ChessBard also acts as the translator, translating my actions into words. By moving the chess pieces I force the computer to create a storyline but I would not consider myself to be the one coming up with the storyline.

Regardless of who the author was, this was a collaboration between a human and a computer. Both parties were necessary in order to create the poem. The computer and the human work together to cover the positions of the tool, the author and the translator. All of these positions are essential to creating a ChessBard poem. Working collaboratively with a computer means that the tasks are divided but that each one has an essential role in creating the final outcome.

Playing and games allow people to use their creativity to create a storyline. When someone is playing a game they are either following a story or creating one. Every choice they make affects how the game and therefore the story will play out. The computer allowed me to play a game that would in turn create a story that was representative of the game that I played. Each new decision and each new move is represented by a new word written by the author, the ChessBard.

Adom-Krodua Acheampong

*a necessity materializes apology   
and finger and shoulder and   
productive sketch revolve a human   
  
live man or basket   
toward shoulder the shoulder and   
a man or injected shoulder*

In making the poems with the Chessbard, one of the questions that occurred to me was “who is the author of this poem”? I came to the conclusion that the author of the poem is essentially the Chessbard, however, I do claim some level co-authorship, particularly because the poem was constructed through my moves in the chess game. This also creates a strange dynamic between tool and author. Upon first glance, it would appear that the Chessbard is the tool and I am the author, however, I believe myself and the chessboard function differently – I am the tool and the Chessbard is the author, and we work collaboratively to produce the two poems.

Christopher Bjola

*each hard act or   
human, any human exits closely   
the seperation apologizes keyboard   
  
temptation performs memory or burr   
powder isolates anciently or softly   
  
Imagine scrawny cube*

Despite my non-existent and out of practice chess skills, I was able to play against the chessbard in a game of 25 moves (I lost on the 25th move, coincidentally). After playing against the chessbard and creating these poems with the program, I found that the chessbard could be considered both an author and a tool for creating works of literature. On the one hand, the program is creating an original work of literature. Whether this work makes complete sense is irrelevant, as many works of poetry written by authors may not appear to make sense until the reader delves deeper into the work. On the other hand, the program can be used as a tool for authors searching for inspiration. The benefit of taking words based on the moves made in a chess match creates an element of randomness to the writing process. A writer who is brainstorming ideas to write about in a poem can use this program as the ultimate word bank, often seeing words that they may have not considered using in their work, or discovering a stanza that they may want to use in their poem to some degree. In terms of playing games to create these works, I think that it adds a very entertaining element to writing. By having the participant play a game to find words to use, or to combine words into a poem based on an algorithm implemented by a computer adds an interactive side to creating literature; something that wasn’t exactly possible before the 21st century.

Hannah Jong

*single plan or any act   
argues purposely or shoulder   
apologizes keyboard above zinc   
  
deserted decomposition on scrawny cast   
or circlet toward knight and   
staged sum*

At first glance, I must admit that the concept of the Chessbard and the thought of playing against this machine was rather intimidating. Having very little to almost no experience playing chess, it took me numerous tries to get to 25 moves. However, the many matches I had to play to achieve this goal granted me time to contemplate the program, its level of interactivity, and the question of authorship.

First, while I found a great level of difficulty and restrictions with the Chessbard (this of course due to my inexperience), its level of potentiality and possibility in the variety of poems it can generate is undeniable.

Second, despite not always knowing what move to make, I truly appreciate the high level of interactivity involved in playing with the Chessbard. While the text generators we have previously explored (i.e. The N+7 Machine) allowed the user to choose and alter the text through various settings, it was now fascinating to compare and contrast this experience with that of using the Chessbard. In this program’s added element generated text be determined by the moves we made within the chess match. I believe that the Chessbard’s combination of literature and game play made for a greatly interactive and immersive experience while providing its end users with a unique and more tangible sense of contribution to the generated poem.

However, this of course raises and further complicates the question of authorship; Is the Chessbard’s program creator the author? Is the Chessbard program itself the author? Or are we, the Chessbard players the author? Personally, I agree with Professor Aaron Tucker’s outlook that the role of the author and subject of authorship is in actuality a complex ecosystem. It is ultimately a collaborative effort and experience of a multitude of authors that can be credited as the author of the Chessbard, for the program would not exist without its author, and without the manipulation of a player the program could not generate poetry.

All in all, I believe the Chessbard to be an incredible example and exercise in the collaboration of man, machine, and poetry. Through this relatively new and constantly developing ecosystem of authorship and creation, it is very exciting to see the ways in which the English language and computer programming are continuously developing through mediums of the digital age.

Julia Lennox

*productive textbook inside grinder   
purposely plans active apple or   
cellular zinc, this keyboard   
  
a sphere, the rabbit, sand   
copies curved man and sphere   
  
each sketch and diagonal path   
single desert*

Professor Aaron Tucker’s Chessbard is a very interesting and complex tool used to create original works of poetry. For the user, the Chessbard acts as a translator, interpreting individual moves made by the human player. It also acts as an author by selecting the actual words and phrasing solely based on the play of the user. The Chessbard’s authorship is furthered through its own unique game play in response to the human player, creating its own set of moves which then must be translated. I found it fascinating that the same set of moves created two similar, yet distinct poems: one specifically from game play and one from the HTML translator. Examining my own experience, I wouldn’t say that I wrote the poem generated through my game play; I acted as a tool for the computer, creating a specific road map, which allowed the Chessbard to interpret as a work of poetry. This is where collaboration comes in: both the player and the computer rely on each other in order to create poems. The game of chess requires an opponent, otherwise you’d simply be able to anticipate every move. Partaking in this way, where it’s much harder to predict what moves are going to be made, allows for an almost infinite amount of different outcomes. Games and “play” turn traditional literary authorship on its head. Typically viewed as an individual art form, competition and interaction allow the author(s) to focus not on themselves or their own writing style, but the play of the other participant, therefore creating a whole new strategy in which they approach their work.