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Joyce's Odyssey. A celebration of human ingenuity in *Ulysses* and an indictment of the mediocrity of generative AI

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Abstract

This editorial reflects on James Joyce's modernist novel *Ulysses*, first published 100 years ago in 1922. We reconstruct *Ulysses's* revolutionary redefinition of the novel genre, its critical reception, and the immense challenges Joyce faced in writing, printing, and publishing the work. Narrating the genesis of *Ulysses* is a celebration of human ingenuity and perseverance in the face of daunting obstacles. We contrast Joyce's brilliant literary achievement with the comparatively inferior outputs of much-hyped generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) chatbots. We discuss how the excessive caution and censorship exhibited by leading generative AI systems like ChatGPT undermine the free exchange of ideas, in stark contrast to the liberation of expression embodied by *Ulysses*. Finally, we consider the implications of these insights for effective teaching practices and visionary leadership in higher education, emphasising the vital role of cultivating broad intellectual engagement and critical thinking skills among students and faculty. Our editorial also provides an overview of the many human-created gems in our latest journal issue.

Keywords: AI; artificial intelligence; fiction; generative AI; generative artificial intelligence; higher education; Homer; human ingenuity; James Joyce; literature; *The Odyssey; Ulysses*.

Introduction to *Ulysses*

> Oh rocks. Tell us in plain words.
> (Molly Bloom in Joyce, 2000a, p. 77)

It is ironic that reflecting on artificial intelligence and higher education for the last year has led us – the authors of this Editorial – to increasingly appreciate human intelligence. In this Editorial, we have decided to do something slightly unusual: to celebrate human literary ingenuity that favourably compares to the terminally dull texts that generative AI tends to spew out (Rudolph et al., 2023a, 2023b). To showcase the superiority of the human intellect, we could have provided innumerable examples from literature, visual art, theatre, film, or music. Instead, we shine our torchlight on only one monumental novel that was published some 100 years ago (in 1922): James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Homer's magnificent work, The Odyssey, approximately 2,700 years old and consisting of more than 12,000 lines of hexameter verse (Knox, 2006), serves as a crucial point of reference for Joyce's *Ulysses* and would have been another worthy case in point.

This is not the first instance of discussing a literary masterpiece within a JALT Editorial – Rudolph et al. (2022) discuss *Faust* (Goethe, 1997, 2003) in the context of the Faustian pacts that we enter in the context of neoliberal higher education. Goethe's *Faust* served as an allegory for the Faustian bargains of modernity, notably our unyielding faith in never-ending progress, which has precipitated environmental degradation in the Anthropocene – the epoch we currently live in. We also reflected on how the existential and epistemological crises engendered by the pandemic mirrored Faust's despair over the limitations of his knowledge and the quest for meaning in his teachings. We concluded that *Faust* challenges us to reflect on the essence of human striving and the possibility of redemption, advocating for a critically-tempered hope in the face of adversity and injustice (Rudolph et al., 2022).

While the recent pandemic's challenges framed our exploration of *Faust*, our examination of *Ulysses* navigates through the prevailing generative AI epidemic, characterised by viral hype and hysteria. In the realm of higher education, the erosion of extensive reading habits among students – and, to a lesser extent, educators – signals a troubling trend. This decline diminishes the potential for developing robust writing skills, given the well-established notion that avid readers frequently become more adept writers (Pinker, 2014). Furthermore, the escalating specialisation

within academic disciplines threatens to stifle the breadth of interdisciplinary knowledge epitomised by geniuses of bygone eras like Leonardo da Vinci and Goethe. Such broad-ranging scholarship, which fosters a culture of intellectual curiosity and cross-disciplinary learning, is at risk of being eclipsed by a narrow emphasis on domain-specific expertise. James Joyce's *Ulysses*, a paragon of literary complexity and innovation, serves as a poignant reminder of the richness that broad and deep engagement with literature can offer. We underscore the irreplaceable value of human creativity and intellectual depth by juxtaposing Joyce's opus magnum with the outputs of generative AI (GenAI). While GenAI may offer impressive feats of content generation at breakneck speed, it falls markedly short of replicating the creative syntheses that human artists have achieved through the ages.

This observation is not merely an academic point but has profound implications for good teaching and higher education leadership (Brookfield et al., 2023; Tan et al., 2024). Fostering a culture of wide-ranging intellectual exploration among students and faculty is not just beneficial but essential. Encouraging engagement with works of complex literature like *Ulysses* can serve as a powerful antidote to the narrowing of academic focus, enriching students' educational experiences and equipping them with the creative and critical thinking skills necessary for thriving in a VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous) environment. Moreover, for educators and leaders in higher education, championing the value of broad and interdisciplinary learning and teaching – in line with public intellectual ideals (Andrew, 2024) – can help cultivate a more knowledgeable, critical, and creative academic community. In doing so, we not only honour the legacy of literary greats like Joyce but also reaffirm our commitment to nurturing the full spectrum of human intellectual and creative potential.

Joyce is as inextricably associated with modern prose as Eliot is with modern poetry and Picasso with modern art (Ellman, 1982). In *Ulysses*, Joyce fundamentally reimagined the novel as a literary form. He pioneered a new modernist literature that articulated the perceived pointlessness and disorder that characterised early 20th-century Europe, and "dowdy, dirty Dublin" in particular (Birmingham, 2014, p. 54). Joyce's "revolutionary redefinition" of the novel in Ulysses treated all varieties of language – from the vernacular of Dublin to biblical references, from advertising slogans to classical allusions – as integral components of his expansive literary endeavour (Hastings, 2022, p. 72).

One must remember how stringent literary conventions were to fully appreciate Joyce's radical departure from them. A decade prior to the publication of *Ulysses*, Joyce faced seemingly insurmountable hurdles in publishing his short-story collection *Dubliners* (Joyce, 2008b) partly due to his use of the word "bloody", highlighting the extent of censorship and societal constraints on language (Birmingham, 2014, p. 225). Joyce's fearless incorporation of the F-word in *Ulysses* signalled a shift towards unfettered expression, eliminating previously inviolable taboos against freely articulating one's thoughts or ideas. Thus, Joyce's act of writing the word "fuck" in *Ulysses* transcended mere juvenile provocation.

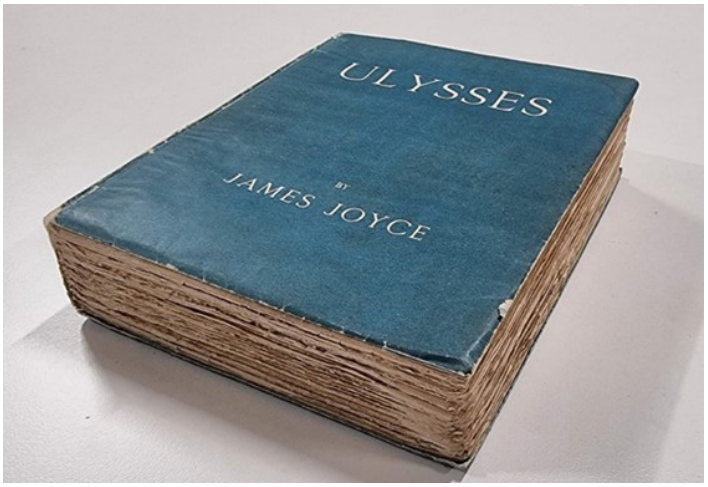


Figure 1. The first edition of *Ulysses* (1922). Bound in the Greek colours that Joyce considered lucky – white letters on a blue field – the book's design evokes the myth of Greece and Homer, reminiscent of a white island emerging from the sea. The formidable tome spans 732 pages, is three inches thick, and weighs nearly three and a half pounds (Ellman, 1982; Birmingham, 2014). Photograph of No. 302 of a limited edition of 1,000 numbered copies held by the State Library of New South Wales RB/0131.

Joyce's employment of profanities was merely a facet of a broader endeavour to dismantle established literary conventions. *Ulysses* challenged and deconstructed the conventional framework of narrative, offering a liberation from the established "tyranny of style" (Birmingham, 2014, p. 225). It marked a radical departure from established narrative techniques, dispensing with traditional narrative devices such as a singular narrative voice and blurring the lines between internal thought and the external world (Birmingham, 2014). In the "Oxen of the sun" chapter, Joyce crafts 32 parodies that trace the evolution of literary style from ancient pagan chants through Middle English, followed by the Latinate styles of Milton, imitations of satirists like Swift, and 19th-century novelists like Dickens. This chapter showcases Joyce's virtuosity in various writing styles, simultaneously advancing his narrative and paying ironic homage to the literary traditions that culminated in *Ulysses* (Hastings, 2022).

Already during its serialisation, *Ulysses* encountered fierce resistance from governmental bodies and various moral guardians, all zealous in their efforts to expurgate any perceived improprieties from literature. The novel's unabashed use of language and its bold, often provocative wordplay elicited considerable outrage. In addition, its irreverent portrayal of the British royal family and its 'blasphemous' views concerning the Roman Catholic Church intensified the scandal. Consequently, *Ulysses* found itself at the centre of legal battles and faced widespread censorship across the English-speaking world during the interwar period.

Despite these challenges, *Ulysses* has ascended to become one of the most highly regarded novels of the 20th century. 16 June 1904, the day Joyce and his future wife, Nora Barnacle, had their first date and the day the book's action takes place,

is commemorated globally every year as Bloomsday through festivities in bookshops and pubs (Hastings, 2022). More than 300 books and more than 3,000 scholarly articles are devoted, partly or entirely, to *Ulysses* (Birmingham, 2014). Ulysses continues to sell 100,000 copies a year, and it has been translated into more than 20 languages, including two Chinese translations (Birmingham, 2014). Random House continues to publish two rival editions of *Ulysses*.

One astonishing and innovative feature of *Ulysses* is its focus on a single day, evoking comparisons with the TV series "24", where each season's 24 episodes encapsulate an hour of a day in 'real-time'. McNamara (2010) described the series as akin to an "epic poem", with counter-terrorist federal agent Jack Bauer, a modern-day Odysseus, battling against human monsters that represent political corruption, cowardice, narcissism, megalomania, and terrorism. Contrary to "24", not much happens in *Ulysses*. Here is a feeble attempt to describe the content of the book in a paragraph.

Stephen Dedalus's day is filled with diverse activities: he shares breakfast with his roommates, teaches a class, enjoys a leisurely walk, engages in deep discussions with fellow intellectuals, indulges in alcohol, visits a brothel, and ends up being assaulted by an aggressive British soldier, a reflection of Ireland's status under British rule. Stephen is burdened by the memory of his mother's recent passing, a grief compounded by his refusal to pray for her due to his disenchantment with Catholicism. Meanwhile, Leopold Bloom starts his day by preparing breakfast for himself and his wife, Molly, before carrying out various errands around town. His day includes attending a funeral, conducting business in his role in advertising, dining out, engaging in a heated political debate with an Irish nationalist at a pub, spending time on the beach at dusk, and visiting a maternity hospital to check on a friend in labour. His path intersects with a drunken Stephen, prompting Bloom to take him under his wing. Bloom's day is complicated by his knowledge of Molly's afternoon affair with another man.

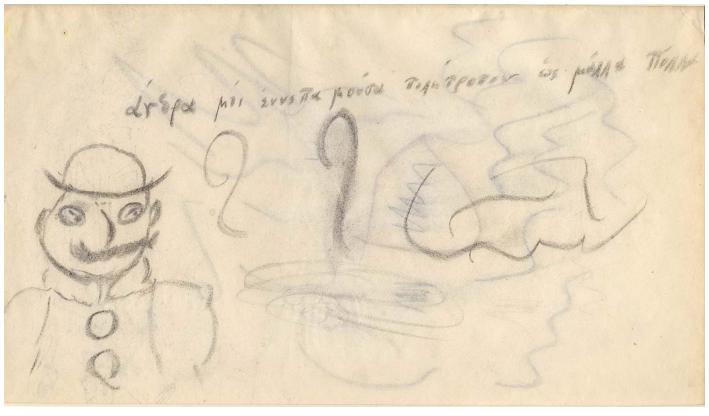


Figure 2. Joyce's sketch of Bloom is his only known visual depiction of one of his characters. It is a highlight of the McCormick Library's collection of 20th-century literary material. Source: https://sites.northwestern.edu/northwesternlibrary/2018/06/05/collection-highlight-james-joyces-sketch-of-leopold-bloom/

The initial section of this editorial continues with brief reconstructions of *Ulysses's* critical reception, its parallels with Homer's *Odyssey*, and its unbelievably arduous journey through writing, printing, publishing, and censorship. Subsequently, we explore the stark disparity between such human-created masterpieces and the over-hyped generative artificial intelligence, including its algorithms' underwhelming tendency towards censorship. We then ponder the implications of these insights for effective teaching practices and leadership in higher education. Importantly, the second part of the editorial unveils and examines our latest issue, Volume 7(1).

Critical reception of *Ulysses*

Joyce harboured a deep-seated belief that literature served as a testament to the resilience of the human spirit (Ellman, 1982). He maintained that as long as he could engage in writing, his physical surroundings were inconsequential, akin to Diogenes living in a tub (Ellman, 1982). Joyce had tremendous self-belief. He famously declared that he expected his readers to dedicate their entire lives to the study of his works (Eastman, 1931). Joyce infused *Ulysses* with myriad riddles and mysteries, rather accurately predicting it would occupy scholars for generations to debate his intentions, thereby securing his "immortality" (cited in Gifford, 1988, p. v). Joyce boldly proclaimed that "if Ulysses isn't fit to read, life isn't fit to live" (cited in Hutchins, 2016, p. 139).

To say that not everybody agreed with Joyce would be a gross understatement. Even D. H. Lawrence – who, in 1928, published his own 'obscene' novel *Lady Chatterley's lover* (Lawrence, 2006) that was banned till 1959 in the U.S. – described the final Penelope episode in *Ulysses* as "the dirtiest, most indecent, obscene thing ever written" (cited in Potter, 2009, p. 92). A book review in *The Daily Express* denounced Ulysses as "the maddest, muddiest, most loathsome book issued in our own, or any other time – inartistic, incoherent, unquotably nasty – a book that one would have thought could only emanate from a criminal lunatic asylum" (Mais, 1922). Another scathing review described *Ulysses as*

> the most infamously obscene book in ancient or modern literature… All the secret sewers of vice are canalized in its flood of unimaginable thoughts, images and pornographic words. And its unclean lunacies are larded with appalling and revolting blasphemies directed against the Christian religion and against the name of Christ – blasphemies hitherto associated with the most degraded orgies of Satanism and the Black Mass (Douglas, 1922, p. 5).

The Dublin Review disapproved of the novel even more, condemning it as a "devilish drench" and calling upon the government to destroy the book (cited in Deming, 2013, p. 201). It also appealed to the Vatican to include it in the Index Expurgatorius, arguing that merely reading *Ulysses* was tantamount to sinning against the Holy Ghost – the sole sin deemed unforgivable by God's mercy (Birmingham, 2014). The famous psychologist C. G. Jung initially suspected

Joyce of being schizophrenic (Ellman, 1982) before revising his views and exclaiming that *Ulysses* was an alchemical laboratory that distilled "a new, universal consciousness" (Jung, 1979, p. 132).

Like Jung, literary luminaries such as Virginia Woolf and William Butler Yeats revised their initial negative assessments over time. Woolf (1923) initially described *Ulysses* as "a memorable catastrophe—immense in daring, terrific in disaster". She further criticised the "illiterate, underbred book" as the effort of a "self-taught working man", embodying the distressing characteristics of being "egotistic, inconsistent, raw, striking & ultimately nauseating", going as far as to liken Joyce to "a queasy undergraduate scratching his pimples" (Woolf, 1980, pp. 188-189). However, by 1924, Woolf (2018) herself had authored *Mrs. Dalloway,* a novel obviously indebted to *Ulysses* as it explores the inner lives of its characters over a single day in London. Yeats initially dismissed *Ulysses* as "a mad book", only to later concede, "I have made a terrible mistake. It is a work perhaps of genius… It is an entirely new thing… he has certainly surpassed in intensity any novelist of our time" (cited in Ellman, 1982, pp. 529-530).

Many literary greats unequivocally admired *Ulysses*. T. S. Eliot, who published *The wasteland* in the same year as Joyce *Ulysses*, wrote: "I hold this book to be the most important expression which the present age has found; it is a book to which we are all indebted, and from which none of us can escape" (Eliot, 1975, p. 175). F. Scott Fitzgerald, the author of *The great Gatsby* (originally published in 1925), offered to jump out a window to prove his devotion to Joyce and *Ulysses* – the offer, thankfully, was declined (Birmingham, 2014). Novelist Vladmir Nabokov (1990, p. 55) called *Ulysses* a "divine work of art" and the greatest masterpiece of 20th-century prose. Henry Miller compared the end of *Ulysses* to the end of the Book of Revelation (Birmingham, 2014). Hemingway swore that "Joyce has a most goddamn wonderful book" (cited in Ellman, 1982, p. 529) and wrote that "Jim Joyce was the only alive writer that I ever respected… he could write better than anyone I knew" (cited in Birmingham, 2014, p. 234).

Ulysses and *The Odyssey*

Thanks to Joyce's student Borach, we have his teacher's thoughts on *The Odyssey.*

> "The most beautiful, all-embracing theme is that of the Odyssey." It is greater, more human, than that of *Hamlet, Don Quixote, Dante, Faust*… I find the subject of Ulysses the most human in world literature. Ulysses didn't want to go off to Troy; he knew that the official reason for the war, the dissemination of the culture of Hellas, was only a pretext for the Greek merchants, who were seeking new markets… I am almost afraid to treat such a theme; it's overwhelming (Borach, 1917, cited in Ellman, 1982, pp. 416-417).

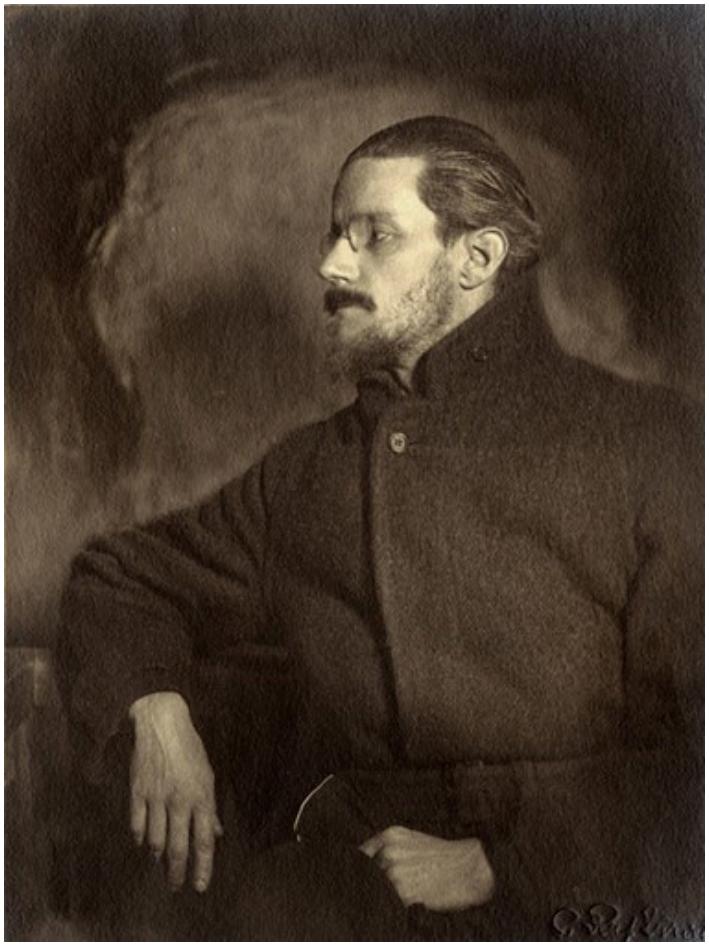


Figure 3. Photograph of Joyce by Camille Ruf, Zurich, ca. 1918. Cornell Joyce Collection, public domain.

Figure 4. Odysseus and the Sirens. Detail from an Attic red-figure stamnos by the Siren Painter (eponymous vase), circa 480-470 BC. Origin: Vulci. Public domain.

The 18 chapters of *Ulysses* roughly correspond to the 24 episodes in Homer's *Odyssey* but are not in the original order. In Homer's epic, Odysseus, a hero of the Trojan War, spends ten years journeying from Troy back to his home in Ithaca, facing tempests, a shipwreck, giants, monsters, and deities. To Joyce, Odysseus was simultaneously Europe's first gentleman, a rebel and an ingenious warrior who came up with the first tank – the Trojan horse (Birmingham,

2014). Conversely, Joyce's novel unfolds over a mundane day in early 20th-century Dublin. Leopold Bloom, a Jewish advertising solicitor, corresponds to Odysseus. Stephen Dedalus, central to Joyce's prior semi-autobiographical work, *A portrait of the artist as a young man* (Joyce, 2000b), parallels Telemachus, Odysseus's son, while Bloom's wife, Molly, represents Penelope, who awaited Odysseus's return for two decades. Joyce playfully subverts these classical parallels. Ulysses is not a king but a newspaper advertising solicitor, and his homecoming is not to a loyal queen. While Penelope is renowned for her loyalty in warding off her suitors, Molly Bloom betrays her husband by engaging in an affair. Joyce invoked classical comparisons to critique the state of Western civilisation, represented through a single June day in drab, dingy Dublin.

To illustrate Joyce's ironic references to Homer, let's examine the "Cyclops" chapter (12). In Homer's (2006) epic (Book 9: "In the one-eyed giant's cave"), Odysseus and his men arrive at an island and venture into a cave. They encounter the cyclops Polyphemus, who devours some of Odysseus's crew and imprisons the survivors. Odysseus introduces himself as "Nobody" (Homer, 2006, 9.410) to Polyphemus, intoxicating the Cyclops and blinding him with a burning stake. When Polyphemus seeks aid, claiming, "Nobody's killing me" (Homer, 2006, 9.455), his kin conclude that if 'nobody' is the assailant, he must be suffering from a plague and refuse to assist. As Odysseus makes his escape, his unfortunate pride leads him to reveal his true name, prompting the enraged Polyphemus to throw a boulder at him and beseech Poseidon, his father, to curse Odysseus's voyage:

> 'Hear me—
> Poseidon, god of the sea-blue mane who rocks the earth!
> If I really am your son and you claim to be my father—
> come, grant that Odysseus, raider of cities,
> Laertes' son who makes his home in Ithaca,
> never reaches home. Or if he's fated to see
> his people once again and reach his well-built house
> and his own native country, let him come home late
> and come a broken man—all shipmates lost.
> alone in a stranger's ship—
> and let him find a world of pain at home!'
> (Homer, 2006, 9.585-595).

In Joyce's schema for *Ulysses*, the technique listed for this episode is "gigantism" (see Table 1). Accordingly, the Irish nationalist called "the Citizen" (Homer's Cyclops) becomes a "broadshouldered deepchested stronglimbed frankeyed redhaired freelyfreckled shaggybearded widemouthed largenosed longheaded deepvoiced barekneed brawnyhanded hairylegged ruddyfaced sinewyarmed hero" with "rocklike mountainous knees" whose "heart thundered rumblingly causing the ground, the summit of the lofty tower and the still loftier walls of the cave to vibrate and tremble" (Joyce, 2008a, 12.151-67). Odysseus's taking on the Cyclops with a burning stake in the cave is hilariously paralleled by Ulysses arguing with the bigoted Citizen in a pub while brandishing a lit cigar.

Eventually, the Citizen, brimming with racist animosity towards Bloom, initiates a confrontation. As Bloom departs from the pub, the Citizen follows and taunts him with a derisive cheer for Israel. Bloom counters this by citing renowned Jewish philosophers and artists, including Jesus. This provocation maddens the Citizen, who storms back into the pub, seizes a biscuit tin, and hurls it at Bloom as his carriage pulls away. The scene is depicted with the intensity of a seismic event and portrayed with "imagery of biblical rapture" (Hastings, 2022, p. 145).

In view of the vast size and intricate complexity of *Ulysses*, Joyce eventually permitted the publication of his "summary-key-skeleton-scheme" (cited in Hastings, 2022, p. 277). The schema maps out each chapter with specific times (on June 16 and 17, 1904), settings, colour schemes, narrative techniques, parallels (mostly to *The Odyssey*), related fields of science or art, thematic significances, associated human organs, and symbols. The schema for the "Cyclops" chapter is presented in Table 1 as an example.

Table 1. Joyce's schema for the Cyclops episode. Adapted from Hastings, 2022, pp. 280-281.

Episode	Cyclops
Time	5 p.m.
Scene	Tavern
Colour	Green
Technique	Gigantism
Correspondences	I = Noman Cigar = Stake Apotheosis = Challenge
Science/art	Politics
Meaning	The egocidal terror
Organ	Muscles
Symbols	Nation, Religion, Gymnastics, Idealism, Exaggeration, Fanaticism, Collectivity

Writing, printing, publishing, censoring, burning, and celebrating *Ulysses*

> The heaventree of stars hung with humid nightblue fruit
> (Joyce, 2008a, 17.1039).

Ulysses had to navigate perilous paths to be written, printed, published and disseminated. When Joyce started to write *Ulysses* in 1914, he began his own Odyssey. At multiple points, the world came close to never seeing this now-classic masterpiece. The fact that Joyce managed to write, print, and publish *Ulysses* at all is miraculous. Even with his comparatively tame previous works, he had faced the greatest problems that would have made lesser authors give up. Already in the 1900s, Joyce realised that "I cannot write without offending people", and his career reminded him "of an opera with a magnificent overture… While the audience is applauding just before the curtain goes up, in comes a group of bumbailiffs and arrests the fiddlers for debt" (cited in Ellman, 1982, pp. 210, 264).

Even before *Ulysses*, printing his works had been extremely trying. Joyce's short-story collection *Dubliners* required his nine-year-long "correspondence with seven solicitors, one hundred and twenty newspapers, and several men of letters about it – all of whom, except Mr Ezra Pound, refused to aid me" (Joyce, cited in Ellman, 1982, p. 415). The first edition

(1906) was aborted, the second burnt (1910), and the third (1914) was eventually published after 40 publishers had rejected it.

His novel *A portrait of the artist as a young man* (Joyce, 2008b) was refused by every publisher. Joyce's sense of powerlessness fuelled his resentment. In a moment of despair, he cast the incomplete manuscript into the fire. Thankfully, Joyce's sister Eileen retrieved the manuscript from the flames at the cost of minor burns to her fingers (Ellman, 1982). Later, Joyce considered buying a revolver and putting "some daylight into my publisher" (cited in Ellman, 1982, p. 331). Instead, he wrote the amusing broadside "Gas from a burner", ostensibly spoken by his publisher and printer:

> Ladies and gents, you are here assembled
> To hear why earth and heaven trembled
> Because of the black and sinister arts
> Of an Irish writer in foreign parts
> He sent me a book ten years ago;
> I read it a hundred times or so,
> Backwards and forwards, down and up,
> Through both ends of a telescope.
> I printed it all to the very last word
> But by the mercy of the Lord
> The darkness of my mind was rent
> And I saw the writer's foul intent.
> But I owe a duty to Ireland:
> I hold her honour in my hand,
> This lovely land that always sent
> Her writers and artists to banishment
> (cited in Ellman, 1982, p. 336)

When *The Egoist* finally decided to publish *A portrait of the artist,* about twenty printers in England and Scotland refused to print it (Ellman, 1982).

Joyce had laid the groundwork for Ulysses since 1907, with the project becoming increasingly ambitious in scope and method over time (Ellman, 1982). He estimated that he had dedicated around 20,000 hours (Ellman, 1982) to writing approximately 265,000 words for *Ulysses*. That is a glacially slow average 'writing' speed of 13-14 words per hour (that presumably includes researching and editing). For instance, he devoted an entire day to perfecting these two sentences (Hastings, 2022): "Perfume of embraces all him assailed. With hungered flesh obscurely, he mutely craved to adore" (Joyce, 2008a, 8.638-39). Joyce described a state of total mental exhaustion following the completion of an episode, feeling as though neither he nor the "wretched book" would recover from the effort (cited in Ellman, 1982, p. 461). He worked "like a galley-slave, an ass, a brute", could not even sleep, and the "episode of *Circe* has changed me too into an animal" (Joyce, cited in Birmingham, 2014, p. 180).

Even Ezra Pound, Joyce's staunch supporter, wrote to ask if he had "got knocked on the head or bit by a wild dog and gone dotty" (cited in Birmingham, 2014, p. 132) when reading the beginning of the *Sirens* episode. We cite a couple of lines for your enjoyment.

> Bronze by gold heard the hoofirons, steelyringing,
> Imperthnthn thnthnthn…
> Jingle jingle jaunted jingling.
> Coin rang. Clock clacked.
> (Joyce, 2008a, 11.1-2, 15-16)

Here are some hints: Bronze and gold were the principal metals in Homer's epic; Miss Douce, a barmaid, threatens to report a customer for his "impertinent insolence" that is parodied by the busboy as "Imperthnthn thnthnthn"; a "jingle" and a "jaunting car" are two-wheeled horse-drawn carriages; the clock strikes 4 p.m. (see Gifford, 1988, pp. 290-291, 86).

Joyce continued to work on *Ulysses* almost up to its publication day, with about a third of the novel being written during the proofreading stage (Ellman, 1982). Joyce requested five sets of proofs and, using his notes, made countless alterations – primarily expansions. He felt compelled to engage in an exhaustive routine of writing, revising, and correcting for approximately twelve hours daily, with brief pauses when his vision blurred (Ellman, 1982).

Chronic severe eye conditions significantly hampered Joyce's literary endeavours and daily life. He suffered from recurrent iritis (inflammation of the iris), leading to episodes of acute glaucoma and additional complications that drastically diminished his vision, nearly to blindness. Joyce's treatments were as harrowing as his symptoms. He endured not only the prospect of having his eyes "slit open" but also a relentless regimen of injections, narcotics, antiseptics, dental extractions, and the application of tonics, electrodes, and leeches (Birmingham, 2014, p. 9). Considering the agony Joyce experienced, it is astonishing that he managed to write *Ulysses*.

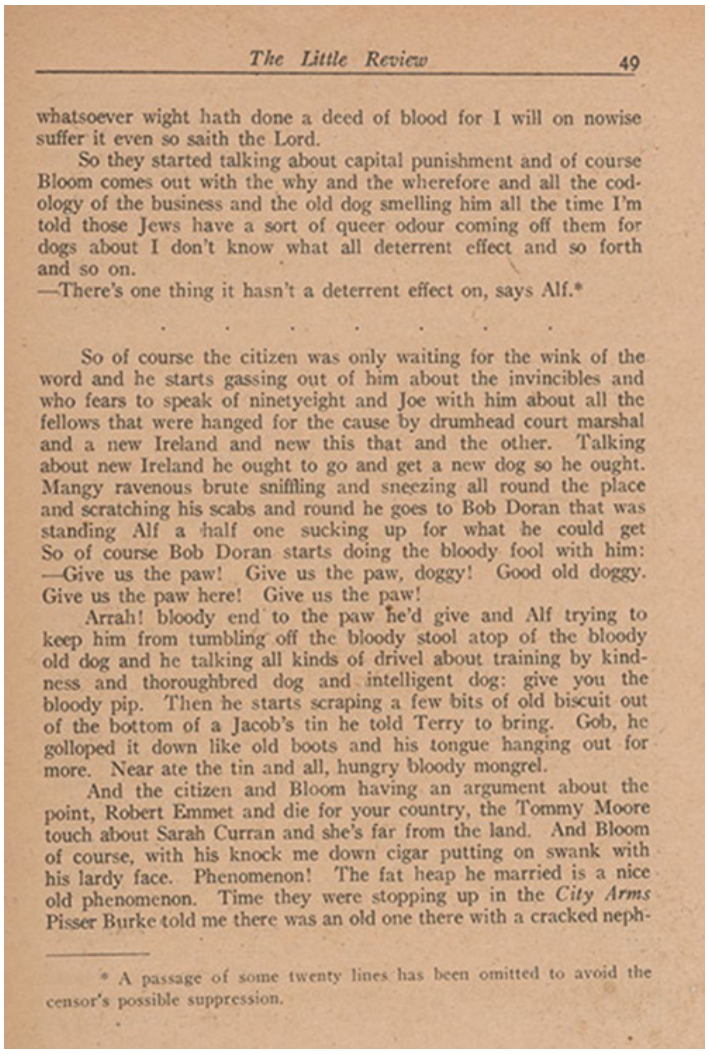
Moreover, the book's creation coincided with the tumultuous era of the Great War and its aftermath. Spanning from 1914 to 1918, the First World War claimed the lives of 17 million people, both military and civilian, and unveiled a "monstrous epiphany in the European imagination" (Birmingham, 2014, p. 59). The aftermath of this catastrophic period brought the Spanish flu pandemic, which killed as many as 100 million people worldwide (Barry, 2020).

In Joyce's view, artists should eschew judging their characters through a moral lens, instead approaching even the most deviant behaviours with "indifferent sympathy" (cited in Ellman, 1982, p. 139). Joyce viewed his work as a meticulously buffed mirror reflecting reality. If the reflection appears repugnant, the fault lies not with the mirror (Hastings, 2022). Joyce held the principle of free expression in high regard. To him, censorship represented an overreach of governmental authority, dictating not only the prohibition of obscenity but also defining what was 'obscene' in the first place (Birmingham, 2014). Joyce (cited in Ellman, 1982, p. 688) commented on the "strangely hostile reception" of *Ulysses* and his own perspective of morality:

> The most natural thing for a writer is to call a spade a spade. The mistake that some moralists make, even today, is that they hate unpleasant phenomena less than they do those who record them. It's always the

same. People go on judging an author immoral who refuses to be silent about what in any case exists. Immoral! Why, it's a mark of morality not only to say what one thinks is true—but to create a work of art with the utmost sacrifice; that's moral, too.

Ulysses was serialised in the American journal *The Little Review* from 1918 to 1920. Birmingham recounts the amusing anecdote where British war censors believed the serialised parts of *Ulysses* to be a complex spy code (Birmingham, 2014). Birmingham (2014), in his brilliant *The most dangerous book: The battle for James Joyce's Ulysses*, shows that *Ulysses's* initial difficulties with censorship did not stem from vigilantes hunting for pornographic content but rather from Post Office government censors on the lookout for foreign spies, radicals, and anarchists.



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whatsoever wight hath done a deed of blood for I will on nowise suffer it even so saith the Lord.

So they started talking about capital punishment and of course Bloom comes out with the why and the wherefore and all the cod-ology of the business and the old dog smelling him all the time I'm told those Jews have a sort of queer odour coming off them for dogs about I don't know what all deterrent effect and so forth and so on.

—There's one thing it hasn't a deterrent effect on, says Alf.*

. . . . . .

So of course the citizen was only waiting for the wink of the word and he starts gassing out of him about the invincibles and who fears to speak of ninetyeight and Joe with him about all the fellows that were hanged for the cause by drumhead court marshal and a new Ireland and new this that and the other. Talking about new Ireland he ought to go and get a new dog so he ought. Mangy ravenous brute sniffling and sneezing all round the place and scratching his scabs and round he goes to Bob Doran that was standing Alf a half one sucking up for what he could get So of course Bob Doran starts doing the bloody fool with him: —Give us the paw! Give us the paw, doggy! Good old doggy. Give us the paw here! Give us the paw!

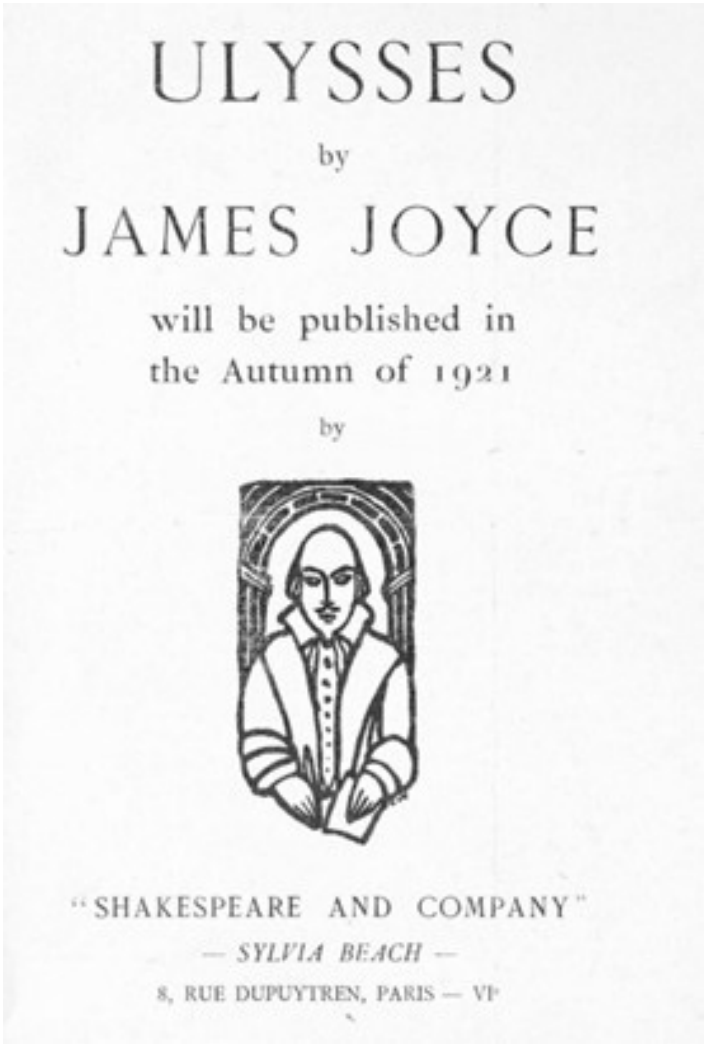
Arrah! bloody end to the paw he'd give and Alf trying to keep him from tumbling off the bloody stool atop of the bloody old dog and he talking all kinds of drivel about training by kindness and thoroughbred dog and intelligent dog: give you the bloody pip. Then he starts scraping a few bits of old biscuit out of the bottom of a Jacob's tin he told Terry to bring. Gob, he golloped it down like old boots and his tongue hanging out for more. Near ate the tin and all, hungry bloody mongrel.

And the citizen and Bloom having an argument about the point, Robert Emmet and die for your country, the Tommy Moore touch about Sarah Curran and she's far from the land. And Bloom of course, with his knock me down cigar putting on swank with his lardy face. Phenomenon! The fat heap he married is a nice old phenomenon. Time they were stopping up in the *City Arms* Pisser Burke told me there was an old one there with a cracked neph-

* A passage of some twenty lines has been omitted to avoid the censor's possible suppression.

Figure 5. Self-censorship of parts of the "Cyclops" episode in *The Little Review, 6*(7), November 1919. "Cyclops", as Joyce originally wrote it, never appeared in the magazine in its entirety. Following the US Postal Service's suppression of two *Ulysses* issues, the editors pre-emptively censored the first instalment of "Cyclops.". Passages were replaced with an asterisk, an ellipsis, and a telling footnote. The Morgan Library & Museum, gift of Sean and Mary Kelly, 2018; PML 197868.8. Public domain.

The Comstock Act of 1873 criminalised the distribution of materials considered obscene material via the U.S. postal service. Legislation prohibiting obscene literature emerged in the mid-19th century, driven by increasing literacy and urban growth. This era's heightened concern for public morality led to the stringent application of such laws, and *Ulysses* was an ideal subject for enforcement (Birmingham, 2014). Consequently, seized editions of *The Little Review* that contained initial versions of chapters from *Ulysses* were handed over to the Salvation Army, where women in reform programmes were tasked with ripping them to shreds (Birmingham, 2014). In an eery anticipation of the Nazi book burnings, officials collected nearly 500 copies of *Ulysses* and disposed of them in the furnace room of a post office building. The Comstock Act enraged Ezra Pound, who was instrumental in getting Ulysses serialised in the US. He lambasted it as "grotesque, barbarous, ridiculous, risible, Gargantuan, idiotic… pissian, pharrtian, monstrous, aborted, contorted, distorted, merdicious, stinkiferous, pestilent" (cited in Birmingham, 2014, p. 119).



ULYSSES

by

JAMES JOYCE

will be published in
the Autumn of 1921

by

"SHAKESPEARE AND COMPANY"

— SYLVIA BEACH —

8, RUE DUPUYTREN, PARIS — VI[e]

Figure 6. Poster announcing the publication of *Ulysses*. The first copies were only to become available on Joyce's 40th birthday, 2 February, 1922. Public domain.

Eventually, Judge Woolsey presided over the most publicised obscenity case in U.S. history in 1933, *United States v. One book called Ulysses*. The explicit content in *Ulysses* exceeded anything previously permitted by American courts. However, for every obscene term, there were numerous obscure ones,

like 'quadrireme', 'entelechy', 'epicene', or 'hebdomodary'. *Ulysses* was a masterpiece to the literati, while it appeared incomprehensible to those deemed 'morally at risk' (Birmingham, 2014).

Judge Woolsey recognised that for Joyce, all elements, including propriety, were secondary to his artistic vision. He ruled that Joyce, despite facing criticism and misunderstanding, "has been loyal to his technique" and "has honestly attempted to tell fully what his characters think about", regardless of the consequences. Woolsey did more than merely legalise Joyce's work; he championed it, stating, "Ulysses is an amazing tour de force" (cited in Birmingham, 2014, p. 329). *Time* lauded Woolsey's decision as "historic for its authority, its eloquence, its future influence on U.S. book publishing" (cited in Birmingham, 2014, p. 330).

Figure 7. Family portrait photograph of the Joyce family. Clockwise from top left: James Joyce, son Giorgio Joyce, wife Nora Barnacle, and daughter Lucia Joyce (1 January 1924, unknown photographer). Public domain.

In the 1920s, U.S. and British government agencies had incinerated numerous copies of a book that, by the 1930s, had emerged as a modern classic and an integral part of Western cultural heritage. The official acceptance of *Ulysses* signified that the experimental and radical culture of the 1910s and 1920s had not been a mere deviation but had firmly established itself in literature. By allowing *Ulysses* to be published, authorities acknowledged the fluidity of cultural norms, admitting that distinctions between what is considered 'classic' and what is deemed 'filth' were not rigid (Birmingham, 2014). It is remarkable to think that, less than a hundred years ago, powerful forces in the United States were determined to stifle artistic expression in the guise of safeguarding public morals. Their efforts inadvertently shifted *Ulysses* from being the flagship of avant-garde literature to a broader symbol of artistic freedom. A world devoid of *Ulysses* would be significantly diminished.

The inferiority of generative AI and consequences for good teaching and higher education leadership

Amidst the surrounding hyperbole, it is clear that the current generation of Large Language Models (LLMs), including GPT-4o and its rivals, falls markedly short of capturing the profound depth and intricate richness embodied by literary classics like Joyce's *Ulysses* or Homer's *Odyssey*. It is worthwhile recalling that *The Odyssey* was written 2,700 years ago. For those who have truly immersed themselves in Homer's exceptional Iliad and Odyssey, the notion of generative AI producing work that even remotely approaches the magnificence of these ancient epics is fanciful. Such a notion underscores a profound superficiality that derives from insufficient engagement with literature and even non-fiction books (Sam, 2024). It conflates the oftentimes terminally dull prose of GenAI with the literary classics that we have exemplified through *Ulysses* and *The Odyssey*. Techno-optimistic and solutionist claims for generative AI are repeated ad nauseam, and there is a dearth of critical voices (Lindgren, 2023a, 2023b; Popenici et al., 2023; Rudolph et al., 2024b). One does not need to live in Nazi Germany or in contemporary Russia to know that when lies are sufficiently frequently repeated, they become truths (Rudolph & Tan, 2022). Or, to cite the wonderful title of Pomerantsev's (2017) book: *Nothing is true and everything is possible*.

Human intelligence is characterised by multiplicity and far superior to the ill-named 'artificial intelligence'. Academics babbling endlessly about "Artificial General Intelligence" (AGI) or "superintelligence" (e.g. Bostrom, 2017, Kurzweil, 2005) – not to speak of Elon Musk predicting that "AI will overtake human intelligence next year" (Hammond, 2024) – usually have a vested interest in these claims. Tech tycoons and their allied 'thought leaders' benefit from singing from the techno-optimistic and solutionist hymn sheet. However, the expectation that 'newer equals better' in every aspect oftentimes falters, not only in the realm of creative literary expression.

These days, fewer people appreciate physical books (Sam, 2024), and we wish you the best of luck finding anybody with the verbal prowess of Joyce or Homer among your acquaintances. There is popular disdain for bibliophiles, and to you, book lovers and collectors, we give you Walter Benjamin's quote (first published in 1931), showing that this contempt is nothing radically new:

> Suffice it to quote the answer that Anatole France gave to the philistine who admired his library and then finished with the standard question, 'And you have read all these books, Monsieur France?' 'Not one-tenth of them. I don't suppose you use your Sèvres china every day?' (Benjamin, 2015, p. 64).

There is a clear and present danger that we are becoming dumber and dumber while machines are getting smarter and smarter (Popenici, 2023). As educators, it is our job to expose that 'artificial intelligence' is neither artificial nor intelligent (Crawford, 2021), combat shallowness (Carr, 2020) that mistakes quantity for quality and that succumbs to "garbage in, garbage out" outputs in a "new dark age" (Bridle, 2023; Rudolph et al., 2024b). Many experts warn against equating human and artificial intelligence, as human intelligence cannot be fully captured in precise, machine-compatible descriptions (Verdicchio, 2023; Luckin et al., 2024). Gardner (1993) influentially conceptualised multiple intelligences, which categorises human intelligence into eight distinct types: visual-spatial, linguistic-verbal, logical-mathematical, bodily-kinaesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic. If Gardner's multiple intelligences are agreed upon, and intelligence is not reduced to its logical-mathematical aspect, then AGI would have to encapsulate all eight intelligences.

In terms of censorship, the lifting of the publishing bans on *Ulysses* in the 1930s was spectacular and thrilling to liberals. Alas, such hard-fought freedoms do not last automatically, and AI plays a sinister role in strengthening censorship. Authoritarian regimes have adapted to AI chatbot innovations by aligning them with their censorship agendas, utilising machine learning on digital platforms to filter out unwanted political, social, and religious discourse. The adoption of AI has amplified the scope and effectiveness of digital suppression, enabling online censorship through automated systems. Advanced surveillance technologies swiftly scour social media for dissent, combining large data pools with facial recognition to monitor and identify pro-democracy activists (Freedom House, 2023). The World Economic Forum (2024) has labelled AI-generated disinformation the most severe global threat at present.

While there is consensus on preventing GenAI from facilitating the creation of biological or chemical weapons or child pornography, leading GenAI chatbots, such as ChatGPT and Gemini, implement broad and ambiguous 'harm' filters "that leave users in the dark about where, how, and why the red lines are drawn" (Mchangama & White, 2024). For example, GenAI's refusal to detail comedian Lenny Bruce's (1925 - 1966) controversial yet impactful work illustrates the excessive caution in content moderation. ChatGPT maintained that it is unable to offer instances of "slurs, blasphemous language, sexual language, or profanity", committing instead to "share information in a way that's respectful and appropriate for all users". Gemini took an even more cautious stance, suggesting that presenting Bruce's language "without careful framing could be hurtful or even harmful to certain audiences" (Mchangama & White, 2024).

When we asked GPT-4 to provide reasons and examples as to why *Ulysses* was banned in much of the English-speaking world in the 1920s and early 1930s, it did well in elaborating on the four aspects of "Sexual Content and Obscenity", "Language and Profanity", "Challenging Conventional Morality and Social Norms", and "Anti-Authority and Anti-Religious Sentiments". When asked to cite some of the offensive passages, it explained that "I can't directly quote passages from '*Ulysses*' or any copyrighted material", but volunteered to "guide you on where to find some of the controversial content", proceeding to elaborate on the Nausicaa, Circe and Penelope episodes in particular, and commenting on "Language and Profanity" as follows: "Joyce employs a wide range of language, including what was considered profanity and coarse language at the time. While specific instances are spread throughout the text, the overall use of such language contributed to the book's initial reception as obscene". Unsurprisingly, and in line with Mchangama and White's (2024) findings, ChatGPT does not cite any profanities.

The censorship described by Mchangama and White (2024) raises concerns about the extent of information and viewpoints being filtered out under the guise of harm prevention. They argue that GenAI must not replace human judgment and criticise the current approach by a small group of powerful companies for limiting open inquiry and expression based on vague and unsubstantiated claims of 'harm'. They caution against a future dominated by AI's restrictive moral frameworks in everyday technologies, advocating for access to a broad spectrum of information.

Mchangama and White (2024) paint the dystopian scenario where "your word processor prevents you from analyzing, criticizing, lauding, or reporting on a topic deemed 'harmful' by an AI programmed to only process ideas that are 'respectful and appropriate for all'". With the rapid integration of GenAI into search, word processing and email, this frightening prospect may not be as far-fetched as it initially sounds. Guardrails should avoid restricting human agency or curiosity. We need to think for ourselves and make more informed decisions based on a wealth of information from multiple perspectives. We need to ensure that AI systems are optimised to enhance human reasoning, not to replace human faculties with the "artificial morality" of large tech companies (Mchangama & White, 2024).

Amidst the burgeoning discourse around GenAI, it may be good to go back to basics and remind ourselves that good teaching means "being willing to do anything that helps students learn" (Brookfield et al., 2023, p. viii). Teaching well encompasses adapting our teaching strategies to align with the unique contexts we encounter. The selection of teaching modalities should be informed by our understanding of the context and our educational goals, choosing those that we believe will most benefit our students' learning journey. Enhancing our teaching practices requires us to embrace experimentation and calculated risk-taking, underpinned by continuous feedback from students (and ideally, peers) through persistent classroom research. Thus, teaching evolves "as a continuous process of failing well, in which our growing appreciation of complexity is matched by a willingness to be more and more open to different approaches" (Brookfield et al., 2023, p. ix). The teaching for a critical AI literacy and an emphasis on critical thinking, creativity and teamwork will be key (Rudolph et al., 2024a).

In our turbulent age, learning leadership in higher education will have to come from below, behind, and among, thus including multiple stakeholders such as teachers and students (Preskill & Brookfield, 2009; Rudolph et al., 2024a). It is essential to guide students on the ethical and critical

use of generative AI in their learning to enhance their critical reflection skills (Tan et al., 2024). As educators, we need to foster deeper relationships with our students, encouraging discourse while educating them to critique authoritative-sounding misinformation (Mills, 2023). Debunking anthropomorphic tendencies is essential in nurturing well-rounded, critical thinkers (Mills, 2023; Rudolph et al., 2023b). We advise higher education institutions to foster multi-stakeholder dialogues, including representatives from various sectors, to integrate the insights gleaned into concrete guidelines, regulations, and educational materials, emphasising the pivotal role of digital literacy education, which encompasses a range of AI tools (Gimpel et al., 2023; Rudolph et al., 2023a). There is a fast-growing literature on AI and higher education teaching and learning that Ismail et al. (2023, 2024a) have organised into a freely available open-access database (Ismail et al., 2024b) to facilitate critical discussions.

Finally, it is deeply ironic that much-maligned humanities may produce superior prompt engineers, commanding six-digit starting salaries (Marr, 2023). A combination of communication skills, critical thinking and creativity continue to be extremely useful. Joyce, if transported with a time machine into our age, would have likely avoided GenAI and despised its inherent censorship. Otherwise, he might have had a good laugh about the sudden market value of people who could write well.

Overview of issue 7(1)

This issue, one of our most voluminous to date, once again shines a spotlight on artificial intelligence in higher education. It offers rich insights and practical perspectives on how various institutions navigate the complex AI landscape in academia. Leading the discussion is Professor Waring's thought-provoking commentary, "Artificial intelligence and graduate employability: What should we teach generation AI?" In his contribution, he explores the intersection of AI and graduate employability, advocating for curriculum adjustments that incorporate AI literacy and ethical decision-making. Waring concludes by championing a balanced approach, combining technical skills with critical thinking and interpersonal abilities, to equip graduates for an AI-driven job market.

Following Waring's commentary are 29 research articles that explore a diverse range of topics, from the ethical implications of GenAI in higher education to the development of virtual reality (VR) and digital literacy competencies. These articles also address pressing issues such as the challenges posed by neoliberalism, toxic supervision in PhD programmes, cultural safety education, and organisational resilience. In addition, a practical piece provides valuable guidance on leadership within higher education institutions.

The research section opens with a thematic exploration of education research after the COVID-19 pandemic by Bala and Mitchell. Their study employed BERTopic modelling to analyse trends and research within the *Journal of Applied Learning and Teaching*, revealing thematic structures and emerging trends. It identified 17 topics across four thematic groups, reflecting global trends in post-COVID learning and teaching, and providing insights for future research and practice in higher education.

11 manuscripts in the section explored AI topics and higher education. First is Van Wyk's article, "Is ChatGPT an opportunity or a threat?" His study employed semi-structured interviews to investigate academics' perceptions of ChatGPT at an education faculty and the findings study highlights its potential for enhancing teaching and learning in preventing academic dishonesty.

Second, Ogunleye et al.'s "Higher education assessment practice in the era of GenAI tools" examined how GenAI tools affect higher education (HE), particularly assessment and academic practice. The study looked at three disciplines in particular (data science, data analytics, and construction management) and highlighted GenAI's potential benefits and limitations. The authors also advised the ethical use of GenAI and offered recommendations for integrating AI tools into higher education's teaching and learning.

This is followed by Ahmad et al.'s paper on AI tools among Asian and African higher education staff and students, concluding that awareness, benefits, threats, attitudes, and satisfaction are critical factors determining its usefulness. Among 815 participants, 38% were unaware of the presence and functionality of AI tools, but 63% revealed that they rarely use AI tools. Notably, higher education-level individuals perceive AI tools as being threatening, while female participants expressed more concerns than males. These findings underscore the diverse levels of comfort and familiarity with AI technology across demographics and educational backgrounds, emphasising the necessity of enhancing AI awareness and development in Asia and Africa.

Next comes Kouam and Muchowe's insightful piece on graduate students' perception and adoption of AI chatbots in Zimbabwe. They investigated Zimbabwean graduate students' perceptions and adoption of AI chatbots in universities and examined benefits like enhanced learning and skill development alongside challenges such as plagiarism and financial constraints. Findings revealed graduate students' positive attitudes towards chatbots, highlighting their role in augmenting education while recommending measures for better integration and accessibility.

Another paper by Joseph et al. similarly presented insights from a multi-group analysis of students' awareness and perceptions using gender and programme type concerning the use of AI tools for research. Male and postgraduate students demonstrated higher awareness and perception, while female students excelled in using AI tools for research. This study underscores the importance of incorporating AI tools into university curricula while considering demographic variables for technology integration.

This is followed by Sobaih's "Ethical concerns for using artificial intelligence chatbots in research and publication: Evidences from Saudi Arabia". This study surveyed academics and research leaders, revealing widespread chatbot use, ethical dilemmas, and pseudoscience risks. Strategies to

mitigate concerns and promote responsible usage were recommended, and the findings emphasised the critical need for effective policy interventions.

Kershnee and Potter's article on GenAI in distance education shed light on the challenges, and impact on academic integrity and student voice in distance education. Using the technology acceptance model, it investigates GenAI's influence on learning, integrity, and student voices in a South African open distance and e-learning university. Qualitative data from interviews, evaluations, and focus groups highlight the need to balance concerns with the potential benefits of GenAI in education.

Next, a systematic review by Chaka examined studies discussing the performances of different AI detection tools in differentiating between AI-generated and human-written text. The review screened 17 articles and concluded that the detection tools had varied detection efficacy, and suggested adopting a combined approach involving AI detectors, traditional tools, and human reviewers. Another related paper by Chaka, "Accuracy pecking order – How 30 AI detectors stack up in detecting generative artificial intelligence content in university English L1 and English L2 student essays", evaluated the accuracy of 30 AI detectors' accuracy in identifying GenAI-generated and human-written content in university English L1 and L2 student essays. Results showed that only two detectors, Copyleaks and Undetectable AI, accurately identified all essays as human-written. Most detectors misidentified the essays and were deemed unfit for purpose.

Lastly, Ismail et al. introduced an open-access repository using a systematic literature review: "Artificial intelligence in higher education database (AIHE V1)". Utilising a rigorous systematic review method, the review provides a first look at the metadata of articles published on AI and higher education during ChatGPT's inaugural year, facilitating scholars and practitioners in making informed decisions in relation to policy and practice. The open access database is freely accessible via a separate DOI (Ismail et al., 2024b).

The next three articles are related to VR simulation and digital competencies in higher education. The first is Abusalim et al.'s "Digital versus classroom discussions: Motivation and self-efficacy outcomes in speaking courses via Gather.town". The authors debate online and traditional classroom methods, focusing on student motivation and self-confidence in a German language-speaking course. Results demonstrated significant improvements in motivation and self-efficacy in the online group, highlighting the potential of platforms like Gather.town in enhancing educational outcomes.

Second, Inkabi et al.'s "Utilizing head simulation training in dental school education: Time and cost implications" investigates cost and time factors as barriers to the effectiveness of head simulator use in dental schools. Findings indicate that most participants disagreed that head simulators extend course duration. While their availability was generally rated positively, the cost of using these simulators did not significantly impact device accessibility or course duration.

Next, the article by Rojas-Osorio et al., "Self-perception of university teachers on their digital teaching competence: The case of Peru", analysed the self-perception of digital competence of 122 university professors at a private university in Peru. The study revealed low participation in training, evaluation, and innovation projects with ICT, indicating a need for continuous training programmes to enhance digital competence among professors.

Neoliberalism took centre stage in the next three articles. Martin Andrew's article "'Just get them over the line': Neoliberalism and the execution of 'excellence'" is grounded in the author's experience of postgraduate education using narrative inquiry to examine the concept of excellence in postgraduate education. He suggests that the neoliberal conception of 'excellence' hides a more authentic form of 'excellence' and believes that this form can only surface if the voices of learners and educators are heard above the managerialist chatter and when teaching well is considered. Martin Andrew's piece on 'The Great Resignation: The simple joys of not belonging' continued his argument of the harm the neoliberal grip has on higher education. Similarly, using vignettes as a form of narrative inquiry, his article explored the relational link between the archaic notion of affliction and what it means to 'belong' to a university for academics. The narratives revealed the importance of exercising critical resilience to establish academic identities beyond the neoliberal university. Nikpouya and Zareian's "Neoliberalism and the violation of students' rights: The case of English language education" completes the argument on the dangers and challenges of neoliberalism on higher education in this issue. Their theoretical study explores the impact of neoliberalism on education, focusing on areas of general education and the English language. They found that neoliberal ideologies have led to the commodification of education and amplified the emphasis on standardised testing and accountability measures.

The following two articles explore power relationships in academia. Owan et al.'s "Metrics in research impact assessment and grant funding: Insights from researchers in the "Reviewer 2 Must Be Stopped!" Facebook group" explores the reliance on quantitative metrics in research assessment and grant funding, gathering insights from over 15 experienced researchers worldwide. Data were analysed thematically, revealing diverse perspectives. While some voiced concerns about metric dominance and biases, others recognised their value. The study emphasises the need for a balanced, context-aware approach incorporating qualitative measures. Okere's "A content analysis of tweets on toxic doctoral supervision" investigates toxic supervision of PhD students via Twitter posts. A content analysis of these posts reveals themes and trends, shedding light on students' experiences. Twitter (recently renamed X) has emerged as a valuable research tool and support platform for doctoral researchers. The findings sought to inform policy and enhance supervisory practices in academia.

The subsequent research articles in this issue encompass a variety of topics. We start with Moore et al.'s "The challenge of making relationships central in online cultural safety education". It explores cultural safety education, emphasising the importance of fostering respectful classroom

relationships. Collaborative reflections by university educators compare facilitating positive connections in online versus physical classrooms. Findings reveal how technological affordances affect relational dynamics, impacting educators' emotional labour. The study suggests integrating culturally responsive pedagogies to prioritise relationship-building and support effective teaching across physical and online learning environments.

Williams's "A conceptual, strategic and implementation framework for the Scholarship of Learning and Teaching" explored the Scholarship of Learning and Teaching (SoLT) framework in an Australian higher education provider. It outlines standards for scholarly practice and explores the linkages between scholarship, research, professional development, and quality improvement. The initiative has shown success, with a high percentage of academics meeting standards for scholarly practice.

Hanshaw's article "Micro-credentials in higher and vocational education: An innovation or a disruption?" critically assesses the literature on micro-credentials in higher and vocational education, debating their potential as innovative tools or disruptive elements. It explores their role in promoting agency, equity, access, and their perceived simplification of academic credentials. Hanshaw advocates for the leveraging of micro-credentials to drive positive innovation in education.

Shafi and Middleton's "Organisational resilience in a higher education institution: Maintaining academic continuity, academic rigour and student experience in the face of major disruption (Covid-19 pandemic)" investigates a university's response to the Covid-19 pandemic in England. Data from various levels were collected using a systems-based approach and an organisational resilience framework. The study highlights the university's positive adjustments during the pandemic. Still, it underscores the need to understand longer-term impacts and resilience in adversity.

Calonge et al.'s "Do graduate courses in a HyFlex mode foster emotional, cognitive and behavioral engagement? A consideration" explored strategies and their impacts on learning outcomes and engagement. Through critical reflection, results showed that HyFlex courses can achieve equivalent learning outcomes but require staff development and purposeful activity design to promote emotional, cognitive, and behavioural engagement.

In the same vein, Khatter et al.'s "Student engagement and fostering ownership of learning" sought to enhancing student engagement by exploring pedagogical solutions. Employing action research integrates action, evaluation, and reflection to drive classroom change. Findings reveal that student-centred practices like project-based learning foster increased interest, motivation, and active participation in learning experiences.

Alordiah's "Evaluation of a research training workshop for academic staff in tertiary institutions: A Kirkpatrick model approach" evaluates a workshop's impact on academic staff in Delta State, Nigeria, focusing on writing and publishing scholarly papers. Using the Kirkpatrick Model, results showed high participant satisfaction and significant improvements in writing, publication, and research exposure, emphasising the workshop's effectiveness in enhancing research capabilities and academic recognition.

Le Pham et al.'s "Professional development activities of English language lecturers in Vietnam through the lens of sociocultural theory" explores professional development's impact on 56 English lecturers in Vietnam. Surveys and interviews reveal feedback, workshops, and resources like videos and websites crucial for their development. Social interaction and resources enhance their skills, knowledge, and motivation, suggesting regular training and resource availability for ongoing growth.

Wong and Chapman's "Development and validation of an instrument to measure expectancy for success and subjective task value constructs in the context of higher education" aimed to develop and validate an instrument in higher education. In surveying 565 undergraduate students from a large private institution in Singapore, two versions of the Expectancies and Values in Higher Education Instrument (EVHEI) were utilised. Results suggest that the EVHEI holds considerable promise for measuring motivation-related constructs at the higher education level.

Ó Murchú and O'Donoghue's "Advice from retired secondary school principals in Ireland on how to lead as a principal" aim to generate theory regarding the perspectives of recently retired secondary school principals in Ireland. The goal is to offer insights to providers, including university-led programmes, to inform the preparation of aspiring and appointed principals. The paper has four parts: rationale, recent developments in Irish school leadership, study methodology, and study results.

Ó Murchú and O'Donoghue's study concludes the research section and leads to two illuminating interview pieces. We start with an interview with an educational thought leader, Professor Rose Luckin, "Exploring the future of learning and the relationship between human intelligence and AI. An interview with Professor Rose Luckin". Rose Luckin shares her journey into AI in Education (AIE), addressing gender bias and women's challenges. She also discusses other aspects, such as the ethical dimensions of AI deployment, advocating for learner-centred AI methodologies and stresses collaboration between educators and tech developers. In addition, Luckin evaluates generative AI's impact on assessment and learning in K-12 and higher education, emphasising lifelong learning and the need for collaborative efforts and ongoing research in navigating AIE's challenges and opportunities within ethical frameworks.

The interviews conclude with Brookfield et al.'s "'Failing well' in teaching about race, racism and white supremacy. An interview with Stephen Brookfield". The interview discusses his extensive international experience in education. It explores core concepts of race, racism, and white supremacy, reframing racism as systemic rather than individual. Brookfield emphasises an intersectional analysis, addressing racism in higher education and advocating for continuous antiracist efforts, challenging the idea of 'good white people' and promoting 'failing well' in the journey towards

antiracism. This interview is a much-extended version of a chapter in Brookfield et al.'s (2023) *Teaching well* and our third interview with Professor Stephen Brookfield in JALT (see Brookfield et al., 2019, 2022).

The Ed-tech review in this issue takes us back to the theme of AI. Perkins and Roe's "The use of Generative AI in qualitative analysis: Inductive thematic analysis with ChatGPT" introduces a methodological innovation combining Generative AI (GenAI) tools with traditional qualitative research methodologies for thematic analysis. The approach enhances data processing and theme identification while maintaining the interpretative depth of human analysis. Challenges include managing inconsistencies in GenAI outputs and ensuring research validity through rigorous validation processes. The findings suggest a complementary relationship between GenAI and human researchers, accelerating analytical processes while leveraging human expertise and critical engagement.

The next section encompasses three opinion pieces, the first being Sam's "Reading between the lines: The necessity of books". This opinion piece celebrates the enduring significance of books in education, tracing their historical evolution and highlighting their role as repositories of human wisdom and culture. Amidst the digital age, books in physical form maintain their allure, offering tangible engagement and serving as lifelong companions in the pursuit of knowledge. In an era of technological advancement, the value of written knowledge in books remains timeless, guiding readers towards comprehension and enlightenment.

This is followed by Dey and Chakraborty's "Cargo cultism and the whiteness syndrome: Fake internationalization of private universities of India", which critiques the internationalisation efforts of Indian universities, identifying phenomena of cargo cultism and whiteness syndrome. Drawing from personal conversations with research participants, informal discussions with friends and colleagues, and analysing social media content, the piece challenges the effectiveness and authenticity of these initiatives.

This section concludes with Ifelebuegu's "Rise of the robots: What it means for educators" discussing an AI robot named Abigail Bailey as one of its "co-headteachers," illustrated the growing integration of AI in educational settings. This development prompts questions about the potential impact on traditional educator roles. This opinion piece explored the complexities of this issue, considering various factors that must be examined.

Cavagnari-Bruce et al.'s "Recognition of foreign professional degrees in Peru: Processes and strategies for improvement" falls into our category of a 'brief article'. It outlines the recognition process for foreign professional degrees in Peru and highlights the administrative nature of the recognition process and its lack of academic evaluation criteria. The authors suggest the need for academic assessments to ensure professionals meet high standards for entry into the job market.

Finally, we draw the curtains to a close for this issue with several book reviews. We start with Professor Waring's book review of Brookfield et al.'s (2023) *Teaching well: Understanding key dynamics of learning-centered classrooms. What does it mean to teach well?* Brookfield et al. (2023) delve into this question in *Teaching well,* exploring the essence of effective teaching through the lens of renowned scholar Stephen Brookfield. The book, co-authored by two of the authors of this editorial (Rudolph and Tan), examines key dynamics in learning-centered classrooms, covering topics such as classroom democratisation, critical thinking, and race. Each chapter poses pivotal questions to refine teaching practices and spark meaningful dialogue. With practical advice on integrating educators' identities into their pedagogy, it is Brookfield et al.'s hope to have provided an engaging text and a valuable resource for college and university educators worldwide.

This section concludes with Rudolph's book reviews of two gargantuan AI handbooks. Lindgren's (Ed., 2023) "Handbook of critical studies of artificial intelligence" comprehensively examines AI's societal impact, gathering insights from scholars worldwide. Lindgren's Handbook is a vital resource for academics, practitioners, and policymakers navigating AI's complex landscape, challenging prevailing techno-optimism with critical analysis and advocating for technology aligned with societal well-being. Du Boulay et al.'s (2023) "Handbook of artificial intelligence in education" thoroughly examines the field's development and practicalities, encompassing theories, methodologies, and future trajectories. Authored by esteemed scholars, its audience comprises researchers and advanced computer science, education, and AI students. Though the technicalities within the book may be a challenge for some readers, the Handbook's extensive coverage and insights render it a valuable asset for scholars and practitioners and a notable addition to AIED scholarship.

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