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SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH



ABSTRACT

THE EVOLUTION OF READING IN THE AGE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

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How fundamental is reading to us, both literary fiction and non-fiction, and what impact might AI and digital technologies be having on the act of reading, and, by default, on us and our brains? This is what this talk will be about. We will start by looking at where and when and how reading began. Thereafter, we will consider where reading is now, anno 2023, between paper and pixels. We will then start to speculate how reading might evolve in the next 100 years under the influence of digital technologies. Finally, we will consider what effects such an evolution might have on text comprehension, human memory, and human emotion, and whether this might pose challenges for the future. We also consider what role oral storytelling and the power of rhetoric might start to play again across the globe in the matrix of human society and AI/human communication.

