

00:00:00:05 - 00:00:47:21

Christina Bauer

By the time I'm writing, I have the the image in my head that I try to then translate. And it's hard because I have sometimes these great scenes where it just doesn't. It just doesn't. It just doesn't translate over into words very well. Or it takes too long or. So the the project I'm working on now is a graphic novel, which has been a lot of fun because I'm not limited by language.

00:00:51:18 - 00:01:12:16

Eileen Lamb

Welcome to Adulting on the Spectrum. In this podcast, we want to highlight the real voices of autistic adults, not just inspirational stories, but people like us talking about their day to day life. Basically, we want to give a voice to a variety of autistic people. I'm Eileen Lamb, an autistic author and photographer, and I co-host this podcast with Andrew Komarow. Hey Andrew!

00:01:12:17 - 00:01:42:09

Andrew Komarow

Hey, Eileen, I'm Andrew. I'm an autistic entrepreneur software engineer, co-host of this podcast and the Better Pickleball Player between Eileen and myself. Today our guest is Christina Bauer. An author of Fantasy books. She thinks fantasy books are like bacon. They just make life better. She has written more than 45 novels that feature demons, dragons, wizards, witches, elves, elementals and a bunch of random stuff that she brainstorms while writing the Boston T. That's a train, Eileen. Christina is on the autism spectrum and currently studying for her master's degree in history at Harvard University. She lives in Newton, Massachusetts, with her husband, son and semi insane golden retriever Ruby. Welcome. Thank you for joining us.

00:02:00:15 - 00:02:10:09

Christina Bauer

Thank you. And one thing I should have added on to that is that my son is 19 and he is on the autism spectrum and non-verbal autism.

00:02:11:00 - 00:02:21:18

Eileen Lamb

Yeah, it's definitely very interesting. That's my situation, too. He's not 19, but he is is ten and non-verbal. Back to you, Andrew.

00:02:22:06 - 00:02:40:05

Andrew Komarow

Okay. So we like to ask every guest how they prefer to identify. And we don't mean pronouns, although you're welcome to share those as well. We mean autism. Autistic on the spectrum. A person with autism. Asperger's. Do you have a preference that not having a preference is also an option?

00:02:40:21 - 00:03:02:10

Christina Bauer

That's a great question and I appreciate you ask it so because with I know a lot of people who are in my sort of situation where we don't appear different right away, like to be called an autistic woman, but because my sign is it's very clear that he's different from the moment you meet him. So I like to lead with the fact that he's a person.

So he's my son on the autism spectrum, and I do the same thing in solidarity. So I'm a woman on the autism spectrum.

00:03:08:10 - 00:03:15:24**Eileen Lamb**

So speaking of autism, can you tell us about your own autism diagnosis journey? And maybe you can tell us a bit about your son, Stu?

00:03:16:13 - 00:03:43:13**Christina Bauer**

Sure. So, I mean, when I was a kid, there wasn't any you know, there wasn't a lot of awareness about this stuff. So I was a I flapped my hands a lot. I wasn't great at making eye contact at work. And it was I tell stories to myself for hours and hours and hours. I was a third kid in a family of six in a Roman Catholic family outside Buffalo, New York.

And I loved telling my stories and I would just get bored during school and stand up, start telling my stories. In middle class and first grade, Sister Virginia decided that this was not cool. So she sent me over to a priest who in that day and age, that was what you did to have my IQ tested and see if I needed to go into, you know, kind of an institutionalized setting, which was nothing that you could do then.

And he was my first fan. I told him my stories for like 45 minutes. And he was he told Sister Virginia, you have to let this girl tell her stories. So she had to set aside 5 minutes for me at the end of every school day where I could tell my latest story. And I just I learned how to to to fit in.

I think a lot like a lot of people from from my era and even today. So, you know, the way I try to describe it is like you're around neurotypical people and like, isn't it so terrible when you're riding the roller coaster at the amusement park and there's nobody sitting next to you? And as an autistic person, you're like, you're in a roller coaster at an amusement park.

00:04:51:06 - 00:05:05:15**Christina Bauer**

Like, why are you there? What are you doing? Why do you want people with you? Like, there's this whole kind of structure and understanding that neurotypical folks have about how the world works that's just like not there. It's a gift and a curse. You know?

00:05:05:19 - 00:05:22:14

Andrew Komarow

So I'm going to interrupt you with something that reminded me of soft hop. So one of my favorite instances of that, because it was so like, obvious, like after the fact is I had a former employee who was we were very much friends, too. And like, how I ride on island, right?

Yes. So and he was telling me how over the weekend, how he was sad. He was all alone and he went to Chipotle for Cinco de Mayo. So my first question is, well, what did you have? And he said he ordered tacos. And I'm literally amazed. I didn't even know triple A had tacos. And it's like, who orders the tacos at your poll?

00:05:48:24 - 00:05:50:10

Christina Bauer

Right, right, right. I get.

00:05:50:10 - 00:06:05:09

Andrew Komarow

It. I don't know whether that cheered him up in that moment, but afterwards, you know, he got it got him away from the crying at Chipotle. You know, it's like borders that tacos that travel. I didn't really like. I was open.

00:06:06:20 - 00:06:12:12

Christina Bauer

I did know that. Tacos. Yes. But it was it it wasn't something that I knew right away. It took me a little while to discover that on the menu.

00:06:12:16 - 00:06:15:11

Andrew Komarow

So you see the correlation between your story, though?

00:06:15:12 - 00:06:33:02

Christina Bauer

Yes. Yeah. No, I get it. I get it. I also had a lot with in high school where when I'm really listening to somebody because I take in a lot of sensory information and it gets overwhelming very quickly. So and auditory is my primary way of taking in the world. And so if I'm really paying attention to you, I'm not going to look at you.

00:06:33:02 - 00:06:56:08

Christina Bauer

I'm just going to listen because I'm getting a lot from your voice. And that wasn't a popular thing in high school. I almost got kicked out for being insubordinate. But then again, more nuns. I don't know why that was, but that's what happened. But eventually I learned that if you look at somebody right here, the gives the neurotypical person the illusion that you make eye contact and you don't actually have to make eye contact.

So, you know, little acts like that. And then I just kind of like put it off that I was, you know, awkward kid. I liked the India was a dungeon master. I thought, you know, whatever. And then when my son, he seemed, you know, typical for his first year and a half that he lost all language. He stopped making eye contact.

00:07:17:21 - 00:08:02:11

Christina Bauer

He started doing lots of repetitive behaviors, and he got diagnosed. And as I learned about him, I realized like, oh, okay, you know, they're we are we're different parts of the same spectrum. And it's been a it's been a cool journey to to realize that he brings so much beauty and joy into the world separate from his ability to give speeches, make money or, you know, have progeny and kind of being able to open up my eyes to the beauty of myself that I didn't want to accept before because I just saw it as different and weird and wrong.

00:08:03:00 - 00:08:12:03

Christina Bauer

So, you know, that's like a ten year long journey. It was a lot of therapy, but that's where I got.

00:08:12:03 - 00:08:38:18

Andrew Komarow

So I'm assuming you like fantasy books, right? I mean, there is like the shoemaker walks barefoot. I've ever seen a mess. Your house and somebody who cleaned houses for a living. But you probably like fantasy books, so it seems. Was there did you get into fantasy writing because you like telling the stories and and or was there like a book that, like, also truly inspired you?

00:08:39:08 - 00:09:03:06

Christina Bauer

Yeah. So I just always wanted to tell stories, but I was like, inspired by what I saw around me. So looking out the window from this, Our Lady of the Blessed Something school that I was in, and there was this, this, you know, I could see the nunnery and there was one nun who would like, you know, dust out her window every day at a certain time.

And they were also building a wall. And I built up this whole thing about how she was talking to the wall contractor with this secret code using her, you know, And of course, they're looking at me thinking she's completely nuts, like she's just staring out a window mumbling to herself. But it was one day I will write the nun in the contract her story.

00:09:21:21 - 00:09:50:23

Christina Bauer

So that was sort of like the natural stuff that I came that just came to my head. And then when I

got to be a teenager, I read Hobbit Lord of the Rings. And that's still, you know, I mean, Tolkien, man, that worldbuilding that he does is phenomenal, building his own languages. Oh, God. So for each each book that I do, I build out, you know, a unique world with history and language system and a naming system.

And and even if it's in the same world, it's going to build it's going to explore a new part of that world. So that's just that's my jam. That's what I love to do.

00:10:01:22 - 00:10:13:01

Eileen Lamb

So when you're when you're developing the characters, do they come first or do the story come first?

00:10:13:01 - 00:10:33:06

Christina Bauer

I in it, it's like it's more like a word sculpture. So I'll start with like an idea for a character and then like the book I'm working on now, they're, they're twins. So it's so the idea wise, I really want a Star Wars story and they're not making any right now. So I'm going to write my own version, but put it in fantasy.

And then I was like, I always wanted to have Luke and Leia in this in the story from the beginning, be pals and go running around doing stuff together.

00:10:41:19 - 00:10:49:05

Andrew Komarow

So Eileen has never seen Star Wars. I make fun of her for this constantly.

00:10:49:20 - 00:11:14:24

Christina Bauer

So I just started to it though, because you can't even get the original releases, You know that the original movie theatrical release was just amazing. But but anyway, yeah. So they're these two brother and sister characters looking like I am Star Wars. They are separated and they're, you know, raised in different planets and stuff. So I wanted them to be together.

So all of a sudden, like watching all this, I don't know if you've been following, but there's been lots of new star Wars content. And, you know, I as a as a fantasy person, I'm like, I want my space wizards to space wizard, stop it. And I want looking like a back end or at least they're kids running around like.

So finally I got so mad. I'm like, I'm buying this book. And then it got other things come in and then there. But the basic thing of like the twins and that they're on an adventure stays the same. But stuff changes along the way as I kind of figure out different parts of the world. And there's a

lot of testing things out.

00:11:49:20 - 00:12:02:17

Christina Bauer

So for each piece of a world that stays, there are probably about ten things that are like, you know, try maybe they have maybe they're wizards now, maybe they're this now like, you know, and toss away until it's sort of like something inside me says, yup, that's it. You go in.

00:12:03:18 - 00:12:29:17

Andrew Komarow

Typically, many with autism are very visual. That's, I would say probably more Temple Grandin you know the good doctor other show, very visual, I think. Eileen You're very visual. I'm the complete opposite. I can't visualize literally anything. I have F and pager. So I'm just curious, are you visual? Not visual. Somewhere between, I would imagine. Very visual. And if so, how is that helped your writing?

00:12:33:21 - 00:12:52:03

Christina Bauer

So the test that I was given when I was a kid, I'll give it to you both now, is you're in a boat on a lake and it's a beautiful summer day. What's the first thing you notice? I'll go with you.

00:12:52:03 - 00:13:01:17

Elleen Lamb

I lean summer there on the lake. The first thing I notice, probably the. The sea, the ocean or the lake. I guess.

00:13:02:21 - 00:13:05:01

Christina Bauer

So. What about it?

00:13:05:01 - 00:13:06:15

Elleen Lamb

How blue and big it is?

00:13:08:08 - 00:13:14:20

Christina Bauer

So for me, I notice the sound of the water lapping against the side of the boat.

00:13:14:20 - 00:13:17:04

Elleen Lamb

So you hear. You hear it. You don't see it.

00:13:17:22 - 00:13:27:22

Christina Bauer

Right for me. I then I'll see it. And then the last thing I'll feel is the motion. So I go auditory, visual, kinesthetic. That's how my brain processes information.

00:13:28:12 - 00:13:57:10**Andrew Komarow**

So the way I first described it was it's like reading a book. But then if people are very visual, that apparently doesn't help. I just I know that I know exactly as much as you've described. Right. I know that there's water. I wouldn't think about the color of anything until you asked the question. So very similarly, there's an app in Asia question, which is think of a horse a little simpler, but same concept, right?

And it's, you know, the person, you know, very visual, probably thinks of it. I'm looking at a picture. That's how I know, you know, a horse in a field. Maybe there's a saddle, maybe there isn't. There's a color of a horse. I, I know horse exists, right? Like I, but I wouldn't put any. It's just black.

00:14:19:11 - 00:14:44:24**Christina Bauer**

So there's a kind of Buddhist meditation where they it's called like clear mind, and one of which I tried for a little while. And then I, I just couldn't keep quite that long. But one of the things that, that my whatever teacher did is that when you're least expected, they just clap in your face and there's this moment where you're just completely clear mind.

00:14:45:09 - 00:14:51:11**Christina Bauer**

And when you were talking about it, that's what it sounded to me like there's this, this you're in the moment and not necessarily.

00:14:52:15 - 00:15:03:15**Andrew Komarow**

Oh, no, My head is a crazy place right now. My thoughts are more than a now, so. Okay. Yeah. No. So.

00:15:04:06 - 00:15:31:17**Eileen Lamb**

So do you guys. Well, I guess that doesn't apply to you, Andrew, but like, you know, when you ask a question, I was thinking about like a specific, like I went to that that's in France. And then as soon as I started, like talking about, like the blue leg, I could, like, remember, like, memories and see, like, people and then the sky and like, the ice cream shop over there and, you know, memories, like, just was like one scene, but like, it's just must be, like, so depressing to be like you.

00:15:31:17 - 00:15:33:12

Eileen Lamb

And I just can't imagine.

00:15:33:12 - 00:15:34:02

Andrew Komarow

Like, was. Like. If my thought was, Am I on a boat? Did you say you're on a boat? Or was that an assumption that I was on a boat.

00:15:39:22 - 00:15:46:12

Christina Bauer

You're you're on a boat, You're on a lake and it's a summer day, so there's no descriptors.

00:15:46:12 - 00:15:56:21

Andrew Komarow

It's shot. Now, I saw something interesting. Literally. Just what you told me is what I think so. Or what I it. It's black says.

00:15:57:00 - 00:16:00:18

Eileen Lamb

So how do you read a book then?

00:16:00:18 - 00:16:04:19

Andrew Komarow

Like vowels and Constance and you put the words together.

00:16:04:24 - 00:16:06:12

Eileen Lamb

Like, what does your brain do.

00:16:06:12 - 00:16:08:10

Andrew Komarow

Is I'm reading Hebrew. Then it's right to laugh.

00:16:09:00 - 00:16:20:08

Eileen Lamb

I just don't even understand like how like you read a book. How do you even let your mind, like, take you there if you can't see it? How does your brain process what you're reading? It just doesn't make sense to me.

00:16:21:10 - 00:16:45:10

Andrew Komarow

Well, ever, ever different. Not less. I know. I think that's why I too. I like a lot of it. So, for example, I'm a fan of hard science fiction first, very like, maybe more visual stuff or maybe there's more of us the story than something that's visual. So like, you know, I'm one of three people who watches Foundation.

Actually, one was on the podcast, right? Isaac Asimov, like Arthur Z Clarke's like my dad. So like a lot of stuff where I guess the descriptions either artificial or, you know, sometimes that there's a very, very visual author who also describes so much what I think, you know, some people might say, like I think people said like either like Stephen King or Neil Gaiman or both.

00:17:09:08 - 00:17:24:24

Andrew Komarow

Like they both like, probably describe too much, right? So I might enjoy those because then there isn't the assumption. And then but yeah, so that's yeah.

00:17:25:09 - 00:17:29:04

Christina Bauer

Do you find that gives you like a superpower and other places in life?

00:17:30:02 - 00:17:52:02

Andrew Komarow

Well, I can never have traumatic flashbacks. So there is that. Once I knew it was a lot easier. I think that's it, right? Like, you know, just show me on the screen Right. Versus, you know, struggling. I do remember being scared shitless as a kid, though. Like, if like I had to do a police sketch, like, you know, I do remember that.

Like, how do people do that? Call it a superpower or I mean, maybe there are some things where I can, you know, think differently, not necessarily better or worse. Definitely. Yeah. I mean, they're there. And the best part. Okay, I take that back to the movie or TV show never ruins the book for me from a visual story wise.

00:18:17:21 - 00:18:30:16

Andrew Komarow

Yes, they can screw it up, but like I am way less likely to be annoyed that a book ruined or that the because there was nothing in my head before. So I appreciate it.

00:18:31:12 - 00:18:53:14

Christina Bauer

Yeah, I would think too, that was software because I used to work in software before I became an author full time that it would be very helpful to be focused on what is in front of you versus getting off on like, Oh my gosh, what if, you know, we rewrote this in C-sharp and then I did this object in my mind, like, you know, like just, just the facts bam kind of thing.

00:18:54:07 - 00:19:33:06

Christina Bauer

So back to your original question. I do I do start with I do have a like a by the time I'm writing, I have the the image in my head that I try to then translate. And it's hard because I have sometimes these great scenes where it just doesn't it just doesn't it just doesn't translate over into words very well or it takes too long or so the the project I'm working on now is a graphic novel, which has been a lot of fun because I'm not limited by language and I can Yeah.

So so it's it's a different way of telling the story. But a lot of the stuff comes from an underlying sort of feeling and understanding of how people's people relationships work and people's minds work. It's something that I've definitely interested in because, you know, having that feeling of walking in the room and everybody is in on some secret that you don't know, you know, like, like, oh, crap.

00:20:01:02 - 00:20:20:01

Christina Bauer

It's, you know, a classic example. Oh, crap. I was invited to a to a Easter event with a bear. The friend of mine and I missed the memo that I'm supposed to wear pastel color. Like, who tells you these things? Where am I supposed to find this stuff out? I'm in black with black leather boots, and everybody else looks a little like at that moment.

I know. Okay. Something I missed something somewhere, but there you go. Long answer.

00:20:26:04 - 00:20:50:04

Eileen Lamb

No, that's. That's great. You know, I. I wrote a couple books, too, but it's not fiction at all. And so it's always impressive to me. I always wonder about the creative, creative process. You know, it's one thing to have all of these ideas, but being able to make them make sense on paper, you know, is very impressive. You don't you said you wrote like 40 something point 45.

00:20:50:04 - 00:21:23:09

Christina Bauer

Yeah. And I'm 50. Yeah. And they're all buried the way that I do it, as I am at all the chapters on an Excel spreadsheet with themes and color coding. It's, it's a, it's, it's mathematical. So you introduce the, you introduce the protagonist and there's a what's called I followed something called Save the cap. So it's which is named after you have a when you one of the things you're supposed to do when you introduce a protagonist is to have them do something that makes them sympathetic within the first scene.

So if you think about Disney's Aladdin, he's running around the the, the marketplace, but at the end he gives the bread that he stole to the two little starving kids. Right. That save the cat or you'll or it's it's kind of an inside joke where you know how many times writers have somebody actually save kittens or a cat, you know.

So there are that's just one example. And there's about 45 more steps that you that you can go through.

00:21:53:00 - 00:22:09:18

Eileen Lamb

You're also at Harvard. Harvard, which is very impressive. And you're studying history. What specifically are you studying? And you're working on something specific at the moment. Why did you choose to study history? Can you tell us more?

00:22:10:08 - 00:22:33:00

Christina Bauer

So history is also storytelling. And the program that I'm on is one where because I'm not I'm not test girl like, I just my logic just doesn't work with standardized testing. So I'm in a program where if you take three classes and you get a B or higher than you're in. So I've done two so far and I've gotten A's, Yay!

And I have one more to go. And then I'm officially in. I've been studying revolutionary re America and an interest in a kind of the economics of our relationship with England and it's just I mean, history is just fascinating. You know there's so much that it that that that I can pull in to the different to my writing.

00:23:03:15 - 00:23:26:07

Christina Bauer

And if you want to have original content you have to put original content in. So I, I if someone tells me how your work really reminds me of fill in the blank, I will not watch that. Or, you know, if I haven't already seen it. So that's kind of history kind of going my head with things that are real but not what everybody else is focusing on.

00:23:26:20 - 00:23:36:10

Eileen Lamb

Andrew did that to you. He said the character you're you're describing there reminds me of a TV show before we started recording Foundation.

00:23:36:10 - 00:23:49:02

Christina Bauer

Yeah, Yeah. Isaac Asimov I you know, I, I've tried to get into that show not, not happening as much for me yet, but you have to respect Isaac Asimov and and his imagination with that.

00:23:50:02 - 00:24:08:22

Andrew Komarow

Yeah, I you know, it's funny. My daughter's, you know, six and my father read me twice one A Space Odyssey when I was six. And now that actually seems really weird, but I did really enjoy it and get it. Like I'm like, she could, which was like six. But anyway, yeah, so I like that for a

long time.

00:24:11:00 - 00:24:20:05

Christina Bauer

That's been on my list to read. I guess the book explains a lot of the stuff that's a movie screen movie.

00:24:20:05 - 00:24:39:24

Andrew Komarow

So you also mentioned that you are a very auditory person. Are your books audiobooks? Do you like audiobooks? And if so, what is your favorite audiobook? And if you don't say the 10th anniversary forecast production of American Gods, your answer is wrong. Okay, I'll let you go.

00:24:40:12 - 00:25:01:19

Christina Bauer

So I do love audiobooks. I do narrate my own audiobooks. I've done eight of them so far. So. So yeah, that's. That's that. And I will take your American gods and I will one up you with the original 1969 BBC production of Lord of the Rings Best ever.

It's really good. I mean, if you think Peter Jackson did a good job at BBC and actually trivia point, the guy who plays Bilbo in the movie played Frodo in the BBC radio play.

00:25:18:22 - 00:25:43:23

Andrew Komarow

Did not know that you'll like this. My fourth grade teacher had a tradition, this is before the movies came out, etc., where he read ever where he read all four books to a fourth grade class. Here some parents were saying it was too much for fourth graders to be able to read. So he started a class for us this year playing it on cassette tape because they told him he couldn't read it to us.

00:25:45:00 - 00:25:48:24

Christina Bauer

So he played the audiobook and then they gave up.

So those were the days.

00:25:52:19 - 00:26:01:20

Eileen Lamb

So thanks for the question. Andrew So Andrew writes some of the questions and this one's definitely Andrew's. How would you say we're sister? Oh.

00:26:02:06 - 00:26:07:08

Christina Bauer

Oh, well, it depends where growing up. It's Rochester in New York.

00:26:07:09 - 00:26:12:18

Andrew Komarow

No, no, no, no. The Boston town, she couldn't even show. Oh, oh, oh. It's actually so bad.

00:26:12:18 - 00:26:15:20

Eileen Lamb

Blake versus my sister.

00:26:16:10 - 00:26:20:14

Christina Bauer

Oh, it's Worcester. It's like war chest. War, chest.

00:26:20:19 - 00:26:22:00

Eileen Lamb

Rochester?

00:26:22:14 - 00:26:28:02

Christina Bauer

Yeah, well, all right. It's hard to do it off Boston accent. Unless you're from the area, though it's hard to pull it off.

00:26:29:12 - 00:26:39:06

Eileen Lamb

Do you think there are any funny nuances in writing, like not just internationally, but like, even, like, originally, Like, can you notice these things?

00:26:40:02 - 00:27:18:11

Christina Bauer

Let's say? You know, the thing with writing that I think I can answer is that when you get into almost any, you know, business, there's what I call the 8020 rule, where 80% of your customers are, 80% of your business comes from 20% of your customers. So when writing e-books, which is what I do, that that 20% are ravenous, ravenous, read a book or maybe even two a day, folks, and they get to where there's very specific areas of interest.

You know, it's kind of like a neurotypical, hyper focused thing, you know, where some people will only read Regency Romance, which is a specific period of time or hot Navy SEALs buy bear shifters. That was when I went through a bear shifter period, like aliens like. So it's it's not from the so people get kind of united in our in our community not necessarily from where they come from but from these very specific sort of niches and fantasy that they focus on at being an autism parent.

00:28:00:02 - 00:28:11:20

Christina Bauer

And writing is a totally valid, if rich area that it has lots of lots of avid readers and writers in there as well.

00:28:12:02 - 00:28:39:17

Andrew Komarow

What are your thoughts about A.I. in terms of writing? I mean, or you know, what language learning model, you know, I kind of in general just hate how everybody's calling everything. But, you know, for content creators specifically, not just writers, but artists, there's seems like there's a lot of opportunity, there's a lot of parallel. There's a lot of new territory.

00:28:40:08 - 00:28:44:01

Andrew Komarow

I assume you have thoughts and if so, what are there?

00:28:45:02 - 00:29:16:03

Christina Bauer

So I but before, when I was in technology, I founded my own AI software company and I co-wrote a patent with Dr. Konstantin Papageorgiou from the MIT Artificial Intelligence Lab. So the current GP and similar writing modules are best trained by longform writing. So they they scrape up a lot of stuff from the from the web. But long form writing is just how those algorithms are best able to mimic speech.

And as it turns out, the best way to mimic speech in long form writing are romance novels. I am not kidding, you know, So if you look, they doubt the the chatty beauty folks, which they could get away with because at the time they were a research whatever, not a not a commercial operation. They download it from a a vendor called Smashwords.

00:29:40:18 - 00:30:07:17

Christina Bauer

They downloaded 300,000 books from their collection, and that is the machine learning ebook Corpus that all these AI writing systems use. And they made the decision to not compensate any of the authors that are in that corpus. So I'm pretty sure my stuff is in there because if I ask it to write a chapter about one of my books that comes up with the character names and all that stuff.

So I but so I so there's the first issue, which is it's not ethical to take people's work and not even pay them like 499 or whatever for your book and put it into a machine corpus and make billions of dollars over it for, over what be, you know, years and years to come. So first of all, that's scummy and that should not be allowed and they should.

00:30:31:03 - 00:30:57:12

Christina Bauer

And they know exactly who they stole from because you prioritize certain sentences higher based on what the system sees a success is, it keeps the conversation going. So if one it's like making French onion soup. If one vendor gives you terrible onions, you're going to go back and put that in the soup, right? So it knows where it's pulling in the the good onions, the good content and is prioritizing that stuff.

00:30:57:12 - 00:31:26:01

Christina Bauer

So it could they could they just got judged beat just got 10 billion from Microsoft they could know who is giving them the best onions the best content and pay them some percentage. Right. And that's one thing that's being fought out in the courts. So legal aside, I know of that's a it's a hot topic. I know a lot of folks feel very that gets super helpful for them to have.

00:31:27:12 - 00:31:50:17

Christina Bauer

You know, I draft out books for them. They're for me as a creator. The idea of the the way the system works under that, under the hood is that it's not intelligent. It's like if you're going to your to Amazon picker and you're picking out boxes of stuff to put into your cart, right to then ship off somewhere, Right.

What the air system does is it says if someone says this box, this sentence, the next most likely percent chance is that they'll say that I should say this box. So it's coming out with the most average response. And next to they based on what you asked it to put together and for me as knowing that's what's happening under the hood, it makes me ill, which is really not fair because for other people it's very helpful.

00:32:15:09 - 00:32:23:07

Christina Bauer

But for me ill, I work very hard that I'm not coming up with anything that other people do.

00:32:23:07 - 00:32:29:17

Eileen Lamb

Well, you have a lot of knowledge about it. I did not expect. I mean, it's great. And I.

00:32:29:17 - 00:32:32:05

Andrew Komarow

Cheated. I looked at her website before the podcast.

00:32:32:05 - 00:32:35:08

Christina Bauer

I laid out a long think Yeah, there's I could go.

00:32:35:08 - 00:32:39:08

Andrew Komarow

On for even I didn't read any of it but you know, I kind of had a feeling you.

00:32:39:08 - 00:32:55:13

Christina Bauer

Saw it. Yeah. And also they're the bad people. There used to be 800 books a day being loaded into Amazon. There's now over 4000. That's across all. So it's they're just junking up the legit authors so that it's hard for us to be discovered.

00:32:56:10 - 00:33:06:18

Andrew Komarow

I can't remember the name of something that came out that's like injecting like copyright infringing material and stuff. So then I thought that was also pretty amusing.

00:33:08:09 - 00:33:25:07

Christina Bauer

Friedman She's an author who someone, you know, she writes like how to how to write books and someone just put out a whole bunch of how to write books, right? Write me five. How to write books like Jane Friedman does, post them on Amazon. And it got attached to her author page before she figured out what was happening.

So I have faith in Amazon. They're very sneaky. They'll figure out how to shut this stuff down, but for now it's really frustrating. It's like this. And also as a as a creative to think of people seeing, you know, this is like a get rich quick scheme. It's just again, the whole.

00:33:47:24 - 00:34:00:06

Eileen Lamb

Well, we're on to our last question. Do you have any autistic characters in your books and are they canon or just treats why or why not?

00:34:01:07 - 00:34:28:18

Christina Bauer

So my most out autistic, I don't call her that, but it's my science fiction series and her name is Mamie Archer and she writes code. And, you know, I just had a lot of fun about with her, you know, picking a part of the people's code. And it's just it was just she was somebody that I kind of let the the autism flag fly and although I didn't, you know, call it out as such.

And it's been neat to see that people from all all different backgrounds enjoy that that series. Although just because it is science fiction, it does kind of have a limited appeal, a more focused, more focused. I have a I have a short story coming out next year in the science fiction magazine, one of them. So I'm not giving up on that.

00:34:55:03 - 00:35:00:24

Eileen Lamb

By the way, did you write all your books? Did you self-publish all of your books or did you go through a publisher?

00:35:01:15 - 00:35:14:19

Christina Bauer

I self-published them all, and I am I have now recently signed with an agent. And so I'm going to be going on back to the man soon. So we'll see.

00:35:14:19 - 00:35:19:05

Eileen Lamb

Nice. Good luck. It's such an exhausting process.

00:35:20:14 - 00:35:37:11

Christina Bauer

You know, it it's one of these things where like working again, like being in you're kind of your autism bubble. Where and working with my agent, she's like, This is so great because the book that I'm doing is going to be is going to be the graphic novel fantasy. And the artist that I found is also a woman.

And she's like, We're going to be actually like, I can't wait to pitch a fantasy book written by a woman and, illustrated by a woman. And I was like, Oh, is that thing so like a thing that people don't do a lot? And so then I started Googling. I'm like, Oh, crap, how long have I been doing this for so long?

And I had no idea. There's this huge, you know, where are the where are the, you know, hardcore fantasy sci fi women writers out there? Okay.

00:36:05:20 - 00:36:07:19

Andrew Komarow

Now, writing fan fiction.

00:36:08:21 - 00:36:22:01

Christina Bauer

They're writing fan fiction. Yeah. So, yeah, more people should approach the the agent.

00:36:22:01 - 00:36:34:01

Eileen Lamb

Before I ask you the quickfire questions, you want to tell people like, little bits, like where they can find you on social media, if at all, and any of like your books, Anything you want to promote, like free for all.

00:36:34:13 - 00:36:58:13

Christina Bauer

Oh, thank you. So you can find my books at Christina Bauer, author Tor.com. And there are links there to my audio books. I've got TikTok and Instagram and Facebook, and I love connecting with readers and yeah, come check. Check it out. I'm I'm, I'm. I try to consistently do odd things that people might find interesting.

00:36:59:20 - 00:37:06:07

Andrew Komarow

I like that. That's about that's my favorite thing right.

00:37:06:07 - 00:37:18:01

Eileen Lamb

Very good at it And your weird things. Okay. I'm going to ask you the quickfire questions, so let me save questions that you tell me the first answer that comes to your mind.

00:37:18:11 - 00:37:18:19

Christina Bauer

Okay.

00:37:19:15 - 00:37:20:01

Eileen Lamb

Ready?

00:37:20:13 - 00:37:20:21

Christina Bauer

Ready.

00:37:22:04 - 00:37:23:05

Eileen Lamb

Favorite animal.

Christina Bauer

A golden retriever.

00:37:27:20 - 00:37:31:23

Eileen Lamb

Favorites Book to TV show Movie adaptation.

00:37:32:24 - 00:37:45:16

Christina Bauer

I'm going to go with Edith Hamilton's mythology to Oh, crap, what Rachel movie didn't, which was The Clash of the Titans. Although, okay, I'm booked. TV show.

00:37:45:21 - 00:37:47:01

Eileen Lamb

Or movie.

00:37:47:01 - 00:37:53:13

Christina Bauer

Yeah. Okay. Well, we'll will stick with Edith Hamilton. Mythology and Clash of the Titans.

00:37:53:13 - 00:37:58:02

Eileen Lamb

Is there another place you love to brainstorm other than the T.

00:38:01:17 - 00:38:08:05

Christina Bauer

Driving is a very that that's a good place to have good flow when I'm alone in the car.

00:38:08:12 - 00:38:10:07

Eileen Lamb

So it's transportation

00:38:10:20 - 00:38:20:14

Christina Bauer

Transportation all around. Yeah. And in Starbucks with coffee if I give up a a mocha and a corner and my headphones things, things can happen.

00:38:20:14 - 00:38:22:00

Eileen Lamb

Favorite movie.

00:38:23:04 - 00:38:27:00

Christina Bauer

I'll go with Casablanca.

00:38:27:00 - 00:38:34:14

Eileen Lamb

Andrew I've seen it. Favorite audiobook.

00:38:36:11 - 00:38:42:02

Christina Bauer

I'll go with the Harry Potter read by Jim Dale.

00:38:42:02 - 00:38:49:24

Eileen Lamb

And the last question, which I guess we did. Six Quick Fire questions today. Favorite fantasy TV show.

00:38:49:24 - 00:38:51:04

Andrew Komarow

Say Fantasy again? I like.

00:38:51:14 - 00:38:54:04

Eileen Lamb

Fantasy. Fantasy.

00:38:55:05 - 00:39:09:06

Christina Bauer

Fantasy. I now I'm thinking in French, which is causing me that there are stranger things.

00:39:09:14 - 00:39:20:19

Eileen Lamb

Oh me to Jim trends racing doof. Cool. Well, thank you so much for joining us. Christina. That was very interesting. I feel like it was more of a conversation than an interview because.

It Was great. Yeah. Thank you so much for, for joining us.