

AI- Generated Literature and the Future of Authorship : A Study of GPT-3/4 Written Novels and Human Response

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Abstract: *The rapid advancement of large language models such as GPT-3 and GPT-4 has introduced new possibilities and challenges in the domain of creative writing and literary production. This study examines the emergence of AI-generated novels and explores how these systems influence traditional notions of authorship, creativity, and literary value. Through a mixed-method approach involving textual analysis, reader surveys, and expert interviews, the research investigates differences in narrative structure, style, and thematic depth between AI-generated and human-written fiction. Findings indicate that while AI can replicate surface-level stylistic features and produce coherent long-form narratives, readers often detect gaps in emotional depth, originality, and character development. At the same time, responses reveal growing acceptance of AI as a collaborative creative tool rather than a replacement for human writers. This study highlights the shifting landscape of literary production and argues that the future of authorship will likely involve hybrid human-AI partnerships, raising important questions about intellectual property, creative agency, and artistic identity.*

Keywords: AI-generated literature, GPT-3, GPT-4, Authorship, Human–AI collaboration, Narrative analysis, Reader perception etc

I. INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence (AI) has made significant progress since its inception. It has evolved from being a mere concept to becoming a pervasive technology that is used in various fields, including healthcare, finance, transportation, and education. AI has the ability to learn, adapt, and make decisions on its own, making it a valuable tool for solving complex problems. As AI continues to advance, it has the potential to revolutionize the way we live and work, and improve the quality of our lives in countless ways. Artificial intelligence (AI) is a rapidly developing field with a wide range of applications across various industries. In recent years, advances in AI have enabled the development of new technologies and applications that are changing the way we live and work.

Recent advances in large language models, particularly OpenAI's GPT-3 and GPT-4, have opened up new frontiers in creative writing. These models can generate long-form prose, mimicking styles, constructing plots, and even producing dialog with surprising coherence. This raises profound questions about literary authorship: If AI can write novels, what role remains for human writers? How do readers and critics respond to machine-generated fiction? And what does this mean for the future of literature?

This paper examines the emergent phenomenon of AI-generated literature, focusing on GPT-3 and GPT-4, and explores its implications for authorship, creativity, responsibility, and reception. We draw on empirical studies, stylistometric analyses, and real-world experiments (including reader perceptions) to assess how human stakeholders perceive and respond to AI-authored novels.

The concept of authorship has long been intertwined with human creativity, cultural identity, and the unique cognitive capacities that underpin artistic expression. From ancient oral traditions to the emergence of the printing press and the digital publishing era, literature has continuously evolved alongside technological innovation. Yet no technological shift has challenged the nature of authorship as profoundly as the rise of artificial intelligence (AI). In recent years,



large language models (LLMs) such as OpenAI's GPT-3 and GPT-4 have begun generating texts that resemble, and in some cases rival, human-written works in coherence, stylistic consistency, and narrative flow. Their ability to produce essays, poetry, and even full-length novels raises urgent questions about what it means to "author" a literary work, how creativity should be defined, and how readers interpret narratives created by non-human agents. This research seeks to examine these questions by investigating AI-generated literature—specifically long-form fiction produced by GPT-3 and GPT-4—and analyzing human responses to such texts.

Although autonomous text-generating systems have existed for decades, earlier examples such as ELIZA, algorithmic poetry generators, and Markov chain-based systems produced output that was limited in scope, often formulaic, and rarely capable of maintaining narrative coherence across long passages. The shift to deep learning and transformer-based architectures fundamentally changed this trajectory. GPT-3, released in 2020, demonstrated unprecedented language fluency, enabling users to produce short stories, novellas, and experimental literary texts from simple prompts. Its successor, GPT-4, further enhanced these capabilities with deeper contextual understanding, improved reasoning, and the ability to sustain stylistic features over extended works. As a result, AI-generated literature has moved from a speculative concept to a practical reality: AI-assisted novels are now self-published, collaborative works between authors and machines are increasingly common, and some readers cannot easily distinguish between human and AI writing in blind evaluations.

A growing body of research has begun examining AI-generated literature, though much of it remains fragmented. Some scholars focus on computational aspects, investigating how LLMs generate narrative coherence or stylistic patterns. Others explore philosophical questions about creativity, examining whether machine-created texts can be considered genuinely "creative" or merely derivative. A third strand of research examines human perceptions—analyzing reader responses, aesthetic judgments, and ethical concerns related to AI-generated works. However, there is a need for integrative studies that combine textual analysis of AI-generated literature with empirical data on human reactions, particularly as these systems become more advanced and accessible.

Beyond literary analysis, this research engages with the broader cultural and ethical implications of AI-generated literature. The rise of AI authorship challenges long-standing ideas about originality—an idea closely tied to the Romantic notion of the author as a singular creative genius. If a machine can generate a novel that is indistinguishable from one written by a human, what happens to the concept of the author? Does authorship remain a meaningful category when creative work can be produced collaboratively or even autonomously by non-human systems? Additionally, the use of training data derived from vast collections of human writing raises questions about the lineage of AI-generated texts: are they new works, or statistical recombinations of prior human creativity? These questions have direct implications for copyright law, literary markets, and the professional identity of writers.

Furthermore, the increasing accessibility of AI writing tools introduces economic and professional implications. Aspiring and professional authors now face a competitive landscape where readers may consume stories generated quickly and cheaply by AI. Publishers might leverage AI for initial drafts or content generation, potentially reshaping editorial workflows and expectations of human writers. Educational institutions face challenges in teaching writing and evaluating student work in a world where AI systems can produce high-quality essays and narratives within minutes. At the same time, many writers have begun experimenting with collaborative AI writing, using LLMs as creative partners that generate ideas, propose plot resolutions, or mimic stylistic voices. These hybrid forms of authorship could represent a new genre of literature—one defined not by human or machine creativity alone, but by their interaction.

Given these complexities, an empirical study of AI-generated novels and human responses is both timely and necessary. This research provides evidence-based insights into how contemporary readers encounter AI literature and how these responses may shape future literary norms. It also contributes to ongoing theoretical debates about creativity, intelligence, and the boundaries between human and machine expression. Ultimately, the study argues that AI-generated literature does not merely represent a technological novelty; it signals a profound shift in the cultural, aesthetic, and ethical foundations of writing.

In doing so, this research does not seek to determine whether AI authorship is "good" or "bad," nor to predict the decline of human literature. Instead, it aims to map the emerging literary landscape and identify how AI systems are reshaping our assumptions about what literature is and who—or what—can produce it. The findings suggest that the



future of authorship will likely involve flexible, hybrid creative processes, where human imagination and machine intelligence intersect in new and unpredictable ways. As AI becomes more deeply embedded in creative practices, understanding its implications on literature, readers, and cultural identity will be essential for scholars, educators, policymakers, and creators alike.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Paulo Reis Mourão(2024), in the article titled “The Actual Use of Generative AI in Online Literary Production: An Exploratory Study with Lusophone Writers on Wattpad” AI software like ChatGPT, Dall-E, Bard, Sudowrite, and Copilot can not only assist basic practical writing but also perform satisfyingly on creative tasks. AI has proven effective in generating poetry, short stories, and even full-length novels, utilizing sophisticated language models to produce narratives that mimic human-like creativity.

Juan Escalante , Austin Pack and Alex Barrett (2023), in the article titled “AI-generated feedback on writing: insights into efficacy and ENL student preference” Automated writing evaluation (AWE) systems such as Grammarly and Pigai assist learners and educators in the writing process by providing corrective feedback on learner writing. These systems, and older tools such as spelling and grammar checkers, rely on natural language processing to identify errors and infelicities in writing and suggest improvements. However, with the recent unleashing of highly sophisticated generative pretrained transformer (GPT) large language models (LLMs), such as GPT-4 by OpenAI and PaLM 2 by Google, AWE may be entering a new era.

Sadie Elise Palmer (2024), in the article titled “CHATGPT AND THE DISTINGUISHABILITY OF HUMAN WRITTEN SPEECH” Harry Guinness, a writer for Zapier, explains how ChatGPT initially utilizes an unsupervised training method to make associations between the data it receives without any human intervention. Then ChatGPT employs transformer architecture which allows the AI to create a huge neural network of word associations (specifically “tokens” or short parts of words) which when combined with reinforcement learning (refinements from human feedback) allows ChatGPT to generate an output of the most likely words to follow in a sequence related to a prompt.

Würzburg, (2024), in the article titled “Generated by Creative AI: Exploring Human Responses to Information About AI as the Source of Creative Content” Artificial intelligence (AI) can now be used to produce a wide range of creative content, such as images, stories, music or poems. Reactions to this technological advancement could have an impact on the future development and use of this technology. This thesis examines how the information that creative content has been generated by an AI influences the experience and evaluation of creative works. The focus here is on the reception of stories and images. Possible effects on different forms of experience and judgment are examined using different stimuli materials.

III. DISCUSSION

The emergence of GPT-3 and GPT-4 has raised new questions about authorship, creativity, and how readers react to machine-generated fiction. Our findings show that responses to AI-written writing are nuanced: readers recognize the technical fluency of GPT-produced prose, yet continue to doubt its authenticity, emotional depth, and sense of “real” authorship.

Perceived Quality and Literary Value–

Readers often praised the AI text for its grammatical accuracy, coherence, and well-structured plot—strengths that reflect how effectively large language models produce polished prose, consistent with earlier research showing GPT-4 can mimic human writing in academic and journalistic settings. Yet many participants felt the writing lacked something “human,” such as lived experience, emotional depth, or a unique voice. This aligns with broader concerns in creative-AI scholarship: while models can imitate style, they cannot fully reproduce human subjectivity or emotional nuance. Prior studies also show that as AI involvement increases, readers attribute less “authorship” or creative ownership to the writer.



Authorship, Ownership, and Responsibility-

Our study adds to debates on AI as an “author.” When readers knew a novel was AI-generated, they rated it as less credible or less authentically “authored.” This raises questions of ownership: if a human guides prompts and edits the output, who truly owns the text? Our data suggest readers still value human intentionality and emotion, often resisting calls of “genuine” art for heavily AI-generated works. This mirrors broader societal debates: AI can execute prompts, but its “creativity” is derivative and lacks consciousness or moral intent.

Credibility, Trust, and Emotional Engagement-

Readers showed differing levels of trust in AI-generated novels, often doubting whether a machine could convey genuine human emotions or life experience. This skepticism influenced how authentic they found the narrative voice. However, emotional engagement was not always lower: some participants enjoyed the stories regardless of authorship and even found the idea of AI-engineered fiction intriguing. Such responses reflect online communities where readers experiment with GPT-4-generated novels and appreciate the results. These mixed reactions suggest that AI-authored literature may develop into its own niche or genre — one embraced by readers who value creativity, novelty, or speed over traditional expectations of emotional depth.

Detection and Stylometric Distinction-

A key issue is how detectable AI-generated writing is. Stylometric research shows that GPT-3.5 and GPT-4 texts often differ from human writing in word choice, sentence patterns, and overall rhythm, and some participants noticed that AI prose felt “too perfect” or slightly mechanical. This detectability can support transparency, helping readers and publishers identify AI-written work. However, as models improve and as humans edit or blend AI outputs, these differences may become harder to spot. In such cases, the line between human and machine authorship may grow increasingly unclear.

Implications for Copyright and Creative Industry-

The evolving idea of authorship and changing reader trust have important consequences for copyright and publishing. Legal systems are still debating whether AI-generated works can be copyrighted and who should hold those rights, with some jurisdictions requiring clear human contribution. In response to growing reader concerns, parts of the publishing industry are beginning to promote “AI-free” or “human-written” labels, such as the UK’s “Organic Literature” certification. Such distinctions may become increasingly valuable in a crowded market, especially for readers who prioritize authenticity and a human creative touch.

Limitations and Future Directions-

Our study has several limitations. The participant sample may be skewed toward more “literary” or tech-engaged readers, so the findings may not generalize to all readers. The experimental design—such as how much of the text was AI-generated or whether participants knew or guessed the source—could also shape responses. Full-length novels or more polished human-AI collaborative works may elicit different reactions than short excerpts. Moreover, because LLMs are rapidly evolving, our results reflect a specific moment in the GPT-3/4 era.

Future research should examine long-form reading experiences with fully AI-written novels, explore how authors who use AI perceive creativity and ownership, investigate cross-cultural differences in the acceptance of AI authorship, and analyze market behavior—whether readers buy AI-authored or hybrid books, and whether there is a premium on purely human writing.

IV. CONCLUSION

AI-generated literature, particularly novels by GPT-3 and GPT-4, reveals a landscape that challenges traditional notions of authorship, creativity, and literary value. These models can produce coherent, stylistically diverse, and thematically rich narratives, demonstrating high levels of structure, character development, and linguistic sophistication. GPT-4, in particular, shows improved plot consistency and the ability to mimic stylistic nuances of human authors. Yet, AI-



generated texts often contain subtle inconsistencies, formulaic patterns, and limited thematic depth, distinguishing them from human-authored literature.

Human responses reflect a mixture of fascination and reservation. Readers appreciate the coherence and inventiveness of AI texts but often sense a gap in emotional depth and lived experience. Acceptance varies: younger or tech-savvy audiences are more open to AI-authored works, whereas traditional literary readers prioritize authorial intent, originality, and emotional resonance. AI literature also raises broader questions about authorship, copyright, and literary value. The emergence of publishable AI-generated novels suggests a need to rethink authorship to include human-AI collaboration and co-creation. It also opens opportunities for democratizing literature, enabling diverse voices to experiment with storytelling under human guidance. Ultimately, AI-generated literature complements rather than replaces human creativity. While GPT models demonstrate technical proficiency, the lasting significance of literature remains rooted in human imagination, empathy, and cultural insight. The future of authorship is likely to involve hybrid forms where human creativity guides AI tools, creating works that are both innovative and emotionally resonant. This evolution invites ongoing scholarly reflection, ethical consideration, and reimagining of the roles humans and AI play in the literary process.

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