

When Art Meets Algorithm: Voices from the JAFF Community on AI

MJ Stratton and Leigh Dryer

Disclaimer

Neither Leigh Dryer nor MJ Stratton use generative AI in their work. This presentation is designed to be informative as we face the new challenges this technology brings to our lives. All information apart from survey responses is factual and drawn from various sources such as the Authors Guild and Alliance of Independent Authors website and other studies.

Have you used AI today?

Did you:

1. Get on social media?
2. Talk to an Alexa?
3. Use Zoom?
4. Use Google?
5. Use Google Maps? Apple Maps? Waze?
6. Use Amazon?
7. Talk to Siri
8. Count your steps on your phone?
9. Watch Netflix?
10. Use autocorrect?
11. Have your email filtered?
12. Use an instagram filter?

AI in Everyday Life and Creative Work

- Understanding what the difference between generative AI is and typical artificial intelligence.
- Looking at the changes and complications coming to creative spaces everywhere
- What do you do when there are no laws protecting the creator?
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What Is Artificial Intelligence?

- AI refers to computer systems designed to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as recognizing patterns, learning from data, or making predictions. It's a broad term with many tendrils, parts, and variations.
- Key Point: AI does not think or understand context like humans; it follows rules and patterns within its algorithms. It is essentially dehumanized thoughts, responses, reactions, etc.

Traditional AI

Traditional AI, often called Narrow or Weak AI, focuses on performing a specific task intelligently.

- systems designed to respond to a particular set of inputs
- have the capability to learn from data and make decisions or predictions
- Examples
 - voice assistants like Siri or Alexa
 - recommendation engines on Netflix or Amazon
 - Google's search algorithm.
 - These AIs have been trained to follow specific rules, do a particular job, and do it well, but they don't create anything new.

Where We Encounter AI Every Day

- • Voice assistants (Siri, Alexa, Google Assistant)
- • Streaming recommendations (Netflix, Spotify)
- • Predictive text & grammar correction
- • Navigation apps (Google Maps, Waze)
- • Online shopping suggestions
- • Smart home devices & thermostats
- And newer: Generative AI

What Is Generative AI?

- Generative AI creates new content—text, images, music, and more—based on learned patterns from existing data.
- Examples: ChatGPT, DALL·E, Midjourney, Grok, Claude, Gemini.
- Clarification: It doesn't truly know information; it predicts what a plausible output should be. For example, if I asked it to make me a Pride and Prejudice portrait in the style of Van Gogh's starry night, it would do so based on what it knows about Van Gogh.

So What?

The main difference between traditional AI and generative AI lies in their capabilities and application.

Traditional AI systems are primarily used to analyze data and make predictions, while generative AI goes a step further by creating new data similar to its training data.

Common Myths about AI

- Myth: Artificial Intelligence is ChatGPT
- Reality: ChatGPT is only one small facet of the larger field of AI
 - Prediction, description, causal analytics, natural language processing, robotics, etc.
- Myth: AI, Machine Learning, and Deep Learning are the same
- Reality: They're not
 - AI—google, algorithms, Siri/Alexa
 - Machine Learning uses data to explain, predict, suggest
 - Deep- Lets algorithms improve on their own

Common Myths About AI

- Myth: AI can think for itself.
- Reality: AI follows algorithms; it doesn't have consciousness or emotions.
- Myth: AI is always accurate.
- Reality: Output depends on data and algorithmic design—bias and errors can and often persist.
- Myth: AI is unbiased.
- Reality: AI often reflects or amplifies existing biases in its data. Basically, if it's coded a certain way, it can show bias.

Common Myths About AI

- Myth: AI will make human labor obsolete
- Reality: Maybe
 - Currently, AI can only complete small tasks. However, currently, humans are still absolutely required
- Myth: AI thinks like a human
- Reality: It doesn't think. It processes. It mimics patterns it does not comprehend, reflect, or innovate
- Myth: Businesses can afford to wait to see how AI plays out
- Reality: It's here. It's not a question of whether or not to adopt AI—it is how.

Common Myths About AI

- Myth: Fast writing/releases is indicative of AI
- Reality: Writing speed and release frequency vary depending on the author.
 - A person only needs to write around 37-40 words a minute, for 2-3 hours a day, 6 days a week to have a 100k book first draft finished in 4-6 weeks.
 - Many authors have months between writing the book and release, even if they are releasing frequently.
 - For example, Christmas stories are often written months in advance to be ready for release during the holidays.
 - It IS understandable to be concerned about a new author popping up releasing 4 books a month, but with rapid release marketing strategies, there is no way for a consumer to tell if those books were written using AI or if the author just waited to release so the readers didn't have to wait.

Leigh Dryer has seen the other side of the coin. One of her low reviews on a book she wrote was low because the reader complained she hadn't written and released it fast enough.

Authors have been writing quickly for YEARS

“10 weeks... Louisa May Alcott wrote "Little Women," one of the best novels ever written, in 10 weeks, while she was ill, and because her family was desperate for money... And she did it all without so much as a typewriter, let alone a robot to feed prompts to that spits out content.” ~JAFF Author from Facebook~

Fast writing does not mean AI use. Other author examples:

Meg Cabot (over 80 novels)

Barbara Cartland—averaged 23 novels a year, dictating 6-9,000 words

Isaac Asimov—over 700 novels written or edited

Stephen King (65 books)

Reliability and Limitations

- *“It’s only as good as its algorithm.” — Survey Respondent*
- AI cannot be relied upon for authentic or verified information.
- Models generate responses based on patterns, not fact-checking.
- Users must evaluate credibility and verify sources.
- Overreliance can lead to misinformation.
- It completely removes the ‘human aspect’ from design and creativity

Ethical Discussion (Briefly)

- Bias in output misrepresenting groups/concepts
- Misinformation and hallucinations
- Intellectual property and copyright
- Privacy and Sensitive Information

Ethical Discussion (Briefly)

- Accountability and Authorship
 - AI cannot be authors because they are not intelligent agents
 - Using generative AI to create content that you have not expanded on, modified, or meaningfully engaged with means you are presenting work that is not your own.
- Job displacement
- Environmental Impact
- Security and Misuse

Generative AI in Creative Work

- Brainstorming, summarizing, drafting, editing, idea exploration.
- Benefits: Efficiency, accessibility, productivity boost.
- Limitations: Lacks originality, emotion, and authorial intent.
- Ethical Concerns: Authorship, intellectual property, and over-dependence.

Accessibility, cont'

Visual Impairments—AI can read aloud, describe images and objects, help navigate physical spaces

Hearing Impairments—AI can provide real-time transcription and subtitles

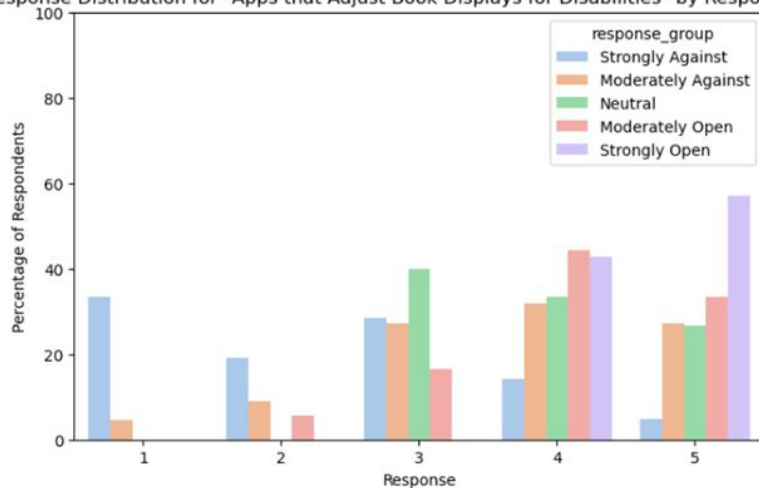
Mobility Impairments—Voice-activated commands for control of devices without physical interaction

Cognitive/Learning disabilities—draft emails to allow dyslexics write more clearly, re-format for dyslexic font

Accessibility

- AI Survey Responses for Accessibility Questions

Response Distribution for "Apps that Adjust Book Displays for Disabilities" by Response Group

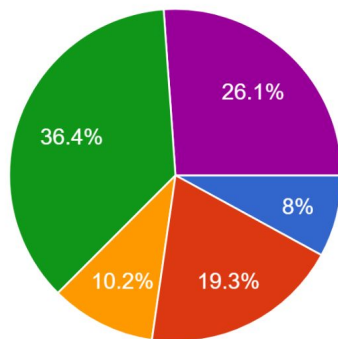


The response for 2 indicated quality concerns over AI apps for disabilities ("Might Create Glitches"), indicating that anti-AI sentiment may be more of a negative view of it's abilities/quality rather than a moral issue.

Accessibility, Con't

10. Do you support AI making writing easier for authors with disabilities or language barriers?

88 responses

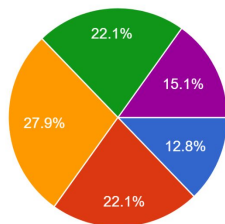


- Strongly Positive: Yes, accessibility matters and benefits everyone.
- Moderately Positive: It's good, though I hope authors still develop their own vo...
- Neutral/Mixed: I'm happy either way as long as the story is strong.
- Moderately Negative: I'd be cautious about over-reliance on AI tools.
- Strongly Negative: I'm concerned it might discourage personal skill growth.

Accessibility, con't

96. Should AI automatically create large-print editions of books?

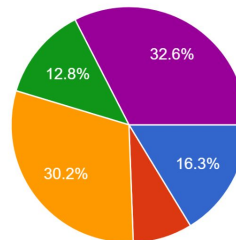
86 responses



- Strongly Positive: Yes, more accessibility is always good.
- Moderately Positive: Fine if quality is consistent.
- Neutral: I don't use large print but support it.
- Moderately Negative: Could lead to formatting errors.
- Strongly Negative: Large print should be designed by humans.

99. Should AI provide instant text-to-speech for books?

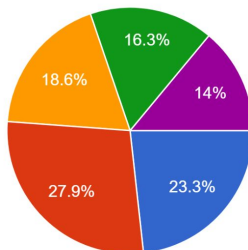
86 responses



- Strongly Positive: Yes, it increases accessibility.
- Moderately Positive: Good for quick listening.
- Neutral: I wouldn't use it myself.
- Moderately Negative: The voices may sound robotic.
- Strongly Negative: Leave audio to professionals.

97. Should AI reformat books with dyslexia-friendly fonts?

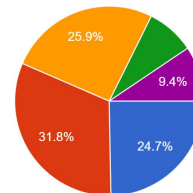
86 responses



- Strongly Positive: Yes, inclusivity is vital.
- Moderately Positive: Fine as an option.
- Neutral: Doesn't affect me.
- Moderately Negative: Might mess up formatting.
- Strongly Negative: Accessibility should be human-designed.

101. How do you feel about AI apps that adjust book displays for disabilities?

85 responses



- Strongly Positive: Fantastic — accessibility matters.
- Moderately Positive: Good as long as it works smoothly.
- Neutral: I don't need it but support others.
- Moderately Negative: Might create glitches.
- Strongly Negative: Apps should be human-designed.

Traditional and Generative AI in Accessibility

Niki White

Jessica's Grandmother (cataracts)

Jessica's son (dyslexia)

Reader Survey

Apologies for Repeated Questions

This isn't scientific and wasn't meant to be

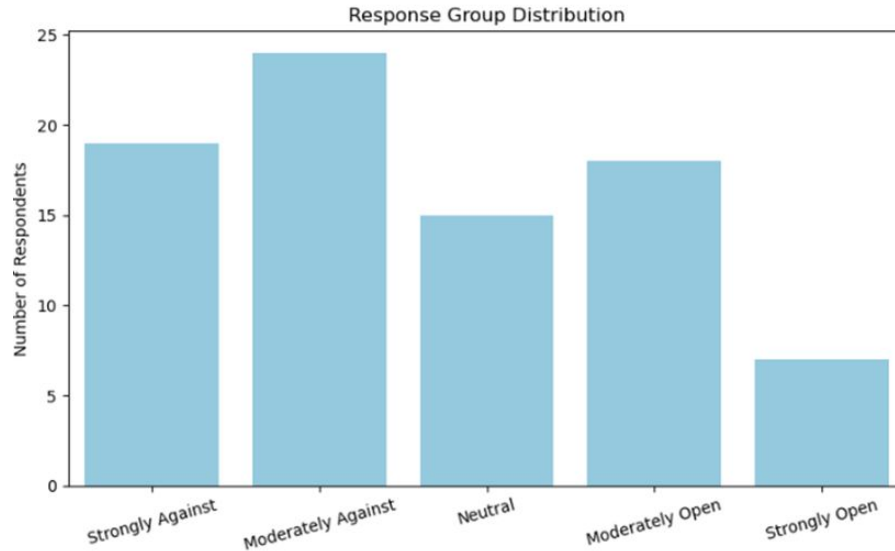
The 5 rating scale was only meant to be a guide

Winners!!!

Joy and PikgrimGirl!

Reader Survey Data

- 48% of respondents are generally neutral, somewhat, or very open to AI
- 52% of respondents were either strongly or moderately against the use of AI



Greatest Support

- Overall the greatest support for AI use was in adjusting book displays for disabilities
- Use as a personal assistant
- Re-formatting books with dyslexia friendly fonts
- Managing events, signings, and calendars
- Tracking royalties and incomes
- Using grammar tools like ProWritingAid
- Google searches for background Research

Least Support

- Generate Fanfiction spinoffs
- Generate Short spinoff content
- AI-assisted virtual author Q&A
- Help turn novels into comics
- Trained on copyrighted books
- Draft Scenes/Chapters
- Generating Bonus scenes
- Publishing Contests
- Voice narration
- Voice faster releases
- Generate different character voices
- Mimic Austen's style
- Draft screenplays
- Dialogue help
- Online comment responses
- Help with Character backstories
- Tailoring newsletters
- Simplified versions of complex books
- Art in illustrated editions

Reader & Writer Perspectives (from our very non-scientific survey)

- Many respondents appreciate AI's convenience but question authenticity.
- Concerns include loss of the 'human touch,' creativity dilution, and misinformation, or theft of human jobs.
- Most view AI as a tool (such as a personal assistant), not a creator—useful for ideas, but not trusted for truth.
- There are valid concerns about ethics and morality of using copyrighted works or otherwise to train AI models.
- There are NO LAWS in place to protect creators from big tech companies scraping their stuff.

Survey, con't

In this day and age I don't think it's realistic for anything to be 100% AI-free unless an author takes a pile of books and a typewriter to a cabin in the woods. People can be using AI without realizing it because it's tainted so much content out there already. And even doing a google search these days come back with AI results. That said, I still feel very strongly that AI can be a supplemental tool for research, grammar checking, etc. but authors still need to write their own things. Especially in JAFF. Jane Austen didn't have AI.

AI as a basic research tool can be similar to online searches; no problems there. AI as a business assistant; no problems there. AI to increase accessibility; a definite plus. Where AI completely replaces participants in the creative process (authors, editors, artists, audiobook actors/narrators, etc.); that is a hard no. Use of AI is fairly unregulated, and most private and public tools train on copyrighted and non-public domain works; that is theft of intellectual property, and should be against the law. Saying you don't care where the final product comes from as long as it is cheap and you like it is like buying somebody's stolen TV off the back of a truck (i.e. not good).

I hadn't thought about many of these ways that AI could affect the writing/publishing process!

Survey, con't

AI is a complicated subject, but in my view it should help not hurt. Where it can give feedback its good since it is a soundboard. Where it replaces it hurts, people losing jobs and pay. Its not going away, we need to learn to live with it and make sure it helps not hurts.

There is more AI use out there than I was aware of! It affects me most when I listen to books and have to listen as words are butchered and misread because of spelling quirks in the English language. AI has gotten better at voice inflection, but that's also something that I catch as I listen and just shake my head at. I get bored quickly when I read an AI generated book, and those books receive lower ratings from me in my reviews.

In general: I am strongly against using AI in the creative process. Using AI for the business part is fine if it is productive. Full and total transparency is very important to me...

In general, I want the artistic process to be human driven. If you want to use ai to help you schedule your day or manage your money, that's your business. When you present something to someone, claiming the work as your own, it had best be your own work. Otherwise, it is plagiarism.

I don't know if I would actually realize if something was AI generated

Survey, con't

I'm fine with AI as a tool - not as a creative source

AI is going to destroy human creativity and lead us blindly down paths we could never imagine.

I generally do not like AI generated covers. They are usually often obviously AI and distorted and look freakish. There was a whole rash of giraffe like necked ones. AI generated novels often have huge continuity issues and are almost always repetitive in uses of phrases and often saccharine.

I don't mind AI in assistive roles, like grammar checking or plotting advertising schedules. Generative AI is another story. Why should I bother to read something that no one bothered to write? I don't want to read some computer-generated drivel.

AI leads to the "shiny happy people" effect. Like an echo chamber. It cannot reach the depths that a human can experience because they only can provide feedback based on algorithms and whatever it can scrape off the internet.

I feel less angry about AI with narration because I'm used to text to speech and in general it's completely transparent but that doesn't mean I don't prefer the artistry of a human narrator.

Survey, con't

I think using AI as a helpful tool is just fine, but there should still be a human element when it comes to writing. Im only opposed when its completely replacing the human element, when a human element is necessary.

Suggestions for Readers

- Can you tell if a book is AI? Maybe? But probably not.
- Keep a list of authors whos work you love and another whose work you do not enjoy. Read what you love and keep reading and enjoying stories.
- If you see authors or readers casting suspicion, blame, or otherwise accusing authors do not join in unless the author themself has asked for intervention (like Melanie Rachel)

Suggestions for Readers

- Even AI detectors cannot tell when something is AI or when it is not. It can be upsetting if you have strong feelings about AI use in a book, however, if you are enjoying a story written by an author—continue to enjoy it!
- Many authors I spoke to are nervous about even being on social media because of the current toxic community outlook on AI, new authors, suspicions about pricing, writing style, etc. Please engage positively and meaningfully with others in the community!

Responsible Use of AI (as defined by our research)

- EU AI Act–World's First comprehensive AI law
 - Ensures better conditions for development and use of AI. Works to make AI system use safe, transparent, traceable, non-discriminatory, and environmentally friendly
- Maintain human oversight
- Protect sensitive data
- Address bias
- Cite sources
- Promote sustainability
- Continuous oversight
- Education and Training in AI-generated content
- Feedback and Dialogue

AI Best Practices

<https://authorsguild.org/resource/ai-best-practices-for-authors/#:~:text=If%20you%20incorporate%20AI%20Dgenerated,generated%20content%20in%20the%20book.>

Author's Guild AI Best Practices for Authors

voice before adopting it. If you are claiming authorship, then you should be the author of your work.

3. If you incorporate AI-generated text, characters, or plot in your manuscript, you *must* disclose it to your publisher as publishing contracts require the authors to represent and warrant that the manuscript is original to the author. **AI-generated material is not considered “original” to you and it is not copyrightable.** Inclusion of more than a very minimal amount of AI-generated text in the final manuscript will violate your warranty to the publisher. Similarly, an entirely AI-generated plotline or wholesale adoption of AI-generated characters may violate this term of the contract. It is important to know that any expressive elements generated by AI that you incorporate in your work are not protected by copyright and need to be disclaimed in the application for registration. Such material must also be disclaimed in the application for copyright registration, and your publisher needs that information to register the copyright correctly. If you contemplate using AI-generated material in your work (other than minor editorial change as a result of grammar or spell-checking), you should discuss it with your publisher and see if they will waive the warranty.
4. You should also disclose to the reader whether you incorporated any AI-generated content in the book.

They have a right to know because they will feel cheated if they are not so advised. It is not the publisher's job to

AI notes from the Author's Guild

- AI is a tool. However, ALL large language models for generative AI for text are part of **the largest mass copyright infringement of authors' works ever.**
- Licensing work may become the new norm with “fairly trained certifications”

Alliance of Independent Authors AI Policy

Curiosity – Authors are encouraged to maintain an open and inquisitive attitude toward AI, exploring how it might responsibly support their creative, business, or administrative practices, even if they choose not to use it directly in their artistic process.

Creativity – Authors should approach AI as a tool that enhances rather than replaces their unique creative vision and voice. Ethical and imaginative use of AI can open new avenues for innovation while preserving the integrity and originality of human authorship.

ALLI Ethical Author Code Statement: *I declare use of AI and other tools where appropriate. I edit and curate the output of any generative text tool I use to ensure the text is not discriminatory, libelous, an infringement of copyright, or otherwise illegal or illicit. I recognize that it is my job, not the job of the AI tool or service I use, to ensure I am legally compliant.*

Using AI Ethically

- Do not use AI to write for you.
- If you use AI to develop stories, character, text—rewrite it in *your* voice
- If you incorporate AI-generated text, characters, or plot you *must* disclose it to your publisher
 - Friendly reminder, most JAFF is self-published
 - Amazon requires disclosure of AI-generated text—text, images, or translations from AI even with edits
 - AI assisted disclosure is not required—this includes editing, refining, error-checking, improving the content, brainstorming, idea generation, etc. for things you ultimately create yourself

Using AI Ethically

4. Disclose to reader whether you incorporated AI-generated content.

- Grammar check, brainstorming, idea generation, researching, copyediting DO NOT NEED TO BE DISCLOSED
- If an appreciable amount of AI-generated text and content are incorporated it should be disclosed either by making AI an “author” or as part of the byline

Using AI Ethically

- Be aware of publisher and platform-specific policies
 - Q&Q?
- Respect the rights of other writers—do not use generative AI to copy styles, voices, or attributes
- Review and Fact-Check
- Fine-tuning an Ai model on your own work is less ethically concerning, however, it is still a part of a foundational and problematic LLM
- Show solidarity and support to other professional creators (narrators, cover artists, etc.)

ALLI Answers AI Questions

- Will AI make writers defunct? No—AI cannot change human's fundamental drive to create.
- Will AI result in market saturation? The market is already saturated. AI tools with sophisticated recommendation algorithms are aiding book discoverability. Authors should find value in what we offer and then do that more often, intentionally, and liberally.
- One example of using AI unethically as an author would be cutting and pasting generated text without checking and adapting the output, then passing off these words as their own.
- AI tools can be used for idea, character, and story generation as well as text generation. It is your job as an ethical author to edit and curate the words generated by a tool you've prompted.

Ask Three Core Questions

1. Which of my writing and publishing challenges can be met by AI solutions?
2. Which AI tools do I want to implement in my writing and publishing?
3. Which AI tools do I *not* want to implement in my writing and publishing?

Stay curious—investigate the tools rather than making assumptions.

Stiff Warning from Jessica

If the JAFF community continues the witch hunts of authors who use AI—or more importantly—are simply accused of using AI, authors will leave in droves. I spoke to many authors privately and ALL of them are terrified of admitting ChatGPT exists let alone they use it to create their marketing budget or for menu ideas (or other unrelated things).

Stiff Warning from Jessica

We are informing of writing industry best practices, but NO AUTHOR I spoke to would admit openly whether they used AI for any portion of their writing process (including “ok” things like marketing or accessibility—or even things that no one is asking for disclosures to do) because of how the JAFF community has acted all over social media.

Rating bombing someone, posting new work as “AI,” stating specific writing techniques or prices, etc. HAS TO STOP if you want honesty.

AUTHORS HAVE ALREADY LEFT DUE TO BULLYING AND SEVERAL MORE TOLD ME THEY WERE CONSIDERING IT.

Stiff Warning from Jessica

On a side note, AI witch hunts are not the only concern authors mentioned. Several have cited the growing friction and toxic posts in the groups as a factor driving them away from social media and interacting with their readers. From criticisms of trope preferences to harassment for common mistakes, the environment has become difficult for a lot of authors to stomach.

If you think you can tell if an author used AI, guess again...

Too good to be human?

Several recent studies have highlighted just how difficult it is to determine whether text was generated by a human or a chatbot.

Research participants recruited for a 2021 online study, for example, were unable to distinguish between human- and ChatGPT-generated stories, news articles and recipes.

Language experts fare no better. In a 2023 study, editorial board members for top linguistics journals were unable to determine which article abstracts had been written by humans and which were generated by ChatGPT. And a 2024 study found that 94% of undergraduate exams written by ChatGPT went undetected by graders at a British university.

Conclusion

- AI is a powerful tool, not a replacement for human thinking.
 - AI-Generated text *should* be disclosed
 - AI-assisted *does not need* to be disclosed
- Understanding its limitations and ethical guidelines ensures responsible use..
- Creativity, authenticity, and critical thinking remain uniquely human strengths.