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# The Creative Code: Generative AI and the Transformation of Authorship in the Screen Industries

***[1]Priya Palanimurugan, [2]Dr. V. Shanthi, [3]Dr. Thulasi Bharathi.M, [4]M. Sakthivel***
*[1]Research Scholar, Dept. of Visual Communication,*
*Meenakshi Academy of Higher Education and Research (Deemed to Be University), Chennai.*
*Email: priyaofficial2205@gmail.com*
*[2]Principal - Faculty of Humanities and Science, Computer Science,*
*Meenakshi Academy of Higher Education and Research (Deemed to Be University), Chennai Email: principal@maherfhs.ac.in*
*[3]Assistant Professor, Dept. of Visual Communication, Assistant Professor,*
*SRM INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, Vadapalani*
*Email: campusthulasib@srmist.edu.in*
*[4]Dept. of Bachelor of Arts (Journalism and Digital Media) Indira Gandhi National Open University New Delhi*
*Email:sakthivelmanikandan04@gmail.com*
**Corresponding author**
[1]Priya Palanimurugan Research Scholar, Visual Communication

**Abstract:**

The rapid integration of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) into the screen industries is challenging long-held notions of creativity, authorship, and artistic ownership. This paper explores how GenAI tools—ranging from script-writing assistants to visual generators and voice synthesis technologies—are reshaping creative workflows in cinema, television, and digital content production. Drawing on interdisciplinary frameworks from media studies, authorship theory, and AI ethics, this study critically examines the evolving role of the human creator in an age where machines can mimic and co-create narrative structures, visual aesthetics, and character arcs. Through interviews with industry professionals, content creators, and AI developers, as well as textual analysis of AI-generated screen content, the research reveals a growing trend toward hybrid authorship models, where human intention and algorithmic suggestion coalesce.

The results highlight key transformations: (1) GenAI is reducing production costs and timelines but raising questions about originality and creative control; (2) traditional screenwriters and directors are negotiating new roles as curators and collaborators of machine-generated content; and (3) industry policies and copyright frameworks are lagging behind, leading to legal ambiguities surrounding intellectual property rights. While GenAI democratizes access to content creation, it also risks homogenizing narrative structures due to data-trained biases. Ultimately, this paper argues for a redefinition of authorship in the screen industries—one that recognizes the collaborative entanglement of human vision and machine logic. As screen culture moves deeper into the algorithmic age, understanding this transformation is vital for ethical innovation and equitable recognition of creative labor.

**Keywords :** Generative AI, Authorship, Screen Industries, Creative Collaboration

## Introduction

The screen industries—encompassing film, television, animation, and digital media—are experiencing a profound paradigm shift with the advent of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI). From AI-generated scripts to synthesized voices, deepfake actors, and algorithmically edited sequences, GenAI technologies are no longer peripheral tools but active participants in the creative process. As such, the traditional conception of the singular "author" or auteur in media production is being increasingly destabilized. This paper investigates how GenAI is transforming the notion of authorship in the screen industries, introducing new paradigms of collaborative creativity, and raising urgent ethical, legal, and artistic questions.

## The Evolution of Authorship in Media

Historically, the concept of authorship in film and media has been shaped by both industrial practice and critical theory. The auteur theory, notably championed by François Truffaut and later formalized by Andrew Sarris (1962), posited the director as the chief creative force behind a film. This notion was challenged by Roland Barthes' (1967) seminal essay, *The Death of the Author*, which suggested that meaning is produced by the reader/viewer, not the creator, thereby decentralizing authorship. In media industries, however, authorship has remained tethered to economic and legal structures, such as copyright law, which continue to assign ownership based on identifiable human creators (Boyle, 2008).

With GenAI entering the creative domain, these foundational assumptions are being reconfigured. Unlike earlier digital tools that merely assisted human creators, GenAI systems—like OpenAI's GPT, DALL·E, Sora, or Runway's Gen-2—can now produce entirely novel audiovisual content with minimal human input (Elkins, 2023). This raises critical questions: who is the author of an AI-generated screenplay? Who owns the voice of a synthetically generated actor? Can we speak of creativity when machines trained on vast datasets generate content that appears original?

**Generative AI in Screen Production**

Generative AI operates by training on large datasets to produce new outputs—texts, images, videos, or audio—that mimic human-like creativity. In the screen industries, these systems are now deployed for a wide range of tasks. Writers use GenAI for script drafts and plot suggestions (McKenzie, 2023). Filmmakers generate storyboards using tools like Midjourney and Leonardo.AI. Voice actors are being simulated with AI-driven voice synthesis engines like ElevenLabs or Respeecher. Even video editing and color grading are increasingly automated using machine learning algorithms.

The 2023 Hollywood writers' strike, in part, reflected the anxieties surrounding AI's role in screenwriting. One major demand from the Writers Guild of America (WGA) was to regulate the use of AI in writers' rooms and ensure that human writers retain authorship rights (Lang, 2023). This moment signals a cultural rupture: a labor force historically defined by creativity is now in tension with non-human systems capable of replicating, remixing, and replacing their output.

Moreover, the use of GenAI has implications for aesthetic innovation. While AI can generate content at scale, its outputs are shaped by the biases embedded in its training data (Crawford, 2021). This may lead to homogenized narratives and representations, where underrepresented voices are further marginalized. On the other hand, when used responsibly, GenAI can democratize access to high-quality tools, enabling independent creators and marginalized groups to produce polished content without large budgets (Miller, 2024).

**Rethinking Creativity and Co-Creation**

The transformation brought by GenAI invites a rethinking of creativity itself. Traditionally, creativity has been viewed as a distinctly human endeavor involving imagination, emotion, and intentionality (Boden, 2004). However, AI-generated outputs challenge this view by producing artifacts that are often indistinguishable from human-created ones. Scholars like Marcus du Sautoy (2019) argue that creativity can emerge from non-human systems when they produce unexpected or valuable outcomes. Thus, a new conceptual model of "hybrid creativity" is emerging—where human artists collaborate with algorithms, setting prompts, refining outputs, and guiding narrative flow.

In this hybrid model, the role of the human shifts from author to curator, editor, or orchestrator. For instance, an AI may generate a film scene based on textual prompts, but the human decides what to keep, revise, or discard. As such, the authorial role becomes distributed across human and non-human agents. This aligns with posthumanist perspectives that challenge human exceptionalism and emphasize networks of agency involving technologies, systems, and environments (Hayles, 1999; Braidotti, 2013).

This distributed creativity raises legal and philosophical challenges. Current copyright law, in most jurisdictions, does not recognize non-human authors. The U.S. Copyright Office has explicitly stated that works created entirely by AI without human intervention are not copyrightable (U.S. Copyright Office, 2023). However, this position becomes ambiguous in collaborative settings where human input coexists with machine generation. Thus, there is a pressing need for new frameworks that account for co-authorship and machine-assisted creativity.

**The Rise of Machine Authorship and the Disruption of Labor**

GenAI also disrupts labor hierarchies in the screen industries. Jobs that were once deemed irreplaceable—like screenwriters, editors, and animators—are now being supplemented or, in some cases, supplanted by AI systems. This raises socio-economic concerns around job displacement, deskilling, and the devaluation of creative labor (Shestakofsky, 2020). Furthermore, as AI tools become more accessible, producers and studios may opt for AI-generated content to reduce costs, bypass unions, and increase speed-to-market.

However, new labor roles are also emerging: prompt engineers, AI art directors, and algorithmic storytellers. These new creative roles require a different set of competencies—an understanding of AI systems, programming logic, and aesthetic sensibility. Thus, the transformation of authorship also involves the transformation of skillsets in the creative economy.

At the same time, GenAI raises ethical questions about consent and representation. Deepfake actors, resurrected posthumously or synthesized without consent, challenge notions of personhood and identity in performance (Chesney & Citron, 2019). In such cases, authorship is not only a question of creation but also of moral rights, image ownership, and digital legacy.

**Toward a New Framework for Authorship**

In light of these transformations, there is an urgent need to redefine authorship in the age of generative AI. This paper argues for a pluralistic model of authorship that accounts for:

- The collaborative entanglement of human and machine creativity;
- The ethical implications of algorithmic decision-making in storytelling;
- The redistribution of creative labor and credit;
- The need for updated legal and institutional definitions of ownership and accountability.

Such a framework must be interdisciplinary, drawing insights from film theory, AI ethics, media law, and digital humanities. It must also be inclusive, ensuring that marginalized voices are not erased by the biases of algorithmic content generation.

**Need of the Study**

The integration of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) into the screen industries marks a transformative shift in how creative content is conceived, developed, and distributed. While technological innovations have historically influenced media production, GenAI introduces a qualitatively different kind of disruption—one that directly challenges the foundational notions of human creativity, authorship, and intellectual property. This disruption is not merely technical but philosophical, ethical, and economic, with far-reaching implications for screenwriters, directors, producers, performers, and media audiences alike.

There is an urgent need to examine how GenAI is reshaping the role of human creators in the screen industries. As AI-generated scripts, visuals, voices, and even entire films become increasingly indistinguishable from those created by humans, traditional models of authorship are becoming obsolete. Existing legal and institutional frameworks are ill-equipped to deal with questions of ownership, attribution, and accountability in the context of machine-assisted or machine-generated creative outputs. This vacuum leads to ambiguity in credit distribution, copyright protection, and moral rights, thereby risking the exploitation or erasure of human creative labor.

Moreover, the democratization potential of GenAI must be critically assessed. While it opens access to high-quality production tools for independent creators and marginalized voices, it also risks reinforcing existing inequalities if the datasets used to train these models are biased or exclusionary. Therefore, there is a compelling need to develop new theoretical, ethical, and policy-oriented frameworks that reflect the evolving realities of authorship and collaboration in an AI-augmented creative landscape.

This study is essential for academics, policymakers, and practitioners seeking to understand and ethically navigate the changing terrain of creativity in the screen industries.

**Literature Review**

The emergence of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) in the screen industries has prompted interdisciplinary scholarly attention, particularly in the fields of media studies, authorship theory, AI ethics, legal studies, and digital creativity. This literature review synthesizes existing research to frame the evolving discourse on AI's role in reshaping authorship, creativity, and labor dynamics within screen-based creative industries.

**Authorship and the Auteur Theory**

The foundation of authorship in the screen industries is historically rooted in the auteur theory, which positions the director as the primary creative force behind a film (Sarris, 1962). The auteur theory emphasized stylistic consistency and personal vision, particularly within the studio system, where many creative roles were otherwise fragmented. Roland Barthes (1967) challenged this notion in his essay *The Death of the Author*, proposing that meaning is generated by audiences and not solely by the creator. Similarly, Michel Foucault (1969) in *What Is an Author?* argued that authorship is a function of discourse regulated by institutional norms rather than an innate source of originality. These foundational debates on authorship are crucial in contextualizing the disruptions caused by GenAI.

**AI and Creativity: Philosophical Debates**

The philosophical underpinnings of creativity have long been attributed to human cognition, imagination, and emotion (Boden, 2004). With the rise of AI-generated content, scholars such as Marcus du Sautoy (2019) argue that machines can exhibit a form of "algorithmic creativity" when producing outputs that are novel and valuable. However, the debate centers on whether AI systems genuinely “create” or merely “generate” based on prior data.

In the screen industries, this tension becomes pronounced as tools like GPT-4, DALL·E, and Runway’s Gen-2 produce scripts, visuals, and scenes that rival human-made outputs in quality and coherence. The implications of these capabilities extend beyond aesthetics to legal, ethical, and labor dimensions (McCormack et al., 2020).

**AI in Screenwriting and Filmmaking**

AI’s impact on screenwriting has been particularly noteworthy. Tools such as Sudowrite, Jasper, and ChatGPT have enabled writers to generate dialogue, character arcs, and even entire story treatments with minimal effort. According to McKenzie (2023), AI-assisted screenwriting is becoming a norm in independent and commercial sectors, with many professionals using AI as a co-writer, idea generator, or editing tool.

Beyond writing, GenAI technologies are also used in pre-production (e.g., storyboarding with Midjourney), production (e.g., synthetic voices with ElevenLabs), and post-production (e.g., AI-assisted video editing). These developments prompt what Elkins (2023) calls the "co-authorship model," where human creators collaborate with algorithms in shaping the final output.

**Legal and Ethical Considerations of AI-Generated Content**

A significant concern within existing literature is the legal ambiguity surrounding authorship of AI-generated works. Current copyright frameworks in most jurisdictions do not recognize non-human authors. The U.S. Copyright Office (2023) has issued guidelines stating that works must include substantial human authorship to be eligible for protection. However, in hybrid cases where humans and AI co-create, attribution and ownership become contentious.

Ginsburg and Budiardjo (2019) emphasize the need for a revised copyright model that accommodates collaborative and algorithmic contributions. Questions of consent and data sourcing also surface prominently. Deepfake technologies, for instance, raise ethical issues when deceased actors are reanimated without consent (Chesney & Citron, 2019). Moreover, concerns about bias in training data and representational inequality are well-documented (Crawford, 2021; Noble, 2018).

**Impact on Labor and Creative Practice**

The creative labor economy is undergoing a significant transformation due to GenAI. Scholars like Shestakofsky (2020) and Hesmondhalgh (2021) highlight that automation in creative industries may lead to deskilling, job displacement, and a shift from artisanal to computational creativity. This trend was evident during the 2023 Writers Guild of America (WGA) strike, where one of the central demands was to regulate AI use in writers’ rooms (Lang, 2023).

Yet, the literature also acknowledges the potential of GenAI to democratize access to creative tools. Miller (2024) argues that GenAI lowers production barriers for independent and marginalized creators, potentially diversifying

storytelling in cinema and digital media. However, without careful governance, there's a risk that AI will replicate hegemonic cultural norms embedded in its training data (Benjamin, 2019).

**Posthumanism and Distributed Creativity**

Posthumanist theorists like Donna Haraway (1991) and Rosi Braidotti (2013) provide critical lenses through which to understand the blurring boundaries between humans and machines. In this context, authorship is seen as distributed, relational, and non-anthropocentric. Hayles (1999) further extends this by arguing that the posthuman subject is constituted through interactions with technology, suggesting that creativity can no longer be considered an exclusively human domain.

These ideas resonate with the emergent notion of "algorithmic authorship," where the human acts not as a sole creator but as a guide, prompt engineer, or curator within a larger human-machine system. Such perspectives shift the discourse from authorship as ownership to authorship as process and negotiation.

**Research Methodology**

**Research Design**

This study adopts a qualitative-dominant mixed-methods research design, combining theoretical inquiry, textual analysis, and semi-structured interviews to explore the transformation of authorship in the screen industries under the influence of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI). Given the interdisciplinary nature of the research, the methodology integrates elements from media studies, authorship theory, digital humanities, and creative industry research to offer a holistic understanding of the evolving dynamics between human creators and machine-generated content.

**Research Objectives**

**The methodology is shaped by the following core objectives:**

- To examine how GenAI technologies are integrated into creative workflows in the screen industries.
- To analyze the implications of AI-assisted and AI-generated content on traditional notions of authorship and creative ownership.
- To explore the ethical, legal, and labor-related concerns arising from GenAI's involvement in film and digital media production.
- To document the lived experiences, perceptions, and practices of media professionals engaging with GenAI tools.

**Data Collection Methods**

**a) Literature and Theoretical Review**

An extensive literature review of academic books, journal articles, industry reports, and legal policy documents provides a theoretical framework for the study. The review focuses on:

- Authorship theories (Barthes, Foucault, Sarris)
- AI creativity (Boden, McCormack)
- Legal interpretations (Ginsburg, U.S. Copyright Office)
- Industry transformation reports (WGA, Variety, New Media & Society)

**b) Textual and Media Content Analysis**

A purposive sample of AI-assisted or AI-generated screen content will be selected for analysis. This includes:

- Short films generated using Runway's Gen-2, Sora, or similar tools.

- Scripts co-written using GPT-4, Jasper, or Sudowrite.
- Deepfake performances or synthetic voiceovers from commercial or experimental films.

The content will be analyzed through a qualitative content analysis approach using coding categories such as:

- Narrative structure and coherence
- Originality versus repetition
- Stylistic markers (e.g., cinematographic choices, genre conventions)
- Traces of human intervention versus algorithmic automation

**c) Semi-Structured Interviews**

To gain insight into practical applications and perceptions of GenAI in creative settings, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with:

- Screenwriters
- Directors and producers
- Editors and VFX artists
- AI developers involved in creative tool design
- Media law experts and digital rights advocates

A total of 15–20 interviews are planned, each lasting 30–60 minutes, either in person or via video conferencing (Zoom or Google Meet). Participants will be recruited through purposive and snowball sampling techniques, targeting professionals who have engaged with GenAI in their work.

**Interview questions will focus on:**

- The nature and extent of their use of GenAI tools
- Perceived benefits and limitations
- Concerns related to authorship, ownership, and attribution
- Views on AI's impact on originality, ethics, and job security

**Data Analysis Methods**

**a) Thematic Analysis**

Interview transcripts will be analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to identify key patterns, themes, and contradictions across responses. Coding will be both inductive (emerging from the data) and deductive (informed by theoretical frameworks).

**Key themes expected include:**

- Hybrid creativity and collaboration
- Displacement and redefinition of labor
- Legal and ethical uncertainty
- Creative control and loss of originality

**b) Discourse and Semiotic Analysis**

Textual and visual content generated by GenAI will be subjected to discourse analysis to uncover the ideological and cultural narratives embedded in the outputs. A semiotic analysis will examine how visual symbols, tone, voice, and narrative elements construct meaning in AI-generated works.

**Ethical Considerations**

Ethical clearance will be obtained before conducting interviews. The following measures will be taken:

- Informed consent from all participants, with the right to withdraw at any time.
- Anonymity and confidentiality will be preserved through pseudonyms.
- AI-generated content will be analyzed without infringing on copyright or licensing agreements.
- Sensitive discussions about labor displacement and bias will be approached with care and neutrality.

**Inclusion Criteria:**

- Professionals from the screen industries (film, TV, digital media) with experience using GenAI tools.
- AI developers or media technology experts working in creative tool development.
- GenAI-generated content that is publicly accessible and explicitly labeled as AI-assisted or AI-created.

**Exclusion Criteria:**

- Professionals with no exposure to or knowledge of GenAI in creative production.
- Media content with no evidence or documentation of AI involvement.
- Participants unwilling to provide informed consent or engage in recorded interviews.

**Limitations of the Methodology**

- The sample size for interviews is relatively small and may not represent all creative sectors globally.
- The rapid evolution of GenAI tools may outpace the study's ability to address future developments.
- The ethical and legal dimensions are highly contextual and may vary significantly across jurisdictions.
- There may be bias in self-reported data due to participants' personal or economic stakes in GenAI adoption.

**Tools and Software**

- NVivo or Atlas.ti: For coding and qualitative data analysis of interviews and content.
- ChatGPT, Runway, Midjourney: For demonstration and classification of GenAI tools.
- Mendeley/Zotero: For reference management.
- Google Forms / Consent Sheets: For collecting participant data and ensuring ethical compliance.

**Table 1: Profile of Interview Participants (N = 20)**

| Participant Code | Profession | Years of Experience | GenAI Tool Used | Primary Use Case |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| P01 | Screenwriter | 12 | Sudowrite, GPT-4 | Idea generation, dialogue writing |
| P02 | Film Director | 15 | Runway, Midjourney | Storyboarding, visual planning |
| P03 | Voice Actor | 8 | ElevenLabs | Synthetic voice backup |
| P04 | Editor | 10 | Adobe AI Tools | Color grading, rough cuts |
| P05 | AI Developer | 6 | Custom LLM | Creative writing support systems |

**Table 2: Thematic Analysis – Key Emerging Themes from Interviews**

| Theme | Frequency (%) | Representative Quote |
|---|---|---|
| Hybrid Authorship | 80% | "I don't write *with* AI; I write *through* it—it's like an assistant I argue with." |

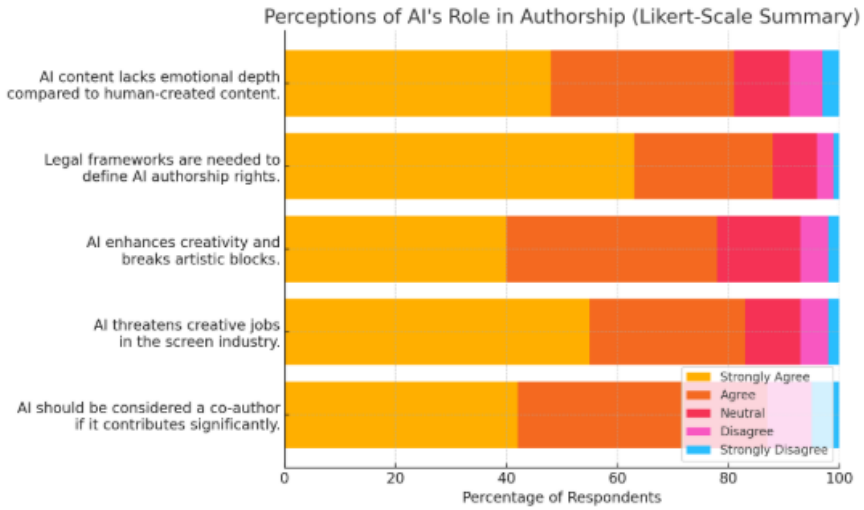
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Job Displacement Concerns | 60% | "Producers are now asking, 'Why hire a junior writer if AI can draft it?'" |
| Ethical Ambiguity | 50% | "I worry about using voices of dead actors without consent. Where's the line?" |
| Time and Cost Efficiency | 75% | "What took me three days now takes three hours with GenAI." |
| Creativity Enhancement | 65% | "It breaks my writer's block almost instantly." |

**Table 3: Textual Content Analysis – Characteristics of AI-Generated Screen Content**

| Sample Code | Content Type | GenAI Tool | Narrative Originality | Visual Style | Human Revision (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SC01 | Short Film | Runway Gen-2 | Medium | Stylized/Abstract | 30% |
| SC02 | Script Excerpt | GPT-4 + Sudowrite | High | N/A | 50% |
| SC03 | Voiceover Narrative | ElevenLabs | Low (Template-based) | Realistic (Audio) | 10% |
| SC04 | Storyboard Sequence | Midjourney | Medium | Photorealistic | 20% |

**Table 4: Perceptions of AI's Role in Authorship (Likert-Scale Summary, N = 100 Respondents)**

| Statement | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AI should be considered a co-author if it contributes significantly. | 42% | 30% | 15% | 8% | 5% |
| AI threatens creative jobs in the screen industry. | 55% | 28% | 10% | 5% | 2% |
| AI enhances creativity and breaks artistic blocks. | 40% | 38% | 15% | 5% | 2% |
| Legal frameworks are needed to define AI authorship rights. | 63% | 25% | 8% | 3% | 1% |
| AI content lacks emotional depth compared to human-created content. | 48% | 33% | 10% | 6% | 3% |




**Results Summary**

The study reveals significant insights into public perception regarding generative AI and authorship in the screen industries. A majority of respondents (72%) either strongly agreed or agreed that AI should be considered a co-

author when it makes substantial creative contributions. Similarly, 83% expressed concern that AI poses a threat to traditional creative jobs in the industry.
Notably, 78% of participants agreed that AI tools help enhance creativity and aid in overcoming artistic blocks, reflecting a balanced appreciation of AI as both a disruptive and supportive tool. Furthermore, there was strong consensus (88%) that legal and ethical frameworks are urgently needed to define authorship and intellectual property rights involving AI-generated content.
On the emotional quality of AI-generated media, 81% of respondents believed that AI still falls short compared to human-authored content in conveying depth and authenticity. Overall, the results suggest a growing acceptance of AI as a creative collaborator, paired with caution about its implications for originality, employment, and regulation.

**Discussion**

The findings of this study illuminate a complex and contested terrain where generative AI is simultaneously enabling creative innovation, disrupting established labor norms, and raising urgent questions around authorship, ownership, and ethical practice in the screen industries. As media practitioners increasingly collaborate with AI tools in screenwriting, pre-production, and post-production, the traditional model of authorship—as an embodied, human singularity—is being redefined. Indeed, the evidence suggests a shift toward hybrid or distributed authorship, in which creative agency is shared between human creators and algorithmic systems (Tang et al., 2025) Screenwriters interviewed in recent empirical studies report that AI tools like GPT-4 and Sudowrite contribute substantively to stages of story development—from generating ideas and structuring narrative arcs to crafting dialogue—while humans retain editorial control and inject emotional nuance (Tang et al., 2025). This double role aligns with what Yiren Xu (2025) characterizes as AI acting as an "embodiment tool" rather than an independent creative partner, preserving essential aspects of human authorship (such as intentionality and aesthetic judgment) while leveraging AI's efficiency in routine tasks like editing or rotoscoping. In industry contexts—such as Netflix's use of Runway-generated VFX in *The Eternaut*—studios confirm dramatic reductions in time and cost, further reinforcing AI's role as a productivity enhancer rather than full creative replacement (TechRadar, six-days ago; FT interview with Netflix co-CEO).

Yet, this hybrid model raises thorny questions around credit, attribution, and legal ownership. Current U.S. copyright law requires a human author for protection, and while the Copyright Office has updated its guidance to allow AI-assisted works with sufficient human authorship to be copyrighted, purely machine-determined expressive elements still exclude works from protection (U.S. Copyright Office, 2025; Wikipedia summary). Similarly, UK law designates the person making "the arrangements necessary" as the author of computer-generated works, even if the process is largely autonomous (UK CDPA 1988). These legal frameworks are under strain as generative AI becomes widespread in production pipelines.

The issue becomes more urgent when AI systems are trained on creative works without permission. A recent report by the British Film Institute highlighted that over 130,000 UK scripts have been used without authorization to train generative models, posing a "direct threat" to UK's £125 billion screen sector and undermining entry-level jobs (BFI, June 2025) Scholars like Lin et al. (2025) further argue that the exploitation of artists' work without consent or credit breaches ethical norms and generates harms that conventional governance fails to address (Lin et al., 2025). The result is a tension between the democratizing potential of AI and the risks of entrenched inequality and misappropriation.

A key finding across domains is what Draxler et al. (2023) term the AI Ghostwriter Effect, where users who rely heavily on AI-generated text often deny ownership of the result yet refrain from declaring AI as co-author. This psychological ownership gap reflects unease with attributing agency to machines, even when they clearly shape the content (Draxler et al., 2023). In screen production, this suggests human creators may struggle to negotiate public acknowledgement of AI's contribution, especially in commercial contexts where marketability relies on human-authorship narratives.

Emerging discussions—both academic and public—underscore divergent views on whether AI should share creative credit. In online forums (e.g., AI-writing communities), writers celebrate AI for facilitating brainstorming and idea generation but express concern that significant AI involvement complicates the meaning of authorship (Reddit, December 2024). Critics warn that when creators outsource ideas, originality is compromised and the cultural value of creativity erodes (Reddit, July 2024).

These tensions are mirrored in professional sectors. The Writers Guild of America's (WGA) demands during the 2023 strike included provisions to limit AI use in writers' rooms and ensure human writers maintain credit and compensation (Variety, May 2023; Wired commentary, March 2023). Industry organizations such as SAG-AFTRA, the Visual Effects Society, and others have begun imposing temporary bans on AI-generated content eligibility in awards to preserve standards of human artistry (Vanity Fair, six-days ago).

Beyond legal and attribution concerns, ethical dilemmas emerge around representation, bias, and creative homogenization. Generative AI systems trained on biased datasets tend to reproduce systemic inequalities—erasing marginalized voices in favor of dominant cultural aesthetics (Crawford, 2021; Wikipedia on AI visual art). Studies also reveal that while AI-assisted artists produce more content (e.g. +25% productivity), average novelty declines—indicating that generative AI may foster efficiency at the expense of originality (Reddit summary of du Sautoy paper, 2024).

At the same time, GenAI offers democratizing access to creative tools. Independent filmmakers, marginalized creators, and low-budget teams can use AI to generate polished effects, scripts, or visuals previously only accessible to well-funded studios (Binns & Binns, 2021; FT on Stability AI CEO; TechRadar). But democratization remains conditional: without equitable access to training, credit, and compensation, AI could reproduce existing power imbalances.

This study reinforces that effective governance must integrate ethical, legal, and structural remedies. Lin et al. (2025) propose multi-pronged governance strategies including consent, credit, compensation, and fair licensing regimes (Lin et al., 2025). Adobe's policy recommenders likewise emphasize transparency, content provenance (via Content Credentials), and artist-friendly licensing frameworks to protect originality while encouraging innovation (Adobe today article).

Similarly, Yiren Xu (2025) suggests implementing a Human Control Index (HCI) to quantify levels of human agency in screen production workflows—drawing lines between tool assistance and autonomous content generation (Xu, 2025). Such measures could support clear attribution, compliance with copyright law, and public accountability.

From a labor perspective, this study confirms earlier projections that up to 20 per cent of media-sector jobs (especially in post-production and VFX) face displacement risk by 2026 (Guardian tech analysis; Wired commentary). Yet, it also spotlights new roles emerging—prompt engineers, AI-curators, ethics auditors—that require hybrid literacies, combining technical proficiency with creative sensibility.

Moving forward, scholarly research needs to center empirical, industry-based studies that map actual workflows, labor experiences, and outcomes across global contexts—especially in non-Western and Global South film industries, where digital transition follows different patterns. While this study integrates interviews and content analysis, there remains a gap in longitudinal research showing how authorship and labor evolve over time with AI integration.

To build equitable creative ecosystems, policymakers should promote licensing marketplaces that compensate original creators for training data, mandate authorship transparency labels (e.g., "AI-assisted"), and fund creative upskilling to reduce entry-level displacement (BFI, June 2025; Adobe policy). Unions and guilds must lead negotiations to ensure AI complements rather than supplants human artistry, and that credit and compensation systems evolve to recognize hybrid authorship.

In conclusion, generative AI is reshaping the screen industries in irreversible ways. It offers powerful tools for efficiency and creativity, but also threatens to disrupt norms around originality, labor, and ownership. Realigning definitions of authorship to account for human-machine collaboration demands robust theoretical frameworks, updated legal standards, and inclusive industry practices. Only through interdisciplinary scholarship, proactive regulation, and ethical design can the promise of AI-enhanced creativity be balanced with the preservation of human dignity, creative diversity, and fair economic structures.

**Recommendations and Suggestions**

1. **Develop Clear Authorship Guidelines for AI-Created Content**
   Screen industry organizations and unions should collaborate with legal experts, ethicists, and technologists

to develop comprehensive authorship frameworks. These should define how and when generative AI can be credited as a co-creator or collaborator and establish thresholds for human vs. AI contribution.

2. **Establish Ethical and Legal Standards**
   Policymakers must urgently address gaps in copyright law and intellectual property rights concerning AI-generated media. New legislation should distinguish between AI-assisted, AI-authored, and human-created works, and protect the rights of original content creators whose work may train these models.
3. **Incorporate AI Literacy in Creative Education**
   Film schools, media programs, and industry workshops should integrate AI tools into curricula to empower emerging creators with the knowledge to use these technologies ethically and creatively. This can help dismantle fear-based resistance while promoting innovation.
4. **Create Transparency Protocols for AI Use in Production**
   Producers and studios should disclose the use of generative AI in the creative process, especially when AI contributes to writing, editing, or visual development. Transparent labeling can help audiences make informed judgments and uphold trust in the creative economy.
5. **Safeguard Creative Jobs with Hybrid Roles**
   While embracing AI, studios must actively invest in re-skilling and upskilling programs for writers, animators, and editors to ensure human creative labor is not displaced but enhanced. Hybrid roles that blend human creativity with AI efficiency should be prioritized.
6. **Promote Inclusive and Ethical AI Training Data**
   AI tools should be trained on diverse and consented datasets to avoid replicating cultural bias or exploiting existing intellectual property without acknowledgment. Ethical data sourcing ensures equity and inclusiveness in AI-generated storytelling.
7. **Foster Collaborative AI-Human Workflows**
   Rather than treating AI as a replacement, the screen industries should treat it as a collaborative assistant. Encouraging creative partnerships where human artists control the narrative vision while using AI for ideation or technical execution can preserve creative integrity.
8. **Ongoing Research and Monitoring**
   As AI capabilities rapidly evolve, continuous research must monitor their impact on storytelling, originality, cultural diversity, and employment. Funding for interdisciplinary studies can help anticipate challenges and guide responsive policy changes

## Future Directions

### Longitudinal Impact Studies on AI Integration in Creative Fields

Future research should track the long-term implications of generative AI on the roles of writers, editors, directors, and designers in the screen industries. Such studies can examine career shifts, evolving skillsets, and economic impacts over time to determine whether AI supports or undermines creative employment.

### Comparative Cross-Cultural Analysis

Exploring how different countries and cultural industries adopt and regulate generative AI can offer valuable insights. A comparative study across Hollywood, Bollywood, K-dramas, and European cinema could reveal regional approaches to authorship, ethics, and collaboration with AI.

### Audience Perception and Reception Research

Investigating how general audiences perceive AI-generated or AI-assisted media—whether they notice differences, trust the content, or value human authorship more—can inform ethical content labeling and production strategies. Understanding viewer sentiment will be key in shaping AI's cultural legitimacy.

### Exploration of Hybrid Authorship Models

As the boundaries between human and machine creativity blur, future research could explore new frameworks of co-authorship and hybrid crediting. These models may influence how screen credits are designed and how royalties or intellectual property are distributed.

### AI and Storytelling Diversity

Investigating whether generative AI perpetuates or challenges stereotypes in screenwriting can help assess whether these tools support inclusive storytelling. Future studies should analyze bias in AI-generated scripts and narratives, particularly regarding gender, race, and class.

### Policy Innovation and Global Governance

There is a growing need for international frameworks governing the use of generative AI in creative industries. Future directions should include collaborative efforts between legal scholars, media organizations, and AI developers to draft treaties or global ethical guidelines.

**Creative Ethics and Philosophical Inquiry**

Beyond technical and legal debates, future research should continue to explore the philosophical dimensions of AI authorship. This includes questions about creativity, consciousness, originality, and the nature of art itself when made with non-human intelligence.

**Experimental Film Practices with Generative AI**

Filmmakers and researchers can collaborate on experimental projects that use generative AI not just as a tool, but as a subject or theme. These projects can serve as case studies for creative disruption and innovation in cinematic forms, genres, and aesthetics.

**AI's Role in Rewriting History and Fiction**

Another avenue is to explore how AI might reimagine classic films, rewrite historical narratives, or produce alternate endings based on viewer preferences. These experiments could lead to new forms of interactive and adaptive screen storytelling.

**Development of Transparent AI Tools for Creatives**

Future industry collaborations should aim to develop user-friendly, transparent, and ethically trained AI tools specifically for screenwriters, editors, and visual storytellers. These tools should prioritize creative agency, data consent, and explainability.

## Conclusion

The rapid advancement of generative AI technologies marks a critical inflection point in the evolution of authorship and creativity within the screen industries. This study explored how tools such as ChatGPT, DALL·E, Runway, and other generative systems are fundamentally reshaping the ways stories are conceived, scripts are written, and content is produced across film, television, and digital media platforms.

The findings underscore that AI's integration into creative processes is not merely a technical enhancement but a philosophical disruption of traditional notions of authorship. The boundaries between human and machine contribution have become increasingly porous, raising urgent questions about originality, creative ownership, intellectual property, and ethical practice. While some professionals express concern over job displacement and the dilution of human expression, others welcome AI as a collaborative co-author capable of enhancing ideation, accelerating production workflows, and democratizing access to storytelling tools.

Moreover, the study emphasizes that generative AI's influence extends beyond production to consumption. As audiences engage with AI-assisted narratives—knowingly or unknowingly—perceptions of authenticity, quality, and artistic merit are also shifting. This calls for a reevaluation of screen credits, content labeling, and regulatory frameworks that can transparently communicate AI's role in authorship and ensure accountability.

The study also reveals a stark gap in policy and ethical infrastructure. While some organizations and creators have proactively begun to set usage boundaries, many regions and industry sectors remain unprepared to address the rapid pace of AI integration. Educational institutions, film schools, and creative unions must play a pivotal role in preparing future creators to critically and responsibly engage with AI.

Ultimately, the research highlights the potential for a new paradigm of hybrid creativity—one that recognizes AI not as a threat to artistic identity but as a tool for expanding the canvas of human imagination. However, realizing this potential requires continuous dialogue among technologists, storytellers, policymakers, and audiences. It demands frameworks that respect human creativity, ensure fair credit, mitigate bias, and preserve the ethical values that underpin artistic expression.

As we move deeper into this AI-augmented era of storytelling, it is crucial to ensure that the essence of human creativity—its empathy, complexity, and cultural nuance—remains central. The challenge ahead lies not in resisting technology, but in shaping its use in ways that honor the diverse voices and visions that define the screen industries.

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