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Simulating the Confessional Self: AI-Generated Writing, Literary Subjectivity, and the Performance of Confession

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ABSTRACT

The dramatic advances in generative artificial intelligence have increasingly foregrounded questions of literary creativity, authorship, and textual authenticity in current debates, echoing the centuries-old concern over the definition of subjectivity in literary writing. Though much recent critique on AI authorship has focused on the fields of creative writing, literary authorship and ethics, little has engaged with its implications for the confessional mode, a literary mode invested in lived experience, emotional truthfulness, and autobiographical self-revelation. This paper explores whether AI-produced confessional writing can authentically engage with the confessional tradition, or whether it will simply define the idiomatic register of confessional writing by reproducing its lexicon. Using qualitative comparative textual analysis, it assesses AI confessional writing on loneliness, depression, motherhood, and identity crisis, juxtaposing it with canonical confessional texts by T. S. Eliot, Anne Sexton, and Adrienne Rich. Drawing on psychoanalytic theory, confessional studies, post structuralism, post-human literary criticism, and the works of Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, Michel Foucault, Roland Barthes, Donna Haraway, and N. Katherine Hayles, it demonstrates how AI reproduces stylistic, idiomatic, and rhetorical confessional features while lacking in the consciousness, memory, and psychological depth attributed to individual literary subjectivity, rather than realizing confession, AI performs a simulation of subjectivity through language. Ultimately, the paper offers a new understanding of how contemporary AI confessional writing disrupts understandings of confession, authorship, truthfulness, and the relationship of language to the self.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, AI-Generated Writing, Confessional Literature, Literary Subjectivity, Psychoanalysis, Machine Authorship, Post-humanism, Authenticity

Introduction

The proliferation of generative AI has revolutionized contemporary writing, eliciting new debates about creativity, authorship, meaning, and the role of the text itself. Large Language Models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, and other generative protocols are capable of generating literary and emotionally compelling compositions with notable linguistic complexity. Such advances call into question long-held beliefs that literary invention must be a human possession, ultimately urging critical attention to the dynamic between author and reader in a period of artificial text-production.

In recent years, there has been limited but growing interest in the literature produced by artificial intelligence, taking into consideration the criteria of computational creativity, machine authorship, copyright issues, ethical concerns, and human-AI partnership. However, when it comes to confessional writing, studies have taken far less interest, despite the fact that it is a literary mode connected, not only with emotional depth, but also autobiographical disclosure, and the notion of the poetic, subjective self. This is problematic because a lot of what these texts can be read against is the existing paradigm that confessional literature has for being about both the self and the body, both memory and emotion.

In the case of AI created confessional writing, a more fundamental question is posed: what is the status of confession in a context where its modes of expression are created by a being lacking mind or life experience? Of course, the proliferation of artificial intelligence is just one way of opening up the timeless debates about authoring, subjectivity and reception. We can trace the meaning of confession in psychoanalytic studies of the psychic conflict of desire and repression and poststructuralist questioning of authorial intention and emphasis on discourse. Post-humanist writing also disrupts the hard boundaries of agency- human/ technological.

In addition to the unease produced by the apparent “**death of the author**”, AI confessional writing throws into question the way we understand the motivational and interpretive procedures of writing. Instead of questioning if artificially intelligent machines have consciousness and emotional experience, this paper looks at how the linguistic performance of the language of confession is enacted through AI-generated confessional writing. Comparing selected examples of T. S. Eliot, Anne Sexton, and Adrienne Rich with the results of AI-generated confessional narratives of loneliness, depression, motherhood, and crisis of identity, this research utilises a qualitative comparative textual analysis with psychoanalytic, poststructuralist, and post-human literary criticism to problematize the way that confession works when its linguistic performance is unrooted from embodied experience.

The paper claims that AI-modulated confessional writing replicates many of the stylistic, affective and rhetorical conventions through which confessional writing is conceived, while establishing that it is unique from human confessional writing. AI generated confessional writing does not communicate lived subjectivity, but generates an algorithmic performance of subjectivity in language. Far from being merely imitate, this distinction underscores the relationship between textual performance and ‘living’ experience, and pushes literary studies to rethink their known history of confession, authorship, and the literary subject in the age of artificial intelligence.

Literature Review

Confessional writing is a unique sub-genre within literary studies because of its concern with autobiography, authenticity, and representation of self. It was first popularized in the United States in the mid-twentieth century through authors like Robert Lowell, Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton, and W. D. Snodgrass through confessional poetry, which engaged in the publication of intensely personal material about mental health, sexuality, trauma, family, and pain. M. L. Rosenthal’s review of Lowell’s *Life Studies* (1959) is the popularization of confessional poetry, defining a style that centred on the publication of a poet’s private life (Rosenthal, 1967).

In early criticism, confessional poetry was read as autobiography which was transparent in its direct delineation of the speaking voice as an extension of the poet’s own life. Later theorists, however, refuted such model by illustrating that confession, like all writing, involves reflection upon the literary or literary genre and the conventions of cultural representations. (Gill, 2005), reading confessional poetry as a performance of poetic subjectivity in the hands of the poet, attests to this, as she notes that ‘*confession entails the presentation of the speaker’s view of his experience, but it also constructs that view and the subject who subscribes to it*’.

Like Gill, (Gilmore, 2001) believes that autobiography, or confessional writing, ‘*is a linguistic construction, one that is also cloaked by the mechanisms of institutions*’. Therefore, the confessional mode has been re-read as not a simple expression of a subjective identity but as a construction of it.

Yet even with this transition from autobiography to textual performance, the embodiedness of experience remains crucial. Confessional literature still receives considerable force from the interlocutors’ perceptions of the connection between the language used and the real mental, emotional, and social worlds the language describes.

Confessional discourse is still analysed with reference to memory, exposure, and psychodrama. Generative AI makes this association more complicated. Large Language Models imitate first person voice, introspection, shame and disclosure without being conscious or having lived experiences. The capacity of LLMs to produce persuasive confessional discourse therefore calls into question the assumption that the linguistic use of sincerity necessarily comes from an experiencing subject.

Recent work on AI and literary production has similarly challenged traditional models of authorship. For example, (Formosa, Bankins, Matulionyte, & Ghasemi, 2024) and (Watson, Brezovec, & Romic, 2025) understand AI inflected literary production as more collaborative and distributed between human authors, computational agents and audiences. While their research directly addresses authorship, it prompts a related question for confessional literature: if it is possible for audiences to recognize emotional sincerity in texts uttered by disembodied lives, can sincerity remain in the realm of an autobiographical effect?

The confessional writing produced by AI thus does a great deal more than merely parody a pre-existing literary form. It reveals how the relationships among confession, authenticity and subjectivity have been assumed. The boundary between a genuine confession and a practiced one is blurred further when expressions of mental frailty can be mechanically created without prior awareness or psychological equivalent.

While confessional poetry is most associated with an American idiom, confessional writing has also taken other forms within Indian English literature. Self-revelation has been adopted by Indian writers to interrogate issues of gender and sexuality, family and religion, postcolonial subjectivity and social norms. Confession is thus not only a revelation of the self but also of its relationship to society.

In this line Kamala Das is at the very beginning of this tradition, which subverts the expected representations of womanhood, womanly desire, womanhood, marriage, the woman herself. It links the interior world of women with the exterior world of the patriarchal or postcolonial disciplines. Eunice de Souza investigates the interior worlds of loneliness, family, religious identity and female subjectivity with irony, fragmentation and restraint thus proving that confession may sometimes be withheld through suggestion as well as explicit mention of desires. Gauri Deshpande portrays identity in terms of the interwoven or fragmented relation to other as she investigates the emotional life of women in relation to family, sexuality and societal expectations. Together these writers show that Indian English confessional writing both appropriates the genre further through placing confession in specific histories, cultures and genders and at the same time, makes confession a mode of both individual expression and sociocultural critique.

This wider interpretation is applicable to the current research project in so much as human-conceived confessional texts find their literary significance not merely in the acts of revealing oneself emotionally but in the contexts into which they are situated which is specific psychological, historic, gendered and cultural worlds. AI-produced writing may mimic the language of these worlds without having been through their constitutive processes. The parallels hence go beyond verisimilitude and into the realm of memory, culture, embodiment and experience as a means of literary identity.

Psychoanalytic theory is particularly useful to the understanding of confessional writing because it conceived language as a site through which the subject is produced and negotiated. Instead of viewing confession as direct disclosure, psychoanalysis views confession as an act through which psychic life is able to be put into language. This is pertinent to AI confession because it questions whether language alone can constitute subjectivity absent the psychic.

Freud's formulation of the talking cure thus makes language fundamental to psychic life. In *Studies on Hysteria*, (Freud & Breuer, 1893-95) show how talking can make the unconscious conscious, construct the painful past. Confession, then, is more than a simple act of transmission: it also offers a method for the articulation of unconscious desire, memory, and conflict. As a result, the voice of confession gains value only in relation to this psychic life.

Lacan goes even further and develops an understanding of how subjectivity itself is shaped by language. Identity is not something pre-formed or fixed outside of language and social formations but something that emerges within the Symbolic Order. Confession is thus not merely a disclosure of a pre-existing self but an active part in the formation of the self through narration (Lacan, 2002). This development is especially pertinent to AI-produced writing as LLMs are entirely capable of constructing first-person statements that have the linguistic form of human subjectivity but do not engage in the desire, lack and unconscious processes of human subjectivity.

A complementary view is offered by Michel Foucault, who theorises the use of confession as a cultural-historical technique. In *The History of Sexuality*, (Foucault, 1978) characterises confession as a 'technology of the self' by which we are shaped into intelligible subjects by systems of power and knowledge, and the term can therefore be argued to contribute to the construction of identity through speech acts. This formulation is especially valuable in relation to an AI-generated confession, because it allows one to assume that many of the rheumatic and cultural role played by confession can be recreated through language without a narrating subject.

In combination, Freud, Lacan and Foucault lay out three requirements for subjectivity, namely the unconscious conflict of Freud, the linguistic construction of the Lacan, and the discursive framing of Foucault. They make a crucial distinction between the linguistic presentation of subjectivity and the conditions of experience that produce human subjectivity. This distinction forms the theoretical premise for the investigation of AI-produced confessional writing.

Questions of authorship, textual authority, and literary significance have historically haunted theoretical reflections on literature. With the advent of present-day artificial intelligence-created texts, these debates are further complicated as they call into question the presupposition that the author and the reader occupy two isolated, autonomous positions within the text.

Roland Barthes' *The Death of the Author* was a scathing critique of the idea that meaning in literature stemmed from the author's intention or biographical information. Giving authorial intent less priority and focusing on language and interpretation, Barthes offers an especially applicable model for AI writers, where a traditional author becomes optional (Barthes, 1977).

Complementing this is reader-response criticism, especially Wolfgang Iser (Iser, 1978) and Stanley Fish, which focuses on the reader's role in creating meaning. Iser's idea of the unresolvable nature of some texts and Fish's theory of interpretive communities show how meaning is created in a dialogical process between text and reader's interpretation. As in the section on postmodernist thought, these approaches are useful in understanding how readers respond to AI-generated texts with feeling, even when they are aware that it is not human generated. The issue of creativity complicates the traditional notion of authorship even more.

Margaret Boden's theory of computer creativity claims the creation of new and interesting combinations of existing conceptual spaces to be an act of creativity (Boden, 2004). Taking a cue from the wider developments taking place in digital culture, Lev Manovich too points towards the dispersal of creative production among human authors, algorithms, datasets and digital infrastructure (Manovich, 2018).

More recently, these debates have been extended to generative AI. (Formosa, Bankins, Matulionyte, & Ghasemi, 2024) claim that ideas of authorship are becoming more associated with levels of human involvement rather than a strict human or machine dichotomy, while (Watson, Brezovec, & Romic, 2025) see authorship as fragmented across writers, technologies, institutions and audiences. (Vlaad, 2025) suggests that algorithmically-produced texts challenge traditional ideas around authorial intent, and (Colella, 2025) reads AI-authored writing as a kind of authorship performance encompassing prompting, editing and interpretation.

Indeed, such advances are especially important for confessional literature, whose power has traditionally rested on an assumed nexus between textual voice and embodied life. AI-authored confessional writing re-invokes linguistic indicators of sincerity without the lived basis traditionally thought necessary for confession. For that reason, Barthes, reader-response theory, and modern research on distributed authorship, all offer useful tools of analysis for considering how these texts come to hold literary and emotional significance without an experiencing author.

AI generated writing does not replace conventional theories of authorship but demonstrates the ongoing importance of such theories while simultaneously showing their inadequacy. Meaning in literature is created through a dynamic interaction between formal features, social conventions, reader reception and technological mediation, especially when the text presupposes, implicitly or explicitly, to stand for an experiencing self.

Post-human literary criticism has gained importance in the conversations surrounding AI because it addresses humanist expectations of literary creation, authorship, and subjectivity. Instead of assuming that the author is the singular locus of meaning and action, post-humanism destabilizes the pre-conceived human or technological dichotomies and offers a relational conception of subjectivity. Generative AI is thus a threat to the traditional conception of authorship, as well as a technological advancement.

This attitude has a solid grounding in Donna Haraway's picture of the cyborg, which in *A Cyborg Manifesto*, is defined precisely by its inability to be neatly caught-up in the divisions of human or machine and natural or cultural, a notion of the identity that is hybrid and relational (Haraway, 1985). As Haraway wrote before LLMs, this becomes a useful model for the role of computational agencies in cultural manufacturing.

N. Katherine Hayles also addresses the relationship between embodiment, information and technology. In *How We Became Post-human* (Hayles, 2017), she disputes models of subjectivity based solely on human agency by focusing on the material embodiment that coexists with informational processes. Through the work of Haraway and Hayles, literary criticism can consequently move beyond the question of whether AI can fully imitate human creativity and address the ways in which technological systems themselves influence new productions of literature.

Contemporaneous research on generative AI builds on this theory by viewing literary authorship as more distributively shared among human promptings, computer crafting, editorial adjustments, and reader reception. This has led to a rediscovery of computational subjectivity- the machine's generation of self-constituting I- positions in algorithmic language in the absence of states of self-formation, autobiographical memories, or painful lived experience. Large Language Models are therefore capable of producing compelling expressions of longing, regret, emotional reflection, and vulnerability- all while lacking in the capacities for feeling, remembering, or believing.

This distinction is of particular importance for confessional writing. Belonging in confessional writing to autobiography, emotional exposure, and psychological infliction, confession seems to function as a gateway into the private self. The emergence of AI-generated confessional texts complicates this notion by providing examples of many linguistic features associated with interiority, that can be mimicked computationally even in the absence of the experiential factors that have historically given rise to them. These texts evoke a sense of psychological authenticity, while remaining disconnected from its essential embodiment.

Post-human literary criticism in no way entails conceptualising AI as an autonomous subject. Instead, post-human criticism allows for an exploration of the means by which authorship, creativity, embodiment and subjectivity function in a technologically mediated literary context. AI confessional writing is therefore a space in which language, cultural convention, computational process and reader response combine to produce effects of literary subjectivity.

Post-human theory thus offers a valuable link to the current study of AI, between the psychoanalytic notion of confession and the present state of the AI research. As psychoanalysis emphasizes the embodied and mental bases of the subject, post-humanism focuses on the way in which technological systems challenge the nexus of language, the body, and literary production.

Research Gap

In the present moment, there has been a proliferation in academic work on generative artificial intelligence that has broadened conversations around literary creativity, authorship, computer-generated writing, and machine-generated texts, just as literary studies have remained focused on confessional writing, psychoanalysis, reader-response theory, and post-human subjectivity. Nevertheless, these areas of scholarship have not interacted with one another.

While less studied, the connection between generative AI literature and confessional writing remains one of the more underexplored areas of the field. Analysis of AI-produced literature has predominantly been dedicated to issues of computational creativity, authorship, ethics, copyright, and human-AI literary collaboration, and has rarely engaged with form, literary practices that are tied to the autobiographical, emotional, or representational truth of lived life. Likewise, the scholarship on confession generally presupposes an experiencing subject whose formation is keyed to memory, mental conflict, embodiment, and sociocultural existence, although confession is often studied in its textual performance.

Another point of contention is that the various theories are not integrated into one. AI-literature scholarship has for the most part not interacted with theories of the formation of the subject under psychoanalytic paradigms and confession theory, and confession theory studies have shown little interest in the impact of generative AI for the concept of authenticity, literary selfhood, etc. Post-humanist literary criticism opens the way but has yet to be widely applied to AI-fed confessional texts.

This study seeks to fill this lacuna by synthesizing confessional studies, psychoanalytic criticism, poststructuralist models of authorship, post-humanist literary criticism, and artificial intelligence research. By analysing texts- some AI-generated, some by canonical Authors- T. S. Eliot, Anne Sexton, and Adrienne Rich- to consider how computer developing systematically re-enacts the language of confession, and how this re-enactment thwarts the search for interiority through the discovering of pausing processes.

In its calls to express (by machine) all the reasons not to be miserable, the paper claims that AI-generated writing is capable of engaging with the formal and rhetorical conventions of confession without necessarily engaging with the embodied experiences that have constituted the modality of confession. In this way, it displaces and refigures concepts of authority and authenticity in the literary subject.

Theoretical Framework

This study uses psychoanalytic literary criticism, poststructuralist theories of authorship, and post-human literary criticism as interwoven methods for analysing literary modes of confession, subjectivity, and selfhood. Used in conjunction, these methodologies allow the paper to draw a distinction between human-generated as-lived confession, as performed discourse, and as computed self.

Psychoanalytic theory primarily utilizes the work of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan. The former's conception of confession as the articulation of unconscious internal conflict informs the analysis of memory, repression, desire, and anxiety within the human-authored literary selections.

Therefore, psychoanalysis provides a framework for distinguishing a psychologically grounded confession from a computational simulation thereof. Lacan shifts the psychoanalytic focus to language as primary in the construction of subjectivity, highlighting the linguistic nature of these psychic constructions. This is of particular interest for computational fiction, which utilizes language to construct internally consistent first-person narratives. The study interrogates how both human and AI-generated texts enact literary subjectivity through narration, self-referencing, and symbolic content, and uses Freud and Lacan as conceptual frameworks for defining what is at stake in the between of psychology and computation in textual subjectivity.

The psychoanalytic mode of thought is enriched by **poststructuralist theories** of discourse, authorship, and the reader that facilitate the analysis of confession as literary and cultural performance. Michel Foucault's work on the concept of confession as a technology of the self is instrumental to an analysis of first-person narrative, an autobiographical framing, the articulation of emotions, and self-reflection as socially recognized performative strategies of selfhood, and not as evidence of lived experience. Roland Barthes' work on authorial intention, the 'death of the author', supports analysis of AI as producer of confession that abandons any belief in the need for an experiencing author to establish meaning. Authority as a result may derive from textual performance in the absence of biographical corroboration.

Lastly, **reader-response criticism**, drawing on work by Iser and Fish, offers grounds to consider why AI confessional narratives may be understood to communicate sincerity, openness and authenticity in the absence of an experiencing subject. The capacity of conventions to invoke such responses will, as a result, also be examined as features that contribute to authentic reading experiences, even if authenticity remains a quality the author, not merely interpreted, does not possess.

Ultimately, and supported by Foucault, Barthes, Iser and Fish, the psychoanalytic approach to confession is thus supplemented with analysis of confession as discourse, performance and interpretation, an argument which supports the distinction between the lived and the simulated in a mode that is nevertheless, without the distinction, critically inert.

The third analytic approach employed by this study is **post-human literary criticism**, used to analyse how generated artificial intelligence may destabilise conventional notions of literary subjectivity, creativity and authorship. As psychoanalysis prioritises embodied psychological experience and post-structuralism prioritises discourse and interpretation, post-humanism allows the study to analyse how computational systems may play a part in contributing to the development of subjectivity in and through language. The framework utilised relies heavily upon the work of Donna Haraway and N. Katherine Hayles to challenge essentialist notions of identity and place the emphasis on the relationality of subjectivity, allowing the study to look beyond the question of whether the artificial intelligence is conscious and rather to ask how computational systems may convincingly perform introspection, vulnerability, and selfhood.

In the comparative analysis, **post-human theory** is therefore applied to the artificial intelligence text in order to analyse its recapitulation of first person voice, emotional reflection, autobiographical framing, and similar practices of confession in spite of a lack of embodied experience, memory, unconscious desire, and a life beyond computation. Such writing is therefore understood not as a failed imitation of human writing, but as a computational performance of subjectivity that subverts the commonly held relationship between language, identity, and authorship. Consequently, the framework operates by distinguishing between subjectivity as embodied or experiential, and subjectivity as performed or textual. Human confessional writing is understood as the generation of literary subjectivity arising from historical and psychological experience, whilst generated artificial intelligence confessional writing is analysed as a modelling of such experience in and through computer programming. Post-human literary criticism is therefore utilised to contextualize the artificial intelligence confession in a wider discussion of technological mediation and literary selfhood.

The paper draws on psychoanalytic literary criticism, poststructuralist thought on authorship and interpretation, and post-human literary criticism as compatible methods of analysis. This combined approach is used to investigate AI confessional writing on three interdependent levels of analysis: experience, performance, and computation.

Here is the four stage model of analysis used in this study:

1. Existing conventions of confessional writing, such as first person narration, autobiography, emotional disclosure, contemplation, memory and emotional struggle, are identified.
2. The conventional features are analysed, using psychoanalytic theory (Freud and Lacan), in relation to memory, desire, psychic conflicts and subjectivity while illustrating how artificial intelligence reiterates effects without the unconscious experience.

3. The concept of confession as a discourse, and the text and reader's role in constructing an assumption of authentic confession, is scrutinized using poststructuralist texts (Foucault, Barthes, Iser and Fish).
4. The study concludes by addressing contemporary interests in post-human and computational authorship and subjectivity. Used together, the conceptual framework has the benefit of differentiating between confession as something inherently subjective, experienced, and confession as something that is performed, constructed, textually, and interpretively.

Psychoanalysis provides context as to the psychic elements which structure the confession of a human being, post structuralism talks about the social and interpretive frameworks in which such confessions are understood and post-humanism accounts for the way in which the computational system simulates this human performance, its effects and their textual and interpretive potential.

Rather than reading the AI-generated confession as neither or only as either authentically human or simply imitating, the researcher has attempted to formulate a framework that explores the AI-generated confession as a computation of and a performance of confessional subjectivity and that challenges many long-standing notions about authorship, authenticity and literary self-hood. It follows that a comparative analysis of both human and computer-generated literary narratives will be undertaken.

Methodology

The current research utilises qualitative comparative textual analysis to compare contemporary AI generated confessional writing with traditional confessional literature. This method is suitable because the focus is on the construction and representation of literary subjectivity in textual terms, not necessarily on the functional abilities of the generative AI program itself. The researcher therefore uses close readings in order to analyse the rhetoricity of the textual operations by which confessional selfhood is created. Comparing the different kinds of texts allows us to more fruitfully analyse parallels and differences between human written and computer-generated confessions.

Instead of positing a competition about human creativity, this analysis looks at how computer-driven narration can retrace, reinterpret, or rewrite the rhetorical, emotional and psychological conventions of the confessional. It will engage the interdisciplinary theoretisation of the study which is psychoanalytical, poststructuralist and post-humanist.

Corpus Selection

The corpus consists of canonical confessionalism and machine-readable confessional fiction. The machine-free corpus of texts consists of excerpts of poems by T. S. Eliot, Anne Sexton and Adrienne Rich (Annexure A).

I have included Eliot, although he would hardly be considered a confessional poet, but because the Love song of J. Alfred Prufrock is a text preoccupied with psychological division, self-reflection and self-awareness (both qualities important for confessional texts). Sexton can stand for the canon of American confessionalism- mental illness, motherhood, sexuality and pain is her poetry's subject matter. Rich can be described as an American poet who expanded confessionalism to questions of sexuality, self, identity and social awareness. The corpus of machine-readable texts consists of a collection of narratives created by the machine on a given prompt (related to themes of loneliness, depression, motherhood and identity crisis) which can serve as comparable thematic fields in which to investigate how confessional subjectivity is constituted differently in the two sets of narratives. The material used in this essay was sampled not as a statistically representative corpus but chosen in a way that will help theoretically informed comparisons in machine-based and human-based confession and address the questions of subjectivity, reality, authenticity of literary persona.

AI Text Generation Procedure

The AI-generated corpus was generated using Open AI's ChatGPT (version 5.5) in the development of this paper. Prompts were developed to generate an introspective literary account of the self-reflecting on each of the four selected themes to ensure experimental and methodological control. The intention was to extract narrative of introspection reflecting on each of the selected emotional experiences without explicit reference to specific literary works or named authors.

Each prompted theme yielded a number of generated outputs and individual narratives were chosen based on their coherence, relevance to their themes and the presence of conventions recognised as confessional.

The value of the AI-generated corpus is, therefore, not in measuring the performance capabilities of a specific AI tool but rather in investigating the performance of subjectivity by modern generative AI. The generated narratives were read and discussed as literary texts, not computational measures of proficiency. In the interest

of scientific rigour and reproducibility, the original prompts are provided in **Annexure B**, providing the opportunity for future work to replicate or build upon this comparative study.

Analytical Framework

The comparative analysis is developed through four interrelated sections:

1. Textual: each text is scrutinized in terms of characteristic confessional forms such as subjective narration, autobiographical framework, revelation of trauma and emotional vulnerability, reflection and introspection, memory and psychic trauma;
2. Psychological: the interpretation of the dynamics of repression, desire, rupture, the psyche in conflict, and the shaping of the confessional subject through readings of Freud and Lacan;
3. Post-structural: reading the construction of veridicality in relation to performance and readerly experience with Foucault, Barthes, Iser and Fish;
4. Post-human: analysing the interpretation of AI confession as a performance of digital subjectivity, language and embodiment.

Ethical Considerations and Limitations

This analysis investigates AI texts only as literary objects and no actual humans were involved, no personal information was collected and no experimental interference occurred so formal ethical clearance was deemed not necessary. AI-generated texts are clearly labelled as such, and procedures are provided detailing how the corpus was produced.

This study's major limitations lie in:

1. having an AI corpus in only one single language model
2. being a qualitative rather than statistically generalizable design prioritizing interpretations
3. the reception by readers was not studied directly empirically

Future studies can explore a comparison between different AI models, an investigation across multiple language models, a corpus-stylistic method and reception analysis based on empirical data.

Analysis

Performing Loneliness: Alienation, Recognition, and the Computational Self

Because loneliness sheds light on the relationship between subjectivity and social recognition, it holds a central place in modernist and confessional literature. A comparison of Eliot's *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* and the AI narrative of loneliness suggests the use of similar alienated codes but a divergent relation of language and subjectivity with experience.

The AI poem construes loneliness through repopulated routines and a decreasing social invisibility, and the narration confesses: *"I have become skilled at pretending that silence is a choice" thus performing the experience as response.*

It continues in another way: *"I pick up my phone... To feel something in my hands, to have evidence that I exist in someone else's thoughts"*, constructing loneliness through the mediation of digitally-driven Otherness, as evidence of its subjectivity and sociality. This reflects Prufrock's awareness: Eliot's poem, represented as similar though it may seem, is shot with this anxiety throughout- *"Do I dare?" "Do I dare disturb the universe?"* represent a consciousness of doubt, and his own anticipated criticism: *"They will say: 'How his hair is growing thin!' and: 'But how his arms and legs are thin!'"* - confirms that Prufrock's identity depends on his being seen. But his alienation is expressed through the memory, bodily insecurity, his age and shared living experience, instead of simply narrated as is the AI version. In Freudian sense, Prufrock's halting conveys an underlying psychic conflict between wish and fear.

Though the AI uses the wording of loneliness and its psychic progression can also seem linear and relatively less symbolic, but, without symbolic contradiction and displacements as the articulation of internal conflict (psychic tension, wish and fear), and without inner conflicting logic to carry on the narrative with self-consciousness and doubt- such conflicts are, without self-consciousness and doubt from a human being (the narrator), a purely expressed or performance (in a certain context). Thus, a Lacanian interpretation also contrasts both texts. Identity is constructed via the recognition of an 'Other', but Prufrock's desire emerges from the fragmented self-consciousness, as he negotiated the Symbolic Order, whilst the AI narration merely repeats the structure of longing without experiencing the desire out of a subject who does more than just present himself as lonely for an audience.

In terms of Foucault's "confession as discourse", Eliot and the AI narrative both exploit the conventions of

narration-first-person disclosure, intimacy, vulnerability-to create credible performances.

But Eliot's representation of urban, male, historical anxiety becomes historically localized compared with the generalized emotional discourse. Meanwhile, reader-response theory explain how both can evoke sympathy, though the reader would recognize recognizable traces of expressed vulnerabilities in the AI, or would engage with multiple interpretations of Eliot's symbolically-dense, less resolving texts. So, despite each constructing a convincing representation of loneliness through intimacy and seeking for recognition through their language, Eliot represents loneliness as an historical, bodily, psychological phenomenon of subjective, lived experience. Whereas, the AI narrative mimics the language codes, instead, becoming an inauthentic representation of loneliness as disembodied and logically coherent self-performance.

Performing Depression: Suffering, Psychic Conflict, and the Simulation of Despair

For confessional literature, depression provides a central access point not only to psychological distress, but also to language and fractured subjectivity itself, for it complicates straightforward narrative and highlights internal contradictions. Comparing Anne Sexton's *Wanting to Die* to the AI-generated poem, I argue that while AI can articulate the language of emotional pain, it cannot replicate the embodied, psychological experience that drives human confession.

The AI generation offers depression in the form of conventional metaphors for perseverance, despair, and existential questions, "*There are days when sadness arrives without explanation. It settles beside me like an uninvited guest and refuses to leave*". this is a metaphor of emotional persistence for depression. While the rhetorical device "*How do you describe the weight of simply existing?*" emulates the kind of inward-looking and confessional vulnerability Sexton exploits, there is nonetheless an emotional coherence and lucidity to the poem which makes this a convincing depiction of mental pain.

Sexton's poem deploys a different tone entirely: "*suicides have a special language*", she declares in the opening, immediately presenting death not as a philosophical option but an acute experience. Death, oscillating between the longed for and the feared for, generates a destabilising and irrational psychic state not readily explainable but, instead, enacted through the performance of that destabilisation. The suicide poem enacts psychic fragmentation whereas the AI poem describes emotional despair.

Freud's theories about unconscious conflict, repression, and oppositional desiring explain Sexton's paradoxical obsession with death as simultaneously desired and fought against, her ability to "*thrust all that life under your tongue*", in one compact image that combines the living, the dead, desire and oblivion.

The AI generated depression, with its predictable figures of despair, lacks those complex, competing tensions of human expression. Indeed, Lacanian theories of subjectivity emphasize loss, lack and desired completion over the coherent 'self-knowledge'. Sexton both mocks and articulates, and her ever shifting, almost incoherent oscillations of intent and mood reflect this state of psychic disturbance, something lacking in the AI narration even as it replicates all the markers of the self-confessor. Foucault's analysis of confession highlights how these two texts both represent, through recognised features of confession, the discourse of the self-disclosing and vulnerability, however, Sexton's persona is subject to a particular historical-psychic framework of oppression, depression, and identity related suffering to that which the AI narrative simulates. Even through reader-response theory's identification of recognisable indicators of psychological pain as drivers of reader empathy, the AI narrative's resolution into clear emotional states lacks Sexton's own resistance to resolution through ambiguity, paradox, and dense symbolic construction of her 'un-being'.

Sexton's poem performs the complexity of subjective experience, the instability of consciousness, for it relies on the interaction between repression, language, symbolic language, and psychic fragmentation.

The AI, on the other hand, performs the rhetoric of the disabled self for the benefit of the reader, an attempt at artificial subjectivity which fails to grasp the underlying subjective experience which is the substance of the confessional poem.

Performing Motherhood: Maternal Ambivalence, Embodiment, and the Computational Self

Motherhood holds a peculiar position within confessional writing, insofar as it lays bare contradictions between identity, embodiment, care, and emotional selfhood. Confessional works rarely posit motherhood as unalloyed fulfilment, instead, they often demonstrate the contradictions inherent in love and loss, intimacy and separation, responsibility and individuality. When comparing Anne Sexton's *Morning Picture* to the AI-generated motherhood narrative, we reveal that AI can simulate maternal introspection without being subject to the embodied conditions that shape maternal identity.

The AI-written narrative defines motherhood as a form of self-transformation: “*Motherhood has given me a new identity while quietly dismantling an old one*”. This tension is deepened by the confession, “*I miss the person I used to be. Then I feel guilty for missing her*”. In this way, the narrative reproduces a central concern of feminist confessional literature- the existence of maternal love within maternal loss-in a coherent discourse of maternal ambivalence. Sexton’s *Morning Picture*, by contrast, approaches motherhood from a material, embodied perspective: “*It’s morning; this is the little girl who came out of the mother yesterday*”.

From its very beginning, the poem grounds motherhood in the birth, embodiment, and emotional perception that reconfigures the mother. Through attentive maternal observation, motherhood becomes an experienced event wherein personal subjectivity is re-formed by caregiving, bodily memory and attachment. Freudian critical perspective shows that in Sexton’s poem, motherhood functions as a space of unconscious negotiation concerning attachment, desire, anxiety, and separation, thus defying simplifications into either sacrifice or fulfilment. The AI narrative articulates maternal conflict in terms of clear self-reflection, naming ambivalence fluently but not re-enacting the symbolic ambiguities or psychological conflicts through which we live such conflicts.

Lacanian criticism reveals the inherent difference between the two texts. Given that subjectivity is formed relationally, a mother subjectivities formed to the degree through attachment and separation from the child, whereas AI formulates maternal subjectivity through an abstract, computational description of this process. Foucault’s theory of confession names the texts as both contesting an idealized view of motherhood since they make the experiences of guilt, loss and ambivalence speakable but also historicised and sexuate where AI is not.

Reader-response theory assists in explaining why we find both poems to be emotionally persuasive: first-person reflection, openness to self-questioning and vulnerability encourage readers to find the AI-generated confession to be genuine.

Sexton’s work, however, provides far more in the way of interpretive complexity by way of sensual detail, ambiguity and unresolved emotional conflict. The comparison between these poems thus demonstrates that an AI-generated confession can reproduce the language of maternal ambivalence without actually undergoing maternal bodily experience. While the Sexton piece constructs power from the confluence of bodily memory, attachment, care and emotional ambivalence, the AI has simply taken these constituent elements and reconfigured them into an organized, computational discourse. In Sexton’s poem, then, Motherhood acts not just as a subject but as a method for the forging of a material subjectivity, whereas AI re-enacts the performance of maternal thought without embodying the maternal experience it reflects.

Performing Identity: Fragmented Subjectivity, Gender, and the Computational Self

Issues of identity play a central role in confessional writing, revealing the self as fragmented and constantly negotiated between personal experience and social expectation. The juxtaposition of Adrienne Rich’s *Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law* with the AI’s simulated identity crisis narrative shows that while AI can mimic language of fragmentation, it is divorced from the historical, gendered and embodied conditions under which confessional subjectivity is formed. The AI narrative treats identity as a matter of social performance, with the speaker confessing, “*I have begun to suspect that I am performing versions of myself rather than living as one*”, noting she is “*confident at work, pleasant at home, funny with friends, hesitant when alone*”.

Identity is thus dispersed across disparate social interactions rather than centred in a unifying self. This performance is acutely aligned with anxieties around authenticity and role-play in the contemporary period. Rich similarly fractures the female self, but within the context of patriarchy and its requirements for women in marriage, domesticity, intellectual pursuits, and gender-specific conduct. The metaphor of a woman “*who has matched her decades against a canvas*” implicitly suggests a life measured against socially determined expectations, rendering identity as a more than psychological struggle, one framed by competing historical contexts and subjective agencies. Applying psychoanalytic theory, Rich’s fractured subject can be understood in the Freudian terms of conflict between desire and society, a dynamic reflected in the AI’s self-exploring narrative, but expressed through conscious statements rather than unconscious conflicts.

The Lacanian perspective illuminates the differences further- neither text presupposes a fixed self, but Rich’s sense of fracture is derived from specific interactions with patriarchal discourse and the search for recognition within the symbolic order.

The AI mimics the form of division without having any experience of the processes that give such an effect its psychological reality. Reading through Foucault, the confessional is examined as a technology of the self, and

Rich deconstructs the cultural practices governing female identity while at the same time utilizing the forms of confession as resistance. The AI's confessional language operates in a similar way however it primarily conceives of identity crisis as a psychological phenomenon rather than a socio-political construct.

Reader-response theorists can account for the appeal of both texts- the AI's predictable use of the linguistic cues for doubt and vulnerability makes it recognisable as authentic, whereas Rich's fragmented structure, rich imagery and historical specificity create greater ambiguity and demand more interpretation from the reader. The post-human perspective on technology provides a lens through which the AI's capacity for simulated fragmentation can be analysed, while the AI convincingly performs fragmented subjectivity in the absence of sentience or embodiment, it merely replicates many of the linguistic conventions we associate with self-formation. Therefore, while both texts present divided identities, the conditions producing this fragmentation are distinctly different, with Rich's arising from historicised social interactions and lived experience, and AI's being a computation of existing language patterns.

Discussion

AI-created confessional fiction occupies a complex space within the literary landscape of today, as evidenced in these comparative analyses. The AI texts mimic various elements of confessional writing across experiences of solitude, depression, motherhood, and a crisis of identity- first-person voice, emotional openness, autobiographical framing, inner contemplation, and psychic introspection. As such, generative AI possesses a significant ability to create compelling performances of confessional subjectivity.

However, these studies also illustrate a crucial difference between representing emotion and experiencing it. The works of T. S. Eliot, Anne Sexton, and Adrienne Rich convey palpable force through the weaving together of language, memory, embodiment, interior conflict, and situation-specific lived experiences. In contrast, AI narratives convey emotional credibility through computational language and conventional patterns of cultural expression. Such authenticity, it appears, relies more on performing the communicative conventions of confession rather than expressing direct psychic reality.

From the perspective of psychoanalytic thought, it distinguishes between embodied subjectivity and its imitative textual manifestation. Sigmund Freud's articulation of confession in terms of articulation of the unconscious, and Lacan's conception of self through desire and language, demonstrate that human writing's multiplicity, complexity, and irresolution arises directly out of psychic operations. AI narratives replicate some aspects of this linguistic style but are relatively lucid and transparent about meaning, instead enacting only the recognizable stylistic features of psychically imbued literary forms rather than true subjective interiority. Foucault's concept of confession as an interaction rather than solely expressive act further underscores this observation. Although AI-generated texts reproduce the discursive performance characteristics that Foucault identified- that is, the first-person account, vulnerable confession, and the inward-directed analysis- they lack the deeper experiential context provided in human literary works that situates confession within a richer socio-historic, gendered, and psychologically grounded framework. AI narratives thus seem focused on general emotional patterns that may not connect to a more specific embodied subjectivity.

Likewise, reader-response theories acknowledge that reader response and the perception of authenticity in confessional writing are both mediated phenomena involving the performance of conventions rather than a more direct access to the author's innermost consciousness. However, human authored poems offer a more open interpretive field because they possess deeper symbolic nuances, historical specificities, and psychic open-endedness, whereas AI texts more closely conform to patterns of readability and lucidity. In considering post-human implications, these findings do not necessarily eliminate distinctions between human and machine creativity, but rather complicate them. They clearly indicate that consciousness isn't emerging in machines but culturally recognizable performances of subjectivity are. Literary selfhood thereby hinges, it seems, upon both subjective experience in some physical or emotional form and upon conventions of cultural expression.

Overall, the results lend credibility to this study's main assertion that AI can perform confession without knowing anything of it, lacking the psychic processes to confess in a Freudian manner, but able to reproduce the linguistic cues and conventions that perform the act. For literary studies, this distinction suggests that authentication should not focus on or be limited to the presence of the author's real experience, but must also include an analysis of the role language plays alongside cultural context and human readers. Rather than diminish the field, the invention of artificial confessional prose requires fresh consideration of the relationship among experience, discourse, and literary authorship in our current age of powerful computing machines.

Conclusion

It has provoked, especially theoretically, widespread discussions about literary authorship, literary writing and text production. But we still need to have further studies of the impact of the artificial intelligence on the confessional writing practice. In this article we try to fill the gap, with an analysis of artificial intelligence's

writing practice by means of the approach combines psychoanalytic, poststructuralist and post-human literary critical perspectives in relation to the topic.

We combine the qualitative analysis of the modern confession literature by T.S. Eliot, Adrienne Rich and Anne Sexton, together with artificial intelligence writings concerning matters of motherhood, crisis on identity, depression and loneliness, showing that generative artificial intelligence will produce confessions to be seen as quite near and to even simulate various features of the confessions, for instance in terms of first-person narration, introspective thinking, emotions and emotionality, auto-biographical disclosure and psychologistic introspection. We believe that this fact and that these features are readily recognisable of the artificial intelligence's text and are able to be reproduced algorithmically and performatively within the frameworks of confession is the real strength of these systems. Beside, we consider that an important line of distinction can be made is between "performed" confession and "experienced" confession: the first refers to artificial intelligence's writings whereas human authors' confession should be experienced by body-language and life-experience, social relation, conflict or social context, whereas there is no subjective consciousness at all for artificial intelligence so the machines cannot 'experience' subjectivity. For us, the point of drawing a distinction here lies not necessarily in the attempt to have machines replicate human life but to make clear on what level it 'works'. Psychoanalytically, it highlights confession as bodily experience, by reader's response as well as poststructuralist criticism we see at the same time what significance language is given, what role has language played on convincing reading always and last but not least by post-humanism perspective artificial intelligence influences systems not only within literature but also within a boundary between "man and machine". We are trying, and our method as an object, to show- first, a selected corpus consists of certain typical specimens of confessions of modern literature and secondly, it looks at one specific artificial intelligence system. Thirdly, it focused on the literary texts and we do not have any empirical data on "reader's response". Finally, we leave some topics for further studies, namely- comparative studies of the artificial intelligence's outputs for systems of different generation systems, multi-lingual confession studies, and how the readers may respond to "authentic confession" generated by machine as well as by human.

AI's confession may not truly belong to machines but still reflect certain essential truth about authenticity, language and subject. To make it clearer, as an AI's confession demonstrates what writing itself is through machine's introspective thinking and revealing vulnerability without life experience, instead of exposing futility on the narration of life, machine writing perhaps enables to value the live experience.

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