

Plagiarism and AI-generated content



Azim Shariff, Chiara Longoni, Stephanie Tully
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You have finished a week of final assignments and exams, when, exhausted, you realize you forgot an entire essay you were supposed to write for your eleventh grade social studies class.



Scrambling, you come across an essay produced by a student at a nearby school. You use this essay as inspiration for your own, changing some wording throughout so that the two versions are not identical.

Would you submit this essay as your own?

ORIGINAL

Jean-Jacques Rousseau's "The Social Contract" is a revolutionary work that tackles the complex relationship between individuals and the state, seeking to redefine the foundations of political authority and social order. Rousseau posits that in order to establish a just and equitable society, individuals must enter into a social contract with one another, voluntarily surrendering some of their natural freedoms in exchange for the protection and stability provided by the state. This contract forms the basis of legitimate political authority, grounded in the consent of the governed rather than in arbitrary power or coercion.

This essay will explore the central tenets of Rousseau's social contract theory, focusing on the principles of popular sovereignty, the general will, and the role of government in promoting the common good. By engaging with these ideas, we will illuminate the ways in which Rousseau's thought has profoundly influenced modern democratic principles and continues to shape contemporary political discourse on the nature and limits of state power.

SUBMITTED ESSAY

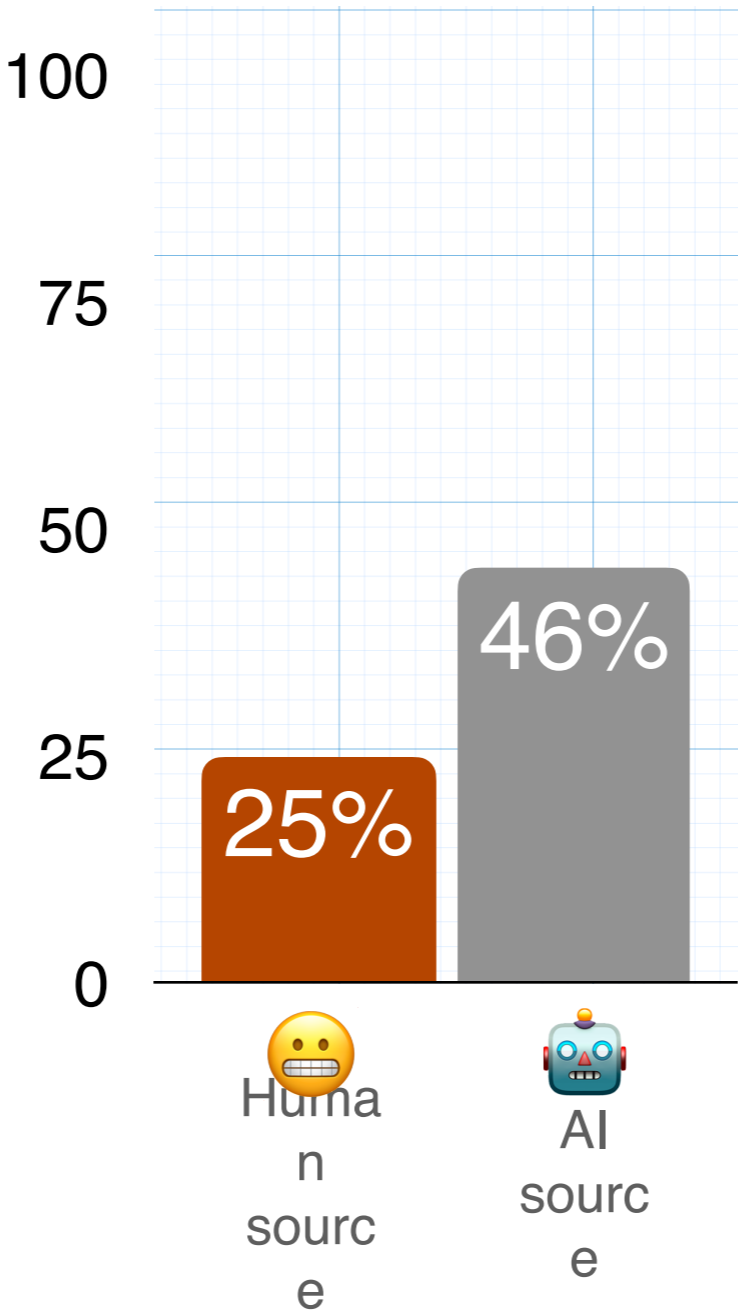
Jean-Jacques Rousseau's seminal work, "The Social Contract," offers a groundbreaking analysis of the complex interplay between individuals and their governing institutions. In doing so, it seeks to reevaluate the foundations of political legitimacy and societal organization. Rousseau contends that in order to establish a just and equitable society, citizens must enter into a social contract with one another, voluntarily surrendering some of their inherent freedoms in exchange for the safety and stability provided by the state. This mutual agreement forms the bedrock of legitimate political power, anchored in the consent of the governed rather than whimsical control or coercion.

This essay will investigate the key elements at the heart of Rousseau's social contract theory, focusing on the concepts of popular sovereignty, the general will, and the role of the government in fostering communal well-being. By scrutinizing these ideas, we will highlight the enduring influence of Rousseau's philosophy on contemporary democratic principles and its ongoing relevance to current debates surrounding the extent and limitations of state authority.

n = 431 students

Study 1a - Reported Self-Use

Would you submit this essay as your own?

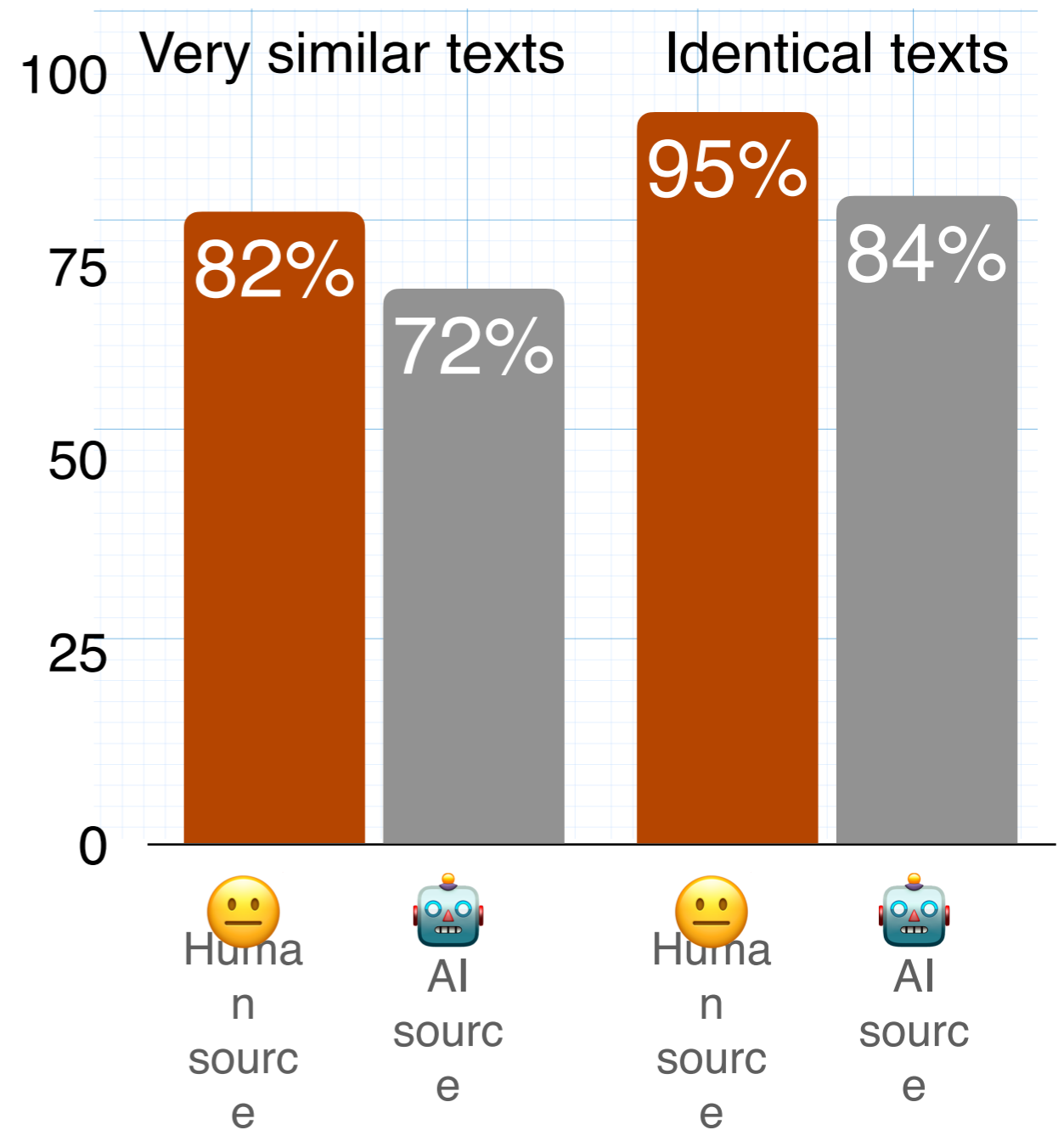
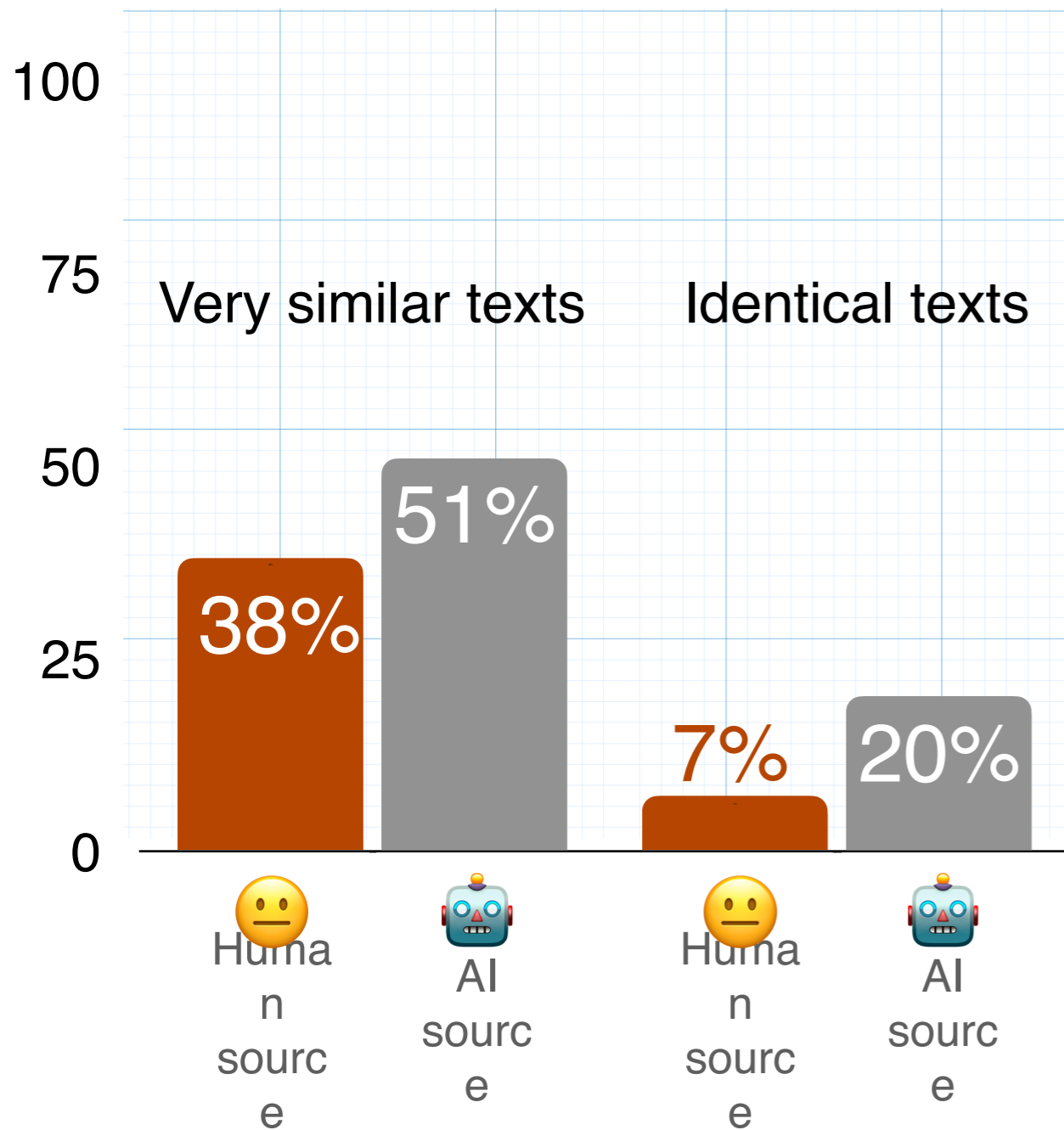


n = 431 students

Study 1b - Reported Self-Use

Would you submit this essay as your own?

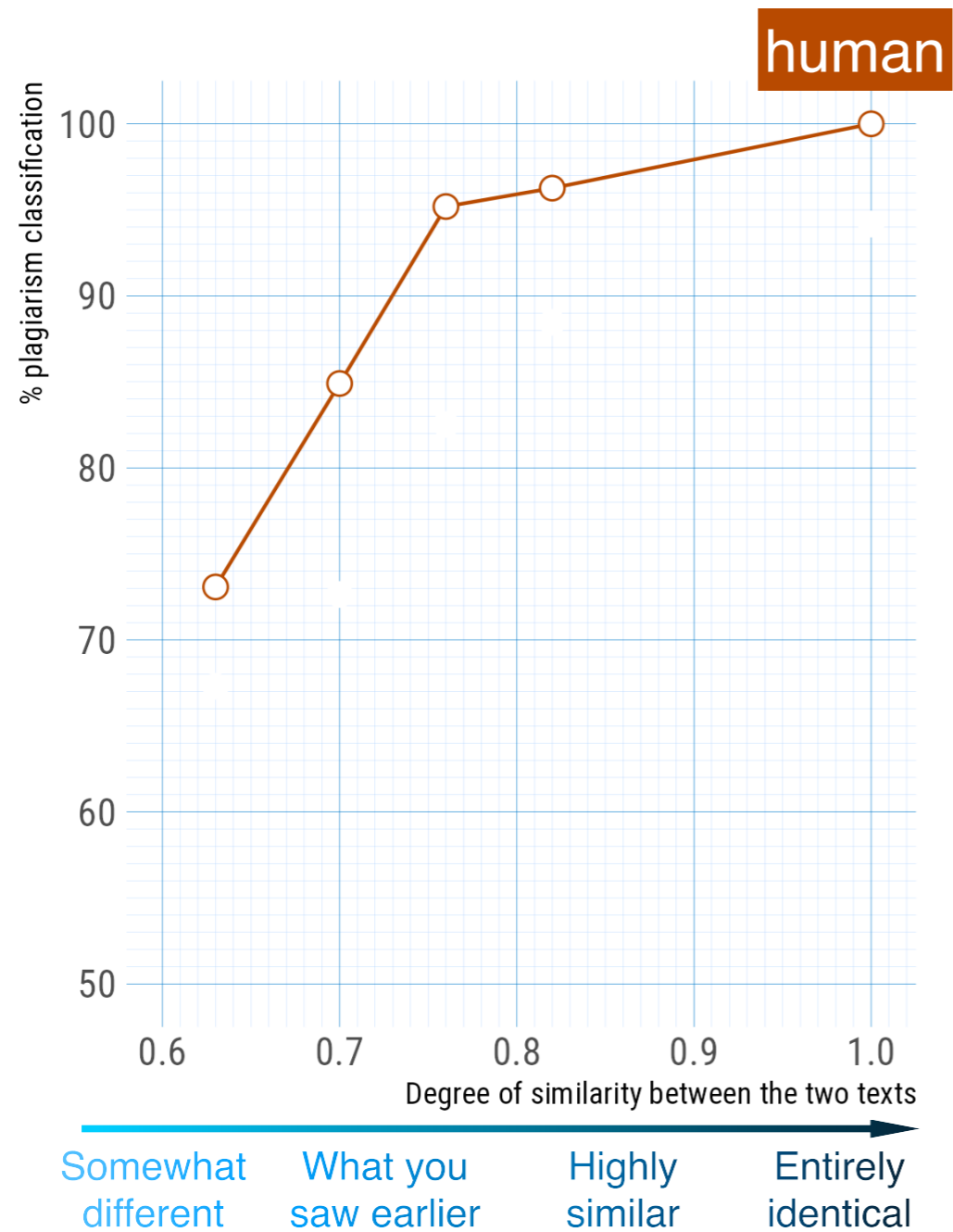
Is this plagiarism?



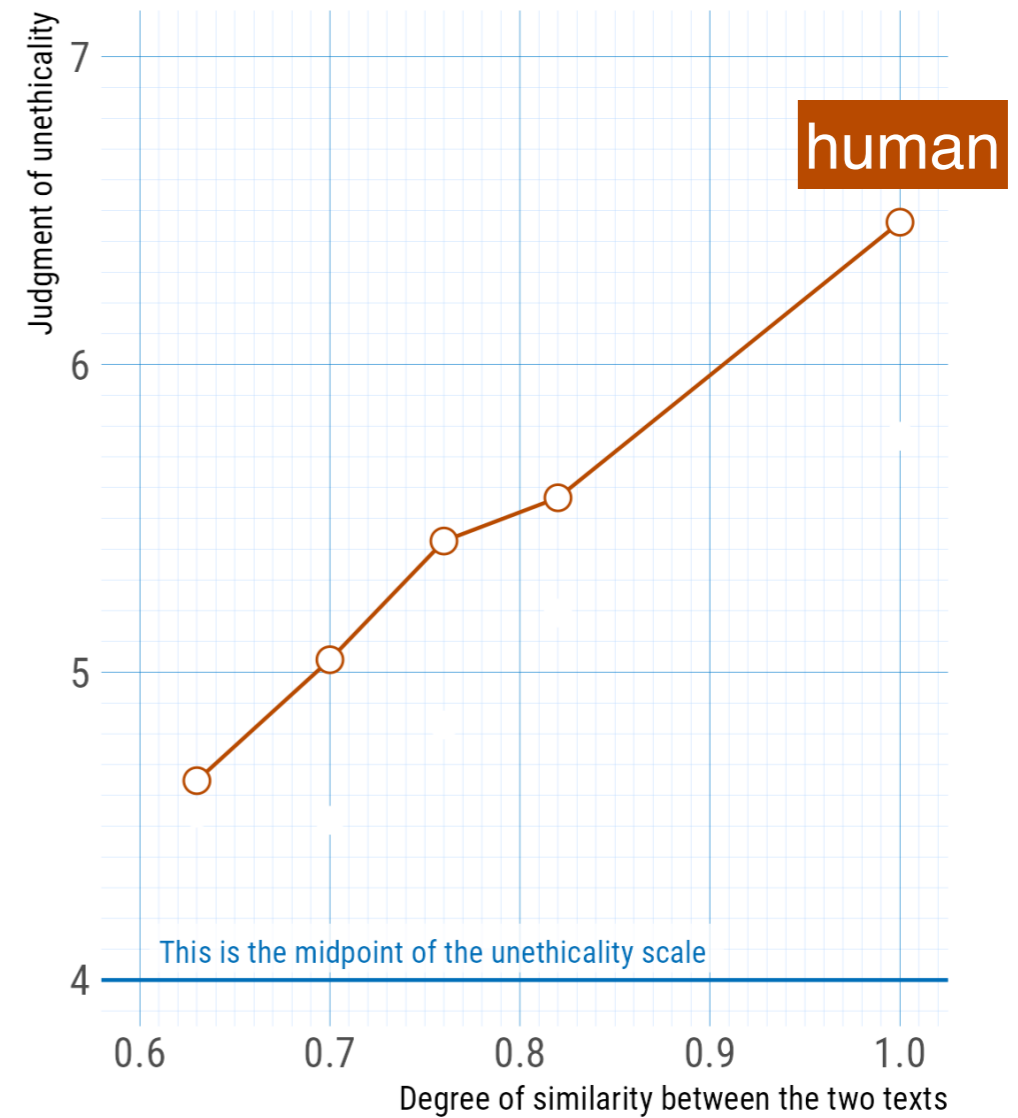
n = 882 students

Study 2 - Third-party judgments

Is this plagiarism?



How unethical is this?

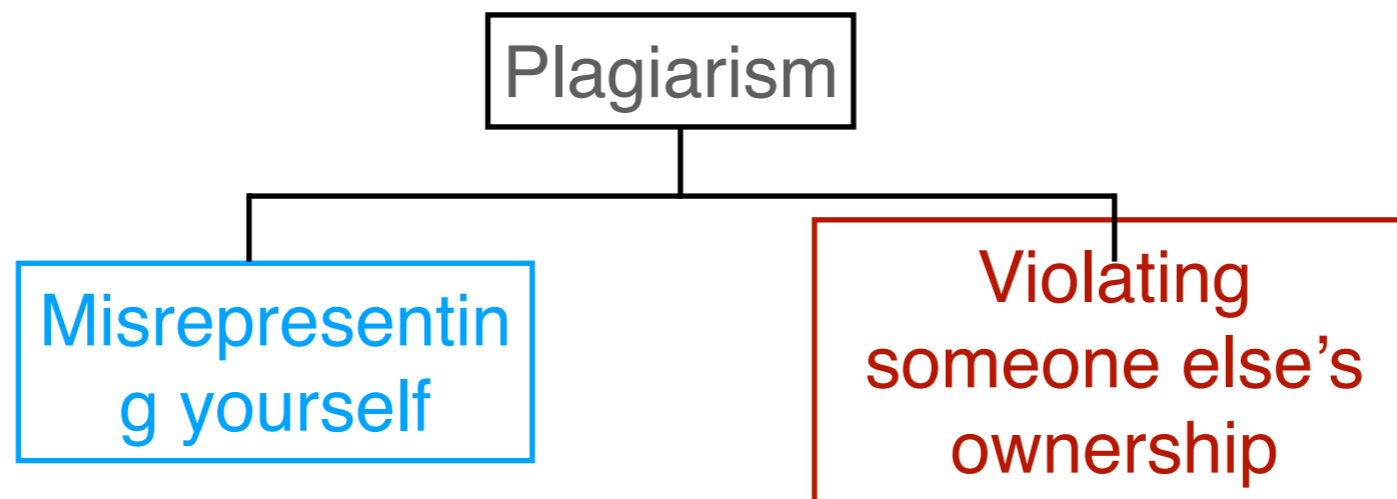


n = 1032 American residents

Studies 3-4 - Mechanisms

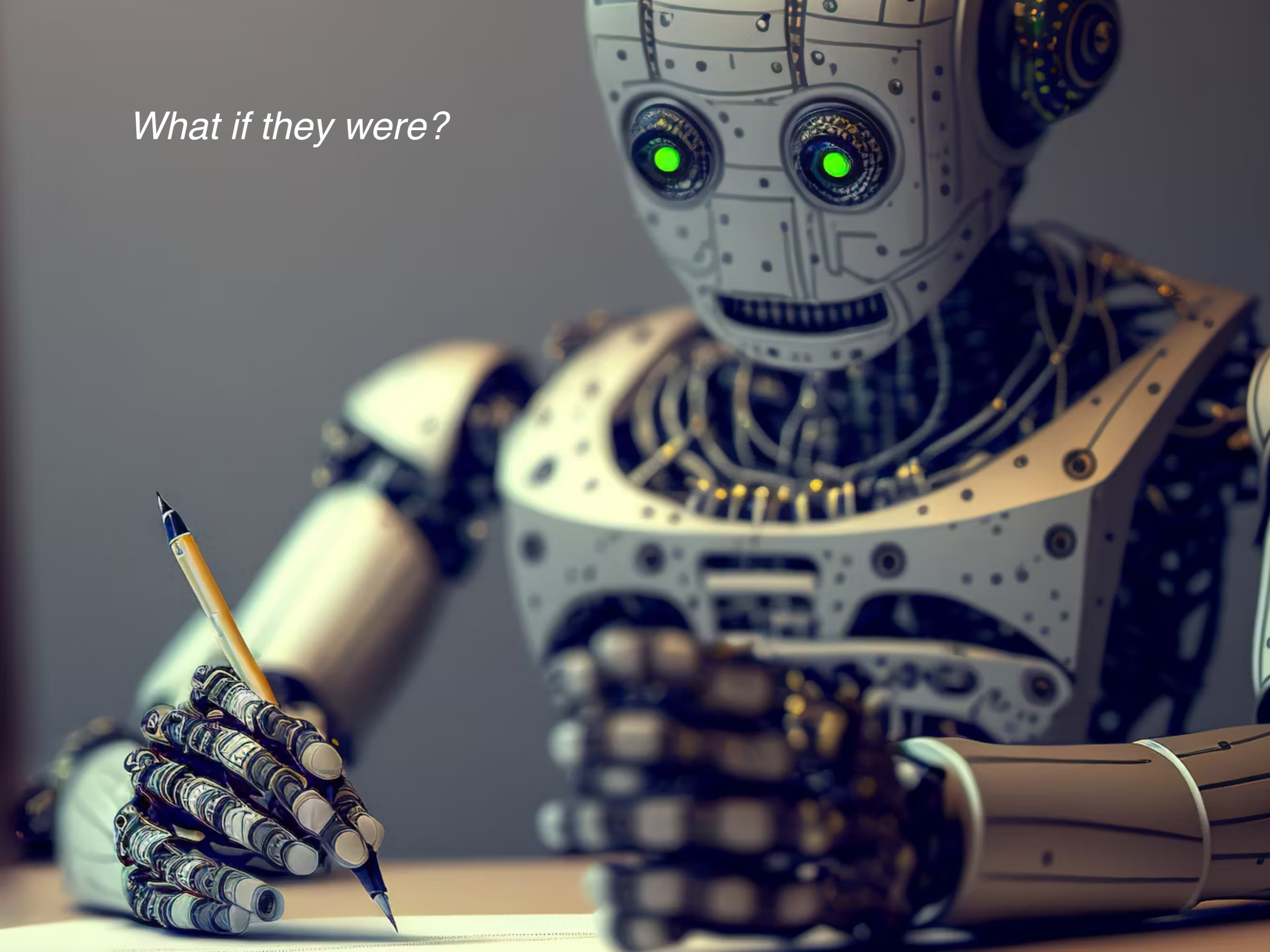
Why?

- Doesn't seem to be differences in perceptions of legality
- Doesn't seem to be differences in perceptions of effort



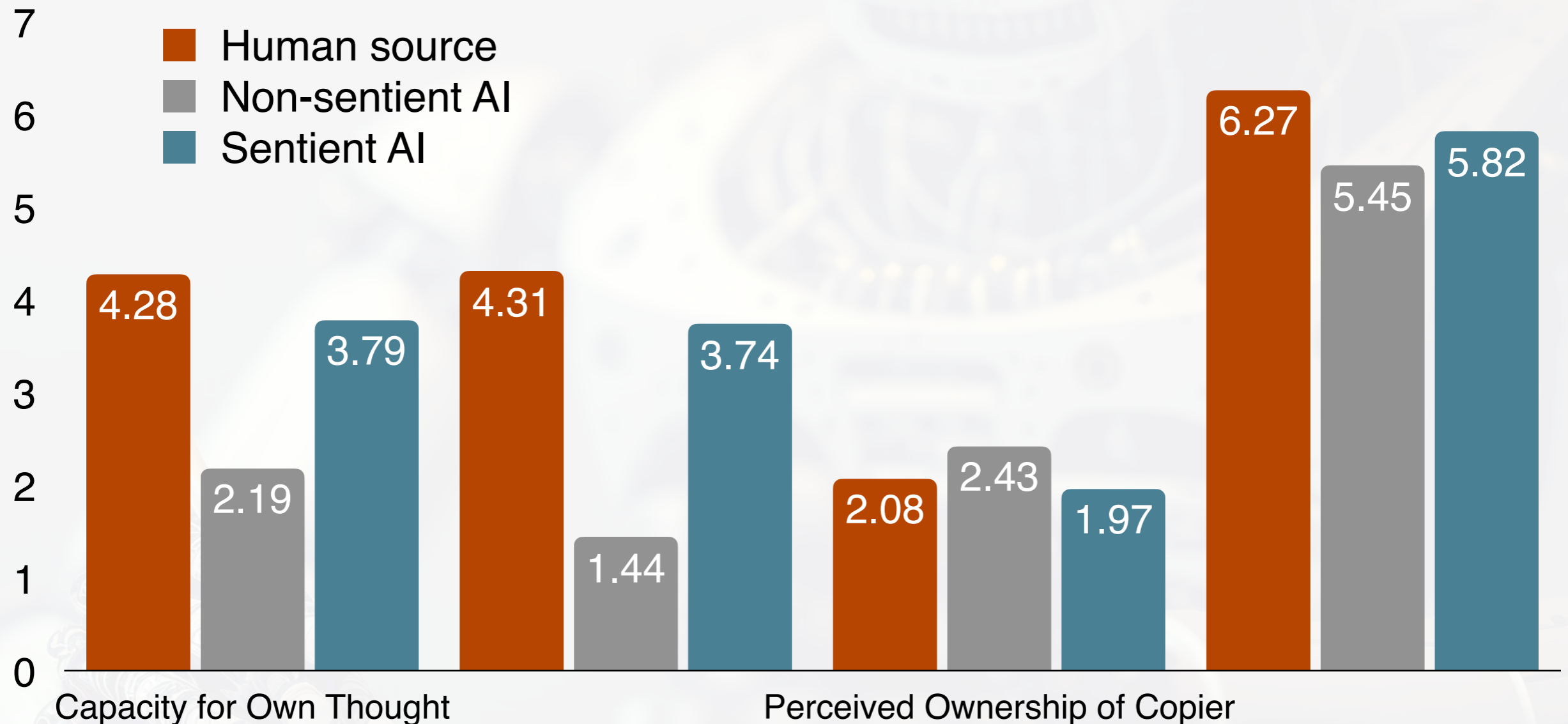
- Doesn't seem to be differences in concerns about misrepresenting oneself
- Instead, it seems to be driven by different intuitions about *ownership*

What if they were?



Study 5 - Science Fiction Science

Imagine a future, one hundred years from now, in which we share the world with both sentient and non-sentient robots. The sentient robots are not only able to think like humans, but feel like them too—experiencing a rich emotional life full of love, sadness, ambition and jealousy...



n = 749 American residents

Conclusions

- This is an fast moving field; attitudes are liable to change quickly
- But for right now, we should be wary of relying on students' intuitive sense of moral wrongness
- Instead, we should:
 - (A) be sure to make explicit to students what the rules—and punishments—are
 - (B) find creative ways of working with LLMs while preserving the educational benefits of writing