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The Reputational Threat of Scandalous Deepfakes and their Effects on Voting Intention

Internal workshop at the LMU Center for Advanced Studies

Speakers: Briony Swire-Thompson (Northeastern University & Harvard), Dannagal G. Young (University of Delaware), Michelle A. Amazeen (Boston University)

Abstract: According to expert predictions, politicians are likely to become a target of deepfakes, defined as real-looking yet fraudulent videos created using artificial intelligence (AI). A synthesized version of a politician can be shown saying or doing things they never have, and that are contrary to what most people would consider appropriate—thus staging a full-fledged scandal. Currently, scholars and pundits alike assume that deepfakes would yield sweeping effects. In particular, it is feared that they would ruin the reputation of that politician, making it unlikely that he/she would be elected. Yet, such contentions are yet to be tested empirically, especially in comparison to the effects of traditional fraudulent videos (i.e., those not using AI) and “classical” text-based rumors on the one hand, and authentic incriminating videos on the other. This workshop begins with the brief presentation of an experiment testing whether these effects actually occur using a fictitious politician, as well as possibilities to debunk false beliefs. Thereafter, the panelists bounce ideas for future studies and reflect on the implications of the results available.

Tuesday, June 15, 2021

Zoom link:

<https://lmu-munich.zoom.us/j/98333549805?pwd=cVo3T3JheGhFZ3N1Qkwrd1N0T09VZz09>

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| 3.00 – 3:05 pm | Welcome |
| 3.05 – 3.30 pm | Viorela Dan (LMU)
The Effects of Deepfakes: Experimental Findings |
| 3.30 – 3.45 pm | Michelle A. Amazeen (Boston University)
Response |
| 3.45 – 4.00 pm | Briony Swire-Thompson (Northeastern University & Harvard)
Response |
| 4.00 – 4.15 pm | Dannagal G. Young (University of Delaware)
Response |
| 4.15 – 4.30 pm | Coffee Break |
| 4.30 – 5.55 pm | The Study of Deepfake: What’s Next?
Moderator: Viorela Dan |
| 5.55 – 6.00 pm | Wrap-Up & Closing Remarks |