

Misinformation and disinformation

AI avatar Kailana: Hi, I'm Kailana, an AI avatar voicing a human-authored script. This video introduces an issue that's becoming more important every day as AI progresses. Misinformation is incorrect information spread by AI-generated content, and the deliberate spreading of false information is a parallel issue and is known as disinformation.

With the rise of readily available AI tools that can create hyper-realistic images, videos, and even entire news articles, it's becoming harder to distinguish between real and fake content online. Deepfakes can make it seem like someone said or did something that never happened. This opens the door to serious consequences, especially when AI-generated content is used to spread false information. Perhaps ironically, this video uses the same sorts of technologies that could be misused in these cases.

Misinformation can mislead people, harm reputations, or even influence public opinion. For example, AI-generated videos could be used to create fake news reports or speeches that sway voters in an election. This kind of manipulation not only undermines trust but also creates confusion, making it difficult to know what's real anymore. Easy access to generative AI tools has opened the door to lower-cost disinformation efforts and is used to support such things as viral social media campaigns.

So how can we protect ourselves from falling for false information? At an individual level, it's important to critically evaluate the content we consume. Ask yourself key questions about the source: its credibility, potential conflicts of interest, and the evidence supporting the claims. Learning to recognise signs of dis- and misinformation is a skill we must all develop. On a larger scale, we can advocate for greater transparency and regulation, such as requiring platforms to clearly label AI-generated content or implementing robust detection systems to flag fake news. AI itself can be part of the solution, using machine learning models to identify and explain false content while promoting information integrity.

As educators, we have a critical role to play in addressing these challenges. By teaching students how to identify disinformation and misinformation, and discussing the ethical implications of AI, we can empower them to navigate an increasingly complex digital landscape responsibly.