

Submission from Yassir (17 – VIC)

Adapted/improved speech (Made by AI and inspired by my own work)

Every day, we swim through an endless stream of content. We scroll past faces, headlines, and stories—rarely stopping to ask: ‘Is this real, or is it just convincing?’

With AI advancing so fast, the boundary between human creativity and synthetic code is blurring. In fact, AI-generated deepfakes increased by over 900% in a single year, and studies show that people can only spot AI-generated faces about 60% of the time—meaning we’re falling for them almost half the time.

A voice call, a portrait, a historical event—anything can be fabricated in seconds to look completely authentic.

Misinformation doesn’t just spread because it looks real—it spreads because it feels dramatic. Research from MIT found that false news spreads six times faster on social media than the truth, reaching 1,500 people way before a fact-check ever catches up.

We’re wired to trust big numbers: high views, viral likes, endless shares. But popularity has never been a guarantee of truth.

“So, what’s left to trust? Maybe truth isn’t something found on a glass screen.

Studies consistently show that while online connections give us quick dopamine hits, real-world human interactions are what actually lower stress and build genuine trust. It’s the quiet conversations, the shared laughter over coffee, the tangible moments that AI can mimic, but never actually feel.

In a world saturated with digital noise, being ‘real’ means grounding ourselves in the experiences algorithms can’t recreate.

Reference list

1. MIT Study on Misinformation: Vosoughi, S., Roy, D., & Aral, S. (2018). The spread of true and false news online. *Science*, 359(6380), 1146-1151. (Source for: False news spreading 6x faster than truth on social platforms).
2. AI Face Perception & Human Accuracy: Nightingale, S. J., & Faraday, H. (2022). AI-generated faces are indistinguishable from real faces and judge more trustworthy. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)*, 119(8). (Source for: Humans identifying synthetic faces at near-chance levels / ~60% accuracy).
3. Deepfake Growth & Synthetic Media: Sumsb / Security Identity Reports (2023–2024). *Global Deepfake Statistics & AI Fraud Trends*. (Source for: Over 900% year-over-year increase in deepfake media online).