Levi George

09/02/2020

CS 30600: Computers in Society

Professor Chansavang

Freedom of Speech and National Relations

Freedom of Speech is the most basic right afforded to U.S. citizens. It is held in such high regard that it is the first amendment right. Clearview A.I., however, has several lawsuits being filed against it for its uses of publicly available images in a criminal tracking database (Hill, 2020). It is important to make note of Clearview A.I.’s purpose. The company sells an A.I. research tool that is used by law enforcement to discover the identity of perpetrators and victims of crimes. According to their website the tool has helped law enforcement descend upon hundreds of criminals ranging from pedophiles to sex traffickers. They claim that they use public information only and are within full compliance of the law (“Computer vision…”, 2020).

First Amendment Lawyer Floyd Abrams has taken to the defense of Clearview. Stating that those lawsuits levied against Clearview should be dropped as enforcing them would be a violation of freedom of speech. Abrams believes that Clearview has a right to disseminate publicly available photos (Hill, 2020). Although, when does privacy take precedence over freedom of speech? Is there a possibility that Clearview could evolve into a more insidious tool, one that tracks people at all moments? Could this evaluation of Clearview’s innocence by citing Freedom of Speech lead to more intrusions of privacy with the same defense? Personally, I believe that Clearview could easily evolve into something worse, especially if Clearview can take anyone’s publicly available information without their consent. Clearview should request permission to use this information.

Works Cited

“Computer vision for a safer world.” *Clearview.ai,* 2020. <https://clearview.ai/>. Accessed 2 Sept. 2020.

Hill, Kashmir. “Facial Recognition Start-Up Mounts A First Amendment Defense.” *The New York Times,* 11 Aug. 2020.<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/11/technology/clearview-floyd-abrams.html>. Accessed 2 Sept. 2020.