Inquiry Process Document

Criterion A: Inquiry focus

Inquiry question
To what extent is deepfake technology being used as tools for manipulation and disinformation in political affairs and democratic elections?

Connection: The real world example and the Inquiry question
In March 18 of 2022 the deepfake video with the president Zelensky, where tells his army to put down their weapons on the battlefield against the Russian army, was published to weaken Ukraine's troops (The Telegraph, 2022).

Thus, it is evident that deepfake causes threat to political processes and can be applied to public figures with intent to influence the course of action of the war. Therefore, such technology might be highly influential in political manipulations, including democratic elections as a part.

Context: Connection between the Inquiry question & specific relevant real world example and the related Context in the DS Guide
4.6 Political/ 4.6A Political processes: Since deepfake can be a part of political strategies against opponents as Russians to Ukrainians, it can also be used as a tool for manipulation during political elections. Thus synthetic media applied as a way for political propaganda.

4.7 Social/ 4.7A Social components of identity: Deepfakes can manipulate opinions of citizens, including Ukrainians when they were told to stop the war. However it can also affect opinions in society by providing effective communication and language localization for political figures without harming societal norms.

Content: Connection between the Inquiry question & specific relevant real world example and the related Content in the DS Guide
3.5 Media/ 3.5A Types of digital media: Deepfakes are used as a part of the media so that the digital media would reach a wider audience as Ukrainian troops, where credibility and reliability of the information is not always ensured.

Concept(s): Connection between the Inquiry question & specific relevant real world example and the related Concept(s) in the DS Guide
2.1 Change/ 2.1A Change is the evolution, transformation, adaptation or movement from one form, state or value to another:
The integration of synthetic media in political elections can make a large shift in political processes as it can manipulate media, changing democratic processes as with the Ukraine war.

2.4 Power/ 2.4A Power is a feature of all social relations that involves a person's or group's capacity to influence or control the actions of others:
Manipulation of information through deepfake, including Zelensky's deepfake challenges distribution of political power within democratic systems. It can empower certain politicians, such as Putin by strategically manipulating public opinion.

2.7 Values and Ethics/ 2.7A Values and ethics are ways to determine possible distinctions between right and wrong, fair and unfair, just and unjust, legal and illegal, proper and improper:

The integration of deepfakes in political processes as the Russian-Ukraine war raises ethical concerns around authenticity, damaging the image of political figures, including Zelensky through unethical misuse of AI.

Criterion B: Claims and perspectives

Kaplan, L. (2019, January 10). How campaigns can protect themselves from deepfakes, disinformation, and social media manipulation. *Brookings.* https://www.brookings.edu/blog/techtank/2019/01/10/how-campaigns-can-protect-themselves-from-deepfakes-disinformation-and-social-media-manipulation/

The article describes how much threat deepfake content can create for democracies because author Lisa Kaplan provides an example that Russian interference in the 2016 elections demonstrated the ease with which social media platforms can be manipulated to promote misleading content and misinformation. Therefore, the aim of the article is to provide guidance for political parties to protect their campaigns from digital threats, including deepfakes, disinformation, and social media manipulation. It also aims to raise awareness about the potential dangers of these tactics by offering strategies to decrease their impact. Kaplan draws on her experience as the digital director for a U.S. Senate campaign to provide practical insights and recommendations as she said "In this article, I distill what we learned in our campaign about digital and social media threats and show the methods designed to mitigate the risks of digital attacks".

The reliability of the source written by Lisa Kaplan can be justified because of her expertise in the field of digital campaigns and the fight against disinformation as Kaplan is the founder of Alethea Group, a company specializing in combating disinformation and digital manipulation. The main method she used to convince the audience was sharing her own experience as she also served as the digital director for the 2018 Angus King for U.S. Senate campaign, where she gained practical experience while working with digital threats. Her firsthand knowledge and expertise make her a credible source on this topic. Thus, the tactics she suggests to deal with misleading deepfake content can be considered as reliable and that campaigners, technology companies, citizens, and the media can take action against disinformation without sacrificing freedom of expression with the help of them.

Therefore, the article by Lisa Kaplan is highly useful for the inquiry as it provides valuable insights into the types of threats campaigns face, such as deepfakes, disinformation, and social media manipulation. Kaplan offers specific examples and tactics used by adversaries and provides practical recommendations on how campaigns can protect themselves. For instance, evaluating strengths and weaknesses, obtaining relevant training, and developing proactive and defensive strategies to mitigate digital attacks.

Thomas, D. (2020, January 22). How deepfakes could threaten democracy. *BBC News.* https://www.bbc.com/news/business-51204954

The source is aimed at discussing the potential risks and implications of deepfake technology, particularly in relation to politics and democracy. It focuses on the fact that deepfake content can manipulate public opinion, and spread political disinformation. To make readers more aware of the issue, the author presents politicians using the existing deepfakes to discredit real videos.

The BBC is a reliable source of information as it has worked since 1922 as a news portal (History of BBC, n.d). This particular article was written by Daniel Thomas, who is a business reporter for BBC News and a professional journalist, who specializes in covering business-related topics. However, his discussion about deepfakes that have the potential to

undermine democracy by discrediting genuine video evidence and spreading disinformation might be unreliable because he is not fully aware of the political aspect of our society.

The BBC article is useful for inquiries related to the impact of deepfakes on democracy and politics. It provides insights from experts, including Professor Hao Li from USC and Giorgio Patrini, a director of Deptrace, which is a cybersecurity company. Thus, it offers perspectives on the greater extent of risks associated with deepfake technology in politics. However, since the perspective of the director of the cybersecurity company is discussed, it is eviden that he offers a hypothesis that even though there will be significant effects of deepfakes of political manipulation and disinformation, humanity will be able to create a solution to detect AI generated content. Thus, the article provides an idea towards the fact that political affairs are highly impacted by synthetic technology.

The Economist. (2020, November 5). Could deepfakes weaken democracy? [Video]. *YouTube*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_m2dRDQEC1A

The Economist's YouTube video "Could deepfakes weaken democracy?" has a purpose to raise awareness about the impact of deepfakes on democratic processes. The reason is that it focuses on potential threats of deepfakes in increasing the challenges of distinguishing between fake news and real information. Also, It raises concerns about the manipulation of voters living in democratic countries as synthetic learning could influence public opinion because of which people can lose faith in digital content and their reliability. Thus, the video emphasizes the advancement of artificial intelligence and machine learning in creating misleading deepfakes, which increases the risks they make to democratic societies.

The Economist is considered to be a highly reputable and reliable source for global news as it is known for its accurate fact checking and in-depth reporting. However, the publication has a long history of providing credible and balanced information on various subjects so it's main focus is not politics. Therefore, arguments against the impact of AI on political processes might be exaggerated to gain increased public attention. The reliability of The Economist as a source ensures that the information presented in the video is well researched. Also, the main method used to convince the audience was integrating the examples of the deepfake video of ex-president of the United States of America - Donald J. Trump to show that everybody in the political runs can be affected by the artificial intelligence technologies and thus be harmed by it.

The Economist's YouTube video is highly useful for inquiries related to deepfakes and their potential impact on democracy. The reason is that the video provides clear explanations of deepfake technology can be used in political affairs as a voting system and its potential consequences. To make it even more convincing visual details were added as the format of video allowed authors to add real life deepfake video examples that helped people to understand the scale of the problem. It also offers insights from experts such as Aviv Ovadia who is an international expert regarding potential dangers of artificial intelligence (LinkedIn). This, in turn, helps to enhance the understanding of the topic. Being a reputable source, The Economist adds credibility to the presented information, making it valuable for an audience who has the intention to explore the implications of deepfakes on democratic processes. Specifically, that deepfakes pose a significant threat to democracy and making it almost impossible to understand the difference between real content and fake information. Thus, the spread of deepfakes can lead to decreased trust in media and public figures, potentially undermining democratic systems. However, the source also says that the development of deepfake can be used as an excuse to help politicians escape scrutiny. Therefore the source

creates an insight towards the point that AI creates a world where people won't know what they can trust, especially in politics.

Therefore, the source is helpful for the inquiry because it provides specific examples of manipulation in democratic elections and politicians falsified information, where they can justify their actions relying on deepfakes.

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