

# Yes, deepfakes can make people believe in misinformation — but no more than less-hyped ways of lying | Nieman Journalism Lab

By Joshua Benton

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For some completely unknowable reason, a lot of people are interested these days in why Americans sometimes get the most damn-fool ideas in their heads about politics. What leads people to believe fantastical claims of imaginary voter fraud, say, or that the Democratic Party is run by a league of Satanic cannibal pedophiles?

There's plenty of blame to go around: political leaders happy to embrace politically convenient lies; partisan media optimized for inflammation; social platforms that reward the outlandish and false over the boring and true.

But one popular suspect going into 2020 was technological: deepfakes.

And a new study finds that — even if we had seen a swarm of deepfakes — they probably wouldn't have been any more effective at making people believe false things than other, simpler tools in the fraudster's toolbox.

[...]

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