Fake AI videos have a new generation loving 1980s life | FMT

Original Article



NEW YORK: "The 1980s are calling," says a teenager with an old-style haircut. In the background, a rock song called "Everybody Wants to Rule the World" by Tears for Fears plays. This song was popular in the 1980s.

But this video isn't real. It was made by a computer program called artificial intelligence, or AI for short. The fake video got more than 600,000 "likes" on Instagram. This is part of something called "AI nostalgia." Nostalgia means missing old times. This can be confusing for people who really lived in the 1980s.

There's an Instagram account called Maximal Nostalgia that makes lots of videos like this. They show a perfect, dreamy version of the 1980s and 1990s. Everything looks soft and beautiful, like in a fairy tale.

These videos are made using special computer programs. Some are called OpenAI's Sora, Google's Veo, and Luma AI's Ray. These programs can make videos that look very real. At first, it's hard to tell they're fake. They look like real videos from long ago.

People on Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube use these computer programs to look back at old times. They show young people from before smartphones existed. In these videos, kids spend more time outside and talk to each other face-to-face instead of looking at phones.

One person making these videos is Tavaius Dawson. He's 26 years old and runs the Maximal Nostalgia account. But Tavaius wasn't even born in the 1980s!

"People who were born when smartphones and social media already existed kind of wish they'd lived in a time when they didn't have to worry about this stuff," Dawson told a news reporter.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

'Rose-coloured glasses'

Someone who really lived in the 1980s might notice that some things in the videos are wrong. For example, New York City didn't have bike lanes back then like it does now.

But young people who were born much later really like these videos about the 1980s. The videos show peaceful neighbourhoods and city streets. They look like happy movies from that time period.

Other accounts like Maximal Nostalgia include Purest Nostalgia and utopic.dreamer. They all show the same kind of perfect world.

But the videos don't show the bad things that really happened in the 1980s. Back then, there were problems like people getting very sick from AIDS, and some people were addicted to dangerous drugs. The videos also don't show that some people were very poor whilst others were very rich.

Instead, the fake videos show the fun parts of the 1980s. People had big, puffy hair, wore bright clothes, and had big shoulder pads on their jackets.

"You have people look at the 1950s or 1960s through rose-coloured glasses, forgetting a lot of difficult things that were happening at those times," said Anna Behler. She's a teacher who studies how people think. Rose-coloured glasses means seeing things as better than they really were.

"Now, we're seeing the same thing with the '80s," she said. This means lots of people are remembering the 1980s as better than it really was.

Dawson says his videos aren't meant to teach history. He just wants to make people happy.

Even though Dawson has good reasons for making the videos, Anna Behler is worried. The AI videos look so real that people might think they show what really happened in the past. This could "blur the line" between real history and made-up stories.

AI is a very modern technology, but it uses old pictures and videos to make new ones that remind people of the past. This makes people feel comfortable when they're feeling lonely.

"Nostalgia isn't a trick; it's emotional survival," said Simon Parmeggiani. He makes videos for a channel called Neptunian Glitter Ball. His videos also look back at the 1980s, but he adds some fantasy to them.

Alicia West Fancher works selling makeup. She really lived through the 1980s and watched some of these AI videos.

"I teared up," Fancher told the news reporter. This means the videos made her cry happy tears. "It's definitely not a made-up version; that's how it was."

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Now Dawson wants to make real videos with real people instead of using AI. He wants to make them look like his perfect version of the 1980s or 1990s.

"One thing we're certain of is that nostalgia doesn't fade," Dawson said. This means people will always miss old times and want to remember them.

Quiz: AI Videos and 1980s Nostalgia

1. What is AI nostalgia?
a) Missing old computers from the past
b) Missing old times that AI videos show
c) Being sad about new technology
d) Wanting to live in the future

2. Why do young people like these fake 1980s videos?
a) They want to learn about real history
b) They think the videos are funny
c) They wish they lived when there were no smartphones
d) They want to become famous on social media

3. What does "rose-colored glasses" mean in the article?
a) Wearing pink sunglasses
b) Seeing things as better than they really were
c) Looking at old photographs
d) Having good eyesight

4. What is the main problem Anna Behler worries about?
a) The videos cost too much money to make
b) People might think the fake videos show real history
c) The videos are too long and boring
d) Young people won't learn to use computers

5. Why doesn't Tavaius Dawson show the bad things from the 1980s?
a) He doesn't know about them because he wasn't born yet
b) He wants to make people happy, not teach history
c) The AI programs can't make videos about sad things
d) Instagram won't allow videos about problems

6. What can we learn about how nostalgia affects people?
a) It only happens to old people who lived in the past
b) It makes people want to buy old things
c) It helps people feel better when they're lonely
d) It makes people forget how to use new technology

7. How might these AI videos change what people think about the past?
a) People will study history more carefully
b) People might believe the fake perfect world was real

LIVEWORKSHEETS

c) People will stop watching old movies
d) People will want to time travel to the 1980s

8. What does the article suggest about every time period?
a) The 1980s were the best time to live
b) All time periods have both good and bad things
c) Modern times are worse than the past
d) AI can fix problems from any time period

9. Why might someone who really lived in the 1980s have mixed feelings about these videos?
a) They remember both good and difficult times that aren't shown
b) They don't understand how AI works
c) They think the videos are too short
d) They want to be in the videos themselves

10. What does this article teach us about technology and memory?
a) New technology always makes things better
b) We should only remember happy things from the past
c) Technology can create feelings about times we never lived through
d) Old technology was better than new technology

Math Word Problems: AI Videos and 1980s Nostalgia

Problem 1: Instagram Likes
The fake AI video about the 1980s got 600,000 likes on Instagram. If another AI video gets 250,000 fewer likes, how many likes did the second video get?

Problem 2: Tavaius's Age
Tavaius Dawson is 26 years old now. The 1980s ended in 1989. If Tavaius was born in 1998, how many years after the 1980s ended was he born?

Problem 3: Social Media Accounts
The article mentions 3 Instagram accounts that make nostalgic videos: Maximal Nostalgia, Purest Nostalgia, and utopic.dreamer. If each account posts 4 videos per week, how many videos do all 3 accounts post together in one week?

Problem 4: AI Programs
The article names 3 AI programs used to make videos: OpenAI's Sora, Google's Veo, and Luma AI's Ray. If a creator uses each program to make 5 videos, how many total videos can they make?

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Solution: 3 programs × 5 videos = 15 total videos

Problem 5: Decades of Nostalgia
The article talks about people feeling nostalgic for the 1950s, 1960s, and 1980s. If someone born in 2015 watches videos about all these decades, how many decades before their birth year are they learning about? (Count: 1950s = 1950-1959, 1960s = 1960-1969, 1980s = 1980-1989)

LIVEWORKSHEETS