From virtual bliss to virtual betrayal: the growing threat of romance fraud in VR spaces

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Title: From Virtual Bliss to Virtual Betrayal: The Growing Threat of Romance Fraud in VR Spaces

Abstract: Romance fraud is a pervasive form of social engineering that has gained momentum in recent years. Fraudsters create fictitious personas on dating platforms to lure unsuspecting individuals into a relationship to defraud them. The impact of such fraud can be devastating, causing not only monetary loss but also emotional distress for those seeking companionship. As technology advances, new challenges emerge, with the rise of VR, XR, and the Metaverse posing additional risks. This talk explores the phenomenon of romance fraud, its impact on victims, and how emerging technologies present new challenges for online dating.

Biography: Dr Lynsay Shepherd is a Lecturer in Cybersecurity and Human-Computer Interaction in the School of Design and Informatics at Abertay University and has a PhD in Usable Security. She is a SPRITE+ Expert Fellow and Deputy Lead for Human Interaction and User Experience at Abertay University. Her research focuses on applied research on the human aspects of cybersecurity, investigating how people interact with emerging technologies, and their behaviour in the context of secure interactions.