



Two New Studies Claim Putin Put Trump in the White House. Credible? Not!

Allegations of collusion with Russia have been leveled at President Trump since he was candidate Trump. His enemies in politics, media, and the Deep State are behind those allegations, which they have used since the beginning in an attempt first to keep him from winning, and since then to delegitimize his presidency. Now, two newly released studies assert that Russia's interference in the 2016 elections targeted minorities and was designed to help conservatives in general and Donald Trump in specific.



The [first study](#) — entitled “The IRA, Social Media and Political Polarization in the United States 2012-2018” — was conducted by the Oxford University Computational Propaganda Project and Graphika and funded by the usual suspect in big tech, big media, big government, and the big liberal tax-exempt foundations. Financiers include AOL, Google, BBC World Service Trust, eHarmony, Virgin Media, the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), National Institutes of Health, British Telecommunications, UNESCO, and the Rockefeller Foundation. The study's report was prepared for the Senate Intelligence Committee.

The committee — led by Chairman Richard Burr (R-N.C.) and ranking Democrat Mark Warner (D-Va.) — has been probing allegations of collusion between the Trump campaign / administration and Russia since President Trump took office. [According](#) to the *Washington Post*, lawmakers said the findings “do not necessarily represent the views” of the panel or its members.

Given the known agenda of those behind the study, it is of little surprise that the study “found” that social media accounts controlled by Russia's Internet Research Agency (IRA) “spread sensationalist, conspiratorial, and other forms of junk political news and misinformation to voters across the political spectrum” with a goal to “confuse, distract, and ultimately discourage members [of minority groups] from voting.”

According to the study, the “minority groups” targeted by the IRA included African Americans, Native Americans, Latin Americans, Muslim Americans, and LGBT users. The study asserts that the biggest “victims” of the Russian disinformation campaign were “conservative groups,” which were used as pawns by Russia to elect Donald Trump.

The study claims to have looked at and analyzed millions of social media posts in determining the size, scope, and impact of Russia's interference in the 2016 elections. According to the *Post*:

The first report — by Oxford University's Computational Propaganda Project and Graphika, a network analysis firm — offers new details of how Russians working at the Internet Research Agency, which U.S. officials have charged with criminal offenses for interfering in the 2016 campaign, sliced Americans into key interest groups for targeted messaging. These efforts shifted



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over time, peaking at key political moments, such as presidential debates or party conventions, the report found.

The data sets used by the researchers were provided by Facebook, Twitter and Google and covered several years up to mid-2017, when the social media companies cracked down on the known Russian accounts. The report, which also analyzed data separately provided to House Intelligence Committee members, contains no information on more recent political moments, such as November's midterm elections.

The report claims, "What is clear is that all of the messaging clearly sought to benefit the Republican Party — and specifically Donald Trump." Furthermore, "Trump is mentioned most in campaigns targeting conservatives and right-wing voters, where the messaging encouraged these groups to support his campaign. The main groups that could challenge Trump were then provided messaging that sought to confuse, distract and ultimately discourage members from voting."

The *Post* article — seeming to take the study at face value — says that it "offers the latest evidence that Russian agents sought to help Trump win the White House. According to the *Post*:

The Russians aimed particular energy at activating conservatives on issues such as gun rights and immigration, while sapping the political clout of left-leaning African American voters by undermining their faith in elections and spreading misleading information about how to vote. Many other groups — Latinos, Muslims, Christians, gay men and women, liberals, Southerners, veterans — got at least some attention from Russians operating thousands of social media accounts.

Of course, even if it is proven that Russia was behind a major social media disinformation campaign leading up to the election of Donald Trump (which is a likely scenario), that would not necessarily implicate Trump or anyone involved in his campaign in collusion with Russia.

As if on cue, the [second study](#) — a product of left-leaning New Knowledge, Columbia University and Canfield Research — echoed the same general sentiment, stating, "The IRA created an expansive cross-platform media mirage targeting the Black community, which shared and cross-promoted authentic Black media to create an immersive influence ecosystem." And as the *Post* reported:

This report, though largely tracking with the one from Oxford and Graphika in its conclusions, also offered some new statistics, including that the Russians posted more than 1,000 YouTube videos for their disinformation campaign and that Instagram generated more than twice the "engagement" among users than either Facebook or Twitter. Such metrics track user comments, shares, likes and other actions that go beyond having an item merely appear on their screens.

And with a wink and a nod toward greater government controls, the article stated:

The authors of the report by Oxford and Graphika, while reliant on data provided by technology companies, also highlighted the companies' "belated and uncoordinated response" to the disinformation campaign and, once it was discovered, their failure to share more with investigators. The authors urged that in the future they provide data in "meaningful and constructive" ways.

Senators Burr and Warner — both known surveillance hawks — were quick to seize the opportunity to call for Big Government to gain even more power by taking the reins of Big Tech. Burr called the reports "proof positive that one of the most important things we can do is increase information sharing between the social media companies who can identify disinformation campaigns and the third-party experts who can analyze them." Warner said the information in the reports is "a wake-up call" that



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should bring about “some much-needed and long-overdue guardrails when it comes to social media.”

While there is little room for doubt that the Russian IRA used American social media in an attempt to disrupt American elections in 2016, two things asserted by Trump’s enemies as if they are established facts are yet unproven. The first is that Trump was the beneficiary of that meddling. The second is that more government control is the solution.

The one thing that is certain is that the spectre of Russian collusion will continue to haunt Trump into the 2020 elections — with or without any real evidence.

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