



Pekka Kallioniemi @P_Kallioniemi

Jan 24 · 18 tweets · [P_Kallioniemi/status/1617852982095405056](https://twitter.com/P_Kallioniemi/status/1617852982095405056)

In today's [#vatnik](#) soup, I'll talk about Russiagate and the Russian interference in the 2016 US elections. Twitter Files by [@mtaibbi](#) and The Grayzone blogger [@aaronjmate](#) have often suggested that the Russians had no effect on the election, which simply isn't true.

1/17



WANTED BY THE FBI

CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT AN OFFENSE AGAINST THE UNITED STATES; FALSE REGISTRATION OF A DOMAIN NAME; AGGRAVATED IDENTITY THEFT; CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT MONEY LAUNDERING

RUSSIAN INTERFERENCE IN 2016 U.S. ELECTIONS

					
<small>Boris Alekseyevich Antonov</small>	<small>Dmitriy Sergeyevevich Badin</small>	<small>Anatoliy Sergeyevevich Kovalev</small>	<small>Nikolay Yuryevich Kozachek</small>	<small>Aleksey Viktorovich Lukashev</small>	<small>Artem Andreyevich Malyshev</small>
					
<small>Sergey Aleksandrovich Morgachev</small>	<small>Aleksandr Vladimirovich Osadchuk</small>	<small>Aleksey Aleksandrovich Potemkin</small>	<small>Ivan Sergeyevevich Yermakov</small>	<small>Pavel Vyacheslavovich Yershov</small>	

DETAILS

On July 13, 2018, a federal grand jury sitting in the District of Columbia returned an indictment against 12 Russian military intelligence officers for their alleged roles in interfering with the 2016 United States (U.S.) elections. The indictment charges 11 defendants, Boris Alekseyevich Antonov, Dmitriy Sergeyevevich Badin, Nikolay Yuryevich Kozachek, Aleksey Viktorovich Lukashev, Artem Andreyevich Malyshev, Sergey Aleksandrovich Morgachev, Aleksandr Vladimirovich Osadchuk, Aleksey Aleksandrovich Potemkin, Ivan Sergeyevevich Yermakov, Pavel Vyacheslavovich Yershov, and Viktor Borisovich Netyksho, with a computer hacking conspiracy involving gaining unauthorized access into the computers of U.S. persons and entities involved in the 2016 U.S. presidential election, stealing documents from those computers, and staging releases of the stolen documents to interfere with the 2016 U.S. presidential election. The indictment also charges these defendants with aggravated identity theft, false registration of a domain name, and conspiracy to commit money laundering. Two defendants, Aleksandr Vladimirovich Osadchuk and Anatoliy Sergeyevevich Kovalev, are charged with a separate conspiracy to commit computer crimes, relating to hacking into the computers of U.S. persons and entities responsible for the administration of 2016 U.S. elections, such as state boards of elections, secretaries of state, and U.S. companies that supplied software and other technology related to the administration of U.S. elections. The United States District Court for the District of Columbia in Washington, D.C. issued a federal arrest warrant for each of these defendants upon the grand jury's return of the indictment.

THESE INDIVIDUALS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED ARMED AND DANGEROUS, AN INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT RISK, AND AN ESCAPE RISK

If you have any information concerning this case, please contact your local FBI office, or the nearest American Embassy or Consulate.

www.fbi.gov

Many pro-Russian actors have been downplaying the effects of Russian propaganda and disinformation campaigns during the 2016 elections.

In Jan, 2023, Eady et al. published their research on Nature Communications which concluded that ...

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Article | [Open Access](#) | [Published: 09 January 2023](#)

Exposure to the Russian Internet Research Agency foreign influence campaign on Twitter in the 2016 US election and its relationship to attitudes and voting behavior

[Gregory Eady](#) , [Tom Paskhalis](#) , [Jan Zilinsky](#), [Richard Bonneau](#), [Jonathan Nagler](#) & [Joshua A. Tucker](#)

Nature Communications **14**, Article number: 62 (2023) | [Cite this article](#)

30k Accesses | **1375** Altmetric | [Metrics](#)

Abstract

There is widespread concern that foreign actors are using social media to interfere in elections worldwide. Yet data have been unavailable to investigate links between exposure to foreign influence campaigns and political behavior. Using longitudinal survey data from US respondents linked to their Twitter feeds, we quantify the relationship between exposure to the Russian foreign influence campaign and attitudes and voting behavior in the 2016 US election. We demonstrate, first, that exposure to Russian disinformation accounts was heavily concentrated: only 1% of users accounted for 70% of exposures. Second, exposure was concentrated among users who strongly identified as Republicans. Third, exposure to the Russian influence campaign was eclipsed by content from domestic news media and politicians. Finally, we find no evidence of a meaningful relationship between exposure to the Russian foreign influence campaign and changes in attitudes, polarization, or voting behavior. The results have implications for understanding the limits of election interference campaigns on social media.

on Twitter, 1) the Russian disinformation was heavily concentrated, 2) the exposure was focused on people who identify as Republicans, and 3) the Russian influence campaign was eclipsed by content from domestic news media and politicians.

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This led to a publishing of several news articles, for example from [@LukewSavage](#), [@BrettWilkinsSF](#) and [@samfiddle](#), claiming that "Russia bots" weren't effective during the 2016 US elections, even though the study doesn't even have the word "bot" in it.

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New Study Blows Up Myth That Russian Bots Swayed 2016 Election for Trump

However, one of the paper's authors warned that "it would be a mistake to conclude that simply because the Russian foreign influence campaign on Twitter was not meaningfully related to individual-level attitudes that other aspects of the campaign did not have any impact on the election."



By BRETT WILKINS
Jan 30, 2023



A study published Monday by researchers at New York University eviscerated liberal Democrats' assertion that the Russian government's disinformation campaign on Twitter during the 2016 U.S. presidential election had any meaningful impact on the contest's outcome.

The study, which was led by NYU's Center for Social Media and Politics and published in the scientific journal *Nature Communications*, is based on a survey of nearly 1,500 U.S. respondents' Twitter activity. The researchers—who also include scholars from the University of Copenhagen, Trinity College Dublin, and Technical University of Munich—concluded that while "the online push by Russian foreign influence accounts didn't change attitudes or voting behavior in the 2016 U.S. election," the disinformation campaign "may still have had consequences."

It Turns Out Hillary Clinton, Not Russian Bots, Lost the 2016 Election

By
[LUKE SAVAGE](#)

A new study of Russia-based Twitter posts by New York University researchers buries the liberal canard that Russian bots played any significant role in swinging the 2016 election for Donald Trump.

THOSE RUSSIAN TWITTER BOTS DIDN'T DO \$#!% IN 2016, SAYS NEW STUDY

There is "no evidence" Russian Twitter bots had any meaningful effect pushing voters to Donald Trump in the 2016 presidential election.



Sam Fiddle
January 10 2023, 4:00 p.m.

SINCE THE 2016 presidential election, the notion that the Russian government somehow "weaponized" social media to push voters to Donald Trump has been widely taken as a gospel in liberal circles. A groundbreaking recent New York University study, however, says there's no evidence Russian tweets had any meaningful effect at all.

"We demonstrate, first, that exposure to Russian disinformation accounts was heavily concentrated: only 1% of users accounted for 70% of exposures," the scholars wrote in the journal *Nature Communications*.

"Second, exposure was concentrated among users who strongly identified as Republicans. Third, exposure to the Russian influence campaign was eclipsed by content from domestic news media and politicians. Finally, we find no evidence of a meaningful relationship between exposure to the Russian foreign influence campaign and changes in attitudes, polarization, or voting behavior."

The study itself had nothing to do with bots, which are automated user accounts that are often used to spread and augment content on social media.

Second, the study's scope was very small, and it looked into the relationship between Russian ...

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... propaganda tweets and attitudes and voting behavior. This effect wasn't found, but because the scope was so small, it's impossible to make any real conclusions in regards to actual voting behavior or attitude change.

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In 2016, Russia spent 1,5 billion USD per year on online disinformation and propaganda. They ran campaigns in Reddit, Youtube, 4chan, Instagram, Twitter, fake news blogs, Facebook and FB groups.

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They also organized rallies, demonstrations and infiltrated activist groups. Internet Research Agency (IRA) also spammed comment sections of various domestic newspapers and other websites.

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69. On or about August 2, 2016, Defendants and their co-conspirators used the false U.S. persona "Matt Skiber" Facebook account to send a private message to a real Facebook account, "Florida for Trump," set up to assist then-candidate Trump in the state of Florida. In the first message, Defendants and their co-conspirators wrote:

Hi there! I'm a member of Being Patriotic online community. Listen, we've got an idea. Florida is still a purple state and we need to paint it red. If we lose Florida, we lose America. We can't let it happen, right? What about organizing a YUGE pro-Trump flash mob in every Florida town? We are currently reaching out to local activists and we've got the folks who are okay to be in charge of organizing their events almost everywhere in FL. However, we still need your support. What do you think about that? Are you in?

For example, MIT Tech Review from 2021 exposed the incredible Russian infiltration in Facebook - 19/20 of top American Christian FB groups were troll farms, from African-American FB groups this number was 10/15.

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So called "hack and leak" operations were also effective in swaying the public opinion, and Russian hacker groups targeted especially the Democrats. For example the Podesta e-mails led to Pizzagate conspiracy theory which again helped QAnon to become extremely popular.

10/17



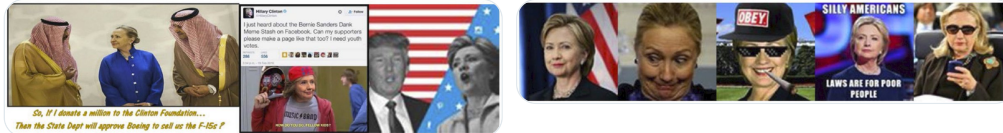
Russians also forged documents that were then spread online by the IRA employees and useful idiots like Trump-fanboy Roger Stone. RT, Ruptly and Sputnik also conducted propaganda campaigns for people in the US and in the West.

11/17



Memes and political news and ads were just a tiny part of this impressive campaigning, and research has found that organic online discussions were the most effective tools for the IRA.

12/17



The organization activated people on the far end of both spectrum and heavily promoted sensationalist and conspiratorial content. IRA employees goal was to "set Americans against their own government".

13/17

According to one former employee, IRA staff on the "foreign desk" were responsible for meddling in other countries' elections. In the run up to the 2016 U.S. presidential election, for example, foreign desk staff were reportedly trained on "the nuances of American social polemics on tax issues, LGBT rights, the gun debate, and more . . . their job was to incite [Americans] further and try to 'rock the boat.'" The employee noted that "our goal wasn't to turn the Americans toward Russia. Our task was to set Americans against their own government: to provoke unrest and discontent." Based on conversations with Facebook officials, it appears that Kremlin-backed trolls pursued a similar strategy in the lead up to the 2017 French presidential election, and likely before Germany's national election the same year. The IRA also apparently had a separate "Facebook desk" that fought back against the social network's efforts to delete fake accounts that the IRA had developed into sophisticated profiles. In addition, in the United States, Russian-backed social media accounts linked to the IRA paid for advertisements to promote disinformation and encouraged protests and rallies on both sides of socially divisive issues, such as promoting a protest in Baltimore while posing as part

Stating that the research proves that "Russian bots" were ineffective is either ignorance or conscious lying, and it completely disregards the dynamics of Russia's disinformation and propaganda campaigns.

14/17

36th Parallel made a nice graph of various aspects of the Russian information operation, and it shows that Twitter is just a tiny part of a huge campaign, affecting all levels of society.

15/17



It's quite telling that most major US news outlets have used IRA tweets as sources for partisan opinions, and many of their conspiracy theories and narratives already constructed in 2016 just won't die.

16/17

A
ANALYSIS

Most major outlets have used Russian tweets as sources for partisan opinion: study

By Josephine Lukito and Chris Wells
MARCH 8, 2018

SHARE ON TWITTER

THE NEW YORK TIMES'S BARI WEISS was in the news again yesterday, this time for citing a hoax Twitter account as an example of liberal intolerance. Just how often do such Twitter accounts make it into mainstream media, as @OfficialAntifa did in Weiss's column?

While it is well-established that Russians have imitated US citizens on social media, and that they bought thousands of dollars' worth of social media advertising, the impact of those attempts is not well understood. Special Counsel Robert

THE ABORTION ISSUE

Emergency upon Emergency: How the press reacted to *Dobbs*—and what comes next

A Matter of Necessity: Shefali Luthra covers abortion for *The 19th* at a crucial moment

When someone's stating that Russia's tactics consisted of "Jesus masturbation memes", they're either being stupid or dishonest. anyone who's looked into Russia's "active measures" and IRA's campaigns knows, that they were so much more, and that they had real impact in 2016.

17/17



Katie Halper 
@kthalps

Aaron Mate discusses Russian troll farms' dangerous Jesus masturbation memes that allegedly won Donald Trump the election. Full ep [youtube.com/watch?v=Pq1tzj...](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pq1tzj...) @aaronjmate @mtaibbi #UsefulidiotsPod @RollingStone @RSPolitics #russiagate



5,117 views 0:03 / 1:50

9:21 PM · May 18, 2020

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Russian info ops:



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In today's #vatnik soup, I'll start an introduction about the Russian information operations (an activity that tries to affect the public opinion and behavior of a society), disinformation and propaganda.

This topic is a broad issue and I'll do it over several threads.

1/10



7:20 AM · Dec 8, 2022



[Read the full conversation on Twitter](#)



610



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Troll farms:



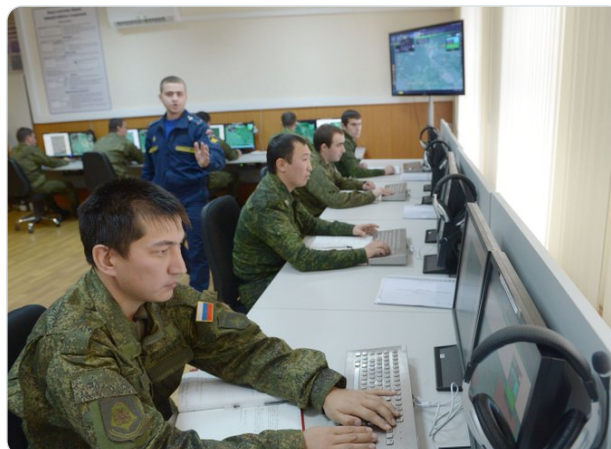
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In today's #vatnik soup, I'll continue discussing about info ops, disinfo & propaganda. Today's focus will be on troll farms and "useful idiots".

As usual, I'll focus on Russia and its activities because of its topicality and the previous research available.

1/13



7:22 AM · Dec 9, 2022



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Social media manipulation:

 **Pekka Kallioniemi** 
@P_Kallioniemi · [Follow](#) 

In today's [#vatnik](#) soup I'll continue talking about troll farms and social media manipulation, extending the topic to other social media platforms, too.

Our social media space is constantly manipulated by paid actors whose goal is to control the online narratives.

1/10



7:44 AM · Dec 20, 2022 

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