

False News Targeting Latinos Trails the Election | The New York Times

By Patricia Mazzei and Nicole Perloth

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The posts proliferated on election night before anything remotely definitive was known about the results of the presidential race. “Robado,” they falsely repeated again and again in Spanish: President Trump was being robbed of a victory. He had won Arizona. George Soros was funding violent “antifa riots.”

The baseless social media messages to Latinos trying to delegitimize the election and the results for Joseph R. Biden Jr. circulated online on Tuesday night and into Wednesday, part of a disinformation campaign to undermine Latino confidence in the vote as it unfolded.

Ahead of Election Day, false news in Spanish tried to turn Latinos against Black Lives Matter and tie Mr. Biden to socialism, tactics that experts said could depress the Hispanic vote. Now that voting is complete, the rampant falsehoods have only garnered larger audiences — including among immigrants less familiar with the institutions of American democracy. The gist of the falsehoods is that the election is “rigged” against Mr. Trump.

“These misinformation narratives are helping plunge the country further into chaos and confusion,” said Fadi Quran, a director at Avaaz, a nonprofit that tracks disinformation. He called the disinformation campaigns a “democratic emergency.” “The most vulnerable communities in the country are paying the highest price,” he said.

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