

Georgia Senate Runoff Targeted by Misinformation ‘Superspreaders’ | The New York Times

By Sheera Frenkel & Davey Alba

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As Georgia prepares to hold special elections that will determine which party will control the U.S. Senate, the state has become the focus of a misinformation campaign that is aimed at discrediting the results of the November elections and convincing voters that Democrats are trying to steal the upcoming vote.

A small group of “superspreaders” is responsible for the vast majority of that misinformation, according to new research by Avaaz, a global human rights group. Not only are those accounts responsible for most of the misinformation swirling around the vote, they are drowning out accurate reporting by mainstream media outlets on Facebook and Instagram.

The research indicates that, despite efforts by social media companies to curtail misinformation, the viral nature of false news continues to take advantage of the algorithms that gin up what people see on those platforms. The algorithms often reward outrage over accuracy, and telling people what they want to hear or what gets them angry can easily overwhelm the truth.

Americans are “being drowned in misinformation in Georgia by these superspreaders,” said Fadi Quran, a director at Avaaz.

[...]

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