

How careful local reporting undermined Trump's claims of voter fraud | Columbia Journalism Review

By Ian W. Karbal

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One week before Election Day, President Trump [tweeted](#), “Big problems and discrepancies with Mail In Ballots all over the USA”—a claim he used to call for the dismissal of some of those ballots and for a definitive result on November 3 regardless of outstanding votes. Since the summer, Trump has cherry-picked examples of voting irregularities to paint a picture of an unreliable and exploitable system. Those examples are often plucked from developing stories covered by local news outlets that continue to pursue clarity for their readers even after the president reaches for the next one.

CJR spoke with reporters in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Minnesota, and New Jersey about their efforts to reassure local readers about the integrity of the electoral process, even as national figures spun stories about their coverage areas. Most described their reporting on these issues as a balancing act—weighing the need to decisively counter Trump’s misleading claim against the possibility of appearing as a partisan corrective to a divisive president who has primed supporters to view journalism as dissent.

[...]

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