

# Sustained Online Amplification of COVID-19 Elites in the United States | Cornell University

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The ongoing, fluid nature of the COVID-19 pandemic requires individuals to regularly seek information about best health practices, local community spreading, and public health guidelines. In the absence of a unified response to the pandemic in the United States and clear, consistent directives from federal and local officials, people have used social media to collectively crowdsource COVID-19 elites, a small set of trusted COVID-19 information sources. We take a census of COVID-19 crowdsourced elites in the United States who have received sustained attention on Twitter during the pandemic. Using a mixed methods approach with a panel of Twitter users linked to public U.S. voter registration records, we find that journalists, media outlets, and political accounts have been consistently amplified around COVID-19, while epidemiologists, public health officials, and medical professionals make up only a small portion of all COVID-19 elites on Twitter. We show that COVID-19 elites vary considerably across demographic groups, and that there are notable racial, geographic, and political similarities and disparities between various groups and the demographics of their elites. With this variation in mind, we discuss the potential for using the disproportionate online voice of crowdsourced COVID-19 elites to equitably promote timely public health information and mitigate rampant misinformation.

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Source: [\[2009.07255\] Sustained Online Amplification of COVID-19 Elites in the United States](#)