

News Item

What Even Is 'Coordinated Inauthentic Behavior' on Platforms? | WIRED

By Shannon McGregor September 18, 2020

Earlier this week, Twitter and Facebook took action to suspend and remove accounts associated with Turning Point Action, an affiliate of the prominent conservative youth organization Turning Point USA. These takedowns were in response to a report from *The Washington Post* that revealed that posts from these users were part of a broad coordinated effort led by TPA. According to the report, the majority of the messages were comments and replies to news posts across Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram that generally sought to cast doubt on the electoral process and downplay the threat of Covid-19.

Content aside, this is not the first time supporters, or even social media savvy teens, have worked the platforms to drive up a hashtag or advance a cause. But each time, the platforms seem to respond differently, and sometimes not at all. That's because the line between "coordinated behavior" and campaign activity, as defined by the platforms, is blurred. This ambiguity and inconsistent enforcement, as well as the haphazard manner in which political speech is moderated, exacerbates threats to the electoral process—not to mention platforms' own ability to defend themselves to critics on both sides of the aisle.

[...]

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