

Title: Misinformation-related topics, claims, and phrases appendix for “Lies and presidential debates: How political misinformation spread across media streams during the 2020 election”

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Appendix A: Misinformation-related topics, claims, and phrases

Table 1 describes our misinformation-related topics and the number of false or misleading statements each candidate made during the two debates within each category. Table 2 shows the candidates’ specific false claims and their associated topics.

Table 1. *Misleading and false claims by candidates during 2020 presidential debates.*

Category of misinformation	What most of the false claims in this category are about	Source of claims	Number of claims by Trump (debate 1, debate 2)	Number of claims by Biden (debate 1, debate 2)
<i>Biden personal attacks</i>	Biden and his family, especially his son Hunter	Trump	(4, 2)	(0, 0)
<i>Campaigning</i>	Trump rallies, other miscellaneous claims	Trump	(3, 1)	(0, 0)
<i>Climate</i>	Fracking and clean energy	Trump	(3, 4)	(0, 0)
<i>Courts</i>	Obama left judge seats to fill	Trump	(1, 0)	(0, 0)
<i>Covid-19</i>	What Trump did and did not do about the pandemic, H1N1	Trump	(5, 2)	(0, 0)
<i>Economy</i>	State of economy under Trump or Obama, China deficit	Both candidates	(4, 0)	(1, 0)
<i>Election integrity</i>	Selling or stealing votes, election rigging, mail ballots	Trump	(3, 2)	(0, 0)
<i>Foreign relations</i>	Kim Jong Un did not like Obama	Trump	(0, 1)	(0, 0)
<i>Healthcare</i>	Biden supporting an end to private insurance	Trump	(2, 1)	(0, 0)
<i>Immigration</i>	Immigrants do not show up to their court hearings	Trump	(0, 1)	(0, 0)
<i>Law enforcement</i>	Protests, endorsements, defunding the police	Both candidates	(3, 0)	(1, 0)
<i>Military</i>	What Biden has said about service members, Trump rebuilding the military	Trump	(2, 0)	(0, 0)
<i>Racism</i>	Biden’s statements, Trump’s record	Trump	(1, 3)	(0, 0)
<i>Taxes</i>	Trump’s tax payments	Trump	(2, 0)	(0, 0)

Table 2. Misinformation categories, specific claims, and example phrases.¹

Misinformation-related topic	Specific claim	Example phrase 1	Example phrase 2	Example phrase 3	Example phrase 4	Example phrase 5
<i>Biden personal attacks</i>	Hunter Biden controversies	hunter biden	dishonorably discharged	use cocaine	using cocaine	tested positive for cocaine
	Hunter Biden received \$3.5M from Moscow mayor's wife	hunter biden	elena baturina	baturina	wife of moscow mayor	russia's only female billionaire
	Biden forgot where he went to college	biden went to delaware state	delaware state	forgot name of college	biden college attend	start at delaware state
	Biden graduated either the lowest or almost lowest in his class	finish last in class	last in his class	last in college class	last in his college class	nothing smart about joe
	Biden isn't from Scranton	biden doesn't come from scranton	biden left scranton at five	he isn't from scranton	he left scranton at age nine	biden's not from scranton
<i>Campaigning</i>	Kellyanne Conway did not say violence and anarchy were politically advantageous for Trump	riots and chaos	violence helps his cause	kellyanne conway	trump more chaos and anarchy	trump vandalism and violence
	Trump has not held indoor rallies	henderson, nv	henderson nevada	henderson nevada	no indoor rally	indoor rally
	Obama Administration spied on Trump campaign	crossfire hurricane	operation crossfire hurricane	robert litt	russian interference obama spying	carter page
	Nancy Pelosi was dancing on the streets in San Francisco	dancing in the streets	dancing in chinatown	pelosi was dancing	bring your infection with you	pelosi danced
<i>Climate</i>	Biden supports the Green New Deal	support green new deal	support climate plan	support green deal	in favor of green	wants green new deal
	Cause of forest fires = forest mismanagement	forest management	federal government manages forests	cleaning forest	cleaned forests	forests were cleaned
	Green New Deal will cost \$100T	alexandria ocasio-cortez's green new deal	100 percent clean energy	\$100 trillion green new deal	aoc green deal cost	green new deal cost
	Biden wants to end fracking	end fracking	ban all fracking	ban fracking	eliminate fracking	ban on fracking
	Windmills generate harmful fumes, are worse than natural gas, etc.	windmills kill all the birds	i know more about wind than you do	wind extremely expensive	wind turbines are extremely expensive	windmills are extremely expensive
	The U.S. is energy independent	us is energy independent	makes us energy independent	keeps us energy independent	we are energy independent	we're energy independent

¹ Our full list of associated phrases for these misleading statements is available on [our project repository](#). See the file "Misinformation Topics and Phrases.xlsx."

<i>Courts</i>	Obama left 128 judge seats to fill	128 vacancies	128 judge vacancies	left 128 openings	obama left 128 openings	obama left 128 vacancies
<i>Covid-19</i>	Biden wants to "shut down" U.S. to address coronavirus	wants to shut down the country	wants to shut down our country	wants to shut down the economy	wants to shut down our economy	shut down country if scientists
	Trump brought back BIG10 football	brought back big10	brought back big 10	brought back big ten	brought big10 football back	brought big 10 football back
	Serious people do say masks are not important - Fauci said it	fauci said masks	mask stance was taken out of context	fauci said the opposite	fauci pushes back on trump	fauci's mask stance
	Trump took bold action to stop the spread of coronavirus	china ban	biden called it xenophobic	called trump xenophobic	called him xenophobic	europa ban
	Obama administration did not handle H1N1 effectively	12000 dead	12,000 deaths	infected 60 million	obama did nothing	2009 h1n1
	Trump's corona efforts have saved 2 million lives	saved 2 million lives	saving 2.2m lives	2 million people would have died	2.2 million people would have died	biden would have killed 2 million
	U.S. is rounding the corner on coronavirus	we are rounding the corner	rounding the corner beautifully	vaccine on the horizon	should have a vaccine in weeks	will have a vaccine soon
<i>Economy</i>	Trade deficit with China has increased under Trump	trade deficit with china is up	higher trade deficit with china	art of the steal	trade deficit with china	trade deficit with china shrank
	Obama-era recovery was weakest economic recovery since 1929	worst economic recovery	slowest economic recovery	weakest economic recovery	obama-era recovery	obama's recovery
	Trump is only POTUS since WWII to host decline in jobs	overall decline in jobs	worst jobs president	trump's job losses	jobs loser	leave office having fewer jobs
	Before coronavirus	we had the greatest economy in the history of the country	greatest economy in history	greatest economy in the history of the world	greatest economy in the history of our country	greatest economy in the history
	Trump created 700,000 manufacturing jobs	700k manufacturing jobs	700,000 manufacturing jobs	237,000 manufacturing jobs	brought back half a million	230,000 manufacturing jobs
<i>Election integrity</i>	Poll watchers were improperly barred from observing early voting in Philadelphia	philadelphia poll watchers	philly poll watchers	poll watchers blocked	poll watchers barred	satellite election offices
	WV mailmen sold ballots	wv mailman sold ballots	wv mailmen sold ballots	west virginia mailman sold ballots	west virginia mailmen sold ballots	thomas cooper
	The election was rigged	voter fraud	mail balloting	9 ballots	nine ballots	9 military ballots
	The Mueller Report found no collusion	collusion	report witch hunt	mueller find	mueller's finding	found absolutely nothing wrong
<i>Foreign relations</i>	Kim Jong Un did not like Obama	kim jong un didn't like obama	obama begged for a meeting	kim wouldn't meet with obama	north korea disliked obama	obama couldn't get a meeting
<i>Healthcare</i>	Trump guaranteed preexisting conditions via Executive Order	executive order preexisting	executive order health care	everyone receives healthcare	everyone receive healthcare	does not guarantee coverage

	Prices of insulin and other prescription drugs are falling	insulin so cheap	insulin like water	lowered drug prices	lowered price of insulin	insulin prices
	Biden wants to end private health insurance	biden wants socialized medicine	joe wants socialized medicine	joe's plan would end private insurance	he will end private insurance	his healthcare plan threatens private insurance
	No one with private insurance lost their insurance with obamacare	no one lost insurance	obamacare canceled plan	plans were not up to standard	find new insurance plan	lost health coverage
<i>Immigration</i>	Less than 1 percent of people released into the country show up to their court hearings	never returned for court hearings	don't return for court hearings	didn't show up for catch-and-release court hearings	1% show up to immigration	didn't appear at immigration court hearings
<i>Law enforcement</i>	Trump has all law enforcement endorsements; Biden has none	law endorsements	police endorsements	police all endorsed trump	no police like biden	sheriff endorsement
	Trump brought back law and order to Seattle and Minneapolis	seattle law and order	minneapolis law and order	law and order back	brought back law and order	returned law and order
	Biden wants to defund the police	defunding the police	defund the police	biden wants to defund	biden will defund	biden said he wants to defund
	Violent crime has increased under Trump	violent crime increased	violent crime went up	trump increased violent crime	crime increased under trump	violence increased under trump
<i>Military</i>	Biden called military members "stupid bastards"	karen johnson	stupid bastards	appointed johnson to the academy	finest generation of warriors	troops at al dhafra air base
	Trump administration has rebuilt the military	military rebuild	invested \$2 trillion	military was a joke	military was depleted	rebuilt the military
	Trump ended military diversity training because it was "racist"	ended military diversity training	military racist	anti-diversity training	diversity training	racist training
<i>Racism</i>	Biden called African-Americans superpredators	super predators	superpredators	1993 speech	predators on our streets	beyond the pale
	Trump is "the least racist person in this room"	trump not racist	trump is not a racist	trump does not discriminate	he is not racist	he is not a racist
	Trump has done more for Black community than every President except MAYBE Lincoln—especially re: HBCU funding	done more for black	done more for blacks	helped black people more	nobody's done more	nobody done more
<i>Taxes</i>	Trump has paid millions of dollars vs. \$750 in federal income tax (in 2016/2017) thing	750 taxes	\$400 million in debt	trump paid no taxes	he paid less taxes than a teacher	many millions of dollars in taxes
	Trump's depressed tax burden was possible due to Obama-era legislation	obama-era tax laws	trump paid no federal income tax	trump losses	obama tax cuts 2009	obama tax cuts 2010