

# A key legacy of 9/11? The way conspiracy theories spread online. | The Washington Post

By Jeff Melnick

September 13, 2021

It's been 20 years since the attacks on the twin towers, the Pentagon and the crash of United 93 in a field in Shanksville, Pa., and in some ways the most important legacy of 9/11 can be boiled down to one maddening question: What is the truth?

In our pandemic moment, in the aftermath of a presidential administration that weaponized accusations of “fake news” against its political enemies while promoting egregious falsehoods, this is no small matter. A recent report in The Washington Post underscores how concentrated and deadly the dissemination of false information has become: A vast amount of anti-vaccination content is generated by just 111 (out of billions of) Facebook accounts.

Our toxic media ecosystem — what Jacob Silverman earlier this year called the “right-wing conspiracy singularity” — has its roots in the immediate chaotic times after 9/11 and the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq that followed. Then, technological changes combined with political ones to create a media landscape full of potential for democratic impulses and marbled with toxic misinformation.

[...]

Source: [A key legacy of 9/11? The way conspiracy theories spread online. | The Washington Post](#)