

# Opinion: Why the Anti-Vaccine Movement Is Getting Stronger | The New York Times

By Tara Haelle

September 2, 2021

As the coronavirus began pushing the nation into lockdown in March 2020, Joshua Coleman, an anti-vaccine campaigner who organizes anti-vaccine rallies, went on Facebook Live to give his followers a rallying speech. He laid out what he thought the pandemic really was: an opportunity.

“This is the one time in human history where every single human being across this country, possibly across the planet, but especially in this country, are all going to have an interest in vaccination and vaccines,” he said. “So it’s time for us to educate.”

By “educate,” he meant to spread misinformation about vaccines.

The approach that Mr. Coleman displayed in his nearly 10-minute-long appearance — turning any negative event into a marketing opportunity — is characteristic of anti-vaccine activists. Their versatility and ability to read and assimilate the language and culture of different social groups have been key to their success. But Mr. Coleman’s speech also encapsulated a yearslong campaign during which the anti-vaccine movement has maneuvered itself to exploit what Mr. Coleman called “a very unique position in this moment in time.”

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