

News Item

Research note: Understanding offline Covid-19 conspiracy theories: A content analysis of The Light "truthpaper" | HKS Misinformation Review

By Rod Dacombe September 17, 2021

This article explores the ways in which offline conspiracist material concerned with Covid-19 is presented and structured through a content analysis of The Light, a newspaper produced and distributed by activists in the U.K. Our analysis shows that conspiracy theories related to Covid-19 are included alongside a range of other, non-conspiracist content and that readers encounter these ideas in a format which closely resembles a conventional newspaper. We also find evidence that The Light includes content that is aimed at prompting participation and activism amongst adherents of conspiracy theories, rather than simply presenting information. These findings have implications for policymakers aiming to mitigate the effects of Covid-19 misinformation and provide a corrective to the focus of recent research on online dissemination of conspiracist material.

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