

# She Hunts Viral Rumors About Real Viruses | The New York Times

By Jenny Anderson

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In late September, Heidi Larson, an anthropologist and the founder of the [Vaccine Confidence Project](#) in London, sat on a Zoom call with the project team for Verified, a United Nations-led group that is working to combat a rising tide of misinformation about potential vaccines for Covid-19.

Dr. Larson, 63, is arguably the world's foremost rumor manager. She has [spent two decades](#) in war torn, poor and unstable countries around the globe, as well as in rich and developed ones, striving to understand what makes people hesitant to take vaccines. She is obsessed with the origin and evolution of rumors, which she calls "collective problem solving," and has come to see most anti-vaxxers — a term she considers too oppositional — not as uneducated, science-denying individualists but as people with genuine questions and doubts in search of guidance. "This is a public cry to say, 'Is anyone listening?'" she writes in her [recently released](#) book "Stuck: How Vaccine Rumors Start and Why they Don't Go Away."

[...]

Source: [She Hunts Viral Rumors About Real Viruses - The New York Times](#)