

Sander van der Linden

Title: "Psychological Inoculation Against Conspiracy Theories"

Abstract: Much like a viral contagion, conspiracy theories can spread rapidly on social networks. Moreover, once committed to memory, they are difficult to counter. Inoculation theory therefore offers a natural basis for developing a psychological 'vaccine' against the spread of conspiracy theories. Specifically, in a series of lab and field studies, I'll show that it is possible to pre-emptively "immunize" people against conspiracy theories about a wide range of topics by pre-exposing them to severely weakened doses of the techniques that underlie their production. This process of "*prebunking*" helps people cultivate cognitive antibodies in a simulated social media environment. I'll showcase several interventions we developed and evaluated—with public health authorities and social media companies—to help citizens around the world recognize and resist harmful conspiracy theories.

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