False Covid Information in Social Media in the United States

In the United States the highest award of the armed forces is the "Medal of Honor." Even a general must salute a private wearing this medal. In 2005 Congress adopted the Stolen Valor Act, which defined the crime of falsely claiming to have received orders or medals and which provided stricter punishment if the false claim was about the medal of honor. In the case of *United States v. Alvarez*, 567 U.S. 709 (2012), the accused admitted that he had falsely claimed to have received the Medal of Honor, but appealed his conviction on the ground that the Stolen Valor Act of 2005 was unconstitutional. The Supreme Court found this law unconstitutional as violating the First Amendment to the Constitution, which guarantees freedom of speech. The effect of this decision of the Supreme Court was to establish the right to lie. This right is very important now when there are many false posts about Covid-19 in US-based social networks.

A new problem arises from the right to lie. This is the monopoly position of Facebook and Twitter in our social networks. On December 9, 2020, the Federal Trade Commission and the attorney general of the United States filed suit against Facebook for violation of antitrust law.[1]

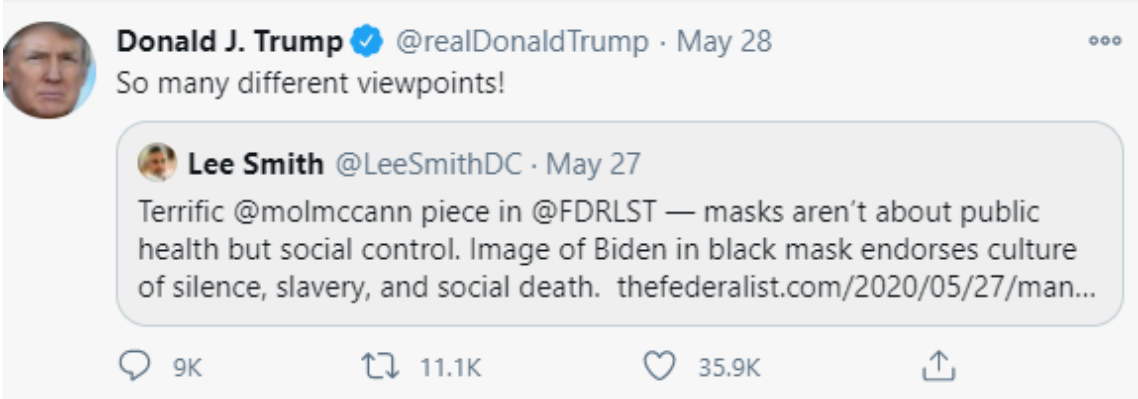
[1] https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/press-releases/2020/12/ftc-sues-facebook-illegal-monopolization

This is the essence of the problem. Under the Constitution there is a right to lie. However, in fact this right is regulated not by the government, but by Facebook and Twitter. Huge numbers of dangerously false posts, such as those by "antimaskers" appear daily in these social networks.

At the time of our elections in the fall of 2020, it became clear that many members of one political party were against makes, while most members of the other party were for masks.

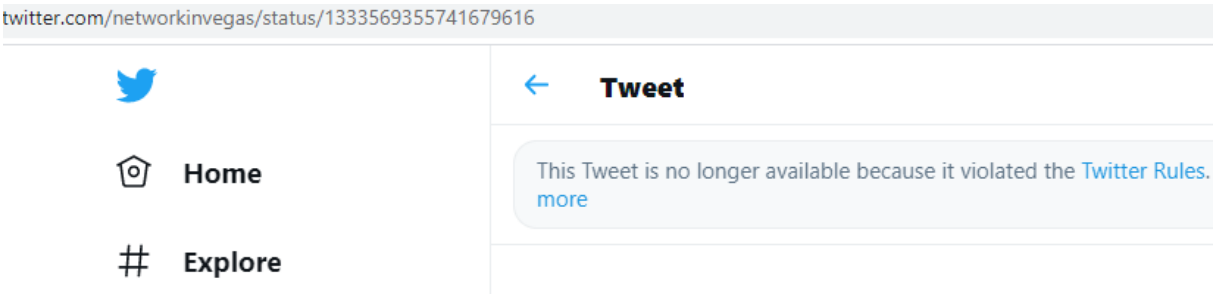
~ Here is a post from Twitter by the chief medical advisor of the White House. The doctor falsely states that masks are unnecessary and actually cause heart problems.

The most popular person on Twitter in 2020, with around 80 million followers, was the President, who constantly retweeted various negative opinions about masks.

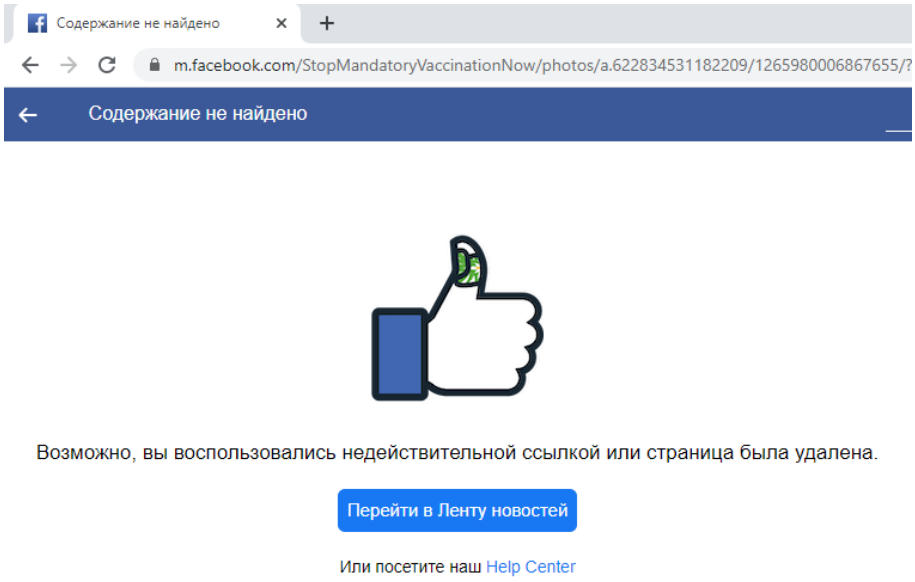


Here is a tweet by President Trump about the results of elections in Nevada. His tweet included a retweet of a tweet by someone else with false information about a new Covid ward of a hospital in Nevada.

The original tweet was removed by Twitter and so disappeared from the President's Twitter feed.

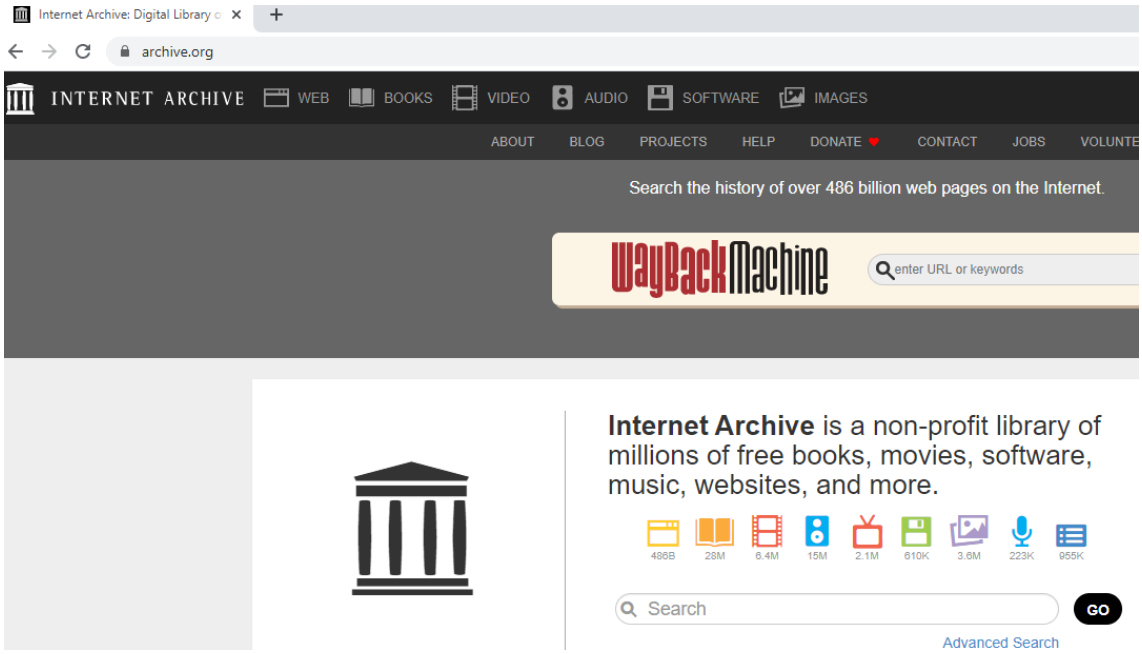


Facebook also removes dangerous groups. Examples are antivaxxer groups. At present on the site of this antivaxxer group in Facebook you can see only this explanation from Facebook.



Luckily for the researcher, one can find many deleted Internet pages on the highly useful site “archive.org.” This site regular makes “snapshots” of the whole Internet and saves. This site is very useful, not only for historians, but also for lawyers, who may find information that opposing parties in lawsuits have deleted from their website.

Here, on “archive.org” is a the deleted Facebook page of a group of antivaxxers:


Internet Archive: Digital Library
archive.org
INTERNET ARCHIVE
WEB
BOOKS
VIDEO
AUDIO
SOFTWARE
IMAGES
ABOUT
BLOG
PROJECTS
HELP
DONATE
CONTACT
JOBS
VOLUNTE
Search the history of over 486 billion web pages on the Internet.
WayBackMachine
enter URL or keywords
Internet Archive is a non-profit library of millions of free books, movies, software, music, websites, and more.
486B
28M
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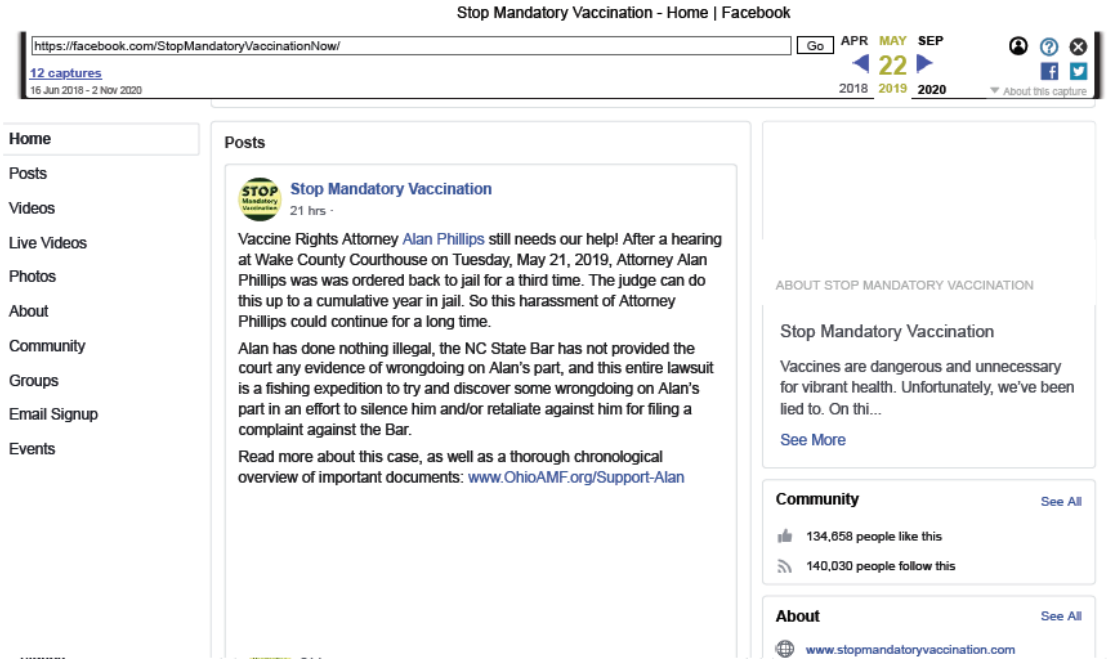
610K
3.8M
223K
955K
Search
GO
Advanced Search


Stop Mandatory Vaccination - Home | Facebook
https://facebook.com/StopMandatoryVaccinationNow/
Go
APR
MAY
SEP
22
12 captures
16 Jun 2018 - 2 Nov 2020
2018
2019
2020
About this capture
Home
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Videos
Live Videos
Photos
About
Community
Groups
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Events
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Stop Mandatory Vaccination
21 hrs ·
Vaccine Rights Attorney Alan Phillips still needs our help! After a hearing at Wake County Courthouse on Tuesday, May 21, 2019, Attorney Alan Phillips was was ordered back to jail for a third time. The judge can do this up to a cumulative year in jail. So this harassment of Attorney Phillips could continue for a long time.
Alan has done nothing illegal, the NC State Bar has not provided the court any evidence of wrongdoing on Alan's part, and this entire lawsuit is a fishing expedition to try and discover some wrongdoing on Alan's part in an effort to silence him and/or retaliate against him for filing a complaint against the Bar.
Read more about this case, as well as a thorough chronological overview of important documents: www.OhioAMF.org/Support-Alan
ABOUT STOP MANDATORY VACCINATION
Stop Mandatory Vaccination
Vaccines are dangerous and unnecessary for vibrant health. Unfortunately, we've been lied to. On thi...
See More
Community
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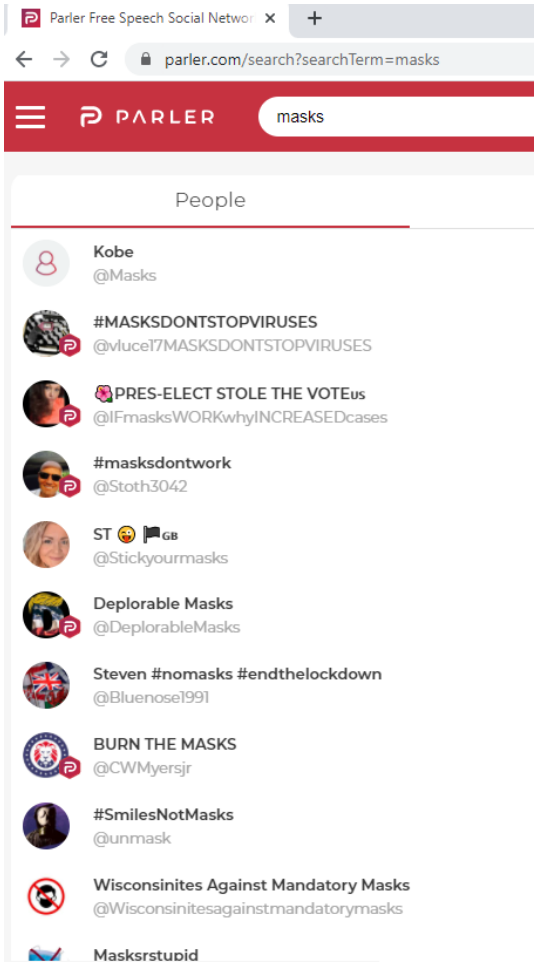
134,658 people like this
140,030 people follow this
About
See All
www.stopmandatoryvaccination.com

But even after expulsion from Facebook, this organization has continued to maintain its own sites with the same kind of false information, Facebook can do nothing about it.

Among the most dangerous antivaxxer sites on the Internet is the site of a nephew of the late President Kennedy (the 35th president of the USA).

Facebook also censored this site, and in return Kennedy's nephew brought suit against Facebook. I think this suit is sure to fail because Facebook, as a private business, has the right to decide what it wants to block and what it does not want to block. However, the question is important, because of the monopolistic position of Facebook.

In answer to the censorship of posts by Facebook and Twitter, a new social network, Parler, appeared, with a policy of freedom of speech. I signed up for Parler and found there a very active discussion among anti-maskers, anti-lockdowners, and antivaxxers.


Parler Free Speech Social Networ
parler.com/search?searchTerm=masks
PARLER
masks
People
Kobe
@Masks
#MASKSDONTSTOPVIRUSES
@vluce17MASKSDONTSTOPVIRUSES
PRES-ELECT STOLE THE VOTEus
@IFmasksWORKwhyINCREASEDcases
#masksdontwork
@Stoth3042
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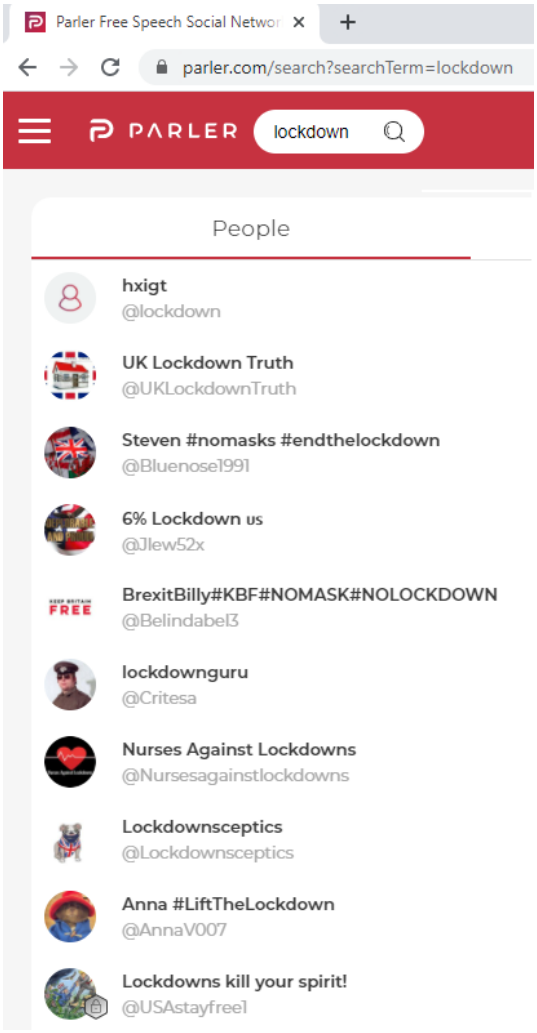
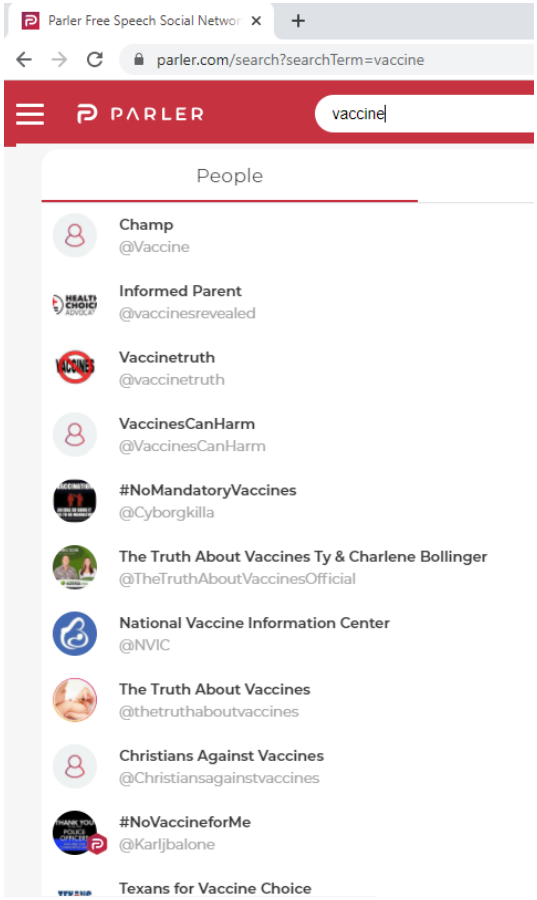
@Stickyourmasks
Deplorable Masks
@DeplorableMasks
Steven #nomasks #endthelockdown
@Bluenose1991
BURN THE MASKS
@CWMyersjr
#SmilesNotMasks
@unmask
Wisconsinites Against Mandatory Masks
@Wisconsinitesagainstmandatorymasks
Masksrstupid


Parler Free Speech Social Networ
parler.com/search?searchTerm=lockdown
PARLER
lockdown
People
hxigt
@lockdown
UK Lockdown Truth
@UKLockdownTruth
Steven #nomasks #endthelockdown
@Bluenose1991
6% Lockdown us
@Jlew52x
BrexitBilly#KBF#NOMASK#NOLOCKDOWN
@Belindabel3
lockdownguru
@Critesa
Nurses Against Lockdowns
@Nursesagainstlockdowns
Lockdownsceptics
@Lockdownsceptics
Anna #LiftTheLockdown
@AnnaV007
Lockdowns kill your spirit!
@USAstayfree1



The question of masks in the United States has become a political question, with Democrats supporting wearing masks and Republicans opposing. I recall the picture game for children, similar to "Find Ten Differences," in which the goal is to find "Waldo". The picture below illustrates the opposition to masks among Trump supporters. Instead of finding "Waldo," can you find the person with a mask?

Since I gave the talk on which this article is based there have been several important developments. After the Trump-inspired attack on Congress on January 6, Twitter permanently banned Trump. Because of the many dangerous posts in Parler, Amazon, one of the largest supplier of "cloud computing" in the United States, refused to supply services to Parler, which was shut down and has a hard time finding a new a company willing ot support its services. In late March 2021, an advisor to former President Trump announced that Trump was going to start his own social network.[2]

[2] https://www.foxnews.com/politics/trump-social-media-platform-return-adviser