Shine Brighter Terminale

SnapFile 15 Climate of suspicion

Extrait p.137 – Article de Jake Hall, *Atmos.earth*

How did climate conspiracy theories go mainstream?

Conspiracy theorists have always existed. People have invented grandiose stories of secret cults and imminent apocalypse; they've staged moon landings and phony[1] assassinations. Throughout history, we've banished these unbelievable tales to the margins of society. That's no longer the case.

Conspiracy thinking has officially moved from the margins into the mainstream, reshaping how Americans talk about science. Nowhere is that more visible than in the fight over climate change. Surveys show that 15% of Americans do not believe global warming is happening, while most say they rarely or never discuss it with family or friends. That number might seem small, but it represents tens of millions of Americans. And skepticism is now seeping[2] into U.S. policymaking, too. [...]

Few people have felt that collision between politics and science more directly than Laura Faye Tenenbaum. A former senior science editor for NASA's Global Climate Change website. [...]

"At first, the conspiracy was that climate change doesn't exist," she said. "And then, denialists shifted to saying it does exist, but it's natural." [...]

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[1] false

[2] spreading

For Rosie Semlyen, a graduate student at Columbia University's Climate School who has written extensively about climate conspiracies, the appeal lies in their simplicity. "They gain traction[3] because climate change itself is hard to wrap our heads around," she told Atmos. "There's no single villain you can point to, and its causes and effects are spread across geographies and timelines." The crisis is everything from melting permafrost to wildfires and floods, which Semlyen said have "become so normalized that we forget their frequency and intensity are not 'natural.'" Against this global behemoth[4], conspiracy theories provide a false sense of clarity and a refuge for fear.

Irreversible damage has been done, but a new generation of climate activists refuses to give in.

Jake Hall, *Atmos.earth*, 2025

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[3] become important

[4] monster

Extrait p.138 – Article de Rachel Leingang, *The Guardian*

‘A flood of disinformation’: rumors and lies abound amid Los Angeles wildfires

The Hollywood sign was not on fire. Firefighters weren’t using women’s purses to put out fires. A fish is not responsible for the blazes. The Los Angeles fire department didn’t see big budget cuts. The fires were not started deliberately as some kind of mass plot related to high-speed rail or the 2028 Olympics. Firefighting efforts did not include spraying a mood stabilizer into the air to put locals into a trance. Diversity measures are not to blame.

Fires are still burning in Los Angeles, and with them has come a near-constant stream of rumors, half-truths, conspiracy theories and outright[1] lies. Natural disasters have long led to the spread of misinformation as people try to make sense of destruction and grasp for control when the world around them is destroyed. In the aftermath of the disaster, a lot is still unknown: what caused it, what could have prevented it, who could be to blame.

“Misinformation can kind of rush into that void and give people explanations for why this is happening, and typically those explanations fit into kind of their existing beliefs or narratives that they want to perpetuate,” said Lisa Fazio, a professor of psychology and human development at Vanderbilt University. [...]

Some misinformation narratives are based at least partially in fact. Fire hydrants[2] did run out of water because of extreme demand. There’s a valid, complex

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[1] unquestionable

[2] water pumps

debate on the role of controlled burns in managing destructive fires, and about environmental management practices.

But others are fiction or distortions designed to make political points, exacerbated by California being a blue state during a time of heightened partisanship in the US. Some have been used to deflect[3] from the role climate change plays in exacerbating natural disasters.

Rachel Leingang, *The Guardian*, 2025

[3] get away

Évaluation de la compréhension de l'écrit – Guide pédagogique

Extrait – Article de *NPR*

Weather influencers are going viral. How much should we trust them?

When Christian Bryson needs quick weather information, like for this weekend's massive snowstorm, he doesn't wait for the 5 p.m. local newscast. Instead, he turns to Ryan Hall.

"It's as if he's sitting in the living room with you tracking the storm," said Bryson, a 21-year-old meteorology student at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

Hall, who goes by "Ryan Hall, Y'all" on his social media platforms, calls himself a "digital meteorologist" and "The Internet's Weather Man." His YouTube channel has over 3 million subscribers. Hall did not respond to a request to comment about his platform.

Hall is part of an increasingly popular genre of social media weather accounts that share information leading up to extreme weather, and then livestream for their viewers, sometimes for hours at a time. Overall, Hall offers solid information and is a good communicator with a few technical omissions[1], experts told NPR. But the weather genre online spans a wide range of sources—from amateurs with no science background to accredited meteorologists.

Experts say that while weather influencers can help fill an information gap, platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and X tend to prioritize engagement and likes over

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[1] elements that are not said or forgotten in a presentation

accuracy[2]. That means extreme weather updates on social media are often sensationalized or lack context, says Gary Lackmann, a professor of atmospheric science at North Carolina State University.

“They’re not going to the National Weather Service web page, they’re just looking at what’s in their feed,” Lackmann said. “Once you start clicking on viral extreme weather stuff, then the algorithm is going to just feed you more and more.” [...]

Meteorologists and other weather professionals are grappling[3] with how to navigate the new media landscape and prioritize accurate information, the experts said.

Ava Berger, *NPR*, 2026.

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[2] precision and reliability

[3] struggling