

Conspiracy theories stubbornly impervious to scientific method | The Irish Times

By William Reville

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Conspiracy theories abound in today's world: who killed JFK, who killed Princess Diana, "cover-up" of alien landings, "fake" Apollo moon landings, Covid-19 conspiracy theories, "new world order" conspiracy theories, the disturbing American QAnon phenomenon, and many more. A surprising number and diversity of people subscribe to conspiracy theories and it would be very unwise either to ignore or to patronise this phenomenon.

In the context of this article a conspiracy theory rejects the standard explanation for an event and credits a covert group with carrying out a secret plot. Usually the "conspiracy" rests on little or no standard evidence.

Esther Addley reported on a large-scale international study by Cambridge University and YouGov researchers in the Guardian in November 2018. This study uncovered a pattern of deep and widespread public distrust of authority across Europe and the United States.

[...]

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