

Why Americans turn to conspiracy theories | Washington Post

By Rachel Hope Cleves

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As the impeachment inquiry heats up, members of Congress and the media are left with the difficult job of untangling the conspiracy theory that seems to have driven the president's actions in Ukraine: a wild tale of a missing computer server whisked off to Eastern Europe for nefarious, if never entirely clear, purposes, and something involving Joe Biden, his son Hunter and, for good measure, China, too.

Although a strong vein of conspiratorial thinking courses through the right today, dismissing conspiracy theories as a recent product of the "paranoid style" of the American right underestimates their influence on our political culture as a whole. Just last week, for example, Hillary Clinton claimed without evidence that the Russians were grooming Democratic presidential candidate Tulsi Gabbard for a third-party run aimed at damaging the eventual Democratic nominee.

[...]

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