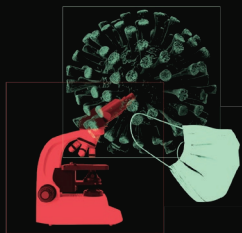




# Conspiratorial THINKING

# FIVE REASONS PEOPLE FALL FOR conspiracy theories



**“PROPORTIONALITY BIAS”** is an innate impulse to believe that major problems have major causes.



**“ILLUSORY PATTERN PERCEPTION,” OR “PATTERNICITY,”** is a natural tendency to see meaningful patterns and connections in unrelated events and details.

## COMPELLING STORIES

Conspiracy theories present exciting, fascinating narratives.

## SIMPLIFIED EXPLANATIONS

Complex social issues and problems are rarely clear-cut. Conspiracy theories provide people with simplified explanations ... and someone or something to blame.

## MOTIVATED REASONING

Believers in conspiracy theories tend to only search for and present information that confirms their theory — and to find far-fetched reasons to dismiss anything that proves them wrong.

## SENSE OF BELONGING

Many conspiracy theory communities provide believers with a sense of connection and purpose that all people need.

## COGNITIVE BIASES

Conspiracy theories seem much more credible and compelling than they actually are because they take advantage of common errors in the ways we think.