

# CONSPIRACY THEORIES

1. How do you think psychological factors, such as a need for control or fear of the unknown, contribute to people's belief in conspiracy theories, and what role does cognitive bias play in this process?
2. How do social and political contexts influence the spread and acceptance of conspiracy theories, particularly in times of crisis or uncertainty?
3. How do you think the internet and social media platforms have changed the landscape of conspiracy theories, both in terms of their proliferation and the speed at which they spread?
4. How do you approach conversations with individuals who strongly believe in conspiracy theories, and what strategies do you use to engage in a constructive dialogue without alienating them?
5. How do you differentiate between healthy scepticism and the more extreme distrust that often characterises belief in conspiracy theories, and where do you think the line should be drawn?
6. How do conspiracy theories exploit existing societal divisions, such as those based on race, class, or ideology, and what impact does this have on social cohesion and public discourse?
7. How do you assess the ethical responsibilities of media outlets and influencers in either promoting or debunking conspiracy theories, and what standards should guide their reporting?
8. How do conspiracy theories about historical events, such as the moon landing or 9/11, reflect broader societal anxieties, and how do these theories shape public perception of history?
9. How do you think education systems can address the rise of conspiracy theories, particularly in teaching critical thinking and media literacy skills to students?
10. How do you perceive the relationship between conspiracy theories and authoritarianism, and how do these beliefs undermine trust in democratic institutions and processes?
11. How do conspiracy theories spread in communities that are already marginalised or distrustful of mainstream institutions, and what are the challenges in reaching these groups with credible information?
12. How do you think conspiracy theories can become self-reinforcing, creating echo chambers where believers reject all evidence to the contrary, and what strategies can be used to break this cycle?
13. How do you view the impact of conspiracy theories on public health, particularly during events like the COVID-19 pandemic, where misinformation can have life-and-death consequences?
14. How do you think the entertainment industry, through movies, television, and books, influences the public's fascination with conspiracy theories, and what responsibilities do creators have in this context?
15. How do you reflect on the role of government transparency and accountability in either preventing or fueling conspiracy theories, and what steps can be taken to build public trust?