

Lovers, of course, are notoriously frantic epistemologists, second only to **paranoiacs** (and analysts) as readers of signs and wonders.



The five critical ingredients of a conspiracy theory (according to Jan-Willem van Prooijen):

1. *Patterns*
2. *Agency*
3. *Coalitions*
4. *Hostility*
5. *Continued secrecy*

Paranoia and theory share structure and hermeneutics. Both explain the world by discounting some perceptions and validating others.

*"[t]he end of the world is the projection of this internal catastrophe; [their] subjective world has come to an end since [their] withdrawal of [their] love from it . . . And the paranoiac builds it again, not more splendid, it is true, but at least so that [they] can once more live in it."*

Freud (1911)

The Paranoiac

Chip Berlet's four factors of conspiracy theory:

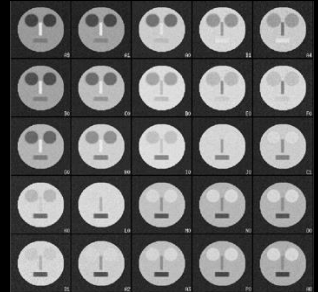
1. *Dualism*
2. *Scapegoating*
3. *Demonization*
4. *Apocalyptic aggression*

Paranoia is anticipatory: establishes a conditions where knowledge is anti-foundational and performative/ not static.

The Conspiracy

Latin *conspirationem* (nominative *conspiratio*) "agreement, union, unanimity," noun of action from past-participle stem of *conspirare* "to agree, unite, plot," literally "to breathe together".

The reality (& toll) of living in age of cover-ups, black sites and unexplained disappearances, classified information, restricted zones, multiple political "gates," invisible warfare, psy-ops.



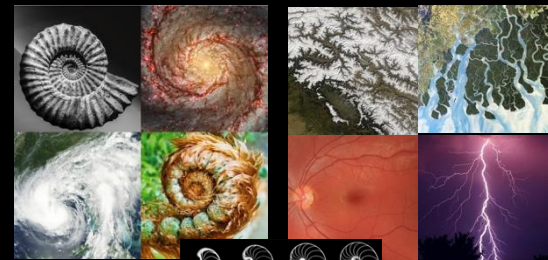
"anxiety to manage rhizomic, cell-driven, nonnational" (Puar 2017)

According to Richard Hofstadter, conspiracy theories are not simply a belief or mentality, but a style.

Everything exists as an assemblage, a cluster, an interconnected mass. Our responsibility is to discover "The Pattern."

The Scholar

Postmodernism displays a striking similarity to the "mode of functioning" described by David Shapiro as the "paranoid neurotic style."



"Psychic life—or the vicissitudes of unconscious affect—and the emergence of thinking are inextricable." (Sedgwick 2007, 629)

Scholarship as psychic work?

The reparative potential of fashioning a new, provisional whole out of paranoid reductions

*hermeneutics of suspicion*

# PARANOID VS REPARATIVE READING - WORKSHOP

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*“I just had a hunch”*

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An online workshop and lecture exploring difficult findings, fraught datasets, restricted archives, contentious interview recordings, rough field experiences, academic hunches, occasional gut feelings, bad vibes, paranoid styles, and, amidst everything, possible reparative methods.

Featuring a talk on feminist-ecological methodology in a scrutinized and militarized environment by **Dr. Darcy Alexandra** (University of Bern) and an interactive presentation on fieldwork “behind enemy lines” by **Nico Edwards** (University of Sussex).

**8 December 2025**

**Workshop: 12:00–14:00**

**Lecture: 17:30–18:30**

**Zoom**

*Workshop:*



*Lecture:*

