



Conspiracy Panics: Political Rationality and Popular Culture

Jack Z. Bratich

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Examines contemporary anxiety over the phenomenon of conspiracy theories.

While most other works focus on conspiracy theories, this book examines conspiracy panics, or the anxiety over the phenomenon of conspiracy theories. Jack Z. Bratich argues that conspiracy theories are portals into the major social issues defining U.S. and global political culture. These issues include the rise of new technologies, the social function of journalism, U.S. race relations, citizenship and dissent, globalization, biowarfare and biomedicine, and the shifting positions within the Left. Using a Foucauldian governmentality analysis, Bratich maintains that conspiracy panics contribute to a broader political rationality, a (neo)liberal strategy of governing at a distance through the use of reason. He also explores the growing popularity of 9/11 conspiracy research in terms of what he calls the “sphere of legitimate dissensus.” Conspiracy Panics concludes that we are witnessing a new fusion of culture and rationality, one that is increasingly shared across the political spectrum.

Jack Z. Bratich is Assistant Professor of Journalism and Media Studies at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey and the coeditor (with Jeremy Packer and Cameron McCarthy) of *Foucault, Cultural Studies, and Governmentality*, also published by SUNY Press.



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