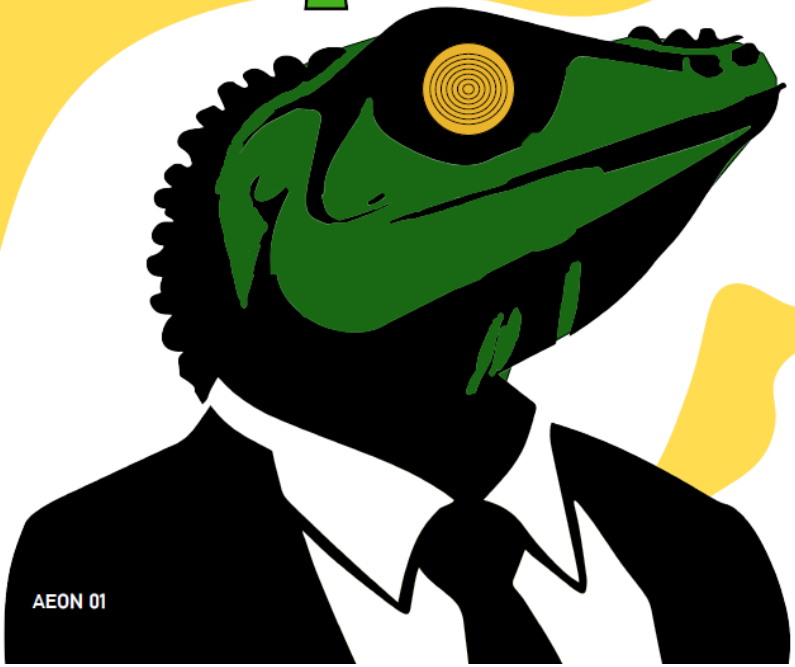
WANT TO FEEL UNIQUE? BELIEVE IN REPTILE PEOPLE



Roland Imhoff is professor of social and legal psychology at the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany.

The internet is full of wild-eyed insinuation. Seemingly accidental events are not actually accidental. A few powerful people have hatched plots to bring about certain outcomes, usually with the goal of benefitting the shadowy string-pullers. As Karl Popper noted in Conjectures and Refutations (1963), some people tend to attribute anything they dislike to the intentional design of a few influential 'others'. While conspiracy theories have long existed, the internet has accelerated their circulation (like the circulation of all information). Who believes in conspiracies, and what might these people have in common?

Most blame the conspiracy mentality on a sense of profound lack of control in their lives, whether due to randomness or the machinations of others. In one study, research participants who were asked to remember instances over which they had no control, such as the weather, were more likely to accept a conspiracy theory than those who were asked to remember instances in which they do have control (eg what they wear or eat). In a similar vein, survey respondents who faced working conditions with reduced levels of control (eg long-term unemployment, temporary employment) expressed greater levels of a conspiracy mentality than those who had more control (eg permanent employment). The rationale behind this is that lacking control increases the need to engage in the compensatory illusion of control – that is, in conspiracy theories.

Adherence to conspiracy theory might not always be the result of some perceived lack of control, but rather a deep-seated need for uniqueness. My research team and I tested this gut hypothesis empirically through a series of studies.

David Lee

2024 Spring

Capstone - Graphic Design

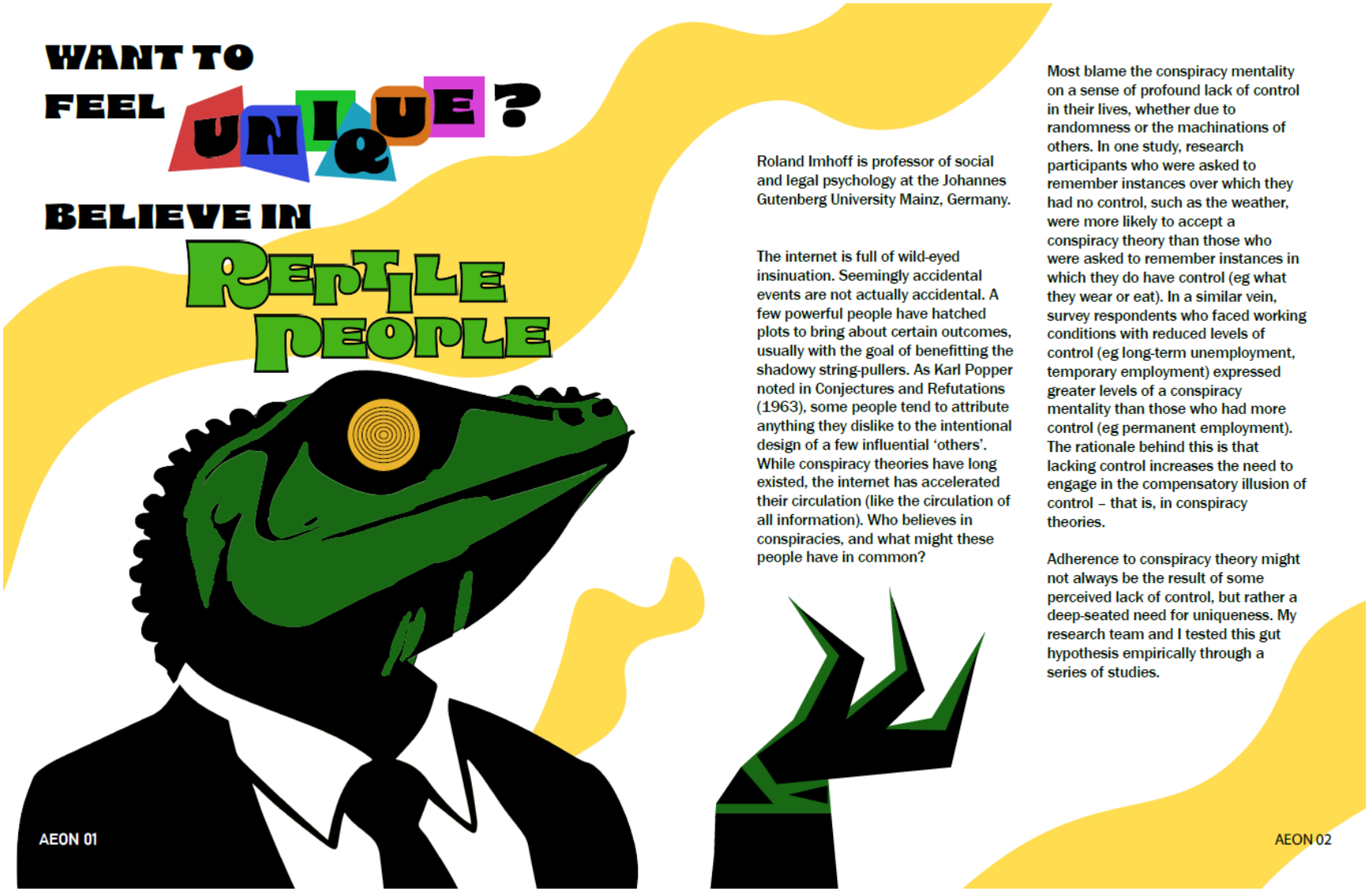
Department of Art and Art History

Artist Statement:

My encompassing theme of my designs is heralded through a process of sketches and delineation. As I've grown as a graphic designer through the classroom curriculum, I've realized the importance of the precursor to the culminating execution. My work is an exploration of identity, mistakes, and innovation within a visual compass.

I've always dreamed of creating vivid ecosystems of characters, worlds, and landscapes; however only when I pursued design is when I found myself drawn to the elements of visual communication. My work is often inspired from my hobby of reading manga as I try to blend illustration with typographic styles. Artists such as Tite Kubo and Seung Eun Kim dictate my approach towards color and composition. I'm interested in creating panels with a certain clever depth while also delivering upon abstract and subliminal communication. I always start with paper and pencil, manifesting my ideas onto a surface. Through discussion and dialogue, I constantly want to evolve my sketches until it reaches its final version. Living in the age of social media, there is inspiration and history revolving around us day by day. I always try to keep a sense of action, movement, and performance in my designs while incorporating the larger goal of pushing a message and substance beyond purely aestheticism.

Title	Original Format
Figure 1: AEON Magazine Spread	Illustrator, 11 in x 17 in
Figure 2: The Wailing Title Sequence	Illustrator, 11 in x 17 in
Figure 3: Clash of the Koa Magazine	Illustrator, 11in x 17 in
Figure 4: Frontier Brew Beer Branding	Illustrator, 11 in x 17 in



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