

QAnon and the information dark age

by Matthew Hannah

Abstract

We are entering a dark age for information literacy, an age predicated on a strange reversal of accepted wisdom. Whereas early Internet advocates predicted a utopian age of information access and literacy, the twenty-first century has witnessed a paradoxical technological expansion of communications technologies and, at the same, the growth and spread of bizarre, vast, complex conspiracies. Although many argue that belief in conspiracies is the mark of a “crippled epistemology” (Sunstein and Vermeule, 2009), I argue that this particular fusion of information access and ignorance is emblematic of what Chun (2015) has described as the combination of individual content creation within a mass medium. It is our incredible access to information, when combined with anonymized mass communications platforms, which has exacerbated networked conspiratorial thinking and given rise to the most complex example of this problematic: QAnon. In this article, I analyze QAnon through the lens of a theoretical frame I call the information dark age, and I argue that QAnon represents a new paranoid permutation, which takes advantage of information technology to spread its shadow across the Internet. The power of the QAnon conspiracy is its protean nature, its ability to grow quickly through crowd-sourced contributions to the overarching theory. Perhaps even more disturbing is that QAnon has weaponized this network in an effort to derail the 2020 presidential election in favor of President Trump and spread misinformation about the COVID-19 pandemic. Without a dramatic evolution in our current media infrastructure, we are facing the increasing spread and worsening effect of this information dark age.

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Introduction to the information dark age

“Nothing is random. Everything has meaning.” — Q [1]

“‘And this also,’ said Marlow suddenly, ‘has been one of the dark places on the Earth’.” — Joseph Conrad, *Heart of darkness* [2]

In February 2020, *Wired* reported on a new battlefield in the presidential campaign dubbed “information war” [3]. Waged by adherents of a once-fringe, now mainstream Internet conspiracy theory which began circulating the Web in 2017, this movement has spread like a shadow across the Internet and erupted into American political and social life. Posting to the anonymous imageboard sites 4chan, 8chan, and 8kun, followers of QAnon leverage information technology to weaponize their beliefs, waging an informational blitz to recruit adherents to the conspiracy and effect a climactic confrontation between good and evil. In the space of a few years, QAnon has transformed from a bizarre

conspiracy theory circulating only in the dark corners of cyberspace to a mainstream phenomenon advocated by politicians and media figures alike (Weill, 2018; Lerer, 2020; DeCiccio, 2020), which has also resulted in several violent crimes off-line (Wilson, 2019, Bellaiche, 2020). Despite the fact that the promised climactic confrontation has yet to occur, QAnon continues to attract vocal supporters, confounding attempts to debunk or ridicule the theory out of existence. Such resilience suggests a disturbing new permutation in American media literacy and information environments, which evidences a new media paradigm for the twenty-first century: a synthesis of distrust in news media and mainstream politics, ubiquity of information access, and public inability to parse online truth from fiction. I call this particular fusion the “information dark age,” a theoretical framework which helps articulate why efforts to debunk QAnon fail and why we will see new and ever more paranoid conspiracies develop long after QAnon disappears. Theorizing the rise of QAnon as a structural aspect of our contemporary media ecosystem is paramount to understand how such movements thrive despite mainstream hostility, skepticism, and scorn.

Through a uniquely twenty-first-century fusion of dark Web anonymity, social media communities, distrust of mainstream media, and hostility toward academic expertise, we are now witnessing a “Great Awakening” (to adapt Q’s phrase) of online organizing around particular notions of power and paranoia. This theory of power relies on disdain toward government/media/academia and a belief that entrenched elites manipulate national policy for their own perverse desires [5]. Q’s followers believe that powerful politicians and celebrities are involved in trafficking children, pedophilia, harvesting organs, and worshipping Satan [5]. While journalists have reported extensively on the QAnon conspiracy with a mixture of dismissive skepticism, anxiety, disbelief, and/or scorn (Cassin and Wendling, 2018; Vesoulis, 2018; Sommer, 2019), media scholars have yet to analyze the eruption of conspiratorial thinking across Internet communities or contextualize the form of QAnon as an Internet phenomena that challenges information and media literacy initiatives.

These features of twenty-first century life have come to characterize sectors of the media sphere: the information dark age is predominately characterized by the viral spread of unsubstantiated, unverified information (which seems plausible enough on the surface) through unauthorized channels combined with a general reaction against corporate media and academic expertise, which far-right blogger Mencius Moldbug dubs “the Cathedral” [6]. One of the most prominent conduits for this information dark age is the dark Web. Completely anonymous and largely untraceable, the dark Web requires special browsers which retain the utmost security and anonymity. Darkness welcomes covert activity, producing paradoxical collectivity in developing underground content while ensuring freedom from censure, generating the conditions of possibility for radically new forms of conspiratorial thought.

The notion of an information dark age is not meant to be the dystopian bookend to cyber-utopianism but serve instead as a theoretical optic to view challenges to information literacy confronting us in the post-2016 media environment in which inability to parse information veracity has fused with the manipulation of media platforms in a perfect storm of misinformation (Solon, 2016). The information dark age is emblematic of a wider phenomenon than QAnon, including the rise of opinion sites masquerading as news, social media platforms as primary mechanism for information retrieval, viral memes and meme warfare, propaganda, and “fake” news (Farkas and Schou, 2020; Goering and Thomas, 2018). Nagle (2017) describes this as a broader shift in media production and consumption: “One of the things that linked the often nihilistic and ironic chan culture to a wider culture of the alt-right orbit was their opposition to political correctness, feminism, multiculturalism, etc., and its encroachment into their freewheeling world of anonymity and tech.” [7] Anonymous media platforms indeed the very concept of anonymity itself combined with widespread reactionary backlash to political correctness and media news occasioned by Trump’s election has only metastasized in the face of the coronavirus pandemic and 2020 elections.

Late-twentieth century theorizing about the information age predicted a future of utopian, democratic spaces for information access and literacy. Proponents of such utopian visions of the Internet praised its capacity for community and democratic information access. The 1990s witnessed excitement about the possibilities of the Internet and concern about authoritarian controls over information. In his “Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace,” which consciously modeled itself on the founding document of the United States, Barlow (1996) claimed a zone for uncoerced free speech: “We are creating a world where anyone, anywhere may express his or her beliefs, no matter how singular, without fear of being coerced into silence and conformity.” [8] In his 1993 piece for *Wired*, Kapor linked American democracy and the Internet even more explicitly: “life in cyberspace seems to be shaping up exactly like Thomas Jefferson would have wanted: founded on the primacy of individual liberty and a commitment to pluralism, diversity, and community.” [9] Many believed they were witnessing a new dawn for democratic information access and public media literacy.

But darkness has followed that dawn. Twenty-first century strands of thought leverage information technology to transform radically the “cultural imaginary” of the Internet [10]. By the second decade of the twenty-first century,

commitments to pluralism, diversity, and community have produced reactionary backlashes and running battles across cyberspace. As post-9/11, liberal-democratic societies struggle with right-wing challenges to multiculturalism, many media figures openly espouse controversial ideas about race, gender, identity, and culture, which have been further exacerbated by information technology combined with anonymity and an increasing cynicism toward mainstream media (Nagle, 2017). Such views are often condemned by online liberals to little effect. This has produced a renewed sense of militant solidarity among those who hold such controversial viewpoints (and their followers), committing to online organizing under the auspices of free speech.

The information dark age is characterized by a widespread rebellion against accepted mainstream thought and expertise. In some instances, this has produced flamboyant media stunts by the so-called “alt-right” who espouse controversial views in an effort to provoke. Figures such as Milo Yiannopolis, a self-described “provocateur,” quickly rose to prominence by advocating vocally for positions outside the mainstream to offend the liberal media establishment (Beauchamp, 2017; Nagle, 2017). In other permutations, the media environment of the information dark age has produced sustained philosophical engagements rejecting Enlightenment values altogether as in Nick Land’s neo-reactionary, anti-democratic philosophy of the “dark Enlightenment.” “Where the progressive enlightenment sees political ideals,” Land argues, “the dark enlightenment sees appetites. It accepts that governments are made out of people, and that they will eat well. Setting its expectations as low as reasonably possible, it seeks only to spare civilization from frenzied, ruinous, gluttonous debauch ... It consistently finds democratic ‘solutions’ to this problem risible, at best.” [11] Other advocates of intellectual unorthodoxy include the so-called “Intellectual Dark Web,” a term coined by Weiss (2018) to describe a group of intellectual provocateurs who traffic in controversial ideologies. “An alliance of heretics is making an end run around the mainstream conversation,” Weiss asks. “Should we be listening?” [12] Central to both the dark Enlightenment and the Intellectual Dark Web is a heightened sense of “outsider” status, skepticism and resistance to mainstream media spheres and the multicultural, politically correct values of twenty-first century liberal democracies [13]. This resistance has evolved online to have a dark life all its own exemplified in paranoia and conspiracy, a fundamental belief that mainstream (liberal) political and media authorities are actively working to manipulate and fool the American people and hide hideous crimes, which can only be exposed by a cadre of information warriors willing to dig into the dark corners of the Web.

Background: Everything is connected or “future proves past”

Whereas both the far left and right deploy information technologies and social media to organize, the far right’s victory in the 2016 election opened a new online front in the culture wars (Nagle, 2017). Believed to be largely composed of white men who feel disenfranchised by the rise of multicultural tolerance, sexual and gender equality, and growing class inequality, the far right has leveraged such rage into an organized cadre of anti-immigrant, misogynistic, often white supremacist groups (Levine, 2019; Simon and Sidner, 2019). Online, this has metastasized into anti-SJW groups who use memes and content to “trigger” those deemed too sensitive about matters of cultural representation and identity [14]. This is perhaps most visible in the “Pepé the Frog” memes which exploded onto the mainstream web shortly after Trump’s nomination (Figure 1). Yet, it is also important to remember that QAnon is decidedly neither Republican nor Democrat in political orientation nor is it made up entirely of white men [15].



Figure 1: Pepe the Frog memes are often explicitly hateful.

Beginning in October 2017, a user on 4chan known only as Q began leaking information putatively from inside the Trump administration, claiming to have Q Clearance to top-secret information. Q revealed secret directives to expose and indict a global cabal of political and cultural elites engaged in pedophilia, child trafficking, organ harvesting, and Satanic worship, which had operated with impunity under the Obama administration. Dropping cryptic clues — which have been described as “part poem, part ransom note” (Sommer, 2019) — called “breadcrumbs,” Q revealed information about the conspiracy to educate American “patriots” who then decipher and interpret the clues within the context of unfolding geopolitical events. As Q states in one post, “I can hint and point but cannot give too many highly classified data points.” [16] In another post, Q claims “we want transparency but not at a cost we can’t recover from.” [17] Rather than divulge too much classified information, Q reveals glimpses of a dark underside to contemporary politics, an underside which Trump will expose and eventually punish.

QAnon operates according to an eschatology in which President Trump serves as a secular savior who will expose and punish entrenched elites who have hitherto controlled society for their own perverted needs during a cataclysmic period of revelation known as “the Storm.” Unlike other twentieth-century teleological systems, which posited progressive stages toward a historical endpoint, QAnon focalizes specific current events backward through the optic of Q’s information “drops.” In this account, breadcrumbs are belated links in the historical process, leading toward “the Storm” in which sealed indictments will be unsealed, sending the leaders of international child-sex/organ harvesting rings to prison. Q refers to the imminence of “the Storm,” often described as “the calm before the storm,” warning of

riots and rebellion as news breaks about the cultish practices of global elites [18]. For Q and his followers, the “[b]ig picture is rare,” requiring communal vigilance, knowledge, research, and interpretation [19].

Central to QAnon’s worldview is a temporal master-narrative in which “future proves past” [20]. Events that have yet to happen are read backward through the Q drops. Despite post-modern insistence that all master-narratives are inadequate (Lyotard, 1984), Q insists on the connectedness of all events in time, no matter how random. “Nothing is random. Everything is connected” Q states in one such post. “All posts are connected. Graphic is key” in another [21]. Q often refers to “keystone” and “map” as tools to decipher and understand the cryptically incomplete information he leaks to reveal hidden structures underlying everything. Belief in master-narratives is common to all conspiracy theories, but the innovative aspect of QAnon is that Internet users are invited to build the map through research, effectively leveraging networked infrastructures of anonymous information technology. The affordances of anonymized comment threads on platforms enable disconnected users to weave themselves into the conspiracy network regardless of age, gender, location, and class. All anons are anonymous, allowing them to identify with one another solely through the shared task of hermeneutic interpretation as they piece together Q’s master-narrative. As one anon described it, “We’re all apart [sic] of the greatest timeline we’ve ever known.” [22] QAnon is perhaps the first crowd-sourced conspiracy theory.

Literature review: Conspiracy

Conspiracy theories such as QAnon are nothing new. Whether advocating that the moon landing was faked, that aliens are housed in Area 51, or that September 11th was an inside job, conspiracies are a fascinating aspect of American life (Fenster, 2008; Lepselter, 2016; Barnes, 2018). Despite popular representations of conspiracy theorists as paranoid loners in films such as *Conspiracy theory* (1997) or novels such as Thomas Pynchon’s *The crying of lot 49* or Umberto Eco’s *Foucault’s pendulum*, the reality is that conspiracy theories are not always far-fetched nor are they solely believed by fringe elements. Before the Internet, conspiratorial thinking was kept in check by public norms and values; however, the information age has facilitated completely anonymized communications enabling broader communities to form and cooperate in secret. Brooke Binkowski, a former editor at Snopes.com, articulates the difficulty in debunking online conspiracies: “You can’t really confront the people who are responsible for these to their face or on social media, because you don’t know who is doing it.” [23] With the rise of the Internet, information access is more available than ever and information literacy is probably the highest it has been in human history. But this has an obverse effect too. Rather than ushering in a new enlightenment, information technology has also enabled new paranoid permutations to appear, new threads to be pulled, based purely on the amount of information available.

Conspiracy operates through a paradigm of plausibility and coincidence. New connections can be formed between any dissimilar events given enough data, providing supposed evidence of deeper realities submerged beneath the predominant ideology. Recent scholarship on conspiracy theories approach the phenomenon predominately from a psychological perspective paired with cognitive, political, or social theory in an effort to understand how people come to believe such conspiracies. Douglas, *et al.* (2019) identify multiple dynamics contributing to belief in conspiracy theories, including a “range of psychological, political, and social factors.” [24] Van Proujien and Douglas (2018) identify key features of conspiracy theories in current research, developing four recurring factors: conspiracy theories are consequential as they impact health, relationships, and safety; universal in that beliefs in conspiracies transcend cultures and historical periods; emotional in that such theories provoke negative emotions; and social in that they rely on sharing among individuals.

Studies focusing on individual cognitive beliefs in conspiracy theories emphasize the psychological mechanisms by which such beliefs are formed. Individual cognitive and affective states can produce conditions amenable to conspiratorial beliefs. Van Proujien (2015) links personal feelings of uncertainty and not belonging to a higher propensity toward conspiratorial thinking, arguing that such feelings are uniquely susceptible to affirmation from others. Swami, *et al.* (2016) diagnoses conspiratorial thinking as a symptom of multi-adaptive personality traits diagnosed in the DSM V. Van Proujien (2020) argues that individual beliefs in conspiracy correspond to what he describes as a personal response to an “existential threat,” defined as “feelings of anxiety or uncertainty” which exacerbate willingness to ascribe to conspiratorial beliefs [25]. For researchers focusing on individual psychology, adoption of unorthodox beliefs corresponds to personal psychological tensions and traumas.

Conspiracy is a social feature as much as a personal belief system. Douglas and Sutton (2018) advocate for applying

methods from social psychology to study conspiracy theories, focusing on social processes to help predict the extent to which people may believe in conspiracies. Jolley, *et al.* (2018) analyze the ways in which British social aggregates remain satisfied with the status quo despite their beliefs. In their account, the rise of conspiracy need not trouble the social status quo and may in fact reinforce it. Sunstein and Vermeule (2009) apply social psychology to argue that conspiratorial beliefs correspond to a “crippled epistemology,” caused by access to limited informational resources [26]. And such a crippled epistemology is more widespread than many may think. Oliver and Wood (2014) find that nearly 50 percent of Americans believe in some form of conspiracy theory, and they advocate an approach based on mass opinion research in an effort to handle mass paranoia. Social structures provide key reinforcement mechanisms to shore up and spread conspiratorial thinking.

But conspiracy theories also operate *vis-à-vis* existing psycho-political structures as well, and this is especially true of the post-2016 QAnon conspiracy. Imhoff and Lamberty (2018) illustrate that the distinction between conspiracy and paranoia is primarily a distinction between distrust of groups versus distrust of everyone. Nor is belief in conspiracy necessarily at odds with support of the political status quo as shown in British studies by Jolley, *et al.* (2018) and American studies by Wood and Gray (2019). Indeed, as Wood and Gray claim, right-wing authoritarianism correlates closely to a belief in the political status quo as being under threat from external forces — *e.g.*, political opponents, Hollywood, other nations. Furthermore, belief in extreme political ideologies such as right-wing authoritarianism correlate strongly with conspiratorial thinking in some accounts (van Prooijen, *et al.*, 2015) Political beliefs and opinions can fuel conspiratorial thinking especially when supercharged by an especially contentious and partisan political atmosphere.

Sociopolitical and psychological accounts of conspiratorial beliefs are important for understanding the phenomena, but I believe we also need analysis grounded in media studies, which factor the very structures of our media and information environments into the rise and spread of such beliefs. After all, QAnon is a different breed of conspiracy theory, born on the Web. Zuckerman (2019) argues that QAnon is an example of “radically participatory” media in which individuals build the construct as much as they consume it. In many ways, QAnon is the culmination of Web 2.0 as the users become builders. Because of this participatory capacity, QAnon can be easily dismissed as a kind of “fan fiction” or online game, but the broader implications of this online phenomenon are too interesting, provocative, and dangerous to ignore (Wilson, 2019). QAnon represents key features of the information dark age: belief that creating knowledge via the chans is equivalent to expertise, that an anonymized, crowd-sourced episteme will be capable of finding truth “out there” by virtue of its size and scope.

The very form of QAnon itself is thus predicated on networked Web infrastructures, making it very difficult to track and debunk across platforms. I argue that in an age where so much information is available via social media and YouTube, disparate connections are even easier to make via the vast online informational landscape. To make matters worse, conspiratorial thinking has received public credence through the rise of fringe media outlets such as Breitbart and prominent public support from leaders such as President Trump, whose repeated references to a “deep state” exemplify paranoid thinking [27]. Both plausible and paranoid, the notion of a “deep state” leaves enough to the imagination for Internet conspiracies to fill the void between fact and fiction (Gordon, 2020). Comment threads, Twitter feeds, YouTube feeds, and anonymous communities exacerbate paranoid linking operations between assertion and evidence. Part of what fuels the QAnon conspiracy theory is this sense of community, a feedback loop of unfettered information exchange combined with unfettered information access. The chans rely on threads to structure such information, and structural design elements such as the thread are uniquely suited to expanding and developing an idea through linking operations. Threads organize and contextualize a conversation in small, digestible chunks, linking to other threads, conversations, and content.

Unlike conspiracies in the pre-Internet age, which relied on word of mouth and risk of personal judgement — the conspiracy theorist is often depicted as a loner — today’s conspiracies spread rapidly because the very technologies that enable communication also fuel conspiratorial coordination. The information dark age is produced by the opposite of ignorance: it is a side effect of too much access to unmoderated information wherein connections between anything can be decoded by anyone at any time. QAnon thus structurally reflects the information technologies and platforms that facilitated its rise and spread. Today’s conspiracy theorist is an anonymized, weaponized network. For Chun (2015), this is the very paradoxical nature of the Internet as both “a personalized [and] mass device.” [28] It is no mistake that QAnon’s slogan is “Where we go one, we go all” as this encompasses our contradictory media experience as both isolated individuals and mass movements.

“WWG1WGA”: The dark side of information access

The specific power of QAnon is based on incorporating information literacy into the conspiracy’s very ethos. Q provides clues to be specifically researched and interpreted by adherents or “anons.” Q often posts a series of questions meant to be answered, often included with admonishments to “dig deeper” (Figure 2). Questions such as “Who owes a lot to very bad actors?” are meant to inspire the anons to conduct research and seek signs or “proofs” in news stories and President Trump’s press conferences [29]. Rosenberg (2019) describes the appeal of such actions thusly, “part of the appeal of QAnon for participants is that the conspiracy theory assigns enormous significance to even relatively minor acts such as posting on message boards or sharing Facebook posts.” [30] Zadrozny and Collins (2018) argue that what separates QAnon from previous purported information leaks is this game-like participatory element.

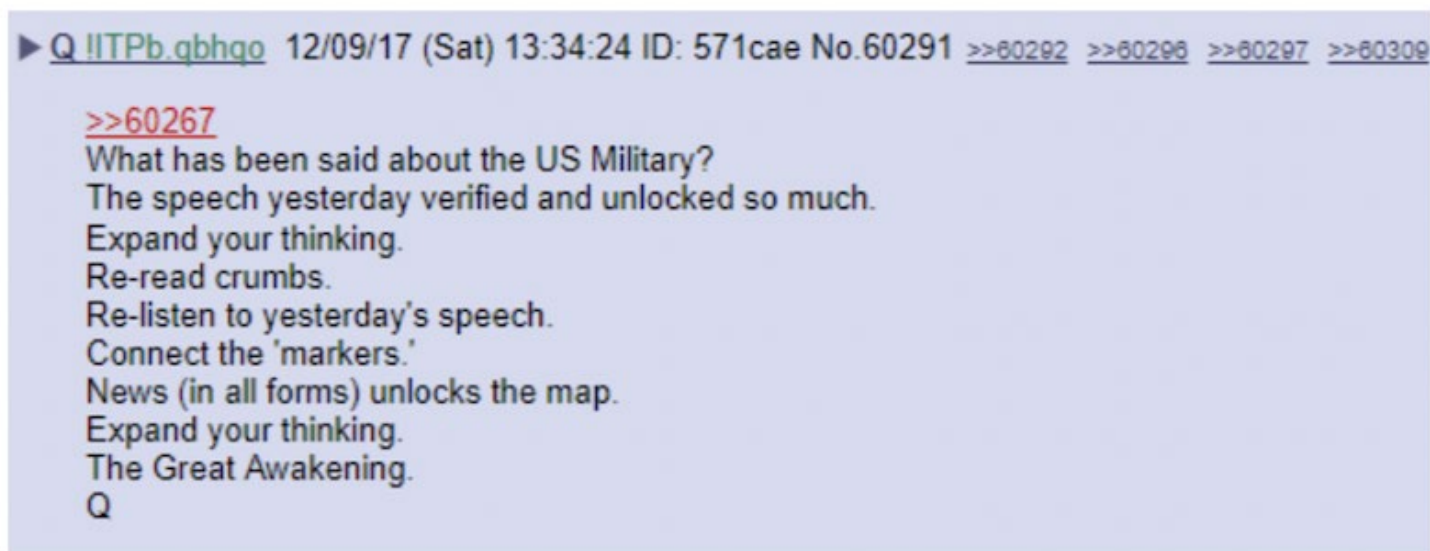


Figure 2: Q’s posts often encourage anons to work harder to interpret the breadcrumbs.

In an ironic twist on conventional representations of QAnon advocates being uneducated rubes, they are actively exhorted to deduce and decode clues correctly and archive information as they research breadcrumbs, practicing a strange kind of information literacy. Rather than a “crippled epistemology,” based on limited access to information resources, anons seem to suffer from the opposite problem: unfettered, unmoderated access to information resources [31]. The very over-abundance of information allows unrelated, random events to be woven into the narrative. Often in posts, Q will point to an unfolding incident as evidence that breadcrumbs refer to true events. For example, in one such post referring to a comment by Trump that we are living in the calm before the storm, Q encourages followers to “Look to Twitter: Exactly this: ‘My fellow Americans, the Storm is upon us’ God bless.” [32] Q cites Twitter as evidence of the truth of the leaks. In other instances, anons point to hidden messages in video clips or tweets as evidence that Q is revealing truths about the deep state.

Anons post responses to Q’s breadcrumbs in hopes of receiving confirmation and recognition. Such feedback mechanisms provide a system of reward among those who believe Q is indeed an intelligence operative. For example, in reference to a cryptic use of the phrase “The Hunt for Red October,” one respondent asks if this refers to a missing submarine [33]. In other posts, Q exhorts his followers to compile posts into an overarching graphic or map that will better reveal the threads: “Follow the map,” “Crumbs make bread,” “Re-read crumbs,” and “Refer back to graphic.” [34] Such incitements encourage anons to expose connections revealing the truth of Q’s obscure posts in a reciprocal form of recognition. In some cases, this causes frustration, as evidenced in one response: “GOD DAMMIT ONE MORE CLUE.” [35] The anon community responds to Q’s crumbs as communiques that must be decoded, collected, and analyzed. As one anon puts it, “Archive EVERYTHING.” [36] This is why efforts to dismiss QAnon’s believers as misinformed rubes do not succeed. Anons believe they are actually *more* informed than the regular population, which makes debunking their theories extremely difficult.

Because of QAnon's networked structure, the theory is spread off-line, beyond the chans, to family, friends, co-workers, and colleagues through a pedagogical front known as "redpilling." [37] Used as a verb, redpilling refers to the process of revealing, explaining, and contextualizing secret information to the broader, off-line community. Appearing on 8kun under the title "Redpill Tactics," one anon provides a comprehensive guide to redpill friends and family. "Q gave us a method to BYPASS COGNITIVE DISSONANCE!!!" the anon claims, detailing ways to deploy information warfare against a variety of targets, including the skeptical "normie." "Remember that too much too fast can turn normies away," the post reminds us before providing a list of tactics that have been tested, including: ask don't tell, coaxing, the "Podesta art shock" method, starting small, and concluding with additional resources [38]. Many guides to redpilling maneuver around skeptical audiences by asking them to google "John Podesta's art collection" or other search terms to expose the alleged global pedophile and organ harvesting operations. Central to the pedagogical mission of QAnon, however, is the belief that anons know how to access and communicate information not readily visible to "normies." In essence then, anons believe they possess privileged interpretational skills because they have been intellectually awakened.

Anons "bake" the breadcrumbs into coherent narratives with Q advising and approving new additions. A closer look at a set of guidelines for QAnon aspirants on 8kun illustrates the communal nature of the movement. After the migration to 8kun, anons put together a welcome page, which operates as a manifesto detailing the QAnon research agenda to provide guidance to "Newfags" or newcomers preparing for the "global war" (Figure 3). Central to this community is an anonymous identity with no allegiance to off-line identity categories:

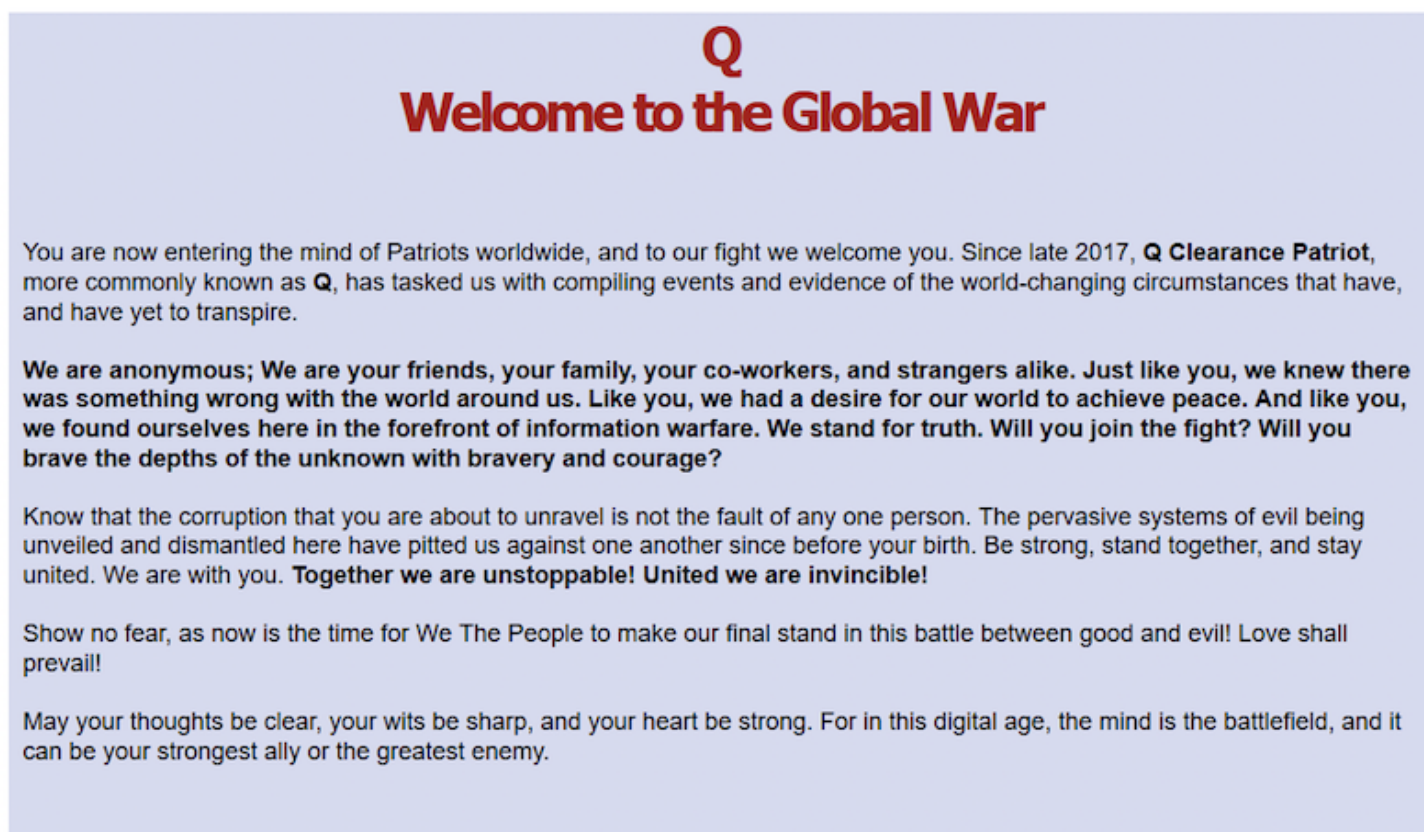


Figure 3: QAnon's "Welcome to Q Research" page is a manifesto for the global information war.

Everyone here is anonymous. We care about your ideas and your words and the value of what you say. We value your contributions. We don't care who you are, what your race or gender is, and we do

not want to know. The game of identity politics is not played here. Here, we really are equal, and equally anonymous. 8kun is different than the rest of the internet. You will probably feel shell-shocked. We know, that's why we're giving you advice. Steady yourself and hang on to something! And get ready to remember how amazing it is to be master of your own experience. [39]

In many ways, this is a training document as much as a manifesto, preparing new bakers and anons for the wild, weird dark Web where anything can be said and where personal identity is irrelevant and discouraged. Newcomers are teased with the notion of being master of their own online experience again, presumably through anonymous engagement with QAnon, while at the same time being warned they will be lowly novitiates in training: "Being called faggot is a mark of having submitted to the training." [40]

More explicitly, the manifesto clarifies the nature of the online community. Even as it provides guidelines for the QAnon research community, it demarcates certain parameters for participation in a clear denunciation of SJW media spaces such as Twitter: "Only marxist nonsense has convinced you that it's okay to enter someone else's space and immediately start demanding they rearrange the furniture to suit you." [41] The Q space is defiantly demarcated as "a men's club" because combat is "metaphysically male." This is not to say that QAnon does not welcome women but rather that gender identity on 8kun is paradoxically defaulted male and, at the same time, anonymous. "If you ARE gender-female, then shut the fuck up about it and be an anon" warn the anons at one point, and they remind acolytes: "Be glad you can swim anonymously with them [male anons] if you choose to." Thus, the manifesto both welcomes and castigates potential newcomers with a mixture of masculinist rhetoric and communal anonymity with the promise of a space to speak freely about any topic. The guiding principle is commitment to information access and warfare with an eye toward perpetuating and spreading the theory.

Information war

More recent militant permutations of QAnon increasingly reframe the theory in terms of global information warfare. Galloway and Thacker (2007) have theorized the rise of networked systems as a weaponized feature of twenty-first century politics, "Connectivity is a threat. The network is a weapon's system." [42] If Galloway and Thacker are correct that the network is a weapons system, 8kun's QAnon pages provide one site where the weapon system's mechanisms become visible. Q's posts leading up to the 2020 election season increasingly use the phrases "control the narrative" and "information warfare" to delineate new fronts for the elections [43]. Information warfare is waged in more mainstream social media spaces such as YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook, with memes, gifs, videos, and other online content, and it is a mistake to laugh off such media attacks as superficial. In the twenty-first century, ideology and power are controlled via the Web.

Whereas early Q threads on 4chan were more discursive, with anons plaintively suggesting possible interpretations, the 8kun community seems more organized and militant, with an eye toward training foot soldiers: "We are researchers who deal in open-source information, reasoned argument, and dank memes. We do battle in the sphere of ideas and ideas only. We neither need nor condone the use of force in our work here." [44] Research is envisioned as combat between the educated anons and the ignorant normies. "This is a political research board, a war room" claims one manifesto, "whose occupants likely have a higher-than-average level of intelligence." [45] Presenting the chans as a "boot camp for the mind," the manifesto provides a militant call-to-arms for those ready to fight for Q online by learning the theory: "Be humble. Be patient. That is the foundation of being an effective patriot. Do you imagine Q started out by skipping those steps? Along the way, lurk with agency, study the boards, the bantz, the culture." [46]

Alongside the personal development required of newcomers to learn how to interpret and communicate the theory is a commitment to militant engagement through what's been described as "meme warfare." Because so much of QAnon erupts from the dark Web onto Twitter or Facebook through anonymized accounts, memes have become an effective way to condense political information in a tactical way. Memes provide a simple, effective, and easy way to weaponize images and text to attack or advance a position. In 8kun "War Rooms," anons provide resources for waging meme and tweet wars, including graphics and tips on hashtags. On one such page, entitled "Information Warfare with Finite Ammunition Edition," anons urge combatants to keep creating and sharing memes: "Your memes are what's waking up the normies." [47] In another war room, anons describe themselves as "hacktivist[s] who deal in open-source information, reasoned argument, and meme warfare." [48]

Anons also advance particular fronts in the meme wars, announcing specific campaigns in response to current events. For example, following Trump’s impeachment, one anon declared a counter-attack. “Must declare a memewar on the Democrats in districts Trump won” the post is titled, “This is part of the 2020 memewar anons.” Calling Democratic senators traitors, anons list vulnerable politicians in swing districts with a mission: “Part of the 2020 memewar NEEDS to be strategically targeting these now VERY VULNERABLE democrats with memes so that not only are they voted out of office but democrats lose the House.” [49] In another campaign called “VoterID Meme Warfare,” anons call for a concerted social media blitz surrounding California primary voting. Claiming that “California has become a hotbed for corruption and crime,” anons detail specific objectives including pressuring Democrats to pass voter-ID laws, derailing existing efforts, and shifting media narratives, concluding with the war cry:

GO GO GO — THIS IS NOT A DRILL FAGGOTS — FIRE AT
WILL
AND KEEP FIRING MEME CANNONS TILL SOMEONE DOES
SOMETHING
WE ARE THE NEWS NOW! [50]

While raining hell from the “meme cannons” almost seems whimsical, the aims behind these QAnon war-rooms are clear: control the media narrative and declare information war designed to undermine and derail Democratic political races in an effort to help Trump win reelection. Waging war across social-media platforms with memes and hashtags as ammunition, anons deploy information technology as a weapons system. As one war-room enthused under the title “tweet storm,” “THINK MOAB BABY!,” a military acronym for the Mother of All Bombs [51].

COVID-19, a new Q front

The COVID-19 pandemic has provided a new crop of paranoid theories for the QAnon worldview, moving the movement into a particularly dangerous new paradigm. The pandemic fuels the QAnon conspiracy theory, providing new frontlines for the coming memewars, and President Trump has accelerated such conspiratorial thinking by referring to COVID-19 as the “Chinese virus” (Figure 4) [52]. Erik Trump claimed on Fox News that Democrats were milking the pandemic for electoral gains, in phrasing similar to Q’s (O’Connell, 2020). Perhaps even more disturbingly, Q has cast doubt on the directives of medical professionals and organizations working to contain the virus.



Figure 4: Two tweets from President Trump on 3 August 2020 calling COVID-19 a “China virus.”

By January 2020, Q hints that big things are imminent: “Don’t worry, it won’t be boring forever.” [53] By the end of March, Q begins mentioning COVID-19 in posts, describing it in similarly racist terms to Trump’s tweets. Q speculates about the geographical location of a virology lab in Wuhan and points to a purported medical journal article from 2007 that described symptoms of a SARS-COV disease contracted from bats as evidence of a long-term cover-up. Q also raises the idea that quarantine mandates are actually designed to destabilize the 2020 elections and shelter Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden: “What is the mathematical probability this occurs (the ‘time bomb’ explodes) at the exact point in time that allows for maximum damage (above) prior to the P_elec? ... Occam’s razor simply states that of any given set of explanations for an event occurring, the simplest one is most likely the correct one.” [54] For Q’s followers, such speculation fosters resentment and hostility toward Federal and state authorities enacting legislation trying to control the virus, especially in traditionally democratic states.

The global coronavirus pandemic has fueled further conspiratorial thinking over the summer of 2020, with Q stoking the paranoia by depicting COVID-19 as an attempt to derail President Trump’s re-election and destroy his economic gains. By late summer 2020, Q details a purported five-part plan to leverage COVID-19 against President Trump’s re-election campaign. Phase 1 involves a coordinated effort by the Centers for Disease Control, World Health Organization, and healthcare officials to provide misinformation to the president regarding the need to close travel, described by Q as “the political ‘set up.’” Phase 2 involves “inaccurate scenarios” predicting death counts with a required to lock down to erase economic gains under the Trump administration. In Phase 3, Democratic governors spike death counts and stoke fear by predicting alarming on-the-ground projections in their states. Phase 4 claims that calls for increased calls for testing are designed to spike actual infected rates, a narrative President Trump has also advocated publicly (Cunningham, 2020). Mainstream liberal media (“MSDNC”) is also accused of manipulating data about proportional death rates in an effort to exacerbate the pandemic. Stage 5 involves a coordinated effort to eliminate and censor opposing views of the pandemic (called the “anti-narrative”) and introduces Black Lives Matter as a kind of sleeper agent waiting to sow discord leading up to the 2020 elections [55]. Worse, Q describes such efforts as part of a broader deep-state effort by the Democratic Party to launch a political takeover in the presidential elections by destabilizing President Trump and strengthening media and state control. Such rhetoric is especially dangerous given the far-Right’s predilection toward a civil war and President Trump’s own efforts to delegitimize the 2020 elections, which led directly to the January 6th riot at the Capitol in which QAnon was well represented. It is hard not hear imminent violence in Q’s conclusion to the five-part plan: “Welcome to the Revolution.” [56]

Q also questions the narrative surrounding the travel ban and advocates use of hydroxychloroquine to treat the coronavirus. Q asks why certain Democratic governors ban the use of the drug, claiming this is a key piece of information to pursue. Q's response to the pandemic both dismisses the scope and threat of the virus and perpetuates false information about treatment, and followers see no contradiction here. Q also accuses "fake news" of pushing anti-hydroxychloroquine narratives, equating the Democratic Party with the "People's Republic of China." [57] Connecting COVID-19 to the election season and to China in this way rhetorically incorporates COVID-19 into the conspiracy, suggesting that the virus is being hyped by mainstream media sources to secure electoral victory for the Democrats. "What is the prime benefit to public in mass hysteria re: COVID-19" Q asks. "Think voting. Are you awake yet?." [58] Q even suggests that the Democratic Party is actively trying to "squash all hope for a cure." [59] Undermining belief in the media and Democratic governors enables Q to open a new front by reconceptualizing the pandemic as an effort to undermine Trump's larger mission to expose powerful elites, but it has the dangerous side effect of encouraging citizens to ignore important government guidelines for protecting the population, which has been all too visible in recent right-wing protests (Scott and Overly, 2020).

Q's misinformation about the coronavirus also produced a range of responses on 8kun. Some anons questioned why Trump didn't fire Dr. Fauci for publicly contradicting the president. Other anons claimed that vaccines had already been discovered but were being hidden, asking bakers to research certain pharmaceutical companies [60]. As Argentino (2020) argues, QAnon conspiracy theories have become a health hazard as believers ignore and challenge government directives or share quack cures to COVID-19. Perhaps even more disturbingly, such resistance to government management of the pandemic has spread overseas as well with QAnon adherents spreading misinformation in Europe (Schaeffer, 2020). As the pandemic rages around the world, QAnon conspiracy theories have taken on new and terrifying eschatological purpose, and it is difficult to imagine the future directions of the conspiracy now that Joe Biden defeated President Trump in November. As some anons admit defeat, others seem to be growing even more militant, predicting future upheavals.

Conclusion: Controlling the narrative


QAnon seems to have slowed down somewhat as the predicted "Storm" has not happened and Biden has won the 2020 election. There is evidence of growing discontent among some anons, especially since Q has not posted any new drops since December. Among some anons, this has produced a sense of failure and regret. In January 2021, one such anon lamented, "Well I am man enough to admit when I got duped and MAN did I ever. I really thought Trump was going to fight and today would be the start of real actual change. Guess not." [61] Another poster laments that President Trump is unlikely to expose the deep state, posting a Pepe suicide meme: "I've been interested in all this Qanon movement, I had hope in it for a bit of time, but I shook myself back into reality" (Figure 5). [62] Scrolling through 2020 Q threads on 8kun reveals growing disenchantment with Q, with some commentators openly attacking QAnon as a cult. This certainly does not mean that the conspiracy has died and, with the explosion of the Coronavirus pandemic, the time for conspiratorial thinking is ripe and particularly fraught. Like so many previous events, the virus has been woven into the conspiracy.



Figure 5: "Here to crush hope."

QAnon's protean nature makes it nearly impossible to debunk. Rosenberg (2019) argues "to focus merely on QAnon's content and not the form it takes is to miss why the conspiracy theory has spread so widely — and why similar ideas may prove incredibly difficult to combat." [63] Any response to QAnon or other anonymized groups operating outside the mainstream is going to be caught in a political catch-22: pay too much attention to these groups and risk sensationalizing and legitimizing their beliefs or publicly critique their views and risk pushing them deeper into the conspiracy (Phillips, 2011). But Rosenberg's claim points to a deeper challenge: the very networked form of QAnon both accelerates conspiratorial hermeneutics and develops an infrastructure to communicate them, and this form is impossible to combat. Exploring the Q war rooms reveals an organized and calculated set of resources waiting to be deployed. Shutting down such sites only reinforces the persecution complex of those with beliefs outside the mainstream (Little, 2018; Roose, 2019; Holmes, 2020) even as Twitter and Reddit ban QAnon accounts (Zadrozny and Collins, 2018; Conger, 2020). While deplatforming tactics bespeak censorship and control over the Internet, which should be of concern to anyone in a democratic society, it remains unclear how to stop QAnon from spreading.

Despite Pew Research Center (2020) opinion polls showing that most Americans have not heard of QAnon, the stakes are becoming increasingly stark. Several Congressional candidates running in 2020 are Q believers, including Marjorie Taylor Greene who won in Georgia running openly as a Q believer (Itkowitz, 2020; Wilson, 2020; Franco and Radford, 2019; Kaplan, 2020). Posts about Q on Twitter increased 21 percent from January to March 2020 (Argentino, 2020), and many now ask what happens when QAnon conspiracies cast shadows over our off-line lives (McIntire and Roose, 2020). The information dark age has thus produced an online environment where many anonymous individuals post and share information as part of a nebulous whole. Where Q goes one, Q goes all. In an age of incredible access to vetted information and verified accounts, QAnon reveals that information literacy is perhaps even more elusive, as though we evolved the technology before the means to wield or interpret it effectively. And as such communications infrastructures increasingly infiltrate our lives, our politics, and our society, so too will conspiracy theories and paranoid delusions. This makes any concerted political or technical solution extraordinarily elusive.

Perhaps the only viable political response is a concerted initiative to teach information literacy and data literacy as part of our national civics. This will require far more than simply combatting conspiracies with facts because most believers in QAnon actually believe they have more facts than the average normie (Vesoulis, 2018). Instead, we must find ways to inculcate informational awareness across multiple sectors of society, not just in our institutions of higher education. Otherwise, we risk sliding further into the information dark age. As one anon put it, "So Q may have been a psyop, but it did teach us how to dig and research to find out the truth." [64] This starkly illustrates that the mechanisms that made QAnon possible will only lead to future iterations of the same conspiratorial behavior. QAnon is the first viral conspiracy in the information dark age, but it will not be the last. QAnon will not disappear any time soon and, when it eventually does, it will be replaced by other, potentially darker strands of thought. To adapt Q's phrase, we must control the narrative. 

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Notes

1. Q Post, ID: KKlreCTB. Mon. 6 Nov. 2017. 17:07:57. No. 148289594. All Q posts come from the Q map of confirmed Q posts unless otherwise specified, available here: https://anonfile.com/W7x2m3d4b1/Q_Map_12_14_2017v2.pdf.

2. Conrad, 1960.

3. Thomas, 2020, at <https://www.wired.com/story/qanon-deploys-information-warfare-influence-2020-election/>.

4. M. Safi, 2019. QAnon's particular narrative focuses on the political infrastructure around the Democratic Party, especially focused on the Clintons and Obamas, but also including wealthy political allies such as George Soros. Because the mainstream media and Democratic Party so visibly leveraged power in the 2016 presidential election to support a Clinton presidential ticket, the conspiracy is intrinsically bound up in the surprising, come-from-behind election of Trump. His electoral victory undermined what had been deemed by some as the end of history and rise of a Democratic dynasty (Goldberg, 2016). The upheaval to conventional politics initiated by Trump's nomination, and his subsequent shocking victory over an insider coronated by the Democratic National Convention produced a strange phenomenon, which made QAnon possible. In a stunning ideological shift, Trump was able to become both President while remaining an outsider who would "drain the swamp" of the Washington, D.C. establishment. Trump is thus seen by his far-right followers as an outsider who is under siege by the liberal establishment while working to expose and punish them for shadowy evil deeds incumbent on maintaining unchallenged global power.

5. QAnon evolved out of the "pizzagate" conspiracy theory, which still remains central. In 2016, a Twitter account run by a man who presented himself as a New York lawyer tweeted a conspiracy theory that prominent Democrats were involved in a pedophilia ring fronted by Comet Ping Pong, a D.C.-area pizzeria. The theory spread quickly on 4chan, 8chan, and Twitter. After Wikileaks leaked e-mails from Clinton's campaign manager John Podesta, adherents to the theory began combing the e-mails for coded messages related to supposed pedophile groups. The conspiracy theory had real-world consequences when Edgar Welch fired into the restaurant with an AR-15 (Hsu, 2017).

6. Moldbug, 2008, at <https://www.unqualified-reservations.org/2008/05/ol4-dr-johnsons-hypothesis/>.

7. Nagle, 2017, p. 16.

8. Barlow, 1996, at <https://www.eff.org/cyberspace-independence>.

9. Kapor, 1993, at <https://www.wired.com/1993/03/kapor-on-nii/>.

10. Yar, 2014, at <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137436696>.

11. Land, n.d., <https://www.thedarkenlightenment.com/the-dark-enlightenment-by-nick-land/>.

12. Weiss, 2018, at <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/08/opinion/intellectual-dark-web.html>.

13. To be clear: Nick Land and the IDW are not affiliated with QAnon and have been critical of the conspiracy. I cite them to show the broader trend toward "outsiderness." This outsider ethos is captured perfectly in Nick Land's Twitter profile, which is Outsideness @Outsideness.

14. SJW is an acronym for "social justice warrior," used as a slur to describe online interlocutors who point out inequality and injustice, especially around sexuality and gender identity.

15. In my research, I came across some anons who revealed key identity markers: "brb kidlette is in need of mommy hugs" (OctoberAnon, ID: 97d7f5. Mon. 27 Nov. 2017. 05:48:14. No. 3383).

16. Q Post, Wed. 1 Nov. 2017. 02:25:22.

17. Q Post, Wed. 1 Nov. 2017. 01:56:06.

18. The similarities between QAnon and Christian eschatology, in which seven seals will be unsealed on the Day of Judgement, and which will see a great Tribulation, like the Storm, preceded or followed by a Rapture of the believers in a similar structure to the Great Awakening. It seems likely, given the prominence of Christian beliefs within the QAnon community that this is not accidental.

19. Q post, Thurs. 2 Nov. 2017. 02:14:27. No. 147588085, at https://anonfile.com/W7x2m3d4b1/Q_Map_12_14_2017v2.pdf.

20. Breadbox!u2YjtUz8MU. ID: 38b3b3. Sat. 16 Dec. 2017. 06:00:22. No. 1604, at <https://8ch.net/thestorm/res/1604.html>. Some posters on the chans receive special "trip codes" which allow users to identify repeated posts from the same user. Q's trip code is: Q !ITPb.qbqo.

21. Q Post, Mon. 6 Nov. 2017. 17:07:57, at https://anonfile.com/W7x2m3d4b1/Q_Map_12_14_2017v2.pdf; Q Post, Mon. 20 Nov. 2017. 03:36:59, at https://anonfile.com/W7x2m3d4b1/Q_Map_12_14_2017v2.pdf.
22. Breadbox!u2YjtUz8MU. ID: 38b3b3. Sat. 16 Dec. 2017. 06:00:22, No. 1604, at <https://8ch.net/thestorm/res/1604.html>.
23. Vesoulis, 2018, at <https://time.com/5356851/what-is-qanon/>.
24. Douglas, *et al.*, 2019, p. 3.
25. Van Prooijen, 2020, p. 17.
26. Sunstein and Vermeule, 2009, p. 204.
27. A search of President Trump’s Twitter archive reveals he has tweeted about the “deep state” 30 times. Retrieved 3 August 2020 from <http://www.trumptwitterarchive.com/archive>.
28. Chun, 2015, p. 144.
29. Q Post, Thurs, 2 Nov. 2017. 00:54:52, at https://anonfile.com/W7x2m3d4b1/Q_Map_12_14_2017v2.pdf.
30. Rosenberg, 2019, at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/08/07/qanon-isnt-just-conspiracy-theory-its-highly-effective-game/>.
31. Sunstein and Vermeule, 2009, pp. 202–227.
32. Q Post, Thurs. 2 Nov. 2017. 14:44:21, at https://anonfile.com/W7x2m3d4b1/Q_Map_12_14_2017v2.pdf.
33. Anonymous, Mon. 20 Nov. 2017. 03:10:43, at https://anonfile.com/W7x2m3d4b1/Q_Map_12_14_2017v2.pdf. The answer was an emphatic “no.”
34. Q !ITPb.qbqo, Mon. 20 Nov. 2017. 13:13:08; Sat. 11 Nov. 2017. 23:33:51; Sat. 11 Nov. 2017, 23:33:13; Sat. 11 Nov. 2017. 23:33:51, at https://anonfile.com/W7x2m3d4b1/Q_Map_12_14_2017v2.pdf.
35. Anonymous, ID: hPg9HcUL, Thur. 23 Nov. 2017. 01:12:34, at <https://8kun.top/qresearch/res/3152.html>.
36. Anonymous, ID: HpMXQdk5, Sun. 5 Nov. 2017. 19:55:14, <https://8kun.top/qresearch/res/3152.html>.
37. “Redpilling” refers to the 1999 cyberpunk action film *The matrix*. In one key scene, Morpheus offers Neo the choice between a blue pill, which will allow Neo to remain ignorant of the matrix, and a red pill, which would open his eyes to the matrix undergirding his perception of reality. Among reactionary groups, “red pilling” refers to an awakening to the political reality in the U.S.
38. Anonymous, ID: 9A8632., Sat. 20 Jan. 2018. 12:44:48, at <https://8kun.top/qresearch/res/3152.html>. Intriguingly, this post also showcases a certain awareness of the lunacy of the bigger theory, and the anon encourages others to avoid topics such as aliens, energy fields, hollow earth theories, metaphysics, religious pantheons, Moloch and Satan, chemtrails, crop circles, cleansing pineal gland/detoxing, chakras, and reptiloids.
39. Q Research General #11218, at <https://sys.8kun.top/qresearch/res/8762165.html>.
40. Welcome to /QResearch/, <https://8kun.top/qresearch/welcome.html>.
41. *Ibid.*
42. Galloway and Thacker, 2007, p. 16.
43. Q uses the phrases “Control the Narrative” 20 times and “information warfare” 27 times in the 4,620 Q dumps as of this writing. Retrieved 3 August 2020 from <https://qresear.ch/q-posts>.
44. Q Research General #11218, at <https://sys.8kun.top/qresearch/res/8762165.html>.

45. Welcome to /QResearch/, <https://8kun.top/qresearch/welcome.html>.
46. *Ibid.*
47. Q Research General #9484, at <https://sys.8kun.top/qresearch/res/7415807.html>.
48. Q Research General #9837, at <https://8kun.top/qresearch/res/7687068.html>.
49. Impeachment Counter Offensive, at <https://8kun.top/qresearch/res/7556525.html#7556525>.
50. Call For VoterID Meme Warfare, at <https://sys.8kun.top/qresearch/res/7664945.html>.
51. Anonymous, ID: a7c70f, Wed. 1 Jan. 2020. 18:07:17, at <https://8kun.top/qresearch/res/7687068.html>.
52. Chiu, 2020, at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/03/20/coronavirus-trump-chinese-virus/>.
53. Q Post 3787, at <https://qposts.online/page/9>.
54. Q Post 3896, at <https://qposts.online/page/9>.
55. Q Post 4620, at <https://qresear.ch/q-posts>. The purposes of this five-stage COVID-19 plan are made explicit: eliminate economic gains, eliminate record unemployment gains, shelter Biden from public exposure, shelter Biden from Ukraine exposure, shelter Biden from debates, delay convention, eliminate Presidential rallies, eliminate ability for people to gather, eliminate ability to find peace and strength through church closures, promote mail-in voting, push state bailouts, increase national debt, test limits of public obedience, test limits of public non-acceptance, test limits of State authority, test limits of media control.
56. Q Post 4620, at <https://qresear.ch/q-posts>.
57. Q Post 3909, at <https://qposts.online/page/9>.
58. Q Post 3913, <https://qposts.online/page/9>.
59. Q Post 3918, at <https://qposts.online/page/9>.
60. Anonymous. ID: 3b64d4. Mon. 11 May 2020. 06:59:40, at <https://8kun.top/qpatriotresearch/catalog.html>; Anonymous. ID: f32ccb. Tues. 12 May, 2020. 07:44:53, at <https://8kun.top/qpatriotresearch/catalog.html>.
61. WWG1WGA CanPatriot. ID: 3eb8ab. Wed. 20 Jan. 2021. 21:55:31, at <https://8kun.top/qpatriotresearch/res/20124.html>.
62. Anonymous. ID: 9e46cd No.11163. July 28, 2020. 15:56:59, at <https://8kun.top/qresearch/res/756.html>.
63. Rosenberg, 2019, at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/08/07/qanon-isnt-just-conspiracy-theory-its-highly-effective-game/>.
64. Vera verda. ID: 91b040. Wed. 20 Jan. 2021. 18:15:01, at <https://8kun.top/qpatriotresearch/res/20087.html>.

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