Trust the Plan

The Rise of QAnon and the Conspiracy That Unhinged America

Will Sommer



An Imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers

TRUST THE PLAN. Copyright © 2023 by Will Sommer. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews. For information, address HarperCollins Publishers, 195 Broadway, New York, NY 10007.

HarperCollins books may be purchased for educational, business, or sales promotional use. For information, please email the Special Markets Department at SPsales@harpercollins.com.

FIRST EDITION

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data has been applied for.

ISBN 978-0-06-311448-7

ScoutAutomatedPrintCode

Acknowledgments

This book only exists because of the support of my wife, Juliana, who first encouraged me to turn my fascination with American conservatives into reporting of my own. She took on far more than her fair share of work to keep our lives running while I was writing this book, and remains the best editor I know. Juliana: I love you so much.

My parents, Peggy and Bill, have given me more support and encouragement than any son could ask for. My wife's parents, Michele and Steve, and her brother, Ben, have been sources of inspiration and help throughout this process.

Covering the right can be lonely work. It was even more so in QAnon's first days, when few people recognized that it was shaping up to be bigger than a few kooks online. My reporting is indebted to the work of other people who covered this beat from the beginning, including Mike Rothschild, Jared Holt, Brandy Zadrozny, Ben Collins, and Paris Martineau. The hosts of the *QAnon Anonymous* podcast—Travis View, Julian Feeld, and Jake Rockatansky—have also done excellent work on the world of Q.

Cullen Hoback's HBO documentary, *Q: Into the Storm*, broke new ground on Q's possible identities. The operators of several anonymous Twitter accounts tracking QAnon have also played a key role in expanding our understanding of its consequences, doing crucial work compiling videos and tracking court cases.

My agents, Matt Latimer and Keith Urbahn at Javelin, were the first to

recognize the possibilities in a book about QAnon. My editor at Harper-Collins, Sarah Haugen, suffered through rounds of edits to improve this book. Rebecca Raskin at Harper-Collins and Jordan Mulligan at Harper-Collins UK helped bring the book on board.

I've been blessed to have excellent editors at The Daily Beast, including Tracy Connor, Jackie Kucinich, Matt Fuller, Noah Shachtman, and Sam Stein. I have shared bylines with a number of great reporters on this beat, including Asawin Suebsaeng, Zachary Petrizzo, and Kelly Weill. This book never would've happened without my partners in The Daily Beast's *Fever Dreams* podcast—Asawin, Kelly, and Jesse Cannon—who picked up the slack so I could keep writing.

This book is only possible because of the encouragement from readers and listeners who have supported my reporting: first the subscribers to my newsletter, *Right Richter*, and then on *Fever Dreams*. It's been gratifying hearing from many of you, and I'm thankful for your support over the years.

I fell in love with journalism while working on Georgetown's campus newspaper, the *Georgetown Voice*. I'm lucky enough to still be friends today with many of the people I met there: Chris, Molly, Daniel, Kate, Brendan, Tim, Jeff, Joe, and Henry, all of whom have heard more about QAnon than any reasonable person could ever expect to.

Finally, reporting and writing this book would not be possible without the people whose lives have, one way or another, been torn apart by QAnon. I'm thankful that they trusted me with their stories.

Notes

Introduction: The Storm

- 1 zip ties in hand: Ryan Reilly, "Armed Jan. 6 Rioter Had Zip Ties during Capitol Attack, Friend Testifies at Trial," NBC News, March 4, 2022, https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/justice-department/armed-jan-6-rioter-zip-ties-capitol-attack-friend-testifies-trial-rcna18733.
- 2 rogue CIA supercomputer: Will Sommer, "Infamous 'Hoax' Artist Behind Trumpworld's New Voter Fraud Claim," Daily Beast, Nov. 9, 2020, https:// www.thedailybeast.com/infamous-hoax-artist-behind-trumpworlds-new -voter-fraud-claim.
- 6 "The Punisher": Sam Thielman, "How Do You Stop the Far-Right Using the Punisher Skull? Make It a Black Lives Matter Symbol," *Guardian*, June 11, 2020, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/jun/11/how-do-you-stop-the-far-right-using-the-punisher-skull-make-it-a-black-lives-matter-symbol.
- 8 seized on the pizza emails: Amanda Robb, "Pizzagate: Anatomy of a Fake News Scandal," *Rolling Stone*, Nov. 16, 2017, https://www.rollingstone.com/feature/anatomy-of-a-fake-news-scandal-125877.
- 9 Welch said later: Adam Goldman, "The Comet Ping Pong Gunman Answers Our Reporter's Questions," *New York Times*, Dec. 7, 2016, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/07/us/edgar-welch-comet-pizza-fake-news.html.
- 13 purchased a new truck: "QAnon FAA Employee from California Charged with Taking Part in U.S. Capitol Riot," Associated Press, Jan. 22, 2021, https://ktla.com/news/california/qanon-faa-employee-from-california-charged-with-taking-part-in-u-s-capitol-riot/.

- 14 Boyland died: Ayman M. Mohyeldin and Preeti Varathan, "Rosanne Boyland Was Outside the U.S. Capitol January 6. How—and Why—Did She Die?" *Vanity Fair*, Jan. 5, 2022, https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2022/01/capitol-insurrection-rosanne-boyland-how-and-why-did-she-die.
- 14 using a bullhorn: "Government's Brief in Support of Detention," USA v. Jacob Chansley, Jan. 14, 2021.
- 15 left a note: "Government's Brief in Support of Detention."

Chapter 1: The Genesis

- 19 A March 2021 poll: Chuck Todd, Mark Murray, and Carrie Dann, "Study Finds Nearly One-in-Five Americans Believe QAnon Conspiracy Theories," NBC News, May 27, 2021, https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/meet-the-press/study-finds-nearly-one-five-americans-believe-qanon-conspiracy-theories-n1268722.
- 20 conducted by the American Enterprise Institute: Daniel A. Cox, "After the Ballots Are Counted: Conspiracies, Political Violence, and American Exceptionalism," Survey Center on American Life, Feb. 11, 2021, https:// www.americansurveycenter.org/research/after-the-ballots-are-counted -conspiracies-political-violence-and-american-exceptionalism/.
- 20 a running poll: "Are You a Supporter of QAnon?" Civiqs, https://civiqs.com/results/qanon_support?uncertainty=true&annotations=true&zoomIn=true.
- 21 more anime porn: Dale Beran, *It Came from Something Awful: How a Toxic Troll Army Accidentally Memed Donald Trump into Office* (All Points Books, 2019), ix.
- 21 Nanashii: Beran, 37.
- 22 trolled racist website Stormfront: Beran, 123.
- 22 Dale Beran notes: Beran, 124.

Chapter 2: "Ask the Q"

28 Roman Riselvato: E. J. Dickson, "Meet the Parents of 'Qbaby,' Star of the Trump Rally and New QAnon Mascot," *Rolling Stone*, July 18, 2019, https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-news/qbaby-qanon-conspiracy-theory-trump-rally-860526/.

- 29 "pissing off the crazy": Will Sommer and Asawin Suebsaeng, "Team Trump Wrestles with Its QAnon Problem," Daily Beast, Sept. 12, 2019, https:// www.thedailybeast.com/team-trump-wrestles-with-its-2020-qanon -problem.
- 30 QAnon's "coming out party": Elizabeth Nolan Brown, "At Trump Tampa Rally, QAnon Conspiracists Abound as President Claims You Need ID to Buy Groceries," *Reason*, Aug. 1, 2018, https://reason.com/2018/08/01/trump-tampa-rally-a-hotbed-of-ganon/.
- 30 complained to a local website: Adam C. Smith, "Florida Insider Poll:
 'We've Gone from Being the Party of Jeb, Winning Everywhere, to the
 Party of Cletus, the Slack-jawed Yokel," *Tampa Bay Times*, July 24, 2018,
 https://www.tampabay.com/florida-politics/buzz/2018/07/24/florida
 -insider-poll-weve-gone-from-being-the-party-of-jeb-winning-everywhere
 -to-the-party-of-cletus-the-slack-jawed-yokel/.
- 30 DeSantis told a reporter: Steve Contorno, "Ron DeSantis on His QAnon Conspiracy Supporters: 'I'm Not Sure What That Is,'" *Tampa Bay Times*, Aug. 28, 2018, https://www.tampabay.com/florida-politics/buzz/2018/08/28/ron-desantis-on-his-qanon-conspiracy-supporters-im-not-sure-what-that-is/.
- 32 a rally in Grand Rapids, Michigan: Tom Porter, "QAnon Conspiracy Theorists Turned Out in Force at Trump's Michigan Rally as He Hailed Victory over 'Deep State;" Insider, March 29, 2019, https://www.business insider.com/qanon-conspiracy-theory-attend-trump-michigan-rally-deep-state-2019–3.
- 33 Frank said: Emily Singer, "Campaign Official Promises to Share QAnon Supporter's Message with Trump," The American Independent, May 26, 2020, https://americanindependent.com/donald-trump-campaign-qanon-kayleigh-mcenany-rally-arizona-phoenix.
- an Axios report: Jonathan Swan and Zachary Basu, "Episode 3: Descent into Madness," Axios, Jan. 17, 2021, https://www.axios.com/2021/01/17/trump-off-the-rails-descent-into-madness.
- 39 Straka told the Washington Examiner: Jerry Dunleavy, "QAnon Slogan Spoken from Trump Rally Podium as FBI Warns about Conspiracy Theory-related Violence," Washington Examiner, Aug. 2, 2019.
- 39 Dan Scavino posted a meme: David Gilbert, "The Jan. 6 Committee Wants to Speak to Trump's Social Media Guy about QAnon," Vice News, March 29, 2022, https://www.vice.com/en/article/dypjky/dan-scavino-qanon.
- 41 televised town hall: "Donald Trump NBC Town Hall Transcript October

15," Rev.com, https://www.rev.com/blog/transcripts/donald-trump-nbc-town-hall-transcript-october-15.

Chapter 3: Q's Priests

- 42 launched "The Black List": Kenny Malone, "Hollywood's Black List," NPR, July 10, 2020, https://www.npr.org/2020/07/10/889708583/hollywoods-black-list.
- 44 On his blog: "Soros' Hollywood Rentboy Exposed," Neon Revolt, https://www.neonrevolt.com/2018/10/18/soros-hollywood-rentboy-exposed-by-blacklistanon-greatawakening-neonrevolt/.
- 47 proved to be a surprising hit: Ben Collins, "On Amazon, a QAnon Conspiracy Book Climbs the Charts—with an Algorithmic Push," NBC News, March 4, 2019, https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/tech-news/amazon-qanon-conspiracy-book-climbs-charts-algorithmic-push-n97 9181.
- 50 appeared on InfoWars in 2015: Elizabeth Williamson, "Alex Jones and Donald Trump: A Fateful Alliance Draws Scrutiny," *New York Times*, March 7, 2022, https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/07/us/politics/alex-jones-jan-6-trump.html.
- 51 allegedly acted as a cutout between Stone and WikiLeaks: Jeffrey Toobin, "Roger Stone's and Jerome Corsi's Time in the Barrel," *New Yorker*, Feb. 11, 2019, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/02/18/roger-stones-and-jerome-corsis-time-in-the-barrel.
- 52 its leading figures started to grapple for control: Brandy Zadrozny and Ben Collins, "How Three Conspiracy Theorists Took 'Q' and Sparked QAnon," NBC News, Aug. 14, 2018, https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/tech-news/how-three-conspiracy-theorists-took-q-sparked-qanon-n900531.
- 53 "I'm sick of all these witches and warlocks": Rebecca Speare-Cole, "Alex Jones' QAnon Rant Watched Over 2 Million Times: 'I'm Sick of It!'"

 Newsweek, Jan. 11, 2021, https://www.newsweek.com/alex-jones-qanon-rant-viral-infowars-1560394.
- Robert Cornero: Details on Cornero's life come from *Revolution Q*, his self-published memoir released under the name "Neon Revolt." Open-source intelligence company Logically connected Cornero to the "Neon Revolt" persona in 2021. Cornero has neither confirmed nor disputed the identification. I tried to reach Cornero via email, phone calls, and a letter to his parents' house, but didn't receive a response.

- 53 a long-term decline: Neon Revolt, "Revolution Q: The Story of QAnon and the 2nd American Revolution," 2019.
- 56 discovered Cornero's double life: Nick Backovic, "EXCLUSIVE: Failed Screenwriter from New Jersey Behind One of QAnon's Most Influential Personas," Logically, Jan. 11, 2021, https://www.logically.ai/articles/exclusive-failed-screenwriter-from-new-jersey-behind-one-of-qanons-most-influential-personas.

Chapter 4: Who Is Q?

- 59 Cicada 3301: David Kushner, "Cicada: Solving the Web's Deepest Mystery," *Rolling Stone*, Jan. 15, 2015, https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-news/cicada-solving-the-webs-deepest-mystery-84394/.
- 59 claimed he had chat logs: Michael Edison Hayden, "Jack Posobiec Interviewed a Pro-Hitler Disinformation Poster on One America News Network," Hatewatch, July 23, 2020, https://www.splcenter.org/hate watch/2020/07/23/jack-posobiec-interviewed-pro-hitler-disinformation -poster-one-america-news-network.
- 60 BuzzFeed News declared: Ryan Broderick, "People Think This Whole QAnon Conspiracy Theory Is a Prank on Trump Supporters," BuzzFeed News, Aug. 6, 2018, https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/ryanhatesthis/its-looking-extremely-likely-that-qanon-is-probably-a.
- 60 political pranks: "Prologue," Luther Blissett, http://www.lutherblissett .net/.
- 62 robbed almost immediately: Michael Wilson, "City Newcomer Is Let Down by a Stranger, Then the Police," *New York Times*, Jan. 18, 2014, https://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/18/nyregion/city-newcomer-is-let -down-by-a-stranger-then-the-police.html.
- 63 Brennan replied: Don Caldwell, "Q&A with Fredrick Brennan of 8chan," Know Your Meme, 2014, https://knowyourmeme.com/editorials/interviews/qa-with-fredrick-brennan-of-8chan.
- 64 Brennan partied: Adrian Chen, "Gamergate Supporters Partied at a Strip Club This Weekend," *New York*, Oct. 27, 2014, https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2014/10/gamergate-supporters-party-at-strip-club.html.
- 65 a linguistic analysis report: David K. Kirkpatrick, "Who Is Behind QAnon? Linguistic Detectives Find Fingerprints," *New York Times*, Feb. 24, 2022, https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/19/technology/qanon-messages-authors.html.

- wrote in his memoir: Paul Furber, "Q: Inside the Greatest Intelligence Drop in History," https://paulfurber.net/qinside/.
- 69 Brennan called for 8chan to be shut down: Kevin Roose, "Shut the Site Down,' Says the Creator of 8chan, a Megaphone for Gunmen," *New York Times*, Aug. 4, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/04/technology/8chan-shooting-manifesto.html.
- 70 Q: Into the Storm: Cullen Hoback, Q: Into the Storm, HBO, 2021.
- 71 fled the country: Hoback.
- 71 The linguistic analysis: Kirkpatrick, "Who Is Behind QAnon?"

Chapter 5: Plan to Save the World

- 73 created her first Facebook account: Leaked internal Facebook document, "Carol's Journey to QAnon," published via Gizmodo's release of the "Facebook Papers," "Read the Facebook Papers for Yourself," https://gizmodo.com/facebook-papers-how-to-read-1848702919.
- 74 Facebook had thousands of QAnon groups: Ben Collins and Brandy Zadrozny, "Facebook Bans QAnon Across Its Platforms," NBC News, Oct. 6, 2020, https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/tech-news/facebook-bans-qanon-across-its-platforms-n1242339.
- 74 Mark Zuckerberg made the decision: Rachel Metz, "Likes, Anger Emojis and RSVPs: The Math Behind Facebook's News Feed—and How It Backfired," CNN, Oct. 27, 2021, https://www.cnn.com/2021/10/27/tech/facebook-papers-meaningful-social-interaction-news-feed-math/index.html.
- 75 the community had broken Reddit's rules: Kaitlyn Tiffany, "Reddit Squashed QAnon by Accident," *Atlantic*, Sept. 23, 2020, https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2020/09/reddit-qanon-ban-evasion-policy-moderation-facebook/616442/.
- 75 told the Atlantic in 2020: Tiffany.
- 77 cleaning up QAnon: Sheera Frankel, "QAnon Is Still Spreading on Facebook, Despite a Ban," *New York Times*, Dec. 18, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/18/technology/qanon-is-still-spreading-on-face book-despite-a-ban.html.
- 78 believers rejoiced: Will Sommer, "Fox News Promotes Pro-Trump QAnon Conspiracy Theorist," Daily Beast, March 22, 2019, https://www.thedaily beast.com/fox-and-friends-first-promotes-pro-trump-qanon-conspiracy -theorist.

- 78 Twitter ire fell: Mike Rothschild, "The Inside Story of How QAnon Derailed a Charter School's Annual Fundraiser," Daily Dot, May 10, 2019, https://www.dailydot.com/debug/qanon-grass-valley-charter-school-foundation/.
- 79 one Twitter user wrote: Reuters Fact Check, "Fact Check-False QAnon Claims That Oprah Is Wearing an Ankle Monitor During Interview," Reuters, March 10, 2021, https://www.reuters.com/article/factcheck-oprah-ankle/fact-check-false-qanon-claims-that-oprah-is-wearing-an-ankle-monitor-during-interview-idUSL1N2L81CO.
- 80 the Wayfair sex-trafficking plot: Jessica Contrera, "A QAnon Con: How the Viral Wayfair Sex Trafficking Lie Hurt Real Kids," Washington Post, December 16, 2021, https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/inter active/2021/wayfair-qanon-sex-trafficking-conspiracy/.
- 80 she wrote: Contrera.
- 81 entered the lobby: Eddie Kim, "How 'Save the Children' Became a Conspiracy Grift," *MEL Magazine*, https://melmagazine.com/en-us/story/save-the-children-qanon-child-trafficking.
- 82 "Pastel QAnon": Marc-André Argentino, "Pastel QAnon," Global Network on Extremism & Technology, March 17, 2021, https://gnet-research.org/2021/03/17/pastel-qanon/.
- 82 "QAmom": E. J. Dickson, "The Birth of QAmom," *Rolling Stone*, Sept. 2, 2020, https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-features/qanon-mom-conspiracy-theory-parents-sex-trafficking-qamom-1048921/.

Chapter 6: Viral Load

- 86 vaulted into the QAnon pantheon: Will Sommer, "QAnon's Newest Hero Is D-list 'Vanderpump Rules' Star Isaac Kappy," Daily Beast, Aug. 7, 2018, https://www.thedailybeast.com/qanons-newest-hero-is-a-d-list-vander pump-rules-star.
- **tainted their adrenochrome supply with the coronavirus**: Kyle Mantyla, "Liz Crokin Claims Celebrities Are Getting Coronavirus from Tainted 'Adrenochrome Supply,'" Right Wing Watch, March 18, 2020, https://www.rightwingwatch.org/post/liz-crokin-claims-celebrities-are-getting -coronavirus-from-tainted-adrenochrome-supply/.
- 87 Frazzledrip: Jane Coaston, "YouTube Conspiracy Theory Crisis, Explained," Vox, Dec. 14, 2018, https://www.vox.com/technology/2018/12/12/18136132/google-youtube-congress-conspiracy-theories.

- 88 found a Twitter thread: "Q Is Always Wrong About Everything," Twitter user @PokerPolitics, June 4, 2019, https://twitter.com/PokerPolitics/status/1135811817073270785.
- 91 fertile ground for conspiracy theories: Samuel K. Cohn, "Pandemics: Waves of Disease, Waves of Hate from the Plague of Athens to A.I.D.S.," *Historical Journal*, 2012, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4422154/.
- 91 QAnon activity grew significantly: "The Genesis of a Conspiracy Theory," Institute for Strategic Dialogue, https://www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/The-Genesis-of-a-Conspiracy-Theory.pdf.
- 92 late nights reading QAnon websites: David Gilbert, "Man Inspired by QAnon and Hopped Up on Caffeine Purposefully Derailed Train," Vice News, April 15, 2022, https://www.vice.com/en/article/7kb38q/man-inspired-by-qanon-and-hopped-up-on-caffeine-purposefully-derailed-train.
- 93 retracted her findings: Martin Enserink and Jon Cohen, "Fact-checking Judy Mikovits, the Controversial Virologist Attacking Anthony Fauci in a Viral Conspiracy Video," *Science*, May 8, 2020, https://www.science.org/content/article/fact-checking-judy-mikovits-controversial-virologist-attacking-anthony-fauci-viral?cookieSet=1.
- 93 Mikki Willis: Josh Rottenberg and Stacy Perman, "Meet the Ojai Dad Who Made the Most Notorious Piece of Coronavirus Disinformation Yet," *Los Angeles Times*, May 13, 2020, https://www.latimes.com/entertain ment-arts/movies/story/2020–05–13/plandemic-coronavirus-documentary -director-mikki-willis-mikovits.
- 93 Willis introduced Mikovits to Zach Vorhies: Anna Merlan, "An Ex-Google Employee Turned 'Whistleblower' and QAnon Fan Made 'Plandemic' Go Viral," Vice News, May 14, 2020, https://www.vice.com/en/article/k7q qyn/an-ex-google-employee-turned-whistleblower-and-qanon-fan-made -plandemic-go-viral.
- 94 reposted the video: Sheera Frankel, Ben Decker, and Davey Alba, "How the 'Plandemic' Movie and Its Falsehoods Spread Widely Online," *New York Times*, May 21, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/20/tech nology/plandemic-movie-youtube-facebook-coronavirus.html.
- 95 roughly \$100: Geoff Brumfield, "What a Bottle of Ivermectin Reveals about the Shadowy World of COVID Telemedicine," NPR, Feb. 9, 2022, https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2022/02/09/1079183523 /what-a-bottle-of-ivermectin-reveals-about-the-shadowy-world-of-covid -telemedicine.

- 95 patients complained: Vera Bergenruen, "How 'America's Frontline Doctors' Sold Access to Bogus COVID-19 Treatments—and Left Patients in the Lurch," *Time*, Aug. 26, 2021, https://time.com/6092368/americas-frontline-doctors-covid-19-misinformation/.
- 96 Steele wrote: Lindsey Ellefson, "Former CIA Officer Who Called COVID a 'Hoax' Dies from Virus," Wrap, Aug. 30, 2021, https://www.thewrap.com/robert-david-steele-covid/.
- 97 "a mass spreader event": David Moye, "Pro-Trump Speaker Wants to Turn D.C. Rally into 'Mass-Spreader Event,'" Huff Post, Jan. 5, 2021, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/clay-clark-trump-dc-rally-mass-spreader-event_n_5ff4e12cc5b6ec8ae0b69f57.

Chapter 7: The Wizard of Mattoon

- 101 wrapped in aluminum foil: John Kelly, "Omega Victims Bought Hope in \$100 Investments," Associated Press, Sept. 7, 2000.
- 101 bought a boat and a Harley-Davidson motorcycle: Pam Belluck, "Wads of Cash, Gossip, then Fraud Charges," New York Times, Sept. 2, 2000, https:// www.nytimes.com/2000/09/02/us/wads-of-cash-gossip-then-fraud-charges .html.
- once been convicted for helping to steal guns: Shane Tritsch, "False Profit," *Chicago*, Sept. 2001, https://www.quatloos.com/FalseProfit.pdf.
- 102 more than a dozen rare cars: "Vehicles Belonging to Clyde Hood Among Those to Be Auctioned," Copley News Service, May 2003.
- 102 a banking wheeler-dealer of the highest order: Tritsch, "False Profit."
- 102 "Keep the Lord's Warehouse full": Belluck, "Wads of Cash."
- an ice cream shop owner sold her business: David Marchant, "Funny Business," UPI, May 16, 2001.
- 103 The scam spread across the world: Myron Levin, "Suspect's Arrest Lifts Veil on 'Financial Scam of '90's,' "Los Angeles Times, Sept. 3, 1994.
- Earth's magnetism had delayed the financial transfer: Flynn McRoberts, "Downstate Fraud Had Global Reach, U.S. Says," *Chicago Tribune*, Sept. 4, 2000.
- 105 a powerful force in American politics and culture: Jesse Walker, *The United States of Paranoia: A Conspiracy Theory* (New York: HarperCollins, 2014), 8.
- 105 American history is filled: Walker, 9.
- 105 Thomas Jefferson's opponents accused him: Claus Oberhauser,

- "Freemasons, Illuminati, and Jews: Conspiracy Theories and the French Revolution," in Michael Butter and Peter Knight, eds., *Routledge Handbook of Conspiracy Theories* (London and New York: Routledge, 2020), 562.
- 105 American Protestants reacted to waves of Catholic immigration: Annika Thiem, "Conspiracy Theories and Gender and Sexuality," in Butter and Knight, eds., *Routledge Handbook of Conspiracy Theories*, 297.
- 105 conspiracy theories about "Slave Power": Walker, 7.
- summed up conspiracy theories: Joseph E. Uscinski and Joseph M. Parent, American Conspiracy Theories (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).
- 105 a conspiracy theory is: Jeffrey A. Hall, "Aligning Darkness with Conspiracy Theory: The Discursive Effects of African American Interest in Gary Webb's 'Dark Alliance," *Howard Journal of Communications*, Nov. 2006, quoted in Julien Giry and Pranvera Tika, "Conspiracy Theories in Political Science and Political Theory," in Butter and Knight, eds., *Routledge Handbook of Conspiracy Theories*, 152.
- 105 Barkun writes: Michael Barkun, A Culture of Conspiracy: Apocalyptic Visions in Contemporary America (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 3.
- 106 Shaini Goodwin discovered Omega: Sean Robinson, "Snared by a Cybercult Queen," *News Tribune*, July 18, 2004.
- 107 possibly disguised as pizza deliverymen: Tritsch, "False Profit."
- 108 Goodwin came upon the writings of Harvey Barnard: Robinson, "Snared by a Cybercult Queen."
- 108 NESARA started to mutate: Robinson.
- 110 "the strong dominate the weak": Anthony Lantian, Mike Wood, and Biljana Gjoneska, "Personality Traits, Cognitive Styles, and Worldviews Associated with Beliefs in Conspiracy Theories," in Butter and Knight, eds., Routledge Handbook of Conspiracy Theories, 162.
- 110 less likely to use condoms during sex: Daniel Jolley, Silvia Mari, and Karen M. Douglas, "Consequences of Conspiracy Theories," in Butter and Knight, eds., Routledge Handbook of Conspiracy Theories, 236.
- 110 support political violence: Uscinski and Parent.
- A 2013 study: "Conspiracy Theories Prosper: 25% of Americans Are Truthers," Jan. 17, 2013, Fairleigh Dickinson University, http://publicmind.fdu.edu/2013/outthere/final.pdf, quoted in Steven M. Smallpage, Hugo Drochon, Joseph E. Uscinski, and Casey Klofstad, "Who Are the Conspiracy Theorists?" in Butter and Knight, eds., Routledge Handbook of Conspiracy Theories.
- 111 Another survey taken in 2011: J. Eric Oliver and Thomas J. Wood,

- "Conspiracy Theories and the Paranoid Style(s) of Mass Opinion," *American Journal of Political Science* (October 2014).
- 112 Joseph Gregory Hallett: Nick Backovic and Joe Ondrak, "All Hail the King? How QAnon Is Backing a Conspiracy Theorist's Bizarre Claim to the Throne of England," Logically, July 22, 2020, https://www.logically.ai/articles/all-hail-the-king-how-qanon-is-backing-a-conspiracy-theorists-bizarre-claim-to-the-throne-of-england.
- 113 most famous millenarian movement: Barkun, A Culture of Conspiracy, 9.
- 114 Sanchez said: Jason Strait, "Few Stake Claim to Millions in Omega Case," Associated Press, Jan. 24, 2002.

Chapter 8: Those Who Know Can't Sleep

- 9/11 conspiracy theorist: WCT Newsroom, "Northwest Pilot from Rural Glyndon Alleges 9/11 Cover-up," West Central Tribune, March 9, 2007, https://www.wctrib.com/news/northwest-pilot-from-rural-glyndon-alleges-9-11-cover-up.
- 116 A woman named Judy Johnson became convinced: Mark Sauer, "Decade of Accusations: The McMartin Preschool Child Abuse Case Launched 100 Others—and a Vigorous Debate on How to Question Youngsters," San Diego Union-Tribune, Aug. 29, 1993.
- a thermometer: Richard Beck, *We Believe the Children: A Moral Panic in the 1980s* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2015), 53.
- 116 a letter: Beck, 9.
- 117 forced to drink blood: Sauer, "Decade of Accusations."
- 117 a devilish "goatman": Beck, 79.
- 117 Geraldo Rivera earned massive ratings: Becker, 181.
- 118 martial arts star Chuck Norris: Beck, 122.
- 118 Beck writes: Beck, 272.
- 119 ended in 1990: Sauer, "Decade of Accusations."
- At a cost to the government of \$16 million: Gordon Dillow and Marilyn Kalfus, "McMartin: The Pain Lingers," *Orange County Register*, May 20, 1995.
- 119 One former Miami daycare operator is still in prison: Rael Jean Isaac, "The Last Victim," *National Review*, Sept. 10, 2018, https://www.nationalreview.com/magazine/2018/09/10/the-last-victim/.
- 119 taken by plane to the rituals: Beck, 160.
- 120 Haleigh Cummings vanished: Eileen Kelly, "10 Years Later: Haleigh

- Cummings Disappearance Still a Mystery," *Gainesville Sun*, Feb. 9, 2019.
- 120 received an official trespassing warning: Kelly.
- 120 past drug use: Eileen Kelly, "Still a Mystery," *Florida Times-Union*, Feb. 10, 2019.
- 121 filed by Picazio: "Petition for Injunction for Protection against Repeat Violence," *Kim Lowry Picazio v. Timothy Charles Holmseth*.
- 121 On his obscure blog: "Petition for Injunction for Protection against Repeat Violence."
- 121 Using the internet: "Petition for Injunction for Protection against Repeat Violence."
- 122 Holmseth sent Picazio: "Petition for Injunction for Protection against Repeat Violence."
- 122 violated the order: "Report and Recommendation," *Timothy Charles Holmseth v. City of East Grand Forks*, U.S. District Court, District of Montana.
- "Agent Margaritaville": Mack Lamoureux, "Arrest of 'Agent Margaritaville' Hitting Conspiracy Movement Hard," Vice News, Feb. 8, 2021, https://www.vice.com/en/article/v7mj8b/arrest-of-agent-margaritaville-hitting -conspiracy-movement-hard.
- 126 a mysterious substance called adrenochrome: Tarpley Hitt, "How QAnon Became Obsessed with Adrenochrome, an Imaginary Drug Hollywood Is Harvesting from Kids," Daily Beast, Aug. 14, 2020, https://www.thedailybeast.com/how-qanon-became-obsessed-with-adrenochrome-animaginary-drug-hollywood-is-harvesting-from-kids.
- 126 Thompson explained to him: Hitt.
- said in a 2021 interview: Blake Montgomery, "'Passion of the Christ' Star Hawks Unhinged QAnon Adrenochrome Conspiracy Theory," Daily Beast, April 17, 2021, https://www.thedailybeast.com/passion-of-the-christ-star-jim-caviezel-hawks-qanon-adrenochrome-conspiracy-theory.
- 127 his death took on an enormous importance: Kjetil Braut Simonsen, "Antisemitism and Conspiracism," in Butter and Knight, eds., *Routledge Handbook of Conspiracy Theories*, 358.
- seventy-nine cases of blood libel allegations: Simonsen.
- 128 killed more than forty Jews: "Kielce Pogrom," United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, https://www.ushmm.org/learn/timeline-of-events/after-1945/kielce-pogrom.
- 128 were sharing: Brian Friedberg, "The Dark Virality of a Hollywood Blood

- Harvesting Conspiracy," *Wired*, July 31, 2020, https://www.wired.com/story/opinion-the-dark-virality-of-a-hollywood-blood-harvesting-conspiracy/.
- 128 He fled: "Protesters Gather at Polk County Justice Center Monday Morning," KROX-AM, Aug. 26, 2019, https://kroxam.com/2019/08/26/protesters-gather-at-polk-county-justice-center-monday-morning/.

Chapter 9: The QAnon Kidnappers

- 130 Jessica pointed out to her mother: "Affidavit for Arrest Warrant," Parker Police Department, Parker, CO, Oct. 3, 2019.
- 131 wrote in a report: Douglas County Department of Human Services report, Jan. 2019.
- 131 holed up in her apartment: "Affidavit for Arrest Warrant."
- introduced to her daughter as a "sniper": "Affidavit for Arrest Warrant."
- 132 bought a gun: "Affidavit for Arrest Warrant."
- 132 according to her daughter: "Affidavit for Arrest Warrant."
- turned his truck into an improvised armored vehicle: William Mansell, "Man Pleads Guilty to Terrorism Charge after Blocking Hoover Dam Bridge with Armored Truck," ABC News, Feb. 13, 2020, https://abcnews.go.com/US/man-pleads-guilty-terrorism-charge-blocking-bridge-armored/story?id=68955385.
- 134 a man armed with a katana: Will Sommer, "QAnon Disciple Allegedly Vandalized Catholic Church with Crowbar While Ranting about Human Trafficking," Daily Beast, Sept. 30, 2019, https://www.thedailybeast.com/qanon-disciple-allegedly-vandalized-catholic-church-with-crowbar.
- 134 convinced that his brother was secretly a "reptilian": Will Sommer, "Qanon-Believing Proud Boy Accused of Murdering 'Lizard' Brother with Sword," Daily Beast, Jan. 9, 2019, https://www.thedailybeast.com/proud-boy-member-accused-of-murdering-his-brother-with-a-sword-4.
- a man tried to burn down Comet Ping Pong: Peter Hermann, "Man Who Set Fire at Comet Ping Pong Sentenced to Four Years in Prison," Washington Post, April 23, 2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/man-who-set-fire-at-comet-ping-pong-pizza-shop-sentenced-to-four-years-in-prison/2020/04/23/2e107676–8496–11ea-a3eb-e9fc93 160703_story.html.
- 134 aimless twenty-four-year-old: Ali Watkins, "A Conspiracy Theorist, Anthony Comello, and a Mystery Motive in Gambino Murder," New York

- *Times*, March 22, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/22/nyregion/gambino-comello-mob-boss.html.
- 134 FBI wiretaps: "Murder of Gambino Boss Triggered Flawed Theories," National Museum of Organized Crime and Law Enforcement, https://themobmuseum.org/blog/murder-of-gambino-boss-triggered-flawed-theories/.
- 135 held up one of his hands to reporters: Ali Watkins, "Accused of Killing a Gambino Mob Boss, He's Presenting a Novel Defense," New York Times, Dec. 6, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/06/nyregion/gambino-shooting-anthony-comello-qanon.html.
- 135 data compiled by University of Maryland researchers: Michael Jensen and Sheehan Kane, "QAnon Offenders in the United States," National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, 2021, https://www.start.umd.edu/publication/qanon-offenders-united-states.
- 136 Arrived at McConnell's house: Accounts of Abcug's months on the run are taken from court and police records, as well as a three-hour interview Ramos gave in 2020 to NorthWest Liberty News, an online TV show. Ramos and Abcug didn't respond to requests for comment.
- 136 Now they planned to lie low with McConnell: "Field McConnell Was Surprised That We Were There," NorthWest Liberty News, https://rumble.com/vcaal7-field-mcconnell-was-surprised-that-we-were-there-joseph-ramos-part-1.html.
- 138 The FBI's 2019 memo: Jana Winter, "Exclusive: FBI Document Warns Conspiracy Theories Are a New Domestic Terrorism Threat," Yahoo News, Aug. 1, 2019, https://www.yahoo.com/video/fbi-documents-conspiracy-theories-terrorism-160000507.html.
- 139 harboring a fringe congressional candidate: Osceola Police Dept., "Incident Report #20-010128."
- 140 Ramos recalled later: NorthWest Liberty News.
- arrested in Wisconsin: "Complaint," *State of Wisconsin v. Field McConnell*, Nov. 5, 2019.
- 142 fugitive life came to an end in Kalispell: Robert Garrison, "Parker Woman Arrested in Montana for Conspiracy to Commit Kidnapping," Denver7, Jan. 4, 2020, https://www.thedenverchannel.com/news/local-news/parker-woman-arrested-in-montana-for-kidnapping.
- 143 Struggled for years with opioid addiction: Hopkins County Jail medical report, March 30, 2020.
- 144 long-simmering frustrations: Georgia Wells and Justin Scheck, "How a Custody Fight Plus QAnon Turned Deadly," Wall Street Journal, Aug. 2,

- 2021, https://www.wsj.com/articles/when-online-conspiracies-turn -deadly-a-custody-battle-and-a-killing-11617376764.
- 146 Wray said: Zachary Cohen, "FBI Director Says Bureau Is Not Investigating QAnon Conspiracy 'In Its Own Right," CNN, April 15, 2021, https://www.cnn.com/2021/04/15/politics/fbi-director-wray-qanon-threat/index.html.

Chapter 10: When Dad Takes the Red Pill

- 154 Reddit's "QAnon Casualties" board: "QAnon Casualties," https://www.reddit.com/r/QAnonCasualties/.
- who has studied QAnon: Ronald W. Pies and Joseph M. Pierre, "Believing in Conspiracy Theories Is Not Delusional," Medscape, Feb. 7, 2021, https://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/945290.

Chapter 11: The Q Caucus

- 160 Jade Helm: Dan Lamothe, "Remember Jade Helm 15, the Controversial Military Exercise? It's Over," Washington Post, Sept. 14, 2015, https://www .washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2015/09/14/remember-jade -helm-15-the-controversial-military-exercise-its-over/.
- 160 cosponsored a resolution: Susan Davis, "House Votes to Condemn QAnon Conspiracy Theory: 'It's a Sick Cult," NPR, Oct. 2, 2020, https://www.npr.org/2020/10/02/919123199/house-votes-to-condemn-qanon-conspiracy-movement.
- 160 recorded a video: Allie Bice, "Rep. Kinzinger: 'It's Time' for Leaders to Disavow QAnon," *Politico*, Aug. 16, 2020, https://www.politico.com/news/2020/08/16/adam-kinzinger-trump-qanon-396414.
- 161 McCain grabbed the microphone: Jonathan Martin and Amie Parnes, "McCain: Obama Not an Arab, Crowd Boos," *Politico*, Oct. 10, 2008, https://www.politico.com/story/2008/10/mccain-obama-not-an-arab-crowd-boos-014479.
- 164 Pamela Patterson: Will Sommer, "In a First, Lawmaker Cites QAnon Conspiracy from City Council Floor," Daily Beast, Dec. 13, 2018, https://www.thedailybeast.com/in-a-first-lawmaker-cites-qanon-conspiracy-from-city-council-floor.
- 164 Matthew Lusk: Will Sommer, "A QAnon Believer Is Running for Congress

- and Is Currently Unopposed in His Republican Primary," Daily Beast, April 10, 2019, https://www.thedailybeast.com/matthew-lusk-meet-the-first-qanon-believer-running-for-congress.
- 165 fleeing across the state border: Will Sommer, "Ilhan Omar's Challenger Is Literally on the Run from the Law," Daily Beast, Feb. 21, 2020, https:// www.thedailybeast.com/ilhan-omars-challenger-danielle-stella-is-literally -on-the-run-from-the-law.
- 166 Perkins said: Will Steakin and Meg Cunningham, "Republicans Wrestle with Conspiracy-Theory Advocate Winning Senate Primary," ABC News, May 22, 2020, https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/republicans-wrestle -conspiracy-theory-advocate-winning-senate-primary/story?id=70829450.
- 166 list of QAnon supporters: Alex Kaplan, "Here Are the QAnon Supporters Running for Congress in 2020," Media Matters for America, Jan. 7, 2020, https://www.mediamatters.org/qanon-conspiracy-theory/here-are-qanon-supporters-running-congress-2020.
- 167 the waitresses were armed: Chaney Skilling, "Armed and Ready to Feed You: Shooters Grill in Rifle Serves Up Barbecue with a Gun on the Side," Denver Post, June 22, 2018, https://www.denverpost.com/2018/06/22/shooters-grill-rifle-waitresses-guns/.
- 167 Vandersteel asked Boebert: Jim Anderson, Nicholas Riccardi, and Alan Fram, "GOP Candidate Is Latest Linked to QAnon Conspiracy Theory," Associated Press, July 2, 2020, https://apnews.com/article/e21311e35e70 63834222942a1702211b.
- 167 a lengthy digital trail of support for QAnon: Eric Hananoki, "A Guide to Likely Member of Congress Marjorie Taylor Greene's Conspiracy Theories and Toxic Rhetoric," Media Matters for America, Oct. 15, 2020, https://www.mediamatters.org/congress/guide-likely-member-congress-marjorie-taylor-greenes-conspiracy-theories-and-toxic.
- 168 9/11 Truther: Catie Edmondson, "Marjorie Taylor Greene's Controversies Are Piling Up. Republicans Are Quiet." *New York Times*, Jan. 29, 2021.
- 168 the racism and anti-Semitism at the heart of QAnon: Ally Mutnick and Melanie Zanona, "House Republican Leaders Condemn GOP Candidate Who Made Racist Videos," *Politico*, June 17, 2020, https://www.politico.com/news/2020/06/17/house-republicans-condemn-gop-candidate-racist-videos-325579.
- 169 McCarthy initially took a hard line: Aaron Rupar, "Kevin McCarthy's Remarkable Flip-flop from 'There's No Place for QAnon' to 'I Don't Even Know What It Is," Vox, Feb. 4, 2021, https://www.vox.com/2021/2/4/22 266193/kevin-mccarthy-qanon-marjorie-taylor-greene.

- 169 listed Watkins in a planning document: Cheryl Teh, "The Trump Team's 22-Page Communications Playbook to Overturn the Election Had QAnon Influencer Ron Watkins Playing a Key Role," Insider, Jan. 5, 2022, https:// www.businessinsider.com/trumps-team-enlist-qanon-influencer-ron -watkins-overturn-the-election-2022-1.
- 171 won a seat: David Gilbert, "One of QAnon's Earliest Influencers Just Got Elected to South Carolina GOP," Vice News, April 26, 2021, https://www.vice.com/en/article/93ywwv/one-of-qanons-earliest-influencers-just-got -elected-to-south-carolina-gop.
- 171 Juan O. Savin has organized: Will Sommer, "Jim Caviezel's QAnon Guru Wants to Control Elections," Daily Beast, Oct. 27, 2021, https://www.the dailybeast.com/jim-caviezels-qanon-guru-juan-savin-wants-to-control -elections.
- 172 a ruse to arrest top Democrats all along: Bob Woodward and Robert Costa, "Virginia Thomas Urged White House Chief to Pursue Unrelenting Efforts to Overturn the 2020 Election, Texts Show," Washington Post, March 24, 2022, https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/03/24/virginia-thomas-mark-meadows-texts/.

Chapter 12: Baby Q

- 176 has three criteria: Robert Jay Lifton, *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism: A Study of "Brainwashing" in China* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), vii.
- 176 "thought-terminating clichés": Lifton, 429.
- a way station for cabal child-sex traffickers: Tay Wiles, "Conspiracy Theories Inspire Vigilante Justice in Tucson," *High Country News*, Sept. 12, 2018, https://www.hcn.org/issues/50.17/politics-conspiracy-theories-inspire -vigilante-justice-in-tucson.
- 181 Steinbart's mother: Amen Clinic letter to Steinbart family, March 17, 2020
- 189 admitted: "Petition for Action on Conditions of Pretrial Release," *USA v. Steinbart*, Sept. 1, 2020.
- 191 a sexual relationship with accused Russian spy Maria Butina: Michael Corkery, "Overstock C.E.O. Takes Aim at 'Deep State' after Romance with Russian Agent," *New York Times*, Aug. 15, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/15/business/overstock-paul-byrne-maria-butina-affair.html.
- 191 Byrne finagled his way into the White House: Alan Feuer, Maggie

Haberman, Michael S. Schmidt, and Luke Broadwater, "Trump Had Role in Weighing Proposals to Seize Voting Machines," *New York Times*, Jan. 31, 2022, https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/31/us/politics/donald-trump-election-results-fraud-voting-machines.html.

Chapter 13: Q Goes Abroad

- 195 Q had someone on the inside: Louise Milligan, Jeanavive McGregor, and Lauren Day, "QAnon Follower Tim Stewart's an Old Friend of Scott Morrison. His Family Reported Him to the National Security Hotline," Four Corners, June 13, 2021, https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-06-14/qanon-follower-old-friend-scott-morrison-stewart-family-speaks/100125156.
- split into two factions: Emiko Jozuka, Selina Wang, and Junko Ogura, "Japan's QAnon Disciples Aren't Letting Trump's Loss Quash Their Mission," CNN, April 23, 2021, https://www.cnn.com/2021/04/23/tech/qanon-consipiracy-theory-japan-trump-hnk-intl-dst/index.html.
- 198 QAnon Facebook groups: "Interpreting Social Qs: Implications of the Evolution of QAnon," Graphika, https://public-assets.graphika.com/reports/graphika_report_interpreting_social_qs.pdf.
- 198 Brazil: Robert Muggah, "In Brazil, QAnon Has a Distinctly Bolsonaro Flavor," *Foreign Policy*, Feb. 10, 2021, https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/02/10/brazil-qanon-bolsonaro-online-internet-conspiracy-theories-anti-vaccination/.
- 198 raising a Q flag: Mark Townsend, "Fan of Trump and Farage Raises Far-Right 'Q' Flag at His Cornish Castle," *Guardian*, Jan. 11, 2020, https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/jan/11/trump-and-farage-supporter-flies-flag-for-qanon-rar-right-conspiracy.
- 199 marched in front of Buckingham Palace: Ruchira Sharma, "How a Desire to 'Save Our Children' Took People Down the Rabbit Hole into the QAnon Delusion," iNews, Sept. 11, 2020, https://inews.co.uk/news/long-reads/qanon-uk-conspiracy-theory-save-our-children-march-explained -642000.
- 199 roughly 200,000 QAnon devotees: Katrin Bennhold, "QAnon Is Thriving in Germany. The Extreme Right Is Delighted," New York Times, Oct. 11, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/11/world/europe/qanon-is-thriving-in-germany-the-extreme-right-is-delighted.html.
- 199 adherents of the Reichsbürger: Bennhold.

- 201 made a startling announcement: Mack Lamoureux, "QAnons Are Harassing People at the Whim of a Woman They Say Is Canada's Queen," Vice News, June 17, 2021, https://www.vice.com/en/article/3aqvkw/qanons-are-harassing-people-at-the-whim-of-a-woman-they-say-is-canadas-queen-romana-didulo.
- 202 messages to her flock: Daphne Bramham, "The Absurd and Disturbing Tragedy of Romana Didulo," *Vancouver Sun*, Dec. 9, 2021, https://vancouversun.com/news/daphne-bramham-the-absurd-and-disturbing-tragedy-of-romana-didulo.
- 202 Didulo herself was detained: Andrew Russell and Stewart Bell, "Self-Declared 'Queen of Canada' Detained by RCMP after Alleged Threats to Health-Care Workers," *Global News*, Dec. 1, 2021, https://globalnews.ca/news/8417379/queen-of-canada-covid-online-threats/.
- 203 kidnapped a five-year-old girl: Lori Hinnant, "French Child Kidnap Plot Shows Global Sway of QAnon Style," Associated Press, Oct. 5, 2021, https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-europe-kidnapping-health-79761187c5d2767a8a27072a0e2d81ef.
- 205 replicating the Myanmar coup: Maggie Astor, "Michael Flynn Suggested at a QAnon-Affiliated Event That a Coup Should Happen in the U.S.," New York Times, June 1, 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/01/us/politics/flynn-coup-gohmert-qanon.html.

Conclusion: Patriots in Control

- 208 provided security: Alan Feuer, "Another Far-Right Group Is Scrutinized about Its Efforts to Aid Trump," *New York Times*, Jan. 3, 2022, https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/03/us/politics/first-amendment-praetorian-trump-jan-6.html.
- 210 suing her for \$1 billion: Tucker Huggins and Dan Mangan, "Dominion Voting Systems Brings \$1.3 Billion Defamation Suit Against Ex-Trump Lawyer Sidney Powell," CNBC, Jan. 8, 2021, https://www.cnbc.com/2021/01/08/dominion-brings-defamation-suit-against-sidney-powell .html.
- 211 Q social media content: Jim Hoft, "BOOTED! Police Escort Leftist Troll Will Sommer from Dallas Pro-Trump Conference—Crowd Cheers the News... Update: Response from Will Sommer," Gateway Pundit, May 30, 2021, https://www.thegatewaypundit.com/2021/05/booted-police-escort -leftist-troll-will-sommer-dallas-pro-trump-conference-crowd-cheers-news/.

- 212 telling his fans to consume chlorine dioxide: Andrew Jacobs, "Trump Disinfectant Remarks Echo Claims by Miracle-Cure Quacks," *New York Times*, April 27, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/27/health/coronavirus-disinfectant-bleach-trump.html.
- 212 the Food and Drug Administration warns: "Danger: Don't Drink Miracle Mineral Solution or Similar Products," U.S. Food and Drug Administration, https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/danger-dont-drink-miracle-mineral-solution-or-similar-products.
- 214 released a secret recording: Will Sommer, "QAnon Hero Michael Flynn Secretly Said QAnon Is 'Total Nonsense," Daily Beast, Nov. 28, 2021, https://www.thedailybeast.com/qanon-hero-michael-flynn-secretly-said -qanon-is-total-nonsense.
- start disguising their support: David Gilbert, "QAnon Is Going into Stealth Mode Ahead of the Election," Vice News, Sept. 30, 2020, https://www.vice.com/en/article/935pgp/qanon-is-going-into-stealth-mode -ahead-of-the-election.
- 216 encouraged Republicans to follow it: Isaac Arnsdorf, Doug Bock Clark, Alexandra Berzon, and Anjeanette Damon, "Heeding Steve Bannon's Call, Election Deniers Organize to Seize Control of the GOP—and Reshape America's Elections," ProPublica, Sept. 2, 2021, https://www.propublica.org/article/heeding-steve-bannons-call-election-deniers-organize-to-seize-control-of-the-gop-and-reshape-americas-elections.
- declared that human traffickers: Vera Bergengruen, "QAnon Candidates Are Winning Local Elections. Can They Be Stopped?" *Time*, April 16, 2021, https://time.com/5955248/qanon-local-elections/.
- 216 accusing her of being pro-pedophile: David D. Kirkpatrick and Stuart A. Thompson, "QAnon Cheers Republican Attacks on Jackson. Democrats See a Signal," *New York Times*, March 24, 2022, https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/24/us/qanon-supreme-court-ketanji-brown-jackson.html.
- NPR poll: Tovia Smith, "They Believe in Trump's 'Big Lie.' Here's Why It's Been So Hard to Dispel," NPR, Jan. 5, 2022, https://www.npr.org/2022/01/05/1070362852/trump-big-lie-election-jan-6-families.
- 216 targeted a butterfly sanctuary: Meagan Flynn, "The National Butterfly Center Closed Indefinitely. A Fringe Va. Candidate Is Partly to Blame," Washington Post, Feb. 3, 2022, https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2022/02/03/kimberly-lowe-national-butterfly-center/.
- impersonating a government official: Will Sommer, "He Was Partners with QAnon. Now He Wants Them Arrested," Daily Beast, April 9, 2021,

- https://www.thedailybeast.com/he-was-partners-with-qanon-now-he-wants-them-arrested.
- 218 fighting Q with immigration reforms: "Countering QAnon," Polaris Project, https://polarisproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Polaris -Report-Countering-QAnon.pdf.