What drives support for QAnon? Evidence from a survey experiment *

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Abstract

A growing body of research examines the extent of public support for QAnon— a conspiracy theory which purports that a cabal of Satan worshipping pedophiles is running a global child sex-trafficking ring and plotting against President Trump. However, little is known about the concomitants of support for QAnon as well as what informational cues may weaken support for the conspiracy. In this paper, we address this important gap by using original data from a nationally representative survey in addition to an embedded experiment. The results reveal that exposure to information about racist and anti-Semitic online QAnon content weakens support for QAnon, while learning about the representation of QAnon beliefs in Congress increases support for the conspiracy (though these effects diminish with the addition of a competing frame). We also find that exposure to information about the origins of QAnon, as well as the many incorrect “Q” predictions does not shape support for QAnon. We conclude that drawing attention to the virulently racist and anti-Semitic dimensions of QAnon adherence may provide the best approach to weaken support for the conspiracy theory.

Keywords: QAnon; conspiracy theory; (dis)confirming information cues; survey experiment

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1 Introduction

QAnon is a conspiracy theory which purports that a cabal of Satan worshipping pedophiles is running a global child sex-trafficking ring and plotting against President Trump, who is fighting the cabal. Since 2018, an increasing number of Americans have become aware of QAnon, primarily through social media sites such as Facebook and online forums such as Reddit (Papasavva et al. 2020). Data from the Pew Research Center (Mitchell et al. 2020) indicate that 47 percent of US adults had heard of QAnon by September 2020 - a figure that was 24 percent higher than the proportion of US adults who had heard of QAnon just six months earlier.

Questions concerning what individual level factors shape belief in conspiracy theories (Douglas et al. 2019, Uscinski et al. 2016), the extent to which (dis)confirming informational cues can affect conspiratorial beliefs (Enders & Smallpage 2019, Uscinski et al. 2016), and why conspiratorial beliefs are so difficult to reverse (Berinsky 2017), have long piqued the interests of political psychologists. Past studies have provided insight to these questions in relation to a variety of conspiracy theories. However, we are not aware of any studies that explore these questions in specific reference to QAnon. As such, there is a need to understand the individual-level factors associated with support for QAnon, the types of (dis)informational cues that might lead some individuals to exhibit support for the conspiracy, and exactly how such beliefs might be reversed.

These are by no means abstract or niche questions; the dissemination and acceptance of QAnon-related misinformation has had real-world implications since its emergence. For instance, the spread of disinformation about child sex trafficking by QAnon influencers led Polaris (2020), a national anti-trafficking organization, to warn that hotlines devoted to stopping trafficking were being overwhelmed by false reports, thus preventing individuals from reporting valid information. In 2019, the FBI (2019) also published a report expressing concern for the potential for QAnon beliefs to motivate individuals to commit political violence and extremism—the first time the agency had rated a fringe

conspiracy theory. These concerns were realized on January 6, 2021, when many QAnon adherents were arrested for taking part in the storming on the US Capitol building (Rubin et al. 2015). Therefore, by identifying the types of informational cues that may lead to a weakening in support for QAnon, a variety of actors (e.g., non-profit organizations, law enforcement agencies, and social media companies) might be better placed to develop targeted messaging to combat online disinformation

We directly address these important questions here. Specifically, we conducted a nationally representative survey with embedded experiments to test whether disconfirming informational cues shape support for QAnon among the American public, potentially conditional on a vector of individual level factors that we might reasonably expect also to shape QAnon adherence. In order to get a comprehensive understanding of the types of information that might affect QAnon support, we test a variety of established mechanisms to examine the relationship between information exposure and false beliefs.

Our findings provide four important contributions. First, we find that making individuals aware of the origins of QAnon (i.e. anonymous posts on the far-right online messaging board 4Chan) does not weaken support for the conspiracy. This finding lends further weight to other studies which find that source credibility does not reduce susceptibility to misinformation (Dias et al. 2020). Second, we find that learning about the representation of QAnon beliefs in Congress leads to an increase in support for the conspiracy. This suggests that elite QAnon adherence functions as a heuristic that primes support for the conspiracy among the wider public. Nevertheless, we find that these effects diminish with the addition of a competing frame. Third, we find that making individuals aware of the racist and anti-Semitic elements of QAnon beliefs weakens support for the conspiracy. This finding suggests that individuals appraise negative information about members of conspiracy groups and accordingly adjust their beliefs in order to preserve their moral reputations (Mackie et al. 2000). Finally, we find that making individuals aware of the many incorrect predictions made by QAnon does not lead to a weakening in support for

the conspiracy, which comports with a substantial literature which similarly finds that disconfirming information cues tend to be unsuccessful in moving conspiratorial beliefs (Berinsky 2017, Nyhan, Reifler & Ubel 2010). Moreover, that exposure to disconfirming information about QAnon did not produce a “backlash” effect among QAnon adherents further speaks to the limitations of backlash theory (Wood & Porter 2019).

The structure of the paper proceeds as follows. We begin by tracing the origins of QAnon, tracking its early beginnings on far-right online message boards such as 4Chan, 8Chan, and Reddit, to its reach to a wider and more dispersed audience on more mainstream social media sites such as Facebook. We then assess the role of informational cues and individual level factors in conspiracy endorsement. Next, we develop a set of hypotheses to assess the role of various informational cues in shaping support for QAnon, potentially conditional on a vector of individual level factors that we might reasonably expect to also shape QAnon adherence. After delineating our hypotheses, we outline our sample, experimental research design, and measures. We then present the results of a series of models testing the effects of our experimental conditions on support for QAnon. We conclude with a reflection on the significance of our findings, and provide a critical evaluation of which disconfirming informational cues are the most effective for reducing beliefs in the QAnon conspiracy.

2 The Origins and Spread of QAnon

Harking to the longer history of the conspiratorial and paranoid bent in U.S. politics (Fenster 1999, Hofstadter 2012), some have theorized that QAnon is the latest iteration of the “Satanic Panic” that gripped America in the late Eighties and early Nineties (Hughes 2017, Wright 2011).¹ Alternatively, QAnon has been billed at the Trump era sequel to

¹An earlier iteration of “Satanic Panic” came with the publication of the now-discredited memoir *Michelle Remembers* (Smith & Pazder 1980). The memoir details alleged abuse Smith claims to have suffered as a child at the hands of a Satanic cult. Following publication of *Michelle Remembers* (Smith & Pazder 1980), Pazder subsequently consulted with prosecutors in criminal trials, including the infamous McMartin

the “Pizzagate” conspiracy,² which spread on far-right online message boards during the 2016 election (Ohlheiser 2016).³ Like “Pizzagate,” QAnon subsumes many of the conspiratorial elements inherent in its ideological predecessors, including anti-globalism, anti-liberalism, and anti-Semitism (Halvorsen 2021). The origins of the conspiracy can be traced to October 28, 2017, when a user named “Q Clearance Patriot” posted in a 4Chan thread titled “Calm Before the Storm.” With “Q drops” – the name given to posts from the “Q” user – the “storm” subsequently became an idiom for an imminent event in which elites were to be arrested and imprisoned by President Trump for being cannibalistic pedophiles. Moderators of the 4Chan board and a far-right YouTube conspiracy theorist were primarily responsible for taking these “Q drops” out of relative obscurity and spreading them throughout the internet. These beginnings laid the groundwork for the role that online influencers would play in the QAnon community, with a litany of blog posts, YouTube videos, and podcasts released that provided explainers of “Q drops.”

While QAnon initially started as a fringe movement inhabiting the darker parts of far-right online message boards on 4Chan and 8Chan, the conspiracy began to seep into more mainstream online spaces between 2018 and 2020 (McIntire & Roose 2020). By the summer of 2020, QAnon pivoted from its pro-Trump narrative to focus on ‘Save the Children,’ a movement that purports to see the end of human trafficking. With an emphasis on anti-trafficking rhetoric, QAnon adherence went through a process of “normification” (de Zeeuw et al. 2020), whereby cultural artefacts which first appeared in fringe online subcultures later find a more mainstream and dispersed audience (Preist et al. 2014).

Pre-school trial in which hundreds of children claimed to have been abused in Satanic rituals by McMartin staff in tunnels underneath the pre-school (DeYoung 1997). The trial became one of the longest and most expensive criminal trials in American history, and ultimately ended with none of the accused being convicted.

²Promulgators of the conspiracy purport that leaked emails from John Podesta, Hillary Clinton’s campaign manager in the 2016 Presidential election, contained encoded messages that connected high-rank Democratic party officials to a child sex-trafficking ring being operated out of a pizzeria in Washington D.C.

³Just as pro-Trump insurrectionists, many of them QAnon adherents, stormed the Capitol in January 2021, belief in “Pizzagate” turned criminal in November 2016 when an individual from North Carolina armed with an assault rifle travelled to the pizzeria to “self-investigate” the conspiracy (Fisher et al. 2016).

Consequently, the QAnon conspiracy reached a demographic of believers far-removed from the stereotype of the young, nihilistic, and always online 4Chan user.

3 The Role of Informational Cues and Individual-Level Factors in Conspiracy Endorsement

3.1 Informational Cues

A rich body of literature attempts to understand how informational cues shape conspiratorial beliefs. Research demonstrates that a variety of sources may lead elements of the mass public to adopt conspiratorial beliefs, including movies (Mulligan & Habel 2013), cable news (Motta, Stecula & Farhart 2020, Stecula & Pickup 2021), online news websites, and social media (Allington, Duffy, Wessley, Dhavan & Rubin 2021, Enders, Uscinski, Seelig, Klostad, Wuchty, Funchion, Murthi, Premaratne & Stoler 2021). Scholars have long been interested in whether individuals' conspiratorial views can be reversed with disconfirming evidence via the use of informational cues. However, the evidence for whether disconfirming informational cues actually lead to a weakening of conspiratorial beliefs is somewhat mixed. Past studies find that individuals' false beliefs *can* be corrected by evidence, though such effects are likely to be short-lived (Kuklinski et al. 2000). Still, more recent studies demonstrate that disconfirming informational cues are often largely unsuccessful in moving conspiratorial beliefs (Berinsky 2017, Nyhan, Reifler & Ubel 2010).

Interestingly, Attempts to reverse conspiratorial beliefs with disconfirming evidence may even *reinforce* those existing beliefs. In an experimental study, for instance Nyhan & Reifler (2010) find that correcting false beliefs about whether Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction induced a "backfire effect," whereby cues reinforced conservative respondents' beliefs that Iraq did have those weapons. Notwithstanding, contemporary

evidence suggests that the link between fact-checking and backfire effects are more tenuous than previously suggested. In a large-N experiment, for instance, Wood & Porter (2019) find limited evidence for backfire effects across more than fifty contentious issues. Elsewhere, meta-analyses find that fact checking may actually have an overall positive effect on false beliefs (Walter et al. 2020).

Despite these studies, robust literatures on the effects of information cues on opinion formation demonstrates that a variety of individual level factors – for instance, psychological predispositions, knowledge and sophistication levels, socio-political attitudes, and demographic characteristics – also impart a significant effect on conspiratorial belief formation (Douglas, Uscinski, Sutton, Cichocka, Nefes, Ang & Deravi 2019, Uscinski, Klostad & Atkinson 2016) Although these individual-level characteristics are often supplemented by elite communication (Zaller 1992), and the broader information environment (Bartels 1993), individual-level characteristics are nonetheless necessary for opinion formation (van Bavel & Pereria 2018). In this way, beliefs in the QAnon conspiracy are a function of individual-level motivations, and not just information exposure. With these theories of opinion formation in mind, the relationship between information exposure and belief in the QAnon conspiracy is likely to be contingent on individual-level characteristics that motivate individuals to be accepting of QAnon-related content. Given these developments, it is important to account for a variety of individual-level factors when attempting to isolate the effects of informational cues on support for QAnon. In the next subsection, we therefore explore a number of individual-level factors that we might reasonably expect to shape support for QAnon.

3.2 Individual-Level Factors

Perhaps owing to its “normification” (de Zeeuw et al. 2020), current accounts emphasize many different dimensions of QAnon support.⁴ In this section, we therefore account for how a number of factors (psychological, knowledge and sophistication, socio-political, and demographic), might shape support for QAnon. Firstly, a number of psychological predispositions may shape support for QAnon, including paranoid ideation, an individual’s willingness to subscribe to specific conspiracies, and a generalized conspiratorial mindset. Those who score highly on measures of paranoid ideation – or the tendency to be suspicious of others’ motives – exhibit higher rates of conspiratorial thinking than those with lower scores (Brotherton & Eser 2015, Darwin, Neave & Holmes 2011). Novel items assessing willingness to subscribe to real-world conspiracies have also been used to measure conspiratorial thinking (Darwin et al. 2011). In this way, support for QAnon might be gauged on how likely an individual believes the “Pizzagate” conspiracy to be true.

Still, there is a worry that testing for specific conspiracies is too unidimensional, and raises concerns related to generalizability (Brotherton et al. 2013). Thus, as well as measuring subscription to specific conspiracies, it is important to account for general conspiratorial beliefs which tap into a broader set of themes observed in real-world conspiracies. These themes including government malfeasance, extraterrestrial coverup, malevolent global, personal wellbeing, and the control of information (Brotherton et al. 2013). Given

⁴Just as lively as the debate about the concomitants of QAnon support is a related set of questions about the prevalence of QAnon adherence among the American public. However, many have pointed out the relative difficulty in gauging levels of support for QAnon owing to problems with measurement error, social desirability bias, and the expressive response dilemma (Rogers 2021). Though testing for prevalence is not our primary objective, we nonetheless included two distinct measures of QAnon support in our survey. Namely, the likelihood of a respondent thinking that QAnon was a good thing for country, and how strongly they identified as a QAnon supporter. Weighted estimates indicate that 8.4% of respondents think that QAnon is a good thing for country, while just 2.1% identify as QAnon supporters. In contextualizing these figures, our estimates for whether respondents think QAnon is a good thing for the country are lower than those of prior surveys (Mitchell et al. 2020), though are reflective of the decline in support seen in other polls after the storming of the US Capitol in January 2021. Meanwhile, our estimates for our more explicit measure of QAnon identity are largely in line with similar “hard” measures of QAnon support, which consistently find explicit support to be in the low single figures (Civiqs 2021)

QAnon's paranoid focus on the "Deep State," we might expect two of these dimensions - namely government malfeasance, and malevolent global - to be particularly predictive of support for QAnon.

Low political knowledge is also known to be predictive of conspiratorial thinking. Many conspiracies are often political in nature, involving government plots and nefarious acts by government actors, meaning low levels of political knowledge are likely to be conducive of greater conspiratorial endorsement (Berinsky 2012).⁵ Though the "normification" of QAnon between was largely conditional on an increased focus on topics such as anti-human trafficking in its online messaging, much content throughout 2020 remained highly political in nature (Aliapoulios et al. 2021). As such, it is possible that low political knowledge is also associated with greater support for QAnon.

Beyond political knowledge, sociopolitical beliefs including partisanship may predict support for QAnon. Partisan motivated reasoning, or directional goals aimed at protecting one's partisan identity, drive beliefs in a plethora of conspiratorial attitudes (Enders et al. 2020). Though levels of conspiratorial thinking are evenly distributed between the two major parties (Uscinski & Parent 2014), support for particular conspiracies may vary greatly among partisan identifiers (Pasek et al. 2015). Indeed, when it comes to QAnon, a descriptive analysis conducted by the Pew Research found that 41% of Republicans thought that QAnon was either a "somewhat" or "very" good thing for the country, compared to just 6% of Democrats (Mitchell et al. 2020). Like partisanship, ideology plays an important role in conspiratorial thinking. Ideological extremism, be it in the liberal or conservative direction, is associated with higher levels of conspiratorial thinking (van Prooijen et al. 2015). Recent evidence also suggests an ideological asymmetry in conspiratorial thinking (van der Linden et al. 2021). While liberals tend to score higher on measures of cognitive reflection and analytical reasoning (Jost 2017), conservatives rely

⁵Notwithstanding, it is important to qualify that there is divergence between self-perceived knowledge (i.e., what individuals *think* they know), and actual knowledge (i.e., what individuals *do* know), with the latter predicting decreased endorsement of conspiratorial beliefs (Vitriol & Marsh 2018).

more on intuition (Deppe et al. 2015), making them more susceptible to misinformation and fake news (Basol et al. 2020). Given these differences, it is perhaps not surprising to find that conspiracy theories are disseminated more rapidly within conservative social and online networks (Guess et al. 2020). These development give us reason to expect that political conservatism will also be somewhat predictive of support for QAnon.

Lastly, a plethora of demographic characteristics are known to be associated with greater adherence to conspiratorial beliefs. As such, there is a reasonable expectation that some of these factors may likewise shape support for QAnon. First, though adherence to conspiratorial beliefs may be largely unvarying across races, people of color (PoC) may become more likely to entertain conspiracies if they are targeted by misinformation campaigns. In 2020, for instance, Latinx individuals were specifically targeted by Spanish-language QAnon accounts on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube in the run up to the 2020 election (Gilbert 2020*b*). There are also reasons to suspect that individuals who identify as female exhibit stronger belief in QAnon than those who identify as men. Scholars note the importance of “Pastel QAnon,” a strategy that co-opts the aesthetics and language of online communities and activities popular with female social media users, in indoctrinating women into the QAnon conspiracy (Bloom & Moskalenko 2021, Tiffany 2020). Next, those with lower levels of education should also be more likely to exhibit support for QAnon. For instance, Oliver & Wood (2014) find that higher education is negatively associated with the belief that secret cabals exert control over world events. Finally, there is an expectation that religion and religiosity are associated with greater support for QAnon. Generally speaking, the style of thinking that allows for supernatural beliefs is closely related with conspiratorial thinking (van Prooijen et al. 2018). Consistent with these observations, a recent PRRI survey found that White Evangelical Protestants, Hispanic Protestants, and Mormons, were among the most likely religious identifiers to agree with the essential tenets of the QAnon conspiracy, including the belief that government and the

media are controlled by a cabal of Satanic pedophiles (PRRI 2021).⁶

4 Current Study and Hypotheses

We now turn to develop a set of hypotheses concerning the effects of a variety of informational cues on affect towards QAnon, potentially conditional on an individual level vector of covariates that shape QAnon adherence. Our first hypothesis concerns the impact of exposure to information about the origins of QAnon on support for the conspiracy. Here, we focus on one the earliest posts made by “Q Clearance Patriot” - an anonymous user who purported to be a high-ranking official in the US military - on the far-right online forum 4Chan. In this post, “Q” predicts that Trump, with the help of the US military, will wage war against a global cabal. While it might have been reasonable to expect that learning that QAnon emerged on a fringe, far-right website would make respondents more likely to doubt the veracity of these claims than had the information originated from a more mainstream source, evidence suggests that source credibility does *not* reduce susceptibility to misinformation (Austin & Dong 1994, Dias, Pennycook & Rand 2020). As such, we expect that learning about the origins on QAnon on 4Chan will not impart any significant effects on how the mass public feel towards the conspiracy. These developments lead us to state our first hypothesis as:

H1: There will be no significant differences in levels of affect towards QAnon between individuals assigned to the contain containing information about the origins of QAnon and individuals who did not receive this information.

Our second hypothesis concerns the impact of exposure to information about QAnon

⁶Though it is important to qualify that PRRI did not measure explicit support for QAnon, it is reasonable to expect that religious identifiers will also support QAnon if they exhibit salient levels of belief in it’s core claims.

support in Congress on affect towards QAnon. We identify two representatives who have expressed support for QAnon in the past – namely, Marjorie Taylor Greene (GA-14) (Coleman 2020), and Lauren Boebert (CO-3) (Gilbert 2020a). While small, the representation of QAnon support in Congress nevertheless has potentially important implications on broader support for the conspiracy, especially considering the extant scholarship on descriptive representation. While scholarship on descriptive representation consistently underscores the importance of citizens’ abilities to identify with political elites on the basis of readily visible identities such as race and gender (Lawless 2004, Wolak 2019), there is reason to suspect that the mechanism remains largely the same in the case of QAnon identity. Specifically, learning about the presence of QAnon beliefs in Congress ought to bolster the perception among elements of the mass public that QAnon matters. In turn, this may have the effect of priming QAnon identity and thus increasing the salience of QAnon beliefs. Though such priming is unlikely to affect those who are already strong QAnon identifiers, there is a much greater potential for movement among those with less salient beliefs, but who nevertheless exhibit a degree of sympathy towards QAnon. These developments lead us to state our second hypothesis as:

H2: Individuals assigned to the condition containing information about QAnon support in Congress will exhibit more positive affect towards QAnon relative to individuals who did not receive this information.

Our third hypothesis concerns the impact of exposure to information about the racist and anti-Semitic content on online QAnon forums on support for QAnon. Many individuals who are supportive of QAnon are likely to have become so when the conspiracy became more widely known after its process of “normification,” whereby online much of the online (mis)information disseminated by QAnon influencers was increasingly focused on anti-human trafficking efforts to “Save the Children” (de Zeeuw et al. 2020). As such, it

is possible than many who exhibit a degree of sympathy for QAnon are not aware of the conspiracy's more nefarious connections with anti-Semitism and racism. Crucially, many posts of this nature were especially prevalent on sites such as 4Chan, 8Chan, and Reddit before the conspiracy became more widely known in 2020.

By making individuals aware of the anti-Semitic and racist elements of QAnon, is it possible that individuals will seek to distance themselves from the conspiracy? Such behaviors would largely be consistent with the scholarship on intergroup emotions theory (IET), which underscores how group members (i.e., QAnon supporters) seek to preserve their moral reputations in response to negative stimuli. When group memberships are salient, individuals tend to appraise information not just in terms of personal interest, but also in relation their ingroup's moral reputations (Mackie et al. 2000). However, even if not directly implicit in their group's wrongdoing, ingroup critical moral appraisals may trigger psychological adverse feelings of guilt or shame on the part of group members. In turn, these feelings of guilt and shame among ingroup members may lead individuals to change their beliefs. In this way, individuals who are sympathetic towards QAnon may seek to distance themselves from the conspiracy once they become aware of its anti-Semitic and racist elements. These developments lead us to state our third hypothesis as:

H3: Individuals assigned to the condition containing information about racist and anti-Semitic content on online QAnon forums will exhibit more negative affect towards QAnon relative to individuals who were not assigned to the condition.

Our final hypotheses concerns the impact of exposure to information about the many incorrect predictions made by QAnon adherents on support for the conspiracy. In exposing individuals to such disconfirming information, it is important to note that our treatment might have the *opposite* effect and make individuals supportive of QAnon more entrenched in their views (Nyhan & Reifler 2010, Berinsky 2017). Nevertheless, we have

some reason to expect that exposure to the incorrect predictions made by QAnon will lead to a weakening in overall support for the conspiracy; contemporary studies suggest that backlash effects on reinforcing false beliefs are overstated (Walter, Cohen, Holbert & Morag 2020, Wood & Porter 2019). Individuals are also more than capable of learning, and evidence demonstrates that factual receptivity may take place regardless of differences in deeply engrained attitudes (Prior et al. 2015). Given these streams of literature, our fourth hypotheses is stated as:

H4: Individuals assigned to the treatment containing information about the many incorrect predictions made by QAnon will exhibit more negative affect towards QAnon relative to individuals who were not assigned to the treatment.

5 Data and Methods

5.1 Pre-Registration

We pre-registered our hypotheses, primary analyses, and subgroup analyses on Open Science Framework (OSF), on January 21, 2021, prior to collecting any data. See pre-registration link: <https://osf.io/b53sh/>

5.2 Sample

To test our hypotheses, we conducted an online survey experiment using a nationally representative sample of adults living in any of the 48 contiguous US states, as well as Alaska or Hawaii ($N = 1,405$).⁷ Our data was collected by the survey sampling company Qualtrics. We compute general population weights via iterative proportional fitting, benchmarking our sample to Census estimates on race, age, gender, education, and re-

⁷IRB approval for research concerning human subjects was obtained from Stanford University on February 25, 2021.

gion. Section A1 of the SI file provides a comparison of the demographics of our weighted sample with estimates from the 2019 American Community Survey (ACS).

5.3 Procedure and Experimental Design

Prior to the experiment, respondents completed information on sociopolitical attitudes and demographic characteristics. We also obtained pre-treatment measures of general conspiratorial beliefs, and political knowledge. In the experimental block of the survey, respondents were randomly assigned to one of four conditions (three experimental, one control).⁸ In the first condition, a quarter of respondents were presented with a short excerpt from *The New York Times* about the origins of QAnon. In the second condition, a quarter of respondents were presented with a short, modified excerpt from Roll Call about QAnon support in Congress. In the third condition, a quarter of respondents were presented with a short, modified excerpt from an academic article describing racist and anti-Semitic online discourse on a QAnon forum. The remaining quarter of respondents were assigned to a control condition that contained no material. Additionally, half of respondents were assigned to a further condition wherein they either received an additional paragraph describing some of the failed predictions of QAnon, while the other half received no additional paragraph. Altogether, our 4x2 factorial design creates 8 conditions (number of respondents per condition in **Table 1**).⁹ After random assignment to the experimental conditions, respondents completed a post-treatment measure of QAnon support.

⁸Full excerpts for all conditions are presented in section B1.2 of the SI file

⁹Though it is not our primary interest, our factorial design also allows us to test the effects of competing frames (for instance, assignment to the QAnon beliefs represented in Congress vignette, followed by assignment to the treatment containing disconfirming information). Regarding our expectations for this competing frame, we would broadly expect the effect of each frame to be mitigated, resulting in insignificant effects (Chong & Druckman 2007, Druckman 2004)

Table 1: 4 x 2 Experimental Design

	No information (control)	Origins of QAnon	QAnon representation in Congress	QAnon racist and anti-Semitic
No disconfirming cue about false predictions	221	169	166	162
Disconfirming cue about false predictions	143	173	200	170

5.4 Measures

5.4.1 Support for QAnon

Our focal dependent measure is an ordinal measure of QAnon affect. In this item, we asked respondents “do you think QAnon is a very good thing for the country, a somewhat good thing for the country, a somewhat bad thing for the country, or a very bad thing for the country, or are you not sure?” We code “not sure” responses (which amount to 26.93% of our analytical sample) as a middle category to create a five-point ordinal scale ranging between 1 = “very bad thing for the country,” to 5 = “very good thing for the country.

5.4.2 Generic Conspiratorial Beliefs

Our focal moderator of interest is generic conspiratorial beliefs. To measure generic conspiratorial beliefs, we operationalize the short-form 15-item scale outlined by Brotherton et al. (2013). In the short-form scale, three-items are used to capture a respective dimension of generic conspiratorial beliefs: government malfeasance (GM), extraterrestrial cover-up (ET), malevolent global conspiracies (PG), personal wellbeing (PW), and control of information (CI). In these items, respondents were presented with a series of statements and asked to rate how true they believed them to be on a five-point scale ranging between 1 = “definitely not true,” to 5 = “definitely true.”¹⁰ The items are summed into an overall measure of generic conspiratorial beliefs (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .91$). **Figure 1** plots the distribution of the GCB scale among the full sample.

¹⁰Full item wordings are presented in section **B1** of the SI file.

Figure 1: Distribution of the Generic Conspiratorial Belief Scale

5.5 Estimation Strategy

We divide our sample into four populations of interest. For our main analysis, we use the full sample. For the subgroup analysis, we use tercile binning to group respondents by low conspiratorial beliefs, mid conspiratorial beliefs, and high conspiratorial beliefs. We estimate our models using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression as opposed to ordinal regression.¹¹ Each OLS model is estimated with robust standard errors,

¹¹In our pre-registration document, we had specified that models would be estimated using ordinal estimator. We now consider this to be a mistake in our original pre-registration. Interpretation of treatment effects in ordinal models is somewhat difficult (Lu et al. 2018). For ease of interpretation, we therefore opt to use OLS regression. In section A4 of the SI file, we demonstrate that our main-paper results are virtually identical had we used an ordinal estimator.

and includes controls that we hypothesize as being related to QAnon support (political knowledge, party ID, ideology, race, age, gender, education, and religiosity).

6 Results

6.1 Main Analyses

To assess whether our experimental conditions affect support for QAnon, we estimate OLS models. **Figure 2** depicts the estimated effect of each condition on levels of support for QAnon while adjusting on our vector of covariates (political knowledge, party ID, ideology, race, age, gender, education, and religion). Points to the right of the x -axis in **Figure 2** indicate a positive relationship between a given condition and the dependent measure, or higher levels of support for QAnon. By contrast, points to the left of the x -axis indicate a negative relationship, or lower levels of support for QAnon.

The first four coefficients in **Figure 2** depict the estimated effects of our conditions on support for QAnon without the addition of the disconfirming cue. As evidenced by **Figure 2**, making respondents aware of the origins of QAnon on the far-right website 4Chan does not substantively affect levels of support for the conspiracy. By contrast, making respondents aware of the representation of QAnon beliefs in Congress leads to an increase in support for QAnon ($\beta = 0.28, p < .001$). On a scale ranging between 1 and 5, the mean level of QAnon affect for respondents exposed to condition 2 was 1.996, relative to 1.871 to respondents who did not receive this information.¹² Next, making respondents aware of the racist and anti-Semitic nature of online posts on QAnon forums makes respondents significantly less likely to support the conspiracy ($\beta = -0.34, p < .001$).

¹²In line with the extant scholarship on partisan cue taking, we might expect this significant effect through condition 2 to be largely driven by respondents who identify as Republican partisans. To test for this possibility, we specified an interaction term between condition 2 and our measure of partisan identity. The results indicated that Republican partisans exposed to condition 2 exhibit significantly higher mean levels of affect towards QAnon (Mean = 2.080) relative to Democratic partisans (M = 1.859) exposed to the same condition ($p < .001$).

Figure 2: OLS Estimates for Main Sample

Points represent the size of the standardized OLS coefficient for each experimental condition. Models control for political knowledge, partisanship, ideology, race, age, gender, education, and religion. Data are weighted. Full estimates presented in section C1 of the SI file.

The mean level of affect towards QAnon exposed to condition 3 was 1.664, while the mean level of QAnon affect for respondents who did not receive this information was 1.977. As would be expected, assignment to the condition where respondents received no information does not produce significant results.

The remaining coefficients depicted in **Figure 2** represent the estimated effects of our conditions on support for QAnon with the addition of the disconfirming cue. As evidenced here, making respondents aware of the many incorrect predictions made by QAnon does not increase the salience of the first condition where respondents are made

aware of the origins of QAnon on the far-right messaging board 4Chan. Next, the addition of the disconfirming cue reduces the salience of the second condition (the representation of QAnon beliefs in Congress) such that it is no longer a statistically significant. However, and as was the case with the first condition, the addition of the disconfirming cue does not increase the salience of the third condition, where respondents are made aware of the racist and anti-Semitic nature of online QAnon content ($\beta = -0.20, p < .05$ relative to $\beta = -0.34, p < .001$). Lastly, because of our factorial design, we are also able to quantify the effect of the disconfirming cue independent of random assignment to our conditions. As evidenced by the final coefficient in **Figure 2**, respondents assigned to the disconfirming cue are not significantly less likely to support QAnon, bringing the effectiveness of the cue itself into question.

Regarding our covariates, we find that identifying as a Republican partisan, being politically conservative, being younger, and being Catholic, are consistently associated with higher levels of support for QAnon, while high levels of political knowledge and identifying as Hispanic are associated with lower levels of support. These results are largely congruous with our pre-registered analysis of data from Wave 73 of Pew’s American Trends Panel (ATP) (see <https://osf.io/6y5t4>), which we analyzed to inform what individual-level factors were likely to be associated with support for QAnon. In our model using the Pew data, we similarly found significant effects on levels of support for QAnon through political knowledge, Republican partisanship, political conservatism, Hispanic status, and age.

6.2 Subgroup Analyses: Generic Conspiratorial Beliefs

Next, to test the effects of individual-level conspiratorial attitudes on the effectiveness of our conditions, we examine how effects differ among those with low, mid, and high levels of generic conspiratorial beliefs. **Figure 3** depicts the mean levels of affect to QAnon among our conspiratorial subgroups across the first four conditions. The bars represent

Moderation Effects + No disconfirming Cue

Origins of QAnon + no disconfirming cue QAnon in Congress + no disconfirming cue

QAnon racist + no disconfirming cue

No excerpt + no disconfirming cue

the mean level of affect for QAnon (adjusting on our set of covariates), while the capped lines are 95 percent confidence intervals.

Turning to the top left panel in **Figure 3**, we see no statistically significant mean differences in levels of QAnon affect among those low-to-mid conspiratorial beliefs. By contrast, individuals with high conspiratorial beliefs assigned to the first condition exhibit significantly less support for QAnon after exposure (Mean = 1.934 for treatment relative

to $M = 2.245$ for control, $p = <.001$). Moving to the top right panel in **Figure 3**, we see that individuals with low-to-mid conspiratorial beliefs are not more likely to exhibit higher levels of support for QAnon after assignment to the second condition. Among those with high levels of conspiratorial beliefs, however, exposure to the second condition is associated with significantly increased support for QAnon ($M = 2.695$ for treatment relative to $M = 2.146$ for control $p = <.001$). As indicated by the bottom-left panel in **Figure 3**, assignment to the third condition results does not result in lower levels of affect for QAnon among those with the lowest levels of conspiratorial beliefs. Nevertheless, we see significant declines in support for QAnon after exposure to the third condition among respondents with mid ($M = 1.923$ for treatment relative to $M = 1.274$, $p = <.001$) and high ($M = 2.284$ for treatment relative to $M = 1.809$ for control $p = <.001$) levels of conspiratorial beliefs. Lastly, the bottom-left panel in **Figure 3** indicates no statistically significant mean differences in levels of support for QAnon across the conspiratorial subgroups among those who received no information.

Next, **Figure 4** depicts the mean levels of affect for QAnon with the addition of the disconfirming cue. As indicated here, the addition of the disconfirming cue does not substantively alter the results across the three conditions. In addition, exposure to the disconfirming cue alone does not lead to significantly different levels of QAnon affect among the conspiratorial subgroups. These results further suggest that the disconfirming cue is not particularly effective in leading to a weakening in support for QAnon, regardless of the salience of one's conspiratorial beliefs.

6.3 Robustness Tests

In this section, we present a series of tests to check the robustness of our main estimates.

Moderation Effects + Disconfirming Cue

Origins of QAnon + disconfirming cue

QAnon in Congress + disconfirming cue

QAnon racist + disconfirming cue

No excerpt + disconfirming cue

6.3.1 Choice of Specification

First, we ran our specifications under every possible combination of our eight covariates (political knowledge, party ID, ideology, race, age, gender, education, and religion). Section D2 of the SI file reports coefficient estimates for each of our eight models. In the case of condition 2, (QAnon in Congress + no disconfirming cue), the estimated OLS co-

efficients for the treatment decrease as we control for more observables, suggesting that unobservables generate a positive bias. In the case of condition 3 (QAnon racist + no disconfirming cue), the coefficient estimates for the treatment are relatively stable across these same permutations of controls, suggesting less of a bias. Meanwhile, in the case of condition 7 (QAnon racist + disconfirming cue), the estimated coefficients are generally increasing as we control for more observables, suggesting that unobservables create a negative bias. Lastly, the remaining conditions retain their levels of statistical insignificance regardless of the combination of controls.

6.3.2 Continuous Moderation Effects

Next, to demonstrate that the results of our subgroup analyses are not an artefact of tercile binning, we also interact our conditions with the full generic conspiratorial beliefs scale. In section **D3** of the **SI** file, we show that the results of our models using a continuous moderator do not differ substantively from those presented in the main paper.

6.3.3 Robustness to Alternate Measures of Conspiratorial Beliefs

As aforementioned, we chose the generic conspiratorial beliefs scale rather than belief in specific conspiracies as our moderator variable (MV) given concerns regarding the latter's unidimensionality (Brotherton et al. 2013). What then, might our subgroup analyses have looked like had we used belief in specific conspiracies as our MV? To test this expectation, we included two items in our survey that gauged belief in specific theories related to QAnon - namely, Pizzagate and Wayfair.¹³ In our alternate model specifications, we interact each of our conditions with two five-point ordinal items regarding respondents' beliefs in the veracity of the Pizzagate and Wayfair conspiracies. In sections **D3-D4** of the **SI** file, we test how beliefs in each of these conspiracies moderate our various conditions.

¹³In these items, we first asked if a respondent had heard of each conspiracy. Among those who were aware of Pizzagate and Wayfair, we then asked "how likely do you think it is to be true."

In the case of Pizzagate, we find that specific conspiratorial beliefs are a significant moderator of condition 3 (QAnon racist + no disconfirming cue), but *not* the two previously-significant conditions presented in the main paper. In the case of Wayfair, we again find that specific conspiratorial beliefs are only a significant moderator of condition 3 but none of our other conditions. Furthermore, the inclusion of the two respective items as MVs significantly increases the size of our robust standard errors. This artefact is primarily due to the reduced sample size of our models, since only 732 respondents (or 52% of our sample) are aware of the Pizzagate conspiracy, while just 460 (or 32.7% of our sample) are aware of the Wayfair trafficking conspiracy. The fact that our reduced sample size is conditional on respondents' awareness of these two conspiracies suggests that we are introducing a significant degree of bias into our models by accounting for beliefs in specific conspiracies. Thus, we are relatively confident that our chosen moderator (i.e, generic conspiratorial beliefs) produces the most reliable estimates when conducting subgroup analyses.

6.3.4 Placebo Tests

In our final test, we demonstrate whether that our conditions have no effect on respondents' attitudes towards issues that are unrelated to QAnon. Section **D5** of the **SI** file contains the results of a series of models estimating the effects of our conditions on respondents' attitudes towards court packing, and the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Should our conditions shape attitudes towards QAnon in particular, then we should expect to observe a pattern of insignificant results across these placebo models. The results of the models indicate that our conditions impart no significant effects on our respective placebo measures. Therefore, we can be reasonably confident that the significant conditions are shaping attitudes towards QAnon specifically and not a broader range of issues.

7 Discussion

In recent decades, political psychologists have examined adherence to a vast amount of conspiracy theories which have captured the attention of elements of the US public. Since 2018, an increasing number of Americans have become aware of QAnon - a conspiracy which purports that a cabal of Satan-worshipping pedophiles is running a global sex trafficking ring and plotting against President Trump. Even though the number of Americans who identify as QAnon supporters remains comparatively small (Civiqs 2021), QAnon beliefs have motivated some individuals to political violence and extremism, as evidenced in the storming of the US Capitol building on January 1, 2021. Consequently, the study of QAnon support is by no means an esoteric question; by better understanding the types of information that shape and weaken support for QAnon, a variety of actors (e.g., governmental, social media platforms) should be better placed to combat online misinformation. The current study therefore represents an important step in trying to address this gap.

Overall, our results provide four important contributions to the extant scholarship. First, our finding that exposure to information about the origins of QAnon on the far-right online messaging board 4Chan does not lead to a weakening in support for the conspiracy comports with a vast literature which suggests that source credibility does not reduce susceptibility to misinformation. Though it is important to qualify that 4Chan is not a news organization in its own right, our results are at least broadly consistent with a pattern of recently inconclusive results concerning whether differences in news organization credibility affect judgements of believability (Dias, Pennycook & Rand 2020, Pennycook & Rand 2019). Therefore, our insignificant finding for condition 1 lend further weight to the argument that publisher information has little-to-no impact on evaluations of the accuracy of misinformation. This finding further highlights the importance of social media platforms to rigorously assess the impact of disconfirming interventions to combat online misinformation – in the particular case of combatting QAnon-related content, simply

drawing attention to the source of content is unlikely to lead to a substantive weakening in QAnon support.

Second, our finding that learning about the representation of QAnon beliefs in Congress leads to a substantive increase in affect towards QAnon suggests that elite QAnon adherence functions as a heuristic that primes QAnon support among the US public. This finding is broadly consistent with the extant scholarship on identity heuristics and descriptive representation. Though the descriptive representation scholarship has focused on the impact of the public's ability to identify with elites on the basis of characteristics such as race and gender (Lawless 2004, Wolak 2019), we theorized that exposure to information about the representation of QAnon beliefs in Congress might underscore to elements of the American public that QAnon matters.

Though we found that condition 2 was a significant concomitant of support for QAnon, it is important to qualify that these effects were largely driven by respondents who identified as Republican partisans - a finding that is congruent with the extant scholarship on elite cues and public opinion (Zaller 1992). In addition, we also found that the effects of condition 2 on QAnon support became insignificant with the addition of the disconfirming cue. This finding is consistent with a large scholarship on the effects of competing frames. Here, studies repeatedly find that if, two frames (i.e, QAnon affirming and QAnon disconfirming) are of equal strength, then they are likely to cancel each other out, therefore resulting in significant effects (Chong & Druckman 2007, Druckman 2004). In this respect, our finding also lends further weight to this particular body of scholarship.

Third, our finding that making individuals aware of the racist and anti-Semitic elements of QAnon beliefs is important because it suggests that individuals may appraise negative information and accordingly adjust their beliefs in order to preserve their moral reputations. Testing for this possibility was important given that QAnon content originated on far-right online message boards such as 4Chan and 8Chan before reaching a wider and more dispersed audience on social media platforms such as Facebook. Through-

out this wider dispersion of misinformation, QAnon adherence also went through a process of “normification” (de Zeeuw et al. 2020), whereby much of the racist and anti-Semitic content which initially appeared on these fringe message boards shifted to a focus on anti-human trafficking. Consequently, there was a possibility that individuals sympathetic to anti-human trafficking messaging became QAnon believers as a consequence of exposure to such misinformation but, nevertheless, may have been unaware of its racist and anti-Semitic origins. Consistent with these expectations, we found exposure to condition 3 to be - by some considerable margin – the most effective predictor of reducing support for QAnon. Our results suggest that many individuals seek to distance themselves once they learn about the racist and anti-Semitic nature of online QAnon content. This finding comports with scholarship on intergroup emotions theory (IET) which posits that individuals seek to preserve their moral reputations in response to negative information (Mackie et al. 2000).

Fourth, our finding that making individuals aware of the many incorrect predictions made by QAnoners does not lead to a weakening in support for the conspiracy lends further weight to scholarship which suggests that disconfirming informational cues are largely unsuccessful in moving false beliefs (Berinsky 2017, Nyhan, Reifler & Ubel 2010). While the results are consistent with this particular body of scholarship, the overall ineffectiveness of the disconfirming cue went against our general expectations that exposure to such information would lead to a substantive decrease in support for QAnon; prior evidence suggested that individuals (even those with deeply ingrained beliefs) are quite capable of responding to information and accordingly adjust their beliefs (Prior et al. 2015). As such, we had some expectation that our disconfirming cue might be effective in shaping QAnon beliefs. Despite this null finding, however, the fact that our disconfirming cue was insignificant lends further weight to the limitations of backlash theory, which posits that exposure to disconfirming information might actually make individuals more entrenched in their views (Berinsky 2017, Nyhan & Reifler 2010). In this respect, our null

results lend credence to contemporary studies which suggest that backlash effects on reinforcing false beliefs are most likely overstated (Walter et al. 2020, Wood & Porter 2019).

7.1 Limitations and Future Directions

Lastly, it is also important to highlight the limitations of our current study, and to point to potential avenues for future research. One limitation of our study concerns the extent to which respondents' beliefs about QAnon can actually be shaped by disconfirming evidence. For instance, we found that exposure to information about the racist and anti-Semitic nature of QAnon content led to a significant weakening in support for the conspiracy, evidence suggests that such effects are likely to be short-lived (Kuklinski et al. 2000). Therefore, there is a possibility that attitudinal decay will lead to a weakening in the effectiveness of such information over time. In order to test the effectiveness of similar cues over time, future studies should leverage a panel design in order to test within-subject changes in levels of support for QAnon over a period longer than the duration of a typical survey.

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A Descriptive Statistics

A.1 Demographic Characteristics of Sample

Table 2

Variable	Categories	Sample %	Population %
Race	White, non-Hispanic	64.33%	64.33%
	Black, non-Hispanic	12.80%	12.80%
	Hispanic	16.40%	16.40%
	Other race, non-Hispanic	6.47%	6.47%
Age	18-24	11.89%	11.89%
	25-34	17.85%	17.85%
	35-44	16.48%	16.48%
	45-54	15.97%	15.97%
	55-64	16.63%	16.63%
	65+	21.18%	21.18%
Gender	Male	48.66%	48.66%
	Female	51.34%	51.34%
Education	Less than high-school	5.59%	11.43%
	High-school diploma or GED	29.39%	27.58%
	Some college but no degree	23.54%	22.09%
	Associate's degree/technical degree	8.80%	8.26%
	Bachelor's degree	20.53%	19.27%
	Graduate degree/professional degree	12.13%	11.38%
Region	Northeast	17.40%	17.43%
	Midwest	20.76%	20.76%
	South	37.99%	38.05%
	West	23.84%	23.76%

A.2 Descriptive Statistics for Analytic Sample

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Full Analytic Sample

Variable	Categories	Proportion	SE
QAnon affect	Very bad thing for the country	54.52%	.018
	Somewhat bad thing for the country	10.44%	.011
	Not sure	26.88%	.016
	Somewhat good thing for the country	6.32%	.009
	Very good thing for the country	1.82%	.004
GCB scale	continuous scale, 0-5	2.836	.035
Political knowledge	Low knowledge	40.62%	.018
	Mid knowledge	36.09%	.017
	High knowledge	23.29%	.014
Party ID	Dem partisan	45.44%	.011
	Dem lean	8.74%	.018
	Non-partisan	13.19%	.013
	Rep lean	6.88%	.010
	Rep partisan	25.72%	.015
Ideology	Extremely liberal	7.70%	.010
	Liberal	16.70%	.013
	Slightly liberal	11.10%	.012
	Moderate/haven't thought much	32.53%	.017
	Slightly conservative	8.45%	.010
	Conservative	16.17%	.013
	Extremely conservative	7.32%	.009
Race	White, non-Hispanic	64.32%	.018
	Black, non-Hispanic	13.00%	.015
	Hispanic	16.07%	.014
	Other race, non-Hispanic	6.61%	.009
Age	18-24	11.63%	.015
	25-34	18.18%	.014
	35-44	16.53%	.012
	45-54	15.15%	.013
	55-64	16.67%	.013
	65+	21.81%	.013
Gender	Male	50.94%	.018
	Female	49.06%	.018
Education	Less than high-school	5.95%	.014
	High-school diploma or GED	29.05%	.018
	Some college but no degree	22.97%	.015
	Associate's degree/technical degree	8.95%	.008
	Bachelor's degree	20.73%	.012
	Graduate degree/professional degree	12.32%	.009
Religion	Mainline Protestant	13.00%	.012
	Evangelical Protestant	17.35%	.014
	Catholic	26.22%	.015
	Other Christian	12.55%	.013
	Non-Christian	4.51%	.006
	Unaffiliated	26.34%	.017

A.3 Distribution of Responses to Dependent Measure Across Conditions

B Survey Items

B.1 Full Text of Survey Items

B.1.1 Dependent Measure

Table 4: Dependent Measure

Variable	Survey item	Response options	Coding
QAnon affect	Does R think QAnon are good thing for the country	Very bad thing for the country	1
		Somewhat bad thing for the country	2
		Not sure	3
		Somewhat good thing for the country	4
		Very good thing for the country	5

B.1.2 Treatment Texts

Condition 1: Origins of QAnon

But where did QAnon begin? In October 2017, a post appeared on 4chan, the notoriously toxic message board, from an anonymous account calling itself “Q Clearance Patriot.”

This poster, who became known simply as “Q,” claimed to be a high-ranking intelligence officer with access to classified information about Mr. Trump’s war against the global cabal.

Q predicted that this war would soon culminate in “The Storm” — an appointed time when Mr. Trump would finally unmask the cabal, punish its members for their crimes and restore America to greatness.

“The Storm” is a reference to a cryptic remark Mr. Trump made during an October 2017 photo op. Posing alongside military generals, Mr. Trump said, “You guys know what this represents? Maybe it’s the calm before the storm.” QAnon believers pointed to this moment as proof that Mr. Trump was sending coded messages about his plans to break up the global cabal, with the help of the military

Condition 2: QAnon in Congress

QAnon is heading to Congress, as Marjorie Taylor Greene, who has expressed some support for QAnon in the past, won a House seat in Georgia, and Lauren Boebert, who expressed support in 2020, claimed a House seat in Colorado. Both have specified that they do not consider themselves supporters of QAnon.

In early October the House approved a resolution condemning QAnon. The measure passed 371-18, with 17 Republicans choosing not to condemn QAnon and one Republican voting "present."

Condition 3: Academic Article

QAnon phenomenon has also captured the attention of a team of academic researchers from both the US and the UK. To discover more about the kind of people QAnon attracts, they turned to Voat.co, a Reddit-esque news aggregator, which has recently captured the interest of the press for its toxicity and for providing a platform to QAnon followers. These researchers analyzed a large dataset from /v/GreatAwakening, the most popular QAnon-related message board on Voat.co.

While full of familiar topics such as elections, the COVID-19 pandemic, and Black Lives Matter protests, the dialogue on the QAnon messaging board was far less civil than a typical messaging board. For instance, discussion of the “Black Lives Matter” movement, frequently included hateful and race-related words, such as “n**ger.”

Other forms of prejudice and profanity were common across various posts, such as derogatory terms for Jewish and mentally disabled people. Many posts discussed Q predictions as well.”

Treatment

One new element in QAnon is a number of clear and specific predictions about when and how events would play out. For years, Q has predicted that mass arrests of cabal members would occur on certain days, that certain government reports would reveal the cabal's misdeeds, and that Republicans would win numerous seats in the 2018 midterm elections. None of these predictions have come true.

B.1.3 Generic Conspiratorial Beliefs

	Item wording	Response options	Coding
GCB.1	The government is involved in the murder of innocent civilians and/or well-known public figures, and keeps this a secret	Definitely not true	1
		Probably not true	2
		Not sure/cannot decide	3
		Probably true	4
		Definitely true	5
GCB.2	The power held by heads of state is second to that of small unknown groups who really control world politics	Definitely not true	1
		Probably not true	2
		Not sure/cannot decide	3
		Probably true	4
		Definitely true	5
GCB.3	Secret organizations communicate with extraterrestrials, but keep this fact from the public	Definitely not true	1
		Probably not true	2
		Not sure/cannot decide	3
		Probably true	4
		Definitely true	5
GCB.4	The spread of certain viruses and/or diseases is the result of the deliberate, concealed efforts of some organization	Definitely not true	1
		Probably not true	2
		Not sure/cannot decide	3
		Probably true	4
		Definitely true	5
GCB.5	Groups of scientists manipulate, fabricate, or suppress evidence in order to deceive the public	Definitely not true	1
		Probably not true	2
		Not sure/cannot decide	3
		Probably true	4
		Definitely true	5
GCB.6	The government permits or perpetuates acts of terrorism on its own soil, disguising its involvement	Definitely not true	1
		Probably not true	2
		Not sure/cannot decide	3
		Probably true	4
		Definitely true	5
GCB.7	A small, secret group of people is responsible for making all major world decisions, such as going to war	Definitely not true	1
		Probably not true	2
		Not sure/cannot decide	3
		Probably true	4
		Definitely true	5
GCB.8	Evidence of alien contact is being concealed from the public	Definitely not true	1
		Probably not true	2
		Not sure/cannot decide	3
		Probably true	4
		Definitely true	5
GCB.9	Technology with mind control capacities is used on people without their knowledge	Definitely not true	1
		Probably not true	2
		Not sure/cannot decide	3
		Probably true	4
		Definitely true	5
GCB.10	New and advanced technology which would harm current industry is being suppressed	Definitely not true	1
		Probably not true	2
		Not sure/cannot decide	3
		Probably true	4
		Definitely true	5

GCB.11	The government uses people as patsies to hide its involvement in criminal activity	Definitely not true	1
		Probably not true	2
		Not sure/cannot decide	3
		Probably true	4
		Definitely true	5
GCB.12	Certain significant events have been the result of the activity of a small group who secretly manipulate world events	Definitely not true	1
		Probably not sure	2
		Not sure/cannot decide	3
		Probably true	4
		Definitely true	5
GCB.13	Some UFO sights or rumors are planned or staged in order to distract the public from real alien contact	Definitely not true	1
		Probably not true	2
		Not sure/cannot decide	3
		Probably true	4
		Definitely true	5
GCB.14	Experiments involving new drugs or technologies are routinely carried out on the public without their knowledge or consent	Definitely not true	1
		Probably not true	2
		Not sure/cannot decide	3
		Probably true	4
		Definitely true	5
GCB.15	A lot of important information is deliberately concealed from the public out of self interest	Definitely not true	1
		Probably not true	2
		Not sure/cannot decide	3
		Probably true	4
		Definitely true	5

B.1.4 Covariates

Covariates

Variable	Survey item	Response options	Coding
Political knowledge	Computed from political knowledge battery	Low knowledge	1
		Mid knowledge	2
		High knowledge	3
Party ID	Party ID	Dem partisan	1
		Dem lean	2
		Non-partisan	3
		Rep lean	4
		Rep partisan	5
Ideology	Ideology	Extremely liberal	1
		Liberal	2
		Slightly liberal	3
		Moderate/haven't thought much	4
		Slightly conservative	5
		Conservative	6
		Extremely conservative	7
Race	Computed from race and ethnicity measures	White, non-Hispanic	1
		Black, non-Hispanic	2
		Hispanic	3
		Other race, non-Hispanic	4
Age	Age	18-24	1
		25-34	2
		35-44	3
		45-54	4
		55-64	5
		65+	6
Gender	Gender	Male	1
		Female	2
		Non-binary	3
Education	Education	Less than high school	1
		High school diploma or GED	2
		Some college but no degree	3
		Associate's degree/technical degree	4
		Bachelor's degree	5
		Graduate degree/professional degree	6
Religion	Computed from religion and "born again" measures	Mainline Protestant	1
		Evangelical Protestant	2
		Catholic	3
		Other Christian	4
		Non-Christian	5
		Unaffiliated	6

C Primary Regression Outputs

C.1 Full Sample

QAnon Affect by Condition

	Condition 1, no cue	Condition 2, no cue	Condition 3, no cue	None	Condition 1, cue	Condition 2, cue	Condition 3, cue	Cue only
Treatment	-0.07 (0.09)	0.28*** (0.08)	-0.34*** (0.09)	0.09 (0.08)	0.10 (0.08)	-0.05 (0.08)	-0.20* (0.09)	0.16 (0.09)
Political knowledge	-0.38*** (0.04)	-0.38*** (0.04)	-0.37 (0.04)	-0.38*** (0.04)	-0.37*** (0.04)	-0.38*** (0.04)	-0.37*** (0.04)	-0.37 (0.04)
Party ID (Republican)	0.10*** (0.02)	0.10** (0.02)	0.10*** (0.02)	0.10*** (0.02)	0.10*** (0.02)	0.10*** (0.02)	0.10*** (0.02)	0.10*** (0.02)
Ideology (Conservative)	0.14*** (0.02)	0.14*** (0.02)	0.14*** (0.02)	0.14*** (0.02)	0.14*** (0.02)	0.14*** (0.02)	0.14*** (0.02)	0.14*** (0.02)
Black, non-Hispanic	-0.12 (0.10)	-0.13 (0.10)	-0.12 (0.10)	-0.11 (0.10)	-0.12 (0.10)	-0.12 (0.10)	-0.12 (0.10)	-0.11 (0.10)
Hispanic	-0.20* (0.09)	-0.21* (0.09)	-0.21* (0.09)	-0.21* (0.09)	-0.20* (0.09)	-0.20* (0.09)	-0.21* (0.09)	-0.20*** (0.09)
Other race, non-Hispanic	-0.04 (0.12)	-0.08 (0.12)	-0.07 (0.12)	-0.05 (0.12)	-0.05 (0.12)	-0.05 (0.12)	-0.07 (0.12)	-0.04 (0.12)
Age	-0.12*** (0.02)	-0.12*** (0.02)	-0.13*** (0.02)	-0.12*** (0.12)	-0.12*** (0.02)	-0.12*** (0.02)	-0.12*** (0.02)	-0.12*** (0.02)
Female	-0.01 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)	0.01 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)
Education	0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)	0.00 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.12)	0.00 (0.02)
Evangelical Protestant	-0.01 (0.11)	-0.00 (0.10)	0.01 (0.10)	-0.01 (0.10)	-0.01 (0.10)	-0.00 (0.10)	-0.00 (0.10)	0.00 (0.10)
Catholic	0.31*** (0.10)	0.32*** (0.10)	0.33*** (0.10)	0.32*** (0.10)	0.32*** (0.10)	0.32*** (0.10)	0.31*** (0.10)	0.32*** (0.10)
Other Christian	0.20 (0.11)	0.22* (0.11)	0.19 (0.11)	0.20 (0.11)	0.19 (0.11)	0.20 (0.11)	0.20 (0.11)	0.20 (0.11)
Non-Christian	0.22 (0.15)	0.24 (0.15)	0.23 (0.15)	0.21 (0.15)	0.22 (0.15)	0.23 (0.15)	0.22 (0.15)	0.23 (0.15)
Unaffiliated	0.07 (0.10)	0.08 (0.10)	0.09 (0.10)	0.07 (0.10)	0.07 (0.10)	0.07 (0.10)	0.07 (0.10)	0.08 (0.10)
Intercept	2.15*** (0.17)	2.09*** (0.17)	2.18*** (0.17)	2.13*** (0.17)	2.12*** (.017)	2.14*** (0.17)	2.18*** (0.17)	2.13*** (0.17)
R2	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22
Adjusted R2	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.12	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21
N	1,266	1,266	1,266	1,266	1,266	1,266	1,266	1,266

Notes: Table entries are OLS coefficients. Robust standard errors given in parentheses. Data are weighted. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

C.2 Subgroup Analyses

QAnon Affect by Condition (Interactive Effects)

	Condition 1, no cue	Condition 2, no cue	Condition 3, no cue	None	Condition 1, cue	Condition 2, cue	Condition 3, cue	Cue only
Treatment	0.09 (0.16)	-0.03 (0.14)	-0.00 (0.15)	0.01 (0.13)	-0.05 (0.18)	0.00 (0.17)	-0.19 (0.09)	0.01 (0.13)
GCB tercile: Mid	0.39*** (0.08)	0.34*** (0.08)	0.43*** (0.07)	0.36*** (0.08)	0.33*** (0.08)	0.40*** (0.08)	0.40*** (0.08)	0.36*** (0.08)
GCB tercile: High	0.76*** (0.08)	0.34*** (0.08)	0.79*** (0.08)	0.70*** (0.08)	0.72*** (0.08)	0.72*** (0.08)	0.68*** (0.08)	0.70*** (0.08)
Treatment x GCB tercile: Mid	-0.06 (0.21)	0.40* (0.21)	-0.65*** (0.24)	0.20 (0.19)	0.35 (0.22)	-0.08 (0.20)	-0.17 (0.21)	0.20 (0.19)
Treatment x GCB tercile: High	-0.40** (0.22)	0.58*** (0.20)	-0.47*** (0.19)	0.08 (0.18)	-0.04 (0.22)	-0.07 (0.21)	0.27 (0.21)	0.08 (0.18)
Political knowledge	-0.31*** (0.04)	-0.32*** (0.04)	-0.32*** (0.04)	-0.32*** (0.04)	-0.32*** (0.04)	-0.32*** (0.04)	-0.32*** (0.04)	-0.32*** (0.04)
Party ID (Republican)	0.07*** (0.02)	0.07*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.07*** (0.02)	0.07*** (0.02)	0.07*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)
Ideology (Conservative)	0.12*** (0.02)	0.12*** (0.02)	0.11*** (0.02)	0.11** (0.02)	0.12*** (0.02)	0.11*** (0.02)	0.12*** (0.02)	0.11** (0.02)
Black, non-Hispanic	-0.22* (0.09)	-0.23** (0.09)	-0.23** (0.09)	-0.21** (0.09)	-0.24** (0.09)	-0.22* (0.10)	-0.23* (0.09)	-0.21* (0.09)
Hispanic	-0.21** (0.08)	-0.21** (0.08)	-0.22*** (0.08)	-0.23** (0.08)	-0.24*** (0.08)	-0.22** (0.08)	-0.24*** (0.08)	-0.23** (0.08)
Other race, non-Hispanic	-0.06 (0.12)	-0.10 (0.11)	-0.11 (0.11)	-0.10 (0.12)	-0.12 (0.12)	-0.10 (0.12)	-0.12 (0.12)	-0.10 (0.12)
Age	-0.09*** (0.02)	-0.09*** (0.02)	-0.09*** (0.02)	-0.09*** (0.02)	-0.10*** (0.02)	-0.09*** (0.02)	-0.10*** (0.02)	-0.09*** (0.02)
Female	-0.00 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.05)	-0.02 (0.05)	-0.01 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)	-0.00 (0.06)	-0.00 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)
Education	0.02 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)
Evangelical Protestant	-0.06 (0.10)	-0.05 (0.10)	-0.03 (0.10)	-0.05 (0.10)	-0.06 (0.10)	-0.05 (0.10)	-0.04 (0.10)	-0.05 (0.10)
Catholic	0.27*** (0.09)	0.25** (0.09)	0.29*** (0.09)	0.28*** (0.09)	0.27*** (0.09)	0.28*** (0.09)	0.28*** (0.09)	0.28*** (0.09)
Other Christian	0.15 (0.11)	0.17 (0.11)	0.15 (0.11)	0.16 (0.11)	0.14 (0.11)	0.16 (0.11)	0.14 (0.11)	0.16 (0.11)
Non-Christian	0.18 (0.15)	0.21 (0.15)	0.19 (0.15)	0.19 (0.15)	0.18 (0.15)	0.04 (0.09)	0.19 (0.15)	0.19 (0.15)
Unaffiliated	0.03 (0.09)	0.06 (0.09)	0.06 (0.09)	0.04 (0.09)	0.03 (0.09)	0.04 (0.09)	0.04 (0.09)	0.04 (0.09)
Intercept	1.67*** (0.17)	1.65*** (0.17)	1.68*** (0.17)	1.70*** (0.17)	1.70*** (.017)	1.68*** (0.17)	1.73*** (0.18)	1.70*** (0.18)
R2	0.28	0.29	0.29	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.28	0.27
Adjusted R2	0.26	0.28	0.28	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	0.26
N	1,246	1,246	1,246	1,246	1,246	1,246	1,246	1,246

Notes: Table entries are OLS coefficients. Robust standard errors given in parentheses. Data are weighted. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

D Robustness Tests and Sensitivity Analyses

D.1 Alternate Estimators

D.1.1 Ordered Models

QAnon Affect by Condition (Ordered Probit Estimates)

	Condition 1, no cue	Condition 2, no cue	Condition 3, no cue	None	Condition 1, cue	Condition 2, cue	Condition 3, cue	Cue only
Treatment	.111 (.100)	.339*** (.099)	-.406*** (.111)	.082 (.093)	.107 (.111)	-.030 (.009)	-.270* (.111)	.180 (.110)
Political knowledge	-.478*** (.048)	-.486*** (.049)	-.479*** (.048)	-.481*** (.048)	-.481*** (.048)	-.481*** (.048)	-.479*** (.048)	-.479*** (.048)
Party ID (Republican)	.119*** (.026)	.119*** (.023)	.128*** (.026)	.121*** (.026)	.118*** (.026)	.120*** (.026)	.124*** (.026)	.122*** (.026)
Ideology (Conservative)	.191*** (.027)	.193*** (.027)	.190*** (.027)	.188*** (.027)	.190*** (.027)	.190*** (.027)	.188*** (.027)	.188*** (.027)
Black, non-Hispanic	-.102 (.119)	-.129 (.119)	-.107 (.119)	-.102 (.119)	-.112 (.119)	-.105 (.119)	-.096 (.119)	-.102 (.119)
Hispanic	-.221* (.103)	-.239* (.103)	-.238 (.103)	-.232* (.103)	-.227* (.103)	-.227* (.103)	-.228* (.103)	-.224* (.103)
Other race, non-Hispanic	-.033 (.143)	-.069 (.143)	-.058 (.143)	-.041 (.143)	-.028 (.144)	-.042 (.143)	-.063 (.143)	-.033 (.143)
Age	-.146*** (.024)	-.148*** (.024)	-.1518** (.024)	-.146*** (.023)	-.146*** (.024)	-.146*** (.024)	-.149*** (.024)	-.148*** (.024)
Female	-.031 (.069)	-.034 (.069)	-.040 (.069)	-.033 (.069)	-.034 (.069)	-.034 (.069)	-.036 (.069)	-.041 (.069)
Education	.002 (.023)	.008 (.023)	.000 (.023)	.000 (.023)	.001 (.023)	.001 (.023)	.000 (.023)	-.000 (.023)
Evangelical Protestant	.007 (.131)	.018 (.131)	.026 (.132)	.011 (.131)	.007 (.131)	.013 (.131)	.014 (.131)	.022 (.131)
Catholic	.390*** (.123)	.393** (.123)	.409*** (.123)	.394** (.123)	.384** (.123)	.394** (.123)	.386** (.123)	.391** (.123)
Other Christian	.197*** (.140)	.243 (.140)	.205 (.140)	.212 (.140)	.205 (.140)	.211 (.140)	.214 (.140)	.213 (.140)
Non-Christian	.270 (.189)	.298 (.189)	.270 (.190)	.257 (.189)	.259 (.189)	.269 (.189)	.261 (.189)	.266 (.189)
Unaffiliated	.066 (.126)	.090 (.126)	.102 (.126)	.071 (.126)	.065 (.126)	.072 (.126)	.064 (.126)	.074 (.126)
Loglink	-1311.61	-1306.42	-1305.33	-1311.82	-1311.74	-1312.16	-1309.18	-1310.88
AIC	2661.21	2650.84	2648.66	2661.64	2661.49	2662.32	2656.37	2659.76
N	1,266	1,266	1,266	1,266	1,266	1,266	1,266	1,266

Notes: Table entries are ordered probit coefficients. Robust standard errors given in parentheses. Data are weighted. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

D.2 Choice of Specification

Model Specifications: No Disconfirming Cue

Origins of QAnon + no disconfirming cue QAnon in Congress + no disconfirming cue

QAnon racist + no disconfirming cue

No excerpt + no disconfirming cue

Notes: Figure depicts the robustness of our OLS estimates under every possible combination of our set of eight covariates (political knowledge, party ID, ideology, race, age, gender, education, and religion). The vertical grey lines are 95 percent confidence intervals. Black points are not significant at the 10 percent level; blue points are significant at the 10 percent level; green points are significant at the 5 percent level; and red points are significant at the one percent level.

Model Specifications: Disconfirming Cue

Notes: Figure depicts the robustness of our OLS estimates under every possible combination of our set of eight covariates (political knowledge, party ID, ideology, race, age, gender, education, and religion). The vertical grey lines are 95 percent confidence intervals. Black points are not significant at the 10 percent level; blue points are significant at the 10 percent level; green points are significant at the 5 percent level; and red points are significant at the one percent level.

D.3 Continuous versus Binned Moderation Effects

Continuous Moderation Effects, No Disconfirming Cue

Origins of QAnon, no disconfirming cue

QAnon in Congress, no disconfirming cue

QAnon racist, no disconfirming cue

No excerpt, no disconfirming cue

Continuous Moderation Effects, with Disconfirming Cue

Origins of QAnon + disconfirming cue

QAnon in Congress + disconfirming cue

QAnon racist + disconfirming cue

No excerpt + disconfirming cue

D.4 Alternate Measures of Conspiratorial Attitudes

QAnon Affect by Condition (Moderated by Pizzagate Beliefs)

	Condition 1, no cue	Condition 2, no cue	Condition 3, no cue	None	Condition 1, cue	Condition 2, cue	Condition 3, cue	Cue only
Treatment	-0.07 (0.20)	-0.23 (0.21)	0.09 (0.22)	-0.00 (0.17)	0.27 (0.22)	-0.04 (0.21)	-0.11 (0.18)	-0.12 (0.22)
Pizzagate beliefs	0.39 (0.03)	0.37*** (0.03)	0.43*** (0.03)	0.39*** (0.03)	0.39*** (0.03)	0.39*** (0.03)	0.41*** (0.03)	0.38*** (0.03)
Treatment x Pizzagate beliefs	0.01 (0.08)	0.15 (0.08)	-0.20** (0.07)	0.08 (0.07)	-0.01 (0.08)	0.02 (0.08)	-0.06 (0.06)	0.14 (0.08)
Political knowledge	-0.20*** (0.05)	-0.21*** (0.05)	-0.19*** (0.05)	-0.20*** (0.05)	-0.20*** (0.05)	-0.20*** (0.05)	-0.20*** (0.05)	-0.20*** (0.05)
Party ID (Republican)	0.06* (0.03)	0.06 (0.03)	0.06 (0.03)	0.06* (0.03)	0.06* (0.03)	0.06* (0.03)	0.07* (0.03)	0.07* (0.03)
Ideology (Conservative)	0.11*** (0.03)	0.12*** (0.03)	0.12*** (0.03)	0.11*** (0.03)	0.12*** (0.03)	0.11*** (0.03)	0.11** (0.03)	0.10*** (0.03)
Black, non-Hispanic	-0.01 (0.11)	-0.03 (0.11)	-0.02 (0.10)	0.01 (0.11)	0.01 (0.11)	-0.01 (0.11)	0.02 (0.11)	-0.00 (0.10)
Hispanic	-0.21* (0.11)	-0.21** (0.11)	-0.19* (0.09)	-0.21* (0.10)	-0.20* (0.10)	-0.21* (0.10)	-0.21* (0.10)	-0.20*** (0.10)
Other race, non-Hispanic	-0.22 (0.14)	-0.26 (0.14)	-0.25* (0.13)	-0.23 (0.14)	-0.20 (0.14)	-0.23 (0.14)	-0.26* (0.14)	-0.20 (0.14)
Age	-0.07*** (0.03)	-0.08*** (0.03)	-0.07*** (0.02)	-0.07** (0.03)	-0.07*** (0.03)	-0.07*** (0.03)	-0.07*** (0.03)	-0.07*** (0.03)
Female	-0.12 (0.07)	-0.13 (0.07)	-0.11 (0.07)	-0.11 (0.07)	-0.11 (0.07)	-0.12 (0.07)	-0.11 (0.07)	-0.12 (0.07)
Education	-0.00 (0.02)	-0.00 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)	-0.00 (0.02)	-0.00 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)	-0.00 (0.02)
Evangelical Protestant	-0.03 (0.13)	-0.05 (0.13)	-0.02 (0.13)	-0.02 (0.13)	-0.05 (0.13)	-0.03 (0.13)	-0.02 (0.13)	-0.02 (0.13)
Catholic	0.16 (0.11)	0.16 (0.11)	0.15 (0.11)	0.17 (0.11)	0.16 (0.11)	0.17 (0.11)	0.18 (0.11)	0.16 (0.11)
Other Christian	-0.22 (0.14)	0.20 (0.13)	0.19 (0.13)	0.21 (0.13)	0.17 (0.13)	0.19 (0.14)	0.23 (0.14)	0.21 (0.13)
Non-Christian	0.31 (0.17)	0.32 (0.17)	0.30 (0.17)	0.31 (0.17)	0.32 (0.17)	0.31 (0.17)	0.33* (0.17)	0.31 (0.17)
Unaffiliated	0.08 (0.11)	0.08 (0.11)	0.09 (0.11)	0.08 (0.11)	0.06 (0.11)	0.08 (0.11)	0.08 (0.11)	0.07 (0.11)
Intercept	1.03*** (0.21)	1.06*** (0.21)	0.98*** (0.21)	1.03*** (0.21)	0.97*** (0.21)	1.03*** (0.21)	1.03*** (0.21)	1.05*** (0.21)
R2	0.47	0.47	0.49	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47
Adjusted R2	0.45	0.46	0.47	0.46	0.46	0.45	0.46	0.46
N	664	664	664	664	664	664	664	664

Notes: Table entries are OLS coefficients. Robust standard errors given in parentheses. Data are weighted. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

QAnon Affect by Condition (Moderated by Wayfair Beliefs)

	Condition 1, no cue	Condition 2, no cue	Condition 3, no cue	None	Condition 1, cue	Condition 2, cue	Condition 3, cue	Cue only
Treatment	-0.14 (0.38)	-0.18 (0.32)	0.34 (0.39)	0.09 (0.29)	-0.13 (0.04)	0.06 (0.37)	-0.22 (0.37)	0.33 (0.34)
Wayfair beliefs	0.39*** (0.05)	0.38*** (0.05)	0.41*** (0.05)	0.39*** (0.05)	0.37*** (0.05)	0.40*** (0.05)	0.39*** (0.05)	0.39*** (0.05)
Treatment x Wayfair beliefs	0.08 (0.15)	0.08 (0.12)	-0.28* (0.13)	0.01 (0.10)	0.12 (0.11)	-0.09 (0.13)	0.04 (0.12)	-0.03 (0.11)
Political knowledge	-0.22*** (0.07)	-0.23*** (0.07)	-0.23*** (0.07)	-0.22*** (0.07)	-0.21*** (0.07)	-0.22*** (0.07)	-0.22*** (0.07)	-0.22*** (0.07)
Party ID (Republican)	0.07 (0.04)	0.07 (0.04)	0.08 (0.04)	0.07 (0.04)	0.07 (0.04)	0.07 (0.04)	0.07 (0.04)	0.08 (0.04)
Ideology (Conservative)	0.08* (0.04)	0.09* (0.04)	0.09 (0.04)	0.08 (0.04)	0.09* (0.04)	0.08 (0.04)	0.08 (0.04)	0.08 (0.04)
Black, non-Hispanic	-0.01 (0.14)	-0.02 (0.15)	0.01 (0.14)	0.00 (0.14)	0.02 (0.15)	-0.02 (0.14)	-0.01 (0.15)	-0.00 (0.14)
Hispanic	-0.16 (0.12)	-0.15 (0.12)	-0.13 (0.12)	-0.16 (0.12)	-0.14 (0.12)	-0.16 (0.12)	-0.16 (0.12)	-0.15 (0.12)
Other race, non-Hispanic	0.28 (0.21)	0.25 (0.21)	0.24 (0.21)	0.27 (0.21)	0.31 (0.21)	0.31 (0.21)	0.24 (0.21)	0.27 (0.21)
Age	-0.05 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.04)
Female	-0.13 (0.10)	-0.14 (0.10)	-0.13 (0.10)	-0.13 (0.10)	-0.14 (0.10)	-0.13 (0.10)	-0.13 (0.10)	-0.14 (0.10)
Education	0.03 (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)	0.04 (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)	0.04 (0.03)	0.04 (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)
Evangelical Protestant	0.10 (0.21)	0.11 (0.22)	0.12 (0.21)	0.10 (0.21)	0.10 (0.21)	0.08 (0.21)	0.10 (0.22)	0.14 (0.22)
Catholic	0.40* (0.19)	0.40* (0.19)	0.41* (0.18)	0.39* (0.19)	0.37* (0.19)	0.38* (0.17)	0.38* (0.19)	0.42* (0.19)
Other Christian	0.28 (0.21)	0.29 (0.21)	0.27 (0.21)	0.27 (0.21)	0.27 (0.21)	0.28 (0.21)	0.26 (0.21)	0.33 (0.21)
Non-Christian	0.29 (0.28)	0.28 (0.28)	0.29 (0.27)	0.26 (0.28)	0.30 (0.28)	0.29 (0.28)	0.26 (0.28)	0.31 (0.28)
Unaffiliated	0.10 (0.18)	0.11 (0.18)	0.12 (0.18)	0.09 (0.18)	0.10 (0.18)	0.09 (0.18)	0.09 (0.18)	0.14 (0.18)
Intercept	0.78*** (0.32)	0.82** (0.33)	0.76*** (0.32)	0.78*** (0.32)	0.75* (0.32)	0.78** (0.32)	0.83** (0.33)	0.72* (0.33)
R2	0.39	0.39	0.41	0.39	0.40	0.39	0.39	0.40
Adjusted R2	0.37	0.37	0.38	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37
N	417	417	417	417	417	417	417	417

Notes: Table entries are OLS coefficients. Robust standard errors given in parentheses. Data are weighted. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

D.5 Placebo Tests

Court Packing Affect by Condition

	Condition 1, no cue	Condition 2, no cue	Condition 3, no cue	None	Condition 1, cue	Condition 2, cue	Condition 3, cue	Cue only
Treatment	-0.10 (0.08)	0.09 (0.07)	0.05 (0.08)	-0.01 (0.07)	0.11 (0.07)	-0.08 (0.07)	-0.16 (0.08)	0.13 (0.08)
Political knowledge	-0.25*** (0.03)	-0.25*** (0.03)	0.25*** (0.03)	-0.25** (0.03)	-0.25*** (0.03)	-0.25*** (0.03)	-0.25*** (0.03)	-0.25*** (0.03)
Party ID (Republican)	-0.16*** (0.02)	-0.16*** (0.02)	-0.16*** (0.02)	-0.16*** (0.02)	-0.16*** (0.02)	-0.16*** (0.02)	-0.16*** (0.02)	-0.16*** (0.02)
Ideology (Conservative)	-0.10*** (0.02)	-0.10*** (0.02)	-0.10*** (0.02)	-0.10*** (0.02)	-0.10*** (0.02)	-0.10*** (0.02)	-0.11*** (0.02)	-0.10*** (0.02)
Black, non-Hispanic	-0.05 (0.09)	-0.06 (0.09)	-0.05 (0.09)	-0.05 (0.09)	-0.05 (0.09)	-0.05 (0.09)	-0.05 (0.09)	-0.05 (0.09)
Hispanic	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.07 (0.08)	-0.06 (0.08)
Other race, non-Hispanic	-0.07 (0.11)	-0.09 (0.11)	-0.08 (0.11)	-0.08 (0.11)	-0.07 (0.11)	-0.08 (0.11)	-0.10 (0.11)	-0.08 (0.11)
Age	-0.04** (0.02)	-0.05** (0.02)	-0.04* (0.02)	-0.04* (0.02)	-0.04** (0.02)	-0.04** (0.02)	0.05** (0.02)	-0.05** (0.02)
Female	0.03 (0.05)	0.03 (0.05)	0.03 (0.05)	0.03 (0.05)	0.03 (0.05)	0.03 (0.05)	0.03 (0.05)	0.03 (0.05)
Education	0.08*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)
Evangelical Protestant	0.21** (0.09)	0.22* (0.09)	0.22*** (0.09)	0.22** (0.09)	0.22* (0.09)	0.22* (0.09)	0.22* (0.09)	0.23** (0.09)
Catholic	0.18** (0.09)	0.19* (0.09)	0.18* (0.09)	0.19* (0.09)	0.18** (0.09)	0.19* (0.09)	0.18* (0.09)	0.19* (0.09)
Other Christian	0.29*** (0.10)	0.30*** (0.10)	0.29*** (0.10)	0.29*** (0.10)	0.28** (0.10)	0.29*** (0.10)	0.29*** (0.10)	0.29** (0.10)
Non-Christian	0.31* (0.14)	0.32* (0.14)	0.13* (0.10)	0.31** (0.14)	0.31* (0.14)	0.32 (0.14)	0.31* (0.14)	0.31** (0.14)
Unaffiliated	0.10 (0.09)	0.11 (0.09)	0.10 (0.09)	0.10 (0.09)	0.10 (0.09)	0.10 (0.09)	0.10 (0.09)	0.10 (0.09)
Intercept	3.48*** (0.15)	3.46*** (0.15)	3.47*** (0.15)	3.47*** (0.15)	3.45*** (0.15)	3.47*** (0.15)	3.50*** (0.15)	3.46*** (0.15)
R2	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
Adjusted R2	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24
N	1,291	1,291	1,291	1,291	1,291	1,291	1,291	1,291

Notes: Table entries are OLS coefficients. Robust standard errors given in parentheses. Data are weighted. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

Table 6: ICE Affect by Condition

	Condition 1, no cue	Condition 2, no cue	Condition 3, no cue	None	Condition 1, cue	Condition 2, cue	Condition 3, cue	Cue only
Treatment	0.08 (0.07)	0.00 (0.07)	0.11 (0.07)	-0.10 (0.06)	0.04 (0.07)	-0.00 (0.06)	0.03 (0.07)	-0.09 (0.07)
Political knowledge	0.04 (0.03)	0.04 (0.03)	0.04 (0.03)	0.04 (0.03)	0.04 (0.03)	0.04 (0.03)	0.04 (0.03)	0.04 (0.03)
Party ID (Republican)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.07*** (0.02)	0.07*** (0.02)	0.07*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.07*** (0.02)
Ideology (Conservative)	0.17*** (0.02)	0.17*** (0.02)	0.17*** (0.02)	0.17*** (0.02)	0.17*** (0.02)	0.17*** (0.02)	0.17*** (0.02)	0.17*** (0.10)
Black, non-Hispanic	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.07 (0.08)	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.06 (0.08)
Hispanic	-0.30*** (0.07)	-0.29*** (0.07)	-0.29*** (0.07)	-0.29*** (0.07)	-0.29*** (0.07)	-0.29*** (0.07)	-0.30*** (0.07)	-0.30*** (0.07)
Other race, non-Hispanic	0.01 (0.09)	0.02 (0.09)	0.03 (0.09)	0.02 (0.09)	0.03 (0.09)	0.03 (0.09)	0.02 (0.09)	0.02 (0.09)
Age	0.08*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)	0.08*** (0.02)
Female	-0.10* (0.05)	-0.10* (0.05)	-0.10 (0.05)	-0.10* (0.05)	-0.10* (0.05)	-0.10* (0.05)	-0.10* (0.05)	-0.10* (0.05)
Education	0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)
Evangelical Protestant	0.01 (0.08)	0.00 (0.08)	-0.00 (0.08)	0.01 (0.08)	0.00 (0.08)	0.00 (0.08)	0.00 (0.08)	-0.00 (0.08)
Catholic	0.09 (0.08)	0.08 (0.08)	0.08 (0.08)	0.08 (0.08)	0.08 (0.08)	0.08 (0.08)	-0.08 (0.08)	0.08 (0.08)
Other Christian	-0.04 (0.09)	-0.04 (0.09)	-0.03 (0.09)	-0.04 (0.09)	-0.04 (0.09)	-0.04 (0.09)	-0.04 (0.09)	-0.04 (0.09)
Non-Christian	-0.16 (0.12)	-0.17 (0.12)	-0.17 (0.12)	-0.16 (0.12)	-0.17 (0.12)	-0.17 (0.12)	-0.17 (0.12)	-0.17 (0.21)
Unaffiliated	-0.13 (0.08)	-0.13 (0.08)	-0.14 (0.08)	-0.13 (0.08)	-0.13 (0.08)	-0.13 (0.08)	-0.13 (0.08)	-0.13 (0.08)
Intercept	1.80*** (0.14)	1.80*** (0.14)	1.79*** (0.14)	1.82*** (0.14)	1.80*** (0.14)	1.80*** (0.14)	1.81*** (0.14)	1.81*** (0.14)
R2	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29
Adjusted R2	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28
N	1,291	1,291	1,291	1,291	1,291	1,291	1,291	1,291

Notes: Table entries are OLS coefficients. Robust standard errors given in parentheses. Data are weighted. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.