



Understanding QAnon Through the Lens of Traditional Media

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Data Parameters

- Key Word: "qanon"
- Publication Type: Newspapers
- Article Length: $500 < \& \> 1500$ words
- Location: The 50 States, United States/Federal
- Language: English
- Date Range: January 2018 - March 2021



Research Question & Hypothesis

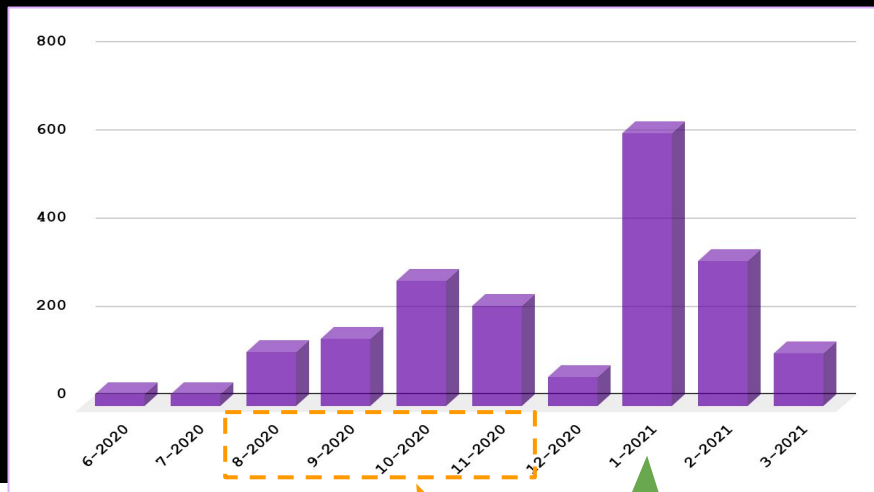
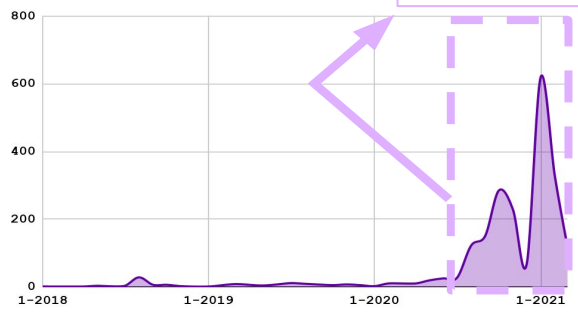
- Research Question: To what extent did the 2020 Election impact the subject matter & coverage of conspiracy theories?
- Hypothesis: Polarization between the Trump & Biden and during the 2020 Election fueled the spread of conspiracy theories.



Data Analysis

Top months where QAnon was covered the heaviest

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[((2021, 'January'), 620),  
((2021, 'February'), 382),  
((2020, 'October'), 285),  
((2020, 'November'), 228),  
((2020, 'September'), 151),  
((2020, 'August'), 122),  
((2021, 'March'), 118),  
((2020, 'December'), 66),  
((2018, 'August'), 28),  
((2020, 'July'), 27),  
((2020, 'June'), 25),  
((2020, 'May'), 19),  
((2019, 'July'), 11),  
((2020, 'February'), 10),  
((2020, 'April'), 10),  
((2019, 'August'), 9),  
((2019, 'March'), 8),  
((2019, 'November'), 7),  
((2018, 'September'), 6),  
((2018, 'October'), 6),  
((2018, 'December'), 6),  
((2019, 'October'), 5),  
((2019, 'December'), 5),  
((2019, 'May'), 4),  
((2018, 'May'), 3),  
((2018, 'July'), 3),  
((2018, 'November'), 2),  
((2020, 'January'), 2),  
((2018, 'January'), 1),  
((2018, 'April'), 1),  
((2019, 'January'), 1)]
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Spikes in coverage correlate with the **inauguration** and (to a lesser extent) **voting season** (extended to 4 months to account for to mail-in voting)

Data Analysis(cont.)

Top 5 days where QAnon was covered the heaviest

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[('2020-10-16', 51),  
 ('2021-01-12', 44),  
 ('2021-02-04', 43),  
 ('2021-01-07', 42),  
 ('2021-02-05', 42)]
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Top 50 types in articles from October 16 2020 (num of articles type occurs in)

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[('a', 51), ('that', 51), ('to', 51), ('from', 51), ('for', 51), ('the', 51), ('on', 51), ('in', 51), ('of', 51), ('and', 51), ('he', 50), ('was', 50), ('has', 50), ('president', 50), ('with', 50), ('it', 50), ('by', 49), ('but', 49), ('as', 49), ('not', 49), ('his', 49), ('trump', 49), ('who', 49), ('is', 49), ('qanon', 48), ('more', 48), ('at', 48), ('said', 48), ('about', 48), ('an', 47), ('when', 46), ('biden', 44), ('which', 43), ('would', 43), ('are', 43), ('had', 43), ('have', 43), ('be', 43), ('than', 42), ('after', 42), ('election', 42), ('before', 42), ('did', 41), ('time', 41), ('also', 41), ('two', 41), ('one', 40), ('they', 40), ('if', 40), ('so', 40)]
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Random sample of 10 headlines from October 16 2020 articles that mention Trump

AMP2.- USA.- Trump says "for years" denounced supremacism and accuses Democrats of "directing" the anti-fashioners
Biden and Trump counter-programme to occupy the space of suspended debate
QAnon, Donald Trump's conspiratorial arm
New Rules For YouTube Will Prohibit QAnon Posts
Biden Beats Trump in Ratings Battle of the Network Town Halls
Business digest
Trump takes more punches in remote duel with Biden
Trump-Biden duel remotely on TV in campaign again altered by covid-19
Trump looks evasive and Biden erratic at respective events
Trump Campaign Lawyers Are Aiding a Leading Proponent of QAnon

Random sample of 10 headlines from October 16 2020 articles that mention Biden

If he loses the election, Trump mused Friday, 'Maybe I'll have to leave the country.'
No debate, but dueling town halls, styles Dueling: Biden says only 'not a fan' of expanding court
QAnon, Donald Trump's conspiratorial arm
Trump looks evasive and Biden erratic at respective events
Trump campaign efforts face strong headwind: Trump himself
Biden and Trump counter-programme to occupy the space of suspended debate
Trump ignores campaign attempts at chance of defeat
How the Internet Viewed the Presidential Town Halls
Candidates face voters Trump, Biden wage rivalry long distance in dueling town halls
Trump threatened Facebook and Twitter for blocking critical article against Biden

Random sample of 10 excerpts from October 16 2020 articles that mention Trump

"i know nothing about qanon"	trump	and democrat joe biden squared
become the same or when	trump	claimed guthrie protested: "i just
hall and nbc booked mr	trump	said his management had saved
little you can see it"	trump	for the same night --
ms guthrie insisted that mr	trump	said during a rally held
misinformation and republicans including mr	trump	explain why he had retweeted
president wants us to be"	trump	paint them as censorious menaces
republicans have concluded that mr	trump	meanwhile was evasive on whether
immediate and striking trump was	trump	is heading for a loss
		he was loud and argumentative

Random sample of 10 excerpts from October 16 2020 articles that mention Biden

any media person ever challenged	biden	like savannah guthrie is with
"americans don't panic he panicked"	biden	said of trump in an
in 2016 but in both	biden	he now leads the intention
and so does everybody else"	biden	meanwhile took a far different
the final stretchdonald trump demanded	biden	"immediately" reveal his son hunter's
in the remote duel with	biden	first published in diario la
supremacists though vague at times	biden	suggested he will offer clarity
primarily barack obama and joe	biden	(with a generous helping of
emails related to sleepy joe	biden	and his son hunter in
stake" late in the event	biden	was asked what it would

Next Steps

1. Research to align dates of higher coverage with events
2. Conduct more in-depth analysis of individual conspiracy theories and the topics they revolve around (through expanded word frequency analysis)
3. Analyze articles containing “truth” and “alternative facts”