

## THE SOCIAL SCIENCE OF QANON

QAnon has emerged as the defining conspiracy group of our times, and its far-right conspiracies are extraordinary for their breadth and extremity. Bringing together scholars from psychology, sociology, communications, and political science, this cutting-edge volume uses social science theory to investigate aspects of QAnon. Following an introduction to the “who, what, and why” of QAnon in Part I, Part II focuses on the psychological characteristics of QAnon followers and the group’s methods for recruiting and maintaining these followers. Part III includes chapters at the intersection of QAnon and society, arguing that society has constructed QAnon as a threat and that the social need to belong motivates its followers. Part IV discusses the role of communication in promoting and limiting QAnon support, while Part V concludes by considering the future of QAnon. *The Social Science of QAnon* is vital reading for scholars and students across the social sciences and for legal and policy professionals.

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THE SOCIAL SCIENCE  
OF QANON

*A New Social and Political Phenomenon*

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*To Jim Richardson, who encouraged my interest in studying religion and social groups, in mentoring, and in publishing. You have inspired many.  
May this book be one small piece of your ever-expanding legacy.*

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## *Preface*

This book was inspired by lively conversations with Tatyana Kaplan during the COVID-19 pandemic. As two social psychologists, we were curious about this phenomenon of QAnon. I began the adventure of finding experts who could write chapters to explain various aspects of QAnon. Many weeks and conversations later, a book proposal was born.

Writing chapters and editing and publishing a book are no small feats in general. Doing so during a pandemic – while learning to juggle one’s other duties (teaching, administration) online and at home and while personally experiencing COVID-19 and/or caring for those experiencing COVID-19 – is even more impressive. Our team tackled countless societal and personal challenges for two years to make this book a reality. There are many people I need to thank because, without them, this book would not exist. First, thanks to the chapter authors, who provided ideas that shaped the book, wrote these intriguing chapters, and made changes without complaint. Additionally, I’d like to thank Janka Romero at Cambridge University Press, who helped polish up the proposal and offered helpful advice at every stage. Thanks also to all of the reviewers, who made helpful suggestions that certainly improved the book. Finally, thanks to Rowan Groat and the publishing and production team at Cambridge University Press, who helped make the book a beautiful reality.

I’m proud of this team of hard-working professionals. We hope readers enjoy our perspectives on this group that has changed society since its emergence in 2017. May future researchers use this book as a starting point to challenge and expand the ideas it contains.

