

# QAnon: Meet a Real-life Believer in the Online, Pro-Trump Conspiracy Theory That's Bursting Into View | The Washington Post

By Isaac Stanley-Becker

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After I [wrote](#) about QAnon, an online conspiracy theory that leaped on Tuesday from the far reaches of the Internet to the audience at President Trump's rally in Tampa, an email arrived in my inbox from a man named Paul Burton.

He described a colleague and me as "Bezos' boys," referring to Jeffrey P. Bezos, the owner of The Washington Post, and asked, "How's your fishbowl?" meaning, I presumed, a place open to public view and subject to critique. "LOL!" he added.

I responded, asking if he would be interested in speaking with me about his belief in QAnon. Much about the philosophy remains mysterious, even contradictory. But the central idea, which has no basis in observable reality, is that "Q" is the government insider, or cadre of insiders, leaving clues on digital message boards about a countercoup underway to vanquish deep-state saboteurs and their ring of elite allies, including Hillary Clinton and George Soros. (You can read more about the origins and meaning of QAnon [here](#) and [here](#).)

Less clear to me, given the anonymity that shrouds the threads on which the theory has spread, was the nature of the people who find it credible. How did they come across Q's "crumbs" of information? What made the tenets of QAnon — tinged with racism and anti-Semitism — convincing to them? What were their day jobs?

Source: [QAnon: Meet a Real-life Believer in the Online, Pro-Trump Conspiracy Theory That's Bursting Into View | The Washington Post](#)