2021 Far-Right Conferences: QAnon and Other Extremist Ideologies Dominate Events

Retired Lt General and former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn, a QAnon promoter, has spoken at numerous conspiracy-oriented events in 2021.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the chaos of the January 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, disparate groups of Trump supporters advocating the former president's false assertions of a stolen election, QAnon adherents, election fraud promoters and anti-vaccine activists have organized events around the country to promote their causes. This phenomenon underscores the extent to which the line separating the mainstream from the extreme has blurred, and how mainstream efforts to undermine democratic institutions are bolstered by extremist and conspiratorial narratives and their supporters.

These narratives, which go well beyond the mainstream into extreme territory, include the following lies:

- The 2020 presidential election was stolen by the Democrats (touted at the Health and Freedom events, organized by right-wing entrepreneur Clay Clark, as well as at other events.)
- A global cabal of pedophiles (including Democrats) who are kidnapping children for their blood will be executed when Donald Trump is reinstated as president.
- The coronavirus was co-created in a lab by Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Dr. Anthony Fauci and Microsoft founder Bill Gates.
- The coronavirus vaccine contains dangerous ingredients that change your DNA and make vaccinated people “shed” dangerous toxins.
- Satanic socialists are attempting to take over the country.
- If Democrats and “the left” remain in power, a confrontation, potentially violent, will be necessary to “reclaim” the country.

In 2021, a variety of conferences have brought together right-wing extremists, conspiracy theorists and “mainstream” conservatives. As recently as July 11,
speakers at CPAC (the Conservative Political Action Conference) raised the issue of “election integrity,” which in this context is a euphemism for the election fraud conspiracy theories promoted by former President Trump and his associates. Attendees at this nominally mainstream event were able to purchase QAnon merchandise, while members of two extremist groups—the Oath Keepers and the Proud Boys—freely walked the halls of the conference.

While presenting themselves as American “patriots,” many event speakers have celebrated conspiracy theories that sow distrust in not only the government but also in democratic institutions and scientific facts. The overriding view is that America is being corrupted by nefarious entities like “the Deep State,” communists, socialists and scientists, among many others.

People with varying ideologies are finding common ground in their desire for a more “traditional” society that embraces American nationalism, religion and what they consider “patriotic” values. Conspiracy theories like QAnon are merging with bigger, broader theories focused on election fraud and government control, which in turn attracts right-wing politicians to the conferences to promote these amalgam theories. This has the effect of normalizing these conspiratorial views and spreading disinformation to a broader audience.
Many of the speakers at these events travel directly from one venue to another. They have amassed thousands of online supporters, who are likely to attend events.

A number of the speakers are associates of Donald Trump. People like retired lieutenant-general and former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn, who was pardoned by Trump in November 2020 for lying to the FBI about the Russia investigation, and attorney Lin Wood, a lawyer who tried to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election, have a devoted following at these events.

Flynn and Wood are heroes to QAnon adherents, mostly due to their support of Trump’s presidency, particularly after the 2020 election. Sidney Powell, another attorney who worked on trying to overturn the results of the 2020 election, has also become a popular speaker. All three have a massive number of followers on Telegram: Wood has almost 840,000; Powell has nearly 495,000 and Flynn has nearly 250,000.

Other well-known speakers like Mike Lindell, the CEO of My Pillow, and Patrick Byrne, the former CEO of Overstock.com, are very vocal in their belief that the 2020 election was decided by fraud. The false narrative of election fraud, coupled with QAnon narratives that Trump will return to office as president is a prevalent theme at these conferences.
Mike Lindell, the CEO of MyPillow, is one of the biggest promoters of election fraud conspiracy theories. (photo credit: Gage Skidmore)

These ideas were key in motivating Trump supporters to converge on Washington, D.C. on January 6 in an effort to stop the certification of Joe Biden’s election victory. At least nine speakers at these events were at the Capitol on January 6, with some participating in the actual insurrection. (See “January 6 Protesters and Insurrectionists,” below).
In addition to Trump surrogates and insurrectionists, the speakers for these events have included politicians, QAnon supporters, religious leaders and a range of conspiracy theorists.

The sheer number of these events—which feature dozens of speakers, including those mentioned above, promoting various conspiracies—and the fact that they are well attended indicates that these speakers and organizers are creating momentum for their cause. These events demonstrate that numerous people with extreme ideologies are spreading their views, conspiracies and misinformation to an audience that embraces these ideas—and that the distinction between extreme and mainstream views is increasingly gray.

Greg Locke, a Tennessee pastor, was featured at a number of conspiracy-oriented events and was also at the Capitol on January 6, although he claims he did not go inside.
Dr. Simone Gold, who founded America’s Frontline Doctors, promotes conspiracy theories about the COVID vaccine. She was arrested by the FBI for entering the Capitol building during the insurrection on January 6. (photo credit: Gage Skidmore)

The individuals who speak at these events can be sorted into the following categories (see chapter titles at the top of the page); some fit into more than one.
These conspiracy-oriented events happening around the country are fueled by the anger and fear that America is changing for the worse and that something must be done to address or reverse that change. Reporting suggests this anger also propelled many Trump supporters to violently protest against the 2020 election results on January 6.

Several of the speakers at these events were at the U.S. Capitol that day, to support Trump and his false claims that he won the election.

One of the speakers, Dr. Simone Gold, an anti-vaccine activist, entered the Capitol building and was subsequently arrested by the FBI. Gold founded a fringe group, America’s Frontline Doctors, which filed a lawsuit in a U.S. District Court in Alabama in May 2021, asking that all COVID-19 vaccinations be stopped in the country. She was a speaker at Clark’s Health and Freedom conference in Tulsa in April. At the event, Gold talked about “sociopathic, evil, greedy, policymakers who have committed massive crimes against humanity,” adding, “I have no illusion that they will receive justice, but America’s Frontline Doctors will do everything possible to shed light on their evil behaviour through the courts, through the media, and through empowering the citizens of the world.”

Other event speakers who were at the Capitol include:

- Leigh Dundas, a self-proclaimed “human rights attorney,” and anti-vax activist (who has likened the COVID-19 vaccine to experiments performed on Jews by the Nazi doctor, Joseph Mengele during the Holocaust), also from California, stood on the Capitol grounds egging on the crowd to take action. She yelled, “This is 1776 all over again. We are fighting for our freedom!” and then broke into a chant, “Traitors, traitors.” It is not clear if she ever entered the building.
**Greg Locke**: The right-wing pastor at the Global Vision Church in Mt. Juliet, Tennessee. He walked to the Capitol but claims he did not enter the building. Locke has promoted election fraud and anti-vaccine conspiracy theories. He spoke at Clay Clark’s Health and Freedom events in Tulsa in April and Tampa in June, as well as at Matt Couch’s Faith and Freedom event in Allen, Texas, in May. Locke has defended his decision to keep his church open throughout the pandemic and encouraged others to not listen to mask mandates or other COVID-19 health and safety recommendations. He encouraged the audience to embrace the Bible and defend it against the “leftists” and the “liberals.”

**Ty Bollinger**: An activist from Tennessee who along with his wife Charlene promote alternative medicine. He was filmed at the Capitol doors but claims he did not enter the building. Both have promoted election fraud and anti-vax conspiracy theories. The Bollingers spoke at Clark’s events in Tulsa and Tampa. The couple claims that the established medical field spreads misinformation and that there is a conspiracy to censor anyone who tries to reveal this misinformation. They also claim their own books and films about cancer treatments and vaccines have been censored. They promote the idea that the coronavirus is a scam and that the COVID-19 vaccinations are killing more people than the virus itself.

**Bevelyn Beatty**: A pro-Trump conservative activist with ties to the Proud Boys, a right-wing extremist group. In November 2020, Beatty, Proud Boy chairman Enrique Tarrio, and two other alleged Proud Boys were stabbed in Washington D.C. Beatty is best known for painting over a BLM mural outside Trump Tower. On Election Day 2020, she tweeted, “Biden/ Harris & the whole left is trying to steal this election.” She was at the Capitol on January 6 but claims she did not enter the building.

**Joey Gilbert**: A former professional boxer running for Nevada Governor as a Republican candidate in 2022, who was filmed on the Capitol steps but claims he did not go inside. He was featured at Clark’s event in Tampa. At the event, Gilbert admonished the audience, “Don’t you ever close your
businesses again! Don’t you ever put those masks on again! Don’t you ever listen to Anthony Fauci again! Don’t you ever listen to the CDC again. They are liars. They are traitors. Ok? They come from Satan.” He went on to say that Fauci and Bill Gates are “already talking about planning plandemic two [a reference to a widespread coronavirus conspiracy theory].”

- **DeAnna Lorraine**: A podcast host, author and QAnon believer who repeatedly tweeted about QAnon and used QAnon phrases during her unsuccessful 2020 Congressional campaign against Nancy Pelosi. Lorraine, who hosts the conspiracy-oriented site InfoWars, claims she was tear-gassed at the Capitol but did not go inside. She was an announcer for the “We the People Patriots Day” event in Stuart, Florida, in May.

- **Mindy Robinson**: The girlfriend of Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) legend Randy Couture and a self-described actress who ran for Congress in Nevada in 2020. She was at the Capitol but it’s not clear if she entered the building. She is a QAnon supporter who has used QAnon phrases in tweets and has also pushed lies about election fraud. She is advocating for a “forensic audit” of Nevada’s election results. Robinson spoke at the Revival Revolution conference in Glendale, Arizona in May, where she encouraged the audience to be "troopers for America" and do something.

- **Caroline Wetherington**: The founder of Defend Florida, which aims to convince conservative groups to fight for “constitutional rights” in Florida and across the country. She claims that Defend Florida has evidence “that there was tampering with the 2020 election” in Florida. She has also interviewed Sidney Powell about election fraud. She was at the Capitol but claims she never entered the building.

These and the many others who protested and rioted on January 6 were influenced by election fraud conspiracies.

**ELECTION FRAUD CONSPIRACY THEORISTS**
Two of the biggest promoters of election fraud conspiracy theories are Mike Lindell, the CEO of MyPillow, and Patrick Byrne, the ex-CEO of Overstock.com. Lindell, who made a film about election fraud, spoke at the We the People event in Las Vegas in April and at Clay Clark’s Health and Freedom events in Tulsa and Tampa, in April and June, respectively. Lindell claimed he hired cyber experts and hackers to examine election fraud. At the event in Tampa, he asserted, “We have every packet capture from the 2020 election. And what is shows is Donald Trump won 80 million to 68 million. And this was an attack by the CCP, by China, through the dominion machines. ESNS, Heart, SmartMatic, they're all the same.”

Byrne spoke at both of Clark’s events, as well as at the We the People Patriots Day rally in Stuart, Florida, in May. He also reportedly sent a video to the We the People Revival Revolution conference in Glendale, Arizona, held in May. At the event in Tulsa, Byrne argued, “How do we determine what the governed...consent to? We hold elections that are free, fair, and transparent.... Does anyone here think that on November 3rd, somebody welched on that deal that they made with us? Yeah, it was not accidental.”

Other speakers at these events have consistently pushed the election fraud narrative. For instance, Jovan Pulitzer (also known as J. Jovan Philyaw), a Trump supporter and an inventor, has spoken at the We the People event in Las Vegas in April and was scheduled to speak at the Revival Revolution in Glendale, Arizona. At the event in Las Vegas, Pulitzer claimed that the Biden administration released a report “that looked at all the elections and they did all these fancy numbers and they basically declared that the world knows that this was the most fraudulent presidential election in history.”

Pulitzer claims to have invented a technology that detects “kinematic artifacts” – irregular folds, fibers or marks—on ballots that can prove whether they are legitimate. This notion has led Trump supporters to call for “kinematic” or “Pulitzer” audits and to ask that Pulitzer be one of the people in charge of audits in different locations. The audit of ballots in Maricopa County, carried out at the
behest of Republicans in the Arizona State Senate, has reportedly used technology invented by Pulitzer. His involvement in audits is part of the ongoing efforts of Trump advocates to change the outcome of the 2020 presidential election.

In addition to these speakers there are numerous others—from pastors to politicians—who are motivated by election fraud conspiracies and are organizing and participating in these events, particularly those hosted by Clay Clark. Others include:

- **Keith Rose**: A plastic surgeon who discourages lockdowns and mask mandates, claiming that lockdowns are authoritarian. He spoke at Clark's event in Tulsa, where he said there was no constitutional, medical or scientific justification for the lockdowns and encouraged the audience to speak out against lockdowns and the Biden administration.

- **Phil Waldron**: A former Army colonel who claims to be a security expert and acted as a witness on hearings about election fraud. Speaking at the Tulsa event, he said, “The elections were one critical node, and the critical node gave the enemy the access to all of our elements of national power.” He went on to say that people promoting the election fraud theory were being censored.

- **Todd Coconato**: A former pastor at Leaves of Healing Tabernacle Church in California and currently the president of the Religious Liberties Coalition. He spoke at Clark's event in Tampa where he asked the audience, “How many know that Donald Trump won the election? ...Of course he did! That's like 'the sky is polka-dot' thing... So, I'm not gonna stop speaking truth just because they want to silence me and censor me.”

**POLITICIANS, CANDIDATES, EX-CANDIDATES, TRUMP ASSOCIATES ARE SPEAKERS**

Since election fraud has become a major issue for Trump supporters, as well as the Republican Party, many of the gatherings are attracting lawmakers, current
candidates as well as candidates who lost elections in 2020. For instance, **Paul Gosar**, a far-right Congressman from Arizona who spoke at a white nationalist event, America First Political Action Conference (AFPAC) in February 2021, was a speaker at the Revival Revolution in Glendale, Arizona, in May 2021, alongside QAnon and anti-vaccine speakers. Gosar is not the only elected representative to attend QAnon-oriented events.

The Patriot Voice: For God and Country conference in Dallas in May, organized by QAnon influencer John Sabal, aka “QAnon John,” included as speakers Texas Congressman **Louie Gohmert**, and **Allen West**, who was head of the Texas Republican Party at that time but resigned soon afterwards. At the Dallas event, Gohmert downplayed the Capitol insurrection, saying “some of us think Pearl Harbor was the worst attack on democracy, some of us think 9/11 was the worst attack.” He also claimed that “it wasn’t just right-wing extremists” who attacked the Capitol, even though federal officials have found no evidence that left-wing activists played a role in the attack. At the same event, West brought Michael Flynn back onstage, who encouraged West to run against Texas Governor Greg Abbott. West announced his run for governor on the Fourth of July.

Many other current and former candidates have been speakers at these conferences. These include:

- **Kandiss Taylor**: A candidate in the Georgia Governor’s race in 2022, Taylor spoke at Clay Clark’s Health and Freedom event in Tampa, Florida, in June, and was also scheduled to speak at the Patriots United Rally in Dalton, Georgia in May. She has promoted election fraud conspiracy theories. At a campaign event in Georgia, she told supporters “she was running to clean up election fraud and running for values she said are not held by current incumbents in Atlanta,” according to local news reports. At the Tampa conference, Taylor explained to the crowd that she was inspired to run for governor of Georgia by former President Donald Trump, and that she was “tired of not being represented” and that she didn’t “want to live in China.”
- **Jackson Lahmeyer**: A pastor at the Sheridan Church in Tulsa who is running for U.S. Senate in Oklahoma in 2022. He was featured at Clark’s event in Tampa. Clark also promoted the OKC Freedom rally in Norman, Oklahoma in June, which was a showcase for Lahmeyer’s candidacy and featured Michael Flynn, who endorsed Lahmeyer. In Tulsa, Lahmeyer referred to an evil Deep State and a very corrupt government. He said, “Right now, there’s a battle between the wicked and the righteous. There’s a battle between globalism and Americanism for the heart and the soul of the United States of America. We are at war within this country right now but it’s a different type of war. It is an information war, it is a cultural war, it is a spiritual war, but most of all, it’s a war between good and evil.”

- **Anthony Sabatini**: He is a QAnon promoter who is currently a member of the Florida House of Representatives and is also running for U.S. Congress in 2022. He spoke at the We the People Patriots Day event in Stuart, Florida, in May. He focused on the measures to stop COVID, saying, “Don’t ever forget who it was that sat back and did nothing while they locked you in your home, destroyed small businesses, arrested Christian pastors, mask mandates, and all the rest of it…”

- **Gene Ho**: A former Trump photographer and QAnon supporter who is running for mayor of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. He was featured at Clark’s Health and Freedom events in Tulsa in April and in Tampa. Ho’s speeches focused on how great a president he thinks Donald Trump was and the backlash and bankruptcy he faced after he came out in support of Trump in 2016. At a QAnon event in Washington, DC, in September 2019, Ho accused the “elites” of drinking children’s blood, a frequently cited element of QAnon lore.

- **George Papadopoulos**: He was the first Trump aide to be arrested in October 2017 during the Mueller investigation (for lying to the FBI about his contacts regarding Russia during the 2016 election) and ran unsuccessfully for office in 2020 in California. He spoke at the We the People event in Las Vegas, in
April, and at three events in May: The Faith and Freedom conference in Allen, Texas, the Patriot Voice: For God and Country event in Dallas, and the Revival Revolution event in Glendale, Arizona. At the event in Las Vegas, Papadopoulos focused on the “Deep State,” asserting, “President Trump did nothing wrong. His team did nothing wrong. In fact, it was exactly because Donald Trump was going to awaken patriots like you that they wanted to suppress his movements. They wanted to suppress you. This wasn’t about him. This wasn’t about me. It was about you.”

- **Mark McCloskey**: Running for U.S. Senate in Missouri in 2022. He and his wife are infamous for pulling guns on Black Lives Matter protesters outside their home. He has pushed election fraud theories and spoke at the OKC Freedom rally in June.

- **Leon Benjamin**: A pastor who ran for Congress in Virginia in 2020 and is the head of the GOP in Richmond, Virginia. He has said he will run for Congress again in 2022. He was featured at Clay Clark’s events in Tulsa and Tampa as well as at the We the People Patriot’s Day Rally in Stuart, Florida, and the OKC Freedom rally in Norman, Oklahoma. In Tulsa, he exclaimed, “It’s time to fight. It’s time to say no to the tyranny.” He promotes Christian dominionism, a belief that Christians must control various aspects of society, such as the government and media, in order to implement God's will. At a recent Clay Clark event in Anaheim, he said, “The church was meant to rule and reign in the Earth.” Benjamin also asserted at the event that "the kingdom is a government..." He then said that "there are some new apostles" and named Clay Clark and Simone Gold as examples. He then added, "This old ecclesiastical order would never ordain [Michael] Flynn as an apostle. But we are...We need to ordain Mike Lindell."

- **Alan Keyes**: A long-time Republican who ran for president in 1996, 2000 and 2008. He has promoted something called the “Miracle Mineral Solution” (“MMS”), a dangerous chlorine dioxide cocktail that its supporters claim can cure any illness. He was a speaker at Clark’s event in Tampa.
Events held across the country have also attracted Trump associates. In addition to people like Michael Flynn and Mike Lindell, Bill Mitchell, a QAnon promoter, who became well known on Twitter for his pro-Trump comments, appeared at the Patriots Day event in Stuart, Florida, in May. At the event, Mitchell promoted election fraud and spoke about the need to run pro-Trump candidates in 2022 and 2024. He said, “In a national election, they could dump millions of fake ballots in three blue cities that were bought off by the Democrats and flip those states and win the election for Joe Biden. Do you realize that only 43,000 ballots in three blue cities won this election?”

Roger Stone, the conspiracy-driven former political operative whose sentence to jail time for giving false statements in the Mueller investigation was commuted by Trump in July 2020, spoke in Stuart, as well, and at Clark’s event in Tampa. Stone has promoted election fraud conspiracies, saying at one point that North Korea had delivered ballots via ports in the state of Maine.

QANON PROMOTERS

QAnon conspiracies have played a major role in the events that have taken place in the last few months, since many of the speakers are QAnon influencers, supporters and promoters. Some of the well-known speakers at these events, including Michael Flynn, Sidney Powell and Lin Wood, came to the QAnon universe a little late. Yet, major narratives promoted by QAnon believers—that there is a Deep State made up of a global cabal of pedophiles and elitists and that Donald Trump is destined to lead America and defeat this global cabal—fits into the narrative that Trump and his supporters are pushing, that the 2020 election was “rigged” and that he will return to office. Flynn actually took the “QAnon oath,” “Where we go one, we go all,” on video and Wood and Powell have repeated various QAnon ideas and phrases at conferences. Flynn is by far the most prolific speaker at these types of gatherings.
Flynn attended Clay Clark’s Health and Freedom gatherings in Tulsa and Tampa, in April and June, respectively; the QAnon-oriented Patriot Voice: For God and Country conference in Dallas in May, and a number of events in June including the Rock the Red gathering in South Carolina; the Patriots Arise event in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania and the OKC Freedom Rally in Norman, Oklahoma. Flynn did not attend the We the People Patriots Day in Stuart, Florida, in May, but did send a video message.

At the event in Dallas, a member of the audience asked Flynn, "I want to know why what happened in Minamar (sic) can't happen here?" There had been a coup in Myanmar in February 2021, where the military declared the country's November 2020 election illegal and removed the president from office. Many QAnon advocates supported the Myanmar coup, likening the situation there to the November 2020 election in the U.S. Flynn responded. "No reason, I mean, it should happen here. No reason. That's right." Despite a publicly available video of this exchange, Flynn has claimed he never advocated for a coup in America.

Flynn often crossed paths with Wood, who attended Clay Clark's event in Tulsa; the Patriot Voice event in Dallas; the Rock the Red gathering in South Carolina as well as the Patriots Unite rally in Dalton, Georgia in early May. After the January 6 insurrection, Wood labeled Mike Pence a traitor and said in social media posts that he should be executed via a firing squad. Wood has continued to insist that Trump won the election and has made Q gestures at events he attended, to the apparent delight of the audience.

Powell attended the Patriot Voice event in Dallas and sent a video to be played at Clark's event in Tulsa. She became known as the “Kraken” lawyer for her defense of Trump after the election. A kraken is a Scandanavian sea monster that devours its enemies. Her ideas became so wild that Trump’s team disavowed her after she made accusations that Republicans “had been involved in a payoff scheme to manipulate voting machines.”
In addition to these figures, there are numerous speakers at the conferences who have promoted QAnon conspiracies, while also focusing a lot of attention on the COVID vaccine.

- **John Sabal**: aka “QAnon John,” a QAnon influencer who runs the Patriot Voice website, organized The Patriot Voice: For God and Country conference, held in Dallas in May. The logo for the event featured acronym **WWG1WGA** (Where we go 1, we go all), a common term/acronym in QAnon circles. In a July 18 post on Telegram, Sabal wrote that “the best route to restoring our Republic and declaring Trump the rightful victor is to decertify the electors, State by state.”

- **Jordan Sather**: He promotes conspiracy theories about QAnon, the coronavirus and election fraud on social media. He spoke at the Patriot Voice event. In a January 2021 post on Telegram, Sather wrote, “I'd say Q is nowhere near finished. In fact, it seems like we haven't even hit the crescendo yet.”

- **Zak Paine**: Runs the website, RedPill78, which promotes conspiracy theories, particularly about the election. He was featured at the Patriot Voice event where he said, “President Trump and this movement, this truth and freedom movement, the Q movement, basically saved my life.”

- **Ann Vandersteel**: Hosts a podcast, “Steel Truth Show” and is ex-president of the far-right media outlet, Your Voice America. She spoke at Clark's events in Tulsa and Tampa and was scheduled to speak at the We the People event in Las Vegas in April and the Revival Revolution event in Glendale, Arizona in May. At the event in Tampa, Vandersteel alluded not only to the pandemic being a hoax but also to the “**Great Replacement**” theory. She asserted, “The banking crisis, the human trafficking crisis, the pandemics that we've seen over time, especially this shamdemic we're in right now, the endless wars, the migration that's taken place all over Europe that has just upended all those beautiful countries that are losing their nationality.”

- **Matt Couch**: A conservative commentator and conspiracy theorist who organized the Faith and Freedom conference in Allen, Texas, in May. The
conference speaker list included a collection of conspiracy theorists who have promoted QAnon. Couch has made QAnon related posts on social media such as references to Pedogate and the Deep State, but has denied being a follower. He also spoke at a We the People conference in Las Vegas in April.

- **Allen and Francine Fosdick**: Run a pro-QAnon religious podcast “Up Front in the Prophetic” and hosted a QAnon-oriented event, Patriots Arise: Awakening the Dead!, in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, in June. In a July 16 Telegram post for their show, they focused on the COVID-19 vaccine, writing, “They are trying to stop the message of the truth about the experimental jab, saying it’s misinformation! They are panicking! Keep spreading the "truth guys!!!"
Another group that is well represented at these conferences are anti-vaccine conspiracy theorists, as well as those who actively opposed measures to control the coronavirus pandemic. These anti-vaxxers promote the idea that the government wants to take away individual freedoms and control people's lives via COVID-19 vaccination programs. Many of these speakers have medical backgrounds, which lends them the appearance of legitimacy, despite the fact that they are promoting disinformation about scientific facts.

In particular, the Health and Freedom conferences hosted by Clay Clark feature some of the most well-known anti-vax crusaders in the country. These include:

- **Andy Wakefield**: A former British medical doctor who was one of the authors of the discredited 1998 study in The Lancet, a British medical journal which linked vaccines to autism and gut problems. He was a featured speaker at Clark's Health and Freedom events in Tulsa and in Tampa in June, along with Lori Gregory, with whom Wakefield runs 7th Chaka Films. The company produced the 1986 anti-vax film, “The Act,” about the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act.

- **Dr. Christiane Northrup**: A well-known OB/GYN who has written a number of best-selling books about women empowering their own health. She promotes alternative medical practices including many unproven New Age remedies. She spoke at Clark's events in Tulsa and Tampa. In Tulsa, she claimed that vaccine developers “are trying to be God” and that the COVID vaccine isn't a vaccine because it doesn't disrupt transmission or stimulate immunity, but instead it triggers people to make a **toxin**.

- **Judy Mikovits**: A virologist best known for promoting COVID-19 conspiracy theories in the film *Plandemic*. She spoke in Tampa and was scheduled to
Many other medically trained anti-vax personalities spoke at events, including:

- **Shannon Kroner**: A psychologist who works in special education and is a coalition member of Physicians for Informed Consent (which opposes mandatory vaccinations) and the executive director of Freedom of Religion – United Solutions (which fights for religious exemptions for vaccines). She was a speaker at Clark’s event in Tulsa. At the event, she said, “We have a COVID vaccine right now and it is dangerous. But let me tell you something, every single vaccine is dangerous.”

- **Erin Olszewski**: An Army Special Operations Combat Veteran and a registered nurse who apparently came to New York City at the height of the epidemic to work at a hospital there and wrote a book claiming that she was a whistleblower exposing fraud at the hospital. She spoke at Clark’s event in Tulsa and was scheduled to speak at the Revival Revolution in Glendale, Arizona, in May. In Tulsa, she asserted, “The COVID-19 plandemic is one of the biggest threats to America, our values, and our Constitution that many of us have never faced in our lifetimes. And it’s not because the virus is so deadly, it’s because of the corrupt politicians and bureaucrats that have lied to you, and they have been lying to you since the beginning.”

- **Dr. Sherri Tenpenny**: An Ohio physician and author who is widely known for publicizing the false claim that the COVID-19 vaccines magnetize those who receive them. She has posted antisemitic anti-vax claims on social media saying that all the CEOs of vaccine manufactures are Jewish and that the Rothschilds, a well-known Jewish banking family, were behind “COVID 19 biometric tests.” Tenpenny claims that shedding-transmission with COVID vaccine is real, which is one of the false conspiracies circulated about the
Anti-lockdown activists, who protested against local, state and federals measures to contain the coronavirus, including mask mandates and closures of schools, churches and other institutions, often alongside extremists, have also spoken at these events:

- **Jim Meehan**: An ophthalmologist in Tulsa who is anti-vaccine and a QAnon supporter and claims to have treated COVID successfully with unproven treatments. He also spoke at Clark's events in Tulsa and Tampa. At the Tulsa event, Meehan called mask mandates a failed experiment. He went on to make Holocaust comparisons, saying, “The defense here is ‘we’re just following orders.’ These superintendents of schools that are just following orders. You know, there was another population of terrorists, if you will, that once did this to the Jewish people.”

- **Lee Merritt**: An orthopedic surgeon, member of America's Frontline Doctors and the former president of the American Association of Physicians and Surgeons which spreads false medical information. She spoke at the OKC Freedom Rally in Norman, Oklahoma.

Anti-lockdown activists, who protested against local, state and federals measures to contain the coronavirus, including mask mandates and closures of schools, churches and other institutions, often alongside extremists, have also spoken at these events:

- **Cordie Williams**: A former Marine, also known as “The Megaphone Marine,” a practicing chiropractor in Carlsbad, California, and one of the leaders of the anti-lockdown protests in that state. He is currently running for the U.S. Senate in California. He spoke at five events: the Faith and Freedom conference in Allen, Texas, in May; the Revival Revolution conference in Glendale, Arizona, that same month; at Clay Clark's events in Tulsa and Tampa, and at the OKC Freedom rally in Norman, Oklahoma.

- **Thomas Renz**: One of the attorneys working with Ohio Stands Up, an organization which opposes COVID measures and lockdowns spoke at Clark's events in Tulsa and Tampa. At the event in Tampa, he argued “Let me tell you about these 95 percent effective vaccines. That number's garbage. The absolute risk reduction of these vaccines is approximately one percent...”
Many of the speakers at the events are Christian pastors or head Christian organizations. Along with their religious beliefs, many of them preach conspiratorial beliefs about the common themes of election fraud, vaccines and governmental overreach. They include Tennessee pastor Greg Locke and Virginia pastor Leon Benjamin, both mentioned previously. Another pastor, David Scarlett, the head of His Glory Ministry in Valley City, Ohio, runs His Glory TV and hosts “His Glory Show,” which has featured QAnon influencers Michael Flynn and Lin Wood. He was a speaker at Clark’s events in Tulsa and Tampa and the Faith and Freedom conference in Allen, Texas.

In June, the Patriots Arise: Awakening the Dead conference was held in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania and hosted by Allen and Francine Fosdick. It featured a number of Christian authors and conspiracy theorists, some of whom promote bigoted views of Jews and Muslims. They include:

- Sheila Holm: A Christian author and conspiracy theorist whose book series, For the Sake of America, promotes conspiratorial ideas about the founding of the United States, the Deep State, the New World Order and efforts to remove Americans’ rights. At the event, Holm was asked about her general thoughts about the conference and talked about how “The shrine over South Carolina is ‘I-S-L-A-M.’ it stands for the New World Order, Holy Roman Empire is located there. It was put together by all the top 33rd Degree Masons globally and that’s where you get the Khazarian Mafia...,” She is making both anti-Muslim and anti-Jewish claims. Her reference to the “Khazarian Mafia” refers to an antisemitic conspiracy theory about the Khazars (who are storied to have converted to Judaism in the eighth century) which falsely claims that they and their descendants have a secret agenda to undermine societies and enrich themselves at the expense of their non-Jewish neighbors.
Bishop Larry Gaiters: A far-right conservative host of the show “Global Spiritual Revolution,” who has claimed on the Fosdicks’ podcast that the deaths of President Biden’s first wife and daughter in 1972 and son in 2015 were a “satanic sacrifice” to help his political career. In addition, Gaiters has tweeted many antisemitic conspiracies, including posts accusing the Rothschilds of controlling nations, creating the KKK and paying off past president Ulysses S. Grant and President Joe Biden.

Scott McKay: aka “Patriot Streetfighter,” a QAnon promoter who is also a former Los Angeles GOP committee member and current host of the “The Tipping Point” Radio show. He also spoke at Clay Clark’s event in Tulsa. He has promoted conspiracy theories like the “Khazarian Plan,” an antisemitic conspiracy theory referenced above.

Bobby Lawrence: A sovereign citizen and founder of “Protect Your Vote USA” and “We the People USA,” was invited to speak at the event in Gettysburg. It is not clear if he actually spoke at the event.

CONCLUSION

These events, which promote QAnon, election fraud, anti-vaccine theories and other conspiracies, are bringing together speakers who are able to reach wider and wider audiences. Their vision of a corrupt or evil society in a changing America encourages people to think about taking action to “save” the country. Many pundits thought that QAnon would fade when Donald Trump lost the election in 2020. Instead, we are seeing that this extreme ideology is not disappearing but is fusing with other conspiracies that are creating doubt, fear and anger about the government and the country.

In addition, the issues promoted at these events—particularly election fraud but also COVID misinformation and QAnon narratives about the Deep State and its “battle” against Trump—have made it into mainstream politics. At least two of the
speakers at these conferences—Paul Gosar and Louie Gohmert—are currently members of Congress.

The momentum for conspiracy-oriented events appears to be growing, with many more similar events planned around the country. In addition, there are many believers in QAnon and other conspiracies running for office and their theories are being mainstreamed by conservatives, including some elected officials and right-wing media.