

QAnon Conspiracies and Narrative Community Building on Social Media

Asher Albanese
Communication, Film & Theater

Background

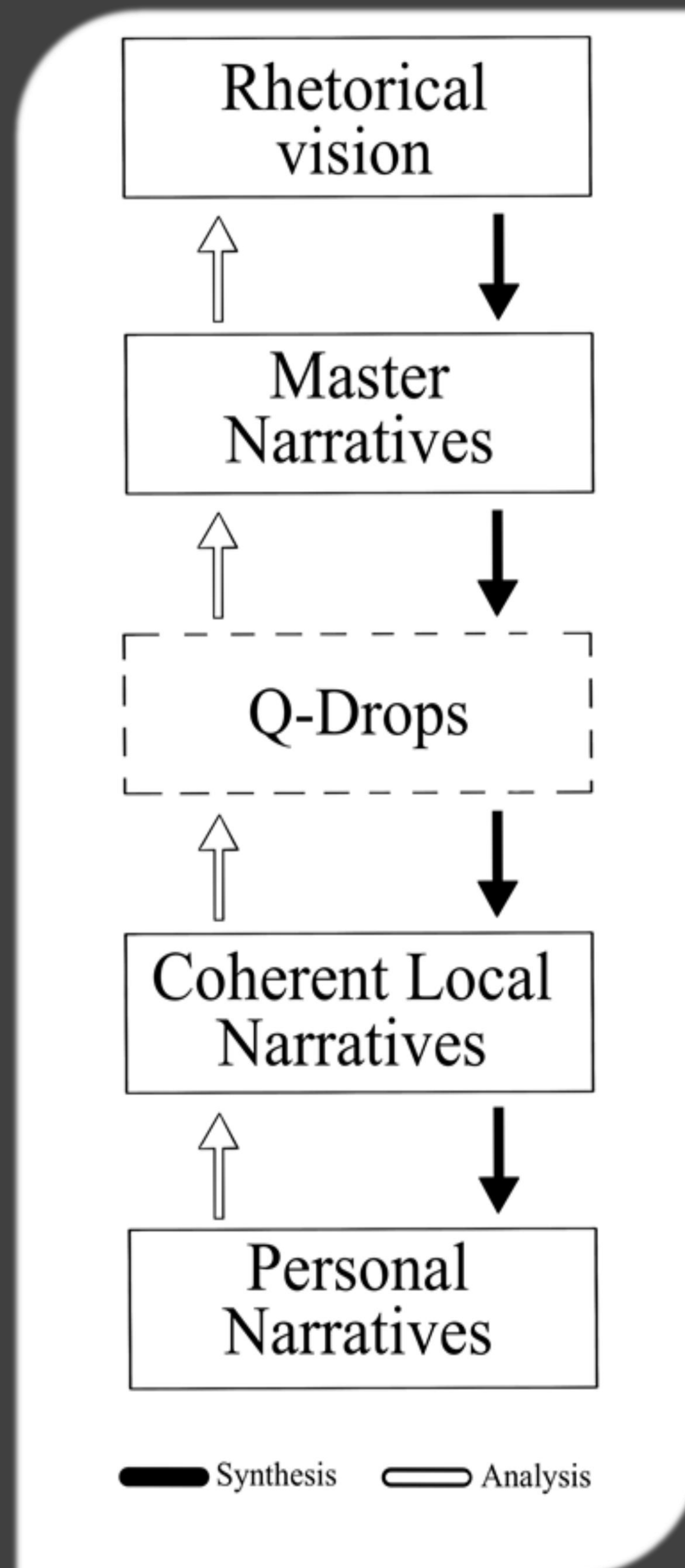
Starting in the 2000's, the growing alt-right movement in the United States was defined by populist rhetoric, disinformation, and accusations that mainstream media has a 'liberal bias,'

The QAnon conspiracy groups on the social media platform 4Chan, spread the narrative that a cabal of Satan-worshipping child sex traffickers control liberal elites and are ritualistically killing children and extracting their blood.

Narrative Paradigm Theory

Communication theorist Steven Corman defines three narrative levels:

- *Master narratives* are universal, culturally embedded narratives everyone knows.
- *Local narratives* reference master narratives to convince subcultural group members to take specific action.
- *Personal narratives* are how individuals tie their experiences and stories to local and master narratives
- Tying disparate master narratives of a culture together creates a *rhetorical vision*.



If you'd like to read the whole paper, please scan here:



Analysis

The QAnon conspiracy utilizes *master narratives* of anti-Semitic "blood libel" and references from the movie *The Matrix*, among other recognizable cultural *master narratives* to prompt Q-Drops.

The drops are decoded to inform *local narratives* by various conspiracy groups.

Despite the diversity of opinions among QAnon followers, *local* and *personal* narratives draw from well-known and established historical and cultural *master narratives* to develop a *rhetorical vision* that unites members from all conspiracy groups.

The uniting rhetorical vision for alt-right groups centers on the belief that children are being sexually trafficked by powerful liberal political and corporate elites who must be stopped.