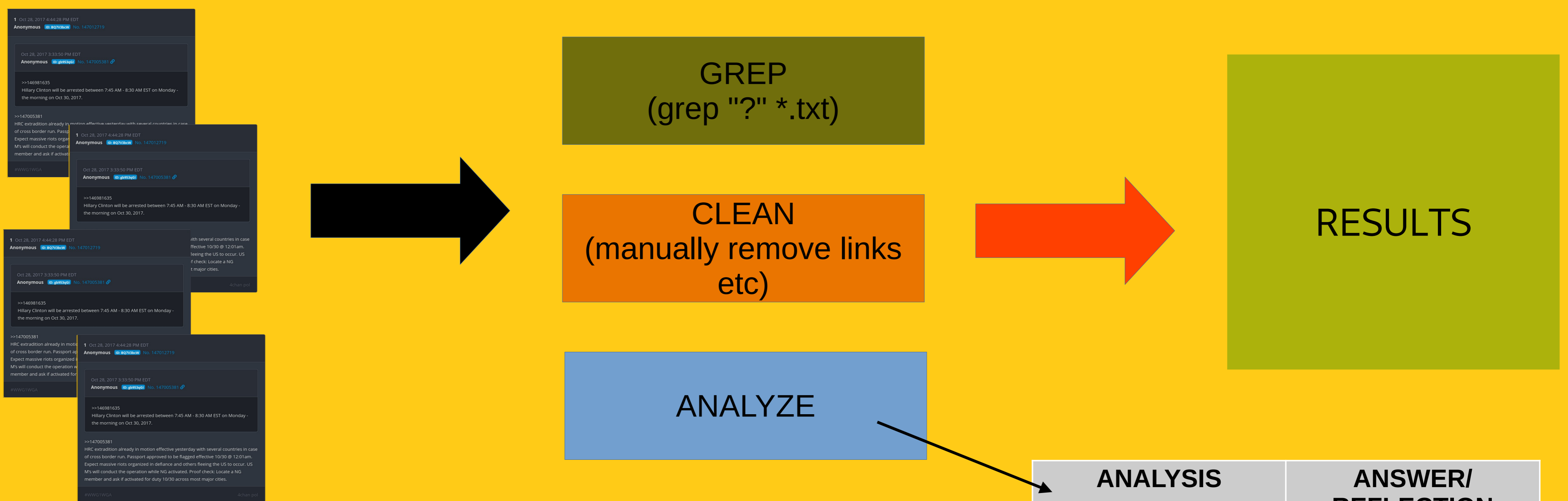


"What?" – The Q-drop corpus's usage of rhetorical questions to refer to independent information retrieval

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The communications from the source "Q" are regarded by the QAnon movement, a political and conspiracy theory group that rose to prominence in the early months of 2021 after storming the Capitol in Washington, D.C., as their primary information source. Between November 2017 and November 2022, "Q" posted brief remarks on many message boards, including 4Chan, 8Chan, and others. The messages made predictions about future political developments and offered commentary on current political happenings. The Q-drop corpus—the 4,966 posts made by the poster Q—is full of rhetorical questions with the purpose of inciting the reader to "Do your own research." Relating to earlier research, I have made a collection of all Q-drops in .txt format, which makes it possible to search through all posts using the program *Grep*. In this poster I will map and analyze the use of rhetorical questions in the corpus; Especially such rhetorical questions that invite the reader to do their own research using a search engine.



RESULTS:

Amazing how things make sense once you are asked a question. That's the entire point of this operation. (Q-drop 96)

Rhetorical questions are very common in the Q-drops. Often grouped together, several in one post. There are almost the double amount of rhetorical questions in relation to the amount of posts.

How can the use of rhetorical questions be explained?

- Rhetorical questions are a classic method in persuasion (Dennett 2014). It is the most prevalent type of question in short messages on the internet (Hills 2018).
- Rhetorical questions can easily relate to the internet trope of "Do your own Research" or DYOR (Ballantyne et al 2024). A trope used as a token of honor among many netizens.

ANALYSIS	ANSWER/ REFLECTION
Question marks	8526 (with links erased – 8192).
Are the questions directed toward the reader?	In most if not all cases.
Are the questions formulated with a complexity that spurs the reader to do further research?	In this context, yes.

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