

JOINT LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION FOR SHANNON FOLEY MARTINEZ

I have known Shannon for many years now, and she is a hard-working, principled, force of nature. Her knowledge of the far-right and polarizing forces in the current climate is not only accumulated through painful personal experience, but also through all the work she has put in since leaving the movement - a lot of which she doesn't talk about publicly, even though it would easily elevate her "credibility" in this space. She would be a great asset to any organization trying to understand and combat extremism and polarization today - two trends that, unfortunately, only seem to be on the rise.

Amarnath Amarasingam, PhD

Assistant Professor in the School of Religion/Department of Political Studies, Queen's University
Senior Research Fellow, International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation

It is well-understood among scholars that working with former members of extremist groups is a necessity in understanding their motives and curbing future violence. Shannon's public presence exhibits the kind of bravery and commitment that drives change, and any institution would benefit greatly from having her on the team. - Sara Aniano, Communication Graduate Student, Monmouth University

Shannon is a dedicated researcher whose intelligence, kindness, and humility shine through. She holds the highest standards of accountability and integrity for both herself and others. Her candid vulnerability and gift for educating a diverse range of audiences (educators, mental health practitioners, youth, students, academic researchers, etc.) on topics related to violent extremism in an accessible manner has made, and is continuing to make, an impact. In addition to her academic knowledge, she brings her personal past painful experiences into the space and connects in ways that emphasize the dire necessity of this work on a deeper human level. Shannon would bring crucial expertise, skill sets, and perspective to any organization and her work speaks for itself.

- Meili Criezis, Polarization and Extremism Research and Innovation Lab, PhD student, American University, criezis@american.edu

Shannon Foley Martinez is one of the preeminent figures in deradicalization from and understanding of the transnational far-right extremist movement. Beyond her own experiences and understandings as a former member of the movement, Shannon can effectively communicate to a diverse audience how far-right extremist movements function and how to effectively combat them. Shannon is extensively networked with other extremism researchers and has mentored countless extremism researchers as well as individuals exiting extremist movements. - W.F. Thomas, B.S. International Affairs and German, M.S. Global Media and Culture (Candidate), Georgia Institute of Technology, wftthomas@protonmail.com

Everyone I have ever talked to in this field -- one hundred percent, without exaggeration -- has the highest respect for Shannon Foley Martinez. She's loved and admired both because she's been a genuinely effective deradicalization worker for many years and because her ethical standards are top of the line. Any organization would be lucky to have her. -- Al Jones, founder, Q Origins Project / QOriginsProject@gmail.com

Shannon Foley Martinez is a gifted and insightful researcher with a keen eye for extremism and radicalism in the digital realm. Her skills would be an asset to any organization engaging in extremism research in a rapidly developing socio-political climate. Her humanity and expertise make her an effective deradicalization worker, and her character is above reproach. -- Taylor Combs, B.S. Neuroscience, B.A. Cognitive Science, UGA, independent extremism research and education consultant, taylor@writingtowin.com

At a time when extremism and conspiracy runs rampant, we need forward thinking individuals to help us contextualize and make policy recommendations. Shannon's work asks not only pertinent questions, but looks for novel solutions. For the reasons mentioned above and so many others, Shannon possesses the kind of qualities all leaders should aspire to have. --Christopher T. Conner, PhD. ctckdg@missouri.edu Visiting Assistant Professor of Sociology, University of Missouri Columbia

I invited Shannon Martinez to speak with my students as part of my graduate course on 'Social Movements and Political Violence' at Leiden University, Netherlands. Shannon's lecture was thoughtful, informative, and highly engaging. Shannon's guest lecture was very much appreciated by students, and received a score of 4.7 out of 5 when students were asked if the "lecture from the guest speaker in [the] course added to [their] learning experience" during the end of term student evaluations.

-- Yannick Veilleux-Lepage, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Terrorism and Political Violence, Leiden University

I first became aware of Shannon Martinez and her work in the months after the Tree of Life shooting happened a few blocks away from my home in Pittsburgh, PA. As I searched for answers and understanding about factors that may have inspired the shooting, I found Shannon's comments, insights, and honesty to be instructional. I've since followed her tweets and have been astonished by her openness and honesty. She's since been to Pittsburgh at least twice, talking to members of our community and working to promote the understanding and empathy that we all desperately need. She is a powerful and necessary voice, looking for a platform that will multiply her influence. - Harry Hochheiser, PhD, Department of Biomedical Informatics, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine

Shannon Foley Martinez is the foremost individual in North America today doing the ground-level work of helping individuals extricate themselves from hate movements. Her advocacy stems from astonishing insight into far-right extremism, as she bravely shares her painful past within such movements, and the challenges of transitioning away from hatred. Today she engages with students, educators and policy-makers from a place of empathy, intelligence and wholeheartedness. At a time when violent attacks on Jews and other minorities are rising, and political polarization brings the attendant threat of increasing antisemitism & hatred, it behooves Jewish and anti-racist organizations to rally behind Ms. Foley-Martinez in her crucial work.

- Rabbi Leonard Cohen, Kehilat Shalom -- Calgary, AB, Canada,
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