

Discussion of “Partisan Identity, Party-Specific Knowledge, and Second-Order Beliefs” by Burdea, et al.

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Motivation

- ▶ Members of different political parties often give polarized answers to factual questions
 - ▶ E.g., "Does the burning of fossil fuels contribute to global warming?"
- ▶ Different information? Motivated reasoning? Does partisanship affect how information is processed?
- ▶ Policy implications
- ▶ This paper looks at the relationship between partisanship and beliefs about **others**

Comments

- ▶ Analysis looks at Credibility gap = $(\text{InBelief} - \text{InTruth}) - (\text{OutBelief} - \text{OutTruth})$. Can also look at effects on beliefs directly
 - ▶ \uparrow Partisanship $\Rightarrow \uparrow \text{InBelief}, \downarrow \text{OutBelief}$?
 - ▶ \uparrow In-party sentiment $\Rightarrow \uparrow \text{InBelief}$?
 - ▶ \downarrow Out-party sentiment $\Rightarrow \downarrow \text{OutBelief}$?
- ▶ Can effects of different variables be disentangled?
 - ▶ Correlation between partisanship and in-group affect is 0.36
 - ▶ Why no regression analysis?
- ▶ What is the right test of the rational learning hypothesis?
 - ▶ “The more an individual knows about a party, the more accurate (less biased) their second-order beliefs will be”.
 - ▶ \uparrow In-party knowledge $\Rightarrow \downarrow |\text{InBelief} - \text{InTruth}|$
 - ▶ \uparrow Out-party knowledge $\Rightarrow \downarrow |\text{OutBelief} - \text{OutTruth}|$

Politically Motivated Reasoning (Kahan, et al)

- ▶ We align our beliefs, opinions, etc. with those of others that share our political identity
- ▶ If we don't, we get ostracised
- ▶ E.g., subjects judge credibility of scientists on global warming:

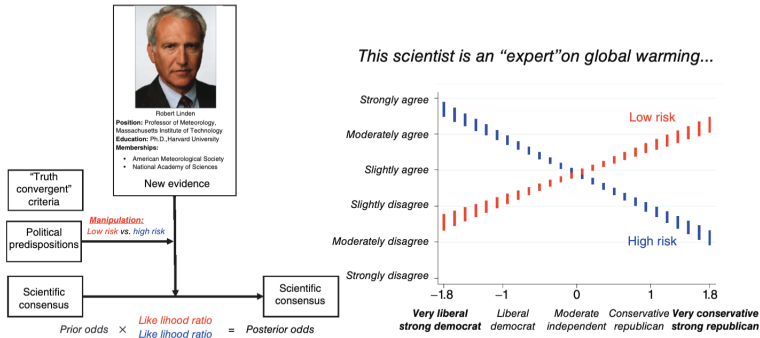


Figure 2 Politically motivated cognition of evidence of science consensus. Colored bars reflect 0.95 CIs. Source: Adapted from Kahan et al. (2011).