

Change My View

Do Moral Appeals Facilitate Compromise?

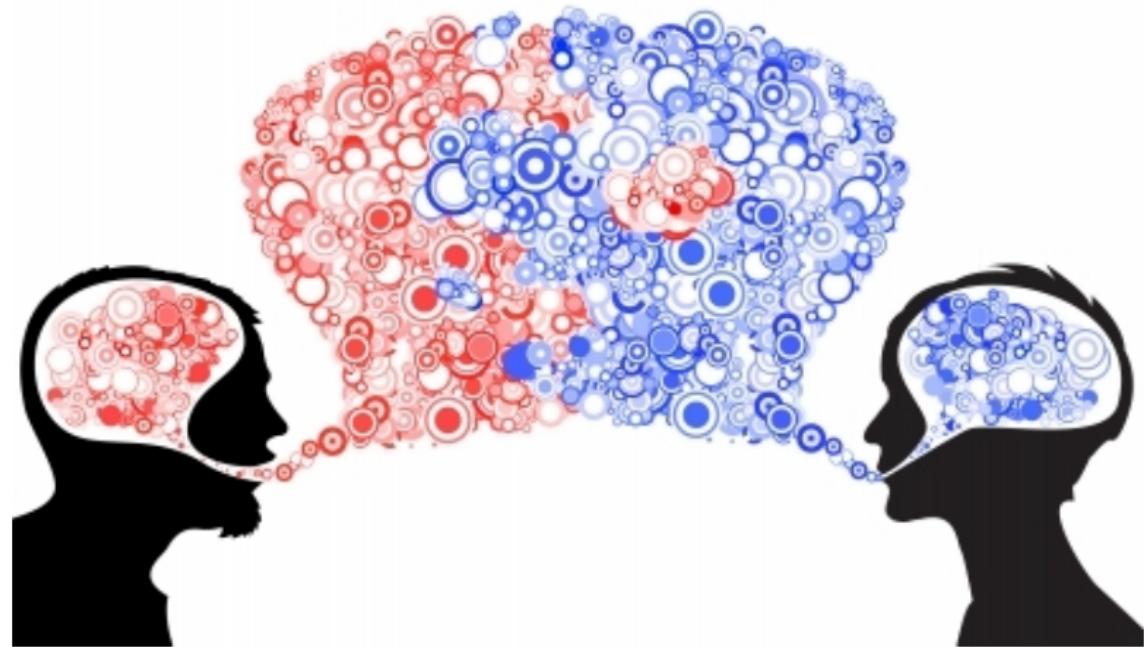
Patrick W. Kraft

MAPPS Meeting
Marquette University

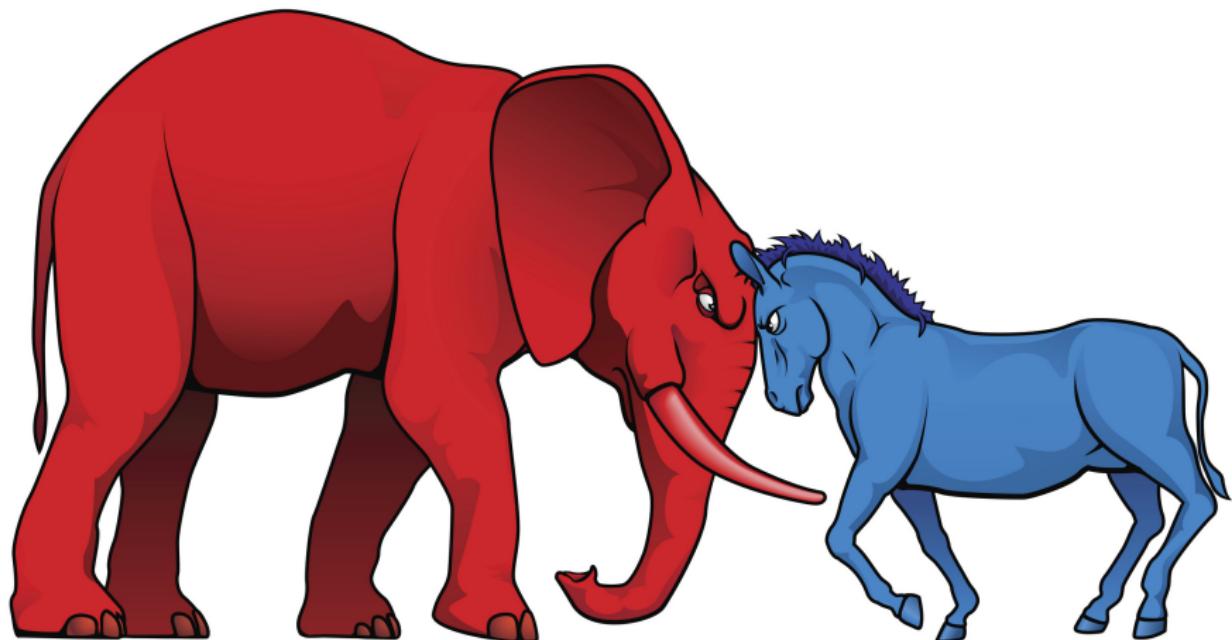
October 12th 2018



Introduction



How Can We Overcome Political Disagreements?



Political Disagreements and Moral Considerations

- ▶ **Moral Conviction literature:**

Liberals and conservatives are less likely to compromise if they hold moral convictions about politics.

(e.g., Skitka and Morgan, 2014; Ryan, 2017)

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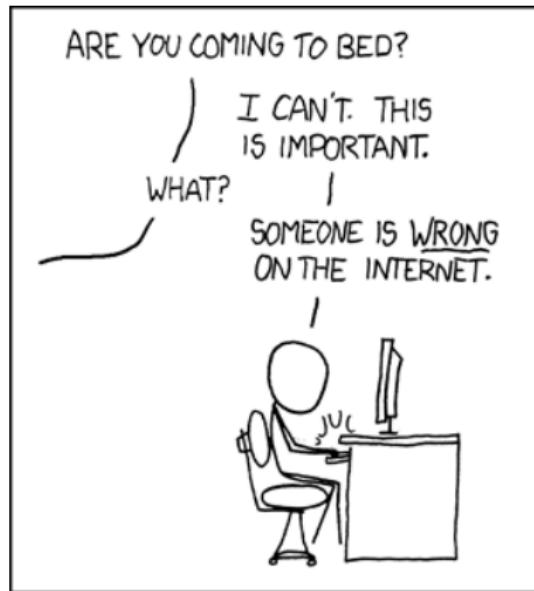
(e.g., Skitka and Morgan, 2014; Ryan, 2017)

- ▶ **Moral Foundations literature:**

Liberals and conservatives are more likely to compromise if they focus on the same moral foundations.

(e.g., Graham, Haidt, and Nosek, 2009; Haidt, 2012)

Analyzing Online Discussions



Analyzing Online Discussions

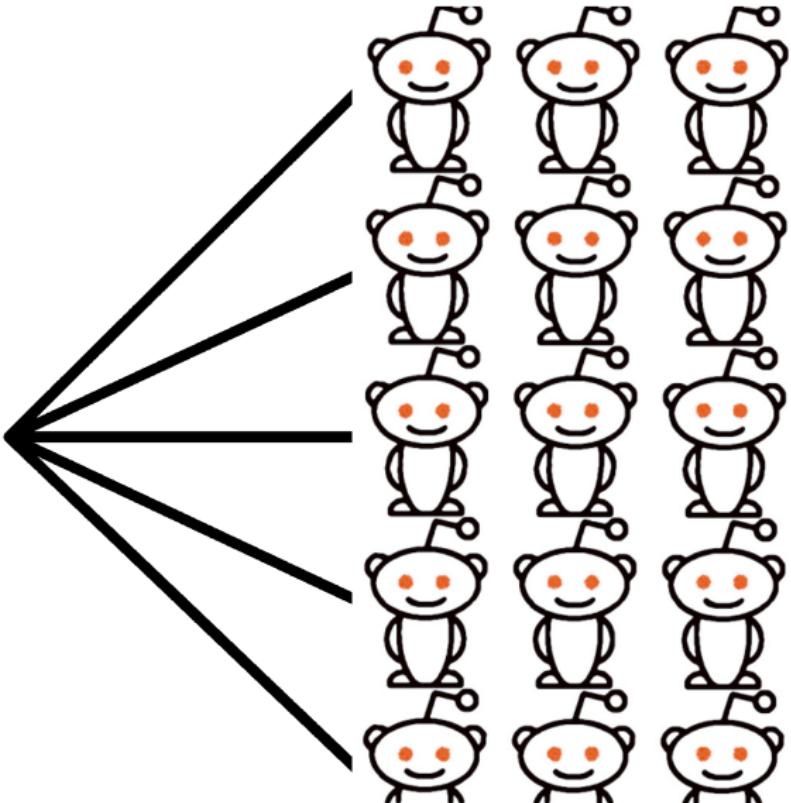


reddit

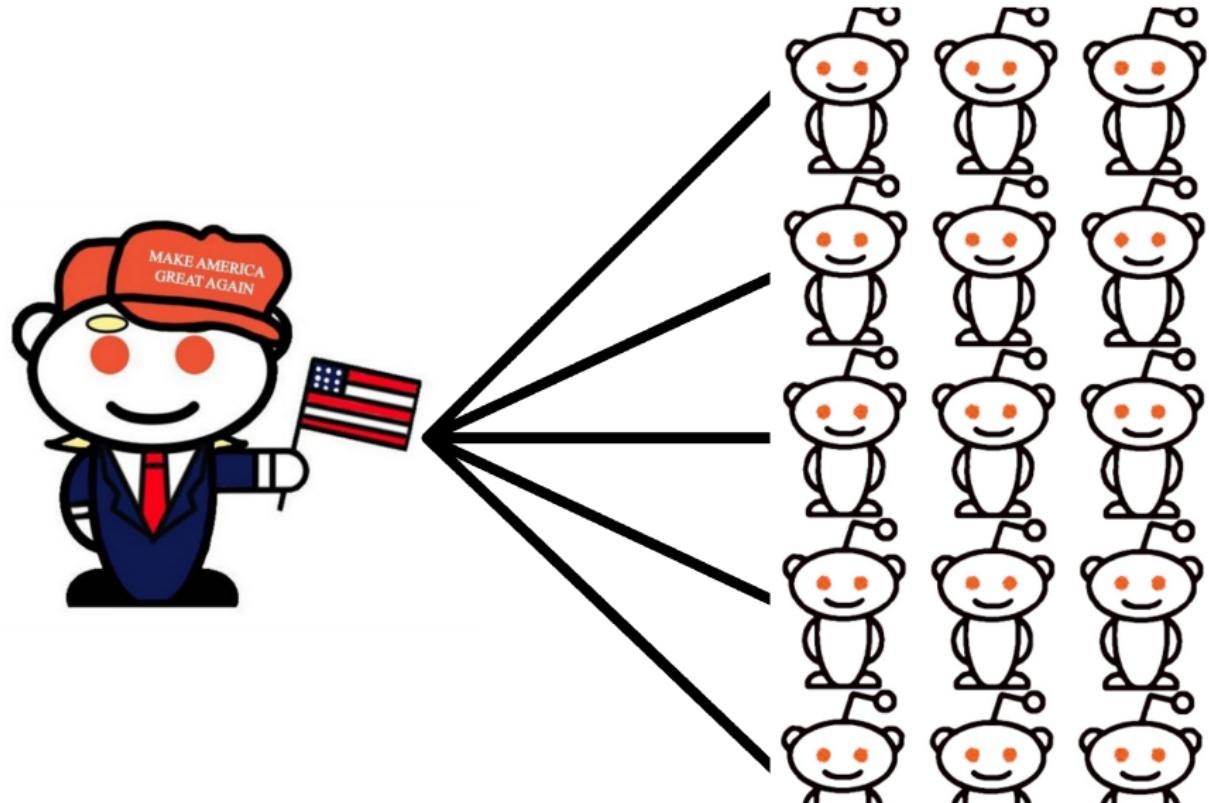
The Subreddit /r/ChangeMyView



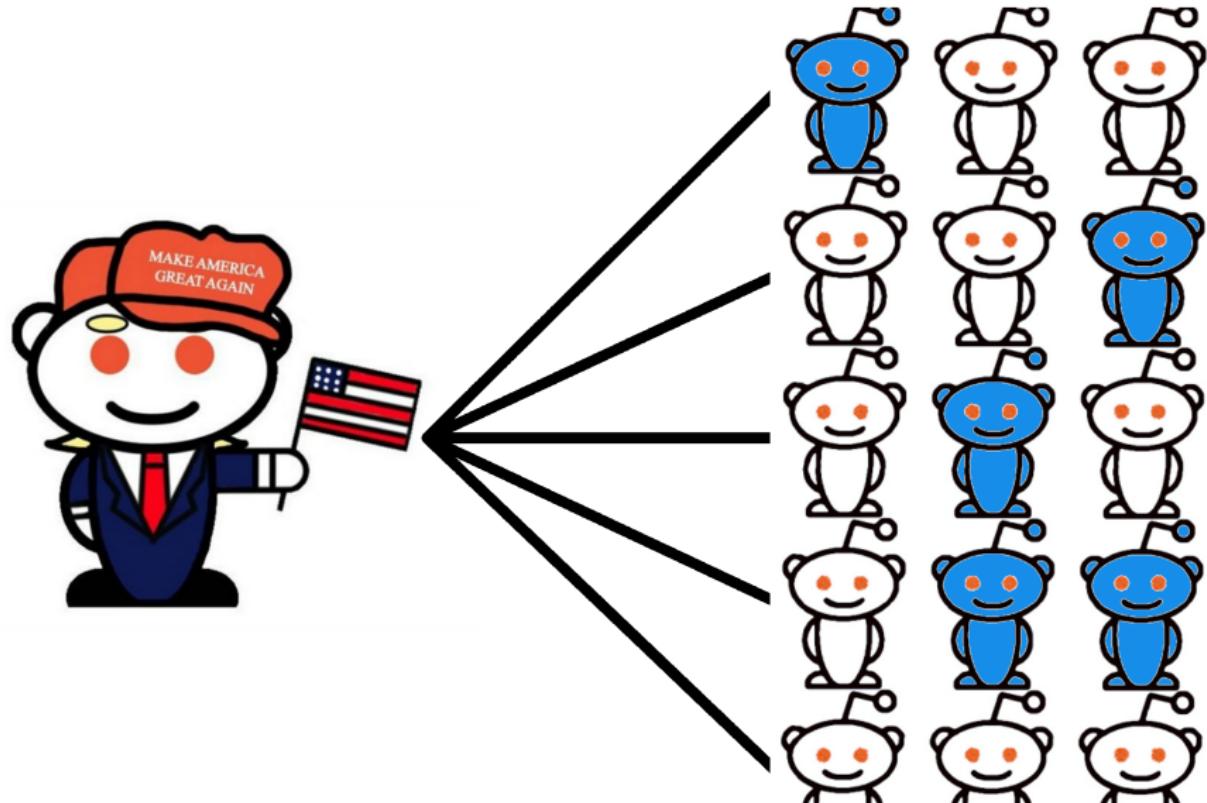
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Subscribe to CMV

612,245 subscribers 2,209 here now

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username password

remember me reset password login

CMV: A company going public inevitably will sacrifice its humanity and become inherently concerned about money only

15 hours ago by [Friendly_Popo](#) 163 comments share save hide report GET LINK FROM UP

CMV: Before bringing someone else into your life, you should have a happy independent life worth sharing. Adding a romantic partner to fix your unhappiness is not a solution.

3 hours ago by [Knead99](#) 11 comments share save hide report

CMV: An entire class performing extremely poor on a test is a clear indicator a professors teaching style needs to be evaluated

an hour ago by [The-Wanderer-Hans](#) 9 comments share save hide report

CMV: Religious freedom should not include the right to turn away gay children and teachers

23 hours ago by [Far_Gas](#) 133 comments share save hide report GET LINK FROM UP

CMV: People who wish to transition genders need to wait until they are at least 21

23 hours ago by [schengenandmaps](#) 133 comments share save hide report GET LINK FROM UP

CMV: Reddit is just as bad as most other social media networks

23 hours ago by [DarkWitney](#) 23 comments share save hide report GET LINK FROM UP

CMV: Very few people in the 1% are actually "self made."

13 hours ago by [theresavive](#) 64 comments share save hide report

CMV: People do not put human life as highly as they say they do

23 hours ago by [AveHdTheTremor](#) 27 comments share save hide report

CMV: People should have to disclose if they are trans before intercourse

9 hours ago by [josephine's_hands](#) 150 comments share save hide report

CMV: defensive gun uses are very rare.

13 minutes ago by [patriotmagazines](#) 1 comment share save hide report

CMV: China, not the US, will be the leading figure in the fight against global warming

12 minutes ago by [red999](#) 1 comment share save hide report

CMV: The US should abolish the death penalty. It is morally wrong, economically inefficient, ineffective as a deterrent for heinous crimes, and it implicates each citizen (as a participant in the democracy) as part of state-sponsored murder.

13 minutes ago by [empty_well](#) 1 comment share save hide report

CMV: Having an Abortion is more harmful than going through a pregnancy.

43 minutes ago by [YouCardinalMe](#) 5 comments share save hide report

weebly

START YOUR WEBSITE

What is /r/change my view?

A place to post an opinion you accept may be flawed, in an effort to understand other perspectives on the issue. Enter with no mindset for convolution, not debate.

More Detail

Message the Moderators

CMV Podcast Episodes

Submission Rules

Never over sell ideas for more info

A Explain the reasoning behind your view, not just what that view is (500+ characters required). ▾

B You must personally hold the view and demonstrate that you are open to it changing. ▾

C Submission titles must adequately sum up your view and include "CMV" at the beginning. ▾

D Posts cannot express a neutral stance, support harm against a specific person, be self-promotional, or discuss this subreddit (visit [r/ChangeForMe](#) instead). ▾

E Only post if you are willing to have a

Data Overview

Dataset of more than [10,000 discussions](#) on /r/ChangeMyView:

- ▶ Posted between January 2013 and May 2015

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- ▶ Compiled by Tan et al. (2016), who studied linguistic features (e.g., use of personal pronouns) and differences in style (formatting etc.) that predict persuasiveness

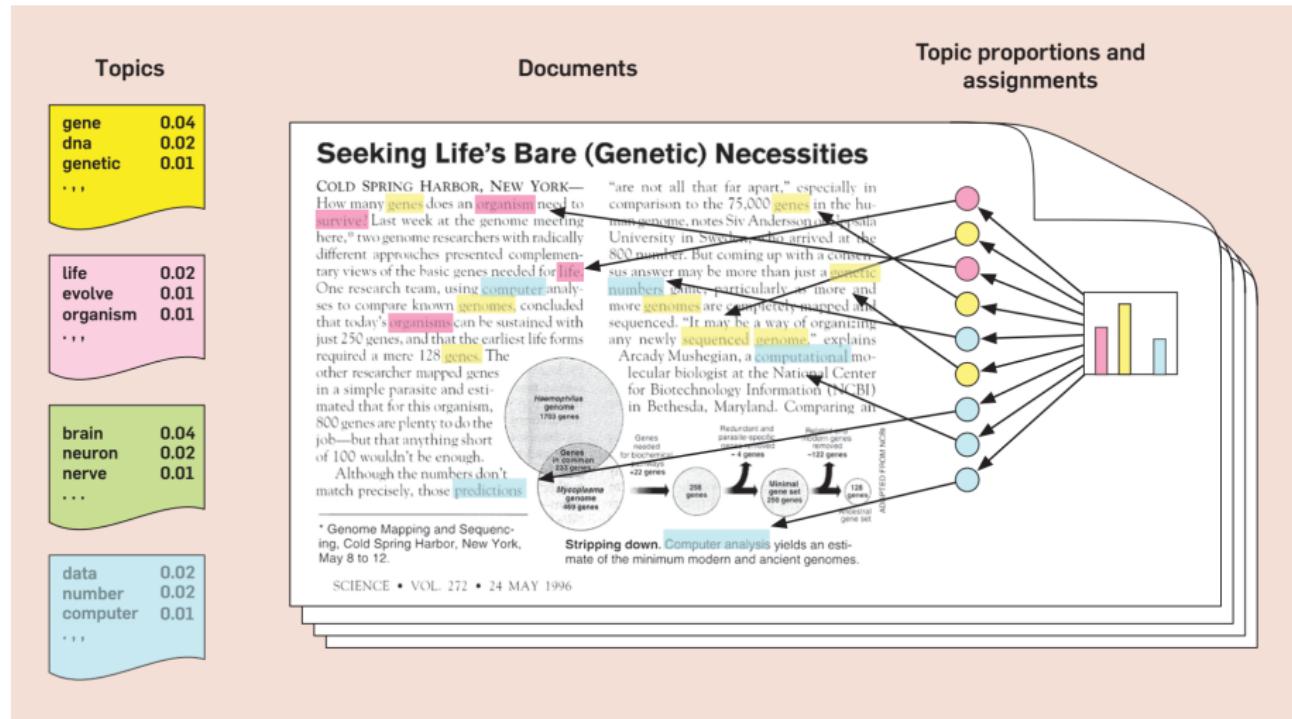
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- ▶ This analysis: Exploring the role of moral appeals in facilitating or inhibiting compromise

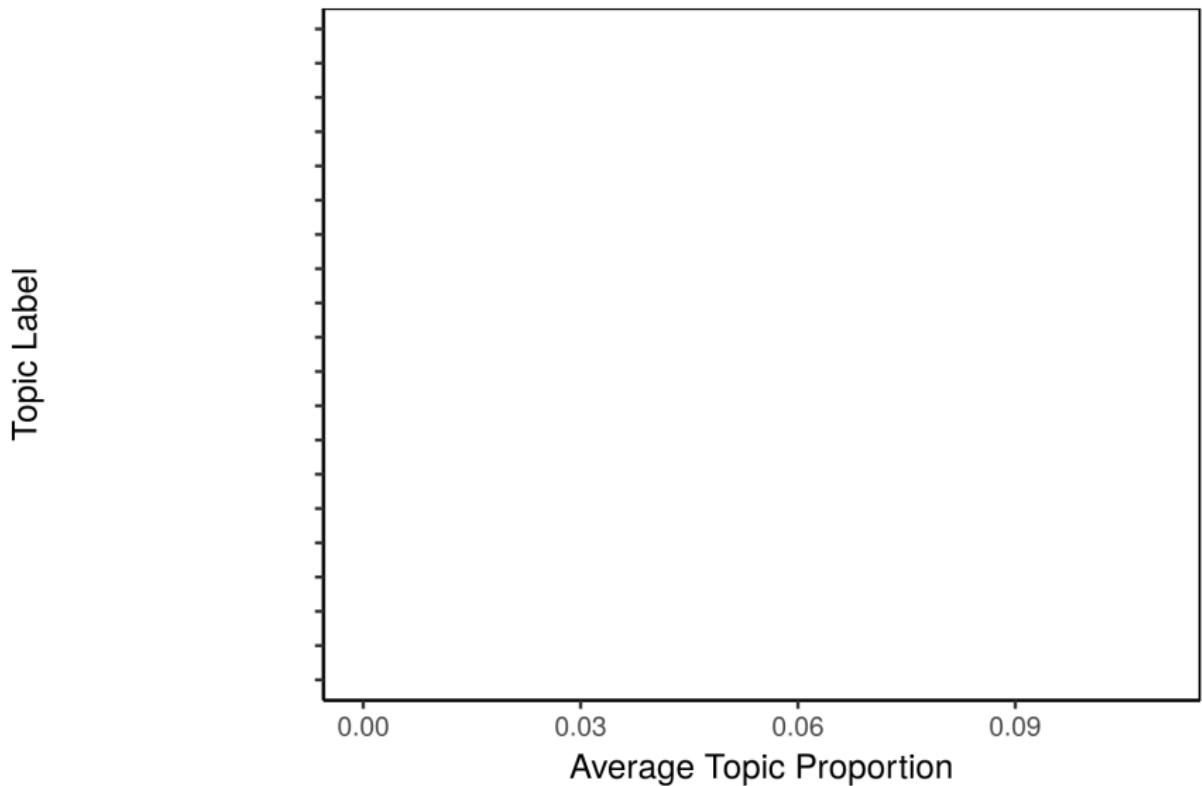
Extracting Topics from Text – Latent Dirichlet Allocation

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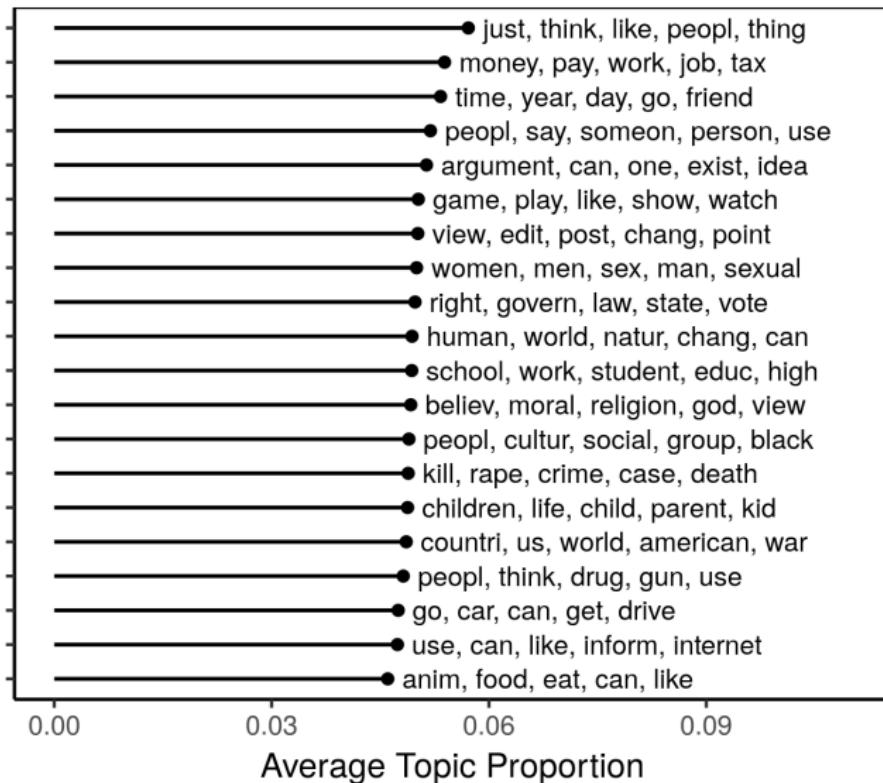
Source: Blei (2012)

Discussion Topics on /r/ChangeMyView

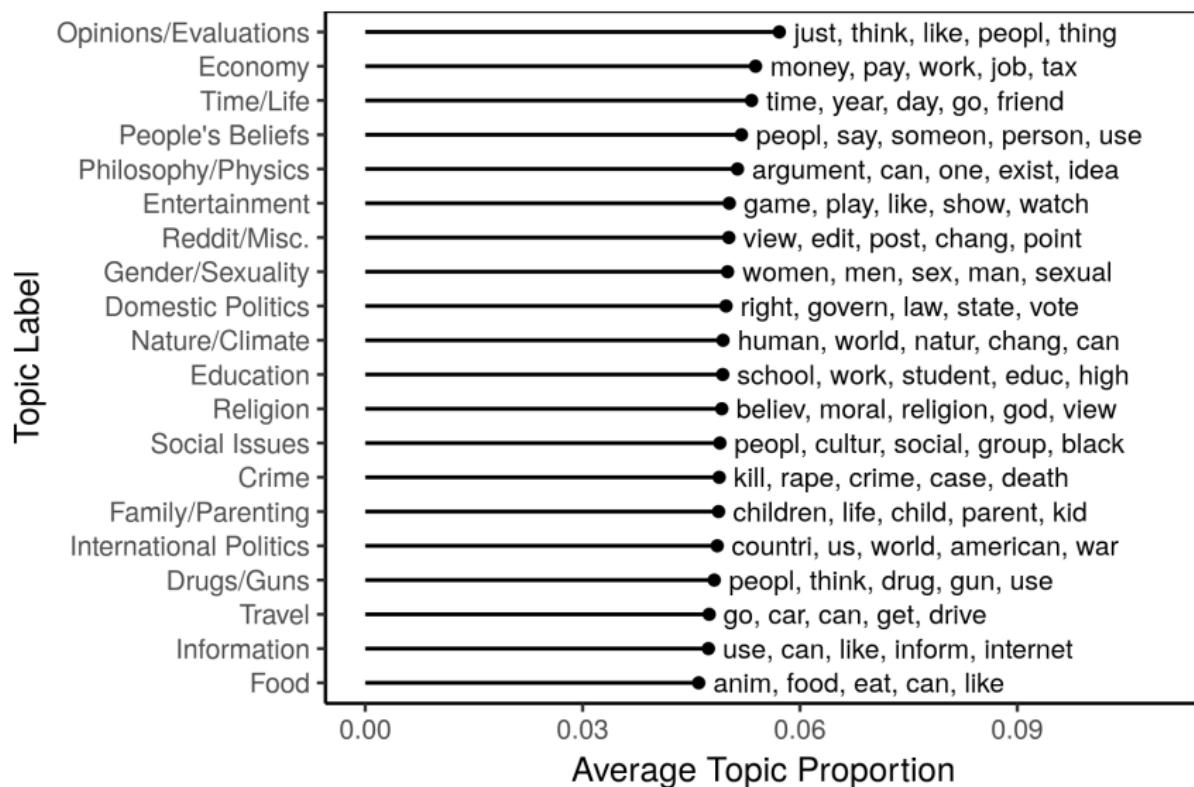


Discussion Topics on /r/ChangeMyView

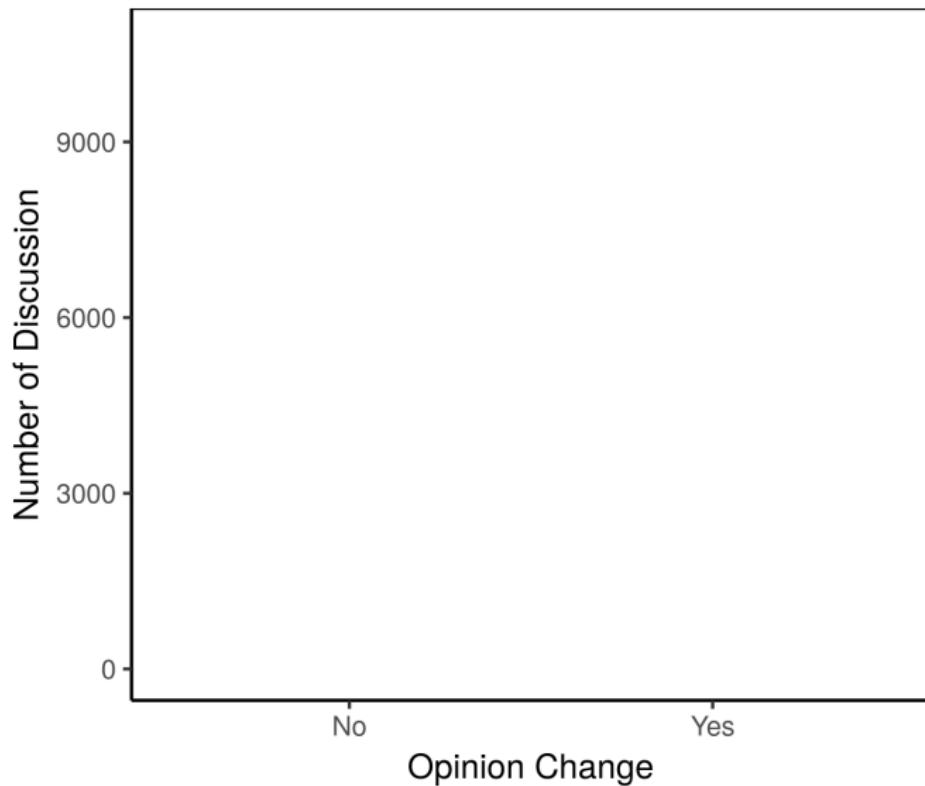
Topic Label



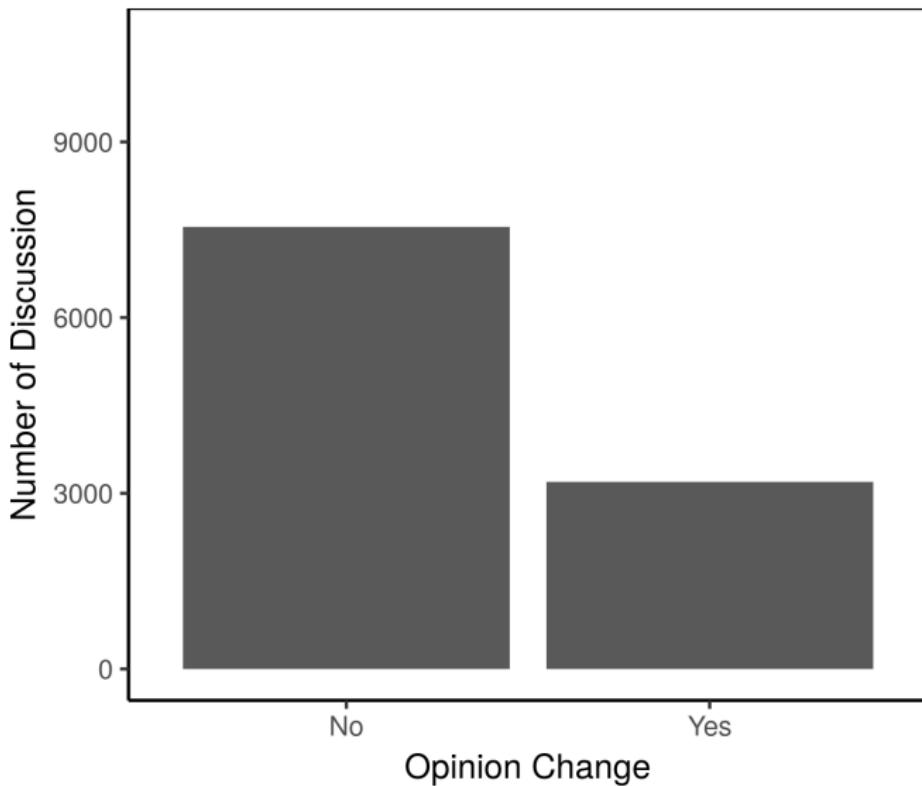
Discussion Topics on /r/ChangeMyView



Awarding Δ s on /r/ChangeMyView



Awarding Δ s on /r/ChangeMyView



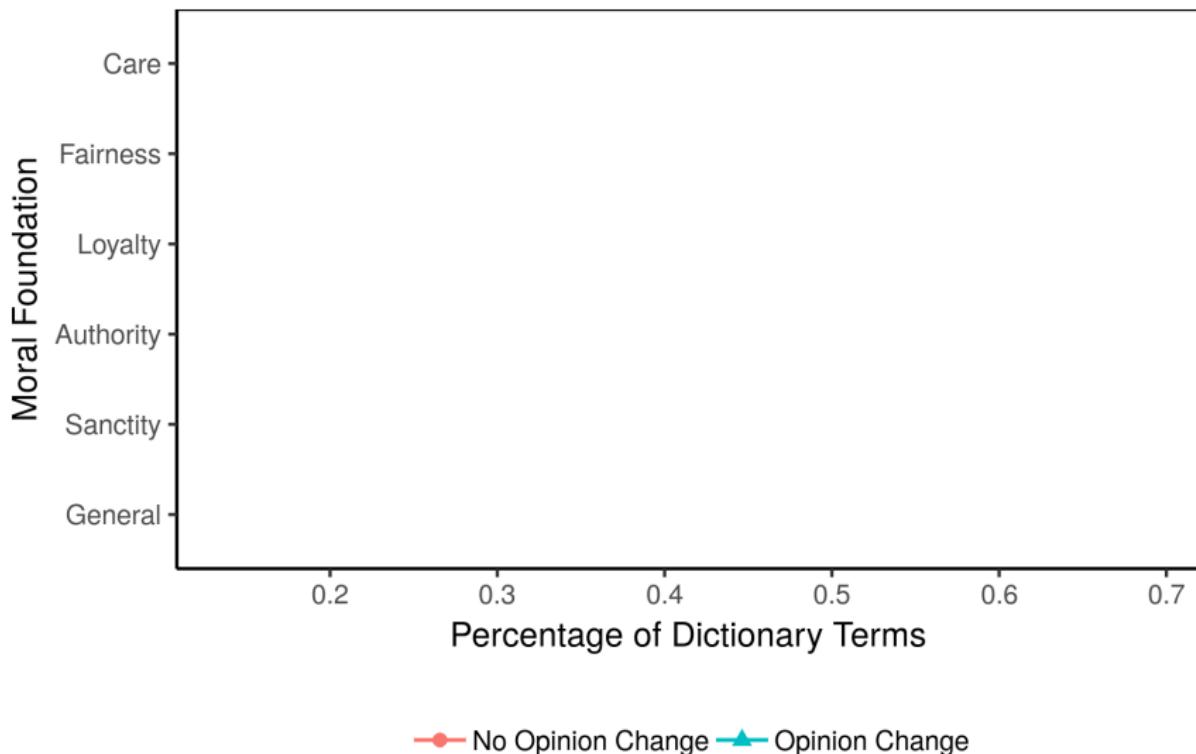
Measuring Morality in Text

Moral Foundations Dictionary:

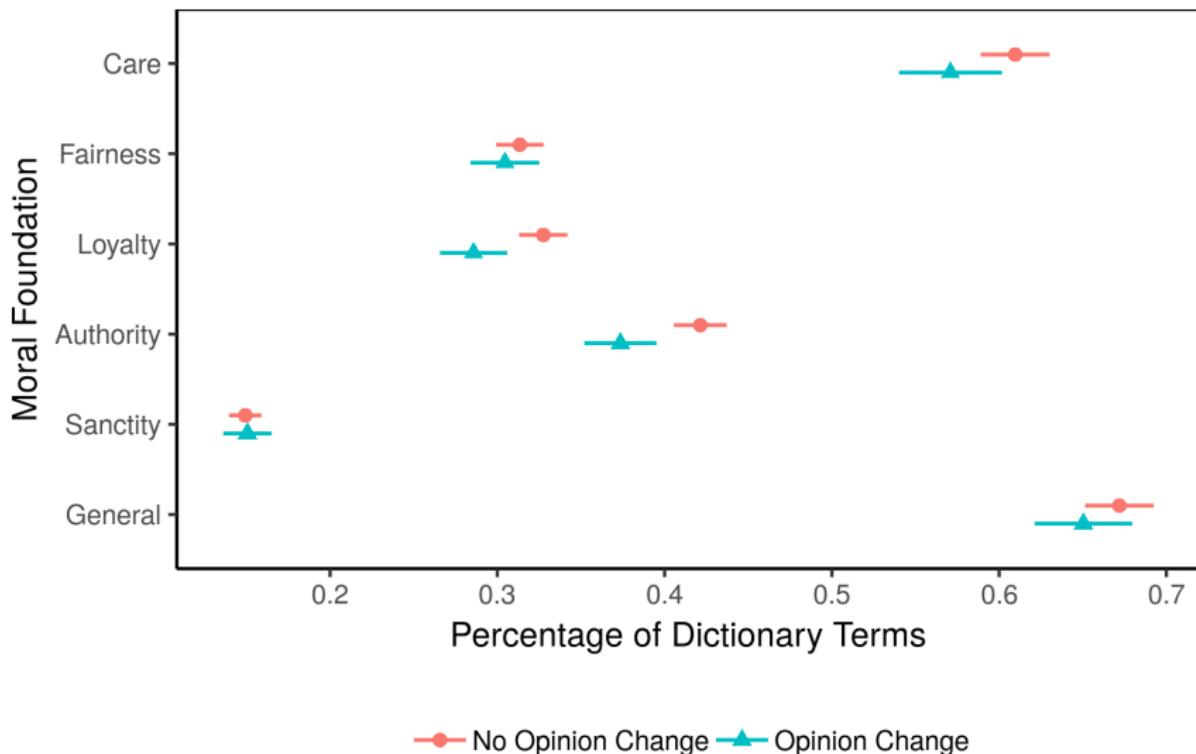
(c.f., Graham, Haidt, and Nosek 2009 and <http://www.moralfoundations.org/>)

- ▶ **Care**: caring, compassion*, empath*, preserve, protect*, ...
- ▶ **Fairness**: equal*, honest*, impartial*, justice, favoritism, ...
- ▶ **Loyalty**: collectiv*, communal, family, homeland*, unite*, ...
- ▶ **Authority**: command, comply, duty, hierarch*, honor*, ...
- ▶ **Sanctity**: abstention, clean*, decen*, holy, innocent, ...
- ▶ **General Morality**: character, commendable, decen*, ethic*, moral*, ...

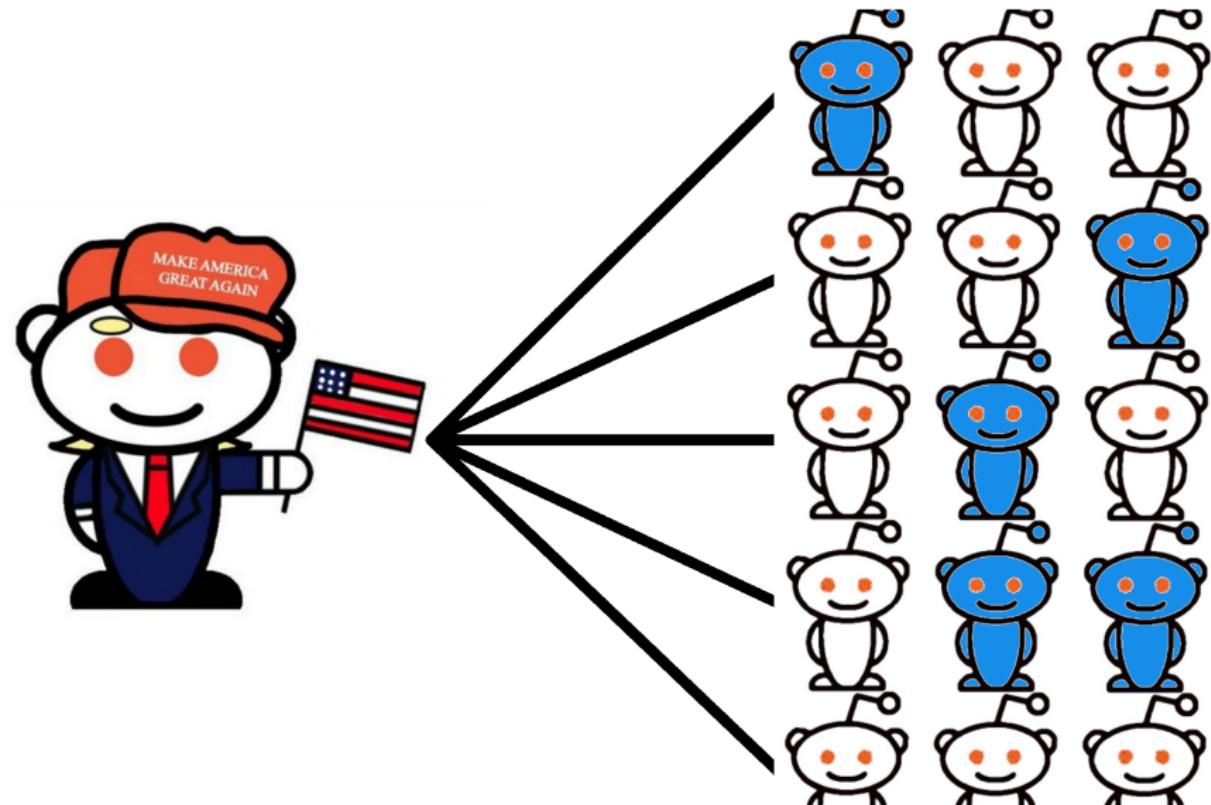
Moral Foundations and Persuadability



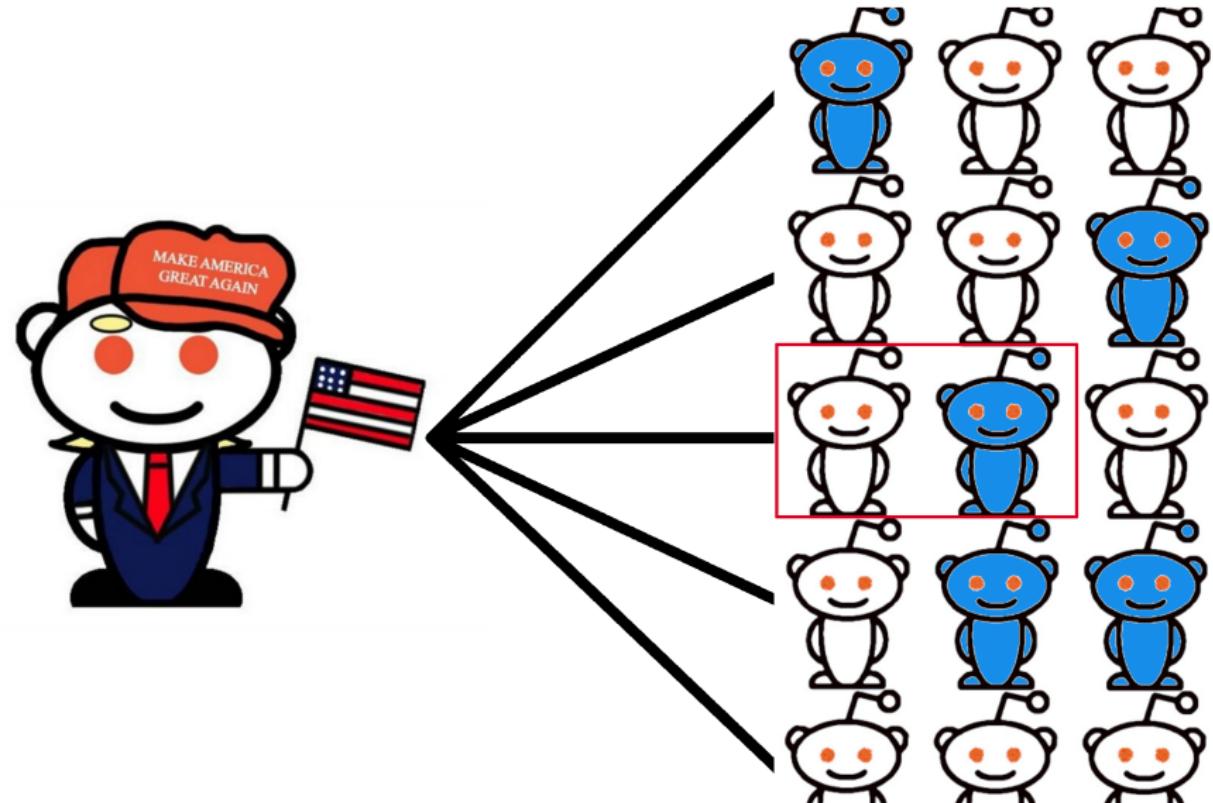
Moral Foundations and Persuadability



Exploring the Persuasiveness of Counterarguments



Exploring the Persuasiveness of Counterarguments



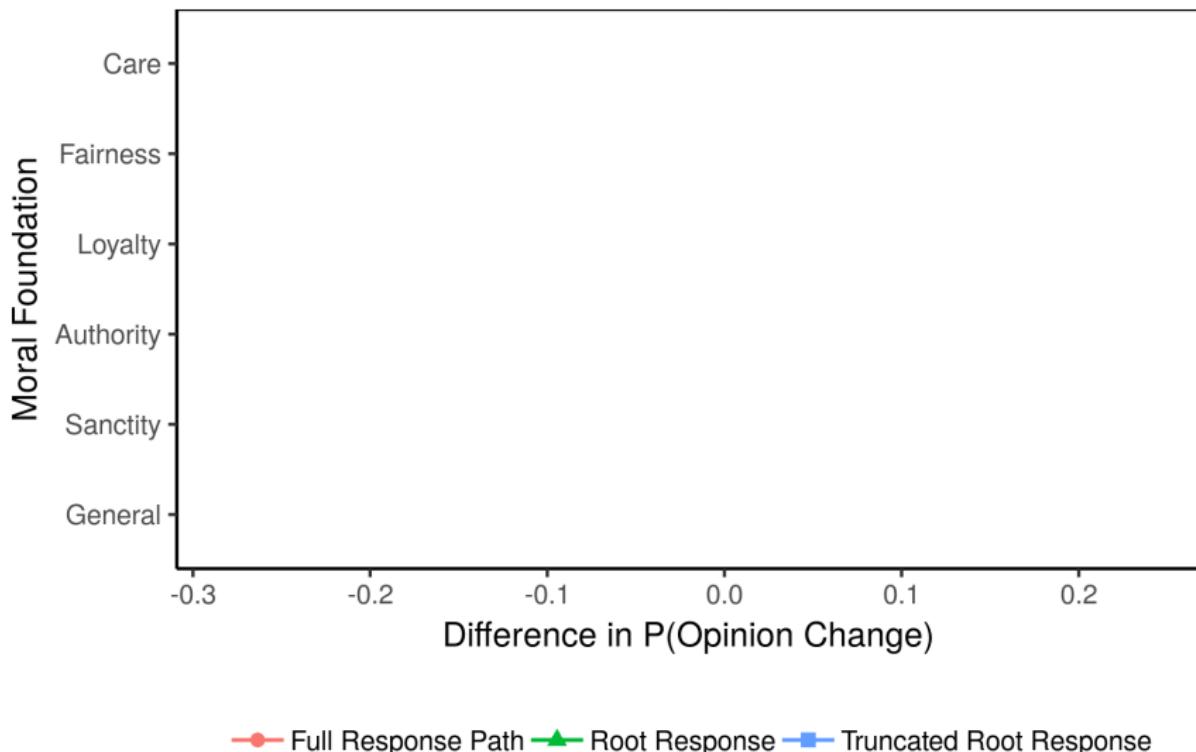
Matching Similar Arguments

$$\text{Jaccard}(B_\Delta, B_{\neg\Delta}) = \frac{|B_\Delta \cap B_{\neg\Delta}|}{|B_\Delta \cup B_{\neg\Delta}|}$$

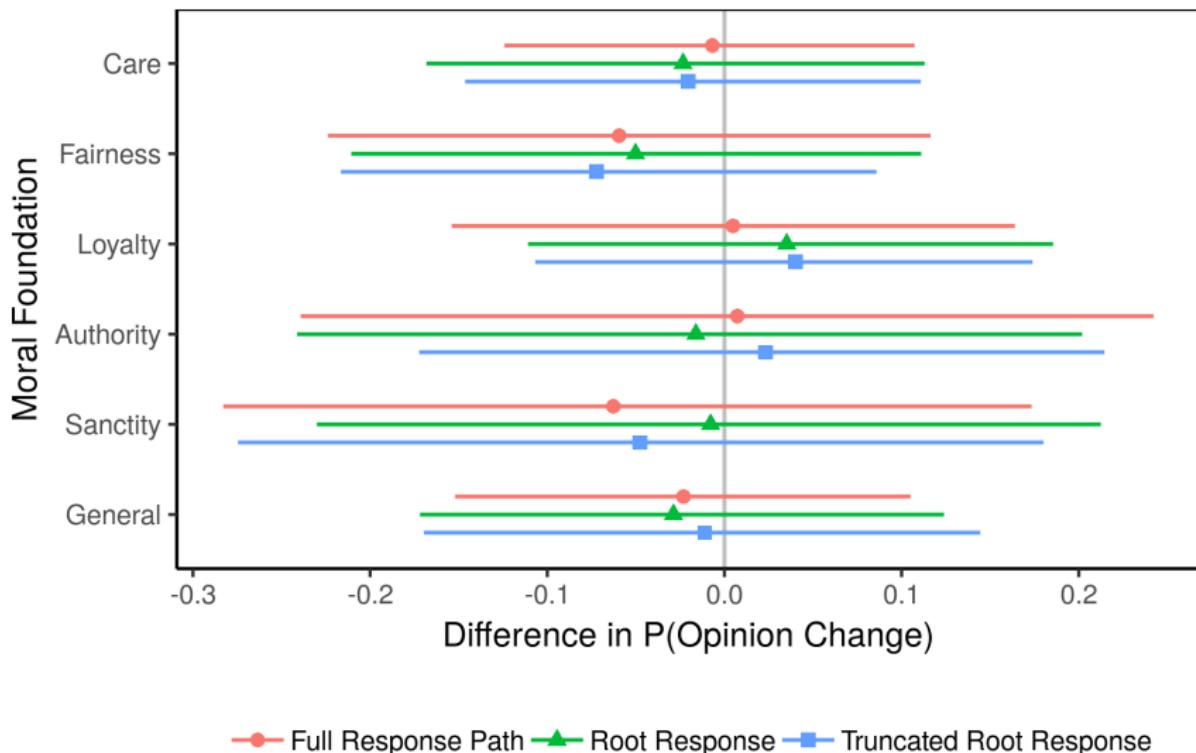
Question:

Which of two lexically similar arguments is the successful one?

Moral Foundations and Persuasiveness



Moral Foundations and Persuasiveness



Measuring Moral Congruence

$$\text{MFT Congruence} = \frac{\vec{a} \cdot \vec{b}}{||\vec{a}|| ||\vec{b}||}$$

Basic Approach:

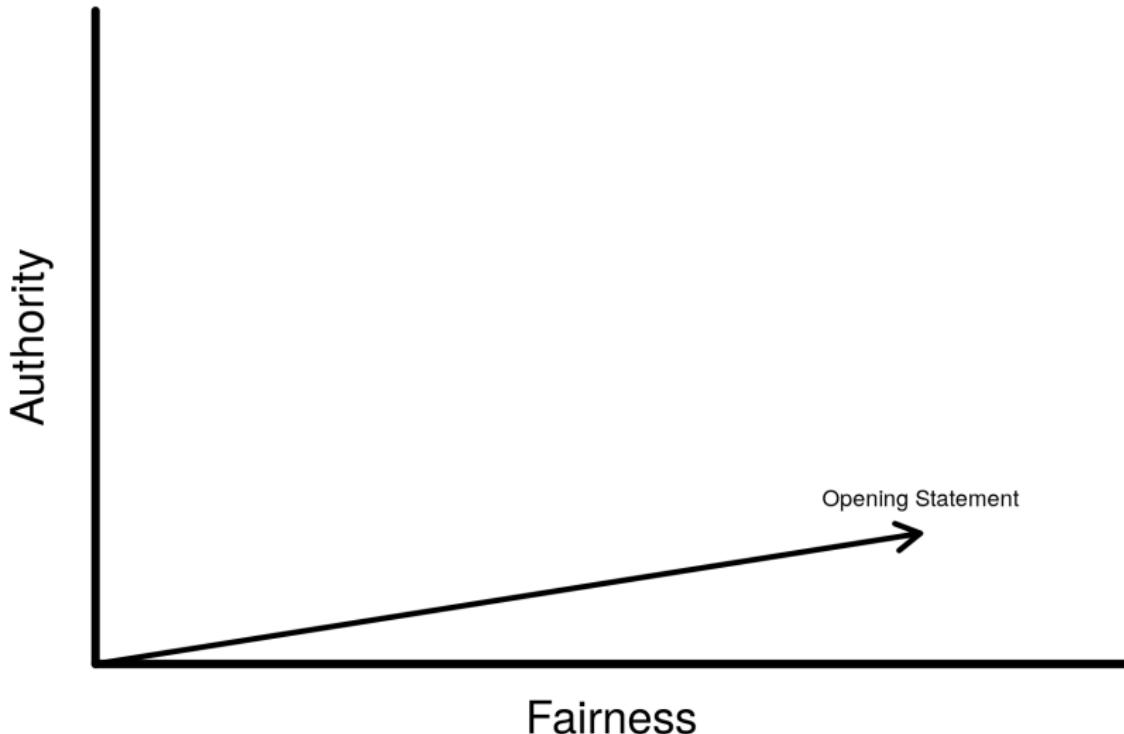
Measure the cosine similarity in dictionary counts between opening statements and counterarguments

Measuring Moral Congruence

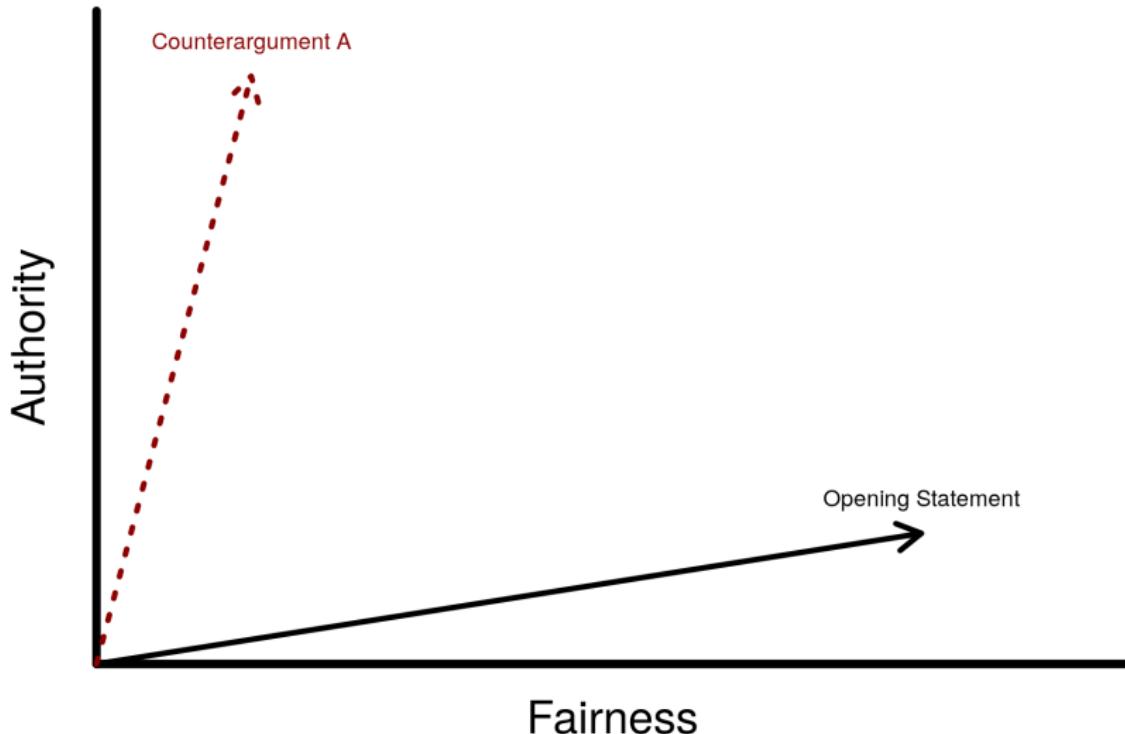
Authority

Fairness

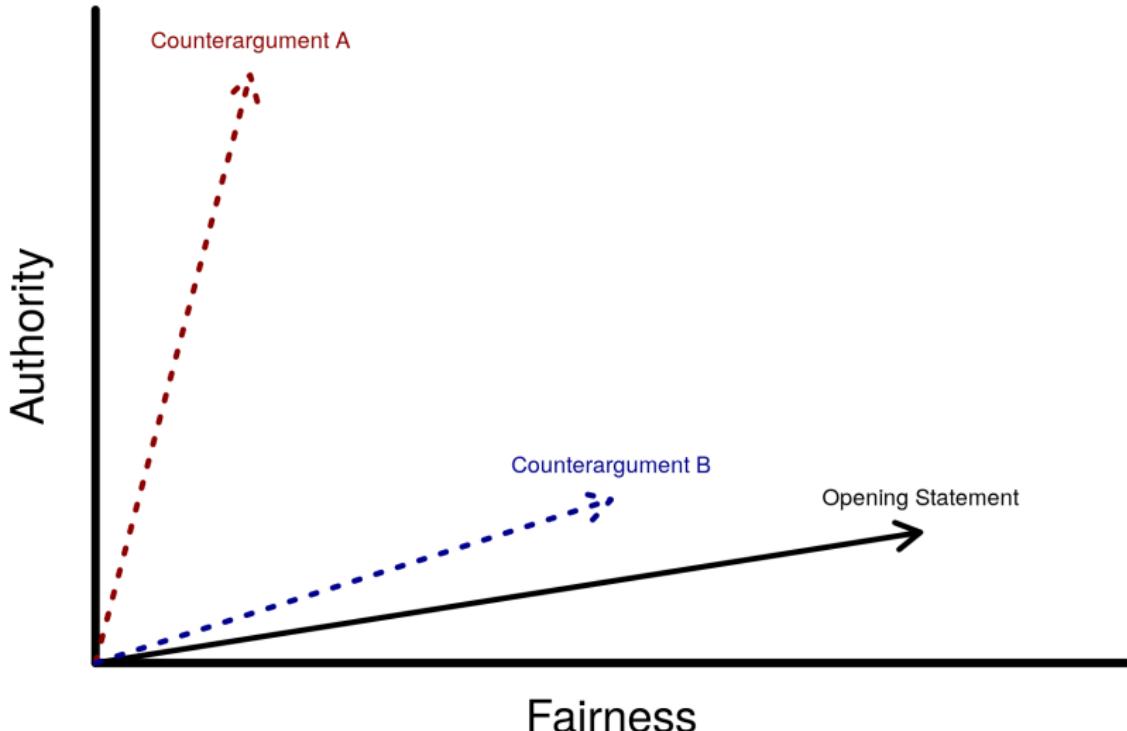
Measuring Moral Congruence



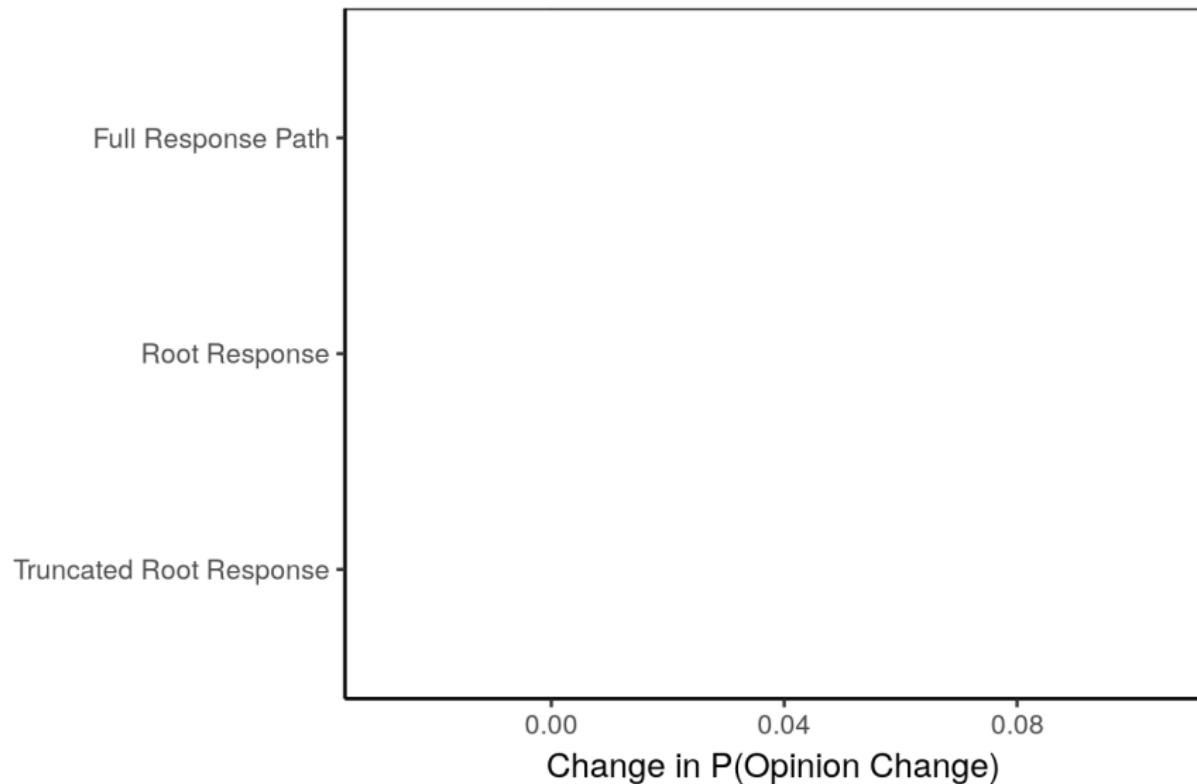
Measuring Moral Congruence



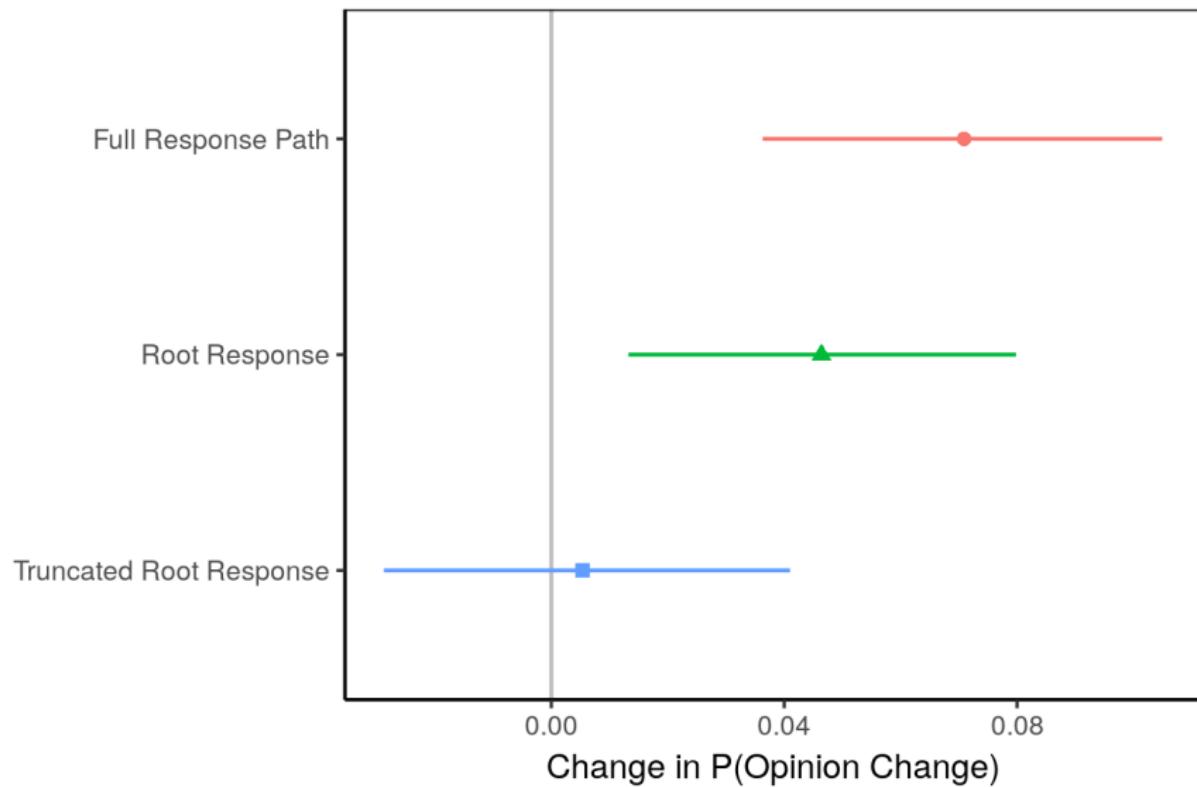
Measuring Moral Congruence



Moral Congruence and Persuasiveness



Moral Congruence and Persuasiveness



Conclusion – Discussions, Disagreement, and Morality

Two opposing hypotheses:

Moral Conviction: Arguments that involve moral appeals will be less persuasive than arguments that do not involve moral appeals.

Moral Foundations: Arguments that involve moral appeals will be more persuasive than arguments that do not involve moral appeals, but only if they are congruent with the opening statement's moral framework.

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Moral Foundations: Arguments that involve **moral appeals** will be **more persuasive** than arguments that do not involve moral appeals, but only if they are **congruent** with the opening statement's moral framework.

⇒ Moral appeals are futile unless we're speaking the same moral language

Future Directions

- ▶ Collect new data, extract additional information about individual users (other subreddits etc.)
- ▶ Survey users on /r/ChangeMyView
- ▶ Experimental manipulation of opening statements
- ▶ Discussions in the lab
- ▶ ...

Thank you for your attention!

Manuscript and code available at:
<https://github.com/pwkraft/cmv>

Comments, questions?

✉ kraftp@uwm.edu

🌐 pkraft.github.io
🐦 [@patrickwkraft](https://twitter.com/patrickwkraft)

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

I JUST THOUGHT OF A BAD
OPINION SOMEONE COULD HAVE,
AND NOW I'M SEARCHING TO
SEE IF ANYONE DOES SO
I CAN BE MAD AT THEM.

SOUNDS LIKE YOU HAVE
A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP
WITH THE INTERNET.

HEY, AT LEAST I'M NOT
THIS GUY I JUST FOUND!



Content

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Theory

Online Discussions and Description of Dataset

The Subreddit /r/ChangeMyView

Data Overview

Empirical Results

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Counterarguments and Persuasiveness

Conclusion

Appendix Content

Topic Differences and Persuadability

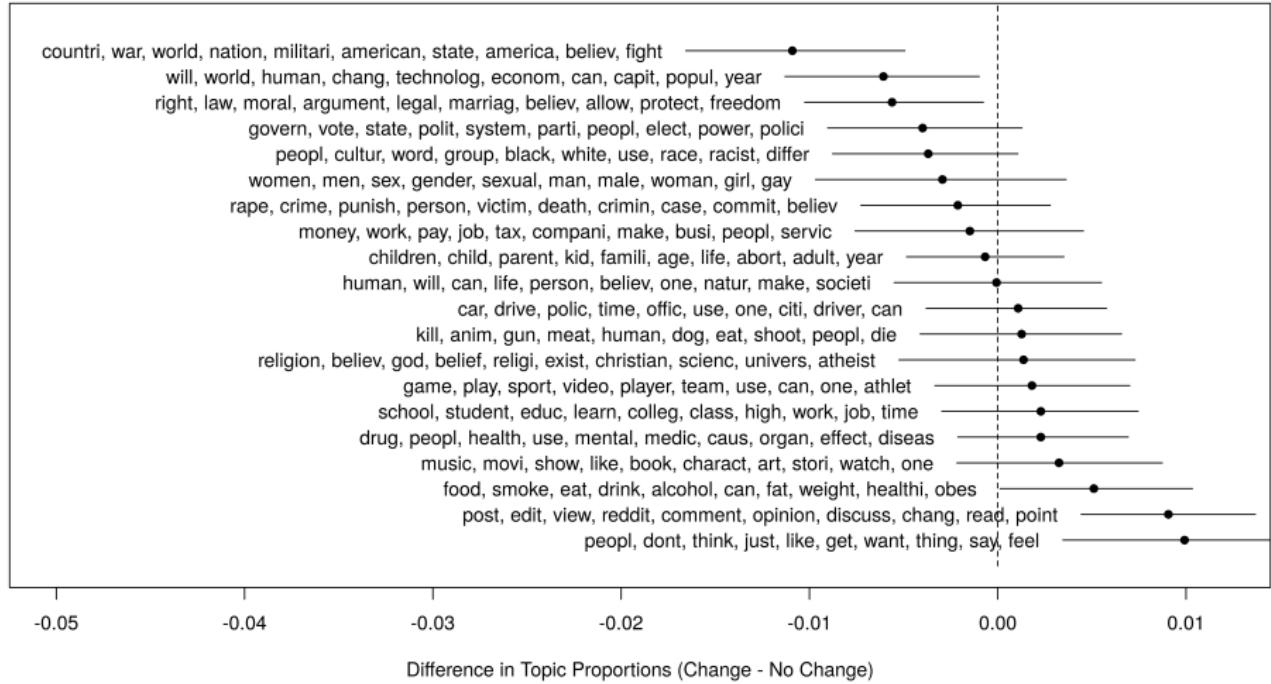
Overall Moral Language in Opening Statements that Awarded a Δ

Individual Moral Foundations in Opening Statements that Awarded a Δ

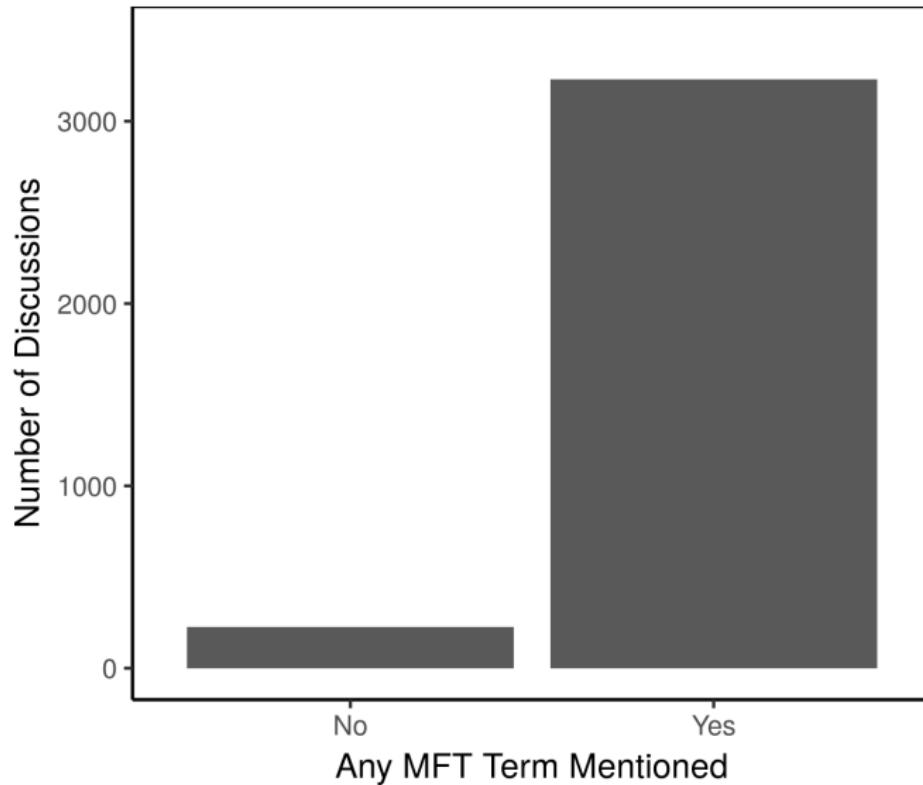
Argument Length and Persuasiveness

References

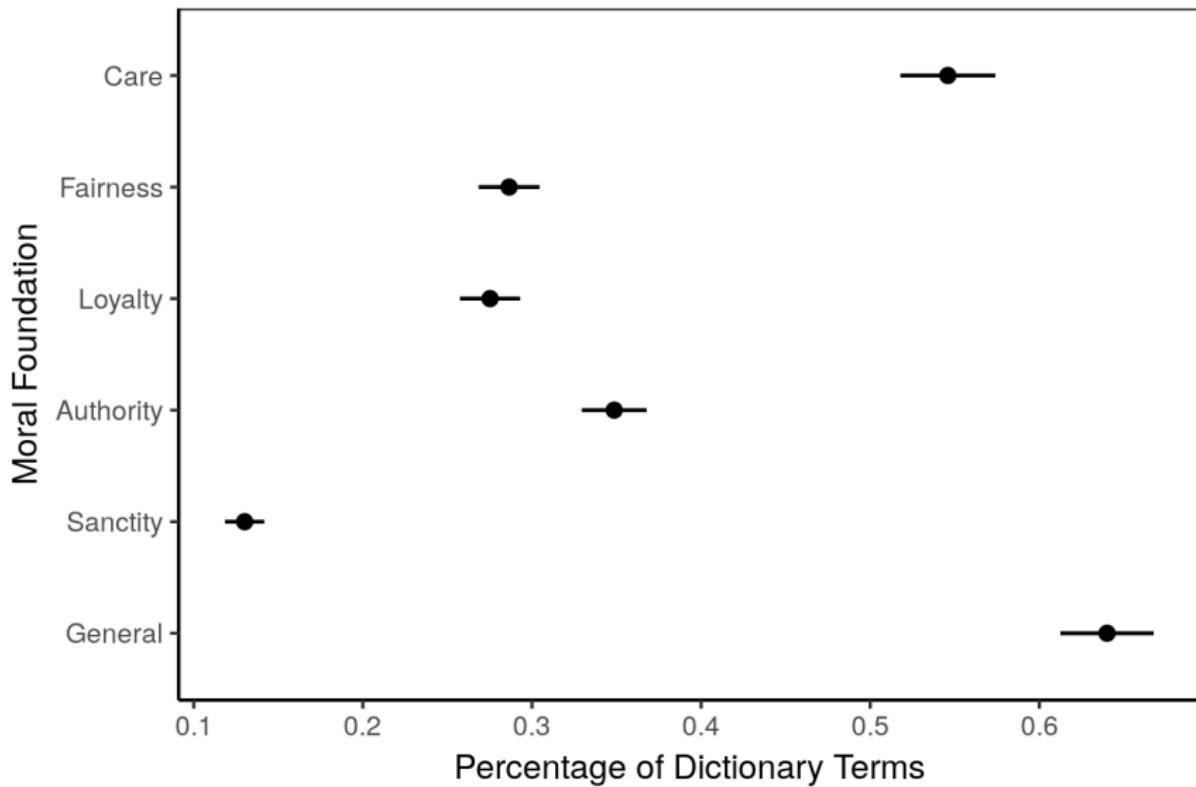
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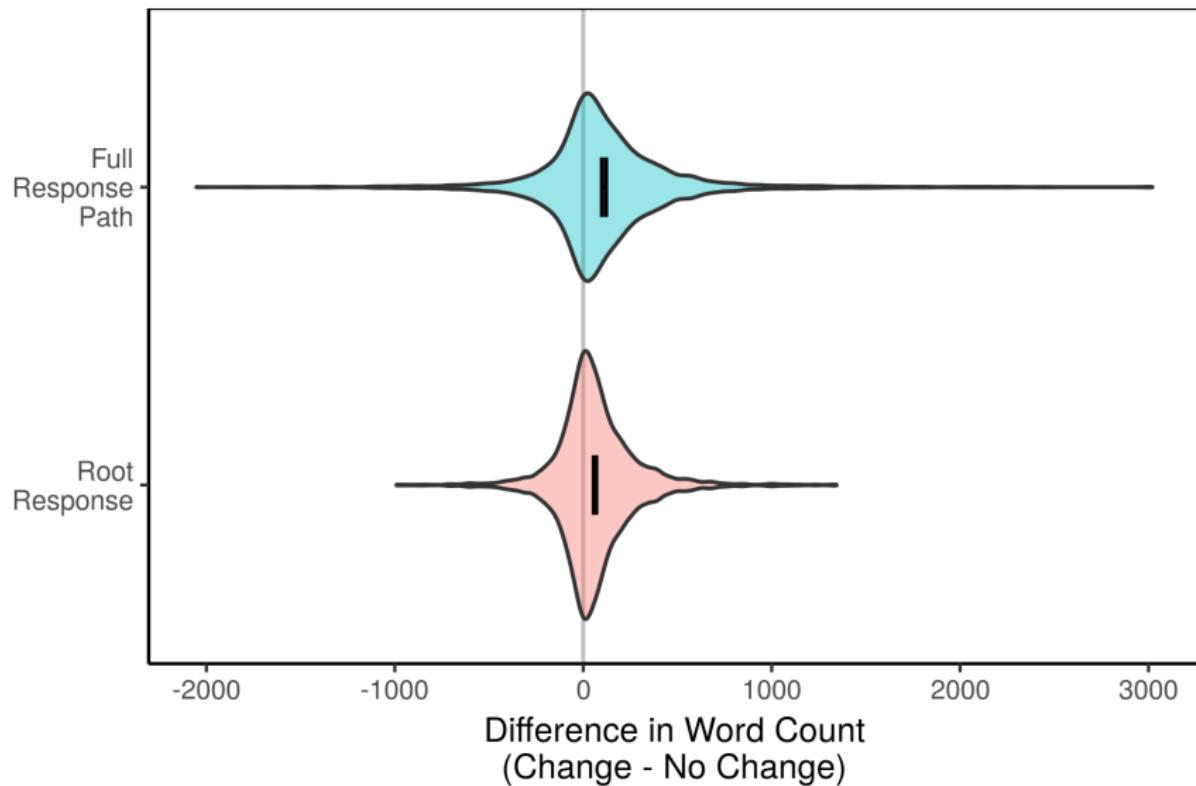
Overall Moral Language in Opening Statements that Awarded a Δ



Individual Moral Foundations in Opening Statements that Awarded a Δ



Argument Length and Persuasiveness



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