

Supplementary Materials

Ethics Statement

Qualtrics and its contractors (Lucid and Dynata) comply fully with European Society for Opinion and Marketing Research (ESOMAR) standards for protecting research subjects' privacy and information. Lucid and Dynata maintain panels of subjects that are used only for research. Individuals voluntarily join these panels (e.g., through the company's website, or by responding to a banner advertisement). Subjects received reward points redeemable from Lucid or Dynata in exchange for voluntary participation in the study. They were invited to participate by email and consented voluntarily to participate by reading an informed consent statement and clicking a button to proceed to the next screen in the survey. Subjects were free to end participation at any time by closing their Internet browser. Approval to conduct research with human subjects was granted by the University of [REDACTED] Human Subject Research Office (Study 1: March 15, 2020, Protocol # 20200095; Study 2: October 7, 2020, Protocol #20201154).

Supplementary Tables

Table S1. Conspiracy Thinking Factor Loadings		
	Study 1	Study 2
Much of our lives are being controlled by plots hatched in secret places	0.86	0.86
Even though we live in a democracy, a few people will always run things anyway	0.75	0.71
The people who really ‘run’ the country, are not known to the voters	0.83	0.84
Big events like wars, the current recession, and the outcomes of elections are controlled by small groups of people who are working in secret against the rest of us	0.85	0.87
Explained variance	67.93%	67.45%
Eigenvalue	2.72	2.70

Table S2. Sample Sizes by Treatment (Study 1)						
Rhetorical device	Conspiracy theory					
	immigration replacement	deep state	Jewish control	terrorists crossing border	Trump Russian asset	forces against Trump
control (no device)	276	303	279	287	292	287
movement trick	299	293	302	281	290	283
anti-intellectualism	295	288	280	278	295	293
intuitionism	286	289	285	293	288	282
if you only knew	285	279	300	311	289	291
lone wolf	286	289	288	297	286	294
tingling backbone	298	282	288	276	283	293

Table S3. Sample Sizes by Treatment (Study 2)					
Rhetorical device	Conspiracy theory				
	chemtrails	lightbulbs	satanic cult	weather control	look-alikes
control (no device)	287	298	278	284	300
movement trick	291	276	284	296	298
anti-institution	299	277	297	286	280
anti-intellectualism	281	281	287	289	288
if you only knew	275	291	287	281	271
lone wolf trick	296	292	291	286	280
tingling backbone	286	300	291	293	298

Table S4. Regression Analysis of Rhetorical Device Effects on Conspiracy Beliefs (Study 1)

Rhetorical treatment	Immigration replacement		Deep state		Jewish control		Terrorists crossing border		Trump Russian asset		Forces against Trump	
movement trick	-0.08 (0.11)	-0.07 (0.10)	-0.13 (0.10)	-0.08 (0.08)	-0.03 (0.11)	-0.05 (0.09)	0.18 (0.11)	0.17 (0.09)	0.08 (0.11)	0.05 (0.10)	0.03 (0.12)	0.10 (0.11)
anti-institution	0.01 (0.11)	0.01 (0.10)	0.03 (0.10)	0.01 (0.08)	-0.01 (0.11)	-0.03 (0.09)	0.06 (0.11)	0.09 (0.09)	0.11 (0.11)	0.06 (0.10)	0.01 (0.12)	0.10 (0.11)
anti-intellectualism	0.05 (0.11)	0.02 (0.10)	-0.06 (0.10)	-0.02 (0.08)	-0.09 (0.11)	-0.08 (0.09)	0.12 (0.10)	0.13 (0.09)	0.11 (0.11)	0.03 (0.10)	-0.06 (0.12)	-0.04 (0.11)
if you only knew	-0.10 (0.11)	-0.13 (0.10)	-0.08 (0.10)	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.11 (0.11)	-0.15 (0.09)	0.08 (0.10)	0.07 (0.09)	0.03 (0.11)	-0.01 (0.10)	-0.06 (0.13)	-0.06 (0.11)
lone wolf trick	-0.01 (0.11)	-0.07 (0.10)	0.00 (0.10)	-0.04 (0.08)	0.02 (0.11)	-0.00 (0.09)	0.01 (0.10)	0.05 (0.09)	0.08 (0.12)	0.05 (0.10)	-0.21 (0.12)	-0.10 (0.11)
tingling backbone	-0.01 (0.11)	-0.05 (0.10)	0.01 (0.10)	-0.03 (0.08)	-0.08 (0.11)	-0.07 (0.09)	-0.03 (0.11)	-0.02 (0.09)	0.08 (0.12)	0.03 (0.10)	0.05 (0.12)	0.09 (0.11)
Conspiracy thinking	---	2.17*** (0.11)	---	3.02*** (0.09)	---	2.54*** (0.10)	---	1.60*** (0.10)	---	1.69*** (0.11)	---	1.46*** (0.12)
Partisanship												
Democrat	---	-0.13* (0.06)	---	-0.03 (0.05)	---	0.12* (0.06)	---	-0.12* (0.06)	---	0.68*** (0.06)	---	-0.44*** (0.07)
Republican	---	0.46*** (0.07)	---	0.22*** (0.06)	---	0.30*** (0.06)	---	0.79*** (0.07)	---	-0.53*** (0.07)	---	1.03*** (0.08)
Sex (female)	---	-0.23*** (0.06)	---	0.06 (0.05)	---	-0.14** (0.05)	---	-0.25*** (0.05)	---	-0.01 (0.06)	---	-0.14* (0.06)
Age (in years)	---	0.00 (0.00)	---	-0.00 (0.00)	---	-0.01*** (0.00)	---	0.01*** (0.00)	---	-0.01*** (0.00)	---	-0.00 (0.00)
Income	---	0.03 (0.02)	---	-0.00 (0.01)	---	0.02 (0.02)	---	0.01 (0.02)	---	-0.00 (0.02)	---	0.03 (0.02)
Education	---	-0.02 (0.02)	---	0.00 (0.02)	---	0.04* (0.02)	---	0.00 (0.02)	---	0.09*** (0.02)	---	-0.03 (0.02)
Race (BIPOC)	---	0.01 (0.06)	---	-0.10 (0.05)	---	0.24*** (0.06)	---	-0.11 (0.06)	---	0.05 (0.06)	---	-0.09 (0.07)
Constant	2.68*** (0.08)	1.44*** (0.15)	3.09*** (0.07)	1.48*** (0.12)	2.46*** (0.08)	1.04*** (0.14)	2.96*** (0.07)	1.60*** (0.14)	2.60*** (0.08)	1.58*** (0.15)	3.21*** (0.09)	2.46*** (0.16)
N	2023	2022	2023	2022	2022	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	1979	1978
F	0.45	35.95***	0.72	80.65***	0.44	57.92***	1.00	42.63***	0.25	54.91***	1.06	45.71***
R ²	0.001	0.20	0.002	0.36	0.001	0.29	0.003	0.23	.001	0.28	0.003	0.25

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Note: Cells are linear regression coefficients, standard errors in parentheses. Sample sizes vary due to listwise deletion of cases with missing data.

Table S5. Regression Analysis of Rhetorical Device Effects on Conspiracy Beliefs (Study 2)

Rhetorical treatment	Chemtrails		Lightbulbs		Satanic cult		Weather control		Look-alikes	
movement trick	-0.08 (0.11)	0.06 (0.09)	0.05 (0.10)	0.05 (0.09)	0.12 (0.11)	0.14 (0.09)	-0.04 (0.11)	-0.02 (0.09)	-0.10 (0.09)	-0.04 (0.08)
anti-institution	-0.20 (0.11)	-0.06 (0.09)	0.05 (0.10)	0.06 (0.09)	0.12 (0.11)	0.18* (0.09)	-0.04 (0.11)	0.04 (0.09)	-0.23* (0.10)	-0.15 (0.08)
anti-intellectualism	0.01 (0.11)	0.06 (0.09)	-0.06 (0.10)	-0.06 (0.09)	0.10 (0.11)	0.05 (0.09)	-0.08 (0.11)	-0.06 (0.09)	-0.09 (0.09)	-0.07 (0.08)
if you only knew	-0.21 (0.11)	-0.09 (0.09)	0.04 (0.10)	0.07 (0.08)	0.10 (0.11)	0.16 (0.09)	0.02 (0.11)	0.04 (0.09)	-0.02 (0.10)	0.02 (0.08)
lone wolf trick	-0.07 (0.11)	-0.04 (0.09)	-0.10 (0.10)	-0.07 (0.08)	0.10 (0.11)	0.08 (0.09)	-0.05 (0.11)	0.02 (0.09)	-0.11 (0.10)	-0.08 (0.08)
tingling backbone	0.01 (0.11)	0.09 (0.09)	0.09 (0.10)	0.06 (0.08)	0.09 (0.11)	0.10 (0.09)	-0.22* (0.11)	-0.13 (0.09)	-0.15 (0.09)	-0.11 (0.08)
Conspiracy thinking	---	2.16*** (0.11)	---	1.80*** (0.10)	---	2.74*** (0.10)	---	2.19*** (0.11)	---	1.61*** (0.10)
Partisanship										
Democrat	---	0.02 (0.06)	---	0.05 (0.06)	---	-0.05 (0.06)	---	-0.02 (0.06)	---	0.08 (0.05)
Republican	---	0.16* (0.06)	---	0.31*** (0.06)	---	0.30*** (0.06)	---	0.19** (0.06)	---	0.17** (0.06)
Sex (female)	---	0.22*** (0.05)	---	-0.04 (0.05)	---	0.08 (0.05)	---	0.07 (0.05)	---	-0.02 (0.05)
Age (in years)	---	-0.02*** (0.00)	---	-0.02*** (0.00)	---	-0.01*** (0.00)	---	-0.02*** (0.00)	---	-0.02*** (0.00)
Income	---	-0.03 (0.02)	---	-0.02 (0.02)	---	-0.02 (0.02)	---	-0.01 (0.02)	---	-0.02 (0.01)
Education	---	0.00 (0.02)	---	0.08*** (0.02)	---	0.01 (0.02)	---	0.02 (0.02)	---	0.07*** (0.02)
Race (BIPOC)	---	0.22*** (0.06)	---	0.16** (0.06)	---	0.17** (0.06)	---	0.20** (0.06)	---	0.10 (0.06)
Constant	2.55*** (0.08)	1.97*** (0.15)	2.10*** (0.07)	1.53*** (0.14)	2.19*** (0.08)	1.24*** (0.14)	2.26*** (0.08)	1.65*** (0.14)	1.94*** (0.07)	1.57*** (0.13)
N	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014
F	1.47	58.68***	0.91	50.25***	0.27	78.00***	1.03	57.82***	1.35	45.84***
R ²	0.004	0.29	0.003	0.26	0.001	0.35	0.003	0.29	0.004	0.24

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Note: Cells are linear regression coefficients, standard errors in parentheses. Sample sizes vary due to listwise deletion of cases with missing data.