1.

**Loman et al. (2018)**

Self-Persuasion in Media Messages: Reducing Alcohol Consumption Among Students With Open-Ended Questions

Self-persuasion (self-generation of arguments) is often a more effective influence technique than direct persuasion (providing arguments). However, the application of this technique in health media communications has received limited attention. In two experiments, it was examined whether self-persuasion can be successfully applied to antialcohol media communications by framing the message as an open-ended question. In Experiment 1 (N \_ 131) cognitive reactions to antialcohol posters framed either asopen-ended questions or statements were examined. In Experiment 2 (N \_ 122) the effectiveness of this framing to reduce actual alcohol consumption was tested. Experiment 1 demonstrated that exposure to an antialcohol poster framed as an open-ended question resulted in more self-generated arguments for drinking less alcohol and more favorable message evaluations than framing the same message as a statement. Experiment 2 showed that the self-persuasion poster did not affect the choice to consume alcohol but did reduce alcohol consumption for individuals who chose to drink any alcohol, compared with a direct persuasion poster or no intervention. Together, the results demonstrated the potential of self-persuasion in persuasive media messages for interventions aimed at alcohol consumption reduction specifically and for health communication in general.

2.

**Ecker et al. (2014)**

Do people keep believing because they want to? Preexisting attitudes and the continued influence of misinformation

Misinformation—defined as information that is initially assumed to be valid but is later corrected or retracted—

often has an ongoing effect on people’s memory and reasoning. We tested the hypotheses that (a) reliance on misinformation is affected by people’s preexisting attitudes and (b) attitudes determine the effectiveness of retractions. In two experiments, participants scoring higher and lower on a racial prejudice scale read a news report regarding a robbery. In one scenario, the suspects were initially presented as being Australian Aboriginals, whereas in a second scenario, a hero preventing the robbery was introduced as an Aboriginal person. Later, these critical, race-related pieces of information were or were not retracted. We measured participants’ reliance on misinformation in response to inferential reasoning questions. The results showed that preexisting attitudes influence people’s use of attitude-related information but not the way in which a retraction of that information is processed.

3.

**Lee et al. (2014)**

The serial reproduction of conflict: Third parties escalate conflict through

communication biases

We apply a communication perspective to study third party conflict contagion, a phenomenon in which partisan

spectators to others' disputes not only become involved in, but escalate, the dispute to a multitude of others.

Using the serial reproduction method, we demonstrate the role of third parties' communication biases in conflict

escalation, revealing that successive generations of partisan observers share and reproduce conflict narratives

that become increasingly biased in their moral framing, attributions for the conflict, evaluations of the disputing

parties, and quest for revenge. Despite equal fault between the disputing parties at the beginning, these communication

biases increased, rather than subsided, with each iteration throughout communication chains, cumulating

in distortions and group biases far above and beyond initial ingroup favoritism. Implications for strategies to

debias conflict information transmission are discussed.

**Yang et al. (2012)**

Polarized Attitudes Toward the Ground Zero Mosque are Reduced

by High-Level Construal

On the basis of construal level theory (Trope & Liberman, 2010), we hypothesized that political polarization on controversial issues may be reduced by increasing abstract mental construal. Using the issue of the ‘‘Ground Zero Mosque’’ and political polarization on it as an example, we first established that liberals and conservatives hold opposing attitudes toward building a mosque near Ground Zero (Study 1). Polarized attitudes were significantly reduced by increasing the abstract (vs. concrete) level of construal, by having participants answer a series of why (vs. how) questions before considering the issue (Study 2) or by having participants read an article about the Ground Zero Mosque in a disfluent (vs. fluent) format (Study 3). We conclude that abstract mental construal may potentially provide a means for dialogue and compromise on divisive political issues, and implications for political discourse are discussed.

4.

**Fisher & Keil (2014)**

The Illusion of Argument Justification

Argumentation is an important way to reach a new understanding. Strongly caring about an issue, which is often evident when dealing with controversial issues, has been shown to lead to biases in argumentation. We suggest that people are not well calibrated in assessing their ability to justify a position through argumentation, an effect we call the illusion of argument justification. Furthermore, we find that caring about the issue further clouds this introspection. We first show this illusion by measuring the difference between ratings before and after producing an argument for one’s own position. The strength of the illusion is predicted by the strength of care for a given issue (Study 1). The tacit influences of framing and priming do not override the effects of emotional investment in a topic (Study 2). However, explicitly

considering counterarguments removes the effect of care when initially assessing the ability to justify a position (Study 3). Finally, we consider our findings in light of other recent research and discuss the potential benefits of group reasoning.

5.

**Trouche et al. (2016)**

The Selective Laziness of Reasoning

Reasoning research suggests that people use more stringent criteria when they evaluate others’arguments than when they produce arguments themselves. To demonstrate this “selective laziness,” we used a choice blindness manipulation. In two experiments, participants had to produce a series of arguments in response to reasoning problems, and they were then asked to evaluate other people’s arguments about the same problems. Unknown to the participants, in one of the trials, they were presented with their own argument as if it was someone else’s. Among those participants who accepted the manipulation and thus thought they were evaluating someone else’s argument, more than half (56% and 58%) rejected the arguments that were in fact their own. Moreover, participants were more likely to reject their own arguments for invalid than for valid answers. This demonstrates that people are more critical of other people’s arguments than of their own, without being overly critical: They are better able to tell valid from invalid arguments when the arguments are someone else’s rather than their own.

6.

**Kuhn & Modrek (2018)**

Do reasoning limitations undermine discourse?

Why does discourse so often seem shallow, with people arguing past one another more than with one another? Might contributing causes be individual and logical rather than only dialogical? We consider here whether there exist errors in reasoning that could be particularly damaging in their effects on argumentive discourse. In particular, we examine implications for discourse of two such errors – explanation as a replacement for evidence and neglecting the likelihood of multiple causes contributing to an outcome. In Studies 1 and 2, we show these errors to be prevalent in a cross section of adults, as well as samples of community college students and young adolescents, with minimal age related

improvement. They also occur, although less frequently, among a sample of highly educated adults, and in Study 3, we examine their role in the discourse of college-educated adults. We point finally to evidence that these individual reasoning errors are potentially addressable through education.

7.

**Kuhn & Crowell (2011)**

Dialogic Argumentation as a Vehicle for Developing Young Adolescents’ Thinking

Argumentive reasoning skills are featured in the new K–12 Common Standards (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010), yet with little said about their nature or how to instill them. Distinguishing reasoning skills from writing skills, we report on a multiyear intervention that used electronically conducted dialogues on social issues as the medium to develop argumentive reasoning skills in two cohorts of young adolescents. Intervention groups demonstrated transfer of the dialogic activity to two individual essays on new topics; argument quality for these groups exceeded that of comparison groups who participated in an intervention involving the more face-valid activity of extensive essay writing practice, along with whole class discussion. The intervention group also demonstrated greater awareness of the relevance of evidence to argument. The dialogic method thus appears to be a viable one for developing cognitive skills that the comparison-group data show do not routinely develop during this age period.

**Zavala & Kuhn (2017)**

Solitary Discourse Is a Productive Activity

Young adults received information regarding the platforms of two candidates for mayor of a troubled city. Half

constructed a dialogue between advocates of the candidates, and the other half wrote an essay evaluating the

candidates’ merits. Both groups then wrote a script for a TV spot favoring their preferred candidate. Results supported

our hypothesis that the dialogic task would lead to deeper, more comprehensive processing of the two positions,

and hence a richer representation of them. The TV scripts of the dialogue group included more references to city

problems, candidates’ proposed actions, and links between them, as well as more criticisms of proposed actions and

integrative judgments extending across multiple problems or proposed actions. Assessment of levels of epistemological

understanding administered to the two groups after the writing tasks revealed that the dialogic group exhibited a

lesser frequency of the absolutist position that knowledge consists of facts knowable with certainty. The potential of

imagined interaction as a substitute for actual social exchange is considered.

8.

**Pennycook & Rand (2018)**

Lazy, not biased: Susceptibility to partisan fake news is better explained by

lack of reasoning than by motivated reasoning

Why do people believe blatantly inaccurate news headlines (“fake news”)? Do we use our reasoning abilities to convince ourselves that statements that align with our ideology are true, or does reasoning allow us to effectively

differentiate fake from real regardless of political ideology? Here we test these competing accounts in two studies

(total N=3446 Mechanical Turk workers) by using the Cognitive Reflection Test (CRT) as a measure of the propensity to engage in analytical reasoning. We find that CRT performance is negatively correlated with the perceived accuracy of fake news, and positively correlated with the ability to discern fake news from real news – even for headlines that align with individuals’ political ideology. Moreover, overall discernment was actually better for ideologically aligned headlines than for misaligned headlines. Finally, a headline-level analysis finds that CRT is negatively correlated with perceived accuracy of relatively implausible (primarily fake) headlines, and positively correlated with perceived accuracy of relatively plausible (primarily real) headlines. In contrast, the correlation between CRT and perceived accuracy is unrelated to how closely the headline aligns with the participant’s ideology. Thus, we conclude that analytic thinking is used to assess the plausibility of headlines, regardless of whether the stories are consistent or inconsistent with one’s political ideology. Our findings therefore suggest that susceptibility to fake news is driven more by lazy thinking than it is by partisan bias per se – a finding that opens potential avenues for fighting fake news.

9.

**Pennycook et al. (2020)**

Fighting COVID-19 Misinformation on Social Media: Experimental Evidence for a Scalable Accuracy-Nudge Intervention

Across two studies with more than 1,700 U.S. adults recruited online, we present evidence that people share false

claims about COVID-19 partly because they simply fail to think sufficiently about whether or not the content is

accurate when deciding what to share. In Study 1, participants were far worse at discerning between true and false

content when deciding what they would share on social media relative to when they were asked directly about

accuracy. Furthermore, greater cognitive reflection and science knowledge were associated with stronger discernment.

In Study 2, we found that a simple accuracy reminder at the beginning of the study (i.e., judging the accuracy of a non-

COVID-19-related headline) nearly tripled the level of truth discernment in participants’ subsequent sharing intentions.

Our results, which mirror those found previously for political fake news, suggest that nudging people to think about

accuracy is a simple way to improve choices about what to share on social media.