

Title: Respondent instructions/prompts for each condition appendix for “Using an AI-powered ‘street epistemologist’ chatbot and reflection tasks to diminish conspiracy theory beliefs”

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Note: The material contained herein is supplementary to the article named in the title and published in the Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) Misinformation Review.

Appendix B: Respondent instructions/prompts for each condition

For the task asking respondents to reflect on why they believe a conspiracy theory, the following prompt was administered (“CT: Reflect on Reasons”):

Please list all the factors that support your endorsement of the statement [insert conspiracy theory], going from the most important to the least important.

Please state precisely why you hold the position. Try to tell as complete a story as you can about the reasons for your position. Please provide a detailed response, as we expect you to carefully state your reasons.

For the task asking respondents to reflect on uncertainties regarding their conspiracy theory beliefs, the following prompt was administered (“CT: Reflect on Reservations”):

Please list the factors that contribute to your reservations about the statement [insert conspiracy theory], going from the most important to the least important.

Please state precisely which reservations you have about the statement, preventing you from fully endorsing it. Try to tell as complete a story as you can about your reservations. Please provide a detailed response, as we expect you to carefully state your reasons.

For the task asking respondents to interact with the street epistemologist chatbot, the following prompt was administered (“CT: Interact with AI”):

Please click the link below to chat briefly with Chip, an AI Chatbot, about the statement [insert conspiracy theory]. This typically takes 5 minutes. Once done, you'll receive a code from Chip. Enter that code in the text box below before moving on.

All respondents were also notified about the potential for being asked to interact with the AI chatbot in the IRB-approved survey preamble. The relevant text is as follows:

In the other you will be asked to discuss your opinions with an AI chatbot we call “Chip.” Chip operates on GPT-4 developed by OpenAI. OpenAI has implemented extensive safety restrictions to ensure that chatbots do not produce harmful or offensive content. These restrictions ensure that your interactions with Chip remain respectful and appropriate. Additionally, Chip is programmed to only ask questions, and will not state facts or its own opinions. The responses you provide Chip will be stored and used as part of the data we analyze in this study. Chip will ask you for your nickname to make the chat more conversational, but to protect your anonymity please do not give Chip your real name.

This survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Your participation in this study is

voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty (and you will still receive 1 loyalty credit from Forthright).