

Title: Examples of written reflections on conspiracy theory belief uncertainty 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 D: Examples of written reflections on conspiracy theory belief uncertainty

Note: The examples reflect the exact wording provided by the participants.

Epstein

assistant: Hi there! I'm Chip. I'm here to help you explore and reflect on your beliefs. What's your nickname?

user: [Francis]

assistant: Nice to meet you, Francis. In the survey that you're currently completing, you've indicated that you believe Jeffrey Epstein, the billionaire who was accused of running an elite sex trafficking ring, was possibly murdered to cover-up the activities of his criminal network. Would you like to rephrase this belief or are you comfortable with it as is?

user: Comfortable

assistant: Understood, Francis. To ensure we're on the same page, let's clarify what this belief means. When you say Jeffrey Epstein was “murdered,” are you suggesting that his death was intentionally caused by someone else? Furthermore, when you say it was to “cover-up the activities of his criminal network,” does that mean you believe someone or some entity contributed to his death to protect themselves or others involved in the alleged criminal acts? Have I captured your belief correctly?

user: Yes, I believe a lot of people were nervous and took him out to avoid public outing

assistant: Thank you for clarifying, Francis. Is this belief personally important to you? If so, could you share why?

user: No not personally important to me but worth talking about

assistant: Indeed, it's an interesting topic of discussion. So, can you remember how you came to adopt this belief in particular? Did a specific event, person, or source shape your viewpoint?

user: There has always been chatter of the sort and over time I just slowly began to realize there was some truth to it

assistant: I see, so it has been a gradual accumulation of information and discussion that led you to this belief. Are there any doubts or reservations you have regarding this belief? For instance, are there areas that you feel less certain about or particular points of contention that you've come across?

user: I guess there is always a chance but we will never know the truth

assistant: Certainly, the availability and interpretation of information can sometimes be limiting. If we consider a hypothetical situation - if there was discovered evidence that supported the official cause of Epstein's death, how would that affect your belief? Would you be open to changing your viewpoint, or how would you approach this new information?

user: If I was given proof that couldn't be denied I would have to admit it

assistant: So, you express openness to changing your belief provided the evidence is irrefutable, which highlights your adaptability to information. Do you hold any assumptions related to this belief that haven't been supported by available evidence so far? For example, concerning specifics of the supposed cover-up, who might be responsible, or the nature of participation of others in Epstein's activities?

user: No

assistant: Got it. Has this belief led you to make any significant decisions or choices in your life, or has it largely remained as a viewpoint on a public issue?

user: Viewpoint on public issue

assistant: Understood. So, our conversation has revolved around your belief that billionaire Jeffrey Epstein may have been murdered to cover up the activities of his criminal network. This belief, largely derived from ongoing discussions and available information over time, does not significantly impact your personal life but remains an intriguing public matter to you. You stated a willingness to shift your view should undeniable evidence contradict your belief. Are you satisfied with this summary or would you like to add or rephrase anything?

user: That's good

assistant: Great. To complete the survey, please enter the code word "cheetah" back in the survey form. It was a pleasure talking to you about this intriguing belief. Goodbye, Francis.

Pharma

assistant: Hi there! I'm Chip. I'm here to help you explore and reflect on your beliefs. What's your nickname?

user: What do you think about cures and are there some that the government is hidden from us for profit

assistant: In the survey you're currently completing, you indicated that you endorse the belief that "The Food and Drug Administration is deliberately preventing the public from getting natural cures for cancer and other diseases because of pressure from drug companies." Do you want to rephrase this belief or are you satisfied with it as it is?

user: Satisfied and not 50-50

assistant: That's clear enough. So, if I understand correctly, you believe that the FDA is purposely withholding certain natural remedies for diseases like cancer due to influence from pharmaceutical companies. Is that an accurate representation of your belief?

user: Yes

assistant: Is this belief personally important to you? If so, why?

user: People get blinded sighted by greed and forget basic morals.

assistant: I understand the concern. Could you please share how you came to hold this belief?

user: The state the world is right know it went to shit and it seems like it not getting any better.

assistant: Certainly, world events can affect our perceptions. Can you think of any specific examples or evidence that led you to believe that the FDA is withholding natural cures due to pharmaceutical pressure?

user: No one can fell safe outside in city's or anywhere in some places and the New York news. New York Sims like GTA while some parts of the world fell like New York. So far the safest places are suburban or country.

assistant: You've mentioned the state of the world and safety concerns. Do you have any reservations or doubts about this specific belief regarding the FDA and pharmaceutical companies? Would you consider information from other sources, if it pertained to this topic?

user: No it's more of government than FDA

assistant: I see, you now mention it's more about the government than the FDA. If there was evidence which countered this belief, such as government documents or independent research indicating no deliberate withholding of natural cures, how would you view such evidence?

user: Look in to it more

assistant: That seems like an open approach. Given that, can you think of any specific evidence or conditions which might potentially challenge your belief?

user: Nothing I can think of as for right know

assistant: Understood. Has this belief led you to make any significant choices in your life? For example, decisions about health care or engagement in political activity?

user: I use to trust health care a lot till one of the doctors gave me medicine that If I didn't have a second opinion before taking I would have died.

assistant: I see, you've mentioned a personal experience with healthcare that has shaped your perspective. To summarize our discussion, we explored your belief that the FDA, influenced by pharmaceutical companies, is withholding natural remedies for diseases. This belief was motivated by concerns for safety, general mistrust in the current state of the world, and personal experiences with

healthcare. We also discussed your willingness to investigate contradictory evidence. Are you satisfied with this summary, or would you like something rephrased?

user: Satisfied

assistant: That's great. To complete your survey, please go back to it and enter the code word "elephant."