

# WORKING AROUND MISINFORMATION: MOTIVATION, ABILITY, HEURISTICS

**Sara K. Yeo**

Department of Communication

University of Utah

[sara.yeo@utah.edu](mailto:sara.yeo@utah.edu)

 @sarakyeo

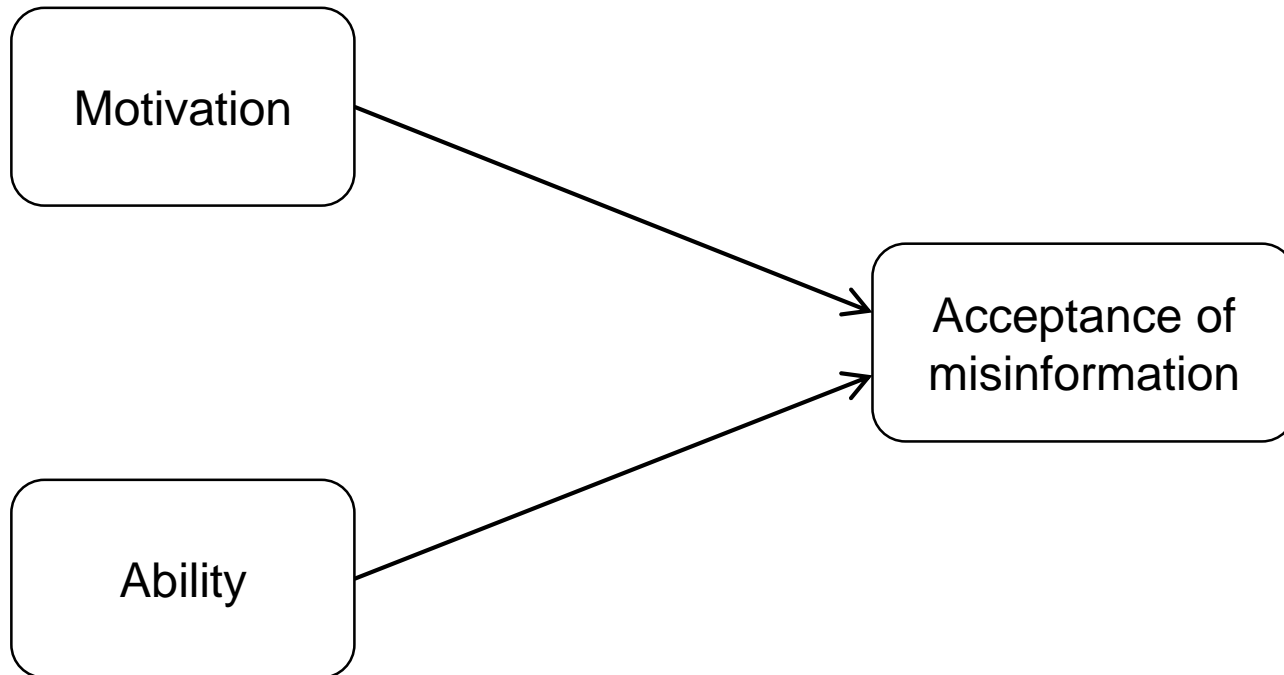
---

Arthur M. Sackler Colloquium

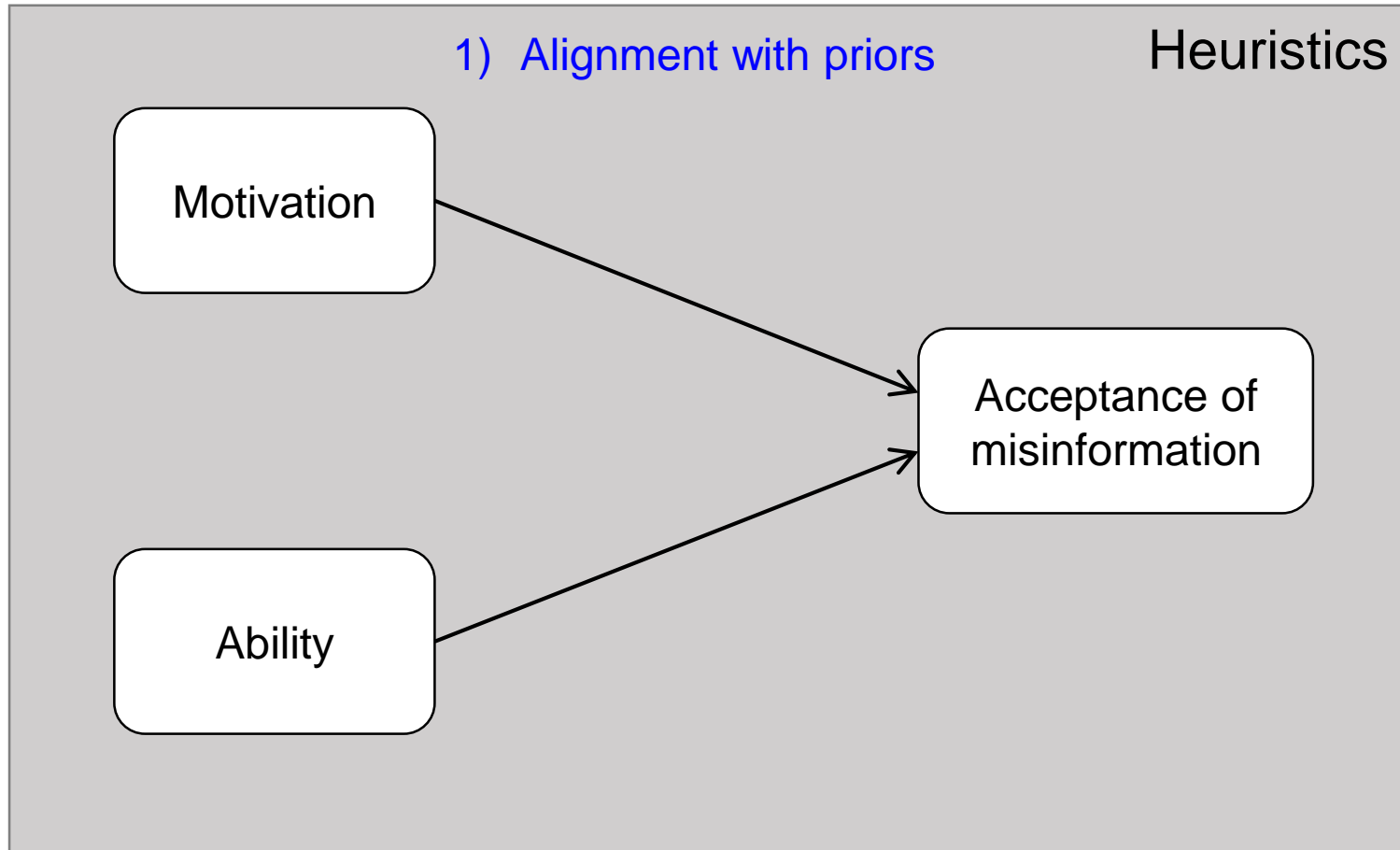
April 3, 2019

# MOTIVATION & ABILITY DRIVE ACCEPTANCE

(Kuklinski, Quirk, Jerit, Schwieder, & Rich, 2000; Lewandowsky, Ecker, Seifert, Schwarz, & Cook, 2012; Scheufele & Krause, 2019; ...)



# HEURISTICS ARE CENTRAL TO PROCESS



# ... ALIGNS WITH OUR PRIORS

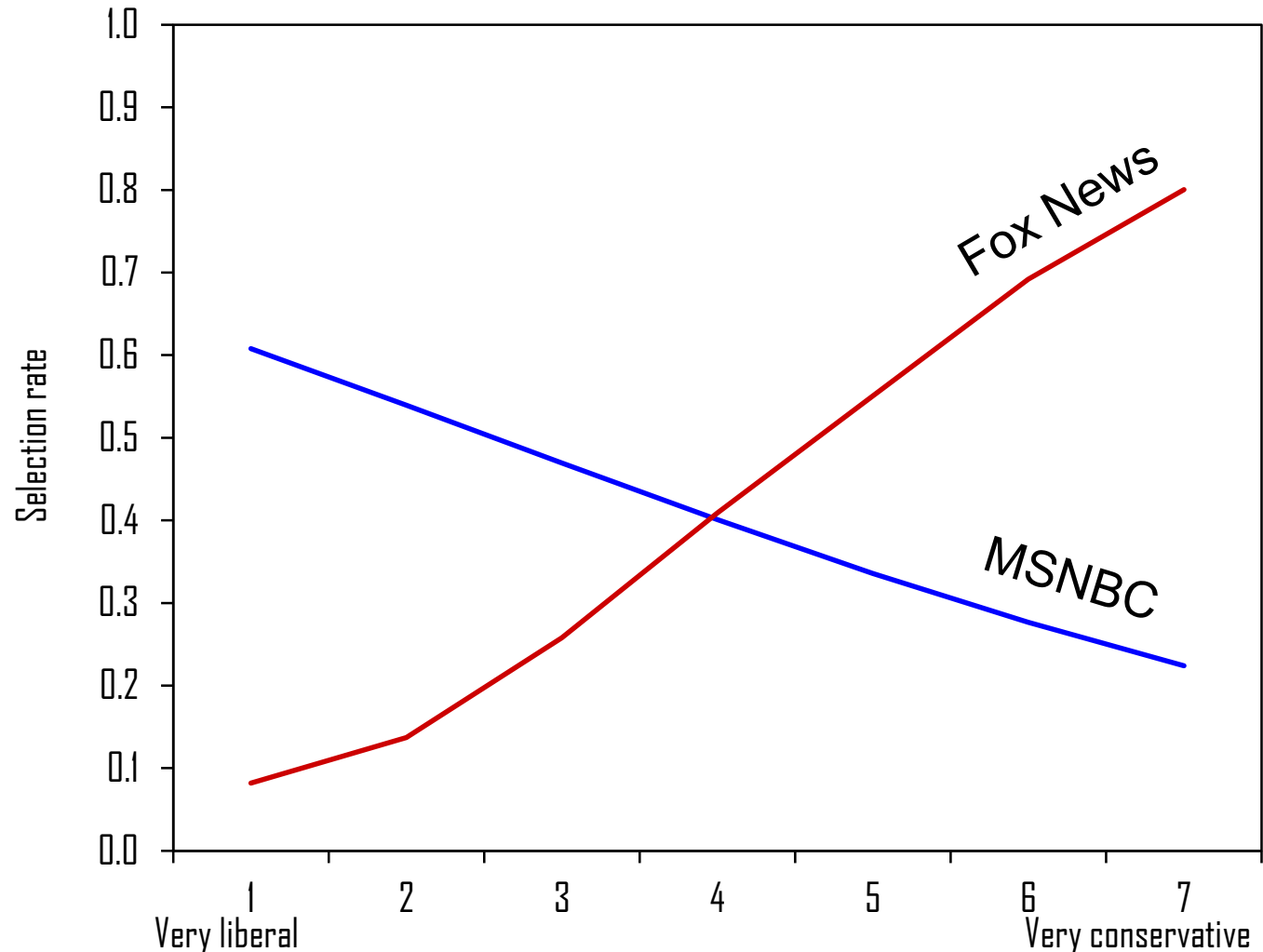
## Ease cognitive dissonance

- **Selective exposure** (Festinger, 1957; Sears & Freedman, 1967)
- **Biased information processing** (Kunda, 1990; Taber & Lodge, 2006)

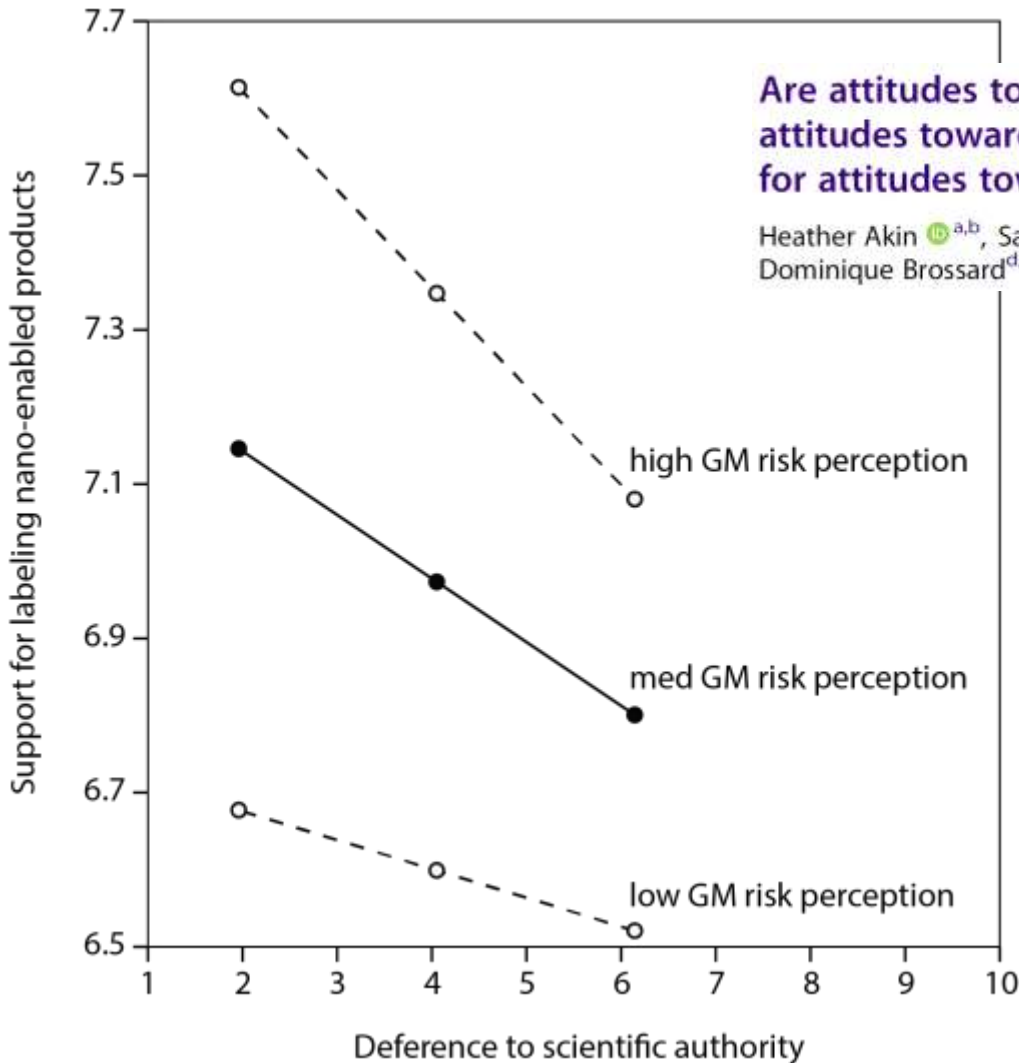
# WE TURN TO PARTISAN SOURCES FOR SCIENCE INFO

Selecting Our Own Science: How Communication Contexts and Individual Traits Shape Information Seeking

By SARA K. YEO, MICHAEL A. XENOS, DOMINIQUE BROSSARD, and DIETRAM A. SCHEUFELE



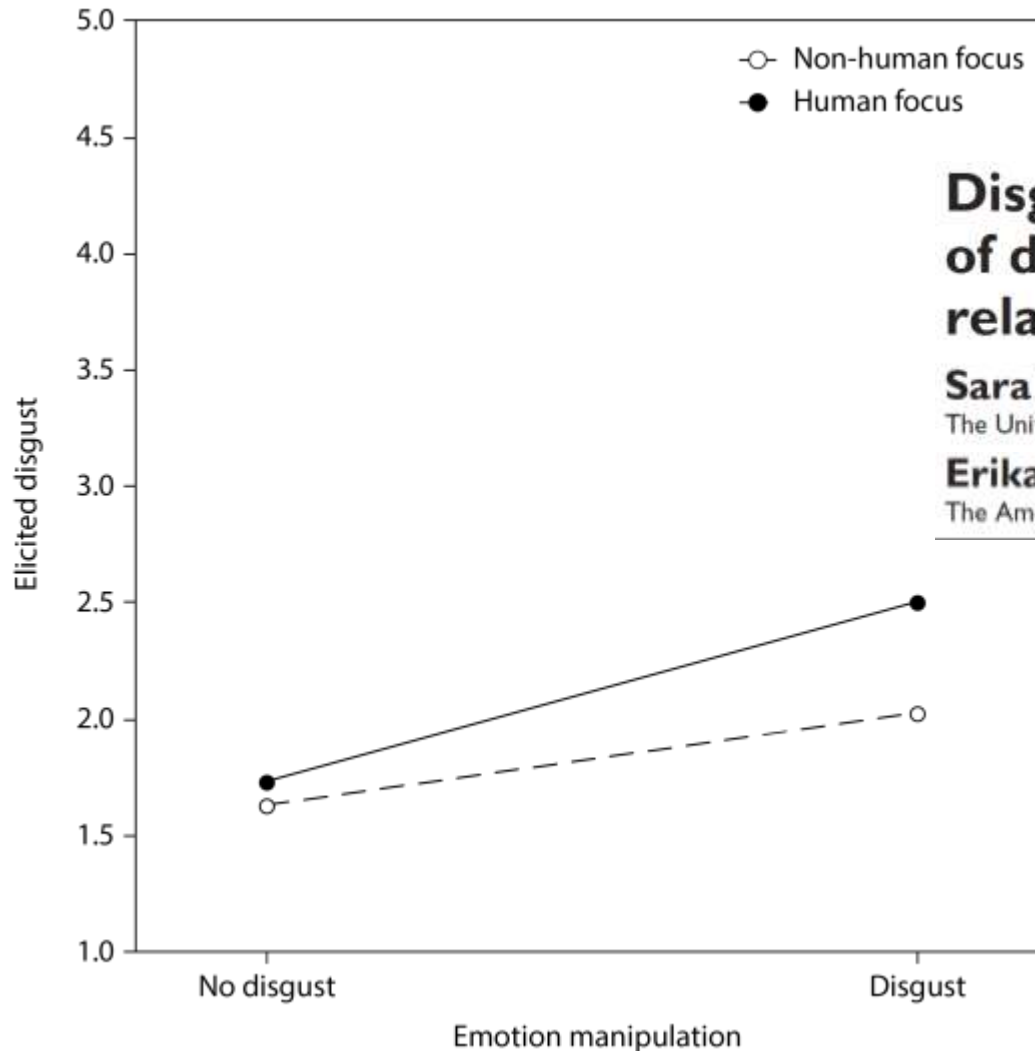
# RISK PERCEPTIONS CAN “SPILLOVER”



Are attitudes toward labeling nano products linked to attitudes toward GMO? Exploring a potential 'spillover' effect for attitudes toward controversial technologies

Heather Akin<sup>a,b</sup>, Sara K. Yeo<sup>c</sup>, Christopher D. Wirz<sup>d</sup>, Dietram A. Scheufele<sup>d,e</sup>, Dominique Brossard<sup>d,e</sup>, Michael A. Xenos<sup>f</sup> and Elizabeth A. Corley<sup>g</sup>

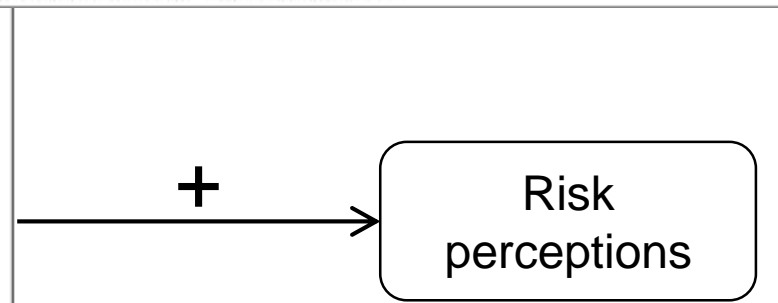
# EMOTIONS INFLUENCE HOW WE PERCEIVE SCIENCE



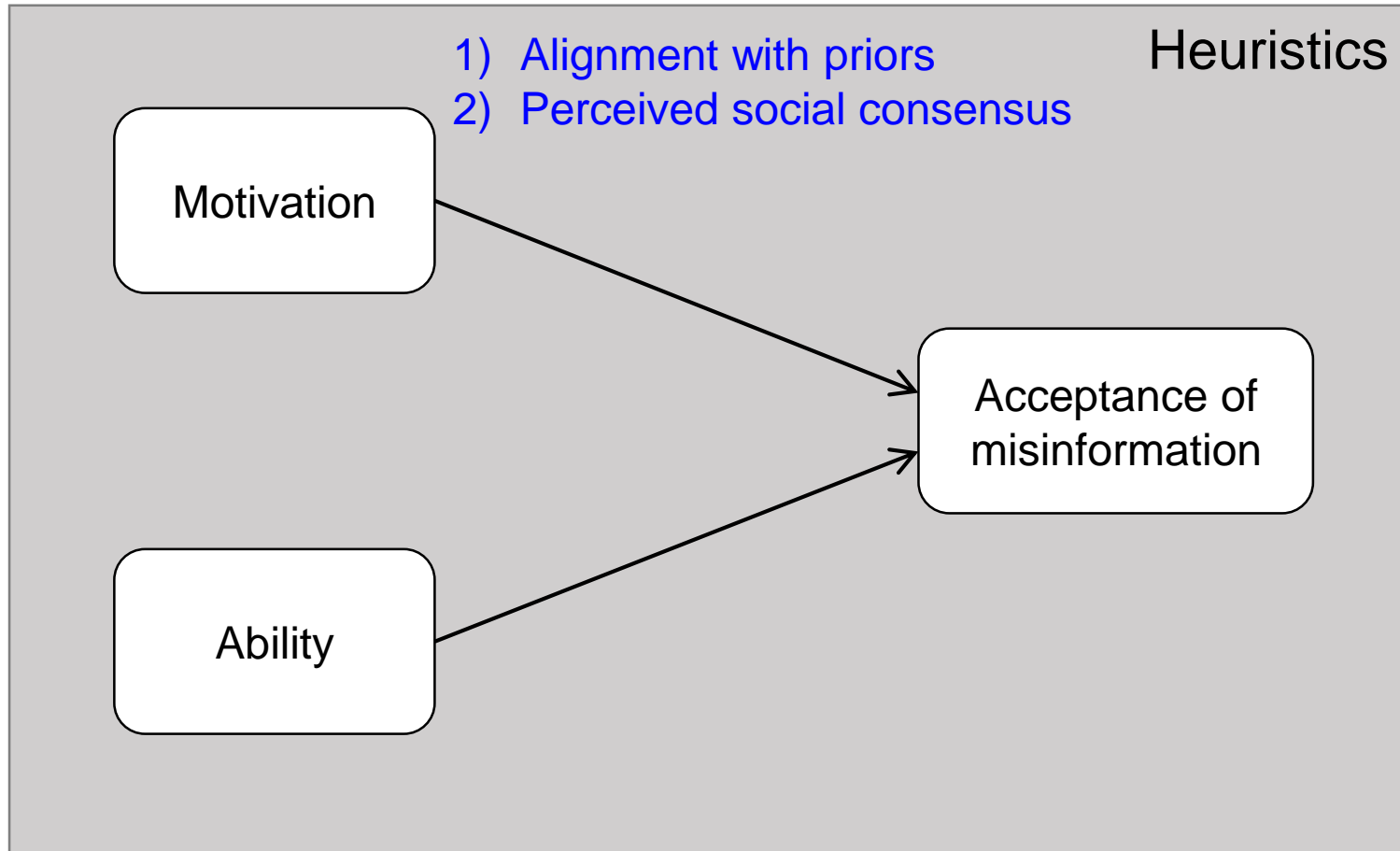
**Disgusting microbes: The effect of disgust on perceptions of risks related to modifying microbiomes**

Sara K. Yeo <sup>1</sup>, Ye Sun and Meaghan McKasy  
The University of Utah, USA

Erika C. Shugart  
The American Society for Cell Biology, USA



# HEURISTICS ARE CENTRAL TO MOTIVATION & ABILITY



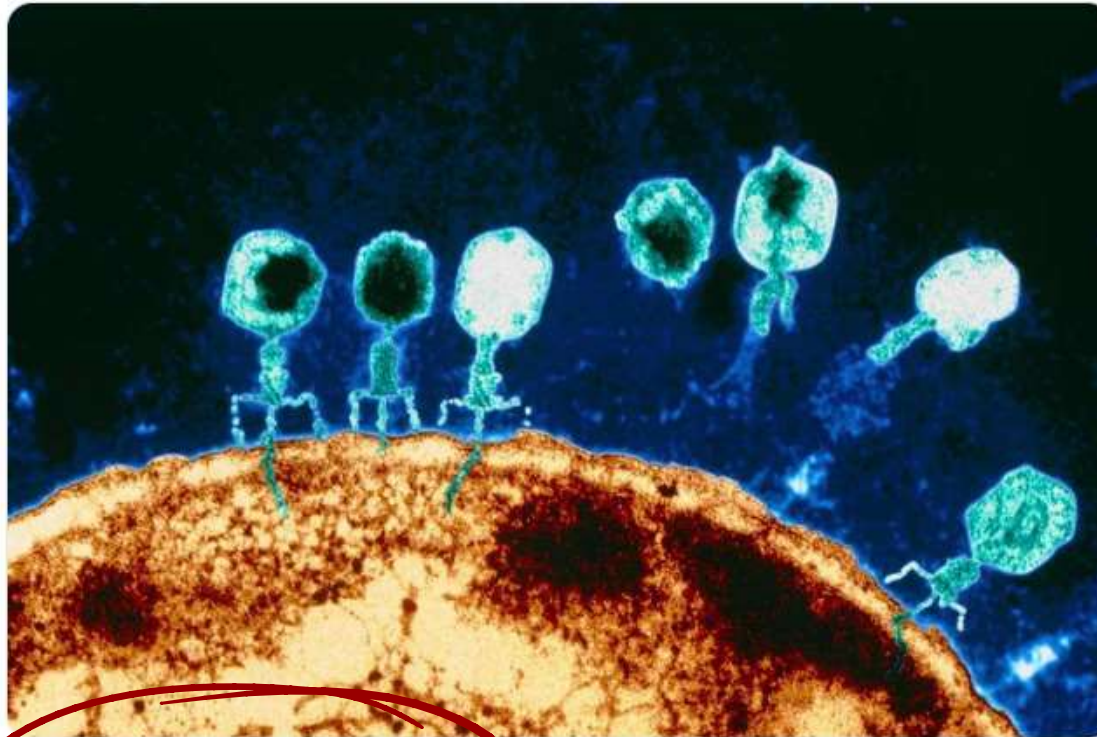


# ... WHEN OTHERS (LIKE ME) ACCEPT MISINFORMATION



New Scientist @newscientist · 13h

Giant viruses have weaponised **CRISPR** against their bacterial hosts  
[newscenti.st/2TPqrbD](https://www.newscientist.com/story/20190918-giant-viruses-have-weaponised-crispr-against-their-bacterial-hosts/)



1 29 97

## YouTube, Social Norms and Perceived Salience of Climate Change in the American Mind

James T. Spartz, Leona Yi-Fan Su, Robert Griffin,  
Dominique Brossard & Sharon Dunwoody

## When a Personal HPV Story on a Blog Influences Perceived Social Norms: The Roles of Personal Experience, Framing, Perceived Similarity, and Social Media Metrics

Tae Kyoung Lee<sup>a</sup> and Leona Yi-Fan Su<sup>b</sup>

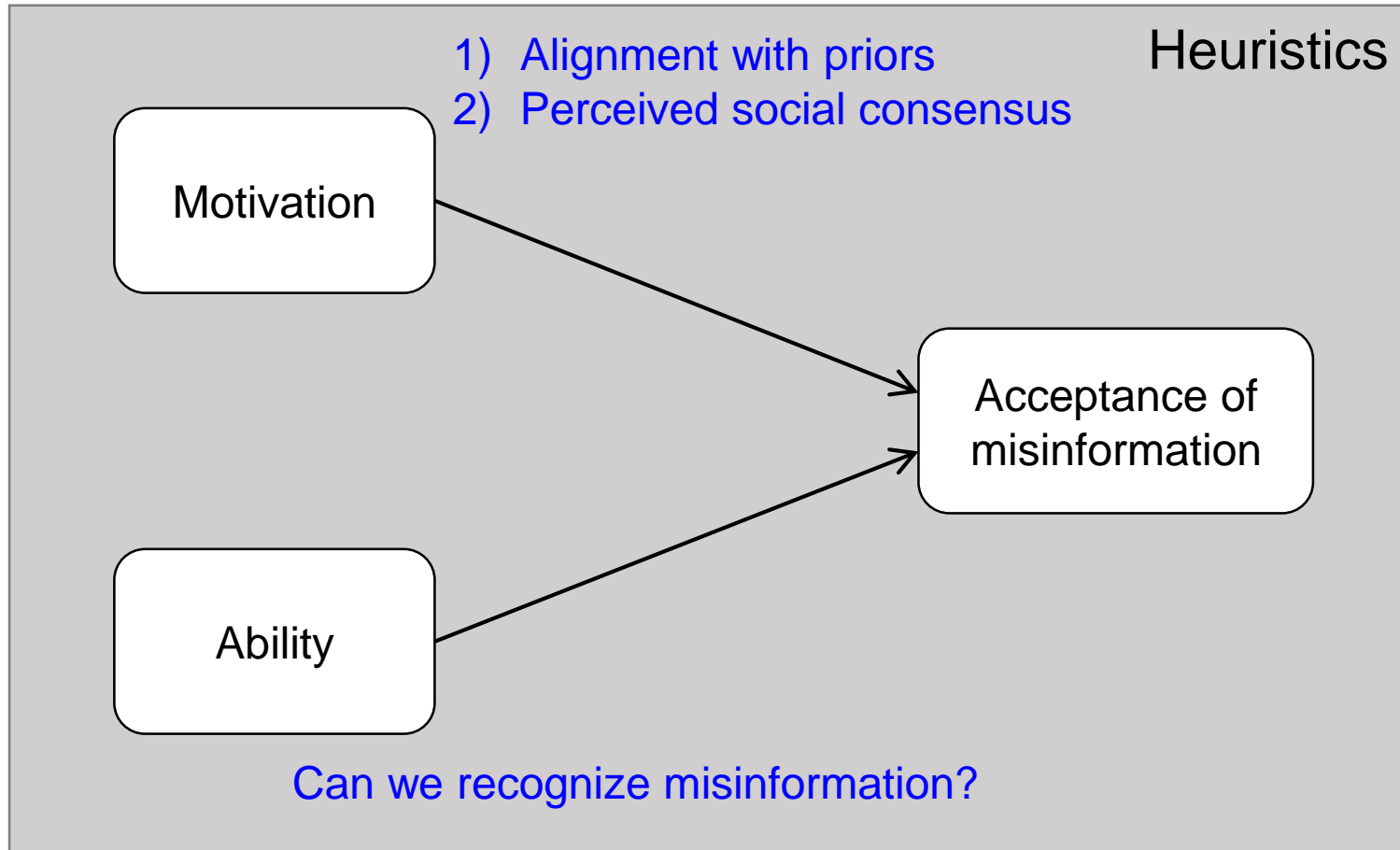
<sup>a</sup>Department of Communication, University of Utah; <sup>b</sup>Department of Advertising, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

## Alcohol's Getting a Bit More Social: When Alcohol Marketing Messages on Facebook Increase Young Adults' Intentions to Imbibe

Saleem Alhabash, Anna R. McAlister,  
Elizabeth Taylor Quilliam, Jef I. Richards, and Chen Lou  
*Department of Advertising and Public Relations  
Michigan State University*



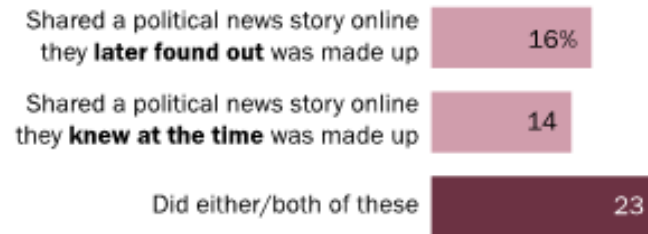
# HEURISTICS ARE CENTRAL TO MOTIVATION & ABILITY



# ABILITY: RECOGNIZING MISINFORMATION

**About one in four report sharing fabricated news – whether aware at the time or not**

*% of U.S. adults who say they ...*



(Pew Research Center, 2016)

Perceptions of credibility should help, but...

- **heuristics** (McLeod et al., 2017; Metzger & Flanagin, 2013)

# WORKING AROUND MISINFORMATION

Digital information literacy (Christ & Potter, 1998)

- “ability to [...] evaluate messages”
- literacy is low (Eshet-Alkalai & Chajut, 2009)

Message and communicator

- evidence-based
- strategic

Bridging the practice-research interface



# WORKING AROUND MISINFORMATION: MOTIVATION, ABILITY, HEURISTICS

**Sara K. Yeo**

Department of Communication

University of Utah

[sara.yeo@utah.edu](mailto:sara.yeo@utah.edu)

 @sarakyeo

---

Arthur M. Sackler Colloquium

April 3, 2019