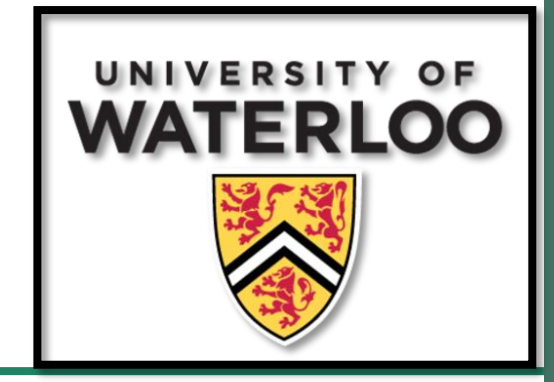


Judging others' wise reasoning: Wise writers are perceived more favorably and are more often chosen as partners

Amanda Rotella & Igor Grossmann



INTRO

- Wise reasoning includes taking others' perspectives, being open to compromise, having intellectual humility, and looking at broader contexts. Wise reasoning is valued and associated with prosociality (Grossmann, 2017).
- Prior research finds that there is within-person variation in wise reasoning, and that people reason more wisely in public (Grossmann, Gerlach, & Denissen, 2016). This suggests that there are motivational factors influencing wise reasoning.
- We hypothesized that people use more wise reasoning around others because it signals that they possess valued traits. Thus, we predicted that judges would be able to discern the use of wise reasoning, then use these reasoning processes to make character judgments.
- Slow life-history strategy traits (e.g., family-oriented, sexually restricted, and nonaggressive; Baumard & Chevallier, 2015), are highly valued and associated with prosociality. Perceivers may use wise reasoning as a cue to infer these characteristics.
- We aim to investigate how people who use wise reasoning are perceived.

METHODS

- Across two within-participant studies (Ns = 216 & 273), participants read 4 to 6 short texts (S1: student conflicts; S2: workplace conflict). Texts were adapted from prior studies (see Table 1), pre-rated on wise reasoning. High wise reasoning texts were matched with low wise reasoning texts, based on length and complexity.
- After each text, participants provided their impression of the writer, rated the writer on several characteristics (see Table 2), and answered a partner-choice question
- We computed multilevel regression models nested within participants. Predictions, methods, and analyses were pre-registered on the OSF.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Are writers of wise texts viewed more positively compared to writers of non-wise texts?

- In both studies, wise writers (vs. non-wise writers) were perceived more positively and less negatively.
- Wise writers were judged to be more wise, trustworthy, thoughtful, moral, patient, and kind; less emotional, selfish, aggressive, and impulsive. See Table 2.

Are wise writers perceived as slow life history strategists?

- Wise writers (vs. non-wise writers) were perceived to be less aggressive, less impulsive, more educated, and having a more restricted reproductive strategy (Table 2).
- Perceived life history partially mediated the relationship between wise reasoning and perceptions of writers (see Fig 2).

Are wise writers chosen as partners?

- In a partner choice decision, participants disproportionately chose the writers of wise texts compared to writers of texts without wise reasoning, $\chi^2 = 19.00, p < .001$ and $\chi^2 = 54.41, p < .001$, respectively.

Thus, people can detect wise reasoning in short texts, and use this information to make judgments and decisions.

In short texts, writers who used wise reasoning were judged more favorably, perceived as having slower life history strategies, and were more likely to be chosen as coworkers

Join me on Zoom for questions/thoughts on my research! Sat Dec 12, 2020 8:30-9:15 AM EST [Link](#) (passcode: RmJ4xL)

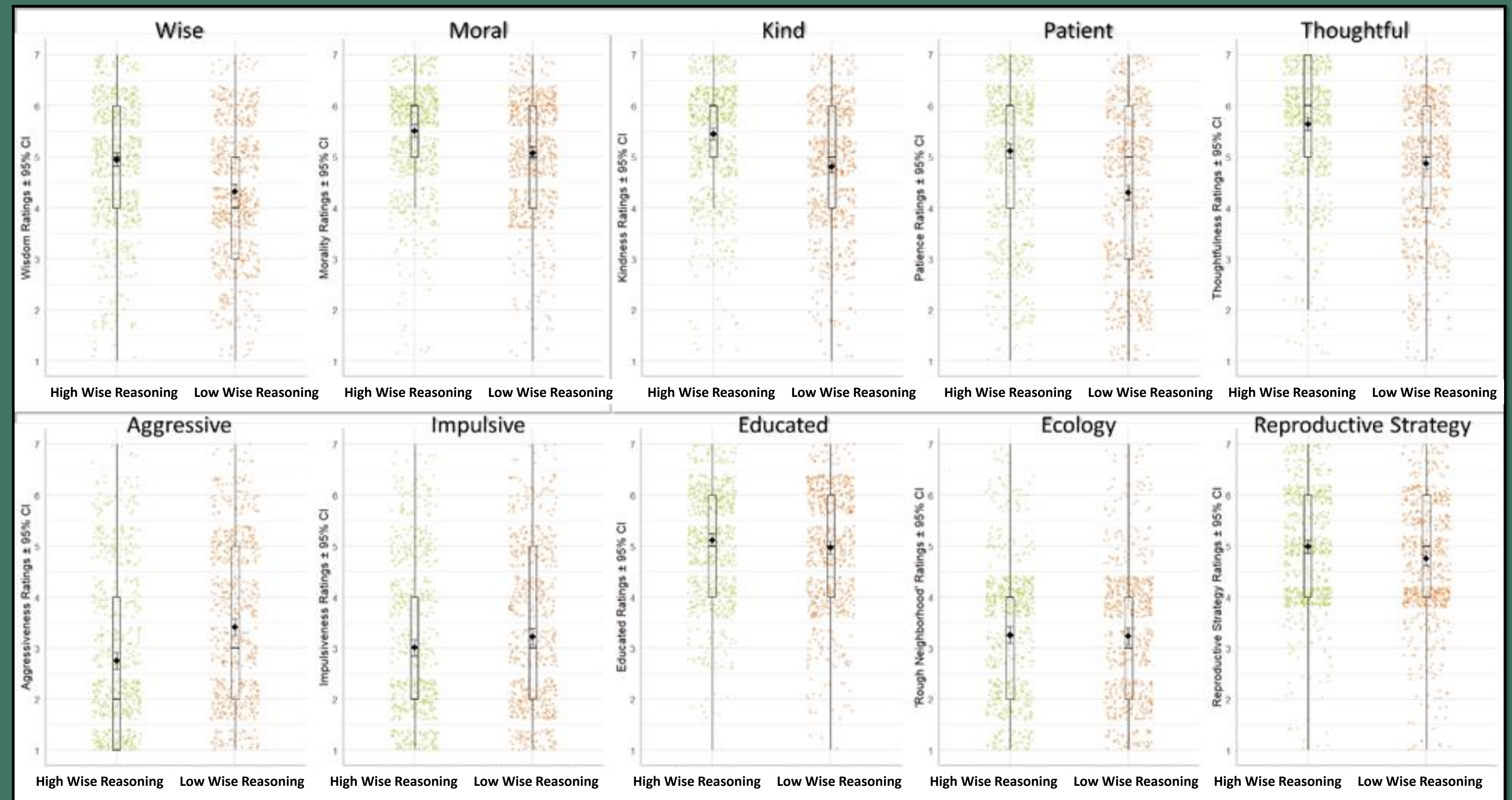


Figure 1. Perceived ratings of writers of texts (Study 1) that contain wise reasoning (green) or do not contain wise reasoning (orange) for traits (top panel) and life history characteristics (bottom panel). Means are represented by black diamonds with 95% confidence intervals. Thick black lines represent the median with quantile ranges. Dots are individual data points.

Table 1. Examples of texts presented to participants (study 2) which were rated high or low on wise reasoning. Stimuli were adapted from prior studies, where participants responded to conflicts.

Example stimuli from Study 2	
High wise reasoning	"I am wondering if this employee is ill? Has a substance abuse issue? Crisis in his family? I would sit down with this person and explain my dilemma. I would ask this person if there is anything, I could do to help his performance improve. I would ask this person to come up with a plan to show how they could improve in the next month, and then I would monitor weekly to see how things are going. I don't want to lose this person unless absolutely necessary."
Low wise reasoning	"Let them go. They are there to work, their problems at home is not your problem at work. This employee has been under performing consistently. Its better to find someone who is passionate about the job. Their poor performance looks bad on you as the manager, then as a whole company. Leave your feelings out of work. If they needed the job that bad they would show up and do well."

Table 2. Effect of Wise Reasoning on Writer Judgements in Experiments 1 and 2 (two-tailed t-tests, multilevel models). Diff. Est. is the estimated preference for wise writers (vs. unwise writers), based on a 7-point scale

	STUDY 1		STUDY 2	
	p	Diff. Est.	p	Diff. Est.
Wise	< .001	0.62	< .001	1.36
Moral	< .001	0.43	< .001	1.66
Kind	< .001	0.64	< .001	2.31
Patient	< .001	0.82	< .001	2.59
Thoughtful	< .001	0.78	< .001	2.07
Trustworthy	< .001	0.33	< .001	1.48
Rational	< .001	0.40	< .001	0.96
Reasonable	< .001	0.48	< .001	1.61
Competent	< .001	0.39	< .001	1.05
Emotional	< .001	-0.36	< .001	0.96
Selfish	< .001	-0.32	< .001	1.96
Intelligent	-	-	< .001	0.98
Judgements				
Like writer	< .001	0.50	< .001	1.88
Seek advice from writer	< .001	0.51	< .001	1.88
Share values with writer	< .001	0.40	< .001	1.90
Values others	< .001	0.61	< .001	2.32
Values others in the social conflict	< .001	0.70	-	-
Life history				
Aggressive	< .001	-0.66	< .001	-2.09
Impulsive	.010	-0.22	< .001	-1.46
Plans for future	-	-	< .001	0.94
From rough neighborhood	.729	0.02	< .001	0.44
Grew up in safe, stable environment	-	-	< .001	0.47
Educated	.011	0.15	< .001	0.82
Faithful romantic partner	< .001	0.30	< .001	1.26
Prefers long-term relationships	< .001	0.23	< .001	1.03
Is sexually promiscuous	-	-	< .001	0.58
Dedicated parent	-	-	< .001	1.21
Is a family person	-	-	< .001	1.21
Has likely engaged in criminal activity	-	-	< .001	0.58
Emotional reactions				
Frustration	< .001	-0.70	< .001	1.88
Annoyance	< .001	-0.73	< .001	1.87
Sympathy	.019	0.20	< .001	1.55
Anger	.001	-0.27	-	-
Sadness	.016	0.19	-	-

Figure 2. Mediation model of the effect of wise reasoning on perceptions of writers, mediated by perceived life history strategies.

