

DECISIONS, DECISIONS

DONA LEWANDOWSKI
UNC SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT


APRIL 2011

The slide features a light gray background with a white rectangular area containing the title and author information. To the right of this area is a vertical gold-colored textured rectangle.

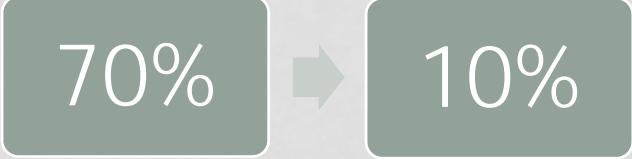
YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE
SCIENCE OF DECISION-MAKING. . .

. . . because you are a decision-
maker.

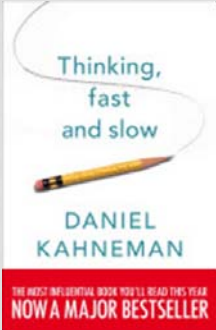

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Decision Fatigue



70% → 10%



Thinking,
fast
and slow

DANIEL
KAHNEMAN

THE MOST INFLUENTIAL BOOK YOU'LL READ THIS YEAR
NOW A MAJOR BESTSELLER

His research, conducted over a period of decades, eventually led scientists to question two very basic assumptions we make about ourselves as humans:

MYTH #1



We accurately perceive the world around us.

MYTH #2



We are consciously aware—and thus in control of—internal influences on our perceptions and behavior.



Fast Thinking is

- Fast
- Automatic
- Outside of our awareness
- Intuitive
- Beyond our control
- Efficient (requires little energy)

Slow Thinking is

- Sequenced
- Conscious
- Effortful
- Deliberative
- Requires attention

WE SPEND MOST OF OUR TIME
THINKING FAST.



CAN YOU READ THIS?

I cnoat blveiee I aulacly uesdnatnrd waht I am rdanieg. Aoccdrnig to rscheearch at Cmabrigde Unervtisy, it deosn't mttar in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoatnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe.

READ THE WORD

BLUE BLACK GREEN

YELLOW RED BLUE

RED BLACK GREEN

SAY THE PRIMARY COLOR OF THE
BALLOON



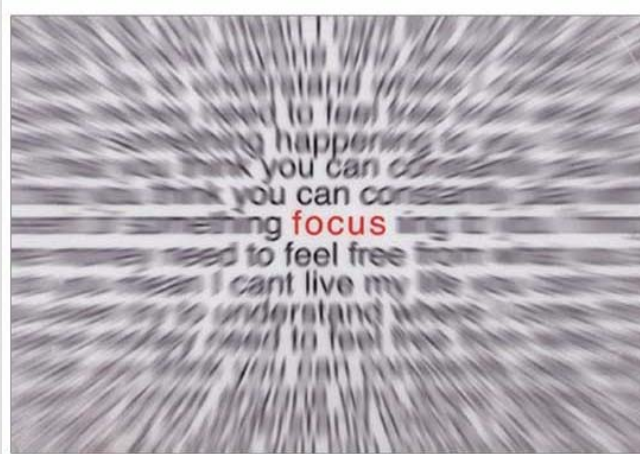
SAY THE COLOR OF THE WORD

BLACK **BLACK** **GREEN**
YELLOW **BLUE** **RED**
RED SHARK! **BLUE**

RECAP

- We are flooded with information, and process much of it automatically
- Automatic processing is necessary for us to function
- Automatic processing can be very **helpful**
 - Saves cognitive resources
 - Fight or flight / primitive brain
- Automatic processing can be very **unhelpful**
 - It sacrifices accuracy for efficiency and speed
 - It's fertile ground for bias

HOW GOOD ARE YOU AT FOCUSING YOUR ATTENTION?



Did a gorilla stop by?

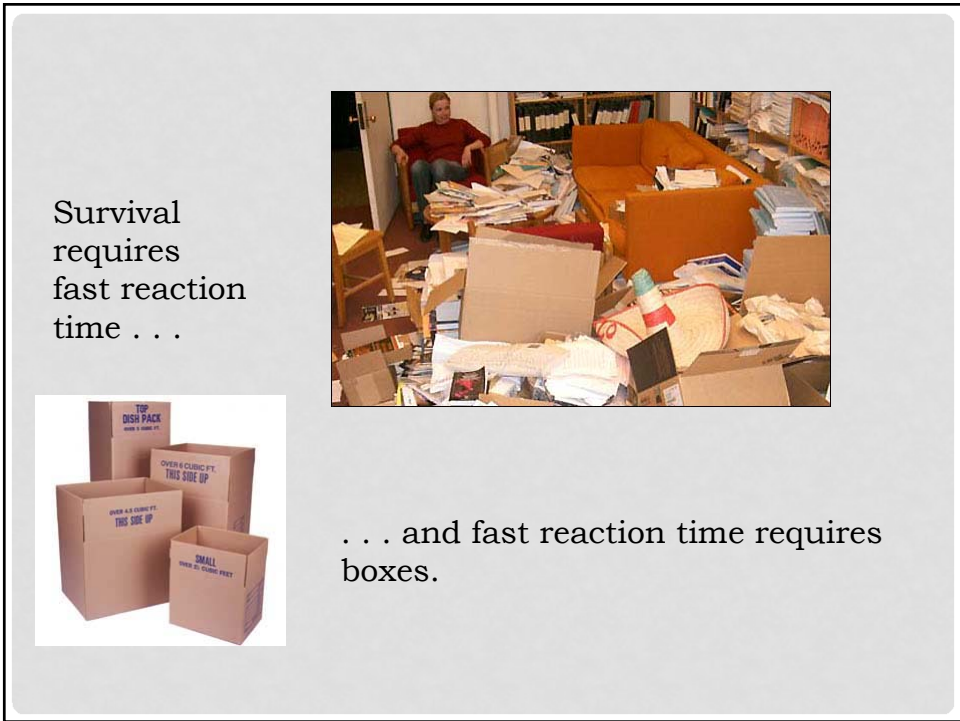


Magistrates' Basic School
January, 2011 SOG/DGL

MYTH #1



We accurately perceive the world
around us.



“Getting to know you . . .
. . . getting to know all about you.”



STEREOTYPES MAKE LIFE SIMPLER.



Lewandowski
IOG/2007

BUT SOMETIMES THEY'RE WRONG!



In-Group



Out-Group



OUR MOST
IMPORTANT
CATEGORIES

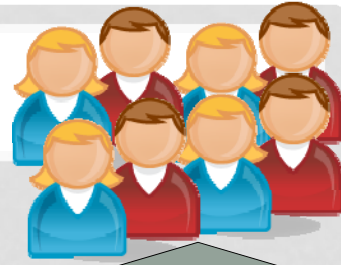
SOME PREDICTABLE THINGS HAPPEN AS A RESULT OF THAT BOX-PACKING.



And we can categorize a person into in-group/out-group in the blink of an eye.



We see members of our in-group as diverse individuals. . .



“They”



. . . while members of an out-group seem pretty much the same.

Lewandowski
IOG/2007



“Surely not guilty. Next case.”


We have a more positive impression of members of our in-group than of those who aren't



WE DON'T NEED MUCH INFORMATION BEFORE WE FORM FIRM OPINIONS ABOUT A PARTICULAR OUT-GROUP.

Lewandowski
IOG/2007

BRAIN RULE #1



I do not like to change my mind.

MY NEPHEW



"He just got in with the wrong crowd."

4/8/2015



We acc~~X~~actly perceive the world around us *in a manner calculated to enhance our chances of survival.*

REMEMBER MYTH #2?



We are consciously aware—
and thus in control of –
internal influences on our
perceptions and behavior . . .

. . . except for when Fast
Thinking is running the show. . .

. . . which is most of the time!

HEURISTICS—MENTAL SHORTCUTS

- Decision fatigue? Stick with the status quo.
- Classification and stereotyping
- Confirmation bias
- Availability
- Self-fulfilling prophecy

Implicit Bias

BIAS

Explicit	Implicit
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consciously accessible• Endorsed as appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not consciously accessible• Likely to be disavowed as inappropriate

“We know that racism is bad, and we want to be good people.”

4/8/2015

I believe that I am in the top 50% of participants in this class in my ability to minimize the impact of bias on the decisions I make.

1. Yes, I am
2. No, I am not

97%

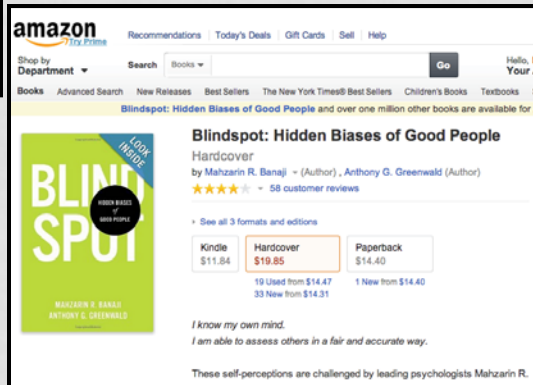
HEURISTICS – MENTAL SHORTCUTS

- Decision fatigue? Stick with the status quo.
- Anchoring
- Classification and stereotyping
- Confirmation bias
- Availability
- **Bias blind spot**

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The Bias Blind-Spot



4/8/2015

IMPLICIT BIAS

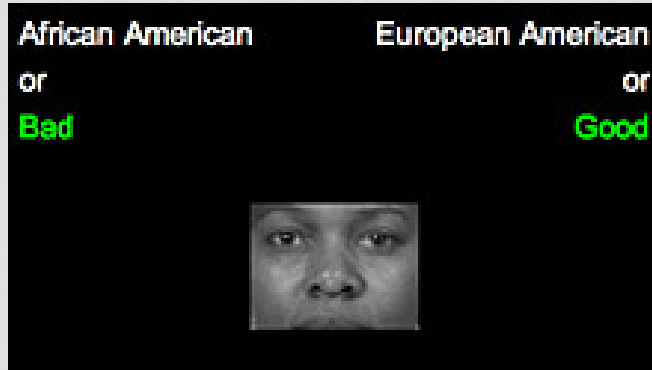
- NOT explicit bias
- Implicit = unconscious
- Reflects not a belief, but an association
- Exerts a powerful influence on decision-making
- Impact increased by fatigue, strong emotion

For example, many of our anti-discrimination policies focus on finding the bad apples who are explicitly prejudiced. In fact, the serious discrimination is implicit, subtle and nearly universal. Both blacks and whites subtly try to get a white partner when asked to team up to do an intellectually difficult task. In computer shooting simulations, both black and white participants were more likely to think black figures were armed. In emergency rooms, whites are pervasively given stronger painkillers than blacks or Hispanics. Clearly, we should spend more effort rigging situations to reduce universal, unconscious racism.

David Brooks,
New York Times
January 11, 2013

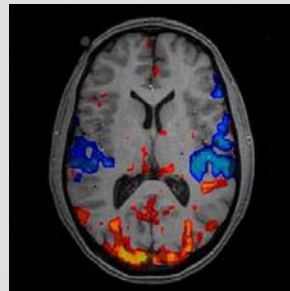
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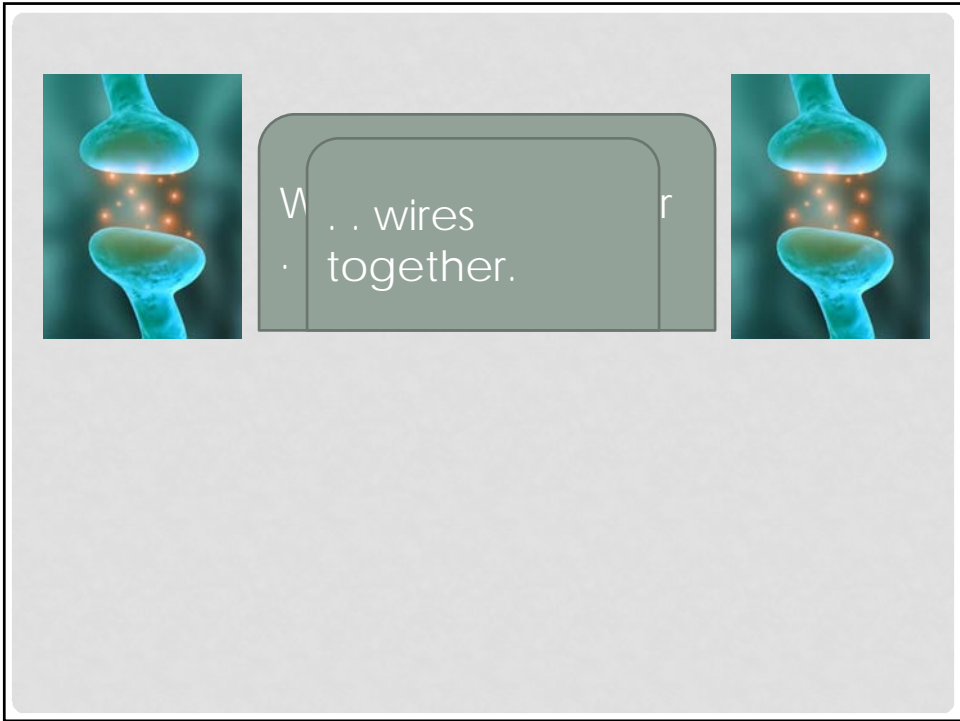
Just one example of many ...



Implicit Association
Test

HOW DO WE KNOW IT'S THERE?







PALOS VERDES PENINSULA NEWS

SAVEDATE: MARCH 15, 2014

LOCAL NEWS

Five Charged in Rocky Mount Shooting, Robbery

Sports Center for the Performing Arts, 27179 Crossfield Drive in MDE, on Saturday, March 20 at 2 and 4 p.m. Tickets are \$18 for adults and \$19 for students. For the evening performance and \$50 for adults and \$15 for students at the matinee performance. For reservations, call 544-0401.

UPCOMING — The Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District and Friends of School Music host the 15th Palos Verdes Elementary Choral Festival on March 23, 24 and 25 at the North Center for the Performing Arts, 27179 Crossfield Drive in MDE. All shows begin at 7:30 p.m. For tickets, call the North Center office at 544-0401.

ONGOING — The Sculpture Edge, 20955 S. Western Ave., Suite 113 in MDE, continues "Third Time's a Charm," an exhibit of 150 collages by artist Steve Jackson, through March 30. For gallery hours, call 833-3612.

ONGOING — "Musical Treasures" exhibition continues.

Two years ago, U.S. Navy personnel and their families assigned to the Arangi Navy base, home of the U.S.S. Kearsarge, were treated to a new experience when Terry Fleming and his band British-American Band, Inc. performed at the base to entertain them on St. Patrick's Day. Fleming and the other five members of the band were assigned and honored to be able to go to Japan and perform there for the first time.

For the third year in a row, Fleming — a local insurance broker in Rolling Hills by day and an musician by night — and the band traveled to entertain the Navy men, women and families at various bases throughout Japan.

Fleming, the leader of the band on accordion and harmonica, actually is the only member of the band from Simsbury. Other members include lead singer Julie Deane, a civil engineer in Newport Beach, Terry Dwyer, guitarist and bassist with CBS news, Dennis Doyle, Celtic harpist, a professor at Glendale College, Kevin Wood, keyboards and bagpipes, music

teacher and assistant director of the Orange County Symphony and Mike Tibbitts, bass, a computer engineer. The band has been playing the length and breadth of California for the past 23 years. They have played at jobs, wakes, weddings, birthdays and on occasions where there was little expense for throwing a party.

Fleming says it was by coincidence the band got the opportunity to travel to Japan. Another band was unable to travel at the last minute and so he and his band were offered the opportunity to go in their place.

With some preparation they made their first trip and with the overwhelming response they received at Arangi, any fears they had were quickly allayed. On a large St. Patrick's Day, hundreds of families, clad in many shades of green, whooped it up, sang their hearts out and danced up a storm. At the evening were ten, many in the audience were embarrassed to try their hand or foot at the Irish jig, with much encouragement from the band.

Even though far from home, the Arangi base — situated a few hours

west of Tokyo — felt like home away from home, with its lush green rolling landscape and its multitude of cherry blossoms — some "Ok" Fleming says, "was" struck by the commitment and dedication of one man and woman in uniform as they played their part in protecting and serving in an ever challenging and hectic world."

A couple of the families even took time out from their busy schedule to host Terry and the band members. They treated them to a guided tour of the base and accompanied them on a few exciting trips off the base, visiting beautiful secret spots, monuments and viewed great beaches.

On a visit to downtown Tokyo, the band came across what they assumed was a very rare sight, a place called "Senshi Market" an Irish pub located in the heart of a bustling downtown. Upon checking the establishment out, they discovered a real authentic Irish Pub with excellent Guinness and good pub grub. It also happened to be open six nights, so the band members took over the stage

and entertained the locals like a few New England boys. It turned out that it was just one of many establishments in the city.

A special bond developed between the band members and these families and already exchange visits have occurred where the same families were on leave in the United States.

For more information about the band, log on to www.britishamericanband.com

THE DILEMMA



We have human brains, hard-wired to make rapid decisions making survival more likely .

THE DILEMMA

. . . but important decisions require a brain more concerned with accuracy than survival.



SOME OF YOUR DECISIONS ARE DICTATED BY THE LAW

But many of them are not. If you believe that the people affected by your decisions are entitled to fair treatment unaffected by bias, achieving that goal requires struggle.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: A PLAN OF ATTACK

Consciously take note of
differences
(and similarities, too).



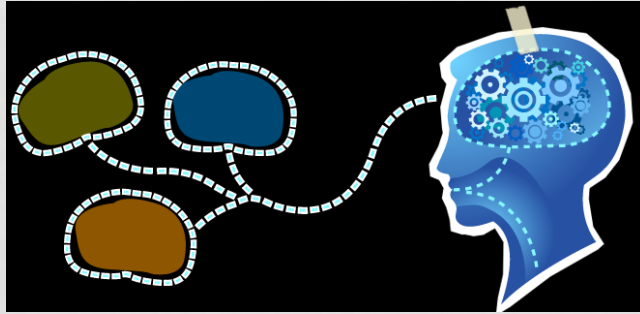
BE HUMBLE



Remember that rules, policies, and standardized practices are weapons against bias and other cognitive errors. Strive for consistency, and force yourself to articulate the reasons for a decision to deviate.



KNOW THYSELF



KEEP LEARNING!



First say to yourself what you would be; and then do what you have to do.
-- Epictetus



What do we do when getting it right really matters?





Walking is automatic.



Right?