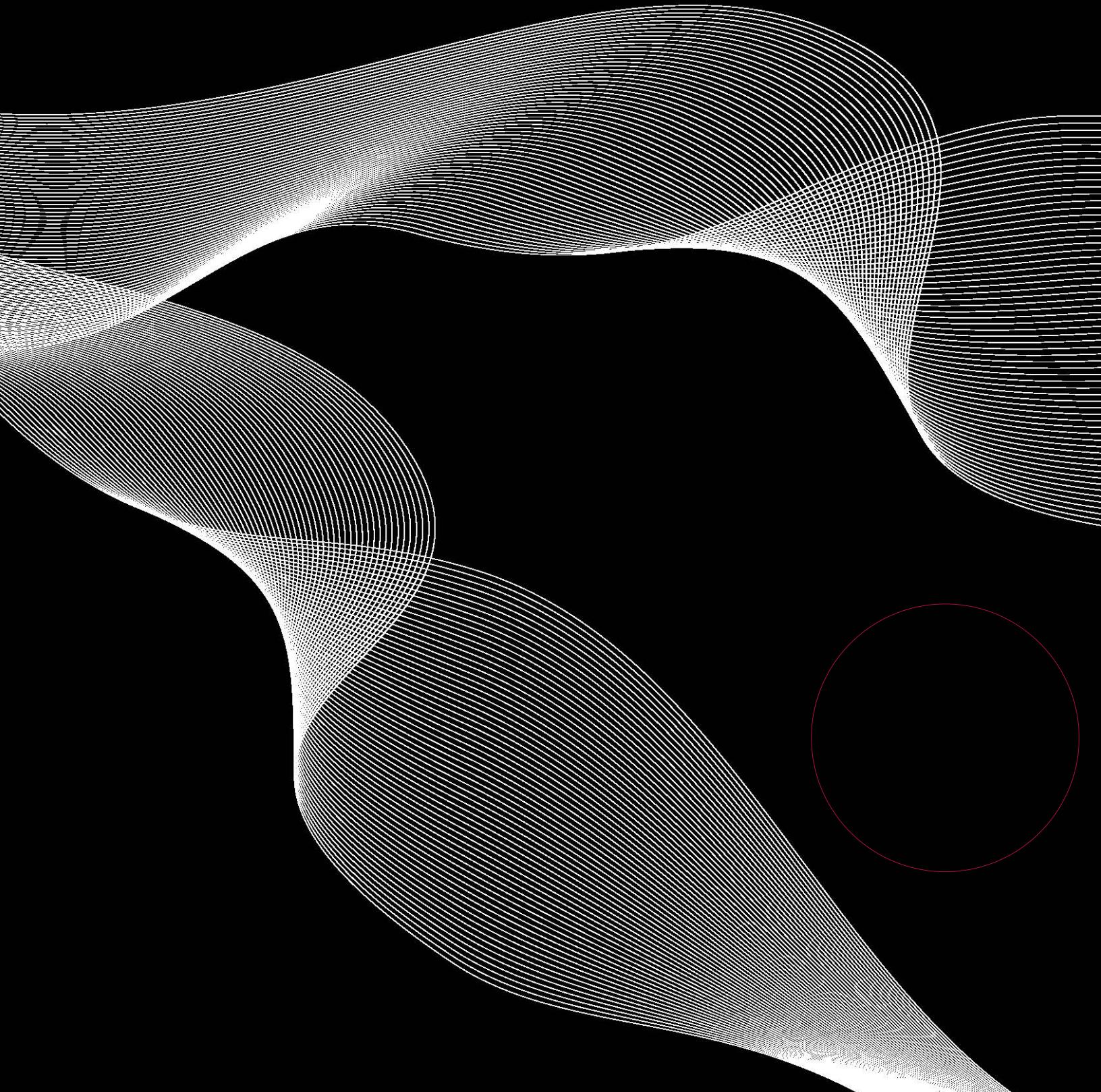
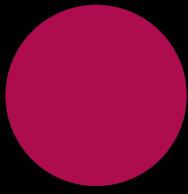
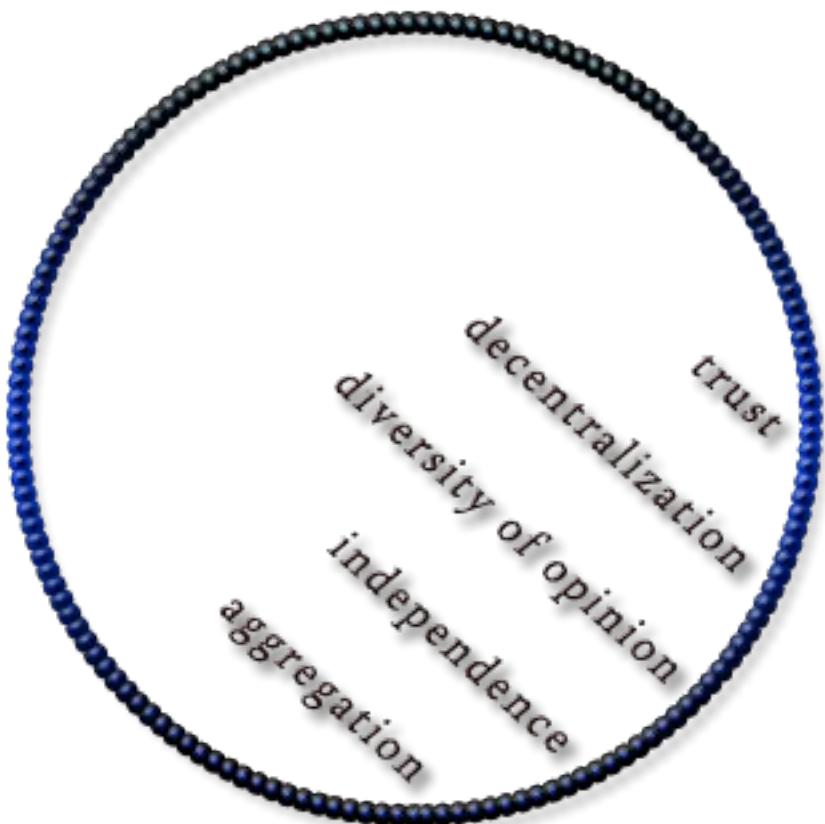


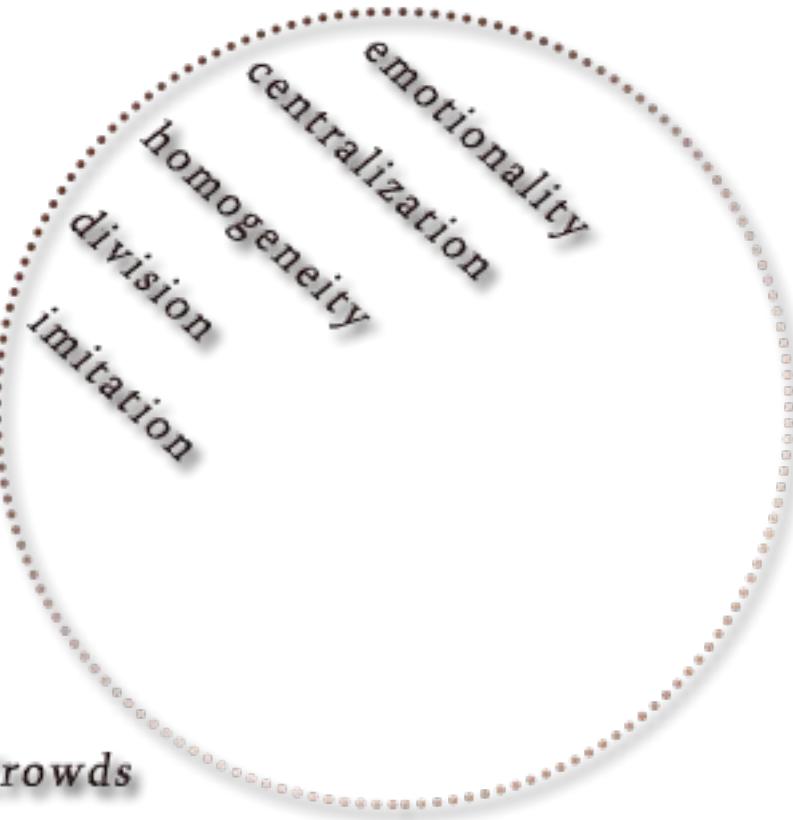
# Group Think



## *Wisdom of Crowds*



## *Folly of Crowds*





Abilene Paradox  
Amity-enmity Complex



False Consensus  
Filter Bubble  
Flaming on the Internet  
Folie À Deux  
Foot-in-the-door Technique  
Freethought



Bandwagon Effect



Group Dynamics  
Group Flow  
Group Polarization  
Self-serving Bias  
Groupshift  
Groupthink



Collective Behavior  
Collective Consciousness  
Collective Effervescence  
Collective Intelligence  
Collective Narcissism  
Communal Reinforcement  
Conformity  
Conspiracy of Silence  
Critical Mass  
Crowd Abuse  
Crowd Psychology  
Crypto-fascism



Herd Behavior  
Herd Mentality  
Hive mind  
Honne and Tatemae  
Homophily



Decentralized Decision-making  
Democratic Centralism  
Dumbing Down  
Dunning-Kruger Effect  
Delphi Method



Ideocracy  
In-group Favoritism  
Individualism  
Information Cascade



Early Adopter  
Echo Chamber  
Elephant in the Room  
Emotional Contagion  
Engineering of Consent



Keynesian Beauty Contest



Lollapalooza Effect



Self-organization

Shame Society

Sheeple

Shy Tory Factor

Signalling Theory

Silent Majority

Slacktivism

Social Desirability Bias

Social Exclusion

Social Norms Approach

Social Network

Social Proof

Socionomics

Scapegoating

Social Comparison Theory

Speaking Truth to Power

Spiral of Silence

Spontaneous Order

Stampede

State Collapse

Suggestibility

Superficiality

Swarm Intelligence

Symmetry Breaking of Escaping Ants

System Justification



Magical Thinking  
Manufacturing Consent  
Mass Psychogenic Illness/  
Hysteria Mean World Syndrome  
Milieu Control  
Memory Hole  
Mob Rule  
Monkey See, Monkey Do  
Moral Man and Immoral Society  
Moral Panic

No Soap Radio

Opinion Corridor  
Opinion Leadership  
Organizational Dissent  
Overton Window

Pact of Forgetting  
Panic Buying  
Peer Pressure  
Pluralistic Ignorance  
Political Correctness  
Political Midlife Crisis  
Positive Psychology  
Preference  
Falsification  
Prediction Market  
Prisoner's Dilemma  
Pseudoconsensus

Realistic Conflict Theory  
Risky Shift



Team Error  
Team Player  
The Emporer's New Clothes  
The Wisdom of Crowds  
Thomas Theorem  
Tinkerbell Effect  
Tipping-Point  
Trial by Media  
Tone Policing  
Third Rail of Politics  
Three Men Make a Tiger  
Tuckman's Stages of Group Development  
Tyranny of the Majority



Vendor Lock-in



Wishful Thinking  
Woozle Effect



As a rough guide, this list has been assembled, mostly from wikipedia, for basic reference only.

This list comprises part of the Rhetoric Series, involving: logical fallacies, biases, complexes, Rules of Disinformation, Rules for Radicals, paradoxes, and rhetorical devices.





## Abilene Paradox

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In the Abilene paradox, a group of people collectively decide on a course of action that is counter to the preferences of many or all of the individuals in the group. It involves a common breakdown of group communication in which each member mistakenly believes that their own preferences are counter to the group's and, therefore, does not raise objections. A common phrase relating to the Abilene paradox is a desire to not "rock the boat". This differs from groupthink in that the Abilene paradox is characterized by an inability to manage agreement.

## Amity-enmity Complex

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The amity-enmity complex theory was introduced by Sir Arthur Keith in his work, *A New Theory of Human Evolution* (1948). He posited that humans evolved as differing races, tribes, and cultures, exhibiting patriotism, morality, leadership and nationalism. Those who belong are part of the in-group, and tolerated; all others are classed as out-group, and subject to hostility: "The code of enmity is a necessary part of the machinery of evolution. He who feels generous towards his enemy... has given up his place in the turmoil of evolutionary competition."

Conscience in humans evolved a duality: to protect and save friends, and also to hate and fight enemies. Keith's work summarized earlier opinions on human tribalism by Charles Darwin, Alfred Russel Wallace, and Herbert Spencer.



## **Bandwagon Effect**

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The bandwagon effect is the term used to describe the tendency for people to adopt certain behaviors, styles, or attitudes simply because others are doing so.



## Collective behavior

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The expression collective behavior was first used by Franklin Henry Giddings and employed later by Robert Park and Ernest Burgess, Herbert Blumer, Ralph H. Turner and Lewis Killian, and Neil Smelser to refer to social processes and events which do not reflect existing social structure (laws, conventions, and institutions), but which emerge in a "spontaneous" way. Use of the term has been expanded to include reference to cells, social animals like birds and fish, and insects including ants. Collective behavior takes many forms but generally violates societal norms. Collective behavior can be tremendously destructive, as with riots or mob violence, silly, as with fads, or anywhere in between. Collective behavior is always driven by group dynamics, encouraging people to engage in acts they might consider unthinkable under typical social circumstances.

## Collective consciousness

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Collective consciousness, collective conscience, or collective conscious (French: *conscience collective*) is the set of shared beliefs, ideas, and moral attitudes which operate as a unifying force within society. In general, it does not refer to the specifically moral conscience, but to a shared understanding of social norms.

The modern concept of what can be considered collective consciousness includes solidarity attitudes, memes, extreme behaviors like group-think and herd behavior, and collectively shared experiences during collective rituals and dance parties. Rather than existing as separate individuals, people come together as dynamic groups to share resources and knowledge. It has also developed as a way of describing how an entire community comes together to share similar values. This has also been termed "hive mind", "group mind", "mass mind", and "social mind".

# Collective effervescence

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**Collective effervescence** (CE) is a sociological concept coined by Émile Durkheim. According to Durkheim, a community or society may at times come together and simultaneously communicate the same thought and participate in the same action. Such an event then causes collective effervescence which excites individuals and serves to unify the group.

# Collective narcissism

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In social psychology, **collective narcissism** (or **group narcissism**) is the tendency to exaggerate the positive image and importance of a group to which one belongs. The group may be defined by ideology, race, political beliefs/stance, religion, sexual orientation, social class, language, nationality, employment status, education level, cultural values, or any other ingroup. While the classic definition of narcissism focuses on the individual, *collective narcissism* extends this concept to similar excessively high opinions of a person's social group, and suggests that a group can function as a narcissistic entity.

# Communal reinforcement

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**Communal reinforcement** is a social phenomenon in which a concept or idea is repeatedly asserted in a community, regardless of whether sufficient empirical evidence has been presented to support it. Over time, the concept or idea is reinforced to become a strong belief in many people's minds, and may be regarded by the members of the community as fact. Often, the concept or idea may be further reinforced by publications in the mass media, books, or other means of communication. The phrase "millions of people can't all be wrong" is indicative of the common tendency to accept a communally reinforced idea without question, which often aids in the widespread acceptance of factoids. A very similar term to this term is **community-reinforcement**, which is a behavioral method to stop drug addiction.

# Crowd psychology

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**Crowd psychology**, also known as **mob psychology**, is a branch of social psychology. Social psychologists have developed several theories for explaining the ways in which the psychology of a crowd differs from and interacts with that of the individuals within it. Major theorists in crowd psychology include Gustave Le Bon, Gabriel Tarde and Sigmund Freud. This field relates to the behaviors and thought processes of both the individual crowd members and the crowd as an entity. Crowd behavior is heavily influenced by the loss of responsibility of the individual and the impression of universality of behavior, both of which increase with crowd size.

# Conspiracy of Silence

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A **conspiracy of silence**, or **culture of silence**, describes the behavior of a group of people of some size, as large as an entire national group or profession or as small as a group of colleagues, that by unspoken consensus does not mention, discuss, or acknowledge a given subject. As a descriptor, *conspiracy of silence* implies dishonesty, sometimes cowardice, sometimes privileging loyalty to one social group over another.

Some instances of such a practice are sufficiently well-known or enduring to become known by their own specific terms, including code of silence for the refusal of law enforcement officers to speak out against crimes committed by fellow officers and omertà, cultural code of organized crime in Sicily.

# Conformity

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**Conformity** is the act of matching attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors to group norms, politics or being like-minded. Norms are implicit, specific rules, shared by a group of individuals, and guide interactions with others. People often choose to conform to society rather than to pursue personal desires - because it is often easier to follow the path others have made already, rather than forging a new one.

The Asch Conformity Experiment demonstrates how much influence conformity has on people. In a laboratory experiment, Asch asked 50 male students from Swarthmore College in the US to participate in a 'vision test'. Asch put a naive participant in a room with seven confederates/stooges in a line judgment task.

# Critical Mass

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In social dynamics, **critical mass** is a sufficient number of adopters of a new idea, technology or innovation in a social system so that the rate of adoption becomes self-sustaining and creates further growth. The point at which critical mass is achieved is sometimes referred to as a threshold within the threshold model of statistical modeling.

# Collective intelligence

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Collective intelligence (CI) is shared or group intelligence that emerges from the collaboration, collective efforts, and competition of many individuals and appears in consensus decision making. The term appears in sociobiology, political science and in context of mass peer review and crowdsourcing applications. It may involve consensus, social capital and formalisms such as voting systems, social media and other means of quantifying mass activity. Collective IQ is a measure of collective intelligence, although it is often used interchangeably with the term collective intelligence. Collective intelligence has also been attributed to bacteria and animals.

## Crowd abuse

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Crowd abuse or barracking refers to the widespread practice of crowds following various sports to criticise or abuse opponents, by shouting, chanting, singing or through the use of banners in the stadium. Motivation for crowd abuse includes gaining a psychological advantage over an opponent, either individually or as a team. Examples of the effectiveness of such techniques can be found in any major sport, including some dangerous outcomes such as the Malice in the Palace (Pacers-Pistons Brawl).

## Crypto-fascism

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**Crypto-fascism** is the secret support for, or admiration of, fascism or trends very closely related to the ideology. The term is used to imply that an individual or group keeps this support or admiration hidden to avoid political persecution or political suicide. The common usage is "crypto-fascist", one who practices this support.



## Decentralized decision-making

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**Decentralized decision-making** is any process where the decision-making authority is distributed throughout a larger group. It also connotes a higher authority given to lower level functionaries, executives, and workers. This can be in any organization of any size, from a governmental authority to a corporation. However, the context in which the term is used is generally that of larger organizations. This distribution of power, in effect, has far-reaching implications for the fields of management, organizational behavior, and government.

The decisions arising from a process of decentralized decision-making are the functional result of group intelligence and crowd wisdom. Decentralized decision-making also contributes to the core knowledge of group intelligence and crowd wisdom, often in a subconscious way a la Carl Jung's collective unconscious.

Decision theory is a method of deductive reasoning based on formal probability and deductive reasoning models. It is also studied in a specialized field of mathematics wherein models are used to help make decisions in all human activities including the sciences and engineering.

# Delphi Method

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The **Delphi method** or **Delphi technique** (also known as **Estimate-Talk-Estimate** or **ETE**) is a structured communication technique or method, originally developed as a systematic, interactive forecasting method which relies on a panel of experts. The technique can also be adapted for use in face-to-face meetings, and is then called **mini-Delphi**. Delphi has been widely used for business forecasting and has certain advantages over another structured forecasting approach, prediction markets.

Delphi is based on the principle that forecasts (or decisions) from a structured group of individuals are more accurate than those from unstructured groups. The experts answer questionnaires in two or more rounds. After each round, a facilitator or change agent provides an anonymised summary of the experts' forecasts from the previous round as well as the reasons they provided for their judgments. Thus, experts are encouraged to revise their earlier answers in light of the replies of other members of their panel. It is believed that during this process the range of the answers will decrease and the group will converge towards the "correct" answer. Finally, the process is stopped after a predefined stop criterion (e.g., number of rounds, achievement of consensus, stability of results), and the mean or median scores of the final rounds determine the results.

# Democratic Centralism

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Democratic centralism is a practice in which political decisions reached by voting processes are binding upon all members of the political party. It is mainly associated with Leninism, wherein the party's political vanguard of professional revolutionaries practised democratic centralism to elect leaders and officers, determine policy through free discussion, and decisively realise it through united action. Democratic centralism has also been practised by social democratic and democratic socialist parties as well.

# Dumbing Down

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**Dumbing down** is the deliberate oversimplification of intellectual content in education, literature, and cinema, news, video games, and culture. Originated in 1933, the term "dumbing down" was movie-business slang, used by screenplay writers, meaning: "[to] revise so as to appeal to those of little education or intelligence". Dumbing-down varies according to subject matter, and usually involves the diminishment of critical thought by undermining standard language and learning standards, thus trivializing academic standards, culture, and meaningful information, as in the case of popular culture.

# Dunning–Kruger Effect

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The **Dunning–Kruger effect** is a cognitive bias whereby people with low ability, expertise, or experience regarding a type of task or area of knowledge tend to overestimate their ability or knowledge. Some researchers also include the opposite effect for high performers: their tendency to underestimate their skills.



## Early Adopter

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An early adopter or lighthouse customer is an early customer of a given company, product, or technology. The term originates from Everett M. Rogers' *Diffusion of Innovations* (1962).

## Emotional Contagion

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Emotional contagion is a form of social contagion that involves the spontaneous spread of emotions and related behaviors. Such emotional convergence can happen from one person to another, or in a larger group. Emotions can be shared across individuals in many ways, both implicitly or explicitly. For instance, conscious reasoning, analysis, and imagination have all been found to contribute to the phenomenon. The behaviour has been found in humans, other primates, dogs, and chickens.

## Echo Chamber

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In discussions of news media, an **echo chamber** refers to situations in which beliefs are amplified or reinforced by communication and repetition inside a closed system and insulated from rebuttal. By participating in an echo chamber, people are able to seek out information that reinforces their existing views without encountering opposing views, potentially resulting in an unintended exercise in confirmation bias. Echo chambers may increase social and political polarization and extremism. On social media, it is thought that echo chambers limit exposure to diverse perspectives, and favour and reinforce presupposed narratives and ideologies.

## **Elephant in the Room**

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The expression “the elephant in the room” (or "the elephant in the living room") is a metaphorical idiom in English for an important or enormous topic, question, or controversial issue that is obvious or that everyone knows about but no one mentions or wants to discuss because it makes at least some of them uncomfortable and is personally, socially, or politically embarrassing, controversial, inflammatory, or dangerous.

It is based on the idea/thought that something as conspicuous as an elephant can appear to be overlooked in codified social interactions and that the sociology/psychology of repression also operates on the macro scale.

## **The Engineering of Consent**

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"The Engineering of Consent" is an essay by Edward Bernays first published in 1947, and a book he published in 1955.



## False Consensus Effect

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In psychology, the false consensus effect, also known as consensus bias, is a pervasive cognitive bias that causes people to “see their own behavioral choices and judgments as relatively common and appropriate to existing circumstances”. In other words, they assume that their personal qualities, characteristics, beliefs, and actions are relatively widespread through the general population. This false consensus is significant because it increases self-esteem (overconfidence effect).

## Filter Bubble

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A filter bubble or ideological frame is a state of intellectual isolation that can result from personalized searches. Personalized searches utilize website algorithms to selectively curate search results based on information about the user, such as their location, past click-behavior, and search history. Consequently, users become separated from information that disagrees with their viewpoints, effectively isolating them in their own cultural or ideological bubbles, resulting in a limited and customized view of the world. The choices made by these algorithms are only sometimes transparent. Prime examples include Google Personalized Search results and Facebook's personalized news-stream.

## Flaming on the Internet

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Flaming, also known as roasting, is the act of posting insults, often including profanity or other offensive language, on the internet, not to be confused with the term trolling, which is the act of someone causing discord online or in person. Flaming emerged from the anonymity that Internet forums provide cover for users to act more aggressively. Anonymity leads to disinhibition, resulting in swearing, offensive, and hostile language characteristic of flaming. Lack of social cues, less accountability of face-to-face communications, textual mediation and deindividualization are also likely factors. Deliberate flamers specialize in flaming and target specific aspects of a controversial conversation.

# Folie à Deux

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Folie à deux (*French-* 'folly of two', or 'madness [shared] by two'), additionally known as shared psychosis or shared delusional disorder (SDD), is a rare psychiatric syndrome in which symptoms of a delusional belief, and sometimes hallucinations, are transmitted from one individual to another. The same syndrome shared by more than two people may be called folie à trois ('three') or quatre ('four'); and further, folie en famille ('family madness') or even folie à plusieurs ('madness of several').

# Foot-in-the-door Technique

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Foot-in-the-door (FITD) technique is a compliance tactic that aims at getting a person to agree to a large request by having them agree to a modest request first.

This technique works by creating a connection between the person asking for a request and the person that is being asked. If a smaller request is granted, then the person who is agreeing feels like they are obligated to keep agreeing to larger requests to stay consistent with the original decision of agreeing. This technique is used in many ways and is a well-researched tactic for getting people to comply with requests. The saying is a reference to a door to door salesman who keeps the door from shutting with his foot, giving the customer no choice but to listen to the sales pitch.

# Freethought

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Freethought (sometimes spelled free thought) is an epistemological viewpoint which holds that beliefs should not be formed on the basis of authority, tradition, revelation, or dogma, and that beliefs should instead be reached by other methods such as logic, reason, and empirical observation. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, a freethinker is "a person who forms their own ideas and opinions rather than accepting those of other people, especially in religious teaching." In some contemporary thought in particular, free thought is strongly tied with rejection of traditional social or religious belief systems. The cognitive application of free thought is known as "freethinking", and practitioners of free thought are known as "freethinkers". Modern freethinkers consider free thought to be a natural freedom from all negative and illusive thoughts acquired from society.



## Group Polarization

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In social psychology, group polarization refers to the tendency for a group to make decisions that are more extreme than the initial inclination of its members. These more extreme decisions are towards greater risk if individuals' initial tendencies are to be risky and towards greater caution if individuals' initial tendencies are to be cautious. The phenomenon also holds that a group's attitude toward a situation may change in the sense that the individuals' initial attitudes have strengthened and intensified after group discussion, a phenomenon known as attitude polarization.

## Groupshift

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Groupshift is a phenomenon in which the initial positions of individual members of a group are exaggerated toward a more extreme position. When people are in groups, they make decisions about risk differently from when they are alone. The decision made tends to be even more risk-averse if the group members' opinions are risk-averse on average, and even more risk-seeking if the group members' opinions are risk seeking on average. In a group, people are likely to exhibit a slight preference towards riskier decisions as the risk is divided among the group members rather than borne by an individual.

## Groupthink

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Groupthink is a psychological phenomenon that occurs within a group of people in which the desire for harmony or conformity in the group results in an irrational or dysfunctional decision-making outcome. Cohesiveness, or the desire for cohesiveness, in a group may produce a tendency among its members to agree at all costs. This causes the group to minimize conflict and reach a consensus decision without critical evaluation.

# Group Dynamics

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**Group dynamics** is a system of behaviors and psychological processes occurring within a social group (*intragroup dynamics*), or between social groups (*intergroup dynamics*). The study of group dynamics can be useful in understanding decision-making behaviour, tracking the spread of diseases in society, creating effective therapy techniques, and following the emergence and popularity of new ideas and technologies.



## Herd Behavior

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Herd behavior is the behavior of individuals in a group acting collectively without centralized direction. Herd behavior occurs in animals in herds, packs, bird flocks, fish schools and so on, as well as in humans. Voting, demonstrations, riots, general strikes, sporting events, religious gatherings, everyday decision-making, judgement and opinion-forming, are all forms of human-based herd behavior.

## Herd Mentality

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Herd mentality, mob mentality or pack mentality describes how people can be influenced by their peers to adopt certain behaviors on a largely emotional, rather than rational, basis. When individuals are affected by mob mentality, they may make different decisions than they would have individually.

# Hive Mind

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A hive mind or group mind refers to a shared intelligence:

- Collective consciousness and collective intelligence, two concepts in sociology and philosophy
- Group mind (science fiction), a type of collective consciousness
- Groupthink, in which the desire for harmony or conformity in a group results in irrational or dysfunctional decision-making
- Sheeple, referring to groups of people who 'mindlessly' follow those in power
- Swarm intelligence, collective behavior of decentralized, self-organizing natural or artificial systems
- The apparent consciousness of colonies of social insects such as ants, bees, and termites
- Universal mind, a type of universal higher consciousness in some esoteric beliefs
- Egregore, a concept in occultism which has been described as group mind
- The collection of memes as self-replicators seeking reproduction through control of human resources

# Homophily

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**Homophily** (from Ancient Greek ὁμός (*homós*) 'same, common', and φιλία (*philía*) 'friendship, love') is a concept in sociology describing the tendency of individuals to associate and bond with similar others, as in the proverb "*birds of a feather flock together*". The presence of homophily has been discovered in a vast array of network studies: over 100 studies have observed homophily in some form or another, and they establish that similarity is associated with connection. The categories on which homophily occurs include age, gender, class, and organizational role.

# ***Honne and Tatemae jeez, talk about cognitive dissonance !***

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In Japan, *honne* refers to a person's true feelings and desires (本音, *hon'ne*, "true sound"), and *tatemae* refers contrastingly to the behavior and opinions one displays in public (建前, *tatemae*, "built in front", "façade"). This distinction began to be made in the post-war era.

A person's *honnie* may be contrary to what is expected by society or what is required according to one's position and circumstances, and they are often kept hidden, except with one's closest friends. *Tatemae* is what is expected by society and required according to one's position and circumstances, and these may or may not match one's *honnie*. In many cases, *tatemae* leads to outright telling of lies in order to avoid exposing the true inward feelings.



## Ideocracy

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Ideocracy (a portmanteau word combining "ideology" and *kratos*, Greek for "power") is "governance of a state according to the principles of a particular (political) ideology; a state or country governed in this way". It is government based on a monistic ideology—as distinct from an authoritarian state, which is characterized by strong central power and limited political freedoms. An ideocratic state can either be totalitarian—citizens being forced to follow an ideology—or populist (citizens voluntarily following an ideology).

## Individualism

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Individualism is the moral stance, political philosophy, ideology and social outlook that emphasizes the intrinsic worth of the individual. Individualists promote the realisation of one's goals and desires, valuing independence and self-reliance, and advocating that the interests of the individual should gain precedence over the state or a social group, while opposing external interference upon one's own interests by society or institutions such as the government. Individualism is often defined in contrast to totalitarianism, collectivism and more corporate social forms.

# Information Cascade

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An Information cascade or informational cascade is a phenomenon described in behavioral economics and network theory in which a number of people make the same decision in a sequential fashion. It is similar to, but distinct from herd behavior.

An information cascade is generally accepted as a two-step process. For a cascade to begin an individual must encounter a scenario with a decision, typically a binary one. Second, outside factors can influence this decision (typically, through the observation of actions and their outcomes of other individuals in similar scenarios).

The two-step process of an informational cascade can be broken down into five basic components:

1. There is a decision to be made – for example; whether to adopt a new technology, wear a new style of clothing, eat in a new restaurant, or support a particular political position
2. A limited action space exists (e.g. an adopt/reject decision)
3. People make the decision sequentially, and each person can observe the choices made by those who acted earlier
4. Each person has some information aside from their own that helps guide their decision
5. A person can't directly observe the outside information that other people know, but he or she can make inferences about this information from what they do

Social perspectives of cascades, which suggest that agents may act irrationally (e.g., against what they think is optimal) when social pressures are great, exist as complements to the concept of information cascades. More often a problem is that the concept of an information cascade is confused with ideas that do not match the key conditions of the process, such as social proof, information diffusion, and social influence. Indeed, the term information cascade has even been used to refer to such processes.

# In-group Favoritism

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In-group favoritism, sometimes known as in-group–out-group bias, in-group bias, intergroup bias, or in-group preference, is a pattern of favoring members of one's in-group over out-group members. This can be expressed in evaluation of others, in allocation of resources, and in many other ways.



## Keynesian Beauty Contest

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A **Keynesian beauty contest** is a concept developed by John Maynard Keynes and introduced in Chapter 12 of his work, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (1936), to explain price fluctuations in equity markets. It describes a beauty contest where judges are rewarded for selecting the *most popular* faces among all judges, rather than those they may personally find the most attractive.

A naive strategy would be to choose the face that, in the opinion of the entrant, is the most handsome. A more sophisticated contest entrant, wishing to maximize the chances of winning a prize, would think about what the majority perception of attractiveness is, and then make a selection based on some inference from their knowledge of public perceptions. This can be carried one step further to take into account the fact that other entrants would each have their own opinion of what public perceptions are. Thus the strategy can be extended to the next order and the next and so on, at each level attempting to predict the eventual outcome of the process based on the reasoning of other rational agents.



## ***Lollapalooza Effect***

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Charlie Munger, American businessman, investor, and partner of the legendary Warren Buffett, coined the term "Lollapalooza effect" during a 1995 Harvard speech, in which he reviewed numerous causes of human misjudgment.

We humans have many inherent biases and tendencies that can sway our behavior one way or another. When several of them act in concert to drive us toward a particular action, you have a Lollapalooza effect. The Lollapalooza effect can create large-scale drivers of human behavior -- and often error.



## ***Manufacturing Consent***

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*Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* is a 1988 book by Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky. It argues that the mass communication media of the U.S. "are effective and powerful ideological institutions that carry out a system-supportive propaganda function, by reliance on market forces, internalized assumptions, and self-censorship, and without overt coercion", by means of the propaganda model of communication. The title refers to consent of the governed, and derives from the phrase "the manufacture of consent" used by Walter Lippmann in *Public Opinion* (1922). The book was honored with the Orwell Award.

## **Mass Psychogenic Illness**

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Mass psychogenic illness (MPI), also called mass sociogenic illness, mass psychogenic disorder, epidemic hysteria, involves the spread of illness symptoms through a population where there is no infectious agent responsible for contagion. It is the rapid spread of illness signs and symptoms affecting members of a cohesive group, originating from a nervous system disturbance involving excitation, loss, or alteration of function, whereby physical complaints that are exhibited unconsciously have no corresponding organic causes that are known.

## **Mean World Syndrome**

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Mean world syndrome is a cognitive bias wherein people may perceive the world to be more dangerous than it actually is, due to long-term moderate to heavy exposure to violence-related content in mass media.

# Magical Thinking

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Magical thinking, or superstitious thinking, is the belief that unrelated events are causally connected despite the absence of any plausible causal link between them, particularly as a result of supernatural effects. Examples include the idea that personal thoughts can influence the external world without acting on them, or that objects must be causally connected if they resemble each other or have come into contact with each other in the past. Magical thinking is a type of fallacious thinking and is a common source of invalid causal inferences. Unlike the confusion of correlation with causation, magical thinking does not require the events to be correlated.

The precise definition of magical thinking may vary subtly when used by different theorists or among different fields of study. In anthropology, the posited causality is between religious ritual, prayer, sacrifice, or the observance of a taboo, and an expected benefit or recompense.

In psychology, magical thinking is the belief that one's thoughts by themselves can bring about effects in the world or that thinking something corresponds with doing it. These beliefs can cause a person to experience an irrational fear of performing certain acts or having certain thoughts because of an assumed correlation between doing so and threatening calamities.

In psychiatry, magical thinking defines false beliefs about the capability of thoughts, actions or words to cause or prevent undesirable events. It is a commonly observed symptom in thought disorder, schizotypal personality disorder and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

# Memory Hole

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A memory hole is any mechanism for the deliberate alteration or disappearance of inconvenient or embarrassing documents, photographs, transcripts or other records, such as from a website or other archive, particularly as part of an attempt to give the impression that something never happened. The concept was first popularized by George Orwell's 1949 dystopian novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, where the Party's Ministry of Truth systematically re-created all potentially embarrassing historical documents, in effect, re-writing all of history to match the often-changing state propaganda. These changes were complete and undetectable.

# Milieu Control

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**Milieu control** is a term popularized by psychiatrist Robert Jay Lifton to describe tactics that control environment and human communication through the use of social pressure and group language; such tactics may include dogma, protocols, innuendo, slang, and pronunciation, which enables group members to identify other members, or to promote cognitive changes in individuals. Lifton originally used "milieu control" to describe brainwashing and mind control, but the term has since been applied to other contexts.

# Mob Rule

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Mob rule or ochlocracy (Greek: ὥχ λοκρατία, Romanized: okhlokratía; Latin: ochlocratia) is the rule of government by a mob or mass of people and the intimidation of legitimate authorities. Insofar as it represents a pejorative for majoritarianism, it is akin to the Latin phrase *mobile vulgus*, meaning "the fickle crowd" from which the English term "mob" originally was derived in the 1680s, during the Glorious Revolution.

# Monkey See, Monkey Do

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**Monkey see, monkey do** is a pidgin-style saying that was already called an "old saying" in 1900. The saying refers to the learning of a process without an understanding of why it works. Another definition implies the act of imitation, usually with limited knowledge and/or concern for the consequences.

# Moral Man and Immoral Society

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*Moral Man and Immoral Society: A Study in Ethics and Politics* is a 1932 book by Reinhold Niebuhr, an American Protestant theologian at Union Theological Seminary (UTS) in New York City. The thesis of the book is that people are more likely to sin as members of groups than as individuals. Niebuhr wrote the book in a single summer. He drew the book's contents from his experiences as a pastor in Detroit, Michigan prior to his professorship at UTS. The book attacks liberalism, both secular and religious, and is particularly critical of John Dewey and the Social Gospel. *Moral Man and Immoral Society* generated much controversy and raised Niebuhr's public profile significantly.

# Moral Panic

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A moral panic is a widespread feeling of fear, often an irrational one, that some evil person or thing threatens the values, interests, or well-being of a community or society. It is "the process of arousing social concern over an issue", usually perpetuated by moral entrepreneurs and mass media coverage, and exacerbated by politicians and lawmakers. Moral panic can give rise to new laws aimed at controlling the community.

Stanley Cohen, who developed the term, states that moral panic happens when "a condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests". While the issues identified may be real, the claims "exaggerate the seriousness, extent, typicality and/or inevitability of harm". Moral panics are now studied in sociology and criminology, media studies, and cultural studies.



## No Soap Radio

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"**No soap radio**" is a form of practical joke and an example of surreal comedy. The joke is a prank whereby the punch line has no relation to the body of the joke; but participants in the prank pretend otherwise. The effect is to either trick someone into laughing along as if they "get it" or to ridicule them for not understanding.

The joke became popular in New York in the 1950s. The punch line is known for its use as a basic sociological and psychological experiment, specifically relating to mob mentality and the pressure to conform. The basic setup is similar to the Asch conformity experiments, in which people showed a proclivity to agree with a group despite their own judgments.



## Opinion Leadership

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**Opinion leadership** is leadership by an active media user who interprets the meaning of media messages or content for lower-end media users. Typically opinion leaders are held in high esteem by those who accept their opinions. Opinion leadership comes from the theory of two-step flow of communication propounded by Paul Lazarsfeld and Elihu Katz. Significant developers of the opinion leader concept have been Robert K. Merton, C. Wright Mills and Bernard Berelson. This theory is one of several models that try to explain the diffusion of innovations, ideas, or commercial products.

## Opinion Corridor

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**Opinion corridor** (Swedish: *åsiktskorridor*, Norwegian: *meningskorridor*) refers to a sociopolitical phenomenon that has been observed during the beginning of the 21st century in Sweden, and to some extent also in Norway. The expression itself was originally used in 2013 by Henrik Oscarsson, professor of political science at the University of Gothenburg, as a metaphor for the limits of what is commonly acceptable to debate.

The concept is similar to the Overton window, which assumes a sliding scale of legitimate political conversation, and to Hallin's spheres, which assumes that the press implicitly groups issues into questions of wide consensus, legitimate controversy, and deviance. The Swedish Language Council has included the word *åsiktskorridor* in its 2014 list of neologisms.

Sweden didn't become like Denmark, thank goodness. Maybe the opinion corridor helped. But the price was too high: widespread self-censorship, a fear to examine reality objectively, a diminished belief in the power of arguments. And as a result a dumbed-down public, moral-panicked politicians and social problems that should have gotten attention and been dealt with a long time ago. It proved to be an expensive corridor.

— Ann-Charlotte Marteus, Expressen, 24 May 2015

# Organizational Dissent

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**Organizational dissent** is the "expression of disagreement or contradictory opinions about organizational practices and policies". Since dissent involves disagreement it can lead to conflict, which if not resolved, can lead to violence and struggle. As a result, many organizations send the message – verbally or nonverbally – that dissent is discouraged. However, recent studies have shown that dissent serves as an important monitoring force within organizations. Dissent can be a warning sign for employee dissatisfaction or organizational decline.

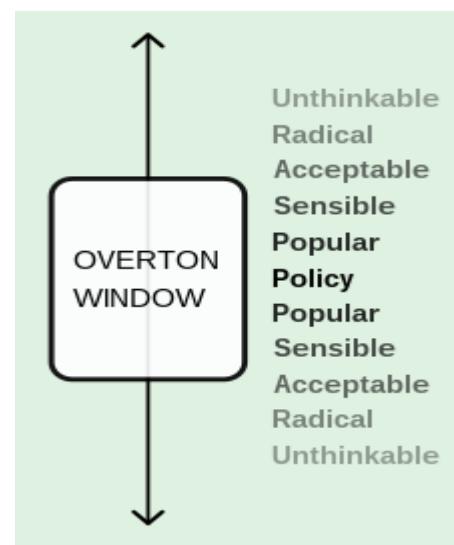
Redding (1985) found that receptiveness to dissent allows for corrective feedback to monitor unethical and immoral behavior, impractical and ineffectual organizational practices and policies, poor and unfavorable decision making, and insensitivity to employees' workplace needs and desires. Furthermore, Eilerman argues that the hidden costs of silencing dissent include: wasted and lost time, reduced decision quality, emotional and relationship costs, and decreased job motivation. Perlow (2003) found that employee resentment can lead to a decrease in productivity and creativity which can result in the organization losing money, time, and resources.

## Overton Window

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The Overton window is the range of policies politically acceptable to the mainstream population at a given time. It is also known as the window of discourse.

The term is named after American policy analyst Joseph Overton, who stated that an idea's political viability depends mainly on whether it falls within this range, rather than on politicians' individual preferences. According to Overton, the window frames the range of policies that a politician can recommend without appearing too extreme to gain or keep public office given the climate of public opinion at that time.



An illustration of the Overton window, along with Treviño's degrees of acceptance



## **Pact of Forgetting**

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The Pact of Forgetting (Spanish: *Pacto del Olvido*) is the political decision by both leftist and rightist parties of Spain to avoid confronting directly the legacy of Francoism after the death of Francisco Franco in 1975. The pact was given a legal basis in the Spanish 1977 Amnesty Law. The pact was challenged in 2004 with the Historical Memory Law.

## **Panic Buying**

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Panic buying (alternatively hyphenated as panic-buying; also known as panic purchasing) occurs when consumers buy unusually large amounts of a product in anticipation of, or after, a disaster or perceived disaster, or in anticipation of a large price increase or shortage.

Panic buying during health crises is influenced by "(1) individuals' perception of the threat of a health crisis and scarcity of products;(2) fear of the unknown, which is caused by emotional pressure and uncertainty; (3) coping

# Peer Pressure

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**Peer pressure** is the direct or indirect influence on people of peers, members of social groups with similar interests, experiences, or social statuses. Members of a peer group are more likely to influence a person's beliefs and behavior. A group or individual may be encouraged and want to follow their peers by changing their attitudes, values or behaviors to conform to those of the influencing group or individual. For the individual affected by peer pressure, this can result in either a positive or negative effect or both.

# Pluralistic Ignorance

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In social psychology, pluralistic ignorance refers to a situation in which the minority position on a given topic is wrongly perceived to be the majority position or where the majority position is wrongly perceived to be the minority position. This can be more simply described as "an individual who does not believe, but that individual thinks that everyone believes".

A common example of pluralistic ignorance is the bystander effect, where individual onlookers may believe others are considering taking action, and may therefore themselves refrain from acting. This results in all the individual onlookers believing that the majority of onlookers are taking action, when in reality the minority or none of the onlookers take action.

# Political Correctness

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Political correctness (adjectivally politically correct; commonly abbreviated PC) is a term used to describe language, policies, or measures that are intended to avoid offense or disadvantage to members of particular groups in society. Since the late 1980s, the term has been used to describe a preference for inclusive language and avoidance of language or behavior that can be seen as excluding, marginalizing, or insulting to groups of people disadvantaged or discriminated against, particularly groups defined by ethnicity, sex, gender, or sexual orientation. In public discourse and the media, the term is generally used as a pejorative with an implication that these policies are excessive or unwarranted.

# Political Midlife Crisis

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A political midlife crisis is a turning point in the fortunes of a governing entity, such as an empire, nation, faction, political party or an international alliance. These events occur after a prolonged golden age of optimism, economic progress, conquest or other success, and typically feature an attack on, or threats toward, a rival power. These attacks are vigorously opposed, end in stalemate or defeat. The political midlife crisis is then followed by an era of existential doubt, pessimism and hesitancy.

# Positive Psychology

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**Positive psychology** is a branch of psychology that studies the conditions that contribute to the optimal functioning of people, groups, and institutions. It studies "positive subjective experience, positive individual traits, and positive institutions... it aims to improve quality of life." It is a field of study that has grown as individuals and researchers look for common ground on better well-being.

## Prediction Market

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Prediction markets (also known as betting markets, information markets, decision markets, idea futures or event derivatives) are exchange-traded markets created for the purpose of trading the outcome of events. The market prices can indicate what the crowd thinks the probability of the event is. A prediction market contract trades between 0 and 100%. It is a binary option that will expire at the price of 0 or 100%. Prediction markets can be thought of as belonging to the more general concept of crowdsourcing which is specially designed to aggregate information on particular topics of interest. The main purposes of prediction markets are eliciting aggregating beliefs over an unknown future outcome. Traders with different beliefs trade on contracts whose payoffs are related to the unknown future outcome and the market prices of the contracts are considered as the aggregated belief.

## Preference Falsification

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Preference falsification is the act of communicating a preference that differs from one's true preference. The public frequently conveys, especially to researchers or pollsters, preferences that differ from what they truly want, often because they believe the conveyed preference is more acceptable socially. The idea of preference falsification was put forth by the social scientist Timur Kuran in his 1995 book *Private Truths, Public Lies* as part of his theory of how people's stated preferences are responsive to social influences. It laid the foundation for his theory of why unanticipated revolutions can occur. The concept is related to ideas of social proof as well as choice blindness.

# Prisoner's Dilemma

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The prisoner's dilemma is a standard example of a game analyzed in game theory that shows why two completely rational individuals might not cooperate, even if it appears that it is in their best interests to do so. It was originally framed by Merrill Flood and Melvin Dresher while working at RAND in 1950. Albert W. Tucker formalized the game with prison sentence rewards and named it "prisoner's dilemma".

Standard prisoner's dilemma payoff matrix

A	B	B stays silent	B betrays
A stays silent	-1	0	
A betrays	0	-3	-2

# Pseudoconsensus

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A pseudoconsensus is a false consensus, reached most commonly when members of a group feel they are expected to go along with the majority decision, as when the voting basis is a large supermajority and nothing can be done unless some of the members of the minority acquiesce. This can cause problems such as the Abilene paradox. Robert's Rules of Order notes that this was part of the impetus for switching from consensus to majority as the voting basis in the British House of Lords:

This evolution came about from a recognition that a requirement of unanimity or near unanimity can become a form of tyranny in itself. In an assembly that tries to make such a requirement the norm, a variety of misguided feelings – reluctance to be seen as opposing the leadership, a notion that causing controversy will be frowned upon, fear of seeming an obstacle to unity – can easily lead to decisions being taken with a pseudoconsensus which in reality implies elements of default, which satisfies no one, and for which no one really assumes responsibility. ... Robert saw, on the other hand, that the evolution of majority vote in tandem with lucid and clarifying debate – resulting in a decision representing the view of the deliberate majority – far more clearly ferrets out and demonstrates the will of the assembly.



## **Realistic Conflict Theory**

Realistic conflict theory (RCT), also known as realistic group conflict theory (RGCT), is a social psychological model of intergroup conflict. The theory explains how intergroup hostility can arise as a result of conflicting goals and competition over limited resources, and it also offers an explanation for the feelings of prejudice and discrimination toward the outgroup that accompany the intergroup hostility. Groups may be in competition for a real or perceived scarcity of resources such as money, political power, military protection, or social status.

## **Risky Shift**

Groups and teams sometimes take unusually high risk decisions. And sometimes they take unusually low risk decisions. In particular the risk taken is noticeably greater or lower than individuals in the team would normally choose. It is as if they have lost their ability to assess risk.



## Scapegoating

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**Scapegoating** is the practice of singling out a person or group for unmerited blame and consequent negative treatment. Scapegoating may be conducted by individuals against individuals (e.g. "he did it, not me!"), individuals against groups (e.g., "I couldn't see anything because of all the tall people"), groups against individuals (e.g., "He was the reason our team didn't win"), and groups against groups.

## Self-organization

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**Self-organization**, also called spontaneous order in the social sciences, is a process where some form of overall order arises from local interactions between parts of an initially disordered system. The process can be spontaneous when sufficient energy is available, not needing control by any external agent. It is often triggered by seemingly random fluctuations, amplified by positive feedback. The resulting organization is wholly decentralized, distributed over all the components of the system. As such, the organization is typically robust and able to survive or self-repair substantial perturbation. Chaos theory discusses self-organization in terms of islands of predictability in a sea of chaotic unpredictability.

# Self-serving Bias

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A **self-serving bias** is any cognitive or perceptual process that is distorted by the need to maintain and enhance self-esteem, or the tendency to perceive oneself in an overly favorable manner. It is the belief that individuals tend to ascribe success to their own abilities and efforts, but ascribe failure to external factors. When individuals reject the validity of negative feedback, focus on their strengths and achievements but overlook their faults and failures, or take more credit for their group's work than they give to other members, they are protecting their self-esteem from threat and injury. These cognitive and perceptual tendencies perpetuate illusions and error, but they also serve the self's need for esteem. For example, a student who attributes earning a good grade on an exam to their own intelligence and preparation but attributes earning a poor grade to the teacher's poor teaching ability or unfair test questions might be exhibiting a self-serving bias. Studies have shown that similar attributions are made in various situations, such as the workplace, interpersonal relationships, sports, and consumer decisions.

# Shame–Guilt–Fear Spectrum of Cultures

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In cultural anthropology, the distinction between a **guilt society** or **guilt culture**, **shame society** or **shame culture** and **honor–shame culture**, and a **fear society** or culture of fear, has been used to categorize different cultures. The differences can apply to how behavior is governed with respect to government laws, business rules, or social etiquette. This classification has been applied especially to so called "apollonian" societies, sorting them according to the emotions they use to control individuals (especially children) and maintaining social order, swaying them into norm obedience and conformity.

- In a guilt society, control is maintained by creating and continually reinforcing the feeling of guilt (and the expectation of punishment now or in the afterlife) for certain condemned behaviors. The guilt worldview focuses on law and punishment. A person in this type of culture may ask, "Is my behavior fair or unfair?" This type of culture also emphasizes individual conscience.
- In a shame society, the means of control is the inculcation of shame and the complementary threat of ostracism. The shame–honor worldview seeks an "honor balance" and can lead to revenge dynamics. A person in this type of culture may ask, "Shall I look ashamed if I do X?" or "How will people look at me if I do Y?" Shame cultures are typically based on the concepts of pride and honor. Often actions are all that count and matter.
- In a fear society, control is kept by the fear of retribution. The fear worldview focuses on physical dominance. A person in this culture may ask, "Will someone hurt me if I do this?"

The terminology was popularized by Ruth Benedict in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, who described American culture as a "guilt culture" and Japanese culture as a "shame culture".

# Sheeple

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A person who unquestioningly accepts as true whatever their political leaders say or who adopts popular opinion as their own without scrutiny.

## Shy Tory Factor

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The **shy Tory factor** is a name given by British opinion polling companies to a phenomenon first observed by psephologists in the early 1990s. They observed that the share of the electoral vote won by the Conservative Party (known colloquially as the "Tories") was significantly higher than the equivalent share in opinion polls. The accepted explanation was that so-called "shy Tories" were voting Conservative after telling pollsters they would not. The general elections held in 1992 and 2015 are examples where it has allegedly affected the overall results, but has also been discussed in other elections where the Conservatives did unexpectedly well. It has also been applied to the success of the Republican Party in the United States or the continued electoral victories of the People's Action Party in Singapore.

## Signalling Theory

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Within evolutionary biology, signalling theory is a body of theoretical work examining communication between individuals, both within species and across species. The central question is when organisms with conflicting interests, such as in sexual selection, should be expected to provide honest signals (no presumption being made of conscious intention) rather than cheating. Mathematical models describe how signalling can contribute to an evolutionarily stable strategy.

Signals are given in contexts such as mate selection by females, which subjects the advertising males' signals to selective pressure. Signals thus evolve because they modify the behaviour of the receiver to benefit the signaller. Signals may be honest, conveying information which usefully increases the fitness of the receiver, or dishonest. An individual can cheat by giving a dishonest signal, which might briefly benefit that signaller, at the risk of undermining the signalling system for the whole population.

# Silent Majority

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The **silent majority** is an unspecified large group of people in a country or group who do not express their opinions publicly. The term was popularized by U.S. President Richard Nixon in a televised address on November 3, 1969, in which he said, "And so tonight—to you, the great silent majority of my fellow Americans—I ask for your support." In this usage it referred to those Americans who did not join in the large demonstrations against the Vietnam War at the time, who did not join in the counterculture, and who did not participate in public discourse. Nixon, along with many others, saw this group of Middle Americans as being overshadowed in the media by the more vocal minority.

# Slacktivism

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**Slacktivism** (a portmanteau of *slacker* and *activism*) is the practice of supporting a political or social cause by means such as social media or online petitions, characterized as involving very little effort or commitment. Additional forms of slacktivism include engaging in online activities such as "liking," "sharing," or "tweeting" about a cause on social media, signing an Internet petition, copying and pasting a status or message in support of the cause, sharing specific hashtags associated with the cause, or altering one's profile photo or avatar on social network services to indicate solidarity.

# Social Comparison Theory

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**Social comparison theory**, initially proposed by social psychologist Leon Festinger in 1954, centers on the belief that there is a drive within individuals to gain accurate self-evaluations. The theory explains how individuals evaluate their own opinions and abilities by comparing themselves to others in order to reduce uncertainty in these domains, and learn how to define the self. Comparing oneself to others socially is a form of measurement and self assessment to identify where an individual stands according to their own set of standards and emotions about themselves.

# Social Exclusion

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**Social exclusion** or **social marginalisation** is the social disadvantage and relegation to the fringe of society. It is a term that has been used widely in Europe and was first used in France in the late 20th century. It is used across disciplines including education, sociology, psychology, politics and economics.

Social exclusion is the process in which individuals are blocked from (or denied full access to) various rights, opportunities and resources that are normally available to members of a different group, and which are fundamental to social integration and observance of human rights within that particular group (e.g. due process).

# Social Network

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A **social network** is a structure made up of a set of actors (such as individuals and organizations), with sets of dyadic ties and other interactions between actors. The social network perspective provides a set of methods for analyzing structures of and within the whole as well as a variety of theories explaining the patterns observed in these structures. The study of these structures uses network analysis to identify local and global patterns, locate influential entities, and examine network dynamics.

# Social Norms Approach

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The **social norms approach**, or **social norms marketing**, is an environmental strategy gaining ground in health campaigns. While conducting research in the mid-1980s, two researchers, H.W. Perkins and A.D. Berkowitz, reported that students at a small U.S. college held exaggerated beliefs about the normal frequency and consumption habits of other students with regard to alcohol. These inflated perceptions have been found in many educational institutions, with varying populations and locations. Despite the fact that college drinking is at elevated levels, the perceived amount almost always exceeds actual behavior. The social norms approach has shown signs of countering misperceptions, however research on changes in behavior resulting from changed perceptions varies between mixed to conclusively nonexistent.

# Social Proof

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**Social proof** (or **informational social influence**) is a psychological and social phenomenon wherein people copy the actions of others in choosing how to behave in a given situation. The term was coined by Robert Cialdini in his 1984 book *Influence: Science and Practice*.

Social proof is used in ambiguous social situations where people are unable to determine the appropriate *mode of behavior*, and is driven by the assumption that the surrounding people possess more knowledge about the current situation.

# Social-desirability Bias

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In social science research, social-desirability bias is a type of response bias that is the tendency of survey respondents to answer questions in a manner that will be viewed favorably by others. It can take the form of over-reporting "good behavior" or under-reporting "bad", or undesirable behavior. The tendency poses a serious problem with conducting research with self-reports. This bias interferes with the interpretation of average tendencies as well as individual differences.

# Socioeconomics

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Socioeconomics (also known as social economics) is the social science that studies how economic activity affects and is shaped by social processes. In general it analyzes how modern societies progress, stagnate, or regress because of their local or regional economy, or the global economy.

# Speaking Truth to Power

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Speaking truth to power is a non-violent political tactic, employed by dissidents against the received wisdom or propaganda of governments they regard as oppressive, authoritarian or an ideocracy. The phrase originated with a pamphlet, *Speak Truth to Power: a Quaker Search for an Alternative to Violence*, published by the American Friends Service Committee in 1955. Speak Truth To Power is also the title of a global Human Rights initiative under the auspices of Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights. Practitioners who have campaigned for a more just and truthful world have included Apollonius of Tyana, Boethius, Vaclav Havel, Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi, the Dalai Lama and Elie Wiesel.

# Spiral of Silence

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The spiral of silence theory is a political science and mass communication theory proposed by the German political scientist Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann. It states that an individual's perception of the distribution of public opinion influences that individual's willingness to express their own political opinions. The main idea is that people influence each other's willingness to express opinions through social interaction. According to the spiral of silence theory, individuals will be more confident and outward with their opinion when they notice that their personal opinion is shared throughout a group. But if the individual notices that their opinion is unpopular with the group they will be more inclined to be reserved and remain silent. The individual "not isolating himself is more important than his own judgement". This is a self-expressive act that can change the "global environment of opinion", shifting the perceptions of others and the willingness of individuals to express their own opinions.

# Spontaneous Order

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Spontaneous order, also named self-organization in the hard sciences, is the spontaneous emergence of order out of seeming chaos. The term "self-organization" is more often used for physical changes and biological processes, while "spontaneous order" is typically used to describe the emergence of various kinds of social orders in human social networks from the behavior of a combination of self-interested individuals who are not intentionally trying to create order through planning. Proposed examples of systems which evolved through spontaneous order or self-organization include the evolution of life on Earth, language, crystal structure, the Internet, Wikipedia, and a free market economy.

Spontaneous orders are to be distinguished from organizations as being scale-free networks, while organizations are hierarchical networks. Further, organizations can be (and often are) a part of spontaneous social orders, but the reverse is not true. While organizations are created and controlled by specific individuals or groups, spontaneous orders are created and controlled by no one in particular. In economics and the social sciences, spontaneous order is defined as "the result of human actions, not of human design".

# Stampede

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A stampede is a situation in which a group of large animals suddenly start running in the same direction, especially because they are excited or frightened.

# State Collapse

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State collapse is a sudden dissolution of a sovereign state. It is often used to describe extreme situations in which state institutions dissolve rapidly.

When a new regime moves in, often led by the military, civil society typically fails to rally around the central government, and societal actors fend for themselves at the local level. Neighboring states interfere politically, sometimes harboring dissidents within their borders, and the informal economy becomes dominant, operating beyond the control of the state and further undermining potential reconstruction.

# Suggestibility

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**Suggestibility** is the quality of being inclined to accept and act on the suggestions of others. One may fill in gaps in certain memories with false information given by another when recalling a scenario or moment. Suggestibility uses cues to distort recollection: when the subject has been persistently told something about a past event, his or her memory of the event conforms to the repeated message.

A person experiencing intense emotions tends to be more receptive to ideas and therefore more suggestible. Generally, suggestibility decreases as age increases. However, psychologists have found that individual levels of self-esteem and assertiveness can make some people more suggestible than others; this finding led to the concept of a spectrum of suggestibility.

# Superficiality

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What social psychologists call "the principle of **superficiality** versus depth" has pervaded Western culture since at least the time of Plato.

Socrates sought to convince his debaters to turn from the superficiality of a worldview based on the acceptance of convention to the examined life. For more than two millennia, there was in the Platonic wake a general valorisation of critical thought over the superficial subjectivity that refused deep analysis. The salon style of the Précieuses might for a time affect superficiality, and play with the possibility of treating serious topics in a light-hearted fashion; but **the prevailing western consensus** firmly rejected elements such as everyday chatter or the changing vagaries of fashion as superficial distractions from a deeper reality.

# Swarm Intelligence

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Swarm intelligence (SI) is the collective behavior of decentralized, self-organized systems, natural or artificial. The concept is employed in work on artificial intelligence. The expression was introduced by Gerardo Beni and Jing Wang in 1989, in the context of cellular robotic systems.

SI systems consist typically of a population of simple agents or boids interacting locally with one another and with their environment. The inspiration often comes from nature, especially biological systems. The agents follow very simple rules, and although there is no centralized control structure dictating how individual agents should behave, local, and to a certain degree random, interactions between such agents lead to the emergence of "intelligent" global behavior, unknown to the individual agents. Examples of swarm intelligence in natural systems include ant colonies, bee colonies, bird flocking, hawks hunting, animal herding, bacterial growth, fish schooling and microbial intelligence.

# Symmetry Breaking of Escaping Ants

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Symmetry breaking of escaping ants is a herd behavior phenomenon observed when ants are constrained to a cell with two equidistant exits and then sprayed with an insect repellent. The ants tend to crowd one door more while trying to escape (i.e., there is a symmetry breaking in their escape behavior), thereby decreasing evacuation efficiency. Apparently, under stress and sufficient density, ants will assemble together, to their disadvantage.

## System Justification

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System justification theory (SJT) is a theory within social psychology that system-justifying beliefs serve a psychologically palliative function. It proposes that people have several underlying needs, which vary from individual to individual, that can be satisfied by the defense and justification of the status quo, even when the system may be disadvantageous to certain people. People have epistemic, existential, and relational needs that are met by and manifest as ideological support for the prevailing structure of social, economic, and political norms. Need for order and stability, and thus resistance to change or alternatives, for example, can be a motivator for individuals to see the status quo as good, legitimate, and even desirable.

According to system justification theory, people desire not only to hold favorable attitudes about themselves (ego-justification) and the groups to which they belong (group-justification), but also to hold positive attitudes about the overarching social structure in which they are entwined and find themselves obligated to (system-justification). This system-justifying motive sometimes produces the phenomenon known as out-group favoritism, an acceptance of inferiority among low-status groups and a positive image of relatively higher status groups. Thus, the notion that individuals are simultaneously supporters and victims of the system-instilled norms is a central idea in system justification theory. Additionally, the passive ease of supporting the current structure, when compared to the potential price (material, social, psychological) of acting out against the status quo, leads to a shared environment in which the existing social, economic, and political arrangements tend to be preferred. Alternatives to the status quo tend to be disparaged, and inequality tends to perpetuate.



## The Emperor's New Clothes

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The story's title refers to something widely accepted as true or professed as being praiseworthy, due to an unwillingness of the general population to criticize it or be seen as going against popular opinion. The phrase "emperor's new clothes" has become an idiom about logical fallacies. The story may be explained by pluralistic ignorance. The story is about a situation where "no one believes, but everyone believes that everyone else believes. Or alternatively, everyone is ignorant to whether the emperor has clothes on or not, but believes that everyone else is not ignorant."

## Team Player

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At its core, being a team player means being ready, willing, and able to support the team - no matter what lies ahead. In sports, the best team players are the ones who act unselfishly and make decisions for the good of the team.

# Team Error

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**Team Error** refers to errors that occur in settings where multiple people are working together. Dependency increases the likelihood of human error due to interactions with other seemingly independent defense mechanisms. Engaging multiple people to perform a task does not ensure that the task will be done correctly. One potential dependency is team error, an error of one or more members that allows other individual members of the same group to make a mistake.

## *The Wisdom of Crowds*

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James Surowiecki argues the aggregation of information in groups results in decisions that are often better than could have been made by any single member of the group.

## Third Rail

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The **third rail** of a nation's politics is a metaphor for any issue so controversial that it is "charged" and "untouchable" to the extent that any politician or public official who dares to broach the subject will invariably suffer politically. The metaphor comes from the high-voltage third rail in some electric railway systems.

Touching a third rail can result in electrocution, so usage of the metaphor in political situations relates to the risk of "political suicide" that a person would face by raising certain taboo subjects or having points of view that are either censored, shunned or considered highly controversial or offensive to advocate or even mention.



This third rail, used to power trains, usually results in the death by electrocution of anyone who comes into direct contact with it.

# Thomas Theorem

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The **Thomas theorem** is a theory of sociology which was formulated in 1928 by William Isaac Thomas and Dorothy Swaine Thomas:

If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences.

In other words, the interpretation of a situation causes the action. This interpretation is not objective. Actions are affected by subjective perceptions of situations. Whether there even is an objectively correct interpretation is not important for the purposes of helping guide individuals' behavior.

# Three Men Make a Tiger

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"**Three men make a tiger**" is a Chinese proverb or *chengyu* (four-character idiom). "Three men make a tiger" refers to an individual's tendency to accept absurd information as long as it is repeated by enough people. It refers to the idea that if an unfounded premise or urban legend is mentioned and repeated by many individuals, the premise will be erroneously accepted as the truth. This concept is related to communal reinforcement or the fallacy of *argumentum ad populum* and *argumentum ad nauseam*.

# Tinkerbell Effect

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The **Tinkerbell effect** is an American English expression describing the phenomenon of thinking something exists only because people believe in it. The effect is named after Tinker Bell, the fairy in the play *Peter Pan*, who is revived from near death by the belief of the audience.

# Tone Policing

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A **tone argument** (also called **tone policing**) is a type of *ad hominem* aimed at the tone of an argument instead of its factual or logical content in order to dismiss a person's argument. Ignoring the truth or falsity of a statement, a tone argument instead focuses on the emotion with which it is expressed. This is a logical fallacy because a person can be angry while still being rational. Nonetheless, a tone argument may be useful when responding to a statement that itself does not have rational content, such as an appeal to emotion.

# Trial by Media

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**Trial by media** is a phrase popular in the late 20th century and early 21st century to describe the impact of television and newspaper coverage on a person's reputation by creating a widespread perception of guilt or innocence before, or after, a verdict in a court of law. It is particularly relevant in cases where high-profile individuals stand trial, with the concern that the impartiality of the jury may be compromised by extraneous information, disrupting due process and resulting in an unfair trial.

# Tuckman's Stages of Group Development

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The *forming-storming-norming-performing* model of group development was first proposed by Bruce Tuckman in 1965, who said that these phases are all necessary and inevitable in order for a team to grow, face up to challenges, tackle problems, find solutions, plan work, and deliver results. As Tuckman knew these inevitable phases were critical to team growth and development, he hypothesized that along with these factors that interpersonal relationships and task activity would enhance the four-stage model that is needed to successfully navigate and create an effective group function.

# Tyranny of the Majority

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The tyranny of the majority (or tyranny of the masses) is an inherent weakness to majority rule in which the majority of an electorate pursues exclusively its own objectives at the expense of those of the minority factions. This results in oppression of minority groups comparable to that of a tyrant or despot, argued John Stuart Mill in his 1859 book *On Liberty*.

# Tipping Point

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In sociology, a tipping point is a point in time when a group—or many group members—rapidly and dramatically changes its behavior by widely adopting a previously rare practice.



## **Vendor Lock-in**

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In economics, vendor lock-in, also known as proprietary lock-in or customer lock-in, makes a customer dependent on a vendor for products, unable to use another vendor without substantial switching costs.



## **Wishful Thinking**

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Wishful thinking is the formation of beliefs based on what might be pleasing to imagine, rather than on evidence, rationality, or reality. It is a product of resolving conflicts between belief and desire. Methodologies to examine wishful thinking are diverse. Various disciplines and schools of thought examine related mechanisms such as neural circuitry, human cognition and emotion, types of bias, procrastination, motivation, optimism, attention and environment. This concept has been examined as a fallacy. It is related to the concept of wishful seeing.

## **Woozle Effect**

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The Woozle effect, also known as evidence by citation, occurs when a source is widely cited for a claim it does not adequately support, giving said claim undeserved credibility. If results are not replicated and no one notices that a key claim was never well-supported in its original publication, faulty assumptions may affect further research.

The Woozle effect is somewhat similar to circular reporting in journalism, where someone makes a questionable claim, a journalist unthinkingly accepts it and republishes it not realizing its dubious and unreliable origins, and other journalists and the public continue to repeat and duplicate the unsupported claim.

A Woozle is an imaginary character in the A. A. Milne book *Winnie-the-Pooh*, published in 1926. In chapter three, "In which Pooh and Piglet Go Hunting and Nearly Catch a Woozle", Winnie-the-Pooh and Piglet start following tracks left in snow believing they are the tracks of an imaginary animal called a woozle. The tracks keep multiplying until Christopher Robin explains to them that they have been following their own tracks in circles around a spinney.