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Psychology 204 Reflection Paper

**To have well informed opinions, I will treat information that opposes my point of view with greater respect.**

Selective evaluation states that people will diminish the credibility of information that challenges their beliefs. In a study performed by Ziva Kunda, male and female students read a news article that explained how caffeine can increase females risk of a fibrocystic disease. Half of the subjects were high caffeine users while the other half were low caffeine users. Selective evaluation would predict that females who are high caffeine users would treat the article with less respect than the other subjects. The study supported the hypothesis and the females that were high caffeine users rated the article with lower credibility than females who were low caffeine users.

I know that when I am confronted with opposing viewpoints I look to discredit the source which can particularly easy to do with all the Facebook articles I see. To resist the urge to discredit opposing viewpoints, I will look to have conversations with friends or peers about their viewpoints that oppose mine. In the study, the students discredited the information put forth by the article, but I think that having personal conversations with people about opposing information makes it much more difficult to discredit the person you are talking with.

**I will do favors for my friends so that when I need a favor they will be more likely to help me out.**

The norm of reciprocity suggests that people will do favors for others that have helped them out in the past. This norm can be seen in an experiment where two people rated paintings. One of the participants was a confederate. In one condition, the confederate bought two sodas and offered one to the participant. In the other, the confederate did not buy a soda for the participant. Afterward the confederate tried to sell the participants raffle tickets to win a car. As expected, the participants that were given the soda bought twice as many raffle tickets compared to those that were not.

If I want my friends to be more willing to help me out with favors, doing favors for them appears to increase their likelihood to help me out. As seen in the study, doing a favor for someone creates a debt that they will be likely to repay.

**Now that I am looking for a job, to increase my likelihood of getting a job I will network more often and stay in contact with people from places where I would like to work.**

The mere exposure effect is the idea that being exposed to something more will lead to liking that thing more. To test this effect, Zajonc ran an experiment that showed a list of Turkish words that were unfamiliar to the participants. The words in the set were shown to the participants anywhere from 0 to 25 times. Afterward the participants were asked to indicate if the words would either referred to something good or bad. The results of the study supported the mere exposure effect because the words that were shown more often were assumed by participants to mean something good.

By going to more networking events and being in often contact with job recruiters will increase the exposure that they have with me. As seen in the study, this exposure should increase their opinion of me. This should increase the likelihood of job recruiters to offer me an interview or recommend me to someone else.

**While it might be difficult, I will try to stop judging people’s personalities by their behaviors, so that I will not form wrong impressions of them.**

People tend to judge others based on their actions and without regard to the situations that may have influenced their behaviors. The fundamental attribution error can be seen in a study where participants either read pro or anti-Castro essays. Half of the participants were told that the essayist’s stance was freely chosen and the other half were told that the essayist’s stance was assigned. In support of the idea of the fundamental attribution error the participants believed the essayist who were assigned a stance on Castro to have views that were in line with the stance taken in their essay. The participants ignored that essayists beliefs did not influence their essay and still inferred that their essay was an indication of their beliefs.

In day to day life it is very easy to judge people purely on their actions. However, this process limits me from truly understand what people are going through in their lives. I am going to challenge myself when I find that I judging people based on their actions to remember this study and how now are behaviors are not all caused by people’s personalities and beliefs.

**If I ever see an emergency happen in a public, I will go to help the person that is in need.**

Often in public places where there are several witnesses to an emergency people assume that someone else will help and are less likely to help the victim. This diffusion of responsibility can cause the victims in an emergency to suffer more than if they were helped immediately. This effect of bystanders in an emergency can be seen in a study performed by Darley and Latané. In this study, students sat in separate cubicles and talked to each other over an intercom. One of the students—who was a confederate – would fake a seizure. In one condition, there was just one other student with the confederate, in another there were three students, and in the last condition there were six students. Diffusion of responsibility would suggest that the larger the group the less likely students would be willing to help. This was confirmed with the two person groups helping 85% of the time while the six person groups helped only 31% of the time.

I think that is terrible for people to go unhelped especially when there are more than enough people to help them. I am deciding that I am going to help people in an emergency so I don’t need to make the choice in the moment. In the study the larger groups, the ambiguity of who would help the victim would stop some people from helping. From deciding ahead of time that I will help in emergency will take the ambiguity of my actions and allow me to help those in need more quickly and ensure they get the help they need.