10 lessons
from experimental
psychology

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the halo effect

Perception of one trait (e.g. intelligence) is influenced by the perception of another trait (e.g. attractiveness)

Wikipedia

Nisbett & Wilson, 1977:

group 1 lecturer warm and friendly

group 2 lecturer cold and distant

results: group 2 thought worse of the lecturer and even believed that his individual characteristics influenced the global evaluation and denied any influence of global evaluation to the individual characteristics

Nisbett & Wilson, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (1977)

framing

Imagine that the U.S. is preparing for the outbreak of an unusual Asian disease, which is expected to kill 600 people. Two alternative programs to combat the disease have been proposed. Assume that the exact scientific estimate of the consequences of the programs are as follows:

If Program A is adopted, 200 people will be saved.

If Program B is adopted, there is 1/3 probability that 600 people will be saved, and 2/3 probability that no people will be saved.

Which of the two programs would you favor?

Tversky & Kahneman, *Science* (1981)

framing

Imagine that the U.S. is preparing for the outbreak of an unusual Asian disease, which is expected to kill 600 people. Two alternative programs to combat the disease have been proposed. Assume that the exact scientific estimate of the consequences of the programs are as follows:

If Program C is adopted 400 people will die.

If Program D is adopted there is 1/3 probability that nobody will die, and 2/3 probability that 600 people will die.

Which of the two programs would you favor?

Tversky & Kahneman, *Science* (1981)

false memories

People can sometimes remember things that never happened.

Loftus & Pickrell (1995):

participants read 4 narratives written by their relatives

1 narrative is plausible, but false (lost in the mall)

25% reported remembering the event

Loftus & Pickrell, *Psychiatric Annals* (1995)

cognitive dissonance

Festinger & Carlsmith, 1959

group 1 do a boring task, decribe it as cool for $1

group 2 do a boring task, decribe it as cool for $20

between −5 and +5, how much did you enjoy the task?

group 1 +1.35

group 2 −.05

Festinger & Carlsmith, *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* (1959)

užduotis

In 5 minutes, come up with as many ways as possible to manipulate people using the effect we discussed so far:

halo effect pretty -> intelligent

framing wording makes a difference

false memories implanting false memories

cognitive dissonance change your beliefs to justify your actions
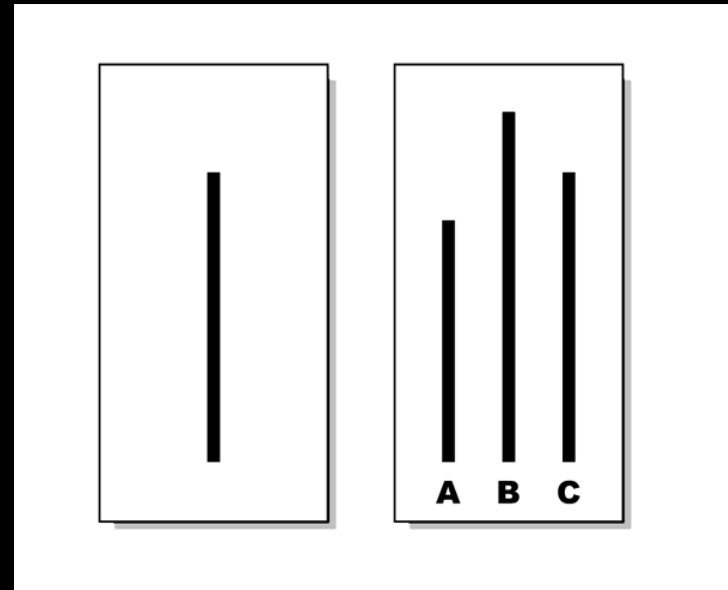
asch conformity experiment

Which line is the of same length?

25% correct

33% more than half of the time erroneous majority

Source; Asch (1951)

Wikimedia Commons

bystander effect

People are not likely to help
when there are others
around

milgram experiment

(stanley milgram, 1963)

<u>demo</u>

teacher and student (actor)

teach by administering an electric shock ranging from Slight Shock to Danger: Severe Shock

65% teachers went all the way

<u>Milgram, The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology (1963)</u>

the robbers cave experiment

William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954)

group prejudice

24 (eleven or twelve)-year-old boys
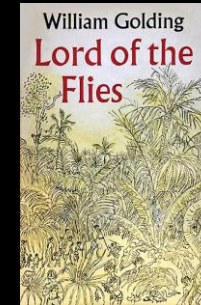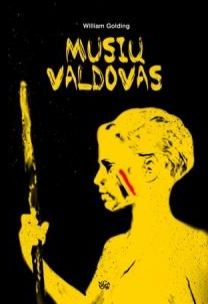
two groups

stages:

      group formation

      friction

      integration

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Sherif et al. (1954/1961)

stanford prison experiment

(philip zimbardo, 1971)

24 students: 12 guards, 12 prisoners

14 days in "prison"

5 prisoners released early

experiment halted after 6 days

Wikipedia

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learned helplessness

In difficult situations, people tend to lose *hope*.