

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

SCCE REGIONAL CONFERENCE – TAMPA, FLORIDA (VIRTUAL) APRIL 24
ITS IMPACT ON INVESTIGATIONS

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WHAT IS BIAS?

“**Bias** is disproportionate weight in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair.”



“Your assumptions are your windows on the world. Scrub them off every once in a while, or the light won't come in.”

- Isaac Asimov



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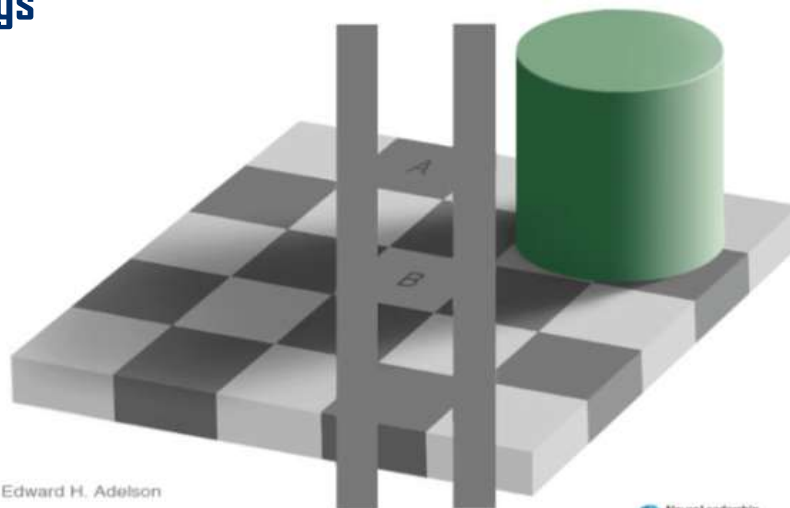
The moment a **person forms a theory**, his imagination sees in every object only the traits which favor that **theory**.



--Thomas Jefferson

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Mindbugs



Edward H. Adelson

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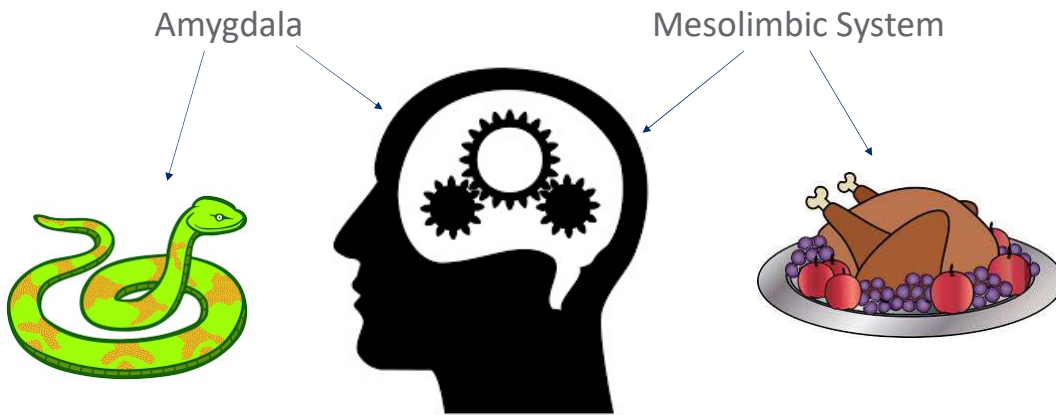
#1	#2	#3
SLB	CFLTK	CFLTK
SPRND	HLMG	CFLTK
SLB	SPRND	SLB
SPRND	HLMG	CFLTK

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#1	#2	#3
RED	GREEN	YELLOW
BLUE	GREEN	BROWN
RED	YELLOW	BLUE
BROWN	BROWN	BLUE

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Neuroscience



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Bias Influencers

- Ambiguity
 - Reaching our own conclusions when evidence is ambiguous.
- Attachment
 - Making decisions based on **our** relationships
- Approval
 - Following others' biased views



ASPECTS OF BIAS

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Types of Investigative Bias

- Confirmation
 - Tendency to give more or less weight to information that tends to confirm a preconceived notion
- “Like Me” or “Familiarity” Bias
 - Favoring information received from witnesses who are ‘like’ you *or* dismissing evidence from witnesses who are not
- Priming
 - Phenomenon in which reactions to stimulus are affected by our exposure to another stimulus
Example: Reaction to the word *crash* vs *collide*

CIRCUMSTANCES CAN
DICTATE BIAS

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Types of Investigative Bias

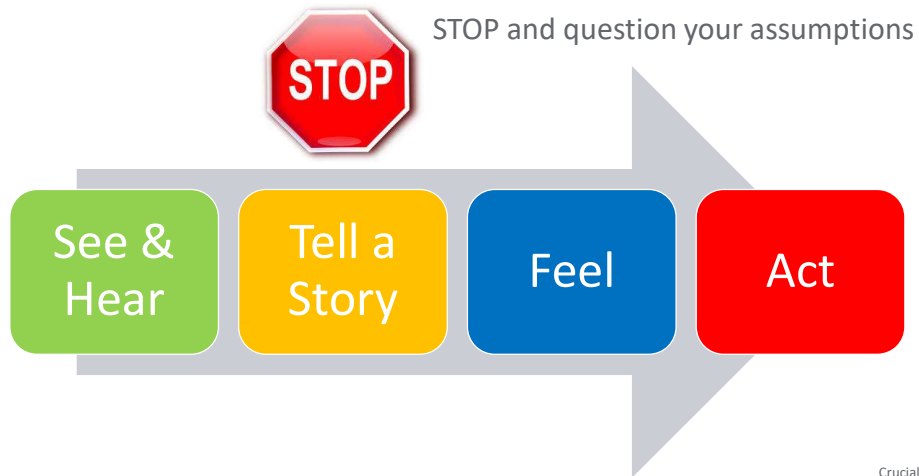
- **Confirmation Bias**
 - Tendency to give more or less weight to information that tends to confirm a preconceived notion
- “Like Me” or “Familiarity” Bias
 - Favoring information received from witnesses who are ‘like’ you
- **Priming Bias**
 - Phenomenon in which reactions to stimulus are affected by our exposure to another stimulus (i.e. reaction to word *crash* vs *collide*)
- **Rush to Solve Bias**
 - Occurs when an opinion is formed without considering all available data
- **Availability Bias**
 - Reaching easy conclusions by accepting available information versus digging for more detail



CIRCUMSTANCES CAN
DICTATE BIAS

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Testing Assumptions-The Problem



Crucial Conversations, Vital Smarts 2007

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Scenario



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The Faces of Ryan



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Tips to Avoid Bias

- Don't Prejudge
- Be Aware of Communications
- Test Yourself
- Prepare, Prepare, Prepare
- Review and Analyze Evidence & Facts
- Respect
- Seek to Prove & Disprove
- Reply on Tools
- Get a Second Opinion
- Play Devil's Advocate
- Test your Assumptions



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