

I2. MIND PUZZLES

PARADOX OF SELF-DECEPTION

Self-deception appears to be rife. How can it work? X deceives Y about p iff X, knowing that p, makes Y think that $\sim p$. How can one being knowing enough to deceive, and at the same time ignorant enough to succeed in the deception? It isn't just that one is knowing before the deception. One might need to continue knowing in order to maintain the deception. Could there be two agents inside us? But then why, for instance, is self-deception more common when people are drunk? Does the deceiver have a higher tolerance for alcohol?

RELIANCE ON INTUITIONS ABOUT POSSIBLE CASES

Many of the arguments we have used so far depend upon our intuitions about possible cases. But why should we trust our intuitions? Are they in general reliable? Are there specially odd things about imagining fictitious (i.e. merely possible) cases?

INTUITIONS ARE NOT GENERALLY RELIABLE

WASON SELECTION TEST

I am presented with four cards, each has a color on one side and an integer on the other. I want to ascertain the truth of the claim 'If there is red on one side, then the number on the other side is even'. Two of the cards are color side up; one is red and one is blue. Two of the cards are number side up. One bears a '2' one bears a '7'. Which cards do I need to turn over in order to ascertain the truth of the conditional? (Compare: I am a policeman looking for underage drinkers in a bar. That is, I'm trying to see if the rule 'If you are drinking alcohol, then you are over 21' is met. I ask everyone to put their driver's licences out. In four cases I can't see both the licence and the drink: one 19 year old's licence, one 24 year old's licence, one whisky, one coke. Which do I need to investigate further?)

CONJUNCTION

Linda is 23, college educated, vegetarian, lives in Northern California. Which is more probable? Linda is a bank teller? Linda is a feminist bank teller? A conjunction A&B is not as probable as A. Yet people will judge A&B more probable. Other example: Asked to guess how many times the pattern -----n- appears on a page of the NY Times, people will give a lower number than for -----ing, which entails the pattern just given.

AVAILABILITY

A phenomenon will seem more prevalent if we can think of more examples, even when the reasons examples are cognitively available have nothing to do with actual prevalence. Words beginning with K seem more common than words with K in the third position, because examples readily come to mind.

BASE-RATE

"Pat enjoys organizing things. Is Pat a librarian or a salesperson?" People say librarian regardless of the fact that salespeople vastly outnumber librarians. "Suppose that 108 people pass through a terrorist detector at an airport. 1 in a million are terrorists. The detector is 99% percent accurate. Smith passes through and the detector buzzes. What are the chances Smith is a terrorist?" People say 99%. But the probability of being a terrorist, given that you've set off the buzzer, = # of terrorists setting off buzzer / # of people setting off buzzer = 99% of 100 / (99% of 100 + 1% of (108 - 100)) = 99/(99 + (106 - 1)) = about 1/104 = .01%.

ODDITIES ABOUT IMAGINATION**IMAGINATIVE RESISTANCE**

I read a story in which it is said that space craft can travel faster than the speed of light. I go along with the story. I read a story in which there is a decision procedure for the validity of first-order logic. I go along with the story. I read a story in which child abuse is good. Do I go along with the story?

FEARING FICTIONS

Am I afraid of Hannibal Lecter? On the one hand, YES. Emotional engagement is the whole point; if you're not going to be drawn in, you might as well stay home. Also why would my heart be racing, why would I look away, etc., if I were not afraid? On the other hand, NO. People who are truly terrified and have the opportunity to escape generally do so. No one is blocking the door, yet here I sit.

PARADOX OF TRAGEDY

Oliver Twist is treated badly in the workhouse. I find this horrifying. I am disgusted by Bill Sykes' cruelty, and am overcome with pity for Nancy. Why keep reading, or watching, then? The fact that I keep on with it suggests that I somehow want to feel these things. People are "never are so happy as when they employ tears, sobs and cries to give vent to their sorrow, and relieve their heart, swollen with the tenderest sympathy and compassion" (Hume). Why would I seek out an encounter with horrifying events? How can tragedy be so deeply satisfying?

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