

- "Knowledge is literally prediction," said Morey. "Knowledge is anything that increases your ability to predict the outcome. Literally everything you do you're trying to predict the right thing. Most people just do it subconsciously."

- "Confirmation bias," he'd heard this called. The human mind was just bad at seeing things it did not expect to see, and a bit too eager to see what it expected to see. "Confirmation bias is the most insidious because you don't even realize it is happening," he said.

- Morey thus became aware of what behavioral economists had labeled "the endowment effect."

- By then the question of whether God exists left me cold. But the question of why people believe God exists I found really fascinating. I was not really interested in right and wrong. But I was very interested in indignation. Now that's a psychologist!"

- "Basically it was organized around charismatic teachers, people who had biographies, not just curriculum vitae,"

- Figure 2. Müller-Lyer optical illusion. Presented with two lines of equal length, the eye is tricked into seeing one as being longer than the other. Even after you prove to people, with a ruler, that the lines are identical, the illusion persists: They'll insist that one line still looks longer than the other. If perception had the power to overwhelm reality in such a simple case, how much power might it have in a more complicated one?

- Thorndike concluded; he went on to say that he had "become convinced that even a very capable foreman, employer, teacher, or department head is unable to view an individual as a compound of separate qualities and to assign a magnitude to each of these in independence of the others." Thus was born what is still called "the halo effect."

- unified the field of psychology. Meehl's book, called Clinical versus Statistical Prediction,

- He told them to pose very specific questions, designed to determine not how a person thought of himself but how the person had actually behaved.

- The question was not "What do I think of him?" but "What has he done?"

- "When someone says something, don't ask yourself if it is true. Ask what it might be true of."

- The question the Israeli military had asked him—Which personalities are best suited to which military roles?—had turned out to make no sense. And so Danny had gone and answered a different, more fruitful question: How do we prevent the intuition of interviewers from screwing up their assessment of army recruits?

- "The difference between Danny and the next nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine psychologists is his ability to find the phenomenon and then explain it in a way that applies to other situations," said Dale Griffin, a psychologist at the University of British Columbia. "It looks like luck but he keeps doing it."

- A small child's ability to wait turned out to be correlated with his IQ and his family circumstances and some other things as well. Tracking the kids through life, Mischel later

found that the better a five-year-old resisted the temptation, the higher his future SAT scores and his sense of self-worth, and the lower his body fat and the likelihood he'd suffer from some addiction.

- Amos Tversky.

- His father had turned away from an early career in medicine, Amos explained to friends, because "he thought animals had more real pain than people and complained a lot less."

- He compelled himself to be brave until bravery became a habit.

- "You know, Murray, there is no one in the world who is as smart as you think you are."

- The University of Michigan psychologist Dick Nisbett, after he'd met Amos, designed a one-line intelligence test: The sooner you figure out that Amos is smarter than you are, the smarter you are.

- "Amos thought people paid an enormous price to avoid mild embarrassment,"

- "The nice thing about things that are urgent," he liked to say, "is that if you wait long enough they aren't urgent anymore."

- "He said, 'There is nothing we can do in philosophy. Plato solved too many of the problems. We can't have any impact in this area. There are too many smart guys and too few problems left, and the problems have no solutions.'

- Amos said. "The big choices we make are practically random. The small choices probably tell us more about who we are. Which field we go into may depend on which high school teacher we happen to meet. Who we marry may depend on who happens to be around at the right time of life. On the other hand, the small decisions are very systematic. That I became a psychologist is probably not very revealing. What kind of psychologist I am may reflect deep traits."

- If you went to a doctor in the seventeenth century, you were worse off for having gone. By the end of the nineteenth century, going to the doctor was a break-even proposition: You were as likely to come away from the visit better off as you were to be worse off. Amos argued that clinical psychology was like medicine in the seventeenth century, and he had lots of evidence to support his case.

- "The Theory of Decision Making," by a psychology professor at Johns Hopkins named Ward Edwards. "Many social scientists other than psychologists try to account for the behavior of individuals," it opened.

- As it turned out, the Jackson Prison inmates choosing between gambles had a lot in common with Kenneth May's students when they chose between spouses: After they had said they preferred A to B and B to C, they could be induced to prefer C to A

- The University of Michigan was then, as it is now, home to the world's largest department of psychology.

- “The directionality and asymmetry of similarity relations are particularly noticeable in similes and metaphors,” Amos wrote. “We say ‘Turks fight like tigers’ and not ‘tigers fight like Turks.’
- ‘The absence of a feature is a feature.’ ” Amos had written that into his original paper. “Similarity increases with the addition of common features and/or deletion of distinctive features.”
- Two American college students in the United States might look at each other and see a total stranger; the same two college students on their junior year abroad in Togo might find that they are surprisingly similar: They’re both Americans! By changing the context in which two things are compared, you submerge certain features and force others to the surface.
- Things are grouped together for a reason, but, once they are grouped, their grouping causes them to seem more like each other than they otherwise would. That is, the mere act of classification reinforces stereotypes. If you want to weaken some stereotype, eliminate the classification.
- Danny watched for a bit and then explained to them what was actually going on: The pilot who was praised because he had flown exceptionally well, like the pilot who was chastised after he had flown exceptionally badly, simply were regressing to the mean. They’d have tended to perform better (or worse) even if the teacher had said nothing at all. An illusion of the mind tricked teachers—and probably many others—into thinking that their words were less effective when they gave pleasure than when they gave pain. Statistics wasn’t just boring numbers; it contained ideas that allowed you to glimpse deep truths about human life.
- Error wasn’t merely instructive; it was the key that might unlock the deep nature of the mechanism. “How do you understand memory?” he asked. “You don’t study memory. You study forgetting.”