



# SEMINAR ON SEXUAL APOLOGETICS

Steve Willing



# AGENDA

- Introduction: The Top Ten Myths of the Sexual revolution
- Week 2: Why sexual apologetics? The state of the Church
- Week 3: Defending Biblical sexuality to professing believers
- Week 4: Scientific basis for the Genesis paradigm (recorded)
- Week 5: Victims of the sexual revolution
- Week 6: Homosexuality, Transgenderism, and other variants
- Week 7: How we got here; where we're headed; what we can do



# RESOURCES

- Weekly notes and PowerPoint at [www.swilling.com](http://www.swilling.com)
- Contact: [steve@willing.org](mailto:steve@willing.org)
- Christian Medical & Dental Association
- National Review
- Breakpoint
- The Public Discourse
- Recommended readings



# A STATE OF MIND

Thinking about  
believing: the view  
from 30,000 feet



# BARNA RESEARCH

"59% of Millennials who grew up in the church have dropped out at some point"

"Only two in 10 believe it is important"

"The dropout problem is, at its core, a faith-development problem; to use religious language, it's a *disciple-making problem*. The church is not adequately preparing the next generation to follow Christ faithfully in a rapidly changing culture." p21

insulated ideas about sexuality disconnected from the real world clergy abuse scandals caused me to never experienced anything like the miracles in the Bible never took any risks in church not creative talk at me rather than listen to me to pushy never really accepted by church people church people are mean do not want to be like the church people clergy scandals caused me to doubt my faith faith is antisocial no place for young leaders out of touch with the way the world really is demonized everything that is outside the church church made me choose between friends and faith chauvinistic too male dominated

# YOU LOST ME.

Why Young Christians Are Leaving Church . . . And Rethinking Faith

David Kinnaman  
Bestselling coauthor of *unChristian*  
President of the Barna Group



# RECAP

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Rapid decline in religious engagement  
driven by sex

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The Biblical paradigm for human sexuality  
is validated by scientific research of the  
last 3 decades

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The secular narrative, based on the so-  
called “sexual revolution”, is deleterious to  
physical, mental, and societal well-being

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The secular narrative breeds predators,  
and makes victims of women, children,  
and other men



# THE BASIS OF BELIEF – AS WE SEE IT

- Facts
- Experience
- Logic

# THE BASIS OF BELIEF – AS IT REALLY IS

- Facts
- Logic
- Experience
- Traditions
- Heuristics
- Emotions
- Social influences



# THE BASIS OF BELIEF - AS IT REALLY, *REALLY* IS

- Facts
- Logic
- Experience
- Traditions
- Heuristics
- Emotions
- Social influences



BELIEFS ARE LIKE  
SAUSAGES



FACTS?

Misinformation

Disinformation

Information overload



# Lies, Damned Lies, and Medical Science

*Much of what medical researchers conclude in their studies is misleading, exaggerated, or flat-out wrong. So why are doctors—to a striking extent—still drawing upon misinformation in their everyday practice? Dr. John Ioannidis has spent his career challenging his peers by exposing their bad science.*

By DAVID H. FREEDMAN



Essay

## Why Most Published Research Findings Are False

John P. A. Ioannidis

### Summary

There is increasing concern that most current published research findings are false. The probability that a research claim is true may depend on study power and bias, the number of other studies on the same question, and, importantly, the ratio of true to no relationships among the relationships probed in each scientific field. In this framework, a research finding is less likely to be true when the studies conducted in a field are smaller; when effect sizes are smaller; when there is a greater number and lesser preselection of tested relationships; where there is greater flexibility in designs, definitions, outcomes, and analytical modes; when there is greater financial and other interest and prejudice; and when more teams are involved in a scientific field

factors that influence this problem and some corollaries thereof.

### Modeling the Framework for False Positive Findings

Several methodologists have pointed out [9–11] that the high rate of nonreplication (lack of confirmation) of research discoveries is a consequence of the convenient, yet ill-founded strategy of claiming conclusive research findings solely on the basis of a single study assessed by formal statistical significance, typically for a  $p$ -value less than 0.05. Research is not most appropriately represented and summarized by  $p$ -values, but, unfortunately, there is a widespread notion that medical research articles

is characteristic of the field vary a lot depending on field targets highly likely or searches for only one true relationships among and millions of hypotheses be postulated. Let us also for computational simplicity circumscribed fields where is only one true relationship many that can be hypothesized the power is similar to find several existing true relationships pre-study probability of a being true is  $R/(R+1)$ . of a study finding a true reflects the power  $1 - \beta$  (the Type II error rate). of claiming a relationship truly exists reflects the Type I rate,  $\alpha$ . Assuming that  $c$



IMAGE CREDIT: ROBYN TWOMEY/REDUX

# MISINFORMATION

It can be proven that

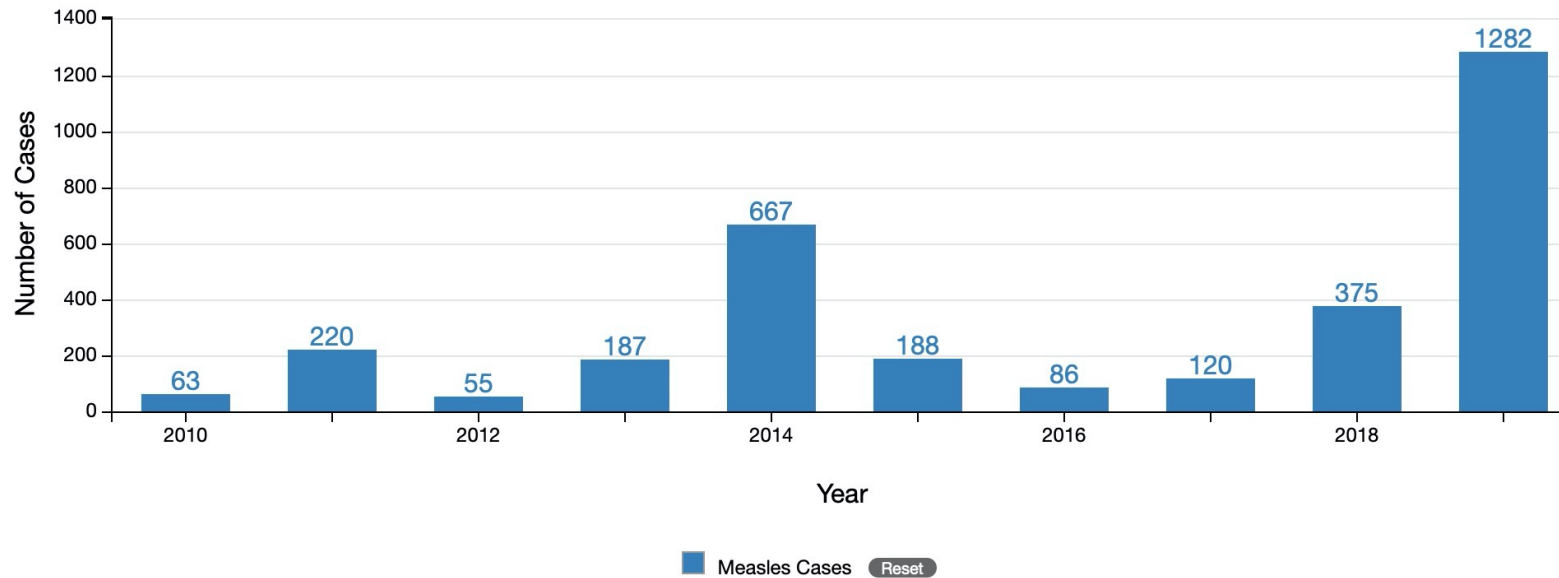


## Early report

Ileal-lymphoid-nodular hyperplasia, non-specific colitis, and  
pervasive developmental disorder in children

## Number of Measles Cases Reported by Year

2010-2019\*(as of January 31, 2019)



Data Table

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Measles Cases	63	220	55	187	667	188	86	120	375	1282

# DISINFORMATION



# The 50/50 Problem: How the Internet Is Distorting Our Reality

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MARCH 30, 2021 | BY S. ADAM SEAGRAVE

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More than 50 percent of Americans spend more than 50 percent of their waking hours living in virtual, artificial worlds rather than the given, created one in which their bodies exist. The 50 percent threshold represents a tipping point that renders dialogue, deliberation, civic friendship, and compromise extraordinarily difficult in any society.



# LOGIC

Mirror?

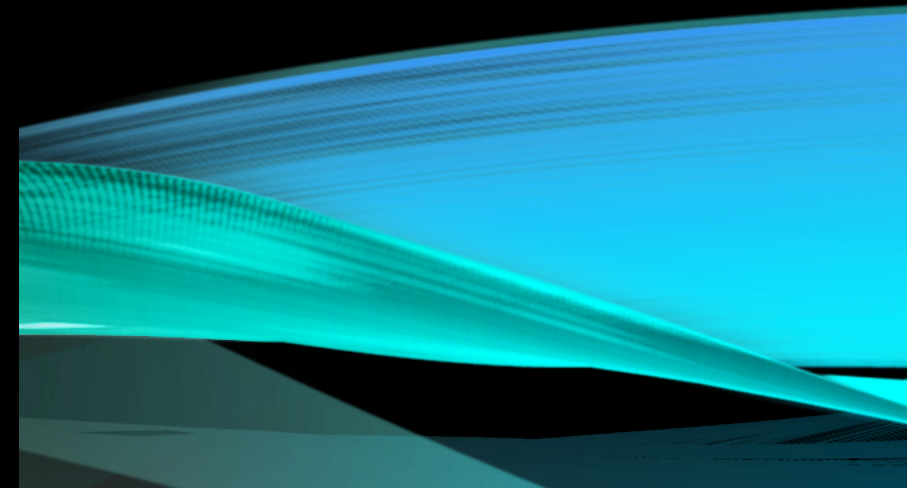
Or weapon?





# EXPERIENCE

Must be understood  
correctly







# TRADITION

Just Because You've Always Done It That Way Doesn't  
Mean It's Not Incredibly Stupid

[www.despair.com](http://www.despair.com)

## TRADITIONS

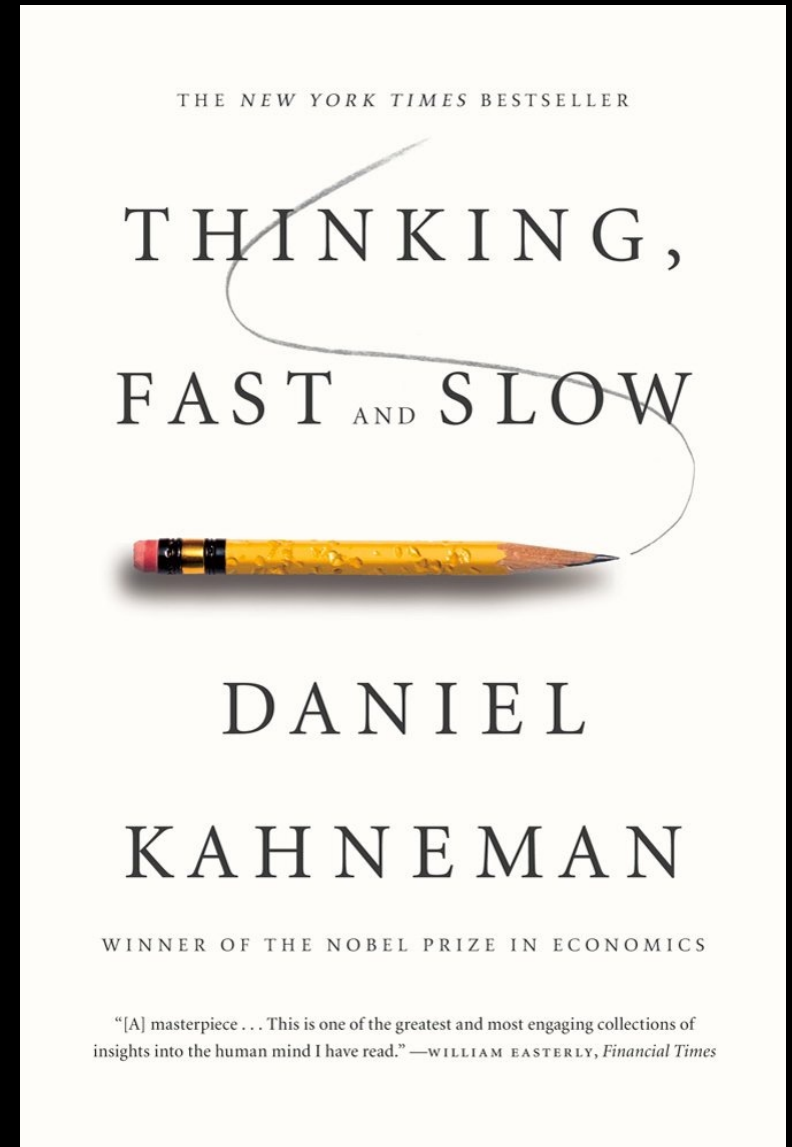
- Could represent myth persistence
- Could represent accumulated experience

# HEURISTICS

“mental shortcuts that ease the cognitive load of making a decision” (Wikipedia)

“System 1 is gullible and biased to believe, System 2 is in charge of doubting and unbelieving, but system 2 is sometimes busy, and often lazy.”

“the human mind is not bound to reality.”





# HEURISTICS

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Availability

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Affect

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Familiarity

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Occam's razor

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Recognition

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Representativeness

# THE “REPRESENTATIVENESS” HEURISTIC







# EMOTIONS

# THE UNDERAPPRECIATED IMPORTANCE OF EMOTIONS IN DECISION MAKING:

“The studies of decision-making in neurological patients who can no longer process emotional information normally suggest that people make judgments not only by evaluating the consequences and their probability of occurring, but *also and even sometimes primarily at a gut or emotional level.*”

A Bechara. The role of emotion in decision-making: Evidence from neurological patients with orbitofrontal damage. *Brain and Cognition* 55 (2004) 30–40



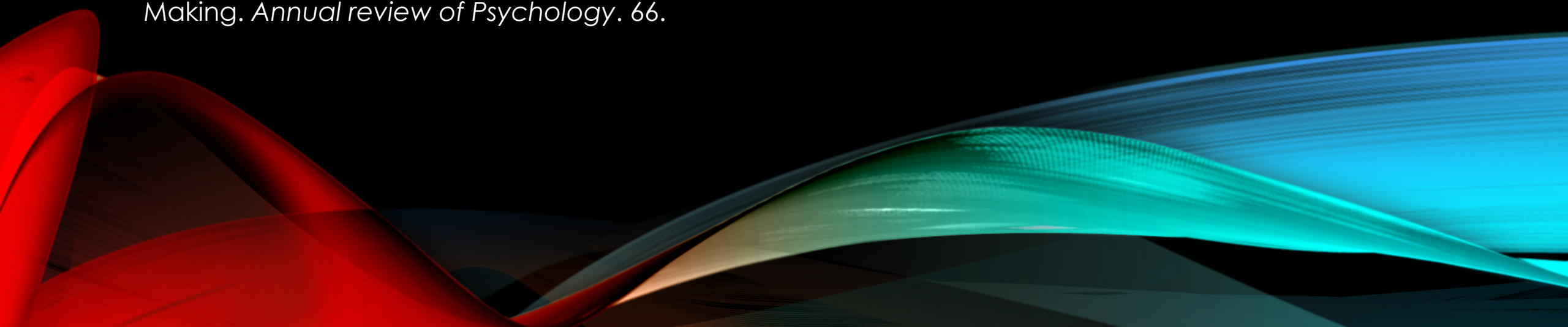
# SEXUAL DECISION-MAKING IS INFLUENCED BY NEUROBIOLOGY

- Dopamine
- Testosterone
- Oxytocin

“ THE RESEARCH REVEALS THAT EMOTIONS CONSTITUTE  
POTENT, PERVASIVE, PREDICTABLE, SOMETIMES HARMFUL  
AND SOMETIMES BENEFICIAL DRIVERS OF DECISION MAKING.  
ACROSS DIFFERENT DOMAINS, IMPORTANT REGULARITIES  
APPEAR IN THE MECHANISMS THROUGH WHICH EMOTIONS  
INFLUENCE JUDGMENTS AND CHOICES. ”

Jennifer Lerner, Harvard University

Lerner, Jennifer & Li, Ye & Valdesolo, Piercarlo & S. Kassam, Karim. (2014). Emotion and Decision Making. *Annual review of Psychology*. 66.



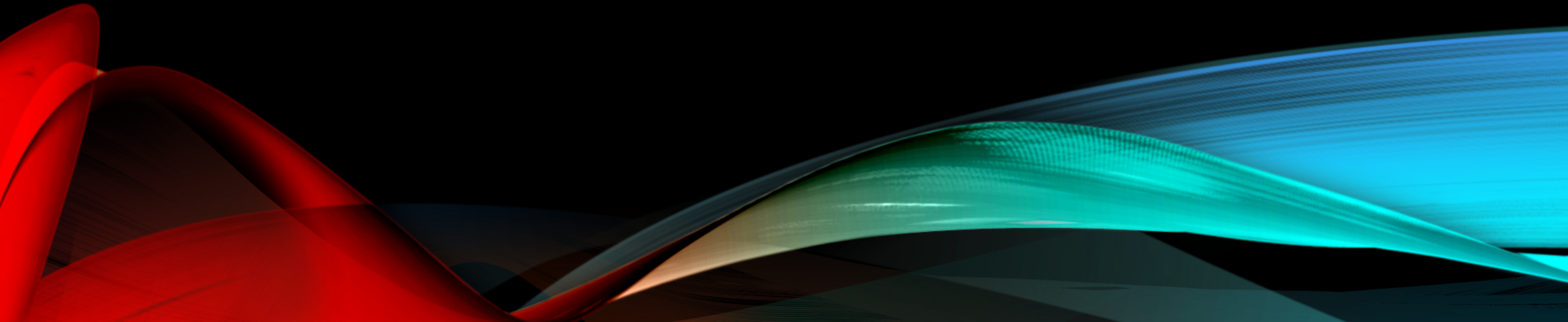


Thomas Nagel,  
Philosopher

IT ISN'T JUST THAT I DON'T  
BELIEVE IN GOD AND,  
NATURALLY, HOPE THAT I'M  
RIGHT IN MY BELIEF. IT'S THAT  
I HOPE THERE IS NO GOD!  
I DON'T WANT THERE TO BE A  
GOD; I DON'T WANT THE  
UNIVERSE TO BE LIKE THAT.

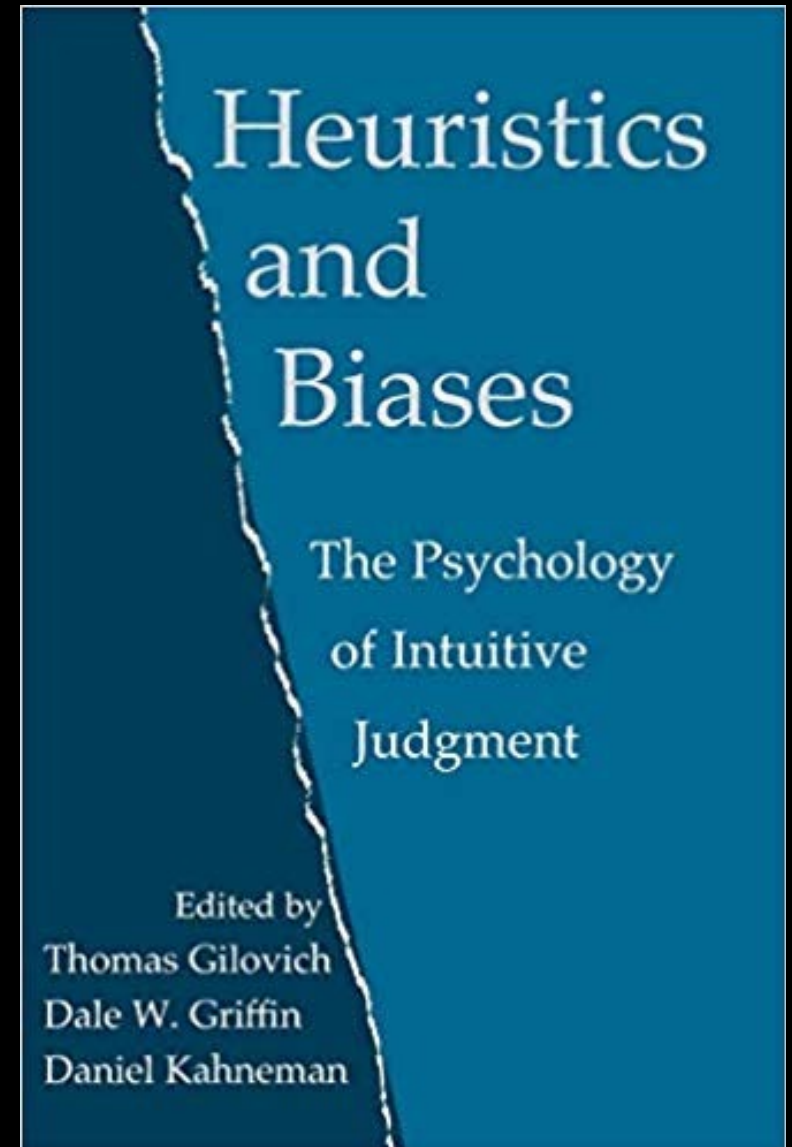
**Biases**  
Misinformation  
Disinformation  
Overload

# BARRIERS TO TRUTH-SEEKING



# BIASES

- Confirmation bias
- Disconfirmation bias
- Bias blind spot
- As of May 15, 2019: 194 listed on Wikipedia



# SOCIAL INFLUENCES

- Availability cascade
- Bandwagon effect
- Peer pressure
- Grandstanding
- Ramping up
- Mass media



## MEETINGS

None of Us is as Dumb as All of Us





# HUMANS ARE *BELIEVING* MACHINES

- ~~Age of Enlightenment~~
- ~~Age of Postmodernism~~
- Age of Credulity
- *Every belief demands denial of its antithesis*

# PRIDE

- *“The desire for inordinate exaltation” – Augustine*
- *“Inordinate desire of one’s own excellence” – Aquinas*
- *“A person having too high a thought of himself” – Jonathan Edwards*

Definition: An unrealistically positive view of one’s wisdom, abilities, virtue, importance, or control. Overconfidence.

VOICES

## “I Think, Therefore It Must Be True,” Part 2: The Science of Certainty

BY GUEST WRITER - AUGUST 9, 2019

SHARE



By Steve Willing

“Do not be wise in your own eyes.” ([Proverbs 3:7](#))

# CERTAINTY

“Studies repeatedly show that our degree of certainty consistently exceeds our accuracy....This disparity both defines and demonstrates the phenomenon of overconfidence.”

**Pride and false beliefs are causally related.** This is the crux of the issue.

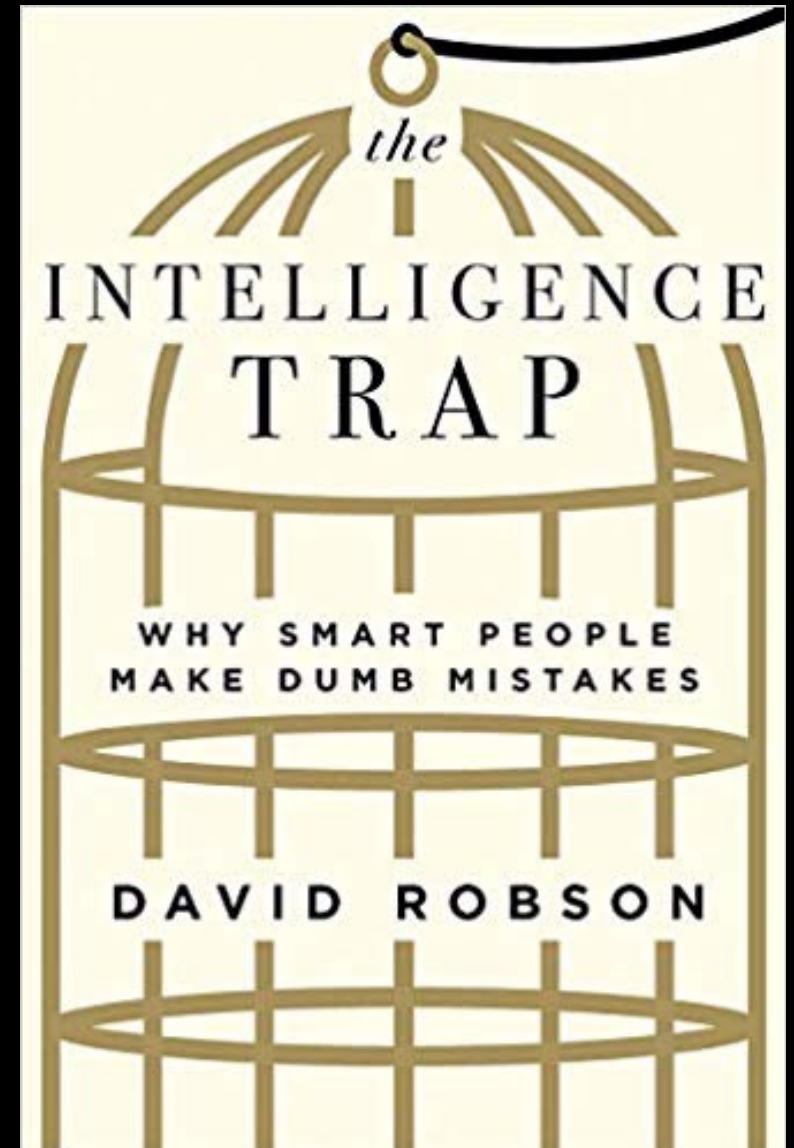
# INTELLIGENCE IS NOT WISDOM

“Nobel disease”

*"I honor Lenin as a man who completely sacrificed himself and devoted all his energy to the realization of social justice. I do not consider his methods practical, but one thing is certain: men of his type are the guardians and restorers of humanity."*

- Albert Einstein. Einstein Archives:34-439

Wisdom: “Capacity of judging rightly in matters relating to life and conduct; soundness of judgement in the choice of means and ends” OED 2009



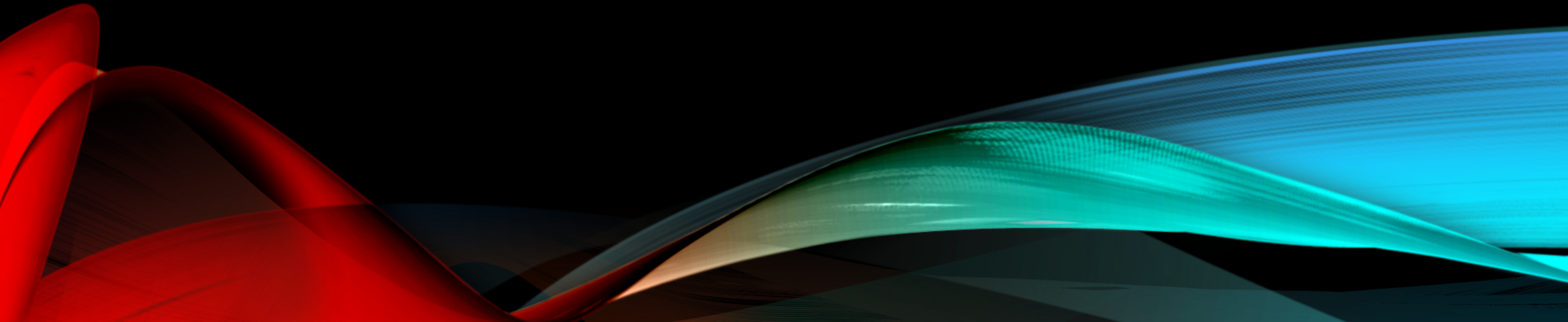




# MOTIVATED COGNITION

Critical thinking is  
necessary but not  
sufficient

FOR LOVE OF  
WISDOM

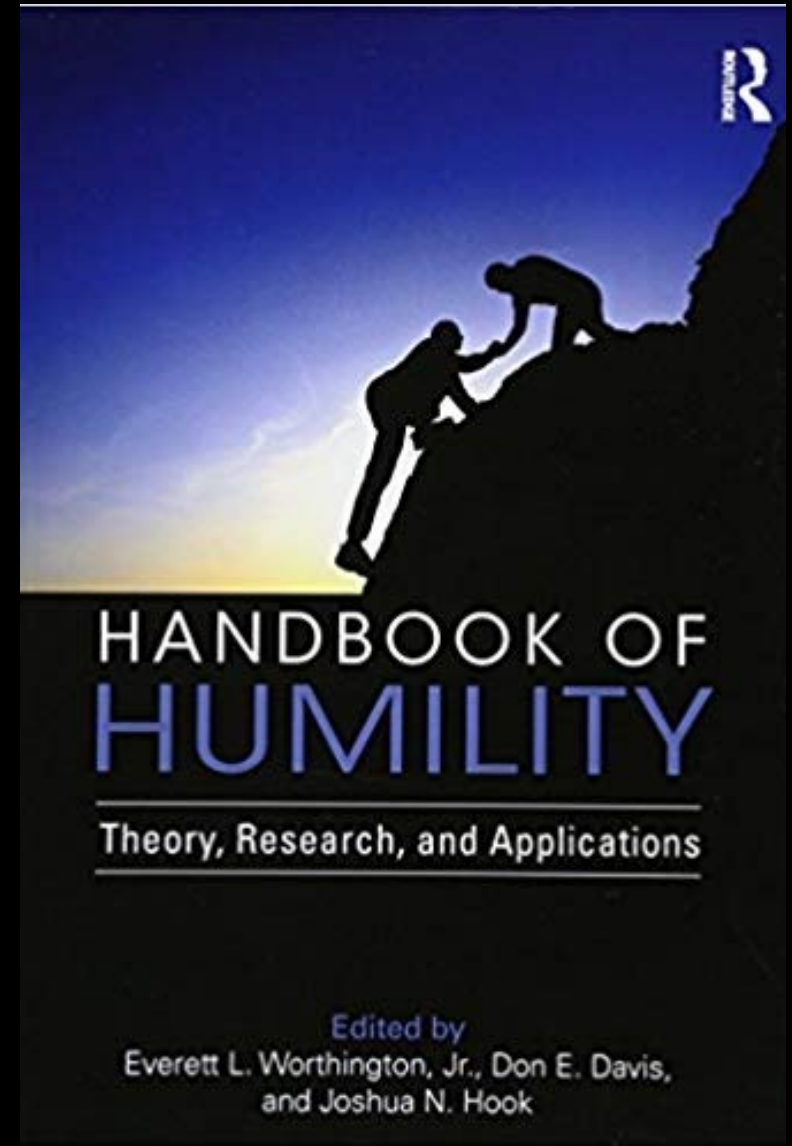


# INTELLECTUAL HUMILITY

Accepting that one's knowledge and understanding will always be incomplete, and allowing for the possibility of being mistaken.

“The first principle is that you must not fool yourself — and you are the easiest person to fool.” *Richard Feynman*

“We cannot choose not to be wrong. We can choose not to be arrogant.”





# SUMMARY

- False beliefs make poor disciples
- There is much more to it than facts and arguments
- Humans are believing machines
- Pitfalls abound, truth is elusive
- Pursue wisdom
- Recognize pride
- Embrace, practice, and preach humility



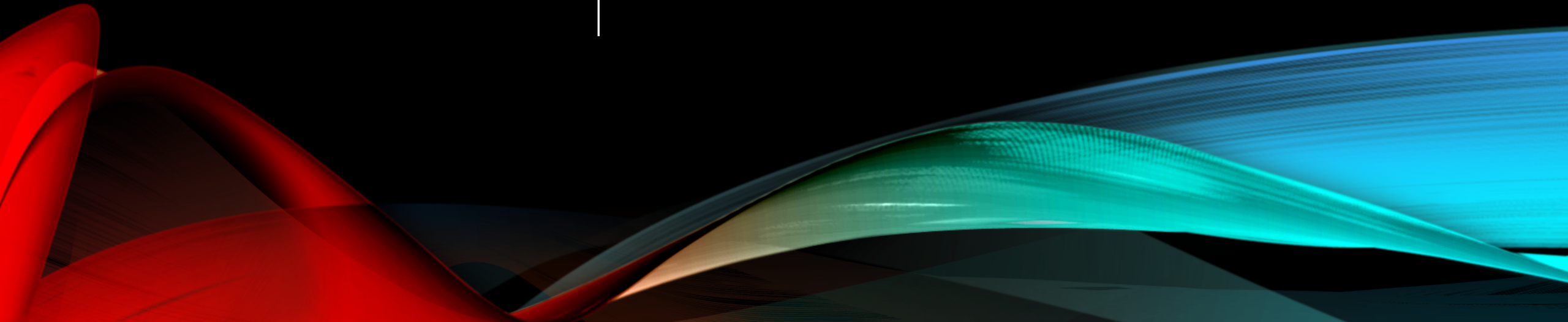


SO WHAT DID I  
MISS?

# THE BASIS OF BELIEF - AS IT REALLY, REALLY, *REALLY IS*

- Facts
- Experience
- Logic
- Traditions
- Heuristics
- Emotions
- Social influences
- Spiritual influences

IT IS THE CLEAR TEACHING  
OF SCRIPTURE THAT DARK  
SPIRITUAL FORCES HAVE  
GREAT POWER IN THIS  
WORLD.







# SPIRITUAL WARFARE 101



# The Great Deceiver

THE PRIMARY WEAPON AT  
THE DISPOSAL OF SATAN  
AND HIS LEGIONS IS THE  
POWER TO DECEIVE AND  
MANIPULATE.

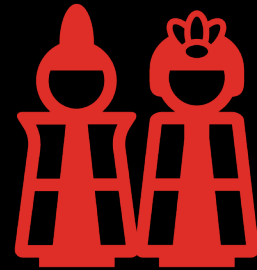
# WHAT POWER DO THEY WIELD?



They tempt (John 13:27, Acts 5:3, Matthew 4)



They plant ideas (I Chronicles 21:1, Matthew 16:21-23)



They recruit (John 8:44)



# WHAT ARE THEIR TECHNIQUES?

- They quote Scripture with aplomb
- They tempt with sex
- They plant ideas
- They facilitate the spread of disinformation
- They zero in on our pride





# WHAT ARE THEIR OBJECTIVES?

- Impede the ministry of the Church
- Keep people from seeking and finding the truth
- Maximize human misery

# WHAT ARE THE SIGNS?

- Falsehood
- Division
- Pride
- Judgmentalism
- Strife
- Self-destruction

# WHAT ARE WE TO DO?

1

Recognize the  
nature of the  
battle  
(Ephesians 6:12)

2

Study  
(Ephesians 6:14)

3

Pray (Ephesians  
6:18)

4

Be humble

# RESPONDING TO THE SEXUAL REVOLUTION

- Minister to the victims
- Make our churches a place of refuge
- Forceful discipline against predatory behavior
- Challenge the narrative with stories
- Promote earlier marriage
- Shut off the spigot of propaganda
- Employ the weapons of spiritual warfare