

Availability Bias

Availability Bias is the tendency to let an example that easily comes to mind easily affect decision-making or reasoning.¹ This occurs when we overweight evidence that comes more easily to mind or is more prevalent in our memories.

The study of Availability Bias was pioneered by psychologists Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, who developed a model called *prospect theory* to explain systematic bias in human decision-making.² You may remember the classic study in which different people, witnessing the same crime or accident event, each report a different version of events. Though each presumably sane, sober person witnessed the events with his or her own two eyes, individual expectations and biases influenced how they perceived what happened. Our thinking is often strongly influenced by what is personally most relevant, recent, or dramatic.³

Next: [Anchoring](#)

¹ Esgate, Anthony; Groome, David (2005). An Introduction to Applied Cognitive Psychology. Psychology Press. p. 201.

² <http://www.innovateus.net/health/what-availability-bias>.

³ <http://www.businessinsider.com/the-availability-bias-is-driving-investor-decisions-2012-10>.

Also:

http://www.howtogetyourownway.com/biases/availability_bias.html.