

Psychology 458

Decision Making

Winter, 1993

Professor: Debbie Frisch

Office Hours: Monday 2:00-3:00; Thursday 11:00-12:00 325 STRAUB (x6-4959)

Text: Thinking and deciding, Jonathan Baron, Cambridge University Press, 1988

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Topic</u> | <u>Reading</u> |
|-------------|---|--------------------------------|
| 1/5 | Introduction | Chapters 1-3 |
| 1/7 | Rational and intuitive ways of knowing | |
| 1/12 | Improving thinking in everyday life | Chapters 7-10 |
| 1/14 | Probability and statistics | |
| 1/19 | Judgment under uncertainty: | Chapters 11-12 Gigerenzer |
| 1/21 | Reasoning about probability and statistics | |
| 1/26 | Hypothesis testing | Chapter 13-15 |
| 1/28 | Hypothesis testing | |
| 2/2 | EXAM 1 | Chapter 16 |
| 2/4 | Decision making | |
| 2/9 | Decision making | Chapter 17 |
| 2/11 | Decision making | |
| 2/16 | Decisions that affect others: | Chapter 19-21 |
| 2/18 | Moral decisions and social dilemmas | |
| 2/23 | Men and women: | Gilligan, Belenky et al. |
| 2/25 | Different thinking styles? | |
| 3/2 | Emotions in decision making | Janis & Mann, Csikszentmihalyi |
| 3/4 | EXAM 2 | |
| 3/9 | Perspectives on intuition | Blackburn |
| 3/11 | Integrating rationality and intuition (Paper due in class on 3/11) | |

Readings: In addition to the textbook, there is a packet of readings on reserve at the library.

Janis, I.L. & Mann, L. (1977). Decision making: A psychological analysis of conflict, choice, and commitment. New York: The Free Press. Chapters 1 and 3.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). Flow: The psychology of optimal experience. New York: Harper & Row. Chapter 3.

Gilligan, C. (1982). In a different voice. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Chapter 3.

Belenky, M.F., Clinchy, B.M., Goldberger, N.R., Tarule, J.M. (1986). Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice, and mind. New York: Basic Books. Introduction and Chapter 7.

Blackburn, T.R. (1971). Sensuous-intellectual complementarity. Science, 172, 1003-1007.

Gigerenzer, G. How to make cognitive illusions disappear: Beyond "Heuristics and biases" European Review of Social Psychology, 2, 83-115.

Grading:

There are two exams and a paper in this class. The exams will include short answer and essay questions. Each of these components is worth 1/3 of your final grade. **THERE WILL BE NO EXAM DURING FINALS WEEK.**

Paper:

You have two basic options for the paper. One option is to apply ideas from class, the text and the readings to a problem in the real world. You might research and analyze a public policy issue (e.g., How should the government deal with the problem of drug abuse and related violent crimes?; How should economic and environmental concerns be balanced?) or a scientific issue (Does existing evidence suggest that homeopathic medicine is effective?; To what extent are the OCA's claims about homosexuality supported by scientific evidence?; Is there evidence demonstrating the existence of ESP or other psychic phenomena?). A second option is to write a research paper on one of the topics covered in the class or the readings. This would involve reading more about the psychological research done in a particular area. Examples include moral decision making, intuitive vs. rational decision making, sex differences in thinking and decision making; gambling decisions, cross-cultural differences in decision making.

In a few weeks, I will give you a handout describing the paper requirement in more detail.