

Biased? Me?

How Biology and Psychology Affect our
Opinions and Actions—and How to Recognize
and Improve our Interpersonal Skills

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2 Agenda

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- The biology of decision making
- Definitions and types of bias
- Confirmation bias
- The Backfire Effect
- Information deficit and belief change
- Recognizing manipulation techniques
- Astroturfing
- Strategies for dealing with others
- Strategies for our own decisions

Primer: The Biology of Decision Making

“There’s a reason you feel that way!”

4 Implicit (“unconscious”) Bias – Our worldview

Factors which form our unconscious views and preferences:

- How and Where we are brought up
- Who socialized us during formative years
- Our friendships then... and now
- Media Influences
- Individual experiences

We are hard-wired to to prefer those who look, sound and share similar interests.

Emerging from the Shadows: Unconscious Bias in the Workplace – Katrina Grider, 2018 UT-CLE 25th Annual Labor Law Conference.

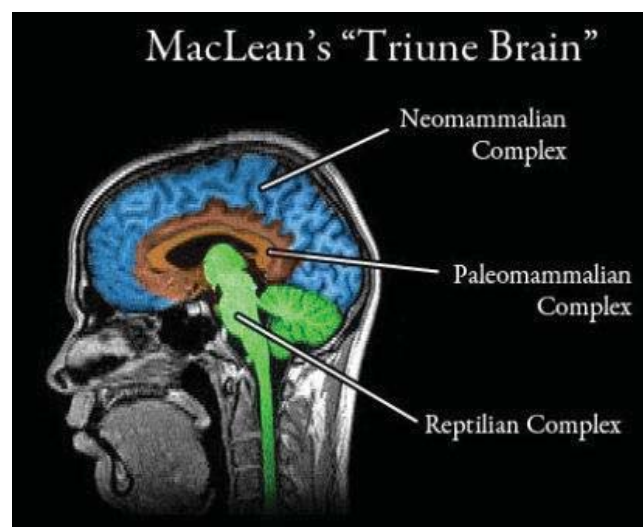
5 The biology of decision making

The brain's **frontal lobe** presides over reasoning, self-control, and decision making, including:

- Social behavior
- Complex cognitive behavior
- Your personality

By contrast the **limbic cortex** (also nicknamed “lizard brain”) is associated with emotion, addiction, and mood. It is much more primitive in development.

OUR DECISIONS RELY ON BOTH PARTS OF THE BRAIN.



[blogs.scientific american.com](https://blogs.scientificamerican.com)

6 The “psychology” of decision making

The Human Brain's tools for making decisions:

Perception – how we perceive reality - what color is the sky for us?

Attitude – what sort of people make us scared/guarded?

Behavior – what sort of people will we naturally be friendly toward?

Attention – what attributes are we drawn to in people? Looks? Humor?

Listening skills – do we actively listen to what certain people say (or engage in “micro-inequities”)?

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[2019 Land Use eConference](#)

First appeared as part of the conference materials for the
23rd Annual Land Use Conference session

"Me? Biased? The Psychology and Biology of Decision-Making"