

Notes On The Psychology of Deniers, Contrarians, and other Conspiracy Theorists:

Essentially, these are all just proclivities, artefacts, and artifices, of human psychology; proclivities extending beyond just tendencies and aberrations, artefacts as being the products of individual and/or group psychology, and, artifices in that any and all tactics are used to support and promote the non-realities that manifest, from human psychological modelling of personal, subjective reality. Which also reflects in mass-psychology....

Also, a study of how some humans deal with knowledge, facts, information, though sadly, in direct contravention of how such matters should be utilised, as per:

Coda

Why We Will Always Need Libraries and Archives

I WOULD LIKE to highlight five functions of libraries and archives that we lose when they are lost or destroyed. Librarians and archivists do their jobs, and advocate for their funding but the power often lies elsewhere. It is to the holders of power that these five functions of libraries and archives are addressed. This is what we lose when those institutions are destroyed or starved of funds.

- Firstly, they support the education of society as a whole and of specific communities within it.
- Secondly, they provide a diversity of knowledge and ideas.
- Thirdly, they support the well-being of citizens and the principles of the open society through the preservation of key rights and through encouraging integrity in decision-making.
- Fourthly, they provide a fixed reference point, allowing truth and falsehood to be judged through transparency, verification, citation and reproducibility.
- Finally, they help root societies in their cultural and historical identities through preserving the written record of those societies and cultures.

First, education. The educational role of libraries and archives is truly powerful. Libraries provide opportunities to enable critical thinking and they allow exploration of new ideas in a supportive setting. For most libraries access is free of charge, or at very low cost, and patrons are treated equally no matter what their background or purpose of study. In the 1990s the National and University Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo supported

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The Library Coda, from:

Burning The Books, R. Ovenden,
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This Coda also defines ideal comparative education prescriptions, and standards.

CTs, et al, sadly do not represent, or uphold, such high principles in formulation, propagation, or spread. Identifying external expedient scapegoats, real, contrived, or imaginary, is the main key to the originating and 'validating' of conspiracy theories, note.

1) **There are 4 main common aspects**, viz, what the erroneous information is, and, who swallows it, v. who thinks up such rumours, and, their motives. Plus, the artefact of origination may be a matter of wanton mischief, basis of scamming, spite, gossip, propaganda, misinformation, vested interest, end justifying means, or, even sincere belief. Motives may be the same for originators as well as disseminators, but, the overwhelming majority of the theories and rumours are pernicious in nature. In addition, numbers are important....**the more people who perpetuate and/or 'believe', the more it must be 'true,' viz, a halo effect relating to cognitive bias.** Human herd instinct thus also plays an important part. **There is also an emotional halo component**, in that the more emotion generated by CTs, especially collectively, the more real they appear to be, and, especially significant **when scapegoats are the target of CTs.** The more primal the emotion, the more powerful the CT generated, and the less thought is given to actual veracity. Hence also, the 'conviction potential', especially in relation to propaganda and scamming. Human credulity and gullibility levels are also important factors. **Believer Syndrome** would be an appropriate description. <https://futurism.com/artificial-intelligence/study-do-what-chatgpt-tells-us> ...**Latest manifestation of BS...** **Cultural narcissism** will accentuate these behaviors, as well individual narcissistic susceptibilities, note.

Safety in numbers thus erroneously translates to validity in numbers, adding to credulity, plus the need to opt for direction and leadership, and also, peer pressure increases as numbers of followers increases. Power trips characterise both parties...originators re mischief, anonymity, attention-seeking, etc., recipients re 'superior' knowledge, pattern anxiety quelled, etc. Both polar options are the reasons why Conspiracy Theories and related rumours (**CTRs**) of any kind are so hard to stamp out....plus, logically contrasting original v merely different also breeds self-protective aggression..? Quasi-logic, scapegoating and finger-pointing, bias and prejudice, plus, us-versus-them, all play a part in strengthening the impetus, and subsequent social and personal fall-out, of propagated conspiracy theories...

Above all, the inconvenience of gaining any appropriate formal comparative education is not required, if one is only tuned to many loud voices telling what is 'fact', and/or, all one needs to know to know, and on a limitless scale..? The mobile phone is a significant part of the weaponising.....the actual screen size reflects, and/or necessitates, by default, a small view of the world...so handy for low attention spans, quick superficial messaging, reactive priorities... Personal proclivities degenerate into mass 'ists' and 'isms'. Add this to the clamour of social media, and very bad emergent social behaviour manifests.

<https://unherd.com/newsroom/google-declares-the-end-of-the-world-wide-web/> <https://techxplore.com/news/2025-10-world-wide-web-meant.html> **Plus, misuse of AI is definitely making matters worse...** <https://www.zuckedbook.com/>

Human evolution is like all others on the planet...existing and evolving however, whatever, and, with what actually exists, there is no going back to the evolutionary drawing board. Neuroplasticity is certainly inherent in human brains, enhanced by learning, and acculturation, but, there is little such learning without a comprehensive and comparative education, and, sound and sensible culture, within societies that promote this...hence, in our increasingly homogeneous modern times, with ubiquitous and easily utilised social media, plus, multitudinal 'like minds', no surprises that conspiracy theories, et al, thrive...?

Nowadays, compounding this anti-Intellectual trend, there is an an increasing shift to LCD society...libraries are increasingly involved in this vapid, agendered status quo, plus, the electorate is expected to be compliant, selectively educated, fed scapegoats, and playing with their toys. So, manifesting as 'intellectual' thinking, with this sort of perspective, perhaps not surprising that there is more irrationality, dysrationality, and superstition, emerging..?

Neuroplasticity is the key concept, neurally, and psychologically, when discussing human psychological proclivities, artefacts, and artifices of dysrationality, superstitions, conspiracy theories, rumours, et al. Reality will only be grasped by a mind that has had a logical, comprehensive, and comparative, education, and, having thus developed an objective mindset...universally difficult given the range, artefacts, artifices, and negative proclivities and susceptibilities of, human intelligence. Neuroplasticity is more flexible at an early age, as with all brains, mammalian or otherwise, but, will still be present, and utilisable, even with age, and, relevant intelligence. (Teaching an old dog new tricks will be easier, but, only if the dog is actually keen to learn, plus, some neuro-regeneration action is possible at any age!)

But, and especially for humans, the worst damage is done at an early age, when, actually being keen to learn, is so sadly, badly, exploited by education that is neither logical, comprehensive, or comparative, whatever the motives, usually bad.

Some useful and relevant terms that apply, with help from Google:

Pareidolia, apophenia, paracusia, pattern anxiety, dysrationality...*In more detail, as follows:*

Pareidolia: The imagined perception of a pattern or meaning where it does not actually exist, as in considering the moon to have human features.

Apophenia: The tendency to perceive meaningful connections between unrelated things.

Paracusia: A form of hallucination that involves perceiving sounds without auditory stimulus.

Superstitious Behaviour: When the delivery of a reinforcer or punisher occurs close together in time with an independent behavior. Ritual and ritualisation elements also reinforce, and take advantage of, such behaviour.

Pattern recognition: A sign of emergent intelligence, but, may result in looking and seeing for what is wanted, but not present. **Active pattern-discernment** is part of higher intelligence, but, a complex brain means there can be poor connections, using the complex 'switchboard' metaphor, and **pattern faults** emerge. **Pattern anxiety** may thus be manifested in individuals who cannot cope with an open-ended world,

or incomplete knowledge, hence a cognitive void results due to the clash of **cognitive consistency v. cognitive dissonance**.

Pattern Anxiety: Caused by inability to maintain a stable view of the world in familiar terms, inability to live with open-ended view of the world...need for a 'pattern' that conveniently explains all, giving comfort, and/or satisfies a need to always be 'right.' **Also, providing opportunity for a self-written licence/justification, not to think, a typical human 'mental homeostasis'**. Being on the fringe is 'rebellious', education, and lack of worldly experience, are not an issue. When personally acceptable explanations sought in the real world, if not present, those of unreal worlds are substituted..? A human characteristic of pattern seeking and understanding, gone badly wrong, pattern anxiety expresses need for explanations, however weird or bigoted, or misplaced, by those who cannot live with open-ended questions and/or knowledge. Again, **cognitive consistency v. cognitive dissonance**. **There is a need, therefore**, to positively reinforce informed individual curiosity and exploration, plus, seeking and testing facts and evidence independently, even beyond home, classrooms, lecture halls...also the reason why there should be a comprehensively and comparatively educated core of citizens in all societies.

Plus, some other related common factors:

Casistry: The false application of general principles to particular instances, especially with regard to morals or law.

Sophistry: Seemingly true but falsely subtle reassuring argumentation.

Spin: To draw out of, and twist; to plunge helplessly out of control; to deviate from a straight line. Also, rhetoric, stage managing, posturing techniques. **Qv Frances Haugen re Facebook algorithms...**the more hate, the more clicks! Engendering hatred, for this reason, used by click-conscious social media profiteers.?

Belief: An acceptance that something exists or is true, especially one without proof. 'Think Not, But Believe...', and, What is Believed or Believable, must be Truth....proof and facts are thus much lesser considerations, once again conveniently invoking the self-written licence not to think. Advertising, propaganda, conspiracy theories, gossip/social media mischief, and religion, all are fostered by belief, however misplaced and/or false. For perpetrators of 'belief', the end easily justifies the means; suffice to say, a mental addiction..?

Faith: Complete trust or confidence in someone or something. **Confusion of knowledge v. belief, especially if seeming validity in numbers is a factor. Also, confusing being original, with merely being different, or contrary.** Also, 'ineffability is part of the 'logic' of religious doctrine, so, best treated as a psychological/mental phenomenon, than using any sort of logical analysis; to reiterate, **Believer Syndrome**.

2) **CTRs** play to poor education, gullibility, pattern anxiety and general cognitive dissonance, boosted by propensities for 'religious' tendencies such as unquestioning following due to faith/belief, the 'power' of unique knowledge that majority supposedly do not have access to, same as for formal religious following, plus, casistry and sophistry, all being intertwined in presentation, which will be quickly absorbed by vulnerable. **When 'believers' outnumber analytical thinkers, and, comparative education declines, or is even banned...what remains as knowledge is then indistinguishable from common or garden conspiracy theories.** Plus, all this begins with, and is perpetuated by, the systematic generational brainwashing of children. Group identity, especially 'us versus them', and 'belongingness' are important factors as well. Any tendency to look for 'enlightenment', or 'leadership' adds to individual vulnerability. 'Power' derivation is also from from making and/or promoting conspiracy theories/rumours, as well as supporting and perpetuating them. Plus, mistaking original thinking or action for merely being different, also breeds self-protective aggression..? For perpetrators, end justifying means...the most pernicious product of CTR mischief, invoking a simplistic attitude of 'us versus them', plus, a licence not to think, and, actually detracting from legitimate issues, including by the machinations of contemporary social media platforms.

3) Possibly **narcissistic, and/or, with feelings of inadequacy, poorly educated, sensitive to criticism, inferiority, and/or, narcissism, superiority complex, hall-of-mirrors syndrome, mistaking lying/cunning as being a substitute for, or, superior to normal intelligence, gossip as a weapon of social bullying..the weaponising of gossip...again, ref. Haugen, et al. Addiction to the mental state of self-righteousness, aka smugness, extreme or not, is a common concomitant.** Investment in marvellous new 'knowledge' that sets them apart, however ill-founded, and just plain being wrong, means reluctance to accept a real-world reasoning or answer. Thus, acquiring 'knowledge' without an appropriate systematic and comparative education, and

encouraging a child-like, simplistic view of the world. Eg, **Quiz shows and superficial knowledge versus the application of concentrated factual knowledge.**

Followers of **smarter influencers/narcissists** are attracted by their seeming independence and self-confidence, rather like the attraction of cats, whose aloofness prompts vulnerable people into trying to ingratiate themselves with the animal. The attraction of *human* narcissists is their seeming boundless confidence, emotional aloofness, opportunistic self-aggrandisement, and, telling other people what they want to hear. However, narcissists, in particular, despite their seeming confidence, tend to suffer arrested development, a pre-pubertal mindset that means strong reactions to unfamiliar knowledge, and conflicting circumstances, outside their 'control'. They never do grow up, retaining childish self-centredness and immediacy of self-gratification, displaying **Hall of Mirrors Syndrome**, plus, ever-increasing bombast and cunning as compensatory behaviours. **Also, their personal cunning is mistaken for actual intelligence, by themselves, and, by (self-deceiving) others.**

<https://www.1news.co.nz/2026/01/19/is-narcissism-the-reason-educated-people-fall-for-conspiracy-theories/>

This can be extrapolated to also include leadership and directions of human society... the licence not to think, and the desire to be led, manifested in the majority of the population, means that the narcissists are more likely to occupy leadership positions. The more knee-jerk, and simplistic, way their minds work is reflected in simplistic solutions, and, all too often, violent outcomes. 'The Master and His Emissary', the latest cult text about the human mind, has missed this point about human intelligence and destiny...?

4) **Deniers in particular, (aka Contrarians), eg, re Global Warming**, tend to be narcissistic personalities, conservative in outlook, probably religious, more comfortable with a fixed and markedly subjective world view, live in a Hall of Mirrors, follow CTRs they approve of, often scorn formal education, and, things do not change without their 'permission'. 'Business as Usual' is strong within their ranks, as is tendency for involvement in taking control of actual business, economics, and institutions. Managing Denier misinformation is similar to CTR tactics. Making their own rules is important, and, they do not like being questioned as to motives, and/or held to account. True Believers are the most dangerous in this category...

5) **R. Dawkins** has shown, inadvertently, that legitimate causes may be diminished by direct confrontation, even if this is based on reason and logic, because the fixed mental wiring of the opposing party does not work that way. **Ineffability Rules, OK!** Conflation of knowledge with belief, especially at a mass scale, further reinforces inherent striving for mass cognitive consistency...and one of the strengths of a higher intelligence, that of pattern recognition, is derailed by inability to accommodate cognitive dissonance, manifesting as pattern anxiety.

Casistry and Pathological/Deluded Science, plus, popular mass-media, potentiate toxic disinformation combinations..? **When the majority can be easily persuaded, reason is easily overcome. Conspiracy Theories can thus be identified as rumours on steroids.** Legitimate concerns are ridiculed, distorted, with the stronger the individual self-righteousness of the participants. Gossip and rumour precede conspiracy theories...one easily evolving into the other..? **Again, just being different is not to be confused with being original, and, is dangerous if manifesting with poorly reasoned, and, poorly informed/educated self-righteous mass-followings.**

6) **Religion**, in general is the oldest and most pervasive conspiracy theory, exploiting human vulnerability and pattern anxiety...plus, ensuring early conditioning of children's minds, so that, as adults, they are never grown up, cosy in a mental situation of not asking questions, nor ever feeling the need to, thus, ensuring **the ideal compartmentalisation of mind that forestalls the stress of cognitive dissonance.** Again, group identity, especially 'us versus them', and 'belongingness', are important factors as well, plus, being 'chosen people' is an added bonus for believers. **The purpose of education should be to enlarge personal and societal perspective, especially emphasising that the more that is known, the realisation will follow that the more there is to know, antithetical to the propagation of religious dogma, as well as CTRs.**

Belief, especially mass-belief, is not knowledge, education, or, useful direct experience. Thus, lack of comparative education is ideal for pre-conditioning the vulnerable and/or co-dependent population from an early age, with a contrived and carefully orchestrated body of dogma, that actually protects and strengthens a minority power base, whilst fostering a false mass cognitive consistency, thus forestalling any pattern anxiety, and consequent cognitive dissonance. Aka, **Believer Syndrome.**

Religion may enfranchise elites, and/or the masses, although, in both cases, **protecting an elite power base is the main concern, regardless of the details of religious involvement.** Vicarious power is enjoyed by followers. An ideal power base for narcissists, not necessarily to make sense as long as it enables the exploitation and manipulation of human psychology. Knowledge is easily supplanted by belief.

Thus, faith, belief, rather like a bad investment, as in, time wasted or not...? To question dogma is also to question the fact that observance has been a waste of time and resources, difficult to face up to...? Thus, knowing when to move on, is hard for people who want a fixed, sure world view, ie are prone to pattern anxiety, and, fearful of cognitive dissonance. *Plus, invalidation of belief means acknowledging all the time wasted, expended on a fantasy that is contrived and perpetuated by vested interests, taking advantage of flaws in human psychology, to protect a controlling power base..?*

Mass belief does not mean actual, and verifiable, mass knowledge or education. Discouraging of informed self-analysis also maintains a false cognitive consistency. Ineffability passes as a logical justification of religious belief. Herd Instinct, co-dependency, mob instinct, gang instinct, us-versus-them, plus, a licence not to think, all are most conveniently exploited. (Cf Orwell's **1984** warning.)

<https://www.futurity.org/brain-pathway-neurons-addiction-3213952-2/>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cj4w95452eeo> 'You're sold a lie': How do you spot a cult?'

<https://unherd.com/newsroom/google-declares-the-end-of-the-world-wide-web/>

<https://scitechdaily.com/innovative-study-reveals-how-addiction-hijacks-brain-functions/>

<https://techxplore.com/news/2025-10-world-wide-web-meant.html>

<https://arstechnica.com/science/2025/07/study-sheds-light-on-why-some-people-keep-self-sabotaging/>

<https://www.futurity.org/why-people-fall-for-fake-news-3310952/>

<https://arstechnica.com/science/2025/10/believing-misinformation-is-a-win-for-some-people-even-when-proven-false/>

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/ai-chatbots-psychosis-delusion-chatgpt-experts-b2874373.html>

<https://techxplore.com/news/2026-02-ai-psychosis-chatbots-sustain-delusions.html>

Question is, extrapolating the points made of these links, does addiction, and thus over-exposure to, 'natural' human physiological chemicals, like endorphins and adrenalin, also have the same type of result, and consequent pathological effect...? Gambling, risk-taking, ideological extremism, cults, or, stubborn self-defense of own decision making, or, just addicted to self-righteousness, et al...? 'Idiopathic addictions', or whatever...?

Pattern Anxiety *in detail:* Keywords are pattern anxiety, pattern fulfillment, co-dependency, cognitive consistency and dissonance:

The greatest strengths of human intelligence are pattern recognition, and, pattern application, but sadly, these talents are too easily subverted to base means by those who cannot live with the fact that all of human knowledge, at any one time, will never be subsumed within one system of expeditious answers and explanations, thus suffering what could only be described as 'pattern anxiety', certainly a most disastrous personality trait when manifested by those in positions of responsibility or leadership. Again, **cognitive consistency v. cognitive dissonance** clashing.

Concept of key-in-lock applies here, same as for drug dependency, the subject gains such a 'reward' from psychological pattern fulfillment that they are 'hooked' on the mental state that they have self-initiated. Religion replacing drug dependency for some cases, one 'dependency' replaces another..? After all, people will read love stories, base-jump, and go to horror movies to initiate a mood, or desired neurological/biochemical state, so, why should not pattern fulfillment have a marked affect on the psyche, and continuing reasoning powers..? **Hence an incipient addiction to self-righteousness..?**

Headiest of all with pattern fulfillment, especially with religious intensity, and regardless of the nature of the 'fulfillment', is the ongoing personal 'licence not to think', a most desirable mental homeostasis for the susceptible subject to enjoy, literally! So, obsessive religious/belief pattern fulfillment is actually a mental state that could easily be classed as a psychosis, and so common, especially among the severely afflicted, that it is an easily discernible syndrome, complete with non-existent entities to talk to, (such fancies should have been left behind in childhood..?), as imaginary friends for adults, plus, a general lack of logic and commonsense that can be dangerously bizarre. The co-dependency aspect is manifested in validity of, and safety in, numbers likewise affected. Again, humans, like other animals, have a 'herd' instinct, also involved.

Even the better-educated can be afflicted, especially with any psychological pre-disposition, as evidenced by cults and their followers, who seem to extend so readily the personally-issued 'licence not to think' to a group, and/or manifest collective acceptance, of the obviously irrational.

'Hard wiring' these patterns also applies! Indeed, wars and other dark human actions, including for the unscrupulous pursuit of vested interests, are often justified by enforcing this pattern anxiety upon others, individually, collectively, and culturally, and then offering a spurious cognitive consistency, masquerading as a new direction. Plus, the continuing subsistence of such anti-intellectual ideas and motives still remain major obstacles to coherent human social and intellectual development. **IE, always the same collective ordure, just different brands of shovel?**

Another telling factor is the prevalence of such aberrant fantasizing in all human societies, plus, the attribution of power, leadership, origins, et al, to a whole pantheon of assorted deities, and the willingness of humans of all ages to suspend belief with storytelling, both traditional, and contemporary.

Aspects of Human Dysrationalia:

Dysrationalia is defined as 'the inability to think and behave rationally, despite adequate intelligence. It is a concept in educational psychology, and, is not a clinical disorder, such as a thought disorder.' [Wikipedia](#)

The 'amazing' human brain is touted, by human self-flatterers, as the most complex organ in the universe, (despite the Universe being largely unexplored...), and, such as advertisers, all touting, in turn, spurious individuality and 'decision-making', so, how to explain the very widespread mental phenomena, irrespective of age, education, supposed sophistication, et al, of very obvious, self-delusional, even mass-delusional, human dysrationalia..? **Confabulation, in other words, by supposedly 'normal' brains...? An aberration within the operation of human ratiocination..?**

To begin with, the most effective intellects are those that operate on a higher scale of transcendency, ie, incorporating commonsense variables, and high levels of objectivity, irrespective of cultural, group, or personal ambience. Highest IQ need not be a factor, just optimum use of a normal, functioning brain, with balanced analytical and associative abilities, and, capable of supra-objective, or 'bigger-picture', thinking, and decision-making. So, taking this as a benchmark of rationality, thus, degrees of dysrationality may be identified, cumulatively, on a scale that varies from this benchmark of the objective thinker intellect:

- 1) A licence not to bother with rational or objective thinking, conferred or self-written, which also absolves the individual of the need for personal initiative or conscience, obvious when dealing with ideologies, beliefs, cultural traits, Teamworking, etc., and other feeders of individual or group self-righteousness and self-justification.
- 2) A licence not to bother with comparative education, again, conferred or self-written, exemplified as the difference between the fox and the hedgehog, the latter knowing just One Big Thing, this can be exemplified by such as conspiracy theories, anti-vacc, etc., as well as 1) examples. 'Shortcut education' would be a key description, revelatory 'facts' would be especially influential.
- 3) A licence to surrender to mob psychology and companion-feeding, again, conferred or self-written, with the potential of escalation to group-sanctioned violence, from lynch mobs, to localised conflicts. to international wars...
- 4) An increasingly pathological need for self or group approval, and, the more pathological, the more irrational, suggestible, and group dependent, the individual, and, the more lacking in personal conscience.
- 5) Compartmentalised intellectual functioning that prevents any purposeful self-introspection or identifying of contradictions and/or anomalies. Such minds do not like probing or analysis, or, being suddenly provoked to engage in a hitherto unknown topic or issue, and are usually not capable of seeing, and acknowledging, lack of knowledge as an opportunity to gain more.
- 6) Narcissistic, or otherwise generally self-defensive personalities, are less likely to be t-intellects, and even display obvious and extreme dysrationalia, especially under pressure. 'Hall of Mirrors Syndrome' would best describe those who are obsessed with self-image, beyond just craving social acceptance or approval.
- 7) Self-manufactured individuality, 're-invented' personalities, especially with the influences of the Internet...personalities are 'selected', rather than naturally developed within a structure of social rules, and customs. Now there is 'normality in numbers', rather than healthy and accepted standards of behaviour, and thinking-intellects are thus further marginalised.
- 8) A consequence of dysrationalia is the **Dunning-Kruger Effect**, as defined by Wkipedia, as '*a cognitive bias in which people with limited competence in a particular domain overestimate their abilities.*' Especially when systematic research and expansion of knowledge is not undertaken, or even considered.....perhaps subconsciously, the correct answer is not actually wanted...in that, what is not known does not exist, a rather child-like view of knowledge, and the world itself..?
- 9) Both **Dysrationalia** and the **Dunning-Kruger Effect** are easily identifiable as factors involved with people having limited competence in a particular domain, overestimating their abilities. especially when systematic research is not undertaken, or even considered.....perhaps subconsciously, the correct answer is not actually wanted...in that, what is

not known does not exist, a rather child-like view of knowledge, and the world itself..? *For too many of Us, self-introspection and thus, self knowledge, remain within a mentation blind spot...?*

9) Both **Dysrationalia** and the **Dunning-Kruger Effect** are also easily identifiable as factors involved with conspiracy theories, denialism, religion, superstition, licence not to think, et al, and, scalable as to spread, and effects. *AI and social media can/will exacerbate such anxieties, as well. Misery likes company, Ignorance even more so....*
Anon. *Charlatanry thus prospers, taking advantage of these vulnerabilities of human intelligence.*

<https://arstechnica.com/science/2025/07/conspiracy-theorists-think-their-views-are-mainstream/>

[More people believe in conspiracy theories than you might think](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/chemtrails-planes-sky-vapour-conspiracy-b2963528.html)

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10) **To Reiterate....Neuroplasticity is the key concept**, physically, and also, psychologically, when discussing human psychological proclivities, artefacts, and artifices of dysrationality, superstitions, conspiracy theories, rumours, et al. **Reality will only be grasped** by a mind that has had a logical, comprehensive, and *comparative*, education, and, having thus developed an objective mindset...universally difficult given the range, artefacts, artifices, and negative proclivities and susceptibilities of, human intelligence. **Neuroplasticity** is more flexible at an early age, as with all brains, mammalian or otherwise, but, will still be present, and utilisable, even with age, and, relevant intelligence and motivation. (Teaching an old dog new tricks will be easier, but, only if the dog is actually keen to learn, plus, some neuro-regeneration action is possible at any age!)

But, and especially for humans, the worst damage is done at an early age, when, actually being keen to learn, is so sadly, and badly, exploited by education that is neither logical, comprehensive, or comparative, whatever the motives, and those usually bad. Radicalisation of young minds is the most extreme form of such mis-education. When a population actually wants to know what any controlling entity wants them to know, aka the Knowledge Control Singularity...and, apart from any danger from any such human origination, there is now the greater danger that AI will, some day, recognise this, plus, take easy advantage of those weaknesses, tendencies, and proclivities, of human psychology. Thus, human thinking will then, as always, be so easily manipulated, especially via credulity and gullibility, but, this particular time, by an intelligence that is not human, and, subject to a logic that will be singularly deterministic. <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/17286699-our-final-invention> is a useful reference in this regard.

There is also the perspective of emergent behaviour that can be applied...the brain being a complex organic, electro-chemical entity, viz, a very complex organic switchboard, ...'the brain, beyond autonomic mediation, is the active means to think, whereas the mind is then the actual collective process of doing so.' As a consequence, emergent behaviour is a tangible outcome resulting from collective neural processes. Capabilities in regard to Sciences, Arts, Trades, Sports, Crime, and more imaginative outcomes such as fantasy, delusion, plus, conspiracy theories, et al, are thus all potential emergent behavioural factors that can eventuate from human neurological processes. Doubtless 'strange attractors' would manifest if human mental activities were thus plotted...? **'Normality'** thus needs careful, and ongoing, qualification, individually and collectively....

New Paper Proposes What Really Causes AI Psychosis....also related to the well-springs of **CTRs**:

"Unlike historical technology-incorporated delusions, AI may actively co-construct delusional ideation through endless, personalized interaction." <https://futurism.com/artificial-intelligence/paper-proposes-ai-psychosis;>

CF https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer_Power_and_Human_ReasonPub. 1976... plus, discussion of his Eliza (Rogerian)

'counsellor' <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/3937687>, https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/496834.Joseph_Weizenbaum:

"What I had not realized is that extremely short exposures to a relatively simple computer program could induce powerful delusional thinking in quite normal people." — Joseph Weizenbaum

10 Problems of Knowledge

1) Concerning human limitations and frailty; all possible knowledge will not fit in one small head, plus, age overtakes, and memory fails, thus, knowledge acquisition is an exercise that must be practiced from an early age, so that the mind is always ready, and, the brain is always optimally operational, regardless of age. Being born into a house full of useful books is an advantage. Healthy living definitely helps, and, that begins in the womb, given sensible parents, plus, fortuitously appropriate genes for both intelligence and longevity as well.

2) It is always necessary to deal with bad news as well as good, thus, the continual quest for comparative education and knowledge can, or should, only be optimally practiced by those best able to deal with this reality. Note that compartmentalised minds are seldom troubled by these considerations.

- 3) Acquisition of knowledge is not always easy, nor does it always confer pleasure or satisfaction, and, personal limitations of understanding should always be accommodated. Accordingly, that which must be learned is often not as enjoyable as that which is voluntarily and willingly learned. Also, there must always be a basic core of expedient knowledge maintained to support mundane and routine activities, plus, personal interactions, in everyday life. Inconvenient, certainly, nevertheless mostly necessary.
- 4) Ideally, knowledge should always be sought, gained, and utilized, without fear or favour. Naturally, caution and commonsense should be practiced in this regard, so, in given problematical circumstances, be sure to always survive to learn, inform, and/or teach, another day. Accordingly, time and place are always important considerations. Note that stress diminution and/or stress avoidance are also part of healthy living and learning.
- 5) The more one knows, the more there is to know, and, a balanced mind is also necessary to deal with this reality. Knowledge is infinite, thus, the capacity for objectively processing facts must be matched by the ability to search constructively and comparatively, as well as accommodating potential need for the change and enlargement of a personal knowledge base. Scheduled rest periods, with some physical exercise, are advisable, during such sustained sedentary learning activities.
- 6) There is a difference between truth and fact, and, objective knowledge is ultimately the most valuable. All knowledge is relative as regards rating of usefulness and validity, and, self-knowledge should be included in this description. Thus, self-introspection should also be regularly practiced, as well as maintaining the ongoing mental agility required for rigorous intellectual self-adjustment.
- 7) Not everyone is truly curious, not everyone can cope with changing reality, not everyone wants to share knowledge, so, beware wasting of time on unreasoned arguments, willful obfuscation, or, just countering pattern anxieties. Thus, careful choices of questions, as well as of intellectual company, including that of intellectual adversaries, are all strongly advised. Most people react more positively to questions if you appear less intellectually able than they are, and, will usually speak more slowly and clearly as a result.
- 8) If you really want to know the extent of your own knowledge and understanding of any topic, then, try teaching someone else. Teaching thus maintains personal understanding, and knowledge base, in an optimal condition. Problem-solving is a useful and necessary form of self-teaching, which combines both knowledge acquisition and application concurrently, and, should always be actively practiced. Note that advocating this type of mental exercise is never universally popular.
- 9) The brain is a biochemical entity, not a computer, so, to keep the mind fresh and flexible in the quest for knowledge, select and change extra learning topics as required. Intelligence is also wasted if not used optimally, plus, any brain used optimally is potentially more useful in the search for, and application of, useful knowledge than a better brain used lazily and/or badly. Thus, always seek out intellectually honest peers, or better, whenever practicable. Time and place, once again, are also important considerations.
- 10) Human affairs are ephemeral at best, and, the only knowledge that will still be relevant, and constant, beyond inevitable mass human demise, is that portion of human inquiry relating to the knowledge of the workings of the physical and natural worlds, and, of the Universe itself, which will still endlessly cycle on when all humans are gone. Note also, that this is never a universally popular consideration.

NB, the term 'mind' herein is not used in any metaphysical sense, rather, that the brain, beyond autonomic mediation, is the active means to think, whereas the mind is then the actual collective process of doing so.

The Flynn Effect states that human IQs are rising, although, as the old adage says, psychological tests are only a measure what they are testing for, so, if facts are tested for, then perhaps this reflects proliferation of quiz shows on mainstream media, or, some mental technical flexibility having been gained by familiarity with computers, laptops, and mobile phones. ***One significant factor, that Flynn himself conceded, in conversation, is that his perceived Effect does not reflect any real increase in common sense, or, commonsense thinking....***

'Nothingness will save or destroy those who face it, but, those who do not face it, are condemned to unreality.' *Anon.*

To further elaborate: substitute 'nothingness' for 'infinity', and, you have the **Conundrum of Education**, in that, the more you know, the realization dawns that the more there is to know, a definite potential precursor of pattern anxiety and cognitive dissonance....and, for the susceptible, a mental petri dish of unreality, escapism, phony knowledge, paranoia, and thus, CTRs, et al, ensues...? Many humans cannot face this fact of infinite knowledge, they would rather have a self-written licence not to think....? <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/44584488-the-irrational-ape>

A checklist re discerning narcissistic personality:

(Source: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/spycatcher/201805/living-the-paranoid-narcissist>)

Here is a comprehensive checklist describing key traits, all of which are most undesirable socially, especially in a leader, adjust accordingly re given gender:

1. Projects self-importance beyond position, experience, or what has been duly earned or deserved.
2. Has a grandiose idea of who they are and what they think they can achieve. **(Claim other's ideas as their own, and/or, consider merely being contrary as practicing actual original thinking)**
3. Often talk about their need to lead, to be in charge, or to exercise power.
4. Requires and seeks excessive admiration from others. **(Arrested mental development evident)**
5. Has a sense of entitlement, expecting to be treated as someone special or given priority at all times.
6. Is interpersonally exploitative of others for personal gain.
7. Lacks empathy and is unable to recognize the needs or suffering of others. **(The opposite of empathy is apathy, but, anti-empathy goes a step further, by actively attacking and punishing the empathy of other non-narcissists.)**
8. Is often envious of others or believes others are envious of them.
9. Is arrogant and haughty in behavior or attitude. **(Hall of Mirrors and Gatekeeper Syndromes evident.)**
10. Has a tendency to see their problems as unique or more acute than anyone else's.
11. Has an exaggerated sense of privilege that allows them to bend rules and break laws.
12. Is hypersensitive to how they are seen or perceived by others. **(Incapable of objective self-inspection.)**
13. Interacting with this individual leaves you irritated, troubled, worried, upset, or anxious.
14. Tends to overvalue self and capabilities in almost all things.
15. Makes a point of devaluing others as being inferior, incapable, or not worthy.
16. Has demonstrated little sympathy or empathy for others; nevertheless, expects others to show them endless empathy and support. **(Exhibits obsessive and opportunistic self-aggrandisement.)**
17. Is considered to be or acts like a bully.
18. Deep emotions appear to be difficult for them to comprehend. Seems emotionally detached at times when deeply felt emotions are most needed.
19. Has a need to control others and demands total loyalty at all times.
20. Repeatedly has violated boundaries of rules, privacy, secrecy, or social decorum.
21. Only sees own problems and repeatedly ignores the problems or struggles others may have.
22. Has angry reactions to minor slights—seems to always have an axe to grind.
23. Seems to lack altruistic qualities—everything is done for a selfish purpose; rarely does anything for the good of others.
24. Is very thin-skinned, and any criticism is considered a personal attack.
25. Sees goodness as a weakness.
26. Has a need to habitually inflate personal accomplishments, deeds, or experiences.
27. When criticized, seems insecure and tends to lash out with anger or rage.

28. Acts imperiously, not wishing to know what others think, have planned, or are concerned about.
29. Devalues people who work for them without consideration for their feelings, loyalty, or sacrifices. **(Dangerous and destructive of morale when used as Attack Dogs in workplaces, plus, easily manipulated, by interested parties, conveying a false sense of importance, to be de facto 'bosses'.)**
30. Is disinterested in knowing more about you and others and lacks normal curiosity in others. In essence, they only like to talk about themselves.
31. At times, displays a certain coldness or aloofness that makes you think you really don't know the true measure of this person.
32. Is inappropriately boastful of accomplishments and does so with frequency.
33. Doesn't ever seem to feel guilty about anything they have done wrong and is unlikely to apologize or to show remorse. **(Instinctively, reflexively lies, cunning is mistaken for intelligence...)**
34. Sees those who disagree with them as "enemies."
35. Has resorted to cheating, conning, scheming, embezzling, or other criminal activity to achieve success.
36. Is a "wound collector"—constantly looking for and ruminating on social slights and grievances, which they never forget.
37. Is often rigid, unbending, and insensitive in their thinking and speaking.
38. Tries to over-control what others do or think.
39. Demonstrations of empathy are short-term, superficial, or self-serving.
40. Doesn't seem to reciprocate the attention, gratitude, or kindness of others.
41. Seems to lack tenderness, passion, or softness; everything is seemingly tension-producing or threatening in their life.
42. Uses insults to establish superiority, dominance, or control.
43. Becomes indignant when others fail to show absolute loyalty or when they publicly disagree with them.
44. One of these words usually applies to them: snobbish, disdainful, arrogant, patronizing, **malicious**.
45. Is unwilling to acknowledge their own mistakes, wrongdoings, bad ideas, or perilous actions.
46. Believes that others are always seeking to exploit or harm them in some way.
47. Sees nothing wrong with lying and co-opts others to lie for them— lying for them is a way of life. **(Plus, exhibiting reflexive lying regardless of reality.)**
48. Holds grudges for a long time and is not forgiving of slights, even after many years.
49. They habitually question the intentions of others and is shown to be distrustful of: a spouse, intimate relations, family, or workmates.
50. Is quick to anger or has been described as having a "very short fuse."
51. At times being jealous with little or no justification.
52. Feels a need to be guarded, secretive, devious, and scheming, or thinks others around them are that way.
53. Is reluctant or unwilling to entertain alternative views; readily dismisses them.
54. Sees self as a victim of one or more of these things: life, society, foreigners, minorities, government, family, workers, conspiracies, cabals, etc.

55. Does not hesitate to insult others publicly, to debase them, or to engage in ad hominem attacks.
56. Is incapable of truly relaxing and seems to be constantly guarded, almost always serious, lacking in humor and joy.
57. Constantly looks for signs that others are conspiring or planning something against them.
58. Claims that past failings at work or in relationships have been the fault of others v. they are never at fault.
59. Claims to have perfect recall of events and facts when in fact the information is often faulty, exaggerated, or biased. **(Subject to fantasizing, and even delusional thinking and/or recall...)**
60. Their thoughts, beliefs, and prejudices are rigid and inflexible, and they becomes truculent or combative when challenged.
61. Needlessly preoccupied with unjustified doubts about the loyalty of others. **(IE, paranoidal...)**
62. Sees self as excessively self-important or believes they are infallible—completely lacking humility or self-awareness. **(Their cunning is superior to everyone else's intelligence and/or education.)**
63. There is a generalized anxious feeling of pending doom or that some sort of unspecified harm will befall them.
64. Seems to view the world in general as a place where one needs to be “on guard” at all times and that others are generally out to “get you” or will lie and deceive.
65. Often has an unrelenting, one-track mind about this or that issue and can't seem to let go.
66. Insists that only they have a clear understanding of the threats that are out there, and in their own view there are many.
67. Is overly demanding, pedantic, or arrogant. **(Often fixating on self-perceived 'self-enhancing' behaviour, and related fads.)**
68. Is highly inflexible in their thinking, and, stubbornly refuses at times to recognize facts.
69. Tends to be unromantic, lacking tenderness or empathy in their interpersonal relations.
70. Is distrustful of people who are different because of religion, ethnicity, place of birth, socioeconomic status, or because they are minorities.
71. Is too often hostile, stubborn, or defensive. **(Defends personal ignorance with aggressive bluffing.)**
72. Seeks to surround self with people who only think as they do (other “True Believers” as defined by Eric Hoffer), or, who contribute to “groupthink.”
73. Makes it a habit to frighten others or to make others fear for their safety or well-being by vilifying someone or a group of people. **(Round up the usual scapegoats...)**
74. Often and systematically overvalues self at the expense of devaluing others.
75. For them, propaganda and deception are more important and useful than truth.
76. Is not above using or permitting others to use violence to quell dissent.
77. Relishes having an enemy to focus on and blame for when things go wrong.
78. Believes there is always a conspiracy or an individual trying to undermine them. **(Again, identifying external expedient scapegoats, real, contrived, or imaginary, is the main key to the originating and 'validating' of conspiracy theories, note.)**
79. Recognizes, almost instinctively, that hate is useful, as it unites people in a common cause.
80. Truth and facts are whatever they spews out at any given moment without regard for facts, reality, truth, or actuality. **Mendacity is not an occasional occurrence; it is a way of life.**

*(Or, simply classify Narcissism, in any obvious manifestation, as a form of psychosis..? Thus, ensure exclusion of leadership aspirants manifesting this psychologically aberrant state..? Psychopathy and Sociopathy are on the same plane, though, a **healthy** ego is a necessary indication of normality, note.)*

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/spycatcher/201805/living-the-paranoid-narcissist>

<https://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/225819376-charlatans> Re: human susceptibility to rank misinformation...

<https://phys.org/news/2026-04-people-dark-personality-traits-naturally.html> Re: "...the dark triad—psychopathy, Machiavellianism, and narcissism."

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