

BIAS IN HUMAN REASONING: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

Jonathan St. B. T. Evans

*Professor of Cognitive Psychology
Polytechnic SW, England*

Technische Hochschule Darmstadt
Fachbereich 3
Institut für Psychologie
Steubenplatz 12, 6100 Darmstadt

Inv.-Nr. 9109050



LAWRENCE ERLBAUM ASSOCIATES, PUBLISHERS
Hove and London (UK)

Hillsdale (USA)



Contents

Foreword	vii
1 Introduction	1
The Nature of Reasoning Tasks	3
The Rationality Debate	7
Theories of Reasoning	10
Approach and Form of This Book	14
2 Selective Processing	19
Theoretical Concepts	20
Empirical Case Studies	30
Conclusions	39
3 Confirmation Bias	41
The Nature of Scientific Inference	42
Wason's 2 4 6 Problem	45
Attempting to Remove Confirmation Bias	48
Wason's Selection Task	53
Diagnosticity and Pseudo-diagnosticity	60
Conclusions	62
4 Effects of Content and Context	65
Knowledge and Reasoning	66
Biasing Effects of Knowledge	70
Debiasing Effects of Knowledge	79
Content Effects in Statistical Reasoning	86
Discussion and Conclusions	88

5 Self-knowledge	91
Empirical Studies of Self-knowledge	92
Theoretical Issues	104
Conclusions	107
6 Implications and Applications	111
The Nature of Reasoning Biases	111
Approaches to Debiasing	113
Some Final Thoughts	125
References	129
Author Index	139
Subject Index	143