



A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance

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Leon Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance has been widely recognized for its important and influential concepts in areas of motivation and social psychology. The theory of dissonance is here applied to the problem of why partial reward, delay of reward, and effort expenditure during training result in increased resistance to extinction.

The author contends that a state of impasse exists within learning theory largely because some of its major assumptions stand in apparent opposition to certain well-established experimental results. The book puts forward a new theory that seems to reconcile these data and assumptions. This new theory can account for data with which other theories have difficulty: it integrates empirical phenomena that have been regarded as unrelated, and it is supported by the results of experiments designed specifically to test its implications. These experiments are fully described in the text.

A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance Details

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Author : Leon Festinger

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From Reader Review A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance for online ebook

Eric says

A fantastically insightful book written in prose that ranks well above turgid but nowhere near breezy. I would've given it 5 stars but because of its time (trying to make social psych respectable) it is written in an overly scientific fashion (damn behaviorists ruin everything).

Elena says

The concept itself is very interesting (and that's why I managed to finish the book) but it was one of the most boring books I read since school times. The examples were really hard to comprehend, in many cases almost impossible unless you make numerous notes. I do understand it's an academics read, but I'm reading a lot of books of this kind and in most cases authors make it possible to enjoy the process. The theory itself is hard to overestimate though.

Will Holcomb says

Not one of the easiest books I have ever read but it was highly interesting. I don't know exactly what I was expecting but there were a lot of studies that were outlined in detail. For me, those were hard to read through. But all-in-all I am glad I read the book. I had a limited understanding of cognitive dissonance when I started, but after reading, I realize the magnitude of the scope cognitive dissonance plays on our behavior and thoughts. If you start looking at the cognitive elements of your own or others, and start looking at the dissonant relationship between those elements, I think you can start to understand why change is so hard for people.

Lawrence Linnen says

More people need to understand the power of cognitive dissonance.

Michael Perkins says

This book is the academic counterpart, published by a university press, to the case study the author and his team did that resulted in the formulation of the concept of cognitive dissonance in the first place. (see link below).

"Cognitive dissonance" is the mental (and emotional) stress, or discomfort, experienced by an individual who holds two or more contradictory beliefs, ideas, or values at the same time. Most of us prefer to avoid this uncomfortable feeling when it comes to cherished values, especially in religion and politics. So we do

our best to block out contradictory information and even indulge in what behavioral economists call "confirmation bias" in seeking out anecdotes and other information that support our already-held beliefs. Naturally, the ubiquity of social media makes that even easier in enabling us to find groups online that already agree with this.

Denial is a common tactic for those avoiding this discomfort:

"A man with a conviction is a hard man to change. Tell him you disagree and he turns away. Show him facts or figures and he questions your sources. Appeal to logic and he fails to see your point. "

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1...>

Davis says

This is the first time when I am writing a review for a book. I found that this book is little outdated, however, the reader can use this book to receive a sound background to explore the origins of the theory of cognitive dissonance. I am spending much of my time in academia exploring the cognitive dissonance phenomenon. So based on my experience, I would advise to purchase/download new studies that extended the theory of cognitive dissonance alongside with this book.

Michelle says

It's sociology, what am I to do?

David Haws says

Well, not fiction, but I found it enormously insightful. No particular need to re-read it, but it explains a lot about why people do such bizarre things in interacting with their beliefs.

Cortney R says

Overall, it's a nice read. Psychology research interests me of late, although two flaws I find are the general attribution of almost all behavior to the reduction of dissonance as well as the lack of control and presence of deception in the experimental work.
