

Warren harding error

[Experience](#), [Human Nature](#)



Malcolm Gladwell in this book proposes that people have the ability to unconsciously think without consciously thinking. That we could arrive at decisions, resolutions, and judgments without thinking too much and it is likely to be as good as when we consciously think deeply. Gladwell defines thin-slicing as that ability of our unconscious to find patterns in situations and behavior based on very narrow slices of experience. He tells us that we have a crucial brain activity that keeps us able to function by silently processing daily stimulus called our adaptive unconscious.

An individual is unaware of such brain process thus making it to a great extent uncontrollable. He gave a good example called the “ Warren Harding Error” which is thin-slicing in a superficial level and giving too much emphasis on the snap judgment. The author used a combination of scientific studies (Implicit Association Test), historical accounts (Warren Harding), social happenings (discrimination), notable trends (Coke v Pepsi), and simple day to day observations regarding the creation of snap-judgments called thin-slicing.

The book opens our eyes to the fact that in coming up with judgments and decisions, we are not always value-neutral. That in coming up with these judgment and decisions regarding just about anything there is the factor of time and careful investigation. The author used evidences that strengthen the theory that we indeed rely on our own adaptive unconscious and that we are capable at arriving on a decision that is accurate. An example would be the how the fake kouros was identified from a mere hunch. He points out also there is an also likely chance that our way of thinking would be impaired by day to day bombardment of stimulus.

An example would be the Warren Harding Error which lets us stop from thinking beyond what we already figured. It keeps us away from weighing the need to look beyond what we thin-slice. It is important for us not to rely too much on our snap judgment and we should know when to apply such judgments. Crucial moments and decision making in such moments still require thinking twice and doubting and thin-slicing must then give way to rational thinking and decision making. Along this line, the author also wishes for us to remember that stereotyping is also a tool for thin-slicing.

It is then important for us to consciously be able to look beyond our stereotyped ideas. While it may be unconsciously done, our knowledge of our disposition would bring it out in the conscious level. Finally, it should also be noted that at times there is a need for the isolation of our criteria for judgment. The unconscious is able to seep through the creation of the judgment although it is not in line with the true nature of our decision (you may hate President Bush not because of his policies on war but because of his southern drawl).

In this situations there is a need to focus on what really should be considered. The book is applicable in almost all facets of life. Even in law, the theories pushed by the author finds application . Although not apparent, its application to the legal system tells us that Law is governed by human features (i. e. flaws and strengths). Think about how often we thin -slice, judges or juries are also able to thin-slice without them knowing it.

It is value neutral yet it never takes away the fact that it could work for or against anyone thus reasonability andequalityreally does not exist. What is crucial at this point is that we accept that people indeed thin-slice and that

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we really are able to come up with a sound judgment regardless of the length of time that we think and whoever we are. We may never realize this but we thin-slice every day, we thin slice people at the first moment we meet them, we thin slice every day, we stereotype, and we need to realize this.