

A person's mind is a
very simple venue for
many interesting
cognitive



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

A person's mind is a very simple venue for many interesting cognitive phenomena, unusual ways of thinking and mental mistakes, no matter how trivial or significant, which are usually unconsciously committed by a person even in the most mundane of mental tasks.

This paper shall focus on number of interesting cognitive phenomena and mental lapses or mistakes which are chronologically presented based on what the writer perceives as the most important and common.

FUNDAMENTAL ATTRIBUTION ERROR Fundamental attribution error is a very common human tendency when a person is placed in a social situation. It occurs when a person attributes someone's behavior or reaction to a situation as having been caused by the person's disposition or personality rather than by the situation at hand.

According to Lee Ross, a professor of social psychology at Stanford University, a fundamental error forms the conceptual bedrock for the field of social psychology. He coined this term based on the classic experiment conducted by Jones and Harris.

In the said experiment, subjects were placed in a situation where they were made to listen to pro- and anti- Castro speeches.

They were initially made to believe that the persons who gave the speeches were freely given a choice as to what stand to make (i. e., pro- or anti-), the subjects naturally rated the persons who gave the pro- speeches as having a positive attitude towards Castro, and people who gave anti- speeches as having a negative attitude towards Castro. Before the experiment, Jones and Harris hypothesized that behaviors resulting from freely given choice shall be

attributed by the subjects to disposition, while actions or behaviors resulting from chance to situation.

However, this hypothesis was proven wrong when as part of the experiment, the subjects were told that the person's choice of position (pro- or anti-Castro) was determined by a coin toss. It turned out that the subjects were still of opinion that persons who gave pro- speeches were still, on average, in favor of Castro than those who spoke against him.

Therefore, the subjects were unable to see the speakers as merely persons who were tasked to perform by virtue of chance or circumstance. They could not refrain from attributing the speaker's actions or behaviors to situation rather than to disposition (Fundamental Attribution Error, 2007).