CENTER FOR PUBLIC DELIBERATION

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

Dedicated to enhancing local democracy through improved public communication and community problem solving

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CPD Projects, 2006-2016

- Civic mission of schools
- Grade configuration of Poudre School District schools
- Statewide dropout rate
- Colorado Health Care Reform
- Student housing
- Improving higher education
- Childhood obesity
- Bicycle safety
- Diversity Dialogues at CSU Diversity Conference
- STEM education in K-12
- Arts Engagement Summit
- UniverCity Connections (CSU/Old Town collaborative project)
- School budgeting issues/school closures
- Medical Marijuana
- Regional visioning process
- Water and growth issues

- Poverty in Larimer County
- PSD Student Think Tank facilitator group
- K-12 school improvement
- Improving higher education through student-faculty reciprocity
- Politics of food
- Issues surrounding aging
- Early childhood education
- On campus stadium proposal
- Senior transportation
- Campus smoking
- School safety
- Bullying
- Mental health
- Nature in the City
- Larimer County Landfill/Wasteshed
- Diversity and Inclusion in Fort Collins
- CSU Innovation and Economic Prosperity
- CSU parking and affordable housing

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

REVISED AND
EXPANDED EDITION

PREDICTAB

"Sly and lucid. . .

The H
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AUTHOR

WHAT MAKES YOUR
BRAIN HAPPY AND
WHY YOU SHOULD
DO THE OPPOSITE

DAVID DiSALVO
FOREWORD BY WRAY HERBERT

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WHY YOU
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RIENDS ON
ACEBOOK

AVID
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"A landmark contribution to humanity's understanding of itself."
—The New York Times Book Review

THE
RIGHTEOUS
MIND

WHY GOOD
PEOPLE ARE DIVIDED
BY POLITICS AND
RELIGION

JONATHAN
HAIDT

Your Brain
Distorts and
Deceives

What Are We Learning from Brain Science and Social Psychology?

The Problematic

We crave certainty and consistency

We are suckers for the good v. evil narrative

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We filter & cherry pick evidence to support our views

What We Are Learning from Brain Science and Social Psychology?

Stages of motivated reasoning	
What and who we expose ourselves to	*selective exposure /echo chambers*
How we interpret new evidence	*confirmation bias*
How we make attributions and tell stories	*egoism, illusory correlation, negativity bias*
How we make decisions	*heuristics, self-serving bias, social proof*
What we remember	*availability bias*

*"**when we want to believe something**, we ask ourselves, '**Can I believe it?'** Then...we search for supporting evidence, and if we find even a single piece of pseudo-evidence, we can stop thinking.... In contrast, **when we don't want to believe something**, we ask ourselves, '**Must I believe it?'** Then we search for contrary evidence, and if we find a single reason to doubt the claim, we can dismiss it"*

- *Jonathan Haidt and Tom Gilovich*

What We Are Learning from Brain Science and Social Psychology?

The Problematic
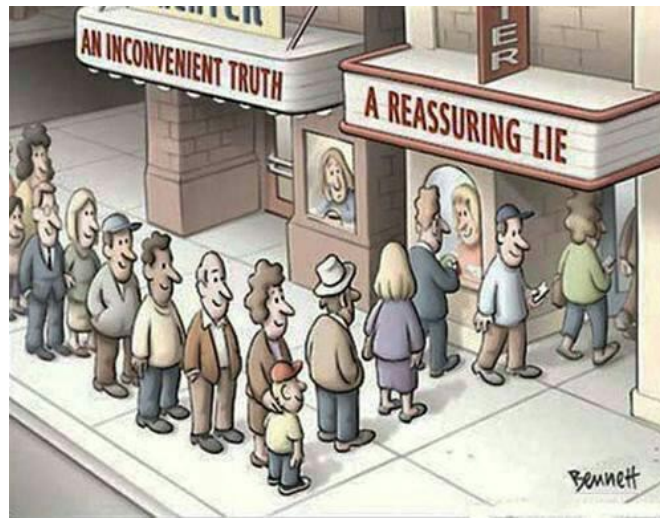
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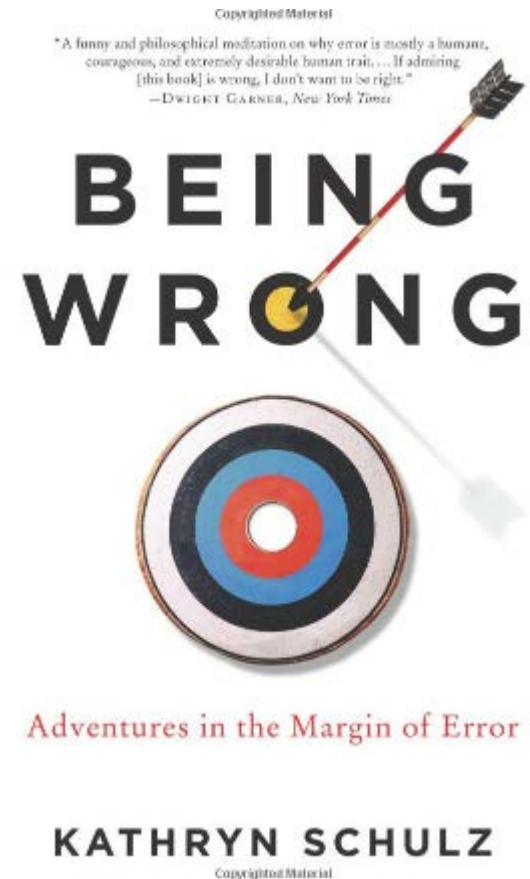
We resist counter-evidence

We avoid value dilemmas, tensions, and tough choices

Negative Interaction Effects
(i.e. Bad Process)

Kathryn Schulz – *Being Wrong*

- First step: Ignorance assumption
- Second step: Idiot assumption
- Third Step: Evil assumption

What We Are Learning from Social Psychology and Brain Science

The Good

We are inherently social and seek purpose and community
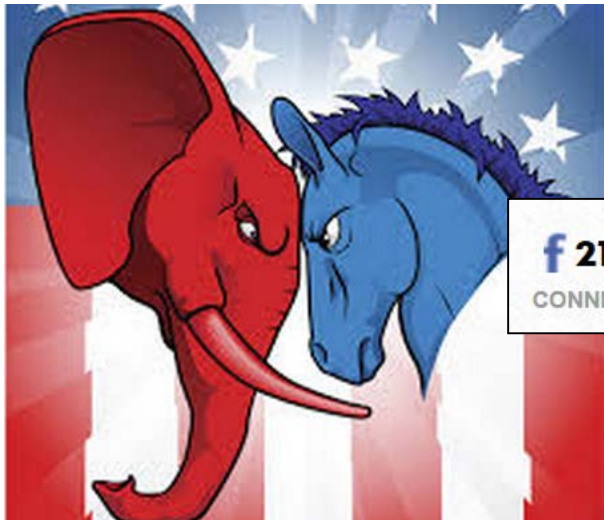
We are inherently pragmatic and creative

We can overcome our bad tendencies and build better habits

The Problem We Face

Most of our processes for public engagement and community problem solving primarily activate the negative aspects of human nature, and rarely tap into or nurture the positive.

What We Are Learning from Brain Science and Social Psychology?

Bottom line: The most powerful thing to help people overcome their biases, refine their opinion, and build community is **genuine conversation with people they respect**.

Rules of Engagement

1. Be respectful of others' views
2. Listen for understanding, not for how to counter the other's point
3. Be succinct—don't talk too much
4. Encourage others to share their view
5. Its ok to disagree, just do so with curiosity not hostility