

The hindsight bias with dynamic stimuli and the propensity effect with static stimuli

Dayna Gomes

California State University, Los Angeles

Dustin Calvillo

California State University San Marcos

Abstract: A reversal of the hindsight bias, termed the propensity effect, has been found with dynamic stimuli when likelihood estimates of an event are lower among people with outcome knowledge than among those without outcome knowledge (Roese, Fessel, Summerville, Kruger, & Dilich, 2006). One hundred sixty-two participants were shown a vehicular accident depicted either by diagrams or by an animation. Some participants saw information leading up to the accident and were asked to predict the likelihood of an accident occurring. Others saw the accident and were instructed to disregard this outcome knowledge before providing a likelihood estimate. Results contradicted previous findings; the propensity effect occurred with diagrams and the hindsight bias occurred with the animation. Evidence for the propensity effect appears to depend on how stimuli are constructed and the point at which participants are asked to disregard outcome information. The present findings indicate that different presentation modes influence decision making.