Judgment and Decision Making in the Lab and the World

Short Answer Questions

Chapter 1

1. Give a brief definition and example of each of the following: *descriptive models*, *prescriptive models*, and *normative models* of judgment and decision-making.
2. Broadly speaking, how does the *cognitive illusions* approach to judgment and decision-making differ from the *fast-and-frugal approach*, and in what way(s) are they the same?

Chapter 2

1. Does the use of the availability heuristic change over the lifespan, and if so, how?
2. Given that the majority of researchers studying the human mind are from WEIRD countries, how might the representativeness heuristic shape and influence the study of psychology?

Chapter 3

1. How does the belief-adjustment model describe the process of belief updating? In your response, include a description of all three subprocesses contained in the model.
2. Are people influenced by subliminal anchors? Describe a study from the text to support your answer.

**Chapter 4**

1. In what way, if any, is the hindsight bias similar to the curse of knowledge effect? In what way, if any, are they different?
2. Describe one common methodological paradigm used to study hindsight bias. What are pros and cons of using this method?

**Chapter 5**

1. The prevalence of Down syndrome in fetuses is 1% for pregnant women who are 40 years of age. Suppose that a widely used screening procedure gives a positive result in 60% of women who *do* have a baby with Down syndrome, and also in 10% of women who *don’t* actually have a baby with Down syndrome. What is the probability that a pregnant 40-year-old woman who tests positive actually has a baby with Down syndrome? Using a natural frequency diagram, please (a) calculate the answer to the question above (leaving it as a fraction is OK), and (b) explain why it is essential that base rates be taken into account in calculating the answer.
2. Explain the difference between absolute risk and relative risk. How does each influence our risk perception? How might advertisers use absolute versus relative risk formatting to their advantage?

**Chapter 6**

1. How good are people at predicting how happy a future event (e.g., graduation; marriage) would make them feel? Justify your answer, drawing upon at least one research study.
2. Should doctors base their patients’ end-of-life medical care on what the patient formally requested in a living will years ago, or on what the patients say they want right now? Draw upon at least one research study in explaining your response.

**Chapter 7**

1. Explain the conditions under which the choice overload effect can be expected to occur, and when it is less likely to occur.
2. What three characteristics of mental accounting are accounted for by the behavioral life-cycle hypothesis?

**Chapter 8**

1. Suppose there is a 50% chance that you will have a pop quiz tomorrow morning in math class, and a 50% chance that you won’t. Should you (1) study for it or (2) not? Using a 1-5 scale (where 1=extremely undesirable and 5=extremely desirable) to indicate your utilities for the four possible outcomes (e.g., one possible outcome is *you study for it and there is a pop quiz*), calculate the answer to this question.
2. Explain how expected value theory and expected utility theory are similar and how they are different.

**Chapter 9**

1. Explain what it means to say that people have non-linear preferences in risky choice. Give an example to illustrate.
2. Explain why merchants do not show the endowment effect for their own merchandise.

**Chapter 10**

1. Briefly describe information integration theory and the story model, pointing out two key ways in which they differ.
2. How do schemas and framework theories affect clinical judgment? Briefly describe the results of at least one empirical study to support your answer.

**Chapter 11**

1. Explain the difference between a predictive learning task and a diagnostic learning task.
2. What did Tversky and Kahneman (1972) mean by the phrase “regression to the mean?” Give an illustrative example of how people tend to come up with spurious causal explanations for what might better be described as regression to the mean.
3. Name two cues-to-causality and give an example of each.

**Chapter 12**

1. Name two ways in which fMRI researchers can make more legitimate claims about what their imaging data can show.
2. Explain how circular reasoning can lead forensic professionals to pinpoint the wrong person as the suspect in a criminal investigation. How can this be avoided?

**Chapter 13**

1. Explain how people come to believe in telekinesis (e.g., the ability to move objects with one’s mind) in terms of a core knowledge account of paranormal beliefs.
2. Drawing upon at least one research study on misinformation and its correction, explain how “myth versus fact” public information campaigns can backfire.

**Chapter 14**

1. Explain the difference between the wag-the-dog illusion and the wag-the-other-dog’s-tail illusion. What would be a better approach to changing people’s minds about moral issues?
2. Briefly describe the evidence supporting Gilligan’s (1982) challenge to Kohlberg’s theory of moral development. On the whole, do you agree with Gilligan or Kohlberg, and why?