



Metacognitive Training (MCT)

# MCT 7 A – Jumping to Conclusions II

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# Hasty Conclusions

We often draw conclusions without knowing the full truth.

- Reasons/advantages: ???
- Disadvantages: ???



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- Disadvantages: ???



# Hasty Conclusions

We often draw conclusions without knowing the full truth.

- Reasons/advantages: saving time, makes one feel safe, may appear determined and competent to others (“A wrong decision is better than no decision”).
- Disadvantages: risk of making an incorrect and dangerous decision ...



# Jumping to Conclusions

In what kind of situations do we draw conclusions without knowing the full truth?

When?	Example
... when we have limited access to information	???
... when we have some previous experience, from which we generalise	???
... when the decision does not really matter	???



# Jumping to Conclusions

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... when we have some previous experience, from which we generalise	???
... when the decision does not really matter	???



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... when the decision does not really matter	???



# Jumping to Conclusions

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... when we have some previous experience, from which we generalise	Over-generalisations can lead to prejudice (“seen one, seen `em all”).
... when the decision does not really matter	Choosing a kind of a cake, colour of socks, kind of lunch etc....





# Hasty Conclusions “in action”

Domain	Example
<div> </div> <p>Cover of <i>Stern</i> magazine, which published the fake Hitler diaries</p>	<p>In 1983, the German news magazine <i>Stern</i> (German for star) published the alleged secret diaries of Adolf Hitler, the leader of the Nazi regime in Germany (1933-1945). The magazine paid 9.3 million German marks (around 5 million €) for them, although there had been early indications of a forgery. For example, a poem that – according to the diaries – was written by Hitler was revealed as the work of another writer in 1980.</p> <p>A few days after the publication of the diaries in <i>Stern</i>, an investigation by the German Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA) established beyond a doubt that the diaries were fake. They had been created by the art forger Konrad Kujau.</p> <p>Had <i>Stern</i> waited for the BKA's investigation, it would have been spared the scandal.</p>




# Jumping to Conclusions “in action”

– urban legends –

(for an alternative exercise, see end of presentation)

Marlboro is owned by the KKK?


legend	for & against	“evidence”
<p>Since the mid-1980s there were rumours that markings on the Marlboro package indicate Ku Klux Klan ownership.</p>	<p>For: ???</p> <p>Against: ???</p>	 <p>Mar = Mar = jew? lboro = orobl = horrible</p>



# Jumping to Conclusions “in action”

## – urban legends –

Marlboro is owned by the KKK?


legend	for & against	“evidence”
<p>Since the mid-1980s there were rumours that markings on the Marlboro package indicate Ku Klux Klan ownership.</p>	<p>For:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The red chevrons on the white background forms the capital letter “K”</li> <li>• “Mar” upside down reads like “jew” – “lboro” reversed looks like “horrible” = “horrible jew” (see right)</li> <li>• The motto “veni, vidi, vici” (came, saw, conquered) is believed to be a slogan of the KKK</li> </ul> <p>Against: ???</p>	 <p>Mar = Mar = jew? lboro = orobl = horrible</p>



# Jumping to Conclusions “in action”

## – urban legends –

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<p>Since the mid-1980s there were rumours that markings on the Marlboro package indicate Ku Klux Klan ownership.</p>	<p><b>For:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The red chevrons on the white background forms the capital letter “K”.</li> <li>“Mar” upside down reads like “jew” – “lboro” reversed looks like “horrible” = “horrible jew” (see right).</li> <li>The motto “veni, vidi, vici” (came, saw, conquered) is believed to be a slogan of the KKK.</li> </ul> <p><b>Against:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marlboro was founded by Philipp Morris, an Englishman; no ties to KKK.</li> <li>Marlboro was named after street of London factory: Marlborough Street.</li> <li>The motto is not connected to the KKK.</li> </ul>	 <p>Mar = <math>\text{Mar}</math> = jew? lboro = orobl = horrible</p>



# Jumping to Conclusions “in action”

– urban legends –

Is the Ku Klux Klan owner of Marlboro?



No!



# How do these conspiracy theories arise?

???



# How do these conspiracy theories arise?

- They are often more exciting than reality!
- They are based on statements difficult to check or prove (e.g. that “Veni, Vidi, Vici” would be the motto of the Ku Klux Klan? wrong!).
- They conceal alternative explanations (e.g. the name “Marlboro” rearranged forth and back can mean a lot of things; e.g. the words labor or Roma can be found).
- Legends are sometimes based on facts taken out of context. The significance of these details is also largely exaggerated (at first glance, the three red K’s are impressive, but they do not prove anything).



## How do these conspiracy theories arise?

- There are numerous examples in history where minorities and outcasts were falsely blamed for uncontrollable, catastrophic events. For example, in medieval times a poor harvest was often blamed on witchcraft or religious minorities.
- These simple explanations reduced tension and fear and provided the illusion of control.





## Why are we doing this?

- Studies show that many people with psychosis (but not all!) make decisions on the basis of little information. This type of decision making can easily lead to errors, compared to a type involving careful consideration of all available information.



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- Studies show that many people with psychosis (but not all!) make decisions on the basis of little information. This type of decision making can easily lead to errors, compared to a type involving careful consideration of all available information.
- The perception of reality for many (but not all!) people with psychosis is altered. Unlikely interpretations are considered that most other people would disregard.



# How jumping to conclusions promotes misinterpretations during psychosis – examples

Event	Explanation during psychosis	What really happened
Your discharge date is moved forward.	You are convinced that the doctors have given up.	Unexpectedly, a bed has come up at a residential accommodation.
The thought “You are worthless!” is hammering in your head.	You are convinced that this is caused by a cell phone antenna on the roof.	Most people experience negative thoughts about themselves from time to time.
Therapist says a word you were just about to use.	Therapist can read your thoughts.	The word was accessible from the context.

Can anyone contribute a short personal experience?



# Exercise

- In the following exercises you will be shown different paintings. Please try to identify the correct title for each painting and rule out “misfits”.



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- Please also state the degree of confidence in your judgment.



# Exercise

- In the following exercises you will be shown different paintings. Please try to identify the correct title for each painting and rule out “misfits”.
- Discuss the *pros and cons* for each of the interpretations.
- Please also state the degree of confidence in your judgment.
- Pay special attention to features that clearly rule out one interpretation.



- a. Confession of adultery
- b. Courtship
- c. Announcement of a relative's death
- d. The flower seller





- a. Confession of adultery
- b. Courtship (Karl Zewy, 1896)
- c. Announcement of a relative's death
- d. The flower seller



- a. The monk
- b. The drunkard
- c. The reading chemist
- d. The bookworm



- a. The monk
- b. The drunkard
- c. The reading chemist  
(Johann Peter von Langer, 1756-1824)
- d. The bookworm



- a. Servants' room
- b. The imaginary invalid
- c. The poor poet
- d. Shelter for the homeless





- a. Servants' room
- b. The imaginary invalid
- c. The poor poet  
(Carl Spitzweg, 1835)
- d. Shelter for the homeless



- a. The evil witch
- b. The gloating boy
- c. The shoe thief
- d. The admonition



- a. The evil witch
- b. The gloating boy
- c. The shoe thief
- d. The admonition  
(Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller, 1846)





- a. The visit
- b. Absorbed in studies
- c. The poet
- d. Grandfather's library





- a. The visit  
(Carl Spitzweg, 1849)
- b. Absorbed in studies
- c. The poet
- d. Grandfather's library



- a. Taiga
- b. Adolf
- c. Higher creatures demanded: paint right upper corner black
- d. Depression



- a. Taiga
- b. Adolf
- c. Higher creatures demanded: paint right upper corner black (Sigmar Polke, 1969)
- d. Depression



## optional: Video Clip

optional: Video clip presentations that address today's topic are available at the following web site:

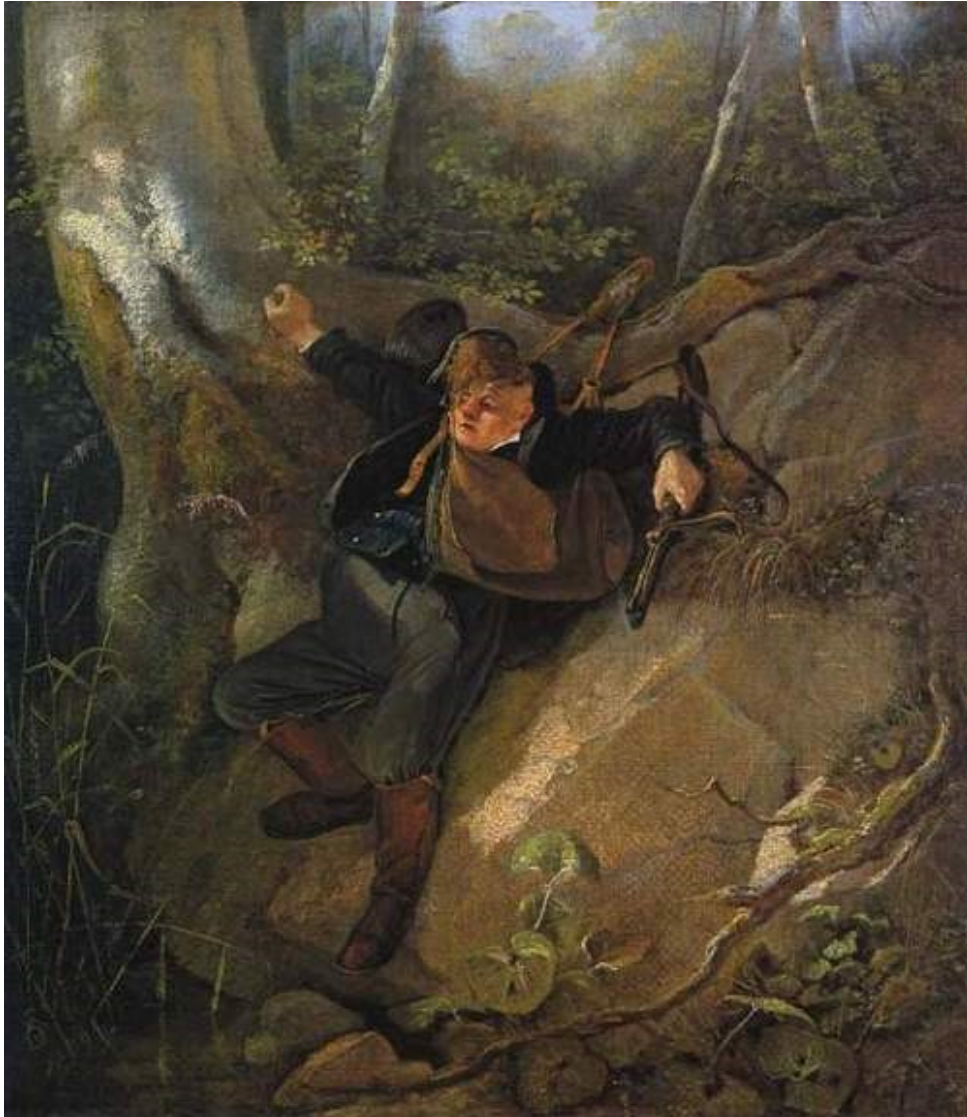
[http://www.uke.de/mct\\_videos](http://www.uke.de/mct_videos)

After the video, you may discuss how it is related to today's topic.

*[for Trainers:*

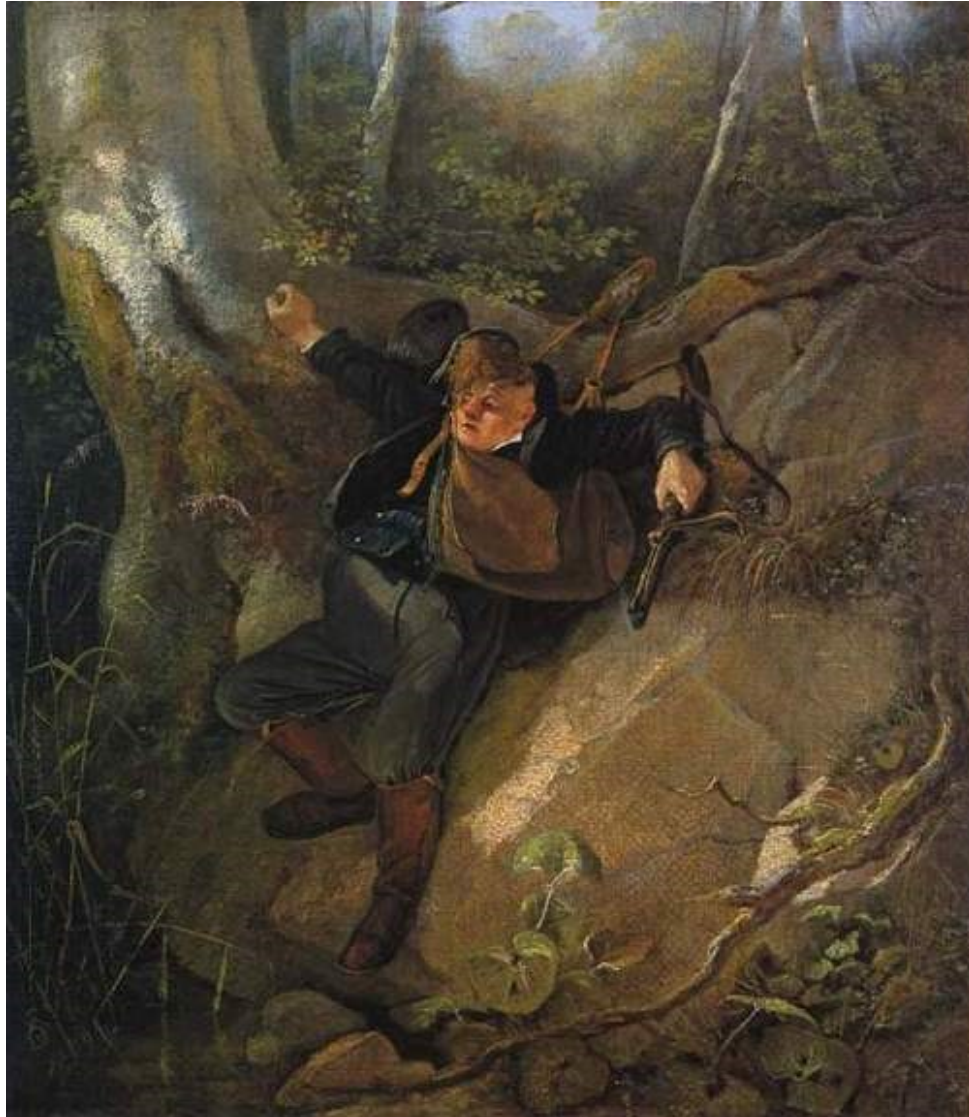
Some movie clips contain language that may not be appropriate for all audiences and across all cultures. Please carefully pre-screen videos before showing]





- a. Facing the beast
- b. The drunkard
- c. Nightmare
- d. Hunting accident





- a. Facing the beast
- b. The drunkard
- c. Nightmare
- d. Hunting accident  
(Carl Spitzweg, 1839)



- a. The binge
- b. The Cossack-letter
- c. Arm wrestling
- d. Before the battle



- a. The binge
- b. The Cossack-letter  
(Ilja Jefimowitsch Repin, 1891)
- c. Arm wrestling
- d. Before the battle





- a. Children's birthday party
- b. The scholar
- c. Wanderer's rest
- d. The optician



- a. Children's birthday party
- b. The scholar
- c. Wanderer's rest
- d. The optician  
(Frederick Daniel Hardy, 1826-1911)



- a. The poisoner of Salamanca
- b. The water seller of Sevilla
- c. Winetasting in Malaga
- d. The alcoholic of Madrid





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- b. The water seller of Sevilla  
(Diego Velázquez, 1623)
- c. Winetasting in Malaga
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- a. The cavalier
- b. Walk on Sunday
- c. The widower
- d. Reviled lover



- a. The cavalier
- b. Walk on Sunday
- c. The widower  
(Carl Spitzweg, 1844)
- d. Reviled lover





- a. The pedicure
- b. The consultation
- c. Amputation
- d. The admirer



- a. The pedicure  
(Edgar Degas, 1873)
- b. The consultation
- c. Amputation
- d. The admirer





- a. The paper chase
- b. The homeless
- c. Illegal entry
- d. The fruit thieves



- a. The paper chase
- b. The homeless
- c. Illegal entry
- d. The fruit thieves  
(Hermann Kauffmann, 1848)



- a. The harvest
- b. Evening prayer
- c. The funeral
- d. Hedger



- a. The harvest
- b. Evening prayer  
(Jean-Francois Millet, 1859)
- c. The funeral
- d. Hedger

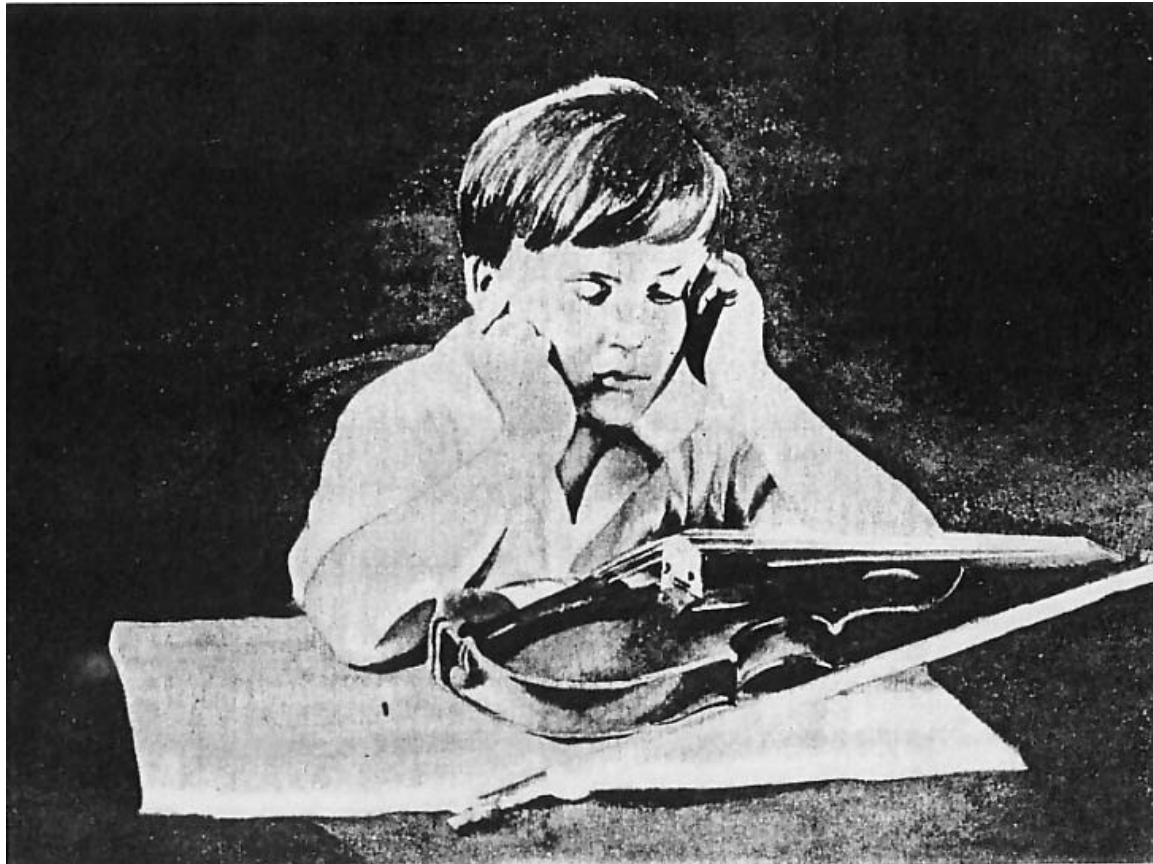


- a. The walk
- b. Awaiting the fishing boat
- c. The mourners
- d. On the run

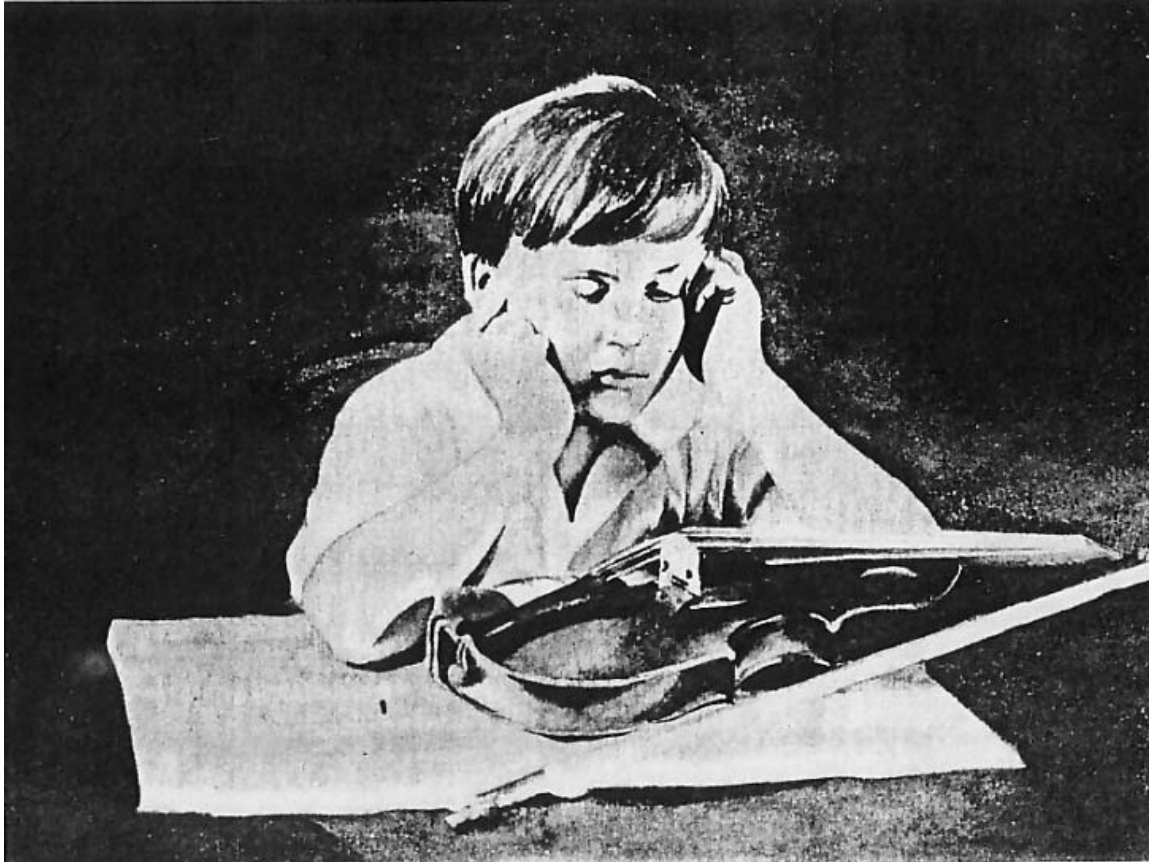




- a. The walk
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(Philip Lodewijk F. Sadée, 1837-1904)
- c. The mourners
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What is happening here?



- a. The boy hates to play violin but his parents force him to.
- b. A blind boy wishes to be able to play the violin
- c. The boy has broken his father's precious violin and is afraid to tell him.
- d. The boy is a talented musician concentrating before his upcoming concert.





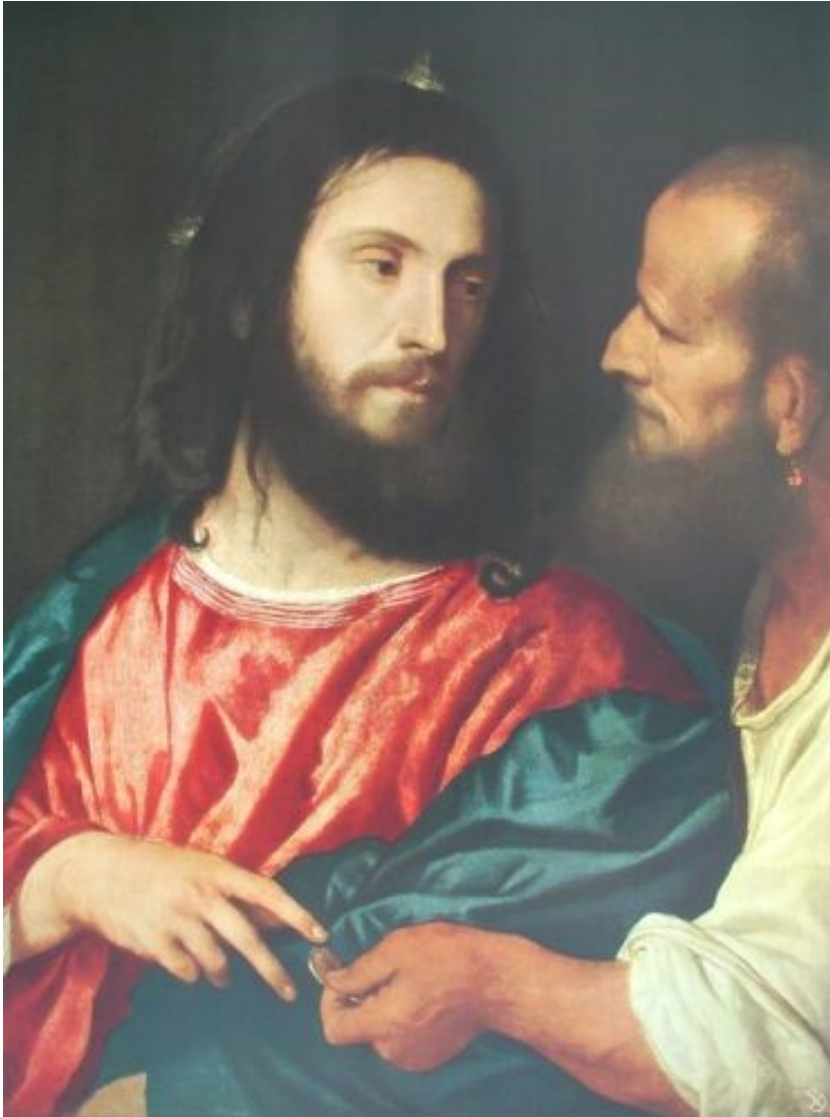
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- a. The love letter
- b. The evil neighbour
- c. House moving
- d. The topographer

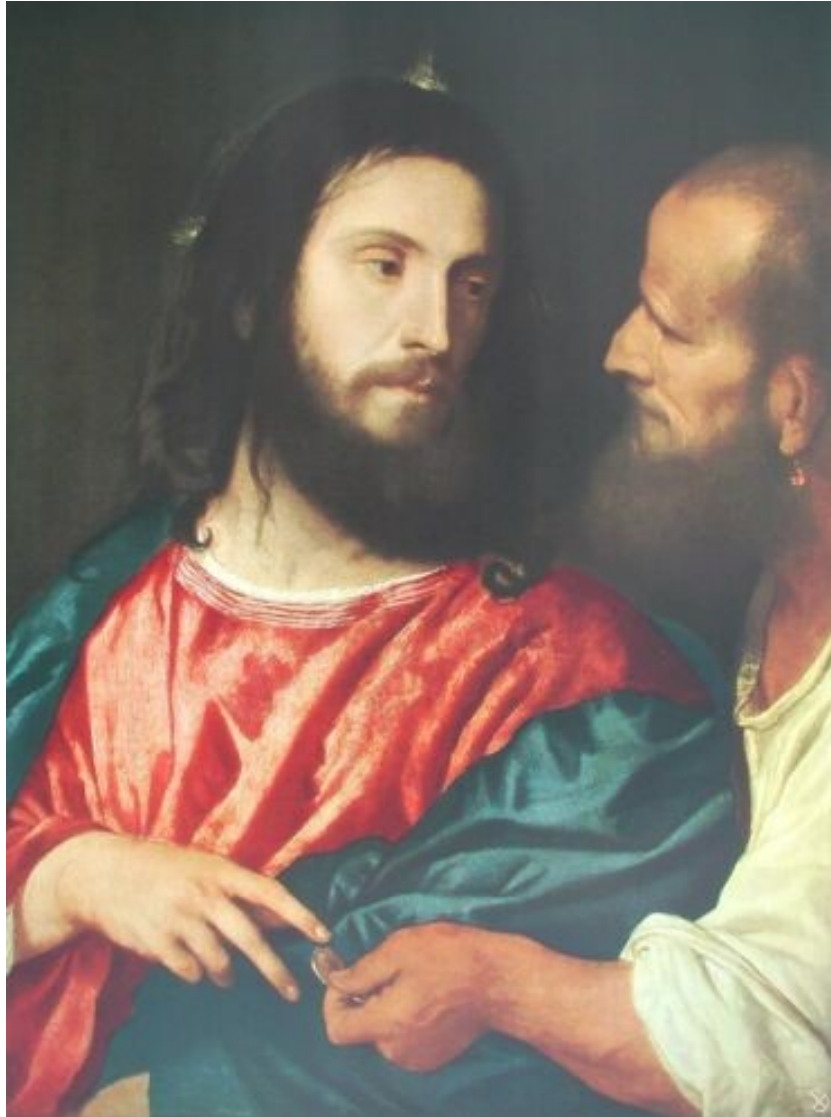


- a. The love letter  
(Carl Spitzweg, 1860)
- b. The evil neighbour
- c. Relocation
- d. The topographer



- a. Corruption
- b. The messiah
- c. Land tax
- d. Nobleman and buccaneer





- a. Corruption
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- c. Land tax (Tizian, 1524)
- d. Nobleman and buccaneer



- a. The drunken jerk
- b. Gossiping women
- c. Asking for a dance
- d. The funeral feast



- a. The drunken jerk
- b. Gossiping women
- c. Asking for a dance  
(Peter Baumgartner, 1834-1911)
- d. The funeral feast





- a. Witnesses of a murder
- b. The drama
- c. At the movies
- d. The fleeing bride



- a. Witnesses of a murder
- b. The drama  
(Daumier Honoré, 1831/1832)
- c. At the movies
- d. The fleeing bride



# Transfer to everyday life

## Learning objectives:

- When judgements are important and momentous, it is better to avoid hasty decisions and consider all relevant information (“better safe than sorry”).



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- **Example:** A man is babbling: *is he drunk?*
- Observe more closely: is the man coming from a bar or smelling of alcohol?  
*The man may be suffering from a language disorder after a stroke, or has a speech impairment.*



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*The man may be suffering from a language disorder after a stroke, or has a speech impairment.*
- Remember that hasty decisions increase the risk of errors.
- For events of minor importance, we may as well act quickly (e.g. choosing a type of yogurt, type of cake).



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- Remember that hasty decisions increase the risk of errors.
- For events of minor importance, we may as well act quickly (e.g. choosing a type of yogurt, type of cake).
- To err is human – be prepared for the possibility that you are wrong.
- Base important decisions on solid facts. Mere guesses are “bad advisers.” Always consider the consequences of a wrong judgment.





## What does this have to do with psychosis?

Many (but not all!) people with psychosis tend to jump to conclusions and form extreme judgements. This style of reasoning may be enhanced when one is under pressure and wants to let off steam.



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**Real example:** Elton wants to drive to university with his car but cannot find the keys. He thinks the caretaker has stolen his keys to stop him from driving to campus.

**Background:** He is convinced that people at university want to expel him.

**But:** Why should the caretaker be interested in expelling Elton from university? How did he come into possession of his keys? Is it possible that Elton misplaced his keys?



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**But:** Why should the caretaker be interested in expelling Elton from university? How did he come into possession of his keys? Is it possible that Elton misplaced his keys?

Before making serious accusations, you should collect information from as many sources as possible and discuss different explanations with people you trust.



# Thank you for your attention!

*for Trainers:*

Please hand out worksheets. Introduce our app COGITO (download free of charge).



[www.uke.de/mct\\_app](http://www.uke.de/mct_app)





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miss_blackbutterfly	flickr	“One thousand Americans stop smoking every day - by dying. They say Nicotine patches are great. Stick one over each eye and you can't find your cigarettes.”	CC	Marlboro cigarette boxes/Marlboro Zigarettenschachteln


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# Jumping to conclusions “in action”


## – Urban legends –

Legend	Conspiracy theorists	“Evidence”
<p>Allegedly the moon landing in 1969 never took place and was merely a fake.</p>	<p>Arguments pro?</p>	



# Jumping to conclusions “in action”

## – Urban legends –


Legend	Conspiracy theorists	“Evidence”
<p>Allegedly the moon landing in 1969 never took place and was merely a fake.</p>	<p>Alleged motives of the USA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. “Technological victory” in space travel competition with the Soviet Union, which had successfully launched a satellite into space earlier</li> <li>2. Distraction from the Vietnam-War</li> <li>3. NASA itself faked the moon landing for fear of governmental budget cutback</li> </ol>	





# Jumping to conclusions “in action”


## – Urban legends –

Legend	For and Against	“Evidence”
<p>Allegedly the moon landing in 1969 never took place and was merely a fake.</p>	<p>For: ???</p>	



# Jumping to conclusions “in action”


## – Urban legends –

Legend	For and Against	“Evidence”
<p>Allegedly the moon landing in 1969 never took place and was merely a fake.</p>	<p><b>For:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. “Waving flag”: impossible because there is no atmosphere/weather on the moon</li> <li>2. Pictures of starless sky and varying shadows indicate a film studio production</li> <li>3. Astronaut Armstrong’s radio message: He responds too quickly to president Nixon’s last sentence. Radio signals need more time to be transmitted to earth than it took Armstrong to answer</li> </ol>	



# Jumping to conclusions “in action”


– Urban legends –

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# Jumping to conclusions “in action”

## – Urban legends –

Legend	For and Against	“Evidence”
<p>Allegedly the moon landing in 1969 never took place and was merely a fake.</p>	<p><b>Against:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The waving of the flag was caused by ramming the pole into the moon’s surface and a supporting mounted crossbar</li> <li>2. Night photographs cannot capture weak light sources due to exposure times → no stars</li> <li>3. The varying shadows were caused by the uneven moon surface</li> <li>4. The interview had been edited in order to cover the original time delay between Nixon’s and Armstrong’s dialog</li> </ol>	

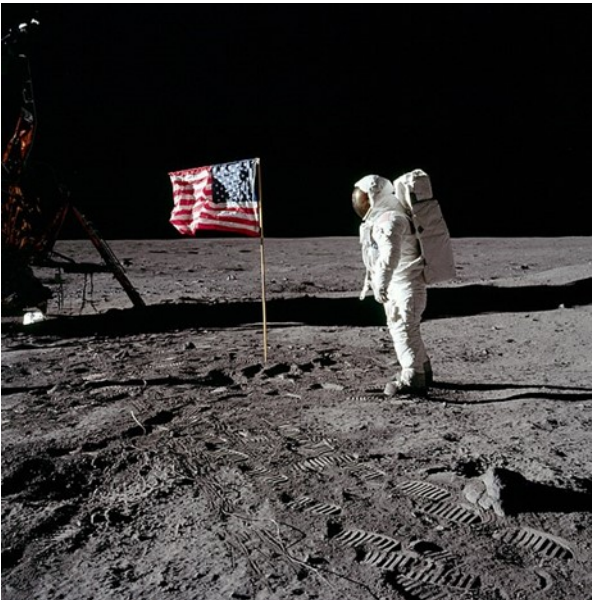


# Jumping to conclusions “in action”

– Urban legends –

Was the moon landing faked by the US Government?

**No!**



Director Roland Emmerich (Independence Day):  
“The moon landing (...) was just too good. Such a thing was impossible to stage in the 1960s. Even with today’s equipment this would pose problems.”

Source: German television station ZDF: “Vorsicht Verschwörung” (Beware conspiracy)



How did this urban legend and other conspiracy theories arise?

???



# How did this urban legend and other conspiracy theories arise?

- They are often more compelling than reality.
- They are based on facts that are hard to check and people believe them easily (e.g., waving flag suggests that pictures were taken on earth).
- They conceal alternative explanations (e.g., the starless sky can be explained by the technical limitations of night photography).
- Urban legends take facts out of context and push them to the limit.