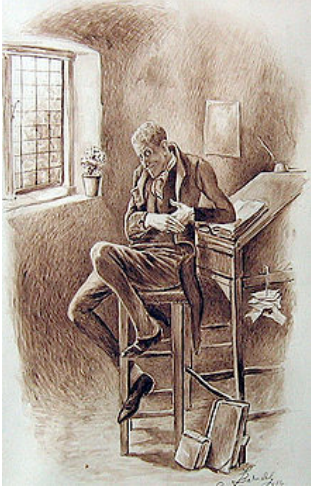


Confirmation Bias



Confirmation bias is a filter through which you see a reality that matches your expectations. It is a form of cognitive bias that describes our inclination to want to confirm our beliefs or hypotheses as we: search for; interpret; and remember information.

Confirmation bias has been consistently demonstrated in experiments since the 1960s whereby people consistently support what they already believe and systematically ignore or rejecting evidence that supports a different conclusion. In essence, it works as in “internal yes man”, echoing back a person's beliefs like Charles Dickens character Uriah Heep.

Confirmation bias is demonstrated in two ways:

1. the tendency to readily accept without question the accuracy of evidence that agrees with (confirms) one's preconceptions; and
2. the tendency to examine closely any evidence that contradicts (disconfirms) one's preconceptions until one finds problems with it, thereby usually leading to its rejection.

These biases appear in particular for emotionally significant issues and for established beliefs. As Henry David Thoreau put it, 'We hear and apprehend only what we already half know.' The truism, *I'll believe it when I see it* might be better stated *I'll see it when I believe it*.