



# Understanding Unconscious Bias

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# Introduction





**How would you define bias?**



# What is unconscious bias?





**Write the first thought that comes to  
your mind.**





**Write the first thought that comes to  
your mind.**





**Write the first thought that comes to  
your mind.**

**Dog meat**



Write the first thought that comes to  
your mind.

Approximately 25 million dogs are eaten each year by  
humans.

It is legal in 44 states to eat dogs, including Minnesota.

Dog meat		
Nutritional value per 100 g (3.5 oz)		
Energy	1,096 kJ (262 kcal)	
Carbohydrates	0.1 g	
Dietary fiber	0 g	
Fat	20.2 g	
Protein	19 g	
Vitamins		
Vitamin A equiv.	3.6 µg	(0%)
Thiamine (B <sub>1</sub> )	0.12 mg	(10%)
Riboflavin (B <sub>2</sub> )	0.18 mg	(15%)
Niacin (B <sub>3</sub> )	1.9 mg	(13%)
Vitamin C	3 mg	(4%)
Minerals		
Calcium	8 mg	(1%)
Iron	2.8 mg	(22%)
Phosphorus	168 mg	(24%)
Potassium	270 mg	(6%)
Sodium	72 mg	(5%)
Other constituents		
Water	60.1 g	
Cholesterol	44.4 mg	
Ash	0.8 g	
Units		
µg = micrograms • mg = milligrams		
IU = International units		
Percentages are roughly approximated using US recommendations for adults.		
Source: Yong-Geun Ann (1999) <sup>[1]</sup>		



# Discussion





# Are we born with bias?





# Discussion





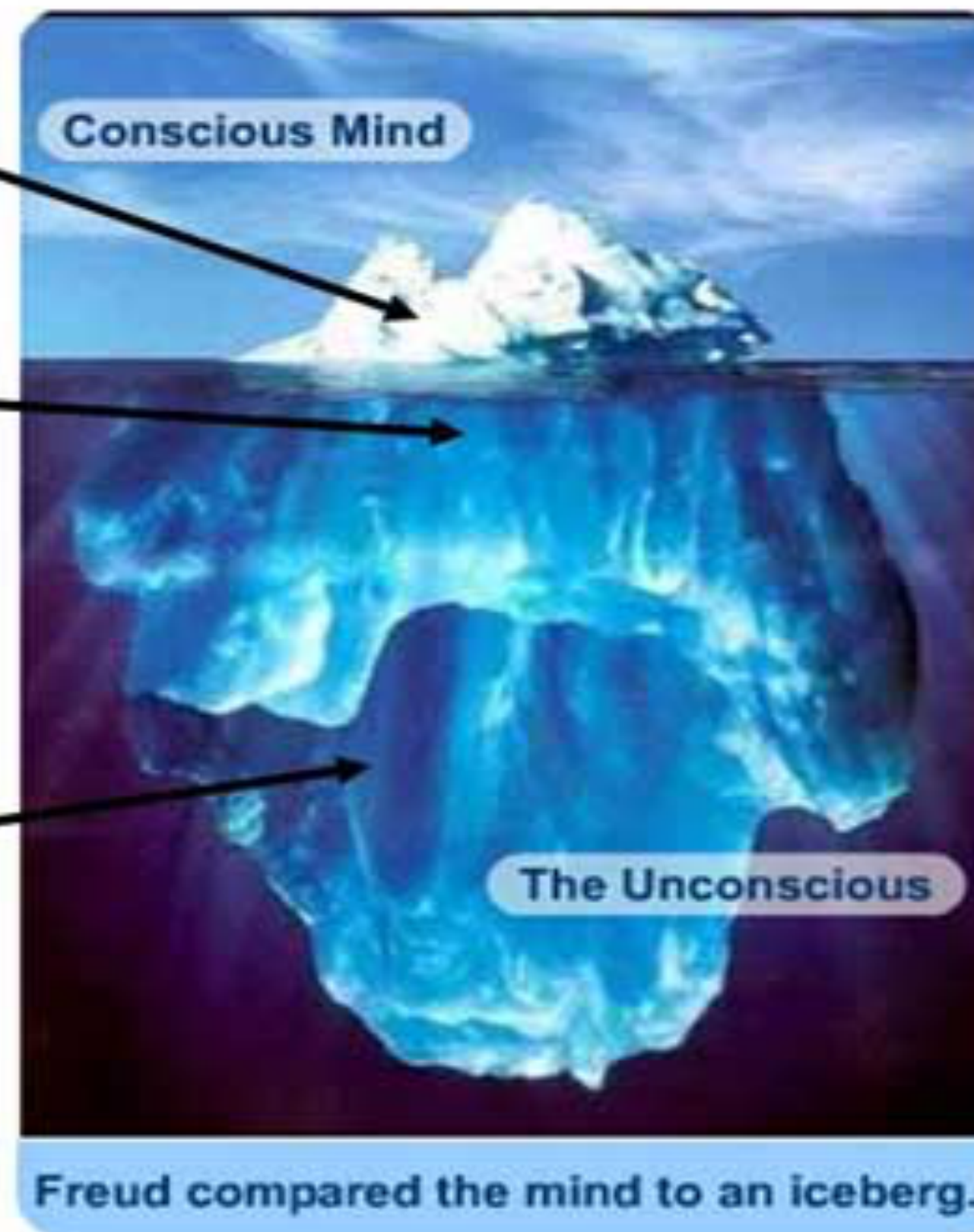
# Unconscious bias and your decisions

## The Unconscious Mind

**The conscious.** The small amount of mental activity we know about

**The preconscious.** Things we could be aware of if we wanted or tried.

**The unconscious.** Things we are unaware of and can not become aware of.



Thoughts  
Perceptions

Memories  
Stored knowledge

Fears  
Unacceptable sexual desires  
Violent motives  
Irrational wishes  
Immoral urges  
Selfish needs  
Shameful experiences  
Traumatic experiences



# Unconscious bias and your decisions

*We go out in the world everyday and make decisions about what is safe or not, what is appropriate or not, and so on. This automatic decision making is called an “unconscious danger detector” determines whether or not something or someone is safe before we can even begin to consciously make a determination.*

*Joseph LaDoux, PHD*



# Unconscious bias and your decisions

***When we see something or someone that “feels” dangerous, we have already launched into action subconsciously before we have started “thinking”.***

*-Ross (2008)*



# Unconscious bias and your decisions



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# Unconscious bias and your decisions





# Unconscious bias and your decisions





# Discussion





# Case study



# Discussion

Have you witnessed or heard of something similar to this? If so how was it handled?

How would this have been handled at your agency now compared to ten years ago?

How would you have handled this situation?

What should happen to the deputy involved in this case study?



# Unconscious bias in the workplace

***“We found that women were leaving the firm at a significantly greater rate than men.... We assumed that women were leaving to have children and stay home....We were wrong... Most women weren’t leaving to raise families; they had weighed their options in Deloitte’s male-dominated culture”.***

*Deloitte Corporation, McCracken (2000)*

**Deloitte.**





# Unconscious bias in the workplace

*Unfairness cost U.S. employers over **64 billion dollars** a year.*

*People of color are **three times** more likely to cite workplace unfairness as the **only** reason for leaving their employers than white men and **twice** as likely as white women.*

*Gay and lesbian workers were **twice** as likely to cite workplace unfairness as the only reason for leaving an employer in comparison to heterosexual employees.*

***85% of workers who leave an employer after experiencing unfairness discourage others from seeking a job with their former employer.***

*Fair salary is the most important concern for white men and women, benefits are the most important concern for gay and lesbians, and managers who recognized their abilities was the chief concern for employees of color.*

***-Level Playing Field Institute 2007***



# Mission accomplished!



Recognize that all humans have bias.  
Recognize if bias is playing a role in your decision making process.