

## Notes For SPED102 Exam

Full disclosure, questions are derived from study guides that were created for this specific course.

### Week 2

#### **1. What sorts of individuals tend to believe 'weird things'?**

- All cultures, all societies
- Regardless of gender, socioeconomic status or education, we're actually all susceptible to having weird irrational beliefs
- Susceptibility traits include:
  - Fantasy proneness (a difficulty distinguishing between reality and fiction)
  - Believers are likely to be susceptible to hypnotic suggestion
  - Some people who are high on disassociation (detachment from reality)

#### **2. Explain the concept of pareidolia and how it relates to our ability to recognise randomness?**

- Psychological phenomena where we see meaning in random stimuli
- Evolutionary advantage of being oversensitive to patterns, false positives present less risk than false negatives
- All human beings feel the need to find meaning but believers often find paranormal context in random stimuli where none exists

#### **3. How well do humans typically understand probability and how might this affect their decisions?**

- Almost all of us are actually hopeless at understanding probability
- We make very poor judgements and very poor estimates
- Doctors' (poor) understanding of probability (Gigerenzer, 2002)

#### **4. What is 'personal validation'?**

Tendency to interpret general information that is meaningful to the individual as being specific/accurate.

#### **5. Explain the 'Barnum effect' and why it works.**

Where people interpret very broad and general descriptions of personality as being very specific/accurate to themselves.