01

[1] Online environments vary widely in how easily you can save whatever happens there, what I call its recordability and preservability.

[2] Even though the design, activities, and membership of social media might change over time, the content of what people posted usually remains intact.

[B] Email, video, audio, and text messages can be saved.

[4] When perfect preservation is possible, time has been suspended.

[5] Whenever you want, you can go back to reexamine those events from the past.

[6] In other situations, permanency slips between our fingers, even challenging our reality testing about whether something existed at all, as when an email that we seem to remember receiving mysteriously disappears from our inbox.

[7] The slightest accidental tap of the finger can send an otherwise everlasting document into nothingness.

02

[1] Your concepts are a primary tool for your brain to guess the meaning of incoming sensory inputs.

[2] For example, concepts give meaning to changes in sound pressure so you hear them as words or music instead of random noise.

[3] In Western culture, most music is based on an octave divided into twelve equally spaced pitches: the equal-tempered scale codified by Johann Sebastian Bach in the 17th century.

[4] All people of Western culture with normal hearing have a concept for this ubiquitous scale, even if they can't explicitly describe it.

[5] Not all music uses this scale, however.

[6] When Westerners hear Indonesian gamelan music first time, which is based on seven pitches per octave with varied tunings, it's more likely to sound like noise.

[7] A brain that's been wired by listening to twelve-tone scales doesn't have a concept for that music.

03

[1] Tap your finger on the surface of a wooden table or desk, and observe the loudness of the sound you hear.

[2] Then, place your ear flat on top of the table or desk.

[3] With your finger about one foot away from your ear, tap the table top and observe the loudness of the sound you hear again.

[4] The volume of the sound you hear with your ear on the desk is much louder than with it off the desk.

[5] Sound waves are capable of traveling through many solid materials as well as through air.

[6] Solids, like wood for example, transfer the sound waves much better than air typically does because the molecules in a solid substance are much closer and more tightly packed together than they are in air.

[7] This allows the solids to carry the waves more easily and efficiently, resulting in a louder sound.

[8] The density of the air itself also plays a determining factor in the loudness of sound waves passing through it.

04

[1] A phenomenon in social psychology, the Pratfall Effect states that an individual's perceived attractiveness increases or decreases after he or she makes a mistake — depending on the individual's perceived competence.

[2] As celebrities are generally considered to be competent individuals, and often even presented as flawless or perfect in certain aspects, committing blunders will make one's humanness endearing to others.

[3] Basically, those who never make mistakes are perceived as being less attractive and "likable" than those who make occasional mistakes.

[4] Perfection, or the attribution of that quality to individuals, creates a perceived distance that the general public cannot relate to —making those who never make mistakes perceived as being less attractive or likable.

[5] However, this can also have the opposite effect — if a perceived average or less than average competent person makes a mistake, he or she will be less attractive and likable to others.

05-06

[1] In 2000, James Kuklinski of the University of Illinois led an influential experiment in which more than 1,000 Illinois residents were asked questions about welfare.

[2] More than half indicated that they were confident that their answers were correct — but in fact, only three percent of the people got more than half of the questions right.

[3] Perhaps more disturbingly, the ones who were the most confident they were right were generally the ones who knew the least about the topic.

[4] Kuklinski calls this sort of response the "I know I'm right" syndrome.

[5] "It implies not only that most people will resist correcting their factual beliefs," he wrote, "but also that the very people who most need to correct them will be least likely to do so."

[6] How can we have things so wrong and be so sure that we're right?

[7] Part of the answer lies in the way our brains are wired.

[8] Generally, people tend to seek consistency.

[9] There is a substantial body of psychological research showing that people tend to interpret information with an eye toward reinforcing their preexisting views.

[10] If we believe something about the world, we are more likely to passively accept as truth any information that confirms our beliefs, and actively dismiss information that doesn't.

[11] This is known as "motivated reasoning."

[12] Whether or not the consistent information is accurate, we might accept it as fact, as confirmation of our beliefs.

[13] This makes us more confident in said beliefs, and even less likely to entertain facts that contradict them.