



TARTU ÜLIKOOL

SALTO PARTICIPATION &
INFORMATION



15 ways to influence our attitudes and thoughts

Maria Murumaa-Mengel

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MEDIA STUDIES



Baltic Engagement
Centre for Combating
Information Disorders



Important!

My background in social media studies, I am an Estonian – it shows 😊

We take a critical look at political communication, but persuasion and influencing is a normal part of everyday communication

We need the politicians. They need us.



Resilience as a core concept

Przybylski et al. (2014), Timmerman (1981) understand resilience to be:

... individual's/organisation's/society's ability to absorb and recover, accurately prepare and adapt to changing and sometimes stressful environments

and to feel empowered to act instead of react in the face of both novel and threatening challenges.



Planned for today

1. Stay in the picture
2. Brand yourself
3. Know the platforms
4. Seem authentic
5. Borrow reputation
6. Use existing associations
7. Differ
8. Seem strong (for men)
9. Seem beautiful (for women)
10. We are good, they are bad

Ad nauseam

Halo effect

Reductio ad Hitlerum

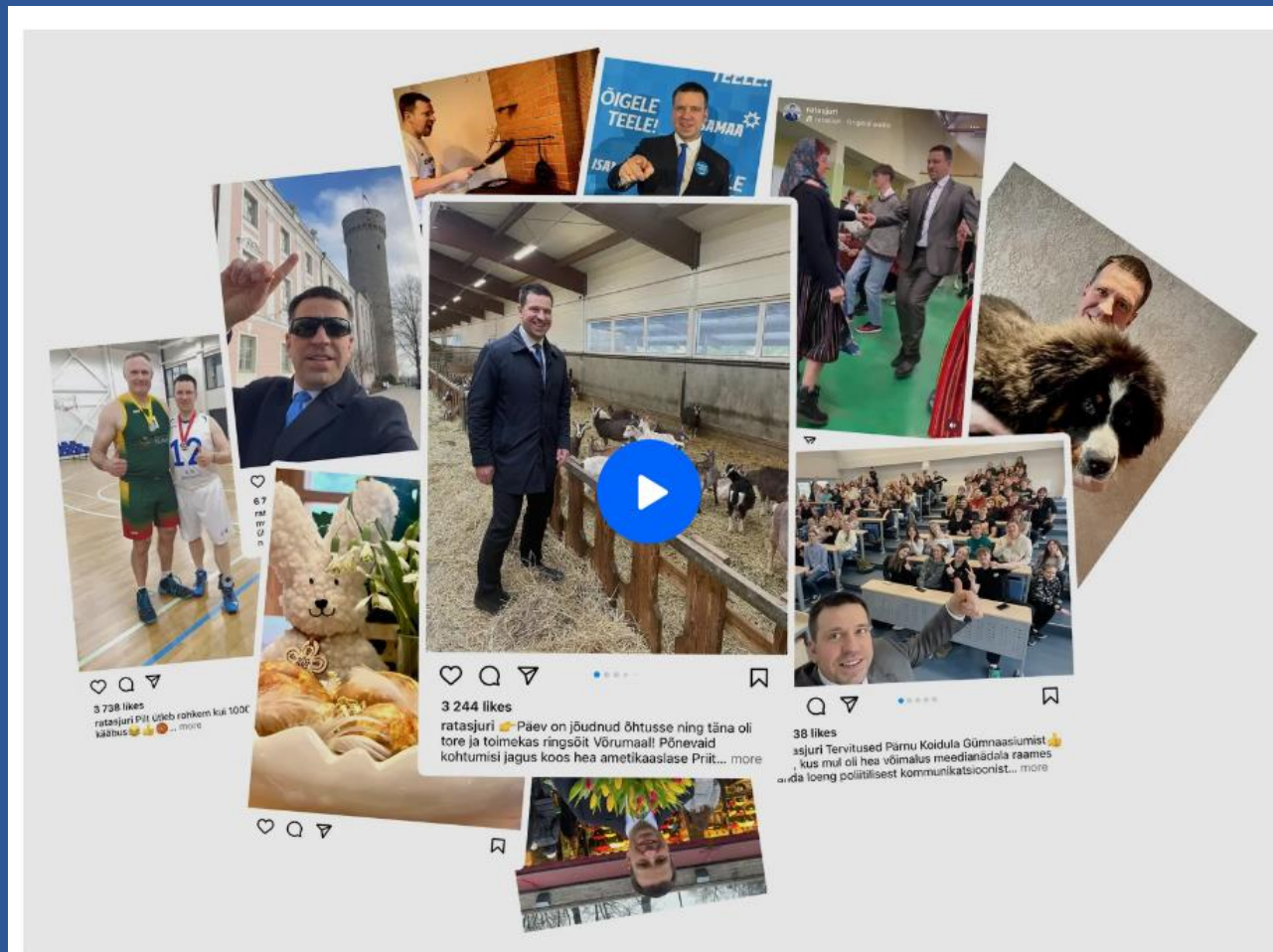
Divide and conquer

Bandwagon effect



TARTU ÜLIKOOL

1. Stay in the picture!



Jüri Ratase postitused Instagramis. — Illustratsioon: Postimees



Why it works?

Because we remember the things that are more accessible, familiar, available

See also:

Availability heuristic

25 languages

Article Talk Read Edit View history Tools

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



This article **needs additional citations for verification**. Please help [improve this article](#) by [adding citations to reliable sources](#). Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. Find sources: "Availability heuristic" – news · newspapers · books · scholar · JSTOR (March 2023) (Learn how and when to remove this message)

The **availability heuristic**, also known as **availability bias**, is a mental shortcut that relies on immediate examples that come to a given person's mind when evaluating a specific topic, concept, method, or decision. This *heuristic*, operating on the notion that, if something can be recalled, it must be important, or at least more important than alternative solutions not as readily recalled,^[1] is inherently biased toward recently acquired information.^{[2][3]}

The mental availability of an action's consequences is positively related to those consequences' perceived magnitude. In other words, the easier it is to recall the consequences of something, the greater those consequences are often perceived to be. Most notably, people often rely on the content of their recall if its implications are not called into question by the difficulty they have in recalling it.^[4]

Overview and history [\[edit \]](#)

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, [Amos Tversky](#) and [Daniel Kahneman](#) began work on a series of papers examining "heuristic and biases" used in the judgment under [uncertainty](#). Prior to that, the predominant view in the field of human [judgment](#) was that humans are [rational actors](#). Kahneman and Tversky explained that judgment under uncertainty often relies on a limited number of simplifying heuristics rather than extensive [algorithmic](#) processing. Soon, this idea spread beyond academic psychology, into law, medicine, and political science. This research questioned the descriptive adequacy of idealized models of judgment, and offered insights into the [cognitive processes](#) that explained human error without invoking motivated [irrationality](#).^[5] One simplifier strategy people may rely on is the tendency to make a judgment about the frequency of an event



SYSTEM 1

Intuition & instinct



Unconscious
Fast
Associative
Automatic pilot

SYSTEM 2

Rational thinking



Takes effort
Slow
Logical
Lazy
Indecisive



Ad nauseam



sealioning

Sealioning is a specific type of trolling. The general term *trolling* refers to harassing someone online with the intent of getting a (negative) reaction out of them. In the case of sealioning, a troll will relentlessly harass someone with questions or requests for evidence in an attempt to upset them and make their position or viewpoint seem weak or unreasonable. Sealioning is often disguised as earnest curiosity or interest in debate, but the real goal is to troll someone until they get angry or upset.

Sealioning is a common trolling tactic used on social media. For example, a Twitter user might say that they support a higher minimum wage. In response, a sealioning troll might repeatedly and relentlessly ask them for sources that would prove the merits of higher pay scales or demand that they write detailed explanations of how increased wages have affected the economies of the world. The troll will not stop until the other person angrily lashes out (or blocks them), thus allowing the troll to paint themselves as the victim and then claim to have won the “debate” over the issue. Those who engage in sealioning are never actually interested in legitimately debating—the point is to harass and attempt to diminish.

Influencer creep (Bishop 2023)

- self-branding techniques rooted within influencer cultures, strategic techniques of algorithmic optimisation and sharing of authentic (yet highly stylised) selves online
- influencer creep has generated accelerated demands to consistently perform and maintain an artistic identity across social media platforms

The collage features several social media profiles and posts:

- oetajajoana**: Profile of Joana Jögela, a chemistry teacher. Bio includes "keemiaõpetaja TLPK & HTG", "õppejõud TÜ", "Praktiline kodukeemia" looja, "LIT Aasta täht'19", and "Teaduse populariseerija'21".
- Maarja Punak**: Profile of Maarja Punak, a politician. Bio includes "Politseinik. Jalgpallur. Raamatunohik." and "Estonia".
- kadrikunnuspottery**: Profile of Kadri Kunnus, a potter. Bio includes "Sold my soul to pottery. Clay is my religion. Ki (♀) my goddess." and "Follow, engage and if you like something, DM, we might agree on a price :)".
- Piret Rospu**: Profile of Piret Rospu, a woman with a background image of a rural landscape.
- Mario Kadastik**: Profile of Mario Kadastik, a man in a suit, with a background image of a rabbit in a suit.

Posts from Maarja Punak's profile include:

- A post with the caption "Guess what I did yesterday?" featuring a woman in a dark top.
- A post showing a close-up of a white ceramic bowl.
- A post showing a blue ceramic cat figurine.

2.-3. Three main characteristics

- **Attending to self-branding:**
 - The inclusion of the self in promotional content
 - Maintaining a consistently upbeat emotional performance across social media platforms
 - ...
- **Optimisation:**
 - Algorithm-manipulation
 - Planned content dissemination
 - Up to date with current trends
 - ...
- **'Authentic' selves on social media platforms:**
 - aspirational and commercially viable
 - conveying a convincing emotional performance that it comes from within an influencers' genuine self
 - dialogue-based
 - ...



TARTU ÜLIKOOL

5. Borrow reputation





Why it works?

Our emotions tend to “spill over”, we clump objects/elements/people together, seek patterns

See also:

Halo effect

38 languages

Article Talk

Read Edit View history Tools

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

This article is about the cognitive bias. For other uses, see *The Halo Effect*.



This article may require copy editing for grammar, style, cohesion, tone, or spelling. You can assist by editing it. (March 2024) (Learn how and when to remove this message)

The **halo effect** (sometimes called the **halo error**) is the tendency for positive impressions of a person, company, country, brand, or product in one area to positively influence one's opinion or feelings.^{[1][2]} Halo effect is "the name given to the phenomenon whereby evaluators tend to be influenced by their previous judgments of performance or personality."^[3] The halo effect is a **cognitive bias** which can prevent someone from forming an image of a person, a product or a brand based on the sum of all objective circumstances at hand.

The term was coined by **Edward Thorndike**. A simplified example of the halo effect is a person, after noticing that an individual in a photograph is attractive, well groomed, and properly attired, then assuming, using a mental **heuristic**, that the person in the photograph is a good person based upon the rules of their own social concept.^{[4][5][6]} This constant error in judgment is reflective of the individual's preferences, **prejudices**, **ideology**, aspirations, and social perception.^{[7][6][8][9][10]}



Reductio ad Hitlerum

someone's argument, core values, behavior is condemned by drawing a parallel to Hitler.

Godwin's law

Article [Talk](#)

[Read](#) [Edit](#) [View history](#) [Tools](#)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Not to be confused with [Goodhart's law](#).

Godwin's law, short for **Godwin's law** (or **rule**) of **Nazi analogies**,^[1] is an Internet [adage](#) asserting: "As an online discussion grows longer, the probability of a [comparison involving Nazis](#) or [Hitler approaches](#) 1."^[2]

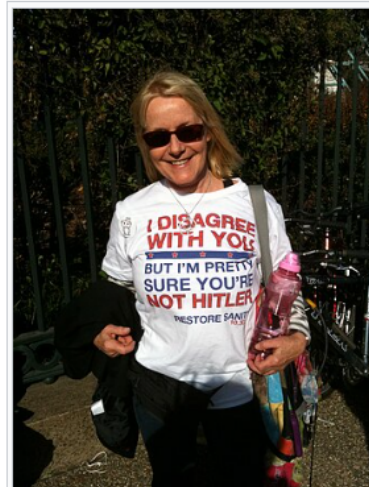
History [\[edit \]](#)

Promulgated by the American attorney and author [Mike Godwin](#) in 1990,^[1] Godwin's law originally referred specifically to [Usenet newsgroup](#) discussions.^[3] He stated that he introduced Godwin's law in 1990 as an experiment in [memetics](#),^[1] specifically to address the ubiquity of such comparisons which he believes regrettably [trivialize](#) the [Holocaust](#).^{[4][5]} Later, it was applied to any [threaded online discussion](#), such as [Internet forums](#), [chat rooms](#), and [social-media](#) comment threads, as well as to speeches, articles, and other [rhetoric](#)^{[6][7]} where *reductio ad Hitlerum* occurs.

In 2012, *Godwin's law* became an entry in the third edition of the *[Oxford English Dictionary](#)*.^[8]

Generalization, corollaries, and usage [\[edit \]](#)

[47 languages](#)



An attendee at the Rally to Restore

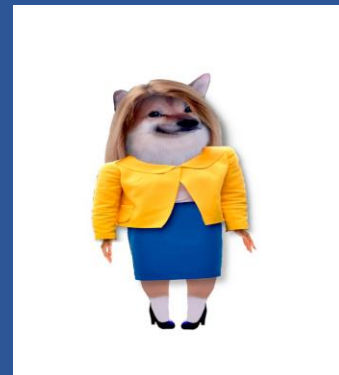


Halo effect gets used a lot



“I voted for Kaja”

How do we know
which Kaja?





6. Use existing associations



Kristjan Lukk @kristjanlukk · May 4

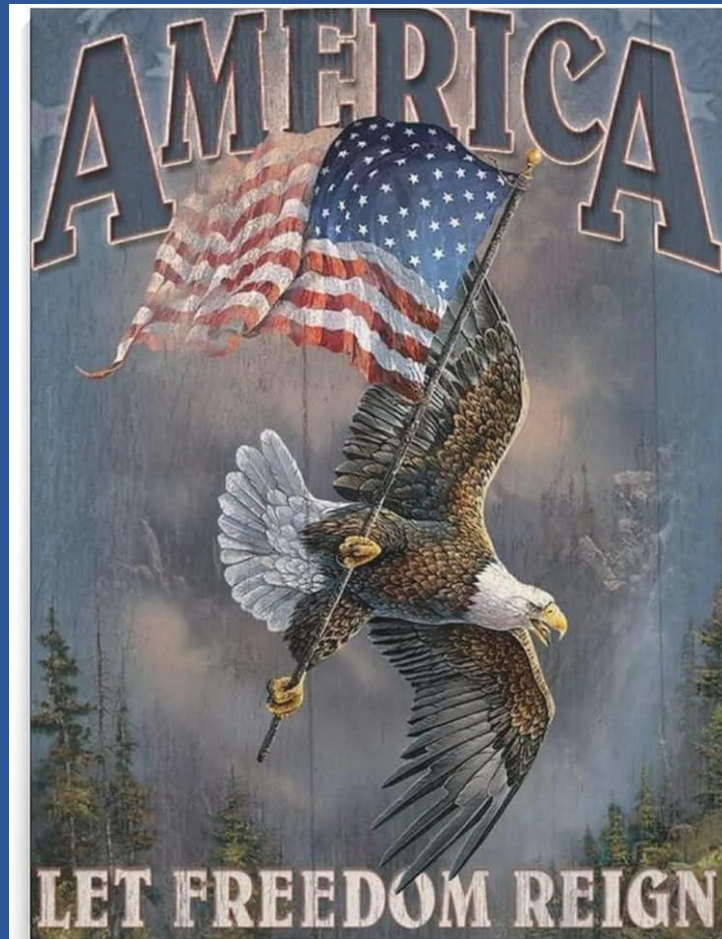
R-Kiosk ja Lehepunkt avaldavad Europarlamendi valimiste eel sinikollastes toonides pressivabaduse päeva erilehe nimega VabaKaja.

Ma pole sisu lugenud (intekad on vingete ajakirjanikega nagu Holger, Piia ja Anton), aga selle asja vorm ja kontekst on 100% **K-kohukese** vaibiga.

Vali vaba
ajakirjandus!

VabaKaja

PRESSIVABADUSE PÄEVA ERILEHT



Why it works?

Spillover + we are in a hurry, live in the context of social acceleration

SYSTEM 1

Intuition & instinct

95%

Unconscious
Fast
Associative
Automatic pilot

SYSTEM 2

Rational thinking

5%

Takes effort
Slow
Logical
Lazy
Indecisive





7. Differ

POLITICO

Ukraine | Israel-Hamas war | Farmers' protests | Newsletters | Podcasts | Poll of Polls | Policy news | Events

NEWS > POLITICS

Move over Trump, Johnson and Fabricant, there's a new terrible haircut in town

Estonia's Rain Epler is a sight to behold.





Why it works?

Something that deviates from the norm catches our attention, we deem it more important

Attention economy built on it (e.g. shamelebrities)

See also:

Von Restorff effect

 10 languages 

[Article](#) [Talk](#)

[Read](#) [Edit](#) [View history](#) [Tools](#) 

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **Von Restorff effect**, also known as the "**isolation effect**", predicts that when multiple homogeneous stimuli are presented, the stimulus that differs from the rest is more likely to be remembered.^[1] The theory was coined by German psychiatrist and pediatrician [Hedwig von Restorff](#) (1906–1962), who, in her 1933 study, found that when participants were presented with a list of categorically similar items with one distinctive, isolated item on the list, memory for the item was improved.^[2]

The study utilized the *isolation paradigm*, which refers to a distinctive feature of an item in a list that differs from the others by way of dimension. Such distinctiveness, leading to the von Restorff effect, can be generated from changing the meaningfulness or physical nature of the stimulus in some way, such as in size, shape, color, spacing and underlining.





TARTU ÜLIKOOL

8.-9. Seem beautiful/strong





Why it works?

Our brain wants shortcuts – they are like this, those are like that, all X are like Y, all Q are like Z.

Gender stereotypes especially strong – we expect and anticipate different things, practices, media/self-presentations from men and women. Why?

See also:

Stereotype

73 languages

Article Talk

Read Edit View history Tools



From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

For other uses, see [Stereotype \(disambiguation\)](#). Not to be confused with [Stereotypy](#).

In [social psychology](#), a **stereotype** is a generalized belief about a particular category of people.^[2] It is an expectation that people might have about every person of a particular group. The type of expectation can vary; it can be, for example, an expectation about the group's personality, preferences, appearance or ability. Stereotypes are often *overgeneralized*, inaccurate, and *resistant to new information*.^[3] A stereotype does not necessarily need to be a negative assumption. They may be positive, neutral, or negative.

Explicit stereotypes [\[edit\]](#)

An explicit stereotype refers to stereotypes that one is aware that one holds, and is aware that one is using to judge people. If person *A* is making judgments about a *particular* person *B* from group *G*, and person *A* has an explicit stereotype for group *G*, their decision bias can be partially mitigated using conscious control; however, attempts to offset bias due to conscious awareness of a stereotype often fail at being truly impartial, due to either underestimating or overestimating the amount of bias being created by the stereotype.

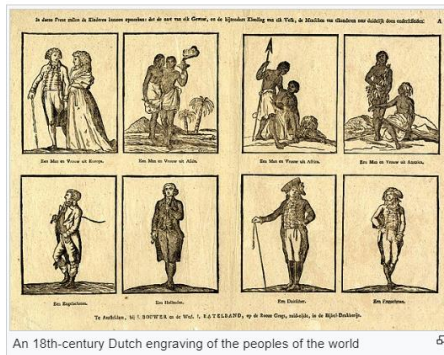


FOTO | Lustakas olukord! Kaja Kallas ja Anna Pihl olid poliitdebatiks selga pannud väga sarnased kleidid



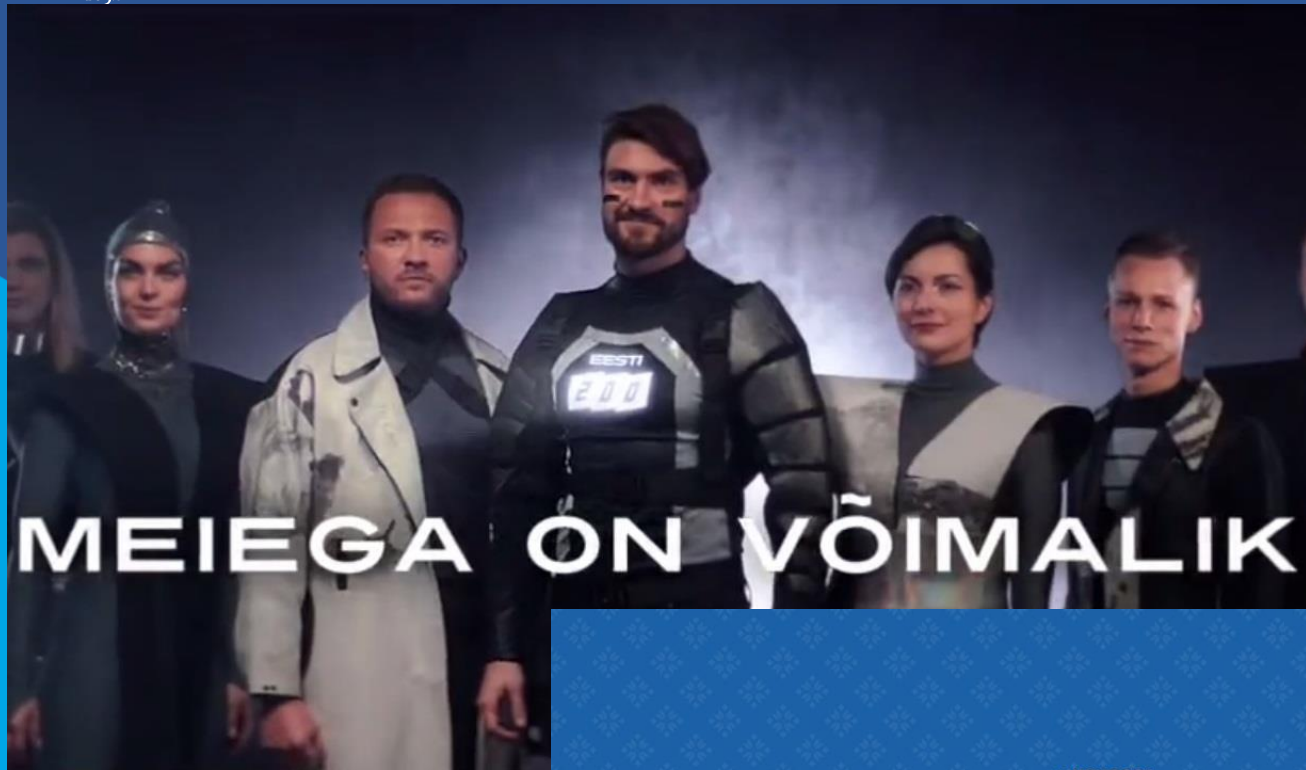


**10. We are good and we
have the majority.
They are bad and they
will lose.**



TARTU ÜLIKOOL

1632



MEIEGA ON VÕIMALIK

#KOV2021

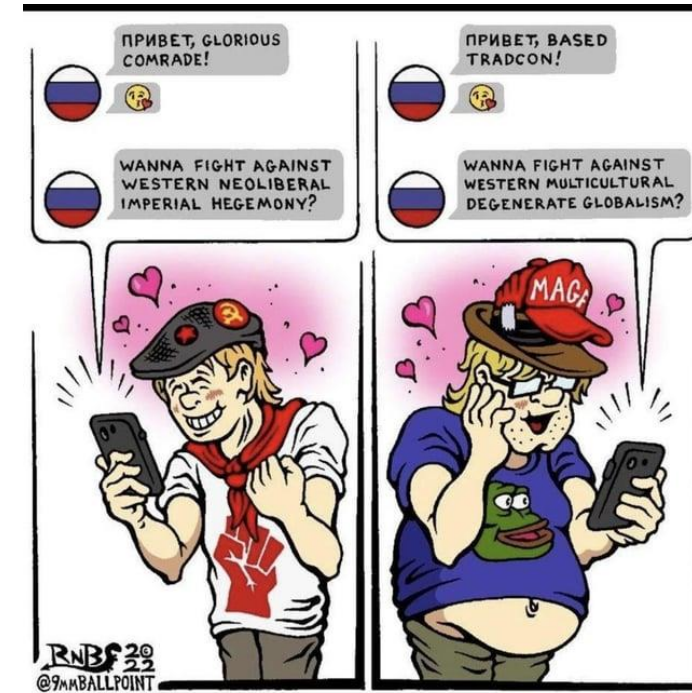
MEIE ARMASTAME
EESTIT!



Common enemy unites

Bandwagon effect: we feel safer in a herd, belonging base level need. If everybody thinks like that, then I should too, right?
„Everybody is with us!“ „85% of consumers think like that“

Divide and conquer





Me, an intellectual, judging people for making the same mistake I recently learned to stop making





TARTU ÜLIKOOL

maria.murumaa@ut.ee



unitartu



tartuylikool



SALTO PARTICIPATION &
INFORMATION

