## *I took several IAT tests on implicit.harvard.edu, the website you suggested. I was interested in the results, and here they are. I didn’t know what to expect at all, but I’m somewhat proud of myself! Guillaume C.*

## During the Implicit Association Test (IAT) you just completed:

Your responses suggested no automatic preference between Arab Muslims and Other People.

Your responses suggested a slight automatic association for Male with Family and Female with Career. *(It might be because of all I hear on the radio, on TV, at school (e.g. women in engineering schools), but it is noteworthy nonetheless)*

Your responses suggested a moderate automatic preference for Thin people over Fat people.

Your responses suggested a slight automatic preference for European Americans over African Americans.

TEDTALK QUESTIONS:

2. “We all have our biases. They're the filters through which we see the world around us.” What are yours if you have any?

As confirmed by the tests I took on the Harvard website, I believe I have some bias towards fat people. Although it might be detrimental to my future relations and it can have a negative impact on somewhat more corpulent people, I’m convinced it is part of my first impressions on the health of someone. A skinny person might do boulder climbing, or calisthenics, that’s how I reason. It is not a healthy way of thinking, as people sometimes get fat because of genetic illnesses, or mental health problems, or because they’ve never had anyone show them the importance of eating well in order to keep a sane body. But sometimes, someone gets a bit fat because of laziness and refusal to exercise, and this is not something I’m OK with. You’ve been given a functioning body, that’s amazing luck! Now make sure it stays in perfect shape. Yeah, I’m kind of a gym freak…

For other biases, I was afraid I would have one against Arab people, because of terrorism. Sounds horrible, yet… but I’m relieved that, no, in fact, I don’t seem to have any bias towards them. I should probably thank a lot the KTV (KametoTV), an independent team of streamers that are from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia or Turkey, and whose names are like “Kamel Kébir, Zouhair Darji, Fatih, Tareq...”.

I am surprised by the result concerning gender/work or gender/science (which wielded the same results), but I cannot say I am disappointed. Looks like in our future, gender proportions might be inverted in engineering schools!

4. What was your first reaction when you heard the riddle (about the surgeon)?

In English, names are impersonal, which means that you can get baited easily. In the surgeon case, at first I didn’t understand the point of the riddle. It took 2 more explanations for me to understand that the problem was between the fact that the father was somewhere and the surgeon somewhere else. And there I got it right. But I originally thought it was a riddle on gay couples…

I am pretty sure that when I was younger, I heard a different version of this story, in French, which I gave the “good” answer to right away. But when I was really much younger, like 5 or 6, I made a drawing representing me, my little brother, my cousin John and my other cousin Cilia. I remember drawing a preparation for an adventure in which Cilia was the only one associated to foodstuffs, my brother to camping equipment, me to arms and I don’t remember what John was supposedly doing. At this moment in my life, I already had this bias. However, my mom saw what I was doing and (I still thank her internally to this day) asked me why my cousin was the only one taking care of the cooking. It sort of went like this:

“Why is Cilia the only one getting the foodstuffs?”

“Dunno, I just kind of split the tasks accordingly”

“But why did you choose it like that?” (This made me think about it for some time)

“I guess we can both grab foods and then grab weapons and then…”

It might not seem important, or that impressive for a lesson, but when I heard the riddle for the first time, it instantly threw me back to when I realized how sexist this used to be. Thanks, mom.

5. “And I encourage you to look past your initial perceptions because I bet you, they're probably wrong”, do you agree or disagree with this assumption? Give examples from your personal life.

If I were asked to look at this sentence and say if I agree with it, I’d say of course. “You can never know”, as they say. What you will first think of someone cannot be correct, even if your second AND third impressions still seem to indicate this way. People are complex, and their youth and the path they chose in life and the people they met… all of this make someone a unique person, one you could not have found to correct boxes to put them in. However, it is not because people are unpredictable that they are all worth meeting. You still can be disappointed after getting to know someone, even though they surprised you. Like when someone outwardly friendly is actually a douche in disguise, or someone that behaves a completely different way in public social circles compared to private life.

I try not to hold any expectations. They’re a sure way to either get disappointed or prevent you from actually meeting new people with different stories than what you’re used to. Because of this, I always try to think people have a special background and a story to tell before judging. Although this has prevented me to looking past initial perceptions (because, again, I try not having any), I still have a story in mind about initial perceptions that is worth sharing.

For the sake of the story, I’ll call this girl C, so you won’t get any expectations. I knew her from a friend, and we were bound with 6 others to spend a vacation week in southern France. I had been told she was chill, and liked to cook, and that was kind of all. So, as you would expect, I was eager to meet her.

At the end of the week, I had learned that she was almost as fond of history as me, was actually Muslim, came from Jordan, was much more patient than our common friend and also that she was lesbian, and as fond of Petra (the monument) as me. Again, I had not expected anything more than a chill dude except that it was not a dude but a woman.

Now, how are you picturing her? Her name is Sirine and she is a white woman, one you might encounter anywhere in France and not think twice about it, categorizing her instantly as French. This is the prime example of “don’t judge a book by its cover”.

We chatted for a while afterwards, especially because she went back to Jordan for a bit, visiting Petra in the meantime, and she sent me marvelous pictures. (I will go some day…)