

Unconscious Bias

Implicit-Association Test

- Project Implicit - implicit.harvard.edu
 - Measures the strength of associations between concepts (i.e. women, LGBTQ folks) and evaluations (good, bad) or stereotypes (brave, clumsy)

Results

- **Most people associated careers -> males, family -> females**
 - Response time much faster and automatic for these associations

Unconscious Bias

Relates to the attitudes, beliefs, and opinions about people (or things) that operate outside our awareness, yet they have a significant impact in determining our judgement and our behavior towards other people (or things).

TL;DR

- We have widely held, oversimplified ideas about particular types of people (stereotypes)

TL;DR

- We have widely held, oversimplified ideas about particular types of people (stereotypes)
- We apply stereotypes automatically

TL;DR

- We have widely held, oversimplified ideas about particular types of people (stereotypes)
- We apply stereotypes automatically
- This effects decisions and actions unconsciously

TL;DR

- We have widely held, oversimplified ideas about particular types of people (stereotypes)
- We apply stereotypes automatically
- This effects decisions and actions unconsciously
- Stereotypes can be self-fulfilling for those affected

WHY!?!?

(where does this come from)

- Who wants to get eaten by lions!?
- We receive **11 million** bits of information *EVERY* moment
 - We can only consciously process **40 bits**
 - $11 \text{ million} - 40 = 10,999,960$
 - **99.9996% unconsciously processed**



WHO

- YOU
- And ME
- Rating: E - for EVERYONE



TL;DR

● SO...

TL;DR

- *We have widely held, oversimplified ideas about particular types of people (stereotypes)*
- *We apply stereotypes automatically*
- *This effects decisions and actions unconsciously*
- *Stereotypes can be self-fulfilling for those affected*
- **Be mindful about your actions**

Implicit-Association Test Results

- We don't think we are biased (but it turns out everyone is)
- Not necessarily intentional! Stereotypes are cultural, automatic, applied without consideration
- Obviously not just gender, or tech
 - Race, Age, Gender Identity, Physical or Mental Disability, Hair Color, Immigration Status, Sexual Orientation, Income Level
- Intersectionality

Impact

- Why does this matter?
- How does this manifest in tech/engineering?
- How does bias effect hiring/rewarding/promoting employees?

Gender Performance Bias

Gender Performance Bias

- **Resume Case Study (also done for assumed ethnicity)**
 - Robert, Joseph, Kevin, Tim: 79% “worthy of hire”
 - Sarah, Susan, Katie, Jane: 49% “worthy of hire”

Gender Performance Bias

- **Resume Case Study (also done for assumed ethnicity)**
 - Robert, Joseph, Kevin, Tim: 79% “worthy of hire”
 - Sarah, Susan, Katie, Jane: 49% “worthy of hire”
- **Performance Attribution Bias Study**
 - Men and women working together on a project and assessed

Gender Performance Bias

- **Resume Case Study**

- Robert, Joseph, Kevin, Tim: 79% “worthy of hire”
- Sarah, Susan, Katie, Jane: 49% “worthy of hire”

- **Performance Attribution Bias Study**

- Men and women working together on a project and assessed
 - Women were given less credit for success and blamed more for mistakes by researchers
 - Men were assumed to be the leaders, decision-makers

Gender Performance Bias

- **US Orchestra Auditions Study**
 - Various Orchestras conducted blind/not-blind studies for the same batch of performers
 - Women's odds of making it through first round audition increased 50% with blind auditions (playing behind a screen/curtain)

Impact

- **Gender impacts perceptions about competence and ability**

Impact

- Gender impacts perceptions about competence and ability
- Bias informs decisions on hiring, promoting, performance eval

Impact

- Gender impacts perceptions about competence and ability
- Bias informs decisions on hiring, promoting, performance eval
- Fewer women in tech, engineering, management roles

Impact

- Gender impacts perceptions about competence and ability
- Bias informs decisions on hiring, promoting, performance eval
- Fewer women in tech, engineering, management roles
- Unemployment rates higher in non-dominant groups

Impact

- Gender impacts perceptions about competence and ability
- Bias informs decisions on hiring, promoting, performance eval
- Fewer women in tech, engineering, management roles
- Unemployment rates higher in non-dominant groups
- Impostor Syndrome & Stereotype Threat:
 - Self-fulfilling prophecy

Types of bias

- Gender and Race Performance Bias
- Performance Attribution Bias
- Competence-Likability Trade-Off

Counteract

- ◎ **Question and justify your actions (accountability)**
 - standards for hiring, evaluating performance, assigning roles/opportunities
 - accountability - explaining decisions
- ◎ **Set norms for meetings, projects (accountability for all)**
 - No interrupting a speaker, giving credit where credit is due

Counteract

- **Be mindful of cues you give other people**
 - No subtle *-isms* and not-so-subtle *-isms*
- **Be cool and accept that you will mess up**
 - “You’re standing on my foot.”
 - “There is something in your teeth.”



Why Do I Care

- You are a hooman
- Diversity is a competitive advantage
 - companies with higher proportions of women board directors outperform others by 53%
- Being conscientious means more doors open, not less

