

Diversity Statement

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My research area of information visualization (as part of wider projects of collecting, designing, and presenting information) sits at a nexus of many existing overlapping areas where lack of diversity has time and again produced unjust and unequal outcomes. Who collects data (and who has data collected *about* them), how data are presented, and, ultimately, who makes decisions about data, are all matters of power, privilege, and representation with enormous ethical importance and impact. In my research and my writing, I have been a strong advocate for surfacing our social responsibilities and working to improve the existing status quo, whether this is in reforming the way that we collaborate with the ubiquitous data science “domain experts,” [1] selecting projects and datasets of more immediate social good [2], or pausing and reflecting on our research impacts in area of critical importance [3].

While articulating our responsibilities (as designers, as academics, and as communicators) when it comes to data is a central theme of my research, I hope that it is also evident, and will continue to be evident, in my professional life. I am committed to fostering a safe environment for students of different backgrounds, identities, and trajectories to flourish, and am committed to a research agenda that seeks to improve the state of the world.

Mentorship of students is important to me, especially as a tool for opening up the often narrow and homogeneous avenues of STEM academia. Most recently, I was a diversity and inclusion scholarship mentor for the IEEE VIS 2019 conference. In this program, students who had previously been excluded from VIS for lack of access or resources were given scholarships and then paired with established researchers. Our cohort of first-time attendees were able to make their voices heard and connect with the wider visualization community, a welcome change from sometimes overwhelming and alienating experience of attending an academic conference for the first time. Beyond my work with individual students, I have also contributed to mentorship through communication, publishing guides on academic paper writing [4], paper reviewing [5], and asking questions after an academic talk [6].

I have been a personal activist for equitable outcomes, even when it is personally and professionally inconvenient. As one of the organizers of the Tableau Employee Ethics Alliance, I spoke at our Drawing A Line walkout and rally to protest our company’s financial connections with the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency. Since that rally (and Tableau’s acquisition by Salesforce), I have been an active voice for the responsible use of software both in my published and public writings as well as in guiding internal strategy for Tableau Research.

References

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- [3] M. Correll, "Visualization Design Principles for the Pandemic," 2020. [Online]. Available: <https://mcorrell.medium.com/visualization-design-principles-for-the-pandemic-e65388280d16>.
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