<https://medium.com/@nickiwashington/when-are-we-gonna-have-a-serious-conversation-about-how-unserious-and-problematic-sigcse-is-839c4f28cc1b>

In Dr. Nicki Washington’s blog post about SIGCSE’s reviews on her panel proposal, she underlined the importance of critical thinking, self-reflection and analysis, and impartiality when it comes to evaluating and reviewing somebody’s work. This particular instance of reviewer bias and incompetence demonstrated that people may be misevaluated and poorly represented as a result of an imbalance between skepticism of a work’s merit and faith in a person’s credentials.

The entirely subjective process of review is offset by having multiple reviewers each share their opinions on a work, but this check fails as bias ultimately intrudes systematically into the evaluation. These biases include among others the elitist assumption that a Ph.D or tenure status makes someone in a field more qualified than someone with comparable years of experience in that same field, and the racist and sexist assumption that people of color or women are worthy of increased skepticism and decreased faith.

One commenter (the only at the time of writing) was of the opinion that “teaching professors are more likely to be qualified tha[n] tenure-track/tenured faculty who advanced through research and grants unrelated to education,” with the caveat observation that even this generalization should not be used in any evaluations of work. They bring up one example of a teaching professor, Dan Garcia, who was declared at the time of writing to pass a significantly high number of SIGCSE reviews despite being non-tenured. This example shows that the elitism displayed throughout the reviewers’ remarks may have had external motivations that may have had little to do with the proposers’ qualifications per se and is entirely unjustified. Moreover, irony abounds in the reviewers’ lack of background knowledge about the content of the panel, specifically with respect to a trivial detail as the author’s preferred typographic representation of their name consisting of all lowercase letters.

I have watched the documentary by Dr. Raychelle Burks a while ago, so I only remember the main points, some of which are brought up in the article and used by Dr. Washington to emphasize how irritating this refutation engagement was. People of color and women are disproportionately more likely to face obstacles and challenges in the pursuit of growth, especially those who identify in the intersections of marginalized groups such as these in a field as elitist, racially uniform, and male dominated as computer science. As Dr. Washington notes, one reason for the hindrance of progress marginalized people may be experiencing in their careers may be contributions of unnecessary pressure similar to those observed in this blog post.