Implicit Bias and Hiring
Implicit Bias
• What do you look for when making decisions about hiring?
• What constitutes a good potential colleague?
• Does the current approach to hiring consistently produce this result?
• What does equity-mindedness in hiring look like?
Weight ('Fat - Thin' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to distinguish faces of people who are obese and people who are thin. It often reveals an automatic preference for thin people relative to fat people.

Arab-Muslim ('Arab Muslim - Other People' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to distinguish names that are likely to belong to Arab-Muslims versus people of other nationalities or religions.

Skin-tone ('Light Skin - Dark Skin' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to recognize light and dark-skinned faces. It often reveals an automatic preference for light-skin relative to dark-skin.

Native American ('Native - White American' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to recognize White and Native American faces in either classic or modern dress, and the names of places that are either American or Foreign in origin.

Gender - Science. This IAT often reveals a relative link between liberal arts and females and between science and males.

Weapons ('Weapons - Harmless Objects' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to recognize White and Black faces, and images of weapons or harmless objects.

Presidents ('Presidential Popularity' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to recognize photos of Donald Trump and one or more previous presidents.

Race ('Black - White' IAT). This IAT requires the ability to distinguish faces of European and African origin. It indicates that most Americans have an automatic preference for white over black.
Defining Implicit Bias

• Implicit bias is “the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an implicit manner. Activated involuntarily, without awareness or intentional control. Can be either positive or negative. Everyone is susceptible” (Kirwan Institute, 2016, p. 14).

• Implicit bias is characterized by “the introspectively unidentified (or incorrectly identified) traces of past experience that mediate attributions of qualities to members of social categories” (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995, p. 15).

• “The science of implicit cognition suggests that actors do not always have conscious, internal control over the processes of social perception, impression formation, and judgment that motivate their actions” (Greenwald & Kreiger, 2006, p. 946).
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Addressing Implicit Bias and Microaggressions

• Most people view themselves as good, caring, ethical people.
• Reacting to their behavior and naming it racist or discriminatory can be difficult to comprehend.
• Often the initial reaction to addressing microaggressions is:
  • Explain away the microaggression
  • Become defensive in response
  • Accuse others of offending them
Defining Implicit Bias

Implicit bias is the result of system 1 thinking

**SYSTEM 1**
- Unconscious reasoning
- Implicit
- Automatic
- Low effort

**SYSTEM 2**
- Conscious reasoning
- Explicit
- Controlled
- High effort

Defining Implicit Bias

Implicit associations are most likely to drive behavior under the following conditions:

• Situations that involve ambiguous or incomplete information

• Circumstances in which time is constrained

• Times when cognitive control is compromised (e.g., when experiencing stress or insufficient sleep)

(Bertrand, Chugh, & Mullainathan, 2005)
Additional Risk Factors

- **Emotional stress** “Certain emotional states (anger, disgust) can exacerbate implicit bias in judgements of stigmatized group members, even if the source of the negative emotion has nothing to do with the current situation or with the issue of social groups or stereotypes.”

- **Salient social categories** “A decision maker may be more likely to think in terms of race and use racial stereotypes because race often is a salient, i.e., easily-accessible, attribute.”

- **Lack of feedback** “When organizations fail to provide feedback that holds decision makers accountable for their judgments and actions, individuals are less likely to remain vigilant for possible bias in their own decision-making processes.”

(National Center for State Courts, n.d. p. 2)
The Primacy Effect

- Implicit associations are most likely to drive behavior under the following conditions:

Primacy effect refers to the fact that individuals tend to give more weight to information presented earlier when forming opinions and making decisions.
Children pick up on nonverbal cues around them, which influence their development of implicit associations

“Young children can catch bias from an ‘infected atmosphere’—that is, by observing nonverbal bias exhibited by other people around them. What is more, preschool children generalize this bias to other individuals. Thus, exposure to nonverbal bias could be a mechanism for the spread of social bias throughout the world in the hearts and minds of children and adults” (Skinner, Meltzoff, & Olson, 2016, p. 7).
Forming Implicit Bias

Several factors influence the formation of associations, such as:

- Media
- Nonverbal behaviors of others
- Attitudes of friends and family members
- Interactions
- Observations of social roles
- Perception of social value
Outcomes of Implicit Bias

- These possible behaviors result from implicit associations:
  - No outward behavior
  - Nonverbal response (e.g., stepping back, avoiding eye contact, crossing arms, clutching purse)
  - Verbal response (verbal microaggressions)
Sadler and colleagues (2012) study of police offers with armed and unarmed Black and White targets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>With Blacks</th>
<th>With Whites</th>
<th>17% More Likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>use hands</td>
<td>2,165</td>
<td>1,845</td>
<td>17% more likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for every 10,000 stops in New York City</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>push into well</td>
<td>623</td>
<td>529</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use handcuffs</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>draw weapons</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>push to ground</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>point weapon</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use pepper spray or baton</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Research supports a relationship between patient care and physician bias in ways that could perpetuate healthcare disparities” (Chapman, Kaatz, & Carnes, 2013, p. 1507).

In response to vignettes, pediatricians with higher levels of pro-White implicit racial bias were more likely to prescribe painkillers to White patients as opposed to Black patients (Sabin & Greenwald, 2012).

Black patients treated by primary care clinicians with higher race bias (as measured by the IAT) report feeling low confidence in their doctor, and that they receive less respect than other patients (Cooper et al., 2012).
Apprehension to engage in the classroom and stereotype threat

The Yale Child Center study found that preschool teachers spent more time looking at Black children than White children when looking for disruptive behaviors (Gilliam et al., 2016).

Teachers in the study who were given background information about a student engaging in challenging behavior reacted more empathetically only if the teacher shared the same racial identity with the student.
In-group bias can cause employers/hiring committees to seek candidates who are most like themselves. “resonate” “likeable” “fit”

- Candidates’ names, accents, and physical appearances can activate employers’ implicit biases.

- “In the hiring process and other decision-making occasions, allowing adequate time to make decisions is vital” (Kirwan Institute, 2014).
Implicit Bias in Hiring Decisions

- Participants with higher pro-White bias (as measured by the IAT) spent more time looking at positive information on CVs/resumes of White candidates versus candidates from other racial/ethnic backgrounds.

“Our implicit attitude would seem to be directing our unconscious eye movements to provide exactly the information it wants for a ‘rational’ decision. This is both extraordinary and very worrying” (Beattie, 2013, p. 241).
# The Job Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feminine-coded words</th>
<th>Masculine-coded words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compassionate</td>
<td>Active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerate</td>
<td>Ambitious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative</td>
<td>Analytic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empathetic</td>
<td>Assertive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honest</td>
<td>Committed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Competitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>Confident</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responsive</td>
<td>Courageous</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sensitive</td>
<td>Decisive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>Determined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sympathetic</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Intellectual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm</td>
<td>Objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Reliant</td>
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@DrLukeWood
Some Strategies for Reducing the Influence of Bias

**Pre-screening**

- Ensure position announcement communicates “welcomeness” to applicants from minoritized communities
- Remember that referrals are often based on social closure
- Review pool for applicant diversity
- Pre-screening discussions on desired “experiences” and “skills” [exercise caution around dispositions]
- De-identified review of candidates
- Avoid looking up pictures
- Capacity to work with diverse communities [service] [research]
Some Strategies for Reducing the Influence of Bias

Preliminary interviews and campus visit

• Employ standard interview protocol
• Consider how bias is manifested through free-lance (informal) questioning
• Body language during interview
• Make assessments based on pre-determined “experiences” and “skills”
• Be attentive to panelists comments, such as “likable”, “trustworthy”, “strong”, “fit” and “something about them”
• Be cautious about conversations around dress and apparel
• Spend more time evaluating teaching practices
• Avoid the static “diversity” question

Reference checks (official and un-official)

• Be attentive to racialized and gendered language
Some Strategies for Reducing the Influence of Bias

- Recognize bias
  - Implicit Association Test
- Counter-stereotypic exposure
- Taking more time to make judgments
- Reflect on thoughts and subsequent behavior
- Hold colleagues accountable for their biases
- Articulate your reasoning process
ADDRESSING IMPLICIT BIAS

Stereotype replacement
This strategy involves replacing stereotypical responses for non-stereotypical responses. Using this strategy to address personal stereotyping involves recognizing that a response is based on stereotypes, labeling the response as stereotypical, and reflecting on why the response occurred. Next one considers how the biased response could be avoided in the future and replaces it with an unbiased response (Monteith, 1993).

Perspective taking
This strategy involves taking the perspective in the first person of a member of a stereotyped group. Perspective taking increases psychological closeness to the stigmatized group, which ameliorates automatic group-based evaluations (Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000).

Counter-stereotypic imaging
This strategy involves imagining in detail counter-stereotypic others (Blair et al., 2001). These others can be abstract (e.g., smart Black people), famous (e.g., Barack Obama), or non-famous (e.g., a personal friend). The strategy makes positive exemplars salient and accessible when challenging a stereotype’s validity.
Where are the areas in the process that bias can manifest?
What can you do to create equity-mindedness in hiring?
What are strategies that you can do to reduce bias?
Implicit Bias and Hiring