

Creating a Welcoming & Inclusive Cohort

Ross Wantland

Office of the Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



Land Acknowledgment

We are on the lands of the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Piankashaw, Wea, Miami, Mascoutin, Odawa, Sauk, Mesquaki, Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ojibwe, and Chickasaw Nations.

These lands were the traditional territory of these Native Nations prior to their forced removal; these lands continue to carry the stories of these Nations and their struggles for survival and identity.



Pictured: *Beyond the Chief* exhibit by Hock E Aye Vi Edgar Heap of Birds



Land Acknowledgment cont.

The University of Illinois has a particular responsibility to acknowledge the peoples of these lands, as well as the histories of dispossession that have allowed for the growth of this institution for the past 150 years.

We are also obligated to reflect on and actively address these histories and the role that this university has played in shaping them.



Pictured: *Beyond the Chief* exhibit by Hock E Aye Vi Edgar Heap of Birds



From Diversity to Transformation

*Diversity asks, “Who’s in the room?”
Equity responds: “Who is trying to
get in the room but can’t? Whose
presence in the room is under
constant threat of erasure?”*

*Inclusion asks, “Has everyone’s ideas
been heard?” Justice responds,
“Whose ideas won’t be taken as
seriously because they aren’t in the
majority?”*

-Dr. D-L Stewart, Bowling Green
State University



Physicist Stereotype

- What are the stereotypes about physicists?
- What do they look like? How do they act?
- Who are they?
- How did this stereotype affect how you saw yourself as a physicist?



Stereotype Enforcement

- Where do these stereotypes come from?
- What's the impact of these stereotypes?



Danger of a Single Story



“The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story.”

– Chimamanda Adichie



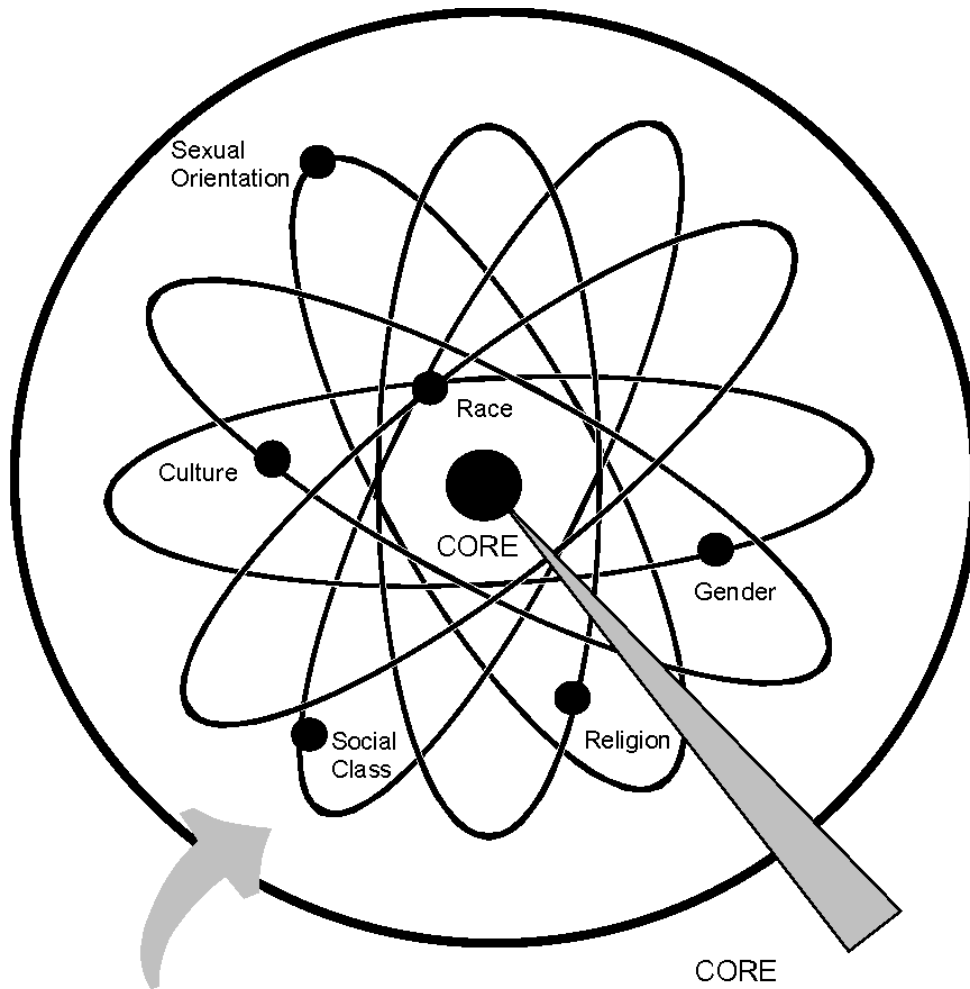
Social Group Membership

Stereotyping can occur along a variety of identities or characteristics, including:

- Gender identity
- Race/Ethnicity
- Sexuality
- Social Class
- Age
- Nationality
- Disability
- Religious Identity
- Appearance
- What other categories do you think about?



Identity In Context



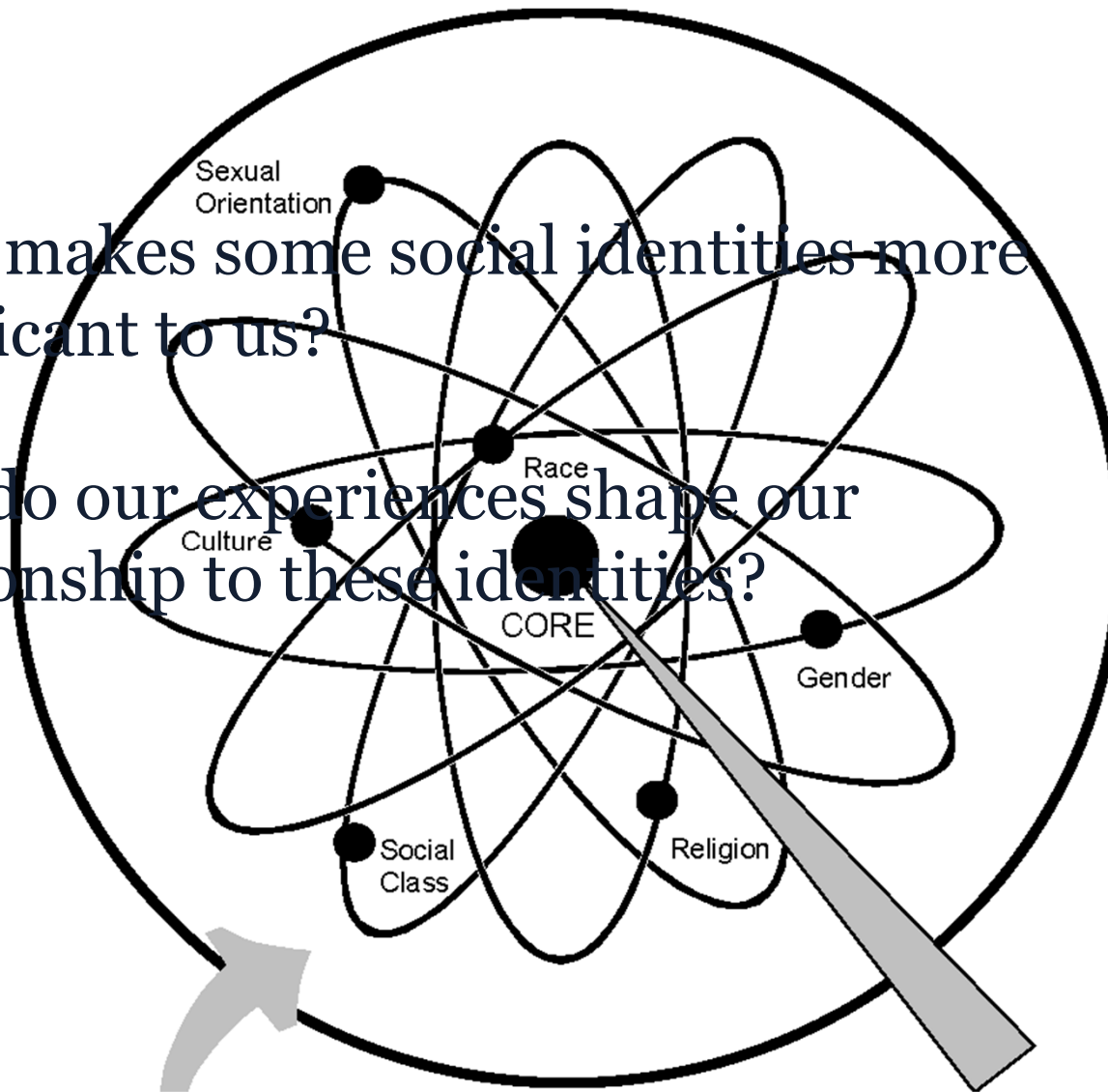
CONTEXT
Family Background
Sociocultural Conditions
Current Experiences
Career Decisions and Life Planning

CORE
Personal Attributes
Personal
Characteristics
Personal Identity



Identity In Context Discussion

- What makes some social identities more significant to us?
- How do our experiences shape our relationship to these identities?



Continuum of Community (Schlossberg)

Marginality



Mattering

- Separateness
- Ignorance
- Fear
- Shunning/Avoidance
- Unknown

- (Inter)Dependence
- Attention
- Importance
- Appreciation
- Known



Barriers to Mattering

- What are some of the barriers that individuals may experience to support and inclusion in a group?

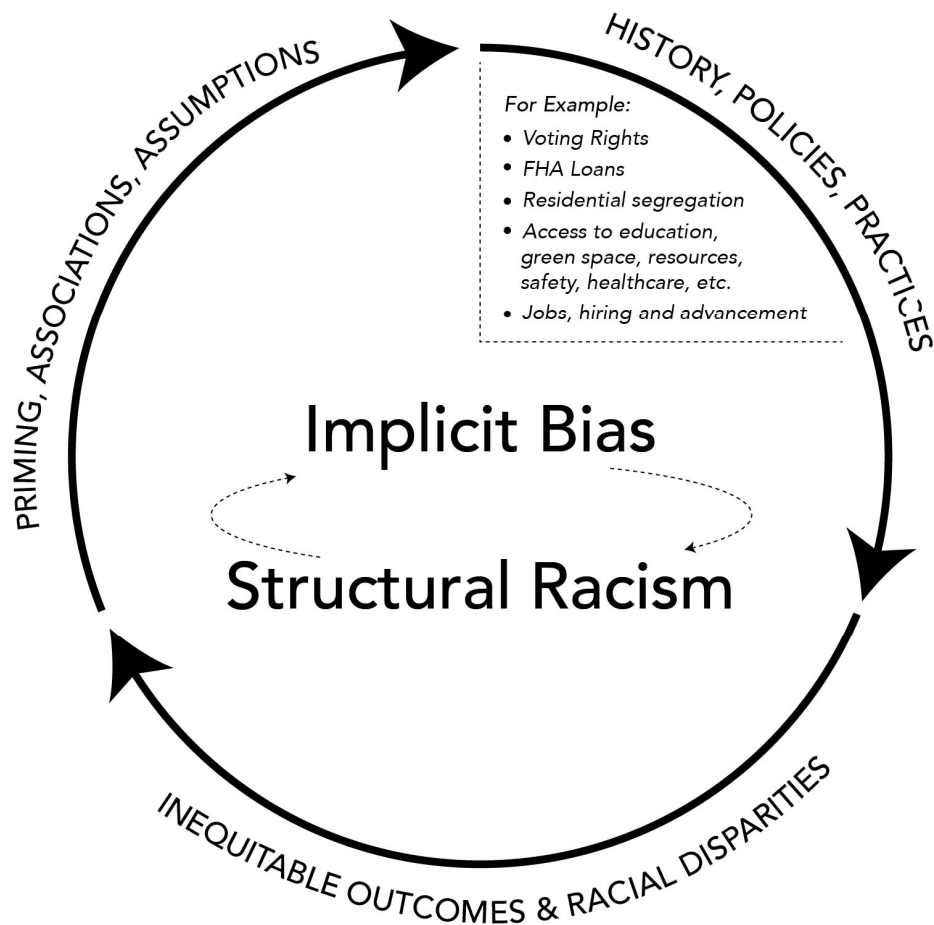


Understanding Barriers to Mattering

- Cultural/historical exclusion
- Disrespectful treatment by others
- Differential access to opportunities, experiences
- Inequitable support, encouragement
- Inequitable expectations, consequences



Racism as a Complex System



Histories, Policies & Practices shape...

How have laws or policies applied differentially based on race?

Inequitable Outcomes & Racial Disparities, which create...

Who has access to resources and opportunities, like health, wealth, and education?

Priming, Associations, & Assumptions, which influence...

What stereotypes are we taught about individuals?

How do those influence the laws we create?

Behaviors Matter

- Treating others based on our stereotypes and assumptions impact our relationship, community
- We are much more likely to see the bias in how others treat us, rather than how we treat others
- We must consciously pay attention to our biases if we want to change them



Implicit Bias

- ◆ The attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.
- ◆ Includes favorable and unfavorable assessments.
- ◆ Activated involuntarily and without an individual's awareness or intentional control.
- ◆ May include, exacerbated by cognitive biases



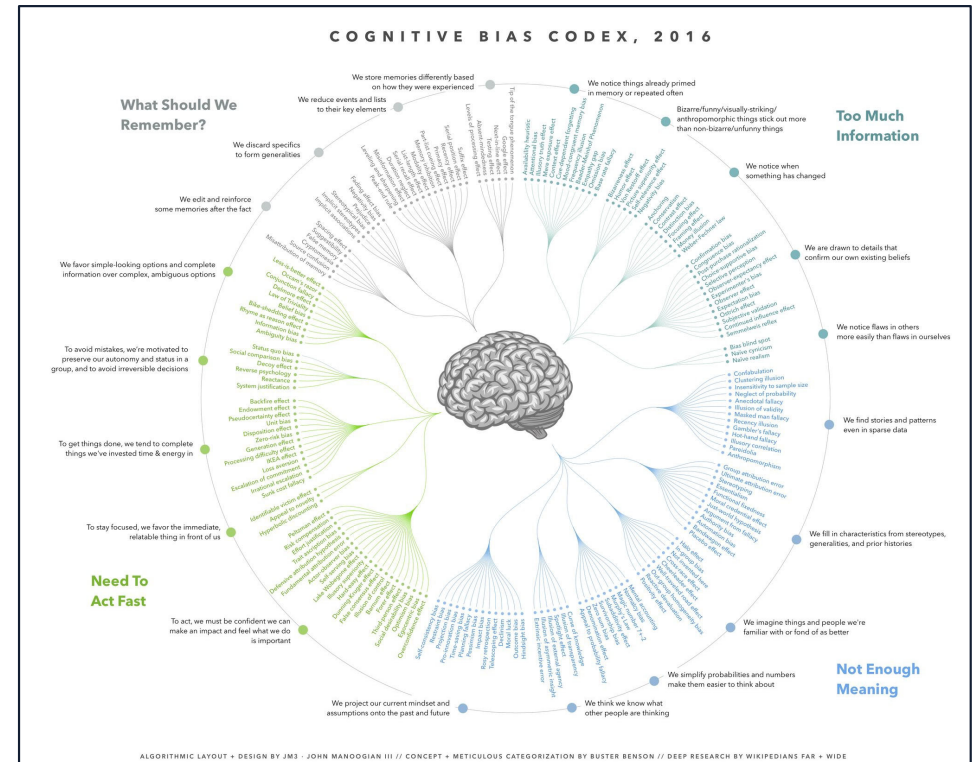
Characteristics of Implicit Bias

- ◆ Pervasive
- ◆ Implicit and explicit biases are related but distinct mental constructs.
- ◆ Do not necessarily align with our declared beliefs or even reflect stances we would explicitly endorse.
- ◆ We tend to favor our own ingroup (though research has shown that we can still hold implicit biases against our ingroup)
- ◆ Malleable

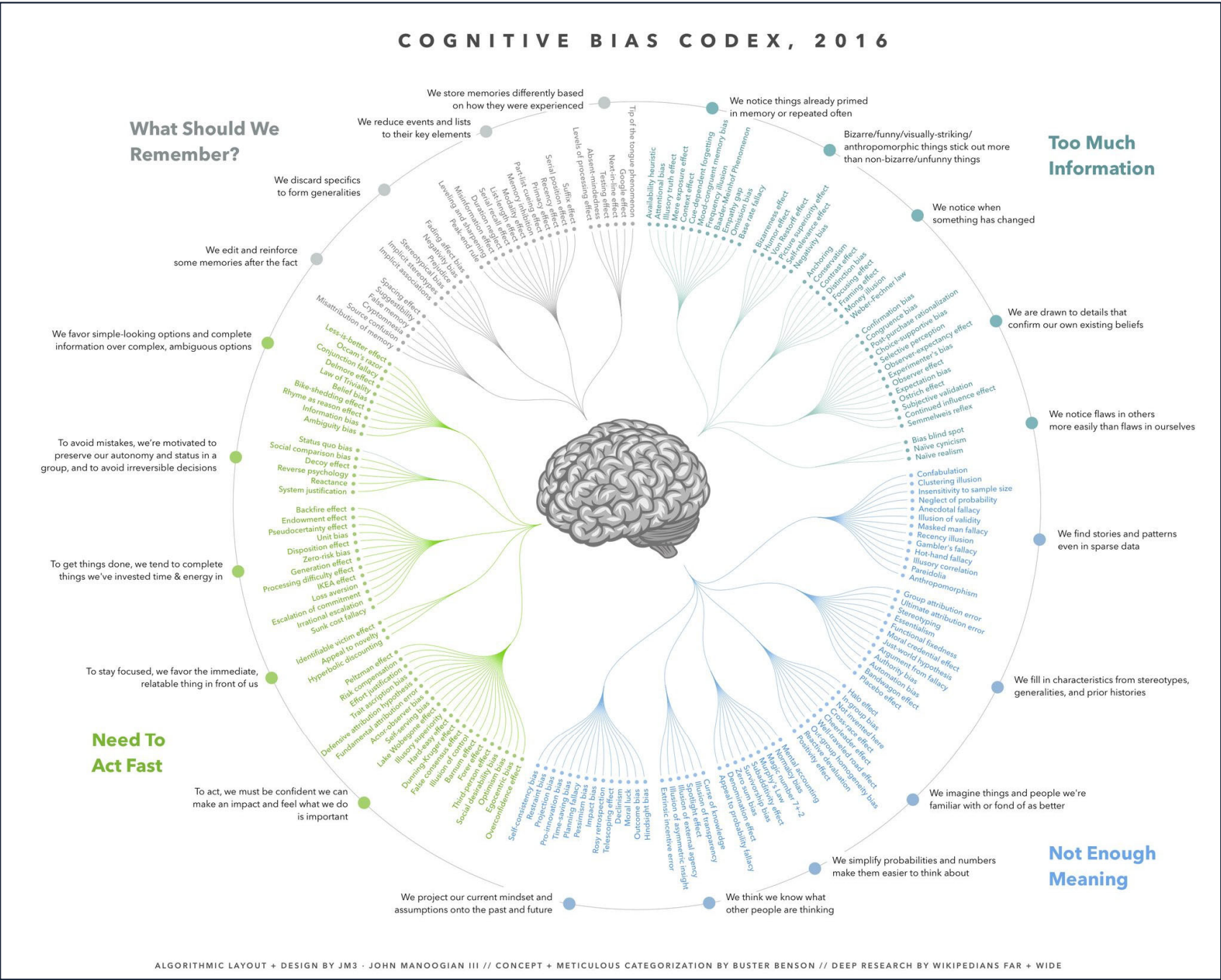


Issues that Cognitive Bias Solves

- ◆ Too much information
- ◆ Not enough meaning
- ◆ Need to act fast
- ◆ What to remember?



COGNITIVE BIAS CODEX, 2016



ALGORITHMIC LAYOUT + DESIGN BY JMC · JOHN MANOGIAN III // CONCEPT + METICULOUS CATEGORIZATION BY BUSTER BENSON // DEEP RESEARCH BY WIKIPEDIANS FAR + WIDE



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN
<https://betterhumans.coach.me/cognitive-bias-cheat-sheet-55a472476b18>

Issues that Cognitive Bias Creates

- ◆ Too much information → We don't see everything
- ◆ Not enough meaning → Seeking meaning creates illusion
- ◆ Need to act fast → Fast decision flawed
- ◆ What to remember? → Our memory can reinforce error



Impact of Bias

- ◆ A study of postdoctoral fellowships found that women needed many more publications to achieve the same rating as men, unless they personally knew someone on the panel.
- ◆ A study showed that when the journal of *Behavioral Ecology* used a double-blind review process (concealing identities of reviewers and authors) there was a significant increase in publication of articles with a woman as first author.
- ◆ Research shows that a lack of previous positive experiences with minorities causes majority individuals to feel anxious about interactions, which cause majority individuals to respond with hostility or avoid interactions.



Microaggression Defined

- *Commonplace verbal or behavioral indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial [and/or other identities] slights and insults (Sue, et al., 2007)*



What Are you?



Understanding Microaggressions

Commonplace verbal or behavioral indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial [and/or other identities] slights and insults

(D.W. Sue, et al., 2007)



Types of Microaggressions

Micro-Invalidations

- *Exclude or negating the experiences of a group*
- “When I look at you, I don’t see color.”
- “Where are you from?”
- “I’m not homophobic, I have lots of gay friends!”

Micro-Insults

- *Communicate rudeness and insensitivity based on someone’s identity*
- “You’re so pretty for a dark-skinned girl”
- Being closely monitored by security when in a store

Micro-Assaults

- *Purposeful discriminatory action, like a verbal attack or avoidant behavior*
- Using racial epithets or other slurs
- Shouting at a same-sex couple holding hands
- Swastikas or other graffiti targeting certain groups



Racial Microaggressions on Campus

- Report written by Harwood, et al., in 2015
- Surveyed over 4,800 students (45%) of color in the 2011-2012 school year



Racial Microaggressions Results (Harwood, et al., 2015)

- 39% of students of color reported feeling uncomfortable on campus because of their race
- 51% reported experiences of stereotyping in the classroom
- 27% felt that their contributions were minimized
- 25% believed they were not taken seriously because of race



Racial Microaggression Quotes #1

- I didn't understand one of the concepts [the instructor] was talking about and asked him to slow down. He made fun of me and said, 'Hey everyone, I guess I have to slow down for the Chinese girl.' The entire class did not react very well with it; no one thought it was funny. (Asian, Female)



Racial Microaggression Quote #2

- A Caucasian professor was talking about how to encourage children to accomplish goals. At some point he said, ‘Imagine a Latino boy who wants to work at Burger King to contribute to his family. How would you encourage him?’ But before this example, he mentioned encouraging a White kid [to go to] college... It made me feel offended. But it wasn’t the first time he did this and he did it with all minorities. (Latino, Male)



Racial Microaggression Quote #3

- An in-class group-mate accidentally sent me an email about not trusting the assignment 'the Black girl' in the group had completed. (African American, Female)



Intent vs. Impact

- Intent is the purpose that the actor believes motivated their behavior
- Impact is the experience of the behavior as perceived by the recipient
- Intent and Impact may not always be congruent



What might be the *intent* of the individual making these statements?



What is the impact of microaggressions on the recipient?

- Fear
- Anger
- Frustration
- Disbelief
- Awkwardness
- Discomfort
- Unwelcome
- Isolated
- Invisible



The Impact of Unintentional Racism

“The impact of unintentional racism—the ways we participate in and bolster racism without actively trying to do so—is indistinguishable from the impact of intentional racism. Imagining myself as a good person, as a progressive person, means little if I am not examining and changing the impact I’m having even through actions I once took without intention.”

- Paul Gorski, EdChange



Scenarios

- In small groups, determine how you might respond to the given scenario.
- Be realistic, and think about your responsibilities in the moment.



Scenario One

- You are working in the lab when you overhear fellow students talking about international students in your program. “I don’t trust them with the work if they can’t speak English,” one of them says. What could you say or do?



Scenario Two

- You are TA'ing an upper-level undergraduate physics course. An undergraduate student in the class says that he is pretty sure that people of color are being let into the department who aren't as intelligent just to “fill a quota.” What do you do?



Scenario Three

- A Latinx classmate tells you that they worry that their advisor is treating them unfairly. Although many of your cohort are struggling with a particular course, this student's advisor is pressuring them to consider dropping out or changing their field of study, rather than offering resources or support. What might you do?



Scenario Four

- In the classroom, a male student frequently talks over and interrupts female students in the classroom. A couple of times, you realize that he has repeated ideas that have come from his female classmates and attempted to pass them off as his own. As classmate, what could you do?



Responding to Bias

- Stay in the moment
- Decide how to respond, when
- Focus on the specific behavior
- Share your concern about the impact
- Request how you would like this to change, what you need in the future
- Reflect on the experience



Focus on the Behavior

When somebody picks my pocket, I'm not going to be chasing them down so I can figure out whether he feels like he's a thief deep down in his heart. I'm going to be chasing him down so I can get my wallet back.

I don't care what he is, but I need to hold him accountable for what he did. Treat them like they took your wallet and focus on the part that matters, holding each person accountable for the impact of their words and actions.

- Jay Smooth



How Can We Build an Inclusive Community

- What are some of the ways you can personally work to create a supportive, inclusive community in Physics?
- What do you need from your classmates?
- From the faculty & department?



Campus Resources

- Office of the Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (diversity.illinois.edu)
- Student Success, Inclusion, and Belonging (ssib.illinois.edu)
- Disability Resources and Educational Services (disability.illinois.edu)
- Campus Belonging Bias Response (go.illinois.edu/CampusBelonging)



Physics Resources

- Society of Underrepresented Physics Students (SUPS)
- Faculty Support (Lance)
- Particles for Justice
(particlesforjustice.org)
- Additional Resources?



Training Opportunities

- **LGBT Ally Network Trainings**
(counselingcenter.illinois.edu/node/146)
- **Racial Justice Ally Trainings**
(<https://dsje.illinois.edu/programs/racial-justice-allies-advocates-training>)
- **Undocumented/DACA Student Ally,**
September 11th 9am-12pm
(go.Illinois.edu/UndocuAlly)



Resources

- Adams, Bell, & Griffin (2016). *Teaching for Diversity & Social Justice Education 3rd edition*
- The Danger of a Single Story
www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en
- Flick, D. (1998). Inside the Understanding Process. In *From Debate to Dialogue: Using the Understanding Process to Transform Our Conversations*.
- Harwood, S. A., Choi, S., Orozco, M., Browne Huntt, M., & Mendenhall, R. (2015). *Racial microaggressions at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign: Voices of students of color in the classroom*. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M., Torino, G. C., Bucceri, J. M., Holder, A. M. B., Nadal, K. L. & Esquilin, M. (2007). Racial Microaggressions in everyday life: Implication for clinical practice. *American Psychologist*, 62(4), 271-286.



Contact Me!

Ross Wantland

Director of Curriculum Development and Education
Office of the Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity, &
Inclusion

wantland@illinois.edu

(217) 244-1814

diversity.illinois.edu

