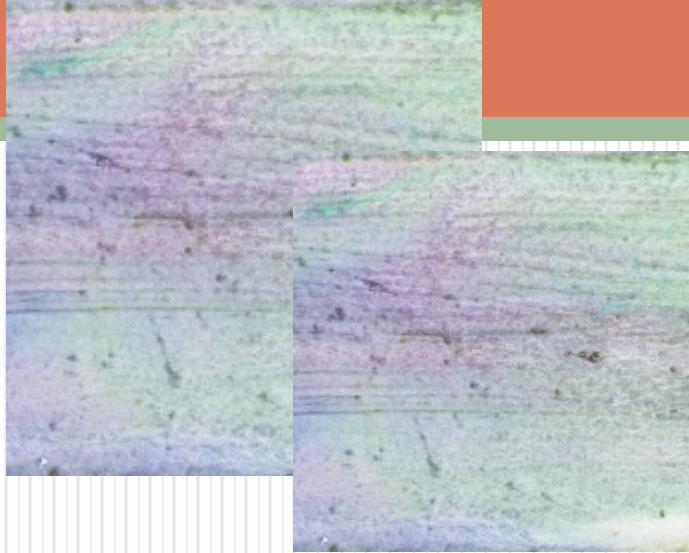
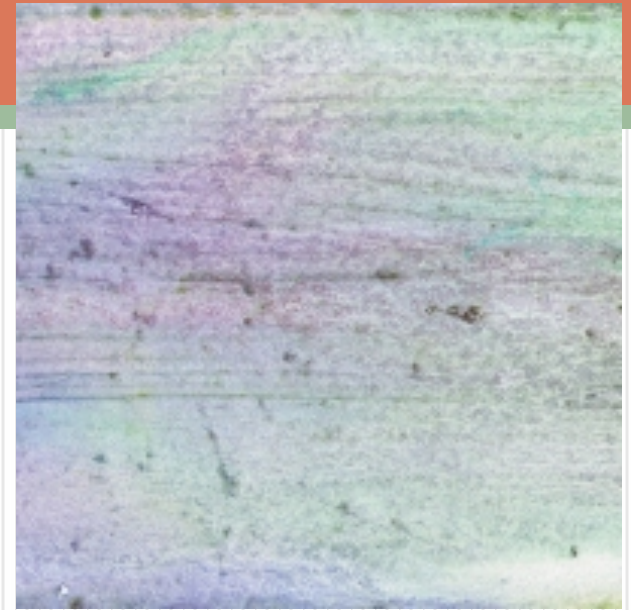


What Part of the Picture does Unconscious Implicit Bias Capture?



Support for this project has come
from the Australian Research
Council
DP150104449



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What is the problem?

- *Time-lag puzzle = why explicit policy commitments to equal opportunities and the broad social acceptance of the formally equal status of women have not yet translated into better outcomes, particularly in leadership or top-ranking positions.*
- **Same questions seem to apply to race issues**
- *Its in this context that unconscious implicit bias (UIB) is used to account for issues across the sciences, in the business world, indeed in every area of life where we can see individual decision-making occurring that seems to lead to systemically poorer outcomes for a stigmatized and stereotyped social group.*

What is UIB theory? What is the practice? - **Accept YOU are biased**

“Most people— even those who explicitly and sincerely avow egalitarian views— hold what have been described as implicit biases against such groups as blacks, women, gay people, and so on. This is true even of members of the ‘targeted’ group (See e.g. Steinpreis et. al. 1999, Vedantam 2005). So, for example, **women as well as men are biased against women**. These biases are manifested in association tasks asking subjects to pair positive and negative adjectives with black or white faces: most are much speedier **to match black faces with negative adjectives than with positive ones**. They are also, it has been argued, manifested in behaviour: studies have shown that those with anti-black implicit biases are less friendly to black experimenters and more likely to classify an ambiguous **object in a black person’s hand as a gun while classifying it as harmless in a white person’s hand**” Jenny Saul 2012

Explaining Persistent Discrimination

1. We have **well-intentioned 'good people'** who subscribe to egalitarian ideals and oppose sexism/ racism (would not consciously identify with racist or sexist attitudes)
2. who are not fully cognizant of their **unconscious attitudes** or motivations and it is in this sense that attitudes are implicit not explicit, ie we are unaware of them (evidence from IAT- as Perception.org puts it, "brains schematize people on the basis of race and gender").
3. who **manifest behaviour** that is inconsistent with conscious self-understanding, so that we can be operating with race or gender schemas in discriminatory ways and
4. who can be **'anyone'** - this is a phenomenon that is quite general in a society - unconscious bias, for instance, affects people to be prejudiced against their own group.

UIB: interpreting failure/re-building faith

Scepticism... “*the weight of scientific evidence of UIB is such that we have clear grounds for self-doubt whenever we are dealing with the social world in a non-anonymised manner*” (Saul 2012)

By naming ubiquitous biases, UIB theory paradoxically offers to *restore* a high degree of confidence in the *ideal* of objectivity as applied to the evaluation of both people and work, in the face of evidence that this ideal has *not effectively regulated* judgment in the recent past.

UIB theory is used to *protect* our confidence in ‘well-intentioned moral agents’ (despite evidence that those good intentions have not been effective in changing practices of employment and promotion) by separating out the role of ‘unconscious’ influences of which a person can only indirectly become aware.

- *counter-stimuli,*
- *more anonymity/ more ‘blind’ review processes are recommended to eliminate the effect of UIB*

Same or different?

- MERITOCRATIC IDEAL
- What the evidence of UIB aims to **exhibit** is biased preference for one group over another on the basis of objectively **identical facts** that in principle should be evaluated identically.
- *But can there be unbiased judgment, achieved by removing all reference to social classes, or does this **assume an underlying identity** of that which is judged, ignoring residual forms of difference that arise from gendered histories, contexts and locations?*
- Is there a problem in the common example offered of 2 identical CV's, one circulated with a man's name, one with a woman's.
- The assumption is that it is obvious that the capacities and skills of the two individuals *are* the same.
- But what if gender's meaning within institutional contexts goes deeper than this and the 'facts' on a CV are not readily separable from the institutional and social contexts in which they gain their meanings?
- *Is this more important in some disciplinary spaces than others?*

What difference does it make? - Promotions Gap

Strong case:

- The differences in probability of promotion *cannot* be explained by observable characteristics such as age, family characteristics, quality of PhD-training, field, employer, or publications – **men and women are directly comparable** (eg on CV's) but women do worse.
- *Evidence of direct or indirect discrimination - explicit and implicit bias as appropriate analysis*

Weaker case:

- Systemic differences in age, career path, field of research and rate of publications seem to affect outcomes - but they also **make direct comparisons difficult.**
- *Evaluative factors related to the vectors of 'difference' need to be brought into focus and discussed.*
- *Questions about PLURALISM and how it is fostered become salient.*

Weighing approaches

Remedies for bias seem to promise epistemic and equality **gains for everyone**.

BUT:

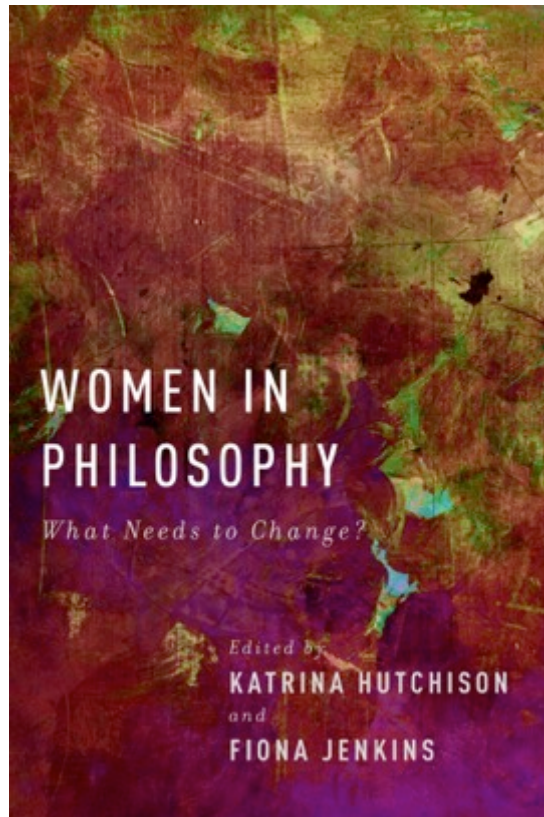
- It is notable that evidence of bias mostly focuses on the **negative** outcomes of bias for women or blacks, rather than the **positive** outcomes for white men.
- Some argue this is because the approach **normalizes the perspective of the 'winners' in the outcomes of disparate gender/race effects**

'One size fits all' theory?

- UIB theory is an analysis of persistent inequalities in terms of a logic of stereotypical associations which are **highly general** - women are less competent than men, or men associated with intelligence, women with emotion.
- Stereotypes are assumed to be relatively stable and contextless
- **Depoliticises** contexts of race/gender inequalities in academia

Disciplinary Focus: WOMEN IN PHILOSOPHY, what needs to change?

Oxford University Press 2013

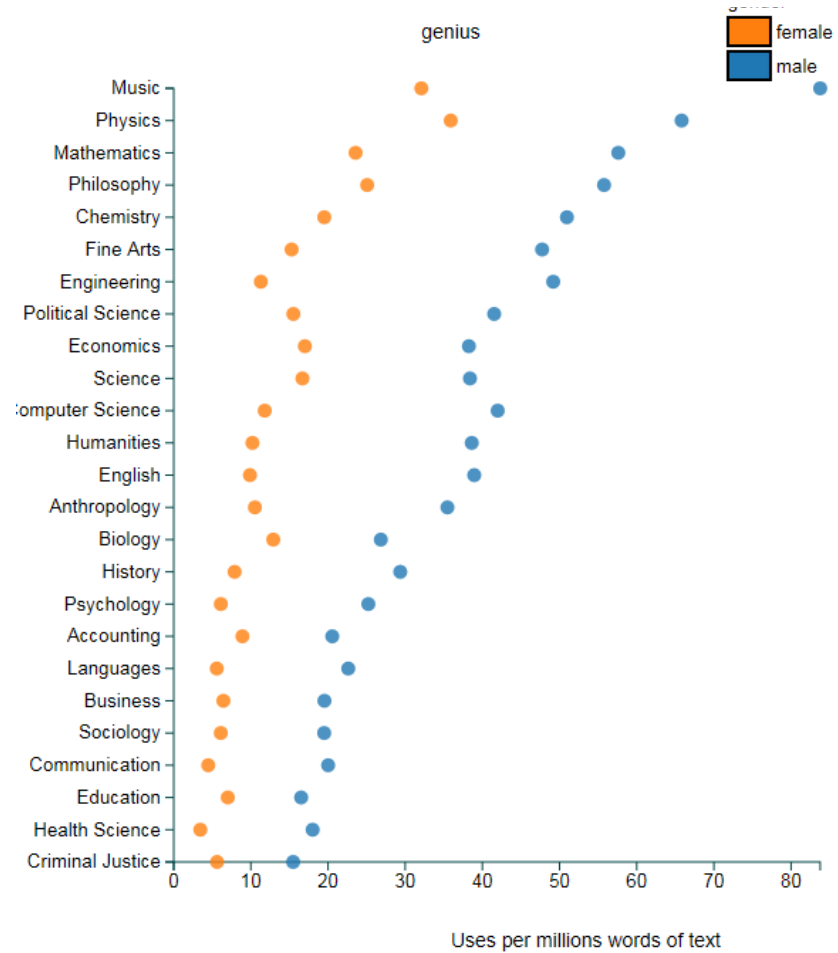


Why are professional philosophers today still overwhelmingly male? Despite its place in the humanities, the career prospects and numbers of women in philosophy much more closely resemble those found in the physical sciences and engineering. This book explores why and offers discussion and concrete reflections on the way in which philosophy needs to change, in order to accommodate and benefit from the important contribution women's full participation makes to the discipline.

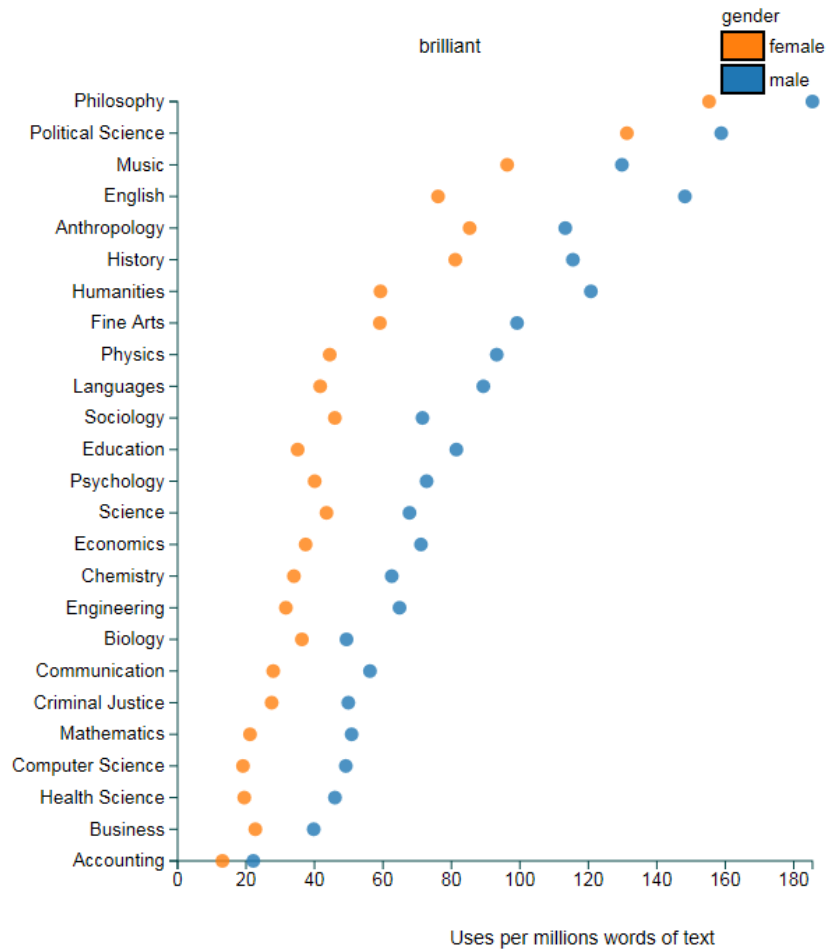
Bias in academia – nice evidence from teaching assessments

- Disciplinary associations with particular qualities, plus clear gender differentials.
- The findings of this tool are corroborated by a recent widely cited article published this year in *Science* - the disciplinary fields with the worst outcomes for women are the ones with the strongest associations with 'genius' - maths, physics., music, philosophy
- **Gendered Language in Teacher Reviews**
- This interactive chart lets you explore the words used to describe male and female teachers in about 14 million reviews from RateMyProfessor.com.
- *You can enter any word to see how it is split across gender and discipline*
- <http://benschmidt.org/profGender/#>
- *Compare findings of Leslie, S.J., et al. (2015) **Expectations of Brilliance Underlie Gender Distributions Across Academic Disciplines.** *Science*, 347(6219), 262-265*

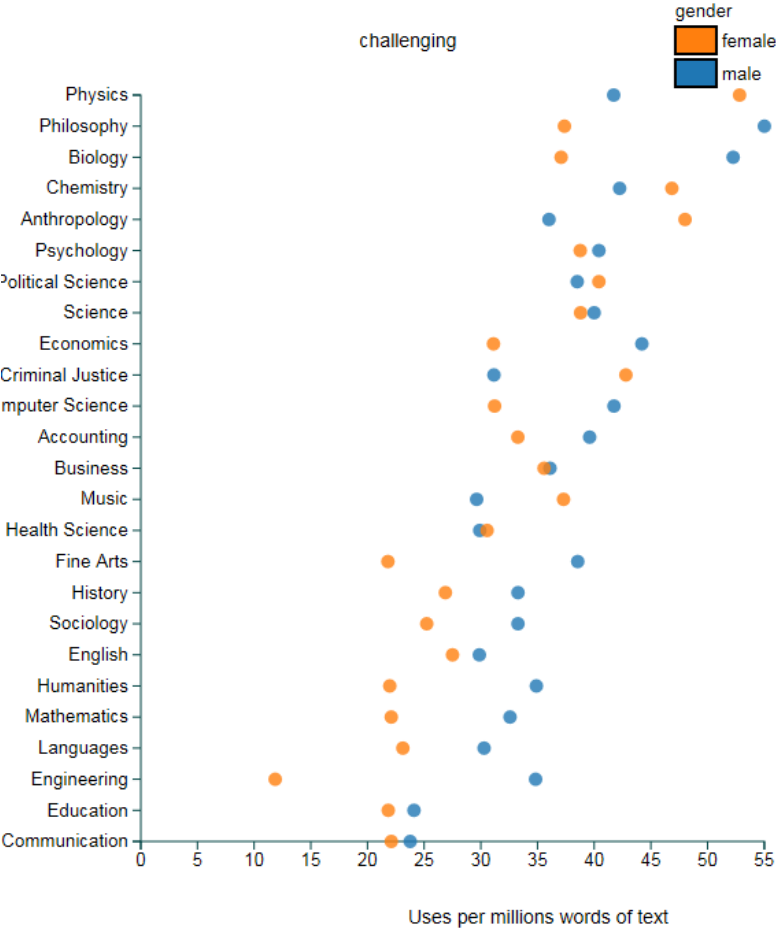
Genius...is, guess what?



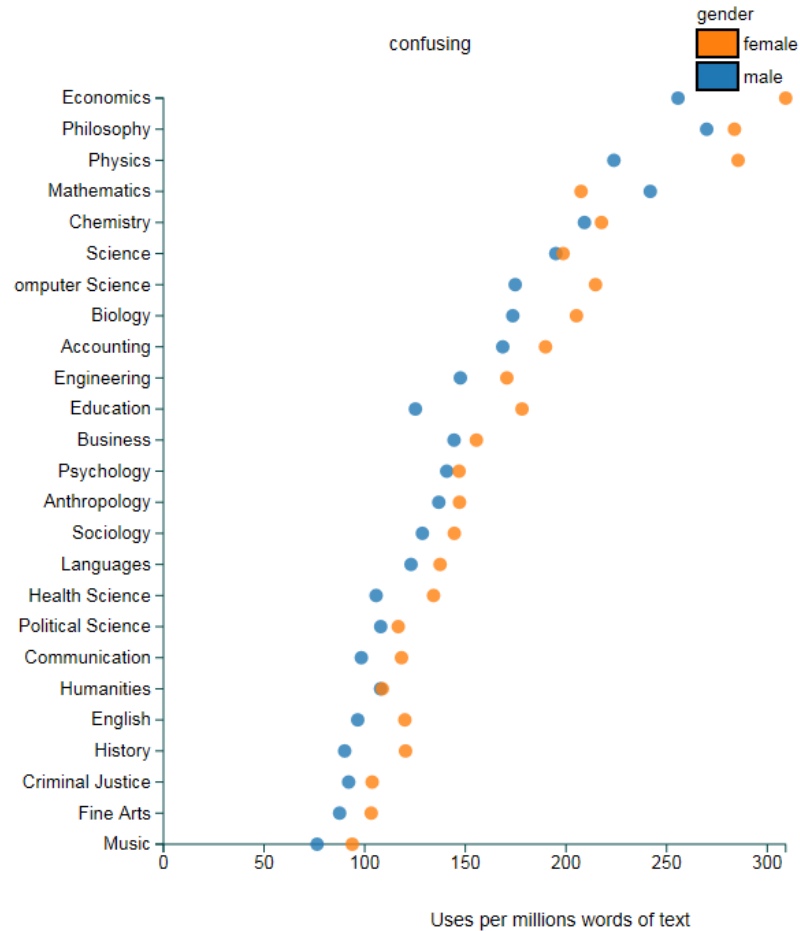
Philosophers are brilliant; but men more so



Philosophy is challenging; more so when men teach it



Philosophy is confusing: slightly more so when women teach it



What does it mean? 2 interpretations

Positivist

- *Bias goes ahead of judgment and distorts it*
- **Leads to false judgments and ranking evaluations**
- *Should be **corrected** in order to improve quality of judgment / evidence of actual performance and thereby generate greater (evidenced) equality*

Critical

- *Bias is internal to and supports / is consolidated by social relations*
- *Involves **performativity** of gender, not just ascription of qualities = Social forms of recognition and self-identification.*
- *Should be **challenged / become troubled** in order to counter gender hierarchies*

A picture of contemporary philosophy: Healy's co-citation network model



Figure 1. Co-Citation Network of top 500 most-cited items over 20 years. Main topical locations fancifully labeled; items authored by women marked with red dots.

Ways of looking at the Healy map

Evidence of Bias

- Systemic **preferences** for men's work over women's
- **Associations** of men with genius, authority etc...
- Men's **credibility/ importance** is deemed greater
- *Bias goes ahead of judgment and distorts it OR*
- *Bias is internal to and supports/is consolidated by social relations*

Power/Relations in Citation

- Co-citation locates X's work in relation to Y's, Z's etc
- organises a network - establishes a center and an outside
- mandates 'position-holders' within an array of recognisable options
- invests in a particular 'game'
- acquires internal focus on elaborating the rules of that game, player-relations etc...

Politics of gender segregated fields?

Top 5 areas for women

1. **Feminist Phil**
2. **Applied Ethics**
3. **Normative Ethics**
4. **Social Phil**
5. **Political Phil**

Top 5 areas for men

1. *Metaphysics*
2. *Epistemology*
3. *Philosophy of Mind*
4. *Normative Ethics*
5. *Metaethics*

- See: **Preliminary Report of the Survey on Publishing in Philosophy**, APA Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession, December 2009

Men's v Women's work?

High Value ('Hard')

Objective

Knowledge

Abstract-theoretical

Serious

- *Well-established problem areas*
- *Not answerable to 'soft' questions*

Low Value ('Soft')

Subjective

Interpretative/
Evaluative

Applied

Has socio-political ends

- *Interrogation of assumptions constituting well-established fields*
- *Critical-transformative goals*

Conclusions: Value of consensus?

- *if UIB gives us too thin or too partial a picture of the problem, does that matter?*
- can we still do useful things by working with parts of the picture, especially those where consensus readily gathers?
- **UIB theory is a success** in contexts where the first problem is to persuade those in power that racism and sexism persist, albeit in non-intentional forms.
- the analysis also gives a strong **motivation** for removing distortions from the merit-based evaluations that modern institutions believe they adhere to.
- **Is this consensus superficial?**
does it ignore some of the issues about persistent inequality that remain profoundly controversial?
- emphasis on how bias takes hold in the ‘associations’ of the unconscious mind, risks missing important shifts in how inequalities are generated by institutionalized
- **ruling academic practices** require an image of objectivity to be maintained at their center. UIB does not damage this, rather it negotiates the relation between evidence of impartiality and evidence of partiality in judgment

2 histories of the present

Moral story

- Recalcitrant moral attitudes (archaic unconscious mind) distort proper market mechanism for delivering equitable outcomes in status positions
- Social stratification is distorted by poor judgment of merit/ character
- Injustice involves (a) being falsely judged (b) suffering the consequences
- Inequality is based on incorrect judgment of merit/ character by decision-makers

Political story

- Unfinished business in generating social and political equality
- Inequalities are consolidated by neo-liberal reforms eg rankings
- Social relations based in classification, validated and reconfigured by market logics, consistently deliver inequalities along gender, race and class lines
- Meritocracy – preserving relations of authority based in properties, capacities and performance of persons – fails to overcome status inequality eg. for leadership roles