Faculty Search

Based on materials compiled by Prof. Abby Stewart for the University of Michigan's STRIDE (Strategies and Tactics for Recruiting to Improve Diversity and Excellence) Committee, under UM's NSF Advance Program. Adapted by Profs. Barbara Liskov and JoAnne Yates, MIT.

Overview

- What is the problem?

- What can we do?
  - ➢ Running the search

What is the problem?

- We want the highest quality faculty we can get regardless of gender, race, or other such attributes
  - For excellence in research
  - For our students
- There is evidence that women and minorities are underrepresented in occupations relative to their quality
  - The composition of the candidate pool only accounts for part of the problem
  - Research shows that we all – regardless of gender or race – perceive and treat people differently based on their race/gender/social group
- All else equal, diversity is valuable

Schemas vs. Discrimination

Discrimination: Often interpreted as conscious actions directed against members of a group – *relatively rare*

Schemas: Non-conscious expectations or stereotypes associated with members of a group that guide perceptions and behaviors -- *pervasive*

➤ *Research shows that we all – <u>regardless of gender or race</u> – perceive and treat people based on schemas associated with their race/gender/social group, etc.*

Valian (1998) *Why So Slow? The Advancement of Women*. Cambridge: MIT Press, p. 280

Schemas are…

- **Widely culturally shared**
  - Both men and women hold them about gender
  - Both whites and people of color hold them about race
  - People are often not aware of them
  - Implicit association test:
    https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/

- **Applied more** under circumstances of:
  - Ambiguity (including lack of information)
  - Stress from competing tasks
  - Time pressure
  - Lack of critical mass

Fiske (2002). *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 11*, 123-128.

Schemas Affect Evaluation

Numerous studies show that schemas affect evaluation, for example:

- Blind auditions
- Evaluation of CVs
- Evaluation of resumes
- Evaluation of job credentials
- Evaluation of minimum standards vs. ability
- Evaluation of fellowship applications
- Letters of recommendation

Blind Auditions: Gender

When auditioners were behind a screen, the percentage of female new hires for orchestral jobs increased 25 – 46%.

Goldin & Rouse (2000) *The American Economic Review*, 90, 4, 715-741.
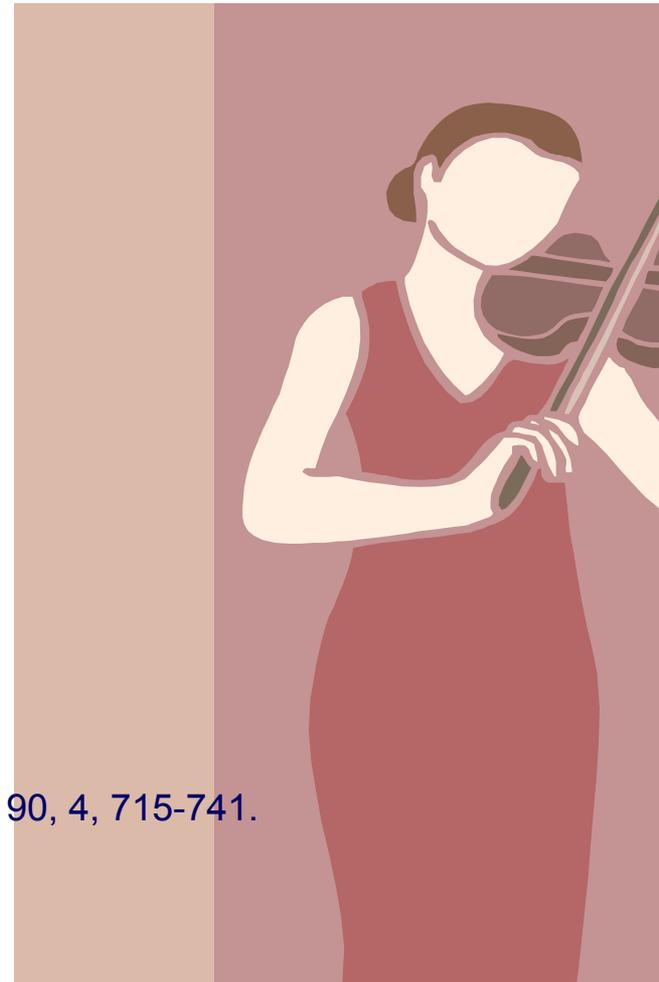
Evaluation of Identical CVs: Gender

When evaluating identical application packages, male and female University Psychology professors preferred 2:1 to hire "Brian" over "Karen."

Karen

Brian

Steinpreis, Anders, & Ritzke (1999) *Sex Roles*, 41, 509.
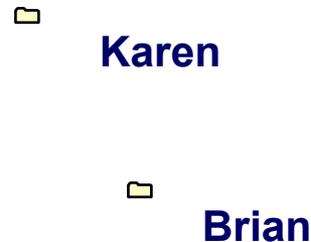
Evaluation of Identical Resumes: Race

- Applicants with African American-sounding names had to send 15 resumes to get a callback, compared to 10 needed by applicants with white-sounding names.

Jamal

Greg

- White names yielded as many more callbacks as an additional eight years of experience.

- The higher the resume quality, the higher the gap between callbacks for white and African American names.

Bertrand & Mullainathan (2004) *Poverty Action Lab*, 3, 1-27.

The Role of Ambiguity in Job Credentials: Race

- When credentials are equivalent, there are still differences based on ambiguity

- In a study where credentials were ambiguous and race was indicated via activities on resumes, then Whites recommend
  - Black candidate 45% of the time
  - White candidate 76% of the time

- Whites get "benefit of the doubt" in ambiguous situations

Dovidio & Gaertner (2000). *Psychological Science*, 11, 315-319.

Evaluation of Fellowship Applications: Gender

"…the success rate of female scientists applying for postdoctoral fellowships at the [Swedish Medical Research Council] during the 1990s has been less than half that of male applicants."

Results of study: Women applying for a post- doctoral fellowship had to be 2.5 times more productive to receive the same reviewer rating as the average male applicant.

Average rating of applicants as a function of their scientific productivity
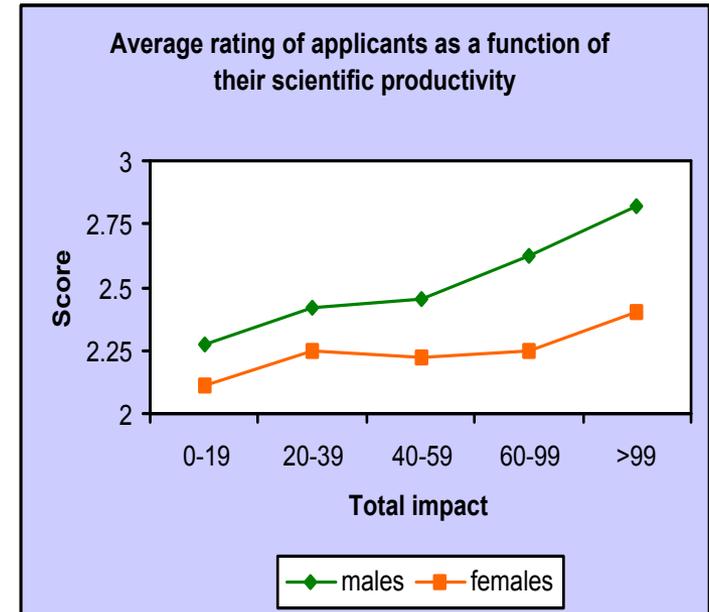
Similar findings:
- USA/GAO report on *Peer Review in Federal* Agency Grant Selection (1994)
- *European Molecular Biology Organization Reports* (2001)
- NIH Pioneer Awards: *Journal of Women's Health* (2005) & *Nature* (August 2006)

Wenneras & Wold (1997) *Nature*, 387, 341.

Impact of Using Different Standards on Evaluations: Race and Gender

- To be rated as having the **ability to be successful**
  - Women and African Americans are required to have significantly *higher* skills than men and whites and to have achieved *twice* as much

- To be rated as meeting the **minimum standards for the position**
  - Women and African Americans could be viewed as less capable then men and whites, but "good" for a member of that group

Biernat & Kobrynowicz (1997). *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 72 (*3*), 544-557.

Gender Schemas in Letters of Recommendation for Successful Medical School Faculty Applicants

Letters for men:

Longer

More references to CV

Publications

Patients

Colleagues

Letters for women:

Shorter

More references to personal life

More "doubt raisers," including hedges, faint praise, and irrelevancies (e.g., *"It's amazing how much she's accomplished."* *"It appears her health is stable."* *"She is close to my wife."*)

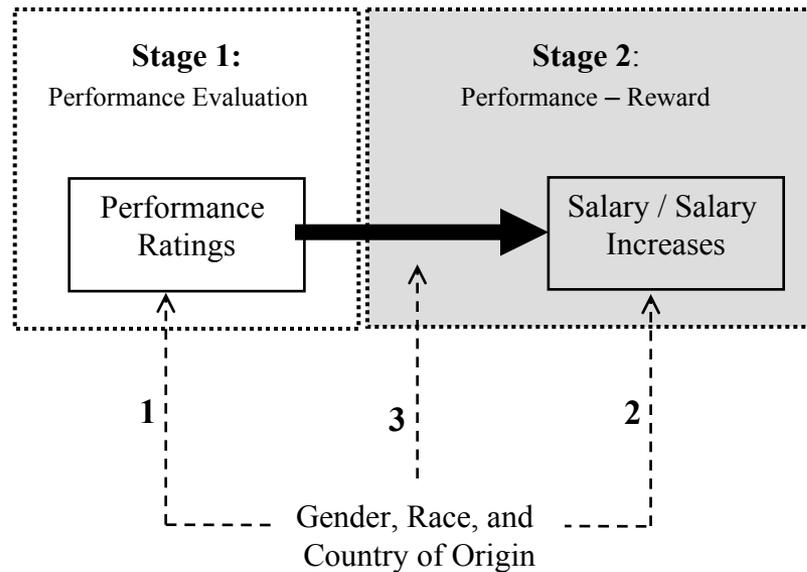Trix & Psenka (2003) *Discourse & Society*, 14(2): 191-220, 2003.
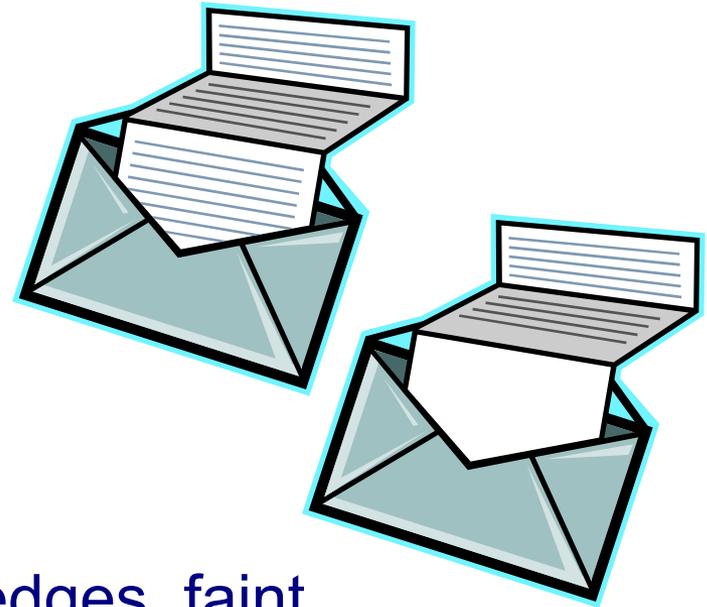
Critical Mass Affects the Use of Schemas

When a group lacks critical mass, reliance on schemas is greater.

> ➤ *When there are many individuals, we differentiate among them and cannot rely on group-based schemas.*

When there are few women and minorities on the faculty, schemas are more likely to be invoked.

Schemas also affect rewards

Stage 1: Performance Evaluation → Performance Ratings → Salary / Salary Increases ← Stage 2: Performance – Reward

Arrows labeled 1, 3, 2 pointing up from: Gender, Race, and Country of Origin

– Women and minorities receive less compensation and get lower salary increases than white men with equal scores on performance evaluations (Castilla, *American Journal of Sociology,* May 2008)

– **Potential remedies:**

  • Transparency: Salary *increase* decisions may be visible, even if salaries are not

  • Accountability: When decision makers know they are accountable, bias is less likely to occur (Tetlock 1983 and 1985)

Overview

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Running the Search

1. Defining the search
2. Getting the right applicants
3. Selecting the short list
4. Running the interview
5. Making the decision
6. After the search

Defining the search

- Consider combining searches
  - Research shows that picking people one at a time decreases diversity
  - Combining can work even across multiple areas
- Consider broadening the search

Getting the right applicants

- Signal interest in the ads:
  - "MIT is a diverse community and welcomes applications from women and minorities"
- Be proactive
  - Attend conferences, invite visits, make phone calls
  - Ask your colleagues explicitly about women and minorities
  - Cultivate your own students
  - Recruit broadly

Selecting the short list

- Try to bring in more than one female and/or minority candidate

  ➢ this disproportionately increases the likelihood that a woman and/or a minority will be hired

- Beware of implicit bias: *schemas*

Accountability affects results

The "Rooney Rule" (adopted in 2002) penalizes National Football League teams for not interviewing minority candidates for each vacancy.

In the 27 months following this rule's adoption, 4 of the 15 openings for head coach were filled by African American candidates.

The interview

- Remember: we are recruiting!
  - Be polite and friendly
  - Point out all the good things about the school
  - Provide information about family-friendly policies to all candidates
- Allow women and minority candidates to meet with other women and minorities, preferably not on the search committee

Making the decision

- Be aware of bias

- Use objective criteria

- Seek more information to reduce ambiguities

- Don't rush

Focus on Particular Criteria During Evaluation

Please indicate which of the following are true for you (check all that apply):

- ☐ Read candidate's CV
- ☐ Read candidate's scholarship
- ☐ Read candidate's letters of recommendation
- ☐ Attended candidate's job talk

- ☐ Met with candidate
- ☐ Attended lunch or dinner with candidate
- ☐ Other (please explain):

  _____

  _____

Please comment on the candidate's scholarship as reflected in the job talk:

Please comment on the candidate's teaching ability as reflected in the job talk:

Please rate the candidate on each of the following:	excellent	good	neutral	fair	poor	unable to judge
Potential for (Evidence of) scholarly impact						
Potential for (Evidence of) research productivity						
Potential for (Evidence of) research funding						
Potential for (Evidence of) collaboration						
Fit with department's priorities						
Ability to make positive contribution to department's climate						
Potential (Demonstrated ability) to attract and supervise graduate students						
Potential (Demonstrated ability) to teach and supervise undergraduates						
Potential (Demonstrated ability) to be a conscientious university community member						

Other comments?

After the search

- Get the new faculty member off to a good start
  - Ensure equitable salaries and teaching/committee loads
  - Provide help with networking and lab start-up
  - Introduce new faculty directly to colleagues
  - Offer information about access to resources
  - Invite new faculty to collaborate on departmental proposals
- Prepare for future searches