To Address Structural Racism, We Need to Change Structures

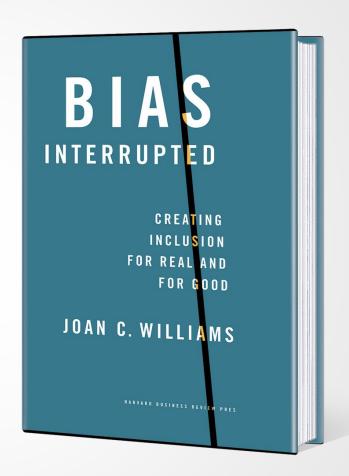
Practical Advice Real-life Solutions Social Science

Distinguished Professor Joan C. Williams
Director, Center for WorkLife Law
University of California, Hastings College of the Law



"How do you move DEI from acronym to action? Joan Williams shines the light on the realities of the modern workplace and how small but important steps can usher in real change."

Katie Couric







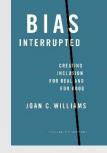
How would you handle a problem with sales?

Evidence

Metrics

Persistence





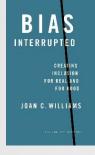
Companies are spending \$8 billion on DEI...

...but haven't moved the needle

Earnest conversations about inclusion aren't an effective organizational change strategy if...

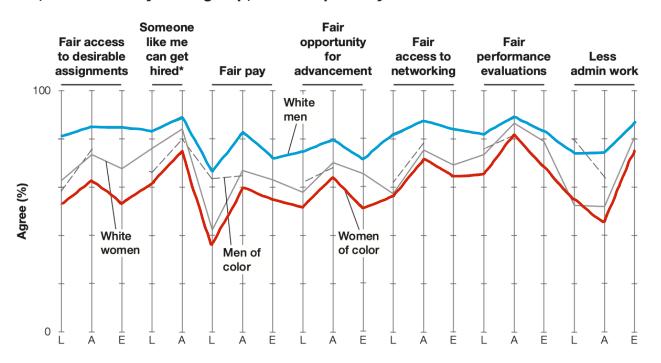
Dobbin et al., 2015, Kalev et al., 2006





Systemic bias

White men, more than any other group, see workplace systems as fair



Note: L = lawyers, A = architects, and E = engineers. The lines in the graph for male engineers of color are incomplete where we did not receive enough responses from them to draw conclusions.

*This statement wasn't included in the survey for engineers.

Data collected from 6,296 lawyers, engineers, and architects





What's the solution?

Treat DEI like a business problem

That's what bias interrupters do





Are trainings worthless?

- Doing anything once...
- Individual Bias Interrupters Workshop

Part of an integrated approach



Kalev et al., 2006; Dobbin and Kalev, 2018; Dobbin and Kalev, 2016; Kalinoski et al., 2013; Apfelbaum et al., 2012; Legault et al., 2011; Roth et al., 2019; Carnes et al., 2015; Devine et al., 2017

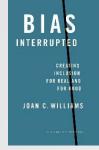




Hundreds of lab studies

 Documenting bias over and over again for 40 years

 Do these lab studies describe what actually goes on at work?



Workplace Experiences Survey

- 10-minute climate survey:
 - Is there bias?
 - If so, where?
 - Impact on outcome measures

National Samples:



Engineering (US & India)



Computer science



Law



STEM professors

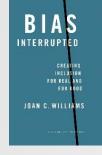


Architecture



Construction





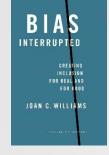
Purpose of WES

- Experiments→ objective evidence that bias exists
- WES: same patterns of bias reported in a given workplace
 - 18,000 people in different industries
- Clear and complete picture of the experiences of different groups



5 patterns of workplace bias

- 1. Prove-it-again: need to be more competent
- 2. Tightrope: need to be politically savvier
- 3. Maternal wall: bias against mothers
- 4. Tug of war: bias against a group fuels conflict amongst the group
- 5. Racial stereotyping



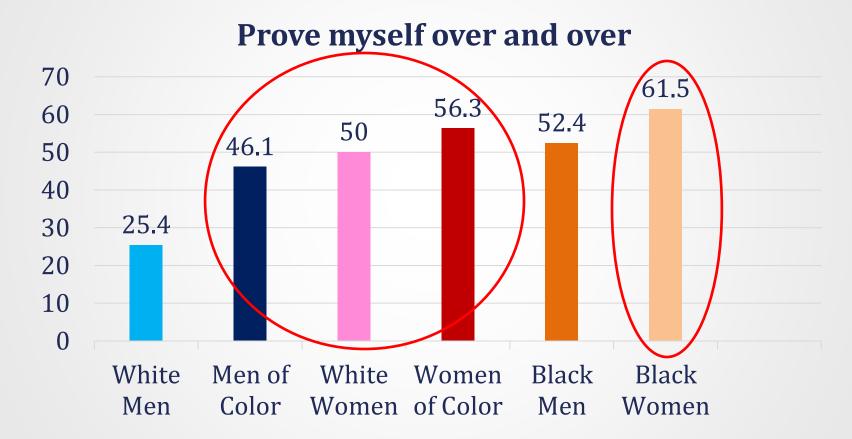
Groups stereotyped as less competent have to provide more evidence in order to be judged equally competent.

Triggered by:

- Race: women of color report the most
- Gender
- Class origin
- LGBTQ+
- Age
- Disability







Williams & Korn, forthcoming 2021



Mechanisms

Two different mechanisms:

- In-group favoritism
- 2. Lack of fit



1st Mechanism: In-group favoritism

The most important determinant of who is in your social network is....

- A. proximity
- B. similarity **←1**
- C. attractiveness
- D. social status
- E. dissimilarity/diversity





Who's in the in-group?

Typically, in-group consists of a subgroup of white men

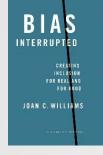
But...not all white men are in the in-group!

Benefit of doubt

Focus on treatment of majority

- Objective requirements applied leniently to in-group; rigorously to others
- In-group judged on potential, given benefit of doubt; others on demonstrated results

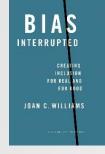
Brewer, 1996. Supporting evidence: Biernat et al., 2010; Bowles & Gelfand, 2010; Bauer & Baltes, 2002; Eagly 2015



Potential/ performance

- New study of the 9-box
- Women receive significantly lower potential ratings despite higher job performance ratings
- 30 to 50% of the promotion differential for men and women was attributable to potential ratings

Benson et al., 2021



Objective rules

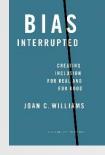
We rejected a lot of... candidates because they had not worked at a [company like ours], but then hired a man who hadn't. He knew someone, so they let him in the pool."

Supporting evidence: Biernat et al., 2010; Bowles & Gelfand, 2010; Bauer & Baltes, 2002

In-group favoritism

Focus on treatment of majority

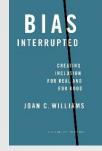
- 1. Hiring "through the grapevine"
- 2. Access to inside information
- 3. Sponsorship & opportunities



Inside info

Are decisions made in the "meeting-before-the-meeting"?

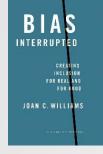
"I later found out that the key decision had been made in the men's bathroom."



2nd Mechanism: Lack of fit

Some people even think my research is better. Shortly after I changed sex, (someone) said, 'Ben Barres gave a great seminar today, but then his work is much better than his sister's..."



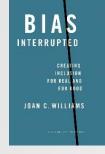


Men's vs. women's successes

He's skilled.

She's lucky.

Kulich et al., 2011; Garcia-Retamero & López-Zafra, 2006; Swim & Sanna, 1996; Igbaria & Baroudi, 1995; Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1993; Taylor et al., 1978

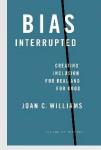


Mistakes

Mistakes noticed more and remembered longer

- Work product with 7 mistakes
 - Ave. 2.9 mistakes spotted in work of whites
 - Ave. 5.8 in work of Black people





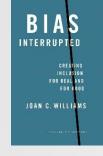
Confirmation bias



"That's an excellent suggestion Miss Trigg. Perhaps one of the men here would like to make it."

Duncan, 1988





Prove-it-again bias interrupters

Next time you write a performance evaluation...

- Avoid global judgments without backup!
- Limit your comments to this performance evaluation period
- Identify specific competencies demonstrated
- Give 3-4 pieces of evidence

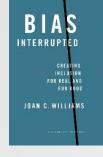




Prove-it-again bias interrupters

- Someone reading your evaluation should be able to understand what led you to the global rating
- Give everyone or no one—the benefit of the doubt

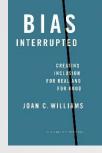
If you waive objective rules, do so consistently



Assertiveness and authoritativeness are less accepted from some groups than others.

Triggered by:

- Gender
- Race
- LGBTQ+



Prescriptive stereotypes

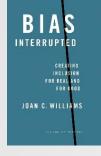
are expected to be...

- Nice, and
- "Communal"
 - Helpful
 - Modest
 - Interpersonally sensitive
 - → Good team players

Men are expected to be...

- Competent, and
- "Agentic"
 - Direct
 - Assertive
 - Competitive
 - Ambitious
 - → Leaders

Eagly & Karau, 2002; Fiske et al., 2002; Bettis & Adams (forthcoming)



Meeting dynamics

 Men tend to interrupt women a lot more than women interrupt men

Why?





Negotiating style

No f**ing way. That's never going to happen."

I hear what you're saying. I'm sympathetic. If I were in your shoes I would want that too."

Supporting evidence: Biernat, et al., 2010; Bowles & Gelfand, 2010; Bauer & Baltes, 2002



Bias is dangerous!

- Men with expertise were more influential
- Women with expertise less influential

With a woman, if they disagree they often go above her head and seek a 'more authoritative' opinion, even though I'm supposed to be the expert."

- White woman

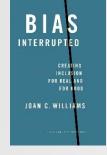


Likability/competence trade-off

• Liked but not respected "too" feminine

• Respected but not liked "too" masculine





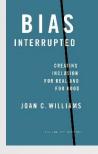
Pressure to behave in feminine ways

Pressure to be deferential or play feminine roles (office mom, dutiful daughter)

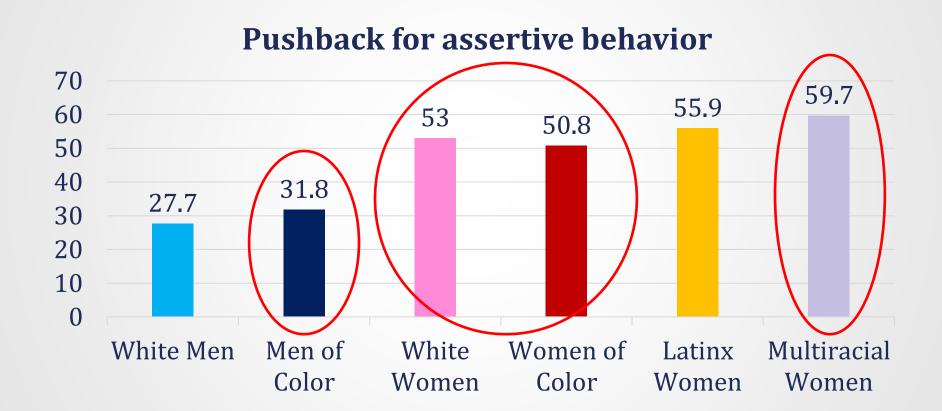
Women need to coddle men to get the answers they need to do their jobs."

Phelan et al., 2008; Rudman & Phelan, 2008; Rudman & Fairchild, 2004; Rudman & Glick, 2001; Costrich etl al., 1975

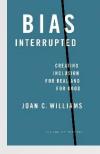




Assertiveness



Williams & Korn, forthcoming 2021

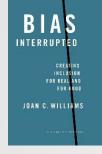


What a witch!

So if you're stern... or you say no, your immediate reaction is to call that woman a b*tch, right? If you're a man, it's just a no."

Williams, 2007 [Focus group interviews for NSF ACE grant, San Francisco, CA]. Supporting evidence: Rudman & Phelan, 2008; Brett et al., 2005; Rudman & Fairchild, 2004; Rudman & Glick, 2001; Costrich et al., 1975

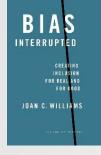




Tightrope

Anger: gender

Showing anger tends to increase the perceived status of a *man*, but decrease that of a *woman*.



Tightrope

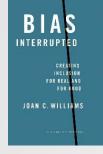
Race & dominance

"Angry Black man/woman"

Latinx "too emotional," "sassy," "feisty"

Asian-Americans



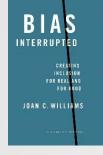


Tightrope

Race & dominance

- Performance evaluation audit
 - -90.5% of POC had personality mentioned v. 77% of WM
 - -57% of POC v. 38% of WM "well-liked"

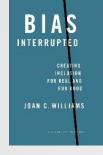




Selective incivility

 Bias can look like rude behavior –insulting remarks, sneers, or jokes at someone's expense

 This form of incivility is directed at women and people of color more often than men and white people.



Tightrope bias interrupters

On all assessments...

- Separate personality issues from skill sets
- Keep track!

 Don't tolerate incivility: when it's tolerated, women and POC are more likely to be targets, which predicts intent to leave



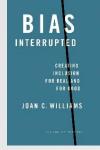
Tightrope bias interrupters

To interrupt bias in opportunities...

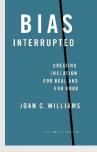
Establish a rotation for less glamorous work

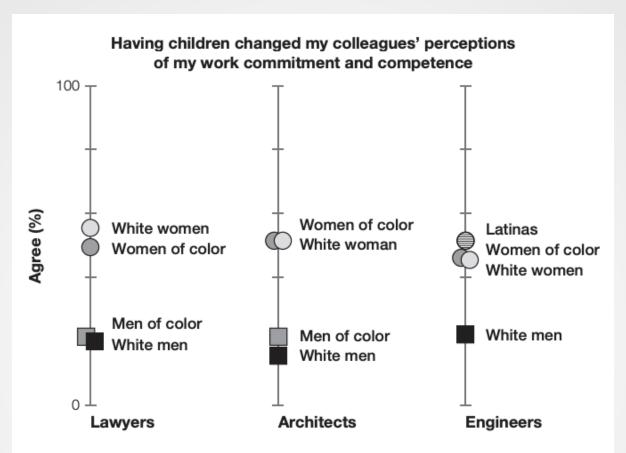
Give everyone access to stretch assignments

 Don't compliment women on being helpful, but then penalize them for doing low value work



Mothers are stereotyped as less competent and committed.





Note: "Women of color" and "Men of color" include all people who identified as Black, Asian or Asian American, Latinx or Hispanic, multiracial, or any other nonwhite option. The data for the "of color" group provides an average of the data for each specific group. We did not receive enough responses from male engineers of color to draw conclusions.

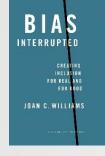
Where available, the graphs highlight the group whose experiences diverge the most from white men's (often, though not invariably, this is Black women). "Women of color" is used when the percentage differentials between the individual groups were too small to be meaningful.

Data collected from the Center for WorkLife Law's Workplace Experiences Survey





- I took leave after having a child and when I returned there was no longer meaningful work for me at the firm."
 - White woman architect



Negative competence and commitment assumptions

- 79% less likely to be hired
- Only half as likely to be promoted
- Offered \$11,000 less in salary
- Held to higher performance and punctuality standards



Hostile prescriptive bias

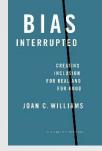
Indisputably competent and committed mothers

- Women seen as:
 - Less likeable
 - Held to higher performance standards

Copyright © 2021 Women's Leadership Edge. All rights reserved.

An Initiative of the Center for WorkLife Law at UC Hastings

Slide 47



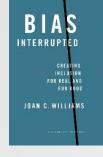
Benevolent prescriptive bias

This is not a good time for her..."



Maternal wall bias interrupters

- Don't discourage anyone from taking family leave (also illegal!)
- Don't penalize anyone from taking family leave (ditto)
- Observe the principle of "part-time parity"
- Don't make assumptions; ask if someone wants a stretch opportunity



When bias against a group fuels conflict amongst the group.

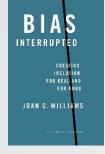
Triggered by:

- Gender
- Race
- LGBTQ
- Class origin





The [older] women... are always very encouraging, very helpful and very kind to me."



Tokenism

Opportunities for women are very zero-sum. If one woman gets a prized position...another woman won't. And so it breeds a sense of competition."

Williams & Dempsey, 2014; Zatz, 2002; Ely, 1994a & 1994b; Keller & Moglen, 1987; Kanter, 1997a & 1997b

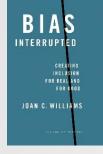








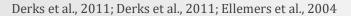
Williams & Korn, forthcoming 2021

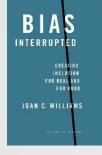


Strategic distancing

I'm not a girl at Google, I'm a geek at Google."

- Marissa Mayer

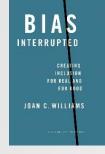




Tug of war Prove-it-again pass through

She had to work extra hard and so expects other women to have done as much as she has."

Williams et al., 2015



Tug of war Mommy wars

I worked long hours and my kids are fine."

Childfree:

"They are just reinforcing stereotypes."

"I had to make hard choices." Childless:



Tug of war Threat mechanisms

Collective Threat

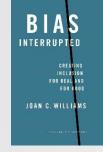
 "If another member of my demographic group performs poorly, it reflects negatively on me."

Favoritism Threat

 "If I support someone in my group, it will look like I'm playing favorites."

Competitive Threat

- "There's only room for one, so if there's another qualified member of my group, I'll lose out."



Tug-of-war bias interrupters

- Make sure there is not only one "diversity" or "women's" spot
- Senior women need to recognize...
- Junior women need to recognize...
- Make sure that parents' flexibility does not come at nonparents' expense
- There's no "right" way to be a woman, or person of color



Subtle bias

Most of the racism is not overt (e.g. using derogatory terms/names), but is more subtle. Colleagues and managers are dismissive - not responding to calls or e-mails, or suggesting one is being overly sensitive. They are demeaning through daily microaggressions—not remembering your name, what you said in the meeting, or interrupting and not allowing you to speak in a meeting." - Woman of color



• Stereotype: high in technical skills but lacking in leadership ability

Asians are stereotypically seen as subservient and lacking management skills, which you can see in the low representation of Asians in senior management at [STEM organization]." – East Asian woman

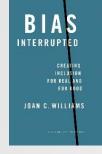


Latinx/
African Americans

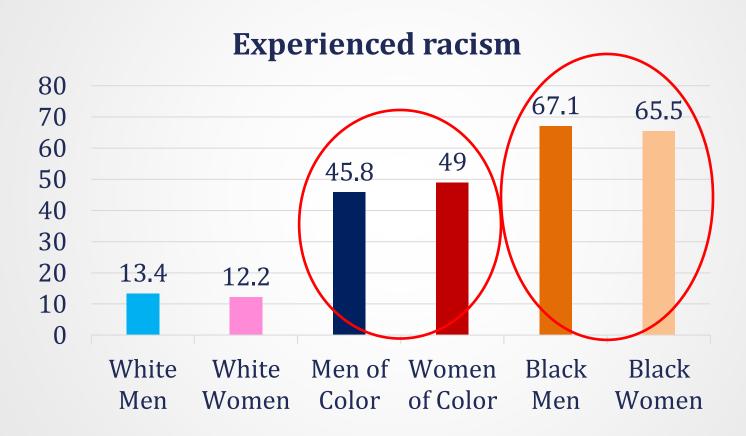
I have heard insinuation that Hispanics and African Americans are lazy, "dramatic," and untrustworthy, assuming I would agree with the sentiments." – White man

Coworker attempted to make a joke about how machines didn't break down and tools didn't go missing as often until Mexicans started working here." – Latino man

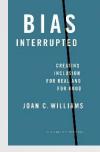
I have heard people act like my Black colleagues were 'reaching above' their station for not being satisfied where they were." – White woman



Racism in the workplace



Williams & Korn, forthcoming 2021



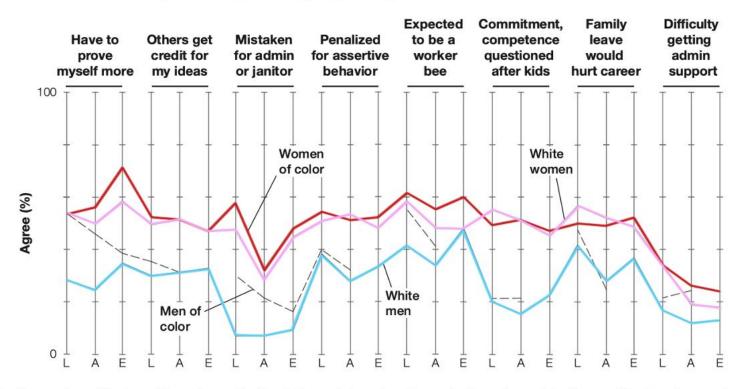
Racial bias interrupters

- Don't make assumptions based on race
- This includes positive as well as negative assumptions
- If a person of color's behavior makes you uncomfortable, stop and reflect before you talk
- Read up



White men report less bias

White men are less likely than any other group to report bias



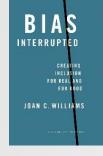
Note: L = lawyers, A = architects, and E = engineers. The lines in the graph for male engineers of color are incomplete where we did not receive enough responses from them to draw conclusions.

Data collected from 6,296 lawyers, engineers, and architects





Interrupting bias at an organizational level



But we're a meritocracy!

- Organizations that believe they are meritocratic show more bias
- People who believe they are "colorblind" show more bias
- Men evaluate gender bias research more negatively than women, esp. in STEM



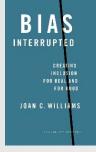
Backlash against diversity

Focusing on diversity means lowering the bar and jeopardizing meritocracy



Data from STEM organization





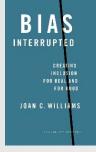
Prove-it-again

Class

- Resumes sent to 147 firms
 - 2 resumes of white males
 - Identical credentials but different hobbies
 - "Sailing, polo, classical music"
 - "Counseling first-gen students, country music"
- Mr. Polo received 12x more call backs than Mr. Country Music



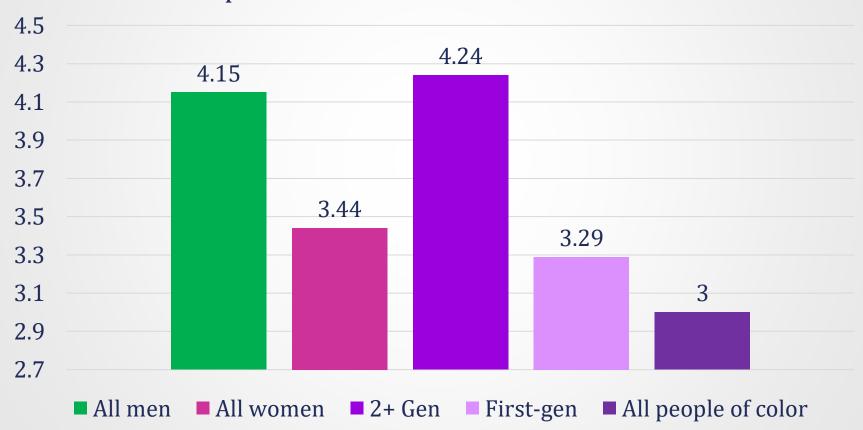
Rivera & Tilcsik, 2017; Images: https://www.nptpolo.com/; Courtesy Incahoots Fullerton https://www.timeout.com/los-angeles/things-to-do/where-to-go-line-dancing-around-la



Belonging

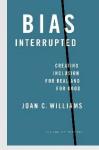
Professional services firm data

People who succeed here are a lot like me.



Data from professional services firm

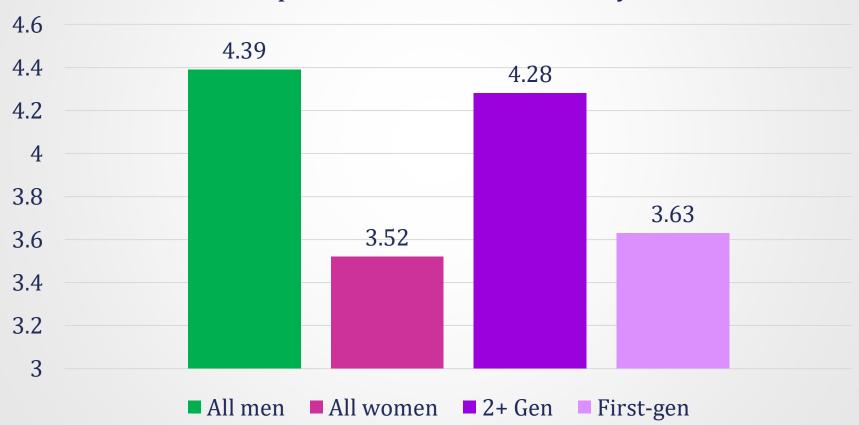




Clear path for advancement

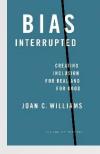
Professional services firm data

I see a clear path for advancement for myself here.



Data from professional services firm





Evidence → **buy-in**

Law firm example: who gets the hours?

 Clorox example: hiring, promotion, turnover – by department and by manager

 Metrics establish baselines and help measure progress





www.biasinterrupters.org

- Outcome metrics vs. process metrics
- Establish baselines and measure progress

THE SOLUTION: A 3 Step Approach

1. Use Metrics

Businesses use metrics to assess whether they have progressed towards any strategic goal. Metrics can help you pinpoint where bias exists, and assess the effectiveness of the measures you've taken. (Whether metrics are made public will vary from company to company, and from metric to metric.)

- Track the demography of the candidate pool through the entire hiring process, from initial contact, to resume review, to interviews, to hiring. Break down the demography by under-represented groups: women, people of color, people with disabilities, veterans, members of the LGBT community, etc.
- Track whether hiring qualifications are waived more often for people from certain groups than other groups.

Keep metrics by: 1) individual supervisor; 2) a department; and 3) the organization as a whole.





Role of the CEO

- Give someone the clout they need
- Treat diversity as a business goal
- Use metrics to establish baselines and measure progress
- Debias HR systems
- Change incentives of middle-management



Interrupting bias in performance evaluations

Seven Powerful Bias Interrupters

- 1. Give evidence (from the evaluation period) to explain and back up your rating.
- 2. Make sure to give everyone—or no one—the benefit of the doubt.
- 3. If you waive objective rules, do so consistently.
- 4. Don't insist on likeability, modesty, or deference from some but not others.
- 5. Don't make assumptions about what mothers—or fathers—want or are able to do.
- 6. If you comment on "culture fit," "executive presence," or other vague concepts, start with a clear definition and keep track to ensure such concepts are applied consistently.
- 7. Give honest feedback to everyone who is evaluated—otherwise some groups won't get notice of problems in time to correct them.

available at www.biasinterrupters.org





New tools actually work

Increased
 performance
 evaluations &
 bonuses for
 white women,
 Black women,
 Black men

BIAS INTERRUPTERS small steps big change

Identifying & Interrupting Bias in Performance Evaluations

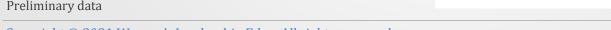
The four patterns below describe tendencies not absolutes. Here's what to watch out for:

Prove-It-Again! ("PIA") Groups stereotyped as less competent often have to prove themselves over and over. "PIA groups" include women, people of color, individuals with disabilities, older employees, LGBT+, and class migrants (professionals from blue-collar backgrounds).

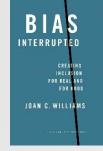
- 1. "He'll crush it"; "She's not ready." PIA groups judged on performance; others on potential.
- "He's skilled; she's lucky." PIA groups' successes attributed to luck, majority men's successes attributed to skill
- "It could happen to anyone"; "She blew it." PIA groups' mistakes tend to be noticed more and remembered longer, whereas majority men's mistakes tend to be written off.
- 4. PIA groups get horns; others a halo. Horns=one weakness generalized into an overall negative rating. Halo=one strength generalized into a global positive rating. In addition, mistakes by one PIA group member may reinforce negative group stereotypes.
- "We applied the rule—until we didn't." Objective requirements applied rigorously to PIA groups but applied leniently or waived for majority men.
- 6. Do only the superstars survive? Superstars may escape PIA problems that affect others.

Tightrope A narrower range of workplace behavior often is accepted from women and people of color ("TR groups"). Class migrants (professionals from blue-collar backgrounds) and modest or introverted men can face Tightrope problems, too.

- Leader or worker bee? TR groups face pressure to be "worker bees" who work hard and are undemanding...but if they comply, they lack "leadership potential."
- Modest, helpful, nice; dutiful daughter, office mom? Prescriptive stereotypes create pressures on women to be modest, mild-mannered team players—so "ambitious" is not a compliment for women and niceness may be optional for men but required of women.
- 3. Direct and assertive—or angry and abrasive? Direct, competitive, and assertive in majority men may be seen as inappropriate in TR groups —"tactless," "selfish," "difficult" "abrasive." Anger that's accepted from majority men may be seen as inappropriate or even threatening in TR groups.
- 4. Office housework vs glamour work. TR groups report less access to career-enhancing opportunities and more "office housework"—planning parties & cleaning up; taking notes & arranging meeting times; mentoring & being the peacemaker).
- 5. "She's a prima donna"; "He knows his own worth." The kind of self-promotion that works for majority men may be seen as off-putting in TR groups. Modest men may encounter bias about how "real men" should behave. Strong modesty norms can make class migrants, Asian-Americans, and women uncomfortable with self-promotion.
- Racial stereotypes. Asian-Americans are stereotyped as passive and lacking in social skills; African-Americans as angry or too aggressive: Latinos as hotheaded or emotional.





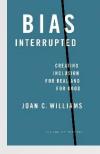


Performance evaluation audit at a law firm

• **Year 1:** 18% of women received comments such as: "I don't think she wants to be partner"

Intervention

Year 2: Only 1 woman



Evaluation audit

• **Year 1:** 9.5% of POC had leadership mentions; also much more likely to receive comments they were "well-liked"

Intervention

• Year 2: 100%!



What was the intervention?

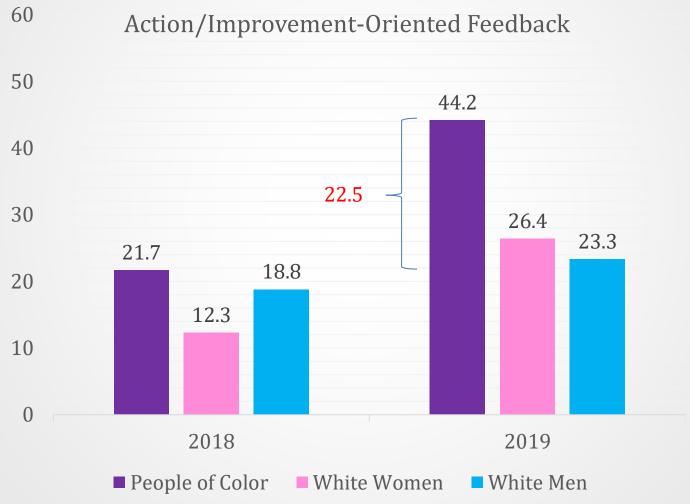
Redesign the evaluation form

A one hour training

 Do you have to get all rigid and bureaucratic? Not really



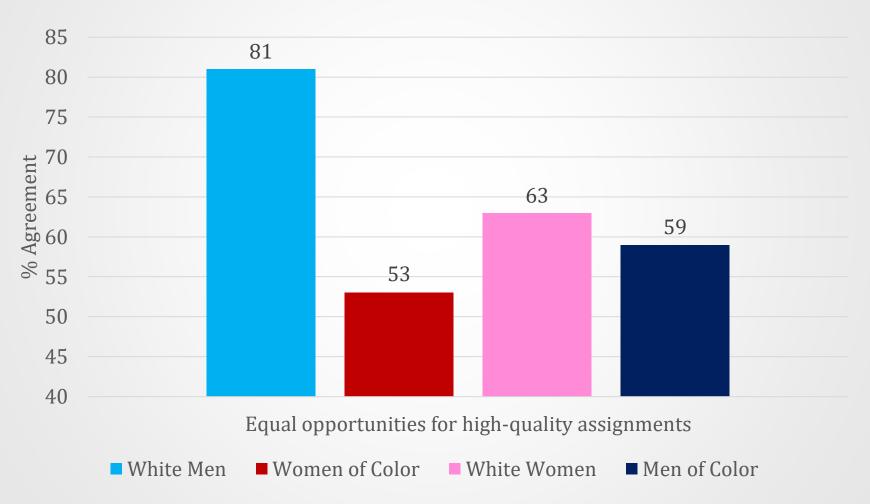
New systems benefit everyone



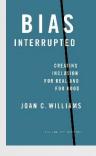
Williams et al., 2021



Access to opportunities: law

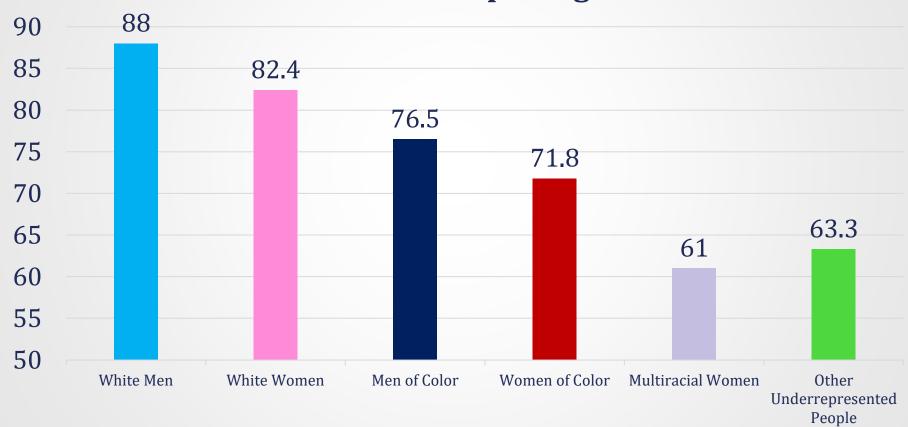


Williams et al., 2018



Architecture

Allowed to develop design ideas



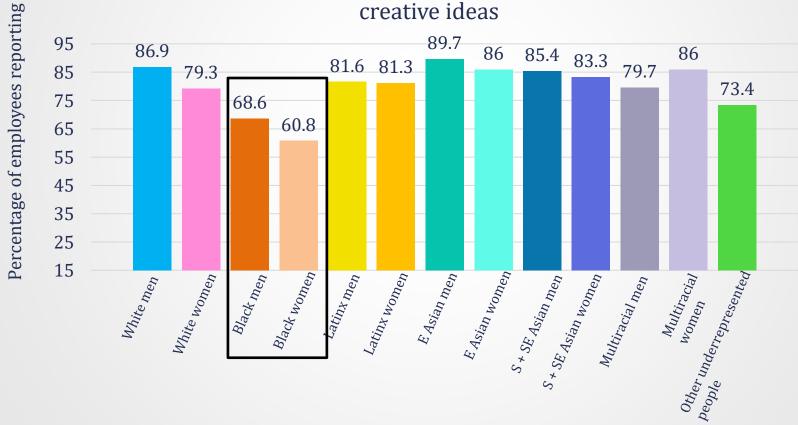
Williams & Korn, forthcoming 2021





Engineering company





Data from STEM organization





Without this...

Nothing else matters!

- Is it possible to change this?
 - Hint: only the CEO can

The book provides a step-by-step



Individual bias interrupters

BIAS INTERRUPTERS small steps big change

BIAS INTERRUPTERS FOR ASSIGNMENTS

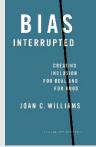
Office Housework Survey

Please fill in the blanks below. Put in zero	
if no time was spent on certain tasks.	

if no time was spent on certain tasks.	T	T	1		
	On average, how much time did you spend per month on each task below?	Do you feel you spent more time on this task than your peers with similar seniority and experience (circle answer)		he peers you have previous question # of women in your peer group	
1. Cleaning up after meetings	_hours_minutes	Yes/No			
2. Planning parties and other social events	_hours_minutes	Yes/No			
3. Getting coffee/food for meetings	_hours_minutes	Yes/No			
4. Taking notes at meetings	_hours_minutes	Yes/No			
5. Fetching documents during meetings	_hours_minutes	Yes/No			
6. Handling logistics and scheduling for meetings	_hours_minutes	Yes/No			
9. Keeping track of paperwork	hoursminutes	Yes/No			
10. Keeping track of budgets	hoursminutes	Yes/No			
11. Managing documents and data	_hours_minutes	Yes/No			
12.					
13.					
14.					

Center for WorkLife Law This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License

https://biasinterrupters.org/wp-content/uploads/Office-Housework-Survey.pdf



Tasking tool

BIAS INTERRUPTERS small steps big change

BIAS INTERRUPTERS FOR ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment Typology Worksheet
Fill out the worksheet below with specific projects/types of work/assignments that are high-profile and fall und the categories provided below:
This process applies to: (circle one) Junior Senior Intermediate () ()
HIGHER-PROFILE WORK:
Roles that provide the opportunities to gain new knowledge or become a subject matter expert:
1.
2.
3.
4.
Opportunities to display knowledge to important audiences:
1.
2.
3.
4.
Opportunities to develop relationships inside the company that are important for
promotion/compensation:
1.
2.
3.
4.
Opportunities to develop relationships outside the company that are important for promotion/compensation:
1.
2.
3.
4.
Opportunities that grant access to business development resources:
1.
2.
3.
4.
Other high-profile assignments in your organization that lead to promotion:
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.





Return to hybrid work

 Handled well, hybrid work can enhance diversity

 Handled poorly, hybrid work can corrode diversity



- Equalize access to opportunity
 - Set up a rotation for office housework
 - Keep track of who is getting highprofile opportunities
 - Reward lower-profile contributions

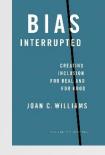


- Run inclusive meetings
 - Interrupt excessive interruptions
 - Call out the stolen idea
 - Tap knowledge of introverts and anyone with a modesty mandate
 - Remember, it's a business meeting





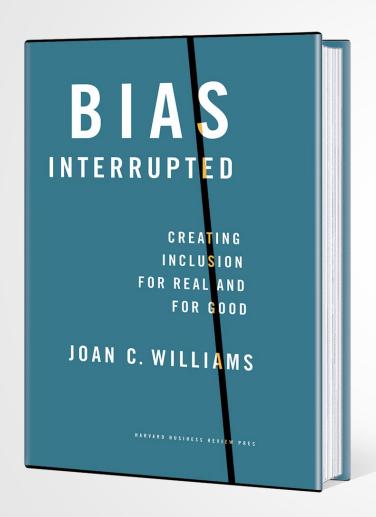
- Be respectful of people's nonwork commitments
 - Schedule meetings during business hours
 - Allow remote work if your company permits you to
 - Don't make assumptions



- Give effective feedback (including about racist or sexist comments)
 - You need a system
 - Give feedback to everyone
 - Discuss common biases before you write performance evaluations
 - Level the playing field with respect to selfpromotion
 - Be matter-of-fact and firm



Bias Interrupted



For more information, contact Joan C. Williams at williams@uchastings.edu
Joancwilliams.com