

Careers in Academic Medicine: Evaluation at Gatekeeping Junctures

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AAMC Benchmark Data, 2005-06

Medical students: 49% (33% in 1985; 21% 1975)

Residents: 43%

IM: 22% (42%), Peds: 16% (67%); Ob/Gyn: 9%(74%);
Ortho: 1% (11%)

Full-time faculty: 32%; 17% full profs; 38% assist profs

5% AA, 4% H, 0.1% NA, 13% Asian

Dept chairs: 102 basic science (avg 1/school); 174 clinical
(avg 1/school)

Deans at US Medical Schools: 11/125, <10%

What Do Women Want?

Basically the same thing men want

- More protected research time
- More institutional support
- Better clarification of expectations of employment
- Improved feedback

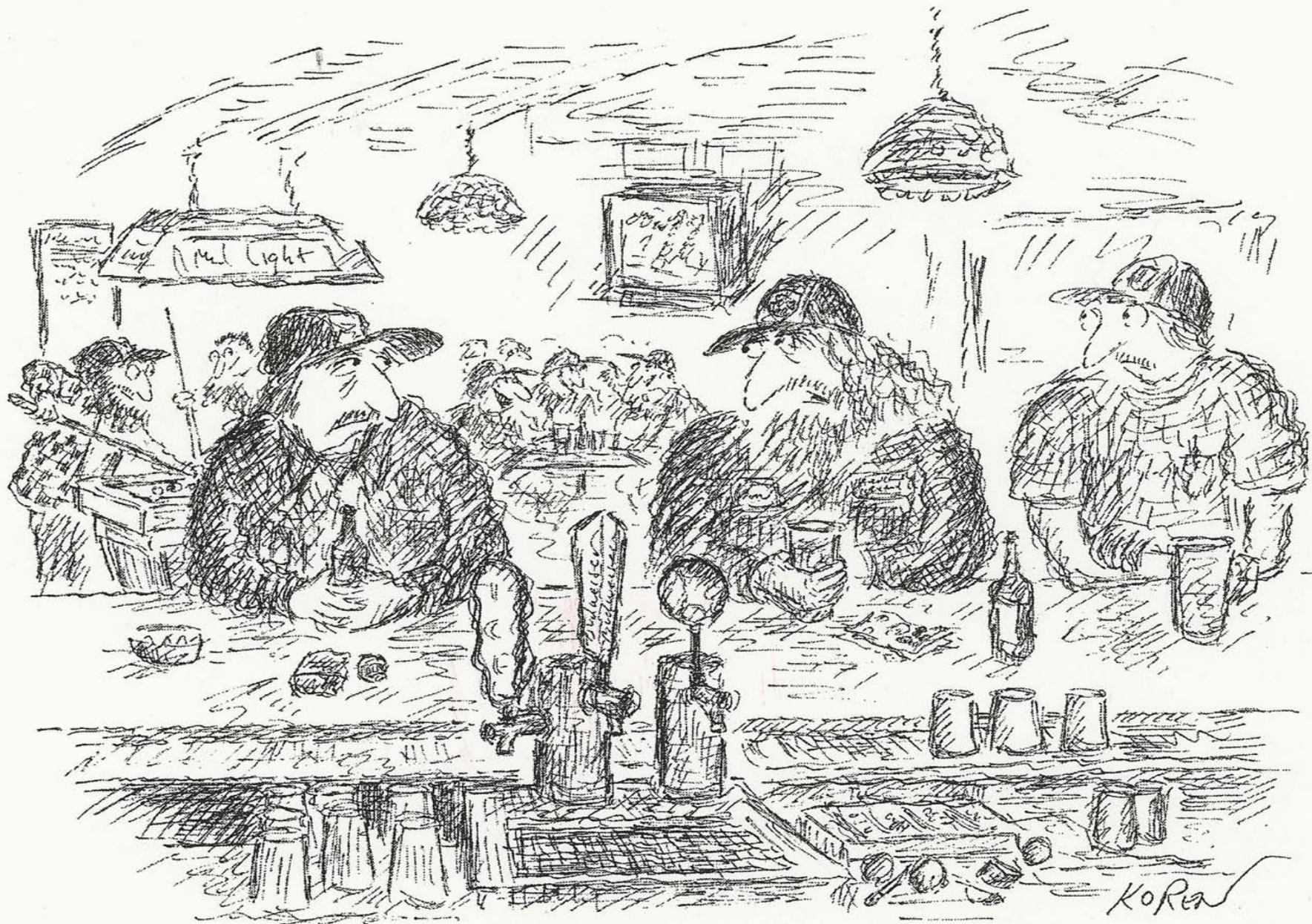
Broaddus & Feigel, Chest 105:1858, 1994

WHY?

Attacking the issue with the tools of our trade:

Research and evidence-based action

- Gather data on numbers – AAMC benchmarking, pay equity evals, %women faculty at ranks locally
- Survey perceptions of reasons for lack of advancement - numerous studies tell a consistent story
- Turn to research methods and findings from other fields



"Are you just pissing and moaning, or can you verify what you're saying with data?"

What is “unconscious bias”

- Unconscious bias and assumptions
- Previously held beliefs about a social category
- Schemas
- Stereotypes
- Mental models
- Cognitive shortcuts
- Statistical discrimination
- Implicit associations
- Spontaneous trait inference

The tendency of our minds to judge *individuals* based on characteristics (real or imagined) of *groups*

Unconscious Assumptions and Gender

DESCRIPTIVE: How men and women actually behave

PRESCRIPTIVE: Unconscious assumptions about the way men and women in the abstract “ought” to behave:

- Women: Nurturing, communal, nice, supportive, helpful, sympathetic
- Men: Decisive, inventive, strong, forceful, independent, “willing to take risks”

RELEVANT POINTS:

- Leaders, scientists, pioneers: Decisive, inventive, strong, independent
- Social penalties for violating prescriptive gender assumptions
- Unconscious gender assumptions are easily and automatically activated and applied

Language can activate
assumptions about a social
category

Semantic priming activates unconscious gender stereotypes

- Unrelated exercise: unjumble sentences where actions reflect *dependent*, *aggressive* or *neutral* behaviors; e.g.:
 - P alone cannot manage a
 - M at shouts others of
 - R read book by the
- “Reading comprehension” experiment with Donna or Donald engaging in dependent or aggressive behaviors
- Rated target on series of traits (Likert, 1-10)

-
- Gender of evaluator made no difference
 - Gender of target determined influence of semantic priming:
 - Neutral primes – Donna and Donald same
 - Dependent primes – only Donna more dependent
 - Aggressive primes – only Donald more aggressive

Banaji et al., J Pers Soc Psychol, 65:272 1993

Time pressure and high cognitive load
enhance application of unconscious
assumptions

Evaluation of Police Officers Engaging in Competent and Incompetent Behaviors

- 202 undergrads (77 male, 125 female)
 - Ps randomly assigned to 1 of 8 experimental conditions (2x2x2 factorial):
 - Male or female version of police officer's performance
 - Hi or low attentional demands (concurrent task demand and time pressure)
 - Hi or low memory demand
- Ratings:
- Competence, job performance, potential for advancement, likely future success → work performance scale
 - Adjective scales of gender-related attributes (e.g. dominant-submissive, strong-weak) → composite score

Martell RF. J Applied Soc Psychol, 21:1939-60, 1991

- No effect of evaluator sex
- No impact of memory demand on evaluation
- *Low attentional* demand:
 - Men and women comparable
- *High attentional* demand:
 - Work performance
 - Men higher than women
 - Men higher than men under low attentional demand
 - Gender-related characteristics
 - Men more stereotypically masculine
 - Women same

In a traditionally male job,
ambiguous performance criteria or
evaluation based on “potential”
consistently disadvantages
women

Ambiguous performance criteria in traditionally male jobs favors evaluation of men : “glass escalator”

- 48 participants (20 men)
- Job description; Assist VP; products made suggested male (e.g. engine parts, fuel tanks). Male and female rated in two conditions:
 - Performance clear
 - Performance ambiguous

Heilman et al., J Applied Psychol 89:416-27, 2004

Competence Score:

Competent - incompetent

Productive - unproductive

Effective - ineffective

Achievement-related
Characteristics:

Unambitious - ambitious

Passive - active

Indecisive - decisive

Weak - strong

Gentle - tough

Timid - bold

Unassertive - assertive

Interpersonal Hostility:

Abrasive - not abrasive

Conniving - not conniving

Manipulative - not manipulative

Not trustworthy - trustworthy

Selfish - not selfish

Pushy - accommodating

Likeability:

Likeable - not likeable

How much do you think
you would like to work
with this person?

Very much - not at all

Comparative Judgment:

Who is more likeable?

Who is more competent?

Results

- Performance clear
 - Competence comparable
 - Achievement-related characteristics comparable
 - Women less liked
 - Women more hostile
- Performance ambiguous
 - Likeability and hostility comparable
 - Men more competent
 - Men more achievement-related characteristics

- Study 2 – women only less liked in male gender type jobs
- Study 3 – Likeability and competence independently linked to recommendation for organizational rewards

Only women were deemed unlikeable for being competent at their job!

Evaluators can re-construct the value of identical accomplishments to get the hire that aligns with assumptions

Redefining Merit to Justify Discrimination

- Mock hiring situation – 3 studies
- Male and female applicants with identical credentials confirmed by ratings
- Police Chief – criteria constructed to favor male applicant, sign. for male evaluators
- Women's Studies Professor – criteria constructed to favor female applicant, sign. for female evaluators
- Self-perceived objectivity predicted gender bias

Uhlman and Cohen, 2005

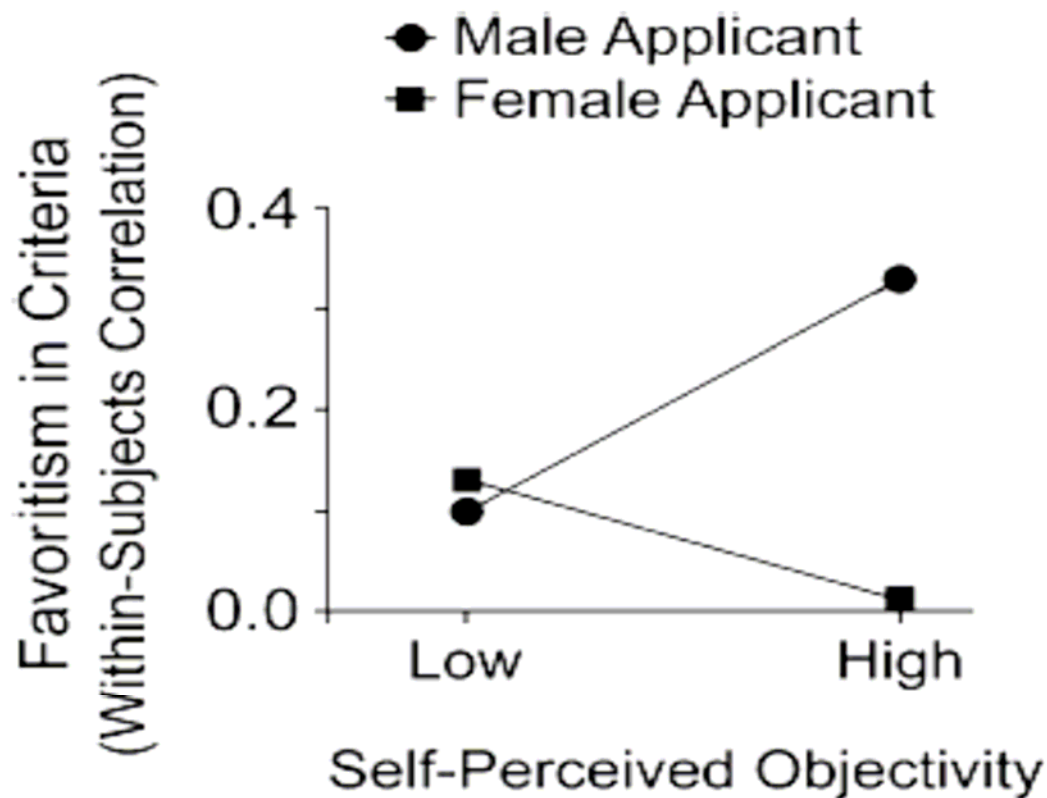


Fig. 2. Results from Experiment 1: the interaction of applicant's gender and self-perceived objectivity in predicting biased criteria. Low self-perceived objectivity is defined as one standard deviation below the mean; high self-perceived objectivity is defined as one standard deviation above the mean. Higher numbers indicate greater favoritism toward the applicant.

Redefining Merit to Justify Discrimination

- Half of the evaluators rated importance of criteria *before* seeing applications (commitment vs no-commitment)
- No-commitment: Criteria constructed to favor male applicant
- Commitment: Male and female applicants – similar hiring evaluations

Conclusion: To prevent the unconscious re-construction of merit to favor the person they want to hire, agree on criteria before seeing any applicants.

Uhlman and Cohen, Psychol Sci, 2005

Presence of a member of a social category can influence behavior through “social tuning”

Social influence effects on automatic racial prejudice

- Series of experiments measuring automatic prejudice
- Significant interaction of results with race of experimenter (less anti-black prejudice with black experimenter)
- When given instruction to avoid prejudice, further reduction in anti-black automatic prejudice

Lowery et al. J Pers Soc Psych 81:842, 2001

Progress in an Academic Career: Gatekeeping Events

- Prestigious research awards
- Hiring into a faculty position
- Achieving tenure

Progress in an Academic Career: Gatekeeping Events

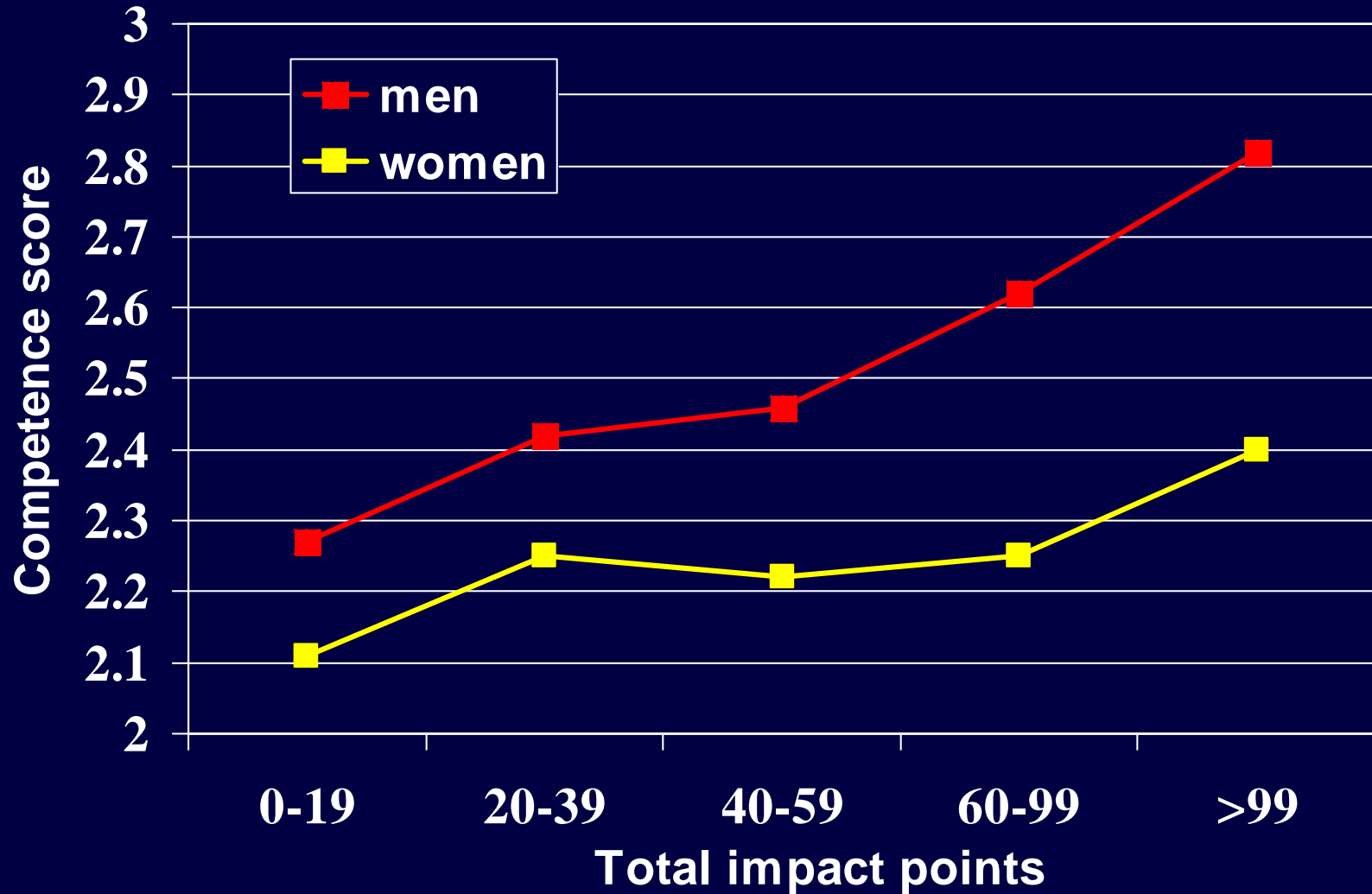
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Real Life Example: Swedish Postdoc study

Wenneras and Wold, Nature 387:341; 1997

- 114 applications for prestigious research postdocs to Swedish MRC (52 women)
- Reviewers' scores vs standardized metric from publication record = impact points
- Women consistently reviewed lower, especially in "competence"
- Women had to be 2.5x as productive as men to get the same score
- To even the score, women needed equivalent of 3 extra papers in a prestigious journal like Science or Nature

Wenneras and Wold, Nature, 1997



NIH Director's Pioneer Award:

Real life example of activation and application of unconscious bias?

- First NIH Roadmap initiative to be rolled out
- Intended to accelerate innovative research unsupported through traditional NIH funding mechanisms
- \$500,000/yr for 5 years
- Drew from all institutes
- New protocol for submission and review
- None of 9 awarded first round were women

Carnes, et al. JWH, 2005

Subsequent Review Cycles

- 2005: 6 women out of 14 (43%)
- 2006: 4 women out of 13 (31%)
- 2007: 4 women out of 12 (33%)

Were women doing better science after 2004 or was there something else?

Male semantic primes were
present in the announcement and
review criteria in 2004
and were removed in subsequent
rounds

2004

2005, 06, 07

Emphasis on risk

Risk-taking emphasized:

- “exceptional minds willing and able to explore ideas that were considered risky”
- “take...risks”
- “aggressive risk-taking”
- “high risk/high impact research”
- “take intellectual risks”
- URL includes “highrisk”

Emphasis on risk removed:

- “pioneering approaches”
- “potential to produce an unusually high impact”
- “ideas that have the potential for high impact”
- “highly innovative”
- URL no longer includes “risk”

Focus on technological advances

Technological advances highlighted as desirable:

- “support the people and projects that will produce tomorrow’s conceptual and technological breakthroughs”

Mention of technological breakthroughs removed; human health added:

- “encourage highly innovative biomedical research with great potential to lead to significant advances in human health.”

Social tuning to avoid anti-female bias more likely after 2004

- Huge public outcry
- Many more women present on review committee:
 - 2004: 6/64 (6%)
 - 2005: 28/64 (44%)
 - 2006: 32/79 (40%)
 - 2007: 29/69 (58%)
- Wording added to encourage women and minority applicants

Time pressure and cognitive load likely less after 2004

- 2004 – 1300 applications, unfamiliar process
- 2005 – 840 applications, more familiar process
- 2006 – 469 applications
- 2007 – 449 applications

In 2004 evaluation focused on
intrinsic leadership qualities
and performance criteria
emphasized *potential*

2004

2005, 06, 07

Evaluation criteria

Intrinsic qualities stressed:

- “*Potential* for scientific leadership”
- “Testimony of *intrinsic* motivation, enthusiasm, and intellectual energy”
- Reviewers told to look at *potential* for future work

Focus on intrinsic abilities removed:

- “Relevance of the research and impact on the scientific field and on the NIH mission”
- “Motivation/enthusiasm/intellectual energy to pursue a challenging problem.”
- Reviewers encouraged to look at accomplishments as evidence

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Preference for male applicants in academic settings

- 238 academic psychologists sent a cv with either male or female name
 - No differences between male and female evaluators
 - Entry level (i.e. potential): more likely to vote to hire man, more likely to indicate man had adequate teaching, research, and service experience
 - High level (i.e. clearly competent): no gender differences
 - More write-in comments for women

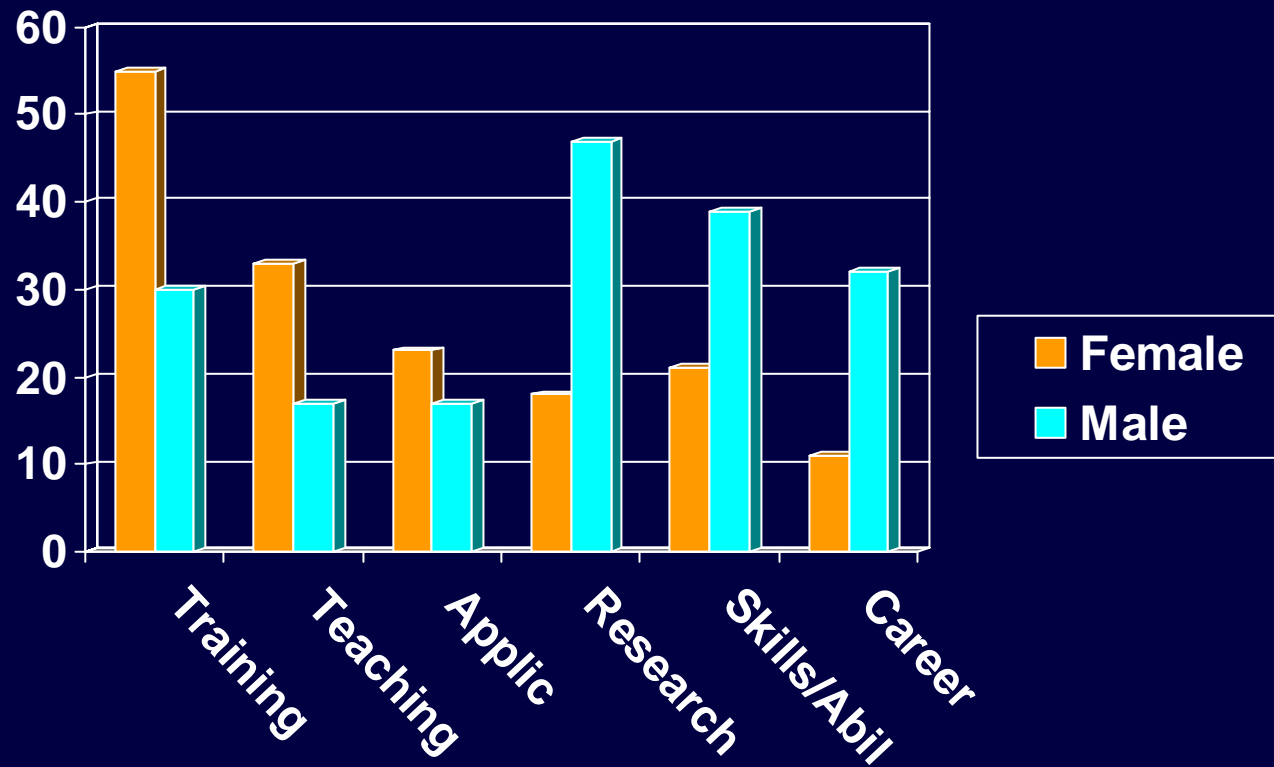
Steinpreis, Anders, and Ritzke 1999

Subtle gatekeeping bias – letters of recommendation

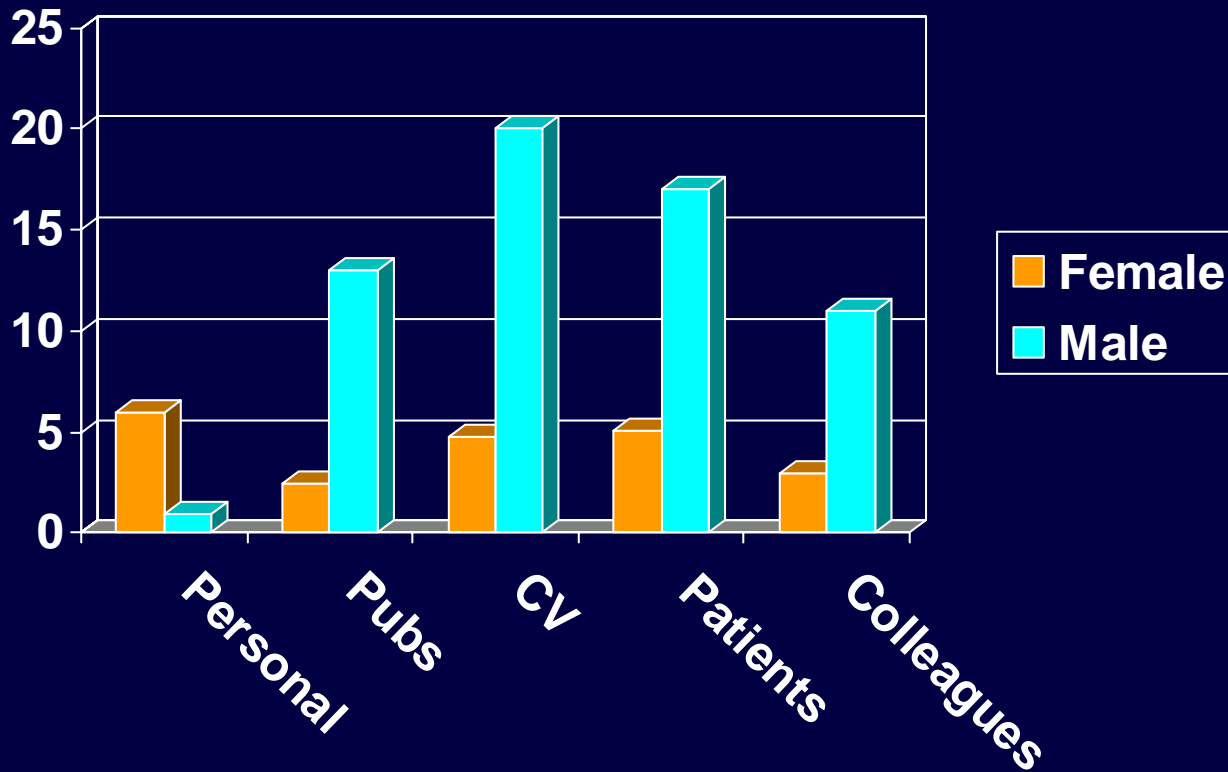
Trix and Psenka, *Discourse & Soc* 14:191 2003

- 312 letters of rec for medical faculty hired at large U.S. medical school
- Letters for women vs men:
 - Shorter
 - 15% vs 6% of *minimal assurance*
 - 10% vs 5% with *gender terms* (e.g. “intelligent young lady”; “insightful woman”)
 - 24% vs 12% *doubt raisers*
 - *Stereotypic adjectives*: “Compassionate”, “related well...” vs “successful”, “accomplished”
 - Fewer *standout adjectives* (“outstanding” “excellent”)

Semantic realms following possessive (e.g. “her training”; “his research”)



Distinctive semantic realms following possessive



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Bias in Evaluation of Leadership/Competence

“Think-manager-think-male phenomenon”

Prescriptive Gender Norms

- **Men**

- Strong
- Decisive
- Assertive
- Tough
- Authoritative
- Independent



- **Women**

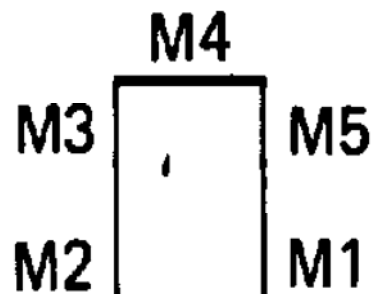
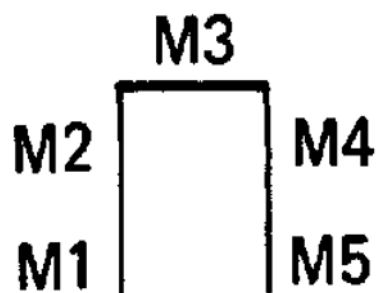
- Nurturing
- Communal
- Nice
- Supportive
- Helpful
- Sympathetic

Evaluation of Leadership/Competence

- Students seated around a table – Who is the leader?

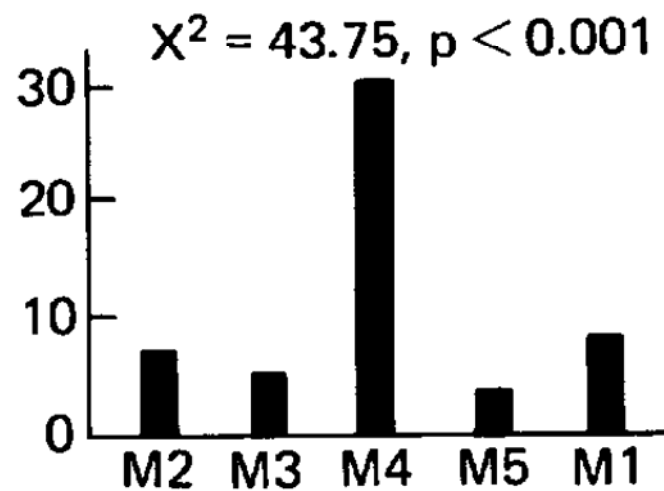
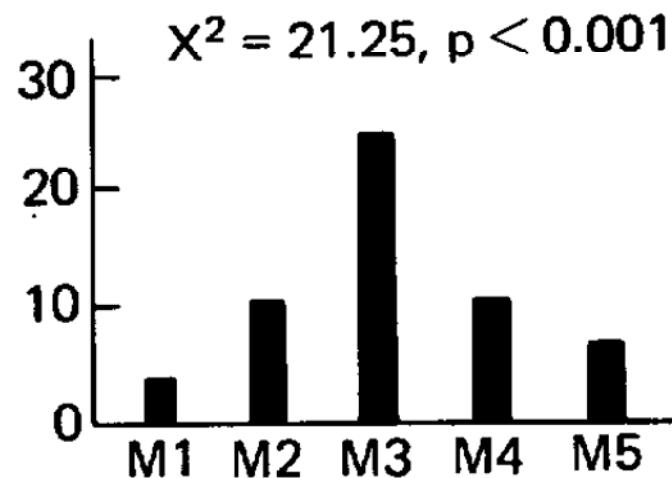
Porter & Geis 1981

MALE

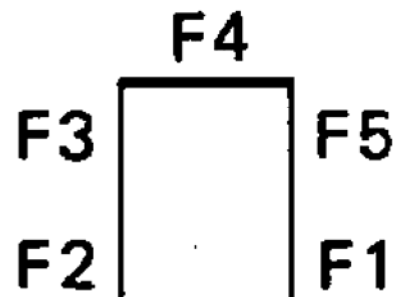
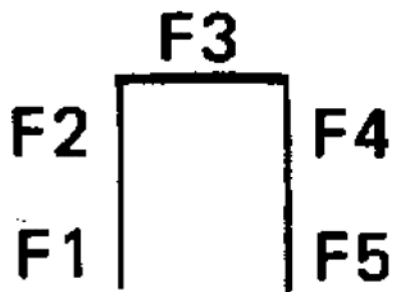


MALE

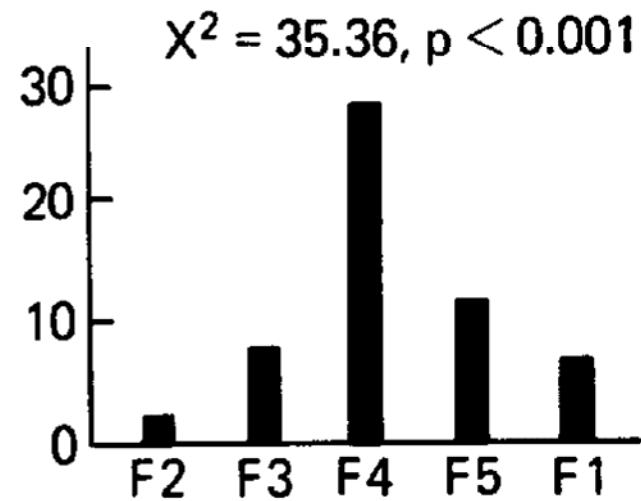
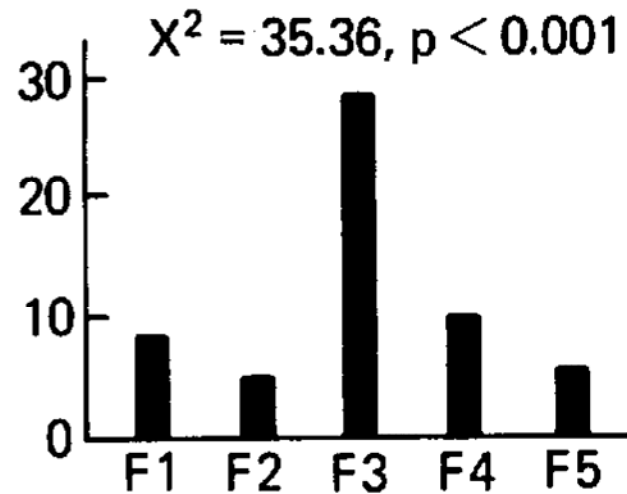
SAME-SEX STIMULUS GROUPS

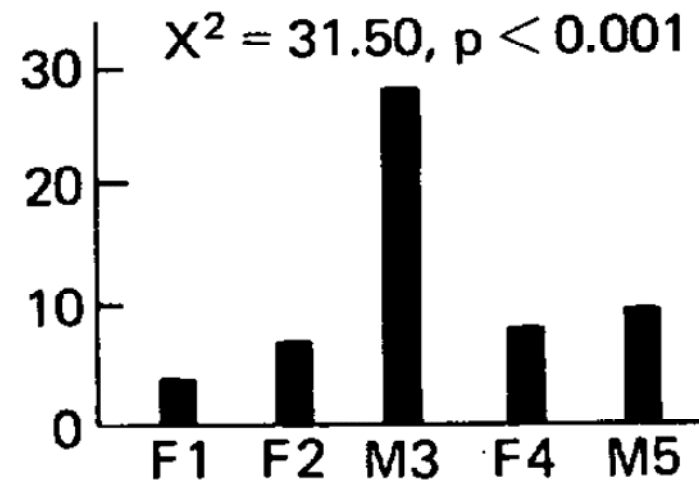
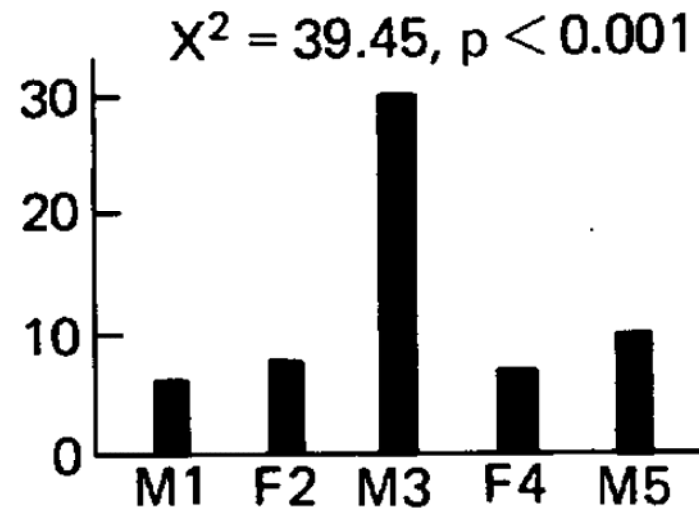
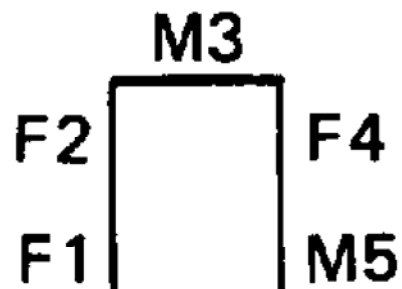
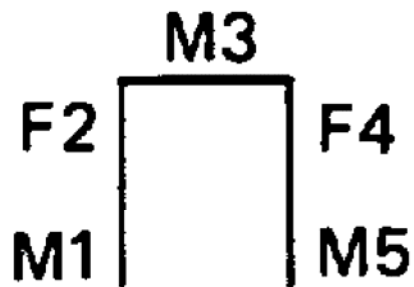


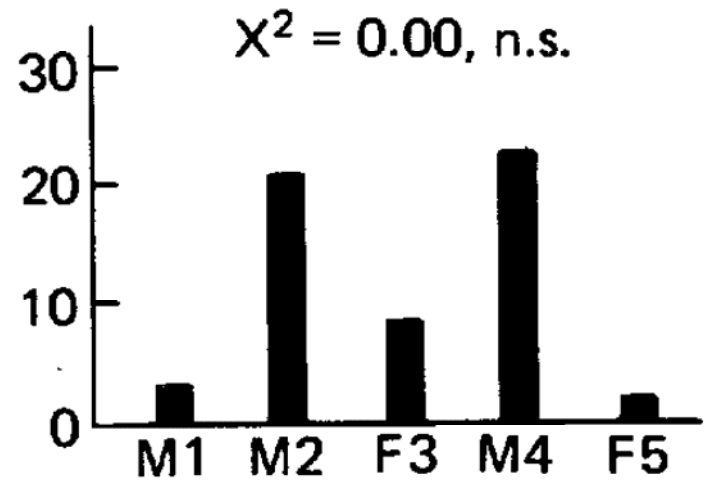
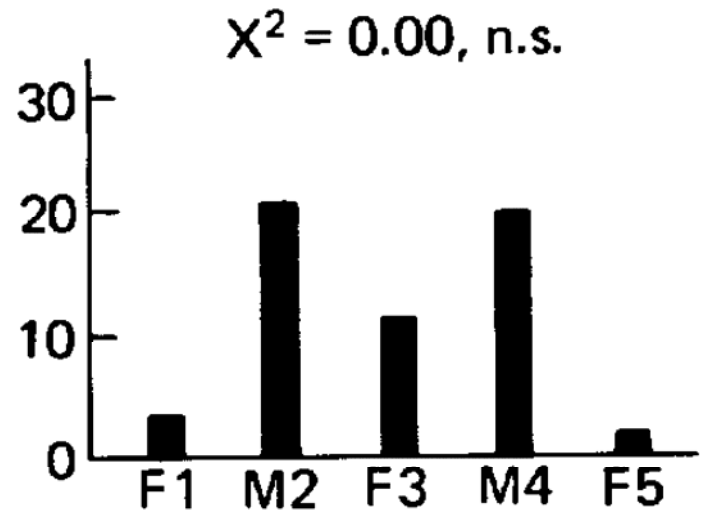
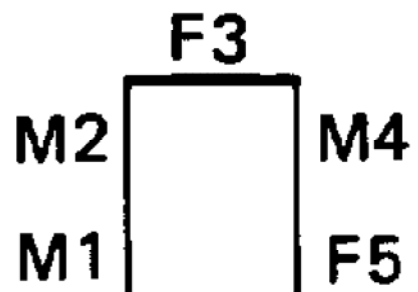
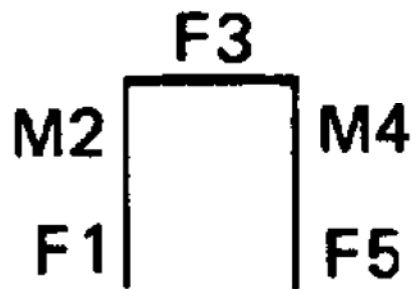
FEMALE



FEMALE







Characteristics of Effective Leadership – is there a basis for the prejudice favoring male leaders?

- Transformational **
- Transactional
- Laissez-faire

Are Men better Leaders than Women?

- Metanalysis of 45 studies measuring leadership effectiveness – Eagly et al., 2002
- Leadership effectiveness of 16 male and 6 female deans – Rosser et al., 2003

Conclusion: little difference between men and women. When differences emerged, women exhibited more transformational and men more laissez-faire leadership behaviors

“Leader” in tenure criteria

- 25 top research academic medical centers
- Tenure criteria from websites
- Scanned for “Leader”
- Slopes of regressions for annual % faculty who are tenured women x 7 years
- “Leader” = OR 6.0 (1.02, 35.37; $p=0.04$) for slope below median compared to those without

Marchant et al. 2007

Conclusions

- Even the most well-intentioned person committed to gender equity has unconscious biases about social categories
- These assumptions can disadvantage women at gatekeeping junctures in fields traditionally occupied by men such as academic medicine

Recommendations

- Acknowledge that we all have biases and assumptions
- Examine language and other processes at gatekeeping junctures in the context of research from social psychology
- Continue to raise awareness of the fact that:
 - “fixing the women” is not enough to achieve gender equity
 - With women comprising 50% of the pipeline, we cannot afford a system that utilizes only half of the potential talent in academic medicine