Why So Few? Fixing the Dearth of Women in Science









Percent Bachelor's degrees to URM Women 1991-2010



Percent STEM degrees to URM Women 1991-2010











Differential Attrition

% Physicists who are women (U.S.)



AIP Statistical Research Center

Differential Attrition

% Astronomers who are women (U.S.)



AIP Statistical Research Center

Why Diversity?

- Excellence of science
- Fairness/justice
- It's a great life!
 - Taxpayers support science, so should benefit equally
- Health of science profession
 - More scientifically literate (broad) public
 - \Rightarrow more public support of science
- Workforce needs

Why do Women and Under-represented Minorities lag behind parity?

- Statistical career disparities
 - Long 2001, Sonnert & Holton 1996, Egan & Bendick 1994, Tesch et al. 1995, MIT Report+
- Not ability, interest, effort
 - Seymour & Hewitt 1990s, Xie & Shauman 2003, NRC's 2006 "Beyond Bias and Barriers" study
- Not family issues
- Not conscious discrimination, overt prejudice

Why do Women and Under-represented Minorities lag behind parity?

- "Gender schemas" Virginia Valian, Why So Slow? The Advancement of Women
 - Lower expectations for women
 - Uneven evaluation ("unconscious bias") Wenneras & Wold 1997, Paludi & Bauer 1983, Budden+ 2008
 - Accumulation of disadvantage
- → Tilted playing field

The Objectivity of Science ...



Biernat, Manis & Nelson 1991 – height Porter & Geis 1981 – leaders at table Butler & Geis 1990, Geis+ – speaker/leader evaluation Dovidio et al. 1988 – eye gaze

Uneven Evaluation

- Heilman et al. 2004 rating asst. VPs
 Women can be friendly or competent, not both
- Norton, Vandello & Darley 2004 rating resumes for construction job
- *Uhlman & Cohen 2005* shifting criteria and (non)objectivity
- Heilman 1980 critical mass is ~30%

Valian annotated bibliography: http:// www.hunter.cuny.edu/genderequity/repository/ files/equity-materials/annobib.pdf Moss-Raucusin, Handelsman, et al. 2012 PNAS

- 63 male, 64 female science faculty
 - physics, chemistry, biology
 - 6 research universities: 3 private, 3 public
- CV of graduating senior looking for job as lab manager – "John" or "Jennifer"
- Both men and women:
 - See the male candidate as more competent
 - Were more likely to hire and mentor him
 - Starting salaries ~ \$30k for him, \$26k for her

Are you objective?

Mahzarin Banaji: implicit.harvard.edu

Sanbonmatsu, Akimoto & Gibson 1994 (Evaluation of failing students)



XKCD wisdom at xkcd.com

Women lack math ability ...

- STEREOTYPE THREAT: performing below ability because of expectations
- Example: "hard" math test
 - Men: 25/100
 - Women: 10/100
 - Gender gap in math?
- "This test has been designed to be gender neutral"
 - Women: 20/100
 - Men: 20/100
- Important for minority students

11 Steps to Success for Young Women

- 1. Work hard (at something you love)
- 2. Do interesting, high impact work
- 3. (If) uneven playing field don't be discouraged
- 4. Reject "lower standards"
- 5. Mentor up, down, and sideways
- 6. Network w WiS: find allies, take turns leading
- 7. Use your first & last names
- 8. Prepare an "elevator speech"
- 9. Practice confidence after brushing
- 10. Give great talks
- 11. Own your ambition

Conference for Undergraduate Women in Physics at Yale (CUWPY)



5 Steps for Leaders

- 1. Learn about bias www.hunter.cuny.edu/genderequity/ equityMaterials/Feb2008/annobib.pdf implicit.harvard.edu Beyond Bias and Barriers (NRC Study)
- 2. Do job *searches* UW hiring kit
- 3. Validate women speakers, job candidates, colleagues Introductions, appointments
- 4. Mentor
- 5. Equate diversity with excellence

Back-up slides

Reasons for Disparities?

- Not family "Do Babies Matter?" Mason & Goulden 2002
 - Women w/o children not more successful
 - Many women in other demanding fields
 - Countries w strong support systems (e.g., Scandinavia) have few women in physics
 - Academic careers flexible: become a professor, have a family!
- In Praise of Daycare, 2009 January STATUS newsletter

2006 NAS Study: Beyond Bias and Barriers: Fulfilling the Potential of Women in Academic Science and Engineering

- 1. Statistics (U.S.)
- 2. Learning and performance

→ No intrinsic difference could possibly lead to observed gender gap

- 3. Persistence and Attrition
- 4. Evaluation of success *implicit bias*
- 5. Strategies that work

Undergraduate Carnegie Mellon Hiring faculty U. Washington toolkit Training women faculty CoaCH ADVANCE CRLT players

- 6. Institutional structures, career paths
- 7. Recommendations

Letters of Recommendation

- *Trix & Penska 2003* letters for a prestigious medical fellowship
 - Length
 - Specificity
 - Superlatives v. "grindstone" adjectives
 - Doubt
 - Explicit mention of gender, personality, family
 - (Tenure letters: women re women)

Coaching (Mentoring)



Tony DeCicco, U.S. women's soccer coach Boston Globe, June 18, 1999

When job searches are gender-blind ...

blind audition...

...works for orchestras, writers, abstracts, resumes ...

See story of Munich Philharmonic trombonist (Abby Conant)

There aren't any good women to hire?

- Jane Doe
- John Doe
- Keisha Doe
- Jamal Doe

(Research shows name strongly affects success of resume, even among psychologists who are well aware of gender schemas.)

More women are earning science and engineering PhDs



Career Disparities

- Long 2001
- Sonnert & Holton 1996
- Synthetic cohorts, e.g., NSF fellows career advancement of women slower
- Egan & Bendick 1994, Tesch et al. 1995, MIT Report, 1999
 - Salary and resource disparities

Reasons for Disparities?

- Xie & Shauman 2003 interest not correlated with ability in science
- Seymour & Hewitt studies 1990s persistence in science not correlated with ability

Amelia & Sophia

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Women in Astronomy I Space Telescope Science Institute 1992



Baltimore Charter for Women in Astronomy