Thinking Your Way to Success

SOUTH CAROLINA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

PROFESSOR SARAH E. REDFIELD

AUGUST 23, 2014

PART I

TODAY’s TOPICS

Reminder time limited
Just an introduction
THERE IS A SECOND SESSION
AFTERNOON BREAKOUT:

PART II. Focus on DEBIASING with examples from testing/employment

*Intro 1 Brown Revisited
Intro 2: WHY this topic: Manifestation

THINKING ABOUT THINKING

Aspects of Implicit Bias
- Implicit Bias & brain shortcuts
- Briefly, In- and Out- Groups
- Briefly, Micromessaging
- Briefly, Debiasing

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Rethinking the way we think offers insight to a more mindful fair approach at every level of education (without blame).

In the school house....concept & practice

New insights and explanations
- Intransigent achievement gaps.
- Disproportionality in special education
"Today, education is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments. Compulsory school attendance laws and the great expenditures for education both demonstrate our recognition of the importance of education to our democratic society. It is required in the performance of our most basic public responsibilities, even service in the armed forces. It is the very foundation of good citizenship. . . .", Brown v. Board of Education 1954.

Brown v. Board of Education

"To separate them from others of similar age and qualifications solely because of their race generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone. . . . Segregation of white and colored children in public schools has a detrimental effect upon the colored children. The impact is greater when it has the sanction of the law; for the policy of separating the races is usually interpreted as denoting the inferiority of the negro group. A sense of inferiority affects the motivation of a child to learn. Segregation with the sanction of law, therefore, has a tendency to (retard) the educational and mental development of negro children and to deprive them of some of the benefits they would receive in a racially integrated school system.

Whatever may have been the extent of psychological knowledge at the time of Plessy v. Ferguson, this finding is amply supported by modern authority."
WHATEVER MAY HAVE BEEN THE EXTENT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE AT THE TIME OF PLESSY V. FERGUSON, THIS FINDING IS AMPLY SUPPORTED BY MODERN AUTHORITY.

Differences plague education.
A few examples – manifestations -- here (and in materials.)

% Reading Below Basic by Race & Ethnicity US
Differences that plague education are particularly concerning around (exclusionary) discipline.
Beyond school house gates, disproportionality and difference in results exists at almost every point in juvenile and criminal justice.
Relative Rate of Involvement in JJ

**Relative Rates**

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<th>Black</th>
<th>AIAN*</th>
<th>AIEPI**</th>
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</table>

**Juveniles by Race & Ethnicity**

- Total in Juvenile Population
- Total Detained
- Total in Diversion
- Total Adjudicated and placed
- Total Convicted criminal count

* AIAN: American Indian/Alaska Native
** AIEPI: Asian and Pacific Islanders
AND THE RESEARCH SHOWS:
DIFFERENT DISCIPLINE, DIFFERENT ARREST, ETC. IS
NOT BECAUSE OF WORSE BEHAVIOR OR OFFENDING RATES

Differences are pervasive and persistent. WHY?
The numbers suggest why we may want to think differently.

A common factor here is the exercise of discretion.

SO MANY CRITICAL DECISION MAKERS.
Why? ...Many reasons, but can it be that we just aren’t thinking when we need to be?

Can it be that cumulatively our unconscious, unintended responses cause disproportionality?

Implicit bias, in-groups, micromessaging ...

Today’s Topics
Reminder time limited
Just an introduction

Why this topic: Manifestation
Thinking about Thinking

Aspects of Implicit Bias
- Implicit Bias & brain shortcuts
- In- and Out- Groups
- Micromessaging
- Debiasing
Thinking about thinking.

“Sometimes the behavioral research leads us to completely change how we think about an issue. For example, many of our anti-discrimination policies focus on finding the bad apples who are explicitly prejudiced. In fact, the serious discrimination is implicit, subtle and nearly universal. Both blacks and whites subtly try to get a white partner when asked to team up to do an intellectually difficult task. In computer shooting simulations, both black and white participants were more likely to think black figures were armed. In emergency rooms, whites are pervasively given stronger painkillers than blacks or Hispanics. Clearly, we should spend more effort rigging situations to reduce universal, unconscious racism.”
Given who we are it’s hard to rethink thinking.
Rethinking thinking...

Would you hire this man?
Exploring Implicit / Explicit

1. You ask me if my decisions are biased in favor of the abled compared to disabled? Of course I say no.

2. I tell my HR person there is no way I’ll ever hire a handicapped driver.

3. You are in a wheelchair, I talk louder, without knowing that’s what I’m doing...

Implicit attitudes reflect learned associations that can exist outside of conscious awareness or control.

Explicit attitudes are those evaluations that are deliberately generated and consciously experienced as one’s own.
Exploring Implicit / Explicit

• New methods don’t rely on self-reporting.
• Implicit Association Test

Project Implicit, https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/
IAT

PENCIL AND PAPER
# Exploring Implicit

**WORD CATEGORIZATION [HANDBUT]**

**FIRST ROUND**

**20 SECONDS**

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(C) PROFESSOR SARAH REDFIELD
Word Categorization

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(C) PROFESSOR SARAH REDFIELD

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Word Categorization

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White
Good

Black
Bad

Word Categorization
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(C) Professor Sarah Redfield
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RESPONSE TIME MEASURES
IMPLICIT ASSOCIATIONS.

(backtracking...)
The brain’s use of shortcuts--schemas --explains the IAT.
Schemas, helpful... or not

“Categorization is fundamental to human cognition.”
Critical to organizing knowledge about the world, but sometimes leads to discriminatory results.

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IMPLICIT BIAS revisited
This is not self-reported.
This is not diversity training.

Person who is implicitly biased:

- Is UNAWARE that has such bias
- Makes unconscious assumptions about groups of individuals
- Makes decisions based on such assumptions
Implicit bias defined:

- an unconscious association or preference (positive or negative) we hold that operates outside of our awareness

“People may possess associations with which they actively and honestly disagree.”

Nosek & Riskind

- Implicit biases are dissociated from explicit biases.
- Implicit biases are not necessarily dissociated from decisions and actions, verbal and nonverbal.
- And they are apt to be self-perpetuating.
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IN- AND OUT-GROUPS
Groups
We prefer our own.
No matter how we define our own.

Rethinking thinking...

Would you marry this man?
WITHOUT EVEN THINKING ABOUT IT
"F*ing punks"..."Creepy assed cracker"
Labels (schema) when uncomfortable, afraid.

Schemas & groups give (dis)advantages.
familiar is good, fear is bad....

You'll be a good fit
My brother knows you
You're just like me
Got it!
Labeling is another aspect of group dynamics. Labels are everywhere... And can be enough to decide your path.

American-**Limited** English Proficiency-Emotionally **Disturbed-ADVANCED** ...
Ivy League, Democrat, Yankee... v. SHOW ME THE EVIDENCE

**NAMES ARE LABELS...**

And can be enough to get you a job or not...
- Gender Race
MICROMESSAGING

“Thafs an excellent suggestion, Miss Triggs. Perhaps one of the men here would like to make it.”
MICROAFFIRMATIONS

- Provide full attention
- Acknowledge contributions
- Recognize strengths
- Encourage participation
- Respectfully ask questions for clarification

MICROINEQUITIES

- Interrupt
- Translate
- Misidentify
- Exclude
- Marginalize
- Don’t respond, include

Understand your own voice

Small messages
- sometimes unspoken
- often unconscious
- constantly sent and received

Micromessages are often unknown to the sender.
Micromessages are cumulative.

- Accumulation of either Advantage or Disadvantages.
- Cumulative microinequities lead to disengagement and thus to a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure.

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Implicit Bias, Mental Schema, Groups, Micromessaging

ALL UNCONSCIOUS, ALL UNINTENDED INFLUENCES ON DECISIONS AND RESPONSES

Summary

Is bias misunderstood?
“Sometimes the behavioral research leads us to completely change how we think about an issue. For example, many of our anti-discrimination policies focus on finding the bad apples who are explicitly prejudiced. In fact, the serious discrimination is implicit, subtle and nearly universal. Both blacks and whites subtly try to get a white partner when asked to team up to do an intellectually difficult task. In computer shooting simulations, both black and white participants were more likely to think black figures were armed. In emergency rooms, whites are pervasively given stronger painkillers than blacks or Hispanics. Clearly, we should spend more effort rigging situations to reduce universal, unconscious racism.”
While there is no blame in the quick shortcut working of our brains, also not an excuse.

There is good news.

**MOTIVATION TO BE FAIR CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**
Research supports debiasing techniques.

**EDUCATION**
- Increase internal motivation
- Awareness / detection

**EXPOSURE**
- Individuation
- Contact
- Positive exemplars/counter-stereotyping
- Environment

**SYSTEMIC**
- Higher level processing, e.g., writing
- Reduced cognitive load
- **TRAINING**
- Checklists/accountability
- Procedural / organizational changes

Learn Strategies
Debiasing, become aware/engage in training.

https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/

Be engaged and accountable.
Commit to active and bystander intervention.

INTERVENE against bias, especially if you can do so from a safe (and powerful) position...

TEN + TIPS for Debiasing: BE MINDFUL

There is good news, be motivated.
Debiasing (1), remember it’s all about you.
Debiasing (2), become aware.
Debiasing (3), individuate.
Debiasing (4), notice your environment.
Debiasing (5), add different context and relationships to your environment.
Debiasing (6), be open to different perspectives.
Debiasing (7), approach and accept.
Debiasing (8), Modify your approach to fit the decision.
Debiasing (9) Modify your approach to fit the situation.
Debiasing (10), Modify organizational approaches.
Debiasing (+), Be an active player or bystander.
QUESTIONS/THOUGHTS?