Using Research and Technology to Tackle Gender Bias

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Disclosures

- I have no financial disclosures
- I am an early learner when it comes to programming

Esther Choo MD MPH @choo_ek · 2 Feb 2018

Enthusiasm about the gains at the med school admission level, therefore, are mitigated by the persistence of the leaky pipeline of advancement. We get in the door, but we do not move up from there. [AAMC] 5/

Fig 2 Facial hair categories.

Mackenzie R Wehner et al. BMJ 2015;351:bmj.h6311

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Letters of recommendation... 11/

Letters for Women > Men *Tend* to Have Certain Qualities

- Lack superlatives
- Emphasize effort (not accomplishment)
- Mention personal life
- Have irrelevant negative comments
- Refer to "soft" qualities ("nice," "warm")

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Home
Insert
Page Layout
Formulas
Data
Review
View
Book2
Paste
Calibri (Body)
12
A1
Number

If . . . , then . . .

Research

- What does the literature say?
- What's been done?

What are the “rules”?

Letters/evaluations written for women are <u>more</u> likely to:

- Include minimal assurance ('She can do the job') rather than a strong endorsement
- Highlight effort ('She is hard-working') instead of highlighting accomplishments ('her significant research')
- Discuss personal life and fail to use formal titles
- Include gender stereotypes ('She is compassionate' while 'he is a leader') and emotion-focused/communal words
- Raise doubt
- Be shorter

What’s out there?

- Textio
- http://www.hemingwayapp.com/

What are the “rules”?

Letters/evaluations written for women are <u>less</u> likely to:

- Mention publications, projects, and research
- Include superlatives ('She was the best, the top, the greatest')
- Use nouns ('He was a teacher' while 'she taught’)
- Include repetition of positive qualities

Pinter pauses . . .

Social Justice

Dyslexia

Silence + Space

Technology

- How do we make this happen?
- What do we want to create?

Diving in!

- Python
- Html
- API
- Github

Poolside

- Natural language processing
- Lint
- Vue
- Developing a plug-in

Value of a team

- Jordan Matelsky
- Catherine DeJager
- Neil Pilgrim
- Vassiki Chauhan
- Eric Leung
- Alex Chan

- Mentor: Jason Clark

https://github.com/gender-bias/gender-bias

README.md

Reading for Gender Bias

Promote gender equality by identifying potential gender bias in letters of recommendation and evaluations

Autocorrect for bias

Implicit gender bias in evaluations negatively impacts women at every stage of her career. The goal of this project is to create a web-based text analysis tool that scans and reveals language bias associated with evaluations and letters of recommendation written for trainees and applicants. The tool will provide a summary of potential changes to the writer to help them remove bias. The hope is that by bringing awareness to the existence of implicit bias, we can change how evaluations for women are drafted and judged, thereby providing a concrete way to tackle gender disparities.

Welcome!

Thank you for visiting the Reading for Gender Bias project!

This document (the README file) introduces you to the project. Feel free to explore by section or just scroll through.

- What is the project about? (And why does it matter?)
- Usage
- About the founder
- How can you get involved?
- Contact me
- Learn more

What is the project about?

Website

- https://github.com/gender-bias/reading-for-genderbias-web

- Beta testing
  - Blended rules (“best woman”)
  - Nous and adjectives (“patient”)

- Summary statement

What does feedback look like?

- Behavior change
  - Positive reinforcement
- Constructive feedback
  - Percentage of words (e.g., communal words)
  - Considering value (add vs. delete)

Research

- Will people use it?
- Can the tool change behavior?
- What level of specificity does it need?
  - Applications
  - Promotion/hiring
  - Evaluations
  - Field
- Can it help with personal statements?
- Can we develop rules for other types of bias?

Storytelling

- Power in these moments
- Don’t limit yourself by your expertise
- Bring your creativity to problem-solving

Thank you!

Questions?

Learn more/help out:

- Github: https://github.com/gender-bias/gender-bias

Get in touch

- mollie.marr@gmail.com
- @MollieMarr

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Publications, Projects, and Research

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Superlatives

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Nouns

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