

Understanding Implicit Bias

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Implicit Bias in the Courtroom

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ABSTRACT

Given the substantial and growing scientific literature on implicit bias, the time has now come to confront a critical question: *What, if anything, should we do about implicit bias in the courtroom?* The author team comprises legal academics, scientists, researchers, and even a sitting federal judge who seek to answer this question in accordance with behavioral realism. The Article first provides a succinct scientific introduction to implicit bias, with some important theoretical clarifications that distinguish between explicit, implicit, and structural forms of bias. Next, the Article applies the science to two trajectories of bias relevant to the courtroom. One story follows a criminal defendant path; the other story follows a civil employment discrimination path. This application involves not only a focused scientific review but also a step-by-step examination of how criminal and civil trials proceed. Finally, the Article examines various concrete intervention strategies to counter implicit biases for key players in the justice system, such as the judge and jury.

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INTRODUCTION

The problems of overt discrimination have received enormous attention from lawyers, judges, academics, and policymakers. While explicit sexism, racism, and other forms of bias persist, they have become less prominent and public over the past century. But explicit bias and overt discrimination are only part of the problem. Also important, and likely more pervasive, are questions surrounding implicit bias—attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, decisionmaking, and behavior, without our even realizing it.

How prevalent and significant are these implicit, unintentional biases? To answer these questions, people have historically relied on their gut instincts and personal experiences, which did not produce much consensus. Over the past two decades, however, social cognitive psychologists have discovered novel ways to measure the existence and impact of implicit biases—without relying on mere common sense. Using experimental methods in laboratory and field studies, researchers have provided convincing evidence that implicit biases exist, are pervasive, are large in magnitude, and have real-world effects. These fascinating discoveries, which have migrated from the science journals into the law reviews and even popular discourse, are now reshaping the law's fundamental understandings of discrimination and fairness.

Given the substantial and growing scientific literature on implicit bias, the time has now come to confront a critical question: *What, if anything, should we do about implicit bias in the courtroom?* In other words, how concerned should we be that judges, advocates, litigants, and jurors come to the table with implicit biases that influence how they interpret evidence, understand facts, parse legal principles, and make judgment calls? In what circumstances are these risks most acute? Are there practical ways to reduce the effects of implicit biases? To what extent can awareness of these biases mitigate their impact? What other debiasing strategies might work? In other words, in what way—if at all—should the courts respond to a better model of human decisionmaking that the mind sciences are providing?

We are a team of legal academics, scientists, researchers, and a sitting federal judge¹ who seek to answer these difficult questions in accordance with behavioral realism.² Our general goal is to educate those in the legal profession who are

1. Judge Mark W. Bennett, a coauthor of this article, is a United States District Court Judge in the Northern District of Iowa.

2. Behavioral realism is a school of thought that asks the law to account for more accurate models of human cognition and behavior. See, e.g., Jerry Kang & Kristin Lane, *Seeing Through Colorblindness: Implicit*

unfamiliar with implicit bias and its consequences. To do so, we provide a current summary of the underlying science, contextualized to criminal and civil litigation processes that lead up to and crescendo in the courtroom. This involves not only a focused scientific review but also a step-by-step examination of how criminal and civil trials proceed, followed by suggestions designed to address the harms. We seek to be useful to legal practitioners of good faith, including judges, who conclude that implicit bias is a problem (one among many) but do not know quite what to do about it. While we aim to provide useful and realistic strategies for those judges already persuaded that implicit bias is a legitimate concern, we also hope to provoke those who know less about it, or are more skeptical of its relevance, to consider these issues thoughtfully.

We are obviously not a random sample of researchers and practitioners; thus, we cannot claim any representative status. That said, the author team represents a broad array of experience, expertise, methodology, and viewpoints. In authoring this paper, the team engaged in careful deliberations across topics of both consensus and dissensus.³ We did not entirely agree on how to frame questions in this field or how to answer them. That said, we stand collectively behind what we have written. We also believe the final work product reveals the benefits of such cross-disciplinary and cross-professional collaboration.

Part I provides a succinct scientific introduction to implicit bias, with some important theoretical clarifications. Often the science can seem too abstract, especially to nonprofessional scientists. As a corrective, Part II applies the science to two trajectories of bias relevant to the courtroom. One story follows a criminal defendant path; the other story follows a civil employment discrimination path. Part III

Bias and the Law, 58 UCLA L. REV. 465, 490 (2010); Linda Hamilton Krieger & Susan T. Fiske, *Behavioral Realism in Employment Discrimination Law: Implicit Bias and Disparate Treatment*, 94 CALIF. L. REV. 997, 997–1008 (2006). Jon Hanson and his coauthors have advanced similar approaches under the names of “critical realism,” “situationism,” and the “law and mind sciences.” See Adam Benforado, *Frames of Injustice: The Bias We Overlook*, 85 IND. L.J. 1333, 1339 n.28 (2010) (listing papers).

3. This paper arose out of the second symposium of PULSE: Program on Understanding Law, Science, and Evidence at UCLA School of Law, on March 3–4, 2011. We brought together leading scientists (including Anthony Greenwald, the inventor of the Implicit Association Test), federal and state judges, applied researchers, and legal academics to explore the state of the science regarding implicit bias research and to examine the various institutional responses to date. The Symposium also raised possibilities and complications, ranging from the theoretical to practical, from the legal to the scientific. After a day of public presentations, the author team met in a full-day closed session to craft the outlines of this paper. Judge Michael Linfield of the Los Angeles Superior Court and Jeff Rachlinski, Professor of Law at Cornell Law School, participated in the symposium but could not join the author team. Their absence should not be viewed as either agreement or disagreement with the contents of the Article.

examines different intervention strategies to counter the implicit biases of key players in the justice system, such as the judge and jury.

I. IMPLICIT BIASES

A. Empirical Introduction

Over the past thirty years, cognitive and social psychologists have demonstrated that human beings think and act in ways that are often not rational. We suffer from a long litany of biases, most of them having nothing to do with gender, ethnicity, or race. For example, we have an oddly stubborn tendency to anchor to numbers, judgments, or assessments to which we have been exposed and to use them as a starting point for future judgments—even if those anchors are objectively wrong.⁴ We exhibit an endowment effect, with irrational attachments to arbitrary initial distributions of property, rights, and grants of other entitlements.⁵ We suffer from hindsight bias and believe that what turns out to be the case today should have been easily foreseen yesterday.⁶ The list of empirically revealed biases goes on and on. Indeed, many legal academics have become so familiar with such heuristics and biases that they refer to them in their analyses as casually as they refer to economic concepts such as transaction costs.⁷

One type of bias is driven by attitudes and stereotypes that we have about social categories, such as genders and races. An *attitude* is an association between some concept (in this case a social group) and an evaluative valence, either positive or negative.⁸ A *stereotype* is an association between a concept (again, in this case a social group) and a trait.⁹ Although interconnected, attitudes and stereotypes

4. See Jon D. Hanson & Douglas A. Kysar, *Taking Behavioralism Seriously: The Problem of Market Manipulation*, 74 N.Y.U. L. REV. 630, 667 (1999) (describing anchoring).

5. See generally Russell Korobkin, *The Endowment Effect and Legal Analysis*, 97 NW. U. L. REV. 1227 (2003).

6. See generally DANIEL KAHNEMAN, THINKING, FAST AND SLOW (2011); Jeffrey J. Rachlinski, *A Positive Psychological Theory of Judging in Hindsight*, 65 U. CHI. L. REV. 571 (1998).

7. See, e.g., Russell B. Korobkin & Thomas S. Ulen, *Law and Behavioral Science: Removing the Rationality Assumption From Law and Economics*, 88 CALIF. L. REV. 1051 (2000); Donald C. Langevoort, *Behavioral Theories of Judgment and Decision Making in Legal Scholarship: A Literature Review*, 51 VAND. L. REV. 1499 (1998).

8. In both common and expert usage, sometimes the word “prejudice” is used to describe a negative attitude, especially when it is strong in magnitude.

9. If the association is nearly perfect, in that almost every member of the social group has that trait, then we think of the trait less as a stereotype and more as a defining attribute. Typically, when we use the word “stereotype,” the correlation between social group and trait is far from perfect. See Anthony G. Greenwald & Linda Hamilton Krieger, *Implicit Bias: Scientific Foundations*, 94 CALIF. L. REV. 945, 949 (2006).

should be distinguished because a positive attitude does not foreclose negative stereotypes and vice versa. For instance, one might have a positive overall attitude toward African Americans and yet still associate them with weapons. Or, one might have a positive stereotype of Asian Americans as mathematically able but still have an overall negative attitude towards them.

The conventional wisdom has been that these social cognitions—attitudes and stereotypes about social groups—are explicit, in the sense that they are both consciously accessible through introspection *and* endorsed as appropriate by the person who possesses them. Indeed, this understanding has shaped much of current antidiscrimination law. The conventional wisdom is also that the social cognitions that individuals hold are relatively stable, in the sense that they operate in the same way over time and across different situations.

However, recent findings in the mind sciences, especially implicit social cognition (ISC),¹⁰ have undermined these conventional beliefs. As detailed below, attitudes and stereotypes may also be implicit, in the sense that they are not consciously accessible through introspection. Accordingly, their impact on a person's decisionmaking and behaviors does not depend on that person's awareness of possessing these attitudes or stereotypes. Consequently, they can function automatically, including in ways that the person would not endorse as appropriate if he or she did have conscious awareness.

How have mind scientists discovered such findings on matters so latent or implicit? They have done so by innovating new techniques that measure implicit attitudes and stereotypes that by definition cannot be reliably self-reported. Some of these measures involve subliminal priming and other treatments that are not consciously detected within an experimental setting. Other instruments use reaction time differences between two types of tasks—one that seems consistent with some bias, the other inconsistent—as in the Implicit Association Test (IAT).¹¹

10. Implicit social cognition (ISC) is a field of psychology that examines the mental processes that affect social judgments but operate without conscious awareness or conscious control. *See generally* Kristin A. Lane, Jerry Kang & Mahzarin R. Banaji, *Implicit Social Cognition and Law*, 3 ANN. REV. L. & SOC. SCI. 427 (2007). The term was first used and defined by Anthony Greenwald and Mahzarin Banaji. *See* Anthony G. Greenwald & Mahzarin R. Banaji, *Implicit Social Cognition: Attitudes, Self-Esteem, and Stereotypes*, 102 PSYCHOL. REV. 4 (1995).

11. *See* Anthony G. Greenwald et al., *Measuring Individual Differences in Implicit Cognition: The Implicit Association Test*, 74 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 1464, 1464–66 (1998) (introducing the Implicit Association Test (IAT)). For more information on the IAT, *see* Brian A. Nosek, Anthony G. Greenwald & Mahzarin R. Banaji, *The Implicit Association Test at Age 7: A Methodological and Conceptual Review*, in AUTOMATIC PROCESSES IN SOCIAL THINKING AND BEHAVIOR 265 (John A. Bargh ed., 2007).

The well-known IAT is a sorting task that measures time differences between schema-consistent pairings and schema-inconsistent pairings of concepts, as represented by words or pictures. For example, suppose we want to test whether there is an implicit stereotype associating African Americans with weapons. In a schema-consistent run, the participant is instructed to hit one response key when she sees a White face or a harmless object, and another response key when she sees an African American face or a weapon. Notice that the same key is used for *both* White and harmless item; a different key is used for *both* African American and weapon. Most people perform this task quickly.

In a schema-inconsistent run, we reverse the pairings. In this iteration, the same key is used for both White and weapon; a different key is used for both African American and harmless item. Most people perform this task more slowly.¹² Of course, the order in which these tasks are presented is always systematically varied to ensure that the speed of people's responses is not affected by practice. The time differential between these runs is defined as the implicit association effect and is statistically processed into standard units called an IAT D score.¹³

Through the IAT, social psychologists from hundreds of laboratories have collected enormous amounts of data¹⁴ on reaction-time measures of "implicit biases," a term we use to denote implicit attitudes and implicit stereotypes. According to these measures, implicit bias is pervasive (widely held),¹⁵ large in magnitude (as compared to standardized measures of explicit bias),¹⁶ dissociated from explicit biases (which suggests that explicit biases and implicit biases, while related, are

12. See Brian A. Nosek et al., *Pervasiveness and Correlates of Implicit Attitudes and Stereotypes*, 18 EUR. REV. SOC. PSYCHOL. 1, 17 (2007).

13. This D score, which ranges from -2.0 to 2.0, is a standardized score, which is computed by dividing the IAT effect as measured in milliseconds by the standard deviations of the participants' latencies pooled across schema-consistent and -inconsistent conditions. See, e.g., Anthony Greenwald et al., *Understanding and Using the Implicit Association Test: I. An Improved Scoring Algorithm*, 85 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 197 (2003). If an individual's IAT D score is divided by its standard deviation of the population that has taken the test, the result is interpretable as the commonly used effect size measure, Cohen's *d*.

14. The most prominent dataset is collected at PROJECT IMPLICIT, <http://projectimplicit.org> (last visited Mar. 22, 2012) (providing free online tests of automatic associations). For a broad analysis of this dataset, see Nosek et al., *supra* note 12.

15. Lane, Kang & Banaji, *supra* note 10, at 437.

16. Cohen's *d* is a standardized unit of the size of a statistical effect. By convention, social scientists mark 0.20, 0.50, and 0.80 as small, medium, and large effect sizes. The IAT effect, as measured in Cohen's *d*, on various stereotypes and attitudes range from medium to large. See Kang & Lane, *supra* note 2, at 474 n.35 (discussing data from Project Implicit). Moreover, the effect sizes of implicit bias against social groups are frequently larger than the effect sizes produced by explicit bias measures. See *id.* at 474-75 tbl.1.

separate mental constructs),¹⁷ and predicts certain kinds of real-world behavior.¹⁸ What policymakers are now keen to understand are the size and scope of these behavioral effects and how to counter them—by altering the implicit biases themselves and by implementing strategies to attenuate their effects.

Useful and current summaries of the scientific evidence can be found in both the legal and psychological literatures. For example, in the last volume of this law review, Jerry Kang and Kristin Lane provided a summary of the evidence demonstrating that we are not perceptually, cognitively, or behaviorally colorblind.¹⁹ Justin Levinson and Danielle Young have summarized studies focusing on jury decisionmaking.²⁰ In the psychology journals, John Jost and colleagues responded to sharp criticism²¹ that the IAT studies lacked real-world consequences by providing a qualitative review of the literature, including ten studies that no manager should ignore.²² Further, they explained how the findings are entirely consistent with the major tenets of twentieth century social cognitive psychology.²³ In a quantitative review, Anthony Greenwald conducted a meta-analysis of IAT studies—which synthesizes all the relevant scientific findings—and found that implicit attitudes as measured by the IAT predicted certain types of behavior, such as anti-Black discrimination or intergroup discrimination, substantially better than explicit bias measures.²⁴

Instead of duplicating these summaries, we offer research findings that are specific to implicit bias leading up to and in the courtroom. To do so, we chart

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17. See Anthony G. Greenwald & Brian A. Nosek, *Attitudinal Dissociation: What Does It Mean?*, in *ATTITUDES: INSIGHTS FROM THE NEW IMPLICIT MEASURES* 65 (Richard E. Petty, Russell E. Fazio & Pablo Briñol eds., 2008).
 18. See Kang & Lane, *supra* note 2, at 481–90 (discussing evidence of biased behavior in perceiving smiles, responding to threats, screening resumes, and body language).
 19. See Kang & Lane, *supra* note 2, at 473–90; see also David L. Faigman, Nilanjana Dasgupta & Cecilia L. Ridgeway, *A Matter of Fit: The Law of Discrimination and the Science of Implicit Bias*, 59 HASTINGS L.J. 1389 (2008).
 20. See Justin D. Levinson & Danielle Young, *Different Shades of Bias: Skin Tone, Implicit Racial Bias, and Judgments of Ambiguous Evidence*, 112 W. VA. L. REV. 307, 319–26 (2010).
 21. See, e.g., Gregory Mitchell & Philip E. Tetlock, *Antidiscrimination Law and the Perils of Mindreading*, 67 OHIO ST. L.J. 1023, 1108–10 (2006).
 22. See, e.g., John T. Jost et al., *The Existence of Implicit Prejudice Is Beyond Reasonable Doubt: A Refutation of Ideological and Methodological Objections and Executive Summary of Ten Studies That No Manager Should Ignore*, 29 RES. ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAV. 39, 41 (2009).
 23. See *id.*
 24. See Anthony G. Greenwald et al., *Understanding and Using the Implicit Association Test: III. Meta-Analysis of Predictive Validity*, 97 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 17, 19–20 (2009). Implicit attitude scores predicted behavior in this domain at an average correlation of $r=0.24$, whereas explicit attitude scores had correlations at an average of $r=0.12$. See *id.* at 24 tbl.3.

out two case trajectories—one criminal, the other civil. That synthesis appears in Part II.

B. Theoretical Clarification

But before we leave our introduction to implicit bias, we seek to make some theoretical clarifications on the relationships between explicit biases, implicit biases, and structural processes that are all involved in producing unfairness in the courtroom. We do so because the legal literature has flagged this as an important issue.²⁵ In addition, a competent diagnosis of unfairness in the courtroom requires disentangling these various processes. For instance, if the end is to counter discrimination caused by, say, *explicit* bias, it may be ineffective to adopt means that are better tailored to respond to *implicit* bias, and vice versa.

We start by clarifying terms. To repeat, explicit biases are attitudes and stereotypes that are consciously accessible through introspection *and* endorsed as appropriate. If no social norm against these biases exists within a given context, a person will freely broadcast them to others. But if such a norm exists, then explicit biases can be concealed to manage the impressions that others have of us. By contrast, implicit biases are attitudes and stereotypes that are not consciously accessible through introspection. If we find out that we have them, we may indeed reject them as inappropriate.

Above, we used the labels “explicit” and “implicit” as adjectives to describe mental constructs—attitudes and stereotypes. Readers should recognize that these adjectives can also apply to research procedures or instruments. An explicit instrument asks the respondent for a direct self-report with no attempt by researchers to disguise the mental construct that they are measuring. An example is a straightforward survey question. No instrument perfectly measures a mental construct. In fact, one can often easily conceal one’s explicit bias as measured through an explicit instrument. In this way, an explicit instrument can poorly measure an explicit bias, as the test subject may choose not to be candid about the beliefs or attitudes at issue.

By contrast, an implicit instrument does not depend on the respondent’s conscious knowledge of the mental constructs that the researcher is inferring from the measure. An example is a reaction-time measure, such as the IAT. This does not necessarily mean that the respondent is unaware that the IAT is measuring bias.

25. See generally Ralph Richard Banks & Richard Thompson Ford, *(How) Does Unconscious Bias Matter?: Law, Politics, and Racial Inequality*, 58 EMORY L.J. 1053 (2009); Stephen M. Rich, *Against Prejudice*, 80 GEO. WASH. L. REV. 1 (2011).

It also does not mean that the respondent is actually unaware that he or she has implicit biases, for example because she has taken an IAT before or is generally aware of the research literature. To repeat, no instrument perfectly measures any mental construct, and this remains true for implicit instruments. One might, for instance, try to conceal implicit bias measured through an implicit instrument, but such faking is often much harder than faking explicit bias measured by an explicit instrument.²⁶

Finally, besides explicit and implicit biases, another set of processes that produce unfairness in the courtroom can be called “structural.” Other names include “institutional” or “societal.” These processes can lock in past inequalities, reproduce them, and indeed exacerbate them even without formally treating persons worse simply because of attitudes and stereotypes about the groups to which they belong.²⁷ In other words, structural bias can produce unfairness even though no single individual is being treated worse right now because of his or her membership in a particular social category.

Because thinking through biases with respect to human beings evokes so much potential emotional resistance, sometimes it is easier to apply them to something less fraught than gender, race, religion, and the like. So, consider a vegetarian’s biases against meat. He has a negative attitude (that is, prejudice) toward meat. He also believes that eating meat is bad for his health (a stereotype). He is aware of this attitude and stereotype. He also endorses them as appropriate. That is, he feels that it is okay to have a negative reaction to meat. He also believes it accurate enough to believe that meat is generally bad for human health and that there is no reason to avoid behaving in accordance with this belief. These are *explicit* biases.

Now, if this vegetarian is running for political office and campaigning in a region famous for barbecue, he will probably keep his views to himself. He could, for example, avoid showing disgust on his face or making critical comments when a plate of ribs is placed in front of him. Indeed, he might even take a bite and compliment the cook. This is an example of *concealed* bias (explicit bias that is hidden to manage impressions).

26. See, e.g., Do-Yeong Kim, *Voluntary Controllability of the Implicit Association Test (IAT)*, 66 SOC. PSYCHOL. Q. 83, 95–96 (2003).

27. See, e.g., Michelle Adams, *Intergroup Rivalry, Anti-Competitive Conduct and Affirmative Action*, 82 B.U. L. REV. 1089, 1117–22 (2002) (applying lock-in theory to explain the inequalities between Blacks and Whites in education, housing, and employment); John A. Powell, *Structural Racism: Building Upon the Insights of John Calmore*, 86 N.C. L. REV. 791, 795–800 (2008) (adopting a systems approach to describe structured racialization); Daria Roithmayr, *Barriers to Entry: A Market Lock-In Model of Discrimination*, 86 VA. L. REV. 727, 743–48 (2000) (describing lock-in theory, drawing on antitrust law and concepts).

Consider, by contrast, another vegetarian who has recently converted for environmental reasons. She proclaims explicitly and sincerely a negative attitude toward meat. But it may well be that she has an implicit attitude that is still slightly positive. Suppose that she grew up enjoying weekend barbecues with family and friends, or still likes the taste of steak, or first learned to cook by making roasts. Whatever the sources and causes, she may still have an implicitly positive attitude toward meat. This is an *implicit* bias.

Finally, consider some eating decision that she has to make at a local strip mall. She can buy a salad for \$10 or a cheeseburger for \$3. Unfortunately, she has only \$5 to spare and must eat. Neither explicit nor implicit biases much explain her decision to buy the cheeseburger. She simply lacks the funds to buy the salad, and her need to eat trumps her desire to avoid meat. The decision was not driven principally by an attitude or stereotype, explicit or implicit, but by the price. But what if a careful historical, economic, political, and cultural analysis revealed multifarious subsidies, political kickbacks, historical contingencies, and economies of scale that accumulated in mutually reinforcing ways to price the salad much higher than the cheeseburger? These various forces could make it more instrumentally rational for consumers to eat cheeseburgers. This would be an example of *structural* bias in favor of meat.

We disentangle these various mechanisms—explicit attitudes and stereotypes (sometimes concealed, sometimes revealed), implicit attitudes and stereotypes, and structural forces—because they pose different threats to fairness everywhere, including the courtroom. For instance, the threat to fairness posed by jurors with explicit negative attitudes toward Muslims but who conceal their prejudice to stay on the jury is quite different from the threat posed by jurors who perceive themselves as nonbiased but who nevertheless hold negative implicit stereotypes about Muslims. Where appropriate, we explain how certain studies provide evidence of one type of bias or the other. In addition, we want to underscore that these various mechanisms—explicit bias, implicit bias, and structural forces—are not mutually exclusive.²⁸ To the contrary, they may often be mutually reinforcing. In focusing on implicit bias in the courtroom, we do not mean to suggest

28. See, e.g., GLENN C. LOURY, THE ANATOMY OF RACIAL INEQUALITY 23–30 (2002) (discussing self-reinforcing stereotypes); JOHN POWELL & RACHEL GODSIL, *Implicit Bias Insights as Preconditions to Structural Change*, POVERTY & RACE, Sept./Oct. 2011, at 3, 6 (explaining why “implicit bias insights are crucial to addressing the substantive inequalities that result from structural racialization”).

that implicit bias is the only or most important problem, or that explicit bias (revealed or concealed) and structural forces are unimportant or insignificant.²⁹

II. TWO TRAJECTORIES

A. The Criminal Path

Consider, for example, some of the crucial milestones in a criminal case flowing to trial. First, on the basis of a crime report, the police investigate particular neighborhoods and persons of interest and ultimately arrest a suspect. Second, the prosecutor decides to charge the suspect with a particular crime. Third, the judge makes decisions about bail and pretrial detention. Fourth, the defendant decides whether to accept a plea bargain after consulting his defense attorney, often a public defender or court-appointed private counsel. Fifth, if the case goes to trial, the judge manages the proceedings while the jury decides whether the defendant is guilty. Finally, if convicted, the defendant must be sentenced. At each of these stages,³⁰ implicit biases can have an important impact. To maintain a manageable scope of analysis, we focus on the police encounter, charge and plea bargain, trial, and sentencing.

1. Police Encounter

Blackness and criminality. If we implicitly associate certain groups, such as African Americans, with certain attributes, such as criminality, then it should not be surprising that police may behave in a manner consistent with those implicit stereotypes. In other words, biases could shape whether an officer decides to stop an individual for questioning in the first place, elects to interrogate briefly or at length, decides to frisk the individual, and concludes the encounter with an arrest versus a warning.³¹ These biases could contribute to the substantial racial disparities that have been widely documented in policing.³²

29. See Jerry Kang, *Implicit Bias and the Pushback From the Left*, 54 ST. LOUIS U. L.J. 1139, 1146–48 (2010) (specifically rejecting complaint that implicit bias analysis must engage in reductionism).

30. The number of stages is somewhat arbitrary. We could have listed more stages in a finer-grained timeline or vice versa.

31. Devon W. Carbado, *(E)racing the Fourth Amendment*, 100 MICH. L. REV. 946, 976–77 (2002).

32. See, e.g., Dianna Hunt, *Ticket to Trouble/Wheels of Injustice/Certain Areas Are Ticket Traps for Minorities*, HOUS. CHRON., May 14, 1995, at A1 (analyzing sixteen million Texas driving records and finding that minority drivers straying into White neighborhoods in Texas's major urban areas were twice as likely as Whites to get traffic violations); Sam Vincent Meddis & Mike Snider, *Drug War 'Focused' on Blacks*, USA TODAY, Dec. 20, 1990, at 1A (reporting findings from a 1989 USA

Since the mid-twentieth century, social scientists have uncovered empirical evidence of negative attitudes toward African Americans as well as stereotypes about their being violent and criminal.³³ Those biases persist today, as measured by not only explicit but also implicit instruments.³⁴

For example, Jennifer Eberhardt, Philip Goff, Valerie Purdie, and Paul Davies have demonstrated a bidirectional activation between Blackness and criminality.³⁵ When participants are subliminally primed³⁶ with a Black male face (as opposed to a White male face, or no prime at all), they are quicker to distinguish the faint outline of a weapon that slowly emerges out of visual static.³⁷ In other words, by implicitly thinking *Black*, they more quickly saw a weapon.

Interestingly, the phenomenon also happens in reverse. When subliminally primed with drawings of weapons, participants visually attended to Black male faces more than comparable White male faces.³⁸ Researchers found this result not only in a student population, which is often criticized for being unrepresentative of the real world, but also among police officers.³⁹ The research suggests both that

Today study that 41 percent of those arrested on drug charges were African American whereas 15 percent of the drug-using population is African American); Billy Porterfield, *Data Raise Question: Is the Drug War Racist?*, AUSTIN AM. STATESMAN, Dec. 4, 1994, at A1 (citing study showing that African Americans were over seven times more likely than Whites to be arrested on drug charges in Travis County in 1993).

33. See generally Patricia G. Devine & Andrew J. Elliot, *Are Racial Stereotypes Really Fading? The Princeton Trilogy Revisited*, 21 PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. BULL. 1139 (1995).
34. In a seminal paper, Patricia Devine demonstrated that being subliminally primed with stereotypically "Black" words prompted participants to evaluate ambiguous behavior as more hostile. See Patricia G. Devine, *Stereotypes and Prejudice: Their Automatic and Controlled Components*, 56 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 5 (1989). The priming words included "Negroes, lazy, Blacks, blues, rhythm, Africa, stereotype, ghetto, welfare, basketball, unemployed, and plantation." *Id.* at 10. Those who received a heavy dose of priming (80 percent stereotypical words) interpreted a person's actions as more hostile than those who received a milder dose (20 percent). *Id.* at 11–12; see also John A. Bargh et al., *Automaticity of Social Behavior: Direct Effects of Trait Construct and Stereotype Activation on Action*, 71 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 230, 238–39 (1996).
35. See Jennifer L. Eberhardt et al., *Seeing Black: Race, Crime, and Visual Processing*, 87 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 876 (2004).
36. The photograph flashed for only thirty milliseconds. *Id.* at 879.
37. See *id.* at 879–80. There was a 21 percent drop in perceptual threshold between White face primes and Black face primes. This was measured by counting the number of frames (out of a total of 41) that were required before the participant recognized the outlines of the weapon in both conditions. There was a 8.8 frame difference between the two conditions. *Id.* at 881.
38. Visual attendance was measured via a dot-probe paradigm, which requires participants to indicate on which side of the screen a dot flashes. The idea is that if a respondent is already looking at one face (for example, the Black photograph), he or she will see a dot flash near the Black photograph faster. See *id.* at 881 (describing dot-paradigm as the gold standard in visual attention measures).
39. See *id.* at 885–87 (describing methods, procedures, and results of Study 4, which involved sixty-one police officers who were 76 percent White, 86 percent male, and who had an average age of forty-two).

the idea of Blackness triggers weapons and makes them easier to see, and, simultaneously, that the idea of weapons triggers visual attention to Blackness. How these findings translate into actual police work is, of course, still speculative. At a minimum, however, they suggest the possibility that officers have an implicit association between Blackness and weapons that could affect both their hunches and their visual attention.

Even if this is the case, one might respond that extra visual attention by the police is not too burdensome. But who among us enjoys driving with a police cruiser on his or her tail?⁴⁰ Moreover, the increased visual attention did not promote accuracy; instead, it warped the officers' perceptual memories. The subliminal prime of weapons led police officers not only to look more at Black faces but also to remember them in a biased way, as having more stereotypically African American features. Thus, they "were more likely to falsely identify a face that was more stereotypically Black than the target when they were primed with crime than when they were not primed."⁴¹

We underscore a point that is so obvious that it is easy to miss. The primes in these studies were all flashed *subliminally*. Thus, the behavioral differences in visually attending to Black faces and in remembering them more stereotypically were all triggered implicitly, without the participants' conscious awareness.

Shooter bias. The implicit association between Blackness and weapons has also been found through other instruments, including other priming tasks⁴² and the IAT. One of the tests available on Project Implicit specifically examines the implicit stereotype between African Americans (as compared to European Americans) and weapons (as compared to harmless items). That association has been found to be strong, widespread, and dissociated from explicit self-reports.⁴³

Skeptics can reasonably ask why we should care about minor differentials between schema-consistent and -inconsistent pairings that are often no more than a half second. But it is worth remembering that a half second may be all

In this study, the crime primes were not pictures but words: "violent, crime, stop, investigate, arrest, report, shoot, capture, chase, and apprehend." *Id.* at 886.

40. See Carbado, *supra* note 31, at 966–67 (describing existential burdens of heightened police surveillance).

41. Eberhardt et al., *supra* note 35, at 887.

42. See B. Keith Payne, *Prejudice and Perception: The Role of Automatic and Controlled Processes in Misperceiving a Weapon*, 81 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 181, 185–86 (2001). The study deployed a priming paradigm, in which a photograph of a Black or White face was flashed to participants for two hundred milliseconds. Immediately thereafter, participants were shown pictures of guns or tools. *Id.* at 184. When primed by the Black face, participants identified guns faster. *Id.* at 185.

43. For N=85,742 participants, the average IAT D score was 0.37; Cohen's *d*=1.00. By contrast, the self-reported association (that is, the explicit stereotype measure) was Cohen's *d*=0.31. See Nosek et al., *supra* note 12, at 11 tbl.2.

the time a police officer has to decide whether to shoot. In the policing context, that half second might mean the difference between life and death.

Joshua Correll developed a shooter paradigm video game in which participants are confronted with photographs of individuals (targets) holding an object, superimposed on various city landscapes.⁴⁴ If the object is a weapon, the participant is instructed to press a key to shoot. If the object is harmless (for example, a wallet), the participant must press a different key to holster the weapon. Correll found that participants were quicker to shoot when the target was Black as compared to White.⁴⁵ Also, under time pressure, participants made more mistakes (false alarms) and shot more unarmed Black targets than unarmed White targets, and failed to shoot more armed White targets (misses) than armed Black targets.⁴⁶ Interestingly, the shooter bias effect was not correlated with measures of explicit personal stereotypes.⁴⁷ Correll also found comparable amounts of shooter bias in African American participants.⁴⁸ This suggests that negative attitudes toward African Americans are not what drive the phenomenon.⁴⁹

The shooter bias experiments have also been run on actual police officers, with mixed results. In one study, police officers showed the same bias in favor of shooting unarmed Blacks more often than unarmed Whites that student and civilian populations demonstrated.⁵⁰ In another study, however, although police officers showed a similar speed bias, they did not show any racial bias in the

44. Joshua Correll et al., *The Police Officer's Dilemma: Using Ethnicity to Disambiguate Potentially Threatening Individuals*, 83 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 1314, 1315–17 (2002) (describing the procedure).

45. *Id.* at 1317.

46. *Id.* at 1319. For qualifications about how the researchers discarded outliers, see Jerry Kang, *Trojan Horses of Race*, 118 HARV. L. REV. 1489, 1493 n.16 (2005). Subsequent studies have confirmed Correll's general findings. See, e.g., Anthony G. Greenwald et al., *Targets of Discrimination: Effects of Race on Responses to Weapons Holders*, 39 J. EXPERIMENTAL SOC. PSYCHOL. 399 (finding similar results).

47. Correll et al., *supra* note 44, at 1323. The scales used were the Modern Racism Scale, the Discrimination and Diversity Scale, the Motivation to Control Prejudiced Responding Scale, and some questions from the Right-Wing Authoritarianism Scale and the Personal Need for Structure Scale for good measure. *Id.* at 1321. These are survey instruments that are commonly used in social psychological research. Shooter bias was, however, correlated with measures of societal stereotypes—the stereotypes that other people supposedly held. *Id.* at 1323.

48. *See id.* at 1324.

49. On explicit attitude instruments, African Americans show on average substantial in-group preference (over Whites). On implicit attitude instruments, such as the IAT, African Americans bell curve around zero, which means that they show no preference on average. See Brian A. Nosek, Mahzarin R. Banaji & Anthony G. Greenwald, *Harvesting Implicit Group Attitudes and Beliefs From a Demonstration Web Site*, 6 GROUP DYNAMICS: THEORY RES. & PRACTICE 101, 105–06 (2002).

50. See E. Ashby Plant & B. Michelle Peruche, *The Consequences of Race for Police Officers' Responses to Criminal Subjects*, 16 PSYCHOL. SCI. 180, 181 (2005).

most important criterion of accuracy. In other words, there was no higher error rate of shooting unarmed Blacks as compared to Whites.⁵¹

Finally, in a study that directly linked implicit stereotypes (with weapons) as measured by the IAT and shooter bias, Jack Glaser and Eric Knowles found that “[i]ndividuals possessing a relatively strong stereotype linking Blacks and weapons [one standard deviation above the mean IAT] clearly show the Shooter Bias.”⁵² By contrast, recall that Correll found no such correlation with explicit stereotypes. These findings are consistent with the implicit stereotype story. Of course, it may also be true that participants were simply downplaying or concealing their explicit bias, which could help explain why no correlation was found.

In sum, we have evidence that suggests that implicit biases could well influence various aspects of policing. A fairly broad set of research findings shows that implicit biases (as measured by implicit instruments) alter and affect numerous behaviors that police regularly engage in—visual surveillance, recall, and even armed response.⁵³ It should go without saying that explicit biases, which often undergird unspoken policies of racial profiling, also play an enormous role in the differential policing of people of color. It also should go without saying that various structural forces that produce racially segregated, predominantly minority neighborhoods that have higher poverty and crime rates also have a huge impact on racialized policing. Nevertheless, we repeat these points so that readers internalize the idea that implicit, explicit, and structural processes should not be deemed mutually exclusive.

2. Charge and Plea Bargain

Journalistic investigations have uncovered some statistical evidence that racial minorities are treated worse than Whites in prosecutors’ charging decisions.⁵⁴

51. See Joshua Correll et al., *Across the Thin Blue Line: Police Officers and Racial Bias in the Decision to Shoot*, 92 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 1006, 1010–13, 1016–17 (2007) (describing the results from two studies).

52. Jack Glaser & Eric D. Knowles, *Implicit Motivation to Control Prejudice*, 44 J. EXPERIMENTAL SOC. PSYCHOL. 164, 169 (2008).

53. For discussions in the law reviews, with some treatment of implicit biases, see Alex Geisinger, *Rethinking Profiling: A Cognitive Model of Bias and Its Legal Implications*, 86 OR. L. REV. 657, 667–73 (2007) (providing a cognitive model based on automatic categorization in accordance with behavioral realism).

54. For example, in San Jose, a newspaper investigation concluded that out of the almost seven hundred thousand criminal cases reported, “at virtually every stage of pre-trial negotiation, whites are more successful than non-whites.” Ruth Marcus, *Racial Bias Widely Seen in Criminal Justice System; Research Often Supports Black Perceptions*, WASH. POST, May 12, 1992, at A4. San Francisco Public Defender Jeff Brown commented on racial stereotyping: “It’s a feeling, ‘You’ve got a nice

Of course, there might be some legitimate reason for those disparities if, for example, minorities and Whites are not similarly situated on average. One way to examine whether the merits drive the disparate results is to control for everything except some irrelevant attribute, such as race. In several studies, researchers used regression analyses to conclude that race was indeed independently correlated with the severity of the prosecutor's charge.

For example, in a 1985 study of charging decisions by prosecutors in Los Angeles, researchers found prosecutors more likely to press charges against Black than White defendants, and determined that these charging disparities could not be accounted for by race-neutral factors, such as prior record, seriousness of charge, or use of a weapon.⁵⁵ Two studies also in the late 1980s, one in Florida and the other in Indiana, found charging discrepancies based on the race of the victim.⁵⁶ At the federal level, a U.S. Sentencing Commission report found that prosecutors were more apt to offer White defendants generous plea bargains with sentences below the prescribed guidelines than to offer them to Black or Latino defendants.⁵⁷

While these studies are suggestive, other studies find no disparate treatment.⁵⁸ Moreover, this kind of statistical evidence does not definitively tell us that biases

person screwing up,' as opposed to feeling that 'this minority is on a track and eventually they're going to end up in state prison.'" Christopher H. Schmitt, *Why Plea Bargains Reflect Bias*, SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS, Dec. 9, 1991, at 1A; see also Christopher Johns, *The Color of Justice: More and More, Research Shows Minorities Aren't Treated the Same as Anglos by the Criminal Justice System*, ARIZ. REPUBLIC, July 4, 1993, at C1 (citing several reports showing disparate treatment of Blacks in the criminal justice system).

55. See Michael L. Radelet & Glenn L. Pierce, *Race and Prosecutorial Discretion in Homicide Cases*, 19 LAW & SOC'Y REV. 587, 615–19 (1985).

56. See Kenneth B. Nunn, *The "Darden Dilemma": Should African Americans Prosecute Crimes?*, 68 FORDHAM L. REV. 1473, 1493 (2000) (citing Martha A. Myers & John Hagan, *Private and Public Trouble: Prosecutors and the Allocation of Court Resources*, 26 SOC. PROBS. 439, 441–47 (1979)); Radelet & Pierce, *supra* note 55, at 615–19.

57. LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE ON CIVIL RIGHTS, JUSTICE ON TRIAL: RACIAL DISPARITIES IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM 12 n.41 (2000), available at <http://www.protectcivilrights.org/pdf/reports/justice.pdf> (citing U.S. SENTENCING COMM'N, SPECIAL REPORT TO CONGRESS: COCAINE AND FEDERAL SENTENCING POLICY (1995)); see also Kevin McNally, *Race and Federal Death Penalty: A Nonexistent Problem Gets Worse*, 53 DEPAUL L. REV. 1615 (2004) (compiling studies on the death penalty).

58. See, e.g., Jeremy D. Ball, *Is It a Prosecutor's World? Determinants of Count Bargaining Decisions*, 22 J. CONTEMP. CRIM. JUST. 241 (2006) (finding no correlation between race and the willingness of prosecutors to reduce charges in order to obtain guilty pleas but acknowledging that the study did not include evaluation of the original arrest report); Cyndy Caravelis et al., *Race, Ethnicity, Threat, and the Designation of Career Offenders*, 2011 JUST. Q. 1 (showing that in some counties, Blacks and Latinos are more likely than Whites with similar profiles to be prosecuted as career offenders, but in other counties with different demographics, Blacks and Latinos have a lesser likelihood of such prosecution).

generally or implicit biases specifically produce discriminatory charging decisions or plea offers by prosecutors, or a discriminatory willingness to accept worse plea bargains on the part of defense attorneys. The best way to get evidence on such hypotheses would be to measure the implicit biases of prosecutors and defense attorneys and investigate the extent to which those biases predict different treatment of cases otherwise identical on the merits.

Unfortunately, we have very little data on this front. Indeed, we have no studies, as of yet, that look at prosecutors' and defense attorneys' implicit biases and attempt to correlate them with those individuals' charging practices or plea bargains. Nor do we know as much as we would like about their implicit biases more generally. But on that score, we do know something. Start with defense attorneys. One might think that defense attorneys, repeatedly put into the role of interacting with what is often a disproportionately minority clientele, and often ideologically committed to racial equality,⁵⁹ might have materially different implicit biases from the general population. But Ted Eisenberg and Sheri Lynn Johnson found evidence to the contrary: Even capital punishment defense attorneys show negative implicit attitudes toward African Americans.⁶⁰ Their implicit attitudes toward Blacks roughly mirrored those of the population at large.

What about prosecutors? To our knowledge, no one has measured specifically the implicit biases held by prosecutors.⁶¹ That said, there is no reason to

59. See Gordon B. Moskowitz, Amanda R. Salomon & Constance M. Taylor, *Preconsciously Controlling Stereotyping: Implicitly Activated Egalitarian Goals Prevent the Activation of Stereotypes*, 18 SOC. COGNITION 151, 155–56 (2000) (showing that “chronic egalitarians” who are personally committed to removing bias in themselves do not exhibit implicit attitudinal preference for Whites over Blacks).

60. See Theodore Eisenberg & Sheri Lynn Johnson, *Implicit Racial Attitudes of Death Penalty Lawyers*, 53 DEPAUL L. REV. 1539, 1545–55 (2004). The researchers used a paper-pencil IAT that measured attitudes about Blacks and Whites. *Id.* at 1543–45. The defense attorneys displayed biases that were comparable to the rest of the population. *Id.* at 1553. The findings by Moskowitz and colleagues, *supra* note 59, sit in some tension with findings by Eisenberg and Johnson. It is possible that defense attorneys are not chronic egalitarians and/or that the specific practice of criminal defense work exacerbates implicit biases even among chronic egalitarians.

61. In some contexts, prosecutors have resisted revealing information potentially related to their biases. For example, in *United States v. Armstrong*, 517 U.S. 456 (1996), defendants filed a motion to dismiss the indictment for selective prosecution, arguing that the U.S. Attorney prosecuted virtually all African Americans charged with crack offenses in federal court but left all White crack defendants to be prosecuted in state court, resulting in much longer sentences for identical offenses. *Id.* at 460–61. The claim foundered when the U.S. Attorney's Office resisted the defendants' discovery motion concerning criteria for prosecutorial decisions and the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the U.S. Attorney's Office's refusal to provide discovery. *Id.* at 459–62. The Court held that, prior to being entitled even to discovery, defendants claiming selective prosecution cases based on race must produce credible evidence that “similarly situated individuals of a different race were not prosecuted.” *Id.* at 465.

presume attorney exceptionalism in terms of implicit biases.⁶² And if defense attorneys, who might be expected to be less biased than the population, show typical amounts of implicit bias, it would seem odd to presume that prosecutors would somehow be immune. If this is right, there is plenty of reason to be concerned about how these biases might play out in practice.

As we explain in greater detail below, the conditions under which implicit biases translate most readily into discriminatory behavior are when people have wide discretion in making quick decisions with little accountability. Prosecutors function in just such environments.⁶³ They exercise tremendous discretion to decide whether, against whom, and at what level of severity to charge a particular crime; they also influence the terms and likelihood of a plea bargain and the length of the prison sentence—all with little judicial oversight. Other psychological theories—such as confirmation bias, social judgeability theory, and shifting standards, which we discuss below⁶⁴—reinforce our hypothesis that prosecutorial decisionmaking indeed risks being influenced by implicit bias.

3. Trial

a. Jury

If the case goes to the jury, what do we know about how implicit biases might influence the factfinder's decisionmaking? There is a long line of research on racial discrimination by jurors, mostly in the criminal context. Notwithstanding some mixed findings, the general research consensus is that jurors of one race tend to show bias against defendants who belong to another race ("racial outgroups"). For example, White jurors will treat Black defendants worse than they treat comparable White defendants. The best and most recent meta-analysis of laboratory juror studies was performed by Tara Mitchell and colleagues, who found that the fact that a juror was of a different race than the defendant influenced

62. Several of the authors have conducted training sessions with attorneys in which we run the IAT in the days leading up to the training. The results of these IATs have shown that attorneys harbor biases that are similar to those harbored by the rest of the population. One recent study of a related population, law students, confirmed that they too harbor implicit gender biases. See Justin D. Levinson & Danielle Young, *Implicit Gender Bias in the Legal Profession: An Empirical Study*, 18 DUKE J. GENDER L. & POL'Y 1, 28–31 (2010).

63. See Robert J. Smith & Justin D. Levinson, *The Impact of Implicit Racial Bias on the Exercise of Prosecutorial Discretion*, 35 SEATTLE L. REV. 795 (2012) (undertaking a step-by-step consideration of how prosecutorial discretion may be fraught with implicit bias).

64. See *infra* Part II.B.

both verdicts and sentencing.⁶⁵ The magnitude of the effect sizes were measured conservatively⁶⁶ and found to be small (Cohen's $d=0.092$ for verdicts, $d=0.185$ for sentencing).⁶⁷

But effects deemed "small" by social scientists may nonetheless have huge consequences for the individual, the social category he belongs to, and the entire society. For example, if White juries rendered guilty verdicts in exactly 80 percent of their decisions,⁶⁸ then an effect size of Cohen's $d=0.095$ would mean that the rate of conviction for Black defendants will be 83.8 percent, compared to 76.2 percent for White defendants. Put another way, in one hundred otherwise identical trials, eight more Black than White defendants would be found guilty.⁶⁹

One might assume that juror bias against racial outgroups would be greater when the case is somehow racially charged or inflamed, as opposed to those instances when race does not explicitly figure in the crime. Interestingly, many experiments have demonstrated just the opposite.⁷⁰ Sam Sommers and Phoebe Ellsworth explain the counterintuitive phenomenon in this way: When the case is racially charged, jurors—who want to be fair—respond by being more careful and thoughtful about race and their own assumptions and thus do not show bias in their deliberations and outcomes. By contrast, when the case is not racially charged, even though there is a Black defendant and a White victim, jurors are not especially vigilant about the possibility of racial bias influencing their

65. Tara L. Mitchell et al., *Racial Bias in Mock Juror Decision-Making: A Meta-Analytic Review of Defendant Treatment*, 29 LAW & HUM. BEHAV. 621, 627–28 (2005). The meta-analysis processed thirty-four juror verdict studies (with 7397 participants) and sixteen juror sentencing studies (with 3141 participants). *Id.* at 625. All studies involved experimental manipulation of the defendant's race. Multirace participant samples were separated out in order to maintain the study's definition of racial bias as a juror's differential treatment of a defendant who belonged to a racial outgroup. *See id.*

66. Studies that reported nonsignificant results ($p>0.05$) for which effect sizes could not be calculated were given effect sizes of 0.00. *Id.*

67. *Id.* at 629.

68. *See* TRACY KYCKELHAHN & THOMAS H. COHEN, U.S. DEPT OF JUSTICE, BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS, NCJ 221152, FELONY DEFENDANTS IN LARGE URBAN COUNTIES, 2004, at 1, 3 (2008), *available at* <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/fdluc04.pdf> ("Seventy-nine percent of trials resulted in a guilty verdict or judgment, including 82% of bench trials and 76% of jury trials."); *see also* THOMAS H. COHEN & TRACEY KYCKELHAHN, U.S. DEPT OF JUSTICE, BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS, NCJ 228944, FELONY DEFENDANTS IN LARGE URBAN COUNTIES, 2006, at 1 (2010), *available at* <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/fdluc06.pdf> (reporting the "typical" outcome as three out of four trials resulting in convictions).

69. This translation between effect size d values and outcomes was described by Robert Rosenthal & Donald B. Rubin, *A Simple, General Purpose Display of Magnitude of Experimental Effect*, 74 J. EDUC. PSYCHOL. 166 (1982).

70. *See, e.g.*, Samuel R. Sommers & Phoebe C. Ellsworth, "Race Salience" in *Juror Decision-Making: Misconceptions, Clarifications, and Unanswered Questions*, 27 BEHAV. SCI. & L. 599 (2009).

decisionmaking. These findings are more consistent with an implicit bias than a concealed explicit bias explanation.⁷¹

So far, we know that race effects have been demonstrated in juror studies (sometimes in counterintuitive ways), but admittedly little is known about “the precise psychological processes through which the influence of race occurs in the legal context.”⁷² Our default assumption is juror unexceptionalism—given that implicit biases generally influence decisionmaking, there is no reason to presume that citizens become immune to the effects of these biases when they serve in the role of jurors. Leading scholars from the juror bias field have expressly raised the possibility that the psychological mechanisms might be “unintentional and even non-conscious processes.”⁷³

Some recent juror studies by Justin Levinson and Danielle Young have tried to disentangle the psychological mechanisms of juror bias by using the IAT and other methods. In one mock juror study, Levinson and Young had participants view five photographs of a crime scene, including a surveillance camera photo that featured a masked gunman whose hand and forearm were visible. For half the participants, that arm was dark skinned; for the other half, that arm was lighter skinned.⁷⁴ The participants were then provided twenty different pieces of trial evidence. The evidence was designed to produce an ambiguous case regarding whether the defendant was indeed the culprit. Participants were asked to rate how much the presented evidence tended to indicate the defendant’s guilt or innocence and to decide whether the defendant was guilty or not, using both a scale of guilty or not guilty and a likelihood scale of zero to one hundred.⁷⁵

The study found that the subtle manipulation of the skin color altered how jurors evaluated the evidence presented and also how they answered the crucial question “How guilty is the defendant?” The guilt mean score was $M=66.97$ for

71. See Samuel R. Sommers & Phoebe C. Ellsworth, *White Juror Bias: An Investigation of Prejudice Against Black Defendants in the American Courtroom*, 7 PSYCHOL. PUB. POL’Y & L. 201, 255 (2001); Samuel R. Sommers & Phoebe C. Ellsworth, *Race in the Courtroom: Perceptions of Guilt and Dispositional Attributions*, 26 PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. BULL. 1367 (2000). That said, one could still hold to an explicit bias story in the following way: The juror has a negative attitude or stereotype that he is consciously aware of and endorses. But he knows it is not socially acceptable so he conceals it. When a case is racially charged, racial bias is more salient, so other jurors will be on the lookout for bias. Accordingly, the juror conceals it even more, all the way up to making sure that his behavior is completely race neutral. This explicit bias story is not mutually exclusive with the implicit bias story we are telling.

72. Samuel R. Sommers, *Race and the Decision-Making of Juries*, 12 LEGAL & CRIMINOLOGICAL PSYCHOL. 171, 172 (2007).

73. *Id.* at 175.

74. Levinson & Young, *supra* note 20, at 332–33 (describing experimental procedures).

75. *Id.* at 334.

dark skin and $M=56.37$ for light skin, with 100 being “definitely guilty.”⁷⁶ Measures of explicit bias, including the Modern Racism Scale and feeling thermometers, showed no statistically significant correlation with the participants’ weighing of the evidence or assessment of guilt.⁷⁷ More revealing, participants were asked to recall the race of the masked robber (which was a proxy for the light or dark skin), but many could not recall it.⁷⁸ Moreover, their recollections did not correlate with their judgments of guilt.⁷⁹ Taken together, these findings suggest that implicit bias—not explicit, concealed bias, or even any degree of conscious focus on race—was influencing how jurors assessed the evidence in the case.

In fact, there is even clearer evidence that implicit bias was at work. Levinson, Huajian Cai, and Young also constructed a new IAT, the Guilty–Not Guilty IAT, to test implicit stereotypes of African Americans as guilty (not innocent).⁸⁰ They gave the participants this new IAT and the general race attitude IAT. They found that participants showed an implicit negative attitude toward Blacks as well as a small implicit stereotype between Black and guilty.⁸¹ More important than the bias itself is whether it predicts judgment. On the one hand, regression analysis demonstrated that a measure of *evidence evaluation* was a function of both the implicit attitude and the implicit stereotype.⁸² On the other hand, the IAT scores did not predict what is arguably more important: guilty verdicts or judgments of guilt on a more granular scale (from zero to one hundred).⁸³ In sum, a subtle change

76. See *id.* at 337 (confirming that the difference was statistically significant, $F=4.40$, $p=0.034$, $d=0.52$).

77. *Id.* at 338.

78. This finding built upon Levinson’s previous experimental study of implicit memory bias in legal decisionmaking. See Justin D. Levinson, *Forgotten Racial Equality: Implicit Bias, Decisionmaking, and Misremembering*, 57 DUKE L.J. 345, 398–406 (2007) (finding that study participants misremembered trial-relevant facts in racially biased ways).

79. Levinson & Young, *supra* note 20, at 338.

80. Justin D. Levinson, Huajian Cai & Danielle Young, *Guilty by Implicit Bias: The Guilty–Not Guilty Implicit Association Test*, 8 OHIO ST. J. CRIM. L. 187 (2010).

81. *Id.* at 204. For the attitude IAT, $D=0.21$ ($p<0.01$). *Id.* at 204 n.87. For the Guilty–Not Guilty IAT, $D=0.18$ ($p<0.01$). *Id.* at 204 n.83.

82. Participants rated each of the twenty pieces of information (evidence) in terms of its probity regarding guilt or innocence on a 1–7 scale. This produced a total “evidence evaluation” score that could range between 20 (least amount of evidence of guilt) to 140 (greatest). *Id.* at 202 n.70 (citation omitted). The greater the Black = guilty stereotype or the greater the negative attitude toward Blacks, the higher the guilty evidence evaluation. The ultimate regression equation was: Evidence = $88.58 + 5.74 \times BW + 6.61 \times GI + 9.11 \times AI + e$ (where BW stands for Black or White suspect; GI stands for guilty stereotype IAT score; AI stands for race attitude IAT score; e stands for error). *Id.* at 206. In normalized units, the implicit stereotype $\beta=0.25$ ($p<0.05$); the implicit attitude $\beta=0.34$ ($p<0.01$); adjusted $R^2=0.24$. See *id.* at 206 nn.93–95.

83. *Id.* at 206 n.95.

in skin color changed judgments of evidence and guilt; implicit biases measured by the IAT predicted how respondents evaluated identical pieces of information.

We have a long line of juror research, as synthesized through a meta-analysis, revealing that jurors of one race treat defendants of another race worse with respect to verdict and sentencing. According to some experiments, that difference might take place *more* often in experimental settings when the case is *not* racially charged, which suggests that participants who seek to be fair will endeavor to correct for potential bias when the threat of potential race bias is obvious. Finally, some recent work reveals that certain IATs can predict racial discrimination in the evaluation of evidence by mock jurors. Unfortunately, because of the incredible difficulties in research design, we do not have studies that evaluate implicit bias in real criminal trials. Accordingly, the existing body of research, while strongly suggestive, provides inferential rather than direct support that implicit bias accounts for some of the race effects on conviction and sentencing.

b. Judge

Obviously, the judge plays a crucial role in various aspects of the trial, exercising important discretion in setting bail,⁸⁴ deciding motions, conducting and deciding what can be asked during jury selection, ruling on the admissibility of evidence, presiding over the trial, and rendering verdicts in some cases. Again, as with the lawyers, there is no inherent reason to think that judges are immune from implicit biases. The extant empirical evidence supports this assumption.⁸⁵ Jeff Rachlinski and his coauthors are the only researchers who have measured the implicit biases of actual trial court judges. They have given the race attitude IAT to judges from three different judicial districts. Consistent with the general population, the White judges showed strong implicit attitudes favoring Whites over Blacks.⁸⁶

84. See Ian Ayres & Joel Waldfogel, *A Market Test for Race Discrimination in Bail Setting*, 46 STAN. L. REV. 987, 992 (1994) (finding 35 percent higher bail amounts for Black defendants after controlling for eleven other variables besides race).

85. Judge Bennett, a former civil rights lawyer, shares his unnerving discovery of his own disappointing IAT results in Mark W. Bennett, *Unraveling the Gordian Knot of Implicit Bias in Jury Selection: The Problems of Judge-Dominated Voir Dire, the Failed Promise of Batson, and Proposed Solutions*, 4 HARV. L. & POL'Y REV. 149, 150 (2010).

86. See Jeffrey J. Rachlinski et al., *Does Unconscious Racial Bias Affect Trial Judges?*, 84 NOTRE DAME L. REV. 1195, 1210 (2009). White judges ($N=85$) showed an IAT effect $M=216$ ms (with a standard deviation of 201 ms). 87.1 percent of them were quicker to sort in the schema-consistent arrangement than in the schema-inconsistent one. Black judges ($N=43$) showed a small bias $M=26$ ms (with a standard deviation of 208 ms). Only 44.2 percent of Black judges were quicker to sort in the schema-consistent arrangement than in the schema-inconsistent one. See *id.*

Rachlinski and colleagues investigated whether these biases predicted behavioral differences by giving judges three different vignettes and asking for their views on various questions, ranging from the likelihood of defendant recidivism to the recommended verdict and confidence level. Two of these vignettes revealed nothing about race, although some of the judges were subliminally primed with words designed to trigger the social category African American. The third vignette explicitly identified the defendant (and victim) as White or Black and did not use subliminal primes. After collecting the responses, Rachlinski et al. analyzed whether judges treated White or Black defendants differently and whether the IAT could predict any such difference.

They found mixed results. In the two subliminal priming vignettes, judges did not respond differently on average as a function of the primes. In other words, the primes did not prompt them to be harsher on defendants across the board as prior priming studies with nonjudge populations had found.⁸⁷ That said, the researchers found a *marginally* statistically significant interaction with IAT scores: Judges who had a greater degree of implicit bias against Blacks (and relative preference for Whites) were harsher on defendants (who were never racially identified) when they had been primed (with the Black words). By contrast, those judges who had implicit attitudes in favor of Blacks were less harsh on defendants when they received the prime.⁸⁸

In the third vignette, a battery case that explicitly identified the defendant as one race and the victim as the other,⁸⁹ the White judges showed equal likelihood of convicting the defendant, whether identified as White or Black. By contrast, Black judges were much more likely to convict the defendant if he was identified as White as compared to Black. When the researchers probed more deeply to see what, if anything, the IAT could predict, they did not find the sort of interaction that they found in the other two vignettes—in other words, judges with strong implicit biases in favor of Whites did not treat the Black defendant more harshly.⁹⁰

Noticing the difference between White and Black judge responses in the third vignette study, the researchers probed still deeper and found a three-way interaction between a judge's race, a judge's IAT score, and a defendant's race. No effect was found for White judges; the core finding concerned, instead, Black

87. See Sandra Graham & Brian S. Lowery, *Priming Unconscious Racial Stereotypes About Adolescent Offenders*, 28 LAW & HUM. BEHAV. 483 (2004).

88. See Rachlinski et al., *supra* note 86, at 1215. An ordered logit regression was performed between the judge's disposition against the priming condition, IAT score, and their interaction. The interaction term was marginally significant at $p=0.07$. See *id.* at 1214–15 n.94.

89. This third vignette did not use any subliminal primes.

90. See *id.* at 1202 n.41.

judges. Those Black judges with a stronger Black preference on the IAT were less likely to convict the Black defendant (as compared to the White defendant); correlatively, those Black judges with a White preference on the IAT were more likely to convict the Black defendant.⁹¹

It is hard to make simple sense of such complex findings, which may have been caused in part by the fact that the judges quickly sniffed out the purpose of the study—to detect racial discrimination.⁹² Given the high motivation not to perform race discrimination under research scrutiny, one could imagine that White judges might make sure to correct for any potential unfairness. By contrast, Black judges may have felt less need to signal racial fairness, which might explain why Black judges showed different behaviors as a function of implicit bias whereas White judges did not.

Put another way, data show that when the race of the defendant is explicitly identified to judges in the context of a psychology study (that is, the third vignette), judges are strongly motivated to be fair, which prompts a different response from White judges (who may think to themselves “whatever else, make sure not to treat the Black defendants worse”) than Black judges (who may think “give the benefit of the doubt to Black defendants”). However, when race is not explicitly identified but implicitly primed (vignettes one and two), perhaps the judges’ motivation to be accurate and fair is not on full alert. Notwithstanding all the complexity, this study provides some suggestive evidence that implicit attitudes may be influencing judges’ behavior.

4. Sentencing

There is evidence that African Americans are treated worse than similarly situated Whites in sentencing. For example, federal Black defendants were sentenced to 12 percent longer sentences under the Sentencing Reform Act of 1984,⁹³ and Black defendants are subject disproportionately to the death penalty.⁹⁴

91. *Id.* at 1220 n.114.

92. *See id.* at 1223.

93. *See* David B. Mustard, *Racial, Ethnic, and Gender Disparities in Sentencing: Evidence From the U.S. Federal Courts*, 44 J.L. & ECON. 285, 300 (2001) (examining federal judge sentencing under the Sentencing Reform Act of 1984).

94. *See* U.S. GEN. ACCOUNTING OFFICE, GAO GGD-90-57, REPORT TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE COMMITTEES ON THE JUDICIARY, DEATH PENALTY SENTENCING: RESEARCH INDICATES PATTERN OF RACIAL DISPARITIES (1990) (finding killers of White victims receive the death penalty more often than killers of Black victims); David C. Baldus et al., *Racial Discrimination and the Death Penalty in the Post-Furman Era: An Empirical and Legal Overview*,

Of course, it is possible that there is some good reason for that difference, based on the merits. One way to check is to run experimental studies holding everything constant except for race.

Probation officers. In one study, Sandra Graham and Brian Lowery subliminally primed police officers and juvenile probation officers with words related to African Americans, such as “Harlem” or “dreadlocks.” This subliminal priming led the officers to recommend harsher sentencing decisions.⁹⁵ As we noted above, Rachlinski et al. found no such effect on the judges they tested using a similar but not identical method.⁹⁶ But, at least in this study, an effect was found with police and probation officers. Given that this was a subliminal prime, the merits could not have justified the different evaluations.

Afrocentric features. Irene Blair, Charles Judd, and Kristine Chapleau took photographs from a database of criminals convicted in Florida⁹⁷ and asked participants to judge how Afrocentric both White and Black inmates looked on a scale of one to nine.⁹⁸ The goal was to see if race, facial features, or both correlated with actual sentencing. Using multiple regression analysis, the researchers found that after controlling for the seriousness of the primary and additional offenses, the race of the defendant showed no statistical significance.⁹⁹ In other words, White and Black defendants were sentenced without discrimination based on race. According to the

With Recent Findings From Philadelphia, 83 CORNELL L. REV. 1638, 1710–24 (1998) (finding mixed evidence that Black defendants are more likely to receive the death sentence).

95. See Graham & Lowery, *supra* note 87.

96. Priming studies are quite sensitive to details. For example, the more subliminal a prime is (in time duration and in frequency), the less the prime tends to stick (the smaller the effects and the faster it dissipates). Rachlinski et al. identified some differences between their experimental procedure and that of Graham and Lowery’s. See Rachlinski et al., *supra* note 86, at 1213 n.88. Interestingly, in the Rachlinski study, for judges from the eastern conference (seventy judges), a programming error made their subliminal primes last only sixty-four milliseconds. By contrast, for the western conference (forty-five judges), the prime lasted 153 milliseconds, which was close to the duration used by Graham and Lowery (150 milliseconds). See *id.* at 1206 (providing numerical count of judges’ prime); *id.* at 1213 n.84 (identifying the programming error). Graham and Lowery wrote that they selected the priming durations through extensive pilot testing “to arrive at a presentation time that would allow the primes to be detectable but not identifiable.” Graham & Lowery, *supra* note 87, at 489. It is possible that the truncated priming duration for the eastern conference judges contributed to the different findings between Rachlinski et al. and Graham and Lowery.

97. See Irene V. Blair et al., *The Influence of Afrocentric Facial Features in Criminal Sentencing*, 15 PSYCHOL. SCI. 674, 675 (2004) (selecting a sample of 100 Black inmates and 116 White inmates).

98. *Id.* at 676. Afrocentric meant full lips, broad nose, relatively darker skin color, and curly hair. It is what participants socially understood to look African without any explicit instruction or definition. See *id.* at 674 n.1.

99. *Id.* at 676.

researchers, this is a success story based on various sentencing reforms specifically adopted by Florida mostly to decrease sentencing discretion.¹⁰⁰

However, when the researchers added Afrocentricity of facial features into their regressions, they found a curious correlation. Within each race, either Black or White, the more Afrocentric the defendant looked, the harsher his punishment.¹⁰¹ How much so? If you picked a defendant who was one standard deviation above the mean in Afrocentric features and compared him to another defendant of the same race who was one standard deviation below the mean, there would be a sentence difference of seven to eight months between them, holding constant any difference in their actual crime.¹⁰²

Again, if the research provides complex findings, we must grapple with a complex story. On the one hand, we have good news: Black and White defendants were, overall, sentenced comparably. On the other hand, we have bad news: Within each race, the more stereotypically Black the defendant looked, the harsher the punishment. What might make sense of such results? According to the researchers, perhaps implicit bias was responsible.¹⁰³ If judges are motivated to avoid racial discrimination, they may be on guard regarding the dangers of treating similarly situated Blacks worse than Whites. On alert to this potential bias, the judges prevent it from causing any discriminatory behavior. By contrast, judges have no conscious awareness that Afrocentric features might be triggering stereotypes of criminality and violence that could influence their judgment. Without such awareness, they could not explicitly control or correct for the potential bias.¹⁰⁴ If this explanation is correct, we have further evidence that discrimination is being driven in part by implicit biases and not solely by explicit-but-concealed biases.

* * *

Where does this whirlwind tour of psychological research findings leave us? In each of the stages of the criminal trial process discussed, the empirical research

100. *Id.* at 677.

101. *Id.* at 676–77. Jennifer Eberhardt and her colleagues reached consistent findings when she used the same Florida photograph dataset to examine how Black defendants were sentenced to death. After performing a median split on how stereotypical the defendant looked, the top half were sentenced to death 57.5 percent of the time compared to the bottom half, which were sentenced to death only 24.4 percent of the time. See Jennifer L. Eberhardt et al., *Looking Deathworthy: Perceived Stereotypicality of Black Defendants Predicts Capital-Sentencing Outcomes*, 17 PSYCHOL. SCI. 383, 384 (2006). Interestingly, this effect was not observed when the victim was Black. See *id.* at 385.

102. See Blair et al., *supra* note 97, at 677–78.

103. See *id.* at 678 (hypothesizing that “perhaps an equally pernicious and less controllable process [is] at work”).

104. See *id.* at 677.

gives us reason to think that implicit biases—attitudes and beliefs that we are not directly aware of and may not endorse—could influence how defendants are treated and judged. Wherever possible, in our description of the studies, we have tried to provide the magnitude of these effects. But knowing precisely how much work they really do is difficult. If we seek an estimate, reflective of an entire body of research and not any single study, one answer comes from the Greenwald meta-analysis, which found that the IAT (the most widely used, but not the only measure of implicit bias) could predict 5.6 percent of the variation of the behavior in Black–White behavioral domains.¹⁰⁵

Should that be deemed a lot or a little? In answering this question, we should be mindful of the collective impact of such biases, integrated over time (per person) and over persons (across all defendants).¹⁰⁶ For a single defendant, these biases may surface for various decisionmakers repeatedly in policing, charging, bail, plea bargaining, pretrial motions, evidentiary motions, witness credibility, lawyer persuasiveness, guilt determination, sentencing recommendations, sentencing itself, appeal, and so on. Even small biases at each stage may aggregate into a substantial effect.

To get a more concrete sense, Anthony Greenwald has produced a simulation that models cumulating racial disparities through five sequential stages of criminal justice—arrest, arraignment, plea bargain, trial, and sentence. It supposes that the probability of arrest having committed the offense is 0.50, that the probability of conviction at trial is 0.75, and that the effect size of implicit bias is $r=0.1$ at each stage. Under this simulation, for a crime with a mean sentence of 5 years, and with a standard deviation of 2 years, Black criminals can expect a sentence of 2.44 years whereas White criminals can expect just 1.40 years.¹⁰⁷ To appreciate the full social impact, we must next aggregate this sort of disparity a second time over all defendants subject to racial bias, out of an approximate annual

105. See Greenwald et al., *supra* note 24, at 24 tbl.3 (showing that correlation between race attitude IAT (Black/White) and behavior in the meta-analysis is 0.236, which when squared equals 0.056, the percentage of variance explained).

106. See Rachlinski et al., *supra* note 86, at 1202; Jerry Kang & Mahzarin Banaji, *Fair Measures: A Behavioral Realist Revision of 'Affirmative Action'*, 94 CALIF. L. REV. 1063, 1073 (2006).

107. The simulation is available at *Simulation: Cumulating Racial Disparities Through 5 Sequential Stages of Criminal Justice*, http://faculty.washington.edu/agg/UCLA_PULSE.simulation.xlsx (last visited May 15, 2012). If in the simulation the effect size of race discrimination at each step is increased from $r=0.1$ to $r=0.2$, which is less than the average effect size of race discrimination effects found in the 2009 meta-analysis, see *supra* note 105, the ratio of expected years of sentence would increase to 3.11 years (Black) to 1.01 years (White).

total of 20.7 million state criminal cases¹⁰⁸ and 70 thousand federal criminal cases.¹⁰⁹ And, as Robert Abelson has demonstrated, even small percentages of variance explained might amount to huge impacts.¹¹⁰

B. The Civil Path

Now, we switch from the criminal to the civil path and focus on the trajectory of an individual¹¹¹ bringing suit in a federal employment discrimination case—and on how implicit bias might affect this process. First, the plaintiff, who is a member of a protected class, believes that her employer has discriminated against her in some legally cognizable way.¹¹² Second, after exhausting necessary administrative remedies,¹¹³ the plaintiff sues in federal court. Third, the defendant tries to terminate the case before trial via a motion to dismiss for failure to state a claim under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure (FRCP) 12(b)(6). Fourth, should that fail, the defendant moves for summary judgment under FRCP 56. Finally, should that motion also fail, the jury renders a verdict after trial. Again, at each of these

108. See ROBERT C. LAFOUNTAIN ET AL., COURT STATISTICS PROJECT, EXAMINING THE WORK OF STATE COURTS: AN ANALYSIS OF 2009 STATE COURT CASELOADS 3 (2011), available at <http://www.courtstatistics.org/FlashMicrosites/CSP/images/CSP2009.pdf>.

109. See Rachlinski et al., *supra* note 86, at 1202.

110. See Robert P. Abelson, *A Variance Explanation Paradox: When a Little Is a Lot*, 97 PSYCHOL. BULL. 129, 132 (1985) (explaining that the batting average of a 0.320 hitter or a 0.220 hitter predicts only 1.4 percent of the variance explained for a single at-bat producing either a hit or no-hit). Some discussion of this appears in Kang & Lane, *supra* note 2, at 489.

111. We acknowledge that *Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. v. Dukes*, 131 S. Ct. 2541 (2011), made it much more difficult to certify large classes in employment discrimination cases. See *id.* at 2553–54 (holding that statistical evidence of gender disparities combined with a sociologist's analysis that Wal-Mart's corporate culture made it vulnerable to gender bias was inadequate to show that members of the putative class had a common claim for purposes of class certification under FED. R. CIV. P. 23(b)).

112. For example, in a Title VII cause of action for disparate *treatment*, the plaintiff must demonstrate an adverse employment action “because of” the plaintiff’s “race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.” 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-2(a)(1) (2006). By contrast, in a Title VII cause of action for disparate *impact*, the plaintiff challenges facially neutral policies that produce a disparate impact on protected populations. See *Griggs v. Duke Power Co.*, 401 U.S. 424, 431 (1971). We recognize that employment discrimination law is far more complex than presented here, with different elements for different state and federal causes of action.

113. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) process is critical in practical terms because the failure to file a claim with the EEOC within the quite short statute of limitations (either 180 or 300 days depending on whether the jurisdiction has a state or local fair employment agency) or to timely file suit after resorting to the EEOC results in an automatic dismissal of the claim. However, neither EEOC inaction nor an adverse determination preclude private suit. See 2 CHARLES SULLIVAN & LAUREN WALTER, EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION LAW AND PRACTICE § 12.03[B], at 672 (4th ed. 2012).

stages,¹¹⁴ implicit biases could potentially influence the outcome. To maintain a manageable scope of analysis, we focus on employer discrimination, pretrial adjudication, and jury verdict.

1. Employer Discrimination

For many, the most interesting question is whether implicit bias helped cause the employer to discriminate against the plaintiff. There are good reasons to think that some negative employment actions are indeed caused by implicit biases in what tort scholars call a “but-for” sense. This but-for causation may be legally sufficient since Title VII and most state antidiscrimination statutes require only a showing that the plaintiff was treated less favorably “because of” a protected characteristic, such as race or sex.¹¹⁵ But our objective here is not to engage the doctrinal¹¹⁶ and philosophical questions¹¹⁷ of whether existing antidiscrimination laws do or should recognize implicit bias-actuated discrimination. We also do not address what sorts of evidence should be deemed admissible when plaintiffs attempt to make such a case at trial.¹¹⁸ Although those questions are critically important, our

114. As explained when we introduced the Criminal Path, the number of stages identified is somewhat arbitrary. We could have listed more or fewer stages.

115. Section 703(a) of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act states that “[i]t shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual . . . because of [an] individual’s race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.” 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-2(a)(1).

116. For discussion of legal implications, see Faigman, Dasgupta & Ridgeway, *supra* note 19; Linda Hamilton Krieger, *The Content of Our Categories: A Cognitive Bias Approach to Discrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity*, 47 STAN. L. REV. 1161 (1995); Krieger & Fiske, *supra* note 2.

117. For a philosophical analysis, see Patrick S. Shin, *Liability for Unconscious Discrimination? A Thought Experiment in the Theory of Employment Discrimination Law*, 62 HASTINGS L.J. 67 (2010).

118. For example, there is considerable disagreement on whether an expert should be allowed to testify that a particular case is an instance of implicit bias. This issue is part of a much larger debate regarding scientists’ ability to make reasonable inferences about an individual case from group data. John Monahan and Laurens Walker first pointed out that scientific evidence often comes to court at two different levels of generality, one general and one specific. See Laurens Walker & John Monahan, *Social Frameworks: A New Use of Social Science in Law*, 73 VA. L. REV. 559 (1987). For instance, in a case involving the accuracy of an eyewitness identification, the general question might concern whether eyewitness identifications that are cross-racial are less reliable than same-race identifications; the specific question in the case would involve whether the cross-racial identification in this case was accurate. Interested in social science evidence, Monahan and Walker referred to this as “social framework” evidence, though their fundamental insight regarding frameworks applies to all scientific evidence. In the context of implicit biases, then, general research amply demonstrates the phenomenon in the population. However, in the courtroom, the issue typically concerns whether a particular decision or action was a product of implicit bias.

As a scientific matter, knowing that a phenomenon exists in a population does not necessarily mean that a scientist can reliably say that it was manifest in a particular case. This has led to a debate as to

task is more limited—to give an empirical account of how implicit bias may potentially influence a civil litigation trajectory.

Our belief that implicit bias causes some employment discrimination is based on the following evidence. First, tester studies in the field—which involve sending identical applicants or applications except for some trait, such as race or gender—have generally uncovered discrimination. According to a summary by Mark Bendick and Ana Nunes, there have been “several dozen testing studies” in the past two decades, in multiple countries, focusing on discrimination against various demographic groups (including women, the elderly, and racial minorities).¹¹⁹ These studies consistently reveal typical “net rates of discrimination” that range from 20–40 percent.¹²⁰ In other words, in 20–40 percent of cases, employers treat subordinated groups (for example, racial minorities) worse than privileged groups (for example, Whites) even though the testers were carefully controlled to be identically qualified.

Second, although tester studies do not distinguish between explicit versus implicit bias, various laboratory experiments have found implicit bias correlations with discriminatory evaluations. For example, Laurie Rudman and Peter Glick demonstrated that in certain job conditions, participants treated a self-promoting and competent woman, whom the researchers termed “agentic,” worse than an

whether experts should be limited to testifying only to the general phenomenon or should be allowed to opine on whether a particular case is an instance of the general phenomenon. This is a complicated issue and scholars have weighed in on both sides. For opposition to the use of expert testimony that a specific case is an instance of implicit bias, see Faigman, Dasgupta & Ridgeway, *supra* note 19, at 1394 (“The research . . . does not demonstrate that an expert can validly determine whether implicit bias caused a specific employment decision.”); and John Monahan, Laurens Walker & Gregory Mitchell, *Contextual Evidence of Gender Discrimination: The Ascendancy of “Social Frameworks,”* 94 VA. L. REV. 1715, 1719 (2008) (“[T]estimony in which the expert witness explicitly linked general research findings on gender discrimination to specific factual conclusions . . . exceeded the limitations on expert testimony established by the Federal Rules of Evidence and by both the original and revised proposal of what constitutes ‘social framework’ evidence.”). For advancement of allowing expert testimony that a particular case is an instance of some general phenomenon, see Susan T. Fiske & Eugene Borgida, *Standards for Using Social Psychological Evidence in Employment Discrimination Proceedings*, 83 TEMPLE L. REV. 867, 876 (2011) (“Qualified social scientists who provide general, relevant knowledge and apply ordinary scientific reasoning may offer informal opinion about the individual case, but probabilistically.”).

In the end, lawyers may be able to work around this dispute by using an expert to provide social framework evidence that identifies particular attributes that exacerbate biased decisionmaking, then immediately calling up another witness who is personally familiar with the defendant’s work environment and asking that witness whether each of those particular attributes exists.

119. See Marc Bendick, Jr. & Ana P. Nunes, *Developing the Research Basis for Controlling Bias in Hiring*, 68 J. SOC. ISSUES (forthcoming 2012), available at http://www.bendickegan.com/pdf/Sent_to_JSI_Feb_27_2010.pdf.

120. *Id.* (manuscript at 15).

equally agentic man.¹²¹ When the job description explicitly required the employee to be cooperative and to work well with others, participants rated the agentic female less hireable than the equally agentic male.¹²² Probing deeper, the researchers identified that the participants penalized the female candidate for lack of social skills, not incompetence.¹²³ Explicit bias measures did not correlate with the rankings; however, an implicit gender stereotype (associating women as more communal than agentic)¹²⁴ did correlate negatively with the ratings for social skills. In other words, the higher the implicit gender stereotype, the lower the social skills evaluation.¹²⁵

Third, field experiments have provided further confirmation under real-world conditions. The studies by Marianne Bertrand and Sendhil Mullainathan demonstrating discrimination in callbacks because of the names on comparable resumes have received substantial attention in the popular press as well as in law reviews.¹²⁶ These studies found that for equally qualified—indeed, otherwise identical candidates, firms called back “Emily” more often than “Lakisha.”¹²⁷ Less attention has been paid to Dan-Olof Rooth’s extensions of this work, which found similar callback discrimination but also found correlations between implicit stereotypes and the discriminatory behavior.¹²⁸ Rooth has found these correlations

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121. Laurie A. Rudman & Peter Glick, *Prescriptive Gender Stereotypes and Backlash Toward Agentic Women*, 57 J. SOC. ISSUES 743, 757 (2001). Agentic qualities were signaled by a life philosophy essay and canned answers to a videotaped interview that emphasized self-promotion and competence. *See id.* at 748. Agentic candidates were contrasted with candidates whom the researchers labeled “androgynous”—they also demonstrated the characteristics of interdependence and cooperation. *Id.*
 122. The difference was $M=2.84$ versus $M=3.52$ on a 5 point scale ($p<0.05$). *See id.* at 753. No gender bias was shown when the job description was ostensibly masculine and did not call for cooperative behavior. Also, job candidates that were engineered to be androgynous—in other words, to show both agentic and cooperative traits—were treated the same regardless of gender. *See id.*
 123. *See id.* at 753–54.
 124. The agentic stereotype was captured by word stimuli such as “independent,” “autonomous,” and “competitive.” The communal stereotype was captured by words such as “communal,” “cooperative,” and “kinship.” *See id.* at 750.
 125. *See id.* at 756 ($r=-0.49$, $p<0.001$). For further description of the study in the law reviews, see Kang, *supra* note 46, at 1517–18.
 126. Marianne Bertrand & Sendhil Mullainathan, *Are Emily and Greg More Employable Than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination*, 94 AM. ECON. REV. 991 (2004). A search of the TP-ALL database in Westlaw on December 10, 2011 revealed ninety-six hits.
 127. *Id.* at 992.
 128. Dan-Olof Rooth, *Automatic Associations and Discrimination in Hiring: Real World Evidence*, 17 LABOUR ECON. 523 (2010) (finding that implicit stereotypes, as measured by the IAT, predicted differential callbacks of Swedish-named versus Arab-Muslim-named resumes). An increase of one standard deviation in implicit stereotype produced almost a 12 percent decrease in the probability that an Arab/Muslim candidate received an interview. *See id.*

with not only implicit stereotypes about ethnic groups (Swedes versus Arab-Muslims) but also implicit stereotypes about the obese.¹²⁹

Because implicit bias in the *courtroom* is our focus, we will not attempt to offer a comprehensive summary of the scientific research as applied to the implicit bias in the *workplace*.¹³⁰ We do, however, wish briefly to highlight lines of research—variously called “constructed criteria,” “shifting standards,” or “casuistry”—that emphasize the *malleability of merit*. We focus on this work because it has received relatively little coverage in the legal literature and may help explain how complex decisionmaking with multiple motivations occurs in the real world.¹³¹ Moreover, this phenomenon may influence not only the defendant (accused of discrimination) but also the jurors who are tasked to judge the merits of the plaintiff’s case.

Broadly speaking, this research demonstrates that people frequently engage in motivated reasoning¹³² in selection decisions that we justify by changing merit criteria on the fly, often without conscious awareness. In other words, as between two plausible candidates that have different strengths and weaknesses, we first choose the candidate we like—a decision that may well be influenced by implicit factors—and then justify that choice by molding our merit standards accordingly.

We can make this point more concrete. In one experiment, Eric Luis Uhlmann and Geoffrey Cohen asked participants to evaluate two finalists for police chief—one male, the other female.¹³³ One candidate’s profile signaled *book smart*, the other’s profile signaled *streetwise*, and the experimental design varied which profile attached to the woman and which to the man. Regardless of which attributes the male candidate featured, participants favored the male candidate and articulated their hiring criteria accordingly. For example, education (book

129. Jens Agerström & Dan-Olof Rooth, *The Role of Automatic Obesity Stereotypes in Real Hiring Discrimination*, 96 J. APPLIED PSYCHOL. 790 (2011) (finding that hiring managers (N=153) holding more negative IAT-measured automatic stereotypes about the obese were less likely to invite an obese applicant for an interview).

130. Thankfully, many of these studies have already been imported into the legal literature. For a review of the science, see Kang & Lane, *supra* note 2, at 484–85 (discussing evidence of racial bias in how actual managers sort resumes and of correlations between implicit biases, as measured by the IAT, and differential callback rates).

131. One recent exception is Rich, *supra* note 25.

132. For discussion of motivated reasoning in organizational contexts, see Sung Hui Kim, *The Banality of Fraud: Re-situating the Inside Counsel as Gatekeeper*, 74 FORDHAM L. REV. 983, 1029–34 (2005). Motivated reasoning is “the process through which we assimilate information in a self-serving manner.” *Id.* at 1029.

133. See Eric Luis Uhlmann & Geoffrey L. Cohen, *Constructed Criteria: Redefining Merit to Justify Discrimination*, 16 PSYCHOL. SCI. 474, 475 (2005).

smarts) was considered more important when the man had it.¹³⁴ Surprisingly, even the attribute of being family oriented and having children was deemed more important when the man had it.¹³⁵

Michael Norton, Joseph Vandello, and John Darley have made similar findings, again in the domain of gender.¹³⁶ Participants were put in the role of manager of a construction company who had to hire a high-level employee. One candidate's profile signaled more education; the other's profile signaled more experience. Participants ranked these candidates (and three other filler candidates), and then explained their decisionmaking by writing down "what was most important in determining [their] decision."¹³⁷

In the control condition, the profiles were given with just initials (not full names) and thus the test subjects could not assess their gender. In this condition, participants preferred the higher educated candidate 76 percent of the time.¹³⁸ In the two experimental conditions, the profiles were given names that signaled gender, with the man having higher education in one condition and the woman having higher education in the other. When the man had higher education, the participants preferred him 75 percent of the time. In sharp contrast, when the woman had higher education, only 43 percent of the participants preferred her.¹³⁹

The discrimination itself is not as interesting as *how* the discrimination was justified. In the control condition and the man-has-more-education condition, the participants ranked education as more important than experience about half the time (48 percent and 50 percent).¹⁴⁰ By contrast, in the woman-has-more-education condition, only 22 percent ranked education as more important than experience.¹⁴¹ In other words, what counted as merit was redefined, in real time, to justify hiring the man.

Was this weighting done consciously, as part of a strategy to manipulate merit in order to provide a cover story for decisionmaking caused and motivated by explicit bias? Or, was merit refactored in a more automatic, unconscious, dissonance-reducing rationalization, which would be more consistent with an implicit bias story? Norton and colleagues probed this causation question in another series of

134. See *id.* ($M=8.27$ with education versus $M=7.07$ without education, on a 11 point scale; $p=0.006$; $d=1.02$).

135. See *id.* ($M=6.21$ with family traits versus 5.08 without family traits; $p=0.05$; $d=0.86$).

136. Michael I. Norton et al., *Casistry and Social Category Bias*, 87 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 817 (2004).

137. *Id.* at 820.

138. *Id.* at 821.

139. *Id.*

140. *Id.*

141. *Id.*

experiments, in the context of race and college admissions.¹⁴² In a prior study, they had found that Princeton undergraduate students shifted merit criteria—the relative importance of GPA versus the number of AP classes taken—to select the Black applicant over the White applicant who shared the same cumulative SAT score.¹⁴³ To see whether this casuistry was explicit and strategic or implicit and automatic, they ran another experiment in which participants merely rated admissions criteria in the abstract without selecting a candidate for admission.

Participants were simply told that they were participating in a study examining the criteria most important to college admissions decisions. They were given two sample resumes to familiarize themselves with potential criteria. Both resumes had equivalent cumulative SAT scores, but differed on GPA (4.0 versus 3.6) versus number of AP classes taken (9 versus 6). Both resumes also disclosed the applicant's race. In one condition, the White candidate had the higher GPA (and fewer AP classes); in the other condition, the African American candidate had the higher GPA (and fewer AP classes).¹⁴⁴ After reviewing the samples, the participants had to rank order eight criteria in importance, including GPA, number of AP classes, SAT scores, athletic participation, and so forth.

In the condition with the Black candidate having the higher GPA, 77 percent of the participants ranked GPA higher in importance than number of AP classes taken. By contrast, when the White candidate had the higher GPA, only 63 percent of the participants ranked GPA higher than AP classes. This change in the weighting happened even though the participants did not expect that they were going to make an admissions choice or to justify that choice. Thus, these differences could not be readily explained in purely strategic terms, as methods for justifying a subsequent decision. According to the authors,

[t]hese results suggest not only that it is possible for people to reweight criteria deliberately to justify choices but also that decisions made under such social constraints can impact information processing even prior to making a choice. This suggests that the bias we observed is not simply post hoc and strategic but occurs as an organic part of making decisions when social category information is present.¹⁴⁵

142. Michael I. Norton et al., *Mixed Motives and Racial Bias: The Impact of Legitimate and Illegitimate Criteria on Decision Making*, 12 PSYCHOL. PUB. POL'Y & L. 36, 42 (2006).

143. *Id.* at 44.

144. *See id.*

145. *Id.* at 46–47. This does not, however, fully establish that these differences were the result of implicit views rather than explicit ones. Even if test subjects did not expect to have to make admissions determinations, they might consciously select criteria that they believed favored one group over another.

The ways that human decisionmakers may subtly adjust criteria in real time to modify their judgments of merit has significance for thinking about the ways that implicit bias may potentially influence employment decisions. In effect, bias can influence decisions in ways contrary to the standard and seemingly commonsensical model. The conventional legal model describes behavior as a product of discrete and identifiable motives. This research suggests, however, that implicit motivations might influence behavior and that we then rationalize those decisions after the fact. Hence, some employment decisions might be motivated by implicit bias but rationalized post hoc based on nonbiased criteria. This process of reasoning from behavior to motives, as opposed to the folk-psychology assumption that the arrow of direction is from motives to behavior, is, in fact, consistent with a large body of contemporary psychological research.¹⁴⁶

2. Pretrial Adjudication: 12(b)(6)

As soon as a plaintiff files the complaint, the defendant will try to dismiss as many of the claims in the complaint as possible. Before recent changes in pleading, a motion to dismiss a complaint under FRCP 8 and FRCP 12(b)(6) was decided under the relatively lax standard of *Conley v. Gibson*.¹⁴⁷ Under *Conley*, all factual allegations made in the complaint were assumed to be true. As such, the court's task was simply to ask whether "it appears beyond doubt that the plaintiff can prove no set of facts in support of his claim."¹⁴⁸

Starting with *Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly*,¹⁴⁹ which addressed complex antitrust claims of parallel conduct, and further developed in *Ashcroft v. Iqbal*,¹⁵⁰ which addressed civil rights actions based on racial and religious discrimination post-9/11, the U.S. Supreme Court abandoned the *Conley* standard. First, district courts must now throw out factual allegations made in the complaint if they are merely conclusory.¹⁵¹ Second, courts must decide on the plausibility of the claim based on the information before them.¹⁵² In *Iqbal*, the Supreme Court held that

146. See generally TIMOTHY D. WILSON, STRANGERS TO OURSELVES: DISCOVERING THE ADAPTIVE UNCONSCIOUS (2002).

147. 355 U.S. 41 (1957).

148. *Id.* at 45–46.

149. 550 U.S. 544 (2007).

150. 129 S. Ct. 1937 (2009).

151. *Id.* at 1951.

152. *Id.* at 1950–52.

because of an “obvious alternative explanation”¹⁵³ of earnest national security response, purposeful racial or religious “discrimination is not a plausible conclusion.”¹⁵⁴

How are courts supposed to decide what is “Twombal”¹⁵⁵ plausible when the motion to dismiss happens before discovery, especially in civil rights cases in which the defendant holds the key information? According to the Court, “[d]etermining whether a complaint states a plausible claim for relief will . . . be a context-specific task that requires the reviewing court to draw on its judicial experience and common sense.”¹⁵⁶

And when judges turn to their judicial experience and common sense, what will this store of knowledge tell them about whether some particular comment or act happened and whether such behavior evidences legally cognizable discrimination? Decades of social psychological research demonstrate that our impressions are driven by the interplay between categorical (general to the category) and individuating (specific to the member of the category) information. For example, in order to come to an impression about a Latina plaintiff, we reconcile general schemas for Latina workers with individualized data about the specific plaintiff. When we lack sufficient individuating information—which is largely the state of affairs at the motion to dismiss stage—we have no choice but to rely more heavily on our schemas.¹⁵⁷

Moreover, consider what the directive to rely on common sense means in light of social judgeability theory.¹⁵⁸ According to this theory, there are social rules that tell us when it is appropriate to judge someone. For example, suppose your fourth grade child told you that a new kid, Hannah, has enrolled in school and that she receives free lunches. Your child then asks you whether you think she is smart. You will probably decline to answer since you do not feel entitled to make that judgment. Without more probative information, you feel that you would only be crudely stereotyping her abilities based on her socioeconomic status. But what if the next day you volunteered in the classroom and spent twelve minutes observing

153. *Id.* (quoting *Twombly*, 550 U.S. 544) (internal quotation marks omitted).

154. *Id.* at 1952.

155. See *In re Iowa Ready-Mix Concrete Antitrust Litig.*, No. C 10-4038-MWB, 2011 WL 5547159, at *1 (N.D. Iowa Nov. 9, 2011) (referring to a *Twombly-Iqbal* motion as “Twombal”).

156. *Iqbal*, 129 S. Ct. at 1940.

157. These schemas also reflect cultural cognitions. See generally Donald Braman, *Cultural Cognition and the Reasonable Person*, 14 LEWIS & CLARK L. REV. 1455 (2010); Dan M. Kahan, David A. Hoffman & Donald Braman, *Whose Eyes Are You Going to Believe? Scott v. Harris and the Perils of Cognitive Illiberalism*, 122 HARV. L. REV. 837 (2009).

158. See Vincent Y. Yzerbyt et al., *Social Judgeability: The Impact of Meta-Informational Cues on the Use of Stereotypes*, 66 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 48 (1994).

Hannah interacting with a teacher trying to solve problems? Would you then feel that you had enough individuating information to come to some judgment?

This is precisely what John Darley and Paget Gross tested in a seminal experiment in 1983.¹⁵⁹ When participants only received economic status information, they declined to evaluate Hannah's intelligence as a function of her economic class. However, when they saw a twelve-minute videotape of the child answering a battery of questions, participants felt credentialed to judge the girl, and they did so in a way that was consistent with stereotypes. What they did not realize was that the individuating information in the videotape was purposefully designed to be ambiguous. So participants who were told that Hannah was rich interpreted the video as confirmation that she was smart. By contrast, participants who were told that Hannah was poor interpreted the same video as confirmation that she was not so bright.¹⁶⁰

Vincent Yzerbyt and colleagues, who call this phenomenon "social judgeability," have produced further evidence of this effect.¹⁶¹ If researchers told you that a person is either an archivist or a comedian and then asked you twenty questions about this person regarding their degree of extroversion with the options of "True," "False," or "I don't know," how might you answer? What if, in addition, they manufactured an illusion that you were given individuating information—information about the specific individual and not just the category he or she belongs to—even though you actually did not receive any such information?¹⁶² This is precisely what Yzerbyt and colleagues did in the lab.

They found that those operating under the illusion of individuating information were more confident in their answers in that they marked fewer questions with "I don't know."¹⁶³ They also found that those operating under the illusion gave more stereotype-consistent answers.¹⁶⁴ In other words, the illusion of being informed made the target judgeable. Because the participants, in fact, had received no such individuating information, they tended to judge the person in accordance with their schemas about archivists and comedians. Interestingly, "in the debriefings,

159. See John M. Darley & Paget H. Gross, *A Hypothesis-Confirming Bias in Labeling Effects*, 44 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 20, 22–23 (1983).

160. See *id.* at 24–25, 27–29.

161. See Yzerbyt et al., *supra* note 158.

162. This illusion was created by having participants go through a listening exercise, in which they were told to focus only on one speaker (coming through one ear of a headset) and ignore the other (coming through the other). They were later told that the speaker that they were told to ignore had in fact provided relevant individuating information. The truth was, however, that no such information had been given. See *id.* at 50.

163. See *id.* at 51 ($M=5.07$ versus 10.13; $p<0.003$).

164. See *id.* ($M=9.97$ versus 6.30, out of 1 to 20 point range; $p<0.006$).

subjects reported that they did not judge the target on the basis of a stereotype; they were persuaded that they had described a real person qua person.”¹⁶⁵ Again, it is possible that they were concealing their explicitly embraced bias about archivists and comedians from probing researchers, but we think that it is more probable that implicit bias explains these results.

Social judgeability theory connects back to *Iqbal* in that the Supreme Court has altered the rules structuring the judgeability of plaintiffs and their complaints. Under *Conley*, judges were told not to judge without the facts and thus were supposed to allow the lawsuit to get to discovery unless no set of facts could state a legal claim. By contrast, under *Iqbal*, judges have been explicitly green-lighted to judge the plausibility of the plaintiff’s claim based only on the minimal facts that can be alleged before discovery—and this instruction came in the context of a racial discrimination case. In other words, our highest court has entitled district court judges to make this judgment based on a quantum of information that may provide enough facts to render the claim socially judgeable but not enough facts to ground that judgment in much more than the judge’s schemas. Just as Yzerbyt’s illusion of individuating information entitled participants to judge in the laboratory, the express command of the Supreme Court may entitle judges to judge in the courtroom when they lack any well-developed basis to do so.

There are no field studies to test whether biases, explicit or implicit, influence how actual judges decide motions to dismiss actual cases. It is not clear that researchers could ever collect such information. All that we have are some preliminary data about dismissal rates before and after *Iqbal* that are consistent with our analysis. Again, since *Iqbal* made dismissals easier, we should see an increase in dismissal rates across the board.¹⁶⁶ More relevant to our hypothesis is whether certain types of cases experienced differential changes in dismissal rates. For instance, we would expect *Iqbal* to generate greater increases in dismissal rates for race discrimination claims than, say, contract claims. There are a number of potential reasons for this: One reason is that judges are likely to have stronger biases that plaintiffs in the former type of case have less valid claims than those in the latter. Another reason is that we might expect some kinds of cases

165. *Id.*

166. In the first empirical study of *Iqbal*, Hatamyar sampled 444 cases under *Conley* (from May 2005 to May 2007) and 173 cases under *Iqbal* (from May 2009 to August 2009). See Patricia W. Hatamyar, *The Tao of Pleading: Do Twombly and Iqbal Matter Empirically?*, 59 AM. U. L. REV. 553, 597 (2010). She found that the general rate of complaint dismissal rose from 46 percent to 56 percent. See *id.* at 602 tbl.2. However, this finding was not statistically significant under a Pearson chi-squared distribution test examining the different dismissal rates for *Conley*, *Twombly*, and *Iqbal* for three results: grant, mixed, and deny.

to raise more significant concerns about asymmetric information than do others. In contracts disputes, both parties may have good information about most of the relevant facts even prior to discovery. In employment discrimination cases, plaintiffs may have good hunches about how they have been discriminated against, but prior to discovery they may not have access to the broad array of information in the employer's possession that may be necessary to turn the hunch into something a judge finds plausible. Moreover, these two reasons potentially interact: the more gap filling and inferential thinking that a judge has to engage in, the more room there may be for explicit and implicit biases to structure the judge's assessment in the absence of a well-developed evidentiary record.

Notwithstanding the lack of field studies on these issues, there is some evidentiary support for these differential changes in dismissal rates. For example, Patricia Hatamayr sorted a sample of cases before and after *Iqbal* into six major categories: contracts, torts, civil rights, labor, intellectual property, and all other statutory cases.¹⁶⁷ She found that in contract cases, the rate of dismissal did not change much from *Conley* (32 percent) to *Iqbal* (32 percent).¹⁶⁸ By contrast, for Title VII cases, the rate of dismissal increased from 42 percent to 53 percent.¹⁶⁹ Victor Quintanilla has collected more granular data by counting not Title VII cases generally but federal employment discrimination cases filed specifically by Black plaintiffs both before and after *Iqbal*.¹⁷⁰ He found an even larger jump. Under the *Conley* regime, courts granted only 20.5 percent of the motions to dismiss such cases. By contrast, under the *Iqbal* regime, courts granted 54.6 percent of them.¹⁷¹ These data lend themselves to multiple interpretations and suffer from various confounds. So at this point, we can make only modest claims. We merely suggest that the dismissal rate data are consistent with our hypothesis that *Iqbal*'s plausibility standard poses a risk of increasing the impact of implicit biases at the 12(b)(6) stage.

If, notwithstanding the plausibility-based pleading requirements, the case gets past the motion to dismiss, then discovery will take place, after which defendants will seek summary judgment under FRCP 56. On the one hand, this procedural posture is less subject to implicit biases than the motion to dismiss because more individuating information will have surfaced through discovery. On the

167. See *id.* at 591–93.

168. See *id.* at 630 tbl.D.

169. See *id.*

170. See Victor D. Quintanilla, *Beyond Common Sense: A Social Psychological Study of Iqbal's Effect on Claims of Race Discrimination*, 17 MICH. J. RACE & L. 1 (2011). Quintanilla counted both Title VII and 42 U.S.C. § 1981 cases.

171. See *id.* at 36 tbl.1 ($p < 0.000$).

other hand, the judge still has to make a judgment call on whether any “genuine dispute as to any material fact”¹⁷² remains. Similar decisionmaking dynamics are likely to be in play as we saw in the pleading stage, for a significant quantum of discretion remains. Certainly the empirical evidence that demonstrates how poorly employment discrimination claims fare on summary judgment is not inconsistent with this view, though, to be sure, myriad other explanations of these differences are possible (including, for example, doctrinal obstacles to reaching a jury).¹⁷³

3. Jury Verdict

If the case gets to trial, the parties will introduce evidence on the merits of the claim. Sometimes the evidence will be physical objects, such as documents, emails, photographs, voice recordings, evaluation forms, and the like. The rest of it will be witness or expert testimony, teased out and challenged by lawyers on both sides. Is there any reason to think that jurors might interpret the evidence in line with their biases? In the criminal trajectory, we already learned of juror bias via meta-analyses as well as correlations with implicit biases. Unfortunately, we lack comparable studies in the civil context. What we offer are two sets of related arguments and evidence that speak to the issue: motivation to shift standards and performer preference.

a. Motivation to Shift Standards

Above, we discussed the potential malleability of merit determinations when judgments permit discretion and reviewed how employer defendants might shift standards and reweight criteria when evaluating applicants and employees. Here, we want to recognize that a parallel phenomenon may affect juror decisionmaking. Suppose that a particular juror is White and that he identifies strongly with his Whiteness. Suppose further that the defendant is White and is being sued by a racial minority. The accusation of illegal and immoral behavior threatens the

172. FED R. CIV. P. 56(a).

173. See, e.g., Charlotte L. Lanvers, *Different Federal Court, Different Disposition: An Empirical Comparison of ADA, Title VII Race and Sex, and ADEA Employment Discrimination Dispositions in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania and the Northern District of Georgia*, 16 CORNELL J.L. & POL'Y 381, 395 (2007); Theodore Eisenberg & Charlotte Lanvers, *Summary Judgment Rates Over Time, Across Case Categories, and Across Districts: An Empirical Study of Three Large Federal Districts* (Cornell Law Sch. Research Paper No. 08-022, 2008), available at <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1138373> (finding that civil rights cases, and particularly employment discrimination cases, have a consistently higher summary judgment rate than non-civil rights cases).

status of the juror's racial ingroup. Anca Miron, Nyla Branscombe, and Monica Biernat have demonstrated that this threat to the ingroup can motivate people to shift standards in a direction that shields the ingroup from ethical responsibility.¹⁷⁴

Miron and colleagues asked White undergraduates at the University of Kansas to state how strongly they identified with America.¹⁷⁵ Then they were asked various questions about America's relationship to slavery and its aftermath. These questions clumped into three categories (or constructs): judgments of harm done to Blacks,¹⁷⁶ standards of injustice,¹⁷⁷ and collective guilt.¹⁷⁸ Having measured these various constructs, the researchers looked for relationships among them. Their hypothesis was that the greater the self-identification with America, the higher the standards would be before being willing to call America racist or otherwise morally blameworthy (that is, the participants would set higher confirmatory standards). They found that White students who strongly identified as American set higher standards for injustice (that is, they wanted more evidence before calling America unjust);¹⁷⁹ they thought less harm was done by slavery;¹⁸⁰ and, as a result, they felt less collective guilt compared to other White students who identified less with America.¹⁸¹ In other words, their attitudes toward America were correlated with the quantum of evidence they required to reach a judgment that America had been unjust.

In a subsequent study, Miron et al. tried to find evidence of causation, not merely correlation. They did so by experimentally manipulating national identification by asking participants to recount situations in which they felt similar to other Americans (evoking greater identification with fellow Americans) or different from other Americans (evoking less identification with fellow Americans).¹⁸²

174. Anca M. Miron, Nyla R. Branscombe & Monica Biernat, *Motivated Shifting of Justice Standards*, 36 PERSONALITY SOC. PSYCHOL. BULL. 768, 769 (2010).

175. The participants were all American citizens. The question asked was, "I feel strong ties with other Americans." *Id.* at 771.

176. A representative question was, "How much damage did Americans cause to Africans?" on a "very little" (1) to "very much" (7) Likert scale. *Id.* at 770.

177. "Please indicate what percentage of Americans would have had to be involved in causing harm to Africans for you to consider the past United States a racist nation" on a scale of 0–10 percent, 10–25 percent, up to 90–100 percent. *Id.* at 771.

178. "I feel guilty for my nation's harmful past actions toward African Americans" on a "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (9) Likert scale. *Id.*

179. *See id.* at 772 tbl.1 ($r=0.26, p<0.05$).

180. *See id.* ($r=-0.23, p<0.05$).

181. *See id.* ($r=-0.21, p<0.05$). Using structural equation modeling, the researchers found that standards of injustice fully mediated the relationship between group identification and judgments of harm; also, judgments of harm fully mediated the effect of standards on collective guilt. *See id.* at 772–73.

182. The manipulation was successful. *See id.* at 773 ($p<0.05, d=0.54$).

Those who were experimentally made to feel *less* identification with America subsequently reported very different standards of justice and collective guilt compared to others made to feel *more* identification with America. Specifically, participants in the low identification condition set lower standards for calling something unjust, they evaluated slavery's harms as higher, and they felt more collective guilt. By contrast, participants in the high identification condition set higher standards for calling something unjust (that is, they required more evidence), they evaluated slavery's harms as less severe, and they felt less guilt.¹⁸³ In other words, by experimentally manipulating how much people identified with their ingroup (in this case, American), researchers could shift the justice standard that participants deployed to judge their own ingroup for harming the outgroup.

Evidentiary standards for jurors are specifically articulated (for example, "preponderance of the evidence") but substantively vague. The question is how a juror operationalizes that standard—just how much evidence does she require for believing that this standard has been met? These studies show how our assessments of evidence—of how much is enough—are themselves potentially malleable. One potential source of malleability is, according to this research, a desire (most likely implicit) to protect one's ingroup status. If a juror strongly identifies with the defendant employer as part of the same ingroup—racially or otherwise—the juror may shift standards of proof upwards in response to attack by an outgroup plaintiff. In other words, jurors who implicitly perceive an ingroup threat may require more evidence to be convinced of the defendant's harmful behavior than they would in an otherwise identical case that did not relate to their own ingroup. Ingroup threat is simply an example of this phenomenon; the point is that implicit biases may influence jurors by affecting how they implement ambiguous decision criteria regarding both the quantum of proof and how they make inferences from ambiguous pieces of information.

b. Performer Preference

Jurors will often receive evidence and interpretive cues from performers at trial, by which we mean the cast of characters in the courtroom who jurors see, such as the judge, lawyers, parties, and witnesses. These various performers are playing roles of one sort or another. And, it turns out that people tend to have stereotypes about the ideal employee or worker that vary depending on the segment of the labor

183. In standards for injustice, $M=2.60$ versus 3.39; on judgments of harm, $M=5.82$ versus 5.42; on collective guilt, $M=6.33$ versus 4.60. All differences were statistically significant at $p=0.05$ or less. See *id.*

market. For example, in high-level professional jobs and leadership roles, the supposedly ideal employee is often a White man.¹⁸⁴ When the actual performer does not fit the ideal type, people may evaluate the performance more negatively.

One study by Jerry Kang, Nilanjana Dasgupta, Kumar Yogeeswaran, and Gary Blasi found just such performer preference with respect to lawyers, as a function of race.¹⁸⁵ Kang and colleagues measured the explicit and implicit beliefs about the ideal lawyer held by jury-eligible participants from Los Angeles. The researchers were especially curious whether participants had implicit stereotypes linking the ideal litigator with particular racial groups (White versus Asian American). In addition to measuring their biases, the researchers had participants evaluate two depositions, which they heard via headphones and simultaneously read on screen. At the beginning of each deposition, participants were shown for five seconds a picture of the litigator conducting the deposition on a computer screen accompanied by his name. The race of the litigator was varied by name and photograph. Also, the deposition transcript identified who was speaking, which meant that participants repeatedly saw the attorneys' last names.¹⁸⁶

The study discovered the existence of a moderately strong implicit stereotype associating litigators with Whiteness (IAT $D=0.45$),¹⁸⁷ this stereotype correlated with more favorable evaluations of the White lawyer (ingroup favoritism since 91% of the participants were White) in terms of his competence ($r=0.32$, $p<0.01$), likeability ($r=0.31$, $p<0.01$), and hireability ($r=0.26$, $p<0.05$).¹⁸⁸ These results were confirmed through hierarchical regressions. To appreciate the magnitude of the effect sizes, imagine a juror who has no explicit stereotype but a large implicit stereotype (IAT $D=1$) that the ideal litigator is White. On a 7-point scale, this juror would favor a White lawyer over an identical Asian American

184. See, e.g., Alice H. Eagly & Steven J. Karau, *Role Congruity Theory of Prejudice Toward Female Leaders*, 109 PSYCHOL. REV. 573 (2002); Alice H. Eagly, Steven J. Karau & Mona G. Makhijani, *Gender and the Effectiveness of Leaders: A Meta-Analysis*, 117 PSYCHOL. BULL. 125 (1995); see also JOAN WILLIAMS, UNBENDING GENDER: WHY FAMILY AND WORK CONFLICT AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT 213–17 (2000) (discussing how conceptions of merit are designed around masculine norms); Shelley J. Correll et al., *Getting a Job: Is There a Motherhood Penalty?*, 112 AM. J. SOC. 1297 (2007).

185. See Jerry Kang et al., *Are Ideal Litigators White? Measuring the Myth of Colorblindness*, 7 J. EMPIRICAL LEGAL STUD. 886 (2010).

186. See *id.* at 892–99 (describing method and procedure, and identifying attorney names as “William Cole” or “Sung Chang”).

187. See *id.* at 900. They also found strong negative implicit attitudes against Asian Americans (IAT $D=0.62$). See *id.*

188. *Id.* at 901 tbl.3.

lawyer 6.01 to 5.65 in terms of competence, 5.57 to 5.27 in terms of likability, and 5.65 to 4.92 in terms of hireability.¹⁸⁹

This study provides some evidence that potential jurors' implicit stereotypes cause racial discrimination in judging attorney performance of basic depositions. What does this have to do with how juries might decide employment discrimination cases? Of course, minority defendants do not necessarily hire minority attorneys. That said, it is possible that minorities do hire minority attorneys at somewhat higher rates than nonminorities. But even more important, we hypothesize that similar processes might take place with how jurors evaluate not only attorneys but also both parties and witnesses, as they perform their various roles at trial. To be sure, this study does not speak directly to credibility assessments, likely to be of special import at trial, but it does at least suggest that implicit stereotypes may affect judgment of performances in the courtroom.

We concede that our claims about implicit bias influencing jury decisionmaking in civil cases are somewhat speculative and not well quantified. Moreover, in the real world, certain institutional processes may make both explicit and implicit biases less likely to translate into behavior. For example, jurors must deliberate with other jurors, and sometimes the jury features significant demographic diversity, which seems to deepen certain types of deliberation.¹⁹⁰ Jurors also feel accountable¹⁹¹ to the judge, who reminds them to adhere to the law and the merits. That said, for reasons already discussed, it seems implausible to think that current practices within the courtroom somehow magically burn away all jury biases, especially implicit biases of which jurors and judges are unaware. That is why we seek improvements based on the best understanding of how people actually behave.

Thus far, we have canvassed much of the available evidence describing how implicit bias may influence decisionmaking processes in both criminal and civil cases. On the one hand, the research findings are substantial and robust. On the other hand, they provide only imperfect knowledge, especially about what is actually happening in the real world. Notwithstanding this provisional and limited knowledge, we strongly believe that these studies, in aggregate, suggest that implicit bias in the trial process is a problem worth worrying about. What, then, can be done? Based on what we know, how might we intervene to improve the trial process and potentially vaccinate decisionmakers against, or at least reduce, the influence of implicit bias?

189. These figures were calculated using the regression equations in *id.* at 902 n.25, 904 n.27.

190. See *infra* text accompanying notes 241–245.

191. See, e.g., Jennifer S. Lerner & Philip E. Tetlock, *Accounting for the Effects of Accountability*, 125 PSYCHOL. BULL. 255, 267–70 (1999).

III. INTERVENTIONS

Before we turn explicitly to interventions, we reiterate that there are many causes of unfairness in the courtroom, and our focus on implicit bias is not meant to deny other causes. In Part II, we laid out the empirical case for why we believe that implicit biases influence both criminal and civil case trajectories. We now identify interventions that build on an overlapping scientific and political consensus. If there are cost-effective interventions that are likely to decrease the impact of implicit bias in the courtroom, we believe they should be adopted at least as forms of experimentation.

We are mindful of potential costs, including implementation and even overcorrection costs. But we are hopeful that these costs can be safely minimized. Moreover, the potential benefits of these improvements are both substantive and expressive. Substantively, the improvements may increase actual fairness by decreasing the impact of implicit biases; expressively, they may increase the appearance of fairness by signaling the judiciary's thoughtful attempts to go beyond cosmetic compliance.¹⁹² Effort is not always sufficient, but it ought to count for something.

A. Decrease the Implicit Bias

If implicit bias causes unfairness, one intervention strategy is to decrease the implicit bias itself. It would be delightful if explicit refutation would suffice. But abstract, global self-commands to "Be fair!" do not much change implicit social cognitions. How then might we alter implicit attitudes or stereotypes about various social groups?¹⁹³ One potentially effective strategy is to expose ourselves to countertypical associations. In rough terms, if we have a negative attitude toward some group, we need exposure to members of that group to whom we would have a positive attitude. If we have a particular stereotype about some group, we need exposure to members of that group that do not feature those particular attributes.

192. In a 1999 survey by the National Center for State Courts, 47 percent of the American people doubted that African Americans and Latinos receive equal treatment in state courts; 55 percent doubted that non-English speaking people receive equal treatment. The appearance of fairness is a serious problem. See NAT'L CTR. FOR STATE COURTS, HOW THE PUBLIC VIEWS THE STATE COURTS: A 1999 NATIONAL SURVEY 37 (1999), available at http://www.ncsconline.org/WC/Publications/Res_AmtPTC_PublicViewCrtsPub.pdf. The term "cosmetic compliance" comes from Kimberly D. Krawiec, *Cosmetic Compliance and the Failure of Negotiated Governance*, 81 WASH. U. L.Q. 487 (2003).

193. For analysis of the nature versus nurture debate regarding implicit biases, see Jerry Kang, *Bits of Bias*, in IMPLICIT RACIAL BIAS ACROSS THE LAW 132 (Justin D. Levinson & Robert J. Smith eds., 2012).

These exposures can come through direct contact with countertypical people. For example, Nilanjana Dasgupta and Shaki Asgari tracked the implicit gender stereotypes held by female subjects both before and after a year of attending college.¹⁹⁴ One group of women attended a year of coed college; the other group attended a single-sex college. At the start of their college careers, the two groups had comparable amounts of implicit stereotypes against women. However, one year later, those who attended the women's college on average expressed no gender bias, whereas the average bias of those who attended the coed school increased.¹⁹⁵ By carefully examining differences in the two universities' environments, the researchers learned that it was exposure to countertypical women in the role of professors and university administrators that altered the implicit gender stereotypes of female college students.¹⁹⁶

Nilanjana Dasgupta and Luis Rivera also found correlations between participants' self-reported numbers of gay friends and their negative implicit attitudes toward gays.¹⁹⁷ Such evidence gives further reason to encourage intergroup social contact by diversifying the bench, the courtroom (staff and law clerks), our residential neighborhoods, and friendship circles. That said, any serious diversification of the bench, the bar, and staff would take enormous resources, both economic and political. Moreover, these interventions might produce only modest results. For instance, Rachlinski et al. found that judges from an eastern district that featured approximately half White judges and half Black judges had "only slightly smaller" implicit biases than the judges of a western jurisdiction, which contained only two Black judges (out of forty-five total district court judges, thirty-six of them being White).¹⁹⁸ In addition, debiasing exposures would have to compete against the other daily real-life exposures in the courtroom that rebias. For instance, Joshua Correll found that police officers who worked in areas with high minority demographics and violent crime showed more shooter bias.¹⁹⁹

If increasing direct contact with a diverse but countertypical population is not readily feasible, what about vicarious contact, which is mediated by images,

194. See Nilanjana Dasgupta & Shaki Asgari, *Seeing Is Believing: Exposure to Counterstereotypic Women Leaders and Its Effect on the Malleability of Automatic Gender Stereotyping*, 40 J. EXPERIMENTAL SOC. PSYCHOL. 642, 649–54 (2004).

195. See *id.* at 651.

196. See *id.* at 651–53.

197. See Nilanjana Dasgupta & Luis M. Rivera, *From Automatic Antigay Prejudice to Behavior: The Moderating Role of Conscious Beliefs About Gender and Behavioral Control*, 91 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 268, 270 (2006).

198. See Rachlinski et al., *supra* note 86, at 1227.

199. See Correll et al., *supra* note 51, at 1014 ("We tentatively suggest that these environments may reinforce cultural stereotypes, linking Black people to the concept of violence.").

videos, simulations, or even imagination and which does not require direct face-to-face contact?²⁰⁰ Actually, the earliest studies on the malleability of implicit bias pursued just these strategies. For instance, Nilanjana Dasgupta and Anthony Greenwald showed that participants who were exposed vicariously to countertypical exemplars in a history questionnaire (for example, Black figures to whom we tend to have positive attitudes, such as Martin Luther King Jr., and White figures to whom we tend to have negative attitudes, such as Charles Manson) showed a substantial decrease in negative implicit attitudes toward African Americans.²⁰¹ These findings are consistent with work done by Irene Blair, who has demonstrated that brief mental visualization exercises can also change scores on the IAT.²⁰²

In addition to exposing people to famous countertypical exemplars, implicit biases may be decreased by juxtaposing ordinary people with countertypical settings. For instance, Bernard Wittenbrink, Charles Judd, and Bernadette Park examined the effects of watching videos of African Americans situated either at a convivial outdoor barbecue or at a gang-related incident.²⁰³ Situating African Americans in a positive setting produced lower implicit bias scores.²⁰⁴

There are, to be sure, questions about whether this evidence directly translates into possible improvements for the courtroom.²⁰⁵ But even granting numerous caveats, might it not be valuable to engage in some experimentation? In chambers and the courtroom buildings, photographs, posters, screen savers, pamphlets, and decorations ought to be used that bring to mind countertypical exemplars or associations for participants in the trial process. Since judges and jurors are differently situated, we can expect both different effects and implementation strategies. For example, judges would be exposed to such vicarious displays regularly as a feature of their workplace environment. By contrast, jurors would be exposed only

200. See Jerry Kang, *Cyber-Race*, 113 HARV. L. REV. 1130, 1166–67 (2000) (comparing vicarious with direct experiences).

201. Nilanjana Dasgupta & Anthony G. Greenwald, *On the Malleability of Automatic Attitudes: Combating Automatic Prejudice With Images of Admired and Disliked Individuals*, 81 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 800, 807 (2001). The IAT effect changed nearly 50 percent as compared to the control (IAT effect $M=78\text{ms}$ versus 174ms , $p=0.01$) and remained for over twenty-four hours.

202. Irene V. Blair, Jennifer E. Ma & Alison P. Lenton, *Imagining Stereotypes Away: The Moderation of Implicit Stereotypes Through Mental Imagery*, 81 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 828 (2001). See generally Irene V. Blair, *The Malleability of Automatic Stereotypes and Prejudice*, 6 PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. REV. 242 (2002) (literature review).

203. See Bernd Wittenbrink et al., *Spontaneous Prejudice in Context: Variability in Automatically Activated Attitudes*, 81 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 815, 818–19 (2001).

204. *Id.* at 819.

205. How long does the intervention last? How immediate does it have to be? How much were the studies able to ensure focus on the positive countertypical stimulus as opposed to in a courtroom where these positives would be amidst the myriad distractions of trial?

during their typically brief visit to the court.²⁰⁶ Especially for jurors, then, the goal is not anything as ambitious as fundamentally changing the underlying structure of their mental associations. Instead, the hope would be that by reminding them of countertypical associations, we might momentarily activate different mental patterns while in the courthouse and reduce the impact of implicit biases on their decisionmaking.²⁰⁷

To repeat, we recognize the limitations of our recommendation. Recent research has found much smaller debiasing effects from vicarious exposure than originally estimated.²⁰⁸ Moreover, such exposures must compete against the flood of typical, schema-consistent exposures we are bombarded with from mass media. That said, we see little costs to these strategies even if they appear cosmetic. There is no evidence, for example, that these exposures will be so powerful that they will overcorrect and produce net bias against Whites.

B. Break the Link Between Bias and Behavior

Even if we cannot remove the bias, perhaps we can alter decisionmaking processes so that these biases are less likely to translate into behavior. In order to keep this Article's scope manageable, we focus on the two key players in the courtroom: judges and jurors.²⁰⁹

1. Judges

a. Doubt One's Objectivity

Most judges view themselves as objective and especially talented at fair decisionmaking. For instance, Rachlinski et al. found in one survey that 97 percent of judges (thirty-five out of thirty-six) believed that they were in the top quartile in "avoid[ing] racial prejudice in decisionmaking"²¹⁰ relative to other judges attending the same conference. That is, obviously, mathematically impossible.

206. See Kang, *supra* note 46, at 1537 (raising the possibility of "debiasing booths" in lobbies for waiting jurors).

207. Rajees Sritharan & Bertram Gawronski, *Changing Implicit and Explicit Prejudice: Insights From the Associative-Propositional Evaluation Model*, 41 SOC. PSYCHOL. 113, 118 (2010).

208. See Jennifer A. Joy-Gaba & Brian A. Nosek, *The Surprisingly Limited Malleability of Implicit Racial Evaluations*, 41 SOC. PSYCHOL. 137, 141 (2010) (finding an effect size that was approximately 70 percent smaller than the original Dasgupta and Greenwald findings, *see supra* note 201).

209. Other important players obviously include staff, lawyers, and police. For a discussion of the training literature on the police and shooter bias, see Adam Benforado, *Quick on the Draw: Implicit Bias and the Second Amendment*, 89 OR. L. REV. 1, 46–48 (2010).

210. See Rachlinski et al., *supra* note 86, at 1225.

(One is reminded of Lake Wobegon, where all of the children are above average.) In another survey, 97.2 percent of those administrative agency judges surveyed put themselves in the top half in terms of avoiding bias, again impossible.²¹¹ Unfortunately, there is evidence that believing ourselves to be objective puts us at particular risk for behaving in ways that belie our self-conception.

Eric Uhlmann and Geoffrey Cohen have demonstrated that when a person believes himself to be objective, such belief licenses him to act on his biases. In one study, they had participants choose either the candidate profile labeled “Gary” or the candidate profile labeled “Lisa” for the job of factory manager. Both candidate profiles, comparable on all traits, unambiguously showed strong organization skills but weak interpersonal skills.²¹² Half the participants were primed to view themselves as objective.²¹³ The other half were left alone as control.

Those in the control condition gave the male and female candidates statistically indistinguishable hiring evaluations.²¹⁴ But those who were manipulated to think of themselves as objective evaluated the male candidate higher ($M=5.06$ versus 3.75 , $p=0.039$, $d=0.76$).²¹⁵ Interestingly, this was not due to a malleability of merit effect, in which the participants reweighted the importance of either organizational skills or interpersonal skills in order to favor the man. Instead, the discrimination was caused by straight-out disparate evaluation, in which the Gary profile was rated as more interpersonally skilled than the Lisa profile by those primed to think themselves objective ($M=3.12$ versus 1.94 , $p=0.023$, $d=0.86$).²¹⁶ In short, thinking oneself to be objective seems ironically to lead one to be less objective and more susceptible to biases. Judges should therefore remind themselves that they are human and fallible, notwithstanding their status, their education, and the robe.

But is such a suggestion based on wishful thinking? Is there any evidence that education and reminders can actually help? There is some suggestive evidence from Emily Pronin, who has carefully studied the bias blindspot—the belief

211. See Chris Guthrie, Jeffrey J. Rachlinski & Andrew J. Wistrich, *The “Hidden Judiciary”: An Empirical Examination of Executive Branch Justice*, 58 DUKE L.J. 1477, 1519 (2009).

212. See Eric Luis Uhlmann & Geoffrey L. Cohen, “*I Think It, Therefore It’s True*”: Effects of Self-Perceived Objectivity on Hiring Discrimination, 104 ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAV. & HUM. DECISION PROCESSES 207, 210–11 (2007).

213. This was done simply by asking participants to rate their own objectivity. Over 88 percent of the participants rated themselves as above average on objectivity. See *id.* at 209. The participants were drawn from a lay sample (not just college students).

214. See *id.* at 210–11 ($M=3.24$ for male candidate versus 4.05 for female candidate, $p=0.21$).

215. See *id.* at 211.

216. See *id.* Interestingly, the gender of the participants mattered. Female participants did not show the objectivity priming effect. See *id.*

that others are biased but we ourselves are not.²¹⁷ In one study, Emily Pronin and Matthew Kugler had a control group of Princeton students read an article from *Nature* about environmental pollution. By contrast, the treatment group read an article allegedly published in *Science* that described various nonconscious influences on attitudes and behaviors.²¹⁸ After reading an article, the participants were asked about their own objectivity as compared to their university peers. Those in the control group revealed the predictable bias blindspot and thought that they suffered from less bias than their peers.²¹⁹ By contrast, those in the treatment group did not believe that they were more objective than their peers; moreover, their more modest self-assessments differed from those of the more confident control group.²²⁰ These results suggest that learning about nonconscious thought processes can lead people to be more skeptical about their own objectivity.

b. Increase Motivation

Tightly connected to doubting one's objectivity is the strategy of increasing one's motivation to be fair.²²¹ Social psychologists generally agree that motivation is an important determinant of checking biased behavior.²²² Specific to implicit bias, Nilanjana Dasgupta and Luis Rivera found that participants who were consciously motivated to be egalitarian did not allow their antigay implicit attitudes to translate into biased behavior toward a gay person. By contrast, for those lacking such motivation, strong antigay implicit attitudes predicted more biased behavior.²²³

A powerful way to increase judicial motivation is for judges to gain actual scientific knowledge about implicit social cognitions. In other words, judges should be internally persuaded that a genuine problem exists. This education and

217. See generally Emily Pronin, *Perception and Misperception of Bias in Human Judgment*, 11 TRENDS COGNITIVE SCI. 37 (2007).

218. See Emily Pronin & Matthew B. Kugler, *Valuing Thoughts, Ignoring Behavior: The Introspection Illusion as a Source of the Bias Blind Spot*, 43 J. EXPERIMENTAL SOC. PSYCHOL. 565, 574 (2007). The intervention article was 1643 words long, excluding references. See *id.* at 575.

219. See *id.* at 575 (M=5.29 where 6 represented the same amount of bias as peers).

220. See *id.* For the treatment group, their self-evaluation of objectivity was M=5.88, not statistically significantly different from the score of 6, which, as noted previously, meant having the same amount of bias as peers. Also, the self-reported objectivity of the treatment group (M=5.88) differed from the control group (M=5.29) in a statistically significant way, $p=0.01$. See *id.*

221. For a review, see Margo J. Monteith et al., *Schooling the Cognitive Monster: The Role of Motivation in the Regulation and Control of Prejudice*, 3 SOC. & PERSONALITY PSYCHOL. COMPASS 211 (2009).

222. See Russell H. Fazio & Tamara Towles-Schwen, *The MODE Model of Attitude-Behavior Processes*, in DUAL-PROCESS THEORIES IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY 97 (Shelly Chaiken & Yaacov Trope eds., 1999).

223. See Dasgupta & Rivera, *supra* note 197, at 275.

awareness can be done through self-study as well as more official judicial education. Such education is already taking place, although mostly in an ad hoc fashion.²²⁴ The most organized intervention has come through the National Center for State Courts (NCSC). The NCSC organized a three-state pilot project in California, Minnesota, and North Dakota to teach judges and court staff about implicit bias.²²⁵ It used a combination of written materials, videos, resource websites, Implicit Association Tests, and online lectures from subject-matter experts to provide the knowledge. Questionnaires completed before and after each educational intervention provided an indication of program effectiveness.

Although increased knowledge of the underlying science is a basic objective of an implicit bias program, the goal is not to send judges back to college for a crash course in Implicit Psychology 101. Rather, it is to persuade judges, on the merits, to recognize implicit bias as a potential problem, which in turn should increase motivation to adopt sensible countermeasures. Did the NCSC projects increase recognition of the problem and encourage the right sorts of behavioral changes? The only evidence we have is limited: voluntary self-reports subject to obvious selection biases.

For example, in California, judicial training emphasized a documentary on the neuroscience of bias.²²⁶ Before and after watching the documentary, participants were asked to what extent they thought “a judge’s decisions and court staff’s interaction with the public can be unwittingly influenced by unconscious bias toward racial/ethnic groups.”²²⁷ Before viewing the documentary, approximately 16 percent chose “rarely-never,” 55 percent chose “occasionally,” and 30 percent chose “most-all.” After viewing the documentary, 1 percent chose “rarely-never,” 20 percent chose “occasionally,” and 79 percent chose “most-all.”²²⁸

Relatedly, participants were asked whether they thought implicit bias could have an impact on behavior even if a person lacked explicit bias. Before viewing the documentary, approximately 9 percent chose “rarely-never,” 45 percent chose “occasionally,” and 45 percent chose “most-all.” After viewing the documentary, 1 percent chose “rarely-never,” 14 percent chose “occasionally,” and 84 percent

224. Several of the authors of this Article have spoken to judges on the topic of implicit bias.

225. See PAMELA M. CASEY ET AL., NAT’L CTR. FOR STATE COURTS, HELPING COURTS ADDRESS IMPLICIT BIAS: RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION (2012), available at <http://www.ncsc.org/IBReport>.

226. The program was broadcast on the Judicial Branch’s cable TV station and made available streaming on the Internet. See *The Neuroscience and Psychology of Decisionmaking*, ADMIN. OFF. COURTS EDUC. DIV. (Mar. 29, 2011), <http://www2.courtinfo.ca.gov/cjer/aocvtv/dialogue/neuro/index.htm>.

227. See CASEY ET AL., *supra* note 225, at 12 fig.2.

228. See *id.*

chose “most-all.”²²⁹ These statistics provide some evidence that the California documentary increased awareness of the problem of implicit bias. The qualitative data, in the form of write-in comments²³⁰ support this interpretation.

What about the adoption of behavioral countermeasures? Because no specific reforms were recommended at the time of training, there was no attempt to measure behavioral changes. All that we have are self-reports that speak to the issue. For instance, participants were asked to agree or disagree with the statement, “I will apply the course content to my work.” In California, 90 percent (N=60) reported that they agreed or strongly agreed.²³¹ In North Dakota (N=32), 97 percent reported that they agreed or strongly agreed.²³² Three months later, there was a follow-up survey given to the North Dakota participants, but only fourteen participants replied. In that survey, 77 percent of those who responded stated that they had made efforts to reduce the potential impact of implicit bias.²³³ In sum, the findings across all three pilot programs suggest that education programs can increase motivation and encourage judges to engage in some behavioral modifications. Given the limitations of the data (for example, pilot projects with small numbers of participants, self-reports, self-selection, and limited follow-up results), additional research is needed to confirm these promising but preliminary results.

From our collective experience, we also recommend the following tactics. First, training should commence early, starting with new-judge orientation when individuals are likely to be most receptive. Second, training should not immediately put judges on the defensive, for instance, by accusing them of concealing explicit bias. Instead, trainers can start the conversation with other types of decisionmaking errors and cognitive biases, such as anchoring, or less-threatening biases, such as the widespread preference for the youth over the elderly that IATs reveal. Third, judges should be encouraged to take the IAT or other measures of implicit

229. *Id.* at 12 fig.3.

230. Comments included: “raising my awareness of prevalence of implicit bias,” “enlightened me on the penetration of implicit bias in everyday life, even though I consciously strive to be unbiased and assume most people try to do the same,” and “greater awareness—I really appreciated the impressive panel of participants; I really learned a lot, am very interested.” See CASEY ET AL., *supra* note 225, at 11.

231. See *id.* at 10.

232. See *id.* at 18. Minnesota answered a slightly different question: 81 percent gave the program’s applicability a medium high to high rating.

233. See *id.* at 20. The strategies that were identified included: “concerted effort to be aware of bias,” “I more carefully review my reasons for decisions, likes, dislikes, and ask myself if there may be bias underlying my determination,” “Simply trying to think things through more thoroughly,” “Reading and learning more about other cultures,” and “I have made mental notes to myself on the bench to be more aware of the implicit bias and I’ve re-examined my feelings to see if it is because of the party and his/her actions vs. any implicit bias on my part.”

bias. Numerous personal accounts have reported how the discomfiting act of taking the IAT alone motivates action. And researchers are currently studying the specific behavioral and social cognitive changes that take place through such self-discovery. That said, we do not recommend that such tests be mandatory because the feeling of resentment and coercion is likely to counter the benefits of increased self-knowledge. Moreover, judges should never be expected to disclose their personal results.

c. Improve Conditions of Decisionmaking

Implicit biases function automatically. One way to counter them is to engage in effortful, deliberative processing.²³⁴ But when decisionmakers are short on time or under cognitive load, they lack the resources necessary to engage in such deliberation. Accordingly, we encourage judges to take special care when they must respond quickly and to try to avoid making snap judgments whenever possible. We recognize that judges are under enormous pressures to clear ever-growing dockets. That said, it is precisely under such work conditions that judges need to be especially on guard against their biases.

There is also evidence that certain elevated emotional states, either positive or negative, can prompt more biased decisionmaking. For example, a state of happiness seems to increase stereotypic thinking,²³⁵ which can be countered when individuals are held accountable for their judgments. Of greater concern might be feelings of anger, disgust, or resentment toward certain social categories. If the emotion is consistent with the stereotypes or anticipated threats associated with that social category, then those negative emotions are likely to exacerbate implicit biases.²³⁶

234. There are also ways to deploy more automatic countermeasures. In other words, one can teach one's mind to respond not reflectively but reflexively, by automatically triggering goal-directed behavior through internalization of certain if-then responses. These countermeasures function implicitly and even under conditions of cognitive load. See generally Saaed A. Mendoza et al., *Reducing the Expression of Implicit Stereotypes: Reflexive Control Through Implementation Intentions*, 36 PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. BULL. 512, 514–15, 520 (2010); Monteith et al., *supra* note 221, at 218–21 (discussing bottom-up correction versus top-down).

235. See Galen V. Bodenhausen et al., *Happiness and Stereotypic Thinking in Social Judgment*, 66 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 621 (1994).

236. See Nilanjana Dasgupta et al., *Fanning the Flames of Prejudice: The Influence of Specific Incidental Emotions on Implicit Prejudice*, 9 EMOTION 585 (2009). The researchers found that implicit bias against gays and lesbians could be increased more by making participants feel disgust than by making participants feel anger. See *id.* at 588. Conversely, they found that implicit bias against Arabs could be increased more by making participants feel angry rather than disgusted. See *id.* at 589; see also David DeSteno et al., *Prejudice From Thin Air: The Effect of Emotion on Automatic Intergroup Attitudes*, 15 PSYCHOL. SCI. 319 (2004).

In sum, judges should try to achieve the conditions of decisionmaking that allow them to be mindful and deliberative and thus avoid huge emotional swings.

d. Count

Finally, we encourage judges and judicial institutions to count. Increasing accountability has been shown to decrease the influence of bias and thus has frequently been offered as a mechanism for reducing bias. But, how can the behavior of trial court judges be held accountable if biased decisionmaking is itself difficult to detect? If judges do not seek out the information that could help them see their own potential biases, those biases become more difficult to correct. Just as trying to lose or gain weight without a scale is challenging, judges should engage in more quantified self-analysis and seek out and assess patterns of behavior that cannot be recognized in single decisions. Judges need to count.

The comparison we want to draw is with professional umpires and referees. Statistical analyses by behavioral economists have discovered various biases, including ingroup racial biases, in the decisionmaking of professional sports judges. Joseph Price and Justin Wolfers found racial ingroup biases in National Basketball Association (NBA) referees' foul calling;²³⁷ Christopher Parsons and colleagues found ingroup racial bias in Major League Baseball (MLB) umpires' strike calling.²³⁸ These discoveries were only possible because professional sports leagues count performance, including referee performance, in a remarkably granular and comprehensive manner.

Although NBA referees and MLB umpires make more instantaneous calls than judges, judges do regularly make quick judgments on motions, objections, and the like. In these contexts, judges often cannot slow down. So, it makes sense

237. Joseph Price & Justin Wolfers, *Racial Discrimination Among NBA Referees*, 125 Q.J. ECON. 1859, 1885 (2010) ("We find that players have up to 4% fewer fouls called against them and score up to 2½% more points on nights in which their race matches that of the refereeing crew. Player statistics that one might think are unaffected by referee behavior [for example, free throw shooting] are uncorrelated with referee race. The bias in foul-calling is large enough so that the probability of a team winning is noticeably affected by the racial composition of the refereeing crew assigned to the game.").

238. Christopher A. Parsons et al., *Strike Three: Discrimination, Incentives, and Evaluation*, 101 AM. ECON. REV. 1410, 1433 (2011) ("Pitches are slightly more likely to be called strikes when the umpire shares the race/ethnicity of the starting pitcher, an effect that is observable only when umpires' behavior is not well monitored. The evidence also suggests that this bias has substantial effects on pitchers' measured performance and games' outcomes. The link between the small and large effects arises, at least in part, because pitchers alter their behavior in potentially discriminatory situations in ways that ordinarily would disadvantage themselves (such as throwing pitches directly over the plate).").

to count their performances in domains such as bail, probable cause, and preliminary hearings.

We recognize that such counting may be difficult for individual judges who lack both the quantitative training and the resources to track their own performance statistics. That said, even amateur, basic counting, with data collection methods never intended to make it into a peer-reviewed journal, might reveal surprising outcomes. Of course, the most useful information will require an institutional commitment to counting across multiple judges and will make use of appropriately sophisticated methodologies. The basic objective is to create a negative feedback loop in which individual judges and the judiciary writ large are given the corrective information necessary to know how they are doing and to be motivated to make changes if they find evidence of biased performances. It may be difficult to correct biases even when we do know about them, but it is virtually impossible to correct them if they remain invisible.

2. Jurors

a. Jury Selection and Composition

Individual screen. One obvious way to break the link between bias and unfair decisions is to keep biased persons off the jury. Since everyone has implicit biases of one sort or another, the more precise goal would be to screen out those with excessively high biases that are relevant to the case at hand. This is, of course, precisely one of the purposes of voir dire, although the interrogation process was designed to ferret out concealed explicit bias, not implicit bias.

One might reasonably ask whether potential jurors should be individually screened for implicit bias via some instrument such as the IAT. But the leading scientists in implicit social cognition recommend against using the test as an individually diagnostic measure. One reason is that although the IAT has enough test-retest reliability to provide useful research information about human beings generally, its reliability is sometimes below what we would like for individual assessments.²³⁹ Moreover, real-word diagnosticity for individuals raises many more issues than just test-retest reliability. Finally, those with implicit biases need not

239. The test-retest reliability between a person's IAT scores at two different times has been found to be 0.50. For further discussion, see Kang & Lane, *supra* note 2, at 477–78. Readers should understand that “the IAT’s properties approximately resemble those of sphygmomanometer blood pressure (BP) measures that are used to assess hypertension.” See Anthony G. Greenwald & N. Sriram, *No Measure Is Perfect, but Some Measures Can Be Quite Useful: Response to Two Comments on the Brief Implicit Association Test*, 57 EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOL. 238, 240 (2010).

be regarded as incapable of breaking the causal chain from implicit bias to judgment. Accordingly, we maintain this scientifically conservative approach and recommend against using the IAT for individual juror selection.²⁴⁰

Jury diversity. Consider what a White juror wrote to Judge Janet Bond Arterton about jury deliberations during a civil rights complaint filed by Black plaintiffs:

During deliberations, matter-of-fact expressions of bigotry and broad-brush platitudes about “those people” rolled off the tongues of a vocal majority as naturally and unabashedly as if they were discussing the weather. Shocked and sickened, I sat silently, rationalizing to myself that since I did agree with the product, there was nothing to be gained by speaking out against the process (I now regret my inaction). *Had just one African-American been sitting in that room, the content of discussion would have been quite different.* And had the case been more balanced—one that hinged on fine distinction or subtle nuances—a more diverse jury might have made a material difference in the outcome.

I pass these thoughts onto you in the hope that the jury system can some day be improved.²⁴¹

This anecdote suggests that a second-best strategy to striking potential jurors with high implicit bias is to increase the demographic diversity of juries²⁴² to get a broader distribution of biases, some of which might cancel each other out. This is akin to a diversification strategy for an investment portfolio. Moreover, in a more diverse jury, people’s willingness to express explicit biases might be muted, and the very existence of diversity might even affect the operation of implicit biases as well.

In support of this approach, Sam Sommers has confirmed that racial diversity in the jury alters deliberations. In a mock jury experiment, he compared the deliberation content of all-White juries with that of racially diverse juries.²⁴³ Racially diverse juries processed information in a way that most judges and lawyers would consider desirable: They had longer deliberations, greater focus on the actual evidence, greater discussion of missing evidence, fewer inaccurate statements, fewer

240. For legal commentary in agreement, see, for example, Anna Roberts, *(Re)forming the Jury: Detection and Disinfection of Implicit Juror Bias*, 44 CONN. L. REV. 827, 856–57 (2012). Roberts suggests using the IAT during orientation as an educational tool for jurors instead. *Id.* at 863–66.

241. Janet Bond Arterton, *Unconscious Bias and the Impartial Jury*, 40 CONN. L. REV. 1023, 1033 (2008) (quoting letter from anonymous juror) (emphasis added).

242. For a structural analysis of why juries lack racial diversity, see Samuel R. Sommers, *Determinants and Consequences of Jury Racial Diversity: Empirical Findings, Implications, and Directions for Future Research*, 2 SOC. ISSUES & POLY REV. 65, 68–71 (2008).

243. The juries labeled “diverse” featured four White and two Black jurors.

uncorrected statements, and greater discussion of race-related topics.²⁴⁴ In addition to these information-based benefits, Sommers found interesting predeliberation effects: Simply by knowing that they would be serving on diverse juries (as compared to all-White ones), White jurors were less likely to believe, at the conclusion of evidence but before deliberations, that the Black defendant was guilty.²⁴⁵

Given these benefits,²⁴⁶ we are skeptical about peremptory challenges, which private parties deploy to decrease racial diversity in precisely those cases in which diversity is likely to matter most.²⁴⁷ Accordingly, we agree with the recommendation by various commentators, including Judge Mark Bennett, to curtail substantially the use of peremptory challenges.²⁴⁸ In addition, we encourage consideration of restoring a 12-member jury size as “the most effective approach” to maintain juror representativeness.²⁴⁹

b. Jury Education About Implicit Bias

In our discussion of judge bias, we recommended that judges become skeptical of their own objectivity and learn about implicit social cognition to become motivated to check against implicit bias. The same principle applies to jurors, who must be educated and instructed to do the same in the course of their jury service. This education should take place early and often. For example, Judge

244. Samuel R. Sommers, *On Racial Diversity and Group Decision Making: Identifying Multiple Effects of Racial Composition on Jury Deliberations*, 90 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 597 (2006).

245. See Sommers, *supra* note 242, at 87.

246. Other benefits include promoting public confidence in the judicial system. See *id.* at 82–88 (summarizing theoretical and empirical literature).

247. See Michael I. Norton, Samuel R. Sommers & Sara Brauner, *Bias in Jury Selection: Justifying Prohibited Peremptory Challenges*, 20 J. BEHAV. DECISION MAKING 467 (2007); Samuel R. Sommers & Michael I. Norton, *Race and Jury Selection: Psychological Perspectives on the Peremptory Challenge Debate*, 63 AM. PSYCHOLOGIST 527 (2008) (reviewing literature); Samuel R. Sommers & Michael I. Norton, *Race-Based Judgments, Race-Neutral Justifications: Experimental Examination of Peremptory Use and the Batson Challenge Procedure*, 31 LAW & HUM. BEHAV. 261 (2007) (finding that race influences the exercise of peremptory challenges in participant populations that include college students, law students, and practicing attorneys and that participants effectively justified their use of challenges in race-neutral terms).

248. See, e.g., Bennett, *supra* note 85, at 168–69 (recommending the tandem solution of increased lawyer participation in voir dire and the banning of peremptory challenges); Antony Page, *Batson's Blind-Spot: Unconscious Stereotyping and the Peremptory Challenge*, 85 B.U. L. REV. 155 (2005).

249. Shari Seidman Diamond et al., *Achieving Diversity on the Jury: Jury Size and the Peremptory Challenge*, 6 J. EMPIRICAL LEGAL STUD. 425, 427 (2009).

Bennett spends approximately twenty-five minutes discussing implicit bias during jury selection.²⁵⁰

At the conclusion of jury selection, Judge Bennett asks each potential juror to take a pledge, which covers various matters including a pledge against bias:

I pledge *** :

I will not decide this case based on biases. This includes gut feelings, prejudices, stereotypes, personal likes or dislikes, sympathies or generalizations.²⁵¹

He also gives a specific jury instruction on implicit biases before opening statements:

Do not decide the case based on “implicit biases.” As we discussed in jury selection, everyone, including me, has feelings, assumptions, perceptions, fears, and stereotypes, that is, “implicit biases,” that we may not be aware of. These hidden thoughts can impact what we see and hear, how we remember what we see and hear, and how we make important decisions. Because you are making very important decisions in this case, I strongly encourage you to evaluate the evidence carefully and to resist jumping to conclusions based on personal likes or dislikes, generalizations, gut feelings, prejudices, sympathies, stereotypes, or biases. The law demands that you return a just verdict, based solely on the evidence, your individual evaluation of that evidence, your reason and common

250. Judge Bennett starts with a clip from *What Would You Do?*, an ABC show that uses hidden cameras to capture bystanders' reactions to a variety of staged situations. This episode—a brilliant demonstration of bias—opens with a bike chained to a pole near a popular bike trail on a sunny afternoon. First, a young White man, dressed in jeans, a t-shirt, and a baseball cap, approaches the bike with a hammer and saw and begins working on the chain (and even gets to the point of pulling out an industrial-strength bolt cutter). Many people pass by without saying anything; one asks him if he lost the key to his bike lock. Although many others show concern, they do not interfere. After those passersby clear, the show stages its next scenario: a young Black man, dressed the same way, approaches the bike with the same tools and attempts to break the chain. Within seconds, people confront him, wanting to know whether the bike is his. Quickly, a crowd congregates, with people shouting at him that he cannot take what does not belong to him and some even calling the police. Finally, after the crowd moves on, the show stages its last scenario: a young White woman, attractive and scantily clad, approaches the bike with the same tools and attempts to saw through the chain. Several men ride up and ask if they can help her break the lock! Potential jurors immediately see how implicit biases can affect what they see and hear. *What Would You Do?* (ABC television broadcast May 7, 2010), available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ge7i60GuNRg>.

251. Mark W. Bennett, *Jury Pledge Against Implicit Bias* (2012) (unpublished manuscript) (on file with authors). In addition, Judge Bennett has a framed poster prominently displayed in the jury room that repeats the language in the pledge.

sense, and these instructions. Our system of justice is counting on you to render a fair decision based on the evidence, not on biases.²⁵²

Juror research suggests that jurors respond differently to instructions depending on the persuasiveness of each instruction's rationale. For example, jurors seem to comply more with an instruction to ignore inadmissible evidence when the *reason* for inadmissibility is potential unreliability, not procedural irregularity.²⁵³ Accordingly, the implicit bias instructions to jurors should be couched in accurate, evidence-based, and scientific terms. As with the judges, the juror's education and instruction should not put them on the defensive, which might make them less receptive. Notice how Judge Bennett's instruction emphasizes the near universality of implicit biases, including in the judge himself, which decreases the likelihood of insult, resentment, or backlash from the jurors.

To date, no empirical investigation has tested a system like Judge Bennett's—although we believe there are good reasons to hypothesize about its benefits. For instance, Regina Schuller, Veronica Kazoleas, and Kerry Kawakami demonstrated that a particular type of reflective voir dire, which required individuals to answer an open-ended question about the possibility of racial bias,

252. *Id.* In all criminal cases, Judge Bennett also instructs on explicit biases using an instruction that is borrowed from a statutory requirement in federal death penalty cases:

You must follow certain rules while conducting your deliberations and returning your verdict:

* * *

Reach your verdict without discrimination. In reaching your verdict, you must not consider the defendant's race, color, religious beliefs, national origin, or sex. You are not to return a verdict for or against the defendant unless you would return the same verdict without regard to his race, color, religious beliefs, national origin, or sex. To emphasize the importance of this requirement, the verdict form contains a certification statement. Each of you should carefully read that statement, then sign your name in the appropriate place in the signature block, if the statement accurately reflects how you reached your verdict.

The certification statement, contained in a final section labeled "Certification" on the Verdict Form, states the following:

By signing below, each juror certifies that consideration of the race, color, religious beliefs, national origin, or sex of the defendant was not involved in reaching his or her individual decision, and that the individual juror would have returned the same verdict for or against the defendant on the charged offense regardless of the race, color, religious beliefs, national origin, or sex of the defendant.

This certification is also shown to all potential jurors in jury selection, and each is asked if they will be able to sign it.

253. See, e.g., Saul M. Kassin & Samuel R. Sommers, *Inadmissible Testimony, Instructions to Disregard, and the Jury: Substantive Versus Procedural Considerations*, 23 PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. BULL. 1046 (1997) (finding evidence that mock jurors responded differently to wiretap evidence that was ruled inadmissible either because it was illegally obtained or unreliable).

appeared successful at removing juror racial bias in assessments of guilt.²⁵⁴ That said, no experiment has yet been done on whether jury instructions specifically targeted at implicit bias are effective in real-world settings. Research on this specific question is in development.

We also recognize the possibility that such instructions could lead to juror complacency or moral credentialing, in which jurors believe themselves to be properly immunized or educated about bias and thus think themselves to be more objective than they really are. And, as we have learned, believing oneself to be objective is a prime threat to objectivity. Despite these limitations, we believe that implicit bias education and instruction of the jury is likely to do more good than harm, though we look forward to further research that can help us assess this hypothesis.

c. Encourage Category-Conscious Strategies

Foreground social categories. Many jurors reasonably believe that in order to be fair, they should be as colorblind (or gender-blind, and so forth.) as possible. In other words, they should try to avoid seeing race, thinking about race, or talking about race whenever possible. But the juror research by Sam Sommers demonstrated that White jurors showed race bias in adjudicating the merits of a battery case (between White and Black people) unless they perceived the case to be somehow racially charged. In other words, until and unless White jurors felt there was a specific threat to racial fairness, they showed racial bias.²⁵⁵

What this seems to suggest is that whenever a social category bias might be at issue, judges should recommend that jurors feel free to expressly raise and foreground any such biases in their discussions. Instead of thinking it appropriate to repress race, gender, or sexual orientation as irrelevant to understanding the case, judges should make jurors comfortable with the legitimacy of raising such issues. This may produce greater confrontation among the jurors within deliberation, and evidence suggests that it is precisely this greater degree of discussion, and even confrontation, that can potentially decrease the amount of biased decisionmaking.²⁵⁶

This recommendation—to be conscious of race, gender, and other social categories—may seem to contradict some of the jury instructions that we noted

254. Regina A. Schuller, Veronica Kazoleas & Kerry Kawakami, *The Impact of Prejudice Screening Procedures on Racial Bias in the Courtroom*, 33 LAW & HUM. BEHAV. 320 (2009).

255. See *supra* notes 70–71.

256. See Alexander M. Czopp, Margo J. Monteith & Aimee Y. Mark, *Standing Up for a Change: Reducing Bias Through Interpersonal Confrontation*, 90 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 784, 791 (2006).

above approvingly.²⁵⁷ But a command that the race (and other social categories) of the defendant should not influence the juror's verdict is entirely consistent with instructions to recognize explicitly that race can have just this impact—unless countermeasures are taken. In other words, in order to make jurors behave in a colorblind manner, we can explicitly foreground the possibility of racial bias.²⁵⁸

Engage in perspective shifting. Another strategy is to recommend that jurors try shifting perspectives into the position of the outgroup party, either plaintiff or defendant.²⁵⁹ Andrew Todd, Galen Bohenhausen, Jennifer Richardson, and Adam Galinsky have recently demonstrated that actively contemplating others' psychological experiences weakens the automatic expression of racial biases.²⁶⁰ In a series of experiments, the researchers used various interventions to make participants engage in more perspective shifting. For instance, in one experiment, before seeing a five-minute video of a Black man being treated worse than an identically situated White man, participants were asked to imagine "what they might be thinking, feeling, and experiencing if they were Glen [the Black man], looking at the world through his eyes and walking in his shoes as he goes through the various activities depicted in the documentary."²⁶¹ By contrast, the control group was told to remain objective and emotionally detached. In other variations, perspective taking was triggered by requiring participants to write an essay imagining a day in the life of a young Black male.

These perspective-taking interventions substantially decreased implicit bias in the form of negative attitudes, as measured by both a variant of the standard IAT (the personalized IAT) and the standard race attitude IAT.²⁶² More important, these changes in implicit bias, as measured by reaction time instruments,

257. See Bennett, *supra* note 252 ("[Y]ou must not consider the defendant's race, color, religious beliefs, national origin, or sex. You are not to return a verdict for or against the defendant unless you would return the same verdict without regard to his race, color, religious beliefs, national origin, or sex.").

258. Although said in a different context, Justice Blackmun's insight seems appropriate here: "In order to get beyond racism we must first take account of race." *Regents of the Univ. of Cal. v. Bakke*, 438 U.S. 265, 407 (1978) (Blackmun, J., concurring in part and dissenting in part).

259. For a thoughtful discussion of jury instructions on "gender-, race-, and/or sexual orientation-switching," see CYNTHIA LEE, *MURDER AND THE REASONABLE MAN: PASSION AND FEAR IN THE CRIMINAL COURTROOM* 252–55 (2003); see also *id.* at 257–58 (quoting actual race-switching instruction given in a criminal trial based on Prof. Lee's work).

260. Andrew R. Todd et al., *Perspective Taking Combats Automatic Expressions of Racial Bias*, 100 J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL. 1027 (2011).

261. See *id.* at 1030.

262. Experiment one involved the five-minute video. Those in the perspective-shifting condition showed a bias of $M=0.43$, whereas those in the control showed a bias of $M=0.80$. Experiment two involved the essay, in which participants in the perspective-taking condition showed $M=0.01$ versus $M=0.49$. See *id.* at 1031. Experiment three used the standard IAT. See *id.* at 1033.

also correlated with behavioral changes. For example, the researchers found that those in the perspective-taking condition chose to sit closer to a Black interviewer,²⁶³ and physical closeness has long been understood as positive body language, which is reciprocated. Moreover, Black experimenters rated their interaction with White participants who were put in the perspective-taking condition more positively.²⁶⁴

CONCLUSION

Most of us would like to be free of biases, attitudes, and stereotypes that lead us to judge individuals based on the social categories they belong to, such as race and gender. But wishing things does not make them so. And the best scientific evidence suggests that we—all of us, no matter how hard we try to be fair and square, no matter how deeply we believe in our own objectivity—have implicit mental associations that will, in some circumstances, alter our behavior. They manifest everywhere, even in the hallowed courtroom. Indeed, one of our key points here is not to single out the courtroom as a place where bias especially reigns but rather to suggest that there is no evidence for courtroom exceptionalism. There is simply no legitimate basis for believing that these pervasive implicit biases somehow stop operating in the halls of justice.

Confronted with a robust research basis suggesting the widespread effects of bias on decisionmaking, we are therefore forced to choose. Should we seek to be behaviorally realistic, recognize our all-too-human frailties, and design procedures and systems to decrease the impact of bias in the courtroom? Or should we ignore inconvenient facts, stick our heads in the sand, and hope they somehow go away? Even with imperfect information and tentative understandings, we choose the first option. We recognize that our suggestions are starting points, that they may not all work, and that, even as a whole, they may not be sufficient. But we do think they are worth a try. We hope that judges and other stakeholders in the justice system agree.

263. *See id.* at 1035.

264. *See id.* at 1037.

Prosecuting Fairly: Addressing the Challenges of Implicit Bias, Racial Anxiety, and Stereotype Threat

by Rachel D. Godsil and HaoYang (Carl) Jiang

“All of us prosecutors want to do justice—we hold ourselves to a higher standard, so why aren’t we trusted?”

— William Stetzer

The question posed by Bill Stetzer¹ is shared by many prosecutors. Yet too often, those in communities of color have a hard time believing that these values are genuine based upon their personal experiences. This article shares insights from social psychology research and neuroscience that can unlock this conundrum and provide tools to align behaviors with values.

How is this research important? It shows that people can genuinely want to be fair, but their decisions, reactions, and behaviors can be determined by their unconscious processes. These cognitive functions are shaped by the racial stereotypes that continue to be prevalent in popular media and culture. To begin to achieve racially equitable outcomes within the criminal justice system, prosecutors need to understand the risks of these unconscious, stereotypical associations and related phenomena linked to racial and ethnic differences. The next step is to use cutting-edge brain and

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social science to foster environments that promote equal treatment and guard against the impact of biases.

We are not suggesting that all issues of racial disparity within the criminal justice system are the result of individual decisions—many are systemic and beyond the scope of this article. However, individual decisions and interactions matter enormously to those affected by them. We are in a moment when leaders within criminal justice have access to methods to meaningfully shift dynamics, reduce disparities, and enhance the legitimacy of the criminal justice system. Prosecutors across the country are beginning to make use of these methods and working to engender the trust often missing in communities they impact.

Our purpose is to move the discussion forward by showing how the roles of three intersecting phenomena may play at various decision points or important interactions in the prosecutorial process:

- **Implicit Bias**—“the automatic association of stereotypes and attitudes toward particular groups”;²
- **Racial Anxiety**—“involves the stress response people experience before or during interracial interactions”;³ and
- **Stereotype Threat**—“involves inhibition in cognitive functioning when a negative stereotype about [one’s] identity group is activated.”⁴

We then describe the interventions that can begin to prevent these phenomena from undermining fairness.

What Is Implicit Bias and Why Does It Happen?

Explicit bias is consciously held hostilities or stereotypes about groups of people that differs dramatically from the automatic processes involved in implicit bias. Implicit biases are not a consequence of an individual’s chosen values; they are automatic associations that follow from stereotypes common in our culture. The fact that biases are implicit does not mean they necessarily dictate our actions, but to prevent them from doing so, we need to be aware that they are operating.

In the context of criminal justice, the distorted stereotypes associating black and Latino men with violence, criminality, and poverty that have been and continue to be common in the media are most dangerous.⁵ Recent studies have found that people judge identically sized black and white men differently; with black

men seen as larger, stronger, and more apt to cause harm in an altercation.⁶

In addition, when people are primed with black faces, they are faster to see crime-related objects; when primed with white faces, they are faster to see neutral objects.⁷ In a 2016 study of college students, the association of black faces with crime-related objects occurred even when the face was of a five-year-old boy.⁸ Also salient to the criminal justice context is a study finding that after hearing about an encounter, people were more apt to remember hostile details about a person named “Tyronne” than “William,” and even wrongly recalled hostile details when the story was about “Tyronne.”⁹

Researchers have assessed the presence of implicit bias using a variety of methods. The most commonly known is the Implicit Association Test (IAT), which can be easily accessed on the website Project Implicit.¹⁰ The IAT is a computer task that measures how quickly participants can link particular groups with positive or negative words (race attitude) or different racial groups with weapons (weapons association) by pressing a particular key on the computer’s keyboard. The IAT is not akin to a DNA test; it is not a precise and entirely stable measure of bias in any single individual. Rather, it reveals patterns and tendencies among large groups of people.¹¹ Scientists are also beginning to use physiological tools to measure implicit responses to race, including functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI), patterns of cardiovascular responses, facial electromyography (EMG), and cortisol responses.

What Is Racial Anxiety and Why Does It Happen?

In navigating social interactions across lines of difference, implicit bias is but one obstacle. Others include “racial anxiety,” a phenomenon centered on discomfort about the potential consequences of interracial interactions. Research indicates many people of color experience racial anxiety.¹² For a person of color, this anxiety materializes through an expectation they will receive discrimination, hostility, or distant treatment. White people may experience a “mirror anxiety” that they will be assumed to be racist by people of color and face corresponding feelings of hostility.¹³

Racial anxiety has been measured based upon self-reports, but it is also observed behaviorally when someone exhibits behaviors associated with anxiety, such as sweating, increased heart rate, facial

twitches, fidgeting, and avoiding eye contact.¹⁴ Racial anxiety has been shown to have cognitive effects as well, diminishing people's executive functions.¹⁵ As with implicit bias, researchers have developed physiological tools to measure racial anxiety by assessing release levels of norepinephrine from the locus coeruleus to the anterior cingulate cortex.¹⁶

What Is Stereotype Threat and Why Does It Happen?

Stereotype threat is the frequently unconscious fear that one's actions may confirm stereotypes about their identity groups.¹⁷ Stereotypes differ across groups so this anxiety can play out differently for particular identity groups and in different situations.¹⁸ It has been well documented by its effect on the academic performance of students of color who fear confirming the negative stereotypes of intellectual inferiority.¹⁹

Stereotype threat can cause individuals to attempt to discern whether they are confirming negative racial stereotypes or whether they are being judged based on those stereotypes.²⁰ The constant monitoring and increased vigilance expends cognitive resources.²¹ Stereotype threat is particularly likely to be triggered in high-pressure situations or when the task outcome is of high value.²²

This threat occurs when three conflicting beliefs are activated:

1. the group stereotype of inferior ability (e.g., women cannot read maps);
2. the recognition that you are a member of the group (e.g., I am a woman); and
3. the knowledge of one's own ability (e.g., I am good at map reading).

The physical manifestation of this conflict occurs through the diversion of cognitive resources (our brain power) that would be otherwise spent on the task at hand. These effects are detectable in both the body and brain, most often through an increased heart rate and rising blood pressure, as well as in the brain regions that regulate emotion.²³ The resulting stress, combined with a motivation to self-monitor and suppress self-doubt, creates a failure to perform to potential.

It has also been shown to be a risk in the context of patients of color being concerned about the stereotypes held about them by health care providers.^{24,25} In this context, stereotype threat can

undermine communication, lead to discounting of feedback, poor adherence to health plans, and disidentification—viewing health promotion behaviors as “white.”²⁶

Presence of Bias in Prosecutor’s Offices

In a recent study of the Manhattan District Attorney’s Office, the Vera Institute found that in the exercise of discretion at every level from case screening, bail recommendations, charging, and sentences in pleas, black defendants were subject to more severe outcomes compared to similarly situated whites.²⁷ Prosecutors recommended denying bail to black defendants more often, a significant factor, and eventual plea deals included longer incarceration times.²⁸

The Vera study does not address the precise mechanisms explaining the disparate outcomes; however, research in social psychology suggests how bias may operate. For example, if black men are misjudged due to their physical size, leading to higher rates of perceived criminality and aggression, this has ramifications for witness or police officer actions, accounts, and trial testimony, but may also cause prosecutors to perceive such aggressiveness accordingly in charging and sentencing decisions.²⁹

Bias may further manifest in the detailed accounts of crimes provided to police and prosecutors. As noted earlier, a study asked participants to read a short description of a crime committed by “William” and an identical description of a crime committed by “Tyronne.”³⁰ They were then distracted for 15 minutes and asked to recall details of the incident. The participants who read William’s actions recalled fewer aggressive details about the incident. The participants who read Tyronne’s actions not only correctly remembered more aggressive details about the incident, but also incorrectly attributed additional aggressive details to Tyronne.³¹

One can imagine how such selective memory may play out in the courtroom, where prosecutors must routinely determine if defendants are exaggerating or being purposefully deceptive in their description of events. If passersby and witnesses provide a disingenuous version of the facts, one can expect that bias will color the subsequent results.

Research establishes that lawyers are not immune to implicit biases. In one study, 60 law firm partners were given an identical memorandum written by “Thomas Meyer,” identified as a third-year associate who went to NYU Law School. The memo contained

seven spelling or grammar errors. Half of the partners were led to believe that Meyer was white and the other half that Meyer was black. Though the memos were identical, partners found an average of 2.9 of the seven errors when Thomas Meyer was depicted as white, and an average of 5.8 of the seven errors when Thomas Meyer was depicted as black.³²

Possible Decision Points Influenced by Bias

In grappling with the myriad ways bias may be present in a prosecutor's office, it is helpful to clearly examine the decision points and interaction moments in which prosecutors exercise their discretion. Possible decision points include: charging decisions, pre-trial strategy, and trial strategy.³³

Charging Decisions

Charging decisions for a prosecutor involve the decision of whether to charge a defendant with a crime and the decision of what crime to charge. Research has indicated that prosecutors are routinely less likely to charge white suspects than black suspects. Even while controlling for the type of crime and existence of a previous criminal record, the data indicates disproportionate charging trends based on race.³⁴

Such findings are magnified by studies around priming, or subliminal exposure via words and images, related to prosecutorial decision-making. For example, the use of an African American name, specific genre of music associated with African Americans, or "black" neighborhood, can cause racial stereotypes to "be immediately and automatically activated in the mind of a prosecutor, without the prosecutor's awareness."³⁵ As previously noted, the priming of a black face caused participants in one study to more quickly detect "degraded images" of an object commonly associated with crime (e.g., knife, gun).³⁶ Again, the impact of this phenomenon may cause prosecutors to charge a defendant of color with more severity or more speed than a white defendant.

The effects of implicit bias do not merely affect adult defendants. Black juvenile suspects were more likely to be charged as adults when compared to their white counterparts, even while controlling for severity of crime and previous record.³⁷ One possible explanation for this disparity may result from the inability of white people to correctly gauge a black child's age. In one study, white

undergraduate students were primed with the face of a black or white child and then asked to identify the next image of a gun or toy as fast as possible. Participants identified the second image as a gun more quickly after primed with black faces than white, and identified the second image as a toy more quickly after primed with white faces than black.

Pre-Trial Strategy

In considering whether to oppose bail or consider a plea bargain, there are many points in which implicit bias can impact a prosecutor's pre-trial decision-making process. For example, research indicates that defendants of color receive worse pre-trial detention decisions than their white counterparts in certain jurisdictions.³⁸ In evaluating bail procedures, implicit bias may also operate through "the implicit devaluation of the defendant."³⁹ Evidence of this devaluation was demonstrated by a comparison of computerized facial images of a white male and a black male.⁴⁰ Researchers showed participants a series of images transitioning from "angry" to "neutral" to "happy," and asked them to determine when a face appeared happy. The results of these findings pointed to a lack of empathy recognition among white participants with black faces. In essence, the black male appeared to be angrier, more hostile, and more serious than the white counterpart.⁴¹ As a result, prosecutors may be unable to gauge their defendants' honesty or intent based on body language alone.

Trial Strategy

Whether through striking black jurors or making closing arguments tinged with racial animus, prosecutors have wide leeway in justifying their trial decisions on non-racial lines even when influenced by racial bias. For example, while prohibitions against race-based strikes of jurors have clear precedent and are well defined, the implementation of the prohibition is often difficult. According to one analysis, courts will "routinely uphold peremptory challenges based on largely unverifiable race-neutral claims, for example, those based on avoiding eye contact, possessing an apparent lack of intelligence, or showing signs of nervousness."⁴² While prosecutors may not routinely refer to explicit biases for striking a juror, it is often difficult to ascertain a prosecutor's true intentions or categorize the influences that sway their decision.

For example, according to the same analysis, “prosecutors might associate black citizens with lack of respect for law enforcement and opposition to the prosecution of drug crimes or use of the death penalty as a punishment.”⁴³ As a result, black jurors are unfairly stereotyped and castigated based on the implicit biases that affect black defendants.

Possible Interventions for Bias

Fortunately, while the breadth of decision points and interaction moments between prosecutors and defendants seem intractable, researchers have identified several interventions to address them. These interventions fall into two categories: *bias reduction* and *bias override*. While bias reduction is the fundamental goal for prosecutors, since the biased mindset is itself transformed, it seems unlikely that an amelioration of our biases will occur in the near future. Therefore, pursuing bias override simultaneously is crucial.

One avenue to decrease bias is the constant and consistent exposure of prosecutors to positive images and associations with non-stereotypical out-group individuals. Depictions that counter negative stereotypes create new implicit associations between those positive attributes and the out-group as a whole.⁴⁴ According to experts, the most effective bias reduction strategies require a series of steps to “break the prejudice habit.”⁴⁵ This may require prosecutors to engage in more community building activities and outreach, including know-your-rights trainings and community prosecution workshops. Prosecutors must expand the set of positive pro-social interactions with the out-group in order to succeed in long-term bias reduction.

Since the reduction of bias will take a significant amount of time and energy, it will be critically important for institutions and stakeholders to put long-term practices into place that will minimize the effects of such bias.⁴⁶ These formal and objective decision-making tools may include the creation of a prosecutor override card, similar to a judge’s bench card, which outlines the necessary questions prosecutors should ask before engaging in a charging/sentencing decision. In combating implicit bias, the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) has identified a number of risk factors that increase the severity of bias on the part of prosecutors and judges. These factors include: intensified emotional states, ambiguity of information, salient social categories, low-effort cognitive

processing, distracted or pressured decision-making circumstances, and a lack of clear feedback loops.⁴⁷ As a result, the use of an objective checklist to assist prosecutors in curbing bias is essential to reduce these factors.

As Professor Kristen Henning writes: “Well-intentioned actors can overcome automatic or implicit biases ... when they are made aware of stereotypes and biases they hold, have the cognitive capacity to self-correct, and are motivated to do so.”⁴⁸ Studies show this self-correction is successful when efforts are made to actively engage in thoughtful reflection, scrutiny, and reasoning efforts regarding the rationale for decision-making. According to the NCSC, this process should be routine, systematized, and intentional.⁴⁹ An effective checklist, like the judicial bench cards used in jurisdictions such as Los Angeles County; Omaha, Neb.; Portland, Ore.; and Mecklenburg County, N.C., have been empirically shown to curb biases in judges when considering the appropriateness of foster care for youth of color.⁵⁰

According to an analysis conducted by the Brennan Center for Justice, a number of best practices exist to ensure the effectiveness of judicial bench cards in the reduction of implicit bias.⁵¹ For example, the inclusion of implicit bias questions (e.g., “imagine how one would evaluate the defendant if he or she belonged to a different, non-stigmatized group”)⁵² both prompts the decision maker to the possibility of bias and ensures an objective check in the reasoning process. Other practices include listing alternatives to placement, reminders on the general process for specific hearings, and listing instances where defendants should have public defenders present.⁵³

In addition to an objective decision-making tool, short-term remedies also exist. For example, prosecution offices should begin to collect and store information on racial demographics at each point of the charging and sentencing process. Such an information collecting measure should be shared with stakeholders and consistently reviewed for trends and patterns for prosecutorial success.⁵⁴ Additional trainings focused on the systematization of bias override in new attorney training manuals would go a long way toward providing “explicit reminders” for attorneys to monitor themselves and their peers.⁵⁵

Presence of Racial Anxiety in the Prosecutor's Office and Possible Interventions

Racial anxiety also has the potential to undermine effective prosecution. As Bill Stetzer, a white prosecutor, has observed:

I would be questioning a black prospective juror and what I would be thinking is: Does this juror think I'm a racist? Am I going to offend this juror? If this juror is bad for me, will I get challenged under *Batson*?

All the while, the prospective juror is wondering: Is this guy going to treat me differently because I'm black? Is he trying to find a way to get rid of me?

What this means is that both the juror and I are scared, and we never talk about it. Why does it matter? Because both the juror and I are likely to stiffen up our body language, we'll avoid, eye contact. We will each be sending the other the message that "I don't trust you." As a prosecutor, when a juror doesn't trust me, I lose cases.^[56]

In addition to the interactions between prosecutors and jurors, the behavioral effects of racial anxiety have the risk of undermining effective witness interviewing, as well as potentially leading victims or families of victims to distrust the prosecutor. When a victim or family member is feeling vulnerable, the lack of eye contact or the avoidant body language can be read as linked to their race.

It is equally important to consider the many interactions prosecutors of color have with their peers, employees, and managers. From hiring, to discipline, to termination, prosecutors of color often face a different set of expectations and obstacles than their white counterparts. This racial anxiety about interracial interactions has implications for white and minority staff.

For example, one study contrasted the experiences black and Latino college students face in interracial interactions. While racial minorities were more likely to request respect, professionalism, and competence, white students expressed a desire to be well liked and develop rapport with their peers.⁵⁷ One can imagine a scenario in which a prosecutor of color who is interviewing for a prospective position may feel slighted by a white interviewer due to a difference in social interaction goals.

In instances where racial anxiety is present in the workplace, studies indicate a correlative negative response in employee workflow and performance. This is a result of the cognitive impact of perceived prejudice as black subjects are much more likely to face impairment when they saw ambiguous evidence of discrimination, whereas white subjects felt such impairment when blatant evidence of prejudice was experienced.⁵⁸ The evidence indicates that people of color are more sensitive to the presence of racial slights and feel them more acutely than whites.

Prosecutor offices can begin to address such imbalances in ways similar to addressing implicit bias: reduction and override. Not only should new attorney trainings include methods to communicate across lines of difference, more attention should be paid to diversity hiring overall. A more diverse pool of prosecutors may curb implicit bias, racial anxiety, and stereotype threat due to the increased exposure to different viewpoints and perspectives. As research has indicated in the jury context, “diverse group decision-making is better than homogenous group decision-making.”⁵⁹

The Presence of Stereotype Threat in the Prosecutor’s Office and Possible Interventions

The research on stereotype threat in health care is salient to its potential effects in the criminal justice system. If people of color are concerned that they will be viewed through stereotypical lenses, they may be less apt to interact effectively with prosecutors, which has implications for reporting crimes, acting as witnesses, and a host of other instances in which trust and communication are critical.

In addition, stereotype threat has significant salience for the experience of prosecutors of color. Research and anecdotal evidence suggest that they may face added burdens due to the concern about confirming a negative stereotype about their in-group during the course of performing their professional functions. When a negative stereotype is triggered about someone’s group, making one’s identity salient, it can undermine performance because they worry about confirming the stereotype.

A prosecutor of color, for example, can often feel twice the burden/challenge of their white counterpart on the job.⁶⁰ Unfortunately, the reverse can also be true for white managers. For example, the provision of overly positive feedback on writing tasks for a minority employee to compensate for feelings of racism

is a real phenomenon. Research has shown stereotype threat has motivated recommendations for job changes despite the lack of necessary skills.⁶¹

Possible interventions and solutions for decreasing stereotype threat include removing the triggers for stereotype threat, promoting a growth mindset, and providing motivational feedback. A potential tool that prosecutors can adopt for providing feedback is *wise feedback*.⁶² Originally designed to restore minority students' trust in critical feedback, three double-blind, randomized experiments provided a series of interventions that have shown success in the academic context. These steps include:

- working with the client/colleagues to understand their highest goals and aspirations;
- using an *asset frame* to identify and convey the reasons you are confident they can meet those goals and aspirations; and
- candidly sharing any constructive feedback on the steps they need to take going forward to meet their goals and aspirations.⁶³

Through a combination of these tools, it is possible to reduce the feelings of stereotype threat prosecutors of color may feel in the workplace and provide higher rates of retention and better performance from staff of color.

Conclusion

Although bias reduction and override work can be extraordinarily difficult without the dedication and fidelity to objective measures needed to succeed, there are short and long-term steps prosecutors can take to begin their journey toward a productive and safe workspace. It is important to recognize that along with the interventions we have outlined, success is also dependent upon the buy-in of managerial and administrative staff. Without a clear “train-the-trainer” regimen, it can be easy for staff to dismiss such solutions as mere lip service to the issues we have outlined. Through combating implicit bias, racial anxiety, and stereotype threat, we hope to shed light on the various ways these intersecting and interconnecting phenomena can impact the performance of prosecutors and their efficacy in serving their communities. ■

ENDNOTES

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