Hidden Biases – Is this a concern for youth work professionals?

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ACT for Youth

PYD Network Webinar – March 28, 2019

Objectives

- Introducing the implicit association test
- What are hidden biases?
- How do hidden biases work?
- What can we do about them?
- Questions & Resources

PYD Network: History & Background

NYS AYD Partnership 1998 - 2012

PYD 101 Curriculum 2015

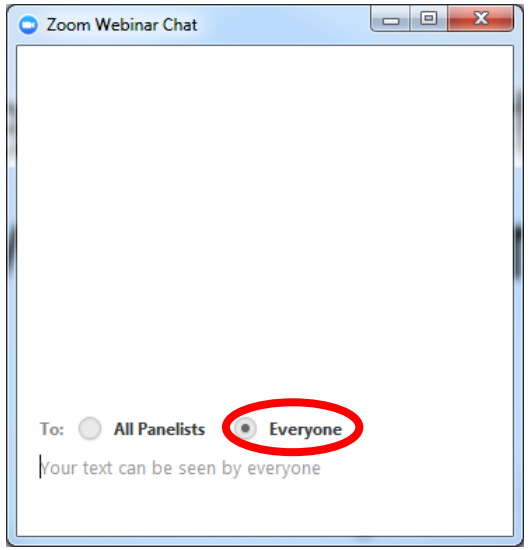
PYD Online Courses 2016-17

New: Building Organizational Capacity for PYD 2018-21

Website: http://www.actforyouth.net/youth_development/professionals

Housekeeping

Experiencing delays?
Try closing out the other programs running on your computer

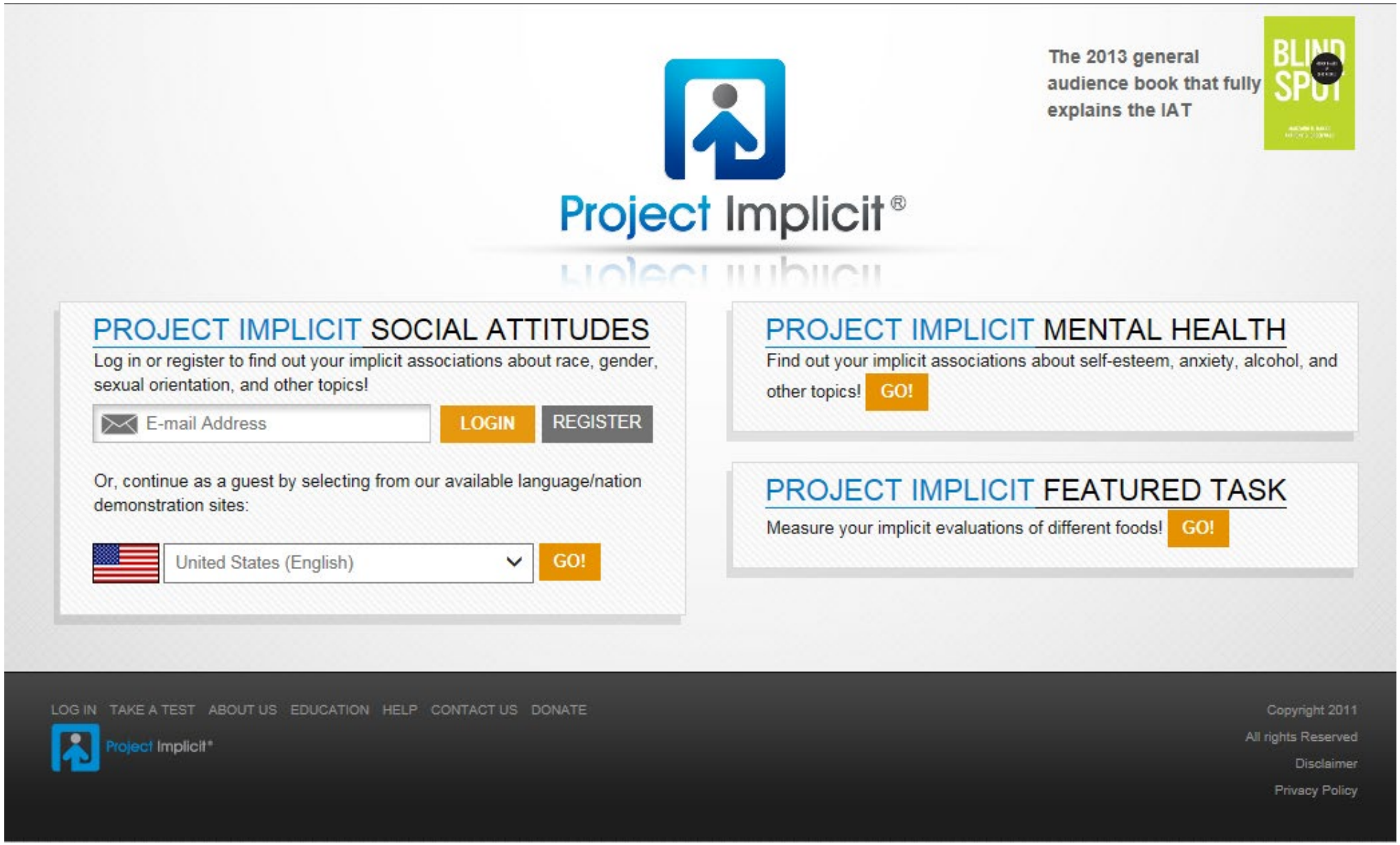


Questions?
Use chat function.
Post to Everyone.

Inspired by

MON FEB 11
3:30 PM
Statler Auditorium
Reception to follow
BLINDSPOT:
HIDDEN BIASES OF GOOD PEOPLE
MAHZARIN R. BANAJI
Richard Clarke Cabot Professor of Social Ethics, Harvard University
OFFICE OF FACULTY DEVELOPMENT AND DIVERSITY
Robert L. Harris ADVANCEments in Science Lecture
INSTITUTE FOR THE SOCIAL SCIENCES
Distinguished Lecture in the Social Sciences
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
Colloquium

Have you heard about the implicit association test?



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

Measuring Attitudes (Likes and Dislikes)

Unpleasant

Picture or word

Pleasant

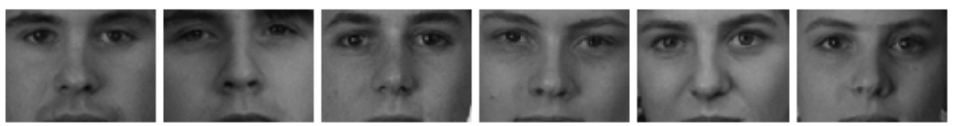
Pleasant

Picture or word

Unpleasant

Implicit Association Test

Next, you will use the 'E' and 'I' computer keys to categorize items into groups as fast as you can. These are the four groups and the items that belong to each:

Category	Items
Good	Cheerful, Pleasure, Cherish, Enjoy, Terrific, Fantastic, Attractive, Joyful
Bad	Ugly, Hate, Sadness, Failure, Horrible, Dirty, Disaster, Hatred
Black people	
White people	

There are seven parts. The instructions change for each part. Pay attention!

Continue

Press "E" for

Black people

Press "I" for

White people

Part 1 of 7

Put a left finger on the **E** key for items that belong to the category Black people.
Put a right finger on the **I** key for items that belong to the category White people.
Items will appear one at a time.

If you make a mistake, a red **X** will appear. Press the other key to continue.
Go as fast as you can while being accurate.

Press the **space bar** when you are ready to start.

Reflective versus automatic

Eric Kandel, neuroscientist, Nobel Prize winner, estimated

80-90 % of the mind works unconsciously

Project Implicit: Large data set

14 million completed by 2013

20,000 new users every week

Dissociation between reflective egalitarianism and automatic preferences in attitudes involving race, sexual orientation, age, skin color, body weight, height, disability, gender-career …

Project Implicit®

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Arab-Muslim IAT

Arab-Muslim **('Arab Muslim - Other People' IAT).** This IAT requires the ability to distinguish names that are likely to belong to Arab-Muslims versus people of other nationalities or religions.

Disability IAT

Disability **('Disabled - Abled' IAT).** This IAT requires the ability to recognize symbols representing abled and disabled individuals.

Gender-Science IAT

Gender - Science. This IAT often reveals a relative link between liberal arts and females and between science and males.

Weapons IAT

Weapons **('Weapons - Harmless Objects' IAT).** This IAT requires the ability to recognize White and Black faces, and images of weapons or harmless objects.

Gender-Career IAT

Gender - Career. This IAT often reveals a relative link between family and females and between career and males.

Sexuality IAT

Sexuality **('Gay - Straight' IAT).** This IAT requires the ability to distinguish words and symbols representing gay and straight people. It often reveals an automatic preference for straight relative to gay people.

Asian IAT — ***Asian American*** **('Asian - European American' IAT).** This IAT requires the ability to recognize White and Asian-American faces, and images of places that are either American or Foreign in origin.

Skin-tone IAT — ***Skin-tone*** **('Light Skin - Dark Skin' IAT).** This IAT requires the ability to recognize light and dark-skinned faces. It often reveals an automatic preference for light-skin relative to dark-skin.

Age IAT — ***Age*** **('Young - Old' IAT).** This IAT requires the ability to distinguish old from young faces. This test often indicates that Americans have automatic preference for young over old.

Presidents IAT — ***Presidents*** **('Presidential Popularity' IAT).** This IAT requires the ability to recognize photos of Donald Trump and one or more previous presidents.

Religion IAT — ***Religion*** **('Religions' IAT).** This IAT requires some familiarity with religious terms from various world religions.

Native IAT — ***Native American*** **('Native - White American' IAT).** This IAT requires the ability to recognize White and Native American faces in either classic or modern dress, and the names of places that are either American or Foreign in origin.

Race IAT — ***Race*** **('Black - White' IAT).** This IAT requires the ability to distinguish faces of European and African origin. It indicates that most Americans have an automatic preference for white over black.

Weight IAT — ***Weight*** **('Fat - Thin' IAT).** This IAT requires the ability to distinguish faces of people who are obese and people who are thin. It often reveals an automatic preference for thin people relative to fat people.

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https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html

Puzzle

A father and his son are in a car accident. The father dies at the scene and the son, badly injured, is rushed to the hospital. In the operating room, the surgeon looks at the boy and says," I can't operate on this boy. He is my son."

How can this be?

Stereotypes

"Surgeons are male"

"Old people are forgetful"

"Asians are good in math"

"Women are nurturing"

A Stereotype is an exaggerated belief, image or distorted truth about a person or group – a generalization that allows for little or no individual differences or social variation.

Stereotypes are based on images in mass media, or reputations passed on by parents, peers and other members of society.

“Homo Categoricus”

Our mind thinks with the aid of categories

Stereotypes are a consequence or by-product of category making

Group stereotypes are usually not favorable

Stereotypes affect our behavior/ decisions

What are the consequences?

Does automatic white preference mean prejudice?

Implicit bias not the same than explicit prejudice

Does not tap into hostility

75% of participants show white preference

Predicts discriminatory behavior

Leads to disparities

Self-Defeating Stereotypes

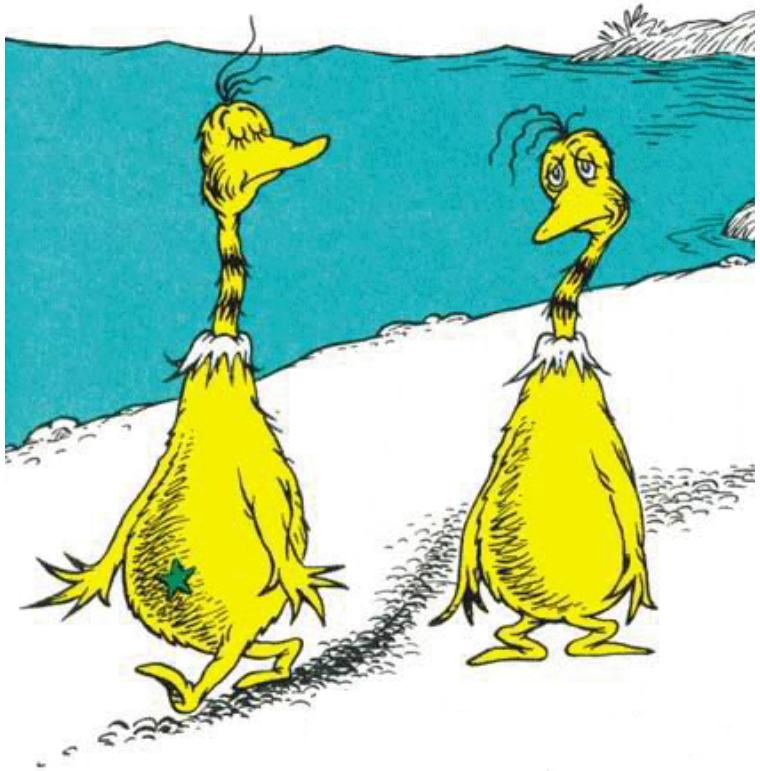
Stereotype threat (Claude Steele)

- Women and math
- Black Americans and the poor underperforming on achievement tests

Self-defeating consequences

- Gender and career
- Gender and achievement

Early Development/ Identity Formation



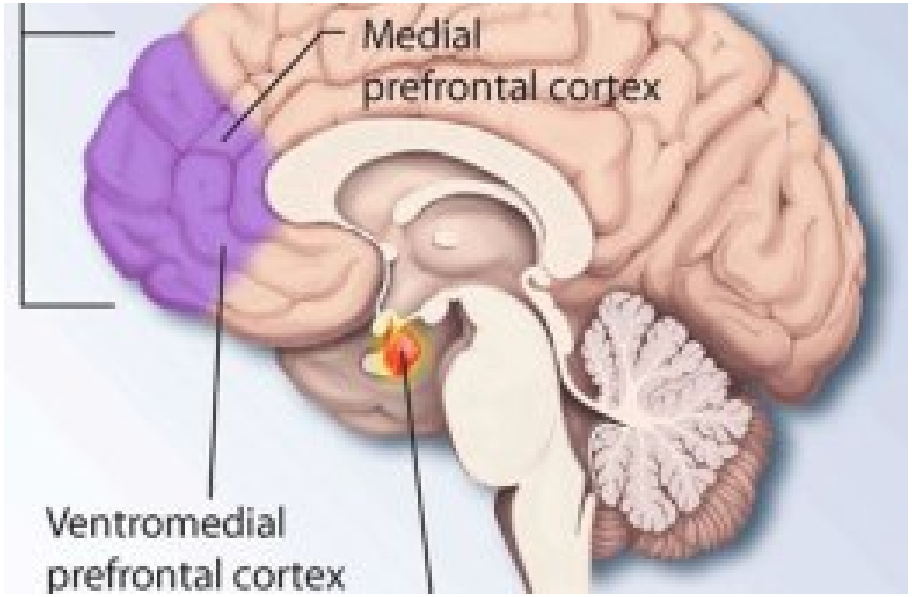
Attachment to familiar sounds and faces

Distinguishing between “like us” and “not like us”

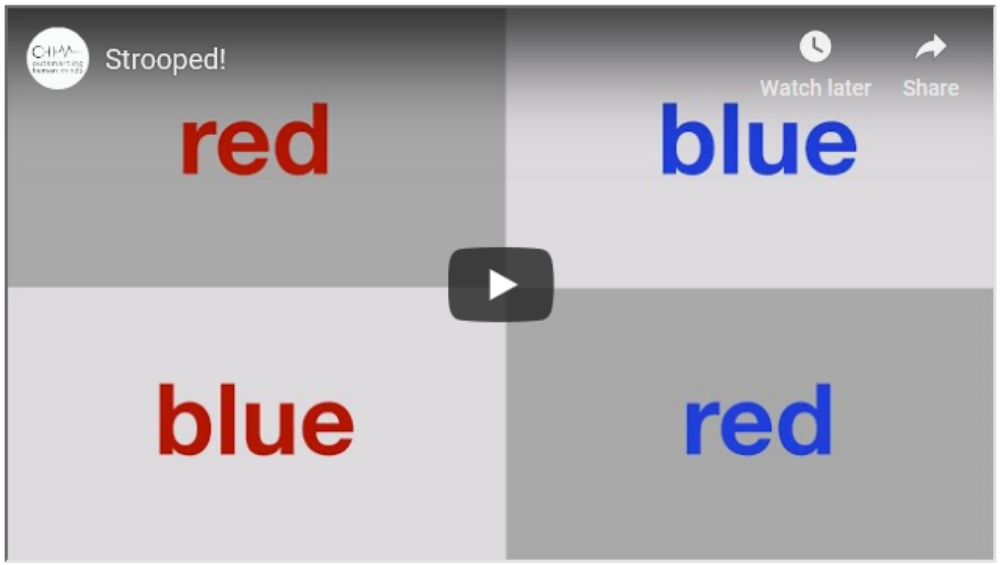
Ventral mPFC

- Firing when thinking about self
- Other areas fire when thinking about others

- Activated when thinking about someone we can identify with



WATCH LISTEN READ TEST



Most of us believe we can control what pieces of information influence our decisions. But when it comes down it, can

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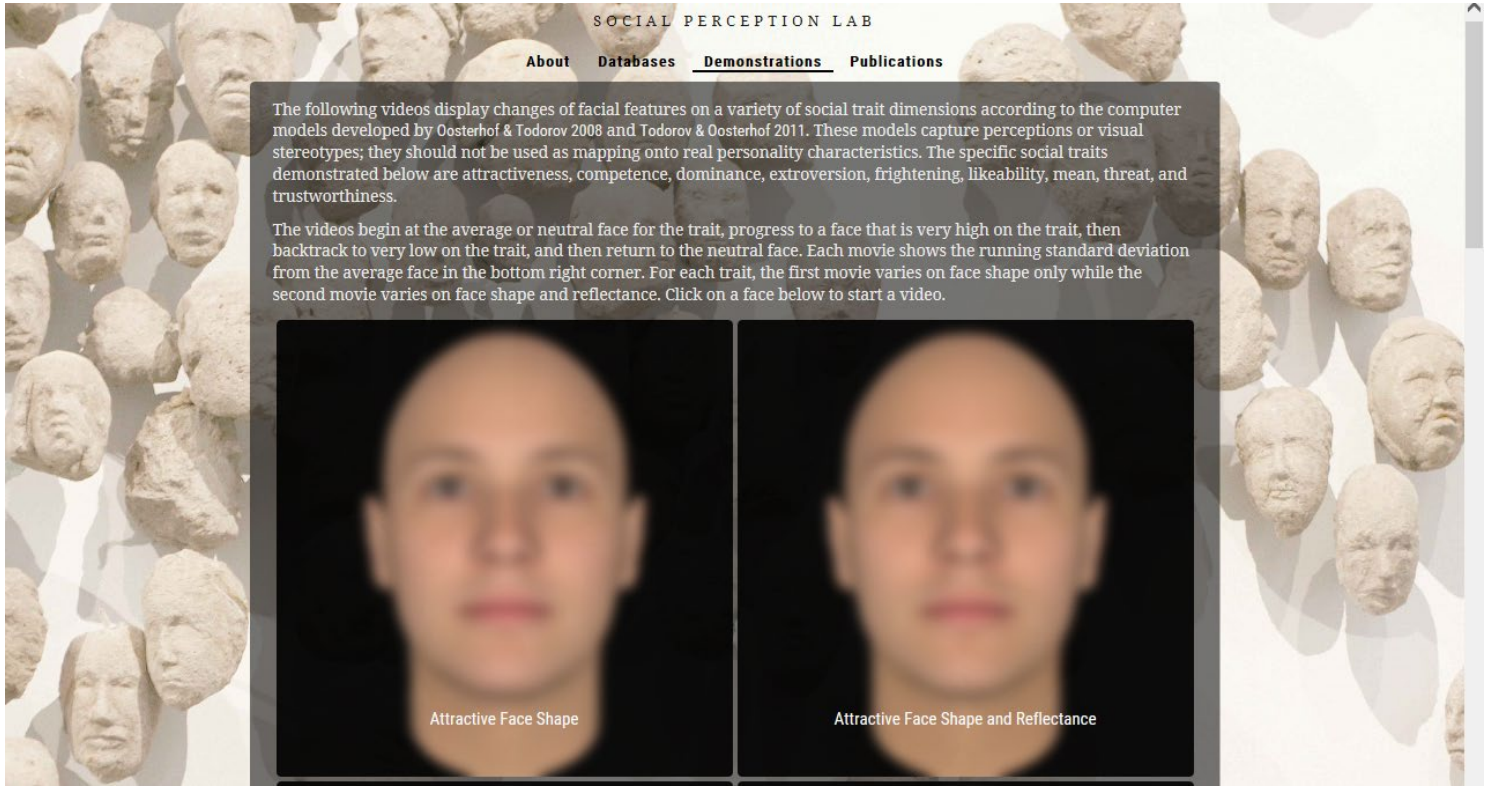
https://outsmartinghumanminds.org/module/strooped/

First Impressions



http://tlab.princeton.edu/demonstrations/

Hidden Biases are Robust but also Malleable

Trends

- Sexuality IAT: 37% decrease (automatic preference for straight)
- Race IAT: 13% decrease (automatic preference for white)
- Slight decrease: gender and science IAT (automatic preference for men in science)
- Increase: body weight IAT (automatic preference for thin people)

Outsmarting Our Mind on Automatic Pilot

- Become aware – do the test
- Question yourself/your decisions
- Increase exposure to "stereotyped" population
- Develop guidelines/practices
- Counter-stereotypic role models

Other Suggestions?

What can we do as youth work professionals?

- Be mindful how you engage with young people
- Questions assumptions and first impressions
- Create a sense of belonging in program groups
- Build in empathy activities
- Assess your program environment/create inclusive environments
- Other…?

Beware of micro-aggressions

https://www.edweek.org/ew/section/multimedia/illustration-microaggressions-in-the-classroom.html

http://www.actforyouth.net/youth_development/professionals/sel/

Questions?
Comments?

References & Readings

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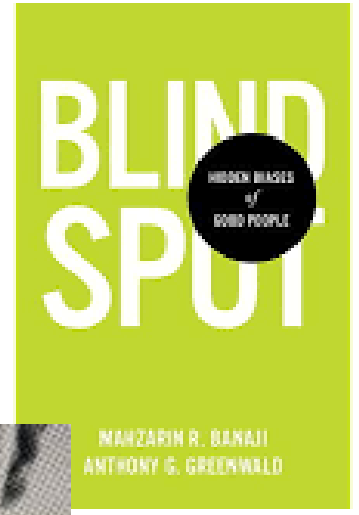

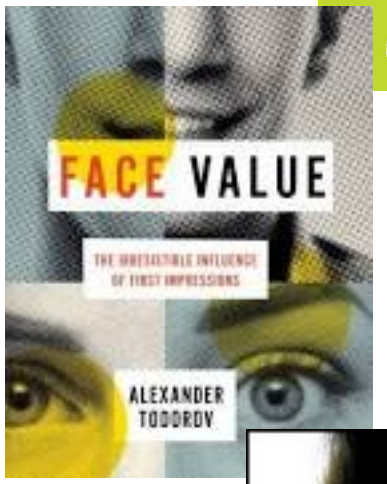

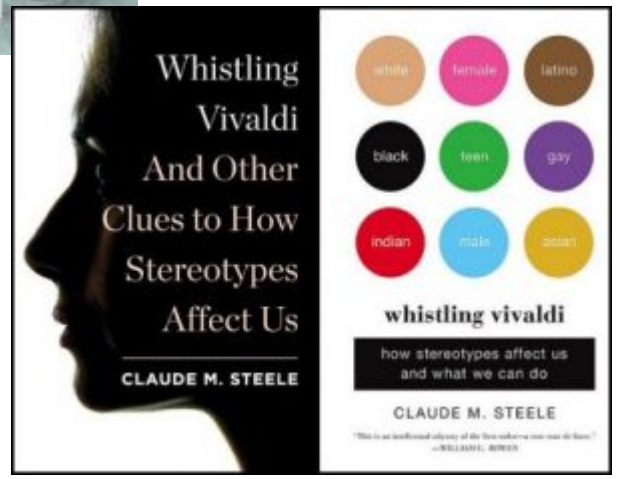

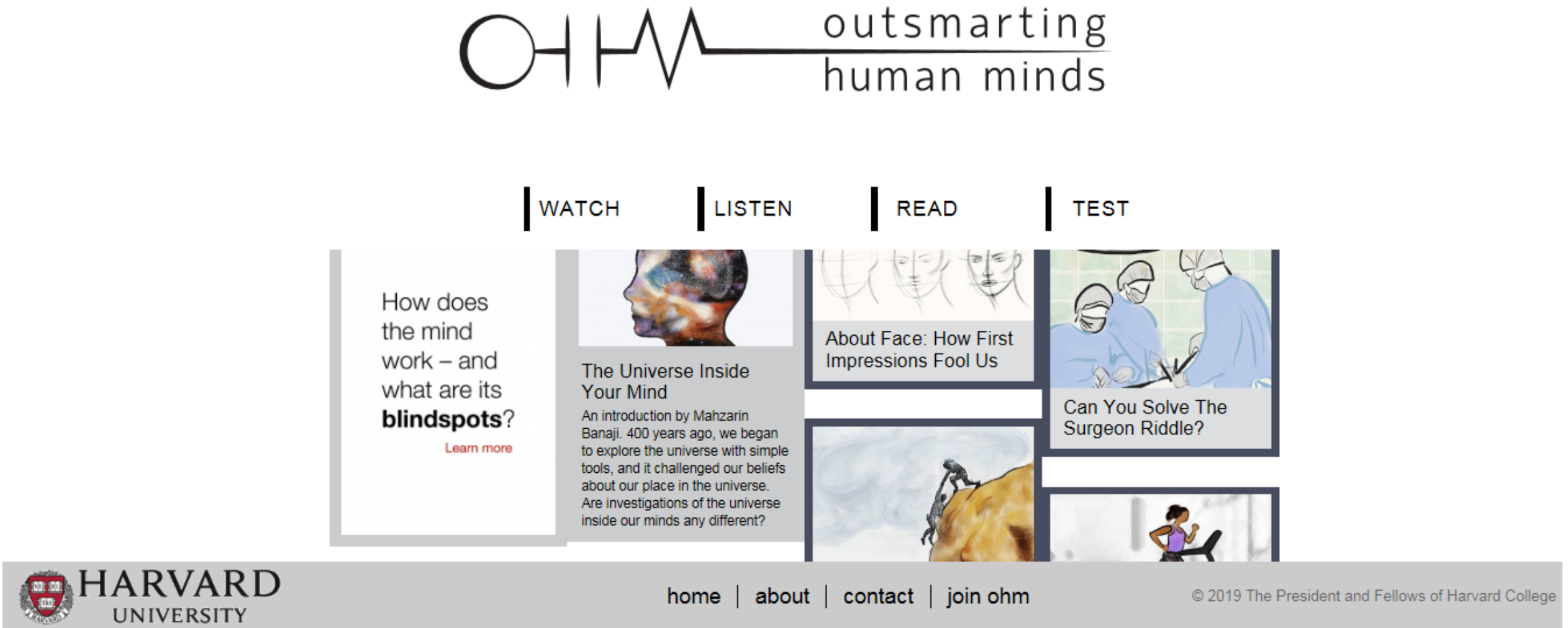

https://outsmartinghumanminds.org/

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