SUCCEED Committee

Supporting UIC's Commitment to a Community of Excellence, Equity & Diversity

Department of Bioengineering

Head Search Committee Workshop

Tuesday, November 18, 2008

SUCCEED's Mission

Supporting UIC's Commitment to a Community of Excellence, Equity & Diversity

To support UIC's commitment to creating a community of excellence, by assisting search committees identify, recruit & hire talented and diverse faculty and heads

Subject of today's presentation

- Climate and advancement of women in academia during the last three decades – "why so slow?"

- Procedures to ensure an inclusive and effective search

- Defining attributes of a leader with regard to diversity (in addition to the usual scholarly and administrative qualities) – **"multiplier effect"**
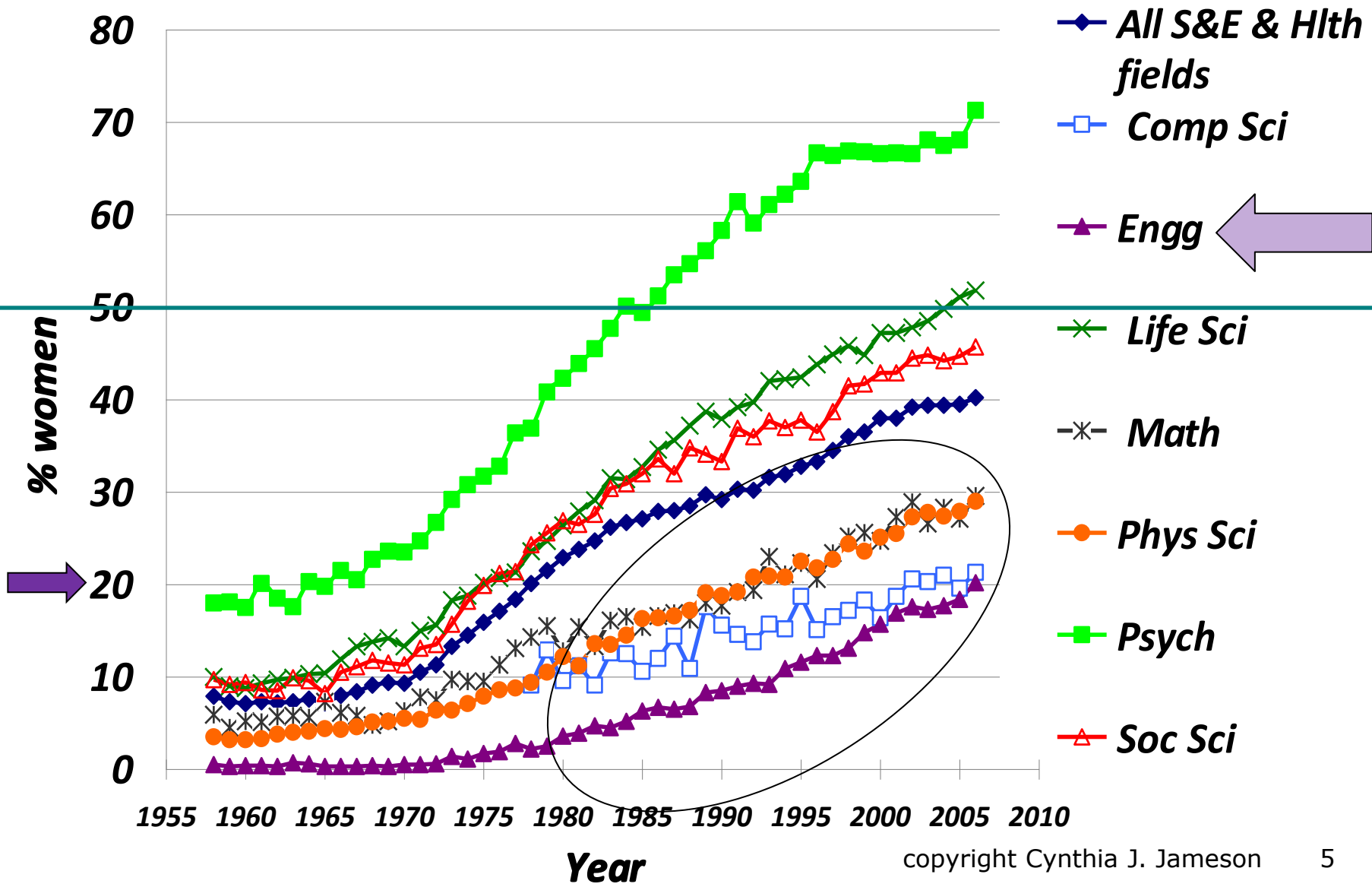
What's the Issue?

- Over the last thirty years, the proportion of women PhDs in the pipeline has been increasing steadily (e.g., chemistry 1/3)

- There has not been a commensurate increase in the percentage of women in tenured/tenure track and leadership positions in US academic science and engineering departments
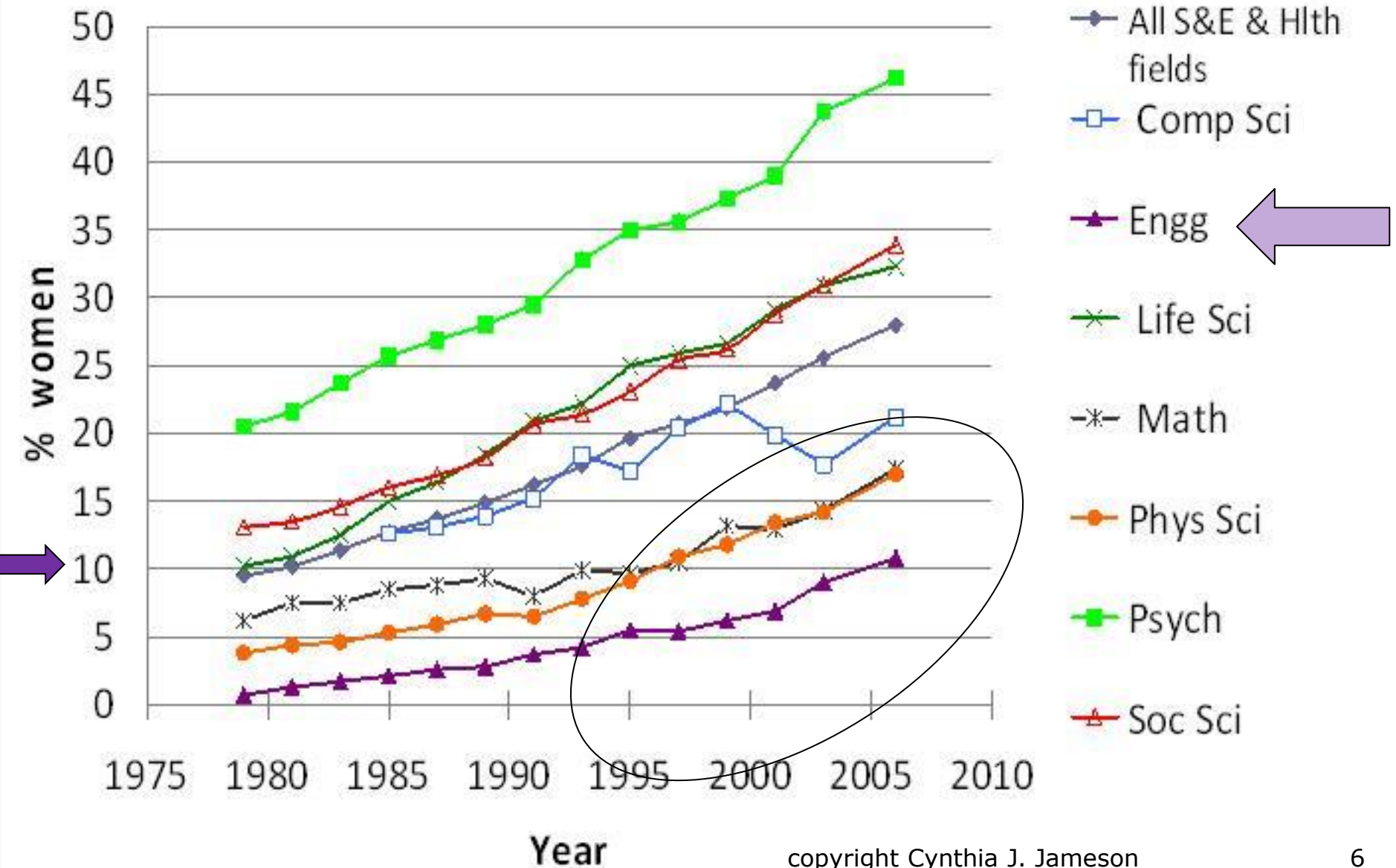
The underlying issues are important for search committees in general to understand.

These issues are particularly important for a Head candidate to be aware of and act accordingly.

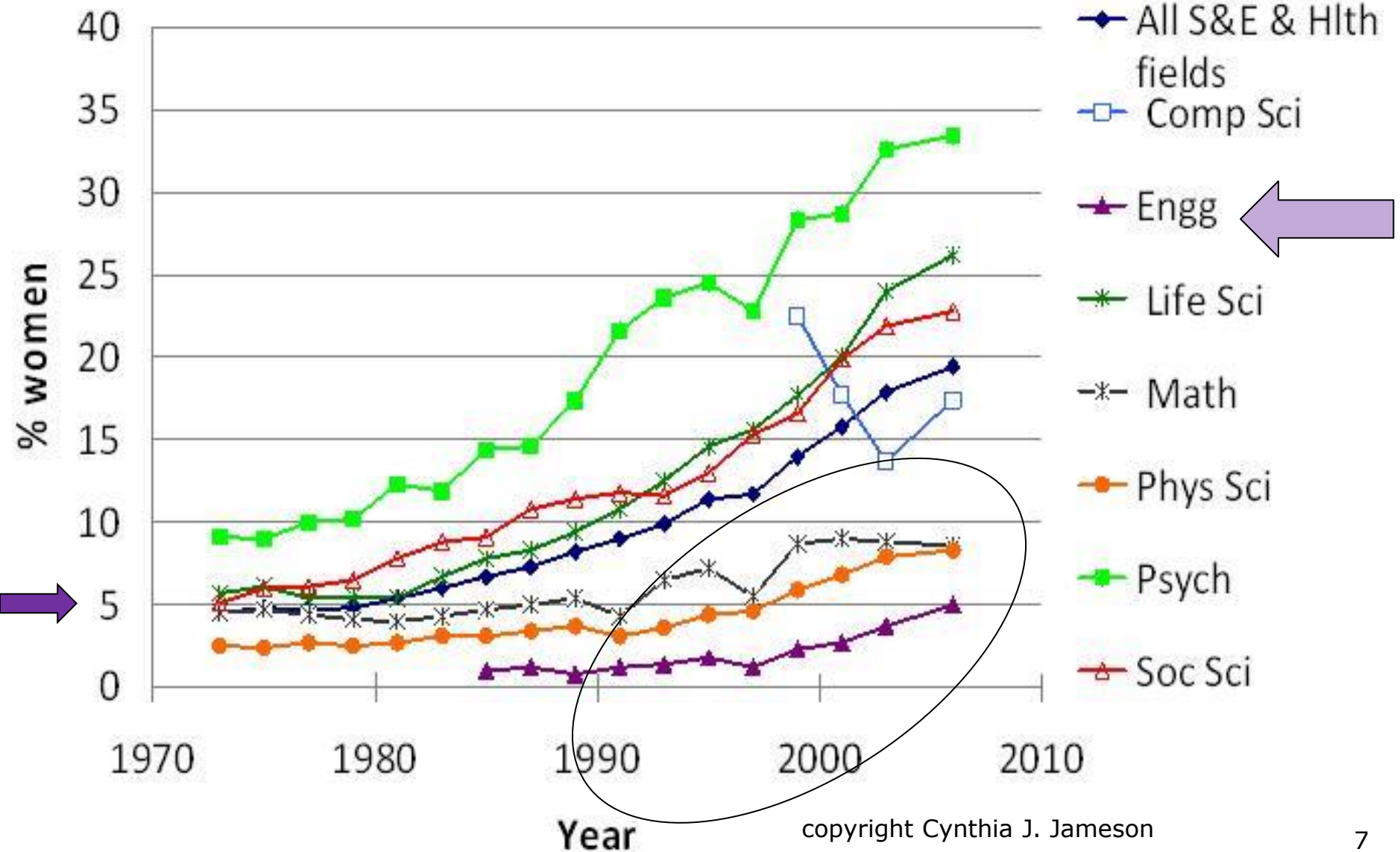Women as a percentage of science, engineering, and health **doctoral degrees awarded**, by field of doctorate

Legend:
- All S&E & Hlth fields
- Comp Sci
- Engg
- Life Sci
- Math
- Phys Sci
- Psych
- Soc Sci

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Women as a percentage of full-time tenured/tenure-track faculty, by field of doctorate

Legend:
- All S&E & Hlth fields
- Comp Sci
- Engg
- Life Sci
- Math
- Phys Sci
- Psych
- Soc Sci

X axis: Year (1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005, 2010)
Y axis: % women (0, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50)

Women as a percentage of full-time full professors by field of doctorate

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Common Beliefs

- We simply hire the best available faculty based on objective assessment of their accomplishments; the gender or ethnicity of the candidate doesn't matter

- If women behaved like men, they would succeed at the same rate

- Discrimination is only practiced (actively) by a small set of ignorant people

Common Perceptions

- The lack of women in leadership positions will fix itself over time

- Since many of the problems encountered by female faculty are minor, recent emphasis on remedies to improve the climate is an over-reaction

What the research shows...

- Unconscious gender-based assumptions and stereotypes are deeply embedded in the patterns of thinking of **both men and women**

- Women (and work performed by women) consistently receive lower evaluations than men (and work performed by men) by **both men and women** evaluators

- These cumulative disadvantages impede women's progress toward full participation in academia

Concepts that Search Committees Must Understand

- Lack of Critical Mass =>

- Gender Schemas =>

- Evaluation Bias =>

- Accumulation of Disadvantage

Lack of Critical Mass

- When women make up ≥30% of an applicant pool, individual women are judged more positively by evaluators

  Heilman & Stopeck. (1985). *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 70, 379-388

- When women make up ≥30% of a work group, their work is judged more positively by evaluators

  Heilman. (1980). *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance,* 26, 386-395

- When there are fewer women (or minorities), stereotypes (schemas) have more influence in evaluation

  Valian, V. (1998). Why so Slow? The Advancement of Women

What are Gender Schemas?

- Non-conscious hypotheses about sex differences that guide everyone's perceptions and behaviors

- Expectations or stereotypes that define "average" members of a group

  - Men are instrumental, task-oriented, competent

  - Women are nurturing, emotional, and care about relationships

- Schemas are necessary

- Both men and women have the same schemas

- Problems arise when schemas that define the aggregate, influence the evaluation of an individual's capability and their work: **Evaluation Bias**

Valian, 1998, *Why So Slow? The Advancement of Women*, MIT

Schemas in Action: Competency Bias

- "Blind" auditions can explain 30 to 55% of the increase in women winning orchestral jobs

Golden, C & Rouse, C. (2000). Orchestrating impartiality: The impact of "blind" auditions on female musicians. *American Economic Review* 90, 715-741

- University psychology professors prefer 2:1 to hire "Brian" over "Karen" even though the application packages are identical

Steinpreis, Anders & Ritzke (1999). *Sex Roles,* 41, 509

- Letters of recommendation for **women hired** at a large academic medical center **differ systematically** from those for **men hired**. They were shorter and used gender terms & stereotypic adjectives. They had more grindstone adjectives and fewer standout adjectives

Trix and Psenka (2003). *Discourse & Soc* 14:191 2003

Schemas in Action: Competency Bias

Swedish Postdoc study:

- 114 applications for prestigious research postdocs at the Swedish MRC (52 women; 46%)

- 4 of 20 (20%) went to women

The study: **Wenneras & Wold (1997). *Nature* 387, 341**

- Standardized objective metric developed based on publication record, research plan, etc. => **impact points**, to be compared with relative competence scores assigned by judges

Evaluation bias
Wenneras & Wold (1997) *Nature* 387, 341
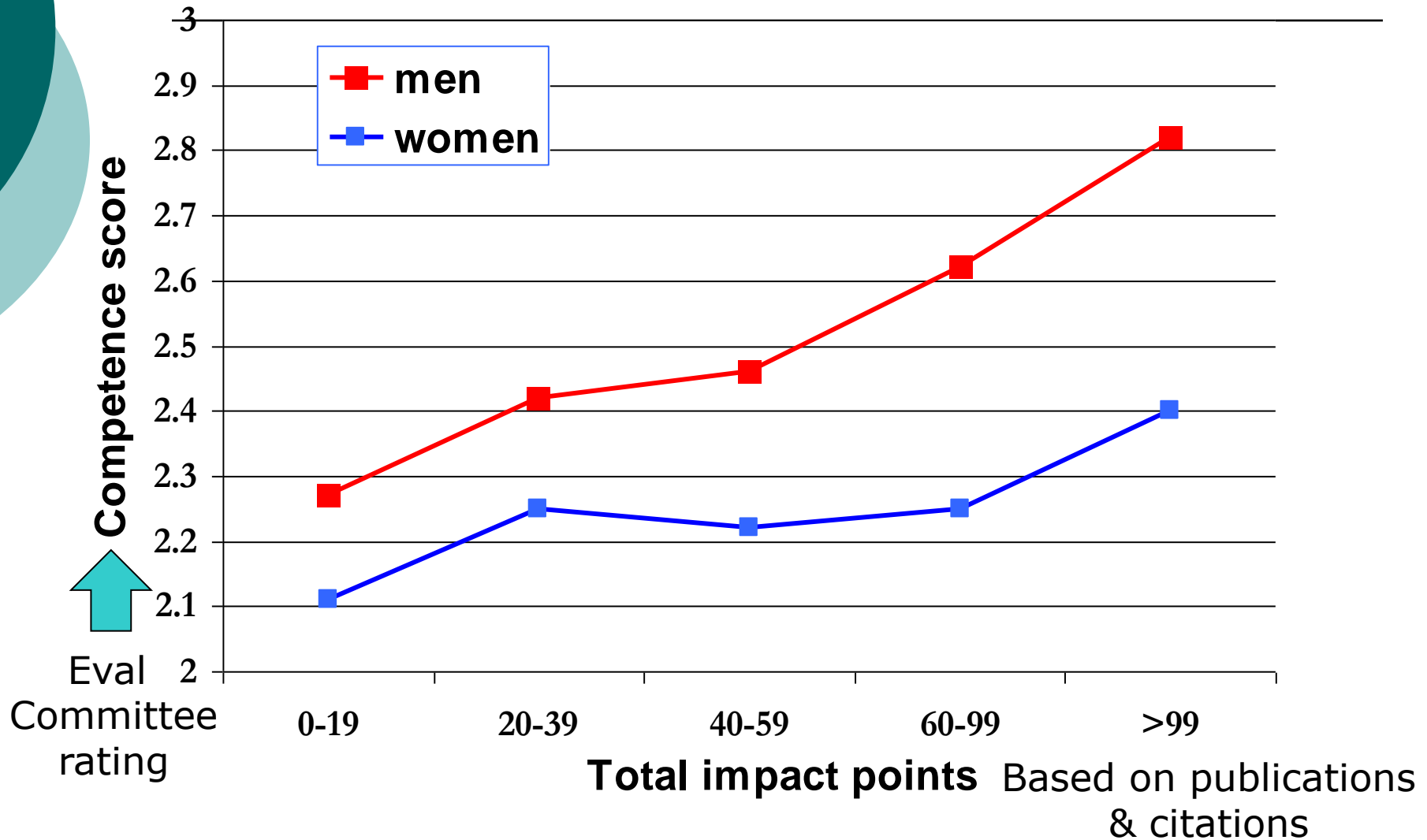
Which attributes to seek in a department head?

Commitment to and effectiveness in...

1. Reviewing the gender and ethnic composition of the department's faculty and students each year and charting progress towards diversifying the faculty over time.

2. Encouraging faculty members to increase their awareness of gender equity and diversity issues.

Which attributes to seek in a department head?

Commitment to and effectiveness in...

3. Articulating a clear stand on gender issues:

- Diversity enhances the value of any institution
- Increasing diversity does not mean sacrificing quality
- Society and universities need women who combine outstanding science and family life
- Unconscious biases and assumptions are universal and need to be countered in all evaluations of women and minorities
- Too few women faculty leads to feelings of isolation and marginalization
- Poor climate reduces productivity and creativity of both men and women and makes it difficult to attract and retain women faculty
- The climate experienced by women and minorities is different from that experienced by majority males; majority males are typically poor judges of the climate experienced by these faculty

Which attributes to seek in a department head?

Commitment to and effectiveness in…

4. Steering broad and inclusive faculty searches:

- Give a clear charge to the committee department's commitment to gender equity and diversity
- Hold the search committee accountable for having conducted fair, broad, and aggressive searches, requiring the use of instruments in the WISEST Faculty Search Toolkit.
- Conduct a post mortem review of each completed search

Which attributes to seek in a department head?

Commitment to and effectiveness in…

5. Advancing URM and women faculty:

- Nominate for awards other than those exclusively for women and URM

6. Annually charting gender equity in distribution of resources: salaries, space, student support, equipment, etc.

What Can Search Committees Do?

During the Search:

- Word the position description so that it conveys the College's commitment to excellence, equity & diversity

- Engage in **active recruiting** for a individuals who possess the aforementioned attributes. Function as a Search Committee, not a "Letter-Opening Committee".

How to actively recruit Head candidates who can lead in enhancing diversity.

- Contact colleagues at other institutions and specifically ask for individuals with the desired qualities.

- Look for individuals with a track record of activity in recruiting, sponsoring and promoting women and minorities in their department.

- Ask senior women in academia who were their sponsors and mentors

- Ask NSF ADVANCE programs for nominations of professors who have been active in their program.

What Can Search Committees Do?

When search is complete:

Search Committee Chairs debrief with administrators on the search process:

- What worked well

- What were the challenges

- What kind of support would have helped facilitate the committee's work

Our Message in Brief

- Heads have a major and direct impact (through hiring) on the diversity of future academia. This "**multiplier effect**" means the head search is vastly more important than individual faculty hires.
- Cannot assume that a URM/woman will necessarily possess the desired attributes with regard to diversity.
- Need not only commitment but effectiveness with regard to diversity.
- The usual scholarly and management criteria are obviously not supplanted by the above diversity considerations. A head must be respected by his/her colleagues as a leader in scholarship.

Thank you !

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