

The logo for the University of California, Irvine (UCI), consisting of the letters 'UCI' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The logo is centered within a white, multi-lobed starburst shape that has a soft blue gradient and is set against a solid blue background.

UCI

**Office of Inclusive Excellence
Research Brown Bags
“Researching Implicit Bias”**

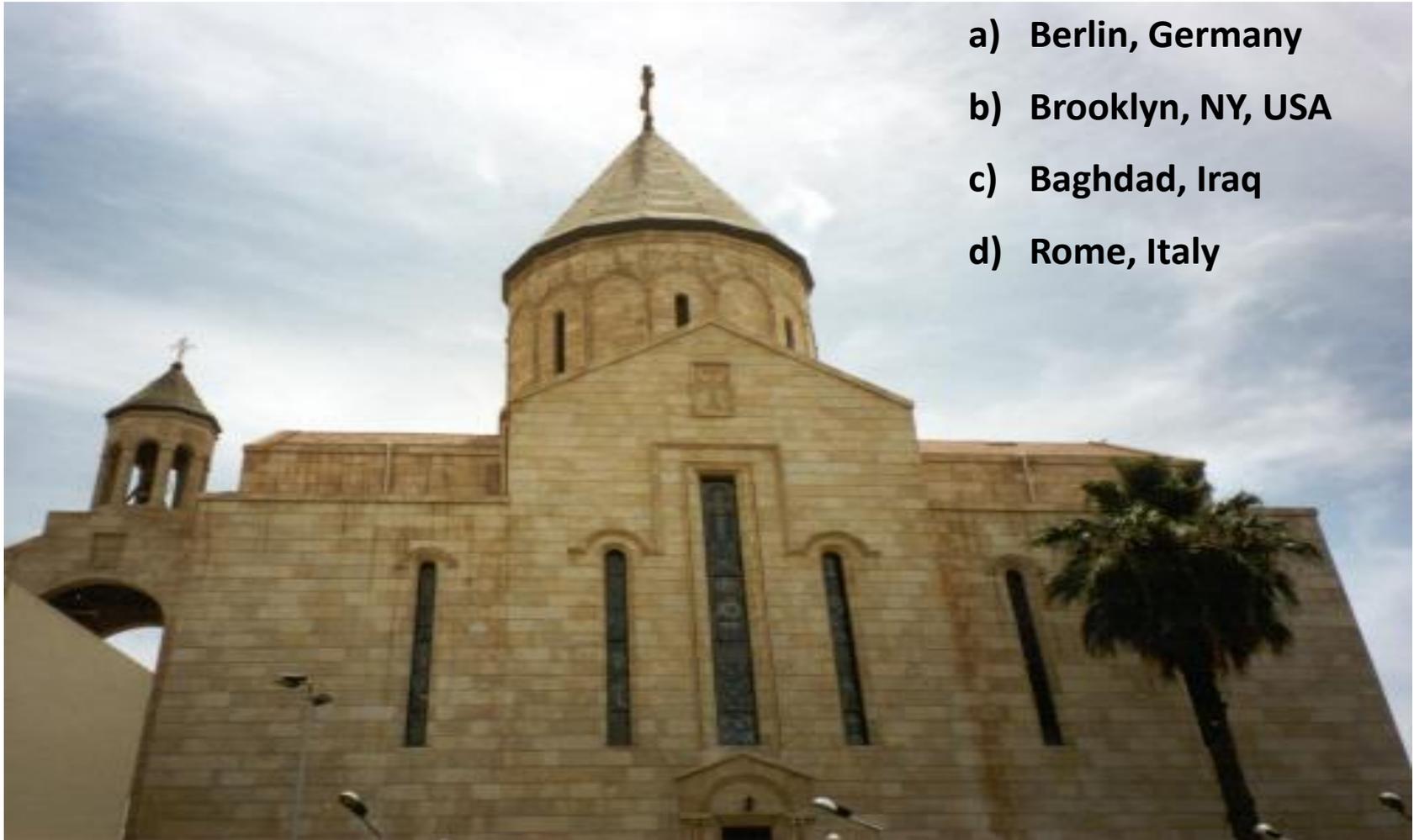
Overview

- **Bias** is a trained, learned, or innate tendency to disproportionately favor or oppose something, or to otherwise interpret things from a non-neutral viewpoint
- Bias stems from more “basic” brain processes that are used to help us make sense of the world around us
 - Recognizing patterns and creating shortcuts means we don’t have to thoroughly process every piece of information all the time
 - But these shortcuts can become problematic when we rely on them too much and don’t allow for exceptions or new information
- **Stereotypes** are templates of predetermined qualities or characteristics that are applied to members of a group

Where was this picture taken?

(The following slides contain an activity to demonstrate aspects of bias. Answers and explanations for this activity are included as notes in the downloadable PowerPoint version of this presentation.)

Where was this picture taken?



- a) Berlin, Germany
- b) Brooklyn, NY, USA
- c) Baghdad, Iraq
- d) Rome, Italy

Where was this picture taken?

a) Kabul, Afghanistan

b) Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

c) California, USA

d) Baghdad, Iraq



Where was this picture taken?



- a) **Baton Rouge, LA, USA**
- b) **Detroit, MI, USA**
- c) **Baghdad, Iraq**
- d) **Honolulu, HI, USA**

Where was this picture taken?

- a) Tokyo, Japan
- b) Paris, France
- c) Abuja, Nigeria
- d) Toronto, Canada



Where was this picture taken?



- a) Jackson, Mississippi
- b) Waco, Texas
- c) Los Angeles, California
- d) Spokane, Washington

Explicit and Implicit

- Explicit bias is bias that can be consciously recognized, expressed, and controlled
 - Measuring explicit bias can be difficult because it relies on self-reported data that could reflect socially desirable responses rather than actual attitudes
- Implicit bias occurs without conscious awareness
 - Based on associations created from past experiences
 - Can occur and persist even when there is no indication of explicit bias
 - Measuring implicit bias can be difficult because we need to be certain the test is **valid** and not measuring something other than bias (like reaction speed)

Measuring Implicit Bias

- Implicit Association Test (IAT)
 - One of the most famous measures for implicit bias
 - [Demonstration](#)
 - Does it actually measure implicit bias, or just the ability to make unconscious associations between concepts?
 - Does that difference matter?
 - Several versions exist, as well as related tests with slightly different methods
 - E.g., the Go/No-Go Association Test (GNAT), which can focus on a single target category instead of creating a comparison between target categories

Measuring Implicit Bias

- Stereotypic explanatory bias (SEB) tests attempt to measure a combination of implicit and explicit representations of bias
- Sentence completion test
 - Pair stereotypic names with stereotypically congruent or incongruent behaviors
 - Bias is measured by the type of explanation used to complete the sentence:
 - “Lakisha scored high on the SAT because she took a lot of preparation courses.”
 - “Deborah scored high on the SAT because she is smart.”

Measuring Implicit Bias

- Résumé studies
 - Identical resumé listing the same experience, background, skills, etc.
 - The only difference (experimental manipulation) between the resumé was the listed name
 - Resumé with “Black-sounding” names had to be sent 1.5x as often as resumé with “White-sounding” names in order to receive the same number of requests for follow-ups
 - Despite being otherwise identical, just the “Black-sounding” name was enough to trigger implicit biases that caused the candidates to be viewed less favorably

Measuring Implicit Bias

- Résumé studies (continued)
 - Identical student applications listing the same experience, background, skills, etc.
 - The only difference (experimental manipulation) between the student applications was the listed name
 - Applications with male names were rated more competent and more likely to be hired than applications with female names
 - Male names also received a higher starting salary and more offers for mentorship
 - This was true for both men and women faculty members who were rating the applications
 - Just the implication of being a woman triggered implicit biases that influence or override the given information

Measuring Implicit Bias

- Stereotypes can be learned at an early age, often through socialization or other cues received from the environment (manifesting as bias later)
- At 9 years old, girls show a gendered association for boys and math (but not girls and math)
 - This association predicts attitudes about math, beliefs in ability, and performance on the SAT later in life
- Studies of 4-to-8-year-old children showed that both Black and White children thought lighter skin color was more preferable
 - However, this effect appears to have shifted over time, from the original study in the 1940s, to a follow-up in 1970, and most recently in 2017 showing more in-group preference and positive self-concept

Countering Implicit Bias

- Unfortunately, most evidence shows implicit bias can only be treated or reduced temporarily
 - Exceptions exist within long-term educational and training programs (e.g., the OIE Certificate Program)
 - Raising awareness of bias still helps, but it mostly relies on the individual to notice and respond appropriately
- Masking demographic information that could be used for bias or stereotyping (e.g., in recruitment)
- Training is still in its infancy to determine the most effective solutions
 - Viable solutions include counterstereotyping, empathy and perspective-taking, education, and explicit rejection

Recommended Reading

- Greenwald & Banaji (1995). Implicit social cognition: Attitudes, self-esteem, and stereotypes. *Psychological Review*, 102(1), 4-27.
- Greenwald et al. (1998). Measuring individual differences in implicit cognition: The implicit association test. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74(6), 1464-1480.
- Sekaquaptewa et al. (2003). Stereotypic explanatory bias: Implicit stereotyping as a predictor of discrimination. *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 39, 75-82.
- Bertrand & Mullainathan (2004). Are Emily and Greg more employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A field experiment on labor market discrimination. *The American Economic Review*, 94(4), 991-1013.
- Moss-Racusin et al. (2012). Science faculty's subtle gender biases favor male students. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 109(41), 16474-16479.
- Nosek et al. (2002). Math = male, me = female, therefore math \neq me. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83(1), 44-59.
- Hraba & Grant (1970). Black is beautiful: A reexamination of racial preference and identification. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 16(3), 398-402.