

Invisible Women, Exposing Data Bias in a World Designed for Men

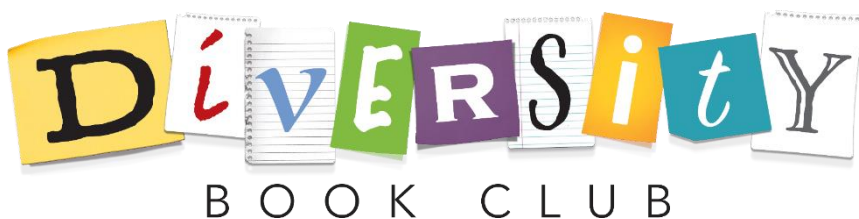
Preface, Parts 1 (Chapters 1-2) & 2 (Chapters 3-6)

By Caroline Criado Perez

&

Breaking the Barriers, Women's Retention and Progression in the Chemical Sciences

A report by the Royal Society of Chemistry



DISCUSSION BOOKLET 1

*"Representation of the world, like the world itself, is the work of men; they describe it from their own point of view,
which they confuse with absolute truth"*

Simone de Beauvoir

Acknowledgments

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Icebreaker – “Desert Island”

For this task come up a book, a music album and a fictional character you would take with you if you were exiled to a desert island. You will need to explain your choices to the group.

Book –
Album –
Fictional Character –

Thinking back - What challenged/surprised you from the chapters?

This could be something pertinent or something that really grabbed your attention and made you think twice

Discussion

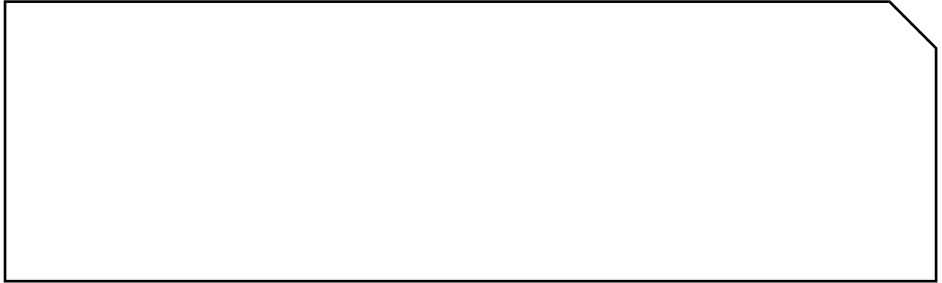
What is the “gender data gap”? Why does Criado Perez stress it is the gender data gap not the sex data gap?

Re-read the Preface

What is “male universality” (P. 22) aka “the default male” and how is this a privileged position?

How does this link to the professor at Georgetown who named their course “White Male Writers”? (P. 12) Why is it important that language allows gender to be marked? (P. 5-7)

How has our teaching of history influenced this narrative? (P. 16-21)



“what is essential goes without saying because it comes without saying: the tradition is silent, not least about itself as a tradition”

Pierre Bourdieu page 23

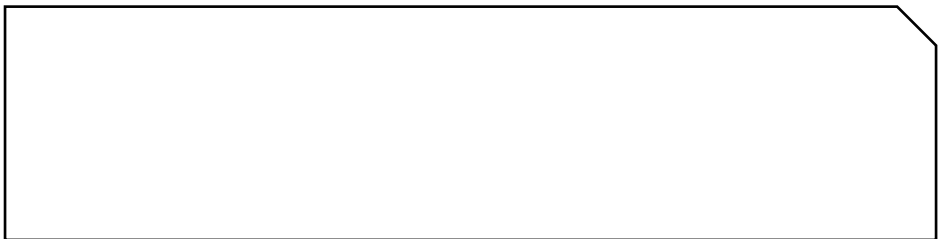
“Whiteness and maleness are silent precisely because they do not need to be vocalised. Whiteness and maleness are implicit. They are unquestioned. They are default.”

Page 23

Carol Azumah Denis offers an interesting discussion on the “unmarked scholar”, a concept often aligned with white male universality in relation to education and scholarship that some members may find useful.¹

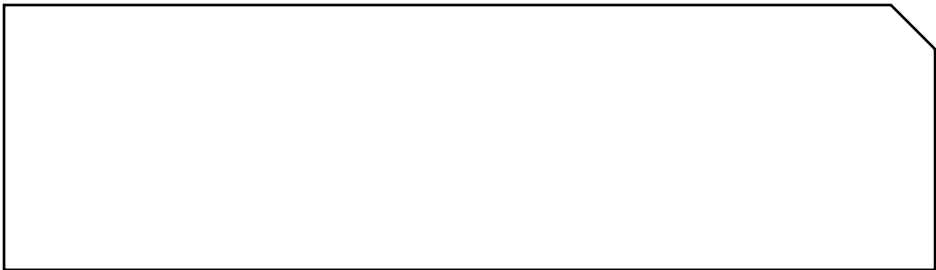
How does snow-clearing become a gendered issue (P. 29-35) & how does this link to unpaid work?

What does this show us about the need to dis-aggregate data by gender?




Are gender-neutral or gender-blind solutions the answer?

Think about the gender-neutral toilet solution at the Barbican (P. 47-52) and the gender-blind policies of US universities in the early 2000s (P. 83-85) - who did these actions actually benefit? How does this link to supporting transgender and non-binary people?



What is the “myth of meritocracy”?

In what ways does unpaid labour link to the “myth of meritocracy”?



“Ever-growing empirical evidence documents a gender bias against women and their research—and favoring men—in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. Our research examined how receptive the scientific and public communities are to experimental evidence demonstrating this gender bias, which may contribute to women’s underrepresentation within STEM. Results from our three experiments, using general-public and university faculty samples, demonstrated that men evaluate the quality of research unveiling this bias as less meritorious than do women. These findings may inform and fuel self-correction efforts within STEM to reduce gender bias, bolster objectivity and diversity in STEM workforces, and enhance discovery, education, and achievement.”

Handley et al.²

Reflecting & Application

What places/locations, highlighted by Criado Perez, are areas women feel unsafe?

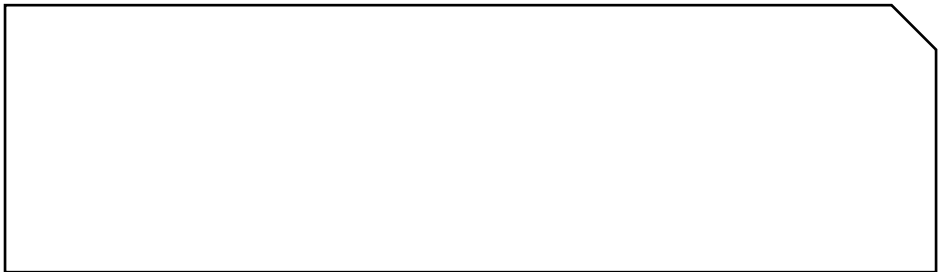
“But defecating in the open isn’t really much safer for women: there is a real danger of sexual assault from men who lurk near and on the routes to areas which are known to be used by women when they need to relieve themselves.”

Page 50

“In 2017 a Danish woman ... reported a man who was sexually harassing her on a London bus. After asking what she expected him to do, the bus driver commented, ‘You’re a pretty girl, what do you expect?’”

Page 58

Where do women feel unsafe on campus? It may be worthwhile for male participants to juxtapose their answers to where they feel safe as men on campus.



Health & Safety is a big part of work life – thinking about PPE, does this work for women?

Consider “The Henry Higgins Effect” Chapter. From lab coats to face masks, do these fit women properly and function as they should?



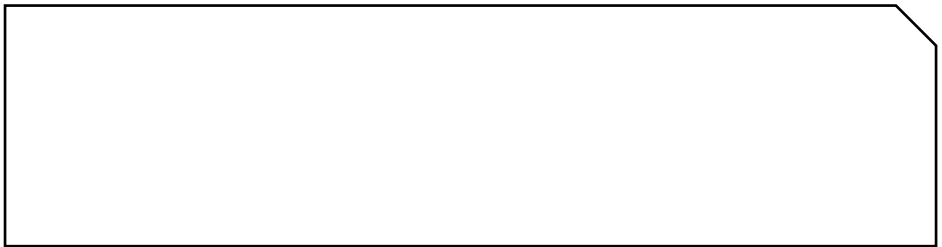
What positive steps can we take towards our campus, PPE, students and colleagues that would help make environments safer for women?

Few women are willing to talk about something they may well be blamed for “encouraging”?
Page 50

Victim blaming and dismissive attitudes continue to put women at risk – not the women’s actions. Women are often blamed for the violence, unsafe actions or unsafe environments perpetrated against them.



Additional Notes;



References;

- (1) Dennis, C. A. Decolonising Education: A Pedagogic Intervention. In *Decolonising the University*; 2018; pp 190–207.
- (2) Handley, I. M.; Brown, E. R.; Moss-Racusin, C. A.; Smith, J. L. Quality of Evidence Revealing Subtle Gender Biases in Science Is in the Eye of the Beholder. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.* **2015**, 112 (43), 13201–13206.