



## Incorporating Race into Gender Equity Initiatives

24th Annual Winter Roundtable on Cultural Psychology and Education  
February, 2007

University of Rhode Island

- Ashima Singh, M.A. [asingh@mail.uri.edu](mailto:asingh@mail.uri.edu)
- Barbara Silver, Ph.D. [silver@uri.edu](mailto:silver@uri.edu)
- Kathryn Quina, Ph.D. [kquina@uri.edu](mailto:kquina@uri.edu)

[www.uri.edu/advance](http://www.uri.edu/advance)

Supported in part by National Science Foundation Institutional Transformation Award SBE-0245039

## Why are we still here?

- Joyce Ladner, 1971:
  - Social science is inherently biased and practices *neo-colonialism*: the oppressors are unable to understand the reality of the oppressed
- Bonnie Thornton Dill, 1979:
  - Challenges *essentialism* of feminism, and the tendency of white women to generalize from that of white, Western women to all women
- Patricia Hill Collins, 1992 and others
  - Intersection of identities (race, class, gender, etc.) combine to form a "matrix of domination"
  - *Standpoint theory* – all knowledge is situated and is relative to a person's particular standpoint

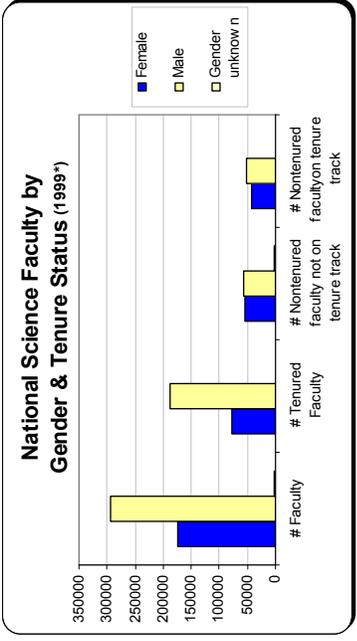
2

## Overview

1. Equity programming in the sciences
  - Why is it needed?
  - Why is it focused on gender?
2. Implications
  - What do we know based on gender research?
  - What could we know with disaggregated data?
3. Solutions and counterbalancing strategies.

3

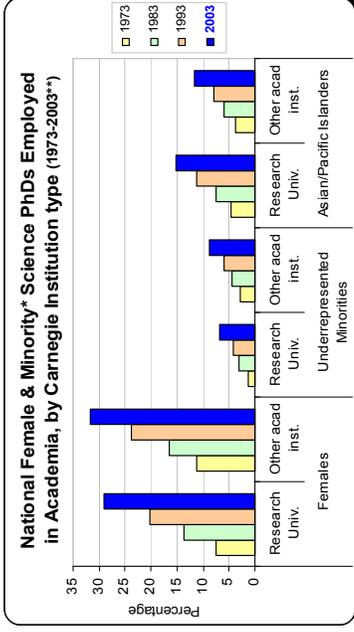
## The State of the (Science) Nation



\* Most recent National-Level data available for stated variables.

4

## Status of “Females & Minorities”



\* Categories as defined by the National Science Foundation (NSF)

\*\* Most recent National-Level data available for stated variables.

5

## Current Strategies for Addressing Inequities in Science

1. Infuse underrepresented groups into the sciences at all levels, faculty & students. (Used widely by many, including NSF)
2. Reconstruct the social sphere of science (Keller, 1985; Harding, 1998)
3. The process of doing one could potentially lead to the other, but such effects are yet unknown (e.g. Bratton, 2002; Turner, 2003).

6

## Possible Sources of Inequity

- A 3-level approach [based on Mederer's (in progress) framing of Risman (1998)]
  - Individual (bottom-up efforts)
    - Personal acknowledgment of the importance of diversity, individual endorsements of diversity policies, mentoring, support groups, workshops
  - Institutional (top-down efforts)
    - Meaningful support for a true diversity agenda (Chang, 2002), institutional policies, official recruitment & retention plans, etc.
  - Interactional
    - Subtle interpersonal dynamics → Tokenism, Fundamental attribution error, exclusion, Discrimination & Harassment, “neo-colonialism” effects, etc.

7

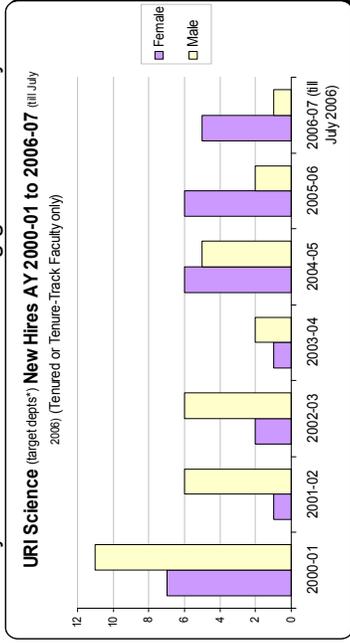
## “Gender”-reductionism... Why?

- Small numbers diminish importance
- Assumption of additive effects
- Stereotype complexity (Deaux & Lewis, 1984; Devine & Baker, 1991; Fiske, 2004)
  - Easier to focus on what you know
  - Easier to focus on what you are aware of
  - Easier to focus on easier groups

8

## Implications for Focus on Gender

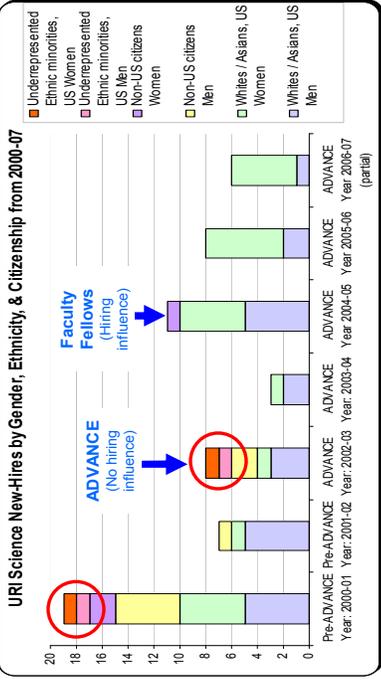
Very successful with increasing gender diversity



\* Intervention targets included some science, technology, engineering, and math departments

9

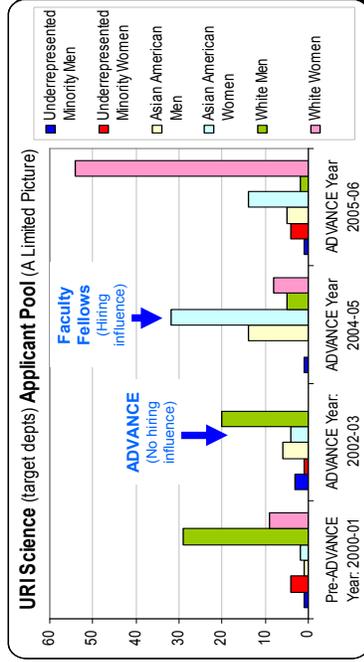
## Less so with racial/ethnic diversity



10

## What did the applicant pools look like?

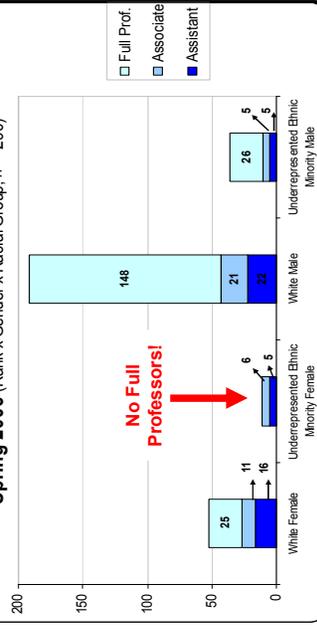
(Limited information available)



11

## Current State of URI

URI Science (target depts) Faculty Composition as of Spring 2006 (Rank x Gender x Racial Group, n = 290)



12

## URI “Climate Survey” of 2003-04

- Governed by a funding mandate from an NSF-ADVANCE IT grant
  - Goal to increase the representation and advancement of women in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) academic careers.
- Administered across campus, including non-science, non-target departments
- To establish a campus climate “baseline”

13

## Climate Survey Design & Results

- 12 pages long
- Designed with “gender” as the focus of inquiry (because of funding mandate)
- Results illustrated that institutional experiences amongst faculty are indeed gendered.
- But, what if both race & gender had been the focus of inquiry?

14

## Race x Gender: Time @ Institution

### Climate Survey Report    Race x Gender Analyses

Respondents (**all**) had been at URI for avg 16.67 yrs (*ns*):

♀ = avg. 11.95 yrs  
 ♂ = avg. 19.96 yrs

White ♀ (90) = 12.43 yrs

non-White ♀ (21) = 11.90 yrs

White ♂ (116) = 20.66 yrs

non-White ♂ (25) = 19.64 yrs

15

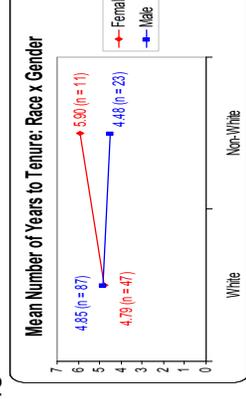
## Race x Gender: Time to Tenure

### Climate Survey Report    Race x Gender Analyses

Overall, it took survey respondents an average of **4.79 yrs** to receive tenure (*ns*):

♀ = 5.00 yrs

♂ = 4.77 yrs



16

## Race x Gender: Sexism

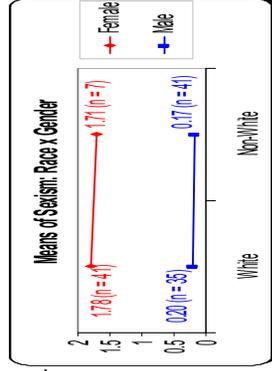
### Climate Survey Report      Race x Gender Analyses

Respondents were asked to indicate job-related discrimination perceived or experienced in past 2-5 yrs.

♀ (66%) = 3.4 incidents\*

♂ (31%) = 1.84 incidents

\* Statistically significant



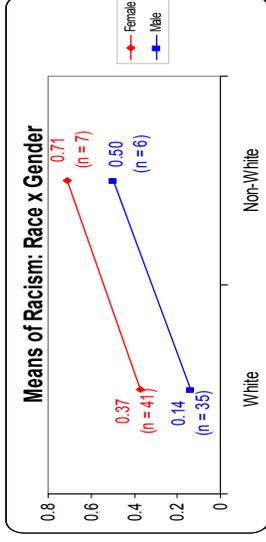
17

## Race x Gender: Racism

### Climate Survey Report      Race x Gender Analyses

Racism not analyzed

Not significant, but...



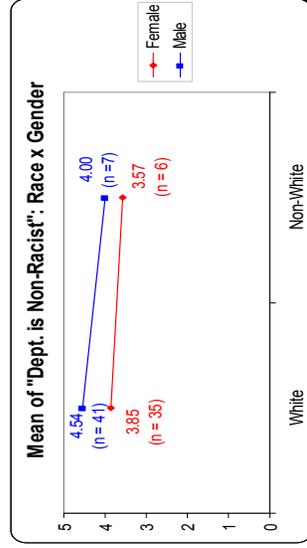
18

## Race x Gender: Dept. is Non-Racist

### Climate Survey Report      Race x Gender Analyses

Not analyzed

Not significant, but...



19

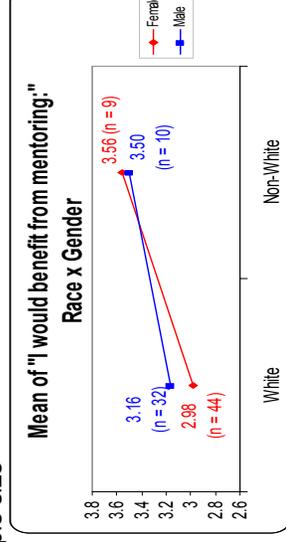
## Race x Gender: "I would benefit from mentoring"

### Climate Survey Report      Race x Gender Analyses

Not analyzed: Small

sample size

Not significant, but...

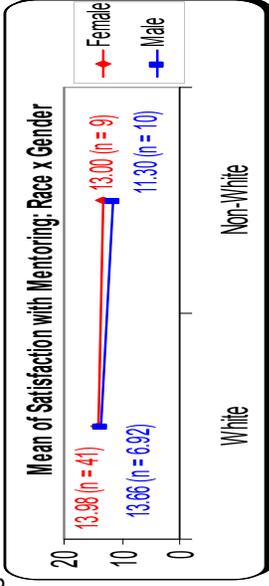


20

## Race x Gender: Satisfaction with Mentoring

### Climate Survey Report    Race x Gender Analyses

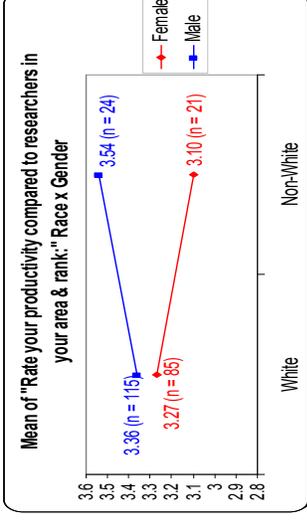
Not analyzed: Small sample size  
Not significant, but...



21

## Race x Gender: Productivity

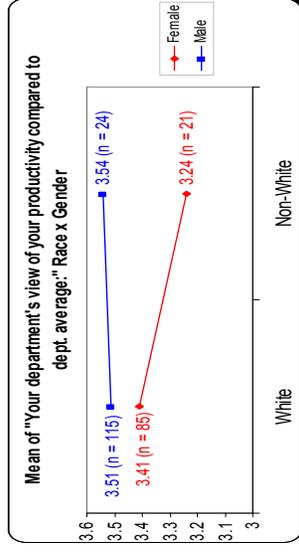
Rate your productivity compared to researchers in your area & rank (*ns*)



22

## Race x Gender: Productivity

Rate your department's view of your productivity compared to the department average (*ns*)



23

## Data Implications

- Limited knowledge of how non-gender variables construct institutional experiences
  - Findings not statistically significant, but indicative of trends
  - Women of color may experience unique patterns of oppression
    - Corroborated by an independent group's interviews with faculty of color
- Dilemma: How to "do it all" in research?

24

## Solutions: Looking at Ourselves

---

- Remember *standpoint theory*: situated knowledge shapes action and focus of inquiry
  - Beware of “*whitewashing*” issues, assuming that what works for majority members, works for all
  - Take responsibility for promoting unseen agendas
  - Critical self-inquiry
- *Personal responsibility*
  - Research
  - Interventions
  - Education
  - Hearing / Giving voice

25

## Solutions: Changing Ourselves

---

- Engage in self-critical inquiry
  - Leadership, buy-in, and follow-up are essential (Jones-Hudson, 2003).
- Devote time & resources for examination through alternate lenses
- Celebrate successes and learn from unsuccessful efforts

26

## Solutions: Gathering the Data

---

- Go beyond aggregate data
- Utilize multi-method research designs
  - Qualitative as well as quantitative data
  - Involve all stakeholders in design
  - Seek to discover missed agendas
  - Small sample sizes may lead to statistical non-significance, but does that imply practical insignificance?

27

## Solutions: Changing the Culture

---

- Target change at the interactional level, by promoting:
  - knowledge and skills at the individual level
  - policies and procedures at the institutional level
- Appreciative Inquiry (Mohr & Watkins, 2002; <http://autocrat.uri.edu/2091.html>)
  - Envision an excellent department
  - Agree on its characteristics through dialogue about exceptional career experiences
  - Recognize the commonality of vision
  - Recognize the needs of women, minorities, all underrepresented members, including junior faculty in general
  - Agree on action plan together

28

## Solutions: Changing Institutions

- Recognize & reward efforts (not just successes)
- Take responsibility
  - Policy formation, support for Affirmative Action (Eberhardt & Fiske, 1998)
  - Leadership: delegate “diversity” work to non-minorities, course release, formal recognition of service contributions, etc.
- Translate success (external validity) to reach all demographic sectors (i.e., sexual minorities, persons with a disability, etc.)

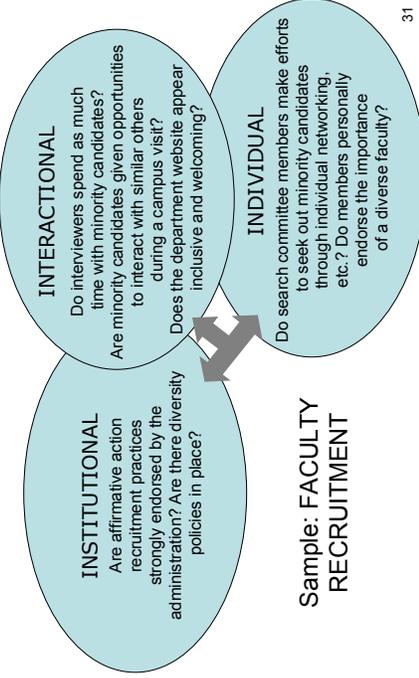
29

## Solutions: Changing Community

- Respond to concerns and challenges from community members
- Identify supportive groups and organizations in the community
- Participate in community change to create a better home environment for faculty women of color (and all)
- Promote the scholarly and economic benefits that multiple perspectives bring

30

## Solutions: Keeping our I’s Open



31

## References

- Bratton, K. A. (2002). The effect of legislative diversity on agenda setting: Evidence from six state legislatures. *American Politics Research*, 30, 115-142.
- Chang, M. (2002). Preservation or transformation: Where's the real educational discourse on diversity? *The Review of Higher Education*, 25(2), p. 125-140.
- Collins, L. H., Christer, J. C., & Quina, K. (1998). *Career strategies for women in academe: Arming Athena*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Deaux, K., & Lewis, L. L. (1984). Structure of gender stereotypes: Interrelations among components and gender label. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 46, 991-1004.
- Devine, P. G., & Baker, S. M. (1991). Measurement of racial stereotype subtyping. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 17, 44-50.
- Dill, B. T. (1979). The dialectics of Black womanhood. *Signs*, 4(3), 543-555.
- Eberhardt, J. L., & Fiske, S. T. (1998). Affirmative action in theory and practice: Issues of power, ambiguity, and gender versus race. In D. L. Anselmi & A. L. Law (Eds.), *Questions of Gender* (pp. 629-41). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

32

## References

- Fiske, S. T. (2004). *Social beings: Core motives in social psychology*. New York: Wiley.
- Harding, S. (1998). *Is science multicultural? Postcolonialisms, feminisms, and epistemologies*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Hill Collins, P., & Andersen, M. (1992). *Race, Class, & Gender: An Anthology*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.
- Jones-Hudson, V. (2003). Building a multicultural community: One department's transformation. In P. Bronstein & K. Quina (Eds.), *Teaching Gender and Multicultural Awareness*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Keller, E. F. (1985). *Reflections on gender and science*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Ladner, J. (1971) *Tomorrow's tomorrow: The black woman*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday

33

## References

- Mederer, H. (in development). *Promoting Organizational Change: The Interactional Level of Analysis* (working title)
- Mohr, B. J., & Watkins, J. M. (2002). *The essentials of appreciative inquiry: A roadmap for creative positive futures*. Waltham, MA: Pegasus Communications, Inc..
- Risman, B. J. (1998). *Gender vertigo: American families in transition*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Turner, C. S. (2003). Incorporation and marginalization in the academy: From border toward center for faculty of color? *Journal of Black Studies*, 34(1), 112-125.



With gratitude to the NSF-ADVANCE IT  
Award SBE-0245039 for supporting this work.

34