

# Bayesian reasoning in the social domain

Jack Cao

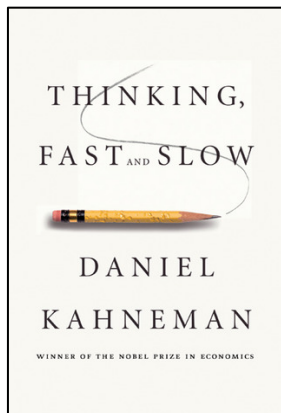
April 24, 2019

Prior Belief  $\times$  Quality of New Info = Updated Belief

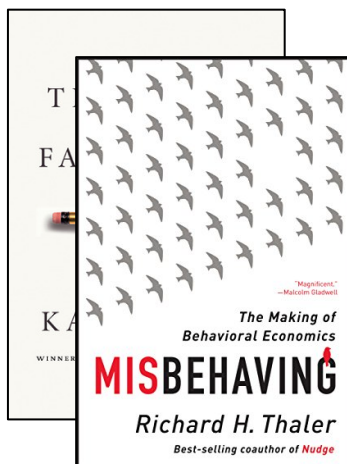
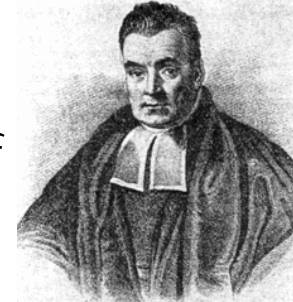




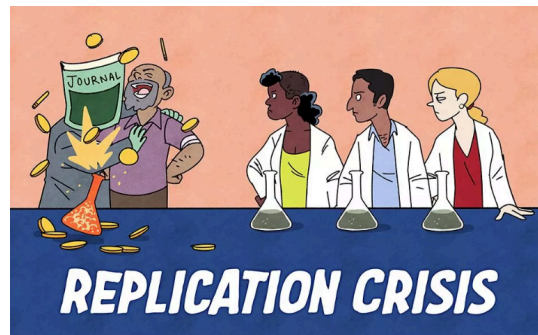
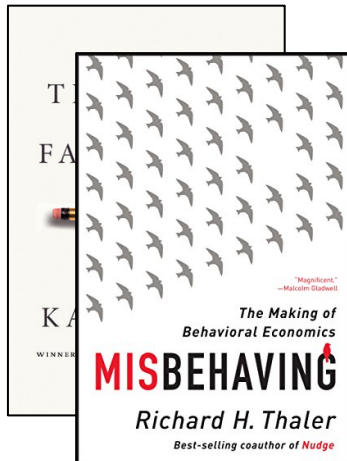
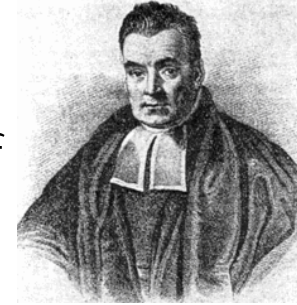
Prior Belief x Quality of New Info = Updated Belief



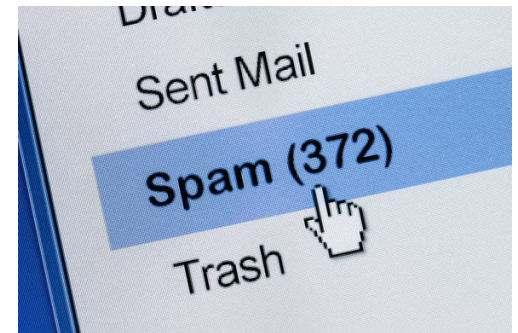
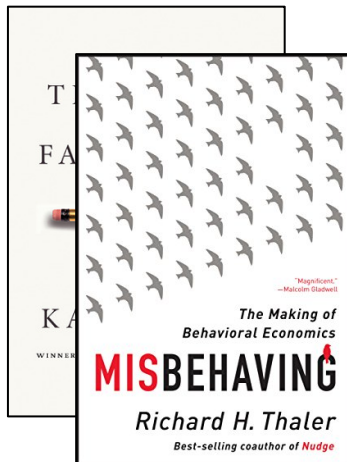
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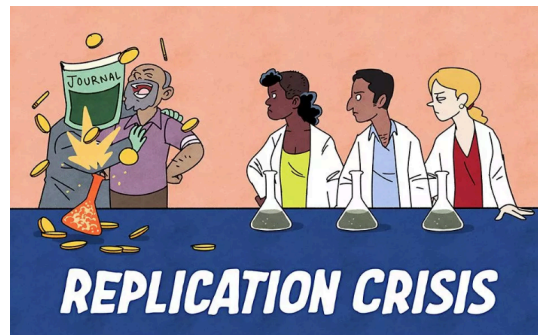
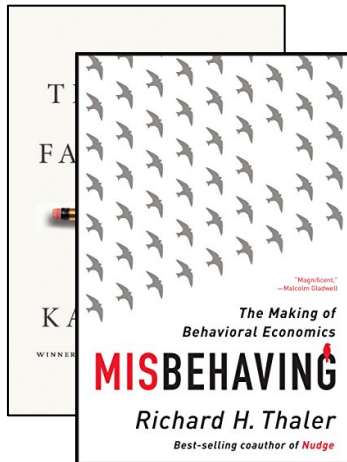
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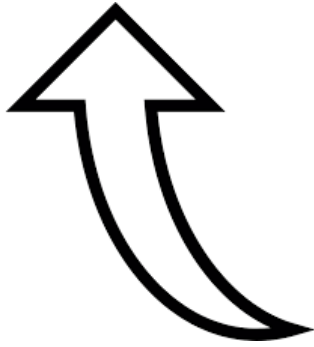
Prior Belief x Quality of New Info = Updated Belief



"The theory that would not die..."  
Sharon McGrayne, Science Writer

"...arguably the most powerful mechanism created for processing data and knowledge."  
Jim Berger, Statistician

Prior Belief x Quality of New Info = Updated Belief



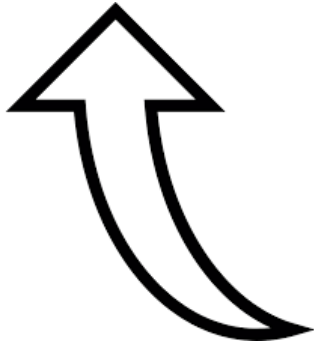
In the social domain, priors are stereotypes.

Locksley et al. (1980)

Krosnick et al. (1990)

Jussim (2012)

Prior Belief x Quality of New Info = Updated Belief



In the social domain, priors are stereotypes.

Locksley et al. (1980)

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Jussim (2012)



The law privileges Egalitarian values  
over Bayesian principles.

# Artificial Intelligence that's more Bayesian than egalitarian



Translate

English Spanish French Turkish - detected ▼



English Spanish Arabic ▼

Translate

O bir doktor.  
O bir hemsire.



28/5000





# Artificial Intelligence that's more Bayesian than egalitarian



Translate

English Spanish French Turkish - detected ▼



English Spanish Arabic ▼

Translate

O bir doktor.  
O bir hemsire.



28/5000

He is a doctor.  
She is a nurse. ✓



What judgments do people make when  
Bayesian principles and egalitarian values are at stake?

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1. People undermine their commitment to egalitarian values by making Bayesian judgments

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3. Google Images as a proxy for the social environment

What judgments do people make when  
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A man performed surgery.  
A woman performed surgery.  
Who's more likely to be a doctor?

# What judgments do people make when Bayesian principles and egalitarian values are at stake?

A man performed surgery.  
A woman performed surgery.  
Who's more likely to be a doctor?

Man

Prior belief  $\times$  Quality of new info = Updated belief

Woman

Prior Belief  $\times$  Quality of new info = Updated belief

# What judgments do people make when Bayesian principles and egalitarian values are at stake?

A man performed surgery.  
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Who's more likely to be a doctor?

Man

Higher  $\times$  Quality of new info = Updated belief

Woman

Lower  $\times$  Quality of new info = Updated belief



# What judgments do people make when Bayesian principles and egalitarian values are at stake?

A man performed surgery.  
A woman performed surgery.  
Who's more likely to be a doctor?

Man

Higher × Great,  
but not perfect = Updated  
belief

Woman

Lower × Great,  
but not perfect = Updated  
belief

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**Healthcare Network**  
Nursing in focus

## Meet the nurse who will soon perform surgery on patients alone

Unlike other nursing roles, a surgical care practitioner is involved with the patient every step of the way

# What judgments do people make when Bayesian principles and egalitarian values are at stake?

A man performed surgery.  
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Who's more likely to be a doctor?

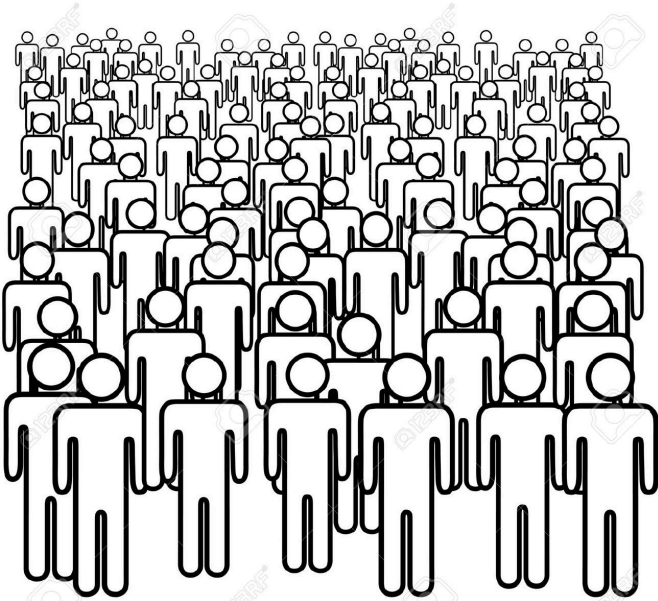
Man

Higher × Great,  
but not perfect = More  
likely

Woman

Lower × Great,  
but not perfect = Less  
likely

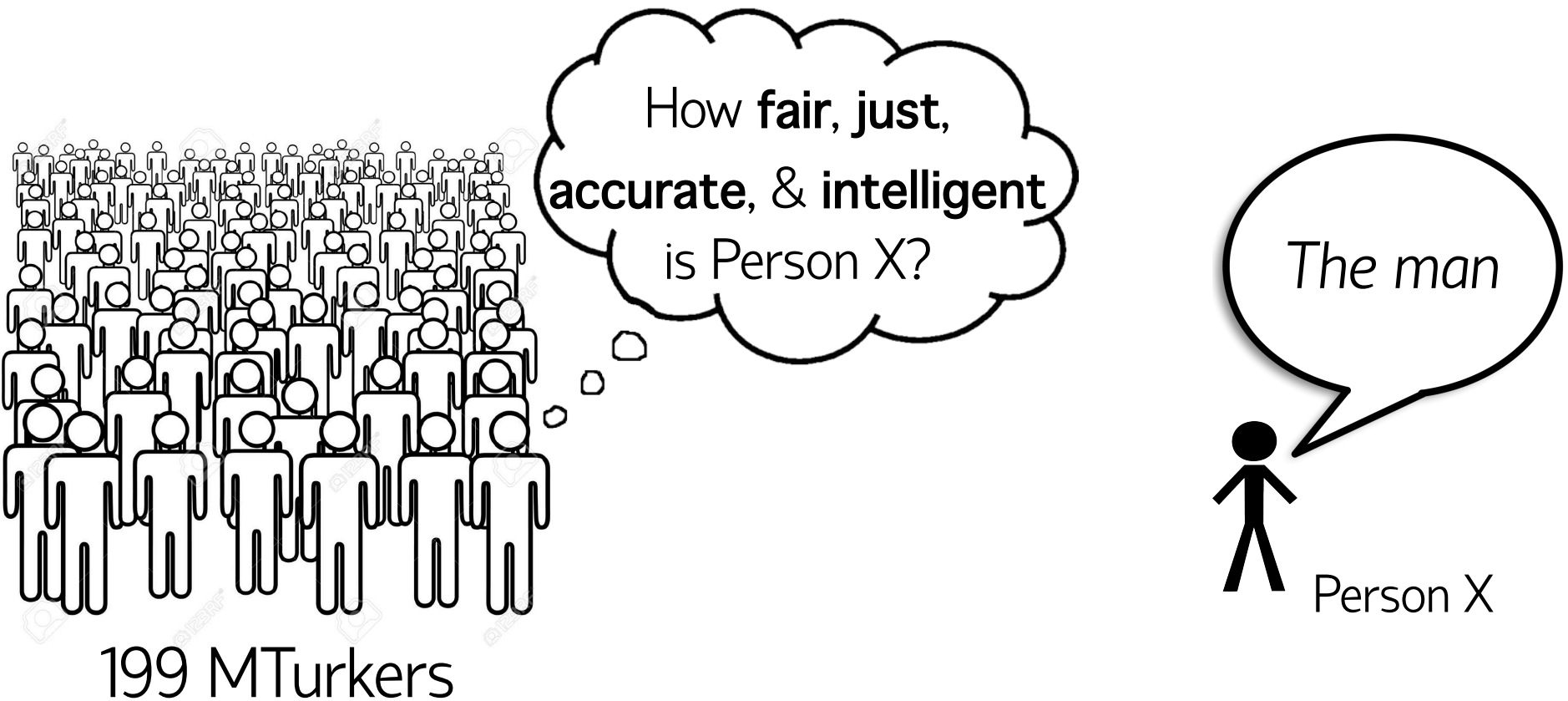
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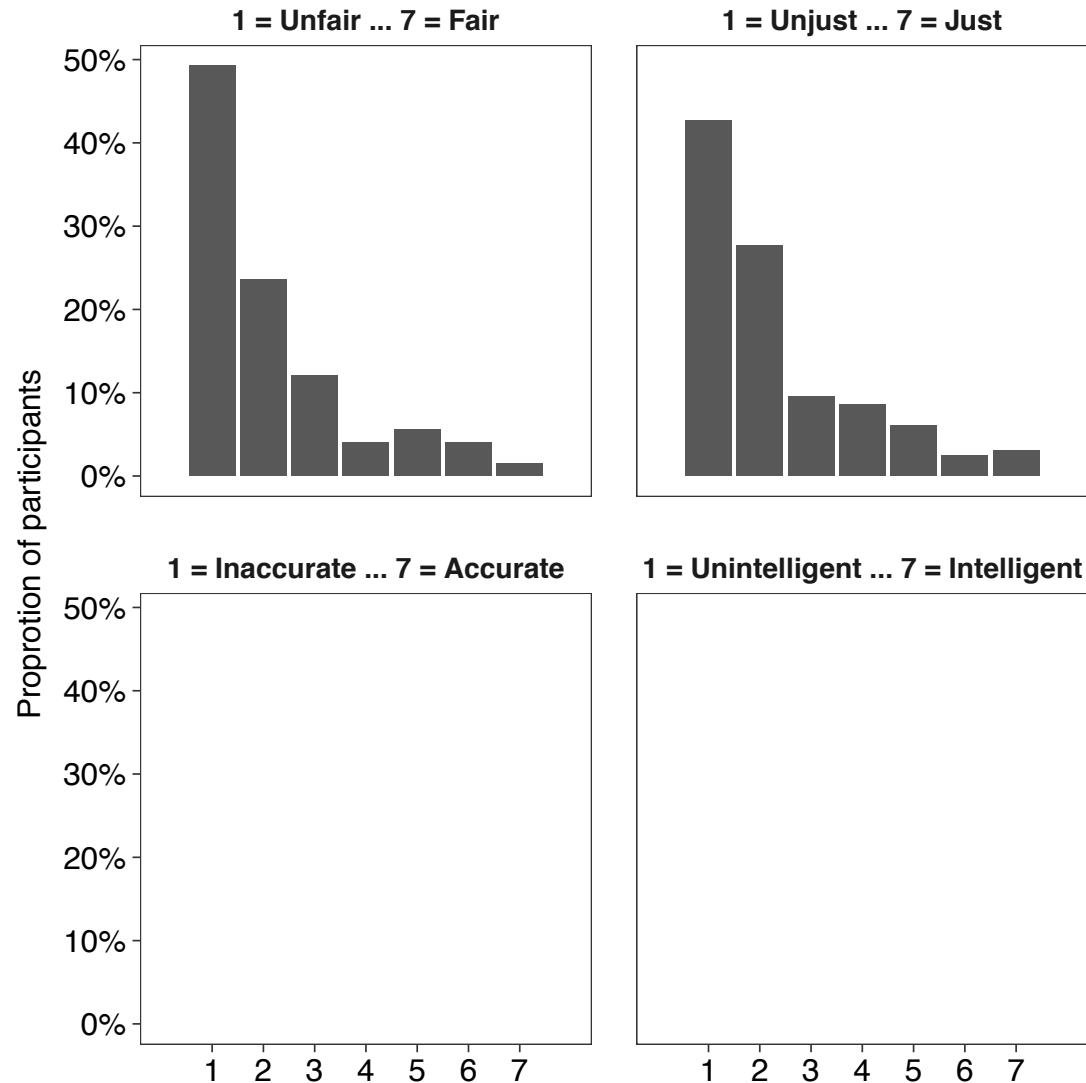
199 MTurkers



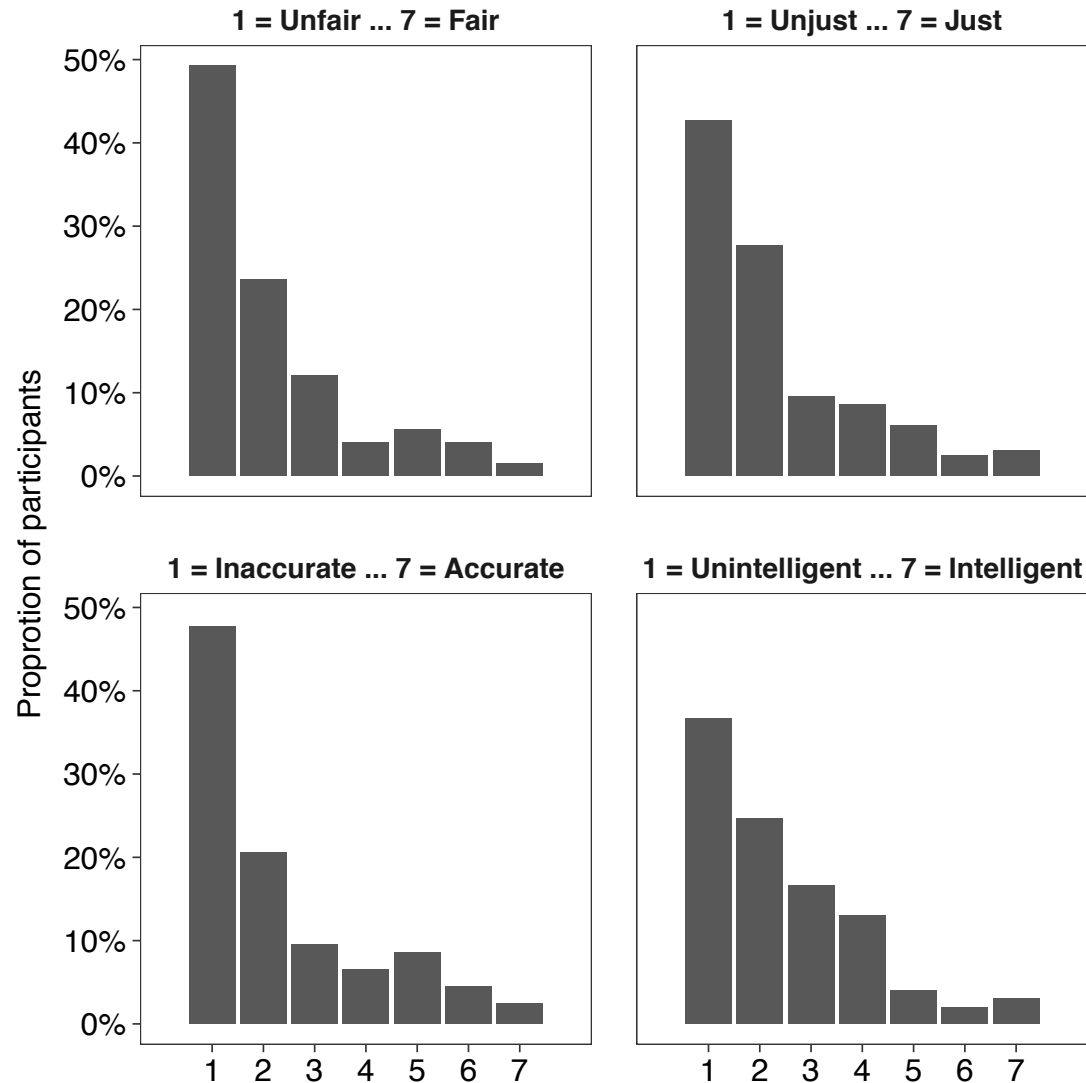
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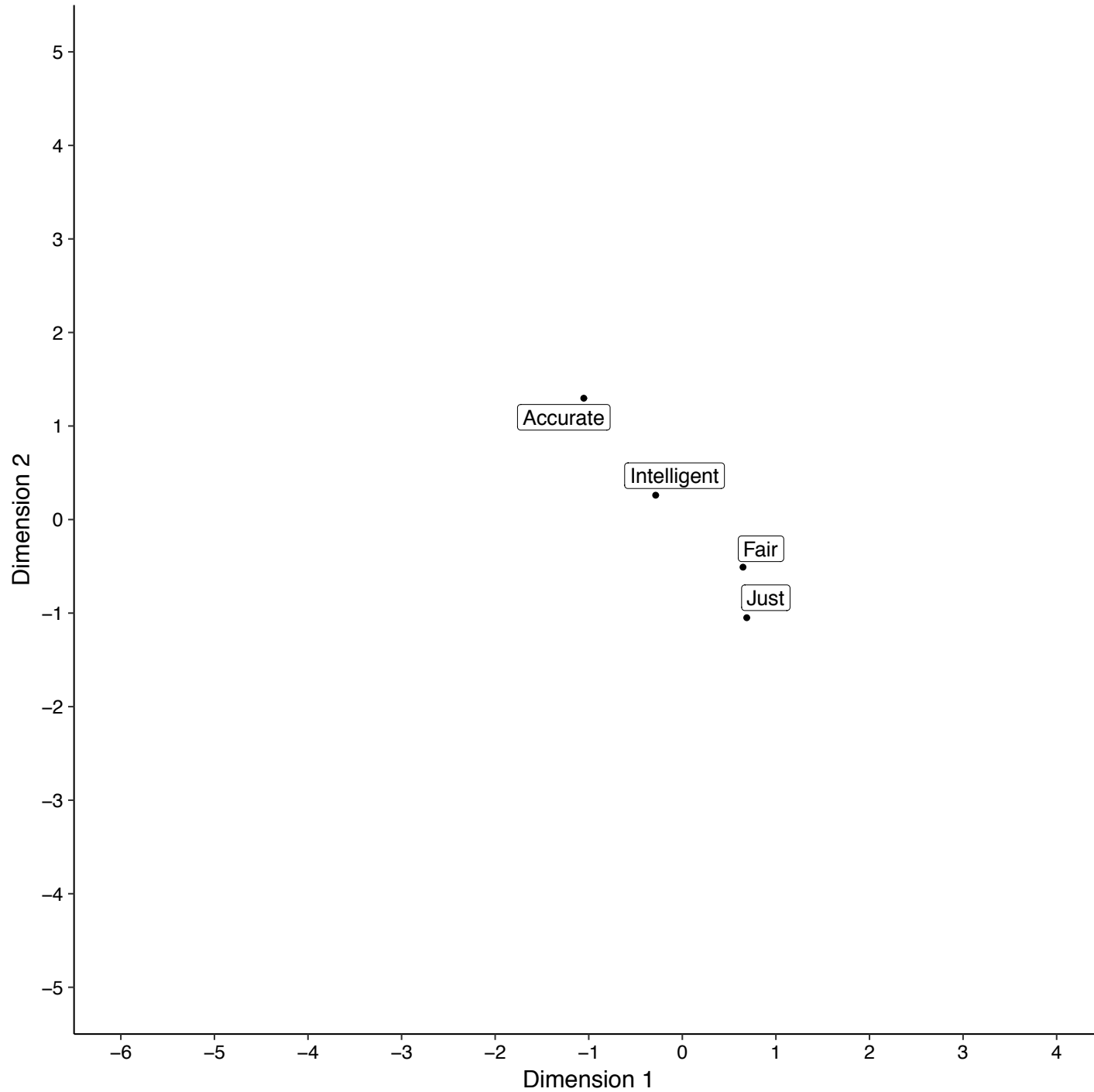


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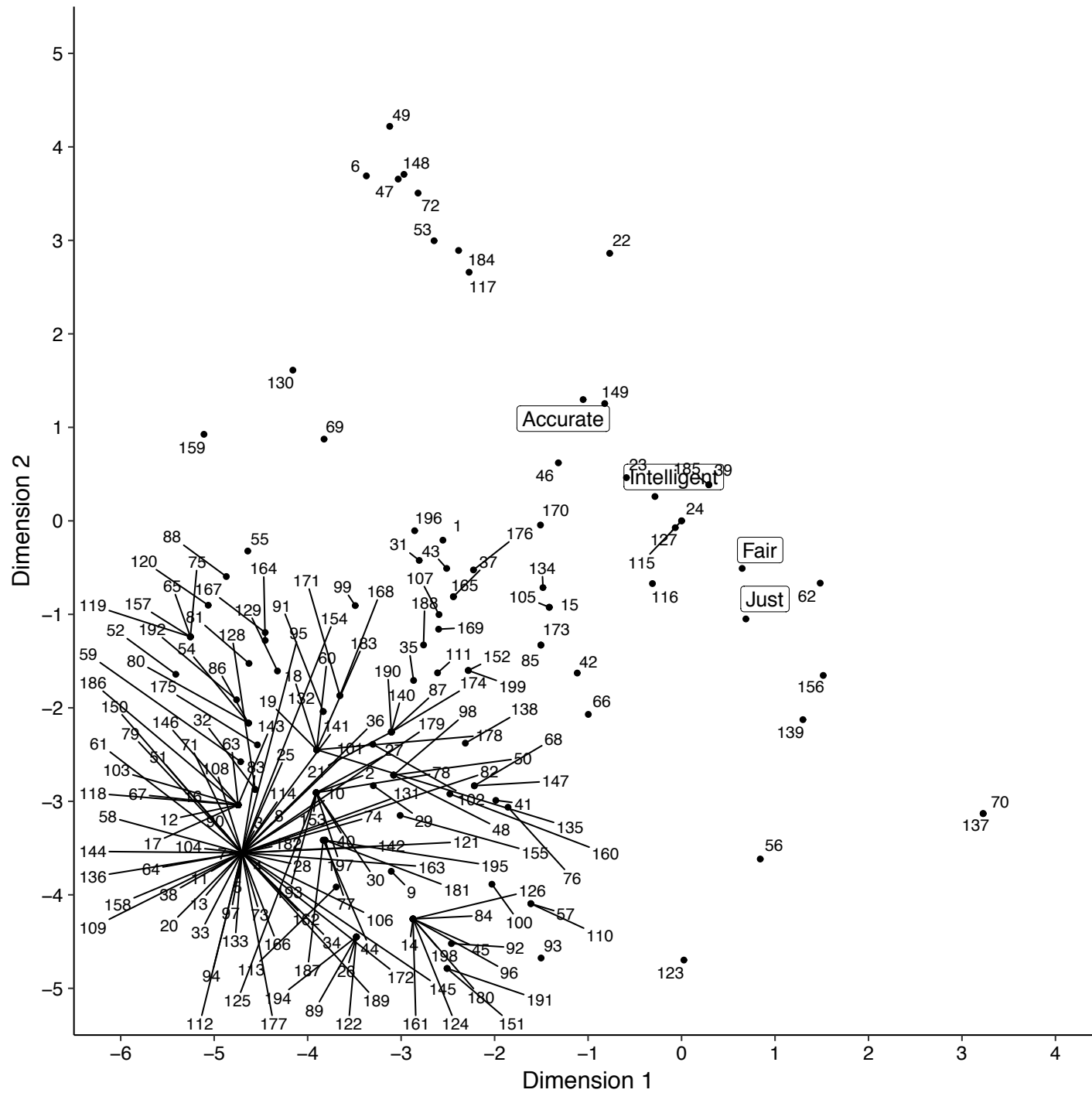


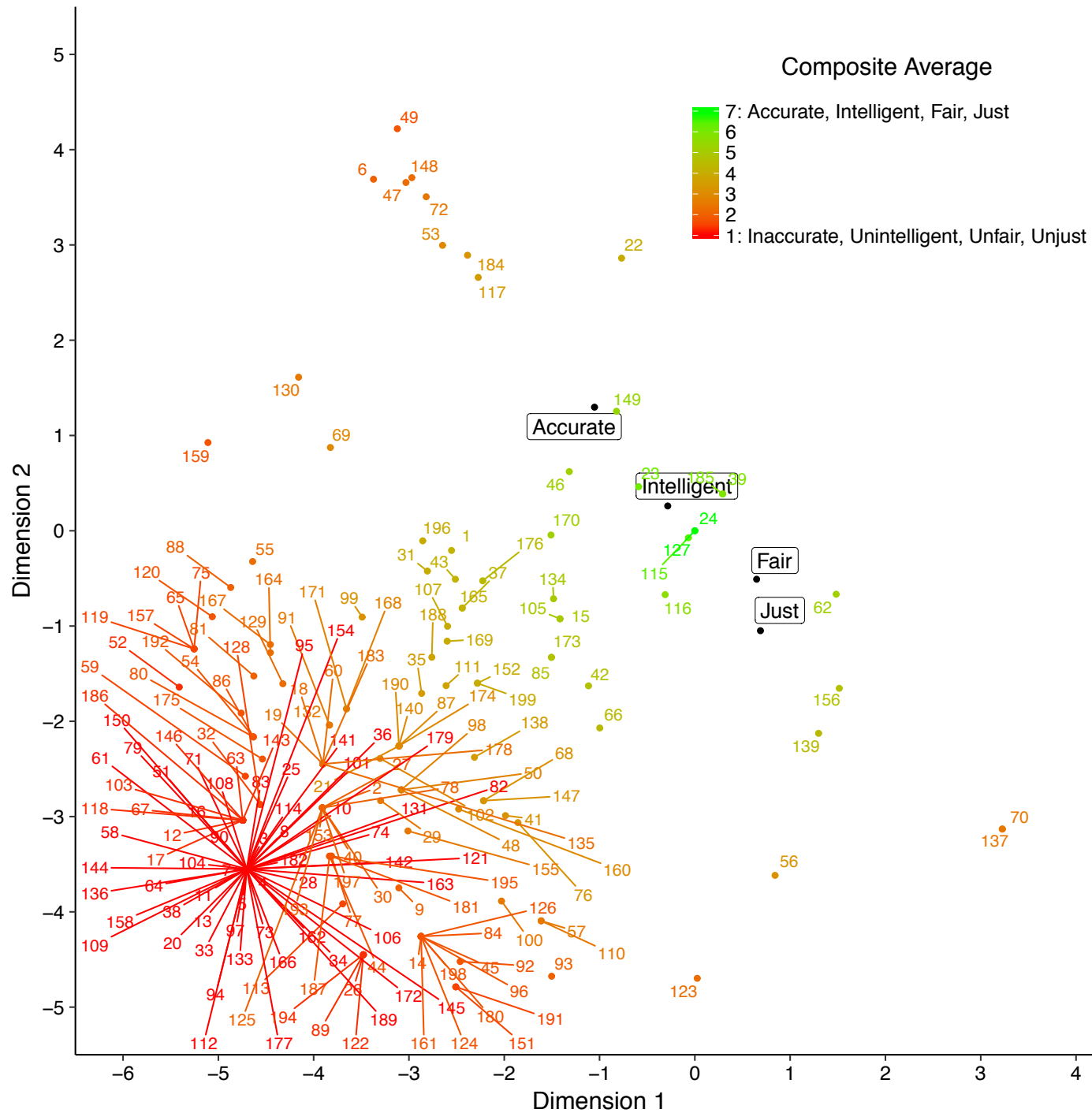
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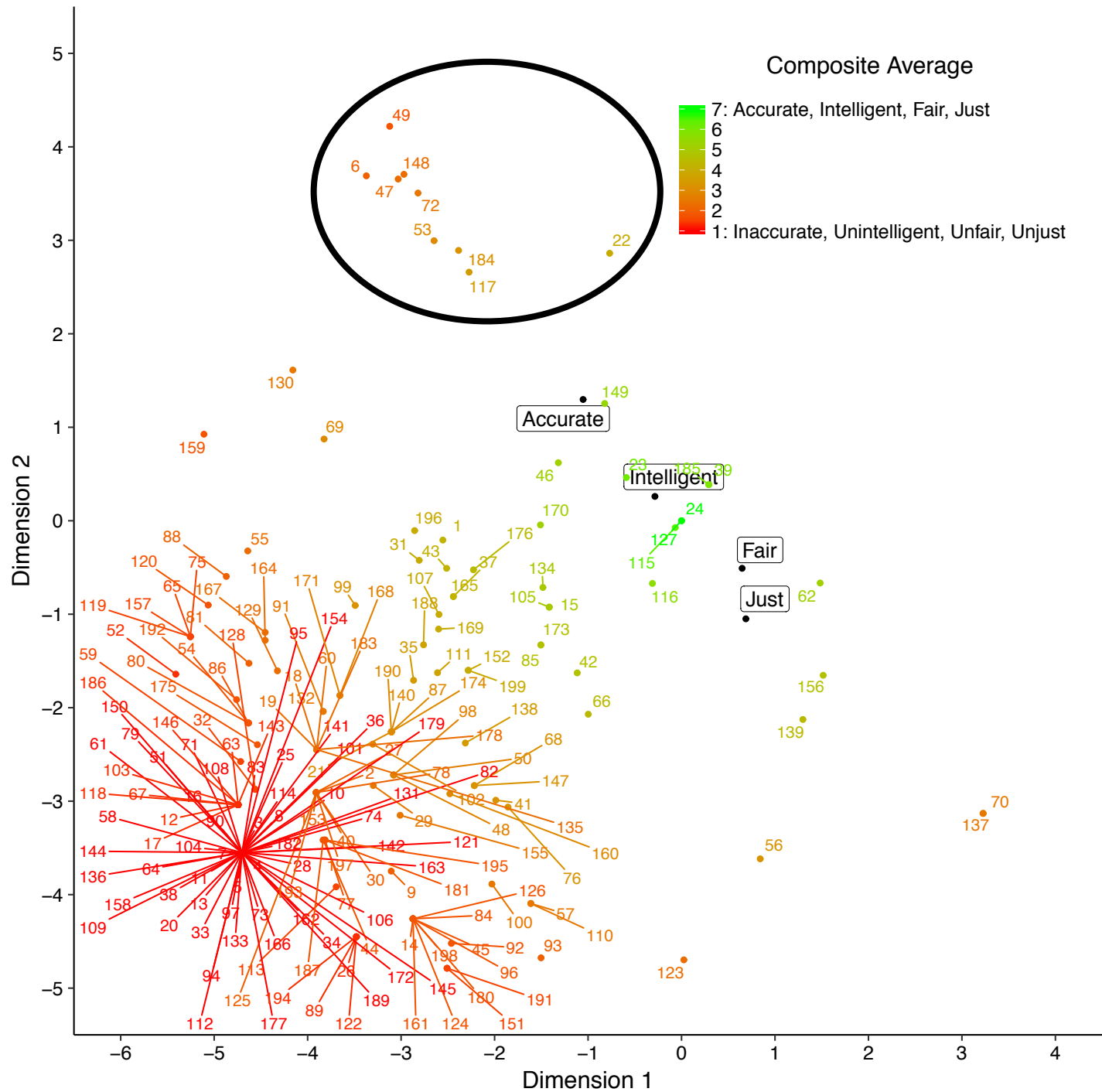


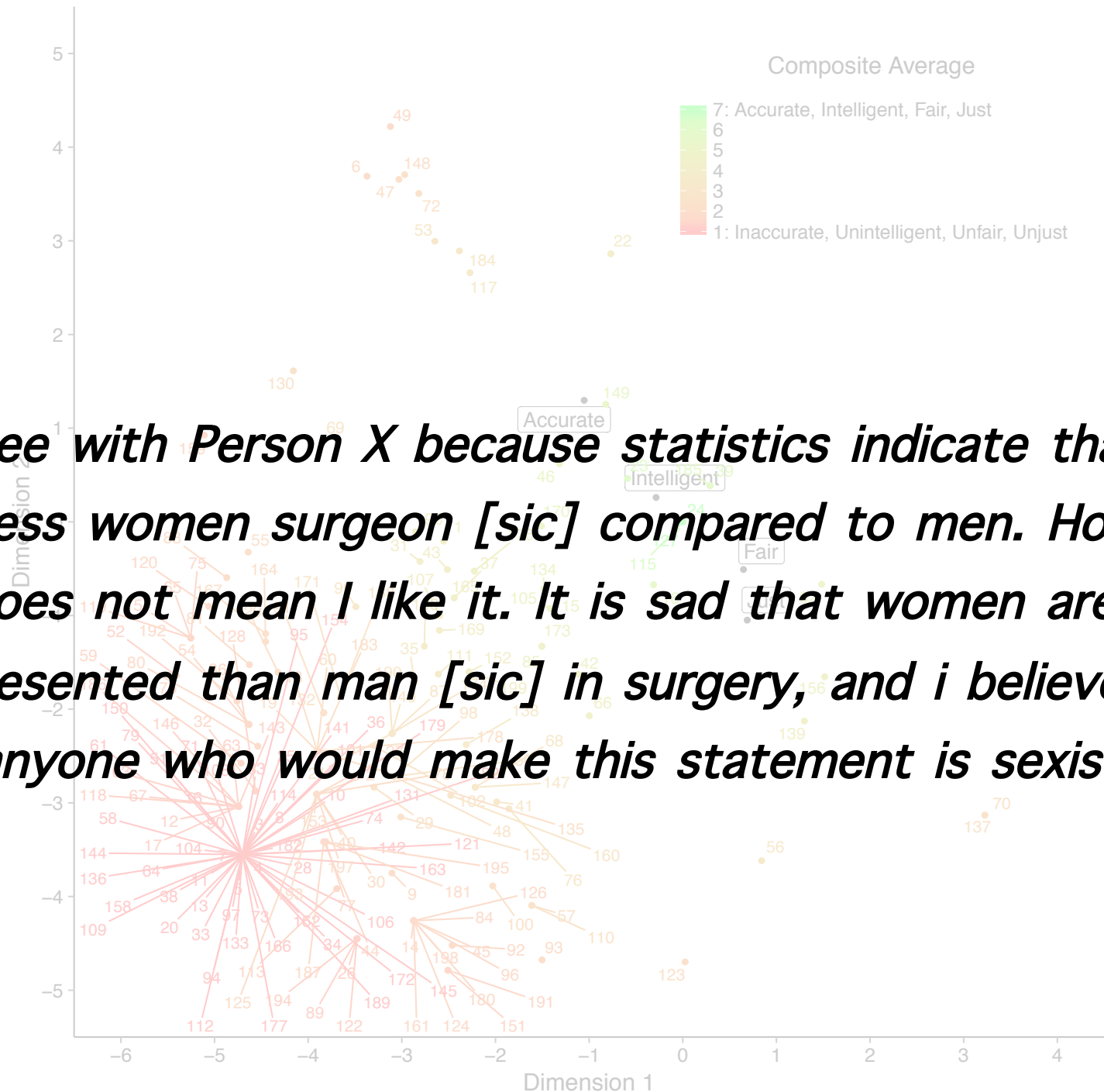




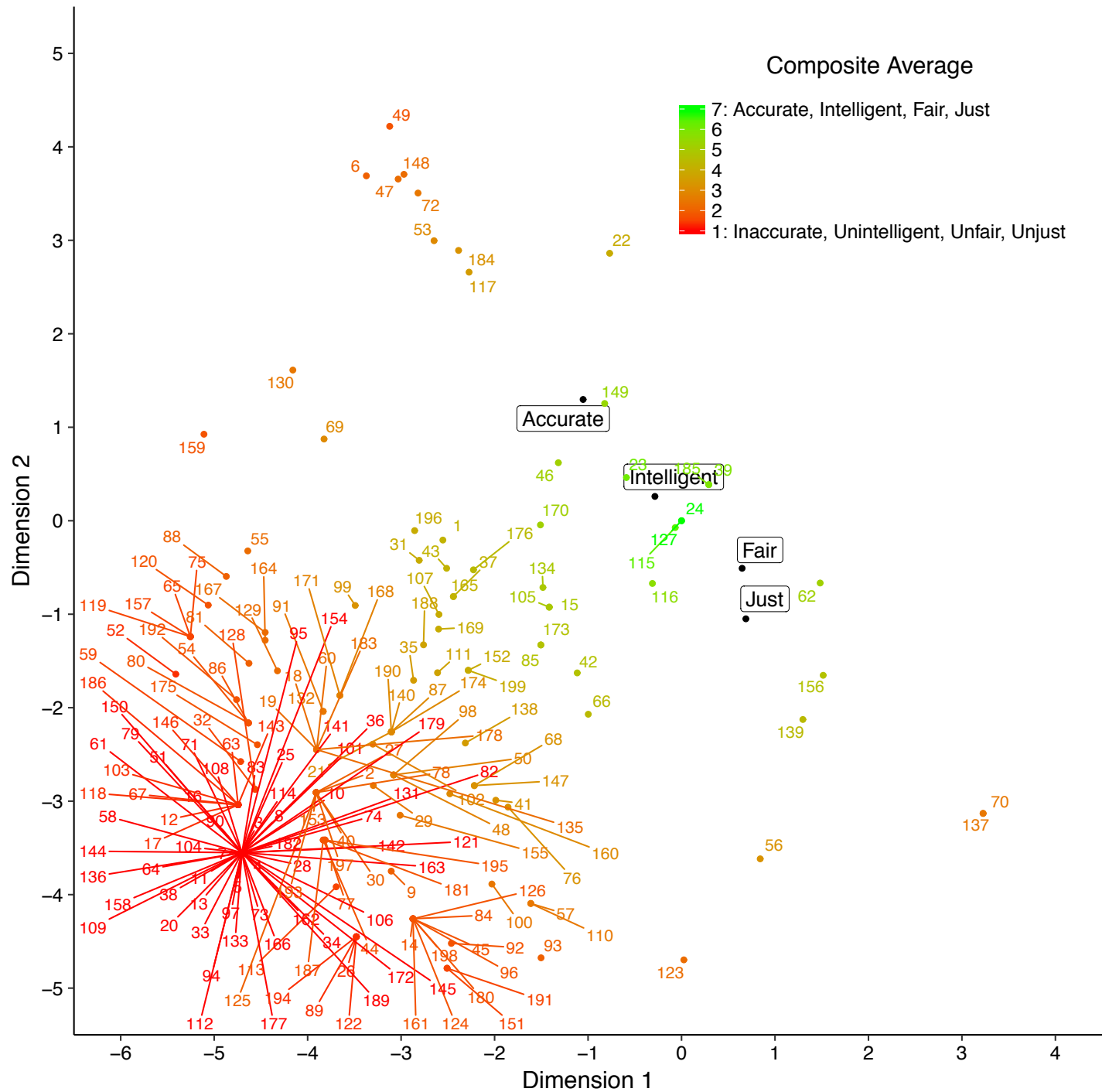


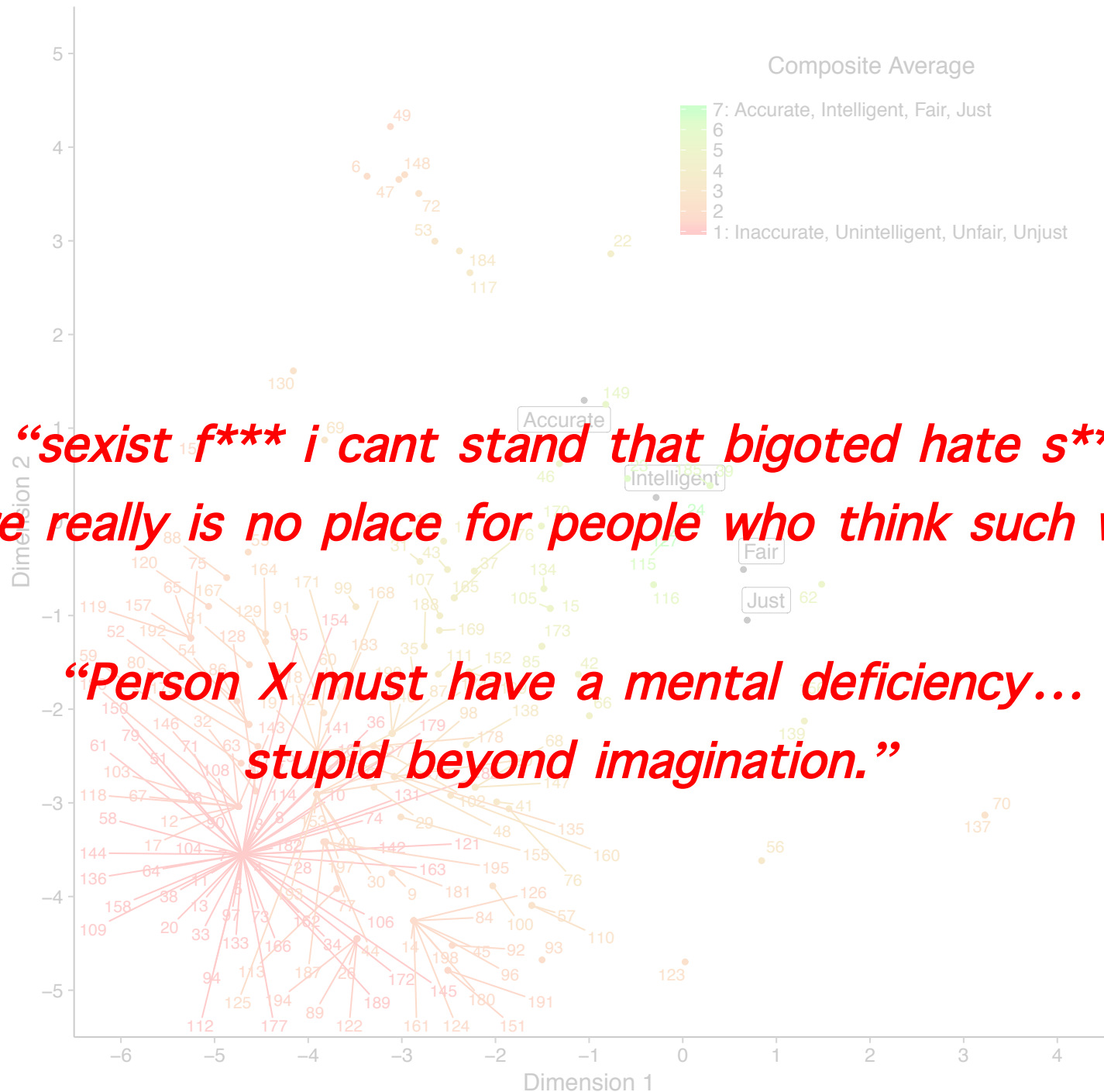


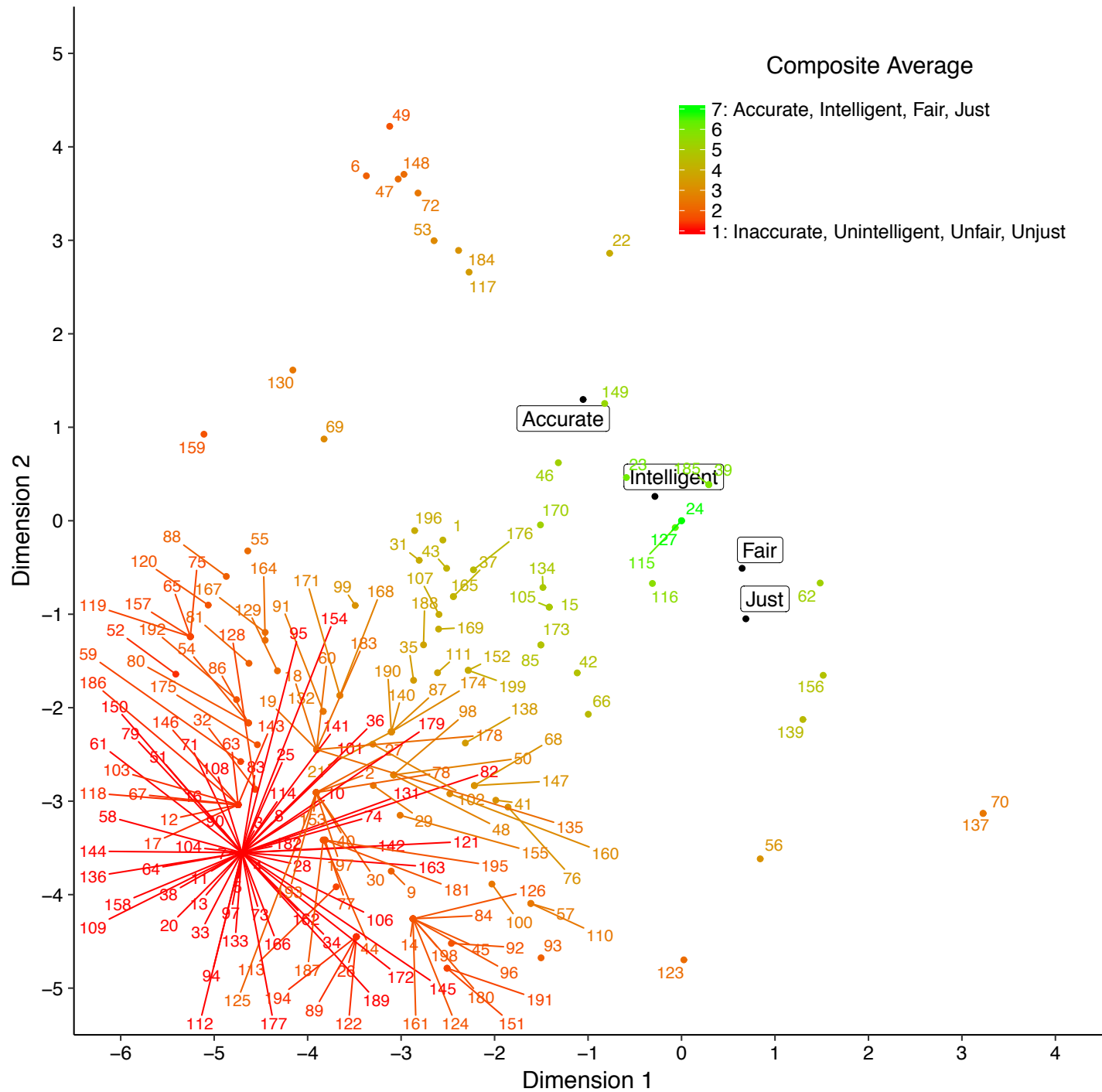




***“I agree with Person X because statistics indicate that there are less women surgeon [sic] compared to men. However, this does not mean I like it. It is sad that women are under-represented than man [sic] in surgery, and i believe that anyone who would make this statement is sexist.”***

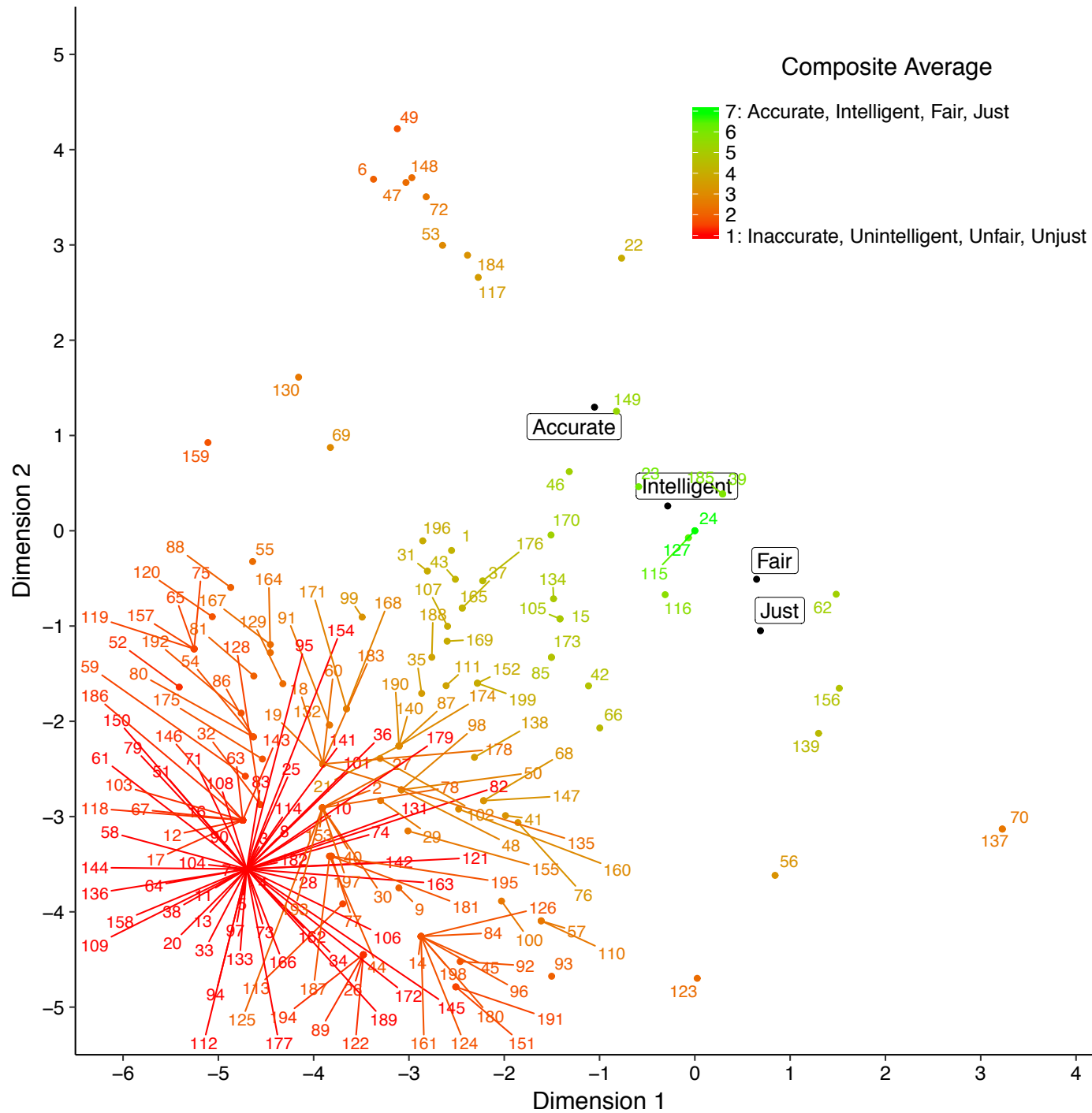










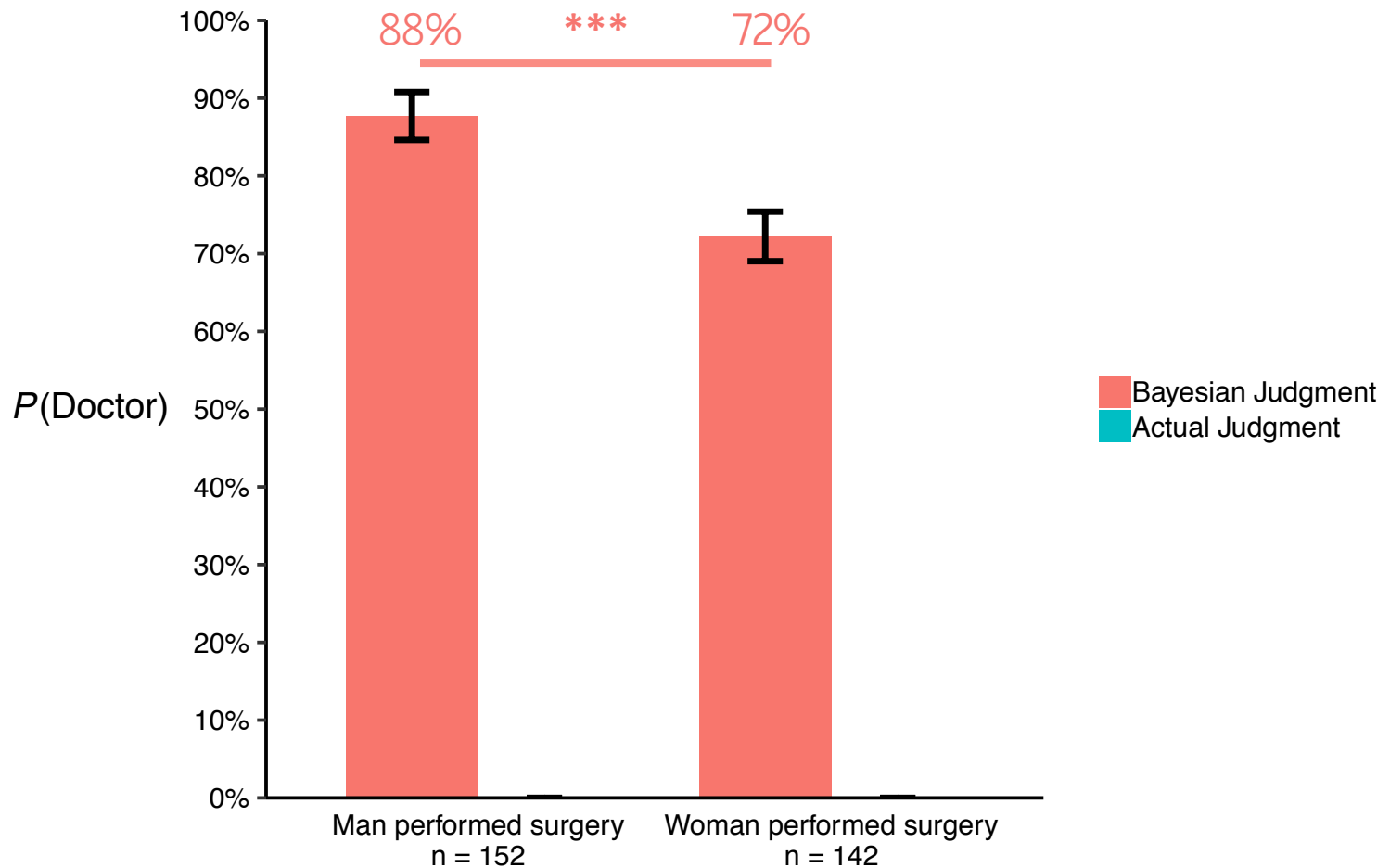




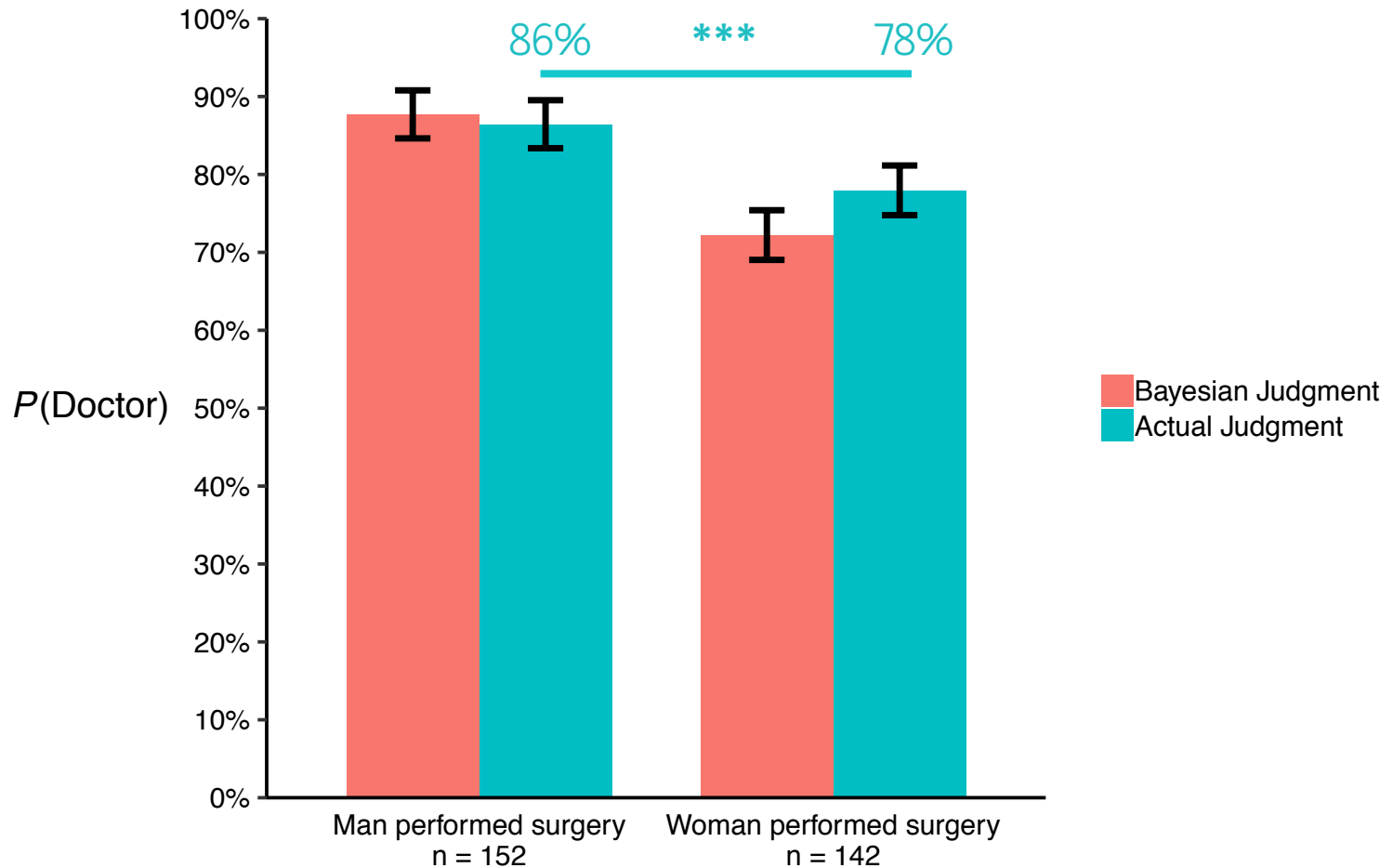
What judgments do people make when  
Bayesian principles and egalitarian values are at stake?

How likely is a man vs. a woman to be a doctor given that each  
performed surgery?

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How do you go from something like this...



to something like this...





What is *unfair* in the social domain?

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When outcomes depend on social group, *ceteris paribus*

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Policing Correll et al. (2007), *JPSP*

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$$P(\text{Hire} \mid \text{Qualified, Female}) < P(\text{Hire} \mid \text{Qualified, Male})$$

$$P(\text{Shoot} \mid \text{Unarmed, White}) < P(\text{Shoot} \mid \text{Unarmed, Black})$$

$$P(\text{Undertreat} \mid \text{In Pain, White}) < P(\text{Undertreat} \mid \text{In Pain, Black})$$

$$P(\text{Hire} \mid \text{Qualified, Female}) < P(\text{Hire} \mid \text{Qualified, Male})$$

Unequal false positive rates, FPRs

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Unequal false positive rates, FPRs

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Unequal positive predictive values, PPVs

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# Not egalitarian

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# Egalitarian

Equal false positive rates, FPRs

$$P(\text{Shoot} \mid \text{Unarmed, White}) = P(\text{Shoot} \mid \text{Unarmed, Black})$$

Equal false negative rates, FNRs

$$P(\text{Undertreat} \mid \text{In Pain, White}) = P(\text{Undertreat} \mid \text{In Pain, Black})$$

Equal positive predictive values, PPVs

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# Why these three ways of thinking about egalitarian values?

$$\text{FPR}_{\text{Group A}} = \text{FPR}_{\text{Group B}}$$

$$\text{FNR}_{\text{Group A}} = \text{FNR}_{\text{Group B}}$$

$$\text{PPV}_{\text{Group A}} = \text{PPV}_{\text{Group B}}$$

# Why these three ways of thinking about egalitarian values?

$$\text{FPR}_{\text{Group A}} = \text{FPR}_{\text{Group B}}$$

$$\text{FNR}_{\text{Group A}} = \text{FNR}_{\text{Group B}}$$

$$\text{PPV}_{\text{Group A}} = \text{PPV}_{\text{Group B}}$$

When base rates between Group A and Group B differ, all three definitions cannot be simultaneously met. At least one must be given up.

Kleinberg, Mullainathan, & Raghavan (2016)

# The sinister tradeoff

$$P(\text{cancer} \mid \text{pos}) = \frac{P(\text{pos} \mid \text{cancer}) \times P(\text{cancer})}{P(\text{pos} \mid \text{cancer}) \times P(\text{cancer}) + P(\text{pos} \mid \text{no cancer}) \times P(\text{no cancer})}$$

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$$P(\text{cancer} \mid \text{pos}) = \frac{[1 - P(\text{neg} \mid \text{cancer})] \times P(\text{cancer})}{[1 - P(\text{neg} \mid \text{cancer})] \times P(\text{cancer}) + P(\text{pos} \mid \text{no cancer}) \times [1 - P(\text{cancer})]}$$



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$$\text{PPV} = \frac{[1 - \text{FNR}] \times \text{BR}}{[1 - \text{FNR}] \times \text{BR} + \text{FPR} \times [1 - \text{BR}]}$$

# The sinister tradeoff

$$P(\text{cancer} \mid \text{pos}) = \frac{P(\text{pos} \mid \text{cancer}) \times P(\text{cancer})}{P(\text{pos} \mid \text{cancer}) \times P(\text{cancer}) + P(\text{pos} \mid \text{no cancer}) \times P(\text{no cancer})}$$

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$$\text{PPV} = \frac{[1 - \text{FNR}] \times \text{BR}}{[1 - \text{FNR}] \times \text{BR} + \text{FPR} \times [1 - \text{BR}]}$$

$$\text{FPR} = \frac{\text{BR}}{[1 - \text{BR}]} \times \frac{[1 - \text{PPV}]}{\text{PPV}} \times [1 - \text{FNR}]$$

# The sinister tradeoff

$$FPR_w = \frac{BR_w}{1 - BR_w} \times \frac{1 - PPV_w}{PPV_w} \times [1 - FNR_w]$$

$$FPR_m = \frac{BR_m}{1 - BR_m} \times \frac{1 - PPV_m}{PPV_m} \times [1 - FNR_m]$$

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Meet two definitions of fairness

$$PPV_w = PPV_m$$

$$FNR_w = FNR_m$$

$$\frac{FPR_w}{FPR_m} = \frac{\frac{BR_w}{1 - BR_w} \times \frac{1 - PPV_w}{PPV_w} \times [1 - FNR_w]}{\frac{BR_m}{1 - BR_m} \times \frac{1 - PPV_m}{PPV_m} \times [1 - FNR_m]}$$

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Meet two definitions of fairness

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$$\frac{FPR_w}{FPR_m} = \frac{\frac{BR_w}{1 - BR_w}}{\frac{BR_m}{1 - BR_m}}$$

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Meet two definitions of fairness

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Meet two definitions of fairness

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$$\frac{FPR_w}{FPR_m} = \frac{\frac{BR_w}{1 - BR_w}}{\frac{BR_m}{1 - BR_m}}$$

Cannot meet third definition of fairness

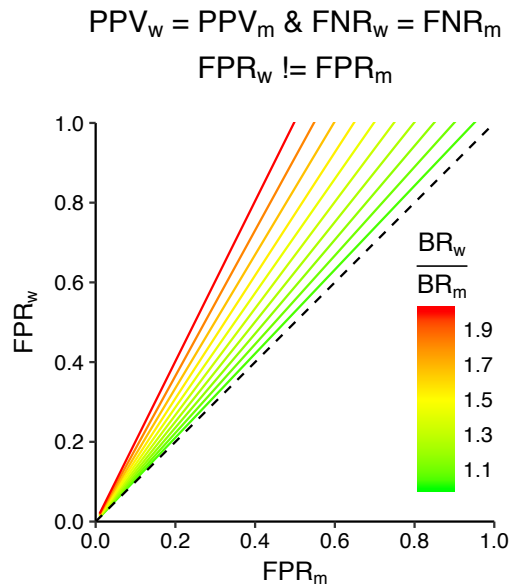
$$FPR_w \neq FPR_m$$

*Breast cancer is more common among women than men*

$$FPR_w = \frac{BR_w}{BR_m} \times \frac{[1 - BR_m]}{[1 - BR_w]} \times FPR_m$$



# The sinister tradeoff



$$FPR_w = \frac{BR_w}{1 - BR_w} \times \frac{1 - PPV_w}{PPV_w} \times [1 - FNR_w]$$

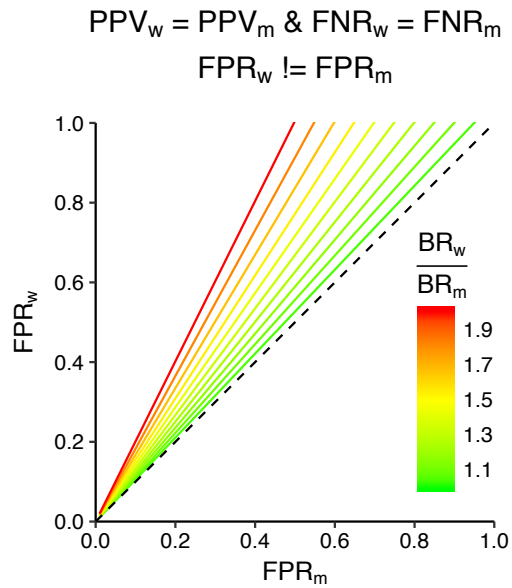
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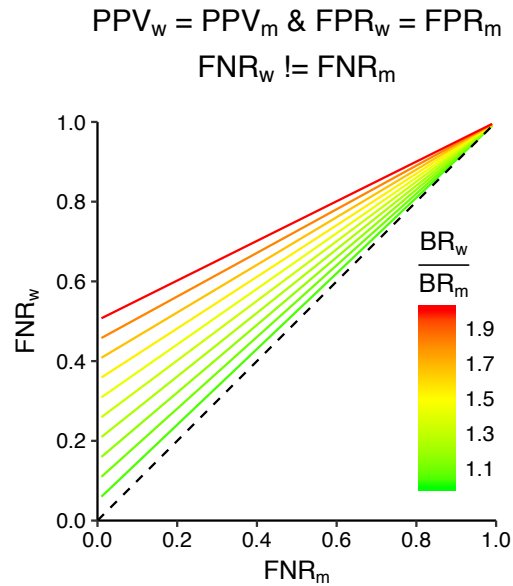
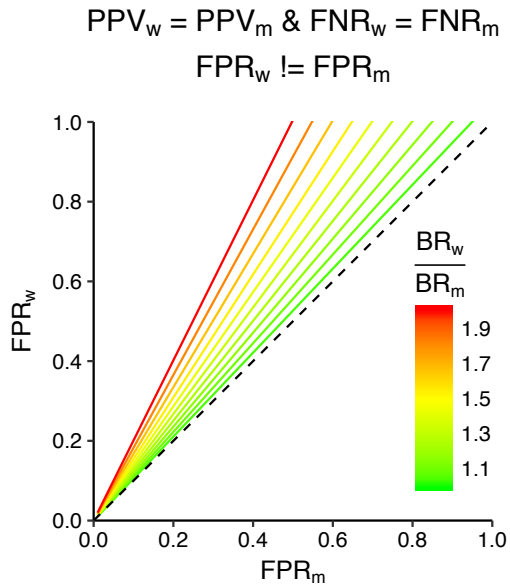
$$\frac{FPR_w}{FPR_m} = \frac{\frac{BR_w}{1 - BR_w}}{\frac{BR_m}{1 - BR_m}}$$

$$FPR_w = \frac{BR_w}{BR_m} \times \frac{[1 - BR_m]}{[1 - BR_w]} \times FPR_m$$

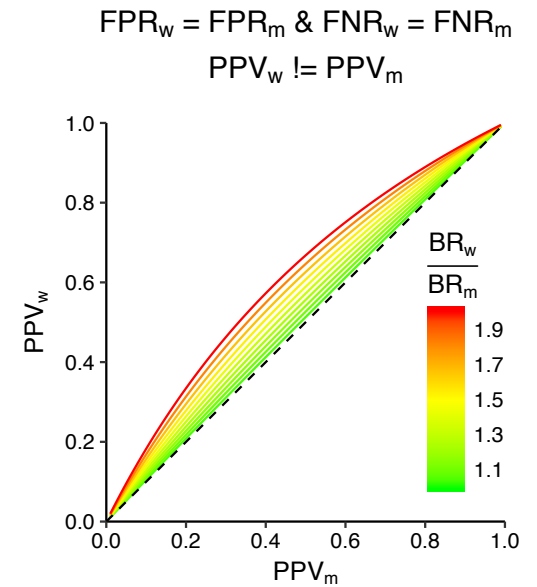
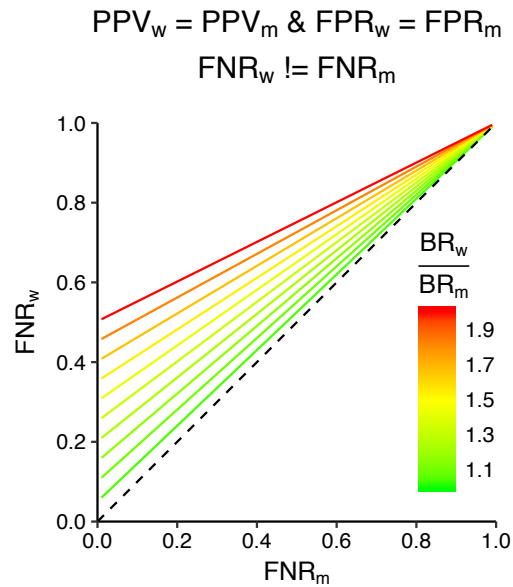
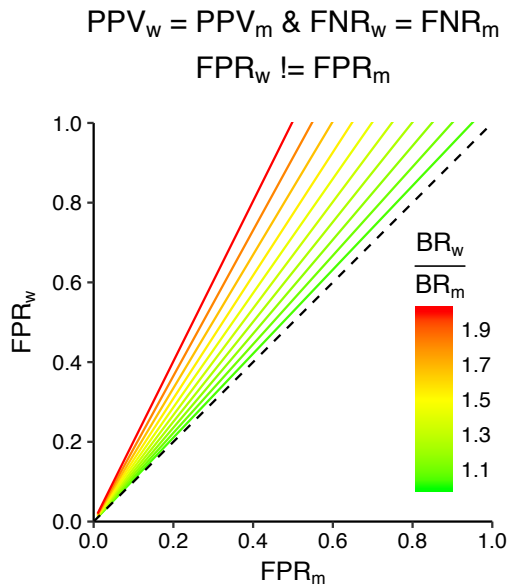
# The sinister tradeoff



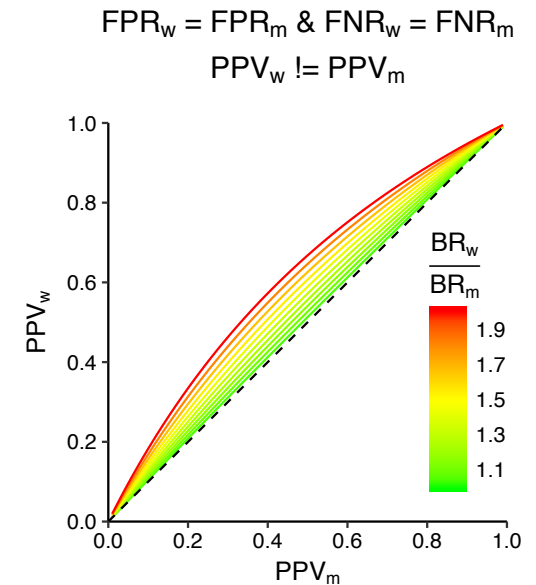
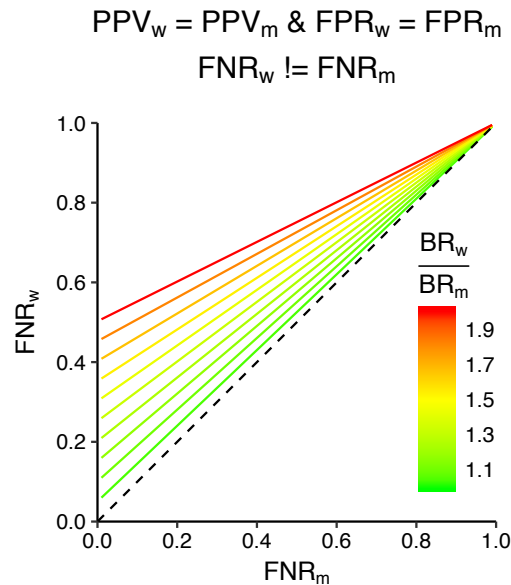
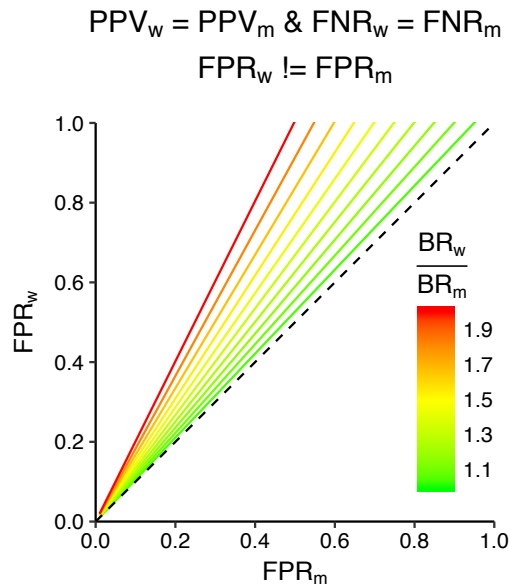
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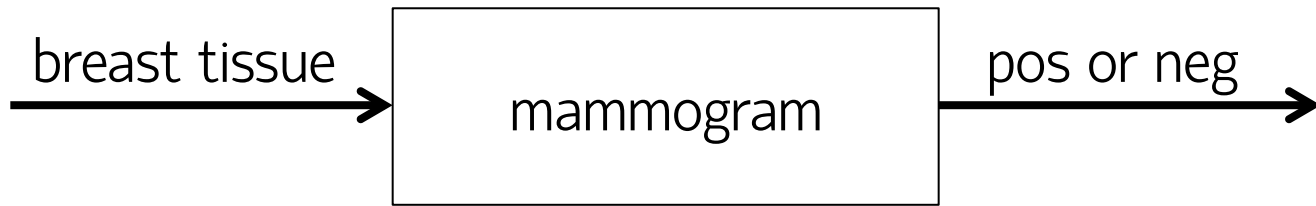
# The sinister tradeoff



# The sinister tradeoff



Of the three "worlds" depicted above, which is preferred?  
 Which notion of fairness is valued more? Which is valued less?



Bail eligibility for defendants  
Bank loans  
Whether a post is fake news

# Machine Bias

There's software used across the country to predict future criminals. And it's biased against blacks.

*by Julia Angwin, Jeff Larson, Surya Mattu and Lauren Kirchner, ProPublica*

May 23, 2016

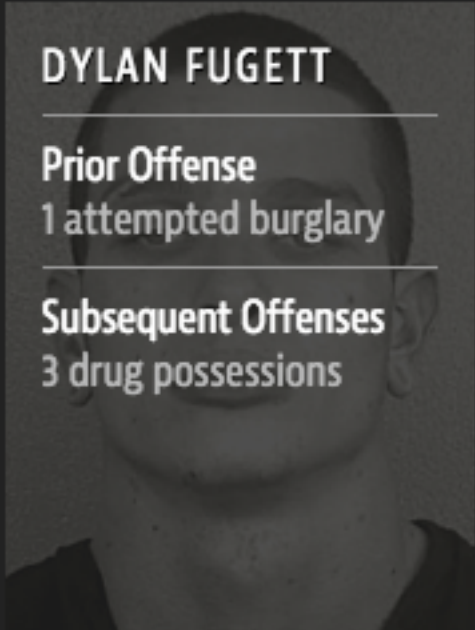
# Machine Bias

There's software used across the country to predict future criminals. And it's biased against blacks.

*by Julia Angwin, Jeff Larson, Surya Mattu and Lauren Kirchner, ProPublica*

May 23, 2016

## Two Drug Possession Arrests



DYLAN FUGETT

Prior Offense


1 attempted burglary

Subsequent Offenses

3 drug possessions

LOW RISK

3



BERNARD PARKER

Prior Offense

1 resisting arrest  
without violence

Subsequent Offenses

None

HIGH RISK

10



# Machine Bias

There's software used across the country to predict future criminals. And it's biased against blacks.

False Positives, False Negatives, and False Analyses: A Rejoinder to "Machine Bias: There's Software Used Across the Country to Predict Future Criminals. And It's Biased Against Blacks."

*Anthony W. Flores*

*California State University, Bakersfield*

*Kristin Bechtel*

*Crime and Justice Institute at CRJ*

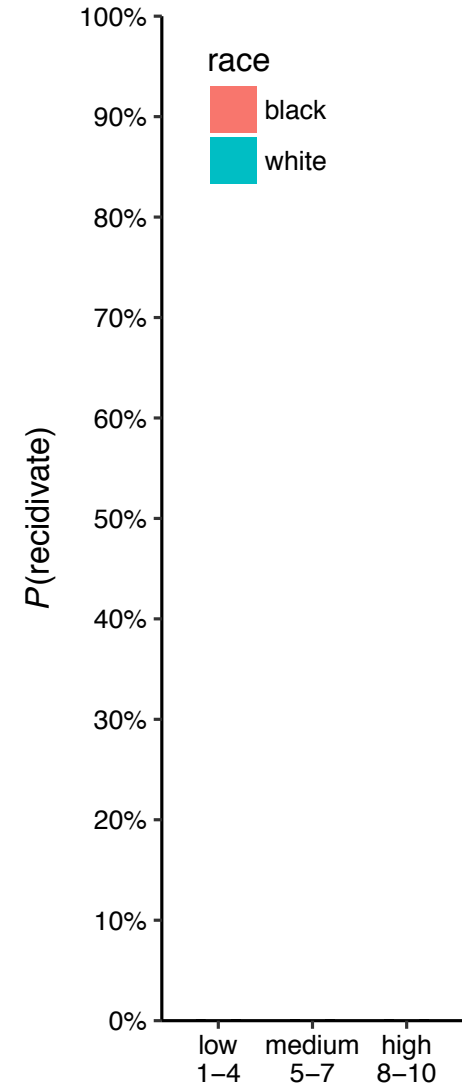
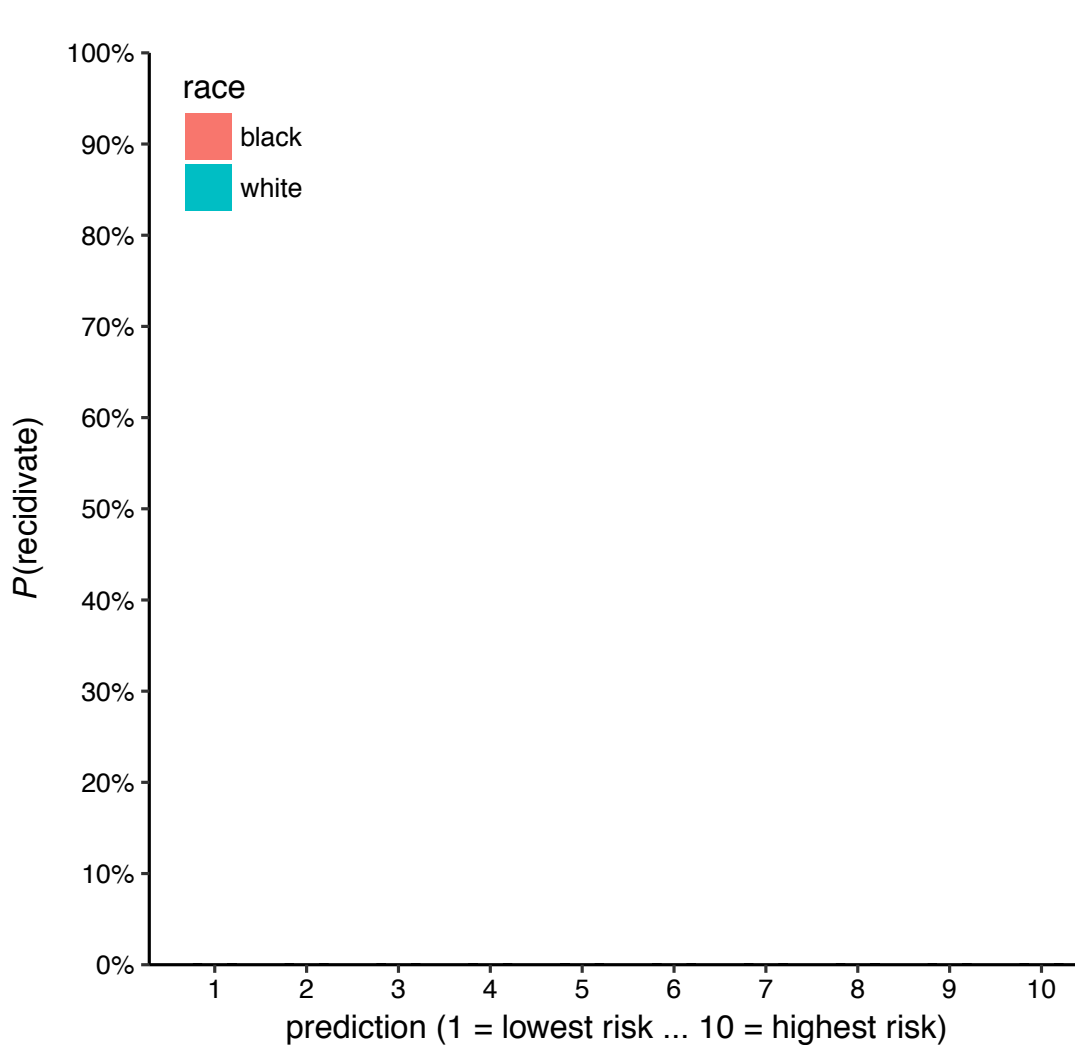
*Christopher T. Lowenkamp*

*Administrative Office of the United States Courts*

*Probation and Pretrial Services Office*

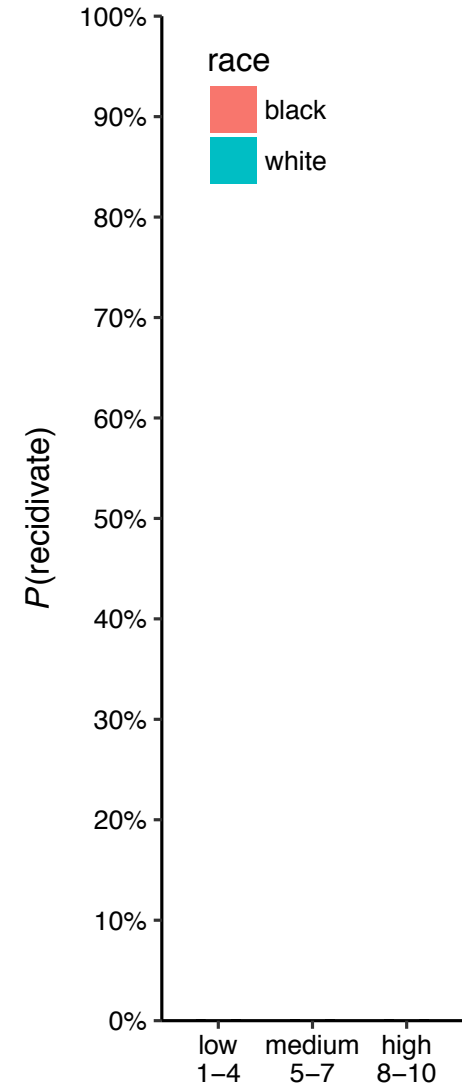
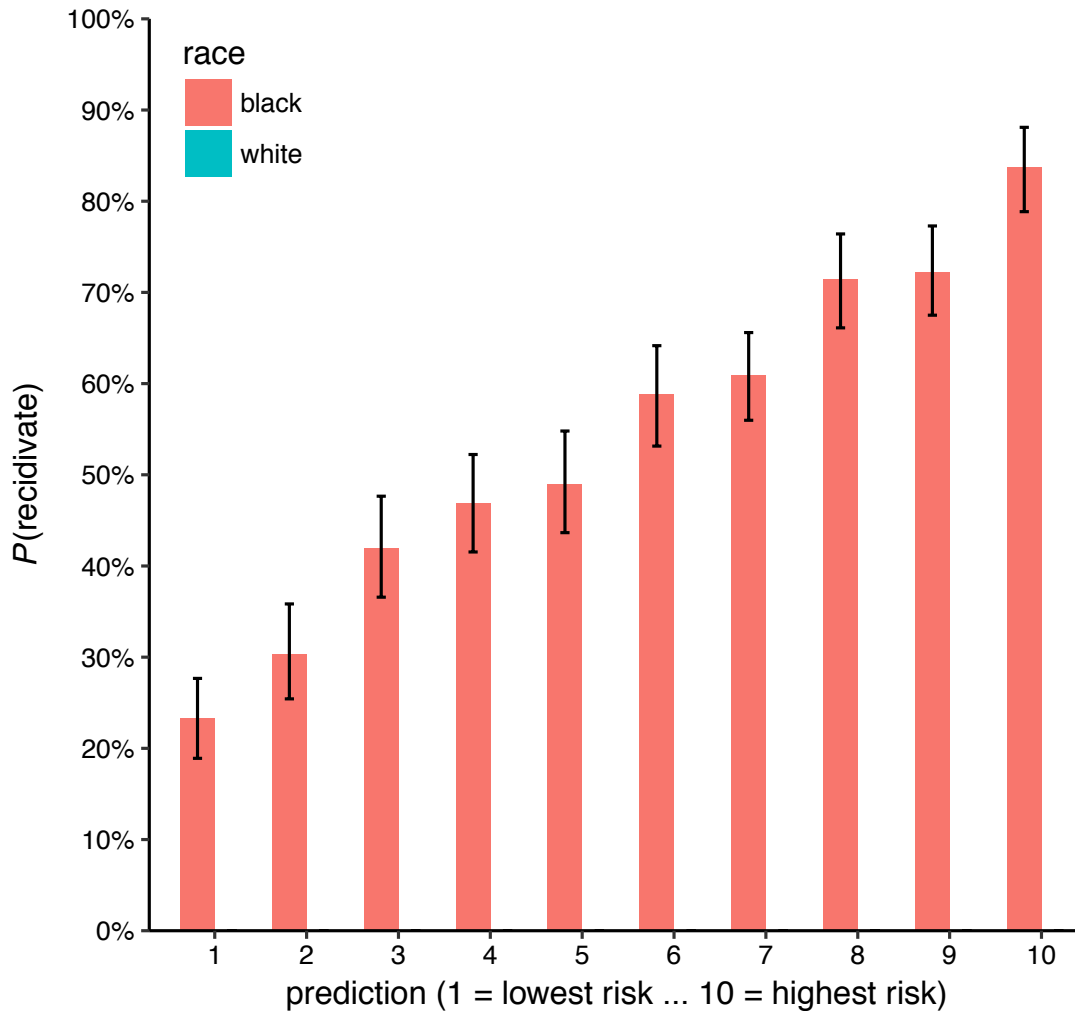
$$PPV_{\text{black}} = PPV_{\text{white}}$$

$$P(\text{recidivate} \mid \text{risk score, black}) = P(\text{recidivate} \mid \text{risk score, white})$$



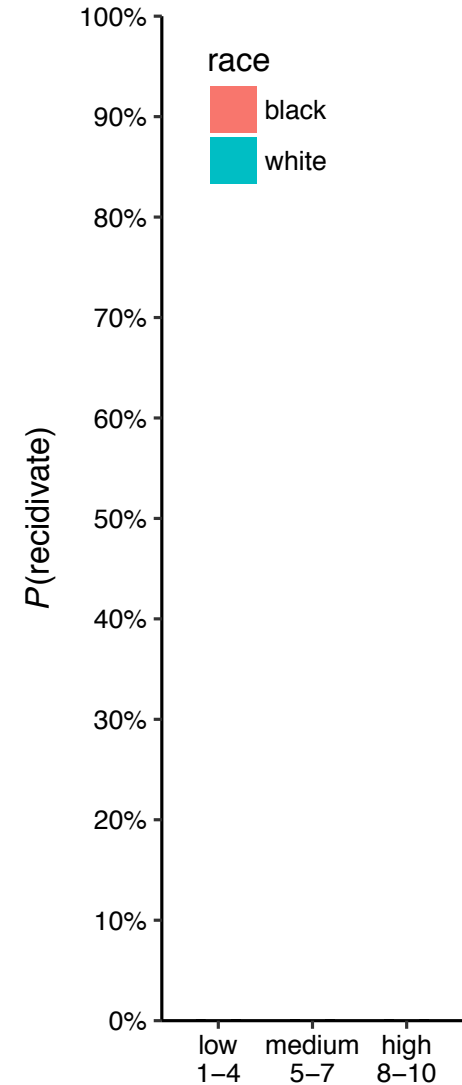
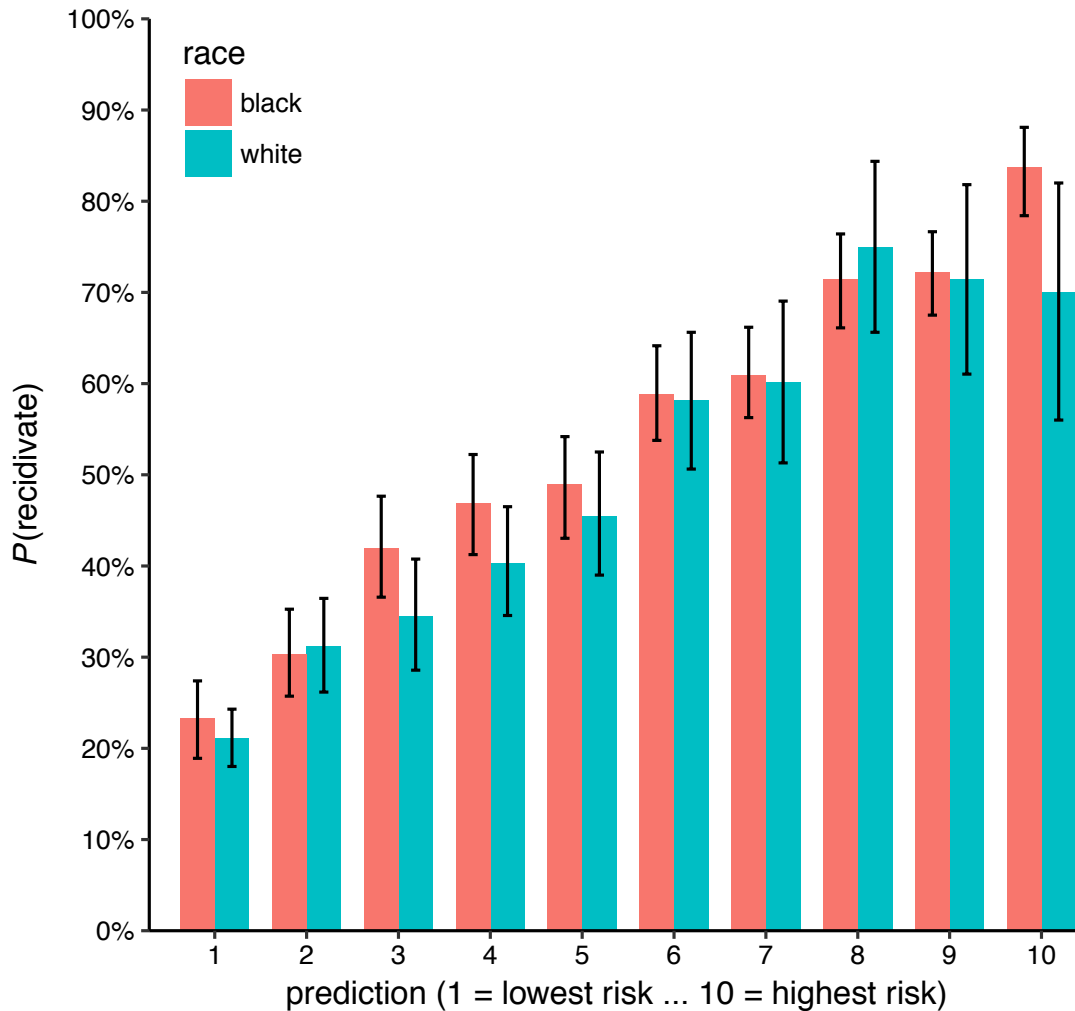
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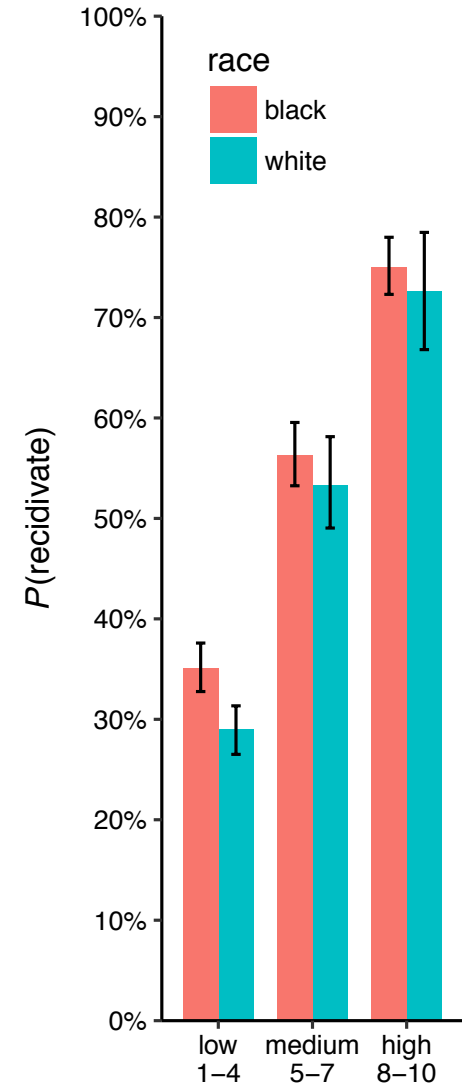
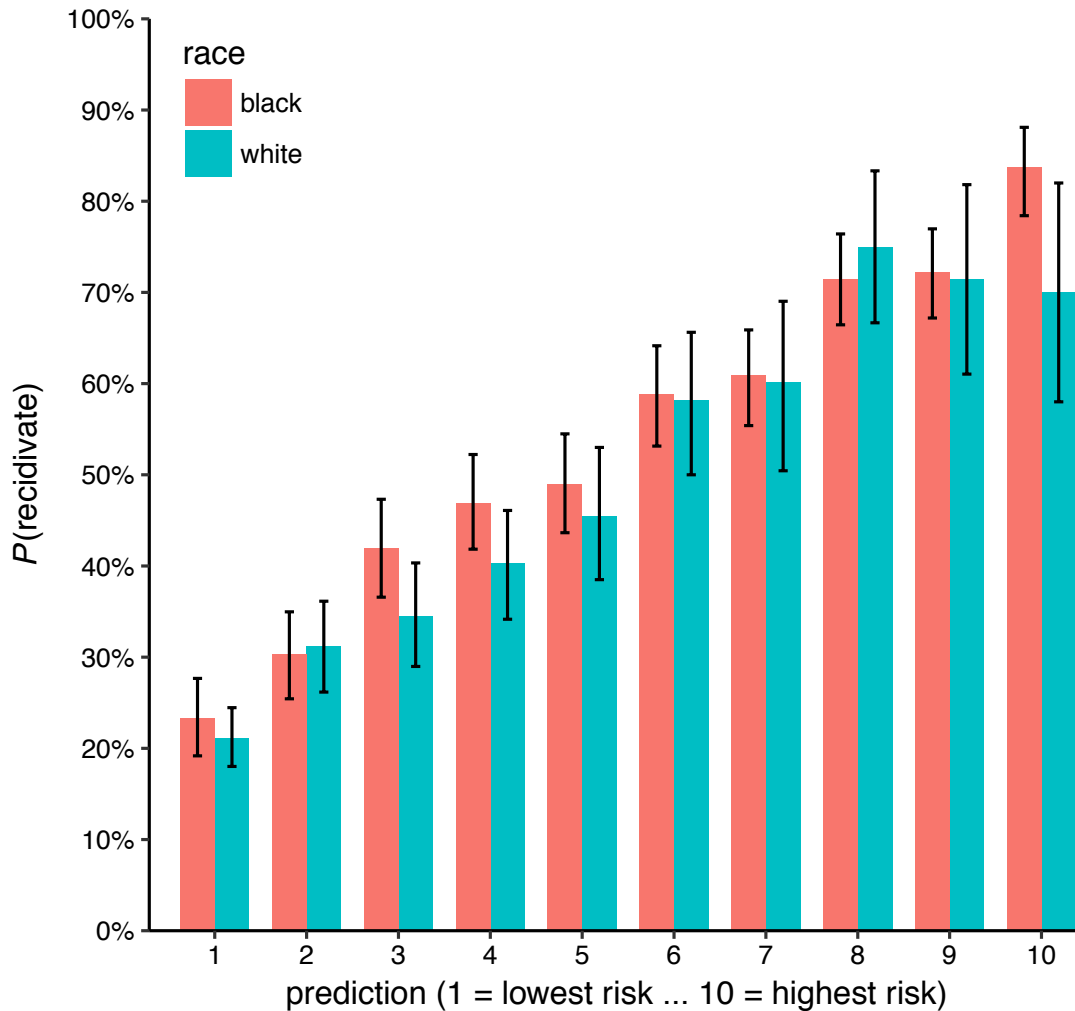
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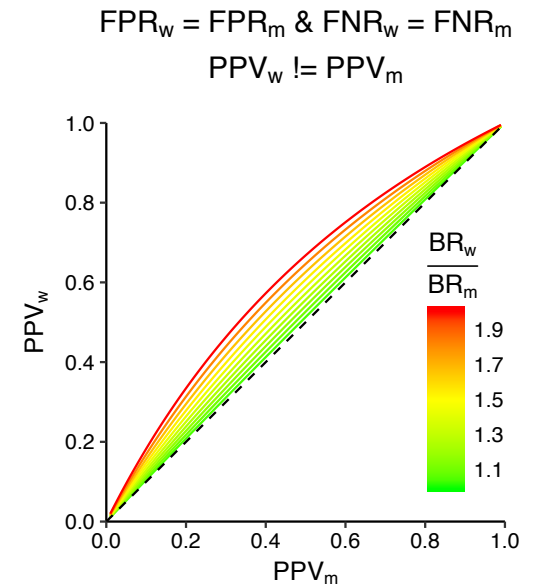
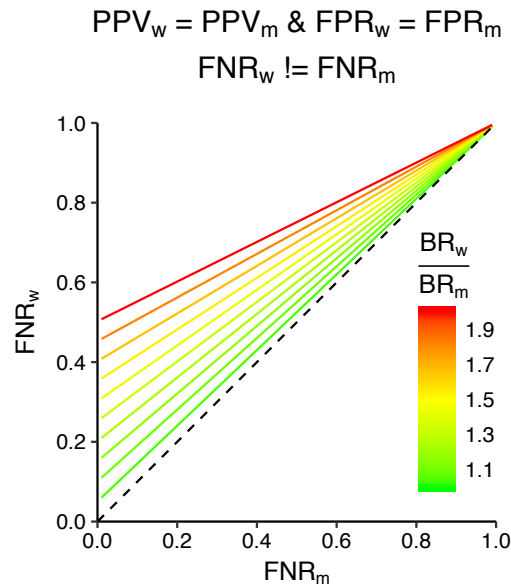
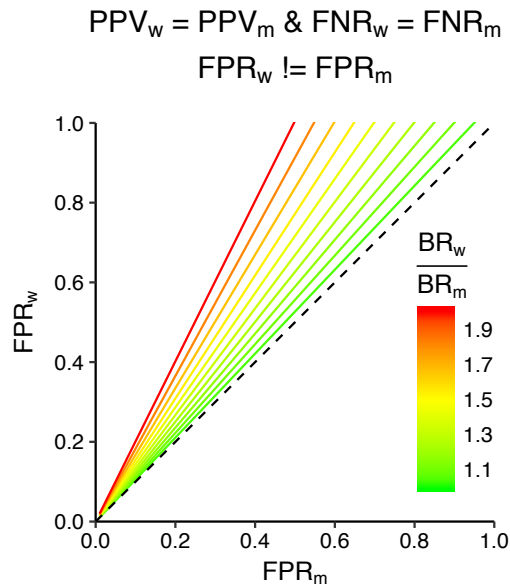


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# The sinister tradeoff



Of the three "worlds" depicted above, which is preferred?  
Which notion of fairness is valued more? Which is valued less?

# What judgments do people make when Bayesian principles and egalitarian values are at stake?

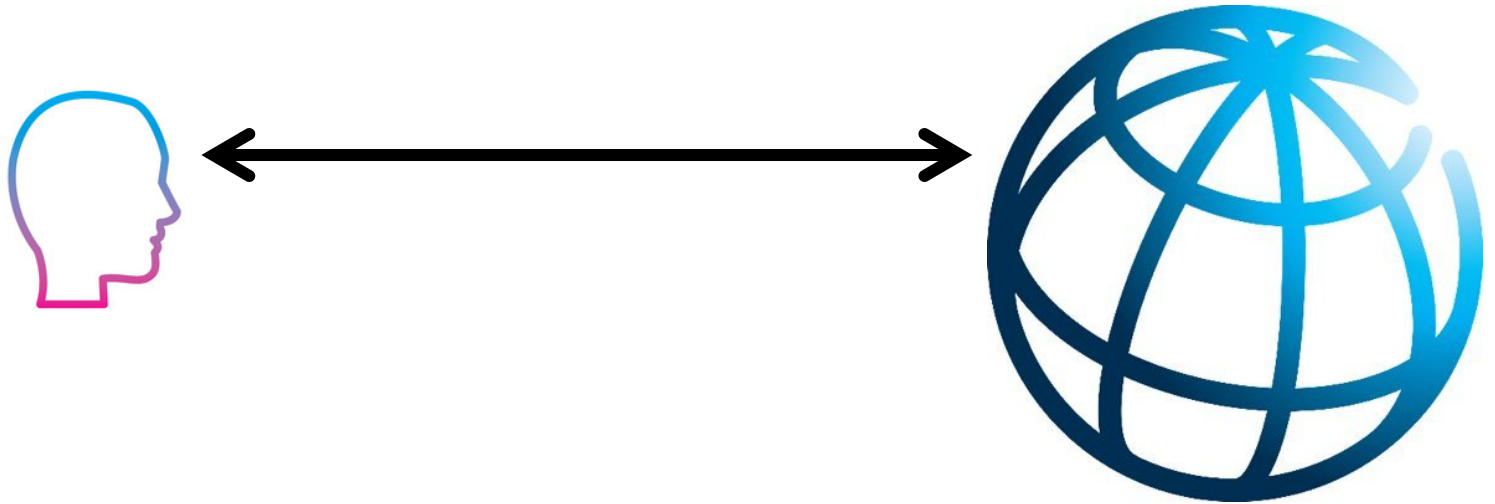
1. People undermine their commitment to egalitarian values by making Bayesian judgments
2. Formalizing "egalitarian values"
3. Google Images as a proxy for the social environment

# What judgments do people make when Bayesian principles and egalitarian values are at stake?

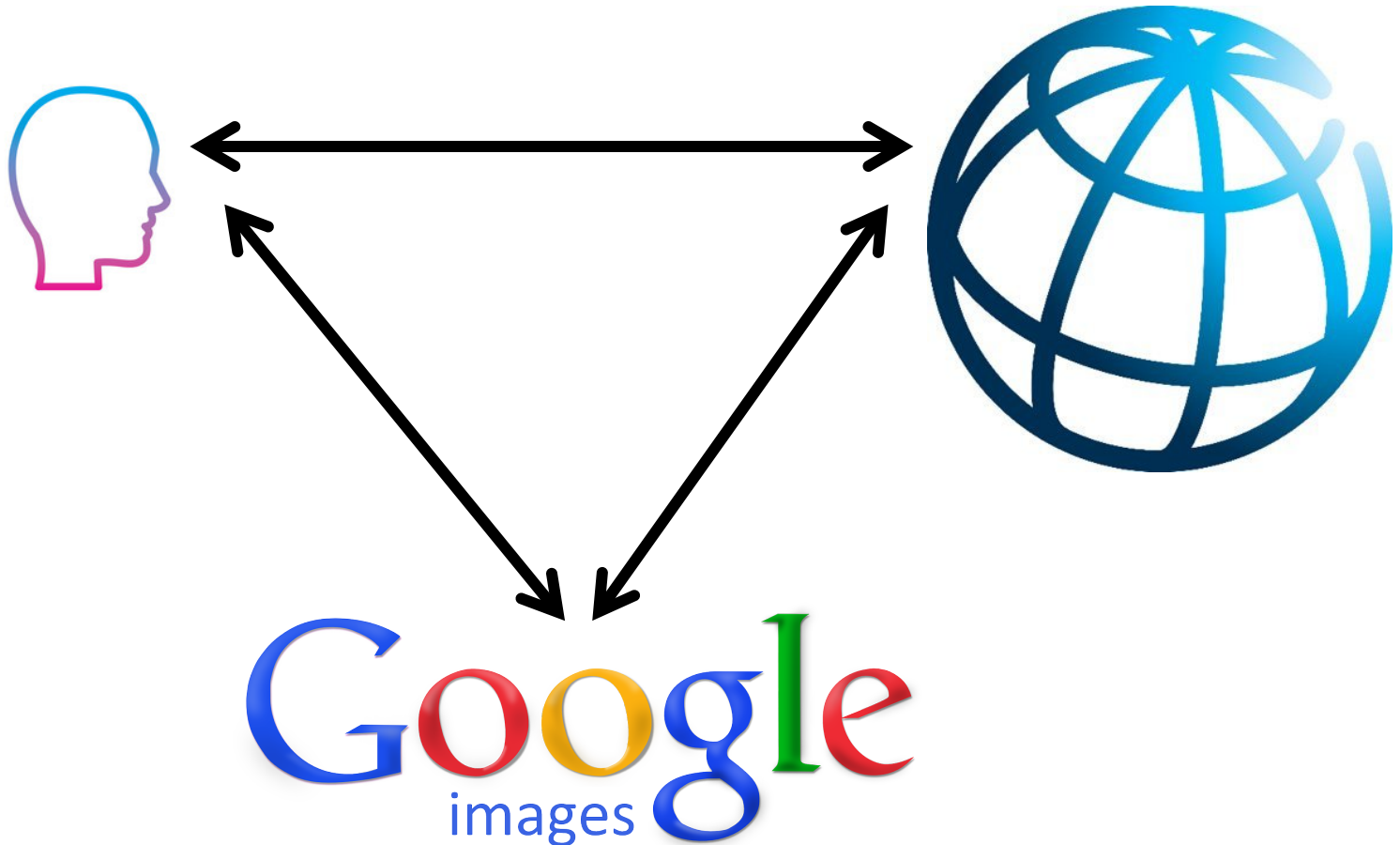
1. People undermine their commitment to egalitarian values by making Bayesian judgments
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3. Google Images as a proxy for the social environment



1. Pictures of people matter a great deal
2. There's some relationship between the content in our minds and the content in the world



1. Pictures of people matter a great deal
2. There's some relationship between the content in our minds and the content in the world





doctor

All

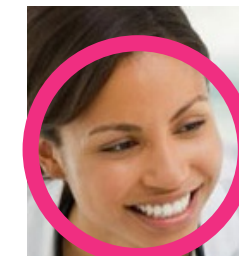
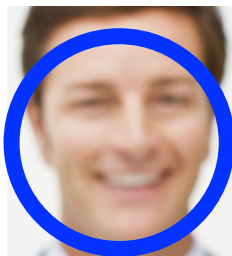
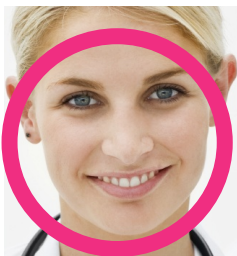
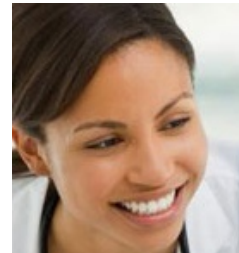
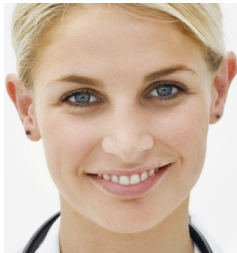
Maps

Images

News

Videos

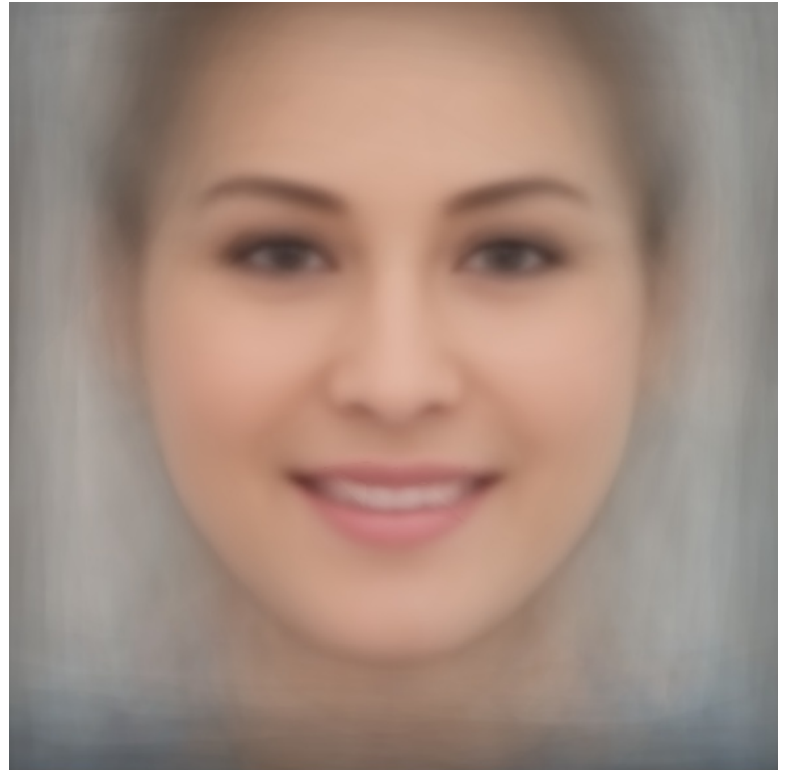
More



"doctor"



"nurse"



"computer science  
student"



"biology  
student"



"philosophy  
student"



"education  
student"



"intelligent  
person"



"sensitive  
person"





"person drinking  
whiskey"



"person drinking  
cosmopolitan"





"bulldog  
owner"



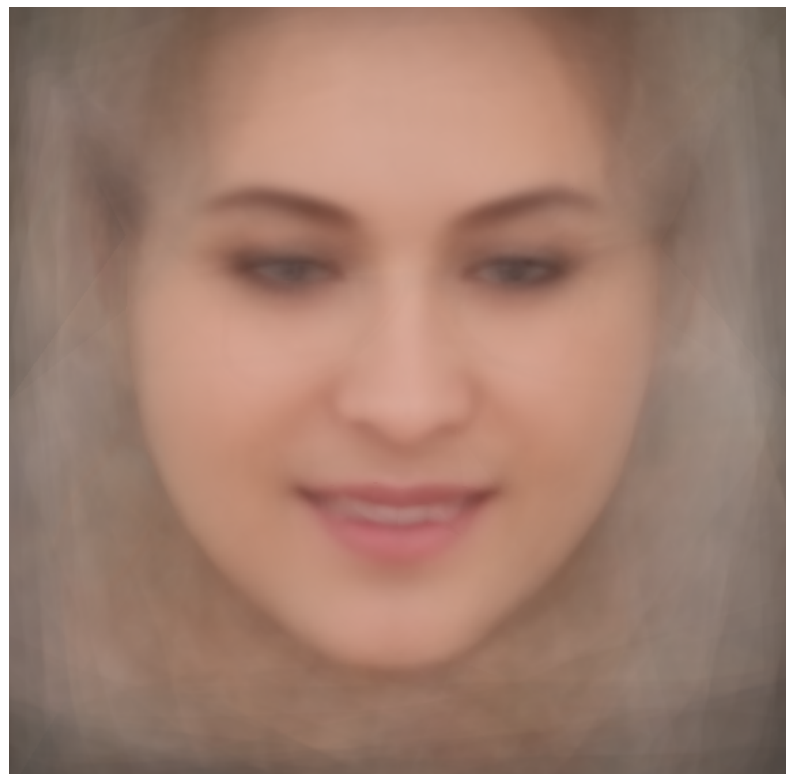
"chihuahua  
owner"



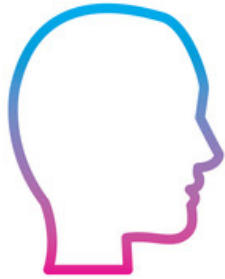
"person reading a  
newspaper"



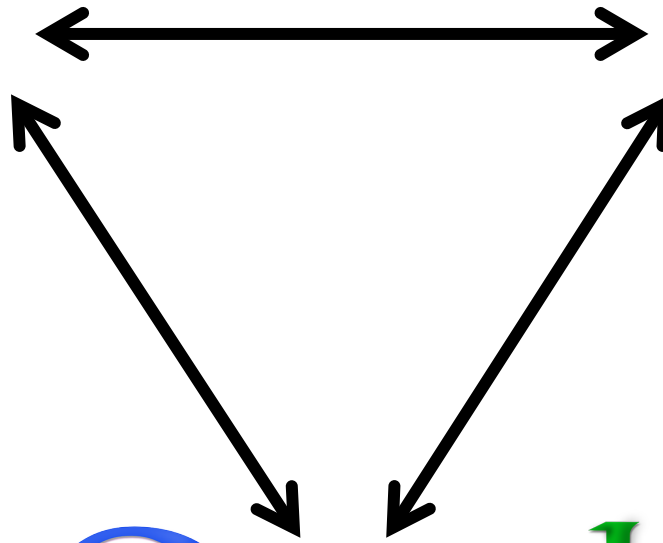
"person reading a  
cookbook"



Beliefs  
&  
Desires

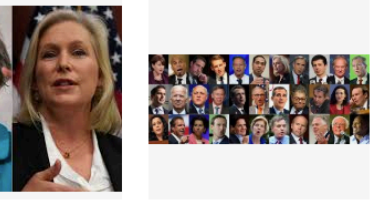
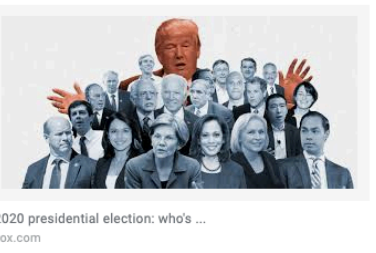
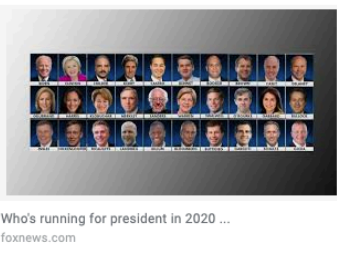
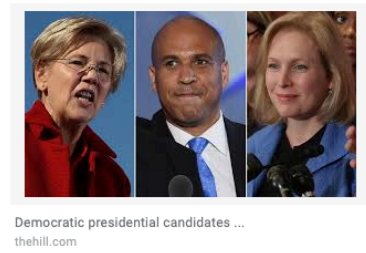
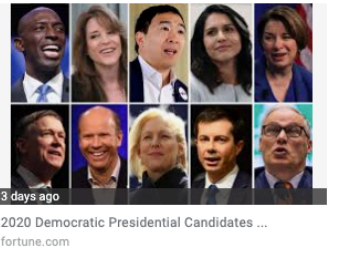


Reality



Google  
images

Representations  
&  
Aspirations



# Summary

1. People undermine their commitment to egalitarian values by making Bayesian judgments
2. Formalizing "egalitarian values"
3. Google Images as a proxy for the social environment

# Closing thoughts

Life is mostly between-subjects.

Make it more within-subjects.

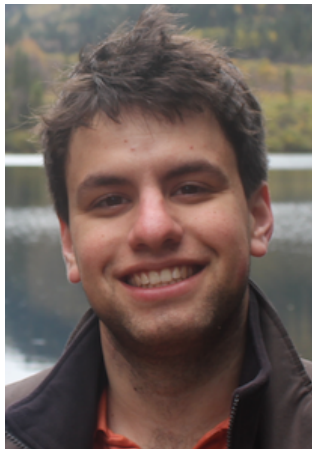
Need for theory on specifying egalitarian principles.

Relatively low-cost tweaks might go a long way towards promoting inclusion.

# Thank you



Mahzarin R. Banaji



Max Kleiman-Weiner

Harvard Social Cognition Lab

Jason Mitchell & Jim Sidanius

Research Assistants

Kirsten Morehouse

Juan Lopez Martin



**HARVARD**  
Mind Brain Behavior



**HARVARD Kennedy School**

**MALCOLM WIENER CENTER**  
for Social Policy