

Diversity Round Table: Racial Bias in Neuroscience

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Symposium

OHBM initially launched a Diversity and Gender Task Force in 2017 to address the growing need to recognize and address multiple forms of inequity with respect to gender balance and geographical representation on the Council (<https://www.ohbmbrianmappingblog.com/blog/you-spoke-we-listened-steering-a-new-course-with-respect-to-gender-equity>). Since 2017, this initiative has worked towards tackling a range of issues surrounding underrepresentation at OHBM. The task force has grown and evolved into a Diversity and Inclusion Committee (<https://www.ohbmbrianmappingblog.com/gender--diversity-committee.html>) that meets regularly to ensure that the needs of the diverse OHBM community are adequately represented at all levels of the organization and in all of its activities. As neuroscientists, the OHBM community increasingly recognizes that some groups are historically marginalized in ways that ultimately hinder both social and scientific progress. One way to combat these issues is to expose them and openly discuss ways to address them. This third Diversity Round Table follows up on the success of our inaugural symposium in 2019 focusing on gender biases in academia (https://www.pathlms.com/ohbm/courses/12238/sections/15843/video_presentations/137799) and the second virtual symposium in 2020 focusing on neuroscience and the LGBTQ+ community (<https://www.ohbmbrianmappingblog.com/blog/ohbm-2020-diversity-round-table-intersection-between-neuroscience-and-the-lgbtq-community>). The goal of the 2021 symposium is to facilitate productive discussions on how racial biases affect neuroscience research as well as neuroscientists of color. This is one of many actions we have planned to pursue as outlined in our statement following the murder of George Floyd (<https://www.ohbmbrianmappingblog.com/blog/ohbm-statement-george-floyd-and-black-lives-matter>).

Objective

- Familiarize the audience with examples of implicit and explicit racial biases which adversely affect individuals from underrepresented groups at both a personal and systemic level in science and academia.
- Present current research on the topics of how brain imaging and other relevant neuroscientific fields (e.g. genetics, health disparities, psychiatry) must grapple with harmful biases in order to make tangible progress.
- Demonstrate real-world examples of how mentoring of scholars from underrepresented groups can not only impact individuals' careers but also provide opportunities for novel advances in multilingual and multicultural research.

Target Audience

The target audience is the OHBM membership at large, but especially those who may not be aware of how pervasive racial biases have affected people of color and other underrepresented groups in science.

Presentations

White Supremacy in Neuroscience

The term “white supremacy” conjures up particular images of vile racists like neo-Nazis or the ku klux klan. However, white supremacy is more insidious and pervasive. Hearing this may cause discomfort, but the impact of the belief that white people are superior and should dominate society is seen in neuroscience. In this talk we will discuss how it shows up and how we can begin to dismantle it.

Presenter

Sharlene Newman, University of Indiana Bloomington, IN, United States

Creating Lasting Diversity Frameworks: The shift from optical to equitable

We have been confronted with the realities of existing disparities in the inclusivity and allyship practices within our institutions and academic communities, but what now? This talk aims to open a conversation around addressing the path to creating tangible, rather than performative, change within our local and globally scaled scientific community, moving towards equity and intersectionality as default mindsets.

Presenter

Sade Abiodun, Princeton Neuroscience Institute Princeton, NJ, United States

Challenges and Opportunities of Mentoring Latino Investigators

Dr Quiroz will discuss some mentoring strategies to better support the career development of scholars with Latino backgrounds, including considerations of mentoring first-generation students and international trainees.

Presenter

Yakeel Quiroz, Harvard Medical School Cambridge, MA, United States