Biology vs. Socialization

• Achievement gaps exist between groups.
• What causes them?
• Do certain groups tend to be innately talented? Or are there other factors in play?
Socialization

• Assigning a role to someone based on their gender, race, etc

• Has the ability to impacts one’s beliefs, attitudes and choices
Studies

• Gaps based more on personal beliefs and experiences than innate biological differences

• Video game study showed practice eliminated performance gaps

Source: “Mars and Venus Here on Earth,” Sommers
Structural Bias

- Disparity in distribution of opportunities
- Institutionalized opportunity gaps
“When high scoring students from low income are compared to similar high scoring students high income families, 80% of those in the top quarter go on and get college degrees, 44% of the lower income families, go on to get college degrees.”

Estimated Baccalaureate Degree Attainment by Age 24 by Family Income Quartile
1970 to 2009

Bachelor's Degree Attainment Rate (moving 3-year average)

Top Income Quartile: 82.4%
Third Income Quartile: 36.1%
Second Income Quartile: 16.5%
Bottom Income Quartile: 8.3%
Structural Bias: Bias in distribution of opportunities

- A common hiring practice is to ask for referrals from current employees
- Resources in schools aren’t evenly distributed
- Lack of Upward Mobility
Impacts engineering

- Prevent us from using all our talent
- Less fortunate may make less impact in society.
- Social justice
What can YOU do?

• Encourage dialogue
• Be aware of your attitudes
• Change policies to correct these issues
• Ask questions
• Growth mindset
Questions?