



bias

If you're human, you're biased. Now what?

Documentary | USA | 88 Minutes | Color | English

Current as of 03/07/20

Director: Robin Hauser

Producers: Robin Hauser and Christie Herring

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tagline If you're human, you're biased. Now what?

logline ***bias*** challenges us to confront our hidden biases and understand what we risk when we follow our gut. Through exposing her own biases, award-winning documentary filmmaker Robin Hauser (*CODE: Debugging the Gender Gap*, *Running for Jim*) highlights the nature of implicit bias, the grip it holds on our social and professional lives, and what it will take to induce change.

brief synopsis The toxic effects of bias make headlines every day: sexual harassment, racial profiling, the pay gap. As humans, we are biased. Yet few of us are willing to admit it. We confidently make snap judgments but we are shockingly unaware of the impact our assumptions have on those around us. The documentary feature ***bias*** follows filmmaker Robin Hauser on a journey to uncover her hidden biases and explore how unconscious bias defines relationships, workplaces, our justice system, and technology. ***bias*** contemplates the most pressing question: can we de-bias our brains?

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bias

synopsis

The toxic effects of bias make headlines every day: sexual harassment, racial profiling, the pay gap. As humans, we are biased. Yet few of us are willing to admit it. We confidently make snap judgments, but we are shockingly unaware of the impact our assumptions have on those around us. The documentary feature **bias** follows filmmaker Robin Hauser on a journey to uncover her hidden biases and explore how unconscious bias defines relationships, workplaces, our justice system, and technology. **bias** contemplates the most pressing question: can we de-bias our brains?

There is a test that measures unconscious biases: the Harvard-based Implicit Association Test, or IAT. In **bias**, Robin takes the IAT and is shocked by her results. She embarks on an investigation into the nature of human bias, tracking down the test's co-creators, Mahzarin Banaji and Anthony Greenwald, to dig into the science behind bias before traveling across the country and around the world to explore cutting-edge research into bias and its effects on our social and professional lives.

Throughout, **bias** gives voice to neighbors concerned about profiling in their communities, CEOs battling bias in their businesses, and those of us hesitant to admit our own biases. After confronting her unconscious bias, Robin turns to action by engaging with innovative experiments — from corporate strategies to tech interventions and virtual reality — that are reshaping our understanding of implicit bias and attempting to mitigate it. In settings such as a police deadly force decision simulator and a virtual reality lab designed to reduce racial bias, the film considers the possibilities presented by new technology. At the same time, it exposes the risks we take by using algorithms to solve for human bias.

Humorous anecdotes, alarming exposés, and Robin's acute vulnerability prompt viewers to reflect on their own "gut feelings." When should we trust them and when should we let them go?

A Finish Line Features, LLC and Unleashed Productions, Inc. film

director's statement



While making and screening *CODE: Debugging the Gender Gap*, I spent two years travelling the globe talking to people about the lack of diversity in the tech industry. When I spoke with experts and audiences, one term kept surfacing: unconscious bias. Unconscious – or implicit – bias, I was told, is the underlying precursor to many of the “isms” that plague our society: sexism, racism, and ageism.

And what's more, we all have it.

I consider myself a fair person, but the more I learned about unconscious bias, the more I saw how it influenced my life. My closest friends are a lot like me. I make assumptions about people based on their appearances and where they grew up. I began to wonder: what biases do I have that I am not aware of and how do they affect my choices and actions? From these questions, *bias* documentary was born.

To make the film, I interviewed renowned scientists who introduced me to tests and innovative tools that unveil and measure bias. I took several Implicit Association Tests, which uncovered some deeply rooted biases I held. I sought out an experimental virtual reality lab at the University of Barcelona and saw myself, a white woman, with black skin. I experienced crime simulation in a deadly force decision-making training for police and learned the risks of following my gut.

Because I'm human, I will never be able to be completely fair and objective. I have learned, however, that by better understanding my biases, I can work to counteract them. I can slow down and question my snap judgements. I can seek diverse perspectives, and I can cultivate empathy for people who are not just like me.

Initially, I felt hopeful that I would learn the cure for implicit bias. Ultimately, I learned that there is not just one solution or call to action. Despite decades of research and technology, there isn't a panacea for human bias. We all have bias; that much is certain. The question I now ask myself is: what am I going to do about it?

Robin Hauser, Director/ Producer

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Iris Bohnet
Women in Public Policy Program
Director, Harvard Kennedy School



Anthony Greenwald
Professor of Psychology,
University of Washington



Mahzarin Banaji
Professor of Social Ethics,
Harvard University



Ronald Tyler
Criminal Defense Clinic Director,
Stanford University



Francesca Rossi
Researcher on AI Ethics,
IBM



Jerry Kang
Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity,
and Inclusion, UCLA



Abby Wambach
Retired, U.S. Soccer Team Captain



Nirav Tolia
Co-founder and CEO,
Nextdoor



Shikira Porter
Co-founder, Neighbors for
Racial Justice



Libby Schaaf
Mayor of Oakland, CA



Blake Irving
CEO, GoDaddy



Joanna Bryson
Associate Professor,
University of Bath

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Robin Hauser *director/producer*

Robin is the director and producer of cause-based documentary films at Finish Line Features and President of Unleashed Productions. Robin's award-winning film, *CODE: Debugging the Gender Gap*, premiered at Tribeca Film Festival 2015, and has caught the attention of the international tech industry and of policy makers and educators in Washington, DC and abroad. Robin's most recent documentary, *bias*, explores unconscious bias and how it affects us socially and in the workplace. She delivered a TED talk about the impact of unconscious bias on artificial intelligence and is a frequent speaker at major conferences on topics including diversity and inclusion, the importance of ethical AI, and gender equality. Robin has been featured in international publications: *Forbes*, *Fortune*, *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, *Fast Company*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Glamour*, *USA Today*, *Wired*, *Marie Claire*, and *San Francisco Business Times*. She has appeared on Bloomberg TV, CNN, NPR, CNBC.

Christie Herring *producer/editor*

Christie is an award-winning editor, producer, and director who has worked in documentary filmmaking for over 20 years. She recently edited and produced *CODE: Debugging the Gender Gap* and edited (with Jean Kawahara) NOVA's *Point of No Return*. Christie's credits include work with PBS, National Geographic, A&E, MBC1, the History Channel, and numerous nonprofit and corporate clients. Her ITVS-funded film *The Campaign* aired on public television and screened at numerous film festivals and universities. She received her MA in Documentary Filmmaking from Stanford University, was a 2013 San Francisco Film Society Film House Fellow, is a member-owner of New Day Films, and is a 2018 American Film Showcase Expert.

John Behrens *director of photography*

John is an Oakland-based cinematographer with a multi-disciplinary background in narrative feature, live music, commercials, corporate and documentary feature films. He uses various techniques from the different disciplines to bring a richer visual style to the documentary form of filmmaking. His recent documentary features include: *Spark: A Burning Man Story*, *Frontline: Death by Fire*, *Racing Extinction*, *The Mask You Live In*, and *Resilience*.

Brook Holston *supervising producer*

Brook is a Supervising Producer with many years of experience on documentaries and film productions of all kinds. She specializes in budgeting, scheduling and the myriad details and logistics of getting film crews and tons of equipment to the right place at the right time on planes, trains, boats, helicopters, underwater and over. Brook has most recently supervised documentaries for HBO, National Geographic Television, Discovery, BBC and PBS.

Molly Schwartz *animator*

Molly earned her BFA in painting from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and an MPS graduate degree in visual programming and physical computing at NYU's Interactive Telecommunications Program. She was the lead designer and animator for the documentary film *Watchers of the Sky* which won a Sundance Special Jury Award for Animation in January 2014. Recent film projects include *CANCER: Emperor of All Maladies*, *CODE: Debugging the Gender Gap* and *Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution*, among other films.

Kathryn Bostic *composer*

Kathryn is a composer and singer/songwriter known for her work on film, TV and live theater. She is a recipient of many fellowships and awards including the prestigious Sundance Time Warner Fellowship, Sundance Fellowship for Feature Film Scoring, Sundance/Skywalker Documentary Film Scoring and the BMI Conducting Fellowship. She is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences and Television Academy of Arts and Sciences. Kathryn is the Vice President of the Alliance For Women Film Composers. Her recent credits include *Dear White People*, *I Will Follow*, and *Middle of Nowhere*.

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Jack Youngelson
consulting producer

Jack is an Emmy award winning writer, producer, and director of documentary films. His projects have been shown by numerous broadcasters around the world, including PBS, HBO, BBC, and Channel Four. Recent credits include *Cancer: The Emperor of All Maladies* (PBS); *Mission Blue* (Netflix); *Ghosts of Abu Ghraib* (Sundance, HBO), *Ethel* (Sundance, HBO), and *Tierney Gearon: The Mother Project* (Sundance Channel). Other recent PBS credits include *Electric Nation*, *Rethinking Happiness*, *African American Lives II*, and *Finding Your Roots*.

**Joanne Lubeck
Esser**
associate producer

Joanne received her BFA in Dramatic Arts from UC Santa Barbara, and has since been working as a professional Actor in TV, Film and Theatre. She joined the Finish Line Features team in early 2015, and as Associate Producer serves as a liaison between the film team and its many partners, coordinates private screenings and speaking engagements, and supports production both on and off set.

Tierney Henderson
associate producer

Tierney studied Environmental Economics and English at UC Berkeley and joined the *bias* team after a term of Americorps service in northwestern Washington. Since pioneering her own (rather small) newspaper in the 4th grade, she has continued to hone her writing skills in support of social and environmental justice causes. As an Associate Producer on *bias* film, Tierney assists production across the board, from research and scripting to PR and distribution.

Among Web-based IAT Takers

64% prefer **STRAIGHT** over Gay People

68% prefer **WHITE** over Black People

75% prefer **THIN** over Fat People

77% prefer **YOUNG** over Old People

78% prefer **ABLE-BODIED** over Disabled People

Project Implicit, 22 Sept. 2017, www.projectimplicit.net/.

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directed by	Robin Hauser	presented by	Dell Technologies
produced by	Robin Hauser Christie Herring	in association with	Gilead Sciences
edited by	Christie Herring	executive producers	Helen Bradley and Steve Kleiman Broadway Angels The David and Lura Lovell Foundation David Diamond Brad Feld and Amy Batchelor Aristides Ioannides Kate and Wes Mitchell Regina K. Scully Techstars Millicent Calinog Tracey Jacki Zehner
supervising producer	Brook Holston		
consulting producer	Jack Youngelson		
associate producers	Joanne Lubeck Esser Tierney Henderson		
outreach and social media producer	Mel Nolan		
director of photography	John Behrens	funding provided by	VMware, Inc. Cisco Systems, Inc. Deloitte Silicon Valley Bank AvidXchange, Inc. JPMorgan Chase & Co. Ericsson, Inc. Adobe Pivotal Ventures, Executive Office of Melinda Gates
assistant editors	Jason Alarcón Sarah Cannon Lucas Guilkey		
lead design and animation by	Molly Schwartz	also funded by	Gregory and Marilyn Becker Family Foundation Henrietta Aigner and Joy Baldwin Foundation The Embrey Family Foundation Wendy Frank and Brian Bromberg Michelle and Mitch Lewis
music by	Kathryn Bostic		
post production supervisor for ZAP	Kim Aubry		
HD post production by	ZAP Zoetrope Aubry Productions		
online editor	Ashley Pagán		
color grading	Gary Coates		
post production sound services by	Skywalker Sound a Lucasfilm Ltd. Company		
sound design and re-recording mixer	Malcolm Fife		
graphic design by	Elisa Tanaka		
website design by	Agnieszka "Nikki" Orzel		
public relations	The 2050 Group Zehnder Communications, Inc.		

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Please visit the *bias* website, www.biasfilm.com, for more information about film screenings and educational resources and initiatives.



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