

# Bias in Language

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April 9, 2020

# Real-World Problems

**Google accused of racism after black names are 25% more likely to bring up adverts for criminal records checks**

- Professor finds 'significant discrimination' in ad results, with black names 25 per cent more likely to be linked to arrest record check services

**Amazon apologises for 'ham-fisted' error that made gay books 'disappear'**

**Firm apologises for sales ranking system mistake that hit books dealing with gay themes**

**Amazon scraps secret AI recruiting tool that showed bias against women**

# Motivation

- Biases in NLP models perpetuate stereotypes
- Stereotype-based biases worsen model performance

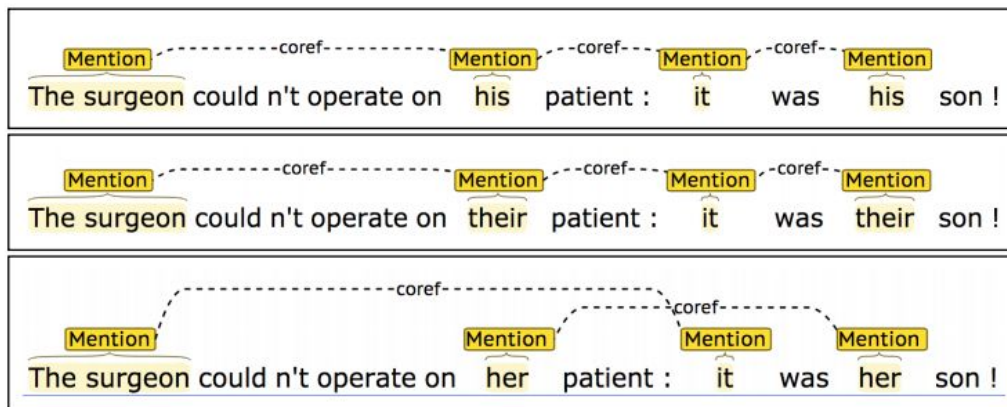
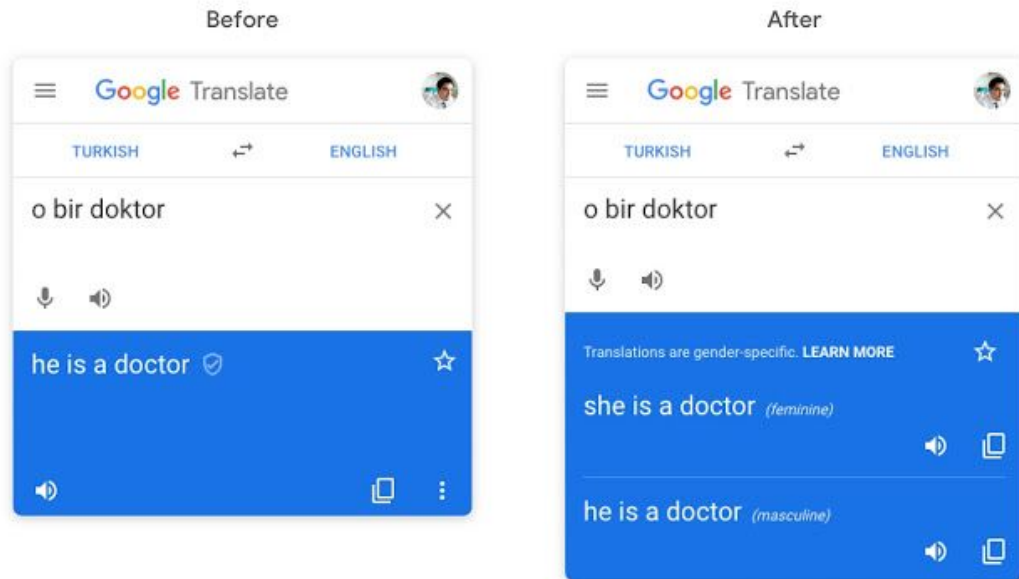


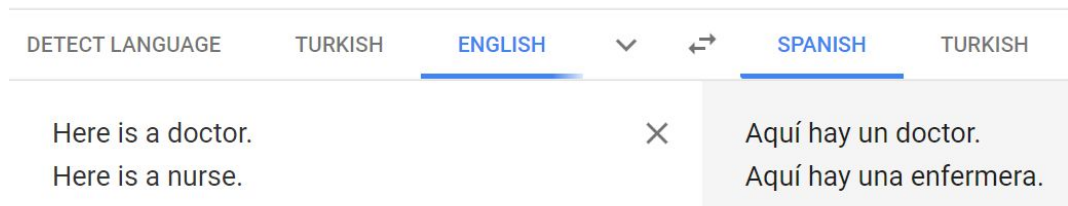
Figure 1: Stanford CoreNLP rule-based coreference system resolves a male and neutral pronoun as coreferent with “The surgeon,” but does not for the corresponding female pronoun.

# Motivation

- Despite some efforts, biases persist today



<https://ai.googleblog.com/2018/12/providing-gender-specific-translations.html>



# Overview

## Measuring Bias:

Semantics derived automatically from language corpora contain human-like biases (Caliskan et al., *Science* 2017)

On Measuring Social Biases in Sentence Encoders (May et al., *NAACL* 2019)

## Reducing Bias:

Men Also Like Shopping: Reducing Gender Bias Amplification using Corpus-level Constraints (Zhao et al., *EMNLP* 2017; best long paper award)

## The Bigger Picture

# Overview

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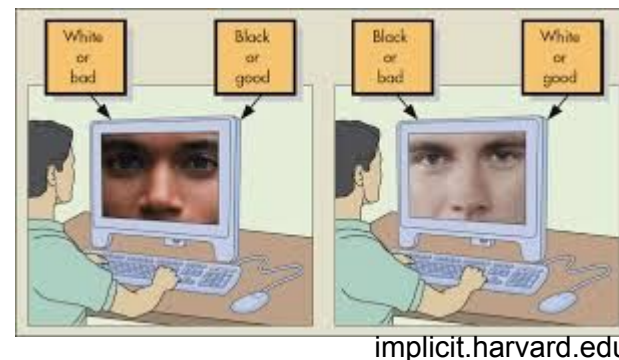
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The Bigger Picture

# Word Embedding Association Test (Caliskan et al., 2017)

- Measure bias in word embeddings (GloVe and word2vec)
- Based on Implicit Association Test
- Measure association between **target words** and **attribute words**



## Target Words

**X**

("European American Names")

Adam, Harry, Nancy...

**Y**

("African American Names")

Jamel, Lavar, Latisha...

## Attribute Words

**A**

("Pleasant Attributes")

love, cheer, friend...

**B**

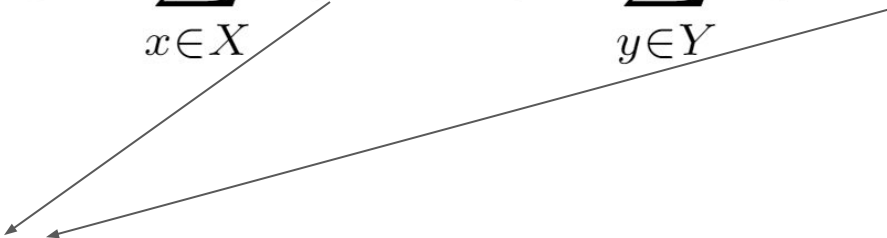
("Unpleasant Attributes")

ugly, evil, abuse...

# Word Embedding Association Test

- Difference between sums of  $s(w, A, B)$ , where  $s(w, A, B)$  is the difference in mean **cosine similarities**

$$s(X, Y, A, B) = \sum_{x \in X} s(x, A, B) - \sum_{y \in Y} s(y, A, B)$$


$$s(w, A, B) = \text{mean}_{a \in A} \cos(w, a) - \text{mean}_{b \in B} \cos(w, b)$$

# Word Embedding Association Test (WEAT)

- Effect size: Measures strength of association

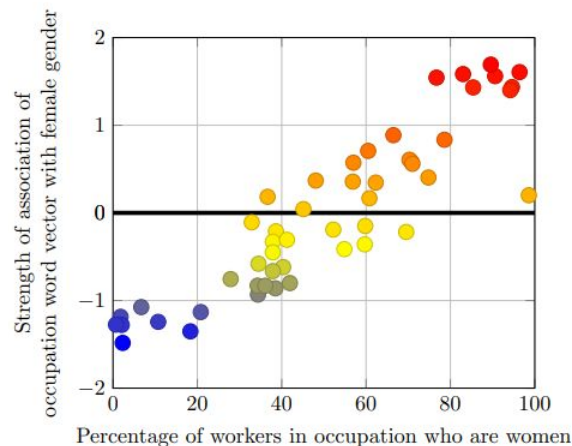
$$d = \frac{\text{mean}_{x \in X} s(x, A, B) - \text{mean}_{y \in Y} s(y, A, B)}{\text{stddev}_{w \in X \cup Y} s(w, A, B)}$$

- Permutation test to compute significance:

$$p = \Pr[s(X_i, Y_i, A, B) > s(X, Y, A, B)]$$

# Tests and Results

- Significant biases for several tests
- Word embeddings for professions correlate strongly with % of women in that profession
- Stereotypes reflected in statistical machine translation



|                                  |                     | Human IAT       |            | WEAT            |           |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Target Words                     | Attribute Words     | d (effect size) | p-value    | d (effect size) | p-value   |
| Flowers/insects                  | Pleasant/unpleasant | 1.35            | $10^{-8}$  | 1.54            | $10^{-7}$ |
| European-/African-American names | Pleasant/unpleasant | N/A             | N/A        | 1.24*           | $10^{-3}$ |
| Male/female names                | Career/family       | 0.72            | $10^{-2}$  | 1.89            | $10^{-4}$ |
| Math/arts                        | Male/female terms   | 0.82            | $<10^{-2}$ | 0.97            | .027      |
| Science/arts                     | Male/female terms   | 1.47            | $10^{-24}$ | 1.24            | $10^{-2}$ |

# Sentence Encoder Association Test (May et al., 2019)

- Extend WEAT to sentence encoders: same formulae
- Slot each word into a semantically bleached sentence template
  - Minimize effect of context
  - Focus on what attributes the encoder associates with a target word
- Apply WEAT to the vector embeddings of the target and attribute sentences

**Target Templates**

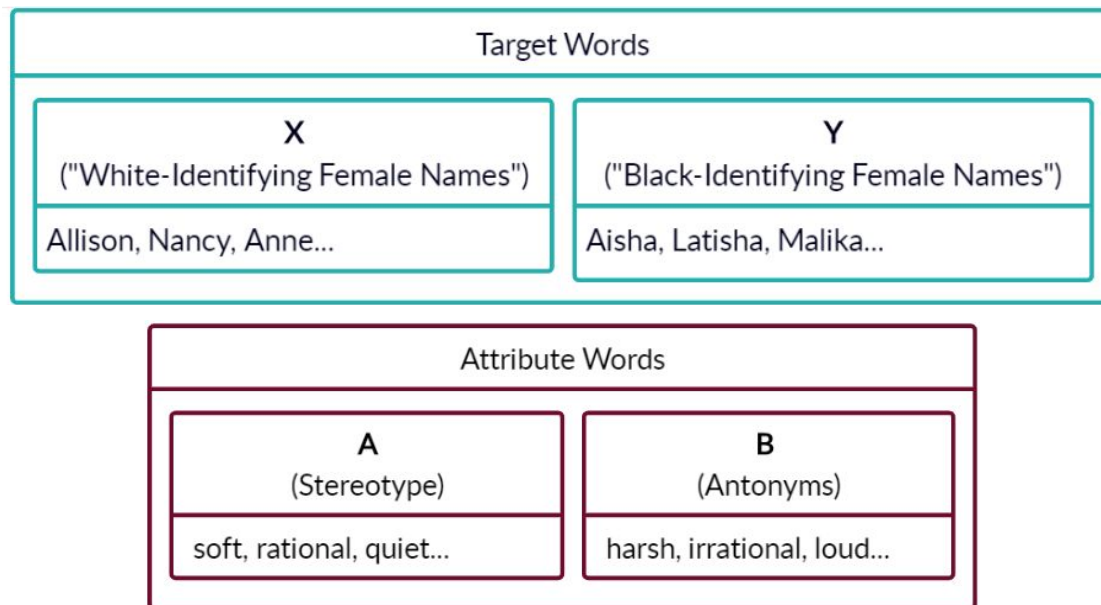
This is **Latisha**.  
**Latisha** is here.  
...

**Attribute Templates**

There is **love**.  
That is a **friend**.  
...

# Biases Tested: Angry Black Woman Stereotype

- Black women portrayed as loud, imposing
- Target words: white- and black-identifying female names
- Attribute words: Words associated with stereotype vs. their antonyms



# Biases Tested: Double Bind

- Women who clearly succeed are perceived as less likable
- Women who ambiguously succeed are perceived as less competent
- Target words: Male and female names
- Test 1: Likable vs. unlikable attributes
- Test 2: Competent vs. incompetent attributes

# Double Bind Tests

## Test 1: Likable/unlikable

### Target Templates

Ann is an engineer with superior technical skills.  
Bob is an engineer with superior technical skills.  
...

### Attribute Templates

The engineer is agreeable.  
The engineer is selfish.  
...

## Test 2: Competent/incompetent

### Target Templates

Ann is an engineer.  
Bob is an engineer.  
...

### Attribute Templates

The engineer is competent.  
The engineer is weak.  
...

# Sentence Encoders Tested

- CBoW: (baseline) average of GloVe word embeddings (Pennington et al., 2014)
- InferSent (Conneau et al., 2017)
- GenSen (Subramanian et al., 2018)
- USE (Iyyer et al., 2015)
- ELMo (Peters et al., 2018)
- GPT (Radford et al., 2018)
- BERT (Devlin et al., 2018)

# Results

- Little evidence of significant bias on newer models

|                | Test                   | Context  | CBoW   | InferSent | GenSen | USE    | ELMo   | GPT    | BERT   |
|----------------|------------------------|----------|--------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Caliskan Tests | C1: Flowers/Insects    | word     | 1.50** | 1.56**    | 1.24** | 1.38** | -0.03  | 0.20   | 0.22   |
|                | C1: Flowers/Insects    | sent     | 1.56** | 1.65**    | 1.22** | 1.38** | 0.42** | 0.81** | 0.62** |
|                | C3: EA/AA Names        | word     | 1.41** | 1.33**    | 1.32** | 0.52   | -0.40  | 0.60*  | -0.11  |
|                | C3: EA/AA Names        | sent     | 0.52** | 1.07**    | 0.97** | 0.32*  | -0.38  | 0.19   | 0.05   |
|                | C6: M/F Names, Career  | word     | 1.81*  | 1.78*     | 1.84*  | 0.02   | -0.45  | 0.22   | 0.21   |
|                | C6: M/F Names, Career  | sent     | 1.74** | 1.69**    | 1.63** | 0.83** | -0.38  | 0.35   | 0.08   |
| New Tests      | ABW Stereotype         | word     | 1.10*  | 1.18*     | 1.57** | -0.39  | 0.53   | 0.08   | -0.32  |
|                | ABW Stereotype         | sent     | 0.62** | 0.98**    | 1.05** | -0.19  | 0.52*  | -0.07  | -0.17  |
|                | Double Bind: Competent | word     | 1.62*  | 1.09      | 1.49*  | 1.51*  | -0.35  | -0.28  | -0.81  |
|                | Double Bind: Competent | sent     | 0.79** | 0.57*     | 0.83** | 0.25   | -0.15  | 0.10   | 0.39   |
|                | Double Bind: Competent | sent (u) | 0.84   | 1.42*     | 1.03   | 0.71   | 0.20   | 0.71   | 1.17*  |
|                | Double Bind: Likable   | word     | 1.29*  | 0.65      | 1.31*  | 0.16   | -0.60  | 0.91   | -0.55  |
|                | Double Bind: Likable   | sent     | 0.69*  | 0.37      | 0.25   | 0.32   | -0.45  | -0.20  | -0.35  |
|                | Double Bind: Likable   | sent (u) | 0.51   | 1.33*     | 0.05   | 0.48   | -0.90  | -0.87  | 0.99   |

\* = significant at 0.01

\*\* = significant at 0.01 after multiple test correction

# Discussion

- Stronger evidence for angry black woman stereotype than double bind
- Only evidence of double bind: Women perceived as incompetent regardless of context
- **Counterintuitive results: Differing p-values for similar tests**
- Math/arts and science/arts don't have similar associations with male vs. female names
  - $p=10^{-5}$  and 0.14 for BERT; 0.12 and  $10^{-3}$  for GenSen; 0.89 and  $10^{-4}$  for GPT
- African American bias test suggests that ELMo has **significantly different representations for similar words**
  - 1, 0.97,  $10^{-4}$  for different sets of pleasant/unpleasant attributes

# Conclusions

- No evidence for bias  $\neq$  no bias exists
- Assumption that set of sentence representations of a target or attribute actually embodies a coherent concept appears invalid
  - So encoders may behave differently on new words related to the target/attribute
  - **Results may not generalize**
- Suggested explanation: Cosine similarity is a poor metric

# Questions?

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The Bigger Picture

# Contributions

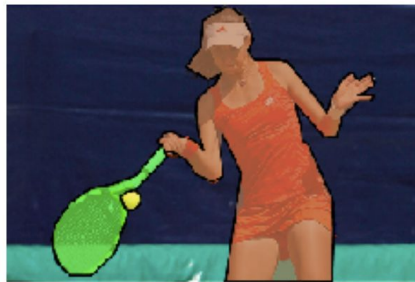
With experiments on two datasets:

- High dataset gender bias
- Bias amplification by models
- Method to reduce bias amplification



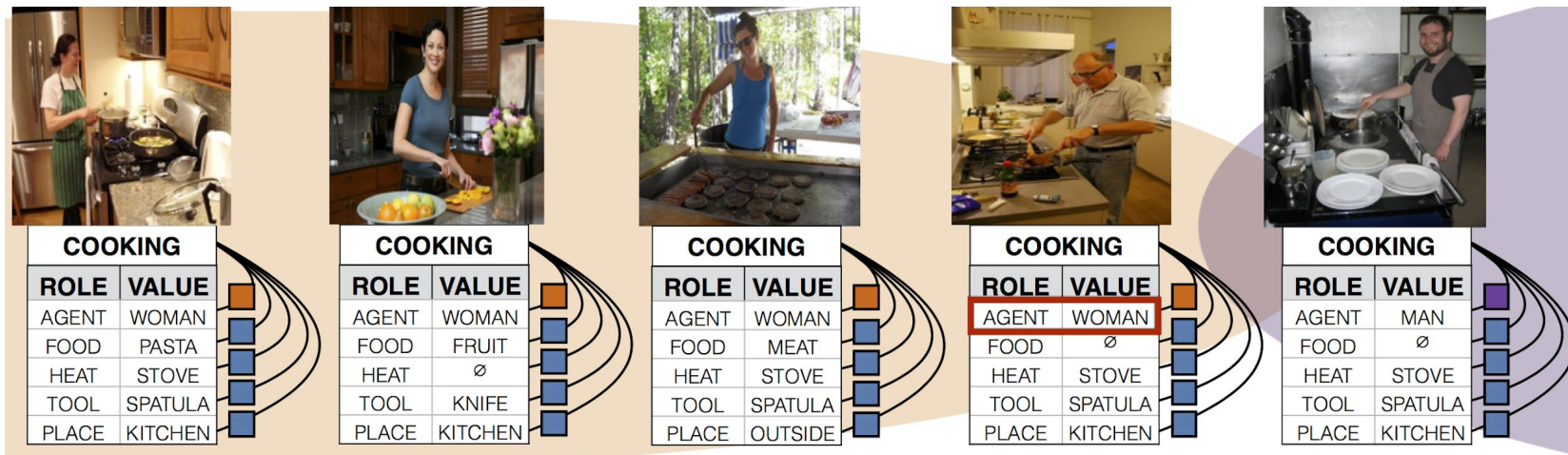
| painting |      |           |       |
|----------|------|-----------|-------|
| agent    | item | tool      | place |
| man      | car  | spray gun | room  |

[imSitu visual semantic role labeling](#)



[Microsoft COCO multi-label classification](#)

# Gender Bias in imSitu Visual Semantic Role Labeling (vSRL)

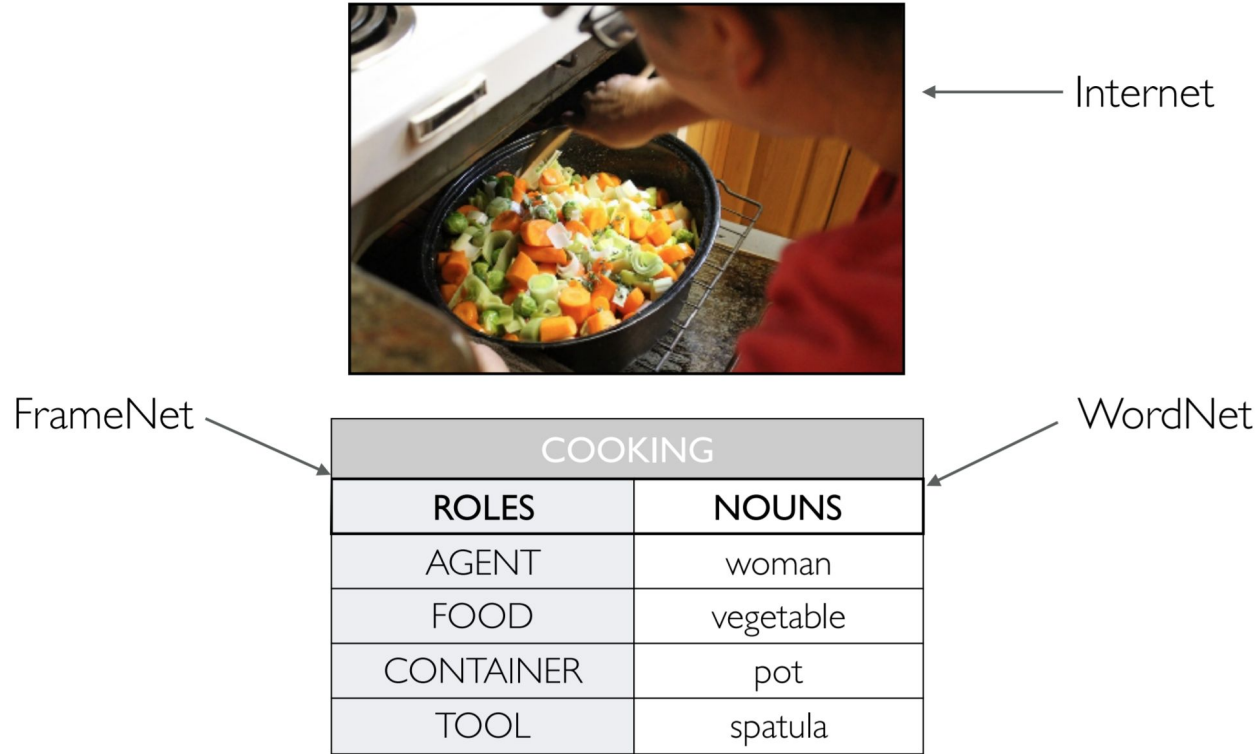


**Dataset bias:** in the training set, 33% of cooking images have man in the agent role.

**Bias amplification by the model:** 16% of cooking images in the test set are predicted with the agent role as man.

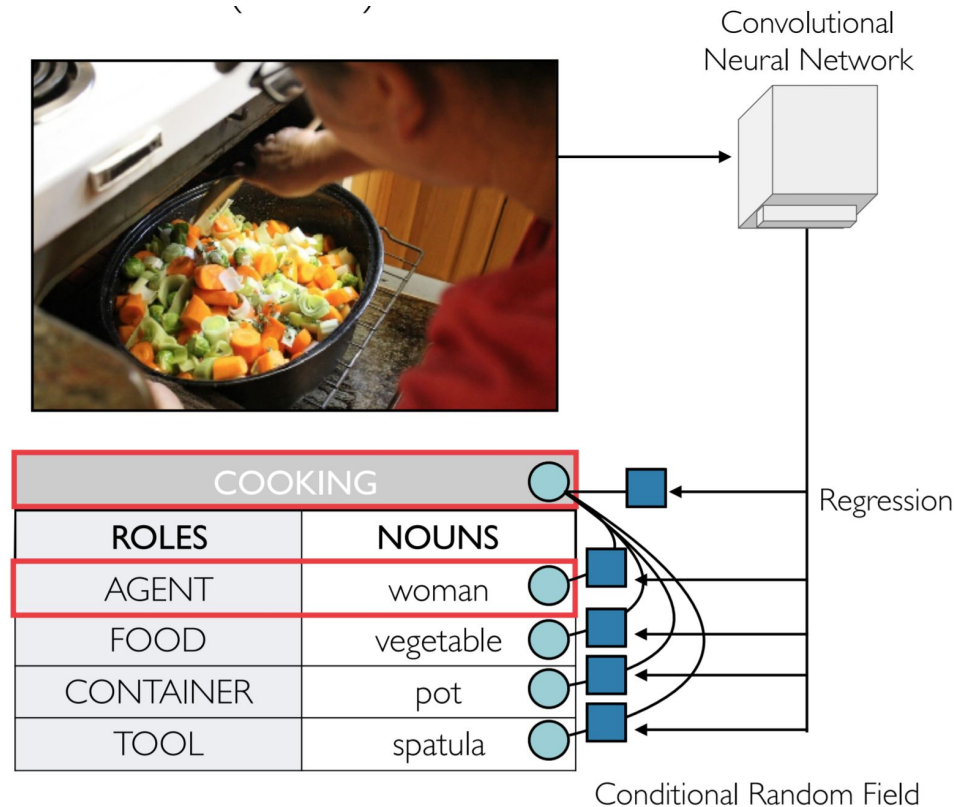
**Reduce bias amplification:** after applying the method, man appears in the agent role of 20% of cooking images.

# imSitu Visual Semantic Role Labeling (vSRL) [Yatskar et al. *CVPR16*]



Multivariable prediction: first the activity, and then corresponding semantic roles

# imSitu Visual Semantic Role Labeling (vSRL)



Focus on the gender biases of activities

# COCO Multi-Label Classification (MLC) [Lin et al. *ECCV14*; Chen et al. *arxiv15*]



← Internet

a woman is smiling in a kitchen near a pizza on a stove

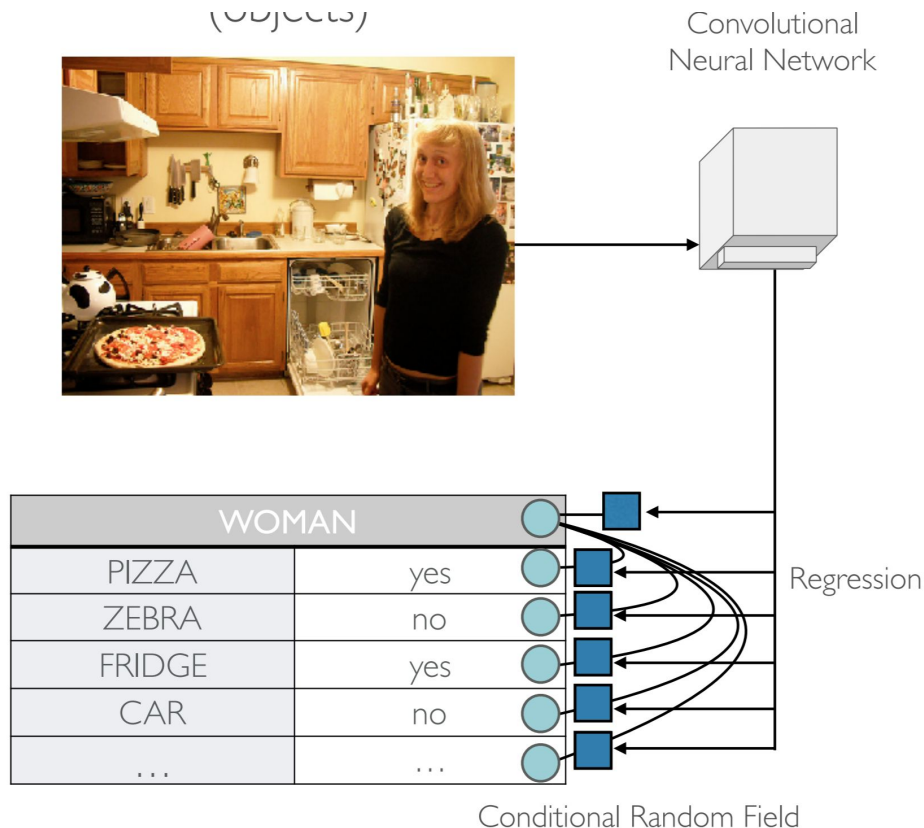
COCO  
Objects →

| WOMAN  |     |
|--------|-----|
| PIZZA  | yes |
| ZEBRA  | no  |
| FRIDGE | yes |
| CAR    | no  |
| ...    | ... |

← Caption Inferred  
Label

Multi-label classification: whether COCO objects exist in the image

# COCO Multi-Label Classification (MLC)



Focus on the gender biases of objects

# Contributions

With experiments on two datasets:

- **High dataset gender bias**
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# Measuring Dataset Bias

## Mathematical Notations:

- **Structured prediction**

- Several interdependent output variables:  $y = \{y_1, y_2, \dots, y_K\} \in Y$
- E.g., in the vSRL task, outputs include verb and associate semantic roles such as agent.

- **Demographic variables**

- $g \subseteq y, g \in G$  reflects **demographic** attributes such as **gender** or **race**
- E.g., {man, woman} of the agent output in the vSRL task

- **Output variables correlated with the demographic variables**

- $o \subseteq y, o \in O$  are correlated with variables  $g$
- E.g., in the vSRL task, the activity presented in an image such as cooking

# Bias Score to Measure Dataset Bias

$$b(o, g) = \frac{c(o, g)}{\sum_{g' \in G} c(o, g')},$$

$b(o, g)$  quantifies the bias of a given output,  $o$ , with respect to a demographic variable  $g$ , where  $c(o, g)$  is the co-occurrence frequency.

$o$  is positively correlated with  $g$  and may exhibit bias if  $b(o, g) > 1/\|G\|$ , for example, cooking and woman.

# Bias Score of imSitu vSRL

Training Gender Ratio (♦ verb)

Training Set

♦ cooking

● woman

● man



| ♦ | COOKING |          |
|---|---------|----------|
|   | ROLES   | NOUNS    |
| ● | AGENT   | woman    |
|   | FOOD    | stir-fry |



| ♦ | COOKING |        |
|---|---------|--------|
|   | ROLES   | NOUNS  |
| ● | AGENT   | man    |
|   | FOOD    | noodle |

$$\frac{\#(\text{♦ cooking}, \text{● man})}{\#(\text{♦ cooking}, \text{● man}) + \#(\text{♦ cooking}, \text{● woman})} = 1/3$$

# Bias Score of COCO MLC

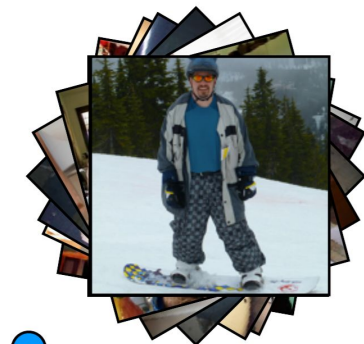
Training Gender Ratio (▲ noun)

Training Set

▲ snowboard

● woman

● man



| ● | MAN          |     |
|---|--------------|-----|
| ▲ | snowboard    | yes |
|   | refrigerator | no  |
|   | bowl         | no  |



| ● | WOMAN        |     |
|---|--------------|-----|
| ▲ | snowboard    | yes |
|   | refrigerator | no  |
|   | bowl         | no  |

$$\frac{\#(\blacktriangle \text{ snowboard}, \text{● man})}{\#(\blacktriangle \text{ snowboard}, \text{● man}) + \#(\blacktriangle \text{ snowboard}, \text{● woman})} = 2/3$$

# Contributions

With experiments on two datasets:

- High dataset gender bias
- **Bias amplification by models**
- Method to reduce bias amplification



| painting |      |           |       |
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# Defining Bias Amplification

Compare bias scores on the training set,  $b^*(o, g)$ , with bias scores on an unlabeled evaluation set predicted by the deep learning model  $\tilde{b}(o, g)$

- The evaluation set is assumed to be identically distributed to the training set.
- If the bias scores on the evaluation set are larger, we say bias has been **amplified**.

Further define **mean bias amplification** as

$$\frac{1}{|O|} \sum_g \sum_{o \in \{o \in O \mid b^*(o, g) > 1/\|G\|\}} \tilde{b}(o, g) - b^*(o, g).$$

# Bias Amplification on imSitu vSRL

Predicted Gender Ratio (♦ verb)

Development Set

- ♦ cooking
- woman
- man



| ♦ | COOKING |          |
|---|---------|----------|
|   | ROLES   | NOUNS    |
| ● | AGENT   | woman    |
|   | FOOD    | stir-fry |



| ♦ | COOKING |        |
|---|---------|--------|
|   | ROLES   | NOUNS  |
| ● | AGENT   | man    |
|   | FOOD    | noodle |

$$\frac{\#(\text{♦ cooking}, \text{● man})}{\#(\text{♦ cooking}, \text{● man}) + \#(\text{♦ cooking}, \text{● woman})} = 1/6$$

# Contributions

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| painting |      |           |       |
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# Design of Debiasing Method

**Expectations** of the debiasing method:

- Prediction debiasing: not more biased than the training set
- Model performance: as good as original model

Propose **Reducing Bias Amplification (RBA)** as a biasing mitigation method!

# Reducing Bias Amplification (RBA)

**Method:** inject constraints to ensure the model predictions follow the distribution observed from the training data within a given margin.

- Debiasing at the **inference time**, no need to retrain the model
- Constraints are applied at the **corpus level**, requiring predictions on all test instances
- Algorithm based on **Lagrangian relaxation**

# RBA on the vSRL task

Given a test instance  $i$ , the inference problem of the structured prediction model is to find

$$\arg \max_{y \in Y} f_{\theta}(y, i),$$

The output  $y$  consists of two types of variables,  $\{y_v\}$  and  $\{y_{v,r}\}$

$y_v = 1$  if and only if the activity  $v$  is chosen.

$y_{v,r} = 1$  if and only if both the activity  $v$  and the semantic role  $r$  are assigned.

$$f_{\theta}(y, i) = \sum_v y_v s_{\theta}(v, i) + \sum_{v,r} y_{v,r} s_{\theta}(v, r, i),$$

# Corpus-level Constraints

$$b^* - \gamma \leq \frac{\sum_i y_{v=v^*, r \in M}^i}{\sum_i y_{v=v^*, r \in W}^i + \sum_i y_{v=v^*, r \in M}^i} \leq b^* + \gamma$$

$y^i = \{y_v^i\} \cup \{y_{v,r}^i\}$  is the output assignment for the test instance  $i$ .

$b^* \equiv b^*(v^*, man)$  is the desired gender ratio of an activity  $v^*$ .

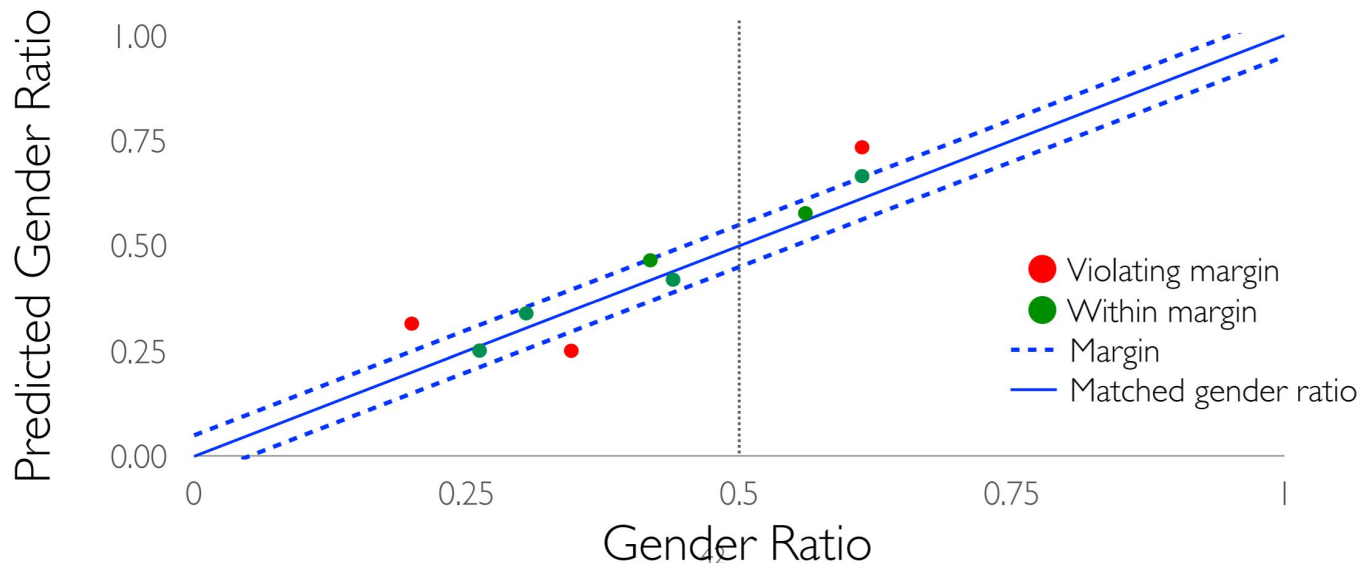
$\gamma$  is a user-specified margin.

$M$  and  $W$  are semantic role-values representing the agent as a man or a woman

Can be represented in the form of  $A \sum_i y^i - b \leq 0$ ,

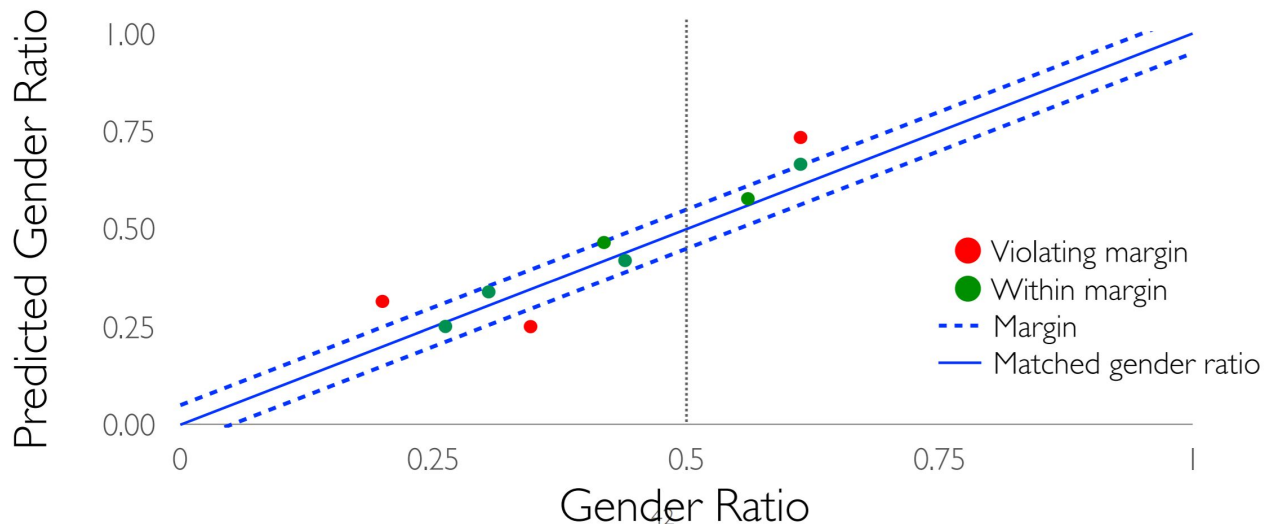
# Corpus-level Constraints

$$b^* - \gamma \leq \frac{\sum_i y_{v=v^*, r \in M}^i}{\sum_i y_{v=v^*, r \in W}^i + \sum_i y_{v=v^*, r \in M}^i} \leq b^* + \gamma$$



# RBA as a Constrained Optimization Problem

$$\begin{aligned} \max_{\{y^i\} \in \{Y^i\}} \quad & \sum_i f_{\theta}(y^i, i), \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & A \sum_i y^i - b \leq 0, \end{aligned}$$



# RBA as a Constrained Optimization Problem

$$\begin{aligned} \max_{\{y^i\} \in \{Y^i\}} \quad & \sum_i f_{\theta}(y^i, i), \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & A \sum_i y^i - b \leq 0, \end{aligned}$$

Reformulate the problem with **Lagrangian relaxation**, with  $\lambda_j \geq 0$

$$\begin{aligned} L(\lambda, \{y^i\}) = \\ \sum_i f_{\theta}(y^i) - \sum_{j=1}^l \lambda_j \left( A_j \sum_i y^i - b_j \right), \end{aligned}$$

# Iterative Process to Find a Solution

1. At iteration  $t$ , find the solution of each instance  $i$ .

$$y^{i,(t)} = \operatorname{argmax}_{y \in \mathcal{Y}'} L(\lambda^{(t-1)}, y)$$

2. Update the Lagrangian coefficients

$$\lambda^{(t)} = \max \left( 0, \lambda^{(t-1)} + \sum_i \eta (A y^{i,(t)} - b) \right)$$

# Experiment Setup (imSitu vSRL)

**Data preprocessing:** remove non-human oriented activities, such as *rearing*, *wagging*

**Model training:** a Conditional Random Field (CRF) based on pre-trained VGG image features  $f_i$

$$p(y|i; \theta) \propto \psi(v, i; \theta) \prod_{(e, n_e) \in R_f} \psi(v, e, n_e, i; \theta) \quad \psi(x, i; \theta) = e^{w_x^T f_i + b_x},$$

**Model accuracy:** top-1 SRL accuracy, how often the correct verb was predicted and the noun value was correctly assigned to a semantic role.

# Experiment Setup (COCO MLC)

**Data preprocessing:** (1) remove images with captions mentioning both or none genders; (2) remove objects that do not occur with man or woman at least 100 times in the training set

**Model training:** Training a CRF model based on pre-trained ResNet-50 image features  $f_i$

$$p(y|i; \theta) \propto \psi(g, i; \theta) \prod_{c \in y} \psi(g, c, i; \theta)$$

$$\psi(x, i; \theta) = e^{w_x^T f_i + b_x}$$

**Model accuracy:** top-1 average precision, the precision averaged across object categories.

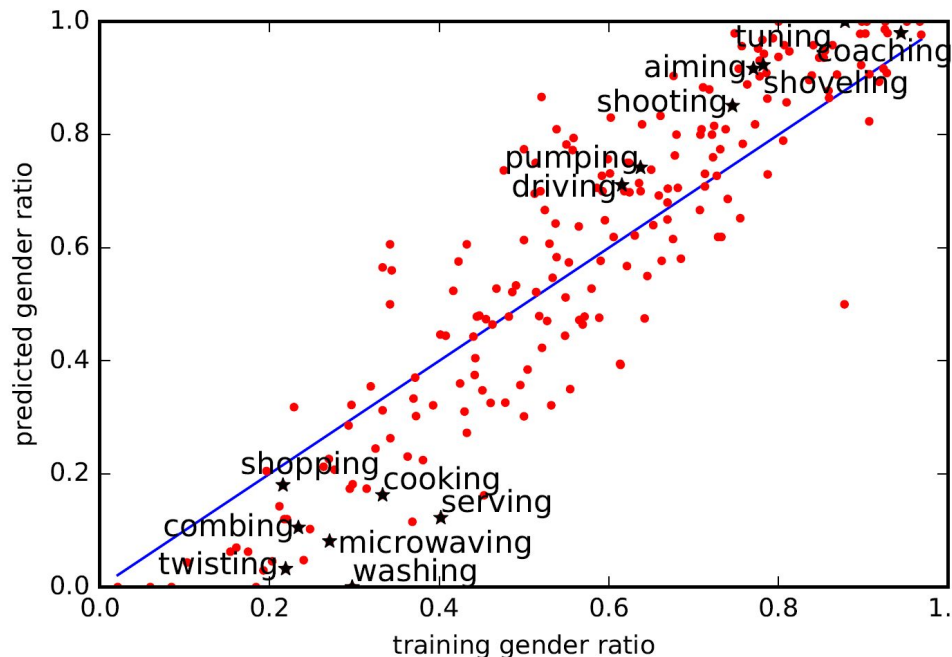
# Experiment Setup

| <b>Dataset</b> | <b>Task</b> | <b>Images</b> | <b><i>O</i>-Type</b> | <b><math>\ O\ </math></b> |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| imSitu         | vSRL        | 60,000        | verb                 | 212                       |
| MS-COCO        | MLC         | 25,000        | object               | 66                        |

Table 1: Statistics for the two recognition problems. In vSRL, we consider gender bias relating to verbs, while in MLC we consider the gender bias related to objects.

# Dataset Bias (x-axis) of the imSitu vSRL task

1. 64.6% of verbs favors a male agent with an average bias of 0.707
2. 46.95% of verbs has a gender bias larger than 0.7
3. Typical biased words for male (*coaching*, *shooting*) and female (*microwaving*, *shopping*)

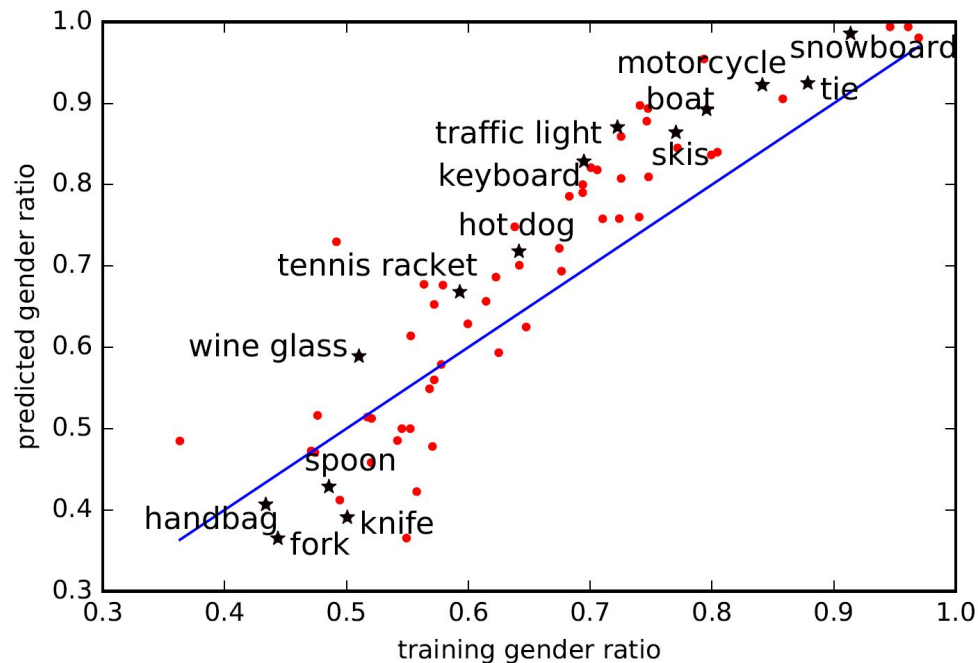


(a) Bias analysis on imSitu vSRL

The x axis is the ratio of man in training set

# Dataset Bias (x-axis) of the COCO MLC task

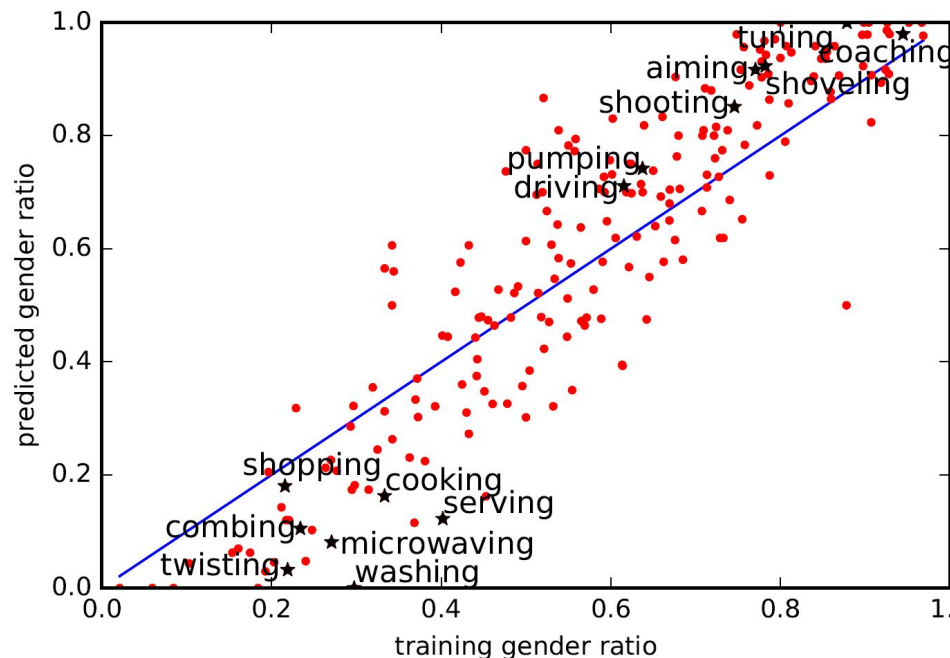
1. 86.6% of objects favors a male agent with an average bias of 0.65
2. 37.9% of nouns favor men with bias over 0.7.
3. Typical biased words for male (*snowboard*, *boat*) and female (*fork*, *knife*)



(b) Bias analysis on MS-COCO MLC

# Bias Amplification of the imSitu vSRL task

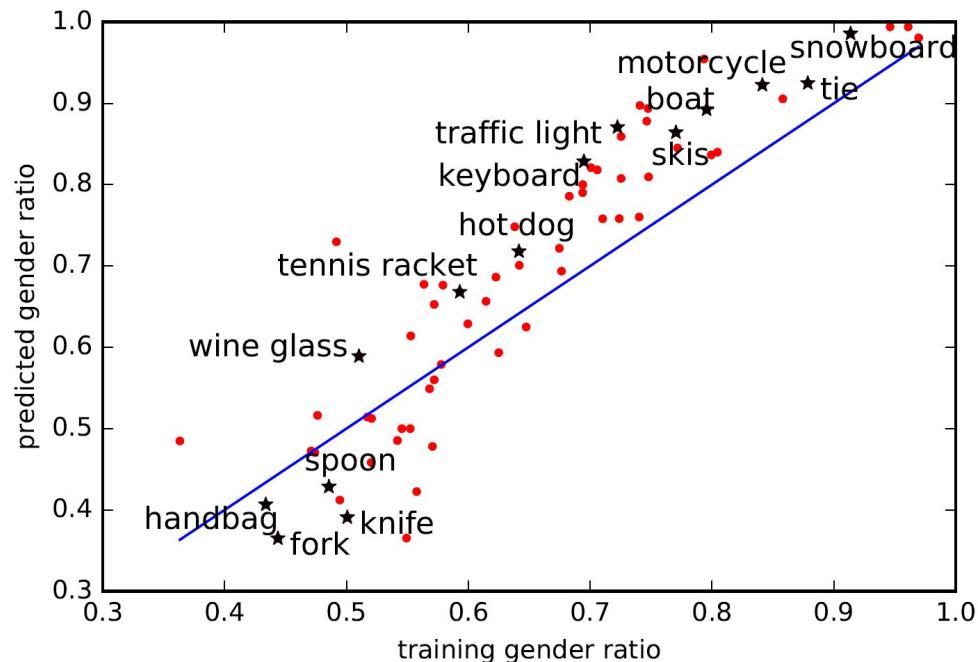
1. The mean bias amplification is 0.05.
2. Biased verbs tend to have stronger amplification: verbs with training bias over 0.7 has 0.07 mean amplification.
3. Words with large amplification: *washing, serving, tuning*.



(a) Bias analysis on imSitu vSRL

# Bias Amplification of the COCO MLC task

1. The mean bias amplification is 0.036.
2. Biased objects tend to have stronger amplification: verbs with training bias over 0.7 has 0.081 mean amplification.
3. Words with large amplification: *fork*, *keyboard*, *motorcycle*.



(b) Bias analysis on MS-COCO MLC

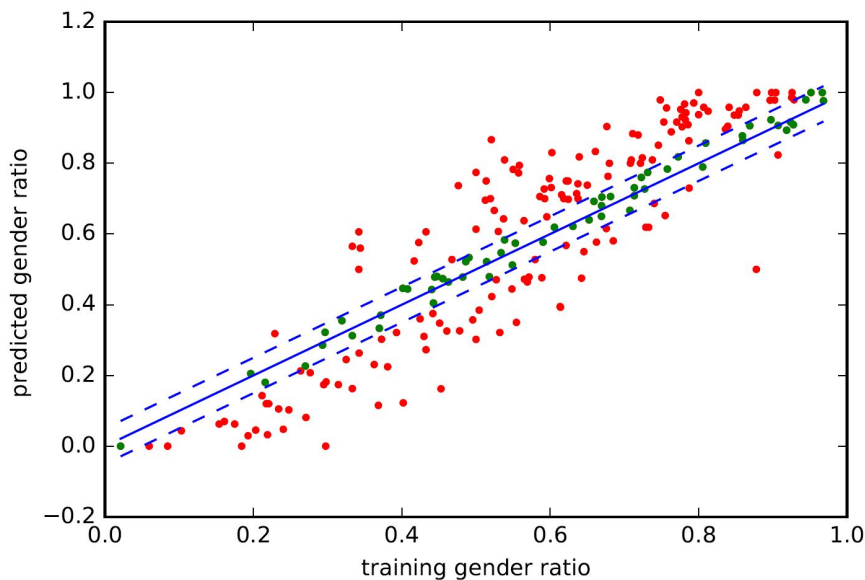
# RBA Debiasing Results

Set the **margin** of training bias scores as 0.05.

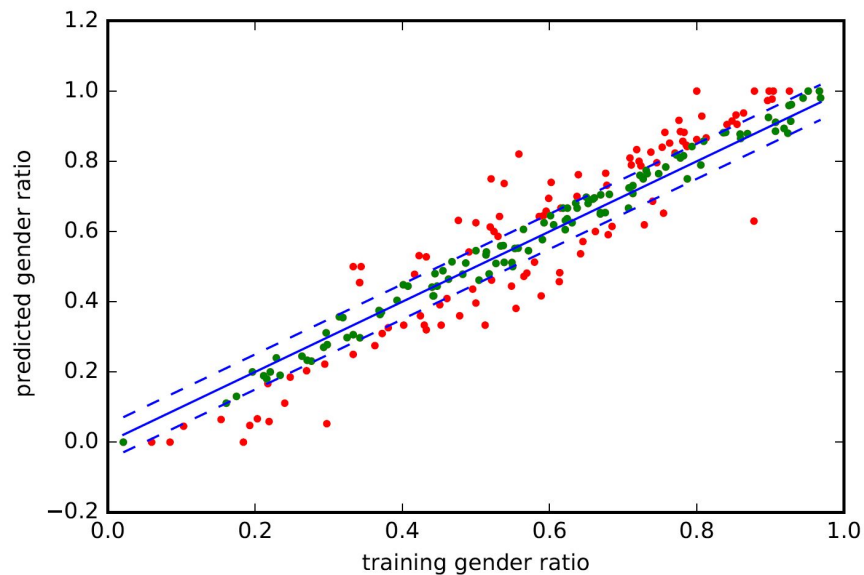
- Significantly reduces the number of violated constraints and the mean bias amplification.
- Cause negligible decrease in model performance (top-1 accuracy).

| Method                | Viol. | Amp. bias | Perf. (%) |
|-----------------------|-------|-----------|-----------|
| vSRL: Development Set |       |           |           |
| CRF                   | 154   | 0.050     | 24.07     |
| CRF + RBA             | 107   | 0.024     | 23.97     |
| vSRL: Test Set        |       |           |           |
| CRF                   | 149   | 0.042     | 24.14     |
| CRF + RBA             | 102   | 0.025     | 24.01     |
| MLC: Development Set  |       |           |           |
| CRF                   | 40    | 0.032     | 45.27     |
| CRF + RBA             | 24    | 0.022     | 45.19     |
| MLC: Test Set         |       |           |           |
| CRF                   | 38    | 0.040     | 45.40     |
| CRF + RBA             | 16    | 0.021     | 45.38     |

# Debiasing Results on the imSitu vSRL task



(a) Bias analysis on imSitu vSRL without RBA



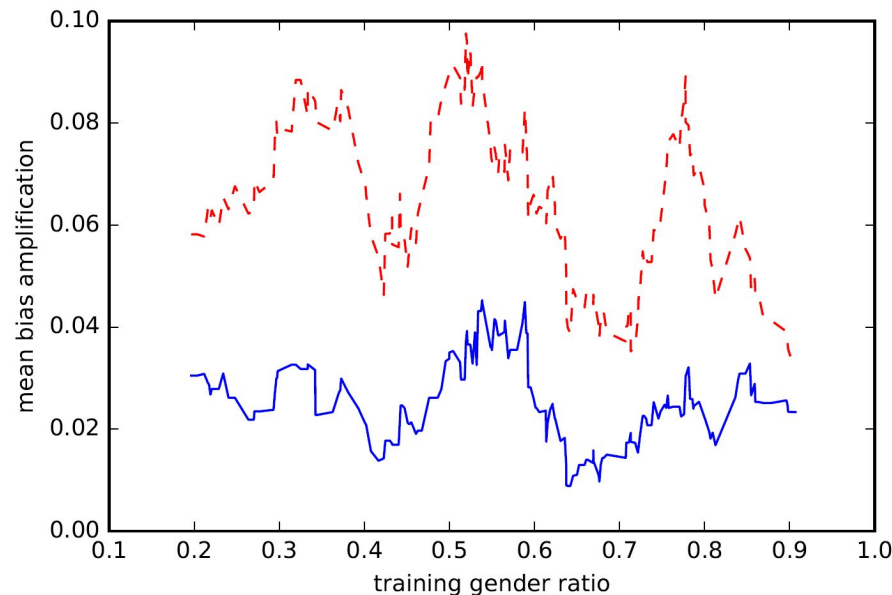
(c) Bias analysis on imSitu vSRL with RBA

The overall distance to training set distribution after applying RBA decreases by over 39%.

# Debiasing Results on the imSitu vSRL task

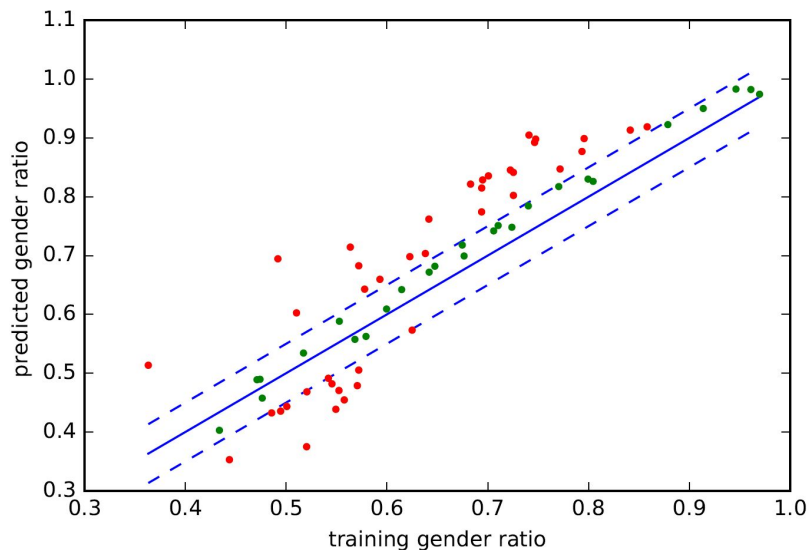
RBA is able to reduce bias amplification across all initial training biases.

In general, RBA has better debiasing performance in areas of high initial training biases.

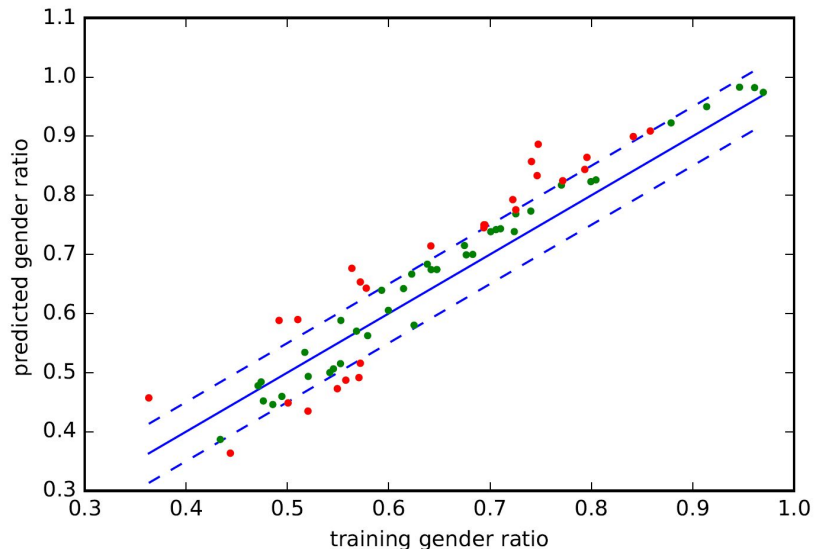


(e) Bias in vSRL with (blue) / without (red) RBA

# Debiasing Results on the COCO MLC task



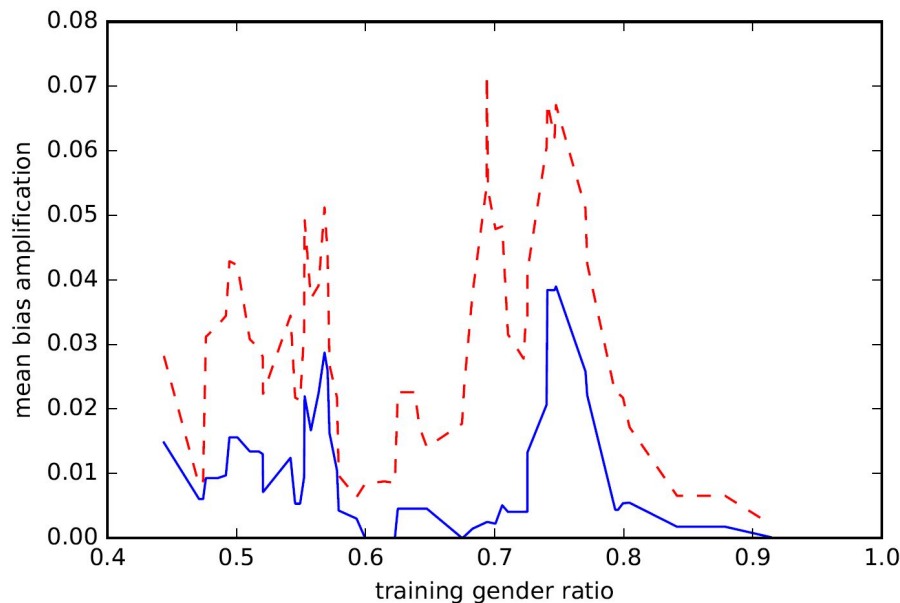
(b) Bias analysis on MS-COCO MLC without RBA



(d) Bias analysis on MS-COCO MLC with RBA

The overall distance to training set distribution after applying RBA is decreased.

# Debiasing Results on the COCO MLC task



(f) Bias in MLC with (blue) / without (red) RBA

RBA is able to reduce bias amplification across all initial training biases.

# Conclusion

The first work to demonstrate structured prediction models amplify bias in visual-language tasks.

Present a general framework to quantify dataset bias and bias amplification by the model

Propose RBA to calibrate test-time predictions, the first work to consider debiasing methods.

# Overview

## Measuring Bias:

Semantics derived automatically from language corpora contain human-like biases (Caliskan et al., *Science* 2017)

On Measuring Social Biases in Sentence Encoders (May et al., *NAACL* 2019)

## Reducing Bias:

Men Also Like Shopping: Reducing Gender Bias Amplification using Corpus-level Constraints (Zhao et al., EMNLP 2017; best long paper award)

## The Bigger Picture

# The Bigger Picture

1. **Other Efforts at Bias Detection: Coreference Resolution**
2. Other Efforts at Bias Mitigation
3. Types of Bias
4. Issues with Approaches to Bias

# Gender Bias in Coreference Resolution

- Rudinger et al., 2018
- Create sentence templates in which a **pronoun** is coreferent with either an **occupation** or a **participant**
- Tested on rule-based, statistical, and neural coreference resolution systems (Lee et al., 2011; Durrett & Klein, 2013; Clark & Manning, 2016)
- Male pronouns more likely to be resolved as occupation

(1a) **The paramedic** performed CPR on **the passenger** even though **she/he/they** knew it was too late.

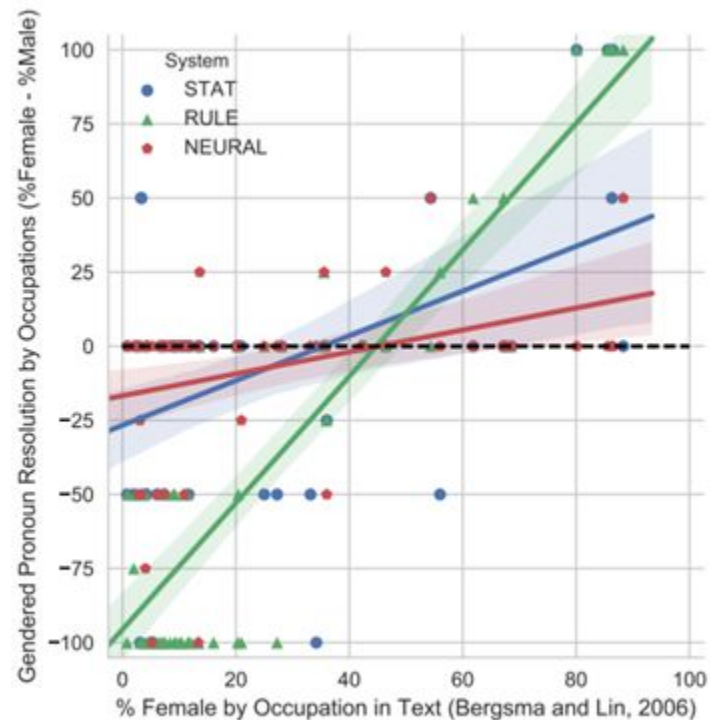
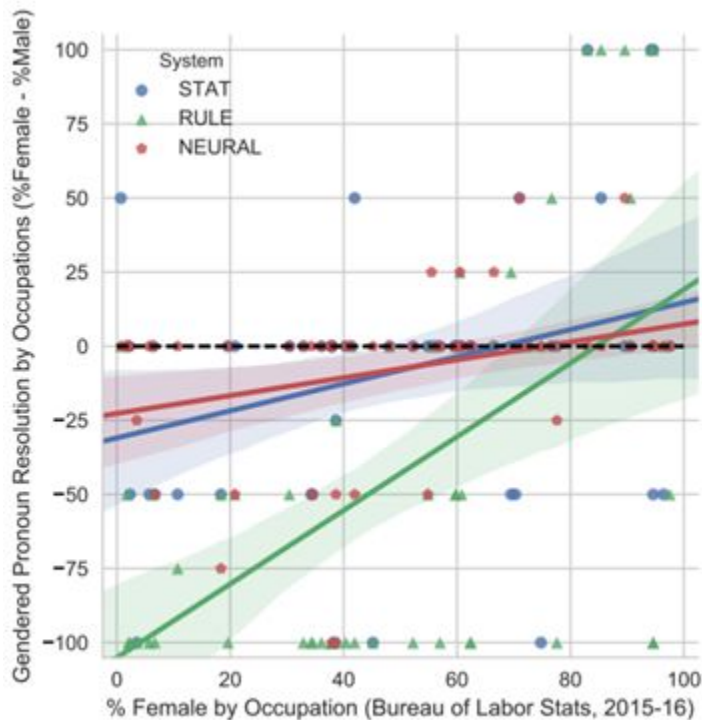
(2a) **The paramedic** performed CPR on **the passenger** even though **she/he/they** was/were already dead.

(1b) **The paramedic** performed CPR on **someone** even though **she/he/they** knew it was too late.

(2b) **The paramedic** performed CPR on **someone** even though **she/he/they** was/were already dead.

# Gender Bias in Coreference Resolution

- Gender chosen for specific occupations amplifies disparities in employment



# Bias Amplification

- Bureau of Labor Statistics: 39% of managers are female
- Corpus used for coreference resolution training: 5% of managers are female
- Coreference systems: **No** managers predicted female
- Systems *overgeneralize* gender

# The Bigger Picture

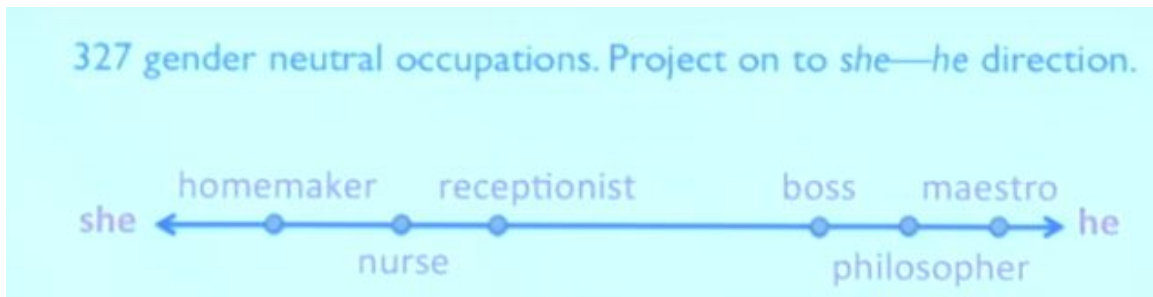
1. Other Efforts at Bias Detection: Coreference Resolution
2. **Other Efforts at Bias Mitigation**
3. Types of Bias
4. Issues with Approaches to Bias

# Open Question: Other Debiasing Methods

- Zhao et al, 2017: Debiasing at inference time without re-training the model
- Alternatives:
  - Reduce the bias during training
  - Directly manipulate the training data
- What are the pros and cons of these approaches? Which is most promising?

# Other Proposed Solutions: Debiasing Data

- Removing gender component of vector embeddings from gender-neutral words (Bolukbasi et al., 2016)
  - Make gender-neutral words orthogonal to the he-she direction



- But may lose real-world information

# Other Proposed Solutions: Later Adjustment

- Bias fine-tuning (Park et al., 2018)
  - Incorporate transfer learning from an unbiased dataset, then fine-tune on more biased dataset for the target task
- Prevent adversarial discriminator from predicting trait (e.g., gender) based on generator output (Zhang et al., 2018)

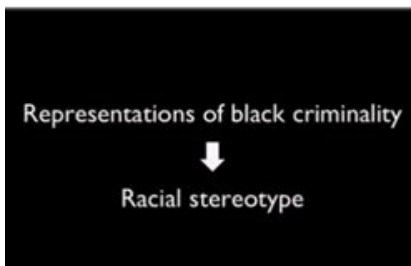
# The Bigger Picture

1. Other Efforts at Bias Detection: Coreference Resolution
2. Other Efforts at Bias Mitigation
3. **Types of Bias**
4. Issues with Approaches to Bias

# Types of AI Bias (Crawford, 2017)

- Allocation bias: System **performs worse** on a group
- Representation bias: System **perpetuates stereotypes** about a group

## REPRESENTATION



Long term  
Difficult to formalize  
Diffuse  
Cultural

## ALLOCATION



Immediate  
Easily quantifiable  
Discrete  
Transactional

# The Bigger Picture

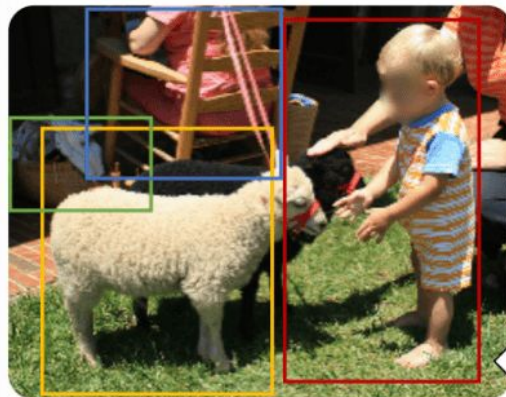
1. Other Efforts at Bias Detection: Coreference Resolution
2. Other Efforts at Bias Mitigation
3. Types of Bias
4. **Issues with Approaches to Bias**

# Issues With Bias in AI

- Should systems be **descriptively** or **normatively** correct? (Bailey & Deery, 2019)
  - Descriptively correct: Accurately describes the world as it is
    - E.g., knows that there are fewer female than male engineers
  - Normatively correct: Acts according to ethical norms
    - E.g., doesn't hire male engineers more frequently than female ones
- De-bias original representations of language?
  - Then lose real-world knowledge (descriptive accuracy)
- Don't de-bias representations?
  - Then may amplify biases (lose normative accuracy)

# Questions?

# Tasks Combining Computer Vision and Language



Visual Question Answering

What color is the child's outfit? Orange

Referring Expressions

child sheep basket people sitting on chair

Multi-modal Verification

The child is petting a dog. false

Caption-based Image Retrieval

A child in orange clothes plays with sheep.



The woman takes out a cucumber from the refrigerator.

**Predicate:** "takes out": track 1  
**Agent:** "The woman": track 2  
**Patient:** "a cucumber": track 3  
**Source:** "from the refrigerator": track 4  
**Destination:** " ": track 5

Visual Semantic Role Labeling

# Appendix

# Full Caliskan Results

- Multiple European-/African-American name association tests run with different sets of attribute words: strongest result on slide 10

| Target words                         | Attrib. words                   | Original Finding |                |      |             | Our Finding    |                |      |           |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|----------------|------|-------------|----------------|----------------|------|-----------|
|                                      |                                 | Ref              | N              | d    | p           | N <sub>T</sub> | N <sub>A</sub> | d    | p         |
| Flowers vs insects                   | Pleasant vs unpleasant          | (5)              | 32             | 1.35 | $10^{-8}$   | $25 \times 2$  | $25 \times 2$  | 1.50 | $10^{-7}$ |
| Instruments vs weapons               | Pleasant vs unpleasant          | (5)              | 32             | 1.66 | $10^{-10}$  | $25 \times 2$  | $25 \times 2$  | 1.53 | $10^{-7}$ |
| Eur.-American vs Afr.-American names | Pleasant vs unpleasant          | (5)              | 26             | 1.17 | $10^{-5}$   | $32 \times 2$  | $25 \times 2$  | 1.41 | $10^{-8}$ |
| Eur.-American vs Afr.-American names | Pleasant vs unpleasant from (5) | (7)              | Not applicable |      |             | $16 \times 2$  | $25 \times 2$  | 1.50 | $10^{-4}$ |
| Eur.-American vs Afr.-American names | Pleasant vs unpleasant from (9) | (7)              | Not applicable |      |             | $16 \times 2$  | $8 \times 2$   | 1.28 | $10^{-3}$ |
| Male vs female names                 | Career vs family                | (9)              | 39k            | 0.72 | $< 10^{-2}$ | $8 \times 2$   | $8 \times 2$   | 1.81 | $10^{-3}$ |
| Math vs arts                         | Male vs female terms            | (9)              | 28k            | 0.82 | $< 10^{-2}$ | $8 \times 2$   | $8 \times 2$   | 1.06 | .018      |
| Science vs arts                      | Male vs female terms            | (10)             | 91             | 1.47 | $10^{-24}$  | $8 \times 2$   | $8 \times 2$   | 1.24 | $10^{-2}$ |
| Mental vs physical disease           | Temporary vs permanent          | (23)             | 135            | 1.01 | $10^{-3}$   | $6 \times 2$   | $7 \times 2$   | 1.38 | $10^{-2}$ |
| Young vs old people's names          | Pleasant vs unpleasant          | (9)              | 43k            | 1.42 | $< 10^{-2}$ | $8 \times 2$   | $8 \times 2$   | 1.21 | $10^{-2}$ |