



Shaping Tomorrow
with AI Today

Beyond the algorithm:
Tackling gender bias in AI
with your Product Teams



Gender equality is still 60+ years away

Quick Disclaimer

I am not here to blame or make anyone
feel guilty.

We're here to build awareness, and explore
practical tools you can use to tackle gender
bias.

Your facilitator

Evelien Acun-Roos

- Trainer at Xebia
- Professional Scrum Trainer Scrum.org
- Certified Training From the Back of the Room (TBR) trainer
- Co-author of the Scrum Master Playbook



BEARS 5 steps

Beginnings

Exchange

Apply

Reflect

Sustain



Session with break out rooms.

This is a learning space, not a blaming space.

Think of a

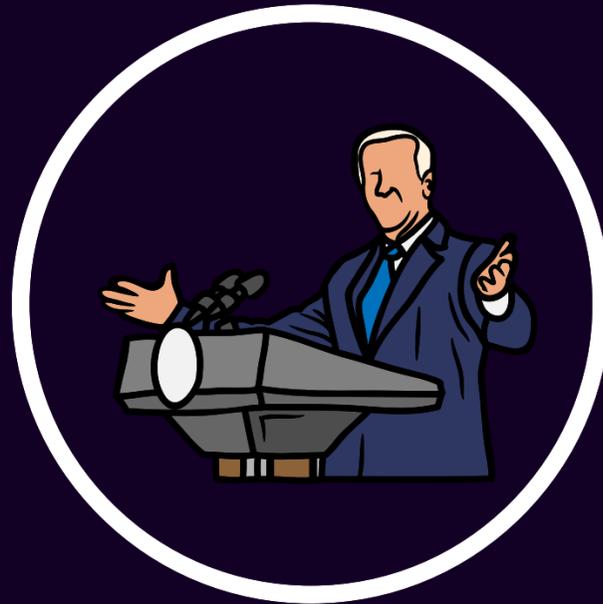
Doctor

President

Nurse

Someone
cooking
dinner

What did you see?



**Bias = a mental shortcut,
not a moral failure.**

**“If you have a brain, you
have bias.”**

Dr Jennifer Eberhardt



The Amplifier Effect

Human Bias

- Human scale
- Inconsistent
- Affects decisions
- Humans can break historical patterns

Example: A hiring manager unconsciously favors candidates who remind them of themselves.

AI Bias

- Machine scale
- Systematic
- Affects entire populations
- Learns from historical patterns

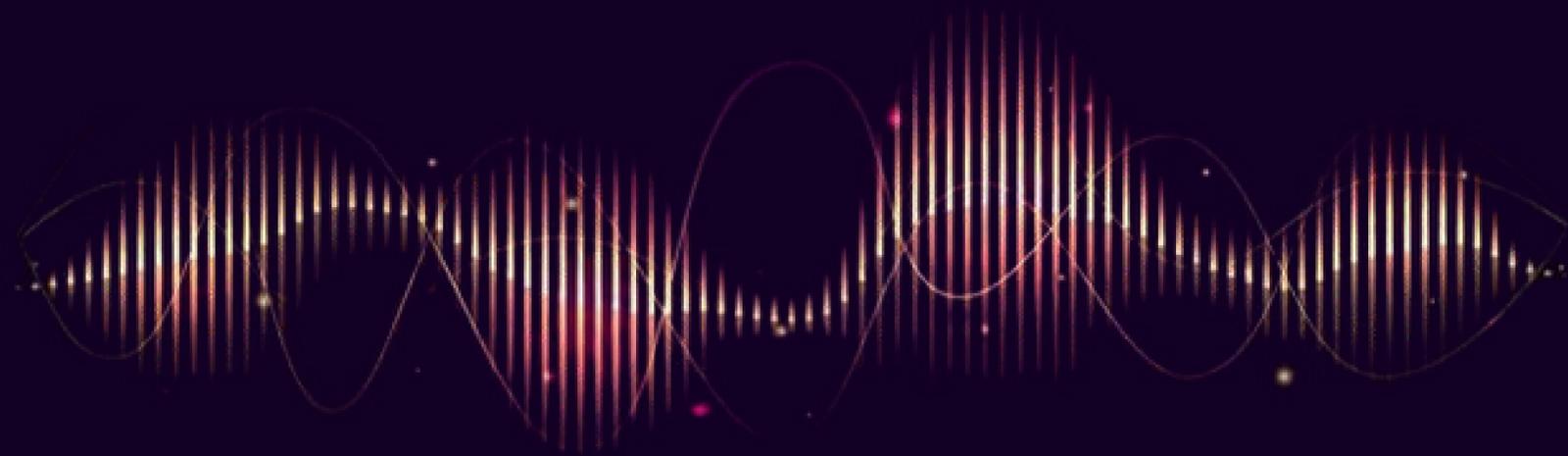
Example: An automated resume screener rejects all female candidates because it learned from historical male-dominated data.

Why This Matters Now

- 44% of AI systems show gender bias*
- Small bias entering a model → larger bias after scaling
- Rise of generative AI in UX
- Regulatory pressure

*<https://www.unwomen.org/en/articles/explainer/artificial-intelligence-and-gender-equality>

“I’m sorry, I didn’t understand that.”



Voice recognition bias is real

Heart attack misdiagnosis in women is real

Voice assistant emergency failures happen



DATA

**The Voice Assistant that
couldn't hear women**

What data might be missing or
underrepresented in YOUR product?"

The four Ds framework

Where gender bias enters your Products (and where your team can intervene)

DATA

DESIGN

DEPLOYMENT

DECISIONS

The four Ds framework

Where gender bias enters AI Systems (and where your team can intervene)

1. DATA

What data are we training on?

- Who's included?
- Who's missing?
- What's being measured?

2. DESIGN

What assumptions are we building into the product?

- What's "normal"?
- Who did we design for?
- What did we not consider?

3. DEPLOYMENT

How are we testing and releasing this?

- Who's testing?
- Who's affected?
- Who monitors after release?

4. DECISIONS

Who has power to question and challenge this?

- Is it safe to speak up?
- Who has final say?



DESIGN

The Health App that didn't track "Female Problems"

What assumptions about 'normal users' might be built into your product design?



DEPLOYMENT & DECISIONS

The Hiring AI that preferred men

Who on your team has permission to challenge AI decisions? Who should?

AI and Gender Inequality: A growing Risk

1

Teams who
create products

Women are underrepresented
in tech

- Only 22% of AI jobs
- Just 2% of EU tech funding goes to women-led startups

2

The Product

- Bias is built into products
- Bias is already built into AI systems

3

Users of AI

- Women using AI less, risk of future inequality
- Cyber violence silences women (deepfakes, online bullying)

The Product Problem



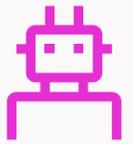
It's Real



Built In



Agile Fit



**And as of August 2026, detecting and mitigating gender bias
isn't just ethical.**

It's required by EU law for high-risk AI systems.

Interventions

Definition of Done

Retro Bias Lens questions

Product Backlog Bias Review

.....

Bias Buster Toolkit

Each group takes one of the scenario's and uses the toolkit to:

1. Identify which of the Four Ds is involved (2 min)
2. Which type of bias is involved? (4 min)
3. Design one intervention (e.g. Definition of Done item, retro question, or backlog refinement) (4 min)
4. Add your notes to the Miro Board
5. Prepare 30-second share (2 min)

The four Ds framework

Where gender bias enters AI Systems (and where your team can intervene)

1. DATA

What data are we training on?

- Who's included?
- Who's missing?
- What's being measured?

2. DESIGN

What assumptions are we building into the product?

- What's "normal"?
- Who did we design for?
- What did we not consider?

3. DEPLOYMENT

How are we testing and releasing this?

- Who's testing?
- Who's affected?
- Who monitors after release?

4. DECISIONS

Who has power to question and challenge this?

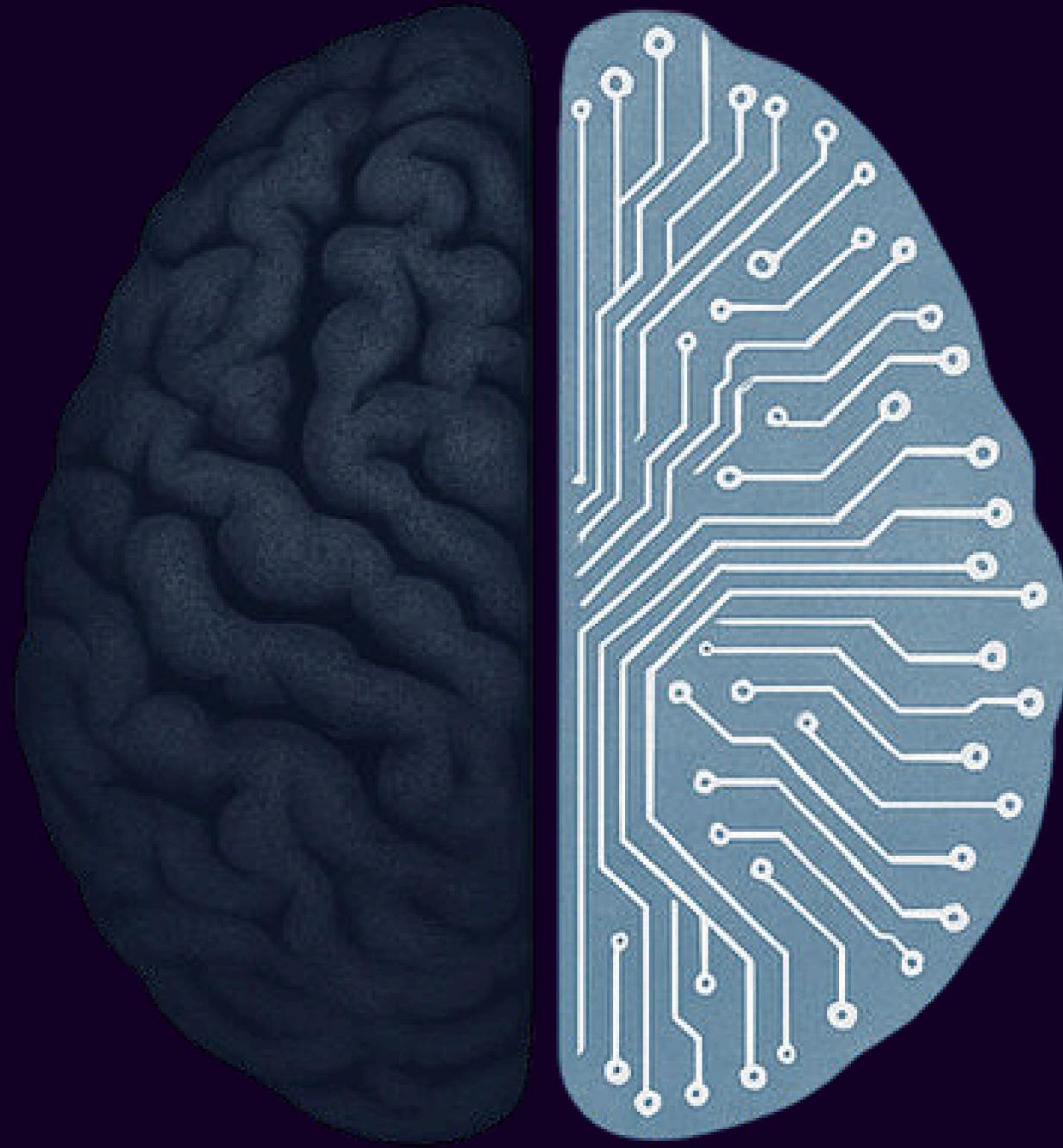
- Is it safe to speak up?
- Who has final say?

How do you know it's working?

Examples:

- # of bias concerns raised in Sprint Retrospectives
- diversity of test users
- inclusion items in DoD being checked

Bias in = bias out



ONE action you'll take



Add one inclusion question to your
Definition of Done



Add bias lens to your next
retrospective



Review one Product Backlog Item
through the Four Ds



Start a conversation about
who can challenge AI
decisions

**This is not just a tech problem.
It's a product problem.
It's a team problem.**

**And you now have the tools to solve it,
one Sprint at a time.**

Thank you for joining!



Give feedback to Evelien

Scan this QR code



Or go to

<https://talk.ac/evelienacunroos>

and enter this code when prompted

ADVENT

Powered By 



Source material used while researching

1. [The theory that men evolved to hunt and women evolved to gather is wrong](#)
2. [Do wages fall when women enter an occupation?](#)
3. [Faking deep voices to sound like an authority](#)
4. [Deep impact asserting authority low pitched voice](#)
5. [Perceptions of male - female leaders](#)
6. [The origins of sexism, how men came to rule 12000 years ago](#)
7. [Ambivalent Sexism and Religion: Connected Through Values](#)
8. [Teaching feminism to toddlers](#)

AI related

1. <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/chatgpt-replicates-gender-bias-in-recommendation-letters/>
2. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-amazon-com-jobs-automation-insight-idUSKCN1MK08G/>
3. <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/generative-ai-unesco-study-reveals-alarming-evidence-regressive-gender-stereotypes>
4. <https://nypost.com/2024/04/26/tech/chatgpt-overwhelmingly-depicts-financiers-ceos-as-men-and-women-as-secretaries-study/>
5. <http://gendershades.org/overview.html>
6. <https://www.technologyreview.com/2021/06/23/1043082/podcast-hired-by-an-algorithm-2/>
7. <https://www.wired.com/story/openai-sora-video-generator-bias/>
8. <https://www.washington.edu/news/2024/10/31/ai-bias-resume-screening-race-gender/>
9. <https://www.pharmasalmanc.com/articles/the-gender-bias-built-into-ai-and-its-threat-to-womens-health>
10. <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2024/oct/08/family-court-judges-victim-blaming-language-domestic-abuse-cases-ai-project>
11. <https://www.changeincontent.com/women-in-ai-underrepresentation-bias-barriers/>
12. <https://www.changeincontent.com/feminine-voice-for-digital-assistants/>

