

What is something everyone has with them at all times but is invisible? Unconscious biases. It is like an invisible shadow that follows us wherever we go. This shadow can influence the way we see people and the assumptions we make about people's appearances. Are these unconscious biases helpful or harmful? I am not sure of the answer to that question. So, to answer this question, I created this piece of artwork.

In this piece of art, I wanted to see how unconscious biases plague the way people are first seen. What can someone assume based on just an appearance? The answer should be not that much, but society has taught people to make assumptions about others based on their appearances. These assumptions could be based on harmful stereotypes or the generalizing of a group of people.

I thought the best way to demonstrate this was to create a game for other people to test their biases. I began by interviewing people in the Napa community. I conversed with each of the people photographed about their identity and what assumptions people make about them based on their appearance. Using the photo and conversations with these individuals, I set up the interactive game. I asked people to put acetate on these photos. The different colors of the acetate relate to different identifiers. After putting the acetate on, the participants would listen to the audio of the actual interview I had with the person photographed. This shows people that their assumptions can be wrong and should be challenged every step of the way.

As a person of color, I am all too familiar with the idea of unconscious biases and assumptions. I also know these biases can carry on even within close relationships, but my overall message is that everyone should always try to challenge their biases and assumptions.

LAYERS OF UNKNOWN

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