

ACCENTuate the Positive

Perception of Accent and Authority among Classroom Instructors at Queen's University

Experiences of harassment or discrimination in connection to gender and race

70% of the instructors self-identified as accented were women

“Accents most certainly affect students' perception of authority and also affect faculty and admin's perceptions of others' authority in sharply negative ways. They are, I'm sure, related to a multiplicity of factors, including (most obviously) racism and classism. It may also be worthwhile investigating the perceived authority of men's voices vs. women's, and masculine vs. feminine voices.” Survey Participant

“Women's voices (tone, language, inflection) are not treated with respect. We are seen as shrill, emotional, and so on.” Survey Participant

“It is hard to separate racism or sexism from accent, but I think they all go together.” Survey Participant

Attitude towards accented instructors may include more than one bias. Biases intersect and overlap in multiple ways.