**0-0:20 – Intro**

The only times I’ve personally Pinterest are for dorm room decorations and the occasional gift inspiration. This is not necessarily surprising though. The stereotype goes that women by far make up the largest chunk of Pinterest’s community. And this could have something to do with how Pinterest takes in and presents information. In this video we’re going to investigate how two different Pinterest profiles with different backgrounds are presented information for the same searches.

**0:20-0:30 – male and 20**

**0:30-1:08 – personalized to male persona**

The first profile being studied is my own. I selected stereotypically male topics to follow, including technology, home improvement, and gadgets. A quick look at the recommended topics or me to follow support that Pinterest’s algorithm has “profiled” me based on gender, suggesting things like sports, survival skills, and trucks to me. Another quick look at my board shows a lot of typical “male” things, but also things related to a college student, like DIY beer bottle projects and dorm decorations. These are actually relevant things to me, but I highly doubt these types of things would show up on, say, a woman’s’ feed in her mid 40’s.

**1:08-1:18 – female and 42**

**1:18-1:52 – personalized to female**

And to test this aforementioned theory, we turn towards a newly created profile with different characteristics from myself. The next profile belongs to a fictitious 42-year-old woman named Kayla. She absolutely loves DIY’s, travel, makeup, fashion, and cooking. All things well represented in her favorite topics and feed. From nothing more than gender and age, we can already see vastly different boards. Obviously, neither account has been used much in the past, so it’s no surprise that Pinterest is purely showing things based on the interests we pick out and our gender in the beginning stages.

**1:52-1:59 – set up for search words**

The question now becomes how Pinterest uses information about us, like age and gender, as factors in presenting us results on seemingly random searches, like colors and places.

Our first search, simply the color purple, does not really present us with anything pertaining to a young adult male at all, with purple sparkles and women’s hairstyles making up a lot of the results.

And the search on Kayla’s account doesn’t really present us anything different other two dresses that did not appear on the search on my own account. To be fair, purple is typically a more feminine and rare color, so the similarity here isn’t necessarily surprising.

For our next search, Greece, I was presented with very scenic portraits of the country on my own account, which is what I would have expected.

As for our female profile… it was much of the same again. However, I did notice a few more pictures of women in these scenic portraits, whereas the male profile saw strictly landscapes. This potentially means that Pinterest is showing women pictures of other women in scenarios that they might hope to recreate someday.

In an eerily relevant search, we are presented with the word homeschool. The searches for our male profile are far from what I would have expected, with essentially every single result involving some type of “homeschooling for dummies” parenting book covers.

As for Kayla, I truly couldn’t find any discernable differences between her results and my own, which is surprising given Kayla would be the right age to actually be a parent. However, it is relatively likely that given the circumstances, all searches of homeschool would lead to the same resources.

Nothing too surprising came up in my results for family vacation. Books on travel and vacation destinations are likely the results I would want given the search.

As for the female profile, it was much of the same, with a few key photos raising some interesting points. For one, I noticed a book on Greece show up, unsurprising given the assumption that every website keeps data on searches to a certain degree. But I also noticed a kind of random picture of a family that was nowhere to be found in my own results, suggesting that the previous point of Pinterest showing women other women in desirable scenarios remains true.

For the final search, sweatshirt, I would expect the most variation and I think that’s what happened. Essentially all of my results were either male or unisex sweatshirts that were age appropriate for a 20 year old.

As expected, the results were tailored towards a female, but not necessarily one in her 40’s. It seems that age played no role in these results. However, one result that appeared in the male search also appeared in this one. A UNC sweatshirt.

This suggests to me that, more than any other method, Pinterest uses cookies and previous searches to present results, since looking for UNC and college related things are one of the only times I’ve ever personally used Pinterest.

In light of our method of data scraping completely failing me for Kayla’s profile, I still wanted to present some of the findings from my own profile’s data collection. As you can see, most of the major tags are pretty generic and non-gendered, like travel, products, and clothes. I wasn’t surprised by this given how similar the search results were between the two profiles. However, some of things I found through the results, like women being presented more desirable pictures of other women, and Pinterest using past searches and cookies to give us relevant results, remain a topic for further investigation