Stereotyping

- Prejudice is a negative attitude towards a social group.
- Stereotypes are a set of traits that society attributes to a particular social group.

Why do we stereotype?

Energy saving device- simplifies information and reduces the cognitive load.

- Judgemental heuristics are mental shortcuts for streamlining perception.
- Evidence- Macrae, Milne and Bodenhausen (1994)- experimental control was john is a skinhead (this would provide information about john’s traits without knowing john), the control were just told about john and john’s traits.
- The participants had to form impressions while monitoring an audio track.
- When they have to do 2 tasks, participants have to split the cognitive load.
- It was expected in the stereotype condition that they would apply more cognitive resources to do the task better on a multiple choice task about the audio type.

Stereotypes serving as justification function

- System justification theory (Jost and Banaji, 1994):
  - People want to believe that social systems are fair.
  - Stereotypes can rationalise any inequality that exist.
- Evidence- Jost and Kay (2005)
  - Participants were exposed to communal gender stereotypes.
  - Communal stereotype condition- do traits that apply more to women or men and to what degree?
  - It was found males engaged in gender-specific system justification in both conditions (the control too).
  - But women were more engaged in stereotypical behaviours after exposure to the stereotype.

Formation and Maintenance

- Through socialisation- media, family, for example at birth are given certain toys, etc that are learnt to be associated with gender.
- Stereotypes may bias the information we seek un a way that continues the stereotype.
- Johnston and Macrae (1994)
- Impression formation task: participants were given a selection of questions and answers from interviews of physics students.
  - It was found participants chose to view more stereotype confirming than disconfirming questions.
  - The ultimate attribution error (Pettigrew, 1979) is when negative stereotypes are attributed to disposition and positive behaviours are attributed to the situation.
- Barrett and Bliss Moreau (2009)