

An abstract graphic on the left side of the slide. It features a dark blue background with a network of white and red nodes connected by thin lines. The nodes are arranged in a complex, interconnected pattern, with some nodes highlighted in red and others in white. The overall effect is a sense of a dynamic, interconnected system.

# Social Categorization

Assoc. Professor Peter Strelan

*Psych 1A – Social Psychology*



THE UNIVERSITY  
of ADELAIDE

We acknowledge and pay our respects to the Kaurna people,  
the traditional custodians whose ancestral lands we gather on.

We acknowledge the deep feelings of attachment and relationship of the  
Kaurna people to country and we respect and value their past, present  
and ongoing connection to the land and cultural beliefs.

Length: 12m

# Introduction

This presentation discusses the negative real-world consequences that schemas and stereotypes can have.

## Learning Outcomes:

1. Understand the concept of social categorization
2. Learn how an inclination to divide one's social relationships according to in/outgroups can lead to prejudice and discrimination

# Prejudice and Discrimination

## Prejudice:

- A usually negative attitude toward people based on their membership to a particular group

## Discrimination:

- Negative behaviour towards a target of prejudice



Photo by [Unseen Histories](#) on [Unsplash](#)

# Social Learning

Prejudices are formed by:

1. Learning the prejudice from someone else (i.e. a parent) and then,
2. Having prejudices positively reinforced (i.e. parent laughing at a prejudiced joke)



# Social Categorization

Humans tend to categorize people into in-groups and out-groups.

- We tend to make more negative evaluations of out-groups, and more positive evaluations of our in-group

We derive self-esteem from our group identify.



# The Robber's Cave Study

Researchers studied two American summer camp groups.

- Provided a setting for developing strong ingroups and outgroups
- Kept the groups apart at first and helped them develop strong group social identities
- Then let them meet, and organised competitive activities between the two groups with desirable prizes

Ingroup vs outgroup mentality produced intense conflict between the groups.



# Ultimate Attribution Error

**Ultimate Attribution Error:** Where we make an attribution error about an entire group.

Real world example:

- Israeli–Palestinian conflict





# Summary

Several explanations exist for why prejudice and discrimination occur.

- Our inclination toward forming ingroups and outgroups could be to blame

Note: Social categorization can be good! For example, if we consider all humans in our ingroup, then we are less likely to hold strong negative views about other outgroups.

make  
history.

