




POLICE
SCOTLAND
Keeping people safe
POILEAS ALBA

Implicit Bias in Policing




Dr Pete Jones
Shire Professional Chartered Psychologists

Session Plan

- 
- What is unconscious (implicit) bias?
 - How may it affect our people decisions in policing?
 - How might it affect officer decision making around use of force?
 - How may it affect the training we design and deliver?
 - What does the research say we can we do about it?
 - Generating our own actions and advice

Setting the Tone



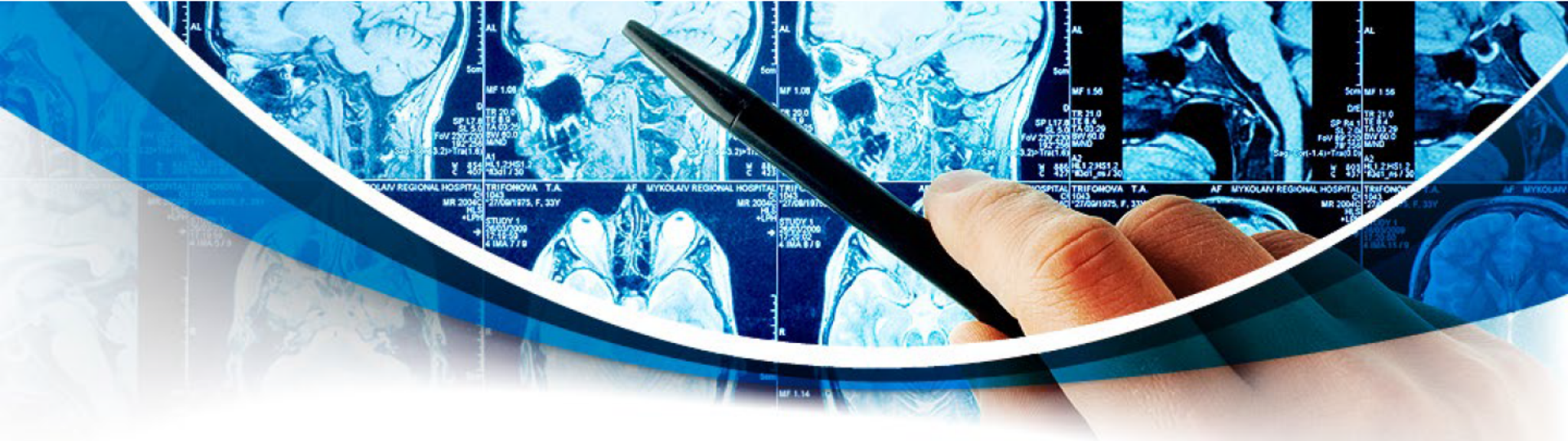
“There are no bad people, just bad thinking habits. Unconscious bias is a thinking habit we have learned and which we can unlearn.”

Professor Patricia Devine
University of Wisconsin-Madison



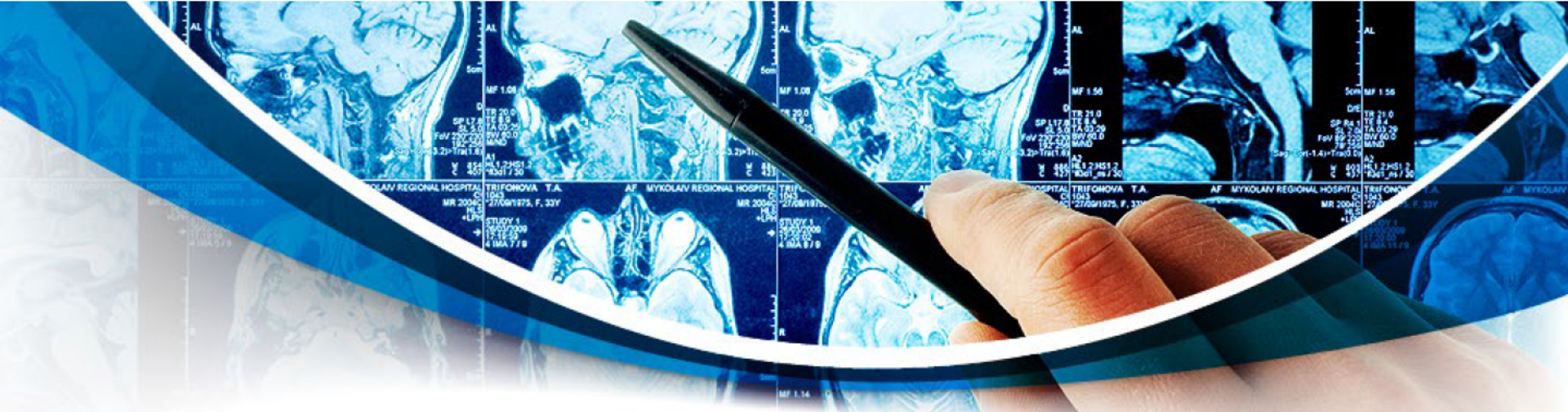
What may Implicit Bias look like in Policing?

- Floyd
- Lower proportions of BAME applicants to Policing and in recruiting
- Disproportionately fewer promotions
- Under representation at senior ranks
- Disparity in PSD outcomes
- Disparity in Stop-Search likelihood and Covid FPN
- Police use of Firearms/Taser
- Police Use of Force
- Disparity in police (-) social media representations of BAME communities
-
-



A bat and a ball costs £1.10
The bat costs £1 more than the ball
How much does the ball cost?





A bat and a ball costs £1.10
The bat costs £1 more than the ball
How much does the ball cost?

Bat

£1.10

£1.05p



Ball

10p

5p

£1.20p

£1.10p

Dual Processing (Kahneman)

A bat and a ball costs £1.10
The bat costs £1 more than the ball
How much does the ball cost?



What 'patterns' are there within your team, department, local police service or within Policing more widely?



Key facts about unconscious (implicit) bias

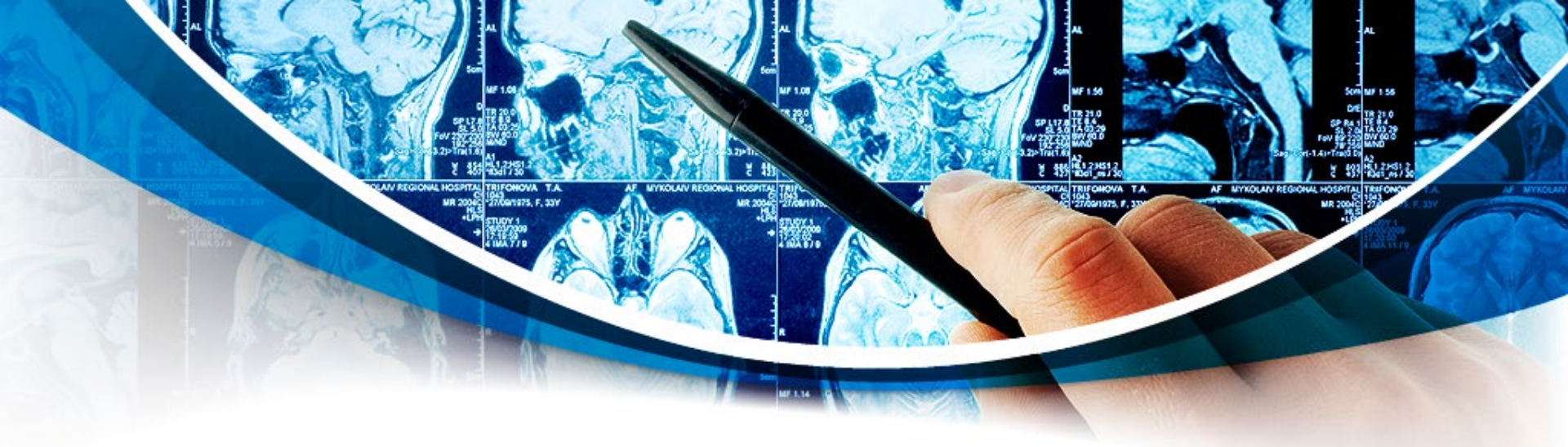
Implicit biases develop and are maintained from our **culture**, our **experiences** (patterns) and from the **media** we absorb.

Being biased is part of who we are; **we are ALL biased** and have a **bias blind spot**.

- Pronin (2002) but beware Duguid & Thomas-Hunt (2015)


Biases are easily triggered under **cognitive** or **emotional load**, when tired or deplete of glucose





41% of Police Officers believe stereotypes about other groups are 'usually true', compared to 26% of the public (YouGov, 22/6/2020 N=300 Police Officers)

Your Focus

- 
- **Recruiting**
 - Work Allocation & Team Formation
 - Performance Management
 - Professional Standards
 - **Use of Force**
 - **Stop Search**

Impacts: Recruiting



1. The Sheffield Study

Wood, M., Hales, J., Purdon, S., Sejersen, T. and Hayllar, O. (2009). *A test for racial discrimination in recruitment practice in British cities*. Department for Work and Pensions Research Report, 607.

2. The Meta-analysis of 738 correspondence tests in 43 separate studies conducted in OECD countries between 1990 and 2015.

Zschirnt, E. and Ruedin, D. (2016): Ethnic discrimination in hiring decisions: a meta-analysis of correspondence tests 1990–2015. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 42(7): 1115-34.
[Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies Volume 42, 2016 - Issue 7](#)

3. The GEMM Briefing paper Jan 2019. r. Valentina Di Stasio, European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations (ERCOMER) Utrecht University, Padualaan 14, 3584 CH, Utrecht,

Commonness leads to **Comfort** which affords implicit **Trust** and a perception of **Competence**

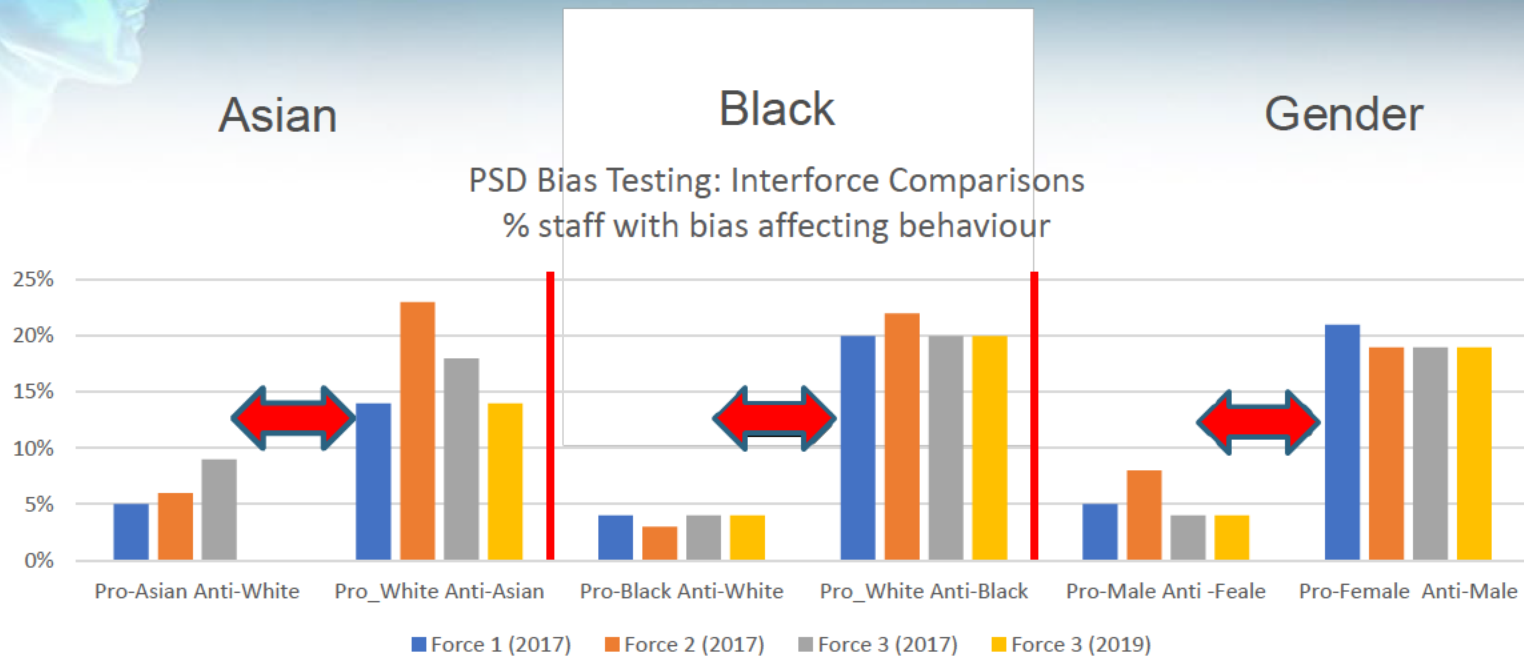
Impact: Recruiting and Selection

GEMM Briefing paper Jan 2019. r. Valentina Di Stasio, European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations (ERCOMER) Utrecht University, Padualaan 14, 3584 CH, Utrecht, Netherlands

**Table 1. Positive responses (callbacks),
by minority status of the applicant. N=3200**

Majority group	Pakistani	Nigerian	All other groups	
% rate	% rate	% rate	% rate	
All occupations	24.1	13.9	13.1	15.8
High-skilled occupations	25.8	18.3	11.7	20.2
All other occupations	23.2	11.9	13.7	13.6
All occupations - men	21.8	11.5	11.1	15.4
All occupations - women	26.5	16.6	15.7	16.2

Ethnicity & Gender: Professional Standards



Headlines:

- Sample sizes range from 34 to 107
- Patterns of PSD bias are broadly similar across the 3 forces
- Bias seems quite stable across time (2017-2019 in Force 3)
- One in four PSD investigators have an Ethnicity bias, mainly directed against BAME staff
- One in four PSD investigators have an Gender bias mainly directed against Men

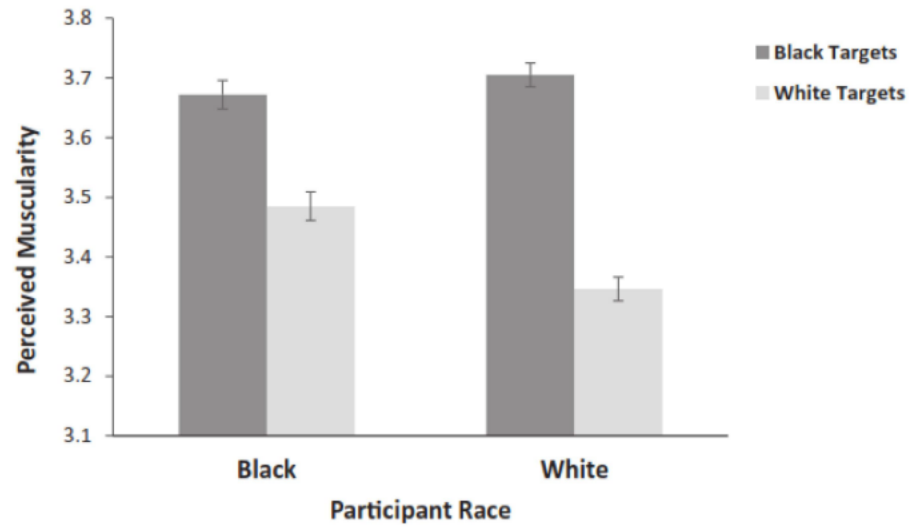
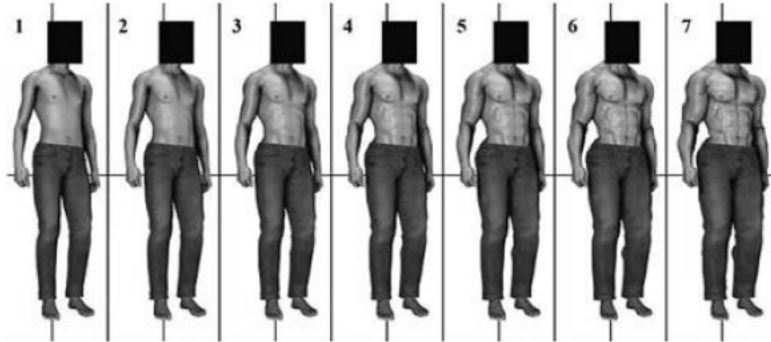
Implicit Bias and Perceptions of Criminality



- Representations of Black people, and particularly young Black men, in popular media reliably depict them as aggressors (e.g., Dixon & Linz, 2000; Chiricos & Eschholz, 2002)
- Black men are more likely than White men to be misremembered as carrying a weapon (Allport & Postman, 1947) and more likely to facilitate the visual recognition of a weapon (Payne, 2001)
- Black men are more likely to be shot mistakenly in a virtual crime scenario while holding an innocent object such as a soda can (Correll et al., 2002; Correll, Wittenbrink, Park, Judd, & Goyle, 2011; cf. James, Vila, & Daratha, 2013),
- Black men are more likely to activate concepts related to crime (Eberhardt, Goff, Purdie, & Davies, 2004).
- In ambiguous contexts, Black men are more likely than White men to be seen as threatening or aggressive (e.g., Duncan, 1976; Hugenberg & Bodenhausen, 2003, 2004; Sagar & Schofield, 1980).
- Physical features associated with Black people activate race-related stereotypes regardless of the target's actual race (Blair, Judd, Sadler, & Jenkins, 2002), leading to exacerbated criminal sentences
- White perceivers show greater sensitivity to signs of anger in outgroup Black faces compared with ingroup White faces (e.g., Maner et al., 2005),

- Estimates of men's physical strength correlate reliably with their actual physical strength when looking at images of the entire person ($r .71$), of the targets' bodies ($r .66$), or of even just the targets' faces ($r .45$; Sell et al., 2009).
- People misperceive targets as larger and more formidable as a function of how much they believe their own capabilities to be inferior (Fessler, Holbrook, & Gervais, 2014).
- Holbrook et al. (2016); people tend to envision Black men as more physically formidable and aggressive
- The average height White men (20 years or older) at 177.4 cm and 90.4 kgs, and of Black men at 176.4 cm and 90.4 kgs (Fryar, Gu, & Ogden, 2012).

- People are particularly motivated to attend closely to and minimize threats to their personal safety, meaning that humans have likely evolved mechanisms to detect threat, including threats from other humans (Neuberg, Kenrick, & Schaller, 2011).
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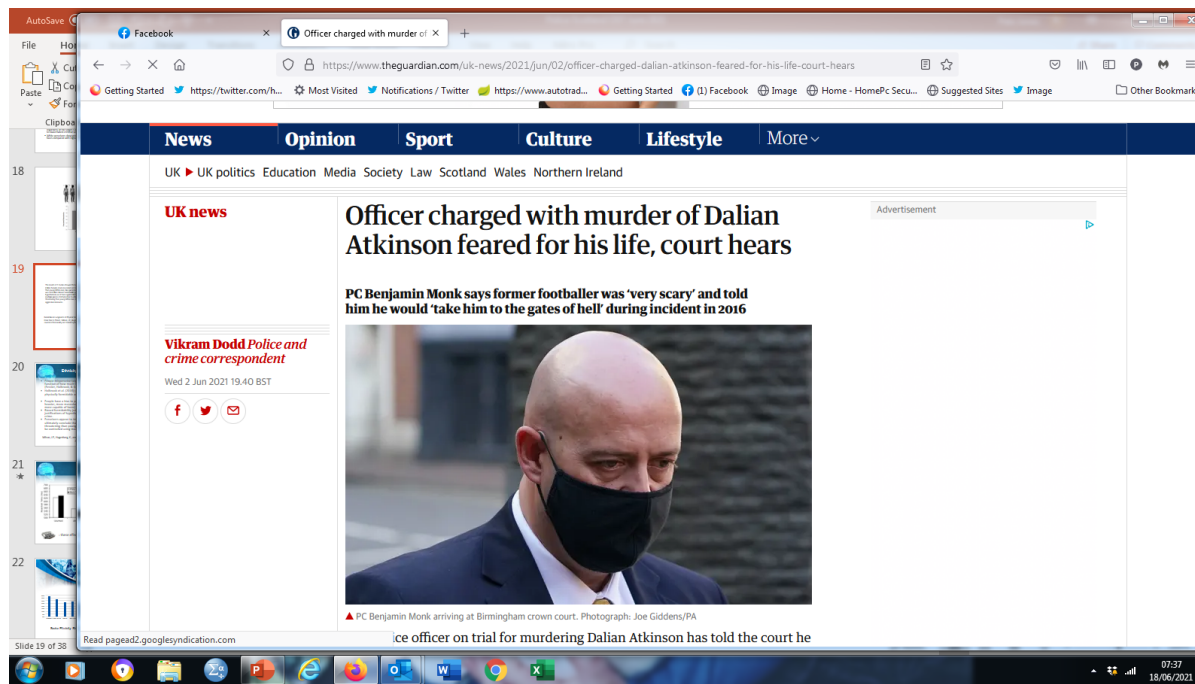


Ethnicity: Police use of Force

- People misperceive targets as larger and more formidable as a function of how much they believe their own capabilities to be inferior (Fessler, Holbrook, & Gervais, 2014).
- Holbrook et al. (2016); people tend to envision Black men as more physically formidable and aggressive
- People have a bias to perceive young Black men as bigger (taller, heavier, more muscular) and more physically threatening (stronger, more capable of harm)
- Biased formidability judgments in turn promoted participants' justifications of hypothetical use of force against Black suspects of crime.
- Perceivers appear to integrate multiple pieces of information to ultimately conclude that young Black men are more physically threatening than young White men, believing that they must therefore be controlled using more aggressive measures.

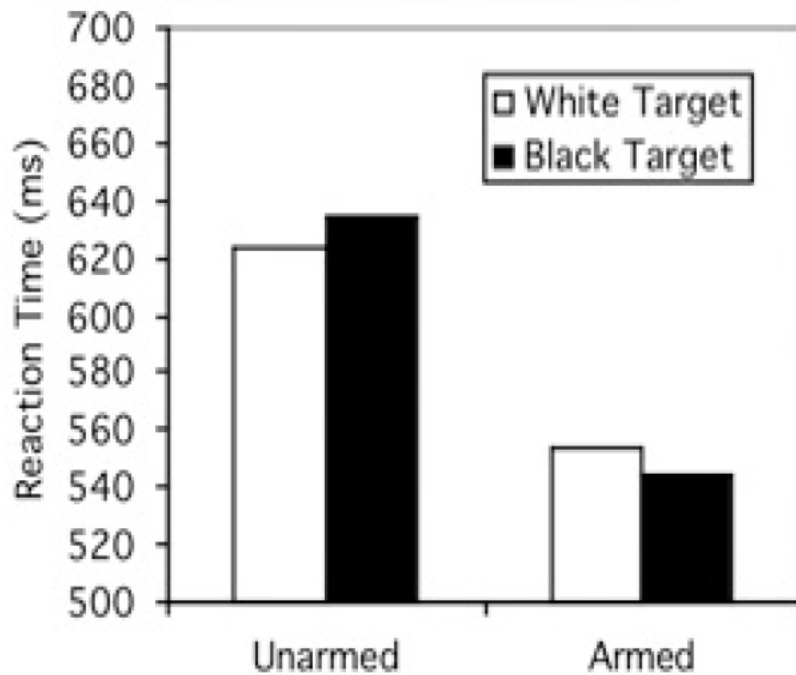
Wilson, J.P., Hugenberg, K., and Rule, N.O., *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2017, Vol. 113, No. 1, 59–80

The results of 7 studies showed that people have a bias to perceive Black men as bigger (taller, heavier, more muscular) and more physically threatening (stronger, more capable of harm) than young White men. Biased formidability judgments in turn promoted participants' justifications of hypothetical use of force against Black suspects of crime. Thus, perceivers appear to integrate multiple pieces of information to ultimately conclude that Black men are more physically threatening than White men, believing that they must therefore be controlled using more aggressive measures.

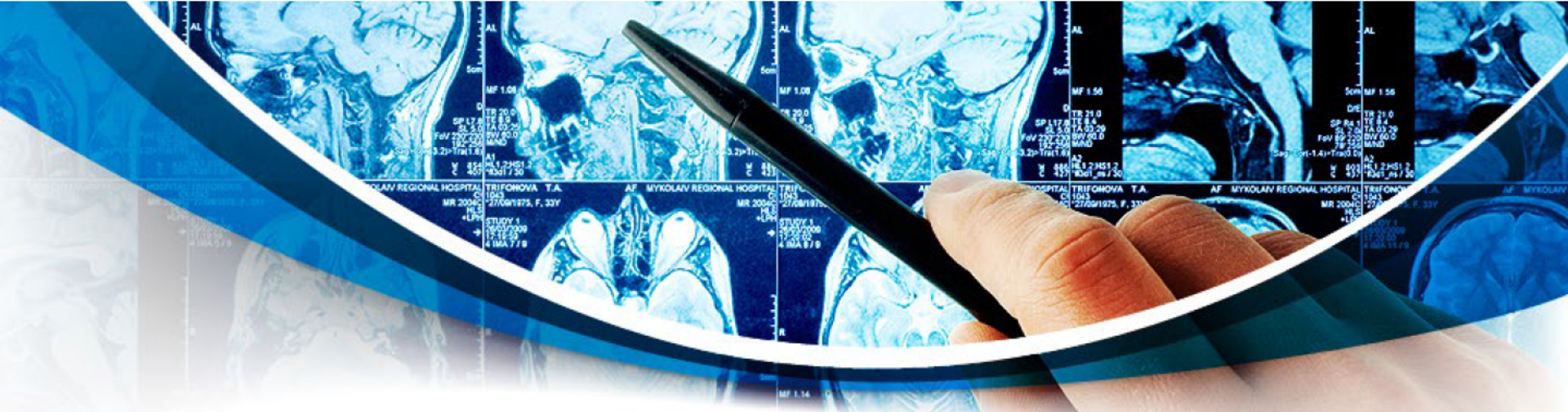


Racial Bias in Judgments of Physical Size and Formidability: From Size to Threat.
Wilson, J.P.,
Hugenberg, K., and
Rule, N.O.,
Journal of Personality
and Social Psychology,
2017, Vol. 113, No. 1,
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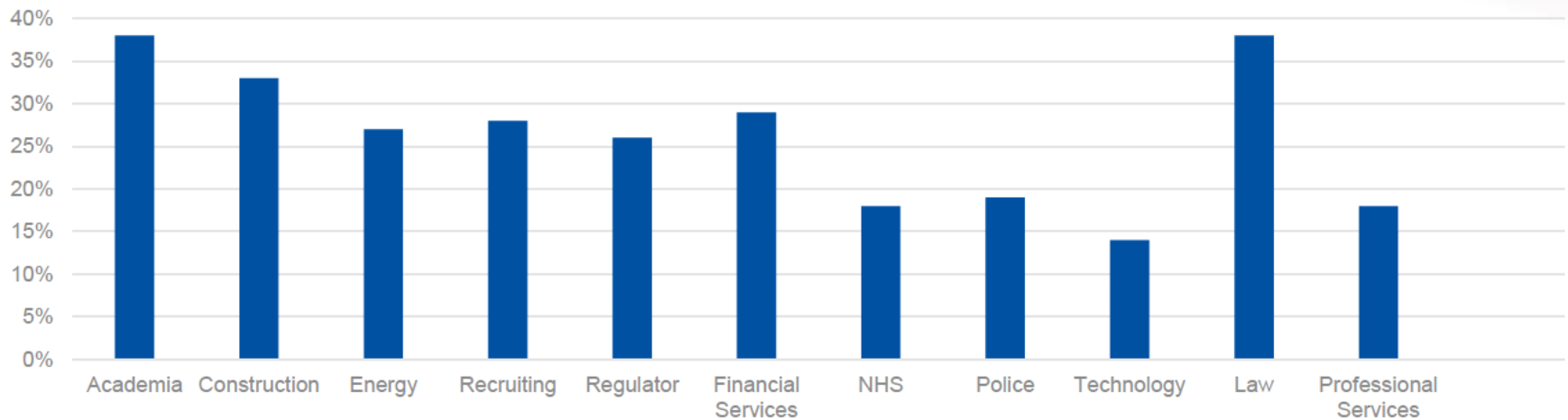
Ethnicity: Firearms The Police Shooter Task



: these effects seem to be muted by training



Ethnicity



Sector Ethnicity Bias; % Staff With Bias Affecting Behaviour



2020 Bias Test Results: Ethnicity

Ethnicity Test Results Westshire: N=899

Strength of Bias	%
Very Strong bias in favour of White people	0.5%
Strong bias in favour of White people	4.5%
Moderate bias in favour of White people	15.0%
Moderate bias in favour of BaME people	0.1%
Strong bias in favour of BaME people	3.3%
Very Strong bias in favour of BaME people	0.3%
Total staff bias in sample	23.7%

23.7%

Sector	% Staff with bias affecting behaviour
Academia	37%
Local authorities	29%
Financial Services	29%
Engineering	26%
Law Firms	38%
Police	19%
This Sample	24%*

19%

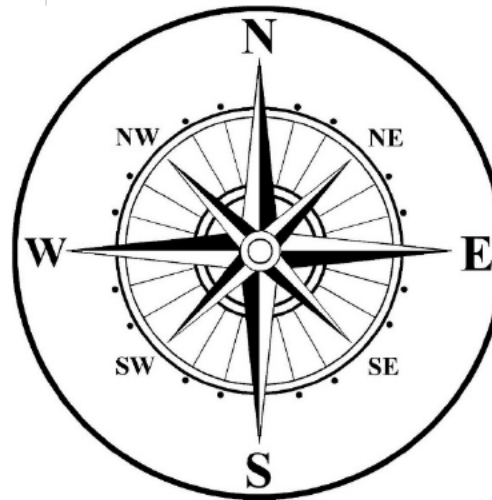


Results by Geographical Area



NORTH: proportions with Bias	%
Bias on the basis of Disability (N=64)	21.9%
Bias on the basis of Ethnicity (N=67)	22.4%

West: proportions with Bias	%
Bias on the basis of Disability (N=56)	25.0%
Bias on the basis of Ethnicity (N=58)	32.8%












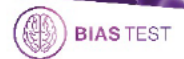
EAST: proportions with Bias	%
Bias on the basis of Disability (N=114)	27.2%
Bias on the basis of Ethnicity (N=120)	22.5%

SOUTH : proportions with Bias	%
Bias on the basis of Disability (N=52)	13.5%
Bias on the basis of Ethnicity (N=53)	28.3%



Results by Rank and Role

Rank	Role	SLT: proportions with Bias	%
Chief Superintendent		Bias on the basis of Gender-Career (N=28)	39.3%
		Bias on the basis of Gender -Police Leader (N=27)	7.4%
		Bias on the basis of Ethnicity (N=27)	29.6%
		Insp: proportions with Bias	
Superintendent		Bias on the basis of Ethnicity (N=47) (15.6% Pro White, 6.7% pro BaME)	22.3%
		Bias on the basis of Gender-Career (N=45) (12.8% Man-Career and 4.3% Woman-career)	17.1%
		Bias on the basis of Gender-Police Leader (N=44) (6..8% Male leader and 4.5% Female Leader)	11.3%
Chief Inspector		Sergeants: proportions with Bias	
		%	
Inspector		Bias on the basis of Disability (N=60)	20.0%
		Bias on the basis of Ethnicity (N=60)	11.7%
Sergeant		Constables : proportions with Bias	
		%	
		Bias on the basis of Disability (N=175)	21.9%
Police Constable		Bias on the basis of Ethnicity (N185)	29.7%
		PCSO: proportions with Bias	
Rank		%	
		Bias on the basis of Disability (N=51)	33.3%
		Bias on the basis of Ethnicity (N=56)	25.0%
Rank		Control Room: proportions with Bias	
		%	
		Bias on the basis of Ethnicity (N=78)	21.8%
		Bias on the basis of Age (N=78)	26.9%
Rank		Bias on the basis of Sexual orientation (N=84)	22.4%



Does our culture foster bias?



Professor Phil Semple
RCMP/Ontario Police College

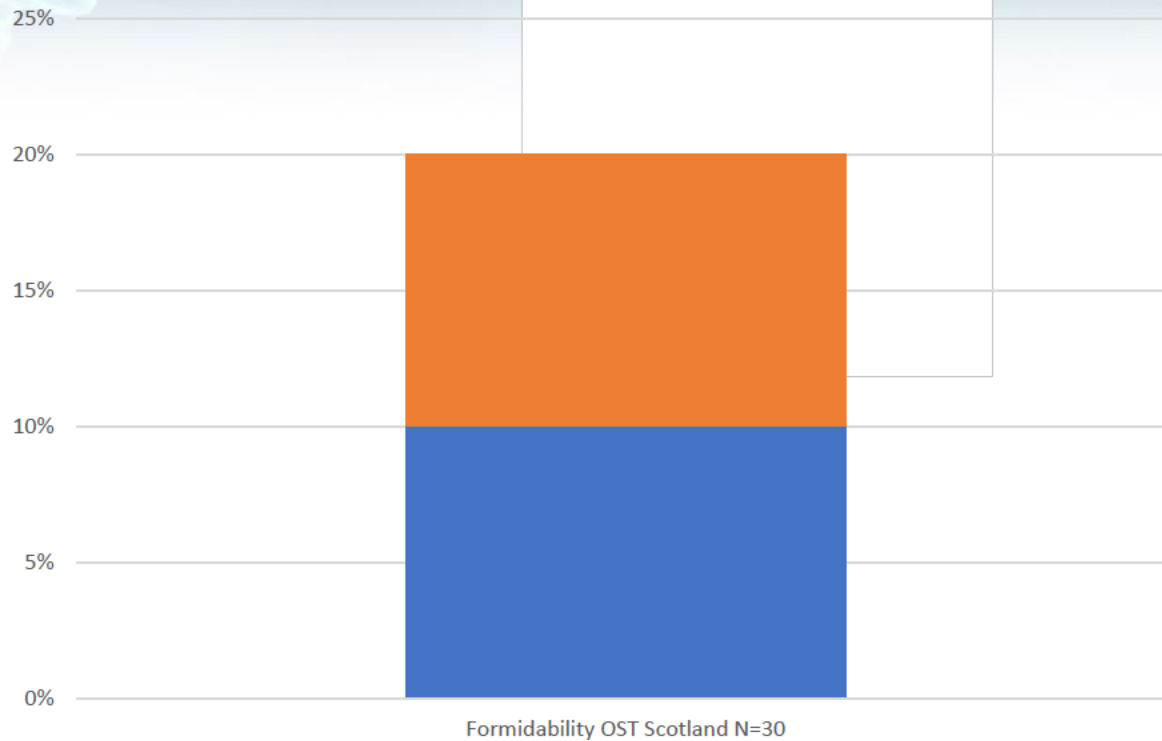


- Following 506 RCMP/OPC recruits through 12/14 weeks of training
 - Testing cohorts before and after training
 - Young Black Man and Young Black Woman Test
 - Testing their trainers
-
- Is bias about race or about both race and gender?
 - Do recruits become more/less biased or does bias stay unchanged during training?
 - What role do their trainers play?
-
- **All 10,000 RCMP Recruits invited to start testing Feb-August 2021: Gender Hostility, Ethnicity, Faith, and Sexual Orientation**



Your Formidability Tests

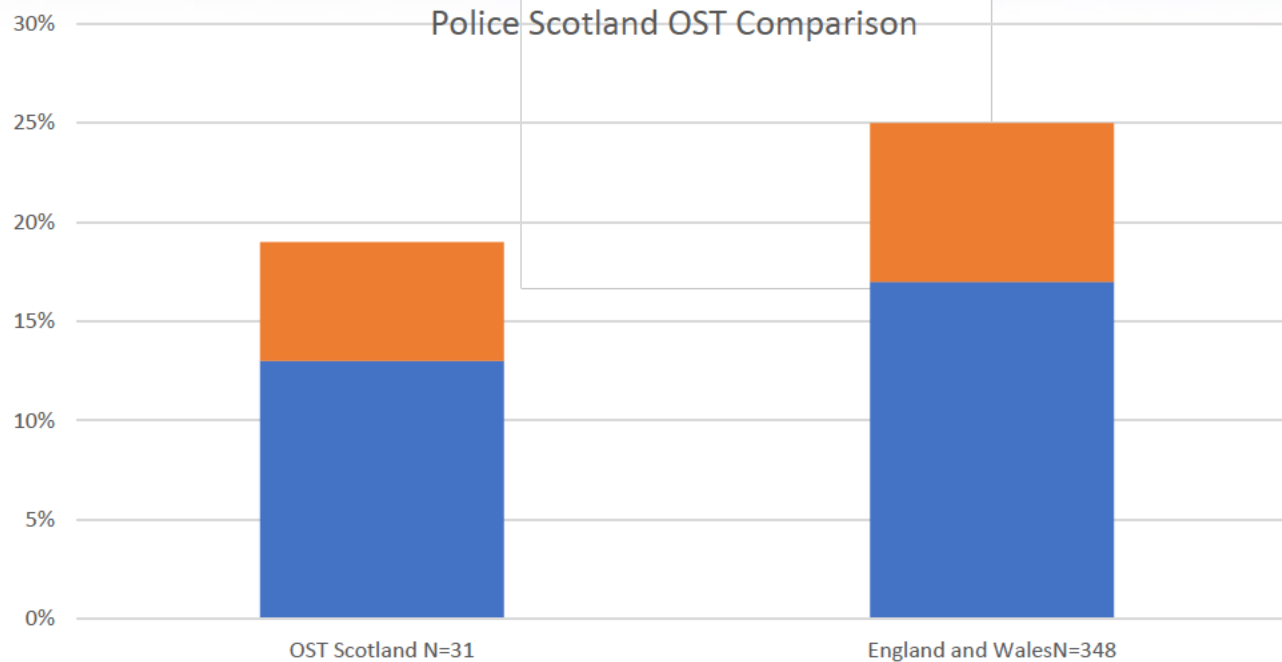
% Staff with Race Formidability Bias Affecting Behaviour



	Anti Black	Anti White
Formidability OST Scotland N=30	10%	10%

Your Stop-Search Tests

% Staff with Race Stop Search Bias Affecting Behaviour



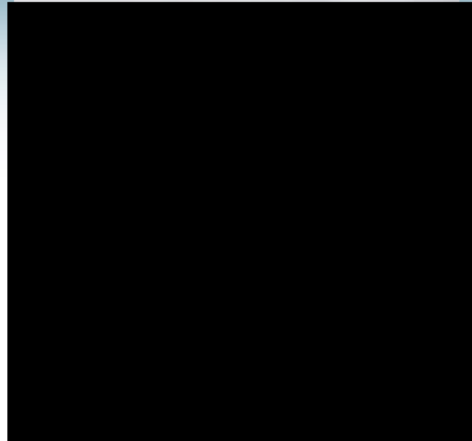
■ Anti Black ■ AntiWhite ■

	Anti Black	AntiWhite
OST Scotland N=31	13%	6%
England and Wales N=348	17%	8%

£££ The Good, the Bad and the Ugly £££



6.3cm = £2,940 Male
6.3cm = £1,130 Female



1 SD = -£210 Male
1 SD = -£1,890 Female





Types of Thinking Error (Bias)

- **Affinity Bias**
- **Attribution Bias**
- **Bandwagon Bias**
- **Benevolence Bias**
- **Confirmation Bias**
- **Conformity Effects**
- **Halo and Horns effects**
- **Impact Bias**
- **Recency and Primacy Bias**
- **Self Investment Bias**
- **Source Bias**
- **Status Quo Bias**
- **Stereotyping**




Group Task 3: Our **Hot Spots** (20 Minutes)

Using the material you have seen so far and the handouts, in your groups, spend 20 minutes to identify the specific places within our operational policing and training design/delivery processes may be at risk of bias in the way:

- 1. Operational officers make decisions in conduct a stop-search**
- 2. Operational officers make decisions in use of force**
- 3. How we design our operational training**
- 4. How we deliver our operational training**

Be specific, for example; *“Recent social media attention to high profile cases produces a recency and impact effect which may shift the focus of our training”*

- 
1. Know your data
 2. Bias Test & Train Trainers & Officers
 3. Review key decision making processes for triggers for bias; intel, call taking and logging etc.
 4. Involve a diverse range of people in training design and in scrutiny panels
 5. Look for marginal gains across processes; it isn't a silver bullet
 6. Use debiasing checklists in developing policy and practice, including training design



7. Know your data
8. Promote (+) role models which counter stereotypes
9. Engage communities who have faced disproportionality in training design and in training
10. Avoid pejorative media releases
11. Recruit a diverse group of trainers for perspective and representation



Personal Actions

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Top research led tips to mitigate Unconscious Bias

- 1 Get tested:** Insight into our biases can help us choose the times when we employ mitigation techniques.
- 2 Have contact:** Positive contact with people from groups for whom we may have a bias makes it more difficult for the brain to pigeonhole people.
- 3 Use role models:** Remembering people who have impressed us or made a real contribution helps us mitigate bias. Recalling those people when we have a decision to make mitigates bias.
- 4 Counter stereotypes:** Simply trying to suppress a stereotype about a group makes it more likely you will use it. Reminding yourself of statements which oppose the stereotype (e.g. positive attributes of a group or person) mitigate bias.
- 5 Perspective taking:** Putting yourself in someone else's position or trying to see things from their point of view.
- 6 Avoiding reinforcement:** Avoiding pejorative jokes, removing media which promotes negative stereotypes and recognising when your biases may be getting reinforced all help.
- 7 Avoid triggers:** We do not make sound people decisions when we are stressed, hungry, tired or anxious because our brain's bias control resources are shared with our emotional regulation and cognitive processing.
- 8 Slow down:** Slowing down key decisions with a short gap often enables our impulsive decisions to become more considered.
- 9 Challenge:** We can impact the biases of our wider group by politely challenging when we hear biases at play; initially though a reminder of the facts.



Group Task 4

Identify the 4 elements of the process you reviewed, where you feel we face the biggest risk of bias entering the process.

1. Generate ideas to mitigate bias in these 4 areas.
2. Generate ideas you could offer to officers attending your training to help them mitigate their personal biases

Bias is Not Unchangeable



Long-term reduction in implicit race bias: A prejudice habit-breaking intervention

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3603687/

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[J Exp Soc Psychol](#). Author manuscript; available in PMC 2013 Nov 1.
Published in final edited form as:
[J Exp Soc Psychol](#). 2012 Nov; 48(6): 1267–1278.
doi: [10.1016/j.jesp.2012.06.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2012.06.003)

PMCID: PMC3603687
NIHMSID: NIHMS396358
PMID: [23524616](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23524616/)

Long-term reduction in implicit race bias: A prejudice habit-breaking intervention

Patricia G. Devine, Patrick S. Forscher, Anthony J. Austin, and William T. L. Cox

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Abstract

Go to:

We developed a multi-faceted prejudice habit-breaking intervention to produce long-term reductions in implicit race bias. The intervention is based on the premise that implicit bias is like a habit that can be reduced through a combination of awareness of implicit bias, concern about the effects of that bias, and the application of strategies to reduce bias. In a 12-week longitudinal study, people who received the intervention showed dramatic reductions in implicit race bias. People who were concerned about discrimination or who reported using the strategies showed the greatest reductions. The intervention also led to increases in concern about discrimination and personal awareness of bias over the duration of the study. People in the control group showed none of the above effects. Our results raise the hope of reducing persistent and unintentional forms of discrimination that arise from implicit bias.

Keywords: prejudice, stereotyping, intervention, reduction, implicit bias, self-regulation

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Similar articles in PubMed

Breaking the prejudice habit: Mechanisms, timecourse, and longevity. [J Exp Soc Psychol. 2017]

The regulation of explicit and implicit race bias: the role of motivations to respond without prejudice. [J Pers Soc Psychol. 2002]

Overweight people have low levels of implicit weight bias, but overweight nations have high levels of implicit weight bias. [PLoS One. 2013]

A developmental intergroup theory of social stereotypes and prejudice. [Adv Child Dev Behav. 2006]

Implicit social cognition: attitudes, self-esteem, and stereotypes. [Psychol Rev. 1995]

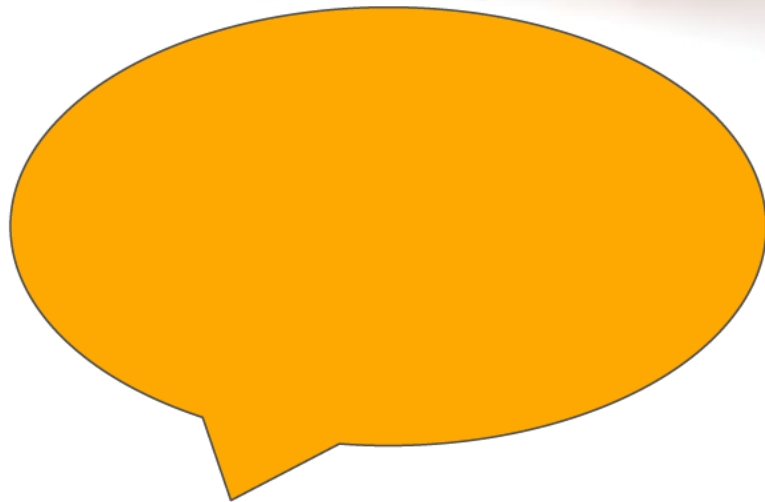
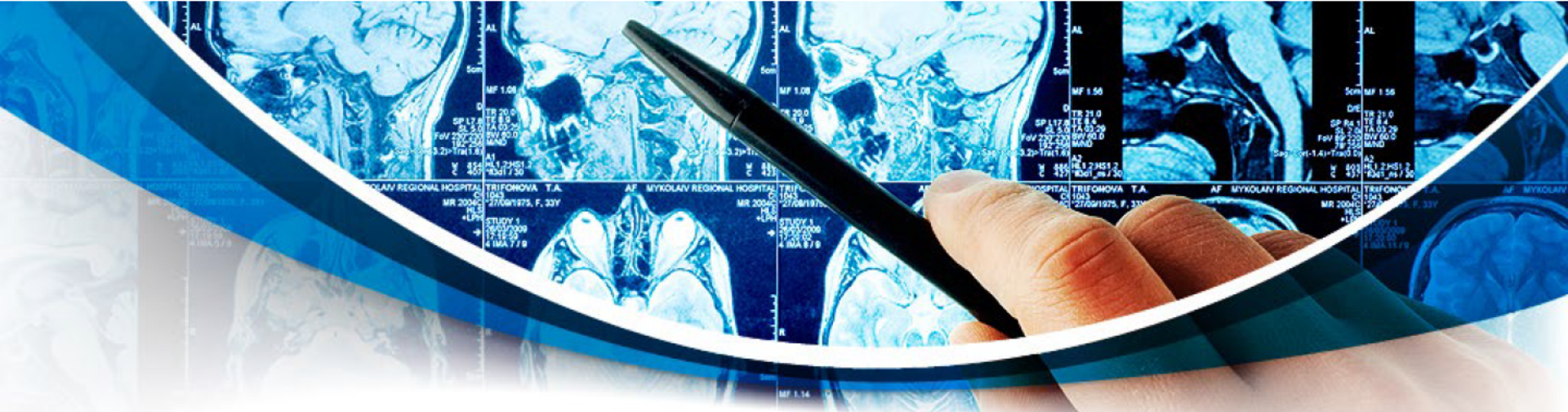
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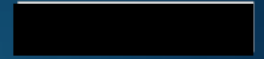
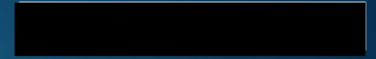
A Long-Term Effect of Perceptual Individuation Training on Reducing Implicit Racial Bias in Preschool Children. [Child development. 2017]

The silent burden of stigmatisation: a qualitative study among Dutch people with a low socioeconomic status. [BMC Public Health. 2018]

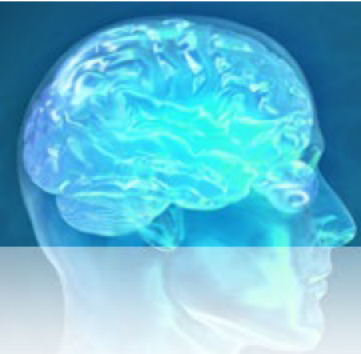


Q&A (Chat)

Dr Pete Jones
Shire Professional Chartered Psychologists



BIAS TEST



Organisational and Leader Actions

1. Be brave, not fragile
2. Know the data that drives action
3. Review processes to mitigate bias; explain or change
4. Bias test and train; front line staff, recruiters, managers and decision makers, and then all staff
5. Avoid ambiguity (e.g. in intel, briefing)
6. Use diverse panels in decision making
7. Build in challenge to decision making
8. Create opportunities for staff role modelling (+) contact and networking, respect lived experiences
9. Create space in decision making (e.g. Stop Search)
10. Build in accountability (e.g. College of Policing, leaders, recruiters, operational officers)