

advocates of particular models of identity draw attention to perceived limitations in the collective views of others and seek to supplant these with their own. It was such progress – and the problematization of race psychology – that led to prejudice being identified as a research topic in the first place (Reynolds et al. 2012). Likewise, the success of Dixon et al.'s own leadership will hinge on whether it motivates researchers to interrogate their own "attitude problem" or else cling to their prejudices (and the identities that underpin them) ever more strongly.

Of babies and bathwater, and rabbits and rabbit holes: A plea for conflict prevention, not conflict promotion

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Miles Hewstone,^a Hermann Swart,^b and Gordon Hodson^c

^aDepartment of Experimental Psychology, Oxford University, Oxford OX1 3UD, United Kingdom; ^bDepartment of Psychology, Stellenbosch University, Private Bag X1, Matieland, Stellenbosch, 7206 South Africa; ^cDepartment of Psychology, Brock University, St. Catharines, ON L2S 3A1, Canada.

miles.hewstone@psy.ox.ac.uk <http://hewstone.socialpsychology.org/>
hswart@sun.ac.za <http://sun025.sun.ac.za/portal/page/portal/Arts/Departments/psychology/staff/hswart>
ghodson@brocku.ca <http://brocku.ca/psychology/people/hodson.htm>

Abstract: Dixon et al. overlook the fact that contact predicts not only favorable out-group attitudes/evaluations, but also cognitions, affect, and behavior. The weight of evidence supporting the benefits of intergroup contact cautions against throwing the (contact) baby out with the bathwater. The goal to "ignite struggles" in pursuit of social equality, we argue, incautiously risks hurling us down the proverbial rabbit hole.

There is much to admire in Dixon et al.'s elegantly written piece. Given space limitations, we focus our reply on how research on intergroup contact is characterized within the target article.

By focusing on direct (face-to-face) intergroup contact and the reduction of prejudice, the target article does not adequately capture the complexities in contemporary contact theory. In some ways, the authors attack a "straw man": there are multiple forms of contact (notably direct and indirect/extended contact; see Harwood et al. 2013) that affect a wide range of outcomes that are cognitive, affective, and/or behavioral in nature (Hewstone 2009; for a review, see Hodson et al. 2013). Suggesting that the contact literature is preoccupied with prejudice reduction alone ignores the body of evidence demonstrating that contact goes beyond simply eliminating negative states and perceptions, but also fosters empathy, increases cooperation, and encourages future contact (Hodson et al. 2013). Impressively, contact even works among contact-resistant, prejudiced persons (e.g., those high in authoritarianism or social dominance, see Hodson 2011).

The target authors trivialize research focusing on attitude outcomes as simply "getting us to like one another more." Although attitude change is not the only, or even the ultimate, outcome variable, achieving increased liking between members of different groups *will* be seen as a critical achievement for those working in settings where members of different social, ethnic, and religious groups do (have to) coexist (e.g., diverse schools). In other settings (e.g., post-conflict societies such as Northern Ireland), other outcome variables may be considered more important, such as promoting outgroup trust and forgiveness or reducing dehumanization. Fortunately, contact achieves these objectives (Hewstone et al. 2006; Tam et al. 2007; 2008; 2009). Arguably, contact's impact on the proximal predictors of attitudes (e.g., reducing anxiety and promoting empathy; for reviews, see Brown & Hewstone 2005; Hodson et al. 2013) is as important as promoting "mere" liking. We must not do social science research a disservice, nor confuse policy makers, by underplaying the prejudice-relevant

achievements of contact. Before the baby is thrown out with the bathwater, we ought to revisit the failures of alternative interventions (see Paluck & Green 2009), compared with the robust meta-analytic support for intergroup contact (see Pettigrew & Tropp 2006). Moreover, without increased contact, we risk perpetuating segregation and separation. This is no solution, whether under actual apartheid in South Africa pre-1994 or the "benign apartheid" of highly segregated neighborhoods and schools in many countries.

We are sympathetic to the challenge the authors pose between prejudice-reduction and social change solutions. Yet the pressing needs in the social context should guide the research agenda. As such, we consider neither prejudice reduction nor collective action as the *de facto* outcomes to be pursued. In some situations, and for some scholars, social change may trump other goals (as it seems for the target authors). Elsewhere, the social change agenda may seem less relevant. In contemporary Northern Ireland, for example, there has been a massive reduction in discrimination against Catholics in housing and education and the emergence of a burgeoning Catholic middle class. Here, contact theory's focus on a *range of outcomes* – e.g., promoting perspective-taking or increasing the complexity of outgroup images – is arguably more relevant than emphasizing collective action. Likewise, in our current work in multiethnic schools in the north of England (the scene of riots in 2001), we see the primary goal being one of promoting positive coexistence through contact, rather than of encouraging further disturbances. As academics, we consider it unwise to encourage collective action that will exert unknown and potentially negative impact on others (typically not ourselves). In the wake of the Arab Spring of 2011 it may be tempting to "ignite struggles" to bring about social change. Yet we find ourselves thinking of Alice's rash journey to Wonderland, compelling us to urge strong caution before going down this particular rabbit hole without seriously considering the potentially negative consequences of encouraging intergroup conflict in the name of social change.

Dixon et al. are right to point to the two models of social change and the possible tensions between them. However prejudice reduction and collective action need not be conceptualized as zero-sum goals. If, as the authors contend, contact is negatively associated with precursors of social change, then it is incumbent upon the field to harness the power of contact to induce change in the dominant group without blunting the subordinate group's striving for equity. There will be less bloodshed when the majority is convinced to change their out-group evaluations and when there is widespread normative support for change. Contact can therefore facilitate social change by bringing majority members to understand the world from the perspective of the disadvantaged minority (Jeffries & Ransford 1969; Mallett et al. 2008). It is important, therefore, not to underplay the great successes of intergroup contact. Even knowing about or observing intergroup contact is associated with reduced prejudice (Turner et al. 2007; Wright et al. 1997), and recent longitudinal and multilevel analyses show that contact typically drives effects at the neighborhood level (not simply at the individual level; Pettigrew et al. 2007). In contrast to alternative interventions, contact effects *generalize*, from individual out-group members to the out-group as a whole (Brown & Hewstone 2005), and from views of a primary outgroup to secondary outgroups (Tausch et al. 2010). Such research on contact's "secondary transfer effects" allay the target authors' concerns that, for members of a minority group, contact with the majority group negatively impacts attitudes toward other minorities.

Although contact is only *part* of the solution, not *the* solution, its role remains essential. As social psychologists, we see great value in exploring the potential of multiple forms of intergroup contact to impact multiple outcomes, via multiple mediating processes, at micro-, meso-, and societal-levels (Pettigrew 1996; Wagner & Hewstone 2012). This view does not negate or deny the importance of collective action, but rather sets the record straight

about what contact can achieve and situates contact-based attitude change and social change as complementary (not inherently conflicting) objectives.

The politics of moving beyond prejudice

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Caroline Howarth,^a Wolfgang Wagner,^{b,c} Shose Kessi,^d and Ragini Sen^e

^aInstitute of Social Psychology, London School of Economics and Political Science, London, WC2A 2AE, United Kingdom; ^bInstitute of Education and Psychology, Johannes Kepler University, 4040 Linz, Austria; ^cDept de Psicología Social, University of the Basque Country, San Sebastián, Spain; ^dDepartment of Psychology, University of Cape Town, Cape Town 7701, South Africa; ^eCentre for Policy Research, New Delhi, India, 110021.

c.s.howarth@lse.ac.uk http://www2.lse.ac.uk/socialPsychology/faculty/caroline_howarth/Home.aspx

w.wagner@jku.at <http://www.swp.jku.at/team/wagner>

shose.kessi@uct.ac.za raginisen2011@gmail.com

Abstract: Dixon et al. have highlighted the importance of a political conceptualisation of intergroup relations that challenges individualising models of social change. As important as this paper is for the development of critical debates in psychology, we can detect at least three issues that warrant further discussion: (a) the cultural and historical conditions of structural inequality and its perception, (b) the marginalisation of post-colonial works on collective mobilisation, and (c) acknowledging the complex perspectives and politics of those targeted by prejudice.

Before and beyond the existence of psychology as a science, revolutionaries of all times – Spartacus, Robespierre, Lenin, Mao Zedong, Lumumba, Malcolm X, Mandela, and leaders of anti-colonial movements – knew that one needs a dedicated group of people to attempt and sometimes succeed in overthrowing an institutionalised social structure of oppression and discrimination. They also knew that dominant classes would not cede power voluntarily. Their struggle was directed against a well-organised stratum of society whose power, structural dominance, and exclusive privileges were legitimised by divine or secular law. In such social structures, it does not make sense to attribute prejudice to the “oppressors.” It is not prejudice to treat the “historically disadvantaged” in hostile, denigrating, or even paternalistic terms because the differences in access to rights and resources are structurally given and their subordinated status appears “natural.” Hence, the slave holder who is indulgent to his obedient slaves (Dixon et al., sect. 3.2, for example) is taking care of his means of production and not paternalistically prejudiced towards a potential equal.

Prejudice becomes an issue as soon as societies are more or less successful in reducing structural obstacles to social mobility to varying degrees, usually by implementing some form of democracy, particularly the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948. Differences in access to rights and resources then appear as the “natural” consequence of individual achievement and evidence of capitalist market forces. Under these conditions, it is conceptually correct to talk about the “historically disadvantaged” as recipients of prejudice; and it is these conditions that the psychology of prejudice addresses in its humanist intention to create harmony among people where we “like each other.”

Dixon et al. merge these conditions in somewhat arbitrary ways: the structurally divided societies of the U.S.-American slave-owning society or the apartheid system in South Africa on the one hand and seemingly benevolent, positive relations in supposedly egalitarian societies on the other. In doing so, these authors confuse the unstable character of hierarchies in democracies with structurally and legally divided societies in

other historical periods. In our opinion, juxtaposing the collective action model and the prejudice reduction model as models of social change constitutes a confusion in conceptual levels of analysis. The first deals with collective action to abolish structural conditions of which historical revolutions are a more extreme example. The latter is a humanist attempt at smoothing daily social encounters with (constructed) otherness, which does not aim for social change per se. Conflating these as dealing with the relationship between advantaged and disadvantaged groups belittles and simplifies the complex political identities and multifaceted political ambitions of the structurally disadvantaged (cf. Bourdieu 2000).

Nevertheless, we applaud the attempt by Dixon et al. to highlight the individualisation of prejudice within psychology. Indeed, there is a long history of the individualisation and psychologisation of prejudice that has excluded more political psychological accounts that may be better equipped to tackle social inequalities and promote social change (Elcheroth et al. 2011). Hence, it is troubling to see this marginalisation occurring in this very paper with the omission of relevant theories on collective mobilisation and group solidarity based on the works of Biko, Fanon, and other post-colonial writers (beyond one fleeting reference to Fanon 1965). Although the authors critique the simplistic notion that positive emotions lead to a reduction in prejudice, they make the reverse and equally simplistic assumption that negative emotions lead to collective mobilisation. By contrast, post-colonial psychology promotes the development of positive emotions towards self and others to inspire a desire for collective action and social change (Biko 1978). As a result, individuals from disadvantaged communities begin to see themselves as knowledgeable and capable agents of change (Howarth 2006). In this way, we can see collective mobilisation as a process of conflict *resolution* to achieve social justice and not merely a mechanism to “instigate intergroup conflict” (Dixon et al., sect. 3.1, para. 11).

In our recent research (on development in Tanzania and South Africa, Kessi 2011; community art projects for mixed-heritage families in the UK; Howarth et al. forthcoming; representations of the veil in India and Indonesia, Wagner et al., forthcoming), we have documented how individuals and groups challenge stigmatising representations (of development, of race, and of Islam) and forge positive emotions towards self and others in these communities. As a result, we see how our research participants have developed a consciousness of themselves as *agents* of change, which was reinforced through the networks of social solidarity forged through the collective activities and the positive recognition that they received from community members. These examples demonstrate that prejudice reduction and collective mobilisation can go hand in hand and do not *necessarily* draw on competing psychological processes as Dixon et al. argue.

Furthermore, when these authors discuss the findings of prejudice reduction programmes and show that these can sometimes lower support for antidiscriminatory measures, they attribute a false consciousness in the sense of “They should know better that they are being discriminated against!” This is a problematic move that diminishes the perspective and politics of those categorised as “disadvantaged” and overlooks the ideological and intersectional construction of advantaged and disadvantaged groups. Their analysis implies that there are always clearly divided and competing groups: men and women; blacks and whites; Jews and Arabs. This reifies social categories, obscures the intersectionality of all social groups, and loses a perspectival approach that recognises that these are located, socially constructed and ideologically maintained (Gillespie et al., forthcoming).

Dixon et al. have developed an important political conceptualisation of intergroup relations that challenges individualising models of prejudice and social change. However, we suggest that there are a number of problems with this analysis: first: the