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From prejudice reduction to collective action: Two psychological models of social change (and how to reconcile them)

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Two Psychological Models of Social Change (and How to Reconcile Them)

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Even when the social order appears intractable, social change is constantly unfolding all around us, finding expression in the accumulation of small acts of resistance as much as in dramatic moments of revolution. Psychologists should take interest in the dynamics of social change, whether mundane or dramatic, for at least two reasons. First, the explanation of when and why change occurs – or fails to occur – requires analysis of ordinary people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. To understand fully the conditions under which people act in ways that support or challenge the status quo, we simply cannot afford to overlook the role of psychological factors. Second and related, processes of social change invite us to (re)appraise the moral and political implications of psychological knowledge. How do we reduce discrimination against others? When do we recognize and challenge social inequality and when do we accept or even endorse it? How can we create more inclusive forms of identity and community? Such questions elide the traditional division between scholarship and advocacy. They require us to demonstrate how psychological knowledge helps create a more just and tolerant society. Perhaps less comfortably, they require us to recognize how our discipline may be complicit in maintaining social inequalities.

In this chapter, we discuss two psychological models of social change, namely prejudice reduction and collective action. Both models focus on the problem of "-improving relations between groups to reduce social inequality and discrimination. However, they propose different psychological pathways to the achievement of this goal and prioritize different core questions. As we shall see, the prejudice reduction model primarily addresses the question "How can we get individuals to like one another more?" whereas the collective action model primarily addresses the question "How can we get individuals to mobilize together to challenge inequality?"

The first section of the chapter elaborates the fundamental principles and underlying assumptions of these models. The second section explores the relationship between the two models of change, focusing on the allegation that prejudice reduction exerts counterproductive effects on collective action. The chapter's

conclusion advocates a *contextualist* perspective on social change. We hold that any evaluation of the efficacy of psychological models of change must remain sensitive to the "stubborn particulars" (Cherry, 1995) of local conditions and the affordances and obstacles embedded there.

Prejudice Reduction

> *How could it be that in a culture of law, order and reason there could have survived the irrational remnants of ancient racial and religious hatreds? How to explain the willingness of great masses of people to tolerate the mass extermination of their fellow citizens.*
> (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950, p. v)

Taken from the preface to the *Authoritarian Personality*, Adorno et al.'s famous quotation captures some basic features of the modern concept of prejudice. Initially, this concept highlighted a general distinction between rational thinking and thinking corrupted by irrational biases. However, in the early years of the last century, "prejudice" came to refer more narrowly to the expression of unreasonable dislike toward members of other social groups. In the years following the Second World War, commentators such as Allport and Kramer (1946), Saenger (1953), and Allport (1954) gathered compelling evidence of the scale, nature, and consequences of the problem of prejudice, focusing particularly on the damage done by racism and anti-Semitism in American society. They also presented an unfavorable picture of the mental life of bigots, flagging the rigid and "stenciled" quality of their thinking; their ego fragility and intolerance of ambiguity; and, above all, the irrational nature of their antipathy for members of minority groups.

This early work often adopted an individual differences approach to explaining prejudice. It espoused a "rotten apple" perspective (cf. Henriques et al., 1984), tracing the causes of prejudice to the dynamics of "maladjusted" personality development. As the field developed, alternative causal models gained currency, and the core image of the nature of the prejudiced person shifted. In the so-called second phase of prejudice research (cf. Dovidio, 2001), prejudice was viewed as the unfortunate by-product of ordinary cognitive processes such as categorization, attribution, and stereotyping. The core image of the authoritarian bigot gave way to the image of the "cognitive miser," engaging in efficient yet fallible forms of information processing. Researchers also recognized increasingly that individual prejudice might reflect group-level norms, identity dynamics, and instrumental goals rather than personal irrationality (Sherif et al., 1961; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). In its most recent phase, prejudice research has been dominated by so-called dual process models, as exemplified, for example, by research that distinguishes between conscious and implicit attitudes toward others (see Durrheim, Quayle, & Dixon, 2016). The figure of the aversive racist – whose surface support for racial tolerance and equality is offset by unconscious antipathies – shows how this latest

wave of prejudice research is complicating standard images of the "old-fashioned" or "redneck" bigot (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004).

One of the most enduring contributions of prejudice research arises from its implications for promoting social change. From the outset, prejudice researchers sought not only to understand but also to transform relations of social inequality and discrimination. As Lippitt and Radke (1946, p. 167) insisted in an early commentary: "The need for an understanding of the dynamics of prejudice has no equivalent importance in the social sciences. In no other aspects of interpersonal and intergroup relations is there a more urgent need for social scientists to *get out and do something* [our emphasis]." In the ensuing decades, many social scientists answered this rallying cry: They got out and did something. Numerous interventions to reduce prejudice were devised, tested, and applied across a wide range of social and cultural settings and types of intergroup relations (see Paluck & Green, 2009, for a comprehensive overview). Examples include interventions to promote intergroup contact, common identification, empathic awareness, and cooperative learning.

It is important to acknowledge, of course, that different theoretical conceptions of the nature of prejudice have inspired different solutions to the problem. If one's starting assumption is that the "cognitive processes of prejudiced people are in general different from the cognitive processes of tolerant people" (Allport, 1954, p. 170), for example, then this points toward a rather different approach to prejudice reduction than if one assumes that prejudice reflects intergroup competition for scarce resources (see also Long, 1951). Similarly, if one treats prejudice as a largely conscious, controlled, and deliberative response, then this has different implications for practical intervention than if one treats it as an implicit, uncontrolled, and automatic response (e.g., Olsen & Fazio, 2006).

Nevertheless, we want to identify some general principles that underlie the entire project of prejudice reduction, laying the foundations for the model of social change it promotes. These principles inform researchers' conception of (a) the primary agents of change, (b) the primary psychological mechanisms through which change occurs, and (c) the behavioral changes that ultimately shape broader patterns of social inequality.

Agents of change. The prejudice reduction model focuses overwhelmingly on changing the hearts and minds of members of historically advantaged groups, whose bigotry is viewed as the main cause of social problems such as racism, xenophobia, and homophobia. Whereas in the early years of the last century, the victims of social inequality and discrimination were often viewed as bringing misfortune on themselves (e.g., as a result of intellectual deficiencies), the rise of prejudice research heralded an important and progressive ideological shift (Samelson, 1978). The prejudices of the historically advantaged increasingly became viewed as the main problem that required solution. Prejudice reduction became viewed as the answer to that problem.

Underlying psychological processes. The prejudice reduction model of social change posits a series of internal cognitive and affective shifts in the mind of the

bigot. The cognitive shifts enable the prejudiced person to formulate a more accurate view of social reality and relations or at least to moderate the tendency to perceive others as mere exemplars of social groups. Stereotype reduction is the best example this process of "de-biasing," which typically involves the rational correction of faulty beliefs about others (see Oakes, Haslam, & Turner (1994) for a critique of this approach). Early in the history of prejudice research, however, psychologists realized that stereotype reduction was by no means an automatic consequence of exposure to counter-stereotypic information. They found that even in the face of seemingly contradictory evidence, cognitive processes such subtyping and confirmation bias often preserve stereotypes. They are preserved, too, by individuals' emotional investments in maintaining the differences between "us" and "them." To echo Allport's (1954) observation: "Defeated intellectually," prejudice all too often "lingers emotionally" (p. 328).

Proponents of the prejudice reduction model have thus also targeted the transformation of our reactions to others on an emotional level. Whereas the extent to which prejudice necessarily involves holding false beliefs about others is much debated, the assumption that it involves disliking them is widely shared. As such, the challenge of getting people to like one another more – or at least to hate one another less – lies at the heart of many prejudice reduction interventions. As well as tackling generalized negativity, such interventions have targeted the reduction of specific negative feelings such as anxiety and threat as well as the promotion of specific positive feelings such as empathy and forgiveness (e.g., see Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008).

Behavioral outcomes and their social and political implications. The aim of prejudice reduction interventions is not merely to get dominant group bigots to have more positive thoughts and feelings about members of other groups. If this were the case, then such interventions would have remained an interesting, but ultimately inconsequential, distraction to the project of combating social inequality. Rather, the promise on which the voluminous prejudice literature rests is more provocative and far reaching. It posits the existence of an intimate relationship between prejudice reduction, transformations in individual behavior, and the reduction of social inequality on a broader scale.

Proponents of this model do not always make the underlying mechanisms of change transparent. Indeed, the pathway from psychological to behavioral to social change is often presumed rather than explicitly evidenced or evaluated. Nevertheless, it is possible to piece together the assumptions involved, for they underwrite the promise of psychological work on prejudice. In changing the thoughts and feelings that the advantaged harbor toward the disadvantaged, prejudice reduction is also believed to decrease the likelihood that they will actively discriminate against them in situations that matter, for example, job interviews, jury deliberations, policing, educational assessments, mortgage-lending decisions, and so on. In turn, this process is assumed to gradually erode inequality at a collective and institutional level. Closely related, by decreasing the likelihood that the historically advantaged will act in ways

that defend their privileges, prejudice reduction also undermines the so-called stubborn core of resistance to social change at a societal scale (Dixon et al., 2010a). It weakens, for instance, resistance to policies such as affirmative action, educational quotas, and increased taxation of the rich. In these ways, the psychological rehabilitation of dominant group bigots is believed to mediate individual and collective behaviors that promote social change in a broader sense.

Critics have long harbored doubts about the efficacy of this model of change. They have warned of the limits of an individualistic account of the origins of systemic inequality and thus of interventions to promote change through the improvement of personal thoughts and feelings about others (Henriques et al., 1984). They have questioned, too, the extent to which we should put our faith in a model of change that relies on persuading members of advantaged groups to accept the fundamental injustice of the privileges they enjoy and then to embrace policies that progressively undermine those privileges (Reicher, 2007). Historical evidence, they have suggested, does not give much cause for optimism about the success of this strategy. All too often, power is not so much passively ceded by the advantaged as actively seized by the disadvantaged (Dixon, Levine, Reicher, & Durrheim, 2012), which brings us to our second model of social change.

Collective Action

> As Owen thought of his child's future, there sprang up within him a feeling of hatred and fury against his fellow workmen. They were the enemy – those ragged-trousered philanthropists, who not only quietly submitted like so many cattle to their miserable slavery for the benefit of others, but defended it and opposed and ridiculed any suggestion of reform. They were the real oppressors – the men who spoke of themselves as "the likes of us" who, having lived in poverty all their lives, considered that what had been good enough for them was good enough for their children.
> (Tressell, 1914, pp. 39–40)

As its name suggests, the collective action model of social change explains the conditions under which members of a group act together to improve their status, reduce inequality, or achieve some related group goal. Although the roots of this model of social change lie outside of psychology – notably in Marxist and socialist thought and in related sociological and historical work on mass movements – psychological motivations are central to understanding when and why collective action occurs, a theme powerfully captured in Robert Tressell's (1914) socialist novel *The Ragged Trousered Philantropists*. In this novel, Tressell details a young activist's passionate, and often frustrating, struggle to rouse his fellow workers to challenge class inequalities in Edwardian England. By presenting a series of extended conversations between this activist, Frank Owen, and a group of working

class laborers, Tressell explores the challenges of motivating the historically disadvantaged to abandon their "philanthropic" acceptance of inequality and act together to challenge it. At its most basic level, the psychology of collective action can similarly be characterized as an attempt to understand how "ragged-trousered philanthropists" become political activists.

We should immediately add that this problem has generated far less attention than the problem of prejudice reduction within our discipline. Whereas prejudice reduction has inspired many thousands of studies and attracted millions of dollars of funding, collective action has been embraced with noticeably less enthusiasm. Indeed, it could be argued that psychologists have often treated any kind of rebellious intergroup behavior as inherently dangerous, a perspective captured in a long tradition of research on crowd psychology (Reicher, 2002). Witness the scathing indictment of mass behavior presented by Gustave Le Bon, whose work laid the foundations for modern research on deindividuation accounts of collective behavior (e.g., Zimbardo, 1969). Submerged within the mass, Le Bon (1896, pp. 55–56) observed in a notorious passage that individuals tend to display "impulsiveness, irritability, incapacity to reason, the absence of judgment and of critical spirit, the exaggeration of the sentiments and others besides – which are almost always observed in beings belonging to inferior forms of evolution – in women, savages and children, for instance."

Notwithstanding this general ideological bias against collective behavior and mass protest in particular (see also Reicher & Stott, 2011, for a more recent case study), psychologists have also provided concepts, theories, and evidence that have enabled the development of the collective action model of social change. Stouffer and colleagues' (1949) classic work on relative deprivation shed light on a range of seemingly paradoxical findings, laying the foundations for a rich body of research on the social psychology of intergroup justice (see Walker & Pettigrew, 1984). This work showed that objective structural conditions of poverty, mistreatment, and disadvantage are not in themselves sufficient to explain why people perceive the social inequality as unfair. Psychological factors such as the nature of social comparisons made and the degree to which the status quo is perceived as legitimate play a crucial role. Their work helped explain why, for example, those living in the worst material circumstances in a society are often not the most dissatisfied with their lot in life.

Tajfel and Turner's (1986) social identity theory similarly advanced the field by underlining the importance of group identification as a driving force of collective action and clarifying the ideological conditions under which subordinate groups are likely to band together to challenge the social order. When group boundaries are perceived as sharply defined and impermeable, group identities salient, and the social order unstable and illegitimate, they argued, then collective action to challenge the status quo becomes more likely. Building on this general theoretical framework, several distinct but related strands of work on collective action have flourished over the past few decades. The (elaborated) social identity model of crowd behavior developed

by Reicher and colleagues (Drury & Reicher, 2009; Reicher, 1982; see also Stott & Drury, 2000) and the dual pathway model of collective action theory developed by Van Zomeren and colleagues (Van Zommeren, Postmes & Spears, 2008, Van Zomeren, Spears, Fischer, & Leach, 2004) exemplify two exciting developments in the field. Klandermans and colleagues' work on the psychology of protests and the role of politicized collective identities exemplifies another (Klandermans, 1997, 2002; Simon & Klandermans, 2001).

Our concern in this chapter is not with the details of specific theories of collective action. Rather, as in our discussion of prejudice reduction, we want to outline some general principles that inform this model of social change. These principles again specify (a) the main agents of change, (b) the main psychological mechanisms through which change occurs, and (c) the individual and collective behaviors that are presumed to alter wider patterns of social inequality.

Agents of change. Although its proponents do not deny that members of historically advantaged groups may participate in mass protest, the collective action model has generally focused on the role of the disadvantaged in promoting social change. There are at least two good reasons for this focus. First, the disadvantaged typically have less access to institutional sources of power and must therefore rely to a far greater degree on the power of mass resistance to effect change. Second, given that many social struggles are designed to undermine systems of hierarchy and privilege, the disadvantaged typically have most to gain from collective action.

Underlying psychological processes. As anticipated earlier, the collective action model of social change focuses on psychological processes that encourage individuals to recognize injustice and become motivated to do something about it. A number of key processes are consistently identified in the literature, uniting otherwise distinct theoretical traditions (see also Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Van Zommeren et al., 2008). First, a strong sense of social identity is generally agreed to be critical. When individuals perceive themselves as belonging to a common social category and feel an emotional attachment to that category, then collective action is more likely to occur. Conversely, the experience of engagement in collective action may itself lead to strong stronger identification with the group or even a redefinition of participants" self-definitions (cf. Drury & Reicher, 2000). Second and related, collective action is often impelled by perceptions of injustice about the treatment of a common ingroup. Of particular significance here are perceptions that arise through intergroup comparisons in which the relative social statuses of "us" and "them" are directly contrasted, fomenting what Runciman (1966) called a sense of "fraternalistic deprivation." Third, this typically leads to negative emotions such as anger, frustration, and outrage, which are arguably the most immediate predictors of participation in collective action. Fourth, such action also becomes more likely when the social order is perceived as unstable and when group members develop a sense of collective efficacy and empowerment. Again, the act of participating in mass protest can in itself be an empowering and transformative experience.

As Drury and Reicher (2009) note, when participation is "understood as instantiating one's collective identity over against one's oppressors, then empowerment can develop into a virtuous cycle of broader, deeper, and more advanced resistance" (p. 722).

Behavioral outcomes and their social and political implications. Collective action can take many forms and find expression in different kinds of behaviors. The anti-apartheid struggle, for instance, was marked by mass strikes that sought to cripple the apartheid economy, marches protesting particular apartheid laws, and violent clashes with the South African police in the townships. In an especially imaginative expression of collective resistance during the 1980s, black protesters drew attention to the injustice (not to mention ridiculousness) of beach segregation by staging a campaign of occupations under the banner "All God's beaches for all God's people." In this case, mass protests took the form of picnicking on Whites-only beaches and taking rebellious dips in Whites-only seas (Durrheim & Dixon, 2001).

Research on collective action has attempted to catalog its various forms and to map its social, psychological, and political implications. Psychological work, for example, has distinguished between normative and nonnormative, violent and nonviolent, and incidental and sustained collective action (e.g., see Tausch et al., 2011). It has shown how the psychological pathways that lead to different forms of collective action may vary, even if many of the core processes are similar. Our key point here, however, is not to open up these complexities. We want to make a simpler observation. Collective action is not about getting (psychologically reformed) individuals to treat other individuals better in the hope that this may indirectly change the status quo. Rather, it is about getting members of disadvantaged communities to act together to challenge the status quo directly, that is, to become a group not only of but also for itself.

Whether or not this process is ultimately effective, of course, is a moot point, and one that its champions sometimes gloss over. Mass protests can result in violent repressions that intensify inequality and leave the disadvantaged in a deteriorating rather than improving situation. The availability of personal and collective resources, effective communication and coordination structures, the capacity to form allegiances with third parties, the political/military power, and unity of opposition forces can all play a vital role in determining the success of any social struggle. Moreover, mass protest may also lead to unanticipated consequences in which, for example, the overthrow of one repressive regime creates the conditions under which another can form.

Similarly, the idea that members of disadvantaged groups who view the social order as legitimate or believe that social mobility is possible can necessarily be characterized as holding a distorted view of social reality has attracted criticism. For one thing, it disregards the fact that the disadvantaged may have sound reasons for embracing the status quo under certain conditions. For instance, an unequal social system may present short-term material benefits and opportunities that a disadvantaged community may be quite right to recognize, especially if the viable

alternatives are not present. For one thing, it begs the questions of who is in a position to define objectively the nature and causes of social inequality or judge the validity others' political beliefs. Debates surrounding the Marxist concept of ideological "false consciousness" and of the entire "dominant ideology" thesis (Abercrombie & Turner, 1978) highlight some of the complexities involved here. They also offer an intriguing, if as yet relatively unexplored, counterpoint to psychological work that emphasizes the tendency of subordinate group members to accept their own subordination.

Relationship Between the Two Models of Change

It is intuitive to presuppose that our two models of social change, prejudice reduction and collective action, inform complementary interventions to promote social change. On the one hand, prejudice reduction works by tackling the cognitive and emotional biases of members of dominant groups and, in so doing, reducing their tendency to discriminate against members of subordinate groups. On the other hand, collective action works by mobilizing the disadvantaged to challenge social inequality from the bottom up. In this way, these models of change could be seen as mutually sustaining movements within a common process of creating social justice.

In a provocative series of book chapters, however, Steve Wright and his colleagues have complicated this simple story (e.g., see Wright, 2001; Wright & Baray, 2012; Wright & Lubensky, 2009), opening up a new tradition of research on the so-called ironic (Dixon et al., 2010b) or sedative (Cakal, Hewstone, Schwar, & Heath, 2011) effects of prejudice reduction on collective action. They argue that the surface complementarity of these models belies deeper social psychological – and indeed political – tensions that may ultimately prove irreconcilable.

Prejudice reduction increases positive intergroup emotions and beliefs, while decreasing negative reactions to members of other groups. Prejudice reduction lessens the salience of intergroup boundaries and their associated social identities and thus weakens processes of intergroup comparison and differentiation. Above all, prejudice reduction fosters harmonious relations between hitherto divided and unequal communities. It does so both by correcting negative beliefs about the disadvantaged and by extending the emotional good will of the advantaged toward those who are less fortunate than themselves. Like a pebble thrown into a pond, its effects are assumed to ripple outward gently to transform intergroup relations at an institutional and collective level.

By contrast, as Table 21.1 highlights, collective action sets in motion an opposing set of social and psychological processes. Rather than diminishing intergroup comparisons and decreasing the salience of group identities, collective action typically requires the disadvantaged to identify strongly as a social group and to make intergroup comparisons that highlight social inequalities. Collective action

Table 21.1 *Two models of social change*

Model of Change	Main Agents of Change	Interventions	Psychological Processes	Behavioral Outcomes
Prejudice reduction model	Members of historically advantaged groups	Intergroup contact; cooperative interdependence; reeducation; empathy arousal	Stereotype reduction; more positive affect; decreased salience of group boundaries and identities	Reduction of individual acts of discrimination; reduction of intergroup conflict
Collective action model	Members of historically disadvantaged groups	Empowerment; consciousness raising; coalition building	Sense of injustice; collective anger; collective efficacy; increased salience of group boundaries and identities	Collective action to change the status quo

works by fostering rather than reducing ostensibly negative emotions, especially a sense of anger at the status quo, which provides the psychological impetus to act collectively. Above all, collective action works not by fostering harmony, but by enabling confrontation with existing relations of power and status: a process that typically brings the historically disadvantaged into direct conflict with representatives (or functionaries) of the historically advantaged.

These tensions between a model of change based on promoting intergroup harmony and a model of change based on promoting intergroup conflict play out not only at a psychological but also at a sociopolitical level. A growing body of research has suggested that prejudice reduction interventions may well be effective at improving the thoughts and feelings that the disadvantaged espouse toward the advantaged. However, they also reduce their tendency to acknowledge, reject, or challenge social inequality and this may have profound consequences for whether or not social change occurs (Dixon et al., 2012).

Consider, for example, emerging work on the consequences of intergroup contact (see Tropp, Mazziotta, & Wright, Chapter 20, this title) – one of the most extensively researched interventions to reduce prejudice. By increasing intergroup empathy, decreasing intergroup anxiety, and providing richer information about others, contact has been shown to improve intergroup attitudes, reduce negative stereotypes, and increase positive responses such as forgiveness and trust (see Pettigrew & Tropp, 2011, for a comprehensive review). For this reason, the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954) has "long been considered one of psychology's most effective strategies for improving intergroup relations" (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Kawamaki, 2003, p. 5).

Mounting evidence suggests, however, that positive experiences of contact with the advantaged can have paradoxical effects on the political attitudes and collective action orientations of the disadvantaged (see Dixon et al., 2010c, for a review).

This evidence has been gathered from research conducted in the United States (Glasford & Calcagno, 2011; Tropp, Hawi, van Laar, & Levin 2012; Taush, Saguy, & Bryson, in press), South Africa (Cakal, 2011; Dixon et al., 2007, 2010b), Israel (Saguy, Tausch, Dovidio & Pratto, 2009; Saugy & Chernyak-Hai, 2012), India (Tausch, Saguy, & Singh, 2009), and New Zealand (Sengupta & Sibley, 2013). It has used an array of research designs, types of intergroup relations, and political indicators relevant to collective action; and it has produced a broadly convergent set of findings (see also Tropp et al., Chapter 20, this title).

These findings indicate that positive intergroup contact reduces subordinate group members'

- Support for policies designed to redress inequality (e.g., Sengupta & Sibley, 2013)
- Readiness to perceive the members of the ingroup as suffering from collective discrimination (e.g., Dixon et al., 2010b)
- Feelings of anger at unjust treatment (e.g., Tausch et al., in press)
- Political solidarity with members of similarly disadvantaged groups (e.g., Glasford & Calcagno, 2011)
- Most important, willingness to participate in collective action to change social inequality (e.g., Becker et al., 2013; Cakal et al., 2011; Tropp et al., 2012; Saguy et al., 2009)

At the same time, such contact increases subordinate group members'

- Willingness to perceive the existing status hierarchy as legitimate (e.g., Saguy et al., 2009)
- Belief in the possibility of social mobility (e.g., Tausch et al., 2015)
- Readiness to perceive that members of the dominant groups will treat members of subordinate groups fairly (e.g., Saguy & Chernyak-Hai, 2012)

Explaining the pathway from positive contact to collective action, researchers such as Cakal et al. (2011), Tausch et al. (2015), Tropp et al. (2012) and Wright & Lubensky (2009) present evidence that positive interactions with the advantaged tend to reduce disadvantaged group members' perceptions of injustice, identification with the ingroup, sense that group boundaries are "closed" and that social mobility is difficult, and anger at injustice. These psychological shifts in turn reduce their willingness to support, or participate in, collective action (see also Tropp et al., Chapter 20, this title).

Of course, this process varies depending on the nature of contact experiences. Contact in which intergroup relations of power and status are explicitly flagged (Becker et al., 2013) or where encounters are negatively experienced by subordinate group members (cf. Barlow et al., 2012) may prove to be exceptions. However, given that contact interventions generally seek to promote harmonious exchanges – and that dominant group members are often motivated to keep issues of power and status off the table during intergroup encounters (Saguy & Dovidio, 2013) – the paradoxical effects of contact on minority political attitudes arguably

illustrate deep-lying tensions between models of social change based on prejudice reduction and models based on collective action (see Dixon et al., 2012, for further discussion).

Echoing this idea, researchers working in other fields of inquiry have warned that exploitative intergroup relations are often characterized not by overt antipathy, but by mixed or even ostensibly positive emotions and behaviors. Jackman's (1994) sociological work has shown how many long-standing systems of intergroup inequality (e.g., gender relations in patriarchal societies) are swathed in the "coercive embrace" of paternalistic affection, which has a "shimmering allure" for members of both advantaged and disadvantaged groups alike. Similarly, emerging psychological research on benevolent sexism (Glick & Fiske, 2001), common identification (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2009), positive dehumanization (Haslam & Loughnan, 2012), and even intergroup helping (Durrheim, Jacobs, & Dixon, 2014; Nadler, 2002) demonstrates how negative evaluations need not underpin the problem of social inequality.

A fiortori, getting people to like one another more is not necessarily the solution (Dixon et al., 2012). Indeed, in some circumstances at least, prejudice reduction and other interventions to promote social harmony may actually make social change more difficult to achieve. As Wright and Baray (2012) emphasize:

> Although it is clear efforts to reduce rampant antipathy, overt expressions of hostility, and active denigration of other groups would need to be part of a scheme to improve many intergroup relations, it also appears reasonable to consider the limitations of a focus on prejudice reduction, and recognize that it may actually directly conflict with another important means by which positive social change occurs – collective action. Failure to recognize these limitations will very likely lead us into the trap that many members of the advantage group seem to fall into – assuming that because interpersonal interactions across groups are convivial and warm that intergroup inequalities are either gone or are acceptable. (p. 242)

Conclusion: Toward a Contextualist Resolution

William McGuire (1983) once advocated what he called a contextualist approach to social psychology (later elaborated into his perspectivist approach). Two of the guiding principles of his approach are particularly apposite to our discussion of models of social change in this chapter. First, any social psychological theory will benefit from empirical confrontation across as wide a range of contexts and everyday settings as possible. Crucially, this enables not only its falsification but also, equally important, the specification of its boundary conditions. The second principle is a corollary of the first. Social psychologists should actively seek out conditions where their theoretical models and associated hypotheses do not seem to apply; that is, where predicted effects and relationships are weaker, nonexistent, or even reversed. Increasingly, we have come to view the

tensions between collective action and prejudice reduction models of social change in such contextualist terms. The resolution of these tensions will not, in our view, involve a generic denouement. Rather, it will involve careful, qualified, and contextually attuned work that appraises the social, political, and psychological opportunities – and obstacles – to social change within and across a range of social contexts. In the spirit of McQuire, we end the chapter by considering two contexts in which the efficacy of collective action and prejudice reduction interventions to promote social change might well vary.

The first context is post-apartheid South Africa, a society where the first and second authors of this chapter have conducted research for more than 20 years. Most of this research has explored the relationship between intergroup contact and attitudes toward the transformation of structures of racial inequality in the post-apartheid era. In a series of national surveys, for example, we found that Black South Africans who reported having positive contact with White South Africans tended to have more favorable intergroup attitudes (as measured on dimensions such as trust and warmth). At the same time, such contact was associated with lower levels of support for government policies designed to address inequality, such as land restitution and affirmative action (Dixon et al., 2007).

In a follow-up study, we found that positive contact with Whites was also associated with decreased acknowledgment of racial discrimination among Black South Africans (Dixon et al., 2010b). Intriguingly, we found that these effects were partly mediated by (positive) intergroup attitudes. When the disadvantaged hold positive feelings toward members of a historically advantaged group, our analysis suggested, then it becomes more difficult for them to treat the advantaged as beneficiaries of inequality. Consequently, they may be less motivated to act in ways that challenge the status quo. This may help explain why paternalistic relationships – marked by ostensibly affectionate and helpful intergroup exchanges – can play an insidious role in maintaining existing power relations in post-apartheid society (see Durrheim, Jacobs, & Dixon, 2014, for a case study).

Based on these and similar findings, we have come to question the limits of the prejudice reduction model that has dominated psychological research on social change for most of the past century. Indeed, we have contributed to emerging debates about the limits of what Wetherell and Potter (1992) once called the "prejudice problematic" (e.g., Dixon et al., 2012). We have argued that the entire project of "getting us to like one another more" is sometimes a distraction from the main struggle to achieve social inequality. Worse, by diminishing the extent to which the historically disadvantaged recognize and resist broader forms of injustice, this project may sometimes contribute to the very problem that it is trying resolve.

It is important, however, to flag the boundary conditions within which this critique of the prejudice reduction model of social change applies. Our work has focused almost exclusively on relations within a society marked by long-standing,

continuing, institutionalized patterns of racial discrimination: a society where absolute and relative levels of poverty make it one of the most unequal countries on earth. In this society, Black citizens continue to struggle for access to basic health care, education, employment, and housing; their life expectancy, health, wealth, and opportunities for social mobility are grossly diminished as a result. In this society, too, the project of creating racial harmony through prejudice reduction is, in our view, of limited relevance to the promotion of social equality, at least at the present historical juncture. Indeed, it is worth noting that many of the significant political advances achieved in South Africa over the past 25 years, including the dismantling of apartheid, have largely been the result of sustained collective action – often in the face of violent repression – by the disadvantaged and their allies. They have had little or nothing to do with the improvement of the racial attitudes and stereotypes of White South Africans.

To say this is not to claim that prejudice reduction is intrinsically flawed, however, or to deny it has value in certain circumstances. To the contrary, in circumstances where social equality has been broadly achieved, prejudice reduction can be effective in combatting some of the other legacies that affect social life in post-conflict societies. The program of work conducted by Miles Hewstone, the late Ed Cairns, and their colleagues in Northern Ireland evidences some of the potential benefits of prejudice reduction in a society where significant advances have been made in terms of the achievement of social justice, but where problems of intergroup conflict linger (e.g., Hewstone et al., 2006).

Although Northern Ireland has a long history of (sectarian) discrimination and inequality, in the years following the end of "The Troubles," much has been done to address its legacy. Major advances have been made, for example, in terms of key issues of political representation and the reform of institutions of policing and criminal justice. Moreover, although poverty and disadvantage certainly exist in Northern Ireland, they are neither as severe as the South African situation nor, crucially, are they structured so overwhelmingly along intergroup lines. Many of Northern Ireland's current problems relate to issues of fear and distrust between Protestant and Catholic communities, persistently high levels of segregation, conflict over the expression of cultural differences, and of course the ever present threat of sectarian violence. This threat creates numerous problems at the level of everyday life.

Bairner and Shirlow (2003) demonstrated, for instance, how use of public facilities designed to benefit the whole community (e.g., leisure centers) may be curtailed by fears about where they are located. Protestants are often reluctant to use facilities located in our near Catholic areas, while Catholics are similarly reluctant to use facilities located in or near Protestant areas.

In this kind of context, as Hewstone and colleagues' work demonstrates powerfully, prejudice reduction interventions such as promoting intergroup contact are of potentially vital importance (e.g., Hewstone et al., 2006; Hughes et al., 2008). They have the capacity to increase empathy and forgiveness across intergroup divisions, reduce the dehumanization of others, dampen intergroup threat and anxiety, and

thus improve how individuals treat one another in everyday settings. Ultimately, as is happening in Northern Ireland, they may inform government initiatives to promote good relations and to create urban environments where citizens feel safe, trusting of one another, and able to mingle freely.

Our broader point is that the formulation "prejudice reduction versus collective action" is potentially as limiting as the presumption that the two models of change are simply compatible. The deeper challenge will be to explore how the relationship between these two models of change plays out within particular social contexts and to specify the conditions under which interventions based on these models are effective, ineffective, or even counterproductive in creating a more just society.

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