A Sociocultural Perspective of Interracial Contact: Examining the Efficacy of Sociocultural Contact on Black and White Interracial Experiences

A Sociocultural Perspective of Interracial Contact: Examining the Efficacy of

Sociocultural Contact on Black and White Interracial Experiences

by

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Abstract

This research investigates the relationship between sociocultural interracial contact (individuals' engagement with or sharing aspects related to outgroup members' or their own racial background, respectively) and intrapsychic (e.g., prejudice), interpersonal (e.g., future interactions), and systemic (e.g., collective action) race-related outcomes. Integrating research on interracial interaction, intergroup contact, and cultural psychology insights on the sociocultural self, three pilots and three studies extend the selves-in-contact framework proposed by Brannon, Taylor, and colleagues (2017) to evaluate how engaging with another's sociocultural background during interracial contact benefits interracial attitudes. Further, it tests the role of intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, (meta-)empathy, and (meta-)knowledge in explaining race-related outcomes. Pilot 1 and Study 1 find that, among Black Americans, high-quality sociocultural interracial contact is associated with positive feelings toward White Americans, intentions to engage in interracial contact, and collective action. Pilots 2-3 and Study 2 show that, among White Americans, high-quality sociocultural interracial contact is related to positive feelings towards Black Americans, intentions to engage in interracial contact, and collective action. Study 3 examines the causal relationship between imagined sociocultural interracial contact and race-related outcomes among Black Americans. While imagined sociocultural contact does not produce the same outcomes as Studies 1-2, imagining interacting with a White partner produces

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negative affective and meta-cognitive outcomes. These studies demonstrate that naturally occurring and greater quality sociocultural contact is associated with improved interracial outcomes for both Black and White individuals. Nevertheless, future work is needed to understand the causal impact of sociocultural interracial contact on Black Americans.

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It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and

celebrate those differences (Lorde, 2012).

The above excerpt from writer and civil rights activist Audre Lorde highlights

how relations between social groups can be superficial, especially when we fail to

celebrate others' differences. As an attempt to understand those differences, a

longstanding tradition of social psychological research has examined relations between

social groups, and interracial/interethnic relations in particular. For example, decades of

research on the effects of contact between groups, especially under favorable conditions

(e.g., contexts in which groups cooperate, etc.), show that contact reduces prejudice,

including racial/ethnic prejudice (Al Ramiah & Hewstone, 2013; Pettigrew & Tropp,

2006). However, work also suggests that interracial interactions are replete with anxiety

and discomfort often leading to misunderstandings for both majority and minoritized

group members (Stephan & Stephan, 1985, 1989; Trawalter et al., 2009). I propose that

these divergent findings illustrate the same types of divisions that Lorde points out above

among members of different racial groups in the US: not group differences, but groups'

inability to appreciate and celebrate those differences.

Helping bridge these discrepancies, research in cultural psychology points to the

critical role that racial group members' sociocultural contexts (e.g., their group's

histories, cultural traditions, etc.) play in informing their sense of identity (i.e., the self)

and how group members approach novel interracial encounters (Markus & Kitayama 1991, 2010). Majority group members' inability to appreciate and celebrate these sociocultural contexts and minoritized group members' inability to authentically express their sociocultural identities is theorized to be a critical hindrance to interracial harmony (Taylor et al., 2019). This dissertation extends recent theoretical work by merging cultural psychology insights on the importance of sociocultural contexts to explain the disparate findings of research in the intergroup contact and interracial interaction literatures. In doing so, I propose that interracial contact that incorporates groups' sociocultural backgrounds can benefit both majority and minoritized group members (Brannon et al., 2017; Taylor et al., 2019).

The current work examines how meaningfully engaging with aspects of another's social and cultural (i.e., sociocultural) background can reduce intergroup anxiety and meta-stereotyping while increasing empathy and knowledge about others, thereby reducing prejudice among majority and minoritized group members. Such a *selves-in-contact* approach suggests that individuals' active and substantive interracial engagement with aspects of their interaction partners' racial/ethnic sociocultural background (e.g., histories, traditions) is crucial for achieving mutually positive outcomes (Brannon et al., 2017; Taylor et al., 2019). In fact, this type of socioculturally-informed interracial contact may be necessary to protect against one of the ironic and demobilizing effects of interracial contact. Specifically, the demobilizing effect of decreased intentions among disadvantaged groups to engage in collective action to improve their groups' outcomes following interracial contact (Wright & Lubensky, 2009). This is important to address

because it suggests that one of the most widely used methods of reducing Whites' prejudice (i.e., interracial contact) can be harmful toward the racially minoritized groups it purports to benefit.

The current work examines the above processes and outcomes in interracial interactions among White and Black people in the US. This research specifically focuses on engagement with Blacks' sociocultural contexts, a sociocultural context that Whites tend to have much less engagement with and knowledge about given past and continued racial segregation (Hall et al., 2019). In doing so, this work has three major objectives that highlight the perspectives of those belonging to traditionally advantaged/privileged groups (i.e., Whites) and disadvantaged/marginalized groups (i.e., Blacks) amidst interracial interactions. The first objective is to assess how Whites' sociocultural engagement with Blacks impacts Blacks' interracial and collective action attitudes. Second, to assess the relationship between Whites' engagement with Blacks' sociocultural background and Whites' interracial as well as collective action attitudes. Last, to demonstrate the utility of sociocultural contact by assessing Blacks' experiences after imagined socioculturally-informed interracial contact with Whites. Examining this dual perspective extends previous research on intergroup contact and is critical for understanding processes that can benefit both White and Black people during interracial contact.

To understand these processes, the below review will first outline work within the interracial interaction literature followed by how the intergroup contact literature has addressed some of the same questions with divergent findings. Then, I introduce theories

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regarding the sociocultural self and the selves-in-contact perspective to integrate the interracial interaction and intergroup contact literatures. In doing so, I will highlight the underexplored potential role of outgroup knowledge, as an aspect of socioculturally-informed contact, on intergroup attitudes and behavior Next, I highlight the unintended and demobilizing consequences of intergroup contact on minoritized groups, especially as they relate to collective action attitudes and behaviors. Finally, I propose three studies that aim to test the mutually beneficial impact of engaging with Blacks' sociocultural background amidst interracial contact among Whites and Black Americans across outcomes related to intrapsychic (e.g., individual prejudice), interpersonal (e.g., desire for interracial contact), and systemic (e.g., support for collective action) factors.

Understanding Interracial Relations

Although distinct, interracial interaction research and intergroup contact work have similarly contributed to understanding interracial relations[1]. Despite their similarities, these literatures paint a divergent picture of how interactions among members of advantaged and disadvantaged racial groups can increase/decrease prejudice and are related to avoidance of further interracial interactions. These outcomes are of particular interest because they address the intrapsychic (e.g., individual prejudice) and interpersonal (e.g., desire for interracial contact) consequences of interracial relations and can inform efforts to improve interracial outcomes more generally. Notwithstanding the

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[1] The terms "interracial interactions" and "intergroup (or interracial) contact" are used throughout this work to refer to their respective literatures (MacInnis & Page-Gould, 2015). Nevertheless, strictly speaking, an interracial interaction is a specific type of intergroup contact situation. The term *interracial relations* is used to refer to all relations between members of different racial groups whether termed interracial interactions or intergroup contact in the literature.

differences, these two literatures have lent support for a variety of related mechanisms through which interracial relations impact important interracial outcomes. For example, both literatures document the mediated role that intergroup anxiety plays in explaining how interracial relations lead to increased/decreased prejudice. There are also constructs like meta-stereotypes, empathy, and knowledge of the racial outgroup that have been found to play a critical role in interracial interactions and intergroup contact but are not similarly or often assessed in both literatures. Furthermore, research across both literatures has documented similar and different ways in which interracial relations may impact Whites and racial minorities.

Below, I first outline relevant research on interracial interactions and next relevant research on intergroup contact. For each literature, I first highlight how previous research speaks to intrapsychic and then interpersonal interracial outcomes. These outcomes are discussed as they relate to White (or majority) group members and Black (or minoritized) group members separately. Given this focus, relations among different racially minoritized groups are beyond the scope of this work, although aspects of the above processes may apply to relations among disadvantaged group members (e.g., intraminority relations; Richeson & Craig, 2011). Additionally, I note important moderators that shed further light on the processes related to interracial relations as well as areas in which more research is needed. Following, I delineate research that speaks to the mediating role of intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, empathy, and outgroup knowledge. This section of the review concludes with a discussion of how the current proposed dissertation research attempts to integrate the interracial interaction and

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intergroup contact literatures and forge a path toward improving interracial contact

experiences among both White and Black people in the US.

The Challenge of Interracial Interactions

Traditionally, interracial interaction research yields largely negative outcomes as

a function of different racial groups coming together. Across racial groups, much

research documents that interracial interactions can be difficult because individuals lack

the necessary social scripts to navigate novel interracial contexts (Avery et al., 2009;

Plant & Devine, 2003). Research shows that past and present interracial interactions have

the potential to lead to increased prejudice and less desire for interracial interactions

(Shelton et al., 2009), especially when replete with stress and anxiety (Trawalter et al.,

2009). While most of the interracial interaction work has used prejudicial attitudes as a

predictor of interracial interaction outcomes (e.g., Dovidio et al., 2002; Finchilescu,

2010; Richeson & Shelton, 2003), there is also evidence that prejudicial attitudes are

likely to follow stressful interracial interactions (Toosi et al., 2012; Paolini et al., 2016;

Shelton et al., 2009). Notably, interracial interaction research has largely been focused on

Whites' (i.e., dominant/historically advantaged groups') attitudes in North American

contexts (i.e., often termed "the perceiver's perspective").

Whites' Interracial Interactions

Whites' interracial interactions have the potential to lead to increased prejudice

toward racially minoritized groups. Research shows that interracial (vs. intraracial or

same-race) interactions are more likely to elicit Whites' bias in verbal and nonverbal

responses (Dovidio et al., 2006), but this link is most often observed through anxiety

(e.g., Dovidio et al., 2002). For example, Whites who feel anxious about interracial interactions also report feeling more hostile and less likely to desire future interracial interactions (Plant & Devine, 2003; Trawalter & Richeson, 2008). The mediated role of intergroup anxiety will be discussed later, but in support of how interracial interactions may breed prejudice, research shows that Whites who anticipate feeling anxious when interacting with Blacks also anticipate more hostile feelings against their Black (but not White) partners (Plant & Devine, 2003). Furthermore, a 2012 meta-analysis assessing the outcomes of interracial interactions over the previous 46 years demonstrated that Whites' interracial interactions, compared to their same-race interactions, lead to more negative feelings toward an interracial partner, and also negative interpersonal outcomes like less friendly behavior toward a racial outgroup partner (Toosi et al., 2012).

Likewise, Whites' interracial interactions can also negatively impact interpersonal processes. Specifically, research suggests that stressful interracial interactions lead Whites to engage in interpersonal behaviors indicative of avoidance, including less desire for further interracial relations. Viewed through a stress and coping framework, interracial interactions are thought to be psychologically demanding and anxiety-inducing, thus eliciting several coping strategies aimed at reducing this anxiety. For example, theorists and empirical work suggest that avoidance is one coping strategy employed when the demands of the interracial interaction outweigh Whites' psychological resources to meet those demands (Taylor et al., 2022; Trawalter et al., 2009; Valladares et al., 2022). Providing evidence for such avoidance, Whites sat at a greater physical distance from a Black (vs. White) partner when the "Whites-as-racist"

stereotype was activated (Goff et al., 2008), a stereotype much more likely to arise amidst interracial interactions (Shelton & Richeson, 2006; Vorauer et al., 1998). Relatedly, Whites who imagined or expected an interaction with a Black partner after witnessing a racial ingroup member behave stereotypically reported increased negative affect and avoidance (Taylor et al., 2022; Valladares et al., 2022).

Beyond the anxiety-avoidance link among Whites in interracial interactions, this literature has outlined motivation to control prejudice as a key moderator that helps explain instances in which interracial relations negatively impact Whites. Whites' motivation to control prejudice is part of a larger set of impression management and self-regulatory strategies toward appearing non-prejudiced that play a critical role in Whites' experiences amidst interracial interactions. Whites in interracial interactions seek to be liked (vs. respected) by their partners (Bergsieker et al., 2010). However, they are aware that their group may be stereotyped as racist (Vorauer et al., 1998), and thus engage in careful self-regulatory strategies not to appear prejudiced (Richeson & Trawalter, 2005), including behaviors aimed at disproving such negative group stereotypes (Valladares et al., 2022). However, research shows that Whites who are concerned about appearing prejudiced are viewed as less interpersonally engaged and are perceived less favorably by a Black interaction partner (Shelton et al., 2005).

Moreover, Whites' success in controlling unwanted prejudice is, in part, due to whether one's motivation is self-directed (i.e., internal) or based on social sanctions (i.e., external; Plant & Devine, 1998). Specifically, Whites are most successful when their motivation to control prejudice stems from internal desires to be egalitarian (Butz &

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Plant, 2009; Plant et al., 2010). Bridging these findings, negative interpersonal outcomes are also likely to arise among Whites who are externally (vs. internally) motivated to avoid appearing prejudiced (Plant 2004; Plant & Devine, 2003). For example, research shows that externally motivated Whites are less sensitive to an interracial partner's needs to be respected and are more self-focused, leading to more superficial and less engaged interracial interactions (LaCosse & Plant, 2020). Thus, being externally (vs. internally) motivated to control one's prejudice is an important moderator that helps explain Whites' tense outcomes associated with interracial interactions.

Blacks/Minoritized Interracial Interactions

There is less work directly assessing Blacks' (and other racial minoritized groups) racial prejudice following interracial interactions. However, like Whites, racial minorities who experience stress and anxiety amidst interracial interactions are theorized to develop negative feelings toward their outgroup partners (Paolini et al., 2016). These negative feelings, after repeated association with interracial interactions, may pave the way for the development of prejudiced attitudes. Despite these theories, there are only limited and, at times, contradictory findings regarding racial minorities' prejudiced attitudes as a function of their interracial interactions. For example, the meta-analysis reviewed above for Whites (Toosi et al., 2012) does not demonstrate the same pattern for racially minoritized groups. For racially minoritized participants, there was no relationship between an interaction partner's race and attitude toward their racial outgroup partner. This suggests that the relationship for racially minoritized individuals might be weaker, may only arise with White (vs. other interracial) partners, or might depend on additional

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moderators. How might we understand these generally weak attitude-related outcomes among racially minoritized groups generally and Black participants in particular?

Research shows that racially minoritized groups engage in more interracial interactions generally and thus may have developed multiple compensatory strategies to manage the stress, anxiety, and other negative outcomes typically associated with interracial interactions (Miller & Kaiser, 2001; Shelton et al., 2005). While this may result in less negative attitudes following interracial interactions, these coping strategies may also lead to negative interpersonal outcomes when interacting with Whites. For example, racially minoritized groups who expected to interact with a prejudiced White individual engaged in more overcompensation strategies which led them to enjoy the interaction less compared to those who did not have that expectation (Shelton et al., 2005).

Likewise, research shows that Blacks' interracial interactions are more stressful than same-race interactions (Richeson & Shelton, 2007), and stressful interracial interactions are theorized to contribute to avoidance of future interactions with Whites (Trawalter et al., 2009). Specifically, research finds that Blacks who engaged in interracial interactions experienced increased anxiety which predicted their desire to avoid interactions with Whites. Work by Taylor and colleagues (2018; 2021) corroborates and extends these findings. In this research, Blacks reported a desire to disprove negative stereotypes and avoid a White partner when they believed their partner was likely to stereotype them and their anxiety was high. Finally, Black individuals who expected Whites to express prejudice reported greater anxiety and, in turn, greater desire

to avoid interactions with White individuals (Plant, 2004). Thus, Blacks' concerns about, and past experiences being the target of prejudice, may detrimentally affect their desire for interracial interactions. This suggests that when racially minoritized individuals interact with Whites, particularly those that are perceived as prejudiced, they experience negative emotions and concerns that make them avoid further interracial relations.

Recent theorizing and empirical research have pointed to Blacks' suspicion of motives and motivation to not be targets of prejudice as important moderators of the negative outcomes associated with interracial interactions. In contrast to Whites, racially minoritized individuals often seek to be respected (vs. liked) by their partners (Bergsieker et al., 2010). However, they are aware that they may be the targets of prejudice (Shelton et al., 2005), and suffer cognitive performance decrements when interacting with Whites who endorse more prejudiced attitudes (Holoien & Shelton, 2012; Richeson & Shelton, 2003). Even when Whites hold egalitarian values, Blacks' suspicion of others' behavior being externally (vs. internally) motivated predicts feelings of threat, avoidance, and beliefs that Whites are less genuine (Kunstman & Fitzpatrick, 2018; Major et al., 2016). Thus, members of racially minoritized groups, like White individuals, express genuine concern when approaching or engaging in interracial interactions, though for different reasons. Moreover, this concern is exacerbated when minoritized groups fear that they will be the targets of prejudice or when they suspect that Whites' motivation to appear nonprejudiced is disingenuous.

Taken together, while there is less evidence for the more direct prejudice-related outcomes of racially minoritized groups' interracial interactions, there is work that points

to the negative interpersonal outcomes that Black individuals experience following interracial contact with Whites. Additionally, there is much anecdotal and mounting experimental evidence of the interpersonal harm incurred during interracial encounters with Whites (e.g., racial microaggressions; Sue et al., 2008). Thus, interracial interactions among minoritized racial groups have been shown to lead to some of the same negative intrapsychic (i.e., less interaction enjoyment) and interpersonal (i.e., less desire for future contact/avoidance) outcomes that are experienced by Whites, albeit for different reasons.

Mediators of the Negative Impact of Interracial Interactions

The above review has highlighted the adverse outcomes engendered by interracial interactions among Black and White individuals. However, this review has also signaled that there are crucial mediators that explain the process through which interracial interactions can influence intrapsychic outcomes like prejudice and interpersonal outcomes like avoidance of further interracial interactions. Intergroup anxiety, in particular, is a well-documented affective response through which individuals experience increased negative outcomes while amidst interracial interactions. As the reviewed literature highlights, research has rarely examined interracial interactions without their connection to anxiety and prejudice. This literature finds a strong and positive link between prejudice/avoidance and anxiety among Whites and between avoidance and anxiety among racially minoritized groups. Racial meta-stereotypes (i.e., stereotypes one believes others hold about their racial group) and empathy are other important mediators that have been theorized and have garnered empirical support in explaining the

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relationship between interracial interactions and interracial outcomes. Each of these mediators will be discussed briefly in turn below.

Intergroup anxiety, or the worry and apprehension one feels when interacting with an outgroup member, has long been theorized to impede interracial interactions (Stephan & Stephan, 1985). Interracial anxiety, largely stemming from negative expectations about interacting with those of another race, is theorized to lead to heightened hostility toward and avoidance of interracial partners (Plant, 2004). There are several theorized reasons why intergroup anxiety induced by interracial interactions can lead to negative outcomes. For instance, a negative association (and negative attitudes) may be established if one consistently associates interacting with a racial outgroup member and increased anxiety. Likewise, anxiety arising from interracial interactions can activate valence-congruent (i.e., negative) schemas based on stereotypes at the time of making a prejudiced judgment of a novel interaction partner (Paolini et al., 2016). Further, research shows that for both minoritized and majority group members, the anxious feelings of one's interracial partner may impact one's own desire to engage in future contact. Through daily diary questionnaires, researchers showed that intergroup anxiety, as well as participants' interracial roommates' anxiety, predicted less desire to live together in the future with one's interracial roommate (West et al., 2009). Thus, interracial anxiety can have important negative implications for how advantaged and disadvantaged racial groups feel and act amidst interracial interactions.

Racial meta-stereotypes, the stereotypes one believes others hold about their racial group, are known to thwart interracial interactions by shaping perceptions of

outgroup members' impressions (Vorauer et al., 1998). Further, racial meta-stereotypes are important contributors to interracial anxiety as individuals wrestle with concerns about how outgroup members will view them, often leading to negative interactions and less desire for future interracial interactions (Shelton & Richeson, 2006; Vorauer, 2003; Vorauer & Sakamoto, 2006). Insecurities about the stereotypes others hold are not only more self-relevant than one's stereotypes about a racial outgroup, but they may be more difficult to dispel because they rely on information out of one's control (Vorauer et al., 1998). In several studies Finchilescu (2010) had White participants discuss race-related topics (e.g., affirmative action) in an intraracial or interracial context. In all conditions, meta-stereotypes helped explain Whites' anxiety above and beyond their initial prejudice. The results also indicated that meta-stereotyping helps explain the relationship between interracial interactions and increased prejudice. Relevant research also demonstrates that both Blacks (Taylor et al., 2018) and Whites (Taylor et al., 2022) experience increased meta-stereotypes when amidst interracial (vs. intraracial) interactions after seeing an ingroup member confirm a negative stereotype. Focusing on what one believes another person thinks and feels about one's racial group thus underscores how one's understanding of a racial outgroup's mental state and beliefs may impact interracial outcomes.

Ironically, empathy, or one's ability to understand another's experience, has been shown to have a disruptive effect on interracial interactions. While there is work that points to the role empathy has in improving intergroup tensions (e.g., Dovidio et al., 2010), interracial interaction work highlights some of empathy's less considered

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downsides. Specifically, empathy amidst interracial interactions may lead to adverse outcomes if it leads to increased racial meta-stereotyping. For example, White Canadians were asked to view a clip about Aboriginal Canadians before an interracial interaction while thinking objectively (i.e., control condition) or while imagining the outgroup's feelings (i.e., empathic condition). Individuals in the empathic condition rated their ostensible interracial partners more negative, largely driven by increased racial meta-stereotypes and those who took an empathic perspective failed to experience any prejudice reduction due to self-focused concerns (Vorauer et al., 2009). Further work shows that Whites' empathic concerns while amidst interracial interactions can backfire if their interracial partners do not express hardships. Attempting to empathize with an interracial partner who does not express the need for another's empathy generally leads Whites to become worried about how they will be perceived by their partner and to engage in more negative interpersonal behaviors (e.g., less self-disclosure; Vorauer & Sasaki, 2012). Thus, empathy in interracial interactions, specifically if it increases racial meta-stereotypes, can lead to negative affective and behavioral outcomes.

Conclusions: Interracial Interactions

The interracial interaction literature is consistent in at least one way: interracial interactions are stressful for both racial majority (Whites) and minoritized (Blacks) group members. This research also demonstrates that interracial interactions can negatively impact both intrapsychic (i.e., prejudice and related attitudes; albeit weaker for minorities) and interpersonal (i.e., desire for future interactions) outcomes. Specifically, the stress and anxiety associated with a novel interracial interaction is associated with

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increased negative and hostile feelings as well as less desire for future interracial

engagement (Shelton & Richeson, 2006). Moreover, notable mechanisms explaining the

relationship between interracial interactions and negative outcomes have been

documented: increased intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, and empathy. However,

most of this work has been carried out across White samples, with less empirical work

focusing on the experiences of racially minoritized groups (Fiske, 1998; Shelton, 2003;

Roberts et al., 2020). Nonetheless, these findings point to the challenges that arise when

racial group members come together to interact.

Despite these challenges, interracial interactions are not all doomed to fail. In fact,

the US is becoming more and more racially diverse and there are areas in which

interracial interactions are necessary and productive (Richeson & Shelton, 2007). As has

been noted elsewhere, interracial interaction research focuses on relations among racial

group members that are not necessarily characteristic of all or most interracial

interactions (Page-Gould et al., 2010). As an example, most of the interracial interaction

literature focuses on the "stranger situation," that is, interactions with complete strangers

that one is unlikely to interact with across time. Thus, there is reason to believe that

interactions among different group members can be constructive, particularly when one is

able to build rapport and friendships (Camargo et al., 2010; Shelton et al., 2014). In fact,

there is empirical evidence to suggest that interracial relations can result in positive

intrapsychic and interpersonal outcomes. This is precisely the conclusion that researchers

across a similar and related literature have found: the intergroup contact literature.

The Promise of Intergroup Contact

To address some of the challenges that arise amidst interracial interactions, Gordon Allport formulated what was then known as the contact hypothesis (1954) and has since evolved into a rich theoretical framework, the *intergroup contact theory* (Christ & Kauff, 2019; Pettigrew et al., 2011). From this perspective, intergroup contact refers to interactions between members of distinct social categories. In direct contrast to the interracial interaction literature, intergroup contact theory suggests that intrapsychic and interpersonal outcomes *improve* when social groups come together to interact by reducing negative affect and increasing intergroup comfort (Allport, 1954; Dovidio et al., 2017; Pettigrew, 1998). Allport's writings have become influential for detailing important conditions (i.e., equal status, common goals, interdependent cooperation, and institutional support) theorized as vital for prejudice reduction across both advantaged and disadvantaged groups. However, research has found that several intrapsychic (e.g., interracial prejudice) and interpersonal (e.g., intentions for further contact) outcomes improve even when these four conditions are not met (Pettigrew et al., 2011). Furthermore, intergroup contact can occur directly and indirectly, the latter including extended and imagined forms of contact in which people do not physically interact, but nevertheless experience reduced prejudice and increased desire for in-person contact (Schiappa et al., 2005; Turner & Crisp, 2007).

The following section of this review focuses on the intrapsychic and interpersonal outcomes of intergroup contact, underlining how findings often oppose those in the interracial interaction literature. First, I outline evidence of how intergroup contact can reduce prejudice and improve the desire for future interracial contact among Whites.

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Following, I review the same outcomes as they relate to racially minoritized groups. This review of the literature also points to more recent research outlining how even extended and imagined forms of contact can produce favorable intrapsychic and interpersonal outcomes. I conclude by reviewing unique moderators to intergroup contact and findings that assess the same crucial mediators related to interracial interactions: intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, and empathy. An additional mediator is also discussed, outgroup knowledge, which has been tested across the intergroup contact literature and is central for the argument proposed later in this dissertation.

Whites' and High-Status Groups' Intergroup Contact

Interracial contact for Whites has repeatedly been demonstrated as an effective and robust way to reduce racial prejudice (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). For example, White individuals, especially those who expressed apprehension amidst interethnic contact, expressed reduced anxiety, lower implicit prejudice, and more desire for intergroup friendships after three cross-group (vs. same-group) friendship meetings (e.g., answering questions to increase self-disclosure, playing games, etc.) with a Latino partner (Page-Gould et al., 2008). Additionally, research also highlights the generalizability of intergroup contact effects. For example, a multinational analysis shows that intergroup contact with racially minoritized immigrants is associated with lower levels of ethnic prejudice, an association that remains even among strongly conservative Whites (Barni et al., 2020). Furthermore, the effects of intergroup contact on prejudice reduction (i.e., at the intrapsychic level) generalize to children (Aboud et al., 2012), adolescents (Tropp et

al., 2022; Ülger et al., 2018), and adults (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006), but these generalized patterns can also be observed at the interpersonal level.

Intergroup contact among Whites can also increase desire for future interracial contact. Research shows that White Americans who report more positive contact with Black Americans report reduced prejudice, but also less likelihood of desiring to actively avoid Black people in general (Barlow et al., 2012). In further support of this, though not across racial lines, low-status students attending a public school and high-status students attending a private school in Britain were more willing to interact (e.g., to go on a trip, become friends, or attend school with their respective outgroup) with increased quantity and quality of intergroup contact (Brown et al., 2007). Thus, intergroup contact can favorably impact one's willingness to interact with, and comfort around, racial outgroup members; and these effects may also extend to low-status groups.

Blacks' and Low-Status Groups' Intergroup Contact

Intergroup contact research among racially minoritized and low status groups is far less common and generally less studied. However, similar to White individuals and members of other high-status groups, intergroup contact among minoritized groups has generally been found to improve intrapsychic outcomes, though there are mixed findings. For example, Tropp and Pettigrew's (2005) meta-analysis found evidence for the hypothesized negative relationship between intergroup contact and prejudice among racially minoritized groups, though this relationship was slightly smaller compared to majority group members. Nevertheless, intergroup contact generally, and interracial contact specifically, were associated with decreased outgroup prejudice for racially

minoritized participants. However, research assessing the relationship between Blacks'

and Latinos' contact with Whites and their racial attitudes demonstrate that negative

(relative to positive) contact increases anti-White attitudes. Specifically, while negative

contact is related to increased anti-White attitudes, positive contact experiences with

Whites are associated with more positive attitudes toward Whites (Hayward et al., 2017;

see also Swart et al., 2011). This work demonstrates that for racially minoritized groups,

the valence of their interracial contact with Whites matters for their outcomes. In addition

to these intrapsychic outcomes, intergroup contact among minoritized groups can impact

interpersonal outcomes related to a desire for future interracial contact.

Though intergroup contact among racially minoritized groups has not consistently

assessed desire for future contact, it has assessed other interpersonal outcomes such as

desire and intentions to avoid future interracial contact. For example, longitudinal and

correlational research shows that Black individuals, compared to Whites, are more likely

to report positive previous interracial contact with the outgroup, in this case, Whites. This

positive contact, in turn, led to increased self-efficacy about managing interracial contact

and thus less desire to avoid interracial contact in the future (Doerr et al., 2011). Research

also demonstrates that Blacks and Latinos who have experienced more positive contact

with Whites are less likely to avoid contact with White individuals (Hayward et al.,

2017). Thus, intergroup contact among racially minoritized groups may increase their

willingness to engage in more contact, or at the very least avoid future contact.

Beyond Face-to-Face Contact

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For both majority and racially minoritized group members, the positive intrapsychic and interpersonal effects of intergroup contact can emerge even amidst less direct types of contact (e.g., extended, parasocial, imagined, and virtual/computer-mediated contact; Imperato et al., 2021; Lemmer & Wagner, 2015; Miles & Crisp, 2014). For example, simply knowing that a close ingroup member has favorable interactions with an outgroup member (i.e., extended contact) has been shown to reduce prejudice that rural-born Chinese individuals may harbor against urban-born Chinese (Wang et al., 2022). Further, the parasocial contact hypothesis suggests that mere exposure to an outgroup member through the media can help reduce prejudice to the degree that people process mass-mediated communication in a similar way to interpersonal interactions (Schiappa et al., 2005). Work from this theoretical perspective finds that, among British soccer fans, the addition of a Muslim soccer player to a national team, and the subsequent exposure of this player on television, led to reduced hate crimes and anti-Muslim speech, an important interpersonal outcome (Alrababa'h et al., 2021). These findings provide convergent evidence that contact with an outgroup member, even if physically or psychologically removed, can have positive effects on racial/ethnic attitudes and interpersonal behaviors.

Contact effects have also emerged when contact involves individuals who are not merely far removed but may not exist at all. Imagined contact, an extension of intergroup contact theory in which one mentally visualizes positive contact with an outgroup member (Turner & Crisp, 2007), has been shown to increase positive attitudes and desire to interact with outgroup members (Borinca et al., 2022). White participants who were

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asked to imagine a positive interaction with a Muslim individual, compared to those who imagined no interaction, later chose to sit closer to an ostensible Muslim partner (Turner & West, 2012). Individuals have expressed additional positive outcomes like greater interest in interacting with an outgroup member when they next have the chance (Husnu & Crisp, 2010, see also, Borinca et al., 2022; Vezzali et al., 2012). Imagined contact paradigms are particularly instructive for research among groups that have limited opportunities for direct or face-to-face interracial contact, which is often the case among Whites and Blacks in the current US racial context. Thus, a rich and creative line of work has followed Allport's initial hypothesis showing the ways in which intergroup contact can increase a desire for further interracial contact.

Moderators of Interracial Contact

As with interracial interaction research, intergroup contact work has outlined moderators that explain when intergroup contact reduces racial prejudice and improves interpersonal outcomes. However, these moderators are largely focused on Whites' experiences with limited work focusing on racially minoritized groups. Two moderators, in particular, have received empirical support: group categorization and contact valance. For instance, how groups are cognitively categorized can moderate the success of interracial contact (Christ & Kauff, 2019). Research suggests that mutual intergroup differentiation (wherein group differences are recognized within a superordinate identity) compared to decategorization or recategorization (wherein group differences are deemphasized or become salient, respectively) is most likely to improve interracial

outcomes (Brown & Hewstone, 2005)[2]. From this perspective, contact may improve attitudes and behaviors when group members are able to see themselves distinctly under a larger common identity. Contact valence, whether the intergroup contact is positively or negatively experienced, is another important moderator that helps determine when contact will improve attitudes (Laurence et al., 2018). While work on contact valence is emerging, it is an important element of intergroup contact that will be further discussed when integrating the interracial interaction and intergroup contact literatures.

Mediators of Interracial Contact

Researchers have long sought to understand the mechanisms through which intergroup contact may improve intergroup attitudes. Pettigrew and Tropp (2008) documented three major mediators that help explain how intergroup contact reduces prejudice. Anxiety, empathy/perspective-taking, and to a lesser extent outgroup knowledge were each found to significantly mediate the relationship between intergroup contact and prejudice reduction (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008). Finally, meta-stereotypes are a less well-documented but nevertheless important cognitive means through which intergroup contact has been theorized and found to impact intrapsychic and interpersonal outcomes (e.g., Laher & Finchilescu, 2010; Vezzali, 2017).

Anxiety is one of the most well-researched mediators explaining the positive effects of intergroup contact. A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact assessed 45 studies in which the mediating role of anxiety on intergroup contact and prejudice was analyzed. This meta-analysis demonstrated that anxiety (vs. empathy/perspective taking

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[2] This has also been termed "balanced similarity" within the imagined intergroup contact literature (Ioannuo et al., 2017).

and intergroup knowledge) was the strongest mediator, suggesting that intergroup contact reduces intergroup anxiety which, in turn, decreases prejudice (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008; see also, Hayward et al., 2017; Jasinskaja et al., 2011). Additionally, longitudinal work among minoritized groups (i.e., colored South Africans) demonstrates a similar pattern. Intergroup contact at Time 1 was associated with reduced anxiety at Time 2, which in turn predicted reduced anti-White prejudice at Time 3 (Swart et al., 2011). Thus, among both majority and minoritized group members, intergroup contact can improve interracial outcomes through anxiety reduction.

Though less well-documented, meta-analytic work also shows that being able and willing to understand how others feel – or having "empathy" for another person or group – leads to improve outcomes following intergroup contact (Pettigrew & Tropp; 2008). One of the ways in which empathic emotions are induced is through perspective taking, or the cognitive capacity to consider another's point of view. For example, Hayward and colleagues (2017) assessed the mediating role of empathy on outgroup prejudice cross-sectionally, among a sample of racially minoritized participants, and experimentally through an imagined contact experience. Across these studies, the results revealed that empathy, above and beyond other emotions like anxiety and anger, predicted a reduction in prejudice following positive contact experiences. Additional longitudinal work conducted among colored junior high school students in South Africa shows that perspective-taking was a mediator (at time 2) of the relationships between cross-race friendships (at Time 1) and interracial outcomes (at time 3). Specifically, empathy generated through perspective-taking amidst intergroup contact led to more positive

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outgroup attitudes, greater perceived outgroup variability, and less negative action tendencies (e.g., fighting or arguing with the outgroup; Swart, et al., 2011).

Outgroup knowledge has long been theorized to help explain the relationship between intergroup contact and improved outgroup attitudes. In the above-mentioned meta-analysis, knowledge of the outgroup emerged as a weak but significant mediator explaining the relationship between intergroup contact and reduced prejudice (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008). This is notable because Allport (1954) argued that "knowledge-giving" contact, in which one learns about the characteristics of the outgroup, was most likely to lead to lasting prejudice reduction (p. 266). As evidence of the role of knowledge, research shows that intergroup knowledge is a critical mediator when it focuses on the entire group (e.g., knowledge about a group's history, language, values, etc.) as opposed to the individual (e.g., knowledge about the person one is interacting with). For example, research shows that indigenous Chilean's intergroup contact with non-indigenous Chileans increased intergroup knowledge (knowledge about their values and history) which reduced anxiety and, in turn, decrease affective prejudice (Zagefka et al., 2017). Arguably, researchers have not clearly outlined whether specific types of knowledge are more or less likely to mediate the relationships between contact and interracial outcomes, nor has outgroup knowledge been fully assessed in the interracial interaction research tradition.

A final mediator, meta-stereotypes, has not typically been assessed within the intergroup contact literature. However, limited research in this domain shows that meta-stereotypes play an important role in successful interracial contact (Finchilescu, 2005;

Laher & Finchilescu, 2010). Evidence of this is gained from experimental work assessing Italian students' attitudes toward African immigrants. In this study, male participants were led to believe that an outgroup (vs. ingroup) individual they were about to interact with held positive (vs. negative) beliefs about Italians. The results revealed positive meta-stereotypes led to increased desire and more anticipated enjoyment of interracial (but not intraracial) interactions (Vezzali, 2017). Additionally, Stathi and colleagues (2020) found that meta-stereotypes were negatively associated with intergroup contact but positively associated with prejudiced attitudes. While mediation was not assessed, this work provides preliminary evidence that meta-stereotypes play a role in explaining how intergroup contact may impact prejudice. Specifically, intergroup contact can reduce meta-stereotypes, which may then decrease negative attitudes but increase one's expectations of favorable interracial contact.

Conclusions: Intergroup Contact

The intergroup contact literature is consistent in at least one way: interracial contact can be beneficial for both racial majority (Whites) and minoritized (Blacks) group members. Decades of research continue to support the conclusion that contact among members of different racial groups can improve both intrapsychic (i.e., reduce prejudice) and interpersonal (i.e., increased contact) outcomes (Dovidio et al., 2017). Specifically, by reducing one's intergroup anxiety, increasing empathy (often through perspective-taking activities), adding to one's outgroup knowledge, and reducing meta-stereotyping, intergroup contact can reduce prejudice and increase one's intentions to approach outgroup members (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008; Stathi et al., 2020).

Taken together, research in the intergroup contact tradition generates outcomes that often oppose those related to interracial interaction research. The intergroup contact literature suggests that interracial contact is often effective in improving interracial outgroup attitudes through a reduction in anxiety and meta-stereotyping and an increase in empathy and outgroup knowledge. By comparison, interracial interaction research suggests that interracial interactions increase one's anxiety and meta-stereotypes, while decreasing the effectiveness of empathy, thus hindering the success of cross-race encounters. Given that both literatures aim to understand and improve interracial outcomes, these discrepancies suggest that there is room for integration and development across both literatures. Notably, important caveats have been the topic of recent theorizing, pointing to the conditions under which interracial relations may or may not contribute to improved intrapsychic and interpersonal outcomes (Dixon et al., 2005; Paluck et al., 2019; MacInnis & Page-Gould, 2015). These caveats and limitations are discussed next.

Merging Insights from the Interracial Interaction and Intergroup Contact

Literatures

While research demonstrates a consistent association between intergroup contact and reduced prejudice (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008), notable limitations have been documented (e.g., Dixon et al., 2005; Dixon & McKeown, 2021; Paolini et al., 2021). First, some argue that much (if not most) intergroup contact research does not meet the methodological criteria considered most rigorous and necessary to inform public policy on how to improve interracial relations (Paluck et al., 2019; see also Paluck et al., 2021).

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Further, recent research has begun to explore the consequences of negative contact, and how contact valence may attenuate the positive impact of interracial contact on prejudice reduction (Laurence et al., 2017; but see also Dixon & McKeown, 2021). The issue of contact valence asymmetry may be particularly applicable to efforts aiming to integrate interracial interaction work with intergroup contact research because it highlights areas of overlap between the two literatures. Last, there are issues related to intergroup knowledge as a mediator of intergroup contact and prejudice reduction, focusing on ways in which knowledge content (i.e., whether it is interpersonal or socioculturally-based) may differentially serve as a particularly powerful mediator of the contact-prejudice relationship.

Meta-analytic work demonstrated that only a handful of studies (11 total) assessed interracial/interethnic contact wherein participants were randomly assigned to the experimental condition and assessed at least 1 day after the intervention began. With these inclusion criteria, results showed that improved intergroup attitudes for studies involving race or ethnicity are substantially weaker than other types of contact targeting immigrants, individuals with physical disabilities, age, etc. (Paluck et al., 2019). This is relevant to the current work because it may help explain how one literature focused on contact between members of various social identities (i.e., intergroup contact) may not always align with research focusing on race relations specifically (i.e., interracial interactions). Thus, it is unlikely that enough work has been conducted among racial groups to understand how contact may best be leveraged given that contact may not function equivalently across different social groups. This is noteworthy given that

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Allport's (1954) initial hypothesis was generated in the context of, and with intentions of improving interracial relations. However, there are areas where the interracial interaction and intergroup contact literatures do converge.

Recent empirical work on negative contact can give insights into why interracial interaction research and intergroup contact research often produce opposing findings. As highlighted above, interracial interaction work finds that interracial relations are negative and stressful experiences (Toosi et al., 2012). Relatedly, recent work on the impact of negative, relative to positive, intergroup contact (contact characterized by unfriendly or unpleasant experiences) finds that it, too, can lead to increased prejudice and intergroup conflict (Paolini et al., 2010; Aberson, 2015). Although negative intergroup contact is less ecologically common, it may have a stronger positive relationship to prejudice (Garf et al., 2014; see also Schäfer et al., 2021 for evidence of mixed findings on the prevalence and impact of negative contact). Thus, interracial interaction research may reflect a specific case of intergroup contact: negative contact, which is then likely to lead to negative intrapsychic and interpersonal outcomes, as evident in the interracial interaction literature. This also can help explain how similar mechanisms differentially impact the relationships found across both literatures (i.e., anxiety, meta-stereotypes, empathy).

A specific mechanism that has not been fully explored, however, is outgroup knowledge. Previous intergroup contact work shows that outgroup knowledge is either a weak or non-significant mediator of intergroup contact and reduced prejudice (e.g., Cervantes et al., 2018; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008). However, there is no standardized way of assessing outgroup knowledge and the distinction between interpersonal knowledge

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and sociocultural knowledge has not been clearly delineated. Additionally, the interracial interaction literature has not assessed intergroup knowledge as one of its main mediators. This makes sense given that interracial interaction research focuses on interactions between strangers who are unlikely to vary in the amount of interpersonal or sociocultural knowledge they have about each other or their racial groups. Hence, further research is needed to understand when and if different types of outgroup knowledge may result in enhanced interracial outcomes. Remarkably, an early study predating both the interracial interaction and intergroup contact literatures gives insight into how outgroup knowledge may be leveraged to improve interracial relations.

Sociocultural Outgroup Knowledge and Interracial Relations Study

An early and informative interracial contact study conducted by F. Tredwell Smith (1943; as cited in Allport, 1954) highlights a potentially important, though less well enumerated, condition needed to improve intergroup relations long term – that of gaining substantive knowledge about outgroup members' sociocultural background. In this study, White students spent two consecutive weekends in Harlem in contact with and gaining knowledge about the architecture, food, churches, social clubs, music, and literature related to the Black Harlem life of the mid-'40s. Results showed that after 8 years, 38 of the 46 participants who went to Harlem continued to show more favorable attitudes toward Blacks compared to a control group. While the control group did not engage in any type of intervention (aside from the pre and post-intervention measures), they were selected based on having similar initial attitudes toward Blacks as those in the experimental condition. Notably, Smith describes this intervention as "cultural contact,"

highlighting the more group-based level of analysis from which Smith (and later Allport) were considering improving interracial relations.

Different focuses may help explain the divergence between Allport's (1954) focus on "knowledge-giving" contact and more recent work illustrating the weak mediating effect of "interpersonal knowledge" in intergroup contact research (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008). Specifically, intergroup knowledge that focuses on an individual's qualities does not help an interracial contact partner learn about another's sociocultural self (i.e., the sense of self shaped by one's social/cultural context). This is not to say that personal information is not important in an interracial contact situation but failing to capture aspects of an interaction partner's sociocultural background can only provide a partial sketch of another's experiences. This is especially the case for minoritized group members' sociocultural backgrounds which are often misrepresented, misunderstood, and undervalued (Davis, 2005; Franklin, 1992). Thus, interpersonal knowledge (e.g., what is this person's history, patterns of behavior, etc.) may only weakly mediate the relationship between contact and intrapsychic and interpersonal outcomes compared to sociocultural knowledge (e.g., what is this group's history, patterns of behavior, etc.).

Although this study pre-dates the formulation of most interracial interaction and intergroup contact research, it addresses key problems that have been directed toward recent intergroup (and in particular interracial) contact work (Paluk et al., 2019). For example, Smith (1943) addresses many of the limitations noted above regarding lack of experimental randomization, longitudinal data assessments, critical knowledge-giving contact, and a focus on interracial attitudes. As has been noted (Brannon et al., 2017),

Smith's cultural contact study also highlights the importance of considering key elements of another's sociocultural background when interacting with them. Importantly, this original work suggests that studies that lack this important context may be associated with superficial changes in racial attitudes that are unlikely to persist. Incorporating more fully insights about the sociocultural self and individual's sociocultural background may be critical for interventions designed to improve interracial relations. These theoretical integrations may pave the way for more complete theorizing by understanding the similarities and differences found in the interracial interaction and intergroup contact literatures and contribute to longer-term positive intergroup outcomes.

A Socioculturally Perspective on the Self: Implications for Interracial Relations

Individuals engaged in interracial contact also have the potential to engage with each other's social and cultural (i.e., sociocultural) backgrounds and experiences. A major proposition of the current work is that interracial relations can best be understood when researchers leverage the dynamic ways in which the self is connected to the broader social environment it inhabits. Thus, intergroup contact theory can be expanded and further developed by exploring how racially minoritized groups' sociocultural selves can be incorporated into interracial contact situations. To situate research on the sociocultural self, in this section, I will first outline important tenants of cultural psychology and the sociocultural self, focusing on how this literature may be applied to intergroup contact work. I then introduce a selves-in-contact perspective to explore how interracial contact research might incorporate insights about the sociocultural self. I conclude by highlighting current research that provides evidence for the positive impact of

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socioculturally-informed interracial contact for both White and Black racial group members.

The Sociocultural Self

The self (i.e., an individual's sense of awareness and the center of experience) shapes and is shaped by the broader sociocultural setting (e.g., ideas, practices, institutions, products, and artifacts, embedded in a cultural, historical, and geopolitical context), including interactions with groups who may or may not share an individual's social group membership (Markus & Kitiyama, 1991; 2010). Thus, one of the functions of the self is to incorporate the various pieces of input that are derived from the broader environment and social patterns of behaviors surrounding the person. At the same time, people's actions, thoughts, and feelings have the potential to shape the sociocultural context they reside in (Markus & Kitiyama, 2010). This cycle of *mutual constitution* suggests that individuals' psyche (emotion, attention, motivation, etc.) and the sociocultural elements around them are dynamically informing and being informed by one another (Fiske et al., 1998; Markus & Kitiyama, 1991; Shweder, 1995). Hence, the self is a sociocultural entity, and racially minoritized groups' sociocultural selves may play an important role in their interracial experiences.

As indicative of how the sociocultural context may impact one's psyche, Markus and Kitayama (1991) outlined various ways in which individuals' self-construal differs between individuals from Western and Eastern nations. A self-construal describes beliefs that one has about the self and, as part of one's sociocultural self, directs one's experiences as a function of one's social and cultural background. Specifically, there are

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cognitive (e.g., beliefs about how similar one is to others), affective (e.g., reasons for experiencing self-conscious emotions), and motivational (e.g., desire to fit in or desire to stand out) differences in the self-construal of individuals from Western and Eastern backgrounds. For example, independent self-construals, which are more prominent in Western cultures, form and hold social relations based on personal and egocentric goals. Interdependent self-construals, which are more prominent in Eastern cultures, view individuals as inherently connected and value mutual relationships over personal goals. It is important to note that these differences are not limited to international regions but can encompass many other social and cultural group memberships (e.g., class, ethnicity, religion, workplace, family relationships, etc.; Markus & Conner, 2014).

As outlined above, the process of mutual constitution helps explain how one's sociocultural background can direct and moderate one's interracial experiences (e.g., one's motivation for engaging in interracial contact, one's feelings around an interracial partner, etc.). For example, racially minoritized group members (Blacks and Latinos, in particular) understand and make sense of interactions with law enforcement officers based on the history of discrimination racial group members have experienced under the law (Taylor et al., 2019). While contact with police officers is not always interracial per se, a history of racial discrimination and systemic racist institutional policies and practices in law enforcement in the US may nevertheless shape such interactions (Alexander, 2010). Given these and other racialized experiences, marginalized racial group members express feeling misunderstood amidst interracial contact, and this may largely be derived from majority group members' confusion and/or general lack of

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knowledge about the sociocultural factors that have informed their sense of self (Shelton et al., 2014). Thus, it is likely that one's sociocultural background can give meaning to one's interracial experiences and can have vital consequences on how one understands and responds to them (Oyserman & Markus, 1993). This is important because interracial interactions in the US are often characterized by distinct selves (i.e., ethnically European Whites and Blacks with African ancestry). It is these types of interracial situations that a sociocultural perspective of interracial contact research undertakes.

Sociocultural Selves in Intergroup Contact: A Selves-in-Contact Perspective

Interracial contact strategies can benefit by considering the sociocultural selves of those who are otherwise marginalized and devalued. Brannon, Taylor, and colleagues (2017) argued that interracial relations (among other types of intergroup relations) which incorporate minoritized groups' sociocultural backgrounds can benefit intergroup outcomes. Mainly, Whites' opportunities to engage with practices and ideas which are meaningful and defining for racially marginalized groups can be one method of effectively communicating the divergent ways in which minoritized groups think, feel, and behave. Termed sociocultural selves in intergroup contact, or a '*selves-in-contact*' approach, it suggests that acknowledging, understanding, and/or appreciating one's sociocultural background may more fully "capture the psychological experiences of people from different social groups and, in doing so, enhance psychological understandings of sociocultural selves and intergroup contact" (Brannon et al., 2017, p. 4).

A selves-in-contact approach to interracial contact arose as part of a critical analysis surrounding theories of intergroup relations (including interracial interactions and intergroup contact) as well as cultural psychology's insights on the sociocultural self. Despite their overlap and interconnected focus on understanding marginalized group members' experiences with outgroups, these two theoretical lenses rarely converge. Nevertheless, together they give greater insight into the sources of pride, identity, and meaning that may be critical components for improving interracial relations; relations that are often replete with misunderstanding and intergroup apprehension. Further, theoretical insights supporting a selves-in-contact approach to interracial contact may be beneficial to members of both dominant and marginalized groups for several reasons.

First, gaining knowledge about an outgroup is one of the primary ways that foundational research and theory by Smith, and later Allport, suggested intergroup contact could lead to prejudice reduction, at least for majority group members (Allport, 1954; Smith, 1943). Gaining, understanding, and/or sharing critical historical knowledge may not only provide more correct information associated with a particular group (e.g., accurate perceptions of Black crime) but also a holistic picture of how stereotypes arose and the purpose they serve (e.g., the subjugation of newly freed slaves, share cropping regulations, Jim Crow laws, differential sentencing laws for illegal drugs, etc.). Gaining knowledge may be particularly important because it may relate to all three types of interracial outcomes: intrapsychic, interpersonal, and systemic. Specifically, gaining accurate knowledge about an outgroup's (and feeling that others fully understand one's own) sociocultural experiences may reduce negative feelings toward, lead to greater

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desire to learn more about, and even socially support the efforts of racially oppressed

groups and communities.

Second, because cultural traditions can be a source of pride and meaning (Adams

& Markus, 2004; Brannon & Lin, 2021), marginalized groups may feel respected by

others when their cultural backgrounds are recognized and valued. These feelings of

respect may further bolster minoritized groups' feelings of self-efficacy to not only

engage in more interracial contact but stand up in support of, and in solidarity with, other

members of their group. Third, because unfamiliarity breeds misunderstanding and

interracial apprehension (Plant & Devine, 2003; Shelton & Richeson, 2006), gaining

knowledge about an outgroup's sociocultural background may be crucial for helping

reduce avoidance that is characteristic of novel interracial contact. Similarly, creating

environments in which racially minoritized group members can authentically express

their sociocultural selves may reduce the apprehension that characterizes their intentions

toward interracial contact. Empirical work across several literatures lends evidence to the

utility of a selves-in-contact approach to interracial relations.

The Effect of Sociocultural Contact on Whites' Interracial Attitudes

Research demonstrates that sociocultural interracial contact can have a positive

influence on racial majority (i.e., White) individuals. For example, work exploring

tourists' satisfaction can be understood through a sociocultural lens. This work shows

that having more cultural contact while traveling (e.g., learning about different rituals,

getting involved in cultural activities, etc.) is associated with more intentions to visit the

destination (Chen & Rahman, 2018). Related theoretical work suggests that being open to

learning about the culture of other racial/ethnic groups is strongly associated with more positive contact and less negative contact (Rullo et al., 2022). Thus, individuals who travel and are more open to engaging in cultural contact are likely to desire more intergroup contact and thus develop more favorable interracial attitudes. However, individuals may develop positive outgroup evaluations even when travel experiences are not positive.

Research on study abroad programs (i.e., when individuals travel to live, work, and learn among members of another country/culture) shows that, while sometimes characterized by undesirable experiences, intercultural contact has positive intergroup outcomes. In one study, White education students spent three weeks studying in Mexico. Qualitative analysis suggests that while students struggled with the linguistic, racial, and cultural dynamics of the host country, they were able to channel these struggles into empathic emotions toward second language learners in the US (Marx & Pray, 2011). Similar longitudinal work shows that increased contact with locals increases one's identification with the host culture, a relationship that is associated with overall satisfaction with the study abroad experience (Waßmuth et al., 2018). Thus, study abroad experiences are not always positive, as is the case when White students learn about African oppression while in Africa (Tolliver, 2000), or when individuals feel lost while navigating a new language in Mexico (Marx & Pray, 2011; see also Wooley & Fishbach, 2022). Nevertheless, intergroup experiences that incorporate another's culture are important in providing counter-stereotypic, critical, and meaningful knowledge about another's cultural selves.

Experimental work further corroborates the correlational findings among students in study abroad programs. For example, Brannon and Walton (2013) had White female participants interact with a Mexican American female confederate to create a music video. Participants first learned they were interacting with a Latina who did or did not share similar interests (e.g., same/different favorite book) to manipulate participants' social connection. The pair was then tasked with creating the music video for a Mexican band (i.e., a culturally relevant activity) or a Portuguese band (i.e., a non-culturally relevant activity). Throughout, the Latina confederate provided appropriate culturally relevant information to create the music video (i.e., suggesting the use of traditional Mexican/Portuguese dancing, based on condition). Participants with a heightened desire for social connection who completed the culturally relevant activity demonstrated significantly less implicit bias toward Latinos, compared to those who completed a non-culturally relevant activity. Follow-up assessments 6.5 months later showed that participants in the culturally-relevant condition indicated increased interest in talking with Mexican Americans about their cultural traditions and practices, effects that proved to be long-lasting. This research provides experimental evidence that sociocultural interracial contact can improve Whites' interracial attitudes and facilitate intercultural engagement.

The Effect of Sociocultural Contact on Blacks' Interracial Attitudes

A view of the self as a sociocultural entity also provides rich insights into the interactions that will be effective for improving racially minoritized groups' experiences in interracial interactions. For example, classic scholarship on the psychological

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experience of being of African descent in the US context has been described as "double consciousness" (Dubois, 1903; Gilroy, 1993)—an experience that is instructive in understanding Black Americans' interracial interactions. It refers to a duality arising from being part of two sociocultural contexts: being an American (which often facilitates an independent self-construal, among other things) and being of African descent or Black (which often facilitates an interdependent self-construal, among other things; Oyserman et al., 1995). For Black Americans, in particular, the activation of an interdependent self (vs. an independent self) can impact intergroup contact situations. For example, Black (but not White) students cooperated significantly more after having been primed with their Black interdependent identity compared to their American independent identity (Brannon et al., 2015). Thus, not only do members of racially minoritized groups inhabit unique and varied selves that are often quite distinct from the mainstream (European/White American) culture, but the sociocultural self that is activated can impact how racially minorized group members interact with outgroup members.

Another important consequence of Blacks' (and many other minoritized groups') dual sociocultural selves is that they are already very familiar with the mainstream American (i.e., White, or European American) culture (Hudson et al., 2021; Johnson, 2019). Thus, while a selves-in-contact approach suggests that groups should learn and engage with the outgroup's culture, for Black people in the US, this is part of their everyday lives (e.g., it is taught in school, disseminated through media, etc.). Why then, do Blacks' interracial experiences continue to be replete with stress and anxiety (Richeson et al., 2005; Trawalter et al., 2009)? One reason is that Whites likely do not

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have similar levels of knowledge or understanding of Blacks' sociocultural selves and background. While it is advantageous and functional for Black individuals to learn about the dominant culture (Johnson, 2019), it may appear less critical for Whites to reciprocate this effort. Thus, given the historical and sociopolitical context of the US, Whites may be less familiar with Black Americans' culture. It is thus likely that Whites' interracial contact experiences may benefit from increased knowledge of racial outgroup members. If so, Blacks may likewise benefit from interracial contact in which their sociocultural selves are shared, valued, and understood.

For Black individuals, their concerns or fears that their sociocultural selves and background are *not* valued, shared, or understood, however, may contribute to some of their negative interracial experiences. For example, Blacks' belief that Whites are unaware of their struggles with systemic oppression (i.e., a likely component of their sociocultural self) may contribute to their expectations that they will be the target of further prejudiced attitudes (Holland, 1994; Shelton et al., 2005). These types of expectations about how others may view the self (i.e., meta-stereotypes) can have detrimental outcomes for Blacks' interracial experiences with Whites (Taylor et al., 2018; 2021). Thus, the current work focuses on how Whites' racial attitudes and behavioral intentions may be improved, while also creating conditions that generate favorable interracial contact experiences for Blacks. This is done by understanding and providing the critical sociocultural knowledge that Whites may lack, while also helping Blacks feel that their sociocultural selves are understood, valued, and respected.

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Though theory is informative, there is also limited empirical work assessing how sociocultural contact impacts minorities' experiences. For example, research speaks to the positive outcomes that may follow when institutions consider minorities' sociocultural backgrounds. Longitudinal research shows that Blacks' engagement with African American culture on college campuses (e.g., being part of Black student clubs, attending cultural events) is associated with greater academic fit and identification beliefs, especially for students who do not experience identity threat. Cultural engagement was also associated with higher self-reported GPAs and academic persistence (Brannon et al., 2015, Study 5). A conceptual replication of this work provided similar evidence among Latino and Black students. The authors assessed how engagement in courses related to one's racial/ethnic background predicted health and academic outcomes. Sociocultural engagement through academic courses predicted minorities' inter- and intragroup closeness which increased their sense of belonging and in turn predicted higher self-rated health, GPA, 4-year completion rates, and decreased depression (Brannon & Li, 2021). While not in the context of interracial interactions per se, this work suggests that making one's sociocultural background salient (when it differs from the mainstream) can benefit racially minoritized groups.

Conclusion: A Selves-in-Contact Perspective

Cultural psychologists have attested to the fact that human interactions, including interracial interactions, shape and are shaped by the sociocultural context in which they occur (Adams & Markus, 2004). Social psychological literatures on interracial relations (e.g., interracial interactions, intergroup contact) paint divergent pictures for improving

Black and White relations. However, theoretical and empirical perspectives on the

sociocultural self may be a critical missing piece for understanding how interracial

relations can impact intrapsychic (e.g., prejudice) and interpersonal (e.g., desire for

contact) outcomes for both advantaged and disadvantaged group members. While this is

an emerging line of thinking, there is work that demonstrates the benefit that Whites can

gain when learning about Blacks' sociocultural background (Brannon & Walton, 2013)

and that Blacks can gain when feeling that they can authentically express their

sociocultural selves (Brannon & Li, 2021). Thus, spaces in which interracial relations are

characterized by openly sharing meaningful aspects of one's sociocultural selves can

improve both intrapsychic and interpersonal outcomes across racial groups. Finally,

sociocultural contact may also be critical in improving structural outcomes, like support

for collective action, an outcome that has been largely absent from the interracial

interaction literature and a topic of recent criticism for traditional interracial contact

research.

Interracial Relations and Collective Action

Within the context of interracial relations, collective action refers to one's

attitudes or behaviors that promote the interest of the disadvantaged group. For example,

support for the Black Lives Matter movement (i.e., participating in a protest) and

intentions to vote for candidates that fight for equal rights are different forms of

collective action. While collective action (sometimes referred to as social action) has

often been the topic of research for disciplines like sociology which examines structural

barriers to equity, it has recently also been applied to social psychological work,

especially as it relates to interracial relations (Hayward et al., 2018; Uluğ & Tropp, 2021). The relationship between interracial relations and collective action is important to study because it adds an important structural level of analysis to interracial research that has most often examined intrapsychic, interpersonal, and intergroup processes. Though in its infancy, research exploring collective action intentions in the context of racial relations shows that intergroup contact and interracial interactions may disparately impact advantaged and disadvantaged group members.

Below, I outline research within the interracial interaction literatures that speaks to outcomes related to collective action among both majority and minoritized individuals. Following, I highlight the same outcomes within the intergroup contact literature, which is slightly further developed, in part because intergroup contact has been shown to detrimentally impact minorities' collective action intentions (e.g., Hässler et al., 2021; Wright & Lubensky, 2009). However, examining racially minoritized groups' collective action intentions following intergroup contact has only recently been carefully studied and contradictory findings suggest that more research is needed. Within the intergroup contact review, I highlight how conventional methods of studying collective action (e.g., within sociology and political psychology) diverge in consequential and meaningful ways from how racial inequity is studied in the traditional intergroup contact literature.

Collective Action in the Interracial Interaction Literature

In a review of the extant interracial interaction literature, there seems to be no research directly assessing the relationships between interracial interactions and Whites' attitudes toward collective action on behalf of racially marginalized groups. This may

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also be an appropriate place to note that the field of social psychology, by in large, does

not explicitly categorize race-related interpersonal research as either belonging to the

interracial interaction or the intergroup contact tradition. Thus, there are elements from

both theoretical frameworks within the below review. Nevertheless, the race-related

research described below exploring minoritized groups' collective action experiences is

much more in line with interracial interaction frameworks and procedures. Given the lack

of research among White Americans, however, the following findings can only

cautiously be generalized to interactions that focus on White individuals collective-action

response following interracial interactions.

Research on interminority relations sheds some light on how interracial

interactions may impact minoritized group member's collective action intentions from a

somewhat different vantage point. Specifically, it provides insight into why interracial

interactions among racially minoritized groups (e.g., Blacks interacting with Latinos)

may result in *decreased* support for collective action. Interminority relations can lead to

negative outcomes if they lead to perceived competition for resources among minoritized

group members (Young & Sullivan, 2016). If one group believes that their disadvantages

are comparatively more than another group, they may be less likely to support collective

action on behalf of that outgroup (Dixon et al., 2015; Cernat, 2019). Thus, increased

interracial interactions among racially minoritized group members, at times, may increase

perceived competition and lower collective action intentions. Likewise, it is possible that

Whites' beliefs in reverse racism, that their racial group is discriminated against (Kolber,

2017), may translate to less support for collective actions against the actual targets of racism.

Interminority relations can also lead to adverse outcomes if they are perceived as obstructing group distinctiveness (Richeson & Craig, 2011). For example, Dominican Americans experience categorization threat and reported negative attitudes toward African Americans when they are discriminated against by others who perceive them as African American, as opposed to their preferred categorization as Latinos or Dominicans (Wiley, 2019). This categorization threat led to less positive feelings toward African Americans and greater perceived distance to African Americans. Thus, there is evidence to suggest that intergroup interactions among minoritized racial groups may impede collective action initiatives, especially when these interactions lead to decreased group distinctness. Interracial interactions with Whites, then, may impact collective action intentions if they elicit categorization threat, but limited research has emerged within this literature to know with certainty. Related work within the intergroup contact tradition has more directly examined interactions between advantaged and disadvantaged group members.

Collective Action in the Intergroup Contact Literature

Though limited, research on collective action in the intergroup contact literature is more developed than that in the interracial interaction literature. Recent work in the intergroup contact literature suggests that contact can produce differing attitudes and behavioral intentions among advantaged and disadvantaged groups regarding collective action for underrepresented/minoritized group members. That is, research finds that

collective action intentions generally improve among majority group members, though they may decrease among minoritized group members. This so-called demobilizing effect among minoritized group members suggests that positive intergroup contact serves to disassociate marginalized group members from their groups' needs, thereby reducing their intentions to engage in collective action (Kauff et al., 2016). This is problematic for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that intergroup contact has been found to produce different but favorable outcomes among majority group members.

Specifically, among majority group members, there is evidence to suggest that intergroup contact can lead majority group members to support collective action on behalf of minoritized groups. For example, Italian nationals' intergroup contact with immigrants has been associated with an increased willingness to engage in collective action on behalf of immigrants in Italy. This relationship was mediated by perceptions that group status differences were illegitimate (Di Bernardo et al., 2021). For White South Africans, interracial contact with Black South Africans was associated with increased support of policies aimed at supporting Blacks in South Africa (Cakal et al., 2011). For Turkish nationals, higher quality contact with Syrian refugees predicts support for more open borders, a relationship mediated by perceived cultural closeness (Firat & Ataca, 2021). Finally, meta-analytic work demonstrates this same pattern: intergroup contact tends to lead to increased support for collective action, at least among majority group members (Hässler et al., 2020).

However, the relationship between intergroup contact and racially minoritized groups' attitudes and behaviors toward collective action is more complex. For example,

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some studies show that there is a positive relationship between intergroup contact and collective action for minoritized group members (Di Bernardo et al., 2021). However, there is also evidence of a small negative relationship between intergroup contact and collective action intentions (Reimer et al., 2021). Theorists have proposed that there may be certain situations in which intergroup contact leads to increased collective action among minoritized group members, for example, when the contact is negative (e.g., Reimer et al., 2017). This proposition aligns with the idea that negative intergroup contact may be qualitatively different than, and lead to divergent outcomes compared, to positive intergroup contact. Partly responsible for these disparate findings is that the contact literature and the literature on collective action (mostly in sociology and political science) have divergent approaches and methods to studying intergroup relations.

Intergroup contact work often focuses on the advantaged group's prejudice with the hope that understanding it will inform prejudice reduction strategies. As noted, intergroup contact research examines positive contact between groups. Positive contact, however, reduces intergroup anger, which is crucial and instrumental for creating constructive tension and building equity (Dixon & Tropp, 2010; Hässler et al., 2020; Wright & Lubensky, 2009; see also Cikara & Paluck, 2013). Further, the contact literature argues that to improve intergroup outcomes, group identity distinctions should be lowered (e.g., Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000), the outgroup should be positively characterized, and group status differences should be diminished (i.e., groups should have equal status). Collective action research, however, focuses on disadvantaged groups and how their responses to oppression can be leveraged to challenge structural forms of

prejudice and discrimination (Droogendyk et al., 2016; Wright & Lubensky, 2009). In

contrast to intergroup contact, collective action research suggests that group identity

salience should be clear and distinct (Ufkes et al., 2016), the outgroup should be

negatively evaluated (Wright & Tropp, 2002), and group status differences (i.e.,

disadvantage) should be readily recognized (Taylor & Moghaddam, 1994). Researchers

have pointed to these theoretical differences to understand how and when contact may

demobilize disadvantaged group members.

Collective Action and Intergroup Contact Among Minorities: Demobilizing Effects

Recent work has begun to understand the conditions under which intergroup

contact can undermine (vs. preserve or increase) minoritized group members' collective

action intentions. In particular, the demobilizing effects of intergroup contact among

minoritized groups have been observed across several research studies. For example,

research shows that outgroup justification of the status quo is a moderator of whether

intergroup contact may lead to less support for collective action among those

marginalized (Becker et al., 2013). In one such experiment, LGBT individuals were

asked to think about an outgroup (i.e., heterosexual) close friend who is against (vs.

supports) same-sex marriage before answering questions about collective action

intentions. Results showed that the collective action intentions of LGBT individuals were

hampered (i.e., demobilizing effect) only when imagined/past intergroup contact involved

an outgroup member (i.e., heterosexual friend) who opposed (vs. supported) same-sex

marriage (Study 1). A conceptual replication built upon this study to demonstrate that

intergroup contact can lead to decreased collective action intentions even when contact is

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characterized by an outgroup member who is ambiguous about their support/opposition toward the social hierarchy (Study 2).

Similar demobilizing patterns have been observed across race and ethnicity. Work assessing the relationship between interracial contact and support for collective action among racially marginalized individuals showed that Black South African students who reported more contact with White individuals also reported less willingness to engage in collective action initiatives. This relationship was partially mediated by decreased feelings that Blacks experienced social and economic deprivation compared to Whites (Cakal et al., 2011; see also Dixon et al., 2010; Saguy et al., 2009; cf. Kauff et al., 2016). Finally, in a large-scale test of the relationship between intergroup contact and collective action, Hässler and colleagues (2020) assessed over 1,000 ethnic minorities and found that interracial contact is negatively correlated with support for collective action. Moreover, research suggests that it is the absence of negative contact (and not necessarily the presence of positive contact) that is specifically associated with protecting/increasing minorities' collective action intentions (Reimer et al., 2017). Thus, there is convergent evidence that intergroup contact, as typically applied to interracial experiences, can have disparate outcomes for majority and minoritized group members' collective action intentions.

Conclusions: Collective Action in Interracial Relations

Research on interracial relations, particularly within the intergroup contact literature, demonstrates that further work is needed to understand White and minoritized group members' collective action intentions. While research on collective action remains

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in its infancy, it is critical to consider the degree to which research across one marginalized social identity (e.g., sexual minorities) can reasonably explain processes across a different marginalized social identity (e.g., race). Though most of the work highlighted in earlier sections has been on interracial contact, much of the experimental work and theoretical literature on collective action in the intergroup contact research tradition has focused on the attitudes of marginalized sexual minorities with less focus on race (e.g., Beck et al., 2013; Reimer et al., 2017). Likewise, it is important to understand mechanisms that aid majority group members' collective action intentions, given that even their inaction is uniquely associated with negative cross-group emotions (Elad-Strenger et al., 2022). Thus, there are opportunities to develop further theoretical and empirical work by exploring the collective action intentions of racially minoritized groups.

In the current dissertation research, collective action is examined because it is theorized to relate to systemic-related outcomes. In assessing collective action, this research complements work on interracial relations across literatures that traditionally explore the intrapsychic and interpersonal dynamics of cross-race experiences yet excludes systemic-related outcomes. While the unit of analysis in this work remains at the intrapsychic level (i.e., individuals' attitudes, intentions, and support of collective action), these attitudes are used to generalize and abstract to phenomena that can impact systemic forces (e.g., policies, cultural norms, etc.). By exploring these three types of outcomes, this dissertation integrates research on interracial interactions, intergroup (i.e.,

interracial) contact, and the sociocultural self to explore how White and Black individuals may benefit from sociocultural interracial contact.

Sociocultural Interracial Contact

The above review outlines multiple literatures that attempt to understand interracial relations and resolve intergroup inequity across three interconnected types of outcomes within social and cultural psychology: intrapsychic (e.g., prejudice), interpersonal (e.g., desire for future contact), and systemic (e.g., collective action). I argue that a sociocultural perspective of the self, especially as it informs interracial experiences, is one way in which the benefits of intergroup contact can be more successfully applied to novel interracial interactions. Thus, above and beyond mere contact, engaging in and with disadvantaged groups' sociocultural context (informed by group members' sociocultural perspectives of the self) is likely to improve intrapsychic and interpersonal outcomes in addition to remedying the unintended effects contact can have on systemic outcomes like collective action. Thus, both Whites and Black Americans have the potential to mutually benefit from socioculturally-informed interracial contact.

Although related work has explored how cultural contact may impact intergroup attitudes, the impact of sociocultural interracial contact has not been fully outlined, especially as it may relate to intrapsychic, interpersonal, and systemic outcomes. While this paves the way for theoretical development and empirical growth, it also creates challenges in knowing how best to measure and/or manipulate sociocultural contact. Thus, below I first describe the details of Pilot 1, which assesses Black Americans'

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understanding of a prompt developed to measure sociocultural engagement and tests the direct relationship between sociocultural contact and interracial outcomes. Following, Study 1 evaluates the relationship between sociocultural contact and interracial-related outcomes while considering critical covariates and mediators. Following, I outline Pilots 2 and 3 which test the effectiveness of the prompt developed in Pilot 1 among a sample of White Americans as well as a preliminary assessment of the relationship between sociocultural contact and interracial attitudes among Whites. Then, Study 2 assesses the relationship between sociocultural contact and White Americans' attitudes using the same conceptual mediators as Study 1 and controlling for relevant covariates. To conclude, Study 3 experimentally examines the impact of sociocultural (vs. traditional) imagined interracial (vs. intraracial) contact among a separate sample of Black Americans.

Pilot 1: Preliminary Assessment of Blacks' Sociocultural Contact

Study 1 pilot was conducted among a sample of Black US adults to assess their comprehension of two prompts asking about previous sociocultural contact and to test whether sociocultural contact among Blacks is associated with improved interracial and collective action attitudes toward reducing inequality. Participants were asked to read and answer questions about the clarity and cultural sensitivity of two different prompts (see Appendix A). Following, they answered questions about their sociocultural contact with Whites, interracial attitudes, and collective action. It is hypothesized that sociocultural-based contact, above and beyond traditional contact, will be associated with improved interracial outcomes and collective action attitudes. Though participants were also asked

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to respond to their respective prompts in an open-ended format, the analysis of those responses will be reserved for future research.

Two prompts describing and defining groups' sociocultural backgrounds were drafted after a reading of the relevant literature and related measures assessing cultural knowledge, ethnic identity, and interethnic empathy (e.g., Bücker et al., 2015; Chol Yoo et al., 2021; Wang, et al, 2003; see Appendix A). Two different prompts were created to assess whether differences would arise based on whether more or less examples were given as part of the sociocultural description. Additionally, I was interested in whether the wording of the prompt was clear in helping non-technical audiences understand the nature of racial groups' sociocultural background.

Study 1 Pilot Method

Design, Participants, and Procedures

A total of 60 Black adults (M_{age} = 36.33, SD = 11.38; 26 men, 33 women, 1 non-binary) completed this cross-sectional pilot study on Cloud Connect. Participants read either Prompt A (n = 30) or Prompt B (n = 30; see Appendix A).

Upon consent and an introduction to the study, participants reported the quality of their "traditional" contact with White/European Americans. They were then randomly assigned to read one of two prompts describing and defining racial groups' sociocultural backgrounds (prompt A or B; Appendix A). Following, participants answered dependent measures assessing the ease of understanding and cultural sensitivity of the prompt. Next, participants were asked to respond to the prompt in an open-ended format by reporting instances in which they shared aspects of their racial/ethnic background with

White/European Americans. Participants were asked to enter any and each instance of

sociocultural contact in a separate text box. This was done to ensure that participants

could later answer contact quantity and quality questions about each instance of

sociocultural engagement separately. Dependent measures then asked about participants

prejudice feelings toward Whites and collective action intentions on behalf of Black

Americans. Finally, participants completed demographics, received debriefing details,

and were thanked for their participation.

Measures

Open-ended sociocultural contact (exploratory). Experiences engaging in

sociocultural contact with White individuals were assessed through an open-ended item

instructing participants to report cultural experiences, activities, customs, and/or

interactions with other people related to their won racial group (i.e., Blacks/African

Americans) that they have engaged in or learned about. The question read: "What cultural

experiences, activities, customs, and/or interactions have you had with White people in

which you shared aspects related to your own racial group's culture?" Participants had the

option to enter a second, third, etc. instance of sociocultural contact or to move on to the

remainder of the study. The survey then displayed, one by one, each instance of

sociocultural contact participants entered as their open-ended responses along with a

series of questions related to each sociocultural contact experience. Qualitative

assessment of these responses will not be part of this dissertation.

Assessment of Prompt. Each prompt was assessed by a separate set of 30 participants to determine which one would be used in Study 1. These assessments included *prompt clarity*, *valence*, and *cultural sensitivity*.

Prompt Clarity. Participants assessed the clarity of the prompt they read by reporting how clear and difficult (two separate items) the prompt was to understand on a scale from 1—*Not at all* to 7—*Very.*

Prompt Valence. Participants assessed the valence of the prompt by answering questions regarding the positivity or negativity of the thoughts the prompt brings to mind on a scale from 1—*Very negative to 7—Very positive.*

Prompt Cultural Sensitivity. Participants rated whether the prompt brings to mind stereotypes about Blacks, is culturally insensitive, culturally appropriate, controversial, and racist on a scale from 1—*Not at all to 7—Extremely.* These five items were averaged together to create a scale of cultural appropriateness ($\alpha = .77$).

Quality of traditional interracial contact. Participants indicated the quality of their previous interactions with White people across four dimensions: pleasant, uncomfortable, superficial, and cooperative on a scale from 1—*strongly disagree* to 7—*strongly agree* (Tausch et al., 2007; $\alpha = .69$). These items did not reference sociocultural engagement. Items were coded and averaged such that higher scores indicate more positive interracial contact with Whites.

Quality of sociocultural interracial contact. Participants reported the quality and depth of their previous interactions with White people involving the characteristics

described in the prompt across ten dimensions[3], including those noted above (e.g., cooperative, important, meaningful, etc.). Items were assessed on a scale from 1—*strongly disagree* to 7—*strongly agree* (α = .83; adapted from Tausch et al., 2007). Items were coded and averaged such that higher scores indicate more positive and deep sociocultural interracial contact with Whites.

Affective prejudice. To assess prejudice, participants responded to a single-item feeling thermometer scale from 1—*cold* to 100—*warm* assessing feelings toward White/European Americans (Gaertner et al., 1996).

Collective action anti-racism attitudes. The Anti-Racism scale adapted from LaCosse and colleagues (2021; α = .82) was used to evaluate participants' attitudes toward collective action through evaluations of one's anti-racist beliefs (e.g., "Black people should do more than just acknowledge that racism toward Black people exists," "Black people need to speak out against racial discrimination"; See appendix C).

Collective action behavioral intentions. Participants rated the degree to which they would consider doing 11 different behaviors indicative of support toward social equity (α = .93; adapted from Smith et al., 2008; Pieterse et al., 2016). Behaviors include writing a letter, signing a petition, and attending a rally (see Appendix C for measure).

Pilot 1 Results and Discussion

Assessment of prompt. Table 1 displays descriptive statistics and correlations across all Pilot 1 variables. Independent samples t-tests demonstrated that no differences

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[3] The sociocultural contact quality composite includes six items not included in the traditional contact quality scale. These items were added to ascertain qualities specific to sociocultural contact (e.g., important, eye-opening). Analyses using only the same four items used for the traditional contact quality scale produce similar effects.

emerged across the assessments when comparing responses to prompt A and prompt B (all t's < 1, all p's > .20). Given the lack of variability between responses to prompt A and prompt B the following analyses collapse across the prompt participants viewed.

Participants who viewed both prompts thought they were between mostly clear and clear to understand ($M = 5.63$, $SD = 1.44$), and likewise rated it as only a little difficult to understand ($M = 1.93$, $SD = 1.41$). The thoughts and responses the prompt brought to mind were above the neutral midpoint, ($M = 4.87$, $SD = 1.40$; $t(59) = 4.81$, $p <$ .001), suggesting that the message of the prompt did not bring to mind negative thoughts about Blacks/African Americans. Finally, participants did not find the prompt culturally insensitive ($M = 2.20$, $SD = 0.94$).

Linear Regression Results. A series of two-step hierarchical regressions were carried out to investigate the relationships between sociocultural contact quality on feelings toward Whites and collective action, controlling for traditional forms of contact quality. For each regression below, traditional contact quality was entered in step 1. In step 2, sociocultural contact quality was added. Prior to conducting the hierarchical multiple regression, the relevant assumptions of this statistical analysis were tested. Residuals were normally distributed and there were no issues with multicollinearity (VIFs < 1.16), linearity, or homoscedasticity. Table 2 displays the results of the hierarchical regression for all focal outcomes.

Regression analysis revealed that at step 1, traditional forms of contact quality contributed significantly to the regression model explaining feelings toward Whites, $F(1,58) = 46.60$, $p < .001$, and accounted for 44.60% of the variation (see Table 2 for all

statistics). At step 2, sociocultural contact quality significantly added to the model, $F(1,57) = 3.91$, $p = .05$, and an additional 3.6% of model variance was explained. These results suggest that greater quality of Blacks' sociocultural contact with Whites, above and beyond the quality of their traditional interracial contact, is associated with more favorable feelings toward Whites. Stated differently, greater sociocultural contact quality is related to less prejudiced feelings toward Whites. Unexpectedly, neither traditional contact nor sociocultural contact quality were associated with collective action attitudes or behavioral intentions for Black American respondents in the Pilot sample.

Pilot 1 investigated the relationship between sociocultural contact quality on feelings towards Whites and collective action among Black Americans. Independent samples t-tests showed no differences in responses to the two prompts tested. Participants generally found both prompts to be clear and culturally appropriate. Hierarchical multiple regression revealed that traditional forms of contact quality was related to feelings toward Whites, and sociocultural contact quality further significantly contributed to the model. However, unexpectedly, neither traditional contact nor sociocultural contact quality were related to collective action attitudes or behavioral intentions for Black Americans. Given the limited sample size of this pilot, Study 1 aims to test a more complete model with a more adequately powered sample.

Study 1: Blacks' Sociocultural Contact and Interracial Attitudes

Study 1 examines the extent to which Black people's racial attitudes are related to their experiences sharing aspects of their sociocultural background with White individuals. Specifically, the purpose of Study 1 is to assess the relationship between

Blacks' greater quality sociocultural engagement with Whites (wherein they share their sociocultural background) and their racial attitudes toward Whites and collective action intentions. Given that sharing aspects related to one's racial group may involve an intimate degree of self-disclosure, Study 1 also controls for participants' self-disclosure amidst their interracial contact. Thus, Study 1 is important for understanding whether sociocultural contact quality, above and beyond traditional forms of interracial contact quality and degree of self-disclosure, is related to Black individuals' collective action attitudes and intentions. I focus on evaluating collective action (i.e., racial) solidarity, among other collective action items, which has been used to ascertain racial minoritized group's collective action attitudes (Glasford & Calcagno, 2012). Additionally, Study 1 employs two quasi-behavioral measures of collective action: monetary donations toward racial equity and written characters as part of a letter advocating for racial justice.

To further extend Pilot 1, the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and interracial outcomes will be tested through four mediators: intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, meta-perceptual outgroup empathy, and outgroup meta-perceptual knowledge. Moreover, given that Study 1 focuses on understanding how sharing their sociocultural selves might be related to Black Americans' attitudes, two of the four mediators have been adapted for this population. Research shows Black Americans are already accustomed to learning about and engaging with Whites' sociocultural background (Hudson et al., 2021; Johnson, 2019), in part because the US is predominantly dominated by White/European American culture and ways of being (Markus & Kityama, 1999). Thus, Study 1 assesses Blacks' meta-perceptual beliefs (i.e.,

beliefs Blacks have about Whites' empathy toward and knowledge of their racial group).

Meta-perceptual beliefs generally, and meta-stereotypes particularly, have been

investigated within the interracial interaction literature (Shelton & Richeson, 2006;

Taylor et al., 2018, 2022; Vorauer et al., 1998). However, to my knowledge, meta-

perceptions involving Whites' empathy and knowledge (i.e., the degree of empathy and

knowledge Blacks believe Whites hold toward their group) have received less attention.

Thus, Study 1 assess the degree to which Black Americans perceive Whites as being able

to understand the emotions of, and have knowledge about, Black Americans.

There are a number of open-ended responses that will be collected, though they

will not form part of the main analyses of these dissertation studies. For Study 1, I will

collect open-ended responses regarding the aspects of Black Americans' sociocultural

background that they report sharing with White Americans. Further, participants will

answer a similar question asking them to report elements from their own sociocultural

background that they believe would be most helpful in helping reduce anti-Black

prejudice. Finally, a collective action assessment will ask participants to write a letter in

support of racial justice. While the length of the letter will be used in the below

quantitative analysis, the qualitative assessment of the content of their response will be

reserved for future work.

Study 1 has three main hypotheses. It is expected that Black individuals who

report greater quality sociocultural contact with Whites will also report more positive

feelings toward Whites, greater desire for interracial contact, and increased collective

action intentions. Second, it is expected that this relationship will remain after controlling

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for traditional forms of contact quality and self-disclosure, such that greater sociocultural contact quality will be unique associated with improved outgroup attitudes and collective action intentions. Lastly, it is predicted that these relationships will be mediated by the following parallel mediators: intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, meta-perceptual empathy, and outgroup meta-perceptual knowledge (see Figure 1 for hypothesized model). Specifically, greater quality sociocultural contact is expected to be related to decrease intergroup anxiety and meta-stereotypes which, in turn, are expected to be related to improved interracial outcomes. Likewise, greater quality sociocultural contact is expected to be related to increased meta-perceptual empathy and outgroup meta-perceptual knowledge which, in turn, are hypothesized to be related to improved interracial outcomes. All Study 1 hypotheses, design, and analyses were preregistered: https://osf.io/dkvju.

Method

Design

Black participants completed this cross-sectional study online through the crowdsourcing site, Prolific. They were presented with the consent form, followed by brief instructions, and then a list of all variables of interest, with covariates first, predictors second, followed by mediators, and outcomes last.

Participants

Participants were recruited through Prolific to take part in a study about social interactions in exchange for payment. For this 25-minute online study, participants were compensated $3.41 ($8.00/hour). Participants completed the entire cross-sectional study

online. Participants eligible for Study 1 met the following inclusion criteria: 1) self-selected Black/African American as their primary race, 2) at least 18 years of age, and 3) currently residing in the US. *Exclusion criteria:* participants were excluded from analysis for failing attentional checks (e.g., "select strongly agree for this item"). While participants also responded to a memory check question regarding the sociocultural contact instructions, the exclusion criteria was revised due to potential participant confusion surrounding these items (see Study 1 Results).

Though no research has tested similar hypotheses across a racially minoritized sample, estimates were based on a Monte Carlo power analysis for indirect effects using the online web app (Schoemann et al., 2017) with data available from predominantly White samples (given that estimates from Pilot 1 are subject to power limitations). The power analysis tested for the hypothesized indirect effects between sociocultural contact and prejudice as mediated by intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, outgroup knowledge, and empathy. The Monte Carlo interface allows for up to three parallel mediators, and this model was used excluding meta-stereotypes given the dearth in research (and by implication, estimates) regarding how meta-stereotypes may mediate the relationship between intergroup contact and interracial outcomes[4]. In this power analysis, the standard .80 power for detecting a significant effect at $p < .05$ was used. Indirect effect estimates and correlations were derived from previous intergroup contact research (Pettigrew &

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[4] An a priori Monte Carlo power analysis was conducted with a single mediator model to assess the necessary sample size to detect the mediating effect of meta-stereotypes. The necessary sample size was 85, although the estimates used to calculate this sample size comes from research assessing meta-stereotypes regarding the outgroup's desire for contact specifically (Stathi et al., 2019). Given this is one of the few studies assessing the relationship between intergroup contact, meta-stereotypes, and prejudice, this estimate was used with caution.

Tropp; 2008; Zagefka et al., 2019). The power analysis indicated that a sample size of 165, 205, and 110 would be necessary to detect the indirect effect of intergroup anxiety, outgroup knowledge, and empathy, respectively. The largest needed sample (for the smallest effect) of 205 was used as a starting point. Given the additional mediator of meta-stereotypes, the two covariates, and to account for attrition, 300 Black participants were recruited to participate in this study.

Procedures

Following consent participants completed items related to their previous contact with White/European Americans (i.e., traditional forms of contact quality) and were then given a description of what it means to engage with another group's social and/or cultural background (i.e., prompt A following Pilot 2 results; see Appendix B). Participants were prompted to describe any instances in which they have shared aspects of their sociocultural background with Whites. Following, participants were asked to report the content and quality of any previous *sociocultural contact* with Whites (as described in the prompt they read).

Next, participants completed the main dependent measures beginning with the cognitive and affective mediators (i.e., intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, meta-perceptual empathy, meta-perceptual outgroup knowledge) and closing with their interracial attitudes and assessments of collective action. A second covariate then assessed participants' interracial contact quality in which they self-disclosed aspects of their personal identity and characteristics. A final assessment, reserved for future analyses, asked participants to report the types of sociocultural contact experiences that

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they personally believe would be most helpful in reducing anti-Black prejudice. Unless

otherwise noted, all measures were rated from 1—*strongly disagree* to 7—*strongly*

agree. Throughout, participants completed attention and memory checks regarding the

sociocultural contact prompt they read. Finally, participants completed a demographic

questionnaire, were fully debriefed, and were given the details of the study.

Covariates

Quality of interracial contact. Participants assessed the quality of their previous

interactions with White individuals across four items: pleasant, uncomfortable,

superficial, and cooperative on a scale from (Tausch et al., 2007; $\alpha = .78$). Items were

coded and averaged such that higher scores indicate more positive interracial contact with

Whites.

Interracial contact self-disclosure. Participants reported the degree of self-

disclosure during interracial contact with White individuals ("I felt I disclosed important

personal information", "I felt I was understood"; $\alpha = .88$). The six items were coded and

averaged such that higher scores indicate more self-disclosure amidst interracial contact

with Whites.

Sociocultural Engagement Predictors

Open-ended sociocultural contact (exploratory). Experiences engaging in

sociocultural contact with Whites was assessed through an open-ended item instructing

participants to type any cultural experiences, activities, customs, and/or interactions with

Whites related to Blacks/African Americans that they have engaged in. The question

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read: "What experiences, activities, customs, and/or interactions have you had with White people in which you shared aspects related to your own racial group's culture?"

Quality of sociocultural interracial contact. Participants reported the quality and depth of their previous interactions with White people that involve the characteristics described in the prompt (i.e., sharing their sociocultural backgrounds) across ten dimensions (e.g., cooperative, important, meaningful; $\alpha = .92$; adapted from Tausch et al., 2007)[5]. Items were averaged such that higher scores indicate more favorable sociocultural interracial contact with Whites.

Mediators

Intergroup anxiety. Participants indicated how much apprehension they generally feel while interacting with White individuals. The 11-item scale includes feeling awkward, happy, self-conscious, accepted, confident, irritated, impatient, defensive, suspicious, careful, and certain while interacting with White individuals ($\alpha = .87$; Stephan & Stephan, 1985). Items were coded (and reversed coded when necessary) such that higher scores indicate greater intergroup anxiety.

Meta-stereotypes. Thirteen items assessed the extent to which participants believe that White Americans, in general, view them as having stereotypically Black characteristics (e.g., hostile, criminal, athletic, irresponsible, poor, religious, ignorant, dirty, uneducated, violent, unintelligent, loud, and aggressive; $\alpha = .95$; adapted from

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[5] The sociocultural contact quality composite includes six items not included in the traditional contact quality scale. These items were added to ascertain qualities specific to sociocultural contact (e.g., important, eye-opening). Analyses using only the same four items used for the traditional contact quality scale produce similar direct effects, but non-significant indirect effects. All reliabilities are stronger when using the complete ten-item sociocultural contact quality scale.

Taylor et al., 2018). Items were coded and averaged such that higher scores indicate greater meta-stereotypes.

Meta-perceptual empathy. Participants' assessment of Whites' empathy toward Blacks was assessed through an affective scale (adapted from Swart et al., 2011) and a cognitive scale, the latter of which uses a subset of items from the empathic perspective taking subscale of the scale of ethnocultural empathy (Wang et al., 2003). All items were adapted so that they assess beliefs Blacks have about Whites' empathy. Specifically, these scales assessed participants' beliefs about Whites' empathic feelings towards Black individuals and their ability to take on the perspective of Black individuals ($\alpha = .84$). Items were summed and averaged such that higher scores indicate greater beliefs in Whites' empathy toward Blacks.

Meta-perceptual outgroup knowledge. Participants responded to five items assessing their beliefs that Whites have knowledge about Black Americans' sociocultural background ($\alpha = .92$; adapted from Zagefka et al., 2017). Items measured how much knowledge, in general, participants believe Whites have about 1) Black Americans and also how much they believe Whites know about Black Americans' 2) history, 3) culture, 4) language, and 5) values. Items were rated on a scale from 1—*Very little knowledge to* 7—*A lot of knowledge* and were coded such that higher scores indicate greater belief in Whites' outgroup knowledge.

Interracial Attitudes Outcomes

All below items were coded and averaged such that higher scores indicate more favorable attitudes toward Whites (i.e., decreased prejudice, greater desire for future interracial contact, etc.).

Affective prejudice. Participants used a single-item feeling thermometer sliding scale from 1—*cold* to 100—*warm* to assess feelings toward Whites/European Americans (Gaertner et al., 1996).

Desire for future interracial contact. Participants rated the extent to which they could see themselves approaching and engaging with White Americans in the future. Participants were asked to rate the degree to which they generally would want to 1) talk to, 2) find out more about, and 3) spend time with Whites ($\alpha = .91$; adapted from Turner et al., 2013).

Collective Action Outcomes. Three collective action outcome measures were assessed—solidarity, attitudes, and behavioral intentions. First, participants' beliefs that their racial group should work collaboratively and in solidarity to improve their group's social position was assessed with a three-item solidarity scale ($\alpha = .90$; Glasford & Calcagno, 2012). Next, participants responded to measures of collective action attitudes and then behavioral intentions. Specifically, participants responded to the Anti-Racism scale ($\alpha = .84$; LaCosse et al., 2021) and an assessment of collective action behavioral intentions ($\alpha = .94$; adapted from Smith et al., 2008 & Pieterse et al., 2016).

Collective action behaviors. Two measures of collective action behaviors were assessed. First, participants were asked to write a message to federal representatives about their support toward racial equality. The instructions read: Please write your

thoughts about recommendations (if any) that the government can implement to advance racial equality in the US. Feel free to leave blank if you don't have any recommendations. Greater quantity of characters written was coded as greater collective action behaviors. Qualitative data analysis of response content was not part of this dissertation but will be reserved for future work. Second, participants were entered into a raffle and had the option to donate part or all of their raffle winnings. When introduced to the raffle, participants had the option to select how much, if any, they would like to donate to any three organizations. The organizations are the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and the Equal Justice Initiative. Greater donations are indicative of greater collective action support.

Memory Checks. Memory check items asked participants to recall the target race that the prompt was asking about (e.g., White Americans).

Results

Participants

Following the a priori power analysis and considering possible attrition, the aim was to obtain a sample size of 300 participants. The survey was completed online through Prolific by 299 Black U.S. adults (1 participant submitted the survey with empty survey responses). Nine participants (3.0%) were excluded from analysis for failing an attention check. Additionally, 64 (22.07%) participants failed a closed-ended memory check asking them to indicate the racial group that they had been asked to recall interacting with throughout the study (i.e., they indicated Black/African Americans rather than

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White/European Americans as expected). Given this large proportion of participants, I investigated further for potential causes of confusion.

Throughout the study, participants were repeatedly asked to think about their experiences, attitudes, and opinions as Black/African Americans. All 64 participants who failed the closed-ended memory check answered "Black/African American," and not the alternative option of "Asian American" (which would have indicated a clear misunderstanding of the prompt). Further, inspection of the open-ended memory check question indicated that only 12 (4.1%) participants did not explicitly mention interactions with White/European Americans or insinuate that they were sharing their culture with a racial outgroup member (e.g., using phrases like "them," "they," etc.). The direct and indirect effects reported below remain consistent whether analyzing the 290 participants who passed the attention check or 278 participants who passed the open-ended memory check described above. However, when removing the 64 participants who failed the closed-ended memory check, the indirect effects disappear (though direct effects remain). To preserve the largest sample size and using the participants who passed either the open- and closed-ended memory checks (which indicates an understanding of the prompt), the below analyses focus on the 290 participants (145 men, 135 women, 9 non-binary, 1 preferred not to say; $M_{age} = 36.42$, $SD = 12.69$). This final sample only excludes participants who failed the attention check.

Example of open-ended responses. Preliminary descriptive data analyses of participants' open-ended responses were conducted. Participants' sociocultural experiences involved the sharing of and engagement with Black/African American

culture related to arts (e.g., music, dance), food, holidays, history, and worship. Example responses are displayed in Table 3 and include sociocultural experiences involving food (31.20%), the celebration of holidays (13.99%), as well as music and dance (12.54%).

Analytic Strategy.

Closed-ended responses were analyzed through mediation analyses to assess the direct and indirect effect between Blacks' sociocultural contact quality with Whites and interracial attitudes and collective action. The indirect effect of sociocultural contact and interracial attitudes was assessed as partially mediated through intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, meta-perceptual empathy, and meta-perceptual outgroup knowledge. All scores exceeding three standard deviations above or below the mean were changed to a value capped at three standard deviations above or below the mean to reduce skewness. Assumptions of multivariate normality (through a visual assessment of a histogram of the residuals) and multicollinearity (through VIF values) were also assessed. The full model for each outcome was a parallel mediation model 4 using the PROCESS v.3 Macro for SPSS v.24 with 5,000 bias-corrected bootstrap resamples (Hayes, 2017). Analyses of the open-end responses (sociocultural contact with White Americans, beliefs in the types of contact that are most likely to reduce anti-Black prejudice, and content of letters written in support of racial justice) will be reserved for future analyses.

Focal Mediation Models

OLS assumptions were tested and met aside for assumptions of multivariate normality involving the amount of money donated and the number of characters participants wrote as part of their letter advocating for racial equality. To correct for this

non-normal distribution of residuals of these two outcomes, bootstrap linear regression was used in determining the significance of regression coefficients for donations and characters written in response to the letter prompt (Pek, Wong, & Wong; 2018). Furthermore, across all outcomes, 13 scores were transformed for being 3 standard deviations below or above the means. Significant results reported below remained when examining the transformed and untransformed scores. Table 4 displays means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations for all Study 1 variables.

A model 4 parallel mediation analysis using the PROCESS v.3 Macro for SPSS v.24 was used to investigate the hypothesis that sociocultural contact quality is associated with each one of the focal outcomes when controlling for traditional forms of contact quality and degree of personal self-disclosure while amidst interracial contact. Further, this model tested the mediating role of intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, meta-perceptual empathy, and outgroup meta-perceptual knowledge in explaining the intrapsychic, interpersonal, and systemic outcomes. The following sections present the results of the mediation models predicting each one of the focal predictors and all below results control for traditional forms of contact quality and degree of personal self-disclosure. These outcomes include, affective prejudice, desire for future interracial contact, collective action solidarity, collective action attitudes, collective action behavioral intentions, donations, and number of characters written in the advocacy letter supporting racial justice. For each outcome, all significant direct effects are reported followed by all significant indirect effects. Unstandardized direct effects, indirect effects, and R^2s are presented in Tables 5, 6, and 7.

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Affective prejudice toward White Americans

Direct effects. As hypothesized, sociocultural contact quality was associated with less affective prejudice toward White Americans. Additionally, significant direct effects emerged between four other predictors, including traditional contact quality, intergroup anxiety, meta-perceptual empathy and meta-perceptual knowledge. Specifically, participants who reported greater sociocultural contact quality, greater traditional contact quality, less intergroup anxiety, more beliefs that Whites have empathy toward and hold critical knowledge about Black/African Americans, also reported less affective prejudice toward White/European Americans. No other direct effects were significant.

Indirect effects. Hypotheses were partially supported, as significant indirect effects suggest that three of the four proposed mechanism mediated the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and affective prejudice. Intergroup anxiety, meta-perceptual empathy, and meta-perceptual knowledge partially mediated the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and feelings toward White/European Americans, controlling for traditional contact quality and self-disclosure. Specifically, sociocultural contact quality was negatively associated intergroup anxiety ($b = -.16$, 95%CI [-.26, -.07], $p < .001$) but positively with meta-perceptual empathy ($b = .18$, 95%CI [.04, .31], $p = .01$) and meta-perceptual knowledge ($b = .22$, 95%CI [.04, .39], $p = .02$). Decreased intergroup anxiety and increased meta-perceptual empathy and meta-perceptual knowledge, in turn, were associated with more positive feelings toward White/European Americans (see Table 5). No other indirect effects were significant, nor was the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and meta-stereotypes significant.

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Desire for future interracial contact

Direct effects. As expected, sociocultural contact quality was positively associated with participants' desire for future interracial contact. Additionally, significant direct effects emerged between four other predictors, including traditional contact quality, degree of self-disclosure, meta-perceptual empathy, and meta-perceptual knowledge. Participants who reported greater sociocultural contact quality, more positive traditional forms of contact, greater personal self-disclosure, and greater beliefs that Whites have empathy toward and knowledge about Black/African Americans also reported greater desire to interact with White/European Americans. No other direct effects were significant.

Indirect effects. Hypotheses were partially supported, as significant indirect effects indicate that two of the four proposed mechanism mediated the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and desire for future contact. Both meta-perceptual empathy and meta-perceptual knowledge emerged as significant partial mediators between sociocultural contact quality and desire for future interactions with White/European Americans, controlling for traditional contact quality and self-disclosure. Specifically, greater sociocultural contact quality was associated with greater beliefs that Whites are empathic toward and have sociocultural knowledge about Black/African Americans which, in turn, is related to greater desire for future interracial contact (see Table 5). No other indirect effects were significant.

Collective action solidarity

Direct effects. As expected, sociocultural contact quality was positively

associated with collective action solidarity. Additionally, significant direct effects

emerged between two other predictors, including meta-stereotypes and meta-perceptual

empathy on participants beliefs that Black Americans should work together to improve

their group's social position. Participants who reported greater quality sociocultural

contact, more meta-stereotypes, and *fewer* beliefs that Whites feel empathy toward

Black/African Americans also reported greater collective action solidarity. No other

direct effects were significant.

Indirect effects. Only meta-perceptual empathy emerged as a significant partial

mediator between sociocultural contact quality and collective action solidarity,

controlling for traditional contact quality and self-disclosure. Specifically, greater

sociocultural contact quality was related to greater beliefs that Whites feel empathy

toward Black/African Americans which, in turn, was associated *decreased* agreement that

Blacks should work together to reduce racial inequities (see Table 6). Said differently, the

more empathy Whites were believed to have toward Black/African Americans, the less

feelings of collective action solidarity Black respondents expressed. No other indirect

effects were significant.

Collective action attitudes

Direct effects. As hypothesized, sociocultural contact quality was positively

associated with collective action attitudes. Additionally, significant direct effects

emerged between meta-perceptual empathy and collective action attitudes. Participants

who reported greater sociocultural contact quality, but fewer beliefs that Whites

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understand the feelings and emotions of Blacks/African Americans, also reported more favorable attitudes about collective action. No other direct or indirect effects were significant.

Collective action behaviors

Direct effects. As expected, sociocultural contact quality was directly associated with collective action behavioral intentions. Additionally, significant direct effects emerged between racial meta-stereotypes. Participants who reported greater sociocultural contact quality and more racial meta-stereotypes also reported greater intentions to engage in collective action on behalf of Black/African Americans. No other direct or indirect effects were significant.

Donations

Direct effects. Unexpectedly, sociocultural contact quality was not directly related to monetary donations participants were willing to make to support organizations that advocate for and promote racial equality. However, significant direct effects emerged between two variables— racial meta-stereotypes and meta-perceptual knowledge—in association with monetary donations toward organizations advancing racial equality. Participants who reported increased meta-stereotypes and greater beliefs that Whites have knowledge about Blacks/African Americans donated more money to the organizations. No other direct effects were significant.

Indirect effects. In partial support of the hypotheses, meta-perceptual knowledge emerged as the only significant mediator fully explaining the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and monetary donations, controlling for traditional contact

quality and self-disclosure. Specifically, greater sociocultural contact quality was related to greater knowledge which, in turn, was related to greater donations in US dollars (see Table 7).

Letters of support: Characters Written

Direct effects. Significant direct effects emerged between two variables— sociocultural contact quality and degree of self-disclosure—on characters written to federal representatives to advocate for racial equality. Unexpectedly, participants who reported *less* sociocultural contact quality and more interracial contact in which they self-disclosed personal information also wrote a greater number of characters in their letters. No other direct or indirect effects were significant.

Study 1 Discussion

Study 1 provides novel evidence of the relationship between Blacks' self-reported quality of sociocultural contact with Whites and their interracial attitudes, desire for future interactions with Whites, and beliefs and behaviors about collective action. Greater quality of interracial interactions in which Black Americans have shared their social and cultural racial heritage with White Americans is associated with nearly all outcomes in the expected direction. This was the case for affective prejudice, desire for future contact, collective action solidarity, collective action attitudes, and collective action behaviors. Notably, these effects emerge when controlling for traditional forms of interracial contact quality and when taking into account personal self-disclosure in interracial interaction. Put another way, greater sociocultural interracial contact quality is uniquely associated with important intrapsychic, interpersonal, and systemic-related outcomes among Black

Americans. These findings, thus, contribute to and advance the literature in two important ways. First, these findings illustrate the relationship between greater sociocultural contact quality and important race-related outcomes and second, it demonstrates that these effects occur above and beyond traditional forms of interracial contact quality.

Among its most notable contributions, this study demonstrates that above and beyond interracial contact quality, greater quality interracial interactions in which Black individuals share aspects of their sociocultural background are associated with favorable interracial and collective action outcomes. As previously argued, the exchange of and/or engagement with cultural ideas, histories, experiences, etc., can be one way in which the sociocultural selves of Black Americans are incorporated into interracial contact interactions to foster mutually benefiting outcomes. While the reactions of their White partners have not yet been considered, this work indicates that Black Americans benefit from experiences in which they share their sociocultural background. In addition to this novel contribution, this study provides replication and support for intrapsychic and interpersonal outcomes evident in previous interracial interactions and intergroup contact work. However, this study is among the first to examine the effects of interracial contact-related experiences wherein the social and cultural selves of Black Americans are explicitly highlighted.

In addition to accounting for traditional forms of interracial contact quality, Study 1 also accounted for interracial self-disclosure. This is particularly important because sociocultural contact experiences are likely to involve more intimate interpersonal experiences. For example, preliminary qualitative descriptive data analysis shows that

31.2% of the sociocultural interracial experiences reported involved the sharing of food with White individuals (see Table 3). The sharing of ethnically-based food is likely to emerge in more intimate settings (e.g., at home, while celebrating a special occasion, etc.) where individuals may be more likely to disclose important aspects of the self. However, the inclusion of the interracial self-disclosure covariate suggests that the relationship between greater quality sociocultural contact and improved outcomes emerges above and beyond more intimate relationships (i.e., where there is greater self-disclosure). In addition to these contributions, this work advances the literature by 1) showcasing important mediators that help explain the relationship between Black Americans' greater quality sociocultural contact with Whites and their interracial attitudes, and 2) incorporating collective action attitudes, intentions, and behaviors into interracial interaction and intergroup contact research.

Mechanisms of Positive Outcomes Following Sociocultural Contact Among Black Americans

Intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, meta-perceptual empathy, and meta-perceptual knowledge were tested as potential mechanisms through which sociocultural contact quality may relate to interracial and collective action outcomes. Notably, the mechanisms through which participants reported decreased affective prejudice align with previous intergroup contact research. Specifically, greater sociocultural contact quality was associated with decreased intergroup anxiety which, in turn, was related to warmer feelings toward White Americans. Intergroup anxiety, however, was not a consistent mediator among all Study 1 outcomes. While past work has found intergroup anxiety as

one of the strongest mediators in the relationship between intergroup contact and prejudice (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008; Zagefka et al., 2017), it only emerged as a mediator predicting affective prejudice (and not other forms of prejudice like desire/avoidance of future contact) among Black Americans. It is possible that, for Black Americans, there are additional interpersonal factors that can help explain how greater sociocultural contact quality is related to other forms of prejudice (e.g., cognitive prejudice). However, intergroup anxiety did not explain the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and either interpersonal (i.e., desire for future contact) or systemic (i.e., collective action) related outcomes. Nevertheless, meta-perceptual empathy and meta-perceptual knowledge were important in explaining the role between sociocultural contact quality and multiple interracial outcomes.

While conceptually similar to mediators like empathy and knowledge that have been used to explain the relationship between intergroup contact and reduced prejudiced among Whites, meta-perceptual empathy and outgroup meta-perceptual knowledge likely operate differently among Black participants. Specifically, the mediating role of meta-perceptual empathy and meta-perceptual knowledge suggest that Blacks' perception of Whites beliefs amidst intergroup contact (e.g., that they develop empathy, gain knowledge) align with Whites' reported experiences amidst interracial contact with Blacks (e.g., Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). In other words, interracial contact leads Whites to gain more knowledge and develop more empathy toward Black Americans and these outcomes are predictive of less prejudice attitudes toward Black Americans. This past research, however, has been conducted in the context of "traditional" interracial

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contact—where Black Americans sociocultural background has been ignored or deemphasized. Nevertheless, the findings of Study 1 suggest that mechanisms through which sociocultural contact quality relates to beneficial interracial and collective-action outcomes among Black Americans depends on the perceptions they hold about the outgroup, in this case, White Americans.

The results of Study 1 point to the crucial role of meta-perceptual empathy and meta-perceptual knowledge in understanding the observed outcomes. Specifically, high quality experiences related to sociocultural sharing with Whites is associated with Black Americans' beliefs that White individuals feel empathy and gain knowledge about their racial group. In turn, increased meta-perceptual empathy was related to decreased prejudice, greater desire for future contact, but surprisingly less collective action solidarity. Further, increased meta-perceptual knowledge was associated with decreased prejudice, greater desire for future contact, and greater monetary donations. These findings suggest that it may be important to communicate empathy and knowledge when Black Americans share their racialized experiences. Thus, intergroup contact strategies aimed at improving relationships between majority and minoritized groups may need to prioritize creating environments where minoritized groups feel that their experiences are acknowledged, understood, and valued. Of course, these results also point to the importance of considering the perceptions of minoritized groups when devising new intergroup contact strategies—even well-meaning contact interventions may fail if Black Americans do not perceive that others have developed empathy or gained knowledge

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about their racial experiences or sociocultural backgrounds. Nonetheless, meta-stereotypes did not emerge as significant mediators in Study.

In contrast to previous interracial interaction research and findings related to meta-perceptual empathy and outgroup meta-perceptual knowledge, meta-stereotypes did not emerge as a mediator explaining the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and any of the focal outcomes. Put another way, beliefs about the stereotypes Whites Americans may or may not hold about Black individuals was not a mechanisms that explains how sociocultural contact quality relates to intrapsychic, interpersonal and systemic-related outcomes among Black participants. As previously addressed, there are important differences between intergroup contact studies like Study 1, and previous interracial interaction research wherein the role of meta-stereotypes is most often documented. These methodological differences, arising from different ways in which interracial relations are theorized to positively or negatively impact race-related outcomes, may account for some of these findings.

Nevertheless, there were notable direct effects of meta-stereotypes. Specifically, greater meta-stereotypes were associated with greater collective-action solidarity and greater collective action behaviors. Thus, it is likely that greater beliefs that White Americans hold stereotypes about (i.e., are prejudice toward) Black Americans can contribute to the motivators that mobilize participants toward racial solidarity and collective action. Notably, these relationships between meta-stereotypes and collective action outcomes emerge after controlling for the direct relationship between sociocultural contact quality and collective action outcomes. Moreover, these results align with

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previous findings showing that anger, which may emerge by increased meta-stereotypes, plays a critical emotional role in explaining collective action intentions among minorities (Li et al., 2019). Thus, it is possible that meta-stereotypes play a role in helping determine the success of sociocultural contact among racial minoritized groups, especially when examining collective action outcomes.

Sociocultural Contact and Collective Action

As reported above, sociocultural contact quality was positively related with nearly all collective action outcomes. Further, when sociocultural contact quality is included in the model, and even when it is not included in the model, the association between traditional contact quality and collective action outcomes becomes non-significant, suggesting that any demobilizing effects of interracial contact are not observed. Thus, the demobilizing effects of intergroup contact may be more prominent across nonracial social categories or may be restricted to assessments of intergroup quantity rather than quality (e.g., Hässler et al., 2020; Saguy et al., 2009; cf. Kauff et al., 2016). Nevertheless, it is proposed that sociocultural contact quality is related to greater collective action because it allows for the authentic expression of minoritized group members' sociocultural selves. Doing so has the potential to bolster minoritized groups appreciation for their own group's culture and their self-efficacy surrounding collective action. However, while sociocultural contact quality was directly associated with nearly all collective action-related outcomes, mediation was not consistently observed.

Specifically, there was mediation through meta-empathy when assessing collective action solidarity, but in an unexpected direction. Sociocultural contact quality

was related to increased meta-perceptual empathy (i.e., beliefs that Whites hold empathy toward Black Americans) which, in turn, was related to *decreased* feelings that Black Americans should work together to improve their groups' social position. Put another way, despite a positive direct effect (i.e., sociocultural contact was related to increased collective action solidarity), the indirect effect is negative, though much smaller, when accounting for the role of meta-perceptual empathy because meta-perceptual empathy is negatively related to collective action solidarity. This finding has important implications for intergroup relations and social justice initiatives, as it suggests that greater quality sociocultural contact may not necessarily result in increased solidarity among marginalized groups. Rather, it highlights the need to examine and address individuals' underlying attitudes and beliefs about empathy and its role in promoting collective action; attitudes and beliefs that may contribute to the ironic demobilizing effects of intergroup contact. Future research should continue to explore the complex relationships between (meta-) empathy, sociocultural contact, and collective action solidarity in order to better understand how to foster more inclusive and equitable social change.

Study 1 findings also provide important insights into participant's likely direct (e.g., donating) and indirect (e.g., writing a letter) behaviors as a function of their sociocultural contact quality. Specifically, although there is no direct relationship between sociocultural contact quality and donations made to advance racial equality, mediation exists as explained by meta-perceptual knowledge. Greater quality sociocultural contact with Whites is associated with greater perceptions that Whites have gained knowledge about Black Americans and their culture. This, in turn, is related to

more collective action behaviors as indicated by the increased amount of money participants were willing to donate. However, greater quality sociocultural contact was negatively related to the number of characters participants wrote in a purported letter to their federal representatives to advance racial equality. Donations to different organizations represent a direct and individual-based action toward fighting racial injustice, while writing to a federal representative could be perceived as a more indirect route to collective action. Thus, given the interpersonal nature of sociocultural contact, it may be more predictive of individual and direct behaviors rather than those focused on long-term legislative outcomes. Nevertheless, results regarding this outcome variable (i.e., letter writing) are limited given that the focus was not the content of the letter participants wrote but the number of characters written. Future qualitative data analysis will be needed to clarify the potential relationships between these variables.

Study 1 provides evidence into the positive relationship between Black Americans' sociocultural contact quality and intrapsychic, interpersonal, and systemic-related outcomes (with noted exceptions). Intergroup anxiety mediated the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and prejudice, replicating past intergroup contact research. Though direct effects were found between meta-stereotypes and collective action outcomes, it did not explain the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and any focal outcomes. However, the mediating role of meta-perceptual empathy and outgroup meta-perceptual knowledge was crucial for understanding the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and prejudice, desire for future contact, and collective action. This may suggest that it is important to genuinely communicate

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empathy and gained knowledge amidst interracial contact situations. Further, findings related to racial solidarity and donation have important implications for social justice initiatives and call for further research to explore the complex relationships between sociocultural contact, meta-perceptual empathy, meta-perceptual knowledge, and collective action. The study also highlights the need to examine Whites' sociocultural contact experiences with Blacks and the mediators that may help explain their experiences and attitudes. These issues are addressed in Study 2, but first two pilots were conducted to conceptually replicate pilot 1 among a White sample.

Pilots 2 and 3: Preliminary Assessments of Whites' Sociocultural Contact

Before conducting Study 2 among a sample of White Americans, two pilots were conducted to first assess the effectiveness of an adapted version of the sociocultural prompt/description used in Study 1 and second to assess whether similar results as those observed in Study 1 would emerge among a sample of White participants. Specifically, Pilot 2 tested the clarity of two prompts defining sociocultural background and Pilot 3 tested whether the direct effect of sociocultural contact quality on improved interracial attitudes would emerge among a sample of White Americans when controlling for traditional types of contact. Given that White individuals often perceive their race as neutral (Roberts & Mortenson, 2022), they may have less experience considering how their race-based social and cultural heritage informs or impacts the self. Thus, it is unclear whether a prompt describing another group's sociocultural self would help White individuals recall the types of interracial interactions that are at the center of sociocultural

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interracial contact. For this reason, the same two prompts tested among Black participants in Pilot 1 were tested among a sample of White individuals in Pilots 2 and 3.

Pilot 2: Whites' Assessment of Sociocultural Contact

Pilot 2 was conducted among White students to ascertain individuals' understanding of sociocultural interracial contact and its relationships to interracial attitudes. The same two prompts used in Pilot 1 were adapted for a White audience and used as part of Pilot 2. Participants were asked to read and respond to the prompt across several dimensions. Specifically, participants were asked the degree to which they understood the prompt and whether it seemed culturally insensitive. Participants were also asked to respond to the prompt to get an initial understanding of what types of sociocultural contact White individuals have experienced in the past.

Pilot 2 Methods

Design and Participants

A total of 194 White college students (M_{age} = 18.89, SD = 1.12) recruited through Lehigh's introduction to psychology subject pool participated in Pilot 2 for course credit. Pilot 2 consisted of one study with a correlational design. Participants read one of two different versions of a sociocultural prompt (see Appendix A). Two prompts were created to ascertain whether less (prompt A) or more (prompt B) description and examples of sociocultural contact would be useful to help participants effectively recount experiences of sociocultural contact with Black people.

Procedure

Upon consent and an introduction to the study, participants were randomly assigned to read one of two prompts describing and defining racial groups' sociocultural backgrounds (prompt A or B; Appendix A). Next, participants were asked to respond to the prompt in an open-ended format by reporting instances in which they have engaged with Black Americans' sociocultural backgrounds as described in the prompt they read. Similar to Pilot 1, participants were asked to enter any and each instance of sociocultural contact in a separate textbox to ensure that they could later answer contact quantity and quality questions about each instance of sociocultural engagement separately. Following, participants answered the main dependent measures assessing the ease of understanding and cultural sensitivity of the prompt. Participants then completed demographics, were given instructions for receiving course credit, received debriefing details, and were thanked for their participation.

Dependent Measures

Open-ended sociocultural contact (exploratory). Experiences engaging in sociocultural contact were assessed through an open-ended item instructing participants to report cultural experiences, activities, customs, and/or interactions with other people related to Blacks/African Americans that they have engaged in or learned about. The question read: "What cultural experiences, activities, customs, and/or interactions with other people related to Blacks/African Americans have you engaged in or learned about?" Participants had the option to enter a second, third, etc. instance of sociocultural contact or to move on to the remainder of the study. The survey then displayed, one by one, each instance of sociocultural contact participants entered as their open-ended responses along

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with a series of questions related to each sociocultural contact experience. A word count was calculated, and content coding was conducted for each open-ended sociocultural contact experience provided by participants. Additionally, the number of sociocultural contact experiences provided was calculated for each participant.

Quantity of sociocultural contact. Referencing participants' previously written responses, one item assessed the frequency with which they have engaged in sociocultural contact on a 5-point scale (1—*very frequently* to 5—*very rarely*).

Quality of sociocultural contact. Referencing participants' previously written responses, six items assessed the quality of their sociocultural contact response on a scale from 1—*Not at all* to 5—*Extremely* (adapted from Tausch et al., 2007; $\alpha = .81$). The items include whether the sociocultural contact was personally important to them, pleasant, uncomfortable, cooperative, meaningful, and valuable.

Assessment of Prompt. Each prompt was assessed in the same way as Pilot 1 to determine which one would be used for Study 1. These assessments included *prompt clarity*, *valence*, and *cultural sensitivity*.

Prompt Clarity. Participants assessed the clarity of the prompt they read by reporting how clear and difficult the prompt was to understand on a scale from 1—*Not at all* to 7—*Very.* Additionally, they were asked to copy and paste the easiest portion to understand and the most unclear portion, after which they were asked, in an open-ended format, to make suggestions for improving the prompt.

Prompt Valence. Participants assessed the valence of the prompt by answering questions regarding the positivity or negativity of the thoughts the prompt brings to mind on a scale from 1—*Very negative to* 7—*Very positive.*

Prompt Cultural Sensitivity. Following, participants rated whether the prompt brings to mind stereotypes about Blacks, is culturally insensitive, culturally appropriate, controversial, and racist on a scale from 1—*Not at all to* 7—*Extremely.* These last five items were averaged together to create a scale of cultural appropriateness ($\alpha = .70$), although the item asking about whether the prompt is culturally appropriate was removed to improve internal consistency, leaving the remaining four items as part of the composite ($\alpha = .81$).

Pilot 2 Results

Open-ended sociocultural responses. Word count did not vary based on the prompt that was displayed to participants ($M_{wordcountA} = 45.00$, $SD = 39.44$, $Mdn = 36.00$, $M_{wordcountB} = 43.96$, $SD = 40.29$, $Mdn = 31.00$; $t(192) = 0.18$, $p = .86$). Of the 96 participants who viewed prompt A, there were 9 (9.38%) participants who reported having engaged in no previous sociocultural interracial contact. Of the 98 participants who viewed prompt B, there were 20 (20.41%) who reported no sociocultural contact, and a chi-square test of independence demonstrated that this difference was significant, X^2 (1, $N = 194$) = 4.64, $p = .03$. Thus, although most Whites reported having engaged in some type of sociocultural contact as described in the prompts, those who read prompt B had a larger proportion of individuals reporting no previous sociocultural contact. Only 11 participants (6 who read prompt A, 5 who read prompt B) entered more than 1

sociocultural interaction in separate text boxes, although many participants (52.73%) who

reported sociocultural engagement listed various instances as part of their first response.

Preliminary exploratory analyses of the open-ended responses are presented in the

Dissertation Supplement.

Quantity and quality of sociocultural contact. Participants reported, on

average, to have engaged in their sociocultural contact rather infrequently ($M = 2.95$, SD

$= 1.26$). However, participants reported having generally positive experiences amidst

their sociocultural contact with an average quality of 3.99 ($SD = 0.81$).

Assessment of prompt. Participants who viewed both prompts thought they were

between moderately clear and somewhat clear to understand ($M = 4.79$, $SD = 1.53$), and

likewise rated it as only a little difficult to understand ($M = 2.33$, $SD = 1.25$). The

thoughts and responses the prompt brought to mind were between neutral and moderately

positive ($M = 4.89$, $SD = 1.18$), suggesting that the message of the prompt did not bring

to mind negative thoughts about Blacks/African Americans. Finally, participants did not

find the prompt culturally insensitive ($M = 1.91$, $SD = 0.86$).

Pilot 2 Summary

Prompt A was selected for further work because it proved to be less restrictive in

allowing participants to write multiple and varied instances of sociocultural contact.

Importantly, the assessment of the prompts' clarity, difficulty of understanding, and

cultural sensitivity was comparable between Prompt A and Prompt B. Therefore, it was

also useful to be able to use a conceptually similar prompt used in Study 1 (for Black

participants) as part of Study 2 which explored White Americans' attitudes. However,

another test was necessary to assess the direct relationship between sociocultural contact (as described in prompt A used in Pilot 2) and prejudicial feelings as well as collective action attitudes among White Americans. For this reason, Pilot 3 was conducted.

Pilot 3: Assessment of Whites' Sociocultural Contact and Interracial Attitudes

The purpose of Pilot 3 was to assess the direct relationship between Whites' sociocultural contact and interracial attitudes as well as collective action intentions. Pilot 3 served as an initial proof of concept that sociocultural contact, above and beyond traditional forms of contact, has a unique influence on interracial outcomes for White Americans. Given the results of Pilots 1 and 2, Prompt A was re-used for Pilot 3. Participants reported the quantity and quality of their previous sociocultural contact, as well as their attitudes toward Black individuals and collective action on behalf of Blacks. It was hypothesized that sociocultural contact would be negatively associated with interracial prejudice, but positively associated with collective action intentions on behalf of Black Americans.

Pilot 3 Methods

Design and Participants

A total of 112 White college students recruited through Lehigh's introduction to psychology subject pool participated in Pilot 3. Participants read prompt A from Pilot 1 (see Appendix A) and answered questions regarding their previous traditional contact, sociocultural contact, and interracial attitudes. Pilot 3 was conducted as part of a larger study on interracial relations, but only the relevant items and outcomes will be discussed here.

Procedure

Upon consent and an introduction to the study, Participants were asked to read a description and definition of groups' sociocultural backgrounds, focusing on Black Americans. Following, participants answered questions about the extent, quantity, and quality of their previous sociocultural contact. Then, participants answered questions regarding traditional forms of contact, interracial attitudes, and collective action attitudes. Finally, participants were given instructions for receiving course credit, fully debriefed, and thanked for their participation.

Dependent Measures

Sociocultural engagement. This Pilot used a new closed-ended 1-item scale to assess overall sociocultural engagement. Participants were asked to rate the degree of sociocultural engagement they have had with Black's/African American's sociocultural background (as described in the prompt they read) on a scale from 1—*none at all* to 10—*a great deal* (item adapted from Vorauer & Sakamoto, 2006). Specifically, the item read: "Please indicate the overall amount of direct personal contact you have had with Blacks/African Americans as described in the prompt above." Conceptually, this item is similar to the composite of sociocultural contact quantity items below, but it was included to ascertain an overall sense of participants' previous engagement with Blacks' sociocultural background, without regard to the specific context in which it may have occurred (i.e., at school, at work, etc.).

Quantity of sociocultural interracial contact. Participants indicated the degree to which they have had personal interactions with Black people involving the

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characteristics described in the prompt (i.e., while learning about their sociocultural backgrounds) across four domains: in their friend group, neighborhood, work, and at school on a scale from 1—*none at all* to 5—*a great deal* (adapted from Tausch et al., 2007; $\alpha = .77$). Items were coded and averaged such that higher scores indicate a greater sociocultural contact with Blacks.

Quality of sociocultural interracial contact. Participants reported the quality of their sociocultural contact response across four dimensions on a scale from 1—*Strongly disagree* to 7—*Strongly agree* (adapted from Tausch et al., 2007; $\alpha = .76$). The items include whether the sociocultural contact was pleasant, uncomfortable, superficial, and cooperative. Items were coded and averaged such that higher scores indicate more positive sociocultural interracial contact with Blacks.

Quantity of traditional interracial contact. Participants indicated the degree to which they have had personal interactions with Black people across four contexts: in their friend group, in their neighborhood, at work, and at school on a scale from 1—*none at all* to 5—*a great deal* (Tausch et al., 2007; $\alpha = .74$). These items did not reference sociocultural engagement. Items were coded and averaged such that higher scores will indicate greater interracial contact with Blacks.

Quality of traditional interracial contact. Participants indicated the quality of their previous interactions with Black people across four dimensions: pleasant, uncomfortable, superficial, and cooperative on a scale from 1—*strongly disagree* to 5—*strongly agree* (Tausch et al., 2007; $\alpha = .67$). These items did not reference sociocultural

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engagement. Items were coded and averaged such that higher scores will indicate more positive interracial contact with Blacks.

Anti-Black prejudice. A ten-item measure of anti-Black attitudes was used to assess participants' feelings of prejudice toward Black Americans ($\alpha = .87$; Katz & Hass, 1988; see Appendix C for full measure). This scale assesses participants' beliefs that Blacks' behaviors and attitudes are the main contributors to their social and economic disadvantage in the US.

Collective action intentions. Two scales assessed collective action intentions. First, the Antic-Racism scale by LaCosse and colleagues (2021) was used to evaluate participants' attitudes toward collection action through behaviors aimed at expressing one's anti-racist beliefs ($\alpha = .92$). Following, participants rated the degree to which they would consider doing 11 different behaviors indicative of support toward social equity ($\alpha = .95$; adapted from Smith, Cronin, & Kessler, 2008 & Pieterse, Utsey, & Miller, 2015; see Appendix C for measures).

Pilot 3 Results

Table 7 displays all variable descriptive statistics and correlations for Pilot 3 variables.

A series of two-step hierarchical regressions were carried out to investigate the relationships between sociocultural contact quantity and quality on anti-Black attitudes and collective action intentions, accounting for traditional forms of contact quantity and quality. In step 1, traditional forms of contact quantity and quality were entered. In step 2, overall sociocultural contact, sociocultural contact quantity, and sociocultural contact

quality were entered. In the model, traditional forms of contact quantity and quality were entered and controlled for to assess the unique effects of sociocultural contact quality and quantity. Prior to conducting the hierarchical multiple regression, the relevant assumptions of this statistical analysis were tested. Residuals were normally distributed and there were no issues with multicollinearity (VIFs < 3.02), linearity, or homoscedasticity.

The hierarchical multiple regression revealed that at step 1, traditional forms of contact quality contributed significantly to the regression model explaining anti-Black attitudes, $F(2,109) = 11.66$, $p < .001$, and accounted for 17.6% of the variation (see Table 9 for all statistics). At step 2, sociocultural contact quality significantly added to the model, $F(3,106) = 2.72$, $p < .05$, and an additional 5.9% of model variance was explained. Traditional forms of contact quality remained significant, though no other predictors emerged as significant. These results suggest that the quality of Whites' sociocultural contact with Blacks, above and beyond the quality of their traditional interracial contact, is negatively associated with their anti-Black prejudice. Stated differently, greater sociocultural contact uniquely explains less Black prejudice.

A similar pattern emerges when assessing collective action attitudes. At step 1, traditional contact quality was related to collective action attitudes among Whites, $F(2,108) = 15.72$, $p < .001$, accounting for 22.5% of the variation (see Table 10 for all statistics). At step 2, sociocultural contact quality significantly added to the model, $F(3,105) = 3.93$, $p = .01$, and an additional 7.8% of model variance was explained. Traditional forms of contact quality remained significant, but no other variables added

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explanatory power to the model. Thus, sociocultural contact quality is significantly

associated with collective action attitudes, above and beyond traditional forms of

interracial contact.

Lastly, the same pattern emerges when assessing collective action behaviors. At

step 1, traditional contact quality is positively related to collective action attitudes among

Whites, $F(2,108) = 10.70$, $p < .001$, accounting for 16.5% of the variation (see Table 11

for all statistics). At step 2, sociocultural contact quality significantly added to the model,

$F(3,105) = 7.37$, $p = .01$, and an additional 9.5% of model variance was explained. Again,

traditional forms of contact quality remained significant, but no other variables added

explanatory power to the model. Thus, sociocultural contact quality is significantly

associated with collective action behaviors, above and beyond traditional forms of

interracial contact.

Pilot 3 Summary

As hypothesized, Pilot 3 demonstrated that sociocultural contact is negatively

associated with interracial prejudice (in the form of Anti-Black prejudice) and positively

associated with collective action attitudes and behavioral intentions. Notably, this

relationship remained when controlling for traditional forms of contact quantity and

quality. However, sociocultural contact quality (as well as traditional forms of contact

quality) was associated with improved interracial outcomes compared to contact quantity.

Thus, similar to Pilot 1 and Study 1, White Americans also experience improved

outcomes in association with greater quality sociocultural contact with Black Americans.

Pilot 2 and 3 Discussion

The pilots had two main goals. First, to ascertain the best method of asking about Whites' sociocultural engagement with Blacks'/African Americans' culture. Second, to understand the relationship between quality and quantity of sociocultural contact and interracial attitudes among Whites, controlling for traditional forms of contact quality and quantity. In addressing the first goal, both prompts emerge as equally clear and appropriate for eliciting Whites' sociocultural engagement. There were two notable differences between the open-ended responses. First, those who read prompt B (compared to prompt A) were more likely to report having no previous sociocultural contact related to Blacks/African Americans. Second, when they did report having previous sociocultural contact, participants who read prompt B were likely to write fewer sociocultural contact experiences compared to those who read prompt A.

This longer prompt (B) included specific examples of activities that may constitute sociocultural engagement including engaging with another group's language, eating or making food that originates from another group's cultural heritage, or celebrating specific holidays (e.g., Day of the Dead, Chinese New Year; see Appendix A). These descriptions may make participants become hyper focused on the specific examples and/or recognize their lack of engagement in those few activities. On the other hand, prompt A, which did not include any specific examples, may allow participants to more openly share cultural activities that they themselves consider sociocultural contact. Finally, these results corroborate the findings of Pilot 1 among Black participants and therefore will be used in subsequent studies.

In addressing the second goal, the results of Pilot 3 suggest that certain aspects of contact are most closely associated with anti-Black attitudes and collective action attitudes. Specifically, only contact quality, whether it was traditional forms of contact or sociocultural contact, uniquely contributed to explaining participants' anti-Black attitudes and intentions toward collective action on behalf of Black Americans. As hypothesized, sociocultural contact quality added explanatory power to the model and was negatively associated with anti-Black prejudice, but positively associated with collective action intentions, above and beyond traditional forms of contact (see Table 8, 9, and 10). The significant effect of contact quality (vs. quantity) aligns with previous research suggesting that contact quality (vs. quantity) is more strongly associated with improved intergroup outcomes (Ahmed, 2017; De Coninck et al., 2021; Dirksmeier, 2014; Firat & Ataca, 2021; Johnston & Glassford, 2018).

Taken together, Pilots 2 and 3 represent some of the first investigations of the relationship between sociocultural contact and interracial outcomes among Whites. Specifically, these findings suggest that prompt A is a better candidate for answering the current research questions (aligning with Black participants' responses; Pilot 1) and that sociocultural contact quality significantly contributes to understanding White participants' interracial attitudes. Nevertheless, these pilots do not assess interpersonal outcomes (e.g., desire for further interracial contact), nor do they account for the mediators that may explain the positive influence of sociocultural contact. Thus, Study 2 will extend the previous work in several ways. It will use the format of prompt A to instruct White participants to report their sociocultural contact experiences and

investigate the direct and indirect relationship between sociocultural contact quality and improved interracial outcomes among White adults.

Study 2: Whites' Sociocultural Contact and Interracial Attitudes

The purpose of Study 2 is to assess the direct and indirect relationship between Whites' quality of sociocultural engagement with Blacks and attitudes toward Blacks as well as collective action intentions. Specifically, this study explores the extent to which exposure to the sociocultural background of Black Americans is associated with interracial attitudes, desire for interracial interactions, and collective action intentions, through four mediators often assessed in traditional interracial interaction and intergroup contact research. These mediators include intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, empathy, and outgroup knowledge. Further, similar to Study 1, outgroup knowledge is assessed at the sociocultural level (e.g., knowledge about another group's history, values, etc.) which will extend previous research because it is conceptually distinct from how interpersonal knowledge has been assessed in the intergroup contact literature.

Additionally, I assess the unique relationship between sociocultural contact quality and interracial attitudes by controlling for traditional types of contact (i.e., interracial contact quality). Further, Study 2 assesses White Americans historicist thinking about Black Americans (Andreychik & Gill, 2009; Gill & Pizzuto, 2022) to assess whether the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and improved attitudes emerges above and beyond knowledge about Black Americans' history in the US. Historicist thinking is an important covariate because one of the primary ways in which White Americans learn about Black culture is through formal education (e.g.,

social studies classes). Further, within educational psychology, learning about Black

history is thought to be a critical factor in reducing racism (Burrell & Walsh, 2001).

Thus, it is critical to understand whether sociocultural contact quality will be related to

interracial outcomes after controlling for Whites' knowledge of, and beliefs about, how

Black history impacts current day inequities. Finally, Study 2 also evaluates which

aspect(s) of Blacks' sociocultural background are most accessible to Whites (e.g., aspects

Whites report engaging in) through qualitative data assessments that will be analyzed in

future work.

Study 2 will assess the same conceptual outcomes as part of Study 1 with some

minor exceptions. First, following the pattern of Pilot 3, an assessment of anti-Black

prejudice will be employed in Study 2, along with the affective prejudice measure (i.e.,

feeling thermometer) used in Study 1. Further, given that the assessment of collective

action solidarity was specifically designed for minoritized groups, it is not an outcome of

Study 2. However, and in extensions of previous intergroup contact work, Study 2 will

assess White's collective action attitudes, intentions, and behaviors in association with

their experiences with sociocultural interracial contact. Similar to Study 1, there are two

open-ended responses that will be collected, though will not form part of the main

analyses of these dissertation studies. Specifically, participants will report the content of

the sociocultural experiences they have had with Black Americans. Additionally, the

same collective action assessment used in Study 1 will ask participants to write a letter in

support of racial justice. While the length of the letter will be used in the quantitative

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analysis below, the qualitative assessment of the content of their response will be reserved for future analysis.

Study 2 has three main hypotheses. First, it is expected that Whites who report greater quality sociocultural interactions with Blacks will report more improved interracial attitudes, more desire for interracial contact, and more favorable attitudes toward collective action aimed at improving Black-White interracial disparities. Second, it is expected that the relationship between greater sociocultural contact quality with Blacks and improved attitudes will remain after controlling for traditional contact quality (e.g., interracial contact with no sociocultural component), and historicist thinking about African Americans. Lastly, I predict that intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, empathy, and outgroup knowledge will mediate, in parallel, the relationship between greater sociocultural contact quality and improved interracial attitudes (see Figure 1). Specifically, I hypothesize a negative relationship between sociocultural contact and both intergroup anxiety and meta-stereotypes, but a positive relationship with both empathy and outgroup knowledge. Likewise, decreases in intergroup anxiety and meta-stereotypes are expected to be related to improved interracial outcomes while greater empathy and outgroup knowledge are expected to be related to improved interracial outcomes (i.e., reduced prejudice, increased desire for contact, support for collective action). All Study 2 hypotheses, design, and analyses were preregistered: https://osf.io/24t98.

Method

Design and Participants.

Participants completed the entire cross-sectional study online. They read the

consent form, followed by brief instructions, and then a list of all dependent measures,

with predictors first, followed by mediators, and outcomes last. Participants eligible for

Study 2 met the following inclusion criteria: 1) self-selected White as their primary race,

2) at least 18 years of age, and 3) currently residing in the US. *Exclusion criteria:*

participants were excluded from analysis for failing attentional checks (e.g., "select

strongly agree for this item"), or for incorrectly responding to memory check questions

regarding sociocultural contact instructions.

An a priori Monte Carlo power analysis for indirect effects was conducted on the

online web app (Schoemann et al., 2017) to determine the necessary sample size to detect

the hypothesized indirect effects between sociocultural contact and prejudice as mediated

by intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, outgroup knowledge, and empathy. The Monte

Carlo interface allows for up to three parallel mediators, and this 3-mediators model was

used given the dearth in research (and by implication, estimates) regarding how meta-

stereotypes may mediate the relationship between intergroup contact and interracial

outcomes[6]. In this power analysis, the standard .80 power for detecting a significant

effect at $p < .05$ was used. Indirect effect estimates and correlations were derived from

previous intergroup contact research (Pettigrew & Tropp; 2008; Zagefka et al., 2019).

The power analysis indicated that a sample size of 165, 205, and 110 would be necessary

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[6] An a priori Monte Carlo power analysis was conducted with a single mediator model to assess the necessary sample size to detect the mediating effect of meta-stereotypes. The necessary sample size was 85, although the estimates used to calculate this sample size comes from research assessing meta-stereotypes regarding the outgroup's desire for contact specifically (Stathi et al., 2019). Given that this is one of the few studies assessing the relationship between intergroup contact, meta-stereotypes, and prejudice, this estimate should be cautiously accepted.

to detect the indirect effect of intergroup anxiety, outgroup knowledge, and empathy, respectively. The largest needed sample (for the smallest effect) of 205 was used as a starting point. Given the additional mediator of meta-stereotypes, the two covariates, and to account for attrition, 250 White participants were recruited to participate in this study.

Procedures

Following consent, participants completed items related to their previous contact with Black/African Americans (i.e., traditional forms of contact quality; covariate) and were then given a description of what it means to engage with another group's social and/or cultural background (i.e., prompt A used in Pilot 2; see Appendix B). The sociocultural contact prompt instructed participants to think about previous instances in which they have engaged with Blacks' sociocultural background. Next, participants were asked in an open-ended format to report the content of their contact and in a closed-ended format to report the quality and depth of their sociocultural contact with Blacks (as described in the prompt they read).

Participants then completed the main dependent measures beginning with the proposed mediators and closing with outcomes related to their interracial attitudes/experiences including assessments of collective action intention and behaviors. A final covariate assessed participants historicist thinking about Black/African Americans. Participants also completed two attention checks and one memory check regarding the sociocultural contact prompt they read. Finally, participants completed a demographic questionnaire and saw the details of the study in the debriefing document.

Covariates

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Quality of interracial contact. Participants responded to items assessing the quality of their previous interactions with Black people across four dimensions: pleasant, uncomfortable, superficial, and cooperative on a scale from 1—*strongly disagree* to 7—*strongly agree* ($\alpha = .77$; Tausch et al., 2007). Items were coded and averaged such that higher scores indicate more positive interracial contact with Blacks.

Historicist thinking about African Americans. Six items assessed Whites' beliefs that Blacks' history helps explain Blacks' social disadvantage in the US on a scale from 1—*strongly disagree* to 7—*strongly agree* ($\alpha = .93$; Gill & Andreychik, 2007). This measure of Historicist Thinking about African Americans has been used and validated in previous work. The goal of including this 6-item scale (see Appendix C) is to test whether sociocultural contact quality, above and beyond knowledge of history and/or historicist thinking, is related to interracial outcomes and collective action intentions.

Sociocultural Engagement Predictors

Open-ended sociocultural contact (exploratory). Following the sociocultural prompt, experiences engaging in sociocultural contact with or related to Blacks/African Americans was assessed through an open-ended item. This item instructed participants to type cultural experiences, activities, customs, and/or interactions with other people related to Blacks/African Americans that they have engaged in or learned about. The question read: "What cultural experiences, activities, customs, and/or interactions with other people related to Blacks/African Americans have you engaged in or learned about?" Participants then indicated whether each experience did or did not involve direct face-to-face contact with Black/African American individuals.

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Quality of sociocultural interracial contact. Participants were then asked to think about those instances involving direct face-to-face contact with Black/African Americans and asses the quality and depth of those interactions across ten dimensions, including those noted above (e.g., cooperative, important, meaningful, etc.). Items were assessed on a scale from 1—*strongly disagree* to 7—*strongly agree* (α = .89; adapted from Tausch et al., 2007). Items were coded and averaged such that higher scores indicate more positive and deep sociocultural interracial contact with Blacks.

Mediators

Intergroup anxiety. Participants indicated how much apprehension they feel interacting with Black individuals. The 11-item scale includes feeling awkward, happy, self-conscious, accepted, confident, irritated, impatient, defensive, suspicious, careful, and certain while interacting with Black people (α = .88; Stephan & Stephan, 1985). Items were coded (and reversed coded when necessary) such that higher scores indicate greater intergroup anxiety amidst interracial contact with Black people.

Meta-stereotypes. Ten items assessed the extent to which participants believe that Black Americans, in general, view them as having stereotypically White characteristics (e.g., prejudiced, racist, entitled, pretentious, arrogant, well-educated, intelligent, someone who has negative views about minorities, a stereotypical member of their group; α = .85; adapted from Vorauer et al., 1998; see Appendix C for measure). These items have been used in previous work to assess Whites' perceptions of the stereotypes Blacks hold about them in interracial interactions (Taylor et al., 2022). Items

were assessed on a scale from 1—*Strongly disagree to 7—Strongly agree.* Items were

coded and averaged such that higher scores indicate greater meta-stereotypes.

Empathy. Empathy was assessed through an affective scale ($\alpha = .85$; adapted

from Swart et al., 2011) and a cognitive scale, the latter of which uses some (but not all)

of the items from the empathic perspective taking subscale of the scale of ethnocultural

empathy ($\alpha = .75$; adapted from Wang et al., 2003). These scales assess participants'

empathic feelings (e.g., feeling angry, sad, etc.) on behalf of Black people and the ability

to take on the perspective (e.g., understanding, being able to imagine, being in the shoes,

etc.) of Black individuals (full scale $\alpha = .77$; see Appendix C for full scale). Items, which

were assessed on a scale from 1—*Strongly disagree to 7—Strongly agree*, were averaged

such that higher scores indicate greater empathy toward Black Americans.

Outgroup knowledge. Participants responded to five items assessing their

knowledge of Black Americans ($\alpha = .91$; adapted from Zagefka et al., 2017). Outgroup

knowledge was measured by asking participants how much knowledge, in general, they

have about 1) Black Americans and how much they know about Black Americans' 2)

history, 3) culture, 4) language, and 5) values. Items were rated on a scale from 1— *very

little knowledge* to 7— *a lot of knowledge* and averaged such that higher scores indicate

greater outgroup knowledge.

Interracial Attitudes Outcomes

Unless otherwise noted, the below measures were assessed on a scale from 1—

Strongly disagree to 7—Strongly agree. All below items were averaged such that higher

scores indicate more favorable attitudes toward Black Americans (i.e., decreased

prejudice, greater desire for future interracial contact, etc.).

Anti-Black prejudice. A ten-item measure of anti-Black attitudes assessed

participants' feelings of prejudice toward Black Americans ($\alpha = .91$; Katz & Hass, 1988;

see Appendix C for full measure). This scale assessed participants' beliefs that Blacks'

behaviors and attitudes are the main contributors to their social and economic

disadvantage in the US (e.g., "Many Black teenagers don't respect themselves or anyone

else," "One of the biggest problems for a lot of Blacks is their lack of self-respect").

Affective prejudice. Participants used a single-item sliding scale from 1—*cold* to

100—*warm* to assess feelings toward Black/African Americans (Gaertner et al., 1996).

Desire for future interracial contact. Participants rated the extent to which they

could see themselves approaching and engaging with Black Americans in the future.

Participants were asked to rate the degree to which they generally would want to 1) talk

to, 2) find out more about, and 3) spend time with Black Americans ($\alpha = .95$; adapted

from Turner et al., 2013).

Collective action outcomes. Two collective action outcome measures were

assessed—attitudes and behavioral intentions. First, collective action anti-racism attitudes

were assessed. The Anti-Racism scale by LaCosse and colleagues (2021; $\alpha = .94$) was

used to evaluate participants' attitudes toward collective action through evaluations of

one's anti-racist beliefs (e.g., "White people should do more than just acknowledge that

racism toward Black people exists," "White people need to speak out against racial

discrimination"; See appendix C). Next, collective action behavioral intentions were

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assessed. Participants rated the degree to which they would consider doing 11 different behaviors indicative of collective action support ($\alpha = .96$; adapted from Smith et al., 2008; Pieterse et al., 2016). Behaviors include writing a letter, signing a petition, and attending a rally (see Appendix C for measure).

Collective action behaviors. Two measures of collective action behaviors were assessed. First, participants were asked to write a message to federal representatives about their support toward racial equality. The instructions read: "Please write your thoughts about recommendations (if any) that the government can implement to advance racial equality in the US. Feel free to leave blank if you don't have any recommendations." Greater quantity of characters written was coded as greater collective action behaviors. Qualitative data analysis of response content was not part of this dissertation but will be reserved for future work. Following, participants were entered into a $50 raffle and have the option to donate part or all of their raffle winnings. When introduced to the raffle, participants had the option to select how much, if any, they would like to donate to any three organizations. The organizations are the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and the Equal Justice Initiative. Greater donations are indicative of greater collective action.

Attention and Memory Checks.

Two items assessed participants' attention (e.g., "select somewhat disagree") and one memory check item asked for participants to recall the topic of the prompt they read (e.g., cultural engagement).

<center>**Results**</center>

Participants

The survey was completed online through Cloud Research by 250 White U.S. adults. Eighteen participants (7.2%) were excluded from analysis for failing memory ($n = 14$; 5.6%) or attention check ($n = 4$; 1.6%) questions. The below analyses focus on the remaining 232 participants (127 men, 102 women, 3 non-binary; $M_{age} = 43.16$, $SD = 13.24$).

Example of open-ended responses. Preliminary descriptive data analyses of participants open-ended responses were conducted. Participants' sociocultural experiences involved the sharing of and engagement with Black/African American culture related mainly to food followed by history, music, worship, holidays, and travel. Example responses are displayed in Table 12 and include sociocultural experiences involving food (25.56%), learning about history (18.85%), as well as music and dance (12.14%).

Analytic Strategy.

Data from closed-ended responses was analyzed using parallel mediation analyses to assess the direct and indirect effect between Whites' sociocultural engagement quality with interracial attitudes and collective action intentions. The indirect effect of sociocultural contact and interracial attitudes was assessed as partially mediated through intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, empathy, and outgroup knowledge. All scores exceeding three standard deviations above or below the mean were changed to a value capped at three standard deviations above or below the mean to reduce skewness.

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Assumptions of multivariate normality (through a visual assessment of a histogram of the residuals) and multicollinearity (through VIF values) were assessed. The full model for each outcome was a parallel mediation model 4 using the PROCESS v.3 Macro for SPSS v.24 with 5,000 bias-corrected bootstrap resamples (Hayes, 2017). Analysis of all open-ended responses (i.e., content of sociocultural experiences, content of letter in support of racial justice) is reserved for future work.

Focal Mediation Models

OLS assumptions were all met aside for assumptions of multivariate normality involving the number of characters participants wrote as part of their letter advocating for racial equality. To correct for this negatively skewed non-normal distribution of residuals, bootstrap linear regression was used in determining the significance of regression coefficients for characters written in response to the letter prompt (Pek et al., 2018). Furthermore, across all outcomes, 17 scores were transformed for being 3 standard deviations below or above the means. Significant results reported below remained when examining the transformed and untransformed scores. Table 13 displays means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations for all Study 2 variables.

A model 4 parallel mediation analysis using the PROCESS v.3 Macro for SPSS v.24 was used to investigate the hypothesis that sociocultural contact quality is related to each one of the focal outcomes when controlling for traditional forms of contact quality and historicist thinking about African Americans. Further, this model tested the mediating role of intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, empathy, and knowledge in explaining the intrapsychic, interpersonal, and systemic outcomes.

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I first assessed direct effects by testing the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and each one of the focal outcomes while controlling (as covariates) for traditional contact quality and historicist thinking about African Americans. Then, I assessed the indirect effects by testing the mediating role of intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, empathy, and outgroup knowledge. The following sections present the results of the mediation models explaining each one of the focal outcomes. These include, anti-Black prejudice, affective prejudice, desire for future interracial contact, collective action attitudes, collective action behavioral intentions, donations, and number of characters written. All results below control for traditional contact quality and historicist thinking about African Americans as covariates. Unstandardized direct effects, indirect effects, and R^2s are presented in Table 14 for interracial attitudes, Table 15 for collective action attitudes, and Table 16 for collective action behaviors.

Anti-black Prejudice.

Direct effects. Unexpectedly, there was no direct relationship between sociocultural contact quality and anti-Black prejudice. However, significant direct effects emerged between three predictors, including traditional contact quality, historicist thinking, and intergroup anxiety. Participants who reported greater contact quality, greater historicist thinking, and less intergroup anxiety reported less anti-Black prejudice. No other direct or indirect effects for anti-black prejudice were significant. Nevertheless, sociocultural contact quality was negatively associated with intergroup anxiety ($b = -.15$, 95%CI [-.25, -.04], $p = .006$), but positively related with empathy ($b = .17$, 95%CI [.05,

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.29], $p = .006$) and knowledge ($b = .32$, 95%CI [.16, .48], $p < .001$). There was no relationship between sociocultural contact quality and meta-stereotypes.

Affective prejudice toward Black Americans

Direct effects. As hypothesized, sociocultural contact quality emerged as significantly related to affective prejudice. Additionally, significant direct effects emerged between three other predictors, including historicist thinking, intergroup anxiety, and empathy. Participants who reported greater sociocultural contact quality, greater historicist thinking, less intergroup anxiety, and more empathy toward Black/African Americans also reported warmer feelings toward Black/African Americans. No other direct effects were significant.

Indirect effects. Hypotheses were partially supported, as significant indirect effects suggest that two of the four proposed mechanism mediated the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and affective prejudice. Specifically, intergroup anxiety and empathy partially mediated the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and prejudice toward Black/African Americans, accounting for traditional contact quality and historicist thinking about African Americans. Specifically, greater quality sociocultural contact is negatively associated with intergroup anxiety and positively related to outgroup empathy. Decreased intergroup anxiety and increased empathy, in turn, are related to more positive feelings toward Black/African Americans (see Table 14). No other indirect effects were significant.

Desire for future interracial contact

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Direct effects. As hypothesized, sociocultural contact quality was associated with desire for future interracial contact. Additionally, significant direct effects emerged between four other predictors, including traditional contact quality, historicist thinking, intergroup anxiety, and outgroup knowledge. Participants who reported greater sociocultural contact quality, greater traditional contact quality, greater historicist thinking, less intergroup anxiety, and more knowledge about Black/African Americans also reported greater desire to interact with Black/African Americans. No other direct effects were significant.

Indirect effects. In partial support of the hypothesized indirect effects, outgroup knowledge emerged as a significant partial mediator between sociocultural contact quality and desire for future interactions with Black/African Americans, accounting for traditional contact quality and historicist thinking about African Americans. Specifically, greater quality sociocultural contact is related to greater knowledge about Black/African Americans which in turn is related to greater desire for future interracial contact (see Table 14). No other indirect effects were significant.

Collective action attitudes

Direct effects. As expected, there was a direct positive relationship between sociocultural contact quality and collective action attitudes. Additionally, significant direct effects emerged between two other predictors, including historicist thinking and empathy. Participants who reported greater sociocultural contact quality, greater historicist thinking, and more empathy toward Black/African Americans also reported greater collective action attitudes. No other direct effects were significant.

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Indirect effects. In partial support of Study 2 hypotheses, empathy emerged as a significant partial mediator between sociocultural contact quality and collective action attitudes, accounting for traditional contact quality and historicist thinking about African Americans. Specifically, greater quality sociocultural contact is related to greater empathy toward Black/African Americans which, in turn, is related to more favorable attitudes about collective action aimed at reducing racial inequities (see Table 15). No other indirect effects were significant.

Collective action behaviors

Direct effects. As hypothesized, sociocultural contact quality is positively related to collective action behavioral intentions. Additionally, significant direct effects emerged between four other predictors, including traditional contact quality, historicist thinking, empathy, and outgroup knowledge. Participants who reported greater sociocultural contact quality, less traditional contact quality, greater historicist thinking, more empathy, and more outgroup knowledge about Black/African Americans also reported greater collective action attitudes. No other direct effects were significant.

Indirect effects. Hypotheses were partially supported, as significant indirect effects suggest that two of the four proposed mechanism mediated the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and collective action behaviors. Specifically, both empathy and outgroup knowledge emerged as significant partial mediators between sociocultural contact quality and collective action attitudes, accounting for traditional contact quality and historicist thinking about African Americans. Greater sociocultural contact quality was related to greater empathy and greater knowledge about

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Black/African Americans which, in turn, was related to more intentions to engage in collective action behaviors (see Table 15). No other indirect effects were significant.

Donations

Direct effects. As expected, sociocultural contact quality was related to the amount of money participants were willing to donate from their raffle winnings. Additionally, significant direct effects emerged between two other variables: historicist thinking and knowledge. Participants who reported greater sociocultural contact quality, greater historicist thinking, and more outgroup knowledge about Black/African Americans donated more money to racial justice and related organizations. No other direct effects were significant.

Indirect effects. In partial support of my hypotheses, outgroup knowledge emerged as the only significant mediator partially explaining the direct relationship between sociocultural contact quality and monetary donations, accounting for traditional contact quality and historicist thinking about African Americans. Specifically, greater sociocultural contact quality was associated with more outgroup knowledge which, in turn, was related to more donations in US dollars (see Table 16). No other indirect effects were significant.

Letters of support: Characters Written

No significant direct or indirect effects emerged predicting participants' number of written characters advocating for racial equality.

Study 2 Discussion

Study 2 largely supports the assertion that sociocultural contact quality, above and beyond traditional forms of interracial contact quality and historicist thinking, positively relates to interracial attitudes and collective action among White individuals. In fact, greater sociocultural contact quality was positively related to each outcome aside from anti-black prejudice and characters written in support of racial equality (the latter outcome was not associated with any variable in the model). Specifically, greater quality sociocultural contact was related to more favorable feelings toward Black/African Americans, greater desire for interracial contact, more favorable collective action attitudes, greater intentions to engage in collective action, and more monetary donations to support racial equality. Furthermore, and consistent with the larger intergroup contact literature, decreased intergroup anxiety and increased empathy mediated the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and reduced prejudice toward Black/African Americans. Greater empathy and outgroup knowledge were also significant mediators predicting desire for interracial contact and collective action. However, meta-stereotypes, a key mediator in the interracial interaction literature, did not emerge as a significant mediator explaining the relationship between (or directly predicting) sociocultural contact quality and any of the focal outcomes.

The results provide evidence of how engaging with another group's social and cultural background can relate to intrapsychic (e.g., affective prejudice), interpersonal (e.g., desire for future contact), and systemic (e.g., collective action intentions) outcomes. Notably, greater quality of interactions in which White individuals engaged with the sociocultural selves of Black Americans is associated with improving interracial-related

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outcomes even when controlling for traditional contact quality as a covariate. This is important because, unlike Study 1, Study 2 did not assess interracial self-disclosure. However, traditional contact quality may account for some of the interracial interactions that participants have with close friends and acquaintances, given that high quality traditional contact may be indicative of close friendships. Thus, while the sociocultural prompt may have led participants to think about close and intimate interracial relations, sociocultural contact quality emerges as significant even when accounting for greater quality traditional contact situations.

Likewise, these favorable outcomes are evident above and beyond historicist thinking about Black/African Americans, suggesting that the effect is not a mere byproduct of learning about and understanding the history of Black people in the US. This is notable because preliminary descriptive qualitative data analysis shows that engaging with Black/African American history is one of the primary ways that White Americans engage with Black culture (reported in 18.85% of the sociocultural experiences in Study 2, see Table 12). The results also indicate that greater sociocultural contact quality is associated with improved interracial-related outcomes through several mediators, including decreased intergroup anxiety, increased empathy, and increased outgroup knowledge. However, these mediators work in different ways across the various outcomes. Below I discuss what different mediators emerged as significant in the above results and address some of the implications.

Mechanisms through which Sociocultural Contact Relates to Race-Related Outcomes

The mediating role of intergroup anxiety, empathy, and outgroup knowledge largely replicates previous intergroup contact research focusing on prejudice reduction. Specifically, the positive association between sociocultural contact quality and improved feelings toward Black/African Americans is mediated by reduced intergroup anxiety, increased empathy, and greater outgroup knowledge. Previous meta-analytic work (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008) shows that intergroup anxiety and empathy were critical in explaining the relationship between traditional contact and reduced prejudice. The mediating role of intergroup anxiety has also been consistently found among interracial interactions research (e.g., Plant & Devine, 2003), particularly among White samples (Toosi et al., 2012), indicating that interracial interactions are often tense and uncomfortable because of the general feelings of apprehension individuals experience. In contrast, Study 2 results show that imbuing interracial interactions with a sociocultural component is associated with reduced interracial anxiety which is associated with important outcomes like less affective prejudice and more desire for future interracial contact. In addition to this self-focused affective mediator, other-focused emotions also played an important mediating role in Study 2 results.

Specifically, empathy emerged as an important mediator helping explain the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and affective prejudice, collective action attitudes, intentions, and behaviors (i.e., monetary donations). Greater quality sociocultural contact with Black/African Americans was related to White participants' feelings of empathy, which in turn was related to reduced prejudice attitudes toward Black/African Americans but greater desire to engage in race-based collective action.

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These findings suggest that sociocultural contact which allows and encourages White individuals to understand and feel the emotions of Black/African Americans may be crucial for mobilizing them to engage in efforts designed to improve Blacks' social and economic systemic disadvantage. Notably, when the effect of sociocultural contact quality is accounted for, the direct effect of traditional contact quality is either non-significant (for collective action intentions and donations) or is negatively associated (for collective action behavioral intentions) with collective action outcomes. Put another way, only sociocultural contact quality (vs. traditional contact quality) emerged as significantly related to greater collective action-related outcomes among White Americans. This work is among the first to provide evidence for the affective and cognitive mediators that help explain Whites' attitudes toward, and intentions to participate in, collective action to help remedy racial inequality.

Extending previous intergroup contact research, Study 2 found that outgroup knowledge played a crucial role as a mediator, but it differed from intergroup anxiety and empathy in terms of its relationship with various outcomes. Results revealed that greater knowledge about the outgroup helped explain the relationship between the quality of sociocultural contact and desire for future interracial contact, behavioral intentions towards collective action, and donations to combat racial inequality. While previous research has assessed the mediating role of general knowledge about one's contact partner and their personal attributes, Study 2 focused on sociocultural outgroup knowledge, such as knowledge about the culture and history of another group. The significant findings of Study 2 suggest that sociocultural knowledge about another group may be an essential

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mechanism through which greater sociocultural contact quality relates to interracial outcomes, particularly those related to one's intentions to engage in behaviors indicative of greater collective action on behalf of Black Americans. This suggests that learning about another group's culture can be a crucial factor in promoting interracial cooperation and activism. Greater knowledge may increase White Americans' respect for the larger Black community thus leading to greater collective action and a more meaningful effort to combat systemic racism and oppression.

Notably, and in contrast to previous interracial interaction research, meta-stereotypes did not mediate the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and interracial attitudes or collective action outcomes. Specifically, there is no evidence that greater quality sociocultural contact is related to meta-stereotypes, nor that meta-stereotypes mediate the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and any of the focal outcomes (neither when entered as a single mediator nor when accounting for the additional mediators of intergroup anxiety, empathy, and knowledge). However, replicating previous work (e.g., Finchilescu, 2010; Shelton et al., 2010; Taylor et al., 2022), bivariate correlations demonstrate that racial meta-stereotypes are positively related to interracial anxiety. It should be noted that, while not a focal part of the mediated model, traditional contact quality (vs. sociocultural contact quality and historicist thinking about African Americans) was the only predictor associated with meta-stereotypes ($b = -0.55$, $p < .001$). One possible interpretation of these findings is that sociocultural contact adds a protective factor to interracial interactions, thereby reducing White Americans' likelihood of believing that outgroup members will think

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stereotypically about them. Furthermore, the current model uses a composite of all meta-stereotypes Whites believe Blacks hold about Whites. In an exploratory analysis, a composite including only the negative meta-stereotypes (e.g., racist, entitled, arrogant, etc.) was used and similar null results emerged.

Sociocultural Contact: Unique Effects Among White Americans

A more complete discussion of divergent and convergent findings between Study 1 and 2 will be reserved for the general discussion; however, there are important similarities and distinctions to note here about these two first studies. Specifically, Study 2 included a cognitive assessment of prejudice (i.e., anti-Black prejudice) that did not emerge as significantly related to sociocultural contact quality, nor was the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and anti-Black prejudice mediated by any variable tested. Study 1 among Black participates did not include a cognitive assessment of prejudice, in large part due to the limited number of prejudice assessments that focus on the perspective of Black individuals. Study 2 findings may suggest that sociocultural contact quality is related to White Americans' affective prejudice, but not necessarily cognitive prejudice. Further, Table 13 descriptive statistics suggest that mean scores on anti-Black prejudice were generally low with little variability among them. Thus, cognitive prejudice may be more difficult to assess given social desirability concerns and the face-valid nature of the anti-Black racism items. Nevertheless, traditional contact quality is significantly associated with less anti-Black prejudice, as would be expected by intergroup contact theory. Thus, more work is needed to ascertain the degree to which sociocultural contact is associated with more multi-faceted assessments of prejudice.

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Further, there were no predictors that were significantly associated with

characters written in a purported letter in support of racial equality. In contrast to Study 1,

the R^2 value did not reach significance when including any of the variables to the model,

suggesting that the variables assessed in Study 2 do not help explain variability in the

number of characters White participants wrote. However, this generally aligns with Study

1 results, suggesting that either critical predictors are missing from this model to help

explain participants' support for such behavioral assessment of collective action, or that

this assessment of collective action is not valid. In other words, characters written may

not be an appropriate way of understanding participants' support of collective action

aiming to reduce Black-White disparities. This is likely to be the case given that

characters written were the only measure with non-significant correlations and no

significant mediation. To remain consistent with pre-registered analysis plans, Study 3

will retain this measure of collective action. However, given Study 1 and Study 2 results,

the findings associated with characters written should be cautiously interpreted.

Last, given that Study 2 concludes the correlation studies of my dissertation, it is

important to discuss potential alternative explanations of the observed results. Due to the

correlation design of these studies, it is possible to imagine the direction of effects

running from the outcomes to the predictor. For example, it is possible that Black

participants (Study 1) and White participants (Study 2) who are less prejudiced are thus

more likely to engage in greater quality sociocultural interracial contact experiences.

There is experimental research, however, showing that sociocultural experiences with a

racial outgroup member lead to less implicit bias and greater interest in future interracial

contact among White participants (Brannon & Walton, 2013). Though there is less experimental work among racially minoritized groups, longitudinal research demonstrates that favorable outcomes, including intergroup closeness, follow sociocultural engagement through ethnic-centered college courses. Thus, while the design of the previous two studies and three pilots leaves open alternative interpretations, the presentation of the current data and conclusions drawn from it align with evidence and theory in the intergroup contact literature.

In sum, Study 2 demonstrates that sociocultural interracial contact quality can be an important contributor to improved interracial attitudes and collective action intentions among White Americans. Notably, this relationship persists when controlling for mere contact quality with Black Americans and historicist thinking about Black/African Americans. Despite the novel contribution that these studies offer, they open the door to questions about how sociocultural contact impacts *cognitive* prejudice and what forms of collective action are most appropriate to use in interracial contact research. However, this study complements Study 1 among Black participants and replicates Pilots 2 and 3 among White participants to demonstrate that sociocultural contact in which Black Americans share and allow Whites to engage in their sociocultural heritage is related to both groups' attitudes and collective action intentions. To examine the causal relationship between sociocultural contact on interracial attitudes and collective action intentions, the next study will utilize an experimental design. In doing so, the goal is to better understand the underlying mechanisms and processes that contribute to the above effects

and provide a more nuanced understanding of how sociocultural contact can be utilized to promote positive interracial relations and collective action.

Study 3: The Effects of Blacks' Imagined Sociocultural Contact with Whites

The purpose of Study 3 is to experimentally examine Blacks' responses to sociocultural informed contact with Whites. This study will assess Black participants' attitudes after an imagined interracial (vs. intraracial) interaction in which they share meaningful aspects of their sociocultural lives and experiences. Of particular interest are Blacks' interracial attitudes toward Whites and their intentions toward collective action after the imagined sociocultural contact situation. In the intergroup contact literature, ample evidence demonstrates the relationship between retrospective in-person interracial contact and reduced prejudice, even among racially minoritized groups (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008), but these positive effects have also been found following imagined contact experiences (Miles & Crisp, 2014). Imagined contact can be a useful tool for promoting positive intergroup relations because it allows individuals to engage in a low-risk and easily accessible form of interracial interaction. Imagined contact has been shown to produce similar positive effects as actual in-person contact, making it a valuable first step in promoting positive intergroup attitudes and intentions towards collective action (Husnu & Crisp, 2010, see also, Borinca et al., 2022; Vezzali et al., 2012).

The impact of sociocultural contact on collective action is important to explore because previous work shows that intergroup contact can detrimentally impact Black peoples' collective action intentions (Hässler et al., 2020). In the current research, however, it is proposed that sociocultural contact can improve interracial attitudes

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without undermining Black individuals' collective action beliefs and attitudes. Specifically, by sharing aspects related to their sociocultural selves with White people in a meaningful and natural way, Black individuals may be able to establish a sense of common ground, reduce feelings of threat or anxiety, and increase their willingness to engage in intergroup cooperation and social change. In doing so, sociocultural contact can potentially serve as a powerful tool for promoting positive intergroup relations and advancing efforts towards greater equity and social justice.

In this study, participants were randomly assigned to one of the two imagined contact conditions: sociocultural imagined contact or traditional imagined contact. Additionally, within each imagined contact conditions, participants imagine interacting with either a same race (i.e., Black; intraracial) or different race (i.e., White; interracial) partner. Participants in the sociocultural condition were asked to write about important aspects related to their racial group's sociocultural background, while those in the traditional condition were not given any written instruction. Participants were then asked to imagine a positive interaction with a White or Black stranger, with those in the sociocultural condition imagining sharing the items they had previously entered in response to the sociocultural prompt. Participants then completed dependent measures (including mediators and focal outcomes), manipulation checks, a demographic questionnaire, and were debriefed. Both traditional contact quality and degree of self-disclosure were assessed as covariates.

Study 3 has the following predictions. First, it is expected that Blacks who imagine an interracial (vs. intraracial) sociocultural (vs. traditional) contact situation will

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report improved interracial attitudes, greater desire to engage in interracial contact, and more favorable attitudes toward collective action aimed at improving interracial disparities. Additionally, it is expected that the effect of sociocultural (vs. traditional) interracial (vs. intraracial) contact on interracial attitudes and collective action intentions will remain after controlling for the effect of previous interracial contact quality and degree of self-disclosure while interacting with Whites. Lastly, it is expected that intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, meta-perceptual empathy, and meta-perceptual knowledge will, in parallel, mediate the relationship between sociocultural contact and interracial attitudes. Specifically, decreased intergroup anxiety and meta-stereotypes, but increased meta-perceptual empathy and outgroup knowledge, are expected to be positively associated with sociocultural contact and improved interracial outcomes. All Study 3 hypotheses, design, and analyses were preregistered: https://osf.io/ujwvd.

Method

Design

Study 3 used a 2 (imagined contact type: sociocultural, traditional) × 2 (partner race: Black, White) between-subjects factorial design. Participants were asked to imagine a scene with either a Black or a White individual. They were asked to imagine either sharing aspects of their sociocultural lives and experiences (e.g., family histories and traditions, ethnic foods, etc.) or were not given any instructions about what they should or should not share with their partner. Following, they completed the dependent measures.

Participants

An a priori power analysis was conducted using G*Power3 (Faul et al., 2007) to obtain the necessary sample size for a two-way ANCOVA interaction using an estimated medium effect size based on previous imaged contact research ($d = .351$ for prejudice as a meta-analytic outcome; Miles & Crisp, 2014), and using an alpha of $p = .05$. Results showed that a total sample of 337 participants would be required to achieve a power of .80. Participants were recruited through Prolific to take part in a study about social interactions. For this 20-minute online study, participants were compensated $3.35. Recruitment focused on adults with the following inclusion criteria: 1) self-selected Black as their primary race, 2) at least 18 years of age, 3) currently residing in the US, and 4) did not participate in Study 1 of this dissertation.

Exclusion criteria: participants were excluded from analysis for incorrectly responding to manipulation check questions regarding their interaction partner's race and the type of interaction (e.g., socioculturally laden or not) they imagined. Participants were also excluded from analysis for failing attentional checks (e.g., "select strongly agree for this item").

Procedures

The entire study was conducted online. After accepting the invitation to participate in the study, participants were provided with a Qualtrics link that redirected them to the beginning of the survey. Upon consent, participants were asked to report the quality of previous interracial contact with Whites, a measure that served as a covariate. Participants were then randomly assigned to one of the two imagined contact conditions.

Participants assigned to the sociocultural imagined contact condition were given a

description of sociocultural contact adapted from the sociocultural prompt used in Studies

1 and 2 (see Appendix A). As in Study 1, the sociocultural contact prompt asked

participants to think about and write in an open-ended format what they consider to be

important aspects related to their racial groups' sociocultural background (e.g., traditions,

customs, activities, etc.). Participants assigned to the traditional imagined contact

condition were not given instructions to write about anything, but rather moved directly

to the next part of the study.

All participants were then re-directed to read a scenario depicting an interaction

between two people. In one condition, participants were randomly assigned to imagine

interacting with a White individual or interacting with a Black individual. Following

standard imagined contact procedures (Crisp & Turner, 2012; see also, Hodson et al.,

2015), participants read the following instructions:

> *We would like you to take a minute to imagine yourself meeting a [White/Black]*
>
> *stranger for the first time. Imagine that the interaction is positive, relaxed, and*
>
> *comfortable. You spend some time together. During the conversation, they*
>
> *express that they are interested in what you are sharing and so you tell them more*
>
> *about [...]*

In the sociocultural imagined contact condition, the imagined contact instructions

ended by listing the items that participants had previously entered as their response to the

sociocultural prompt. In the traditional imagined contact condition, the imagined contact

instructions ended with "…you tell them more about yourself." Thus, participants in the

sociocultural contact condition saw the text that they themselves had entered at the beginning of the study, related to their sociocultural lives, but participants in the traditional contact condition were simply told to imagine sharing more about themselves. Once participants finish a 1-minute timer set as part of their imagined contact experience, they were instructed to complete all dependent measures in the below order. The study ended after manipulation check questions, a short demographic questionnaire, and a full debriefing.

Measures

Measures are conceptually identical to those used in Study 1, aside from updated wording in the stem of the mediators. The measures include the following: a covariate of interracial contact quality (Tausch et al., 2007; α = .73); mediators which include intergroup anxiety (Stephan & Stephan, 1985; α = .85), meta-stereotypes (adapted from Taylor et al., 2018; α = .93), meta-perceptual empathy (adapted from Swart et al., 2011 & Wang et al., 2003; α = .88), and meta-perceptual knowledge (adapted from Zagefka et al., 2017; α = .95). In contrast to Study 1, which asked about White individuals in general, the mediators in this study asked about one's feelings and perceptions of the imagined contact partner. For example, instead of asking participants how anxious they feel when interacting with White/European Americans, they are asked how they would feel following the imagined interaction with their partner. Likewise, instead of asking whether they believe that White individuals hold stereotypes about, have empathy toward, or knowledge about Black Americans, they are asked whether they believe that their

interaction partner holds stereotypes about, has empathy towards, or knowledge about

Black Americans.

The outcome measures included affective prejudice (Gaertner et al., 1996), desire

for future interracial contact (adapted from Turner et al., 2013; $\alpha = .92$), collective action

solidarity (Glasford & Calcagno, 2012; $\alpha = .88$), attitudes (LaCosse et al., 2021; $\alpha = .83$),

and behavioral intentions (adapted from Smith et al., 2008 & Pieterse et al., 2016; $\alpha =$

.93). Finally, identical to Study 1, participants completed measures of collective action

behaviors (through monetary donations and characters written) were assessed.

Participants also completed a covariate of personal self-disclosure, identical to the one

used in Study 1 (6 items, e.g., I felt that I disclosed important information to the person I

interacted with; $\alpha = .83$). This covariate was used because sociocultural contact (i.e.,

sharing aspects related to one's culture) involves a degree of self-disclosure which has

been linked to intergroup liking (Collins & Miller, 1994). Thus, this covariate was

employed to understand the impact of sociocultural contact above and beyond sharing

aspects about oneself or one's background.

Manipulation checks. Manipulation check items asked participants to recall the

content of what they shared with the stranger they imagine speaking with (either related

to their sociocultural background or not) and the race of the stranger they imagined

meeting (Black or White).

Results

Participants

Following the a priori power analysis and considering possible attrition, the aim was to obtain a sample size of 337 participants. The survey was completed online through Prolific by 338[7] Black U.S. adults. Nine participants (2.66%) were excluded from analysis for failing an attention check. Additionally, 24 participants (7.10%) failed to correctly recall the race of the person they imagined interacting with (17 in the White partner condition; 7 in the Black partner condition) and 63 participants (18.64%) failed to correctly recall the content of the interaction they had with their partner (53 in the traditional contact condition; 10 in the sociocultural contact condition). Of the 53 participants who failed the traditional contact closed-ended manipulation check, 48 answered that their interaction involved sharing aspects of their group's cultural heritage and social lives. The remaining 5 selected an answer related to financial decision making, demonstrating random clicking or truly failing to recall the manipulation. Given the large proportion of individuals who failed to recall the type of contact they engaged in, I investigated further for potential causes of confusion.

Given that participants in the traditional contact condition were not given explicit instructions about what to discuss with their partner, it is possible that they spontaneously chose to discuss topics related to their social and cultural background. Of the 53 participants in the traditional contact condition who failed the closed-ended manipulation check, there were 48 (90.57%) participants who indicated that they shared aspects related to their group's cultural heritage and social lives (based on the closed-ended manipulation

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[7] There were 2 participants labeled as "timed out" on prolific who successfully completed the study and are thus included in the participant count and were properly compensated. Additionally, 1 participant submitted the survey after 20 seconds with no data and were thus not included in the participant count.

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check). To ascertain whether participants failed to properly recall the instructions they received, or whether they did indeed discuss sociocultural related outcomes, an open-ended manipulation check item of the imagined contact procedure was assessed. Specifically, participants were asked to write, in an open-ended format, the topics they choose to discuss with their partners.

The assessment of these open-ended responses demonstrated that, of those who were assigned to the traditional contact condition, there were 38 participants who wrote that they discussed topics related to their race and cultural heritage with their partner (e.g., family values, music, experiences as people of color, etc.). However, of these 38 participants only 19 failed the closed-ended manipulation check described above. This may suggest two things. First, these 19 individuals, though not instructed to do so, discussed topics related to their sociocultural experiences and answered the closed-ended manipulation check item accordingly. Second, the remaining participants may have genuinely failed to recall the imagined contact instructions they saw. The below ANCOVA main effects, interactions, as well as the moderated mediation indirect effects remain consistent whether using the full sample or samples removing participants who failed the closed-ended manipulation check or the open-ended manipulation check. Thus, the below analysis focuses on the 274 participants who passed all closed-ended manipulation checks and the attention check.

Analytic Strategy.

Mean-based testing will be used to compare differences in ratings by conditions. A 2×2 analysis of covariance will be used with partner-race (Black, White) and

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imagined contact type (traditional, sociocultural) entered as between-subjects factors with

previous sociocultural contact entered as a covariate. ANCOVAs were conducted, one for

each mediator (intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, meta-perceptual empathy, and meta-

perceptual knowledge) and each one of the dependent measure: affective prejudice, desire

for future contact, collective action attitudes, and collective action behaviors.

Assumptions of ANCOVA (e.g., normality of residuals, homogeneity of regression, etc.)

were first tested for each model.

To assess mediation, a parallel mediation model using the PROCESS v.3 macro

for SPSS v.24 with 5,000 bias-corrected bootstrap resamples was used (Hayes, 2017).

This moderated mediation model assessed the indirect effect between Blacks'

sociocultural contact with Whites and interracial attitudes as well collective action. In the

model, previous traditional contact and degree of self-disclosure were included as

covariates. The indirect effect of sociocultural contact on interracial attitudes was

assessed as partially mediated through intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, meta-

perceptual empathy, and meta-perceptual outgroup knowledge. All scores exceeding

three standard deviations above or below the mean were changed to a value capped at

three standard deviations above or below the mean to reduce skewness. Assumptions of

multivariate normality (through a visual assessment of a histogram of the residuals) and

multicollinearity (through VIF values) were assessed.

Focal Analytic Models

ANCOVA and OLS assumptions were tested and met except for assumptions of

multivariate normality involving the amount of money donated and the number of

characters participants wrote as part of their letter advocating for racial equality. To

correct this non-normal distribution of residuals, bootstrap linear regression was used in

determining the significance of regression coefficients for donations and characters

written in response to the letter prompt (Pek, Wong, & Wong; 2018). Furthermore, across

all outcomes, 23 scores were transformed for being 3 standard deviations below or above

the means. The general pattern of findings reported below remains when examining the

transformed and untransformed scores. Table 17 displays means, standard deviations, and

bivariate correlations for all Study 3 variables.

First, the below sections will outline the findings of the analyses of covariance

with the type of contact (traditional, sociocultural) and the partner race (Black- same

race, White- other race) entered as the independent variables. Traditional contact quality

and degree of self-disclosure were both entered as covariates and controlled for in all the

reported results. The report will fist outline the main effects and interactions predicting

each one of the mediators (intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, meta-perceptual

empathy, and meta-perceptual knowledge) followed by each one of the focal outcomes

(affective prejudice, desire for future contact, collective action attitudes, and collective

action behaviors).

Following, the results will outline the findings of the moderated mediation using a

Model 7 (Hayes, 2017) parallel moderated mediation analysis using the PROCESS v.3

Macro for SPSS v.24. Sociocultural contact quality was entered as the predictor and

partner race was entered as the moderator. This model tested the parallel mediating role

of intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, meta-perceptual empathy, meta-perceptual

knowledge in explaining the intrapsychic, interpersonal, and systemic outcomes. The moderated mediation model also controls for traditional forms of interracial contact quality and degree of personal self-disclosure. Standardized indirect effects, indices of moderated mediation, and R^2s are presented in Tables 18-21.

ANCOVA results: mediators

Intergroup anxiety. There was a significant main effect of partner race on intergroup anxiety, $F(1, 268) = 12.13$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. Specifically, participants who imagined an interracial interaction with a White individual reported greater anxiety toward their partner ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 0.97$) compared to those who imagined an intraracial interaction with a Black individual ($M = 2.67$, $SD = 0.88$). The main effect of contact type and the contact type × partner race interaction were non-significant.

Meta-stereotypes. There was a was a significant main effect of contact type on meta-stereotypes, $F(1, 268) = 10.38$, $p = .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. The results indicate that participants who imagined sociocultural contact reported greater meta-stereotypes ($M = 2.76$, $SD = 1.31$) compared to those who imagined traditional contact (M = 2.39, SD = 0.97). Unexpectedly, there was a significant main effect of partner race on meta-stereotypes, $F(1, 268) = 12.03$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$. The results indicate that participants who imagined an interracial interaction with a White individual reported greater meta-stereotypes ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 1.31$) compared to those who imagined an intraracial interaction with a Black individual ($M = 2.33$, $SD = 0.97$). The contact type × partner race interaction was non-significant.

Meta-perceptual empathy. There was a significant main effect of partner race on meta-perceptual empathy, $F(1, 268) = 51.33$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .16$. Specifically, participants who imagined an intraracial interaction with a Black individual reported greater beliefs that their partner would have empathy toward Black/African Americans ($M = 4.98$, $SD = 1.23$) compared to those who imagined an interracial interaction with a White individual ($M = 3.95$, $SD = 1.15$). The main effect of contact type and the contact type $\times$ partner race interaction were non-significant.

Meta-perceptual knowledge. There was a was a significant main effect of contact type on meta-perceptual knowledge, $F(1, 268) = 16.37$, $p = .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$. Unexpectedly, results indicate that participants who imagined traditional contact reported that their partner is likely to have more knowledge about Black/African Americans ($M = 4.93$, $SD = 1.66$) compared to those who imagined sociocultural contact ($M = 4.38$, $SD = 1.83$). Additionally, there was a significant main effect of partner race on meta-perceptual knowledge, $F(1, 268) = 216.95$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .45$. Specifically, participants who imagined an intraracial interaction with a Black individual reported that their partner is likely to have greater knowledge about Black/African Americans ($M = 5.83$, $SD = 1.22$) compared to those who imagined an intraracial interaction with a White individual ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 1.44$). The contact type $\times$ partner race interaction was non-significant.

ANCOVA results: focal outcomes

Affective prejudice toward White Americans. There was a significant main effect of partner race on affective prejudice toward White Americans, $F(1, 268) = 7.65$, $p = .006$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$. Participants who imagined an interracial interaction with a White

individual reported warming feelings toward White Americans ($M = 62.96$, $SD = 23.67$) compared to those who imagined an intraracial interaction with a Black individual ($M = 57.20$, $SD = 22.24$). The main effect of contact type and the contact type $\times$ partner race interaction were non-significant.

Desire for future interracial contact. None of the main effects or interactions emerged as significant.

Collective action solidarity. None of the main effects or interactions emerged as significant.

Collective action attitudes. None of the main effects or interactions emerged as significant.

Collective action behavioral intentions. There was a significant main effect of partner race on collective action behavioral intentions, $F(1, 268) = 4.55$, $p = .03$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Specifically, participants who imagined an interaction with a White individual reported greater intentions to engage in collective action ($M = 5.07$, $SD = 1.40$) compared to those who imagined an intraracial interaction with a Black individual ($M = 4.77$, $SD = 1.28$). The main effect of contact type and the contact type $\times$ partner race interaction were non-significant.

Donations. None of the main effects or interactions emerged as significant.

Letters of support: Characters Written. None of the main effects or interactions emerged as significant.

Moderated mediation indirect effects.

Unexpectedly, none of the indirect effects from the moderated mediation model emerged as significant. Further, there was no evidence of moderated mediation (see Tables 18-21).

<div align="center">**Study 3 Discussion**</div>

Study 3 attempted to experimentally examine the effects of imagined sociocultural interracial contact on Black Americans' interracial attitudes and collective action intentions. Further, it tested cognitive and affective mechanisms that, based on the existing interracial relations literature, have been found to mediate the relationship between interracial contact and Black Americans' interracial related outcomes. In the discussion below, I first review the result of the focal outcomes, followed by the proposed mediators and moderated mediation models. Then, I address important theoretical insights that can be gained through Study 3, including the effectiveness of imagined intergroup contact for studying interracial dynamics and the degree to which Study 3 findings replicate previous interracial interaction or intergroup contact, and specifically imagined intergroup contact, research.

In line with previous imagined intergroup contact work, imagining an interracial (vs. intraracial) interaction led to more positive feelings (i.e., less affective prejudice) toward a majority racial outgroup member. However, imagined interracial contact did not impact participants interpersonal assessment of prejudice (i.e., desire for future interracial contact), a measure of prejudice more commonly assessed within the interracial interaction research tradition. Further, participants' collective action attitudes and behaviors (i.e., monetary donations and characters written in support of racial equality)

did not vary based on the imagined partner's race or the type of contact they imagined engaging in. However, interracial (vs. intraracial) interactions led to greater intentions to participate in collective action efforts. Unexpectedly, there were no main effects of contact type, suggesting that imagining an interaction with a novel or previously unacquainted interaction partner that incorporates the sharing of one's own racial/ethnic cultural heritage (vs. traditional types of contact) did not impact Black Americans' feelings or attitudes on any of the focal outcomes. Additionally, there were no contact type by partner race interactions or significant moderated mediation effects across any of the focal outcomes in Study 3.

However, Study 3 demonstrates a number of main effects of either contact type or partner race differentially predicting the proposed mediators. Specifically, imagining interactions with a racial outgroup member led Black participants to report greater anxiety, greater meta-stereotypes, less meta-perceptual empathy, and less outgroup meta-perceptual knowledge. Many of these findings align with the interracial interaction literature, a point I will return to discuss below. Nevertheless, the meta-perceptual outcomes used in Study 3 have not previously been used in the interracial interactions literature. Surprisingly, sociocultural (vs. traditional) contact led to greater meta-stereotypes while traditional (vs. sociocultural) contact led to greater outgroup meta-perceptual knowledge. Thus, these findings suggest that a novel sociocultural interaction may lead Black participants to feel that their partner will apply more negative stereotypes and also to have gained less knowledge about their culture.

Unexpectedly, neither the direct (i.e., ANCOVAs) nor the indirect (i.e., moderated mediation) effects of sociocultural (vs. traditional) interracial (vs. intraracial) contact emerged as significant for predicting interracial and collective action related outcomes among Black Americans in Study 3. While not reported in the below tables, a post-hoc analysis removing the covariates of traditional contact quality and degree of self-disclosure demonstrated that the (non-significant) results remain consistent. This was also true when entering each mediator separately. Thus, Study 3 consistently demonstrates that imagining a novel interracial interaction in which Black Americans' share aspects related to their cultural and social lives is not predictive of improved interracial and collective action outcomes. Although these findings differ significantly from Pilot 1 and Study 1 among Black participants, the broader examination and integration of all studies will be reserved for the general discussion. Following, I address important considerations related to Study 3 and how it attempted to test the underlying hypotheses that drive the current research.

Imagined Interracial Sociocultural Contact

Study 3 took a novel approach to experimentally testing, for the first time, how sociocultural interracial contact may impact Black Americans' interracial and collective action attitudes. As a first step in testing the effectiveness of empirically integrating insights about the sociocultural self into interracial relations research, there were some methodological restrictions to Study 3, like the use of imagined (vs. in-person) contact and a limited degree of sociocultural engagement. Nonetheless, these methodological restrictions were deliberate, as the aim of Study 3 was to provide the first experimental

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test of sociocultural contact before exploring more complex in-person or culturally-embedded context for studying these processes. Specifically, asking Black participants to imagine verbally sharing aspects related to their social and cultural lives is a relatively minor level of sociocultural engagement. Participants could, for example, imagine cooperatively working together on a culturally-based task (planning a music video for an ethnically meaningful song; Brannon & Walton, 2013), engage in a computer-mediated interaction in which they discuss their sociocultural selves in real time, or meet in person to engage in a cultural activity together (e.g., preparing an ethnically-based dish, participating in an important cultural tradition, etc.). Thus, there may be varying levels of cultural engagement and a certain threshold may need to be met before one is able to benefit from sociocultural contact.

In fact, previous attempts to integrate interracial interactions and intergroup contact research speaks to the idea of a necessary threshold that must be met for interracial relations to produce beneficial outcomes. Specifically, theorists who have attempted to reconcile and contextualize the divergent findings related to interracial interaction research and intergroup contact work have proposed that engaging in repeated interracial interactions increases one's ability to cope with and feel familiar around outgroup members. Upon repeated exposure to an interracial outgroup member, a threshold is reached whereupon one's history of negative interracial interactions assumes the properties of beneficial intergroup contact (MacInnis & Page-Gould, 2015). It is thus possible that one instance of imagined sociocultural contact (as was tested in Study 3)

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may only be a part or the beginning of the process whereby improved interracial outcomes and collective action intentions emerge.

In support of this interpretation, ANCOVAs predicting Study 3 mediators illustrate findings more in line with the larger interracial interaction literature. That is, there was a main effect suggesting that interracial (vs. intraracial) interactions led to increased intergroup anxiety and meta-stereotypes but decreased meta-perceptual empathy and meta-perceptual knowledge. These findings align with much of the interracial interaction research wherein novel interracial (vs. intraracial) encounter produce detrimental outcomes on interracial experiences (Finchilescu, 2010; Plant, 2004; West et al., 2009; Taylor et al., 2018, 2021; Vorauer et al., 1998). While interracial (vs. intraracial) interactions led to less affective prejudice, the feeling thermometer measure assessed global feelings about White Americans, an assessment that parallels the intergroup contact literature more so than the interracial interaction literature which employs assessments specific to one's interaction partner. Thus, there are reasons to believe that the methodology employed in Study 3 (i.e., a novel interracial interaction) may have contributed to the findings observed and that these findings are consistent with previous research on the negative effects of novel interracial interactions.

A separate methodological consideration related to Study 3 involves the manipulation of sociocultural contact quantity (i.e., presence) vs. quality. Pilot 1-3 and Study 1-2 focus on understanding the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and improved interracial outcomes. These previous correlational studies suggest that greater quality sociocultural contact is associated with improved interracial attitudes.

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Study 3, however, manipulates the presence (vs. absence) of sociocultural contact with another person. The quality of those interactions, however, was not experimentally assessed as more or less meaningful, deep, emotionally-connecting, etc. As has been discussed, contact quality has been found to be a stronger predictor of improved attitudes compared to contact quantity (De Coninck et al., 2021). Given Study 3 results, it is possible that the favorable impact of sociocultural contact quality (vs. quantity) may be even more pronounced among Black Americans. However, further research will be needed to ascertain whether manipulating sociocultural contact quality is a more appropriate assessment of Study 3 hypotheses.

Thus, Study 3 results suggest that the psychological processes underlying participants' imagined contact experiences align more with the interracial interactions (vs. intergroup contact) literature. Furthermore, the contact experience in Study 3 is with a novel, unacquainted interracial (vs. intraracial) interaction partner—a context traditionally found to increase intergroup anxiety and meta-stereotyping (Finchilescu, 2010; Plant, 2004; West et al., 2009). Evidently, the presence of sociocultural contact was not enough to combat the apprehension and negative outcomes associated with novel interracial contact. This may suggest that greater exposure to racial outgroup members (i.e., repeated interracial encounters) or a greater quality of sociocultural engagement may be needed before the hypothesized effects are observed. To do so, longitudinal assessments may be needed or more impactful sociocultural manipulations (e.g., computer mediated contact, in-person collaborative cultural engagement, etc.) should be employed. A more complete examination of how the methodology related to Study 3

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(i.e., modeled after traditional interracial interaction studies) and Studies 1 and 2 (i.e., modeled after traditional intergroup contact studies) will be addressed in the general discussion. In sum, cultural engagement depth may be another dimension that impacts the threshold that must be met for mutually benefitting sociocultural contact experiences.

General Discussion

Audre Lorde's poetic opening quote suggests that group differences are not at the root of intergroup conflict, but that one's inability to celebrate and appreciate group differences can create unnecessary interracial division. Two theoretical traditions within the social sciences, the interracial interactions tradition and the intergroup contact tradition, have studied race relations by exploring group differences to understand when and why interracial relations succeed and fail. The former suggests that novel race relations often end poorly (Stephan & Stephan, 1985, 1989; Trawalter et al., 2009), while the latter emphasizes the importance of interpersonal race relations for improving interracial experiences (Al Ramiah & Hewstone, 2013; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). In contrast, cultural psychology insights about the sociocultural self, our sense of identity arising from one's social and cultural background (Markus & Kitayama 1991, 2010), suggest that embracing and celebrating group differences may be critical for interracial relations that can benefit both majority and marginalized groups. In an effort to integrate and extend theoretical and methodological insights from the interracial interaction and the intergroup contact literature, this dissertation introduced and provided correlational and experimental tests of sociocultural interracial contact (i.e., interracial interactions that

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allow for the sharing of, and engagement with, the social and cultural selves of marginalized groups; Brannon et al., 2017).

To test the utility of these theoretical and methodological integrations, this dissertation had three objectives across three types of interracial outcomes applied to Black and White interracial relations in the US. The first objective was to assess the relationship between Black Americans' sociocultural contact with White individuals and their interracial experiences. Second, to assess the relationship between engaging with Black Americans' social and cultural background and White Americans' interracial attitudes. This dual approach is crucial given that research demonstrates that interracial contact experiences that may positively impact White Americans have the potential to demobilize marginalized groups' intentions to engage in collective action (Wright & Lubensky, 2009). The third objective was to experimentally test the impact of sociocultural interracial contact on Black Americans' interracial attitudes to understand the underlying process behind the proposed outcomes. Throughout, interracial outcomes were assessed that relate to intrapsychic, interpersonal, and systematic factors. Further, the role of mediators that have emerged from both the interracial interaction and the intergroup contact literatures (i.e., intergroup anxiety, meta-stereotypes, (meta-) empathy, and (meta) knowledge were tested.

Overview of Studies

Though the findings across studies were, at times mixed, overall, the results support the proposition that insights about the sociocultural self can provide useful recommendations for how to reconcile, integrate, and further develop interracial

interaction and intergroup contact research. In part, the findings suggest that interracial

contexts in which Black individuals can share their full sociocultural selves, and where

White individuals are willing to engage with them, are associated with mutually

benefitting interracial outcomes. Further, interracial contexts in which racially

minoritized groups feel that they can share their sociocultural background may serve as

an important step in curtailing the demobilizing effects intergroup contact can have on

minoritized groups' collective action attitudes, intentions, and behaviors. Taken together,

these studies demonstrate that sociocultural contact quality is associated with favorable

outcomes across wide ranging intrapsychic (i.e., affective prejudice), interpersonal

(desire for future contact), and systemic (i.e., collective action) outcomes for both White

and Black Americans.

Specifically, three studies examined the relationship between sociocultural

interracial contact and improved interracial outcomes. Studies 1 and 2 provide an initial

test of the hypothesis that higher quality sociocultural contact is associated with mutually

benefiting interracial outcomes for both Black (Study 1) and White (Study 2) individuals.

These studies used a correlational design, a methodology traditionally used in intergroup

contact research to assess ecologically-valid contact that arises from naturally occurring

interactions in participants' lives. Further, these studies demonstrated that the

hypothesized effects arise above and beyond traditional contact quality. Study 3

examined the effect of sociocultural (vs. traditional) interracial (vs. intraracial) imagined

contact among Black participants. Study 3 used an experimental design, a methodology

traditionally used in interracial interaction research to empirically assess the processes

underlying the relationship between sociocultural contact and improved outcomes. This was a more stringent test of sociocultural contact, as it adopted a design that traditionally finds negative outcomes, testing to see if sociocultural contact could override these negative outcomes. Together, these studies begin to provide convergent and growing support for the need to consider the sociocultural background of those involved in interracial interaction situations, especially when these sociocultural backgrounds are marginalized, ignored, and misunderstood. The results of each study will be discussed in turn below.

Overview of Results

First, Study 1 demonstrates that greater quality interracial interactions in which Black Americans can share aspects of their sociocultural selves with White individuals is positively related to less affective prejudice toward, but more intentions to engage in contact with, White Americans. That is, the quality of Black Americans' interactions in which they can share their culture with White individuals is associated with reduced negative feelings towards White people and greater desire to engage in future interactions. Further, Study 1 demonstrates that greater quality sociocultural interracial contact experiences do not come at a cost to Black Americans' collective action intentions. This is crucial because previous work demonstrates that intergroup contact can reduce minoritized groups' intentions to engage in collective action (Kauff et al., 2016; Hässler et al., 2020). In contrast, Study 1 suggests that greater quality sociocultural contact was associated with increased collective action racial solidarity, attitudes, and behavioral intentions among Black participants. However, this relationship did not

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emerge when assessing collective action behaviors (e.g., donations made, characters written). Nevertheless, these effects remain when controlling for traditional forms of contact quality and degree of self-disclosure in the contact situation. These covariates are important because they demonstrate that the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and improved outcomes emerges above and beyond interpersonal interactions or disclosing personal aspects about the self.

Study 1 was also critical for outlining the role of important mediators that have emerged from both the interracial interaction and the intergroup contact literature. Specifically, reduced intergroup anxiety, increased meta-perceptual empathy, and greater outgroup meta-perceptual knowledge were critical mechanisms partially explaining the relationship between greater sociocultural contact quality and affective prejudice. Greater meta-perceptual empathy and outgroup meta-knowledge also helped explain the relationship between greater sociocultural contact quality and more desire for future contact. Further, greater meta-perceptual empathy partly mediated the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and greater collective action solidarity while greater outgroup meta-perceptual knowledge fully mediated the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and higher donations participants made to advance racial equality. Across all outcomes in which sociocultural contact quality positively predicted favorable interracial attitudes, it emerged as a stronger predictor than traditional contact quality (see Tables 5-7). Thus, Study 1 was essential for showcasing how centering the perspective of Black Americans affords researchers with greater insight into interracial contact situations that have typically centered around White Americans.

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In line with results in the intergroup contact literature, Study 2 demonstrated that greater quality sociocultural contact with Black Americans is associated with White participants improved interracial feelings, desire for future contact, and collective action attitudes and behaviors. This means that White individuals' engagement in quality interracial contact with Black Americans where they learn and engage in their sociocultural background is positively related to their feelings towards Black Americans and motivation to have further contact with them. Additionally, greater quality sociocultural contact is related to greater willingness to take part in forms of support (i.e., monetary donations) against racial inequality. Critically, Study 2 demonstrates that the effects of sociocultural contact quality extend above and beyond mere contact quality with Black Americans and mere knowledge about Black history and how that history affects present day outcomes (i.e., historicist thinking). In other words, sociocultural contact quality may benefit interracial outcomes above and beyond simply having more quality interactions with Black Americans or learning about how their history of oppression negatively impacts their current-day social standing. Further aligning with previous research, intergroup anxiety and empathy were found to partially mediate the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and interracial outcomes, though the mediators were not equally consistent across outcomes.

In particular, and in line with previous research on intergroup contact, Study 2 found that lower levels of intergroup anxiety and higher levels of empathy played a mediating role in the relationship between greater quality sociocultural contact and decreased prejudice towards Black/African Americans. Decreased anxiety and greater

knowledge also helped explain the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and desire for future interracial contact. The results also indicated that greater outgroup knowledge and empathy were significant factors in explaining collective action attitudes, behavioral intentions, and donations. Taken together, Studies 1 and 2 demonstrate that sociocultural contact quality is associated with improved interracial and collective action outcomes for both Black and White individuals. Finally, Study 3 tested the casual direction of the relationship between sociocultural contact and improved outcomes among Black Americans. This experimental test was conducted to test the utility of applying a selves-in-contact approach to the study of interracial interactions and assess how novel interracial relations may be impacted by sociocultural engagement.

In contrast to the correlational nature of Studies 1 and 2, Study 3 employed an experimental design wherein Black participants imagined engaging in a same-race (intraracial) or mixed-race (interracial) interaction involving sociocultural or traditional contact. As in Study 1, Study 3 also controlled for traditional contact quality and participants' degree of self-disclosure. In line with Study 1 and 2 outcomes, I hypothesized that sociocultural contact during an interracial interaction with a White partner would produce improved intrapsychic, interpersonal, and collective action interracial outcomes among Black participants. Further, it was expected that the relationship between sociocultural contact would be moderated by the race of their partner (i.e., interracial sociocultural interactions producing stronger effects) and partially mediated by decreased intergroup anxiety, decreased meta-stereotypes, increased meta-perceptual empathy, and increased meta-perceptual knowledge. Study 3 findings suggest

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that there is no systematic difference (i.e., there were no contact type by partner race interactions or direct effects) predicting the focal outcomes following an imaged sociocultural interracial interaction relative to the other conditions. Further, there was no evidence of moderated mediation, suggesting that the effects of sociocultural contact are not fully or partially mediated by any of the mediators tested. Nevertheless, there are some findings that are worth noting.

Despite the unexpected set of non-significant interactions in Study 3, the results demonstrated that interracial (vs. intraracial) imagined contact (i.e., a main effect of contact type) led to several outcomes. Specifically, Black participants who imagined interacting with a White (vs. Black) partner reported greater intergroup anxiety, increased meta-stereotypes, less meta-perceptual empathy, less meta-perceptual knowledge, less affective prejudice, and greater collective action intentions. Generally speaking, these findings tend to align with the larger interracial interaction literature; wherein interracial encounters lead to unfavorable interracial outcomes (Trawalter et al., 2009). At the same time, contact involving the discussion of sociocultural elements (vs. traditional contact, i.e., a main effect of contact type) led to increased meta-stereotypes and decreased outgroup meta-perceptual knowledge. Though surprising, these findings may suggest that the positive impact of sociocultural contact (observed in Studies 1 and 2) may become less effect and non-significant when pitted against the known detrimental outcomes following novel interracial interactions (design of Study 3). A closer examination of these findings will be discussed below.

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Taken together, Studies 1-3 provide valuable insights into how and when embracing and celebrating group differences can improve interracial relations and benefit both majority and minoritized groups. The concept of sociocultural interracial contact, which allows for the sharing of and engagement with the social and cultural selves of marginalized groups, was introduced and tested with the goal of integrating two perspectives on race relations: interracial interaction research and the intergroup contact literature. An implication of these findings is that interracial contexts in which marginalized groups can share their sociocultural selves, and where individuals from other groups are invited to learn about them, may mutually benefit interracial outcomes while preventing the demobilizing effects that intergroup contact can have. However, in merging aspects of the intergroup contact and interracial interaction literature to examine sociocultural contact, several theoretical and methodological differences emerged across studies which may account for the inconsistent findings in Study 3. Given the differing patterns of results between Study 1 and 2 compared to Study 3, I now discuss the theoretical implications of these findings in depth.

Theoretical Implications

The current dissertation research provides several insights about the benefits of taking a selves-in-contact approach to interracial relations and how it can bridge gaps and integrate research following the interracial interaction and intergroup contact traditions. Specifically, Studies 1 and 2 provide initial evidence that, through various mechanisms, sharing (for Black people) and engaging with (for White people) Black Americans' sociocultural background is related to improve interracial outcomes. Not only so, but

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these studies suggest that there are mechanisms that are important for successful

sociocultural interracial contact, including those that can promote or hinder collective

action attitudes and behaviors among majority and minoritized groups. At the same time,

Study 3 contrasts these findings and helps draw important boundary conditions for

understanding the nature of sociocultural contact, especially as it may impact Black

Americans' attitudes. The following discussion will begin by reviewing analogous

findings between Studies 1 and 2. Following, I will outline important considerations that

may help explain Study 3 findings within the context of this entire body of work and the

diverse literatures involved therein.

The Mutually Benefitting Outcomes of Sociocultural Interracial Contact: Overview

Studies 1 and 2 suggest that there is a consistently positive relationship between

the quality of both Black and White participants' sociocultural interracial contact and

improved intrapsychic (e.g., affective prejudice), interpersonal (e.g., desire for future

contact), and systemic (e.g., collective action) outcomes. Importantly, Study 1 focuses on

how Black Americans feel when sharing meaningful aspects related to their sociocultural

background while Study 2 focuses on White Americans' experiences when allowed to

engage with Black Americans' sociocultural background. Thus, while the predictors in

Study 1 and Study 2 were conceptually different, they arise from the same type of

interracial interactions that are likely to engage, encourage, promote, and welcome the

full expression of Black Americans' distinct and racialized sociocultural selves. Black

American's sociocultural background was the focus of this dissertation because, due to

continued racial segregation, Whites Americans tend to have much less engagement with

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and knowledge Black American culture (Hall et al., 2019). The convergent findings of Studies 1 and 2 are important because they suggest that greater quality sociocultural contact is related to improved attitudes for both minoritized and majority group members. Furthermore, across Study 1 and 2, when both traditional types of contact quality and sociocultural contact quality are entered into the mediation models, sociocultural contact quality predicted a greater number of outcomes (in the expected direction) and produced stronger relationships, with some minor exceptions.

In particular, greater quality sociocultural contact was related to less affective prejudice, greater desire for future contact, collective action attitudes, and collective action behavioral intentions for both White and Black participants. Additionally, sociocultural contact quality was associated with greater racial solidarity, a measure of collective action developed for racially minoritized groups in particular, used in Study 1 (Glasford & Calcagno, 2012). While traditional contact quality also emerged as significantly related to intrapsychic and interpersonal outcomes, it was not related to any collective action outcomes (once sociocultural contact quality was accounted for). In other words, the positive relationship between greater quality sociocultural contact and collective action attitudes, intentions, and behaviors for both Black and White participants cannot be accounted for by mere (i.e., traditional) interracial contact quality. This is important because a recent critique of the intergroup contact literature is the demobilizing effects that it can have when intergroup contact that reduces majority group members' prejudice also decreased minoritized group's collective action engagement (Cakal et al., 2011; Kauff et al., 2016; Hässler et al., 2020). Therefore, incorporating a

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selves-in-contact approach to interracial relations may be one effective way of combating the potential demobilizing impact of intergroup contact on minoritized groups. These findings raise important implications for individuals who promote collective action.

Specifically, greater quality sociocultural interracial contact can benefit efforts that aim to engage those in power (e.g., White Americans), while fostering Black Americans' sense of group identification and solidarity. By sharing cultural experiences, individuals can feel a sense of connection and belonging with others who acknowledge, appreciate, and, at times, share similar experiences and histories. Sociocultural contact also has the potential to open majority group members' view on how meaningful racialized experiences, including collective action efforts, give meaning to, build community among, and provide safety for Black individuals in the US (Oyserman & Markus, 1993). This sense of connection can strengthen collective identity among Black Americans, which is an important predictor of collective action intentions and behaviors (Fominaya, 2010). Overall, this preliminary evidence suggests that fostering positive intergroup relationships through sociocultural contact can be an effective strategy for promoting greater understanding, solidarity, and for building more inclusive and equitable communities.

Moreover, sharing cultural experiences can also raise awareness and understanding of the unique challenges and struggles that Black people in American face, which can motivate both groups to take collective action to address these issues. Learning about others' experiences is at the heart of Allport's impetus for proposing the intergroup contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954). However, engaging with Black American's culture

may not only convey the challenges they face, but illustrate how cultural traditions can be a source of pride and strength (Adams & Markus, 2004; Brannon & Lin, 2021). Further, among White participants in Study 2, greater knowledge fully mediated the amount of donations they were willing to make to support racial justice, a tangible outcome that can inform organizations that seek to monetarily support racial justice. It may thus be important for those seeking to mobilize both majority and minoritized groups to promote opportunities for Black people to feel that others have gained knowledge about their cultural experiences. This could be done through supporting community organizations that promote cultural events and activities or creating policies that increase diversity and representation in workplaces and other public spaces. Overall, recognizing the importance of cultural experiences in promoting collective action can be a tool for policymakers and individuals seeking to promote collective action and social justice.

It must also be noted that the so-called demobilizing effects of interracial contact were not observed among any of the Black samples in Pilot 1, Study 1, or Study 3. This is important because it points to boundary conditions that must be considered when assessing the efficacy of intergroup contact as a mutually beneficial strategy for improving intergroup attitudes. As noted in Study 1 discussion, it is possible that the demobilizing effects which have been previously documented among minoritized groups (e.g., Reimer et al., 2017; Hässler et al., 2020) are specific to assessments of intergroup quantity rather than quality (as has been the focus of the above studies). Therefore, further research is needed to explore the nuanced dynamics of interracial contact among Black individuals. Understanding the demobilizing boundary conditions will allow for a

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more comprehensive understanding of intergroup contact as a tool for fostering positive

intergroup attitudes and inform the development of effective strategies for promoting

social harmony and equality. Further, understanding the interplay between quantity and

quality of intergroup contact will shed light on the underlying mechanisms driving the

observed effects, providing valuable insights for future interventions aimed at reducing

prejudice and promoting collective action.

The Mutually Benefitting Effects of Sociocultural Interracial Contact: Mechanisms

Across both racial groups, there were also some similarities in the mediators that

helped explain the relationship between sociocultural contact quality and improved

interracial outcomes, mediators that align with the larger intergroup contact literature

(Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008). While intergroup anxiety, (meta-) empathy, and outgroup

(meta-) knowledge each arose as significant mediators explaining different outcomes,

there were some conceptual consistencies across Study 1 and Study 2. Mainly, the

relationship between sociocultural contact quality and reduced affective prejudice was

mediated by intergroup anxiety and outgroup (meta-) empathy. For both groups,

decreased intergroup anxiety and greater (meta-) empathy were associated with decreased

affective prejudice. Thus, for Black Americans, greater quality sociocultural contact is

related to their feelings of less apprehensive about interracial interactions and also greater

beliefs that their interracial partners will understand their emotions and experiences.

Likewise, for White Americans, greater quality sociocultural contact is associated with

less apprehension about interracial interactions and greater understanding of the emotions

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and experiences of Black Americans. These experiences, in turn, are associated with less affective prejudice for both Black and White Americans.

Additionally, the relationship between desire for future interracial contact and donations participants were willing to make to support racial justice were mediated by outgroup meta-perceptual knowledge (for Black Americans) and outgroup knowledge (for White Americans). In other words, greater sociocultural contact quality was related to increased self-reported knowledge about Black Americans' cultural background (among White Americans), and greater beliefs, among Black Americans, that White Americans have gained knowledge about their culture (i.e., meta-perceptual outgroup knowledge). This, in turn, was related to increased desire for future interracial contact as well as monetary donations that both Black and White participants were willing to make. This aligns with the larger intergroup contact literature which suggests that anxiety, empathy, and knowledge are key mediators between intergroup contact and improved outgroup attitudes. However, these findings extend the intergroup literature by illustrating the mediating role of minoritized group members' beliefs about the knowledge others have gained. Further, it showcases the importance of cultural knowledge in explaining the link between sociocultural contact quality and improved interracial attitudes as well as monetary donations. These findings have the potential to further inform theories related to interracial relations in at least three ways.

First, the analogous findings between Studies 1 and 2 highlight some of the most fertile ground upon which mutually-benefitting interracial contact strategies can flourish. Specifically, being able to devise interracial contact strategies that targets critical

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mediators for both majority and minoritized group members (e.g., decreased intergroup anxiety, increased (meta-) empathy, and increased (meta-) knowledge) can be a resource-efficient strategy while at the same time being optimally benefitting. While many previous interracial contact strategies likely aim to target intergroup anxiety toward both groups, it will take a more concerted effort to target meta-empathy and meta-knowledge for racially minorized groups. Not only will one need to factor in the degree to which White Americans develop empathy toward and gain knowledge about Black Americans, but successful interracial interventions will need to ensure that majority group members' feelings and knowledge are authentically communicated to their minoritized partners. Failing to do so may limit theorists, researchers, and interventionists' ability to take full advantage of the influence that quality sociocultural contact can have on interracial outcomes. It should be noted that this relational and dual-focused approach toward interracial relations has long been advocated for among interracial interaction researchers (Shelton & Richeson, 2006). Thus, exploring mediators that can benefit both minoritized and majority group members can be one effective way of more fully integrating interracial interaction and intergroup contact research and theorizing.

Second, parallel findings across Studies 1 and 2 provide evidence for the mediating role that certain types of outgroup (meta-) knowledge can have on interracial-related attitudes. Outgroup knowledge has often been found to be a weak mediator within the larger intergroup contact literature (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008), but this past body of work has largely focused on individual-level elements related to an outgroup member (e.g., knowledge about another person likes and attributes; Pettigrew et al., 2011). This

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dissertation, however, focuses on sociocultural-level elements related to an outgroup

member (e.g., knowledge about a groups' history, traditions; Zagefka et al., 2017). Thus,

this research has the potential to inform theoretical development on the types of

knowledge (e.g., interpersonal, sociocultural) which may be more likely to mediate the

relationship between contact and interracial outcomes. Sociocultural knowledge is likely

a critical mediator because it may be one effective way for understanding the success of

cross-cultural dialogue, aligning more with Allport's idea of "knowledge-giving" contact

(Allport, 1954). Further, the mediating role of (sociocultural) knowledge sheds light into

the benefits of learning about the sociocultural selves of minoritized group members to

promote collective action aimed at dismantling systemic forms of oppression.

The third and last notable theoretical implication of the similar findings between

Study 1 and 2 is the potential sociocultural contact can have on collective action

behaviors. While collective action has only recently been the focus of intergroup contact

theorists and researchers, there is evidence to suggest that majority group member's

collective action attitudes improve following intergroup contact (Cakal et al., 2011;

Tausch et al., 2015). This was replicated in Study 2, wherein, among other collective

action related findings, greater quality sociocultural contact was associated with greater

monetary donations, a relationship partially mediated by outgroup knowledge. However,

in contrast to intergroup contact which can sometimes demobilize minoritized group

members (Hässler et al., 2020; Wright & Lubensky, 2009), greater sociocultural contact

quality was found to increase Black Americans feelings of racial solidarity, attitudes

toward, intentions to engage in, and amount donated toward collective action efforts.

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Similar to White Americans, the relationship between sociocultural contact and monetary donations for Black Americans was fully mediated by meta-perceptual outgroup knowledge. Thus, perceptions that majority outgroup members have gained critical and socioculturally-based knowledge about the minoritized group is important for preserving and increasing both Black and White individuals' collective action behaviors.

Thus, incorporating the sociocultural selves of Black Americans into interracial contact theorizing may be one way to remedy the unintended demobilizing effects that intergroup contact can have on racially minoritized groups. This may be the case because greater knowledge about Black/African Americans may indicate greater understanding of social and race-based inequities. If Black Americans believe that Whites have greater knowledge and awareness of racial disparities, for example, then this can help elevate the need for collective action to remedy and undo systemic forms of social disadvantage. It is notable, however, that the mediating role of outgroup meta-knowledge only emerged for Black participants' donations (vs. solidarity, attitudes, intentions). Given the direct and consistent relationships between sociocultural contact quality and Black Americans' solidarity, collective action attitudes, and collective action intentions, however, it is likely that there are other mediators that would further bolster the models' explanatory power demonstrated in Study 1. While these theoretical advances are important, there are also important limitations related to how interracial interaction and intergroup contact research can be successfully integrated.

The Limits of Sociocultural Contact

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While these studies begin to reveal the impact that sociocultural contact can have on interracial attitudes, the unexpected findings of Study 3 need to be considered within the context of the theoretical frameworks that this dissertation attempts to integrate. Discrepant findings between Studies 1 and 2 with Study 3 provide important insights into the degree to which intergroup contact and interracial interaction research can be theoretically and empirically integrated. At the heart of these two theoretical frameworks is an emphasis on social identity and how those identities shape intergroup relations (Pettigrew et al., 2011; Shelton & Richeson, 2006). However, each framework has approached questions surrounding identity and interracial relations from different perspectives. For example, findings from the interracial interaction literature have largely focused on individual-level factors that may facilitate or hinder positive intergroup contact (meta-stereotypes, motivation to disprove stereotypes), while intergroup contact research tends to provide a broader understanding of the social psychological processes that underlie intergroup relations (social identity, social categorization). There are important theoretical and methodological consequences of these approaches that were highlighted in the introduction of this dissertation, but some are worth noting now.

Specifically, the cross-sectional nature of Studies 1 and 2 align more with intergroup contact research while the experimental nature of Study 3 follows an approach more common among interracial interaction researchers. The difference in findings between the correlational interracial contact studies (Studies 1 and 2) and the experimental imagined intergroup contact study (Study 3) may be explained by the fact that these studies focus on different aspects of intergroup relations. The correlational

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studies, which found results generally consistent with intergroup contact theory, examined the relationship between ecologically valid interracial contact and intergroup attitudes. This study provides support for the idea that positive intergroup contact can lead to improved intergroup attitudes and reduced prejudice, in line with intergroup contact theory. On the other hand, the experimental study, which found results consistent with interracial interaction research, examined the effect of contrived imagined intergroup contact on intergroup attitudes. This study highlights the importance of individual-level factors, such as affective reactions to intergroup contact (e.g., intergroup anxiety) and cognitive processes (e.g., meta-stereotypes) related to intergroup perceptions, which are emphasized in the interracial interaction literature. Nevertheless, this interpretation can give greater insights into the process through which sociocultural contact should be further examined.

Given theoretical differences between intergroup contact and interracial interaction research, sociocultural contact may be most impactful when it emerges organically, repeatedly, and in the real world. Sociocultural contact may necessitate the sharing of culturally meaningful information to an outgroup member, and thus, may be difficult to imagine when meeting a stranger. Even if one is able to conjure up such an interracial encounter, it may be difficult to induce the effects observed from more natural and in-person experiences when sharing aspects of one's culture with others. As noted in the introduction, culture is often understood, transmitted, shared, and experienced implicitly (Adams & Markus, 2004). For example, participating in a Juneteenth BBQ with a Black friend, teaching a White family member how to prepare soul food, or

visiting and learning about slave plantations may not consciously be understood as engaging with another person's sociocultural self. Nevertheless, these types of experiences have the potential to convey important elements, thoughts, and ways of being related to the Black/African American experience and how those experiences inform the self. Therefore, attempting to create a short imagined interracial contact situation may only partially be able to produce the outcomes observed in more naturalistic settings. Even with these considerations in mind, however, it is important to note the degree to which Study 3 differs from previous imagined intergroup contact research.

While imagined intergroup contact work has been successful at reducing intergroup prejudice, it may be prone to some of the same limits regarding the larger intergroup contact literature. Specifically, research conducted within the imagined intergroup contact tradition has seldom focused on interracial interactions in the US. A meta-analytic test of imagined intergroup contact strategies demonstrated that of the 71 independent tests of imagined contact effects tested within the literature, only 6 were specifically targeted at race, and only 2 were in the US context, none of which have been peer reviewed yet (as of Miles & Crisp, 2014). This dearth in research suggests that the field has more theoretical ground to cover to better understand the effects of intergroup contact, and imagined contact by extension, across racial groups. Thus, while a potential cost-effective alternative to in-person interracial contact, there may be limits to the effectiveness of imagined contact on racial relations that have a long history of tension, misunderstanding, and active erasure. Together, the current research suggests that both intergroup contact and interracial interactions play important roles in shaping intergroup

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relations. Thus, a comprehensive understanding of these complex phenomena requires consideration of both individual-level and group-level factors.

Limitations

While thoroughly informative, this work has a few important limitations that must be noted. First and foremost, in efforts to synthesize and integrate related but distinct literatures (e.g., interracial interaction, intergroup contact, cultural psychological perspectives on the self), there are rich insights from each body of work that could not be incorporated due to time, space, resources, or for the sake of parsimony. For example, interracial interaction research has highlighted important individual-level characteristics, like Whites' internal or external motivation to be non-prejudice (Plant & Devine, 1998) or Blacks' suspicion of Whites' motives when acting non-prejudicially (Major et al., 2016), that may play a moderating role in the degree to which greater quality sociocultural contact may influence interracial outcomes. Likewise, the intergroup contact literature has longed pointed to contact conditions like equal status, common goals, cooperation, and institutional support that are hypothesized to be critical for successful intergroup contact (Imperato et al., 2021) and may likewise impact sociocultural contact dynamics. Further, insights about the reciprocal nature of the sociocultural self suggest that one's interracial interactions are not only informed by, but also inform, the cultural world of those who engage in them. Thus, a sociocultural perspective would explore how the exchange of ideas, customs, and values between interracial partners can shape the sociocultural landscape in which those interactions occur. While not exhaustive, this short list serves as an example of the many important

loose threads that make up the rich tapestry of ideas and theories which have only begun

to be integrated in this dissertation.

Another limitation involves the narrow focus on Black and White relations in the

US. This focus allows for a deep exploration of the historical and contemporary dynamics

of race relations in a US context, but it excludes sociocultural dynamics that are part of

other interracial relations. Given that the sociocultural contexts of Asian, Latino, and

Indigenous people in the US are different than that of Black Americans, this study

presents only partial insights into how the sociocultural self can impact interracial

relations. Likewise, race relations in other countries and regions may provide additional

insights that are not captured in this work. Importantly, and applicable to all race-

relations, there is no clear taxonomy for how to understand racial groups' sociocultural

backgrounds. Study 1 and 2 begin to paint a picture of how Black and White individuals,

respectively, have come to understand Black American's sociocultural background, but it

is unlikely that these ways of categorizing and understanding the sociocultural self will

directly translate to other racially minoritized groups in the US. Thus, while this work

provides a nuanced analysis of sociocultural relations between Black and White

Americans, the findings should be understood as only one part of a larger story about

interracial dynamics.

A related limitation involves the small amount of intergroup contact and

interracial interaction research that centers the sociocultural experiences of minoritized

groups like Black Americans. In other words, much of the theoretical impetus behind this

work is based on research which has been conducted primarily on White/European

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populations. Mediators like meta-perceptual empathy and meta-perceptual knowledge, for example, continue to center the mechanisms of intergroup contact on Whites' beliefs and experiences (albeit, as perceived by Black Americans). To fully understand the role that sociocultural contact may play in explaining Black Americans' attitudes and collective action behaviors, it will be important to take a novel approach to the intergroup contact theory. Specifically, future work can begin to understand the unique experiences that minoritized groups' have which may help explain the mechanisms that contribute to their intergroup contact outcomes. Some of the mediators may include feelings of empowerment, confidence, and connectedness to the outgroup, which were not accounted for in these dissertation studies. Consequently, this work is limited in that it did not assess mediators based on minoritized group members' values (e.g., more interdependent elements like connectedness; Brannon et al., 2015) but rather adapted mediators derived from research on majority group members' experiences.

On a more procedural level, there are important limitations related to the design of the studies. For example, the indirect effects observed in Study 1 should be cautiously interpreted due to potential issues with memory check questions. While the post hoc and unplanned method of ascertaining eligible participants was consistent with data handling plans that were pre-registered, it does differ from participants closed-ended responses in which participants responded "Black/African American" as opposed to the expected "White/European American." While our open-ended memory check strategy attempted to circumvent this problem, it is an issue that will have to be resolved with future research. Similarly, it is unclear why Study 2 findings suggest that sociocultural contact quality is

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related to less affective prejudice, but not less anti-Black prejudice. These findings may suggest that interracial contact generally, and sociocultural contact in particular, may influence outgroup attitudes at the affective level only. Given that anti-Black prejudice deals with the more cognitive and behavioral attitudinal components, it is important to address how and why prejudice may be differentially impacted by sociocultural contact experiences. It should be noted, however, that cognitive measures of prejudice like anti-Black prejudice have been treated as moderators among interracial interaction researchers (Finchilescu, 2010; Shelton & Richeson, 2006).

Another notable limitation involves the comparison condition used in Study 3. In this experimental study, participants in the sociocultural contact condition read about, thought about, wrote about, and later imagined sharing with their partner important elements about their sociocultural background. In contrast, participants in the "traditional" imagined contact condition simply imagined a favorable interaction with another person, without any sociocultural prompt reading, writing tasks, or instructions about the content of their interaction. While this comparison is useful for determining the impact of imagined sociocultural contact, the traditional contact conditions differed in numerous ways. First, the sociocultural prompt requires more reading comprehension and writing engagement. Second, participants spent slightly longer in the sociocultural contact condition, compared to the traditional contact condition. Granted that there were only two main effects observed by contact type (sociocultural contact led to greater meta-stereotypes, less meta-perceptual knowledge). Nevertheless, these limitations will be important as follow-ups to Study 3 are theoretical and methodologically considered. In

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light of these limitations, this work has numerous and rich avenues for future development.

Future Directions

There are a number of exciting future directions that I plan on exploring as I apply a selves-in-contact approach to future research. First, it will be important to understand the qualitative data that was gathered across studies. Specifically, this data can be used to understand how Black individuals think about their own sociocultural background, but also how White individuals personally experience Black's culture. This will be important to examine because it can alert future research into possible discrepancies between how Black Americans introspect about their own sociocultural heritage and how White individuals (mis)perceive it. Misalignment between what Black Americans consider important elements of their cultural background and what White Americans are more readily exposed to may be an important factor that contributes to many of the racial divides that continue to plague the US. Additionally, these responses can help inform intergroup contact strategies that aim to give voice to the experience of minoritized groups, in this case, Black Americans. By understanding the sociocultural aspects that Black Americans are most open to sharing with White Americans researchers can develop intergroup contact strategies that are considerate and respectful and thus beneficial for both groups.

Future research will also need to examine how sociocultural contact fits into recent research outlining differential outcomes depending on the valance of the intergroup contact situation. Specifically, research finds that negative and positive

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interracial contact impacts White (Kotzur & Wagner, 2021) and Black Americans' (Hayward et al., 2018) in distinct ways. This past work suggests that positive contact is more common and is likely to lead to favorable interracial outcomes relative to negative contact, which is less common but relatively more detrimental to outgroup attitudes (Graf et al., 2014). In this context, negative contact refers to interactions in which one is bothered, antagonized, or otherwise made to feel inferior amidst an intergroup contact situation (Barlow et al., 2012; Hayward et al., 2017). I proposed that there are characteristics of sociocultural contact that place it in a more nuanced position beyond the mere negative-positive binary.

While many sociocultural contact experiences are likely positive, there are also experiences that, while not negative (as used in the intergroup contact literature) are still prone to make others, particularly majority group members, uncomfortable. In this context, I use the word "uncomfortable" (rather than negative) to describe contact that is not "comfortable, relaxed, and positive," (Study 3 instructions) but also does not necessarily intend to create antagonism between individuals. For example, discussing the relation between slavery and present-day discrimination, sharing family values that derive from racial adversity, or discussing why cultural appropriation may be viewed as a way to devalue, rather than appreciate, another's culture. While the content of these types of interactions may not be positive (and may even arouse negative feelings and discomfort), these interactions may nevertheless be able to communicate aspects of Black/African American's culture in such a way that others can have a transformative experience as they develop empathy while Black individuals feel valued and listened to.

It is likely that individual difference measures will moderate majority group members' receptiveness to these types of contact situation. However, even when faced with group threat and the potential for discrimination, intergroup contact strategies can produce prejudice-reduction outcomes (Van Assche et al., 2023). Thus, future research will need to examine how sociocultural contact fits within the dynamics of positive and negative contact.

To address some of the limitations related to Study 3, future work will need to address confounding variables that may enhance or hamper the impact that sociocultural contact has on Black Americans' attitudes and behaviors. For example, it is possible that simply reflecting about one's cultural heritage and social background prior to an imagined contact situation can induce the hypothesized outcomes. Alternatively, sharing aspects of any racially minoritized group (not just one's own) may produce positive interracial experiences if one feels identified with a superordinate identity related to racialized groups generally (Dovidio et al., 2007). At the same time, any information that causes one to feel individualized in the context of interracial contact may positively impact intergroup attitudes- whether it is related to one's sociocultural background or not. Lastly, future work will need to explore the extent to which imagined sociocultural contact extends to other forms of intergroup contact like computer-mediated contact and in-person interactions. As noted above, more immersive interpersonal interactions may be necessary for one to become more fully engaged in the sociocultural background of an outgroup member, and thus benefit from sociocultural contact.

Relatedly, future work can explore the consequences of selves-in-contact approach to interracial relations wherein one is either personally reaffirmed or not. While interracial interaction research has more thoughtfully considered the target's perspective (Shelton & Richeson, 2006), intergroup contact research, by in large, has not taken this approach. However, the positive outcomes associated with sociocultural contact are likely to be affected by whether one feels that their culture is explicitly valued, respected, and understood. Failure to communicate this may backfire in interracial contact settings if minoritized individuals feel that, upon sharing important aspects of their culture, they are misunderstood, misrepresented, disrespected or devalued (cf. Bergsieker et al., 2010). Conversely, future work can explore strategies that White individuals can take to authentically and safely communicate that they acknowledge, value, respect, and accept minoritized group members' culture and perspectives. Being able to effectively communicate interest in another's sociocultural background without relying on stereotypes and flawed assumptions may not be a natural interracial contact strategy that White Americans are familiar with due to lack of interracial contact (Hall et al., 2019). Nevertheless, future work can explore ways in which White Americans can learn to communicate acceptance and appreciation for a minoritized racial group's sociocultural background.

Conclusion

A selves-in-contact approach to interracial interactions affirms that one's sense of identity is derived from and informed by the sociocultural background in which it resides, which has implications for people's experiences during interracial encounters (Brannon et

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al., 2017; Markus & Kitayama, 2010; Taylor et al., 2019). Despite this, theoretical and empirical integrations about how the sociocultural self is likely to impact interracial dynamics are limited. Building upon the selves-in-contact approach proposed by Brannon and colleagues (2017), this dissertation tests the mutually beneficial impact of sociocultural interracial contact on interracial-related outcomes. In doing so, I attempt to integrate and contextualize some of the discrepant findings found across the interracial interaction literature and intergroup contact research, first theoretically and then empirically. Three pilot studies and two main studies produce strong correlational evidence for the unique benefits that incorporating insights about Black Americans' sociocultural selves can have on interracial outcomes and collective action attitudes among Black and White individuals in the US. A final experimental study examining sociocultural (vs. traditional) interracial (vs. intraracial) contact experiences points to limitations and important considerations that must be taken into account as this novel work moves forward. While much work on interracial dynamics focuses on groups' differences, these findings underscore the importance of meaningfully recognizing, accepting, and celebrating the diversity of cultural experiences that individuals bring to interracial encounters.

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Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Pilot 1 Variables

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4
1. Traditional contact quality[a]	4.74	0.79	–			
2. Sociocultural contact quality[a]	3.45	0.79	.36*	–		
3. Feeling thermometer[b]	64.10	25.11	.67**	.42**	–	
4. Collective action attitudes	5.36	1.21	.12	.20	.17	–
5. Collective action behaviors	4.41	1.55	-.15	-.02	-.02*	.39*

Note. N = 60; *p* < .05, **p* < .001; Unless otherwise noted, item scales range from 1-7.

[a] Scale from 1-5

[b] scale from 1-100

Table 2

Summary of Pilot 1 Hierarchical Regression for Focal Outcome Variables

Predictors	Feeling Thermometer				Collective Action Attitudes				Collective Action Behaviors			
	b	SE	R^2	ΔR^2	b	SE	R^2	ΔR^2	b	SE	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1			.45	.45**			.01	.01			.02	.02
Traditional contact quality	21.20**	3.11			.18	.20			-.29	.26		
Step 2			.48	.04			.04	.03			.02	.001
Traditional contact quality	18.87**	3.25			.09	.21			-.31	.28		
Sociocultural contact quality	6.46*	3.26			.27	.21			.07	.28		

Note. $N = 60$; *$p < .05$, **$p < .001$

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Table 3

Examples of Study 1 Open-ended Sociocultural Experiences

Sociocultural category	Percent of responses	Example responses
Food	31.20%	Eating soul food and other black cultural cuisine; …many of the foods have a special history with black culture which we share with both white and black people
Holidays	13.99%	The way my family celebrates New Years Eve and New Years Day… We eat black eye peas and rice also known as hop 'n John and Collard greens with baked chicken… Juneteenth celebration at a park by the river… came and experienced black entertainment, food, and culture.
Music and Dance	12.54%	I have shared the love of Black musicians, such as Prince, with White people; …add insight to a White/European musician's understanding of certain historical facts about some of the music we were playing created by Black musicians… Dancing to music is a shared custom.
Fashion	8.45%	I had my hair braided in a "protective" style (something typically worn by black women to protect our hair from breakage, dryness, etc.). I explain how it was styled, what a protective style was, and its purpose.
Worship	8.16%	I invited a couple of friends to attend my church. It was a more traditional kind of Black Baptist church, which carried out traditional activities, such as the style of music that was played, the type of sermon that was given, and they also shared in a traditional Sunday dinner with the rest of the congregation.
History	4.66%	When my white college roommate came home with me for the holidays, she had a chance to taste and learn the history behind certain cultural foods that my family served; I helped organized a black history presentation at the local middle school.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study 1 Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1.Contact quality	4.65	1.10	–												
2.Self-disclosure contact	5.24	1.14	.41**	–											
3 Sociocultural contact quality	4.92	1.18	.60**	.49**	–										
4.Intergroup anxiety	3.53	1.05	-.69**	-.40**	-.55**	–									
5.Meta-stereotypes	4.30	1.38	-.34**	-.12	-.26**	.39**	–								
6.Meta-Empathy	3.43	1.18	.47**	.22**	.39**	-.33**	-.47**	–							
7.Meta-perceptual knowledge	3.32	1.47	.35**	.33**	.33**	-.26**	-.38**	.58**	–						
8. Affective prejudice[a]	59.04	23.26	.63**	.38**	.61**	-.59**	-.35**	.55**	.46**	–					
9. Desire for contact	4.64	1.41	.62**	.46**	.66**	-.52**	-.30**	.53**	.46**	.71**	–				
10. Collective action solidarity	5.99	0.04	.15*	.15*	.24**	-.15*	.10	-.08	-.01	.06	.19**	–			
11. Collective action attitudes	5.79	0.97	.11	.17*	.27**	-.14*	.08	-.07	-.02	.08	.25**	.53**	–		
12. Collective action intentions	5.10	1.33	-.03	.11	.13*	.05	.19**	-.14*	-.13*	-.07	.07	.27**	.43**	–	
13. Characters written[b]	15.14	28.88	-.05	.10	-.07	.06	.12*	-.09	.02	-.16*	-.08	.09	.09	.15*	–
14. Total money donated[c]	18.65	15.65	.12*	.06	.05	.01	.07	.15*	.20†	.09	.18*	.04	.17*	.32**	.08

Note. $N = 290$; *p < .05, **p < .001; Unless otherwise noted, item scales range from 1-7.

[a] Scale from 0-100

[b] unbounded upper limit

[c] scale from 0-50

Table 5

Study 1 Direct and Indirect Effects of Mediation Model Predicting Interracial Attitudes

	Affective prejudice toward Whites				Desire for future contact				
R^2	.58					.58			
			Bootstrapped 95% CI					Bootstrapped 95% CI	
	b	SE	Lower	Upper		*b*	SE	Lower	Upper
Direct effect- predictors									
Self-disclosure	0.32	0.93	-1.51	2.16		**0.14***	0.06	0.03	0.25
Traditional contact	**3.46***	1.27	0.96	5.97		**0.26****	0.08	0.11	0.41
Sociocultural contact	**4.81****	1.05	2.76	6.88		**0.40****	0.06	0.28	0.53
Direct effect- mediators									
Intergroup anxiety	**-5.25****	1.27	-7.75	-2.76		-.09	0.08	-0.24	0.07
Meta-stereotypes	-0.27	0.78	-1.26	1.81		0.04	0.05	-0.05	0.14
Meta-empathy	**4.51****	1.04	2.46	6.57		**0.24****	0.06	0.11	0.36
Meta-knowledge	**2.08***	0.77	0.57	3.59		**0.13***	0.05	0.04	0.22
Indirect effect through									
Intergroup anxiety	**0.86**	0.41	0.19	1.79		0.01	0.01	-0.01	0.05
Meta-stereotypes	-0.04	0.13	-0.31	0.27		-0.01	0.01	-0.02	0.01
Meta-empathy	**0.80**	0.38	0.18	1.66		**0.04**	0.02	0.01	0.09
Meta-knowledge	**0.45**	0.27	0.04	1.10		**0.03**	0.02	0.01	0.07

Note. N = 290. * p < .05, ** p < .001; significant effects in bolded text; bootstrapped indirect effect estimates do not contain p-values.

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Table 6

Study 1 Direct and Indirect Effects of Mediation Model Predicting Collective Action Attitudes

	Collective action solidarity				Collective action attitudes			
R^2	.11		Bootstrapped 95% CI		.12		Bootstrapped 95% CI	
	b	SE	Lower	Upper	b	SE	Lower	Upper
Direct effect- predictors								
Self-disclosure	0.02	0.05	-0.09	0.13	0.05	0.06	-0.06	0.16
Traditional contact	0.06	0.05	-0.09	0.20	-0.02	0.08	-0.17	0.13
Sociocultural contact	**0.21****	0.06	0.09	0.33	**0.26****	0.06	0.13	0.38
Direct effect- mediators								
Intergroup anxiety	-0.05	0.07	-0.20	0.09	-0.06	0.08	-0.21	0.09
Meta-stereotypes	**0.10***	0.05	0.01	0.19	0.07	0.05	-0.02	0.16
Meta-empathy	**-0.15***	0.06	-0.27	-0.03	**-0.13***	0.06	-0.25	-0.01
Meta-knowledge	0.02	0.05	-0.07	0.11	-0.01	0.05	-0.10	-.08
Indirect effect through								
Intergroup anxiety	0.01	0.01	-0.01	0.04	0.01	0.01	-0.02	0.04
Meta-stereotypes	-0.01	0.01	-0.04	0.01	-0.01	0.01	-0.03	0.01
Meta-empathy	**-0.03**	0.02	-0.07	0.01	-0.02	0.01	-0.05	0.01
Meta-knowledge	0.01	0.01	-0.01	0.03	-0.01	0.01	-0.03	0.02

*Note. N = 290. * p < .05, ** p < .001; significant effects in bolded text; bootstrapped indirect effect estimates do not contain p-values.*

Table 7

Study 1 Direct and Indirect Effects of Mediation Model Predicting Collective Action Intentions and Behaviors

	Collective action intentions				Donations				Characters written			
R^2	.10				.09				.11			
	b	SE	Bootstrapped 95% CI		b	SE	Bootstrapped 95% CI		b	SE	Bootstrapped 95% CI	
			Lower	Upper			Lower	Upper			Lower	Upper
Direct effect- predictors												
Self-disclosure	0.11	0.08	-0.04	0.26	0.31	0.93	-1.57	2.05	**3.71***	1.26	1.39	6.40
Traditional contact	-0.03	0.11	-0.23	0.18	2.51	1.29	-0.01	5.05	0.58	0.56	-2.73	3.70
Sociocultural contact	**0.29***	0.09	0.12	0.46	-0.59	0.99	-2.57	1.38	**-2.82***	1.39	-5.80	-0.40
Direct effect- mediators												
Intergroup anxiety	0.13	0.11	-0.08	0.34	1.91	1.25	-0.56	4.45	-0.05	1.71	-3.35	3.26
Meta-stereotypes	**0.14***	0.07	0.01	0.27	**2.10***	0.74	0.66	3.61	1.93	1.20	-0.45	4.30
Meta-empathy	-0.11	0.09	-0.28	0.06	1.22	1.00	-0.74	3.14	-1.99	1.48	-4.89	0.87
Meta-knowledge	-0.09	0.06	-0.21	0.04	**2.07***	1.29	0.67	3.55	1.60	0.96	-0.25	3.57
Indirect effect through												
Intergroup anxiety	-0.02	0.02	-0.07	0.01	-0.31	0.28	-1.00	0.07	0.01	0.30	-0.53	0.71
Meta-stereotypes	-0.02	0.02	-0.06	0.01	-0.28	0.20	-0.73	0.02	-0.26	0.26	-0.94	0.06
Meta-empathy	-0.02	0.02	-0.06	0.02	0.22	0.23	-0.12	0.79	-0.35	0.31	-1.07	0.17
Meta-knowledge	-0.02	0.02	-0.06	0.01	**0.45**	0.25	0.06	1.06	0.35	0.26	-0.06	0.99

*Note. N = 290. * p <.05, ** p <.001; significant effects in bolded text; bootstrapped indirect effect estimates do not contain p-values.*

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Pilot 3 Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Overall sociocultural engagement [a]	5.42	1.94	—							
2. Quantity of Sociocultural contact [b]	2.48	0.72	.55***	—						
3. Quality of Sociocultural contact	5.71	0.84	.21*	.13	—					
4. Quantity of Traditional Contact [b]	2.60	0.72	.40***	.77***	.08	—				
5. Quality of Traditional Contact	5.67	0.76	.12	.04	.63***	.10	—			
6. Anti-black prejudice [c]	2.86	0.94	-.17	-.01	-.43***	.00	-.42***	—		
7. Collective action attitudes	5.20	1.03	.20*	.15	.49***	.07	.47***	-.63***	—	
8. Collective action behaviors	5.17	1.27	.211*	.14	.46***	.04	.41***	-.69***	.79***	—

Note. N = 111; *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p< .001; Unless otherwise noted, item scales range from 1-7.

a Scale from 1-10

b scale from 1-5

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Table 9

Summary of Pilot 3 Hierarchical Regression for Variables Predicting Anti-Black

Prejudice

Variable	β	SE	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1			.18	.18***
Traditional contact quantity	.03	.12		
Traditional contact quality	-.42***	.11		
Step 2			.235	.059*
Traditional contact quantity	.04	.18		
Traditional contact quality	-.25*	.14		
Overall Sociocultural contact	-.15	.05		
Sociocultural contact quantity	.08	.19		
Sociocultural contact quality	-.25*	.13		

Note. $N = 112$; *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

Table 10

Summary of Pilot 3 Hierarchical Regression for Variables Predicting Collective Action

Attitudes

Variable	β	SE	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1			.225	.225***
Traditional contact quantity	.03	.12		
Traditional contact quality	.47***	.12		
Step 2			.304	.078*
Traditional contact quantity	-.14	.19		
Traditional contact quality	.30**	.14		
Overall Sociocultural contact	.06	.05		
Sociocultural contact quantity	.18	.20		
Sociocultural contact quality	.27*	.13		

Note. $N = 112$; *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

Table 11

Summary of Pilot 3 Hierarchical Regression for Variables Predicting Collective Action

Behaviors

Variable	β	SE	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1			.165	.165 ***
Traditional contact quantity	.01	.16		
Traditional contact quality	.41***	.15		
Step 2			.260	.095**
Traditional contact quantity	-.18	.24		
Traditional contact quality	.22*	.18		
Overall Sociocultural contact	.09	.07		
Sociocultural contact quantity	.18	.26		
Sociocultural contact quality	.29*	.17		

*Note. N = 111; *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p< .001*

Table 12

Examples of Study 2 Open-ended Sociocultural Experiences

Sociocultural category	Percent of responses	Example responses
Food	25.56%	I was invited to a barbeque one time… They introduced me and fed me soul food which was delicious. I learned that black people love getting together as a family and having barbeques; I lived in Charleston and worked with women who shared many traditional Gullah food with me.
History	18.85%	I have had discussions with African Americans regarding the history and experiences of Black people; I took a walking tour of a local town - that had housed the freed slaves from the Amistad ship part of the underground railroad.
Music and Dance	12.14%	Several years ago, I went to a Jazz Festival in New Orleans. It was culturally diverse but the majority of the people there were Black, African Americans; Went to John Brown's farm and learned about the thriving live music scene that lived there in the mid-1900s as a part of the Chitlin Circuit of underground black musicians
Worship	10.86%	I have attended church with Blacks/African Americans and really enjoyed their hospitality, heart-felt devotion and expressions.
Holidays	10.54%	I celebrated kwanza with an African American family; A person I met talked with me about Kwanzaa. They told me the candles represent things like unity and responsibility. I think it's lovely.
Travel	4.15%	I have traveled to Jamaica and seen and experienced black culture; I have visited the Gullah people in coastal South Carolina. They are the remaining Black/African Americans from slavery. We were able to visit one of their villages and interact with them to learn more about their culture and history. We watched them prepare food and weave baskets.

Table 13

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study 2 Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1.Contact quality	5.30	1.10	—												
2.Historicist Thinking	5.25	1.52	.36**	—											
3 Sociocultural contact quality	5.27	1.09	.59**	.29**	—										
4.Intergroup anxiety	2.82	1.04	-.73**	-.16*	-.51**	—									
5.Meta-stereotypes	4.94	1.46	-.38**	-.08	-.21*	.48**	—								
6.Empathy	4.87	0.96	.48**	.38**	.42**	-.45**	-.19*	—							
7.Outgroup knowledge	5.15	1.18	.22**	-.12	.30**	-.27**	-.03	.23**	—						
8. Affective prejudice[a]	74.46	22.12	.60**	.38**	.57**	-.60**	-.26**	.50**	.21**	—					
9. Anti-Black prejudice	3.21	1.32	-.58**	-.58**	-.36**	.46**	.30**	-.39**	.02	-.53**	—				
10. Desire for contact	5.41	1.25	.66**	.42**	.59**	-.57**	-.23**	.50**	.28**	.65**	-.50**	—			
11. Collective action attitudes	5.57	1.34	.48**	.69**	.46**	-.38**	-.22**	.49**	.01	.53**	-.64**	.61**	—		
12. Collective action intentions	4.20	1.70	.31**	.58**	.48**	-.29**	-.10	.45**	.19*	.43**	-.56**	.55**	.72**	—	
13. Characters written[b]	97.76	157.05	.02	-.11	.13*	-.10	.01	.08	.10	.02	.02	.07	.07	.00	—
14. Total money donated[c]	16.28	17.92	.11	.30**	.30**	-.08	.01	.16*	.22**	.24**	-.16*	.36**	.32**	.48**	.14

Note. N = 232; *p < .05, ** p < .001. Unless otherwise noted, item scales range from 1-7.

[a] Scale from 0-100

[b] unbounded upper limit

[c] scale from 0-50

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Table 14

Study 2 Direct and Indirect Effects of Mediation Model Predicting Interracial Attitudes

R^2	Anti-Black prejudice				Affective prejudice toward Blacks				Desire for future contact			
	.52				.52				.56			
			Bootstrapped 95% CI				Bootstrapped 95% CI				Bootstrapped 95% CI	
	b	SE	Lower	Upper	b	SE	Lower	Upper	b	SE	Lower	Upper
Direct effect- predictors												
Historicist thinking	**-0.37****	0.05	-0.46	-0.27	**2.60***	.80	1.04	4.18	**0.17****	0.04	0.08	0.24
Traditional contact	**-0.30****	0.09	-.54	-0.18	1.97	1.54	-1.06	5.01	**0.31****	0.08	0.15	0.47
Sociocultural contact	.003	0.07	-0.11	0.18	**4.61****	1.23	2.18	7.03	**0.24****	0.06	0.11	0.37
Direct effect- mediators												
Intergroup anxiety	**0.21***	0.09	0.02	0.40	**-6.71****	1.59	-9.84	-3.57	**-0.19***	0.08	-0.35	-0.03
Meta-stereotypes	0.07	0.05	-0.03	0.16	0.24	0.81	-1.35	1.84	0.03	0.04	-0.06	0.11
Empathy	-0.03	0.08	-0.19	0.12	**3.36***	1.32	0.77	5.95	0.13	0.07	-0.01	0.27
Knowledge	0.09	0.06	-0.02	0.20	0.52	0.97	-1.38	2.43	**0.11***	0.05	0.01	0.21
Indirect effect through												
Intergroup anxiety	-0.03	0.02	-0.08	0.01	**0.98**	0.48	0.13	2.02	0.03	0.02	-0.01	0.08
Meta-stereotypes	0.00	0.01	-0.02	0.02	0.01	0.09	-0.20	0.20	0.00	0.01	-0.01	0.01
Empathy	-0.01	0.02	-0.04	0.02	**0.56**	0.34	0.04	1.38	0.02	0.01	-0.01	0.05
Knowledge	0.03	0.02	-0.01	0.07	0.17	0.34	-0.53	0.87	**0.04**	0.02	0.01	0.08

*Note. N = 232. * p <.05, ** p < .001; significant effects in bolded text; bootstrapped indirect effect estimates do not contain p-values.*

Table 15

Study 2 Direct and Indirect Effects of Mediation Model Predicting Collective Action Attitudes

	Collective action attitudes				Collective action intentions			
R^2	.60		Bootstrapped 95% CI		.50		Bootstrapped 95% CI	
	b	SE	Lower	Upper	b	SE	Lower	Upper
Direct effect- predictors								
Historicist thinking	**0.49****	0.04	0.40	0.58	**0.58****	0.06	0.46	0.70
Traditional contact	0.01	0.09	-0.16	0.18	**-0.39***	0.12	-0.63	-0.16
Sociocultural contact	**0.22***	0.07	0.08	0.35	**0.46****	0.10	0.27	0.65
Direct effect- mediators								
Intergroup anxiety	-0.15	0.07	-0.32	0.03	-0.22	0.12	-0.47	0.02
Meta-stereotypes	-0.05	0.04	-0.14	0.04	0.01	0.06	-0.11	0.13
Empathy	**0.21***	0.07	0.06	0.35	**0.28***	0.10	0.08	0.48
Knowledge	-0.05	0.05	-0.16	0.05	**0.22***	0.08	0.07	0.37
Indirect effect through								
Intergroup anxiety	0.02	0.02	-0.01	0.05	0.03	0.03	-0.01	0.10
Meta-stereotypes	0.00	0.01	-0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	-0.02	0.02
Empathy	**0.03**	0.02	0.01	0.08	**0.05**	0.03	0.01	0.12
Knowledge	-0.02	0.02	-0.06	0.02	**0.07**	0.03	0.01	0.15

Note. N = 232. * p < .05, ** p < .001; significant effects in bolded text; bootstrapped indirect effect estimates do not contain p-values.

Table 16

Study 2 Direct and Indirect Effects of Mediation Model Predicting Collective Action Behaviors

	Donations				Characters written			
R^2	.21				.04			
			Bootstrapped 95% CI				Bootstrapped 95% CI	
	b	SE	Lower	Upper	b	SE	Lower	Upper
Direct effect- predictors								
Historicist thinking	**4.00****	0.83	2.36	5.63	-1.98	8.13	-17.80	14.18
Traditional contact	-2.98	1.60	-6.14	0.18	-24.50	18.74	-63.77	9.64
Sociocultural contact	**4.33****	1.28	1.81	6.85	19.67	11.38	-2.06	42.64
Direct effect- mediators								
Intergroup anxiety	0.20	1.66	-3.06	3.47	-22.59	17.27	-57.95	10.15
Meta-stereotypes	0.25	0.84	-1.41	1.92	5.56	8.20	-10.36	21.81
Empathy	-0.72	1.37	-3.42	1.98	7.42	12.61	-17.55	32.07
Knowledge	**3.59****	1.01	1.61	5.57	6.24	8.73	-10.27	24.10
Indirect effect through								
Intergroup anxiety	-0.03	0.27	-0.64	0.47	3.30	3.15	-1.59	10.86
Meta-stereotypes	0.01	0.11	-0.23	0.23	0.13	1.51	-2.21	2.80
Empathy	-0.12	0.24	-0.60	0.40	1.24	2.32	-3.26	6.36
Knowledge	**1.13**	0.46	0.34	2.14	1.97	2.92	-3.38	8.45

*Note. N = 232. * p <.05, ** p < .001; significant effects in bolded text; bootstrapped indirect effect estimates do not contain p-values.*

Table 17

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study 3 Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1.Sociocultural contact[a]	–	–	–													
2.Race of partner[a]	–	–	0.01	–												
3 Traditional contact quality	4.81	0.97	0.04	-0.02	–											
4.Self-disclosure	5.36	1.12	.14*	-0.07	.30**	–										
5. Intergroup anxiety	2.88	0.95	0.03	.21**	-.42**	-.46**	–									
6.Meta-stereotypes	2.60	1.18	.16**	.22**	-.22**	-.21**	.47**	–								
7.Meta-perceptual empathy	4.45	1.29	0.01	-.40**	.25**	.28**	-.38**	-.43**	–							
8. Meta-perceptual knowledge	4.62	1.78	-.15*	-.66**	0.12	.24**	-.33**	-.31**	.56**	–						
9. Affective prejudice[b]	60.16	23.13	0.10	.13*	.59**	.25**	-.27**	-.15*	.20**	0.07	–					
10. Desire for contact	4.73	1.36	0.06	0.04	.59**	.30**	-.26**	-.20**	.27**	.12*	.71**	–				
11. Collective action solidarity	5.97	0.94	0.05	0.03	0.08	.29**	-.18**	-0.03	0.04	-0.01	0.06	0.04	–			
12. Collective action attitudes	5.62	0.99	0.07	0.05	.27**	.30**	-.14*	-0.11	0.08	0.04	.21**	.19**	.53**	–		
13. Collective action intentions	4.92	1.35	.12*	0.11	-0.09	.24**	-0.06	0.01	0.07	0.03	-0.09	-0.1	.33**	.32**	–	
14. Total money donated[c]	22.58	16.17	0.03	0.11	0.12	0.04	0.02	0.01	.14*	-0.01	.18**	.14*	0.10	.14*	.29**	–
15. Characters written[d]	121.81	204.94	-0.01	0.03	-0.10	0.03	.14*	-0.02	-0.01	0.05	-0.07	-0.04	-0.01	0.01	0.06	-.03

Note. $N = 274$; *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$; Unless otherwise noted, item scales range from 1-7.

[a] Point biserial correlation with dichotomous independent variables wherein 1 is coded as the focal outcome (sociocultural imagined contact and an interracial partner).

[b] Scale from 0-100

[c] scale from 0-50

[d] unbounded upper limit

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Table 18

Indirect Effects of Moderated Mediation Model Predicting Interracial Attitudes

Outcome	Full model R^2	Indices of contact type × partner race moderated mediation	Conditional Indirect Effects	
			Interracial (White) partner	Intraracial (Black) partner
Affective prejudice through	.39			
Intergroup anxiety		$b = -0.07$, $SE = .45$, 95% CI: [-1.04, 0.91]	$b = -0.08$, $SE = .47$, 95% CI: [-1.06, 0.87]	$b = -0.02$, $SE = .23$, 95% CI: [-0.55, 0.45]
Meta-stereotypes		$b = -0.13$, $SE = .58$, 95% CI: [-1.52, 0.93]	$b = -0.21$, $SE = .84$, 95% CI: [-2.10, 1.34]	$b = -0.08$, $SE = .40$, 95% CI: [-1.00, 0.69]
Meta-perceptual empathy		$b = 0.03$, $SE = .51$, 95% CI: [-1.07, 1.14]	$b = -0.07$, $SE = .33$, 95% CI: [-0.79, 0.62]	$b = -0.09$, $SE = .41$, 95% CI: [-1.04, 0.75]
Meta-perceptual knowledge		$b = -0.24$, $SE = .60$, 95% CI: [-1.62, 0.87]	$b = -1.13$, $SE = .79$, 95% CI: [-2.88, 0.19]	$b = -0.89$, $SE = .65$, 95% CI: [-2.44, 0.16]
Desire for contact through	.40			
Intergroup anxiety		$b = 0.03$, $SE = .04$, 95% CI: [-0.03, 0.12]	$b = 0.04$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI: [-0.01, 0.12]	$b = -0.01$, $SE = .02$, 95% CI: [-0.04, 0.06]
Meta-stereotypes		$b = -0.02$, $SE = .04$, 95% CI: [-0.13, 0.03]	$b = -0.04$, $SE = .06$, 95% CI: [-0.17, 0.05]	$b = -0.02$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI: [-0.09, 0.03]
Meta-perceptual empathy		$b = 0.01$, $SE = .04$, 95% CI: [-0.09, 0.10]	$b = -0.01$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI: [-0.07, 0.04]	$b = -0.01$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI: [-0.09, 0.07]
Meta-perceptual knowledge		$b = -0.01$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI: [-0.07, 0.04]	$b = -0.05$, $SE = .04$, 95% CI: [-0.14, 0.04]	$b = -0.04$, $SE = .04$, 95% CI: [-0.12, 0.03]

Note. N = 274. Significant effects are indicated by bold text.

Table 19

Indirect Effects of Moderated Mediation Model Predicting Collective Action Attitudes

Outcome	Full model R^2	Indices of contact type × partner race moderated mediation	Conditional Indirect Effects	
			Interracial (White) partner	Intraracial (Black) partner
CA solidarity through	.10			
Intergroup anxiety		$b = -0.03$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI: [-0.11, 0.02]	$b = -0.03$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI: [-0.11, 0.01]	$b = -0.01$, $SE = .02$, 95% CI: [-0.05, 0.03]
Meta-stereotypes		$b = 0.01$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI: [-0.04, 0.10]	$b = 0.02$, $SE = .05$, 95% CI: [-0.06, 0.13]	$b = 0.01$, $SE = .02$, 95% CI: [-0.03, 0.06]
Meta-perceptual empathy		$b = -0.01$, $SE = .02$, 95% CI: [-0.04, 0.03]	$b = 0.01$, $SE = .01$, 95% CI: [-0.02, 0.02]	$b = 0.01$, $SE = .01$, 95% CI: [-0.02, 0.03]
Meta-perceptual knowledge		$b = 0.01$, $SE = .02$, 95% CI: [-0.03, 0.06]	$b = 0.03$, $SE = .04$, 95% CI: [-0.04, 0.11]	$b = 0.02$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI: [-0.03, 0.09]
CA attitudes through	.14			
Intergroup anxiety		$b = 0.02$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI: [-0.03, 0.09]	$b = 0.02$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI: [-0.02, 0.09]	$b = 0.01$, $SE = .02$, 95% CI: [-0.03, 0.04]
Meta-stereotypes		$b = -0.03$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI: [-0.10, 0.03]	$b = -0.04$, $SE = .04$, 95% CI: [-0.13, 0.04]	$b = -0.02$, $SE = .02$, 95% CI: [-0.07, 0.02]
Meta-perceptual empathy		$b = -0.01$, $SE = .02$, 95% CI: [-0.05, 0.04]	$b = 0.01$, $SE = .01$, 95% CI: [-0.02, 0.03]	$b = 0.01$, $SE = .02$, 95% CI: [-0.03, 0.04]
Meta-perceptual knowledge		$b = -0.01$, $SE = .02$, 95% CI: [-0.05, 0.03]	$b = -0.02$, $SE = .04$, 95% CI: [-0.09, 0.06]	$b = -0.01$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI: [-0.08, 0.05]

Note. N = 274. Significant effects are indicated by bold text. CA = Collective action.

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Table 20

Indirect Effects of Moderated Mediation Model Predicting Collective Action Behavioral Intentions

| Outcome	Full model R^2	Indices of contact type × partner race moderated mediation	Conditional Indirect Effects	
			Interracial (White) partner	Intraracial (Black) partner
CA intentions through	.13			
Intergroup anxiety		$b = -.01$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI: [-0.08, 0.05]	$b = -.01$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI: [-0.08, 0.05]	$b = -.01$, $SE = .01$, 95% CI: [-0.04, 0.02]
Meta-stereotypes		$b = .01$, $SE = .04$, 95% CI: [-0.06, 0.09]	$b = .02$, $SE = .05$, 95% CI: [-0.09, 0.13]	$b = .01$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI: [-0.04, 0.07]
Meta-perceptual empathy		$b = .02$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI: [-0.06, 0.08]	$b = -.01$, $SE = .02$, 95% CI: [-0.05, 0.04]	$b = -.01$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI: [-0.07, 0.04]
Meta-perceptual knowledge		$b = -.01$, $SE = .04$, 95% CI: [-0.10, 0.05]	$b = -.07$, $SE = .06$, 95% CI: [-0.20, 0.03]	$b = -.05$, $SE = .05$, 95% CI: [-0.16, 0.02]

Note. N = 274. Significant effects are indicated by bold text. CA = Collective action.

Table 21

Indirect Effects of Moderated Mediation Model Predicting Collective Action Behaviors

Outcome	Full model R^2	Indices of contact type × partner race moderated mediation	Conditional Indirect Effects	
			Interracial (White) partner	Intraracial (Black) partner
Monetary donations				
Intergroup anxiety	.07	b = 0.33, SE = .48, 95% CI: [-0.44, 1.50]	b = 0.40, SE = .47, 95% CI: [-0.32, 1.56]	b = 0.07, SE = .29, 95% CI: [-0.40, 0.79]
Meta-stereotypes		b = 0.30, SE = .47, 95% CI: [-0.45, 1.46]	b = 0.50, SE = .66, 95% CI: [-0.67, 2.01]	b = 0.20, SE = .34, 95% CI: [-0.33, 1.04]
Meta-perceptual empathy		b = 0.05, SE = .86, 95% CI: [-1.68, 1.86]	b = -0.15, SE = .55, 95% CI: [-1.28, 0.93]	b = -0.20, SE = .67, 95% CI: [-1.61, 1.10]
Meta-perceptual knowledge		b = -0.03, SE = .30, 95% CI: [-0.68, 0.60]	b = -0.14, SE = .63, 95% CI: [-1.43, 1.14]	b = -0.11, SE = .51, 95% CI: [-1.19, 0.90]
Characters written				
Intergroup anxiety	.06	b = 11.58, SE = 11.77, 95% CI: [-6.59, 38.89]	b = 14.08, SE = 10.15, 95% CI: [-0.24, 37.79]	b = 2.50, SE = 7.15, 95% CI: [-11.17, 18.11]
Meta-stereotypes		b = -7.57, SE = 7.73, 95% CI: [-26.33, 3.03]	b = -12.64, SE = 9.00, 95% CI: [-32.73, 2.11]	b = -5.07, SE = 4.72, 95% CI: [-15.72, 2.53]
Meta-perceptual empathy		b = -0.12, SE = 3.83, 95% CI: [-9.01, 7.73]	b = 0.31, SE = 2.44, 95% CI: [-4.83, 5.95]	b = 0.43, SE = 3.22, 95% CI: [-5.69, 8.02]
Meta-perceptual knowledge		b = -2.90, SE = 6.99, 95% CI: [-19.67, 9.91]	b = -13.68, SE = 8.89, 95% CI: [-34.22, 0.05]	b = -10.79, SE = 7.09, 95% CI: [-26.98, 0.35]

Note. N = 274. Significant effects are indicated by bold text.
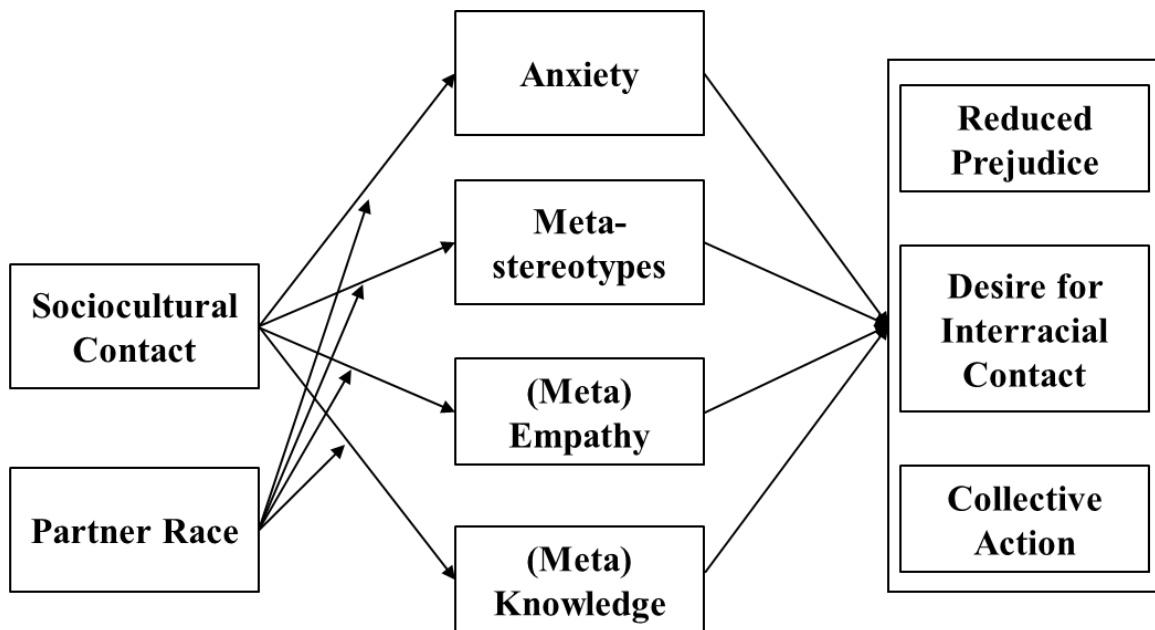
Figure 1. Conceptual model of sociocultural contact effects on interracial outcomes.

Meta empathy (i.e., meta-perceptual empathy) and meta knowledge (i.e., meta-perceptual

knowledge) were measures used on Black samples in Study 1 and 3.

Figure 2. Pilot 2 prompt A participants' open-ended responses word cloud

Figure 3. Pilot 2 prompt B participants' open-ended responses word cloud

Appendix A
Sociocultural Prompts Assessed

Sociocultural Contact Prompt used in the Pilots.

Pilot 1 (Black Americans)

Prompt A
Different racial/ethnic groups and communities often share common experiences, customs, and histories.

For example, people from the same racial and ethnic background may share similar languages, traditionally eat similar food, and celebrate similar holidays. Although not all members participate in these experiences and customs, they are often still important experiences and customs for individual group members and for the group as a whole.

These features, experiences, customs, and histories are aspects of different groups' cultural heritage and social lives.

We are interested in instances in which you have shared aspects of your own racial group's culture with people from other races. We will ask that you recount any and all of these experiences.

Given this information, consider what cultural experiences relating to your own racial group you have had with White/European Americans in the past.

We will ask you to report the experiences, activities, and customs, including interactions with White/European Americans, related to your racial group's culture.

Please be as thorough as possible, even if your engagement or participation was minor.

Prompt B
Different racial/ethnic groups and communities often share common experiences, customs, and histories. They may share similar beliefs and attitudes because of their shared backgrounds. These shared backgrounds, experiences, customs, and histories can be features of many different groups (e.g., religious groups, racial/ethnic groups, national groups, etc.).

For example, people from the same racial and ethnic background may share similar languages (e.g., Spanish, Chinese), traditionally eat similar food (e.g., Tortillas, Dim sum), and celebrate similar holidays (e.g., Day of the Dead, Chinese New Year). Although not all members participate in these experiences and customs, they are often still important experiences and customs for individual group members and for the group as a whole.

These features, experiences, customs, and histories are aspects of different groups' cultural heritage and social lives.

We are interested in instances in which you have shared aspects of your own racial group's culture with people from other races. We will ask that you recount any and all of these experiences.

Given this information, consider what cultural experiences relating to your own racial group you have had with White/European Americans in the past. We will ask you to report the experiences, activities, and customs, including interactions with White/European

Americans, related to your racial group's culture.

Please be as thorough as possible, even if your engagement or participation was minor.

Pilots 2 and 3 (White Americans)

Prompt A
Different racial/ethnic groups and communities often share common experiences, customs, and histories.

For example, people from the same racial and ethnic background may share similar languages, traditionally eat similar food, and celebrate similar holidays. Although not all members participate in these experiences and customs, they are often still important experiences and customs for individual group members and for the group as a whole.

These features, experiences, customs, and histories are aspects of different groups' cultural heritage and social lives.

We are interested in whether you have participated in or have learned about other groups' cultures. We will ask that you recount any and all of these experiences.

Keep in mind that these experiences don't have to involve people from those cultures but could involve you learning about others' cultural heritage and social lives.

Given this information, consider what cultural experiences relating to Blacks/African Americans you have had in the past.

We will ask you to report the experiences, activities, and customs, including interactions with Black/African American people, related to Black/African Americans.

Please be as thorough as possible, even if your engagement or participation was minor.

Prompt B
Different racial/ethnic groups and communities often share common experiences, customs, and histories. They may share similar beliefs and attitudes because of their shared backgrounds. These shared backgrounds, experiences, customs, and histories can be features of many different groups (e.g., religious groups, racial/ethnic groups, national groups, etc.).

For example, people from the same racial and ethnic background may share similar languages (e.g., Spanish, Chinese), traditionally eat similar food (e.g., Tortillas, Dim sum), and celebrate similar holidays (e.g., Day of the Dead, Chinese New Year). Although not all members participate in these experiences and customs, they are often still important experiences and customs for individual group members and for the group as a whole.

These features, experiences, customs, and histories are aspects of different groups' cultural heritage and social lives.

We are interested in whether you have participated in or have learned about other groups' cultures. We will ask that you recount any and all of these experiences.

Keep in mind that these experiences don't have to involve people from those cultures but could involve you learning about others' cultural heritage and social lives.

Given this information, consider what cultural experiences relating to Blacks/African Americans you have had in the past.

We will ask you to report the experiences, activities, and customs, including

interactions with Black/African American people, related to Black/African Americans.

Please be as thorough as possible, even if your engagement or participation was minor

Appendix B
Sociocultural Prompts Used

Sociocultural Prompt for Black participants (Study 1)

Different racial/ethnic groups and communities often share common experiences, customs, and histories.

For example, people from the same racial and ethnic background may share similar languages, traditionally eat similar food, and celebrate similar holidays. Although not all members participate in these experiences and customs, they are often still important experiences and customs for individual group members and for the group as a whole.

These features, experiences, customs, and histories are aspects of different groups' cultural heritage and social lives.

We are interested in instances in which you have shared aspects of your own racial group's culture with people from other races. We will ask that you recount any and all of these experiences.

Given this information, consider what cultural experiences relating to your own racial group you have had with White/European Americans in the past.

We will ask you to report the experiences, activities, and customs, including interactions with White/European Americans, related to your racial group's culture.

Please be as thorough as possible, even if your engagement or participation was minor.

Sociocultural Prompt for White participants (Study 2)

Different racial/ethnic groups and communities often share common experiences, customs, and histories.

For example, people from the same racial and ethnic background may share similar languages, traditionally eat similar food, and celebrate similar holidays. Although not all members participate in these experiences and customs, they are often still important experiences and customs for individual group members and for the group as a whole.

These features, experiences, customs, and histories are aspects of different groups' cultural heritage and social lives.

We are interested in whether you have participated in or have learned about other groups' cultures. We will ask that you recount any and all of these experiences.

Keep in mind that these experiences don't have to involve people from those cultures but could involve you learning about others' cultural heritage and social lives.

Given this information, consider what cultural experiences relating to Blacks/African Americans you have had in the past.

We will ask you to report the experiences, activities, and customs, [including interactions with Black/African Americans.

Please be as thorough as possible, even if your engagement or participation was minor.

Sociocultural Prompt for Black participants (Study 3)

Different racial/ethnic groups and communities often share common experiences, activities, customs, histories, and historical accounts that are important to who they are.

For example, people from the same racial and ethnic background may share similar languages, traditionally eat similar food, and celebrate similar holidays. Although not all members participate in all of these experiences and customs, they are often still important experiences and customs for individual group members and for the group as a whole.

We are interested in aspects that you consider important to your own racial/ethnic group and its associated culture. Given this information, consider what experiences, activities, customs, histories, and/or historical accounts relating to your own racial/ethnic group you consider important in order for others to understand and appreciate who you are.

We will ask you to report these experiences, activities, customs, histories, and/or historical accounts. Please be as thorough as possible.

Appendix C
Dependent Measures

(r) indicates reverse coded items throughout all scales

Covariates

Quality of interracial contact (Tausch et al., 2007; *1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree*, $\alpha = .74$)

Directions: Please rate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following statements

My prior interactions with [White/European American or Black/African American] people have generally been…
1. Pleasant
2. Uncomfortable (r)
3. Superficial (r)
4. Cooperative

Study 1 and 3**- Personal self-disclosure**

Directions: "What experiences, activities, customs, and/or interactions have you had with White people where you share aspects related to your personality (not related to your Black/African Americans cultural background)."

[open-ended response]

When in the experiences listed above,
1. I felt authentic
2. I felt that the White people I interacted with had a good understanding of who I am.
3. I felt that the interactions I had with White people were overall positive.
4. I felt like I disclosed important information to the White people I interacted with
5. I felt like I disclosed intimate things to the White people I interacted with
6. I felt comfortable expressing my feelings.

Study 2- **Historicist Thinking** (Gill & Andreychik, 2007); *1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree*, $\alpha = .82$)

Directions: We are interested in your opinion of the CAUSES of social disparities that exist between African Americans and White Americans. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each item below:

1. Poverty is like a trap that is very difficult to escape; this is an important reason why African Americans continue to linger behind White Americans economically.
2. The reason that African Americans are sometimes less likely to go to college than are White Americans is that African American schools in many neighborhoods are underfunded and inadequate.
3. The history of slavery, segregation, and discrimination suffered by African Americans has surely contributed to any current economic and social problems they are facing.
4. Ultimately, any social or economic problems of the African American community are rooted in the profound mistreatment they have been subjected to in the United States.
5. When I think about the history of African Americans in the United States, it is easy to understand why some of them feel angry or resentful; I would feel the same way.
6. I imagine that the constant barrage of stereotypes and prejudice in the U.S. is disheartening and debilitating for African Americans.

Critical Predictors

Quality of sociocultural contact (adapted from Tausch et al., 2007; *1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree*, $\alpha = .74$)

Directions: Please rate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following statements

My prior overall engagement with [White/European Americans or Blacks/African Americans] as described in the prompt above has generally been…
1. Pleasant
2. Uncomfortable (r)
3. Superficial (r)
4. Cooperative
5. Important
6. Moving
7. Meaningful
8. Deep
9. Emotionally connecting
10. Eye-opening

Mediators

Intergroup Anxiety (adapted from Stephan & Stephan, 1985; 1; $\alpha = .70$; 1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 7 = *Strongly Agree*)

Directions: How do you feel while interacting with [Black/African Americans or White/African Americans]I feel awkward

1. I feel happy (r)
2. I feel self-conscious
3. I feel accepted (r)
4. I feel confident (r)
5. I feel irritated
6. I feel impatient
7. I feel defensive
8. I feel suspicious
9. I feel careful
10. I feel certain (r)

Meta-Stereotypes of Whites (Study 2)

Directions: please rate the extent to which you believe that Black Americans, in general, probably assume that you arePrejudiced

1. Racist
2. Entitled
3. Pretentious
4. Arrogant
5. Well-educated
6. Intelligent
7. Wealthy
8. Someone who has negative views about minorities
9. Attentive
10. Cordial
11. Nice
12. A stereotypical member of my racial group

Meta-Stereotypes of Blacks (Study 1 and 3)

Directions: please rate the extent to which you believe that White Americans, in general, probably assume that you are

1. Hostile
2. Criminal
3. Athletic
4. Irresponsible
5. Poor
6. Religious
7. Ignorant
8. Dirty
9. Uneducated

10. Violent
11. Unintelligent
12. Loud
13. Aggressive

Empathy (adapted from Swart et al., 2011; α = .69-.80 & Wang et al., 2003; α = .76-.91; 1 = *Strongly Disagree,* 7 = *Strongly Agree*)

White participants

<u>Direction</u>: Please rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.
Affective
1. If I heard that a Black person was upset, and suffering in some way, I would also feel upset.
2. If I saw a Black person being treated unfairly, I think I would feel angry at the way they were being treated.
3. If a Black person I knew was feeling sad, I think that I would also feel sad.
Cognitive (perspective-taking)
1. It is easy for me to understand what it would feel like to be a person of another racial or ethnic background other than my own.
2. It is difficult for me to relate to stories in which people talk about racial or ethnic discrimination they experience in their day to day lives. (r)
3. It is difficult for me to put myself in the shoes of someone who is racially and/or ethnically different from me. (r)
4. I can imagine what it feels like to be the only person of a certain race or ethnicity in a group of people.

Black participants (meta-perceptual empathy)

<u>Direction</u>: Please rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.
Affective
4. If a White person heard that a Black person was upset, and suffering in some way, they would also feel upset.
5. If a White person saw a Black person being treated unfairly, I think they would feel angry at the way they were being treated.
6. If a Black person that a White individual knew was feeling sad, I think that they would also feel sad.
Cognitive (perspective-taking)
5. It is easy for White people to understand what it would feel like to be a person of another racial or ethnic background other than their own.
6. It is difficult for White people to relate to stories in which people talk about racial or ethnic discrimination they experience in their day to day lives. (r)

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7. It is difficult for White people to put themselves in the shoes of someone who is racially and/or ethnically different from them. (r)
8. White people can imagine what it feels like to be the only person of a certain race or ethnicity in a group of people

Knowledge (adapted from Zagefka et al., 2017; α = .83; 1=*very little knowledge* to 7=*a lot of knowledge*)

White participants

1. In general, how much knowledge do you have about Black/African Americans?
How much do you know about Black/African American's…
2. History?
3. Culture?
4. Language?
5. Values?

Black participants (meta-perceptual knowledge)

1. In general, how much knowledge do you think White/European Americans have about Black/African Americans?
How much do you think White/European Americans know about Black/African American's…
2. History?
3. Culture?
4. Language?
5. Values?

Focal Outcomes

Affective prejudice (Gaertner et al., 1996; 1 = *cold*, 50 = *neutral*, 100 = *warm*)

Directions: How cold or warm do you feel toward the following racial groups?

1. Whites/European Americans (for Black participants)
2. Black/African Americans (for White participants)

Anti-Black Prejudice (Study 2)
Direction: Please rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

1. The root cause of most of the social and economic ills of Blacks is the weakness and instability of the Black family.

2. Although there are exceptions, Black urban neighborhoods don't seem to have strong community organization or leadership.
3. On the whole, Black people don't stress education and training.
4. Many Black teenagers don't respect themselves or anyone else.
5. Blacks don't seem to use opportunities to own and operate little shops and businesses.
6. Very few Black people are just looking for a free ride (r)
7. Black children would do better in school if their parents had better attitudes about learning.
8. Blacks should take the jobs that are available and then work their way up to better jobs.
9. One of the biggest problems for a lot of Blacks is their lack of self-respect.
10. Most Blacks have the drive and determination to get ahead (r)

Desire for Future Interracial Contact (adapted from Turner et al., 2013; $\alpha = .85$; 1 = *Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree*)

Directions: In general, I would want to

1. Talk to [Blacks/African Americans or Whites/European Americans]
2. Find out more about [Blacks/African Americans or Whites/European Americans]
3. Spend time with [Blacks/African Americans or Whites/European Americans]

Collective Action Anti-racism Attitudes (LaCosse et al., 2021; $\omega = .88$; 1 = *Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree*)
[items in bracket will match participants' self-reported race]

Directions: Please rate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

1. It is important for [White/Black] people to actively try to promote equal treatment of Blacks and Whites.
2. It is important for [White/Black] people to share their nonprejudiced beliefs with other White people.
3. White people should do more than just acknowledge that racism toward Black people exists.
4. [White/Black] people need to speak out against racial discrimination.
5. [White/Black] people should proactively (i.e., with words and actions) show that they are antidiscrimination.

Collective Action Racial Solidarity (Studies 1 and 3; Glasford & Calcagno, 2012; $\alpha = .90$; 1 = *Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree*)

Directions: The next set of questions ask about actions you believe people need to take with respect to Black people.

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Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the upcoming statements.

1. Black/African Americans should work together to improve the position of their group.
2. Black/African Americans must stick together and work with each other to change the position of their group.
3. Black/African Americans would be better off if they worked together to improve their group's position.

Collective Action Behavioral Intentions (adapted from Smith et al., 2008, α= .92 & Pieterse et al., 2016, α = .83)

Directions: I would consider doing the following things on behalf of Black Americans

1. Send a letter of protest to the media
2. Sign a petition advocating for racial justice toward African Americans
3. Attend a demonstration or rally in support for Black/African Americans
4. Hand out leaflets to the public to support Black/African American organizations
5. Display a bumper sticker or poster in support of Black/African American organizations
6. Vote for a political candidate who supports racial justice
7. Join a picket line to protest racial injustice
8. Support a strike in favor of racial justice
9. Give money to organizations working against racism and discrimination
10. Be actively involved in exposing companies that uphold exclusionary and racist practices
11. Volunteer with anti-racist or racial justice organizations

Collective Action Behaviors

Donations
Directions:
Lastly, as a thank you for your participation, we will enter all participants of this study into a raffle for $50.

We are giving all participants the option to donate some or all of their winnings to the below organizations fighting for racial equality.

If you win the raffle, please indicate below how much of the winnings you would like to donate (if any)

Amount to donate to the National Museum of African American History and Culture:

Amount to donate to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP):
Amount to donate to the Equal Justice Initiative:
Amount to keep (not to be donated):

Characters written in letter supporting social equity
Directions:
As part of this study, we will send federal representatives anonymous recommendations of what the government can be doing to further advance racial equality.

Please write your thoughts about recommendations (if any) that the government can implement to advance racial equality in the US. Feel free to leave blank if you don't have any recommendations.

Appendix D
Pilot 2 Qualitative Data Analysis

I.   Analytic strategy for open-ended responses

Open-ended responses were analyzed using an inductive data-driven approach. A coding scheme was first developed after a review of the open-ended responses and the results from Pilot 1. At least two individuals then code each participant's response, noting whether it falls into one or more social categories (e.g., sociocultural contact related to food, history, travel, etc.). Based on this coding, descriptive statistics were assessed for word count, average number of sociocultural contact instances described, instances of sociocultural contact reported per social category, and the number of participants who reported no previous sociocultural contact.

II.   Results: Pilot 2 open-ended responses

Exploratory data analyses were conducted to examine the content of participants previous sociocultural experiences with Black/African American culture. Before data analysis, a word cloud was created to visualize participants' frequent responses to being asked about their sociocultural engagement with Blacks' culture. These word clouds (see Figure 2 and Figure 3) were created by placing the entire corpus of text of all participants' responses in a single column matrix, one for prompt A and one for prompt B. Next, all letters were transformed to lowercase, all punctuation marks were removed, and stop words (e.g., "and," "to," "the," etc.) were deleted. Following, the word cloud was created by displaying more frequently repeated words in larger text and in different colors. Those words most used are displayed in green, followed by red, blue, and black,

(see Figures 2 and 3). These word clouds largely reflect the qualitative data analysis that follows.

Using an inductive data-driven bottom-up approach, a coding scheme was created based on participants' responses which resulted in seven social areas in which sociocultural contact was reported: collective action, the arts, foods, holidays, history, travel, and worship. The arts category was further broken down into the following classifications: painted artwork, dance, fashion, language, literature, music, and other. The history category (e.g., learning about slavery, modern-day racism, or important historical figures) was likewise diverse but was maintained as its own social category for coherence and simplicity. Participants' responses were treated as the unit of analysis, with each different instance of sociocultural contact representing a 1 (vs. 0) across the different social areas it is related to. For example, a participant reporting having learned about the history of Kwanzaa in school and participating in a ritual associated with the holiday would receive a 1 next to both holiday and history. These coding procedures were applied to responses to prompt A and prompt B separately.

Participants who read prompt A reported an average of 1.76 ($SD = 1.12$) instances of sociocultural contact, significantly more than those who read prompt B ($M = 1.30$ $SD = 1.02$, $t(192) = 3.00$, $p = .002$). By in large, participants reported that learning about or otherwise engaging with Black history was one of the primary ways of engaging with Blacks' sociocultural lives (reported by 27.22% of participants who viewed prompt A and 35.24% of participants who viewed prompt B). Most participants reported learning about Black history in a school context, but some mentioned extracurricular activities

(e.g., Black student clubs), family vacations, interpersonal interactions, and within the context of protests. For example, the following response illustrates how participants may have learned about history outside of a classroom context:

> *I spent a week on a trip learning about African American culture and traditions in Alabama and Mississippi. I was taken around to see some historic spots and learned how mistreated Black people were, I went to a gospel church, and I learned some cooking techniques. I found it all to be very interesting and I learned a lot more about Black history because my high school never spent much time educating us.*

The next most reported area participants reported as part of their sociocultural engagement was through music. Although some discussed singing choir music with African American roots or learning about traditional African instruments, most reported favorable attitudes toward hip-hop and rap music, with few acknowledging that parts of this genre are historically associated with the subjugation of Blacks in the US and around the world. For example, in relation to music, one participant out of the few who articulated the role that Black Americans have played in shaping modern-day music wrote:

> *I've learned about a lot about black culture/experiences through music. From my understanding, hip hop is a good outlet that the black culture uses to describe their experiences good or bad. Lots of rappers talk about their experiences with police oppression and gang violence, and others talk about how good life is once they get out of high crime neighborhoods.*

Engaging with food and different holidays were the next two roughly equally reported instances of sociocultural engagement. Many of these types of sociocultural contact were intertwined. For example, participants described celebrating Black History Month or Kwanzaa by learning about and eating food associated with Blacks' culture. Some also reported less structured and less formal sharing of food. For example, participants who reported having close Black friends often described being invited to cookouts or BBQs in which they observed different aspects of their friends' lives and sociocultural traditions. These four social areas (i.e., history, music, food, and holidays) explained over 50% of all responses participants gave (for those answering prompt A and prompt B), with the remaining categories contributing each significantly less.

However, at least 1 participant reported engaging in each one of the categories. For those who viewed prompt A, only 2 participants reported engaging with painted artworks and 2 participants reported learning languages related to African Americans. For example, one participant reported learning about Swahili through a childhood nanny. For those who viewed prompt B, only 1 participant reported engaging with painted artwork, and 1 participant reported engaging with languages. Responses that fell into the remaining categories were roughly equally distributed, with each having between 1 – 12 participants who reported having engaged in them.

For the close-ended responses, given the lack of variability between responses to prompt A and prompt B the remaining analyses collapse across the prompt participants viewed. Independent samples t-tests demonstrated that no differences emerged across

these assessments when comparing responses to prompt A and prompt B (all t's < 1.22, all p's > .11).

Summary

Whites' one-ended responses in illustrate the limited number of instances in which sociocultural contact involved interracial contact with Blacks. Although participants were not instructed to explicitly state whether a Black individual accompanied them, many reported situations (e.g., learning history in school) or activities (e.g., listening to hip-hop music) that are not interactions with Black individuals. In fact, many individuals qualified their response by noting that they lived in a community or attended an educational institution with very low numbers of Blacks and African Americans. This may explain the activities (e.g., listening to hip-hop/rap music) that are stereotypical and/or superficial ways of understanding the sociocultural experiences of Black Americans. Nevertheless, sociocultural experiences were overwhelmingly positive, which parallels previous work suggesting that intergroup contact is typically positive (Garf et al., 2014). These findings begin to paint a picture of how Whites may imagine meaningful and substantive interracial sociocultural contact, though this may diverge from how Black people may imagine interracial sociocultural contact with Whites.

Vita

Juan Valladares graduated from Brigham Young University in 2017 with a

Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish. He earned a

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Social Issues (SPSSI). Juan is a researcher part of the Stereotypes and Social Interactions

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this lab is exploring how social processes, especially those related to stereotyping and

discrimination, can be explored in the context of virtual reality.

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Taylor, V.J., Brannon, T., & **Valladares**, J. (2019). Intergroup conflict through a sociocultural lens: How collective histories and memories impact intergroup understanding and misunderstandings. In Salter, P.S., & Mukherjee, S. (Ed.), *History and Collective Memory: Its Role in Shaping National Identities*.

Taylor, V. J., **Valladares**, J. J., Siepser, C., & Yantis, C. (2020). Interracial Contact in Virtual Reality: Best Practices. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 7*(2), 132–140. https://doi.org/10.1177/2372732220943638

Taylor, V.J., Siepser, C.F., **Valladares**, J.J., Knasel, R. (2022). Stereotype Threat Experiences Across Social Groups. In: Deshpande, A. (eds) *Handbook on Economics of Discrimination and Affirmative Action*. Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-33-4016-9_6-1

Manuscripts Under Revision, Review, and in Preparation

Taylor, V. J., Yantis, C. A., & **Valladares**, J. J. "Will she assume I'm racist?" How racial ingroup members' stereotypical behavior impacts White Americans' interracial interaction experiences. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*. Manuscript under review.

Valladares, J. J. & Taylor, V. J., & Yantis, C. A. The Cognitive, Emotional, and Behavioral Consequences of Confirming the "White as Racist" Stereotype Amidst Interracial Contact. Manuscript in preparation.

Valladares, J. J., Taylor, V. J., Manfreda, S., & Alam, R., Interracial encounters in Virtual Reality: VR perspective-taking on Empathy and Antiracism. Manuscript in preparation.

PRESENTATIONS

Dalumpines, M., **Valladares**, J,. Goates, J., Bohman, G., and Lavelle, L. (2017). The *Effects of Media on Attitudes Toward Domestic Violence Victims*. Poster presented at the American Psychological Association Conference, Washington D.C.

Valladares, J., & Smith, T. B. (2018). *The Benefits of Culturally-adapted Mental Health Treatments: A Meta-analysis*. Presentation at the Rocky Mountain Psychological Association Conference, Denver, CO.

Valladares, J. J., Taylor, V. J., & Yantis, C. (2019). *Reaction to ingroup members' stereotype-confirming behavior: Consequences for interracial contact*. Poster presented at the Group Processes and Intergroup Relations Pre-conference, SPSP, Portland, OR.

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