Toward a Social Psychology of Race and Race Relations for the Twenty-First Century

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Abstract

The United States, like many nations, continues to experience rapid growth in its racial minority population and is projected to attain so-called majority-minority status by 2050. Along with these demographic changes, staggering racial disparities persist in health, wealth, and overall well-being. In this article, we review the social psychological literature on race and race relations, beginning with the seemingly simple question: What is race? Drawing on research from different fields, we forward a model of race as dynamic, malleable, and socially constructed, shifting across time, place, perceiver, and target. We then use classic theoretical perspectives on intergroup relations to frame and then consider new questions regarding contemporary racial dynamics. We next consider research on racial diversity, focusing on its effects during interpersonal encounters and for groups. We close by highlighting emerging topics that should top the research agenda for the social psychology of race and race relations in the twenty-first century.

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INTRODUCTION

In the United States, one-and-a-half decades into the twenty-first century, race relations continue to be unquestionably fluid and volatile. The continuation of the troubling trend of police shootings of unarmed black people in 2014 inspired protest and the "Black Lives Matter" movement, but also backlash and counterprotest. Halfway through the second term of President Barack Obama—the first black person to hold the office—the midterm election cycle saw two Latino governors reelected and the largest black Republican delegation sent to Congress since Reconstruction. And projections continue to indicate that by the year 2050, racial minorities will comprise more than 50% of the population, a milestone that will render the United States a so-called majority-minority nation (US Census Bur. 2012).

Racial diversity: the variance in racial, ethnic, and/or cultural background of the members of a nation, community, organization, group, or dyad

It is in light of such developments, movements, and potential demographic shifts that we seek to review and organize the social psychological literature relevant to contemporary race relations. We begin by considering the concept of race, a discussion in which we believe psychologists too infrequently engage. We then use classic perspectives on intergroup relations to frame current understandings of race relations, before turning to a review of the effects of racial diversity on individuals and groups. Although each section includes consideration of directions for future research, we close by identifying what we believe to be essential topics for the next decade of social psychological inquiry on race and race relations.

CONCEPTUALIZING RACE

In order to study race relations, it is important first to consider what exactly "race" is, or at least come to some consensus regarding what we actually refer to when we use the term. Psychology, in general—and social psychology, in particular—has concerned itself with a number of questions pertaining to race. In its early days, psychology contributed to the legacy of scientific racism, offering evidence to support, if not to justify, existing racial hierarchies (see Eberhardt 2005, Metzl 2010). Other research traditions, however, sought to investigate the roots of (racial/ethnic) prejudice, including the categorization of people into different racial categories (Allport 1954, Brewer 1999, Dovidio & Gaertner 2004); potential remedies for prejudice, such as interracial contact (Pettigrew & Tropp 2006); and, more recently, psychological perspectives on racial disparities in health and well-being (Williams & Mohammed 2009; see also Mays et al. 2007). Each of these (and other) lines of research requires an understanding of who belongs in what racial group and why. Although racial categorization can seem like a relatively straightforward process, extant research highlights its complexity.

Racial formation: the dynamic formation of racial categories and identity based on target and perceiver characteristics and embedded in sociocultural-historical factors

Racial categorization: the process of assigning others or the self to specific or multiple racial/ethnic groups

So, then, what is race? Most people think of race as a way of categorizing individuals into relatively distinct, stable, and homogenous groupings, defined largely by skin color. Indeed, we often use skin tone as a metaphor for racial category membership, echoing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous call for judgment based on the "content of one's character," not the "color of one's skin" (ABC News 2013). Underlying this heuristic use, however, is the clear implication that the differences in skin tone (and other physical characteristics) that covary with racial categories also reflect more important innate differences. Historically, of course, these presumed biological differences were also those that justified the asserted superiority of lighter-skinned European colonizers relative to the darker-skinned native individuals (African, Asian, Indigenous American) whom they colonized (Smedley 2007). Despite such efforts to justify discrimination with appeals to biological differences between races, however, research identifies race as largely a social, rather than biological, category. Indeed, genetic studies find far more differences within traditionally defined racial groups/categories than between them (e.g., Zuckerman 1990). Nevertheless, the (mis)understanding of race as a biological reality persists among both laypeople and scientists, including psychologists (Morning 2011). In fact, it may even be resurging, especially in the natural sciences and medicine (Duster 2005, Roberts 2011).

Race as Socially Constructed and Malleable

If race is not primarily biological, then what is it? Sociologists, and more recently psychologists as well, argue that race is not simply a characteristic that people are born into. As depicted in **Figure 1**, race, at both the individual and societal levels, is largely a product of dynamic social construction. Indeed, other fields refer to "racial formation" (Omni & Winant 1994) rather than "racial categorization," recognizing that racial categories are "historically situated, context specific, and subject to processes of both resistance and reproduction" (Saperstein et al. 2013, p. 360). In other words, we don't racially categorize ourselves or others simply based on what we see—when cues regarding physiognomy shape racial categorization, they do so in concert with social norms, conventions, and even laws (Banks & Eberhardt 1998, Peery & Bodenhausen 2008). For example, the court records of states such as Virginia and Louisiana contain cases wherein individuals have petitioned to change their official racial classifications (Banks & Eberhardt 1998), typically from "nonwhite" to "white." In many instances, these individual petitioners were closer to "white" based on physical appearance, but had nevertheless been classified as "nonwhite" due to social associations with nonwhites or evidence of at least one nonwhite ancestor, no matter how distant.

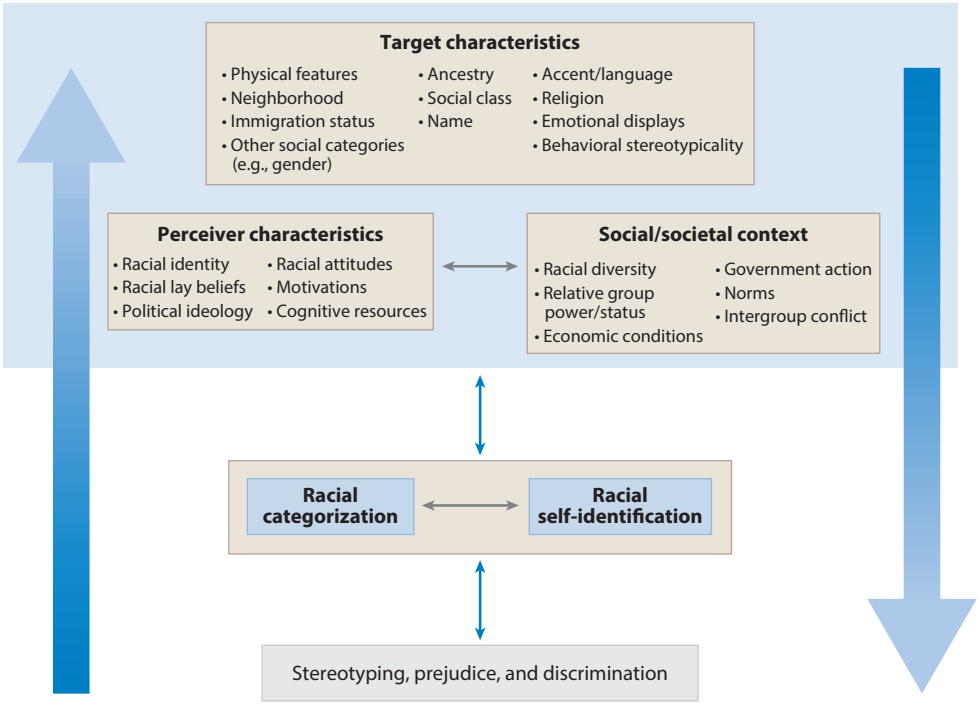

Figure 1

Schematic of the dynamic and malleable pathways to racial categorization and self-identification. Racial categorization is shaped by both seemingly relevant (e.g., skin tone) and irrelevant (e.g., social class) target characteristics as well as by characteristics of perceivers (e.g., racial lay beliefs) and the larger social/societal context. Racial categorization and self-identification are mutually constituted but not isomorphic and are both shaped by and influence exposure to stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination.

Additional evidence regarding the social construction of race can be gleaned from historical shifts in the number and nature of specific racial categories that have been recognized, both formally and more informally—most notably, the distinction between who is and who is not considered white (Painter 2010). For instance, Irish, Italian, and Jewish Americans were largely considered nonwhite as late as the early twentieth century; Arab Americans were often categorized as white before the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 (but usually considered nonwhite thereafter); and Latinos now have the opportunity to identify as white, black, or neither on official government forms, such as the US Census (Perez & Hirschman 2010). Asian Americans, interestingly, can specify discrete ethnic/national origin categories (i.e., Japanese, Filipino, Indian, etc.) as their racial designation on the Census; however, they are nevertheless clumped together as Asian for most reporting purposes. Similarly, racial categories that were readily utilized in the past, albeit sometimes only locally, have all but disappeared, such as mulatto or quadroon, while newer categories have emerged (e.g., Hapa in Hawaii; Hochschild et al. 2012). The malleability of racial categorization at the societal level may be reflected best in the decision by the US Office of Management and Budget to move from the recognition of roughly 5 mutually exclusive racial categories in 1978 to more than 100 possible racial/ethnic combinations in 2010 (Hochschild et al. 2012, Perez & Hirschman 2010).

Some of the most compelling empirical work demonstrating the dynamic social construction of race comes from sociology. For instance, in a series of papers, Aliya Saperstein and Andrew Penner

have found that cues regarding status (e.g., socioeconomics, incarceration) can shape the racial category to which individuals are assigned (Freeman et al. 2011, Penner & Saperstein 2008; for a review, see Saperstein & Penner 2012). Knowing that a woman receives welfare payments makes it more likely that she will be categorized as black rather than white (Penner & Saperstein 2013). Indeed, even information regarding disease status informs racial category judgments: Knowing that someone died of cirrhosis of the liver makes it more likely that he will be categorized as American Indian (Noymer et al. 2011). Of course, consistent with the extant social-psychological research on stereotype application (see Macrae & Bodenhausen 2000), these processes are bidirectional; for instance, information about racial category membership also affects medical diagnoses (Metzl 2010). Although the flexibility of racial categorization has received less attention in social psychology, there is research to suggest that psychosocial factors such as prejudicial attitudes (e.g., Hugenberg & Bodenhausen 2004), group identification (e.g., Castano et al. 2002), stereotypes and affective orientations (e.g., Richeson & Trawalter 2005a), political ideology/affiliations (e.g., Caruso et al. 2009), and beliefs regarding the nature of race itself (Eberhardt et al. 2003, Plaks et al. 2012) can affect the racial categorization process (**Figure 1**; see Kang & Bodenhausen 2015).

Moving Beyond Either/Or Racial Categorization

It is likely no coincidence that research on the malleability of racial categorization has grown, as has the proportion of individuals who self-identify as multiracial (Gaither 2015). Specifically, members of this growing population have sparked a renewed interest in race perception, especially the categorization of people who identify as multiracial (Peery & Bodenhausen 2008). Although many studies have relied on individuals with ambiguous visual appearances as a proxy of sorts for multiracial identity (or sometimes as a set of physical cues in concert with such an identity; see Pauker et al. 2009), this work has greatly contributed to the uncovering of our assumptions about race. For instance, research on the perception of multiracial individuals has revealed that the historical convention of hypodescent—the tendency to categorize individuals with mixed racial ancestry into the socially subordinate parental race—still governs most categorization decisions (Ho et al. 2011, Peery & Bodenhausen 2008).

As this work on the perception of biracial and/or multiracial individuals continues, it will need to take care not to fall prey to the very assumptions regarding race that the work may be best positioned to disrupt—specifically, the notion that racial category membership is a matter of simple biology. For instance, what seems like a reasonable definition of "biracial" as a child of parents with different racial backgrounds actually reifies, rather than challenges, the biological understanding of race. This definition often presumes that there are two distinct biologically meaningful parental racial categories that are then passed down to biracial children. This view, then, prioritizes biology rather than the myriad cultural factors that give rise to racial identity. In addition, it ignores the historical truth that all of the racial categories that we recognize today in the United States (as well as in many other countries) are actually groupings of peoples with quite varied "racial" ancestries. It remains without question, though, that the emerging research on the perception of multiracial individuals underscores that racial categorization is far more than a simple matter of physical appearance or biology, but rather a dynamic process informed by any number of sociocultural, motivational, and cognitive factors.

Race Versus Ethnicity

We use (as others have used) the terms race and ethnicity somewhat interchangeably in this article, but it is important to note that these concepts are not always interchangeable. Some prefer to use

the term ethnicity when attempting to denote cultural groupings and "race" when attempting to denote groupings defined by physical markers such as skin tone. As noted previously, however, this distinction reflects a problematic understanding of race, and thus we will not perpetuate it here. Instead, we offer the following: Ethnic categories tend to be subordinate to racial categories for the most part (except on the US Census, where it depends on racial category; Hochschild et al. 2012). Nevertheless, we agree that ethnicity does tend to refer to cultural heritage more so than does race, which instead tends to reflect sociopolitical groupings. For instance, whereas Asian American is a common umbrella or pan-ethnic racial category in the United States, it means nothing in most other countries and, importantly, little in terms of personal social identification for many individuals. Instead, the national origin of one's ancestors for Asian Americans (e.g., China, Japan) and Latinos (e.g., Mexico, Columbia) or tribal affiliation for American Indians (e.g., Choctaw, Navaho) is often a more salient source of identification and better informs people's lived experiences (Flores & Huo 2013). Moreover, although often overlooked, the racial category "black" is also composed of various ethnic subgroups in the United States (Waters 1999), including individuals from different Caribbean nations (e.g., Haiti), individuals from different African nations (e.g., Nigeria) and, of course, individuals with direct ties to chattel slavery in the United States.

The tendency to think in terms of racial rather than ethnic categories can also yield troubling forms of miscategorization. For instance, stereotypical beliefs and associations regarding Chinese Americans are often applied to all Asian Americans much as beliefs regarding Mexican Americans tend to be applied to all Latinos, to the chagrin of targets and embarrassment of perpetrators. Further, these types of categorization errors can trigger negative affect and undermine positive interracial interactions (Flores & Huo 2013, Trujillo et al. 2015). Interestingly, the use of ethnic (e.g., African American, European American), rather than racial (e.g., black, white) labels can even result in the expression of different levels of racial bias (Hall et al. 2015, Morrison & Chung 2011). Although the confusion regarding race versus ethnicity is not something that is likely to be resolved in the near future (Hochschild et al. 2012), it is nevertheless important to recognize that decisions regarding the categorization of individuals into these different racial and/or ethnic categories is multiply determined and can come with any number of unexpected downstream consequences.

Closing Thoughts

The understanding of race in the social sciences has shifted greatly over the years. Research has demonstrated quite convincingly that race is not simply a predetermined biological category, but rather is shaped by a number of sociocultural and psychological factors. Instead of modeling racial categorization as the beginning of a process that could lead to stereotyping and prejudice, therefore, this view of race reminds us that the reverse process is also occurring. In other words, stereotyping and prejudice are not solely the products of racial categorizations, but are also among their sources. Stereotypes and prejudicial attitudes help to create and sustain our beliefs about race, including who belongs in which categories. Given that the United States, like other nations, is facing dramatic changes in its racial demographic profile, social psychology should be poised to contribute to our understanding of the racial formation process, helping answer questions such as: Will the lines that separate white from nonwhite shift in the face of these changing demographics? If so, which, if any, groups will migrate from nonwhite to white? Which individuals are more likely to assert a white identity, and under what conditions will these assertions be verified by others? What new racial categories will be created and, then, contested in this new century? Only by understanding the dynamic processes through which race is perceived individually, and constructed societally and contextually, can psychological science meaningfully inform these types of pressing questions. Further, adopting a more nuanced understanding of the social construction

of race allows for a more compelling understanding of the nature of prejudice—a topic to which we turn in the next section.

CLASSIC AND CONTEMPORARY THEORIES OF RACE RELATIONS

As noted previously, much of the history of social psychology is grounded in the pursuit of the roots of, and remedies for, prejudice and intergroup conflict (Allport 1954, Duckitt 2010, Paluck & Green 2009). The field has been impressively productive and largely successful in unearthing many of the cognitive and motivational underpinnings of prejudice and discrimination (for extensive treatment of this topic, see Dovidio et al. 2010). In this section, we briefly review the prevailing social psychological theories of intergroup relations, highlighting their implications for contemporary race relations, primarily in the United States.

Social identity theory: intergroup relations are shaped by cognitive and motivational processes whereby others are viewed through the lens of either ingroup or outgroup membership

Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory suggests that people sort others rapidly and with minimal effort (Allport 1954, Tajfel & Turner 1986), resulting in categories colloquially distinguished as "we" and "they" based on whether the category does or does not include the self. This basic distinction between one's ingroups and outgroups influences perception, cognition, affect, and behavior in ways that systematically produce and reinforce pervasive intergroup biases (see Brewer 1999, Dovidio & Gaertner 2010, Yzerbyt & Demoulin 2010). Specifically, classic research, often utilizing the minimal group paradigm, offers compelling evidence that merely classifying individuals into categories—even when arbitrarily assigned—is sufficient to engender bias. According to social identity theory, ingroup favoritism emerges, at least in part, because individuals are motivated to protect and affirm the self, an affordance also extended to their ingroups (Brewer 1999).

Although in part a product of evolution (Brewer 2007, Cosmides et al. 2003), ingroup favoritism is nevertheless a potent form of intergroup bias (Greenwald & Pettigrew 2014). All that is necessary to maintain, if not create, disparities in any number of outcomes is for members of the dominant, high-status group to trust, cooperate, and work for the betterment of their ingroup more than for outgroups (Brewer 2007, De Dreu 2010). Consistent with this work, white Americans have been found to reveal a preference for other white Americans both historically and in contemporary US society (Bobo et al. 2012, Duckitt 2010), especially when such preferences are assessed relatively unobtrusively (Banaji & Greenwald 2013, Crosby et al. 1980, Dovidio & Gaertner 2010). For instance, although multiply determined, white Americans continue to show a preference for living in relatively segregated neighborhoods (Bobo et al. 2012, Burrow et al. 2014). Further, as the influence of explicit racial bias seems to be on the decline in many social arenas, recent theoretical and empirical work argues that it is everyday discrimination in the form of ingroup favoritism that maintains racial disparities, for instance, in employment (DiTomaso 2013) and many legal outcomes (Sommers & Marotta 2014).

Competition over seemingly scarce resources shifts intergroup biases from ingroup favoritism to those involving the derogation of competing outgroups (Sherif et al. 1961, Stephan & Stephan 2000). Most notably, perceived threat—particularly of the loss of valued resources, whether realistic or symbolic—associated with different outgroups is thought to trigger negative intergroup reactions (Fiske et al. 2002, Riek et al. 2006, Schaller & Neuberg 2012; see also Mackie & Smith 2002). For instance, the perceived threat of disease has been found to predict heightened bias toward immigrants (Faulkner et al. 2004), the perceived threat of violence/physical danger increases antagonism toward black and Mexican Americans (Cottrell & Neuberg 2005), the potential loss of group status promotes bias toward other racial groups more generally (Blumer

1958, Craig & Richeson 2014a, Outten et al. 2012), and the perceived threat to the dominant (white) American cultural worldview can fuel a variety of racial biases (Greenberg & Kosloff 2008). Further, although often overlooked, the perceived threats associated with being outnumbered (Schaller & Abeysinghe 2006) and with past and current discrimination (Monteith & Spicer 2000) contribute to racial minorities' mistrust and negative attitudes toward the dominant racial outgroup (Terrell & Terrell 1981).

Social categorization/group cognition approach: a perspective on intergroup relations whereby placing individuals into categories activates related knowledge structures, stereotypes, and attitudes

Social dominance theory (SDT): intergroup relations are rooted in the organization of society into group-based hierarchies with resources disproportionally controlled by dominant group members

Social Categorization/Group Cognition Approach

A second major approach to intergroup relations is the social categorization/group cognition approach (Brewer 1988, Fiske 1998). Although this approach also begins with the insight that individuals carve up the social world into meaningful categories, unlike social identity theory it does not necessitate the motivational pull of ingroup bonds through social identification. Instead, this approach offers a relatively "cold" cognitive understanding of intergroup relations whereby social categorization precipitates the activation of knowledge structures regarding different groups in the form of traits (stereotypes) and attitudes (prejudice) that, in turn, shape behavior (discrimination) toward those same targets (Macrae & Bodenhausen 2000). This view understands stereotyping and prejudice as the unfortunate by-products of categorization that are best disrupted at the category activation stage, rather than attempting to suppress or correct for attitudes once activated (Bodenhausen et al. 2009).

Research in this tradition has noted the rapid, if not automatic, attention garnered by race (Ito & Bartholow 2009, Trawalter et al. 2008). Specifically, given its historical relevance to US society, race categorization seems to proceed quickly if not obligatorily. Some have even called race a basic category of person perception, much like categories with evolutionary import, such as sex and age (Fiske 1998). The evidence is clear that processes of visual attention track racial category memberships, and basic processes of face processing and evaluation are affected by race (for reviews, see Eberhardt 2005, Ito & Bartholow 2009, Kubota et al. 2012). And, of course, extant research attests to the automatic activation of racial stereotypes and evaluations that, in turn, affect behavior toward members of different racial groups (Dovidio & Gaertner 2010, Macrae et al. 1996). Some of the most compelling research in this area has demonstrated the perilous implications of automatic stereotypical associations between black men and crime (Eberhardt et al. 2004). This work, employing a variety of paradigms, finds that black men are more likely than their white male counterparts to be misperceived to be holding dangerous objects (i.e., guns versus tools; Payne 2001). Further, priming individuals with the concept of crime seems to increase the extent to which they unknowingly direct their attention toward the faces of black men and away from the faces of white men (Eberhardt et al. 2004). In other words, the social cognition view of intergroup relations has provided considerable evidence that cognition, even absent strong ingroup ties or negative intergroup attitudes, can result in the stereotyping of, and expression of discriminatory behavior toward, racial minorities.

Social Dominance Theory

A third theory of intergroup relations that is important for understanding contemporary race relations is social dominance theory (SDT; Sidanius & Pratto 2012). In short, SDT asserts that most (if not all) human societies organize themselves as group-based hierarchies, wherein members of dominant groups allocate to one another a disproportionately large share of the valued resources in the society (e.g., homes, powerful jobs/roles). SDT contends that group-based social hierarchies typically consist of three interactive systems of stratification: (*a*) an age system privileging the middle-aged over the old and young, (*b*) a patriarchal system privileging men over

women, and (*c*) what Sidanius and Pratto call an arbitrary set system, in which socially constructed categories, such as race, ethnicity, religion, and nationality, are hierarchically arranged. These systems of stratification, furthermore, operate on multiple levels. At the societal level, social institutions and organizations, such as police forces and other criminal justice systems, maintain and enhance the hierarchy via legitimizing myths and ideologies. These hierarchy-enhancing systems and institutions, however, are countered by competing systems and institutions designed to attenuate group-based hierarchies, for instance, human/civil rights organizations and charities. Sidanius and Pratto argue that these competing forces eventually find an equilibrium so as to maintain a stable level of social inequality.

In addition to these societal forces, both intergroup and interpersonal processes serve to support and maintain group hierarchies. Most notably, inequality breeds inequality; that is, the unequal allocation of resources often recreates itself and is typically justified by individuals as deserving. Hence, dominant groups use the resources and privileges associated with their group to perpetuate their status in ways that are largely unavailable to oppressed groups. In addition, members of subordinate groups often contribute to their groups' social location by engaging in behaviors (e.g., poor study habits, engagement in crime, poor diet) that contribute to their subordination. Indeed, considerable research suggests that many members of subordinate social groups embrace the very systems that created, maintain, and justify their subordination (Jost & Hunyady 2005).

These and other components of SDT (for a review, see Sidanius & Pratto 2012) offer an often-overlooked perspective on American race relations. For instance, SDT highlights sociostructural facets of inequality that give rise to intergroup, interpersonal, and, even, intrapersonal dynamics in support of the hierarchy. Most importantly, the SDT perspective centers the concepts of power and domination in intergroup relations, instead of the more common social-psychological focus on the attitudes, stereotypes, and emotions that perpetrators hold toward targets. Indeed, Sidanius & Pratto (2012) assert, "SDT's most important epistemological assumption is that intergroup power, not which group is liked or respected more, is what matters" (p. 429). SDT is particularly useful for capturing how dynamic systems of racial inequality are and, thus, how difficult they are to overcome. SDT, therefore, is better able to account for the persistence of racial disparities in wealth, health, and other important life outcomes than are models of intergroup relations that focus on individual-level endorsement of stereotypes or liking of different groups.

Integration of Approaches

Although we have attempted to differentiate between these prominent perspectives on intergroup relations, the approaches overlap and certainly work in concert to explain the varied psychological processes that give rise to, justify, and maintain racial discrimination. Although ingroup ties and processes of self-categorization and social identification are not essential for the activation and application of racial stereotypes, for instance, processes of self-interest certainly motivate the attitudes and behavior of both white Americans and racial minorities. Indeed, perhaps due to their relatively smaller size (Brewer 1991) and/or perceptions of common fate due to shared experiences of discrimination (Branscombe et al. 1999, Sellers et al. 1998), racial minorities often identify more strongly with their racial groups than do whites (but see Knowles et al. 2014) and sometimes even reveal greater ingroup favoritism (Mathur et al. 2010). Other research suggests, however, that racial minorities, like members of other stigmatized groups, have more ambivalent attitudes regarding their groups (Dasgupta 2004; cf. Axt et al. 2014).

It is these results, however, that remind us of the importance of intergroup power. Even if racial minorities demonstrate greater and more frequent ingroup favoritism—especially in laboratory settings—the opportunity to do so in society and in ways that disproportionately

advantage members of their group are few and far between (Operario & Fiske 1998). Attention to the influence of power and status should also be brought to bear on research examining any number of intergroup processes, including intergroup emotions such as schadenfreude—the pleasure found in the misfortune of outgroups (Cikara & Fiske 2012, Leach et al. 2003)—as well as more basic processes of perception and evaluation. In general, examination of many of these processes from the perspective of racial minority and/or subordinate groups is lacking.

We also need to begin to focus our attention more squarely on relations between different racial minority groups—what we've been calling intraminority intergroup relations (Craig & Richeson 2012). Such an examination necessitates both the integration and consideration of the competing predictions of these prominent theories of intergroup relations. In other words, whereas the tenets of the theories reviewed here may apply to the dynamics of interactions among members of different minority groups, it is possible that intraminority intergroup dynamics may unfold quite differently. For instance, the common experience of racial discrimination could lead members of one racial minority group (e.g., Asian Americans) to express surprisingly positive evaluations of other racial minority groups, especially when ingroup discrimination is salient (Craig & Richeson 2012). Other research suggests, however, that racial minorities largely adopt the attitudes and behavior that white Americans direct toward racial minority outgroups, consistent with system justification theory (Jost & Hunyady 2005), especially when in the presence of whites (Shapiro & Neuberg 2008).

And, as noted previously, the social-cognition approach to stereotyping and prejudice does not require consonant ingroup ties. For instance, black Americans can harbor negative stereotypes and attitudes toward their own group, especially unconsciously (Clark & Clark 1939, Dasgupta 2004). Nevertheless, this emergent line of inquiry suggests that there is much to be gained both theoretically and practically through systematic consideration of the psychology of intergroup relations among and between members of different socially stigmatized groups, rather than assuming that the tenets of theories of intergroup relations will have similar explanatory power regardless of the status/power of the particular groups in question.

Closing Thoughts

Several prevailing theories of intergroup relations offer guidance regarding race relations in contemporary US society. Although much of the social psychology of prejudice emerged in response to ethnic/racial discrimination, conflict, and oppression (Allport 1954), research largely moved toward an examination of what may be common, if not universal, components of mind and brain that give rise to such negative intergroup biases and outcomes. This approach has been productive and insightful but has also left a number of important issues understudied, including the role of power (Sidanius & Pratto 2012), a focus on social justice rather than racial attitudes (Dixon et al. 2012), dominant group members' efforts to maintain group hierarchy (Knowles et al. 2014), and the perspective of so-called targets of prejudice (Sellers et al. 1998, Shelton 2000). Importantly, the contexts in which specific racial dynamics unfold may have been lost in the shuffle. As the racial landscape of the United States becomes more complicated and, perhaps, more pluralistic, it will be increasingly important to consider the psychology of race relations both between whites and racial minorities as well as among members of different racial minority groups.

PERCEPTIONS, OUTCOMES, AND EXPECTATIONS OF RACIAL DIVERSITY

In addition to the theoretical models of intergroup relations reviewed in the section on Classic and Contemporary Theories of Race Relations, empirical findings stemming from research

focused on how individuals construe and experience racial diversity are also essential to any effort to understand race relations. During the past 10 to 15 years, considerable research has explored multiple dynamics during—and outcomes of—interracial dyadic interactions. Interestingly, during this same period, a separate line of inquiry has emerged that considers how people experience diversity at more collective levels—i.e., in work groups, companies, neighborhoods, and even societies. Both lines of work have been fruitful, revealing the potential promise and pitfalls of diversity and, further, how the effects of diversity may differ for members of dominant and subordinate racial groups.

The first question to ask in assessing how people experience diversity is what it means for an entity to be racially diverse. When this question is posed to contemporary Americans, consensus emerges: Thoughts about diversity chiefly conjure thoughts about demographic minorities such as blacks, Latinos, and Asians (Unzueta & Binning 2010). But differences emerge in the criteria used by different racial groups to assess diversity. White Americans tend to base their assessment on simple numerical representation: The higher an entity's percentage of racial minority members, the more diverse it is (Unzueta & Binning 2011). Minority individuals' perceptions of diversity are more sensitive to ingroup representation, with an entity being perceived as more diverse to the degree that members of one's own racial group are included (Bauman et al. 2014). Hence, a black perceiver is likely to view a group that is 70% white, 20% black, and 10% Asian as more diverse than is an Asian perceiver. In addition, racial minorities are more likely than whites to require diversity at both high and low levels of an organization's hierarchy in order to consider it diverse (Unzueta & Binning 2011).

Effects of Racial Diversity on Individuals

Regardless of the cues that lead individuals to construe a context as relatively diverse (or not), research suggests that the experience of diversity can engender different psychological outcomes than the experience of racial homogeneity (Crisp & Turner 2011; see **Figure 2**). So, what does racial diversity actually do? It depends on the level of analysis. Considerable research has examined the potential outcomes of increased contact between individuals of different racial backgrounds. In other words, racial diversity is thought to be important because it increases opportunities for individuals from different backgrounds to interact with and learn from one another and, in so doing, reduce the negative stereotypes and attitudes that often come from merely passively learning about each another (e.g., through media representation; Weisbuch et al. 2009). The evidence in favor of the benefits of interpersonal contact is indeed quite compelling (Brown & Hewstone 2005, Pettigrew & Tropp 2006), even when the "optimal conditions" originally outlined by Allport (1954)—equal status, cooperation, common goals, and support from relevant authorities—have not been met (see Hewstone et al. 2014). Interestingly, research finds that the effects of contact on intergroup attitudes are larger for members of majority groups than members of minority groups (Tropp & Pettigrew 2005), reflecting, again, the potential for racial diversity not only to be construed differently by members of dominant and subordinate racial groups but also to be experienced differently as a function of group status.

A great deal of recent research (for a review, see Shelton & Richeson 2006) has also focused on the dynamics of interpersonal interactions between members of dominant and minority racial groups, examining such outcomes in terms of physiology (e.g., Page-Gould et al. 2008), behavior (e.g., Dovidio et al. 2002), cognition (e.g., Richeson et al. 2003, Richeson & Shelton 2003), and affect (e.g., Pearson et al. 2008). Taken together, this body of work suggests that members of both majority and minority racial groups often enter interpersonal interactions with one another harboring concerns about prejudice (Shelton et al. 2006). Many whites are concerned about appearing prejudiced (e.g., Dunton & Fazio 1997, Richeson & Shelton 2007, Vorauer 2006); racial

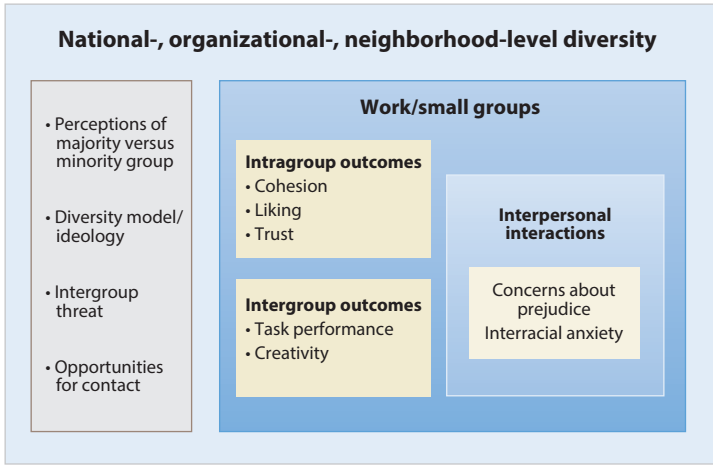

Figure 2

Schematic of the effects of diversity at societal, group, and interpersonal levels. The benefits of diversity at each level depend, at least in part, on the perceived and actual representation of members of different groups, factors such as the prevailing models of diversity in the context, the opportunities for intergroup contact, and, of course, the management of interracial anxiety that often stems from individuals' prejudice concerns. Importantly, the outcomes of interracial contact at the interpersonal level are informed by processes that take place at the level of small groups, which, in turn, are shaped by the processes at play at larger (e.g., national, organizational, and neighborhood) levels of analysis.

minorities, by contrast, are often concerned about being the target of prejudice (i.e., experiencing prejudice) during these interactions (Mendoza-Denton et al. 2002, Shelton et al. 2005). Research suggests that both sets of concerns can increase participants' anxiety and physiological arousal (Richeson & Shelton 2007) before and during the interaction, thereby disrupting nonverbal, if not verbal, aspects of behavior (Trawalter et al. 2009). Moreover, managing these prejudice concerns seems to be quite effortful, subsequently undermining individuals' cognitive functioning (Richeson & Trawalter 2005b). In other words, individuals' concerns about prejudice often lead interracial interactions to be effortful and, as a result, experienced as less positive than same-race interactions (Toosi et al. 2012).

Interestingly, the very effort that can make these interactions less positive for individuals may actually yield relatively positive experiences for their interaction partners (Shelton & Richeson 2006). For example, Shelton and colleagues (2005) randomly assigned a sample of black participants to expect prejudice or not (control condition) prior to an interracial interaction. Results revealed that those who had been primed to expect prejudice tended to work harder during the interaction—they were more engaged than their interaction partners—and, as expected, felt more negative affect after the interaction compared with participants who had not been primed. But, examination of the experiences of these participants' white interaction partners suggests that the efforts deployed by the black participants who were primed to expect prejudice were not in vain. Indeed, these white partners reported having more positive interactions and liking their partners more than did whites who were partners of black participants in the control condition. In other words, managing prejudice concerns during interracial interactions sometimes results in divergent experiences—i.e., negative cognitive and affective outcomes for the self, but relatively positive outcomes for one's interaction partner. Hence, although interracial interactions may be experienced as more negative than same-race interactions, at least for one participant in the interaction, they may be experienced as more positive than expected for the other participant (Mallet et al. 2008), a cycle

that, over time and with repeated contact, is likely to result in the emergence of more positive racial attitudes (Pettigrew & Tropp 2006).

Recent research has extended this work largely based on short, one-shot interactions between strangers but has also included the study of interracial interactions in more naturalistic contexts, such as between college roommates (Gaither & Sommers 2013, Shook & Fazio 2008, West et al. 2009). Although these encounters can be anxiety provoking and stressful (Paolini et al. 2004), they can also be beneficial for those involved (e.g., Shook & Clay 2012, Shook & Fazio 2008). Close, intimate relationships across racial lines, for instance, are thought to reduce both more explicit and automatic expressions of racial bias (Gulker & Monteith 2013, Olsson et al. 2005). Consequently, the next wave of research in the interaction domain is rightly focused on efforts to reduce individuals' apprehension regarding interracial interactions, such as by changing their lay beliefs about prejudice (Carr et al. 2012, Neel & Shapiro 2012); increasing their willingness to persist in interracial interactions, such as via the use of implementation intentions to alleviate felt anxiety (e.g., Stern & West 2014); and increasing individuals' agility navigating interracial interactions, such as by leveraging learning, rather than performance-oriented, mindsets (Goff et al. 2008, Murphy et al. 2011, Trawalter & Richeson 2006). In other words, research on interracial interaction dynamics is poised to close the gap between the largely negative outcomes of acute contact experiences and the largely positive outcomes of these same interactions over time (MacInnis & Page-Gould 2015).

Effects of Diversity in Groups

Much like research at the dyadic level, a growing body of work explores the proposition that racially diverse and racially homogeneous groups may engender different intragroup processes and outcomes. Specifically, research on diversity, broadly defined (i.e., not exclusively based on race), has largely come to the conclusion that diversity yields both negative and positive consequences (see **Figure 2**). The negative consequences tend to pertain to intragroup outcomes, often centering on group morale, with diverse groups experiencing less cohesion than homogeneous groups (e.g., King et al. 2009, Stahl et al. 2010, Thatcher & Patel 2011). By contrast, positive consequences of diversity typically pertain to differences in performance, whether in terms of creativity, problem solving, or information sharing, between diverse compared with homogenous groups (e.g., Crisp & Turner 2011, Phillips et al. 2004, Roberge & van Duck 2010). Few of these studies have focused specifically on racial diversity (cf. Cunningham, 2009, Ely et al. 2012, Herring 2009), and of those that have, even fewer have made use of experimental designs that speak to the processes by which racial diversity may be influential. In one such experiment, however, researchers charged groups with brainstorming new ideas for encouraging tourism to the United States (McLeod et al. 1996). Half of the groups consisted of all white participants and half included white, black, Latino, and Asian participants. Not only did the diverse groups generate more ideas than the homogeneous groups, but naïve coders also rated the diverse groups' suggestions as better and more practical.

The McLeod et al. (1996) study is also one of several to demonstrate divergence between individuals' perceptions of diverse groups and the actual effects of racial diversity on group performance. Specifically, white participants reported greater affinity for their group when it was racially homogeneous, but the diverse context produced superior group performance. What explains these different effects of racial diversity on intragroup outcomes (often, though not always, negative) and intergroup outcomes (often, though not always, positive)? Traditionally, many of the negative effects have been explained through a social categorization framework—the classification of group members into ingroup and outgroup interferes with group identification, commitment, and morale (see King et al. 2009, Thatcher & Patel 2011, van Knippenberg & Schippers 2007; cf. van

Dijk et al. 2012). Consistent with this view, individuals are less inclined to work in teams with members who are racially dissimilar (e.g., Hinds et al. 2000) and expect demographic similarity to reflect attitudinal similarity (Phillips & Loyd 2006).

Multicultural model of diversity: the perspective that racial progress is best achieved by acknowledging and, when appropriate, appreciating racial/ethnic group differences and experiences

On the other hand, the positive effects of diversity are often presumed to be due to differences in information; namely, people from demographically diverse backgrounds bring diverse perspectives that can be leveraged to obtain better task performance, compared with homogenous groups. Although there is merit to this idea (see Sommers 2006), it is not without its limitations (Sommers 2008). Most notably, this view implies a monolithic perspective for each minority racial group for whatever topic is under discussion and places the onus for the effects of diversity squarely on the shoulders of these individuals. Moreover, research suggests that demographic dissimilarity changes how majority group members process information as well. In one example, Phillips and colleagues (2006) assigned white participants to three-person groups for a decision-making task. Half the groups were homogenous (all white) and half were racially diverse. White participants assigned to diverse groups believed that more unique information had been shared than did their counterparts in homogenous groups. In other words, simply seeing that their group was racially diverse led individuals to assume that the group possessed a diversity of perspectives (Phillips et al. 2006; see also Antonio et al. 2004). These and other findings suggest, therefore, that some component of the effects of diversity reflects changes in individuals' motivational and normative concerns (Lount & Phillips 2007, Loyd et al. 2013). Further, what seem to be effects of diversity may actually be the undoing of effects of homogeneity that are detrimental to group performance (see Apfelbaum et al. 2014).

Before we close this discussion of the effects of diversity in groups, it is important to note that studies examining this issue do not tend to include groups that are racially homogenous in terms of minority individuals, thereby precluding a comparison of the effects of group diversity and homogeneity among racial minorities. Moreover, we know that the conditions that white group members might perceive as being diverse are often the very same that create token or solo status for racial minorities, leaving individuals susceptible to social identity threat effects (Steele 2010). In other words, there is every reason to believe that "diverse" groups can often be experienced as largely negative from the perspective of racial minorities. Whether such negative outcomes for the self nevertheless yield positive group outcomes, however, remains to the examined in future research. Moreover, the quite separate body of research on the experience of stigmatization, prejudice, and stereotyping needs to be integrated with this emerging and compelling research on the effects of diversity at the group level. Much as has been found within interracial dyadic interactions, racially diverse groups may also typically reveal divergent outcomes depending on the majority versus minority status of the individual group members. In order to maximize the potential benefits of diverse groups, committees, and organizations it is important to understand potential costs for members of both dominant and subordinate groups.

Models of Diversity

As the racial diversity of various societies increases, social scientists have renewed their interest in the ways in which individuals, organizations, and even nations seek to manage it (Crisp & Meleady 2012, Gaertner & Dovidio 2000). Philosophies regarding how best to manage diversity differ widely across person, group, culture, and era. Psychologists have often dichotomized these differing philosophies into colorblind (largely assimilationist) and multicultural models of diversity (see Rattan & Ambady 2013). A colorblind approach asserts that equality among and within groups is best achieved by minimizing demographic distinctions in policy setting and day-to-day interaction (see Neville et al. 2013). Dominant group members (i.e., whites) are more likely

than minority group members to endorse such a model (Ryan et al. 2010). Alas, research also links this colorblind ideology to various negative outcomes including increased prejudice among whites (Apfelbaum et al. 2012, Richeson & Nussbaum 2004) and feelings of exclusion among racial minorities (Purdie-Vaughns et al. 2008). Colorblindness has also been linked to a failure to recognize racial disparities in important life outcomes (e.g., Schofield 1986, Wolsko et al. 2000) as well as a relative insensitivity to racial discrimination (Apfelbaum et al. 2010).

Colorblind model of racial diversity: the perspective that racial progress is best achieved by ignoring racial/ethnic categories, focusing on human similarities and sometimes promoting assimilation

A multicultural approach to diversity proposes that demographic distinctions within a group should be acknowledged and even championed. Minorities are more likely than whites to endorse this model (Verkuyten 2005), perhaps in part because of many whites' belief that their whiteness leaves them little to contribute to such a conceptualization of diversity (Plaut et al. 2011). As such, the multicultural perspective on diversity has been linked to feelings of exclusion or even threat among white individuals (Norton & Sommers 2011) as well as to increased liking for targets who fulfill existing racial stereotypes (Gutierrez & Unzueta 2010). The effects of a multicultural perspective on levels of prejudice among whites, however, is more complicated, with some research finding positive effects (Richeson & Nussbaum 2004, Wolsko et al. 2000) and other work noting that these effects are dependent on how the ideology is represented. Specifically, highlighting abstract goals of multiculturalism reduces whites' expression of racial bias, but emphasizing more concrete ways in which multiculturalism can be achieved increases bias (Yogeeswaran & Dasgupta 2014). Further, when groups are in conflict, multiculturalism can yield particularly negative intergroup outcomes (Vorauer & Sasaki 2011).

That people endorse varied ideological models of racial diversity illustrates the more general proposition that assumptions and expectations about diversity are important considerations in any effort to examine the actual effects of racial composition on cognitive, affective, and behavioral outcomes. For example, consider two individuals who both consider themselves to be proponents of racial diversity, one of whom espouses a colorblind view, and the other endorses a more multicultural perspective. Despite both seeing themselves as supportive of diversity, these individuals will likely have very different responses to specific initiatives (e.g., affirmative action, targeted recruitment, antibias training, English-only policies) put forth to promote racial cohesion (see Oh et al. 2010). Similarly, the model of diversity held by one's white coworkers, managers, and interaction partners can shape how positively or negatively racial minorities experience these contexts (Holoien & Shelton 2012, Plaut et al. 2009). Indeed, the largely colorblind model of racial diversity espoused by US Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts (e.g., Roberts 2007) has been cited in the rollback of various race-conscious policies, such as voluntary school desegregation plans, that many others perceive to be critical to ushering in a more egalitarian society. Last, it is entirely likely that the changing racial demographics of the country will also motivate people to rethink the models of diversity that they currently endorse (Zárate et al. 2012).

Closing Thoughts

Diversity has been found to influence both interpersonal and group dynamics. There are many unanswered questions concerning the moderators and mediators of the influence of racial diversity on group performance, as well as the extent to which such effects vary by the race and status of the individuals involved. The consequences of various institutional efforts to achieve racial diversity constitute another important issue that psychologists are well equipped to address. Moreover, future research will need to integrate conclusions regarding positive performance effects for group diversity with established findings regarding the potentially negative effects "diverse" contexts can have on minority individuals by triggering social identity threat (see Steele 2010). Indeed, the very conditions that would lead many whites to identify a group as diverse are the same that

can produce challenging circumstances for minorities, a conclusion that is often overlooked in discourse regarding generalized performance advantages of diversity. What is clear from the extant research, however, is that the processes by which racial diversity shapes individual and group outcomes are more varied and complex than many lay assumptions, policy initiatives, or even research paradigms suggest.

A RESEARCH AGENDA FOR THE SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY OF RACE RELATIONS

We began this article by citing the dynamic, fluid, and somewhat volatile state of racial/ethnic relations in the United States. Even a cursory glance at the international news, however, reveals similarly complex interethnic relations in many other nations. Consider, for instance, the historic ascension of Cécile Kyenge, the first black Italian cabinet minister—both a moment of national pride and accomplishment and a catalyst for the expression of antiblack and anti-immigrant sentiment (Martin 2013). This iconic event and myriad similar events elsewhere serve as sobering reminders that race/ethnic relations are not inexorably and consistently getting better; they also underscore the potential utility of social psychological theory and research on this topic. Hence, we close by briefly identifying a number of emerging issues that we think should top the agenda for the next decade of social psychological research on race relations.

Reactions to Majority-Minority Nation Status

A profound demographic shift is underway in the United States. Indeed, racial minorities are expected to comprise more than 50% of the population by 2050 (US Census Bur. 2012). Not only does this remarkable transition to a so-called majority-minority nation reinforce the importance and relevance of studies of race and ethnic relations, it is also likely to have its own effects in need of investigation. Indeed, extant theoretical and empirical work in sociology and social psychology suggest that white individuals are likely to have largely negative reactions to this demographic change (e.g., Blumer 1958). A series of recent experiments finds that making salient the changing US racial population triggers greater prowhite/antiracial minority sentiment in both whites' explicit and more automatic attitude assessments, compared with making salient the current population, or even making salient a similar majority-minority shift in a foreign country (Craig & Richeson 2014a; see also Outten et al. 2012). Further, this population shift is perceived as a threat to whites' status in society and increases their resistance to racial diversity (Burrow et al. 2014, Danbold & Huo 2015). It also increases their endorsement of political conservatism, including (but not limited to) policies pertaining to race, such as immigration and affirmative action (Craig & Richeson 2014b). Taken together, this work underscores the possibility that rather than heralding a more tolerant and egalitarian future, the increasing diversity of a nation could actually yield more intergroup hostility.

Immigration

The rise of a so-called majority-minority United States, and similar developments in many European countries, is in part due to increases in the proportion of people in these nations who are immigrants. In the United States, for instance, the abolition of national-origin quotas in 1965 removed barriers to the immigration of people from many Latin American, Caribbean, Asian, and African countries (Lee & Bean 2012). Consequently, as of 2010, the foreign born constituted 13% of the US national population, with 53% of that group hailing from Latin

America (Grieco et al. 2012). Perhaps not surprisingly, this rise has been met with increasing consternation regarding immigration policy, concerns regarding the treatment of immigrants (especially the "undocumented"), and heated debate regarding the best approaches to promote the acculturation of new immigrants (see discussion of models of diversity in the section on Perceptions, Outcomes, and Expectations of Racial Diversity).

Social psychological research and theory should inform these pressing policy debates (see Craig & Richeson 2014c). Social psychology, for instance, could shed light on the processes through which concerns about national identity fuel anti-immigrant sentiment, which, in turn, shapes support for relevant social policies, such as those pertaining to citizenship, education, and the social safety net (see Berry 2002, Esses et al. 2010). Similarly, greater understanding of the ways in which immigrants come to racially categorize themselves (or are categorized by others) is paramount to any endeavor to promote the psychological well-being of members of this often vulnerable social group (Waters 1999).

Multiple Identities

Although some research suggests negative effects of a growing racial minority population for race relations, there is also reason to expect some movement toward a more tolerant society. For instance, the increasing racial diversity of the United States has also brought increased rates of interracial marriage, one marker of loosening racial boundaries in society (Lee & Bean 2012). Accompanying this shift is a comparable rise in the population of people that self-identifies as biracial or multiracial. In the section titled Conceptualizing Race, we considered what this may mean for our understanding of race, but it will also be critical for social psychologists to examine how this growing demographic group negotiates and maintains a healthy racial identity (Shih & Sanchez 2005), especially in the face of pressure to choose a racial category (Gaither 2015, Remedios & Chasteen 2013). Similarly, basic research examining race and race relations will need to better acknowledge the role that multiple social identities (e.g., social class, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion) play in shaping individuals' experiences and outcomes (Kang & Bodenhausen 2015). In other words, it is at the intersections of these multiple identities that "race" is created, maintained, and experienced (Sen & Wasow 2016).

Renewed Attention to Racism

Our final topic of emphasis is really a call to return to the past. It is not rare for contemporary discussions and analyses of racial bias to assert that overt forms of racism are a thing of the past. Yet, one need only scroll through the comments of almost any online article about race or racial minorities to find ample evidence that hate speech, racial slurs, and so-called old-fashioned racism are indeed alive and well. Today, the suggestion that race may have played a role in any given outcome is often met with the charge that this very suggestion itself is what is actually racist. And, the general willingness of many dominant group members to acknowledge, in abstract terms, that racial discrimination and disparities still exist often fails to be accompanied by a willingness to recognize that bias may have occurred in any one particular incident or decision (cf. Apfelbaum et al. 2010, Norton & Sommers 2011). Hence, it is important for the field to reinvest in the study of more overt forms of racial bias, such as the continued endorsement of racial stereotypes, desire for social distance (Bobo et al. 2012), and blatant dehumanization (Ktiely et al. 2015; see also Haslam 2006), as well as the reactions of both dominant and racial minority groups to evidence of these and other forms of racial bias, including collective action behavior (van Zomeren et al. 2012).

Similarly, social psychology should integrate recent research on implicit bias with more structural and cultural forms of racial bias (Adams et al. 2008, Bonilla-Silva 1997, Unzueta & Lowery 2008). For example, how else can we understand the near invisibility of American Indians in media representations, save as mascots for athletic teams (Fryberg et al. 2008)? As the racial diversity of the United States increases, members of different racial minority groups will seek greater representation and inclusion in many societal domains, including media representations. Will these efforts be embraced, ignored, or, perhaps, met with backlash? And, how will each of these responses affect the psychological health, identification, and well-being of racial minorities (Cheryan & Monin 2005)?

FINAL THOUGHTS

The twenty-first century has already presented new challenges and opportunities (e.g., multiracial identification), revealed the sustained relevance of old problems (e.g., police violence, state-sanctioned Confederate imagery), as well as brought the return of battles once thought already won (e.g., school desegregation, voting rights). Social psychology has a long and storied tradition of addressing societal issues such as these and, we believe, remains well poised to do so again in support of the development of racially diverse, yet cohesive and just, organizations, communities, and even societies. Our aim in this article, therefore, was to gather and integrate relevant research findings that are currently distributed across a variety of domains (e.g., stereotyping and prejudice, intergroup relations and interactions, diversity, social stigma) and reconnect them to the sociocultural and historical contexts in which they initially emerged, in order to focus, if not galvanize, the next decade of social psychological research on race and race relations.

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