



## FlashReport

E pluribus unum: Dual identity and minority group members' motivation to engage in contact, *as well as* social changeDemis E. Glasford <sup>a,\*</sup>, John F. Dovidio <sup>b</sup><sup>a</sup> John Jay College and Graduate Center, CUNY, USA<sup>b</sup> Yale University, USA

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## ABSTRACT

Recent work on social change illustrates that disadvantaged-group members are sometimes less influenced by prejudice-reduction strategies than are advantaged-group members, and interventions to improve intergroup relations (e.g., commonality) can sometimes have the unintended consequence of *reducing* social-change motivations among members of disadvantaged groups. Focusing on disadvantaged groups' (i.e., racial/ethnic minorities) orientations toward advantaged groups, the present research experimentally investigated the potential of dual, relative to common, identity to produce greater willingness to engage in contact, while maintaining social change motivation. Relative to common identity, dual identity produced not only greater willingness to engage in contact, which was mediated by perceptions of shared values, but also greater social change motivation, mediated by decreased optimism about future relations. Thus, for dual identity, enhancing approach motivation (willingness for contact) does not necessarily undermine social change motivation. Implications for intergroup relations and more broadly social change are discussed.

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Much of the work on improving intergroup relations has focused on the responses of advantaged-group members toward disadvantaged-group members (e.g., 72% of contact research, Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005). However, the intergroup orientations of disadvantaged-group (minority) members tend to be less influenced by prejudice-reduction interventions than those of advantaged-group (majority) members (Binder et al., 2009; Dixon, Tropp, Durrheim, & Tredoux, 2010; Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005). Moreover, approaches that do improve intergroup attitudes (e.g., emphasizing commonality) can sometimes have the unintended consequence of *reducing* social-change motivations among members of disadvantaged groups (Saguy, Tausch, Dovidio, & Pratto, 2009; Saguy, Tausch, Dovidio, Pratto, & Singh, 2011; Wright & Lubensky, 2009). The present research investigated the influence of dual versus common identity representations on disadvantaged-group members' willingness to engage in intergroup contact while also maintaining motivation to support social change.

Research guided by the Common Ingroup Identity Model (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000) has demonstrated that inducing members of different groups to conceive of themselves in terms of a shared superordinate (one-group) identity improves intergroup attitudes (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000) and increases motivations for intergroup contact (Gómez, Dovidio, Huici, Gaertner, & Cuadrado, 2008). However, it is also possible for people to recognize and endorse

distinct subgroup identities *within* a superordinate identity: a “dual-identity” representation.

In general, members of advantaged groups exhibit a preference for common identity and policies that promote it, such as assimilation (Verkuyten, 2006). Support for common identity and assimilation not only produces more positive intergroup attitudes and reduces tensions, but it can also reinforce social values that maintain the status quo, which favors advantaged groups (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2009; Jost & Banaji, 1994). By contrast, members of disadvantaged groups consistently prefer to acknowledge group-based differences along with commonality (Saguy, Dovidio, & Pratto, 2008). Disadvantaged-group members thus typically prefer a dual identity (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2007) and policies such as multiculturalism that support racial or ethnic distinctions within a larger society (Ryan, Hunt, Weible, Peterson, & Casas, 2007; Verkuyten, 2006).

One reason why minorities may prefer a dual identity is because people are motivated to have positively distinct social identities (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), and emphasis on a single common identity alone arouses identity threat (Crisp, Stone, & Hall, 2006). Members of racial and ethnic minority groups, such as Blacks and Latinos, are particularly concerned with respect within intergroup interactions (Bergsieker, Shelton, & Richeson, 2010), and a dual identity can convey this respect while also communicating shared values. Shared values and feelings of similarity promote positive intergroup expectancies and interaction (Mallett & Wilson, 2010). When members of a host country share a common acculturation preference with immigrants (communicating a “fit” or shared value system), for

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example, immigrants show increases in positive out-group attitudes (Zagefka & Brown, 2002). Indeed, within contexts that support a dual identity or multiculturalism, and communicate shared values, minority-group members demonstrate positive orientations toward advantaged groups, both within interactions (Bergsieker et al., 2010) and non-interactions, toward the larger group (Shnabel, Nadler, Ulrich, Dovidio, & Carmi, 2009).

Whereas much of the previous research in this area has investigated the relative impact of different identity representations on intergroup attitudes (e.g., González & Brown, 2006) or individual attention within interpersonal interactions (Vorauer, Gagnon, & Sasaki, 2009), we focused on disadvantaged-group members' motivations for intergroup contact and for social change. Recent work has distinguished between factors associated with social cohesion (e.g., intergroup attitudes/contact) and those associated with social change (e.g., motivations for collective action; Wright & Lubensky, 2009) and demonstrates that factors aimed at social cohesion (e.g., commonality) are sometimes negatively related to behaviors aimed at social change (Dixon et al., 2010).

The very psychological processes that work to improve relations between groups can potentially reduce motivations for social change among disadvantaged-group members (Wright & Lubensky, 2009). Because common identity transforms people's representations of group memberships from separate groups to a single, more inclusive group, it can reduce minority-group members' attention to group-based disadvantage (Dixon et al., 2010). Black South Africans who reported greater commonality-focused intergroup contact with Whites also reported experiencing less personal discrimination (Dixon, Durrheim, & Tredoux, 2007). This decreased salience of subgroup identity facilitates optimism among members of disadvantaged groups about their future treatment (which is often not realized; Saguy et al., 2009). However, optimism that progress is being made toward a goal can decrease personal commitment to action (Zhang, Fishbach, & Dhar, 2007). Consistent with this reasoning, Arabs in Israel who experienced a stronger sense of commonality with Israeli Jews perceived greater benevolence in Israel, which predicted lower levels of support for social action (Saguy et al., 2009). By contrast, although a dual identity may be associated with optimism about future relations between groups, the maintained salience of group identity, a prerequisite for social action (van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008), makes it less likely that optimism under dual identity salience will be associated with decreases in social change motivation.

In the present research, members of traditionally disadvantaged racial and ethnic groups in the US read a news report designed to increase the salience of a common identity or a dual identity. The main outcome measures were willingness to engage in intergroup contact and social change motivation (motivation to change disparities between groups). We predicted that the condition that emphasized the dual identity, affirming both racial/ethnic and common group identity as American, would produce a greater willingness to engage in contact with Whites, mediated by greater perceptions of a shared value system. Furthermore, because it deflects attention away from separate group identities and emphasizes disadvantaged-group members' full inclusion in the common in-group identity (American), we further predicted that participants would report lower social change motivation in the common identity condition relative to the dual identity condition. This effect was expected to be explained by increased optimism regarding future group relations.

## Method

### Participants

Forty-nine undergraduate students (31 women and 18 men) participated to fulfill one option of an introductory psychology course

requirement. Fifty-three percent of the sample self-identified as Latino/Hispanic, 27% as Black/African-American, 6% as Asian, 8% as multi-racial, and 6% as "Other".

### Procedure

Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions (common or dual identity; see Guerra et al., 2010) and individually completed questionnaires in a group setting. Participants were asked to read one of two different one-and-a-half page reports describing "Relations in America" (modeled after the procedure of Wolsko, Park, Judd & Wittenbrink, 2000).

In the common identity condition, the news report was designed to increase salience of a superordinate identity (American) and read: "We are all members of a common group, American....Recognizing that all of us are Americans can contribute to making America a better nation....Social scientists argue that an approach that emphasizes thinking about our common identity as Americans, with less emphasis on racial/ethnic differences, is an essential component to long-term social harmony in the United States" The dual identity condition was designed to make a common (American) and subordinate (racial/ethnic) identity salient: "We are all members of our own racial/ethnic group and a common group, American....Recognizing that all of us are members of groups that have different traditions but also share a common American identity can contribute to making America a better nation....Social scientists argue that an approach that emphasizes the ways racial/ethnic identities and American identity support each other is an essential component of long-term social harmony in the United States".

Pilot testing ( $n = 26$ ) of this manipulation of common versus dual identity confirmed the impact on identity representations. Pilot participants in the common identity condition reported (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*) that they viewed racial/ethnic groups in America more as one group more than did those in the dual identity condition,  $M_s = 5.58$  vs. 4.00,  $t(24) = 2.66$ ,  $p = .014$ . Conversely, participants in the dual identity condition indicated that they saw racial/ethnic groups as different groups within one group more than those in the common identity condition,  $M_s = 5.78$  vs. 4.41,  $t(24) = 2.65$ ,  $p = .014$ .

In the main study, after reading one of the two versions of the newspaper article, participants directly responded (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*) to our primary measures, which were embedded among a variety of filler items. To measure perceptions of shared values, participants responded to the item: "What brings all Americans together is a shared value system." Items assessing Willingness to Engage in Contact with Whites, Optimism about the Future of Race Relations, and Social Change Motivation were then interspersed. Willingness to Engage in Contact with Whites was measured using two items (Shelton & Richeson, 2005): "I am motivated to go out of my way to have quality contact with Whites," and "I am motivated to work together with Whites" ( $\alpha = .74$ ). Optimism about the Future of Racial Relations was measured using three items (Leach & Williams, 1999): "I am optimistic about race relations in the future," "Race relations in the future will be better off than it is now" and "I see race relations significantly improving in the future" ( $\alpha = .82$ ). Participants also reported their general Social Change Motivation using two items (Saguy et al., 2008): "Right now, I have a strong motivation to change disparities between groups," and "At this moment, I am extremely motivated to change disparities between groups" ( $\alpha = .87$ ).

## Results

Preliminary analyses testing for the effects of participant sex and race/ethnicity revealed no significant effects and thus these variables were excluded from analyses. Consistent with the notion that

intergroup attitudes and social change motivation can be dissociated (Wright & Lubensky, 2009), Willingness to Engage in Contact with Whites and Social Change Motivation were not correlated,  $r(47) = .174, p = .23$ . We next tested our two main hypotheses, examining the effects of the manipulation of identity representation on (a) shared values and willingness to engage in contact, and (b) on optimism and social change motivation.

#### *Shared values and willingness to engage in contact with advantaged-group members*

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) testing for differences in perceptions of shared values between conditions revealed, as expected, that participants perceived greater shared values in America in the dual identity condition ( $M = 5.51, SD = 1.06$ ) compared to the common identity condition ( $M = 4.68, SD = 1.34$ ),  $F(1,47) = 5.57, p = .02, \eta_p^2 = .10$ . Also, as hypothesized, participants reported greater Willingness to Engage in Contact with Whites in the dual identity ( $M = 5.84, SD = .82$ ) condition than in the common identity ( $M = 5.24, SD = 1.16$ ) condition,  $F(1,47) = 4.41, p = .04, \eta_p^2 = .08$ .

Supportive of the hypothesis that shared values would mediate the effect of the common versus dual identity manipulation on Willingness to Engage in Contact with Whites (see Kenny, Kashy, & Bolger, 1998): (a) the identity representation condition was significantly related to Willingness to Engage in Contact with Whites,  $\beta = -.29, t(47) = -2.10, p = .04$ ; (b) as well as perceptions of shared values,  $\beta = -.32, t(47) = -2.36, p = .02$ ; and (c) perceptions of shared values was related to Willingness to Engage in Contact with Whites,  $\beta = .52, t(46) = 4.11, p < .001$ , when the effects of identity representation condition were controlled. The effect of identity representation condition also became non-significant,  $\beta = -.12, t(46) = t < 1$ . In addition, the bootstrapped estimate of the indirect effect was estimated to lie between  $-.88$  and  $-.06$  with 95% confidence. Because zero is not in the 95% confidence interval, the indirect effect is different from zero at the  $p < .05$  level (Preacher & Hayes, 2004).

#### *Optimism and social change motivation*

As expected, participants reported less Social Change Motivation in the common identity condition ( $M = 3.56, SD = 1.75$ ) relative to the dual identity condition ( $M = 4.81, SD = 1.53$ ),  $F(1,47) = 7.05, p = .01, \eta_p^2 = .13$ . There was a marginally significant effect of the manipulation on Optimism about the Future of Racial Relations,  $F(1,47) = 3.64, p = .06, \eta_p^2 = .07$ : participants reported greater optimism in the common identity ( $M = 5.96, SD = .93$ ) than the dual identity ( $M = 5.41, SD = 1.04$ ) condition. Consistent with the prediction that Optimism in the common identity condition, relative to the dual identity condition, would explain decreases in Social Change Motivation, mediation analyses revealed that (a) the identity representation condition was related to Social Change Motivation,  $\beta = -.36, t(47) = -2.65, p = .01$  and (b) to Optimism about future Racial Relations,  $\beta = -.26, t(47) = 1.90, p = .06$ . In addition, when considered simultaneously as predictors, (c) Optimism about Future Racial Relations (the hypothesized mediator) predicted lower Social Change Motivation,  $\beta = -.46, t(46) = -3.75, p < .001$ , while the effect of the identity manipulation became marginally significant,  $\beta = -.23, t(46) = -1.88, p = .08$ . The indirect effect from identity representation condition to Change Motivation through Optimism was marginally significant: the bootstrapped estimate of the indirect effect fell between  $-.95$  and  $.08, p = .09$ .

## Discussion

The present research moves beyond exploring the identity preferences of members of disadvantaged groups to studying the consequences of emphasizing different identity representations.

Whereas past work has investigated the influence of dual identity on immediate intergroup attitudes (González & Brown, 2006), we focused on willingness to engage in contact, often associated with increases in positive attitudes (Esses & Dovidio, 2002), and motivation for social change.

From the perspective of disadvantaged-group members, an emphasis on commonality in conjunction with respect for group-based differences (dual identity) led to greater willingness for contact than did a focus only on commonality, and it also related to greater social change motivation. Conversely, common identity (relative to dual), increased optimism, but also was accompanied by decreases in social change motivation, perhaps associated with perceptions of the benevolence of the advantaged (see Saguy et al., 2009). Optimism, which is related to longer-term structural change, was unrelated ( $r = .01$ ) to willingness for contact, which represents a willingness to engage at a personal level. Thus, for dual identity, enhancing approach motivation (willingness for contact) does not necessarily undermine social change motivation. Because this experiment only tests the relative efficacy of dual identity to common identity, however, the results should be interpreted cautiously. It is impossible to tell whether the common identity increased optimism or the dual identity decreased perceptions of shared values and optimism. A stronger test for future research would include a control condition to demonstrate the direction of effects, relative to a neutral-control condition.

Diversity offers unique benefits (Antonio et al., 2004), but it can also arouse social tensions (Putnam, 2007). Different group preferences for acculturation strategies (i.e., assimilation/commonality vs. multiculturalism/dual identity; Bourhis, Montreuil, Barrette, & Montaruli, 2009) contributes to these tensions. Understanding how to reconcile the different acculturation preferences of advantaged- and disadvantaged-group members has profound implications not only for existing intergroup relations, but also for social change. Greater correspondence between the intergroup preferences of advantaged groups (assimilation/one-group representation) and the disadvantaged groups (multiculturalism/dual identity) may lead to harmony, but the nature of this correspondence is critical. Indeed, in the current work disadvantaged group members' perceptions of shared values related only modestly to their motivation for social change overall ( $r = .20$ ) suggesting that whether the value that is shared reflects assimilation or multiculturalism may be critical. Without altering social change motivation, dual identity may offer elements for both advantaged (common identity) and disadvantaged groups (recognition of subordinate identity) and thus suggests that dual identity can help illustrate when from many groups, a stronger one is possible. Emphasizing a dual identity (multiculturalism), as opposed to common identity (assimilation) can, at least from the perspective of members of disadvantaged groups, achieve positive social change through two different routes: indirectly via improved relations with advantaged groups and more directly through motivations for social change.

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