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Reaffirming King’s Vision: The Power of Participation in Inclusive Diversity Efforts to Benefit Intergroup Outcomes

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In 1967, Martin Luther King, Jr. reaffirmed a vision of integration as “an opportunity to participate in the beauty of diversity.” Drawing inspiration from King’s vision, across two datasets with White and Asian college students (N = 1,957, N = 1,324), this article finds support for the power of participation in inclusive diversity efforts associated with underrepresented groups (i.e., Latina/o and African Americans) to benefit intergroup attitudes. Specifically, participating in an academic course or activity that involves Latina/o/x or African American culture is related to greater outgroup closeness and more supportive perceptions of policies that address inequality. Perceptions of policies included attitudes toward the merits of affirmative action, use of multicultural (vs. colorblind) approaches to diversity, and endorsement of structural (vs. individual) explanations for inequality. These results held controlling for other types of contact (i.e., outgroup friendships, roommates, interactions), college-level demographic diversity, and prior intergroup attitudes and diversity exposure. The importance of engagement in inclusive diversity efforts for achieving integration is discussed.

... we must reaffirm our belief in building a democratic society, in which blacks and whites can live together as brothers, where we will all come to see that **integration is not a problem, but an opportunity to participate in the beauty of diversity**

-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. address at the *American Psychological Association’s Convention*, 1967, p.184

Fifty years since Dr. King reaffirmed the above vision for U.S. society, the aspiration of building a democratic, unified, integrated society remains a colossal challenge. Integration is a persistent problem marked by protests and growing

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inequality along various social identity lines (e.g., race, gender, social class background; see Gilbert, 2017; Surowiecki, 2016). In particular, integrating an increasingly diverse society remains a salient problem in the context of higher education. Colleges and universities represent key gateway institutions that are equipped to provide access to material and social resources that can address a myriad of distinct and interrelated inequalities (e.g., economic, health and well-being). Yet, longitudinal analysis of national data suggest that historically marginalized groups like Latino/a/x and African Americans¹ are more underrepresented in U.S. colleges and universities than they were 35 years ago (Ashkenas, Park, & Pearce, 2017). Moreover, even when groups like African Americans enter higher education the consequences of engaging in such environments can be detrimental to their health and well-being (see Chen, Miller, Brody, & Lei, 2015; Keels, Durkee, & Hope, 2017). Such adverse health and well-being outcomes reflect, in part, the consequences for members of underrepresented groups of contending with prejudice, microaggressions and other types of negative intergroup attitudes and perceptions toward their racial/ethnic group.

In short, the problems tied to contemporary integration are complex— these challenges signal a need for more than mere representation. That is, although efforts to achieve representation championed in the Civil Rights Movement and realized in the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision were important steps toward building the integrated and democratic society reference in King's vision such efforts are not enough. Today's challenges highlight that individuals from underrepresented groups need to feel included, and not merely represented, granted physical access, within institutions. This need has been articulated by Drew Faust, President of Harvard University, who referenced a popular, international, student-led campaign² that started at Harvard University to call action to the negative experiences of students from historically marginalized backgrounds on college campuses. Faust shared, "Everyone at Harvard should feel included not just represented in this community. "I, Too, am Harvard" must be a statement every one of us can confidently make. Diversity must become belonging" (2015). Drawing inspiration from King's vision and acknowledging the persistent yet present challenges of integration, the present article examines the potential power of "opportunities to participate" in diverse cultural efforts on college campuses to be associated with positive intergroup outcomes.

¹Throughout the article some social identity labels are used interchangeably. For instance, "black," "Black," and "African American" are used to reference Black Americans or Americans of African descent. Similarly, "Hispanic" and "Latino/American" are used. The variance in label used reflect the inclusion of direct quotes from previous times in history and/or the language given to respondents in the National Longitudinal Survey of Freshmen.

²For additional information on the "I, too, am Harvard" campaign that inspired similar campaigns both nationally and internationally see Lee (2014).

For a variety of reasons, intergroup attitudes and policy support are critical to integration and to the type of *full inclusion*, not just representation, within mainstream settings like colleges and universities that can address social inequalities. For instance, negative intergroup attitudes among dominant group members (i.e., White Americans) can adversely impact marginalized group members. Such adverse impacts have been shown experimentally; White Americans primed with colorblind (vs. multicultural) ideologies have been shown to enact more prejudiced behaviors during interracial interactions which has the consequence of depleting cognitive resources from ethnic-minority interaction partners (Holoien & Shelton, 2012). However, positive intergroup attitudes, such as valuing diversity and multiculturalism, is associated with advantageous outcomes among marginalized group members. That is, multicultural ideologies among dominant group members have been shown to positively impact psychological engagement among marginalized group members (Plaut, Thomas, & Goren, 2009). Moreover, intergroup support for policy initiatives that create opportunities for inclusion among marginalized groups is often necessary for enacting and sustaining such institutional practices and efforts (see Brannon, Carter, Murdock-Perriera, & Higginbotham, 2018 for a discussion of backlash in response to inclusion efforts). Finally, multicultural relative to colorblind ideologies have been shown to be related to broader intergroup outcomes including less ethnocentrism or stronger ingroup relative to outgroup preferences (Ryan, Hunt, Weible, Peterson, & Casas, 2007).

From Problem to “Opportunities to Participate”: Why Inclusive Diversity Efforts?

In more recent years, reminiscent of the protests and collective action that defined the Civil Rights Movement—the era in which Dr. King penned the opening excerpt taken from his address to social scientists, college and university campuses in the U.S. have been the site of massive student protests. For instance, in 2015 these student protests gained widespread media attention and resulted in a collective effort among African American students and allies from over 80 U.S. colleges and universities to publicly list their demands tied to the promotion of inclusion and equity (<http://www.thedemands.org/>). Notably, a commonly cited demand across these very different college and university campuses (e.g., elite-private schools, large public schools, small liberal arts colleges) involves support for inclusive diversity efforts (e.g., academic courses and activities associated with African American culture/ other marginalized groups' cultures). Demonstrating similar confidence in inclusive diversity efforts to promote positive change, in more recent years, colleges and universities, as well as primary school systems (i.e., middle schools, high schools) in the United States have revised and revamped curriculum standards to explicitly include perspectives and histories associated with marginalized groups (Steinmetz, 2018). Why might participation

in such inclusive diversity efforts that create opportunities to learn about the culture and history of marginalized groups be related to critical intergroup outcomes?

Past experimental research supports the potential for engagement with cultural ideas and practices associated with marginalized groups to benefit intergroup outcomes. For instance, positive sentiments and attitudes associated with cross-group friendships or even social connections between outgroup members do not always generalize beyond the dyad to impact feelings and attitudes toward the broader outgroup (e.g., subtyping; Kunda & Oleson, 1995; see also, Carnaghi & Yzerbyt, 2007). Brannon and Walton (2013) theorized that opportunities to take part in a cultural activity associated with an outgroup could afford generalization, allowing an interaction with a single outgroup member to symbolically feel like an interaction with the broader group. That is, they theorized that because cultural activities can be representative of the broader group, symbolizing a group's values and functioning often times as a source of meaning and pride (Markus, 2008; see also Brannon, Markus, & Taylor, 2015; Jones, 2003), the action of participating in such activities by outgroup members should have positive consequences for intergroup attitudes. Brannon and Walton (2013) found support for this prediction; they also found that the impact on intergroup attitudes was immediate and lasting (e.g., a follow-up with participants, on average 6 months later, revealed persistent positive intergroup attitudes and policy support).

Moreover, research that has created opportunities to read literature that provides counter-stereotypical narratives and insights into the cultural practices of negatively stereotyped outgroups has found evidence of more positive outgroup attitudes including behavioral intentions and empathy among children (Cameron, Rutland, Brown, & Douch, 2006) and adult (Johnson, Jasper, Griffin, & Huffman, 2013) samples. And, in a classic intergroup study described in substantial detail by Gordon Allport in *On the Nature of Prejudice*, F.T. Smith (1943) found that White American graduate students who had contact with African Americans and had the cross-group cultural experience of spending two consecutive weekends in Harlem, New York (at the time a predominately African American community) and gaining exposure to African American cultural ideas and practices (e.g., poetry) reported more positive intergroup attitudes immediately and over-time. Allport described the type of contact in the F.T. Smith study as "knowledge-giving contact" (1954, p. 266).

Building on these past findings, the present research asks whether institutional efforts, rather than more elaborate laboratory and field manipulations, to provide "knowledge-giving contact" tied to cultural ideas and practices associated with marginalized groups can be related to more positive intergroup outcomes. Importantly, in a departure from much of the past laboratory and field experiments that have investigated engagement in cultural ideas and practices associated with marginalized groups through processes involving actual or extended contact with

an outgroup member the present research tests the effect of such engagement absent such intergroup processes. Thus, the present research offers an ecologically valid test of whether participating in an inclusive diversity effort, by itself or without the involvement of a cross-group member, can be related to more positive intergroup attitudes. This question has theoretical and practical importance as support and opposition to inclusive diversity efforts including curriculum practices are strongly debated and it has implications for education policy at the primary (e.g., middle and high schools) and postsecondary (i.e., colleges and universities) levels.

Engagement with inclusive diversity efforts within education settings have been shown to facilitate positive social, academic and health outcomes among members of marginalized groups. For instance, Brannon et al. (2015) found that randomly assigning African American college students to be exposed to an academic course that was inclusive of African American ideas and practices (e.g., African American literature) enhanced academic problem solving and persistence. Similarly, Rheinschmidt-Same, John-Henderson, and Mendoza-Denton (2017) found that living in a Latino/a/x cultural themed dorm was related to physiological health benefits among Latino/a/x American college students. Moreover, a robust literature on culturally relevant pedagogy theorizes and finds support for the importance of incorporating cultural ideas and practices associated with marginalized groups within school and classroom settings (see Ladson-Billings, 1995; Sleeter & Carmona, 2016). And, among high school students at risk-of dropping of school, Dee and Penner (2017) found that taking part in an ethnic-studies curriculum is associated with positive academic and engagement outcomes (i.e., attendance, GPA gains). Extending such findings among members of marginalized groups, the present research examines the association between engagement in inclusive diversity efforts and intergroup outcomes among White and Asian college students³ across two datasets (Study 1 uses the *National Longitudinal Survey of Freshmen (NLSF)*; Study 2 tests a conceptual replication using the *Michigan Student Study*).

Contact and Diversity Exposure: Person, Group, Institutional, and Cultural

The present research examines participation in inclusive diversity efforts while controlling for other types of contact and diversity exposure that have been associated with positive intergroup outcomes. It tests the prediction that engagement with diversity efforts will be related to positive intergroup outcomes; and

³The present research focuses on White and Asian college students given its interest in intergroup attitudes. While Latino/a/x and African Americans remain underrepresented on campus, Whites and Asians are often not underrepresented. Likewise multicultural policies including affirmative action often targets Latino/a/x and African Americans.

it examines this hypothesis while taking into account other types of contact and exposure to diversity at the individual and institutional level. Specifically, across studies, it controls for interpersonal contact (i.e., cross-race roommates, cross-race friendship; Page-Gould, Mendoza-Denton, & Tropp, 2008; Shook & Fazio, 2008; see also Gaither & Sommers, 2013). It also accounts for more general contact with marginalized groups (i.e., interactions, Bowman & Park, 2015; Pettigrew, 1998; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). At the institutional-level, the present research controls for demographic diversity (Study 1). Past research suggests the advantages for marginalized groups of greater demographic diversity for sense of belonging, inclusion and safety within schools (Juvonen, Nishina, & Graham, 2006). Similarly, Okafor, Stobaugh, Van Ryn, and Talwalkar (2016) find that African American patients experience better health outcomes in hospitals with greater racial diversity among current inpatients. Okafor et al. (2016) suggest that the benefits reaped by marginalized group members associated with greater demographic diversity may be related to more positive intergroup attitudes among nonmarginalized group members. That is, they suggest that greater demographic diversity creates more opportunities for intergroup contact among nonmarginalized group members, and that increased contact might facilitate more positive intergroup attitudes. This suggestion, in their research involving patient and doctor interactions, is consistent with research which finds that negative intergroup attitudes among doctors is negatively related to health outcomes among marginalized group members (Dovidio et al., 2008; Penner et al., 2010). Finally, across studies, the present research controls for prior intergroup attitudes and diversity exposure (i.e., demographic racial diversity) in high school and hometown neighborhood (see Schmid, Ramiah, & Hewstone, 2014). By controlling for other types of contact, institutional-level racial demographic diversity, prior intergroup attitudes and diversity exposure, the present research offers a strong examination of inclusive diversity efforts. Thus, it has the potential to contribute to understandings of whether inclusive diversity efforts help to foster more positive integration, more positive intergroup attitudes and policy support, above and beyond other types of contact and demographic characteristics.

Study 1

Method

Dataset and Participants

The NLSF was used to examine the research question (see Bowen & Bok, 2016 for an elaborated description of the dataset and sample). The NLSF dataset tracked college experiences as well as social and academic outcomes among a large and

diverse sample of U.S. college students across 27 colleges and universities.^{4,5} The sample was surveyed across five waves of data collection that tracked experiences from precollege (e.g., high school) through senior year, between 1999 and 2003. To examine intergroup attitudes, Whites and Asians were selected in the sample ($n = 998$ Whites; $n = 959$ Asians). The sample size varies across analyses due to missing data. Unless otherwise indicated the measures were taken from wave 5 (senior year of college). Correlations among variables are shown in Table 1.

Measures. *Theoretical Outcomes: Intergroup Attitudes and Policy Support.*

Closeness to Hispanics and Blacks (relative to Whites). During their senior year respondents answered questions that assessed closeness to different racial/ethnic groups. Questions that assessed closeness to Whites, Hispanics and Blacks were selected ("how close do you feel to Hispanics/Blacks/Whites in terms of your ideas and feelings about things," (0-very distant; 10-very close). First, a mean composite score for closeness to Hispanic and Blacks was calculated, $r = .77$, $p < .001$; $M = 4.98$, $S.D. = 1.66$. Then, a difference score was computed by subtracting the mean composite for closeness to Hispanics and Blacks from closeness to Whites ($M_{Whites} = 6.19$, $S.D. = 1.98$; $M_{diff} = 1.21$, $S.D. = 1.97$).

Closeness to Hispanic and Black students (relative to White students). During their senior year respondents answered questions that assessed closeness to different racial/ethnic groups at their college campuses. Questions that assessed closeness to White, Hispanic and Black students were selected ("how close do you feel to Hispanic/Black/white students at (name of most recent college attended) in terms of your ideas and feelings about things," (0-very distant; 10-very close). First, a mean composite score for closeness to Hispanic and Black students was calculated, $r = .77$, $p < .001$; $M = 5.46$, $S.D. = 1.76$. Then, a difference score was computed by subtracting the mean composite for closeness to Hispanics and Black students from closeness to White students ($M_{Whitestudents} = 6.22$, $S.D. = 1.93$; $M_{diff} = .76$, $S.D. = 1.77$).

Closeness to Hispanic and Black beneficiaries of affirmative action (relative to White students). During their senior year respondents answered questions

⁴The final sample for the NLSF dataset contains a total of 27 rather than 28 colleges and universities.

⁵The correlation between interaction with Hispanic and Black students was significant yet the magnitude of the correlation was modest. Given the conceptual association between interactions with Black and Hispanic students, as members of marginalized groups, a mean composite score was created. This correlation for these variables is much higher in Study 1 using the NLSF dataset.

Table 1. Correlations between Independent and Dependent Variables, Study 1 ($N = 1,957$)

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|-------|----|
| 1. Ethnicity | — | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Prior Intergroup Closeness | -.10*** | — | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Prior Demographic Diversity Exposure | -.018 | -.032 | — | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Cross-race Roommate | -.013 | .017 | .002 | — | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Cross-race friend | .023 | -.050* | .026 | .138*** | — | | | | | | | |
| 6. Outgroup interactions | -.004 | -.065** | .049 | .11*** | .23*** | — | | | | | | |
| 7. Inclusive diversity effort engagement (academic course) | .035 | -.036 | -.008 | .039 | .068** | .023 | — | | | | | |
| 8. Composite closeness to Hispanics and Blacks (relative to Whites) | -.075** | .22*** | -.13*** | -.018 | -.12*** | -.24*** | -.11*** | — | | | | |
| 9. Policy support: anti-affirmative action | .037 | .043 | -.036 | .042 | -.033 | -.11*** | -.09*** | .24*** | — | | | |
| 10. Policy support: anti-multicultural emphasis | -.09*** | .071** | .005 | .054* | -.040 | .002 | -.10*** | .21*** | .32*** | — | | |
| 11. Policy support: antistructural explanations inequality | .12*** | .023 | .000 | .014 | -.033 | -.14*** | -.07*** | .16*** | .42*** | .19*** | — | |
| 12. Intergroup relations growth | -.022 | .038 | -.020 | .078** | .061* | .22*** | .062* | -.001 | -.061* | .010 | -.051 | — |

Note. * $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$, *** $p \leq .001$.

that assessed closeness to Blacks and Hispanics who benefitted from affirmative action. These questions were stated as follows: "how close do you feel to Blacks/Hispanics who benefit from affirmative action in terms of your ideas and feelings about things." A mean composite score for closeness to Hispanic and Black who benefitted from affirmative action was calculated, $r = .97$, $p < .001$, $M = 4.20$, $S.D. = 2.25$. A difference score was computed by subtracting the mean composite for closeness to Hispanics and Black beneficiaries from closeness to White students ($M_{diff} = 2.02$, $S.D. = 2.80$).

Composite closeness to Hispanics and Blacks (relative to Whites). The three measures of closeness to Hispanics and Blacks (relative to Whites), capturing a global (general groups), local (groups on college campus), and specific (group members that are affirmative action beneficiaries) were averaged to create a composite, $M = 1.31$, $S.D. = 1.85$, $\alpha = .78$.

Policy support: negative attitudes toward the merits of affirmative action. To capture support for affirmative action policies an item that asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement with the following statement was used, "Affirmative action has lowered academic standards on (name of most recent college attended)'s campus?," 0-strongly disagree; 10-strongly agree, $M = 2.89$, $S.D. = 2.85$.

Policy support: backlash toward multicultural (vs. colorblind) approaches to diversity. To capture a multicultural relative to colorblind approach to diversity an item that assessed backlash to emphasizing diversity (e.g., indicating that diversity is emphasized too much relative to not enough) was selected. Respondents were asked the following question, "How do you see (name of most recent college attended)'s commitment to racial and ethnic diversity on campus? is diversity emphasized:," 1-way too little, 2-somewhat too little, 3-just enough, 4-somewhat too much, 5-way too much, $M = 2.92$, $S.D. = .95$.

Policy support: endorsement of individual (vs. structural) explanations for inequality. To index endorsement of individual relative to structural explanations for inequality, two items related to individual explanations (i.e., blame) for inequality were selected. Respondents answered the following question for Blacks and Hispanics, "Many blacks/Hispanics have only themselves to blame for not doing better in life. If they tried harder, they would do better," 0-strongly disagree; 10-strongly agree, $r = .84$, $p < .001$, $M = 2.60$, $S.D. = 2.39$.

Perceptions of intergroup relations growth in college. Although marginalized groups remain underrepresented in higher education contexts more broadly,

university and college campuses, relative to other settings, often offer opportunities for intergroup contact. Further, many colleges and universities have missions aimed at preparing students to engage in an increasingly diverse and multicultural society (Hurtado, Engberg, Ponjuan, & Landreman, 2002). To index positive perceptions of intergroup relations growth in college two items were used, "My college experience has made me more tolerant of other racial and ethnic groups"; "My college experience has improved my relationships with other racial and ethnic groups," 0-*totally disagree*; 10-*totally agree*; $r = .77$, $p < .001$; $M = 7.18$, $S.D. = 2.33$.

Theoretical Predictors: Inclusive Diversity Effort Engagement and Covariates

Inclusive diversity effort engagement (Latino/a/x or African American course). Across waves 2–4, respondents reported the academic courses taken including the department that offered the course. Using this information across all four years of college, whether respondents took an academic course offered in "African American Studies," "Hispanic Studies/Latin American Studies," "Ethnic Studies/ Cultural Diversities" was coded as 1, students who never took a class in these departments were coded as 0. Across four years in college, 10.8% ($n = 211$) of respondents had taken an academic course that engaged Latino/a or African American culture.

Cross-race (Hispanic or Black) roommate. During respondents' sophomore and junior years (wave 3 and 4) information about the racial/ethnic background of roommates was assessed. To capture the presence (or absence) of a cross-race roommate, respondents who reported having a Hispanic or Black roommate during this period were coded as 1, those who did not report having a Hispanic or Black roommate were coded as 0. Cross-race roommates were indicated by 15.6% ($n = 305$) of respondents.

Outgroup (Hispanic or Black) close friend. Respondents were asked to "think of the four people at (name of most recent college attended) with whom you have been closest during your college years." For the four indicated close friends respondents reported information about their background. The racial/ethnic background of each nominated individual was used to assess the presence (or absence) of an outgroup (Hispanic or Black) friend. Respondents who reported a close Hispanic or Black friend were coded as 1, those who did not were coded as 0. Outgroup close friends were indicated by 16% ($n = 314$) of respondents.

Outgroup interactions. To assess contact with different racial/ethnic groups respondents were asked "how much interaction have you had over the past four years with members of the following groups." Two items that assessed

interaction with Hispanics and Blacks were used, 0-*no interaction*; 10-*a great deal of interaction*; $r = .49, p < .001; M = 5.04, S.D. = 2.08$.

Prior measure: composite closeness to Hispanics and Blacks (relative to Whites). Identical to the measures of closeness to Hispanics and Blacks and closeness to Hispanics and Blacks affirmative action beneficiaries at wave 5, senior year of college, were asked of respondents at wave 1.⁶ However, at wave 1 respondents were not asked to indicate their sense of closeness to other students. Thus, this composite was created similarly to the composite dependent measure for wave 5 except it is an average of two rather than three difference scores. This composite was used as a prior-measure of intergroup closeness, $r = .58, p < .001; M = 2.47, S.D. = 4.19$.

Racial composition of high school and neighborhood. During wave 1, respondents were asked to indicate the percent of their high school that was White, Asian, Black, and Hispanic. Respondents also indicated these percentages for their neighborhood. To create a composite measure, the percentage of Whites and Asians were summed and the percentage of Hispanics and Blacks were summed. Then the summed percentage of Hispanics and Blacks was divided by the summed percentage of Asians and Whites. This created a score that captured the percentage of Hispanics and Blacks relative to Whites and Asian, higher scores indicate a greater proportion of Hispanics and Blacks. The score was calculated for high school and neighborhood. The two items were correlated ($r = .44, p < .001$), thus a mean composite was created, $M = .45, S.D. = 3.31$.

Institutional-level demographic diversity. For the colleges and universities represented within the NLSF school-level demographic information is available for the respondents' senior year of college. This information was used to create a score of the relative sum percentage of Hispanic and Black to White and Asian students, $M = .14, S.D. = .047$.

Results

To test the prediction that engagement with an inclusive diversity effort, taking a Latino/a/x or African American course, would be related to more positive intergroup attitudes and policy support hierarchical liner modeling was used.⁷

⁶Intergroup closeness measures were not asked during waves 2 through 4, thus the most recent prior measure to use for respondents in the NLSF dataset was from wave 1.

⁷Categorical variables were added to the models uncentered, noncategorical variables were added grand-centered. The statistics with robust standard errors are reported.

Individual, student data was entered in Level 1; school, institutional data was entered in Level 2. In the reported analyses inclusive diversity effort engagement (having taken a Latino/a/x or African American course) was entered as the predictor variable along with the previously noted covariates as well as respondent ethnicity (0 = White; 1 = Asian).

Composite closeness to Hispanics and Blacks (relative to Whites). Consistent with the hypothesis, inclusive diversity effort engagement predicted more positive attitudes toward Hispanic and Blacks. That is, the reported experience of taking a Latino/a/x or African American studies course was related to smaller differences in closeness or more similarity in closeness to Hispanics and Blacks relative to Whites, $\beta = -.57$, $t(1,178) = -3.44$, $p < .001$. Ethnicity ($\beta = -.20$, $t(1,178) = -1.98$, $p = .048$), outgroup interactions ($\beta = -.19$, $t(1,178) = -7.16$, $p < .001$), and the composite for neighborhood and high school racial composition ($\beta = -.07$, $t(1,178) = -5.002$, $p < .001$) also emerged as significant predictors. Prior intergroup closeness was a significant predictor yet in the opposite direction ($\beta = .075$, $t(1,178) = 6.24$, $p < .001$). All other predictors including at the institutional level, were not significant, $ts \leq |1.75|$, $ps \geq .08$.

Policy support: negative attitudes toward the merits of affirmative action. Lower scores indicate greater support for the merits of affirmation action. As hypothesized, taking a Latino/a or African American course emerged as a significant predictor, $\beta = -.93$, $t(1,178) = -4.58$, $p < .001$. Outgroup interaction also emerged as a significant predictor in the same direction, $\beta = -.12$, $t(1,178) = -2.78$, $p = .006$. Having a cross-race roommate was also a significant predictor, yet in the opposite direction, indicating less support for the merits of affirmative action, $\beta = .50$, $t(1,178) = 2.92$, $p = .004$. All other predictors, including at the institutional-level, were not significant, $ts \leq |1.22|$, $ps \geq .22$.

Policy support: backlash toward multicultural (vs. colorblind) approaches to diversity. Lower scores indicate greater support for multicultural approaches to diversity, rather than expressing that diversity is emphasized too much (backlash). Consistent with hypothesis, taking a Latino/a/x or African American course emerged as a significant predictor, $\beta = -.37$, $t(1,178) = -4.21$, $p < .001$. Having a cross-race close friend also emerged as a significant predictor, $\beta = -.12$, $t(1,178) = -2.47$, $p = .014$. Also, institutional-level demographic diversity emerged as a significant predictor yet in the opposite direction, $\beta = 2.03$, $t(1,178) = 2.89$, $p = .008$. All other predictors were not significant, $ts \leq |1.61|$, $ps \geq .11$.

Policy support: endorsement of individual (vs. structural) explanations for inequality. Lower scores indicate less blame/ endorsement of individual (rather

than structural) explanations for inequality. As hypothesized, taking a Latina/o/x or African American course was a significant predictor, $\beta = -.65$, $t(1,178) = -2.86$, $p = .004$. Respondent ethnicity ($\beta = .50$, $t(1,178) = 4.42$, $p < .001$) and outgroup interaction ($\beta = -.16$, $t(1,178) = -7.03$, $p < .001$) also emerged as significant predictors. All other predictors, including at the institutional-level, were not significant, $ts \leq |1.32|$, $ps \geq .19$.

Perceptions of intergroup relations growth in college. Taking a Latino/a/x or African American studies course emerged as a significant predictor of perceived intergroup relations growth in college ($\beta = .36$, $t(1,178) = 2.46$, $p = .014$). Also, outgroup interaction emerged as a significant predictor ($\beta = .26$, $t(1,178) = 8.87$, $p < .001$). All other predictors, including at the institutional-level, were not significant, $ts \leq |1.81|$, $ps \geq .062$.

Study 2: Conceptual Replication

Method

Dataset and participants. *The Michigan Student Study: Opinions, Expectations, and Experiences of Undergraduate Students* (MSS) is a longitudinal survey that was administered to undergraduate students from 1990 to 1994, it tracks students' first-year through senior year of college. The MSS was used, in the present study, to examine the association between participation in inclusive diversity efforts and intergroup attitudes (see Gurin [1999] for an elaborated description of the dataset and sample). To examine intergroup attitudes toward Blacks and Hispanics, Whites and Asians were selected in the sample ($n = 1,075$ Whites; $n = 249$ Asians). The sample size varies across analyses due to missing data. Unless otherwise indicated the measures were taken from wave 4 (senior year of college). Correlations among variables are shown in Table 2.

Measures. Theoretical Outcome Variables: Intergroup Attitudes and Policy Support

Closeness to Hispanic and Black students (relative to own group). Questions that assessed similarity between important "life values like work and family" associated with their racial/ethnic group and those of other groups was selected to index relative outgroup closeness. Respondents were asked "how similar or different are your group's values and those of the following groups," (1-*much more similar than different*, 2-*somewhat more similar*, 3-*somewhat more different*, 4-*much more different than similar*). A mean composite for similarity in values to Blacks and Hispanics was created, $r = .76$, $p < .001$; $M = 2.43$, $S.D. = .91$.

Table 2. Correlations between Independent and Dependent Variables, Study 2 (N = 1,321)

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|----|
| 1. Ethnicity | — | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Prior intergroup closeness | .25*** | — | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Prior demographic diversity exposure | .19*** | .001 | — | | | | | | | |
| 4. Cross-race friend | .055* | -.063 | .058* | — | | | | | | |
| 5. Outgroup interactions | -.18*** | -.22*** | .055* | .34*** | — | | | | | |
| 6. Inclusive diversity effort engagement (Academic event/course) | .13*** | -.027 | .069* | .32*** | .15*** | — | | | | |
| 7. Composite closeness to Hispanics and Blacks (relative to own group) | .23*** | .43*** | .007 | -.10*** | -.20*** | -.053 | — | | | |
| 8. Policy support: anti-affirmative action | -.16*** | .16*** | -.14*** | -.09*** | -.08** | -.30*** | .18*** | — | | |
| 9. Policy support: anti-multicultural emphasis | -.20*** | .14*** | -.12*** | -.08* | -.07** | -.36*** | .09** | .71*** | — | |
| 10. Policy support: antistructural explanations inequality | -.24*** | .12*** | -.17*** | -.070** | -.059* | -.30*** | .16*** | .74*** | .72*** | — |

Note. * $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$, *** $p \leq .001$.

Policy support: negative attitudes toward the merits of affirmative action.

Four items were selected to create an index of attitudes toward the intellectual merits of affirmative action policies. All four items loaded on a single factor ($\geq .702$), which accounted for 54.65% of the variance in the outcome (eigenvalue = 2.19). The items included, "In the long run, a greatly increased enrollment of students of color will enhance the excellence of universities"; "Attempts to bring multiculturalism into the curriculum come at the expense of other topics students need to learn," reverse coded; "Affirmative action for people of color, despite its underlying concern for equality, has helped reduce the academic standards of colleges and universities," reverse coded; Different admissions criteria with respect to SAT and ACT scores may be justified for some students of color. The items were answered on a scale, 1-*strongly agree*, 2-*agree*, 3-*disagree*, 4-*strongly disagree*. The items were averaged to create a composite, $\alpha = .72$; $M = 2.56$, $S.D. = .62$.

Policy support: backlash toward multicultural (vs. colorblind) approaches to diversity.

Six items were selected to create an index of attitudes toward the use of multicultural (vs.) colorblind diversity policies. All six items loaded on a single factor ($\geq .60$), which accounted for 54.28% of the variance in the outcome (eigenvalue = 3.26). The items included, "Colleges and universities should have a requirement for graduation that students take at least one course covering the role of ethnicity in society"; "The current focus on multiculturalism in our schools undermines the common ties that bind us as a nation," reverse coded; "An understanding of the roots of the American experience requires studying African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native American and Asian American as well as European history"; "The hiring of more faculty of color should be a top priority of this University"; "By including multicultural perspectives in the curriculum, universities are fulfilling the real purpose of higher education"; "The contributions of Asian American, Hispanic/Latino, African American, and Native American writers should be essential elements in a college's core curriculum." The items were answered on a scale, 1-*strongly agree*, 2-*agree*, 3-*disagree*, 4-*strongly disagree*. The items were averaged to create a composite, $\alpha = .83$; $M = 2.29$ $S.D. = .59$.

Policy support: endorsement of individual (vs. structural) explanations for inequality.

Five items were selected to create an index of endorsement of individual (vs. structural) explanations for inequality. All five items loaded on a single factor ($\geq .648$), which accounted for 48.24% of the variance in the outcome (eigenvalue = 2.41). The items included, "Despite our concern over racial injustice, colleges and universities do not have a primary responsibility to correct the situation," reverse coded; "Students of color are given advantages that discriminate against other students at colleges and universities," reverse coded; "A high priority should be given to see that students of color receive financial aid for education after high school"; "Continued racial and ethnic discrimination

within higher education requires that universities aggressively remove institutional barriers that promote inequality"; "Colleges and universities should not provide resources to support educational, cultural, and social activities run by different groups of color," reverse coded. The items were answered on a scale, 1-*strongly agree*, 2-*agree*, 3-*disagree*, 4-*strongly disagree*. The items were averaged to create a composite, $\alpha = .73$; $M = 2.30$, $S.D. = .55$.

Theoretical Predictor Variables: Inclusive Diversity Engagement and Covariates

Inclusive diversity engagement (Latino/a/x or African American activities).

To assess engagement in inclusive diversity efforts the following item in which respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they participated in "diversity activities (e.g., programs, events, courses) at the University of Michigan" was selected. There were three responses to the item that were relevant to engagement with Latino/a/x or African American culture: "Hispanic Heritage Celebration events," "Martin Luther King Symposium events," and "Black History Month events." Respondents who indicated participating in one or more of these events were coded "1" and respondents who indicated not participating in any of the events were coded "0"; $n = 488$ indicated participation in an inclusive diversity effort.

Outgroup (Hispanic or Black) close friend. Respondents were asked to "think of [their] six closest friends at Michigan." For the six indicated close friends respondents reported information about their background. The racial/ethnic background of each nominated individual was used to assess the presence (or absence) of an outgroup (Hispanic or Black) friend. Respondents who reported a close Hispanic or Black friend were coded as 1, those who did not were coded as 0; $n = 297$ indicated having an outgroup close friends.

Outgroup interaction. To assess contact with different racial/ethnic groups respondents were asked to "indicate the extent to which [they] interact with students from each of the following groups," 1-*no interaction*; 2-*little interaction*; 3-*some interaction*; 4-*substantial interaction*; 5-*the most interaction*. a composite, $r = .338$,⁴ $p < .001$; $M = 2.56$, $S.D. = .69$.

Prior measure: closeness to Hispanic and Black students (relative to own group). Identical questions used in measure closeness to Hispanic and Black students were asked at wave 3, during respondents' junior year of college. These two items were used to index relative outgroup closeness. A mean composite for similarity in values to Blacks and Hispanics was created, $r = .67$, $p < .001$; $M = 2.35$, $S.D. = .84$.

Racial composition of high school and neighborhood. Two separate items were used to assess prior diversity exposure in high school and neighborhood. One item asked respondents about the racial composition of the high school they attended, 1-all or nearly all white, 2-mostly white, 3-half white and half people of color, 4-mostly people of color, 5-all or nearly all people of color, $M = 1.75$, $S.D. = .84$. A second item asked respondents about the racial composition of the neighborhood in which they grew up, 1-all or nearly all white, 2-mostly white, 3-half white and half people of color, 4-mostly people of color, 5-all or nearly all people of color, $M = 1.56$, $S.D. = .78$. The two items were highly correlated ($r = .61$, $p < .001$), thus a mean composite was created, $M = 1.66$, $S.D. = .73$.

Results

To examine the association between participation in inclusive diversity efforts and intergroup attitudes multilevel linear regressions were run. Participation in a Latino/a/x or African American cultural activity was entered as a predictor variable, with the previously indicated covariates as well as respondent ethnicity (0 = White; 1 = Asian). Each outcome variable was tested separately.

Closeness to Hispanic and Black students (relative to own group). Negative values reflect greater perceived similarity in values or closeness. As hypothesized, inclusive diversity effort participation emerged as a significant predictor, $\beta = -.069$, $t(706) = -2.05$, $p = .041$, the negative values indicate that participation is related to greater closeness with Hispanic and Black students relative to one's racial/ethnic ingroup. Ethnicity emerged as a significant predictor ($\beta = .15$, $t(706) = 4.09$, $p < .001$). Prior intergroup closeness emerged as a predictor in the opposite direction ($\beta = .38$, $t(706) = 10.98$, $p < .001$). Interactions with Black and Hispanic students was a marginal predictor, $\beta = -.072$, $t(706) = -1.94$, $p = .053$. All other variables were not significant predictors, $ts \leq |.90|$, $ps \geq .37$.

Policy support: negative attitudes toward the merits of affirmative action. Negative values reflect greater support for the merits of affirmative action. As hypothesized, participation in an activity associated with Latino/a/x or African American culture was related to more supportive attitudes toward the merits of affirmative action, $\beta = -.28$, $t(729) = -8.08$, $p < .001$. Ethnicity ($\beta = -.16$, $t(729) = -4.18$, $p < .001$) and prior intergroup closeness (opposite direction, $\beta = .19$, $t(729) = 5.34$, $p < .001$) also emerged as significant predictors. All other independent variables were not significant, $ts \leq |1.53|$, $ps \geq .13$.

Policy support: backlash toward multicultural (vs. colorblind) approaches to diversity. Negative values reflect greater support for multicultural approaches

to diversity. As hypothesized, participation in an activity associated with Latino/a/x or African American culture was related to more supportive attitudes toward multicultural approaches to diversity, $\beta = -.35$, $t(729) = -10.19$, $p < .001$. Ethnicity ($\beta = -.18$, $t(729) = -5.00$, $p < .001$) and prior intergroup closeness (opposite direction, $\beta = .17$, $t(729) = 4.94$, $p < .001$) also emerged as significant predictors. All other independent variables were not significant, $ts \leq |.94|$, $ps \geq .35$.

Policy support: endorsement of individual (vs. structural) explanations for inequality. Smaller values reflect greater support for structural explanation for inequality. As hypothesized, participation in an activity associated with Latino/a/x or African American culture was related to greater endorsement of structural explanations for inequality, $\beta = -.29$, $t(728) = -8.41$, $p < .001$. Ethnicity ($\beta = -.21$, $t(728) = -5.62$, $p < .001$), prior intergroup closeness (opposite direction, $\beta = .17$, $t(728) = 4.88$, $p < .001$), and the composite for racial composition of high school and neighborhood ($\beta = -.088$, $t(728) = -2.49$, $p = .013$) also emerged as significant predictors. All other independent variables were not significant, $ts \leq |1.67|$, $ps \geq .095$.

General Discussion

Across two studies, the present research finds support for the power of participation in inclusive diversity efforts (courses, activities) to be associated with intergroup benefits (i.e., greater intergroup closeness and more positive perceptions of inequality addressing policies). Moreover, the present research finds support while taking into account other types of intergroup contact, institutional characteristics (demographic diversity), and prior measures (previous intergroup attitudes and prior diversity exposure). Taken together, the findings of the current research contribute to perspectives that in today's increasingly diverse society optimal conditions for integration should involve not only person-level contact but also the promise of cultural contact (see Brannon, Taylor, Higginbotham, & Henderson, 2017). Given documented links between attitudes and policy support (see Yogeewaran, Verkuyten, Osborne, & Sibley, 2018), the present findings also contribute to theorizing for interventions that can address attitude change and in turn impact policy support.

What processes underlie the observed associations between cultural participation and intergroup attitudes and policy support? This question of "how" would be helpful for future research. Past experimental research that has examined intergroup contact and engagement in cultural activities associated with marginalized groups have examined processes related to social connection and consistency theories (see Brannon & Walton, 2013). Given that participation in an academic course that involves diverse cultural ideas and practices are likely to expose

students to more elaborated, vivid, and even counter-stereotypical representations of marginalized groups it is possible that perspective-taking plays a role in facilitating intergroup benefits. Perhaps such courses invite more spontaneous perspective taking; past research highlights the importance of perspective taking for positively impacting intergroup attitudes and policy support (Broockman & Kalla, 2016; Todd, Bodenhausen, & Galinsky, 2012). It is also possible that taking part in inclusive diversity efforts allows for more accurate perspective taking or knowledge of history. Past research and theorizing discussed in this special issue by Adams, Salter, Estrada-Villalta, and Noemi (2018) highlight the role of historical knowledge in intergroup perceptions and policy support (see Nelson, Adams, & Salter, 2013).

Some limitations of the present research involve the use of secondary data analysis and the correlational nature of survey data. The measures used and created to conceptually index outcome and predictor variables are limited by the questions that were originally asked and constrained by the time points during which they were asked. Experimental and more controlled research is needed to test causality. Although the present research did include measures of prior intergroup attitudes, further research is needed to understand what drives taking part in an inclusive diversity effort like an academic course or activity on Latino/a/x or African American culture by White and Asian college students. In the present research, participation is likely a reflection of individual and personal interest. Yet, given current policies that are increasingly requiring engagement with courses and other academic experiences associated with marginalized groups it is important to understand if the present findings hold when participation is not freely chosen.

To conclude, Dr. King's vision of a society in which "integration is not a problem, but an opportunity to participate in the beauty of diversity" provides an optimistic and encouraging lens with which to view contact and intergroup relations. In reflecting on integration, especially in the context of schooling and higher education, a crucial lesson from the past involves the importance of fully recognizing and leveraging the power of mainstream institutions like colleges and universities to transform society (e.g., *Brown vs. Board of Education*). In the past social scientists have used research and theory to champion the dire need for physical contact, representation, and integration. Today those needs remain. Yet, contemporary times also signal the promise of advocating for cultural contact and the inclusion of cultural ideas and practices associated with marginalized groups within mainstream settings. The leveraging of opportunities for physical or person contact as well as cultural contact holds the promise of realizing Dr. King's vision of shifting integration from a "problem" to an opportunity to "participate in the beauty of diversity."

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