The principle-implementation gap in attitudes towards racial inequality (and how to close it)

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Abstract

Research on attitudes towards racial equality has identified an apparent paradox, sometimes described as the 'Principle-Implementation gap'. White Americans accept equality as an ideal yet reject interventions designed to achieve that ideal. In this paper, we provide a critical review of empirical and theoretical work in the field and outline some directions for future research. Drawing on a programme of research conducted in post-apartheid South Africa, we argue for the value of: (1) widening the field beyond its traditional focus on white policy attitudes in the United States; (2) developing relational models that encompass more fully the perspectives of historically disadvantaged as well as historically advantaged communities; (3) making greater use of methods that elucidate how ordinary people themselves construct the meaning of the Principle-Implementation gap and how this informs, and indeed justifies and normalises, associated patterns of behaviour; and (4) prioritizing the difficult question of how to promote social change in societies where most citizens embrace equality as a noble end but often reject the means through which it might be accomplished. With regards to the latter – and given the ascendancy of prejudice-based explanations of the Principle-Implementation gap - the paper evaluates in particular some strengths and limitations of a prejudice-reduction model of social change.

The end of apartheid heralded a profound transformation of the South African political landscape. The society shifted from a system of government based on *de jure* segregation and racial inequality to a system in which racial segregation became illegal and equality was promised by a raft of government policies designed to redress the legacy of apartheid. More than twenty years after the collapse of apartheid, however, racial segregation and inequality continue to define South African life. A stark gap endures between the ideals of political transformation and the realities of everyday life for many ordinary South Africans. The society has failed to deliver the promises expressed within its new constitution, which enshrines the rights of all citizens, regardless of race, to enjoy adequate access to housing, health care, education, food, privacy, water, equitable treatment under the law, and freedom from violence and forced labour.

The research program that underpins this paper was driven by the problem of understanding how and why the ideals of equality in South Africa continue to be offset by widespread patterns of racial discrimination and disadvantage. Our focus is on the psychological dimension of this problem. That is, we want to understand why there remains a sizeable 'gap' between support for the principle of equality in post-apartheid society and support for its implementation. We assume that understanding this gap may inform explanations of why racial inequality persists, as well as interventions to promote social change.

The gap between the principle and the implementation of racial equality (hereafter the P-I Gap) is a permanent feature of public discourse in the post-apartheid era: a lightning rod for ideological debates about racial politics in the 'new' South Africa. For instance, on April 25, 2016, as we were preparing this paper, Fikile Mbalula, the South African Minister for Sport, banned the organization of international events in 2017 for sports bodies that have fallen short of 'transformation targets', including the traditionally white sports of rugby, cricket and netball. Bearing in mind that during apartheid such teams were comprised almost exclusively of white sportsmen and women, such targets are meant to ensure that national sports teams gradually become more representative of the racial demography of the society. However, while most South Africans now embrace the ideal that anyone should have an equal chance to represent their country, many reject the notion that racial quotas are an effective way to achieve this ideal. Moreover, resistance is polarized along racial lines. The majority of white South Africans *reject* the quota system in sport (82%); the majority of black South Africans *support* it (62%) (Durrheim, 2010, p.33).

What is true of attitudes towards government interventions to promote equality in sport is also true of interventions in other domains of social and economic life. The very term 'transformation' has become a source of political division. For some, South African society has already been 'transformed'; if anything, they argue, the problem is now reverse racism and unfair treatment of the white minority. For others, (white) elites have continued to cling to power and wealth, obstructing initiatives to achieve equality for the majority of South African citizens. In short, while most South Africans accept racial equality and

desegregation as ideals, there is both resistance and dissension at the level of support for policy implementation. This, in turn, expresses wider debates over how best to overcome the (racialized) structure of power and status relations in the post-apartheid era.

This complex pattern of political attitudes forms the backdrop to the present paper. It is a pattern that will be familiar to researchers working in the United States, whose attempts to understand the P-I gap are discussed in the paper's first section. The aim is not to provide an exhaustive review, which is increasingly an impossible task. After all, as Smith (1997) notes, there is now more survey data on racial attitudes than on any other non-commercial topic. Rather, our aim is to provide a broad overview of the main empirical, conceptual and methodological developments in the field, which will contextualise discussion in the rest of the paper. The second section of the paper discusses a programme of South African research, led by the first and second authors of this paper, and traces its implications for understanding the P-I gap. This programme features an accumulation of evidence from national and smaller scale surveys, field work, and interviews gathered over the past 15 years. The third section of the paper looks towards the future of research on the P-I gap, outlining potential directions for further research. This section builds both on the contributions of our South African work and on our broader reflections on the current state of the art of the wider literature on the P-I gap.

A few further opening thoughts may be helpful in order to contextualise the arguments presented in the rest of the paper. To begin with, we acknowledge of course that factors other than the P-I gap explain the persistence of racial segregation and inequality in post-

apartheid South Africa as elsewhere. For example, the fact that national sports teams remain 'unrepresentative' is not merely the result of racial attitudes and behaviours: it reflects a multitude of other causes, including lack of government investment in grass roots facilities, lack of accessible transport to sports facilities, particularly in rural regions, and failure to promote certain sports beyond their traditional player bases.

At the same time, however, we want to argue that understanding the P-I gap is crucial for at least two reasons. First, it clarifies the nature of resistance to social change not only amongst members of historically advantaged groups but also, at least in some policy contexts, amongst the historically disadvantaged themselves. The implications of the latter form of resistance, we want to argue, has been neglected in the majority of work on the P-I gap. Second, it provides a powerful illustration of the complex, historically evolving, nature of racism in an era when overt discrimination is increasingly seen as indefensible. For this reason, as we shall see, the P-I gap has emerged as focus of debates about the dividing line between 'principled conservatism' and 'racial prejudice'.

The PI gap: Empirical foundations

Protho and Grigg's (1960) original formulation of the P-I gap arose through analysis of public beliefs about democracy. They found that Americans tended to agree on democratic principles in the abstract, but to disagree on the concrete practices through which democracy might be realized. Their work showed how the concept of the P-I gap has purchase outside the narrow domain of race politics (e.g. see also Staérkle & Clémence,

2004). The vast majority of work on this gap, however, has focused on the gulf between white Americans' support for the ideals and their rejection of the practices of racial equality (e.g. see Schuman, Steeh & Bobo, 1988; Sears & Kinder, 1971; Jackman, 1978; Tuch & Hughes, 2011).

The emergence of this tradition of research is generally framed within a narrative about an historical shift in the nature of white racial attitudes in the United States (e.g. Bobo, 1988; Bobo, Kleugel & Smith, 1997). In the earlier decades of the last century, inequalities institutionalised by slavery and perpetuated by Jim Crow laws in the American South were associated with open hostility towards black Americans, crude stereotypes about their biological inferiority, and in principle support for racial segregation and discrimination. The decades following the end of the Second World War, however, saw a dramatic shift in White Americans' racial attitudes, representing a paradoxical blend of progress and resistance. Open expressions of biological racism and associated negative emotions declined markedly. There was growing acceptance that African Americans should enjoy equality of opportunity and full rights of citizenship. There was growing acceptance, too, that institutions of education, residence and employment should be racially integrated and that facilities such as public transport should be open to all citizens. So sweeping were these shifts that several items used in national attitude surveys had to be 'retired' owing to ceiling effects. For example, in their analysis of the NORC General Social Survey data between 1970 and 1972, Taylor, Sheatsley & Greeley (1978) remarked that items on scales measuring acceptance of racial integration of public facilities had become so 'settled in the public mind' that it was

difficult to find any whites in opposition; as such, survey items on the topic had ceased to reveal anything interesting or new.

At the same time, complicating a simple, linear narrative of progress towards racial egalitarianism, there were signs that new forms of racism were replacing the old-fashioned bigotry of the past (Bobo et al., 1997). On the one hand, as elaborated below, researchers traced the emergence of new varieties of prejudice - variously labelled 'aversive racism', 'racial ambivalence', 'modern racism', 'subtle prejudice', 'symbolic racism', 'laissez faire racism' and 'racial resentment' - through which negative affect towards black people was expressed in more subtle, qualified, and morally defensible forms. On the other hand, a substantial number of whites exhibited staunch opposition to interventions designed to improve the economic and social position of black Americans, a trend that persisted over time and continues to the present day (e.g. see Hutchings, 2009; Tuch & Hughes, 2011). As Jackman (1996, p.760) observed, a sharp disjuncture emerged between whites "… gradual elevation to lofty racial policy principles and their meagre support for policies designed to implement those principles."

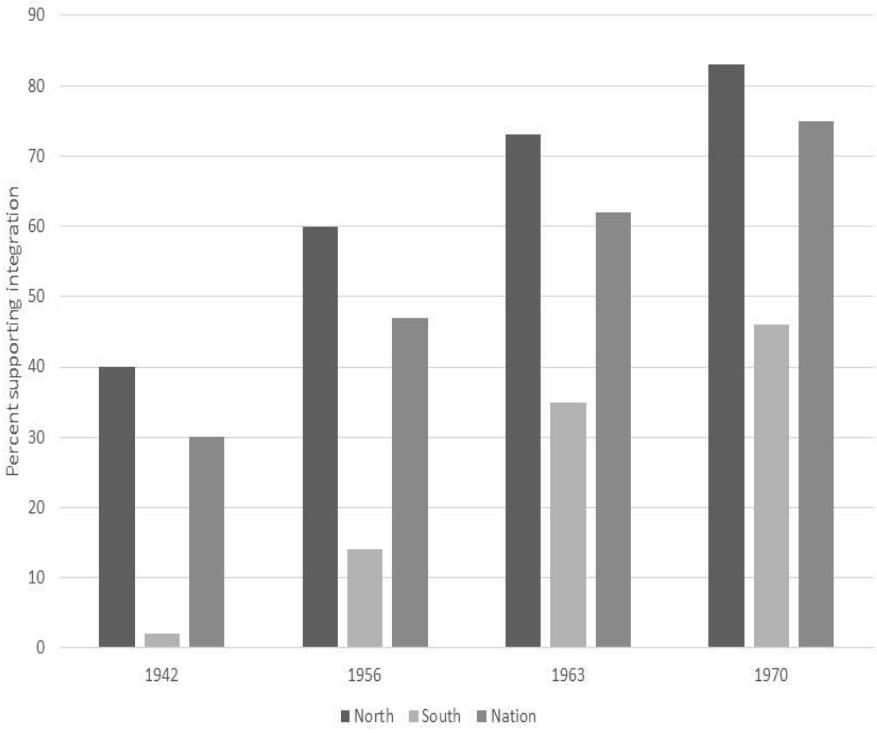

Figure 1 Attitudes towards the principle of racial integration of schools in the United States 1942 to 1970 (taken from Greeley & Sheatsley, 1971).

School desegregation provides a politically significant case study of the P-I gap. As Figure 1 conveys, in 1942 only 2% of white Southerners felt that 'white students and negroes should go to the same schools'. By 1956, shortly after the 'Brown versus the Board of education' decision had officially outlawed segregated education, that figure had risen to 14%. By 1970 almost half of white South Southerners were supportive of integrated education and

nationally support had risen sharply to around 75% (Greeley & Sheastsley, 1971). The trend over a thirty period thus evidenced a progressive liberalization of white attitudes towards the principle of educational desegregation. This trend has continued to the present day, with recent estimates showing that fewer than 10% of whites in the US now believe that black and white kids should 'go to separate schools' (Bobo, Charles, Krysan & Simmons, 2012).

Attitudes towards concrete interventions to desegregate schools, however, have proven far less tractable, as evidenced by reactions to the policy of 'busing'. Given the continuing high levels of residential segregation in many American cities, busing children to schools beyond their own neighbourhoods became a primary mechanism through which local government attempted to achieve integrated schooling during the 1970s and 1980s, prompting widespread outcry amongst white Americans. The American National Election Survey conducted between 1972 and 1984, for example, included the item "Some people think that achieving racial integration of schools is so important that it justifies busing children to schools out of their own neighbourhood. Others think that letting children go to their own neighbourhood school is so important that they oppose busing. Where would you place yourself on this scale?" White responses to this item showed little change over time, with the vast majority (around 85%) of respondents remaining firmly opposed to busing (cf. Sigelman & Welch, 1991, p.124).

This resistance proved crucial in that it motivated behaviours that thwarted, both directly and indirectly, the process of social change. Physical attacks on black students, opening of

separate academies, white flight from integrating schools, a turn to private education, and the shutting down of entire school districts– all directly impeded the process of school desegregation (e.g. see Schofield, 1997). Moreover, indirectly, white resistance provided a context in which the political retreat by federal and local government from the legacy of Brown acquired political legitimacy (cf. Pettigrew, 2004). At the same time, it is worth noting that significant numbers of black parents also expressed reservations about busing as policy for implementing social change, complicating a simple story of racial competition (Sigelman & Welch, 1991).

Contextual and demographic variables that moderate the P-I gap

Not all race-targeted policies generate as much controversy as busing. Although the P-I gap has persisted over time (e.g. Tuch & Hughes, 2011) and across a range of policy domains, the extent of opposition is shaped by various contextual and demographic variables.

Policy Type: Different types of race-targeted policies invoke different levels of opposition. In particular, *race preferential* policies (e.g. affirmative action), which challenge directly whites' proprietary claims and socioeconomic outcomes, tend to produce more opposition than *race compensatory* policies (e.g. job training programmes), which focus on helping the disadvantaged to develop skills to achieve (eventually) a better life (Tuch and Hughes, 1996; Dixon et al., 2010). Closely related, policies that go beyond fostering *equality of opportunity* to promote *equality of outcome* tend to be rated less positively; thus, white support for interventions to promote the fair treatment of black Americans in the marketplace is

greater than, say, their support for interventions "… to take affirmative steps to eliminate segregation and give blacks special assistance in an effort to overcome racial inequality" (Merriman & Carmines, 1988, p.522). Finally, policies associated with *top down* interventions by 'big government' (e.g. federal enforcement of schools desegregation) tend to evoke more opposition than *bottom up* interventions, possibly because the former are viewed as an unwarranted trespass on the liberties of local communities or private individuals (e.g. see Sniderman & Pizza, 1993). It is worth adding here, however, that this is by no means a universal view, but is proffered as the basis for policy opposition by a specific political subgroup of (mainly) white Americans (Tesler & Sears, 2010).

Symbolic framing: How policies are *symbolically framed* also powerfully shapes their reception. Murrell et al. (2004) found that race-targeted policies presented with ideological justifications (i.e. as being designed to redress the injustices of the past) attracted more support than policies presented without such justifications. More subtly, even apparently small semantic variations in how items measuring policy attitudes are phrased can have a substantive impact on resulting levels of support. Sigelman and Welch's (1991, chapter 7) review of research on attitudes towards Affirmative Action policies, mapped variations in White Americans' levels of support ranging from 10% to 76%, depending on how such policies were framed! When affirmative action was cast in terms that connoted threat to principles of meritocratic selection, for instance, then support plummeted compared to when it was cast in vaguer or less threatening terms (see also Golden, Hinkle & Crosby, 2001).

Such framing effects have created both methodological problems and theoretical opportunities. Methodologically, it has made the systematic comparison of data gathered across studies using different survey items difficult to compare directly and the field has been dogged by inconsistent effects whose interpretation remain challenging (e.g. see Kuklinski & Parent, 1981). Even when surveys have used exactly the same items, comparison of results is not straightforward because what such items *mean* often changes over time (Krysan, 1999). Moreover, given the powerful role of social desirability bias in responses to race-targeted policies, it is sometimes difficult to determine if changing levels of support for different kinds of policies reflect surface conformity to egalitarian norms or genuine attitude shifts.

Systematic variation of policy framing, however, has also enabled work of theory development and refinement. As we shall presently see, for example, experimental studies that vary the explicitnesss with which policies are framed as 'race- targeted' has enabled researchers to distinguish the effects of racial prejudice from other factors affecting whites' responses to policies of redress (Bobo & Kleugel, 1993; Rabinowitz, Sears, Sidanius & Krosnick, 2009; Feldman & Huddy, 2005).

Individual differences and demographic factors: These factors also help to explain variations in the P-I gap. The literature on this topic is difficult to summarise as it is a morass of, sometimes contradictory, findings. Research has focused, inter alia, on the role of education, regional location, gender, political affiliation, class, and personality factors on white policy attitudes – sometimes as individual-level predictors as sometimes as part of

more complex interactional models (e.g. see Huddy & Feldman, 2009; Huddy & Feldman, 2005; Sibley & Lui, 2004; Fredrico & Sidanius, 2002).

Work on the influence of education on white opposition to the implementation of race-targeted policies provides an instructive case in point. Mary Jackman and colleagues have argued that education does little to reduce the P-I gap and indeed may play a role in the perpetuation of inequality. In a longitudinal study based on the US presidential election surveys of 1964, 1968 and 1972, Jackman (1978) found that level of education was not associated with support for the actual *implementation* of integration (see also Wodke, 2012). However, she also found that educated whites came to endorse the *principle* of racial integration more rapidly over time than less educated whites.

Explaining this kind of pattern, Jackman and Mhua (1984) have argued that education enhances white Americans' capacity to furnish more sophisticated ideological justifications for inequality and to become more skilful entrepreneurs of white dominance. Thus, the disjunction between rapidly improving support for equality principles and continuing opposition to their implementation may express what Schuman et al. (1997, p.304) memorably labelled 'slopes of hypocrisy'.

Other researchers, however, have produced evidence that qualifies this line of argument, suggesting that education has a beneficial effect on white attitudes in at least some policy domains (e.g. Golden, Hinkle & Crosby, 2001). Moreover, the generally positive correlations between education and cognitive and emotional indicators of prejudice are difficult to ignore. The 'educational enlightenment' thesis is thus far from dead. Still other researchers

have explored the complex interrelations between educational and individual level factors (e.g. political orientation) in shaping policy attitudes amongst members of both advantaged and disadvantaged groups (e.g. Fredrico & Sidanius, 2002; Wodtke, 2012).

In the present paper, in lieu of a more detailed review of the effects of these and other individual level and demographic variables, we want to emphasize the importance of 'race' category membership in understanding the P-I gap. As several commentators have highlighted (e.g. Krysan, 2000), the overwhelming majority of work on the gap has focused exclusively on the attitudes of white Americans - the numerically and politically dominant group in the US - whose resistance to social change has been treated as the main 'problem' to be understood (and resolved). As such, knowledge of minority group attitudes has remained partial, fragmented and indeed often relegated to the margins of the field. In recent years, however, this limitation has begun to be addressed. The field is moving towards a richer, *multi*-racial framework for investigating and explaining the P-I gap.

Sigelman and Welch (1991), Bobo and Johnson (2000) and Bobo, Charlies, Krysan & Simmons (2012), amongst others, have summarized key evidence on evaluations of the principles and practices of racial equality by people of colour in the US, and systematically compared these evaluations with those expressed by their white American contemporaries. The emerging picture is a fascinating blend of intergroup differences and common ground.

On the one hand, black Americans consistently display more positive attitudes than white Americans towards the implementation of race-targeted policies designed to improve the socioeconomic status of their own and sometimes other minority groups. Drawing mainly

on survey evidence collected during the 1970s and 1980s, Sigelman & Welch (1991) compared the two groups' attitudes towards the implementation of school integration (via busing), employment equality (via affirmative action), and improved living standards (via aid programs and welfare spending). In all of these areas, they documented clear intergroup differences, with blacks being more supportive than whites. On some measures, blacks were also more supportive in general of policies designed to help the poor.

Focusing on affirmative action, Bobo (2000) likewise reported that racial minorities in the US, notably blacks, Asians and Latinos, are generally less opposed to affirmative action than whites, particularly when interventions target beneficiaries belonging to their own group. The nature and size of such effects, he noted, do not represent 'enormous or gaping divides', but are nevertheless 'quite real' (p.128). Along similar lines, Lopez and Pantoja (2004) reported that evaluations of opportunity-enhancing affirmative action policies displayed a clear racial rank ordering, with black Americans displaying the highest levels of support, whites the least, and Latinos and Asians occupying an intermediate position between these two extremes. Krupnikov and Piston (2016) too found that Latinos' support for race-targeted policies in the US was generally significantly higher than of whites, but significantly lower than that of blacks.

On the other hand, the comparison of white policy attitudes with attitudes espoused by minority groups reveals a perhaps surprising amount of common ground. In all cases, such attitudes display a clear P-I gap in which endorsement of the ideal of equality is higher than support for its implementation. For example, whilst black Americans' support for the

principle of school integration approaches 100%, their support for busing policies is substantially lower, generally falling in the 50-60% range (Sigelman & Welch, 1991). Similarly, for all race groups, opposition towards race-targeted policies such as affirmative action tends to be greater when such policies are framed in 'harder', racial preferential terms that go beyond merely enhancing the opportunities of racial minorities in order to directly challenge majority group outcomes (e.g. by imposing racial quotas) - a point highlighted by Jackman (1994) and developed by later researchers (e.g. Lopez & Pantoja, 2004; Wodtke, 2012). Moreover, although the interpretation of the meaning of longitudinal data is inherently complicated, there is also evidence to suggest that black Americans' opposition to strong forms of Affirmative Action is steadily increasing over time, whilst their support for government initiatives to help blacks is declining (Bobo et al., 2012). Does this mean that their policy attitudes coming into closer alignment with those of white Americans and, if so, why and with what implications for promoting social change? This is a theme to which we will return later in the paper.

In sum, though important differences remain, black and minority policy attitudes are not fixed or homogeneous; nor are they entirely polarised from the attitudes of white Americans. Moreover, evidence suggests that the P-I gap may vary *between* as well as *within* minority groups in the United States and that levels of support for some policies may be in general decline, even if research on the attitudes held by intermediary groups such as Latino and Asian Americans remains limited (cf. Wodtke, 2012). As we will elaborate as the paper unfolds, researchers need to understand this more complex patterning of intergroup

attitudes when seeking to explain the P-I gap or to promote associated forms of social change.

Theoretical foundations: Explaining the P-I gap

Attempts to build a coherent explanation of the P-I gap have been complicated by a number of factors. First, it remains unclear if opposition to race-targeted policies across different domains have a common origin or if they have different causes and moderating and mediating factors (see Tuch & Hughes, 1996; Sniderman & Piazza, 1993). Is it plausible, for example, to assume that resistance to busing as means of integrating schools is determined by the same factors as resistance to Affirmative Action as a means of ensuring employment equity? Second and related, the accumulation of evidence suggests that the P-I gap is causally over-determined, reflecting the influence of multiple sufficient causes that may vary in significance across different social contexts. Third, as noted in the previous section, explanations of the P-I gap have primarily evolved to explain the attitudes of White Americans and the extent to which existing theories can account for the more complex, multi-racial patterns being identified by recent research remains uncertain (e.g. see Lopez & Pantoja 2004; Krupnikov & Piston, 2016; Wodtke, 2012). These complexities notwithstanding, there is now a critical mass of evidence confirming the central role of: (1) group interests and intergroup competition, (2) beliefs about the nature and underlying causes of inequality, and (3) racial prejudice in explaining (white) opposition to race-targeted interventions. Other factors, notably political ideology, also seem to play a role.

Group interests and intergroup competition

This perspective builds on broader theories of group interests (e.g. Sherif et al., 1961; Esses et al., 2004; Jackman, 1994), positing that the P-I gap is rooted in instrumental struggles over power and resources. The basic argument has been formulated in several different ways but the underlying principles are straightforward and widely accepted. Structural inequalities are bound up with realistic conflicts of interest, which in turn explain why dominant group members resist policies that challenge the status quo. This perspective resonates with Blumer's (1958) positional model of 'prejudice' (see Bobo, 1999; Bobo & Hutchings, 1996), which suggests that negative feelings about others - and associated reactionary political attitudes - express dominant group members' shared sense of group positioning within a political hierarchy and, more specifically, their reactions to threats to the established order of entitlement, material privilege and status.

It is worth pointing out that the terms 'threat' and 'competition' in this context generally designate struggles over *collective interests* rather than the interests of *self-contained individuals*. Simple personal self-interest does not seem to pack as much 'political wallop' (Durrheim et al., 2009, p.3) as one might intuitively expect in explaining the P-I gap. It is members' fear that group level outcomes (e.g. desegregation is threatening *white*

education) rather than personal outcomes gap (e.g. *my* children's education is under threat) are at risk that drives the P-I gap.

Bearing in mind this distinction, a sizeable body of research can be adduced in support of the group interests explanation. For example, as noted already, policies that threaten more directly the material outcomes of the dominant group (e.g. outcome-focused measures such as 'quota' versions of Affirmative Action) attract greater opposition than policies than that affect such outcomes less directly (e.g. opportunity-focused measures such as Jobs Skills training). More generally, research shows that support for affirmative action correlates negatively with individuals' perceptions of intergroup threat (e.g. see Bobo, 2000). The more perceived threat, the more policy resistance.

Other factors that cue a sense of realistic threat have likewise been found to intensify white opposition to the implementation of social change. Smith's (1981) classic study, for example, showed how whites' tolerance of the implementation of schools desegregation varied markedly as a function of the proportion of black children in schools. 'In principle' support for desegregation and support for majority white schools showed a steady improvement from the early 1950s to the late 1970s, with both options being 'tolerated' by well over 85% of whites. However, support for forms of desegregation resulting in majority black schools remained relatively stable and generally fell below 40%. Such findings fit with wider evidence on how 'numbers count' when it comes to explaining white political attitudes (Taylor, 1998).

A group interests perspective also explains, at least in part, the patterning of racial differences in the attitudes towards the P-I gap. Given the current distribution of power, status and material wealth in American society, it is hardly surprising that black Americans express strongest support for race-targeted policies, particularly policies benefitting their own group, that white American's express least support, and Latino and Asian Americans' attitudes fall between these extremes (Lopez & Pantoja, 2004). Nor is it surprising that these groups hold quite different beliefs about the extent and causes of racial discrimination.

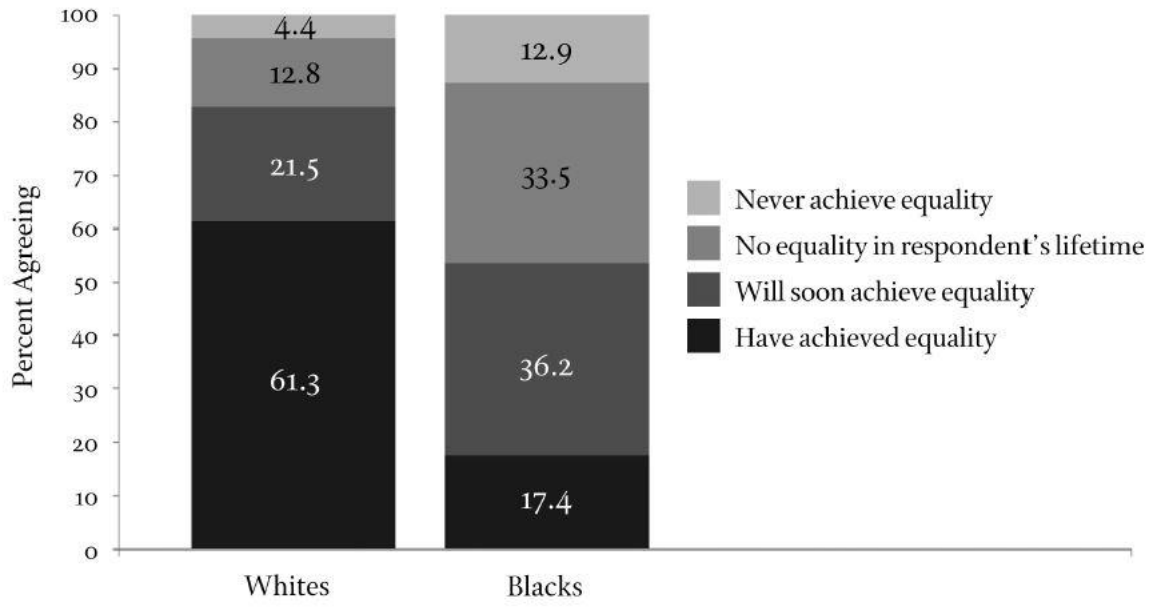

Figure 2 White and black Americans' beliefs about current and future racial inequality (taken from Bobo, 2011).

Beliefs about discrimination and attributions about the causes of inequality

A second explanation of the P-I gap focuses on beliefs about the nature and causes of racial inequality. Bobo (2011) has discussed some recent evidence on this issue. First, echoing the conclusions of earlier researchers (e.g. Kleugel & Smith, 1983; Sigelman & Welch, 1991), he has argued that the majority of white Americans (61.3%) believe that racial equality has now been achieved in the United States, whilst a further 21.5% believe that it is 'about to be achieved' (see Figure 2 above). In short, they believe that racial injustice is either problem of the past or that it is soon to become so. Second, he argues that whites' attributions about the causes of (lingering patterns of) inequality have displayed both continuity and change over time. Between the 1970s and the late 2000s, the idea that inequality results from the genetic inferiority of black people continued to wane in popularity, dropping from around 20% to around 9%. Fewer and fewer whites now accept doctrines of biological racism whose truth used to be taken for granted. At the same time, dispositional explanations of inequality have remained popular, with around 50% of whites continuing to attribute racial disadvantage to a lack of motivation rather than, for example, to limited access to resources such as education.

Such beliefs about the nature and causes of inequality help to explain the P-I gap in whites' racial attitudes. Individuals might wholeheartedly endorse the principle of racial equality but also oppose policies designed to achieve this principle because: (1) they presume that equality has already been attained and therefore further intervention is unnecessary or even counterproductive, or (2) they attribute inequality to the personal or cultural failings of black people and therefore do not view race-targeted interventions as

appropriate forms of redress, however well-intentioned. Certainly, the negative relationship between stratification beliefs and policy support has been extensively documented, with Kleugel (1985) and Kleugel and Smith's (1983) research on the factors that shape whites' attitudes towards Affirmative Action providing a seminal example.

The focus on discrimination beliefs and attributions also enriches the explanation of empirical evidence on race differences in the P-I gap. As well as reflecting intergroup completion, this perspective suggests that such differences may arise from contrasting perspectives on the nature and causes of inequality. Black Americans' greater support for race-targeted interventions may express their heightened awareness of the extent of inequality and their willingness to make structural attributions of causality. In contrast to the data he reported for white Americans, for instance, Bobo (2011) found only 17.4% of black Americans (versus 61% of whites) believe that racial equality has already been achieved in the United States (see Figure 2). Moreover, over time, a higher proportion (between 59 and 77%) attributed existing inequalities to structural factors such as racial discrimination and lack of educational opportunity than whites (between 30 and 40%); that is, to the very causes that race-targeted policies are typically designed to combat (Bobo, 2011; Bobo et al., 2012).

One interpretation of such polarized belief systems is that they are surface reflections of deeper intergroup struggles over power and resources. Whites' stratification beliefs might read, for example, as the mere 'cognitive embroidery' (Jackman, 1994) that legitimates the ongoing maintenance of their historical advantage. Developing this line of analysis, Bobo,

Klugel and Smith (1997) have framed the shift from a biological to a volitional and cultural account of racial inequality as part of the historical evolution of a 'kinder, gentler, form of anti-black ideology'. This ideology does not appeal to overtly racist principles and practices (e.g. state-enforced segregation on grounds that black people are a genetically inferior race). Instead, it treats inequality as the 'informal' by-product of free-market forces in which individual endeavour and choice ultimately determines one's position in life. This 'laissez faire' variety of racism resonates with a family of theories that root the P-I gap in the dynamics of so-called 'modern' prejudices.

Prejudice

A third type of explanation of the P-I gap has focused on the role of negative attitudes towards minority groups in fuelling white policy opposition, an approach that is particularly valuable in addressing the question of why some people display stronger opposition than others. There is a long-standing tension in the field between work that emphasizes 'old-fashioned' prejudice, expressed via comparatively overt stereotypes and emotions, and work that emphasizes more tacit, indirect expressions of prejudice, variously known as symbolic racism, aversive racism, subtle prejudice and modern prejudice. A substantive body of evidence indicates that *both* forms of prejudice predict opposition towards race-targeted policies (e.g. see Krysan, 2000; Huddy & Feldman, 2009). However, a growing number of commentators now claim that the "…new forms of prejudice, embodying both negative feeling toward Blacks as a group and some conservative non-racial values, have

become politically dominant" (Sears & Henry, 2003, p.259). This conclusion, we want to add, is based heavily on research conducted in the United States and grounded in historical analysis of apparently declining levels of old-fashioned racism in that society. We use the term 'apparently' because some researchers have argued - plausibly in our view - that the demise of old-fashioned prejudice in the US may have been exaggerated (e.g. see Tesler, 2013; Leach, 2005). There may more historical continuity in the psychological processes that underpin racism, including opposition to race-targeted policies, than is currently acknowledged.

Nevertheless, the 'symbolic racism' perspective remains the most influential of modern prejudice explanations of the P-I Gap, having emerged as a way of understanding white opposition to race-targeted policies and voting behaviour (e.g. McConahay, 1982; Kinder & Sears, 1981). The 'symbolic' aspect of the theory emphasizes how interventions such as busing and government handouts have come to signify black Americans' violation of abstract and ostensibly non-racial values, particularly values associated with individualism (e.g. hard work, self-reliance, and independence). The 'racism' aspect refers to reservoir of negative affect towards black people that allegedly undergirds and finds expression through this symbolic association. The latter gets to the very heart of modern prejudice approaches, which posit:

(1) The persistence of deep-seated negative feelings towards black people and other minority groups, including feelings of threat, anxiety and dislike, which are

grounded in individuals' early socialization experiences and may remain outside of their conscious awareness

(2) The expression of such antipathy via support for ostensibly legitimate, traditional and non-racial moral values to which individuals may espouse heartfelt commitment. Who can dismiss out of hand, for example, the idea that individuals should be rewarded on the basis of hard work rather than relying on the largesse of government handouts? Who can deny that merit should trump race in deciding which candidate should get a job?

Research on symbolic racism is complex and open to critique. The field has been bedevilled by debates around the construct's validity and operationalisation, and progress has been impeded by inconsistency in measurement across studies (Sears & Henry, 2005). Critics have argued that proclamations of the demise of old-fashioned prejudice have been greatly exaggerated and that the focus on modern racism may have led us to underestimate its enduring role in shaping white resistance to social change (e.g. Sniderman & Piazza, 1993; Huddy & Feldman, 2009). Certainly, evidence of the effects of social desirability on the expression of explicit prejudices (cf. Krysan, 2000) – vanishingly few whites nowadays want to be labelled 'racist' - raises questions about whether their historical decline represents 'fading' or 'faking'. Critics have also argued that symbolic racism research has confounded the influence of prejudice on white policy attitudes with the influence of 'principled conservatism' (e.g. Sniderman & Tetlock, 1986), noting that support for traditional political

values such as individualism can lead to strong opposition to race-targeted policies irrespective of individuals' feelings towards black people. In their study of attitudes towards open housing laws, for example, Schumann and Bobo (1988) found evidence that *both* prejudice and political values explained white opposition (in this case, resistance to federal coercion).

Notwithstanding these complexities and criticisms, symbolic racism, and similar 'modern prejudices' such as aversive racism (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004) and subtle prejudice (Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995), have proved to be strong predictors of opposition to race-targeted interventions. They also tend to explain more variation in policy attitudes than traditional prejudice measures, even when the effects of 'non-racial' variables such as political conservatism are controlled (e.g. see Feldman & Huddy, 2005; Sears et al.,1997; Sears & Henry, 2003; Rabinowitz et al., 2009).

We note in passing that recent advances in psychological research on *implicit attitudes* (Banajii & Greenwald, 2013) may be opening up new ways of investigating how racial prejudice shapes the P-I gap. Using methodologies such as the Implicit Association Test (Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998) and semantic priming tasks (Fazio, Jackson, Dunton & Williams, 1995), this research has shown how individuals' conscious, controlled and deliberative attitude expressions may be at least partially dissociated from their unconscious, less controlled, and spontaneous attitude expressions. Intriguingly, some studies have suggested that the latter are particularly strong predictors of discriminatory *behaviours* that may be relevant to the P-I gap, such as judicial decision making, voting

behaviour and hiring decisions (e.g. Rooth, 2007; Kam, 2007). To our knowledge, their role in predicting policy attitudes *per se* has not been systematically explored, but a few suggestive studies have emerged. For example, Knowles, Lowery and Shaumberg (2010) reported that implicit prejudice predicted greater opposition to presidential health-care reform when this reform was attributed to Obama rather than Clinton. By contrast, in a study of white, African American, Latino American respondents, Ditonto, Lau and Sears (2013) reported that that traditional prejudice measures were much stronger predictors of policy attitudes than an implicit prejudice measure (the Affect Misattribution Procedure), though this implicit measure did explain some variation in the attitudes of Latino respondents.

To sum up this section of the paper: a number of theoretical perspectives have been developed to explain the nature and persistence of the P-I gap, including perspectives focused on intergroup competition, stratification beliefs and attributions, and racial prejudice. Although it is relatively straightforward to distinguish such theories in the abstract, the process of making concrete empirical comparisons is far more challenging. For example, questionnaires surveys focused on the perception of intergroup threat or competition may actually be tapping underlying patterns of racial prejudice. Threat, after all, has historically featured prominently in measures of prejudice. Likewise, stratification beliefs about the nature and origins of racial inequality are often highly interrelated with racial attitudes and stereotypes. Again, this makes the process of disentangling and comparing theoretical models – e.g. attributional versus prejudice-based accounts - of the P-

I gap more challenging than it may first appear. The same problem arises when we consider the implications of current explanations of the P-I gap for promoting social change.

Closing the P-I gap? Preliminary reflections on the problem of social change

As we have seen, the recalcitrance of the P-I gap is a feature underscored by longitudinal studies, which evidence its persistence over time (e.g. Tuch & Hughes, 2011). This is perhaps unsurprising given the nature of the explanations outlined in the previous section. If white policy attitudes reflect evolving structures of intergroup competition, grounded in instrumental struggles to defend dominant group interests, then such attitudes are unlikely to change without a wider transformation in structural relations and interdependencies between groups. If such attitudes are sustained by collective belief systems that treat racial discrimination as a thing of the past or attribute inequality to the personal and cultural failings of black Americans, then change would require nothing short of an ideological revolution in how the 'truth' about racial inequality is constructed. If through childhood processes of socialization, learning and cultural transmission, whites develop deep-seated prejudices - whether of the old-fashioned or modern variety - that impel their opposition to race-targeted policies, then change would require a wholesale transformation in the thoughts and feelings of a sizeable number of Americans. The literature on the P-I gap does not, in short, convey much optimism about the possibility of social change. Indeed, one of

its enduring messages is that racial domination is adaptable and resilient, as evidenced by the historical shift from Jim Crow to 'laissez faire' patterns of racism.

Perhaps for this reason, the question of how to close the P-I gap is surprisingly submerged within the literature, rarely being tackled in a direct or sustained fashion. Most work has either sought to describe the historical trajectory of white policy opposition or to develop theoretical models for explaining such opposition. Throughout the rest of the paper, we argue that greater attention should be paid to the issue of social change. Anticipating later discussion, this rest of this section offers a few preliminary thoughts on a prejudice reduction approach to this issue.

As table 1 conveys, a prejudice-reduction perspective on closing the P-I gap might have several generic features (c.f. Wright & Lubensky, 2009; Dixon et al., 2012a). First, it might tend to focus on the responses of the historically advantaged, which have traditionally been seen as 'the problem' by prejudice researchers and thus targeted by interventions to arrive at 'the solution'. Second, it might prioritize interventions to transform the expression of negative emotions (prejudiced feelings) and cognitions (derogatory stereotypes) towards the disadvantaged. Third, it might assume that this process of prejudice reduction instigates changes in the wider patterning of social inequality: for example by encouraging whites to embrace race-targeted policies that ultimately reduce inequities in the distribution of wealth, health and opportunity and create more just institutions.

Table 1 A prejudice reduction model for reducing the P-I gap

Main Agents of Change	Illustrative interventions	Psychological processes	Outcomes
Members of historically advantaged groups	• Intergroup contact • Empathy arousal • Cueing a common identity • Re-education	• Stereotype reduction • More positive emotions towards others • Decreased salience of intergroup boundaries and identities	• Increased support for policies and interventions to reduce inequality • The evolution of more just institutions and the redistribution of material outcomes and opportunities

What evidence is there to support the idea that prejudice reduction produces these kinds of wider transformations in racial inequality in the United States or elsewhere? At various points in the rest of this paper, we suggest that existing evidence is mixed at best; indeed, we believe that the whole project of 'prejudice reduction' needs to be more cautiously evaluated than is often the case. Having said that, we want also to acknowledge at this point that the project of getting dominant group members to like members of other groups more may have other benefits and that, in some contexts at least, are worth pursuing in their own right (see Dixon, Durrheim, Stevenson & Cakal., in press, for further discussion).

A concrete example may be valuable here. Arguably, the quintessential technique of prejudice reduction is known as the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954). This hypothesis is often cast as one of psychology's most important contributions to 'improving' intergroup

relations (e.g. Dovidio, Gaertner & Kawakami, 2003; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2011). The idea is simple. Bring members of estranged groups together under favour circumstances (e.g. equality of status), give them a chance to interact together, and their intergroup attitudes will improve. Moreover, associated patterns of discrimination and inequality will decline, resulting in wider forms of social and political change.

The majority of research on the social psychological effects of intergroup contact has focused on changing the responses of historically advantaged groups, and it has taken measures of prejudice - or close proxies such as social distance - as its primary measure of a successful outcome (Dixon, Durrheim & Tredoux, 2005). This work has shown that contact reduces prejudice in many contexts and that its beneficial effects generalise across different types of intergroup relations (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2011). Moreover, contact is effective across varying kinds of prejudice, even if comparative evidence suggests that its effects on modern prejudices may be weaker (e.g. see Hamberger & Hewstone, 1997; Olaizola, Díaz & Ochoa, 2014).

Relatively little contact research has focused directly on its influence on policy attitudes and evidence of its role in reducing the P-I gap is thus limited. Promisingly, some research has suggested that contact promotes acceptance of the implementation of policies of desegregation. In an early study in the field, for instance, Star, Williams and Stouffler (1949/1958) investigated white soldiers' responses to the integration of black platoons into white infantry companies. They reported that intergroup contact tended to increase soldiers' support for further interventions to promote racial integration of the military. Most

infantrymen in mixed platoons were supportive of further integration with 'Negro' platoons (around 60%) and few (5%<) said that they would 'dislike' this outcome. Conversely, most infantrymen in segregated platoons (>60%) reported they would actively dislike the desegregation of platoons and few (around 2%) said they would support this process. In other words, experience of soldiering with black infantrymen seemed to promote greater acceptance of the implementation of desegregation.

A later study conducted by Jackman and Crane (1986) qualified this optimistic picture, however, offering a powerful critique of the contact hypothesis. Based on an analysis of national survey data conducted in the 1970s, Jackman and Crane reported that contact was a relatively strong predictor of white Americans' *emotional* attitudes towards Black Americans. However, it was a relatively weak predictor of their *political* support for interventions to promote racial equality of housing, employment and schooling. Interpreting their results, Jackman and Crane argued that reducing whites' 'parochial negativism' need not increase their concrete support for race-targeted policies and programs of redress. To say this is not to deny, of course, there is a relationship between prejudice and policy attitudes, nor to suggest, by implication, that prejudice reduction has no impact on the P-I gap. Rather, it is to highlight that: (a) this relationship may be fairly weak, and (b) that for substantive numbers of white Americans' relatively positive racial attitudes may happily coexist with resistance to interventions to reduce structural inequalities of opportunity and outcome (cf. Jackman, 1994). This theme emerged as a key element of our programme of research on the P-I gap post-apartheid South Africa, which,

among other issues, explored the potential strengths and limits of a prejudice reduction model for closing the P-I gap.

The P-I gap in post-apartheid South Africa

Although it sometimes masqueraded as a moral project, a 'separate but equal' system for maintaining racial harmony (Thompson, 1985), the political ideology known as apartheid entrenched inequalities and perpetuated racial discrimination for almost half a century. Over the course of its 46 year history, which consolidated and expanded earlier forms of colonial discrimination, this ideology became an international symbol of racism and a cause celebre of wider political struggles. It also generated mass protest and armed resistance within South Africa, which ultimately toppled the apartheid system. In 1994, following the country's first democratic elections, the pariah state of De Klerk's Nationalist government became the Rainbow Nation of Mandela's ANC government.

The fall of apartheid brought sweeping changes. In a relatively brief period of time, the legislative foundations of the system were dismantled, including the Group Areas Act (which determined where people could reside), the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act (which determined access to residential space and led to the displacement of millions of South Africans), and the Reservations of Separate Amenities Act (which segregated public facilities and amenities along racial lines). The promise of social change was reinforced by government policies designed to redress the inequalities of the past, including policies of land restitution and redistribution, affirmative action in education and the workplace, and

Black Economic Empowerment (or BEE). These legislative changes and associated government initiatives transformed South Africa in many ways. For example, schools and universities became more racially diverse, and affirmative action was responsible for what Soudien (2010, p.357) has described as "…the astonishingly quick arrival of the Black middle class". At the same time, a massive program of infra-structural development began to raise the basic living standards of many South Africans, extending provision of electrification, potable water and sewage systems in many townships.

Notwithstanding these changes, it is important to recognise that South Africa has remained an unequal and divided society. In fact, with a Gini index that consistently ranges between .63 and .66, South Africa regularly tops the international list of countries in terms income inequality, reflecting gross disparities in household earnings (see Figure 3 below). Inequalities of income are matched by inequalities in other socioeconomic domains. Access to healthcare, housing and education is marked by racial disparities that the transition to post-apartheid society has done little to ameliorate (e.g. see Durrheim, Mtose & Brown, 2011; Seekings & Natrass, 2006). Moreover, racial discrimination persists, even if it is not always easy to identify because it is now illegal and often covert. Durrheim, Cole and Richards (2012), for instance, conducted a matched pair audit of vacation accommodation establishments on the KwaZulu-Natal South Coast. They found that 29% (in 2006) and 25% (in 2010) refused accommodation to a black caller but accepted a booking from a white caller with the same requirements within a 24 hour period (counterbalanced). In addition, there has been staunch resistance to change both from public and private institutions and

from whites who have been the historical beneficiaries of apartheid (Franchi, 2003; Mabokela, 2010). Among other consequences, this may have limited the effectiveness of ANC policies of redress. Burger and Jafta (2006) applied economic decomposition techniques to 15 nationally representative household surveys between 1995 and 2004, and concluded that affirmative action policies had “no observable effect on the racial employment gap, and its impact on the wage distribution is limited to a small narrowing of wages at the top of the wage distribution” (p. 1). White workers have continued to earn a premium for the same job over black workers.

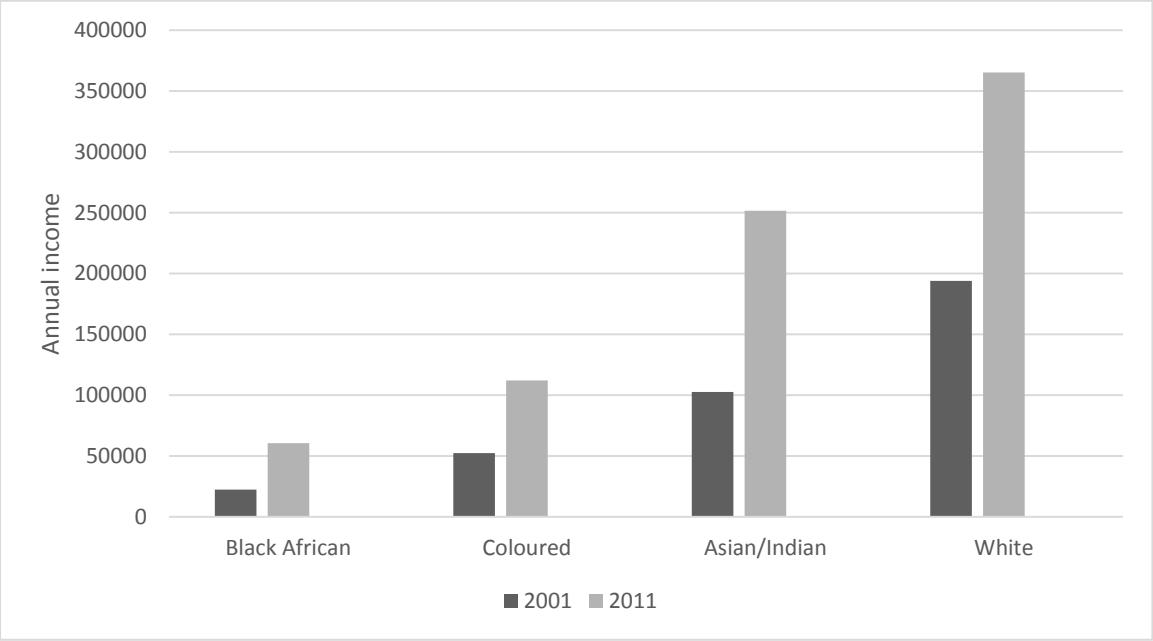

Figure 3 Average annual household income by population group of household head

Source: http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/12/06/chart-of-the-week-how-south-africa-changed-and-didnt-over-mandelas-lifetime/

Note: Income represented in South African Rands

Such is the context in which our research programme emerged and took shape. Initially, we focused on white resistance to forms of desegregation that arose as a result of government policy shifts during the final years of apartheid – roughly between 1988 and 1994 – a period sometimes known as 'the transition' (e.g. Dixon, Reicher & Foster, 1997; Dixon & Reicher, 1997; Durrheim & Dixon, 2005). Our aim was to understand how white South Africans understood this emerging form of social change and to explore why they behaved in ways that seemed both to accommodate to new political realities but also to justify and reproduce racial segregation, sometimes in new forms. Our work subsequently broadened in scope, coming to focus on how, when and why South Africans' support (or oppose) race-targeted policies designed to undo the legacy of apartheid.

We took our bearings for this work form the US literature on racial policy attitudes and the principle implementation gap. Like the US, South Africa is a highly racialized and unequal society that is host to ongoing struggles against the legacy racial injustice and persistent inequality of opportunity and outcomes. However, South Africa provides an contrasting context in which to study the processes underpinning the PI gap. Because white South Africans are a numerical minority under a black majority government, they face higher levels of threat and, under apartheid, embraced old fashioned prejudices and crudely racist beliefs about the nature and underlying causes of inequality.

In the rest of this section, we provide an overview of the core findings of this research programme, along with some related South African research, tracing its

implications for understanding the P-I gap. Building on this discussion, the final section of the paper will then attempt to shape the agenda for future research.

Describing and explaining the P-I gap in South Africa

South African attitudes towards policies and principles of racial equality: What did the South African population think about social change after the fall of apartheid? Hundreds of years of racial domination had left the social landscape deeply scarred by inequality, segregation, and exclusion. Now the opportunity had arrived to normalize the country and create a just society. Of course, change would require more than the removal of apartheid legislation. Policies needed to be implemented that would undo the legacy of apartheid.

Evidence suggests that support for the principles of racial segregation and inequality had waned amongst white South Africans even prior to the collapse of the apartheid state and white attitudes towards other racial groups were improving (Durrheim, Foster, Tredoux & Dixon, 2011). Data collected by the HSRC in 1991, for instance, suggested that over 90% of white South Africans endorsed the ideal that 'Different population groups should attend the same schools and share the same classrooms'. Almost identical results were found in a survey conducted in 2003 at University of Kwa-Zulu Natal in which respondents were asked: 'Do you think that students should go to the same schools of separate schools or are you unsure?' (Durrheim & Dixon, 2010). Results of SASAS surveys conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council over the period 2003 to 2009 similarly indicated that the levels of support for the general principle of poverty reduction were high, with 82% of respondents

agreeing with the statement 'The government should provide a decent stand of living for the unemployed' (Roberts et al., 2011).

To what extent did such support for broad principles of racial equality translate into support at the level of policy implementation? Jeremy Seekings (2008a&b) has argued that white South Africans became particularly supportive of policies of redistributive social justice. He reports data from a probabilistic sample in Cape Town that shows that "massive majorities" support pro-poor redistributive policies, with white respondents being only marginally less pro-poor than black respondents, the likely beneficiaries of such policies. He has also used experimental vignettes to investigate whether black and white respondents viewed a black or white worker to be deserving of government assistance and how much assistance the worker should be awarded. He found that the race of the respondent and the race of the beneficiary made no difference in the judgements of deservingness, but that white respondents generally proposed larger awards, being equally generous to black and white beneficiaries. He argued that his results indicate that "White South Africans – or at least white Capetonians – are prepared to be generous in part because they are rich and in part because they are white" and they "did not appear to favour members of their own racial group." (2008a, p. 56).

Seekings (2008a) interprets white Capetonians' support for social welfare and redistribution to support the African poor as a "paradox of generosity" (p. 42) - a paradox because these policies would be funded from white's tax payments through the public purse. Whereas white Americans often oppose welfare spending, particularly when such

spending is race-targeted, Seekings argues that white South Africans are more inclined to support redistributive policies because of "their vulnerability as racially-identifiable members of a privileged minority class" (p. 43). The depth and obviousness of racial inequality, the temporal proximity of the unjust system that produced it, and the precarious political standing of the white minority may all underpin this 'generosity' and apparent will to help the African poor.

This paradox of generosity has its limits however. Compared to the 82% of white respondents in the 2009 SASAS survey who supported government programs to provide a "decent standard of living for the unemployed", Roberts et al. (2011) reported that "preferential hiring and promotion of black South Africans in employment" enjoyed far more mixed support and that such support varied substantially depending on respondents' race. A whopping 87% of white South Africans were opposed to this policy, whereas over 80% of black South African's either agreed or strong agreed with its implementation. These data suggest something akin to a P-I gap may be operating in South African society, with high levels of in principle support for desegregation and welfare provision for the poor, but resistance to policies that seek to undo racial privilege and exclusion.

Dixon, Durrheim and Tredoux (2007) directly investigated this possibility in a random-digit, national telephone survey conducted with 1556 black and 361 white South Africans. Their main results are presented in Figure 4 below, which depicts South Africans' percentage opposition to principles and policies of redress in the domains of education, land and employment. Three general findings are worth highlighting in this figure: (1) A P-I gap

seems to characterize the political attitudes of both white and black South Africans'. Opposition to the principles of school desegregation, land ownership and employment equality is negligible; however, opposition to policies designed to implement those principles is generally significantly greater and in some cases accounts for over 50% of responses. (2) On several indicators, this gap is significantly larger for white than for black South Africans. Indeed, *on average*, as illustrated by the bottom panel of Figure 4, black South Africans' responses to items tapping policies and principles do not indicate a substantial disparity. However, such a gap does manifest for certain types of policies, notably affirmative action, land appropriation and the use of educational quotas in schools. (3) Relatedly, it is worth noting that the policies that seem to generate most opposition amongst both white and black South Africans are *race-preferential policies* (e.g. affirmative action) rather than *race compensatory policies* (e.g. compensatory education), a pattern that echoes some research conducted in the United States (e.g. Tuch & Hughes, 1996).

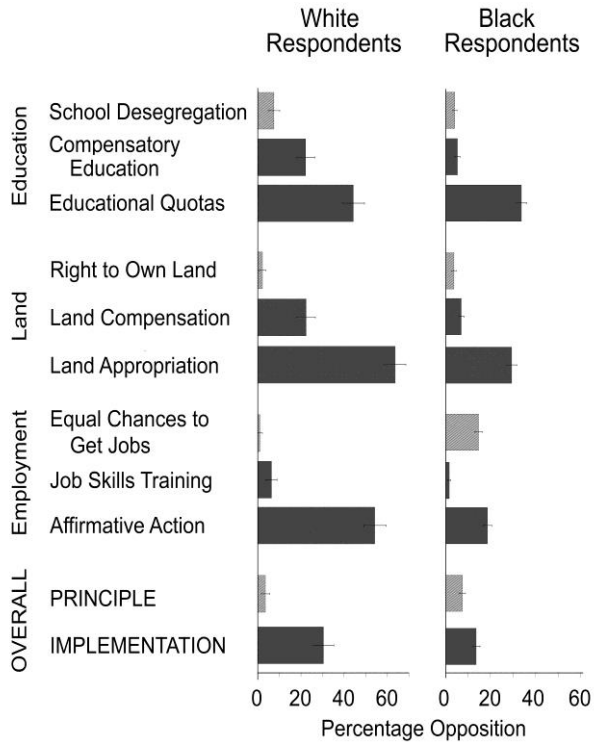

Figure 4 Percentage of Whites and Blacks opposing principles and practices of racial equality, shown with 99% confidence intervals (taken from Dixon et al., 2007).

The role of policy type in shaping opposition to race-targeted interventions has been clarified some of our other research. Durrheim (2003) surveyed the opinions of 134 white South African university students about a range of policies. Exploratory factor analysis yielded three factors:

- *Affirmative Action*: Items evaluating preferential contracts and tax breaks to black businesses; redistributing land by settling black South Africans on white owned farms; paying the victims of apartheid money as reparation for the history of

discrimination; racial quotas in national sports teams; preferential hiring and promotion of blacks in employment; and affirmative action policies in admitting black students to universities.

- *Reconstruction and Development*: Items evaluating spending more money on the schools in largely black neighbourhoods, especially for preschool and early education; and building houses and providing water and electricity for black people.
- *Policy Related Laws*: Items evaluating The Discrimination Bill that makes racism an offence; and the Employment Equity Bill which makes it a criminal offence to discriminate against people on the basis of their skin colour.

The 'Affirmative Action' items covered policies that sought to undo directly the competitive advantage that whites have enjoyed and to reverse some historical injustices. In contrast, the items labelled 'Reconstruction and Development' – based on government rhetoric of the time - were welfare orientated. These policies sought to uplift the black poor, but without directly challenging white privilege. Finally, attitudes toward newly implemented anti-racism and affirmative action legislation loaded on a separate factor that we labelled 'Policy R elated Laws'.

Scores on the three scales were only moderately correlated (ranging from .16 to .38), strengthening our hypothesis of a divide between race preferential and race compensatory or social welfare opinions. As expected, levels of opposition toward affirmative action items (mean = 3.10 and with lower standard deviation = .64 on a scale from 0 to 4) were

significantly higher than scores on the reconstruction and development items (M = 1.37, SD = 0.94) (t = 21.914, p < 0.0001) which, in turn, were marginally higher than scores on the policy law items (M = 1.15, SD = 0.97) (t = 2.167, p < 0.032).

These results again suggest that policy type is crucial in understanding South Africans' levels of support for interventions to promote political transformation. White university students in KwaZulu-Natal show the same generosity toward poor black communities that white Capetonians showed in Seekings' (2008a) study. They also show strong support for policies that outlaw racial discrimination. Yet these pro-poor and anti-discrimination values do not translate into support for affirmative action policies that might undo the privileged access whites have to resources and to networks of power.

Tredoux, Eaton, Quayle & Clack (2009) similarly report the results of two national random dialing telephone surveys that investigated directly the gap between "compensatory" and "preferential" (Tuch & Hughes, 1996) policy attitudes. Study 1 showed near universal support of compensatory policies such as building schools in black neighborhoods and special scholarships for black children who get good grades. Indeed, support was so strong that scores on the items were "too skewed to be used as an independent measure, with the vast majority of the white sample and almost the entire black sample favouring the policies" (p.x). Study 2 used improved measures of compensatory and preferential treatment policy attitudes, and found that white respondents showed much higher levels of support for compensatory policies (M = 2.58, SD = .78) than preferential treatment policies (M= 1.49, SD = .84). In contrast, black respondents showed roughly equal levels of support for the

compensatory policies (M = 3.31, SD = .64) than preferential treatment policies (M= 3.15, SD = .67). The gap between white's support for compensatory policies and opposition to preferential treatment policies was thus not apparent among black respondents.

As noted already, the sharp divide between black and white attitudes towards race preferential interventions has also been evidenced by the SASAS surveys, and as in US research (Tuch & Hughes, 2011), it has been found to display a degree of temporal stability. In the years from 2003 to 2009, black support for "preferential hiring and promotion of black South Africans in employment" ranged between 76% and 80%, whereas white support ranged from 13% to 22% (see Robertset al., 2011).

To sum up, the research reviewed here supports Seekings's claim that white South Africans show a generous attitude toward their poor black compatriots in terms of their in principle support for racial equality and for policies to promote social welfare. This attitude, however, doesn't run deep. Whites want to help the African poor, support their economic upliftment, and endorse government efforts to provide basic services and quality education to disadvantaged communities. However, they are far more reluctant to endorse policies that have the power to undo white advantage.

Does this attitudinal divide among white South African's represent an instance of the principle implementation gap? Qualitative research provides further evidence that it may. White people's talk about affirmative action and social change policies often expresses principled support for social change, but resistance to how it is implemented in practice (see also Durrheim & Dixon, 2005). Franchi (2003) recorded the talk of participants in training

workshops for employees of five state owned enterprises in South Africa. Opposition to affirmative action among whites focused largely on problems with implementation, especially the unfairness and inefficiency that results from fast tracking black workers into positions when they do not have sufficient or as much experience as their white counterparts. Mabokela's (2010) analysis of accounts of transformation policies at the Universities of Cape Town and Stellenbosch also showed that whites' qualified their support for the principle of including black students and staff with laments about the practical impossibility of doing so – because they "could not find black academics" (p. 102). Interestingly, some evidence suggests that black workers also manifest ambivalent attitudes towards affirmative action, but on somewhat different grounds. They believe that such interventions don't "achieve racial redress in practice" (Durrheim, Boettiger, Essack, Maarschalk & Ranchod, 2012, p. 125).

Explaining South African policy attitudes

Why might whites oppose affirmative action and other social change policies? A sizeable literature can be brought to bear on this question, some of which we have reviewed earlier in this paper. Most work has been conducted in the USA, however, and its applicability to the South African or other contexts is unclear. As discussed previously, a great deal of existing research has employed the theory of symbolic racism (McConahay, 1982; McConahay & Hough, 1976; Kinder & Sears, 1981; Sears & Allen, 1984). It has sought to determine if opposition to policies such as busing and Affirmative Action arise because

whites view such policies as threating to their collective self-interest or political convictions, or if the policies are rejected because of whites' racism toward African-American beneficiaries. Because crude expressions of "old-fashioned racism" are nowadays taboo, Sears and his colleagues have also argued that the underlying prejudice is better conceptualized 'symbolic racism' (Kinder & Sears, 1981; Sears, 1988; Sears, van Laar, Carrillo & Kosterman, 1997; Sears & Henry, 2005). As argued earlier, the overall conclusion of such work is that symbolic racism is a stronger predictor of policy attitudes than either old-fashioned racism or personal or collective self-interest.

Much of the recent South African literature, by contrast, has ascribed opposition to social change policies primarily to the threat it poses it whites' self-interest. Vermeulen and Coetzee (2006) surveyed a random sample of 1720 employees of a "leading bank in South Africa". They found that white respondents tended to evaluate affirmative action policies as being less fair than black respondents. They explained the findings in terms of instrumental self-interest of the black participants, who accepted as fair the outcomes that would benefit them, and of white respondents, who rejected outcomes that were seen as disadvantageous to them. The survey data reported by Roberts et al. (2011) tends to support this interpretation, revealing higher levels of support for affirmative action policies amongst groups "with the most to gain from policy implementation" (p. 12). This includes black respondents over white respondents, and the unemployed over the employed. Similarly, they found that white South Africans without tertiary education, who were less

skilled and thus more vulnerable to unemployment, were more opposed to affirmative action than whites with tertiary education.

Our own work has used the data from two national random telephone surveys (n = 1917, n = 2484) to investigate the nature of the self-interest that underlies white's opposition to racial change polices. Unlike the majority of US research, Durrheim and colleagues (2009, study 1) showed that personal threats to employment and housing – the perceived likelihood of losing a job or house value depreciation – were stronger predictors of white and black South Africans' policy attitudes than group threat. However, they found (study 2) that both realistic and symbolic group threat also significantly influenced whites' attitudes towards preferential treatment and compensatory policies. Overall, these data indicate that both personal self-interest and group threat predict white people's opposition social change policies, and that the two kinds of threat may not be as distinct as in the USA. Whites in South Africa are a small minority whose privileges are more precarious that their counterparts in the USA. Might they thus feel more personally susceptible to threats posed by race-targeted policies?

Our two national surveys also evidenced the powerful role of prejudice in predicting white's racial policy attitudes (Durrheim et al., 2009). Drawing on Bulmer's group position theory, we initially hypothesized that significant zero order correlations between prejudice and policy attitudes would be reduced to non-significance once the group position variables of threat and sense of violated entitlement were entered into our models. However, in two independent surveys we found that prejudice continued to have an independent effect on

racial policy attitudes even after threat and sense of entitlement were entered into the structural equation models. Moreover, we found that the strongest predictor of our latent prejudice variable was old-fashioned racism. Along similar lines, Durrheim (2003) reported that the strongest predictor of white opposition to racial change policies was old-fashioned rather than modern prejudice, as measured by overtly racist items such as: “Blacks come from a less able race” and “White people have a right to keep blacks out of their neighbourhoods”.

In terms of explaining policy support amongst Black South Africans, we found that black respondents who felt materially and symbolically threatened by whites were more likely to support racial transformation policies (Durrheim et al., 2009, Study 2). Affirmative action and other transformation policies seemed to be viewed seen as vehicles for eliminating collective threat from whites. Although we observed zero order correlations between anti-white prejudices and support for affirmative action among the black respondents - in contrast to the models for the white sample and in line with the predictions of group position theory - these were entirely mediated by threat. The source of opposition to racial redress policies is accordingly not the same for black and white South Africans. Blacks support redress policies because they are a way of undoing white supremacy. Perhaps for this reason, a recent qualitative study at an historically white university indicated that black academics criticized redress policies and affirmative action both because they didn’t go far enough in reaching the objective of undoing white supremacy and because the policies exposed them personally to white racism (Durrheim et al., 2012).

Bearing in mind the limited amount of available evidence in country, we can tentatively conclude that South African studies of opposition to political change both support and qualify the US literature. First and foremost, they evidence something akin to P-I gap in the attitudes of white South Africans. Not only do whites support the principle of equality, they also support welfare policies in general and even those that are targeted specifically at uplifting the black poor. At the same time, whites express strong opposition toward policies that threaten more directly their privileged position. The two sources of this opposition are old fashioned racial prejudice and the threat that such policies pose both to the position of whites as a group and to their individual interests. The social psychological foundations of the P-I gap thus appear to be somewhat different in South Africa than in the USA. The most obvious explanation for this difference is the precarious status of South African whites as a racial minority, as well as the continuing currency that old-fashioned prejudice of apartheid has for white South Africans today.

As in the literature reviewed earlier in this paper, there is also some evidence of P-I gap among Black South Africans – albeit smaller than that displayed by whites - and also some evidence of variations in their levels of support across policy domains. Findings here are mixed, with some studies showing that black respondents support compensatory and preferential treatment policies equally strongly (e.g. Durrheim et al., 2009) and others suggesting that 'strong' racial preferential policies such as land appropriation and racial quotas attract significant levels of opposition even amongst black South Africans (e.g. Dixon

et al., 2007). As in the US, the fact that studies typically use different items and scaling procedures makes direct comparisons and definitive conclusions difficult to draw.

Ironies of integration? Interracial contact and the P-I gap

In the previous section, we outlined some recent South African research relevant to the P-I gap, which has attempted to describe and explain the nature of attitudes towards principles and policies of racial equality in post-apartheid society. In this section, picking up a theme introduced earlier in the paper, we discuss research on the potential role of interracial contact – a classic prejudice reduction technique (cf. Allport, 1954) – in closing the P-I gap in this country, drawing the findings of a series of survey and interview studies (see Dixon et al., 2007, Dixon et al., 2010a&b; Dixon et al., 2015; Durrheim, Jacobs & Dixon, 2014).

The idea that intergroup contact may improve attitudes towards members of groups has long history in psychology (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2011) and has generated an extensive research literature in South Africa. Contact research conducted during the apartheid era yielded mixed findings (Foster & Finchilescu, 1986). However, recent research has tended to confirm that interracial contact has beneficial effects on interracial prejudice and on associated outcomes such as forgiveness and reconciliation (e.g. Holtman, Louw, Tredoux & Carney, 2005; Swart, Hewstone, Christ & Voci, 2010; Gibson & Classen, 2010; Tredoux & Finchilescu, 2010). These impacts have been explained both in terms of cognitive processes, (enrichment of our knowledge about others) and in terms of emotional shifts (decreases in intergroup anxiety and increases in empathy) (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008). The balance of

recent evidence, then, suggests that contact 'works' as a mechanism for prejudice reduction in South Africa. However, does it also increase participants' support for race targeted policies designed to create a more equal and just society, thereby reducing the P-I gap?

Some of our initial work provided a positive answer to this question. Dixon et al. (2007) found that interracial contact had a modest but significant impact on whites' acceptance of ANC policies such as using quotas in schools to promote educational desegregation and providing job skills training to reduce employment inequality. In a follow up survey conducted with a probability sample of 793 white South Africans, Dixon et al. (2010a) reported similarly that positive contact with Black South Africans was positively correlated with support for both race compensatory and race preferential interventions, though it was significantly stronger for the former. In addition, they reported that the relationship between contact and policy support was partially explained by its effects on whites' sense of collective threat (measured using items such as 'more jobs for black people, mean fewer jobs for members of other groups') and injustice (measured as a perception that whites are not achieving their 'fair and rightful share of wealth in the country'). As the mediation analysis depicted in Figure 5 illustrates, positive contact with black South Africans predicted greater support for race-targeted policies amongst white South Africans, both directly and indirectly via reductions in perceptions of intergroup threat and perceived injustice. For race preferential policies, we add, racial prejudice was also a significant mediator of contact.

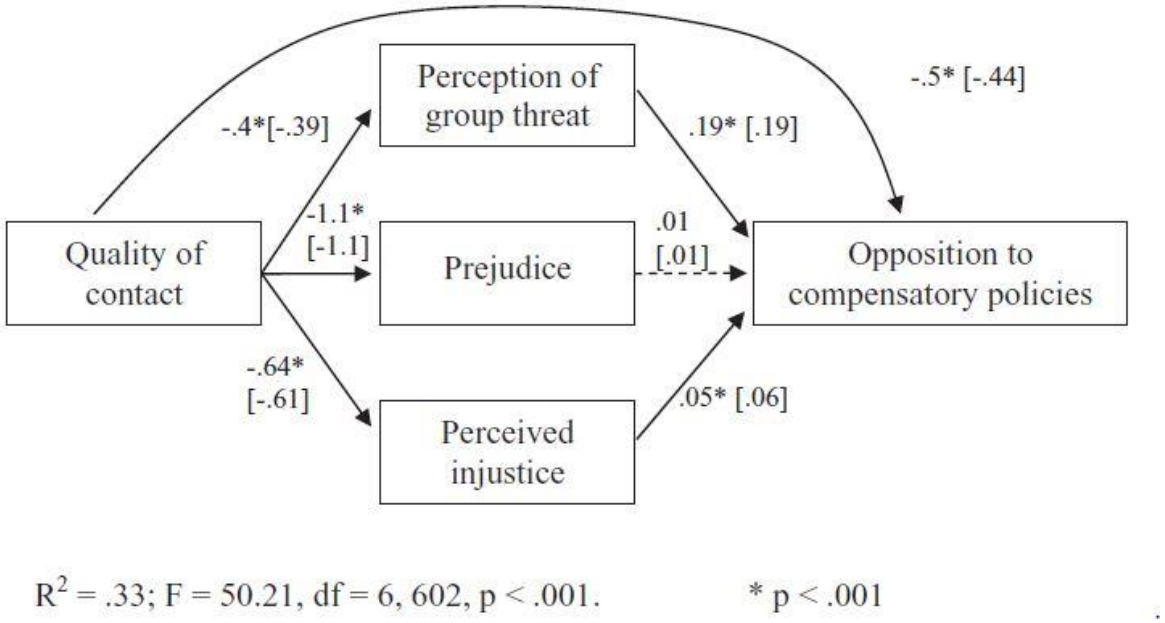

Figure 5 Model of the effects interracial contact on white policy attitudes

(taken from Dixon et al., 2010a)

This pattern of results suggests that if white opposition to policy implementation is driven by perceptions of intergroup competition and positional threat, as some theoretical perspectives on the P-I gap suggest (see Bobo, 1999), then positive interracial contact has the potential to increase policy support precisely by altering such perceptions (see also Sarasin et al., 2012). It also qualifies Jackman and Crane's (1986) argument that interracial contact, whilst improving whites' affective responses to others, leaves intact their stubborn core of resistance to forms of social change that threaten their historical advantage. Indeed, it suggests that prejudice reduction may serve as one route through which the P-I gap is

reduced within historically advantaged communities. We need, of course, to be careful about generalising such results. They may well reflect the specificities of the South African context at a particular historical juncture: whites are minority group living in a context in which compromises around issues of racial power and status are an inevitable feature of post-apartheid society.

What of the effects of contact on South Africans belonging to other groups? Like most interventions to reduce racial prejudice, increased contact alters does not only affect whites' racial attitudes. As an inherently relational process, it also affects the attitudes of those who have historically been the targets of white racism, namely people of colour. As such, our research also explored effects of contact on the policy attitudes of black South Africans, with some intriguing results.

In line with classic contact theory, we found that positive interaction with whites was associated with more positive racial attitudes amongst black South Africans, as measured, for example, by ratings of warmth and trust (Dixon et al., 2010b). However, we also found that such interaction was associated *decreased* support for race-targeted policies designed to undo historical legacy of apartheid (Dixon et al. 2007), notably policies related to affirmative action in the workplace and land reform and redistribution. Relatedly, we found that such contact tended to reduce black South Africans' beliefs that they are personally targets of racial discrimination or that members of their group suffer collectively from such discrimination in post-apartheid society (Dixon et al., 2010b).

Mounting evidence of this sedative effect of contact on the political attitudes of historically disadvantaged groups has subsequently emerged in other contexts and across a wider spectrum of intergroup relations (see Dixon et al., 2013). Segupta and Sibley (2013) reported, for example, that positive interactions with white New Zealanders predicted reductions in Maori's support for policies designed to protect their historic ownership claims to seabed and foreshore regions of the country's coastline (established under the so-called 'Treaty of Waitangi'). They also found that this effect was mediated by their belief that New Zealand is a fair society; that is, contact seemed to shape policy attitudes by encouraging acceptance of *systems-justifying* beliefs in which participants buy into an ideology of meritocracy (see also Dixon et al., 2010b).

Exploring closely related themes, other work has found that contact tends to decrease subordinate group members' willingness to participate in collective action to change social inequality (e.g. Becker et al., 2012; Tropp, Hawi, van Laar & Levin, 2011; Saguy, Tauch, Dovidio & Pratto, 2009), anger at unfair treatment (e.g. Tausch et al., 2015), and political solidarity with members of similarly disadvantaged groups (e.g. Glasford & Calcagno, 2011). At the same time, such contact tends to increase subordinate group members' belief in the possibility of social mobility (e.g. Tausch, Saguy & Bryson, 2015), readiness to perceive that members of the dominant groups will treat members of subordinate groups fairly (e.g. Saugy & Chernyak-Hai, 2012), and willingness to view the existing status hierarchy as legitimate (e.g. Saguy et al., 2009).

In summary, then, emerging research suggests that contact may well foster warmer emotional responses towards the advantaged, but arguably at the cost of diminishing the extent to which the historically disadvantaged recognize ongoing patterns of inequality and support policies designed to challenge the status quo. That is, contact may exercise a 'sedative effect' (Cakal, Hewstone, Schwar & Heath (2011) on the political activism of the disadvantaged. Although at an early stage of development, such research also suggests that these effects may go hand in hand with broader shifts in stratification and discrimination beliefs within disadvantaged communities. As we have seen, such beliefs that have long featured in research on the P-I gap and are widely assumed to contribute to its longevity. In the next section, among other future directions, we anticipate how P-I researchers might seek to address the wider problem of social change.

Future directions

Expanding the empirical base of research on the P-I gap

Most of what we know about the P-I gap is based on studies of policy attitudes in America. However, based on our own and others' research in South Africa, we would argue that it is now time to broaden the empirical foundations of existing knowledge. The P-I gap is not an exclusively American problem. Nor, much less, is it a problem that arises in exclusively within the attitudes and behaviours of *white* Americans, whose reactions have rightly been viewed as central to understanding the persistence of racial inequality in the US. Far from it.

The problem of understanding the gap between individuals' ideals of equality and concrete support for their realization has far more general relevance, even if we cannot yet fully appreciate what this relevance may be.

Two more specific recommendations are worth making in this respect. First, we need to know more about how and why, if at all, the P-I gap manifests in societies that are not WEIRD, i.e. Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich and Democratic (cf. Henrich, Heine, & Norenzaya, 2010). It is possible in such societies, for example, that certain forms of inequality are accepted in principle as well in practice or at least that the historical and ideological trajectory of P-I gap differs from that displayed by the transition from Jim Crow to modern racism in the United States (Bobo, 1988). Similarly, the validity of theoretical explanations of the P-I gap may differ across societies. For instance, as our South African findings illustrate, the relative influence of subtle and traditional forms of prejudice may vary. This would not be surprising. Theoretical frameworks such as Symbolic Racism Theory evolved to explain a particular historical shift in the racial attitudes of white Americans, and the extent to which they explain the P-I gap elsewhere remains unclear.

Second, the P-I gap may characterise social relations beyond the literature's standard focus on race and ethnicity. Thomae, Dixon, Tredoux and Paice's (in prep.) unpublished study, for example, recently established the potential existence of a 'Gender P-I Gap'. In a questionnaire survey conducted with female undergraduates in the United Kingdom, which adapted measures used by Tuch and Hughes (1996, 2011), they found young women's support for gender equality principles far outweighed their support for implementation of

gender equality policies. In a follow up study, they also found evidence for the existence of a Gender P-I gap in an older, mixed-sex UK sample. For both men and women, overall support for gender equality principles (M = 6.75) was significantly higher than the support for gender equality policies (M = 2.0). Contrary to some of the published work on race differences in the P-I gap (e.g. see Sigleman & Welch, 1991), however, this study did not evidence gender differences in the size of the gap, which was roughly equivalent for men and women.

Finally, extending research on the effects of contact on policy attitudes, Thomae et al. (in prep.) also explored how the quality of cross-gender contact shaped both women's and men's endorsement of gender equality principles and policies. They found that positive contact with women was associated with heightened support for both principles and policies amongst men. Positive contact with men was likewise associated with heightened support for gender equality principles amongst women but with *reduced* support for gender equality policies (i.e. benefitting women) (see Figure 6). This asymmetry seems to fit with recent research on the so-called 'sedative effects' (Cakal et al., 2011) of contact on the political attitudes of historically disadvantaged groups. Moreover, it confirms the importance of adopting a relational approach to understanding the P-I gap; that is, an approach able to capture the dynamic evolution of political attitudes as a function of the relationship between *both* historically advantaged and historically disadvantaged groups.

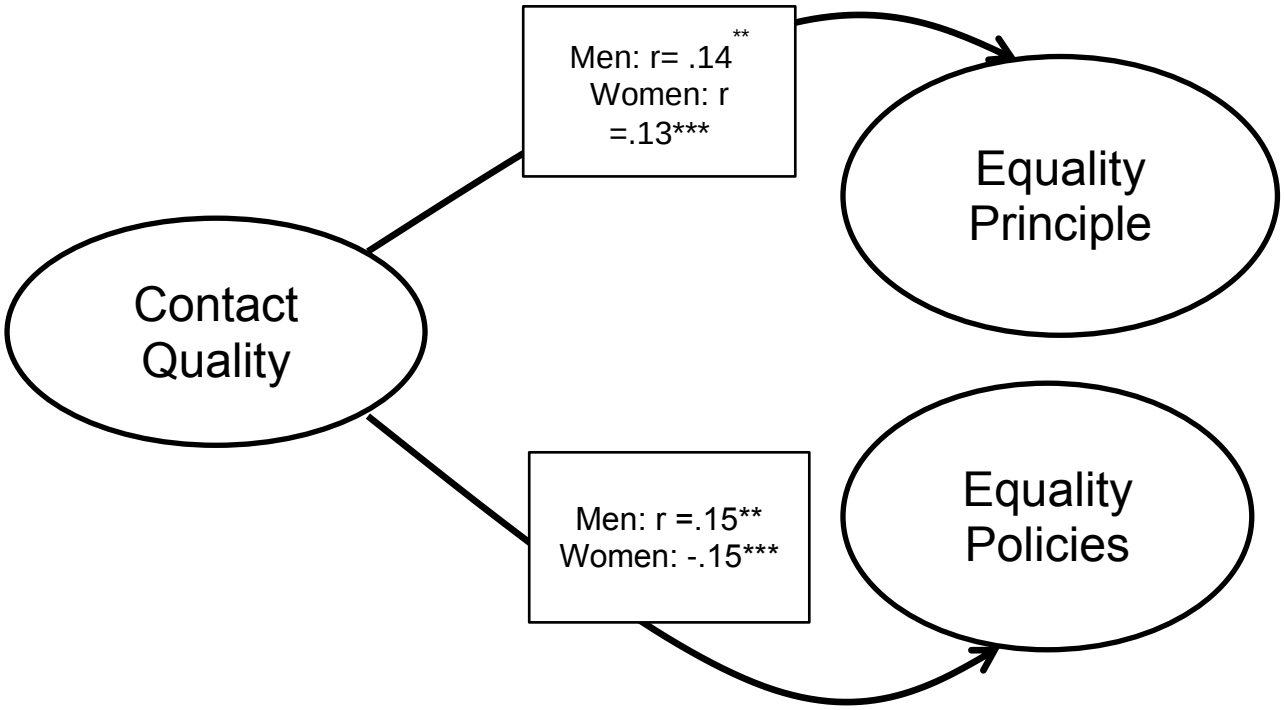

Figure 6 Correlations between men's and women's quality of gender contact and principles and policies of gender equality

(taken from Thomae et al., in prep)

Towards a relational model of policy support and opposition

Most research on the P-I gap has focused on the policy attitudes of the historically advantaged, especially white Americans. Indeed, historically, national surveys conducted in the US have included relatively few items measuring the policy attitudes of other groups. In recent years, as discussed p.x to p.x of this paper, this trend has been somewhat reversed. Evidence has gradually accumulated on how minority and disadvantaged groups understand racial inequality and evaluate race-targeted policies designed to promote equality.

Such evidence is important not only for the purposes of descriptive comprehensiveness. It also shows how the relational dynamics between groups may help to explain the nature and

persistence of the P-I gap, a theme developed elegantly in the work of Mary Jackman (1994).

Jackman has applied a variant of the 'group interests' model (see p.x to p.x above) to an understanding of the patterning race policy attitudes in the United States, which roots such attitudes in the dynamics of intergroup competition for power and resources. She argues that such competition does not necessarily entail a hostile confrontation in which the dominant group violently suppresses the subordinate group in order to maintain control in a zero sum struggle. To the contrary, it locks both parties into a complex set of mutual accommodations in which overt hostility may play a surprisingly minor role and in which warmer relations may gently lubricate the wheels of domination.

In the case of whites in America, she argues, this is reflected in the evolution of a moderated pattern of racial attitudes. Positive attitudes towards black people and towards the general principle of according them equality are balanced by less favourable attitudes towards compensatory policies designed to alleviate disadvantage, and crucially, by outright negative attitudes towards policies targeting whites' material outcomes within 'core areas of expropriation' (Jackman, 1994, p.376; e.g. affirmative action). This blend of (relatively) warm feelings, strategic concession, and conservative resistance to change, Jackman suggests, has emerged as an ideologically effective mechanism for reproducing the status quo. It also reflects a relational and historical process of adjustment to the political aspirations and struggles of black Americans.

By the same token, black Americans have had to recognize the constraints and risks, as well as the opportunities, that challenging the status quo entails (e.g. reprisal, loss of existing benefits). Because of the 'malevolent interdependence' of groups within a system of racial inequality, they have had to be vigilant of the views of the advantaged and often work within their practical and ideological limits (e.g. the values of liberal individualism). Perhaps for this reason, black Americans, though more supportive of race-targeted interventions than their white counterparts, have behaved cautiously towards policies that threaten the core of racial inequality (e.g. by requiring a redistribution of power and resources). As Jackman (1994, p.259) explains:

> "Within each intergroup relationship, the issues on which the dominant group are more intransigent are also the issues on which subordinates are less likely to push forward for affirmative change. Subordinates learn to throw more energy into issues that keep a safer distance from core redistributive concerns."

We cannot elaborate in further detail the implications of Jackman's model. Our broader point is that her work demonstrates the poverty of research that seeks to understand the policy preferences of historically advantaged in isolation from the wider patterns of intergroup perceptions and relations in which they are embedded.

Developing this argument, we would argue that research on the theme of relationality now warrants expansion beyond a simple white-black dichotomy. As we have seen, limited research has focused on the perspectives of groups occupying an 'intermediary' status in

the social and political hierarchy in America and elsewhere (though for exceptions see Lopez & Pantoja, 2004; Krupnikov & Piston, 2016; DiTonto, Lau & Sears, 2013; Hunt, 2007; Wodtke, 2012). The discrimination beliefs, political affiliations, and policy preferences of such groups (e.g. Asian and Latino Americans) are significant for a number of reasons, as is the nature of their relationships with dominant and other subordinate groups. First, such intermediary groups may be enrolled to shore up existing relations of power by acting in ways that impede the implementation of political change (e.g. via policy opposition and voting patterns) and indeed, as Krupnikov & Piston's (2016) work shows, their members may display associated patterns of racial prejudice. This point was not lost on the ideologues of apartheid, who carefully engineered a 'divide and rule' system in which 'coloured' and 'Indian' South Africans were given concessionary privileges relative to black South Africans in the hope that this would fragment political resistance. Second and conversely, such groups may form relations of solidarity and common identification with other disadvantaged communities, thereby creating the conditions under which unified action to promote social change becomes more likely (see Kuo, Malhotra & Mo's (2015) work on the political affiliations of Asian Americans, for example). In a recent field study of neighbourhood relations in a South African community, for example, Dixon, Durrheim and colleagues (2015) reported that positive contact with black South Africans was associated with greater support for policies of redress amongst Indian South Africans, as well as a greater willingness to engage in joint collective action to improve the conditions of both communities.

From policy attitudes to rhetorical and ideological practices

Understanding the relational nature of attitudes towards the P-I gap requires research that can recover and explore "…the subjective existential frameworks through which people see ongoing public policy (Jackman, 1994, p.227). In this respect, we would join other commentators in emphasizing the importance of qualitative research on everyday accounts of policy support and opposition (e.g. Krysan, 1999, 2000). Such work is important because it clarifies, for example, how individuals understand the meanings of scale items used on the questionnaire surveys that have dominated research on the P-I gap, how attributions about the nature of inequality or discrimination inform individuals' evaluations of policies, and why seemingly subtle differences in the symbolic framing of items seem to have such a powerful effect on policy support.

Beyond this, however, we would argue that qualitative research may give deeper insight into how individuals navigate the 'dilemma' of making choices in practice that seem to run contrary to their moral or political principles. Bratlinger, Majd-Jabbari & Guskin (1996) interviewed middle class mothers who believed in integrated education, yet defended segregation when it came to selecting schools for their own children. The mothers argued that their choice to send their children to higher income schools was based on the fact they were "the best schools". Some candidly admitted that they had purchased homes within the high income school districts because attending schools with predominantly low-income enrolments would disadvantage their children's education. Even though the mothers

identified as liberal, and saw themselves as fair-minded and compassionate people, they defended segregation on grounds of personal choice, individual mobility and welfare of their children.

Building broadly on a discursive psychological framework (Potter & Wetherell, 1987), we have similarly explored how White South Africans warrant resistance to a specific form of social change, the creation of multiracial beaches (see Durrheim & Dixon, 2001, 2005). Prior to the 1989, South Africa's beaches were racially segregated; however, with the repeal of the Separate Amenities act, a process of desegregation began to unfold, mainly taking the form of black South Africans enjoying formerly 'whites only' beaches. Our interviews with white holiday-makers on one such beach revealed a rich array of arguments used to oppose desegregation and justify practices of re-segregation. For example, our respondents constructed segregation as an 'anthropological universal' of the human condition in order to highlight the futile and counterproductive nature of government interventions to 'force' desegregation. They freely conceded that black people had a basic right to access the beach, but objected to their presence on other grounds, including crowding, lack of privacy, and cultural differences in beach etiquette. Moreover, by denying racism and accepting desegregation in principle, respondents were able create accountable, reasonable versions of their resistance to its local implementation in practice. This resistance included re-establishing concrete patterns of segregation on the beachfront (see Figure 7 below) or avoiding it altogether when numbers of black visitors were high (Dixon & Durrheim, 2003).

Interviews with black beachgoers revealed a very different set of interpretations. On the one hand, almost all of our black interviewees were strongly in favour of desegregation both as an ideal and as a concrete reality on the beachfront; after all, they were now able to enjoy facilities from which they had been excluded during the apartheid era. On the other hand, their interpretation of the behavioural patterns portrayed in Figure 7 focused not on factors such as cultural differences in beach etiquette or the 'naturalness' of segregation, but on the enduring problem of white racism. Consider, for example, the following account in which a Black African couple discuss the motivations underlying white resistance to the desegregation of beaches, interpreting visible patterns of avoidance and flight on the beach where they were interviewed. Clearly, this account is organised to challenge the process of resistance to social change by attributing such resistance to the (irrational) prejudices of white holiday-makers.

> **Valentine:** This is what we were talking about with my wife we have seen that there are few whites here and there are many blacks here. The beaches now looks like the townships. The most important reason is that whites still have a belief that if they see a person wearing a suit it means he is a good person but if they see a child sneezing or any type of dirt they believe that blacks are naturally dirty.
>
> **Interviewer:** Is there anything you want to say?
>
> **Rose:** I think that is why they move to Umhlanga Rocks. They have seen the crowd here at the beachfront […]. So I should think that is the reason whites run away from us.

These qualitative studies, then, reveal the contested, strategic and 'action-oriented' nature of policy support or opposition (c.f. Wetherell & Potter, 1988, 1992). That is, they highlight the need to treat everyday expressions of political attitudes not simply as transparent reflections of the individuals 'inner' beliefs or feelings, but also as *rhetorical and ideological practices* designed to accomplish social actions (e.g. legitimating or challenging opposition to social change) and warrant associated patterns of behaviour (e.g. about which school to send one's children or which beaches to avoid). As it turns out, ordinary people are themselves skilled in the art of 'symbolic framing' of attitudes towards political principles and policies, and how, and with what consequences, they do so is an important topic for future research.

Figure 7

Mapping the ecology of segregation on a South African beach (see Dixon & Durrheim (2003) for more detailed discussion). Note: Each black circle = one black person; each white circle = one white person; each black triangle = one Indian person (taken from Dixon et al., 2003).

Social change revisited

The P-I gap has proved to be historically persistent. Although acceptance of the principle of racial equality is now vigorously upheld in most domains of American life, by almost everyone, there is scant evidence that opposition to race-targeted policies is declining (Tuch

& Hughes, 2011). Moreover, racial inequality endures in many forms (Bobo, 2011), despite claims in some quarters that the America of the Obama era is now 'post-racial'. The question of how to promote social change is thus urgent and, in our view, needs to be placed at the heart of future research.

The problem of implementing change featured in early research on educational desegregation and some of this research may warrant reconsideration. In the wake of the Brown versus the board of Topeka decision of 1954, during a period of considerable political upheaval, there was uncertainty about the conditions under which desegregation should be implemented in order to best create stable and integrated schools. There were realistic fears about the reactions of white students and parents. Rejecting arguments for 'gradualist' approach, Clark (1953) argued that desegregation of schools should be sudden, decisive and, crucially, implemented with the full legal and normative sanctions of school and government authorities. He believed in the principle that 'stateways can change folkways', arguing that if whites were forced to alter their behaviour and to enter an education system in which racial integration was the norm, then their political attitudes would be realigned.

Drawing on a comparative study of desegregation in communities located in Illinois and St Louis, Schagaloff (1954) echoed Clark, arguing that "…effective desegregation with community acceptance and a minimum of social disturbance depends upon the following: a clear, positive public statement of policy by school authorities and community leaders; firm enforcement of this policy by school authorities in the face of initial resistance; effectiveness

of law enforcement officials in dealing with violations or attempted violations; and finally, a refusal to evade the principle or fact of desegregation." Some later research has likewise confirmed the importance of 'top down' support in altering political attitudes towards the implementation of social change. In two random digit dialling surveys conducted before and after school desegregation, Jacobson (1978) found support for an attitude conformity process in which clear institutional support (e.g. imposition legally enforced desegregation) altered public attitudes. In short, work on the power of institutional sanctions, norms and modes of accountability in shaping acceptance of the implementation of race-targeted policies may be worth reinvigorating.

Earlier in this paper we also explored some of the potential strengths and limitations of a prejudice reduction model for closing the P-I gap. Given that many researchers explain the gap as the outcome of racial prejudice, whether old-fashioned or modern, it is logical to assume that prejudice reduction might increase whites' support for the implementation of measures to combat inequality and discrimination and, by extension, promote social change. As we have seen, however, evidence on this hypothesis is somewhat mixed. Some studies confirm that prejudice reduction interventions, such as promoting intergroup contact, are negatively associated with white policy opposition (Dixon et al., 2007). However, others suggest that such interventions may shape whites' emotional responses to a far greater extent than their political attitudes (Jackman & Crane, 1986; Jackman, 1994) or that their effects vary across different types of policies (Dixon et al., 2010a). As it stands, further research is necessary to clarify the role of prejudice reduction in shaping the P-I gap

in the political attitudes of historically advantaged groups. It would be thus be premature, in our view, to dismiss McConahay's (1978, p.77) observation that "…amicable relations among racial and ethnic groups can exist alongside grossly unjust inequalities of opportunities and outcomes. Ceteris paribus, harmonious race relations and unprejudiced attitudes might be worthy goals—but only if other things are equal, or nearly so'' (p. 77).

Concerns over the limitations of a prejudice reduction model for reducing the P-I gap are deepened by research on its effects on the political attitudes of *historically disadvantaged* groups. As we have seen, growing evidence suggests that prejudice reduction diminishes members' recognition of social inequality, sense of collective injustice, and willingness to promote social change (see Dixon et al., 2012a&b; 2013): for example, by supporting policies of redress and redistribution (Dixon et al., 2007; Sengupta & Sibley, 2013). In so far as change is often driven from the 'bottom up', by those who have most gain from challenging the status quo, this potential weakening of grass roots political activism has concerned several commentators (e.g. see Wright & Lubensky, 2009; Maoz, 2011; Reicher, 2007).

It has also inspired an ongoing debate about the relationship between different models of social change that has direct implications for future research on the P-I gap (e.g. see Dixon et al.' 2012a&b and associated commentaries). This debate suggests the social and psychological shifts prescribed by prejudice reduction interventions may be diametrically opposed to those prescribed by an alternative model of social change, namely a collective action model (e.g. see Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Van Zommeren, Postmes & Spears,

2008). The latter holds that social change occurs not when members of advantaged communities come to like one others more, but instead when members of disadvantaged communities come to act in solidarity to challenge inequality. Moreover, rather than reducing 'negative' intergroup emotions such as anger and a sense of intergroup divisions, this model suggests that the psychological impetus for change arises precisely from a keen sense of injustice, a strong sense of 'us' and 'them', frustration with existing socio-political arrangements, and direct confrontation with existing relations of inequality: processes that typically lead to social conflict rather than social harmony (Wright & Baray, 2012).

This debate raises a number of key questions for those wishing to understand how to reduce the P-I gap in attitudes towards racial equality, thereby facilitating the conditions under which policies of redress are supported to the point of implementation. Should we be reforming the racial attitudes of advantaged groups, fostering bonds of solidarity and resistance amongst the disadvantaged, or both? Will the promotion of social harmony and 'nicer feelings' about members of other groups translate into genuine, long-lasting support for the implementation of equality? Perhaps more significant, will it garner support for policies that are most likely to achieve a meaningful redistribution of wealth, power and opportunity; that is policies that tackle what Jackman (1994) calls 'core redistributive concerns'? How might the effectiveness of collective action, prejudice reduction, and other interventions to reduce the P-I gap vary across different kinds of historical and socio-political contexts, and what are the pathways through which change might progress or falter? These number amongst the most important questions for the field in future years.

Conclusion

> "The pervasive gap between our aims and what we actually do is a kind of moral dry rot which eats away at the emotional and rational bases of democratic beliefs" (Truman's Committee on civil rights, cited and discussed in Schumann et al., 1997, p.8-9).

Taken from a presidential committee report published in 1947, this quotation captures something of the political dilemma captured by a rich tradition of research on the principle-implementation gap. As the history of work on this dilemma has testified, the 'gap' between endorsement of the abstract ideals of equality and endorsement of their means of achievement has proven extraordinarily difficult to bridge. The 'moral dry rot' has continued to slowly erode the promise of racial equality in United States. Indeed, reading the literature on the P-I gap, one might conclude that interventions to implement such equality are destined to attract concerted, sustained and profound opposition . . . and not only from white Americans.

In this paper, we have presented a critical review of research on this issue, discussed the main theoretical explanations of the P-I gap, and outlined some emerging South African work in the field. We have also proposed some potential directions for future research.

Notably, building on a program of research conducted in post-apartheid South Africa over the past 15 or so years, we have argued for:

(1) Widening the field beyond its traditional focus on white policy attitudes in the United States

(2) Developing relational models that encompass more fully the perspectives of historically disadvantaged as well as historically advantaged communities

(3) Making greater use of methods that elucidate how ordinary people construct the meaning of the P-I gap and how this not only informs, but also justifies and normalises their associated patterns of behaviour

(4) Prioritizing the difficult question of how to promote social change in societies where most citizens embrace equality as a noble end but often reject the means through which it might be accomplished

In conclusion, we want both to reiterate the limits of this tradition of research and to reaffirm its significance. For us, the limits are abundantly clear in the post-apartheid context. They point to the necessity of integrating work on the P-I gap in political attitudes with work on other causes of racial inequality. There are many possible explanations for ongoing pattern of discrimination and inequality in South Africa: most of them are not related – or at least not in an immediate and obvious way – to the P-I gap. For example the

country's racial wage gap is partly the product of social networks and racial or ethnic niches in the job market (Hofmeyer, 2010), which originate in patterns of informal patronage and family networks. Moreover, it also reflects the profound and lingering influence of differential access to financial and educational resources established prior to the collapse of apartheid and the legacy of historical dispossession of land. In a recent article written for the Mail and Guardian, Haroon Bhorat, Professor of Economics and Director of the Development Policy Research Unit at the University of Cape Town, has dryly labelled such advantages as 'skewed initial endowments' (Is South Africa the most unequal society in the world?; http://mg.co.za/article/2015-09-30-is-south-africa-the-most-unequal-society-in-the-world).

The P-I gap, then, is only one piece of the broader puzzle of why racial and other forms of inequality persist in societies such as the United States and South Africa. Nevertheless, as we have tried to show in this paper, it is a vital piece of the puzzle. Research on this gap clarifies how, when and why citizens act in ways that defer, obstruct or directly undermine inequality. It also clarifies how collective political attitudes create a normative climate in which government failures to implement policies to ensure change become acceptable or, worse, expedient. More broadly, it clarifies some fundamental features of the political psychology of intergroup relations: the evolution of intergroup struggles to define, promote and defend group interests, the ideological construction of beliefs about inequality and its causes, the shifting nature of prejudice and discrimination, and perhaps most important, the sociological and psychological bases of resistance to interventions to promote social change.

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