

Dual Pathways to a Better America

*Preventing Discrimination and
Promoting Diversity*



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Executive Summary





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Dual Pathways to a Better America

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Foreword



When I was in the first grade, one of my peers declared that he was my boyfriend. A few days later, he informed me that he could not be my boyfriend because I am Mexican. He shared that his mother had told him that it was a “bad thing” to be Mexican. This confused me, and I had many questions for my mother when I arrived home. I wanted to understand what had happened and what it might mean. My mother responded to my questions and account of events by, after becoming quite upset, declaring that, in no uncertain terms, anyone who made such claims, including my so-called former boyfriend and his mother, was simply wrong.

This was my first encounter with differential treatment and being defined as inferior solely on the basis of my ethnicity. It was also perhaps the beginning of an emerging motivation to prove that the bigoted, false claims made by perpetrators of discrimination were unequivocally wrong. Early on, and even to this day, the support of family and community have provided the solid, affirming support I have needed to approach such a daunting mission. One can imagine how the young man began to learn bias and how I began to be affected. Examples abound of experiences I have had of being mistreated, excluded, and marginalized as a result of bias, prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination. My ethnicity has not been the only basis of such injustice. My status as a member of a working-class household, being female, and experiencing temporary disabilities added fuel to the fire of claims that I was “less than.”

However, it would be impossible to duly credit the extent to which the support I have been so fortunate to receive has made it possible for me to cultivate and nurture an ever-growing level of determination, one of the many rewards of which has been a solid resilience. I have been able to achieve a level of success that by any standards proves that the most deleterious of injustices and barriers rooted in an extremely flawed belief system can be overcome.

To avoid any risk of promoting a “we victims, you perpetrators” mentality, I also share a story from a much different perspective, one in which I was the perpetrator. This event also occurred in grade school and involved someone I had befriended, a Latino peer with a visible disability. Needing support and friendship, he followed me around school until finally one day my other friends complained about his constant presence. Fearful of being ostracized by these peers, I publicly humiliated him by telling him to go away, adding a shove to emphasize the point. To this day, I feel shame and sadness at the look of shock and hurt on his face as he fell backward to the ground. These simple yet very painful examples illustrate not only the childhood dynamics of exclusion, but also the manner in which we can all be drawn into the perpetuation of discrimination and avoidance of taking action and thus are all affected by the dynamics leading to the exclusion, maltreatment, and marginalization of others.

Sharing events from my life such as these that occurred at the age of 6 or 7 is relatively easy to do now. However, acknowledging that I have been both victim and perpetrator all my life, the latter most often unintentionally, is much more painful and difficult to admit. I, like many others, strive diligently to prevent being in either role, or at least I try to do what I can to mediate the effects of discrimination and to either prevent or diminish the impact a perpetrator imposes. My belief is that the more we know and understand the complex dynamics of exclusion, while learning, documenting, and informing others about the benefits of inclusion, the better we can accomplish these goals.

Virtually everyone has been treated unfairly at some point. However, many in society experience marginalization simply by virtue of their racial, ethnic, (dis)ability, gender, class, age, or sexual identity. The discrimination, stereotyping, and bias that lead to exclusion and marginalization exact an enormous toll on individuals and groups, and ultimately on society. This country’s ever-expanding diversity is

now a fact of life. Chances to thwart exclusion and marginalization improve when the potential, capacity, and talent of all members of society are fulfilled and as many individuals as possible have a chance to be highly contributing members.

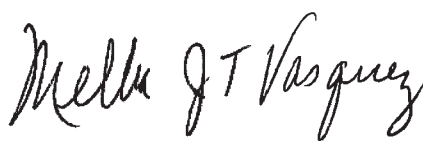
When I thought about potential presidential initiatives, I knew that much of the psychological research about discrimination and diversity has expanded significantly. I envisioned an integration of the cutting-edge research in regard to these issues. What are the mechanisms, consequences, and principles of discrimination, stereotyping, and bias? How do we teach others to be kind and compassionate and to acknowledge differences without negative judgment? How do we inoculate people from the deleterious effects of exclusion and marginalization? How do we promote a society that celebrates inclusion, promotes genuine equality, and not only tolerates but celebrates and appreciates diversity?

The report produced by members of the Presidential Task Force on Reducing and Preventing Discrimination Against and Enhancing Benefits of Inclusion of People Whose Social Identities Are Marginalized in U.S. Society provides much of the relevant psychological science that has evolved over the past few years. I am very fortunate that James M. Jones, PhD, agreed to serve as chair of this task force, and together he and I identified key researchers who were able and willing to devote time, energy, and effort to producing this report.

Task force members quickly realized that the report needed to focus on dual strategies: to prevent discrimination and to nurture and enjoy the benefits of diversity. The report includes an introduction that provides the meaning of terms as they are used in this report, and it is structured by use of a series

of Frequently Asked Questions, a very creative and clear way of presenting psychological research. Part 1 describes the mechanisms, consequences, and principles of discrimination, including how people cope. Part 2 describes the mechanisms of inclusion and beneficial diversity dynamics. Part 3 describes the mechanisms of and strategies for reducing exclusionary processes and promoting diversity by understanding inclusionary processes that can produce functionally beneficial settings, contexts, institutions, and environments. Part 4 provides recommendations (which are consistent with the American Psychological Association's Strategic Plan, including its vision, mission, and specific goals), and references are included in Part 5.

I am very appreciative of the task force members, stakeholders who reviewed the report, and American Psychological Association staff members who toiled to produce and improve this valuable document and resource, and of you, the reader, for your willingness to take time to increase your understanding about these important concepts that so affect people's lives. You may even experience emotional transformation! Our hope is that the content of the report and the recommendations can be used as a valuable and helpful resource for researchers, educators, practitioners (psychotherapists and workplace discrimination forensic practitioners), students, and policymakers. I also hope that this contribution puts a dent in one of the grand challenges in society.



Melba J. T. Vasquez, PhD, ABPP
2011 President, American Psychological Association

Dual Pathways to a Better America: Preventing Discrimination and Promoting Diversity



One of the grand challenges in society is to eliminate bias, prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination and their deleterious effects upon both victims and perpetrators. As one of her presidential initiatives, 2011 APA President Melba J. T. Vasquez, PhD appointed a task force of experts to identify and promote interventions to counteract and prevent these destructive processes. In addition, the benefits of promoting inclusion, respect, acceptance, and appreciation of diversity were also examined. When the potential, capacity, and talent of all members of society are optimally developed, all of society benefits.

The task force focused on two primary premises: (a) An enormous toll is exacted on human capital when systematic biases, stereotypes, and discrimination are perpetuated; and (b) acceptance of and support for social diversity is critical to the health of the population, especially in light of the fact that the diversity of the U.S. population is ever expanding. In the context of this report, as we talk about bias and discrimination, the term *diversity* is intended to encompass individuals from racial, ethnic, (dis)ability, gender, class, age, and sexual identity groups who have been categorized as marginalized in some way.

Why This Report and Why Now?

There are many possible answers to this question, including that the United States is changing, and Americans need to maximize their potential to compete globally; that we want to bring attention to the members of society that discrimination is wrong and harms the United States as a country; that being diverse adds to our country's strengths; that if Americans want to be strong and united, they must deal with these issues; and that discrimination has negative consequences for the individual. All of

these and many more reasons argue for this report. In addition, APA has formulated a Strategic Plan that will guide its activities in the years ahead. This topic is consistent with the plan's vision that APA be (a) a principal leader and global partner in promoting psychological knowledge and methods to facilitate the resolution of personal, societal, and global challenges in diverse, multicultural, and international contexts and (b) an effective champion of the application of psychology to promote human rights, health, well-being, and dignity.

Discrimination, Stereotyping, and Bias

Discrimination, stereotyping, and bias generate exclusion and marginalization for certain groups and wrap a blanket of inclusion, security, and opportunity around others. Biases that operate at the macro level of institutions magnify and spread the effects of individual prejudices throughout society. Reducing discrimination and bias has been a long-standing objective and continues to be the focus of many policies and programs.

We live in a society in which the dynamics of exclusion are prevalent. Even those who consider themselves “bystanders” as opposed to “perpetrators” are affected by the cultural dynamics of exclusion, whether acknowledged or not. Irrefutable psychological evidence supports the understanding that everyone is affected by systems of discrimination, and when these systems are challenged, the eventual acceptance of and support for social diversity is exponentially healthier for everyone.

Inclusion and Diversity

Promoting inclusion entails much more than identifying the mechanisms by which “perpetrators”

harm “victims.” Inclusion requires that we study the ways in which difference has been constructed, access denied, stereotypes perpetuated, and exclusion justified. Furthermore, it is critical that we radically rethink how we create institutions and communities in which differences flourish, power-based inequities are contested, and democratic participation is encouraged. Societal redressing of political, structural, historic, economic, and prejudicial forces that have systematically facilitated and justified marginalization and exclusion is essential.

Diversity is a fact of life in the United States. A recent U.S. Census report (Humes, Jones, & Ramirez, 2011) indicated that out of a total 2010 U.S. population of 308.7 million people, 299.7 million (97.1% of those responding) reported their race or ethnicity as a single category, including 223.6 million reporting as White (72.4% of the total population), 38.9 million as Black (12.6% of the total population), 2.9 million as American Indian or Alaska Native (.9% of the total population), 14.7 million as Asian (4.8% of the total population), .5 million as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (.2% of the total population), and 19.1 million as “other” (6.2% of the total population). Hispanic or Latino was not included as a race or ethnicity, but 50.5 million people (16.3% of the total population) indicated that they identified as such. Recent projections have shown that by 2050, no racial or ethnic group will make up as much as 50% of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). The United States will become a nation of minorities.

The older population (aged 65 and over) grew from 3 million in 1900 to 39 million in 2008, and now makes up 13% of the total U.S. population. The oldest-old segment of this population (aged 85 and over) grew from just over 100,000 in 1900 to 5.7 million in 2008. Baby boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) began turning 65 in 2011. Therefore, the number of older people in this country will increase dramatically during the period 2011 to 2030, and is in fact projected to be twice as large in 2030 as it was in 2000, growing from 35 million to 72 million and representing nearly 20% of the total U.S. population (Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics, 2010).

Economic disparities in America are widening at a rapid rate. A recent report by the Congressional

Budget Office (2011) indicated that over the past 30 years, the income of the top 1% of Americans with the greatest wealth increased by 275%, whereas the income of middle class citizens fell by 7%. Those in the upper middle class bracket (those who collectively own 20% of the nation’s wealth excluding that of the top 1%) fared somewhat better, showing a 65% rise in income. Even more revealing is the class disparity in wealth. Today the top 1% of the U.S. population owns 36% of all assets, whereas 46.2 million people (15.1% of the U.S. population) live in poverty and 49.9 million people are without health insurance. Thus, socioeconomic disparity is a growing source of diversity subject to increasing bias, conflict, and discrimination in this country.

Levels of Analysis

Issues of diversity and discrimination reflect a long history of persistent gaps in educational, economic, legal, and social outcomes, as well as laws and policies that have dictated or enabled differential treatment. Over the past 50 years, laws and social movements have emerged that have generated consciousness about justice, change, and human rights. Analysis of this topic by a sociological task force might have focused on the economic, political, and social conditions that enable discrimination to exist or diversity to thrive; the focus of an economics task force might have been financial infrastructures and the rise of global markets. The task force recognizes the significance of structural conditions, but consistent with the preponderance of psychological evidence, focused primarily on the individual level of social and interpersonal dynamics.

Interventions and/or Strategies

Across topics, *Dual Pathways to a Better America: Preventing Discrimination and Promoting Diversity* offers evidence and examples of structural systems, organizational policies, small group and family dynamics, and individual-level behaviors and attitudes that create or exacerbate discrimination. In addition, the report proposes strategies that can begin to address discrimination and its deleterious effects and support the strong case for accepting and promoting diversity. The applied sections of the report reflect how psychological evidence can be implemented and

evaluated in the workplace, courts, schools, the media, families, and communities.

The task force developed the report and the set of recommendations to be used as a resource for researchers, educators, students, and policymakers. The report is also intended to be accessible to advocacy groups, lay audiences, and others interested in the science of discrimination and the nurturance of diversity.

Through a series of frequently asked questions and answers, the task force (a) examines how psychological research confirms and illuminates the enormous toll that systematic biases, stereotypes, and discrimination have exacted and continue to impose on human capital, and (b) validates the urgency of a move toward embracing social diversity, especially in light of the documented expansion of changes taking place throughout the population of the United States.

PART 1

Mechanisms, Consequences, and Principles of Discrimination



Bias erodes opportunities and challenges the psychological well-being of its targets. Research reflects over a half century of work on the general problem of prejudice in its many manifestations. The task force concluded that the paradigm of prejudice is general enough to be applicable to many different contexts and groups.

What Is Prejudice and What Are the Different Ways in Which it Is Manifested at Individual, Family, and Societal Levels?

The way psychologists often talk about racism, discrimination, and bias contributes to the perception that prejudice is a dispositional quality. Much of what is known about the process of discrimination and bias comes from studying individual differences among people, comparing differences in behavior among people who score high versus low on a given measure of prejudice. The descriptions of people who are “high in prejudice” and behave in one way and people who are “low in prejudice” and behave in another are seen throughout this report as measured by a given study. The labeling of individuals as “high” versus “low” prejudice, however, neither reflects an assumption of immutability nor places the genesis of prejudice within the individual. Rather, the attitudes that people hold at an individual level are intimately and intricately tied to history, sociocultural practices, economic forces, and sociological trends that are larger than any one individual. Furthermore, it is important to underscore that people are able to change and modify prejudicial attitudes.

Noticing Differences Is Natural—Judging Them or Not Judging Them Can Be Learned

Psychologists distinguish among noticing differences, knowing the stereotypes associated

with them, applying judgments to these distinctions, and treating people differently based on these judgments. Overt expressions of prejudice seem to be less common now, as it is less socially acceptable to express prejudices openly. However, studies have found that discriminatory behaviors still exist for those behaviors that are less controllable. Prejudice can manifest as blatant or hidden. *Blatant prejudice* involves open and direct expression, from name calling to hate crimes to genocide. *Hidden prejudice* refers to situations in which people dissociate themselves from blatant prejudice and do not consciously or intentionally endorse traditionally stereotyped beliefs or feelings of group hatred, nor do they conceive of themselves acting against others based solely on their group status. Nevertheless, these people act in ways that are prejudiced.

A particularly important example of hidden biases is represented by *microaggressions* (Sue, 2010)—everyday, seemingly minor verbal, nonverbal, or environmental slights or insults delivered intentionally or unintentionally. These messages provide a glimpse of the communicator’s conscious or unconscious assumptions and prejudices. The most detrimental forms of microaggression are usually delivered by well-intentioned individuals who are unaware they have engaged in harmful conduct toward a socially devalued group. These everyday occurrences may, on the surface, appear quite harmless or trivial or may be described as “small slights.” But research indicates they have a powerful impact on the psychological well-being of members of marginalized groups, while at the same time creating inequities in health care, education, and employment (Sue, 2010).

Can a Person Experience Stereotypical or Prejudiced Thoughts Completely Without Deliberate Intent?

A person can experience stereotypical or prejudiced thoughts without deliberate intent. Often, feelings of guilt or compunction accompany such automatic thoughts. Research has shown that noticing differences occurs automatically. However, while noticing differences might not be prejudiced, noticing differences is often automatically associated with judgments about the differences. Those judgments are often negatively biased and led to discriminatory behavior. Importantly, research finds that these processes that result in a variety of prejudices often occur outside our control. However, there is evidence that steps can be taken to reduce prejudice and discrimination.

Aversive racism (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004; Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986) is a form of hidden prejudice in which individuals genuinely regard themselves as nonprejudiced, but possess conflicting, often unconscious, negative feelings and beliefs about a given group. Many research studies have shown that prejudice exists, and can be overtly demonstrated, even in someone who is unaware of his or her bias. Gaertner and Dovidio (1977) conducted a study in which White participants were presented with an emergency situation that involved both Black and White victims. Some “witnesses” were led to believe that they were each the sole witness to the event. Others thought they were one of several witnesses. Participants who believed they were the only witness came to the aid of both Black and White victims over 85% of the time. No evidence of discriminatory behavior was apparent. However, those under the impression that there were other witnesses, responded to Black victims *only half as often* as they did White victims (37.5% vs. 75%).

In a similar study conducted in both 1989 and 1999 (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000), college students were presented with excerpts from interviews of candidates seeking a position at their university as a peer counselor. Each of the candidates was identified as having very strong, moderate, or very weak qualifications for the position. When a candidate’s credentials were clearly identified as very strong

or very weak, race was not a factor in the students’ selection. However, when candidates’ qualifications were moderate (more ambiguous), the students recommended the Black candidate significantly less often than the White candidate. Similar results have been shown in studies in which candidates are named Garcia versus Smith, or Chen versus Amy. The implication of these findings is that the greater the ambiguity with which differences are perceived or the standards of conduct framed, the more likely hidden biases are to emerge.

How Does Prejudice Affect its Targets?

The belief that belonging to a stigmatized or marginalized group inexorably produces self-loathing and low self-esteem is widespread but flawed. People do not experience prejudice and discrimination passively. Personal, familial, and social resources are available to provide support in coping effectively with prejudice. Individuals who experience prejudice and discrimination find and share strategies to protect themselves and their loved ones and create groups and organizations that place the locus of coping at the collective level. Rather than a story of victimhood and shame, what has emerged over the past 50 years is a story of resilience and coping.

For example, African Americans consistently show equal and sometimes even higher self-esteem relative to White Americans (for a review, see Twenge & Crocker, 2002). Other research shows that when negative judgments or evaluations are likely, and can be connected to biases of the evaluator, active and dynamic processes buffer the negative psychological impact. Maintaining self-worth and sustaining positive personal goals in the face of discrimination and bias is a very important part of the success story.

This does not indicate however that discrimination is not harmful. Research clearly shows that *perceiving* that one has been discriminated against is detrimental to both mental and physical health (Pascoe & Richman, 2009). Research shows that regardless of whether or not someone accepts the validity of negative stereotypes about his or her group, the concern that he or she may be viewed or treated through the lens of that stereotype is enough to hinder

performance. As a result, the individual adapts in ways that may be detrimental to his/her well-being and success. Such *stereotype threat* (Steele, 1997) is conceptualized as *situational*. One can protect oneself in threatening situations through psychological disengagement from those situations (Major & Schmader, 1998), but over time and through repeated exposure, situational disengagement can become *domain disidentification*—removing one’s sense of identity more broadly from the evaluative domain and not allowing success or failure in that domain to affect how one feels (Steele, 1997). Disidentification is a double-edged sword. As a form of coping it can protect one from stereotype threat, but at the same time, disidentification can close doors to achievement in that domain.

Does Discrimination in the Workplace Still Exist?

Discrimination in the workplace continues to be a reality. Whereas the workforce is made up of 48% women and 34% minorities, only 38% and 20%, respectively, are “officials and managers” in U.S. corporations (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2010). The data are similar for a host of other stigmatized characteristics: people with disabilities suffer from more unemployment and lower pay when they are employed relative to the nondisabled (McNeil, 2000), and older individuals are less likely to receive job training and career counseling relative to their younger counterparts (Pitt-Catsouphes, Smyer, Matz-Costa, & Kane, 2007).

Adverse impact describes formal (as opposed to informal) organizational settings and procedures and can refer to discrimination resulting from biased hiring and promotion decisions (Outzz, 2010). Adverse impact can occur through subtle and nonintentional processes as well: for example, the glass ceiling, in which a smaller percentage of individuals with stigmatized identities (e.g., being female or minority) is represented in upper management positions relative to the more general workforce; the glass cliff, whereby minorities and women who are promoted to management positions are essentially set up to fail; and the motherhood penalty, where mothers, compared with nonparent females, are rated as less competent and less

committed and are recommended for lower salaries. Fathers, compared with nonparent males, suffered no such disadvantage.

Test bias implicates the assessment instruments used in selection processes as a principal source of adverse impact. Schultz and Zedeck (2011) took an alternative approach: Rather than try to determine whether test bias exists in available assessments, they sought indicators of actual workplace performance (in their case, lawyering) to predict performance. They found that when they assessed the factors related to what lawyers actually do (practical judgment, negotiation skills, ability to see the world through the eyes of others, developing relationships within the legal profession, and strategic planning), group differences disappeared. This work paves the way for a new generation of assessment materials that tap into a wider variety of skill sets than those tapped by “cognitively loaded” assessments (that purport to assess some kind of core cognitive capacity). The hope is that bringing diversity to assessment and evaluation tools will increase diversity in organizational settings and possibly reduce adverse impact.

How Do People Cope With Stigmatized Identities Within the Broader Social Context?

Research has demonstrated that a fundamental way in which people cope with discrimination is through the development of collective identities. Being able to identify with similar people from a group to which one belongs serves three primary functions: (a) emotional protection from discrimination, (b) a sense of affiliation with an ingroup, and (c) a way to understand and relate to other cultures and groups (Cross, 1991). Research suggests that the development of collective identity around stigmatized status characteristics (e.g., identification around racial groups, sexual orientation, or disability status) is often motivated by hurtful experiences of discrimination (Branscombe, Schmidt, & Harvey, 1999). Concealable identities can make it more difficult to forge and reap the benefits of a collective identity.

In predicting or assessing the effectiveness of a given strategy for negotiating identity, it is helpful to think about the dimensions along which stigmatized

conditions differ. E. E. Jones et al. (1984) proposed six such dimensions:

- *Concealability*: Can the stigmatizing condition be hidden from others?
- *Course*: How does the condition change over time, and what is its outcome?
- *Disruptiveness*: How much does the condition hamper social interaction?
- *Aesthetic qualities*: How much does the condition violate the aesthetic standards of the culture?
- *Origin*: How was the condition acquired, and who is responsible?
- *Peril*: What kind of danger does the stigmatized condition place the target in?

The question of how prejudice and discrimination affect individuals, families, and communities is not just a question of negative outcomes. Prejudice affects people psychologically and physically, and families and communities feel the consequences of the health, economic, and occupational disparities stemming from inequality. However, there is also a story of resilience and coping at every level. From individuals who choose to protect their self-worth and marshal collective identity in their favor, to families who actively engage in protective collective socialization

practices, to communities and societies that find strength in numbers, people are not merely passive recipients of social judgments and evaluations, but rather they psychologically construe and physically reshape their social worlds to actively cope with the problem of stigma.

Do the Ground Rules for Talking About Race Hinder Interracial Understanding?

Talking about race may threaten to unmask both conscious and unconscious belief systems about one's own biases and prejudices (Tatum, 1992). Divergent narratives, stories, and fictions (sincere and otherwise) complicate attempts to mount a dialogue in race. Societal norms and ground rules surrounding the discussion on topics like race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and class differences hinder an honest and open discussion of these topics. The code of silence, politeness protocol, academic protocol, and stereotype constraint all intersect in a way that encourages people to avoid or only superficially engage in meaningful and honest discussions on these "socially taboo" topics. If honest dialogues on race, gender, and sexual orientation, for example, lead to increased group understanding and improved group relations, then the challenge before us is how to overcome these social, academic, and interpersonal constraints.

PART 2

Mechanisms of Inclusion and Beneficial Diversity Dynamics



Diversity is a widely used and often misunderstood concept. A growing body of evidence indicates that diversity can be beneficial to achieving positive outcomes in education, business, and interpersonal and intergroup relations. That it is a “compelling interest” in higher education was asserted by Justice Sandra Day O’Connor in the *Grutter v. Bollinger* U.S. Supreme Court case (Grutter, 2003). But even as a “compelling interest,” there is much to be done in supporting its advancement. There is no simple understanding or one-size-fits-all strategy for achieving successful diversity. This section considers some of the criticisms, barriers, and benefits of diversity.

Some critics of diversity argue that too much focus on diversity undermines American culture and can potentially lead to *balkanization*, the fragmentation or division of a region or state into smaller regions or states often hostile to or noncooperative among each other. However, emphasizing differences (distinctive group identities) does not mean we are unable to recognize our commonalities (superordinate identities).

Those who support the recognition of multicultural identities argue that the differences should be recognized and that the blending of races signals a step toward transcending race. A variety of research findings support the conclusion that the benefits of having an ingroup identity do not have to come at the expense of enjoying the benefits of a broader, superordinate identity (Cheng & Lee, 2009; Shih & Sanchez, 2009). Moreover, forging dual identities has been found to be a critical factor in sustaining positive self-worth across a variety of sometimes conflicting identities (e.g., sexual orientation and race; gender and sexual orientation, among others) (Baysu, Phalet, & Brown, 2011; Fingerhut, Peplau, & Ghavami, 2005; Glasford & Dovidio, 2011).

The key to successful dual identity formation may lie in a majority institution’s efforts to communicate and ensure that having a subordinate identity is safe and supported within its confines. The creation of “safe spaces” for marginalized groups and organizations that celebrate diversity may prevent Balkanization. If institutions can create environments of trust for minority students by assuring that they will not be threatened because of their subordinate identity, the goals associated with the promotion of dual identities become more realistic and achievable. Findings suggest that strong, unambiguous acceptance of minority spaces, including opportunities for intergroup contact, should figure into institutions’ plans for facilitating a diverse atmosphere.

For the most part, research on intergroup relations has focused primarily on racial integration. Psychologists have devoted much less attention to researching the consequences of integration in the areas of age, ability, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation. The primary perspective on diversity relations examines the effects of multiculturalism (recognizing and celebrating group differences) and colorblindness (minimizing group differences). Both ideologies advocate for equality (Plaut, Thomas, & Goren, 2009) and aim to reduce intergroup conflict. However, research finds that adoption of these two ideologies results in different consequences for both individuals and organizations.

Colorblind and multicultural ideologies can have unintended consequences for individuals and organizations. Yet, these two ideologies underlie many of the social policies that organizations and governments use to manage intergroup relations and minimize unlawful discrimination. In general, while research finds pros and cons of each of

these ideologies, the majority of work finds that multicultural approaches tend to be more successful in facilitating workplace cohesiveness, employee engagement, and facilitation of dual identities.

What Exactly Is Diversity and Why Is It Beneficial?

Diversity is a complex concept that to date has been poorly defined. It is based on differences among us, but it is also a term that has been used in traditional discussions of race. Race has historically been conceived in binary terms that contrast Blacks from Africa with Whites from Europe. When “ism” is attached to race, it contrasts “perpetrators” with “victims.” By assigning people to categories, and differentially valuing those categories, we oversimplify the multidimensionality of differences among us.

When diversity is being broadly considered, the significant differences within and between divergent categories must be acknowledged and taken into account. As Nobel Laureate biologist E. O. Wilson articulates in his book *The Diversity of Life* (Wilson, 1992), diversity is the foundation of the survival and evolution of our species. In an evolutionary sense, human survival and advancement may be the most fundamental benefit of diversity. Differences among us benefit all. That we fear and retreat from our differences, or base aggressive hostilities and exclusion on them, is understandable but also regrettable.

Diversity is a fact of U.S. society. The 2010 Census showed that so-called racial and ethnic minorities constitute more than one third (105,803,975) of the U.S. population of 308,745,538 (34.46%). By 2050 or sooner, these groups are projected to constitute more than half of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). Crossing race and ethnicity with gender, socioeconomic class, immigrant status, age, and sexual orientation means that talking about diversity is literally talking about the vast majority of the U.S. population. The question of whether diversity is good is not the most compelling way to address the fundamental fact of our diversity. Perhaps a better question is “What are the ways in which diversity makes us stronger?” Its corollary should also be acknowledged: “What are the ways in which poorly handling diversity makes us weaker?”

Our national history, collective values, and science support our movement toward full, respectful inclusion that is structural, institutional, interpersonal, and individual. Indeed, there is substantial social science literature documenting the benefits of diversity to individuals and institutions and to the strength of democracy and society. This literature, in the aggregate, points to two conclusions about the impact of diversity:

Diversity Breeds Creative Thinking, Democratic Communities, and Innovation

Organizations and groups that integrate varied talents, experience, backgrounds, and perspectives are more likely than homogeneous groups to produce creative solutions to complex problems because the variety of talents and experiences enable divergent problem solving. Several conditions for and consequences of diversity are important: everyone benefits, individuals are included with full membership, and there is diversity of talent.

Diversity in Higher Education Makes Better Citizens

Ample social science evidence documents a wide range of benefits that accrue from racial, ethnic, and social class diversity on college campuses. Gurin, Nagda, and Lopez (2004) created a structured Intergroup Relations Program (IGR) for first-year college students. The IGR was based on five principles for bringing diversity and democracy into alignment: presence of diverse others, discontinuity from precollege experiences, equality among peers, discussion guided by rules of civil discourse, and normalization and negotiation of conflict. Participants came from diverse backgrounds, and the curriculum consisted of readings, lectures, papers, and intergroup dialogues. Results showed that IGR participants, compared with controls, were more likely to hold democratic sentiments and to see that differences were not divisive, conflict was not bad, and learning about other groups was desirable and worthwhile. IGR students were more likely to be interested in politics and participate in campus civic and political activities. They also felt they were more likely to be active in the community and promote racial/ethnic understanding once they graduated.

What Are the Conditions That Enable Diversity to Flourish?

Merely addressing demographic diversity is insufficient. Three important principles for constructing successful diversified conditions are:

- Diversity must be perceived as fundamental to the core values and goals of institutional and societal decision makers
- Diversity must be relevant to the goal at hand
- Organizations must recognize that the benefits of diversity may be quite different for those who “diversify” a setting and those who reflect the setting’s status quo. Diversity has benefits as well as cost

PART 3

Mechanisms and Strategies for Promoting Diversity and Reducing Discrimination



The task force considers the fundamental challenge in crafting this report to be the identification of processes and mechanisms that produce real results—the reduction of discrimination and the promotion of positive forms of diversity. The task force speaks interchangeably about mechanisms, interventions, and strategies. Only approaches that have, at a minimum, empirically validated evidence of success in reducing discriminatory behavior, enhancing psychological well-being, or improving relationships within and among diverse groups are discussed.

What Are Some Promising Strategies for Overcoming Prejudice That Have Been Evaluated with Experimental Methods?

Changes at the intergroup level

Intergroup contact. A recent meta-analysis (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006) that examined 515 investigations of the effects of intergroup contact across many different settings revealed that contact between groups effectively reduced intergroup bias and prejudice, although more so for majority than for minority group members (Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005).

Cooperative interaction and cooperative learning.

A number of studies and school-based interventions engaged children in cooperative learning exercises (e.g., Johnson & Johnson, 1989). In one version of cooperative learning known as the Jig-Saw Classroom (Aronson, 2002), children from different racial/ethnic groups became experts on different and essential parts of a lesson. After the class reassembled, each child shared his or her particular expertise with the others. Hence, each child was cooperatively interdependent

with others from different racial/ethnic groups so as to facilitate learning the entire lesson. The Jig-Saw strategy has been evaluated extensively and presents clear evidence of its effectiveness for facilitating learning, as well as reducing intergroup biases and prejudices (Aronson, 2002).

Changes to the relative salience of group boundaries

Interpersonal interactions and cross-group friendships:

Intergroup contact that leads to interpersonal interactions provides an opportunity for members of one group to develop positive emotional reactions and recognize individual attitudes, talents, and interests among people in the outgroup. The development of interpersonal friendships further reduces prejudice. Cross-group friendships have cascading effects because friends of those involved in cross-group friendships are affected by the knowledge that their friends have close friendships with outgroup members (Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe, & Ropp, 1997). In addition, research on the effects of interactions between students and older instructors in college campus intergenerational service learning courses found these relationships reduced ageist stereotypes (Layfield, 2004). Compared with the beginning of the course, 10 weeks later these students believed that older adults were less set in their ways, less meddlesome, less old-fashioned, less intolerant, and more physically active and optimistic.

Recategorization: Intergroup contact that induces members of different groups to recategorize themselves as members of the same, more inclusive group can reduce prejudice through cognitive and

motivational processes involving ingroup favoritism (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). Recategorization changes the conceptual representations of the different groups from an us-versus-them orientation to a more inclusive, superordinate “we” connection. Common ingroup identity may be achieved by increasing the salience of existing common superordinate memberships (e.g., school, company, or nation) or by introducing factors (e.g., common goals or fate) perceived to be shared by the memberships.

Dual identity or mutual intergroup differentiation. The development of a more inclusive common identity does not necessarily require members of each group to completely forsake their less inclusive ethnic or racial group identities. It is possible to establish a common superordinate identity (e.g., American), while simultaneously maintaining the salience of subgroup identities (e.g., Black or White).

Changes at the individual level

Self-affirmation. According to self-affirmation theory (Steele, 1988), people are motivated to maintain positive regard for their self-worth (i.e., to have a global sense of being moral and proficient). With regard to prejudice, self-affirmation plays a role in both the instigation and the prevention of prejudice. On one hand, research has demonstrated that when a person’s self-image is threatened, devaluing a member of another group for whom pejorative stereotypes are available (e.g., a Jewish woman or gay man) serves to restore that person’s positive self-regard (Fein & Spencer, 1997). However, this research has also demonstrated that people who are initially provided an alternative means of increasing the saliency of their positive self-image by thinking about an important value in their own lives (e.g., art, the pursuit of knowledge, relationships) are less likely to use available stereotypes than those who are not first given the opportunity to self-affirm. Cohen, Garcia, Apfel, and Master (2006) found that a brief self-affirmation intervention (an essay-writing exercise in which students reaffirmed their important personal values) among seventh graders reduced the Black–White academic achievement gap by 40%, with this effect maintained over a 2-year period (Cohen, Garcia, Purdie-Vaughns, Apfel, & Brzustoski, 2009). The implications of this finding are particularly important because

they suggest that the motivation leading to prejudicial beliefs and feelings related to self-affirmation can be buffered by providing ample alternative opportunities for people to maintain and increase their sense of positive self-worth (see Sinclair & Kunda, 1999).

Dynamic versus static theories of human nature.

Among professional psychologists and lay people alike, some believe that psychological attributes are fixed, stable, and unchangeable (i.e., entity theorists), whereas others believe that attributes are more dynamic and changeable (i.e., incremental theorists) (see Dweck, Chiu, & Hong, 1995). Research has shown that entity theorists, compared with incremental theorists, perceived greater homogeneity among outgroup members, interpreted people’s actions and outcomes in terms of their attributes, more strongly endorsed stereotypic traits for outgroups, and generally showed greater prejudice (Hong & Yeung, 1997). However, when college students were exposed to an ostensibly scientific news article advocating an incremental point of view, they agreed less with stereotypes of African Americans, Asians, and Latinos than did students exposed to an entity point of view (Levy et al., 1998). Carr, Pauker, and Dweck (2012) also found that compared to participants who were taught a fixed (entity) belief, those taught to believe prejudice was malleable (incremental) were less anxious and more friendly interacting with a Black partner.

Cognitive retraining: Practice makes perfect. To the extent that stereotypes are learned associations, it is possible to combat stereotyping by unlearning and reversing those associations. Research has shown that repeated efforts to control activation of implicit biases can result in the individual’s ability to inhibit these biases.

Motivating self-regulation. When people are shown they have responded in a biased way that violates their personal nonprejudiced standards, this recognition initiates a basic self-regulatory process (Monteith, Mark, & Ashburn-Nardo, 2010). They experience feelings of guilt (compunction) and attempt to inhibit further bias. These individuals then engage in retrospective reflection, in which they focus their attention on aspects of the situation that might have elicited the reaction and attempt to develop cues to control bias in the future.

Inducing empathy for targets of prejudice. Finally, evidence suggests that inducing empathy for an outgroup member could reduce bias toward members of that group. For example, Batson, Polycarpou, Harmon-Jones, Imhoff, Michener, Bednar, Klein, and Highberger (1997) found that asking individuals to take the perspective of a person with AIDS improved attitudes toward all AIDS patients.

Are There Conditions That Facilitate Constructive Dialogues on Race and if so What Are They?

Evidence suggests that steps can be taken to reduce prejudice. Studies have found that consistent efforts to increase internal motivation against bias, coupled with an awareness of implicit biases, can prove successful in reducing discriminatory behaviors and prejudicial attitudes. In turn, this may lead to increased efforts to reduce discrimination.

Most of the work on identifying conditions that facilitate constructive dialogues on race has come from personal narratives and biographical explorations (e.g., hooks, 1994; Kiselica, 2008; Tatum, 1997), critical intellectual discourse (Bolgatz, 2007), personal experiences and observations by educators and trainers (Sanchez-Hucles & Jones, 2005; Young & Davis-Russell, 2002), and the President's Initiative on Race (1999). Few studies have actually been conducted on identifying conditions or personal attributes that allow people to carry out meaningful racial dialogues.

Focus groups and other systematic explorations, though, have found these main conditions to be helpful to racial dialogues: Acknowledge emotions and feelings; acknowledge and self-disclose personal challenges and fears; acknowledge the possibility of biased social upbringing and conditioning; and recognize and understand the manifestation and dynamics of difficult dialogues.

PART 4

Recommendations



As we have shown in this report, stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination have discernible consequences for their direct targets as well as for the families and communities that support and interact with them. We have further documented a variety of psychological processes and mechanisms that exacerbate these effects. However, research has suggested several strategies that can mitigate these negative consequences. Most of the strategies that follow center on educational outreach. Education is a principal gateway to attitude change, and much of the material in this report (e.g., the vignettes) lends itself readily to the creation of educational materials. The task force encourages APA to endorse and take advantage of newer forms of media (e.g., Web-based videos and blogs) to disseminate educational materials, targeting lay populations, including students, educators, and the general public, as well as professionals in the field and APA. The principal recommendations herein reflect the task force's judgment that APA can promote understanding of the psychological science that illuminates the mechanisms of discrimination and the promising pathways to beneficial diversity.

The recommendations in the report are also consistent with the APA Strategic Plan—its vision, mission, and specific goals. The report addresses the vision that APA be (a) a principal leader and global partner in promoting psychological knowledge and methods to facilitate the resolution of personal, societal, and global challenges in diverse, multicultural, and international contexts and (b) an effective champion of the application of psychology to promote human rights, health, well-being, and dignity.

The report is particularly relevant to two Strategic Plan goals: (a) emphasizing APA's central role in positioning psychology as the science of behavior will increase public awareness of the benefits psychology

brings to daily living and (b) expanding psychology's role in advancing health will promote psychology's role in decreasing health disparities.

APA Strategic Plan

Given the alignment of the task force report with APA's strategic goals, we recommend that APA look for a range of opportunities to promote the significant role of psychological science in understanding and reducing discrimination and achieving the benefits of diversity. The set of activities included here should focus on the strategic subgoals of decreasing health disparities and applying psychology to everyday living.

Education and Training

There is much information in this report that will be educational and useful to multiple audiences. We have separated the recommendations into those most useful for the public and those that might be better used by psychologists and APA members.

Public information

- Make the task force report and ancillary teaching and curriculum materials available to teachers for use in high school and college classes. We recommend that these materials be developed to include case vignettes drawn from the research evidence, exercises to demonstrate the biasing effects, and a sample curriculum to aid teachers in making the report and its findings effective for classroom activities.
- Develop and distribute educational materials to day care, Head Start, preschool, and kindergarten teachers and parents. We believe it is never too soon to introduce diversity education.
- Develop a variety of Web-based products and interactive materials, including videos that highlight specific sections of the report (e.g.,

teaching children not to be prejudiced and to understand more about the many forms of discrimination).

- Develop a speaker series, to include an annual major lecture in Washington, DC, named for a prominent scholar and a speaker's bureau of experts available to present a variety of diversity and discrimination topics and issues.
- Develop a master lecture series on discrimination and diversity to be presented at the APA Annual Convention.

Educating and training psychologists

- Produce a special issue of the *American Psychologist* to underscore a commitment to diversity on the part of APA and to educate members and professionals in the field.
- Develop a set of graphic materials for distribution by APA members to governance and other groups at conferences and other forums.
- Develop diversity training based on findings from the report that would be presented to APA Council and consolidated meetings and videotaped and edited for use as a major training tool for divisions, state psychological associations, and other organizations.
- Develop networking linkages with other organizations; connect to the Social Psychology Network Prejudice site.
- Collect videos made by teachers, consultants, researchers, and others that address and illustrate the forms prejudice takes, effective approaches for reducing it, and strategies for creating beneficial diversity in a wide range of organizational contexts. These videos could be used at APA meetings and made available online with appropriate monitoring and protections. Present the report and its implications at the National Multicultural Summit.

Research

Although we have reviewed a very large body of research in this report, there continue to be research gaps, underresearched areas, and tests of models and

populations that have not been sufficiently examined and compared across settings and over time. Given the growing pressures that dramatically expanding diversity of all kinds may have on U.S. society, and the historically central role psychological research has played in addressing issues of prejudice and discrimination, we feel this is a perfect time for APA to take the lead in forging a vigorous and vital research agenda on discrimination and diversity. We offer several recommendations in line with this view:

- As we noted in the introduction to this report, a vast majority of the research has focused on bias and discrimination on the basis of race and ethnicity. This body of work has produced many outstanding findings and has well documented the overt and subtle forms that race and ethnicity bias takes and with what consequences. However, do these well-established empirical findings and explanatory mechanisms apply in the same way to bias based on other factors such as gender, sexual orientation, social class, age, disability status, and immigration status? We encourage more systematic research on the sources and consequences of bias aimed at targeted groups beyond race and ethnicity.
- We also know that much research that has demonstrated mechanisms for the reduction of intergroup bias has not been broadly tested with other groups. Thus, we recommend systematic testing of different methods singly and in combination relating to bias and stereotype reduction toward a variety of target groups. As far as we are aware, there is no evidence that some bias reduction strategies are less (or more) effective for some groups than others. If we find that different methods are more effective for some target groups relative to others, we would then conclude that the underlying processes of prejudice toward some groups may be different than for others.
- We strongly recommend that intersectionality be a major research focus for both funding and publication priorities. The research literature has tended to focus on individuals on the basis of their most salient group membership (e.g., race, gender, age, social class). However,

everyone belongs to multiple groups, and the intersection of group membership within individuals, known as *intersectionality*, is a growing and underresearched issue. Biracial individuals have gained some attention, but there are many others who fit an intersectional criterion. Psychologists have significantly advanced our understanding of intersectionality in the lives of everyday people and in our research designs (see Cole, 2009, for comprehensive analysis of this issue).

- Studies documenting various forms of discrimination and bias and their effects far outnumber those that address the challenges and benefits of diversity. Moreover, little is known about the psychological trauma endured and coping mechanisms used by those who diversify or integrate nondiverse settings. We recommend more research attention to these individuals and groups.
- We propose convening a meeting focused on examining the empirical, evidence-based interventions that have been shown to reduce discrimination, bias, and prejudice and compiling a best-practices handbook for use by practitioners and organizational leaders.
- We believe APA should take the lead and convene an interdisciplinary conference to examine the issues of discrimination and diversity and set a broad interdisciplinary research agenda that will serve the increasingly diverse U.S. population in the years ahead.
- Although the benefits of integration, particularly under supportive enabling conditions, are well documented, a series of research and policy questions about the process of integration, the

collateral consequences, and the predictable backlash deserve further attention. Three areas are particularly important for future research: (a) a full review of color-blind and diversity ideologies: Who benefits and under what conditions? (b) evaluation of when integration means assimilation and when it produces backlash and the dynamics of inclusion in applied settings; and (c) systematic investigation of the significance of identity safe spaces in integrated settings.

Clinical Practice

Many practitioners provide psychological or organizational services to people who are engaged in some form of difficult, stressful, or even violent interaction across group boundaries. Practitioners in clinical and applied settings have an excellent opportunity to bring the findings and recommendations of this report to the people and settings they serve.

- Make the report of the Task Force on Discrimination and Diversity available to practitioners who work with members of diverse groups, communities, and organizational settings.
- Develop curricula and workshops on discrimination and diversity for continuing education programs for practitioners.

Advocacy

Government relations staff should extract policy implications from the report, develop appropriate fact sheets, and disseminate this information to policymakers and federal agency leaders through the convening of meetings, briefings, and other events.

PART 5

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