

Agenda article

Diversity ideologies and intergroup relations: An examination of colorblindness and multiculturalism

ANEETA RATTAN AND NALINI AMBADY*

Stanford University, USA

Abstract

In this review, we highlight the importance of understanding diversity ideologies, or people's beliefs and practices regarding diversity, for social psychological research on intergroup relations. This review focuses on two diversity ideologies, colorblindness and multiculturalism, and their impact on core issues related to intergroup conflict, such as stereotypes, prejudice, attitudes toward inequality, interracial interactions, and disparate outcomes between minority and majority group members. We close by highlighting some of the areas in which future research has the potential to be especially illuminating. Copyright © 2013 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Social psychology has a long tradition of research in intergroup relations (Allport, 1954; Goffman, 1963; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), examining core questions such as how group memberships shape individual interactions and why intergroup conflicts arise and persist (Clark & Clark, 1947; Sherif, 1966; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). This research has yielded diverse insights into the causes, content, and consequences of some of the most negative aspects of intergroup relations, such as stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination (Devine & Elliot, 1995; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1998; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Goff, Eberhardt, Williams, & Jackson, 2008; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998; Steele & Aronson, 1995). Rather than focusing exclusively on stereotyping and prejudice as the key variables for understanding how to improve intergroup relations, however, we ask whether people's beliefs about diversity also play a key role in the positive versus negative outcomes of intergroup interactions. Thus, we review the extant literature examining *diversity ideologies* (also referred to as diversity models) or people's beliefs and practices regarding diversity.¹ Although this literature is relatively new, and therefore represents a fairly small body of work, we have found that it has already provided fascinating new insights that have informed our own research perspectives and agenda (see Apfelbaum, Pauker, Sommers, & Ambady, 2010). As such, we anticipate that an understanding of these diversity ideologies will be essential to gain a deeper understanding of intergroup interactions. Therefore, we also focus on the many

meaningful questions about diversity ideologies and their impact on intergroup relations that merit further research, and we hope to spur future research in this area.

This review will focus on two ideologies for incorporating and advocating diversity in society that have gained prominence: colorblindness and multiculturalism. The colorblind ideology argues that equality among groups is best gained by downplaying group distinctions and treating people as unique individuals (for reviews, see Apfelbaum, Norton, & Sommers, 2012; Markus, Steele, & Steele, 2000; Peery, 2011; Rosenthal & Levy, 2010; Schofield, 2007; for an alternate conception of colorblindness, see Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, & Browne, 2000). In contrast, the multicultural ideology argues that group memberships must not only be acknowledged but also valued in order to attain equality and diversity (for reviews, see Plaut, 2010; Rosenthal & Levy, 2010; Stevens, Plaut, & Sanchez-Burks, 2008). Different instantiations of these ideologies vary slightly across studies, but these are the core ideals that define each of the ideologies (for a review of the possible distinctions within ideologies, see Rosenthal & Levy, 2010). In the present article, we will review the origins and consequences of each of these ideologies and then discuss some of the many questions that are, as yet, unanswered. Ultimately, we argue that given the emphasis in social psychology on understanding intergroup bias and on reducing intergroup conflict and inequality, more research devoted to investigating these diversity ideologies as well as potential alternatives is timely and essential.²

*Correspondence to: Nalini Ambady, Department of Psychology, Jordan Hall/Building 420, 450 Serra Mall, Stanford, CA 94305, USA.
E-mail: nambady@stanford.edu

¹Although multiple definitions of diversity ideologies exist in the literature, our working definition focuses on people's beliefs about how to approach diversity in society, rather than efforts to increase diversity (Ely & Thomas, 2001), to reduce bias (Bigler, 1999) or to integrate an individual's diverse identities (Benet-Martinez, 2010).

²We should note that this article will not specifically address the body of research on assimilation, which is sometimes examined as a stand-alone ideology (Davies, Steele, & Markus, 2008; Verkuyten, 2005; Wolsko, Park, & Judd, 2006) and sometimes considered a part of colorblindness (Rosenthal & Levy, 2010), as this ideology does not advocate diversity but rather unilateral adoption of the dominant group's ways of being.

THE ORIGINS OF COLORBLINDNESS AND MULTICULTURALISM AS DIVERSITY IDEOLOGIES

Colorblindness and multiculturalism are pervasive diversity ideologies that can be seen across widespread domains, for example in how workplaces describe their culture (Purdie-Vaughns, Steele, Davies, Dittmann, & Crosby, 2008), how governments define their policies (e.g., Canadian immigration policy, Government of Canada, 2012), and even how legal precedent is established (e.g., *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School Dist. No. 1*, 2007). We begin with a brief description of the origins of colorblindness and multiculturalism as diversity ideologies. Understanding how these particular ideologies developed, both in society and social psychology, helps to set the stage for understanding the research questions that have been investigated thus far.

Colorblindness originated in efforts to increase equality. The concept of colorblindness in American society has been traced to early efforts to oppose *de jure* racial segregation and inequality. An early expression of this idea was in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court case, in which Justice Harlan, alone, dissented with upholding the doctrine of “separate but equal” and instead claimed the constitution is “color-blind, and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens,” (*Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1896).³ Years later, this idea was echoed in Martin Luther King Jr.’s famous dream that one day people would “not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character,” (King, 1963). Thus, the concept of colorblindness was an organizing principle in groundbreaking efforts to increase equality between African Americans and Whites in American society because this diversity ideology, at the time, stood for equal treatment across groups. Some argue that the origins of colorblindness stand at odds with its current instantiations, which use this diversity ideology as a basis for maintaining, rather than undermining, intergroup inequality (Bonilla-Silva, 2003).

The idea that a doctrine of colorblindness could contend with intergroup conflict and inequality also emerged in social psychology (for a review, see Park & Judd, 2005). Once theory and research illustrated the profound negative consequences of categorization into groups (Tajfel, 1969; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), categorization itself came to be viewed as a primary source of intergroup conflict, even to the exclusion of other factors (e.g., negative intergroup affect, Allport, 1954; for a review, see Park & Judd, 2005). Because of this, much research has been devoted to investigating ways to reduce the salience of group memberships or avoid them altogether (e.g., decategorization, recategorization, Gaertner, Mann, Murrell, & Dovidio, 1989; for a review, see Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2009). In other words, a substantial literature in social psychology has explored how to achieve a colorblind ideal—the de-emphasis of group memberships—in order to avoid the ingroup preference and outgroup derogation that follow from categorization (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

³It should be noted that Justice Harlan extended this colorblind argument only to citizens of the USA, which included African Americans at this time. Therefore, his call for equal treatment did not extend broadly to all outgroups. Indeed, Justice Harlan highlights the ability of “the Chinese race,” to ride in White train cars as a clear failing of the statute in question. He argues that, “a race so different from our own that we do not permit those belonging to it to become citizens of the United States,” should not be afforded more privileges than “citizens of the black race... who have all the legal rights that belong to white citizens,” (*Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1896).

The ideology of multiculturalism also aims to address the divisiveness associated with group memberships, but by focusing on the positive consequences of group memberships both for the individual and for society more broadly.⁴ Multiculturalism arose in American society, particularly in educational theory, to oppose the “melting pot” idea in which all groups are expected to conform to a unitary cultural ideal (Banks, 2004; Zirkel, 2008) and to oppose more explicitly assimilationist ideals in other cultural contexts, such as the Canadian context (Berry & Kalin, 1995) and to more varying degrees the Western European context (Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2003; Verkuyten, 2005; but see Zick, Wagner, van Dick, & Petzel, 2001). Proponents of a more multicultural ideal suggest that ignoring group memberships does a disservice to those who value their culture and group (Banks, 2004; Markus et al., 2000). Thus, a multicultural perspective argues that divisions between individuals must be acknowledged and valued as meaningful sources of identity and culture, and attempts to minimize such distinctions are viewed as a critical shortcoming of the colorblind perspective. Research in social psychology has also begun to demonstrate that social categories are not solely negative. In recent years, a number of arguments have been made highlighting the importance of developing psychological theory that advocates valuing diversity (Ely & Thomas, 2001; Jones, Lynch, Tenglund, & Gaertner, 2000; Markus et al., 2000; Plaut, 2010; Rosenthal & Levy, 2010), and acknowledging the positive potential of group identities, particularly among ethnic and racial minority groups (e.g., Cohen & Garcia, 2005; Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, & Smith, 1997). Thus, the conceptualization of multiculturalism does not view the presence of group distinctions as the central source of conflict between groups but rather points to the associated negative affect as the source of prejudice (Park & Judd, 2005). In response to this, a multicultural ideal construes group memberships as a positive and valuable source difference between people—something to be celebrated rather than ignored.

So far, we have roughly traced the origins of these concepts in society and in social psychology. However, do these diversity ideologies play their intended role—to provide a vision of positive intergroup relations and a foundation for intergroup equality? Next, we will review the state of current research exploring who supports colorblindness versus multiculturalism, what the consequences of these ideologies are, and how these ideologies compare with one another.

WHO SUPPORTS COLORBLINDNESS VERSUS MULTICULTURALISM?

Colorblindness

An initial question is whether people, generally, endorse a colorblind ideology. The extant research shows that majority

⁴Here, we discuss multiculturalism as a diversity ideology or the belief that group identities should be valued. Therefore, we do not address the other representations of multiculturalism, which have been linked to efforts to create diverse workplaces by increasing minority representation (Ely & Thomas, 2001) and to policy mandates to increase diversity in society (Citrin, Sears, Muste, & Wong, 2001).

group members tend to endorse a colorblind ideology to a greater degree than minority group members (Ryan, Casas, & Thompson, 2010; Ryan, Hunt, Weible, Peterson, & Casas, 2007; Schofield, 1986, 2007) and are more likely to believe that this diversity ideology will lead to positive intergroup relations (Ryan et al., 2007). For example, research in our lab group has shown that majority group children in the USA as young as 10–11 years old spontaneously adopt a colorblind strategy in interactions involving race. Apfelbaum, Pauker, Ambady, Sommers, and Norton (2008) had children play a “guess who” game in which they had to find a target person from an array of images. The images varied on a number of dimensions, such as gender, background color, and the key dimension of race. The results showed that children 8–9 years old rarely hesitated to ask questions regarding race. In contrast, by 10–11 years of age, children avoided mentioning race. Indeed, the younger children outperformed the older children at this relatively simple task, and their better performance was driven by their higher likelihood of mentioning race. This research illustrates that by 10–11 years of age, children spontaneously adopt a colorblind strategy and employ it even at the expense of achieving a goal (i.e., finding the target person as quickly as possible).

White adults exhibit the same tendency toward colorblindness in race-relevant interactions (Norton, Sommers, Apfelbaum, Pura, & Ariely, 2006). White adults underestimate their ability to categorize people based upon race—in other words, they claim colorblindness—and they exhibit colorblindness on the same “guess who” game described previously. When White adults played the game with a Black (versus White) confederate, they avoided mentioning race and their performance was impaired. In another study, the more White adults reported advocating colorblindness, the more they anticipated avoiding race when considering the strategies they would use in the game (Norton et al., 2006). Further research has shown that Whites avoid discussing race in order to avoid appearing biased (Apfelbaum, Sommers, & Norton, 2008). In this research, Whites who were most concerned with showing others that they were unbiased followed a colorblind norm set by a confederate most closely, particularly when this interaction partner was Black (versus White). Thus, the research would suggest that Whites advocate and exhibit colorblindness in their interracial interactions and that this tendency emerges in childhood.

Multiculturalism

Minority group members are less likely to endorse colorblindness than are majority group members. Instead, they tend to endorse multiculturalism. Minority group members view multiculturalism as a diversity ideology to be more likely than colorblindness to lead to positive intergroup relations (Ryan et al., 2007). Although some research suggests that minority group members are also more likely to endorse multiculturalism than are majority group members (Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2003; Verkuyten, 2005), other research indicates that majority group members endorse both ideologies relatively equally (Morrison & Chung, 2011; Ryan et al., 2007, 2010). We will return to this discrepancy later.

The core goal of multiculturalism is to affirm group identities and engender acceptance of outgroup members. Do people

who endorse multiculturalism exhibit these key facets of the diversity ideology? Verkuyten (2005) explored this among both majority (i.e., Dutch) and minority (i.e., Turkish) group members in the Netherlands. Although the Turkish minority group endorsed multiculturalism to a greater degree than did the Dutch majority group, endorsing multiculturalism still had positive effects among both groups. Among the Turkish minority, endorsing multiculturalism was associated with higher ethnic identification and more positive ingroup evaluations. Among the Dutch majority, endorsing multiculturalism was associated with more positive outgroup evaluations, although lower ethnic identification. In other words, among the minority group, a multicultural ideology was associated with positive feelings about their group membership, and among the majority group, multiculturalism was associated with feeling positively toward outgroups. Multiculturalism is also associated with positive self-esteem among both majority and minority group members who identify strongly with their group (Verkuyten, 2009a). Together, these results suggest that endorsing a multicultural ideology may both affirm group identities among minority group members and be associated with more acceptance of outgroups among majority group members.

As noted, some research suggests that majority group members may endorse this ideology less than minority group members (Verkuyten, 2005). This may be due, in part, to majority group members’ perception that multicultural ideologies exclude them. In one study, when White Americans were primed with a multicultural ideology, they exhibited a stronger association between multiculturalism and exclusion (versus inclusion). However, when they were primed with the same multicultural ideology that also addressed how this ideology relates to their group, White Americans exhibited a significantly stronger association between multiculturalism and inclusion (versus exclusion; Plaut, Garnett, Buffardi, & Sanchez-Burks, 2011; Stevens et al., 2008). Changing majority group members’ self-conceptions can make multiculturalism more appealing to them. Majority group members were led to feel a sense of belonging to a group in society, by priming them with “European American” rather than “White” identity terms, and this identity manipulation increased their support for multiculturalism (Morrison & Chung, 2011).

Although support for multiculturalism as a diversity ideology may seem relatively widespread among both majority and minority group members, there is one important caveat: support for this ideology is vulnerable to threat from external sources. For example, after a realistic threat (e.g., the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks), both minorities and White Americans exhibited less support for taking a multicultural approach to foreign (but not domestic) policy (Davies, Steele, & Markus, 2008). Other research has found that perceiving greater threat from minority immigrant groups was associated with lower endorsement of a multicultural ideology and less tolerance toward outgroups (Verkuyten, 2009b). Thus, it is important to acknowledge that the research reported previously highlighting the widespread support for multiculturalism, and to some degree the research that follows exploring its consequences, generally measures support for this ideology in contexts that are relatively unthreatening.

HOW EFFECTIVE ARE COLORBLINDNESS VERSUS MULTICULTURALISM AS DIVERSITY IDEOLOGIES?

Both colorblindness and multiculturalism share the overarching goal of achieving positive intergroup relations and greater social equality. Colorblindness proposes to do so by ignoring group memberships, whereas multiculturalism proposes to achieve these goals by acknowledging and valuing group memberships. To what degree does each of these diversity ideologies achieve its goal? Because these beliefs are often studied in contrast to one another, it is possible not only to explore how both the ideologies relate to stereotyping and prejudice but also to examine whether either ideology better approaches the ultimate goal of achieving positive intergroup relations and greater social equality.

Colorblindness, Multiculturalism, and Stereotyping and Prejudice

Although minimizing category boundaries can be effective in reducing intergroup bias (Dovidio et al., 2009), achieving a state of complete colorblindness where markers of group identity are not perceived is unlikely, if not impossible, because racial categorization seems obligatory—it happens rapidly, often unconsciously, and relatively effortlessly (Ito & Urland, 2003). Race is one of the fastest dimensions on which people categorize others (e.g., third of seven, Norton et al., 2006). Although these results may then suggest that colorblindness is not possible because race cannot be ignored, the question here is whether believing in colorblindness and acting accordingly is effective in reducing bias.

One study explored White participants' responses to outgroup members based on differing diversity ideologies (Wolsko, Park, Judd, & Wittenbrink, 2000). Both a colorblind ideology and a multicultural ideology led participants to express lower ingroup bias on a feeling thermometer and less ethnocentrism relative to a control condition. The ideologies had some diverging effects, however. Participants in the colorblind condition viewed the core values of outgroup members as more similar to their own and were less likely to use stereotypical information in predicting future behavior for an outgroup member as compared with those in the multicultural condition, who viewed the core values of outgroup members as less similar and were more likely to use stereotypical information in predicting outgroup members' behavior (Wolsko et al., 2000). These results might suggest that the colorblind ideology can lead to more positive intergroup relations—less ingroup bias, less stereotyping, and greater perceptions of similarity—than the multicultural ideology. However, a multicultural ideology leads to both more acknowledgement of difference (e.g., lower perceived similarity, greater use of stereotypes) and more positive evaluations of outgroups (Wolsko et al., 2000, 2006). These results suggest that multiculturalism achieves its ideal of maintaining intergroup boundaries while still reducing intergroup bias.

Together, this research suggests that both colorblindness and multiculturalism are effective diversity ideologies, each

in their own way (i.e., colorblindness by minimizing distinctions and multiculturalism by emphasizing them). However, additional research presents a more complex story. A more recent study found that both colorblind and multicultural ideologies lead to reduced bias on both explicit and implicit measures, but only when intergroup conflict was low. When such conflict was high, Whites holding a multicultural ideology exhibited greater explicit bias than those holding a colorblind ideology (although there were no differences on implicit bias) immediately after the threat induction. However, when bias was assessed shortly after the threat induction, this effect was reversed, with those in the colorblind condition showing greater bias than those in the multicultural condition. Thus, after a threat, those holding a colorblind ideology may suppress their negative attitudes, but experience them for longer, whereas those holding a multicultural ideology may express and resolve them sooner (Correll, Park, & Smith, 2008).

Another study directly pitted these ideologies against one another to explore their effects on implicit and explicit biases. White participants read manipulations of colorblindness and multiculturalism and then completed implicit and explicit ratings of different groups, including racial groups. Although participants in both conditions exhibited an implicit pro-White bias, the colorblind ideology led participants to exhibit a significantly greater implicit pro-White bias than did the multiculturalism condition. Similarly, on ratings of explicit racial attitudes, in the colorblind condition participants' explicit preference for Whites relative to Blacks was significantly greater than zero, whereas participants' explicit preference for Whites relative to Blacks was no different from zero in the multiculturalism condition. Additional analyses of the explicit measures suggest this bias may generalize to other outgroups: participants in the colorblind condition exhibited a greater preference for Whites relative to Asians than did participants in the multiculturalism condition (Richeson & Nussbaum, 2004).

The majority of the research discussed so far has explored people's endorsement of stereotypes and prejudice. Another way to evaluate intergroup attitudes, which our lab group has explored, is to assess whether people recognize bias when it occurs. The effectiveness of a colorblind versus multicultural approach to diversity among children, a group who is still learning about what constitutes bias, was explored in a recent study. Children listened to a story in which a teacher either taught a colorblind or "value diversity" (i.e., more multicultural) lesson and were then exposed to vignettes in which one child enacted inequitable behavior toward another child. The vignettes varied how blatantly unequal this behavior was. Children who received a lesson about colorblindness were less likely to view both ambiguous and blatantly race-biased events as discrimination, as compared with children who received a lesson about valuing diversity. Later, teachers who listened to retellings of these events were significantly less likely to view the events as meriting intervention when retold by children in the colorblind condition, as compared with the value-diversity condition. Thus, a colorblind ideology can lead children to fail to recognize discrimination when it happens and therefore to fail to relate such events in an accurate manner to adults who might be able to intervene (Apfelbaum et al., 2010).

As may be evident from this review, much of the research on how colorblindness and multiculturalism relate to bias has been conducted among majority group members. Indeed, we could find little research focusing on the impact of colorblindness and multiculturalism on minorities' experience and expression of stereotyping and prejudice. However, some research has begun to explore how multiculturalism relates to stereotyping and prejudice from the minority group side. Like majority group members, minorities' endorsement of multiculturalism has been associated with seeing groups as more different and believing groups to be important. Although multiculturalism is associated with less preference for the ingroup relative to the outgroup among majority group members, this ideology is associated with a greater preference for the ingroup relative to the outgroups (i.e., ingroup bias) for minorities (Wolsko et al., 2006). Similarly, although greater multiculturalism is associated with less outgroup homogeneity among Whites, for minorities (i.e., Black and Latino participants), it is associated with being more likely to see outgroups as homogenous (Ryan et al., 2007, 2010). This research suggests that multiculturalism, an ideology that may promote positive intergroup attitudes in majority group members, may lead to quite the opposite outcomes among minority group members.

The question at the heart of this section has been whether colorblindness and multiculturalism effectively reduce stereotyping and prejudice, which represent some of the most negative and difficult to change aspects of intergroup relations. If we focus on stereotyping, we see that a colorblind ideology leads to less, whereas a multicultural ideology leads to more stereotyping (Wolsko et al., 2000, 2006). However, if we focus on prejudice instead, then a colorblind ideology leads to more expression and less recognition while a multicultural ideology leads to less expression and more recognition of bias (Apfelbaum et al., 2010; Richeson & Nussbaum, 2004). Stereotyping and prejudice are often thought to go hand-in-hand, with increasing stereotyping being associated with increasing prejudice and factors that reduce stereotyping also thought to be likely to reduce prejudice. However, examining the role of diversity ideologies leads to a potentially different conclusion about the relationship between these constructs. The research examined here suggests that multiculturalism can lead to both greater stereotyping and reduced prejudice at the same time (Wolsko et al., 2000, 2006), although the time-course may play a meaningful role (Correll et al., 2008). Moreover, the research suggests that what reduces prejudice among majority group members may have quite the opposite effect among minority group members. Multiculturalism leads to greater ingroup bias and perceptions of outgroup homogeneity among minorities but not among majority group members (Ryan et al., 2007, 2010; Wolsko et al., 2006). The complexity of these results makes clear how important additional research will be to our understanding of which ideology leads to the most optimal intergroup outcomes, and indeed what constellation of beliefs and behaviors constitute the most optimal outcomes for majority versus minority group members.

Colorblindness, Multiculturalism, and Attitudes toward Intergroup Equality

A developing body of research has shown that it is not only implicit and explicit biases that meaningfully influence

intergroup attitudes; people's general preference for inequality between groups or their social dominance orientation (SDO; Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994) can have important implications for intergroup outcomes. Although this area of research integrating preference for inequality and diversity ideologies is much more recent, and has as yet exclusively focused on these dynamics among Whites, it meaningfully contributes to understanding the effects of colorblind and multicultural ideologies.

In general, those who have a stronger general preference for inequality (i.e., are higher in SDO) have been shown to prefer social policies that enhance the hierarchy (rather than attenuate it) and to exhibit more biased racial attitudes (Pratto et al., 1994). SDO is negatively correlated with both colorblindness and multiculturalism (Levin et al., 2012). Moreover, Levin et al. (2012) showed that both colorblindness and multiculturalism serve a hierarchy-attenuating function: participants' endorsement of both ideologies mediates the relationship between their SDO and prejudice against outgroups. Colorblind norms have been found to weaken the relationship between SDO and prejudice. Exposure to a multicultural norm, however, weakens the SDO-prejudice relationship regarding groups more traditionally associated with diversity in USA (i.e., African Americans, Latino Americans, and Asian Americans) but not for other groups (such as Arab Americans and immigrants).

Diversity ideologies also directly affect how much Whites prefer inequality. As noted previously, multiculturalism as a diversity ideology poses the risk of threatening or excluding majority group members (Plaut et al., 2011; Stevens et al., 2008), a risk that is less pertinent to colorblindness as a diversity ideology. Among Whites highly identified with their racial group, exposure to a multicultural (versus colorblind) diversity ideology leads to a greater preference for inequality (i.e., higher SDO) and less support for allocating funds to diversity-related organizations. These differential allocations were found to be driven by Whites' perceptions of symbolic threat. These differences were not evident among relatively low identified Whites, who showed no differences following exposure to a multicultural versus colorblind ideology (Morrison, Plaut, & Ybarra, 2010). Thus, a multicultural ideology may backfire and lead to a greater preference for inequality among Whites who feel strongly about their group membership, whereas a colorblind ideology does not carry this perceived threat.

Together, this research may seem to suggest that when considering Whites' general preference for inequality, colorblindness is a more effective diversity ideology. However, research has highlighted the multiple potential meanings of a colorblind ideology, which allow for colorblindness to be used to maintain, rather than reduce, inequality (Knowles, Lowery, Hogan, & Chow, 2009). The "distributive meaning" concerns equalizing outcomes, even if this requires different treatment across individuals, an ideal more in line with the original purpose of colorblindness. In contrast, the "procedural meaning," is more concerned with having equal procedures, even if this leads to different outcomes across individuals or further entrenches existing inequalities. When Whites experience a sense of threat, those who have a preference for group-based inequality (i.e., are higher in SDO) come to endorse a colorblind ideology significantly more than Whites low in SDO

(or when threat is not salient). Although this might appear as though it represents a greater orientation toward equity, high SDO Whites' preference for a colorblind ideology is driven by their desire for procedural justice, or maintaining equal procedures regardless of existing inequities, not their desire for distributive justice (Knowles et al., 2009). Thus, it is important to consider both the ideology and the values and goals underlying the ideology.

Given the goals of reducing inequality between groups, both colorblindness and multiculturalism seem equally effective as diversity ideologies because both of these beliefs are negatively associated with SDO and serve a hierarchy-attenuating function (Levin et al., 2012). Although both ideologies have ameliorative effects, they can also have negative consequences. Multiculturalism can threaten majority group members who feel strongly about their group membership, leading them to exhibit an even greater preference for inequality (Morrison et al., 2010). Colorblindness can be seized upon by those who have a strong preference for inequality in order to maintain the status quo (Knowles et al., 2009). If multiculturalism were to be defined in a more inclusive manner (Plaut et al., 2011; Stevens et al., 2008) or if colorblindness were to be explicitly defined in terms of its distributive meaning (Knowles et al., 2009), one would expect these negative consequences to no longer follow. Therefore, these findings highlight how essential it is to create greater clarity and consensus about the meanings of both multiculturalism and colorblindness. If more clearly articulated, these diversity ideologies might be less vulnerable to unanticipated consequences based upon people's preferences for inequality between social groups.

Colorblindness, Multiculturalism, and Intergroup Interactions

Another way to evaluate the effectiveness of colorblindness and multiculturalism as diversity ideologies is to examine how these ideologies affect intergroup interactions. The goal of both colorblindness and multiculturalism is to reduce bias, which should facilitate positive intergroup interactions.

One study explored how exposure to a colorblind versus multicultural ideology affected majority group members' responses to minority group members. They theorized that both colorblindness and multiculturalism might lead to more positive outgroup orientations based on different circumstances. From a multicultural perspective, group memberships are to be acknowledged and valued, perhaps leading to an expectation that people act in line with their group identities. Colorblindness suggests the opposite; group memberships should be minimized, and people should not act according to their ethnic, racial, or cultural identities. Participants given a multicultural ideology expressed greater liking for stereotypical (versus counterstereotypical) minorities, whereas participants given a colorblind ideology expressed greater liking for counterstereotypical (versus stereotypical) minorities. Thus, both ideologies may have unintended negative consequences for intergroup interactions (Gutierrez & Unzueta, 2010).

Although this research investigated evaluations of outgroup members, other research has explored how majority group members act when anticipating or actually interacting with minority group members. These diversity ideologies have

been found to affect majority group members' self-focus versus other focus, respectively, and these shifts then affect outcomes in intergroup interactions (Vorauer, Gagnon, & Sasaki, 2009). A multicultural ideology led to more positive comments being directed at an outgroup interaction partner than did a colorblind approach. A colorblind message led to more negative affect, which was mediated by majority group members' greater focus on preventing themselves from erring in the colorblind condition. Another study examined how the greater other focus induced by multiculturalism interacted with majority group members' existing level of bias. Level of prejudice interacted with diversity ideology, leading to disparate outcomes for low versus high-prejudice people. Among those exposed to a multicultural ideology, low-prejudice Whites exhibited more warmth and were less disturbed by cultural differences, whereas high-prejudice Whites expressed less warmth and were more disturbed by cultural differences. In other words, an increased other focus freed low-prejudice people to engage positively in the intergroup interaction, whereas it impaired the interactions of high-prejudice people (Vorauer & Sasaki, 2010).

Majority group members advocate colorblindness as a way to appear unbiased (Apfelbaum et al., 2008; Norton et al., 2006). Are these attempts at appearing unbiased effective? Avoiding the mention of race in interracial interactions is negatively correlated with perceived friendliness and eye contact (Norton et al., 2006), and some evidence suggests that it leads Whites to exhibit greater cognitive depletion (Apfelbaum et al., 2008; but see Holoien & Shelton, 2012). How do people perceive majority group members who hold a colorblind ideology? When race is believed to be irrelevant to the task at hand, an actor exhibiting colorblindness is viewed by both majority and minority group members as less biased than someone who discusses race. However, when race is believed to be relevant to the task, minority group members view a colorblind actor as more biased than someone who discusses race. When race is relevant, majority group members' responses to a colorblind actor depend upon the perceiver's concerns about appearing prejudiced (Apfelbaum et al., 2008). These results illustrate that Whites' attempts at appearing colorblind can be effective in cases where race is irrelevant but may impair the interaction in cases where race is relevant.

The existing research illustrates a number of situations in which these ideologies may fail to engender positive intergroup interactions. To summarize, a colorblind ideology can lead majority group members to dislike minorities who embody their group memberships (Gutierrez & Unzueta, 2010), to exhibit less friendliness and appear more prejudiced in race-relevant interactions (Apfelbaum et al., 2008), and to experience increased self-focus and negative affect in an anticipated intergroup interaction (Vorauer et al., 2009). A multicultural ideology can lead majority group members to dislike minorities who fail to embody their group memberships (Gutierrez & Unzueta, 2010) and can impair the intergroup interactions of those who are high in prejudice (Vorauer & Sasaki, 2010). However, under some circumstances, these ideologies can also have ameliorative effects. Colorblindness enacted in interactions where race is not relevant communicates a lack of bias to both majority and minority group members (Apfelbaum et al., 2008). Multiculturalism leads majority group members

to express more positive comments to a minority group member but only in an anticipated interaction (Vorauer et al., 2009) and engenders more positive behaviors but only among low-prejudice people (Vorauer & Sasaki, 2010). From this, we can conclude from the current body of research that both diversity ideologies create a set of expectations for intergroup interactions (Apfelbaum et al., 2008; Gutierrez & Unzueta, 2010). However, future research should more fully investigate the content and scope of these expectations and investigate how they affect more naturalistic intergroup interactions.

Colorblindness, Multiculturalism, and Minority Group Members' Outcomes

Another meaningful way of assessing whether these diversity ideologies achieve their goal of benefitting intergroup relations is to explore how they affect minority group members. Colorblindness (versus multiculturalism) has been shown to reduce anxiety among minorities and to make them believe their group is viewed more positively, but this holds only in anticipated (not actual) interactions (Vorauer et al., 2009). In actual interactions between White employees and their minority co-workers, the more colorblind an ideology White employees endorsed, the less engaged their minority co-workers felt with the workplace, and the more multicultural an ideology White employees endorsed, the more engaged their minority co-workers felt with the workplace (Plaut, Thomas, & Goren, 2009). The effect of Whites' diversity ideologies on minorities' lower workplace engagement was driven by minorities' greater perceptions of bias in the workplace. Together, these findings suggest that majority group members' diversity beliefs are communicated to minority group members. Indeed, Whites primed with colorblindness (versus multiculturalism) exhibited greater verbal and nonverbal prejudice, which led minority interaction partners to become more cognitively depleted (Holoien & Shelton, 2012).

This research seems to suggest that a colorblind ideology leads to relatively negative outcomes for minorities in interactions. In fact, the influence of a colorblind ideology may depend upon the level of minority representation in the context (Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008). When a workplace advocated a colorblind ideology, low (versus high) numeric representation of minorities cued a sense of threat and concerns about race-based discrimination among African American adults. These concerns about discrimination mediated the relationship between the colorblind ideology and threat. These dynamics were driven by concerns about fairness; when the company's fair and unbiased process was made clear, a colorblind ideology did not lead to such negative outcomes. Although this research illustrates the conditions under which a colorblind ideology may not induce a sense of threat among minority group members (i.e., in the context of high numeric representation and when the fair and unbiased nature of the company was made clear), it also shows that in a context where a company endorses valuing diversity, even low representation does not induce threat. In other words, an ideology that values diversity, which may be more related to the message of a multicultural diversity ideology, may buffer minorities from such concerns.

What benefits minority group members the most, a colorblind or multicultural ideology? Although the extant research seems to suggest that expecting not to be treated differently based upon group memberships can be beneficial (Vorauer et al., 2009), there is more consensus in the data showing that a multicultural ideology benefits minorities. When majority group members value diversity (i.e., endorse a more multicultural ideology), minority group members are less likely to perceive bias and more likely to be engaged in their workplace engagement (Plaut et al., 2009), are less cognitively depleted (Holoien & Shelton, 2012) and may experience lowered threat. These relatively recent developments in the literature exploring the consequences of diversity ideologies provide perhaps the most clear basis for prioritizing one ideology (i.e., multiculturalism) over the other (i.e., colorblindness) in terms of their success in benefitting intergroup interactions.

SUMMARY AND REMAINING QUESTIONS

This review illustrates that these diversity ideologies affect virtually every aspect of intergroup relations: stereotypes, prejudice, attitudes toward inequality, interracial interactions, and disparate outcomes between minority and majority group members. Ultimately, the goal of these approaches to diversity is to improve intergroup interactions, reduce bias, and benefit intergroup equality. However, there is little consensus in the data on the consequences of these ideologies for intergroup relations. Although both majority and minority group members endorse multiculturalism to a certain degree (Morrison & Chung, 2011; Ryan et al., 2007; Verkuyten, 2005), minority group members tend to endorse colorblindness less than do majority group members (Apfelbaum et al., 2008; Norton et al., 2006; Ryan et al., 2007, 2010). A lack of support among minority group members, who likely face the most negative consequences in intergroup conflicts, might be enough to declare colorblindness unlikely to succeed. Similarly, a consensus of support from both majority and minority group members might seem like enough to declare multiculturalism a more effective diversity ideology. However, the research provides a more nuanced perspective. Colorblindness generally leads to less stereotyping but greater prejudice (Richeson & Nussbaum, 2004; Wolsko et al., 2000). In terms of inequality, colorblindness simultaneously functions as a hierarchy-attenuating ideology and can be seized upon by those who prefer inequality to maintain group hierarchies (Knowles et al., 2009; Levin et al., 2012). In intergroup interactions, colorblindness leads majority group members to exhibit less friendliness, appear more biased in the context of race-related topics (Apfelbaum et al., 2008; Norton et al., 2006; Vorauer et al., 2009), prefer counterstereotypical targets (Gutierrez & Unzueta, 2010), and fail to recognize even blatant prejudice (Apfelbaum et al., 2010). When minority group members face interactions involving colorblindness, they perceive more bias, exhibit less workplace engagement, experience cognitive depletion, and may experience heightened threat if there is low minority representation in the context (Holoien & Shelton, 2012; Plaut et al., 2009; Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008). In contrast, multiculturalism generally leads to more stereotyping

but less prejudice (Ryan et al., 2007; Wolsko et al., 2000). In terms of inequality, multiculturalism also serves a hierarchy-attenuating role but can threaten majority group members (Levin et al., 2012; Morrison et al., 2010; Plaut et al., 2011), leading them to exhibit an even greater preference for inequality. In intergroup interactions, valuing diversity (i.e., a more multicultural ideology) can lead not only to more positive expressions toward outgroup members (Vorauer et al., 2009) and a greater recognition of bias when it occurs (Apfelbaum et al., 2010) but also a preference for stereotype-fulfilling targets (Gutierrez & Unzueta, 2010) and impairment among high-prejudice individuals (Vorauer & Sasaki, 2010). When minority group members face interactions involving multiculturalism, however, they exhibit greater workplace engagement, perceive less bias, and more trust of the environment (Plaut et al., 2009; Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008).

Thus, the current state of the literature on colorblindness and multiculturalism as diversity ideologies suggests that neither of these belief systems will be a panacea for improving intergroup relations. Although multiculturalism may seem to be more promising in terms of leading to more positive behaviors among majority group members, some research suggests that it could have quite the opposite effect on minority group members, leading to more bias toward outgroups among minorities. Moreover, if the goal is to reduce both stereotyping and prejudice while improving intergroup interactions, multiculturalism fails to ameliorate stereotyping, perhaps even leading to greater stereotype endorsement. At the same time, this body of literature also reveals that researchers, ourselves included, who are interested in understanding the dynamics of and ameliorating intergroup conflict must take into consideration the role of diversity ideologies. Although we cannot integrate all of the diverse and sometimes contradictory findings yet, we hope that this review highlights the gaps in our knowledge and suggests paths for future exploration. Indeed, in contrast to their predictive power and centrality to the topics that social psychologists often explore, we would argue that the impact of diversity ideologies has been relatively understudied. This is not a critique by any means; rather, it reveals a landscape of ideas that beg for more empirical investigation and theory to be developed. Next, we discuss some of the broad questions that seem to us to most pressingly demand further social psychological research, and we invite others to join us in addressing this need.

Diversity Ideologies from Both Majority and Minority Perspectives

Simply skimming, the aforementioned review should reveal substantive questions that have yet to be investigated from both the majority and minority perspectives. For example, it is critical to understand whether minority group members ever adopt a colorblind perspective in their interactions with outgroup members (both majority group members and other outgroup minorities). Given that negative race-related interactions with majority group members continue to occur in the everyday lives of minority group members (Swim, Hyers, Cohen, & Ferguson, 2001; Swim, Hyers, Cohen, Fitzgerald, & Bylsma, 2003), could it be the case that minority group members also hold a lay belief that simply avoiding race can

lead to the least conflict? If this were to occur in certain contexts, for example initial meetings or in workplace interactions, what would the consequences be? It might be that, by adopting a strategy to facilitate the immediate interaction, minority group members afford majority group members a positive interaction experience. At the same time, this may be particularly cognitively taxing upon minority group members as they attempt to conceal or downplay their group memberships. Cognitive burdens such as these might, in turn, lead to negative outcomes for minority group members, for example these burdens could result in performance deficits (Steele & Aronson, 1995; for a review see Schmader, Johns, & Forbes, 2008). Similarly, further research should explore how colorblind versus multicultural messages influence minority group members' expression of stereotyping and prejudice, attitudes toward intergroup equality, and style of intergroup interactions. Just as majority group members' diversity ideologies affect the outcomes of minority group members (Holoien & Shelton, 2012; Plaut et al., 2009), research could also investigate whether there are circumstances under which minority group members' diversity ideologies affect majority group members. In situations potentially involving bias, majority group members look to minority group members as authorities (Crosby, Monin, & Richardson, 2008). In such situations, where minority group members are afforded a position of power in the context, might their diversity ideologies be communicated to and influence majority group members with whom they interact frequently?

Content and Structure of Colorblindness versus Multiculturalism

Both the content and structure of people's diversity ideologies also need to be more deeply examined. The extant research illustrates that people generally hold both ideologies to some degree (Morrison & Chung, 2011; Ryan et al., 2007; Verkuyten, 2005). However, it is unclear whether shifting one ideology necessarily shifts the other or whether they function relatively independently. Conceptually, the colorblind and multicultural ideologies seem at odds, with one valuing group memberships and the other minimizing or ignoring them. However, they do seem to coexist, perhaps to a greater degree among majority group members than among minority group members (Plaut et al., 2011; Verkuyten, 2005). This is a seeming paradox and raises a number of questions. Could those who hold both beliefs have a different conceptualization of the same ideology (e.g., Knowles et al., 2009)? Alternatively, individuals might hold both sets of ideologies, advocating each in a different contexts and domain of intergroup interactions (e.g., workplace versus social interactions). Both the content and structure of these ideologies across group membership and contexts also need to be examined. For example, majority group members may be able to hold both ideologies at once, perhaps because one belief (i.e., colorblindness) holds more immediate self-relevance than the other (i.e., multiculturalism). However, this may be less true for minority group members. We must also note that there seem to be national and regional differences in the endorsement of these two ideologies. In the USA, where majority group members are generally more likely to endorse these ideologies equally (Morrison & Chung, 2011; Ryan et al., 2007), there is

relatively little explicit social commentary or debate about diversity ideologies on a national level. In contrast, in Europe, where majority group members are generally more likely to endorse colorblindness rather than multiculturalism (Verkuyten, 2005), there is a relatively open and frequent discourse regarding national diversity ideologies, how they differ across countries, and what type of diversity ideology best matches each nation's culture and interests. It could be the case that these differences in the broader social context, in whether the public discourse around diversity ideologies is more explicit versus implicit, shape the ways in which the meaning of these ideologies is interpreted by both minority and majority group members. If this were to be the case, we might posit an ideology by situation interaction such that the same ideology may function differently depending upon the broader cultural context. This type of additional investigation would help to clearly delineate exactly what is meant by colorblindness and multiculturalism and could have consequences for understanding of the impact of these beliefs on other intergroup outcomes.

Diversity beyond Ethnic and Racial Groups

Although we have frequently used the term “intergroup” in the present review, the current state of research on diversity ideologies generally pertains exclusively to racial and ethnic groups, generally concentrated on exploring the beliefs and outcomes of either majority group members or the more salient of minority groups in the local context (i.e., Turkish in the Netherlands, African Americans and Latinos in the USA). This raises the question of the generalizability of these diversity ideologies. To what degree do colorblindness and multiculturalism apply to other dimensions of diversity, such as gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, ability status, socioeconomic status, or even racial and ethnic groups less commonly associated with diversity? Some research begins to answer this question. Colorblindness can lead to greater bias both toward the target group, African Americans, as well as another outgroup, Asian Americans (Richeson & Nussbaum, 2004). At the same time, multiculturalism may protect only those groups associated with diversity in the context (Levin et al., 2012). Most recently research shows that endorsement of a diversity ideology focused on the interconnectedness of group histories (rather than either acknowledging or ignoring category boundaries) may have benefits for bias against gay and lesbian individuals (i.e., polyculturalism, Rosenthal, Levy, & Moss, 2011). Given that diversity ought to represent many different dimensions, it is important to examine whether these ideologies effectively generalize beyond racial categorization. If not, this may suggest a boundary condition for the benefits associated with each of these ideologies, in addition to sparking novel research on what types of diversity ideologies would benefit intergroup relations for groups unrelated to race, ethnicity, or national origin.

Conclusion

Together, this summary of findings ends on a familiar note: a plea for further investigation to examine more thoroughly whether either of these diversity ideologies fully achieves its goal, or whether some other diversity ideology ought to be

developed and tested. The ultimate question is one that social psychologists have been investigating for some time—how is it possible to reduce intergroup inequality and better intergroup relations? We are in the process of investigating some of these issues in our lab and hope that others will join us in critically examining the impact of different diversity ideologies on intergroup relations.

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