

BRIDGING THE SCIENCE AND PRACTICE OF PREJUDICE REDUCTION:  
EXPLAINING THE EFFECTS OF A COMMUNITY-BASED DIVERSITY  
ACCEPTANCE PROGRAM

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This is dedicated to my grandparents,  
Raymond and Mary-Lou Hawks,  
for their consistent support throughout my education.  
Thank you for teaching me how to  
work hard and persevere.

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## ABSTRACT

### BRIDGING THE SCIENCE AND PRACTICE OF PREJUDICE REDUCTION: EXPLAINING THE EFFECTS OF A COMMUNITY-BASED DIVERSITY ACCEPTANCE PROGRAM

by Erin M. Hawks

Although a great deal of research has sought to identify methods for reducing prejudice, most of this research has occurred in the laboratory, limiting its generalizability to real world situations. The current study bridges this gap by examining whether variables linked to prejudice reduction in the laboratory accounted for the effects of a community-based diversity acceptance program for ethnically-diverse adolescents ( $N = 164$ ). It was hypothesized that intergroup contact, collective identity, and knowledge of diversity would account for program effects. Hierarchical regression results indicated that only one domain of intergroup contact, emotional closeness, accounted for a statistically significant proportion of changes in diversity acceptance.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination are patent realities in the lives of a vast proportion of people living in the United States (US). Estimates suggest that over 60% of individuals living in the US have experienced at least one relatively less-severe form of discrimination (e.g., receiving poor services at a restaurant, being treated as inferior, being verbally assaulted) and more than 30% have experienced at least one instance of major discrimination in their lifetime (e.g., being denied a promotion, being fired from employment, being prevented from obtaining housing) (Kessler, Mickelson, & Williams, 1999). Given the current national population (i.e., 307,560,718), these figures suggest that more than 100 million people living in the US will experience some form of major discrimination over the course of their lives and approximately 185 million will experience relatively less severe acts of discrimination.

Hate crimes exist at the extreme end of the discrimination continuum. More than 9,000 criminal offenses directly involving discriminatory acts based on race (50.8%), religion (18.4%), sexual orientation (16.6%) or ethnic membership (13.2%) were reported to the US Department of Justice during 2007 (USDOJ, 2008). Significant as these numbers might appear, it is well established that hate crimes tend to be dramatically under-reported to authorities (Dunbar, 1997; Harlow, 2005). Hate-crime estimates derived from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) – a yearly survey of criminal victimization in the USA conducted by the USDOJ and involving a nationally representative sample of 76,000 households comprising nearly 135,300 persons – suggest that 191,000 hate crime incidents occur each year (Rand, 2009).

## Adverse Effects of Prejudice, Stereotyping, and Discrimination

The immediate adverse effects of hate crimes and of the more severe forms of discrimination previously introduced arguably are self-evident; however, they can have important consequences beyond their immediate effects. Compared to victims of random crimes, hate crime victims exhibit higher rates of delayed effects such as depression, stress, and anger (Herek, Gillis, Cogan & Glunt, 1997). This is not surprising considering that relatively milder forms of prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination have shown significant effects on individuals' health and wellbeing. In a recent meta-analysis including 134 independent samples, Pascoe and Smart Richman (2009) found that discrimination has a significant negative effect on both mental health ( $r = -.20$ ) and physical health ( $r = -.13$ ). These authors' results also support specific relations between perceived discrimination and depressive symptoms, psychiatric distress, general wellbeing, and the probability of being diagnosed with a mental illness. Pascoe and Smart Richman's findings poignantly underscore the harmful effects of the types of everyday prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination that are encountered by most people living in the US.

Considering the pervasive and detrimental effects of prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination in the US, it is perhaps not surprising to learn that social scientists have long attempted to identify approaches that might lead to the reduction of these variables (Paluck & Green, 2009; Stangor, 2009). In a recent methodological review of the prejudice reduction literature, Paluck and Green (2009) identified 985 studies on the topic, of which 72% were published. This review included non-published studies in order to facilitate a comparison of laboratory-based research and research conducted in the

field. Paluck and Green's (2009) review identified six approaches supported by both laboratory and field research (i.e., cooperative learning, entertainment, peer influence, contact, value consistency, and intercultural training), two supported mostly by laboratory evidence (i.e., social categorization and cognitive training), and four more that were often addressed in the literature but lacked research support (i.e., diversity training, multicultural education, cultural competence, and conflict resolution). However, these authors note that most of the research has been conducted in laboratory settings, with little rigorous research occurring in field settings. As concluded by these authors:

Those interested in creating effective prejudice-reduction programs must remain skeptical of the recommendation of laboratory experiments until they are supported by research of the same degree of rigor outside of the laboratory (Paluck & Green, 2009) p.351.

Given the widely documented gap between research and practice across an alarming variety of domains of human behavior (Jansson, Benoit, Casey, Phillips, & Burns, 2010; Morrissey, Wandersman, Seybolt, Nation, Crusto, & Davino, 1997), Paluck and Green's findings are not altogether surprising and are arguably best understood as a domain specific example of this gap. Scholars who have examined the science-practice gap point out that the goals and contextual realities of importance to scientists and practitioners, even in those interested in the same phenomena (e.g., prejudice reduction), can differ notably (Jansson et al., 2010; Morrissey et al., 1997). Practitioners are often primarily concerned with maintaining or expanding existing services, frequently in under-resourced environments. Researchers, however, are often concerned with conducting rigorous studies, often with the goal of publication in mind. Although the

ultimate goals of both practitioners and researchers may closely overlap (e.g., effective prejudice reduction), their differing concerns can present an obstacle for collaboration. For example, practitioners might perceive practices that increase methodological rigor, such as randomized assignment, as antithetical to their service principles (Acevedo-Polakovich, Gerhart, & Rodriguez, 2010). For these reasons, as Paluck and Green (2009) noted, overcoming the science to practice gap in the prejudice reduction literature will require careful attention to the development of collaborative relations between academics and practitioners.

The establishment of close collaborative relations between academics and practitioners has long been recognized as a crucial strategy toward the resolution of the science-practice knowledge gap (Acevedo-Polakovich, Kassab, & Barnett, in press; Jansson et al., 2010; Morissey et al., 1997). The relatively few studies that have examined the development of these relations suggest that their development is a slow and deliberate process that can require changes to the foci and approaches of both parties (Acevedo-Polakovich, Kassab, & Barnett, in press). For example, practitioners who are involved in these partnerships may have to reallocate resources such as time and personnel in exchange for data that support their efforts to refine, improve, and fund their services. Similarly, scientists who are involved in these partnerships may have to share control over the focus of the research, its design, and the measures and procedures employed. The reward for scientists who chose to engage in these partnerships is the ability to conduct field-based research that does not suffer from the lack of external validity that characterizes a majority of the studies included in Paluck and Green's (2009) review.

As they develop, partnerships between academics and practitioners can progressively increase the degree of internal control that characterizes their research such that it maximally capitalizes on both external and internal validity. However, the limited scholarship examining partnership formation cautions scholars about attempting to implement what to a practitioner can seem like obtrusive and irrelevant steps toward internal validity before a strong partnership is formed (Posavac & Carey, 2007).

Because internal validity is a highly prized aspect of contemporary research in many social sciences (Mook, 1983), the internal validity limitations to the type of research that often characterizes budding collaborations between practitioners and academics can lead researchers to refrain from pursuing these relationships. However understandable, this is unfortunate as these elementary research efforts often serve to develop infrastructures upon which more sophisticated research can be incorporated into practice settings (Acevedo-Polakovich, Kassab, & Barnett, in press). Certainly, the severe real world implications endemic to many social science phenomena suggest that -if adequately contextualized within the frame of its internal validity limitations- externally valid research is needed and can be helpful (Toporek, Gerstein, Fouad, Roysircar & Israel, 2006). Considering the pervasiveness and deleterious effects among the US populations, prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination are arguably among these phenomena.

The research presented in this paper occurs in the context of an emerging collaboration between university-based researchers and a community program focused on increasing diversity acceptance in adolescents. The overarching goal of this collaboration is the integration of research and practice in the area of prejudice reduction among

adolescents such that science is advanced and youth are offered the most effective programming available. The study examined intermediary processes hypothesized to account for program effects identified in a prior study (i.e., Lyons, 2005). The next section of this proposal describes the community program along with the handful of published studies documenting its effects on youth.

### The Anytown Program

*Anytown* is a time-limited residential program focused on increasing high school aged individuals' acceptance of diversity and on providing them with the skills to act as community leaders who promote diversity acceptance in others. Although there is some variation across sites, the program is typically delivered over the course of one week (e.g., Boulden 2004, 2006; Otis & Loeffler, 2005). Participants are intentionally assigned to dormitory groupings designed to maximize diversity in terms of ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. The program's workshops and seminars address the following topics: consensus and dialogue, causes and consequences of bias, socioeconomic privilege, gender and gender bias, physical abilities, sexual bias, religious pluralism, and social action.

With few exceptions, information is presented through large group workshops and is then discussed within smaller groups of 10 to 12 adolescents. As with dorm assignments, discussion groups are created by program organizers in order to maximize diversity. These groups are facilitated by trained peer mentors who are monitored by a competent adult. Aside from workshops and group discussions, participants interact for a few hours daily during recreation and meal times. Throughout the duration of the

program, participants are encouraged to interact in ways that reflect the program's values of respect, understanding, and social responsibility.

In the context of Paluck and Green's (2009) observations about the science-practice gap in the area of prejudice reduction, it is interesting to note that although the *Anytown* program was first developed by the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ)<sup>1</sup> during the 1950's, it was not until approximately 50 years later that the first known published study examining the effects of this program appeared. In this study, Boulden (2004) used paired samples *t*-tests to compare the responses obtained from two-hundred-and-twenty-three high school aged youth from the Kansas City, Missouri area before and after participating in the program. Results showed statistically significant increases on 10 single items assessing youths' comfort with individuals who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Transgendered (LGBT), comfort talking about LGBT issues, understanding of LGBT individuals, respect for LGBT individuals, perception of the effects of oppression against LGBT individuals, and perception of the amount that oppression against LGBT individuals affected their community.

In this same study, Boulden (2004) also conducted several one-way ANOVA comparisons examining the potential effects of gender, race/ethnicity, age, and religious group. Significant findings were found for gender and race/ethnicity. In the case of gender, at pre-test females tended to respond significantly more favorably to the items assessing comfort speaking with someone of a different sexual orientation than their own, understanding of LGBT individuals, and respect for LGBT individuals. However, none of these gender differences persisted at post-test. In the case of race/ethnicity, African

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<sup>1</sup> Originally founded as the National Coalition of Christians and Jews

American participants' responses to the items assessing respect for and understanding of LGBT individuals tended to be significantly lower than those of European American and multiracial participants at both pre-test and post-test.

The next known published study to examine the effects of the *Anytown* program was conducted by Otis and Loeffler (2005) using data provided by 95 youth who participated in the Kentucky-Bluegrass *Anytown* program between the years of 2002 and 2004. Otis and Loeffler's research compared pre-test and post-scores results on the What do I think About Me Scale (WAM; Scales & Leffert, 1999), the Personal/Civic Responsibility Scales (Scales & Leffert, 1999), the Attitudes and Opinions Scale (AOS; Otis & Loeffler, 2005), the Index of Attitudes Toward Homosexuality (IAH; Hudson & Rickett, 1980), and a six item scale assessing gender equality. Paired *t*-tests results suggested statistically significant increases on each of these scales.

Using the same sample as his previous paper (i.e., Boulden, 2004), Boulden (2006) examined the change in responses on single items assessing comfort level in speaking about race and racism, speaking with individuals from a different race, understanding other ethnic groups (i.e., Latino/Hispanic, African American/Black), respect for other ethnic groups, beliefs in the effects of oppression on and against these groups, responsibility to create change, and the likelihood that their program participation will lead to community action. Paired samples *t*-test results suggested significant change on each of these items.

In this second paper, Boulden (2006) again used one-way ANOVA comparisons to examine potential effects of gender and race/ethnicity. In the case of gender, the only reported significant difference involved female participants' higher pre-test agreement

with the item assessing their comfort speaking with someone from a different race. In the case of race/ethnicity, two significant differences were reported involving multi-racial participants. In the first case, the change in multiracial participants' endorsement of the item assessing understanding of African Americans was significantly lower than that of Latinas/os or European Americans. In the second case, the change in multiracial participants' endorsement of the item assessing understanding of American Indians was significantly lower than that of Latinas/os or African Americans.

Lyons (2005) compared data provided by three-hundred-and-twenty-five youth participating in the *Anytown* program operated by Community Tampa Bay Inc. to that obtained from three-hundred-and fifty high school students' participating in social science classes. Participants in both groups completed several psychometrically derived multi-item scales designed to assess knowledge about discrimination, diversity acceptance, social competence, and social responsibility. Additionally, the parents' of these youth completed a published measure of community involvement. With the exception of the community involvement measure, all other measures were completed at baseline, one week follow up, and at a second follow up period ranging from 3 to 10 months. The community involvement measure was only completed at baseline and during the second follow up. For the youth participating in the *Anytown* program, the baseline and one week follow up occurred immediately before and immediately after participation in the program. It should be noted that social studies courses were chosen as a comparison group because of the overlap between their content and that of the *Anytown* program. Moreover, the youth in the high school social studies course were drawn from the same school districts as those participating in the *Anytown* program. Comparisons

between the two groups were made using repeated measures multiple analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) in order to allow for the examination of time and group effects.

Lyons (2005) findings suggested that compared to adolescents participating in the social studies courses, adolescents who attended *Anytown* reported greater initial increases in their social competence, acceptance of diversity, and feelings of social responsibility. With the exception of social responsibility, the differences between the groups persisted at the second follow up. Additionally, whereas *Anytown* participants significantly increased their community involvement scores from baseline to second follow up, the comparison group did not. Finally, although youth in the comparison group obtained significantly higher baseline scores than *Anytown* participants on a measure assessing their knowledge of the causes and consequences of bias, these differences were eliminated at post-test. Examination of gender effects revealed that across times and conditions females scored higher than males in social competence, diversity acceptance, and social responsibility.

In sum, despite its 50 years of existence there are only a handful of known published studies examining the *Anytown* program. Those studies that exist are all relatively recent and in general reflect Paluck and Green's (2009) observations regarding the lack of methodological rigor observed in field-based research. In particular, much of the published research examining the *Anytown* program has lacked a comparison group and utilizes only single-item measures. Despite these limitations, the emerging literature on the *Anytown* program suggests that the program has positive effects across various indicators of young people's acceptance of diversity and in various domains of personal and social functioning including self concept, social responsibility, community

involvement, and social competence. However, further reflecting Paluck and Green's observations regarding the disconnect between laboratory research and field-based research, no known study has directly examined the mechanisms that might account for this program's effects. In an effort to establish a base for the integration of field-based research on the *Anytown* program with existing laboratory science on prejudice-reduction, the proposed research will examine variables that might potentially account for the *Anytown* program's effects on diversity acceptance.

### Potential Intermediary Variables

Existing research suggests that the *Anytown* program might be an effective field based approach for reducing explicit prejudice and increasing diversity acceptance among youth from various backgrounds. However, the mechanisms that might account for these effects remain unclear. Understanding the factors that lead to greater diversity acceptance has direct implications both for improving the efficacy of the *Anytown* program and for the development of other programs focused on promoting diversity (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2000).

In order to identify potential intermediary variables that might account for the *Anytown* program's effects, a logic modeling exercise was conducted involving administrators and personnel of Community Tampa Bay's *Anytown* program and researchers with expertise in applied youth development and cultural competence. Developed from systems analysis, logic modeling is a structured planning process that requires those involved to differentiate goals (e.g., program outcomes) from means (e.g., methods), and then specify a theory that explains the causal relations among these including –when necessary– intermediary processes (Hernandez, 2000). The participation

of psychologists and their community partners in logic modeling exercises focused on developing a theory to explain the known effects of a community program using the integration of local knowledge and scientific knowledge. As such, logic modeling offers a tool to facilitate the development of a shared, explicit, and testable account of program effects and their intermediary processes (e.g., Hernandez, 2000; Nesman, Batsche, & Hernandez, 2007).

After a careful examination of the principles behind the *Anytown* program and of the data supporting its effects on diversity acceptance and other variables three main processes were identified that might account for these effects: intergroup contact, developing an enhanced collective identity, and learning about diversity. Each of these intermediary variables is introduced below along with the literature supporting its role in promoting the acceptance of diversity and its potential relation to the *Anytown* program.

### *Intergroup Contact*

At its simplest, intergroup contact refers to the proposition that, under certain conditions, increased involvement among individuals belonging to different groups will increase their mutual understanding and decrease prejudice toward their respective groups (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) recently meta-analyzed intergroup contact research that included 713 independent samples from 515 studies conducted between 1940 and 2000. The average effect size for the effect of intergroup contact on prejudice was estimated between  $r = -.20$  and  $r = -.21$ , depending on the particular assumptions of its computation. Comparison of these values to Cohen's (1992) guidelines for the determination of effect size suggests that across studies intergroup contact has a small to medium effect on prejudice. Under this context, it is interesting to

note that Allport's (1954) intergroup contact theory guided the development of the *Anytown* program during the 1950's.

### *Collective Identity*

Collective identity is defined as that proportion of the self determined by the importance that an individual tends to place on group memberships (Cheek, Tropp, Chen, & Underwood, 1994). Although no study to date has directly examined the relation between collective identity and diversity acceptance, several studies suggest that these two constructs might be meaningfully related. Research has found that individuals high in collective identity tend to score higher on measures of relatedness (Dollinger, Preston, Pagany O'Brien, & DiLalla, 2006) and interdependence (Wink, 1997), and to continue to hold positive evaluations of their group membership, even when these memberships might be perceived as unfavorable (Kowalski & Wolfe, 1994). During the logic modeling exercise, collective identity was identified as a potential intermediary variable by program personnel, who repeatedly articulated the belief that one of the means by which program outcomes were achieved involved the fostering of an increased sense of collective identity among participants.

### *Knowledge about Diversity*

Diversity training approaches are based on the assumption that prejudice in part stems from ignorance, particularly the lack of understanding of a group's history and the roots of inequality (McGregor, 1993). These approaches are consistent with socialization theories of prejudice and related phenomena and are widely used among practitioners (Paluck & Green, 2009). For instance, Hughes, Bigler, and Levy (2007) found that

including explicit information about the experience of racism when teaching elementary school children about the lives of famous African Americans lead to significantly lowered levels of prejudice in comparison to children who were taught about these famous African American figures without also teaching about racism. During the logic modeling exercise, the development of knowledge about diversity was identified as a potential intermediary variable by program personnel, who believed that the acquisition of this knowledge was another important mean by which program outcomes were achieved.

## Current Study

### *Study Goal and Hypotheses*

The overarching goal of this study was to examine whether each of the three intermediary processes identified through the logic modeling exercise could account for program effects on diversity acceptance. This goal included two primary hypotheses:

*Hypothesis one:* Program participants' knowledge about diversity, collective identity, and intergroup closeness would significantly increase from pre- to post-test.

*Hypothesis two:* The predicted increases in knowledge about diversity, collective identity, and intergroup contact would each account for a significant proportion of the changes in diversity acceptance.

## CHAPTER II

### METHOD

#### Participants

Data for the proposed research was provided by one-hundred and sixty-four ethnically diverse teenagers from Hillsborough and Pinellas counties in Florida who participated in the *Anytown* program during the summer of 2009. Participants' self-reported ethnic membership was 29.7% ( $n = 50$ ) African American, 23.2% ( $n = 39$ ) US Latina/o, 23.2% ( $n = 39$ ) of more than one ethnicity, 17.8% ( $n = 30$ ) European American, and 5.9% ( $n = 10$ ) Asian American. Tables 1 and 2 summarize these and other demographic characteristics of the sample. As can be observed, the average participant was a student who had recently completed 10<sup>th</sup> grade ( $M = 10.54$ ;  $SD = 1.05$ ) and had a grade point average (GPA) of 3.31. Table 2 displays additional demographic variables of interest. Males ( $N = 89$ ) outnumbered females ( $N = 57$  females) and forty-three percent of the participants were eligible for the free lunch program at their schools.

Table 1. *Sample Academic Characteristics*

Variable	Mean	SD
Grade	10.54	1.05
GPA	3.31	.65

Table 2. *Sample Demographic Characteristics*

Variable	Total N	% of Sample
Race/Ethnicity		
Caucasian	30	17.8
African American/Black	50	29.7
Hispanic/Latino	39	23.2
Asian	10	5.9
Mixed Race	39	23.2
Gender		
Male	89	60.1
Female	57	38.5
Free or Reduced Lunch		
Enrolled	64	43.2
Not Enrolled	71	48.0

### Measures

#### *Youth Diversity Acceptance Scale (YDAS; Lyons, 2005)*

Diversity acceptance, the primary predicted variable in this study, was assessed via the YDAS, a 7-item scale that measures a respondents' positive disposition toward individuals whose background differs from their own (e.g., "I have friends whose backgrounds [ability, race, culture, sexual orientation, etc.] are different from mine"), in some cases making allusion to out-groups of importance in US culture such as those defined by race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation (e.g., "I have friends who are gay, lesbian, or bisexual"). Participants use a five point Likert type scale (i.e., 1 = "Never" to 5 = "Very Often") to indicate how often an item accurately characterizes them. Previous research using this scale has reported internal consistency values ranging from  $\alpha = .76$  to  $\alpha = .81$ . The internal consistency in the current sample was consistent with these estimates (i.e.,  $\alpha = .74$  at pretest and  $\alpha = .79$  at post-test).

*Definitions of Discriminatory Terms (DDT; NCCJ, 2003)*

Knowledge about diversity was assessed via the DDT, a 12-item measure that evaluates an individual's knowledge of discriminatory terms. Respondents are provided with a list of terms (e.g., "Homophobia") and asked to match these with a separate list of definitions (e.g., "fear and hatred of gays and lesbians or fear of being associated with them"). Total scores range from 0 to 12 and reflect the number of terms and definitions correctly identified.

*Collective Identity Scale (CIS; Cheek, Smith, & Tropp, 2002)*

Collective identity was assessed via the CIS, an 8-item scale requiring participants to use a five point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 ("not important to my sense of who I am") to 5 ("extremely important to my sense of who I am") to rate the importance that each of eight aspects has in the construction of their personal identity (e.g., race or ethnic background; religion). The CIS has previously shown moderate internal validity in research using samples of diverse youth (e.g., Cronbach's  $\alpha = .68$ , Cheek et al., 1994). In the current sample, estimates suggested high internal consistency (i.e.,  $\alpha = .85$  at pretest and  $\alpha = .81$  at post-test).

*Number of Intergroup Friends*

Two different approaches were used to assess intergroup contact. The first of these required participants to report on the number of personal friends whose backgrounds differ from their own in terms of gender, religion, abledness, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. In the current study, these numbers were added together in order to

obtain an estimate of the total number of friends with a background different from the respondent's across all categories.

### *Intergroup Closeness Ratings*

The second approach to assessing intergroup contact required participants to use a five point Likert type scale (i.e., 1 = "Not Close at All" to 5 = "Extremely Close") to indicate how emotionally close they feel to individuals whose backgrounds differ from their own in terms of gender, religion, abledness, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. In the current study, these five ratings were averaged together to create a measure of a participant's overall emotional closeness to individuals with a background different from their own.

### Procedure

All data were collected by Community Tampa Bay Inc., a Florida non-profit organization that operates the *Anytown* program in the Tampa/St. Petersburg area as a regular part of their program evaluation efforts. Each of the measures was administered both at the outset of the program (i.e., Time 1) and subsequent to the program's completion (i.e., Time 2).

## CHAPTER III

### RESULTS

#### Correlations

Zero-order correlations among all study variables are presented in Table 3.

Correlations involving pre-test variables are summarized below the diagonal line and correlations involving post-test variables are summarized above the diagonal line.

Diagonal values are included when they are meaningful (e.g., when they represent the correlation between pre-test and post-test measurement on the same variable). Consistent with this study's second hypothesis, diversity acceptance was significantly inter-correlated with each of the intermediary variables both at pre-test and post-test.

Table 3. *Correlations among Study Variables*

Pre \ Post	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
1. Grade	--	--	--	--	-.07	.15	.00	-.03	-.11
2. GPA	-.01	--	--	--	.05	.27**	.02	.00	-.10
3. Gender	.02	.24**	--	--	.26**	.17*	.14	.12	-.11
4. Lunch	-.11	-.24*	.01	--	.16	-.04	-.02	.15	.07
5. Acceptance	-.09	.15	.25**	.04	.62**	.21**	.20*	.17*	.40**
6. Knowledge	.20*	.27**	.26**	-.06	.19**	.59**	.01	.11	-.03
7. Coll. Ident.	.03	.01	.27**	.07	.21**	-.01	.66**	.00	.09
8. Friend No.	.01	-.03	.09	.18*	.23**	.20*	-.08	.82**	.14
9. Closeness	-.07	-.09	.06	.01	.53**	.19*	.07	.18*	.55**

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Other correlations of interest were observed. Knowledge of diversity was significantly related to GPA at both pre-test ( $r = .27, p < .01$ ) and post-test ( $r = .27, p < .01$ ) and to school grade at pre-test only ( $r = .20, p < .05$ ). While better academic performers and more advanced students tended to have greater knowledge of diversity at

pre test, schooling had no effect on knowledge scores at post test (although the effect of academic performance remained).

Consistent with prior research, gender was significantly related to this study's primary predicted variable, diversity acceptance, both at pre-test ( $r = .25, p < .01$ ) and post-test ( $r = .26, p < .01$ ). Gender was additionally related to two of this study's proposed intermediary variables: collective identity (at pre-test only;  $r = .27, p < .01$ ) and knowledge about diversity (Pre-test  $r = .26, p < .01$ ; Post-test  $r = .17, p < .05$ ). Because of these significant relations, gender was included as a covariate in subsequent analyses examining the effects of collective identity and knowledge about diversity on diversity acceptance.

## Primary Analyses

### *Hypothesis One*

Table 4 displays the means and standard deviations for each of the variables considered in this study and includes results from t-test comparisons of scores obtained at pre-test and scores obtained at post-test. Consistent with hypothesis one, there were significant increases from pre- to post-test in participants' diversity acceptance ( $t [161] = -5.06, p < .001$ ), knowledge about diversity ( $t [167] = -14.66, p < .001$ ), collective identity ( $t [167] = -2.42, p < .05$ ), number of intergroup friendships ( $t [157] = -5.80, p < .001$ ), and intergroup closeness ( $t [148] = -5.88, p < .001$ ).

Table 4. *Pre-Test and Post-Test Results on Variables of Interest*

Variable	Pre Test		Post Test		df	t
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Diversity Acceptance	3.79	.74	4.03	.67	161	-5.06***
Knowledge	4.27	2.93	7.44	3.24	167	-14.66***
Collective Identity	3.62	.96	3.77	.85	167	-2.42*
Intergroup Number	22.87	40.71	38.25	57.06	157	-5.80***
Intergroup Closeness	2.93	.89	3.33	.87	148	-5.88***

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$

### *Hypothesis Two*

Hypothesis two was tested using four separate hierarchical multiple regression analyses to examine to the extent to which change in each of the three intermediary variables (i.e., knowledge about diversity, collective identity, and intergroup contact) accounted for the changes in diversity acceptance. The increases in each of the intermediary variables were modeled by regressing post-test scores on these variables on to pre-test scores and then saving the unstandardized residual variance as a new variable<sup>2</sup>. These residualized scores were then used to attempt to predict additional amounts of variance in post-test diversity acceptance after accounting for its correlation with pre-test diversity acceptance. As previously described, gender was included as a covariate in the analyses involving collective identity and knowledge about diversity.

Table 5 summarizes the results of the application of this strategy to examine the ability of changes in knowledge about diversity to account for increases in diversity acceptance. As can be observed, gender was included as the sole predictor in step 1 and

<sup>2</sup> Residual scores were chosen to model change because, unlike simple change scores, they account for information about both the individual and the group distribution (Hauser-Cram & Wyngaarden Krauss, 1991). This allows for several benefits. First, the potential to identify individuals who evince more change than predicted. Second, they are less prone to ceiling effects. Third, residual change scores offer more flexibility in the choice of statistical analyses. Finally, residual scores can be standardized allowing comparisons to be made across a range of variables in multivariate applications.

accounted for a significant portion of variance in post-test diversity acceptance (i.e.,  $\beta = .26, p < .001; \Delta R^2 = .07$ ). In order to account for baseline levels of diversity acceptance, pre-test diversity acceptance scores were added as the sole predictor in step 2 and accounted for an additional significant proportion of the variance in post-test diversity acceptance (i.e.,  $\beta = .60, p < .001; \Delta R^2 = .33$ ). When increases in knowledge about diversity were added as the sole predictor in the final step, these did not account for a significant portion of additional variance in post-test diversity acceptance (i.e.,  $\beta = .09, p = .13; \Delta R^2 = .01$ ). As such, these analyses failed to confirm hypothesis two in the specific case of knowledge about diversity.

Table 5. *Hierarchical Regression Analysis Summary for Definitions of Discriminatory Terms as a Predictor of Diversity Acceptance*

Variable	<i>B</i> ( <i>SE</i> )	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1			.07**
Gender	.36 (.11)	.26**	
Step 2			.33***
Gender	.15 (.09)	.11 <sup>+</sup>	
Pre-test Acceptance	.54 (.06)	.60***	
Step 3			.01
Gender	.16 (.09)	.12 <sup>+</sup>	
Pre-test Acceptance	.53 (.06)	.59***	
Residual Knowledge	.03 (.02)	.09	

<sup>+</sup>  $p < .10$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Table 6 summarizes the results of the analyses examining the ability of changes in collective identity to account for increases in diversity acceptance. As can be observed, the first two steps in this hierarchical regression were identical to those in the previously reported analyses. When increases in collective identity were added as the sole predictor in the final step, these did not account for a significant portion of additional variance in

post-test diversity acceptance (i.e.,  $\beta = .08$ ,  $p = .21$ ;  $\Delta R^2 = .01$ ). As such, these analyses failed to confirm hypothesis two in the specific case of collective identity.

Table 6. *Hierarchical Regression Analysis Summary for Collective Identity as a Predictor of Diversity Acceptance*

Variable	<i>B</i> ( <i>SE</i> )	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1			.07**
Gender	.36 (.11)	.26**	
Step 2			.33***
Gender	.15 (.09)	.11 <sup>+</sup>	
Pre-test Acceptance	.54 (.06)	.60***	
Step 3			.01
Gender	.16 (.09)	.12 <sup>+</sup>	
Pre-test Acceptance	.53 (.06)	.59***	
Residual Coll. Identity	.08 (.07)	.08	

<sup>+</sup>  $p < .10$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Table 7 summarizes the results of hierarchical multiple regression analyses examining the ability of changes in the number of intergroup friends to account for increases in diversity acceptance. As can be observed, when increases in the number of intergroup friendships were added as the sole predictor in the final step, these did not account for a significant portion of additional variance in post-test diversity acceptance (i.e.,  $\beta = .09$ ,  $p = .13$ ;  $\Delta R^2 = .01$ ). As such, these analyses failed to confirm hypothesis two in the specific case of intergroup contact assessed as the number of self-reported intergroup friendships.

Table 7. *Hierarchical Regression Analysis Summary for Intergroup Number as a Predictor of Diversity Acceptance*

Variable	<i>B</i> ( <i>SE</i> )	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1			.39***
Pre-test Acceptance	.57 (.06)	.62***	
Step 2			.01
Pre-test Acceptance	.57 (.06)	.63***	
Residual Friendship No.	.01 (.01)	.08	

<sup>+</sup>  $p < .10$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Table 8 summarizes the results of hierarchical multiple regression examining the ability of changes in the ratings of intergroup closeness to account for increases in diversity acceptance. As can be observed, these changes did account for a significant portion of additional variance in post-test diversity acceptance (i.e.,  $\beta = .18$ ,  $p < .001$ ;  $\Delta R^2 = .03$ ). As such, these analyses confirmed hypothesis two in the specific case of intergroup contact assessed as self-reported emotional closeness with intergroup friends.

Table 8. *Hierarchical Regression Analysis Summary for Intergroup Closeness as a Predictor of Diversity Acceptance*

Variable	<i>B</i> ( <i>SE</i> )	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$
Step 1			.39***
Pre-test Acceptance	.57 (.06)	.62***	
Step 2			.03**
Pre-test Acceptance	.55 (.06)	.60***	
Residual Closeness	.17 (.06)	.19**	

<sup>+</sup>  $p < .10$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$

## CHAPTER IV

### DISCUSSION

Although countless studies have been conducted that examine approaches to the reduction of prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination, most of these have been done in the laboratory, limiting the information they can provide about real world situations. The current study attempted to bridge the gap between laboratory research and community practice by examining whether three variables linked to prejudice in laboratory research could account for the effects of a long-standing community-based diversity acceptance program. These three variables –intergroup contact, knowledge about diversity, and collective identity– were identified as potential explanatory mechanisms for program effects through logic modeling, an approach developed from systems analysis that facilitates the identification of goals, means and the relations among these.

Two specific hypotheses were examined. The first stated that scores on measures of each of these three variables would increase after program participation. The second stated that these increases would account for a significant proportion of variance in changes on scores of a diversity acceptance measure. Consistent with the first hypothesis, knowledge about diversity, collective identity, the average number of intergroup friendships, and self-ratings of the emotional closeness associated with these friendships all significantly increased from pre- to post-test. These results suggest that program participation might have a positive effect on each of these variables. Additionally, they provide indirect support for the use of logic modeling as an approach that can help identify laboratory-based variables that might be of relevance in practice settings.

With one exception, results failed to support this study's second hypothesis. As predicted, changes in intergroup emotional closeness did account for increases in diversity acceptance. This is consistent with the intergroup contact theories that guided the program's development (e.g., Allport, 1954), which suggest that intergroup acceptance can be increased when members of groups that might be expected to discriminate against each other are provided with opportunities for meaningful interaction with each other. It is worth noting that increases in another frequently used measure of intergroup contact, the number of self-reported intergroup friends, did not account for a significant proportion of changes in diversity acceptance. As such, while these findings provide a field replication of the vast amount of laboratory evidence supporting intergroup contact as an effective approach to increasing outgroup acceptance (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006), they also raise the possibility that emotional closeness might play a key role in real world intergroup contact processes.

It is worth noting that discrepancies in research findings based on the specific manner in which social contact is assessed permeate many lines of research focused on interpersonal relationships. In social network analysis, an approach to research that examines how relationships among members of a group (e.g., families, friends, co-workers) affect psychological and social phenomena, how to measure and define a relationship is an ongoing focus of debate. Indeed, the findings of research employing a social network methodology often change according to decisions about how to define and measure a relationship (Wasserman & Faust, 1994).

An important direction for future research highlighted by current findings is the examination of intergroup contact as a field-based approach to increasing acceptance,

focused particularly on the potential key role of emotional closeness. Said future research might benefit from a more sophisticated measurement of emotional closeness and from the implementation of alternate designs that permit stronger causal inferences including experimental and quasi-experimental approaches. Should future research confirm an important role for emotional closeness in intergroup contact processes, important implications for practice might also be warranted. For instance, greater practice effects might be reached if activities that hope to increase intergroup acceptance are designed to enhance the quality of the relationships among a limited number of individuals belonging to different groups rather than to increase the number of relationships among these individuals. In the specific case of the *Anytown* program, such findings might justify replacing some didactic activities with structured leisure time designed to allow participants to develop greater emotional closeness with each other.

Contrary to hypothesis two, increased knowledge about diversity failed to significantly account for increases in diversity acceptance. These results are inconsistent with previous research suggesting that teaching children about prejudice can increase their awareness of, and understanding towards, groups that have been historically discriminated against (e.g., Hughes et al., 2007). There are several possibilities that might account for this inconsistency. First, some of the research that has demonstrated positive effects associated with increased knowledge has been based on samples of children much younger than the adolescent sample used in the current study (Levy & Hughes, 2009). It is possible that the effects of diversity-related knowledge are limited to, or are at least stronger during, younger ages. Compared to the younger samples used in previous research, the adolescents in the current sample had more opportunities to experience the

type of learning that other research has suggested is associated with improved acceptance. As such, any effects of learning may have already taken hold in the current sample.

Another possibility lies in the approach used to measure diversity-related knowledge in the current study. Though designed specifically to be of relevance for the content of the *Anytown* program, it is possible that the DDT measure assesses a different form of knowledge than that which has been measured in previous studies. For example, Hughes and colleagues (2007) compared the attitudes of children toward African Americans following one of two teaching conditions about African Americans historical figures. In the experimental group, the children received a basic lesson highlighting historical figures' contributions to society, but also received additional information about some of the relevant discriminatory experiences historically endured by African Americans. Children in the control condition received the same basic lesson about the historical figures, but did not receive the additional information about discriminatory experiences. After the intervention, the children in the experimental group had more positive views of African Americans than the children in the comparison group. This finding might suggest that diversity acceptance increases when children are provided with knowledge that helps them understand racial discrimination in the context of a person's lived experiences. In contrast, the DDT assesses an adolescents' ability to correctly recognize definitions and terms related to prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination. As such, it is likely that the DDT assesses a different type of knowledge than that which has been shown to reduce prejudice in previous research.

Future research examining the relation between increases in diversity-related knowledge and increases in acceptance might examine whether the strength of this relation differs across age groups, and explore potential explanations for age differences (e.g., education, cognitive development, experience, etc.). Such research might also benefit from a measurement strategy that assesses various forms of diversity-related knowledge, and that includes an assessment of a participants' understanding of the effects of discriminatory experiences in people's lives.

Also contrary to hypothesis two, increases in collective identity failed to significantly account for increases in diversity acceptance. This finding runs counter to previous research suggesting that individuals high in collective identity score higher on measures of relatedness (Dollinger et al, 1996) and interdependence (Wink, 1997). The use of a measure of collective identity that is prevalent in published research on this variable seems to decrease the likelihood of measurement-based explanations of the failure to find a relation. This being the case, it seems defensible to hypothesize that –as was the case with the current sample– the statistical correlation between collective identity and diversity acceptance might not be indicative of a directly causal relation.

In developing potential explanations for this study's failure to support a causal relation between collective identity and diversity acceptance, it is helpful to consider the large body of research suggesting that perceivers' ability to recategorize others into a group in which they (i.e., the perceivers) share membership (i.e., a common affiliation) is one of the strongest mechanisms by which to increase acceptance of others previously categorized as belonging to an outgroup (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2009). It is possible that, as a predictor of an individual's potential to recategorize, collective identity is indirectly

related to diversity acceptance. For example, if individuals low in collective identity (i.e. someone who places little importance on group memberships as part of his or her identity) are exposed to the same workshops geared toward acknowledging and accepting diversity as those high in collective identity, those lower in collective identity might not experience an increase in diversity acceptance because they have limited motivation to include others into a broader group membership. Future research in this area might examine this indirect relation between collective identity and diversity acceptance as well as focus on the potential role of recategorization as a mediator of change in diversity acceptance.

### Limitations

This study's findings must be carefully considered in the context of its limitations. As previously noted when discussing specific findings, there are important limitations to the manner in which emotional closeness and diversity-related knowledge were measured. Beyond these specific measurement limitations, it must also be noted that this study relied exclusively on explicit self-report measures. Because these measures are particularly sensitive to social desirability biases (Jo, 2000), and because most participants should have been aware of the purpose of the program (certainly by the time of the post test), it is possible that these types of biases have influenced results. This being said, it is at least arguable that creating an awareness that it is socially desirable to be accepting of individuals whose background differs from one's own in domains that have traditionally been associated with bias might in fact be an effective mechanism to increase diversity acceptance. As such, future research might benefit from a direct examination of the role of social desirability and related phenomena (such as social

norming) in increasing diversity acceptance. One specific way in which this might be accomplished is through the incorporation of implicit measurement approaches, which are much less likely to contamination from social desirability effects and expand the range of constructs that can be considered in this research (Greenwald, McGhee & Schwartz, 1998).

A second measurement limitation involves the specific scale used to assess diversity acceptance. Although the fact that this scale was psychometrically developed specifically for use with the Anytown program might constitute a strength (Lyons, 2005), there is limited data about its statistical relation to other measurement instruments more commonly used in bias research. As such, although there is arguably reasonable evidence for this scale's internal validity, and limited evidence of its external validity, future research should either expand this evidence base or incorporate more established scales into the evaluation of the Anyotwn program's effects.

There are also characteristics of the sample that limit the current study's findings. Most notably, the sample consisted of high-school aged youth who participated in a five day residential program focused on diversity and leadership. Although anecdotal reports from program personnel and previous participants suggests that not all participants self select into the program (e.g., some are coerced by adult authorities such as parents, pastors, teachers, or coaches), it is likely that a considerable proportion do and that – though other motivations for program participation are possible (e.g., peer pressure, taking advantage of the opportunity to experience a new environment or to escape a current one, etc.) – many of these self-selected adolescents have existing interests that parallel the goals and objectives of the program. As such, compared to average teenagers

in their community, it is possible that a good proportion of program participants have an increased likelihood of experiencing program effects because of alignment with personal interests and associated phenomena (e.g., increased motivation).

Although the possibility that program participants differ in meaningful ways from their high school peers has not been formally addressed with a sufficient degree of rigor in this or previous research, it is worth noting that the program participants in Lyons' (2005) research did not score significantly higher on any of the variables she considered than a comparison sample of non-participant students drawn from high schools within the districts that the program recruits participants from. In fact, pre-test scores on the version of the DDT used in that study were actually lower than those of the comparison sample (Lyons, 2005). While Lyons' (2005) results did not account for dispositional and contextual variables such as motivation, interest, resources, etc., or for the variables that have been added in the current study (collective identity and both measures of intergroup contact), they do suggest that the only time program participants have been compared to their high school peers, results failed to support the hypotheses that program participants differed from their average high school peers on any of the variables that are targeted by the program. Nevertheless, future research should take steps to ensure that selection biases are better accounted for, ideally by implementing randomized control trials, but at minimum by assessing participants' motivations for program participation and examining their relation to other research measures.

There are additional limitations associated with the research design. First, this study operationalizes change as the difference between scores obtained at pre-test and scores obtained at post-test. As highlighted earlier in this discussion, there are other

mechanisms that might account for differences in these scores, such as social desirability. A better operationalization of change might be obtained by assessing participants at time periods that are further from program completion (e.g., three months, six months, one year). Finally, the absence of a comparison group prohibits causal conclusions. For example, it cannot be assumed that because there is an increase in diversity acceptance following participation in the Anytown program that the program is solely responsible for the increases in diversity acceptance without comparing the participants to a group who did not attend the program from the same pool of adolescents. Future studies can improve upon this limitation by employing any one of many designs that incorporate a comparison group (e.g., wait-listed design, randomized control trial, etc.).

### Conclusion

These limitations notwithstanding, the present findings build upon and uniquely extend a growing body of work highlighting the association between feelings of closeness to diverse groups and the reduction of prejudice attitudes. The current study is innovative in that it used data provided by young people in a field-based prejudice reduction program to evaluate study hypotheses, an approach that may increase the generalizability because it speaks to the effectiveness of a prejudice reduction program creating real world change in a real environment. Collectively, the current data converge on the idea that youth who become emotionally closer to diverse peers increase their diversity acceptance. In a country where almost two out of every three people experience discrimination, the importance of this finding is difficult to underestimate.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

### YOUTH DIVERSITY ACCEPTANCE SCALE – REVISED

**Directions:** Please respond to the following statement by marking

**N** for Never or No Opportunity

**AN** for Almost Never

**S** for Sometimes

**O** for Often

**VO** for Very Often

1. I have contact with people (outside of my family) who speak more than one language.
2. I spend time with people from different ethnic backgrounds.
3. During my free time, I join in on activities that allow me to meet new people.
4. I have friends who are gay, lesbian, or bi-sexual.
5. I eat lunch with people from different races and cultures than mine.
6. I have friends whose backgrounds (ability, race, culture, sexual orientation, etc) are different from my own.
7. I make a special effort to make new students from backgrounds different than my own feel welcome.

## APPENDIX B

### DEFINITIONS OF DISCRIMINATORY TERMS

**Directions:** Please write the term on the left that best matches each definition on the right.

#### Definitions

1. Pre-Judging a person or group. A negative Attitude.
2. A behavior that deprives a group/individuals of certain rights.
3. The content of prejudice. Unreliable generalizations that do not make up all members of a group.
4. Tendency to think that one's culture and their way of life is superior to others.
5. The deliberate and systematic killing of an entire nation.
6. Fear and hatred of gays and lesbians or fear of being associated with them.
7. Racial privilege and systemic power.
8. Hatred or prejudice of Jews.
9. Social systems of advantage.
10. Fear or dislike of people who are different than us.
11. Advantages held as a consequence of wealth, power, and opportunities.
12. Prejudice and discrimination against people who have a disability.

#### Terms

Intolerance  
ISM  
Genocide  
Prejudice  
Racism

Fear  
Homophobia  
Discrimination  
Stereotype  
Ethnocentrism

Ableism  
Privilege  
Exclusion  
Anti-Semitism  
Xenophobia

## APPENDIX C

### COLLECTIVE IDENTITY SCALE – REVISED

**Directions:** Please mark the answer that best indicates how important each of the statements is to your sense of who you are.

**NI** for Not Important

**SI** for Slightly Important

**SI** for Somewhat Important

**VI** for Very Important

**EI** for Extremely Important

1. Being a part of the many generations of my family.
2. My race or ethnic background.
3. My religion.
4. Places where I live or where I was raised.
5. My feeling of belonging to my community.
6. My feeling of pride in my country, being proud to be a citizen.
7. My commitments on political issues or my political activities.
8. My language, such as my regional accent or dialect or a second language that I know.

## APPENDIX D

### INTERGROUP NUMBER & CLOSENESS SCALE

**Directions:** Please write down the number of friends that you have in each of the categories and then mark how close you feel to your friends in each specific group.

**NC** Not Close at All

**SC** Somewhat Close

**C** Close

**VC** Very Close

**EC** Extremely Close

1. How many friends do you have whose gender is different than yours? How close do you feel to them?
2. How many friends do you have who have a religion different from yours? How close do you feel to them?
3. How many friends do you have who are differently abled? How close do you feel to them?
4. How many friends do you have who have an ethnic background different from yours? How close do you feel to them?
5. How many friends do you have whose sexual orientation is different from yours? How close do you feel to them?

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