

TALKING ACROSS BOUNDARIES: INTERRACIAL DELIBERATION

by

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B.A., The University of Toronto, 2008

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(Political Science)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

(Vancouver)

May 2011

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Abstract

The purpose of my work is to clarify the contingencies that enable the normative expectations of deliberative democracy in the context of interracial deliberation, as well as to understand the conditions under which deliberation contributes to the contrary, and catalyzes racial prejudice and group polarisation. I argue that understanding how interracial deliberation can promote the expectations of deliberative theory, such as the identification of common interests or mutual-recognition across racial divides, entails understanding the *context* under which discourse takes place. For instance, I show that communication between members of different races is less likely to promote beneficial outcomes when discussion partners suffer from economic or material insecurity, and if resultant interracial interactions are characterized by fear, distrust, or hatred. The role of emotions is central to my understanding of the possibility for successful discourse.

In this piece I justify the use of deliberative theory as a framework for understanding race-relations and white values and opinions. I also consider the macro-level antecedents to affect; that is, I consider the structural features of American society that shape the feelings whites harbour toward blacks. The importance of affect for deliberation is reviewed. The effects of interracial socialisation and diversity in communication networks on value and opinion formation are also considered. In this piece I employ original research to clarify the relationship between affect, interracial socialisation, and the racial attitudes of whites. Using data from the Detroit Area Study (2004) I find that variables measuring both the social and economic well-being of neighbourhoods, as well as a variable measuring beliefs about ‘special favours’ for blacks, have a significant impact on the feelings whites harbour toward blacks.

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Acknowledgements

I offer my enduring gratitude to the faculty, staff, and my fellow students at UBC, who have inspired me to continue my work in this field. I owe particular thanks to Dr. Mark Warren, whose research and theoretical work inspires me, and whose suggestions and feedback have been invaluable. I also owe thanks to Dr. Richard Johnston for encouraging my interest in public opinion research (through his publications and encouragement), and to Dr. Fred Cutler for teaching me the joys of STATA. I also want to acknowledge Josephine Calazan, whose patience and assistance I (and the other graduate students) could not do without.

Special thanks is owed to my partner, Andrew Burgess, whose love, encouragement, and conversation have succoured and inspired me. I must also acknowledge Ben, for his cuddly distractions.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge all the love and support I received growing-up (and now) from my friends in East Vancouver/ Champlain. Special thanks to Keely, Stefania, Nicole, Manie, Mirela, Mag, and Laura. I could not have done it without you.

Dedication

For my beautiful niece,

Maeve

May you grow-up in a more tolerant world.

1 Chapter: Introduction

“[T]he anger is real; it is powerful; and to simply wish it away, to condemn it without understanding its roots, only serves to widen the chasm of misunderstanding that exists between the races” (Senator Barack Obama’s “A More Perfect Union,” 18 March 2008).

In March of 2008 in Philadelphia, PA, a black American senator from Illinois delivered a speech addressing the question of race in the United States. Senator Barack Obama spoke honestly about the anger black Americans feel toward whites for a legacy of disempowerment and oppression, and about the resentment that white working and middle-class Americans, who “don’t feel that they have been particularly privileged by their race” feel toward blacks, for special favours they feel black Americans receive (Obama 2008). Senator Obama was praised for refusing to pan to ideological or racial prejudices, and for publicly and critically engaging a subject not often articulated “in polite company” (Obama 2008). Senator Obama’s speech, and the reaction to it, illustrate two characteristics – one foreboding and the other hopeful – of discourse in America. It illustrates, firstly, that race is not a topic often broached with good intentions, especially not between members of different races. However, the speech also demonstrates the *possibility* of positive interracial dialogue, and of an attempt to reach a mutual understanding between citizens of different colour.

The purpose of this paper is to clarify the contingencies that enable the normative expectations of deliberative democracy in the context of interracial deliberation, as well as to understand the conditions under which deliberation contributes to the contrary, and catalyzes group polarisation and racial prejudice. I argue that understanding how interracial deliberation can promote the expectations of deliberation, such as the identification of common interests or mutual-recognition across racial divides, entails understanding the *context* under which discourse takes place. For instance, communication between members of

different races is less likely to promote beneficial outcomes when discussion partners suffer from economic or material insecurity, and if resultant interracial interactions are characterized by fear, distrust, or hatred. The role of emotions is central to my understanding of the possibility for successful discourse. My research focuses on race as opposed to ethnicity, and I will be solely considering black-white relations. Following Taylor (2004), I understand ‘race’ as being of the body, while ‘ethnicity’ “points to culture” (54). While race and ethnicity often intersect, this paper specifically seeks to understand how bodily, as opposed to cultural, differences can be overcome.

The body of my work is comprised of five main sections. In the first, I will briefly justify my use of deliberative theory as a framework for understanding race-relations and white values and opinions. In the second section of my work, I will consider the macro-level antecedents to affect; that is, I will consider the structural features of American society which shape the feelings whites harbour toward blacks. I consider two macro-level antecedents to affect. The first pertains to the social structuring of activity, or more specifically, the effects of segregation and interracial interaction in the neighbourhood. I will illustrate that while the residential segregation of whites and blacks does not encourage whites to feel more warmly toward blacks, neighbourhood-level interracial socialisation only increases the likelihood whites feel positive affect toward blacks under certain conditions. The second macro-level antecedent to affect that I will consider is the effect of race-based redistributive policies. In my analysis I will demonstrate that non-universal redistributive programs not only receive little support from whites, but that these programmes also have the power to induce negative feelings toward blacks in general.

In the third section of my analysis, I will review the importance of affect for deliberation. Reviewing Morrell’s (2010) examination of the relationship between empathy and positive deliberation, I will delineate the failure of deliberative democrats to incorporate

a coherent understanding of affect in deliberative theory. Then, borrowing again from Morrell, as well as from the work of various legal scholars, I will illustrate how a better understanding of empathy can improve theories of deliberation. Work in legal academia not only considers the affective and cognitive efforts required to cultivate empathetic responses, but also considers the intervening effect that race has on inducing (or inhibiting) empathy.

Turning my attention more explicitly back to the question of interracial interaction, I will consider the effects of interracial socialisation and diversity in communication networks on value and opinion formation in the fourth section of my work. In this section I will first consider the extent and types of informal interracial socialisation, as well as the development of interracial friendship ties. I will then examine diversity in conversation networks, and I will show that relationships typified by cross-cutting exposure tend to be those characterized by weak ties, and that diversity in communication networks is conducive to the promotion of tolerant values.

In the fifth section of my piece, I employ original research to help clarify the relationship between affect, interracial socialisation, and the racial attitudes of whites. Using data from the Detroit Area Study (2004), I find that variables measuring both the social and economic well-being of neighbourhoods, as well as a variable measuring beliefs about 'special favours' for blacks, have a significant impact on the feelings whites harbour toward blacks. I discover that emotive factors, including warm feelings and sympathy, are important determinants of whether whites feel an obligation to assist blacks financially. I also find that the likelihood a white would approve of a family member marrying a black person is largely impacted by the number of interracial friendship ties he or she has. This is important, because it suggests that successful interracial socialisation is an important determinant of the willingness for whites to include blacks among their closest social ties, the kinship network. I

conclude my research by delineating the implications of my findings for social theory and for social policy.

2 Chapter: How Can Studying Informal Deliberation Inform us on Questions of Race?

I suggest two important justifications for the study of race through the lens of deliberative theory, one theoretical and the other methodological. Let me begin by delineating my theoretical justification. Borrowing from deliberative democrats, I argue that the transformative power of discourse can reduce conflict through the creation of commonalities, and that “even if individuals fail to discover common interests, they are likely to learn about reciprocity; and failing that, they may learn about tolerance” (Warren 1992, 12).

This paper focuses specifically on the informal, pre-political *social* interactions between diverse others. The importance of public discourse for deliberative theorists is its transformative capacity for self-development; that one’s sense of autonomy is augmented through the articulation of desires or needs in public speech. My readers should note my reiterative use of the word “public,” as this is an important word for understanding the nature of *political* relations (especially as contrasted with *social* relations). Warren (1992) describes political relations as being distinct from social relations when they “have a potential for conflict in the face of necessary action” (14). The importance of publicity is, I believe, implied in this quote, as “action,” or *praxis*, is that which establishes and sustains the Aristotelian conception of the *bios politikos*; that is, that which establishes and sustains “life devoted to public-political matters” (Hannah Arendt 1998, 12).

Given the distinction between social and political relations, Warren re-conceives the self-transformation thesis “in terms of the distinctive qualities of politics” (14). However, I would suggest that the importance of discourse for self-transformation and the development of a democratic citizenry precede the political, and germinate in pre-political, social relations. Warren notes that “the analogy between social and political relations is complicated by the fact that these social relations [child rearing, schooling, friendship, voluntary organizations,

workplace cooperation] are usually based on common interests (and self-select for common interests), so that conflict is often exceptional and (when it does arise) may be resolved simply by reaffirming common interests” (14). I must note, however, that when social relations are also characterised by diversity (in race, gender, age, status, etc.), the primary common interest between individuals may simply be the medium through which the relation originated (the shared school, voluntary organisation, or workplace). Of course, this claim is presupposed by the assumption that social relations at the macro-level (the presence of different races within an entire country) are also reflected, at least to some degree, at the micro-level (blacks and whites interact with one another, face-to-face). Otherwise of course, *individuals* would not be engaging in social interactions with each other, even if elites are.

Returning my attention to Warren’s description of social relations, I would point out that while most social relations are characterised by homophily, and homogeneous social relations may be characterised by few conflicts, it seems probable that heterogeneous social ties are characterised by a greater degree of conflict, as diverse ascribed attributes often coincide with divergent values and opinions. Finally, I would add that when conflict does arise between individuals, in order for these dyads to sustain positive social relations which encourage feelings of reciprocity and tolerance, there must firstly be an attempt to reaffirm common interests; and secondly, the invoked commonality must be seen as at least equally if not more important than the dispute in question, in order for tensions to be eased.

The ability and willingness of diverse others to invoke commonalities is encouraged or restricted by affect, depending on whether sentiments are positive or negative. As I have suggested, positive emotions, particularly empathy, are beneficial to the deliberative process, while negative emotions, such as resentment or hatred, are especially harmful to discourse. As I have already stated in my introduction, I will show that the sentiments felt by individuals are not *merely* the product of individual life-experiences or personal attributes; instead, they

are related to macro-level features, such as the social structuring of activity and the institutionalisation of racial differences in social redistribution programmes (Paul M. Sniderman and Edward G. Carmines 1997).

Recall my suggestion that there are methodological reasons for utilizing discourse theory when studying race-relations and racial attitudes. Before I explain why, I will remind my readers that studies of race have largely ignored the impact of informal, face-to-face communication on value and opinion formation, and instead have focused on interracial socialisation (or “contact”). However, even within this body of literature there is little consensus on the effects of interracial socialisation on the values and racial attitudes of white Americans; research in the field of interracial contact is divided. Adherents to the inter-group conflict perspective, or ‘racial threat hypothesis,’ suggest that prejudicial attitudes increase with interracial contact (Key 1949; Baybeck 2006), while adherents to the inter-group contact perspective propose that interracial contact leads to more tolerant racial attitudes (Allport 1954; Sigelman et al. 1996); empirical evidence reveals mixed findings in both camps.

I would suggest that an important part of the problem is the difficulty in quantifying what is meant by “contact.” By understanding “contact” in terms of *communication*, a researcher can design measures aimed at discerning the extent and type of communication, from informal chit-chat and friendly gestures, to friendship networks, to more formal work or associational connections. This grants researchers greater insight into the degree and type of actual interracial interaction (or lack thereof), and what the effects of different types of (non-)interaction have on value and opinion formation. As I will show, being able to understand what the effects of different forms of communication are will assist in integrating the disparate findings within the field. Understanding “contact” as “communication” provides a means of integrating the racial contact/conflict literature, thus engaging in what David

Dressler (1991) calls “a ‘tying together’ of research findings, and not just a simple side-by-side listing of them” (140-141).

As I have suggested, context is important for understanding whether interracial communication produces positive feelings, or feelings of racial threat. The next section of my paper pertains to the antecedents of affect, and in this section I will demonstrate that the sentiments felt by individuals are not *merely* the product of individual life-experiences or personal attributes.

3 Chapter: Macro-Level Antecedents of Affect: Neighbourhood Segregation and Race-Based Redistributive Policies

Recall from my introduction that I will consider two antecedents to affect, the social structuring of activity and race-based redistributive policies. Before I treat each of these antecedents, let me more fully explain what I mean by the phrase ‘antecedent to affect’. In his work on framing effects, Druckman (2001) suggests that we must distinguish between “*frames in communication*” (227, emphasis in original), which refer to the way information is framed when it is relayed, and “*frames in thought*” (228, emphasis in original), which refer to the way perceptions are framed in the minds of individuals, when they process information. However, as much of what is assumed to be political thinking among citizens actually appears to be “unthinking, reflexive, affective responses” (Sears et al. 1980, 681), it is also useful to consider that which frames affect, or what I call ‘the antecedents to affect.’

3.1 The Social Structuring of Activity: Considering the Racial Context of the Neighbourhood

I shall begin this section of my discussion by considering how place of residence shapes the feelings white Americans harbour toward blacks. Many studies have focused on how black and white Americans share residential space, and have examined the causes and consequences of segregation. In his much cited work, game theorist Schelling (1969) argues that small individual preferences for having a neighbour of the same race leads to a self-sustaining positive feedback cycle, which results in an equilibrium of polarisation. In an empirical test of Schelling’s work, using survey data to determine personal preferences for the racial composition of neighbourhoods, Clark (1991) finds that Schelling’s description of preferences “is broadly correct” (17), although Clark also discovers that the likelihood of a polarised equilibrium is small or non-existent.

While most Americans indicate they would prefer some racial diversity in their neighbourhoods, it appears that a certain amount of segregation is produced by what Anthony Giddens (1986) describes as “an unintended consequence from an aggregate of courses of intentional conduct” (13), which probably exacerbates the problem of segregation incurred through the differential life chances of whites and blacks, or through open opposition to integration. However, despite illustrating the tendency toward segregation, Clark’s work also demonstrates that a polarised equilibrium is unlikely, meaning that there will be an ongoing tendency for individuals of one race to move into geographical contexts dominated by members of another race. However, it is not so much the changes in the racial composition of neighbourhoods, but also the nature of these changes that influence whether or not neighbourhood diversity promotes or inhibits warm feelings toward blacks among whites. Furthermore, the interplay between affect and communication influences more cognitive outcomes, such as opinions toward redistribution and toward blacks more generally.

3.1.1 Segregation and Racial Threat

That the racial context of geography can influence perceptions has been considered by proponents of the inter-racial conflict perspective. The racial-threat hypothesis stipulates that when blacks move into white residential areas, white feelings toward and perceptions of blacks become increasingly negative. As Baybeck (2006) notes, studies testing the racial-threat hypothesis show mixed results, partly because researchers employ different geographic areas, such as neighbourhoods, counties, and states, to test their hypotheses. Because, he argues, individuals inhabit a plurality of geographic residential spaces simultaneously (i.e. individuals are residents of both neighbourhoods *and* cities), he examines the impact that heterogeneity in different levels of geography, and of interactions between these different levels, have on white attitudes. Baybeck finds that the impact of racial diversity on white

attitudes differs depending on whether social-economic (neighbourhood) and political (municipal, or city) levels of geography are heterogeneously congruent or incongruent.

By showing that individuals base their opinions not only on evaluations of their locale, but also on comparisons of their locale with the broader municipality, Baybeck makes an important contribution to the literature. However, Baybeck's research is limited by at least one important factor: while Baybeck controls for the socio-economic status of individual respondents, he does not control for the socio-economic status of *neighbourhoods*.

Irrespective of their own income, whites living in less well-off heterogeneous neighbourhoods may blame the problems associated with poverty on (potentially less well-off) blacks living in their neighbourhood. As blacks are more likely to be plagued by poverty than whites, the racial incongruence between geographic locales could be indicative of socioeconomic incongruence between blacks and whites.

If whites are coming into contact with blacks because they are increasingly suffering from material insecurity, as well as physical insecurity (as higher levels of poverty are associated with higher levels of crime) then whites may concomitantly come to increasingly resent blacks. And this may, of course, inhibit positive interracial communication.

Furthermore, while poverty often limits neighbourhood socialisation in general, class distinctions in a single locale will exacerbate this problem. That is to say, while socialisation may more readily occur between individuals who share a class position, it is less likely to occur between those of different social class; and this tendency combined with the tendency toward homophily would doubly act to impede *any* social intercourse between blacks and whites, especially positive intercourse.

3.1.2 Class, Status, and Race

In fact, Brampton and Jones (2005) have found evidence confirming that not only do racial contexts influence white attitudes, but that these effects are conditional on

socioeconomic status. Specifically, they find that when social contexts are characterised by high levels of socioeconomic well-being, support for racial social issues increases with levels of racial diversity. By contrast, when social contexts are characterised by low levels of socioeconomic well-being, support for racial social issues *decreases* as racial diversity increases.

Similarly, in their study of the effects of heterogeneous contexts on generalised trust, Marschall and Stolle (2004) find that the mere presence of blacks in a neighbourhood does not reduce a white respondent's level of trust. Instead, the researchers find that 'neighbourhood disadvantage,' which they measure in terms of median level of schooling, plays the biggest role in reducing trust among whites. Furthermore, the researchers find that an individual-level measure of neighbourhood disorder, that is, a measure which taps *individual* perceptions of neighbourhood problems, is inversely related to generalised trust among whites. And while support for racial social policies and generalised trust are admittedly *not* measures of affect, I expect that they are related to positive emotions.

Brampton and Jones conclude that the reason diversity in low socioeconomic contexts exacerbates as opposed to ameliorates racial tensions is because minorities in these contexts are competing for the same limited resources as whites. They suggests that in more affluent contexts, "[t]he material well-being of individuals in these contexts may mute (or preclude) the anxiety of having to think about policies that benefit minority groups" (Brampton and Jones 2005, 369). However, it seems unlikely to me that members of the middle or upper middle-class do not have to compete for resources. Son, Model and Fisher (1989) find that father's occupational status has a large, direct effect on the status mobility of blacks, and the researchers note that class polarisation among blacks is increasing. Thus while black middle or upper-middle class youth compete with whites for admission to universities, youth in the black underclass do not tend to apply for university at all.

It seems to me that Brampton and Jones's concession that "minorities in high-status contexts may find themselves well established and integrated in the community" (369) is a better insight. In fact, *all* residents in high-status contexts, regardless of race, probably find themselves in more integrated communities, characterised by higher levels of neighbourhood socialisation and generalised trust. It seems likely that under these conditions, whites would be more likely to develop communication networks with black neighbours, and that these interracial interactions would be more likely to produce warm feelings, as opposed to fear, distrust, or resentment. These feelings may then be generalised to other members of the conversation partner's racial group.

Considering these findings, I would suggest that neither the mere presence of blacks in a neighbourhood, nor a Darwinian account of competition for scarce resources among the materially insecure can account for the potential of neighbourhood diversity to either ameliorate or exacerbate racial tensions. Rather, diversity in combination with material and physical security allow for interracial communication, and the development of warm feelings toward members of different races. By contrast, material and physical insecurity makes neighbouring, and the development of positive feelings toward neighbours less likely, especially in diverse contexts. This problem would be intensified if whites come to blame blacks for neighbourhood problems, which may be predicted to occur, considering the increasing discrepancy in earnings between blacks and whites at the bottom of the labour market, and the growing size of the black underclass (Son et al. 1989).

3.2 Race-Based Redistributive Policies

Having explored how the social structuring of activity can frame affect, let me now consider the potential affective framing effects of race-based redistribution. Sniderman and Carmines (1997) suggest that there are affective implications of race-based social policies in the United States. They suggest that racial prejudice is *not* the main reason why white Americans oppose

redistributive policies. Rather, they argue that race-based opposition to welfare is an expression of opposition to affirmative action; that for many Americans, affirmative action violates the moral precepts of liberalism by insisting on unequal treatment under law. As Habermas (1998) suggests, the legitimation of law must, “on pain of cognitive dissonances” (99), harmonise with ethical and moral principles. Sniderman and Carmines argue that it is precisely the disharmony between moral precepts and affirmative action which produces race-based opposition to welfare more so than prejudice, or any other factor.

Gilens (1999) dismisses the importance of opposition to affirmative action, arguing that the greatest race-based opposition to welfare stems from stereotypes of blacks. Specifically, Gilens argues that the most important factor contributing to opposition to welfare is “the perception that blacks’ economic problems stem from their own lack of effort” (78). However, through the use of the Mere Mention Experiment, Sniderman and Carmines demonstrate that the simple mention of affirmative action can induce negative sentiments among whites. That is to say, the researchers find that white respondents are much more likely to agree with a racially-loaded, negative statement about blacks when that statement is preceded by a neutral question about affirmative action. Thus, while affirmative action “does not cause all dislike of blacks,” affirmative action *does* act as a powerful priming tool for engendering ill will toward blacks (Sniderman and Carmines 1997, 40).

Sniderman and Carmines also seek to determine whether Americans would support universalistic social programmes that reach beyond race, even if these programmes benefit blacks disproportionately. To answer this question, Sniderman and Carmines employ the Colour-Blind Experiment. For the experiment respondents were randomly divided into different groups. In the first condition of the experiment, respondents were asked whether they supported a policy that was targeted and justified on racial lines, and in the final condition of the experiment, respondents were asked about their support for a policy that was

targeted to include all citizens born into poverty, and was justified “on the universalistic grounds of equal opportunity” (Sniderman and Carmines 1997, 127). The universalistic condition met with much greater support, and even those most committed to racial equality were much more likely to support the universalistic condition.

4 Chapter: The Importance of Affect for Deliberation

As I have illustrated, macro-level factors play an important role in framing the way whites feel toward blacks. Residential context, whether racially-mixed and whether socially and materially secure, plays an important role in determining how whites feel toward blacks in general. Furthermore, policies like affirmative action have the power of engendering ill-will among whites, especially among those who do not feel “that they have been particularly privileged by their race” (Obama 2008). Having reviewed some of the factors which frame affect, I will now turn my attention to the importance of affect for the deliberative process.

Morrell (2010) argues that democratic theories can be strengthened by granting a larger place for affect, especially empathy, in deliberation. In my analysis, I will apply Morrell’s understanding of affect, which he uses “to refer to a wide range of concepts including emotions, feelings, moods, and passions” (9). Morrell notes that while he uses the term affect to differentiate this range of emotions from cognition, he acknowledges that there is an interaction between cognition and affect in influencing judgment and reasoning.

4.1 Empathy: The Gap in the Literature

Morrell acknowledges that empathy has largely been ignored by the deliberative democracy literature. He argues that while Gutmann and Thompson (2004) are correct in suggesting that deliberation characterised by mutual respect and reciprocity will necessarily embody the quality of equal consideration, and so successfully link justifiability with legitimacy, Gutmann and Thompson are “never clear on the specific psychological mechanisms that will contribute to this legitimacy and have very little to say about empathy” (Morrell 2010, 95). Morrell suggests that the deliberative theorist who incorporates the largest portion of the process model of empathy in her work is Jane Mansbridge. This is because Mansbridge notes the importance of affect in role-taking, the reliance of the creation

on common interests in a democracy on empathy, as well as the tendency for closeness between subject and target to increase the likelihood of empathy.

However, Morrell suggests that Mansbridge's work is limited for two main reasons. The first pertains to what Dryzek terms the problem of economy and legitimacy. That is, Mansbridge stresses the reliance of empathy on face-to-face interaction, and Morrell notes that if deliberation requires empathy, and empathy is produced through face-to-face interaction, then empathy, and so deliberation, become nearly impossible in modern democracies. The second main limitation of Mansbridge's work, according to Morrell, is her neglect of certain important facets of the process model of deliberation; specifically, the "individual predispositions to empathy and nonaffective outcomes" (Morrell 2010, 98).

4.2 How Empathy can Improve Theories of Deliberative Democracy

Turning his attention to some of the critics of deliberative theory, Morrell acknowledges the problem of Sunstein's Law of Group Polarization. Sunstein suggests that nonvoting, balanced information, and the presence of moderators blunts the effects of polarisation, but does not explain why. Morrell argues that "the process of empathy, at least in part, can help us explain why deliberation does not necessarily lead to group polarization" (p.102). The theorist explores four broad areas where empathy can aid deliberation and reduce polarisation, specifically: the relationship between empathy and individual biases, the relationship between empathy and outgroups, the role of empathy in promoting altruism and helping behaviour, and lastly, the importance of empathy in promoting reciprocity and a commitment to continued deliberation.

The individual biases considered by Morrell include behavioural, moral, and motivational attributions. As Morrell notes, research in social psychology has revealed the presence of a behavioural attribution bias, where there "are biases in the way people tend to look at the influences that affect what they or others do" (102-103). Research illustrates that

individuals are biased in their attribution of situational factors or personal dispositions to explain behaviour. Individuals are more likely to attribute situational factors to explain their own unsuccessful behaviour, and personal dispositions to explain their own successful behaviour, but they are also more likely to attribute personal dispositions to explain the unsuccessful behaviours of others, and situational factors to explain the success of others.

This tendency described by Morrell may extend beyond individual attributions of behaviours of other individuals, and may be related to group biases. There is evidence that negative behaviours are more likely to be viewed by whites as a product of personal dispositions when those behaviours are acted-out by blacks, while negative behaviours are more likely to be viewed by whites as a product of situational dispositions when those behaviours are acted-out by other whites (Brewer 2004). For instance, in experimental studies by legal scholars of capital cases where the defendant is black, evidence of the defendant's history of child abuse or substance abuse is considered less mitigating by white 'jurors' (the experimental subjects), although such evidence is seen as more mitigating when the defendant is white. Furthermore, evidence from legal academia suggests that this tendency is at least in part a product of members of one group or another being able to empathise better with members of the same group. That is to say, this tendency is not specific to white jurors. Legal practitioners term most of what is presented as mitigating evidence during capital trials as "empathy evidence" (Perlin 1996, 233).

Olsen-Fulero and Fulero (1997) argue that in the legal system, empathy works on two levels: on an affective level, as well as on a cognitive level. The researchers suggest that the effectiveness of the affective plane is dependent on the degree to which a juror can personally identify with the accused. They argue, like Morrell, that if a juror can distinguish similarities between the defendant and herself, then that juror will be more open to accepting situational attributions, as opposed to dispositional attributes, regarding the criminal act. The second,

cognitive level of empathy, according to Olsen-Fulero and Fulero, is important because the juror must be able to experience the feelings of the defendant vicariously, and not all feelings or life experiences arouse immediate empathetic responses, especially if a juror has never felt or experienced these things herself. As Brewer (2004) suggests, certain experiences may require “an explicit cognitive effort” by the juror, in order for her to “process the meaning of the experience and cultivate empathy” (533).

Work done by Gould and Sigall (1977) helps substantiate the claim made by Olsen-Fulero and Fulero. Gould and Sigall illustrate that affective role-taking reduces the bias of behavioural attribution for unsuccessful and successful behaviour. That is to say, after paying attention to others’ feelings, observers are more likely to make causal attributions as to the success or failure of targets’ behaviour that more closely resembles the attributions the observers make as to the success or failure of their own behaviour. With regards to race specifically, Brewer (2004) finds that receptivity to mitigation in capital trials is dependent upon the race of the jurors. Brewer discovers that both black and white jurors are more receptive to mitigation when the victim is of the same race as them, and the defendant is of the other race.

However, Brewer also finds that black jurors are overall more receptive to mitigation than their white counterparts, regardless of the race of the defendant. This could be because historically, blacks have been much more likely to be handed the death penalty, and to be executed with fewer legal appeals (Brewer 2004). Being aware of the potential for discrimination or error in the judicial system, as well as the painful effect that the death penalty has had in their own communities, may make blacks feel more empathetically of people facing the death penalty in general, and so more receptive to mitigating evidence.

Morrell also explores the positive relationship between the process of empathy and increased positive evaluations of out-groups. Studies involving both affective role-taking

instructions, as well as general role-taking instructions can increase positive evaluations of out-groups. Other studies have shown that empathetic predispositions, which focus on measures of peoples' self-reported tendency to have tender feelings for those in need, and the tendency to consider matters from others' points of view, show that empathetic predispositions do lead individuals to make more positive evaluations of out-groups. Given the evidence he reviews, Morrell insists that "[w]ithout the process of empathy, it is highly unlikely that citizens will demonstrate the toleration, mutual respect, reciprocity, and openness toward others vital for a deliberative democracy to fulfill its promise of equal consideration that is central to giving collective decisions their legitimacy" (114-115).

Morrell also notes the presence of biases in moral attributions, where individuals are more likely to pass excusatory judgments on their own norm-violating actions, than on the norm-violating behaviours of others. Research in psychology illustrates the presence of biases in motivational attributions, where people demonstrate a "tendency to attribute relatively negative motives to others whose attitudinal positions differ from [their own]" (Glenn Reeder et al. 2005, 1507). Furthermore, as an individual's concern about an issue increases, so too does the tendency toward motivational bias. Morrell argues that these biases create an enormous concern for theories of deliberative democracy, because:

[i]f interlocutors do not view the basic reasons for their respective behaviours similarly, if they tend to judge those who are least like them by stronger moral standards than they judge themselves or those closest to them, and if they attribute unethical and strategic motives to those with whom they disagree, one can hardly imagine how it would be possible for them to give each other equal consideration, reach any sort of mutual understanding, or be able to reciprocally address validity claims" (104).

Morrell suggests that the gap between the perceptions of observers and targets can in part be closed through empathetic processes. For instance, research shows that engaging observers in the affective side of the empathetic process, by asking observers to see from the target's perspective, reduces the effect of the attribution bias.

The importance of empathy for deliberation is further demonstrated by an empirical study designed by Michael E. Morrell and Adam Kanter (Morrell 2010). The researchers find that winning or losing does have a strong independent effect on participants' commitment to continued deliberation, as well as on their perceptions of others as being open-minded. However, Morrell and Kanter also find that the variable that explains the most variation in commitment to continued deliberation is the high empathy group variable. The researchers find that even after controlling for winning or losing, those in the high empathy group were more likely to perceive deliberation as open-minded, which is important for the deliberative process. Furthermore, Morrell and Kanter find that although winning or losing has a significant impact on the enjoyment index, those in the high empathy group scored higher on the enjoyment index on average, as compared to those in the low empathy or control groups, even when controlling for winning or losing. The high empathy variable had an even larger impact on the enjoyment index than did the variable measuring winning or losing.

5 Chapter: Interracial Socialisation, Diversity in Conversation Networks, and Value and Opinion Formation

Having illustrated the importance of empathy for encouraging feelings of reciprocity, perceptions of fairness in deliberation, and commitment to continued deliberation, all of which are important components of successful communication, I will now spend some time examining the degree and type of informal interracial socialisation which takes place in the United States, as well as the effects that interracial socialisation and diversity in communication networks have on value and opinion formation. The effects of *racial* diversity in conversation networks have largely been ignored, with most studies concentrating on the effect of *political* diversity in conversation networks. As such, I will consider the literature on political diversity in communication networks, as it will offer some insights into how racial diversity may influence the values and racial attitudes of whites.

I will begin this section by considering the effects of interracial socialisation and friendships ties, as these may be considered proxies for indirectly measuring communication. Many of the studies on interracial contact I have considered thus far, such as the study by Baybeck as well as the research by Brampton and Jones, only examine the absolute percentages of ethnic minorities living in communities, and do not examine the degree to which interracial interaction actually occurs. These studies seem to follow the conception that “counting blacks and whites in a residential block or on a baseball team will not tell how they get along, but it tells us something” (Schelling 1969, 488). However, while counting the number of black people in a neighbourhood might ‘tell us something,’ also understanding how neighbourhood diversity influences interracial communication, and the types of emotions that this communication incurs, is important for studying the potential for interracial deliberation to encourage positive opinions toward blacks among whites.

5.1 Informal Socialisation and Friendship Ties

Blau's (1977) structural analysis of heterogeneity suggests that physical propinquity is essential for informal interaction which encourages the development of diverse ties. Blau argues that while "heterogeneity creates barriers to social intercourse, much heterogeneity weakens these barriers" (79). He draws this paradoxical claim partly from the assumption that social relations depend on the opportunity for social contact; as such, higher levels of heterogeneity increases the probability of intergroup contact, by definition.

Sigelman et al.'s (1996) study of urban black-white contact in the Detroit metropolitan area reveals that place of residency has a large impact on the degree of informal interaction whites have with blacks. However, the relationship between the proportion of blacks in a neighbourhood and the amount of informal socialisation whites have with blacks is not linear. The researchers find that as the proportion of blacks living in a neighbourhood rises from zero to 20 percent, the degree of informal socialisation whites report having with blacks increases considerably. However, when the proportion of blacks residing in a community is greater than 20 percent, the increase in inter-racial socialisation reported by whites slows, and when the proportion of blacks reaches 50 or 60 percent, reported socialisation declines; in fact, when whites live in a community that is 80 percent black, the expected degree of informal socialisation reported by whites is less than that expected among whites living in communities that are 40 percent black (Sigelman et al. 1996, 1321).

Sigelman et al. suggest that this may be due to the socioeconomic contexts of neighbourhoods. Specifically, whites living in nearly all-black neighbourhoods are more likely to be living in neighbourhoods characterised by poverty, and probably have less autonomy over their choice of residence. Recall also Baybeck's finding that whites living in incongruent racial contexts are more likely to be dissatisfied with their neighbourhood, and Brampton and Jones's finding that diversity in low-socioeconomic contexts is related to lower levels of support for social assistance to minorities. It seems that although segregation

itself obviously impedes interracial socialisation, even within racially diverse neighbourhoods interracial social intercourse between blacks and whites is impeded by the intersection of race and poverty.

Marschall and Stolle (2004) also examine informal social interaction, defined as the frequency of interaction between neighbours, as well as formal interaction, defined by the degree of associational life in the neighbourhood. They find that interaction, especially informal interaction, is very important in determining the degree to which blacks trust other people, but does not have a significant impact on the degree to which whites trust other people. Marschall and Stolle suggest that the different effects of neighbourhood racial heterogeneity and neighbourhood sociability on generalised trust are in part a product of the different types of neighbourhoods in which the respondents reside. Furthermore, I would suggest that had they controlled for the proportion of blacks in each neighbourhood, they may have found an interesting explanation for why this is the case. With regard to Marschall and Stolle's finding that generalised trust among whites overall was not significantly affected by diversity, and considering Sigelman et al.'s finding that actual inter-racial interaction differs depending on the proportion of blacks and whites living in a neighbourhood, it could be that any increased level of inter-racial socialisation (and generalised trust) experienced by whites living in neighbourhoods with 60 percent or fewer blacks is cancelled out by the decreased level of inter-racial socialisation (and generalised trust) experienced by whites living in neighbourhoods with a higher proportion of blacks.

Sigelman et al. also examined which types of informal contact were likely to promote friendship ties. The researchers find that in general, physical propinquity is a good predictor for the likelihood that whites report having close friendships with blacks. Specifically, they find that whites who work in the city, and blacks who work in the suburbs, are more likely to report having conversation partners of the other race (recall that they are studying 'hyper-

segregated' Detroit, where most whites live in the suburbs and most blacks live in the city). The researchers also find that one of the most important predictors of whether whites have casual contact with blacks is whether or not they live in racially diverse neighbourhoods. Finally, Sigelman et al. find that churches can act as important contexts for the development of racially diverse ties. Specifically, they find that whites who attend church most often are more likely to have black conversation partners.

However, Sigelman et al. find that while informal contact in general is a good predictor of the likelihood that whites have close friendships with blacks, not all contexts of socialisation lead to friendship ties. Specifically, while the workplace offers an important context for inter-racial conversations, these relationships do not seem to translate into close friendships. By contrast, although inter-racial ties are less likely to be formed at church, these ties are much more likely to develop into friendships. Religion may be an important facet of affective propinquity. That is to say, I would argue that both sharing a religious faith and sharing in the *act* of worshipping increases the degree to which individuals feel an emotional *closeness* to one another, irrespective of race.

5.2 Diversity in Conversation Networks

Having explored informal interracial socialisation friendship ties, both of which are indirect measures of interracial communication, I will now turn my attention to diversity in conversation networks. Recall that as the literature on racial diversity in conversation networks is scarce, I will also consider the literature on political diversity in conversation networks.

5.2.1 Who Experiences Cross-Cutting Exposure?

Mutz (2006) finds that the most educated individuals (those who have attended graduate school), the wealthiest, and whites tend to have the *least* politically diverse communication networks. As socioeconomic status and level of education decline, diversity in communication networks increases; exposure to diverse political opinions is *highest* for nonwhites and for those who have not completed high school. Mutz clarifies that she is not suggesting that demographic features *cause* homogeneity in conversation partners, instead she suggests that “[t]he same characteristics that give people control over their lives in general also give them more control over with whom they associate” (31). With respect to racial diversity in conversation networks, it is not clear socioeconomic status has the same effect. Sigelman et al. find that income and level of education do *not* affect the likelihood that a white person reports having black conversation partners.

5.2.2 The Relationships Characterised by Cross-Cutting Exposure

Evidence illustrates that large, low-density networks (those characterised by weak ties) are of central importance for the maintenance of diverse political opinions (Robert Huckfeldt et al. 2004; Mutz 2006). Huckfeldt et al. argue that low-density networks are important for the maintenance of political diversity in conversation networks because, they suggest, a society characterised by series of high-density networks would feature a series of politically homogeneous (albeit different) groups, and little or no inter-group dialogue.

With respect to how conversation partners meet one another, Mutz finds that the largest proportion of dyads had met one another through work, and that ties developed in the workplace are the most likely to be characterised by politically diverse views. It seems likely communication networks characterised by racial heterogeneity are also characterised by weak ties. For both blacks and whites, reported inter-racial conversations are most likely to occur while shopping, at work, or during recreational activities such as at sports games (Sigelman et

al. 1996). And recall Sigelman et al.'s finding that contexts of informal socialisation, such as the workplace, are unlikely to lead to close friendships.

Furthermore, research on deliberative forums also suggests that larger groups may be more conducive to exposing individuals to the views of different racial or ethnic groups. Jacobs, Cook and Delli Carpini (2009) find that as the number of participants in face-to-face deliberative forums increases, so too does perceived racial or ethnic diversity. It seems that the importance of large, weak networks in promoting inter-racial dialogue in a largely segregated society cannot be overstated. It seems that, as Mutz argues, those social scientists who long for smaller, more tightly knit communities, have the wrong "prescription for the American condition" (54). Instead, the evidence appears to substantiate Granovetter's (1973) oft-cited claim that "weak ties... are seen as indispensable to individuals' opportunities and to their integration into communities; [while] strong ties, breeding local cohesion, lead to overall fragmentation" (1378).

5.2.3 The Effects of Cross-Cutting Exposure

Mutz acknowledges that there is ample empirical evidence which demonstrates that intergroup contact is useful for promoting greater tolerance. For instance, she cites Brown and Hewstone's (2005) review of intergroup contact studies, which concludes that "there is now ample evidence to support his [Allport's] basic contentions" (cited in Mutz 2006, 64). Mutz suggests that cross-cutting social networks might produce tolerance via two mechanisms: a cognitive and an affective mechanism. The cognitive mechanism works by what psychologists call "deprovincialization" (68) where people learn that their customs and norms are not the only ones. Exposure to oppositional political views increases awareness of rationales for divergent views, and so tolerance for different opinions. The second mechanism described by Mutz, the affective mechanism, suggests that through interaction with diverse others, individuals discover that those who are not like themselves are "not necessarily bad

people” (68). Like Morrell’s description of the potential benefits of empathy, Mutz’s description of the affective mechanism depends on the development of positive inter-personal relationships.

Mutz finds a significant, positive relationship between a respondent’s ability to offer rationales for oppositional views and diverse communication networks. Specifically, moving from the lowest to the highest levels of political disagreement reported, “awareness of rationales for oppositional views more than *triples*” (74, emphasis in original). Mutz is also able to show that it is not only exposure to political opinions in general which induce tolerance, but it is specifically exposure to *diverse* political opinions which induce tolerance. Furthermore, Mutz finds that individuals who have a ‘civil orientation’ to conflict, which is defined as an individual who both stresses the importance of social harmony and the importance of expressing divergent views, experience a greater benefit from exposure to diverse political opinions than those who do not possess a civil orientation to conflict. Mutz shows that civility is not necessary for individuals to benefit from exposure to oppositional views, although it “clearly makes a difference in extracting maximal benefits from cross-cutting networks” (76). While Mutz’s findings are a useful contribution to deliberative theory, understanding how a civil orientation to conflict could be encouraged would be useful – and I think Morrell’s suggestion regarding the importance of empathy helps us understand how this might be achieved.

6 Chapter: Clarifying the Relationship Between Affect, Interracial Communication, and White Racial Attitudes

Thus far I have considered certain important antecedents to affect, by examining the literature on segregation, as well as political psychology literature which illustrates the affective framing effects of race-based redistribution. I have also borrowed from deliberative theorists and legal scholars to illustrate the importance of affect in general, and empathy in particular, for successful deliberation. Finally, I have considered the extent and consequences of diversity in communication networks by borrowing from the work of formal theorists.

This section of my paper is an attempt to synthesise the literatures thus far considered, in order to better understand the relationship between affect, interracial socialisation, and white racial attitudes. In order to do so, I engaged in a statistical analysis using data from the Detroit Area Study (2004). Although the Detroit Area Study does not constitute a nationally representative sample, my research will provide an illuminating snap-shot into the effects of interracial communication in a hyper-segregated American city.

6.1 The Data

The 2004 Detroit Area Study is comprised of individual-level survey data, collected in the Detroit Metropolitan Area by means of computer-assisted personal interviews (CAPI), computer-assisted self interviews (CASI), face-to-face interviews, and paper and pencil interview (PAPI). Respondents were selected by means of a stratified multistage area probability sample, drawn from the DAS master sample of the Detroit area. The survey provides information on diversity in friendship networks, interracial socialisation, and a battery of questions on opinions toward blacks and redistribution, making the survey relevant for my purposes (Reynolds Farley et al. 2004).

6.1.1 Control Variables

I included a number of control variables in my analysis, which previous research indicates might be related to affect, interracial socialisation and values. These controls include demographic factors such as sex, income, education, and age. I also included a measure of neighbourhood satisfaction, as well as a variable measuring individual perceptions of neighbourhood disorder. Because I do not have information on the economic well-being of neighbourhoods, these variables will help control for the socio-economic conditions of neighbourhoods.

6.1.2 Affect and Interracial Communication

Unfortunately, the 2004 Detroit Area Study does not include any variables which directly measure empathy. However, it does include one variable which asks, “How often have you felt sympathy for Blacks and their families?” And although sympathy is not the same emotion as empathy, it is a measure of an empathetic predisposition; as such, I will include it in my analysis. My measures of interracial socialisation include a variable asking how frequently respondents talk to individuals of other races in their neighbourhoods, how frequently respondents talk to individuals of other races at their workplace, and how many friends of other races they have. My measure of affect is a variable which directly asks respondents to indicate how they feel toward blacks on a feeling thermometer. I also include a measure of how respondents’ experiences with minorities in their neighbourhood have been, on a scale from very bad to very good. As can be discerned from Table 1, a simple regression illustrates that my measure of the antecedents to affect are significantly related to affect (see Appendix for variable coding).

Table 6.1. The Effects of Feelings toward Affirmative Action, Neighbourhood Context, and Interracial Communication on Affect

Variable	Estimate (Std. Err)
Gender	-6.257 (2.597)**
Age	-0.104 (0.106)
Education Level	3.923 (1.024)***
Income	0.653 (0.387) *
Ideology	-0.059 (1.056)
No Special Favours	-2.817 (1.553)*
Neighbourhood Satisfaction	3.806 (1.222)***
Neighbourhood Disorder	-2.608 (1.405)*
Interracial Neighbourhood Communication	2.722 (0.803)***
Interracial Neighbourhood Experience	2.374 (1.743)
Interracial Work Communication	1.14 (0.673)*
Diversity of Friendships	0.129 (1.607)
<i>Constant</i>	2.353 (11.227)
N	158
R ²	0.329

*p < 0.1, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01

With regards to the social structuring of activity, it appears that indications of the social and economic health of neighbourhoods are important predictors of the variance in affect.

Neighbourhood satisfaction is positively related to positive feelings toward blacks, and perceptions of neighbourhood disorder are inversely related to warm feelings toward blacks.

And while I do not have a measure to ascertain the economic well-being of neighbourhoods directly, individual-level measures of socio-economic status (income and education) indicate that the better-off and better-educated are more likely to indicate warmer feelings toward blacks.

It appears that while racial diversity within well-kept neighbourhoods with wealthier and well-educated whites encourages warm feelings toward blacks, racial diversity within poorly kept neighbourhoods where residents are poorer and less educated does not. With regards to the institutionalisation of difference in social policy, I find that my variable measuring support for affirmative action-type policies is inversely related to positive feelings toward blacks. That is, whites who strongly agree with the statement that blacks do not deserve any special favours are less likely to indicate warm feelings toward blacks.

Interracial communication, particularly in the neighbourhood but also at work, is an important predictor of whether whites indicate that they harbour positive feelings of blacks. Oddly, respondents' indicated level of racial diversity in friendship networks has a smaller impact on the dependent variable, and does not reach conventional levels of significance. Ideology also does not appear to be significantly related to affect. Gender, however, has a large and significant impact on the dependent variable, with women being far more likely to indicate having warm feelings toward blacks.

6.2 Main Findings

In order to better understand the relationship between affect (and sympathy, my proxy for empathetic predispositions), and interracial communication and socialisation on value and opinion formation, I considered two different dependent variables. The first attempts to tap into white opinions about their economic obligations toward blacks, and asks respondents if they believe that it is not their problem if blacks face unfair treatment and need help. The second dependent variable attempts to tap into white opinions about including blacks in their closest social network, and asks respondents if they would be opposed to or in favour of a family member marrying a black person. The effects of my control variables, measures of affect, and measures of socialisation have different impacts on the two dependent variables.

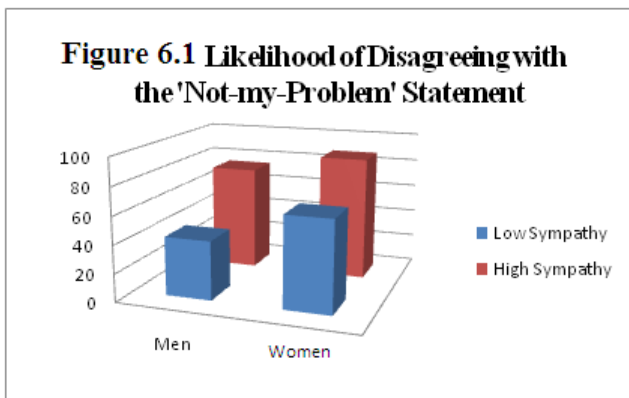
Table 6.2 O-Logit Regression of Affect, Communication and Socialisation on Value and Opinion Formation

Variable	2.1. Effect of Affect, Communication, and Socialisation on Responsibility to Help	2.2. Effect of Affect, Communication, and Socialisation on Opinions on Interracial Marriage
Affect toward Blacks	0.023***	0.019**
Sympathy for Blacks	0.479***	-0.086
Gender	-0.91****	-0.77***
Age	-0.013*	-0.011*
Education Level	0.104*	-0.042
Income	0.035*	0.032
Ideology	0.015	0.182*
Neighbourhood Satisfaction	0.168*	0.181*
Neighbourhood Disorder	-0.183	-0.36***
Interracial Neighbourhood Communication	0.135*	0.169*
Interracial Neighbourhood Experience	0.292*	0.385*
Interracial Work Communication	-0.046	-0.037
Diversity of Friendships	0.187*	0.612****
<i>Cutpoint 1</i>	0.148641	0.059734
<i>Cutpoint 2</i>	0.371024	0.190519
<i>Cutpoint 3</i>	0.385132	0.646508
<i>Cutpoint 4</i>	0.095203	0.041014
<i>Cutpoint 5</i>	-----	0.062226
Constant		
N		

*p<0.5, **p<0.1, ***p<0.05, ****p<0.01

As can be seen from Tables 2.1 “Effect of Affect, Communication, and Socialisation on Responsibility to Help” and 2.2 “Effect of Affect, Communication, and Socialisation on Opinions on Interracial Marriage” (see Appendix for variable coding), few of my independent variables reach conventional levels of statistical significance. This could be due to the small number of observations in my sample. As such, I will consider the effects of even weakly significant variables, but I will treat them with caution in my analysis.

The most important variable for predicting the likelihood that a white person disagrees with the statement that ‘it is *not* my problem if minorities experience unfair treatment or need help’ is gender. Holding all other variables at their means, there is a 62 percent likelihood that a white man will disagree with the not-my-problem statement, and an 81 percent likelihood that a white woman will disagree with the statement. The next most important variable for determining the likelihood an individual will disagree with the statement is the sympathy variable. As a man moves from the least sympathetic to the most sympathetic categories, the probability that he disagrees with the not-my-problem statement increases by a whopping 33 percent, from a 42 percent likelihood of disagreeing with the

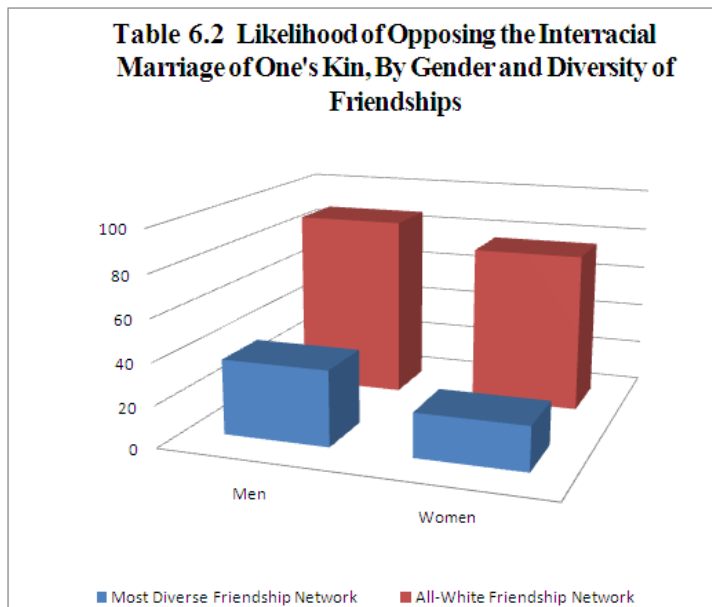


statement, to a 75 percent likelihood of disagreeing with the statement.

General affect toward blacks is also a significant predictor of the probability one disagrees with the not-my-problem statement. And while the

effects of affect appear modest, it should be kept in mind that the affect score ranges from zero to 100. Holding the other variables constant at their means, going from the lowest level of affect to the highest increases the likelihood a man disagrees with the not-my-problem statement from 31 percent to 82 percent, and the likelihood a woman disagrees with the statement from 53 percent to 92 percent. Neighbourhood satisfaction, interracial neighbourhood experiences, and having diverse friendship networks appear to predict a good portion of the variation in the dependent variable, but the effects of these variables do not meet conventional levels of significance. However, it is clear that emotive factors, especially sympathy, are important for understanding whether or not a person feels a sense of altruistic responsibility that extends beyond racial lines.

My second regression, which considers the likelihood a white respondent would support the union between a family member and a black person, appears to be influenced more by positive interracial interaction. Gender, however, is still the strongest determinant of whether a white would be in favour of a family member marrying a black. Holding the other variables at their means, there is a 78 percent probability that a man will *oppose* the interracial marriage of his kin, while there is a 61 percent probability that a woman will oppose the same union. The second most important variable is the number of interracial friendship ties a white person has. For instance, holding the other variables constant at their



means, a white man who *only* has white friends has an 87 percent likelihood of opposing his kin's interracial marriage, while a white man who only has non-white friends has a 36 percent chance of opposing the union.

Perceptions of neighbourhood disorder also

significantly impact the likelihood whites oppose or support interracial marriage in their family, perhaps because perceptions that blacks are less well-off or do not keep-up their property influence their beliefs on the propriety of a family member marrying a black.

Neighbourhood satisfaction, interracial communication, and interracial neighbourhood experiences also seem to explain a good portion of the variance on the dependent variable, but unfortunately these relationships do not meet conventional standards of significance.

However, that these relationships are all in the predicted direction and appear to explain some

of the variation on the dependent variable is still an interesting finding – perhaps with a larger sample size, significance might have been achieved. That not opposing mixed marriage between blacks and one’s kin appears to be strongly related to positive interpersonal relationships reminds me of the affective mechanism described by Mutz, where people find that those who are not like themselves are “not necessarily bad people” (68).

7 Chapter: Implications and Conclusion

Ideally, deliberation brings together diverse voices, and requires that citizens to offer mutually acceptable and accessible reasons for their arguments. Deliberative theory implies the possibility for constant public reflection to shine light on conflicts and expand mutual understanding, and predicts that public discourse will create a feedback loop between citizen efficacy and government policy (Jacobs et al. 2004). However, research shows that interracial deliberation does not necessarily promote the identification of common interests or mutual-recognition across racial divides (Mendelberg and Oleske 2000). My research has helped to clarify the contingencies that enable the normative expectations of deliberative democracy in the context of interracial deliberation.

By re-conceiving the notion of ‘contact’ in terms of communication, I improved the interracial interaction literature theoretically and methodologically. It makes greater theoretical sense to understand interaction in terms of communication (including non-verbal communication, such as smiling or waving) as opposed to “contact.” Social interaction is not analogous to baking, whereby desired outcomes are procured by means of shifting and stirring different ingredients together; rather, human interaction should be understood as being *enacted by means of communication*. As Habermas (1998) says, it is through “the linguistic medium” that “interactions are woven together and forms of life are structured” (4).

Understanding interracial interactions in terms of communication also offers a methodologically improvement to the literature. It is difficult to quantify “contact,” because, as Schelling (1969) reminds us, counting the number of blacks on a city block will not tell us the degree to which diverse others actually engage one another. By contrast, measures aimed at discerning the extent of communication, from informal chit-chat and friendly gestures, to friendship networks, to more formal work or associational connections, grant the researcher

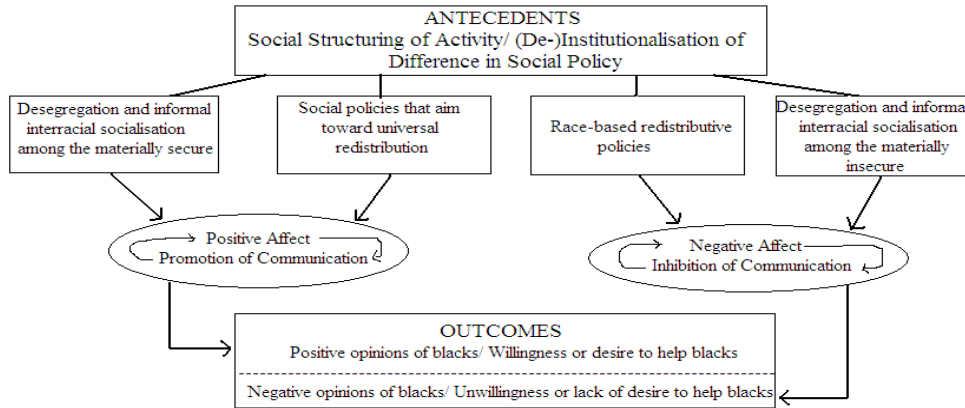
greater insight into the degree and type of actual interracial interaction (or lack thereof), and what the effects of different types of (non-)interaction have on value and opinion formation. As I have demonstrated, understanding informal interracial interaction in terms of communication integrates the disparate findings within the interracial contact/conflict literature.

As I have shown, citizens' emotions, which precede and shape communication, are impacted by the structural features present in the world. Specifically, both social policies that violate the moral claim of universalism, such as affirmative action, and the differential impacts of socio-economic status on neighbourhood interaction, frame affect and so deliberation. As I have illustrated, applying Morrell's understanding of the importance of affect for deliberation to studies of interracial communication improves our understanding of the mechanisms that encourage or inhibit successful dialogue. This not only integrates the disparate empirical findings of the effects of deliberation on value and opinion formation into a comprehensive theory, but it also clarifies the contingencies that enable the normative expectations of deliberative democracy, such as the expectation that deliberation will increase levels of tolerance, trust, and mutual reciprocity.

My own findings, as well as the findings I have reviewed in the separate literatures of political psychology, sociology, legal academia, and deliberative theory, illustrate that there is an iterative relationship between affect and deliberation; that is, while negative affect can impede discourse or lead to negative communication (which in turn augments negative feelings such as distrust and hatred), positive affect encourages successful discourse (which augments positive feelings such as trust and empathy). White values, perceptions of blacks, and opinions toward racial policies are influenced by affect and deliberation, and by the antecedents to these factors. My integrated understanding of the relationship between the

antecedents to affect, affect, interracial communication and value and opinion formation is illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 7.1. Affect, Communication, and Cognitive Outcomes



Many studies of race note the importance of interracial socialisation, as well as the problem of the intersection of race and poverty (specifically, the disproportionate number of the poor who are black). The policy suggestions offered in these studies, such as integrated schooling, desegregation, and affirmative action, seem to stem from the problematic assumption that interracial socialisation is easier to manipulate than socioeconomic conditions. However, while my research substantiates the importance of interracial socialisation, it also suggests that efforts at integration and desegregation will *not* produce the benefits that arise from interracial interaction and communication, *unless* socioeconomic conditions are concurrently (or priorly) addressed. Furthermore, my research substantiates the claim by Sniderman and Carmines (1997) that by contradicting the principles of equal treatment and equal opportunity, affirmative action incurs negative sentiments toward blacks among whites, and that a more effective and legitimate way to ameliorate the situation of poor blacks in American would be for social redistributive to take a more universalistic form.

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Appendix: Coding of Variables

Dependent Variables

Affect

“How would you rate blacks using a feeling thermometer?”

Coding

0... = cold

...50... = neutral

...100 = warm

Responsibility to Help

“How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements. First, it's not really my problem if racial minority groups experience unfair treatment and need help. Do you...”

1 = strongly agree

2 = somewhat agree

3 = somewhat disagree

4 = strongly disagree

Opinions on Interracial Marriage

“How would you feel about having a close relative or family member marry a (non-Hispanic) Black person?”

1 = very much opposed

2 = somewhat opposed

3 = neither in favor nor opposed

4 = somewhat in favor

5 = very much in favor

Independent Variables

Gender

Coding

0 = female

1 = male

Age

19 = 19 years

...

84 = 84 years

Education Level

“What is the highest grade of school or year of college you have completed?”

1 = less than high school (less than 9th grade)

2 = some high school (9, 10, or 11th grade)

3 = completed “high school” or GED (12th grade)

4 = some college, but less than one year

5 = 1-2 years of college

6 = 3 or more years of college

Income

“Think of your family’s total income in 2003 before taxes”

1 = None or less than \$5,000

2 = \$5,000 to \$9,999

3 = \$10,000 to \$14,999

4 = \$15,000 to \$19,999

5 = \$20,000 to \$29,999

6 = \$30,000 to \$39,999

7 = \$40,000 to \$49,999

8 = \$50,000 to \$59,999

9 = \$60,000 to \$69,999

10 = \$70,000 to \$79,999

11 = \$80,000 to \$89,999

12 = \$90,000 to \$99,999

13 = \$100,000 to \$124,999

14 = \$125,000 to \$149,999

15 = \$150,000 or more

Dependent Variables

No Special Favours

“Many people say Irish, Italian, Jewish, and many other ethnic groups overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Minorities today should do the same without any special favors”

Neighbourhood Satisfaction

“Overall, how satisfied are you with this neighborhood as a place to live? Would you say...”

Neighbourhood Disorder

“What about housing and property not being kept up? Would you say this is...”

Interracial Neighbourhood Communication

“How often do you talk or chat with people in your neighborhood who are not the same race?”

Interracial Neighbourhood Experience

“Generally, how do you feel about the experiences you have had with people of other races who live in your neighborhood?”

Interracial Work Communication

“How often do you interact with co-workers of a different race or ethnicity at your place of work?”

Diversity of Friendships

“Next I would like you to think about your close friends. By this I mean, people to whom you can say what you really think. How would you describe these close friends? Are they...”

Coding

1 = strongly agree
2 = somewhat agree
3 = somewhat disagree
4 = strongly disagree

1 = not at all satisfied
2 = slightly satisfied
3 = somewhat satisfied
4 = pretty satisfied
5 = very satisfied
6 = extremely satisfied

1 = never a problem
2 = rarely a problem
3 = sometimes a problem
4 = often a problem
5 = always a problem

1 = never
2 = less than once a year
3 = a few times a year
4 = a few times a month
5 = at least once a week
6 = almost every day

1 = very bad
2 = mostly bad
3 = mixed
4 = mostly good
5 = very good

1 = never
2 = less than once a year
3 = a few times a year
4 = a few times a month
5 = at least once a week
6 = almost every day

1 = all [white]
2 = mostly [white]
3 = about half [white]
4 = a few [white]
5 = none [white]