



# When Groups Meet: The Dynamics of Intergroup Contact (Essays in Social Psychology)

By Thomas F. Pettigrew, Linda R. Tropp

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Research and theory on intergroup contact have become one of the fastest advancing and most exciting fields in social psychology in recent years. The work is exciting because it combines basic social psychological concerns -- human interaction, situational influences on behavior -- with an effective means of improving intergroup relations at a time when the world is witnessing widespread intergroup hatred and strife.

This volume provides an overview of this rapidly progressing area of investigation – its origins and early work, its current status and recent developments, along with criticisms of this work and suggestions for future directions. It covers a range of research findings involving contact between groups drawn from the authors' extensive meta-analysis of 515 published studies on intergroup contact. This meta-analysis, together with the authors' renowned research on intergroup contact, provides a solid foundation and broad overview of the field, to which have been added discussions of research extensions and emerging directions.

*When Groups Meet* is a rich, comprehensive overview of classic and contemporary work on intergroup contact, and provides insights into where this work is headed in the future. For research specialists, this volume not only serves as a sourcebook for research and theory on intergroup contact, it also provides the entire 515-item bibliography from the meta-analysis. The clear structure and accessible writing style will also appeal to advanced undergraduate and graduate students in psychology and other social sciences.

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## **Editorial Review**

### Review

*"For research specialists, When Groups Meet not only serves as a concise sourcebook for research and theory on intergroup contact, it also provides the entire 515-item bibliography from the meta-analysis. ... The clear structure and accessible writing style should appeal to students of psychology and other social sciences, and more widely provide answers for all those interested in the dynamics of intergroup contact."* - **Veronika Bajt, Peace Institute – Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies, Slovenia, in Teorija In Praksa**

*"Contact theory represents psychology's most important and enduring contribution to improving intergroup relations. Tom Pettigrew and Linda Tropp apply their vast knowledge and penetrating theoretical insights to synthesize the literature to create the definitive volume on this topic. When Groups Meet reviews the origins of the theory, presents a deep analysis of the current state of work on the theory, and offers a thoughtful appraisal of emerging scholarly directions. Readers, whether those new to this topic or those already working in this area, will especially benefit from these experts' ideas about the future of contact theory and its implications for research and practical interventions."* - **John F. Dovidio, Yale University**

*"When Groups Meet is a remarkable achievement, essential reading for those who want to understand the potential of contact between members of different groups to shape outcomes from prejudice to policy preferences. It is sure to be a landmark in the field."* - **Janet Ward Schofield, University of Pittsburgh, Author of Black and White in School: Trust, Tension, or Tolerance?**

*"This book is an intellectual tour de force. I thought I knew the contact literature pretty well, but I found I learned something from just about every chapter. It uses a nice mix of systematic and narrative reviews of empirical work, blended with a well-judged focus on certain key studies. The combination makes a powerful argument for contact and an effective rebuttal to some of contact theory's critics. I am full of admiration for the authors for the skill and erudition that they have brought to bear on this work."* - **Rupert Brown, University of Sussex, UK, Author of Prejudice: Its Social Psychology**

### About the Author

**Thomas F. Pettigrew** is Research Professor of Social Psychology at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Since 1956, he has published 400 articles, book chapters, and reviews in addition to sixteen books and monographs. Pettigrew is widely credited with keeping social psychology's focus on intergroup contact over the past half-century. This research has focused on determining the critical links between the macro (cultural and structural), meso (situational), and micro (individual) levels of social science theory and research – with intergroup contact constituting one of these links. Pettigrew served as president of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) and later received the Society's Kurt Lewin and Distinguished Service Awards and twice its Gordon Allport Intergroup Research Award. In 2002, the Society for Experimental Social Psychology presented him with its Distinguished Scientist Award.

**Linda R. Tropp** is Associate Professor of Psychology and Director of the Psychology of Peace and Violence Concentration at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Her main research interests concern experiences with intergroup contact among members of minority and majority status groups, identification with social

groups, interpretations of intergroup relationships, and responses to prejudice and disadvantage. She is a recipient of the Gordon Allport Intergroup Relations Prize for her research on intergroup contact, and she received the McKeachie Early Career Award for the teaching of psychology.

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