POLITICAL SOLIDARITY AS A SOCIAL CHANGE PROCESS:
DYNAMICS OF SELF-CATEGORIZATION IN INTERGROUP
POWER RELATIONS

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DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

THE RESEARCH REPORTED IN THIS THESIS IS MY OWN AND HAS NOT BEEN SUBMITTED FOR A HIGHER DEGREE AT ANY OTHER INSTITUTION.

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ABSTRACT

Social and political change involves a challenge to the status quo in intergroup power relations. Traditionally, the social psychology of social change has focused on disadvantaged minority groups collectively challenging the decisions, actions and policies of those in positions of established authority. The discipline has largely neglected the process by which such a challenge to the status quo spreads to include those who are not directly affected by injustice or disadvantage, but who nevertheless, in solidarity with the minority, become willing to actively participate in the change process. We refer to such a process as political solidarity. At the core of political solidarity is psychological change in the majority self-categorization through which it is no longer the authority but the minority that best defines and embodies the relevant norms, values and beliefs that define ingroup membership—who ‘we’ are and how ‘we’ should relate to each other. Through this process, the majority comes to perceive the authority’s stance towards the minority as illegitimate, embrace the minority’s cause as its own, and ultimately becomes willing to collectively challenge the authority in the name of social change in the reality of intergroup relations.

Building on the review and critique of the relevant social psychological approaches to social change (Chapters 2-5), the empirical program of the thesis (Chapters 6-9) investigates the dynamics of political solidarity across a range of laboratory-based and naturalistic contexts. In addition to sharing a focus on the key question of the thesis—namely, when will the majority become willing to collectively challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority—each study also addresses specific additional questions when it comes to political solidarity as a social change process. Namely, Study 1 investigates whether political solidarity with an ‘outgroup’ minority is possible, or whether this process is confined to those seen to be ‘ingroup’ members. Studies 2 and 3 explore whether common fate—a shared experience of injustice between the minority and majority—is enough for political solidarity or whether other, identity-based, processes need to be taken into account. Studies 4 and 5 explore whether political solidarity is more likely when the meaning
of the relevant majority identity reflects the reality of the majority’s relationship with those in position of authority (Study 4) as well as their relationship with the minority (Study 5). In particular Study 4 investigates the self-categorization process by which opposition to authority’s treatment of the minority can be translated into willingness to actively challenge this group in solidarity with the minority. Study 5 explores the process by which intergroup inequality between the minority and majority shapes the relevant majority identity in a way that makes challenge to authority possible.

In the final chapter, we present a political solidarity model of social change that integrates the theoretical and empirical insights of the thesis. According to this model, political solidarity becomes possible when the meaning of a relevant majority identity ceases to be shared with the authority and becomes shared with the minority. While necessary, rejection of authority—as no longer sharing ‘our’ norms, values, and beliefs—may not be enough for the majority to actively challenge the status quo. Political solidarity will become possible, however, when minority’s concerns are seen as central to the meaning of the majority identity—when ‘their’ disadvantage matters to who ‘we’ are.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

But from the moment that a movement of rebellion begins, suffering is seen as a collective experience – as the experience of everyone... The unhappiness experienced by a single man becomes collective unhappiness... I rebel—therefore we exist.

(Camus, 1953, p.28)

1.1 The Question

That we live in a constantly changing world is to state the obvious. What used to be considered unimaginable only a hundred, ten, or even a couple of years ago, today is a reality. Rapid technological advances during the 20th century, for example, have radically changed many aspects of human life, particularly in the global context, and brought about drastic changes in economic, political and social relations more generally. Viewed in this way, social change seems almost a by-product of our pursuit of other goals and interests—like life, it is something that happens while we are busy making other plans (to borrow from John Lennon).

However, social change is also actively sought through collective social and political action. Indeed, asked to describe how social change comes about, many of us would typically evoke some form of rebellion or collective protest on the part of those who feel that a change in societal norms and values, structures and organisations, laws, policies and procedures, is needed. Any social movement activist will attest to the importance of this process, as will those engaged in other

1 Parts of this chapter (section 1.2 in particular) have been modified and used in a manuscript accepted for publication in the Personality and Social Psychology Review as Subašić, E., Reynolds, K. J. & Turner, J. C. (in press) “The Political Solidarity Model of Social Change: Dynamics of Self-Categorization in Intergroup Power Relations”.

2 The line “Life is what happens to you while you’re busy making other plans” first appeared on John Lennon’s “Double Fantasy” album (in the song “Beautiful Boy”) in 1980, the year he was killed. I am grateful to Alex Haslam for alerting me to the source of this saying.
forms of social and political conflict. We are often reminded that many of the
progressive changes in human social relations during the last century or so (e.g. de-
legitimization of various forms of discrimination; workplace regulation) have come
about because someone has fought for them at some point in the past. As such, social
change often takes place as a result of human agency and intention to affect a given
social environment based on the view that existing social conditions or relations are
untenable.

What is less well understood is when and how such beliefs, attitudes and
actions spread beyond the initial dissenting minority of ‘change agents’ to include
‘the rest of us’—variously referred to as the general community, the society in
general, or the ‘silent majority’. The present thesis aims to make a contribution in
this direction. It does so by building on existing research and theorising within the
social psychology of intergroup relations and the social identity perspective in
particular. Within this perspective it is the emergence of a sense of ‘we’ that is seen
as a primary vehicle for social change—a psychological change in people’s
understanding of themselves and others within the relevant social context of
intergroup relations. The social identity perspective has inspired a large body of work
focusing on the dynamics of collective action, asking when will those who are in
some way disadvantaged or negatively affected by the status quo decide to challenge
it. Similarly, the perspective has been instrumental in shaping the work that focuses
on improving existing intergroup relations to achieve social change (e.g. prejudice
reduction).

However, as we elaborate below, collective action research largely focuses on
the dissenting minority and their willingness to challenge the status quo, including
the relevant authorities seen to maintain and perpetuate existing social relations. As
such, this work places social conflict between the social and/or power minorities and
those in positions of authority at the heart of social change. In contrast, much of
prejudice reduction work focuses on improving the attitudes and behaviours of the
majority towards some relevant minority (e.g. reducing Whites’ prejudice against
Blacks). In doing so, it seeks to understand how intolerance, conflict and animosity
between these groups can be reduced, with little consideration of the role that those
in positions of leadership and authority may have in shaping minority – majority
relations. In the present thesis, we extend the current social psychological approaches to social change by focusing on a tripolar context of intergroup power relations involving (at least) three social actors: minority, authority and majority. These tripolar intergroup dynamics are explored with one specific question in mind: When will the majority become willing to challenge the status quo and those in position of authority in solidarity with the minority?

1.2 Overview of the Thesis

Intergroup relations are at the heart of social change. As Henri Tajfel argued, social change involves:

“...efforts by large numbers of people, who define themselves and are also often defined by others as a group, to solve collectively a problem they feel they have in common, and which is perceived to arise from their relations with other groups”

(Tajfel, 1978e, p.46.)

From a social psychological perspective, at the core of social change is a process of psychological change in people’s understanding of themselves and others in the broader context of intergroup relations (Simon, 1998; Tajfel, 1975, 1978f; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Changes in the reality of intergroup relations (e.g. from cooperation to conflict and vice versa) are intimately linked to psychological change in people’s perceptions of themselves as group members and the group’s place within the social world (Asch, 1962; Sherif, 1958, 1967; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). These ideas are nicely captured within the social identity perspective on intergroup relations (Turner & Reynolds, 2004), comprising social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and self-categorization theory (Turner, 1982, 1985; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987), discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

The social identity perspective has inspired a number of relatively diverse areas of research relevant to understanding social change. Much of this work, however, can be broadly classified into two ‘camps’—one in which collective challenge to the status quo is central to achieving change in intergroup relations (e.g. collective
action), and another where social change comes about through improvement in intergroup attitudes and beliefs (e.g. prejudice reduction). As such, on the one hand social conflict in the form of collective protest is at the heart of social change, conceptualised as a contest between those in positions of social power and domination and those who act collectively to challenge the status quo in intergroup relations. On the other, social change is largely about improving existing intergroup relations and reducing intergroup prejudice, conflict and animosity.

Social change from a ‘collective action’ perspective involves a disadvantaged group coming to define itself as such and seeking to collectively challenge the status quo. When a subordinate group in society develops a distinct social identity in order to contest the power of a hitherto dominant group, thereby rejecting as illegitimate the authority of the social order which seeks to subordinate it, social change is likely (Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, 2005). Of particular interest in this area of work are the conditions under which those who see themselves as discriminated against or disadvantaged on the basis of their group membership will also act collectively in an attempt to change their circumstances. In this domain, the disadvantaged often comprise various social minorities (see Tajfel, 1978f), such as, for example, Black people, women, or gays and lesbians. The ultimate aim of the minorities and their actions against the status quo is to achieve change in the reality of intergroup relations (e.g. eliminate discrimination). As part of this process, minorities often target those who epitomise ‘the system’ by virtue of being in a position of established societal authority (e.g. government, organisational management).

In contrast, the work on prejudice reduction adopts a more micro-level perspective in attempting to change the prejudiced attitudes held by members of the social majority towards the various minority groups (e.g. Whites’ prejudice against Blacks, men’s prejudice against women). At the core of prejudice reduction is the idea that changing how people understand themselves and others (e.g. whether they think of themselves as individuals or group members; whether or not they divide the social world into ‘us’ and ‘them’) affects their attitudes towards members of groups that are likely to be the targets of prejudice in a given social context. This line of work largely focuses on changing the way in which people categorize themselves
and others, assuming that such changes ‘in the head’ will also lead to positive changes in the reality of intergroup relations (e.g. Brewer, 2000; Dovidio, Kawakami, & Gaertner, 2000; Gaertner et al., 2000; Hornsey & Hogg, 2000a, 2000c). The broader context of intergroup power relations and the role that authorities and leaders have in creating and perpetuating prejudice is rarely considered within this line of work (Duckitt, 1992; Subašić, Turner, & Reynolds, 2008; Turner, 2005; Turner, Reynolds, & Subašić, in press).

That social psychology comprises such divergent approaches to understanding social change is not surprising in light of the need to reduce the complexity of intergroup dynamics to tackle some important questions in a systematic and parsimonious fashion. This approach becomes problematic, however, when we consider that intergroup relations, and social change processes in particular, are rarely characterised solely by conflict and animosity between groups or intergroup cooperation and harmony. Indeed the same social change process often has aspects of both—while those perceived to be ‘our’ opponents and enemies are directly confronted and challenged, a simultaneous search for and establishment of positive relations with allies supportive of ‘our’ side in the struggle takes place.

Furthermore, it could be argued that, on its own, minority challenge to authority and the status quo is rarely sufficient to achieve social change nor does it reflect the broader social and political context of intergroup relations in which social change takes place (Tarrow, 1998; West, 1990). As such, social psychological analyses typically ignore a central force in the process of achieving change through collective action. The reality is that conflict between the minority and authority occurs in front of an important ‘societal audience’ (Mugny, 1982; Mugny & Perez, 1991; Simon & Klandermans, 2001). The role that such an audience—‘the general community’, ‘society in general’, ‘the silent majority’—plays in the social change process remains largely unexplored.

It seems that, implicit in much of the social change research is the belief that those who are not directly subordinated or negatively affected by existing intergroup relations have little incentive to participate in the social change process. As a consequence, the so-called ‘silent’ majority is implicitly ‘bundled up’ with the dominant or the relatively privileged, presupposed to support their interests, and
therefore largely neglected as a social and political actor in the social change process. Our capacity to understand dynamic social change may, however, be hindered by an assumption that this process can be reduced into conflict (or cooperation) between the privileged and the disadvantaged, the dominant and the subordinate, or the powerful and the powerless.

The tendency within social psychological research to understand intergroup relations in such dualistic terms is problematic, particularly when there is a need to understand and explain processes characterised by fluidity in people’s understanding of themselves and others in the broader context of intergroup relations—and social change in intergroup relations is an example of such a process. In order to maintain the status quo or achieve social change, those in positions of leadership and authority, as well as those seeking to challenge such an authority, often (at least try to) capitalize on the fluidity in people’s understanding of who they are and how they relate to others in the social world (Reicher, Haslam, & Hopkins, 2005; Reicher & Hopkins, 1996a; Turner, 2005). Indeed, it could be said that the minority challenge to those in a position of established authority involves a contest for the ‘hearts and minds’ of the ‘silent majority’. As will be argued in this thesis, whether or not social change prevails over the status quo is, at least to some extent, a function of whether the relevant majority identity—including the relevant norms, values and beliefs—is seen to be shared with the minority or the authority. It is the shared identity with the majority that determines whether it is the authority or the minority that has the capacity to influence the majority and harness its support.

This argument is based on the premise that social change is more likely to be achieved through widespread collective social action that includes not only the disadvantaged vocal minority, but also ‘ordinary people’ who support their cause enough to do something about it. After all, it is through collective action that “common people act politically” (Roy, 1984, p. 496). Indeed, we suggest that this majority of ‘common people’ is both a source of power for those in positions of authority, and a source of empowerment for the relatively powerless minority. If acting collectively to challenge the status quo is fundamental to social change, then it becomes crucial to understand the process by which the majority becomes not only sympathetic towards the minority and its cause, but also willing to actively challenge
the authority in solidarity with the minority. We refer to such a process as political solidarity.

The term ‘political solidarity’ captures the notion that this particular social change process has two conceptually distinct yet interdependent aspects. Firstly, it is about solidarity between the minority and majority—where solidarity captures not only a sense of ‘unity in diversity’ and a coming together for a common cause, but also that the majority, despite not being directly disadvantaged by the authority’s actions or the status quo, comes to embrace the minority’s cause as its own. Secondly, it is fundamentally political. It not only involves a contest over social power as the capacity to influence the majority and harness its support for one’s cause, but also the majority coming to perceive the social world and act in a way that, in solidarity with the minority, challenges existing power relations between groups and, in particular, the decisions, actions and policies of those in positions of established (hitherto unquestioned, legitimate) authority.

It is important to note that the term minority, as used within this thesis, does not necessarily denote a numerical minority, but rather defines minority status in relation to the social power available to this group (particularly in comparison to those in positions of legitimate authority). Similarly, authority primarily denotes a position of social power as the capacity to persuade, influence and wield legitimate authority over some relevant social majority. The term ‘majority’ simply denotes those who are neither in the position of authority or minority, but rather are the target audience for the authority’s and minority’s quest to maintain the status quo or achieve social change, respectively, in intergroup power relations.

In this context, the perception that the actions, decisions and policies of a given authority towards some minority group are illegitimate signals a ‘crack’ in majority’s support for and shared identity with the authority, potentially triggering political solidarity with the minority. Whether or not political solidarity ensues depends as much on whether the minority will seize the opportunity to widen the gap between the majority and authority and thereby harness majority support as it does on the actions of the authority seeking to reclaim the legitimacy of its position. Therefore, political solidarity entails not only the development of a shared political orientation towards the status quo and a sense of common cause between the minority and the
majority, but also a willingness to act collectively to challenge those in positions of authority based on the perception that their treatment of the minority is in some way inappropriate, unfair and ultimately illegitimate. Importantly, it is the process of psychological change that is of central importance in this thesis—the change in how people understand themselves and others in the context of intergroup relations—and how such a change in turn motivates willingness to act in solidarity with the minority.

It is important to acknowledge that social and psychological change in people’s understanding of the social world may come about in many different ways. Indeed, it is entirely possible that those in positions of authority may create social change by changing the views of their followers and constituents. Many (initially) widely critiqued and unpopular policies are nevertheless ‘pushed’ by the government of the day (in the name of broader national, economic, social and/or political interests)—and, in time, come to be endorsed (or at least accepted) by most as needed and necessary. However, this process is one of influence in the form of persuasion and legitimate authority (see Turner, 2005) and does not involve change in the majority’s self-categorization in relation to the authority. What distinguishes political solidarity as a social change process is a psychological shift in the way in which people categorize themselves and others in the social world. Majority challenge to authority becomes possible when a shared sense of purpose, values and beliefs with the minority emerges, while the hitherto legitimate, ingroup authority comes to be seen as no longer embodying who ‘we’ are.

1.3 Overview of Chapters

In order to understand social change as conceptualised within this thesis, and the more specific questions pertaining to political solidarity as a social change process, it is necessary to discuss in some detail the relevant theoretical approaches on which our analysis is based. To that end, the focus of Chapter 2 is to highlight those aspects of the social identity theory and self-categorization theory, as well as the more recent three-process theory of power (Turner, 2005), that are of most relevance to the present work. We start by locating this work in its meta-theoretical context and proceed to discuss the nature of the self as understood within this
perspective and as it interacts with the broader social context of intergroup relations (with a particular focus on the psychological shift between the different levels of the self). We then focus on two questions of particular relevance to political solidarity as a social change process, namely the emergence of perceived illegitimacy and the dynamics of power in intergroup relations.

In Chapter 3 we discuss the concepts of solidarity, group solidarity and political solidarity in more detail in order to locate our analyses within the broader research context. The term solidarity is used broadly and needs careful exposition to ascertain its meaning within this thesis and particularly its use as part of the 'political solidarity' concept. In the political activism sphere, solidarity frequently denotes processes by which people become united in the face of diversity (of backgrounds, goals and interests) to achieve a common cause. However, in much of sociology and social psychology it is 'group solidarity', defined as group cohesiveness or group commitment, that is the dominant understanding of the term. These conceptualisations of solidarity serve as the backdrop against which the concept of political solidarity is introduced. Political solidarity as a process of social change is described next, distinguished from more general instances of prosocial behaviour (namely altruism and helping), and further illustrated using a number of historical and contemporary examples.

Our conceptualisation of political solidarity raises a number of questions in relation to social psychological understandings of social change and in particular the dynamics of social identity and self-categorization in this domain. Chapter 4 seeks to answer (some of) these questions by reviewing existing social psychological research and theorising of relevance to social change. It distinguishes between the more minority-oriented approaches and those focusing on collective protest as a vehicle for social change (e.g. minority influence, collective action, crowd protest, social movement participation) from the work that focuses on the majority and improving existing intergroup relations without necessarily challenging the status quo (e.g. prejudice reduction). Intergroup emotions research is also briefly discussed as an area of work that has focused on both the majority stance towards some victimised minority (e.g. work on collective guilt), as well as the role of emotions (anger in
particular) in enticing collective action against the status quo on the part of some aggrieved minority.

The purpose of Chapter 5 is to bridge the theoretical review with the empirical program presented in Chapters 6-9 by highlighting where further empirical and theoretical insight is needed, and consequently the contribution that this thesis aims to make. More specifically, in this chapter we further elaborate on the tripolar dynamics of intergroup power relations and the process by which the meaning of the majority identity comes to be redefined so that it is no longer the authority but the minority who is seen as sharing the majority’s understanding of the relevant intergroup relations. Then, we discuss in more detail the key outcomes of this process, including: a) majority willingness to act collectively to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority, b) perceived illegitimacy of authority’s treatment of the minority, and c) emergence of common cause with the minority (and lack thereof with authority), including a sense of shared norms, values and goals, but also a shared belief that social change is needed. This chapter also introduces the empirical program and provides a brief overview of the empirical studies presented in subsequent chapters.

Study 1, presented in Chapter 6, investigates key aspects of the political solidarity process, including the extent to which challenge to authority is more likely when the authority’s treatment of the minority is seen to have violated important, identity defining norms and values. This study also investigates a more specific question at the core of political solidarity, namely whether political solidarity is confined to those who already share one’s membership of the relevant social group, or whether there are conditions under which political solidarity extends to those who are, at least initially, seen to be ‘outgroup’ members. In this study, we manipulated whether or not the relevant norms and values defining the meaning of the majority identity were also more directly aligned with minority’s concerns (e.g. to what extent the relevant identity was characterised by egalitarian values, including a ‘fair go’ for everyone and the need to protect those who are vulnerable in society). Additionally, we manipulated whether or not the authority’s treatment of the minority was consistent or inconsistent with such norms, and whether such treatment was directed
at a minority who could be more readily categorized as ‘ingroup’ compared to ‘outgroup’.

In line with expectations, this study demonstrated that when an authority’s actions are seen to be inconsistent with the majority’s identity political solidarity was more likely (i.e. increased willingness to challenge the authority and support the minority through collective action; enhanced authority illegitimacy; enhanced common cause with the minority and lack of common cause with the authority). This effect was further enhanced when the meaning of the majority identity was primarily defined by egalitarian norms and values. Importantly, political solidarity with an ‘outgroup’ minority was not only possible, but under some conditions even stronger compared to political solidarity with an ‘ingroup’ minority.

In Chapter 7, we present two studies that investigate the relationship between common fate and political solidarity. A shared experience of injustice or common fate has been proposed as an important mechanism through which others are mobilised (e.g. Simon & Klandermans, 2001). In this regard, the central question from the perspective of the current thesis is whether common fate is enough for political solidarity to emerge or whether other, identity-based processes need to be taken into account. In Study 2, we manipulated common fate by providing information that only the minority or both the minority and the majority were affected by injustice. As in Study 1, the norm-consistent or norm-inconsistent nature of the authority’s actions towards the victimised groups was also manipulated. We expected that political solidarity would be more likely when the relationship between the minority and majority was strengthened as a result of common fate. However, this effects was expected to be particularly pronounced when the relationship between the majority and authority was weakened as a result of the belief that authority actions were inconsistent with existing expectations. Unexpectedly, we did not find evidence for such an interactive effect in this study. Rather, there was a strong main effect for common fate, so that common fate increased collective willingness to challenge the authority and support the minority. When looking at the underlying processes at work it was evident that this effect was mediated by the emergence of a sense of common cause between the minority and majority.
In Study 3, we continued to focus on the shared experience of injustice between the minority and majority and investigated whether changing the meaning of the relevant majority identity may enhance or attenuate the effects of common fate in this context. Namely, we manipulated whether or not this identity is defined primarily in terms of concerns that are shared with the minority (e.g. egalitarian higher-order norms) or concerns that are primarily of interest to the majority (e.g. consumer issues, such as low prices for quality products). It was expected that these identities would vary the way in which the majority understands its experience of 'common fate' with the minority and therefore political solidarity. We expected and found that political solidarity was more likely to the extent that the majority identity allows for the common experience of injustice between the minority and majority to be translated into a sense of shared purpose. In contrast, when the majority identity was defined primarily by the concerns and interests that are unique to the majority, the experience of 'common fate' in fact reduced majority willingness to challenge the authority and collectively support the minority. Therefore, 'common fate' enhanced political solidarity when it was experienced in the context of a shared, higher-order, normative framework that allowed for the commonality of mistreatment to be understood as something that affects 'all of us'.

Studies 4 and 5 (presented in Chapters 8 and 9 respectively) focus more directly on the nature of the majority identity and, in particular, the process by which the meaning of this identity may be redefined to reflect the nature of the majority's relationship with the authority and the minority. While it is possible to think of oneself and the relevant others as people who are opposed to (rather than supportive of) the authority and its treatment of the minority, it is also possible to see such a stance as part of a broader contest for the meaning of the relevant identity whose norms and values the authority is meant to uphold. In Study 4 we proposed and found that when opposition to the minority's plight at the hands of the authority is understood as a reflection of who 'we' are—the relevant social identity—it was also more likely to result in political solidarity (i.e. enhanced collective action intentions in solidarity with the minority, perceived authority illegitimacy, and a belief that social change is needed as a manifestation of common cause with minority). Study 4 also demonstrated that the effects of such a shift in the majority's self-definition was
mediated by the emergence of perceived authority illegitimacy and a sense of common cause with the minority (i.e. shared belief that social change is needed).

Unlike previous studies, Study 5 (presented in Chapter 9) focuses on the more precise mechanisms through which the relevant majority – minority (rather than majority – authority) relationship comes to define the meaning of the majority identity in a way that makes political solidarity with this group possible. In this study, we were also aware of the need to extend the investigation beyond those majority identities that can also be seen as shared with the authority and/or the minority and that are likely to be defined by relatively egalitarian norms and values (e.g. Australian identity). Therefore, in this study we focus on the emergence of political solidarity in the context of reconciliation between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians, particularly in terms of Non-Indigenous (i.e. majority) willingness to reduce the inequality between these groups, as well as support a formal (i.e. government) apology to Indigenous people and Indigenous land rights in this context. In this study, we propose and find that for Non-Indigenous Australians to act in solidarity with Indigenous people and support those aspects of reconciliation that address both past injustice and current disadvantage, the inequality between these groups needs to be seen as defining of the relevant (i.e. Non-Indigenous) identity meaning. When intergroup inequality was seen to reflect negatively on the meaning of the majority identity it increased willingness to act collectively to challenge the authority and support the minority in this context, as well as the view that the inequality was illegitimate and that social change was needed in this domain. Although comparison across studies is difficult (given differences in design and contexts of interest), it is important to note that, unlike in Study 4, in Study 5 the meaning of the majority identity continued to predict collective action intentions even after perceived legitimacy of inequality and common cause with the minority (i.e. shared belief that social change was needed) were accounted for. This study therefore provides further support for the idea that to understand when political solidarity is likely to emerge, we need to also understand the self-categorical process by which ‘their’ injustice and disadvantage becomes ‘our’ problem.

The final chapter (Chapter 10) represents a theoretical and empirical integration of the thesis. It provides a summary of key theoretical insights and empirical findings
of the thesis, which are then integrated and extended within a political solidarity model of social change. The chapter also discusses a number of limitations and future extensions of the present work, as well as the implications of the political solidarity approach for the social psychology of social change more broadly.
CHAPTER 2: THE SOCIAL SELF IN INTERGROUP (POWER) RELATIONS

2.1 Introduction

As stated in the introductory chapter, the social identity perspective forms the theoretical basis of the present work. It is therefore important to elaborate why this is the case and highlight those aspects of the approach that are particularly relevant to processes under investigation in the present thesis. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate the usefulness of the social identity perspective to analyses of social change and political solidarity in particular. To this end, we will start by discussing the meta-theoretical underpinnings of the perspective, including its interactionist and non-reductionist nature, as well as its orientation to change and stability, and conflict and cooperation in social relations. The chapter will then focus on the relevant aspects of the theories that comprise the social identity perspective, including social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and self-categorization theory (Turner, 1982, 1985; Turner et al, 1987). Given that challenge to existing structures of social power, authority and leadership are seen as central to social change processes, including political solidarity, the final section of the chapter looks at the dynamics of power in intergroup relations from a self-categorization perspective and the recently proposed three-process theory of power (Turner, 2005).

2.2 The Social Identity Approach – Its Meta-theory and Relevance to Social Change

The social identity perspective originated within the European social psychology tradition (pioneered by Tajfel, Moscovici and others) and its critique of individualism as the dominant metatheory within social psychology. Individualistic approaches to social psychology assume that human social behaviour can be explained solely in terms of intra-individual mechanisms whose functional dynamics remain the same as one moves from ‘non-social’ to social contexts (F. H. Allport, 1924, p. 4.). In contrast, one of the key metatheoretical aspects of the social identity perspective is the notion that individuals cannot be seen in isolation from society or the society reduced to an individual. Indeed, as Turner and Oakes (1986, p.239) argue, “mind and society, individual and group, are mutual preconditions,
simultaneous emergent properties (i.e. higher-order, distinctive, irreducible) of each other”. Furthermore, it could be argued that there is a functional interdependence between the psychological processes of the individual and the society that they produce, in terms of their relations and actions (Turner & Oakes, 1986). An interactionist social psychology, that understands individuals and society as constitutive of each other, is therefore uniquely placed to explain the psychological aspects of society—where the societal structures and processes are represented in and mediated by individual minds (Turner & Oakes, 1986). As such, it is also particularly well suited to social psychological analyses of social change.

Processes of social change and social reproduction in intergroup relations are central to much of social psychological inquiry—When will people conform to group norms? Why do we obey those in positions of authority? How can prejudice and discrimination be reduced? What makes us engage in collective protest? Why do people justify a system or a social hierarchy that disadvantages them? However, the theoretical and empirical approaches that seek to understand these questions differ with regard to their meta-theoretical orientation—whether it is social change or status quo that they are trying to explain. Such a dichotomous approach is possibly embedded in the belief that understanding the status quo in intergroup relations equally speaks to processes of social change and vice versa. However, it could be argued that, while the status quo may be more readily conceptualised as the absence of social change, it is more difficult to argue that social change is simply the absence of the status quo.

Theories primarily oriented to the status quo, while addressing an important question of why people support unequal social hierarchies, systems of intergroup relations, or those in position of authority (e.g. Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004; Jost, Burgess, & Mosso, 2001; Jost & Hunyady, 2002; Sidanius, Levin, Rabinowitz, & Federico, 1999; Sidanius & Pratto, 1993; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Tyler, 1988, 1989, 1997), may have difficulty explaining dynamics of social change in intergroup relations (Reicher, 2004; Reicher & Haslam, 2006a; Reicher & Hopkins, 2001; Turner, 2005; Turner & Reynolds, 2003, 2004). In contrast, theories that seek to explain social change, in terms of factors that both produce and hinder such a process, have a greater capacity to speak to both processes and as such are
more relevant to understanding the dynamics of intergroup relations under investigation in this thesis. Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and self-categorization theory, commonly referred to as the social identity perspective (Turner & Reynolds, 2004), form the theoretical basis for understanding political solidarity for this reason.

Finally, the social identity perspective is fundamentally oriented towards understanding both social conflict and social cooperation. However, due to a relatively prevalent propensity within contemporary intergroup relations research to adopt a more simplistic (mis)reading of the social identity and self-categorization theories, the contributions that the perspective makes (and was meta-theoretically intended to make) towards the more positive end of the human social behaviour spectrum have been somewhat disregarded. Such a narrow view not only limits the scope of the perspective, but also positions social conflict as the opposite of social progress, thereby pathologising it as necessarily destructive and obstructive to positive social change. The social identity perspective, at its core, aims to contextualise, rather than psychologise, social conflict and social cooperation, considering these processes as aspects of both social stability and social change dynamics.

Building on their meta-theoretical foundations, social identity and self-categorization theories have inspired much of social psychological research of relevance to social change. In the following sections we consider those aspects of the social identity and self-categorization theories of most relevance to the social change processes considered in this thesis. We start by discussing the hierarchical organisation of the social self and the dynamics of self-categorization that, in interaction with the nature of intergroup relations in a given social context, make possible both conflict and cooperation in intergroup relations. Then, we consider the contributions of the social identity theory to the dynamics of social change. In particular, we focus on the emergence of social change beliefs—where social identity is the basis for a shared interpretation of intergroup relations and the shared view that social change is needed—and perceived illegitimacy of the status quo as key motivators of willingness to engage in collective efforts to challenge the status quo in intergroup relations. A central aspect of political solidarity is willingness to
challenge those in positions of established authority that spreads beyond the original ‘vocal minority’ to include the hitherto ‘silent majority’. Given that this process has at its core the emergence of perceived illegitimacy in relation to authority’s actions towards the minority, it necessarily involves a realignment of the social power relations between these groups. We therefore turn to the recently proposed three-process theory of power (Turner, 2005) to discuss how self-categorization affects the likelihood of social power being gained, maintained and lost.

2.3 Self-Categorization and Social Identity

While social identity theory and its analysis of intergroup relations is a chronological predecessor of self-categorization theory, in many ways it is helpful to consider the self-categorization theory first as it deals with the more basic ‘building blocks’ of the social change process—namely the process of self-categorization and the dynamics of social identity as the mechanism that makes group behaviour possible. Within the self-categorization theory social identity (self-categorising at the level of the social group) is the “social-cognitive basis of group behaviour, the mechanism that makes it possible” (Turner et al., 1987, p. ix). Self-categorising at the personal level – thinking of oneself as an individual – is not regarded as primary, but rather as only one level of abstraction in self-categorisation. The self concept is hierarchically organised, and the more inclusive levels (e.g. social, human) are just as valid cognitive representations of the self, and under certain conditions more important (Turner et al., 1987).

The hierarchical organisation of the self is central to understanding not only when people self-categorise at the personal or social level of identity (interpersonal – intergroup dimension), but also when they self-categorise at the subgroup or superordinate level (intergroup – intragroup dimension). It therefore explains the emergence of ingroup-outgroup categorisations, but also the shift from categorising a person or group as being ingroup to being outgroup, and vice versa. An important question to ask, however, is how do self-categorisations form or become salient at a particular level of abstraction?

The process of self-categorisation is intimately linked with comparison and comparative relations—it involves cognitive groupings of one self and some class of
stimuli as the same, similar, interchangeable, etc. in contrast to some other class of stimuli (Turner et al, 1987). It is the contrast—a comparative and relational aspect of the process—that enables the self-category to form. Self-categorisations are situation (context) specific and emerge through a process of comparison between self and others within the more inclusive (higher-level) self-category and the relevant norms, values and beliefs defining who we are and how we should relate to each other. It is the shared higher-order self-category (e.g. being Australian) that enables the comparison to occur at a lower level of self-categorisation (e.g. being Indigenous vs. Non-Indigenous Australian). As Turner and colleagues (1987, p.46) state:

“...[C]ategorization and comparison depend upon each other and neither can exist without the other: the divisions of stimuli into classes depends upon perceived similarities and differences (comparative relations), but stimuli can only be compared insofar as they have been categorised as identical, alike or equivalent at some higher level of abstraction...”

The comparison results in category formation on the basis of the meta-contrast principle: stimuli are categorised as an entity to the extent that the differences between them, on a relevant dimension of comparison, are smaller than the differences between them and the remaining stimuli that make up the frame of reference (Turner et al., 1987; Turner, Oakes, Haslam, & McGarty, 1994).

Importantly, the hierarchical organisation of the self applies to the social level of self-categorisation itself, in that the social self can be further stratified into lower and higher levels of inclusiveness, sometimes referred to as subgroup and superordinate¹ levels of social identification. Depersonalisation, or categorising at a level of the social rather than personal identity, does not preclude the use of social identity to make sense of the interpersonal or intragroup (as well as intergroup) processes and relationships. Additionally, like depersonalisation is not a loss of the individual identity or its submergence within the group (Turner et al, 1987; Turner et al, 2006), nor is self-categorising at a higher-level identity the loss of lower-level identities or necessarily their complete submergence within the higher-order

¹ In the original statement of the SCT, the term ‘superordinate’ is reserved for the human level of categorisation, which becomes salient when we make inter-species comparisons. This term later came to be used to denote a higher level of a social identity.
category. On the contrary, higher-level categorisation, and associated higher-order norms, values, and beliefs, inform how we understand and act upon the lower level inter(sub)group relationships. The meta-contrast principle applies here as well—depending on the relevant social context, we are likely to perceive as ‘ingroup’ those subgroups who are seen to share the higher-order norms and values, and as ‘outgroup’ the subgroups who are seen to violate them. The nature of identity and collective action on the basis of that identity will vary depending on who is seen as outgroup and how the relationship between the ingroup and outgroup is defined and understood (Reicher, 2004; Turner & Reynolds, 2004).

Akin to intragroup comparisons made at the level of the social self, comparisons at an inter(sub)group level occur in an intragroup context of shared higher-level category memberships, whose content is defined by a particular set of norms, values, and beliefs. The higher-level identity therefore serves as a normative background against which the intergroup relationships are perceived, understood and evaluated. The higher-order normative framework or background is used to evaluate whether the intergroup relations are constructive or destructive, to our benefit or detriment, and ultimately legitimate or illegitimate. Therefore, far from being mutually exclusive, these intra- and inter-group processes—the dynamic interplay between lower- and higher-level identities—make social behaviour, and indeed social change (including political solidarity), possible.

2.4 Social Identity and Intergroup Relations

While self-categorisation theory speaks to the origins of group behaviour, social identity theory focuses on how particular forms of intergroup relations emerge within a given social comparative context. It starts from the premise that human social behaviour can be understood to occur along an interpersonal—intergroup continuum of social relations. At the interpersonal extreme people relate to each other purely on the basis of their individual characteristics (i.e. personal identity). In contrast, at the intergroup end of the continuum the relationships are based solely on the membership of relevant social groups (i.e. social identity; e.g. soldiers on the opposing sides of armed conflict; Tajfel & Turner, 1979).
Additionally, SIT proposes that, whether people act more in terms of their personal or social identity is, at least to some extent, predicated on whether they tend more towards a ‘social mobility’ or a ‘social change’ system of beliefs. Therefore, according to this (somewhat under-explored) aspect of SIT, people’s understanding of the social world could be organised along a social mobility – social change continuum of beliefs. The social mobility – social change continuum is said to be causally related to the interpersonal – intergroup continuum. The more people believe in *social mobility*, the more likely they will perceive and interact with others in interpersonal terms and vice versa—the more their understanding of the social world is structured in terms of *social change* beliefs, the more they will see and interact with others in terms of the relevant intergroup relations.

According to a social mobility belief system, an individual can easily reject the group membership that is in some way unsatisfactory and join a social group that suits them better. In contrast, the social change belief system is marked by a perception that the nature and structure of relations between social groups is such that individual mobility between groups is difficult, thereby prompting people to think in more collective terms and seek advancement for their group as a whole. The implication of a ‘social change’ belief system is that it also makes people more likely to perceive themselves and others not as individuals, but as members of relevant social groups and act in accordance with their understanding of the relevant intergroup relations—their behaviour moving towards the intergroup extreme of the continuum (e.g. the rise of social movements aiming to either create social change or preserve the status quo; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The more people’s understanding of the social world is in line with a ‘social change’ system of beliefs, the more their behaviour moves towards the intergroup end of the continuum and the more likely the uniformity in ingroup members’ perceptions of and actions towards the outgroup.

A particularly important contribution of the social identity theory is its emphasis on the process by which members of a low-status, disadvantaged social group come to perceive themselves as such and act collectively in order to change a system of intergroup relations that disadvantages them. Like SCT, SIT argues that such collective social action will only be possible to the extent that people think of themselves in terms of their social, rather than personal identity. Only then will they
relate to others in intergroup, rather than interpersonal, terms—striving to advance the social position of the collective as a whole. However, while necessary, thinking of oneself in terms of social group memberships is not sufficient for collective social action to take place—to a large extent, whether or not people engage in social conflict with some relevant outgroup will be determined by the perceived social structural organisation of intergroup relations in a given social context.

The social identity theory proposes three possible reactions to group membership in a low-status or subordinate group. When social structural conditions are perceived to be stable and legitimate, and the boundaries between social groups are permeable, SIT predicts that people will engage in individual mobility strategies to advance their status position—they will dis-identify with and leave the low-status group and join the more privileged group. Subordinate group members faced with impermeable group boundaries are likely to engage in social creativity strategies to maintain the positive distinctiveness of their social identity, particularly when their disadvantaged position is seen as either stable or legitimate. Social creativity strategies may include changing the relevant dimension of comparison, changing the relevant comparison group, and re-defining the valence of the original comparison dimension so that previously negative comparisons are now defined as positive. Finally, when individual mobility is impossible (i.e. intergroup boundaries are impermeable), and the status relations are perceived to be insecure (i.e. both unstable and illegitimate), subordinate group members are likely to engage in social competition with the dominant group and thereby challenge the status quo in intergroup relations.

Importantly, subordinate groups and their leaders can use social creativity to increase the perception of insecurity of intergroup relations in contexts where social stratification arrangements appear somewhat ambiguous in this regard. As such, social creativity can be used to enhance social change beliefs and thereby increase the likelihood of people perceiving themselves and others in terms of the relevant social psychological group memberships (e.g. Welsh or Scottish vs. English; see also High-status group responses to their social structural position, particularly when it is threatened or negatively defined in some way, were discussed in more detail in Tajfel’s earlier work (e.g. Tajfel, 1978), and will be considered further in the chapter.)
Reicher & Hopkins, 2001). Social creativity processes can therefore be seen as strategies for shifting people away from the (individual) social mobility and towards the (collective) social change belief systems (Tajfel, 1978e). It is through social creativity that groups (and group leaders) can re-define the nature of the outgroup, the ingroup–outgroup relationship, and ultimately who ‘we’ are as ingroup members—thereby creating and recreating social comparative relations in a way that either promotes or hinders the likelihood of social change.

2.5 Perceived Illegitimacy of Intergroup Relations and Social Change

While social identity makes it possible for people to understand themselves in terms of their psychological group memberships and engage in collective action to advance the group cause, it is the perceived illegitimacy of intergroup relations that in many ways acts as a seed of social change. As discussed above, a combination of illegitimacy and instability is a powerful motivator for attempts to change the intergroup status quo or to resist such changes on part of those who see their dominant or privileged position threatened by such developments. When subordinate group members identify with their group and perceive their collective circumstances to be both illegitimate and unstable, collective attempts to challenge the status quo and achieve social change are likely.

It is perceived illegitimacy, however, that motivates people to question existing intergroup relations in the first place and consider what the possible alternative arrangements may be, thereby making the status quo less stable and less likely to persist. In turn, the existence of cognitive alternatives further increases the perception that the status quo is illegitimate. Therefore, the perception that one’s subordinate status is illegitimate is likely to interact with perceived stability to increase the likelihood of social change. When those who are subordinated perceive themselves as such (i.e. identify with their group) and their social position as illegitimate, they will be more likely to conceive of alternatives to existing social arrangements. This is the process by which social movements for social change (and those advocating the maintenance of the status quo) come about (Tajfel, 1978b). As such, perceptions of illegitimacy presuppose at least some instability in existing intergroup relations by
encouraging the emergence of cognitive alternatives to the status quo. As Tajfel (1978b, p.52) suggests:

“...[P]erceived illegitimacy is likely to determine, sooner or later, attempts to change the situation; and the perceived instability (which can be translated as the development in a group of the awareness of cognitive alternatives to the existing situation) is likely to be associated, sooner or later with the decrease in that group of the perceived legitimacy of the situation.”

Tajfel (1978b, pp. 74-76) also commented on the relationship between perceived illegitimacy and social comparison processes:

“The important issue from the point of view of a social psychological theory is that the perceived illegitimacy of an existing relationship in status, power, domination or any other differential implies the development of some dimension of comparability (i.e. underlying similarity) where none existed before. This need be no more than the idea that ‘all human beings are equal’... The perceived illegitimacy of an intergroup relationship is thus socially and psychologically the accepted and acceptable lever for social action and social change in intergroup behaviour.”

Therefore, a perception that intergroup relations are in some way illegitimate manifests an underlying perceived similarity (of goals, norms, interests, and values), whose violation heralds that all is not right with the status quo. Therefore, it is via perceptions of illegitimacy that groups become salient to one another for social comparison purposes (i.e. people use the relevant comparison dimension to start to define themselves and others in ingroup – outgroup terms; see also Caddick, 1982). Furthermore, as discussed above, perceptions of illegitimacy make possible the insight that the groups’ present position is not the only possible one, making cognitive alternatives to the status quo more likely (see also Turner & Brown, 1978). As such, perceptions of illegitimacy represent a shared perspective on the social
world and a basis for a shared understanding of collective frustration or discontent and, as such, motivate collective action.

However, while the importance of this concept in intergroup relations is recognised (Caddick, 1982; Ellemers, Wilke, & Van Knippenberg, 1993; Rasinski, Tyler, & Fridkin, 1985; Turner & Reynolds, 2002; Tyler, 1990, 2001b, 2006; Wenzel & Jobling, 2006), little is known about how perceived illegitimacy in intergroup relations comes about—what is the process by which people start questioning the status quo in intergroup relations, their subordinate (or dominant) position within it, and the policies and practices of those in position of societal authority, leadership and dominance that contribute to the maintenance of the status quo (Turner & Reynolds, 2002)? Intergroup relations that violate superordinate values of justice, fairness and equity may be important here (see Turner & Brown, 1978), but this dynamic has been largely neglected in much of existing work on intergroup relations. More recently, Turner and Reynolds (2002) have developed a set of ideas and a program of research seeking to shed more light on the social identity and self-categorization dynamics that explain the shift from the perception that a system of intergroup relations (including its authority structures) is legitimate to the view that it is illegitimate and therefore in need of change. To the extent that perceptions of illegitimacy on the part of those who are not directly disadvantaged by the status quo also motivate them to collectively challenge existing intergroup relations, it becomes important to consider the conditions that make such views more likely (see Chapter 5). As discussed in the following section, the social identity perspective has a number of insights to offer when it comes to how those who are non-disadvantaged or in positions of relatively ‘high status’ may respond to intergroup relations that are perceived to be illegitimate.

2.5.1 ‘High Status’ Illegitimacy, Conflict of Values, and Social Change

Much of social identity theorising and particularly subsequent research has focused on how those in disadvantaged or subordinate social positions deal with the perception that existing intergroup arrangements are illegitimate. Very few studies consider the reactions of the relatively high-status group members (i.e. those who are non-disadvantaged in a particular intergroup system) to the perceived illegitimacy of
their position—a question that is of particular relevance to political solidarity. One of the exceptions in this regard is a study by Turner and Brown (1978) showing that high-status group members became particularly hostile towards the low-status group when their privileged position was perceived to be illegitimate but stable. In contrast, when high status was seen as both illegitimate and unstable (i.e. insecure), ingroup bias and discrimination against low-status group members decreased. Therefore, it seems that when high-status group members perceive their position as threatened and untenable (i.e. both changeable and challengeable) they act in a way that may appease the low-status group, re-legitimise their privileged position and thereby prolong the status quo (Turner & Brown, 1978).

In addition to a high-status group identity being threatened by the low-status group members and their actions (anticipated or otherwise), it can also be challenged through a ‘conflict of values’ experienced by the high-status group members themselves. ‘Conflict of values’ involves a perception that high-status group membership is based on “unfair advantages, various forms of injustice, exploitation, illegitimate use of force, etc.” (Tajfel 1978, p.89). Indeed, Tajfel (1978, p.87) suggests that a completely secure social identity for a group consensually ‘superior’ is an “empirical impossibility”. Where ‘conflict of values’ exists, the focus of comparison shifts from the dimension of status towards issues of morality and the nature of the intergroup relationship itself (Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears & Doosje, 1999)—high-status group members will start to question their own social position when they perceive their relationship with the low-status group to violate important group norms and values.

Tajfel proposes three distinct ways in which high-status group members can respond to a perceived ‘conflict of values’. Firstly, the conflict of values may be so intense that it destroys identification with the high-status group and makes the option of leaving the group highly appealing—an example may be upper or middle class revolutionaries and “renegades” (e.g. Karl Marx) or those members of social movements acting in opposition to their group’s treatment of some disadvantaged group in society (e.g. refugee rights activists opposing the existing laws and regulations, such as the mandatory detention of asylum seekers). Secondly, the conflict of values exists, but identification with the high-status ingroup is strong
enough to continue to shape the attitudes and behaviours of high-status group members. It is under this condition that social creativity (e.g. the belief in the ‘inherent superiority’ of one’s group) is most likely to take place in order to justify the intergroup inequality and alleviate the psychological discomfort resulting from value conflict. Finally, while the conflict of values may exist, it may be relatively irrelevant or unimportant as a comparative dimension for the high-status group—there may be other dimensions of comparison and outgroups that comprise a more immediate frame of reference for the high-status group (e.g. the Welsh compared to the Northern Irish quest for independence in the United Kingdom context).

The idea of a ‘conflict of values’ motivating the attitudes and actions of members of relatively non-disadvantaged groups is particularly important for understanding political solidarity as a social change process. Although dismissed as relatively uninteresting by Tajfel (1978, p.90), it may be important to understand the conditions that will make the “renegade” response to illegitimate intergroup relations more likely, compared to social creativity or the dismissal of the values conflict as irrelevant to ‘who we are’. When it comes to political solidarity, the focus is on those who are not necessarily directly or objectively affected by a disadvantaged group membership, but who are (subjectively) starting to question the legitimacy of existing intergroup relations. To the extent that such relations (e.g. the treatment of some low-status, powerless, disadvantaged minority group at the hands of the ingroup or ingroup authorities) clash with the majority’s view of what the intergroup relations should be like, they will result in a ‘conflict of values’ for this group that needs to be resolved.

Judgements of the legitimacy or otherwise of the ingroup’s (and/or the ingroup authority’s) relationship with those who are in some way subordinate in a given context of intergroup relations are particularly important for understanding processes of social change. When it comes to those in positions of legitimate authority, such judgements or perceptions on part of its followers, subordinates or constituents have the capacity to shape whether the authority itself is seen as an ingroup or outgroup, friend or foe, worthy or unworthy of its position. More broadly, therefore, if we are to understand social change as challenge to those in positions of leadership and authority seen to perpetuate and maintain the status quo, it becomes paramount to
understand the dynamics of social power in intergroup relations—how it can be gained, maintained and lost.

2.6 Dynamics of Power in Intergroup Relations—A Self-Categorization Perspective

Traditionally, within social psychology power has been understood as the capacity to influence others. There is less agreement, however, as to what the basis for such an influence process may be. The “standard” and currently predominant view is that a capacity to influence flows from one’s control over important (material or psychological) resources desired or needed by those over whom power is exercised. Therefore, power is based on a dependence relationship existing between those who have resource control and those who desire and value those resources (Fiske, 2001; French & Raven, 1959). However, if power is based on resource dependence, how is it that those with relatively few resources come to challenge those with many (e.g. the rise of Christianity in the Roman Empire context)? In other words, how is “social change from below” (Turner, 2005, p.4.) possible if resource control is the basis of social power and influence?

More recently, it has been argued that, rather than resource control, it is a shared psychological group membership that forms the basis of social power as the capacity to influence others (Turner, 2005). Conceptualised in this way, at the core of social power is the process by which one can get others to act as an extension of one’s will—what Turner (2005, p.6.) refers to as having power through people. ‘Power through’ is distinct from the capacity to get others to do what they otherwise would not have done (i.e. ‘power as impact’), as it involves getting others to fully endorse one’s goals, values and interests as their own and, as a result, carry out one’s wishes and commands (Turner, 2005). ‘Power through’ can be further subdivided into influence—a capacity to persuade others that the desired actions, decisions or beliefs are the right ones, and control—in the form of either legitimate authority or coercion.

When one is able to persuade others to believe that some decision or action is correct and valid, the targets of influence become intrinsically motivated to act in line with the source’s desires, suggestions and beliefs because of a shared belief that
such action is right. Persuasion and influence of this kind are highly related to leadership processes in which group members perceive themselves and their leaders and authorities to share the same social identity, to have common values and interests, and to be engaged in collective endeavours. Authority is where the target is not persuaded directly by the source but is willing to comply because of a belief in the legitimacy of the norms, values and beliefs that define the group. In this context, power flows from the perception that one occupies a position of legitimate authority vested with the right to demand and expect subordinate compliance in accordance with group norms, values and interests, even when the subordinates' individual views or interests may be perceived to be in conflict with those of the group (e.g. paying tax). Finally, coercion is what people often mean when they talk about power as control over resources. It involves forcing others to act against their will, thereby reinforcing the differences between the source and target, increasing disidentification away from the source, and reducing the possibility for either persuasion or authority. However, while coercion has the capacity to destroy a shared identity with those who are the targets of such action, it is ultimately dependent on a shared identity existing with the agents of coercion. It is such shared psychological group membership with the coercive agents that makes persuasion and authority over this group (and therefore coercive action itself) possible.

Therefore, according to Turner's (2005) analysis of power, it is the self-categorical relationship between the power source and target of influence that determines whether the process will be one defined by persuasion, authority or coercion. Persuasion and authority emerge from a shared psychological group membership between the source and target of influence. In contrast, while coercion depends on the shared psychological group membership existing with the agents of coercion, it is also most likely to result in increased social distance and dis-identification away from those who resort to such action—creating the conditions for a challenge to individuals, groups and organisations in positions of social power and authority and making social change more likely. The work by Ng (1980), focusing on low-status group members' willingness to challenge the status quo in intergroup power relations, suggests that a shared social identity among group members, or lack thereof, has a central role to play in this process.
Therefore, somewhat paradoxically, rather than being the ultimate expression of one’s power, coercive action has the most potential to undermine one’s position as a leader or authority. As Turner, Reynolds and Subašić (2008) suggest, coercion not only has the capacity to create opposition in its victims, it also undermines support for leaders on the part of those ingroup members who identify with victims of coercive action. Indeed, it could be argued that the very definition of an authority’s actions as ‘coercive’—as opposed to ‘justified’, ‘legitimate’, or ‘harsh, but necessary/fair’—presupposes that they are also seen as illegitimate, in violation of what ‘we’ believe to be acceptable and appropriate treatment of others. If authorities are to maintain their legitimacy, while continuing to resort to coercion of their subordinates, they will also need to engage in social creativity strategies that will (re-)define their actions as legitimate and in line with the relevant group norms, values and interests.

An effective way to justify one’s coercive actions against some societal minority is to define it as an outgroup—preferably one that is dangerous and evil, and therefore a legitimate threat to the ingroup (e.g. the Axis of Evil rhetoric used by the US president George W. Bush, or the portrayal of Jews by the Nazi propaganda machine during WWII). In this context, creating prejudice (i.e. outgroup animosity) not only serves to justify the harsh treatment of the outgroup—it also shapes ingroup identity and mobilizes ingroup support for its leadership. Outgroups are chosen and defined in a way that enhances the prototypicality of the leadership, including their preferred version of ‘who we are’ (i.e. who is included in the ingroup and what the relevant ingroup norms, values and beliefs are) and how ‘we’ should relate to others within the relevant intergroup relations context. Therefore, coercion can increase or decrease the power of leaders depending on how it defines or redefines the core identity of the ingroup—as being more aligned with the leadership and different from the victims or as including the victims and different from the leadership (Subašić et al., 2008). The contrastive nature of identity means that conflict with an internal or external enemy is an effective way of manipulating identity and enhancing one’s power, but it is a double-edged sword where legitimacy can easily be lost (Turner, 2005; Turner et al., in press).
2.7 Chapter Summary

Overall, the social identity perspective speaks directly to the way in which political solidarity can be understood as a social psychological process. Of central importance to political solidarity and social change more broadly, the perspective not only speaks to the psychological group formation whereby people come to perceive themselves as members of social (psychological) groups rather than individuals, but also how members of different subgroups become redefined as belonging to a higher-order, superordinate group within the broader context of intergroup relations. Furthermore, the social identity perspective illuminates how those relations are understood and acted upon in a way that makes social change in intergroup relations more likely (e.g. the conditions that make possible collective action that challenges the status quo). Perceived illegitimacy of intergroup relations, including one’s relatively privileged position within an intergroup hierarchy, were also discussed as key components of social change and the spread of the challenge to the status quo beyond those who are directly disadvantaged by it. Social change processes, including political solidarity, are often predicated on some form of challenge to those in positions of established (hitherto unquestioned, legitimate) authority. We therefore also considered the dynamics of self-categorization that shape how social power and influence may be enhanced and maintained, but also challenged and lost. In this regard, more recent developments within the perspective in relation to the dynamics of power (e.g. Turner, 2005) were discussed and their implications for social change processes highlighted.

The relevance of the social identity approach to social change processes has been well recognised within social psychology. Indeed, the perspective has inspired and informed much of existing social psychological research and theorising of relevance to political solidarity and social change more generally, as discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. Before we turn to the social psychology of social change, however, it is important to define more precisely what political solidarity entails, both as a concept and as a process of social change in intergroup relations. In Chapter 3, political solidarity is distinguished conceptually from the prevalent use of the terms solidarity and group solidarity within social psychology as well as sociology. Additionally, we
distinguish political solidarity as a process of social change in intergroup relations from other instances of ‘prosocial’ behaviour such as altruism and helping.
CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTUALISING POLITICAL SOLIDARITY

3.1 Introduction

Used separately, the words ‘political’ and ‘solidarity’ have a relatively broad (although more or less agreed upon) meaning in everyday as well as the social sciences vocabulary. The term ‘political’ usually denotes relations of power at different levels of social organization, while the term ‘solidarity’ seeks to capture a sense of unity, ‘togetherness’ and belonging to a particular group or cause. The term ‘political solidarity’, however, has been developed in the context of this thesis to describe a particular social and political, but above all (social) psychological process through which change in intergroup relations may come about. It is closely related to our conceptualisation of social change itself—as a contest for social power that fundamentally seeks to challenge the status quo by questioning the legitimacy of existing social relations and particularly the decisions and actions of those in positions of authority and leadership (hence the ‘political’). It is also, however, about the (simultaneous) process by which underlying differences can be dealt with (perceived, understood, resolved, acted upon) in a way that makes possible the higher-level commonality and unity of cause and purpose (hence the ‘solidarity’).

As such, political solidarity is a novel concept—we know of no other work within the social sciences that uses this particular term to describe social change processes in general or the specific process that is of central interest in the present thesis. Having reviewed the social psychological literature of relevance to social change, it is also clear that the process or the phenomenon that we seek to explore has gone largely undetected. It is therefore paramount to clarify not only what is meant by the term political solidarity—the key ideas and social psychological processes it is meant to capture—but also to describe what kinds of phenomena we are referring to by this particular name.

We start with the conceptual distinctions and first consider solidarity as a concept used in common parlance, political activism, and the social sciences. We then turn to sociological and social psychological approaches to group solidarity—an area of work that focuses primarily on solidarity as unity or cohesiveness characterising social networks and social groups. The remainder of the chapter is
concerned with political solidarity—defining the concept and discussing how political solidarity may be understood as a social change process. This is partly achieved by discussing what political solidarity is not—here we discuss altruism and helping as instances of ‘prosocial behaviour’ more generally that can be distinguished from political solidarity on a number of grounds, but particularly with regard to their orientation to social change, or (more accurately) lack thereof. Finally, a number of historical and contemporary examples of political solidarity are considered to further illustrate not only the phenomenon but also the distinct social identity and self-categorization dynamics of interest in this thesis.

3.2 What is Solidarity?

“Solidarity is boilermakers and ballerinas standing together”¹

(McCormack, 2007)

As a concept, solidarity is used in a variety of social spheres, although most commonly in political activism and the social sciences. The meaning of the word ‘solidarity’ is commonly defined with reference to its use in French, emphasising the notion of a perfect union, or a community of perfect coincidence, in terms of aspirations, sympathies and interests (Reshaur, 1992). However, as the quote at the beginning of this section nicely captures, solidarity denotes more than just a unity of interests—it is also fundamentally about managing diversity and difference in a way that allows different individuals and groups to become united towards a common cause or purpose. In fact, when the term ‘solidarity’ is entered into a popular Internet search engine, it quickly becomes apparent that it is most frequently used as a name

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¹ This quote is from an online blog by Trevor McCormack devoted to “working Australians, trade unions and industrial relations. McCormack is referring to a court case in which the dancers of the Western Australian Ballet used a boilermakers and welders’ union lawyer in their fight for better pay and work conditions. The full article, written on 22 February 2007, can be accessed here: http://solidarity.redrag.net/2007/02/22/ballet/ (Last accessed: 17 July 2008)
for various political organisations—usually workers’ or trade unions, but also more general ‘grass-roots’ activist organisations. Most of the websites contain explicit links to the political left, including socialism or anti-capitalist political ideology, while many broaden their scope to include feminist, anti-racist, and anti-war objectives. All invariably evoke the need to unite different constituencies and interests in the pursuit of a common goal (e.g. better working conditions, increased corporate accountability, the end of capitalism, etc.) and at times do so with a rather revolutionary flair.

In the political arena, solidarity therefore seems to denote not only a stable, existing characteristic of a collective (in terms of unity, cohesiveness and commitment) but even more so the process of social change through which different groups of people come together to achieve a common objective. Indeed, what seems to give solidarity its ‘flavour’ is the notion of unity in the face of diversity—it could be said that when it comes to solidarity unity presupposes diversity. Furthermore, even from this cursory insight into the lay (if political) usage of the term, it seems that solidarity is strongly associated with the notion of organised social and political action and a collective challenge to the status quo. Importantly, however, difference and diversity seem to be the hallmark of acting in solidarity rather than an obstacle to a higher-order unity of cause and purpose in the face of injustice and exploitation that ‘we all share’.

One of the earliest (and most widely cited) analyses of solidarity within the social sciences is provided by Durkheim (1984/1893) who distinguished between mechanical and organic solidarity, with mechanical solidarity said to mark small, pre-industrial societies, while organic solidarity characterises the modern industrial and post-industrial world (Durkheim, 1984/1893). Durkheim argues that mechanical solidarity is a feature of those societies whose members share primary characteristics, such as language, geography, or community. In contrast, organic solidarity emerges in societies marked by social diversity, where different social groups are tied together by functional interdependence akin to organs within a body (Durkheim, 1984/1893). Durkheim uses the notion of organic solidarity to explain why modernisation and the division of labour, and therefore increased social diversity and difference, did not cause the society to fail or disintegrate. Organic
solidarity is a useful concept to consider because it is conceptualised as emerging out of (social and categorical) difference, rather than something that is fundamentally defined as the opposite of difference (see also Haslam, 2004; Haslam, Eggins, & Reynolds, 2003). It therefore presupposes diversity of social groups, in terms of their memberships, goals and aspirations that are nevertheless united by a common cause or purpose.

In addition to sociological perspectives that seek to explain solidarity as a societal-level phenomenon, solidarity has also been located at the intersection between the individual and the social environment. Namely, philosopher Richard Rorty (1989) criticises the idea of ‘human solidarity’ conceptualised in the abstract as part of the essential nature of individual human beings. Instead, he argues for a recognition of the social and historical context in which social relations take place—how we understand and behave in the social world is contingent upon the context of social relations, rather than some abstract notion of individual human essence. Being ‘one of us human beings’ is therefore a less powerful basis for solidarity compared to ‘one of us’, where ‘us’ is defined in relation to ‘them’—“the wrong sort of human beings” to use Rorty’s phrase (Rorty, 1989, p.190). Rorty also emphasises the inextricability of diversity from unity or one-ness as markers of solidarity, arguing that his view is not incompatible with the idea that solidarity can be extended to others hitherto seen as different from ‘us’—the sense of ‘us’ can and should be extended to include people whom we have previously thought of as ‘them’. He goes on to suggest that:

“...there is such thing as moral progress, and this progress is indeed in the direction of greater human solidarity. But that solidarity is not thought of as recognition of a core self, the human essence, in all human beings. Rather, it is thought of as the ability to see more and more traditional differences...as unimportant when compared with similarities with respect to pain and humiliation—the ability to think of people wildly different from ourselves as included in the range of ‘us’” (Rorty, 1989, p.192).
It is easy to see how Rorty’s understanding of solidarity speaks to the way in which this process may be understood within the social identity perspective, particularly given its emphasis on the interaction between the individual mind and society. Rorty explicitly emphasises the importance of the social and historical context in which human relations take place, and the social categorical nature of such interactions. Furthermore, he also recognises that dealing with diversity and difference in a way that makes unity possible is a key feature of solidarity. In contrast, within sociology and social psychology more generally solidarity is mostly seen in more static (rather than dynamic) terms—as the glue that holds social groups or social networks together. As discussed in the next section, within these disciplines the term ‘solidarity’ or ‘group solidarity’ is used to describe an existing sense of group unity or ‘belongingness’ among group members (Markovsky & Chaffee, 1995), and is often used interchangeably with ‘group cohesiveness’ (Hogg, 1992) or group commitment (Doosje, Ellemers, & Spears, 1999; Doosje, Spears, & Ellemers, 2002; Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1997; Ellemers, Van Rijswijk, Bruins, & de Gilder, 1998).

3.3 Group Solidarity – Sociological and Social Psychological Approaches

3.3.1 The Sociology of Group Solidarity

Sociologists have a lot to say about group solidarity – and use the term solidarity (rather than cohesiveness or unity) as one of the key concepts in their analyses of social groups and social networks. In his influential monograph “Principles of Group Solidarity”, Hechter (1987) suggests that solidarity is based on group members’ compliance with ‘corporate obligations’ under the threat of negative sanctions for failing to meet those obligations (Hechter, 1987; Markovsky, 1998). Individuals will not join the collective struggle, Hechter argues, when they can free-ride instead. Therefore, extensive systems of monitoring and sanctioning need to be developed in solidary groups to ensure that free-riders are identified and excluded (Hechter, 1987; Heckathorn & Rosenstein, 2002). Hechter’s view has been critiqued for its somewhat tautological argument (i.e. solidarity being both a function of and defined by the extent to which people comply with ‘corporate obligations’), as well
as its emphasis on compliance under the threat of sanctions as the sole basis of solidarity (Markovsky & Chaffee, 1995).

More recent sociological explanations of solidarity have more to do with the density of network ties between members of social groups, than obligation-based compliance. For example, Markovsky and Lawler (1994) sought to explicitly link group cohesion and solidarity through the concept of ‘reachability’ within a collectivity. ‘Reachability’ contains elements of both connectedness (among group members) and structure—members of a collective are reachable to the extent that they are tied together by numerous connections. Solidarity marks groups with high reachability that in addition have unity of structure (i.e. they are without internal divisions).

Critiquing the work of Hechter, and building on the idea of reachability, Heckathorn and Rosenstein (2002) proposed the concept of ‘homophily’ as the main indicator of group solidarity. Interestingly, ‘homophily’ is defined not only with reference to a characteristic of a particular social group, but also with reference to relevant outgroups. Namely, Heckathorn and Rosenstein (2002) suggest that in solidary groups there is disproportionate investment in intragroup as opposed to out-group (inter-group) ties. Therefore if we are to explain solidarity, we need to identify those factors that motivate individuals to invest differentially in intra-group ties, rather than ties with other groups. The concept of “homophily” refers to this bias toward self-affiliation (among those of similar race, ethnicity, social class, education, age, etc.) and is seen as an essential element of the social structure and a structurally based indicator of solidarity.

For a social psychologist (and particularly one familiar with the social identity perspective) these sociological formulations of solidarity inevitably evoke processes like the psychological group formation and the emergence of shared social identity (e.g. Copeland, Reynolds, & Burton, 2008). Indeed, the relevance of the social identity perspective to group solidarity has not gone unnoticed within sociology. For example, Markovsky and Chaffe (1995) linked their analysis of group solidarity (i.e. the concept of ‘reachability’) to social identity theory by extending the network conception to include ties that linked an individual to an identity concept, where ‘reachability’ is created through identification with a social category. Furthermore, in
their work on the stability of (interacting) groups and group memberships, McPherson and Smith-Lovin (2002) recognise the relevance of the self-categorisation analysis of group cohesion and the work on social attraction by Hogg and colleagues (Hogg, 1992). They argue that the self-categorisation analysis of group cohesion shifted the research question from the operation of (sociological) social groups to the cognitive processes that illuminate how people come to think of themselves and others as members of social groups—i.e. psychological group formation (McPherson & Smith-Lovin, 2002). These processes are discussed next as we turn to the social psychological analysis of group solidarity as group cohesiveness and group commitment.

### 3.3.2 The Social Psychology of Group Solidarity

Within social psychology, group solidarity has been studied under the umbrella of group cohesiveness (e.g. Hogg, 1992), but also identification with or commitment to the group (e.g. Doosje et al., 2002; Ellemers et al., 1997). For example, Hogg (1992, p.1) suggests that “Cohesiveness is a...term used by social psychologists to refer to the essential property of social groups that is captured in common parlance by a wide range of other expressions, such as solidarity, cohesion, comradeship...” He further argues that, although the early pre-experimental social psychology considered cohesiveness as a group-solidarity phenomenon, post-1950 research explained it in terms of interpersonal attraction (Hogg, 1992). Hogg’s work challenges this conceptualisation, and focuses on establishing that it is social, rather than interpersonal attraction that results in intragroup cohesiveness (see for example Hogg & Hardie, 1992; Hogg, Hardie, & Reynolds, 1995; Hogg & Turner, 1985). A cohesive group is one in which the process of self-categorisation, through depersonalisation, produces a number of effects, including conformity to intragroup norms, a motivation to pursue positive distinctiveness from relevant outgroups, and social attraction – where ingroup members are liked not as individuals but as embodiments of the collective (Hogg, 1992; Turner et al., 1987).

This line of work largely focuses on the *intragroup* processes of social attraction that lead to cohesiveness. One exception is the study by Hogg and Haines (1996) that considered how perceptions of the *intergroup* context (namely the
perceived legitimacy, permeability, and stability of own group’s status position) affect group cohesiveness, conceptualised as social attraction. They found that perceived stability of group status directly increased group identification, and also indirectly (through group identification) increased social attraction. Perceived legitimacy of group status and permeability of intergroup boundaries, on the other hand, did not significantly predict group identification or social attraction. Based on these findings, Hogg and Haines (1996) conclude that perceived stability of intergroup status relations seem to indirectly influence social attraction through group identification (Hogg & Hains, 1996).

A related line of research focuses on group commitment—operationalised as the extent to which group members’ identify with their group—and the consequences of high as opposed to low group identification on group-oriented behaviour. For example, Ellemers, Spears and Doosje (1997) investigated how perceptions of group status and intergroup boundary permeability affect high and low group identifiers’ willingness to engage in collective or individual strategies to improve their circumstances. They found that high identifiers were more likely to remain committed to their group (choose collective over individual strategies) even when the other group had higher status, and when they could change their group membership as individuals (the intergroup boundary was permeable). Differences on the basis of group commitment (i.e. identification) were also found in response to perceived instability of group status (Doosje et al., 1999), with high identifiers showing more commitment to the group when faced with the prospect of diminished group status. Low identifiers, on the other hand, remained committed to the group only when its status was likely to be improved.

More recent work in this area demonstrated that pre-existing levels of group identification affect the extent to which people identify with their group in response to (anticipated and real) changes in the intergroup status hierarchy (Doosje et al., 2002). Doosje and colleagues (2002) manipulated levels of identification with a low-status group (high vs. low identification) and the prospects for group status improvement (unlikely vs. potential vs. likely). Participants in the high identification condition remained committed to the group (and continued to identify highly) even when prospects for status improvement were uncertain or bleak. Those in the low
identification condition, however, expressed commitment to their group (in the form of increased ingroup identification) only when group status was likely to improve.

The willingness of ‘high identifiers’ to remain committed to their group in the face of threats to the group’s social standing also manifests itself in contexts where ingroup identity is characterised by historical injustice towards an outgroup. For example, Doosje and colleagues (1998) found that, when participants were faced with a mixed or ambiguous historical account about their groups’ involvement in harmful action towards another group, ‘high identifiers’ experienced less collective guilt, compared to those who did not identify as highly with their group, and were also less willing to compensate the victims of harmful action. When the historical account was unambiguous (i.e. clearly positive or negative), levels of collective guilt varied only as a function of the message (negative message evoked more collective guilt overall), and not as a function of identification. Doosje and colleagues suggest that high identifiers were more likely to perceive both positive and negative aspects of the message, and therefore experienced less collective guilt, compared to low identifiers who focused more on the negative aspects (Doosje et al., 1998; Doosje et al., 1999). Therefore, it was the low identifiers that engaged in attitudes and behaviours located at the more prosocial end of the spectrum—being willing to critique past harmful actions of the ingroup, and support compensation for the outgroup. However, high identification does not necessarily mean that the ingroup’s actions will be defended and justified at all costs. Under conditions where (past or present) ingroup actions are seen to violate other important (e.g. superordinate) norms and values, it is the high identifiers who may be most likely to demonstrate their group loyalty and commitment by opposing such (norm-violating) actions against the outgroup and supporting change in intergroup relations (see Packer, 2008). The role of perceived violation of higher-order norms and values in mobilising support for social change will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

The preceding discussion of group solidarity (from a sociological and social psychological perspective) makes it clear that there are a number of points of distinction between this work and the process that is of key interest to this thesis. Existing sociological and social psychological approaches to group solidarity provide largely an *intragroup* analysis of this process, where group solidarity (cohesiveness,
commitment) is conceptualised as a group characteristic or as a way to describe group members’ stance towards a group that they already belong to (in sociological and psychological terms). To the extent that this work considers intergroup relations, it does so by looking at the effect of cohesiveness or commitment on how people perceive and act upon the social context of intergroup relations. Consequently, there is a lack of analysis that elucidates the process by which solidarity may emerge from the context of intergroup relations that involves hitherto distinct social groups coming to share a sense of collective self. Does the same process of psychological group formation apply to the formation of the more encompassing, higher-order social categories? Given the hierarchical organisation of the self (Turner et al., 1987), how members of different groups come to realise that they have a common cause and share a higher-order identity may be a similar (albeit a higher-level) process to how individuals come to (psychologically) belong to a group. While this process is largely neglected within the work on group solidarity, it is a core aspect of political solidarity as conceptualised in this thesis. In the following section we discuss the key aspects of political solidarity as a process of social psychological change in intergroup power relations.

3.4 Political Solidarity—A Process of Social Psychological Change in Intergroup Power Relations

At the outset of the thesis, we proposed that attempts to achieve social change by some dissenting social minority may be more likely to succeed if they also result in widespread collective action involving ‘ordinary people’ who come to share the minority’s view that social change is needed. The process by which members of the ‘general community’ as the societal majority become not only sympathetic, but also willing to actively challenge the status quo in solidarity with the relevant minority and its cause we refer to as political solidarity. Importantly, political solidarity is a particularly powerful process of social and political change as it involves willingness to act collectively out of solidarity with those who are dissenting against the status quo, based on a shared belief that change is needed, rather than (necessarily) a shared experience of negative treatment or disadvantage within existing intergroup relations. Moreover, such a collective challenge is aimed at a person or group in a position of
established (institutional, corporate, governmental, organizational) authority and is based not only on a newly-emerged sense of ‘we-ness’ with the minority but also the perception that the authority no longer adequately captures or represents who ‘we’ are—the higher-order norms, values and beliefs that ‘we’ were all meant to share—in a given context of intergroup relations.

As such, the term ‘political solidarity’ denotes a social change process that has two conceptually distinct yet interdependent aspects. The first aspect has to do with the emergence of solidarity between the minority and majority—where solidarity captures a sense of ‘unity in diversity’ and a coming together for a common cause. This ‘coming together’, moreover, does not depend solely on whether or not there is common experience of injustice between the minority and the majority, although such commonality of fate may contribute to this process. Rather, political solidarity is based primarily on a sense of shared cause and a shared identity (i.e. shared norms, values and beliefs) emerging between the majority and minority against which the relevant intergroup relations (between the minority and majority, but also between the majority and those in positions of authority) are evaluated and acted upon. The ‘solidarity’ aspect of political solidarity therefore fundamentally defines the majority-minority relationship as one that transcends subgroup difference to achieve a higher-order, superordinate, commonality of purpose.

However, those who seek to maintain the status quo will rarely (if ever) remain passive in this process, but rather seek to use their position to undermine the minority’s efforts at mobilising widespread support. Secondly, therefore, political solidarity is also, fundamentally, a contest between the minority as agents of social change and those in positions of authority seeking to maintain the status quo—a contest for social power where power is defined as the capacity to influence the majority and harness its support for one’s cause. Therefore, political solidarity entails the development of a shared orientation towards the status quo that binds together the minority and the majority and manifests itself in their shared willingness to act collectively to challenge existing intergroup power relations and achieve social change. Importantly, as stated in the introduction, it is the process of psychological change that is of central importance in this thesis—the change in how people understand themselves and others in the context of intergroup relations—and how the
emergence of such an understanding in turn enhances majority willingness to act in solidarity with the minority to challenge the status quo and those in positions of authority.

At this point, it may be important to clarify that we do not propose political solidarity as the only or even the ‘best’ route towards achieving social change. Indeed, those in positions of authority may themselves seek to produce or encourage change in relation to some social minority group—Kevin Rudd, in his role as the Prime Minister of Australia, formally apologising to the Australian Indigenous people is a good example of this process. Whether or not such actions are perceived to be ‘positive’ and in ‘our’ best interests is itself (ideologically and politically) contested—it is likely that many Australians continue to dispute the need to apologise to Indigenous people, despite the PM’s apology and a broader appeal for reconciliation to be endorsed by ‘all Australians’ (Rudd, 2008). Similarly, in order to shape intergroup relations in a way that enhances their position, authorities and leaders may target minorities in a way that is clearly detrimental to these groups, as was the case with the Nazi propaganda against Jews during the Second World War (see also Reicher, 2004; Reicher & Hopkins, 2001).

However, these examples do not represent political solidarity as understood within this thesis, but rather a process of influence as persuasion and legitimate authority (see Turner, 2005). Processes of persuasion and influence more generally, in contrast to political solidarity, do not necessarily involve change in the majority’s self-categorization in relation to the authority. In contrast, a fundamental distinguishing feature of political solidarity as a social change process is a psychological change in the way in which people categorize themselves and others in the social world—as a shared identity and solidarity with the minority emerges, the hitherto legitimate, ingroup authority comes to be seen as no longer sharing the relevant higher-order goals, values and expectations. Such a self-categorical change in relation to both the minority and the authority is what makes political solidarity, as collective challenge to authority in solidarity with the minority, possible.

We do recognise, therefore, that, all else being equal, ‘ordinary people’ will often be persuaded that those in position of authority are acting legitimately and in ‘our’ best interests even if we do not agree with all of their decisions. After all,
authority in many ways presupposes legitimacy—it is questionable to what extent an authority that has lost its legitimacy is an authority at all. As such, the (legitimate) authority’s stance towards the minority is highly influential in informing majority attitudes and actions. In addition, such ability to influence on part of the legitimate authority need not always be used to sever the minority-majority relationship. However, of central importance to this thesis is the process by which the legitimacy of the status quo and of those in positions of authority, including their position, decisions and/or actions, starts to be questioned and ultimately collectively challenged. It is this orientation to social change that distinguished political solidarity from other instances of ‘prosocial’ behaviour, as discussed in the next section.

3.5 What is Not Political Solidarity – Altruism and Helping

In many ways, the raison d’être of the present thesis is predicated on the perceived neglect within social psychology of political solidarity as a social change process (see Chapter 4). However, one could be forgiven for asking whether what we are proposing to be a distinct (social) psychological process is in fact just another instance of altruistic or helping (i.e. prosocial) behaviour. Indeed, what is known within psychology as ‘prosocial’ behaviour is also sometimes referred to as ‘solidary’ behaviour and researched under the broader ‘solidarity’ umbrella within other social sciences, such as sociology (see Bierhoff & Fetchenhauer, 2006; Fetchenhauer, Flache, Buunk, & Lindenberg, 2006). Therefore, could political solidarity be adequately conceptualised as the process by which ‘decent human beings’ become willing to help one another? If so, could it not be captured within existing work in these domains? We argue to the contrary and discuss altruism and helping next in order to show that, while this work can help us to illuminate some of the psychological mechanisms that make political solidarity possible, there are also a number of fundamental differences between political solidarity and these processes, particularly when it comes to their capacity to account for social change.

Social psychological interest in helping behaviour and altruism, originated with the infamous murder of Kitty Genovese and the failure to help on part of the
witnesses to the incident. Research into the (lack of) bystander intervention that followed the incident demonstrated that the mere presence of other bystanders severely undermines individuals’ willingness to help (i.e. "the bystander effect", see Darley & Latane, 1968; Latane & Darley, 1970; Latane, Nida, & Wilson, 1981). These early social psychological models suggested largely egoistic explanations of helping behaviour (see for example Cialdini, Darby, & Vincent, 1973; Isen & Levin, 1972; Pilliavan & Pilliavan, 1972) to do with the benefits (e.g. social approval, positive emotions) and costs associated with helping (e.g. harm to self, sadness, witnessing others’ distress) or failing to help (e.g. guilt).

Stemming from a (largely economic and evolutionary) view that all human behaviour is motivated by some form of egoism or self-interest, one of the key debates surrounding altruism (i.e. behaviour intended to benefit others, even when such action involves a sacrifice or cost to the actor; Monroe, 1990) and helping seems to be whether prosocial behaviour can ever be considered truly altruistic. As is the case with collective behaviour more generally (see Chapter 4), the altruism literature is heavily influenced by ‘rational choice’ explanations of individual costs and benefits involved for the actor who engages in altruistic behaviour (Axelrod, 1984; Becker, 1976; Bierhoff & Fetchenhauer, 2006; Phelps, 1975). Rational choice theories propose that prosocial behaviour will always have some positive consequences for the actor, if only in the form of positive feelings associated with helping others, and therefore cannot be considered as ‘true’ altruism.

The proponents of altruism dispute this position, suggesting that the ultimate motivation of those who engage in altruistic social action is to help another, and that the benefits of acting in this way are apparent only after such action has taken place (Batson, 1991; Monroe, 1994). In contrast to egoistic explanations of helping and prosocial behaviour, Batson and colleagues (e.g. Batson, 1987, 1991; Batson & Shaw, 1991) proposed that helping could also be motivated by altruism. Altruism involves a motivation to enhance another’s welfare – in contrast to egoism as a

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1 It is interesting to note that many of the events surrounding the social psychological discussion of the Kitty Genovese case have been demonstrated to be false (see Manning, Levine, & Collins, 2007). Specifically, the number of onlookers was significantly lower than originally suggested and they did contact the police.
motivation to increase one’s own welfare (Batson, 1998). Importantly, Batson moved away from the traditional argument as to whether or not altruistic action has some (post facto) benefit for the actor, thereby bringing into question the supposedly selfless nature of such behaviour. Instead, he suggests that altruism is essentially about intentions and motivations, and that there is no direct correspondence between altruism and prosocial behaviour, in that prosocial behaviour is not always motivated by altruism, and altruism does not always result in pro-social behaviour (Batson, 1998).

A key aspect of this line of research is the so-called empathy-altruism hypothesis. Rather than alleviating some self-relevant need, empathy is primarily focused on the welfare of the other and, as such, seen as the driving force that leads a person to engage in altruistic helping. The empathy-altruism hypothesis was supported by a large body of research, showing that individuals low in empathy only engage in helping behaviour when it also has some potential benefits for themselves (e.g. reducing guilt; enhancing mood), whereas those high in empathy are likely to help regardless of the (potentially) self-relevant outcomes of such action (Batson, 1987, 1991, 1998; Batson & Shaw, 1991; Bierhoff & Rohmann, 2004).

The role of empathy in altruism remains a point of controversy however. Namely, it has been proposed that it is the relationship between the (individual) self and the (individual) other, rather than empathy, that drives helping behaviour (Cialdini, Brown, Lewis, Luce, & Neuberg, 1997). For example, Cialdini and colleagues (1997) argue that the same conditions that lead to empathic concern also lead to self-other overlap. Therefore, helping under those conditions is not self-less, but rather enacted with reference to a (personal or individual) self that now includes the other. This is a compelling idea that has been explored further within intergroup helping research (see below).

In her work on rescuers of Jews during World War II, Monroe (1990, 1996, 2003) presented a line of reasoning akin to that of Cialdini and colleagues. She argues that what distinguishes rescuers as ‘moral exemplars’ is the extent to which particular critical values (e.g. compassion, tolerance, respect for all life) are integrated into their self-concept—their altruistic identity (Monroe, 2003). The altruistic identity then forms the basis for a particular view of self in relation to
others (referred to as ‘perspective’). According to Monroe (2003), altruistic identity and perspective create bonds of common humanity and bring about moral salience—a feeling that it is imperative for the rescuer not only to be sympathetic, but also to take action to help.

However, most of the helping and altruism research within social psychology has been conceptualised and executed in the domain of interpersonal relations. There seems to be an assumption in this area that altruism, in particular, is a characteristic of individuals as individual persons, with limited consideration for social and group norms that may promote altruistic behaviour more generally (Monroe, 1996; Oliner & Oliner, 1992). Oliner and Oliner (1992) for example, argue that certain individuals have what they call ‘extensivity’—a constellation of values of care and inclusiveness that permeate how these individuals relate to others to such an extent as to constitute an altruistic personality. Even Monroe sees altruism largely as an individual characteristic, one that is relevant to an individual’s (interpersonal) relationships with others. This line of reasoning is largely void of a social analysis where perceptions of self and others as members of social groups shape helping behaviour. From the perspective of the social identity and self-categorization theories, this work cries out for a link to be made between the notions of ‘altruistic identity’ and the inclusion of the ‘other’ in the self and the concept of ‘social identity’ as the mechanism that makes ‘prosocial behaviour’ possible.

Based on the critique of the individual and interpersonal explanations of helping, there is now a growing body of research on helping that explicitly considers the role of social identity in this domain. More specifically, intergroup helping research is designed with self-categorical aspects of helping and pro-social behaviour in mind and seeks to investigate the effects of perceived shared group membership on helping behaviour. For example, extending their work on the Common Ingroup Identity Model of prejudice reduction (Dovidio et al., 2000; see also Chapter 4), Dovidio and colleagues (1997) have shown that helping is more likely to occur when there is a sense of shared ingroup identity between helpers and those in need of help. Additionally, applying the self-categorisation analysis of helping to bystander intervention, recent findings indicate that the targets of helping behaviour who are
perceived to be ingroup members receive more help from bystanders (Levine, Prosser, Evans, & Reicher, 2005; Levine & Thompson, 2004).

Stürmer and colleagues (Stürmer, Snyder, Kropp, & Siem, 2006; Stürmer, Snyder, & Omoto, 2005) have also shown that the effects of empathy on helping are moderated by whether there is shared group membership between the source and the target of helping behaviour. The relationship between empathy and helping was stronger when the source and the target shared relevant group membership (Sturmer et al, 2006; Sturmer et al, 2005). This work has also shown that the effects of empathy on (ingroup) helping were stronger the greater the perceived similarity between the target and the source of helping behaviour.

However, the recent work on intergroup helping largely disregards the intergroup power relations that often take place in contexts where members of one group are required to help another (for an exception see Nadler, 2002). Intergroup helping both reflects and is affected by pre-existing differences in status and power (Nadler, 2002). Furthermore, groups in positions of power (e.g. government agencies; multinational corporations) often create the need to help members of another group in the first place. In this context, it matters how the potential helpers perceive the relationship between the powerful and the disadvantaged, but also their own relationship with those in positions of social power and authority. It is within this particular context of intergroup relations that political solidarity takes place.

These processes are (to some extent) reflected in sociological analyses of altruism from a more political perspective (Guigni & Passy, 2001; Passy, 2001). Within this work, the term political altruism is used to describe behaviour performed by a group or/and on behalf of a group that is not aimed to meet individual interests. Furthermore, political altruism is directed at a political goal of social change or the redefinition of power relations and the individuals involved in this type of social change do not stand to benefit directly from the accomplishment of such goals (Guigni & Passy, 2001; Passy, 2001). Guigni and Passy (2001) edited a sociological volume designed to provide a contemporary analysis of whether the so-called ‘new solidarity movements’ (e.g. anti-racism, human rights, development aid) can be seen as examples of political altruism. Following their definition, the actions performed by the solidarity movement can be broadly characterised as political altruism.
Participants in the solidarity movements act collectively, with a clear political aim, and their actions are pursued to the benefit of other people. To distinguish it from various volunteer efforts that provide relief, but do not seek to alter the power relations, having a political goal of social change is a necessary pre-condition for characterising collective action as political altruism (Guigni & Passy, 2001; Passy, 2001).

There are some important intersections between political altruism and political solidarity. For example, both are based on collective efforts to alleviate injustice or disadvantage affecting others, and both seek to achieve social and political change. However, when it comes to political solidarity, to act politically is to enact a particular social identity or psychological group membership emanating from one’s relationships with both the powerless and the powerful. Furthermore, in their conceptualisation of political altruism, Giugni and Passy (2001) maintain the categorical distinction between the ‘political altruists’ and the recipients of their help. In this sociological analysis, there is little (if any) recognition that ‘political altruists’ may come to (re)define themselves psychologically as having a common cause, a shared identity, and therefore a shared self-interest, with those who are intended to benefit from their action, while also being aware of the intergroup distinctions that motivated solidarity in the first place. However, akin to other sociological approaches that deal with group solidarity, this analysis is focused on describing and defining the observable (sociological) phenomenon, while somewhat lacking insight into its (social psychological) origins and dynamics.

In summary, there are a number of important aspects of the altruism and helping literature that contribute to understanding political solidarity as a social change process. Of particular importance is the idea that prosocial behaviour is premised on processes that enable the ‘other’ to become a part of the self—in terms of one’s personal identity, but also the relevant psychological group memberships and social identities. However, within much of this work there is little scope for considering how ‘prosocial behaviour’ may affect and/or be affected by the broader social (psychological) and political processes that influence whether social change or the status quo in intergroup relations prevails (as mentioned, one exception here is the work of Nadler and colleagues). With the exception of intergroup helping
research, altruism and helping behaviour are still conceived of as individual-level phenomena within much of prosocial behaviour research—making it difficult to see how this approach can illuminate social and political change in intergroup relations. In contrast, the dynamics of intergroup power relations are a central aspect of political solidarity as a social change process—what could be conceptualised as the more ‘prosocial’ aspects of social change (i.e. emergence of solidarity between the minority and majority) are interdependent with the processes of social and political conflict with those in position of authority. Below, we discuss a number of historical and contemporary examples that further illustrate the need to consider the broader social and political context of intergroup relations, how it shapes the relevant social identities and in turn either promotes or hinders political solidarity.

3.6 Social Identity Processes and Political Solidarity: Some Examples

Historical and contemporary examples of political solidarity abound. As discussed in more detail below, during the Second World War, Danish and Bulgarian people acted collectively against the Nazi regime to save their Jewish populations (Bastholm-Jensen & Jensen, 2003; Reicher, Cassidy, Wolpert, Hopkins, & Levine, 2006). Events surrounding the Polish workers’ union movement “Solidarity”, in the 1980s, are also an example of political solidarity as the majority of workers and their supporters in the broader community were not directly affected by negative government actions, but nevertheless acted in solidarity with those who were (Bakuniak & Nowak, 1987). In the early nineties, thousands of people across Europe, particularly in Germany, protested against the rise of racism and negativity towards asylum seekers (Koopmans, 2001). Many Australians today continue to protest the government policy of mandatory detention of asylum seekers and provide support for the detainees, as well as asylum seekers released on temporary protection visas. Hundreds of thousands of Non-Indigenous Australians participated in ‘walks for reconciliation’ around the country in support of apology for past injustice and reconciliation with Australian Indigenous people—with many continuing to campaign for this particular cause despite a decade of continued (former Australian) Prime Minister John Howard’s opposition to formal apology.
Far from being confined to large scale social and political events (e.g. demonstrations, rallies), political solidarity is also part of our everyday lives. As consumers we are frequently confronted with appeals to purchase food and clothing produced by companies that treat their workers ethically—and, in turn, to avoid or boycott those that continue to put profit ahead of fair working conditions. Similarly, as citizens, we are asked to support (e.g. vote for) those social policies aimed at ensuring that the rights of the most vulnerable in society are protected. These processes rely on a sense of solidarity with, for example, the sweatshop workers or those on a minimum wage, even though relatively few of us have experienced these life conditions directly. Indeed, most of us, at least financially through cheap goods and services, benefit from a system that relies on sweatshop labour or low wages to maintain competitiveness and profit margins. Are we therefore pre-destined to ignore such pleas (e.g. for basic human rights, fairness, equality, etc.) or is there a process by which others’ disadvantage comes to be seen as ‘our problem’? The historical examples described in more detail below provide some important insights that help us to answer this question.

The analysis of political solidarity presented in this thesis has been inspired by three historical events, in particular, that further illustrate what we mean by political solidarity. They include two separate instances of collective efforts to protect Jews during World War II—in Denmark and Bulgaria, and the rise of the workers’ union movement (Solidarność) in Poland in the 1980s. Furthermore, these events have been studied, interpreted and analysed within the social sciences (including social psychology) in a way that resonates with the present conceptualisation of political solidarity and in particular the role of social identity processes in social change.

3.6.1 Rescuing Danish Jews (WWII)

The rescue of Danish Jews stands out in history not only because 98% of the Jewish population was saved, but also because of the collective nature of the rescue effort (the same is true of the Bulgarian case, as discussed below). As Bastholm-Jensen and Jensen (2003) argue, the anomaly of the Danish Jews rescue is in the fact that the threat of their deportation to Nazi concentration camps sparked something of a popular movement that involved all parts of Danish society in an effort to save this
particular minority. In the early autumn of 1943, during only a few weeks, more than 7000 Jews were hidden in churches, schools, hospitals and private homes until they could be transported to safety in Sweden (Bastholm-Jensen & Jensen, 2003).

Social scientific analyses of this event vary, however. For example Yahil (1969) argues that the Danes rescued their Jewish population because of something that is particular to their national character, their high moral standards and their love of freedom and democracy. Mogensen (2003) is not convinced, and proposes a less flattering analysis arguing that Danish indignation and activism on their own would not have been enough to rescue their Jewish population if other social structural factors were not also present in this context (e.g. increased opposition to the Nazi regime among the population; a level of reluctance on part of the German police in Sweden to apprehend Jews and close off the main escape route; Swedish support for the rescue effort).

Of most interest to this thesis is Bastholm-Jensen and Jensen’s (2003) analysis suggesting that Danish Jews were rescued primarily because they were Danish—Danish borders were virtually impenetrable to Jewish refugees from other European countries facing similar fate, and they certainly did not show the same solidarity with other groups persecuted by the Nazi regime (e.g. communists). Non-Jewish Danes engaged in the rescue effort because they identified with the Jewish population of Denmark as fellow Danes facing persecution on the basis of their (sub)group membership (being Jewish) at the hands of an authority (the Nazi regime). In support of this argument, Fein (1979) found that the most powerful immediate cause of Jewish victimisation in Nazi-occupied countries was the extent to which they were successfully isolated from the rest of the population, and therefore excluded from the more inclusive national identity. Crucially, for the rescuers of Jews in Denmark, the ‘Danish’ identity unquestionably included Jewish Danes—there was an acknowledgement of a common identity or self-categorisation, which resulted in the perception that any treatment of Jews that was contrary to the relevant norms, values, and beliefs was unacceptable and ultimately illegitimate.
3.6.2 Preventing the Deportation of Bulgarian Jews (WWII)

The Bulgarian case is somewhat distinct in a sense that a public campaign of protest was successful in preventing the deportation of their indigenous Jewish population, making it the only country where, at the end of the war, the number of Jews living there was greater than at its beginning (Reicher et al., 2006). Using publicly available documents, Reicher and colleagues (2006) analysed the Bulgarian campaign to prevent deportation of their Jewish population, and reached a number of conclusions similar to those of Bastholm-Jensen and Jensen (2003) above. Category inclusion, or the extent to which Bulgarian Jews were seen as part of the common ingroup (e.g. nation), was crucial in this campaign. Campaign documents constructed categorical boundaries in a way that included Jews as part of the Bulgarian nation. They also referred to category norms that in no uncertain terms emphasised helping those who are being attacked as constituting what it meant to be Bulgarian. Finally, building on categorical boundaries and norms, the campaigners appealed to category interest, suggesting that the ingroup as a whole will be harmed if persecution of Jews was allowed (Reicher et al, 2006).

One drawback of this analysis is that Reicher and colleagues do not consider how the relationship with the Nazi regime, as a group in position of power, was (implicitly or explicitly) constructed during this campaign. It is hard to imagine that the campaign materials were silent with regard to the Nazis, or the legitimacy or otherwise of the Nazi stance towards Jews. Indeed, Reicher and colleagues point to the existence of counter-claims disputing the Nazi version of reality. What is lacking from the analysis, however, is the more explicit link between these counter-claims and their strategic purpose to construct not only the Jews as ‘us’ or ‘Bulgarians’, but also the Nazis as not-us, an outgroup. Nevertheless, their analysis is valuable as it considers not only the categorical or identity boundaries (whether or not there is a shared category membership) but also the normative content of categories and common interest as the basis of solidarity with a persecuted minority group.

Both the Danish and the Bulgarian examples suggest that for political solidarity to emerge there needs to be a shared identity and a shared normative framework between the minority and majority. However, it is also important to consider how such an identity may emerge and/or the relevant normative framework be redefined.
within a particular social context of intergroup relations in a way that makes political solidarity more likely. Political solidarity should not be confined solely to those minorities that can be readily categorized as ‘us’ on the basis of some pre-existing, shared (sociological and/or psychological) group membership with the majority. The reality of intergroup relations between the majority and minority, but also between the authority and the majority, have the capacity to shape the meaning of the relevant majority identity in a way that redefines intergroup boundaries and makes possible solidarity with ‘ingroup’ as well as ‘outgroup’ minorities—a question we consider in more detail in Chapter 6.

3.6.3 Solidarność (Poland, 1980s)

The final example that we wish to consider is that of the Polish workers’ union movement Solidarity from the 1980s. This example is particularly important as the social and psychological process through which Solidarity emerged as a national front fundamentally involved not only those directly affected by negative government policies, but also others who chose to oppose the government—not on the basis of own experience of injustice, but rather the emergence of a shared sense of common cause with others who were treated unjustly. For example, Bakuniak and Nowak (1987) argue that Solidarity emerged out of the expansion of the borders of social identity, in that workers around the country continued to strike in solidarity with smaller plants who were not strong enough to have their demands met on their own, thereby resulting in a transition from work plant solidarity to working class solidarity.

Furthermore, a crucial factor in the development of Solidarity as a movement was the development of ‘positive voluntary groups’—groups that were organised not only around an object of conflict (e.g. poor working conditions), but also a clearly defined opponent and common identity (e.g. government authorities who were inflicting such conditions; Bakuniak & Nowak, 1987). Therefore, this context is clearly marked by tripolar intergroup relations that involve not only the minority and the majority, but also those in positions of authority seen to maintain the status quo in intergroup relations. Having a clear sense of who ‘our’ opponents are helped to define the emergent identity between the minority of workers directly affected by the
government’s policy and the majority who acted in solidarity with this group. Importantly, it also allowed for alternative versions of the social reality to develop—ones that were not defined by those in positions of established authority. As Bakuniak and Nowak (1987) argue, solidarity was made possible through a process of collective reality reconstruction that allowed a common world outlook to emerge. It was this emergent social psychological process, rather than the structural relations of interdependence between the different actors, that allowed the different groups of workers to come to a shared understanding of who ‘we’ are and how ‘we’ can act together to achieve change in the social reality of intergroup relations.

3.7 Chapter Summary

In this chapter we sought to conceptualise political solidarity and demarcate our analysis from the way in which solidarity, and group solidarity in particular, has been understood and investigated within existing sociological and social psychological research. We considered the concept of solidarity as embodying both social unity and social diversity and as the basis of both social stability and social change. Our review of sociological and social psychological analyses of group solidarity revealed their focus to be mostly on solidarity as unity or cohesiveness, conceptualising it as a relatively stable characteristic of social networks and groups. These approaches seem to overlook the way in which solidarity is understood in more politicised contexts and its role in processes of social change.

In contrast, in the political sphere, solidarity is fundamentally about dealing with diversity and conflict on the road to social change—and this is reflected in our conceptualisation of political solidarity. Within this thesis political solidarity is conceptualised as a social change process that takes place in a context of intergroup power relations marked by (social) psychological change and the re-definition of who ‘we’ are in relation to both the powerful and the powerless others. We also sought to delineate political solidarity from ‘prosocial behaviour’ more generally, and altruistic and helping behaviour in particular. Additionally, we discussed a number of examples of (large-scale as well as the ‘everyday’) social change processes that further illustrate political solidarity as a process of social psychological change in intergroup relations.
Our conceptualisation of political solidarity raises at least three broad questions for the social psychology of social change. Firstly, what makes any collective challenge to the status quo possible? Secondly, is solidarity between the minority and majority possible given diversity in terms of group size, status, social power, and relations with those in positions of societal authority? Thirdly, what is the process by which the majority becomes willing to challenge the status quo and those in positions of authority in solidarity with the minority? As discussed in Chapter 4, adequate (if somewhat incomplete) answers to the first two questions can be surmised from existing literature of relevance to social change, including the role of social identity and self-categorization processes in collective action and prejudice reduction. The third question, however, presents a greater challenge to existing analyses of social change and will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.
4.1 Introduction

In Chapter 3 we defined political solidarity as a concept that seeks to capture a particular process of social and psychological change in intergroup power relations—namely, the change in the meaning of the majority identity that enables challenge to authority in solidarity with the minority to emerge. In this chapter we seek to move beyond the conceptual and phenomenological delineation to locate political solidarity within the key social psychological approaches of relevance to social change. Much of social psychology can in one way or another be related to processes of social change. However, in this chapter we focus on those areas of research and theorising that are particularly relevant to political solidarity as a social change process, as discussed below.

In introducing this thesis, we suggested that much of the work on intergroup relations that is relevant to social change seems to be oriented either towards understanding social change as a collective challenge to the status quo (e.g. collective action) or as improvement in existing intergroup relations (e.g. prejudice reduction). Within the ‘collective action approaches’, at the heart of social change is social conflict—a contest between those in positions of social power and domination and those who act collectively to challenge the status quo in intergroup relations. In contrast, the ‘prejudice reduction approaches’ largely focus on improving existing intergroup relations and reducing intergroup conflict and animosity. Furthermore, the first category mostly focuses on members of various minority groups—defined as such in terms of social power, if not (necessarily) group size—acting to change their position of perceived low status or disadvantage. The second, more often than not, seeks to improve the attitudes of some societal majority towards a relevant minority group (e.g. Whites’ attitudes towards Blacks).

The present chapter reviews this work, starting with the minority-oriented approaches. We first discuss minority influence, and particularly the role of social conflict in this domain, and then focus on the dynamics of collective protest (including crowd protest and social movement participation) as a vehicle for social change. Then, we look at the more majority-oriented prejudice reduction literature,
and the role of self-categorization and social identity processes in efforts to minimise social conflict and improve existing intergroup relations (without necessarily challenging the status quo). Political solidarity as a social change process can be understood to involve aspects of both collective action and prejudice reduction—the emergence of shared willingness to collectively challenge the status quo and the authority is predicated on subgroup differences between the minority and majority being understood in a way that allows for such shared interests, goals and actions to emerge. In this regard, we also discuss the implications of the ‘prejudice reduction vs. collective action’ dichotomy for social psychological understanding of social change, suggesting that the discipline would benefit from a more integrated approach that sees these processes as distinct but interdependent, especially when considered in the broader, tripolar, context of intergroup relations in which social change, including political solidarity, often takes place. In the final section of this chapter we briefly review the work on intergroup emotions, with a particular focus on how certain emotions experienced by the majority (e.g. collective guilt, moral outrage) in response to the victimization of some relevant minority can motivate majority support for reparation and social change in this domain.

4.2 Minority Influence as Social Change

The work on minority influence, pioneered by Moscovici and colleagues (Moscovici, 1974; Moscovici, 1975, 1976), shares with the social identity approach a meta-theoretical orientation that focuses on explaining not only the stability in social relations but also social conflict as a tool for social change and innovation. Indeed, minority influence originated from a critique of the predominant conformity-focused approaches and the ‘dependence’ theory of social influence in particular, which proposed that influence flows from power in the form of control of desired or valued

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1 This section aims to discuss those aspects of the minority influence research that are of particular relevance to processes of social change in intergroup relations and that intersect with social identity/self-categorization processes of key interest in this thesis. We recognise that there are other aspects of this work (that are less relevant and therefore not included in the present discussion) that focus more on the influence processes more generally and are not (directly) concerned with the question of social change in intergroup relations.
resources (see also Turner, 1991, 2005). Moscovici (1976) proposed that such a theory failed to account for innovation and social change in society. In his genetic model of social influence, he rejected the idea that power as resource control is the basis of influence, arguing instead for a distinction between power as dependence on others and influence as the capacity to change the private attitudes of others (David & Turner, 2001a; Moscovici & Lage, 1976; but see also Ng, 1980; Turner, 2005).

According to the genetic model, all members of a group have the capacity to influence, be they in the majority or the minority, as social influence is separate from power (Moscovici, 1976; David & Turner, 2001). Importantly, rather than being confined to producing social conformity and control, influence processes can equally be used to motivate and create social conflict and the rejection of the status quo (Moscovici, 1976; Turner, 1991). Indeed, the central tenet of Moscovici’s work is the idea that it is the minorities that act as agents of social change ‘from below’ by challenging existing status relations and those in control of resources—a process that traditional theories of conformity and dependence have difficulty explaining (see also Ng, 1980).

The genetic model of minority influence suggests that minorities will generate influence to the extent that they consistently a) disrupt the established norm and produce doubt and uncertainty for the majority, b) draw attention to themselves, c) demonstrate a coherent alternative point of view, d) show confidence and commitment to this point of view, e) signal that they are unwilling to compromise, and f) demonstrate that the only way to restore social stability and resolve social conflict is for the majority to shift towards the minority’s position. Perceived behavioural style of the minority, and in particular the extent to which the minority’s behaviour is seen as consistent (both intra-personally, i.e. across situations, and inter-personally, i.e. across different minority group members), is proposed as the driving mechanism that produces influence in this domain. Consistency signals confidence and certainty that one’s position is the (only) right one, it creates visibility, conflict and uncertainty about established group norms, and therefore encourages alternative views of the social world—a process akin to the emergence of cognitive alternatives proposed within the social identity theory (Moscovici, 1976; Turner, 1991).
The genetic theory of minority influence was later modified into a dual process ‘conversion’ theory that proposed distinct processes of social influence depending on whether the source of influence was a majority or minority group member (Moscovici, 1980). According to conversion theory, majority influence is based on power defined as control of external valued resources. Therefore, this form of influence (at best) results in compliance and conformity, evidenced in short-term change in public attitudes. On the other hand, minority influence is based on the process of conversion, thus representing true influence, persuasion and private acceptance. Overall, the evidence in support of conversion theory has been mixed, although a number of early studies (e.g. the blue-green studies) seem to show that although people publicly conform to the majority, their private perceptions change in line with the minority position (Moscovici, Lage, & Naffrechoux, 1969; Moscovici & Personnaz, 2001).

Not only are there meta-theoretical intersections between the early work on minority influence and the social identity perspective—a number of important aspects of minority influence research have been inspired by the social identity and self-categorization theories’ analyses of social influence and social change. For example, Mugny and colleagues have extended the conversion theory to incorporate the key ideas from social identity theory, arguing that identification with a minority should facilitate its influence (Mugny, 1982; Mugny, Kaiser, Papastamou, & Perez, 1984; Mugny & Papastamou, 1982; Mugny & Perez, 1991). More recent evidence based on self-categorization theory also suggests that it is a shared social identity or self-categorization as ingroup members, rather than being in the minority or majority per se, that forms the basis of influence among members of social groups (David & Turner, 1996, 1999, 2001a, 2001b).

According to the social identity approach to social influence, people expect to agree with others who are seen as ingroup members, and disagree with those seen as members of outgroups (Turner, 1991)—and failure to do so produces uncertainty and the need for its resolution. Both majority and minority influence are mediated by the self-categorisation process, and have been shown to produce both conversion and compliance (David & Turner, 2001a; Perez & Mugny, 1987; Turner, 1991). It is recognised that majority/minority status can also be a cue for ingroup/outgroup
membership, with the majority position being seen as more normative, consensual and prototypical, and therefore more likely to be seen as ingroup, while the minority position is more likely to be seen as deviant, marginalised, and therefore outgroup (David & Turner, 2001). However, from a social identity perspective, whether an influence attempt is successful or otherwise has more to do with the relationship between the source and target of influence, rather than some fixed quality of majorities or minorities per se (David & Turner, 2001).

In a series of studies, David and Turner demonstrated the importance of shared category membership for the process of influence (David & Turner, 1996, 1999, 2001a). For example, they presented participants with both majority and minority messages, delivered either by an ingroup or outgroup source (David & Turner, 1996). When the source of message was seen as outgroup, subjects showed an immediate/public polarization away from the source and towards a more extreme ingroup position, regardless of whether the outgroup source was a member of the minority or majority. In contrast, when the message was said to be from an ingroup source both the minority and the majority messages were influential, with the minority being more influential in private than public, compared to the majority. These findings replicate the traditional ‘conversion’ effect, but only when the minority is clearly seen as ingroup—the outgroup minority influence is rejected regardless of whether the responses are made in private or public.

There is also evidence that when the comparative frame of reference changes so that hitherto outgroup minorities come to be re-categorised as ingroup, their influence message is more likely to be accepted (David & Turner, 1999). In these studies, moderately feminist participants were presented with a message from separatist feminists either in an intragroup, intergroup, or no explicit context. When there was no explicit inter- or intra-group context, minority influence was delayed, suggesting a process of long-term conversion. Importantly, in line with self-categorization theory, in the intragroup context, where the separatist minority was more likely to be seen as deviant and marginalised, their message was rejected. However, in the intergroup context that exposed participants to a salient anti-feminist outgroup, thereby reducing the perception of separatists as deviants, the separatist minority message was accepted. These findings point to the contrastive and
comparative nature of the social identity that enable the minority to be redefined as being more or less representative of who ‘we’ are in the eyes of the majority, thereby shaping majority’s stance towards this group.

4.2.1 The tri-partite context of minority influence

Of particular importance to the present thesis (and other approaches to social change as discussed further in the chapter) is the tri-polar model of minority influence proposed by Mugny and colleagues (Mugny, 1982; Mugny et al., 1984; Mugny & Papastamou, 1982; Mugny & Perez, 1991). Within this model, minority influence takes place in a tripolar context of intergroup relations, involving a minority group in an antagonistic relationships with a dominant power majority and seeking to influence and mobilise the support of the population or numerical majority (Mugny, 1982). Importantly, the model clearly differentiates between a majority group defined in terms of its position of dominance (i.e. ‘power’) and the rest of the ‘population’ comprising the numerical majority. Mugny, for example, suggests that these two groups are distinct

“…precisely because they are in a clearly defined relationship: on one side there is the power which dictates norms and rules, and on the other side there is the population which submits to the domination by this power and which through the interiorization (sic) of the dominant ideology participates wholly of partly in the norm and rule-enforcing activities and thus becomes a majority”

(Mugny, 1982, p.29).

As such, according to Mugny and colleagues, the relationship between the ‘power’ majority and the ‘population’ (i.e. numerical majority) is one of domination, where the ‘population’ uncritically submits to the demands of the dominant group. In contrast, the relationship between the ‘minority’ and the ‘population’ is one of influence. According to this model, and in line with the minority influence ideas more generally, the minority will be more likely to influence the majority to the extent that it is seen as sharing the same group membership with the majority and
maintains a consistent position in relation to its conflict with the group in the ‘power’ position.

This particular conceptualisation of minority influence processes is undoubtedly an important development in social psychological understanding of social change processes and as such has impacted on other research areas, most notably the work on social movement participation (e.g. Simon & Klandermans, 2001; see below). However, the tripolar context of minority influence (as proposed by Mugny and colleagues) remains a theoretical proposition which has not been systematically examined in minority influence (or any other) research to date. Moreover, if minority influence is understood as taking place within the tripolar (i.e. power, minority, majority) context as described above than it becomes necessary to consider the majority’s stance not only towards the powerless (i.e. minorities), but also the powerful. As it currently stands, Mugny’s tri-polar model leaves little scope for the members of the numerical majority to change sides and reject those in positions of ‘power’, given that the ‘population’ is seen as fully dominated by, and therefore expected to acquiesce to, the ‘power’ group and its demands. Furthermore, given the prominent role of social conflict in Moscovici’s early work, it is somewhat puzzling that minority influence research rarely (if ever) considers the relationship between minority influence and engagement in collective action to advance the minority’s cause. As we discuss in the next section, collective action has long been conceived of as the ‘strategy of choice’ when it comes to social change (Sherif & Sherif, 1969).

4.3 Collective Action as Social Change

4.3.1 The Collective Action Dilemma

That people are able to act collectively to achieve a particular group or societal goal runs counter to the predominant view within society and (some of) the social scientific theories (e.g. rational choice theory) that human beings are ultimately selfish and interested solely in procuring individual benefits. Seen from this perspective, group solidarity and collective, cooperative behaviour will only take place to the extent that tangible individual benefits (e.g. material rewards, avoidance
of negative sanctions) are afforded by such action (Becker, 1976; Hechter, 1987). As discussed in Chapter 3, these approaches have also framed much of the work on the so called ‘prosocial’ or ‘solidary’ behaviour (e.g. altruism, helping; Bierhoff & Fetchenhauer, 2006). Applied to political solidarity, as a form of collective action that ultimately benefits the ‘other’, individualistic, rational choice approaches suggest that this process should be highly unlikely, if not impossible. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, numerous historical and contemporary examples suggest otherwise. It is therefore important to consider briefly both the ‘dilemma’ and some solutions to the ‘problem’ of collective action (see Olson, 1965) that allow us to move beyond the individual self-interest as the key explanatory factor in this domain.

As early as 1651, in his seminal work *Leviathan* philosopher Thomas Hobbes argued that human beings always act out of self-interest. Thereby, any action in the interest of public or collective goods needs to be sanctioned by a strong state (Hobbes, 1651). Stemming from this egoistic view of human nature, the dominant approach to the analysis of collective social behaviour has been to argue that people make a rational decision whether or not to participate in collective action on the basis of perceived costs and benefits of participation (Olson, 1965; cf. Zald & McCarthy, 1979). Accordingly, collective action will occur only to the extent that the perceived private benefits of participation outweigh the costs. Furthermore, in this view ‘free-riding’ will generally be preferred to participation, unless there are significant ‘selective incentives’ to participate (Olson, 1965) or negative consequences for failure to do so (Hechter, 1987). This analysis presupposes that the ‘self’ in ‘self-interest’ is necessarily the individual or personal self—as such, any ‘rational’ collective behaviour is therefore reduced to individuals acting to achieve their individual goals and objectives that may or may not coincide with the goals and objectives of others.

The ‘rational choice’ approach (also known as resource mobilisation theory) has been widely criticized for neglecting collective identity processes in its analysis of collective behaviour (Friedman & McAdam, 1992; Gamson, 1992a; Kelly, 1993). Critics of the rational choice approach do not deny that strategic considerations of cost and benefits are important, but argue that such considerations are inevitably rooted in collective identity, where collective identity itself is seen as an ‘incentive’
to act (Friedman & McAdam, 1992). As Gamson (1992a) argues, “Solidarity [group cohesiveness or commitment] and collective identity operate to blur the distinction between individual and group interest, undermining the premises on which such utilitarian [rational choice] models operate.” From a social identity perspective, the ‘collective action dilemma’ is easily resolved—when a particular social identity is salient, and therefore the relevant self is the social rather than the individual self, acting to advance the interest of the collective is to act in terms of one’s (social) self-interest.

4.3.2 Collective Action as a Response to Perceived Disadvantage

The centrality of social or collective identity processes in understanding collective behaviour is now widely accepted within both sociology and social psychology. In the case of the latter, it was social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and self-categorisation theory (Turner, 1982, 1985; Turner et al, 1987) that paved the way for a new understanding of group processes and intergroup relations, including collective action (see Chapter 2 for a detailed discussion of the social identity approach). In the context of intergroup relations (and collective behaviour almost invariably takes place in such a context) it is the social identity, as that part of the self-concept derived from memberships of relevant social groups, that guides people’s understanding of and action upon the social world (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). From a social psychological point of view, therefore, a group member engages in collective action any time that she or he is acting as a representative of the group and where the action is directed at improving the conditions of the group as a whole (Wright, 1999; Wright, Taylor, & Moghaddam, 1990; Wright & Tropp, 2002). Importantly, thus defined, collective action can be performed by a single individual as well as a large and well-organised social movement, as long as the individuals involved in such action perceive themselves as acting on behalf of and for the benefit of the collective (Wright, 1999).

Social change is often associated with the need to eliminate some form of disadvantage or discrimination—and collective action, as an instrument of social change, has been used to this end throughout history. Accordingly, within social psychology much of collective action research focuses on the relatively
disadvantaged groups and their responses to the experience of illegitimate status inequality. Social identity theory proposes that perceived legitimacy and stability of intergroup status positions, and the permeability of intergroup boundaries (the extent to which it is possible for individual group members to leave the low-status group and join the high-status group) determine the strategies that group members will use in response to their social position within the broader system of intergroup relations (Reynolds & Turner, 2001; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Over the past decades, a significant body of research has accumulated to show that, in line with the SIT hypotheses, the necessary preconditions for collective action include identification as a low-status group member, and a perception that the intergroup boundaries are impermeable and the existing status hierarchy illegitimate and unstable (Ellemers et al., 1993; Kawakami & Dion, 1993, 1995; Kelly & Breinlinger, 1995, 1996; Kelly & Kelly, 1994; Reicher & Haslam, 2006a, 2006b; Wright, 1999; Wright et al., 1990).

Interestingly, severely restricted (i.e. token) as opposed to completely closed boundary permeability has been consistently shown to impede disadvantaged groups’ collective action (Wright, 1997, 1999, 2001; Wright et al., 1990; Wright & Tropp, 2002). Most collective action research focuses on how intergroup boundaries perceived to be completely closed or impermeable affect people’s willingness to engage in collective action to advance their group’s (rather than individual group member’s) position. In contrast, Wright and colleagues (Wright, 1997, 1999, 2001; Wright et al., 1990) proposed that slightly permeable boundaries (i.e. tokenism) were in fact more typical of ‘real world’ social contexts. Centrally, these researchers argue that tokenism is a useful tool in reducing the likelihood of collective action as it maintains the perception that it is still possible (if highly unlikely) to improve one’s circumstances through individual mobility—thereby making collective action to achieve social change seem somewhat unnecessary. Barack Obama and Hilary Clinton are good examples of individual group members who have passed through largely impermeable racial and gender boundaries, respectively. They can be readily evoked as examples of ‘anything is possible’, in line with what Wright and colleagues have argued is a ‘myth of meritocracy’.

In line with this argument, Wright et al. (1990) found that when intergroup boundaries were open, the disadvantaged responded with inaction or engaged in
individual action to improve their personal circumstances. On the other hand, closed intergroup boundaries resulted in collective action aimed at improving group status. Participants in the token condition, however, chose individual (rather than collective) action despite being aware of the highly restricted boundary permeability. Wright (2001) suggests that this effect was not investigated or predicted by previous research, as it was assumed that the restrictiveness of group boundaries will be equated with boundary impermeability, resulting in collective action. However, tokenism instead encouraged interpersonal comparisons with the few successful tokens, rather than the intergroup comparison based on status inequality (Wright & Tropp, 2002), thus reducing collective attempts at status improvement. Importantly, tokenism introduces ambiguity as to the legitimacy or otherwise of a particular intergroup relations system—only when such ambiguity is resolved and the intergroup status distinctions seen as clearly illegitimate (i.e. when tokenism is clearly labelled as discrimination by fellow ingroup members), does collective action ensue (Wright, 1997).

Collective action research also encompasses a number of areas that focus on understanding the processes or mechanisms that make collective action possible or particular social contexts in which collective behaviour takes place. For example, a significant body of work has focused on the role of intergroup emotions in collective action (Iyer, Schmader, & Lickel, 2007; Leach, Iyer, & Pedersen, 2006; Leach, Iyer, & Pedersen, 2007; van Zomeren, Spears, Leach, & Fischer, 2004), as discussed later in this chapter. In terms of specific social contexts in which collective behaviour takes place, two highly typical examples of collective action include people participating in crowd protest or becoming members of a social movement in order to achieve some form of change in society. Social psychological analyses of crowd behaviour and social movement participation are discussed next.

4.3.3 Dynamics of Crowd Protest

When asked to imagine what it is that people do when they try to achieve social change, most of us would probably imagine a crowd engaged in some form of collective social or political protest. Crowd behaviour has long fascinated social psychologists, starting with the work of Le Bon and the idea that crowds provide
participants with anonymity, and therefore result in the loss of self and personal responsibility (LeBon, 1947/1895). As a consequence, Le Bon argued, crowd members engage in irrational, atavistic behaviours, dominated by the "racial unconscious". In contrast to Le Bon, Floyd Allport criticised the notion of the "racial unconscious" arguing instead that "there is no psychology of groups which is not essentially and entirely a psychology of individuals" (F. H. Allport, 1924, cited in Reicher, 1987, p. 175). Allport emphasised the individuality of crowd members and argued that the similarities in their behaviour stem from the similarities in their individual psychology – "the individual in the crowd behaves just as he would alone only more so" (F. H. Allport, 1924, cited in Reicher 1987, p.176).

These early approaches to crowd behaviour reject the notion that, within the crowd, individual cognition may be socially determined (Reicher, 1987) and as such have been critiqued extensively, particularly from the social identity perspective. In particular, Reicher has argued that early approaches to crowd behaviour, such as the work of Le Bon and Floyd Allport,: a) exclude the role of authority from crowd events; b) disregard the social context, and therefore pathologise the crowd, and c) clearly separate the individual from the social—the crowd is seen as a "reified entity located outside the individual” (Reicher, 1987, p. 175). A different analysis of crowd behaviour emerges if we adopt the view that human cognition is socially structured—how members of social groups behave is shaped by their self-definition as members of relevant social groups, i.e. their relevant social identity. Such a self-definition (i.e. self-categorization) is itself a social and ideological product, emerging within the broader context of intergroup relations.

Building on these ideas, Reicher and colleagues developed the Elaborated Social Identity Model (ESIM) of crowd behaviour (Drury & Reicher, 1999; Drury, Reicher, & Stott, 2003; Reicher, 1996, 2001; Stott & Drury, 2000; Stott & Reicher, 1998). Of particular relevance to political solidarity and the tripolar context in which it is proposed to occur, ESIM differentiates between three distinct social actors typically involved in a crowd protest—the "confrontation minority" as that part of the crowd playing a more active role in the event; the groups in position of societal power and authority, seeking to regulate crowd behaviour (e.g. the police); and the rest of the crowd, 'coming along' to the event but without a more active role in the
protest. In explaining the process of crowd conflict, this model further differentiates between the *initiation* of conflict (that typically involves the ‘confrontation minority’ and the police) and the subsequent *change* in the nature of conflict as a result of indiscriminate police action against all crowd members. Conflict will be initiated when a) such behaviour is deemed legitimate; b) police action is seen to violate what is perceived as proper social practice; and c) conflictual tactics are considered an effective way to meet the desired ends. Importantly, whether conflict is seen as a legitimate protest strategy, whether the authority (i.e. police) is seen to act in accordance with proper social practice, and whether conflictual tactics are seen as effective will all be defined with reference to the collective beliefs perceived as shared within the crowd (Reicher, 1996).

This analysis suggests a complex and dynamic relationship between self-categorisation, action and intergroup relations (Reicher, 1996). In particular, if the police are seen to respond to an assumed threat in the crowd by denying the perceived rights of *all* crowd members, then the conditions are provided for hitherto separate sections of the crowd to form a single category. As such, the newly united crowd becomes both motivated and empowered to challenge the outside forces. Reicher argues that “…it is not sufficient to point to an initial ‘confrontation minority’ as an explanation of collective conflict. Rather, it is necessary to analyse how the subsequent intergroup dynamics produce the conditions under which such confrontational actions may generalise” (Reicher, 1996, p.130, emphasis added).

According to Reicher (1996), however, involvement in collective conflict will be limited to those in the crowd who perceive *their* rights to be denied. In other words, crowd members will only engage in collective conflict to the extent that they perceive themselves as directly affected by the negative actions of the police or others in position of authority. However, in line with the argument proposed in this thesis, it is possible to imagine situations in which intergroup conflict (crowd or otherwise) spreads to involve people who do not perceive themselves as directly affected by the authority’s action but nevertheless object to the way in which (other) group members are treated. In this context, the meaning of the relevant (majority) identity can be redefined in a way that promotes (majority) opposition to authority even when there is no direct experience of negative treatment. This idea is discussed
in more detail in Chapter 5, in relation to the dynamics of political solidarity as a social change process.

4.3.4 Social Movement Participation

Participation in social movements is another archetypal form of collective action towards social change. Traditionally, resource mobilization theory has been the dominant approach to the analysis of social movements (and collective social behaviour more generally), arguing that people make a rational decision whether or not to participate in collective action on the basis of perceived costs and benefits of participation (Olson, 1965; Zald & McCarthy, 1979). As discussed in relation to collective action more generally, this approach has been critiqued (particularly within the social movements literature) for neglecting the role of collective identity processes in collective behaviour (Friedman & McAdam, 1992; Gamson, 1992a; Kelly, 1993). At the heart of any social movement are people acting not as individuals, but as members of social groups involved in a political struggle (Simon & Klandermans, 2001). Building on past critique of resource mobilisation approaches, and research evidence that instead emphasised the role of collective identity in social movement participation (Klandermans, 2000; Klandermans, Sabucedo, Rodriguez, & Weerd, 2002; Simon, 1998; Simon et al., 1998), Simon and Klandermans (2001) developed the politicised collective identity model of social movement participation. The model not only seeks to explain the process by which collective identity becomes politicised, but also argues for its superior predictive power when it comes to collective action participation.

According to Simon and Klandermans (2001), a collective identity is politicized when people are self-conscious of their particular group membership and when they engage in a power struggle on behalf of their group, while being aware of the wider societal context in which such struggle takes place (Simon & Klandermans, 2001). Furthermore, a politicized collective identity emerges out of a sense of shared grievance or shared fate among ingroup members and an attribution of blame to a common external enemy. Importantly, a collective identity is said to be fully politicized once support from external ‘third parties’ (e.g. the national government, general public) is sought.
This ‘triangulation’ step in the politicization process is particularly important as it demonstrates, Simon and Klandermans (2001) argue, the recognition (on part of the movement’s participants or activists) of the wider community as a more inclusive ingroup membership. The process of ‘triangulation’ is premised on the perception that relevant intergroup relations take place in the context of more inclusive shared categories, which are “likely to bring into play third parties such as representatives of the more inclusive ingroups” (Simon & Klandermans, 2001, p.323). The notion of ‘triangulation’ stems both from the SCT conceptualisation of the (social) self as being hierarchically organized (Turner et al, 1987), as well as the proposed tri-polar context in which minority influence takes place (e.g. Mugny, 1982).

Importantly, as in Klandermans’s earlier work (e.g. Klandermans, 1997), within the PCI model those who sympathise with or have positive attitudes towards the movement and who share a ‘collective action frame’ with regard to the movement’s cause comprise the ‘mobilisation potential’ of social movements. Akin to a sense of shared social identity (see Billig, 1976; Tajfel, 1981), collective frames are shared sets of beliefs that serve to explain social issues and suggest an appropriate collective response (Gamson, 1992b). They define one’s grievance as injustice, define the self and others in collective identity terms (e.g. ‘us’ vs. ‘them’) and facilitate the belief that social change is not only possible but that the social movement is capable of achieving such an outcome (see also Klandermans, 1997).

Existing work on social movement participation (at least implicitly) conceptualises the ‘mobilisation potential’ as comprised of those who share a pre-existing categorization or collective identity with members of the relevant social movement (e.g. gay people as the ‘mobilisation potential’ for the gay rights movement). As such, it makes an important contribution to understanding how social minority members come to identify not only with their group but also with the relevant social movement striving to advance the group’s cause, and the implications of such a politicized identity on willingness to engage in collective action. Indeed, although little (if any) empirical research investigated the proposed process by which collective identity becomes politicized, existing evidence shows that identification with a particular movement (e.g. gay rights movement), rather than a more diffuse disadvantaged minority group (e.g. gay people), is a better predictor of collective
action participation (Klandermans, 2000; Klandermans et al., 2002; Simon et al., 1998; Stürmer & Simon, 2004).\(^1\)

There is little explanation within this work, however, as to how people might become a part of the ‘mobilisation potential’ in the first place—how do they come to have the positive attitudes towards the movement and share the ‘grievance interpretation’ that the movement is putting forward. Similarly, other sociological work on social movements—for example the work on consensus mobilisation (Klandermans, 1984) and frame alignment processes (Snow, Rochford, Worden, & Benford, 1986)—focuses on the strategies that activists can (or should) use to engender wider support for their movement, without considering how the underlying dynamics of social identity and self-categorization may affect such attempts to mobilise popular support.

However, the framing approach to social movements explicitly recognises that ‘consensus mobilisation’ or ‘frame alignment’ processes fundamentally involve a contest over the definition of social categories and the relationships between them (see also Reicher & Hopkins, 1996a, 1996b, 2001). Frame alignment is just as likely to be employed by the activists’ opponents (who are often in positions of power and authority) as by the activists themselves. The contested nature of intergroup relations makes it all the more necessary to consider the ‘mobilization potential’ not only in terms of their orientation towards the social movement, but also to the movement’s political opponents, and particularly those in positions of established social power, authority and leadership.

For successful mobilization of popular support, therefore, it may be equally important to consider how members of the society at large (as witnesses of the power struggle) perceive themselves in terms of relevant (psychological) group

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\(^1\) More recently, Stürmer and Simon (2005) proposed a dual pathway model of social movement participation in which the perceived costs and benefits of participation constitute a distinct path to collective action participation comprised of extrinsic motivators or rewards that are said to pull people towards action. In contrast, collective identification processes constitute an intrinsic motivation that provides the necessary push to participate. Given that this thesis is primarily focused on the role of social identity and self-categorization processes in social change, this model will not be considered here.
memberships emerging within a particular intergroup context. If ‘triangulation’ is to be successful, we need to understand not only the self-categorization processes involving existing members of some aggrieved, disadvantaged and/or dissenting minority (whether or not they see the wider community as ingroup). As argued in the present thesis, equally important are the self-categorization dynamics involving the wider community—under what conditions will members of the society at large see the activists (rather than their opponents) as sharing the relevant norms, values and beliefs, and ultimately social (self-)category membership. Therefore, while the politicized collective identity model provides a comprehensive account of the process by which the collective identity of the aggrieved, dissenting and possibly disadvantaged minority becomes politicized, more work is needed to understand the mobilization of the so-called ‘community in general’ or the ‘silent majority’ and the ‘politicization’ of their collective identity.

4.3.5 Collective Action—Summary and Critique

In summary, the dynamics of collective action seem central to social psychological analyses of social change. Within this work, fundamental to social change is the process by which people come to define themselves as collectively disadvantaged or otherwise negatively affected by existing social relations and engage in collective action aimed to improve their (group’s) social position. However, there is far less theorizing or empirical research looking at how those who are not disadvantaged respond to inequality in intergroup relations and their position of relative advantage or higher status. Although Tajfel offered some early ideas in this domain, this process has not been the focus of either subsequent social identity theorising or research.

Overall, it seems that while disadvantaged groups are seen as having some agency in changing their circumstances, the non-disadvantaged are assumed to be in favour of the status quo, thereby acquiescing to, if not actively supporting, illegitimate intergroup inequality. As a result, the question of how dissent or social conflict spreads beyond the original parties involved to include other relevant social actors seems to have been somewhat neglected. Important advancements in this direction have been made within the social psychological analyses of crowd
behaviour and social movement participation. Within these approaches, understanding how conflict spreads beyond the original participants and the social movement participants’ attempts to mobilize wider support for one’s cause are of central importance. However, these ideas require further integration and elucidation if their role in the dynamics of political solidarity as a social change process is to be understood more fully.

4.4 Prejudice Reduction as Social Change

As discussed earlier in this chapter, there seem to be two distinct foci in the social psychology of social change. The research we discussed so far is clearly focused on disadvantaged or dissenting minority groups and the dynamics of social conflict, and collective protest in particular, as a social change strategy available to these groups. In this section, we look at the research on prejudice reduction that focuses more or less explicitly on the role of the majority in the social change process and the strategies that can be used to improve majority attitudes towards some relevant minority (e.g. Whites’ racism towards Blacks). Having said that, this work has also recognised that different prejudice reduction strategies may be preferred and have more likelihood of success depending on whether the targets of prejudice reduction belong to the majority or minority groups (e.g. Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2008; see below). In terms of its orientation to social change, the work on prejudice reduction contrasts with the collective action-oriented approaches, as it largely focuses on processes that have the potential to reduce social conflict and animosity and promote tolerance and harmony within existing intergroup relations. More recently, however, there has been a movement to recognise how these processes may impact on each other, as discussed further below. Considering the contributions and the more recent developments of prejudice reduction to understanding social change from the ‘majority perspective’, this research is highly relevant to our analysis of political solidarity. More specifically, however, social identity and self-categorization dynamics are at the core of most prejudice reduction work, making it particularly relevant to elucidating the process by which the nature of the majority identity can be redefined in a way that makes solidarity with the minority possible.
Before we can discuss the more contemporary developments in this domain, it is worthwhile considering Allport’s (1954) contact hypothesis as the basis for much of subsequent theorising and research on prejudice reduction. The basic premise of the contact hypothesis is that individuals are prejudiced because they are unfamiliar with the ‘other’—i.e. with members of other social groups. Therefore, in order to reduce prejudice, contact with members of other groups (as individuals) needs to be encouraged to give people an opportunity to get to know each other. Although the basic idea has common sense appeal, even Allport recognised that, for contact to be successful in reducing prejudice, a number of preconditions need to be met. For example, intergroup contact needs to have social and institutional support in the form of tolerant norms (see also Hewstone & Brown, 1986). Also, there need to be opportunities for close relationships or friendships to occur. Individuals involved in contact need to come from groups of equal status (and this is particularly difficult to achieve), and also work towards common goals—in other words, they need to be in a relationship of positive interdependence (see also Sherif, 1958, 1967). The contact hypothesis provided a starting point for many prejudice reduction models and strategies to emerge in the next couple of decades (see Dovidio, Glick, & Rudman, 2005)—here we focus on those that have self-categorization and social identity processes at their core.

How we see ourselves, or self-categorise, in relation to others forms the basis for much of prejudice reduction research following Allport’s work. The role of people’s psychological group memberships in prejudice reduction is suggested to play rather different roles, however, depending on which model we consider. The decategorisation model (Brewer & Miller, 1984, 1988) starts from the premise that social categorisation and intergroup differentiation (thinking of yourself and others in ingroup – outgroup terms) results in category-based judgements (such as negative stereotypes) being applied to all outgroup members. As such, categorization is said to result in inaccurate perception of individual outgroup members, which in turn leads to prejudice. Consequently, according to this model, in order to reduce prejudice, the salience of social categories needs to be reduced and individual differentiation and personalisation of outgroup members encouraged (Brewer & Miller, 1984, 1988; N. Miller, 2002; Norman Miller & Brewer, 1986). In contrast,
other prejudice reduction models consider social identity salience and self-categorisation processes more generally to be the very mechanism that makes prejudice reduction possible. They all stem from the idea that the self, including the social self, is hierarchically organised (as proposed by SCT; see Chapter 2) and investigate how self-categorization processes involving different levels of social identity (e.g. subgroup, superordinate) affect intergroup attitudes. We will start by discussing the strategies that primarily deal with (subgroup and/or superordinate) social identity salience, including re-categorization (e.g. Gaertner, Dovidio, Anastasio, Bachman, & Rust, 1993), sub-categorization (R. Brown & Hewstone, 2005; Hewstone & Brown, 1986) and dual categorization (e.g. Dovidio et al, 2008, Hornsey & Hogg, 2000a). Next, we will consider prejudice reduction strategies that place more emphasis on social identity content and in particular the extent to which who ‘we’ are as members of particular subgroups is also captured within the superordinate ‘us’. These ideas are particularly well represented in the work on ingroup projection (Mummendey & Wenzel, 1999; Wenzel, Mummendey, & Waldzus, 2008; Wenzel, Mummendey, Weber, & Waldzus, 2003) and organic pluralism (Haslam, 2004; Haslam, Eggins et al., 2003).

4.4.1 Prejudice Reduction as Subgroup and/or Superordinate Identity Salience?

The re-categorization model of prejudice reduction, also known as the common ingroup identity model (CIIM), is based on the idea that prejudice will be reduced when both ingroup and outgroup members are re-categorised as members of one superordinate, or higher-order, ingroup (Gaertner, Dovidio, Anastasio, Bachman, & Rust, 1993; Gaertner et al., 2000; Gaertner, Dovidio, Nier, Ward, & Banker, 1999; Gaertner, Dovidio, Rust et al., 1999; Gaertner, Rust, Dovidio, Bachman, & Anastasio, 1994). Under these conditions, pro-ingroup attitudes should apply to the newly created superordinate category, generalising to erstwhile outgroup members and thereby reducing intergroup animosity and prejudice. The process of re-categorisation has been proposed as one of the mechanisms through which intergroup contact reduces prejudice, as individuals engaged in contact come to redefine
themselves in terms of some higher-order shared category membership (Anastasio, Bachman, Gaertner, & Dovidio, 1997).

Empirical support for the re-categorization model has been mixed. Although re-categorisation has been shown to successfully reduce intergroup bias under some conditions (Gaertner, Dovidio, Nier et al., 1999; Gaertner, Dovidio, Rust et al., 1999; Gaertner et al., 1994), there is also evidence that asking people to forego subgroup distinctions and endorse membership of a unifying, superordinate category instead increases ingroup bias (see for example Hornsey & Hogg, 2000c). In dealing with these inconsistent findings, the proponents of re-categorisation agree that different subgroups may deal with the idea of a common identity differently depending on their status or power position in society (e.g. Dovidio et al, 2008), as discussed in more detail below. Furthermore, there may be circumstances when it may not be feasible, given the social reality of intergroup relations, to dispense with subgroup identities entirely—in some contexts, it may be necessary for group members to retain distinct subgroup identities, but see themselves as “all playing on the same team” (Gaertner et al., 1994)—a proposition we will return to shortly.

The sub-categorization or mutual intergroup differentiation model (MIDM; Hewstone & Brown, 1986, Brown & Hewstone, 2005), in contrast to CIIM, highlights the importance of subgroup distinctions. It suggests that maintaining subgroup salience during intergroup interaction is essential if positive effects of contact with individual outgroup members are to be generalised to the category as a whole (R. Brown & Hewstone, 2005; R. Brown, Vivian, & Hewstone, 1999; Crisp, Hewstone, & Rubin, 2001; Hewstone & Brown, 1986). However, akin to CIIM, these researchers also acknowledge that subgroup identities need to complement each other within an overarching cooperative framework. The cooperative framework could be seen as another term for a superordinate identity whose norms and values prescribe, or at least are not in conflict with, intergroup tolerance and harmony (Wenzel et al., 2008).

While the role of dual identity salience in prejudice reduction was considered in both re-categorization and sub-categorization models, dual categorisation research by Hornsey and Hogg (e.g. Hornsey & Hogg, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c) sought to investigate directly whether simultaneous salience of subgroup and superordinate
identities is in fact superior to the single-identity alternatives. Akin to CIIM and MIDM, dual categorization model suggests that simultaneous salience of both subgroup and superordinate categories is necessary for the successful reduction of intergroup bias, as it allows the need for positive distinctiveness to be met within a superordinate context of harmonious intergroup relations (Hornsey & Hogg, 2000a). This work provides some evidence that simultaneous salience of both subgroup and superordinate identities may be a superior strategy for prejudice reduction at least when compared with re-categorization (a single common ingroup identity), although it did not significantly outperform sub-categorization (Hornsey & Hogg, 2000c). Furthermore, dual categorization was more effective in reducing prejudice when subgroups were relatively similar, whereas superordinate categorization on its own reduced prejudice more when subgroups were relatively dissimilar—under conditions of dissimilarity between subgroups there is less need to establish the positive distinctiveness of the ingroup, the authors argue, and therefore less ingroup bias (Hornsey & Hogg, 2000b).

In a recent update of the common ingroup identity model, Dovidio and colleagues also re-examined the role of dual identity and the conditions under which superordinate compared to dual identity leads to prejudice reduction (Dovidio, et al, 2008). Indeed, this updated version of the common ingroup identity model now explicitly includes dual identity or ‘two subgroups in one group’ and argues that there are conditions under which it may be superior to the common ingroup identity in terms of its capacity to reduce prejudice. Namely, differences in social power and status are often reflected in superordinate identities (e.g. Australian), which tend to be defined by the values and norms of the socially dominant majority (e.g. White Australians) rather than minority (e.g. Asian or Indigenous Australians) and as such serve to perpetuate the status quo in intergroup relations (see also Wenzel et al., 2008).

Therefore, minorities asked to forego inter-subgroup differences may have difficulty doing so in the context of the majority-defined superordinate category that perpetuates their minority status. Given that minorities are more likely to experience identity (distinctiveness) threat under such conditions, their attitudes towards the majority are less likely to be positive when asked to self-categorize solely in terms of
the superordinate identity. For minorities, therefore, prejudice (as intergroup bias and animosity towards the majority) is more likely to be reduced when both their subgroup and superordinate identities remain salient.

In contrast, members of the majority, as the socially dominant group, are likely to feel threatened by minorities that seek subgroup differentiation as it also potentially signals that the minority is willing to challenge existing inter-subgroup status relations. Majority members are therefore more likely to have positive attitudes towards the minority when both they and the minority self-categorize at a superordinate level. Indeed, it has been shown that minority group members showing preference for any other type of self-categorization (dual, sub-categorization, individual) elicited more prejudice on the part the majority compared to minorities willing to endorse a shared superordinate category (Dovidio et al, 2008).

While prejudice reduction work discussed above acknowledges that some level of both subgroup and superordinate categorisation needs to be preserved in order to achieve positive intergroup relationships, it is difficult to know, however, what dual or simultaneous categorisation means psychologically. The principle of functional antagonism as proposed by SCT (Turner et al., 1987) suggests that the salience of one level of self-categorisation, reduces the salience of other (higher or lower) levels, and therefore contradicts the suggestion that simultaneous salience of superordinate and subgroup identities is psychologically meaningful. However, the theory also states that different levels of self-categorisation are not mutually exclusive – and tend to “operate simultaneously most of the time, but their perceptual effects are inversely related” (Turner et al, 1987, p.50). Which level of self-categorisation is used is in itself highly variable and context-dependent – with those categories that maximise intergroup differences and intragroup similarities, and generally help to make sense of the social context, emerging as salient (see also Turner, Reynolds, Haslam, & Veenstra, 2006).

Two alternatives have been put forward to explain the psychological process of ‘simultaneous’ categorisation while not violating the functional antagonism assumption. Namely, it is possible that people self-categorise at the subgroup level within the context of a relevant superordinate identity, where the superordinate category serves as a reference point informing the experience of subgroup
membership (Hornsey & Hogg, 2002). Alternatively, based on the organic pluralism model (Durkheim, 1984/1893; Haslam, 2004; Turner & Haslam, 2001), it is the superordinate identity that is salient, but the content of the superordinate category is defined in terms of complementary subgroup differentiation (Haslam, Eggins et al., 2003; Wenzel et al., 2008). When it comes to political solidarity, therefore, a change in the meaning of the higher-order identity (the redefinition of the relevant norms, values and beliefs that defined who ‘we’ are) has the capacity redefine the relevant intergroup relations in a way that makes higher-order unity possible despite, or even because of, inter-subgroup diversity.

Ultimately, the crux of the argument may not be in proving the simultaneousness or otherwise of the different levels of self-categorisations, but rather in understanding how they interact with each other to help us make sense of the social world. The subgroup and superordinate self-categorisations should not be seen as independent, but rather as involved in a dynamic interplay—influencing each other’s boundaries but also meaning and normative content. When the meaning of the higher-order identity changes, so does the understanding of the relevant inter-subgroup relations. How subgroups relate to each other can therefore be seen as couched within the broader, higher-order, identity as the normative framework which serves as the background against which the inter-subgroup relationships are perceived, understood and evaluated. Ingroup projection and organic pluralism are discussed next, as approaches that explicitly focus on the content of superordinate or higher-order identities and how its emergence in the context of subgroup relations affects intergroup attitudes and behaviours.

4.4.2 Prejudice Reduction and Superordinate Identity Content—What’s In It For My (Sub)Group?

According to the ingroup projection model proposed by Mummendey and Wenzel (2001), prejudice results from the tendency of group members to see ingroup’s attributes as more prototypical or representative of the superordinate category (compared to attributes of some relevant outgroup), thus becoming the standard against which the outgroup is evaluated. There is now considerable evidence demonstrating that people tend to perceive their ingroup as more
prototypical compared to a relevant outgroup, as well as that they strive to maintain ingroup prototypicality (i.e. continue to project the relevant dimensions of the ingroup onto the superordinate identity) as the comparison outgroup changes (Waldzus & Mummendey, 2004; Waldzus, Mummendey, Wenzel, & Weber, 2003; Wenzel et al., 2008; Wenzel et al., 2003). The positive relationship between ingroup projection and negative outgroup attitudes, as well as between ingroup projection and the perceived legitimacy of status relations, has been demonstrated (Wenzel et al, 2008). The legitimacy findings are particularly interesting as they demonstrate that the more the high-status group identity is seen as prototypical of the superordinate category, the more this group supports the status quo. For the low-status groups, however, the relationship is negative, so that the higher their ingroup projection (higher perceived ingroup prototypicality of the superordinate category), the more illegitimate they see the existing status relations to be.

Wenzel and colleagues (2008) also suggest that, under some conditions dual categorization may in fact enhance ingroup projection and therefore lead to more, rather than less, prejudice. If dual identities are to effectively reduce prejudice, then the higher-order identity needs to be defined in a way that allows for subgroup differences and complementarity. When a given higher-order identity is completely inclusive of a given ingroup and outgroup (e.g. teams within an organization), and therefore highly relevant for inter-subgroup comparison, making both subgroup and higher-order identities salient is likely to increase ingroup projection (i.e. competition over which group is more representative of the higher-order category).

Therefore, in order to reduce prejudice, opportunities for ingroup projection need to be limited. One effective way of doing so is to redefine the higher-order identity in way that will enhance its complexity. Complex identities consist of multiple prototypes that make it difficult for a single group to ‘claim’ the superordinate identity as their own. The ingroup projection model, however, offers limited insight into the processes by which complexity of superordinate identities may be enhanced, but suggests that future research and models such as the organic pluralism approach to organizational functioning may offer useful insight in this domain.
The organic pluralism approach, formalised within the ASPIRe model (Actualizing Social and Personal Identity Resources; Haslam, Eggins and Reynolds 2003), seeks to explain how lower-level diversity (of beliefs, norms, interests, and psychological group membership) can be translated into higher-order homogeneity. The model proposes four phases in this process—a) ascertaining what the relevant social identities are in a given social context (e.g. different teams within an organization; ethnic/racial groups within society; b) debating and agreeing upon the relevant subgroup goals and interests; c) building on identities that emerged during subgroup discussions, to identify and agree upon shared superordinate goals (e.g. at the level of the organization); and d) evaluating the appropriateness of the superordinate goals for the higher-order category (e.g. organization as a whole), particularly by those in positions of leadership (Haslam et al, 2003). Such a process ensures that the emergent social identities are the ones that people feel adequately capture their understanding of themselves and others, both as individual members of the relevant subgroups as well as the subgroup relations located within the more inclusive superordinate category. As such, commitment to the relevant subgroup and superordinate goals and interests is more likely, as are more positive inter-subgroup relations, where subgroup difference is re-interpreted as enhancing rather than hindering higher-level goals and values.

Research evidence suggests that having an opportunity to discuss and agree upon the subgroup position enhances people’s identification with the superordinate category and satisfaction with a subsequent negotiation process at the superordinate level (Eggins, Haslam, & Reynolds, 2002). Furthermore, these strategies may be particularly important for relatively low-status or marginalised groups, as they are most likely to refrain from committing to higher-order goals perceived to trump their subgroup’s values and interests (O’Brien et al., 2004). These results echo the minorities’ response to prejudice reduction strategies that advocate a single (majority-defined) superordinate (as opposed to dual) identity (see Dovidio et al, 2008, for a review). The advantage of the ASPIRe model, however, is that it offers insight into the processes that increase the likelihood of higher-order identities that form the basis of cooperation and harmony, rather than intolerance and subversion of higher-order goals and interests.
Although the ASPIRe model has been developed with organizational contexts in mind, the processes and strategies proposed by this model equally apply to any social context characterised by the need to achieve (higher-order) unity, tolerance and cooperation in the face of (subgroup) diversity and/or conflict. Importantly, akin to the ingroup projection model, this line of work suggests that focusing solely on the re-definition of categorical boundaries may not be the full answer when it comes to changing intergroup relations to achieve better social and organizational functioning. It may also be vital to consider the process by which the content or meaning of relevant (subgroup and higher-order) identities is continually contested, negotiated and re-defined. This reasoning suggests that a process by which the meaning of the relevant majority identity is redefined may be crucial for understanding political solidarity. Political solidarity may be more likely when the meaning of the relevant majority is redefined so that the minority, rather than the authority, is seen to share the relevant norms, values and beliefs, that define who ‘we’ are and how ‘we’ should relate to each other in the social world.

With the exception of the ingroup projection and the ASPIRe models, existing prejudice reduction research has paid little attention to the content or meaning of social identities and their context-dependent nature. A more integrated approach to prejudice may be needed that takes into account the interaction between identity boundaries and identity meaning (i.e. norms, values) within a given social context of intergroup relations. What it means to be an Australian, for example, changes depending on whether the relevant social context involves a rugby match or debates over mandatory detention of asylum seekers. Therefore, the categorical boundary (i.e. Australian) remains the same, but its meaning (i.e. relevant norms, values and beliefs) changes as a result of changes in the social context and the relevant intergroup relations that it entails.

Therefore, and of relevance to the current thesis, the meaning of both higher-order and subgroup identities emerges from the context of intergroup relations. The way in which ‘simultaneous’ or ‘dual’ self-categorisation is experienced psychologically involves the meaning of the relevant higher-order category being both defined by and constitutive of the relevant inter-subgroup relationships embedded in a particular social context. Different meanings will be associated with
the higher-level (e.g. Australian) identity depending on the perceived nature of the subgroup relationships emerging from the relevant intergroup context. The opposite is also true—the reality of intergroup relations will be affected by changes in the meaning of the higher-order identity.

Consistent with the work on organic pluralism (Durkheim, 1984/1893; Haslam, Eggins et al., 2003), in this thesis it is proposed that political solidarity—manifested in the emergence of cooperation across difference between the minority and majority and the emergence of a shared willingness to actively challenge the authority—will be more likely when the majority self-categorizes in a way that allows for the minority to be seen as a group with a distinct history, opportunities and membership composition, that nevertheless shares ‘our’ norms, values, and beliefs. Therefore, political solidarity becomes possible when authority’s actions towards the minority redefine the higher-order identity so that it is no longer the authority but the minority that shares the relevant norms, values and beliefs that define who ‘we’ are.

4.4.3 Social Change as Prejudice Reduction and/or Collective Action?

While independent lines of research on collective action and prejudice reduction continue to flourish, little consideration has been given to how these processes may interact to affect social change dynamics. As Wright and Lubensky (2004) argue, the same psychological process that aims to reduce intergroup prejudice also has the potential to reduce the likelihood of collective protest, particularly if a single superordinate identity is encouraged and the majority and minority groups come to perceive each other in terms that minimise differences and instead emphasise a shared, higher-order identity. While this strategy may improve the attitudes of the majority towards the minority, it also has the potential to curtail the minority members’ perception of collective disadvantage, thereby reducing the possibility of collective action to challenge the status quo. Therefore, minorities and majorities may have different preferences when it comes to their superordinate and subgroup self-definition.

Nevertheless, for members of the social majority, an enhanced common identity with the minority may be the basis for perceiving minority’s disadvantaged position as unjust and illegitimate, as well as motivate more positive attitudes...
towards this group. For example, Dovidio and Gaertner (2004) manipulated whether an inclusive identity (e.g. Americans) or an exclusive one (e.g. White Americans) was under terrorist threat, and found that inclusive identity threat increased White participants’ perception that Black disadvantage in American society was unjust, which in turn reduced prejudice towards this group. Therefore, in a context where an external party was posing a threat to a shared higher-order category, the experience of common threat created the basis for the re-categorization of the minority as an (higher-order) ingroup. These findings point to the importance of considering the broader intergroup context in which minority – majority relations take place, including relationships with ‘third parties’. As some of the ‘collective action approaches’ to social change have recognised (e.g. Simon & Klandermans, 2001), ‘third party’ relations have the capacity to redefine the relevant majority/minority self-categorizations and therefore the reality of inter-subgroup relations between these groups.

4.5 The Role of Intergroup Emotions in Social Change

The notion that emotions emerge in the context of people’s relationships with relevant others is not new. Traditionally, emotion theories have largely centred around the experience of emotions at the level of the personal or individual self and related cognitive, motivational and, importantly, relational processes (Lazarus, 2001, 2006). Lazarus, for example, emphasises that:

“…emotions always depend on what transpires between a person and the environment, which most importantly consists of other persons…[W]e are constantly appraising – that is, imputing relational meaning to our ongoing and changing relationships with others…and it is this meaning that shapes and defines our emotions”

(Lazarus, 2006, p. 10, original emphasis).

In contexts where relationships with others are understood in intergroup rather than interpersonal terms emotions can be experienced not only on behalf of the personal but also collective or social self (Smith, 1993, 1999). Collective or group-based
emotions reflect what it means (psychologically) to be a member of a particular social group in a given context. As such, they are fundamental to the meaning-making process involved in understanding intergroup relations, and consequently have the capacity to translate that meaning into political action. Indeed, it has been suggested that, in addition to being conceptualised as attitudes and attitude-driven behaviours, intergroup phenomena (e.g. prejudice and discrimination) can be understood as emotions and emotional action tendencies arising in response to the relevant self-categorization as a group member in the broader context of intergroup relations (Smith, 1993, 1999; Smith & Ho, 2002).

Intergroup emotions literature is important to consider as it can be seen to straddle the divide between collective action and prejudice reduction research when it comes to understanding political solidarity. Namely, one aspect of this work focuses on the role of intergroup emotions as the mechanism that makes it possible for those who are dissatisfied with their low-status, marginalised, social minority position to engage in collective action (Doosje et al., 1999; Leach, Snider, & Iyer, 2002; McGarty & Bliuc, 2004). According to this approach, emotions are seen as mediating the relationship between the more distal predictors (e.g. perceived illegitimacy of one’s social status) and collective action (Iyer et al., 2007; Leach et al., 2006; Leach et al., 2007; van Zomeren et al., 2004). For example, it has been shown that action-oriented emotions, such as anger, are likely to follow from the appraisal that the ingroup is unfairly disadvantaged, in turn motivating collective action to improve the group’s social position (van Zomeren et al, 2004). Additionally, when a particular social identity is highly relevant or self-defining, group members are more likely to engage in collective action and be motivated to do so on the basis of group-based anger (van Zomeren, Spears, & Leach, 2008).

However, the second stream within the intergroup emotions research could be seen as more majority-oriented. In contrast to much of collective action literature, which tends to focus on collective action by which social minorities challenge the status quo, the focus here is on the emotional responses of the majority group members in relation to unequal intergroup relations perceived to be unjust and illegitimate. Most of this work focuses on collective guilt, and to a lesser extent moral outrage or anger and sympathy. To the extent that majority members
experience collective guilt or moral outrage, it is argued, they should also be more likely to collectively support those actions and policies that seek to address the injustice experienced by the relevant minority. In the case of collective guilt, it is also necessary to recognise one’s group (or its representatives, e.g. government authorities) as the perpetrator of injustice. Importantly, this area of work is, to a large extent, inspired by the idea that social change for disadvantaged minority groups rests on a broader recognition of systemic and structural injustice experienced by these groups as a result of practices and policies endorsed by the ‘relatively advantaged’ majority (Iyer, Leach, & Crosby, 2003; Iyer et al., 2007; Leach et al., 2006; Leach et al., 2007; Leach et al., 2002).

There is now considerable evidence that experiencing collective guilt, but also sympathy and moral outrage, in response to perceived advantage is associated with greater likelihood of support for social equality policies (Iyer et al., 2003), increased willingness to engage in collective action to help the disadvantaged (Montada & Schneider, 1989), as well as support for a formal (e.g. government) apology on behalf of one’s group (McGarty & Bliuc, 2004; McGarty et al., 2005). However, Iyer and colleagues (2003) found that guilt primarily predicted restorative social policies such as compensation, while sympathy predicted support for both compensation and policies aimed to achieve more encompassing social change in the disadvantaged group’s circumstances (e.g. affirmative action). Other findings also show that guilt about one’s privileged position is a weak predictor of supportive attitudes towards the disadvantaged outgroup and actions to address intergroup inequality (Harth, Kessler, & Leach, 2008; Iyer et al., 2003; Leach et al., 2006). Moral outrage or anger about another’s disadvantage has been shown to be a better predictor of active participation in collective action than either guilt or sympathy (Leach et al., 2006; Montada & Schneider, 1989).

Furthermore, it has been shown that support for efforts to reduce inequality increases when inequality is seen as illegitimate and when the focus is on another’s (illegitimate) disadvantage rather than own (illegitimate) privilege (e.g. Harth et al., 2008). Guilt is an emotion that focuses on one’s own (illegitimate) privilege, rather than another’s disadvantage (Leach et al., 2002; Powell, Schmitt, & Branscombe, 2005). Consequently, it is likely to (primarily) motivate actions to alleviate one’s
psychological discomfort through justification or restorative action that may not address the more pervasive causes of inequality (R. Brown, Gonzàles, Zagefka, Manzi, & Cehajic, 2008; Iyer et al., 2003). Furthermore, it is important to note that focusing on ingroup’s illegitimate privilege is more likely to result in justifications to legitimise the inequality and avoid or alleviate the feelings of guilt that may accompany such an appraisal (Harth et al., 2008; Iyer et al., 2003; Leach et al., 2006; Leach et al., 2002).

What is somewhat lacking within this work is a systematic investigation of the way in which people’s understanding of themselves and others as members of relevant social groups shape their emotional and behavioural responses in a given context of intergroup relations. Inconsistencies in relation to findings on collective guilt in particular suggest that there needs to be greater emphasis on whether or not this particular emotional response makes sense in light of group norms and values in a given social and historical context. Like social identities themselves, those collective emotions that do not correspond to people’s understanding of their social environment and the intergroup relations that it contains, are likely to be rejected as irrelevant. Given that the importance of intergroup emotions in motivating collective action has been well established in social psychological research (e.g. Iyer et al., 2003; Iyer et al., 2007; Leach et al., 2006; Leach et al., 2007; van Zomeren, Spears et al., 2008; van Zomeren et al., 2004), this thesis will not directly investigate the role of intergroup emotions in political solidarity (i.e. willingness to collectively challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority). However, it is nevertheless important to recognise the contribution of this work to understanding the mechanisms that promote ‘majority’ participation in social change—and we will continue to do so where relevant throughout the thesis.

4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed the social psychological work that we perceived to be relevant to social change processes central to the current thesis. Political solidarity as a process of social psychological change involves not only the emergence of shared willingness between the minority and majority to engage in collective protest that challenges the authority, but also the dynamics of self-categorization that redefine
whether it is the authority or the minority that shares the majority's understanding of who 'we' are—the relevant norms, values and beliefs that demarcate ingroup membership. Therefore, in this chapter we discussed both the approaches that highlight the role of social conflict in social change (e.g. minority influence, collective action) as well as the work that explores how the dynamics of self-categorization impact on the reality of intergroup relations to enhance or attenuate intergroup cooperation and tolerance (e.g. prejudice reduction). We also briefly discussed intergroup emotions research, with a particular emphasis on the role of intergroup emotions in motivating majority support for efforts to address past injustice (e.g. apology, compensation) and current disadvantage (e.g. affirmative action) experienced by the minority. Where relevant, we sought to highlight those aspects of the social psychological contributions to understanding social change that are particularly relevant to the current thesis yet largely under-investigated.

Clearly, significant progress has been made within social psychology when it comes to intergroup relations in the social change domain, particularly when it comes to identifying the conditions under which social conflict rather than cooperation is more likely and how social identity and self-categorization processes contribute to one or the other. However, as highlighted throughout this chapter, a number of theoretical and empirical extensions within the current work seem in order when it comes to the central question of this thesis—when will the majority challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority? While important advances have been made in understanding aspects of social change, existing work at best offers a relatively fragmented contribution to understanding political solidarity. In Chapter 5, we seek to build on and extend existing contributions in a way that will allow us to empirically investigate the key political solidarity processes and outcomes.
CHAPTER 5: POLITICAL SOLIDARITY AS A SOCIAL CHANGE PROCESS

5.1 Introduction

Ultimately, this thesis seeks to explain political solidarity as a social change process whereby the majority becomes willing to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority. More specifically, we seek to elucidate the role of self-categorization and social identity processes in this domain. In this regard, so far we have discussed a) the key theoretical concepts and processes within the social identity approach of relevance to social change, b) the different ways in which solidarity has been understood within the social sciences (most notably sociology and social psychology) and how political solidarity may be conceptualised, and c) the social psychological research of relevance to social change more broadly and political solidarity in particular. This chapter elaborates on the key questions and processes when it comes to political solidarity. In particular, it highlights where further empirical and theoretical integration and insight are needed and consequently the contribution that this thesis aims to make, particularly in its more empirical aspects.

We start by elaborating the tripolar dynamics that characterise intergroup relations in the political solidarity context, defining the minority, authority and majority groups and the relationships between them. Then, we discuss in more detail the intergroup dynamics amongst these actors that are likely to enhance majority willingness to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority, with a particular focus on how the relationships between the authority, minority and majority are both reflected in and shaped by the self-categorization processes involving the majority. We then proceed to discuss the key components of political solidarity as a social change process and seek to distinguish between the predictors, mediators and/or outcomes of political solidarity dynamics. The chapter ends with an overview of the empirical program presented in the second part of the thesis.
5.2 Political Solidarity as a Process of Social (Psychological) Change

When it comes to political solidarity, the process of change in the meaning of the relevant majority identity takes place in the context of (at least) tripolar intergroup power relations involving minority, authority and majority groups. It is important to define these actors and consider the relationships between them as these intergroup dynamics have the capacity to shape (and are themselves shaped by) the self-categorization process by which the relevant majority identity is (re)defined to make political solidarity possible. As highlighted in the introduction to this thesis, the term minority does not necessarily denote a numerical minority. Rather, following Tajfel’s (1978d) view that minorities are primarily defined by their social position rather than group size, we use the term ‘minority’ to signify the relative lack of social power available to this group (particularly in comparison to those in positions of legitimate authority). Similarly, following Turner’s (2005) analysis of power, ‘authority’ primarily denotes a position of social power emanating from a sense of shared identity that provides one or one’s group with the capacity to persuade, influence and wield legitimate authority over some relevant social majority.

The term ‘majority’ simply denotes those who are neither in the position of authority or minority, but rather are the target audience for these actors in their quest to maintain the status quo or achieve social change, respectively, in intergroup power relations. Far from being a monolithic or homogenous entity, however, the majority itself is conceptualised as being comprised of numerous views and positions in relation to both the authority and the minority. In the extreme, there will be majority members who, in a given social context, completely reject the authority and fully endorse the minority’s position, as well as those who do the exact opposite. There will also be others who, while sympathising with the minority and their plight, continue to support the authority’s position. Yet others will disengage from both of these groups and perceive the conflict between the minority and the authority as something that, for whatever reason, is not relevant, or of concern, to them. Such diversity of majority views and positions is likely to be a fertile ground for
intragroup contestation processes taking place in parallel to the broader intergroup
dynamics of political solidarity.

Fundamental to political solidarity, however, are the self-categorical
relationships between the majority and authority, and majority and minority—indeed,
these relationships primarily define who the ‘majority’, ‘minority’, and ‘authority’
are in this context. As highlighted, the term ‘authority’ signifies that there exists a
dynamic intergroup relationship between the majority and a group in a position of
social power, where power is the capacity to influence others on the basis of shared
psychological group membership (Turner, 2005). In that sense, before the political
solidarity process is set in motion, the relationship between the majority and the
authority is characterised by a shared social identity, which in turn bestows the
authority with a capacity to influence the majority. Even though the majority may
disagree with some of the authority’s decisions and actions (e.g. authority’s treatment
of the minority), the authority will be seen as acting in the best interests of the group
and fulfilling its legitimate role as long as it is perceived to share the relevant social
identity with the majority. Conversely, an authority perceived to act in ways that
contradict a hitherto-shared understanding of ‘who we are’ and how ‘we’ should
relate to others in the social world is more likely to be seen as ‘outgroup’ and is at
greater risk of being challenged (Turner, 2005; Turner & Reynolds, 2002). Unlike
the majority relationship with the authority, there is little or no pre-existing sense of a
shared identity with the minority—if political solidarity with this group is to exist,
such an identity needs to emerge within the broader intergroup dynamic. As such, it
is the self-categorical relationship with the majority that primarily distinguishes an
authority from a minority when it comes to political solidarity as a social change
process—and hence which group has the most influence for the majority of actors.

In contrast to the two majority relationships discussed so far, the relationship
between the authority and minority is based on conflict, animosity and a profound
lack of either existing or aspirational shared social identity between these groups. It
is also characterised by a tension between authority’s efforts to maintain the status
quo and those of the minority as an agent of change. As such, minorities seek to
mobilise majority support in the hope that such support will help them to achieve
change in the attitudes, decisions and actions of those in position of authority.
Similarly, those in positions of authority appeal to the majority to support their decisions in opposition to the minority, as Richard Nixon did to counter the ‘vocal minority’ opposition to the Vietnam War: “And so tonight—to you, the great silent majority of my fellow Americans—I ask for your support” (Nixon, 1969).

The ‘majority – authority’ and ‘majority – minority’ relationships can therefore be seen as interdependent in that solidarity with the minority, for example, may be more likely to emerge to the extent that the majority starts questioning whether or not it should support the authority. In turn, the greater the majority support for authority, the less likely it is that the majority will support the minority’s position, particularly given the conflictual relationship between the authority and the minority. Indeed, even though they may start to sympathise with the minority, as long as the majority shares the relevant identity with the authority—i.e. the authority is seen as sharing ‘our’ goals and interests and acting in accordance with ‘our’ expectations—political solidarity with the minority is unlikely. As such, while primarily oriented to social change, this analysis can be applied to understanding social stability, particularly as it interacts with processes of social change. What needs to be elucidated, however, is the mechanism that makes these intergroup dynamics possible.

In this thesis, we suggest that psychological change in the meaning of the relevant majority identity—whether it is the authority or the minority that shares ‘our’ understanding of the relevant norms, values and beliefs in a given social context—is the mechanism that makes political solidarity possible. What it means to be an ‘ingroup’ or ‘outgroup’ member, therefore, is fundamentally defined by whether or not there is a shared set of norms, values and beliefs defining both who ‘we’ are in terms of inclusion within the group boundaries, but also how ‘we’ (should) relate to each other. The main task of the empirical program of the current thesis is to elucidate how such a meaning of the relevant majority identity both shapes and is shaped by the social reality of intergroup relations in a way that enhances majority willingness to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority. As such, in this thesis (and consistent with the self-categorization theory more generally), the notion of categorizing the self and others as ‘ingroup’ or ‘outgroup’ is fundamentally about the existence or otherwise of a shared (higher-order) normative framework emerging from the relevant intergroup dynamics, rather
than the mechanics of category membership based on some ‘objective’ and fixed set of criteria (e.g. nationality, ethnicity, gender). As such, ingroup membership represents more than group boundaries—it is also about a commitment to a shared vision of who ‘we’ are in a particular social context. Understood in these terms, identifying as a (psychological) group member entails commitment to a particular identity meaning—a shared understanding of who ‘we’ are and how ‘we’ should relate to others in the social world (see also Livingstone & Haslam, 2008).

The reality of intergroup relations, and particularly the majority and minority relationships with authority, is seen as central to shaping the meaning of the relevant majority identity. Namely, when authority’s actions towards the minority are interpreted as violating important norms and values that ‘we’ were all meant to share, the authority should be seen as more illegitimate, there should be less perceived common cause with this group and, crucially, willingness to challenge the authority should be enhanced. Such majority perceptions of authority actions should also enhance a sense of common cause (e.g. shared goals and values, shared belief that social change is needed) with minority, particularly when the meaning of the relevant majority identity is defined in a way that locates minority concerns at the core of who ‘we’ are. To the extent that authority’s treatment of the minority is not only seen as illegitimate but also as impacting on the meaning of the relevant majority identity—as violating important norms and values that ‘we’ were meant to share—political solidarity with the minority (e.g. majority challenge to authority) should be more likely. Under such conditions, ‘their’ injustice or disadvantage comes to shape and reflect on who ‘we’ are and, as such, enhances the likelihood of political solidarity as a social change process.

However, as noted above, the majority will rarely be fully united in its stance towards the authority or the minority. Indeed, in contexts marked by a high level of political and social contestation in relation to the authority’s treatment of the minority, the majority may be characterised by highly polarised views. Examples of such contexts include the treatment of asylum seekers in Australia (in particular the Australian government’s policy of mandatory detention of asylum seekers) and the process of reconciliation between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians (in particular the issue of apology and Indigenous land rights). The within-majority
conflict that characterises these contexts is likely to involve the contested nature of the higher-order identity (e.g. what it means to be Australian), but also the more exclusive, lower-level majority identities (e.g. what it means to be a Non-Indigenous Australian). Therefore, as a process of intergroup contestation, political solidarity may be understood as being primarily about the redefinition of some higher-level, superordinate identity whose norms and values define whether or not the relevant inter-subgroup relations are appropriate and legitimate. However, a parallel process of intragroup contestation may also take place within the majority in order to define and/or redefine ‘who we are’ at a relevant lower-level self-categorization—to what extent does ‘our’ relationship with the minority (and their treatment at the hands of the authority) matter to ‘us’.

Therefore it is the meaning of the relevant majority identity (and the extent to which it epitomises the relevant intergroup relationships) that is seen as the driving force of political solidarity. Identity meaning can be seen as a shared normative framework that defines what the nature of the intergroup relations should be like and sharpens the group members’ understanding of the relevant norms, values and beliefs that are relevant in a particular context. Such a shared normative framework may be located at the higher-order level and defined in a way that includes the minority while excluding the authority as representative of who ‘we’ are in the broader, superordinate sense. For example, when egalitarian values are central to a relevant higher-order identity, harsh treatment of the minority that is seen to violate such beliefs should be more likely to be perceived as illegitimate and elicit majority support. However, changes in the extent to which the relevant normative framework is shared with the authority or the minority can also redefine who ‘we’ are at a lower level of majority identity and become internalised as the relevant ‘subgroup’ (as well as higher-order) identity meaning. Therefore, it could be argued that when the meaning of the relevant majority identity is seen as fundamentally wedded to ‘their’ (i.e. minority) injustice and disadvantage that political solidarity becomes possible. Depending on the relevant social, historical and political context, the emergence of such a meaning may involve the redefinition of higher- and/or lower-level identities, as well as a process of alignment between the two. Indeed it could be argued that commitment to the minority’s cause and the willingness to participate in processes of
social change in solidarity with this group will be particularly likely when changes in the majority’s higher-order beliefs, values and concerns permeate the relevant lower-level selves.

Broadly speaking, therefore, the nature of the intergroup relations and the meaning of the majority identity seem to be the key factors that (independently and in interaction with each other) predict a number of key political solidarity outcomes, including majority willingness to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority, perceived illegitimacy of authority’s treatment of the minority, shared common cause with the minority and a lack of common cause with the authority. More specifically, whether or not the authority’s treatment of the minority is consistent or inconsistent with the normative expectations of the majority (given the relevant majority identity) is particularly important as it has the capacity to either enhance or attenuate the majority’s relationship with the minority and therefore directly affect the likelihood of political solidarity. It is also possible that political solidarity may be more likely to emerge with those minorities who already share with the majority a relatively accessible social identity that can be evoked for this purpose. However, it is also important to consider how such an identity may emerge (given a particular context of intergroup relations and the meaning of the majority identity) for those minorities more readily categorized as ‘outgroup’. Furthermore, common fate or shared experience of injustice between the minority and majority may be another important motivator of political solidarity between these groups (e.g. Simon & Klandermans, 2001), particularly when the majority’s understanding of themselves and others allows for the emergence of common cause (i.e. higher-order

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1 Although this discussion, given the focus of the present thesis, is confined to the different levels of the social identity, such an identity (re-)alignment process can also be seen to involve the personal self. Indeed, it could be said that what is commonly understood as ‘ideology’ is an outcome of the process by which the different levels of the self and, importantly, their meaning become more fully aligned. As a result of this process commitment to particular views and beliefs, and therefore the commitment to engage in the relevant behaviours becomes enhanced. Therefore, change, as well as stability, in people’s self-definition may indeed be a function of the extent to which identity meanings at the different levels of the self can be (re-)aligned.
unity of beliefs, values and interests; see below) with the minority and the severing of such a shared sense of ‘who we are’ when it comes to the relevant authority. Ultimately, for political solidarity to ensue, majority’s opposition to the authority (and the authority’s treatment of the minority), as well as its relationship with the minority, may need to be seen as identity-defining and relevant to who ‘we’ are.

5.3 Key Outcomes/Mediators of Political Solidarity Processes

In this section we further elaborate on the key outcomes and mediators of political solidarity as a process of social and psychological change in intergroup relations. As highlighted, majority willingness to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority constitutes a key outcome of political solidarity as conceptualised in this thesis. The effects of majority self-categorization and the nature of intergroup relations on this particular outcome are, in turn, likely to affect: a) perceived legitimacy of authority’s actions, and b) the extent to which authority and minority are seen to share the majority’s values, beliefs and interests—including the belief that social change is (not) needed. Collective action, perceived illegitimacy, and, somewhat less explicitly, shared values and beliefs have been central to much of existing work on social change, as discussed in Chapters 2 and 4. However, it is worthwhile briefly reiterating their relevance to political solidarity and the novel ways in which these constructs are investigated within the current thesis.

5.3.1 Collective Action – Majority Challenge to Authority in Solidarity with the Minority

Social change in intergroup relations is often premised on people’s willingness to act collectively to challenge the status quo (Simon, 1998; Tajfel, 1975, 1978f; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). A full understanding of collective action necessitates an understanding of the nature of the relevant social context in which such action takes place, including the historical, economic, political and cultural factors shaping a particular set of intergroup relations (Haslam, 2004). While it is beyond the scope of social psychology to offer such a comprehensive analysis, social psychologists are uniquely placed to investigate how people perceive, understand and interpret a particular social context—how they understand themselves and others within a
particular intergroup relationship—in a way that makes collective action more likely (Haslam, 2004). From a social psychological perspective, collective action takes place when a person’s behaviour is structured by the relevant norms, values and goals shared with other group members (Haslam, 2004). Importantly, action by a single individual can still be considered collective if it is driven primarily by collective, rather than individual, goals and interests (Wright, 1999, 2001; Wright & Tropp, 2002).

Much of the research on collective action, as discussed in Chapter 4, focuses on the conditions under which those who are directly disadvantaged by the status quo will become motivated to challenge such arrangements. According to social identity theory, such actions are more likely to occur to the extent that the social structural arrangements are perceived to be illegitimate and unstable, and the intergroup boundaries impermeable (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). A multitude of subsequent research has provided strong support for these predictions (e.g. Branscombe et al., 1999; Ellemers et al., 1997; Ellemers et al., 1998; Ellemers et al., 1993; Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996; Klandermans, 2000; Louis & Taylor, 1999; Moghaddam & Perreault, 1992; Reynolds, Oakes, Haslam, Nolan, & Dolnik, 2000; Veenstra & Haslam, 2000; Wright, 1997, 2001; Wright & Tropp, 2002). A more recent integration of the collective action literature also highlighted the importance of social identity (particularly politicized identities) and perceived injustice (i.e. illegitimacy), as well as efficacy, in motivating collective action on the part of the disadvantaged (van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008).

The political solidarity analysis of social change presented in this thesis seeks to understand how willingness to act collectively in the name of social change spreads to include not only the social or power minorities directly affected by intergroup inequality, disadvantage, or injustice, but also the majority of others who come to embrace the minority’s cause as their own. As such, majority willingness to act collectively to support a minority in its challenge to authority (including majority willingness to challenge an authority directly) is seen as the key outcome of political solidarity and a key ‘dependent variable’ within the current thesis. However, depending on the particular social and historical context, such actions may involve a direct challenge to authority in the context of its relationship with the majority (e.g.
voting behaviour), or actions that are primarily supportive of the minority's existing efforts to achieve change (e.g. joining an organisation, participating in a rally, or signing a petition in support of minority rights). Importantly, there may be avenues that the majority can use to challenge the authority that are uniquely available to this group, particularly when the minority is comprised of highly marginalised and voiceless social groups (e.g. asylum seekers in mandatory detention). In some contexts these actions can also serve a dual purpose of challenging the authority and supporting the minority at the same time (e.g. voting for a political party that supports a minority's cause). Overall, however, the current thesis extends existing approaches to collective action by emphasising the involvement of the hitherto 'silent' majority and their willingness to go beyond mere support for the minority to challenge the authority and the status quo more directly.

Research looking at social movement participation possibly comes closest to the aims of the current research when it comes to collective action as it explicitly focuses on how such action spreads beyond the original activists (Klandermans, 1997, 2000; Simon, 1998, 2004; Simon et al., 1998; Stürmer & Simon, 2004, 2005). In this work, it is the politicization of one's social identity that is proposed to be the mechanism that makes possible the mobilising of widespread support for a movement's cause. The process of identity politicization has at its core a perception of shared grievance or a common enemy that is shared among the movement's activists and their 'mobilisation potential'. In addition, to perceived legitimacy, therefore such a sense of common fate or purpose should further enhance willingness to participate in efforts to achieve social change (but see discussion of 'common cause' below). However, as discussed in Chapter 4, this work largely focuses on the mobilization of those who are in some way directly negatively affected by the status quo, yet remain relatively passive observers rather than active participants in the change process.

Finally, it is worthwhile noting that, in line with other contemporary social psychological approaches to collective action (Simon et al., 1998; Stürmer & Simon, 2004, 2005; Stürmer, Simon, Loewy, & Jorger, 2003; Stürmer et al., 2006; Stürmer et al., 2005; van Zomeren, Spears et al., 2008; van Zomeren et al., 2004; Veenstra & Haslam, 2000), in this thesis we will be focusing primarily on behavioural intentions
when it comes to collective action participation—i.e. participants’ willingness to engage in collective action. Typically, such measures assess participants’ willingness to take part in a number of different forms of collective action appropriate in a given social context (e.g. sign a petition, participate in a demonstration, join an organisation campaigning for the relevant cause, etc.). Overall, behavioural intentions have been found to be strongly correlated ($r$ values between .45 and .50) with behaviour (for a review see Armitage & Conner, 2001; van Zomeren, Postmes et al., 2008; Webb & Sheeran, 2006), making them an adequate (if imperfect) alternative to the measurement of actual behaviour in this domain. Collective action tendencies or intentions are particularly well-suited for investigating the dynamics of collective action participation in experimental and laboratory-based settings where it may be difficult to measure the extent of actual collective action participation.

### 5.3.2 Perceived Illegitimacy

Another core factor of interest is the perceived (il)legitimacy of authority’s actions and behaviours. Traditionally, perceived illegitimacy has been conceptualised and found to be one of the key predictors of collective action (Ellemers et al., 1993; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Wright, 1997, 1999). In this research, perceptions of illegitimacy usually arise in response to social structural arrangements or intergroup hierarchies seen to be disadvantaging the group as a whole (Branscombe, 1998; Branscombe et al., 1999; Ellemers et al., 1993; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Wright, 1997, 1999; Wright et al., 1990; Wright & Tropp, 2002). In addition to its role in motivating collective action for social change, as discussed above, perceived illegitimacy of a particular social system or a set of intergroup relations is also likely to motivate the emergence of cognitive alternatives to the status quo (Reicher & Haslam, 2006b; Tajfel, 1978a) and the belief that social change is not only possible but needed. Additionally, it also provides the basis for the sharpening and redefinition of categorical boundaries with those seen to behave illegitimately being more likely to be excluded as outgroup members (Caddick, 1982; Tajfel, 1978a).

Legitimacy is also an important factor when it comes to processes of social influence, leadership and authority. Those authorities and leaders seen to act in a way that is consistent with subordinate expectations and values are more likely to
generate influence, compliance and support for their decisions (Reicher et al., 2005; Tyler, 2001a; Tyler & Blader, 2003; Tyler & Dawes, 1993; Tyler, Degoe, & Smith, 1996; Tyler & McGraw, 1986). The work of Tyler and colleagues in particular, focusing on the relationship between legitimacy and justice, has found that expectations in relation to procedural fairness (or violations thereof) are a particularly good predictor of subordinate support for their leaders and authorities (e.g. Tyler, 1990, 1991, 2006).

However, whether or not a particular authority or system of intergroup relations is seen as legitimate or illegitimate is fundamentally wedded to people’s understanding of themselves and others in a given social context of intergroup relations (Spears, Jetten, & Doosje, 2001; Turner & Reynolds, 2002; Wenzel & Jobling, 2006). As such, those leaders and authorities that are seen to violate relevant group norms, values and interests are likely to be seen as illegitimate, rejected and challenged (Turner & Reynolds, 2002; Reicher, Haslam & Hopkins, 2005). However, there is relatively little empirical research looking at the process by which perceptions of authorities may shift towards illegitimacy and in turn motivate efforts to challenge and seek change in authorities’ decisions, policies and actions (Turner & Reynolds, 2002). As a result, even though it is widely accepted that perceptions of legitimacy or otherwise of a particular social system, and particularly when it comes to those in positions of authority, are fundamental to understanding whether the status quo or social change prevails, relatively little is known about how people move from perceiving a system of intergroup relations or those in positions of authority as legitimate to believing they are illegitimate (Turner & Reynolds, 2002).

This is particularly true when it comes to political solidarity in which such efforts on the part of the majority arise in response to authority’s treatment of some social or power minority perceived to be unjust, unfair, illegitimate, and ultimately worthy of majority challenge. Building on the work of Turner and Reynolds (2002), in this thesis we will seek to extend these ideas to explore the self-categorization process by which perceptions of authority illegitimacy may be amplified or attenuated and how they come to shape majority willingness to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority. As a result, perceived illegitimacy of authority will be seen primarily as an outcome of the more distal self-categorization
processes and, secondarily, as a mediator (i.e. a more proximal predictor) of majority willingness to engage in collective action to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority.

5.3.3 Common Cause

As discussed earlier in the chapter, it has long been recognised that ‘common fate’ is one of the ways through which perceptions of shared category membership may emerge (Campbell, 1958; Haslam, 2004; Haslam & Turner, 1992; Simon, Pantaleo, & Mummendey, 1995; Wilder & Thompson, 1988). Like perceived legitimacy, the perception that ‘we’ share a common fate and a common enemy is also likely to strengthen the boundaries that unite ‘us’ against ‘them’. Furthermore, a sense of ‘shared grievance’ has been proposed by the politicised collective identity model (Simon & Klandermans, 2001) to provide an important basis for the politicization of collective identities and through this process enhance participation in social movements. However, as has long been recognised within the social identity perspective (Tajfel, 1978c, 1978d, 1978f; Turner, 1982, 1985; Turner et al., 1987), these effects are made possible through the emergence of a shared set of beliefs and interpretations about the social world and ‘our’ place within it. Therefore, rather than common fate or common enemy per se, it could be argued that it is the emergence of common cause—a set of shared goals, values and interests—that should make collective action towards social change possible.

While akin to ‘common fate’ and ‘shared grievance’, ‘common cause’ denotes not only a shared experience of injustice or mistreatment, but also a sense of shared norms, goals and values based on a shared understanding of intergroup relations. As such, a sense of common cause with the minority should be more likely to emerge to the extent that authority’s treatment of the minority is seen as violating hitherto shared norms, values and beliefs. In turn, political solidarity, as willingness to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority, should be more likely to the extent that a sense of common cause with authority is reduced.

It is important to emphasise that in this thesis common cause is conceptualised as a proxy for ingroup membership—the emergence of a shared identity based on common goals, values and beliefs. We recognise that collective action mobilisation is
particularly likely to be successful if it builds on existing, clearly delineated, category memberships (see Haslam, 2004) that can easily ‘frame’ intergroup relations in ‘us’ vs. ‘them’ terms. However, in this thesis it is particularly important to track how such categories may emerge through the perception that, although people may belong to different social (psychological) groups, ‘we’ are united in terms of a shared higher-order normative framework. Shared common cause with the minority (and a lack of common cause with the authority) is an important indicator of the way in which members of the majority understand themselves and others in this particular context.

In the political solidarity context, a shared belief that social change is needed can also be a powerful demonstration of common cause between the minority and majority. As discussed in Chapter 2, social change beliefs are an important, if relatively under-investigated, component of social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). They are an important indicator that people understand themselves and the relevant social context in intergroup, rather than inter-individual terms, and are likely to protest in response to perceived illegitimacy of intergroup relations. Given that political solidarity is primarily conceptualised as a social change process, whether or not the majority shares with the minority a particular social change orientation is an important outcome of political solidarity processes. Importantly, while it is possible to perceive a particular social system as unfair and illegitimate, if collective willingness to challenge the status quo is to emerge this perception may need to be accompanied by the belief that social change is needed (Tajfel, 1978b; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). As with perceptions of illegitimacy, much of existing theorising and research in relation to social change beliefs focuses on the relatively disadvantaged minorities. Therefore, when it comes to the ‘silent’ majority, it remains to be empirically investigated how social change beliefs may be affected by the reality of intergroup relations and whether or not the majority identity is defined in a way that makes ‘their’ concerns central to who ‘we’ are.

5.3.4 Relationships Between Outcome/Mediator Variables

Based on past research, these outcome variables (i.e. collective action, perceived legitimacy, and common cause) are expected to be interrelated in relatively
predictable ways, so that, for example, the higher the perceived illegitimacy of authority is, the higher the perceived need for social change and willingness to act collectively in solidarity with the minority. It is also possible that the key political solidarity outcome (i.e. challenge to authority in solidarity with the minority) may in turn enhance the political solidarity process itself, so that the relevant perceptions and beliefs that led to the outcome in the first place become more entrenched. However, in this thesis we will remain focused on elucidating the process of change in the meaning of the majority identity and the majority’s understanding of intergroup relations that make such an outcome possible. We will therefore assume, given the interrelated nature of these factors (as well as the relevant research in this domain, see Drury & Reicher, 2000; Drury & Reicher, 2005; Drury et al., 2003), that political solidarity as a process of social change will be further enhanced if the ultimate outcome of political solidarity is achieved. Namely, participating in collective action that challenges the authority should further enhance the perception that the authority is illegitimate, that it is the minority rather than the authority that shares one’s goals and values, and that social change in this domain is needed.

However, the focus of the present thesis is on the way in which majority self-categorization in the tripolar context of relevant intergroup relations shapes the key outcomes and mediators of political solidarity. Figure 5.1 shows the conceptual framework for understanding how these different components of political solidarity may affect each other in a way that enhances the likelihood of majority willingness to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority. Within this framework, the relevant majority identity is seen to both shape and be shaped by the nature of the intergroup relations (e.g. authority’s actions towards the minority, common fate between the minority and majority, minority’s group membership, etc.). When the nature of the majority identity and the relevant intergroup relations interact so that it is no longer the authority but the minority that epitomises who ‘we’ are and how ‘we’ should relate to each other a number of outcomes become possible. Namely, this process is likely to increase the perceived illegitimacy of the authority and its treatment of the minority, enhance common cause with the minority (while attenuating common cause with the authority), and increase majority willingness to collectively challenge the authority and support the minority. The empirical program
that seeks to explore the different aspects of this framework is introduced in more detail in the next section.

Figure 5.1. Conceptual framework for understanding political solidarity as a social change process.

Note: * The bi-directional arrow signifies that these factors are likely to interact with and shape each other.
5.4 Political Solidarity in Contemporary Society – An Empirical Investigation

The empirical program presented in this thesis has two parts. The first part (Chapters 6 and 7) uses an experimental laboratory paradigm to investigate how the nature of the intergroup relations and the nature of the relevant majority identity—both independently and in interaction—shape the likelihood of political solidarity. The second part (Chapters 8 and 9) focuses more on the relevant majority identity, exploring whether political solidarity is enhanced when the meaning of the majority identity is itself defined by the relevant intergroup relations involving the majority—whether or not the minority’s plight (e.g. harsh treatment by some authority, disadvantage) is in some sense defining and shaping who ‘we’ are. Furthermore, in the first part of the empirical program (Chapters 6 and 7), perceived illegitimacy and common cause are considered primarily as outcomes of the majority’s understanding of themselves and others in the relevant context of intergroup relations. The second part (Chapters 8 and 9) focuses more on their role as mediators of majority willingness to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority.

All of the studies, therefore, focus on the (different aspects of the) process by which majority willingness to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority emerges as a result of changes in the majority’s understanding of the relevant tripolar context of intergroup power relations. However, as discussed further below, they locate political solidarity in different social and historical contexts of intergroup relations, seeking to explore the emergence of political solidarity with a range of minority groups. These include low-paid and sweatshop workers (Chapter 6 and 7 respectively), asylum seekers in mandatory detention (Chapter 8), and Indigenous Australians (Chapter 9).

5.4.1 Overview of Studies

Study 1, presented in Chapter 6, uses a scenario-based, experimental paradigm to investigate the core processes when it comes to political solidarity. The central questions of this study include a) whether solidarity with an ‘outgroup’ minority is possible and b) what are the conditions that are likely to enhance this outcome. In this study we are also interested in exploring the relationships between the dependent variables as a way of ascertaining the validity of our key measures. Using a
(hypothetical) context in which a government workplace relations policy negatively affected low-paid workers, we first experimentally manipulated whether or not the meaning of the relevant majority identity (i.e. Australian) was aligned with the minority’s concerns (i.e. whether or not egalitarian norms and values were central to who ‘we’ are as Australians). We then manipulated the nature of the intergroup relations across two independent variables. Firstly, we varied whether the minority shared a pre-existing social group membership with the majority (i.e. whether the policy affected Australian workers (‘ingroup’) or foreign workers (‘outgroup’) on temporary visas). Secondly, we manipulated the relevant authority’s (i.e. government) treatment of the minority as being either consistent or inconsistent with the relevant norms and values. Norm-consistent actions of the authority were described as protecting workers’ interests, while norm-inconsistent actions were said to protect the interests of the employers.

We expected that norm-inconsistent authority actions would motivate political solidarity particularly when egalitarianism and ensuring a ‘fair go’ for everyone was central to what it meant to be Australian—the meaning of the relevant majority identity. Furthermore, given the contrastive nature of social identity and self-categorization processes, authority’s actions towards the minority that violate a hitherto shared sense of who ‘we’ are in the eyes of the majority should redefine ingroup boundaries in a way that not only excludes the authority but also makes the (ingroup, as well as outgroup) minority more representative of ‘our’ goals and interests. Therefore, perceived authority violation of those norms and values that are central to the majority’s understanding of intergroup relations in this context should also reduce a sense of common cause with this group and enhance common cause with the minority—the belief that it is the minority, rather than the authority, that shares ‘our’ beliefs and values. As such, under these conditions political solidarity not only with the ‘ingroup’ (i.e. Australian) but also the (former) ‘outgroup’ (i.e. foreign) minority should be possible. As such, this study was designed to provide a basic, experimental test of the key theoretical process under examination in the present thesis—namely, when authority’s treatment of the minority is perceived to violate those norms and values that are central to the majority’s sense of who ‘we’
are it should also incite majority action in opposition to such an authority in solidarity with the (‘ingroup’ but also ‘outgroup’) minority.

Common fate is another feature of the intergroup relations that has the capacity to enhance a sense of common cause between the minority and majority. Common fate or shared experience of ill-treatment has been identified as one of the key mechanisms that motivate more widespread support for social movements (e.g. Klandermans, 1997, 2000; Klandermans & de Weerd, 2000; Klandermans & Oegema, 1987; Simon, 2004; Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Simon et al., 1998). The key question in the context of this thesis, however, is to what extent common fate or shared grievance *per se* motivates political solidarity. Studies 2 and 3, presented in Chapter 7, have been designed to explore whether common fate between the minority and majority is enough for political solidarity to emerge or whether this process may be affected by other factors. Therefore, in addition to manipulating whether or not the majority shared with the minority a common experience of injustice, as in Study 1 we also manipulated the authority’s treatment of the minority (Study 2) and the meaning of the relevant majority identity (Study 3).

In the context of consumers’ solidarity with sweatshop workers, in Study 2 we manipulated common fate by varying whether or not corporate mistreatment affected consumers as well as workers. We also manipulated authority’s actions by varying whether the authority (i.e. government) responded in a norm-consistent manner (i.e. protected workers’ interests or the interests of both workers’ and consumers under conditions of common fate) or norm-inconsistent manner (i.e. protected corporate interests). We expected that a sense of common cause with the minority should be particularly strong under those conditions where both common fate and authority violation of important norms and values were present. Under these conditions not only should the relationship between the minority and majority be strengthened through common fate, but the relationship between the majority and authority should be weakened given authority’s violation of relevant norms and values. Willingness to act collectively in solidarity with the minority, perceptions of authority illegitimacy, and common cause with minority (rather than authority) were therefore expected to be particularly strong under conditions in which the majority relationship with the
minority was strengthened (i.e. common fate) and their relationship with the authority weakened (i.e. authority actions are norm-inconsistent).

In Study 3, we investigated whether it may also be possible to enhance or attenuate the effects of common fate in this context by changing the nature of the relevant majority identity—whether or not this identity is defined primarily in terms of concerns that are shared with the minority (e.g. egalitarian higher-order norms) or concerns that are primarily of interest to the majority (e.g. consumer issues, such as low prices for quality products). When the meaning of the relevant majority identity allows for the common experience of injustice between the minority (i.e. workers) and majority (i.e. consumers) to be translated into a sense of shared purpose, political solidarity should be more likely. In contrast, political solidarity should be attenuated when the majority identity is defined by concerns and interests that are unique to their particular (consumer) subgroup. As such, political solidarity in the context of common fate between the minority and majority should be enhanced when such an experience is contextualised by a shared, higher-order normative framework that transforms commonality of mistreatment into a common purpose.

In Chapters 6 and 7 (Studies 1 and 3 in particular) we directly manipulated the extent to which the minority’s experience at the hands of the authority was likely to be reflected in the meaning of the relevant majority identity (e.g. whether or not the majority identity was defined by egalitarian values). In contrast, in Chapters 8 and 9, we explored how such an identity meaning may emerge as a result of majority’s understanding of themselves in the relevant context of intergroup relations in a way that makes political solidarity more likely. More specifically, in Study 4 (Chapter 8), we focus on the context of political solidarity with asylum seekers in mandatory detention and investigate how opposition to the authority’s treatment of this particular minority can be transformed into collective challenge to authority. This study is based on the idea that majority opposition to (rather than support for) authority may not be enough when it comes to willingness to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority. If the majority is to become willing to act collectively to challenge the authority, being opposed to authority’s treatment of the minority may need to be seen as a way of ‘standing up’ for those norms, values and beliefs that define who ‘we’ are and that harsh treatment of the minority is seen to violate.
As such, we manipulated whether participants self-categorized primarily in terms of their stance towards the mandatory detention of asylum seekers, or whether their position on mandatory detention was seen as a defining aspect of their relevant (Australian) identity. It was predicted that participants will be more willing to act collectively in solidarity with the minority, perceive the policy as illegitimate, and share with the minority the belief that social change is needed in this domain, to the extent that they primarily defined themselves in terms of the higher-order normative framework (i.e. what it means to be Australia) that guides the inter-subgroup relations in this context, rather than in terms of their opposition to authority per se. Furthermore, in this study we further explore the role of perceived illegitimacy and the need for social change (i.e. common cause with minority) as mediators of majority’s willingness to collectively challenge the authority and support the minority in this context.

Studies 1-4 focused on those majority identities that can also be (potentially) shared with the minority and authority (i.e. higher-order identities) and, additionally, identities that tended to be defined by egalitarian norms and values (e.g. Australian). It may therefore be argued that political solidarity can be evoked by merely making salient a higher-order identity and/or defining that identity in terms of egalitarian norms. Therefore, Study 5 (presented in Chapter 9) focuses on a lower-level majority identity that is exclusive of the minority. In particular, the focus here is on the process by which the meaning of the majority identity comes to encapsulate the minority – majority relationship in a way that makes political solidarity as challenge to authority (as well as support for the minority) possible. More specifically, it is proposed that when the nature of the intergroup relations is seen to clash with the majority’s understanding of who ‘we’ are, willingness to change such relations should be more likely. In the context of reconciliation between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians, Study 5 investigates how the inequality characterising the relationship between the (Non-Indigenous) majority and the (Indigenous) minority may impact on the meaning of the majority identity to enhance political solidarity with the minority. It is argued that political solidarity with the minority will be more likely to the extent that ‘their’ disadvantage matters to who ‘we’ are—when intergroup inequality is fundamentally reflected in the meaning of the relevant (i.e.
Non-Indigenous) identity. Such self-definition and understanding of intergroup relations should enhance the perceived illegitimacy of authority's actions and the need for social change in this domain, as well as increase the likelihood of collective challenge to authority. As in Chapter 8, the role of perceived illegitimacy and the need for social change as mediators of majority willingness to challenge the authority are explored.

5.5 Political Solidarity in Context

The impetus for the present thesis came from the observation that many real-world examples of social change involve (at least an attempt at) the mobilisation of widespread support for one's cause. Such efforts necessarily involve mobilising those who are not directly affected by the conditions that motivated calls for change in the first place and whose participation in social change efforts, therefore, cannot be explained by reference to individualistic (or indeed collective) self-interest defined in relatively narrow utilitarian terms (see Chapters 3 and 4). It is therefore surprising that a process that we refer to as political solidarity has largely escaped the attention of social psychology, particularly given the myriad of contexts in which it seems to be the predominant process through which social change is sought.

Before we describe the empirical studies in more detail in the chapters to follow, it is worthwhile briefly commenting on their (relatively diverse) contextual backdrops—after all, the key psychological processes of interest in the present work cannot be divorced from the relevant historical/social contexts in which they take place. In particular, it is important to note that we strived to choose intergroup contexts in which political solidarity made sense in terms of the social reality of intergroup relations. Consequently, we start by looking at political solidarity with disadvantaged (low-paid, sweatshop) workers. This context makes sense in light of the historical significance of the Polish Solidarity workers' movement in which these dynamics featured prominently (see Chapter 3), but also in light of the more recent and highly politicised (Australian) debate over workplace regulations, widely perceived to undermine workers' rights (e.g. WorkChoices legislation proposed by the former Howard Liberal/National government). Furthermore, contemporary developments in the domain of political consumerism and corporate social
responsibility make solidarity with sweatshop workers, for example, another highly relevant context for investigating the processes of interest in this thesis. Additionally, political solidarity seems to be particularly relevant when it comes to achieving social change in support of highly marginalised groups in society, such as asylum seekers or Indigenous people in Australia. The historical mistreatment of these groups and the debates surrounding how social change can be achieved in these domains have at their core the tripolar intergroup power dynamics and self-categorical processes central to this thesis, as discussed in Chapters 8 and 9. We have therefore sought to introduce the empirical studies in a way that provides enough detail about the relevant social context to elucidate how it shaped the study design and the nature of the questions that a particular study or a set of studies seeks to address.

5.6 Chapter Summary

Building on the review of current social psychological approaches to social change, in this chapter we elaborated on the nature of political solidarity as a process of social psychological change in tripolar intergroup relations and discussed the contributions that the empirical program of the present thesis aims to make in this domain. We defined the key social actors when it comes to political solidarity and the process by which the relationships between them may change as a result of change in majority self-categorization in relation to both the minority and the authority. The majority’s understanding of intergroup relations (e.g. whether or not authority’s treatment of the minority is seen to violate important norms and values) and the meaning of majority identity (e.g. to what extent minority’s concerns are central to who ‘we’ are) emerged from this discussion as the key predictors of political solidarity. We then discussed the key outcomes and mediators of political solidarity, including: a) majority willingness to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority, b) perceived illegitimacy of authority, and c) a sense of common cause with minority (and lack thereof with authority) operationalised as shared goals, norms and values, but also the belief that social change is needed. Finally, we introduced and provided an overview of the empirical program, to be presented in
Chapters 6-9, that explores in more detail how these factors affect the likelihood of political solidarity with a range of minority groups.
CHAPTER 6: BEYOND INGROUPS AND OUTGROUPS—TOWARDS POLITICAL SOLIDARITY

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, we conceptualised political solidarity as a process of social psychological change that is fundamentally shaped by the nature of tri-polar (majority—authority—minority) intergroup power relations and the self-categorization processes involving the majority. It was suggested that this process involves a social psychological change in the nature or meaning of majority identity in relation to both the authority and the minority groups. At the core of political solidarity is the emergence or redefinition of the relevant majority identity so that its meaning becomes shared with the minority rather than the authority. The key outcomes of this process include majority willingness to act collectively to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority, perceived illegitimacy of authority’s actions towards the minority, and an enhanced sense of shared or common cause with the minority (while a sense of common cause with the authority is attenuated).

The focus of this chapter is to empirically investigate the ‘basic’ political solidarity process by which perceptions of authority’s treatment of the minority as violating the relevant norms and values defining the meaning of the majority identity also enhance majority willingness to challenge the authority. An additional question specific to this chapter concerns the extent to which political solidarity may be confined to ‘ingroup’ minorities—those groups that already share with the majority a pre-existing, readily accessible social group membership—or whether there are conditions under which this process may extend to those minorities more readily categorized as ‘outgroup’. In other words, is it possible that solidarity emerges not only in response to the plight of ingroup members, but also those who are more readily categorized as members of some relevant outgroup? For example, hostility toward immigrants, particularly as a source of ‘cheap labour’, often features prominently on many right-wing, conservative political agendas. Are there circumstances, however, when ‘ordinary people’ become willing to protest against the actions of those in positions of authority (e.g. government) that disadvantage this
particular ‘outgroup’ minority (e.g. foreign workers in low-paid, insecure employment)?

Social psychology offers a number of insights that are relevant to answering different aspects of this question. Firstly, it is important to consider how it is that the authority’s treatment of any minority group comes to be seen as harsh, unjust, illegitimate and, ultimately, worthy of opposition and challenge. The work on leadership and leadership rhetoric (Haslam & Platow, 2001; Reicher et al., 2005; Reicher & Hopkins, 1996a, 1996b; Turner & Haslam, 2001) suggests that authorities and leaders will be more influential, and therefore more likely to be supported in their decision and actions, to the extent that they are seen to behave in a way that is consistent with the followers’ understanding of themselves and others in a given context of intergroup relations. In contrast, as shown in crowd dynamics research, authorities and their actions that violate either the subordinates’ understanding of who ‘we’ are or their understanding of the relevant social reality are likely to be challenged (Reicher, 1984, 1987, 1996, 2001; see also Reicher et al., 2005). Similarly, the work of Tyler and colleagues (Tyler, 1988, 1990, 1997; Tyler & Degoe, 1995; Tyler et al., 1996) suggests that authorities will be seen as more legitimate—even when their decisions have negative consequences for subordinates—to the extent that they behave in a manner consistent with subordinates’ expectations of ‘procedurally fair’ treatment. Platow and colleagues (Platow, Hoar, Reid, Harley, & Morrison, 1997; Platow, O’Connell, Shave, & Hanning, 1995) have further suggested that, rather than being grounded in relatively abstract notions of ‘justice’, what is ‘procedurally fair’ is shaped by whether or not it serves to advance the interests of the ingroup over those of the outgroup. Therefore, policies, actions and decisions seen to violate what ‘we’ understand to be the proper conduct in a given social context are more likely to be questioned and challenged (Turner & Reynolds, 2002). As such, certain actions of leaders and authorities are more likely to be seen as inappropriate (e.g. excessively harsh, unjust) when they are also seen as contradicting the norms and values that define who ‘we’ are in a relevant social context.

When it comes to political solidarity, therefore, those actions of the authority that are seen to violate the majority’s understanding of who ‘we’ are and their
expectations in relation to how ‘we’ should relate to the relevant minority are more likely to be challenged. As discussed in Chapter 5, such perceptions are more likely to exist to the extent that the meaning of a relevant social identity is fundamentally defined by those norms and values that the authority’s treatment of the minority is seen to violate. In that sense, perceptions that a particular norm or a set of beliefs and expectations have been violated presupposes the centrality of those beliefs to ‘our’ understanding of who ‘we’ are and how ‘we’ should relate to others in the social world.

However, while the perception that authority’s treatment of the minority is harsh, unjust and illegitimate is important—even necessary—it may not be sufficient to motivate willingness to act collectively in solidarity with the minority. Intergroup relations approaches to helping behaviour are informative in this regard. As discussed in Chapter 4, according to this research people are more likely to experience empathy and help others in need who are seen to be members of relevant ingroups (Levine, 1999; Levine, Cassidy, Brazier, & Reicher, 2002; Levine et al., 2005; Levine & Thompson, 2004; Stürmer et al., 2006; Stürmer et al., 2005). Similarly, minority influence research shows that ingroup minorities are likely to be more influential, compared with those minorities seen to be outgroup members (David & Turner, 1999, 2001a, 2001b). When it comes to political solidarity, this reasoning would suggest that members of the majority will be more likely to ‘help’ and be influenced by those minorities who are more readily categorized as ingroup members.

If shared identity meaning (i.e. shared goals, norms and values) is a precondition of political solidarity, however, then it becomes crucial to understand how such understandings of intergroup relations on the part of the majority may emerge for those minorities who cannot readily be categorized as ‘ingroup’ members. In many political solidarity contexts, the minority is often comprised of people with little protection otherwise afforded by easily evoked ‘ingroup’ membership based on citizenship, race, ethnicity, etc.—if anything, the minorities are more likely to be categorized as outgroups based on such (relatively) readily accessible dimensions of social comparison. When it comes to ‘outgroup’ minorities,
inter-subgroup differences of this kind need to be ‘overlooked’ and a higher-order unity and commonality of purpose need to emerge if political solidarity is to ensue.

When we consider the tripolar intergroup dynamics in which political solidarity takes place, it becomes possible to consider how such higher-order unity may emerge in response to authority’s treatment of ‘outgroup’ minorities that violates important norms, values and beliefs that ‘we’ are all meant to share. Namely, given the comparative and contrasting nature of social identity, norm-inconsistent actions of the authority should not only start to redefine the authority as no longer sharing the majority’s goals and interests, but also enhance the perception that the majority now shares a common cause with the minority. As such, ‘outgroup helping’ may become possible under conditions in which an authority violates important norms and values thereby redefining group boundaries in a way that also redefines ‘our’ goals and interests as no longer shared with the authority but with the minority.

6.2 Study 1: Political Solidarity with Low-Paid Workers

Harsh treatment of workers has been an important historical and contemporary basis for solidarity (e.g. see Chapter 3 for discussion of the Polish workers movement ‘Solidarity’) and thereby seemed an appropriate context in which to investigate the political solidarity processes outlined above. The current study is contextualised by the more contemporary dynamic involving Australian workers’ opposition to government policies perceived to infringe their rights. Namely, over the past decade in Australia there has been growing opposition to the changes in workplace relations laws advanced by the (now former) Liberal (conservative) government—most prominently in relation to the so-called WorkChoices policy. Fundamentally, the changes, and this policy in particular, sought to reduce the collective bargaining power of workers in favour of individually negotiated contracts that potentially undermined a number of previously protected rights. The policy generated widespread opposition, with some political analysts going as far as to argue that it was one of the main causes of PM Howard’s electoral defeat in late 2007 (see, for example, Brett, 2007). Of particular importance in the context of the current thesis, the policy was opposed not only by the most vulnerable (low-paid) workers but also those who were not in danger of being directly affected by it. As Judith Brett (a
prominent political scientists and expert on Liberal Party (i.e. conservative) politics in Australia) argues:

"Those most worried about the direct impact [of WorkChoices policy] on themselves were low- to middle-income voters and the young, many of whom were in casual employment. But there were many people who opposed the laws even though they did not expect to be personally affected, and the majority did not agree with the government’s claim that the changes would be good for the economy. It was the conflation of these two types of opposition that made public sentiment towards WorkChoices so impervious to government persuasion.” (Brett, 2007, p. 73).

It therefore seems appropriate to investigate the core political solidarity processes as understood within the current thesis in the context of workplace relations in Australia. It is important to note that this context, like a number of other contexts of interest to political solidarity (e.g. solidarity with sweatshop workers), is marked by a general tendency to see harsh treatment of the minority as being at least somewhat inconsistent with the views of the majority. However, not all majority members will be equally committed to their view and willing to become more active participants in the process of social change. It is therefore important to investigate the conditions under which such discontent with authority can be transformed into majority willingness to challenge the relevant system of intergroup relations and those in positions of authority in solidarity with the minority. In particular, it may be important to consider the nature of the majority identity and how it may interact with the reality of intergroup relations to affect the likelihood of political solidarity.

It is well-recognised that Australians tend to think of themselves and Australia as being egalitarian and the kind of society that ensures a ‘fair go’ for everyone (e.g. Halloran, 2007; Haslam, Oakes, Reynolds, & Mein, 1999; McGarty & Bllic, 2004). This egalitarian aspect of the Australian identity may be particularly relevant when it comes to workers’ rights in the context of policy changes that threaten to erode the wellbeing of a particularly vulnerable section of the workforce (i.e. low-paid workers). As discussed above, however, authority behaviour that is inconsistent with
a particular set of expectations and values is more likely to be perceived as a *norm violation* to the extent that such norms are indeed central to who ‘we’ are—the relevant social identity. Therefore, the perception that the authority no longer shares ‘our’ norms and values, and therefore willingness to challenge such an authority, should be more likely when egalitarian norms are not only evoked in the abstract, but also come to define the meaning of the relevant identity. In the current study, therefore, in addition to making the Australian identity salient overall, in some conditions what it means to be Australian was defined primarily in terms of egalitarian norms and values. We expected that political solidarity will be more likely to encompass both ‘ingroup’ and ‘outgroup’ minorities when identity meaning centred on egalitarian norms and values whose violation in the eyes of the majority is likely to characterise harsh minority treatment as illegitimate and as violating the majority’s understanding of who ‘we’ are.

Next, using a hypothetical scenario that mirrors the contemporary debates around workplace relations policies, we manipulated minority group membership and the extent to which authority’s treatment of the minority was consistent with the relevant norms and values. Participants were presented with a vignette in which (purportedly credible) research findings showed that the newly proposed government policies have the potential to damage the rights of low-paid workers. Minority group membership was manipulated by referring to the workers either as ‘Australian’ or ‘foreign (on temporary working visas)’. Given that all of our participants were Australian citizens or permanent residents, it was assumed that Australian, compared to foreign, workers will be more readily categorized as ingroup members. The scenario also manipulated the extent to which authority’s actions were consistent or inconsistent with the prevalent norms and values in this context. The government’s response to the research findings was described as either protective of the workers affected by the policy or protective of the interests of employers. In this context, a response that failed to protect workers’ rights was expected to be perceived as violating the prevalent norms and values, while a response that protected those rights should be seen as consistent with ‘our’ values and beliefs.

We expected that political solidarity (as willingness to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority) would be particularly likely to emerge when the
authority acted in a way that was inconsistent with the majority’s expectations in this context. However, this effect should be particularly pronounced when the meaning of the majority identity is defined in a way that places minority’s concerns at the core of who ‘we’ are (i.e. when egalitarian values are central to the majority’s self-definition). Importantly, however, under these conditions, political solidarity with a hitherto ‘outgroup’ minority should be just as likely as solidarity with the hitherto ‘ingroup’ minority. Authority’s treatment of the minority that violates identity-defining norms should also result in a view that it is no longer the authority but the (ingroup or outgroup) minority and their concerns that best embody who ‘we’ are and how ‘we’ should relate to each other in this particular context. It is expected that such a shift in shared identity meaning will be reflected in: a) enhanced willingness to challenge the authority in solidarity with the hitherto ‘outgroup’ minority, b) increased perceptions of authority illegitimacy and a reduced sense of common cause (i.e. shared goals, values, etc.) with this group, and c) increased perception of shared common cause with the minority. We also measured the salience of the Australian as well as ‘worker’ identity in order to explore whether the salience of these identities changed across experimental conditions. It may be that the salience of ‘worker’ identity, as a self-categorization that captures the minority and the majority but excludes the authority, will be heightened under the same conditions that enhance the likelihood of political solidarity. Given the political nature of this context, we also controlled for the extent to which participants were supportive of the Liberal/National Coalition—the political party that formed the (conservative) government of the day. Additionally, we controlled for the extent to which participants anticipated to be directly affected by changes in workplace regulations. It was particularly important to control for such perceptions given that our sample comprised university students, whose political views are likely to be less conservative than those of the general population and who are also more likely to be employed in relatively insecure and low-paid jobs.
6.2.1 Method

Participants and Design

Two hundred and fifty-four psychology students at the Australian National University completed the study as part of their laboratory attendance. Thirty nine participants were neither Australian citizens nor permanent residents and were therefore excluded from the analyses. The reduced sample had 215 participants (63 males and 150 females, with missing gender data for 2 participants), ranging in age from 17 to 55 ($M=20.13$). The study had a 2 (Australian Egalitarian Identity: Strong vs. Weak) x 2 (Minority Group Membership: Ingroup vs. Outgroup) x 2 (Authority Response: Norm-Consistent vs. Norm-Inconsistent) between-subjects factorial design.

Procedure and Materials

Participants completed a questionnaire booklet containing the experimental manipulations and dependent measures, as detailed below.

Australian Egalitarian Identity Manipulation. The first page of the booklet explained that it is important for social psychologists to find out people’s views of the society that we live in. When Australian Egalitarian Identity was Strong, the booklet stated:

“One consistent social psychological finding is that Australians tend to have a strong sense of what is right and wrong and are particularly sensitive to social inequality and injustice – e.g. when some group in society is denied a ‘fair go’ or is unfairly disadvantaged. This is often expressed in terms of looking after those who are less fortunate in society. Consequently, the Australian society as a whole is relatively egalitarian and most people living in Australia have a reasonably good standard of living. This also sets Australia apart from a number of other developed countries that tend to have a large impoverished

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Egalitarianism is likely to be seen as a part of Australian identity across conditions. Therefore, we decided to use the terms Strong and Weak, rather than Present and Absent, for this variable to signify that our manipulation was intended to enhance or attenuate, rather than create or obliterate, this particular identity meaning.
underclass (e.g., lack of healthcare, education opportunities, low standard of living) and more inequality in general."

Participants were then asked to provide written responses to the questions: “What are some positive things about having a relatively egalitarian society” and “What would be some negative consequences if these egalitarian values (e.g., social equality, looking out for those who are less fortunate) were not supported”. This manipulation was intended to define the meaning of the Australian identity strongly in terms of egalitarian norms and values.

When Australian Egalitarian Identity was Weak, it was stated that it is important to take a regular ‘snapshot’ of what people thought of Australia and Australians (as these things can change over time):

“An important task for social psychology is to find out about how people perceive themselves and the society they live in, and many social psychological studies deal with this particular question. As a result, we now have a good general idea about some key characteristics of Australia and Australians. However, it is important to continue to assess these kinds of attitudes and beliefs as they change over time. It is possible that these things vary as a result of broad societal changes over many years, but also because of more short-term or temporary events. It is therefore important and worthwhile to take a regular ‘snapshot’ of how those living in Australia see themselves and the Australian society.”

In this condition, participants were asked to provide a written response to the following two questions: “What are some of the positive things about Australia and Australians?” and “What would be some negative things that characterise the Australian society and Australians?”. It was anticipated that it was still possible for participants in the Weak condition to characterise Australia and Australians as egalitarian, fair, etc., but that, given the broad nature of the questions, the egalitarian nature of the Australian identity would not be a central feature of their responses.
Manipulations of Minority Group Membership and Authority Response. On the next page, under the heading “Contemporary Social Issues in Australia” the booklet stated:

“In this section you are asked to read a brief scenario describing a social issue/debate in Australian society and respond to the questions that follow. Although the scenario used here is hypothetical (i.e. designed for the purpose of the exercise), the situation described in the scenario broadly reflects some of the social and political debates that are currently taking place in Australia. Please respond as if you were asked to consider these issues ‘for real’.”

Under the heading ‘New Policies Affect Low-Paid Workers’ it was briefly stated that there has been a lot of debate about workers’ rights under the new government laws. In order to manipulate Minority Group Membership (Foreign vs. Australian), it was then stated that:

“…a new report, by the Australian Institute for Social Welfare Research (AISWR) now shows that these policies impact negatively on [foreign workers (on temporary work visas)]/[those Australian workers] who are employed in low paid, transient and insecure jobs – an issue which has been overlooked in the past.” [emphasis added]

The response of agencies representing workers’ rights (identical in all conditions) was described next:

“In response to the report, a number of agencies representing workers’ rights have called for the government to act immediately and change the policy. They are arguing that changes to the policy need to include things like free independent legal advice for employment contracts, and random checks on employers to ensure that they are paying these workers adequately.”
The Authority Response (Norm-Consistent vs. Norm-Inconsistent) variable was manipulated next. In the Norm-Consistent (NC) condition, it was stated:

“The Minister for Workplace Relations stated that his department has taken the report seriously and is concerned about the findings. Although his statement did not specify whether any immediate action would be taken, the minister is currently in the process of discussing the findings and the report recommendations in detail with the AISWR. Importantly, he was positive about the idea that random checks on employers should be conducted to protect the rights of these vulnerable workers and ensure they are not underpaid.”

In contrast, the Norm-Inconsistent (NI) conditions had the following statement about the Minister:

“The Minister for Workplace Relations stated that his department has taken the report seriously and is concerned about its findings. However, the minister emphasised that the government needs to protect the interests of employers (e.g. business owners, corporations) and provide an environment where they can be profitable and competitive. Importantly, the Minister said that his department would not be taking any further action in relation to the policy, as this was an initiative that was a long time in the making and that he was proud of.”

**Dependent Measures**

**Manipulation Checks.** One item assessed the effectiveness of the Australian Egalitarian Identity manipulation by asking participants to rate the extent to which “According to social psychological research, Australian society is characterised by egalitarian norms and values”. Manipulation checks for Authority Response consisted of the following two items: 1) “In the scenario, the Minister was positive about the idea of random checks to ensure employers were not underpaying workers”

1 Unless stated otherwise, a 9-point Likert scale, with 1 = “Not at all” and 9 = “Very much”, was used for all measures in this and subsequent studies.
and 2) “In the scenario, the Minister emphasised that the government needs to protect the rights of employers – no further action will be taken about the policy”. Finally, three items assessed the effectiveness of the Minority Group Membership manipulation: 1) “The scenario stated that the policy negatively affected Australian workers”, 2) “The scenario stated that the policy negatively affected foreign workers (on temporary visas)”, and 3) “The scenario stated that the policy negatively affected university students”.

*Collective Action Tendencies.* Collective action tendencies were assessed in relation to participants’ willingness to challenge the authority, but also in relation to their willingness to act collectively in support of minority’s efforts to achieve social change. Collective action tendencies towards the authority were assessed using four items (e.g. “I would consider changing how I vote to support workers affected by this policy”, “I would consider signing a petition supporting immediate change to the policy”), forming a reliable measure of this type of collective action intentions, $\alpha=.75$. We also used a single item measure of support for the Labor party (given that it was the Liberal/National coalition that was in government at the time the study was conducted) as a further indication of participants’ opposition to authority in this context. This measure stated “If you had a chance to vote in the Australian elections, which political party would you be most likely to vote for?” with the options being Liberal/National Coalition, Australian Labor Party, Greens, Family First, Other and Unsure/Don’t know. Each option was rated on a scale from 1=Not at all to 9=Very Much. In addition to the Australian Labor Party ratings, we were also interested in participants’ ratings of the Liberal/National Coalition and used this measure as a covariate in all analyses (see below).

An additional four items formed a reliable measure of participants’ willingness to act collectively in support of the minority, $\alpha=.89$ (e.g. “If I had the opportunity I would actively support the rights of workers affected by this policy”, “I would consider joining an organisation protecting the rights of these workers”).

*Perceived Legitimacy.* Perceptions of legitimacy were assessed in relation to both the minority’s (i.e. workers’) and the authority’s (i.e. government’s) response in this context. These measures will be referred to as Minority Legitimacy and Authority Legitimacy respectively. All items were positively coded, so that higher
values indicate higher perceived legitimacy. Three items measured Minority Legitimacy, including: “The workers’ response was justified”, “The workers’ response to the policy was fair” and “The workers responded to this policy in a way that was illegitimate” (reverse coded). Combined, these items had a reliability coefficient of $\alpha=.63$. Removal of the third (reverse coded) item substantially improved the reliability of this measure, $\alpha=.75$. As a result this item was excluded from further analyses. Perceptions of Authority Legitimacy were measured using an additional three items: “The Minister’s response was unfair” (reverse coded), “The Minister’s response to the policy was justified”, and “The minister responded in a way that was legitimate”. These items formed a reliable measure of Authority Legitimacy, $\alpha=.88$.

*Common Cause.* Perceptions of Common Cause were also measured for the minority as well as the authority. Common Cause with Minority was measured using the following three items: “The workers’ response to this issue reflects the values that I consider to be important”, “In the context of this scenario, I share the view expressed by the workers” and “I share workers’ goals and concerns”. These items formed a reliable measure of shared Common Cause with Minority, $\alpha=.87$. An additional three items formed a reliable measure of shared Common Cause with Authority, $\alpha=.88$, including: “In the context of this scenario, I see myself as someone who shares the view expressed by the Minister”, “I share the Minister’s goals and concerns in the context of this scenario” and “The Minister’s response reflects the values that I consider to be important”.

*Higher-Order Identity Salience.* We also measured the extent to which participants thought of themselves as Australians and Workers while completing the questionnaire. The salience of these identities was assessed using the following two items: “While completing this questionnaire I mostly thought of myself as an Australian” and “While completing this questionnaire I mostly thought of myself as a worker”.

*Covariates.* All analyses included two covariates—participants’ support for the Liberal/National Coalition and the belief that changes in the government’s workplace relations policy may directly (negatively) affect participants in the future (“I believe that the changes in government policy in relation to workplace agreements may
(negatively) affect me in the future”). These items sought to control for existing attitudes towards the political party who formed the government of the day, as well as the extent to which participants anticipated to be directly affected by the policy.

6.2.2 Results

Preliminary Analyses

Elaboration Maximisation method within SPSS was used to replace isolated missing values (less than 5% missing values on all dependent variables). Fifteen participants (8.4%) had missing values on the ratings of Liberal/National Coalition preferences and were excluded from further analyses given that this variable was included as a covariate in all analyses. One participant had extreme scores on multiple dependent variables and was also excluded from further analysis. After data screening, the total sample was 199 participants.

The results of a 2 (Egalitarian Identity: Strong vs. Weak) x 2 (Minority: Australian vs. Foreign) x 2 (Authority Response: Norm-Consistent vs. Norm-Inconsistent) analysis of variance with the covariates as dependent variables revealed no significant main effects or interactions. Given the nature of the study, it was not possible to measure these covariates prior to the experiment, which makes it particularly important to ensure that they were not significantly affected by the experimental manipulations. Overall, participants’ preferences for the Liberal/National Coalition were not strong ($M=4.12$, $SD=2.69$) and they tended to perceive the policy as having the potential to (negatively) impact them personally in the future ($M=6.09$, $SD=2.14$). Using the procedure suggested by Tabachnik and Fidell (2001), we also confirmed that the homogeneity of regression for both of the covariates was maintained—the relationship between the covariates and the dependent variables did not significantly vary across the experimental conditions.

Correlations Between Key Dependent Variables

As can be seen in Table 6.1, the dependent measures correlated in a way that is consistent with the relevant literature in this domain and the conceptual framework for understanding political solidarity outlined in this thesis (see Chapter 5). Importantly, there was a strong negative correlation between collective action intentions to support the minority and challenge the authority and measures of
perceived legitimacy of authority’s actions in this context, as well as perceived common cause with authority. The lower the perceived legitimacy and common cause with authority, the greater the majority willingness to engage in collective action to challenge the authority and support the minority. In contrast, collective action intentions were strongly positively correlated with the perceived minority legitimacy and common cause with the minority, so that the higher the perceptions of minority legitimacy and the greater the perceived common cause with this group, the higher the willingness to act collectively to challenge the authority and support the minority’s cause.

While measures of higher-order identity salience were included for exploratory purposes, it is interesting to note that the salience of worker identity was significantly, although moderately, correlated with collective action tendencies, so that the higher the worker identity salience, the greater the willingness to engage in collective action. This identity was also significantly correlated with minority legitimacy, common cause with minority and common cause with authority. Overall, the more participants thought of themselves as workers in the context of this study, the higher their perceptions of minority legitimacy and common cause with minority, and the lower their perceived common cause with authority. The salience of Australian identity was significantly correlated only with the perceptions of minority legitimacy, so that the greater the salience of this identity, the greater the perceived legitimacy of the minority’s response in this context.
Table 6.1. Means, Standard Deviations (SD) and Bivariate Correlations Between Dependent Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DV</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. CA – Challenge to Authority</td>
<td>6.34</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. CA – Support for Minority</td>
<td>5.83</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.75**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Perceived Legit. – Authority</td>
<td>4.89</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>-.48**</td>
<td>-.37*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Perceived Legit. – Minority</td>
<td>7.09</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>-.15*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Common Cause – Authority</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>-.66**</td>
<td>-.48**</td>
<td>.78**</td>
<td>-.29**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Common Cause – Minority</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>.69**</td>
<td>.67**</td>
<td>-.31**</td>
<td>.60**</td>
<td>-.45**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. ID Salience – Australian</td>
<td>6.96</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. ID Salience – Worker</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>.26*</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>-.15*</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>.19*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. 9-point Likert scale was used for all measures (1 = Not at all, 9 = Very much).
* p < .05, ** p < .01

Effects of Experimental Manipulations

All analyses were conducted using a 2 (Egalitarian Identity: Strong vs. Weak) x 2 (Minority: Australian vs. Foreign) x 2 (Authority Response: Norm-Consistent vs. Norm-Inconsistent) analysis of variance, controlling for participants’ preferences for the Liberal/National Coalition and the extent to which participants believed they will be personally affected by the policy, which were entered as covariates. The estimated marginal means and standard errors reported below have been adjusted for covariates.

Manipulation Checks. Confirming the effectiveness of the Australian Egalitarian Identity manipulation, when Australian Egalitarian Identity was Strong, participants were significantly more likely to agree with the statement that, according to social
psychological research, Australian society is characterised by egalitarian norms and values, $F(1, 186)=56.28, p<.001, \eta_p^2=.23$, compared to when Australian Egalitarian Identity was Weak (Strong: $M=7.59, SE=.16$, Weak: $M=5.88, SE=.16$). There were no other significant main or interaction effects for this variable. It is worthwhile noting that participants believed that Australians and Australian society were moderately characterised by egalitarian norms and values across conditions.

When it comes to the Authority Response manipulation, participants in the Norm-Consistent condition were significantly more likely to agree that the Minister was protective towards workers compared to those in the Norm-Inconsistent condition, $F(1, 187)=477.41, p<.001, \eta_p^2=.72$ (NC: $M=7.53, SE=.23$, NI: $M=2.23, SE=.25$). Furthermore, compared to participants in the Norm-Consistent condition ($M=3.24, SE=.22$), participants in the Norm-Inconsistent condition ($M=7.29, SE=.23$) were significantly more likely to agree that the Minister was protective of employer interests, $F(1, 187)=167.11, p<.001, \eta_p^2=.47$. There were no other significant main or interaction effects for these manipulation checks. The results confirmed that the Authority Response manipulation was successful.

Finally, indicating that Minority Group Membership was successfully manipulated, participants in the Australian condition were significantly more likely to indicate that the policy described in the scenario affected Australian workers, compared to those in the Foreign condition, $F(1, 187)=113.55, p<.001, \eta_p^2=.38$ (Australian: $M=6.79, SE=.25$, Foreign: $M=3.16, SE=.24$). In contrast, participants in the Foreign condition were significantly more likely to indicate that the policy affected Foreign workers, compared to participants in the Australian condition, $F(1, 187)=436.68, p<.001, \eta_p^2=.70$ (Foreign: $M=8.01, SE=.18$, Australian: $M=2.59, SE=.19$). It was clear that participants did not perceive the policy described in the scenario as affecting university students, as ratings for this item were low ($M=2.20, SD=1.74$) and did not significantly vary across conditions. There were no other significant main effects or interactions for these manipulation checks.

**Collective Action: Challenge to Authority.** A significant main effect of Authority Response, $F(1, 189)=7.03, p<.01, \eta_p^2=.04$, indicated that participants were more willing to collectively challenge the authority when Authority Response was Norm-Inconsistent ($M=6.55, SE=.11$) compared to Norm-Consistent ($M=6.14, SE=.11$).
However, this main effect was qualified by two significant 2-way interactions—Australian Egalitarian Identity x Authority Response, $F(1, 189)=7.28, p<.01$, $\eta_p^2=.04$, and Minority Group Membership x Authority Response, $F(1, 189)=5.77, p=.05$, $\eta_p^2=.03$.

Looking at the Australian Egalitarian Identity x Authority Response interaction (Figure 6.1), when authority’s actions were Norm-Inconsistent, participants were significantly more willing to challenge the Authority when the Australian Egalitarian Identity was Strong ($M=6.83, SE=.16$) compared to Weak ($M=6.28, SE=.15$), $F(1, 90)=5.29, p=.02$, $\eta_p^2=.06$. This difference was not observed in the Norm-Consistent condition, $F(1, 96)=2.32, p=.13$ (Strong: $M=5.99, SE=.15$; Weak: $M=6.29, SE=.16$).

Also, when Australian Egalitarian Identity was Strong, a Norm-Inconsistent Authority Response elicited significantly more willingness to challenge the authority ($M=6.83, SE=.16$) compared to a Norm-Consistent response ($M=5.99, SE=.15$), $F(1, 91)=12.19, p<.01$, $\eta_p^2=.12$, but this effect did not emerge when Australian Egalitarian Identity was Weak, $F(1, 95)<1$, ns. Overall, consistent with expectations, majority willingness to challenge the authority was strongest when authority’s actions were seen to be inconsistent with majority’s expectations, particularly when the meaning of the relevant identity was defined primarily in terms of egalitarian norms and values.
Figure 6.1. Willingness to collectively challenge the authority as a function of Authority Response and the Australian Egalitarian Identity.

Note: NC = Norm-Consistent, NI = Norm-Inconsistent

Looking at the Minority Group Membership x Authority Response interaction (Figure 6.2), when the authority behaved in a norm-consistent way, participants were equally willing to challenge the authority regardless of whether the minority was comprised of Australian ($M=6.26, SE=.16$) or Foreign ($M=6.06, SE=.15$) workers, $F(1, 96)<1$, ns.. A norm-inconsistent response, however, generated a greater willingness to challenge the authority when the minority group was comprised of Foreign ($M=6.84, SE=.16$) rather than Australian ($M=6.28, SE=.16$) workers. Greater willingness to support foreign compared to Australian workers treated harshly by the authority perhaps reflects the belief that alternative sources of support are less likely to exist for this group. Additionally, only when the minority was comprised of Foreign workers, participants were significantly more willing to challenge the authority when the Authority Response was Norm-Inconsistent ($M=6.84, SE=.16$) compared to Norm-Consistent ($M=6.06, SE=.15$), $F(1, 97)=12.72, p<.01, \eta_p^2=.12$. When the minority was comprised of Australian workers, participants’ willingness to
challenge the authority did not vary as a function of authority’s behaviour, $F(1, 89) < 1$, ns., (Norm-Inconsistent: $M=6.28$, $SE=.16$; Norm-Consistent: $M=6.26$, $SE=.16$).

Figure 6.2. Willingness to collectively challenge the authority as a function of Authority Response and Minority Group Membership.

Mirroring the findings in relation to authority challenge, there was a significant Minority Group Membership x Authority Response interaction for Labor Party support (measured as willingness to vote for the Australian Labor Party at an imminent federal election), $F(1, 189)=6.62, p<.05$, $\eta^2_p=.03$ (Figure 6.3). When the authority behaved in a norm-consistent manner, support for the Labour party did not vary as a function of Minority Group Membership, $F(1, 96)=1.21, p=.28$ (Australian: $M=6.18$, $SE=.31$; Foreign: $M=5.65$, $SE=.29$). However, when Authority Response was Norm-Inconsistent, participants were significantly more willing to support the Labor party when the minority were Foreign ($M=6.49$, $SE=.31$) compared to Australian workers ($M=5.43$, $SE=.32$), $F(1, 87)=4.94, p<.05$, $\eta^2_p=.05$. Furthermore, only when the minority was comprised of Foreign workers, participants expressed significantly higher support for the Labor Party when the Authority Response was Norm-Inconsistent ($M=6.49$, $SE=.31$) compared to Norm-Consistent ($M=5.65$, $SE=.29$), $F(1, 96)=5.44, p<.05$, $\eta^2_p=.05$. No significant differences for Authority
Response emerged for the Australian workers, $F(1, 87)=1.84, p=.18$ (Norm-Inconsistent: $M=5.43, SE=.32$; Norm-Consistent: $M=6.18, SE=.31$).

Figure 6.3. Support for the Labor Party as a function of Authority Response and Minority Group Membership.

Collective Action – Support for the Minority. A significant main effect of Minority Group Membership showed that participants were more likely to act collectively in support of the minority when it was comprised of Foreign ($M=6.04, SE=.14$) compared to Australian ($M=5.53, SE=.15$) workers, $F(1, 189)=6.00, p<.05, \eta_p^2=.03$. However, this main effect was qualified by two significant 2-way interactions—Minority Group Membership x Authority Response, $F(1, 189)=5.02, p<.05, \eta_p^2=.03$, and Australian Egalitarian Identity x Minority Group Membership, $F(1, 189)=4.46, p<.05, \eta_p^2=.02$.

Simple effects analyses for the Minority Group Membership x Authority Response interaction (Figure 6.4) showed that, only when the minority was comprised of Foreign workers, participants’ willingness to act collectively increased when the authority responded in a Norm-Inconsistent ($M=6.37, SE=.21$) compared to Norm-Consistent ($M=5.70, SE=.20$) manner, $F(1, 97)=4.72, p<.05, \eta_p^2=.05$. This difference did not emerge when the minority was comprised of Australian workers, $F(1, 89)<1$. 
ns (Norm-Consistent: $M=5.66, SE=.21$; Norm-Inconsistent: $M=5.40, SE=.21$). Furthermore, when exposed to a Norm-Inconsistent Authority Response, participants were more willing to act collectively when the minority comprised Foreign ($M=6.37, SE=.21$) compared to Australian workers ($M=5.40, SE=.21$), $F(1, 90)=6.29, p<.05$, $\eta^2_p=.07$. However, these differences did not emerge in the Norm-Consistent condition, $F(1, 96)<1$, ns., (Foreign: $M=5.70, SE=.20$; Australian: $M=5.66, SE=.21$). Therefore, when the authority acted in a way that was consistent with relevant norms and values, the majority was equally supportive of ‘ingroup’ (i.e. Australian workers) and ‘outgroup’ (i.e. foreign workers) minorities. However, Norm-inconsistent actions of the authority elicited more majority support for the minority when it was Foreign, rather than Australian, workers that were the target of such actions.

![Figure 6.4](image_url)

*Figure 6.4. Willingness to collectively support the minority as a function of Authority Response and Minority Group Membership.*

In relation to the Australian Egalitarian Identity x Minority Group Membership interaction (Figure 6.5), only when the Australian Egalitarian Identity was Strong, participants’ willingness to act collectively to support the minority was significantly higher for Foreign ($M=6.21, SE=.20$) compared to Australian workers ($M=5.27, SE=.21$), $F(1, 91)=6.25, p<.05$, $\eta^2_p=.06$. This difference did not emerge when the
Australian Egalitarian Identity was Weak, $F(1, 95)<1$, ns., (Foreign: $M=5.86$, $SE=.20$; Australian: $M=5.79$, $SE=.21$).

![Figure 6.5. Willingness to collectively support the minority as a function of Minority Group Membership and Australian Egalitarian Identity.](image)

**Perceptions of Legitimacy.** Two main effects emerged for Authority Legitimacy—a marginal main effect of Egalitarian Identity, $F(1, 189)=3.02$, $p=.08$, $\eta_p^2=.02$, and a significant main effect of Authority Response, $F(1, 189)=127.82$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2=.40$. Overall, the authority’s response was perceived to be (marginally) more legitimate when the Australian Egalitarian Identity was Strong ($M=5.05$, $SE=.13$) compared to Weak ($M=4.75$, $SE=.12$). Additionally, while a Norm-Consistent response was seen as legitimate ($M=5.88$, $SE=.12$), the Norm-Inconsistent response was seen as illegitimate ($M=3.91$, $SE=.13$).

These main effects were qualified by a significant three-way interaction, $F(1, 189)=5.71$, $p<.05$, $\eta_p^2=.03$ (Figure 6.6). The only significant 2-way interaction to emerge from further analyses was the interaction between Australian Egalitarian Identity and Authority Response, but only when the minority was comprised of Australian workers, $F(1, 90)=6.44$, $p=.01$, $\eta_p^2=.07$. A significant simple effect of Australian Egalitarian Identity indicated that when the Authority Response was
Norm-Inconsistent, $F(1, 43)=6.66, p=.01, \eta^2=.13$, authority’s actions were seen to be particularly illegitimate when the Australian Egalitarian Identity was Strong ($M=3.53, SE=.27$) compared to Weak ($M=4.55, SE=.24$). Indeed, when the policy targeted Australian workers, norm-inconsistent actions of the authority were seen as least illegitimate (i.e. highest rating of legitimacy) when the Australian Egalitarian Identity was Weak. There were no significant differences in the Norm-Consistent condition, $F(1, 50)=1.93, p=.17$ (Strong: $M=6.11, SE=.24$; Weak: $M=5.89, SE=.26$). When the minority were Foreign workers, the Australian Egalitarian Identity x Authority Response interaction was not significant, $F(1, 96)=2.47, p=.12$. Overall, a Weak Australian Egalitarian Identity resulted in somewhat higher Authority Legitimacy when Australian workers were affected by norm-inconsistent actions of the authority. However, when authority’s (norm-inconsistent) actions affected Foreign workers, they were perceived as equally illegitimate regardless of whether the Australian Egalitarian Identity was Strong or Weak. Table 6.2 shows the means, standard errors and 95% confidence intervals for Authority Legitimacy in all experimental conditions.

![Authority Legitimacy as a function of Authority Response, Australian Egalitarian Identity, and Minority Group Membership.](image)
Table 6.2. *Authority Legitimacy as a function of Minority Group Membership, Australian Egalitarian Identity and Authority Response.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minority Group</th>
<th>Egalitarian Identity</th>
<th>Authority Response</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Intervals</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>6.19</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>5.71 - 6.66</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>3.01 - 4.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>5.89</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>5.39 - 6.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>4.08 - 5.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>5.52</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>5.04 - 5.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>3.26 - 4.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>5.94</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>5.48 - 6.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>3.32 - 4.31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. NC = Norm-Consistent; NI = Norm-Inconsistent.*

When it comes to perceptions of Minority Legitimacy, participants perceived the minority response to be legitimate ($M=7.09, SD=1.13$) and this view did not significantly vary across experimental conditions. However, a marginal main effect of Minority Group Membership, $F(1, 189)=3.66, p=.06, \eta_p^2=.02$, indicated that perceptions of Minority Legitimacy were somewhat higher when the minority was comprised of Foreign ($M=7.22, SE=.10$) compared to Australian ($M=6.93, SE=.11$) workers.

*Common Cause with Authority.* A significant main effect of Authority Response, $F(1, 189)=51.74, p<.001, \eta_p^2=.22$, indicated that participants’ sense of shared Common Cause with Authority was higher when the authority treated the workers in a Norm-Consistent ($M=5.11, SE=.14$) rather than Norm-Inconsistent ($M=3.71, SE=.14$) manner. There was also a significant main effect of Minority Group Membership, $F(1, 189)=6.08, p<.05, \eta_p^2=.03$, showing that there was less Common Cause with Authority when its policies affected Foreign ($M=4.17, SE=.14$) compared
to Australian ($M=4.65, SE=.14$) workers. A marginal Australian Egalitarian Identity x Minority Group Membership interaction, $F(1, 189)=3.05, p=.08, \eta_p^2=.02$, qualified this effect (see Figure 6.7). Simple effects analyses indicated that when it was Australian workers who were targeted by the workplace relations policy, common cause with authority did not vary as a result of Australian Egalitarian Identity, $F(1, 89)<1$, ns., (Strong: $M=4.66$, $SE=.20$; Weak: $M=4.63$, $SE=.20$). However, when the minority was comprised of Foreign workers, the extent to which participants’ experienced a sense of common cause with authority was significantly lower when Australian Egalitarian Identity was Strong ($M=3.84, SE=.19$) compared to Weak ($M=4.49, SE=.19$), $F(1, 97)=5.88, p<.05, \eta_p^2=.06$. Also, only when the Australian Egalitarian Identity was Strong, participants’ sense of shared cause with the authority weakened when authority’s actions targeted Foreign compared to Australian workers, $F(1, 91)=7.85, p<.01, \eta_p^2=.08$ (Foreign: $M=3.84, SE=.20$; Australian: $M=4.66, SE=.20$). This difference was not observed when the Australian Egalitarian Identity was Weak, $F(1, 95)<1$, ns. (Foreign: $M=4.49, SE=.19$; Australian: $M=4.63, SE=.20$). Therefore, regardless of whether the authority responded in a norm-consistent or norm-inconsistent manner, when workplace relations policies were described as negatively affecting Foreign (rather than Australian) workers and Australian Egalitarian Identity was Strong, participants’ sense of common cause with authority weakened.
Figure 6.7. Perceived Common Cause with Authority as a function of Minority Group Membership and Australian Egalitarian Identity.

**Common Cause with Minority.** A significant main effect of Minority Group Membership, $F(1, 189)=5.10, p<.05$, $\eta^2_p=.03$, revealed that, overall, perceptions of shared Common Cause with Minority was higher for Foreign ($M=6.83, SE=.12$) compared to Australian ($M=6.43, SE=.13$) workers. This main effect was qualified by a significant Minority Group Membership x Authority Response interaction, $F(1, 189)=4.56, p<.05$, $\eta^2_p=.02$. As shown in Figure 6.8, when the Authority Response was Norm-Consistent, participants’ sense of shared cause with the minority did not change regardless of whether the minority was comprised of Foreign ($M=6.61, SE=.11$) or Australian ($M=6.64, SE=.13$) workers, $F(1, 96)<1$, ns. However, when the authority treated the minority in a Norm-Inconsistent manner, participants expressed an even greater sense of Common Cause with Foreign workers ($M=6.99, SE=.18$) compared to Australian workers ($M=6.22, SE=.18$), $F(1, 90)=8.47, p<.01$, $\eta^2_p=.09$. 

![Figure 6.7](chart.png)
Figure 6.8. Perceived Common Cause with Minority as a function of Authority Response and Minority Group Membership.

Higher-Order Identity Salience. There were no significant main effects or interactions for Australian Identity Salience. The salience of this identity was relatively high ($M=6.96$, $SD=2.34$) and did not vary across experimental conditions. However, there was a significant three-way interaction for Worker Identity Salience, $F(1, 189)=8.47, p<.01$, $\eta^2_p=.04$. We examined this three-way interaction at each level of Minority Group Membership. There was a significant Australian Egalitarian Identity x Authority Response interaction, but only when the minority was comprised of Foreign workers, $F(1, 97)=6.89, p<.05$, $\eta^2_p=.07$. This interaction was not significant when the minority was comprised of Australian workers, $F(1, 89)=2.47, p=.12$ (see Figure 6.9).

Only when the minority was Foreign workers, under conditions of Strong Egalitarian Identity, Norm-Inconsistent actions of the authority ($M=6.00$, $SE=.49$) (marginally) increased the salience of the worker identity compared to the conditions in which authority’s actions were Norm-Consistent ($M=4.44$, $SE=.49$), $F(1, 47)=3.05, p=.09$, $\eta^2_p=.06$. In contrast, when the Australian Egalitarian Identity was Weak, it was Norm-Consistent authority behaviour that (marginally) increased
worker identity salience ($M=6.15$, $SE=.47$) compared to the conditions in which the authority treated the minority in a Norm-Inconsistent manner ($M=4.93$, $SE=.51$), $F(1, 48)=3.21$, $p=.08$, $\eta^2_p=.06$. Also, somewhat unexpectedly, Worker identity salience was significantly higher when Norm-Consistent actions affected Foreign workers and when Australian Egalitarian Identity was Weak ($M=6.15$, $SE=.47$) rather than Strong ($M=4.44$, $SE=.49$), $F(1, 50)=4.07$, $p<.04$, $\eta^2_p=.08$. Overall, it seems that, when the minority was comprised of Foreign workers, worker identity was most likely to become salient under the following two conditions: a) when Australian Egalitarian Identity was Strong and the Authority Response was Norm-Inconsistent, and b) when Australian Egalitarian Identity was Weak but the authority acted protectively towards the minority (i.e. authority actions were Norm-Consistent). Table II shows the means, standard errors and 95% confidence intervals for Worker Identity Salience in all experimental conditions.

![Figure 6.9. Worker Identity Salience as a function of Authority Response, Minority Group Membership and Australian Egalitarian Identity.](image-url)
Table 6.3. Worker Identity Salience as a function of Minority Group Membership, Australian Egalitarian Identity and Authority Response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minority Group</th>
<th>Australian Egalitarian Identity</th>
<th>Authority Response</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>5.91</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>4.95</td>
<td>6.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>5.29</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>6.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>6.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>5.97</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>5.01</td>
<td>6.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>5.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td>6.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>6.15</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>7.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>4.93</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>5.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. NC = Norm-Consistent; NI = Norm-Inconsistent

6.2.3 Discussion

This study sought to investigate the key aspects of the political solidarity process, particularly when it comes to the interaction between the meaning of the relevant majority identity (e.g. whether or not it was defined primarily by egalitarian norms and values) and nature of the intergroup relations (e.g. whether or not the authority treated the minority in a norms consistent or inconsistent manner; whether or not the minority shared the majority’s group membership). More specifically, the study investigated whether political solidarity was confined to those members of the minority with whom the majority already shared a membership of a relevant social group, or whether there are conditions under which this process will extend to those minorities hitherto seen as ‘outgroup’ members. The study also sought to establish that the key dependent measures were indeed related in ways that are consistent with the conceptual framework and existing literature in this domain.
In terms of predictions, it was expected that political solidarity—as willingness to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority—would be more likely to the extent that authority’s behaviour towards the relevant minority was norm-inconsistent rather than consistent. However, we also expected this effect to be particularly pronounced when the meaning of the majority identity was strongly (rather than weakly) defined by egalitarianism. Centrally, we expected political solidarity with an ‘outgroup’ (as well as ‘ingroup’) minority to be most likely under these conditions, reflecting a possible emergence of a shared identity (e.g. shared goals and interests, and a sense of common cause) with this group in response to authority’s violation of identity-defining norms, values and beliefs.

Firstly, it is important to note that our key dependent variables were correlated in the manner consistent with existing research as well as the conceptual framework outlined in Chapter 5 of the thesis. In particular, as the perceived illegitimacy of authority’s actions towards the minority and common cause with the minority increased, so did the majority willingness to collectively challenge the authority and support the minority. Furthermore, the lower the common cause with authority, the greater the willingness to challenge this group and support the minority. When it comes to the experimental manipulations, the results also confirmed our expectations in relation to the key outcome of political solidarity—majority willingness to challenge the authority was highest when the authority’s actions against the (‘ingroup’ as well as ‘outgroup’) minority violated the (egalitarian) meaning of the relevant majority identity. Importantly, however, not only was political solidarity with the ‘outgroup’ minority possible—willingness to challenge the authority was even higher when authority norm violation impacted on foreign compared to Australian workers. Participants were also more willing to support the authority’s political opponents (i.e. vote for the Labor party) when authority’s (norm-inconsistent) actions affected foreign (compared to Australian) workers. Therefore, it seems that authority’s actions towards the minority had an even greater capacity to motivate political solidarity when they targeted foreign workers.

This finding was mirrored in participants’ willingness to collectively support the relevant minority’s efforts at achieving social change. Namely, willingness to collectively support the minority was higher when norm-inconsistent actions of the
authority impacted on foreign workers. This was particularly the case when the meaning of the majority identity was defined in a way that located the minority’s concerns (e.g. protecting vulnerable groups in society) at the core of who ‘we’ are. Furthermore, when the government policy disadvantaged foreign workers and egalitarianism was central to the meaning of the majority identity, common cause with authority decreased regardless of whether or not its response was protective towards the minority (i.e. norm-consistent or norm-inconsistent). These results suggest that the egalitarian meaning of the majority identity was further sharpened when foreign (rather than Australian) workers were targeted. Policies that disadvantaged foreign workers at the hands of the Australian government (i.e. ingroup authority) possibly evoked a broader (e.g. international) comparative context and enhanced the need to maintain Australia’s reputation as an egalitarian society.

When it comes to common cause with minority, however, it mattered whether or not the authority responded in a norm-consistent or norm-inconsistent manner. When the authority’s actions were norm-consistent, participants’ sense of common cause did not vary across the two minority conditions. However, when authority’s actions were norm-inconsistent, the perception that the minority shares ‘our’ values, goals and beliefs was higher when the minority were foreign rather than Australian workers. Importantly, even when egalitarian identity meaning was relatively weak, norm-inconsistent authority actions (i.e. failing to protect this group) enhanced a sense of common cause with foreign workers. It seems that the relevant intergroup relationship (norm-inconsistent authority actions affecting foreign workers) was enough to redefine the meaning of the majority identity in this condition, so that the experimental manipulation that aimed to further define the majority identity in terms of egalitarian norms and values had relatively little (added) effect on collective action intentions to support this group. Therefore, norm-inconsistent authority actions against a hitherto ‘outgroup’ minority not only enhanced the likelihood of majority challenge to authority (see above), but also the emergence of shared norms, values and beliefs with the minority. Also, while the minority’s response to the proposed policy was seen as legitimate across conditions, and as marginally more legitimate when the policy affected foreign compared to Australian workers (a finding consistent with many of the results discussed above), it was clear that norm-
inconsistent authority actions were seen as highly illegitimate, while those that were norm-consistent were seen as legitimate.

Finally, we also observed interesting variations in the salience of worker identity in response to experimental manipulations. Consistent with other findings, the salience of this identity did not vary when the minority were Australian workers. However, when the minority were foreign workers, participants were more likely to think of themselves as ‘workers’ when authority’s treatment was norm-inconsistent and the meaning of the majority identity was strongly defined by egalitarian norms and values. Therefore, the same conditions that motivated political solidarity also resulted in the emergence of a shared higher-order identity between the minority and majority. However, the salience of the ‘worker’ identity was also increased when authority’s actions towards foreign workers were broadly consistent with egalitarianism, but these values were not central to the meaning of the Australian identity. It could be that, in this context, legitimate, norm-consistent authority actions signalled to the majority that foreign workers were a part of ‘us’ as workers (if not Australians), thereby enhancing the salience of this identity through a process of social influence and leadership, rather than opposition to authority.

In summarising these results, it is worthwhile commenting (somewhat speculatively) on what seems to be a common underlying dynamic that underpins perceptions of common cause and collective action intentions in this study. Namely, it is interesting that common cause with authority was reduced under the same conditions that encouraged collective action in support of minority (i.e. strong egalitarian identity, minority comprised of foreign workers). However, common cause with minority emerged under the same conditions that enhanced willingness to challenge the authority (i.e. norm-inconsistent authority behaviour, minority comprised of foreign workers). Therefore, it may be possible that while a lack of common cause with the authority may motivate support for existing minority efforts to achieve social change, it is the emergence of common cause with the minority that may be particularly important when it comes to majority willingness to challenge the authority.

While the present study proved to be highly informative as an empirical test of the political solidarity dynamics, as well as in showing that this process can be
extended to those initially considered to be ‘outgroup’ members, there are also a number of questions that need to be considered more fully. For example, common cause with minority emerged under the same conditions that enhanced willingness to challenge the authority. Therefore, it may be important to further explore the relationship between perceived commonality of cause between the majority and minority and its role in motivating (e.g. mediating) challenge to authority.

Furthermore, while we focused on the way the authority treated the minority in the present study, it may also be important to consider the conditions under which authority’s actions have negative implications not only for their relationship with minority but also for their relationship with the majority. Such common experience of injustice or shared sense of grievance may be another mechanism through which political solidarity may emerge, as suggested by research on social movement participation (e.g. Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Stürmer & Simon, 2004, 2005). However, this process should be enhanced further when authority’s actions are norm-inconsistent and the meaning of the majority identity allows the minority’s plight to be seen as ‘our own’. These questions are investigated in more detail in two studies presented in Chapter 7.
CHAPTER 7: "WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER": WHEN COMMON FATE BECOMES COMMON CAUSE

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, we started to investigate the dynamics of political solidarity by focusing on the 'basic' conditions under which the majority may become willing to challenge the authority. In particular, the focus was on norm-inconsistent actions of the authority targeting a minority that either shared or did not share a pre-existing group membership with the majority. Furthermore, we also manipulated the meaning of the majority identity—whether or not egalitarian norms and values were central to being a member of the relevant social (psychological) group. In Study 1, political solidarity was shown to emerge when authority actions were seen to be inconsistent with the majority identity and particularly when this identity was strongly defined by egalitarian norms and values. However, it may also be possible that political solidarity comes about through a shared experience of injustice or common fate between the minority and majority. In this chapter, we present two studies that extend our investigation to consider the role of common fate in the emergence of political solidarity.

Along with the reality of intergroup conflict (Sherif, 1958, 1967; Sherif & Sherif, 1969), awareness of common fate, including having a common enemy, has long been considered as one of the key factors that enhances the salience of shared categorical boundaries (Campbell, 1958; Haslam & Turner, 1992; Simon et al., 1995; Wilder & Thompson, 1988). However, it has also long been recognised that it is a sense of shared social identity—a shared sense of purpose, goals, values and expectations resulting from a shared understanding of a relevant social environment—rather than the commonality of fate per se, that makes group life possible (Tajfel, 1978a; Turner & Bourhis, 1996). Indeed, social identities emerging out of perceptions of shared grievance have been found to be particularly powerful motivators of participation in social movements for social change (Klandermans, 2000; Klandermans et al., 2002; Simon, 2004; Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Simon et al., 1998). According to the politicized collective identity model (Simon & Klandermans, 2001), the realisation that 'we' share a common enemy and a common
experience of injustice are key aspects of a politicized social identity that make active participation in social change efforts more likely.

Applying this reasoning to the tripolar context of intergroup power relations in which political solidarity takes place, the experience of common fate should be more likely to result in perceptions of ‘shared grievance’ between the majority and the minority with awareness that the authority’s treatment of the minority violates important norms and values that define the meaning of the relevant majority identity. Nevertheless, it is important to investigate whether political solidarity can be reduced to the common experience of injustice and having a common enemy, or whether other processes need to be taken into account. In the present chapter, these questions are explored in the context of political solidarity with sweatshop workers and the conditions under which consumers may become willing to engage in collective social and political action that seeks to achieve social change (e.g. better working conditions) in this domain. The studies presented in this chapter focus on exploring political solidarity processes that may enhance consumer willingness to change their shopping behaviour, as well as engage in other more direct forms of collective action, in solidarity with sweatshop workers. Self-categorization theory (Turner, 1982, 1985; Turner et al, 1987) and the politicized collective identity model (Simon & Klandermans, 2001) are particularly useful in understanding political solidarity processes in this domain.

Given the contrastive nature of social identity processes, if political solidarity with the minority is to take place, the social context of intergroup relations needs to allow for a sense of shared identity to emerge between the majority (i.e. consumers) and the minority (i.e. sweatshop workers), while at the same time severing the shared identity between the majority and those in positions of authority (e.g. the government as regulator, the company). Consistent with this argument, Simon and Klandermans (2001) suggest that a sense of common fate or shared grievance between those who seek to mobilize widespread support for their cause and the broader ‘mobilization potential’ is particularly important in the process of identity politicization and social movement mobilisation. Therefore, when both consumers and workers are directly affected by questionable corporate practices, such experience of shared injustice should also enhance the likelihood of political solidarity. In this context, a sense of
shared grievance not only serves to redefine category boundaries (Campbell, 1958), but also perceptions of shared or common cause. In the face of a ‘common enemy’ and a common experience of injustice (i.e. common fate), perceptions of shared or common cause between the minority and majority is likely to be enhanced. In turn, such perceptions should also increase majority willingness to challenge the current social system in order to achieve change in solidarity with the minority.

However, whether commonality of mistreatment is translated into a sense of common cause with the minority—so that, on some level, ‘we are all in this together’—may itself be affected by other factors. For example, such a perception may be enhanced to the extent that authorities—who are expected to regulate corporate behaviour and protect both consumers and employees (i.e. relevant authority)—are seen to violate such normative expectations and instead choose to protect corporate interests. In this context, perceptions of authority illegitimacy should be enhanced and consumer willingness to challenge such an authority (and the corporation) in solidarity with the workers increased. However, it is also possible that a sense of common cause with the minority increases as a result of the relevant authorities taking an active role in protecting the rights of this group, thereby acting in a way that is consistent with the norms, values and expectations of their constituents. Consequently, while both contexts may potentially increase perceptions of common cause with the minority, they may do so through markedly different social identity dynamics. The first example is one of the majority standing up to protect a vulnerable group in light of authority’s failure to do so; the second is more of a leadership process where the normative actions of the authority influence the majority to act in solidarity with the minority. These processes are investigated in more detail in Study 1. Before we turn to Study 1, however, it is worthwhile briefly discussing the nature of the social context in which the studies presented in this chapter are embedded.

7.1.1 Political Consumerism as Political Solidarity

The idea that the ‘personal is political’ has provided much impetus for redefining the way in which our everyday lives intersect with the broader social and political processes. The decisions to buy ‘Fair Trade’ coffee or choose clothes with
the ‘No Sweat’ label are all manifestations of the way in which we understand the human social world and, importantly, our place within it. In light of the many global social and political problems, we are faced with an ever-increasing need to reconcile the individual and the social/political sphere in order to mobilize such mundane, routine, and personal behaviours (e.g. buying a pair of jeans or running shoes) for a greater purpose (e.g. getting rid of ‘sweatshops’).

This is particularly true when it comes to our ‘personal’ decisions and behaviours in the domain of consumption. ‘Political consumerism’, as Holzer (2006, p.407) suggests, is “…based on a translation of political objectives into consumption choices that…are essentially individual and private affairs.” In Holzer’s terms, rather than seeking to ‘politicize’ the economy, political consumerism is seeking to redefine the otherwise economic role of consumers in terms of political or ethical concerns. As such, it capitalizes on the fact that a consumer is often a member of both the economic sphere (as a consumer) and the more political sphere (as a politician or a voter), as well as a number of other sub-systems of society based on religion, education, sports, and so on.

From a social identity perspective, what Holzer (a sociologist) is referring to as roles can be seen as social identities that are salient in a particular social context. Individual consumers are members of multiple social (psychological) groups who, depending on the relevant social context, have the capacity to define themselves in terms of different social identities. Indeed, the usefulness of the social identity approach to understanding consumer behaviour has been recognised (Granzin & Olsen, 1998; Haslam, Branscombe, & Bachmann, 2003; John & Klein, 2003; Reed, 2002). For example, Granzin and Olsen (1998) found that, in the context of a ‘Buy American’ campaign (designed to offset the negative consequences of increased sales of imported products on domestic workers), a number of social identity processes predicted American consumers’ willingness to buy domestic products. Participants’ ethnocentric orientation and patriotism as ‘Americans’ enhanced their sense of common fate and similarity with the workers, which in turn increased willingness to ‘Buy American’. Briley and Wyer (2002) found that making a social identity salient—either as a member of an ad hoc group or a particular culture (e.g. Asian, Western)—increased the use of equality based strategies for allocating
resources and the tendency to minimize the potential negative outcomes of individual consumer choices.

Social identity and self-categorization processes have also been found to play a role in consumer rebellion against those ‘service providers’ who are seen to violate norms and expectations of proper conduct. For example, Haslam and colleagues (2003) found that when a social identity is made salient by the features of a social context (e.g. negative treatment that affects not only the individual consumer but their friendship group as well), the psychology of the individual consumer is transformed in a way that makes collective protest against the ‘service provider’ more likely. At the core of such a rebellion is the perception that the ‘service providers’ have violated a hitherto shared social identity (e.g. through procedural injustice against ingroup members).

What seems to be lacking from existing approaches to ‘political consumerism’ is the more explicit recognition that consumers are often asked to change their consuming habits (often at some direct cost to the individual, e.g. higher price for ethically produced goods) in order to support a broader campaign to challenge those companies or corporations whose practices violate some ethical or moral standard. Such corporate violation of societal norms frequently involves unfair, exploitative treatment of those involved in direct manufacturing or service delivery (e.g. sweatshop workers). The ‘Fair Trade’ movement is one prominent example of such a campaign. Therefore, political consumerism, at least in contexts that involve disadvantaged workers, can be seen as a political solidarity process to achieve social change in relation to the corporate exploitation of this group. In this context, political solidarity as challenge to the status quo is manifested in consumer willingness to boycott certain products and pressure the relevant authorities (e.g. government) to regulate corporations and ensure that the rights of those potentially affected by corporate malpractice are protected.

7.2 Study 2

In this study we used a hypothetical scenario in which a corporation (described as a multinational company involved in the fashion industry) acts unethically towards
its manufacturing employees\(^1\) (e.g. low pay, poor working conditions) and, under some conditions, also towards the consumers (e.g. deceptive pricing/advertising practices). Common fate is present when the company behaves unethically towards both the manufacturing employees and the consumers, and absent when it is only the employees who are affected by corporate mistreatment. We further manipulated whether the relevant government representative acted protectively towards employees and, where relevant, consumers, or whether the government only protected the interests of the corporation. As in the study presented in Chapter 6, an authority that protected those affected by corporate mistreatment should be seen as acting in line with the relevant Australian norms and values, while an authority that fails to provide such protection should be seen as acting in a norm-inconsistent manner (see Method section for more detail about the norm-setting process involved in this study). In all conditions, participants were encouraged to think of themselves as consumers of the kinds of products that the company described in the scenario makes (see Method section for more details).

The key dependent variables included willingness to engage in collective action that targeted the corporation (e.g. boycott corporate products) and the government (e.g. demanding greater protection of employees and consumers), and action that supported sweatshop workers (e.g. help organise a rally in support of employees affected by corporate mistreatment). We expected that there would be more willingness to act collectively when corporate mistreatment affected both employees and consumers (i.e. under conditions of common fate). However, this effect should be enhanced when the government response was inconsistent with the norms and expectations of consumers in this context. Additionally, as in Study 1 (Chapter 6), we also measured participants’ sense of common cause with the minority (i.e. employees) and the authority (i.e. government), as well as perceived authority legitimacy. In line with predictions for collective action intentions, we expected that both common cause with minority and perceived illegitimacy of authority’s actions would be enhanced under common fate conditions and particularly when the authority acted in a norm-inconsistent manner. Furthermore, it was expected that

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\(^1\) To avoid potential reactance and ceiling effects, the study materials used the less evocative term ‘manufacturing employees’ instead of the term ‘sweatshop workers’.
common cause with authority would be lower when it acted in a norm-inconsistent, compared to norm-consistent manner, and particularly when corporate mistreatment affected both the manufacturing employees and consumers. In order to check whether the manipulations have produced the intended perceptions of the corporation, we also measured participants' attitudes towards corporate treatment of employees and consumers. We also measured the salience of the relevant majority (subgroup and higher-order) identities—in this case the salience of consumer and Australian identities—to explore whether the experimental manipulations would have an effect on participants' self-definition in this context.

7.2.1 Method

Participants

Sixty one undergraduate psychology students at the Australian National University completed the study as part of laboratory attendance. Six participants were neither Australian citizens nor permanent residents and were therefore excluded from the analyses given that the study explicitly focused on the way in which corporations should operate in the Australian context. The final sample included 55 participants (19 males and 36 females), ranging in age from 17 to 35 (M=21.17). The study had a 2 (Common Fate vs. No Common Fate) x 2 (Authority Response: Norm-Consistent vs. Norm-Inconsistent) between-subjects factorial design.

Procedure and Materials

Background Information and Norm Setting. Participants were informed that they would take part in a study looking at the nature of social systems and the relationships between different groups that make up a social system. A particular system of interest in this study was said to be ‘the economy’ and more specifically, the relationships between companies or corporations, their employees, consumers, and the government. In order to establish the relevant norm operating in this particular context, it was then stated that, within Australian society companies are expected to balance their own needs and goals (e.g. achieving profit) with the needs of employees and consumers. The role of the government in this context was to ensure that this balance is achieved, and, if needed, to protect the needs and rights of
both consumers and employees. Participants were then asked to respond to two items assessing the extent to which they agreed with these principles (“There should be a balance between corporate goals and the interests of the broader community” and “The government has an important role in protecting the rights of employees and consumers.”), rated on a scale from “1=Strongly Disagree” to “9=Strongly Agree”, with “5=Neither Agree or Disagree”). The experimenter then looked at the responses and provided (bogus) feedback that nearly everyone agreed or strongly agreed with these statements. While the same feedback was provided regardless of participants’ actual responses, it is worthwhile noting that a visual inspection of responses indicated that all participants either agreed or strongly agreed with these principles.

**Consumer Identity Salience.** Participants were then informed that they would shortly be asked to provide their views about a hypothetical company called ‘FreeWear.Co’ involved in the fashion industry. The experimenter then instructed participants to think of themselves as the consumers of the kinds of products that this company makes. To help them with this task, participants were presented with 9 photographs (arranged in 3 x 3 table on an A4 sheet) of clothing and footwear products, described as “similar to the kinds of products that the FreeWear.Co makes”. They were instructed to imagine that they had $250 to spend and choose the products they would be most likely to buy (prices were provided for all products). This was done in an attempt to make participants’ consumer identity salient in this particular context.

**Manipulation of Independent Variables.** Next, all participants read a brief description of the corporation (“FreeWear.Co – Overview”), stating that FreeWear.Co is a major international fashion and sportswear company whose products are popular due to their good quality, reasonable prices and contemporary design. The description also stated that most of the company’s employees worked in “direct manufacturing (e.g. sewing, assembly)”. Finally, the description stated that the company was an excellent financial performer year after year and included a statement (ostensibly) from the company’s managing director stating that:
“FreeWear.Co is very aggressive in pursuing lean manufacturing. We look for every opportunity to squeeze more value out of the money we spend, and that means more value for consumers and for investors.”

The description was meant to present the company as highly motivated to achieve profit and as an organisation that presented itself as protective of and sharing consumer interests.

In order to manipulate the presence and absence of Common Fate, the information then stated that the company behaved unethically either solely towards its manufacturing employees (Common Fate: Absent) or both employees and consumers (Common Fate: Present). When Common Fate was Absent, this information stated:

“The majority of manufacturing employees are recent migrants to Australia, with little or no knowledge of English. They work long hours (e.g. 12-14 hours per day) and are paid only $3.50 per hour, compared to the Australian minimum wage of $12.75 per hour. (Such arrangements are legally possible because employees are classified as “self-employed contractors” rather than actual employees.) Because of this, the company was accused of profiteering from exploiting its manufacturing employees in Australia.”

When Common Fate was Present, the relevant paragraph stated:

“FreeWear.Co advertising says that its “Australian Made” line of products cost more because the company is paying higher wages to Australian employees. It was later discovered that FreeWear.Co manufacturing employees in Australia are paid only $3.50 per hour, compared to the Australian minimum wage of $12.75 per hour. (Such arrangements are legally possible because employees are classified as “self-employed contractors” rather than actual employees.) The company has now been accused of profiteering from exploiting both consumer trust and its manufacturing employees in Australia.”
In all conditions FreeWear.Co responded by stating that it is “doing all it can to remain profitable in a competitive market environment”. Combined these statements were intended to portray the company as strongly favouring profit, potentially at the expense of employee well-being and, under some conditions, consumer trust.

The Authority Response manipulation was presented next. In the Norm-Consistent condition (and when Common Fate was Absent) the scenario stated:

“There was a government inquiry looking at the working conditions of FreeWear.Co manufacturing employees. It found that government action was very much needed to protect the rights of manufacturing employees. Harsh penalties will be introduced for FreeWear.Co and similar companies who fail to provide appropriate working conditions. Organisations protecting employee rights congratulated the government on its swift and effective response to this issue.”

When Common Fate was Present, the Norm-Consistent statement also included harsh penalties for companies who failed to truthfully advertise how products are made (i.e. the authority acted protectively towards both employees and consumers).

In the Norm-Inconsistent condition (and when Common Fate was Present) the scenario stated that:

“There was a government inquiry looking at the working conditions of FreeWear.Co manufacturing employees. The inquiry supported the view that FreeWear.Co and similar companies must keep costs to a minimum to keep profitable. It stated that the government should not get involved, as manufacturing employees have chosen to work in this environment knowing what the pay and conditions are like.”

When Common Fate was Present, the Norm-Inconsistent statement also said that consumers are free to make their own choices when purchasing products.
Dependent Measures.

Unless otherwise indicated, all measures used a 9-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = Not at all to 9 = Very much.

Manipulation Checks. In order to assess whether the Common Fate manipulation was successful, participants were asked to indicate to what extent “FreeWear.Co lied to consumers about profit being used to pay fair wages to manufacturing employees”. We anticipated that participants’ ratings for this item would be significantly higher when Common Fate was Present compared toAbsent. The success of the Authority Response manipulation was assessed by asking to what extent the government responded by having an inquiry, but otherwise not getting involved in this issue very much. We expected that participants would rate this item higher in the Norm-Inconsistent condition.

Corporate Treatment of Employees. Four items assessed the extent to which Corporate Treatment of Employees was seen to be appropriate (e.g. “I believe that FreeWear.Co has a lot of respect for its employees”, “I am concerned about the way in which FreeWear.Co treats their employees.”). These items were positively coded so that higher scores indicate a more positive view of the corporation. They formed a reliable measure of Corporate Treatment of Employees, \( \alpha = 0.85 \).

Corporate Treatment of Consumers. Three items assessed the extent to which Corporate Treatment of Consumers was seen as appropriate, including “FreeWear.Co has a lot of respect for its consumers”, “I believe that FreeWear.Co has the best interests of consumers in mind”, and “FreeWear.Co seems to share consumer values”. These items were positively coded so that higher scores indicate a more positive view of the corporation and its treatment of consumers. They formed a reliable measure of Corporate Treatment of Consumers, \( \alpha = 0.75 \).

Collective Action Intentions. Collective action intentions were assessed in relation to three separate targets, namely the corporation, the government, and the manufacturing employees. Collective action intentions targeting the corporation focused on participants’ willingness to boycott the products made by FreeWear.Co and companies that behaved in this manner. Two items that were used in this measure ( “As consumers, we should think twice before buying products made by
FreeWear.Co and similar companies that behave like them.”, “We should never buy products by companies like FreeWear.Co”) formed a reliable measure, $\alpha=.72$.

Collective action intentions aimed at the government assessed the extent to which participants were willing to write a letter to the relevant government body asking for: “An increase in government regulation of corporations”, “Improved protection of manufacturing workers employed by corporations”, and “Improved protection of consumer rights”. These items formed a reliable measure, with $\alpha=.90$.

A further five items formed a reliable measure ($\alpha=.84$) of participants’ willingness to act collectively in support of manufacturing employees (e.g. [As a consumer, if I had the opportunity I would] “help organise a rally supporting better working conditions for manufacturing employees”, “join an organization protecting the rights of manufacturing employees”)

**Authority Legitimacy.** Three items assessed the extent to which the authority response in this scenario was seen as legitimate: “Overall, the government response seemed reasonable”, “I think that the government responded in a way that was legitimate”, and “I believe that the government response in this case was unfair” (reverse coded). These items formed a reliable measure of Authority Legitimacy, $\alpha=.93$.

**Common Cause with Authority.** Two items measured the extent to which the authority was perceived to share common cause with consumers, including: “The government seems to be in touch with consumer values” and “The government seems to share the concerns that we as consumers have”. These items formed a reliable measure of perceived common cause with authority, $\alpha=.90$.

**Common Cause with Minority.** Three items measured the extent to which participants perceived to share a common cause with the minority (e.g. “In terms of how FreeWear.Co behaved, to what extent do you feel that consumers and employees have a common goal to work towards?”, “I believe that we, the consumers, share the same beliefs and values with the manufacturing employees when it comes to the way in which companies should operate in Australia”). Although acceptable, the reliability of this measure was not high, $\alpha=.57$. We used factor analysis to investigate the internal consistency of these items. The items indeed loaded on a single factor (Eigenvalue=1.67, 53% of variance explained). All
item loadings were greater than .69. We therefore decided to retain this measure in further analyses.

Majority Identity Salience. We also measured the extent to which participants’ consumer and Australian identities were salient by asking to what extent they were thinking of themselves as a consumer and to what extent they were thinking of themselves as an Australian while completing the questionnaire.

7.2.2 Results

Unless stated otherwise, all analyses were conducted using a 2 (Common Fate: Present vs. Absent) x 2 (Authority Response: Norm-Consistent vs. Norm Inconsistent) analysis of variance.

Manipulation Checks

Indicating that this manipulation was successful, a significant main effect of Common Fate, \( F(1, 51)=34.39, p<.001, \eta_p^2=.40 \), showed that when Common Fate was Present (\( M=6.79, SD=2.08 \)), participants were significantly more likely to perceive that FreeWear.Co also lied to consumers about fair wages being paid to its manufacturing employees, compared to the conditions in which common fate was absent (\( M=3.48, SD=2.03 \)). There were no other significant main effects or interactions for this measure. A significant main effect of Authority Response, \( F(1, 51)=140.35, p<.001, \eta_p^2=.73 \), indicated that this manipulation was also successful. Participants in the Norm-Inconsistent condition (\( M=8.34, SD=0.89 \)) were significantly more likely to indicate that the government was not getting further involved in this issue (beyond the inquiry), compared to the participants in the Norm-Consistent condition (\( M=3.15, SD=2.18 \)).

Corporate Treatment of Employees and Consumers

A marginally significant main effect of Common Fate, \( F(1, 51)=3.68, p=.06, \eta_p^2=.07 \), indicated that participants perceived Corporate Treatment of Employees to be marginally worse when Common Fate was Present (\( M=2.19, SD=1.84 \)), compared to Absent (\( M=2.85, SD=1.58 \)). It is worthwhile noting, however, that, overall, FreeWear.Co treatment of its employees was perceived to be rather poor (\( M=2.52, \eta_p^2=.30 \)).
There were no other significant main effects or interactions for this measure.

When it comes to Corporate Treatment of Consumers, a significant main effect of Common Fate, $F(1, 51)=6.05, p<.05, \eta^2_p=.11$, showed that participants perceived the treatment of consumers to be significantly worse when Common Fate was Present ($M=3.37, SD=1.21$) compared to Absent ($M=4.27, SD=1.56$). However, a significant main effect of Authority Response, $F(1, 51)=4.25, p<.05, \eta^2_p=.08$, indicated that participants also perceived corporate treatment of consumers to be worse when the authority’s response was Norm-Consistent ($M=3.42, SD=1.14$) compared to Norm-Inconsistent ($M=4.16, SD=1.39$). It seems that participants were influenced by the government’s decision (to introduce harsh penalties etc.) and therefore felt that corporate treatment of consumers was worse in this condition.

**Collective Action Intentions**

When it comes to collective action intentions aimed at the corporation, a marginally significant main effect of Common Fate, $F(1, 51)=3.09, p=.09, \eta^2_p=.06$, indicated that participants were more willing to boycott the products of companies that behaved like FreeWear.Co when their actions were perceived to affect both employees and consumers ($M=6.25, SD=1.61$), rather than just the employees ($M=5.41, SD=1.91$).

Significant main effects of Common Fate emerged for both collective action intentions aimed at the authority, $F(1, 51)=5.58, p<.05, \eta^2_p=.10$, and those seeking to support the minority (i.e. manufacturing employees), $F(1, 51)=5.44, p<.05, \eta^2_p=.09$. Participants were more willing to pressure the government to protect the interests of consumers and employees and regulate the corporation more when bad corporate behaviour affected both employees and consumers ($M=5.59, SD=1.31$), rather than just the employees ($M=4.62, SD=1.70$). Similarly, under conditions of common fate, participants were significantly more willing to act collectively in support of manufacturing employees ($M=5.28, SD=1.41$) compared to the conditions in which common fate was absent ($M=4.31, SD=1.76$). Therefore, the experience of common fate enhanced majority willingness to collectively challenge the company and the relevant authority, as well as to support minority efforts to achieve social change in
this domain. Collective action intentions did not vary as a function of Authority Response.

**Authority Legitimacy**

A significant main effect of Authority Response, $F(1, 51)=58.44, p<.001$, $\eta_p^2=.53$, indicated that the authority’s actions were perceived more legitimate when it acted in a Norm-Consistent manner ($M=7.00, SD=1.42$). When the authority was seen as acting in a way that was inconsistent with important norms and values, its response was seen as highly illegitimate ($M=3.89, SD=1.53$). Perceptions of Authority Legitimacy did not vary as a function of Common Fate.

**Common Cause with Authority**

A significant main effect of Authority Response, $F(1, 51)=40.08, p<.001$, $\eta_p^2=.44$, indicated that perceptions of common cause with authority were higher when the authority acted in a Norm-Consistent manner ($M=6.19, SD=1.81$). Perceived common cause with authority was significantly lower when the authority acted in a way that was Norm-Inconsistent ($M=3.53, SD=1.32$). Perceptions of Common Cause with Authority did not vary as a function of Common Fate.

**Common Cause with Minority**

A significant main effect of Common Fate, $F(1, 51)=4.36, p<.05$, $\eta_p^2=.08$, indicated that the experience of common fate enhanced perceptions of common cause with minority ($M=5.95, SD=1.03$), compared to the conditions where common fate was absent ($M=5.16, SD=1.66$). Common Cause with Minority did not vary as function of Authority Response.

**Majority Identity Salience**

There were no significant main effects or interactions with regard to the Consumer identity. All participants seemed to identify as consumers in the context of this study, ($M=6.95, SD=1.65$), and the salience of this identity did not vary across conditions. When it comes to the Australian identity however, there was a significant main effect of Authority Response, $F(1, 51)=4.49, p<.05$, $\eta_p^2=.08$. Interestingly, the
Australian identity was significantly more salient when the authority response was Norm-Inconsistent \((M=6.34, SD=2.51)\), compared to when the authority responded in a Norm-Consistent way \((M=4.85, SD=2.65)\). Therefore, in the face of authority’s actions that violated a hitherto shared meaning of the relevant identity, participants’ identification with this (Australian) identity increased. There were no other significant main effects or interactions for these measures.

**Mediation Analyses – Common Fate**

Given that both collective action intentions and common cause with minority were predicted solely by Common Fate, it is possible to explore whether the relationship between Common Fate and Collective Action Intentions was mediated by perceived Common Cause with Minority. It is important to establish whether the shared experience of injustice between the minority and majority is enough for majority willingness to challenge the authority, or whether this process may be affected by a psychological sense of connection between the majority and the minority—a sense that the minority shares the same beliefs and values. We therefore conducted a series of mediation analyses for each of the collective action intentions, following the mediation procedure proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986).

For the purpose of the mediation analyses, we dummy-coded the Common Fate variable, with the Present condition coded 1 and the Absent condition coded 0. This variable marginally predicted willingness to boycott FreeWear.Co products, \(\beta=.24, t=1.77, p=.08\), and significantly predicted Common Cause with Minority, \(\beta=.28, t=2.14, p<.05\). When this measure of Collective Action Intentions was regressed on both Common Fate and Common Cause with Minority, the common fate manipulation no longer predicted willingness to boycott corporate products, \(\beta=.08, t=.69, \text{ ns.}\), while Common Cause significantly (and positively) predicted this form of collective action, \(\beta=.55, t=4.64, p<.001, R^2=.33, F(2, 52)=12.94, p<.001\).

Significant Sobel test results showed that Common Cause mediated the effects of Common Fate on product boycott, \(z = 2.14, p<.05\). Similar (and significant) patterns were observed for collective action intentions aimed at the government and those in support of employees.
Importantly, the common fate manipulation *significantly* predicted intentions to seek government involvement in this issue, $\beta = .31$, $t = 2.41$, $p < .05$. When this measure was regressed on both Common Fate and Common Cause with Minority, Common Fate no longer predicted collective action intentions towards the authority, $\beta = .17$, $t = 1.44$, ns, with Common Cause remaining a significant predictor, $\beta = .52$, $t = 4.44$, $p < .001$; $R^2 = .35$, $F(2, 52) = 13.80$, $p < .001$. Significant Sobel test results showed that Common Cause mediated the effects of Common Fate on willingness to engage in collective action targeting the government, $z = 2.14$, $p < .05$. Similarly, although Common Fate initially predicted collective action intentions to support employees, $\beta = .29$, $t = 2.26$, $p < .05$, this relationship became non-significant, $\beta = .14$, $t = 1.22$, ns, once perceptions of Common Cause with Minority were taken into account. Significant Sobel test results showed that Common Cause mediated the effects of Common Fate on willingness to engage in collective action supporting the employees, $z = 2.01$, $p < .05$. Therefore, Common Cause with Minority mediated the relationship between Common Fate manipulation and willingness to engage in collective action in support of employees, $\beta = .56$, $t = 4.86$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .37$, $F(2, 52) = 15.47$, $p < .001$. In summary, it seems that the experience of common fate increases majority willingness to engage in collective action (to boycott company products, to pressure the government to get more involved in this issue, and to support employees' cause more generally) through the enhanced sense of common cause with the minority. Figure 1 shows the standardised regression coefficients for a path model in which *combined* collective action intentions were regressed on common cause with minority and the Common Fate manipulation, $R^2 = .54$, $F(2, 52) = 30.31$, $p < .001$ (Sobel $z = 2.03$, $p < .05$).
Figure 7.1. The relationships between Common Fate Manipulation, perceived Common Cause with Minority and (combined) Collective Action Intentions

Note: * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001

Mediation Analyses – Authority Response

Unexpectedly, there were no significant main effects or interactions of Authority Response on willingness to act collectively in support of the minority or common cause with this group. However, it is possible that while there were no mean level differences across the two Authority Response conditions, the process by which perceived common cause with minority and collective action intentions emerged may be fundamentally different depending on whether the authority acted in a norm-consistent or norm-inconsistent manner. Namely, when the authority acts in a way that endorses the relevant norms and values that define the meaning of the majority identity, it may in fact be exerting social influence and promoting a sense of common cause with the minority which in turn motivates action. In the context of norm-inconsistent authority behaviour, however, common cause and willingness to act in solidarity with the minority arise in opposition to the authority and its actions.

We conducted two separate mediation analysis—one for the Norm-Consistent condition and another for participants in the Norm-Inconsistent condition—to investigate the possibility of such dual processes taking place. The mediation analyses explored the relationships between participants’ stance toward the authority (combined Common Cause with Authority and Authority Legitimacy), perceived
Common Cause with the Minority and willingness to engage in collective action to support the minority. As shown in Figure 7.2, for the Norm-Consistent condition, participants’ perception of Authority Legitimacy and Common Cause with Authority significantly and positively predicted both Common Cause with Minority, $\beta = .44$, $t = 2.41$, $p < .05$, and collective willingness to support the minority, $\beta = .42$, $t = 2.24$, $p < .05$. When Common Cause with Minority was included as a mediator, it significantly and positively predicted Collective Action Intentions, $\beta = .57$, $t = 3.27$, $p < .01$, and mediated the relationship between Authority Legitimacy/Authority Common Cause and Collective Action Intentions, which became non-significant, $\beta = .16$, $t = .94$, ns, $R^2 = .44$, $F(2, 23) = 8.86$, $p < .01$. Significant Sobel test results confirmed that Common Cause with Minority mediated the effects of Authority Legitimacy/Common Cause on willingness to engage in collective action in support of the minority, $z = 1.99$, $p < .05$. Importantly, therefore, when the authority acted in a way that was norm-consistent, the greater the perception of authority legitimacy and common cause with authority, the greater the common cause with minority and, in turn, the willingness to act collectively in support of the minority.

![Diagram](image)

*Figure 7.2. The relationships between Authority Legitimacy/Common Cause, Common Cause with Minority, and Collective Action Intentions in support of the minority when Authority Response was Norm-Consistent.*

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

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1. Mediation analysis for collective action intentions targeting the corporation and the government were not conducted due to the pre-conditions for mediation (i.e. significant correlations between the predictor and outcome variables at Step 1) not being fully met.
As shown in Figure 7.3, when the authority acted in a Norm-Inconsistent manner, Authority Legitimacy and perceived Common Cause with Authority significantly and negatively predicted Common Cause with Minority, $\beta = -0.45$, $t = -2.64$, $p < 0.05$, and Collective Action Intentions, $\beta = -0.46$, $t = -2.69$, $p < 0.05$. When Common Cause with Minority was included as a mediator, it significantly and positively predicted Collective Action Intentions, $\beta = 0.65$, $t = 4.43$, $p < 0.001$, and fully mediated the relationship between Authority Legitimacy/Authority Common Cause and Collective Action Intentions, which became non-significant, $\beta = -0.16$, $t = -1.11$, ns, $R^2 = 0.55$, $F(2, 26) = 15.97$, $p < 0.001$. Significant Sobel test results confirmed that Common Cause with Minority mediated the effects of Authority Legitimacy/Common Cause on willingness to engage in collective action in support of the minority, $z = 2.11$, $p < 0.05$. Therefore, in contrast to the norm-consistent conditions, when the authority acted in a way that was norm-inconsistent, the lower the perceived authority legitimacy and a sense of shared values and beliefs (i.e. common cause) with authority, the higher the perceived common cause with the minority and willingness to act in support of this group. Therefore, both norm-consistent and norm-inconsistent authority actions motivated common cause with the minority and collective action intentions to support this group, although for very different reasons. These findings suggest that support for the minority may come about through processes of political solidarity (as a result of opposition to authority) as well as through leadership and influence by those authorities who are seen to be (legitimately) protective of the minority’s interests.
Figure 7.3. The relationships between Authority Legitimacy/Common Cause, Common Cause with Minority, and Collective Action Intentions in support of the minority when Authority Response was Norm-Inconsistent.
Note: * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001

7.2.3 Discussion

The aim of this study was to investigate whether political solidarity (e.g. willingness to act collectively in solidarity with the minority, perceived common cause with minority) is enhanced in the presence of common fate between the minority and majority. We expected that political solidarity outcomes would be more likely when both the majority (i.e. consumers) and the minority (i.e. manufacturing employees) are affected by corporate mistreatment. We also predicted that such outcomes would be further enhanced in a context when the relevant authority (i.e. government) acted in a norm-inconsistent manner and failed to protect those affected by corporate actions. Additionally, authority’s response was expected to be seen as more illegitimate and a sense of common cause with authority reduced when its actions violated important norms and values hitherto shared with the majority, compared to when such actions were consistent with the majority’s expectations.

In line with predictions, compared to the conditions in which it was only the minority who was affected by corporate mistreatment, common fate increased participants’ sense of common cause with the minority, as well as their willingness to engage in collective action in solidarity with the minority. Namely, when both
consumers and employees (rather than just the employees) were affected by corporate mistreatment, participants were more willing to: a) boycott corporate products, b) engage in collective action to pressure the government (to regulate the corporation and protect employees and consumers), and c) engage in other forms of collective action in support of employees (e.g. organising a rally, making a donation). However, contrary to expectations, this pattern remained the same regardless of whether the government stepped in to protect employees/consumers or acted in a way that protected the corporation. However, norm-inconsistent authority response reduced a sense of common cause with authority and was perceived to be highly illegitimate, regardless of common fate—i.e. whether it affected the employees or both employees and consumers. These findings suggest that common fate and authority’s actions in this context may have affected political solidarity through different underlying processes, which we explored further using mediation analyses.

When it comes to the common fate manipulation, the effect of common fate on collective action intentions was fully mediated by a sense of common cause with employees. Therefore, rather than being solely dependent on common fate, participants’ willingness to challenge the authority (as well as the corporation), and to support the minority in this context, was driven by the emergence of common cause with employees. Importantly, this finding suggests that, to the extent that common fate enhances the likelihood of political solidarity, it does so through the emergence of common cause between the majority and the minority.

Furthermore, two distinct processes emerged when it comes to authority’s (norm-consistent and norm-inconsistent) actions in this context. When such actions clearly endorsed the relevant norms and values and protected employees and consumers, the more the majority saw the authority as having acted legitimately and as sharing a common cause with the majority, the greater the perceived common cause with the minority and willingness to act collectively in support of minority. In contrast, when the authority violated important norms and values, the greater the opposition to such an authority, the higher perceived common cause with the minority and, in turn, the greater the willingness to act collectively to protect this group. These findings suggest two distinct processes when it comes to motivating the
majority to act in solidarity with the minority. A social influence process seems to
come into play when an authority acts in a way that affirms a particular social
identity so that supportive action is defined as an appropriate, right and valid
treatment of the minority. In this context, authority legitimacy and perceived
common cause with this group are enhanced and in turn motivate common cause and
willingness to act in solidarity with the minority. In contrast, authority actions that
are inconsistent with the relevant norms and values that ‘we’ were meant to share are
more likely to be seen as illegitimate and in violation of a sense of shared cause or
purpose. Importantly, in this context it is the lack of common cause with authority
and authority illegitimacy that motivate common cause and willingness to act in
solidarity with the minority.

However, caution is warranted when it comes to the interpretation of these
results due to their correlational nature (when it comes to mediation analyses) and a
relatively small sample size. Furthermore, the lack of interactive effects between the
two independent variables may be due to the fact that they affect two very different
intergroup dynamics. The authority response manipulation sought to change the
majority’s perceptions of a group in position of legitimate authority (i.e. the
government); the common fate manipulation, on the other had, sought to affect
perceptions of the corporation. The corporation, like the government, was seen as
bound by the same norms and values that, when violated, motivated political
solidarity with employees. However, while the corporation can be seen as a
legitimate authority in terms of its relationship with its employees, it does not
necessarily hold such a position in relation to consumers. In any case, political
solidarity dynamics may be more readily (empirically) discernible when the relevant
context is confined to a single authority. It may be therefore be necessary to reduce
design complexity to a single ‘authority’ in future studies.

Another limitation of this study is that the common fate manipulation may have
inadvertently portrayed the employees as less Australian under some conditions.
Namely, when it was only the employees that were affected by corporate actions, this
group was also described as recent migrants to Australia. This information was
(inadvertently) omitted from the common fate condition. In hindsight, such a
description may have triggered the perception that members of the minority in these
conditions were 'less Australian', relative to the conditions in which 'recent migrant' status was not mentioned. However, as seen in Study 1, such lack of membership in the national category did not prevent political solidarity with the minority—if anything, political solidarity with such an ‘outgroup’ minority was at times more pronounced that solidarity with an ‘ingroup’ (Australian) minority. Needless to say, however, a consistent description of the minority group across conditions would have been preferable.

These limitations notwithstanding, the results of this study clearly showed that while common fate may indeed enhance political solidarity, this process is made possible by the view that the majority and the minority not only share a common experience of injustice, but also aspire to the same values, goals and interests in a given context of intergroup relations. It is also interesting that the Australian identity became salient when the authority—i.e. Australian government—acted in a way that violated a particular understanding of Australians and Australian society. Our participants on the whole endorsed authority actions that protected employees. When only the profitability of the corporation was the driver for authority’s actions, this was viewed as a violation of norms and values that define the meaning of this identity. However, in this study the meaning of the relevant majority identity was not manipulated across the conditions, but rather all participants were exposed to a norm-setting process where the role of the (Australian) government was to protect those who are potentially disadvantaged by corporate mistreatment. It is therefore important to investigate how the presence or otherwise of such an identity meaning may affect political solidarity both in the presence and absence of common fate—a process investigated further in Study 2.

7.3 Study 3\

7.3.1 Introduction

In the two studies presented so far, the focus has been on a particular system of relations in the Australian society—the Australian government was the relevant

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1 We are grateful to Dr Michael Schmitt (Simon Fraser University) who provided valuable input into the research design and facilitated data collection for this study.
authority and the relevant majority identity was Australian. As discussed in Chapter 6, Australians perceive themselves as an egalitarian people who are committed to a ‘fair go’ for all members of the Australian society. Therefore, it could be argued that the egalitarian nature of the Australian identity was evoked in both Studies 1 and 2 (although it was also further enhanced through the experimental manipulation used in Study 1), and that the political solidarity dynamics investigated so far are therefore confined to this particular context and identity. It is therefore important to extend our investigation to social contexts other than that of Australia and to identities other than the Australian national identity. Therefore, Study 3 was conducted in Canada and directly manipulated the meaning of the relevant majority so that an egalitarian normative framework was either present or absent.

As shown in Study 1 (Chapter 6), the effect of authority norm violation on willingness to challenge the authority was enhanced when participants self-categorized in terms of an Australian identity whose meaning was strongly defined by egalitarian norms and values. Such Australian identity meaning also enhanced the perception that harsh treatment of the minority is illegitimate and therefore in violation of the relevant norms and values that define who ‘we’ are and how ‘we’ should relate to each other. It is important, however, to ascertain that this process is not confined to the Australian identity per se. Therefore, in addition to the common fate manipulation used in Study 1, for half of the participants in Study 2 we made salient a Canadian egalitarian identity by asking them to compare whether Canada or the United States was better at protecting minority rights, good working conditions for all, and other aspects of relatively egalitarian societies (see Method section for details). We anticipated that our (Canadian) participants would readily endorse Canada as the better performer in this regard and, in the process, come to think of themselves in terms of these (egalitarian) norms and values. For the remaining participants, we made salient a consumer identity by focusing them on concerns that are unique to consumers in this context (e.g. low prices for good quality products).

Importantly, when experienced in the context of a Canadian egalitarian identity, common fate should also be more readily translated into political solidarity. In contrast, when the majority identity is defined more in terms of a consumer identity and consumers are directly affected by corporate mistreatment—as they are under
conditions of common fate—participants may be more likely to focus on concerns that are unique to consumers. Therefore, somewhat paradoxically, common fate may reduce political solidarity when a shared, higher-order framework for understanding ourselves and others in the relevant context of intergroup relations is absent. Additionally, unlike in Study 2, in this study the only group in position of authority was the corporation, and participants were described as ‘recent migrants’ in all experimental conditions. We also included additional (more explicit) measures of participants’ orientation to the relevant norms and values in this context, including: a) endorsement of non-profit norms (i.e. that companies should not compromise worker wellbeing in order to achieve profit); and b) perceived corporate violation of higher-order (i.e. Canadian) values.

As in Study 2, we expected more political solidarity (e.g. willingness to act collectively to challenge the corporation and support the employees) under conditions of common fate. However, these effects should be enhanced when the majority self-categorizes in terms of a (egalitarian) Canadian identity, and attenuated when the majority identity is primarily defined by their experiences as consumers. Additionally, we expected that the same pattern of results would be observed for participants’ endorsement of non-profit norms and their perceptions of whether corporate behaviour has violated important Canadian values.

7.3.2 Method

Participants and Design

One hundred and twenty psychology students at Simon Fraser University (Vancouver, Canada) completed the study as part of their research participation requirements. Five participants were neither Canadian citizens nor permanent residents and were therefore excluded from the analyses. The final sample included 115 participants (34 males and 80 females), ranging in age from 17 to 32 ($M=19.87$). The study had a 2 (Majority Identity: Canadian vs. Consumer) x 2 (Common Fate: Present vs. Absent) between subjects factorial design.

Materials and Procedure

All participants completed a questionnaire booklet containing manipulations of independent variables, followed by dependent measures, as described below.
**Majority Identity Manipulation.** At the beginning of each booklet, it was stated that the researchers were interested in understanding more about social systems and the different groups that make up social systems. In order to manipulate Majority Identity, in the Canadian condition, the booklet stated many people are familiar with the notion that their country (e.g. Canada) is a social system that can be compared with other countries to identify ‘systemic similarities and differences’, and that in this case we would like them to compare Canada and the United States. Next, participants were presented with a 6-item forced choice measure instructing them to check a box indicating whether Canada or the United States was better at celebrating tolerance and diversity, protecting human rights and dignity, respecting the rights of minorities, providing good working conditions for all, protecting the environment, and eliminating exploitation and inequality. These items were intended to increase the salience of the Canadian identity but also to define this identity in terms of egalitarian norms and values that (as a result of the comparison to the United States) should be seen to underpin Canadian national identity.

In the Consumer condition, participants were told that one example of a social system is the economy in which most people participate as part of the everyday things that we do, such as shopping. They were then presented with six product characteristics that may influence shopping decisions, including product price, quality, brand, whether they bought it in the past, whether others recommended it, and whether it was good value for money. The instructions stated that the participants' task was to indicate whether or not each of these factors influenced their shopping decisions. This manipulation was intended to keep participants focused on their role as consumers within the study and on concerns that consumers may typically have (i.e. keeping prices low), without evoking their national identity as Canadians.

**Common Fate Manipulation.** Next, all participants read a brief description of the corporation, identical to that used in Study 1. In order to manipulate Common Fate, it was then stated that FreeWear.Co behaved unethically either solely towards its manufacturing employees (Common Fate: Absent) or both employees and consumers (Common Fate: Present). The information about corporate mistreatment of employees was identical in all conditions and stated:
“The majority of manufacturing employees are recent migrants to Canada, with little or no knowledge of English. They work long hours (e.g. 12-14 hours per day) and are paid only $6.00 per hour (which is even lower than the minimum wage of $8.00 per hour). Such arrangements are legally possible because employees are classified as “trainees” rather than actual employees—once the training period ends, they are given very little work or asked to do difficult shift hours, which forces them to move on to another position and start as trainees again. This lack of job stability, in addition to poor working conditions, led to some serious allegations that FreeWear.Co is making profit by exploiting its employees.”

The information was modified slightly to reflect actual minimum wage in Canada (of approximately $8 Canadian dollars in 2007). We also decided to increase the employee wages to $6 in this study (compared to $3.50 in Study 1) to minimise possible reactance and ceiling effects that can potentially reduce the variability in participants’ responses. In line with the Canadian context when it comes to sweatshop workers, we also changed the explanation of the legal loophole that made the mistreatment of workers ‘legally possible’ (i.e. in the Canadian context we explained that sweatshop workers are being classified as “trainees”; in the Australian context the questionnaire stated that employees are being classified as “self-employed contractors”). Importantly, only when Common Fate was Present, the questionnaire additionally stated:

“In a related incident, FreeWear.Co advertising was found to be misleading the consumers. The ad stated that FreeWear.Co “Made in Canada” line of products cost more because the company is paying fair wages to employees. However, this was later found to be untrue, and the company is now also being accused of abusing consumer trust.”

As in Study 1, in all conditions FreeWear.Co responded by stating that it is “doing all it can to remain profitable in a competitive market environment”.
Dependent Measures

*Manipulation Checks.* As in Study 2, one item assessed the extent to which participants perceived that consumers (in addition to the employees) were affected by corporate mistreatment: “FreeWear.Co consumers being deceived by company advertising”. We expected participants in the consumer condition to have higher ratings for this item. We used two manipulation checks to assess whether the Identity manipulation was successful, including: “While completing this questionnaire, I thought of myself as a consumer” and “While completing this questionnaire I thought of myself as a Canadian”.

*Relative Majority Identity Salience.* Following the manipulation checks for the Majority Identity manipulation (see above), one item measured the relative salience of the Canadian compared to Consumer identity—i.e. whether participants thought of themselves more as consumers or Canadians: “If I were to compare these two, I would say that I thought of myself more as being a...”. This item was accompanied by a modified 9-point Likert scale with 1=Consumer and 9=Canadian. This is a relatively simple measure that is meant to capture, in a somewhat crude manner, the extent to which one identity, and the relevant goals, concerns and interests, may prevail over the other.

*Corporate Treatment of Employees and Consumers.* These measures comprised the items described in Study 2 and were reliable (Corporate Treatment of Employees: $\alpha=.61$, Corporate Treatment of Consumers: $\alpha=.79$). They were also intended to capture the perceived legitimacy or otherwise of corporate actions in this context.

*Collective Action Intentions.* Three items formed a reliable measure of collective action intentions to support the manufacturing employees, $\alpha=.78$, including [“If I had the opportunity, I would:’”]: “Try to find out more about how I can help to improve the working conditions of manufacturing employees”, “Make a donation to organizations protecting the rights of manufacturing employees”, and

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1 Unless stated otherwise, all manipulation checks and dependent variables in this study were measured using a 9-point Likert scale, where 1=Strongly Disagree/Not at all, and 9=Strongly Agree/Very much.
"Help organise a rally supporting better working conditions of manufacturing employees".

We also included a measure of willingness to engage in collective action that targeted the government, asking for enhanced regulation of corporations and the protection of consumer/employee rights. Two items measured participants' willingness to put pressure on the government in relation to corporate regulation and the protection of employees, including ["If I had the opportunity, I would contact the relevant government body, asking for:""] "Increase in government regulation of corporations" and "Improved protection of manufacturing workers employed by corporations". These items formed a reliable measure, $\alpha=0.93$.

Finally, three items focused on collective action intentions aimed at the corporation. In this study, we changed this measure to better reflect the extent to which product boycott is a reflection of solidarity with sweatshop workers. Accordingly, the first and second item were preceded by the following statement:

"Imagine that you had a choice to buy a pair of shoes made by FreeWear.Co (price: $100) OR the same pair of shoes made by a company that provides good working conditions for its manufacturing employees." The first item then stated: "Would you be willing to pay more if you knew that by paying a higher price you were supporting better working conditions for manufacturing employees?". The second item included the following question and statements:

"How much more would you be willing to pay for shoes made by a company that treats its workers well? I would be willing to pay $\text{extra}$ for products made by a company whose workers are paid a fair wage and have good working conditions. (Please write the amount in the space provided.)"

Responses to this item (ranging from $0 to $110) were transformed into a 9-point Likert scale. The third item for this measure stated, "I would choose what I buy more carefully to support better working conditions for manufacturing employees". The combined responses to these three items formed a reliable measure of willingness to boycott corporate products in solidarity with the workers, $\alpha=0.66$.

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1 The reliability coefficient when the second (transformed) item is excluded: $\alpha=0.69$. 
Common Cause with Minority. This measure comprised the items described in Study 1. Unexpectedly, however, the reliability of this scale was rather poor, $\alpha=.33$. Item deletion did not significantly improve reliability as the mean inter-item correlation was very low ($r^2=.14$). As a result, this measure was excluded from further analyses.

Higher-Order Norms. One item measured the extent to which participants endorsed the norm that companies should put workers’ well-being ahead of profit: “Canadian companies should treat their workers well, even if this means less profit”. A second item measured the extent to which FreeWear.Co behaved in accordance with Canadian values: “The company behaved in a way that is consistent with the values of Canadians”. These items were analysed separately as they were designed to measure different concepts—participants’ endorsement of non-profit norms and their view of whether or not FreeWear.Co behaved in a norm-consistent manner.

7.3.3 Results

Manipulation Checks

The results for the Common Fate manipulation check revealed that, unexpectedly, there were no significant differences with regard to participants’ perception of consumers being deceived by FreeWear.Co advertising. On average, participants perceived the company to be equally and moderately deceptive towards consumers in its advertising across conditions ($M=5.50, SD=2.54$). However, a significant main effect of Common Fate indicated that participants perceived the company’s treatment of consumers to be significantly worse when it indeed affected consumers as well as employees—i.e. when Common Fate was Present ($M=5.90, SD=1.92$), rather than just the employees—i.e. when Common Fate was Absent ($M=4.69, SD=1.57$), $F(1, 111)=18.60, p<.001, \eta^2_p=.14$. These findings suggest that the manipulation was successful in enhancing the perception that consumers were negatively affected by corporate behaviour when common fate was Present (compared to Absent). There were no significant main effects or interactions with regard to perceived treatment of employees. Overall, participants perceived the company’s treatment of employees to be highly inappropriate across all experimental conditions ($M=8.01, SD=1.06$).
When it comes to the Majority Identity manipulation checks, the results showed that the salience of consumer identity did not vary as a result of the experimental manipulations and was relatively high across conditions \((M=7.39, SD=1.66)\). However, a significant main effect of Majority Identity for the measure of Canadian identity salience, \(F(1, 111)=8.58, p<.01, \eta_p^2=.07\), showed that this identity was significantly more salient in the Canadian \((M=7.39, SD=1.93)\) compared to the Consumer \((M=6.22, SD=2.34)\) condition. There were no other significant main effects or interactions for this measure. These results indicate that the manipulation successfully enhanced the salience of Canadian identity in the relevant (i.e. Canadian) condition. While the manipulation check for consumer identity salience did not show significant differences based on the manipulation, for the measure assessing the relative salience of these identities (see next section), it emerged that (relative to the Canadian identity salience) Consumer identity was more salient in the Consumer compared to the Canadian conditions, as described below.

Relative Consumer vs. Canadian Identity Salience

The overall mean ratings of this measure were (significantly) below the midpoint of the scale (5 on a 9-point scale), \(M=3.97, SD=2.41, t(1, 114)=-4.67, p<.001\), indicating that, in general, while completing this study participants thought of themselves more as consumers than Canadians. Furthermore, there was also a significant main effect of Majority Identity, \(F(1, 111)=9.13, p<.01, \eta_p^2=.08\), and a significant main effect of Common Fate, \(F(1, 111)=8.75, p<.01, \eta_p^2=.07\). As expected, Consumer identity was more salient in the Consumer \((M=3.39, SD=2.37)\) compared to the Canadian condition \((M=4.59, SD=2.31)\). However, the salience of this identity was also affected by the manipulation of Common Fate. Participants were more likely to think of themselves as consumers when common fate was Present \((M=3.37, SD=2.04)\) compared to Absent \((M=4.57, SD=2.60)\). These main effects were further qualified by a significant Majority Identity x Common Fate interaction, \(F(1, 111)=4.35, p<.05, \eta_p^2=.04\) (see Figure 7.4).

\(^1\) Recall that, for this item only, the scale was changed to indicate that 1=Consumer and 9=Canadian.
Figure 7.4. Relative salience of Consumer/Canadian identities as a function of Majority Identity and Common Fate.

Note. This variable was measured using a 9-point scale, where 1 = Consumer and 9 = Canadian. Lower ratings indicate higher salience of Consumer identity, while higher ratings indicate higher salience of Canadian identity.

In the Canadian condition, the relative salience of the consumer/Canadian identity did not change as a function of Common Fate, $F(1, 54) = .343$, ns., (Common Fate Present: $M = 4.41$, $SD = 2.21$, Common Fate Absent: $M = 4.78$, $SD = 2.44$). However, in the Consumer condition, the common fate manipulation did have a significant effect, $F(1,57)=14.18, p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .20$, with a stronger consumer identity salience emerging when Common Fate was Present ($M=2.29$, $SD=1.08$) compared to Absent ($M=4.39$, $SD=2.76$). There was also a significant simple effect of Majority Identity, but only in the Common Fate conditions, $F(1, 55)=21.03, p<.001$, $\eta_p^2 = .28$. When common fate was Present, Consumer identity was significantly more salient for participants in the Consumer condition ($M=2.29$, $SD=1.08$) compared to the salience of this identity for those in the Canadian condition ($M=4.78$, $SD=2.44$). This finding suggests that although participants were more likely to think of themselves as consumers (rather than Canadians) in the Consumer condition, the salience of
consumer identity was further heightened when consumers were directly affected by corporate misbehaviour. Indeed, the only cell-mean that was significantly different from the mid-point of the scale (5 on a 9-point scale) was the mean for the Consumer/Present condition, \( t(27) = -13.23, p < .001 \).

**Collective Action Intentions**

A main effect of Majority Identity, \( F(1, 111) = 8.69, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .07 \), indicated that participants were significantly more willing to engage in collective action in support of employees in the Canadian (\( M=5.69, SD=1.63 \)) compared to Consumer (\( M=4.72, SD=1.94 \)) condition. There were no other significant main effects or interactions for this measure. Importantly, therefore, majority willingness to collectively support the minority was primarily determined by the nature of the relevant majority identity, rather than the experience of common fate.

When it comes to collective action intentions to challenge the relevant authority (i.e. pressure the government to increase regulation of corporations and protection of workers), the results revealed a significant Majority Identity x Common Fate interaction, \( F(1, 111) = 3.97, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .04 \) (see Figure 7.5). In the Canadian condition, participants were equally willing to engage in this type of collective action whether Common Fate was Present (\( M=6.69, SD=1.51 \)) or Absent (\( M=6.46, SD=1.98 \)), \( F(1, 111) = .234, ns \). However, in the Consumer condition, participants were significantly less willing to collectively challenge the authority when Common Fate was Present (\( M=5.89, SD=2.01 \)) compared to Absent (\( M=7.00, SD=1.64 \)), \( F(1, 57) = 5.39, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .09 \). Additionally, when Common Fate was Present, participants in the Canadian condition were (marginally) more likely to challenge the authority (\( M=6.69, SD=1.51 \)) compared to those in the Consumer condition (\( M=5.89, SD=2.01 \)), \( F(1, 55) = 2.87, p < .10, \eta_p^2 = .05 \). There were no significant differences between the Consumer and Canadian conditions when Common Fate was Absent, \( F(1, 56) = 1.27, ns \). Therefore, common fate *per se* did not enhance majority willingness to challenge the authority. Rather, common fate enhanced intentions to challenge the authority when intergroup relations were seen from the perspective of a Canadian (egalitarian) identity. When participants thought of themselves primarily as consumers, common fate *reduced* the likelihood of majority challenge to authority.
There was also a significant Majority Identity x Common Fate interaction for collective action intentions targeting the corporation, $F(1, 111)=10.08$, $p<.01$, $\eta_p^2=.08$ (see Figure 7.6). In the Canadian condition, participants were significantly more willing to boycott corporate products when Common Fate was Present ($M=5.54$, $SD=1.16$) compared to Absent ($M=4.80$, $SD=1.49$), $F(1, 54)=4.28$, $p<.05$, $\eta_p^2=.07$. In contrast, in the Consumer conditions, participants’ willingness to challenge the corporation was reduced when Common Fate was Present ($M=4.82$, $SD=1.84$) compared to Absent ($M=5.81$, $SD=1.24$), $F(1, 57)=5.88$, $p<.05$, $\eta_p^2=.09$. Additionally, when Common Fate was Absent, participants in the Consumer condition were more willing to challenge the corporation ($M=5.81$, $SD=1.24$) compared to those in the Canadian condition ($M=4.80$, $SD=1.49$), $F(1, 56)=7.81$, $p<.01$, $\eta_p^2=.12$. In contrast, when Common Fate was Present, participants in the Canadian condition were (marginally) more likely to challenge the corporation ($M=5.54$, $SD=1.16$) compared to those in the Consumer condition ($M=4.82$, $SD=1.84$), $F(1, 55)=3.12$ $p=.08$, $\eta_p^2=.05$. Therefore, as for collective action intentions targeting the government, willingness to challenge the corporation was a
function of both common fate and the nature of majority identity. Challenge to the corporation was enhanced when common fate was experienced in the context of a salient Canadian (egalitarian) identity and attenuated when common fate took place in the context of an identity defined primarily around consumer interests.

**Figure 7.6.** Collective action intentions (CAI) towards the corporation as a function of Majority Identity and Common Fate.

**Corporate Violation of Canadian Values**

The results for this measure revealed a significant Majority Identity x Common Fate interaction, $F(1, 111)=4.83, p<.05, \eta_p^2=.04$ (see Figure 7.7). In the Canadian condition, participants believed that the corporation violated Canadian values regardless of whether Common Fate was Present ($M=2.59, SD=1.32$) or Absent, ($M=3.19, SD=1.90$), $F(1, 54)=1.89, p=.18$. However, participants in the Consumer condition were (marginally) less likely to perceive corporate actions as violating Canadian values when Common Fate was Present ($M=3.50, SD=2.13$) compared to Absent ($M=2.58, SD=1.95$), $F(1, 57)=2.99, p=.09, \eta_p^2=.05$. Additionally, when Common Fate was Present, participants in the Consumer ($M=3.50, SD=2.13$) condition were (marginally) less likely to rate the company’s behaviour as violating Canadian values compared to those in the Canadian condition ($M=2.59, SD=1.32$)
Regression analysis indicated a significant main effect of Majority Identity, $F(1, 111)=3.65, p=.06, \eta_p^2=.01$ (see Figure 7.8). In the Canadian condition, participants’ endorsement of non-profit norms was equally high regardless of whether Common Fate was Present ($M=7.76, SD=1.38$) or Absent ($M=7.52, SD=1.60$), $F(1, 54)<1$, ns. However, in the Consumer condition, endorsement of non-profit norms was significantly lower when Common Fate was Present ($M=7.32, SD=1.74$) compared to Absent ($M=8.13, SD=1.12$), $F(1, 57)=4.57, p<.05, \eta_p^2=.07$.
7.3.4 Discussion

As in Study 2, this study sought to further explore whether political solidarity is a matter of common fate, or whether other factors—namely the definition and meaning of the relevant majority identity—may also affect the majority’s willingness to support a disadvantaged minority in a number of ways. In this regard, we proposed that when participants primarily self-categorized in terms of a Canadian national identity defined by egalitarian norms and values, common fate (i.e. majority as well as minority mistreatment) should be more readily translated into political solidarity. In contrast, when the majority self is defined more in terms of a consumer identity, ‘common fate’—i.e. a direct experience of injustice on the part of the consumer majority—should enhance focus on concerns unique to consumers and thereby attenuate political solidarity with the minority.

The results of this study confirmed that political solidarity cannot be reduced to the experience of shared grievance or common fate between the minority and majority. Instead, it is particularly important to consider whether such an experience is framed by a shared normative framework and a majority identity that allows for a higher-order unity of purpose with the minority to emerge. In the absence of such an identity, common fate was more likely to attenuate, rather than enhance political
solidarity (e.g. willingness to challenge the corporation, collective intentions to support the minority). Importantly, participants were more willing to act collectively in support of employees when Canadian (egalitarian) identity was salient and this tendency did not vary as a function of common fate. Additionally, consistent with predictions, when Canadian identity was salient, common fate also enhanced willingness to challenge the authority (i.e. the government) and the corporation (e.g. boycott products). The same conditions (i.e. common fate + Canadian identity salience) enhanced participants' endorsement of non-profit norms and perceived corporate violation of Canadian norms and values. In summary, Canadian (rather than consumer) identity salience increased willingness to engage in collective action to support the minority and in interaction with common fate significantly predicted other key indicators of political solidarity with the minority (e.g. willingness to challenge the authority and boycott corporate products).

However, when participants primarily identified as consumers, they were more likely to endorse non-profit norms, more willing to boycott corporate products and put pressure on the government in the absence of common fate. It seems that when the majority (i.e. consumers) was directly affected by injustice, political solidarity was undermined unless such experiences could be understood in the context of a shared higher-order normative framework. Therefore, when the majority identity was defined by those concerns and interest unique to this group, commonality of mistreatment between the minority and majority was less likely to be seen as something that 'affects all of us'.

The results of this study suggest that commonality of fate does not necessarily produce solidarity, particularly in the absence of a higher-order normative framework within which unjust actions of those in positions of social power and authority can be perceived and interpreted as shared grievance. While we predicted (and found) that such a higher-order framework should enhance political solidarity, the results of this study also suggest that it may have an equally important 'buffering' role. When participants identified in terms of an identity that excluded the minority, they focused on their 'own' concerns and interests, and the likelihood of political solidarity (across a range of measures) was reduced. It is worthwhile noting that the salience of the consumer identity increased under conditions that directly threatened consumer
interests and where the salience of Canadian identity was low. For political solidarity to occur, therefore, people need to be able to look beyond isolated subgroup interests. Political solidarity becomes possible when the relevant identity meaning has the capacity to translate ‘commonality of mistreatment’ into a sense of shared purpose. An identity that focuses only on the majority group to the exclusion of the minority will be unsuccessful in promoting political solidarity.

7.4 General Discussion

Overall, the results of these two studies corroborate the findings reported in the previous chapter, as well as offering some novel and important insights when it comes to political solidarity—particularly in contexts marked by a shared experience of injustice between the minority and majority. For example, as in the previous chapter, the results of Study 2 revealed that authority’s violation of important norms and values enhanced the perception of authority illegitimacy and a lack of common cause with this group. However, (the mean level of) participants’ willingness to act collectively in solidarity with the minority remained the same regardless of whether the authority’s behaviour was consistent or inconsistent with the relevant norms and values. Exploratory meditational analyses revealed that two separate processes may have contributed to this result—norm-consistent actions encouraged solidarity through a process of social influence and leadership, whereas norm-inconsistent actions motivated solidarity in opposition to authority.

More centrally, while common fate increased the likelihood of political solidarity (e.g. willingness to act collectively in support of the minority and in challenge to authority), Study 2 results suggest that this effect was made possible (i.e. mediated) by the emergence of common cause with the minority. Common fate, therefore, enhanced political solidarity by enhancing a sense of shared values, goals and beliefs with the minority. This result is consistent with the findings reported in Study 1 in which collective action intentions (particularly those challenging the authority) were observed under the same conditions that enhanced common cause with the minority. The results of Study 2 additionally showed that perceived common cause is an important mediator of political solidarity (at least in contexts characterised by shared fate between the minority and majority).
In Study 3, the meaning of the majority identity emerged as a central factor that enhanced political solidarity both independently and in interaction with common fate. When the meaning of the majority identity was focused on what it meant to be a Canadian (where to be Canadian was also be supportive of egalitarian norms and values) willingness to act collectively in solidarity with the minority increased. Additionally, the salience of Canadian (egalitarian) identity made positive effects of common fate more likely—the experience of common fate in the context of such an identity increased the likelihood of political solidarity, while common fate in the absence of egalitarian higher-order norms and values decreased political solidarity. Centrally, these results suggest that common fate per se cannot account for political solidarity—this relationship is more complex and involves both the meaning of the majority identity and majority’s understanding of its relationships with the minority and authority.

The studies discussed so far in this thesis sought to independently manipulate the nature of the intergroup relations as well as the meaning of the majority identity. However, it was also evident that the relevant majority identity changed and became redefined in a way that reflected the majority – authority – minority relationships in a given social context. For example, in Study 1, the salience of a higher-order worker identity was particularly pronounced when the authority’s (norm-consistent but also norm-inconsistent) actions affected foreign workers. In Study 2, the salience of the higher-order Australian identity increased when the authority acted in a way that violated important norms and values. In Study 3, consumer identity was particularly salient when corporate mistreatment affected consumers and the salience of a higher-order egalitarian identity was low. It may be that the extent to which the intergroup relationships are reflected in and defining of the relevant majority identity impacts on whether or not political solidarity will take place. Namely, political solidarity may be particularly likely when the majority identity is fundamentally defined by the relevant intergroup relations so that ‘their’ (i.e. minority) injustice and disadvantage comes to matter to who ‘we’ (i.e. majority) are. These processes are examined in more detail in Chapters 8 and 9.
8.1 Introduction

Studies 1, 2 and 3 demonstrated how the nature of the intergroup relations (e.g. authority treatment of the minority, common fate and shared group membership between the minority and majority) and the meaning of the majority identity independently and in interaction with each other affect political solidarity. More specifically, it emerged that political solidarity is a process that can be extended to those initially considered to be ‘outgroup’ members, as well as that it cannot be explained solely by the experience of common fate between the minority and majority. Importantly, the meaning of the majority identity and its impact on the understanding of the relevant intergroup relations played a central role in enhancing and attenuating the likelihood of political solidarity.

What remains to be investigated is how the nature of intergroup relations comes to redefine majority self-categorization in a way that makes political solidarity possible. For the mistreatment of the minority to be actively and collectively opposed, it needs to be located within a broader contest for the meaning of the relevant social identity—not only as being ‘wrong’ in some abstract sense, but as violating a hitherto shared understanding of who ‘we’ are and who ‘we’ should be in a given context of intergroup relations. Therefore, the belief that the minority’s experience of injustice or disadvantage is in some way illegitimate or unfair will be more likely to mobilise collective majority opposition to the extent that it is seen to be defining of the relevant social identity whose norms, values and beliefs ‘we’ are all meant to share. In order for political solidarity to take place, mere opposition to authority’s treatment of the minority may not be enough—instead if oppositional stance towards the authority is to be translated into political solidarity, it may need to be seen as an instantiation of the relevant majority identity.

When it comes to collective action by the disadvantaged, it has long been recognised that a relevant social identity is the basis for translating a shared understanding of injustice into collective efforts that challenge the status quo and seek to achieve social change in the reality of intergroup relations (e.g. Tajfel &
in the political solidarity context, the same argument could be made when it comes to the process by which majority opposition to authority may be transformed into collective willingness to challenge the status quo in solidarity with the minority. Namely, the belief that the authority’s treatment of the minority is in some way inappropriate, harsh, and unjust needs to be seen in the context of the relevant social identity—as violating who ‘we’ are—and as shared (and contested) with other ingroup members. In this context, majority opposition to authority becomes a way of standing up for the minority but also for ‘our’ understanding of who ‘we’ are and what particular intergroup relations should be like.

What this process necessitates, however, is an understanding of how the relevant social identity comes to reflect a particular social reality of intergroup relations in a way that makes social change in such relationships more likely. Although this question has not been directly investigated within existing social psychological approaches, the work on prejudice reduction has some important insights to offer in this regard. Namely, many of the existing prejudice reduction models acknowledge that if positive and cooperative intergroup relations are to emerge between different subgroups, subgroup differences need to be seen in the context of a relevant higher-identity (e.g. R. Brown & Hewstone, 2005; Dovidio et al., 2008; Hornsey & Hogg, 2000a, 2000c). Furthermore, based on the notion of organic pluralism, Haslam and colleagues have suggested that in this context the meaning or content of the higher-order identity needs to emerge from or be redefined within the relevant subgroup relations in a way that allows for cooperation and complementary differentiation between subgroups (Haslam, Eggins et al., 2003).

When those who are opposed to the authority’s treatment of the minority perceive such treatment as relevant to an important higher-order identity whose norms, values and beliefs are being violated, political solidarity with the minority, including challenge to authority, should be more likely. Importantly, the view that one disagrees with the authority’s treatment of the minority (e.g. mandatory detention of asylum seekers) needs to be firmly grounded in the relevant identity and the norms, values and beliefs that define who ‘we’ are—it is these norms and values that are being contested when it comes to whether authority’s treatment of the minority is seen as legitimate and fair or as something that violates who ‘we’ are.
This process may be particularly important when it comes to explaining how people move beyond disagreement with authority and towards collective action that challenges the authority in solidarity with the minority.

However, the majority is unlikely to be homogenous in its stance towards the authority’s treatment of a particular minority group, particularly in highly politicised contexts. For example, when it comes to the mandatory detention of asylum seekers, some members of the majority will be absolutely opposed to the policy and fully supportive of asylum seekers, while others will be fully supportive of the government and perceive asylum seekers as a serious threat to the nation. Many others will be somewhere in between in terms of their attitudes towards the authority and the minority. Nevertheless, it should be the case that the more illegitimate the authority’s treatment of the minority is seen to be and the more there is a shared sense of common cause with the minority (including the need for social change in this domain), the greater the willingness to act collectively to achieve such change. The key focus of this study is to elucidate how disagreement with authority and the view that its treatment of the minority is illegitimate may be translated into willingness to collectively challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority in order to achieve social change. In particular, could this process be more likely to the extent that opposition to authority is wedded to the relevant majority identity and seen as an important part of who ‘we’ are? This question is investigated in the context of political solidarity with asylum seekers in Australia, particularly in relation to the Australian government’s policy of mandatory detention of asylum seekers.

8.1.1 Political Solidarity with Asylum Seekers in Australia

Australia’s immigration history is marked by concerns that this relatively small nation of (predominantly) White people will one day be swamped by numerous racially and/or culturally incompatible others, such as those ‘of Asian descent’ or ‘Middle Eastern appearance’. In this context, asylum seekers (a.k.a ‘unauthorised arrivals’, ‘illegal immigrants’, ‘refugees’) have proven to be an easy target for those wishing to capitalise on such sentiments to achieve particular political goals. Within the political sphere, it has long been recognised that popular prejudice against this particular minority can be used to galvanise majority support for a particular political
objective (e.g. winning an election). In one example of this process, the former Australian Prime Minister John Howard (falsely) accused a group of asylum seekers aboard a sinking ship of throwing their children overboard in order to ‘blackmail’ their entry into Australia. Somewhat infamously, the former PM argued:

“I don't want people like that in Australia. Genuine refugees don't do that - they hang on to their children.”


The accusations were made in the context of a ‘border protection’ debate by a government that has already, as part of its election campaign, “declared war on illegal immigrants” (Clennell & Grattan, 2001). In this context, the ‘children overboard’ claim, later found to be false by a Senate inquiry, was a culminating point in a concerted effort to portray asylum seekers as deviant, dangerous and a threat to the Australian way of life (Every & Augoustinos, 2007; Mares, 2002; Marr & Wilkinson, 2003; Saxton, 2003). In turn, it allowed the Howard government to position itself as being ‘tough’ on immigration issues and thereby effective in protecting the ‘Australian way of life’ in light of this particular threat. It has since been prominently argued that it was the Tampa crisis and its aftermath, particularly in the context of September 11 and the subsequent framing of ‘illegal immigrants’ as potential terrorists, that eventually won the 2001 federal election for PM Howard (e.g. Marr & Wilkinson, 2003; Ritter, 2006). In addition to the dynamics of power, prejudice and influence that are evident here (see also Turner et al., in press), this example also illustrates the centrality of (national) identity contestation processes in the authority’s efforts to shape the majority attitudes towards this particular minority (see also Every & Augoustinos, 2007; Reicher & Hopkins, 1996a, 1996b).

Once they make it to the Australian shore, asylum seekers are placed in mandatory detention—usually in purpose-built immigration detention facilities in remote (e.g. desert) locations. Due to the various obstacles within the system, mandatory detention can stretch over many months, even years. According to Amnesty International Australia, up to 80 per cent of detainees who apply for
protection are granted refugee status and provided with visas to remain in Australia. While many have argued that the harsh treatment of asylum seekers can hardly be justified in light of the fact that most are eventually recognised as ‘genuine’ refugees, the proponents of the policy suggest that the key purpose of mandatory detention is to demonstrate Australia’s tough approach to those who arrive uninvited and thereby discourage new (‘unauthorised’) arrivals. Being ‘tough’ on asylum seekers is not peculiar to contemporary Australia—thousands of Jews escaping the Nazi regime were forced to seek asylum during the WWII, only to find that their pleas, at least until relatively late in the conflict, had fallen on deaf ears. Late 20th century Europe has also seen the rise of nationalistic movements that have a ‘tough stance’ on immigration issues, including ‘illegal’ immigration, at their core.

8.2 Study 4

The social (including social psychological) and political debates surrounding these issues have centred on the role of racism, xenophobia and other forms of (majority) prejudice towards the ‘foreign’ minority (Danso, Sedlovska, & Suanda, 2007; Esses, Dovidio, Jackson, & Armstrong, 2001; Esses, Dovidio, Semenya, & Jackson, 2005; Green, 2007; Leong & Ward, 2006; Staerkle, Sidanius, Green, & Molina, 2005). Relatively little attention, at least within social psychology, has been given to the broader intergroup dynamics that include the majority stance towards the authority, and particularly in relation to its treatment of the minority. This is not to say that insights from the existing literature (e.g. prejudice reduction, intergroup helping) are unimportant in this process—on the contrary, they may be crucial in understanding political solidarity with asylum seekers. As discussed throughout this thesis (see Chapters 3 and 4 in particular) we know that people are less likely to be prejudiced against and more likely to help others who are seen as ingroup members. Esses, Dovidio and colleagues (Esses et al., 2001; Esses et al., 2005) further demonstrated the importance of an inclusive higher-order identity when it comes to enhancing attitudes towards immigrants and immigration. However, these insights may be extended beyond the majority – minority relationship to investigate how majority stance towards the authority and its treatment of the minority (e.g.}
mandatory detention) shape the likelihood of political solidarity with the minority. Majority attitudes towards the mandatory detention policy are, of course, highly informative of the majority stance towards asylum seekers (in that opposition to such a policy is likely to entail a supportive attitude towards this group). However, they are also, fundamentally, about the willingness to either support or challenge the relevant authority in relation to its treatment of this particular minority.

These questions may be particularly important to consider when we take into account that there are ‘majority’ members who actively oppose anti-immigration policies and the harsh treatment of asylum seekers. Some of them also engage in collective political action to defend the rights of immigrants and asylum seekers, such as the anti-racism protests in Germany in the early 1990s, or the numerous protests against the mandatory detention of asylum seekers in Australia during the 2000s. In addition to the involvement of large, international, human rights organisations in this issue (e.g. Amnesty International), numerous grass roots organisations have emerged in Australia over the past decade or so that provide support for asylum seekers both while in detention and upon release (e.g. Refugee Council of Australia).

However, although many Australians are sympathetic to asylum seekers in mandatory detention, they remain either broadly supportive of the government’s approach to immigration or do little to challenge the government on this issue. The social psychological mechanism that enhances the perceived illegitimacy of the authority’s treatment of the minority and the willingness to act collectively to challenge the authority in this domain (i.e. political solidarity) remains underexplored. When people start to question whether or not ‘we’ should be supportive of this particular policy given the relevant norms, values and beliefs that ‘we’ (including the authority) were meant to share, the meaning of the relevant majority identity comes to reflect a particular relationship with the minority—i.e. the minority’s plight at the hands of the authority becomes self-relevant. Therefore, to the extent that the conflicted relationship between the authority and those members of the majority who are opposed to mandatory detention is understood in the context of a relevant identity whose values, norms, and beliefs are being contested, willingness to actively challenge the authority should be enhanced.
To investigate these dynamics, we experimentally manipulated whether the salience of a relevant majority identity—what it means to be Australian in this context—was attenuated or maintained. The Australian national identity was first made salient for all participants. Then, half of the participants were presented with two separate paragraphs stating the different (pro and against) views about the policy and asked to clearly indicate whether their own position was either pro or against mandatory detention. The rest of the participants read a single paragraph (containing identical information about mandatory detention) in which the pro and against statements were alternated. Instead of choosing a particular position, these participants simply rated the extent of their support for the policy on a 9-point Likert scale. This manipulation intended to attenuate the relevance of the higher-order identity under conditions where participants were explicitly asked to ‘choose a side’ when it comes to mandatory detention. In this condition, participants’ orientation towards mandatory detention is expected to be the primary basis for understanding the relevant intergroup relations, making it more likely that they will define themselves in terms of their position on this issue (as someone who is opposed to mandatory detention). In contrast, for participants who were not asked to make an explicit choice and were instead presented with a single statement describing the different views that Australians have on this issue, the Australian identity should be maintained as the primary lens for understanding the self and the relevant intergroup relations in this context. Opposition to mandatory detention in this condition is grounded in participants’ understanding of themselves as Australians—not only are some of ‘us’ opposed to this particular treatment of asylum seekers, such an attitude is important to who ‘we’ are as Australians.

It was hypothesised that, when the salience of the relevant (i.e. Australian) identity is maintained so that ‘what it means to be Australian’ guides the majority’s understanding of the nature of intergroup relations, participants will be more likely to go beyond oppositional attitude to mandatory detention and engage in the political solidarity process. Political solidarity outcomes should be less likely in the absence of such a framework that contextualises one’s opposition to the authority’s treatment of the minority as being relevant to who ‘we’ are (i.e. when participants self is defined primarily in terms of their opposition to mandatory detention). The relevant
political solidarity outcomes measured in this study include willingness to act in opposition to the policy and to become further involved in this issue in the future. Additionally, we also measured perceived legitimacy of the policy and perceived need for social change in relation to the policy. Importantly, perceived need for social change is conceptualised as an expression of common cause with the minority—a shared orientation or belief that social change in support of the minority’s cause is needed. Given the relatively simple study design, we are also able to test whether perceptions of legitimacy and common cause (i.e. need for social change) will mediate the relationship between the nature of the majority identity self-categorization (i.e. whether the salience of the Australian identity is maintained or attenuated) and willingness to collectively challenge the authority in relation to its treatment of the minority. The proposed mediation model is shown in Figure 8.1.

![Figure 8.1. Path model representing the relationships between Australian identity salience, perceived legitimacy of mandatory detention, common cause with minority (i.e. perceived need for social change), and willingness to engage in collective action against mandatory detention.](image-url)
8.2.1 Method

Participants and Design

One hundred and fifty-six undergraduate psychology students at the Australian National University participated in the study. Participants’ age ranged between 17 and 57 years ($M=20.44$, $SD=5.93$), and all participants were Australian citizens or permanent residents. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions (Australian Identity Salience: Maintained vs. Attenuated).

Materials and Procedure

To ensure that participants’ Australian identity was salient, all participants first completed a 5-item measure of identification with this particular identity. The first item was adapted from the Haslam and colleagues (1999) single-item measure of social identification (“Being Australian is important to me”). The remaining four items were adapted from Ellemers and colleagues (1999) three-component measure of social identification and in particular the group self-esteem subscale. These items included: “I feel good about Australians”, “I have little respect for Australians” (reverse coded), “I would rather NOT tell other people that I am an Australian” (reverse coded), and “I think that Australians have a lot to be proud of”. Then, the questionnaire booklet stated that although the experimenters were interested in people’s views on a number of government policies, this study will focus on immigration policy. Participants were informed that there are many immigration policies where most of us agree that the Australian government is doing the right thing, such as the extensive humanitarian program dealing with refugee assessment and settlement, as well as its comprehensive skilled migration program.

The mandatory detention (MD) policy was then introduced by stating that there is a lot of debate about policies towards people who enter the country without prior authorisation and then seek protection from the Australian government, with some people supporting the policy of mandatory detention of these asylum seekers, while others oppose it. We then presented the main arguments for and against the policy. For example, pro-MD arguments included “Australian government has the right to decide who comes to this country and who is allowed to stay”, “Detention may not be nice, but it sends a clear message to other people who might try to jump the queue...
as well”, and “Other countries with similar immigration problems can learn from the Australian system about how to manage illegal immigration.” Against-MD arguments included “Even though people who seek asylum in Australia arrived without government permission, most of them are found to be in genuine need of protection.” and “This practice has given us a bad image with other democratic countries world-wide.”

Australian Identity Salience Manipulation. In the Attenuated salience condition, the information about the mandatory detention policy was presented in two separate text boxes containing the pro- and against- arguments respectively. The boxes were labelled ‘View A’ and ‘View B’ and were presented next to each other. The order of the boxes was counterbalanced, so that in half of the questionnaires the pro-MD box was labelled ‘View A’ and the against-MD box ‘View B’, and vice versa. Participants in the Attenuated salience condition were then asked to choose either ‘View A’ or ‘View B’ by circling the appropriate letter.

In contrast, in the conditions where the salience of the Australian identity was to be Maintained, the arguments for and against the policy were presented in the same paragraph and were mixed so that a pro-MD statement was followed by an against-MD statement and vice versa. Participants in this condition were not asked to choose a particular policy position and instead rated the extent to which they supported the policy on a 9-point Likert scale (1 = “Not at all”, 9 = “Very much”). For this group, responses above the mid-point of the scale (5 on a 9-point scale) were deemed to be pro-mandatory detention and those below the mid-point as against mandatory detention.

Dependent measures

Unless stated otherwise, all measures used a 9-point Likert scale, with 1 = “Not at all” and 9 = “Very Much”.

Collective Action Intentions. Participants were asked to indicate their willingness to act in opposition/support of the mandatory detention policy by rating two items measuring these collective action tendencies (“If I had the opportunity I would actively a) oppose the policy / b) support the policy.”). Additionally,
participants indicated (by choosing either a ‘Yes’ or a ‘No’ response option) whether or not they would like to become more actively involved in this issue in the future.

**Perceived Legitimacy.** Perceived legitimacy of the mandatory detention policy was measured using four items, including “To what extent do you believe that this policy is [legitimate]/[fair]/[unjust, reverse coded]/[reasonable]”. These items formed a reliable measure of perceived legitimacy, $\alpha=.86$.

**Common Cause with Minority—Need for Social Change.** Six items were designed to measure perceived need for social change (e.g. “The government policy on this issue needs to be changed”, “The government is doing a good job on this issue” – reverse coded, “People who are protesting against this policy are justified in doing so”). These items formed a reliable measure of perceived need for social change, $\alpha=.83$.

### 8.2.2 Results

**Data Screening**

Forty participants indicated that they were supportive of mandatory detention and were excluded from subsequent analyses, leaving a total sample of 116 participants who opposed the mandatory detention policy. Preliminary analyses showed that pre-existing identification with the Australian identity was moderately high, and there were no significant differences in levels of identification between the experimental conditions, $F(1, 114)<1, \text{ns} (\text{Maintained: } M=5.95, SD=2.60; \text{Attenuated: } M=6.18, SD=2.31)$. Preliminary analyses also indicated that, for participants in the Attenuated condition, there were no significant effects of the order in which the two mandatory detention views were presented.

**Dependent Measures**

As can be seen from Table 8.1, the experimental manipulation significantly affected all of our dependent measures. In terms of collective action tendencies, when the salience of the Australian identity was Maintained (rather than Attenuated), participants were significantly more willing to engage in collective action opposing mandatory detention, and significantly less willing to actively support the policy. In relation to perceived legitimacy, even though participants perceived the policy to be
highly *illegitimate* overall ($M=2.98$, significantly different from scale mid-point $t=-14.35$, $p<.001$), when the salience of the Australian identity was Maintained (compared to Attenuated) the policy was perceived to be even more illegitimate. Similarly, while the perceived need for social change was generally high, ($M_{Soc.ch}=7.86$; significantly different from scale mid-point, $t=27.73$, $p<.001$), there were still significant differences based on the experimental manipulation. Perceived need for social change was significantly higher when the salience of the Australian identity was Maintained, rather than Attenuated.

Table 8.1. Effects of the Australian identity salience manipulation on collective action intentions (CAI), perceived legitimacy and need for social change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUSTRALIAN IDENTITY SALIENCE</th>
<th>Oppose MD CAI</th>
<th>Support MD CAI</th>
<th>Combined CAI (Oppose MD)</th>
<th>Perceived Legitimacy</th>
<th>Need for Social Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DV</td>
<td>$F$</td>
<td>$p$</td>
<td>$\eta^2_p$</td>
<td>Mean (SD)</td>
<td>Mean (SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintained</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>7.48 (1.65)</td>
<td>6.77 (2.05)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attenuated</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>1.73 (1.27)</td>
<td>2.58 (1.97)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.93</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>7.88 (1.33)</td>
<td>7.09 (1.85)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.99</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>2.56 (1.26)</td>
<td>3.38 (1.62)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.21</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>8.17 (.87)</td>
<td>7.57 (1.24)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* All measures were rated on a 9-point Likert scale, with 1 = “Not at all” and 9 = “Very much”. The measure of Combined CAI was coded so that higher ratings indicate greater willingness to oppose mandatory detention.
When it comes to the categorical measure of collective action intentions, Chi-square analysis indicated that whether participants said Yes or No to further involvement was significantly affected by the experimental condition to which they were assigned, $\chi^2(1, 112) = 6.07, p<.05$. Overall, 46 out of 112 participants who responded to this measure said that they would like to become more involved in this issue, while 66 participants said that they did not wish to be further involved. However, as shown in Figure 8.2, participants were significantly more likely to say Yes to further involvement when the salience of the Australian identity was Maintained, rather than Attenuated. Indeed, 63% of those who said Yes to further involvement were in the condition in which the salience of the Australian identity was Maintained. Of those who said No to further involvement, only 39% were in the condition in which the salience of the Australian identity was Maintained, while 61% were in the Attenuated condition.

![Figure 8.2. Willingness to get further involved as a function of whether the salience of the Australian identity was maintained or attenuated.](image)

**Mediation Analyses**

In order to evaluate the path model proposed earlier in the paper, we used the procedure suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986) and conducted two separate mediation analyses for the two mediator variables—perceived legitimacy and perceived need for social change. For the purpose of the mediation analyses, we dummy-coded Australian Identity Salience (Maintained = 1, Attenuated = 0). The
dependent variable was the combined collective action intentions, coded so that higher ratings indicate more opposition to mandatory detention. The results for these analyses are shown in Figure 8.3.

Australian identity salience manipulation significantly predicted perceived need for social change ($\beta=.27$, $t=3.03$, $p<.01$) and perceived legitimacy ($\beta=-.27$, $t=-2.99$, $p<.01$). Furthermore, the manipulation also significantly predicted collective action tendencies, prior to the inclusion of the need for social change ($\beta=.24$, $t=2.63$, $p<.05$) or perceived legitimacy ($\beta=.24$, $t=2.56$, $p<.05$) as mediators in the analysis. However, when collective action intentions to oppose mandatory detention were regressed on both the salience manipulation and perceived need for social change, the manipulation was no longer a significant predictor ($\beta=.06$, $t=.85$, ns.) with the need for social change significantly predicting collective action ($\beta=.65$, $t=8.94$, $p<.001$; $R^2=.45$, $F(2,113)=45.80$, $p<.001$). Similarly, when collective action tendencies were regressed on both the manipulation and perceived legitimacy, the manipulation no longer predicted collective action ($\beta=.04$, $t=.59$, ns.), while perceived legitimacy remained a highly significant predictor ($\beta=-.71$, $t=-10.59$, $p<.001$; $R^2=.53$, $F(2,111)=62.64$, $p<.001$). Significant Sobel tests indicated that the effects of Australian identity salience on collective action tendencies were indeed being mediated by perceived need for social change ($z=3.02$, $p<.01$) and perceived legitimacy of mandatory detention ($z=2.90$, $p<.01$). Therefore, when the salience of the Australian identity was maintained (rather than attenuated), mandatory detention was more likely to be seen as illegitimate and in need of change and, in turn, these perceptions enhanced majority willingness to engage in collective action against the policy.
Figure 8.3. The relationships between the Australian identity salience, perceived legitimacy, perceived need for social change (common cause with minority), and collective action tendencies to oppose mandatory detention.

Note: * p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001

Given that perceived legitimacy and political consciousness are highly correlated variables (r = -.63, p<.01), we also tested a path model in which the mediators were entered together, therefore controlling for this relationship. Although the beta weights for the relationships between the mediators and the dependent variable were reduced, perceived legitimacy and need for social change nevertheless remained highly significant predictors of collective action tendencies (β_{Legitimacy} = -.51, t = -6.49, p<.001; β_{SocCh} = .34, t = 4.40, p<.001), with the final model accounting for approximately 60% of variance in collective action tendencies (R² = .60, F(2,111) = 55.13, p<.001), compared to 53% and 45% when perceived legitimacy and need for social change (respectively) were entered as separate mediators.

8.2.3 Discussion

This study was based on a premise that being opposed to an authority’s treatment of the minority—in this context, the policy of mandatory detention of
asylum seekers—may not be enough *per se* to motivate political solidarity (i.e. willingness to collectively challenge the authority in this regard). To investigate the process by which such opposition to authority may indeed be transformed into political solidarity, we experimentally varied the nature of the majority identity. In contrast to Studies 1 and 3, in this study we did not directly manipulate the meaning of the relevant majority identity (e.g. whether or not it was defined by egalitarian norms and values). Rather, depending on the experimental condition, the salience of a relevant (i.e. Australian) majority identity was either maintained or attenuated. This manipulation sought to vary the extent to which majority opposition to the authority’s treatment of the minority (i.e. mandatory detention policy) would also be seen as relevant to and defining of this particular social identity—as impacting on of who ‘we’ are and who ‘we’ want to be as Australians.

The results of the present study clearly showed that when participants’ Australian identity was maintained and therefore served as a framework for understanding the relevant intergroup relations, willingness to collectively challenge the authority was enhanced, as was perceived illegitimacy of mandatory detention and the need for social change in this domain (i.e. common cause with minority). Additionally, perceived illegitimacy of mandatory detention and the belief that social change is needed mediated the relationship between the salience of the Australian identity and willingness to collectively challenge the authority in relation to mandatory detention. Therefore, if people are to become willing to go beyond disagreement with authority and act collectively in solidarity with the minority, the authority’s treatment of the minority needs be seen as fundamentally at odds with who ‘we’ are. When the minority’s plight is seen as identity-relevant, it also has the capacity to transform the majority’s understanding of the relevant intergroup relations (i.e. enhance perceived illegitimacy and need for social change) and through this process increase the likelihood of collective challenge to the authority and the status quo. These results are consistent with other work demonstrating how attitudes towards outgroups, and immigrants in particular, can be enhanced when people self-categorize in terms of an inclusive higher-order identity (e.g. Esses et al., 2001; Esses et al., 2005). However, the novelty of the current approach is in demonstrating the mechanism through which particular understandings of intergroup relations—
supportive attitudes towards the minority and opposition to authority—become self-relevant and therefore translated into willingness to act collectively in solidarity with the minority to achieve social change.

It is also worthwhile noting that the same process that enhances political solidarity with the minority should enhance political solidarity with authority for those who are pro-authority and supportive of its treatment of the minority. Indeed, the need to protect ‘our’ way of life (i.e. what it means to be Australian) features prominently in justifications of mandatory detention as a necessary tool for protecting what Australia is all about. According to this argument, being careful about whom ‘we’ allow into the country is about protecting the essence of what ‘we’ believe Australia and Australians should be like. As a result, although they may be uncomfortable with the harsh conditions experienced by asylum seekers in detention, those who are supportive of the policy will continue to justify such measures as necessary and in the best interests of Australia. This study demonstrates that the cause of those who are against the policy may benefit from a similar orientation that emphasises not only the harshness of the policy towards asylum seekers, but also the inconsistent nature of the policy given important Australian values and beliefs. While certainly present, this argument could feature more prominently in the rhetorical repertoire of those who would like to see the end to mandatory detention. We ‘all’ agree that mandatory detention is harsh—the real conflict is about whether or not it is necessary in order to “advance Australia fair”.

The arguments advanced in this chapter could be further strengthened with a direct measure of the extent to which the nature of the intergroup relations indeed impacted on who ‘we’ are—the meaning of the relevant majority identity. The lack of such a measure makes it difficult to establish that the self-categorization process proposed to be at work in this study—i.e. intergroup relations being reflected in the meaning of the relevant identity—is indeed the one that is driving the observed effects. It may be possible, for example, that when participants were asked to choose a particular view of mandatory detention (i.e. in the Attenuated identity condition) the also perceived the conflict or the divide between the different positions to be so

1 “Advance Australia Fair” is the title and the opening line of the Australian national anthem.
great that it can only be overcome with great difficulty. The perception that the conflict between these groups is quite entrenched may have reduced a sense of efficacy and therefore willingness to engage in collective action (e.g. van Zomeren et al., 2004).

Given the design of the empirical studies so far, it could be argued that political solidarity is primarily confined to those (higher-order) identities primarily defined by egalitarian norms and values. In these studies we directly manipulated whether a particular (higher-order) identity was salient and to what extent it was also defined by egalitarian norms and values. In Study 5 (presented in Chapter 9), we focus more specifically on the nature of the majority identity and, in particular, directly measure the extent to which this identity reflects the majority’s relationship with the minority. Using this measure, Study 5 explores to what extent political solidarity may come about through a process by which the meaning of the majority identity is (re)defined in a way that makes ‘their’ (i.e. minority) disadvantage fundamental to who ‘we’ (i.e. majority) are.
CHAPTER 9: POLITICAL SOLIDARITY, INTERGROUP INEQUALITY AND
MAJORITY IDENTITY MEANING

9.1 Introduction

Within the studies presented so far, the meaning of the majority identity emerged as a particularly important factor when it comes to political solidarity. In Study 1, political solidarity was more likely to emerge to the extent that the relevant identity meaning was strongly defined by those norms that were likely to clearly characterise harsh authority treatment of the (‘ingroup’ but also ‘outgroup) minority as a violation of who ‘we’ are. In Study 3, common fate between the minority and majority was transformed into political solidarity when the relevant identity meaning provided a basis for interpreting this experience as something that affects ‘all of us’. In Study 4, when opposition to authority was seen as reflecting the relevant majority identity—what it meant to be Australian—it also enhanced perceived illegitimacy of authority’s treatment of the minority, perceived need for social change, and through this process increased willingness to collectively challenge the authority. However, we still need to demonstrate the precise mechanism through which the re-definition of identity meaning makes political solidarity possible.

The focus of Study 5 is on the process by which the meaning of the majority identity, and particularly the extent to which it is shaped by the nature of the majority – minority relations, affects the likelihood of political solidarity with the minority. More specifically, we investigate how the relationship between the majority and minority comes to define the meaning of the majority identity in a way that renegotiates the majority’s understanding of the minority disadvantage and, in turn, enhances majority willingness to challenge the authority. This question is investigated in the context of reconciliation between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians.

1 An article based on this chapter has been accepted for publication in Political Psychology (Special Issue: Political Reconciliation), as Subašić, E. & Reynolds, K. J. (in press) “Beyond ‘practical’ reconciliation: Intergroup inequality and the meaning of Non-Indigenous identity”.
Before we discuss this context in detail, it is worthwhile highlighting that the former Liberal (conservative) government vehemently opposed reconciliation processes that centred on a formal apology to Indigenous Australians and the idea that current inequality has its roots in past injustice (e.g. land dispossession, removal of children). These aspects of reconciliation were shunned as mere ‘symbolism’ and replaced with a more ‘practical’ focus on reducing Indigenous disadvantage more generally (e.g. poor health, poverty, unemployment, etc.). At the time that the current study was conducted, supporting a reconciliation process that involved a formal apology to Indigenous people and the recognition of Indigenous rights more broadly (e.g. land rights) therefore represented a direct challenge to authority in solidarity with the minority (i.e. political solidarity).

As such, in this study a key indicator of political solidarity includes support for those aspects of reconciliation that the relevant authority (at the time) was most strongly opposed to (i.e. apology, land rights) as well as willingness to act in solidarity with Indigenous people to reduce the inequality between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians. More specifically, the study presented in this chapter investigates how the majority (i.e. Non-Indigenous Australians) understanding of themselves in the context of majority – minority (i.e. Indigenous – Non-Indigenous) relations shapes this process. It is suggested that as long as the minority’s disadvantage is seen as ‘their’ problem rather than something that also defines ‘us’ as members of the relevant majority, political solidarity with the minority will be unlikely. However, to the extent that the intergroup inequality (e.g. between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australian) comes to define who ‘we’ are (i.e. as Non-Indigenous Australians) political solidarity will become possible. Rather than resulting from a higher-order identity salience per se or endorsement of particular social norms and values (e.g. egalitarianism), political solidarity is a process by which the relevant majority identity—their sense of who ‘we’ are—comes to be defined by the minority’s exploitation, injustice and disadvantage.

### 9.1.1 Political Solidarity with Indigenous Australians

Some of the most striking Australian examples of the majority acting in solidarity with a minority were the so-called ‘walks for reconciliation’ with
Indigenous Australians. In 2000, hundreds of thousands of Indigenous and, importantly, Non-Indigenous Australians participated in these events—the largest and most prominent being the walk across the Sydney Harbour Bridge—to express their support for a range of reconciliation issues. Most centrally, the walks signalled Non-Indigenous support for a formal government apology to Indigenous people for past injustice perpetrated by the Australian government and particularly the policy of forcible removal of Indigenous children from their families and communities.

As in other colonial and post-colonial contexts (e.g. Humphrey, 2005), the history of Indigenous – Non-Indigenous relations in Australia is marked by injustice and dispossession. In the 19th century these included forced dispossession of land, slavery, introduced diseases and suppression of Indigenous law, language and spirituality (Halloran, 2007; Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1997). The 20th century saw a further intervention into Indigenous life and culture in the form of the government policy of assimilation through forced removal of Indigenous children from their families and communities (see Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1997). Today, Australian Indigenous people continue to experience severe disadvantage in areas like health, life expectancy, education, housing and employment, and are more disadvantaged than Indigenous people in the United States, Canada or New Zealand (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 2008). The Australian reconciliation process was envisaged as an effort to redress past injustice as well as the current relationship and inequality between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians (Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (CAR), 1993; The Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee, 2003).

The issue of apology, however, divided the nation for the better part of the last decade, with many (including the Liberal/National government of the day) arguing that to apologise was to admit guilt where none should exist (see also Augoustinos & LeCouteur, 2004). The following statement by the former PM John Howard is illustrative of this argument:

"But this optimism, my friends, about the reconciliation process cannot be blind. Reconciliation will not work if it puts a higher value on symbolic gestures
and overblown promises rather than practical needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in areas like health, housing, education and employment. It will not work if it is premised solely on a sense of national guilt and shame. Rather we should acknowledge past injustices and focus our energies on addressing the root causes of current and future disadvantage among our Indigenous people.”

John Howard, Prime Minister of Australia, 1996 – 2007
(1997, Australian Reconciliation Convention Opening Address)

Interestingly, the proponents of reconciliation, while demanding apology, also rejected the idea of collective guilt (see below), arguing that reconciliation should be about building a better relationship between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians rather than guilt (Keating, 1992). As a result, the debate about reconciliation shifted to focus on the need to redress Indigenous disadvantage and reduce the inequality between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians.

Until a very recent change of government (in late 2007), and certainly at the time when the study discussed in this chapter was designed and conducted, the idea of ‘practical reconciliation’ (a policy advocating a focus on the ‘practical’ needs of Indigenous people rather than the ‘symbolic gestures’ such as apology) was the most prominent framework that guided the (then Prime Minister) Howard’s government approach to reconciliation. What ‘practical reconciliation’ effectively sought to do is to disconnect the past from the present—the past injustice and current disadvantage facing Indigenous Australians, as Mick Dodson, a prominent Indigenous leader and academic, argued:

“I am saddened that, on the eve of the 40th anniversary of the referendum to grant citizenship rights to Indigenous people, that so many of these rights are eroding away before my eyes...Government mainstreaming policies brimming over with overt assimilationist messages [are] not only denying our people cultural expression, but also disregard the colonial legacies of dispossession, separation and brutality that have left many of us traumatised, incapable,
without significant support, to bridge the divide between the haves and the have
nots, the employed and the unemployed, the healthy and the sick.”

Professor Mick Dodson, Director, National Centre for Indigenous Studies
(2006, Collaborative Indigenous Policy Development Speech)

As discussed in more detail below, in social psychological terms, the ‘practical
reconciliation’ approach also allowed Non-Indigenous Australians to divorce
themselves from the process of reconciliation. By re-defining reconciliation as being
primarily about ‘their’ (i.e. Indigenous) disadvantage, ‘practical reconciliation’
policy allowed most of ‘us’ as Non-Indigenous Australians to disregard the nature of
intergroup relations that created and continued to perpetuate Indigenous – Non-
Indigenous inequality.

9.1.2 Intergroup Inequality and the Meaning of Non-Indigenous Identity

When it comes to Indigenous – Non-Indigenous relations in Australia, most of
the existing social psychological work focuses on the antecedents and consequences
of collective guilt (and, to a lesser extent, shame) in this domain. Non-Indigenous
Australians’ experience of collective guilt (in response to perceptions of past
injustice perpetrated by one’s social group but also perceived ingroup privilege) has
been shown to predict support for apology (McGarty & Bluic, 2004; McGarty et al.,
2005; Pedersen, Beven, Walker, & Griffiths, 2004) as well as reconciliation more
generally (Halloran, 2007). These findings are consistent with research looking at
reconciliation processes with the Chilean largest indigenous group, the Mapuche,
showing the Non-Indigenous Chileans’ experience of collective guilt predicted
support for reparation attitudes, particularly for those participants who experienced
low (as opposed to high) levels of collective shame for their group’s wrongdoing (R.
Brown et al., 2008).

However, findings from the intergroup emotions research also show that guilt
about one’s privileged position is a weak predictor of supportive attitudes towards
the disadvantaged outgroup and actions to address intergroup inequality (Harth et al.,
2008; Iyer et al., 2003; Leach et al., 2006). Guilt, as well as shame, are emotions that
focus on own (illegitimate) privilege, rather than another’s disadvantage (Leach et
al., 2002; Powell et al., 2005). As such, they primarily motivate efforts to alleviate one’s discomfort through justification or restorative action that may not address the more pervasive causes of inequality (R. Brown et al., 2008; Iyer et al., 2003).

Of particular importance in the Australian context, research on collective guilt does not seem to capture that the reconciliation debate in Australia has developed in a way that makes the notion of collective guilt problematic as a contribution to the reconciliation between Australia’s Indigenous and Non-Indigenous people. Collective guilt has become highly contested and politicised in Australia (Augustinos & LeCouteur, 2004; Manne, 2000), not the least because the Howard government’s ‘practical’ approach to reconciliation strongly rejected the notion of collective guilt on the part of Non-Indigenous Australians as offensive to the greater story of Australia’s success as a nation (Howard, 1997). Furthermore, both the previous and current Labor governments explicitly stated that, while supporting apology, they were not suggesting that Non-Indigenous Australians should feel guilt—apology was about acknowledgement of past harm and a basis for future respect and healing, rather than guilt (Keating, 1992; Macklin, 2008). As a result, collective guilt seems to have been rejected as a constructive response in this context—for example, only 14% of Non-Indigenous participants in the McGarty and colleagues (2005) study reported experiencing collective guilt, a finding consistent with low levels of guilt reported in other contexts marked by unresolved (if ceased) social conflict (R. Brown & Cehajic, 2008).

In contrast to guilt, the stark inequality between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians has remained a central issue within the reconciliation process. However, very few studies explicitly investigate Non-Indigenous attitudes towards Indigenous disadvantage or the inequality between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians. In a study looking at attitudes towards reconciliation more generally, Sweeney and colleagues (Sweeney, Johnson, & Trimble, 1996) found that Non-Indigenous Australians perceived Indigenous people to be more disadvantaged (especially in areas like health and employment) than families and single mothers, but less disadvantaged than the elderly, the disabled and the youth. However, Non-Indigenous Australians were also found to believe that Indigenous people received more government support than Non-Indigenous people, and were therefore
privileged rather than disadvantaged in comparison to Non-Indigenous Australians (Pedersen et al., 2004; Pedersen & Walker, 1997). While informative, this research does not explore the processes that underlie the different understandings of inequality or what their implications for the intergroup relationship may be.

In the study presented in this chapter, we explore the relationship between Non-Indigenous Australians' understanding of intergroup inequality, and particularly the extent to which inequality reflects the meaning of Non-Indigenous identity, and their willingness to actively support the reconciliation process in solidarity with Indigenous Australians. Social psychological research looking at the attitudes of the 'relatively privileged' towards intergroup inequality show that support for efforts to reduce inequality increases when inequality is seen as illegitimate and when the focus is on another's (illegitimate) disadvantage rather than own (illegitimate) privilege (e.g. Harth et al., 2008). Furthermore, it is important to note that focusing on ingroup's illegitimate privilege is also more likely to result in justifications to legitimise the inequality and avoid or alleviate the feelings of guilt that may accompany such an appraisal (Harth et al., 2008; Iyer et al., 2003; Leach et al., 2006; Leach et al., 2002).

In contexts where the process of reconciliation is wedded to the need to address intergroup inequality, it is particularly important to consider what factors may contribute to and maintain the view that intergroup inequality is illegitimate and in need of change. Past research, looking at disadvantaged groups' experience of intergroup inequality, has shown that how people see themselves as members of social groups, the meaning of their relevant social identity, affects perceptions of intergroup inequality and particularly its legitimacy or otherwise (Branscombe, 1998; Branscombe et al., 1999; Breilinger & Kelly, 1994). Additionally, the more the inequality is seen to be illegitimate, the more those who are disadvantaged by it become willing to endorse change in intergroup relations (Ellemers et al., 1993; Reicher & Haslam, 2006a, 2006b; Turner & Brown, 1978; Wright & Tropp, 2002). In this context, the relationship between illegitimacy and willingness to achieve change is a manifestation of the underlying meaning of the relevant group identity, where identity meaning reflects a shared understanding of intergroup relations.
9.2 Study 5

In Study 5, we suggest that a related, identity-based, process occurs for those who are members of the ‘perpetrator’ or the ‘privileged’ group and who see their group’s past actions or unequal social hierarchy as illegitimate. The meaning of one’s social identity is defined by the relevant norms, values and beliefs that are seen as important and representative of what it means to be a member of a particular social group (Turner, 1999; Turner & Reynolds, 2004). In that sense, the more the Non-Indigenous Australians’ identity is defined by the Indigenous disadvantage, the more difficult it will be to justify the disadvantage as legitimate. The more Non-Indigenous Australians see the inequality in terms of the intergroup relationship, where their group identity is inextricably linked to the experiences of Indigenous people, the more they will see it as illegitimate and the greater the impetus for social change in solidarity with Indigenous people.

The relationship between the meaning of social identity and perceptions of legitimacy in intergroup relations is a complex one and, while it is beyond the scope of this chapter to theorise it fully, it is important to note that these concepts are interrelated and defining of each other (Turner, 1999, 2005; Turner & Reynolds, 2004). It is therefore plausible (and perhaps even obvious) that the more one sees intergroup inequality as illegitimate the more it will shape one’s social identity and the harder it will be to feel good about one’s group. However, in this paper we propose that the opposite direction of this relationship may perhaps be of more interest and importance in the context of a reconciliation process where the role of intergroup relations in creating and alleviating the inequality is continually contested. Societal inequality can be seen as illegitimate without such perceptions necessarily reflecting or impacting on who ‘we’ are. It is when people see the inequality as reflecting the relevant intergroup relationship, when ‘their’ disadvantage shapes who ‘we’ are, that they will also be less likely to disengage from or justify such inequality, and therefore be more likely to see it as illegitimate, perceive the need for social change, and ultimately be willing to engage in the change process. The more the illegitimate inequality can be dismissed as ‘not our problem’, either through passive neglect or active justification, the less likely the perceived need for social change and willingness to act in solidarity with Indigenous people in this domain. In
contrast, the more one’s social identity is defined or shaped by another’s exploitation (past and present) the more one will be willing to actively challenge the authority and its stance towards the minority and engage in collective political action to achieve social change.

In the present study, we explore these ideas more systematically and suggest that the extent to which Indigenous-Non-Indigenous inequality shapes the meaning of Non-Indigenous identity will be manifested in perceptions of legitimacy of intergroup inequality, the perceived need for change in intergroup relations, as well as willingness to become actively involved in the change process in solidarity with Indigenous people. We provided our Non-Indigenous participants with information about the intergroup inequality between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians and then measured: a) the extent to which they identified as Non-Indigenous Australians and b) the extent to which the inequality shaped the meaning of their Non-Indigenous identity (e.g. the inequality makes it difficult to feel good about being Non-Indigenous). Next, we measured perceived legitimacy of intergroup inequality and the perceived need for social change, conceptualised as variables that reflect identity meaning and in turn mediate the effect of identity meaning on willingness to engage in the reconciliation process. As in Chapter 8, perceived need for social change was seen as a manifestation of common cause with the relevant minority in this context.

Key dependent variables included willingness to vote in support of apology to Indigenous people and Indigenous land rights, as well as willingness to engage in some form of political action to reduce inequality (e.g. signing a petition, participating in a rally) in solidarity with Indigenous people. We included measures of support for apology as well as land rights as both issues have been a part of the debate surrounding reconciliation in Australia and particularly its more symbolic aspects. Furthermore, willingness to vote for political parties who support apology and Indigenous land rights was chosen in preference to more abstract measures of attitudinal support in relation to these issues and as a measure assessing more directly willingness to challenge the authority in this regard. In this study, being willing to

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1 This study was conducted during John Howard government’s term in office and before the current Prime Minister Kevin Rudd offered a formal apology to Indigenous Australians.
take political action to reduce inequality demonstrates that participants are willing to join Indigenous people in achieving this aim, rather than as a more abstract objective (e.g. reducing Indigenous poverty) that is divorced from the nature of Indigenous – Non-Indigenous relations. We therefore anticipate that support for apology and willingness to engage in political action to reduce inequality will be strongly and positively related.

Based on the theoretical reasoning outlined above, we expect a positive relationship between identity meaning and perceived legitimacy of inequality, as well as the perceived need for social change. Of key interest in this study, the more Non-Indigenous Australians see Indigenous disadvantage as reflecting who they are, their relevant social identity, the more they will see it as illegitimate and the greater their perceptions of the need for social change. It is important to note that we do not expect identity meaning to ‘cause’ perceptions of illegitimacy where none existed before, particularly given the correlational nature of the study. It should, however, be the case that the more the inequality shapes the meaning of Non-Indigenous identity, the harder it will be to legitimise or justify, or to see it as irrelevant to who ‘we’ are. In turn, the more the inequality is seen to reflect negatively on Non-Indigenous Australians, the greater the impetus to achieve social change in this domain, and the higher the intentions to vote in support of apology/land rights and the willingness to engage in political action. According to social identity theory and past research, perceptions of illegitimate intergroup inequality form the basis for perceiving the need for social change, as well as willingness to become more actively involved in the change process (Branscombe et al., 1999; Ellemers et al., 1993; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). As such, perceptions of legitimacy and the perceived need for social change can be seen as more proximal predictors that mediate the relationship between identity meaning and voting/political action intentions. In this model, we also explore the extent to which perceived legitimacy affects willingness to act by enhancing the need for social change in this domain (i.e. whether or not social change mediates the relationship between perceived legitimacy and voting/political action intentions).
9.2.1 Method

Participants

One hundred and thirteen undergraduate psychology students at the Australian National University completed the study as part of their laboratory participation. Twelve participants indicated that they were neither Australian citizens nor permanent residents and one participant identified as an Indigenous Australian. They were subsequently excluded from data analysis, leaving a total sample of 100 participants.

Materials and Procedure

Background Information – Intergroup Inequality. On arrival, participants were asked to read the background information about the inequality between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians, and then completed the questionnaire including the measures outlined further below. The background information included (factually correct) statistics published by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission showing the inequality between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians in areas such as health, infant mortality and life expectancy, rates of imprisonment, income, education and employment. All of the statistics clearly indicated that Indigenous people are severely disadvantaged compared to non-Indigenous Australians. Additionally the information stated that 38% of Indigenous people (aged 15 years or more) reported that either themselves or a relative had been removed from their family as a child. In order to make the Non-Indigenous identity salient, participants were then instructed as follows:

“We would like you, as Non-Indigenous Australians, to take some time now to consider the ways in which Indigenous Australians are disadvantaged because of their social group membership, compared to the Non-Indigenous population, as well as why this inequality between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians remains today.”

Having provided written responses in relation to these questions, participants then completed the measures outlined below, using a 9-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree and 9=Strongly Agree). In order to maintain consistency, and focus the
participants on the relationship between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians, the questionnaire items were worded in terms of Indigenous-Non-Indigenous inequality, rather than Indigenous disadvantage or Non-Indigenous privilege.

**Non-Indigenous Identification.** Six items were used to assess participants’ level of identification with Non-Indigenous Australian identity, including “I am comfortable being a Non-Indigenous Australian”, “I believe that Non-Indigenous Australians have a lot to be proud of”, and “Being a Non-Indigenous Australian is important to me”. The responses to these items were averaged into a Non-Indigenous Identification scale, with a reliability coefficient of $\alpha=.86$.

**Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning.** Two items assessed the extent to which the inequality between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians shaped the meaning of the Non-Indigenous identity. These items were “I believe that the inequality between Non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians reflects badly on us as Non-Indigenous Australians” and “I believe that the inequality makes it hard for me to feel good about being a Non-Indigenous Australian.” The combined items formed a reliable measure, with $\alpha=.73$.

**Perceived Legitimacy of Inequality.** In order to measure the extent to which participants perceived the inequality between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians as legitimate, we used four items (e.g. “I believe that the inequality between Non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians is legitimate”, “I believe that the inequality between Non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians is justified”). Averaged responses to these items were combined into a Perceived Legitimacy scale, with $\alpha=.82$.

**Common Cause with Minority—Need for Social Change.** Six items measured the extent to which participants saw the need for social change in this domain, including: “I believe that in order for this inequality to be reduced, we need significant social change at the level of the Australian society as a whole”; “The government policy on this issue needs to be changed”; “I believe that the inequality is being adequately addressed currently so that further social change is not necessary” (reverse coded). These items were averaged to produce a measure of perceived need for social change, with a reliability coefficient of $\alpha=.83$. 
Political Action Intentions. Participants were first asked to indicate to what extent they would be willing to become actively involved in this issue (i.e. reducing the inequality between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians) in support of Indigenous people. They were then asked to indicate the extent to which they would support Indigenous people by signing a petition, writing a letter to the minister for Indigenous affairs, participating in a protest rally, and becoming a member of a non-government organisation advocating for Indigenous issues. Combined, these items formed a reliable scale of political action intentions, with $\alpha=.86$.

Voting Intentions—Apology and Land Rights. Participants’ intentions to vote in support of apology and land rights was measured using two separate items that stated “If I had the opportunity, I would support Indigenous Australians by voting for a political party supporting a [formal apology to Indigenous people]/ [Indigenous claims to land rights]”.

9.2.2 Results

Independence of Predictors—Perceived Legitimacy of Inequality and Identity Meaning

As discussed, perceptions of illegitimacy and the meaning of social identity are interrelated and mutually defining constructs. It is therefore important to ascertain that, while correlated, they are in fact two separate constructs. We therefore compared two latent measurement models in order to assess whether the items for these measures fit a 2-factor model better than a single factor one. To test nested models we set the latent correlations in the 2-factor model to 1.00 and tested whether this worsens model fit compared to a model in which the correlation is estimated. Superior fit of a 2-factor model indicates that the items are indeed measuring two discrete factors rather than a single latent factor.

The fit of the models was assessed on the basis of the $\chi^2$ test significance, the comparative fit index (CFI, Bentler, 1990) and the root mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA, Steiger, 1990; Steiger & Lind, 1980). A significant $\chi^2$ test indicates that an estimated model reliably differs from a perfectly fitting model, whereas a non-significant $\chi^2$ indicates good model fit. Comparative fit index estimates the fit of the hypothesised model compared to an alternative
(independence) model, while RMSEA is an index that takes into account the model's parsimony. Acceptable fit is indicated by a CFI value greater than .90 (Bentler, 1992; Bentler & Bonnet, 1980). RMSEA values of .05 or lower indicate a close fit, while values of .08 indicate reasonable fit (Browne & Cudeck, 1993).

The 2-factor model, in which the correlation between Perceived Legitimacy and Identity Meaning was estimated \( (r^2=-.48, p<.05) \), had superior fit indices, \( \chi^2(8)=38.15, p<.001, \) CFI=.88, RMSEA=.19, compared to the one-factor model in which the correlation was set to 1.00, \( \chi^2(9)=65.25, p<.001, \) CFI=.77, RMSEA=.25. However, as can be seen from the fit indices, both models fit the data poorly. Examination of cross-paths revealed that, while those items measuring Identity Meaning loaded only onto this particular factor, two Perceived Legitimacy items (“I believe that the inequality between Non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians is unfair” (reverse coded) and “I believe that the inequality between Non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians is justified”) had significant loadings for both factors. As a result, these items were excluded from further analysis. The revised 2-factor model (excluding the Perceived Legitimacy items with significant cross-paths; estimated correlation between factors \( r^2=-.34, p<.05 \) ) fitted the data well, \( \chi^2(1)=1.3, p=.25, \) CFI=.99, RMSEA=.06. Importantly, this revised 2-factor model was superior to the single-factor model, which fitted the data rather poorly, \( \chi^2(2)=34.02, p<.001, \) CFI=.67, RMSEA=.40. These results confirmed that the (reduced) measure of Perceived Legitimacy and the measure of Identity Meaning were indeed measuring separate constructs.

Scale Descriptives

As the descriptive statistics indicate (see Table 9.1), participants’ mean level of identification as Non-Indigenous Australians was relatively high and, importantly, participants saw the inequality between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians as highly illegitimate and in need of social change. The majority of participants expressed some willingness to vote for political parties supporting apology and land rights for Indigenous people (67% and 60% respectively), although the means for

1 The reduced Perceived Legitimacy measure had good reliability \((\alpha=.78)\).
these variables were close to the mid-point of the scale. On average, willingness to engage in some form of political action was not high, however 40% of participants expressed intentions to become politically involved in this issue (percentage of scores above the mid-point of the scale). Finally, as expected, the more participants expressed support for apology and land rights, the more they were willing to engage in political action to support Indigenous people and reduce Indigenous – Non-Indigenous inequality.

Table 9.1. Means, Standard Deviations (SD) and Bi-variate Correlations Between Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Non-Indigenous Identification</td>
<td>6.94</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Identity Meaning</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>-.30**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Perceived Legitimacy</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.25**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Social Change</td>
<td>6.97</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td>-.48**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Voting Intentions – Apology</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>-.30**</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td>-.33**</td>
<td>.55**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Voting Intentions – Land Rights</td>
<td>5.62</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td>-.40**</td>
<td>.56**</td>
<td>.78**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Political Action Intentions</td>
<td>4.66</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>-.33**</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td>.62**</td>
<td>.59**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. 9-point Likert scale was used for all measures (1 = Strongly Disagree, 9 = Strongly Agree). *p<.05, **p<.01

Correlations

As can be seen from Table 9.1, Non-Indigenous Identification correlated moderately and negatively with Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning and intentions to vote in support of apology. The more participants identified as Non-Indigenous Australians, the less likely they were to see the inequality as reflecting negatively on
Non-Indigenous Australians, and the less likely they were to vote in support of apology. Non-Indigenous Identification did not significantly correlate with any of the remaining measures.

Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning, correlated in the expected direction with Perceived Legitimacy and Social Change variables, so that the more participants saw the inequality to reflect negatively on Non-Indigenous Australians, the lower the perceived legitimacy of inequality and the higher their perceived need for social change. Identity meaning also positively correlated with intentions to vote in support of apology and land rights, as well as willingness to engage in political action. Finally, participants were more likely to vote in support of apology and land rights, and more willing to become actively involved in this issue the more they saw the inequality as reflecting negatively on Non-Indigenous Australians.

**Evaluation of Path Models**

We used structural equation modelling (in AMOS 6.0) to conduct mediational analyses of two path models testing the hypothesis that the Perceived Legitimacy of inequality and the need for Social Change will mediate the relationship between Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning and our measures of Voting/Political Action intentions. The first model tested the paths between the predictors (Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning, Perceived Legitimacy, and Social Change) and the combined voting intentions to support apology and land rights (given the high correlation between these measures, $r^2 = .78, p<.001$), while the second model looked at the same paths for political action intentions. Both models also included Non-Indigenous Identification as a predictor of Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning, given the significant correlation between these variables.

We initially set the relationship between Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning and voting/political action intentions to 0 as it was expected that Perceived Legitimacy and need for Social Change would fully mediate this relationship (see also Study 4). Direct paths between Non-Indigenous Identification and voting/political intentions were not hypothesised in the models given that this variable was only moderately correlated with intentions to vote in support of apology and was not correlated with intentions to vote in support of land rights or political action intentions. Furthermore,
the models conceptualised Perceived Legitimacy as a predictor of perceived need for Social Change rather than vice versa. These initial models did not fit the data well, as indicated by significant $\chi^2$ values and RMSEA values greater than .1 (Voting Intentions: $\chi^2(4)=16.30, p=.003$, CFI=.89, RMSEA=.18; Political Action Intentions: $\chi^2(4)=13.61, p=.009$, CFI=.90, RMSEA=.16). Due to the inadequate fit of the hypothesised models, the path between Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning and voting/political action intentions was included in the final models, as can be seen in Figure 9.1 (voting intentions) and Figure 9.2 (political action intentions).

Voting Intentions. The fit indices showed that the final model predicting Voting Intentions in support of apology and land rights fits the data well, $\chi^2(3)=1.87, p=.59$, CFI=1.00, RMSEA<.001. As can be seen from the standardised regression coefficients shown in Figure 9.1., Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning significantly predicted both Perceptions of Legitimacy and the need for Social Change in relation to inequality between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians. Unexpectedly, however, Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning remained a significant predictor of willingness to vote in support of apology/land rights, with Perceptions of Legitimacy and the need for Social Change partially mediating this relationship.

![Figure 9.1](image)

Figure 9.1. Path model predicting (Non-Indigenous) participants' intentions to vote in support of apology and land rights for Indigenous Australians.

Note: *p<.05, **p<.01
Removing the non-significant Perceived Legitimacy → Voting Intentions path resulted in poorer but acceptable model fit ($\chi^2(4)=4.12, p=.39, CFI=.99, RMSEA=.02$), indicating that the perceived need for Social Change mediated the effect of Legitimacy on Voting Intentions. Additionally, we checked whether there were any significant cross paths in this model, including the path between Non-Indigenous Identification and voting intentions. No significant cross paths were identified. Combined, the predictors accounted for 45% of variance in voting intentions to support apology and land rights.

In the model tested above the effect of Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning on willingness to vote in support of Indigenous apology and land rights was proposed to be mediated by Perceived Legitimacy, and in turn the perceived need for Social Change. However, it could also be argued that the lower the Perceived Legitimacy of Inequality the more it impacts on Identity Meaning and in turn the higher the perceived need for Social Change and voting intentions in support of apology/land rights. Therefore, we also tested a model in which Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning mediated the effects of Perceived Legitimacy on Social Change and voting intentions. While the fit indices for this model were acceptable, $\chi^2(4)=5.59, p=.23, CFI=.99, RMSEA=.06$, they were inferior to those for the proposed model, $\chi^2(3)=1.87, p=.59, CFI=1.00, RMSEA<.001$. Although somewhat less plausibly, it could also be argued that it is the perceived need for social change that increases the perceptions that the inequality is illegitimate and that it reflects negatively on what it means to be Non-Indigenous. However, the model in which Perceived Legitimacy and Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning acted as mediators of Social Change on Voting Intentions fitted the data rather poorly, $\chi^2(4)=16.41, p=.003, CFI=.89, RMSEA=.18$

*Political Action Intentions.* The fit indices for the final model predicting willingness to take political action (see Figure 9.2.) indicated a very good fit between the model and the data, $\chi^2(3)=1.71, p=.64, CFI=1.00, RMSEA<.001$. 
Figure 9.2. Path model predicting (Non-Indigenous) participants’ intentions to engage in political action in support of Indigenous Australians.

Note: *p<.05, **p<.01

As can be seen from the standardised regression coefficients shown in Figure 9.2, Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning remained a significant predictor of willingness to engage in political action in support of Indigenous Australians, with Perceptions of Legitimacy and the need for Social Change partially mediating this relationship. Removing the non-significant Perceived Legitimacy → Political Actions Intentions path resulted in slightly poorer but still excellent model fit ($\chi^2(4)=2.94, p=.57$, CFI=1.00, RMSEA<.001), indicating that the perceived need for Social Change mediated the effect of Perceived Legitimacy on Political Action Intentions. Additionally, we checked whether there were any significant cross paths in this model, including the path between Non-Indigenous Identification and voting intentions. No significant cross paths were identified. Combined, the predictors accounted for 35% of variance in political action intentions.

In the model tested above the effect of Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning on willingness to engage in political action in support of Indigenous people was proposed to be mediated by Perceived Legitimacy, and in turn the perceived need for Social Change. However, as for voting intentions, it could also be argued that the lower the Perceived Legitimacy of Inequality the more it impacts on Identity.
Meaning, and in turn the higher the perceived need for Social Change and Political Action Intentions. Therefore, we also tested a model in which Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning mediated the effects of Perceived Legitimacy on Social Change and Political Action Intentions. While the fit indices for this model were acceptable, $\chi^2(4)=4.41, p=.35, CFI=.99, RMSEA=.03$, they were inferior to those for the proposed model, $\chi^2(3)=1.71, p=.64, CFI=1.00, RMSEA<.001$. Although less plausibly, it could also be argued that it is the perceived need for social change that increases the perceptions that the inequality is illegitimate and that it reflects negatively on what it means to be Non-Indigenous. However, the model in which Perceived Legitimacy and Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning acted as mediators of Social Change on Political Action Intentions fitted the data rather poorly, $\chi^2(4)=10.41, p=.03, CFI=.93, RMSEA=.13$.

**Summary of Results**

Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning significantly predicted perceptions that the inequality between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians is illegitimate and in need of social change. Also, the more the inequality was seen to reflect negatively on Non-Indigenous Australians the higher the intentions to vote in support of apology/land rights and intentions to become more politically engaged in this issue. However, the relationship between Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning and Voting/Political Action Intentions was only partially mediated by the perceived legitimacy of inequality and the perceived need for social change in this domain. This model fitted the data better when compared to a variety of alternative models, including a model in which Identity Meaning mediated the effects of Perceived Legitimacy on the need for Social Change and Voting/Political Action Intentions. The results highlight the importance of Non-Indigenous Identity Meaning as a construct that significantly predicts intentions to vote and engage in political action in solidarity with Indigenous Australians even after perceived illegitimacy of inequality and the need for social change have been accounted for.
9.2.3 Discussion

Previous studies within this empirical program clearly demonstrated the importance of the majority identity and its meaning in motivating (or attenuating) political solidarity. In this study, the focus was on the more precise mechanism that drives these effects. Therefore, we explored the process by which the majority's understanding of the relevant intergroup relations (i.e. the inequality between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians) comes to define the relevant identity meaning in a way that makes political solidarity more likely. We expected that when the nature of the majority – minority relationship was seen as directly impacting on the meaning of the relevant majority identity (i.e. what it means to be Non-Indigenous), it would also shape willingness to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority. In the context of the present study, therefore, the more the inequality matters to and shapes how Non-Indigenous Australians see themselves in the context of their relationship with Indigenous people, the greater the perception that the inequality is illegitimate and in need of change, and the greater the willingness to actively participate in the change process.

The results of our study provide strong support for this idea. The more the inequality between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians was seen as relevant to and reflecting the meaning of the relevant majority (Non-Indigenous) identity, the more illegitimate it was seen to be and the greater the perceived need for social change. When the relevant majority identity was defined in this way, willingness to participate in the reconciliation process also increased, as manifested in enhanced support for apology and land rights for Indigenous people, and willingness to become politically active in an effort to support Indigenous people and reduce the inequality. Importantly, the meaning of majority identity remained an important predictor of support for apology, land rights, and intentions to act politically even when we took into account the more proximal predictors like the perceived legitimacy of inequality and the perceived need for social change. Overall, our results clearly show that if Non-Indigenous Australians are to become active participants in achieving social change in Indigenous-Non-Indigenous relations, then the issues facing Indigenous people (including inequality) need to be seen as reflecting the broader social and
historical context of intergroup relations and the role that Non-Indigenous people play within it.

Social conflict, injustice and inequality are rooted in the past and present reality of intergroup relations. Therefore, understanding the meanings of relevant ‘current’ group identities, where one’s identity is defined in relation to the ‘other’, is fundamental to understanding social and political change in intergroup relations, including political solidarity. Our findings indicate that social identity processes and definitions of who ‘we’ are shape people’s willingness to redress past injustice and change the future of intergroup relations. This idea is particularly relevant for research looking at the effects of self- and other-focus on attitudes towards intergroup inequality (e.g. Harth et al., 2008; Leach et al., 2006; Leach et al., 2002). Focusing on people’s understanding of the past and present intergroup relationship (and the ingroup’s role within it), as opposed to either own privilege (self-focus) or another’s disadvantage (other-focus), may be particularly useful in contexts where the central concern is to re-build or achieve positive social change in intergroup relations.

The more recent developments in Australian Indigenous politics, such as the Prime Minister’s apology (in February 2008) and the explicit recognition that apology is necessary for addressing intergroup inequality are consistent with the notion that reconciliation is more likely to achieve a broad range of objectives if both Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians are involved in the change process. Furthermore, the focus on the relationship between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians recognises that these are groups with distinct identities, needs and roles to play within the reconciliation process (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008). This approach is in contrast to the continued emphasis on a single Australian identity that marked much of the ‘practical reconciliation’ era. The idea of a single national identity as the basis for reconciliation in post-colonial contexts has been critiqued elsewhere (Gunstone 2006, Short, 2003, 2005). These critics highlight the implications of a single national identity for Indigenous self-determination and sovereignty, but also the assimilationist undertones of such an approach. Instead of focusing on a single national identity as the basis of reconciliation, a framework in which Non-Indigenous Australians are seen as another subgroup in a broader system of
intergroup relations (Gaertner et al., 1993; Hewstone & Brown, 1986; Hornsey & Hogg, 2000a) – akin to a Pakeha identity in New Zealand – may be more constructive. Similar reasoning underpins the usage of the term ‘First Nations’ for the Indigenous people in the Canadian context – where a clear distinction is made between themselves as a nation and the nation state of Canada (Fontaine, 2006).

It is important to emphasise that we are not arguing against efforts aimed at reducing the inequality between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians *per se*. What we are suggesting is that this strategy needs to be located within the broader framework of reconciliation as a process that is equally about addressing past injustice and sharing a common understanding of our history, as it is about building a future together – the ‘practical’ and the ‘symbolic’ are not mutually exclusive. We are also not suggesting that encouraging Non-Indigenous Australians to feel bad about themselves is the way forward in the reconciliation process. It is possible for Non-Indigenous Australians to see their group positively and believe that past injustice needs to be addressed in a way that makes political solidarity with Indigenous people possible—the two are not incompatible. However, the results of this study suggest that the inequality does need to be seen to clash with what it means to be Non-Indigenous in the context of Indigenous – Non-Indigenous relations for Non-Indigenous Australians to act in solidarity with Indigenous people and become engaged more fully in this particular social change process. Political solidarity, as Non-Indigenous commitment to achieve a better future together with Indigenous people, therefore seems to be an important vehicle for genuine social change in this context.

Overall, the evidence presented in this chapter clearly demonstrates that, to the extent that the experiences of the minority are reflected in the meaning of the majority identity, the majority will be more likely to become active participants in political solidarity as a social change process. Political solidarity is therefore a process by which standing up for the minority becomes an important and defining part of the majority’s ‘self’. It could be argued, therefore, that other factors (e.g. egalitarian norms and values; higher-order identity salience; common fate) will motivate political solidarity only to the extent that they allow for the minority’s cause to become the cause of all (or at least most) of ‘us’.
CHAPTER 10: TOWARDS A POLITICAL SOLIDARITY MODEL OF SOCIAL CHANGE

10.1 Introduction

Much of social psychology of relevance to social change focuses on the dynamics of conflict and collective protest involving social or power minorities directly disadvantaged by the status quo in intergroup relations. The key question of this research centres on the conditions under which such minorities may act collectively and challenge those in positions of social power and authority in order to achieve social change. Although notable exceptions exist and have been discussed throughout the preceding chapters, the discipline as a whole has remained somewhat myopic when it comes to understanding the process by which the impetus to challenge and change the status quo spreads beyond the minorities. This thesis set out to address what was perceived to be a fundamental oversight in social psychological approaches to social change and provide a novel framework for understanding the emergence of political solidarity.

Political solidarity, as conceptualised within this thesis, is a process of social psychological change by which the majority comes to perceive the authority’s stance towards the minority as illegitimate, embrace the minority’s cause as its own, and ultimately becomes willing to collectively challenge the authority in the name of social change in the reality of intergroup relations. At the core of this process is change in the majority self-categorization through which it is no longer the authority but the minority that best defines and embodies the relevant norms, values and beliefs that define ingroup membership—who ‘we’ are and how ‘we’ should relate to each other. Building on the review and integration of social psychological theorising and research in this domain, in a series of laboratory-based and naturalistic studies we investigated the core variables that impact on the likelihood of political solidarity.

1 An article based on this chapter has been accepted for publication in the Personality and Social Psychology Review as Subašić, E., Reynolds, K. J. & Turner, J. C. (in press) “The Political Solidarity Model of Social Change: Dynamics of Self-Categorization in Intergroup Power Relations”.
The first part of this final chapter will summarise the key insights of the preceding theoretical and empirical chapters. Rather than redescribing the content of each chapter, in this section we aim to discuss a number of key themes and questions that emerged from the review of the theoretical literature and that the empirical program of the thesis explored in more detail. As part of this process, the key empirical findings will be discussed and a number of conclusions drawn as to what this thesis contributed to understanding political solidarity as a social change process. We will then present the political solidarity model of social change that provides an integration of this work into a more holistic framework. The final sections of the chapter will focus on discussing the limitations and future directions when it comes to the work presented in the thesis, as well as the broader implications of the political solidarity approach for the social psychology of social change.

10.2 Summary of Thesis - Key Theoretical Insights and Empirical Findings

This thesis is based on the premise that social change involves a process by which minority dissent against an established authority or, more broadly, the existing system of intergroup relations becomes widespread. It spreads to include those who are not necessarily negatively affected themselves but who nevertheless come to share the minority’s view that a challenge to the status quo is needed. To fully understand this process in a systematic and parsimonious way, however, it may be necessary to move away from at least three dualisms that seem to characterise (and to some extent thwart) current social psychological approaches to studying social change.

Firstly, as discussed in Chapter 2, we need to reconsider the notion that having an analysis of either social stability or social change is sufficient to understand both outcomes of intergroup dynamics. Conservative political efforts to maintain the status quo often involve as much active campaigning and promulgation of particular norms, values and beliefs as any social movement campaign does. As such, social change and social stability can be more usefully understood as distinct intergroup dynamics that nevertheless interact with and shape each other. For example, it may be easier to maintain the status quo if those who are striving to achieve social change are successfully marginalised as ‘elites’, ‘radicals’ or ‘crazy hippies’. Similarly,
social change may be more likely if those in positions of authority are seen as 'crooked', 'tyrants' or simply 'out of touch' with the views and wishes of their constituents. Therefore, the dynamics of self-categorization and intergroup power relations that maintain social stability are distinct from but also interdependent with the dynamics that make possible social change.

Relatedly, social change is equally about understanding how conflict and protest come about as it is about building more positive intergroup relations—the two often go hand in hand, as highlighted in Chapters 3 and 4. Intergroup conflict and challenge to existing intergroup relations may be necessary in order to advance one’s cause or position in society, as research on collective action suggests. Equally, however, the success or otherwise of such actions is often premised on the capacity to mobilise widespread support and engender cooperative relations with others who may be supportive of one’s cause (Klandermans, 1997; Simon, 2004; Simon & Klandermans, 2001). As part of this process, intergroup distinctions are overcome in the name of a common cause and in order to mount a successful challenge to the status quo. Failure to consider how these processes interact possibly stems from a somewhat static view of the self characterising much of the intergroup relations research that conceptualises intergroup relations in bipolar terms.

Finally, focusing solely on bipolar intergroup dynamics (e.g. dominant vs. subordinate) not only hinders our understanding of the dynamics of social change, it also does not adequately capture the complexity of the intergroup relations context in which social change takes place. Given that intergroup relations research is often conducted within experimental laboratory settings, the tendency to simplify a complex social environment is necessary and understandable. However, it is also important to keep in mind that particular processes and questions require our conceptualisation of intergroup relations to go beyond ingroups and outgroups defined in static and uni-dimensional ways (e.g. privilege – disadvantage)—and political solidarity is an example of such a process (see Chapter 3).

Therefore, to explain political solidarity, the present thesis proposed that existing approaches to social change need to be extended in three interrelated ways. Firstly, the study of intergroup relations in this domain needs to go beyond the traditional bipolar approaches and consider at least three social actors—minority,
authority and majority—and the relationships between them (see Chapter 4 and 5). As discussed in Chapter 4, although there are a number of theoretical models that have considered how such tripolar relationships contribute to social change, these dynamics have not been directly investigated. For example, the work of Mugny and colleagues (Mugny, 1982; Mugny & Perez, 1991) explicitly acknowledged the tripolar nature of the intergroup context in which minority influence takes place as involving the relationships between the minority, majority (i.e. population) and ‘power’. Despite this promising theoretical advancement, however, this line of work does not venture beyond the majority – minority relationship. The tripolar nature of social change processes has also been considered within the politicized collective identity model by Simon and Klandermans (2001). However, this work is largely confined to those who are in some way directly affected by authority’s actions, decisions and/or policies. As such, the processes described within this model fundamentally centre on the politicization of those identities that, in an attempt to achieve social change, strive to capture the wider minority (i.e. gay people not actively involved in the gay rights movement), rather than the majority (e.g. heterosexual people).

Secondly, understanding the intergroup power dynamics in tripolar (rather than bipolar) terms makes it possible to consider the key question when it comes to political solidarity: when will the majority become willing to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority. This question moves away from the bipolar explanations of social change, but also captures the idea that social change is equally about social conflict and challenge to the status quo as it is about overcoming difference and diversity in order to cooperate and achieve a common cause. To answer this question, the current dichotomy between collective action and ‘prejudice reduction’ approaches needs to be overcome to consider how the dynamics of self-categorization may enhance majority willingness to act collectively to challenge the authority and to do so in solidarity with the minority. We know, for example, that a shared belief that ‘we’ are collectively and illegitimately disadvantaged is likely to promote collective efforts to achieve social change (e.g. Ellemers et al., 1993; Stürmer & Simon, 2005; Wright, 1999, 2001). When such an identity becomes politicized, it is also more likely to motivate participation in social movements for
social change (Simon, 2004; Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Stürmer & Simon, 2004, 2005). What is the process, however, that makes it more likely for such beliefs and perceptions to spread beyond those directly disadvantaged by the status quo?

Thirdly, therefore, we need to consider how the dynamics of majority self-categorization interact with the reality of intergroup relations to determine whether it is the authority or the minority that is perceived to share with the majority the norms, values and beliefs that define who ‘we’ are and how ‘we’ should relate to others in the social world. This question has implications not only for processes of social change, but also for the maintenance of social stability in intergroup relations. To the extent that it is the authority, rather than the minority, that is seen to embody and represent ‘our’ shared goals, values and aspirations, social change in line with the minority’s concerns will be unlikely. The opposite is also true—when the minority’s cause is seen as central to the majority’s understanding of themselves in the relevant context of intergroup relations, political solidarity with the minority as challenge to authority should also be more likely. A hallmark of political solidarity as a process of social change is the emergence of cooperation and support between the majority and minority to the extent that the majority becomes willing to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority. In contrast, the status quo is more likely to be maintained to the extent that the authority maintains majority support and therefore its position of influence over the majority. As such, it could be argued that the emergence of majority solidarity with the minority will depend upon a severing of the psychological relationship between the authority and the majority.

As shown in crowd dynamics research (e.g. Drury & Reicher, 1999; Reicher, 1987, 1996, 2001), such a shared identity—a shared set of norms, goals, beliefs and expectations—is particularly likely to emerge in response to authority’s actions perceived to be illegitimate. According to this work, perceptions of authority’s actions as having violated the majority’s understanding of who ‘we’ are and how ‘we’ should relate to each other make possible the spread of conflict beyond the original ‘radical’ minority of crowd members. As discussed in Chapter 5, of particular interest to this thesis is how such a violation of shared identity between the authority and the majority of their subordinates impacts on: a) the majority’s
willingness to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority, b) perceived legitimacy or otherwise of authority’s treatment of the minority, and c) a sense of shared common cause with the minority (e.g. shared norms, values and beliefs; shared belief that social change is needed).

Building on these critiques and insights, the empirical program, presented in Chapters 6-9, investigated the dynamics of political solidarity across a range of laboratory-based and naturalistic contexts. While the studies had a number of common features, they also sought to address a number of specific questions when it comes to political solidarity. In terms of commonalities, all studies were designed in a way that took into account the tripolar nature of intergroup power relations characterising political solidarity contexts. Furthermore, each of the studies sought to answer the key question of the thesis—namely, when will the majority become willing to collectively challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority. More specifically, key dependent variables in all studies included willingness to act collectively to challenge the authority and support the minority in their social change efforts, perceived authority legitimacy, and a sense of common cause with the minority (some studies also included a sense of common cause with authority). Finally, all of the studies focused on whether the meaning of the relevant majority identity was shared with the minority or the authority and, more specifically, how changes in the meaning and definition of this identity (e.g. whether or not it was characterised by egalitarian norms; to what extent it reflected the relevant intergroup relations with authority and minority) affected political solidarity.

Each study also sought to address specific additional questions when it comes to political solidarity as a social change process. Namely, in addition to testing the ‘basic’ process by which political solidarity may come about, Study 1 also focused on investigating whether political solidarity with an ‘outgroup’ minority is possible, or whether this process is confined to those seen to be ‘ingroup’ members (i.e. those who share with the majority a pre-existing and easily accessible social group membership). Studies 2 and 3 explored whether common fate—a shared experience of injustice between the minority and majority—was enough for political solidarity or whether other, identity-based, processes need to be taken into account. Studies 4 and 5 focused on exploring whether political solidarity is more likely when the
meaning of the relevant majority identity reflects the reality of the majority's relationship with those in position of authority (Study 4) as well as their relationship with the minority (Study 5). In particular Study 4 investigated the self-categorization process by which opposition to authority's treatment of the minority can be translated into willingness to actively challenge this group in solidarity with the minority. Study 5 explored how intergroup inequality between the minority and majority comes to define the relevant majority identity in a way that makes challenge to authority possible.

In terms of key findings, Study 1 demonstrated that, political solidarity ensued when authority’s actions were inconsistent with those norms and values that strongly defined the meaning of the relevant identity (who ‘we’ are) and as such guided what the relevant intergroup relations should be like in this particular context. Importantly, under these conditions a sense of common cause (i.e. shared goals, values and interests) with the minority was also enhanced, particularly when the minority did not share a pre-existing group membership with the majority. Additionally, common cause with authority was reduced and willingness to act in support of the minority further enhanced when the authority’s decisions affected a hitherto ‘outgroup’ minority. Therefore, this study clearly demonstrated that the process by which political solidarity with the minority emerges is inextricably linked to the majority’s relationship with the authority—whether or not the authority is seen to uphold or violate a hitherto shared sense of who ‘we’ are. A range of highly consistent results across a number of indicators (e.g. perceived legitimacy of authority, common cause, collective action tendencies) further suggested that these measures, as operationalised in the present thesis, were indeed central to political solidarity as a social change process.

When it comes to the more specific question of Study 1, not only was political solidarity with an ‘outgroup’ minority possible, but under some conditions majority willingness to support this group surpassed their support for an ‘ingroup’ minority. One possible explanation of this effect has to do with the way in which minority group membership was operationalised (i.e. the minority being low-paid workers described as either ‘Australian’ or ‘foreign’). Authority’s actions that potentially harmed foreign workers may have evoked a broader social comparative context in
which Australia's international reputation as a country defined by egalitarian and humanitarian values was further sharpened and perceived to be threatened by government policies that potentially disadvantaged this group. Furthermore, the majority may have been more protective towards an ‘outgroup’ minority in this context due to a perception that foreign, compared to Australian, workers were more vulnerable given their lack of Australian citizenship and therefore the protection that such a status may afford.

While Study 1 demonstrated that a sense of common cause can emerge with a hitherto outgroup minority in response to those actions of the authority seen to violate a shared understanding of who ‘we’ are, it is also possible that such a sense of shared purpose may come about through the experience of common fate or shared experience of injustice between the minority and majority. Such a process has been suggested to play a key role in social movement participation where a sense of shared grievance between the social movement activists and their mobilisation potential is said to motivate more widespread support for the movement’s cause (Klandermans, 1997, 2000; Klandermans & de Weerd, 2000; Klandermans & Oegema, 1987; Simon, 2004; Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Simon et al., 1998). In this regard, the key question from a political solidarity perspective is to what extent common fate or shared grievance per se motivates political solidarity. Studies 2 and 3, presented in Chapter 7, therefore explored whether common fate between the minority and majority is enough for political solidarity (e.g. shared common cause with minority, willingness to engage in collective action in solidarity with the minority) to emerge or whether this process may be affected (mediated and/or moderated) by other factors.

In Study 2, we manipulated whether or not the majority shared with the minority a common experience of injustice (i.e. whether common fate was present or absent). Akin to Study 1, we also manipulated whether or not the relevant authority responded in a norm-consistent or inconsistent manner in this context. Willingness to act collectively in solidarity with the minority was expected to be particularly strong under conditions in which the majority relationship with the minority was strengthened (i.e. under conditions of common fate) and their relationship with the authority weakened (i.e. authority actions are norm-inconsistent). The results of this
study indeed showed that political solidarity (including willingness to challenge the 
authority and a sense of common cause with the minority) was stronger under 
conditions of common fate—when the majority shared the experience of injustice 
with the minority. However, whether the authority acted in a norm-consistent or 
inconsistent manner did not affect mean levels of willingness to engage in collective 
action (whether to support the minority or challenge the authority) nor did they affect 
perceptions of common cause with the minority. The effects of authority’s actions 
were confined to those variables directly relevant to the majority’s relationship with 
the authority—as in Study 1, norm-inconsistent actions of the authority enhanced the 
perception that the authority acted in a way that was illegitimate and reduced 
common cause with this group, compared to the conditions in which the authority 
acted in a way that was consistent with the majority’s understanding of who ‘we’ are 
(i.e. relevant identity meaning).

These somewhat unexpected results were explored further in a series of 
mediation analyses. Importantly, these findings suggested that although common 
fate enhanced a range of collective action tendencies (e.g. to challenge the authority 
and support the minority) in this context, this effect was fully mediated by the 
emergence of a common cause between the majority and minority. The more the 
majority perceived the minority to share the relevant goals, values and interest, the 
higher their willingness to challenge the authority and act collectively in solidarity 
with the minority. Therefore, political solidarity—as majority willingness to 
collectively challenge the authority and support the minority’s efforts to achieve 
social change—is not solely a matter of common fate, but rather a process driven by 
the emergence of shared goals, values and beliefs between the minority and majority.

Additionally, when the authority acted in a way that was consistent with the 
prevalent norms and values by protecting the minority, such actions enhanced 
common cause with authority and minority, and in turn increased willingness to act 
collectively in solidarity with the minority. In contrast, when the authority acted in a 
way that was inconsistent with the majority’s expectations, majority’s sense of 
common cause with authority decreased, while common cause with minority and 
willingness to act in solidarity with the minority was enhanced. Therefore, while 
authority’s actions motivated political solidarity in both instances, they did so
through a process of leadership and social influence in the norm-consistent context, and through a process of political solidarity as opposition and challenge to an authority whose actions were seen as illegitimate and as violating the (hitherto shared) meaning of the relevant identity.

In Study 3 the focus shifted away from the authority and its treatment of the minority (and majority under conditions of common fate) to explore how the nature of the relevant majority identity may interact with common fate to affect political solidarity. More specifically, in this study we manipulated the extent to which the meaning of the majority identity was shaped by those norms and values that are likely to place the minority and their concerns at the core of who ‘we’ are. Therefore, in addition to manipulating whether common fate was present or absent, in Study 3 we also varied the extent to which participants thought of themselves in terms of a higher-order identity whose meaning clearly defined harsh treatment of vulnerable groups in society as inconsistent with ‘our’ norms and values. Consistent with expectations, the findings of this study revealed that common fate enhanced political solidarity outcomes but only under those conditions in which the meaning of the relevant majority identity was sensitive to the plight of the minority and their concerns. When the meaning of the majority identity was focused solely on majority’s concerns (i.e. when participants thought of themselves primarily as consumers), being directly affected by injustice (i.e. common fate with minority) reduced majority willingness to act collectively in solidarity with the minority. Therefore, political solidarity was enhanced when majority self-definition included a higher-order normative framework that had the capacity to focus the majority on the shared nature of the relevant norms, goals and interests. Combined, Studies 2 and 3 suggest that, to understand political solidarity as a social change process, we need to go beyond ‘common fate’ and consider the self-categorization and social identity dynamics that have the capacity to translate a shared experience of injustice into a shared sense of purpose, values, and beliefs (see also Tajfel, 1978d, 1978e, for a similar argument in relation to the frustration-aggression hypothesis). In particular, it may be important to focus on how the meaning of the relevant majority identity can be redefined and shaped within a particular context of intergroup relations to make political solidarity more likely.
Considering the empirical findings so far, the meaning of the relevant majority identity—including whether such meaning is seen as shared with the relevant authority or the minority—proved to be a key factor in shaping the likelihood of political solidarity. Studies 1, 2 and 3 directly manipulated the meaning or content of a relevant majority identity to either enhance or attenuate the extent to which the relevant norms, values and beliefs defining who ‘we’ are as members of the majority were also consistent with the minority’s concerns and interests. In contrast, in Chapters 8 and 9, we explored how such identity meaning may emerge from the relevant context of intergroup relations in a way that makes political solidarity more likely. More specifically, Study 4, presented in Chapter 8, explored the idea that majority opposition to (rather than support for) authority may not be enough when it comes to willingness to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority. Namely, in order for political solidarity to come about, opposition to authority may need to be seen as part of the broader contest for the meaning of the relevant (higher-order) majority identity that provides a normative framework defining who ‘we’ are and how ‘we’ should relate to each other. In this context, we expected that political solidarity should be more likely to the extent that the majority’s stance towards the authority is seen as reflecting the relevant majority identity—where opposition to how the authority’s treating the minority also represents standing up for who ‘we’ are.

As expected, when being against mandatory detention was seen to be defining of the relevant (higher-order) identity—what it meant to be Australian—it also enhanced perceived illegitimacy of the policy, the belief (shared with the minority) that social change was needed, and willingness to act collectively in solidarity with the minority to achieve change in this domain. In this study, we also predicted and found that the effects of self-categorizing as an Australian who opposed mandatory detention were fully mediated by perceptions that the mandatory detention policy was illegitimate and needed to be changed. Therefore, political solidarity comes about when intergroup relations shape the relevant majority identity in a way that characterises authority’s actions as illegitimate and enhances a sense of common cause with the minority.
One potential drawback of previous studies is that they focused on national identities (e.g. Australian, Canadian) that are, additionally, likely to be characterised by egalitarian values prescribing fair treatment of those who may be disadvantaged or marginalised in society. As a result, it could be argued that it is something inherent to egalitarian values or higher-order identities *per se* that makes political solidarity possible. Furthermore, all of the previous studies focused on the process by which political solidarity was a response to an authority violating the relevant (i.e. higher-order) identity meaning and the norms and values they were expected to share with the majority. Therefore, in Study 5 we made salient a lower-level identity defined primarily by the nature of the majority’s relationship with the minority rather than authority. More specifically, in the context of reconciliation between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians, we investigated how the inequality characterising the inter-subgroup relationship between the (Non-Indigenous) majority and the (Indigenous) minority shaped the meaning of the majority identity to enhance political solidarity with the minority (e.g. challenge to authority).

This study demonstrated that the more members of the Non-Indigenous majority saw the inequality between these groups as shaping what it meant to be Non-Indigenous, the more they saw it as illegitimate and in need of change, and the higher their willingness to act collectively in solidarity with Indigenous people. Action tendencies in solidarity with Indigenous people included increased willingness to vote for political parties that supported a formal apology to Indigenous people and Indigenous land rights, as well as engagement in other forms of political action in support of efforts to reduce intergroup inequality in this context. Importantly, the extent to which the meaning of a relevant majority identity was shaped by the relationship between the majority and the minority continued to predict voting and collective action intentions even when perceived legitimacy and need for social change were taken into account. While comparison across studies is difficult due to differences in design and social contexts of interest, it is worthwhile pointing out that, in Study 4, perceived legitimacy and common cause with the minority (i.e. need for social change) *fully mediated* the effect that the nature of majority self-categorization had on willingness to challenge the authority. When the majority identity was defined by its relationship with the minority (Study 5),
however, it remained a significant predictor of collective willingness to challenge the authority. The discrepancy between Study 4 and Study 5 in this regard points to the importance of the mechanism by which the majority comes to internalise the minority’s plight as inextricably linked to their relevant social self. Therefore, rather than being driven solely by the majority’s opposition to the authority’s violation of (higher-order) norms and values, fundamental to political solidarity is the process by which ‘their’ injustice comes to shape and define who ‘we’ are.

For political solidarity to emerge it may be equally important for the minority’s self-definition to reflect its relationship with the authority (i.e. see the authority as having violated a hitherto shared identity meaning) but also its relationship with the minority. Political solidarity, therefore, may be as much about processes of intergroup contestation in relation to the higher-order identity meaning seen to be violated by the relevant authority, as it is about a process of intragroup, within-majority, contestation in relation to who ‘we’ are at a more subgroup level. However, these higher-order and subgroup identity contestations are likely to affect and inform each other as the different levels of the (social) self align in a way that reflects (and in turn shapes) the social reality of intergroup relations. Combined, the results of Studies 4 and 5 suggest that when the relevant majority identity is redefined in a way that is consistent with the minority’s cause, political solidarity as a social change process will be more likely.

In summary, this thesis originated with the notion that political solidarity is largely a neglected process when it comes to social psychological understanding of social change. Having reviewed the key theoretical and empirical insights, it is clear that this thesis has provided a solid basis for understanding political solidarity more fully. We now know, for example, that this process needs to be understood as occurring within at least a tripolar intergroup dynamic. Political solidarity is a function of both the majority’s relationship with the authority and the minority, as well as the way in which these relationships shape the relevant majority identity to affect the likelihood of collective challenge to authority. When the meaning of the majority identity is redefined so that it is no longer the authority, but the minority that shares with the majority important norms, values and beliefs, political solidarity becomes possible. Furthermore, we also now know that political solidarity cannot be
reduced to processes of common fate or mere disagreement with an authority over its treatment of the minority. Both common fate and majority opposition to authority need to be wedded to identity-relevant concerns in order to motivate the majority to go beyond sympathy and become a more active participant in the broader challenge to the status quo. Importantly, central to political solidarity is the self-categorization process by which the relevant majority identity comes to embody the minority’s concerns and interests as ‘our own’. Therefore, this thesis has answered a series of important questions when it comes to political solidarity, although further questions emerged in this process. Nevertheless, we are now in a position to propose a political solidarity model of social change that integrates current insights and suggests how a number of additional questions may be explored more fully in subsequent work.

10.3 The Political Solidarity Model of Social Change

The political solidarity model seeks to explain social change as a process by which people who are not directly affected by authority’s actions nevertheless become willing to challenge such actions in solidarity with those who are. Such a conceptualisation of social change, as the term ‘political solidarity’ seeks to capture, comprises two distinct yet interdependent aspects of this process. The first aspect concerns the emergence of majority solidarity with the minority as a process through which the relevant intergroup distinctions are understood in a way that makes higher-order unity of cause and purpose more likely. Secondly, political solidarity as a process of social change is fundamentally about majority challenge to those in positions of power and authority. These processes and the relationships between them are elaborated in more detail below.

10.3.1 Emergence of Solidarity and Challenge to Authority

As discussed in Chapter 3, the term solidarity can be used in an intra-group sense to denote members’ commitment to the group and each other (e.g. Doosje et al., 1999; Doosje et al., 2002; Ellemers et al., 1997; Ellemers et al., 1998). Importantly, individual differences do not simply disappear or become completely irrelevant once people start to define themselves in terms of their membership of a particular social (psychological) group. They do, however, come to be understood in the context of higher-order (i.e. group) goals and interests (e.g. Postmes & Jetten,
As discussed in Chapter 2, group life is possible because people have a capacity to understand and interpret individual differences and similarities in the context of a relevant social identity. As such, solidarity denotes higher-level unity rather than lower-level uniformity.

A similar dynamic applies at the intergroup level, where different subgroups come together to achieve a common cause. In this context, solidarity implies not only that ‘we’ are united despite subgroup difference but precisely because ‘we’ are different. When different groups act in solidarity they do so in a way that capitalizes on subgroup differences—in membership composition, position in the social structure, or access to resources—in order to achieve a common purpose.

Durkheini’s notion of organic pluralism is akin to this idea (Durkheim, 1984/1893; Haslam, 2004; see also Haslam, Eggins et al., 2003). However, what is the process by which people reconcile differences at the subgroup level in a way that makes higher-order goals and interests possible to achieve. In political solidarity terms, while members of the majority may perceive the minority’s dissent as justified and their disadvantage as illegitimate, how does the minority cause become the cause of the majority?

Self-categorization theory analysis of the self (Onorato & Turner, 2004; Turner et al., 1987; Turner & Onorato, 1999; Turner et al., 2006) provides the basis for resolving this question. As noted earlier, the theory conceptualises the self as being variable, context-dependent, and hierarchically organised, with the more inclusive levels of self-categorization (e.g. social, human) being just as valid cognitive representations of the self as the personal level (Turner et al, 1987). The hierarchical organisation of the self allows not only a shift in an individual’s self-perception from personal to social identity (i.e. from ‘me’ to ‘us’) but also a shift in whether relevant others are members of an ingroup (‘us’) or an outgroup (‘them’). Importantly, we are likely to perceive as ingroup those who are seen to share the relevant norms, values and beliefs, and those who are seen to violate them as outgroup (Reicher, 2004; Turner & Reynolds, 2002). From this perspective, individual self-categorization processes have the capacity to reflect and shape the social reality of intergroup relations, allowing for a more complex analysis of intergroup dynamics, which goes beyond static ingroup – outgroup distinctions, to be considered.
Of particular relevance for this model is the idea that the social self can be further stratified into lower and higher levels of inclusiveness. It is the higher-order (superordinate) identity that provides the comparative context in which the lower level subgroup relations are understood, just like a social identity provides a comparative context in which relationships among individual group members are evaluated (e.g. Postmes & Jetten, 2006; Reynolds & Turner, 2006; Turner et al., 2006). Indeed, it is the hierarchical organisation of the social self that makes inter-subgroup solidarity (and inter-subgroup division) possible by allowing for subgroup differences to be understood with reference to those norms, values and beliefs seen to define who ‘we’ are at a higher-order level. For example, as shown in Studies 2 and 3, common fate translates into political solidarity primarily under those conditions where a sense of common cause also emerges between the minority and majority (Study 2) and where a higher-order, shared normative framework contextualizes the shared experience of injustice into something that affects ‘all of us’ (Study 3).

Just as depersonalisation is not a loss of individual identity or its submergence within the group, neither is self-categorising at a higher-level identity—which, in the context of political solidarity, encompasses the majority, authority and minority groups—the loss of lower-level (social) identities or necessarily their complete submergence within the higher-order category (Reynolds, Turner, & Haslam, 2003). On the contrary, higher-level categorisation and associated identity meaning inform how we understand and act upon the lower level subgroup memberships and inter(sub)group relationships. We are likely to see as higher-order ingroup those subgroups perceived to share the relevant higher-order norms and values, and as ‘outgroup’ those seen to violate them. This dynamic, while clearly elucidated within the self-categorization theory, is currently not captured by research that (at least implicitly) conceptualises social identity solely in terms of group boundaries.

Shared social identity or psychological group membership (i.e. ‘ingroup’) denotes more than group boundaries however. It is also fundamentally about shared identity meaning in terms of the relevant norms, values and beliefs about the social world—a shared understanding of the inter(sub)group relations and the ingroup’s (and the individual group member’s) place within it. Identity, as a model of social relations (Reicher, 2000), captures both group boundaries and the way in which
different groups and group members (should) relate to each other (see also Billig, 1976; Tajfel, 1978b, 1981). It is the violation of shared identity meaning that has the capacity to define and re-define group boundaries, so that we reject as ‘outgroup’ those individuals and groups whose beliefs, values and behaviours no longer adequately capture the ‘ingroup’ identity within a given context of intergroup relations. This process was evident across Studies 1 and 2, in particular, where authority’s actions seen to violate a hitherto shared understanding of who ‘we’ are also elicited perceptions of illegitimacy and reduced a sense of shared goals, values and expectations (i.e. common cause) with this group.

However, whether the majority will endorse an authority’s or the minority’s definition of who ‘we’ are depends on the majority’s relationship with both of these groups. Therefore, when it comes to solidarity with the minority, the extent to which the majority self-categorizes as sharing the relevant norms, values and beliefs with the minority depends not only on its relationship with the minority but also on the majority’s relationship with the authority. When authority’s actions towards the minority are seen to violate a hitherto shared meaning of the relevant identity, solidarity with the minority should also be more likely. In the present thesis, we have consistently shown that when authority’s treatment of the minority was seen to violate majority’s understanding of the relevant intergroup relations and their expectations in this regard it also motivated common cause with minority and willingness to act in solidarity with this group to challenge the authority (see Studies 1 and 2 in particular).

The contested nature the relevant majority identity—whether it is the minority or the authority that is seen to best capture and embody the relevant norms, values and beliefs—has direct implications for the dynamics of social power and influence in the political solidarity context. As shown in Studies 1 and 2 of the thesis, authorities seen to act in accordance with group norms and values will be seen as legitimate and maintain their capacity to influence their subordinates—and vice versa, those authorities seen to violate a sense of shared identity will be seen as illegitimate (see also Turner, 2005; Turner & Reynolds, 2002) and more vulnerable to majority opposition. Furthermore, those members of the majority who subscribe the most to the relevant norms, values and beliefs that prescribe what the intergroup
relations should be like in a given social context are also most likely to object to their violation (Simon & Oakes, 2006). Indeed, as shown in Studies 1 and 3, members of the majority will be particularly willing to challenge the authority in solidarity with the minority when the norms and expectations that the authority’s actions are seen to be violating are also central to or defining of the relevant majority identity. As such, it could be argued that those members of the majority most committed to the norms that the authority is seen to violate will be most likely to reject the authority as ‘outgroup’.

Furthermore, majority’s understanding of its relationship with the authority and the minority can change with relevant changes in the reality of intergroup relations. Historical events that pose a threat to the higher-order category as a whole can serve to solidify majority support for a given authority on a range of issues (e.g. increased support for the US President George W. Bush in the aftermath of September 11, 2001). They also provide opportunities for authorities to construct the social reality in ‘us’ vs. ‘them’ terms, using the exclusion of particular (sub)groups to sharpen intergroup boundaries and enhance a sense of shared identity with the majority (Subašić et al., 2008; Turner, 2005). Under such conditions, any criticism of the authority is more likely to be seen as an affront to ‘all of us’ and rejected as illegitimate.

Importantly, at their outset the intergroup dynamics of political solidarity involve a self-categorical asymmetry between the majority’s relationship with the authority and its relationship with the minority. Namely, while the self-categorical relationship between the majority and authority involves a pre-existing shared social identity, such an identity often needs to emerge within the majority – minority relationship. This self-categorical asymmetry in turn affects intergroup power relations. Because the authority starts from a position of shared identity with the majority it has an existing capacity to influence the majority by evoking different identity meanings. Being able to evoke different aspects of the relevant majority identity (seen to be shared with the authority) in turn has the capacity to redefine what otherwise would have been seen as illegitimate minority treatment. If political solidarity is to occur, it therefore becomes paramount for authority’s actions to be seen not only as harsh and unjust in the abstract, but also as evidence in the eyes of
the majority that the authority no longer embodies and represents ‘all of us’. In other words, even though people may disagree with authority’s treatment of the minority, challenge to authority is unlikely unless such actions are seen to, in some way, contradict and tarnish the majority’s understanding of themselves and others in this particular context of intergroup relations. The results of Study 4 are informative in this regard. Namely, when majority opposition to authority was seen as a way of ‘standing up’ for who ‘we’ are—as defending the meaning of the relevant identity—it was also more likely to motivate political solidarity.

In contrast to authority, for the minority a shared identity with the majority needs to emerge within the relevant context of intergroup relations. Given the contested relationship between the authority and the minority, the more the majority shares an identity with the authority, the easier it will be for the authority to marginalise the minority and its concerns as unreasonable and illegitimate and the more difficult it will be for the shared identity between the minority and majority to emerge (see also Turner, 2005; Turner & Reynolds, 2002). Furthermore, if the perceived conflict of relevant norms and values can be easily resolved by redefining or resorting to a different system of values, then the status quo is likely to continue (Tajfel, 1981).

As such, the perception that authority’s actions towards the minority violate a shared identity with the majority is a precondition of solidarity with the minority. This perception alone is unlikely to result in a full rejection of authority and endorsement of the minority, however. Rather, the more the authority is seen to act in a way that violates what it means to be ‘us’, the more it will be rejected, and the more it becomes possible for the minority to be seen to share the majority’s understanding of intergroup relations. However, even when the authority is rejected as ‘outgroup’, challenge is unlikely unless the minority and its cause are seen to be fundamental to the meaning of the relevant majority identity and at the core of what it means to be a member of the relevant ‘ingroup’. Therefore, as shown in Study 5, at the core of political solidarity is the process by which the minority’s struggle comes to fundamentally define and shape the meaning of the majority identity—without such an internalization of the minority’s plight, the majority may well be more likely to remain a passive observer rather than an active participant in social change.
It is important to note, however, that political solidarity is largely a process of influence and persuasion, rather than necessarily a call to arms or an endorsement of open conflict and confrontation. As such, in many contexts it will involve seeking change in authority’s actions that will restore its legitimacy, as opposed to a complete overhaul or even destruction of the existing social system (e.g. revolution, coup d’état). For example, those acting together on the basis of political solidarity may (at least initially) seek authority’s endorsement of policies that will grant equal rights to minorities (e.g. gay marriage), rather than attempting to overthrow the government (but see below). As such, while a sense that the authority no longer shares a higher-order identity may trigger political solidarity and challenge to such an authority, more often than not the ultimate objective is to shape the authority’s actions, decisions and policies in a way that is consistent with the re-defined nature of the higher-order identity—who ‘we’ are and how ‘we’ should relate to each other.

The authority’s response is crucial in shaping the majority self-categorization in this context, so that the reality of intergroup relations intersects with the majority self-categorization to either enhance or attenuate the likelihood of social change. Namely, an authority that responds by accommodating the majority’s concerns is likely to have its membership of the ingroup reinstated. Therefore, the more accommodating the authority, the less there is a need for members of the majority to define themselves in distinction to the authority and the easier it is for the authority to re-claim its (higher-order) ingroup membership and legitimacy. The results of Study 2, in particular, suggest that a process of influence and leadership emerges in this context so that authorities that act in line with the majority’s expectations to protect a vulnerable minority group are likely to motivate majority support for the minority and its cause. The authority can also reclaim its legitimacy through other means—by successfully shifting the debate to issues that have the potential to sever the shared identity between the minority and authority (e.g. national security in the context of immigration) and/or by strengthening the bond between themselves and the majority on another front (e.g. economic prosperity, tax cuts) that provides the basis for a shared identity between the authority and majority to be (re)established.

However, the more the authority is seen to ‘dig in its heels’ and disregard majority (and minority) concerns, the stronger the perception that the authority no
longer captures the relevant identity meaning and the stronger the self-categorical distinction between the majority and authority will be. Given the contrastive nature of identity, this process is equally about re-categorising the self (i.e. majority) as ‘not other’ as it is about re-categorising the other (i.e. authority) as ‘not self’. At the same time, the distinctions between the minority and majority will become less important, salient and relevant, and the extent to which members of these groups are interchangeable—and therefore the extent to which there is a shared, higher-order self between the minority and majority—will be increased. Therefore, it could be argued that the greater the perceived illegitimacy of the authority’s position is, the sharper the ingroup boundaries that exclude the authority while including the minority, and the greater the likelihood of political solidarity with the minority.

Importantly, the process of majority self-categorization may involve re-defining the meaning of the relevant majority identity to such an extent that it no longer includes the authority (e.g. the emergence of ‘worker’ identity in Study 1), as well as the emergence of a novel identity that uniquely captures the majority and minority members to the exclusion of the authority (e.g. identifying as a member of the gay/Black/women’s rights movement; see also Simon & Klandermans, 2001). The extent to which the majority perceives itself as a distinct subgroup (within the relevant higher-order identity) and what the definition of that subgroup is (e.g. White, Democrat, psychologist) will depend on the relevant dimension of social comparison (e.g. race, political orientation, profession) that makes sense given the social reality of intergroup relations. Therefore, whether the relevant (higher-order) identity hitherto shared with the authority is redefined to exclude an authority or a novel (subgroup) identity emerges that unites the minority and majority against the authority (e.g. workers, parents, environmentalists)—or indeed some combination of these processes takes place—will depend on the social context of intergroup power relations, the kinds of issues that are being contested, and whether or not the relevant actors are seeking to mobilise the support of a (yet) broader, higher-level majority for their cause.

As shown in Studies 4 and 5, however, the centrality of the minority’s experience of injustice for the relevant majority identity seems to be crucial for the emergence of political solidarity. Rather than being a product of particular norms or
values, or particular higher-order or subgroup identities, political solidarity is a process driven by the view that ‘their’ injustice or disadvantage is wedded to who ‘we’ are. To act in political solidarity with the minority, therefore, is to endorse the minority’s cause as the cause that concerns ‘all of us’.

In summary, within the political solidarity model it is challenge to authority (in solidarity with the minority) that is at the core of social change. Political solidarity as a process of social change therefore involves psychological change in the self-categorization of the majority whereby higher-order identity is no longer shared with the authority but with the minority. While the view that an authority no longer shares with the majority the meaning of the relevant identity makes solidarity possible, it is solidarity with the minority—the view that it is now the minority that best embodies who ‘we’ are in the eyes of the majority—that makes challenge to authority possible. Unless there is also a shared identity meaning with the minority, a majority challenge to authority in solidarity with the minority is unlikely.

Therefore, when the meaning of a relevant identity ceases to be shared with the authority and becomes shared with the minority, majority challenge to authority in solidarity with the minority, and therefore social change, becomes a reality. Somewhat paradoxically, therefore, it is solidarity with the minority, rather than merely rejection of authority, that makes majority challenge to the status quo possible. Indeed it could be said that, if what defines the ‘minority’ is their challenge to the status quo, then by engaging in political solidarity the majority effectively becomes such a minority. Alternatively, to the extent that the cause of the few becomes the cause of the many, it is through political solidarity that the minority becomes the majority.

10.3.2 Political Solidarity with Whom?

At the core of the political solidarity model of social change is the interaction between the majority’s self-categorical relationships with the minority and the authority. If these relationships are considered simultaneously and conceptualised as occurring along two (interdependent and interacting) continua—capturing the extent to which the relevant majority identity is shared with the authority or with the minority—it is possible to predict outcomes other than political solidarity that can
emerge in this tripolar context (see Figure 10.1). The current model predicts that political solidarity will be more likely the more it is the minority rather than the authority that is seen as sharing the majority’s understanding of the relevant intergroup relations in the context of higher-order norms, values and beliefs (Figure 10.1a). This is the dynamic that is most likely to result in majority willingness to challenge the authority and therefore social change in intergroup relations. However, it is also possible to predict other outcomes on the basis of the model. For example, when members of the majority not only continue to share an identity with the authority, but also perceive the minority as violating the relevant group norms and values, it is likely that they will engage in political solidarity with the authority and in turn be actively hostile towards the minority (Figure 1d), as research looking at the dynamics of deviance suggests (Abrams, Marques, Bown, & Dougill, 2002; Abrams, Marques, Bown, & Henson, 2000; Abrams, Randsley de Moura, Hutchison, & Viki, 2005; but see also Packer, 2008). It is under these conditions that the status quo is most likely to be maintained.
Figure 10.1. Majority stance towards the minority and challenge to authority as a function of shared identity meaning with authority and minority.

Note: *Given that the majority does not share identity meaning with the authority in condition b), challenge to authority may be possible for reasons other than in solidarity with the minority.
Considering the dynamic nature of the self-categorization process, it is also possible that the authority’s treatment of the minority is seen as unjust but the actions of the authority are justified on other grounds and its legitimacy maintained. For example, while people may perceive that detaining and deporting asylum seekers is quite harsh and even identify with this group in terms of their suffering, this policy will not be challenged by the majority as long as such authority actions are seen as legitimately fulfilling other needs (e.g. enhancing national security). Under such conditions, and given the self-categorical asymmetry between the majority relationships with the authority/minority (see above), the minority will at best elicit the sympathy of the majority and actions of the authority will not be challenged (Figure 1c). However, perceptions that authority actions are unfair or illegitimate (because they violate important norms and values and therefore a shared understanding of who ‘we’ are) make the status quo unsustainable in the long run (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner & Reynolds, 2002), particularly if the authority does nothing to maintain its legitimacy in other ways and identification with the minority strengthens. As such, this dynamic may, over time, become one of political solidarity with the minority.

Finally, there are situations in which the conflict between proponents of social change and those who wish to maintain the status quo either fails or ceases to capture the imagination of the majority as something that is relevant to and defining of who ‘we’ are. Under such conditions, the likely response is apathy or disengagement in relation to the minority’s efforts to achieve social change, making challenge to authority unlikely (Figure 1b). On the other hand, members of the majority who are disengaged from or apathetic towards the minority’s cause may also be a useful part of the ‘mobilisation potential’ for the authority and, in the case of a shared identity meaning with authority emerging, could become a source of support for the authority and a source of hostility towards the minority. However, given that there is no pre-existing sense of shared identity with the authority in this condition, it is also possible that these conditions may be conducive to the questioning of and challenge to the authority in order to achieve those goals and interests seen to be in conflict with or thwarted by the authority. Such actions, however, are unlikely to be motivated by solidarity with the minority. One of the tasks of future work in this
domain is to systematically investigate when outcomes other than political solidarity may emerge as a result of the tripolar intergroup dynamics proposed in this model. Before we can discuss the empirical limitations and future directions of the thesis, however, it is worthwhile pointing out a number of conceptual and theoretical qualifications when it comes to the political solidarity model of social change.

10.3.3 Some Connotations, Caveats and Qualifications

The political solidarity model of social change proposed in this thesis seeks to offer a parsimonious analysis of (some of) the social psychological aspects of social change. It attempts to do so in a way that will extend current understandings and stimulate further research and theorising in this domain. As such, however, it is also somewhat limited in its scope and application. Social change is a complex and multifaceted societal phenomenon constrained by a multitude of social, political, historical, economic, and other factors. Social psychology as a science concerned with psychological aspects of society (Turner & Oakes, 1986) can, at best, claim to do justice to those processes that are located within its particular niche—namely the interaction between the human mind and society. As such, the current thesis is primarily concerned with explaining the psychological aspects of social change and particularly the dynamics of social identity and self-categorization in this domain. However, rather than psychologising this process, the political solidarity model locates the dynamics of social change at the intersection between individual self-categorization processes and the social reality of intergroup relations.

While oriented to social change and primarily seeking to explain this process, the political solidarity model also offers insight into social stability and the interdependent nature of these processes. It therefore moves away from the argument that the status quo can be explained simply by explaining the factors that hinder social change in intergroup relations, and vice versa. Rather, in the political solidarity model, status quo is accounted for by a different (if interdependent) process whereby the majority continues to support the authority despite or even because of minority opposition to the status quo. Locating the dynamics of social stability and change within a tripolar political solidarity context enables such an explanation.
Relatedly, the model also speaks to the process by which those in positions of (or aspiring to) authority can enhance their power by creating and/or marginalizing a minority group in a way that boosts a sense of shared identity between the authority and the majority (Reicher, 2004; Turner, 2005). As others have argued, intergroup animosity and prejudice can be conceptualised as functional (rather than pathological) in maintaining the status quo that benefits those in positions of privilege and dominance (W. O. Brown, 1939; Duckitt, 1992, 2001; Jones, 1972, 1998; Tajfel, 1978d; Turner, 2005). As such, it is also important to point out that the model seeks to explain particular self-categorical processes and dynamics of intergroup relations, rather than necessarily suggest that this is how ‘positive social change’ comes about. The model applies equally to social change in relation to racial and gender equality, for example, as it does to the rise of fascism or religious fundamentalism.

For the sake of parsimony, the political solidarity model focuses on the dynamics within a single set of tri-polar intergroup power relations. It is almost inevitable, however, that such relations are contextualised by and likely to intersect with multiple other higher- and lower-level intergroup relations and relevant social identities. For example, the intra-national dynamics of social change in relation to apartheid in South Africa were fundamentally shaped by the perceived views and attitudes, and ultimately South Africa’s relationship with, the broader international community. Indeed, minorities whose rights have been severely violated within the national context will often appeal to the international community as their ‘majority of choice’ for achieving social change at the national level. Such a process can still be conceptualised as involving political solidarity, however, given that it involves the emergence of majority solidarity with the minority in order to challenge and ultimately change the way in which that minority is treated by some relevant authority.

Furthermore, ‘political solidarity’ is conceptualised as a construct that is psychologically meaningful to the participants in the social change process and as such reflected in their actions in the reality of intergroup relations. However, political solidarity is not necessarily deducible from such actions—people may behave in a way that benefits the minority’s cause and challenges the status quo for other reasons
Central to political solidarity is subjectively meaningful commonality of purpose or cause—a shared understanding of the social world—rather than ‘common fate’ as an ‘objective’ feature of the social context in which both groups are in some way mistreated by the authority or share a pre-existing belief that social change is needed. A relevant example here may be the forming of coalitions of interest, where different groups come together on the basis of existing dissent against the status quo and the desire to achieve social change in intergroup relations. Importantly, however, such a coalition forming does not involve a shift or change in one’s orientation towards the system, but rather the realisation that social change may be more easily achieved if those who are already opposed to the status quo come together. However, it is important to recognise that political solidarity may come about through participation in such forms of collective action—acting collectively in terms of particular identities changes the meaning of those identities and increases the likelihood of future collective action participation (see Drury & Reicher, 2000; Drury & Reicher, 2005; Drury et al., 2003).

Additionally, the political solidarity model does not presume that ‘political solidarity’ involves ‘altruism’ or ‘selflessness’ in the sense of acting on behalf of others rather than in one’s own self-interest, although we understand how, on a phenomenological level, the process we are trying to explain could be seen as such (see Chapter 3; see also Giugni & Passy, 2001; Koopmans, 2001; Passy, 2001). The political solidarity analysis is grounded in the social identity perspective and the idea that the individual “self” is both personal and social. As such, when people share a collective or social self, they are indeed acting in terms of their self-interest—when the minority is seen to share one’s collective self, acting in solidarity with the minority is very much in one’s (social) self-interest. As such, the model moves away from the notion that acting in terms of ‘self-interest’ is necessarily incompatible with action aiming to achieve a collective goal (Gamson, 1992a; McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001; cf. Olson, 1965). Having said that, however, it is also possible for people to act in a way that benefits the minority’s cause but for such actions to take place in the absence of a shared social identity and be motivated by the selfish interests of one’s own group (e.g. politicians supporting vocal community groups critical of their political opponents).
Finally, the model seeks to explain the self-categorical processes that shape the majority’s willingness to collectively challenge the authority and the status quo in intergroup relations in solidarity with the minority. It does not, however, seek to account for all possible factors that may impact on whether or not such actions will in fact take place. For example, self-efficacy and intergroup emotions could be important in determining the likelihood of collective action in this context (Iyer et al., 2003; Leach et al., 2006; van Zomeren et al., 2004). Furthermore, historical events and broader social and political processes can also affect the likelihood of political solidarity by either providing or attenuating opportunities to build, enhance, and challenge the shared meaning of social identities. These may be important catalysts in processes of social and psychological change and, given the somewhat limited scope of the present thesis, deserve to be considered more fully in future research.

10.4 Limitations and Future Directions

The empirical program presented in this thesis sought to address a number of questions and processes that contribute to the broader understanding of political solidarity as a social change process, and to do so over a range of different contexts. The relative diversity in our approach was deemed necessary given a) the complexity of social change processes of interest in this thesis, and b) the novelty of the research question that we sought to investigate and therefore the relative paucity of readily adaptable existing paradigms that could have been ‘tweaked’ to suit this particular investigation. However, it could also be argued that such diversity of approach is the primary weakness of the empirical program. While the questions we sought to answer formed a part of a relatively cohesive story, the way in which they were addressed varied across the studies in an effort to do justice to the different contexts of interest. In particular, this approach made comparison across studies and straightforward replication of results difficult.

An alternative approach would have been to focus on one aspect of political solidarity (e.g. the implications of authority norm-violation for re-categorization of the minority as ingroup and authority as outgroup), explore its possible mediators/moderators, and replicate the findings across different contexts. One of the reasons why a ‘neater’ approach was not adopted has to do with the fact that a
relatively coherent understanding of political solidarity did *not* emerge solely as a result of the review and critique of the existing literature. Rather, we came to understand this process (more) as we started to investigate it empirically. This is equally true in relation to the findings that confirmed our expectations, as it is for those that were somewhat unexpected. It was therefore difficult to identify at the outset what the most interesting or important process may be—whether it has more to do with the nature of intergroup relations, for example, or pre-existing majority self-categorization; whether we should be focusing more on the emergence of illegitimacy, rather than collective action intentions, or maybe the causal relationship between the two.

In addition to these general comments, one of the more specific empirical limitations is a lack of behavioural measures of collective action, particularly given the centrality of this construct for political solidarity as a social change process. Although behavioural intentions tend to be strongly correlated with the behaviour itself (see for example Armitage & Conner, 2001; Webb & Sheeran, 2006), and their use is widespread in contemporary social psychological research in this area (e.g. Simon et al., 1998; Stürmer & Simon, 2004, 2005; Stürmer et al., 2003; Stürmer et al., 2006; Stürmer et al., 2005; van Zomeren, Spears et al., 2008; van Zomeren et al., 2004; Veenstra & Haslam, 2000), such measures would have undoubtedly strengthened our findings further. Additionally, the questions of interest in this thesis are particularly well suited to more interactive paradigms, where the emergence and redefinition of social identities and their impact on the reality of intergroup relations can be more readily observed (e.g. Haslam & Reicher, 2006). The significant resources required for such research notwithstanding, an approach akin to that used in the BBC Prison Experiment (e.g. Reicher & Haslam, 2006a, 2006b) would have been an excellent paradigm in which to explore the dynamics of political solidarity. While we feel that our paradigm of choice (including the key dependent measures) was justified and adequate, this is one of the areas that future extensions of this work could improve on.

Additionally, many of the studies in the empirical program focused on the dynamics of political solidarity that evoked national identities and the role of the (Australian and Canadian) government as the relevant authority in this context. In
Chapter 9, we discussed the need to expand the present investigation to contexts in which other majority identities and intergroup relationships may emerge. More broadly, the current approach may have also conveyed the message that political solidarity processes should apply only to national contexts and citizens’ relations with their government. It is important to emphasise that political solidarity dynamics should apply to contexts that transcend national boundaries (e.g. international relations) as well as the relatively small-scale intergroup dynamics, such as those within organisations, for example.

In terms of specific theoretical questions that warrant further investigation, it may be worthwhile to explore further the interdependence between the majority’s relationship with the authority and the emergence of solidarity with the minority. Such exploration would need to focus on two distinct and (potentially) interdependent processes: a) the extent to which authority norm violation is a necessary pre-condition of solidarity with the minority, and b) the extent to which common cause with the minority is a necessary precondition of willingness to challenge the authority. While this thesis provided some initial insight into this process, the empirical program was not designed to fully investigate these dynamics.

A number of questions also emerged as a result of the integration of this work into a political solidarity model of social change. Namely, when the tripolar intergroup relations are considered more fully—i.e. taking into account the extent to which the majority shares the relevant identity meaning with the authority as well as the minority—it is possible to predict more precisely the conditions under which political solidarity will take place, but also the conditions under which alternative outcomes are more likely (e.g. hostility, apathy, and sympathy towards the minority; challenge or support for the authority). As such, it may be possible to investigate further how the relevant majority identity may be harnessed for efforts to maintain social stability as well as those seeking social change. While this thesis primarily focused on the dynamics of political solidarity as a process of social change, it may be important to explore a broader spectrum of majority responses within the tripolar context of intergroup relations.

Another question that emerged from the integration and extension of empirical findings, as well as other theoretical work in this domain (e.g. Turner et al., in press),
concerns the extent to which processes of leadership, influence and prejudice can be considered with tripolar intergroup dynamics in mind. Namely, as discussed above, the shared identity between the majority and authority can be strengthened by evoking prejudice against the minority, thereby further enhancing the authority's capacity to influence subordinates. This process can also be seen to represent social change (e.g. enhanced majority support for authority; hostility and prejudice towards the minority where none existed before), although one that primarily benefits the cause of the authority, rather than the minority.

Overall, the empirical program of the present thesis built more or less directly on a number of existing approaches to social change to provide a coherent set of novel insights and ideas when it comes to the emergence of political solidarity as a social change process. While neither of the existing approaches to social change provided a complete answer—as political solidarity cannot be reduced to a process of minority influence, collective action participation, or prejudice reduction—we sought to integrate their contributions to inform not only the design of the empirical program, but also the discussion and interpretation of its key findings and their implications for theoretical and empirical developments in this domain. The political solidarity model of social change is a direct result of these efforts and an attempt to provide a (relatively straightforward) answer to the question that this thesis originated with. In the final section of this chapter we offer a number of conclusions and consider the broader implications of the present thesis—and the political solidarity model in particular—for the social psychology of social change.

10.5 Conclusions and Implications for the Social Psychology of Social Change

The present thesis addresses a gap that we perceived to exist in current social psychological approaches to understanding social change. While this chapter has focused on summarising the thesis and outlining a theoretical framework for understanding political solidarity as a social change process, our analysis has additional implications for future developments in a number of specific areas of social psychology of relevance to social change, as detailed below. Furthermore, the model proposed in this thesis has the potential to advance current understanding and application of the social identity perspective more generally. As mentioned
previously, much of the existing intergroup relations research inspired by the social identity perspective conceptualises the social context of intergroup relations in bipolar terms. Building on self-categorization theory and its understanding of the self as variable, hierarchically organised, and epitomizing the relevant context of intergroup relations, the political solidarity model shows how this understanding can be extended to (at least) a tripolar dynamic, particularly when the focus is on challenging existing relations of social influence and authority.

As Turner (2005) suggests, social power as the capacity to influence others rests on the perception that the source and targets of influence share a psychological group membership—as such, it is the shared social identity that makes social influence possible. However, both the meaning of social identity and the extent to which it is shared with relevant others are continually contested, particularly when social change in intergroup power relations is at stake. The political solidarity model seeks to understand these dynamic (rather than static or mechanical) self-categorization processes by which psychological changes in majority perceptions of shared social identity with authority/minority create the conditions for social change in the reality of intergroup relations. Equally, however, it speaks to processes of (social) power creation and maintenance as a process by which those in positions of legitimate authority succeed in maintaining and strengthening their shared identity with the majority, while destroying their opponents’ capacity to do so. For example, the authority can strengthen the shared identity with the majority and therefore enhance its power (i.e. influence over the majority) by demonising the minority as deviant or in some way threatening to ‘all of us’ (Subašić et al., 2008; Turner, 2005).

Furthermore, the model contributes to existing understanding of the social self in the context of intergroup relations. It is increasingly recognised that self-categorizing at the level of the social identity does not necessarily discount one’s personal identity (e.g. Postmes & Jetten, 2006; Reynolds & Turner, 2006; Turner et al., 2006). Similarly, self-categorizing or acting in terms of higher-order norms, values and beliefs does not make subgroup differences or relationships irrelevant and meaningless. Fundamental to the interaction between the social self and the social context of intergroup relations is a process by which lower-level subgroup relationships shape the meaning of the higher-order identity—the relevant norms,
values and beliefs epitomising who 'we' are and what intergroup relations should be like within a given social context. The opposite is also true—the meaning of a shared higher-order identity not only reflects but also shapes the nature of intergroup relations (see also Haslam, Eggins et al., 2003; Reicher & Hopkins, 1996a, 1996b, 2001).

As such, defining who 'we' are is a complex process given that 'we' is rarely homogenous and can be mobilised in different ways. In the context of political solidarity, this process may involve mobilising support across a range of issues, taking into account a history of shared identity with authority. As a result, different dimensions of norm violation and explanations for violation can be emphasised to mobilise the majority to either support or oppose social change. Nevertheless, it becomes possible to imagine how once harmonious intergroup relations between an authority and the majority of their supporters become conflictual as those in positions of authority are increasingly seen to violate a higher-order understanding of who 'we' are. In turn, to the extent that it is the minority rather than authority that shares such an understanding, solidarity with this group becomes possible. As such, rather than thwarting solidarity, in this context the perceived differences among subgroups and differential subgroup relations make possible both higher-order unity with the minority and higher-order division from a hitherto-legitimate authority.

In turn, these theoretical developments have the capacity to inspire new directions in social psychological research. For example, the political solidarity model, in line with other approaches relevant to social change (e.g. Reicher, 1996; Simon & Klandermans, 2001), suggests that collective action research could be expanded to consider the tripolar intergroup dynamics in which collective attempts to achieve change in intergroup relations take place. Traditionally, this area of research has focused on those who were directly disadvantaged by a particular system of intergroup relations. It may be important to consider the factors that affect not only the likelihood of this group acting collectively, but also the extent to which such action may spread to include others willing to support their cause. As such, the political solidarity approach extends beyond the conditions that affect the likelihood of collective action per se to consider the broader dynamics of social change in intergroup power relations.
Similarly, prejudice reduction processes could be considered within a tripolar self-categorical dynamic whereby the majority stance towards minorities is understood within a broader context of intergroup relations that includes those in positions of authority. Allport (1954) himself recognised that intergroup contact will have little success in reducing prejudice when societal authorities and institutions fail to endorse tolerant norms and values. Furthermore, prejudice against a minority can be created and encouraged by those in positions of authority to maintain the status quo and enhance their own position (Turner, 2005). When we say that someone in a position of leadership and authority is engaging in a ‘fear campaign’ or ‘playing the race/immigration card’, what we mean is that they are creating or encouraging prejudice against some outgroup (e.g. ‘Asians’, ‘Muslims’, ‘Jews’, ‘illegal immigrants’) to galvanise ingroup support and in the process win votes or advance their policies. This dynamic is relevant not only for prejudice reduction strategies (focusing on the relationship between the majority and minority), but also for leadership and influence processes (focusing on the relationship between the authority and the majority). Understanding leadership as occurring within a tripolar intergroup dynamic would enable us to understand further how social inclusion and exclusion strategies can be used to create and advance one’s position of social power as influence over the majority of subordinates (Subašić et al., 2008; Turner, 2005; Turner et al., in press).

However, just like leaders can create and exclude minorities as ‘outgroups’ in order to boost their majority support, they also have the capacity to use their position and existing shared identity with the majority to build more harmonious intergroup relations with marginalised and disadvantaged minority groups by (re)defining the minorities as members of a shared ‘ingroup’ and relations with these groups as central to who ‘we’ are. For example, the newly elected Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd recently apologised to Indigenous Australians for past injustice resulting from assimilationist policies such as removal of Indigenous children from their families. The apology not only heralded a change in the government’s stance towards this group, but also explicitly called for Non-Indigenous Australians’ commitment to the reconciliation process (Rudd, 2008; Subašić & Reynolds, in press). Building on other work in this domain (Reicher et al., 2006; Reicher et al., 2005; Reicher &
Hopkins, 1996a, 1996b; Turner & Haslam, 2001), the political solidarity model can be a useful tool in understanding these dynamics and the role that leadership processes play in the creation as well as the reduction of prejudice.

Additionally, the proposed model has implications for intergroup emotions research, where emotions are experienced on behalf of one’s collective or social self (Smith, 1993, 1999; Smith & Ho, 2002), and as such could be seen as manifestations of people’s shared understanding of the relevant intergroup relations. Whether one experiences collective guilt on behalf of one’s group as a perpetrator of historical injustice depends not only on their perceived relationship with the victim, but also on whether those in positions of ingroup leadership and authority are endorsing or rejecting such a view of intergroup relations. For example, in the Australian context, collective guilt in relation to historical mistreatment of Australia’s Indigenous people has been actively discouraged by much of the political leadership, and as such rejected by the majority of non-Indigenous Australians as a meaningful response in this context (see Augoustinos & LeCouteur, 2004; McGarty et al., 2005; Subašić & Reynolds, in press). In contrast, the majority may more readily accept and act on their feelings of moral outrage or anger when such emotions arise in response to those in position of authority and their (illegitimate) actions towards the minority (see also Iyer et al., 2007; Leach et al., 2006; Leach et al., 2007). As such, more explicitly locating intergroup emotions research within a tripolar context of intergroup power relations may help in understanding when such emotions will hinder as opposed to enhance attempts to achieve social change.

Finally, the model has relevance for the use of political solidarity as a strategy for achieving social change. Namely, as social movement researchers have recognised (e.g. Tarrow, 1998), when members of the ‘silent majority’ become vocal and act on their concerns for the minority groups, the ‘powerful’ are more likely to take notice. Groups in position of social power largely depend on majority support to remain in their privileged position, and therefore have a keen interest in keeping the majority on their side. However, the majority not only bestows the power onto the ‘powerful’ (i.e. authority), but also has the capacity to empower the powerless (i.e. minority). As such, members of the majority who are not affected by negative treatment or policies of the authority often have a greater capacity to engage in action
and lend their ‘voice’ to the otherwise ‘voiceless’ and highly marginalised groups (e.g. political prisoners, asylum seekers in detention).

Focusing on when political solidarity with the minority will arise also enables us to consider when it may fail to occur (i.e. when the ‘silent majority’ indeed remains silent), or even when political solidarity with the authority will come about (i.e. when the majority becomes a vocal supporter of the authority). For example, it would be interesting to explore further the strategies that authorities can use to (re)legitimise themselves and their treatment of the minority in the eyes of the general community, and therefore mobilise collective community support in their opposition to the minority. Another strategy available to this group is to keep the minority dissent ‘under the radar’ and off the political agenda – an issue that the majority need not concern themselves with. It is possible that this strategy would be the first choice of those in positions of established authority in dealing with dissent, and that they would only engage in attempts to legitimise their position when faced with the majority that has in one way or another voiced its concern for the minority.

In conclusion, the political solidarity approach outlined in this thesis offers a novel framework for understanding social change and social stability as distinct yet interdependent processes shaped by the dynamics of self-categorization in the tripolar context of intergroup power relations. Central to the dynamics of political solidarity is a contest between the authority and the minority over the definition and meaning of a shared identity meaning with the majority—whether the status quo or social change prevails depends on whether the majority comes to perceive the authority or the minority (respectively) as sharing an understanding of who ‘we’ are and how ‘we’ should relate to others in the social world. When identity meaning ceases to be shared with the authority and becomes shared with the minority, majority challenge to authority in solidarity with the minority, and therefore social change, becomes possible.
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