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Are White Women Showing Up for Racial Justice? Intergroup Contact, Closeness to People Targeted by Prejudice, and Collective Action

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Abstract

Although scholars have suggested that relationships with people of color can enhance White people's commitment to racial justice, many women of color have questioned whether White people, and White women in particular, actually "show up" to protest for racial justice. Focusing on the contact experiences and closeness White women have with people from racial and ethnic groups different from their own, we tested how these relationships may predict their reported motivations to engage in protests for racial justice. With a broad online sample of White American women (Study 1), and White women who attended the 2017 Women's March (Study 2), our results showed that both positive contact and closeness to people targeted by prejudice predicted White women's willingness to participate in protests for racial justice (Studies 1 and 2). Only closeness to people targeted by prejudice significantly predicted actual participation in collective action for racial justice (Studies 1 and 2) and also predicted motivation for racial justice among those who attended the 2017 Women's March (Study 2). Findings suggest that White women's inclinations to protest for racial justice may be linked to the close relationships they have with people targeted by prejudice, while more general forms of positive contact may not be related to such action. *Additional online materials for this article are available on* PWQ*'s website at https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/suppl/10.1177/0361684319840269. Online slides for instructors who want to use this article for teaching are available on* PWQ*'s website at http://journals.sagepub.com/page/pwq/suppl/index*

Keywords

collective action, protest, White women, women's march, racial justice

> Where were you when Mike Brown, Jr. was killed, and we took to the streets of Ferguson to honor his life?
> When your husbands, sons, brothers, and fathers left their homes to point M-16s at Black women and their babies for protesting?
> When your coworker, or partner said Mike deserved it?
> Where were you?
>
> Johnetta Elzie (2017, American civil rights activist)

A fervent resurgence in the struggle for racial justice has taken place in the United States over the last several years. From initial use of the hashtag #blacklivesmatter to the development of the Movement for Black Lives (see Movement for Black Lives, 2016), the urgency of recognizing the value and dignity of the lives of people of color has continued to grow in light of increased numbers of hate crimes targeting racial, ethnic, and religious minority groups; persistent racial and ethnic discrimination and an overwhelming number of deaths of young Black women and men at the hands of police (see Ross, 2018).

In the midst of these events, many women of color have questioned whether White people, and White women in particular, actually "show up" to protest for racial justice. Doubts about White women's commitment to racial justice have been expressed among many women of color who feel that a "sense of loyalty, interconnectedness, accountability, and shared struggle simply isn't there" in their relationships with White women (Lemieux, 2017) or who see White women protesting for feminist causes but still wonder "where have they been when Black mothers were mourning the murders of their sons?" (Jacobsen, 2016). Such doubts have been reinforced further by the oft-cited statistic that more than half of the White women in the United States who voted, helped to elect Trump in the 2016 election (Butler-Sweet, 2017), despite a range of statements and actions by the then-candidate that have been called out as racist and/or sexist (see Grim & Bobic, 2016; Milbank, 2015).

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At the same time, numerous scholars using varied methodologies have documented how fervently many White women are committed to racial justice, highlighting the importance of anti-racism work in White women's lives (e.g., Case, 2012; Stewart, 1999). In interviews, many White women have described how meaningful relationships with people of color fueled their involvement in activism for racial justice (e.g., Boyd, 2015; O'Brien, 2001; Reason, Scales, & Millar, 2005). We sought to expand upon this work and enhance our understanding of factors that may encourage White women to engage in protests for racial justice. We focused principally on the contact experiences and closeness that White women have with people from other racial and ethnic groups, and how these may predict their motivations to engage in protests for racial justice.

Protests Among the Disadvantaged: The Role of Social Identities

Scholars have speculated about the factors that motivate people to join in protests for racial justice. Researchers from the social identity perspective propose that members of disadvantaged social groups are typically motivated to engage in protest behavior to promote the welfare and interests of their own group (e.g., Simon & Klandermans, 2001); this motivation stems both from an awareness of membership in the group and recognition of their group's disadvantaged position relative to other groups in society (van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008; Wright & Tropp, 2002). Fisher, Dow, and Ray (2017) approached people at the 2017 Women's March (see Hartocollis & Alcindor, 2017) and asked them to indicate which of more than a dozen social and political issues motivated them to attend; participants could select as many motivating issues as they wished. The authors observed that respondents were especially likely to be "motivated by issues connected to the social identities that were most salient for them" (Fisher, Dow, & Ray, 2017, p. 5). For instance, respondents who identified as women were more likely than others to be motivated by women's issues such as reproductive rights; compared to White respondents, Black respondents were more likely to be motivated by racial justice issues; and Hispanic respondents were more likely to be motivated by concerns about immigration.

Some scholars have begun to identify motivations for protest that transcend the boundaries of a distinct identity group. For example, intersecting identity categories may serve as a springboard for building coalitions across group boundaries and may facilitate social movements in pursuit of shared interests or in response to shared grievances (Cole, 2008; Crenshaw, 1991; Uluğ & Cohrs, 2017). However, intersectional researchers focus primarily on building coalitions among members of groups that have historically been disadvantaged, oppressed, and/or denied social, economic, and political power (see Case, 2017; Cole, 2008).

Protests Among the Advantaged: The Role of Social Relations

Relatively little work has examined how or why members of advantaged groups might become motivated to engage in protests to promote the welfare and interests of disadvantaged groups. Yet growing numbers of scholars recognize that a commitment to justice and fair treatment is often shared among advantaged group members and is not limited to members of disadvantaged groups (Curtin, Stewart, & Cole, 2015; Duncan & Stewart, 2007; Glasford & Pratto, 2014; Grzanka, Adler, & Blazer, 2015; van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2012). When social and political issues carry personal meaning, White women may not only engage in protest behavior to promote the welfare and interests of women, but their motivations may transcend the boundaries of gender identities and fuel other forms of protest behavior such as activism for civil rights (Duncan & Stewart, 2007).

Scholars studying allyship among advantaged groups have also begun to highlight how allies often embody many characteristics of cross-group friends—including support, caring, and respect for and concern about the welfare of the disadvantaged—coupled with an awareness of the ways in which disadvantaged group members are subjected to differential treatment (Brown, 2015). Other scholars have suggested that meaningful intergroup contact experiences of advantaged group members can nurture a sense of psychological investment in the welfare of other groups, such that they may come to care about the experiences and interests of groups beyond their own (Tropp & Barlow, 2018; Wright, Brody, & Aron, 2005). Among White Americans, greater numbers of interracial friendships predicted greater support for affirmative action over time (Northcutt Bohmert & DeMaris, 2015), and having in-depth conversations with a person of color can enhance their willingness to acknowledge their own racial privilege (Nordstrom, 2015). In addition, the more close contacts White people reported having with Black people, the more they empathized with what Black people experience; greater empathy was closely linked to greater anger regarding the injustices Black people face and greater support for, and participation in, collective action for racial justice (Selvanathan, Techakesari, Tropp, & Barlow, 2017). These patterns emerged even when taking into account other factors that have been shown to promote collective action among the advantaged, such as moral conviction and beliefs in the efficacy of collective action (see van Zomeren et al., 2008, 2012). Anne Braden and Eleanor Roosevelt also have described how the close relationships they forged with Black Americans fueled their ongoing commitment to the struggle for racial justice (Boyd, 2015). In line with these perspectives, we expected that White people would report being more motivated to engage in protests for racial justice, the more contact they have with people from diverse racial and ethnic groups.

Not all forms of intergroup contact are equal (Hayward, Tropp, Hornsey, & Barlow, 2017), and some forms may be more closely linked to motivations to protest for racial justice than others. Prior work in the intergroup contact literature has suggested that, even when experienced as positive, relatively superficial contact with members of disadvantaged groups may not serve to transform intergroup attitudes among the advantaged (e.g., Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005) or compel advantaged group members to become aware of racial injustice (e.g., Hayward, Hornsey, Tropp, & Barlow, 2017). We therefore distinguished between two forms of contact that advantaged group members may have with members of disadvantaged groups, to examine possible links between contact and motivations to engage in protests for racial justice. Everyday contact with people from other groups is typically characterized as positive in nature (see Hayward, Tropp, et al., 2017) and closeness to people from other groups is often related to an awareness of how members of disadvantaged groups are targeted by prejudice and mistreatment (see Brown, 2015). We expected that, among White people, both everyday and close contacts would be associated with greater reported willingness to engage in protests for racial justice. Because close contact often corresponds with a heightened awareness of how people of color are targeted by prejudice, we expected that close contact would be especially likely to predict White people's reported participation in protests for racial justice.

The Present Research

In the present research, we focused on White women, who are recognized as occupying a disadvantaged position on the basis of gender, while at the same time occupying an advantaged position on the basis of race (see McIntosh, 1988). These combined status positions have been associated with greater awareness of the disadvantages faced by members of other oppressed groups (see Curtin, Kende, & Kende, 2016), thereby encouraging women's (compared with men's) greater engagement as allies for diverse groups relative to men (Fingerhut, 2011; Montgomery & Stewart, 2012). Because there are many social and historical factors that can influence the social position of White women (see Hurtado, 1989), we also included several demographic indicators as statistical controls in data analysis: White women's age, socio-economic status, level of education, and political orientation. We also included concerns about appearing prejudiced as a control variable, given that such concerns could potentially bias responses to the key measure of interest.

Given the proliferation of racially charged incidents in the United States in recent years (see Dastagir, 2017; Lopez, 2017; Politi, 2016), coupled with a rise in hate crimes against ethno-religious communities such as Muslims and Jews (BBC, 2017; Potok, 2017), we studied White women's closeness with members of groups that have been targeted by prejudice (e.g., insults or slurs on the basis of their race or ethnicity; see Blanchard, Lilly, & Vaughn, 1991; White & Crandall, 2017). In light of prior work (Duncan & Stewart, 2007), we predicted that White women would be more motivated to protest for racial justice when the issues were personally relevant to their lives, such as through having close relationships with members of disadvantaged racial and ethnic groups who are targeted by prejudice.

In two survey studies, we recruited White women as participants from a broad cross-section of those who take part in online studies (Study 1) and from those who attended the 2017 Women's March (Study 2). In each study, we assessed both White women's reported willingness to participate and actual participation in protests for racial justice; actual participation in protests typically involves greater personal investment (see Klandermans, 1997). We hypothesized that White women's motivation and willingness to engage in protests for racial justice would be related to the positive contact they have had with people of color and their close relationships with people who are targeted by prejudice. We also expected that having close relationships with people targeted by prejudice would be more consistently associated with their actual participation in protests for racial justice than their everyday intergroup contact experiences.

Study 1

Method

Participants and Procedure

As part of a multi-study data collection effort (see also Uluğ & Tropp, 2018), a total of 296 self-identified non-Hispanic White American women were recruited to complete an online survey through Amazon's Mechanical Turk in the spring of 2017, during a time of resurgence of hate crimes in the United States (see Lopez, 2017). Although samples recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk are not fully representative, they typically include respondents who vary more broadly in age, level of education, political ideology, and geographical distribution than those recruited from undergraduate student populations (see Huff & Tingley, 2015; Levay, Freese, & Druckman, 2016). Prior to participation, respondents were informed that the goal of this research was to examine White Americans' perceptions of and experiences with other racial and ethnic groups. Respondents who chose to complete the online survey received US$1.00 at the end of the study as compensation for their participation.

Survey respondents completed measures of positive contact, closeness to people targeted by prejudice, collective action for racial justice (see below), and several demographic indicators that were used as controls in data analysis, including age, family socio-economic status, level of education, and political ideology. Respondents' ages ranged from 21 to 78 years ($M = 40.39$ years, $SD = 12.42$). Ninety one respondents (31%) had a high school education or less, 57 (19%) had an

associate's degree or some college, 119 (40%) had an undergraduate degree from a 4-year college or university, and 29 (10%) had an advanced graduate degree. When describing their family's socio-economic status as they were growing up, 34 (11%) identified as poor or lower class, 103 (35%) as lower middle class, 129 (44%) as middle class, 28 (9%) as upper middle class, and 2 (1%) as rich or upper class. When asked to describe their political orientation on a scale from 1 (*liberal*) to 11 (*conservative*), respondents indicated a wide variety of responses across the political spectrum ($M = 5.01$, $SD = 3.24$).

Measures

Intergroup contact. Participants responded to two items concerning their everyday intergroup contact experiences, adapted from recent work on positive contact (see Hayward, Tropp, et al., 2017). Participants were asked how much they feel "like you are able to get along well together" and "warmth, like they enjoy getting to know you" when they come into contact with Black people, on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). For the current sample, responses to the two items were moderately associated (Spearman-Brown coefficient = .83) and averaged prior to data analysis, with higher scores corresponding to more positive intergroup contact.

Closeness to people targeted by prejudice. In a single item, respondents were asked, "In the last 6 months, how often was someone you care about subject to public insults or slurs because of their race, ethnicity, or religion?" The wording of this item was purposely expansive because White women's responses were assessed from a national sample, and White Americans tend to have very few non-White friends (see Pew Research Center, 2015); three-quarters of White people's close social networks are entirely White (see Beauchamp, 2014). We also included "religion" in this item because of the executive order banning travel from certain Muslim countries and repeated hate crimes against Muslims and Jews that co-occurred during the period of data collection (see BBC, 2017; Potok, 2017).

To ensure that any effects observed for this variable did not merely reflect self-relevant concerns, we included a second item that asked, "In the last 6 months, how often were you subject to public insults or slurs because of your race, ethnicity, or religion?" Responses to the second item (self as target of prejudice) were controlled for when analyzing how closeness to others targeted by prejudice might predict willingness for and participation in collective action for racial justice. Responses to each item ranged from 1 (*never*) to 4 (*many times*).

Protests for racial justice. Using adaptations of items from Odağ, Uluğ, and Solak (2016), in two sets of three questions, we asked respondents "how often they (are willing to support/have supported) the Black Lives Matter movement," by (a) "marching in the streets"; (b) "attending forums, meetings, or discussion groups"; or (c) "posting messages on social media." Responses to each item ranged from 1 (*never*) to 4 (*many times*). Odağ and colleagues (2016) have used these items to measure offline ($\alpha = .78$) and online collective action ($\alpha = .74$) in a Turkish sample. For the current sample, responses to each set of 3 items were summed prior to data analysis to create composite measures of willingness to participate in protests for racial justice (Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$) and actual participation in protests for racial justice (Cronbach's $\alpha = .87$).

Concern about appearing prejudiced. To assess concerns about appearing prejudiced (see Plant & Devine, 1998), respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they (a) "try to hide any negative thoughts about Black people in order to avoid negative reactions from others," (b) "attempt to appear non-prejudiced toward Black people in order to avoid disapproval from others," and (c) "try to act non-prejudiced toward Black people because of pressure from others." Responses to the 3 items ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), and scores were averaged to create a composite measure of concern about appearing prejudiced (Cronbach's $\alpha = .94$ for the current sample). Plant and Devine (1998) reported Cronbach's αs ranging from .76 to .80 for their published scale. Scores on this measure, along with the demographic indicators described previously, were controlled for in data analysis, as respondent concerns about appearing prejudiced could potentially bias responses to key measures of interest.

Results and Discussion

Only a small proportion of the White women surveyed had taken prior action to support protests for racial justice, consistent with reports of views of women of color (e.g., Jacobsen, 2016; Lemieux, 2017). Most of the White women indicated that they had never participated in a march ($n = 253$, 85.5%); attended forums, meetings, or discussions groups ($n = 242$, 81.8%); or posted messages on social media ($n = 213$, 72.0%) related to the Black Lives Matter protests.[1] Overall, these women indicated a greater willingness to participate in collective action for racial justice, $M_{\text{willingness}} = 5.13$, than actual participation, $M_{\text{participation}} = 4.18$, $t(295) = 8.90$, $p < .001$.

Approximately two-thirds of the White women surveyed ($n = 197$, 64.6%) indicated that they generally have positive contact experiences with Black people in their everyday lives, with a mean score of 5.0 or higher on the 7-point scale. Also, 81 White women (27.4%) reported that someone they were close to had, at least once, been subjected to public insults or slurs because of their race, ethnicity, or religion in the last six months; by contrast, 47 White women (15.9%) indicated that they themselves had been subject to public insults or slurs because of their race, ethnicity, or religion at least once in the last six months.

Table 1. Correlations Among Key Variables (Studies 1 and 2).

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Positive intergroup contact	—	.07	−.10	−.11*	.33***	.23***
2. Closeness to people targeted by prejudice	.07	—	.58***	.03	.21***	.24***
3. Self as target of prejudice	−.03	−.21***	—	.10	.01	.07
4. Concern about appearing prejudiced	−.27***	−.02	.00	—	−.07	−.01
5. Willingness to protest	.16**	.35***	−.04	−.05	—	.77***
6. Actual participation in protest	.09	.46***	−.08	−.05	.59***	—

Note. Correlations for Study 1 are presented above the diagonal, and correlations for Study 2 are presented below the diagonal.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

Table 2. Summary of Regression Analyses Predicting Collective Action Outcomes (Study 1).

	Willingness to Protest			Actual Participation in Protest		
Predictor Variables	*b*	*SE*	β	*b*	*SE*	β
Positive intergroup contact	.49***	.11	.23***	.31**	.10	.18**
Closeness to people targeted by prejudice	.51*	.20	.16*	.54**	.18	.21**
Self as target of prejudice	−.10	.26	−.02	−.11	.23	−.03
Concern about appearing prejudiced	−.13	.08	−.08	−.03	.07	−.03
Age	−.02*	.01	−.10*	−.02	.01	−.12*
Socioeconomic status	−.39*	.05	−.12*	−.25	.16	−.09
Level of education	.23	.14	.09	.24	.13	.11
Political orientation	−.30***	.05	−.34***	−.10	.04	−.14*
R^2		.29***			.16***	
Cohen's f^2		.41			.19	
F		14.79***			6.58***	

Note. According to Cohen (1988), a value of f^2 greater than .35 may be considered as a large effect, between .15 and .35 as a medium-sized effect, and between .02 and .15 as a small effect. *b* = raw regression coefficient; *SE* = standard error; β = standardized regression coefficient.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

Moreover, White women's motivation to protest for racial justice was related to their positive contact with Black people and close relationships with people who are targeted by prejudice. Correlations among the key variables in Study 1 are provided in the top diagonal of Table 1. White women who reported greater everyday contact with Black people, and those who reported greater closeness with someone targeted by prejudice, were more likely to have engaged in protests for racial justice and reported being more willing to do so in the future.

In regression analyses, we examined the degree to which positive intergroup contact and closeness to people targeted by prejudice predicted willingness and participation in protests for racial justice while controlling for the demographic indicators (age, socio-economic status, level of education, and political orientation), concerns about appearing prejudiced, and the extent to which respondents themselves had been targeted by prejudice. As summarized in Table 2, both positive intergroup contact and closeness to others targeted by prejudice predicted greater willingness to protest for racial justice and self-reported participation in protests for racial justice, even when taking into account respondents' demographic characteristics and self-relevant concerns.

Political orientation also predicted each outcome; greater leanings toward political conservatism predicted lower willingness to protest and actual participation in protests for racial justice (see Table 2). Using supplementary hierarchical regressions, we explored whether positive intergroup contact and closeness to others targeted by prejudice might interact with political orientation to predict the protest outcomes. After centering these variables (see Aiken & West, 1991), interaction terms were created and entered as possible predictors at the second step of analysis, after all prior variables had been entered at the first step. Only the Contact × Political Orientation interaction term was significant when predicting willingness to participate in protests for racial justice, $\beta = -.15$, $R^2_{\text{change}} = .03$, $F_{\text{change}} = 5.61$, $p < .01$, and actual participation in protests for racial justice, $\beta = -.13$, $R^2_{\text{change}} = .03$, $F_{\text{change}} = 5.01$, $p < .01$. As shown in Figures 1a and 1b, reports of positive contact predicted greater willingness and reports of participation in protests for racial justice among respondents with more liberal political orientations, $b_{\text{liberal}} = .67$ and .40, $t = 5.29$ and 3.70, $p < .001$, respectively; and moderate political orientations, $b_{\text{moderate}} = .42$ and .27, $t = 4.97$ and 3.68, $p < .001$, respectively; but not among those with more conservative political orientations, $b_{\text{conservative}} =$

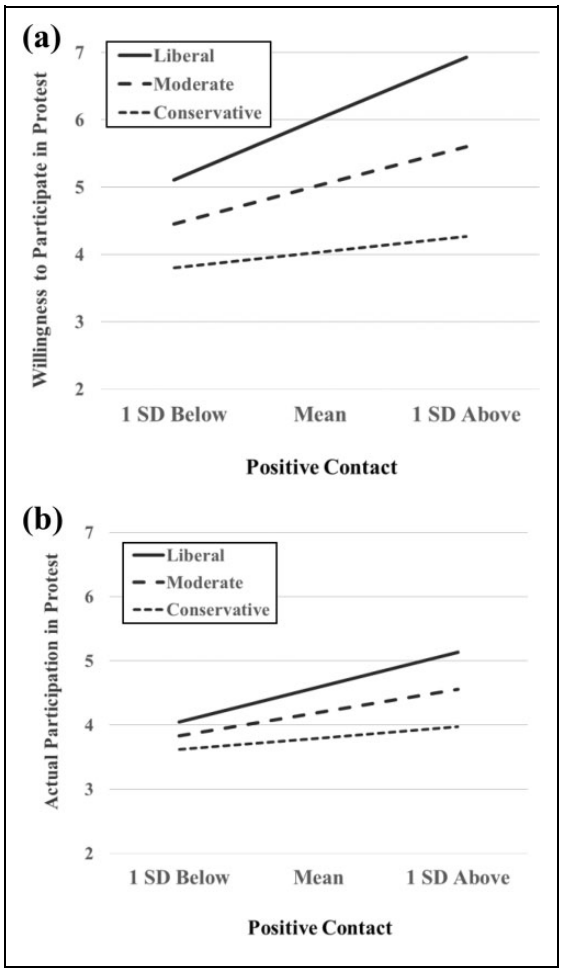

Figure 1. (a) Positive contact as a predictor of willingness to protest for racial justice among White women with liberal, moderate, and conservative political orientations (Study 1). (b) Positive contact as a predictor of reported participation in protests for racial justice among White women with liberal, moderate, and conservative political orientations (Study 1). SD = standard deviation.

.17 and .13, $t = 1.69$, and 1.50, $p = .09$ and .13, respectively. Thus, closeness with people targeted by prejudice was consistently related to reported participation in protests for racial justice among White women regardless of political orientation, whereas positive intergroup contact was only associated with participation in protests for racial justice among White women with liberal or moderate political orientations.

One possible limitation of Study 1 is that relatively small proportions of White women reported engaging in varied forms of protest for racial justice. Based on findings from Study 1, it is difficult to discern whether the trends we observed reflect a general tendency for the women in the sample to have been somewhat inhibited in engaging in protest behavior, and whether we might observe more robust participation in protests for racial justice among those who are already mobilized to engage in other forms of protest behavior (see e.g., Duncan & Stewart, 2007). We conducted a second study, to test whether the patterns of effects observed in Study 1 would replicate with a sample of White women who had demonstrated greater involvement in protest behavior.

Study 2

For Study 2, we recruited a sample of White women who attended the 2017 Women's March. In addition to replicating Study 1 with a larger sample of women who had previously engaged in at least some protest behavior, we focused on White women who attended the Women's March and examined their motivations and behavior in relation to both gender justice issues and racial justice issues. Given that participation in protests for one cause may be associated with participation in protests for another (e.g., Duncan & Stewart, 2007), we tested how positive intergroup contact and closeness to people targeted by prejudice predicted willingness and participation in protests for racial justice. We used the original survey measures included in Study 1, and we added two new measures to ask specifically about (a) how often the White women in our sample have taken action to support both gender justice and racial justice and (b) how much issues associated with gender justice and racial justice may have motivated their attendance at the march.

The Women's March also provided a unique and interesting context in which to examine relations among these variables. Early critiques by women of color noted the march was being organized predominantly by White women, though women from different racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds were soon recruited to join the organizing committee and contribute to its platform (see Quarshie, 2018). The committee ensured that the March's unity principles focused on a variety of issues that affect diverse communities of women, including a strong focus on racial justice. Leaders of the march stated explicitly that they believe in "accountability and justice in cases of police brutality" and "ending racial profiling and targeting of communities of color" so that women are "free and able to care for and nurture their families" and because "no woman or mother should have to fear that her loved ones will be harmed at the hands of those sworn to protect" (see Unity Principles, n.d.).

Nonetheless, as hundreds of thousands of women took to the streets to participate in the Women's Marches that sprang up across the United States and around the world, many women of color expressed skepticism regarding the motivations of the White women who chose to do so. Critics of the first Women's March in January 2017 repeatedly expressed frustration that it neglected and disregarded the concerns and perspectives of women of color (Dupuy, 2018; Holloway, 2018). These sentiments endured throughout the planning and realization of the second Women's March in January 2018, and some women of color purposely chose not to participate in the Women's Marches (Dupuy, 2018; Lemieux, 2017).

Paralleling earlier research (e.g., Duncan & Stewart, 2007), we predicted that some White women would be motivated to participate in the Women's Marches, because of concerns that affect their lives as women and also because of concerns about other racial and ethnic groups whose members they know and about whom they care. We therefore tested whether White women who were motivated to protest for gender justice would also be motivated to protest for racial justice. We expected to replicate findings from Study 1 that White women's motivations to protest for racial justice would be related to their experience of positive intergroup contact with other racial groups and closeness to people who are targeted by prejudice. We also expected that having close relationships with those targeted by prejudice would be a more consistent predictor of reported participation in protests for racial justice than more general everyday forms of positive contact with other racial groups.

Method

Participants and Procedure

A community-based organization in the Northeastern United States that had helped to coordinate transportation to the 2017 Women's March agreed to send a link to an online survey to women on their email distribution list after the march. A total of 305 self-identified non-Hispanic White American women voluntarily completed the online survey without compensation between January and May 2017. In addition, 10 men and 25 women of color (2 African American, 6 Latina, 6 Asian, 1 Middle Eastern, and 10 of mixed heritage) completed the survey. Given the small numbers of men and women of color in the sample, their responses were not retained for data analysis.

Two hundred and twenty-two of the White women surveyed indicated that they attended the Women's March in Washington, DC, and 88 of the women indicated that they attended a sister march in their home state. Their ages ranged from 18 to 80 years old, with a mean age of 52.47 years ($SD = 13.37$). The Study 2 sample tended to have higher levels of education and socio-economic status than the Study 1 sample. Seven women (2%) had a high school education or less, 19 (6%) had an associate's degree or some college, 97 (32%) had an undergraduate degree from a 4-year college or university, and 181 (59%) had an advanced graduate degree; one participant did not respond to this question. When describing their family's socio-economic status growing up, 16 women (5%) identified as poor or lower class, 51 (17%) as lower middle class, 128 (42%) as middle class, 96 (32%) as upper middle class, and 9 (3%) as rich or upper class; five participants did not respond to this question. Study 2 participants tended to lean more toward the liberal end of the political spectrum ($M = 2.50$, $SD = 1.27$) than participants in Study 1 ($M = 5.01$, $SD = 3.24$), $t(599) = 12.58$, $p < .001$, on a scale ranging from 1 (*extremely liberal*) to 11 (*extremely conservative*).

Measures

Respondents completed the same measures as those used in Study 1 to assess positive intergroup contact (Spearman-Brown coefficient = .78), closeness to people targeted by prejudice, concern about appearing prejudiced (Cronbach's $\alpha = .89$), and demographic factors.

Protests for racial justice. Items used to assess willingness for and participation in protests for racial justice were slightly modified from Study 1. Instead of asking respondents questions in reference to "the Black Lives Matter movement," respondents were instead asked more generally how often they are willing to support and have supported "protests for racial justice and equality" by (a) "marching in the streets"; (b) "attending forums, meetings or discussion groups"; or (c) "posting messages on social media." As in Study 1, responses to each item ranged from 1 (*never*) to 4 (*many times*) and were summed prior to data analysis, to create composite measures of willingness to participate in protests for racial justice (Cronbach's $\alpha = .74$) and actual participation in protests for racial justice (Cronbach's $\alpha = .65$).

Protests for gender justice. In addition, three parallel items were used to assess how often respondents have supported "protests for gender justice and equality" by (a) "marching in the streets"; (b) "attending forums, meetings, or discussion groups"; or (c) "posting messages on social media"; responses to each item ranged from 1 (*never*) to 4 (*many times*). Although the reliability estimate for this 3-item measure was low (Cronbach's $\alpha = .50$; see Hinton, Brownlow, McMurray, & Cozens, 2004), responses to these items were summed for data analysis to provide a basis for comparing White women's active participation in protests for gender justice and racial justice.

Motivations for participation in the Women's March. Respondents were asked to report "how much each of the following reasons motivated [them] to participate in the Women's March," with responses ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 4 (*very much*). Three items focused on issues related to women's rights and gender justice (advocating for wage equality between men and women, protecting women's bodies from assault and harassment, and protecting a woman's right to choose), and three items focused on issues related to civil rights and racial justice (advocating for racial justice and equality, preserving the rights of immigrants and refugees, and expressing concern about recent increases in hate crimes). Responses to all six items were entered into a principal components analysis (varimax rotation); this analysis yielded two three-item factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0, representing motivations for gender justice (loadings from .69 to .80; $\alpha = .66$) and racial justice (loadings from .74 to .88; $\alpha = .77$; see online supplement at https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/suppl/10.1177/0361684319840269).

Table 3. Summary of Regression Analyses Predicting Collective Action Outcomes (Study 2).

	Willingness to Protest			Actual Participation in Protest		
Predictor Variables	*b*	*SE*	β	*b*	*SE*	β
Positive intergroup contact	.42**	.14	.17**	.15	.15	.06
Closeness to people targeted by prejudice	.63***	.12	.30***	.99***	.12	.44***
Self as target of prejudice	−.19	.47	−.02	.04	.50	<.01
Concern about appearing prejudiced	−.08	.09	−.05	−.04	.10	−.02
Age	−.04***	.01	−.23***	−.01	.01	−.06
Socio-economic status	−.05	.14	−.02	−.32*	.15	−.12*
Level of education	−.20	.18	−.06	−.16	.19	−.05
Political orientation	−.41***	.10	−.23***	−.29**	.10	−.15**
R^2		.25***			.26***	
Cohen's f^2		.33			.35	
F		10.68***			11.31***	

Note. According to Cohen (1988), a value of f^2 greater than .35 may be considered as a large effect, between .15 and .35 as a medium-sized effect, and between .02 and .15 as a small effect. *b* = raw regression coefficient; *SE* = standard error; β = standardized regression coefficient.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

Results and Discussion

Results from Study 2 complement findings observed in Study 1 in several ways. As in Study 1, White women in Study 2 generally reported greater willingness to participate in protests for racial justice ($M_{\text{willingness}} = 9.31$) than actual participation ($M_{\text{participation}} = 6.41$), $t(301) = 23.10$, $p < .001$. However, compared to those in Study 1 ($M_{\text{participation}} = 4.18$), White women in Study 2 were significantly more likely to have taken some action to protest for racial justice ($M_{\text{participation}} = 6.41$; $t = -11.52$, $p < .01$, $d = .94$). White women in this sample were especially likely to report posting messages on social media at least once ($n = 204$, 66.9%) and/or participating in at least one protest for racial justice ($n = 197$, 64.3%) in addition to attending forums, meetings, or discussion groups related to racial justice issues ($n = 138$, 45.2%).

Results from Study 2 also suggest that White women may have been motivated to protest both for racial justice and for gender justice in attending the 2017 Women's March. Both gender justice ($M = 3.70$) and racial justice ($M = 3.81$) were motivating factors associated with White women's participation in the Women's March; though small in magnitude, the mean difference was statistically significant, $t(304) = -3.64$, $p < .01$, $d = .11$. In addition, reported participation in protests for gender justice and racial justice were also highly correlated ($r = .60$, $p < .001$). Overall, however, White women in Study 2 reported greater participation in protests for gender justice ($M = 8.74$) than for racial justice ($M = 6.41$; $t = 20.18$, $p < .001$, $d = .28$), in line with other work suggesting that motivations for protest are often based in one's social identity as a member of a disadvantaged group (e.g., Fisher et al., 2017; van Zomeren et al., 2008; Wright & Tropp, 2002).

The vast majority of White women in Study 2 reported having positive contact experiences with Black people in their everyday lives ($n = 251$, 82.3%), with a mean score of 5.0 or higher on the 7-point scale. More than two-thirds of the White women surveyed in Study 2 ($n = 205$, 67.2%) also reported that someone close to them had, at least once, been subject to public insults or slurs because of their race, ethnicity, or religion. At the same time, nearly all the women reported that they themselves had, at least once, been subject to public insults or slurs because of their race, ethnicity, or religion ($n = 285$, 93.4%), with 263 (86.3%) indicating that this had occurred many times in the last 6 months.

Correlations among the key variables in Study 2 are provided in the bottom diagonal of Table 1. Both positive intergroup contact and closeness to people targeted by prejudice correlated with greater willingness to participate in protests for racial justice, replicating a key finding from Study 1. However, in this sample, only closeness to people targeted by prejudice—and not positive intergroup contact—significantly predicted reported participation in protests for racial justice. In addition, while positive intergroup contact did not significantly correlate with greater motivations for racial justice in attending the Women's March, $r(304) = .10$, $p = .08$, closeness to people targeted by prejudice was significantly associated with greater motivations for racial justice, $r(303) = .21$, $p < .001$. Neither positive intergroup contact nor closeness to others targeted by prejudice were significantly related to motivations for gender justice, $r(304) = .06$, $p = .27$, and $r(303) = .02$, $p = .70$, respectively.

In separate regression analyses, we tested the degree to which positive intergroup contact and closeness to people targeted by prejudice would predict willingness and participation in protests for racial justice, while controlling for the demographic indicators (age, socio-economic status, level of education, and political orientation), concerns about appearing prejudiced, and the extent to which respondents themselves had been targeted by prejudice. Both positive intergroup contact and closeness to people targeted by

Table 4. Summary of Regression Analysis Predicting Motivation for Racial Justice in Attending the 2017 Women's March (Study 2).

	Motivation for Racial Justice		
Predictor Variables	*b*	*SE*	β
Positive intergroup contact	.04	.03	.09
Closeness to people targeted by prejudice	.07**	.02	.19**
Self as target of prejudice	−.03	.10	−.02
Concern about appearing prejudiced	.02	.02	.07
Age	.01*	<.01	.14*
Socio-economic status	.03	.03	.05
Level of education	−.05	.04	−.09
Political orientation	−.07**	.02	−.19**
R^2		.11***	
Cohen's f^2		.12	
F		4.23***	

Note. According to Cohen (1988), a value of f^2 greater than .35 may be considered as a large effect, between .15 and .35 as a medium-sized effect, and between .02 and .15 as a small effect. *b* = raw regression coefficient; *SE* = standard error; β = standardized regression coefficient.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

prejudice predicted significantly greater willingness to protest for racial justice, even when taking into account respondents' demographic characteristics and self-relevant concerns (see Table 3). However, only closeness to people targeted by prejudice—and not positive intergroup contact—predicted reported participation in protests for racial justice. Closeness to people targeted by prejudice also remained a significant and unique predictor of participation in protests for racial justice ($\beta = .28$, $p < .001$), even when participation in protests for gender justice was included as an additional statistical control. These findings suggest that, beyond any effects of more general forms of positive intergroup contact, closeness to people targeted by prejudice uniquely predicted White women's engagement in protests for racial justice.

As in Study 1, political orientation also predicted each protest outcome; greater leanings toward political conservatism predicted lower willingness and participation in protests for racial justice. However, unlike Study 1, we did not find a significant interaction between positive intergroup contact and political orientation. Specifically, following the procedures used in Study 1, a Contact × Political Orientation interaction term was created and entered as a possible predictor for each collective action outcome at the second step of analysis, after all prior variables had been entered at the first step. The Contact × Political Orientation interaction term did not significantly contribute to predicting either willingness to participate in collective action for racial justice, $\beta = .04$, $R^2_{\text{change}} < .01$, $F_{\text{change}} = .58$, $p = .56$, or reported participation in collective action for racial justice, $\beta = .01$, $R^2_{\text{change}} < .01$, $F_{\text{change}} = .38$, $p = .69$.

Finally, in a parallel regression analysis, we examined the degree to which positive intergroup contact and closeness to others targeted by prejudice would predict a greater motivation for racial justice in attending the Women's March. Closeness to people targeted by prejudice predicted greater motivations for racial justice in relation to the Women's March, while positive intergroup contact did not (see Table 4). Thus, participation in protests for racial justice seemed to be personally relevant for many White women in Study 2, whose motivation to protest for racial justice was linked to having close relationships with people targeted by prejudice (Duncan & Stewart, 2007).

General Discussion

Across two studies, our results show that both positive intergroup contact and closeness to people targeted by prejudice predicted greater willingness to participate in protests for racial justice among White women. Nonetheless, closeness to people targeted by prejudice was a more consistent predictor of reported participation in protests for racial justice than more general, everyday forms of intergroup contact. These trends parallel other work suggesting that cross-race friendships may encourage White people to become more likely to support programs that would benefit the racially disadvantaged (Northcutt Bohmert & DeMaris, 2015) and to participate in collective action for racial justice (Selvanathan et al., 2017); and that White women may be more inclined to engage in civil rights activism the more that such social and political issues are imbued with personal meaning (Duncan & Stewart, 2007). Close relationships with members of targeted groups may provide a pathway for White women to become more psychologically invested in the welfare and interests of other disadvantaged groups (see Tropp & Barlow, 2018; Wright et al., 2005).

While generally positive intergroup contact predicted White women's greater willingness to protest for racial justice, it did not consistently predict their reported participation in protests for racial justice. In Study 1, positive intergroup contact predicted greater participation in protests for racial justice only among White women who reported having relatively liberal or moderate political orientations and not among those with conservative political orientations. And, in Study 2, positive intergroup contact did not uniquely contribute to predicting participation in protests for racial justice or motivations for racial justice among the more liberal-leaning White women who attended the Women's March.

Practice Implications

Simply encouraging contact between members of advantaged and disadvantaged racial groups may not be sufficient to motivate advantaged group members to protest for racial justice. Our findings dovetail with other work showing that positive contact between members of advantaged and

disadvantaged groups may inadvertently create false expectations for fair and equal treatment among the disadvantaged (Saguy, Tausch, Dovidio, & Pratto, 2009). However, the fact that closeness to people targeted by prejudice consistently corresponded with greater participation in protests for racial justice among White women suggests that some awareness of inequality or differential treatment may be necessary to yield active steps toward allyship among the advantaged (see Brown, 2015). Such an interpretation would be consistent with recent work suggesting the importance of having advantaged group members acknowledge inequalities and express support for social change in their relations with disadvantaged groups, in order to minimize the possibility that positive intergroup contact would undermine prospects for social change (see Droogendyk, Wright, Lubensky, & Louis, 2016).

While forging close relationships across group lines has the potential to benefit members of both advantaged and disadvantaged groups (see Plummer, 2019), we are also mindful of the inappropriate burdens associated with placing members of disadvantaged groups in the position of having to "educate" those in privileged positions about injustice (see Santiago & Willingham, 2017; WOC & Allies, 2017). Moreover, positive contact with members of advantaged groups has the potential to decrease motivation to engage in protest for social change among members of disadvantaged groups (Becker, Wright, Lubensky, & Zhou, 2013). Thus, strategies growing from intergroup contact research (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2011) ought to demonstrate clear benefits to both sides, by both honoring the voices and experiences of disadvantaged group members, and cultivating steps toward action among the advantaged group members with whom they engage.

Limitations and Future Directions

One limitation of the present research is that our closeness measure did not allow us to differentiate between the potentially distinct effects of advantaged group members' close relationships with members of diverse groups and their recognition that close others have been targeted by prejudice. Other intergroup research shows links between having contact with members of other groups and expressing empathy and concern regarding their welfare (e.g., Batson & Ahmad, 2009; Swart, Hewstone, Christ, & Voci, 2011; Wright et al., 2005), as well as acting to support their group's interests (Selvanathan et al., 2017). We currently know little about the ways in which advantaged group members come to recognize how other people are targeted by prejudice; for example, it may be that advantaged group members communicate directly about status differences with members of targeted groups (e.g., Saguy et al., 2009), or they may witness how members of targeted groups receive differential treatment (e.g., Uluğ & Tropp, 2018). Such issues could be explored in future research, with measures that distinguish better between intergroup closeness and awareness of the ways in which close others are targeted by prejudice.

In addition, our measures did not allow us to distinguish between the extent to which White women may care about individual members of targeted groups and, more broadly, how much they are aware of, or might care about, the extent to which members of these groups are targeted by prejudice. Members of advantaged groups tend to be less aware of the prejudice and mistreatment faced by members of disadvantaged groups than are disadvantaged group members (see Gallup, 2016). However, it is possible that, like closeness to people targeted by prejudice, greater awareness of the broader prevalence of prejudice against targeted groups may motivate advantaged group members to care more and, potentially, act to prevent it (see Ellemers & Barreto, 2009).

Another limitation is that, due to the closeness measure we used, we were not able to examine the effects of closeness to people from distinct racial, ethnic, or religious backgrounds who may be targeted by prejudice. We had purposely worded our items broadly, because people may be recognized as a member of more than one targeted category (e.g., being perceived as both non-White and Muslim), and many different racial, ethnic, and religious groups were being targeted by public insults and slurs when we conducted our studies (BBC, 2017; Lopez, 2017). Still, it is possible that knowing and caring about members of certain racial, ethnic, or religious groups would be more likely to motivate White women's participation in protests for racial justice than others, an issue that could be explored in more depth in future research.

Finally, our measures did not allow us to draw finer distinctions among White women who indicated that they themselves had been targeted by racial, ethnic, or religious prejudice. Our surveys did not include measures of ethnic or religious affiliation among these respondents, which might have allowed us to differentiate between White women who feel they have been targeted on the basis of being White (see Elzie, 2017), compared to White women who feel they have been targeted on the basis of their membership in an ethnic or religious minority group (e.g., Jewish or Muslim; see Potok, 2017). Such information would provide important insights regarding whether White women may be motivated to stand up for racial justice out of a recognition of their own racial privilege and/or whether their motivation may stem from recognition of parallels in how their own and other ethnic and religious groups are treated (see Case, 2017; Curtin et al., 2016).

We also recognize that the correlational nature of the data we have presented limits our ability to establish causal links between having close relationships with people targeted by prejudice and participating in protests for racial justice among White women. It is possible that participation in protests for racial justice would afford White women with opportunities to develop close relationships with people who are targeted by prejudice or that other factors may drive White women's connections with people targeted by prejudice and their participation in protests for racial justice. Still, the present findings help to rule out the possibility that concerns

about appearing prejudiced are motivating White women's reported participation in protests for racial justice; closeness to people targeted by prejudice predicted greater participation in protests for racial justice, while concerns about appearing prejudiced did not.

Conclusions

Our results indicate that White women's inclinations to protest for racial justice are meaningfully related to the close relationships they have with people who are targeted by prejudice, yet more general forms of intergroup contact may not be sufficient to encourage such action. Thus, beyond other benefits that might be gained from contact between members of different groups, forging deep, personal connections with members of other racial, ethnic, and religious groups may encourage White women to become more psychologically invested in the welfare of targeted groups, and to act to promote their interests.

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Note

1. For comparison purposes, a nationally representative survey, which was conducted in 2018, indicates that one in five adults in the United States has attended a political protest, rally, or speech in the past 2 years (see *Washington Post*, 2018).

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