

Pluralistic Societies: Challenges and opportunities of cultural diversity in liberal democracies



Department of Psychology
University of Copenhagen

Supported by
The Carlsberg Foundation

Wednesday, 7 June

09:00 Arrival with coffee & croissants

09:30 Welcome

**Thomas Morton &
Séamus Power**

Navigating Between Equality and Difference

09:45-10:15 Diversity, Equality and the Welfare State

Michael Jindra

10:15-10:45 "So we are somewhere hanging in between two cultures."
Migrant parents: Perspectives on Parenting

Angela Veale

10:45-11:15 *E pluribus unum*: Forging homogeneity from diversity in Danish
social policy

Flora Bothelo

15 Min. Pause

11:30-12:00 How to Cope with Status Threat: Recognizing Majorities' Subgroup
Uniqueness Increases their Support for Minority Empowerment

Luca Versteegen

12:00-12:30 Correcting Misperceptions about Ethno-Racial Discrimination:
The Limits of Awareness Raising to Promote Support for Equal-
Treatment Policies

Merlin Schaeffer

Lunch

Belonging in a Changing World

14:00-14:30 The National Identity Dynamics of the Catalan Independence and
Unionist Movements: A Social Psychological, Mixed-Methods
Exploration

Nuria Martinez

14:30-15:00 Notions of Home: Dimensions of Belonging in the Context of a
Pluralizing Society

Lisa Hartke

15 Min. Pause

15:15-15:45 Neighbourhood changes due to a newly-opened refugee
accommodation: Initial results of an intensive longitudinal study.

Maria-Therese Friehs

15:45-16:15 Imagined Extremist Communities: The Paradox of the Community-
Driven Lone-Actor Terrorist

Inger Storm Sandboe

15 Min. Pause

16:30-17:30 Keynote 1
Economic inequality as pluralism:
Consequences for societies' social and political vitality

Jolanda Jetten

Pluralistic Societies: Challenges and opportunities of cultural diversity in liberal democracies



Thursday, 8 June

09:00 Coffee & croissants

Politics & Polarization

09:30-10:00 Diversity and polarization: Putting political assertions to the test **Jasper van Assche**

10:00-10:30 "Fight like hell": Projected moral polarisation predicts anticipated conflict and the perceived responsibility to overturn an election loss **Charlie Crimston**

10:30-11:00 Context matters: A multinational test of the association between worldviews and intergroup attitudes **Berfin Acar**

15 Min. Pause

Neglected Differences

11:15-11:45 A distinctive dimension of diversity? A qualitative study of religious identity in the workplace **Ilka Gleibs**

11:45-12:15 Challenges and opportunities of religious diversity: Studying religious orientations from the migrant perspective **Fenella Fleischmann**

12:15-12:45 Immigration and Public Support for Social Policy: Accounting for the Gender Composition of Immigrant Populations **Friedolin Merhout**

Lunch

Blurred Lines

14:15-14:45 Speak to Them in Their Language? Reactions of Minority Group Members to Majority Targets Addressing Them in Their Mother Tongue **Slieman Halabi**

14:45-15:15 Cooperation between diverse social groups **Pınar Uğurlar**

15:15-15:45 An intersectional approach to social identities **Daniela Paz Fernandez**

15 Min. Pause

16:00-17:00 Keynote 2
Social Intelligence in a Multicultural World:
Who Needs It? **Richard A. Shweder**

19:00

Dinner
Kabys
Nansensgade 64
1366 København



Keynote Talk 1

Economic inequality as pluralism: Consequences for societies' social and political vitality

[Jolanda Jetten](#)

ARC Laureate Fellow & Professor of Social Psychology

Department of Psychology, University of Queensland, Australia

Pluralism in society may not only manifest as cultural diversity, but also as economic societal divisions brought about by high levels of income inequality. I will present lines of work that have shown that economic inequality reduces trust, prosociality and cooperation in society as well as enhancing social and political instability. In explaining the relationship between pluralism resulting from economic inequality and societal disintegration I will introduce the concept of anomie (Durkheim, 1897/1987; Teymoori, Bastian, & Jetten, 2016). Anomie affects the way individuals engage and interact with their social world, because it is associated with a perception that there is a breakdown of social fabric and a breakdown in leadership in society. When people perceive that the pillars of their society are no longer functioning effectively, uncertainty and insecurity will rise. In an attempt to cope with anomie, uncertainty and fear, people will be geared towards regaining control in an out-of-control world. I will present two further lines of research that show that higher economic inequality is associated with higher levels of anomie and that this is associated with (a) a greater wish for a strong leader who can restore order, and (b) enhanced endorsement of conspiracy theories. I'll conclude that investigating the effects of pluralism resulting from economic inequality may be increasingly relevant in the light of today's turbulent political and social landscape.



Keynote Talk 2

Social Intelligence in a Multicultural World: Who Needs It?

[Richard A. Shweder](#)

Harold Higgins Swift Distinguished Service Professor

Department of Comparative Human Development, University of Chicago, USA

This Keynote address proposes a conception of social intelligence for life in multicultural worlds (domestic and global). At the highest stage in the development of this type of intelligence individuals who feel at home in their own customary way of life and identify with the social norms of their cultural in-group are also able to understand and sympathize with the customary way of life and spontaneous fellow feelings shared by members of other cultural in-groups. The proposed conception of social intelligence is inspired by the writings of the 16th century Renaissance author Michel de Montaigne, especially his famous essay "On the Barbarians." Montaigne wrote during an early era of Western interventions into the lives of foreign peoples; and he was reluctant to let the cosmopolitan elites of his own time make the world safe for European condescension. He wrote for posterity with the aim of getting us to be more circumspect about our snap judgments about other ways of life. His take-home messages may help us conceptualize norms for social intelligence in contemporary plural societies. For example, when judging the customs and traditions of cultural minority groups beware of the illusory air of moral superiority that so naturally arises as we understandably invest the popular acceptances of our own cultural heritage tradition with strong sentiment and experience them as self-evident truths. Rushing to judgment can be hazardous. Be slow to demonize the way of life of little known others. Distinguish facts from factoids. Try to see the world from the point of view of the other. Bracket your impulsive emotional reactions and have a closer look before arriving at strong moral conclusions. Perhaps you have already guessed: While theorizing about social intelligence I am going to idealize the aims and methods of cultural anthropology and posit them as models for the development of social understanding.



Context matters: A multinational test of the association between worldviews and intergroup attitudes

[Berfin Acar](#)

Université libre de Bruxelles, Belgium

Although the associations between worldviews and intergroup outcomes are well-established, these links might depend on country-level factors. In this large multinational study ($N = 3159$, 39 countries), the role of national diversity and integration policies are examined. In particular, we test if the association of SDO and dangerous world beliefs with prejudice and outgroup avoidance depends on the national level of diversity (H1) and integration policies (H2). We hypothesize that the associations are strengthened by contextual cues such as diversity that have a polarising effect, and buffered by contextual cues that have a hierarchy-mitigating effect such as inclusive politics. We also aim to investigate whether national diversity is related to political outcomes such as perceived efficacy, power stability and equity (H3), and whether this relationship depends on individual levels of SDO and dangerous beliefs (H4). We expect diversity to be related to negative political attitudes but only for those who see diversity as a threat. Reduced political commitment and interest are expected to mediate this relationship (H5). Implications of this research for pluralistic societies and the moderating role of diversity for various intergroup outcomes will be discussed in detail.

Diversity and polarization: Putting political assertions to the test

[Jasper van Assche](#)

Ghent University & Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium

High levels of ethnic-cultural diversity may yield two diverging outcomes in terms of how people react to the outgroup. Studies have already shown that diversity does not necessarily provoke negative reactions for everyone. On the one hand, some people in the majority group may react negatively, i.e., with more prejudice. On the other hand, other people may not be affected by it, or even respond positively – i.e., with more tolerance. Hence, diversity alone does not result in a uniformly prejudicial reaction, rather it strengthens the attitudes people already endorse. This process may push people to the opposite extremes in terms of outgroup attitudes, which causes increased polarization in society. To test this hypothesis, we will analyse data from three different samples. We will explore the diversity's relationship with prejudice and polarization in Belgian neighbourhoods (Study 1), Dutch cities (Study 2), and Swiss cantonal districts (Study 3). We expect to see higher levels of polarization in areas with higher levels of diversity. This investigation will add to the literature by taking into account the nuances within the link between diversity and prejudice by highlighting that diversity does not only provoke prejudice for some people but can also nurture tolerance for others.



E pluribus unum: Forging homogeneity from diversity in Danish social policy

[Flora Botelho](#)

University of Copenhagen, Denmark

In a context of mature globalisation and seventy years of immigration from non-Western countries, Denmark still holds fast to an image of itself as a culturally homogenous nation. It regards this homogeneity as underpinning its highly valued social equality, and recent governments have rolled out a continuous stream of measures to ensure its perennity. This paper analyses one such initiative, a controversial proposal for quotas to determine the percentage of students from different ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds in state high schools throughout the country. The policy, ostensibly aimed at preventing the emergence of so-called “parallel societies” and the educational ghettoization of students with non-western ethnic background, presents an interesting paradox. This obligatory diversity within educational institutions is not intended to create plural conviviality, but rather to promote socio-cultural homogeneity (and thus equality) in the long-term. I explore how this strategy, which works from the assumption that merely mixing students of diverse backgrounds will necessarily lead to minority students assimilating to Danish culture, implicitly assumes the natural superiority of Danish ways.

“Fight like hell”: Projected moral polarisation predicts anticipated conflict and the perceived responsibility to overturn an election loss

[Charlie R. Crimston](#), *Jolanda Jetten*, & *Hema Preya Selvanathan*

The University of Queensland, Australia

Our morality can bind us together. It can also tear us apart. We propose that levels of anxiety and future dread in the context of an election are enhanced when society is characterized by deep intergroup divisions and morally charged polarisation. Across two studies spanning two national elections (2020 US presidential election and the 2021 Dutch general election; $N = 1,079$) we examined support for the prediction that projected moral polarisation in the aftermath of an election would enhance the expected negative consequences of losing an election (i.e., an outgroup political party winning power). We consistently found that projected moral polarisation when anticipating an election loss predicted enhanced anxiety concerning the future state of society (collective angst), higher perceived likelihood of civil war, and a stronger perceived obligation to fight to overturn the results of the election. Moreover, this association was mediated by the perceived breakdown of leadership in society. The current findings have important implications for understanding the societal and political consequences of moral polarisation, including the potential for enhanced intergroup conflict and threats to democracy in the aftermath of elections.



Reflecting on a workshop experience from an intersectional approach to social identities

[Daniela Paz Fernandez](#)

University of Exeter, UK

Research about the experiences of underrepresented groups in Higher Education (HE) is extensive and has demonstrated the persistence of challenges, despite policies and institutional strategies to promote inclusion for all students. Diversity and inclusion policies has been part of the HE agenda for a number of decades, yet most policies and interventions focus on a given isolated identity experience (e.g., based on gender, social class, ethnicity) rather than more integrated and intersectional approaches to identity. We report a case study of a workshop with students from an elite university that drew on an intersectional approach to social identities (IASI) looking at gender and social class identities. Reflecting on this case study we argue that approaches to identity and inclusion in HE can benefit from intersectionality beyond the use of multi and overlapping identity and social group categories. The IASI workshop contributes that research in this space is not neutral and needs to acknowledge researchers' position about (a) inclusion and diversity, (b) perceptions of participants in research, and (c) the motivation and aims of institutions where the research is conducted regarding the research questions and participants involved. We argue that research relative to diversity and inclusion needs to incorporate methods that positions participants as active and critical individuals.

Challenges and opportunities of religious diversity: Studying religious orientations from the migrant perspective

[Fenella Fleischmann](#)¹, *Müge Simsek*¹, *Verena Schneider*² & *Gert Pickel*²

1. *University of Amsterdam, Netherlands*
2. *University of Leipzig, Germany*

Immigrants' religion is frequently conceived of as a challenge to social cohesion in pluralistic societies, particularly in the European context where the high religiosity of Muslim newcomers contrasts with norms of secularism, and Muslims encounter widespread prejudice. The psychology of religion and prejudice shows that religious orientations such as literal and dogmatic interpretations explain prejudicial attitudes and the rejection of diversity much more consistently than individuals' involvement with their religion. An important limitation of this line of work, however, is that it rests almost exclusively on non-migrant samples with Christian heritage. There is a dearth of research on the internal diversity within religious minority communities regarding meaning-making and interpretations of religion, and how these relate to their position in pluralistic societies. I develop an interdisciplinary framework for studying the role of religious orientations in addition to levels of religiosity for a range of immigrant outcomes. First results from a survey of Turkish-origin Muslims in Germany (N=500) show that symbolic approaches to religion are distinct from religiosity and uniquely explain variance, particularly regarding civic participation. With this and related work, I aim to study the migrant perspective on the ways of reasoning about religion that facilitate cohesion in pluralistic societies.



Neighbourhood changes due to a newly-opened refugee accommodation: Initial results of an intensive longitudinal study

[Maria-Therese Friehs](#) & [Oliver Christ](#)
FernUniversität Hagen, Germany

Opening a refugee accommodation in a local neighbourhood is a critical moment from the perspective of community and applied social psychology associated with an increase of ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood. There are different theoretical assumptions about the consequences of such processes ranging from neighbourhood conflicts and increased threat perceptions leading to contact avoidance and resentment of the newly-arrived refugees to improved intergroup attitudes and increased helping behaviour based on more intergroup contact. Building on these divergent theoretical assumptions, we are currently conducting an intensive longitudinal survey ($N_{T1} = 148$) of the direct neighbourhood of a newly-opened inner-city refugee accommodation (housing maximum 150 refugees) in a small town in rural South-Western Germany. We are conducting weekly surveys over a total period of two months (January to March 2023) assessing a variety of aspects such as intergroup contact, attitudes towards refugees, threat perceptions, helping behaviour, social cohesion and tolerance. We will present initial findings of our survey using both quantitative and qualitative methods and focussing on a variety of different aspects. We will discuss these results and their implications for the local accommodation and integration of refugees as well as accompanying social processes in the receiving neighbourhood.

A distinctive dimension of diversity? A qualitative study of religious identity in the workplace

[Ilka H Gleibs](#)¹ & [YingFei Héliot](#)²

1. *London School of Economics, UK*
2. *University of Surrey, UK*

Globally religion is on the rise: Over 80% of the global population identifies with a religious group. This growth means that we will see more interactions among people of different religious affiliations, and between those who are religious and irreligious. The workplace is one space where people of diverse religious backgrounds are likely to come together. However, religious identity is a neglected facet of diversity that connects to work-related outcomes in important ways. To explore this, we interviewed 51 religiously identified participants from four occupational groups: Christian healthcare workers, Christian teachers, Jewish teachers, Christian lawyers, and Christian bankers. From thematic analysis of their experiences, we develop five themes characterizing dynamics of religious identity in the workplace. Our findings shed new light on how employees negotiate religious identity, religious values, and self-other relations in the workplace. Further, the study makes two contributions to research on workplace diversity and inclusion. First, we find specific challenges that employees face when negotiating their own (or others) religious identity in the workplace. Second, we identify how diversity within a person (intraindividual identity dynamics), between people (interpersonal relations) and in a group (group dynamics) contribute to the functioning of religious identity in the workplace.



Notions of Home: Dimensions of Belonging in the Context of a Pluralizing Society

[Lisa Hartke](#), [Christopher Cohrs](#), & [Antje Röder](#)
Philipps University Marburg, Germany

Definitions of the concepts “home” and “belonging” are particularly complex because of their subjective meaning for everyone. However, within contemporary discourses on diversity, societal questions are increasingly framed in terms belonging. These developments indicate that the general societal understanding of questions of belonging has been challenged. Indeed, due to increasing globalization, societies of the global north are currently experiencing a transformation of their everyday realities in which previous social symbols and boundaries indicating belonging are becoming blurred. Polarizing reactions on the rising pluralization are evoked. The study explores varying constructions of belonging within the German society. Winter’s (1995) dimensions of “home as social belonging” are used to approach the constructions of belonging: (1) geographical, (2) social and political, (3) traditional, (4) ritual and (5) mental home. Q methodology, which is suitable to uncover socially shared viewpoints, is used to explore socially shared constructions of belonging among 30 persons living in Germany. The analysis reveals four distinct „systems of belonging“: (1) belonging through mental freedom, (2), belonging through mental community, (3) belonging through social positioning and (4) belonging through origin-based positioning. The meanings of these frames and their importance to understand polarizing reactions to the social trend of increasing pluralization are discussed.

Speak to Them in Their Language? The Reactions of Minority Group Members to Majority Targets Addressing Them in Their Mother Tongue

[Slieman Halabi](#)¹, [Yechiel Klar](#)² and [Murad Abu Elheja](#)²

1. *Wuppertal University, Germany*
2. *School of Psychological Studies, Tel Aviv University, Israel*

Speaking to minority members in their mother tongue is often encouraged and viewed as something that could foster positive intergroup relations. However, in intergroup conflicts, this might be perceived as blurring the minority’s distinct boundaries and as a means of surveillance and cultural appropriation. We examined this hypothesis among Palestinian citizens of Israel who were asked to evaluate a Jewish-Israeli speaker who invited the participants to a social event in either Arabic (participants’ language) or Hebrew (majority’s language). In Study 1 ($N = 524$), participants expressed more negative reactions toward the Arabic speaker than the Hebrew speaker. No differences were observed when the target was an ingroup member. In Study 2 ($N = 781$), we compared the outgroup speaker with a speaker from another group that was not involved in the conflict (i.e., Scotland) and with the ingroup speaker. Furthermore, we examined the role of intergroup distinctiveness, cultural appropriation and fear of surveillance as mediators. We replicated the findings of Study 1, and found no differences between the Arabic and English speakers in the Scottish condition. We also found that cultural appropriation and surveillance but not distinctiveness mediated the negative reaction toward the Jewish-Israeli speaker. Implications will be discussed.



Diversity, Equality and the Welfare State

[Michael Jindra](#)

Boston University, USA

There have been broad debates in the Nordic countries on the effects of recent increased diversity on their equality-oriented societies and especially their welfare states. This paper will focus on welfare state mechanisms in these countries that are implicit and long-standing in the Nordic countries and often unknown among outsiders such as in the US, who idealize the Nordic welfare states. These mechanisms, centered especially around labor market activation, are rooted in a specific history and cultural orientations toward reciprocity, responsibility (“do your duty, claim your rights”) and trust that go hand in hand with their better-known egalitarian ethos (e.g. *Jante*). The unbalanced US focus on autonomy and rights, for instance, hobbles its efforts to address diversity and equality. As Nordic countries attempt to balance diversity and equality, on-the-ground welfare state processes are crucial, and offer lessons for other countries dealing with similar issues. The interaction between culture and policy influences societal outcomes, for better or for worse. Too often, scholars display a bias toward policy and leave out culture. This paper brings together the literature on history, religion and culture in Scandinavia, including recent immigration, with the literature on the welfare state and policy, which few scholars have adequately connected.

The National Identity Dynamics of the Catalan Independence and Unionist Movements: A Social Psychological, Mixed-Methods Exploration

[Nuria Martinez](#) & *Dennis Nigbur*

Canterbury Christ Church University, UK

Political conflicts in multinational states offer opportunities to reflect on the tension between ethnocultural diversity and social inclusion in complex societies, yet secessionism has not received much socio-cultural psychological attention. The present mixed-methods research addresses this by interrogating motivations to support unionism or separatism in Catalonia – a Spanish region characterised by a ‘national identity deadlock’. In study 1, we analyse speeches from Catalan civil society groups to explore how they (de)mobilise secessionism. Results indicate that to navigate the inclusion-exclusion conundrum, both unionist and secessionist camps invoked superordinate identities based on common European and democratic alignments. These transnational ingroups were collated with civil groups’ political aspirations in suggesting normative courses of action whilst distancing themselves from ‘hot’ nationalistic rhetoric and its exclusionary connotations. ‘Hot’ national discourse was more readily invoked in Study 2, where in-depth interviews with Catalan citizens ($N = 12$) were analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. Here, depending on their orientations, participants either viewed unionism or secessionism as necessary to mitigate the continued loss of collective autonomy, the entrenched feelings of polarisation, and the anticipated future loss of their identities in the region. We summarise the above findings by introducing the third study to this research program – a quantitative survey currently being launched to test and extend the Social Identity - Relative Deprivation - Efficacy model (SIRDE) of social change. By doing so, we showcase the generative merits of methodological pluralism in contextually exploring intergroup conflict in multinational and diverse societies.



Immigration and Public Support for Social Policy: Accounting for the Gender Composition of Immigrant Populations

[Friedolin Merhout](#)

University of Copenhagen, Denmark

With increasing global mobility, the consequences of immigration for welfare states have become widely debated. A prominent hypothesis in this debate holds that immigration undermines support for social policies. So far, however, the literature provides no conclusive evidence of a consistent association between the two. We argue that this might be because research has largely treated immigrants as a monolithic mass. To start addressing this, we propose to account for the gender composition of the immigrant population. Drawing on research on attitudes toward immigration, immigration policy, and gendered tropes of immigrants, we develop three hypotheses detailing how the share of women among immigrants might moderate that populations' impact on individuals' social policy support. Using ISSP and United Nations data, we test these hypotheses for six social policies. We find no evidence of a predominant demographic or co-existing immigrant threats, but the results show a consistent pattern between immigration and social policy support that aligns with the dominance of a trope of "deviant immigrant men" posing a criminal threat. Specifically, increasing immigrant populations predict reduced support as the share of women among them decreases. Notwithstanding limitations, these findings have implications for research on social policy support, immigration, and related scholarship.

Imagined Extremist Communities: The Paradox of the Community-Driven Lone-Actor Terrorist

Inger Storm Sandboe¹ & Milan Obaidi²

- 1. University of Oslo, Norway*
- 2. University of Copenhagen, Denmark*

The term 'imagined extremist communities' is introduced to capture how right-wing lone actors are part of communities without being part of organized groups. The cases of Anders Behring Breivik, Brenton Tarrant, and Philip Manshaus, demonstrates that lone actors seek out and turn to an imagined extremist community; allowing them to identify with others and imagined that they belong. This further suggest that it might be misleading to consider them as alone in the literal sense as they are operating in an alternative culture where they can reinforce their own ideas and sustain their ideology. This is observed through the manner that others inspire them in their imagined extremist community, in which lone actors are subject to cognitive radicalization wherein they are prone to cognitive opening through their psychological characteristics. Actors with right-wing ideologies are particularly likely to pursue a community because of the psychological dispositions and conservative traits associated with the actors. In this paper, focusing on three recent terror attacks, conventional lone-actor profiles are discussed with attention to the social influences at play in the radicalization of lone actors, demonstrating that the social influences can be encapsulated as an imagined extremist community and offer a corresponding alternative to a terror cell.



Correcting Misperceptions about Ethno-Racial Discrimination: The Limits of Awareness Raising to Promote Support for Equal-Treatment Policies

*[Merlin Schaeffer](#), Krzysztof Krakowski, & Asmus Leth Olsen
University of Copenhagen, Denmark*

We examine the extent to which mainstream citizens are aware of ethno-racial discrimination in their society, and whether informing them about evidence for discrimination increases issue recognition and support for equal-treatment policies. A survey experiment on a representative sample of mainstream Danes ($N = 4800$) elicited perceptions of the extent to which persons with a Muslim name face discrimination in work, housing, education, and political representatives. We then tested the effects of informing citizens about the results of field experimental studies on discrimination, using three ideal-type framings of this evidence: an independent scientist framing the evidence as credible, a lawyer framing the evidence as a breach of the law, or a potentially affected minority framing the evidence as causing them grief. Two control groups enabled us to disentangle the effects of the correction and its framing from mere priming the topic of discrimination. The results indicate that most citizens are aware of discrimination and even tend to overperceive its extent. Furthermore, communicating evidence corrects perceptions of the extent of discrimination, but does not alter issue recognition or support for equal treatment policies. This pattern held among those who initially underestimated discrimination and was independent of framing. These findings suggest that awareness-raising initiatives are unlikely to be successful in promoting support for equal treatment policies.

Cooperation between diverse social groups

*[Pınar Uğurlar](#)
Ozyegin University, Istanbul, Turkey*

Psychological literature has suggested that the human tendency to adopt an "us versus them" perspective may impede cooperation among diverse social groups: People show an intergroup bias in that they tend to cooperate less with outgroup than ingroup members (e.g., Goette et al., 2006). Nevertheless, the reality of social dynamics is more complex than a simple ingroup versus outgroup dichotomy. People often belong to multiple groups. Two interacting people may belong to two distinct groups in one category (e.g., nationality: the U.S. vs. the U.K.) but may share group membership in another (e.g., gender: men vs. women). While intergroup bias can obstruct cooperation across social groups, the natural heterogeneity of social categories can create untapped opportunities to promote intergroup cooperation. In three high-powered, preregistered, and incentivized experiments, we found that cooperation increases with the number of shared group memberships in arbitrary social categories as well as in naturally existing social categories such as political orientation and ethnicity, or political orientation and religious beliefs (Uğurlar et al., under review). I aim to discuss the nature, underlying mechanisms, and boundary conditions of the relationship between overlapping multiple group memberships and cooperation.



“So we are somewhere hanging in between two cultures.”

Migrant parents: Perspectives on Parenting

[*Angela Veale*](#)

University College Cork, Ireland

Research has documented a pattern of disproportionate involvement of migrant families with the child protection services in Europe. Similar findings have been reported in Ireland, with Eastern European families reported as 1.5 times more likely than Irish families to be present in the child-care courts. Even more significantly, African families were seven times more likely to be facing these proceedings. According to Coulter (2015), two key issues bringing these families before the courts were mental health difficulties experienced by the mother and the use of physical punishment. Ethnic minority families' disproportionate involvement with child protection services is a complex issue influenced by Eurocentric social work practices, systematic racism, and other factors (Dalikeni, 2021). Parenting becomes a site of tension where western liberal values of child rights come into contact with indigenous parenting practices transmitted over generations, raising questions- as raised by this conference – on how such tensions can or should be balanced. This presentation draws on Valsiner's (2002) framework of semiotic demand settings and semiotic bordering processes (De Luca Picione & Valsiner 2017; Picione, Marsio, Tateo & Valsiner, 2022) applied to interview data with migrant mothers in Ireland to explore the intra-inter psychological dimensions of semiotic bordering practices and their regulatory function. Migrant mother's grapple with the liminal space of needing to be seen to conform to normative Irish parenting standards while maintaining the safety of their family and their confidence as a parent in their indigenous child-rearing abilities. These tensions have real world implications for migrant families, and for host society policy and practice.

How to Cope with Status Threat: Recognizing Majorities' Subgroup Uniqueness Increases Their Support for Minority Empowerment

[*Luca Versteegen*](#)¹ & *Stylianos Syropoulos*²

1. *University of Gothenburg, Sweden*

2. *Boston College, USA*

Empowerment of historically marginalized subgroups creates discomfort among some members of traditionally powerful subgroups (e.g., whites, men). In turn, such feelings of subjective status threat predict authoritarian attitudes. This is striking, given that these groups remain objectively privileged. What explains this mismatch between objective and perceived reality? We argue that this tension results from conflicting identity needs. Optimal Distinctiveness Theory proposes that individuals' well-being relies on an optimal balance between their needs a) to belong to the larger group and b) to be recognized as unique entities within that larger group. We argue that most whites and men feel firm belonging to society and even perceive themselves as prototypical members of it. However, firm belonging to the larger society, paired with a subjectively perceived erosion of subgroup recognition, leaves needs to be recognized as whites or men unsatisfied. Online experiments show that whites and men become more supportive of affirmative action and less hostile towards outgroups when their subgroups are recognized. Hence, minority empowerment will be more sustainable if majority members' uniqueness need is accounted for.