

Assigned Workshop A

Interdisciplinary Approaches. Does more contact lead to an increase of mutual acceptance, or to an increase of trouble? Bridging the theoretical divide by bridging the disciplines.

Does more contact lead to an increase of mutual acceptance, or to an increase of trouble? Bridging the theoretical divide by bridging the disciplines. The effects of contact between groups or individuals of different ethnic background have been subject to research and theorising by scholars from a variety of disciplines within the social, behavioural, economic and political sciences. The question if such contacts are beneficial or pernicious, and the influence of contextual factors in this respect, has been approached in different ways. Across disciplines, debate has over all been scarce. Debates have tended to stay restricted within e.g. particular circles of social psychologists (*contact theory* based on Allport's (1954) formulation of the contact hypothesis), social anthropologists (*social transactionalism* and the social construction of ethnic boundaries as first formulated by Barth (1959, 1969)) and network sociologists (heterogeneity theory as proposed by Blau (1977)).