

Review of bystander approaches in support of preventing race-based discrimination

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1. Introduction

During 2009 and 2010 in Australia there were ongoing public discussions about racism. Oftentimes this was in the context of racist attacks upon international students within the public realm of Australian cities. There has also continued to be concern about the racism experienced by new and emerging groups (e.g. African refugees), and by long-standing minorities (e.g. Indigenous Australians). In these discussions, concern has been levelled at institutional racism (the lack of substantive equality across ethnic groups), racism among the staff of organisations (e.g. police), as well as racist incivilities and discriminations enacted by ordinary people in their dealings with minorities. Over this period there have been calls for anti-racism initiatives: from academics, peak organisations, racism conferences and from human rights agencies.

Research from The Challenging Racism Project has found that the most common form of response from those targeted by interpersonal racism is to engage directly with perpetrators (Dunn, Forrest, Pe-Pua, Hynes, & Maeder-Han, 2009). This engagement is usually non-violent, and in many circumstances utilises humour or ridicule. The most common form of reported racism in Australia is being called an offensive slang name for a cultural group, and the most frequent active response to this form of racism was immediate confrontation of the perpetrator by those affected. However, as discussed below, racism and discrimination may take many forms, also being manifest in organisational policies and practices and expressed in more subtle behaviours. Some of the aforementioned calls for anti-racism have specifically asked for bystander action, by which they mean ordinary people speaking up and taking prosocial action when they witness racism.

VicHealth has identified the prevention of race-based discrimination and supporting diversity among its strategic priorities. VicHealth recognises that a spectrum of responses is required to reduce discrimination and its associated harms. However, the emphasis of its work is on preventing racism before it occurs. This is often referred to as primary prevention. In 2009, VicHealth worked in partnership with the University of Melbourne (The McCaughey Centre and the Onemda Koorie Health Research Centre); and the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission to develop an evidence informed framework to guide this work (Paradies, et al., 2009). In the course of the literature review conducted to inform framework development bystander approaches were identified as holding some promise in the primary prevention of race-based discrimination. Accordingly, VicHealth commissioned this review with a view to exploring possibilities for future program development to be undertaken both by VicHealth and others.

For the purposes of this report, racism is defined as a phenomenon that results in avoidable and unfair inequalities in power, resources or opportunities across racial, ethnic, cultural or religious groups in society. It can be expressed through beliefs, prejudices or behaviours/practices (Paradies, et al., 2009). This broad definition encompasses not only racial violence and legal discrimination, but also incorporates more subtle forms of bias and exclusion. This review focuses on bystander action in response to both interpersonal racism (i.e. interactions between people that result in avoidable and unfair inequalities across different racial, ethnic, cultural or religious groups) and systemic racism (i.e. requirements, conditions, practices, policies or processes that result in avoidable and unfair inequalities across different racial, ethnic, cultural or religious groups) (Paradies, et al., 2009). The potential role of the bystander is explored in relation to the varied forms and levels of racism, and across multiple levels and settings. It is based on the assumption that such action may be applied across a continuum from preventing racism occurring, to limiting its reoccurrence, to intervening after a racist incident. There has been very limited research on bystander anti-racism in Australia or overseas and scant policy consideration of how to facilitate and encourage such action.

1.1 Project aims

The aims of this project include:

- Provide a national and international literature review of the origins, underlying theories, and program application of bystander approaches or initiatives, including review of evaluations of initiatives and resources supporting bystander action where these exist.
- Review and evaluate relevant research, including research on organisational readiness to implement such approaches and survey results exploring community attitudes towards playing an active role in prevention activity.
- Identify and provide advice on the utility of existing resources designed to facilitate bystander responses across the range of priority settings identified by VicHealth's evidence-based framework as priorities for the prevention of race-based discrimination (in particular the workplace, sports organisations, schools and other education-based settings).
- Identify the place of bystander approaches in an evidence-informed approach to primary prevention practice in the area of race-based discrimination including enablers and obstacles to their application.
- Provide advice on activities (including resource development) that could be pursued by VicHealth to support bystander action.

1.2 Scope

The literature reviewed for this report was relatively broad in scope, necessitated by the sparse literature directly examining bystander anti-racism. Key search terms used included prosocial behaviour and bystander, and within these categories articles that explored racism, prejudice or discrimination were reviewed. In addition, the search for this project also drew on literature that examines the responses of targets or victims of racism, prejudice or discrimination. It is important to note that studies reviewed for this project were largely undertaken in the United States and in the discipline of social psychology. The emphasis on U.S. based literature is consistent with the social psychological literature in general.

2. What is bystander anti-racism?

Bystander behaviour has been a long standing interest of social psychologists. In social psychological terms a bystander refers to an individual who is present or witnesses an emergency. Historically, social psychologists have studied the conditions that facilitate or inhibit prosocial or helping behaviour of bystanders. A classic study by Rosenthal (1964) explored the case of Kitty Genovese, who was murdered on a residential street in New York in the presence of 38 witnesses. Though it took the attacker over half an hour to kill Kitty Genovese, none of the 38 observers offered any assistance nor contacted police. Cases of this kind have meant that factors affecting helping behaviour have become a core interest of social psychologists. In another oft cited study, Darley and Latané (1968) found that as the number of people present during an emergency increases, a bystander's feeling of personal responsibility is diminished. As a result, the speed at which a bystander offers help also decreases. Other studies have compared the helping behaviour of men and women (for a meta-analysis see Eagly & Crowley, 1986), finding that, in general, men tend to help more in emergencies or dangerous situations, while women help more frequently than their male counterparts in safe situations, such as when volunteering or spending time with family or friends.

From this brief review of the early social psychological literature on bystander behaviour it is clear that the term bystander simply refers to an individual present during a situation of interest – typically an emergency of some kind and very typically the person is a stranger. That is, the term bystander gives no indication of the extent to which an individual is *active* or willing to intervene.¹

This review is distinguished from this notion of bystander in two ways. First, it is focused on active bystanders. This is akin to Hyers (2007) interest in assertive responses (following Swim and colleagues, 1998), which are responses that specifically “communicate one’s displeasure in a way that is visible to the perpetrator” (cited p.1). However, the review also focuses on those who are *potentially active* bystanders. The twin interest is therefore in those who act, and the subjects who have that potential (who could be encouraged to act when they witness racist events, practices, cultures or outcomes).

¹ In some literature, in fact, the term bystander has an inference of passivity. For example, some of the Holocaust literature refers to bystanders as those who failed to act or intervene in the activities of the Nazi Party leading up to and during the Second World War.

Second, our interest is in research that speaks to more than just critical incidents of racism (i.e. those involving blatant, wilful racist behaviour and an identifiable perpetrator and victim). It also includes the potential role of the bystander in responding to more subtle, everyday forms of racism, institutional racism, as well as broader socio-cultural conditions that contribute to racism. These conditions, identified in the VicHealth framework, signal the potential role of the bystander in responding to others:

- expressing racist attitudes and beliefs
- expressing fear and anxiety about, or discomfort with and intolerance of diversity
- expressing negative stereotypes and prejudices about certain groups
- managing inter-cultural conflict poorly; and
- to engage others in positive intergroup interaction.

The bystander may also have a role in responding to the following factors understood to contribute to race-based discrimination at the organisational level:

- organisational cultures in which diversity is not valued or discrimination is not recognised and appropriately sanctioned
- policies and practices contributing to inequalities in outcomes for staff, members or service user/s from different groups
- limited positive inter-group interaction within organisations
- poor organisational leadership in relation to diversity and discrimination.

With the above in mind, bystander action is defined in this review as:

Action taken by a person or persons (not directly involved as a subject or perpetrator) to identify to speak out about or seek to engage others in responding, either directly or indirectly, to specific incidents of racism, or racist practices, cultures and systems.

Bystander action has the objectives of stopping the perpetration of a specific incident of racism, reducing the risk of its escalation and preventing physical, psychological and social harms that may result, as well as strengthening broader social norms that work against racism occurring in the future.

This definition cites changing social norms as one of the desired outcomes of bystander action. While we think of bystanders and potential bystanders as individuals, it is important to highlight that bystander action takes place in a variety of settings and social contexts. For example, many of the studies reviewed here examine bystander behaviour in schools and workplaces. The power of bystander anti-racism lies in the fact that it happens in social contexts and therefore has the potential to influence social norms. That is, bystander anti-racism has the power to push social norms towards intolerance of racism (see Section 6).

While taking this broader approach to the potential of the bystander role, we note that this is an emergent conceptualisation, and that consequently much of the literature is weighted toward a more traditional understanding.

3. Prevalence of bystander anti-racism

In spite of the potential for bystander intervention to have an impact on everyday and other forms of racism, there is a dearth of literature on this topic. When undertaking this review, no research directly examining community attitudes towards bystander interventions was identified. For this reason, it is difficult to ascertain how common or prevalent bystander intervention is, although as we show below, prevalence is likely to vary dramatically according to the setting, the characteristics of the agents involved, and the overtness of the racist incident. There are some useful non-academic sources that dramatically demonstrate the prevalence of pro-social action against racism. ABC news in the United States performed an experiment looking at the extent to which Americans were willing to intervene when Mexican day workers were refused service and verbally abused in a fast food restaurant by their server.² While it is unlikely that the news team followed a strict social scientific method in this experiment, it nonetheless may give some indication of the likelihood that onlookers will intervene when witnessing racism. Of the 88 customers exposed to the experiment most (49) did nothing, nine sided with the cashier and the remaining 30 stood up for the Mexicans, some even threatening never to return to the shop. This suggests that around one third of Americans were willing to intervene in a prosocial manner in a situation involving quite blatant and inflammatory racism.

In her examination of women's responses to anti-Black racism, anti-Semitism, heterosexism and sexism, Hyers (2007) found similar rates of assertive responses. While three-quarters of participants *considered* an assertive response, only forty per cent actually made them, as indicated in the diaries they kept of these incidents. Another study looked at White university students responses to racism. Only one interview participant discussed confronting other students' racist comments as a possible response (Spanierman, et al., 2008). These authors concluded that most of their interviewees remained passive when witnessing an instance of racism, though interview prompts did not directly ask participants about this type of response.

About and Joong (2008) found that in 44 per cent of incidents of race-based bullying at school some or all of the bystanders did nothing (either watched or left the scene). One quarter encouraged the bullying by laughing or provoking the bully. A peer intervened in less than half of the incidents (44%).

² See <http://abcnews.go.com/video/video?id=6591359>;

<http://abcnews.go.com/video/video?id=6591382&tab=9482930§ion=9660855&playlist=6639970>

This again points to the dramatic effect of setting and the forms of racism on the prevalence of a prosocial response. The literature clearly shows how the setting (shops, schools etc.), the characteristics of the agents involved (e.g. see gender variations in previous section), and the overtness of the racist incident (ambiguously racist or overtly so) will all effect the likelihood of a prosocial response.

4. Enabling bystander anti-racism

Table 1 below summarises the factors that may be associated with bystander action, as indicated in the literature. Ashburn-Nardo, Morris and Goodwin (2008) used the classic social-psychological research on bystander intervention cited earlier in this paper to develop the Confronting Prejudiced Responses (CPR) model. The CPR model outlines five steps that a bystander might go through in the process of intervening, as follows:

1. An incident must be interpreted as racism or discrimination.
2. The bystander must decide whether the incident warrants confrontation.
3. The bystander needs to take responsibility for intervening or confronting the perpetrator.
4. Once a bystander has taken responsibility they are required to decide how to confront or intervene. This means a bystander has to make an assessment that they have the skills or ability to intervene.
5. Finally, a bystander takes action, and this may involve a cost-benefit analysis.

The CPR model describes the processes involved in bystander action at an individual level. These processes are likely to remain much the same as individuals act across a range of settings. Organisations readiness in relation to bystander action could also be considered in relation to each stage of the CPR model, as follows:

1. Professional development and training may target employee/member understandings of racism and appropriate, inclusive behaviour in the workplace/organisation.
2. Communication by the organisation that any form of racism, no matter how 'minor' or jovial, is unacceptable in the workplace/organisation.
3. Educating employees/members/service users that they are expected to contribute to an inclusive, non-discriminatory workplace/organisational culture.
4. Educate employees/members/service users on the means (words, tenors and tactics) which they can use.
5. Establish organisational and culture and practice that normalises action, and which privileges action over inaction.

Applications of the CPR model to other settings and incidents (beyond organisations) would need to be tailored to those circumstances, for example, verbal abuse in a public space; disrespectful treatment in a shop; stereotypical comments at a family BBQ or in a sporting shed and so on.

The authors of the CPR model acknowledge that bystanders may not always go through such a deliberative process before intervening, that sometimes action is spontaneous or driven by strong emotion. The CPR model does offer, however, an indication of the factors that enable bystander action at each stage of the process. The first two steps of the model suggest that bystander action is facilitated by knowledge of what constitutes racism or discrimination, coupled with an awareness of the gravity of racism and an ability to see a situation from the target's perspective. This suggests the need for public education on the nature of racism, including its subtle manifestations as well as a focus on promoting empathy and perspective-taking (see Paradies, et al., 2009). Focus groups commissioned by VicHealth suggest that people are concerned about their racist behaviour leading children to become racist as well as broader concerns about the effects of racism on children's wellbeing and life chances. Given ample evidence to support these concerns (Castelli, Zogmaister, & Tomelleri, 2009; Pachter & Garcia, 2009), public awareness campaigns focused on these topics may be effective in instilling an awareness of the gravity of racism. There may also be utility in increasing awareness of the wider detrimental effects of everyday racism, like racist jokes and stereotypes, as these mundane offences are likely to be evaluated as not serious enough to respond to. The CPR model also indicates that bystander action is more likely when individuals feel responsible for intervening when racism occurs. This points to the importance of campaigns that inculcate a prosocial position, drawing on the influential effect of leaders, role models and peers.

The fourth step in the CPR model points to the importance of skills in intervention or confrontation. Bystander action is enabled when individuals perceive they have the skills or ability to act. Providing people with these skills/abilities as well as educating them about the utility of confrontation (see section below) will enable bystander anti-racism. Howley and Pedersen (2006) look at the roles of self and collective efficacy in helping behaviour. In this article self efficacy is understood as an individuals' belief that they can have an impact on community decisions, while collective efficacy refers to an individuals' belief that a group of people working together can affect community decisions. These researchers found that beliefs about *collective* rather than self efficacy were more closely linked to helping behaviour. According to step five of the CPR model, if bystanders are aware of the benefits of intervening, they are more likely to act.

Motives for making assertive responses were examined by Hyers (2007). She found that one of the strongest motives for action in response to a racist, sexist, heterosexist or anti-Semitic comment was educating the perpetrator. The other powerful motive for action was emotional expression. Female participants in the study reported their assertive responses were driven by a need to respond in a way that expressed their values. That is, bystander action was an expression of anger, disapproval, defiance and so on. Along the same lines, in a study of complaining, Kowalski (1996) found that complaining could serve a number of purposes. A complaint could be aimed at changing a situation or someone's behaviour, but complaints also serve an intrapsychic or cathartic function, to vent frustrations or express anger. Recent research by Stocks et al. (Stocks, Lishner, & Decker, 2009) suggests that bystander, or prosocial, behaviour is not only driven by self-oriented motives, like reducing negative affect within oneself, or catharsis as described above but that empathy for a target can be an independent driver of prosocial behaviour.

It is possible that self-affirmation also motivates potential bystanders, particularly men. As discussed earlier in this report Eagly and Crowley (1986) find that males are more likely than females to help in emergency or dangerous situations, which presumably allow men to be admired and seen in a 'heroic' light. A study by Carlson (2008) supports the idea that masculinity plays an important role when it comes to bystander intervention. A strong desire not to appear weak had implications for men in this study, and meant they were under pressure to "be big and powerful, to act aggressively, to fight..." (p.14). A more positive characterisation would be to think of this as leveraging from paternal drives associated with mainstream, if stereotypical, constructions of masculinity (action, leadership, bravery, protectiveness). It is likely that the relationship between normative masculinity and bystander action is complex; at times bystander intervention may offer opportunities to bolster normative masculinity, and normative masculinity could be a resource for encouraging prosocial action against racism. In similar circumstances, normative femininity may inhibit bystander action, yet action might be emboldened in safer circumstances where there are established and stronger relationships between protagonists.

5. Obstacles to bystander anti-racism

The social psychological literature points to a number of factors that could act as barriers or obstacles to bystander anti-racism (see Table 1 below for a summary). When designing public education campaigns or organisational level training encouraging bystander anti-racism, it is necessary to develop an understanding of these factors and the means by which they can be minimised.

There is a sizeable literature on the conditions under which bystanders are most likely to help others. One of the key variables of interest in this work is group identity. Research indicates that under most conditions, bystanders are most likely to help those they see as similar to themselves (Saucier, Miller, & Doucet, 2005). White American participants in a number of studies offered less help to Black Americans, particularly when they could attribute not helping to a reason other than race (Saucier, et al., 2005). That is, when helping took longer, involved more risk, was more difficult or required more effort, less help was given to Black compared to White Americans. Worryingly, Kunstman and Plant (2008) found that the discrepancy between help offered to Blacks relative to Whites was larger the higher the level of emergency. In this study, White participants took twice as long to help Blacks compared to Whites. Consistent with an aversive racism perspective,³ the relationship between race and helping speed was mediated by interpreting the situation as less severe. The extent of this variation in preparedness to assist across race may vary from country to country, depending on the history of ethnic/race relations. For example, in a nation with a strong racial divide in opportunity and interactions (Black and White) the levels of inter-racial assistance may be less than in a country where minorities are less visible, or where there is a greater level of diversity. Though the US-bias to extant research must be considered, there is insufficient research to make any claims about such variation.

That bystander action is more likely when the target belongs to the same group as an onlooker has pessimistic implications for bystander anti-racism. If only those belonging to the same ethnic group as the target of racism are likely to intervene, this severely restricts the potential for bystander anti-racism. A recent study found that the level of help offered depends on the group identity that is primed.

³ Aversive racism theory (Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986) asserts that the key feature of contemporary racism is ambivalence towards out-groups. Aversive racism is characterised by endorsement of egalitarian values coupled with an aversion towards out-groups. The implication of this characterisation is that when it is possible to attribute racist behaviour to some other factor, this aversion towards out-groups will become evident.

Levine et al. (Levine, Prosser, Evans, & Reicher, 2005) found that when a relatively narrow social group identity (Manchester United football fans) was primed, participants in the experiment were slower to help and offered less help to football fans from a rival team. When a more inclusive social group identity was primed (football fan), however, help offered was equivalent regardless of the particular team a target supported. Public education campaigns or organisational level training aimed at fostering more inclusive identities (including national, racial, ethnic, cultural and religious identities) may be required. These campaigns could emphasise shared values, experiences, affiliations and roles to promote common, inclusive social group membership. This has analogies to a general point made in regard to anti-racism strategies and especially social marketing campaigns.

From meta-analyses and reviews of anti-racism it has been advised that anti-racism campaigns that only celebrate and emphasise difference are less successful than those that also emphasise the universality of the human condition (Pedersen, Walker, & Wise, 2005). See Levy and colleagues (Levy, et al., 2005) for an example of one of the few studies that have focused on this issue. They find that anti-bias campaigns that convey a hybrid similarities-differences message, for example, “all people are the same in a way, but each person is also unique” (p.718), are most effective. Emphasising only similarities or differences was found to reduce bias amongst individuals from majority (White) groups, but was less effective for ethnic minorities. Lamont and Aksartova (2002) note that the relative importance of universalism as a tolerance discourse will vary from country to country (see also Pedersen, Walker, Paradies, & Guerin, in press).

In a study of school race-based bullying, Aboud and Joong (2008) found that the obstacles to bystander action tended to be *self focused*. It was very common in this study for children to fear that a bully might turn on them if they were to intervene in an incident of bullying. This finding highlights the importance of understanding bystander risks in intervening/confronting racism; a topic for which there appears to be no extant research.

Other common barriers were perceptions that intervening would be ineffective, that the issue was ‘none of my business’ and that ‘no words came to mind’, suggesting that the children in the study were ill-equipped to act in situations of race-based bullying. This reinforces the argument made in the previous section about the need to develop appropriate skills for bystander action. Perceived risks of bystander anti-racism are prohibitive not only in educational settings; understandings of perceived risks of bystander action in organisations and other institutional settings have not been studied. Yet there is clear utility in organisations being able to identify perceived risks of bystander anti-racism, if they are to encourage bystander action by staff.

In addition to the self-focused concerns identified as barriers to bystander action, another key obstacle is the preservation of interpersonal relations. Bystander anti-racism is often seen as carrying a cost in terms of interpersonal relations. This is an issue that this report will return to when discussing the effectiveness of bystander action. Hyers (2007) conducted a study focused on how “gender role prescriptions for women to be passive and accommodating” (p.1) could inhibit anti-racist or assertive responses. The study examined whether activist norms or gender role prescriptions take precedence when hearing a racist comment. From her analysis of 98 womens’ diaries of racist incidents, Hyers concluded that gender role prescriptions were “a prominent enforcer of silence” (p.10). The reasons that women didn’t respond in an assertive way (though three quarters considered assertive responses) were to avoid conflict (37%), impression management (13%) and not wanting to waste energy on offenders (12%). Similarly, Guerin and Guerin (2007) concluded that student involvement in anti-racism within the schoolyards of New Zealand was discouraged by the threat to social status. This can be related to the entry in Table 1, which suggests that a belief in freedom of speech may inhibit bystander intervention. Bystander intervention in conversations seen as expressing opinions or engaging in ‘light-hearted’ banter can provoke outcries of free speech and accusations of excessive levels of political correctness. Maher (2009) also found from her interviews with non-Muslim ‘media readers or viewers’ in Melbourne that speaking-up against anti-Islamic talk when in the company of family and close friends was hindered by the perceived threat to interpersonal relations and in-group status. The literature suggests the importance of engaging in bystander action or intervention that minimises damage to interpersonal relations (see the section below on the utility of bystander anti-racism).

Research by Guerin (2003, 2005) on the functions of racist talk is pertinent here. Guerin argues that one of the functions of racist talk is to maintain social relationships, a function that is overlooked in most of the literature. He describes these as “conversations in which racist statements function to maintain groups and relationships rather than seriously promote racism” (2003, p.29). This suggests that the social status to be gained from racist talk, or the power of racist talk, may be an obstacle to bystander action across a range of different settings. According to Guerin (2003), the implication of this is that bystander interventions need to parallel the social function of racist talk. That is, just citing facts or statistics alone as a means to contradict racist talk will be ineffective. Instead, high status talk and stories are needed to replace the social uses that racist talk often fulfils: “Conversational skills and strategies for dealing with racist talk need to be taught rather than just facts and evidence” (p.40). Some resources have been developed that attempt to do this; for example, a book produced by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (1998), which provides high status responses that could be used to counter common myths and misconceptions about Aboriginal people.

Another example is the Australian Human Rights Commission's pamphlet 'Face the Facts' which confronts stereotypes regarding Indigenous Australia, immigrants and asylum seekers, through the use of objective facts and neutral explanations of policies and their impacts.

While little empirical research has explored this issue, Scully and Rowe (2009) suggest that preservation of interpersonal relations may be an obstacle to bystander action in the workplace. They argue that a number of fears inhibit bystander interventions in organisations, including fear of losing friendships, concerns about loss of privacy, retaliation, embarrassing superiors and fear of potential consequences. Scully and Rowe (2009) emphasise the value of training in overcoming these obstacles, hypothesising that "with training, many bystanders can learn to be more comfortable and appropriate in their responses" (p.3). Such training needs to include both observing and *practicing* bystander behaviour.

"Training should include thorough discussions about when to act, when and whom to consult, and of course, whether to report the unacceptable behaviour of another person to a compliance office"
(Scully & Rowe, 2009, p.7).

Thus well-developed, empirically based training is imperative if organisations are to encourage employees to become active bystanders. This holds more generally for all spheres of bystander action – there is a need for education on: what constitutes racism; the morbid effects of racism (on victims, witnesses, organisations, and for society); the utility of bystander action; the likely productive effects, and; the best rhetoric, tenor and tactics for different types and settings of racism.

Table 1: Enablers and obstacles to bystander action

Enablers of bystander action	Obstacles to bystander action
Knowledge of what constitutes racism	The ambiguous nature of racism
Awareness of harm caused by racism	Exclusive group identity
Perception of responsibility to intervene	Fear of violence or vilification, being targeted by perpetrator
Perceived ability to intervene – skills (optimism, self/collective efficacy)	Perception that action would be ineffective
Desire to educate perpetrator	Lack of knowledge about how to intervene
Self-validation, catharsis – expressing anger, disapproval etc.	Gender role prescriptions for women
Desire to aid target of racism	Impression management, preserving interpersonal relations
Self-affirmation	Desire to avoid conflict
Anti-racist social norms	Freedom of speech/right to express one’s opinion

Sources: (Aboud & Joong, 2008; Ashburn-Nardo, et al., 2008; Howley & Pedersen, 2006; Hyers, 2007; Levine, et al., 2005; Saucier, et al., 2005; Stocks, et al., 2009; Wellman, Czopp, & Geers, 2009).

6. Contexts of bystander anti-racism

The discussion above has given some indication of the individual factors that enable or inhibit bystander anti-racism. Little research directly examines the influence of contextual factors on bystander anti-racism. In this section we turn to the literature on social norms to examine the role that contextual factors might play in bystander anti-racism.

Recent research by Kawakami, Dunn, Karmali and Dovidio (2009) looked at discrepancies between how people imagine they would feel upon hearing a racist comment and how they actually feel. These authors found that “although people anticipate feeling upset and taking action upon witnessing a racist act against an outgroup, they actually respond with indifference” (p.278). This study reveals that norms of egalitarianism may not be as potent as assumed. Those participants who were present when an experimental confederate⁴ made a racist comment did not punish the offender to the same extent as those who simply imagined being present when such a comment was made. This suggests that existing social norms may not promote bystander anti-racism to the extent that we would hope.

“Despite current egalitarian cultural norms and apparently good intentions, one reason why racism and discrimination remain so prevalent in society may be that people do not respond to overt acts of racism in the way they anticipate: They fail to censure others who transgress egalitarian norms” (Kawakami, et al., 2009, p.278).

There are two instructive findings from this study. First, it shows that changing peer norms must be a critical focus of efforts to encourage bystander anti-racism. Second, the fact that many people report *intentions* to engage in anti-racism indicates there is a good deal of untapped anti-racism potential, that is, for these intentions to be turned into anti-racist behaviour.

Related to this, recent Australian research finds that highly prejudiced individuals are more likely to feel that their views are shared by the wider community. This has been found regarding prejudice against Indigenous Australians and asylum seekers (Pedersen, Griffiths, & Watt, 2008), attitudes towards mandatory detention (Hartley & Pedersen, 2007), prejudice against Muslim Australians (Pedersen & Hartley, 2009) and African immigrants to Australia (Khan, 2009).

⁴ An experimental confederate is typically someone who is working for the researcher, but plays some other role within an experiment. For example, in Kawakami et al (2009) the confederates posed as other participants in the experiment.

This finding is worrying: people who perceive themselves to be in the majority are more forthright in expressing their attitudes and opinions, less prepared to compromise, and less likely to modify their views, than those who perceive themselves to be in the minority (Miller, 1993). Conversely, people who are relatively pro-diversity and anti-racist may fall silent as they often see themselves as in the minority. As a result, the relatively prejudiced often have an influence that is disproportionate to their numbers. Inaction by witnesses of racism will only reinforce the perception that prejudice is the norm.

Another study reinforced the importance of normative influences as potentially powerful drivers of social behaviour (Blanchard, Crandall, Brigham, & Vaughn, 1994). This research examined the effect of hearing others either condemn or condone racism, and found that the way others respond to racism strongly influenced an individual's reaction to racism. In fact, social influence was so strong that it accounted for 45 per cent of the variance in anti-racist opinions of participants. It is important to note that in this research anti-racist opinions could be pushed in either direction.

“Participants who heard someone offer strong antiracist views condemned racism significantly more strongly than those who did not. Furthermore, those who heard another person condone racism expressed significantly less strong antiracist views than those who had no one offer her views”
(Blanchard, et al., 1994, p.995).

While bystander anti-racism is largely conceived as an act of individuals, rather than being an organisation-driven or top-down intervention, it nonetheless promises considerable contextual effects. There is strong potential for bystander anti-racism to positively change the culture of community relations in a given setting of everyday life.

Scully and Rowe (2009) highlight the opportunities for employees to influence workplace climate through bystander intervention. They argue that typical workplace interventions focus on three groups: perpetrators, targets and supervisors/managers. Understandings of workplace interventions should be expanded to include bystanders present, according to Scully and Rowe, who hypothesise that “‘on the spot’ help and affirmation from bystanders may be especially effective because it is an immediate, positive, often unexpected reinforcement” (p.1). There is a higher likelihood that a colleague (potential bystander) compared to a supervisor will witness inappropriate behaviour in the workplace. Hence encouraging bystander interventions in an organisational context is potentially a powerful influencer of workplace climate.

Research exploring ethnic discrimination in the workplace found that simply witnessing ethnic discrimination directed at a co-worker was a stressful event (Low, Radhakrishnan, Schneider, & Rounds, 2007). That is, ethnic discrimination not only had detrimental effects on those directly targeted, but deleterious outcomes also ensued for those who witnessed the discrimination. Low and colleagues argue that, “knowledge of ethnic harassment of one’s co-workers was associated with deleterious well-being consequences that were comparable to those suffered by direct targets” (p.2290). This is compelling evidence that organisations should address race-based discrimination as a priority, through both employee skills in taking action against everyday racism and processes for responding to and redressing racism. It also points to the broader social benefit to be gained from equipping citizens with the skills to respond to racist events, as discussed below.

Taken together, this literature indicates that the contexts of racist talk or other forms of racism are implicated in bystander action. That a handful of outspoken people can influence “the normative climate of interracial social settings in either direction” (Blanchard, et al., 1994, p.997) underlines the importance of bystander action. The encouragement of bystander anti-racism offers the hope of pushing social norms towards intolerance of everyday racisms, and leveraging additional prosocial action from the untapped potential which seems to exist. This would have a positive effect on consensus perceptions, and, in a cyclical manner, dominant social norms would further embolden the public intolerance of racism and constrain public enactments of racism.

7. Effectiveness and modes of bystander anti-racism

This section explores the effectiveness of bystander anti-racism. We first look at the qualities of effective action before turning to evidence that demonstrates the utility of bystander anti-racism.

The most effective bystander action is that which communicates a message of disapproval or discomfort without damaging interpersonal relations. This is important considering that fear of detriment to interpersonal relations is a commonly cited barrier to bystander action. It is a delicate balance between communicating discomfort and maintaining interpersonal relations, and the most appropriate action will depend on features of a particular situation. Plous (2000) suggests that interventions will be most effective if a bystander can avoid inducing defensiveness in the offender. Possible means of doing this are as follows (from Plous, 2000, p.199):

1. Ask questions, rather than make statements. For example, 'why do you say that?' As Fisher and Ury (1983) argued, "Statements generate resistance, whereas questions generate answers... Questions offer... no target to strike at, no position to attack" (cited p.117).
2. Target the offender's egalitarian self-image where possible. For example, 'I'm surprised to hear you say that, because I've always thought of you as someone who is very open-minded'.
3. Describe how a racist comment or joke makes you feel. For example, 'It makes me uncomfortable to hear that'.
4. Take a respectful, rather than self-righteous, approach.

In line with a number of these suggestions, the Anti-racism Response Training (A.R.T.) program lists the following possible responses to racism: disagreeing/assertive interjection, asking the perpetrator to clarify/repeat their comments, expressing personal emotional reactions, empathic confrontation (i.e. helping perpetrator to self-reflect on their feelings/behaviour), noting the damage and offense caused, questioning the validity of the action, naming the action as racism, supporting the target, and mobilizing support from other bystanders/authorities. This program also includes a situation checklist which includes: (1) assessing the safety of the situation; (2) determining what action can be taken; and (3) considering what outside assistance is required. After the incident has been resolved, a last step is to consider who to debrief with and how (Ishiyama, 2007).

The interplay between confrontations and interpersonal relations is an area that Czopp, Monteith and Mark (2006) explored. Their study compared the effects of hostile and less threatening confrontations on stereotypical responses and evaluations of the bystander or confronter.

This research found that confrontations were effective in reducing subsequent use of stereotypes, regardless of the level of threat involved in the confrontation. Hostile interventions, however, had greater negative interpersonal consequences. Those exposed to the threatening confrontation expressed more anger towards the confronter and evaluated the confronter less favourably than those in the low threat condition: “a hostile and accusatory confrontation that labelled participants as racists elicited stronger feelings of anger than a calm appeal for fairness and equality” (p.799). This work implies that calm and measured confrontations can be equally as effective as more hostile approaches, while simultaneously preserving interpersonal relations. A recent study by Hyers (2010) similarly found that the hostility of a confrontation about heterosexism did not increase the effectiveness of the confrontation, and also had negative interpersonal implications.

In a paper examining the racism of some white youth in the English midlands, Nayak (2010) reflected on the visceral nature of the racist discourses they used in regard to Asian-British shop-keepers and residents, and to Nayak himself. The youth made references to the smell of Asians and their houses through references to excrement, their lack of morality, and associated them with rubbish and filth. This deeply evocative and visceral racism has been identified in the work of Mary Douglas, and more recently by David Sibley (1995) regarding Romani in Europe. Nayak observed that much of the government reports on, and prescriptions for improving, community relations, fail to engage with visceral racism. Nayak also noted the limited success of his own measured use of logic and contradiction to engage with these skinheads when they deployed their visceral racism at Asian-Britons and at him. His non-confrontational, and diplomatic, tactics had limited purchase and effect with those youth. It may be that visceral forms of racism require visceral-like responses (visceral anti-racism). The literature cited from North America on anti-racist bystander action suggests that non-confrontational approaches are likely to be the most effective. But Nayak’s work in Britain suggests that this will not always be the case, although clearly there will be variations in the effectiveness of bystander anti-racism depending on the tenor and tactics used and the setting. At the very least, we would caution against an automatic rejection of a role for more confrontational tactics and language. It also reiterates the need to be cognisant of the perceived and actual risks involved in responding to racism, particularly when it is of a more overt and explicit nature.

We outlined earlier the advice of Guerin (2003) that bystander interventions should reflect and address the social function of the racism they address. For example, if the racism of the schoolyard is principally about enhancing social status or showing-off, then the tactics and rhetoric of schoolyard anti-racism needs to operate in the same idiom. This suggests the merit of a parity between the nature of racism and the nature of bystander anti-racism.

More needs to be known about the relative merits of:

1. Always using diplomatic and non-confrontational tactics and rhetoric.
2. Always using confrontational tactics and rhetoric.
3. Varying the tactics and rhetoric depending on the social function that racism serves in a given setting.

The potential benefits of bystander intervention are threefold; improving outcomes for the target, the bystander (including other bystanders) and the perpetrator. In addition, it is important to consider the broad benefits of having a community of active bystanders, which will be discussed at the end of this section. There is some evidence that responding to an incident of racism has benefits for those directly targeted. Brondolo et al. (Brondolo, Brady ver Halen, Pencille, Beatty, & Contrada, 2009) make reference to research that demonstrates the effectiveness of responding to discrimination, citing research that indicates that those who responded to racism were less likely to have a hypertension diagnosis (Krieger, 1990) or high blood pressure (Krieger & Sidney, 1996) than those who did not respond. By extension there may be health benefits to a target of racism if a bystander were to take prosocial action. Bystander behaviour has been studied in some detail in the area of school bullying. Teachers cannot always be present to police bullying and hence bystander intervention could be an effective means of minimising bullying. Research that looked at bystander interventions in schools in Toronto, Canada found that “when bystanders intervened, they were often effective, 57% of the interventions stopped the bullying within 10 seconds” (Aboud & Joong, 2008, p.251). This suggests that bystander behaviour had positive outcomes for targets of bullying.

Qualitative research in the Australian context suggests that inaction from bystanders makes the experience of racism even more troubling. Some of the Muslim Australians who participated in the National Consultations on Eliminating Prejudice Against Arab and Muslim Australians by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (now the Australian Human Rights Commission) went as far as saying that the lack of bystander assistance was more hurtful than the experience of racism itself.

“About eight months ago, my mother was crossing the road at the bus stop in Footscray and a girl about 25 years old kept staring at her, maybe because my mother wears the full hijab. The girl came from behind her and tried to steal her bag and my mother struggled with her. There was a long scuffle and everyone in the street and bus stop was watching. During the struggle, the girl sprayed pepper spray in my mother’s eyes and she fainted. No-one picked her up and the bus driver kept going... My mother went to the doctor and she still can’t see properly and is too scared to catch a bus. She was more upset with the inaction of others rather than what happened.” (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 2004, p.173)

The specific nature of the additional morbidity from being un-defended is the sense that public peers do not consider the victim a citizen worthy of defence. This abandonment undermines their sense of citizenship and corrupts belonging (Dunn & Kamp, 2009). These conflagrate with the morbidities from the experience of racism, and together exacerbate senses of alienation and a lack of safety. Conversely, the productive effects of bystander anti-racism were evident in research undertaken by the Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria.

"When that woman was willing to speak up in front of the whole bus and tell that man that he was being rude and his behaviour made her ashamed, I knew that there were people who were not happy about what is happening. This is important. We worry about our children growing up here. We have to keep saying that we are in this country because we believe it is good, and that our children will grow up and make a good life and help others here." (Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria, 2008, p.42)

When victims were supported by bystanders, they reported productive effects on their senses of belonging, citizenship and community. There is a sense that the affirming effects of these direct forms of everyday anti-racism may moderate the morbidities of the racist experience.

As noted earlier, one of the key motives of active bystanders in Hyers (2007) was educating the perpetrator. Again, this is an area where empirical research is sparse. In a study of aversive racism and bystander behaviour, Son Hing, Li and Zanna (2002) designed an experiment which induced participants to respond in a manner that employed stereotypes. Following this, participants were required to write a persuasive essay arguing that minority students must be treated fairly at universities. An experimental confederate then pointed out the hypocrisy of their earlier response, pointing to participants' use of stereotypes, while the essay they had just written espousing egalitarian values was fresh in their minds.

For individuals high on a measure of aversive racism, highlighting the hypocrisy of their response led them to rely less on stereotypes in a post-test. This study of inducing hypocrisy provides some support for the assertion that bystander anti-racism has educative benefits for perpetrators of racism. Again, the broader literature on anti-racism points to the potential utility of discordance strategies that identify the hypocrisy of being egalitarian and also having prejudicial (and negative) attitudes towards people of a particular cultural group (Pedersen, et al., in press).

Clear benefits of assertive responding for bystanders themselves were evident in Hyers (2007) study of bystander action which found that almost three quarters of assertive responders (71%) were satisfied with their response, compared to only 31 per cent of those who responded in a non-assertive way.

When asked whether they would respond differently to such an incident in the future, those who had employed non-assertive responses were significantly more likely to express a desire to respond differently in the future than were assertive responders (54% vs. 29%). This study points to the utility of bystander action in terms of the personal satisfaction of bystanders.

“Non-assertive responders may have reported benefitting from avoiding conflict during the incident, but they also reported less satisfaction with their response, more desire to respond differently in the future, and less closure due to lingering anger or regret that a perpetrator was left uneducated and unchanged.” (Hyers, 2007, p.9)

In some cases, such lingering regret may even lead to rumination which has been associated with ill-health (Brosschot, Gerin, & Thayer, 2006). A well known Australian blogger, Tim Watts, reflected on a racist attack against three Asian students travelling on a Melbourne train which he witnessed (Watts, 2010). He described how although, “All but one person in the carriage strongly disapproved of what happened... no one could speak up until the guy [the racist] left.” He berates himself in the blog *Violence on the train to Camberwell*, asking “So why didn’t I say anything? For the same reason as the rest of the carriage – fear. Not fear of an awkward social situation – but fear for our physical safety in a situation involving racial aggression.” Taken together, these examples demonstrate the negative effects of witnessing racism, and suggest there is potential for bystander anti-racism to assuage these. As noted above, it also raises concerns about the safety of bystanders once they become active in such situations and the need for research to assess both the perceived and actual risk of bystanders becoming additional targets during racist incidents. While Tim Watts’ blog referred to a fear of physical violence, perceptions of risk are important even in situations unlikely to involve violence or physical risk. As discussed above, risk of damage to interpersonal relations are important for many potential bystanders.

There has been some exploration, again within social psychology, looking at who is best positioned to intervene in a confrontation of racism. The research on this issue is somewhat mixed. Czopp and Monteith (2003) found that bystander interventions by target group members (Black Americans in their research) were less effective in inducing feelings of guilt and self-criticism in perpetrators than confrontations from non-target group members (White Americans). In addition, confrontations from those targeted by racism were more likely to be assessed as an overreaction. A subsequent study, however, found that confrontation was equally effective regardless of whether the bystander belonged to a target or non-target group (Czopp, et al., 2006).

Nonetheless, the research reviewed here is optimistic about the potential for bystanders, regardless of target group status, to play a role in curbing everyday racism. If it is indeed the case that confrontations from non-target group members are more effective, then:

“...nontarget group members may have unique opportunities for prejudice reduction via confrontation... a nontarget’s challenge elicited more guilt from participants yet simultaneously made them feel less tense and uneasy about a target’s confrontation... although White people and men – without a clear vested interest – may think they should ‘mind their own business,’ they may have a unique advantage to help curb prejudice through confrontation.” (Czopp & Monteith, 2003, p.542)

If non-target groups members do have an especially effective role in bystander anti-racism then this makes the consensus effects all the more important, and leadership and role modelling to inculcate majority group responsibility is critical. One articulated danger of these forms of anti-racism are that they award cultural power (to act or not) to cultural majorities, who are requested to tolerate and/or protect cultural minorities, and through this process are confirmed as culturally privileged. However, the thrust of bystander antiracism may well be to police ingroup racism, which would seem culturally and politically appropriate.

Bystander anti-racism then potentially benefits targets, bystanders and perpetrators of racism. In addition, bystander anti-racism may aid the development of a community of active bystanders. An assessment of the utility of bystander anti-racism raises the question of whether bystander interventions simply inhibit public expressions of racism, and leave underlying beliefs unchanged. Czopp and colleagues (2006) argue that regardless of whether bystander action only changes public behaviour, this nonetheless “may have beneficial consequences by creating norms of egalitarianism and instigating self-regulatory processes” (p.784). It has also been established that behavioural change can result in changes in associated attitudes/beliefs over the long-term (Pedersen, et al., 2005).

As highlighted, social norms have powerful influences on behaviour and hence it will be productive to develop strong anti-racist social norms. Ultimately, changing behaviours and reducing racist incidents and outcomes ought to be the principal aims of anti-racism. Bystander anti-racism has the capacity to affect both. Indeed, bystander anti-racism can be conceptualised as a performative politics: Performative theory holds that, while statements and acts may have a “constative function of expressing “attitudes,” they have, above and beyond this, a performative function (Parker & Sedgwick, 1995, p.8). Attending to the performative function of an instance of verbal abuse, for example, involves going beyond the conventional focus on the interior attitudes and intentions of the speaking subject.

Performative theory suggests that we need to look beyond the individual to the social norms that produce the individual subject and condition his/her action (Austin, 1975; Butler, 1990, 1993, 1997; Foucault, 1979, 1981, 1985; Sedgwick, 1993, 2003). Performativity theory thus draws our attention to stated attitudes and acts as performances, which cite and reiterate local norms about acceptable ways of being. While performances may well repeat and reiterate racist norms, such norms are never immutable and anti-racist scholars have sought to exploit their instability. Dunn (2005) has demonstrated, for example, how the reiteration of norms of multiculturalism in the context of mosque development in Australia can destabilise hegemonic norms of 'White Australia' (see also Bhabha, 1992, 1994; Das, 1989).

Bystander action can be seen as a 'troubling' mechanism in that it unsettles otherwise normalised situations, displacing dominant and taken-for-granted acts and utterances. A performative approach to racism is consistent with the acceptance in the social science of racism that sociobiological justifications for racism have, to a large extent, been displaced by more cultural ones (Cohen, 1999; Dreher, 2006; Hall, 1992; Jayasuriya, 2002).

If racism is, at least in part, the outcome of normative performances, applications of performative theory have sought to understand ways of unsettling such norms. Historical instances have provided useful resources. For example, Hannah Arendt's (1964) example of the Danish King's refusal to countenance Nazi racism – and the consequent unsettling of racist norms – is a notable instance of performative anti-racism. Contemporary analyses of anti-racist performances highlight the importance of diverse modes of unsettling norms. Work on the nature of humour, for example, has indicated the role that humour plays in everyday acts of racism (Billig, 2001, 2005), but also points towards its capacity to unsettle norms and destabilise formerly entrenched positions (Hynes, Sharpe, & Fagan, 2007).

While such modes of anti-racism have the potential to generate cultural change, more traditionally educative anti-racism can also have positive impacts on social norms. A study by Paluck (2006) examined the effects of an education program implemented in 10 American high schools, the Anti Defamation League's (ADL) Peer Training Program. A major goal of this program was to develop skills and self-efficacy required to intervene when observing an incident of bias. The types of bystander responses the program aims to develop are: "intervening when they observe biased teasing in the hallways, but also speaking to the perpetrator of the harassment after the situation, getting an adult to help intervene, and offering support to the target following the incident" (p.9). It is clear that bystander interventions are understood here as extending well beyond a critical incident.

A key part of this program was influencing school *norms*. So those individuals selected and trained by the program were expected to return to the school and influence fellow students, and ultimately have an impact on school culture. This study indicated that the program had an impact on bystander responding to teasing, with individuals from treatment schools able to name more bystanders who responded to incidents of teasing than students attending control schools. The program was also effective in developing in depth understandings of bystander action. Students who took part in the program provided elaborated ideas about the importance of bystander intervention. For example, they talked about intervening due to a responsibility for school culture, as well as moral and practical responsibilities. This study provides some evidence that the development of bystander skills at an individual level can have wider benefits, impacting on social norms.

8. Review of bystander program resources

8.1 International examples

Even at the international level, bystander programs are limited. A few promising examples are discussed in this section.

8.1.1 Southern Poverty Law Center's *Speak Up! Responding to Everyday Bigotry* (US)

The Southern Poverty Law Center⁵ (SPLC) compiled stories of everyday bigotry in this book; stories were gathered from people across the United States who submitted their story via email, or took part in an interview or roundtable discussion.

“People spoke about encounters in stores and restaurants, on streets and in schools. They spoke about family, friends, classmates, and co-workers. They told us what they did or didn’t say – and what they wished they did or didn’t say” (p.5).

The SPLC book is structured in such a way that a couple of stories are presented, followed by reflections on the stories and suggested actions when facing such an issue. The book is reflective, rather than being overly prescriptive about what bystander behaviour should look like. The power of this book, however, lies in the attention paid to contexts and specific situations. The book covers bystander behaviour within families, among friends and neighbours, at work, school and in public. Within the domain of work, situations covered range from dealing with casual comments and workplace humour, to biases of supervisors. The advice given to bystanders is context specific and gives suggestions and advice for bystander behaviour spanning the wide range of situations described above. The book demonstrates the potential power of bystanders in responding to racism and other types of bias that occur frequently in everyday life.

⁵ See: www.tolerance.org

8.1.2 Plous' (2000) Lewinian Action Research (US)

Lewinian Action Research was developed by Kurt Lewin following World War II in the Commission on Community Interrelations (CCI) of the American Jewish Congress. The exercise discussed by Plous (2000) involves participants watching vignettes, within which one individual makes a prejudiced comment, which another individual counters. Out of this model, Plous developed a role playing exercise that emphasises *practicing* bystander skills. Three participants are involved in the exercise: a prejudice speaker, an anti-racist responder, and a coach. Ten scenarios are provided for students to work through.

For example, in the third scenario, the speaker is a real estate agent and the anti-racist responder is a New Yorker looking at real estate in Connecticut. The background information provided is a “comment was made during a home tour in which the agent stressed how beautiful New England churches are and how strong the Christian community is” (p.2). The prejudiced comment itself was, “We hate Jews around here” (p.2). The student assigned to be the anti-racist responder attempts to counter this comment, while the coach provides feedback to the responder on the efficacy of his or her response. From his experience Plous (2000) found that after undertaking the exercise most students reflect on the difficulty of intervening in such a way that doesn’t lead the speaker to become “defensive, entrenched or dismissive” (p.199).

8.1.3 Quabbin Mediation's Training Active Bystanders Program (Massachusetts, US)

Quabbin Mediation runs the Training Active Bystanders (TAB) program for both young people and adults.⁶ In this program, an active bystander is defined as “a witness who acts positive rather than ignores, watches passively, or joins in a harmful situation” (Tracy, 2008, p.1). The program has been delivered to police officers, but primarily focuses on students in a number of middle and high schools in the US. The skills that are practiced in the program include: “speaking up, recruiting allies, supporting the target, and encouraging the harm doer to change behaviour” (p.2). These skills are developed through role playing exercises, group discussions, diary writing and other games. The program was implemented in a number of schools and was evaluated.

⁶ See: www.quabbinmediation.org/html/tab.html

Tracy (2008) reports evaluating the program using an adapted version of Olweus' Bully/Victim Scale, which indicated that the program decreased incidents of harm at school. Before the program was run, 60 per cent of students indicated that they had been targets of harm over the previous week; in the post-test only 45 per cent of students reported being targets of harm. The design did include control schools and treatment schools had a reduction in incidents compared to control schools. The evaluation also incorporated qualitative elements, which suggested that youth trainers developed skills which they applied at school and beyond, in peer and family situations.

8.1.4 Exploring Humanitarian Law's Teacher Training Module, *Role-playing: What Can Bystanders Do? (US)*⁷

This teacher training module provides resources for teachers and their students to explore bystander behaviour. The training consists of four stages: students begin by reflecting on what it might take for a bystander to intervene. In the second stage students think about how they would define a 'bystander.' The definition that Exploring Humanitarian Law employed was "someone aware of an incident, without being involved, where the life or human dignity of others is in danger" (Exploring Humanitarian Law, unknown, p.5). The third phase of training utilises stories of bystander action, which students role play in small groups and then discuss the following questions (p.5):

- When and where did the events in the story take place?
- How was someone's life or human dignity at risk in this situation?
- What obstacles did rescuers face? What were they risking?
- Who were the bystanders and what choices did they make? Why?
- What pressures and risks were involved?
- What were the immediate results of the bystanders' actions? And later?

⁷ See: www.ehl.icrc.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=category§ionid=5&id=39&Itemid=163

It is clear that the focus of bystander action in this model is on critical, possibly violent, incidents. This is reflected in the stories of bystander action provided as examples, such as a shopkeeper in Thailand allowing a young boy fleeing a youth gang to take refuge in his shop. The humanitarian interest of this training program is also reflected in the stories. The final stage of the program sees students join back together and reflect on what they have learnt about bystander behaviour.

8.1.5 British Columbia Human Rights Coalition, *Responding to Incidents of Racism and Hate: A Handbook for Service Providers* (Canada)

This handbook (British Columbia Human Rights Coalition, 2003) was developed to give professional service providers access to the information, skills and resources required to support victims of racism and to respond effectively to issues of racism that arise in the community. The handbook begins by providing the information needed in order to start dealing with racism at work as a service provider. The second part of the handbook provides a framework for responding to racism. *Responding to Racism* identifies and develops the four cornerstones of an overall anti-racist strategy: prevention, representation, remedies and community development. The section on prevention shows how to work within your own organisation, institution, union or company to prevent discrimination before it occurs. It includes the importance of developing internal anti-racism or human rights policies and procedures. In addition, the handbook looks at how to design an education program, and provides an assessment of systemic tools such as employment and education equity.

8.2 Australian examples

There are very few examples of bystander programs that have been undertaken in Australia. There is a need for bystander programs to be developed in the Australian context. These programs can be informed by the literature in this area as well as the international examples outlined above.

8.2.1 Pt'chang Nonviolent Community Safety Group Inc.'s *Nonviolent Community Safety and Peacebuilding Handbook*

Pt'chang's vision statement emphasises that community safety is a pro-active process: "We believe that everyone has a basic right to feel safe at all times and that *everyone is...responsible* for creating safety in their lives and communities" (Pt'chang Nonviolent Community Safety Group Inc., 2003, p.6, emphasis added). Pt'chang run training programs that develop skills for intervening in conflict or violent situations, such as active listening skills, creative, non-violent methods of intervention and conflict resolution skills. While Pt'chang's programs are about safety in a broad sense and do not specifically refer to racism, much of their approach parallels bystander anti-racism. Again, the program is primarily targeted at incidents at the critical or violent end of the spectrum of incidents.

8.2.2 ANTaR's (Australian for Native Title and Reconciliation) *Speak Up Against Racism*

ANTaR provides resources on their website⁸ designed to assist people in responding to racism. ANTaR asserts that speaking up against racism can be an effective means of addressing racism. The website outlines general strategies to guide bystander action, such as appealing to someone's principles as a way to highlight racist or inappropriate behaviour. The website also provides advice tailored for responding to problematic comments in particular settings – at home, work, among friends, in public, in the media as well as guidance around speaking up about governments.

⁸ www.antar.org.au/issues_and_campaigns/health/racism/speak_up_against_racism

9. Summary and implications

The primary finding from this review of prosocial action, and its use and/or relevance for anti-racism, is the strong and largely untapped potential of bystander anti-racism. This overall finding is based upon a series of conclusions. First, racism is too common within Australian society – it has an everyday quality and prevalence. Second, the most common response to racism takes the form of victims responding to the acts and statements of perpetrators. Formal reporting of racism is rare, as the procedures are complicated, time consuming, personally taxing, and they offer limited prospects for satisfaction. Police and supervisors, teachers and human rights agencies cannot be everywhere at all times to regulate community relations. Ordinary people need to carry the lions share of the responsibility for addressing everyday racism.

Everyday anti-racism occurs when someone, be it a victim or a bystander, speaks out or against racism. This form of anti-racism is undernourished – there is a paucity of policy development. There is also very little research on prosocial interventions, and the social science on bystander anti-racism is even more limited, and there has been scant such work within Australia. The review reveals how little is known about the prevalence, nature and impacts of bystander anti-racism. Given this research vacuum it is perhaps unsurprising that there has been little policy development.

The second aim of this review was to assess organisational readiness for the encouragement of bystander anti-racism. There have been some calls from anti-racism conferences (Racism Revisited Symposium, 2010), and from some political leaders for bystander vigilance against racism. An example has included calls from the Race Relations Commissioner of the Australian Human Rights Commission (2010), and from his colleague in New Zealand (2009), for the public to speak out and protect students who are the focus of racist antipathy in the public realm. There is then a nascent policy interest and conviction regarding the benefits of prosocial bystander action against racism. The findings of the Challenging Racism Project, also demonstrate that there is a strong level of public acknowledgement that there is racism occurring in Australia and an equally strong agreement for the need for anti-racism action (Dunn, et al., 2009).

So the current policy and political context is a potentially fecund one for the development of bystander anti-racism. In Victoria, the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 states that every person has the right to equal and effective protection against discrimination. The Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (to come into effect in August 2011) places a duty on persons/organisations to proactively eliminate discrimination rather than only respond to complaints of discrimination.

Such a duty could be enforced through practice guidelines, action plans, enforceable undertakings and compliance notices. As such, it may become increasingly important for organisations to comply with the stages of the CPR model detailed above in relation to readiness for bystander action.

This review found that people imagine that they would be more active, if they witness a given instance of racism, than they actually are in reality. People like to think that they would act, although the research suggests people underperform. Again, this points to the strong untapped potential of bystander anti-racism. The review details some of the perceived obstacles to bystander anti-racism. These include perceptions of risk to the self and to social status, as well as negative effects to the institution where the racism has occurred. Another obstacle is within group identification which can numb prosocial responsibility to victims who may be from another group (e.g. another cultural background). The research suggests that cross group responsibility may be particularly weakened when the victim and bystander enjoy varied levels of cultural privilege. A notably disarming obstacle to bystander anti-racism is the lack of knowledge of what could be done and how. People lack a sense of what are efficacious bystander tactics, rhetoric and tenor. Research in this area is underdeveloped, particularly in the area of bystander action in organisational contexts, including the enablers and barriers to organisational readiness for bystander action.

The review reveals the many forms of bystander anti-racism. The categorisation of these forms and their mapping across different settings is a core contribution of this review. The forms of bystander anti-racism range from non-support of the perpetrator, through statements or actions that proclaim disapproval, to the filing of a report or the calling of authorities, to more overt in situ interventions such as speaking out or physical action. Those actions can be targeted at the perpetrator, or they could be principally about supporting the victim, or they may be aimed at generating alliances and allies from among other bystanders, or any mix of those three. Finally, there are different tenors of bystander anti-racism. It is unclear whether it is always better that bystander anti-racism adopts non-confrontational poetics, so as to avoid generating defensiveness within the racist protagonist. There may also be an argument for confrontational approaches in those circumstances where strident racism serves certain social purposes. The poetics of bystander anti-racism could include stern, serious but diplomatic statements. The use of humour is another option, but it again ranges from words and tenors that ridicule the racist, through to joking that deflates a tense situation or which distracts an offender from their mission and target. Very little is known about the relative merits of these different forms of bystander anti-racism across different social settings.

The international research reviewed for this report suggests that there are multi-level benefits from bystander anti-racism. The specific benefits can be categorised according to the victim, the active bystander, other witnesses, the offender, the organisation and society. Apart from having the racism they experience blunted or intercepted victims also benefited from not feeling abandoned by their peers in public, and they have their senses of citizenship, belonging and community (to the nation, locality, organisation or company) affirmed. Those who take prosocial action against racism, or the potential for racism, are said to benefit by not experiencing regret, and they accumulate positive feelings from having acted virtuously. Other witnesses to the prosocial act feel safer within their organisations or in those settings, and are emboldened to act themselves in the future.

The positive effects on racist antagonists include the constraining of their racist performances, thus challenging their consensus perceptions, constructing racist acts as a deviance. Positive effects on the thinking of the racist antagonist are not apparent from the literature. The established positive effect from bystander anti-racism on protagonists is the restraint of their actions. However, discussion around the rhetoric and tenor of action does infer that bystander anti-racism, if suitably non-confrontational, can generate attitudinal change in racist protagonists, although there are no research findings to back this as yet. The benefits of bystander anti-racism for organisations mirror those that have been established regarding all forms of anti-racism: reductions in absenteeism and staff turn-over, and enhanced staff productivity and creativity.

Finally, the review puts a persuasive case for the wider social benefits of bystander anti-racism. The hearing of anti-racist talk, and the witnessing of bystander anti-racism, has strong normative effects. It is striking that actions which are so individual can have such a structural-like impact upon the culture of organisations, localities and public settings. It is for this reason that bystander racism has such robust potential for the primary prevention of race-based discrimination.

10. Next steps/recommendations

The development of a bystander policy agenda for addressing and preventing race-based discrimination must develop resources that assist such prosocial action in the different spheres of life, and which adopt the different forms of bystander action outlined in this review. This review identified two broad types of resources: awareness raising and training. The first involves education and the public awareness raising. In the first instance there is a core need for a greater level of public awareness of the gravity and nefarious impacts of racism (individual morbidities, economic effects, public disorder, etc). As outlined in the CPR model, the recognition of racism, and of the importance of action, is a core precedent for bystander anti-racism.

Much of this awareness raising could be focussed on the community in general, though it would benefit from being anchored to specific settings. Key settings for application would include the workplace (outlining the effects of racism on productivity) and education (effects of racism on learning). Another important educational resource will be the raising of awareness about the productive effects of bystander action, for the victim, the active bystander and for society. Again, the CPR model reminds us that bystanders have to make a cost-benefit judgement about intervention, and community knowledge of the merits of prosocial action will aid this decision. A third aspect of awareness raising regards social responsibility, which will involve enhancing the sense of national pastoralism for all Australians. This aim is echoed in the Pt'chang program's emphasis that making Australia safe (from violence) is everyone's responsibility. Bystander action ought to be associated with a general national goal of non-violence and civic responsibility for that.

A second category of resources that are needed are training-based. One of the key obstacles to bystander action is lack of knowledge of what to say, how to say it, and what else can be done in responding to, or preventing, racism. The research from Scully and Rowe (2009) particularly stressed the importance of providing training on when to act, what to say, who to report to. They emphasise the need for organisations to provide training that means people are 'practiced' at bystander anti-racism. This includes training in making a judgement about where to focus their action: the perpetrator (racist protagonist), the victim, a supervisor (or person in authority), or to other witnesses (other bystanders). A good deal of such work has latterly been done to assist anti-bullying within school environments, and that resource development could be replicated for the development of bystander anti-racism training.

Priority settings for the development of resources (awareness raising and training) include:

- organisations (workplaces and schools)
- peer groups (family BBQs, sporting crowds and sheds)
- public realm (shops, public transport)
- internet (social networking, SMS exchange).

Resources of the types described above, for the priority settings identified, do not exist at present.

This review identified a series of obstacles to bystander anti-racism: risk to safety and status of self; traditional gender roles; and 'within group identification'. The first obstacle is about perceived threats to self if bystander action is taken, specifically the fear that a racist protagonist will turn their antipathy and aggression onto the active bystander. It is noteworthy that in some circumstances, greater numbers of witnesses can decrease propensity of individuals to take prosocial action.

Awareness raising and training should construct numbers as a source of bystander empowerment and safety. Public campaigns must encourage the speedy support of active bystanders (champions) by other witnesses, stressing the importance of backing-up those bystanders who have taken the lead in prosocial anti-racism. This could turn numbers of witnesses from being a source of inaction to a resource for action, and also addresses a core obstacle to action (safety of the self). The awareness raising discussed in the previous paragraph should also help assuage one of the other obstacles to action – risk to social status. If action is perceived to have overwhelmingly productive effects then this should minimise perceptions of risk to social status.

The research on the effects of traditional gender roles and expectations on bystander anti-racism suggests that gender can both encourage and impede action. The research infers that some forms of action are more likely from women, and in some spheres, whereas men are more predisposed to other forms of action in other spheres. For example, men may be more likely to act in regard to a serious incident, and to confront a racist antagonist. Whereas, women may be more likely to show empathy to a victim, and to feel very comfortable doing so within a peer setting, perhaps in a lunchroom or bathroom. To the extent that contemporary society heavily regulates gender performances, and that most people attempt to perform against one of the stylised and ideal gender norms (Butler, 1990; 1993), it may be productive to inculcate bystander activism by leveraging from those gender expectations.

Campaigns that encourage bystander activism could usefully encourage action by men, and leverage from hetero-patriarchal constructions of leadership in the public realm, protectorship and action. Some anti-violence campaigns already cite these constructions in their references to 'real men'. Caution must be exercised in this area. For example, using male stereotypes associated with violence could be detrimental and should be avoided. Similarly, campaigns could draw on traditional constructions of femininity to encourage bystander actions, especially those that show empathy with victims.

However, the real world effect of a measured use of such normative gender constructions is yet to be tested. A counter argument might be that non-normative gender performances will have more productive effects, such as if a woman spoke out against an aggressive male acting in a racist manner. As a woman, her stand might not so easily lend itself to ongoing and escalating violence. Again, little is known empirically about the varied effects of leveraging from gender roles in encouraging bystander anti-racism.

The review outlined how strong 'within group identification' could inhibit prosocial commitment to people from other groups, and that this would be even stronger where the groups enjoy different levels of cultural privilege. There is a philosophical debate about whether asking culturally privileged people to be concerned about and tolerant for lesser privileged people has the effect of reinforcing the cultural privilege, as they are then provided with a choice (Hage, 1998). Encouraging prosocial action must inculcate a sense of responsibility among powerful groups in our society, especially white older men. The thrust of such campaigns ought to then focus on their responsibility to act, rather than it being framed as a request that they consider taking on this responsibility. Older people could similarly be cajoled on their responsibilities. This inculcation of responsibility may be a core means for assuaging the deleterious effects of within group identification.

This review has also identified a series of very large research gaps. In the first instance there is very little empirical material on the prevalence, nature and impact of bystander anti-racism in Australia. Research is needed on the different forms of bystander anti-racism distilled in this review (victim orientated, perpetrator, active bystander, other witnesses, organisational), in different spheres of life (settings), and using different rhetoric and tenor (confrontational or not). A data gathering exercise, using a social survey method, should be used to gather data on the frequency, types, tenor, impacts and settings of ordinary people's bystander anti-racism and/or inaction. The surveys should test for preparedness to act using scenarios from different settings, with different types of racist incident (or potential incident), with different mixes of ethnicity, gender and age. The preferred forms of action, if any, should also be enumerated.

In broad, research is needed on the enablers and obstacles to action, as well as the extent to which obstacles can be assuaged or leveraged. This review recommends focus group testing of campaign and awareness raising material (scripted scenarios and some short-film vignettes). Materials will need to be developed for the different settings, types, and tenor of bystander anti-racism. Focus group participants should be surveyed, before and after their exposure to these materials, on their preparedness to act. Qualitative material will also be collected on participant response to the materials. The six questions set out by the Exploring Humanitarian Law group in the USA would be a useful starting point for devising questions for evaluating bystander anti-racism in Australia, and for testing organised attempts to encourage such action. The CPR model should also be tested for its suitability as a frame for program development of bystander anti-racism campaigns and training. Focus group participants should also be exposed to training materials, and participant dispositions and responses to these materials distilled. A pilot training package for Australian bystander anti-racism must be developed. Finally, focus group participants should be followed-up with a telephone survey 12 months after their session, to collect longer-term effects of awareness raising and training on their dispositions, and any incidents of bystander action (impacts) and/or failure to act over the last 12 months.

One of the settings mentioned earlier was the internet, which is becoming an ever more central part of everyday life. There is evidence from human rights agencies that there is an increasing amount of racist material and racist abuse within the cyber world (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010). There are semi-organised groups who have formed to contest this material (e.g. fightdemback) and some universities and academics (e.g. UTS) are assisting these cyber vigilantes with their work. Other people protest against cyber racism by ignoring it, or by reporting it to the carrier or platform and then moving on, and a handful take complaints to a human rights agency. There is no research at all on these examples of cyber bystander anti-racism, and this reflects the paucity of work on cyber racism itself. Further research on bystander anti-racism must take a close look at anti-racism within the internet.

Finally, the review highlights the philosophically refreshing nature of bystander anti-racism. It is a performative politics betwixt agency and structure, and it belies dichotomies between attitudes and actions, and focuses academic and policy attention on what appears and what is apparent (Arendt, 1958). It provides a robust means to inculcate primary prevention against everyday racism, using what have been called the 'weapons of the weak'.

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