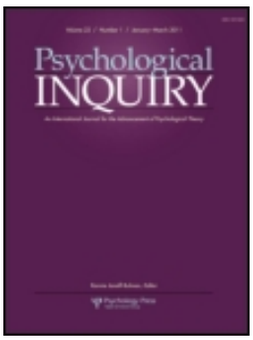

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Regulating the Scope of an Emotion Regulation Perspective on Intergroup Reconciliation

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In the target article, Čehajić-Clancy, Goldenberg, Gross, and Halperin (this issue) present an emotion regulation framework for understanding intergroup reconciliation. Applying insights gained from studying emotion regulation on the (inter-)personal level to the intergroup level, the proposed framework conceptualizes postconflict reconciliation as a process of regulating intergroup emotions. The authors review a variety of social-psychological interventions as ways to achieve emotional change by altering cognitive appraisals of intergroup situations. This framework draws attention to the powerful role that group-based emotion plays in postconflict settings and contributes to both the emotion regulation and intergroup reconciliation literatures. The authors also distinguish between direct and indirect emotion regulation, contending that the latter is more relevant and applicable to the intergroup context. Employing strategies that indirectly target cognitive appraisals, they argue, can ultimately change the associated emotional trajectory without an explicit instruction to regulate emotions.

In our commentary, we consider the scope of the authors' proposed conceptual model and argue that it runs the risk of being too narrow and too broad at the same time. There are two ways in which the model is narrow in its scope. First, it offers a limited understanding of intergroup reconciliation as operating predominantly at an emotional level and primarily involving emotional change. Second, it does not acknowledge the potential pitfalls of using emotion regulation to work toward reconciliation. Although we agree that intergroup reconciliation certainly involves overcoming emotional barriers to positive intergroup relations, we argue that sustainable reconciliation also requires a wide range of structural and psychological transformations that must go well beyond emotional changes. Construing reconciliation solely as an emotion regulation process could also backfire by distracting researchers and practitioners from the utility of other equally—and perhaps even more—critical reconciliatory efforts (e.g., the pursuit of justice) in societies recovering from mass violence. In addition to being too narrow, the authors' proposed conceptual model is also too broad because it recasts a wide variety of reconciliation interventions as means to indirectly regulate intergroup emotions. Reframing interventions as emotion regulation interventions, without evidence for the operation of emotion regulatory processes, runs the risk of obscuring the processes that are operating to the point where the conception of emotion regulation can become diluted. We explain our rationale for these points next. We believe that once it is seen in broader context and with a more precise conception of the underlying processes, the proposed model has a lot to offer the field of psychology in highlighting the important roles emotion and emotion regulation play in intergroup reconciliation.

Too Narrow I: Intergroup Reconciliation Is More Than Emotion Regulation

Although there is no single unified definition of intergroup reconciliation in the social sciences, different perspectives on reconciliation generally share a common understanding of intergroup reconciliation as "a process that leads to a stable end to conflict and is predicated on changes in the nature of adversarial relations between the adversaries and each of the parties' conflict-related needs, emotions, and cognitions" (Nadler, Malloy, & Fisher, 2008, p. 4). This conceptualization distinguishes reconciliation from successful conflict resolution: Whereas conflict resolution refers to the cessation of violence, reconciliation between adversaries requires mutual trust and mutual acceptance, as well as changes in psychological orientations (Kelman, 2008; Staub, Pearlman, Gubin, & Hagengimana, 2005). As Čehajić-Clancy and colleagues (this issue) point out, these changes in psychological orientations include "alterations in beliefs, emotions, identity, and behavioral intentions" (p. 75). The authors move, however, from viewing emotional transformations as *one of* multiple dimensions of intergroup reconciliation to suggesting that intergroup reconciliation is *at its core* an emotion-regulation process:

> We understand intergroup reconciliation as centrally involving positive affective change. (p. 75)
>
> In this review, we offer a perspective which conceptualizes intergroup reconciliation as an emotion-regulation process whose target is intergroup emotions. (p. 76)
>
> Reconciliation occurs when groups resist their default negative emotions which naturally perpetuate existing conflicts. (p. 81)
>
> According to our proposed model, we have defined reconciliation as operating mostly at an emotional level involving positive

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> affective change through changing specific psychological barriers (e.g., beliefs and identities). (p. 85)

We contend that a framework that considers emotion as the primary component of reconciliation oversimplifies the complex socio-psychological processes involved in intergroup reconciliation. Although group-based emotions indeed play a prominent role in intergroup relations, there is no reliable evidence that the effects of emotions go *above and beyond* the effects of structural factors, conflict-related needs, beliefs, goals, and motivations. In fact, it has been argued that stable and lasting peace requires both psychological *and* structural transformations (Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004; Staub, Pearlman, Gubin, & Hagengimana, 2005). In the sections that follow, we briefly discuss the various structural and socio-psychological elements that are critical to intergroup reconciliation and yet operate independently from group-based emotions. In doing so, we aim to show that changes in group-based emotions alone are insufficient for producing reconciliation after mass violence. Further, we argue that these processes can sometimes backfire.

Structural Factors

Although Čehajić-Clancy et al. (this issue) do not entirely ignore the role of structural factors in intergroup reconciliation, they deem them as playing a secondary role, with emotion regulation playing the primary role. They seem to briefly acknowledge the role of structural factors in citing studies showing that intergroup emotions operate above and beyond factors such as ideology and socioeconomic conditions. The cited empirical evidence, however, is limited to the correlational research by Maoz and McCauley (2008) and one set of experimental studies by Halperin and colleagues (2011). Both publications show that the relationship between emotional processes and support for destructive or constructive responses to conflict remained significant after taking into account individual respondents' demographic characteristics such as political affiliation, socioeconomic status, and/or education level. This approach therefore does not directly address macrolevel, structural factors such as political structure or economic development. Further, the cited research was conducted in the context of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, where intergroup dynamics are better described as ongoing violence than as successful conflict resolution. Given that a cessation of violence is viewed as a necessary precondition of reconciliation (Kelman, 2008; Staub, Pearlman, Gubin, & Hagengimana, 2005), the empirical evidence provided in the target article does not speak directly to the actual reconciliation process in *post*conflict situations. Despite the target article's lack of attention to structural factors, there actually *is* substantial evidence in the social science literature suggesting that structural factors play prominent roles in intergroup reconciliation.

Political and Economic Structures

Many conflict analysts agree that creating new political and economic structures—particularly those that help foster democracy, political integration, civil society, economic cooperation, and interdependence—is a necessary first step for reconciliation (e.g., Gardner Feldman, 1999; Zalaquett, 1999). The emphasis on democratization rests on the idea that establishing democratic rules and systems can lead to the reconfiguration of previously unequal or abusive power relations, the restoration of human rights and rule of law, and the enforcement of more inclusive societal values (Azburu, 1999; Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004). Increasing political space for civil society can directly facilitate local communities' engagement in conciliatory actions (Azburu, 1999; Murray & Greer, 1999). In addition to political reforms, economic reforms such as redistributing resources and fostering economic cooperation in areas of mutual interest can contribute to greater equality and harmonious interdependence among all groups in postconflict societies (e.g., Elhance & Ahmar, 1995). Improved standards of living can also directly empower individuals to support and maintain peace processes (Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004).

Structural Justice Mechanisms

Another important structural element in intergroup reconciliation concerns state efforts to redress past injustices through policies, institutions, and mechanisms (e.g., Deutsch, 2000). Virtually all large-scale conflicts involve systematic violations of justice principles and institutionalization of violence. Reconciliation therefore requires institutional acts and mechanisms (e.g., truth and reconciliation commissions, criminal tribunals, or state-level reparation/compensation programs) that formally address the injustices committed by all sides of a conflict. The establishment of formalized justice mechanisms plays a vital role in the reconciliation process by redressing victims' needs, ensuring accountability, and (re-)establishing human rights consciousness and compliance (e.g., Li, Leidner, Petrović, Orazani, & Rad, 2016; Méndez, 1997; Sikkink & Walling, 2007; for a review, see Leidner & Li, 2015).

One may argue that many of the structural transformations in postconflict societies also serve to influence group-based emotions, which then in turn lead to reconciliation. Reparation, for example, was discussed in the target article as increasing victims' reconciliatory attitudes through reduction in perceived insult. A closer scrutiny of the empirical evidence that the authors reviewed to support this mediational hypothesis, however, reveals that the cited research only measured perceived insult as the outcome and did not examine its link to reconciliation (Giner-Sorolla, Castano, Espinosa, & Brown, 2008; Giner-Sorolla, Kamau, & Castano, 2010). It is therefore unclear whether reduced perceived insult can indeed translate into increased willingness to reconcile. Moreover, the cited empirical studies focused exclusively on the effects of offers of reparation on emotions experienced by *victims* of wrongdoings. Other research has shown that offering reparations (or apologies) can serve as a pragmatic move that benefits the perpetrator group because such acts imply a shift in obligation from perpetrators to victims—it is now the victims' turn to accept the offer (Zaiser & Giner-Sorolla, 2013). This obligation shifting, in turn, increased perpetrators' *negative* feelings toward victims (because they expected victims to "reciprocate"). Thus, when considering perpetrators' reactions, it becomes apparent that reparations do not always improve the prospects of intergroup reconciliation by increasing positive group-based emotions.

There is additional evidence to suggest that structural mechanisms can contribute to reconciliation even when they have negative emotional consequences. In our recent review of the psychological consequences of different justice mechanisms (Leidner & Li, 2015), we identified the effects of justice mechanisms on adversarial parties' emotions and other conflict-related psychological outcomes (see also Leidner, Li, & Kardos, 2015, for a discussion of emotion- and health-related outcomes among perpetrators). Criminal tribunals, for example, are often associated with experiences of negative emotions among both victims and perpetrators (Kanyangara, Rimé, Philippot, & Yzerbyt, 2007). At the same time, however, tribunals are also associated with improved psychological adjustment such a sense of empowerment among victims (Lykes, Beristain, & Pérez-Armiñan, 2007). Similarly, even though the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission elicited negative emotions among victims (Colvin, 2008; Grunebaum-Ralph, 2001), it nevertheless increased victims' self-efficacy beliefs, self-esteem (Backer, 2005), and human rights consciousness (Gibson, 2004). From an emotion regulation perspective, these justice-oriented structural mechanisms may be deemed ineffective due to their undesirable effects on emotional outcomes. However, other psychological outcomes known to promote reconciliation (sense of empowerment, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and human rights consciousness) improved after the implementation of justice mechanisms. These outcomes, albeit operating mostly at a cognitive rather than an emotional level, are by no means less important for reconciliation than intergroup emotions. Thus, structural factors play an important role in reconciliation, and even when they influence emotions, (positive) emotional change does not always appear to be necessary for promoting reconciliation.

Socio-Psychological Factors: The Need for Justice

In addition to structural pathways to reconciliation, there are socio-psychological pathways to reconciliation that do not necessarily involve emotional change. As we mentioned in the previous section, there are numerous socio-psychological factors (e.g., conflict-related needs, motivations, cognitions, and beliefs) involved in the reconciliation process. As reviewing all the relevant factors is beyond the scope of this commentary (for a more comprehensive review, see Leidner, Tropp, & Lickel, 2013), we focus our discussion on one particularly important conflict-related need: the need for justice. We chose to focus here on this psychological need for two reasons. First, the need for justice can directly explain the effects of structural factors on reconciliation. Second, interventions that exclusively or overly target emotions can *hinder* the larger goal of reconciliation by overlooking or even working against the need for justice, and therefore the structural effects it serves. Thus, this socio-psychological factor illustrates how reconciliation understood narrowly as emotion regulation can, somewhat ironically, at times block a clear view on postconflict reconciliation.

Needs for Retributive and Restorative Justice

Whereas retributive justice refers to unilaterally punishing transgressors, restorative justice refers to repairing the relationship between perpetrators and victims, for instance, through symbolic (e.g., apologies) and material (e.g., financial reparations) compensation, or the reaffirmation of shared norms and values (e.g., Darley & Pittman, 2003). Motivations for retributive and restorative justice can have important implications for conflict resolution and reconciliation (Leidner, Castano, & Ginges, 2013; see also Mikula & Wenzel, 2000). In a series of experiments conducted in Serbia and the United States (Li et al., 2016), we demonstrate that members of victim groups, especially those who strongly glorify their own group, have a particularly strong need for both retributive and restorative justice. The strong desire for retributive (but not restorative) justice in turn increased support for future violence and decreased openness to reconciliation (also see Lickel, Miller, Stenstrom, Denson, & Schmader, 2006, for a review on vicarious retribution). Using an international criminal tribunal as an institutional intervention to address past injustices/violence, however, helped satisfy victims' need for retributive justice and thereby increased their willingness to reconcile with the perpetrator group. It is important to note that learning about the tribunal increased reconciliatory attitudes among victims in general, regardless of their levels of ingroup glorification (i.e., for both low *and* high glorifiers). These findings suggest that reconciliation efforts can directly benefit from structural and institutional mechanisms that address socio-psychological factors—in this case, victims' psychological need for retributive justice. Whereas emotion-oriented interventions such as perspective taking, intergroup contact, and self-affirmation can increase outgroup-directed empathy, trust, and forgiveness among victims (e.g., Čehajić, Brown, & Castano, 2008), they may be ineffective or even backfire in promoting reconciliation in its full scope if they fail to address involved parties' legitimate needs for justice.

Need for Social Justice/Equality

As discussed earlier, postconflict societies often face the pressing need to redress systematic discrimination and inequality. It has been cautioned that the emphasis on improving intergroup emotions has marginalized more urgent concerns about social justice (Dixon, Levine, Reicher, & Durrheim, 2012). A number of studies have provided evidence that although increasing positive intergroup emotions can foster social harmony, it runs the risk of reducing minority group members' support for social justice and collective action (e.g., Dixon, Tropp, Durrheim, & Tredoux, 2010; Wright & Lubensky, 2009). Therefore, interventions with a narrow focus on intergroup emotions risk perpetuating existing asymmetrical power relations by ignoring the broader socio-political context that gives rise to prejudice, discrimination, and group-based violence—the very phenomena that create a need for reconciliation to begin with (for a similar argument, see Maoz, 2011). In contrast, other interventions such as empowerment often *require* an emergence of "negative" intergroup emotions, including feelings of injustice and collective anger, which are powerful forces that motivate victims and members of disadvantaged groups to challenge the status quo (e.g., van Zomeren, Spears, Fischer, & Leach, 2004).

Taken together, intergroup reconciliation involves a broad range of goals and processes that are not limited to emotion regulation. In addition to positive intergroup emotions, stable and lasting peace also requires transformed political, economic,

and social relations based on justice and equality, as well as consideration of involved parties' psychological needs. Conflict interventions centered on emotion regulation may undermine reconciliation in the long run by overlooking or even suppressing these other critical goals and processes of reconciliation.

Too Narrow II: Emotion Regulation Can Promote Intergroup Reconciliation, But Also Intergroup Conflict

Emotion regulation can render intergroup reconciliation less likely not only by ignoring or obstructing other critical elements of reconciliation but also by increasing emotions that promote intergroup conflict. In fact, emotion regulation may be just *as "centrally" involved* in promoting intergroup conflict as it is in promoting intergroup reconciliation.

Regulation of empathy through perspective taking, for example, has been shown to both improve *and* disrupt relations between groups (Bruneau & Saxe, 2010; Epley, Caruso, & Bazerman, 2006; Vorauer, Martens, & Sasaki, 2009; Zebel, Doosje, & Spears, 2009). That is, taking the perspective of an outgroup can sometimes lead low-prejudiced individuals to be overly cautious about how to present themselves and thus inhibit positive behaviors toward outgroup members (Vorauer, Martens, & Sasaki, 2009). In the context of intergroup violence, we demonstrate that when people attempt to understand group-level harmdoing from the perspective of individual perpetrators from their ingroup, they are reluctant to punish these perpetrators (especially when participants strongly glorify the ingroup; Li, Leidner, & Fernandez-Campos, 2016). Zebel and colleagues (2009) also demonstrated the double-edged potential of perspective taking for improving intergroup relations. They found that although taking the perspective of outgroup victims promotes collective guilt among low ingroup identifiers, it reduces guilt among high identifiers. Ironically, high identifiers experienced more compassion toward victims when they took their perspective, but this compassion was *negatively* associated with feelings of guilt. As Zebel et al. powerfully argued, "[Compassion] may reinforce the power and status of the self in a less threatening way, perhaps even subtly emphasizing the superiority over the victim (e.g. where compassion implies paternalism)" (p. 64). These findings collectively suggest that the regulation of one emotion—even *up*regulation of an often *constructive* emotion (e.g., empathy)—can be destructive in the sense that it might reduce other constructive intergroup emotions, attitudes, and behaviors (e.g., guilt). In the worst-case scenario, it may even do so without the upregulated emotion having any positive effects on reconciliation, such as in Zebel et al.'s case of "compassion turned paternalism."

Emotion regulation can be particularly problematic in asymmetrical intergroup relations. In addition to the risk of reducing disadvantaged or minority groups' support for social justice, some of the emotion regulation strategies advocated in the target article can actually be threatening and aversive to members of disempowered groups (e.g., Bruneau & Saxe, 2010; Sagy, Kaplan, & Adwan, 2002). The creation of a common ingroup identity, for example, does not always result in positive intergroup outcomes, and may even backfire and lead to higher levels of hostility toward the outgroup (e.g., Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2007; Hewstone, Rubin, & Willis, 2002). This is particularly likely to occur among minority group members who strongly identify with their own group, perceive their disadvantaged group status as illegitimate, and value the distinctive qualities of their group (Dovidio et al., 2007). Members of minority groups tend to react more negatively than majority group members to interventions aimed to recategorize groups as one superordinate group. In relation to this point, Bruneau and Saxe (2010, 2012) have shown that members of low-power groups who are asked to take the perspective of the dominant group in a conflict—which requires some degree of merging between their own group identity with the (high-power) outgroup identity—can experience a threat to their social identity and self.

So far we have discussed how well-intended conflict interventions that target emotions can have undesirable, aversive consequences for intergroup relations. It is also worth noting that people spontaneously (i.e., without targeted intervention) engage in a variety of emotion regulation processes in response to intergroup conflict, many of which can undermine rather than facilitate reconciliation. People may be motivated to experience emotions that are consistent with their preexisting attitudes toward other groups, and thus may *up*regulate negative emotions such as anger or hatred to prepare themselves for confrontations with those groups, given that anger is perceived to be useful in confrontational situations (Tamir, 2009). With respect to intergroup conflict, perpetrators, for example, are motivated to engage in emotion regulatory processes such as attentional deployment or suppression, morally disengaging from anticipated and past atrocities against outgroup victims (Bandura, 1999; Castano & Giner-Sorolla, 2006; Leidner, Castano, Zaiser, & Giner-Sorolla, 2010). High glorifiers tend to excuse their group's wrongdoings even when faced with rather unambiguous information about it (Roccas, Klar, & Liviatan, 2006) or may shift the basis of their moral beliefs (Leidner & Castano, 2012), akin to an attentional deployment emotion regulation strategy. Such spontaneous use of emotion regulation strategies, when motivated by psychological defense motivations, allows people to maintain attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and behaviors that promote intergroup conflict rather than reconciliation.

Finally, despite the devastation intergroup conflict causes, people exposed to conflict may over time discern *emotional benefits* embedded in conflict, including the satisfaction of their basic psychological need for meaning and purpose, and thus may be reluctant to actively pursue reconciliation (Hedges, 2003). We find that across contexts (e.g., 2014 Israel–Gaza war, November 2015 Paris attacks, reminders of the American Revolutionary War), people exposed to conflict find meaning in it and thereby are *less* likely to support conflict resolution (Rovenpor, O'Brien, & Leidner, 2016). Thus, positive emotions may sustain conflict, rather than end it.

The research just reviewed demonstrates that emotion regulation serves as a double-edged sword, bearing equal potential for the emergence of constructive and destructive relations between adversarial parties. This insight is of both practical and theoretical importance. On a theoretical level, there is nothing about emotion regulation per se that makes it inherently well suited for facilitating intergroup reconciliation as

opposed to intergroup *conflict*. On an applied level, any efforts to bolster emotion regulatory capacities may provide people with tools that they can use—purposefully or not—to justify intergroup violence, thereby making reconciliation less likely. Thus, a comprehensive account of the role of emotion regulation in reconciliation should acknowledge the potential of emotion regulation to promote *and* undermine reconciliation. Such an account may spur the development of interventions that plan for and address these potential drawbacks of emotion regulation.

Too Broad: Emotion Regulation or Emotional Change? Required or Desired?

At the same time as the proposed framework is too narrow in describing both the antecedents of reconciliation (by downplaying the impact of structural and socio-psychological factors of reconciliation) and the consequences of emotion regulation for reconciliation (by downplaying the potential of emotion regulation to hinder reconciliation), it is too broad in its attempt to recast decades of social psychological interventions as emotion regulation. In particular, framing many of the interventions reviewed as representing instances of indirect emotion regulation is problematic. There are many ways in which the interventions categorized as "direct" emotion regulation differ from those categorized as "indirect" emotion regulation. Direct interventions *explicitly* instruct participants to change the way they think about *specific emotional information* about the group context, whereas indirect interventions subtly change *appraisals that are usually not the direct cause of the targeted emotion* (e.g., perceptions of group malleability). In other words, the difference is not only between direct or indirect delivery of the intervention but also in whether the central target of change is emotion or cognition/appraisal. With direct emotion regulation, emotional change is central to the phenomenon, whereas with indirect emotion regulation, changes in cognitive appraisal are central to the phenomenon; emotional change still occurs but seems secondary to cognitive appraisal changes.

Given these differences between direct and indirect emotion regulation, they appear to represent qualitatively different processes, and it is not clear exactly how the latter actually qualifies as emotion regulation. The literature has generally regarded emotion regulation as involving "the activation of a goal to modify the emotion-generative process" and "the motivated recruitment of one or more processes to influence emotion generation" (Gross, Sheppes, & Urry, 2011). Detecting emotions, activating goals to regulate them, selecting regulatory strategies, and implementing them are all key components of the emotion regulation process (Gross, 2015). Yet the "indirect emotion regulation" proposed in the target article involves none of these components, even though the term was originally coined in an effort to extend the emotion regulation literature to the intergroup context (Halperin, 2014; Halperin, Cohen-Chen, & Goldenberg, 2014). According to working definitions of emotion regulation and emotion generation, when emotional change occurs within an individual without the individual intending this change (i.e., in the absence of explicit and implicit emotion regulation goals) and without the employment of emotion-regulatory strategies, then the emotional change may be more parsimoniously considered emotion generation rather than emotion regulation (Gross, Sheppes, & Urry, 2011). In other words, "indirect emotion regulation" does produce emotional change but—strictly speaking—does not qualify as emotion *regulation*. Thus, although we certainly agree that the intergroup reconciliation interventions described in the target article involve emotional change and can be useful for promoting intergroup reconciliation, framing them as indirect emotion regulation seems to be inconsistent with the common conception of emotion regulation. It is therefore not clear what is gained by broadening the scope of emotion regulation in this way.

It is also not clear why emotional change is *required* for intergroup reconciliation interventions to work. In other words, it is not clear from the evidence reviewed whether emotional change precedes reconciliation and is *necessary* for its success, or whether emotional change is simply diagnostic of (i.e., associated with) and, of course, desirable for reconciliation outcomes. If emotional change *is* pivotal for the success or failure of these cognitive interventions, then empirical evidence is needed to support the *essential*—rather than *incidental*—role of emotional change in the efficacy of these interventions. The evidence reviewed earlier about the salience of negative emotions such as anger during the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission hint at the possibility that one does not need to experience positive emotions as a result of an intervention to be more likely to reconcile. In a recent article, we demonstrate that after reading alternative conflict narratives that acknowledge the suffering of outgroup members *in addition to* ingroup members, Americans, Israelis, and Turkish Kurds all reduced competitive victimhood and aggressive attitudes toward adversarial group members (Adelman, Leidner, Ünal, Nahhas, & Shnabel, 2016). Of importance, this shift in attitudes occurred *despite* the fact that participants did not like the narratives they read.

Finally, the authors' conceptualization of indirect emotion regulation proposes that interventions can target specific appraisals (e.g., perceptions of group malleability) to change a specific discrete emotion (e.g., hatred) to ultimately alter particular action tendencies (e.g., support for intergroup compromise). Despite this clear theoretical grounding, strong empirical evidence for the tight mapping between specific appraisals, discrete emotions, and action tendencies remains lacking. Many studies reviewed in the target paper did not measure emotions, and no evidence is presented for why certain discrete emotions (e.g., hatred) but not other emotions that are similar in valence but not appraisals (e.g., anger) would mediate the effects of some interventions but not others. That is, the authors organize their review by emotion type but do not provide evidence that these different emotions are uniquely sensitive to interventions that target their unique appraisals, or that changing these emotions uniquely shapes particular action tendencies associated with their unique appraisals. This type of evidence would bolster the utility of the model, allowing it to generate more nuanced predictions about the role of emotional change in shaping the effects of specific interventions on specific reconciliation outcomes. It would also help practitioners design more effective interventions.

In sum, the perspective provided by Cehajic-Clancy and colleagues (this issue) runs the risk of becoming too broad by calling any intervention in highly charged emotional situations emotion regulation interventions without evidence for the operation of emotion regulatory processes, the necessity of emotional change, or the unique connections between specific appraisals, emotions, and behaviors.

Conclusions

We agree with Cehajic-Clancy and colleagues (this issue) that emotions play a central role in intergroup conflict and that an emotion regulation perspective on intergroup reconciliation can spur the advancement of both theory and practice. The discussion points we raised do not in any way undermine the importance of the interventions reviewed. Further, we share the authors' enthusiasm for working toward a better understanding of the emotional changes and emotion regulation processes central to intergroup reconciliation. At the same time, we urge future researchers and practitioners to consider emotion regulation *in tandem with* structural and socio-psychological factors in shaping reconciliation and to acknowledge the potential pitfalls of a strict emotion regulation approach to reconciliation. Further, we hope that additional attention will be devoted to identifying the mechanisms underlying the emotional changes associated with both intergroup reconciliation and, on the flip side of the coin, conflict escalation.

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