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SHOULD YOU STAY AWAY FROM STRANGERS?

*Experiments on the Political
Consequences of Intergroup Contact*

Ethan Busby
Brigham Young University



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Abstract: Harmonious relationships between groups are critical for democracy, and intergroup contact presents an appealing way to encourage this harmony. However, what kinds of contact work best? Ethan Busby reviews existing studies of contact, proposes a framework for studying the political consequences of contact, and discusses four experiments following these recommendations. These studies focus on equal-status contact and rely on different samples and contexts. Busby finds that equal status does not promote more political support for racial and ethnic outgroups and can reduce outgroup support. The Element is concluded by discussing the implications of these findings for the study of contact generally.

Keywords: intergroup contact, experiments, political psychology, race, status

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