van Hoorn (1) argues that the conclusions reached in my report (2) are unwarranted because of pitfalls associated with (i) effect sizes, (ii) effect duration, and (iii) subject selection. None of these concerns should properly be labeled as pitfalls. van Hoorn (1) is conflating representativeness with substantive significance. To understand substantively significant effects of contact with new social groups, a researcher should use subjects that have not yet been exposed to that group, rather than seeking a sample that is representative of a larger population. Additionally, the median proportion Hispanic in the Census Tracts used in my study (2) were within two percentage points of the median Census Tract in the United States, making the population both typical and also substantively important for understanding the real-world effects of immigration. Furthermore, the sample used in my study (2) counters van Hoorn’s (1) claim that these subjects likely hold above-average exclusionary attitudes: as reported in table 2 of ref. 2, the subjects were far more politically liberal than the general US population. The claim that stronger prior exclusionary attitudes are likely to strengthen an individual’s initial response is also undermined by the results reported in table 1 of ref. 2, where the exact opposite occurs: the attitudes with higher pretreatment exclusionary levels were actually less responsive to the treatment.

An important feature of the design of my study (2) is that it involved exposure to only two putative immigrants for perhaps only minutes per day in the midst of potential distractions from a busy train platform. As such, these results are likely smaller than the results that may be obtained from the non-experimental process of immigration involving far more than two immigrants and more thorough exposure. The design of my study (2) can be considered an opportunity to more broadly test the effects of this important phenomenon.

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