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MULTIRACIAL FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

Implications for Educational Research and Practice

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The 2000 census reflected an evolving twist to a centuries-old drama around notions of race. People could identify themselves by more than one race, and 2.4 percent did (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). Furthermore, 6.8 percent of youths under 18 years of age were identified by more than one race. This change in the racial classification scheme fundamentally challenges a race system wedded to notions of racial purity and one-drop rules to enforce a monoracial reality (meaning, you can be only one race). Omi and Winant (1994), like others before and after them, note that race is a construction driven by legal, political, and historical interests and injury.

All U.S. racial groups represent multiracial populations. Despite the lack of evidence for a notion of pure race, the assignment of single race categories in the United States confines the reality and fate of individuals and the nation (Nash, 1999). The result is a society that has been very race-discriminating and illogical. Although not erasing the make-believe tale of race, the paradigm of multirace in the public domain challenges the monoracial orientation of U.S. society. The change in the 2000 census acknowledged the increased mixing of the U.S. population across racial lines and a trend toward younger persons identifying themselves as mixed, biracial, multiracial, and the specific variants these labels imply: Black/White, Asian/White, Asian/African American, American Indian and White.

This chapter presents some historical and demographic trends by which to understand why the educational system is challenged to consider how this change in numbers and identification of the young population has implications for training and curriculum. This chapter provides a framework for understanding mixed race identity and the familial and social variables that influence it. In this way, scholars, researchers, and practitioners may remain effective and facilitate new ways of thinking about race. In the words of American writer Peter DeVries, "The value of children is that they grow to become adults who in turn have children" (in Andrews, 1987, p. 167). Educators have the opportunity to equip students, from young child to university adult, with a knowledge base that can affect the critical thinking of hundreds if not thousands of students during their careers.

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS AND CIVIL RIGHTS INFLUENCES

He explained to me his theory—that the mulatto in America functions as a canary in the coal mine. The canaries, he said, were used by coal miners to gauge how poisonous the air underground was. They would bring a canary in with them, and if it grew sick and died, they knew the air was bad and that eventually everyone else would be poisoned by the fumes. My father said that likewise, mulattos had historically been the gauge of how poisonous American race relations were. The fate of the mulatto in history and in literature, he said, will manifest the symptoms that will eventually infect the rest of the nation. He pointed to the chart. "See, my guess is that you're the first generation of canaries to survive, a little injured perhaps, but alive. . . ."

—Senna (1998, pp. 335–336)

For the first time in history, the multiracially identified population was documented with a multiple race checkoff at 2.4 percent of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). This was quite a different option from tracking the fractions of African American heritage in the U.S. census at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century (Lee, 1993). On the 2000 census form, individuals were allowed to identify themselves by checking more than one race in answer to the race question. Those who did so were located primarily in the western United States. These states have representation greater than the average: Alaska, 5.4 percent; California, 4.7 percent; Hawaii, 21.4 percent; Nevada, 3.8 percent; New Mexico, 3.6 percent; and Washington, 3.6 percent. Oklahoma had 4.5 percent of its population identify as multiracial, primarily of American Indian and White European descent. Among those who checked more than one race, 93 percent identified themselves as being of two races, while the remaining seven percent checked three or more races. Seventy-two percent of the biracial people identified as being mixed with European heritage; for example, American Indian/White or Black/White. Approximately 20 percent of the remaining biracial respondents checked boxes indicating that they were of two minority racial groups such as Asian/African American.

The increase in the contemporary mixed heritage population is real, as evidenced by the steadily increasing number of people who have been recorded as interracially married since 1970, shortly after the Supreme Court repeal of the last antimiscegenation laws in 1967. Fourteen states still had laws declaring these marriages illegal in 1967 (Spickard, 1989).

In 1960, the census counted only 148,000 interracially married couples. The majority of these marriages were between White men and Black women. A decade later, the number had doubled. By 1980, the number was triple the count in the 1970 census and six times the number in the 1960 census. By 1990, Black-White intermarriage almost doubled again within a decade, and other intermarriages grew by approximately 50 percent (Root, 2001). With the last population accounting in 2000, the number of interracial marriages increased significantly (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). The public seems to be more attentive to Black and White interracial union. However, intermarriage is proportionally most frequent among other racial groups such as Asian Americans (Kitano, Fujino, & Sato, 1998), American Indians, and Latinos in some parts of the country (Root, 2001).

Two facts related to the growth of the U.S. multiracial population are relevant to educational practice. First, by 2003 federal law requires that government forms be in compliance with this "check all that apply" format for race. Although individual school districts and universities may not be required to be in compliance, states often follow federal law.

Second, 6.8 percent of the population younger than 18 years of age was identified as mixed race (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). This change will spur more dialogue and nomenclature about mixed heritage that challenges some aspects of curriculum and classroom discussion. For example, racial construction may become a necessary part of Black History month as students learn that many of the early Black leaders were mixed, but the political and economic system was constructed to enforce hypodescent (assignment to the racial group of lower social ranking). History may need to teach that Homer Plessy of *Plessy v. Ferguson* was Black by virtue of a great-grandparent and the rule of hypodescent. Japanese Americans of fractional percentage were interned, again because of hypodescent and racial phobia (Spickard, 1989).

The experience and the declaration of a mixed race identity have changed over the last 50 years. Prior to that period of time, the only discussion about mixed race was cast in Black and White. Themes and images of the tragic mulatta or mulatto abounded (Sollors, 1997). Although the Harlem Renaissance clearly included many multiracial persons of African and European descent, there was no room in U.S. society to resolve the disparity in status and worlds between Black and White. For example, Langston Hughes questioned his liminal position in the poem "Cross": "My old man died in a fine big house. My ma died in a shack. I wonder where I'm gonna die, Being neither white nor black?" (Hughes, 1926).

Three contemporary generations of mixed race persons currently exist (Root, in press). Each successive generation occurs over a compressed time period and has its own options for identity. The first generation (see Table 6.1) was born between the late 1940s and the late 1960s and grew up or experienced its young adult years during the civil rights movement. The second generation was born between the repeal of the antimiscegenation laws and approximately 1980. The third generation was born after 1980 and is now going through the school system, from kindergarten through college. There is reason to believe that another generation recently born, from the mid-1990s to the present, will experience being multiracial even differently than did the generation just coming of age.

Each generation's identity options differ. The first generation could not publicly declare a mixed race identity without being thought to be confused, disturbed, or self-hating. The civil rights movement further required solidarity, and a mixed race identity was not perceived as being in solidarity with any of the racial pride movements. The middle generation grew up during the last phase of major civil rights reform, with the enactment of the 1978 Office of Management and Budget's racial categories being used to protect civil rights in housing,

TABLE 6.1. Public Racial Identity Possible by Cohort of Racially Mixed People.

	Possible Identities				
Cohort	*Accept Identity Society Assigns*	*Monoracial Identity*	*Multiple Races*	*New Race*	*Symbolic Race*
Exotic (born before the late 1960s)	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Vanguard (born between the late 1960s and late 1970s)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Biracial boomer (born after 1980, post–civil rights)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

employment, lending, and other practices that had been racially discriminating. However, with the increasing number of mixed race persons, public declaration of mixed race identity was discouraged but situationally declared nevertheless in the 1980s and early 1990s.

The youngest generation grows up with distance from the civil rights movement while being beneficiaries of it. The reforms that characterized the third quarter of the twentieth century are history for them. This generation, whether monoracial or multiracial, is exposed less to the virulent forms of racism experienced by previous generations. Until they leave home, many are often not familiar with racism, though this does not necessarily mean they have not been subjected to it. This generation grows up amid many youths with similar multiracial backgrounds and media figures acknowledging their background: golfer Tiger Woods, actress Halle Berry, and speed skater Apollo Ono. Public declaration of mixed race identity is not unusual. Claiming a White identity, though uncommon, is not necessarily associated with maladjustment (Root, 1998).

Despite evidence that the United States is being forced to shift its racial paradigm, and younger people seem more capable of doing so, injurious policing or gatekeeping occurs, particularly in the middle school to college years when students of color are establishing their racial and ethnic identity. This often requires rejection of people and values that are not conventionally Black, Asian, Indian, or Latino (Azoulay, 1997; Funderburg, 1994; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002; Root, 1992, 1996; Wijeyesinghe & Jackson, 2001; Zack, 1995). For example, persons of mixed heritage, particularly of European heritage, are often seen as less authentic African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos or Chicanos, or American Indians. Authenticity tests are a form of racial hazing and illogically enforce a limited, superficial solidarity. These membership tests, posed by peers and learned from elders, authenticate the gatekeeper by their oppressive action and attitudes to those who are not conventionally conforming or who are vulnerable to rejection. Authenticity tests hurt, reject, and marginalize mixed race youth (Gaskins, 1999; No Collective, 1992; Wardle, 1999).

Negative experiences of gatekeeping, rejection, and hazing expel or push multiracial people out of communities with which they might otherwise identify (Funderburg, 1994; Hall, 1992; Rocquemore & Brunsma, 2002; Root, 1990; Williams-Leon & Nakashima, 2001). Thus some children and adolescents avoid situations where they are tested, taunted, and rejected and fulfill the fear of some ethnic communities that they will be lost to that community (Gaskins, 1999; No Collective, 1992; Rocquemore & Brunsma, 2002; Root, 1998, 1999). To pass these tests, one must exhibit stereotypic behavior, possibly shun or hide family members, and become a two-dimensional caricature of what racial groups have internalized as White definitions of racially identified behaviors for people of color. The rules for passing the test are determined by the gatekeeper. Simultaneously, these youths are subject to the same discrimination as other people of color.

Lastly, because of the unresolved history of racial injuries and trauma sustained in this nation, a racial hierarchy exists (Montagu, 1997). Within this hierarchy, a clear demarcation existed for centuries between Whites and everyone else. Non-White status was a caste marker until recently. This caste status seems to be eroding, but more slowly for African Americans than for other groups of color (Root, 2001).

RACIAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

There are advantages to not being this or that. You have a million stories, one for every occasion, and in a way they're all lies and in another way they're all true. When Indians say to me, "What are you?" I know exactly what they're asking, and answer Coeur d'Alene. I don't add, "Between a quarter and a half," because that's information they don't require, first off—though it may come later if I screw up and they're looking for reasons why. If one of my Dartmouth colleagues wonders, "Where did you study?" I pick the best place, the hardest one to get into, in order to establish that I belong. . . . There are times when I control who I'll be, and times when I let other people decide. I'm not all anything, but I'm a little bit of a lot. My roots spread in every direction, and if I water one set of them more often than others, it's because they need it more.

—Erdrich and Dorris (1991, pp. 166–167)

Normative Behavior and Experience

The contemporary literature on the adjustment and well-being of youths of mixed race who identify multiracially generally demonstrates good adjustment (Field, 1996; Cauce, Hiraga, Mason, Aguilar, Ordonez, & Gonzales, 1992; Gibbs & Hines, 1992; R. C. Johnson, 1992; Johnson & Nagoshi, 1986; Stephan, 1992). Field's study in 1991 of 31 biracial Black and White adolescents found that they had similarly positive self-concepts as their Black peers. Cauce and colleagues (1992) compared 22 biracial adolescents with 22 monoracial peers of color. They found no difference in self-reports or maternal reports on life stress, general distress, behavior problems, or self-worth. Gibbs and Hines (1992) suggest that from their study of 12 adolescents from 1987 to 1989, identity conflicts about belonging, sexuality, control, and future directions are associated with confusion. Though present to some degree in all, they found 9 (75 percent) of their participants were well adjusted. Those who were not well adjusted were more likely than the well-adjusted adolescents to live in a single-parent family, lack contact with the noncustodial parent and relatives, and avoid talking about racial issues.

In an earlier study, R. C. Johnson (1992) summarized the findings of reports from the Hawai'i Family Study of Cognitions. They tested 180 children of intermarriage for aspects of personality and found no difference on aspects of personality that are correlated with poor adjustment. The offspring of these marriages were compared with children of within-group marriages. R. C. Johnson summarizes (1992): "The only empirical data available support the position that whether one is the offspring of within- or across-racial mating does not significantly influence one's personal adjustment" (p. 247).

Many typical behaviors of persons of mixed heritage are nevertheless misunderstood and interpreted as signs of poor adjustment. Some of these behaviors stem from ways of sorting out the meaning of race and ethnicity from a mixed perspective, exposure to multiple types of discriminating comments, and ways of coping with the dynamics of situations. Historically, it was thought that mixed race people of European descent would aspire to be White and therefore try to pass (Daniel, 1992). Although this was true for some individuals of generations before the first generation outlined earlier, times are changing. Many young people from the middle or youngest generation who may phenotypically appear to be White, and are passed as White, make it clear that they do not wish to identify as White, but as a person of color. That passing remains a point of contention is evidence of the salience of race and how it is used to demarcate social status.

Situational ethnicity or race is an often-misunderstood expression of identity. Stephan (1992) reported a summary of findings for her studies on mixed heritage youth of Asian descent in Hawai'i and of mixed heritage Hispanic descent in New Mexico. She asked them about what identity they would use in five situations. The overwhelming majority of respondents gave answers differing with the situation. No respondent used the same identity across all five. Several findings emerged. Stephan found that cultural exposure was not a necessary condition for ethnic identity to occur, since a quarter of her respondents identified with a group to which they had little exposure. Furthermore, cultural exposure did not guarantee identification since 15 percent of participants did not identify with groups from which they were descended or to which they were consistently exposed. In combining results of her studies, she found that the status of the particular minority group in its region, acceptance, surnames, and physical appearance contributed to identity decisions.

Variability in identity and situational declarations that Stephan (1992) found has often been misunderstood to be confusion, rather than flexibility and adaptability. At some ages, it reflects experimentation. Code switching, usually a manifestation of situational identity, further adds to an observer's confusion and speculation as to the motives of mixed race people. It refers to changed expressions of behavior and speech (Root, 1998; Williams, 1992). Exaggerated code switches are often a response to thwart racial hazing or authenticity tests to be accepted by a particular ethnic group.

When contemporary studies have offered evidence of negative adjustment (Dimas, 1995; Field, 1996; Gibbs & Hines, 1992; Root, 1998; Tomishima, 1999), the researchers suggest that it is not being of mixed race per se but rather conflict arising in the family and environment or the lack of guidance in resolving developmental crisis that is responsible. For example, Dimas suggests that with Latino-identified adolescents of mixed parentage, the more stereotypically identified the adolescent was, the more psychological problems he or she reported. Dimas attributed this to the possibility that they were more frequently the recipient of negative attitudes and stigmatization that was internalized. Gibbs and Hines found that 3 of their 12 biracial Black White adolescents had some adjustment difficulties, correlated with living in a single-parent family and having less contact with the noncustodial parent and relatives and lack of conversation about race in the family. Field found that those adolescents whose reference group was White and who held negative feelings about Black persons had poorer adjustment. She notes that Helms (1990) has suggested that a White reference group would not predict poor adjustment. Rather, it might be this identity combined with negative feelings about being Black that would be associated with dissonance within oneself. Tomishima (1999) found that the family strife her 15 research participants had experienced (divorce, an addicted parent or sibling, an absent parent, abuse, adoption) confused identity or derailed it. These findings

are born out by Root (1998), who studied a small cohort that identified as White as well as biracial. However, they did not feel negative toward the racial minority aspect of their heritage. Root's findings also support the conclusions of the four studies that identified evidence for poor adjustment. She suggested that when racial identity is associated with poor adjustment, it is often because family dysfunction and traumas were color-coded at a young age. This color coding of the dysfunction attaches to external negative stereotypes associated with being a person of color. These findings would suggest that mixed race youths who are in the foster care system and experience repeated loss or abuse may have poorer adjustment than same race peers if they attach their lack of permanent placement or mistreatment to being mixed race or being a child of color. This research begs to be conducted.

Racial Identity Models

It is important that the racial identity models reviewed in this chapter be identified within specific eras. The first group of models reviewed was developed in the 1970s and early 1980s, corresponding with the civil rights and racial pride movements. They are stage models and place specific values on accomplishment of particular identity, whether it is Black, Asian, or biracial.

Stage Models. The most widely acknowledged and used racial identity models are those developed by Cross (1978), Helms (1990), and Parham (1989). They emerged from the Black Pride movement and are stage models. In more recent years, in response to observed variety in accomplishing identity and testing of theories, these models are less rigidly stage models (for instance, Cross, 1981) but have difficulty accommodating persons who declare mixed race. In general, the models suggest that there is an initial stage of internalization of a White reference group that necessarily is accompanied by internalization of devalued messages about Black people, values, and culture.

A signifying and often traumatic event awakens the individual to the lack of equity and fairness in this society. There is a retreat and immersion into the racial group of origin to gain support and affirmation as part of a process of undoing the harm of internalized racism. Subsequently, one emerges with an understanding of how racism works, and an appreciation for oneself and for Black people. An ability to embrace all people to work toward social justice while maintaining awareness of one's racial self in an affirmative sense characterizes the last stage of Cross's model.

Phinney (1989) has developed the most commonly cited model of panethnic and panracial identity. She combines Nigrescence models, the evolution of a positive Black identity, with stages of ego identity development based on Marcia's work (1966). Phinney suggests that racial identity development occurs in tandem with other aspects of identity development.

Overlapping with the development of these models, the contemporary body of work on mixed race identity began to emerge. The first models paralleled the work of monoracial theorists and developmental theorists in their form as stage models. In a study of people of Asian and European ancestry, Kich (1982, 1992) proposed a stage model for an evolved mixed race identity. His model is unique for clearly articulating a process of developing a mixed race identity, suggesting that this is a desirable one and starting the model from childhood. He suggests that from ages 3 to 10 children contend with their difference and the disparity between their experiences and the projections and perceptions of others. In his second stage, from age 8 to adolescence or young adulthood, he suggests that there is a developmental struggle for acceptance from others, parallel to many developmental models of child development. In the third stage, the resolution of the combined work of these previous two stages results in adoption of a biracial and bicultural identity.

Jacobs (1977, 1992) likewise offered a stage model based upon tasks posed to Black/White children three to eight years of age, corresponding to the ages encompassed by Kich's first stage. Jacobs suggests that issues of size, color, and gender have different dimensions and degrees of constancy that must be resolved during this period of time. In stage I, he notes that children have no valence attached to color, because racial color constancy has not been attained. In stage II, children achieve some notion of race and acquire a sense of constancy or stability to their sense of people's racial color by about four and a half years of age.

However, with the dawning awareness of racial prejudice, children experience ambivalence about their racial status. Ambivalence may be experienced sequentially, with rejection or ambivalence toward Blackness and then toward Whiteness. He notes that these preferences, rejections, and ambivalences were also projected onto Asians.

Simultaneously, children are attempting to cognitively make sense out of the biracial label. They observe a perceptual distortion of color as a way of trying to make sense of racial labels and of reconciling color assignments in the family. Half of the children in this stage assigned themselves a color one or two shades darker than they were in order to make their color more clearly brown or blended.

The stages were extended by including 8-to-12-year-old children in a second phase of the study. In stage III, children have resolved the correlation between skin color and racial grouping and understand that racial group is determined by parentage. Implicit in this accomplishment is that children have acquired some sense of racial hierarchicalization and hypodescent. For example, in the era in which this study was conducted (second generation) a biracial Black/White child could be Black or biracial, but not White.

Poston (1990) presented a direct translation of the Nigrescence models for his stages, offering a five-stage model. In the first stage, the awareness of race and ethnicity was not necessarily attached to ethnic background (similar to Jacobs's stage II). In his second stage, people had to choose a racial identity; their cognitive capacity usually allowed a single identity. The third stage is driven by dissonance between the chosen identity and the incomplete match with ethnic and racial identity. Through the third and fourth stages, a person still tended to choose a single, monoracial identity, though moving to an appreciation of both parent cultures. In the fifth stage, the parent cultures were personalized and individuals integrated this knowledge and experience into their identity. They might choose a mixed race identity.

Ecological Models. Cross (1981) noted that his work and that of others were influenced by the naturalistic event of Black identity change during the civil rights and racial pride movements. Further, he notes that Bronfenbrenner, a sociologist, had stated that it was important "to make detailed observations when a system is undergoing change in its 'real world' environment" (Cross, 1981, p. x). Thus, the Nigrescence models both evolved and were a response to needed real-world change. Similarly, the emergence of a visible and growing cohort of people of mixed heritage, identifying as such, marks the emergence of a different type of racial identity model. These models do not offer stages; they typically focus on social process and variables, and they suggest that different identities may be viable and reflect certain needs. The models emerge within a similar time frame (D. J. Johnson, 1992; Miller, 1992; Ramirez, 1983, 1998; Root, 1990; Stephan, 1992; Tomishima, 1999; Trimble, 2000; Wijeyesinghe, 2001).

Tomishima (1999) used a grounded theory methodology to examine application of Cross's (1978) model of Nigrescence and Root's (1998; 1999) "ecological framework for understanding racial identity development." She used 15 participants from ages 20 to 32, of different mixes but of whom two-thirds had White mothers. She found evidence for stage movement in line with Cross's model but noted that the biracial experience did not afford racial shelter because of intraethnic prejudice. The immersion in the racial group of origins associated with monoracial stage models does not extend the same protection to multiracial individuals as to monoracial individuals. As Root (1998) and others suggest, racial hazing may be experienced with this attempt at shelter or immersion. Tomishima further suggested that combining two heritages is a task that is neither accommodated nor explained by the stage models. Thus she concluded that these additional experiences add to the tasks included in racial identity making some of the process distinctly different in some important ways. Consequently she found support for Root's model.

Acknowledging that this model was just being outlined, Tomishima (1999) noted that it was important for the role of oppression, clearly outlined in Cross's (1978) model and implied in Root's (1998) model, to be explicitly stated in the ecological framework model if it is to be genuinely useful. Tomishima further found that it was useful to have a model that detailed more specific aspects of the family environment such as family strife, the dominant caretaker, the extended family's reaction to the interracial marriage, and siblings, all of which were detailed in Root's study of biracial siblings as critical and explanatory factors for identity (Root, 1998).

Tomishima's (1999) findings also significantly overlapped with Wijeyesinghe's (2001) "factor model of multiracial identity." In this model, eight life factor experiences have an impact on one's racial identity choice: racial ancestry, cultural attachment, early experiences and socialization, political awareness and orientation, spirituality, physical appearance, social and historical context, and other social identities. This model also overlaps significantly with Root's (1998, 1999) model. It is unique in that it explicitly lists spirituality as a significant factor in combating racism and subsequently influencing racial identity. It explains through narrative how early-life experiences shape identity, and it combines different aspects and locations of variables in Root's model under this category.

Root's (1998; 1999) ecological framework for understanding racial identity is outlined later in this chapter (see Figure 6.1). The theoretical basis for this model is symbolic interactionism, from sociology. The research on monoracial and biracial identity finds that there is much variation in identity, whether it be influenced by the situation, the generation, or some other mediating variable. Furthermore, a particular identity is not necessarily correlated with self-esteem. Whereas certain experiences and processes influence identity, the presence and meaning of these experiences vary across generations.

Table 6.1 lists five identity options for the three generational cohorts, as a way of understanding generational shifts in identity options. Interviewing adults in the mid-1980s and combing through the research on multiraciality conducted by multiracial people, Root (1990) outlined four types of identity resolution for multiracial people. These identities were subject to change in a person's lifetime. None was better than the other, but all were governed by circumstances, personality, generation, geographical location, and other external influences. The identities are (a) accept the monoracial identity society assigns, (b) actively choose a monoracial identity (congruent with the identity society would assign), (c) define self as biracial or multiracial, or (d) develop a "new race" identity. Her research a decade later included interviews with biracial baby boomers, the youngest cohort studied; a fifth identity

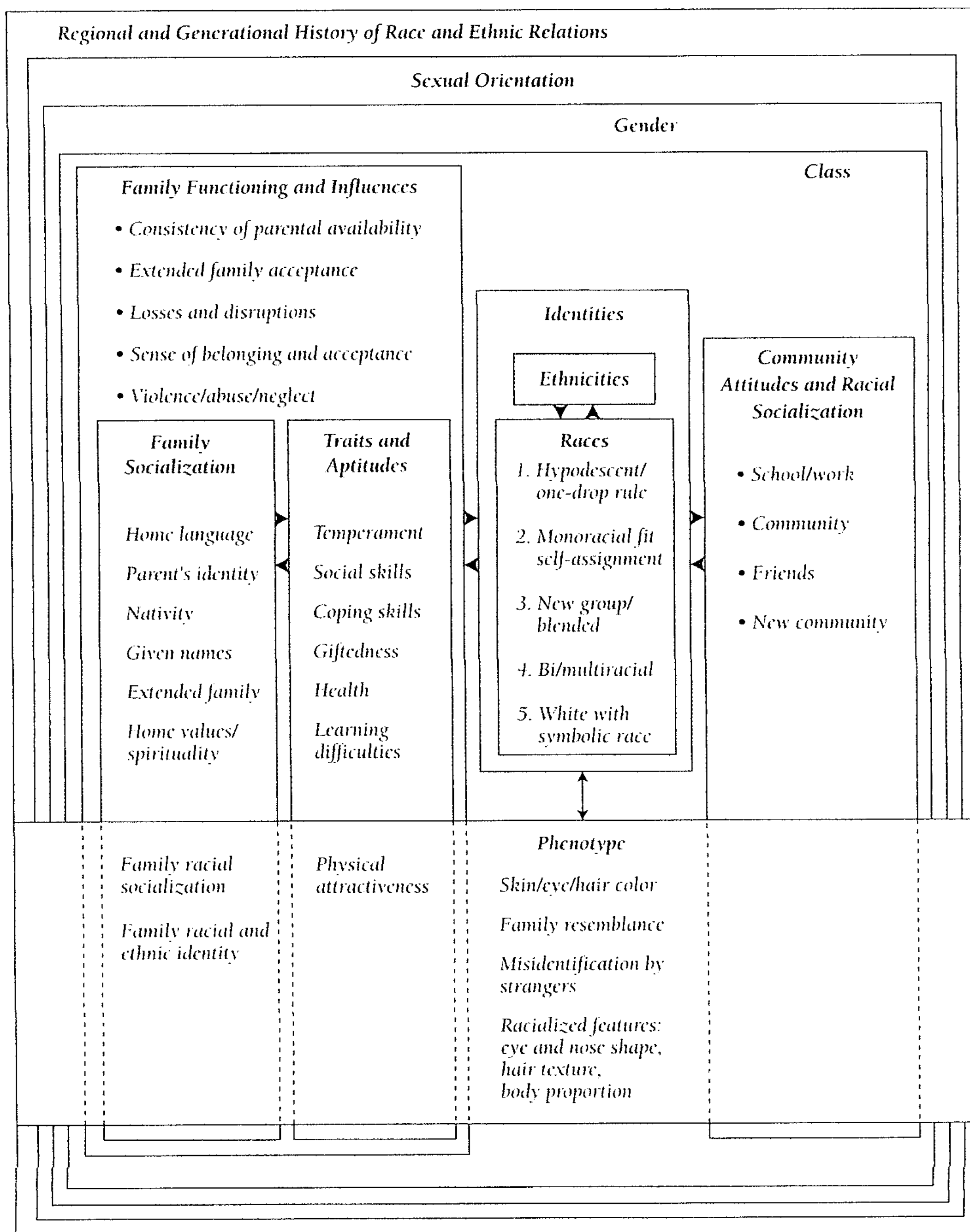

FIGURE 6.1. Ecological Framework for Understanding Identity Development.

emerged: (e) symbolic race, the declaration of a White identity with simultaneous attachment to and detachment from one's heritage of color (Root, 1998).

The macro lenses of the model are gender, regional history of race relations, class, and generation. *Regional history* is influenced by and subsequently influences racial history, racial proportions, and economics (Miller, 1992). *Gender* affects identity significantly because it is a master status (Collins, 1991; Comas-Diaz, 1996; Hurtado, 1996; Root, 1994; Zack, 1997). *Class* is conflated with race. *Generational history* has been explained previously in this chapter as subsuming a set of historical experiences that interact with the region of the country within which one is raised and the identity choices possible.

Theoretically, certain experiences and influences can change salience during one's lifetime and situation. The salience of the screening lenses varies with the individual. For example, though the model can have sexual orientation as a sublens under "family socialization," there is a period of time in sorting out sexual identity in which this salient experience of identity is a macro lens through which other experiences are screened (Allman, 1996; Kich, 1996).

The middle lenses cluster certain experiences as inherited influences, traits, social interactions with the community, phenotype, and eventually identity. The *family socialization influences* primarily do not reflect biology but rather influences originating in the home that are often external markers of identity such as language, nativity, given names, values, customs, parent's identity, family identity, presence of extended family, and sexual orientation. The *traits* are a combination of tendencies combined with environmental influences such as temperament, social skills, talents (other social identities), and coping skills. Temperament is important to how hazing influences an individual. Individuals who are particularly sensitive, despite their constructive coping skills and social skills, are likely to be affected more by the rejection hazing poses than are individuals who are rather thick-skinned.

Community attitudes and racial socialization are a combination of personal and group relationships within each category of home, school or work, community (for instance, religious community), friends and peers, and foreign communities. Within each category, the level of acceptance, belonging, and oppressive experience influences the salience of the category. For example, if the home is dysfunctional, the child may seek a home away from home among friends at school, at church, or in athletic involvement. This method of seeking a source of attachment may be positive or negative. If it is negatively tainted by prevailing negative racial messages at home, school, or the community, the individual may seek refuge in places that further derail a positive construction of racial identity. This is briefly discussed later. When someone leaves a community in which she or he has been raised or attended school for a significant period of time, moving to a new community with or without family often requires renegotiation of racial identity. The possibilities and the obstacles interact with the history of the new community and the regional history of the country. Micro lenses under inherited influences as well as traits may also affect this process of negotiation.

The revision of Root's ecological framework mapped here magnifies the lens of *phenotype* listed originally under inherited influences. It is clearly shown cutting across all three middle lenses (inherited influences, traits, and community). Phenotype is clearly a major experiential piece of multiracial identity (Hall, 1992; Rocquemore & Brunsma, 2002; Wijeyesinghe, 2001; Williams, 1996). Certain phenotypes look more ambiguous in racial group belonging than others. Persons of Asian and European ancestry may be mistakenly identified as Latino (Williams, 1996). Hall (1980) found that individuals of Black and Japanese ancestry have a multitude of phenotypes. Root (1990) determined that one's racial appearance may also vary by age, which further complicates the type of feedback and interaction one may experience in a lifetime.

Thus racial and ethnic identity predictably vary from individual to individual and even for siblings within a family. It is a dynamic process that may change over a lifetime and be expressed situationally. However, Root (1994) suggests that despite this flexibility, the multiracial individual's ultimate task is to establish a core identity of values.

PROCESSES AFFECTING IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Whether offering monoracial stage models or ecological models of identity development, researchers agree that lived experience as it interacts with the paradigm of race in this country drives racial identity. Virtually all researchers of biracial identity find it important to discuss the influences of phenotype, environment, family environment, and racial awareness. Those researchers cited earlier who attend to family dynamics observe that the biracial experience is unique in that neither parent knows what it is like to be biracial, and neither is likely to have experience with the type of hazing to which a biracial individual may be subjected. These are significant issues for educators as the classroom, school, and university are home away from home for many students and a source of significant information, process, and interaction—and ultimately a significant influence in perception of self. Glass and Wallace (1996) emphasize that "educators can help to dismantle racism and to reconstruct commonsense meanings of race . . . recent multicultural educational approaches are inadequate because they often reinscribe essentialist notions of race and fail to challenge the structures of racism" (p. 343). Reexamining diversity and multicultural approaches to education through the experience of a multiracial experience offers instruction as to where we need to seek to improve our discussions and deconstruction of race in order to challenge racism.

Despite suggestions that phenotype is a significant determinant of identity, Hall (1980) did not find a strong correlation. Root (1998) found that an individual's perception of self was not always correlated with how the person was perceived. Jacobs's (1977) early work suggested that because of the racial paradigm in the United States, at an early age some cognitive distortions around color must be made to understand the categories. Featurism abounds across racial groups. This is the process of devaluing, critiquing, and tormenting physical

aspects of self that are usually measured against a white European standard or the reference group of color. Whereas it is usually discussed in terms of skin color, it may include characteristics such as hair, eyes, body proportions, assumptions about male genital size, and nose shape. Dimas (1995) noted how appearance did serve as an external signifier of identity whether or not it was consistent with one's identity. The issue seems to be more salient if one's physical appearance does not match what people expect (Williams, 1996).

Several researchers have pointed out the significance of the family environment (Gibbs & Hines, 1992; Kich, 1992; Root, 1990, 1998; Tomishima, 1999; Wijeyesinghe, 2001). They cite the potential impact of family cutoff, rejection, oppressive behavior and attitudes, and parental abandonment. Root (1998) explains that on the basis of cognitive problem solving and the degree of egocentricity of young children, negative behaviors between parents can be race coded by children. This coding is primed by a society that codes and stereotypes racial behaviors. The result is that an individual may internalize negative aspects of a parent as racial and thus try to disavow herself of this connection with her parent, with people who belong to the same group as the parent, and ultimately with some aspect of herself.

Root (2001) describes three types of cutoff from extended family, which may shape the balance and outcome of racial identity. If the family views race as a commodity (something to be reproduced in its "purity"), dysfunction plays out in distancing, to varying degrees. Using three business models, *merger, franchise*, and *acquisition*, she outlines the outcomes of marriages when race is not a commodity as opposed to when it is. If race is a commodity, the results vary. With the *merger* model, based upon a notion that clans merge with marriage, the family recognizes the marriage, expels the family member, and rejects the couple; the clans do not merge. The *franchise* model promotes separateness of a new couple even when race is not an issue. If race is an issue, the family further distances itself from the couple but may maintain contact. At the most extreme is the *acquisition* model, which ordinarily incorporates only the marital partner into the fold of the family. If this goes awry, the family member is disowned and the marriage is never acknowledged.

All three models deprive the couple of support useful for negotiating the stresses of married life and of having children. When such models are in effect, couples may move away from their families of origin to cope with the emotional distance more effectively, merge or franchise themselves to the other partner's family, or find community support. This type of distancing sometimes becomes problematic in the marriage since much is expected of the partner and pressure may be put on children to be exceptional (Root, 2001).

Family cutoff sometimes makes conversation about race difficult (Root, 2001). Four problematic family approaches to race can be mirrored in the classroom. The first one is a color-blind approach, held in the sentiment that "we're all members of the human race." The second is that "race is everything." Youths often rebel against this view and adopt the first or third approach, the third being "don't make race an issue." Children usually are not sure whether this means it is or is not. The last approach is most frequent among immigrant parents who are not a racial minority in their country of origin but become a racial minority and members of an oppressed group once they immigrate. As their children grow up they may express, "We don't understand Americans and race."

Any of these perspectives is problematic because it deprives children of the opportunity to learn a vocabulary with which to talk about race. It also deprives them of the opportunity to think critically about racial paradigms. Children and adolescents may be discouraged from going to their parents with hurtful and oppressive experiences. This lack of discussion, unless it takes place elsewhere, limits their exploration of their racial identity. Lastly, an absence of overt discussion of race, racial classification, and racism limits the way in which children and adolescents can learn from their parents how to recognize and defend themselves against racial insults toward them or their family.

In multiracial family support groups, enlightened parents of color often tell White parents that whereas they know what it is like to grow up as a person of color in this country, they do not know what it is like to grow up biracial. Thus there are aspects of guiding their children through this experience of race and negotiating social space that are new and experimental for them, just as for White parents (Wehrly, Kenney, & Kenney, 1999). The difference for the younger generation of multiracial individuals is that they are growing up amid a significant cohort of other mixed people, either immediately in their extended family or school or in imagined role models. This was hardly available to previous generations. As a result, although parents may know that there are things they might learn, they are also aware that there are other parents with whom they can consult, family support groups they can join, and newsletters to which they can subscribe that can facilitate their child's experience and their parenting (Brown & Douglass, 1996; Wardle, 1999).

Some children and youths have strong individual and family identities that are skills-based. For example, a youth might identify primarily as an athlete, musician, dancer, or chess player. Thus racial identity plays a background to these identities occurring in an environment in which a certain culture is created. The young person is bonded to a community through shared commonality. Often, in moving to a new community, these individuals seek out a similar replacement community. Their skill

base is their entry and ticket to acceptance into the community. This is not to say that race does not matter in the equation. But in the same way as religion does for some people, this community and sense of belonging brings resilience for some of the racial insults and assaults.

Lastly, peer acceptance and rejection are critical racial identity influences. These experiences, which can constitute hazing and amount to authenticity tests, interact with individual personalities, the availability of parents, family, and teachers to facilitate coping and dissecting these experiences, and the nature of the school and community. The experience associated with hazing may bring physical appearance, behavior, accent, bilingual capabilities, dialectical proficiencies, choice of friends, choice of romantic partner, class, parent's occupation, clothing preference, body type, and neighborhood into the equation.

FIVE TYPES OF IDENTITY

I don't drink alcohol, never have, mostly because I don't want to maintain and confirm any of my ethnic stereotypes, let alone the most prevalent one, but also because my long-lost father, a half-breed, is still missing somewhere in the bottom of a tequila bottle. I had always wondered if he was a drunk because he was Indian or because he was white or because he was both.

—Alexie (2000, p. 47)

Continuing away from stage models as a way of embracing the diversity that exists and the functions it serves, Root (1990) outlined four types of identity that could be found among multiracial people. The first two identities are monoracial and may be expressed in the same way but are driven by different processes. Hypodescent and one-drop rules drive the first identity; one takes on the racial status the community assigns, and it is always the racial identity of lower status. Until recent times, this was the only option publicly available to mixed race people.

The second identity is also monoracial and may result in the same resolution. However, the individual does examine how this identity fits, works for the person, and is consistent with experience. This may be a difficult resolution if one arrives at an identity different from how people perceive one and based upon one's physical appearance, parentage, and defiance of hypodescent rules (as with a White identity in previous generations).

The third identity is one that was not available or easily workable in early generations of mixed heritage people. Identifying with both groups of parentage is part of this resolution. Sometimes one aspect of one's heritage may be more salient than the other, depending on the demands of the situation and the aspects of identity that resonate. This is a frequent normative identity for mixed race young adults and youths in this period of history.

The fourth identity was the most radical of the original four. It was to identify as a new racial group and refuse to do racial addition, as in Black and White. Rather, one might identify as multiracial with no separate racial signifiers or fractions attached as a descriptor or qualifier.

These four identities were derived from the first contemporary generation of biracial people and the oldest cohort of people in the middle generation (see Table 6.1). It was also reinforced by some parents, particularly White parents, who approached such a label as a way of de-essentializing racial construction (Graham, 1996).

In a study conducted ten years later (Root, 1998), these identities were still confirmed, but a fifth identity emerged: symbolic race. In some ways, it is the most radical and challenging identity. It demonstrates how history and generation change the meaning of identity choices. Of 30 biracial sibling pairs, a few people of European heritage who appeared well adjusted and were phenotypically mixed looking identified as White. They did not ignore the fact that they had Asian, American Indian, or African heritage; they did not denigrate it. In fact, they even felt pride in having this heritage, but they did not feel the affinity they did to the markers of Whiteness. At the same time, they were detached from this aspect of their heritage for either having been raised away from family and community of ethnic origins or having experienced significant and repeated rejection from communities of color such that they stopped trying to join in group activities. Their approach to race was similar to what Waters (1990) described as symbolic ethnicity, where people of European ancestry took pride in their ethnic roots of Irish, German, or Polish descent but no longer had much meaning or attachment to it through cultural practice or engagement. As Helms noted in 1990, the orientation to Whiteness may not be problematic if there is not a simultaneous denigration of Blackness.

DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS ASSOCIATED WITH IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

From the time I started elementary school to the time I started junior high, strangers, teachers, and friends' parents often let me know I was different by asking, "Where are you from?" I would name my street, my city, or a geographic marker near my house. But I knew these answers, although they sometimes stopped the inquiry, were not replying to the question they intended. Sometimes if the inquiry continued, I would give my birth country, the Philippines, a place I could no longer remember. For some strange reason, this of all answers seemed to satisfy them. Some would go further and knowingly ask, "Your dad in the military?" a question I dreaded and disliked. Then sometime in my teens, in the era of ethnic

and racial pride movements, the question about my difference more frequently became "What are you?" By then I understood that the question was mostly about my physical ambiguity, asked by someone wondering "whose side I was on." I gave various fractions and explanations, trying to hurry my explanation away from this difference.

—Root (1996, p. xiii)

Various developmental theorists have outlined essential tasks of identity development. It should be noted that the importance of individual identity is a thoroughly Western notion. Thus the theories that guide child development are rooted in some assumptions that are not universal. The major developmental theories that have guided child development are behavioral, humanistic, and psychodynamically based. One of the most influential theorists was Erikson (1968). He was the only influential classic child developmentalist to address racial identity as a task to be resolved. Although progressive at the time, his theoretical thinking was limited by the era in which it was produced and the paradigm of race. The "mature" stage of human development overlaps among theorists, whether it is clarification (Erikson), self-actualization (Maslow, 1962), or being (Rogers, 1962).

Researchers of racial identity suggest that resolution of racial identity has several tasks, beginning in childhood (Phinney & Rotheram, 1987), and is dependent upon one's cognitive capacity. Because race is a social construction, an individual's understanding of race and resolution of racial identity requires a certain level of cognitive complexity. Whereas categorization seems to be a natural human propensity, we are socialized and oriented toward what differences matter. Sex and eventually gender are master statuses in all societies, though their expression and what constitutes desirable behavior are culturally shaped. Before kindergarten, virtually all children can classify most individuals correctly on the basis of whether they are boys or girls, women or men.

Phinney and Rotheram correlate children's ethnic identity socialization with their cognitive capabilities, which become increasingly complex with age. First they are inconsistent and idiosyncratic, then overly general, then entirely concrete. Adolescence is a time in which they gain the capacity for complex abstraction, which allows fuller understanding of ethnicity, race, and racism. All the researchers cited in this chapter fundamentally believe, as Phinney and Rotheram do, that "children's ethnic socialization is a function of both the immediate environment and the sociocultural context" (p. 276). However, not all researchers are grounded in Eriksonian theory, as Phinney and Rotheram are.

Piagetian theory suggests that certain cognitive tasks are ordered, although this has been culturally challenged in more recent years. What is relevant is that physical objects develop constancy (size, volume, shape). Jacobs's (1977) work on biracial identity with young children four to eight years of age suggested that in a society in which race matters, skin color is transformed into an object that must achieve a sense of constancy in spite of the variability among people even within the same group (Russell, Wilson, & Hall, 1992; Spickard, 1992). He notes that this constancy is developed at the cusp of beginning formal schooling and is later associated with the social dynamics of racism and oppression. To achieve this constancy, the child must learn to distort color in people, assigning them to the correct racial categories with some confidence on the basis of a monoracial paradigm. Children must be taught a racially loaded schema; it is not natural. Extrapolating from his work, we can assume that such color constancy would not be a necessary task in a society that did not have race as a master status and that acknowledged continuity and blendedness among individuals along many dimensions of physical features.

Gibbs (1987) focuses on the relational tasks that a person may cycle through at various stages of life, in ever more complex ways with age. The five identity conflicts she poses derive from Eriksonian theory. The conflicts that Gibbs poses in her framework, although derived from ego psychology, explicitly address the racial aspects of each challenge to identity (Gibbs & Hines, 1992):

1. "Who am I?" Conflicts about integrating racial identities that might be socially disparate must be resolved.
2. "Where do I fit in?" Conflicts about social marginality must be resolved.
3. "What is my social role?" Conflicts about sexuality, gender identity, and general impulsivity must be resolved. Feelings about these roles are tied to feelings toward parents.
4. "Who is in charge of my life?" Conflicts over separation and individuation from parents must be resolved. Parental views and feelings about their own race and the degree to which they can appropriately equip and guide their children to understanding independence may well interact with unresolved parental issues around their own interracial union, rejection, or fears for their children.
5. "Where am I going?" The conflict to be resolved touches on achievement and career. Gibbs's discussion suggests that internalization of negative stereotypes by race may limit achievement and ambitions.

Another focus on child development revolves around the transition from dependence upon parents and family as the reference group and source of reflection of the self to transferring more of this dependence to peers. It should be noted that this is culture-specific. Thus Hartup (1978) suggests that the establishment and quality of friendships

is the goal and measure of social competence. Several researchers' findings suggest that peer relationships are not merely a replacement or extension of familial relations; rather, they operate independently. These observations are consistent with those of many researchers on biracial identity, who describe the importance of peer interaction, the choice of friends, parents' choice of neighborhood and school in which to raise their children, and the impact of hazing. Little specific empirical research has focused on this aspect of biracial children's development. Some theorists suggest that mixed race children have multiple groups from which to draw friends (Hall, 1980). Cauce et al. (1992) found no difference between mixed race early adolescents and the comparison cohort of monoracial children of color in terms of peer relationships. Gibbs and Hines (1992) found that all of the adolescents in their study reported good peer relationships.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY AND RESEARCH

This chapter has presented a summary and critique of long-standing racial identity models and their limitations for understanding the process of identity resolution for a growing population of individuals who identify as multiracial. Although population mixing is not new, and neither is racial mixing in the United States, theoretical revaluation and acceptance suggest that a critical shift is taking place in racial construction. Researchers are necessarily attempting to reconsider how monoracial models of identity might accommodate multiracial identity. The emphasis on process and multiple outcomes as well as heavy reliance on historical factors to explain this shift move us into an era in which ecological models seem to accommodate the identity resolutions of multiracial individuals in a way that other models cannot.

Research must study both the subjects of multiracial identity and their families, but also the environments in which their identities are shaped. Now that several qualitative studies have independently shown that family dysfunction as well as peer rejection may derail identity development, quantitative studies might be useful to further test these conclusions. Not all family dysfunctions may influence identity equally.

Although the research on multiracial people has focused on those of multiracial heritage, it is important to conduct research on persons who have no investment in such an identity, or who are indeed against such public identity. This research needs to include both people with parents of different races and persons who are monoracial in origin. It would allow us to further understand what are the contemporary external obstacles to accepting mixed race people and the concept of multirace. Researchers also have to be specific about their sample of mixed race people on the basis of the research questions. It may not be appropriate to mix persons of Black/White and Asian/White and Native American/White and Latino/White in the same samples, particularly if the sample numbers are small. Historical issues specific to the ethnic groups may predictably confound the results.

Root (2002) discusses methodological approaches to multiracial identity in the context of the number of dissertations and theses that have proliferated on this topic. She notes that proportionally few offer new information. Some of these difficulties are because of sampling considerations. Here are common flaws that must be corrected in subsequent research:

- Mixed race people are not randomly distributed geographically in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). This leads to other methodological challenges, particularly self-selection into studies.
- Self-selection limits the breadth of findings. Studies of multiracial people typically include persons who identify as such. Root (1998) introduced leveraged sampling, in which a sibling had to engage another sibling to participate in the same study. Siblings often identify differently within the same family.
- Generational changes in the meaning of mixed race and the support for mixed race identities imply that research findings from 15 to 20 years ago may not be replicable or as relevant to persons who are of mixed race in their early twenties.
- Heterogeneity versus homogeneity is often the rule in small qualitative studies. However, from a theoretical standpoint, it is time to be careful about the research questions and whether or not a heterogeneous mixed race sample can answer the question. It is important to study individuals who identify with specific combinations of mixed race to make sure the findings and their implications are understood.
- Restricted sampling limits the generalizability of results. Many studies use college-age students, who represent a restricted age cohort and are in a specific development stage in their lives. Community samples are harder to obtain but yield a broader scope of influences on people's identities.
- Secondary analysis versus primary analysis may obtain larger samples. However, the data collection is not usually constructed to answer many questions about an issue and multiracial identity. For example, one does not know how an individual identifies even if the person is asked questions about parental ancestry.
- Determining the appropriate control group is more complex and must have conceptual validity. Should the control for a group of Black/White adolescents be Black, White, or another mixed race group? Should the control group be based upon something other than race, such as socioeconomic status?

Asian ancestry typically had mothers who were Asian, not Asian American. The issues of identity were not solely around race but included nationality and cultural brokering for mothers. These issues are not present for persons with a U.S.-born Asian American parent.

Educators are challenged to examine their own thinking about race and ethnicity. Their impact is profound, because they are role models for critical thinking about race. Without specific training or life experience to examine their assumptions about race, they are likely to replicate conventional meanings of race and reinforce standard racial identities that alienate an increasing number of students. Hollins (1999) outlines three types of educators' racial and ethnic identity development as it influences classroom practice, discussion, and interaction with students. Many multiracial students, particularly by high school and college, have grappled with the meaning of race, have had to be critical about racial stereotypes, and may be assertive about creating spaces and places in which to live an integrated life. They are a challenge to teachers who have not examined racial construction in a way that allows students to develop their critical thinking around race.

SUMMARY

This chapter attempts to present background for rethinking the constricted paradigm of monorace and its potential impact on the growing number of mixed race students who identify with multiple heritages. To facilitate a shift in how race is taught and analyzed in the classroom, especially precollege, a brief background history of concepts around race has been provided to understand the generational change in thinking about and expressing mixed race identities. Concepts that are central to the mixed race experience are laid out, such as hypodescent, one-drop rules, passing, code switching, authenticity tests, situational ethnicity, and multiracial identity. The chapter has proposed a framework for thinking about racial identity, as well as explanation of some normative expressions of on racial identity, multicultural education, and the educator's need for critical thinking and personal development.

Educators have a surrogate-parent role in terms of guiding critical thinking; protecting students from harmful practices, interactions, and attitudes in the classroom and curriculum; and engaging them in learning when students are away from home. Most racial socialization takes place outside of the home. The educator who is sensitive to the reform that is needed to accommodate the growing number of multiracial students, many more of whom will assert mixed race identity, may embrace a forthcoming challenge. The paradigm of mixed race, although not eliminating race, challenges some of the fallacies and limitations of the cognitive complexity and flexibility constricted by the current system.

Sheets (1999) states that educators lack awareness of how suppression, denial, and coercion of racial and ethnic identities cause emotional and cognitive stress for students. This invisibility of multiracial realities in the classroom and multicultural curricula sends an unhealthy message (Wardle, 1996). Glass and Wallace (1996) note that to reform multicultural education and challenge racism, educators must be equipped to disrupt racial formation in the way that McCarthy (1993) has outlined. These authors suggest that critical thinking is necessary to expose contradictions and structuring principles currently inherent in the various approaches to multicultural education so that the educational system does not perpetuate and legitimize an oppressive racial ideology. Ideally, such a progressive transgression would challenge the notion of race itself (Glass & Wallace).

The creators of multicultural curricula will, it is hoped, reexamine how conventional multicultural education presents race in a way that discourages flexible thinking and critical questions. Multiracial individuals in history are a vehicle by which to examine race relations in this country and our assumptions about race. Will multicultural education take on the challenge of being a twist in a centuries-old make-believe tale of race that is firmly entrenched into the fabric of everyday life in the United States?

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