



CHAPTER FOUR

SOCIAL IDENTITY: CONCEPTS AND OVERVIEW

Identity development was named in the landmark document “The Student Personnel Point of View (SPPV)” (American Council on Education, 1937/1994a), and since then student affairs professionals and scholars have been working with the concept to enhance student learning and development. In the eight decades since the *SPPV* was written, social identity has remained central to student development. Indeed, as we describe in this chapter, evidence suggests that it is even more significant in the twenty-first century than it was in 1937.

In this chapter we provide a brief history of social identity as an organizing concept of the self and within higher education. We describe oppression and privilege based on social identities, which are important contexts in which to understand the development, enactment, and ongoing construction of social identities. As a precursor to subsequent chapters in which we describe specific domains of identity (for example, race, social class, gender), we conclude this chapter with a discussion of intersecting and multiple identities.

Definition and Historical Context

The notion of social identity emerged through the last half of the twentieth century as a central organizing concept for understanding self in society and, in the context of higher education, as a foundation for understanding student development. Torres, Jones, and Renn (2009) stated, “Enhancing the

identities" (Leonardo, 2004, p. 140). Race and racism influence worldviews, the treatment of people, life opportunities, and racial identity.

Racial identity theories highlight the role of race and the extent to which it is incorporated into self-concept. Racial identity is "a sense of group or collective identity based on one's perception that he or she shares a common racial heritage with a particular racial group" (Helms, 1993b, p. 3). An underlying presupposition about race is that people experience domination or oppression based upon the racial group with which they identify or are perceived to belong.

While race and racism prevail in the United States, little attention has been placed on them in theories of student development. Some would argue that race remains undertheorized in student development theories because they often omit race and are cloaked in "racelessness" (Patton, McEwen, Rendón, & Howard-Hamilton, 2007). Critical race theory (CRT) frames our introduction to the racial identity models presented in this chapter. As noted in Chapter Two, CRT—an interdisciplinary movement of scholars committed to challenging and deconstructing the interplay of race, racism, and power—is based on several key tenets (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). First, racism is normal and systemically embedded, allowing it to go unnoticed; student development theories are no exception (Delgado, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). In addition, the voices of communities of color are legitimate and central to challenging racialized discourses rooted in White racial domination; hence the need for racial identity theories that center experiences of people of color and disrupt the perceived normalcy of whiteness (Delgado, 1995; Solórzano, 1998). Third, the dominant culture will concede to advances for people of color only when there is also a benefit for them; this is referred to as the *principle of interest convergence* (Bell, 1995; Delgado, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1998). Fourth, notions of colorblindness and neutrality must be challenged (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Solórzano, 1998). When colorblindness is used as the dominant script, it renders the experiences of people of color invisible (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

In this chapter, we provide an overview of racial identity development models. We begin with a general discussion of models that provided a foundation for contemporary explorations on racial identity development. We also offer descriptions of several specific theories that depict development for Black, White, Latino/a, Asian American, Native American, and multiracial individuals. We close the chapter by discussing implications for these theories in informing student affairs practice, as well as the need for more research and scholarship that delves into racial identity development.

Racial Identity Development Models

Racial identity development of people of color and White people has attracted increasing attention in the student affairs literature (McEwen, 2003b). Building on the work of Erikson (1950, 1968) and Marcia (1966, 1980), researchers began to examine racial identity development (for example, Cross, 1978, 1991; Helms, 1993a; Kim, 1981) and build models to better understand how identity issues are resolved.

The Atkinson, Morten, and Sue (1979, 1989, 1993, 1998) minority identity development model was introduced in the late 1970s. Sue and Sue (2003) revised the model, calling it the racial and cultural identity development (RCID) model. It comprises five stages. In *conformity*, individuals identify with White culture, internalize negative stereotypes about themselves or their racial/ethnic group, and have no desire to learn about their cultural heritage. In *dissonance*, individuals' experiences contradict their White worldview. They begin a journey of questioning the dominant culture and gaining an increased interest in learning more about their own racial/ethnic group. *Resistance and immersion* involves conscious exploration of one's racial/ethnic identity. Individuals reject White culture and learn about themselves and their cultural group, leading to the formation of a new identity. In the *introspection* stage, individuals grapple with finding a balance between the dominant culture and their own cultural heritage and the role of both in shaping their identity. Those who continue this intensive exploration move to *synergistic articulation and awareness*, in which they integrate their knowledge and experiences into a new identity whereby they accept themselves, appreciate the contributions of other groups, and balance their racial/ethnic identity with other aspects of their identity.

The RCID serves as a foundation for understanding the stages and orientations found in other identity development models presented in this chapter, including models of Black (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001), White (Helms, 1995; Rowe, Bennett, & Atkinson, 1994), Latino (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001), Asian American (Kim, 2001), American Indian (Horse, 2001) and multiracial identity development (Renn, 2000). Research and application literature on most of these racial identity models is largely absent. As a result, our review of research is limited to scholarship related to Black identity development and multiracial identity development, and discussion of application is brief. We close with critique and suggestions for future work.

Cross and Fhagen-Smith's Model of Black Identity Development

Many models of Black identity development exist (Helms, 1990; Jackson, 2001; Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998). Cross, Smith, and Payne (2002) describe Black identity as "the passing down from one generation to the next the learned experiences and identity activities that facilitate black adjustment and humanity under conditions often framed by race, racism, and the proactive dimensions of Black culture" (p. 94). William Cross's theory of psychological Nigrescence is the best known theory of Black identity development. The French term *Nigrescence* refers to the "process of becoming black" (Cross, 1991, p. 147). In 1971, Cross presented a five-stage Nigrescence theory, but in 1991 he condensed it to four stages and introduced three central concepts: personal identity (PI), reference group orientation (RGO), and race salience. *Personal identity* refers to the traits and characteristics that one's personality comprises, whereas *reference group orientation* describes what a person values, how the individual sees the world, and the lens through which the individual's philosophical and political views are filtered. *Race salience* "refers to the importance or significance of race in a person's approach to life" (Vandiver, 2001, p. 168).

William Cross and Peony Fhagen-Smith (2001) approached Black identity development using a life span perspective to reposition the original Nigrescence theory within the larger discourse on human development and to account for racialized experiences during childhood. The Nigrescence life span approach is composed of three patterns. *Nigrescence Pattern A* describes a process in which individuals develop a Black identity resulting from "formative socialization experiences" (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001, p. 243). In this pattern, individuals establish their Black identity through interaction with parents and significant others from birth toward adulthood. Nigrescence Pattern A represents most Black people because, by adulthood, they have adopted one of several Black identities. *Nigrescence Pattern B* represents the conversion experience described in Cross's (1991) earlier work. Black people who are not socialized toward Blackness or who have not formed a healthy Black identity usually experience a conversion during adulthood. Whether African Americans experience Nigrescence Pattern A or Nigrescence Pattern B, Nigrescence Pattern C will occur. *Nigrescence Pattern C* involves *Nigrescence recycling*, an expansion or modification of Black identity throughout adulthood. The Cross and Fhagen-Smith life span model (2001) has six sectors encompassing all three Nigrescence patterns.

Sector One: Infancy and Childhood in Early Black Identity Development. In Sector One, factors including family income, traditions, and practices; social

networks such as school and church; and historical events contribute to the early socialization experiences of Black children. These aspects make up the human ecologies of Black children who are unaware of racism or a racial identity (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001).

Sector Two: Preadolescence. Development is fostered through parental teachings and their reinforcement outside the home. Through parental socialization, three identity types emerge: *low race salience*, *high race salience*, and *internalized racism*. Children with low race salience receive few or no messages from parents about race and place no significance on being Black with the exception of physical features. The importance of race is instilled in high race salience children. They are taught to view Black culture as an important aspect of self-concept. The internalized racism identity develops when children see patterns of negativity toward being Black or toward Black people in their immediate family. They begin to adopt these negative ideas and believe stereotypes about Black people as a result of the (mis)education they receive. These internalized ideas can lead to self-hatred. Despite the presence of these three emergent identity types in preadolescence, they are not fully developed identities until the onset of adolescence.

Sector Three: Adolescence. Using Marcia's (1966) identity statuses as a framework (see Chapter Thirteen), Cross and Fhagen-Smith (2001) pointed out that as they enter adolescence, many Black children accept without critical reflection the identity they have developed as a result of the socialization they received to this point (that is, their identity status is foreclosed). They move into moratorium as they begin the exploration process necessary to establish a personally created self-concept. Adolescents reach an achieved identity status by determining that their Black self-concept is truly based on their own beliefs. Their authenticated identity may reflect low race salience, high race salience, or internalized racism.

Cross and Fhagen-Smith (2001) clearly differentiated between the Black identity changes that occur in adolescence (Sector Three) and those that occur in adulthood (Sector Four). Authentication is related to adolescence, while Black identity *conversion* is related to adult development. The original Nigrescence theory assumed Black people entered adulthood with no idea of their Blackness and had to reconstruct their self-concept into one that placed salience on race and Black culture. In the current model, Cross and Fhagen-Smith assumed that most adolescents possess some awareness of a Black self. Black adolescents who enter moratorium with low race salience or internalized racism patterns may have an experience similar to the adult

conversion if they move beyond these patterns and develop a healthy Black self-concept with high race salience.

During moratorium, Black youth for whom race has low salience may confirm low race salience self-concepts. Instead of exploring Black identity, these individuals explore the non-race identities that emerged while they were preadolescents (for example, being American, not African American; or focusing on a nondominant sexual or gender identity). For Black youth who approach adolescence with an internalized racism identity pattern, their negative Black self-concepts are likely to be maintained and strengthened if the assumptions they have previously internalized are not challenged or dispelled.

Overall, development in the adolescence phase can be linear, but it is not absolutely predictable. Thus it is highly possible that children who entered adolescence with low race salience will transition out of this sector with low race salience. However, it is also possible that children may have an experience that prompts progression toward adopting high race salience. Similarly, children who enter adolescence with high race salience could solidify a race salient identity but might also experience challenges to their Blackness that could lead to de-emphasizing race and Black culture, and shift focus toward a non-race salient identity.

Sector Four: Early Adulthood. The three identity types that emerged in preadolescence and were potentially explored during adolescence are present in early adulthood. Black people with high race salience identities typically represent the largest number in this sector. These adults have established a clear reference group orientation that values race and Black culture. Thus the changes that may result in their identity occur during Nigrescence Recycling (Sector Six). Persons who did not critically consider their reference group orientation in adolescence (that is, they maintained a foreclosed identity) may need to expand their understanding of their Black self-concept. In short, the Nigrescence experience is not a conversion per se for these individuals, because they already have a high race salience, but Nigrescence helps them personalize their sense of Blackness.

Black adults with low race salience still see race as nonessential and construct diverse identities across an array of categories. They can continue to live in environments where their identities are maintained and their race is never acknowledged. However, they are highly susceptible to adult Nigrescence, particularly if they experience a critical event that causes them to examine their race.

Internalized racism continues into adulthood as well. The same prevalent issues that existed in earlier stages of life remain embedded. To move

toward a more corrective self-concept, these individuals have to experience adult Nigrescence. In other words, a conversion is necessary for them to establish a healthy Black identity and race salience.

Black adults who have low race salience or internalized racism may never experience adult Nigrescence. Race can potentially remain nonessential, and feelings of self-hatred may persist throughout adulthood. Similarly, those with high race salience may remain stagnant without having renewed or refreshed their Black self-concept. All of these individuals have *unchanged identities* (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001).

Sector Five: Adult Nigrescence. This sector represents Cross's (1991) original model. Nigrescence involves four stages: pre-encounter, encounter, immersion-emersion, and internalization/internalization commitment. *Pre-encounter* represents two identity types previously mentioned: low race salience (pre-encounter assimilation) and internalized racism (pre-encounter anti-Black). The *encounter* stage occurs when Black people experience an event that causes a conflict in their understanding of their racial identity. Cross (1991) noted that an encounter is an unexpected situation, which can be one traumatic experience or a series of events that prompts a turning point.

Immersion-emersion has two developmental processes. In discussing the earlier Cross (1971) model, Vandiver (2001) stated, "Individuals immerse themselves in black culture to the point of romanticizing it" (p. 166). They become deeply entrenched in the immersion process and ultimately adopt a Black nationalist or pro-Black identity. A pro-Black identity embraces everything Black and strongly opposes White people. Cross (1991) explained that upon entering immersion, individuals have a clear sense of the identity they wish to shed but have little information about the identity they wish to assume. Individuals go through an "in between" phase in which they connect themselves to symbols of Black identity (that is, hairstyle, clothing, music, language; Cross, 1991). However, as they move away from an anti-White perspective toward a pro-Black vision, they begin to focus on nurturing a connection and commitment to Black people. In *emersion*, individuals begin their transition toward stage four, internalization, by reexamining, through a more balanced and focused lens, the coalescing of the affective and cognitive aspects of Black identity. They move beyond the superficiality characterized in the immersion phase toward a more authentic understanding of Black identity.

Although the immersion-emersion stage is a critical point in this model, Cross (1991) explained that negative outcomes might occur, such as *regression*, *continuation/fixation*, and *dropping out*. Regression toward pre-encounter can

occur when individuals have negative experiences that are growth inhibiting or when they are unsuccessful in coping with the push toward a new identity and seek the comfort of the old identity. Individuals who harbor overwhelmingly negative perceptions of White people and remain fixated on these ideas exhibit continuation/fixation. Individuals who become exhausted, depressed, and stressed may drop out of dealing with being Black. Others may drop out once they have established a comfortable sense of Blackness and feel compelled to move on to examine other pressing matters in life.

Internalization represents dissonance resolution and is composed of three different perspectives: Black Nationalist, bicultural, and multicultural. Individuals with a *Black Nationalist identity* consider being Black their most salient identity and commit themselves to political and social platforms to advance the Black community. Individuals who have a *bicultural* reference group orientation concern themselves with infusing their Black identity and their American identity. Individuals who accept a *multicultural* perspective focus on a wide range of identities; thus in addition to being Black, they explore other identities and worldviews and push for social justice.

Black adults who experience a conversion through adult Nigrescence represent *Nigrescence Pattern B*. These individuals have a reinterpreted framework of Blackness. The Nigrescence process can be corrective, particularly for Black adults who exhibit self-hatred. This sector involves coming to race consciousness and establishing a more authentic and balanced comprehension of being Black.

Sector Six: Nigrescence Recycling. Cross and Fhagen-Smith reworked Parham's (1989) model of Nigrescence recycling to be more applicable to their life span model. *Nigrescence recycling* occurs when one's preexisting Black self-concept is called into question. Having no explanatory power to resolve emergent questions regarding their identity, adults reflect on and subject their identity to close scrutiny as they seek resolution. This examination results in an identity that has been enhanced or changed in some way. Throughout adulthood, African Americans will continuously be prompted to address issues or questions of identity, and through resolution they may reach *wisdom*, or a complex and multidimensional understanding of Black identity.

Cross and colleagues expanded Nigrescence theory by further exploring the functionality of Black identity in daily life. Strauss and Cross (2005) suggested three patterns of negotiation that influence the socialization of Black people. These patterns include promotion of "transactional competence in racist situations (transactions with oppression), in all-Black situations (transactions with African Americans), and mainstream circumstances (transactions

with the larger and increasingly multicultural American society)" (p. 68). Each pattern represents the types of experiences Black people face daily, whether it be contending with racism, feeling a sense of pride in being Black, or understanding the importance of being successful in the larger society. In sum, Cross's expansion of Nigrescence theory emphasizes the lived experiences of Black people and represents not only how Black identity is performed but the manner in which Black people are taught to perform it (personal communication October 2, 2013). Strauss and Cross suggested five identity enactments or transactions common among Black people. As these enactments occur, identity remains the same across situations, but how individuals respond to a given stimulus in the environment shifts, based upon the level of integration in their Black identity.

Buffering, the first transaction, refers to the protective strategies that individuals use to either shield themselves from or respond to racist or oppressive interactions. Buffering is a reactive behavior enacted to address an immediate threat.

Code-switching is a transaction in which Black people successfully maneuver interactions within the larger mainstream and Black cultural life. Individuals can adeptly shift between the two as needed, suggesting a form of "bicultural competence" (Strauss & Cross, 2005, p. 70). While code-switching could be used as a buffering strategy, it is less associated with threat, because people make conscious choices out of necessity to place themselves in particular situations. Code-switching is a proactive method to address lifelong situations that arise, such as maneuvering the work environment to gain or maintain employment and promotion and striving toward a positive educational trajectory.

Bridging reflects the ability to foster close and meaningful interpersonal relationships with others, whether they are Black or not. This transaction represents a comfortable sense of identity and willingness to embrace people from various walks of life.

Bonding/attachment refers to the central, daily enactments that Black people use to remain connected to and grounded within Black social and cultural life. It represents the way in which Black people maintain deeply felt connections to other Black people and communities.

Individualism is an enactment in which Black people are "being themselves" and express less of a collectivistic affinity toward other Black people. They see themselves as simply "American" or as an "individual" (Strauss & Cross, 2005, p. 99).

The first three enactments—buffering, code-switching, and bridging—are strategies Black people use to navigate interactions with other groups, particularly White people. However, they are also enacted through intragroup relations around “issues such as social status, colorism, and differences in political ideology” that can cause intragroup conflict (Strauss & Cross, 2005, p. 99). One’s sexual orientation is another aspect that can shape the extent to which they buffer, code-switch, and bridge within Black interactions and in the mainstream if they identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or queer. Embracing any identity that challenges perceived norms could prompt these three enactments. The bonding enactment is less about the external world and reflects a sense of belongingness and affinity with Black people. Bonding represents the promise of continuity and connection with other Black people. All four of these enactments “are race- and culture-sensitive identity operations that... give meaning to the term *collective identity*” (Strauss & Cross, p. 99). Individualism differs from the other enactments because its related actions reflect a minimization of race-salience and a prioritizing of individualistic thinking over a collectivistic perspective.

The identity enactments, while reflective of the many daily activities of Black people, also represent variation in relation to the stages of Nigrescence theory as described in Sector Five. For example, individualism tends to be more closely tied to the pre-encounter stage (Strauss & Cross, 2005). Individuals in the internalization stage who have adopted a Black Nationalist identity will enact buffering and code-switching when dealing with White people. They are also more likely to minimize bridging with White people and engage in individualism. Their primary enactment would reflect bonding with other Black people. Black people with a multicultural or bicultural identity will engage in all of the transactions (Cross, Smith, & Payne, 2002). For individuals who identify as Black and Biracial/Bicultural or Multicultural, these same enactments occur, but in more complex ways. These individuals may enact “dual-bonding” in which they foster strong connections to Black and mainstream society. Similarly, they may enact buffering and code-switching to address doubts about Black authenticity or to combat others who abide by a monoracial mindset.

Helms’s Model of White Identity Development

Highly influenced by the work of William Cross, in 1990 Janet Helms introduced the people of color and the White identity development (WIDM) models (Helms, 1995). The WIDM is widely known and the most researched theory of White identity development. It was created to raise the awareness of White people about their role in creating and maintaining a racist society and the need for them to act responsibly by dismantling it (Helms, 1992).

Helms (1995) contended that all people in the United States have a racial identity that is experienced within a framework of power and privilege. She noted that U.S. residents experience and respond differently to their race and their designated racial group.

Helms (1992) explained that White identity development occurs in two sequential phases. The first is *abandonment of racism* or the process of moving from oblivious or naïve conceptions of race. Upon encountering a racial dilemma that causes dissonance, individuals grapple with the idea of relinquishing idealized notions of whiteness and acknowledging their complicity in maintaining a racist society. The *evolution of a non-racist identity*, the second phase, involves deeper reflection and attempts to interact with other racial group members that are often superficial and/or paternalistic. In this phase, people spend a significant amount of time devising a way to "be White without also being bad, evil, or racist" (Helms, 1992, p. 61). This phase progresses as individuals begin a quest toward understanding themselves as racial beings and the racism and privilege associated with being White, as well as redefining for themselves what it means to be White and taking ownership of racial privilege and how it affects others. Individuals continuously work toward abandoning White privilege and learning about other racial groups.

Rowe, Bennett, and Atkinson's White Racial Consciousness Model

Wayne Rowe, Sandra Bennett, and Donald Atkinson (1994) introduced the White racial consciousness model (WRCM) in response to four key concerns with White racial identity (WRID) models, including Helms's model. They took issue with the fact that many WRID models suggest White people and people of color have parallel identity development processes. Secondly, they asserted that rather than focusing on the development of a White identity, WRID models "mainly describe how Whites develop different levels of sensitivity to and appreciation of other racial/ethnic groups (i.e., racial attitudes)" (p. 131). A third problem is that WRID models assume an arbitrarily assigned linear process that has yet to be verified empirically. The fourth concern is that WRID models, namely Helms's theory, are contextualized strictly through a Black-White framework, with no consideration for other racial groups. Rowe et al. offered an alternative model that explains "the role of White attitudes toward their own and other racial groups ... and can consequently describe the phenomena more accurately, predict relationships better, and provide a more stable base for assessment" (p. 133).

White racial consciousness involves "one's awareness of being White and what that implies in relation to those who do not share White group membership" (Rowe et al., 1994, pp. 133–134). Rowe et al. assumed that White racial

consciousness and racial awareness are related and that dissonance and the manner in which it is resolved is the primary cause for change in racial attitudes. The model, derived from the ethnic identity stage model introduced by Phinney (1989; see Chapter Six), is composed of "types" of attitudes that White individuals may possess. The types are grouped into two categories: *unachieved White racial consciousness* and *achieved White racial consciousness*. It is important to note that the types are not stages and have no linear sequence. Instead, individuals may transition from one type to another contingent upon the experiences they encounter. Transitions result from significant dissonance, needed to move between the unachieved and achieved White racial consciousness types. The experience of dissonance, positive or negative, can determine to which type individuals move.

Unachieved White racial consciousness is composed of three attitude types: avoidant, dependent, and dissonant. *Avoidant* attitudes represent individuals' lack of conscious thought about their race or other's racial experiences. White people dismiss, ignore, or avoid race until forced to address their denial.

Dependent attitudes exist when individuals commit to superficial forms of White consciousness. Awareness of being White exists without ownership of it. Individuals depend on others to gauge their own views and opinions and will continue this dependence until they engage in meaningful reflection. *Dissonant* types have high levels of uncertainty about being White and the experiences of people of color. They are open to learning but may experience confusion due to the disconnection between previous and newfound racial knowledge.

Achieved White racial consciousness is composed of four types: *dominative*, *conflictive*, *reactive*, and *integrative*. *Dominative* type attitudes are ethnocentric, rooted in stereotypes, and emphasize racial superiority over people of color. Dominative attitudes can be "passive or active" (Rowe et al., 1994, p. 138). Passive dominative attitudes are expressed through avoiding interactions with people of color and denial of racist attitudes. Active dominative attitudes are overtly expressed through the use of racial slurs, violence, and discrimination.

White people who possess *conflictive* attitudes "are opposed to obvious, clearly discriminatory practices, yet are usually opposed to any program or procedure that has been designed to reduce or eliminate discrimination" (Rowe et al., 1994, p. 138). Individuals may espouse equality but disagree with measures to achieve it because they think equal opportunity exists. People of color are blamed for the challenges they face in society.

Reactive racial attitudes represent beliefs that inequities exist and people of color bear the brunt of these issues in their life experiences. White people understand they are afforded unearned privileges and benefits that perpetuate inequality. They work toward recognizing and addressing discrimination, while attempting to connect with people of color. Reactive attitudes may be passive or active. Those with passive attitudes intellectualize issues facing people of color and may present genuine concern in the presence of other White people, while having no real interactions with people of color. Those with reactive attitudes can be paternalistic in their approach to people of color, often using a White framework. Their concern is genuine as they wrestle with tensions between connecting with people of color and challenging the White status quo.

White people who see the realities of living in a racialized society demonstrate *integrative* racial attitudes. They understand the complexities associated with race and come to terms with being White. Their more integrated view of identity in relation to people of color fosters a commitment to social change. They have genuine interactions with people of color and may engage in social activism. "This type of racial awareness should not be construed as a state of racial self-actualization or transcendence, but more as a process" (Rowe et al., 1994, p. 141).

Ferdman and Gallegos's Model of Latina and Latino Ethnoracial Orientations

Ferdman and Gallegos (2001) stated, "The racial constructs that have predominated the United States do not easily apply to Latinos, and when they are forced to fit, they truncate and distort Latino realities" (p. 44). They offered three considerations for understanding how Latinos experience race and racism. First, while being Latino involves racial, cultural, and ethnic distinctions, race is secondary for these populations. However, skin color remains pertinent among Latinos, and racism may manifest itself in the devaluing of those with darker skin (that is, people with African and indigenous backgrounds) (Ferdman & Gallegos). Second, Latinos often come from mixed heritages and represent a wide range of skin colors, making it difficult to place them in finite racial categories. Third, Latinos respond in various ways to the racial categories in which they are placed in the United States. Some identify as White, while others reject this classification and use Latino as a racial and an ethnic category. Such distinctions can either be "imposed or self-imposed" (Ferdman & Gallegos, p. 45). A number of factors, including familial reference group, educational experiences, peer interaction, and physical appearance, contribute to how people develop their identities.

Bernardo Ferdman and Placida Gallegos (2012) offered a model of Latino identity that "focuses on the ways Latinos come to think about themselves in a diverse and ever-changing society against the backdrop of a wide range of historical and cultural influences" (p. 56). They discuss development within the racial system that permeates the United States and extends to more globalized contexts. They also acknowledge intersectionality of identity, the complexities embedded in discourses that conflate race and ethnicity, and the predominance of racial categories situated within a Black/White binary.

Ferdman and Gallegos avoided the use of stages to describe the identity process and instead provided six different "orientations" that serve as "lenses" through which Latinos may view themselves. The orientations are constructed based upon five features: "one's 'lens' toward identity, how individuals prefer to identify themselves, how Latinos as a group are seen, how Whites are seen, and how 'race' fits into the equation" (p. 49). The model is neither cyclical nor linear. Latinos may relate to several orientations in their lives or remain within one orientation throughout life. In later work, Ferdman and Gallegos (2012) expanded their thinking by prefacing the original model with a set of five critical questions to provide a more nuanced perspective on Latina/o identity development:

1. How does identity orientation affect Latinos' interactions with each other and with non-Latinos as well as the ways in which Latinos see themselves as similar to or different from other Latinos?
2. How are acculturation and enculturation filtered through a racially tinted lens?
3. Under what conditions will Latinos see themselves as linked to the larger community around them? When will they make the effort, for example, to bridge their neighborhoods ... with the larger world? For Latinos embedded in a highly Latina/o community: when will they venture out and for what purposes? For those Latina/os embedded in a mostly non-Latino context, what will trigger ... them to reconnect (or connect) to the Latino world? And how do they feel about those connections?
4. When and how do Latinos see (and experience) their differences from others as an advantage and value, rather than as a hindrance? How do they make attributions of difference?
5. How do Latinos understand and explain discrimination? (p. 63)

Ferdman and Gallegos's six orientations follow and are intended to reflect the utility of each orientation, the pressing societal expectations and demands influencing development of the orientations and the emergence of the orientations and instances that prompt development among the orientations. The updated model (2012) includes important developmental issues that individuals may face based upon their given orientation.

White-Identified Individuals in this orientation adopt a White racial identity and live as White people. They see other racial groups, including Latinos, as inferior and have minimal association with other Latinos. These individuals may have been exposed to negative, rather than positive, stereotypes and imagery of Latinos, and the consistent exposure inhibits them from developing a positive Latino identity. Their lens is entirely constructed around White culture, and they avoid or remove themselves from "ethnoracial" situations to lessen their vulnerability; by doing so, their identity remains unexamined.

Undifferentiated/Denial In this orientation, individuals have a narrow lens and adopt a color-blind ideology in which they claim that neither race, culture, nor ethnicity matter. They possess "the absence of negative or positive attitudes toward Latino identity," due to limited or no exposure to their culture (p. 68). Individuals do not connect with other Latinos and have a more individual-centered mindset. Movement within and beyond this orientation would involve greater exposure to culture and acknowledgment of both assets and limitations the culture represents.

Latino as Other Individuals with this orientation do not identify with being Latino because they may not know their specific background or heritage within the Latino community. However, they also do not see themselves as White and are likely to connect with other people of color because of their physical attributes (skin color) and the manner in which race is socially constructed. They do not place themselves in a rigid racial category or identify with any particular group, including White and Latino. Learning about their cultural group and making thoughtful decisions regarding the value of cultural knowledge is an important challenge for those with this orientation.

Subgroup-identified Subgroup-identified Latinos identify with their specific subgroup of origin and may view other subgroups, including Latino subgroups, as "inferior." They do not view themselves within a larger pan-Latino framework; instead, they have "a more narrow and exclusive view of their groupness," rarely engaging with Latino groups beyond their own (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001, p. 52). Many Latinos maintain this orientation throughout their lives. The challenge is understanding that other subgroups exist and also have valuable cultural traditions, as well as galvanizing with other subgroups to push political and social agendas that move all Latinas/os forward.

Latino-identified Individuals in this orientation assume a "pan-Latino" identity (the entire Latino community encompasses one Latino race). These individuals have awareness of subgroups but may minimize these differences. They connect with all Latinos in an effort to promote group solidarity,

realizing that some circumstances may require broad Latina/o support, while others may benefit from greater emphasis on subgroup voices.

Latino-integrated Persons with this orientation have a holistic self-concept that successfully incorporates their Latino identity with other identities. They understand racial complexities and see themselves as contributing within a larger multicultural framework inclusive of all people. Development in this orientation stems from exposure to various cultures among and beyond Latina/o identities and perspectives.

Kim's Asian American Identity Development Model

Based on research examining the experiences of Japanese American women, Jean Kim (1981, 2001, 2012) introduced the Asian American racial identity development model (AARID). Kim's model specifically emphasizes racial identity to highlight the "social and psychological consequences" of being racially minoritized in the United States (2012, p. 155). Ethnic identity, she notes, is also of critical importance, but regardless of one's ethnic identification, Asian Americans as a collective must deal with racism in this country. "It is their racial membership, not their ethnic membership, that impacts how Asian Americans feel about themselves in this country" (2012, p. 156). The AARID model addresses how Asian Americans come to terms with their racial identity and resolve racial conflicts in a society dominated by White perspectives. Kim (2001) presented three key assumptions to explain how racialized populations manage their identities in a White racist society. First, Asian American identity and White racism are not mutually exclusive entities. The insidious nature of racism and the press of the external environment influence the development of an Asian American self. Second, Asian Americans must consciously work to unlearn and challenge the negative messages and stereotypes they previously adopted without question. Third, a positive Asian American identity is contingent upon one's capacity to grapple with identity crises and transform previous negative experiences into constructive, growth-enhancing ones (Kim, 2001).

Kim's (2012) later work expounds on the AARID. The author noted that AARID has close similarities to other theoretical perspectives on racial identity in that the process occurs throughout the lifespan and stages, once accomplished, may be "revisited" based upon how individuals respond within a given environment. Kim (2012) also contends the AARID model is of critical relevance to understanding how Asian Americans deal with the psychological

effects of racism in the United States. She explained, "One such psychological cost is racial identity conflict" (2012, p. 143). Many Asian Americans struggle with feelings about their racial selves and managing the expectations that stem from external perceptions of who they are and specific expectations from the groups (group orientation) to which they belong. Such experiences heavily influence their internal perceptions of themselves (Kim, 2012). Overall, the identity processes and challenges that some Asian Americans face are largely dictated by living in a racist society, in which the lives of racially minoritized populations carry little value. Kim (2012) explained that shifting political contexts, intergenerational differences and shifts in the structure of Asian American families, and the need for research within these respective areas influence the discourses surrounding Asian American identity. However, the model of AARID has remained consistent over the years and reflects the experiences of many Asian Americans.

Kim's model "describes a developmental process that progresses through five stages of perception and relation to one's racial group and the dominant group" (Kim, 2012, p. 148-149).

Ethnic Awareness. Individuals at this stage view their identity through their families and have not yet had any schooling experiences. As they develop, those who live in predominantly Asian American communities begin to gain greater awareness of their culture and ethnicity and develop a positive self-concept. Those who live in predominantly White communities experience confusion about being Asian American and feel "neutral" about their ethnicity. The primary experience in this stage is discovery of ethnic heritage; thus increased exposure has positive consequences for positive identity development (Kim, 2001; 2012).

White Identification At this point, children have begun their schooling experiences and may have learned several cultural norms such as enduring suffering quietly, avoiding public shame, and valuing a collective group orientation (Kim, 2001). At a very early age, Asian Americans are exposed to others who point out or make insensitive comments about how Asian Americans are different, fueling the development of shame for being Asian American (Kim, 2012). Due to the "collective orientation" (Kim, 2001, p. 74) among Asian American communities, individuals will react by attempting to fit in or denying racism exists. The desire to be accepted leads to the rejection of their Asian identity and internalization of White standards, "especially regarding standards of physical beauty and attractiveness" (Kim, 2001, p. 74).

This stage is characterized by both active and passive White identification. Asian Americans who experience *active White identification* are usually raised in predominantly White environments. As a result they forgo their "Asianness," adopt a White identity, and take measures to erase or downplay Asian identity (including language, physical features, food). Asian Americans who exhibit *passive White identification* likely have positive Asian ethnic awareness due to being raised in a predominantly Asian community. They do not view themselves as White, but internalize White culture and experience moments of "fantasizing about being white" (Kim, 2012, p. 147). Moving beyond this stage requires individuals to dismiss the belief of full assimilation into a White world.

Awakening to Social Political Consciousness In this stage, Asian Americans no longer blame themselves for being treated differently and realize that their negative experiences are the result of racist social structures. They experience a paradigm shift through which whiteness is no longer treated as superior. For individuals in this stage, "passing" for White is unacceptable because they are astutely aware of the political and social implications of racism for Americans of Asian descent. In fact, "White people become the antireferent group, people they don't want to be like" (Kim, 2012, p. 147). Asian Americans in this stage feel more connected to having a minoritized group status.

Redirection to Asian American Consciousness In this stage, Asian Americans move beyond the oppressed group designation, consciously identify with being an Asian American, and establish a sense of self-pride (Kim, 2001). This transition occurs with the support of family, friends, and the Asian American community, as well as through exploration of self and Asian culture, history, and heritage. Learning about the historical marginalization of Asian Americans produces feelings of fury and anger, but individuals move past these reactions in an effort to reconcile feelings about themselves as both Asian and American. Movement to the next stage is possible when individuals define what it means to be Asian American and the politics embedded in espousing this identity and embracing a sense of pride in being themselves.

Incorporation The incorporation phase involves establishing a strong sense of "confidence in one's Asian American identity" (Kim, 2012, p. 148). Asian Americans in this stage have a positive self-concept. They move beyond immersion in strictly Asian American communities, can successfully connect with other populations, and can focus on other aspects of their identity without abandoning their newly redefined racial identity.

Horse's Perspective on American Indian Identity Development

American Indians represent a diverse array of peoples, tribes, and cultures. In order to understand their racial identity, it is important to recognize the role of colonization. "Colonization refers to both the formal and informal methods (behaviors, ideologies, institutions, policies, and economies) that maintain the subjugation or exploitation of Indigenous Peoples, lands, and resources" (Waziyatawin & Yellow Bird, 2005, p. 2). In the face of colonization, such as efforts by White people to "civilize" Indigenous peoples and force them into hegemonic cultural assimilation (Wright, 1988), Native Americans consistently have fought to preserve their culture. While cautioning against the generalization of American Indian identity, Horse (2001) offered several perspectives that often prevail in the establishment of a healthy identity for members of Native populations.

Perry Horse's (2001, 2012) model of Indian racial identity is grounded in what he termed individual and group "consciousness" (p. 100). This consciousness captures the unique and collective experiences of American Indians within a psychosocial context (Horse, 2012). Horse (2012) offered additional considerations for thinking about American Indian consciousness across generations and time. He explained that "contemporary influences of racial awareness, the legal status of Indians, and potential loss of native languages and culture will all figure into the Indian identity equation" (p. 110).

There are five cross-generational themes that Horse used to characterize consciousness.

First, knowledge of native language and culture reinforces a sense of consciousness. Language is central in American Indian culture and helps individuals to establish a sense of self, while also providing a vehicle through which cultural traditions, values, and behaviors are transmitted (Horse, 2001). Second, consciousness is grounded in the validity of one's genealogical heritage as Indian. It is important for individuals not only to understand tribal history but also to embrace teachings throughout life about being Indian. Third, consciousness also exists through adopting a worldview that respects the traditions and philosophical values of Indian ways (Horse). The extent to which individuals see themselves as Indian people is the fourth aspect of consciousness. The fifth element of consciousness is one's status as a member of an officially recognized tribe.

Horse's later thinking about native consciousness was shaped by his belief that it is a product of "eras of change" (2012, p. 109). These eras of change shift

notions of Indian culture and identity, as well as facilitate Native American people's orientation toward race consciousness, political consciousness, linguistic consciousness, and cultural consciousness. Orientation toward race consciousness highlights the historical trajectory of Indian conceptions of race over time. He notes that many Native Americans tend to see themselves in terms of tribal affiliation rather than race. Orientation toward political consciousness focuses on the legal and political issues surrounding Native communities and their relationship with the U.S. government, particularly sovereignty rights. Orientation toward linguistic consciousness deals with the preservation of Indigenous languages, "the most potent aspect of one's tribal identity," but also the aspect most in danger of extinction (Horse, 2012, p. 114). Orientation toward cultural consciousness emphasizes a commitment to native culture and rests upon Native people's desire for and actions toward preserving and renewing forms of cultural expression that breathe life into native identity.

Research

Research related to racial identity development has largely centered on Black identity. With regard to student populations, much of the research on Black racial identity examines the phenomenon in counseling situations (Bradby & Helms, 1993; Carter, 1993; Helms, 1993a). Little attention has focused on how racial identity affects students' daily lives and decisions. However, one study examined the relationship between Black students' racial identity and their participation in cultural (Black-oriented) and noncultural campus organizations (Mitchell & Dell, 1992). As the researchers hypothesized, students whose scores on the RIAS-B (Parham & Helms, 1981; an instrument based on Cross's [1978] early work on Black identity) indicated they were in encounter, immersion, or internalization stages were more likely to be involved in cultural organizations, while students in the pre-encounter stage were not.

Using the RIAS-B and the African American Acculturation scale (AAAS), Pope-Davis, Liu, Ledesma-Jones, and Nevitt (2000) found significant positive correlations between the constructs of acculturation and racial identity among 187 African American students. A study of Black college students using Cross's early model provided partial support for the hypothesis that racial identity stage and self-esteem are related (Parham & Helms, 1985). The study found that Black college students in pre-encounter and immersion stages tend to have low self-esteem, whereas those in encounter tend to have positive self-esteem. In a later study, racial identity was a significant predictor of the psychological health of 136 African American college students at a

predominantly White institution, endorsing the theoretical concepts offered by Cross's revised model (Pillay, 2005). Gilbert, So, Russell, and Wessel (2006) also used the RIAS-B to examine racial identity and psychological symptoms among Black students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

Research indicates that racial identity is not a predictor of grades or academic outcomes for college students (Awad, 2007; Lockett & Harrell, 2003). However, Sanchez and Carter (2005) reported significant relationships between racial identity attitudes and religious orientation among Black college students. Spurgeon and Myers (2010) used the RIAS-L to examine the relationship of racial identity, wellness, and college type among African American men attending predominantly White institutions (PWIs) and HBCUs. While no significant relationship was found, they were surprised to learn that men at PWIs had higher internalization scores, and they noted that PWI environments, though seemingly negative, may actually facilitate opportunities for men to connect with other men of color in solidarity. Men at HBCUs had high social self-wellness, suggesting a welcoming climate at HBCUs.

When the Nigrescence theory was expanded, researchers began to use the Cross Racial Identity Scale (CRIS) to examine racial identity. For example, Cokley (2002) used the CRIS to measure the relationship between racial identity and internalized racism among African American college students at an HBCU. He found that those in earlier stages (pre-encounter and immersion-emersion) were more likely to hold negative stereotypes of Black people, including intellectual inferiority and sexual prowess, whereas those in latter stages did not. Scholarship on the relationship of racial identity in Black college students to several other variables continues to grow and remains primarily based on Cross's contributions. These studies examine racial identity in relation to moral judgment (Moreland & Leach, 2001), stereotype threat (Davis, Aronson, & Salinas, 2006), perceptions of racial bias (Jefferson & Caldwell, 2002), psychosocial development (Pope, 1998; Taub & McEwen, 1992), racial socialization (Thompson, Anderson, & Bakeman, 2000), college racial composition (Cokley, 1999), coping (Neville, Heppner, & Wang, 1997), involvement (Taylor & Howard-Hamilton, 1995), psychological health (Whittaker & Neville, 2010), adjustment to college (Anglin & Wade, 2007), and perfectionism (Elion, Wang, Slaney, & French, 2012).

Application

A few scholars have encouraged faculty to learn more about their own and their students' racial identity development. Tatum's work (1992) has been particularly helpful over time since she used many examples to explain racial

identity theory and its utility. Ortiz and Rhoads (2000) offered a multicultural education framework that could be used in programming to explore and deconstruct whiteness. They asserted that the only way to "displace white racial identity as the universal norm is by challenging ourselves and our students to name it" (p. 82).

Clayton and Jones (1993) recommended workshops that focus on unlearning racism for student affairs administrators and students in graduate preparation programs. These experiences allow White students to shift from viewing other racial groups as invisible, or in a stereotypical way, to respecting, appreciating, and celebrating racially different people. Such workshops can contribute to the eradication of racism in the academy.

The promotion of racial identity development and general knowledge of how racism operates in society is sorely needed at colleges and universities. Incidents of racial violence (verbal, physical, and psychological) on college campuses and beyond are too numerous to avoid. Student affairs educators have a responsibility for facilitating dialogues and hosting programs that encourage students to examine race, racism, and racial identity. They also have an obligation to work collaboratively with academic affairs to provide opportunities in classrooms and other learning environments that allow students to grapple with racist assumptions, beliefs, and ideologies. Such opportunities can be critical in helping students come to terms with how their general understanding is a manifestation of their racial identity, as well as the extent to which they are privileged or oppressed due to their racial identity.

Any of the theories mentioned in this chapter thus far could be used to frame programs and services that promote racial identity development. For example, revising the curriculum in ways that incorporate diverse voices from various racial groups is one way to expose to students the marginalization of some racial groups. Research indicates that diversity-related courses have benefits when intentionally planned (Chang, 2002). In addition, culture centers and multicultural affairs offices are important campus spaces that allow racially minoritized students to learn about themselves, reflect on their culture, and develop into racially conscious individuals (Patton, 2010; Stewart, 2011). These centers can also be helpful to white students who wish to move beyond their comfort zone, engage in cross-racial interactions, and move toward a more developed understanding of their white identities (Benitez, 2010). Overall, fostering racial identity development could serve as a major tool in prompting students to consider their contributions to a racially just society as well as the actions in which they might engage to disrupt racism on campus, and in society upon graduation.

Mixed Race And Multiracial Identity Development

While early theories of racial identity were significant contributions to understanding the process of development for racially marginalized groups, these theories presume a monoracial experience and fail to account for populations of people who identify with two or more racial categories. Nearly 7 million people (2.4% of the population) indicated on the 2000 U.S. census that their ancestry included more than one race (Jones & Smith, 2003). Based on data from that census, Jones and Smith described the multiracial population of the United States as young, reflecting an increase in multiracial births and more mixed heritage individuals claiming multiracial identities. The mixed race population is also diverse, with the largest percentage (32.3%) indicating they are White and "some other race" (Jones & Smith, p. 5).

In this section we review key theories related to multiracial identity development. While the terms biracial, multiracial, mixed race, and blended commonly refer to individuals whose racial and/or ethnic heritage is mixed, Stephan (1992) correctly pointed out "mixed heritage" is more accurate because it avoids the biological assumption of the term "race." In this chapter, terms used by various authors are retained, with the caveat that "mixed heritage" is a more accurate label.

Acceptance of "multiracial" as an identity is difficult for those who view races as discrete and cannot fathom people legitimately belonging to more than one group (Root, 2003a; Zack, 1995). For many, mixed race people are, first and foremost, not White (Gordon, 2004; Root, 1990). Such thinking stems from the "hypodescent or 'one-drop' rule," which was legally used to categorize mixed heritage individuals as Black "regardless of the proportion of black ancestry or the person's physical appearance" (Davis, 1995, p. 115). The rule was used to prevent children of White slave owners born to Black enslaved women from having any of the privileges associated with their paternity (Root, 1995) and operated as a strategy to maintain the White male power structure, ensuring that property, voting, and inheritance rights stayed in White hands (Wijeyesinghe, 1995).

In both historical and present day contexts, refusal to accept multiracial individuals has been manifested not only by White but also by non-White persons (Renn, 2012; Root, 1990; Song, 2003). For example, opponents of multiracial identification argue that such identification would obscure important racial differences and make it impossible to track progress on efforts to eliminate racial discrimination (Staples, 2007; Wu, 2006). Challenges such as these can have a tremendous impact on development of a secure identity.

Approaches to Mixed Race and Multiracial Identity Development

Identity development is a complex process for individuals from mixed race backgrounds (Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995). Not only must they deal with prejudice similar to that experienced by people who are members of non-White ethnic and racial groups, but they must also decide "how to reconcile the heritages of both parents in a society that categorizes individuals into single groups" (p. 200).

Several approaches have been used to explain the process of identity development for mixed race individuals. *Deficit approaches* presume that bi- and multiracial individuals are "confused, distraught, and unable to fit in anywhere in the American racial landscape" (Wijeyesinghe, 2001, p. 131). Identity issues are believed to be internal rather than the result of societal pressures (Gibbs, 1987; Stonequist, 1937). *Stage theories* attempt to present multiracial identity development as normal (Wijeyesinghe, 2001). Patterned after stage theories of Black and White identity development (for example, Cross, Jackson, Helms, Hardiman), these approaches (Collins, 2000; Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995; Kerwin, Ponterotto, Jackson, & Harris, 1993; Kich, 1992; Poston, 1990) include an immersion-like stage, strong emotional content, and greater self-awareness and self-appreciation in later stages (Wijeyesinghe, 2001). Critics note that stage theories may not be as appropriate for multiracial people as they might be for monoracial individuals, since multiracial individuals have more than one heritage to reconcile, a process that is varied and complex rather than linear (Renn, 2004). In addition, Standen (1996) suggested that the choice of a single multiracial identity could be viewed as a "forced choice" (p. 247) and therefore not necessarily positive.

Typology approaches suggest there are multiple ways for mixed heritage individuals to develop. Cortés (2000) and Daniel (2002) both rejected the idea that an integrated multiracial identity is the only healthy identity for mixed race individuals. They proposed that, depending on background and environmental influences, a number of options exist for how an individual may choose to identify. Cortés (2000) identified five identity patterns among mixed race individuals of various backgrounds: (1) *single racial identity*, where one aspect of the individual's heritage is favored; (2) *multiple racial identity*, in which individuals identify with each race that makes up their heritage (for example, Black and White); (3) *multiple racial-multiracial identity*, where individuals identify with each aspect of their heritage while also viewing themselves as multiracial; (4) *multiracial identity*, in which this identity is the primary one chosen rather than one or more specific racial identities, and (5) *nonracial identity*, where a

person has no sense of racial identity (for example, a recent immigrant from a country in which race has little or no meaning).

Daniel (2002) hypothesized a continuum of identity for individuals with mixed Black and White heritage, ranging from integrative to pluralistic. On this continuum, Daniel (2002) saw three identity types: (1) synthesized identity, (2) functional identity/European American orientation, and (3) functional identity/African American orientation. A weakness of the approaches introduced by Cortés (2000) and Daniel is that both are based on anecdotal data only. Also, while both Cortés and Daniel expanded how multiracial identity is conceptualized, neither theorist examined factors that influence the identity choices individuals make.

Ecological approaches include an examination of external factors that affect how individuals decide to identify racially and/or ethnically, as well as how and why an initially chosen identity may change over time and place (Root, 2003a). A number of theorists writing about multiracial identity development adopted an ecological perspective, including Stephan (1992), Wijeyesinghe (2001, 2012) and Root (1996, 2003a, 2003b). A weakness of these three approaches is that the theorists did not conduct follow-up research to validate their findings. They also failed to consider the various identities that individuals chose. Maria P.P. Root's (1996, 2003a, 2003b) ecological model addressed these issues by outlining the variety of identity choices that mixed heritage individuals make, in addition to delineating factors that influence identity development. Her model is based on empirical research conducted during the 1990s.

Root (1996) first described four ways that mixed race individuals negotiate their identities as "border crossings" (p. xx). They are: (1) accept the identity assigned by society, (2) choose a monoracial identity, (3) choose a mixed-race identity, or (4) create a new racial identity. Later she added a fifth identity type: select a White identity (Root, 2003a, 2003b). Root (2003a) suggested persons understand themselves within the context of their environments, which change throughout life and can lead individuals to alter how they identify. Root (2003a) also noted that people might label themselves in more than one way depending on context.

Root (1995, 2003a, 2003b) identified a number of external factors that influence ethnic and racial identity development of mixed race individuals. The first five influences are contextual and therefore may not be obvious: the history of race within one's geographical region, generation, sexual orientation, gender, and class. More apparent factors are family functioning, family socialization, community, personal attributes, and physical appearance.

A number of studies (Brown, 2001; Hall, 1992; Kilson, 2001; Mass, 1992; Rockquemore & Brunisma, 2002; Wallace, 2001) have found that mixed heritage individuals choose a variety of labels when identifying themselves, as Root (2003a) suggested, and that the identity choices of multiracial individuals change over time and are contingent on the social context (Brown, 2001; Kilson, 2001; Standen, 1996). Researchers have also determined that identity development is affected by Root's (1995, 2003a, 2003b) personal and contextual factors (Brown, 2001; Hall, 1992; Hall & Cooke Turner, 2001; Korgen, 1998; Mass, 1992; Pinderhughes, 1995; Rockquemore, 2002; Rockquemore & Brunisma, 2002; Root, 1997, 2001; Talbot, 2008; Twine, 1996) as well as family and community influences (DeBose & Winters, 2003; Hall & Cooke Turner, 2001; Kilson, 2001; Miville, Constantine, Baysden, & So-Lloyd, 2005; Rockquemore & Brunisma, 2002; Shih, Bonam, Sanchez, & Peck, 2007; Wallace, 2003; Williams, 1996). Few of these studies, other than those conducted by Root herself, were explicitly designed to validate Root's theory, and a limited number have been based on the experiences of college students (Kilson, 2001; Rockquemore, 2002; Rockquemore & Brunisma, 2002; Twine, 1996; Wallace, 2001, 2003). While Root's theory has been supported by a reasonable amount of research, no specific applications to higher education could be found. Renn's ecological theory of mixed race identity development addressed this concern.

Renn's Ecological Theory of Mixed Race Identity Development

Noting that very little research on biracial identity had been completed in college settings, Kristen Renn (2000, 2003, 2004) conducted three increasingly complex studies examining both the identity development process and outcomes experienced by mixed race college students of various racial/ethnic backgrounds, generating an ecological model of mixed race identity. Renn's theory focuses on both ecological factors that influence multiracial identity development and the various labels individuals with mixed heritages use to identify themselves. Renn's (2000) study revealed the importance of space and peer culture on multiracial identity development. The concept of space included both physical and psychological elements. Students were influenced by the extent to which they found places where they saw themselves fitting in, either in formal organizations or in informal peer groups. Seeing parallels between her findings and Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 1993) ecology model of human development, Renn (2003, 2004) used the four components of Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 1993, 1995) person-process-context-time (PPCT) model (see Chapter Two) as a framework to discuss her mixed race participants' experiences.

Renn (2003) found that for biracial individuals the following aspects of the *person* component of the model applied: family background and heritage, extent of cultural knowledge, degree of experience with individuals of one's own heritage and other cultural backgrounds, and physical appearance. Secondly, Renn (2003) noted that in Bronfenbrenner's model the "key to development is the increasing complexity of interactive *Processes* [italics added] in which the individual is engaged" (p. 392). The college environment provides many such options for multiracial students to grapple with the cognitive demands of making sense of race (Renn, 2003, 2004).

Within the *context* of the college environment, Renn (2003, 2004) identified the following settings that influenced the identity development of mixed race students: (1) microsystems that encouraged face-to-face interactions with either positive or negative racial overtones, including monoracial and multiracial student organizations; (2) mesosystems of campus culture that sent positive or negative messages, including the "permeability of group boundaries and the desirability of identifying with various groups within the campus environment" (Renn, 2003, p. 394); (3) the exosystem that affected students' awareness of racial identity, including policies for identifying one's race/ethnicity on forms required by the college, and attention paid in the curriculum to racial issues; and (4) the aspects of the macrosystem that were influential in the students' development, including how the students viewed race and culture and their own roles in these systems as influenced by the existing belief systems about individuals with mixed race backgrounds. *Time*—the sociohistorical context—greatly influenced the macrosystem, in that debates about the racial and ethnic categories to be included on the 2000 census were very prevalent during these students' formative years. Renn (2003) correctly pointed out that Bronfenbrenner's model does not provide a sense of individual development over time.

Identity Patterns

Renn (2004) illustrated the variability and fluidity of identity among mixed race college students. Her participants chose various ways of identifying racially, and many presented different identities depending on the situation and context. Indeed, Taylor (2005) suggested that the most important finding from Renn's (2004) study is that a single identity may be neither possible nor desirable for mixed race students. Renn (2004) described five fluid and nonexclusive "identity patterns" (p. 67), all of which she viewed as healthy: (1) monoracial, (2) multiple monoracial, (3) multiracial,

(4) extraracial, and (5) situational. Different life experiences may lead individuals to change how they identify at various times in their lives. Following is a discussion of each of these patterns.

Monoracial Identity Close to half (48%) of Renn's (2004) participants claimed a monoracial identity; if one of their parents was White, the identity they chose generally represented their nondominant ancestry. Claiming a monoracial identity was easiest for students whose appearance and cultural knowledge were congruent with that identity. Cultural knowledge was greatly influenced by the presence or absence of family representing that heritage. Once in college, peer microsystems affected the degree to which students could easily assume a monoracial identity and have it accepted.

Multiple Monoracial Identities Almost half (48%) of the students Renn (2004) interviewed identified using multiple monoracial identities, most representing their parental heritages (for example, White and Latino; African American and Asian). These students often were equally knowledgeable about each aspect of their heritage or sought more information in college. They exhibited a strong desire to label themselves rather than be labeled by others. Students' ability to successfully identify with more than one monoracial group was contingent on how accepting their peers were of such a label.

Multiracial Identity Most of the students (89%) in Renn's (2004) study identified using a term that represented their unique mixed race background (for example, multiracial, biracial, hapa, mixed). They saw themselves as "existing outside of the monoracial paradigm" (Renn, 2004, p. 156) and sharing common experiences with other mixed race students regardless of heritage. For some students this was a privately held identity; others used it openly. On campuses that had either formal or informal groups where mixed race students interacted, public identification as mixed was more common. Being exposed to racial identity issues in classes and other educational settings also contributed to identification as multiracial.

Extraracial Identity Students in this pattern either opt out of racial categorization completely or do not adhere to the categories used in the United States (Renn, 2004). About one quarter of Renn's (2004) interviewees fit this pattern. Many had been raised outside of the United States, and about half attended an institution where they were exposed to postmodern perspectives and the idea that race is a social construction rather than a biological reality—ideas that contributed to their decision not to identify racially. All but one of the students who chose this identity were juniors and seniors. None of the students solely identified in this manner, which might suggest that "holding such an

approach to racial identity is a difficult stance to maintain in the face of powerful forces on campuses that are organized in part around racial identities" (Renn, 2004, p. 78).

Situational Identity Over half (61%) of Renn's (2004) participants identified differently in different contexts, including all of the students who identified extraracially. They considered racial identification fluid and contextually driven. Shifting among identities was sometimes unconscious and other times deliberate. This process was easy for some students and stressful for others. The rigidity of racial boundaries on campus was a factor. Renn (2004) argued that rather than being problematic, as stage theorists would suggest, "the ability to read contexts and construct identity in relation to specific contexts is a highly evolved skill requiring emotional maturity and cognitive complexity" (p. 80).

Research

Renn (2004) identified trends with regard to identity choice among various student populations. In addition, researchers have found patterns of identity labeling similar to Renn's (2004). Factors influencing identity choice—in particular, the importance of the college years for multiracial identity development—have been documented.

Trends in Identity Choice

Renn (2004) reported some trends with regard to the five identity patterns. Women identified with more patterns on average than men. Men were more likely than women to select only one monoracial identity. Students whose parents were both people of color were less likely than students with a White parent to identify monoracially, more likely to select multiple monoracial identities, and very much more likely to select situational identities. Students with one White parent and one Black parent were less likely to select an extraracial identity, perhaps because of peer pressure to identify racially.

Identity Pattern Trends

While not directly based on Renn's (2004) theory, a number of research studies support some or all of the identity patterns she found. These include Wallace's (2001) study of high school and college students of mixed race background and Kilson's (2001) study of biracial youth. Wallace (2001) found that 14 of the

15 students in her study used at least two labels to identify themselves, consistent with Renn's (2004) finding that many students identify in more than one way. However, fewer of Kilson's (2001) participants (10 of 52) chose more than one label. Participants in a study conducted by Miville Constantine, Baysden, & So-Lloyd or Miville, Darlington, Whitlock, and Mulligan (2005) reported both a private multiracial identity and a public identity that was most often monoracial. They also exhibited an ability to adapt their identities to their social surroundings and expectations of others, as Renn (2004) suggested.

Identity Development Influencers

Identity development for the individuals in Miville, Darlington, Whitlock and Mulligan's (2005) study was influenced by significant others, particularly parents; specific places, especially school environments; and critical time periods, especially elementary school years, high school years, and college—findings that support Renn's (2004) ecological perspective. Renn (2004) also found differences in identification based on the specific institution the students attended, indicating that the culture and curriculum of the institution had an influence on how students saw themselves. In their study of 47 racially mixed college students of various heritages at two state universities in California, one more racially diverse than the other, Phinney and Alipuria (1996) discovered that 80% of the students chose a monoracial identity label when asked for their race on an open-ended question. Students with a White parent were more likely to identify as White, rather than mixed or the race of their other parent, on the predominantly White campus (45.5%) than on the ethnically diverse campus (5.9%), demonstrating the influence of context on identity, similar to Renn's (2003, 2004) findings concerning the differential impact of campus environments.

The Impact of College

Paralleling Renn's (2004) findings, researchers have found that college is a particularly challenging time for biracial individuals (Brown, 2001; King, 2008a; Korgen, 1998; Twine, 1996; Wallace, 2003). College is a major transition for mixed heritage students in that they leave the direct influence of their families and enter an environment in which peer interaction and friendships become especially important. Brown (2001) found that since

her Black and White biracial participants were not given an opportunity to identify as biracial on application forms and therefore indicated that they were Black, they were recruited into Black organizations, where many found a home but others felt pushed to be something they were not and to choose between Black and White cultures. The Black and White biracial students at UC Berkeley who participated in Twine's (1996) study reported that the politicized racial environment pressured students who had any Black ancestry to assume a Black identity, date Black partners, and join Black student organizations. Korgen's (1998) and Harris's (2015) respondents also felt pressured to choose between the Black and White communities on campus, particularly by monoracial Black students, and to perform blackness in order to be accepted.

In the college setting, "cultural legitimacy and loyalty" (Wallace, 2003, p. 89) are key factors in acceptance and greatly influence the identity development of mixed heritage students. If their appearance is ambiguous and/or if their name or language does not reflect their ethnic identity, students may have a particularly difficult time being accepted by monoracial groups of color (Wallace, 2003). At the same time, biracial students are assumed by whites to be "of color" and are therefore excluded from White peer groups. The degree of fluency that mixed heritage students have with their racial/ethnic cultures greatly influences the extent to which they are eventually accepted by and see themselves as belonging to groups reflecting their background (Wallace, 2003).

King's (2008b) findings supported those of Wallace (2003). She identified the two major challenges facing multiracial students in her study: (1) how other students perceived their racial identities, based on the multiracial student's appearance, and (2) pressure from peers to conform to specific ways of being, based on their perceived racial heritage. King (2008a) reflected that "as a light-skinned multiracial woman with a racially ambiguous appearance and no knowledge of what [her] actual racial identity is because [she is] adopted," finding an answer to the question, "What are you?" was an ongoing concern. King (2008a) also reported another poignant example of being spoken to in Spanish because individuals perceived that she was Latina and the awkward result when she was unable to understand them.

College experiences led many individuals in Brown's (2001) study to reconsider and modify how they identified racially, and they left college "more firmly grounded about who they were" (p. 92). The women in Twine's (1996) study noted that taking courses in Black and ethnic studies helped them learn

about their heritage and influenced their identity decisions. In addition, the establishment of multiracial groups on campuses provided a critical space for mixed heritage students to explore identity issues (King, 2008a, 2008b; Wallace, 2003).

Application

A strength of Renn's (2004) work is the number of implications she offered for higher education practice. Her suggestions relate to assessment, policy changes, programs, structural diversity, curriculum, and boundary crossing. In terms of assessment, Renn (2004) stressed the need to assess the campus climate experienced by mixed race students and accurately determine their enrollment numbers in colleges and universities and the various ways in which they identify. Institutional policy on how racial and ethnic data are collected must be reviewed and changed (Renn, 2004). For multiracial students, being able to indicate their mixed heritage, by either selecting more than one race/ethnicity or being able to choose "multiracial" as a way of identifying, gave students in Renn's (2004) study a feeling of inclusion, whereas having to "check one box only" was viewed as exclusionary. Renn and Lunceford (2002) reported that only 17.3% of the 127 randomly sampled institutions provided students the option to indicate more than one race and/or ethnicity. Not only does limiting students to only one racial/ethnic choice result in inaccurate data, but it also unfairly forces students to negate part of their heritage—an arbitrary decision with significant emotional ramifications for many (Cortés, 2000). Currently, institutions are required to offer the opportunity to indicate more than one race.

Scholars (Cortés, 2000; Renn, 2004; Williams, Nakashima, Kich, & Daniel, 1996) also stressed the importance of creating welcoming spaces for multiracial students by establishing student organizations for mixed heritage students to help them find others with common experiences. Orientation presentations, speakers' series, and awareness workshops, as well as providing opportunities for multiracial students to participate in cultural events, are other ways of creating a feeling of inclusion among mixed race students (Renn, 2003, 2004). Wong and Buckner (2008) provided an overview of emerging student services and practices for working with multiracial students, and Gasser (2008) discussed the role played by social networking sites, wikis, blogs, and other technology in supporting this population.

Structural diversity is also important for multiracial students. Multiracial faculty and staff should be visible and available to interact with multiracial

students. Increasing the numbers of students of color on campus also increases the likelihood that the number of mixed race students will increase to the critical mass necessary to create informal and formal networks. Renn (2000, 2003) also pointed out the importance of including information about multiracial issues and identity in classes to enable all students to learn more about this topic, create a more inclusive environment for students of mixed heritage, and assist multiracial students in developing a sense of their own identity. In addition, Williams et al. (1996) stressed that courses on multiracial topics are important for social and political purposes in that they legitimize multiracial identity. Finally, Renn (2004) argued for environmental design that allows students to cross boundaries between peer cultures. In this process, it is helpful to ensure diversity in student groups over which the university has some control—such as orientation groups, advising groups, and course sections—and to make sure that physical space is used in ways that promote interaction among students of different backgrounds. Faculty and student affairs staff can also encourage boundary crossing in one-on-one conversations, leadership education programs, and student group advising.

Critique and Future Directions

While it is encouraging to see a number of racial identity development theories appearing in the literature, the lack of research available to validate the theories discussed in this chapter as well as others (for example, Hardiman, 2001; Jackson, 1976, 2001) is problematic (Burrow, Tubman, & Montgomery, 2006). Moreover, the research studies of racial identity that do exist rarely address the applicability of the models to higher education or student affairs specifically. To further complicate matters, existing models do not account for the complexity of development, and they characterize identity “in relationship to other groups and, in particular, the dominant majority” (Casas & Pytluk, 1995, p. 166), with little attention to other aspects that can influence development (for example, history of racism, other social identities).

Despite this complexity, ecological theories of multiracial identity development seem to provide a closer representation of reality than other theories that can be found in the literature. Further research is needed, however, to validate these approaches. Existing research, while supportive of the ecological theories of Root and Renn, is mostly atheoretical (Miville, 2005). Existing research on multiracial identity is also limited in that it tends to be based on biracial individuals of mixed Black and White heritage; studies have used small, regional, self-identified samples; they have been mostly qualitative and therefore are not

generalizable; they have lacked consistent definitions of racial identity variables; and data analysis procedures have not been clearly discussed (Miville, 2005; Miville, Constantine, Baysden, & So-Lloyd, 2005; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002; Spencer, 2006). Also, most of the studies have focused on children and adolescents rather than college students or adults (Miville).

Not only is there an increased need for theoretical perspectives that address diverse student populations, but closer scrutiny of racial identity theories for people of color also is necessary to better understand the rapidly growing student populations that are becoming the majority in U.S. higher education. More must be known about the identity processes of diverse students from a "dynamic perspective—the affective and cognitive manifestations and their implications for an individual's psychological well-being and personality and/or characterological development from both a short- and a long-term perspective" (Casas & Pytluk, 1995, p. 176). In addition, most racial identity theories imply that oppression is at the core of identity, rather than factors—such as language, country of origin, and culture—that can also shape identity (Sue & Sue, 1990).

Racial identity models have highlighted individual differences among students. Yet the theories and models available represent only a tiny portion of what student affairs educators need to know to create healthy environments that promote racial identity exploration. If student affairs work is to be grounded in theory, the lack of applicable racial identity development theories and accompanying research serves as a call to action to validate existing theories and create new theories that represent the array of students on campus. While much remains to be learned about Black and White racial groups, it is also important to consider other racial groups, including Latinos/as, Asian Americans, and Native Americans, and validate their unique experiences. For example, Sanchez (2013) argued: "the process of identity development for Dominican and Puerto Rican Latino college students is markedly different from that of Whites in the United States" (p. 497). The continued focus on Black and White creates a binary in which other racial groups remain understudied (Chen, LePhuoc, Guzmán, Rude, & Dodd, 2006; Delgado, 1998).

This Black/White binary, a result of institutionalized racism, has particular consequences for mixed-heritage individuals and how they are treated in society. For example, Rockquemore and Brunsma (2002) argued persuasively that assimilation of any racial or ethnic population into White culture is possible and even desired, except for African Americans. Rockquemore and

Brunsma pointed out that people "with one quarter or less Native American, Mexican, Chinese, or Japanese ancestry are treated as assimilating Americans [sic]" (p. 110). In contrast, White people, Black people, and biracial individuals with Black ancestry have consistently been influenced by the one-drop rule, a norm intended to keep undesired assimilation from occurring. By challenging this rule, the recent multiracial movement has contributed to increasing tension among these groups over the identity of mixed race individuals. Rockquemore and Brunsma argued that the one-drop rule will not disappear until prejudice and discrimination are significantly reduced. However, multiracial individuals who resist using a single racial category to identify themselves are pushing against this norm and the racial biases associated with it (Rockquemore & Brunsma). To fully understand the identity development process among mixed race individuals, this important difference based on racial heritage must be kept in mind.

Student affairs professionals who use theory to inform their work must proceed with extreme caution, given the lack of research currently available. Institutions of higher education are increasingly more diverse, and the failure of student affairs educators and faculty to understand fully students' racial identity development "can lead to inappropriate and ineffective responses to volatile racial situations on campus" (Hardiman & Jackson, 1992, p. 21). In fact, how students even conceptualize race remains a topic to be studied. Johnston's (2014) work is particularly instructive here, as he found distinct ways that students defined race, ranging from seeing race as tied to biology or genetics to identifying race as a social or cultural construction to viewing race as connected to issues of power, privilege, and oppression. Some students even held these different views simultaneously. How students view race has implications for the work that student affairs educators do to promote their racial identity development.

Helping White individuals find avenues for exploring their identity can help curb, and disrupt, racism and other discriminatory practices against racially minoritized groups (Cabrera, 2012). Furthermore, educators must recognize their role in providing opportunities for all students and staff to explore racial identity. Most important, educators need to participate in their own racial self-exploration to better understand themselves and then work collectively toward helping others to do the same. There is no one path that people follow in forming their identities and presenting themselves. Students' lives are shaped by their parents and family, neighborhoods, school, friends and strangers, work experiences, love and romance, and other forces. All of

these influences combine in different ways to shape individuals' belief systems and sense of themselves, and how they choose to present themselves in various settings, including college and university campuses.

Discussion Questions

1. Define racial identity and articulate its significance in the lives of minoritized and majoritized individuals.
2. Discuss how critical race theory frames a robust discussion of race and racism.
3. Describe the five sectors of Cross and Fhagen-Smith's Model of Black Identity Development and its relevance for Black students on your campus.
4. How can you use the models introduced by Helms and by Rowe, Bennett, and Atkinson to inform your interactions with White students?
5. What is the role of student affairs educators in enhancing the identity development of White students and encouraging students' reflection on their White privilege?
6. Create a chart to compare and contrast Ferdman and Gallegos's Latino identity, Kim's Asian American identity, and Horse's perspective on American Indian identity. How can student affairs educators use these theories to inform the development of programs and services that facilitate the racial identity of all minoritized students on your campus?
7. Describe current theoretical approaches to multiracial identity development and Renn's ecological theory of mixed race identity development. What trends did Renn identify in her research on identity choice?
8. Outline steps academic and student affairs educators can take to make your campus more welcoming for students who want to explore their racial and/or mixed race identity(ies).
9. How can current events that deal with race and racism be used in the classroom or programmatic efforts to bring greater awareness to students while also facilitating development?
10. What rationale would you provide to White students who do not see themselves as having a distinct identity? How would you help them to explore their whiteness and white identity?