

HANDBOOK  
*of*  
RACE, RACISM,  
*and the*  
DEVELOPING  
CHILD

Edited by

Stephen M. Quintana

Clark McKown

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John Wiley & Sons, Inc.



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*To Joseph, Robert, and Rosalie*  
S.M.Q.

*To Kate*  
C.M.





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## CHAPTER 1

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# Introduction: Race, Racism, and the Developing Child

STEPHEN M. QUINTANA and CLARK McKOWN

**T**HE AUTHORS who contributed chapters to this volume are among the foremost authorities on how race influences children and child development. We have compiled, we believe, a dream team of scholars representing the breadth of perspectives, theoretical traditions, and empirical approaches in this field. The team of authors includes senior scholars who have committed their careers to this field of research, and junior scholars who have shown unusual creativity early in their careers. Each author provides a general summary of an area of research focused on race and child development and describes recent trends in research that foreshadow important future developments.

The breadth of the authorship for this book signals the diversity of perspectives used to understand how children's development and their social world are influenced by race. This area has a rich tradition, beginning with the Clarks' seminal doll research that helped influence the Supreme Court to order the desegregation of schools (K. Clark & M. Clark, 1939; 1940). The long tradition of research in this area has yielded important—sometimes surprising—findings, many of which run counter to popular beliefs. For example, children who have been racially stigmatized do not, contrary to widespread belief, experience low levels of personal self-esteem (Crocker & Major, 1989). Moreover, research suggests that the popular notions that children are naturally naïve to race and that they are taught to be racist by parents turn out to be simply wrong (e.g., see Chapters 3 and 4 of this volume). Clearly, the psychological study of how children are influenced by race has made and will continue to make important contributions to popular and scientific understanding of children. Reflecting the broad recognition that race and racism is highly consequential to societies, to intergroup contexts within societies, and to individual members of society, the field has captured the interest of several allied disciplines, including sociology, anthropology, developmental psychology, social psychology, education, and public policy.

Unlike many areas of scholarship that involve uneven development, there has been sustained academic interest over more than 50 years into topics associated with race, racism, and the developing child. This body of work has been consistently

responsive to social movements that span historical periods (e.g., the civil rights movement in the U.S.). For example, in Chapter 8 of this volume Cross and Cross draw from a rich theoretical tradition of racial identity theory that originated during the 1960s and the civil rights movement. Furthermore, the field reflects longstanding parallel sociocultural dynamics across nations. For example, international contributors to this volume teach us that the processes that give rise to children's prejudice (Chapter 13), and through which prejudice affects children's well being (Chapter 14) share important similarities around the globe. Teichman and Bar-Tal (Chapter 18, this volume) show us, on the other hand, that the development and consequences of children's prejudice can follow a different course in the context of lasting, intractable conflict.

Scholarship in the area reflects the highly creative integration of psychological theories that were not developed to understand interracial dynamics with theories and models that were developed to understand specific interracial contexts. For example, in Chapter 4, Aboud draws from Piagetian theory of cognitive development to understand the development of children's racial attitudes. Similarly, in Chapter 5 Barrett and Davis draw from the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1978 Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986) to account for children's racial attitudes across different sociocultural contexts. Moreover, the field represents an interesting nexus between developmental and social psychological theories. This nexus is particularly intriguing given the substantial differences between developmental psychology, which attempts to explain trajectories within individuals across context and time, compared to social psychology, which often attempts to account for individual and group dynamics that are products of social situations. The integration of these areas of scholarship allows for the investigation of developmental prerequisites of social psychological processes (see Chapter 2, this volume) and allows for an investigation of how children at different developmental levels adapt to specific social contexts (see Chapter 8, this volume).

### SCOPE OF RACE, RACISM, AND THE DEVELOPING CHILD

Coverage of this book is topically broad, and contributors come from Australia, Canada, the European Union, Israel, the Netherlands, and the United States. These contributors have documented the development and consequences of racial cognitions and racism in a variety of interracial contexts and for a variety of ethnic and racial populations. The authors search for consistencies across racial groups, as well as identify those dimensions that are specific to a racial group. For example, in Chapter 11, Hughes, Rivas, Foust, Hagelskamp, Gersick, and Way review the consistencies of parent socialization strategies in White, Asian, Latino, and African American families and identify some trends that are specific to particular groups, such as differences in the emphasis given to promoting mistrust of others. Similarly, in Chapter 2, Quintana finds considerable consistency in the sequencing of levels of racial understanding across racial groups, but finds racial differences in the content (i.e., knowledge of specific characteristics associated with a racial group) of children's racial understandings.

We have organized chapters by two very broad themes. The first part, which includes Chapters 2–11 contains work that helps explain age-related changes in children's thinking about race and racism, and age-related changes in children's own

racial attitudes. The chapters in this section seek to answer two general questions: (1) How does children's thinking about race change with age? and (2) What endogenous and social contextual mechanisms drive those changes? The second section, which consists of Chapters 12–18, includes work that helps explain the consequences of race and racism for children's development across a number of interrelated outcome domains, including mental health, academic achievement, self-esteem, and occupational aspirations. In making this distinction, we sought to focus the volume on two distinct themes in the literature—the factors that give rise to and propagate children's thinking about race and racism, and the impact of race and racism on children's lives. The reader will note, as we do, that these two themes overlap substantially. Nonetheless, children are both participants who construct culture's shared narrative about race and are the targets of long-standing, frequent, and consequential social processes that arise from that narrative.

A variety of theoretical traditions are represented in this book, including cognitive developmental, peer and parental socialization, lay theories, social psychology, moral development, social identity theory, and racial identity models. These theories are used to explore consequences of racial bias on children's peer relations (Chapter 17), occupational aspirations (Chapter 16), academic achievement (Chapter 15), mental health (Chapter 12), and self and identity (Chapter 8). The chapters provide coverage from early childhood (e.g., Chapters 3 and 4) and chart the trajectory of conceptions of race into later childhood and adolescence (Chapters 2 and 8). Many chapters bring together more than one theory. For example, in Chapter 13, Nesdale has constructed a theory, Social Identity Development Theory, identifying factors that make prejudice more likely. In Chapter 14, Verkuyten brings together research on ethnic identity, self-esteem, and discrimination. Teichman and Bar-Tal, in Chapter 18, integrate several strands of developmental and social psychological theory to explain endogenous and social contextual influences on children's prejudice in the context of intractable conflict. This is one of the first scholarly handbooks to elucidate some of the unique developmental and social features of race and racism in children's lives.

## RACE

The book focuses on the psychological experience of race and the impact of race and interracial dynamics on psychological development and adjustment. Historically, the term *race* has denoted genetic and biological differences associated with racial heritage (Smedley & Smedley, 2005). Like others (e.g. Gould, 1981), we question the biological integrity of racial classifications purportedly representing distinct categories of humans. Whether race accurately draws boundaries between genetically similar groups or not, the *idea* of race as a biological dividing line between people is commonly held, and powerful in its consequences. The conception of race as a bright-line biological boundary between groups has no doubt amplified intergroup tensions, magnified social distance (indexed by intermarriage rates and residential segregation), and has been used to justify discrimination towards "inferior" races. For example, racial disparities in academic achievement are often attributed to differences in inherited intelligence (Rushton & Jenson, 2005). This explanation of the achievement gap can be used to justify inaction to redress this problem. The chapters in this volume treat race mainly as a socially constructed lay theory of the boundaries

between people; furthermore, the chapters in this volume all imply that the factors that give rise to prejudice and the consequences of those prejudices are not genetic inevitabilities, but could be altered through the creation of settings that diminish intergroup tensions and their consequences. For example, in Chapter 15, McKown and Strambler explain disparities in ethnic achievement based on differential exposure to factors that promote academic achievement (e.g., effective instruction) and those factors that suppress academic achievement, such as the negative effects of stereotype threat.

Given a shared definition of race as a socially constructed lay theory, the ideas of race and ethnicity become quite similar. Ethnicity is usually defined in demographic terms based on national origin and the cultural characteristics associated with national origin (e.g., language preference, customs, social norms). Hence, ethnicity is differentiated from race in that the former is associated with ethnic heritage and the latter with racial heritage. However, like “race,” “ethnicity” has socially constructed meanings associated with it. As with race, children are influenced by culturally shared explanations about the meaning of ethnic heritage and group membership. For example, children of Mexican descent are negatively affected by ethnic prejudice and bias. The impact of racial prejudice appears similar to ethnic prejudice (e.g., Pahl & Way, 2006). Prejudice is likely to influence children through the frequency of the exposure and the way it is expressed, rather than if it is focused on racial or ethnic heritage.

Recent research supports the similarities between ethnicity and race in how each influences development and adjustment. Some research has found that whether children’s sociocultural identity is focused on racial or ethnic terms does not matter (i.e., predict psychological outcomes). Instead, research has found that children’s psychological investment in the identity—whether it is ethnic or racial identity—has considerable influence (Fuligni, Wikko & Garcia 2005). Specifically, Fuligni et al. found that the strength of adolescents’ identifications was more important than if the identity was based on cultural (e.g., Chinese), ethnic (e.g., Latino), or racial (e.g., Black) labels. In Chapter 2, Quintana has found that the same sequencing of development occurs across ethnic and racial groups. Children’s psychological experience of race appears to be similar to their experience of ethnicity in many contexts.

Highlighting the overlapping meaning of race and ethnicity, there is a strong correlation between race and cultural practices, social norms, and linguistic practices. For example, there are important ethnic and cultural features to African Americans’ racial identity, and there is growing interest in investigating the ethnic foundation to African Americans’ identity (see Cokley, 2005). In Chapter 8, Cross and Cross argue that what has been considered racial identity is more accurately labeled racial-ethnic-cultural. Clearly, there is much in common when considering racial and ethnic influences on children and their development.

Despite similarities in the lived experience and consequences of race and ethnicity, we recognize that reasonable scholars may disagree about which term and which associated group labels are most appropriate. Some may prefer to use the language of ethnicity because they believe the idea of race as a biological fact is false, and using racial terminology to describe groups reifies an erroneous conception. Others may prefer to use the language of race because they believe that even if biological conceptions of race are incorrect, how people think about groups and how intergroup dynamics unfold and affect people rests on a commonly held, if erroneous, assumption

that race reflects true biological boundaries. Although we have highlighted the similarities in these labels, we recognize the ongoing tensions in their meaning and usage. We have taken the position that race and ethnicity are in their lived experience and in their consequences more similar than different. Our decision to only include “race” in this book’s title was based more on editorial considerations than on a desire to exclude considerations of ethnicity and culture.

This book reviews research and theory that generalizes across racial groups, while also attempting to understand those processes that are specific to a racial group or sociocultural context. Many of the theories associated with race and racism are not specific to a particular racial group. Racial identity models (Cross, 1971) originally developed for African Americans have been found applicable to other racial and ethnic groups (Atkinson, Morton, & Sue, 1981). The impact of racism appears similar for African American and Latino youth (Pahl & Way, 2006). Indeed, many of the theories associated with race and racism in children’s lives are applicable to nonracial contexts involving intergroup relations. Barrett and Davis (see Chapter 5) apply Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1978) to racial and national identity across different racial and national contexts. Similarly, children’s understanding of racial groups appears to be an outgrowth of their cognitions associated with the physical world (see Chapter 4), social perspective-taking (see Chapter 2), or their innate drive to understand different social groups (see Chapter 3). In this context, it is not surprising to identify similarities across racial groups and across different interracial contexts in children’s understanding of race.

The chapters in the book also identify features specific to a particular interracial context. Herman (see Chapter 10), for example, identifies differences in racial identity among multiracial youth depending on the particular combinations of racial heritage. To illustrate, she finds particular challenges with social acceptance among biracial youth with Black and White racial heritages due to the large social distance between Black and White racial groups in U. S. society. Similarly, Hughes et al. (see Chapter 11) identify socialization strategies that are similar among racial and ethnic minorities, but different in racial majority families. For example, African American, Latino, and Chinese families tend to provide similar levels of cultural socialization for their children, but higher levels of cultural socialization than occur within White families. Interestingly, Black, White, and Latino families promote egalitarian notions associated with race at similar levels, but at significantly higher levels than among immigrant Chinese families. Despite these mean differences, the effect of particular processes, such as exposure to racism, appears similar across racial groups. Exposure to racism has a different impact, depending on the racial group, because some groups are exposed to racism more frequently or more intensely than others. We hope this book encourages work to continue developing models that can be generalized across racial groups, yet are sensitive to the specific features that vary across different interracial contexts.

## RACISM

A portion of this volume is dedicated to examining the now mature body of research on how children develop racial attitudes. One of the reasons this question is so critical is that between birth and adulthood, children become racialized beings, some of whom endorse hostile racial attitudes, many of whom endorse egalitarian values, but all of whom are to some degree beholden to the psychology of intergroup

cognitions and relations. We rapidly and automatically categorize and judge others on the basis of their group membership, and from this deeply human tendency flow many consequences. Although there are many times when our captivity to the psychology of race relations is invisible to us, contemporary social science findings suggest that we may never escape its influence sufficiently to guarantee a world free of the kind of ethnic hatreds that bred the Holocaust, the Rwandan genocide, ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, and the contemporary horrors that continue to unfold in the Sudan and elsewhere around the globe. While hope of eradicating the psychology of race may be slim, there is every reason to believe we may come to a much greater understanding of that psychology. To understand the psychology of racism as it dawns in human consciousness is a step toward freedom from its most untoward manifestations and consequences. Through greater understanding of racism's birth and development in the human mind, we may learn to prevent and reduce entrenched hatreds and quieter forms of intergroup divisions. The contributions in this volume thus hold critical lessons for addressing the world's most pressing problems.

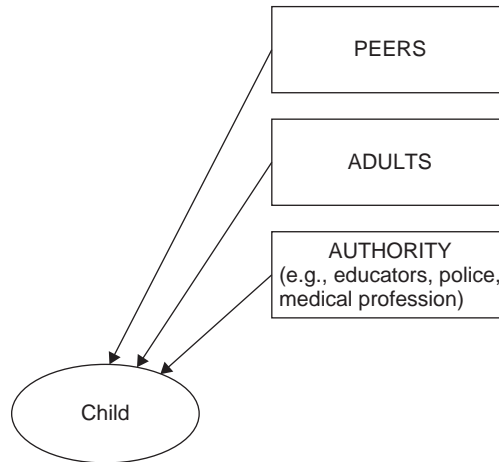
Another portion of this volume is dedicated to examining the effects of racism on children's development. Race is consequential in children's social world and development. Race will determine how a child is perceived by others, including peers, but also by authority such as police and teachers. Race will determine, to some degree, who will befriend and influence the child, and, as the child ages, with whom the child can and will be romantically involved.

We believe it is important to identify the multiple pathways through which racism and bias influences children. Most research on the impact of racism on children has implicitly employed a model in which racism directly influences the child. Within this model, there is an assumption that individuals are likely to be most influenced by the racism for which they are the direct target. In this model, racism may come from peers in the form of, for example, name-calling on the playground or social exclusion in activities (see Chapters 6 and 7). Adults may also express prejudice toward children through stereotyping, hostility, or rejection. Additionally, those in authority, such as teachers or police officers, may act on negative expectations, decreased tolerance for behavior and many other racially driven behaviors (Chapter 7). In Figure 1.1<sup>1</sup>, we depict the direct influence model of racism.

A significant shortcoming of the direct influence model is that the child need not be personally involved in racism to be negatively affected. Research on PTSD reveals that persons can be traumatized by vicarious exposure (see Horowitz, 1999). Recent research on exposure to violence has revealed many negative effects on children from witnessing violence, including higher incidence of substance abuse and internalizing disorders (e.g., Kliewer, Murrelle, Mejia, & Angold, 2001). Similarly, it seems logical that children can be influenced by racism that they witness, but does not occur to them individually. Hence, vicarious racism is another pathway of influence (Chapters 7 and 12). Consider the situation in which a child is riding in a car with her father who is stopped by the police for no apparent reason other than the father's race. The child is likely to internalize the treatment that the father experiences. W. E. B. DuBois (1903) wrote powerfully about children witnessing their parents' victimization due to racial prejudice. The model illustrated

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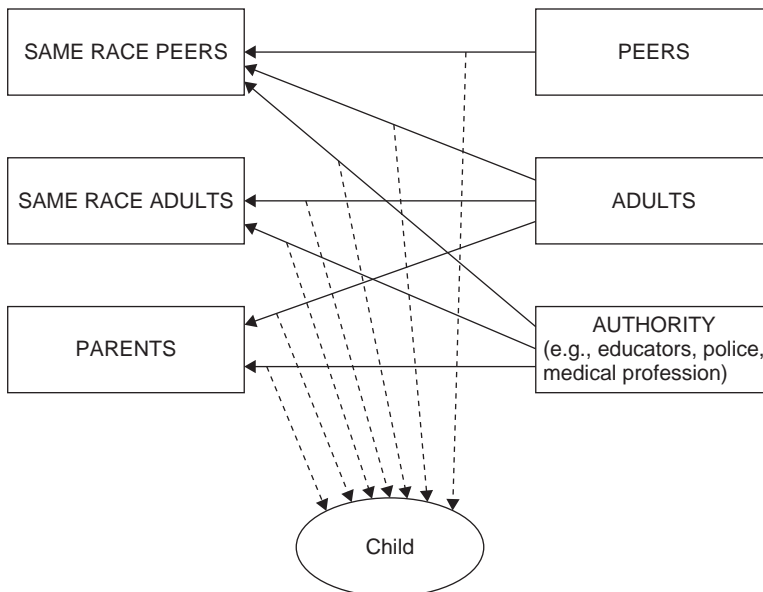
<sup>1</sup>Figures 1.1 through 1.4 were first described by Quintana and Johnson (2001).



**Figure 1.1** Model of Direct Influence of Racism

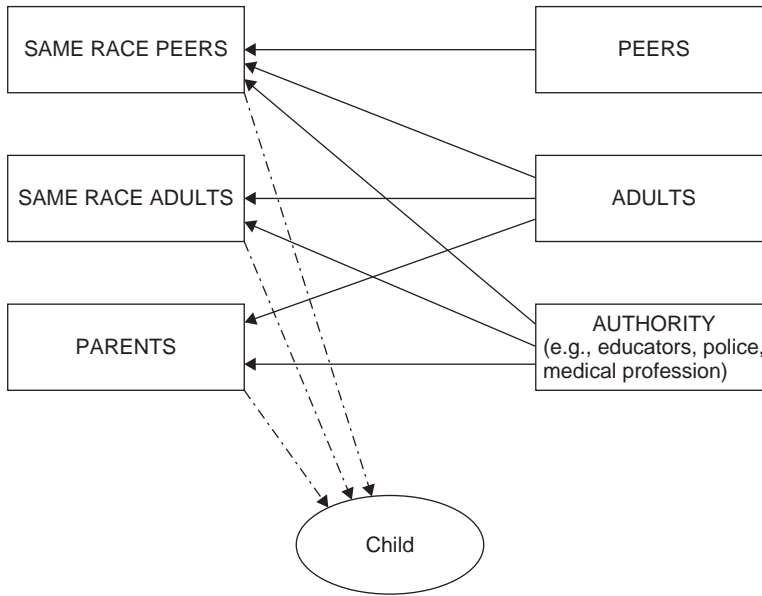
in Figure 1.2 is meant to represent the ways in which children may be affected by vicariously experiencing racism that is directed toward their peers, relatives, parents, and others.

A third pathway for the influence of racism is indirect effects. In other words, children need not be present in order for racism to be influential. There are likely to be significant indirect influences on children by racism that are experienced by peers, parents, relatives, and others. In the above example of racial profiling, the child need not be in the car when the father is stopped inappropriately by police in order for the



**Figure 1.2** Model of Vicarious Influences of Racism



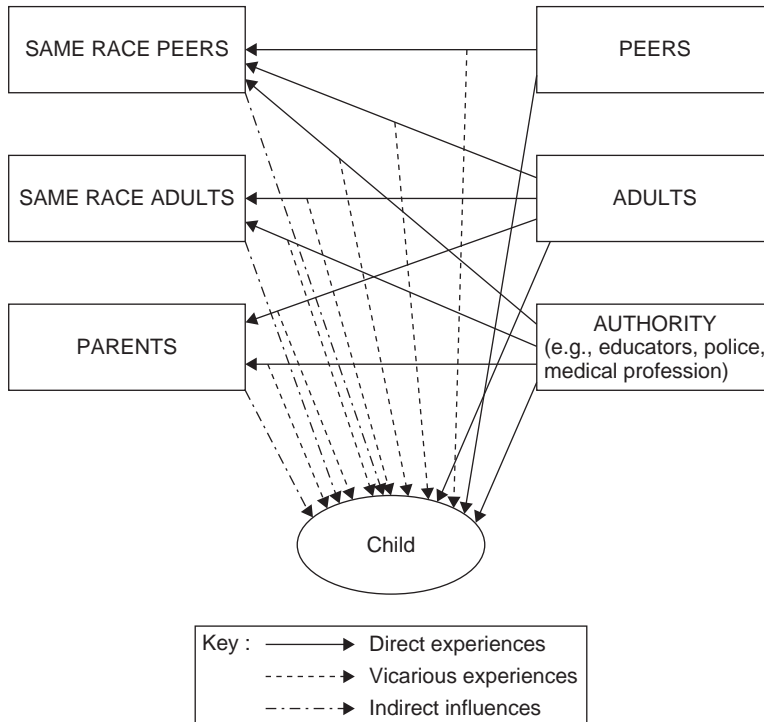


**Figure 1.3** Model of Indirect Influences of Racism

incident to have some effect on the child's life. As another example, parents' experience of racism in schools when they were young may have an intergenerational effect. The socialization strategies used by parents, in some cases, to promote mistrust against others may reflect the exposure to racism that parents experienced, while their children are indirectly exposed to racism, with the effect mediated by parental socialization of their children (see Chapter 11). Children may be made aware of specific incidents affecting others by the retelling of these experiences, or may be made aware of generalized incidents through family or folk stories. Given the social dominance of racial minorities through the exercise of institutionalized forms of oppression, such as the misuse of power instantiated in the criminal justice system (Sidanius, Levin, & Pratto, 1998), these "folk myths" may contain more than just a kernel of truth. Figure 1.3 is an attempt to depict the indirect pathway through which children may be influenced by racism.

Figure 1.4 represents an integrated model of the impact of racism on children. That racism has a negative impact on children's development has been generally recognized in psychological research since at least from the Clark and Clark (1950) doll studies. Surprisingly, why racism has negative impact on children's development and adjustment is not well understood. Much of the research on racism, at least among adolescents and adults, has focused on public forms of racism among strangers (e.g., poor service in stores or restaurants or verbal harassment while in public) or has focused on the perception of racism in the society without a direct connection to the participant (e.g., Karlsen & Nazroo, 2002). The integrated or combined model of the pathways for the influence of racism on children depicts the varied ways in which children can be negatively influenced by racism.

These pathways are represented in the book in several ways. Cooper, et al., (Chapter 12) identify the consequences of direct, indirect, and vicarious exposure to



**Figure 1.4** Model of Combined Influences

racism. Brown (Chapter 7) and Quintana (Chapter 2) describe developmental patterns associated with children's ability to detect and understand discrimination in its various forms. McGlothlin et al. (Chapter 17) describe how peer relationships are influenced by racial attitudes and social exclusion, and reasons for the relatively small proportion of cross-race friendships. Hughes and Bigler (Chapter 16) describe the consequences of racism on children's occupational aspirations. McKown and Strambler (Chapter 15) indicate the consequences of a variety of forms of racial discrimination on academic achievement for racial minority children and youth. Hughes et al. (Chapter 11) reveal how parents attempt to buffer the myriad ways in which their children are exposed to discrimination. Verkuyten (Chapter 14) offers an explanation for the puzzling observation that children and youth who are racially stigmatized do not have low self-esteem. His work suggests that explicit measures reflect cultural patterns of responding to questions about self-esteem, and that minority youth may reveal lower forms of self-esteem based on implicit or unconscious markers of esteem.

## DEVELOPING CHILD

Chapters 2–11 describe the developmental changes in children's racial cognitions and attitudes. Most of these chapters draw from developmental theory to examine how children construe and make sense of their racial world. Hirschfeld (Chapter 3) suggests children's precocious understanding of race reflects an innate drive or motivation to detect differences among groups in their social world. In contrast to

popular myths, children are not naïve with regard to race, but are primed to perceive and detect differences among racial, ethnic, and other social groups. Aboud (Chapter 4) draws from Piagetian and neo-Piagetian theory to understand how the development of children's racial attitudes is influenced by their cognitive development. Nesdale (Chapter 13) applies Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1978) to posit a new theory, Social Identity Development Theory, to account for the development of racial prejudice in young children. Quintana (Chapter 2) charts the development of children's understanding of race and race-related processes from early childhood through adolescence, while Cross and Cross (Chapter 8) posit a lifespan model of development for racial identity that begins early in life and continues into adulthood. Brown (Chapter 7) identifies trends in the empirical literature that indicate developmental differences in how children perceive discrimination. Hughes et al. (Chapter 11) reveal different parental socialization strategies, some of which depend on the developmental level of the child.

Authors also identify inter-racial and inter-group dynamics that influence children, but which do not appear to reflect developmental trends. Barrett and Davis (Chapter 5) apply Social Identity and Social Categorization Theories to understand the difference sociocontextual influences on children's racial and national attitudes and identity. They found few differences across ages in racial attitudes. Levy and Karafantis (Chapter 6) investigate the role of individual differences in children's lay theories about human attributes, examining the consequences of viewing human attributes as fixed and enduring versus context-dependent. Levy and Karafantis find that those who emphasize context-dependent explanations for behavior show lower levels of racial prejudice. These differences in lay theories about human attributes do not appear sensitive to changes in age, although it may be that children younger than 10, who are not included in their work, may display age-related changes in their theories, and the impact of those theories on prejudice.

While developmental psychologists and many social psychologists characterize racial identity and identification as stable characteristics, Yip (Chapter 9) and Herman (Chapter 10) indicate that situational and contextual factors determine when and how racial identity is made salient, with Yip investigating the daily fluctuations of racial identity salience and Herman investigating the fluidity of biracial and multiracial youths' identification across one or another focus for their racial identities. Both of these researchers find that situational and contextual factors account for fluidity in racial identity. We hope this book stimulates more cross-fertilization of developmental and social psychology theories and research to further our understanding of how race and racism influences the developing child.

### EMERGING THEMES

Several themes run through the contributions to this volume. Many of the chapters make clear the importance of setting-level influences on children's lives. For example, Yip (Chapter 9) extends work on racial identity, demonstrating that not only does racial identity change over the course of development, but it also changes depending on situational cues that make different identities salient. Thus, the immediate setting has a bearing on the nature of racial identity. Similarly, Nesdale (Chapter 13) and Barrett and Davis (Chapter 5) identify ways in which the immediate context shapes children's intergroup attitudes. Teichman and Bar-Tal (Chapter 18) demonstrate that

children's prejudices depends on the political context in which they are formed. Their work suggests that intractable conflict begets hardened intergroup encampments and bitter feelings that may further contribute to the intractability of the conflict. McKown and Strambler (Chapter 15) describe a limited number of social processes, occurring in a few key settings, that may explain ethnic differences in achievement. Furthermore, their model suggests that examining multiple social processes across settings simultaneously may be more profitable than focusing narrowly on single processes or contexts.

Further work on the interplay among settings, attitudes, and functional outcomes will help advance the field. It will be important to address basic issues such as defining what constitutes a setting and identifying the settings most likely to shape children's development. If we take these questions seriously, then we will move beyond the conception of a setting as a physical space or a collection of people, toward an idea of settings that emphasizes the shared subjective experience of participants and the processes through which those participants influence one another. A practical consideration in the measurement of settings is who to ask for the best appraisal of the setting's features. For example, if one were interested in the relationship between classroom climate and children's intergroup attitudes, a critical and consequential decision would involve who to ask about the climate. Perhaps an objective observer is in the best position to appraise the setting's features. Perhaps the teacher, an insider with an adult's capacity for reflection, can reveal insights into the setting's climate that an observer would miss. Or perhaps students are in the best position to reveal the inner workings of the setting. There is, of course, no correct answer to this question, but to the extent that we share an interest in understanding how settings shape intergroup attitudes, how settings communicate intergroup attitudes and beliefs, and how settings influence children's development, careful consideration of these issues is a must.

Another theme touched on in many of the volume's chapters involves the role of identity in children's development, particularly the role of racial identity in the lives of racial minority children and youth. From the broad sweep of Cross and Cross' (Chapter 8) model of racial-ethnic-cultural identity development; to Yip's (Chapter 9) close analysis of situational influences on racial identity; to Verkuyten's (Chapter 14) exploration of the relationship between racial and ethnic identity, discrimination, and self-esteem; to Herman's (Chapter 10) examination of identity development among multiracial youth; several authors have argued persuasively that children's developing ideas about their own race and ethnicity, and its relationship to who they are, plays a critical role in who children become and how they respond to a wide range of situations. Continued work to understand the factors that promote healthy identity development is crucial. Furthermore, the field has not yet clearly specified the role of ethnic identity in protecting youth from the negative consequences of discrimination and other noxious experiences, although the authors in this volume and elsewhere are beginning to clarify these relationships.

Another important theme of this volume is the interplay between age, social development, racial cognition, and thinking about race and racism. Many of the chapters highlight the impact of developmental processes on children's thinking about, and response to, race and racism. For example, Aboud (Chapter 4) argues that normative age-related changes in children's cognitive skills, including their Piagetian conservation skills, affects the very nature of children's prejudices, much less the magnitude of those prejudices. Brown (Chapter 7) demonstrates that normative

changes in children's social cognitive development affect the ways children encode and make sense of discrimination. Others make a strong case that children's racial cognitions are not secondary or epiphenomenal to other, more basic social cognitive capacities. For example, Hirschfeld (Chapter 3) argues that children are driven to understand the "natural kinds" of people that exist in the world, and he argues that this drive is distinct from children's cognitive development and thinking about other things in the world—even things that may appear similar, such as children's thinking about biological kinds. An important area for further inquiry will be to sort out in theory and in fact what racial cognitions reflect unique, domain-specific, cognitive modules (e.g., children's theories of natural kinds), what racial cognitions are related to but distinct from other cognitive domains (e.g., children's awareness of discrimination and their perspective-taking skills), and what racial cognitions are epiphenomenal outgrowths of other cognitive domains.

However children's racial cognitions are related to children's non-racial cognitions, those cognitions become increasingly sophisticated and consequential with age (see Chapter 2). Very early in childhood, children become aware of race as a category of person (see Chapter 3). Not long after, they develop attitudes and beliefs about members of different racial groups (see Chapter 4), although the immediate (see Chapters 5 and 13) and societal (see Chapter 18) context in which those attitudes form affects their strength and consequences. Through middle childhood, children become increasingly aware of cultural stereotypes that they may not personally endorse (Chapter 7). With this awareness comes the possibility that children's development—for example, their academic trajectories—may be shaped by situational cues that signal that children are devalued because of their race (see Chapter 15). Chronic experiences with racism may also affect children's mental health (Chapter 12), but the relationship between racism and well-being is far from straightforward (see Chapter 14). Parents vary widely in the messages they convey to children about race and those messages change with children's capacity to understand them (Chapter 11). In turn, children, particularly ethnic minority children, develop important ideas about the role of race in their lives and in who they are as people (see Chapter 8). Those ideas are shaped by the immediate context (see Chapter 9), and may be particularly challenging and rewarding for multiracial youth (see Chapter 10). In short, changes in children's understanding of and response to race and racism from birth to adulthood are nothing short of revolutionary.

Another emerging theme in this area of inquiry involves the nature of children's cognitions, including their racial cognitions. In particular, an exciting area of research in social psychology has been the differentiation of implicit from explicit attitudes. Implicit attitudes are unconscious attitudes that are reflected, for example, in how efficiently stimuli can be processed, with the assumption that information consistent with implicit stereotypes is more efficiently processed than information that is inconsistent with stereotypes information (Dovidio, Kawakami, C. Johnson, B. Johnson & Howard, 1997). These implicit attitudes are differentiated from explicit attitudes, with the latter being those attitudes within a person's consciousness and usually measured with reflective self-report methodology. Verkuyten (Chapter 14) applies this framework to consider differences between implicit and explicit self-esteem and suggests that, consistent with popular conceptions, implicit forms of self-esteem may be susceptible to bias, whereas explicit self-esteem is more based on cultural orientations (individualistic valuing of the self). Quintana (Chapter 2) discusses

explicit forms of children's understanding of race through, for example, responses to interviews. In contrast, Hirschfeld's (Chapter 3) investigates implicit forms of understanding that are evaluated through clever experiments that allow children to respond nonverbally in order to reveal their implicit racial cognitions. Most interventions are designed to target explicit understandings and attitudes, but relatively few are designed for implicit attitudes. Continued research is necessary to identify ways to reduce implicit prejudices and to better understand the connection between explicit and implicit attitudes.

One of the most critical themes for this book involves the various strategies for neutralizing or, at least, diminishing the deleterious effects of racism. The consequences of racism are well documented in this book (e.g., Chapter 12). Each chapter discusses various ways to reduce the impact of racism. For some authors, the focus is on reducing prejudice with, for example, extended intergroup contact (see Chapters 12 and 17). For others, the emphasis is on identifying factors that protect racial minority children from discrimination through parental socialization (see Chapter 11), development of ethnic and self-esteem (see Chapter 14), or development of racial identity (see Chapters 8 and 9). Still others suggest systemic, societal changes (e.g., peace accords) are necessary to reduce the negative effects of discrimination in intractable conflicts (see Chapter 18).

The research outlined in these chapters comes at a time of rapid growth in our knowledge about race and racism in childhood. This growth is exemplified in a number of recent compilations of empirical and theoretical work on race, racism, and the developing child, including this volume, a special issue of *Child Development* (Quintana et al., 2006), a special issue of *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology* (Killen & McKown, 2005), a forthcoming handbook integrating developmental and social psychological perspectives (Levy & Killen, in press), and burgeoning interest in deploying strategies to reduce prejudice (McKown, 2005; Paluck & Green, in press; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006; Pfeifer, Brown, & Juvonen, 2007). These exciting works suggest the energetic involvement of the academic community in understanding the nature, prevention, and reduction of children's prejudice. We hold out great hope that, with continued commitment, what we have learned as described in this and other collections of work could be applied to addressing some of the most devastating social problems facing our society and the world.

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## CHAPTER 2

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# Racial Perspective Taking Ability: Developmental, Theoretical, and Empirical Trends

STEPHEN M. QUINTANA

### INTRODUCTION

**I**T IS remarkable how quickly and efficiently children develop notions of race and racial differences. Racial status is one of the first social categories young children learn, probably preceded only by learning to differentiate by sex (see Chapter 2). Taking an evolutionary perspective, it is easy to understand why infants might learn to differentiate according to sex and gender differences, given sex differences in parent-infant interactions and that most infants are exposed to gender differences within their immediate, proximal environment. Conversely, the benefit, in evolutionary terms, of learning about racial differences in infancy and early childhood is less obvious. It may be beneficial for children to develop the ability to differentiate between strangers and family or clan members, but it would seem that the more immediate and persistent threat to infants through history was not by racially different strangers, but enemies within the infants' own racial group. Moreover, with the exception of multiracial families, young children's proximal environment involves less exposure to racially-different persons, relative to exposure to gender differences. Nonetheless, children develop early in life the ability to differentiate persons among different racial groups.

It is also remarkable that children's developmental understanding of race occurs with very little direct socialization. Children's exposure to the concepts of race occur infrequently via direct references. For example, racial

minority children are infrequently exposed to concepts of race and racism through explicit teachings from parents, particularly early in childhood (Chapter 11). Similarly, White parents tend to ignore racial stimuli when helping their children process their social world (Chapter 11, Katz, 2003). When explicit references are made to race, both White and racial minority parents tend to encourage children to ignore race and promote color-blind strategies in which racial differences are ignored. Although there is some evidence suggesting that parents make some negative references to racial differences, these references are subtle and nuanced (Chapter 11). In contrast to popular conceptions, parental socialization does not appear to account for the efficiency of children's learning about racial differences nor the prevalence of racial bias. Instead, Hirschfeld (see Chapter 3) hypothesizes that children have an innate inclination to perceive groupings in their social environment. Race appears to be one of the more important groups into which children naturally sort their social world.

There are many dimensions associated with race that children learn before they acquire a mature understanding. Children's developmental understanding of race appears to be a dynamic interaction of their natural curiosity about their social world and the complex ways in which they are exposed to race. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the processes by which children and adolescents develop understanding of the personal and social dynamics associated with race. This chapter will review my (1998) theory of racial and ethnic perspective taking ability, updated with recent research. The second purpose is to discuss in the context of this model some of the more critical issues about race and the dynamics of race that are identified in later chapters of this book.

#### KEY PROPOSITIONS FOR RACIAL PERSPECTIVE-TAKING THEORY

Several theorists suggest parallels in children's developmental understanding of racial issues and the development of their understanding of the physical world. Aboud (see Chapter 4) suggested parallels between Piagetian stages of cognition (e.g., concrete operations) and the development of children's understanding of race (e.g., racial constancy) and their racial attitudes. My (1998) model is based on the assumption that how children understand race and ethnicity follows a developmental rhythm parallel to how they understand their social world. In short, racial perspective taking ability (RPTA) represents the application of children's social cognition to the racial aspects of their social and personal worlds. This model applies a specific theory of social cognition, Selman's (1980) model of social perspective-taking ability (SPTA). Selman's original model was applied to four interpersonal domains: peer group, individual, family, and friendships contexts.

My model represents the application of this sequencing of development to a fifth domain: race.

Before describing the levels of RPTA, it seems important to note that whereas this model is focused on developmental changes in cognition, most researchers (see Chapter 4) of race have focused on changes in attitudes. Indeed, the racial identity models are based on the presumption of a developmental sequencing of racial ideologies (Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, 1997). In contrast, my position is that some racial attitudes are not necessarily more developmentally advanced than other ones. Conversely, according to RPTA, development is marked by the changes in the cognitive foundation of the racial attitudes, rather than changes in racial attitudes.

Developmental transitions occur within SPTA and RPTA based on children's acquisition of a new perspective, allowing children to understand a new dimension of their social and racial world. In this context, acquisition of a new perspective refers to a new vantage point for children's understanding of their social or racial worlds. As children acquire a new level of perspective taking, they retain the ability to conceptualize their world based on previous perspectives. That is, a new understanding does not replace old understandings, but instead supplements their previous perspectives. There are parallels between the development of SPTA or RPTA and how science progresses according to Lakatos' (1978) philosophy of science in the sense that old understandings are not falsified by new understandings, but in both cases, an enhanced understanding is marked by the ability to conceptualize in novel ways, while also providing a framework for integrating and explaining previous understandings of phenomena. The sequence of development for RPTA differs from development within racial identity theories (e.g., Helms, 1995), in which new stages of racial identity supplant earlier racial identity ideologies: higher stages of racial identity are inconsistent with ideologies inherent in previous stages. Instead, development for RPTA involves the addition of new perspectives or dimensions akin to the movement in geometry from a single dimension (i.e., point) to two dimensions (i.e., line), to three dimensions (e.g., square) in which the previous dimensions are consistent and incorporated within higher perspectives.

How do children develop a new perspective on race? Because RPTA is the extension of basic SPTA to the racial domain, there are two main components to acquiring a new perspective: development of their SPTA and experiential opportunities to apply their SPTA to the racial domain. First, movement to a new level of RPTA is supported by advances in SPTA. As described in the following, RPTA develops in parallel to SPTA development. The development of a new level of SPTA allows for the development of a corresponding level of RPTA. Theoretically, the levels of RPTA that are available to a child are determined by the child's level of development of SPTA. Selman (1980) has charted the development of SPTA across childhood and adolescence. The development of SPTA provides the cognitive foundation for RPTA. Second, exposure to experiences that encourage, challenge or stimulate children to apply their social cognitive abilities to understand the role of race in their lives are believed to promote the development of a new racial perspective. That is, children's repeated exposure to situations in which their racial status is salient and in which they consciously process racial stimuli is thought to promote the application of social cognition abilities to the racial domain. Consequently, a new level of RPTA is developed when a corresponding level of SPTA becomes available, and then subsequently the child has experiences that stimulate the child's reasoning about race. In short, there is a cognitive and experiential foundation for development to a new level of RPTA.

Research supports both of these principles. Quintana, Ybarra, Gonzalez, and de Baessa (2000) found strong connections between level of SPTA and RPTA for Latino children and adolescents in the United States and cross-validated this finding with children in Guatemala. RPTA was predicted by chronological age and SPTA, suggesting that even at the same age, there was unique variance in SPTA accounting for children's RPTA. Hence, the first theoretical principle predicting that RPTA would be predicted by SPTA has been strongly supported.

Research has helped refine the second theoretical principle about the sociocultural experiences necessary to promote RPTA development. Research to date suggests that racial and most ethnic minority children receive sufficient social stimulation of their thinking and reasoning about race and ethnicity to support levels of RPTA that are consistent with their SPTA levels. That is, the level of acculturation or parental socialization was not associated with RPTA development after accounting for variance associated with SPTA for racial minority children (Quintana et al., 2000). However, some children raised in multi-racial families in which there may be relatively less exposure to cultural socialization appear to have relatively lower levels of RPTA, compared to children raised in monoracial families. For the children in multiracial families, additional exposure to cultural socialization outside of the family promoted further RPTA development. For example, the RPTA of transracially adopted Korean children being raised by White parents and in predominately White neighborhoods benefited from further exposure to Korean culture (Lee & Quintana, 2004). Similarly, the RPTA of multiracial children who were part native Hawaiian also benefited from additional exposure to Hawaiian culture (Quintana, Chun, Gonsalves, Kaeo, & Lung, 2004). In this case, the native Hawaiian children received additional exposure by attending private schools whose mission, in part, was to cultivate Hawaiian pride and identity. The children attending the Hawaiian schools had higher levels of RPTA than Hawaiian children attending public schools. Hence, children raised in multiracial families may experience suboptimal levels of cultural exposure necessary to promote full development of their RPTA, but with supplemental extrafamilial exposure these children were able to realize full development of their RPTA.

There is, however, one exception to the finding that children raised in monoracial families have high levels of RPTA, relative to SPTA. In unpublished data, I have found that White children, although they are raised in monoracial families, tend not to develop their RPTA abilities consistent with their SPTA. It appears as if being a member of a racial majority group does not provide the kind of experiential foundation that racial minority children have. Being a racial minority provides ample stimulation for thinking about race and promotes explicit cultural socialization with families, while children who are members of the dominant racial group are not provided sufficient stimulation to apply their social cognitive abilities to understand their racial world.

Before describing the different RPTA level, one more issue is important to mention. One theme for this book is identifying commonalities across racial and ethnic groups in children's experiences of race. Recent research now allows the RPTA model to be applied across a variety of sociocultural groups across different contexts. In addition to Latino and African American groups, recent research has supported the application of RPTA to three groups of Korean children, including international sojourners, transracially adopted children, children of immigrant parents (e.g., Kim et al., 2004; Lee & Quintana, 2005), international sojourners from Latin America, Native Hawaiians (Quintana et al., 2004) and to two racial groups in Guatemala

(Quintana, et al., 2000). Quintana and Segura-Herrera (2003) further suggested that the RPTA model could be used to conceptualize how false and critical consciousness develop in racially-stigmatized populations. To date, research has supported the basic trajectory of development across racial and ethnic contexts. Each of the levels and the ordering of levels appear to be applicable across racial contexts. This consistency across race is not surprising given that (1) there are similarities across race in the development of SPTA (Selman, 1980) and (2) RPTA is the application of social cognitive development (i.e., SPTA) to the racial domain.

Despite consistency in the *process* of how children develop understanding of race, there are differences between racial groups in the *content* of their understanding of race. For example, African American children will emphasize the civil rights movement in their understanding of race, while Latinos tend to emphasize their ancestral roots in Latin America. The differences in the content of racial understanding are associated with the specific sociocultural and historical context of each of the racial groups. The differences likely result from differences in the socialization messages given to children by parents (see Chapter 11) and prevalent in broader society.

### LEVELS OF RACIAL PERSPECTIVE-TAKING ABILITY

Like SPTA, levels of RPTA range from Level 0, that is characteristic of early childhood and preschool ages, to Level 3, descriptive of development during late adolescence. As described in Table 2.1, levels of racial perspective taking ability range from physical and egocentric perspectives of race typical of children in preschool and early elementary grades to racial group consciousness descriptive of many adolescents. It is important to note that this model describes the progression of children's explicit

**Table 2.1**

Developmental Model of Children's Racial Perspective-Taking Ability

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Level 0: Physical and Egocentric Perspective:	Children's understanding focused on physical manifestations of race, often confusing physical characteristics as the essence of race. Their developmental logic may lead them to adopt egocentric notions regarding racial classifications.
Level 1: Literal Perspective:	Children are able to understand nonphysical and unobservable components of race such as racial heritage. They tend to focus on literal aspects of race, such as those characteristics that are labeled as racial (e.g., Mexican food, ancestors from Africa).
Level 2: Social Perspective:	Children observe patterns associated with race (racial differences in social class) that are not literally connected to racial group membership. They connect social processes with race such as social norms, friendship patterns and also spontaneously mention discrimination and bias as being associated with race.
Level 3: Racial Group Consciousness Perspective:	Youth integrate observation of discrete events and experiences into generalized patterns and can infer a collective perspective of a racial group. For many, there is a merging of personal identity with a racial identity.

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understanding of race that is reflected by oral articulation of their understanding. The difference between explicit and implicit understanding is analogous to the differences between children's receptive and expressive language skills. Namely, children's receptive language skills refer to their ability to understand language that is produced or expressed by others, and expressive skills refer to the ability to understand language well enough to produce it or express it themselves. Receptive skills typically precede expressive skills because children may have an implicit sense of a word, but not be able to explicitly define the word. Hence, RPTA refers to children's ability to understand racial concepts well enough to explain and express their understanding. Children's implicit understanding of racial concepts has been shown to emerge earlier than their explicit understanding articulated in the model of RPTA. For example, Hirschfeld (see Chapter 3, this volume) has designed investigations indicating young children can understand that racial status is associated with racial heritage at ages earlier than when children have demonstrated the ability to explicitly express this kind of understanding. My focus in this chapter is on the development of explicit understandings of racial notions, which would have implications for how parents and others provide explicit socialization (Hughes et al., this volume) as well as interventions into racial attitudes (Cameron, Rutland, Brown & Douch, 2006), which target explicit racial attitudes and understandings.

The RPTA model characterizes the developmental logic that children use as they reason about racial matters. RPTA research involves asking children about social or personal situations involving race as a way to elicit the logic they use to reason about these situations. The interview questions address dilemmas for which there are no obvious answers as a way to assess the reasoning the children use. The focus on reasoning and logic is different than focusing on children's factual knowledge about race. These procedures are similar to assessments of moral reasoning, which focus less on what someone should do and focus more on why, or the reasoning underlying the decision. Similarly, RPTA research focuses not on specific racial attitudes, but on the reasoning underlying these attitudes.

#### LEVEL 0: PHYSICAL AND EGOCENTRIC PERSPECTIVES OF RACE

At this level, children's expressed understanding of race is focused on observable physical aspects of race, including most often skin, hair, and eye color, but also including hair texture and other racial phenotypic characteristics. An anecdote provides a good illustration of Level 0 understanding of race: A colleague shared an account of a kindergartener's explanation of how racial status is determined: "a Black child has two Black parents, a White child has two White parents and a Mexican child has one Black parent and one White parent." This child was reasoning that the brown skin of Mexican-descended children is darker than that of White children but lighter than that of Black children and, according to the child's logic, must represent the mix of White and Black complexions.

Another anecdote illustrates this logic: A towheaded boy was going door-to-door to raise money for playground equipment and in the process volunteered that the "Mexican kids" across the street wouldn't be allowed to play on the equipment. When asked why, the boy indicated that if the Mexican kids went down the slide the "brown would get on other kids."

This anecdote illustrates how the logic of Level 0 is focused on physical appearance and appears to equate race with racial phenotype. Apparently this boy had been

exposed to racial bias and is attempting to justify, based on his developmental logic, his conclusion about “Mexican kids.” He may have been exposed to other justifications for racial bias against Latino populations—for example, associations with criminality or linguistic preference—but his developmental level may not allow him to make sense of these explanations. Instead, he appears to internalize the bias but justify it in the only logic that is available to him.

At this level there appears to be confusion between physical features and racial status such that children may reason that if physical appearances (e.g., skin color) change then racial status may change. The corresponding social perspective-taking abilities are similarly focused on external physical appearance. Children at Level 0 of SPTA understand emotions through their physical manifestation: to cry is to be sad. In order to change from feeling sad, a person would need only to stop crying and start smiling, according to the logic of Level 0 SPTA. According to Selman (1980), at this level of reasoning children cannot infer the internal emotional state as being different from the observable expression of that emotion. This logic is similar to Level 0 of RPTA in that children do not entertain an essence to racial status that underlies the physical manifestations thereof.

The following reflect interview responses illustrating the developmental logic that focuses on physical appearance that young children use. When asked how their own group was different from White or Caucasians, two children responded thusly:

*Child:* You can tell the difference, the Caucasians are kind of White in skin color and the Hawaiians are like tannish brown, not White.

*Child:* Korean people have black hair, brown eyes and [White] Americans have tan hair and different color eyes.

Another child’s responses illustrated this level of RPTA in response to a different interviewer’s question:

*Interviewer:* Is there any way for a person to change her race?

*Child:* There’s really no way, except for their skin color.

In addition to focusing on physical manifestations of race, children at Level 0 also demonstrate some egocentricity in their understanding of race. Many appear to use racial labels and make racial classifications that depart from those used by older children and adults. To illustrate, young children have been known to coin idiosyncratic racial terms based on physical appearance, such as referring to African Americans as “brown” instead of “Black,” with the former being more descriptive of physical features (see Quintana, 1998). This idiosyncratic use of terms is illustrated in the following excerpts, which also illustrate that the content of children’s understanding is based on the specific circumstances associated with their racial group.

*Interviewer:* Can you ever stop from being Hawaiian?

*Child:* No, I don’t think so. . . . oh yeah. By going to live somewhere else like Wyoming.

*Interviewer:* Have you ever been teased because of being Mexican American?

*Child:* Yes, they called me Chinese, but I’m not.

Because the social descriptor *Hawaiian* may refer to a racial group and the residents of a state, young children may be confused by the two social categories. In the second example, strong indigenous features for the Mexican American child may be why his peers called him “Chinese,” but this specific name-calling makes the boy

particularly confused. More generally, clearly, the complexion of members of racial groups will influence children's awareness of race at this early stage. For example, Bernal, Knight, Ocampo, Garza, and Cota (1993) suggested that young children may be unable to differentiate among ethnic groups (e.g., Latino and White populations), but may be able to differentiate among racial groups (e.g., between White and Black groups) because of the more pronounced physical markers among racial groups than ethnic groups.

Research reveals that children manifest particularly strong racial bias early in childhood (for summary, see Chapter 4). Yet, this purported racial bias appears to be more focused on egocentrism than on hostility toward other racial groups (see Chapter 5). That is, consistent with more general egocentrism, children, particularly White children, tend to have favorable opinions about their own racial status. Children may appear to manifest negative attitudes toward other groups, relative to attitudes toward their own group, because (1) they may lack much specific knowledge about other racial groups and (2) the other group is different from the child's racial identification. To feel positive toward what they are, children may need to feel less positive toward those who are different. Despite biased attitudes, most young children do not appear to act on their racial bias by, for example, excluding peers based on their racial group (Aboud, this volume). The children's racial attitudes may be a consequence of their egocentrism and serve to reinforce positive feelings about themselves.

Research described by Hirschfeld (see Chapter 3) suggests that this confusion of physical appearance and racial status may be restricted to explicit reasoning about race as young children appear to show an implicit understanding of the stability of racial status even in the face of changes in physical appearance. Recall that explicit understanding is reflected in verbal reasoning. Implicit understanding is marked by children's ability to choose among options that are provided for them that suggest, for example in Hirschfeld's research, occupational status is likely to be more variable than racial status, even though both occupational and racial status could be represented visually by either uniform or skin coloration, respectively.

#### LEVEL 1: LITERAL PERSPECTIVE OF RACE

As children's social cognitive capacities mature, they become less egocentric and more able to infer perspectives other than the ones that are apparent through observation of physical appearance and overt activity. An important advancement for children is developing a theory of mind or the ability to consider that there may be covert mental activities that underlie observable appearances or behavior. As described by Selman (1980), at Level 1 of SPTA children understand that there is an internal reality to emotional states that is different than the expression of emotions that is observable to others. For example, they can infer the internal emotional states of sadness and they understand that these internal states can be present whether or not a person is crying or has a sad facial expression. The awareness of an internal reality frees children from focusing only on physical appearances, characteristic of the previous level.

Despite awareness of these internal states, children at Level 1 of SPTA are not yet proficient in inferring these states. Consequently, they tend to be literal in their inferences, taking cues from external manifestations of the internal states. That is, although they know crying is different than the feeling of sadness, they infer that someone must be sad if they are crying and seem unaware of why someone might want to present a social façade different than their internal experience.



Children apply these SPTA skills to understanding their racial context. Children are able to infer that racial status has an unobservable dimension that underlies the physical manifestations of race, but remain focused on more literal aspects of race. At this level, children can understand that racial heritage, not physical appearances, determines racial status. They infer racial heritage from observations about racial customs and traditions, as well as racial phenotypes. Although observations of physical characteristics may be the foundation for inferring racial status, children at this level understand that the essence of racial status is something that must be inferred rather than directly observed.

The literal emphasis in racial cognition at this level is evidenced by children's focus on those racial or ethnic aspects that are literally connected to race or ethnicity. That is, they focus on those racial characteristics that are labeled as racial, such as a racial group's cultural traditions (e.g., *Korean* food, *Hawaiian* dance). The following interview excerpts illustrate children's literal focus.

*Interviewer:* How do you know you are Hawaiian?

*Child #1:* I know I'm Hawaiian because I live in Hawaii and I wear Hawaiian clothes.

*Interviewer:* Why do you like being Hawaiian?

*Child #2:* It's cool to be Hawaiian because the language is cool and stuff they did way back is cool.

*Interviewer:* What does it mean to be Korean American?

*Child #1:* Um, to have culture from Korea and different traditions from Korea and just stuff from Korea to do.

*Child #2:* To speak Korean and eat different foods than Americans.

*Interviewer:* What does it mean to be Mexican American?

*Child #1:* It [Mexican American] means that I was born in Mexico but live in America.

*Interviewer:* What does it mean to be African American?

*Child #2:* Well Black is like you're just Black, but African American means you're like, you'd be African and American.

At the earlier part of Level 1, children understand that something about parents determines a child's racial status, but may have some confusion, which reflects normative errors that are associated with their developmental logic. For example, one child indicated a person could change race if they "ask their parents." Additional examples of errors associated with children's developmental logic follow.

*Interviewer:* How do you know you are Mexican American?

*Child:* Everyone in my family is Mexican American. My mom's Mexican American, so is my dad, my grandma and grandpa and I think my dog is, too.

*Interviewer:* Suppose a child had one parent who was White and one parent who was Black. What would the child be?

*Child:* If they had twins, one would be White and one would be Black.

Eventually, children understand more fully about the role of racial ancestry in determining a child's racial status, as evidenced by the following:

*Interviewer:* How do you know you are Hawaiian?

*Child #1:* Cause my mom is Hawaiian and she got her Hawaiian from her dad and her mom.

*Child #2:* Cause my grandma is Hawaiian and my dad is half of that and I am half of that.

*Interviewer:* What does it mean to be Korean?

*Child:* To be Korean means your parents were Korean. But just because you're Korean on the outside that doesn't mean you're not American on the inside.

*Interviewer:* How do you know you are Mexican?

*Child:* My grandma, grandpa, and dad are Mexican, I want to be like my dad.

*Interviewer:* If someone changed the color of his skin, would that change his race?

*Child:* No, because they would still have one Black mommy and Black dad.

With the understanding that heritage determines racial status, children at this level articulate their understanding that racial status is permanent and cannot be changed by changing physical features or appearance, as illustrated by the last quote. One limitation for children's understanding at this level is their more literal focus and tendency to be relatively oblivious to subtler features of race, such as contemporary racial disparities in social class. For example, children at this level did not spontaneously mention connections between social class and race in interviews.

There were, however, some differences across racial groups in what was considered to be literally associated with race at this level of development. At this level, children from most racial groups did not mention the history of discrimination in their associations of race. That is, most racial groups investigated did not spontaneously mention social or historical discrimination when describing racial groups. An important exception was African American children, who spontaneously mentioned the history of slavery and racism. Clearly, the legacy of slavery and discrimination is so strongly connected to what it means to be African American and to be White that this legacy has become a defining feature of race to young children.

*Interviewer:* What does it mean to be White?

*Child #1:* That you never got to be slaves.

*Child #2:* That you didn't have to be sent from Africa, that you used to treat the Black people wrong.

*Interviewer:* What does it mean to be Black?

*Child:* You get to drink in the same drinking fountain.

It is important to note that this focus on discrimination is based on awareness of historical racism that is part of African Americans' sociocultural heritage. Notice that these examples locate the discrimination in the past. Across these examples, characteristic of understanding at this level, race is explained to be associated with historical events. Conspicuous by its absence in interviews is children's spontaneous mention of contemporary forms of discrimination, despite prompting.

At this level, children's understanding of race and racism reflect parental socialization practices. Prior to adolescence, African American parents emphasize historical lessons, such as Civil Rights leaders, and tend not to promote mistrust of others or prepare children for discrimination (Chapter 11). Recall that children from other racial groups tended not to associate race with a history of discrimination, consistent with the socialization strategies used by Latino, White, and Asian parents, who tend to focus on cultural socialization (Chapter 11). Consequently, children from these racial groups focus on the literal practices, customs, and traditions that are labeled as

ethnic or racial. It may be that parents intuit that young children are not yet ready to learn about contemporary forms of discrimination and racism, or they may be responding to their children's tendency to focus on more literal aspects of race and school lessons focused on historical forms of discrimination.

#### LEVEL 2: SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE OF RACE

This perspective incorporates a new social dimension to children's explicit explanations associated with race, which supplements the literal perspective of race. In what they associate with racial group membership, children go beyond the literal associations, such as cultural traditions, or the historical information about groups that are emphasized in school lessons during, for example, Black History month. While children at Level 1 tend to focus on the more obvious features associated with race (e.g., racial heritage), children at Level 2 associate subtle features in their explanations about racial characteristics, including those characteristics associated with race that are labeled as racial (e.g., social class). At Level 2, children begin integrating their own observations of their social world into their verbal reasoning about race. They notice, for example, the connection between social class and neighborhoods segregated by race. Whereas at Level 1, children conceive of race as an artifact of one's past, at Level 2 children describe how race has implications for everyday life, for where people live, the jobs they have, and how they are treated by others. Racial differences in social class are the most common features cited by children that go beyond the more literal definitions of race used at the previous level, as illustrated below.

*Interviewer:* Why would someone not like being African American?

*Child:* Because they [Whites] got most of the stuff and like they [Blacks] can't afford stuff

Level 2 of SPTA involves children's ability to see themselves through the eyes of others. This suggests that at this level a child can take the perspective of others and understand how others may view the child. Consequently, Level 2 of RPTA involves children's ability to consider how others view their racial status. Realizing that some are racially prejudiced and biased toward their racial group, children recognize that others may view their racial status negatively. The following quote illustrates this:

*Interviewer:* Have you ever been called names or teased because of your race?

*Child:* At school people bother me about it [being Korean] but I really don't care 'cause I'm used to it by now so I guess I'm okay with being Korean.

*Interviewer:* How would it be to play on this team [with only Whites on it] instead of this [all Black] team?

*Child:* Whites might treat them [African Americans] differently so they just won't be their friend anymore.

*Interviewer:* Why would someone not like being Black?

*Child:* Maybe the boss or the person who would be their boss wouldn't give it [the job] to them because of the race they are.

Young children, still in elementary school, who have developed Level 2 RPTA skills were articulate in describing how authority figures—teachers, principals, and

police—could be biased toward them because of their racial status. Brown (see Chapter 7) indicates that children’s spontaneous mention of the potential for authority to be prejudiced shows a developmental trajectory in middle childhood. Moreover, understanding that others may be biased toward them because of their racial status is a critical step in the development of critical consciousness or the ability to have a more critical awareness and questioning of the legitimacy of the racial hierarchy.

The knowledge that others may be biased toward them at Level 2 also complicates the children’s relationships with teachers and other authority figures. Awareness of the potential for racial bias may undermine some of the legitimacy of the authority from the children’s perspectives (see Chapter 7). The dynamics of social dominance in which authority manifests racial bias (see Chapter 12) and racial minority youth question the legitimacy of the authority may contribute to school-related problems of racially-stigmatized children and adolescents (see Chapters 7–15 ). For example, McKown and Weinstein (2003) indicated that children who were aware of racial stereotypes against their own group were affected negatively by stereotype threat. Briefly, stereotype threat refers to the tendency to underperform, relative to their ability, on tasks on which their racial group is stereotyped as being at a disadvantage. In McKown’s research, those children unaware of racial stereotypes against their group were immune to the deleterious effects of stereotype threat—suggesting some benefits to naivety regarding racial stereotypes and that there are some negative consequences associated with children’s learning about racial injustice in their world. On the other hand, Brown (see Chapter 7) describes some of the advantages provided by the recognition that children may be discriminated against by others.

More generally, children demonstrate awareness of racial differences in social interactions and activity at Level 2. Just as they notice social class differences associated with race, children and youth notice that social relationships differ across race.

*Interviewer:* How are Koreans different than Caucasians?

*Child #1:* I guess I’m different [from Caucasians] because they treat me differently.

*Child #2:* Americans think that Koreans are . . . like their language is funny and sometimes people would tell other people that another person is weird because they are Korean.

*Interviewer:* How are your relationships with Koreans different than your relationships with Caucasians?

*Child:* I had this friend who was Korean when I was little, but it got kinda annoying cause if you have [only] two girls or boys at school [who are Korean] the people ask, “Are you brothers or sisters?”

These excerpts from interviews indicate children’s awareness and description of differences in social relations associated with race. Children with a social perspective of race also perceive racial differences in social norms and behaviors as illustrated in the following.

*Interviewer:* How are Koreans different from Americans?

*Child #1:* Most Koreans endure when they want to go to a bathroom during class, but he (white child) asked during the middle of class that he wanted to go to the bathroom and where the bathroom was. We don’t do like that. We do it quietly so nobody can notice.

*Child #2:* In Korea, a father has the most power and a mother, even when she argues she doesn't make much difference. But in America families seem to be almost equal.

*Interviewer:* How are Hawaiians different than Caucasians?

*Child #1:* Maybe the[Hawaiian] parents would sing him to sleep and in the White family they might just say "good night" and turn off the light.

*Child #2:* Hawaiians are really kind and loving . . . and when they dance its like real nice they actually show you what the song is about with their hand motions.

As another example, one girl noticed that children in Latin America tend to hold hands more often than White children in the United States. African American children noticed racial differences associated with social activity. One African American girl indicated different activities with her African American peers (i.e., jump rope) than with her White peers (computer games). Children also notice the social dynamics associated with linguistic status and the awareness that their peers who only speak English may not like it when another language is spoken out of suspiciousness that the English speaking peers were being discussed. This recognition of racial differences in social norms and relationships corresponds to a developmental period (early adolescence) in which there is a reduction in interracial friendships. Recognition of these differences in social behaviors may be part of the reason for the reduction in interracial friendships during adolescence, or could be a consequence thereof.

It is important to note that although children are aware of interpersonal forms of discrimination, they did not, however, spontaneously mention awareness of institutional forms of discrimination<sup>1</sup>. At Level 2, children showed understanding of isolated forms of discrimination among individuals (Chapter 7). Moreover, children at this level did not mention awareness of the insidiousness of racism, but rather focused on discrete examples of racism. Consequently, the insidiousness of institutional discrimination is not well recognized by children at this level.

In sum, acquiring a social perspective of race represents an important milestone in the development of children's understanding of race. The most significant consequence is children's spontaneous mention of others' racial bias in interpersonal contexts. Children and youth also begin to discuss connections between racial and social class status at this level of RPTA. Finally, children recognize differences in social norms and behavior across races. Hence, at this Level 2, race takes on a more contemporary reality—in contrast to the historical focus for Level 1—although the recognition of discrimination is focused on isolated instances between individuals and not necessarily a systemic or institutional phenomenon.

### LEVEL 3: RACIAL GROUP CONSCIOUSNESS

The social cognitive advancements corresponding to Level 3 during early adolescence provides the foundation for understanding the racialized structure of society, along with institutional forms of discrimination. Namely, adolescents' social cognitive abilities allow them to generalize across a series of events or across discrete

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<sup>1</sup>Institutional discrimination refers to discriminatory practices manifest in the explicit policies, as well as informal practices, of an institution, such as a school.

individuals. At this level, a racial group is not simply a collection of individuals with their individual perspectives. Instead, adolescents can posit a generalized group perspective, or how the group perceives or feels as opposed to how individuals within the group perceive or feel. Adolescents can posit a generalized other (e.g., racial groups, institutions, societies) that reflects prejudices and acts in discriminatory manners. The social cognitive ability of generalizing across individuals as well as discrete events allows adolescents to identify generalized patterns of action which may not become apparent when considering only each discrete event abstracted from the more general trend. That is, awareness of institutional discrimination requires an abstraction of action from an individual level to that of an institution. To perceive institutional discrimination requires that a generalized perspective be abstracted from the activity of an institution in order to attribute motives to its collective actions. As mentioned above, research indicates that children's spontaneous mention of institutional discrimination tends to occur during the developmental period that Level 3 SPTA and RPTA skills begin to emerge (Brown, this volume).

This ability to posit a generalized other may promote an increase in prejudice against racial minorities, which is also consistent with an age-related increase in racial bias from early to late adolescence for members of racially dominant groups (Chapter 4). For racial minorities, this development may also help them recognize the racialized structure of society in which racial bias is pervasive. These cognitive abilities allow adolescents to posit group perspectives for racial groups in which each group may have different interests, intentions, and reactions. With these cognitive skills, adolescents can generalize across individuals within a racial group, abstracting trends and inferring intentionality as underlying these trends. In short, just as individuals can be perceived as having competing interests and motivations, adolescents can also perceive racial groups as having competing group interests, motivations, and intentionality. At this level, racism is understood not just as isolated incidents between individuals, but can also involve persistent interactions between racial groups.

An important part of positing a group perspective is when adolescents develop a racial group consciousness that represents a generalized perspective associated with their own racial group. In interviews with youth at this level, there was a tendency to use plural pronouns (e.g., "we" and "us"). The use of "we" and "us" illustrate the focus on collective perspectives within their racial group instead of an impersonal "they" used by younger children when describing their own racial group (see above interview excerpts). The following quotes illustrate these trends. Notice the use of "us" in the first excerpt and the inference of a generalized perspective for another racial group in the second excerpt.

*Interviewer:* Why do some people not like Mexican Americans?

*Child #1:* I think it's just the way the world outcasts us, the way they put a tag on us. Like there's little hoodlums over here so they say "Let's see if they have guns or something." I guess it's the way the TV presents us.

*Child #2:* It's like when you're Mexican or . . . they'll accuse you of doing bad things most of the time, no one will think you're like good or anything, if they see you dressing like just the way you dress . . . they'll just think you're a hoodlum or something, they'll accuse you right off. If you try to change their mind, they'll try to get them mad.

*Interviewer:* Why do some people not like Hawaiians?

*Child:* Because earlier in MLK day, the Whites wouldn't agree with the Hawaiians and Blacks and use them as slaves . . . if we were in those days right now we would be scrubbing someone's floor or digging someone's weeds and doing a lot of stuff and slaving and working really hard.

*Interviewer:* Why do some people not like African Americans?

*Child #1:* Because if a Black person did something to them they'll say all of the other Black people will do the same thing.

*Child #2:* Because they're racist and like their families probably raised them not to like different skin toned people.

In these excerpts, youth demonstrate the ability to posit perspectives of racial groups and to perceive reflected appraisals of their racial group by another group—to see how another group would appraise and judge their own group. This ability is one component of DuBois' (1903) description of double consciousness. That is, youth can see how their group is viewed by other racial groups. The second component of DuBois' double consciousness is the merging of personal identity with racial identity. Putting these components together results in youth's ability to simultaneously identify with their racial group while also viewing their group through the collective eyes of another racial group.

Cross and Cross (see Chapter 8) describe adolescents' merging of collective and individual identities. As noted above, the use of first person plural pronouns (we and us) signals the merging of personal and collective identity. These Level 3 skills appear to provide the social cognitive foundation necessary for racial identity development during adolescence and early adulthood as described by Cross and others (e.g., see Chapter 8). Social identity theory (SIT, Chapter 5) describes what dynamics emerge when an individual identifies with a social group. These dynamics include the merging of personal and collective esteem. For example, identifying with a stigmatized group threatens collective self-esteem and, therefore, threatens personal self-esteem, when a person identifies personally with the stigmatized group. To maintain self-esteem there needs to be a concomitant level of group esteem or, in the case of racial groups, racial pride. To minority youth, racial pride takes on increased importance and emphasis in their discussions and explanations about their racial group, which is consistent with my (1998) description of the RPTA level associated with racial group consciousness. The following interview excerpts reflect the integration of personal and collective identity, as well as increased focus on racial pride. In the first example, the youth describes the importance of understanding her racial group for her self-understanding. Notice the use of "I" in the second and third excerpts when mentioning racial identifications, which appears to signal the merging of personal and collective self. The last example demonstrates that the racial identification is critical to the sense of self: A different racial identification would involve becoming a "whole" new person.

*Interview:* What does it mean to be Hawaiian?

*Child:* Being Hawaiian is fun because you get to learn more than if you . . . cause if you are in this school [for Hawaiians], you get to know about your culture and religion and how you are supposed to live. *It gets me to know myself a little better* [emphasis added].

*Interviewer:* What does it mean to be African American?

*Child:* I just feel proud, I just feel proud of who I am, my color.

*Interviewer:* What does it mean to be Mexican American?

*Child:* Even if I married another person from another race I wouldn't stop being who I was, my last name might change, but inside I wouldn't stop being who I was.

*Interviewer:* Suppose a cross-racially adopted child didn't know what her race was, but then just recently found out. Would knowing what her race is change her?

*Child:* Yes, she probably thought she was Mexican or mixed or something but she's just now finding out she's Black, she'd just be a whole new person, she would just change her ways and thinking.

Level 3 RPTA occurs at a time when there is an acceleration of racial and ethnic identity development. My (2007) review of research revealed that across several studies and racial groups, there is an acceleration of racial identity development during the middle school years, and that the rate of acceleration of racial identity development decreases during high school. Developing a racial group consciousness may be a social cognitive prerequisite for the burst of racial identity development that occurs during early adolescence.

To briefly summarize Levels 0 to 3 of RPTA, first young children assume a physical and egocentric perspective that emphasizes physical manifestations of racial status and sometimes reflect children's egocentric notions of racial groups. Next, children are able to assume a literal perspective in which their oral descriptions of race tend to emphasize objective cultural features, such as those characteristics that are obviously connected to a racial group (e.g., language, customs, and traditions). This level is followed by children's ability to adopt a social perspective in which they perceive differences in social activity associated with racial group membership, but also focus their attention more on social attitudes associated with race (e.g., racism and discrimination). The last level discussed above describes the youth's development of a racial group consciousness in which they develop generalized perspectives of their own and other racial groups, and also tend to merge personal and collective identities. The following sections describe ways in which the RPTA model can be integrated with a few other theoretical perspectives described in this book. In the preceding I described connections between Hirschfeld's work (see Chapter 3) and the RPTA model and also differentiated between implicit and explicit understandings, with Hirschfeld's work investigating implicit racial understandings and my work focusing on explicit understandings revealed through children and youth's oral explanations.

#### DEVELOPMENTAL PREREQUISITES FOR SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY PROCESSES

Theorists have applied social psychological theories to account for empirical findings associated with children and race. Most, if not all, of the social psychological theories were developed in the context of adults—or at least college sophomores—and may require advanced levels of social cognitive development. My (1998) model of RPTA may help to identify social cognitive skills that may be prerequisites necessary for these social psychological principles to operate during childhood. As mentioned above, McKown and Weinstein (2003) investigated the origin of stereotype threat in childhood. They found that children's awareness of societal stereotypes



appeared to be a prerequisite for stereotype threat to become operational during childhood. Young children appeared immune to these stereotype threats, while older children were susceptible to its effects because of their advanced social cognitive abilities. As described above, Level 2 (social perspective of race) may be required for stereotype threat to become active.

As briefly mentioned above, Barrett and Davis (see Chapter 5) applied Social Identity Theory (SIT, Tajfel, 1978) to the development of children's cognitions and attitudes associated with race. SIT describes processes that occur when an individual identifies with a social group. For example, identification with a group, even an arbitrary and fictional group, leads to in-group favoritism and bias. SIT indicates that in order to maintain positive esteem, once an individual identifies with a group, there is a tendency to evaluate the group more favorably and show a bias toward other members in the group (Chapter 5). In order for SIT to be applied to children, there needs to be identification of the developmental prerequisites for SIT processes to unfold. To date, researchers have focused on the social contexts in which these processes may emerge during childhood and adolescence, but have not addressed the cognitive development that is also required for the social psychological principles to emerge. More generally, there may be an interaction between social context and cognitive development such that the social psychological processes emerge in some contexts because the contexts are relevant for the child's developmental level or their ability to cognitively understand the social situation.

The RPTA model may help to identify the developmental prerequisites for the dynamics associated with SIT and other social psychological principles to unfold. RPTA describes the social cognitive foundation of children's identification with their racial group. For example, Level 0 of RPTA suggests that although young children may be able to classify self and others into racial groups, the focus on superficial manifestations of race suggest that these young children are not identifying with a racial group, *per se*. Instead, young children's racial identification is based on physical characteristics that are shared by others. In this developmental context, young children's racial identification is based on applying a descriptor, race, to themselves. To young children, a racial group is not made up of a collective, but is composed of individuals with the same physical characteristics. That is, although it is clear that children are able to racially identify themselves based on skin color, it is less clear that they are identifying with a racial group in the same way that adolescents are identifying with a group that is characterized by a racial group conscious.

Moreover, to be able to classify self into a group does not necessarily require there to be an identification with the group, particularly during early childhood. For example, being able to classify others based on eye color does not necessarily mean that there will be a social identity associated with eye color. Social Identity Theory suggests that there is some meaning associated with the social identity. The meaning associated with a social classification may be very different during different developmental periods. RPTA suggests the meaning of race differs considerably over childhood and adolescence. For example, it seems unlikely that the racial classification of self and others that occurs during Level 0, physical and egocentric perspective, of RPTA would be associated with the development of a social identity associated with race. Similarly, children at Level 1 of RPTA may not be identifying with a social group associated with their racial group membership. Instead, their racial classification of

self and others is focused on a shared characteristic, racial ancestry, that does not appear to be intrinsically invested with social or psychological meaning as evidenced by children's responses to interviews. While it seems possible that this sense of a shared ancestry may form the beginnings of a social identification, it also seems that the psychological investment in the social group among young children would be more limited than that of adults, who may identify more passionately with their racial group. On the other hand, children who have reached Level 2, social perspective of race, of RPTA appear to invest stronger social and psychological meaning associated with their racial classifications, compared to much younger children. Consequently, social psychological dynamics associated with social identity, as described by Tajfel (1978), may not become operational in a racial context until some Level 2 skills become available.

Unfortunately, Social Identity theorists have not explicitly defined the social cognitive development that is required for SIT principles to become functional. Moreover, because (1) RPTA defines children's explicit understanding of racial phenomenon, (2) children's implicit understanding of racial phenomenon may precede their explicit understanding, and (3) the social cognitive prerequisites of SIT dynamics may only require children's implicit understanding, not their explicit understanding, therefore children may acquire the prerequisite social cognitive skills associated with SIT dynamics prior to Level 2 RPTA. Nonetheless, it seems reasonable to assume some connection between implicit and explicit forms of understanding of racial phenomenon and that the sequencing of development for explicit understandings of race described by RPTA can provide insight into the sequencing of development for implicit understandings of race and social group membership.

#### FALSE AND CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND RPTA

In a seminal article, Boykin (1986) characterized racial oppression as tantamount to mental colonization, drawing parallels between the colonization of others' indigenous lands and colonization of the minds of an oppressed group. Colonization of lands requires that the colonizers be given some legitimacy by the colonized in order to maintain hegemonic control. According to Boykin, mental colonization requires that the colonized or oppressed do not envision a viable alternative organization of oppression and subjugation in society. Quintana and Segura-Herrera (2003) describe a false consciousness that parallels Boykin's notions of mental colonization. False consciousness is related to internalized racism in which racial stereotypes are internalized, and thereby given legitimacy, by those that are the target of the stereotypes. Repeated exposure to racial stereotypes in contexts in which the legitimization is not effectively challenged contributes to the development of false consciousness. In short, false consciousness involves the acceptance of the stereotypes at either explicit, or more likely, implicit levels of consciousness. Quintana and Segura-Herrera found evidence of explicit forms of false consciousness among a racially stigmatized group in Central America and associated this with development of racial perspective-taking ability. In the context of oppression, children at early levels of RPTA may be at risk for accepting false notions about themselves and their racial group given that they lack the cognitive skills necessary to challenge the legitimacy of their stigmatization. Quintana and Segura-Herrera found evidence for false consciousness in that young Mayan-descent children appeared to stereotype themselves in ways that were similar to how their European-descent peer group stereotyped them (e.g., lacking in skill,

natural talents, and physical attractiveness). There was a reduction in the prevalence of these negative and stereotypical views of their own racial group in older children who appeared to manifest Level 2 or higher RPTA.

This research suggests that one critical component in reducing false consciousness is the realization that stereotypes do not represent objective reality, but the subjective reality for members of another racial group. By moving beyond the literal perspective, children can begin to question the legitimacy of stereotypes that had been presented in general society as objective facts and realize that an alternative subjective perspective is possible. The realization that stereotypes are merely beliefs held by others, or by another group, and not literal interpretations of reality is the beginning of the development of critical consciousness.

The development of critical consciousness may find its roots in Level 2 of RPTA, but may be accelerated by the development of Level 3 RPTA, development of a racial group consciousness. Being able to posit a collective perspective to other racial groups allows youth to question the legitimacy of stereotypical beliefs held by that group. Again, realizing that these beliefs are the result of the group's perspectives helps the youth to be critical of the beliefs rather than accepting the beliefs at face value. As described above, Level 3 skills also allow the youth to posit a group perspective that is different than the perspective of the dominant group that is stigmatizing their group. The racial identity development cogently described by Cross and Cross (see Chapter 8) appear to require advanced levels of RPTA, particularly those skills being consolidated during Level 3. These perspective-taking skills and racial identity development helps youth and young adults challenge the legitimacy of their oppression, develop psychological and social connections with others who share their own racial perspective, and begin to construct perspectives that differ from that of the dominant group. In this way, advancement of RPTA paves the way for reduction of mental colonization by first understanding that the hegemony of their own group is subjective, not literal, interpretations of reality and then by being able to differentiate the perspectives of their own racial group from that of the racially dominant group. The reduction of mental colonization, in turn, contributes to the development of critical consciousness of their oppression and stigmatization.

### SUMMARY

The model of RPTA has shown to be applicable across racial groups and racial contexts, including some cross-cultural validation. The levels of RPTA appear consistent across racial groups. Moreover, the expectation that RPTA development occurs as a result of advances in basic social cognitive development has been supported in empirical research (Quintana et al., 2000). Support for the prediction that cultural exposure is associated with advanced levels of RPTA was supported for children being raised in multi-racial families who have received extra-familial socialization through summer camps or private schools. RPTA described a progression of development from understanding race to be limited to physical manifestations (Level 0), to more literal aspects of racial heritage (Level 1), to isolated social interactions that may involve discrimination (Level 2), to a racial group consciousness (Level 3). The RPTA development is consistent with other research into parental socialization (Chapter 11) as well as others' observation of children's spontaneous mention of other notions associated with race (Brown, this volume). Later stages of RPTA are

consistent with theories of racial identity development (Cross & Cross, this volume). Moreover, there appears to be potential to use the RPTA model to understand how and when social psychological processes observed in adults may emerge during child development. Finally, RPTA model may be able to identify the developmental prerequisites to the development of false consciousness in the contexts of stigmatization, as well as the development of critical consciousness that may be facilitated by Levels 2 and 3 of RPTA development.

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## CHAPTER 3

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# Children's Developing Conceptions of Race

LAWRENCE A. HIRSCHFELD

ONE OF the most important and most daunting tasks for the young child is developing the capacity to interpret and to explain the behavior of others. Humans inhabit a world that is thoroughly social and thoroughly cultural; any particular action can admit to very different kinds of explanations. Johnnie may reach into the cookie jar because he is hungry and knows that cookies are in the cookie jar; or he may do it because he has an oppositional personality and his mother just told him not to touch the cookie jar; or he may reach into the jar by accident, the cookie jar being placed where the candy jar used to be; or he may reach into the jar because all the other kids have reached in.

These explanations all have a common thread: explaining Johnnie's actions is grounded in attributing to Johnnie a particular state of mind: belief, hunger, predilections to believe or feel (i.e., personality). Given this, it isn't surprising that the human child's capacity to "mentalize," to interpret and to explain behavior specifically in terms of unseen mental states, is early emerging and robust. By 9 months, infants interpret an action preformed by a human hand as intentional, but not the same action performed by a mechanical arm (Woodward, 1998). Twelve but not 9-month-old infants, when imitating a goal-directed action performed by a model, do not simply reenact (emulate) the behavior they observe, but infer the most "rational" strategy to achieve the model's unseen goal (Gergely, Szilvia, Orsolya, 2003; see also Meltzoff & Brooks, 2001). Fourteen month olds distinguish actions that are intentional and ones that are accidental, and tend to imitate only the former (Carpenter, Akhtar, & Tomasello, 1998). Further support for the view that mentalizing is a special-purpose cognitive structure comes from neuroimaging studies that have identified a specific brain system underpinning it (Frith & Frith, 2003; Saxe, Carey & Kanwisher, 2004) and differential impairment in mentalizing in individuals with autism (Baron-Cohen, Leslie, & Frith, 1985).

But humans also possess the capacity to use the sort of person an individual is to interpret and explain her actions. Humans inhabit social worlds that are both

complex and cultural; they use the ability to recognize the sorts of people there are to understand the meaning of others' behavior in negotiating these complexities. When Johnnie tries to understand an action, he can—and does—exploit expectations he has about adults, women, teachers, Blacks, or skateboard aficionados. Johnnie may expect, for example, that women are more likely than men to be secretaries without appealing to the motives—the mental states—that may underlie a choice of occupation.

As with mentalizing, there is considerable evidence that even infants are capable of drawing distinctions between individuals that become basis of social category identity: For example, infants distinguish between people by their age (Brooks & Lewis, 1976), gender (Miller, 1983), the language they speak (Mehler et al., 1988), and even their race (Kelly, Quinn, & Slater, 2005). This is not to suggest that innate dispositions directly deliver judgments about gender, language, age, or race. To go “on-line” all require some—although in some cases staggeringly slight—experience with the wider social world. The finding that 3- but not 1-month-old infants discriminate their own (i.e., most commonly encountered) race from other races (i.e., less commonly encountered) does not mean that young infants know their own race or even have a category race. What they display is the ability to distinguish between individuals using information that older children and adults employ in diagnosing the social category of race.

Not all social categories are created equal. Some provide the basis for more powerful explanations than others. For example, an individual's gender is typically thought to explain behavior in more situations than, say, her occupation. Arguably the “most unequal” social category—in the sense that it trumps more social category identities in more situations—is race (Taylor & Fiske, 1978; cf. Kurzban, Tooby, & Cosmides, 2001). Of course, race is also highly salient politically and economically. Knowing a person's race goes a long way toward accurately predicting whether he or she is likely to suffer inadequate medical care, poor schools, being incarcerated, or having greater likelihood of prostate or breast cancer, or higher prices for almost everything from eggs to a mortgage, and so on. (Feagin & Hernan, 1998).

The standard view outside psychology—that is, among historians, sociologists, anthropologists, and the other interpretive research traditions—is that the hyperpsychological salience of race derives from its political and economic importance (Smedley, 1999). However, within psychology, an impressive literature in social psychology has underscored the myriad cognitive processes that support race's political and economic importance (see, e.g., Hamilton & Trolier, 1986; Hilton and Von Hippel, 1996; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Particularly relevant is research demonstrating the extent to which nonconscious, automatic processes are involved (Devine 1989; Banaji & Greenwald, 1994). Imaging studies reveal that the perception of and reasoning about race and racial stereotypes appear to involve unique patterns of neural activation (Phelps et al. 2000; Hart et al. 2000; Richeson et al. 2003; Wheeler & Fiske 2005; Eberhardt 2005).

Curiously, developmental research has less prominence in the elaboration of theoretical models of race. This is not to say that race has not been an important topic of developmental research. Rather, it is to observe two trends in that work: First, relatively less research has explored the development of racial categorization among children, with much greater emphasis on the development of racial attitudes. Second, conventional wisdom, until recently, has been that racial categorization is a bottom-up process involving little more than the ability to categorize like things

together on the basis of surface level similarities. This claim aside, it is clear that developmentally race is one of the earliest emerging social categories. Leaving aside 3-month-olds' discrimination of faces by race, by 2 to 3 years of age, toddlers have the ready capacity to use racial categories to reason about others and their behavior. Most relevant research focused on young children's ability to stereotype racially. Since the Clarks' landmark doll studies (Clark & Clark, 1950), many studies have shown that by 3 years of age, children effortlessly sort people into racial categories and use membership in these categories to interpret behaviors in accord with the (typically the most strident) adult stereotypes (Aboud, 1988; Cross 1991; Katz, 1983). (There are significant changes between 3 and 5 years of age. Three-year-olds generally attribute positive properties to members of the majority race, whereas 5-year-olds not only attribute positive properties to majority race, but also negative properties to minority races.)

Several explanations have been proposed for these patterns (emerging awareness of race, on one hand, and racial stereotyping/prejudice, on the other). As observed above, the young child's beliefs about racial identity—as opposed to racial attitudes—have been long seen as tethered to surface level properties, a view consistent with the long held view that young children's thinking is concrete in orientation (Piaget, 1928). One well-researched example of this is young children's inability to grasp the notion of racial (or gender) constancy, namely, the understanding that a person's race does not change. Young children have similarly been described as unable to grasp that race (and gender) are functions of a person's biological constitution/heritage; the knowledge, for example, that a person's race is fixed at birth. Studies lent support to this view. In one, 5-year-old kindergarteners and third-graders (approximately 8 years old) were asked what would happen if a familiar child were made up to look as if he had changed race (e.g., if a White child was made to look like an Inuit child). Kindergartners, but not third-graders, reasoned that the child's race had changed (Aboud, 1988). A second study, by Semaj (1980), using a similar task, found that 4-year-olds expected that a Black child made up to look White had become White, suggesting that they were both unable to grasp biological identity constancy and unable to grasp that basic biological properties in the context of racial judgments are involuntary. These results are consistent with the view that young children do not believe that race is embodied or a function of biological or corporeal nature. Curiously, in nonracial contexts preschoolers do grasp that internal bodily functions, such as digestion, are involuntary (Hatano & Inagaki, 1994).

If this is an accurate account, it raises an important question about the relationship between children's beliefs about human categories and their expectations about nonhuman living things, phenomena that at first blush are similar to race in many respects. Consider a parallel notion, namely, gender constancy. Although previous research using manipulations like those used by Aboud and Semaj found a similar inability to grasp constancy, more recent studies—using a switched-at-birth paradigm—demonstrate that 4-year-olds have an adult-like grasp of gender constancy (Gelman & Taylor, 2000). These findings have been interpreted as revealing that even preschoolers believe that gender is not simply about outward appearances, but rather about an expectation of an embodied but hidden physical basis to gender. Bem (1989) provided further support for an embodied interpretation of gender in a study that found that preschoolers, who grasped gender constancy, as assessed on traditional measures, also expected that genitalia constitute the defining attributes of male and female.



Other studies reveal that preschoolers also grasp species constancy for nonhuman living kinds, expecting that a creature's species and its inherent nature are constant and more informative of that nature than surface-level similarities (Gelman, 1988; Gelman & Coley, 1990). Gelman and Wellman (1991) found that species-typical properties are conserved even when a creature is raised among members of a species whose species-typical properties are quite different. Children also grasp that although a creature might change radically in appearance during development (e.g., tadpole to frog or caterpillar to moth), it remains the same kind of creature.

Recent studies of young children's beliefs reveal a similar, embodied notion of race. In one study, I (1996) found that young children are able to grasp racial constancy when the task is framed in a familiar context. The study tested an alternative explanation of Aboud's and Semaj's finding, proposing that the pattern of reasoning they observed could be attributable less to children's reasoning strategies than to confusion about task because the changes proposed were both implausibly abrupt and difficult to integrate with the child's awareness that biological change tends to involve gradual changes (see Rosengren, Gelman, Kalish, & McCormick, 1991). To test this proposal, I asked preschoolers whether racial and other embodied properties could change in the context of familiar transformations of the body that occur over the life span and between generations. Specifically, when asked whether a property would remain unchanged as a person grew up—hair and skin color versus clothing style and color—even 3-year-olds judged that racial properties were more constant than sartorial ones. Furthermore, when asked to choose which embodied properties would remain unchanged over the life span—hair and skin color versus body build—4-year-olds judged that racial properties were more constant than body build. The same pattern of judgments was obtained when children were asked which properties would be inherited (i.e., if a heavyset parent was Black, children reasoned that his child would more likely be thin and Black than heavyset and White).

In another study, using a switched-at-birth task, 3- to 5-year-olds reasoned that a person's race is fixed at birth (Hirschfeld, 1996). Participants were asked whether a child would develop racial properties of her birth parents or those of her adopted parents. Four- and 5-year-olds, but not 3-year-olds, overwhelmingly predicted that the child would racially match her birth parents. Other researchers have documented much the same theory-like reasoning about race in populations outside of North America or Northern Europe: Giménez & Harris (2002) among Spanish preschoolers, Astuti et al. (2004) in their work with 6-year-olds in Madagascar (when the category contrast involved differences that North Americans would see as racial), and Mahalingham (1999) in a study of South Asian preadolescents.

Young children's thinking reveals adult-like understanding of race in other respects as well. Ambady et al. (2001) found that children as young as 5 years of age are susceptible to stereotype threat. (A highly abstract version of racial prejudice in which a person's performance on standardized tasks is diminished simply by reminding them of ambient stereotypes; thus, when primed that Blacks struggle learning mathematics, Black participants perform less well than matched, but unprimed Black participants.) In Ambady et al.'s study, kindergarten and early elementary school children reasoned in accord with wide-spread but, for the young child, typically unstated stereotypes. Thus, they predicted that an Asian student would be more likely to do well in math than a Caucasian student (and that a boy was more likely

than a girl to do well in math). Indeed, in spite of conventional wisdom that preschool children are color blind and innocent of racial prejudice, persuasive evidence shows otherwise (Aboud 1988). In part, this reflects an absence of blatant prejudiced behavior among preschoolers, in contrast to their school-age counterparts. But it also reflects the subtlety of young children's use of racial identity as a technology of inclusion and exclusion, much as most adults are able to moderate behavior to avoid unambiguous displays of prejudice.

Van Ausdale and Feagin's (2001) ethnography of a preschool provides striking evidence. In their ethnography they document young children's subtle use of racial identity in regulating inclusion and exclusion—again, despite adults around them denying that they do so. In the first week of the study, Van Ausdale witnessed the following interaction:

Francisco, a very small Latino boy . . . is playing with a small group of children. He suddenly starts a fight. Francisco pushes Cheng-Li (5, Asian) over and topples the Asian boy's Lego tower. . . . Francisco . . . declares [to a White girl watching] "I don't like him. He looks funny. But I like you" (pp. 175)

Van Ausdale and Feagin's account continues. Cheng-Li begins to cry and the teacher approaches. She admonishes the boys not to fight, but to work out their differences, which they make no effort to do. As the teacher moves away, she remarks to Van Ausdale, "Francisco is in a bad temper today but usually is not like that." Van Ausdale later realized, however, that Francisco *did* act like this often. What was remarkable was the teacher's inability or unwillingness to realize it.

### ESSENTIALISM, RACE, AND THE YOUNG CHILD

A hallmark of the North American adult's notion of race is commitment to underlying racial essences (Allport, 1954). While the idea that human races (whatever they might actually represent) have essences, like the parallel idea that nonhuman living kinds have essences, has long been rejected by scientists. However, the folk belief that racial groups (or species, for that matter) have essences is widespread, and the topic of considerable research. Folk reasoning about group essences falls under a more general cognitive predilection for psychological essentialism, first theorized by Medin and Ortony (1989). It is the belief that each member of a category (or group in the case of race) is endowed with a category-group-specific essence that governs the category member's development and behavior (Gelman 2003; Gelman & Hirschfeld 1999). Essentialist reasoning is found in folk beliefs about many social categories, but especially those, like race and gender, that apply in many different situations. In addition to race, gender, age, kinship, language spoken, ethnicity (to the extent it is distinct from race), and caste are virtually always, to the degree that current research permits generalization, essentialized (Prentice & Miller 2006; Haslam, Rothchild, & Ernst, 2000; Mahalingham, 1999; McIntosh 2002; Hirschfeld, 1996).

Influential scholarship in the interpretive disciplines argues that essentialism has historically proved to be an important modality through which domination is achieved (see, Said, 1978; Stoler, 1995; Fields, 1990). The cognitive correlate of that claim, in its skeletal form, is that folk have a conceptual disposition to inexorably link beliefs about outward racial appearance to claims about inner character. Arguably

this is the most pernicious aspect of racial thinking and its exploitation of essentialist reasoning. Specifically, there is within the widely held folk theory of race a conceptually willing willingness to believe that

- human biological variation clusters into natural groupings, largely marked by differences in outward appearances such as skin color, facial form, hair color and texture, etc.;
- each racial group has a unique underlying essence that governs the race-specific development of the group's members (on the surface, at least, similar to the folk belief that the development of each nonhuman species is governed by a distinct species-specific underlying essence);
- this underlying essence governs the development of outward appearance and inward qualities.

Bear in mind that this model is meant to characterize a *folk theory* of race, not (at least among contemporary scientists) a scientific one.

It should be apparent that this essentialist reasoning about race among adult folk also characterizes young children's reasoning about race. Children may not be able to articulate this, but their expectations about race—particularly its continuity over the life span and across generations, and the manner in which it becomes an indelible part of an individual—accord closely with adult beliefs about essentialism and race. These findings together are consistent not only with children's adult-like reasoning about race, they suggest that the young child may play a special role in sustaining racial thinking. Rather than simply rehearsing adult racial beliefs, young children may be crucial to the way racial beliefs become a fixed part of adult cultural repertoire.

### THE CHICKEN AND EGG OF RACIAL THINKING

What role do pedagogical models play in the acquisition of group-based reasoning? Folk wisdom holds that local (daily experience-near) models are especially important: "The acorn does not fall far from the tree," or "As the twig is bent, so grows the tree." On this view, group-based reasoning arises through a process of social learning, such that children are exposed to stereotypes, particularly those expressed by important adult models like parents and teachers, the result of which is that children come to hold them (e.g., see Powlishta, Sen, Serbin, Poulin-Dubois, & Eichstedt, 2001). The child is thus seen as a largely passive observer; and what counts in predicting what beliefs that child acquires is the degree of exposure to the most relevant and readily-available input.

As intuitive as this may seem, for many cultural domains (Maccoby 2000; Harris 1998), and for racial attitudes in particular, this is not the case. Several studies have demonstrated that children's racial and ethnic biases are not reliably associated with the beliefs and attitudes of parents or peers (Bigler 2004; Aboud & Doyle, 1996; Aboud 2003). Parents and teachers, in this case as in others, wildly overestimate their influence in shaping children's beliefs.

On reflection, this should not be as surprising as it sounds at first blush: In matters such as race, children need to develop culturally normative understandings, and accordingly need to recognize that input that reflects the community's beliefs and practices. Relying on sources that are too local—say, a particular family environment or a particular teacher's image of how one should speak—risks relying on input

that may not accord with community norms. The issue can be recast as one of sampling. The child needs to identify reliable sources of information; hence she needs to avoid sampling too narrowly. In the case of the very young child, whose range of encounters is limited, it often means attending to—privileging—less frequently encountered sources of information over more frequently encountered ones.

To illustrate, consider the way that a young child develops (or doesn't develop) an accent. In the typical case, it seems straightforward; the child mimics—uses as a model—the accent of her parents or other important care-givers. When the local model, however, is not the best source—that is, young children of nonnative speakers—giving too much weight to a local source would produce an inappropriate accent (from the perspective of the broader language community). In fact, there is no evidence that young children of nonnative speakers speak with their parents' accents. Rather, they develop normative speech patterns (Hirschfeld, 1996; Harris, 1998). Presumably, this occurs by discounting input from local sources in favor of less local—and less frequently encountered—input.

Relevant to this discussion is whether a sampling bias affects the acquisition of reasoning about groups and their members. A study I conducted speaks, though indirectly, to the point. That study examined the processes by which children come to endorse a culture-specific strategy for attributing racial identity in North America; a system of inference called the one-drop of blood rule (Hirschfeld, 1996). According to the rule, if a person has any traceable Black ancestry he is classified Black. To explore children's knowledge of the rule, Black and White second- and fifth-graders were shown pictures of mixed race couples and then asked to judge the appearance of their offspring from three drawings, one depicting a Black child, a second depicting a White child, and a third depicting a child with intermediate features (made by morphing the Black and White drawings). By early adolescence White children reasoned in accord with the one-drop rule, judging that the child would look Black. Black adolescents, in contrast, predicted that the couple's child would be mixed.

One interpretation of these results is that children's judgments are shaped by their local, family environment: the relevant difference in local environments in this case being race. A second interpretation is that the children's judgments are shaped by the broader community; that is, the judgments reflect a biased attention to community-wide standards. The initial analysis did not allow us to distinguish between the two interpretations; White subjects were drawn from a predominantly White community and the Black subjects were drawn from a community with a large concentration of Blacks. By doing a reanalysis, which focused on White subjects living in the community with a large minority population, we were able to disentangle the two interpretations. Unlike their counterparts in the majority community, White participants living in the mixed race community judged, as had Black children from the same community, that the mixed race couple's child would look mixed racially. In short, predicting how children would respond was more accurately assessed by looking to how the wider cultural environment shapes racial beliefs rather than looking to the more local one.

#### A SPECIAL-PURPOSE COGNITIVE ABILITY FOR RACIAL THINKING?

A convergence of research over the past two decades in psychology, philosophy, linguistics and anthropology has challenged a widely accepted view of the human

mind as a general-purpose reasoning device that is brought to bear on any cognitive task, whatever its specific context (Fodor, 1983; Hirschfeld & Gelman, 1994). Instead, many researchers have concluded that many cognitive abilities are specialized to handle specific types of information. In short, much of human cognition is domain-specific, dedicated to a specific range of tasks, and a specific kind of input. One of the earliest statements of this view—and almost certainly the most influential—was Chomsky's (1965) claims about the nature and scope of a dedicated language acquisition device. Chomsky's insight, sometimes lost in subsequent scholarship, pointed not only to a special-purpose competence, but a special-purpose competence for acquiring knowledge. In many domains, it is not so much that the mind's abilities are domain-specific, but that the competencies that guide and shape acquisition of knowledge in a particular domain are domain-specific.

Modular or domain-specific competencies have been described for a number of domains, including folk biology (the conceptual organization and reasoning about nonhuman living organisms; Carey, 1985); naïve physics (the conceptual organization and reasoning about the movements of not-self-propelling-objects; Spelke, 1990); folk psychology (or Theory of Mind, ToM, the capacity for mentalizing discussed earlier in the chapter; Leslie, 1994); naïve mathematics (sensitivity to number and computational knowledge with mathematical content. In contrast, a relatively modest literature concerns the possibility that knowledge of human groups is organized around a special-purpose competence (Hirschfeld, 1989; Jackendoff, 1992). This reluctance is curious given the degree to which humans use, attend to, and talk about others in terms of group membership, and particularly how potent group membership is in the access to and allocation of important resources.

I propose that the evidence reviewed above, and the supporting conclusion that the child learns about race to a significant degree on her own, is consistent with a special-purpose acquisition competence that guides the detection of group memberships and shapes children's use as a basis for social inference. Elsewhere I have called this cognitive competence folk or naïve sociology (Hirschfeld, 1996). A special-purpose acquisition competence can also be thought of as a preorganization for particular kinds of knowledge. On the face of it, it makes little sense to propose that racial thinking is preorganized; race is, after all, a relatively recent social invention, dating anywhere, depending on the historian, between the early Christian period to overseas exploration in the 15th century.

My proposal is not that there is a special-purpose competence for acquiring knowledge of race, but there is a competence for the acquisition of knowledge of human groupings. Within that rubric is a subset of groupings, of which race is one instance: groups whose membership is thought to be based in an unseen essence, governed by folk biological principles such as growth and inheritance, and highly attention-demanding. Other members of this set would include gender, age grades, (some types of) ethnicity, and caste. This subset of human groupings also share characteristic features with other domains of knowledge subserved by special-purpose abilities: great inductive potential (i.e., supports inference over widely varying situations and conditions), and precocious and robust development (including relevant sensitivities even in infants)—all of which combine in a distinct pattern of independence in development. Unlike some other special-purpose abilities, the development of many of these domains is contingent on cultural variation. All special-purpose competencies require that relevant input be present: No one learns a language in the absence of linguistic input, naïve mathematical development varies depending on the kind of

mathematical knowledge in the surrounding environment; although for some that input appears to be vanishingly small (e.g., naïve physics; Spelke, Phillips, & Woodward, 1995).

Consider in turn some aspects of the folk sociology of essentialized groups that are triggered by very limited exposure to relevant input and those aspects that are more deeply contingent on specific cultural environments.

Certainly a basic dimension of essentialized groupings is the very young child's curiosity about the nature and scope of the repertoire of salient groupings. As just observed, these are manifold in any given cultural environment. To appreciate the scope and depth of this curiosity, consider two studies. In the first (Hirschfeld, 1993), 3- to 5-year-old French preschoolers were provided information about relevant groupings in French culture, specifically race (North African, sub-Saharan African, East Asian, and northern European), gender, and occupation (postal worker, policeman, and shop owner). Participants were presented this information in one of two modalities: either a verbal narrative or a pictorial one. One finding is pertinent here: Participants of all ages were able to recall more information about the groups mentioned in the narrative in the verbal condition. If, as many have claimed, young children's knowledge of race derives from experience with people who look different, why are these children more sensitive to—find more relevant to early representations—verbal input? I suggest that given the complexity of the cultural environment it is more important developmentally to first identify which groups there are than determine what the perceptual cues of membership might be.

A second study, Elizabeth Bartmess, Sarah White, Uta Frith, and I (2007) examined the extent of autistic children's knowledge of racial and gender stereotypes and how they might use them in predicting the behavior of others. At first blush, autistic children would not seem the ideal population in which to explore social stereotypes. They typically are impaired in their ability to mentalize, evincing great difficulty in using attributions of mental states as a basis for explaining the behavior of others. Furthermore, the deep social decrements characteristic of autistic children would presumably make it difficult to learn common social stereotypes, if such learning depends on everyday experience. A group of autistic 7-year-olds with impairment to their ability to mentalize were each told a brief story and then presented a series of picture pairs, each pair contrasting either in the targets' gender or race. In the gender stories, they were told that one of the targets conformed to a gender stereotype (e.g., likes to play with dolls) and then asked to choose which child was the story about (e.g., a boy or a girl). Race items were similar. Participants' responses were coded for whether they were stereotype consistent or not. Strikingly, the autistic children reasoned overwhelmingly in accord with common stereotypes: 80 percent of the time the autistic children were stereotype consistent in their judgments about gender, and 60 percent of the time in their judgments about race (both reliably above chance). This pattern of response is indistinguishable from normally developing controls matched in verbal mental age. In short, children with significant impairment in their ability to interpret the behavior of others with respect to mental states were virtually unimpaired in their ability to interpret the behavior of others in terms of the groups of which they were members.

How did these autistic children acquire this knowledge? Stereotypes are units of cultural knowledge, and vary considerably by place and historical epoch. Importantly, they typically are not based on actual experience, but rely on transmission of verbally or nonverbally coded information regarding the kinds and nature of groups

in the cultural environment they inhabit. Domain-general accounts of the acquisition of cultural knowledge are premised on the assumption that such knowledge is the product of persisting, and often consciously guided, engagement with the flow of normal social life. Autistic children whose social engagement is virtually absent must acquire their social knowledge outside this flow and should on this account be disadvantaged in developing normal cultural competence. Our findings fall into place when we assume that the acquisition of stereotypic knowledge relies on a dedicated set of cognitive processes with their own developmental trajectory, distinct from those in mentalizing. Moreover, these processes must be remarkably robust if they work in early childhood, when social experience is limited, and in autism, when social experience is abnormal.

What of those aspects of folk sociology that do vary across populations? Even if a largely autonomous competence governs the acquisition of knowledge of groupings, the kinds of groups in different cultural environment are not trivially different. Accordingly we would expect that talk about them would also vary. How does the young child's robust curiosity express itself in very different contexts. Put another way: How do we move from an early sensitivity to—strikingly evocative in infancy, but not the same as later-emerging systems of categorization—its cultural elaboration? In the case of race, in particular, and folk sociology, more generally, "culturalization" occurs in part because the competence's input conditions are less constrained than those of other cognitive competencies. To illustrate, compare the processing of input relevant to language processing to input relevant to racial judgments.

Relevant input to the language acquisition device is recognized by what Fodor (1983) has called a perceptual module. Speech, at a low level of processing, is channeled to higher level processors by virtue of a perceptual filter that discriminates between speech and other sounds, and the constituent elements of speech—that is, phonemes and syllables—are recognized by low-level processors that leave little room, as it were, for processing error. The input conditions for self-propelled objects are similarly sensitive and in operation almost from birth (Premack, 1991). Relevant input to a naïve competence for physics—and by extension for numerical processing—is robustly provided by low-level recognition capacities for whole objects, also in operation virtually from birth (Spelke, 1990). Recent work suggests that music processing may also exploit the dedicated perceptual filter associated with language (Levitin & Menon, 2003).

By contrast, input to a folk sociology capacity is determined by whatever (in an individual's bodily appearance, behavior, language, or the reaction of others to them) provides evidence of an individual's group memberships. Raw information may provide input to any number of cognitive processes, ranging from a dedicated face recognition device that discriminates among facial gestalts, to abilities that discriminate between skin and hair color or between body types. It is not surprising that there is cultural exploitation of the dedicated face recognition device because, obviously, it affords close attention to and excellent memory for faces. Thus, human culture often manipulates faces as a technique for identifying members of different groups: make-up, masks, scarification, veils, and so on, exploit a robust ability that evolved from an ability to discriminate between *individuals* to a way to identify members of different *groups*. Long before humans had significant contact with humans who they did not racially resemble, they had contact with humans whose manipulated appearance they did not resemble.

But humans also use (and frequently manipulate the sources of) information about skin color, hair color and texture, and body types as a way to identify and sort individuals into groups. Processing this sort of information is not grounded in a dedicated device, hence input conditions for these processes are less constrained than processes which are grounded in a dedicated device. As a result, a module for folk sociology affords more possibilities, in terms of type of input, than other modules and, accordingly, more possibilities for cultural exploitation. This in turn means that the ways groups are formed and their members identified admit considerable cultural variation. Although it is the case that cultural exploitation of special-purposes competencies is not unique to folk sociology, it does seem to find its most elaborated form there. Humans spend a great deal of time attending to their appearance not only to render themselves attractive to potential mates (as evolutionary psychology suggests), but to mark themselves as members of specific grouping, as *kinds* of people (Sperber & Hirschfeld, 2006).

#### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE TROUBLESOME AND TROUBLING PROBLEM OF RACE?

Race, as observed earlier, is inexorably linked to systems of differential access to and allocation of important resources in North America (and elsewhere). The converse is also the case: Systems of differential access to and allocation of important resources are inexorably linked to systems of racial classification and reasoning. Put another way, race is both a category of power and a category of the mind, a state of affairs that implicates race in any discussion of power and power in any discussion of race. I don't think many would find this claim controversial. A more controversial claim, that I've developed elsewhere (Hirschfeld, 1997), is that

1. Race, as this chapter argued, is a particular sort of concept by virtue of the way it is acquired.

Race, as has further been argued, is a conceptual achievement that the child, in significant measure, accomplishes on his or her own. We can accordingly recast (1):

2. Race is a potent category of power because it is effortlessly learned, and hence easily shared and stabilized over time.

In other words, the cognitive susceptibility that governs the acquisition of racial thinking—namely, folk sociology—provides an easily exploitable cognitive preparedness to find race (in cultural environments in which race is part of the ambient system of belief or its counterparts in systems where it is not, e.g., caste in South Asia) and to invest it with great inductive potential. In a sense children don't come to racial thinking because their elders think racially; children come to racial thinking because of thinking racially is subserved by a cognitive susceptibility that makes race the sort of idea that is readily learned and stabilized in the culture of their elders.

How, if at all, does this account advance our social goal of changing, or at least taming, the most troubling and troublesome character of much of racial thinking? I put forward the following proposal: Our culture overwhelmingly underestimates the influence that children exert on the processes by which racial thinking is acquired, and it overwhelmingly overestimates the influence adults, particularly local adults,



exert on the acquisition of racial thinking. Together, these confusions about the acquisition process mislead us into creating programs aimed at affecting the troubled and troublesome aspects of race that will almost certainly fail.

Overestimating the role that local adults play in shaping children's racial thinking takes many forms, but all share confidence in the idea that very young children are preracial in their thinking, that the preschool years is a period of racial innocence. Although it is not difficult to see why parents would want this to be the case, nonetheless it is not. Still, much effort seeking to change children's racial beliefs presupposes this age of innocence; in essence, much antiracist interventions are less intervention against racism and more interventions seeking to recapture a (nonexistent) preracial innocence. The troubling and troublesome aspects of racial thinking are treated as if they flow from exposure to regrettably biased information, in the absence of which the child would remain color-blind.

Consider familiar multiculturalism from this perspective. An admittedly simplified description includes the following assumptions:

- Race (and ethnicity, religion, culture, etc.) are aspects of each individual that should be celebrated, not disparaged;
- in fact, all people are fundamentally alike, and race (and ethnicity, religion, culture, etc.) are more or less skin deep.
- Teaching children these “facts” will hopefully return a stage of preracial thinking.

The burden of the research reviewed above supports precisely the opposite view: Even very young children believe that race is neither superficial nor culturally celebrated. By the age of 3 they hold an adult-like folk theoretical view—believing that race is fixed-at-birth and governed by biological processes like growth and inheritance—and adult-like prejudices—believing that race determines whether or not one is honest, smart, or clean.

These are not convictions that they acquire through accidental exposure to the wrong information. Children's robust prepared curiosity about the social world and deeply-grounded willingness (and capability) to essentialize social groups play a central, arguably predominant, role in their developing knowledge. This is not to suggest that children invent race out of whole cloth, that somehow they would invent it if it weren't there. Nor are they innately racist. The acquisition process is governed by an endogenous competency that parses the cultural environment for relevant input that meets specific conditions and attributes to the group entities recognized for a domain-specific range of properties. Not all cultures are racialized. In some cultures the attention-demanding essentialized group is caste, in others based on age-grades, and, as far as we know, everywhere gendered and ageist (i.e., everywhere adults exercise authority over children in virtue of the natural immaturity of the latter, even accepting that what a child is varies considerably across cultures and historical era).

- Teaching children these “facts” is appropriate to their stage of cognitive and emotional maturity; teaching them about structural inequity is not.

The first three items in the description of multicultural interventions are familiar enough to most readers, the fourth may be less so. Multiculturalism (to perhaps

unfairly use this term to refer to this constellation of actions and their motivations) often does appeal to the child's sense of fairness, or more accurately, their sense of unfairness. Prejudice hurts people, and hurting people is not good. But as Herbert Kohl (1995) has deftly shown, under the multicultural assumption means one *individual* hurting another *individual*. Prejudice on this view is not about structural inequities that characterize relations between groups, but unfairness between individuals, half of whom are easy to demonize, half of whom are easy to lionize. Racism is imagined as overt acts with direct consequences, not the enduring, hidden, and everyday acts that sustain inequity.

Kohl illustrates this by examining middle-school texts relating the Rosa Parks story (note it is the Rosa Parks story, not the story of the Montgomery bus boycott). He found that these texts displayed systematic omission and distortions, supposedly to cast the episode in (cognitive and emotional) age-appropriate terms. The accounts typically lionize Parks as a *tired seamstress too tired after a day of laboring to give up her seat*. They do not lionize Parks for being a long-time activist in the civil rights moment, nor for participating in a carefully planned political action, designed, organized, and carried out by the Black community. The take-away image of Parks and the Montgomery boycott in most textbooks is one of an individual, acting alone and out of fatigue, a Black community, acting impulsively rather than politically. It is decidedly not the image of a member of an active and thoughtful political movement of Blacks, acting by design and motive. Indeed, the textbook accounts ironically convey and reinforce more prejudice than they potentially reduce.

If the goal is to change children's racial beliefs, then employing a strategy that largely makes no contact with children's prior expectations is unlikely to succeed. The nature of these expectations itself suggests an alternative strategy. At risk of oversimplifying, the widely implemented, multicultural approach (sometimes unflatteringly called *multicultural tourism*) presumes that young children, given their cognitive and emotional immaturity, are unable to appreciate the complexities of adult representations of race. As we've seen, this is not the case. Even 3-year-olds' grasp of race is markedly adult-like. This is not to suggest that preschoolers possess an adult, as opposed to adult-like, understanding. Still, as I've argued on the basis of considerable experimental evidence, there is little to support for the claim that they are *unable* to grasp of the nature of the adult image of race, both in its conceptual and biased dimensions. Since the Clarks' doll studies, it is evident that children display racial bias. Similarly, studies documenting young children's grasp of the biological dimension of race reveal surprising adult-like reasoning about race.

Given children's knowledge, it is plausible that if presented with appropriate—not dumbed down—descriptions of the nature and scope of *structural* racial inequity, particularly its grounding in familiar quotidian acts and everyday experience, children will appreciate the group nature of racial prejudice. Given the way young children, in the context of peer culture, frequently enact inclusion and exclusion as group processes (Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2001; Hirschfeld, 2002), there is little reason to suppose that they would be unable to use their own familiar relations to understand those of others.

Understanding and empathy are only a small part of the process of attitude, let alone behavioral change. Like adults, children need to challenge their own beliefs to master the consequences of them; and like adults they need to change neither their attitudes nor their essentialist construal of race in order to change their own behavior. A crucial part of the process behavior change turns on motivation. It is now

widely acknowledged that individuals who score as having low levels of prejudice on standard measures of racial bias, are in fact nonconsciously biased (Banaji & Greenwald, 1994; Devine, 1989). This is not surprising given the extent to which our society is saturated with racial (and other) prejudice. What makes someone low prejudiced is the motivation to cognitively inhibit bias from shaping behavior. Frequently the motivation is a sense of fairness. Happily, children's sense of fairness—a robust sense of morality based on the notion of harm (Turiel, 2002)—is acute, widely shared, and powerfully motivating.

## CONCLUSION

Few ideas are as easy to learn and as difficult to forget as race. Few aspects of our social world are as attention-demanding and difficult to ignore as race. Few beliefs are as systematically distorted and distorting as race. Few ideas are as mundane and as powerful as race.

This chapter has sought to account for race's paradoxical nature by grounding it, in turn, in the paradoxical nature of children's developing understanding of the concept. I have stressed the adult-like grasp of race very young children possess, perhaps to the extent of losing sight of the fact that these are indeed very young children. They are not small adults; their understandings are grounded in the everyday experience of preschoolers. This is evident if we consider one paradox that hasn't yet been discussed here: Although young children will, if asked in experimental contexts, make choices that are unequivocally prejudiced, parents' and teachers' report that in their everyday friendships these same children are colorblind. This is not entirely wishful thinking. Until recently, when very close ethnographic studies revealed bias in preschool children's peer culture, there has been little research to suggest that in their everyday experience young children *are* innocent of race.

How to explain this seeming paradox? I suggest that it is precisely the convergence of children's adult-like but immature thinking about race that accounts for it. Young children, I've argued, are more concerned, and more curious, in their early representations to discover the repertoire of relevant social groupings in their environment. In this they seem to treat social categories much as they treat other umbrella concepts, such as living things or colors; they pursue a process of top-down learning (Mandler, 1992; Carey, 1978). As a result, young children—even if they have acquired and endorsed detailed knowledge of bias—have only vague knowledge of the properties that are diagnostic of particular racial categories. That is to say, they know that there are X, Y, and Z kinds of people in the environment, but they do not know what it is about a person that identifies him or her as a member of any of these groups. That knowledge typically only emerges in the late preschool years. Younger children's category of race is literally only partially fleshed out. Racial bias isn't reflected in young children's friendships not because they are innocent of race, but because they simply are not very good at recognizing the particular individuals who are members of specific racial categories.

Although this pattern of reasoning might be of technical interest to developmentalists, it isn't obvious that it should be of great interest to others. Yet the underappreciation of this top-down structure of learning among those who have taken to ameliorating children's racial thinking almost certainly undermines their efforts. The widely held presumption that learning about race is bottom-up and tethered to superficial appearances not only misrepresents how that learning occurs, it sets us in

the wrong direction when trying to affect its consequences. Changing race relations through attention to the child's racial thinking should be directed at appropriate goals—turning the child's attention to the consequences and intrinsic unfairness that his unreflective understanding of race entails.

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## CHAPTER 4

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# A Social-Cognitive Developmental Theory of Prejudice

FRANCES E. ABOUD

### INTRODUCTION

**T**HE MAIN contribution of a social-cognitive developmental perspective to the understanding of prejudice was its claim that cognitive changes taking place in the developing child and adolescent bear directly on the young person's view of self and others, and therefore on prejudice (Aboud, 1988). It emerged at a time when the social-cognitive developmental framework was in ascendancy and learning theory was unable to account for the existing data on children's prejudice. The evidence for age changes in prejudice was derived from psychometrically weak measures and non-overlapping cross-sectional age groups. Nonetheless, a review (Aboud & Skerry, 1984) showed that age-related differences fit poorly within the learning theory framework used in a prior review (Brand, Ruiz, & Padilla, 1974). Within this context, the social-cognitive developmental theory emerged inductively to explain reported findings. It was also firmly founded on Piaget's cognitive-developmental theory and Kohlberg's (1969) application of Piaget's theory to social development. Four key papers written by Allport (1954, Ch. 18–19), Kohlberg (1969), Piaget and Weil (1951) and Katz (Katz & Zalk, 1978, empirical intervention study) supported the argument that age-related changes in ethnic attitudes were strongly linked to psychological processes dominant at that particular age.

This chapter is organized first to describe pertinent aspects of cognitive-developmental theory framed by Piaget and Kohlberg in its domain-general form, and then applied to prejudice by myself and others. Second, I



conceptually describe four propositions of the social-cognitive developmental theory of prejudice and the more general social development research from which they were inductively derived. Finally, evidence for and against the propositions is summarized. More complete reviews of the state of research on the development of prejudice and cross-ethnic friendships (Aboud, 2005; Aboud & Amato, 2001) and on interventions to reduce prejudice (Aboud & Levy, 2000) are available, so this chapter focuses more on the theory and related evidence. Strengths and limitations of the theory are critically analyzed, along with comments about current and future research.

Learning theory explained prejudice acquisition and development in terms of mechanisms such as imitation, reinforcement, and paired associate learning. Allport (1954), for example, emphasized the direct transfer of parental words, emotions, and ideas to children through learning. The underlying motivation for learning was thought to be the child's strong identification with parents and a desire for their approval. Allport assumed that parents freely expressed their views, so that children of 4 to 6 years of age learned to associate the racial label with an emotion and a referent. At 6 to 12 years, children were expected to generalize the label and emotion to an entire social group. People therefore expected that prejudice gradually increased from 4 to 12 years of age as a result of exposure to parental attitudes.

By the 1960s, cognitive-developmental theory was in a stronger position than social learning theory to explain the scope and development of morality and self-identity (Kohlberg, 1969). There was no question that learning theory could explain why children adopted certain moral judgments or identities in the face of modeling and reinforcement, but such responses turned out to be short-lived. Likewise there was no question that features of the stimulus person (skin color, language differences) and the social environment (e.g., status hierarchy) were influential. But changeable social variables were not able to explain the consistency of prejudice findings across situations and measures. In particular, current theories of the time could not explain two important findings: Many majority group children showed an early and rapid rise in prejudice at 4 to 5 years of age followed by a lessening of prejudice after 7 years; and many children held attitudes different from their parents'. There was little consensus in the attitudes of young minority children, except that after 7 years of age they more consensually preferred their own group, yet their attitudes also did not follow their parents'.

Cognitive developmental theory was not the first theory of prejudice to be based on stages. However, previous theories had not been tied to ages or to a developmental sequence connecting a child's conception of self and

others with prejudice. Allport (1954) had proposed stages based on category learning: pregeneralized learning of emotions attached to labels (around 4 to 6 years), overgeneralization of these emotions to all people with that label (6 to 12 years), differentiation within the category (post-12 years), and then the tailoring of attitudes to fit the individual's self-image, status seeking, and values. Katz (1976) proposed eight stages to describe the sequence by which children acquire prejudice, including observation of racial cues before 3 years of age, formation of rudimentary concepts by generalizing their evaluation of the cues to the label, consolidation of the link between perceived cues and evaluation, perceptual and cognitive elaboration of the group concept, and finally crystallization of the attitude after 6 years. By emphasizing overgeneralization and differentiation, both Allport and Katz appear to focus on one aspect of prejudice development, namely learning and using social categories.

Unlike Allport's and Katz' stages, I conceived of prejudice development in terms of stages of self-other perspectives and the shift from perception to cognition that accompanied changes in self and other perspectives. Between the ages of 3 and 12 years, children's views of themselves and others change considerably, as revealed in the assessments of self- and other descriptions, self- and other constancy, self-evaluation, friendship, perspective taking, and emotion regulation. These findings on self and other perspectives were sparked by the theoretical writings of Piaget (Piaget & Weil, 1951) and Kohlberg (1969). They seemed to suggest that children are not blind conformists or passive learners, but active and motivated social scientists intent on understanding themselves and others within the emotional and cognitive constraints imposed by their age. The evidence provides important pieces of the prejudice puzzle and leads to four propositions.

#### FOUR PROPOSITIONS OF A SOCIAL-COGNITIVE ACCOUNT

Four propositions outlined in the original theory attempt to explain prejudice in children. As with any developmental theory, the contributions of age and parents are addressed first. In addition, two social-cognitive processes that change with age are suggested as mediators. These propositions are now discussed along with empirical findings at the time that supported their contribution.

##### 1. AGE CHANGES

The first proposition is that age changes in prejudice will not follow a gradual learning curve, but rather a more stepwise development with in-group and out-group biases rising sharply at 4 or 5 years of age and declining after age 7. This proposition is based

on empirical evidence of the time (e.g., Clark, Hocevar, & Dembo, 1980; Katz, Sohn, & Zalk, 1975), and on Kohlberg's (1969) view that self- and other judgments are central to social development and matured parallel to cognitive development. This means that evaluations of oneself and others as group members are polarized in the early years because of cognitive constraints, but that sometime after 7 years of age children's biological maturation allows them to think about multiple dimensions of a person. So, instead of being all good or all bad, people could be some good and some bad. The scope of this proposition is limited to ethnic and racial groups that are observably different and recognized as such. Late and gradually developing attitudes toward groups that are not recognized early by children because of their nonobvious differences are best explained by learning theory. When children do not notice differences, they will treat the person as an in-group member until told otherwise, or until they are old enough to become aware of the unobservable difference. Positive biases may be likewise learned from others or acquired as a result of the child's positive experience with members of such groups. The challenge, though, is to explain why children under 7 years have a stronger tendency to adopt negative rather than positive attitudes toward people who appear different. That is, the big picture tells us that given the same input children adopt negative attitudes toward out-groups more readily than positive attitudes. Although the attitudes may not be strongly negative, they are negative relative to in-group attitudes or an ethnically unidentified person and so constitute bias.

## 2. PARENTS AND PEERS

The second proposition is that the role of parents and peers is not simply that of models or reinforcers from whom children learn prejudice the same way at any age. Studies on imitation and reinforcement from parents indicate a very limited parental impact on children's behaviors and attitudes in the early years (e.g., Kuczynski, Zahn-Waxler, & Radke-Yarrow, 1987; Lytton & Romney, 1991). Likewise the main role of parents and peers is not to set norms for prejudice to which children conform. Young children do not always notice the modeling, the approval, or the norms unless explicitly told by the experimenter (e.g., "these people do better"). Children, however, are active at co-constructing norms with people and events in their environment. For example, they notice certain covariations or regularities and may infer that these are rules or norms (Hirschfeld, 1996). So, a white-skinned 5-year-old may notice that his/her parents do not invite many brown-skinned friends for supper and infer that white- and brown-skinned people cannot have close contact. As with adults, children may exaggerate the normativeness (prevalence) of attitudes because extreme and negative attitudes are more salient. For example, name-calling and other forms of discrimination are witnessed by many children at school; because no one reprimands or disagrees with the discrimination, witnesses may consequently infer that many people feel this way and that it is accepted, implicitly if not explicitly. So, parents and peers are important aspects of the social environment, but their input is sought and interpreted by the child in line with an age-related mindset that may look for attributes to use when categorizing or for rules to be followed.

## 3. SELF-GROUP-INDIVIDUAL FOCUS

One of the mediators of age-related changes is proposed to be a change in the target of the child's focus of attention and information processing. The theory states that

children first focus on themselves, then on groups, and finally more on individuals, and that this focus influences their ethnic and racial attitudes. A self-focused child tended to make judgments about the self first, and with greater confidence than judgments about others. Judgments about others might be seen through the lens of the self and therefore distorted. Kohlberg (1969) and Selman (1980) described various stages of egocentrism in children and the implications for perceptions of others, including friends. Egocentrism is exemplified by the young child who possesses a salient opinion about him/herself that cannot be disregarded when making judgments about an obviously different other (Higgins, 1981). Piaget and Weil (1951) introduced the construct of sociocentrism to represent children's focus on their own group rather than solely themselves. By implication, children with a sociocentric focus are aware of their affiliation with groups, and therefore hold the view that a positive evaluation of one's group is correct (e.g., "I am very good. We are part of Group X, so Group X is very good. People from a different Group Y are not as good. If you think Group Y is very good, you are wrong."). Sociocentric children are expected to be most prejudiced. It was suggested that prejudice may first decline in children who, although focused on groups, are able to judge them in a cognitively differentiated way (e.g., groups who look different may be similar in many respects) and readily learn such a differentiation. The third stage entails the ability and tendency to focus on individuals regarding their unique individual qualities and to minimize the group category information when making person judgments. This derived from Katz' evidence (Katz, Sohn, & Zalk, 1975) that after 8 years of age children were more likely to differentiate among individuals within a group. Attention to individual attributes when making judgments was expected to herald a decline in prejudice toward groups.

The proposition was initially derived inductively from two research areas that provided evidence for the self-group-individual shift in the developing child's focus of attention. One is descriptions of self and others; for example, that differentiation and maturity of self-judgments precedes judgments of others regarding causal attributions and constancy (Aboud, 1984). The second is research on the shift from egocentrism to multiple perspective-taking. Selman (1980) and Higgins (1981) proposed that from being unable to even predict a different other's attitude, egocentric children will later consider different perspectives based on contextual or situational differences (e.g., gender or ethnicity), and later still based on unobservable personal differences. We found evidence for improved perspective-taking and also for a shift from sequential to simultaneous perspective taking. The simultaneous version meant that the child could compare two perspectives and reconcile them. Children were expected to be less prejudiced if they could take the role of people who were different from them and reconcile their different perspectives; for example, by understanding that different preferences can be valid if one considers the social or individual differences of the people involved. This diverged from Piaget's view that after sociocentrism came reciprocity, not reconciliation. By reciprocity, Piaget meant that children would grant to out-groups the same prejudice toward themselves that they held toward out-groups (Piaget & Weil, 1951). I emphasize reconciliation rather than reciprocity.

#### 4. AFFECTIVE-PERCEPTUAL-COGNITIVE PROCESSES

The second mediator of age changes is proposed to be a shift in which of three psychological processes dominate the child's judgments. The idea is that the dominant

process at a given age will largely influence how stimulus features of in-group and out-group members will be interpreted and judged. The first, in the early years before the age of 4, are affective processes such as emotional attachment, fear of the unknown, and preferences. Second are perceptual processes, such as attending to observable racial cues and identifying oneself and others according to these cues. This is thought to dominate generally between 4 and 7 years. The third is cognitive, such as the child's ability to infer abstract and internal qualities in people and simultaneously to consider inconsistent points of view. This is expected to start after 7 years of age, but continue to develop for at least 3 or 4 years. Obviously, children have functioning affective, perceptual, and cognitive processes at all ages, but changes in prejudice are expected to be explained by a shift in which one dominates when reacting to people. This mediator is expected to run parallel to, and overlap with, the self-group-individual shift. This means that affective processing may dominate at the same time as a self-focus, perceptual processing with the group focus, and cognitive with the individual focus. However, it is conceivable that one sequence may develop faster than the other, so that cognitive processing may dominate while the child still focuses on groups.

When the theory was first developed, there was evidence in the literature for a change from affective-based judgments to cognitive-based ones in self-evaluations. Children under 7 years evaluated their accomplishments positively regardless of feedback to the contrary (Ruble, Parsons, & Ross, 1976) because the evaluation was based on pleasure experienced during the activity (Stipek, Recchia, & McClintic, 1992), whereas after the age of 7 they began to integrate direct negative feedback in their ability judgments. Similarly, social comparison information in the form of peers' achievements could be perceived and compared by young children, but not integrated into self-evaluations until after 8 years of age (Aboud, 1985). Comparisons, first on the basis of perceived behaviors and later on unobservable attributes, were found gradually to inform children's self-judgments during middle childhood (Barenboim, 1981). The dominance of affective reactions in the early years seemed to be acknowledged by temperament experts whose measures of infant and child temperament are dominated by positive and negative affect, with effortful control over emotions developing in the later years (Garstein & Rothbart, 2003). Effortful control over impulsive emotions often required perceptual input from a parent (specific stimulation or distraction); with age, children used their own cognitive strategies to regulate emotions of fear, anger, disappointment, and desire (Cole, Martin, & Dennis, 2004). Despite the increasing role of cognitive processes in determining evaluations and actions, children and adults were frequently under "cognitive-affective cross-fire" (Swann, Griffin, Predmore, & Gaines, 1987) because personal or social information was emotionally unacceptable, but cognitively accepted as accurate.

While cognitive strategies gain strength over affective reactions, they also can be seen to control perceptions. This was demonstrated in self and peer descriptions and in identity constancy research. Children had a largely exterior perception of themselves and others—at least the exterior was much more salient and accessible than the interior until after age 7 (Rosenberg, 1979). Because children under 7 were so responsive to what they actually saw with their eyes, they were unable to maintain a constant identity when the gender or ethnic transformation was perceptually salient, as opposed to hypothetical. However, once internal unobservable attributes became cognitively salient and judged to be more essential for identity than observables, children demonstrated constancy. Consequently, children's confidence in and preference

for their cognitive judgments over affective- and perception-based judgments were expected to apply to judgments about people from other ethnic and racial groups. This meant that prejudice would decline as a result of cognitive inferences about out-group members being similar to oneself despite looking different, and being different from each other despite looking similar.

## EVIDENCE FOR THE THEORETICAL PROPOSITIONS

Evidence from the general social-cognitive literature was raised in the previous section to show how it informed theory development. The present section concentrates on subsequent research that directly or indirectly tested the four propositions.

### EVIDENCE FOR AGE DIFFERENCES

Social-cognitive developmental theory is inductively based on empirical evidence that children show high levels of racial prejudice at 4 and 5 years and lower levels after 7 years (e.g., Clark, et al., 1980; Katz, et al., 1975). However, the measures were not fully tested for psychometric properties, often used a forced-choice format or were single items, and the data were cross-sectional. Many subsequent studies, whether derived from social cognitive theory or not, addressed age differences using a variety of measures. So there is now quite a bit of evidence that prejudice and in-group biases appear in young children and decline after 7 years.

There is some evidence that children form biases about existing ethnic groups at the early age of 4 years (Bar-Tal, 1996; Katz & Kofkin, 1997) and certainly by 5 or 6 years (Aboud, 2003; Augoustinos & Rosewarne, 2001; Bigler & Liben, 1993; Doyle & Aboud, 1995; Singh, Choo, & Poh, 1998). This is supported by evidence that intergroup biases about experimentally created groups are easily acquired by 3- to 6-year-olds (Patterson & Bigler, 2006; Yee & Brown, 1992). So the theory is correct in suggesting that prejudice is acquired rapidly, not gradually, in children under 7 years.

There is substantial evidence since publication of social-cognitive developmental theory that children are less prejudiced after 7 years (Augoustinos & Rosewarne, 2001; Black-Gutman & Hickson, 1996; Bigler & Liben, 1993; Rutland, Cameron, Milne, & McGeorge, 2005; Singh et al., 1998; Yee & Brown, 1992). Longitudinal evidence comes from one study that followed White children from 5 to 9 years of age (Doyle & Aboud, 1995). Children became less biased over the 4-year period and there was no correlation between prejudice levels at 5 years and those at 9 years. Two attitudes most responsible for the shift were positive evaluations of the out-group and negative evaluations of the in-group. These two increased substantially after 7 years, demonstrating that intergroup bias encompasses perspectives on both self and others. Evidence that contradicts this shift after age 7 comes mostly from research on out-groups that are not observably different, namely from national European groups such as British, French, and German (e.g., Rutland, 1999). In studies where children are presented with labels that do not evoke an image of an observably different person, one would not expect to elicit strong perceptual processes distinguishing in-group and out-group. In this research, prejudice is acquired gradually and late, consistent with the learning theory hypothesis as expected. So, given the scope of the theory as applied to observably different out-groups, there is strong evidence that prejudice declines sometime after 7 years in some but not all children.

A finding that contradicts the theory concerns the re-emergence of prejudice in early adolescence. It is not yet clear how frequently this occurs and what conditions elicit it. In the Black-Gutman and Hickson (1996) study, prejudice toward Aborigines in Australia re-emerged, whereas prejudice toward Chinese Asians did not. One view is that it arises from self-identity concerns, namely the need to create a new, more mature definition of oneself in adolescence. Ethnicity and race may be one of the attributes adolescents choose to highlight in this new identity if it is salient in their social environment. A parallel is seen in children's friendships, which become more segregated in early adolescence (e.g., Aboud, Mendelson, & Purdy, 2003; Hallinan & Teixeira, 1987), though other "weak associate" relations tend to remain ethnically mixed. Attitudes and peer relations are not necessarily reflections of each other, but may be if both are driven by identity concerns. The early adolescent stage may have similarities to the early, self-focused, affectively charged period when attitudes first develop (an adolescent version of sociocentrism), yet the developmental goal in adolescence is to develop a more mature place in one's chosen social network. The re-emergence of prejudice in adolescence is variable. So, most researchers of adolescence have rightly given priority to identity issues, perceived discrimination, and friendship, instead of prejudice.

Conclusions concerning the evidence for and the scope of age differences can be summarized as follows: Evidence is strongest for the decline in prejudice and bias after 7 years. Evidence is present but less strong for the emergence of bias, driven mostly by the development of in-group attachment, sometime between 3 and 7 years of age. The evidence comes from majority children. Minority children of color show much greater variability and a tendency for improved attitudes toward their own group with age, without showing strong prejudice toward the majority group. Evidence is variable and largely untested for early adolescent changes in bias. Contrary evidence about the early emergence of prejudice comes from studies where the out-group is not observably different. Learning theory principles may better explain if and how prejudice toward such groups might arise. Learning theory may also best explain the re-emergence of prejudice after its decline if there is societal conflict and children hear high ambient levels of expressed prejudice. But social-cognitive theory explains why children acquire prejudice without any direct instruction from parents and maintain it long after.

#### EVIDENCE FOR PARENT AND PEER INFLUENCE

Social-cognitive developmental theory suggests that parents and peers are important aspects of the social environment, but their input is sought and interpreted by the child in line with an age-related mindset. In other words, parents' and peers' attitudes are not learned through imitation or reinforcement, or conformed to as if they were norms. Because children are motivated to understand and predict social events that impinge on them, they may notice what attributes others use to categorize, and what regularities exist in their world.

The theory predicts that because young children do not adopt the attitudes of parents or peers through learning or conformity, correlations between the two would be nonsignificant. Aboud and Doyle (1996a) examined third- and fourth-graders because they demonstrate sufficient variability in their attitudes to allow for a correlation. Mothers' attitudes were rated on a measure that minimized social desirability concerns. The children's attitudes were unrelated to their mothers'

attitudes; they were similarly unrelated to attitudes of a friend and a randomly selected nonfriend classmate. However, children assumed their mother and their friend would have attitudes similar to their own. In another study, we found that children, likewise, assumed that research assistants testing them held similar attitudes (Doyle, Beaudet, & Aboud, 1988). Likewise, Branch and Newcombe (1986) found no correlation between the attitudes of African American children and their parents. Ritchey and Fishbein (2001) confirmed this conclusion with adolescents. So it would seem that children do not hold attitudes similar to their parents, though they think they do. Consequently, the view that children of this age learn attitudes from their parents is untenable. Their judgments about others' attitudes appear to be derived from their own. This could mean that racial attitudes are not overtly discussed by parents or peers. Katz and Kofkin (1997) found that only when parents reported discussing racial attitudes did parent-child attitudes correlate modestly but significantly. So parental influences could potentially play a role, but only if parents play an active role in socializing their children regarding race. Even then, the magnitude of the influence is likely to be weak (see Aboud & Doyle, 1996b, discussed later).

#### EVIDENCE OF SOCIAL-COGNITIVE MEDIATORS: SELF-GROUP-INDIVIDUAL

Two key constructs representing the shift from self to group, namely egocentrism and sociocentrism, are measured through role-taking and reconciliation. The shift from group to individual has been measured through children's use of group versus individual attributes when judging people. One might also infer from the theory that in-group attachment would precede out-group prejudice if a focus on self precedes a focus on others. Aboud (2003) did find that in-group attachment was strong in 5-year-olds, but not 4-year-olds. Without much contact, children's out-group prejudice was inversely related to in-group attachment, as if children were inferring negative attitudes to highlight the contrast. When there was much more intergroup contact, out-group prejudice was not so related and may therefore have been derived from contact with out-group peers.

Ethnic and racial self-identification is not always sufficient to generate either in-group attachment or out-group prejudice. Sociocentrism, however, combines ethnic self-identification with a certainty about the exclusive validity of one's perspective (group-centrism). To measure sociocentrism, I (Aboud, 1981) asked children whether their own in-group preference is the only correct judgment (sociocentrism) or whether an out-group child's in-group preference is equally valid. Sociocentrism was related to high in-group attachment and intergroup bias in 5-year-olds (Aboud, 2003). Moreover, the longitudinal study of Doyle and Aboud (1995) found that declines in overall prejudice levels and increases in attitudes running counter to bias were related to newly acquired reconciliation.

In a third study we reasoned that if one could train 5-year-olds to be more reconciling, they might be more receptive to anti-bias information discrepant from their own evaluations. A study was performed training 5- to 6-year-old children to reconcile different preferences (Aboud, 2002). The training included a discussion of why two people might have different food preferences, using the reconciliation task as a focus. Then children received attitudinal information from an adult and listened to four stories of Black and White friends and mixed-race families. The attitudinal information came in the form of the adult's evaluations of different



children, much as the child had previously completed. Using pairs of stimulus persons, the adult posed questions such as, "Who is exciting to be with?" and put a little yellow Post-it note with the evaluative word on the chosen stimulus. Four positive and two negative evaluations were made: Half of the positive evaluations were assigned to both and half to the Black stimulus alone; half of the negative evaluations were assigned to both and half to the White alone. Thus, the positive:negative ratio was 4:1 for the Black stimulus and 2:2 for the White stimulus. Then the adult read four stories that were modified to express many positive attributes of the Black children and their positive cross-race friendship. Nonreconciling children who were trained to reconcile subsequently expressed attitudes similar to the unbiased attitudes of reconciling children. In contrast, nonreconciling children who did not receive the training made no use of the respectful attitudes expressed in the stories or by the adult. In sum, there is promising evidence that sociocentrism leads to in-group preference and out-group prejudice, and an inability to benefit from contrary evaluations communicated by reading material and by an in-group adult. Overcoming sociocentrism, as evidenced by possessing the skill to reconcile differences, results in a greater receptivity to contrary attitudes, and from there to positive attitudes.

Processing individuating information about people more or less than their race or ethnicity is another relevant social-cognitive mediator. Early studies found that conceptions of skin color and greater attention to individual rather than racial cues were associated with lower levels of prejudice in older children (Clark et al., 1980; Katz et al., 1975). A common indicator of greater attention to racial cues is rating between-group differences high and within-group differences low. Those who attend more to individual attributes, such as activity preferences, would be expected to rate between-group differences low and within-group differences high. This focus on individuals over groups increased with age and was also associated with lower levels of prejudice in longitudinal data (Doyle & Aboud, 1995). Two interventions aimed at training children to process individuating information succeeded in reducing prejudice among White children, particularly in the 10- to 12-year-old range. One intervention conducted by Katz and Zalk (1978) used a brief training session to focus children's memory on out-group members' personal names, and a second (Aboud & Fenwick, 1999) used an 11-week school program to develop skills for processing of fine-grained individual information for about 30 Hoozhoo Kids. In comparison to control students, those who took the latter program were able, in the follow-up, to generate more unique internal attributes of pictured children; high-prejudice White children also showed significant reductions in prejudice. Using similar social-cognitive principles, Khaya Clark (2004) has developed a CD-ROM called "All that we are: Interactive program to reduce racial bias" for elementary school students.

In summary, two sets of cognitive indicators have been used to demonstrate age changes in children's focus on self, group, and individuals. One is sociocentrism and reconciliation—the former has been linked to intergroup bias and the latter to its decline. Only one study has attempted to train reconciliation and monitor subsequent declines in prejudice. The second is perception of between-group differences and within-group similarities (called the homogeneity effect), which is linked to intergroup bias. Increasing cognitive differentiation among individuals within groups can be trained and related to subsequent declines in prejudice.

EVIDENCE OF SOCIAL-COGNITIVE MEDIATORS: AFFECT-PERCEPTION-COGNITION

The consequences to children's prejudice of the affective-perception-cognitive shift have been studied extensively. One of the shifts, between perception and cognition, has been the focus of particularly intense inquiry: These studies include a variety of measures of cognitive differentiation, such as multiple classification or sorting people on the basis of attributes other than race and gender. Conservation ability, which requires the child to understand the consistency of quantity despite changes in superficial appearance, may underlie these skills. However, although conservation seems to be a necessary precursor of these skills and of the age-related decline in prejudice (Aboud, 2003), it is not sufficient (Clark et al., 1980; Doyle & Aboud, 1995). Identity constancy may similarly be relevant for minority children.

Classification tasks assess whether children are flexible enough to see similarities across different category members. Bigler and Liben (1993) found that children 4 to 9 years of age who were able to integrate information inconsistent with their stereotype were also less likely to be prejudiced. Similarly, the ability to classify and sort photos of people using multiple attributes both sequentially and simultaneously was associated with lower levels of intergroup bias (Aboud, 2003; Bigler & Liben, 1993). Training children to classify using multiple attributes reduced their bias (Bigler & Liben, 1990). So, multiple classification requiring more flexible cognitive processing was associated with greater receptivity to nonstereotyped information and reduced bias. It is conceivable that flexible affective and flexible perceptual processing would have the same effect, but perceptions are usually tied to observable aspects of the stimulus such as skin color.

Some research has been conducted in the Netherlands on what is known as cognitive-affective crossfire (Swann et al., 1987). This is the conflict one faces after receiving positive information that one knows to be untrue about oneself, or negative information that one knows to be true. From a developmental perspective, children in the affective stage would be more inclined to accept the positive but untrue statements about themselves or their in-group, whereas older children would be more accepting of the negative but true statement. Truth may be judged on the basis of consistency with one's self-concept or consistency with social reality (Corenblum & Annis, 1993; Verkuyten & De Wolf, 2007). Self-enhancing affective processes would lead one to accept the former information and reject the latter; this is what young children of 6 years did (Verkuyten & De Wolf, 2007). Cognitive processes would lead one to accept the latter information and reject the former; this is what older 10-year-olds did. Stated another way, younger children were more driven to process information that satisfied their affective need to maintain a positive self-identity, whereas older children were more grounded in social reality and so controlled their emotional needs. Thus, age was directly related to whether affective or cognitive motivations dominated in the children's final group evaluation.

Finally, we conducted a study to find out what social-cognitive mediators of prejudice reduction might arise when two friends discussed racial evaluations (Aboud & Doyle, 1996b). The theory would predict that, to reduce prejudice, social-cognitive messages would have to be tailored to the cognitive level of the child. White children of 8 to 10 years participated. As with other Piagetian research, it was expected that disagreement between the friends would lead them to elaborate and justify their positions. Consequently, a child with relatively higher prejudice was paired with a friend who had lower prejudice to discuss two items on which they previously gave

differing evaluations. Subsequently, their taped discussions were coded according to statements made evaluating in-groups and out-groups positively and negatively, as well as justifications. Codes were derived from previously studied social-cognitions (e.g., between-group similarities; within-group differences) as well as *ad hoc* justifications, such as providing a concrete example of someone who was inconsistent with the friend's evaluation. No one dampened the discussion with: "That's not a nice thing to say." Children spoke openly and honestly and their talk reflected respective levels of prejudice. High-prejudice children expressed less prejudice when tested separately after the discussion, as predicted by Piaget and Kohlberg's social-cognitive developmental theory. The degree of change was correlated with their partners' discussion statements, in particular with the number of specific examples they gave to justify positive Black evaluations, and with statements about between-group similarities. This study demonstrated that statements prodding the partner to differentiate cognitively among out-group members were instrumental in reducing high levels of prejudice. It reinforced the need to consider a variety of social-cognitive mediators responsible for the age-related reduction in prejudice, ones that were not originally part of the theory.

Less research has been conducted on this particular mediator, partly because it is difficult to create specific indicators. Also it clearly overlaps with the self, group, and individual mediators, which are easier to operationalize. However, cognitive motivations and cognitive differentiation of internal individual attributes appear to be instrumental in age-related declines in bias.

### CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE THEORY

Criticisms of social-cognitive developmental theory have focused on its inability to explain a number of phenomena. For one, some say that children are not really prejudiced, as evidenced by the lack of strongly negative attitudes, or hate, toward out-groups. However, the usual definition of prejudice is negative or derogatory evaluations, and the usual comparison or control target is the in-group, or sometimes an unspecified group. Because they lack emotional and verbal sophistication, children would not be expected to express the level of hate or racial slurs found with racist adults.

Another criticism is that most if not all majority people are prejudiced and it certainly does not disappear by adulthood. The first point is now bolstered by implicit measures of attitudes over which people have less control (Dunham et al., 2006), showing that implicit prejudice in North Americans remains high even though it declines according to explicit measures. We need to find out what drives implicit prejudice and how implicit prejudice translates into behavior, in comparison to explicit attitudes. As to why some adults are prejudiced, there are many social psychological explanations. Cognitive developmental theory simply states that developmental and individual differences in children can be partly explained by differences in social-cognitive mediators. Most adults would be expected to possess those critical social cognitions, but mature cognitions may not always be used, especially in contexts where emotional states are strong (Rosenbach, Crockett, & Wapner, 1973). Under conditions of threat, there is evidence that one may regress and use less sophisticated cognitions. Perhaps a secondary stipulation should be added, namely that the social cognitions would be effective only if brought to bear on their judgments of different ethnic groups.

An alternative explanation for the developmental decline in prejudice uses social desirability to explain the shift to less-biased attitudes. Social desirability refers to the desire to act in socially approved ways, though there is evidence that children are more influenced by fear of disapproval. Along with the understanding that prejudice is undesirable, children over 7 years old are said to mask their prejudice in order to avoid disapproval. This may explain low levels of prejudice in some children. However, we have used a variety of means to rule out this explanation and validate our explicit measure in our context. The explanation might have more merit if broadened to include morality concerns about fairness and equality, which increase with age (Singh, Choo, & Poh, 1998), and probably correlate with the other social-cognitive mediators discussed here. Rutland et al. (2005) have nicely distinguished between morality concerns that are internally driven and should be present in older children, and concerns over social disapproval due to the norm against prejudice. Older children from 14 to 16 years of age indeed showed less bias, regardless of social conditions, because most had internalized the norm of acceptance. In contrast, 6- to 8-year-olds appeared to be most influenced by fear of disapproval, an externally driven motivation; they showed most in-group favoritism when fear of disapproval was low, and least out-group prejudice when the potential for disapproval was salient. Implicit attitudes were not influenced by social norms. So, attempts to change prejudice need to work within the age-related processes of social norms and personal ethics of fairness and equality.

Linked to this is the criticism that all the findings might be explained by conformity to norms. The norm and conformity explanation is not as simple for children as for adults. The problem is that children's prediction of norms must be assessed. Under the age of 8, children seem to assume that all others, including parents, friends, and research assistants, hold attitudes similar to their own, an egocentric assumption that is not borne out by others' actual attitudes (Aboud & Doyle, 1996a). Augoustinos and Rosewarne (2001) found that children's prejudice declined after 7 years despite their prediction that most others were prejudiced. Rutland et al.'s (2005) conclusion that social influences are stronger and variable in younger children indicates that this is the time to introduce family and school inputs. Children seem to be aware of two contrasting norms—descriptive norms about most people's attitudes, and prescriptive norms concerning the attitudes one should express. Conditions under which these two are differentially elicited in the intergroup context need further study.

Another criticism is that there is little place for self-identity concerns. Certainly there is little evidence that racial self-identification by itself triggers the acquisition of either in-group attachment or out-group prejudice in minority or majority children. Even Social Identity Theory did not argue this (Tajfel, 1978). It is conceivable, though, that in-group attachment may drive out-group prejudice as a result of the need to identify by contrast (Lambert & Klineberg, 1967), or in order to enhance in-group esteem (Tajfel, 1978). Social comparison processes may be irrelevant here, as White children tend to make mostly in-group comparisons (Aboud, 1976). Children with high status and high self-esteem tend to express the most bias, as if they were generalizing to their in-group and contrasting with out-groups (Bigler, Brown, & Markell, 2001; Bigler, Jones, & Lobliner, 1997). Minority children also make in-group comparisons, or seek a better-off in-group comparison and a worse-off out-group comparison (see Blanton, Crocker, & Miller, 2000, for comparable findings with young adults). Yet none of the theories explains well the trajectory of minority children's attitudes,

which shows great variability. Clearly, minority children have many different identities and may not use their racial identity as a basis for attitudes or friendship until adolescence. Of greater importance to them may be the development of an understanding of others' prejudice and how to respond to discrimination. Recently, developmental trends in how children come to infer stereotypes others hold of them, and from there detect and respond to discrimination, reveal striking parallels with other social development research (Brown & Bigler, 2005).

Finally, the theory is criticized for not specifying an explicit role for the environment, in particular parents and peers. Certainly, the evidence indicates that young children do not directly learn negative attitudes from parents. However, wanting to understand their social world, they may search for the criteria by which others organize the classroom and make judgments (Bigler et al., 1997, 2001). For prevention purposes, we need to identify exactly what it is in our environment that children notice and from there acquire prejudice. Yet, to reduce prejudice may require a different strategy, because the existing bias itself stands in the way. The cognitive and normative barriers interfering with children's receptivity to counter-bias information need to be overcome, while positive evaluations are provided. Too many interventions have been based on the false premise that prejudice is due to ignorance; evaluations have shown that providing information is insufficient, and may actually create stereotypes. However, there is definitely a strong role for parents and peers, and for books and television if they present evaluative information in a form that fits the child's mindset. Likewise, contact, or indirect contact, and friendship are well established determinants of prejudice reduction in children and adults (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Affective and social-cognitive mediators of the contact effect are being outlined in current papers (e.g., Kenworthy, Turner, Hewstone, & Voci, 2005). Conditions for beneficial contact have an effect on attitudes partly because they arouse mediators such as threat reduction and individuating cognitions. A recent theory by Bigler and Liben (2006) has outlined developmental and environmental variables along with cognitive mediators responsible for the formation and modification of prejudice. Future research will hopefully follow these innovative new approaches.

Clearly, no one theory has so far been able to explain all the routes to prejudice in children and adolescents. The social-cognitive developmental theory makes an important contribution by explaining age-related changes in prejudice as a function of other known social and cognitive changes. It thereby alerts those who plan interventions to be sensitive to ongoing changes in the child that may facilitate or hinder change.

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## CHAPTER 5

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# Applying Social Identity and Self-Categorization Theories to Children's Racial, Ethnic, National, and State Identifications and Attitudes

MARTYN BARRETT and STEPHANIE C. DAVIS

### INTRODUCTION

**I**N THIS chapter, we review two theories that have been developed by social psychologists to explain adults' intergroup attitudes and prejudices, and examine the extent to which these theories may be useful for understanding the development of intergroup attitudes and prejudices in children. In particular, we focus on the development of children's racial, ethnic, national, and state attitudes, and we use the evidence that is currently available on the development of such attitudes in order to assess the usefulness of these two theories for developmental psychology. The theories on which we focus are social identity theory and self-categorization theory (henceforward SIT and SCT, respectively). These theories suggest a number of avenues for investigation by developmental researchers. Notwithstanding this, however, we argue that these two theories, as currently formulated, have limitations when applied within a developmental context. This is because the empirical evaluation of the theories against findings obtained in developmental studies reveals that neither theory is able to account for all of the available findings. Furthermore, we suggest that these theories in their current formulations (especially SCT) possibly have greater utility for understanding the development of

racial and ethnic attitudes than national and state attitudes. For this reason, we propose some modifications for how we believe these theories need to be augmented when informing developmental investigations.

Before beginning, it is useful to draw some conceptual distinctions. The terms *race*, *ethnicity*, *nation*, and *state* have overlapping meanings, and unless these terms are clearly defined, this overlap can lead to conceptual confusion. In this chapter, we use the term *ethnic group* to denote a human community that has a collective name, a myth of common ancestry, shared historical memories, common traditions, customs, and practices (which may include a common religion or language), and a symbolic link to an ancestral homeland (Hutchinson & Smith, 1996; Smith, 2001). By contrast, we use the term *nation* to denote a named human community that lives in and occupies its historic homeland, has a shared history that has been codified and standardized; a common mass public culture; myths of common ancestry; shared symbols, traditions, and customs; and exhibits self-awareness as a nation and is politicized in its assertion of its status as a nation (Brass, 1991; Connor, 1994; Smith, 1991, 1998, 2001). The term *state* is used to refer to a sovereign political entity in which a government uses a set of institutions to exercise an administrative monopoly over a territory that has clearly demarcated borders, where the rule of that government is sanctioned by law, and where that government has the capacity to use coercion and violence in order to enforce its administrative policies within that territory (Giddens, 1985). In this terminology, therefore, it is possible to distinguish between stateless nations (e.g., the Quebecois, Scots, and Basques), nation-states (e.g., Germany and Japan) and multination states (e.g., Canada, Britain, and Spain). As far as race is concerned, as many commentators have noted (e.g., Banton, 1977; Hirschfeld, 1996, 2005; Miles, 1989; Parker & Song, 2001; Tizard & Phoenix, 2002), this term denotes a pseudobiological, socially constructed category, as there is no more genetic variability between putative races than there is within them (Latter, 1980; Lewontin, 1995; Nei & Roychoudhury, 1982) and definitions of races vary substantially across different historical periods and cultures (Banton, 1977; Bulmer & Solomos, 1999, 2004). However, race and associated terms such as *racial*, *Black*, and *White* are made very real for individuals through racism and racist practices (Leach, 2005). For this reason, we use the term *race* in the present chapter as a synonym for *racialized group* (Banton, 1977; Miles, 1989; Mills, 1998), without intending to imply that races are natural kinds or biologically grounded categories.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See Barrett (2007) for a more detailed discussion of the distinctions and definitions in this paragraph.

Having made these conceptual distinctions, we now turn our attention to the two theories that form the primary focus of this chapter.

## THE THEORIES

In this section we review social identity theory and self-categorization theory.

### SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

Social Identity Theory (SIT) was originally developed by Tajfel (1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986) to explain why people tend to discriminate against other groups and in favor of their own group. Tajfel (1978, p. 63) defined a social identity as "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his [or her] knowledge of his [or her] membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership." He argued that social identities help people to position and orient themselves in the social world. Social identities differ from personal identities in that the former are based on an individual's social group memberships (e.g., their gender, ethnic, racial, national, state, occupational, or social class group memberships), whereas the latter are derived from an individual's unique attributes (e.g., their physical appearance, intellectual abilities, personality, and idiosyncratic tastes). Tajfel and Turner (1979, 1986) proposed that social identities serve not only the cognitive function of helping individuals to define and locate themselves in the social world, but also a motivational function. In particular, they argued that human beings are motivated by the need to achieve a positive sense of themselves. Consequently, when a social group membership has been internalized as part of an individual's self-concept, then the individual is motivated to view that social group in a positive way. In order to do this, the in-group is compared with appropriate out-groups using suitable dimensions of comparison, which produce more favorable representations of the in-group than of the out-groups. The positive distinctiveness that is then ascribed to the in-group over the out-groups on these comparative dimensions produces positive self-esteem. Thus, the social comparison process results either in in-group favoritism, out-group denigration, or both.

However, Tajfel and Turner (1986) postulated that these effects only occur under certain circumstances. First, the individual must subjectively identify with the in-group, that is, the individual must have internalized that particular social group membership as part of his or her self-concept. If an individual's subjective identification with the group is weak or absent, then these effects will not occur. Second, the prevailing social situation must allow comparisons to be made on dimensions that have important and relevant evaluative meaning. Not all dimensions have such meaning, or hold the same meaning for different social groups. The comparative dimensions that are utilized in a particular context must be relevant for how the in-group defines and characterizes itself. Third, the comparison out-group itself must also be perceived to be relevant to the in-group's own self-definition. If the out-group is irrelevant to the way in which the in-group views itself, then the predicted effects also will not occur. Thus, SIT predicts that in-group bias and out-group discrimination occur as a direct consequence of social categorization when there is subjective identification with the in-group category, and when the intergroup

comparison involves an appropriate out-group on dimensions that are relevant for the in-group's view of itself.

In addition, Tajfel and Turner (1986) argued that alternative strategies to achieve positive self-esteem will be required in cases where a comparison out-group is perceived to have a clearly superior status to the in-group. Under these conditions, the individual may either: (1) try to leave the in-group (a strategy of individual mobility); (2) try to redefine either the in-group itself or the basis of the comparison between the in-group and the out-group (a strategy of social creativity); or (3) try to change the social structure (a strategy of social competition). Individual mobility is most likely to occur when the group boundaries are perceived to be permeable. Social creativity and social competition strategies are more likely to be adopted when group boundaries are perceived to be impermeable. Social creativity may involve finding new dimensions on which to compare the in-group with the out-group, or changing the values that have been assigned to the comparative dimensions which are in play, or changing the comparison out-group against which the in-group is evaluated. Social competition involves members of a low-status in-group challenging the position of the high-status out-group and trying to reverse the status differential. A social competition strategy is most likely to be used either when the status differentials are perceived to be illegitimate or when the high status of the out-group is perceived to be unstable. Because the choice of strategy is based on perceptions of group boundary permeability and perceptions of the legitimacy and stability of status differentials, SIT proposes that group members' attitudes and behaviors will depend not only on social identity processes (such as subjective identification and the need to achieve positive self-esteem) but also on the particular societal structure that is in place, the relationships between groups within that structure, and individuals' beliefs regarding that structure and those relationships.

A substantial body of evidence has now been accumulated from social-psychological research with adults to support the various proposals made by SIT. For example, it has been found that the mere act of categorizing a person as a member of a social group can indeed be sufficient to elicit in-group favoritism, both in group descriptions (Doise, Csepeli, Dann, Gouge, Larsen & Ostell, 1972) and in discriminatory behavior (Billig & Tajfel, 1973; Brewer & Silver, 1978; Brown, 1978; Howard & Rothbart, 1980; Tajfel, Billig, Bundy & Flament, 1971). However, in-group favoritism is often stronger when there is a high level of identification with the in-group (Branscombe & Wann, 1994; Grant, 1993; Kelly, 1988, 1993), and when the dimensions on which the in-group and out-group are compared provide a meaningful and relevant basis for in-group-out-group differentiation (Reynolds, Turner & Haslam, 2000). In addition, the strength of in-group identification has been found to influence the choice of intergroup strategy, such that low identifiers are more likely to adopt an individual mobility strategy and high identifiers a social competition strategy (Branscombe & Ellemers, 1998; Doosje & Ellemers, 1997; Ellemers, Spears & Doosje, 1997). Moreover, perceptions of group status have been found to influence not only levels of in-group favoritism (Doosje, Ellemers & Spears, 1995; Ellemers, Van Rijswijk, Roefs & Simons, 1997; Turner & Brown, 1978), but also choice of intergroup strategy (Ellemers, Doosje, van Knippenberg & Wilke, 1992; Terry & O'Brien, 2001). Strategy choice has also been found to be dependent on perceptions of the permeability and legitimacy of group boundaries (Ellemers, 1993; Terry, Carey & Callan, 2001; Terry & O'Brien, 2001). Cumulatively, this body of

evidence provides good support for many of the predictions of SIT in relationship to adults' intergroup attitudes.

There are a number of issues highlighted by SIT that are relevant to the development of children's intergroup attitudes. First, SIT predicts that, once children are aware of their own racial, ethnic, national, or state group membership, and have differentiated their in-group from appropriate comparison out-groups on relevant dimensions, in-group favoritism may well occur. Furthermore, the theory suggests that, when this does occur, the degree of in-group favoritism should be correlated with the strength of children's subjective identification with that in-group, with in-group favoritism not occurring if subjective identification with the group is absent. Notice that SIT does *not* predict that in-group favoritism is a universal phenomenon. The theory explicitly states that exceptions to in-group favoritism can occur if an out-group is perceived to have a clearly superior status to the in-group, and postulates that under these circumstances individuals may employ alternative strategies in order to maintain positive self-esteem. Second, although children may perceive that racial (and possibly ethnic) categories have impermeable boundaries (Hirschfeld, 1996, 2005), there is evidence that at least some children believe that the boundaries between national and state groups are permeable. For example, English, Scottish, and American children sometimes believe that people can change their national or state group by either moving to another country, learning the language of that country, or being granted the passport of that country (Carrington & Short, 1995, 2000). If children do believe that the boundaries of national and state groups are permeable in these ways, but believe that the boundaries of ethnic and racial groups are impermeable, then SIT would predict that the phenomena exhibited in the development of national and state attitudes may well differ from those exhibited in the development of racial and ethnic attitudes. Third, SIT predicts that children's intergroup strategies and attitudes will vary depending on the prevailing societal structure and children's beliefs about this structure. Thus, contrary to many common misunderstandings of the theory, SIT does *not* predict universal patterns in children's development (such as the universal appearance of in-group bias as an automatic consequence of social categorization). Instead, the theory actually predicts that children's development will vary according to the specifics of the particular societal structure within which they grow up, the relative status of their own in-groups within that structure, and their beliefs about group boundary permeability and about the legitimacy and stability of the status differentials between groups.<sup>2</sup>

#### SELF-CATEGORIZATION THEORY

As we have seen, SIT hypothesizes that the social identities that are derived from memberships of social groups (e.g., ethnic, racial, national, or state groups) differ from personal identities, which are derived from personal characteristics (e.g., physical appearance or personality). However, Tajfel himself did not specify the conditions under which any particular social or personal identity would be rendered salient to an individual. Self-Categorization Theory (SCT) was developed from SIT

<sup>2</sup>See Turner (1999) and Haslam (2001) for discussions of how the predictions of SIT have often been oversimplified and misunderstood in the research literature.

by Turner and colleagues (Turner, 1985; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher & Wetherell, 1987; Oakes, Haslam & Turner, 1994) in order to address this issue.

SCT proposes that the critical cognitive process through which social identities are activated to the exclusion of personal identities is self-categorization. Turner (1985) proposed that when the self is categorized as a member of a social group, self-stereotyping occurs. This involves a cognitive redefinition of the self away from personal characteristics and individualized attributes, towards the relevant group-based characteristics and attributes instead. The self becomes depersonalized, being viewed as a member of a category in which it is more or less equivalent to the other members of the same category and distinct from the members of out-group categories. Turner also argued that individuals hold a multiplicity of different personal and social identities, and that these are cognitively organized in the form of a category hierarchy. Three levels in this hierarchy are: the interpersonal level, which is the subordinate level at which personal identities are located; the intergroup level, which is the intermediate level at which social identities are located; and the interspecies level, which is the superordinate level at which the self as a human being is located. Particular social identities are also hierarchically organized within the intermediate level in terms of their degree of abstraction (for example, in the case of a person from Texas, the category of Texan will be stored as a subordinate category under the superordinate category of American). The theory stresses that all levels in the hierarchy are equally real, with people being simultaneously individuals, members of various social groups, and human beings. Thus, no one level is a more accurate way of representing the self than any other. However, Turner (1985) argued that through a mechanism of functional antagonism, when one level of self-categorization is made more salient, other levels are rendered less salient.

Self-categorization itself is hypothesized to be a dynamic and context-dependent process, with the specific level in the hierarchy at which the self is classified varying from situation to situation. The particular category that is activated in any given context depends on a cognitive process driven by the principle of metacontrast (Oakes et al., 1994). According to this principle, categorization occurs at that level in the hierarchy that maximizes between-category differences in the given situation, while minimizing within-category differences. For example, if a situation contains both Texans and Californians, then those people are more likely to categorize themselves as Americans (rather than as Texans and Californians) if the situation also contains people from other countries. If people from other countries are not present, then their subordinate identities of Texan and Californian are more likely to be activated instead. If only Texans are present, then it may be the case that only their personal identities will be activated. Thus, metacontrast drives the salience of identities through a mechanism of relative differences.

SCT postulates that there are two important constraints on the operation of metacontrast as far as the selective activation of particular categories is concerned (Oakes et al., 1994). First, the process is affected by perceiver readiness, that is, by how cognitively accessible a category is to an individual. Perceivers will not only have previous experience of various categories, and of interactions with other people that have been influenced by their category memberships, but will also have current expectations, goals, and needs, and these can all influence how readily a perceiver will use a particular category in a given situation. For example, if members of a stigmatized minority ethnic group experience high levels of racial

discrimination, then their racial identities are likely to be more readily activated than the racial identities of members of a nonstigmatized majority ethnic group. Second, the activation of a category will also depend on normative fit, that is, how well the category members who are present match the perceiver's own cognitive specification of that category. If individuals who are present violate the perceiver's expectations of, and normative beliefs about, category members, then the category is less likely to be activated. Hence, whether or not a category is activated depends on an interaction between comparative fit (i.e., how well that category captures the pattern of similarities and differences that are present in the context as determined by metacontrast), normative fit, and category accessibility/perceiver readiness. Thus, for example, the ethnic identity of a British South Asian individual may be less readily activated when meeting, in a predominantly South Asian area of a city, another South Asian person who has assimilated the discourse patterns and behaviors of the White majority culture, than when he or she meets, in a predominantly White area of the city, a South Asian person whose speech codes and behaviors are of recognizable South Asian origin.

SCT also proposes that the content that is ascribed to category stereotypes varies with context. Stereotyping is viewed as a product of the cognitive attempt to make sense of the group differences that are present within the given context, and to differentiate between these groups in a meaningful way. Hence, stereotype content is conceptualized not as a fixed set of attributes that is imposed as an invariant template on the available social stimuli. Instead, SCT construes stereotype content as being actively constructed in the situation in an inherently relational manner, in order to enable a category's meaning to be captured in relationship to the other categories that are currently present. Stereotypes are therefore viewed as "*representations of the group-in-context*" rather than as "*representations of fixed, absolute group properties*" (Oakes et al., 1994, p. 192, italics in the original). For example, Scottish people, when judged in relationship to English people, may be viewed as emotionally warm but not especially hardworking, but when judged in relationship to Southern European people may be viewed as emotionally cold and very hardworking (cf. Hopkins, Regan, & Abell, 1997). Hence, the attributes that are used to define the stereotype of a particular social group will change as a function of the particular comparative context in which the group is being judged, that is, as a function of the other social groups that are available within the given situation.

In sum, then, SCT proposes that when a social identity becomes salient through these mechanisms there is a depersonalization of self-perception (i.e., self-stereotyping occurs), group behaviors and attitudes that are linked to the activated social identity are elicited and, because personal identities are suppressed, perceptions of in-group homogeneity increase. The particular stereotype content that is used to represent the in-group category will depend on the particular comparison out-groups present within the prevailing context. However, when the social context contains only members of the in-group, meta-contrast leads to self-categorization at a lower level in the categorical hierarchy. As a result, either lower-level social identities or personal identities are activated, and perceptions of in-group variability increase.

As in the case of SIT, the predictions of SCT have been well supported by social-psychological research with adults. For example, a number of studies have confirmed that intergroup contexts do indeed make social identities salient to individuals, while

intragroup contexts make personal identities salient instead (Gaertner, Mann, Murrell, & Dovidio, 1989; Haslam & Turner, 1992; Hogg & Turner, 1987; Oakes, Turner, & Haslam, 1991; Wilder & Shapiro, 1984; Wilder & Thompson, 1988). The prediction that the contents of stereotypes vary as a function of the particular comparative context in which the stereotyped groups are being judged has also been well supported by research with adults (Haslam & Turner, 1992; Haslam, Turner, Oakes, McGarty & Hayes, 1992; Hopkins & Murdoch, 1999; Hopkins et al., 1997; Spears & Manstead, 1989), as has the prediction that the perceived variability of the in-group will vary depending on the presence or absence of out-groups within the prevailing context (Doosje, Haslam, Spears, Oakes, & Koomen, 1998; Haslam, Oakes, Turner & McGarty, 1995; Hopkins & Cable, 2001).

Like SIT, SCT contains several ideas that are potentially relevant to understanding children's stereotyping and intergroup attitudes. First, SCT predicts that the salience of children's self-categorizations will vary across situations as a function of the specific out-groups that are present within those situations. The implication here is that children who grow up within multiethnic or multiracial environments may display different patterns in the development of their ethnic or racial attitudes from children who grow up within monoethnic or monoracial environments, due to the chronic salience of their in-group memberships. Second, SCT predicts that the contents of children's stereotypes of racial, ethnic, national, and state groups will vary in conjunction with changes in the comparative context, and that children will use different dimensions to describe in-groups and out-groups depending on the particular out-groups present in the prevailing context. Third, SCT suggests that the degree to which children will stereotype their own in-group will depend upon the presence or absence of comparison out-groups within the prevailing context. Thus, children's willingness to acknowledge intragroup variability within a particular group to which they themselves belong (such as ethnic or racial variability within their own national or state group) may well vary from situation to situation depending on the presence or absence of out-group members in those situations.

#### THEORETICAL CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING SIT AND SCT

SIT and SCT both contain a number of postulates concerning the psychological factors and processes that are responsible for people's intergroup attitudes, prejudices, and discrimination. These two theories have provided the foundation for many social-psychological studies into adults' intergroup attitudes and behaviors, and these studies have largely supported the predictions made by the theories. SIT and SCT also suggest a number of possible lines of investigation that may be pursued by developmental psychologists studying children's attitudes to racial, ethnic, national, and state groups. In the following sections of this chapter, we describe some of the developmental studies that have been conducted in which SIT and SCT have been applied to children's racial, ethnic, national, and state attitudes.

#### EMPIRICAL EVALUATION OF SIT AND SCT AGAINST EVIDENCE FROM CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES TO NATIONAL AND STATE GROUPS

In this section, we begin by reviewing studies that have applied SIT and SCT to the development of children's attitudes to national and state groups.



THE APPLICATION OF SIT TO CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES TO NATIONAL AND STATE GROUPS

Children's attitudes to national and state groups have recently been investigated in two large-scale, cross-national studies: the CHOONGE project (Barrett, Lyons et. al., 1997) and the NERID project (Barrett, Bennett et al., 2001).<sup>3</sup> Among other goals, these studies were designed to test some of the predictions made by SIT. Across the two projects, data were collected from 4,211 6-, 9-, 12- and 15-year-olds living in 12 different national contexts: England, Scotland, Catalonia, the Basque Country, southern Spain, northern Italy, central Italy, western European Russia, central European Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, and Azerbaijan.<sup>4</sup> The children were interviewed individually using a large battery of questions and tasks. These included tasks that were designed to assess the positivity/negativity of the children's trait attributions to national and state in-groups and out-groups, the children's feelings towards national and state in-groups and out-groups, and the strength of the children's subjective identifications with their own national and state group.

In order to assess the positivity or negativity of the children's attitudes to national and state groups, a trait attribution task was used. It was found that, in all of the national contexts, the children tended to attribute more positive than negative traits to all of the target groups, including both in-groups and out-groups. In other words, there was little evidence of out-group negativity among any of the children. For example, the Italian children at all ages in both northern Italy and central Italy consistently

<sup>3</sup>A comprehensive report of the principal findings from both projects is provided in Barrett (2007). Individual findings have been reported previously by Bennett, Lyons, Sani, and Barrett (1998); Vila, del Valle, Perera, Monreal, and Barrett (1998); de Rosa and Bombi (1999); Barrett (2001); Karakozov and Kadirova (2001); Kipiani (2001); Pavlenko, Kryazh, Ivanova, and Barrett (2001); Riazanova, Sergienko, Grenkova-Dikevitch, Gorodetschnaia, and Barrett (2001); Castelli, Cadinu, and Barrett (2002); Giménez, Canto, Fernández, and Barrett (1999, 2003); Barrett, Lyons, and del Valle (2004); Bennett, Barrett, Karakozov, Kipiani, Lyons, Pavlenko, and Riazanova (2004); and Reizébal, Valencia, and Barrett (2004).

<sup>4</sup>The following information about these various national contexts may be helpful to the reader. England and Scotland are two of the constituent nations of Britain. Scottish people tend to draw a clear distinction between their British state identity and their Scottish national identity (McCrone, 2001). By contrast, many English people are far less clear about the distinction between their British and English identities, as the former has acquired strong Anglocentric connotations due to the political and cultural domination of Britain by England (Kumar, 2003). Catalonia and the Basque Country are two of the autonomous regions of Spain. Historically, the state of Spain has been dominated by its Castillian (Spanish) population. However, a large proportion of the populations of Catalonia and the Basque Country are bilingual, speaking not only Spanish, but also Catalan or Basque, respectively. Many Catalans and Basques view Catalonia and the Basque Country as distinct nations which happen to be currently located within the Spanish state, and are determined to defend their national heritage against the dominance of Spanish language and culture (Guibernau, 2004; Zirakzadeh, 1991). Southern Spain is a less complex national context due to the fact that there are no alternative national identities in play within the south of Spain amongst the ethnic majority group. In northern Italy, where some of the CHOONGE data were collected, a separatist political movement, the Lega Lombarda, which subsequently expanded into the Lega Nord, came to prominence in the 1990s with the goal of protecting the economy and culture of northern Italy against the demands of the state government based in Rome (in central Italy) (Gold, 2003). Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, and Azerbaijan are four independent states that were established after the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991. The Soviet Union was effectively an imperial state dominated by Russia and, in recent years, national identities in Ukraine, Georgia, and Azerbaijan have been reconstructed in reaction to the process of Russification that had occurred during the Soviet era. Nevertheless, there are still large Russian communities living within each of these three countries (Cordell & Wolff, 2004).

attributed significantly more positive than negative traits not only to Italian people but also to British, Spanish, French, and German people. However, some subgroups of children did occasionally appear to single out particular out-groups for special treatment. These were the out-groups that were the traditional enemies of the child's own nation. For example, the number of positive traits that the English and Scottish children attributed to German people was not significantly higher than the number of negative traits they attributed to German people, and the German out-group was unique amongst all the target out-groups in this respect for both groups of British children.

Although nearly all of the out-groups were therefore viewed in positive terms overall, it was noticeable that the highest number of positive attributions was almost invariably made to the in-group. However, the lowest number of negative attributions was not always made to the in-group. When the number of negative traits was subtracted from the number of positive traits for each individual target group in order to derive an overall positivity score for each group, it was found that, as a general rule, in-groups received higher positivity scores than all of the out-groups, implying that in-group favoritism was indeed a widespread phenomenon in the data. However, in-group favoritism was *not* a universal phenomenon (as SIT would predict). For example, among the Italian children, the British out-group received significantly higher positivity scores than the Italian in-group. Thus, there were exceptions to the general principle of in-group favoritism, with cases of out-group favoritism sometimes being evident.

In addition to these trait attribution measures, the children's feelings towards each of the in-groups and out-groups were quantitatively assessed using a like-dislike rating scale. This revealed that the children almost invariably liked their own in-group more than they liked the out-groups. For example, the English children, at all ages, liked English people significantly more than they liked Scottish, French, Spanish, Italian, and German people. There were also some clear cases of the children holding negative affect towards particular out-groups. For example, the older Azeri children attending Azeri language schools<sup>5</sup> expressed a marked dislike of Russians. However, traditional enemy nations were not always disliked. For example, none of the mean scores from the children in Britain, Spain, and Italy were significantly lower than the neutral midpoint of the affect scale (including those that measured the children's affect towards German people).

The strength of the children's subjective identifications with their own national and state in-groups was also assessed in these two studies. In order to test the SIT prediction that the strength of the children's subjective identifications with their in-groups should correlate with the positivity/negativity of their attitudes to groups, correlations were run between the children's identification scores and their trait attribution positivity scores. These revealed that, in many groups of children, and contrary to the SIT prediction, there were no systematic relationships between the children's strength of identification with their in-groups and the positivity of their trait attributions to either in-groups or out-groups, nor were there systematic relationships between their strength of identification and the positive distinctiveness of in-groups over out-groups (i.e., the magnitude of the discrepancy between the in-group and out-group positivity scores). However, there were some exceptions to this general pattern.

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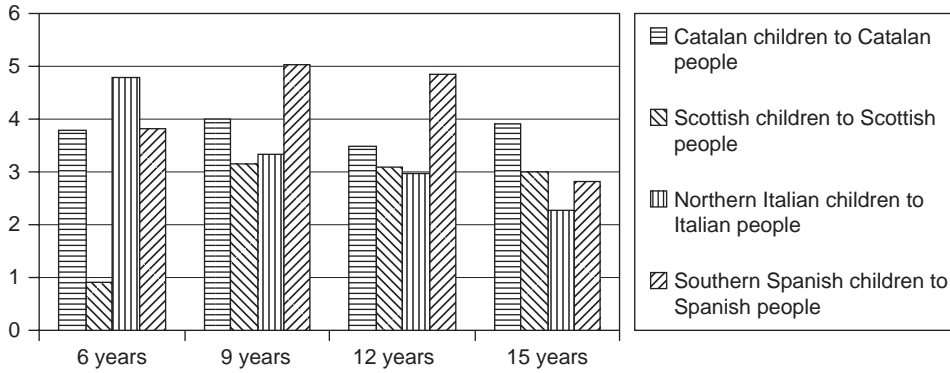
<sup>5</sup>In the cases of the children living in Ukraine, Georgia, and Azerbaijan, data were collected both from children attending Russian language schools and from children attending national language schools.

For example, in the case of the children living in Catalonia and the Basque Country, the strength of the children's identifications with being Spanish (the state identity) was positively related to the positivity of their trait attributions to Spanish people, and the strength of the children's identifications with being Catalan or Basque (the national identity) was positively related to the positivity of their trait attributions to either Catalan or Basque people (as appropriate). Furthermore, the strength of the children's identifications with being Catalan or Basque was *negatively* related to the positivity of their trait attributions to Spanish people. Hence, all of the relationships here are in the direction predicted by SIT (Catalan and Basque identities being defined in contradistinction to Spanish identity). However, there was no evidence that the Catalan and Basque children's trait attributions to other out-groups beyond the Spanish state borders bore any consistent relationship to their levels of identification. In other words, even in the case of these children, the evidence in support of the SIT prediction was mixed.

A somewhat different picture emerged when the children's affect scores were correlated with the measures of identification. Here, there was consistent evidence across all groups of children that their levels of liking of the people who belong to their own national and state groups *were* systematically related to their strength of identification with those groups. By contrast, the children's levels of liking of out-groups were not generally related to their strength of identification in a systematic way; nor, as a general rule, were there systematic relationships between the strength of identification and the affective distinctiveness of the in-group (i.e., the magnitude of the discrepancy between the in-group and out-group affect scores). However, there were, once again, a few exceptions here.

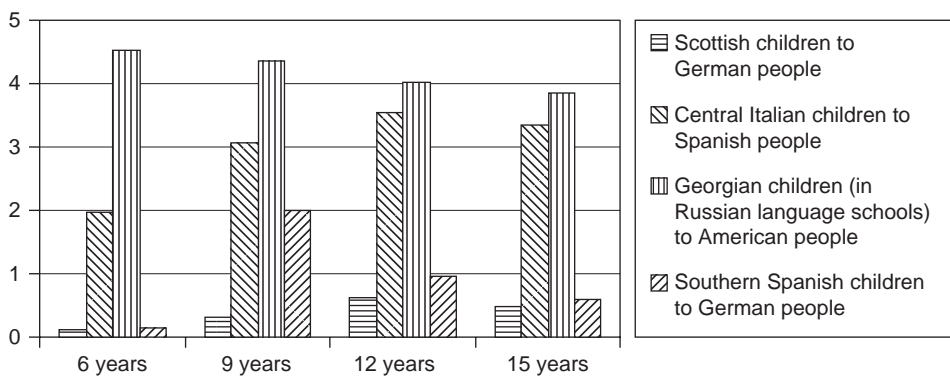
For example, in the case of the children living in the country of Georgia from the former Soviet Union, the strength of their Georgian identification was negatively related to their affect towards Russian people (the traditional enemy nation). Similarly, in the case of the children living in Catalonia and in the Basque Country, the children's affect towards Spanish people tended to be negatively related to their strength of identification with being Catalan or Basque (but positively related to their strength of identification with being Spanish), while levels of liking of Catalan or Basque people tended to be negatively related to their strength of Spanish identification (but positively related to their strength of Catalan or Basque identification). Thus, once again, there was partial evidence in support of the SIT prediction. These findings suggest that, while social identity processes may sometimes operate in children, particularly in relationship to the in-group versus a salient traditional enemy out-group, such processes are often overridden in relationship to other kinds of out-groups.

Three other noteworthy sets of findings emerged from the CHOONGE and NERID studies. First, there was no single pattern of age-related developmental changes in the attributions of positive traits, in the attributions of negative traits, in overall levels of positivity, or in the expressions of affect, towards in-groups and out-groups. In some groups of children, these measures revealed no significant changes at all in the children's attitudes with age; in others there were increases with age, in others decreases with age, and in others U-shaped or inverted U-shaped developmental changes with age (see Figures 5.1 and 5.2 for examples taken from the positivity data). This lack of any consistent pattern in the development of the children's attitudes across different national contexts is theoretically important to stress, as the sheer range of different developmental profiles that were exhibited by the children presents a serious problem for any developmental theory that posits that children's intergroup attitudes always display a similar developmental profile irrespective of the specific societal structure and national context in which they grow up.



**Figure 5.1** Examples of mean levels of positivity attributed to in-groups on the trait attribution task by the Catalan children, the Scottish children, the northern Italian children, and the southern Spanish children, broken down by age. Scores on the vertical axis are calculated by subtracting the number of negative adjectives from the number of positive adjectives attributed to each target group of people.

Second, factor analyses of the trait attribution and affect scores derived from the children living in each national context revealed that there were also different factor structures underlying the children’s attitudes in the different national contexts (see Table 5.1). For example, in the case of the Ukrainian children who attended Ukrainian language schools, their trait attributions to all of the target groups, both in-groups and out-groups, loaded onto a single factor. The English children, however, exhibited a two-factor structure (in-groups vs. out-groups). By contrast, the Basque children showed a different kind of two-factor structure (with attitudes to Spanish people loading onto the same factor as the out-groups). The Scottish children exhibited a three-factor structure (with the two traditional enemy out-groups loading onto the third factor), while a different kind of three-factor structure was exhibited by the



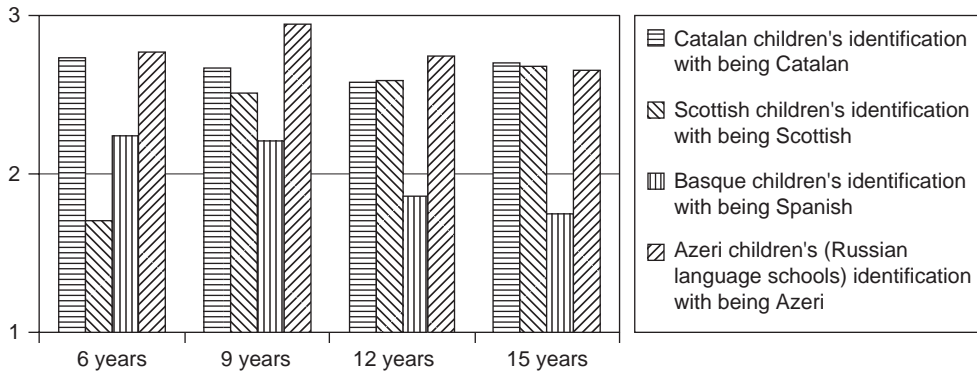
**Figure 5.2** Examples of mean levels of positivity attributed to out-groups on the trait attribution task by the Scottish children (to German people), the central Italian children (to Spanish people), the Georgian children attending Russian language schools (to American people), and the southern Spanish children (to German people), broken down by age. Scores on the vertical axis are calculated by subtracting the number of negative adjectives from the number of positive adjectives attributed to each target group of people.

Georgian children who attended Georgian-language schools (in-group vs. eastern out-groups vs. western out-groups). These findings imply that simple generalizations cannot be made about the relationships that exist between in-group and out-group national and state attitudes in children. Instead, these relationships vary depending on the particular national and state context in which children live. Furthermore, the specific factor structure that is found can often be interpreted in terms of the prevailing pattern of intergroup relationships within which the child's own national and/or state groups are objectively embedded (see footnote 4). Thus, the Basque children, growing up in a national context in which Basqueness and Spanishness are often viewed as being antithetical to one another, held attitudes towards Spanish people that loaded onto the same factor as the various national out-groups, rather than the factor onto which their attitudes to Basque people loaded; the Scottish children, growing up in a national context in which England is often regarded as the dominant political adversary within the British state, held attitudes towards English people that loaded onto a third traditional enemy factor, rather than the factor onto which their attitudes to British and Scottish people loaded; and the Georgian children, growing up in a national context in which the legacy of the former Soviet Union

**Table 5.1**

The results of the factor analyses of the overall positivity of the trait attributions to the target groups by the Ukrainian children in Ukrainian language schools, the English children, the Basque children, the Scottish children, and the Georgian children in Georgian language schools; the figures show the factor loadings of each target group on each factor (adapted from Barrett, 2007).

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Ukrainian children in Ukrainian language schools	Georgian 0.73 Azeri 0.70 English 0.69 Russian 0.61 Ukrainian 0.52 American 0.51 German 0.45		
English children	Italian 0.73 Spanish 0.67 French 0.66 German 0.65 Scottish 0.52	English 0.88 British 0.75	
Basque children	German 0.79 French 0.77 Italian 0.76 Spanish 0.69 British 0.63	Basque 0.97	
Scottish children	British 0.88 Scottish 0.83	French 0.88 Italian 0.76 Spanish 0.44	German 0.88 English 0.70
Georgian children in Georgian language schools	American 0.86 English 0.72 German 0.60	Russian 0.82 Azeri 0.77 Ukrainian 0.50	Georgian 0.96



**Figure 5.3** Examples of mean degree of identification of the Catalan children (with being Catalan), the Scottish children (with being Scottish), the Basque children (with being Spanish), and the Azeri children in Russian language schools (with being Azeri), broken down by age (the scale range is 1 to 3).

is still present, held attitudes to out-groups that were differentiated according to whether these groups had or had not been a part of the former Soviet Union. Notice that these findings are fully consistent with the postulates of SIT, which predicts that children's intergroup attitudes will be affected by their knowledge of the prevailing structure of intergroup relations within which their own group is embedded. An intriguing question here, which is not addressed by SIT, concerns how children acquire such knowledge.

Third, the CHOONGE and NERID projects found that the children's levels of identification with national and state groups exhibited different developmental patterns, which were linked systematically to a host of different factors. Thus, there were differences in children's national and state identifications as a function of: their age (see Figure 5.3 for some examples), the particular state in which they lived, their national and geographical situation within that state, how the state category was interpreted within their local environments, their ethnic background, the use of language in the family home, and their language of schooling (see Barrett, 2007, for a detailed discussion of these various factors). In other words, there was enormous diversity in the development of the children's national and state identifications that appeared to be systematically linked to a range of different environmental factors.

The notion that not only social identity processes but also environmental factors may have an important role to play in the development of children's national and state attitudes and identifications is consistent with other findings from the CHOONGE and NERID studies; for example, the finding that not all out-groups are equivalent to each other in children's thinking, with traditional enemy out-groups in particular being differentiated from other out-groups in terms of the attitudes that children hold towards them. In other words, the children's attitudes to national and state groups were clearly not structured on a simple in-group-out-group basis. Instead, they were much more finely differentiated in a manner consistent with the idea that children are sensitive to images of, and messages about, specific out-groups that circulate within their social environments. We will return to this issue of social-environmental factors later on in this chapter.

Although the CHOONGE and NERID studies were the first to be conducted specifically in order to test predictions from SIT in relationship to children's attitudes to national and state groups, it is pertinent to note that the findings of these two studies are consistent with the findings of other studies into children's attitudes to national and state groups. For example, although they did not use SIT as a theoretical framework, Lambert and Klineberg (1967), Tajfel, Jahoda, Nemeth, Campbell, and Johnson (1970), and Byram, Esarte-Sarries, and Taylor (1991) all found, just like the CHOONGE and NERID studies, that in-group favoritism is indeed a common phenomenon among children in relation to national and state groups; however, both Lambert and Klineberg (1967) and Tajfel, Jahoda, Nemeth, Rim, and Johnson (1972) also found that in-group favoritism, while common, is not universal. In addition, Jahoda (1962), Johnson (1966, 1973), Lambert and Klineberg (1967) and Barrett and Short (1992) all found that the nations or states that are the traditional enemies of the child's own nation sometimes elicit different patterns of responses from other national and state out-groups, while both Bar-Tal (1996) and Povrzanovi (1997) found that current enemy out-groups (Arabs in the case of Israeli children, and Serbs in the case of Croatian and Bosnian children) are sometimes very strongly disliked from as early as 3 years of age. Finally, Verkuyten (2001) has recently also employed SIT as a theoretical framework, and found evidence that the strength of national identification in children is sometimes systematically related to the positivity or negativity of their attitudes to national groups.

#### THE APPLICATION OF SCT TO CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES TO NATIONAL AND STATE GROUPS

Turning now to studies that have examined whether SCT can help to explain the development of children's national and state group attitudes, one study that was expressly designed to test whether children's national judgments and stereotypes vary in accordance with changes to the prevailing comparative context in the manner predicted by SCT was conducted by Barrett, Wilson, and Lyons (1999, 2003). In this study, 5- to 11-year-old English children were asked to attribute traits to their English in-group under three different conditions: either to the in-group on its own, or at the same time as they were attributing traits to American people (a positively liked out-group), or at the same time as they were attributing traits to German people (a traditional enemy out-group). Having made these attributions, the strength of the children's identification with the English in-group was assessed. SCT makes a number of predictions: (1) There should be less variability ascribed to the in-group in the two comparative conditions in which American and German out-groups are present than in the noncomparative condition; (2) The specific traits attributed to the in-group should differ across the three conditions, with the stereotype content being adjusted according to the specific intergroup comparisons present in the prevailing situation; (3) The salience of the in-group category, and hence the strength of identification with that category, should be higher in the two intergroup conditions than in the noncomparative condition. None of these predictions was supported by the study. There were no significant differences between the three conditions in the perceived variability of the in-group, in the contents of the traits that were ascribed to the in-group, or in the strength of identification with the in-group.

The conclusion that SCT may not be as helpful as SIT for illuminating the development of children's attitudes to national and state groups was confirmed by Barrett et al.

(2004), who used the British, Spanish, and Italian data from the CHOONGE project to test several other predictions made by SCT. For example, they examined whether the strength of identification with the in-group was related to the perceived homogeneity of the in-group in an intergroup comparative situation. SCT predicts that, if an individual identifies with a particular group, when that group membership is made salient within an intergroup context, there should be a depersonalization of self-perception and the perceived homogeneity of the in-group should increase; however, if an individual does not identify with that group, then these effects of context should not occur. Barrett et al. also examined whether the strength of identification with the in-group, and the perceived homogeneity of the in-group, were higher among the members of minority national groups (e.g., Scottish and Catalan children) than among the members of majority national groups (e.g., English and Spanish children). SCT predicts that both the strength of identification with the in-group, and the perceived homogeneity of the in-group, should be higher among members of minority groups whose identity is chronically under threat from a majority out-group (due to the threat enhancing the salience of the identity for those individuals). Analysis of the CHOONGE data, however, revealed that there was little empirical support for any of these predictions.

#### SUMMARY OF THE EMPIRICAL EVALUATION OF SIT AND SCT AGAINST EVIDENCE FROM CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES TO NATIONAL AND STATE GROUPS

SIT appears to have some utility for understanding children's attitudes to national and state groups. Two predictions made by SIT have received empirical support. First, as SIT predicts, in-group favoritism is widespread, but not universal. Second, the positivity of children's trait attributions to the in-group and to traditional enemy out-groups are sometimes related to their strength of identification with the in-group, as SIT would predict. In addition, affect towards the in-group is usually related to the strength of identification with that in-group. However, children's attitudes towards other kinds of out-groups do not usually follow the pattern predicted by SIT. That said, the factor structures underlying children's intergroup attitudes are often systematically related to the objectively existing relations between children's own in-groups and out-groups, suggesting that children's knowledge about these in-group-out-group relations contributes to the patterning of their attitudes to national and state groups. This conclusion is consistent with SIT, which predicts that individuals' beliefs about the relationships between their own in-group and relevant out-groups will impact on their attitudes to those groups.

As far as SCT is concerned, it appears that this theory is not so useful for understanding children's attitudes to national and state groups. This might be because children have not yet incorporated their national and state identities into a cognitive hierarchy of social identities, or because their national and state identities are insufficiently salient in the context of their everyday lives to trigger the context-sensitive mechanisms postulated by SCT.

#### EMPIRICAL EVALUATION OF SIT AND SCT AGAINST EVIDENCE FROM CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES TO ETHNIC AND RACIAL GROUPS

In this section, we review studies that have applied SIT and SCT to the development of children's attitudes to racial and ethnic groups.



## THE APPLICATION OF SIT TO CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES TO RACIAL AND ETHNIC GROUPS

One of the most widespread findings reported in the developmental research literature on children's attitudes to racial and ethnic groups is clearly consistent with SIT. This is the finding that has been obtained routinely with ethnic majority children, that such children usually display in-group favoritism in their racial and ethnic attitudes from as early as 4 years of age, with this bias towards their own in-group either persisting throughout the childhood years or increasing still further in strength up until about 6 or 7 years of age, before declining to a more moderate level across the years of middle childhood (e.g., Aboud, 1977, 1980; Asher & Allen, 1969; Brown & Johnson, 1971; Corenblum & Wilson, 1982; Doyle & Aboud, 1995; Fox & Jordan, 1973; Hraba & Grant, 1970; Morland & Hwang, 1981; Vaughan, 1964; Williams, Best & Boswell, 1975; Williams & Morland, 1976; for detailed reviews of this body of research, see Aboud, 1988; Aboud & Amato, 2001; Brown, 1995; and Nesdale, 2001, 2004). Furthermore, despite questions that can be raised about the methodological adequacy and conceptual interpretation of some of the studies that have produced these results (Aboud, 1988; Cameron, Alvarez, Ruble, & Fuligni, 2001; Nesdale, 2001), the finding that majority group children frequently display in-group favoritism has proved to be remarkably robust.

The existing research literature is equally awash with findings that show ethnic minority children's attitudes to their own in-group are much more variable, with these children sometimes showing in-group favoritism (e.g., Aboud, 1980; Hraba & Grant, 1970; Semaj, 1980; Vaughan, 1978), sometimes showing out-group favoritism (e.g., Asher & Allen, 1969; Bagley & Young, 1998; Corenblum & Annis, 1993; Rice, Ruiz, & Padilla, 1974), and with minority samples in some studies either showing no clear bias or being split, with some children showing in-group favoritism and others showing out-group favoritism (e.g., Branch & Newcombe, 1980; Fox & Jordan, 1973; Milner, 1973; Morland & Hwang, 1981; Spencer, 1982; Williams & Morland, 1976). Nevertheless, minority children do tend to show greater levels of in-group favoritism after the age of about 7 years (Asher & Allen, 1969; Semaj, 1980; Spencer, 1982, 1984; Williams & Morland, 1976). Notice that this variability in the display of in-group favoritism among minority children is predicted by SIT, which postulates that whether or not in-group favoritism will be displayed will depend on children's perceptions of their in-group's status within the prevailing societal structure, with in-group favoritism being less likely to occur when the in-group is perceived to have a low status.

However, despite the considerable volume of research that has been conducted into children's racial and ethnic attitudes, very few of these studies have investigated whether the degree of racial or ethnic in-group favoritism, when it occurs, is related to children's strength of identification with their own in-group. As we have seen, a central argument of both SIT and SCT is that intergroup attitudes stem from individuals' subjective identifications with particular social categories, and that identification with an in-group is a necessary precondition for many of the phenomena predicted by these theories to occur (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, 1999). As such, in order to test most of the predictions of SIT and SCT in relationship to children's attitudes to racial and ethnic groups, it is necessary to conduct studies in which children's strength of identification with racial and ethnic categories is assessed. However, very few such studies have been conducted with children. Notice that it is insufficient for studies simply to capture whether or not an individual is aware of, can distinguish, or can classify him- or herself as a *de facto* member

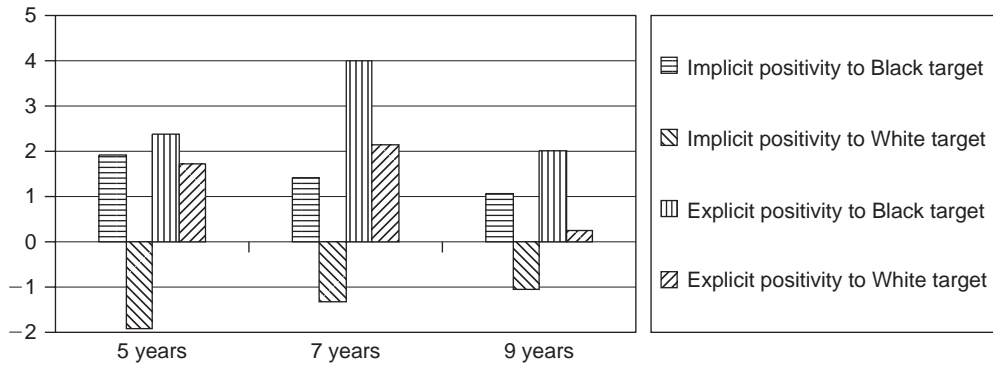
of a particular racial or ethnic group. Instead, it is necessary for studies to measure the individual's subjective sense of belonging to that group, the extent to which he or she feels that this group forms a core part of his or her own self-concept—that is, the importance, relevance, or centrality of the in-group identity to the individual's sense of self (cf. Akiba, Szalacha, & Garcia Coll, 2004; Barrett, 2005a, 2005b, 2007; Gecas, 1991; Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992; Ruble, et al., 2004; Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998).

For these reasons, we have recently conducted two studies in which we measured children's strength of racial identification, racial attitudes, and self-esteem. The aim of these studies was to test the predictions of SIT regarding the relationships between identification, attitudes, and self-esteem. In both studies, children's racial attitudes were assessed using both implicit and explicit measures. In the first study (Davis, Leman & Barrett, in press), 5-, 7- and 9-year-old Black and White British children heard a story involving a Black and a White character, and the children's subsequent recall of the positive and negative traits that had been exhibited by these two characters in the story was assessed (implicit task).<sup>6</sup> The children's assignment of the same traits to Black and White targets was also assessed using a trait-attribution task (explicit task). Finally, children's self-esteem and their strength of identification with their own in-group were assessed.

Figures 5.4 and 5.5 show the age-related differences in implicit and explicit attitudes to in-groups and out-groups that were exhibited by the Black children and by the White children, respectively. It was found that, as expected, the explicitly measured attitudes were more positive overall than the implicitly measured attitudes (cf. Dovidio, Kawakami, & Beach, 2001; Fazio & Olson, 2003; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Nesdale & Durkin, 1998). However, contrary to the predictions of SIT, no relationships were found between the strength of identification and the positivity of the children's attitudes towards Black and White targets in either the Black or the White children on either the implicit or the explicit measures. There were also no relationships between the strength of identification and the positive distinctiveness of the in-group over the out-group on either set of measures for either group of children. In addition, there were no significant differences in the levels of self-esteem exhibited by the Black and White children. However, the White children's levels of self-esteem *were* related to their racial attitudes in the manner predicted by SIT, with White children who exhibited higher self-esteem attributing greater positive distinctiveness to the in-group over the out-group on both the implicit and explicit measures than those who exhibited lower self-esteem. Furthermore, this finding applied at all three ages. In contrast, the Black children's self-esteem was *unrelated* to their ethnic attitudes at all ages. These findings suggest that different processes operate in individuals who belong to high- versus low-status groups, as SIT suggests.

One possible explanation of the findings obtained with the Black children is that provided by Spencer (1985), who has argued that young Black children partition knowledge of the self from knowledge of racial groups, and use only self-related knowledge as the basis for their self-esteem. Hence, she suggests that minority

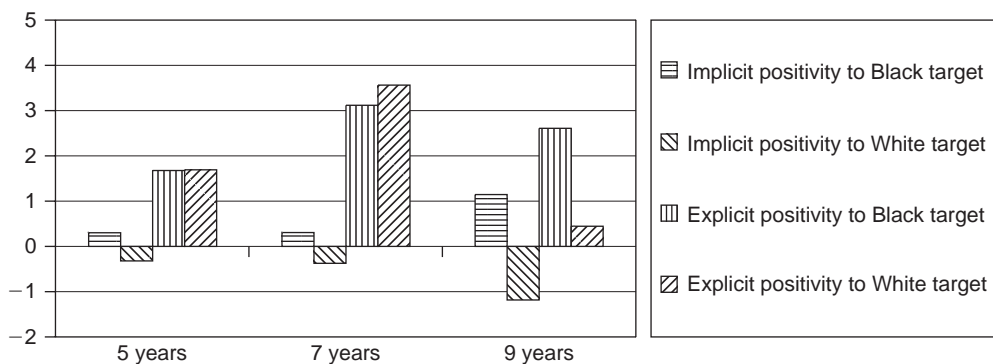
<sup>6</sup>In Britain, the terms *Black* and *White* are commonly used not only in everyday conversations about race but also in government documentation and statistics, as well as in schools for ethnic monitoring purposes. Terminology thus differs from that used in North America. In official usage, the term *Black* is often broken down into *Black-Caribbean*, *Black-African* and *Black-Other*, while the term *White* is often broken down into *White-British*, *White-Irish*, and *White-Other*.



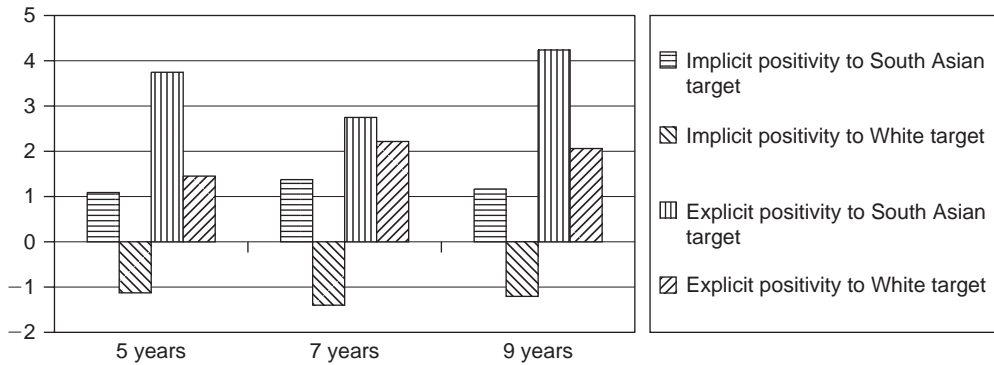
**Figure 5.4** The mean positivity of implicit and explicit attitudes to Black and White targets held by the Black children, broken down by age. Scores on the vertical axis are calculated by subtracting the number of negative adjectives from the number of positive adjectives attributed to each target group by the children on the implicit and explicit tasks.

children’s acquired real-world knowledge regarding the societal evaluation and relative status of their racial group (Dalal, 2002; Spencer, 1988) does not influence their self-esteem. By contrast, the findings obtained from the White children are compatible with the suggestion made by SIT that individuals from high-status groups use in-group favoritism as a basis for self-esteem.

In a second study (Davis, 2006), we extended our inquiry to include British children of South Asian heritage (i.e., of Pakistani, Indian, or Bangladeshi descent). In this study, we used the same procedures to examine attitudes to South Asian and White people among 5-, 7-, and 9-year-old South Asian, White, and Black British children. Once again, explicit attitudes to the targets tended to be more positive than implicit attitudes overall (see Figure 5.6, which shows the profile of the South Asian children). However, different patterns of relationships were revealed in this study from those



**Figure 5.5** The mean positivity of implicit and explicit attitudes to Black and White targets held by the White children, broken down by age. Scores on the vertical axis are calculated by subtracting the number of negative adjectives from the number of positive adjectives attributed to each target group by the children on the implicit and explicit tasks.



**Figure 5.6** The mean positivity of implicit and explicit attitudes to South Asian and White targets held by the South Asian children, broken down by age. Scores on the vertical axis are calculated by subtracting the number of negative adjectives from the number of positive adjectives attributed to each target group by the children on the implicit and explicit tasks.

found in the first study. In the case of the Black children, once again, neither self-esteem nor the strength of identification with the in-group was related to the positivity of the children's attitudes towards South Asian and White targets, on both implicit and explicit measures. However, in contrast to the findings of the first study, in this second study the White children's self-esteem was *not* related to their positivity towards either White or South Asian targets, or to the positive distinctiveness of their attitudes to the in-group over the out-group, on either the implicit or the explicit measures. The most plausible explanation of this finding is that the South Asian out-group is not a potent comparison reference group for achieving self-esteem for White British children, unlike the Black out-group. In addition, it was found that White children's levels of identification with their in-group were unrelated to their attitudes. Hence, neither the Black nor the White children provided any evidence in support of SIT.

However, results for the South Asian children were very different. The South Asian children's self-esteem *was* positively correlated both with the positivity of their attitudes to South Asian people and with the positive distinctiveness of the in-group over the out-group on the explicit measures. These findings therefore mirror those obtained with the White children when they viewed the in-group in relationship to the Black out-group (in the first study). However, these findings contrast both with the findings for White children when they viewed their in-group in relation to the South Asian out-group (in the second study), and with the findings for the Black children when they viewed the in-group in relation to the White out-group (in the first study). A further contrast was that the South Asian children's strength of identification with the in-group was positively correlated with their explicit positivity towards the in-group. Thus, they were the only group of children to exhibit a clear link between their levels of in-group identification and the positivity of their attitudes towards the in-group, precisely as predicted by SIT.

In summary, these findings reveal that White majority group children show varying relationships between their self-esteem and their positivity towards their own in-group and out-groups, depending on the particular out-group that is present. In other words, White children do not treat all racial out-groups as being equivalent to

each other as far as their self-esteem is concerned. Instead, they are sensitive to the particular out-group with which the in-group is being compared, with the Black out-group being more relevant in relation to achieving positive distinctiveness than the South Asian out-group; furthermore, this effect is present already at 5 years of age (recall that the relationship between self-esteem and in-group positive distinctiveness was found even in the 5-year-old White children in the first study). This outcome is consistent with the more negative representations of Black people that are generally prevalent within British society (Alexander, 1996; Dalal, 2002; Gilroy, 1987). The data further suggest that, although South Asian minority children in Britain achieve self-esteem through intergroup comparisons, Black minority children in Britain do not use intergroup comparisons in the same way. Thus, these two studies taken together suggest that there are not only significant differences in the development of majority group versus minority group children, but also in the development of children from different minority backgrounds.

Our findings, which show that the development of racial attitudes in children varies according to the particular ethnic groups to which children belong, accord well with other findings reported by McGlothlin, Killen, and Edmonds (2005) and Margie, Killen, Sinno, and McGlothlin (2005), who found that majority European-American children and minority non-European-American children also exhibit different patterns of racial attitudes. The findings of our studies also accord with those of Dunham, Baron, and Banaji (2006), who report evidence that White American children do not treat all racial out-groups as being equivalent to one another. They found that these children exhibit an implicit preference for White over Black targets at 6 years of age, a preference that does not decline with age, and a similar implicit preference for White over Japanese targets at 6 years of age that, however, *does* decline significantly between 6 and 10 years of age. Thus, American children's racial attitudes are also differentiated according to the particular out-group that is being judged. Notice that these findings are consistent with SIT, which postulates that intergroup attitudes will vary according to perceptions of the relative status of in-groups and out-groups within the prevailing societal structure. Our own findings suggest that White British children are aware of such status differentials by 5 years of age, whereas Dunham et al.'s findings suggest that White American children only become sensitive to these status differentials between 6 and 10 years of age.

#### THE APPLICATION OF SCT TO CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES TO RACIAL AND ETHNIC GROUPS

With regard to SCT, the data from the two British studies that we have just described can also be used to test some of the predictions that are made by this theory (Davis, 2006; Davis, Barrett & Leman, 2007). This is because SCT predicts that the contents of children's in-group stereotypes will vary in conjunction with changes to the comparative context. In other words, children should use different dimensions to describe the in-group depending on the particular out-groups that are present in the prevailing context. Recall that, across the two studies, data were collected from White children in two different contexts, one in which a Black out-group member was present (in the first study), and one in which a South Asian out-group member was present (in the second study). The traits that the White children recalled for the in-group member on the implicit task, and the traits that the White children ascribed to the in-group member on the explicit task, were therefore compared across the two studies.

It was found that the children did indeed vary their in-group stereotype content on both the implicit and explicit tasks across context (e.g., the White children were more likely to recall "well-behaved" as a trait of the White character on the implicit task, and were more likely to ascribe "likes doing things alone" to the White target on the explicit task, in the White-Black condition than in the White-South Asian condition). The fact that shifts were found to occur in the contents of the in-group stereotype are consistent with SCT's argument that stereotype content is actively constructed "on the spot" in an inherently relational manner in order to capture a category's meaning in relationship to the other categories that are currently present.

Second, SCT predicts that not only in-group but also out-group stereotype content will vary depending on the other groups that are present within the prevailing context. Once again, this prediction can be tested using the data from the two studies, as data were collected on Black children's stereotypes of a White target in two different contexts, namely a White-Black context (in the first study) and a White-South Asian context (in the second study). Analysis revealed that the Black children's White out-group stereotype content also varied according to comparative context in the predicted manner (e.g., the Black children were more likely to recall "ignores others" as a trait of the White character on the implicit task, and were more likely to ascribe "thinks he/she is better than others" to the White target on the explicit task, in the White-Black condition than in the White-South Asian condition).

Third, SCT predicts that, in the case of the White children, the salience of the in-group category, and hence the strength of identification with that category, should be the same in both contexts as each context represents a simple binary in-group-out-group comparison. Analysis of the White children's strength of identification across the two studies revealed that there were indeed no effects of context on the White children's levels of identification. There were also no effects of context on the Black children's levels of identification. This latter finding is also consistent with SCT, because both contexts involved making judgments about out-groups, which would have automatically rendered the in-group category salient to these children even though that in-group had not been explicitly instantiated in the White-South Asian context (cf. Oakes et al., 1994, pp. 161–173). Interestingly, however, there was an effect of comparative context on the 9-year-old White children's self-esteem (but not on the 5- and 7-year-olds'), with self-esteem being higher in the White-Black context than in the White-South Asian context, which suggests that, through the course of middle childhood, the Black out-group gradually becomes a more potent reference group than the South Asian out-group for achieving positive self-esteem among White British children. However, in the case of the Black children, there were no effects of context on self-esteem, a finding that, once again, is consistent with the notion that the Black children's self-esteem was not derived through a process of social comparison.

SCT has not yet been widely applied in investigations into children's ethnic and racial attitudes. However, other evidence recently reported by McGlothlin and Killen (2006) is consistent with the implication of SCT that children who grow up in multiethnic or multiracial environments will display different patterns in the development of their ethnic or racial attitudes from children who grow up within monoethnic or monoracial environments. Verkuyten (2002, 2005; Kinket & Verkuyten, 1997, 1999) has also conducted a series of studies in the Netherlands examining the effects of social context on 10- to 13-year-old children's ethnic self-categorizations and attitudes, and his findings are also consistent with the postulates of SCT.

For example, in one study, Kinket and Verkuyten (1997) asked majority Dutch and minority Turkish children in a large number of different schools to give 10 self-descriptions. They found that the spontaneous use of ethnicity in these descriptions was higher amongst the Turkish than the Dutch children. This finding is consistent with SCT, as minority Turkish children living in the Netherlands are more likely to have opportunities for intergroup comparisons (which would render their ethnicity salient to them) than majority group children. However, the use of ethnicity by both Dutch and Turkish children also varied according to the composition of their school class: Dutch children were more likely to mention their ethnicity when the percentage of *minority* children (i.e., outgroup members) in their class was high, whereas Turkish children were more likely to mention their ethnicity when the percentage of *Turkish* children (i.e., ingroup members) in the classroom was high. The findings from the majority group children are consistent with SCT (as salience should increase when the context provides opportunities for intergroup comparisons). The findings from the minority children suggest that factors other than comparative context may be in play for these minority individuals; Kinket and Verkuyten suggest that ethnic salience may be raised in minority children, not only when there are opportunities for intergroup comparisons, but also when the context provides ethnic solidarity and protection from discrimination and negative stereotyping (which is more likely to occur when the number of in-group members is high). Kinket and Verkuyten (1999) also found that the relationship between in-group favoritism (i.e., the magnitude of the positive distinctiveness of the in-group over the out-group) and in-group identification was dependent on the number of Dutch and Turkish children in the class. Strength of identification was only positively related to the degree of in-group favoritism in the Dutch children when these children were in a numerical minority in their school class, and in the Turkish children when they were in a numerical minority. These two findings are both fully consistent with SCT's postulates concerning the role of comparative context in driving social identification.

However, several other findings from Verkuyten's studies do not fit so readily with either SIT or SCT. For example, both groups of children were less likely to show in-group favoritism if they perceived that teachers would react to ethnic harassment in the classroom. They were also less likely to show in-group favoritism if discrimination and ethnic differences were taught as part of the school curriculum, and ethnic identification was higher in classes in which the children themselves talked a lot about the cultures of Dutch and Turkish people. In addition, Verkuyten (2002) found that harassment by peers due to ethnic background was related to less positive out-group attitudes in both groups of children. These various findings are significant because they reveal that ethnic attitudes in children are not driven solely by cognitive-motivational factors. Instead, both exogenous social-environmental factors and endogenous cognitive-motivational factors appear to be implicated in determining children's ethnic identifications and attitudes (cf. the similar conclusions of Aboud, 2005, Branch & Newcombe, 1986, Ocampo, Knight, & Bernal, 1997, and Spencer, 1985).

#### SUMMARY OF THE EMPIRICAL EVALUATION OF SIT AND SCT AGAINST EVIDENCE FROM CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES TO ETHNIC AND RACIAL GROUPS

Both SIT and SCT appear to have some relevance for understanding children's attitudes to racial and ethnic groups. As SIT predicts, racial and ethnic in-group

favoritism is widespread but not universal among children, with in-group favoritism not always being exhibited by minority children who belong to low-status racial or ethnic groups. There is also evidence consistent with SIT that some minority children do not use intergroup comparisons as a source of self-esteem. In addition, some (although not all) children exhibit the relationship between identification, intergroup attitudes, and self-esteem predicted by SIT. The contents of children's stereotypes of racial in-groups and out-groups are sensitive to the particular comparative context in which they are elicited, a finding that is consistent with SCT. The salience of ethnic identification in children is also sometimes related to the prevailing comparative context, as is the relationship between identification and in-group favoritism. Thus, both SIT and SCT appear to have some utility in the case of children's racial and ethnic attitudes. That said, however, there are also other findings that both SIT and SCT have some difficulty accommodating, particularly findings concerning the effects of teachers, the school curriculum and peers on children's identifications and attitudes.

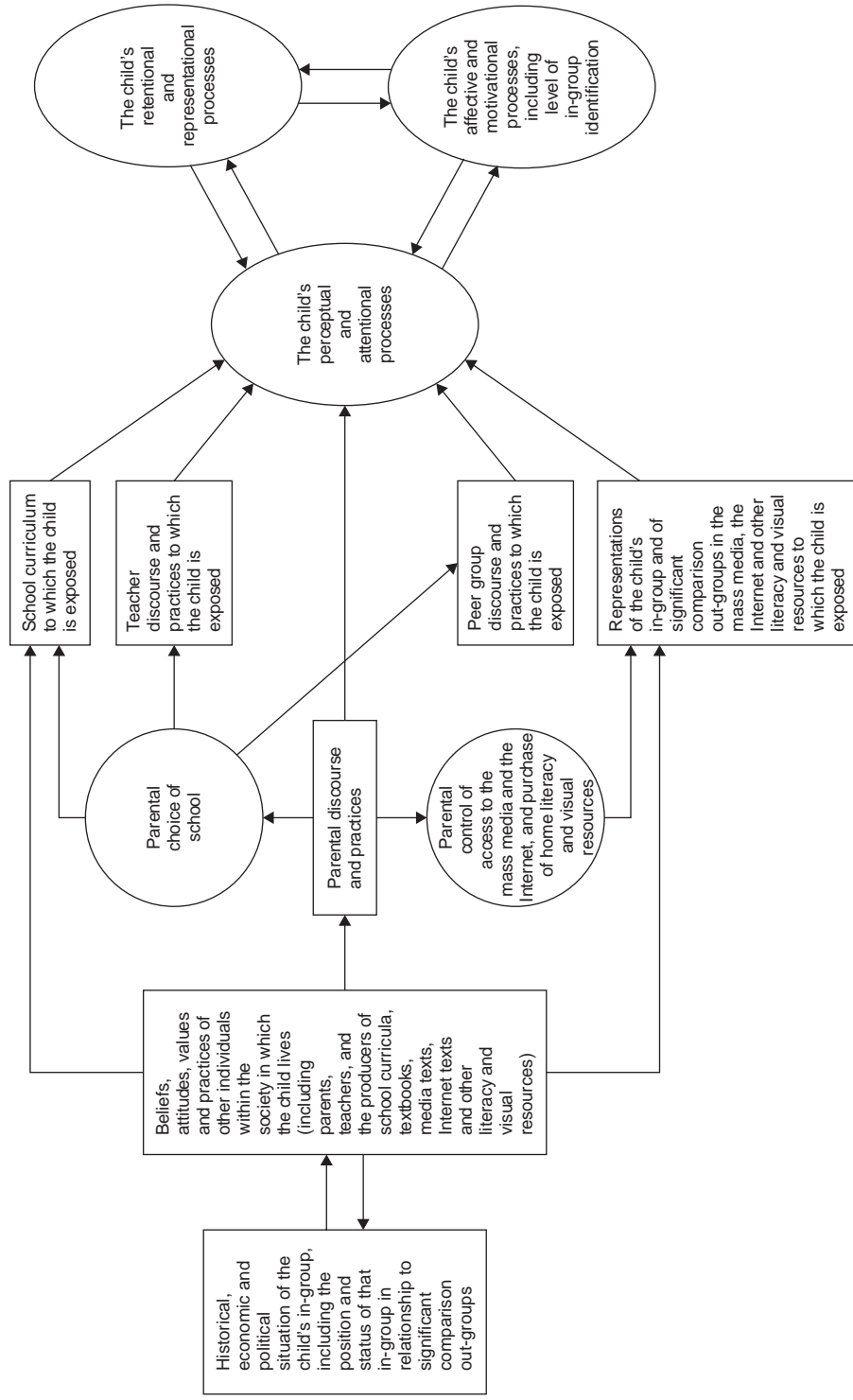
### TOWARDS A MORE COMPREHENSIVE THEORY

SIT and SCT both appear to have some relevance for attempts to understand the development of national, state, racial, and ethnic attitudes in children. The theories suggest that greater attention needs to be paid to several issues that have often been overlooked in empirical studies with children, including: the specifics of the particular societal structure within which children grow up, the relative status of children's in-groups within that structure, children's levels of subjective identification with their in-groups, the relationship that may exist between subjective identification and attitudes, the effects of comparative context on the salience of particular self-categorizations to children, and the effects of comparative context on the contents of the in-group and out-group stereotypes that children hold.

However, while there is good evidence to suggest that the cognitive-motivational processes postulated by SIT and SCT do often operate in relationship to children's national, state, racial, and ethnic attitudes, there is also evidence that these attitudes do not always follow the patterns predicted by these two theories. This outcome suggests that these theories have limitations, as they currently stand, for explaining how and why children's intergroup attitudes exhibit the particular patterns that they do. In light of this, we would argue that the cognitive-motivational processes postulated by SIT and SCT need to be reconceptualized as constituting just one part of the full network of exogenous and endogenous influences that are operative, and that SIT and SCT need to be embedded within a more comprehensive societal-social-cognitive-motivational theory (SSCMT) that takes into account all of the different factors that can impact on the development of children's intergroup attitudes. An outline sketch of such a theory (adapted from Barrett, 2007) is shown in Figure 5.7.

The starting point of this theory is that children's development always takes place within a particular set of historical, political, economic, and societal circumstances—circumstances that determine the relative position and status of the child's in-groups in relationship to significant comparison out-groups. This macrocontext constrains and influences the beliefs, attitudes, values, and practices of the individual members of the society in which the child lives, by providing a framework against which these individuals position themselves ideologically, politically, and





**Figure 5.7** A societal-social-cognitive-motivational theory (SSCMT) of the development of children's social identifications and attitudes (adapted from Barrett, 2007).

socially. These individuals may also try to change the macrocontext through political and social action. It is against this backdrop that the development of the child takes place.

Crucially, parents and teachers—as well as those individuals who determine the contents of school curricula—hold beliefs about the position, characteristics, and status of different social groups, as do individuals who are responsible for producing representational content for mass media, the Internet and other literacy and visual resources that convey information to their audiences, either explicitly or implicitly, about social groups. SSCMT postulates that parents can play a key role in their children's development, not merely through their own discourse and practices (which we know can sometimes influence children: see Branch & Newcombe, 1986; Carlson & Iovini, 1985; Spencer, 1983), but also indirectly through their choice of school for the child, and through their control of the child's access to mass media and the Internet, and their purchase of other literacy and visual resources for the family home. Parents' choice of school will influence the educational curriculum, textbooks, teachers, and peer group to which the child is exposed (all of which can influence the child's development: see Aboud & Doyle, 1996; Aboud & Fenwick, 1999; Barrett, 2007; Byram, Esarte-Sarries, & Taylor, 1991; Kinket & Verkuyten, 1999; McGregor, 1993; Verkuyten, 2002), while parents' control of access to mass media and the Internet, and their purchase of literacy and visual resources for the family home, will influence the range of representational content to which the child is exposed (which we know can also influence children's representations of out-groups: see Barrett, 2007; Bogatz & Ball, 1971; Cole et al., 2003; Dorr, Graves, & Phelps, 1980; Gorn, Goldberg, & Kanungo, 1976; Graves, 1999; Holloway & Valentine, 2000). Notice that parents' choices, decisions, and actions will be dependent, at least in part, on their socioeconomic situation and levels of affluence, and on the range of institutional, technological and other resources to which they have access within their own societies.

SSCMT therefore proposes that all of the following are available as potential sources of information about national, state, racial, and ethnic groups for the child: parental discourse and practices; the school curriculum and school textbooks; teacher discourse and practices; peer group discourse and practices; and the representational content of mass media, the Internet, and other literacy and visual resources to which the child has access. Thus, it is from these various sources that children can potentially acquire information about the pattern of relationships between their in-group and significant comparison out-groups, and about the relative status of their in-group within this broader structure of intergroup relations.

Notice, however, that all of these are only potential sources of information for the child. The information that is actually attended to, processed, and assimilated by the child will depend crucially on a number of intraindividual factors, including the child's perceptual, attentional, and cognitive-representational processes, pre-existing beliefs about the prevailing societal structure, and affective and motivational processes (including his or her level of in-group identification). In other words, children do not passively absorb information from the various exogenous sources. Instead, they actively construct their own representations, beliefs, and attitudes from the information to which they selectively attend in the environment, with this constructive process being influenced by the contrasts between in-groups and out-groups that the social context renders salient to the child, by the child's own pre-existing beliefs, need for a positive sense of self, and by other current needs, motivations, expectations, and goals.

SSCMT therefore postulates that societal, social, cognitive, and motivational factors can *all* play a role in driving children's social identifications and intergroup attitudes. Notice that this theory does not ignore the role that children's developing socio-cognitive abilities might play in driving some of the age-related changes that can be observed in the development of children's intergroup attitudes. Indeed, the converse is the case: This theory explicitly postulates that developmental changes in children's abilities to attend to, process, retain, and represent information about social groups are one of the core drivers of the development of children's attitudes to social groups. However, SSCMT does propose that the particular socio-cognitive factors that have been identified in developmental research to date (e.g., the ability to use multiple classifications, the ability to attend to individual differences within groups, the ability to perceive similarities between different groups, and social perspective-taking: see, for example, Aboud, 1988; Bigler & Liben, 1993; Black-Gutman & Hickson, 1996; Clark, Hocevar, & Dembo, 1980; Doyle & Aboud, 1995; Doyle, Beaudet, & Aboud, 1988; Katz, Sohn, & Zalk, 1975) are not the only factors that influence the development of children's intergroup attitudes. As we have seen earlier in this chapter, there is good evidence that the intergroup attitudes of adults are grounded in a cognitive hierarchy of social and personal identities, with the salience of any particular identity being determined by the principle of meta-contrast, and with stereotype content being actively adjusted according to the particular intergroup comparisons that are available within the prevailing context. The developmental evidence that has been reviewed in this chapter suggests these kinds of cognitive mechanisms also operate in 5- to 9-year-old children in relation to their racial and ethnic identities, but not yet in relation to their national or states identities. This outcome suggests either that children of this age have not yet constructed a full cognitive hierarchy of all their different personal and social identities (as a prerequisite for metacontrast and stereotype flexibility to become fully operational as it is in adults), or that their national and state identities are insufficiently salient at this relatively early point in their development for these kinds of context-sensitive mechanisms to operate, or that children of this age have not yet acquired sufficient representational content for their national and state categories to be able to exhibit active adjustments in stereotype content according to the specificities of the particular comparative context in which these stereotypes are deployed. Further research is required in order to elucidate these issues.

SSCMT also goes well beyond current cognitive-developmental conceptualizations of how children's intergroup attitudes develop in two further ways. First, the theory postulates that children's cognitive processes do not operate independently of their motivational and affective processes. Although SIT has highlighted that self-esteem can sometimes play an important motivational role in children's constructions of representations of in-groups and out-groups, self-esteem is unlikely to be the only motivational factor in operation. Indeed, we know that there are numerous other motivations that influence adults' social identities and their associated judgments and behaviors. These include adults' needs for a sense of belonging, of distinctiveness, of self-efficacy, of continuity, and of purpose and meaning (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Breakwell, 1986, 1992; Brewer, 1993; Brewer, Manzi, & Shaw, 1993; Brewer & Pickett, 1999; Deaux, 1992, 2000; Hogg & Abrams, 1993; Mlicki & Ellemers, 1996; Vignoles, Chrysochoou, & Breakwell, 2000, 2002; Vignoles, Regalia, Manzi, Gollidge & Scabini, 2006). If these various other motivations operate in adulthood, they must first become operational at some point during the course of either childhood or

adolescence. In addition, both SIT and SCT emphasize that subjective identification with a particular social group is a further necessary precondition for the social identity processes underpinning intergroup attitudes to become operational. The implication here is that developmental researchers will need to pay greater attention to both subjective identification and identity motivations in the future in order to obtain a better understanding of the affective dynamics underlying children's social identities and the development of intergroup attitudes.

Second, SSCMT goes beyond current cognitive-developmental conceptualizations of how children's intergroup attitudes develop by explicitly emphasizing the role of exogenous factors (such as the discourse and practices of parents, teachers, and peers, and the representations that are purveyed by mass media). The evidence that has been reviewed in this chapter shows that the underlying structure of children's attitudes often reflects the objectively existing pattern of intergroup relationships within which the child's own in-group is embedded (see, for example, Table 5.1). We need to explain how such effects arise. SSCMT postulates that they occur because children are sensitive to, and sometimes cognitively assimilate, images of and messages about in-groups and out-groups that are available to them in their everyday environments. These images and messages encode information about the relationships that exist between in-groups and out-groups in the prevailing societal structure, about the permeability of the boundaries between groups, about the relative status differentials between groups, and about the legitimacy and stability of these status differentials. Hence, we would argue that it is because children assimilate this kind of information from exogenous sources that their attitudes and judgments often reflect the objectively existing structure of relationships and status differentials between social groups.

SSCMT further postulates that the balance between the different exogenous factors can vary from one societal setting and/or child to another. For example, many children live within highly stratified societies in which the members of disadvantaged minority ethnic groups view the boundaries between ethnic groups as being impermeable. In such a society, some minority parents are likely to hold distinctive attitudes in which in-group pride, irrespective of any intergroup comparison, is the most salient feature. The children of such parents will thus be exposed to particular forms of discourse and practices in the family home that foster in them a strong sense of subjective identification with, and pride in, the cultural heritage of their own group, and these children's strength of identification may then motivate them to seek out further information about the group from media sources, but to actively reject any media images that negatively stereotype their group. Such children may come to hold high levels of self-esteem as a consequence of their high levels of in-group pride and identification, irrespective of their attitudes to other groups. However, other minority parents within the same society may not instill in their children the same levels of in-group pride through their discourse and practices within the family home. These children may then be exposed to exactly the same media images that negatively stereotype their own group, but these children may cognitively assimilate this information about the negative characteristics and low social status of their own group. If these children also believe that the relevant group boundaries are impermeable, they may resort to strategies of either social creativity or social competition in order to protect their self-esteem. By contrast, children who belong to the dominant majority group in that society, and who have little personal contact with minority individuals, may instead derive their attitudes to ethnic minority groups entirely from the media

representations that they encounter, with the negative stereotypes that are constructed by these children on the basis of those representations functioning as a source of self-esteem. Alternatively, children belonging to the dominant majority group may be exposed to multicultural and antiracist perspectives through the school curriculum. Such a curriculum, coupled to the everyday practices of teachers (e.g., reacting strongly against any sign of ethnic harassment or victimization in the classroom), may lead to a reduction in levels of prejudice against, and negative stereotyping of, ethnic minority groups in these children. Finally, if the country in which all of these children live has recently been or is currently in conflict with another country, it is possible that parental discourse, peer discourse, and news media representations all work in conjunction with each other to transmit a particular consensual negative representation of the enemy country to all of these children, irrespective of their ethnic group memberships. In short, different factors and different combinations of factors may be the primary drivers of children's intergroup attitudes, depending on their own minority or majority status, parental attitudes and practices, teacher attitudes and practices, and the particular out-group that is involved. Hence, the relative weightings assigned to the various arrows in Figure 5.7 may vary from one group of children to another, and may even vary depending on the particular out-group, even though all of these children live within the same society.<sup>7</sup>

#### IMPLICATIONS AND CRITICAL FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Because SSCMT emphasizes the role of a multiplicity of different factors in the development of children's national, state, racial, and ethnic group attitudes, while simultaneously emphasizing that the particular factors that actually operate may vary from one society to another, and from one setting to another within a particular society, this theory can explain the variability in children's development that clearly does occur across different countries, and across different ethnic groups within the same country. Notice that SSCMT implies that there may not be any individual methods for reducing prejudice in children that are equally effective irrespective of the specific societal setting in which they live. Instead, this theory suggests that interventions may need to be tailored to the specific set of societal and social circumstances within which the individual child is growing up, and to the particular set of influences that may have dominated in determining that child's current attitudes to the targeted out-groups.

SSCMT also implies that future research will need to pay far more attention to the particular societal structures in which children live, to the relative status of children's own in-groups within those structures, and to children's beliefs about societal structures and the relative status of in-groups and out-groups in these real-world settings. Further, we believe that, over and above the role of cognitive and motivational factors, the role of parents, peers, teachers, the school curriculum, school textbooks, and mass media will need to be examined in a much more comprehensive manner in future studies. Our argument has been that different constellations of these factors are likely to be influential within different developmental contexts, and future research will have to examine the conditions under which particular constellations of factors become effective for particular groups of children. Thus, SSCMT serves to generate a very significant and substantial research agenda for the future.

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<sup>7</sup>For a more detailed account of the postulates and predictions of SSCMT, see Barrett (2007).

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## CHAPTER 6

# Lay Theories and Intergroup Relations

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. . . when the fundamental logical structures that will constitute the basic instruments for her future cognitive development have been fully developed, the subject has at her disposal, in addition to these instruments, a conception of the world (*Weltanschauung*), which determines the future assimilation of any experience.

—PIAGET & GARCIA, 1989, PP. 252

“People’s naive theories “achieve in some measure what science is supposed to achieve: an adequate description of the subject matter which makes prediction possible.”

—HEIDER, 1958, PP. 5

Man [*sic*] looks at his world through transparent patterns or templates which he . . . attempts to fit over the realities of which the world is composed . . . without such patterns the world appears to be such an undifferentiated homogeneity that . . . even a poor fit is more helpful to him than nothing at all.

—KELLY, 1955, PP. 8–9

### INTRODUCTION

“CONCEPTIONS OF the world” or “naïve theories” are often referred to as “lay theories,” since they are used in everyday life. These lay theories may be captured by proverbs such as “Anyone can pull themselves up by their bootstraps,” (U.S. proverb; refers to the Protestant work ethic), and “El perico donde quiera es verde” (Mexican proverb; A parrot is green wherever it goes; refers to the entity theory, suggesting that human attributes are fixed). Decades of research have confirmed Heider’s, Kelly’s, and Piaget/Garcia’s insights that people’s lay theories filter incoming social information and direct cognition, affect, and behavior. For example, lay theories help us



interpret social and academic setbacks, decide whom to ask out on a date, and what career path to choose. Thus, lay theories can have far-reaching implications for understanding how people navigate their social world.

In this chapter, we review evidence of the role of lay theories in intergroup relations among children, adolescents, and adults. Lay theories, in filtering social information and guiding judgment and behavior, have the potential to give rise to and maintain prejudice or tolerance. Therefore, the study of lay theories can provide a fuller understanding of intergroup relations (for reviews, see Hong, Levy, & Chiu, 2001; Levy, Chiu, & Hong, 2006; Yzerbyt, Judd, & Corneille, 2004). Abundant research has indeed shown that a salient lay theory can incite positive and negative judgments regarding a variety of attributes (e.g., race, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, gender, weight; Crandall, 1994; Haslam, Rothschild, & Ernst, 2002; Hong, Chiu, Young, & Tong, 1999; Katz & Hass, 1988; Keller, 2005; Levy, Strossner, & Dweck, 1998; Yzerbyt, Rocher, & Schadron, 1997).

How might lay theories foster prejudice or tolerance toward groups? Some research suggests that when a lay theory is relevant in a given situation, people rely on that theory to support their either socially tolerant or prejudicial attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Dweck, 1999; Dweck, Chiu, & Hong, 1995; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Hong, Levy, & Chiu, 2001; Levy, Plaks, & Dweck, 1999). In support of this, we will review evidence concerning lay theories about the malleability or fixedness of human attributes. Research has also shown that lay theories can be dynamic, that is, changeable over time, and influenced by both age and experience (e.g., Levy, West, & Ramirez, 2005; Levy, West, Ramirez, & Karafantis, 2006). As an example of such a lay theory, the Protestant work ethic will be reviewed in this chapter. We will show that endorsement of such lay theories fosters a wide range of intergroup effects, such as affect, attributions, cognitions, and behavior toward many groups (e.g., African Americans, homeless persons). Moreover, we will demonstrate that the extent of such intergroup effects differs among different groups of theory holders (children from racially diverse backgrounds, adolescents, and adults). Future directions for research on lay theories in the context of intergroup relations will be discussed. We begin by elaborating on the lay theory concept (for a lengthy discussion of the features and properties of lay theories, see Levy, Chiu, & Hong, 2006).

#### DEFINING LAY THEORIES

Lay theories are held by individuals, groups, and institutions. The level of endorsement of a lay theory can vary by the person, group, and culture (e.g., Hong et al.,

1999; see Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Lay theories are taught and can be activated and deactivated by the environment, becoming more prevalent in some contexts than others (see Hong et al., 1999; Levy et al., 1998).

As evident in the words of Heider and Kelly, and as guided by an intuitive scientist metaphor, lay theories are thought to function primarily by providing understanding, meaning, simplification, and prediction of one's world (e.g., see Furnham, 1988; Hong et al., 2001; McGarty, Yzerbyt & Spears, 2002; Wegener & Petty, 1988; Yzerbyt et al., 1997). Lay theories simplify our social world by imposing constraints on the possible interpretations of social events and behaviors (Levy et al., 2001). Thus, when a lay theory is activated, relevant thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that are part of an associative network are also activated (e.g., Hong et al., 2001; Katz & Hass, 1988; Levy et al., 1999).

Besides serving epistemic needs, lay theories serve social (e.g., maintain and build friendships) and psychological needs (e.g., sense of control; self-esteem; for a review, see Levy et al., 2006). Unlike scientific theories, however, lay theories do not need to be tested to be convincing. The perception of a correct social reality is important for lay perceivers (Crandall, 2000; Hong et al., 2001; Wegener & Petty, 1998). As indicated in the words of Kelly, even holding a lay belief that had a poor fit with reality is better than lacking a conceptual framework for one's world. Further, because lay theories are functional for perceivers, people are motivated to maintain them and may be biased toward information compatible with them (e.g., Abelson, 1986; Hong et al., 2001; Levy et al., 2006; Wegener & Petty, 1998).

Despite serving important functions, people are not necessarily aware of their lay theories, nor are they aware of the tremendous impact their lay theories have on their social understanding and behavior (e.g., see Furnham, 1988; Hong et al., 2001; Wegener & Petty, 1998). However, when people are provided with simple, straightforward statements reflecting those lay theories, they are reliably able to indicate their views. Indeed, lay theories tend to be assessed via self-report (see Dweck, 1999; Furnham, 1988). While no lay theory likely provides a "correct" social reality, lay theories are consequential for perceivers and their social targets (see Furnham, 1988; Hong et al., 2001; Wegener & Petty, 1998). Consequences relevant to this chapter are levels of prejudice (negative affect toward a group), stereotyping (associating a set of attributes with a group), and discrimination (biased treatment or intentions toward a group and its members).

#### LAY THEORIES ABOUT MALLEABILITY OR FIXEDNESS OF HUMAN ATTRIBUTES

The proposition that people hold theories about human nature suggesting that groups and individuals either have core, underlying fixed or essential qualities or, in contrast, that these qualities are malleable and vary across time and situations, has a long history and originates from several related lines of research, including work on entativity (e.g., Hamilton & Sherman, 1996, McGarty, Haslam, Hutchinson, & Grace, 1995; see Yzerbyt, Judd, & Corneille, 2004), essentialism (e.g., Haslam, Rothschild, & Ernst, 2000; Yzerbyt et al., 1997), and entity versus incremental theories (e.g., Dweck et al., 1995; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Levy et al., 1998). In this section, we focus on entity and incremental theories, a pair of contrasting lay theories about human attributes.

Beliefs about the malleability (incremental theory) versus fixedness (entity theory) of human attributes are not specific to the intergroup domain. That is, the theories do not directly address the nature or relevance of group differences. In fact, they originated as an attempt to understand a person's own achievement motivation and behaviors in the academic domain (e.g., Dweck, 1999; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Dweck and colleagues' research on lay theories of intelligence showed that students who think of intelligence as fixed (vs. malleable) are quick to label themselves as unintelligent when they face academic failure. Building on these findings, research on intergroup relations has since demonstrated that a belief in fixed traits (*entity theory*) promotes understanding of group members and their behavior in terms of underlying stable personal characteristics, thus leading to stereotyping. In contrast, a belief in the malleability of human qualities (*incremental theory*) should lead people to rely less on trait characterizations and instead help them to understand group members in more context-sensitive terms (e.g., mitigating circumstances) and less stereotypic terms.

#### MENTAL MODEL

Entity and incremental theories have been conceptualized as meaning systems (e.g., Chiu, Dweck, et al., 1997; Dweck & Leggett, 1988) and mental models (e.g., Levy et al., 1999) that, once salient, set in motion distinct, contrasting networks of allied beliefs and, in turn, different patterns of inference, judgment, and behavior with respect to target groups.

In the entity mental model, traits appear fixed and thus have considerable predictive power of future behavior. Therefore, one looks for evidence of the expression of these traits in behaviors, including evidence that confirms societal stereotypes (e.g., Eberhardt, Dasgupta, & Banaszynski, 2003; Plaks, Stroessner, Dweck, & Sherman, 2000). Further, endorsement of the entity theory seems to activate the perception that there is low variability in behaviors and that traits are the primary causes of behavior; thus, dispositional trait attributions for behaviors are warranted, including biological trait attributions (e.g., Hong, 1994; Hong et al., 1999; Levy & Dweck, 1999; Levy et al., 1998; also see Yzerbyt et al., 1997).

Because stereotyping is essentially attributing a fixed set of traits to groups, people holding an entity (relative to incremental) theory express greater belief in stereotypes and, to a greater extent, use them to make judgments about others. Further, the perception that behavior is of low variability and has biological roots (Levy et al., 1998) can facilitate the belief that the behavior of a few group members is indicative of the traits of the entire group. This belief suggests that knowing a person's group membership allows one to predict how that individual will behave (Hong et al., 1999; also see Yzerbyt et al., 1997).

In contrast, when the incremental mental model is salient, one views patterns of behavior as malleable across situations and over time, and traits are better viewed as a descriptive label for behavior at a particular time and place (e.g., Erdley & Dweck, 1993; Plaks et al., 2000; see Levy & Dweck, 1998). Thus, trait judgments are weaker, more flexible, and need to be updated in the face of disconfirming evidence (e.g., Erdley & Dweck, 1993; Plaks et al., 2000). Further, because these trait judgments are amenable to change, they are less relevant to determining the treatment of others (e.g., Erdley & Dweck, 1993; Levy & Dweck, 1999). Because people holding an incremental view do not see traits as stable predictors of behavior, they give ample attention to factors such as context-sensitive psychological variables (needs, goals, emotions) to understand the causes of behavior (e.g., Hong, 1994; Hong et al., 1999; Levy & Dweck, 1999).

The incremental theory seems to not only direct attention to the variability within an individual, but also to a group with respect to the personalities and behavior of its constituent members. Indeed, people holding the incremental (vs. entity) theory perceive greater similarity across groups as opposed to within groups (e.g., Hong et al., 1999; Levy & Dweck, 1999). Thus, endorsement of the incremental (vs. entity) theory, when accessible, readily relates to flexible trait judgments of persons and groups.

#### DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESSES

Research on these lay theories and intergroup relations has been conducted with participants from age 10 to adulthood. Ten-year old children were selected as the youngest age groups because by this age children have developed entity and incremental theories, which impact social judgment and behavior (see e.g., Erdley & Dweck, 1993; Karafantis & Levy, 2004; Levy & Dweck, 1999). Further, by age 10 children are knowledgeable about groups and can perceive similarities across different groups and differences within the same groups (e.g., Aboud, 1988; Bigler & Liben, 1993; Katz, Sohn, & Zalk, 1975).

Following from the mental model conception that entity and incremental theories, once salient, instigate distinct approaches to social judgments, entity and incremental theories should function the same, regardless of the age of the lay theorists in these studies. Thus, no age differences have been hypothesized, and, thus far, no age differences have been found in the pattern of findings.

Below, we highlight the studies that were conducted with children and note any parallel findings with adults. It should be noted that a comparison of children (e.g., Erdley & Dweck, 1993; Levy & Dweck, 1999) versus adults (e.g., Levy et al., 1998) classified as entity or incremental theorists yielded approximately similar results.

In initial work with children and college students (see Levy et al., 1998), entity and incremental theories were examined in the context of newly formed group impressions. Participants were given behavioral information about an unfamiliar (typically fictitious) group and then asked for their impression of the group. A benefit of using a novel group paradigm is that it controls for prior knowledge and experience with the proposed group and its members. Further, the use of a fictitious and novel group was also important given that both children and college students were being examined; thus differences in life experience among the two age groups, which may influence exposure to and knowledge of groups, were better controlled.

In a study by Levy and Dweck (1999), 10- to 12-year-old European American children were provided with a small sample of behaviors performed by hypothetical same-aged students at an unnamed school (each behavior was attributed to a different group member). Behaviors were either positive (e.g., "ran after a person who left a package"), negative (e.g., "pushed to the front of the line at a movie theater"), or neutral (e.g., "bought a magazine from a newsstand"). Participants were exposed to either mostly positive or mostly negative behaviors (e.g., either 12 positive, or 12 negative behaviors, and 6 neutral behaviors). Afterward, participants were asked to rate the group as a whole on relevant and irrelevant attributes. As expected, children endorsing entity (vs. incremental) theories more readily formed extreme trait judgments (e.g., good, mean) of the novel group in both the mostly positive and mostly negative conditions. That is, children endorsing entity theories made significantly less favorable ratings of the "negative" group and significantly more favorable ratings of the "positive" group than did those holding incremental theories (Levy & Dweck, 1999). These findings were also found with college students (Levy et al., 1998).

In line with these trait judgment differences, those holding entity versus incremental theories also appeared to differ in the degree to which they made trait attributions for the behaviors of others. In the aforementioned study with children (Levy & Dweck, 1999), participants were also asked why they thought that the children from a (fictitious) school that was characterized by some negative and some neutral behaviors behaved the way they did. Responses were coded into the three categories: (1) traits (e.g., "they are mean"); (2) psychological processes such as goals, needs, current mood states (e.g., "to get attention"); and (3) external factors such as situational and environmental-learning factors (e.g., "others were acting that way"). As expected, those endorsing an entity theory generated significantly more trait attributions for the group's behavior, while those endorsing the incremental theory made more non-trait attributions.

Stereotyping refers not only to perceptions of the central characteristics of a group on a given attribute, but also to perceptions of group homogeneity on those attributes. When forming impressions about more than one group at a time, people tend to see members of those groups as similar to one another and quite different from members of other groups. In the same vein, because the entity mental model focuses on understanding groups in terms of traits, this model should promote seeing groups members as similar to one another and different from other groups in terms of traits.

To address this, Levy and Dweck (1999) had children learn about students approximately their age from two fictitious schools. At one school, the students performed some positive behaviors (i.e., 6) and a few neutral behaviors (i.e., 3), while at the other school, the students performed some negative behaviors (i.e., 6) and a few neutral behaviors (i.e., 3). Using a procedure established by Bigler (e.g., Bigler, 1995; Bigler, Jones, & Lobliner, 1997), within-school trait variability scores were created by summing the number of positive and negative traits that children assigned to the extreme ends of the scale (e.g., *none or all*). As expected, children holding an entity theory saw the schools as more homogenous than those endorsing the incremental theory. This finding was corroborated by Levy et al. (1998; Study 3) in a novel group study with predominately European American college students, in which those holding an entity theory judged the group to be significantly more internally similar than those holding an incremental theory. Thus, the behaviors of a few group members are seen as reflecting on the group as a whole.

Also in the Levy and Dweck (1999) study with children, between-group differentiation scores were calculated as the proportion of one group seen as possessing a trait minus the proportion of the other group seen as possessing the same trait (see Bigler, 1995; Bigler et al., 1997). As predicted, students holding entity theories saw the novel schools as differing more strongly on the traits (e.g., nice, honest, friendly). Additionally in this study, children were asked to compare the groups on characteristics further removed from the behavioral information provided. Children were asked to decide whether none, some, most, or all the children from the two schools like to do the same kinds of things (i.e., play games, watch movies) and have the same concerns (i.e., worries, wishes). Those holding entity theories reported that the children from the two schools would share "none" to "some" of the same concerns and likes/dislikes, whereas those holding incremental theories, on average, reported that the students would share "some" of these characteristics. This finding indicates that those endorsing the entity theory thought of these novel groups as quite different from each other. This finding was corroborated by Hong, Chiu, Young, and Tong

(1999) who showed that Hong Kong college students with an entity view were more likely than those with an incremental view to exaggerate trait differences between their group and outgroups.

In addition to predicting biased practices toward individual group members, people's theories may guide their treatment of an entire group. In the novel group study reviewed previously (Levy & Dweck, 1999), children were asked to report the extent to which they were willing to socialize with (e.g., go to a party) the students from the school who were characterized by some negative and a few neutral behaviors. Although children indicated that they did not want to socialize much with either group of students from the fictitious school, children holding an entity theory wanted to associate less than children holding an incremental theory. Therefore, it is possible that if children holding an entity theory encounter initial negative experiences with some members of a group, they may be more likely than children holding an incremental theory to avoid members of that group in the future.

It is important to note that people holding entity theories are not simply more extreme in their judgments. When asked to rate the positivity or negativity of diverse behaviors (not attached to people), both children and adults holding either entity or incremental theories do not differ in their ratings (e.g., Chiu, Hong, and Dweck, 1997; Levy & Dweck, 1999; Levy et al., 1998).

In addition to relating to attitudes and behaviors relevant to novel (previously unknown) groups, entity and incremental theories also have been shown to relate to familiar groups. The link between entity and incremental theories and stereotyping of familiar groups was initially demonstrated in correlational studies involving predominately European American college students (Levy et al., 1998; Study 1). Students were asked a series of questions assessing their knowledge of and agreement with societal stereotypes of various social groups (African Americans, European Americans, Jews, and Hispanics). There were no significant differences between participants endorsing either the entity or incremental theory on knowledge of societal stereotypes, presumably because of shared cultural context. However, as predicted, those endorsing the incremental theory, relative to the entity theory, reported believing that the stereotypes were less true of the groups in question. In subsequent studies, differences in stereotyping held even when controlling statistically for relevant individual difference variables (e.g., right-wing authoritarianism, attributional complexity, the need to evaluate, need for cognition, and need for closure; Levy et al., 1998; Study 5).

Subsequent studies have shown that the incremental (relative to entity) theory relates to actual behavior. For example, Karafantis and Levy (Study 2; 2004) found that endorsement of entity and incremental theories related to 10- to 12-year-old children's reported attitudes and behavior toward a disadvantaged outgroup. The context of the longitudinal study was the "Trick or Treat for United Nation Children's Fund (UNICEF)" campaign, which is a popular volunteer activity among U.S. children (for Halloween, children dress up in costumes and go door-to-door to neighbors asking for treats; for this campaign, children additionally ask for donations to UNICEF). Karafantis and Levy (2004) assessed children's theories in addition to volunteer-relevant behaviors and attitudes at three time points: less than a week before Halloween, immediately after Halloween, and 5 months later.

Students more highly endorsing the incremental theory reported relatively more positive attitudes (i.e., liking) toward UNICEF-funded children at pretest. At immediate posttest, students subscribing to more of an incremental theory reported being

more active volunteers (they spent more time carrying the collection can and soliciting donations) and more enjoyment of the experience. At the 5-month posttest, children subscribing to more of an incremental theory had greater intentions to volunteer in the future and reported that they would more highly recommend collecting money for UNICEF to another child their age. There was some evidence of a mutually sustaining cycle between children's theories and their volunteerism. We also tested whether enjoyment of the experience was a mediator of the relation between children's theories and their volunteerism. Indeed, having enjoyed their experience less, children holding an entity (vs. incremental) theory were less willing to volunteer 5 months later.

To help isolate the relation between incremental (vs. entity) theories and volunteerism, Karafantis and Levy (2004) also considered other variables related to youth volunteerism, such as children's gender (girls tend to help others more than boys), general levels of self-esteem (children with higher self-esteem tend to help more), and perceived social pressure to volunteer (children help more when under social pressure to do so). The main dependent variables were related to these variables. However, follow-up analyses showed that the findings for the incremental theory remain significant when statistically controlling for these relevant variables. It is also noteworthy that the incremental theory was not related to perceived social pressure to help at pretest, suggesting that children endorsing the incremental theory did not report any more pressure to collect money than children endorsing an entity theory. This fits well with other findings demonstrating these lay theories do not relate to social desirability or self-presentational concerns (e.g., Dweck et al., 1995; Levy et al., 1998). As noted in the definition section of lay theories, people likely perceive that the theory they use is the correct and acceptable one.

#### CONTEXTUAL PROCESSES

Entity and incremental theories are prevalent in many societies. Research on these theories has been conducted primarily in the United States and Hong Kong, revealing individuals from each culture demonstrated roughly equivalent agreement with both entity and incremental theories (e.g., Chiu et al., 1997, Study 4). Additionally, the above findings were corroborated in a study which examined the endorsement of the entity and incremental theories among U.S. and Mexican college students (Church et al., 2003). Thus, there is some evidence that the prevalence of people holding entity and incremental theories does not differ across some cultures, although more research is needed in other cultures.

As noted earlier, lay theories are thought to be knowledge constructs that can be either chronically accessible or situationally induced. Thus, a social context can make one lay theory more salient than another, or more convincing than another. To demonstrate, brief laboratory inductions have successfully evoked both the incremental and entity theories (Levy et al., 1998; Study 4), and have shown the trigger shifts in levels of these theories as well as subsequent intergroup attitudes. These studies have been conducted mostly with adults (e.g., Chiu et al., 1997; Plaks et al., 2000), although there is an unpublished study conducted with children (Levy, 1998). For example, in a laboratory experiment, predominately European American college students were randomly assigned to receive an article with an induction evoking either the entity or incremental theory and then, ostensibly as part of another study, were asked to evaluate stereotypes of occupational (teachers, politicians, lawyers,

doctors) and ethnic/racial groups (African Americans, Asians, and Latinos). The inductions were designed by Chiu et al. (1997) and consisted of a three-page article designed to resemble a popular psychology magazine that vividly described extensive (fictitious) research providing support for either the entity or incremental theory. Each article described case studies of historical figures in addition to large-scale longitudinal studies. Examples were provided of "subjects" who, for the incremental condition, displayed particular characteristics in their youth (e.g., shyness), which were clearly not evident in adulthood (the identical characteristics remained stable in the entity induction). Participants exposed to the entity induction rated traits relevant to the societal stereotypes of each group (e.g., "intelligent" for doctors) as more descriptive than did incremental-induced participants, suggesting that the two inductions differentially triggered stereotyping levels. Participants were thoroughly debriefed.

Large-scale sociopolitical changes also may influence people's entity and incremental theories. Research on the 1997 political transfer in Hong Kong suggests that this period of transition may have influenced people's lay theories. Specifically, the turnover may have made the entity theory more persuasive than the incremental theory. Hong et al. (1999) found that during the course of the 6-month study, many participants who originally subscribed to an incremental theory shifted to an entity theory, whereas many fewer who began with an entity theory shifted to an incremental theory. Hong et al. (1999) postulated that, as the handover approached, increasing exposure by the mass media to conflicts between Hong Kongers and Chinese Mainlanders, stressing the different characteristics of the Hong Kongers and Chinese, led people to revise their theories. Thus, more residents of Hong Kong might have begun to "see" more stable, distinctive attributes among members of the two groups.

#### SUMMARY

We reviewed a few representative studies across multiple cultures and age groups demonstrating that greater agreement with the entity theory (relative to an incremental theory) consistently relates to greater levels of prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination. Across cultures, an entity (vs. incremental) theory, whether held by adults or children, promotes affective and attributional processes that contribute to and maintain intolerance (see Levy & Dweck, 1998; Levy, Plaks, Chiu, Hong, & Dweck, 2001; Plaks, Levy, Dweck, & Stroessner, 2004). The consistent pattern of findings suggests that these intolerant (vs. tolerant) implications are influenced by entity (vs. incremental) theories, and that the same lay theory can guide children the same way as adults. Further, these lay theories appear to play a causal role, activating these attitudes and behaviors, in addition to being influenced by intergroup experiences and other contextual variables. Although research has not directly tested whether the incremental and entity theories are part of a mutually sustaining cycle with intergroup attitudes and behaviors, previous findings suggest that this may be likely. Levy and colleague's (1998) finding that activating the entity theory led to greater stereotyping, taken together with Hong and colleagues (1999) finding that greater exposure to stereotypes contributed to greater agreement with the entity lay theory, provide indirect evidence for a mutually sustaining cycle. There was also some evidence of a mutually sustaining cycle between children's theories and their volunteerism for disadvantaged groups. Having enjoyed their experience less, children holding an entity (vs. incremental) theory were less willing to volunteer 5 months later.



All in all, this research indicates that endorsement of entity (vs. incremental) theories consistently relate to greater (vs. weaker) stereotyping and prejudice, respectively. Next, we review evidence of a lay theory that has demonstrated a flexible intergroup *meaning*, depending on the perceiver's age and the context.

### PROTESTANT WORK ETHIC

In this section, we review research on the Protestant work ethic (PWE), a central lay theory in the United States that appears to have at least two intergroup meanings. For a long time, PWE has been discussed, namely in the adult social psychological literature, as an ingredient in contemporary racism toward African Americans at the hands of European Americans; African Americans are seen as not conforming to the work ethic and thus deserving disadvantage (e.g., Kinder & Sears, 1981; McConahay & Hough, 1976). It has been emphasized that the PWE can serve as a justifier of social inequality, a handy *post hoc* explanation to rationalize one's own prejudice, and society's differential treatment of less successful or disadvantaged persons (e.g., Crandall, 2000; Levy, Freitas, & Salovey, 2002; Levy et al., 2005; Levy et al., 2006). That is, PWE can be used to support the conclusion that lack of success reflects dispositional factors, such as laziness, which can in turn be used to justify inequalities and differential treatment of social groups (e.g., Crandall, 1994; 2000; Katz & Hass, 1988). Disadvantaged persons, then, are seen as not deserving "handouts," because presumably they could help themselves if they would only put forth some effort—in fact, they deserve disdain for not working hard enough.

Noting that much of this research was conducted with predominately European American adults, Levy et al. (2005; 2006) suggested that this justifier-of-inequality meaning of the PWE might be tailored to the needs of some European American adults in certain situations. After all, the PWE can justify European Americans higher status in U.S. society, which may be a handy explanation for some people and in some situations. Levy et al. (2005; 2006) also noted that as a quintessential lay theory in the United States, the PWE appeared to have another, opposite intergroup meaning. The PWE is often referred to as the "American Dream," with the egalitarian implication that Americans from all social categories are basically equal and can all succeed (e.g., Levy et al., 2005; Levy et al., 2006). Moreover, popular sayings in the United States such as "anyone can pull themselves up by their bootstraps," as well as ever-popular "rags to riches" stories, suggest that hard work is a social equalizer (e.g., Heykoe & Hock, 2003; Liberman & Lavine, 2000). In suggesting a pathway (i.e., effort) to success for each individual, the PWE also has been referred to as an achievement motive (e.g., McClelland, Atkinson, Clark, & Lowell, 1953), which can apply to Americans (as well as other groups) of all ages and backgrounds (e.g., see Levy et al., 2005; McClelland et al., 1953). Indeed, the egalitarian meaning of the PWE, with its emphasis on effort, can give people a sense of control over particular situations and their future, while revealing a positive pathway to success (Levy et al., 2005). Thus, Levy et al. (2005; 2006) theorized that the justifier-of-inequality meaning of the PWE was an associated meaning, which is the outgrowth of cultural or personal experience and personal relevance. In other words, a pervasive lay theory may have more than one meaning as part of the lay theory's associative network, with people accumulating and refining their understandings of lay theories with life experience.

The PWE thus seems to be available for multiple intergroup meanings. Additionally, people in the United States, for example, are highly invested in this culturally

pervasive lay theory, which as noted earlier, represents the American Dream. There is not a pervasive opposite lay theory, such as the case for the entity and incremental theory. Because the PWE, as a quintessential American lay theory, is likely to be difficult to give up, people may instead attempt to accommodate the PWE to serve both tolerant and intolerant needs across situations and over time. Also, lay theories that are justifiers of intolerance in a seemingly egalitarian society, such as the PWE, seem to be good candidates for having a surface meaning, which promotes social tolerance, and an associated meaning that serves as a justifier of intolerance. That is, to justify socially unacceptable and often personally unacceptable levels of prejudice in a society that espouses egalitarian values, a lay theory must appear egalitarian, suggesting that social intolerance is a “fair” response. Indeed, we propose a generic meaning that relates to egalitarianism and an associated meaning that relates to intolerance.

#### SOCIAL-DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

The proposed dynamic relation between a construct and experience has precedence in earlier theorizing and work. For example, Lewin (1951) noted that children hold a narrow view of the implications of their actions but gain a broader view with experience. We have suggested an analogous process whereby children acquire a growing understanding of a lay theory’s implications. In a related vein, much social psychological research indicates that the same construct can be perceived differently by different people or in different contexts (e.g., Bruner, 1957; Ross & Nisbett, 1991; Turner & Oakes, 1997). Notable theorists of intergroup relations have emphasized different subjective constructions of reality from people with different vantage points in the social system (e.g., Hogg & Turner, 1987; McGarty et al., 2002; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987; Turner, Oakes, Haslam, and McGarty, 1994).

This associated meaning theorizing also derives from an integrative social-developmental perspective. Our theorizing (see Levy et al., 2005) draws on developmental theories such as ecological perspectives (e.g., Bronfenbrenner, 1979), social domain theory (e.g., Killen, Lee-Kim, McGlothlin, & Strangor, 2002), social-developmental theories of transitions (e.g., Ruble, 1994) and on social psychological theories, such as social identity theory (e.g., Turner et al., 1979).

Our social-developmental perspective highlights that people interact with and are nested within many potentially different environments, ranging from distal environments (e.g., culture, community) to more proximal ones (e.g., school, family); further, this approach highlights the role that personal characteristics (e.g., age, race, motivation) play in the kind of messages people receive from their environments and how they respond to them (e.g., Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 1986). Our perspective draws on social identity and self-categorization theories from social psychology, which emphasize that people have multiple, nested social identities (e.g., self, ethnic group, national group), and that different social contexts elicit thoughts, goals, and behaviors based on one or more of the identities (e.g., Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner et al., 1987; Turner & Reynolds, 2001). Social identity theory indicates that people are motivated to positively evaluate a salient social identity, and thus, people will react to threats to their social identities and self-esteem in certain contexts with prejudice toward other groups (see Abrams & Hogg, 1988; Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner et al., 1987).

People of different ages and races may differentially receive and respond to messages about whether to use the egalitarian or the justifier-of-inequality meaning of a

lay theory such as PWE. As an example, school environments may highlight a social-equalizer meaning of the PWE to children in messages such as “anyone can succeed through hard work.” Teachers may encourage *all* students to work hard with the expectation of positive outcomes, such that children consider that effort can be something that equalizes people of different social categories. Everyone can put forth effort and succeed, so everyone is basically equal. This is not to suggest that children passively accept such messages, but rather that these messages may appeal to children as useful and relevant.

However, additional meanings of the lay theory may be commonplace in the immediate environment of adults. Adult members of the socially advantaged groups, although endorsing the egalitarian implication of PWE at times, may also be motivated at times to embrace a justifier-of-inequality meaning of PWE, which suggests that disadvantaged groups deserve their disadvantage by not working hard enough. In related work (Levy et al., 2005), we have described particular developmental transition periods (e.g., to college, to the work force), which may make the justifier-of-inequality meaning particularly relevant for some European Americans. Adult members of disadvantaged groups, although aware of the justifier-of-inequality meaning of PWE from their experience in U.S. culture, may tend to receive and respond to the egalitarian meaning because it suggests a positive pathway (i.e., hard work) for them in a hierarchical society, despite their disadvantage.

Psychological needs served by the PWE are pivotal to determining the meaning of the PWE. Indeed, lay theories serve social and psychological needs such as bolstering one’s self-esteem and lending support for one’s values (e.g., see Levy et al., 2006), which would not be necessarily relevant in all situations or to people of all ages and backgrounds. As noted, our hypothesizing suggests that children, and some adults, (namely those from disadvantaged groups in the social system) lack sufficient motivation to use the justifier-of-inequality meaning of PWE, compared to most adults. This suggests that people’s use of one meaning versus the other could reflect a conscious, deliberative process. Also, as discussed in the section on entity and incremental theories, lay theories are knowledge structures activated in particular environments (e.g., see Hong et al., 2001; Levy et al., 2006), and thus we expect that the different meanings of a lay theory can also be activated outside one’s conscious awareness.

In short, once people are knowledgeable about the multiple meanings of a lay theory, their use of one meaning likely depends on the extent to which that meaning is salient or personally relevant.

#### DEVELOPMENTAL, CONTEXTUAL, AND MOTIVATIONAL PROCESSES

Our reasoning about the development of potential associated meanings of lay theories suggests that, through experience, people accumulate and refine their understandings of certain lay theories. Thus, adults are likely to be familiar with both potential meanings of a lay theory, but children (or adults less familiar with the culture or environment) might view the theory primarily through one meaning only. Thus, in our work, we have compared the responses of children to adults in order to help reveal multiple intergroup implications of pervasive lay theories. The youngest age group in our studies was 10-year-old children. This fits with other lay theory work because by this age, children have mastered many of the major cognitive-developmental milestones, including those relevant to understanding groups, and

they are knowledgeable about lay theories. Also, as noted in the previous section, no age differences were found as a function of entity and incremental theories when comparing 10-year-olds to adults. In our work on the PWE, we wondered whether the same lay theory could guide children in a completely different way than it does some adults. Additionally, in our work we have pursued whether the same lay theory could guide one group (racial, ethnic, national) in a completely different way than it does another group. Furthermore, we have examined the impact of contextual features on endorsement of a particular meaning of the PWE.

In our initial work, we examined whether shifts in age (i.e., experience) among European American students (approximately 10-, 15-, and 20-year-olds from roughly similar socioeconomic backgrounds) relate to different patterns of relations between PWE and prejudice. As a first step, we limited our sample to European Americans, given our theorizing that the PWE could serve certain needs of European Americans (such as justify their advantaged societal position) and the large history of theorizing on the relation between the PWE and social intolerance (particularly toward African Americans) among European Americans (e.g., Biernat, Vescio, & Theno, 1996; Katz & Hass, 1988; Kinder & Sears, 1981; McConahay & Hough, 1976; Monteith & Walters, 1998). Given that the intergroup relations literature on the PWE was predominately conducted with adults, we used established measures from the adult literature and modified them slightly to be appropriate for all age groups. We used measures of the PWE (items assessing the belief that hard work leads to success) and egalitarianism (items assessing the belief that people should be treated equally), which were based on items from Katz and Hass's (1988) previous studies with adults. Consistent with past work, we also included a measure of intended behavior toward a disadvantaged group in U.S. society—African Americans (e.g., Katz & Hass, 1988; Kinder & Sears, 1981; McConahay & Hough, 1976). For each age group, there was good internal reliability for all measures.

As expected, results from Levy et al. (2006) studies indeed suggested that PWE has different intergroup implications with age. In Study 1, for the younger samples, PWE was related positively to egalitarianism and negatively to desired social distance from African Americans, suggesting that, at these ages, PWE has a meaning that promotes egalitarianism. For the oldest sample, however, the relations between PWE and these same social tolerance measures were mixed (unrelated to egalitarianism, significantly positively related to desired social distance from African Americans), which is consistent with past findings and with the expectation that European American adults do not solely use PWE in an egalitarian way. The significant interaction between age group and PWE remained significant when statistically controlling for participants' levels of social concerns and self-esteem.

In a second study, this time using an experimental priming of the PWE, Levy et al. (2006; Study 2) replicated the findings from Study 1 demonstrating that PWE relates to egalitarianism among young European Americans. Participants from the same three age groups were randomly asked to read one of two brief messages (written at the reading level of the youngest age groups; each about 800 words, or two pages), that either supported or opposed PWE. Each message was introduced as follows: "Psychologists are scientists who study how people behave. One topic that psychologists study is what happens when people work hard or do not work hard." The main conclusion was: "the important thing to keep in mind is that no matter what kind of study psychologists have done on this topic, they have come to the same conclusion: 'people who work hard do well and have a successful life' (pro-PWE) or 'people who

work hard are not always successful” (anti-PWE). As expected, the pro-PWE (vs. anti-PWE) message triggered greater egalitarianism among younger participants, who appeared to construe PWE in terms of its egalitarian meaning, relative to college students, who are presumably also familiar with PWE’s inequality-justifying associations. All participants were thoroughly debriefed about the study.

Participants within all three age groups temporarily endorsed the pro- or anti-PWE views presented to them, which is not surprising since both views are available in U.S. culture and thus are likely available for these participants. However, as expected, a pro-PWE message had markedly different effects on the reported egalitarianism of people of different ages. Thus, experimentally activating PWE can have markedly different effects on the social beliefs of people of different ages in the United States. We also note that the effects remained significant when taking into account participants’ self-esteem and enjoyment and understanding of the PWE-relevant messages.

Even within cultures such as exists in the United States, in which the justifier-of-inequality meaning of PWE is available, not everyone in the culture may be equally exposed to it or find it equally relevant. European American children’s and early adolescents’ stronger report of the egalitarian meaning of PWE suggests the justifier-of-inequality meaning of PWE is not as prevalent in their immediate environment or as relevant as compared to European American adults. As noted, the justifier-of-inequality meaning of the PWE may also be less likely to be directly highlighted to members of relatively disadvantaged groups in the United States. After all, that meaning of PWE, while justifying advantaged group members’ place in society, by extension justifies the place of disadvantaged group members. It also appears to be tied to advantaged group members’ denial of the persistence of racism and of the need for policies that protect groups that have been historically discriminated against.

Therefore, we predicted that the justifier-of-inequality meaning of PWE should be less strongly endorsed by members of disadvantaged groups relative to more advantaged groups. There should not be differences for the egalitarian meaning as a function of group membership or status, since the egalitarian meaning is generally applicable to all groups in suggesting a positive pathway (work) to success, and in supporting psychological and social needs (e.g., bolstering egalitarian values), as noted earlier. In one study (Levy et al., in preparation), we tested these hypotheses with African and European American college students. We included the relatively direct measures of the intergroup meaning of PWE described earlier. African Americans indeed agreed less with the justifier meaning of PWE compared to European Americans, and there were no significant differences in ratings of the equalizer meaning of PWE. We also included general measures of PWE and egalitarianism that we have used repeatedly in our studies. For African Americans, PWE was positively related to egalitarianism, suggesting that PWE predominately reflects a social tolerant meaning. For European Americans, however, PWE was unrelated to egalitarianism, consistent with past findings and with the expectation that they use PWE both as a social equalizer and as a justifier of inequality.

To test our prediction that African American and European American children would also focus predominately on the egalitarian meaning of PWE, we collected data with children from these groups, ages 11 to 13 (Levy et al., in preparation). Using the measures described previously, we found that PWE and egalitarianism were indeed positively correlated.

In our research we have also examined contextual triggers of the different intergroup meanings of PWE. In two studies, this time with adults only, Levy and colleagues (2006) aimed to demonstrate a situational or contextual trigger of the justifier-of-inequality meaning of PWE. To briefly review our theorizing, we hypothesize that PWE's implication for intolerance develops in part from social and cultural experience (as well as to serve psychological needs). One way in which the justifier-of-inequality meaning may arise is through exposure to others using PWE to justify the status quo (i.e., inequality), as in the argument that disadvantaged groups and group members are to blame for their disadvantage, and that they could pull themselves out of their dire situation by simply putting forth some effort. Repeatedly experiencing PWE used in this way should increase the likelihood that the intolerant meaning will be cued by thinking about how others use PWE to justify their arguments. Thus, having participants consider others' use of PWE in arguments is expected to trigger the associated meaning of PWE.

In two studies (Levy et al., 2006; Studies 3 and 4), college student participants were instructed to engage in a thought exercise. Half of the participants were asked to think and write about instances of others using "people who work hard succeed" in support of their arguments (justification condition) whereas the other half of participants were asked to think and write about what "people who work hard succeed" means (definition condition). As expected, adults who thought about others' use of PWE in arguments endorsed egalitarianism to a less extent than adults who considered the definition of PWE. Also as expected, justification-condition participants mentioned significantly more instances of blaming people for their misfortune (e.g., "it is a shame that we support such things as welfare, which enables people to be lazy and unambitious, to sit around all day long") whereas definition-condition participants were significantly more likely to simply restate the PWE (e.g., "people who work hard by putting in time and effort succeed and those who don't will not succeed. Those who work hard achieve in life and those who do not work hard do not achieve in life").

Further, the impact of these aspects of PWE was assessed on actual intergroup behavior—monetary donations to a homeless shelter. Borrowing from successful prior empathy inductions promoting greater helping (e.g., Batson et al., 1997; Levy et al., 2002), participants read about a local homeless shelter and were given the opportunity to donate money. All participants received a surprise \$2 payment as part of the study to ensure that all participants had money on hand to donate if they wished. As predicted, adults focused on how others use PWE in support of their arguments donated less money than adults focused on the definition of PWE.

Addressing the possibility that merely considering any instances of others using a statement in an argument (justification condition) would impact one's level of egalitarianism, two additional control conditions included the same justification and definition condition instructions regarding the lay theory, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder; sometimes spending too much time together is bad for a couple." As expected, focus on this lay theory did not elicit different intergroup implications across conditions.

We have also considered the role of context more broadly by asking this question: Does the Protestant work ethic develop the justifier-of-inequality meaning in all cultures? Following from the assumption that people accumulate and refine their understandings of certain lay theories through particular social and cultural experiences, PWE should not accumulate the same meanings in all environments and cultures.

Conceiving of culture in broad terms, PWE should not develop the justifier-of-inequality meaning in cultures where people tend to blame others less for their disadvantage. That is, the justifier-of-inequality meaning of the PWE seems to emerge to support “blaming the victim,” or the conclusion that lack of success reflects dispositional factors, such as laziness (e.g., Crandall, 1994; 2000; Katz & Hass, 1988). Prior work suggests that Latin American adults tend to blame others less for their disadvantage or stigma (being overweight, failing at a task) than U.S. adults (e.g., Betancourt & Weiner, 1982; Crandall & Martinez, 1996). We aimed to show that PWE does not obtain the justifier-of-inequality meaning with age (experience) in Colombia, but continues to have an egalitarian meaning. We (Levy et al., in preparation) recruited three age groups (11-, 14-, and 17-year-olds), which was roughly similar to the European American sample used in our original developmental studies (Levy et al., 2006). We focused on the numerical majority group in Colombia, Mestizos, and used a similar procedure to the one used in the U.S. developmental studies. We translated and back-translated the measures into Spanish, and the internal reliability of the measures was comparable to the earlier U.S. sample. As predicted, in Colombia the correlation between PWE and egalitarianism was significantly positive and similar across the age groups, suggesting that, among these age groups, PWE consistently relates to egalitarianism. In contrast, as described earlier, among European Americans the correlation between PWE and egalitarianism went from significantly positive among younger participants (10- and 15-year olds) to non-significant among older participants (20-year-olds).

#### SUMMARY

The PWE appears to have two intergroup implications— one that relates to egalitarianism and the other to social intolerance. Because the PWE has a generic meaning that appears egalitarian, intolerant responses can be framed in such a way as to suggest that they are actually fair and just. However, through repeated exposure to, or use of such intolerant aspects of the theory, the intolerant response may become more associated with the theory for some individuals and in some contexts than others. Consistent with the social-developmental perspective, lay perceivers’ personal characteristics (e.g., age, race, psychological needs) and the situational context surrounding them help determine lay theory use. In the United States, children (both African American and European American) tend to use the social equalizer meaning of PWE, perhaps conceiving of PWE as an extension of egalitarianism, whereas adults tend to use either that meaning or the justifier-of-inequality meaning, depending on which is most salient or personally relevant at that time. However, regardless of age, both U.S. adults and children coming from disadvantaged groups, as well as children of advantaged groups, appear to, on average, focus less on the justifier-of-inequality meaning of PWE than do U.S. adults from advantaged groups. It is possible that some members of disadvantaged U.S. groups (and possibly also members of advantaged groups) reject PWE altogether because of their familiarity with the intolerant meaning. This is an important issue requiring further study. In Colombia, however, children, adolescents, and adults from the majority group agreed with the egalitarian meaning of PWE consistently, unlike the similar cross-section of European American participants, where the relationship between egalitarianism and PWE peaked in childhood and declined until the relationship between the two was non-significant come adulthood. This suggests that development of the justifier-of-inequality meaning is also

culturally sensitive. Thus, there is growing support for the notion that lay theories can have dual intergroup meanings, and there is also initial evidence for our “associated” meanings theorizing, which states that a lay theory may accrue new, associated meanings via experience.

### FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The studies reviewed in this paper examined a variety of groups in terms of age, race, ethnicity, and nationality. Much cross-cultural work shows the generalizability of the tolerant or intolerant aspect (using culturally appropriate measures) of a particular lay theory, especially as reviewed in the section on entity versus incremental theories. Our review brings to attention two main issues relevant to a focus on the role of group membership.

First, our review points to the need for greater focus on different age groups to better understand how, why, and when people endorse a particular lay theory or particular implication of that lay theory. So far, studies suggest that whether studying 10-year-olds, 14-year-olds, 20-year-old college students, or middle-aged community members, the entity theory related to greater social intolerance and the incremental theory, to greater tolerance (e.g., Karafantis & Levy, 2004; Levy & Dweck, 1999; Levy et al., 1998; Levy et al., 2004). In contrast, the Protestant work ethic functioned differently for different age groups. Younger groups (7- to 15-year-olds) seemed to use the meaning of the lay theories associated with egalitarian implications more often than the older groups (college age), who seem to have the flexibility to use either intergroup meaning.

Studying life transitions, which have cognitive and motivational effects (e.g., Higgins & Parsons, 1983; Ruble, 1994), appears to be a fruitful avenue for developmental investigations in this area. An important life phase is applying for competitive schooling or entering the work force, in which students’ future educational and career prospects are increasingly being evaluated and compared. For example, European American students who are motivated to take credit for their own (or their group’s) accomplishments, to blame others (e.g., African Americans) for their disadvantage, and to ensure that members of disadvantaged groups do not get preferential treatment in college or job placement may be particularly likely to take on the intolerant meaning of lay theories, such as the PWE, during such transitional life phases (see Levy et al., 2005).

Second, the work reviewed in this paper points to the need for a greater focus on lay theory endorsement and use by different status groups. Increasingly, researchers of entity and incremental theories (e.g., Hong et al., 1999; 2003; 2004) and the PWE (e.g., Levy et al., in preparation) are addressing this issue; however, it remains an understudied issue.

Studying a wider diversity of lay theorists, we may be able to tease apart the complexities behind factors that influence the degree to which members of different groups endorse and hold particular interpretations of lay theories.

### CONCLUSION

Lay theories are pervasive in our social world and guide important intergroup attitudes and behaviors. Lay theories appear to be powerful social filters because they are socially transmitted and shared, but also because they serve epistemic, social,



and psychological needs. We look forward to future work that will move us toward a fuller understanding of the nature of lay theories, while also contributing to a fuller understanding of the dynamics of intergroup relations.

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## CHAPTER 7

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# Children's Perceptions of Racial and Ethnic Discrimination: Differences Across Children and Contexts

CHRISTIA SPEARS BROWN

### INTRODUCTION

**D**ISCRIMINATION IS a complex phenomenon. Although the definition may be simple—negative behaviors towards someone because of their group membership (Aboud & Amato, 2001; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986; Fishbein, 1996)—perceiving discrimination is rarely so simple. For instance, discrimination can be subtle and ambiguous, or explicit and overt. Discriminatory behaviors can include a wide range of acts, ranging from a long stare in a store to exclusion from a social group to physical assault. In other words, it may be easy to perceive or it may be quite difficult. As a result, actually perceiving discrimination is dependent on several factors, such as situational cues and individual attitudes. For children, who are just learning to attend to multiple perspectives and are in the process of developing attitudes about social groups, the perception of discrimination can be even more complex.

Although studies indicate that many children report having had experiences with some form of discrimination (Simons et al., 2002) and thousands of court cases alleging racial and ethnic discrimination are filed on behalf of children every year in the United States (Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 2000), remarkably little is known about how and when children perceive discrimination. While discrimination and prejudice

are not synonymous—prejudice refers to biased attitudes—they are related. Discrimination is typically the behavior that stems from prejudice. Although considerable research has looked at prejudice and factors that cause people to engage in discriminatory actions (e.g., Allport, 1954; Stephan & Stephan, 2000), research from the perspective of the targets of discrimination is relatively recent. The focus of this chapter, therefore, is to review the extant research on children’s knowledge of, explanations for, and perceptions of racial and ethnic discrimination. The chapter will then outline how perceptions of discrimination differ across situational contexts and individual children, and discuss how school contexts and parental socialization affect such perceptions. Finally, the chapter will discuss some emerging areas of research.

Before a review of the literature, it is helpful to define what is meant by *perceptions* of discrimination. As can be seen in Table 7.1, there are four possible situations relevant for this discussion that can occur. First—and most agree ideally—no discrimination occurs and the child accurately understands the legitimate reason for the outcome (e.g., lower quality of work). Here, race or ethnicity is never directly a factor. In the second possible situation, a child

**Table 7.1**  
Four Possible Situations in Perceptions of Discrimination.

Child’s Perception	Objective <sup>1</sup> Reason for Negative Outcome	
	Not Discrimination	Discrimination
Not Discrimination	1. Child’s outcome is based on legitimate reasons (e.g., quality of work, effort) and child knows the reasons.	2. Discrimination goes undetected by child. Child misattributes the negative outcome, typically making an internal attribution.
Discrimination	3. Child perceives negative outcome to be due to discrimination, when it is actually based on legitimate reasons (e.g., quality of work, effort). Robust research indicates this is the least likely situation.	4. Child accurately attributes negative outcome to discrimination. There are psychological advantages (e.g., not making inaccurate internal attribution, development of racial/ethnic identity) and disadvantages (e.g., loss of perceived control, disengagement).

<sup>1</sup>It is important to note that it is rarely possible to know the objective reality of whether discrimination occurred. Perpetrators are unlikely to state their actions were discriminatory, and may indeed be unaware themselves of the cause of their actions.

is the target of discrimination but fails to detect it. In this situation, for example, the child may misattribute his or her outcome or treatment to low ability when it is actually due to bias. In the third possible situation, the child perceives discrimination when in fact no discrimination occurred. In other words, the child is overly sensitive to discrimination. As will be discussed below, extensive research indicates that this situation rarely happens. In the fourth possible situation, the child is the target of discrimination and accurately perceives the discrimination. Taken together, when an individual encounters a negative outcome or treatment, it most frequently involves (1) an instance of nondiscrimination that is accurately interpreted as nondiscrimination, (2) an instance of discrimination that goes undetected, or (3) an instance of discrimination that is detected.

Each of these possible situations is important. For example, being the target of discrimination has important consequences, particularly in academic domains, regardless of whether the child perceives the discrimination or not. However, because it is nearly impossible to measure *actual* discrimination, most researchers have focused on the *perception* of discrimination. This chapter takes that approach as well—examining how and when children and adolescents are aware of and perceive discrimination. Underlying this approach is the assumption that children and adolescents may, at times, perceive discrimination when it does not occur (situation 3), and at times, fail to perceive discrimination when it does occur (situation 2). Indeed, the same is true for adults. Thus, the goal is not to measure how *accurate* a child is (which is an impossible, and perhaps fruitless, goal), but to examine which factors lead to an attribution to discrimination across children and contexts.

In that vein, extant research has shown that perceptions of discrimination lead to a range of both positive and negative outcomes. For example, attributing negative feedback to discrimination instead of internal causes (such as one's inferior ability) appears to be an important strategy for maintaining motivation and self-esteem, and for effectively coping with the negative outcomes (e.g., Crocker, Voelkl, Testa, & Major, 1991; Steele, 1997; Weiner, 2000). Additional research suggests that perceiving discrimination may help adolescents develop a strong, positive racial and ethnic identity (Pahl & Way, 2006; Phinney & Tarver, 1988), which subsequently helps buffer the individual from life stressors and future discrimination (see below for a more complete discussion of racial/ethnic identity; Ethier & Deaux, 1994; Yip & Fuligni, 2002). There also appear to be costs to perceiving discrimination. Perceptions of discrimination, for example, are associated with more racial mistrust, more problem behaviors, and greater anger and depressive



symptoms (Albertini, 2004; Bowman & Howard, 1985; Brody et al., 2006; DuBois, Burk-Braxton, Swenson, Tevendale, & Hardesty, 2002; Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000; Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003). Research also suggests that perceptions of teacher discrimination could ultimately lead to reduced academic motivation (e.g., Katz, 1999; Ogbu, 1990; Steele, 1997; Wayman, 2002). Considering the myriad effects perceptions of discrimination can have on children, adolescents, and adults, it is important to understand how children first develop their awareness of the phenomenon.

### CHILDREN'S AND ADOLESCENTS' KNOWLEDGE AND PERCEPTIONS OF DISCRIMINATION

The earliest research examining perceptions of discrimination was conducted with adolescents in the 1970s after the court-ordered racial desegregation of schools in the United States. Rosenberg (1979), for example, found that half of the African American children who attended desegregated junior high schools reported that they had experienced teasing or exclusion based on race. Similar research found that many newly integrated African American students perceived both their teachers (Patchen, 1982) and peers (Schofield, 1980) to be discriminatory. African American students who perceived discrimination were shown to have slightly lower grades and more negative attitudes toward European Americans than other African American students (Patchen, 1982).

Contemporary research on discrimination began in the 1990s as research psychologists started to focus on racism from the targets' perspective. One active line of research examines children's *knowledge* of discrimination. Among very young children, exclusion of others based on social group membership appears to be the most recognizable form of discrimination. By preschool, most children say it is unfair to exclude someone from an activity because of his or her race (e.g., Killen & Stangor, 2001). During the elementary school years, children develop a more detailed and nuanced awareness of discrimination. For example, most children (92 percent) are familiar with the meaning of discrimination by the age of 10, with name-calling the most frequently cited example, followed by an unequal sharing of goods and social exclusion (Verkuyten, Kinket, & van der Weilen, 1997). Children avoid classifying negative behavior as discriminatory, however, if they consider either the target to be responsible for the negative behavior, or the perpetrator to have acted unintentionally (Verkuyten et al., 1997).

Recent research also indicates that children are aware of discrimination as an explanation for certain social inequalities. More than half of African American and Latino children (ages 5 to 11) state that discrimination by Whites is the reason only European Americans have historically been president of the United States, and slightly less than half believe that discrimination currently restricts people of color from being president (Hughes, Patterson, Arthur, & Bigler, 2006). Further, half of the African American and Latino children sampled thought that Whites were happy that no African American or Latino person had ever been president (Hughes et al., 2006).

A second line of research examines children's *explanations* for discriminatory behavior. McKown and Weinstein (2003), for example, examined children's developing awareness that discrimination is based on socially-held stereotypes. They found that 30 percent of 7-year-olds, 60 percent of 8-year-olds, and 90 percent of 10-year-olds inferred that an individual's stereotypic beliefs would lead him or her to engage in

discrimination (McKown & Weinstein, 2003). Quintana and Vera (1999) examined 7- and 12-year-old Mexican American and African American children's explanations for ethnic prejudice and discrimination (e.g., why racial/ethnic teasing occurs). They found that children's understanding of prejudice and discrimination becomes more complex with age, with younger children believing that prejudice occurs because of physical or nonsocial reasons (e.g., "They don't like their color") and older children believing that prejudice occurs because of socialization or strained intergroup interactions (e.g., "They were raised that way by their parents").

A third line of research examines children's *perceptions* of discrimination. Recent research indicates that adolescents perceive discrimination to occur relatively frequently (Wong et al., 2003) and within multiple contexts (Fisher et al., 2000; Simons et al., 2002; Szalacha, et al., 2003). Most of the discrimination perceived by children and adolescents occurs (1) between peers, (2) in public settings, or (3) within educational settings and institutions.

Peer discrimination seems to be the most common type of discrimination perceived by children and adolescents (Fisher et al., 2000; Quintana, 1998; Szalacha et al., 2003). For example, research with African American 10- to 12-year-olds found that the majority of children reported having experienced at least one instance of racial discrimination from a peer, with verbal insults and racial slurs reported as the most commonly experienced discriminatory behaviors (Simons et al., 2002). Fisher and colleagues (2000) report similar findings with their sample of African American, Latino, South Asian, East Asian, and European American adolescents. Many children also reported being excluded from activities because of their race, and a small number of children reported being threatened with physical harm (Simons et al., 2002).

Children and adolescents also perceive discrimination in public settings. More than half of African American and Latino adolescents perceived themselves to have been hassled by store clerks and to have received poor service at restaurants because of their race (Fisher et al., 2000). Many children and adolescents also reported being suspected of wrongdoing (Simons et al., 2002) and more than a quarter reported being hassled by the police (Fisher et al., 2000). Children and adolescents also perceive discrimination by teachers in educational settings (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). For example, half of African American and Latino adolescents reported that they had been graded unfairly because of their race, and approximately a quarter felt they had been discouraged from joining advanced level classes and disciplined wrongly by teachers because of their race (Fisher et al., 2000). On average, adolescents perceive discrimination by teachers to occur approximately a couple of times a year (Wong et al., 2003). Although perceptions of peer-based discrimination remain stable across adolescence, perceptions of adult-based discrimination (which can include educational and institutional discrimination) increased with age (Green, Way, & Pahl, 2006; Fisher et al., 2000; Szalacha et al., 2003).

A recently completed study by Brown (2006b) asked 315 children (47 percent Latino, 30 percent European American, 17 percent African American, 6 percent Asian/Asian American) in fourth, sixth, and eighth grades, from predominantly Latino or African American schools, predominantly European American schools, or racially and ethnically heterogeneous schools, if they ever noticed a time when people of different colors, races, or ethnicities were treated differently from one another. Unlike most of the previous studies described above that asked children and adolescents close-ended questions about discrimination, this study qualitatively assessed children's open-ended responses. Approximately half (49 percent) of all children knew of

an example of discrimination without any further prompting. For all of the examples, regardless of the race or ethnicity of the participant, children of color were perceived to be the target of discrimination.

As in previous studies, the most common examples of racial and ethnic discrimination were instances of discrimination from peers (54 percent). Examples often involved peer harassment or teasing because of a child's national origin or language ability. For example, a fourth-grade Latino boy at a predominantly Latino elementary school stated, "Sometimes kids don't let other kids play with them because they say, 'You are not American.'" Examples also referred to discrimination directed toward African American children. A sixth-grade European American child at a racially and ethnically heterogeneous middle school stated, "Ronald tripped over another kid, and the kid called him the 'n' word." The percentage of children who perceived peer-directed discrimination did not significantly differ based on their grade level (52 percent of fourth-graders, 59 percent of sixth-graders, and 44 percent of eighth-graders).

Children also reported examples of societal or institutional discrimination (18 percent). An eighth-grade Mexican American boy at a predominantly Latino middle school stated, "When you go somewhere, like a restaurant. I sat down and waited to be asked. Then a family came in and they attended to their children instantly because they were White." Children, however, did not have to be the target of discrimination to notice it. For example, an eighth-grade European American girl at a racially and ethnically heterogeneous middle school noted, "If a group of Black kids come into a convenience store, the merchant may watch them more closely." The percentage of children who perceived societal or institutional discrimination significantly increased with grade level (0 percent of fourth-graders, 16 percent of sixth-graders, and 35 percent of eighth-graders).

In addition, children reported examples of discrimination in educational contexts (7 percent). For example, a sixth-grade European American girl at a racially and ethnically heterogeneous middle school stated, "I have noticed Black people get picked on a lot by teachers." The percentage of children who perceived education-based discrimination also significantly increased with grade level (0 percent of fourth-graders, 9 percent of sixth-graders, and 9 percent of eighth-graders).

Finally, many children did not give examples of discrimination they witnessed or experienced, but gave examples of discrimination from a historical perspective (21 percent). For example, a fourth-grade Latina girl from a predominantly Latino elementary school stated, "When Black people sit [in] different places. Like MLK days, when Blacks had to sit away from White people." Another fourth-grade Latina girl from the same school noted, "Long ago, only Whites could drink cold water." Historical examples were most prevalent among younger children (48 percent of fourth-graders, 16 percent of sixth-graders, and 12 percent of eighth-graders). These examples seem to be the result of the coverage of the civil rights movement of the 1960s in the current educational curricula of the United States.

Taken together, these lines of research suggest that many children are aware of and perceive racial and ethnic discrimination. This awareness and perception appears to begin in middle childhood and increases through adolescence. However, the more important questions—particularly if one is interested in designing interventions to help children cope with discrimination—are the "who, what, when, and where" questions. In other words, it is especially important to understand which children are more likely to perceive a specific act to be discriminatory and which situations facilitate those perceptions.

## FACTORS THAT AFFECT PERCEPTIONS OF DISCRIMINATION

Based on existing research in the fields of developmental, social, and educational psychology, there appear to be contextual/situational, individual, and socializing factors that affect whether a particular child perceives a specific situation to be discriminatory. The following section describes these three factors in more detail.

### THE SITUATION

As racial and ethnic biases have become less socially acceptable in the United States in the decades after the civil rights movement, most discriminatory actions have become covert and ambiguous (e.g., perpetrators of discrimination are unlikely to explicitly state they prefer one racial or ethnic group to another). Individuals are frequently required to attend to contextual or situational information when making judgments about the likelihood of discrimination in a particular situation (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986; Swim, Cohen, & Hyers, 1998; Swim, Aiken, Hall, & Hunter, 1995). Despite the common myth that members of racial and ethnic minority groups overestimate their experiences with discrimination, robust findings within the social psychological literature indicate that individuals typically perceive discrimination directed at themselves only when it is situationally unambiguous—in other words, when the situational information suggests discrimination is highly likely (see Stangor et al., 2003). This tendency to only perceive discrimination when it is situationally unambiguous is perhaps due to the recognition that accompanies an attribution to discrimination that one has been treated unfairly, and that there may be very little that one can do to prevent such biases from happening in the future (Crosby, 1984; Major & Crocker, 1994; Stanger, et al., 2003). If children and adolescents, like adults, are judicious in their perceptions of discrimination and only perceive discrimination when it is unambiguous, it is important to understand which situations are considered unambiguous.

One way in which discrimination can be unambiguous is if it is considered “prototypical.” Specifically, attending to the race/ethnicity of the target and perpetrator of the potential discrimination appears to affect perceptions of discrimination. For example, adults recognize that European Americans are typically the perpetrators of discrimination and members of racial and ethnic minority groups are typically the targets (Inman & Baron, 1996; Marti, Bobier, & Baron, 2000; Rodin, Price, Bryson, & Sanchez, 1990). Children know about the prototypicality of discrimination by the end of elementary school. By age 10, children understand that discrimination is typically perpetrated by a member of one racial or ethnic group toward a member of a different racial or ethnic group, typically a majority group member discriminating against a minority group member (Verkuyten et al., 1997). Thus, when a child or adolescent experiences or witnesses negative behavior from a European American toward a racial or ethnic minority group member (e.g., African American or Latino), they may be more likely to attribute the negative behavior to discrimination than if the race or ethnicity of the target and perpetrator were reversed.

Simply knowing the race or ethnicity of the target and perpetrator may not always be informative enough for children and adolescents to make an attribution to discrimination. Often, discrimination is inferred because there is a history of similar behavior. Therefore, a second situational factor that makes discrimination less situationally ambiguous is if the child or adolescent has knowledge about the

potential perpetrator. Research with adults found that participants who were told that an evaluator was biased against a particular social group were more likely to make attributions to discrimination than participants who did not know about past biases (Crocker et al., 1991; Feldman, Barrett, & Swim, 1998). Similar findings have emerged in developmental psychology. Children ages 5 to 10 who were read stories about a boy and a girl being treated differently by a teacher, and were told that the teacher had a history of preferring one gender over another, perceived more gender discrimination in the story than children who were told the teacher had a history of fairness (Brown & Bigler, 2004). Thus, when a child or adolescent experiences or witnesses negative behavior from one person toward another, they may be most likely to attribute the negative behavior to discrimination if they know the perpetrator has a history of bias or endorses prejudices about the target's racial or ethnic group.

The third situational factor that makes discrimination less situationally ambiguous is if the child or adolescent has an available comparison person. In other words, individuals often use information about *differential* treatment relative to out-group members and other in-group members to make a judgment about whether discrimination occurred. For example, social psychological research has found that individuals who compare their negative outcome to an out-group member's positive outcome are more likely to make an external attribution for the outcome than individuals who compare their negative outcome to an in-group member's positive outcome (Major, Sciacchitano, & Crocker, 1993). This research suggests that children and adolescents who can make a comparison to an out-group member may be more likely to make an attribution to discrimination than individuals without such a comparison opportunity. For example, attributing the social exclusion of an African American child to discrimination may be most likely if one sees that, although the African American child was excluded, a European American child was included in the activity.

Recent research has empirically tested the role of situational factors in children's perceptions of racial and ethnic discrimination in educational settings (Brown, 2006a). Latino and European American children ( $N = 99$ ; 5–11 years of age) heard scenarios involving two children of different races or ethnicities, one who received a more positive outcome from a teacher than the other (the teacher's race or ethnicity always matched the race or ethnicity of one of the students). Some children were shown a child who the teacher had previously rewarded with a positive outcome and some children were given no information about who the teacher previously chose. Children were then asked about the reasons for the differential outcomes. Results indicated that children were more likely to make an attribution to discrimination when the teacher gave a same-race or ethnicity student a more positive outcome than a different-race or ethnicity student, compared to when the situation was reversed. For example, children were more likely to perceive discrimination if a European American teacher chose a European American child for a science fair than if the same teacher chose a Latino child instead. Furthermore, if the target of possible discrimination was Latino and the teacher was European American, children used the information about the teacher's past choice (e.g., that the teacher also chose a European American child last year) to facilitate their perception of discrimination. In other words, when the discrimination was most prototypical, children used additional situational information about the teacher to inform their judgments. Children's attention to and understanding of situational information, however, was moderated by their individual characteristics, which will next be described.

## THE INDIVIDUAL CHILD

Across situations, some children perceive more discrimination than other children. Several individual characteristics emerge as important factors in children's and adolescents' perceptions of discrimination: their general social-cognitive development, their knowledge of racial and ethnic groups, their racial and ethnic group membership, and their attitudes toward racial and ethnic groups.

First, children's social-cognitive development appears to affect their ability to perceive discrimination. As previously mentioned, children attend to situational cues (such as the race and ethnicity of the target) when making a decision about why someone received a more negative outcome than someone else. This ability to attend to situational cues is moderated, however, by children's social-cognitive abilities (Brown & Bigler, 2005). Social-cognitive abilities that may be important in perceiving discrimination are the ability to use social comparisons, moral reasoning, the understanding of multiple and hierarchical classification, and the understanding of others' cognitions (for a more detailed description see Brown & Bigler, 2005). For example, children who cannot take advantage of social comparison information (a cognitive ability that develops around ages 7 to 9; Ruble, Boggiano, Feldman, & Loebel, 1980) may fail to attend to and appropriately interpret the comparison information that is available (e.g., which child was included in the activity), and thus may perceive either more or less discrimination across situations than older children and adults. In addition, children who do not yet understand that authority figures can act in ways that are unfair (a moral reasoning skill acquired around age 6; Laupa & Turiel, 1986) are unlikely to perceive an adult, such as a teacher, to be the perpetrator of discrimination. And, children who are unable to characterize individuals along more than one dimension simultaneously (e.g., as a science whiz *and* an African American) may not recognize a discouraging remark by a science teacher to be discrimination.

Although not widely researched, there is support for the link between social-cognitive development and children's understanding of discrimination (Aboud & Levy, 2000). For example, research has shown that social perspective-taking is positively correlated with children's explanations of ethnic prejudice, in that children who better understand others' perspectives give slightly more advanced explanations of prejudice than children with less advanced perspective-taking abilities (Quintana, Castañeda-English, & Ybarra, 1999). Further, McKown and Weinstein (2003) note that the development of children's ability to infer others' stereotypes follows the same developmental trajectory as their understanding of theory of mind.

More specific to discrimination, Brown (2006a) found that children's understanding of others' cognitions moderated their perceptions of discrimination. Specifically, children who had very little understanding of others' cognitions seemed to focus on the external attributes of skin color when making attributions, and thus often perceived discrimination when it was a prototypical example. Children who had an advanced understanding of others' cognitions also perceived prototypical discrimination, seemingly recognizing that a teacher's biased opinions about one child's racial or ethnic group affected her treatment of that child. In contrast, children with only a modest understanding others' cognitions seemed to ignore the external attributes of the teacher and student and focus largely on individuals' internal attributes, and subsequently made attributions primarily to inferior ability or effort (a tendency common among children in this developmental period; Damon, 1977; Martin, 1989; McGlothlin, Killen, & Edmonds, 2005; Rholes & Ruble, 1984; Ruble, Newman, Rholes, & Altshuler, 1988). This study (Brown, 2006a) suggests that only children with a well-developed

understanding of others' cognitions are able to attend to *both* the internal and external characteristics of the teacher and student—an ability that is necessary for an adult-like perception of discrimination.

Second, in addition to general social-cognitive development, children's specific knowledge about stereotypes, discrimination, and status differences of racial/ethnic groups may affect their perceptions of discrimination. Research with adults has shown that individuals' knowledge about discrimination, such as their understanding of how often members of their group have been discriminated against in the past, facilitates the perception of discrimination (Essed, 1991). Children's knowledge of racial and ethnic groups develops across the elementary school years. For example, children have knowledge of many racial stereotypes by age 4 or 5 (e.g., Aboud, 1988) and, by age 10, assert that many European Americans endorse common racial stereotypes (e.g., "White people think Black people are not smart;" McKown & Weinstein, 2003, pp. 5). Children of this age are also becoming increasingly aware, at least implicitly, of the implications of stereotypes for the status of members of racial groups. Research has shown, for example, that many African American elementary school-age children rate novel occupations performed by African Americans as lower status (i.e., earn less money, require less education) than the identical jobs performed by European Americans (Bigler, Averhart, & Liben, 2003). Thus, although it has not been empirically tested, it seems likely that children who understand that stereotypes represent shared clusters of beliefs about social groups (rather than single idiosyncratic beliefs), and that stereotypes have important social implications for group members with respect to status, will be more likely to perceive discrimination across situations than children without this understanding.

Third, children and adolescents' own racial and ethnic group membership appears to affect their perceptions of discrimination. For example, research in which children are asked about their past experiences with discrimination has shown that African American and Latino children are more likely to report having experienced discrimination, and are more likely to perceive teacher racial or ethnic bias, than European American children (Romero & Roberts, 1998; Ruck & Wortley, 2002; Wayman, 2002). Furthermore, McKown (2004) found that, when children were asked to talk about racial or ethnic groups, African American and Latino children made more references to discrimination than European American children. These racial and ethnic differences are likely due to the increased salience of race and ethnicity for racial or ethnic minority group members (Akiba, Szalacha, & Garcia Coll, 2004; Turner & Brown, in press), greater parental socialization about discrimination (see Hughes and Johnson, 2001; Sanders Thompson, 1999), and more frequent objective experiences with discrimination relative to racial or ethnic majority group members.

Fourth, children's attitudes about racial and ethnic groups may also affect their perceptions of discrimination. Romero and Roberts (1998) found that European American, African American, Mexican American, and Vietnamese American middle-school children's negative attitudes toward other racial and ethnic groups predicted increased perceptions of racial and ethnic discrimination directed toward their own group. Brown (2006a) found that children who endorsed a pro-European American bias were slightly more likely to perceive a European American child to be the target of discrimination than did children with no bias. These findings, in which biased attitudes predict increased perceptions of discrimination, may be the result of heightened sensitivity to individuals' racial and ethnic group membership. **Previous research has shown, for example, that children with highly biased racial attitudes**



judge racial cues as more salient than other children (Katz, Sohn, & Zalk, 1975). Thus, children with biased racial and ethnic group attitudes may be more attentive to the racial and ethnic group membership of themselves and others, and when deciding about whether discrimination has occurred, may be more likely than children with neutral attitudes to attribute the negative outcome to a racial or ethnic-based reason such as discrimination.

#### THE SOCIALIZING CONTEXT

In addition to situational and individual characteristics, certain socializing factors may affect children and adolescents' perceptions of discrimination. First, an important factor that appears to affect perceptions of discrimination among children is their parents. Sanders Thompson (1999) and Hughes and Johnson (2001) have found, for example, that family discussions about racial matters (such as cultural traditions and overcoming racial bias) are related to increased perceptions of discrimination among children. Parental socialization may also facilitate perceptions of discrimination via its effects on children's knowledge of race and ethnicity, their group attitudes, and their group identity. Quintana and Vera (1999) found that parents can increase children's knowledge about their ethnic group, and that children with enhanced ethnic knowledge have an enhanced understanding of ethnic prejudice. Research has also shown that African American children whose parents discussed racial matters and civil rights with them tended to hold more positive attitudes about African Americans (Branch & Newcombe, 1986; Spencer, 1982) and had a more advanced racial and ethnic identity (Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Marshall, 1995; McHale et al., 2006) than children whose parents elected not to discuss such matters. Holding more positive group attitudes and having a more developed, salient group identity may in turn facilitate children's perceptions of discrimination.

Second, the diversity of the child's school may affect his or her awareness and perception of discrimination. At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, many schools are racially and ethnically homogenous. Resegregation has advanced to the point that schools are now as segregated as in the early 1970s (Harvard University Graduate School of Education, Civil Rights Project, 1999). For example, African American children were more likely to attend predominately African American schools in 2000 compared to any time since the 1960s, and Latino students are even more likely than their African American peers to attend predominately ethnic minority schools (Orfield & Eaton, 1996; Orfield, 2001; Pettigrew, 2004).

Research suggests that these differing school contexts affect children and adolescents' awareness of and experiences with discrimination, although the effects may depend on the child's racial or ethnic group. In terms of awareness of discrimination, school diversity seems to be most important for European American children. For example, in our predominantly urban sample, African American and Latino children were equally aware of discrimination regardless of school context (Brown, 2006b). This may be due to parental socialization about discrimination or personal experiences with discrimination that occur outside of school. However, for European American children, who are unlikely to have parents who discuss discrimination with them and are less likely to experience discrimination than ethnic minority children, school diversity appears to increase their awareness of discrimination. Specifically, although only 36 percent of fourth- through eighth-grade children at predominantly European American schools could give an example of discrimination, 89 percent of



European American children at racially and ethnically heterogeneous schools could (Brown, 2006b). Although not explicitly tested, this difference may be due to the greater emphasis of multicultural and civil rights curricula, as well as greater exposure to discrimination, at the heterogeneous schools (see Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002).

In contrast, in terms of experiences with discrimination, school diversity is most important for ethnic minority children. For example, ethnic minority children who are in the racial or ethnic minority at their school are more frequently the target of peer victimization and more likely to report feeling unsafe than ethnic minority children who attend racially and ethnically heterogeneous schools (Graham & Juvonen, 2002; Juvonen, Nishina, & Graham, 2006; Kistner, Metzler, Gatlin, & Risi, 1993). Verkuyten and Thijs (2002) report similar findings in the Netherlands—as classes become more heterogeneous, ethnic minority children report fewer instances of racial victimization. It is argued that heterogeneous, diverse schools have a more equal balance of power across racial and ethnic groups than schools in which there is a predominant racial or ethnic group, and this greater equality leads to fewer experiences with discrimination (Graham & Juvonen, 2002; Juvonen, Nishina, & Graham, 2006).

## SUMMARY

Experiences with discrimination are a social reality for children and adolescents. That is, at some time or another, nearly all children are likely to feel that they have been treated unfairly because of their racial or ethnic group membership. Of course, this perception is likely to be more common in some situations than others, and among some children and adolescents than others. Specifically, unambiguous discrimination is more likely to be perceived than ambiguous discrimination. The ambiguity of discrimination is often affected by situational cues, such as the prototypicality of the discrimination or the amount of comparison information present. These situational cues are especially important for children with advanced social-cognitive abilities who are able to attend to and comprehend all of the available information. Furthermore, across situations, children and adolescents who are members of racial and ethnic minority groups, who have a greater knowledge of stereotyping and discrimination, who have racial or ethnic group preferences, and who have parents who discuss discrimination with them are likely to perceive more discrimination than others.

Although the experience of discrimination *per se*, as well as the perception of discrimination, is likely to have important consequences for children and adolescents, there is still much to learn about how and when children and adolescents perceive discrimination. This chapter summarized most of the extant literature on the topic. It is imperative, however, for researchers to continue to examine these important issues. The final section highlights areas of inquiry that are currently receiving burgeoning attention with the hope that it will spur additional research.

## EMERGING AREAS OF RESEARCH

### THE ROLE OF RACIAL/ETHNIC IDENTITY

Children's and adolescent's racial and ethnic identity, or the sense of belonging one has to a particular racial or ethnic group and the degree to which one's "thinking, perceptions, feelings, and behavior" are shaped by membership in that group (Rotheram & Phinney, 1987, pp. 13), appears to be an extremely important, albeit

complex, factor in their perceptions of discrimination. Ethnic identity appears to play three roles: it facilitates perceptions of discrimination, it buffers individuals from the negative effects of perceiving discrimination, and it is affected by the perception of discrimination.

First, research with adults indicates that stigmatized group members with strong, salient group identities are more likely to perceive discrimination, especially within ambiguous situations, than their fellow group members who are less strongly identified with their ethnic group (e.g., Operario & Fiske, 2001; Wong et al., 2003). The more salient one's race and ethnicity, the more accessible it is as an explanation for differential treatment. Second, ethnic identity seems to serve as a buffer against the negative effects of discrimination on well-being, academic self-concepts, and achievement (Wong et al., 2003), and as a buffer against general daily stressors (Ethier & Deaux, 1994; Yip & Fuligni, 2002). Finally, research has shown that racial and ethnic identity are affected by the perception of discrimination. For example, African American adolescents who believed that their racial group was evaluated negatively had lower levels of identification with their racial group than adolescents who did not feel their group was evaluated negatively (Arroyo & Zigler, 1995). However, the relationship between discrimination and racial and ethnic identity is likely moderated by the pre-existing centrality or strength of an individual's identity. For example, Deaux and Ethier (1998) found that only Latino college students with a weak ethnic identity decreased the importance of their ethnic identity after perceptions of ethnic threat. Students who strongly identified with their ethnic group actually enhanced their ethnic identity after perceptions of threat. McCoy and Major (2003) drew similar conclusions from an experimental study.

For children and adolescents, who are in the process of identity development, the role of racial and ethnic identity is even more complex than in adults. Research indicates that very few children younger than age 10 have salient racial and ethnic identities (Turner & Brown, in press). Indeed, racial and ethnic identity has been shown to develop around age 13 (Phinney & Tarver, 1988). Because of this developmental timeline, it has been argued that children's racial and ethnic identity may not predict their perceptions of discrimination until mid- to late-adolescence (Verkuyten, 2002). However, Phinney and Tarver (1988) found that several participants mentioned discrimination as the experience that focused their attention on ethnicity for the first time and stimulated the development of their racial and ethnic identity (cf., an "encounter experience;" Cross, Parham, & Helms, 1991). Recent longitudinal research (with adolescents from age 15 to 18) supports this finding (Pahl & Way, 2006). Specifically, they find that perceptions of peer-based discrimination lead to increases in ethnic identity exploration over time, particularly among African American adolescents. They also find that there are reciprocating effects, in that exploring one's ethnic identity increases the likelihood that one will perceive discrimination. Interestingly, peer-based discrimination appears to facilitate the development of ethnic identity more than adult-based discrimination (Pahl & Way, 2006). This may reflect the importance of peers relative to adults to adolescents' sense of self.

Although this recent research sheds important light on the relationship between ethnic identity development and perceived discrimination, it is unclear whether it is necessary to have (at least) an emerging racial or ethnic identity before one can perceive discrimination. Studies with children in middle childhood will help elucidate this issue. It is also unclear from existing research if perceiving discrimination is associated with more negative consequences in middle childhood—when children

are able to perceive discrimination, but may not have a well-developed, buffering racial and ethnic identity—than in later adolescence. Hopefully, future studies will examine this multifaceted role of racial and ethnic identity in children's and adolescents' perceptions of discrimination.

#### THE ROLE OF FAMILY AND PEER SUPPORT

As noted earlier, there are significant psychological costs associated with perceptions of discrimination. There are also costs associated with failing to perceive discrimination when it does occur; most notably, children and adolescents may inaccurately attribute negative outcomes to internal causes such as poor academic ability. Thus, it is important for children and adolescents to be able to make an attribution to discrimination when it is warranted. One factor that may help alleviate the negative feelings associated with perceiving discrimination is the availability of social support when potential discrimination occurs. Research examining the effects of social support indicates that individuals who have strong family support systems actively attend to (rather than deny) negative events (e.g., Holohan & Moos, 1987). It seems reasonable, therefore, to predict that having a support system may also facilitate attending to, detecting, and subsequently coping with, discrimination.

For children and adolescents, support for making attributions to discrimination may come from a variety of sources, including parents, teachers, and peers. For adolescents, peers may be a particularly important source of social support (e.g., Furman & Buhrmester, 1992). Indeed, recent research indicates that the negative effects of perceived discrimination on depression and conduct problems are alleviated when the adolescent has prosocial friends (Brody et al., 2006). The same study also suggests that nurturant and involved parents serve as an additional buffer against the negative effects of discrimination. Although Brody et al. (2006) did not examine support specifically related to discrimination, the findings support the assertion that a caring social support system helps adolescents more effectively cope with discrimination. Future research should expand on these studies to examine the specific mechanisms by which family and peer support help buffer against the negative effects of discrimination. Research should also examine whether family and peer support facilitates the perception of discrimination.

#### THE ROLE OF INTERVENTION

Finally, future research should examine appropriate discrimination interventions. Intervention programs can take two approaches: (1) reduce the amount of discrimination encountered by children and (2) help children recognize and cope with the discrimination they do encounter.

Reducing the amount of discrimination children encounter is a daunting task, especially if one considers the multiple domains in which discrimination can occur (e.g., educational settings, institutions and public settings, peers). Intervention programs, particularly school-based programs, are most likely to be successful in reducing peer-directed discrimination. Considerable work has attempted to design and assess school-based interventions to reduce prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory behavior (i.e., aimed at the potential perpetrators of discrimination). The types of prejudice-reduction interventions are varied and can be moderately successful, depending on the type of intervention, age of child, and school context (for complete

reviews and analyses of intervention programs, see Aboud & Levy, 2000; Bigler, 1999; McKown, 2005; Pfeifer, Brown, & Juvonen, 2007; Schofield, 1995).

Interventions may be more effective, particularly in the short term, by taking the second approach—helping children and adolescents recognize and cope with discrimination. This approach is important because it can help children and adolescents obtain the benefits of recognizing discrimination (e.g., by not making an inaccurate internal attribution), while minimizing the costs associated with perceiving discrimination (e.g., anxiety and depressive symptoms). As Beverly Tatum noted, “we are better able to resist the negative impact of oppressive messages when we see them coming than when they are invisible to us” (1997, pp. 47).

Although no known published research has examined school-based interventions designed to teach children and adolescents to recognize and cope with discrimination, research within the parental racial socialization literature (e.g., Boykin & Toms, 1985; Marshall, 1995) suggests that giving children information about discrimination, as well as information about their racial and ethnic group, can be a positive intervention strategy. Specifically, findings indicate that children whose parents prepare them for discrimination, without overemphasizing it, have higher grades, greater self-efficacy, and less depression than children whose parents do not discuss discrimination (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Stevenson, Reed, Bodison, & Bishop, 1997). In addition to discussions about discrimination, it may also be effective to foster children's and adolescents' racial and ethnic identity. Research indicates that adolescents whose parents stress ethnic and racial pride and heritage (1) feel increased efficacy to withstand discrimination (Overby & Eccles, 2001), and (2) have stronger ethnic identities, which in turn helps buffer the negative effects of discrimination (Quintana, Castañeda-English, & Ybarra, 1999), relative to adolescents whose parents do not stress ethnic and racial pride.

Intervention programs should also help children and adolescents effectively cope with discrimination. Research has examined which coping strategies adolescents most frequently use. For example, Phinney and Chavira (1995) report that a majority (65 percent) of adolescents, especially those with weaker racial and ethnic identities, at times ignore the discrimination they encounter. Proactive coping (such as discussing the problem with the perpetrator, reaffirming their own worth, or trying to disprove the negative stereotype) is more prevalent in adolescents with high self-esteem than adolescents with low self-esteem. Unfortunately, no research has examined the effectiveness of each coping style in adolescence—nor has any research examined the coping strategies used by younger children. As most adolescents report at times ignoring the discrimination, it is particularly important to assess the effectiveness of this strategy. The adult coping literature yields mixed findings, based on how the coping strategy of “ignoring” is operationalized. For example, research suggests that denying the stressful event is associated with psychological distress (Holohan, Moos, & Shaefer, 1996), whereas trying to limit perseveration about the negative event can be beneficial (for a more complete discussion, see Miller & Kaiser, 2001).

Future research should examine which coping strategies in response to discrimination are most effective for children and adolescents, with attention paid to the type and situational context of discrimination and the developmentally unique social and cognitive needs of the children and adolescents involved. For example, it may be effective to teach adolescents that there are instances, such as when they are excluded from a social activity, in which they should recognize and accept that the discrimination occurred, but not perseverate on the discrimination. It may also

be effective to teach adolescents that there are instances, such as when a teacher grades them unfairly, in which they should use a proactive coping response. These differential responses based on context may be too complex for younger children, and future research should examine whether more simplified responses can be effective. Further, research should explore whether these interventions can be implemented effectively in schools, thus reaching all children who may be a potential target of discrimination.

In an ideal world, these types of interventions would be unnecessary because children and adolescents would not experience racial or ethnic discrimination. This ideal world, however, appears to be far from the real world. Children and adolescents understand, are aware of, and perceive discrimination in their daily lives. Therefore, until discrimination is eliminated, psychologists and educators can best serve children and adolescents by helping them effectively navigate through it.

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## CHAPTER 8

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# Theory, Research, and Models

WILLIAM E. CROSS and T. BINTA CROSS

### INTRODUCTION

**I**N THIS chapter we offer a comprehensive model of racial and ethnic identity development for use by educators, researchers, and therapists who study and work with people from a variety of racial-ethnic backgrounds (African Americans, Asian Americans, Latin Americans, Native Americans, etc.). Ethnic identity is a form of social identity—a key component of the self-concept—and we begin this chapter by situating discussions of ethnic identity within the larger context of self-concept structure. Recent research pointing to the way racial, ethnic, and cultural identity development overlap is highlighted. We review the links between Jean Phinney's Ethnic Identity Development Model (1989, 1993) and writings by Erik Erikson and James Marcia. After isolating key limitations to the Erikson-Marcia-Phinney perspective, we conclude by presenting a new model that tracks racial-ethnic identity development across the life span.

### COMPONENTS OF THE SELF-CONCEPT AND ETHNIC, RACIAL & CULTURAL IDENTITY

The discourse on ethnic, racial, and cultural identity is premised on the *structural* analysis of the self as divisible into two components: personal identity and group identity, or PI and GI respectively (Cross, 1991; Porter & Washington 1979; Spencer, 1982). PI theory and research focuses on personality traits, configurations, and psychodynamic drives—both conscious and unconscious—that explicate a person's general personality (Cross & Cross, in press). Developmentally, PI is an outgrowth of the *individuation-separation* process:

For the newly born, sensations and experiences have no borders. The infant is unable to determine where the psychological and physical contours of the self begin and end and when sensations signal the presence of another human being or nearby object. . . . The process infants go through in order to comprehend that their physicality and psychology are distinct from others is called separation-individuation [Mahler, Pine, & Bergman, 1975]. Not to be confused with notions of individualism, individuation maps movement from a sense of self that is diaphanous and without borders to one where the integrity of people and outline of inanimate objects becomes comprehensible to the infant (Cross & Cross, in press, pp.5).

Adventurous, artistic, curious, good-natured, intuitive, preserving, self-esteem, anxious, and self-reliant, are exemplars of PI traits, and what begins in infancy as either inherited or acquired predispositions over time and development take on the characteristics of stable traits. Given the plethora of traits that have been theorized and researched, PI is better understood as a matrix and not a single entity such as level of self-esteem.

PI and GI evolve sequentially, and more importantly PI development is a *prerequisite* for GI development. Before an infant-child can develop object relationships centered on a group or collective, she or he must first achieve a certain degree of separation-individuation, for it is only from the perspective that a child is one human being among others that the child can submit to cognitions and feelings propelling attachment to a collective. Once a certain level of individuation anchors experience the child's capacity for new object relations expands exponentially. By the time a person reaches adolescence, it is possible to draw a detailed and dynamic picture of his or her personality, using knowledge about the person's PI matrix (Cross & Cross, in press). However, if the ultimate objective is a complete picture of the person's self-concept, what remains are the colors, contours, lines, and shadings of the second component of the self-concept—the group identity component (Cross, 1991; Cross & Cross, in press; Spencer, 1982).

The GI component of the self is an out growth of attachment experiences originating in infancy and childhood. In its initial iteration, *attachment theory* linked the quality of the relationship characterizing the mother-child (or key guardian) with dyadic relationships (friendships, intimates) unfolding thereafter (from childhood through adulthood). However, new findings now extend the reach of the theory to an analysis of intra- and intergroup relationships. "People often feel attached to groups; they seek proximity with other group members in times of need; and the group as a whole can be a source of support, comfort, and relief (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2006, pp. 266)." Cross and Cross state that "attachment makes possible the experience of collective esteem and collective or group identity (GI), the second key component of the self (Cross & Cross, in press; pp. 11)."

Although sometimes overlooked, the matrix metaphor is as applicable to GI as PI. By adolescence, a person may reflect a range of social categories (for example, Matthew is male, gay, Palestinian-American, left-handed, short-in-stature, a musician, and anti-racist, etc.). Research and theorizing on racial-ethnic-cultural identity unintentionally "silences" the importance of other social identities revealed during excavation of a person's GI matrix. In recent times terms such as intersectionality, hybridity, multiplicity, and cosmopolitan have been injected into the discourse on

racial-ethnic identity to underscore that racial or ethnic status can never fully capture the identity pyramid each research participant brings to the research enterprise.

We have highlighted PI and GI in order to situate the study of racial-ethnic identity development within the larger discourse on self-concept development. As exemplars of social identity or reference group orientation, concepts of ethnic and racial identity are embedded in the GI component of the self-concept. And when GI is understood as a matrix, we are actually talking about only *one cell* in the matrix. The power of racism, ethnocentrism, and stigmatization is revealed by the fact that people with demonstrably complex GI profiles find themselves “constrained” by the salience of race and ethnicity in everyday life. When race and class intersect, as in the experiences of the underclass, the social constraints to identity development take on caste-like characteristics. On the other hand, others transcend the imposition of stigma. They immerse themselves in the culture of “the folk” and receive the gifts of inspiration and focus that fuel their production of novels, poems, choreography, sculpture, paintings, documentaries, and plays pregnant with cultural specificity and humanism.

#### RACIAL, ETHNIC, AND CULTURAL IDENTITY: AN ARTIFICIAL DIVIDE

Throughout this paper we use the acronym REC to suggest the discourses on racial, ethnic, and cultural identity overlap at the level of the *lived experience* to the point that there is little reason to associate each construct with a distinct identity constellation. By the lived experience we mean an identity discourse that takes as its starting point the perspective of the target and is grounded in W. E. B. Du Bois’s (1903) concept of double consciousness. Du Bois observed that in the lived experience identity factors related to one’s objectification as a racial object are fused with one’s equally powerful sense of self as a cultural being (Rice, 2004). Thus, although a racist may see the focus of loathing as a one-dimensional racial object, the target does not cease to be human and her or his reaction is likely to be two-dimensional (double consciousness), if not three (the simultaneous feeling that one is a target-object, a human being, and a cultural being). Du Bois presupposes the target is operating with an integrated identity that can switch back and forth between two or more frames of reference.

There is strong empirical evidence that youth from socially marginal and stigmatized racial, ethnic, and cultural groups are raised by parents and guardians to achieve an integrated identity built around two or more structural components (Boykin & Toms, 1985; Cross, 1990; Hughes, 2003; Bernal, Knight, Garza, Ocampo, & Cota, 1990; Jones, 2003; Quintana & Vera, 1999; Stevenson, 1994; Ward, 2000). Minority parents (1) prepare their progeny for experiences with racism, oppression, and discrimination, and (2) teach and promote the development of racial-ethnic-cultural pride (Hughes, 2003; Stevenson, 1994; Ward, 2000). Another line of research has isolated an additional component called code-switching wherein the child is socialized to be successful in school and to function without social angst in mainstream academic and social circumstances (Boykin, 1986; Cross, 1991; Oyserman, Kimmelmeier, Fryberg, Brosh, & Hart-Johnson, 2003). In a daily diary study, involving college students, that provided a glimpse of a fully evolved minority identity, most minority participants evidenced identity competencies designed to transact race and culture in five different but inter-related ways (Strauss & Cross, 2005): (1) *buffering*—the transaction of encounters with racism and discrimination; (2) *code-switching*—the ability to move in and out of mainstream situations, or stated in another way, move back and forth from one’s primary

racial-ethnic culture; (3) *bridging*—the desire and competencies related to establishing and sustaining close friendships across racial and cultural divides; (4) *bonding*—activities, experiences, and affiliations within one's group and culture that nourish attachment to the group; and (5) *individuality*—the transaction of both PI and related interests the person cherishes beyond the purview of race and minority culture.

It appears the various components *interact*, further arguing against a discourse that seeks to isolate each structure and this interactivity is the product of socialization. Minority parents stimulate the acquisition of cultural knowledge by their children (Quintana & Vera, 1999). As importantly, children's culture knowledge is directly related to their awareness of the existence of racism, prejudice, and discrimination (Quintana & Vera, 1999). This suggests the inculcation and development of identity schemas that reticulate multiple identity domains (Quintana, Castaneda-English, & Ybarra, 1999; Strauss & Cross, 2005).

Findings from research show the most important survey instrument used to operationalize ethnic-cultural identity (MEIM) is highly correlated with both racial ( $r = .60$ : Hall & Carter, 2006) and cultural ( $r = .58$ : Cokley, 2005) measures of identity. In their study of stereotype threat and identity, Davis, Aronson, and Salinas (2006) used the RIAS to mark each participant's racial identity status, and for the high threat condition administration of the MEIM defined the *racial* prime. But the most dramatic demonstration of the fusion of the REC constructs comes from a recent study. French, Seidman, Allen, and Aber (2006) incorporated a very diverse sample in a study of REC-identity development, and their results favor the argument that the ethnic identity paradigm is better understood as a discourse in which racial, ethnic, and culture schemas are fused. Using identity constructs derived from the MEIM, French et al. explored identity development among 420 adolescents who self-identified as Greek, Italian, Dominican, Puerto Rican, African, African American, and Caribbean American. The researchers collapsed all data from participants classified as African American, African, and Caribbean American and formed the *racial* category African American. The same procedure was used to form the categories European American (non-ethnic White, Italian, Greek, and other European ethnic participants) and Latino (Latino American, Puerto Rican, and Dominican). In effect, within the *same* study and sample they shifted from an analysis based on ethnic status to one based on racial status, even though the dependent variable (e.g., scores from the MEIM) never changed. Interestingly, an early draft of this study carried the banner "ethnic-racial identity"—a title consistent with our analysis—although in accordance with feedback from reviewers, it was eventually published as ethnic identity development (Seidman, personal communication, 2006).

We end this section on a historical note to show that many observers have lost sight of the fact that so-called racial identity models were premised on a discourse that fused elements of race and culture. The identity development models constructed by Cross (1971; 1991; 1995) and Helms (1990) generally anchor discussions of racial identity. Both models date back to the Black Social Movement of the 1970s and 1980s. The discourse on American Black identity was inspired not by the writings of Erik Erikson, James Marcia, or Urie Bronfenbrenner, but authors interrogating domination and oppression such as the Tunisian Jew, Albert Memmi, in his text *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, and especially the Black psychiatrist from the French Caribbean colony of Martinique, Franz Fanon. In *Black Skins and White Masks*, Fanon unravels the psychology of deracination, culture-loss, and internalized racism. Although in *Wretched of the Earth* he rejected the (racial) White-Black binary and positioned himself in opposition

to racial identity, Fanon's writings were used by Blacks in the United States to support a liberation psychology premised on cultural nationalism—a hybrid concept that fuses elements of racial as well as cultural identity.

Fanon employed the terms Black and White to connote both race and culture. This dualistic race-culture thesis provided the foundation for the terms "Black" and "Blackness" in the construction of "Black identity" models in the United States during the early 1970s. The term Black became part of the discourse on racism, but it also signified Black studies, Black music, Black culture, etc. It turns out that what today are called racial identity models should from the very beginning have been labeled *racial-cultural* identity models. If one takes the time to examine the survey scales associated with both the Cross Model (CRIS; Vandiver, Cross, Worrell, & Fhagen-Smith, 2002) and Helms' theory (RIAS; Parham & Helms, 1989), many of the individual scale items make clear reference to culture, others to race, and still others combine the two constructs. How these theories and models became associated only with race is a story beyond the scope of this paper. However, the trend in the research literature suggests that as a case in point, Nigrescence Theory is best understood to be a theory of racial-cultural identity development and its associated survey measure taps racial-cultural identity; the same is true of Ethnic Identity Development (EID) Theory and its associated instrument, the MEIM, which captures both racial and ethnic identity dynamics.

#### THE WORK OF JEAN PHINNEY: EID THEORY

We now turn to theory and research on REC-identity development and will favor the work of Jean Phinney, as her model dominates the discourse on REC-identity development. Jean Phinney constructed the Ethnic Identity Development Model (1993) to address the following question—*How do members of REC groups evolve a sense of themselves as members of socially ascribed groups, for identity development taking place between childhood and early adulthood, with special concern for early, middle, and late adolescence?* Her theory builds on the ideas of Erikson and Marcia.

#### ERIK ERIKSON

Erik Erikson wanted to comprehend and map, within a Western context, the way most human beings eventually enter young adulthood with a coherent worldview and social identity. Erikson created a developmental narrative that explicated the unfolding of the self as (1) originating in the mind's eye of one's significant others, (2) transmitted through socialization experiences orchestrated by significant others, (3) emerges with somewhat firm identity boundaries during middle-childhood and pre-adolescence, (4) becomes the object of intense reflection and interrogation during adolescence, and (5) by late adolescence and early adulthood culminates in an achieved and internalized identity. If a young adult—let's call her Jane—is short, full-figured, Jewish, mathematically inclined, and a lesbian, her level of identity development will be revealed, according to Erikson's thinking, by evidence that she has struggled to come to terms with each of these GI categories. From Erikson's perspective, identity maturity is evidenced in Jane's lived experience, when she demonstrates being able to handle and successfully negotiate social encounters that accord salience to any one or many of the social categories embedded in her GI matrix. In addition to learning to cope with social categorization and possible social stigmatization, Jane's

sense of self helps her function in terms of occupational needs and aspirations, religious-spiritual needs, political outlook, sex role and lifestyle choices, recreational repertoire, and friendship-dating competencies. In effect, Erikson addressed the totality of what we are calling the GI-matrix.

#### J. E. MARCIA

James E. Marcia is credited with truncating Erikson's otherwise expansive discourse by narrowing the focus from the GI-matrix as a whole to four identity states or statuses. The statuses essentially operationalize general and global growth points gleaned from Erikson's discourse about adolescent-to-adulthood identity development: *Diffusion* (a state of identity confusion, floundering, indecision, and negativity); *Foreclosed* (a state of premature identity acceptance without self-examination wherein the ideas, values, and world view of one's significant others are accepted uncritically); *Moratorium* (a state of flux during which identity schemas are held in abeyance for purposes of testing, contesting, switching, reframing, and authenticating); *Achieved* (a state of resolution, authentication, habituation, internalization, and self-ownership).

The application of Marcia's schema to the discourse on REC-identity development has unintentionally distracted researchers from the breadth of Erikson's original theory (Sneed, Schwartz, & Cross, 2006). For example, the scope of Erikson's thinking is better reflected in The Extended Objective Measure of Identity Status, or the EOMEIS-2 (Adams, Bennion, & Huh, 1989). This self-report scale has 64 items and sub-scales that tap eight domains (friendship; religion; political; occupational; sex roles; lifestyle; recreational; dating). The EOMEIS-2 operationalizes a variant of what we are calling the GI-matrix. In light of the four Erikson-Marcia statuses (diffused; moratorium; foreclosed; achieved), this means that the administration and scoring of the EOMEIS-2 can result in 32 scores, as shown in Table 8.1 (taken from a study involving the administration of the EOMIS-2; Low, Akande, & Hill, 2005). It should be noted that the EOMEIS-2 has rarely been employed in the study of REC-Identity development (Sneed, Schwartz, & Cross, 2006).

#### J. PHINNEY

Jean Phinney's theoretical breakthrough was to argue that Jane, the exemplar noted above, rather than Jewish, might be short, full-figured, lesbian, and Black (or, Jamaican, Asian, East-Indian, Chinese, etc.). As previously discussed, Jane will only be depicted as functioning with an *achieved status* if she shows signs of having worked-through to resolution concerns related to her GI matrix. Phinney's contribution has been to theorize and operationalize Eriksonian Theory as it applies to people of color. However, rather than be guided by the multi-domain structure (GI-matrix) found in Erikson's writings, Phinney strives for a global analysis of ethnic-racial identity as explicated in Marcia's approach. The focus is on only *one* sector of the GI-matrix. Her Ethnic Identity Development Model addresses whether, beyond mere self-identification or nominal affiliation, the person's general identity dynamics match the characteristics of any one of the following identity statuses—each of which is a slight reworking of Marcia's formulation: (1) *Ethnic-Diffusion*, or the tendency to evidence signs of ethnic identity confusion, negativity, and floundering; (2) *Ethnic-Foreclosed*, or acceptance in the absence of critique of the ethnic identity molded by significant others; (3) *Ethnic-Moratorium*, or a state of intense self-examination during



**Table 8.1**

Correlations Between Each of the Items in the Four Statuses Within the Eight Domains for South African Students ( $n = 146$ ) and U.S. Students ( $n = 123$ ).

Item	South African		United States	
	r	p	r	p
Occupational/diffused	.15	.066	.18	.048
Occupational/foreclosed	.20	.015	.56	.000
Occupational/moratorium	.22	.008	.49	.000
Occupational/achieved	.01	.905	.51	.000
Religion/diffused	.07	.398	.67	.000
Religion/foreclosed	.20	.015	.47	.000
Religion/moratorium	.44	.000	.48	.000
Religion/achieved	.25	.003	.24	.007
Politics/diffused	.40	.000	.30	.001
Politics/foreclosed	.09	.233	.44	.000
Politics/moratorium	.37	.000	.49	.000
Politics/achieved	.30	.000	.18	.053
Lifestyle/diffused	.03	.676	.30	.001
Lifestyle/foreclosed	.34	.000	.38	.000
Lifestyle/moratorium	.01	.884	.23	.009
Lifestyle/achieved	.30	.000	.07	.427
Sex roles/diffused	-.15	.074	.47	.000
Sex roles/foreclosed	.07	.387	.50	.000
Sex roles/moratorium	.01	.974	.25	.006
Sex roles/achieved	.51	.000	.48	.000
Recreation/diffused	-.17	.038	.24	.008
Recreation/foreclosed	.20	.015	.47	.000
Recreation/moratorium	.56	.002	.21	.022
Recreation/achieved	-.50	.492	.59	.000
Friendship/diffused	.23	.004	.54	.000
Friendship/foreclosed	-.27	.001	.48	.000
Friendship/moratorium	-.04	.633	.26	.004
Friendship/achieved	.09	.239	.16	.079
Dating/diffused	.01	.905	.47	.000
Dating/foreclosed	.44	.000	.69	.000
Dating/moratorium	-.07	.386	.41	.000
Dating/achieved	.42	.000	.39	.000

which the ethnic identity frame molded by significant others is scrutinized, deconstructed, and tested; and (4) *Ethnic-Achieved*, or the point at which the tested ethnic identity becomes internalized, habituated, and self-accepted. Research generated by EID Theory has explored (1) the ease with which the four statuses can be isolated, (2) the direction of identity development, (3) the degree to which the achieved status is linked to positive mental health, and (4) whether the theory is applicable to many or a select number of REC groups.

#### DIRECTIONALITY OF REC-IDENTITY GROWTH

In a longitudinal study involving 224 African Americans, Seaton, Scottham and Sellers (2006) tested both the four-status and directionality theorems. Applying

cluster analysis to separate measures of exploration and commitment, four clusters were predicted:

- Foreclosed: high scores on commitment and low scores on exploration;
- Moratorium: high scores on exploration and low scores on commitment;
- Achieved: high scores on both measures;
- Diffuse: low scores on both measures.

Two data sets were collected within a 12-month interval and the predicted clusters accounted for over 80 percent of the participants. The racial identity trajectories were consistent with theory, as over 72 percent demonstrated stability (no change in status) and progression (movement from a lower status to a higher one). Of the 39 percent who did not change, 55 percent remained in either the achieved or foreclosed statuses, a finding consistent with prior findings (Phinney & Chavira, 1992). In a recent study conducted by French, Seidman, Allen and Aber (2006), two components of REC-identity—group esteem and exploration—were assessed over a 3 year period using a sample of 420 White, Black, and Latino early and middle adolescents. The REC-identity trajectories for all three groups were in line with the Erikson-Marcia-Phinney perspective. Group esteem had an earlier onset than exploration, consistent with a foreclosed identity status in early adolescence. Surprisingly, the Euro-American students evidenced high group esteem for all three waves. Exploration trends increased for middle adolescents, suggesting that the sequence of identity development is attachment to the in-group (group-esteem scores), followed by exploration. The absence of a stronger continuous trend toward exploration in the older students points to greater prominence of REC-foreclosed status than REC-achieved status in this particular sample.

In a secondary analysis of identity and socialization variables based on three waves (the results of a fourth wave will not be discussed because different measures replaced scales used in the first three waves) collected in 1990, 1991, and 1993, Burrow (2005) followed the REC-identity development of 742 African American middle school students. Using cluster analysis, he isolated archetypes consistent with the identity statuses defined in the Phinney model. The results showed that between Wave1 and Wave2 many youth shifted from placement in one cluster to placement in another, with the largest percentage shifting from identity clusters representing lower identity statuses to clusters representing achieved identity. In a Wave2 and Wave3 comparison, stability was the dominant pattern. Although Burrow's interpretation linked the stability patterns with achieved dynamics, an alternate interpretation is that his variable configuration was more sensitive to commitment and foreclosure dynamics. Recall that in our discussion of the study by French, Seidman, Allen, and Abner(2006) they also found what appeared to be premature stabilization indicative of foreclosure. Regardless of whether one accepts this alternate interpretation, his findings are consistent with an unfolding of REC-identity development in middle adolescence.

Pahl and Way (2006) tracked the affirmation and exploration components of REC-identity development in a longitudinal study of 135 Black and Latino high school students. Consistent with previous findings, they found evidence that between the 10th and 12th grades, affirmation preceded exploration, followed by deceleration of exploration into early adulthood. Finally, Yip, Seaton, and Sellers (2006) found clear evidence of the four identity statuses among 940 African American adolescents (13 to 17 years old), college students (18 to 23 years old) and adults (27 to 78 years old). In

line with with Phinney's model, status distribution differed by age group, with older participants disproportionately occupying the more mature identity statuses. Results indicated that 27 percent of the adolescents, 47 percent of the college students, and 56 percent of the adults had an achieved status. Furthermore, while moratorium was the modal pattern for the adolescent sample, achieved status was the modal pattern for college students and adults.

#### MENTAL HEALTH CORRELATES OF THE ACHIEVED STATUS

In a daily diary study conducted with Chinese undergraduates from a private university in the Northeast sector of the United States, higher levels of REC salience were associated with positive mental health, as well as lower levels of depression (Yip, 2003). This replicated findings from an earlier study conducted with a slightly younger sample of Chinese youth living in the United States (Yip & Fuligni, 2002). In the developmental studies highlighted in this review and involving other REC groups, advanced REC-identity development was found to be associated with higher levels of happiness and lower levels of anxiety (Kiang, Yip, Witkow, & Fuligni, 2006), more positive psychological well-being (Seaton et al., 2006), and fewer depressive symptoms (Yip, Seaton, & Sellers, 2006). In the longitudinal study conducted by Burrow (2005), Black youth affirming an REC identity showed higher levels of family pride and lower levels of self-derogation than adolescents who showed signs of disengagement from an REC identity. The trend of the findings from developmental studies is complemented by findings from cross-sectional research that show a strong positive relationship between ethnic identity and mental health (Baldwin, 1984; Caldwell, Zimmerman, Bernat, Sellers, & Notaro, 2002; Carter, 1991; Lorenzo-Hernandez & Ouellette, 1998; Phinney, 1996; Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1997; Pope, 1998; Taub & McEwen, 1992).

In studies making the contrast, REC-individuals positioned at the diffused as compared to other statuses showed less positive mental health and adjustment. From this literature one can logically conclude that those REC-individuals who do not use REC-factors to scaffold their identities are at a disadvantage and logically fall into the diffused status. However, to date, few REC-identity development studies have taken the time to isolate *alternate identities* (identity frames held by REC members not based on REC salience, such as an assimilated identity or one structured around one's feminist ideology or religious beliefs) to determine if a distinction should be made between alternate identities and diffused status. In the few studies that have actually isolated such identities, REC members embracing alternate identities also evidence positive mental health (Yip & Cross, 2004; Cross, Grant, & Ventuneac, 2006). We will return to the question of alternate identities in sections to follow.

#### GENERALIZABILITY OF EID THEORY

We essentially addressed this question earlier when we explicated our rationale for treating as overlapping the discourses of racial, ethnic, and cultural identity. As noted in the earlier section, most minority children are socialized to develop an identity that integrates competencies for transacting race, ethnicity, and culture in everyday life. In effect, theory and research related to Phinney's conceptualization *voices* issues of race, culture, as well as ethnicity.

## UNEXPLAINED FINDINGS

There are findings not explained by the Erikson-Marcia-Phinney perspective (EMP-Perspective). Research has isolated (1) identity trajectories (directionality) that run contrary to the EMP-Perspective, (2) alternate identities not accounted for by the REC perspective, and (3) forms of internalized oppression that may coexist with positive expression of REC-identity.

### COUNTER DIRECTIONAL TRENDS

Although 72 percent of the participants in the developmental study conducted by Seaton, Scottham, and Sellers (2006) demonstrated identity trajectories between Time1 and Time2 consistent with the EMP-Perspective, 28 percent did not. For example, 22 percent of persons with an achieved status at Time1 moved to a diffused or fore-closed status at Time2. A significant percentage positioned at achieved for Time1 moved backward to moratorium at Time2, indicative of what Parham (1989) describes as identity recycling, a pattern not incorporated in the EMP-Perspective. According to Parham (1989), once a person reaches achieved status, a life event related to REC issues may jar the person toward additional self-exploration (moratorium revisited). The person then returns to an achieved status, having gained a deeper and richer appreciation of REC-issues and challenges that triggered recycling in the first place. Yip, Seaton, and Sellers (2006) isolated this recycling pattern in adolescents, young adults, and mature adults, and in Burrow's (2005) study of identity trajectories across three developmental points, the recycling, backward, and regression patterns were observed.

### ALTERNATE IDENTITIES AND THE MEIM

Backward trajectories—that is movement from achieved to diffused—may reflect reaction to negative life events; however, Cross, Grant, and Ventuneac (2006) note that methodologies designed to be sensitive to REC-identity trends may be less sensitive to, overlook, or even misrepresent identity development trends within an REC group driven by something other than REC dynamics. Consequently, a low score on a measure of REC-identity development may reflect negative identity development, but it can also express that the individual accords low salience to REC-issues in the framing of her or his identity.

Yip and Cross (2004) isolated three identity archetypes among a group of Chinese youth: Assimilated, Chinese-centric, and Bicultural. For our purposes, the Assimilated category will be viewed as an expression of an alternate identity. All three groups showed evidence of equally positive mental health as measured by self-esteem, positive-negative emotions, and quality of life—factors linked to positive identity development and achieved status. Furthermore, the groups could not be differentiated by scores from a generic measure of group identity. However, the persons with the alternate identity (Assimilation) scored low on the MEIM, while the other two groups scored equally high on the MEIM. Approached from another angle, the generic group identity measure captured the strength and integrity of the group identity trends for all three groups, while the MEIM was only sensitive to positive identity development for the two groups who accorded REC issues high to moderate salience. The MEIM essentially overlooked identity strengths expressed nonracially and without ethnic identity content. Finally, Cross, Grant, and Ventuneac (2006) isolated alternate identity trends, and global scores on the MEIM were

negatively correlated with the alternate identity, making it possible to erroneously lump alternate identities with the diffused status.

In the study by Cross, Grant, and Ventuneac (2006) the MEIM evidenced a near zero correlation with both expressions of negative identity (racial self-hatred and internalization of negative stereotypes about one's group) and a negative correlation with an alternate identity. In the same study, a generic measure of ego identity development was employed, providing the researchers with two measures of ego identity development: (1) the MEIM as a measure of REC trends, and (2) the generic measure that was thought to be sensitive to ego identity development as expressed in any type of identity, either REC or alternate identity related. The generic measure showed the REC-identity categories (Afrocentric and Multicultural) held no advantage in ego identity strength over the alternate identity (Assimilation). The MEIM, while solidly correlated with the generic measure of ego-identity ( $r = .30$ ) was *insensitive* to the generic ego identity strengths found for the alternate identity.

#### INTERNALIZED NEGATIVITY

The EMP-Perspective tends to lump and associate negative identity trends with diffused status. However, Kelly and Floyd (2001) found that Black adults may simultaneously evidence what appears to be an achieved status in conjunction with degrees of identity negativity. Cokley (2005) discovered persons with an Afrocentric perspective were also subject to hold certain stereotype beliefs about Black people, and Cross, Grant, and Ventuneac (2006) found that while Afrocentric beliefs were not directly linked to negative psychological attitudes, under certain conditions racial self-hatred and Afrocentricity formed the identity profile of some participants in their study of college students (2006). Margaret Spencer and her colleagues at the University of Pennsylvania isolated Black males with pro-Black identities linked to strong, positive, high achievement attitudes, as well as other males who combined pro-Black attitudes with what appears to be oppositional attitudes toward school (Spencer, Cross, Harpalani, & Goss 2003).

The juxtaposition of positive and negative identity elements is not confined to studies involving Blacks. Stereotype threat research has been conducted with Black, Asian, and male and female White college students. Many, if not most, are likely to have reached either a foreclosed, if not achieved, status. However representatives from each group have been vulnerable to the various ST primes followed by a drop in performance, generally on an academic task. This means that the negativity linked to ST vulnerability can be found among college students of various REC backgrounds and social statuses, even though other aspects of their psychological makeup reveal a great many positive psychological traits and dynamics. In the study of REC-identity development, the copresence of negative and positive identity themes rather than a contradiction reflect a more accurate approximation of REC adjustment, and this possibility is generally not addressed by the EMP perspective.

#### COMPREHENSIVE MODEL OF REC-IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT: A LIFE SPAN PERSPECTIVE

We propose a perspective that (1) incorporates the strengths of the Erikson-Marcia-Phinney perspective; (2) incorporates alternate identity trajectories; (3) delineates levels of internalized oppression, that when combined with positive trends, makes

possible the prediction and configuration of complex negative-positive identity trends; and (4) expands the discourse to include a life span perspective.

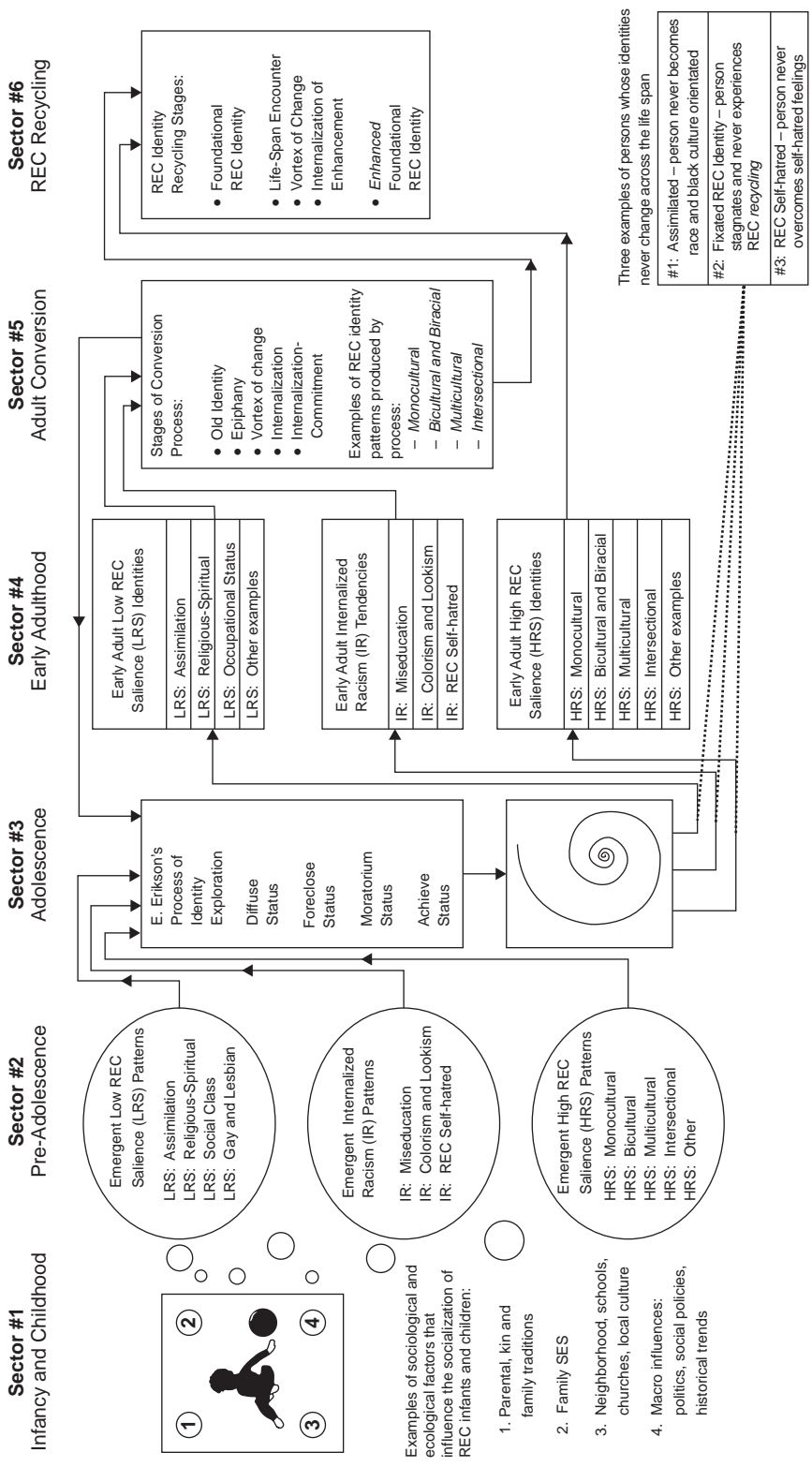
Figure 8.1 presents a schematic representation of the model that is based on the six-sector racial identity life span model developed by Cross and Fhagen-Smith (2001). Sector One depicts the ecological variation into which each REC infant is born, and the early signs of identity development during infancy and early-childhood; Sector Two captures nascent identity structures commonplace to middle-childhood and pre-adolescence; Sector Three revisits the Eriksonian Stages of adolescent identity development, inclusive of “backward” development, and the emergence of alternate, intersectional, and internalized oppression tendencies; Sector Four highlights the range of REC-identity archetypes that emerge in early adulthood; Sector Five is a discussion of epiphany-awareness and identity conversion experiences not atypical to REC-group members; and Sector Six addresses one important form of identity recycling that explains continued identity growth across the life span. The model also tries to account for that small percentage of people who evidence identity fixation for most of their adult lives.

#### SECTOR ONE: INFANCY THROUGH MIDDLE CHILDHOOD

Sector 1 of Figure 8.1 shows an REC infant surrounded by contextual factors that in various configurations define the unique human ecology for each REC infant (Spencer, 2006). Even in the case of biogenetic predispositions, the human potential of every REC infant is molded, shaped, and given direction by parental influences, kinship interactions, neighborhood, community and school influences, the parents’ educational and occupational status, and a wide range of macroinfluences that reflect the politics, social policies, and historical trends framing the infant’s existence and development. At the very start, the infant’s most pressing psychological agenda is achieving *separation-individuation*.

Separation-individuation is related more to PI than GI development. However, between ages 2 and 3, although cognitive capacity is still concrete, children start defining themselves using labels (i.e. age, race, gender) that identify observable, verifiable characteristics (Brown, 1998), signaling the emergence of social cognitions important to GI development. REC children of kindergarten age are rather consistent in their ability to self-classify (self-categorization), although as pointed out by Bernal et al. (1999), this capacity appears earlier for Black and White children (Spencer, 1982) than is true of brown children such as Mexican Americans and multiracial children (Rice, Ruiz, & Padilla, 1974; Aboud, 1988). Findings from racial-ethnic preference tasks show minority children evidencing a pro-White bias between ages 4 and 5, while both their pro-in-group and unbiased tendencies dominate REC-related preferences by age 6 and 7. REC children develop a rather rudimentary awareness of prejudice as early as age 7, with sophisticated and adult like schemas that explain prejudice coming to fruition between early and late adolescence (Quintana & Vera, 1999).

REC-identity development is multidimensional, and young children show early signs of being able to self-categorize, select from various racial-cultural preferences, become the repository of an ever expanding amount of racial-ethnic-cultural knowledge, and on a daily basis enjoy and take part in REC behaviors and activities, under the watchful eyes of their parents and loved ones (Bernal, et al., 1990). As early as age 7, REC children evidence the beginning signs of internalized racism such as colorism (intragroup skin color prejudice) and negative stereotyping about one’s



**Figure 8.1** Descriptive Model of REC Identity Development: A Life Span Perspective (Modified from Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001).

group (Averhart & Bigler, 1999). However, more often than not, most forms of in-group negativity evidenced by REC children, especially at an early age, are not associated with psychological dysfunctionality or low self-esteem (Cross, 1991; Spencer, 1982; 1999; Spencer & Markstrom-Adams, 1990) and may well be, as pointed out by Averhart and Bigler (1997), an early expression of automatic stereotyping (Devine, 1989) or implicit attitudes (Rudman, Feinberg, & Fairchild, 2002).

For preschoolers and very young children the growth of various race- and ethnic-related propensities seem compartmentalized and disconnected in large part because their capacity for social perspective-taking ability is just beginning to bud. Social perspective-taking ability unfolds with greater sophistication as the cognitive capacities of children and youth evolve, and likewise, the related ability of ethnic-perspective talking—the capacity to make connections between self-identification, identity, culture, race, prejudice, and so on—unfolds in a parallel fashion between ages 7 and 15 (Quintana et al., 1999). The imprint that parents' and guardians' have on an infant and preschooler's attachment behaviors and PI development is almost instantaneous. However, it takes awhile for parental influences on the shaping of the young person's race- and culture-related schemas to take hold, again, because the child's capacity for making sense of the world—that is, to construct schemas—is at first limited. By middle childhood and early adolescence the appearance of coherent identity schemas characterized by foreclosed identity dynamics become evident (Quintana et al., 1999). Schemas are expressions of meaning making and helping youth *make meaning* of race, ethnicity, and culture is at the heart of parental socialization strategies.

## SECTOR TWO: PREADOLESCENCE

The scope of identity options found among preadolescent REC youth is captured in the three clusters shown in Sector Two, and this range is directly related to variation in REC-socialization practices (Murray, Stokes, & Peacock, 1999; Ward, 2000). Tatum (2000) found REC parents fall into three categories with regard to the emphasis they accord REC issues in the socialization of their children—minimal, moderate-mixed and strong—and we will add a fourth category that involves the inculcation of REC negativity. Some REC parents accord low salience to REC issues and tend to deemphasize the importance of REC identity in their socialization practices. A child parented in this way may develop an alternate identity centered on another aspect of self such as school, sports, gender, or a sense of being American. Parents in the second category, moderate-to-mixed REC emphasis, understand the importance of REC socialization, but model its integration with other factors such as sexual orientation, political affiliation, and so on. Subsequently, their children fashion identities reflective of pluralistic and multifaceted ideas, pointing to the eventual construction of a bicultural, multicultural, or intersectional identity. The third group accords ethnicity/race singular importance, and their children are encouraged to evolve an in-group identity that is monocultural in emphasis.

REC parents may unintentionally facilitate the learning and absorption by their children of both positive and negative stereotypes (Averhart & Bigler, 1997; Stevenson, 1994). At both the conscious and unconscious levels, and focusing here only on the negative, socialization narratives may incorporate concepts of colorism, miseducation, and other expressions of REC negativity. Parents are not necessarily the primary source of such negativity, but our point is that in some circumstances, REC negativity may even be part of the home environment.



## SECTOR THREE: ADOLESCENCE

In Figure 8.1 note that lines connect *all the identity* options and proclivities found in Sector Two to the top of Sector Three, signaling entrance into adolescence. Thus, whether the nascent identity reflects an alternate stance, REC negativity or REC salience, all forms of identity expression and content are funneled through adolescence.

During adolescence, identity contestation and clarification become central. More so than at earlier points in development, youth take an active role in accommodating, assimilating, or rejecting ideas about understanding the world, other people, and themselves. Their world expands to contain the larger ecosystems of school, community, local culture(s), faith-based institutions, and so on, and these new sources of opinion complement or contest the culture of the family and REC community. They become preoccupied with social interactions outside the home and often crave identification with and acceptance by their peers. Through their interactions with people outside the family unit and immediate community, they are exposed to new ideas and ideals, whereas before they were largely consumers of their parents' world view.

The identity dynamics explicated by Erik Erikson and James Marcia become central to comprehending this phase of human development. Starting with either a diffused or foreclosed status, adolescents move to active exploration in moratorium and wrestle with a range of concerns such as sex role categorization and affirmation, dating and interpersonal skills, lifestyle concerns, political beliefs and party affiliation, religious beliefs, church affiliation and sense of connection to God, career and occupation aspirations, and educational objectives beyond high school. Whether by late adolescence the person is able to accomplish an achieved status requires a degree of resolution across the majority of these critical identity domains.

Note that at the base of Sector Three we have inserted a spiral—this is meant to symbolize nonlinear identity trajectories found among REC youth, such as switching identity content, and movement that is forward and backward, and so on. Some youth may enter moratorium assigning moderate to high salience to REC issues and then shift toward an alternate identity; also, the opposite is possible, producing “backward” as well as forward trajectories (Burrow, 2005; Seaton et al., 2006; Yip, Seaton, & Sellers, 2006). During moratorium, REC youth may drift in and out of monocultural, bicultural, multicultural, and even intersectional frames before they reach a point of identity resolution (Hitlin, Brown, and Elder, 2006).

It is during moratorium that REC youth become hypersensitive to social messages about inferiority and stigmatization. Public debates about the integrity of Black youth culture, the push to highlight the problem of illegal immigration, the demonization of Muslim youth, as well as discussions about the achievement gap between REC youth and White children make ingestion of REC negativity all the more probable during adolescence. Such negativity can add to identity shifting, or even worse, conjure thoughts of suicide (Poussaint & Alexander, 2001; see website for National Organization for People of Color Against Suicide). On the other hand, identity experimentation of REC youth leads to identity content beyond the imagination of the keenest adult observer of REC youth. Hip-Hop culture and Hip-Hop identity—a form of intersectional identity—fuses elements of race-ethnicity, class, gender and culture, and what started as a very *group specific* expression of identity within urban United States—has become a counter-narrative for REC groups worldwide. Hip-Hop has even crossed the racial divide and is a powerful expression of mainstream (non-REC) youth in the United States, France, Germany, Italy, and elsewhere.

Nevertheless, Hip-Hop identity is no less subject to diffused, foreclosed, moratorium, and achieved psychodynamics as any other form of identity development.

*People who are fixated* Finally, note the dotted lines that extend from the spiral at the base of Sector Three to three exemplars of identity fixation that appear in a small rectangular box in the bottom right-hand corner of Figure 8.1. The three examples shown are meant to be representative, not exhaustive. A small but unknown number of REC individuals will experience little change in their REC identity across their life span: Some self-hating people will remain self-hating, some with alternate identities will remain comfortable as such, and the angry militant may never find resolution. A fuller discussion of this phenomenon is not possible at this time; however, for the moment we simply make note that while several of the remaining sectors (Five & Six) discuss identity change and growth across the life span, there are some REC individuals for whom the discussion of change does not seem to apply.

#### SECTOR FOUR: EARLY ADULTHOOD

Between the ages of 18 and 25, or what developmentalists reference as early adulthood, the dynamics of pubescent commitment in conjunction with the trial and error aspects of REC identity exploration give way to identity coherence, habituation, and in the best case scenario, REC identity achievement (Burrow, 2005; French, et al., 2006; Phinney, 1989; Yip et al., 2006). The scope of REC identity options is captured, as shown in Sector Four of Figure 8.1, in three clusters.

*Early Adult Low REC Salience* The cluster that appears at the top of Sector Four incorporates identity exemplars for which REC issues are accorded *limited* or *low salience*. Although found among people who hold nominal membership in an REC group, these identity beliefs are positive and functional, and reflect *alternates* to the more commonplace REC-based trajectories found among REC group members. These low-salience or alternate identities may be grounded in patriotism and a close connection to the mainstream (assimilation), a religious belief and worldview, the philosophy of humanism, or occupational status and gender identity, to mention a few. Alternate identities need not reflect escapism or denial; rather, the person may contend that she or he has risen above race with an identity that offers greater insight into how the world works than is true of a worldview they see as *constrained* by race, culture, or ethnicity (Steele, 1991; Williams, 2006).

Alternate identities are subject to the same developmental steps as any identity. Consequently, the foreclosed, moratorium, and achieved statuses are as applicable to alternate identity development as REC-identity development. In a related concern, REC members who embrace an alternate identity do not appear to suffer psychological damage because of their choices (Yip and Cross; 2004; Cross et al., 2006). On the contrary, one study involving Chinese youth (Yip & Cross, 2004) and two others involving Black Americans (Cross et al., 2006; Vandiver et al., 2001), showed that those holding an assimilationist identity, as compared to a social identity that was decidedly in-group oriented, could not be differentiated across measures of self-esteem and ego strength (Cross et al., 2006), level of depression, positive-negative emotions and quality of life (Yip & Cross, 2004), self-esteem, and the Big Five Personality Inventory (Vandiver et al., 2001). On the other hand, people with alternate identities differ from in-group members who embrace any variant of an in-group perspective on outcomes that tend

to measure level of involvement with in-group activities, language, and culture. Chinese college students who embraced two forms of in-group identities were more likely to speak Chinese on a daily basis, frequent Chinese restaurants, and generally show interest in the Chinese community than a comparison group of Chinese students who evidenced an assimilationist perspective (Yip & Cross, 2004). In a group of Black American participants who spanned early adolescence and retirement age, assimilationists, more so than Afrocentrists or multiculturalists, perceived their lives to be less frequently touched by experiences with discrimination (Foster, 2004). This finding was repeated in another study involving mostly Black women (Jones, 2005). In short, persons holding alternate identities may evidence the same degree of positive psychological integrity as persons holding in-group orientations; however, alternate identities may be associated with a certain distancing from the in-group community.

*H&M REC Salience* While the documentation of alternate identities to be found among REC groups is important, research to date shows that for most REC group members their identity development results in an identity that accords moderate to high salience to race, ethnicity, and culture. This is the modal pattern (Bernal et al., 1990; Yip et al., 2006; Spencer, 2006). The identity exemplars reflecting moderate to high REC salience are captured in Sector Four under the label early adult high REC salience. Just as there is no one type of alternate identity, so it is that REC salience can be expressed in varied configurations. We will highlight monocultural, bicultural, multicultural, and intersectional configurations.

1. *REC-monocultural* refers to an REC identity anchored by a singular salience for the in-group. REC identities that are monocultural in focus are ethnocentric, nationalistic, and in-group centered. It is not so much that such persons are necessarily extremist, ideologues, or closed minded—such a pejorative perspective does not capture the monoculturalist. Rather, monoculturalism is often an expression of intense commitment to the in-group's problems, challenges, culture, and history.
2. An REC identity that is *bicultural* typically interweaves racial, ethnic, and cultural concerns for one's in-group with co-anchorage to a sense of being American (African American, Chinese American, Cuban American). Here we mean the deeper existential quality of living an identity that has two fundamental cultural anchors that connect the REC experience with that of the dominate culture.
3. Cosmopolitan experiences, globalization forces, and increased intermarriage rates explain, in part, the growth of REC identities that are anchored in three or more social experiences, and are best captured by the labels *multicultural*, *multiracial*, and *multi-ethnic*.
4. Even more expansive is the REC stance that expresses the *intersection* of one's REC status (for example, being Asian) with a range of other social identity statuses (for example, being gay, urban, disabled, middle-class, and Mississippian). The Native American Two-Spirit gatherings exemplify the intersection of gender status, sexual orientation, and cultural mooring (Leland, 2006).

*Negative Salience* In Sector Four, sandwiched between the low-salience and high-salience exemplars, is the cluster labeled Early Adult Internalized REC Negativity. This captures what elsewhere has been called internalized oppression or internalized

racism. However, in light of the overlap between race, ethnicity, and culture being stressed in this work, the label Internalized REC-Negativity seems appropriate. In Figure 8.1, space limitations made it impossible to incorporate all permutations of negativity, and the following discussion incorporates more exemplars than listed in the Figure 8.1.

The phrase internalized oppression literally means the ingestion of negativity that originates from the outside. Beverly Tatum (2003) notes that mainstream society's negativity toward REC groups is ubiquitous, and likens it to unseen contaminants in the air we breathe. Internalized REC-Negativity finds expression as colorism and lookism (the tendency to give undue significance and status to skin complexion and physical features); miseducation (the tendency to process as factual social representations about one's REC group that are, in reality, falsehoods or stereotypes); stereotype threat (the tendency to be subliminally or unconsciously distracted by negative stereotypes such that one's performance suffers when completing certain evaluative tasks/tests); language sensitivity (angst about speaking one's ethnic language, and/or about speaking proper English); and to a certain degree, race-related cultural mistrust (the tendency not to trust White people, and by extension the institutions and systems they dominate). Surprisingly, findings from research show these particular expressions of Internalized REC-Negativity are *benign* in that individuals holding such beliefs seldom evidence PI damage. (i.e., damage to one's personality). However, the point often missed is the potential for damage to the group (e.g., GI damage), when too many group members express such beliefs and attitudes:

1. *Colorism and lookism* (as in a sense of privilege based on skin-color and physiognomic characteristics), if found among too many group members, may become the source of within group tensions;
2. *Stereotype threat* (as in test anxiety linked to diminished performance on job placement tests or college entrance examinations), if experienced by a significant number of group members, can reduce the group's presence at elite colleges and universities, and over the long run stifle upward social mobility for the group as a whole;
3. *Miseducation* (as in a distorted understanding of the group's issues, history, and culture), if internalized by a critical mass, may contribute to apathy, disunity, and a "blame the victim" orientation toward the group itself;
4. *Cultural mistrust* (as in choosing to go without proper medical treatment by members suspicious of mainstream health care providers) can lower the group's health care profile; and finally
5. *Language sensitivity* (as in group members preoccupied with learning and speaking proper English), if practiced by too many group members, may result in the loss of the group's indigenous language system with the concomitant loss of a critical component of a group's culture.

These are not trivial consequences, but nor are they markers of serious mental illness. REC negativity can find expression within the identity dynamics of individuals who are otherwise average and relatively healthy in their overall PI profile (Cokley, 2005; Cross, Grant, & Ventuneac, 2006; Kelly & Floyd, 2001; Neville, Coleman, Falconer, & Holmes, 2005; Spencer, 1999). Signs of PI health aside, and keeping in mind that stigmatized groups generally live in the same area—within ghettos, ethnic enclaves, or reservations—too many members suffering from one or more forms

of internalized oppression can result in GI-damage that tears at the group's social fabric, promotes political disunity and diminished participation in elections, blunts achievement and social mobility patterns, and leads to the underutilization of mainstream systems such as health care institutions.

The more insidious and damaging forms of internalized oppression are related to anger and rage, low private regard for one's group, a sense of hopelessness and defeatism, REC-related hypersensitivity (sensitivity to possible REC-related social rejection), and deep feelings of low self-worth linked to REC related self-hatred. In addition to depression, low self-esteem, imbalance between negative and positive emotions, and impeded ego identity development, such negativity can lead to life style problems (addiction, marital problems, sexual deviancy, etc.) that further compound one's situation. When social class is added to the equation, a person's circumstances become all the more complicated.

*Microaggressions* Issues of hopelessness, anger-rage, and REC self-hatred aside, it remains somewhat puzzling that the larger society's stigmatization of and negativity toward REC-groups does not result in more extensive psychological harm at the level of the individual. Part of the answer is in the way positive REC-identity development results in resilience and proactive coping (Crocker & Major, 1989; Franklin, 2004; Ward, 2000). On the other hand, some researchers have turned to a stress management model to show how social triggers or microaggressions present in the larger society require REC-individuals to negotiate aspects of REC-negativity, whether or not they personally suffer from internalized oppression. Here are three examples of what we mean:

1. Let us imagine Aisha, a Black woman who does not suffer from colorism. She has a dark complexion as well as distinct African features, and during the course of any one week she encounters advertisements, TV commercials, and comments over heard in public spaces that prompt her to activate her defenses against the ingestion of colorism—not because she herself suffers it, but because the external impetus for such negativity is in the air she breathes.
2. Though he has become a naturalized citizen of the United States, Carlos, a 40-year-old man of Mexican descent, is frequently mistaken as an illegal immigrant. He personally has avoided internalizing negative stereotypes about illegal immigrants, but must cope with the imposition of such falsehoods by those who accord them importance.
3. Finally, the police stop a Black male in what turns out to be a case of DWB (driving while Black). He is an executive with a well known corporation and lives in an expensive house a block away from the incident; nonetheless, stereotypes about his group affect him even though he knows such beliefs are false.

Though not a form of internalized racism, having to negotiate daily race-related *microaggressions* can, over the long run, result in symptoms of depression, as well as potentially fatal physiological conditions such as high blood pressure (Clark, 2004; Lepore et al, 2006; Adams, 1990). The reduction of overt and crude racism is reason for hope, but the new racism (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986), with its subtle expression, takes its toll on REC-individuals, if not in the moment then over the life span (Clark, 2004). Generally, REC-members handle these little transgressions with resilience, sophistication, and aplomb, and internalized oppression need not be a final result. However, the long-term cumulative effects of having to regularly negotiate

REC-related microaggressions can be just as deleterious to one's physical health and psychological well-being as if one did in fact suffer from a serious form of internalized oppression (Clark, 2004).

While microaggressions are generally the norm and society's transgressions are felt by all REC members, males from several REC groups are currently under heavy surveillance with sometimes traumatic consequences (Fine et al., 2003), specifically males from the Black and Muslim communities. The ill treatment of Black men has reached epidemic proportions at the time of this writing, and following several instances of worldwide terror traced to the activities of Muslim youth and men, societal mistrust and ill treatment directed at Muslim youth is palpable, and in too many cases venomous (Elias, 2006). The degree of being singled out for mistreatment, suspicion, harassment, and ridicule can overload the coping and resilience capacities of even the most well-adjusted youth. If REC-related microaggressions have a cumulative affect that goes unnoticed by the target, it stands to reason that traumatizing REC-related transgressions have the potential to obstruct the average course of REC-identity development. As cases in point, this may be what is happening to an unknown but significant number of Black (Cross, 2006) and Muslim (Elias, 2006) male youth.

In cataloging what can go wrong in REC-identity development we should make a disclaimer. We have included this section on Internalized REC-Negativity, GI damage, and REC-related microaggressions in support of a realistic, nonromantic, three-dimensional analysis on REC-identity development. That said, there is a long tradition in the social sciences of approaching the psychology of REC groups from a deficit perspective that in the extreme leads to a victim-blame orientation (Spencer, 2006). From our perspective, while internalized racism and GI damage must be included as part of a comprehensive discussion, such factors do not constitute an appropriate *point of departure* for the discourse on REC-identity development.

#### SECTOR FIVE: EPIPHANIES AND IDENTITY CONVERSIONS

Many REC individuals will experience as early as late adolescence (note the line connecting Sectors Three and Five), but more generally between early adulthood and middle age, a jarring racial-ethnic-cultural epiphany that can trigger identity change. As shown in the lines that connect Sector Four (array of identity exemplars at early adulthood) with Sector Five (Identity Conversions), REC-related epiphanies are more likely to happen to persons who enter early adulthood with either an alternate identity or an identity that shows signs of internalized oppression. There is no line connecting REC individuals who enter early adulthood with identity stances represented by the moderate-to-high salience cluster. This group is less at risk because there is practically no need to discover the connection between one's self and one's group, as that connection has been inculcated during socialization between infancy and late adolescence. On the other hand, one might insert a light gray line connecting high salience exemplars to the epiphany model, for the following reason. If a REC person enters early adulthood with a REC identity premised on *foreclosed* identity dynamics, there is always the possibility that something will trigger their delayed exploration. Such a person may be subject to an epiphany not for the purpose of identity conversion, but to experience the REC-identity exploration that was skipped and resulted in their entering early adulthood with a relatively unexplored REC identity in the first place. The following highlights those persons holding either an alternate identity or an identity infused with REC negativity, as ownership of either stance puts one at risk for conversion (Cross, 1991).

*Alternate Identities and REC Epiphanies* A successful and positive identity conversion is one of the more remarkable psychological experiences known to humankind (Cross, 1991; Helms, 1990; Gerlach & Hine, 1970; Myers, 1995; Wallace, 1970). REC-related epiphanies map the transition from a fully formed adult identity, often categorized as foreclosed and even achieved in psychodynamics, into a new sense of self that, existentially speaking, the person experiences as a radical change in worldview (Wallace, 1970). Epiphanies require us to comprehend that until the moment of the epiphany the person functions with a habituated and deeply internalized identity that provides a pathway to positive mental health and a coherent meaning making system, even though it is not REC-based. For example, an epiphany-awareness metamorphosis that tracks the change from an alternate identity to one that becomes high in REC salience is not a change from negative to positive. Rather, a positive alternate identity for which REC issues are accorded limited salience is replaced by another positive identity premised on high salience for REC issues. The challenge presented by the epiphany compels the person to go through a tumultuous, unnerving, often painful, and frequently exhilarating metamorphosis driven by a need to *infuse* REC issues into the core of the person's worldview, and not to discover a more positive identity per se.

There is reason to believe that permanent change caused by conversion experiences is more cognitive and group identity related than PI or personality related (Benford & Snow, 2000; Cross, 1991). However, theory and research on identity change suggests that while immersed in the vortex of change, the person's total being—affect, cognitions, and behavior—is activated. That is, immersion in the identity change process is “totalistic” and oceanic, even though the final point at which the new identity is habituated and internalized finds the person relatively *unchanged* in terms of his or her preconversion personality characteristics, while radically changed in terms of worldview and group identity.

*REC Negativity and REC Epiphanies* Even though an epiphany experience can be driven by a desire to expunge internalized racism, we remind the reader that many of the forms of internalized racism are weakly related to such factors as self-esteem. Consequently, release from the grip of miseducation and internalized stereotypes about one's group results in the reconstruction of one's ideology more so than the reshaping of personality (Cross, 1991). On the other hand, for REC group members who suffer from deep structure PI and GI damage, the experience of an REC-related epiphany probably cannot cure mental illness, but may help an individual better understand the origins of her or his problems and thus the need for professional help (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001).

*Stages of Epiphany-Awareness Experiences* Adult identity conversions involve five stages, and when successful result in an array of identity options; the stage labels and resulting identity exemplars are listed under Sector Five (Cross, 1991; Helms, 1990). Stage One depicts the identity to be changed and as noted above, persons operating with an alternate identity or an identity scarred by internalized oppression (REC negativity) place a person at risk for conversion—the former to replace an identity low in REC salience with one high in REC salience, and the latter as a correction for internalized oppression. Stage Two depicts the epiphany that crashes through the person's identity defenses and releases the person's felt need for worldview change. In the case of a person operating with an alternate identity, the epiphany exhausts the explanatory powers of the person's on-going identity and, in what

feels like the first time, the person comes face to face with the reality that his or her worldview minimizes the salience of race, ethnicity, and culture. It is akin to a religious encounter in which as recently as yesterday the person found little relevance in religion and notions of God, but in the aftermath of the epiphany is nearly overwhelmed with the insight that perhaps he or she has been living the wrong life. Likewise, the REC encounter effectively challenges the low-salience stance of the person's alternate identity that only moments before provided a road map for daily living. The person feels driven and pushed by a nearly unstoppable, oceanic urge to undergo identity change that requires *immersion* in all things salient to one's REC group.

Stage Three is the vortex of immersion during which the push and pull of the old and new stances execute internal warfare and identity turmoil. Because the relevance of REC salience is so new, the person is subject to binary thinking (we-they constructions), hypersensitivity to all things REC-related, a sense of guilt about the alternate identity one is trying to expunge, and a sense of exhilarating anticipation for what the self will be like once the vision is understood. Rage toward the other and dominant system play tag with guilt and anger toward the self for having lived the alternate identity for so long. These thoughts and feelings and impulsive actions combine to create an oceanic exploration of the new self.

Stage Four depicts the positive aftermath of change, the point at which the old identity is successfully dislodged and the new is habituated and internalized. The roller-coaster ride ends and the person integrates the new worldview into her or his core personality that defined the person's PI profile before the conversion. A fifth and final stage is not always discussed, but when it is included, it marks the person's attempt to translate personal change into *long-term* commitment to social justice issues.

One type of identity is not produced by conversion, rather converts show the same array of identities produced by the processes linked to Sectors One, Two, Three, and Four (monocultural, bicultural, multicultural, and intersectional). In short, moderate to high salience for REC issues and concerns has replaced the alternate frame of reference, or as the case may be, internalized oppression has either been eliminated or made more manageable. We should note that the psychology of social movements involves the simultaneous conversion of a critical mass of REC members, all within the same time period (Gerlach & Hine, 1970; Wallace, 1970). It is beyond the purview of this work to explore all the historical consequences of conversion, other than to state that some of the most famous REC artists, politicians, poets, musicians, and historical figures made their most significant contributions only after conversion.

Space does not permit a discussion of the many ways conversion can go sour, be disrupted, or aborted. However, we would be remiss not to at least mention that conversion can result in extremism, where one in-group's martyr is another group's devil incarnate.

## SECTOR SIX: RECYCLING

At this point in our journey it is possible to discern two pathways that result in REC salience (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). REC salience results from formative socialization processes and experiences that unfold between infancy and late adolescence (Sectors One thru Four in Figure 8.1). This is the modal pattern of salience acquisition and is made evident at early adulthood by a predictable array of identity exemplars:



monocultural, bicultural, multicultural, and intersectional. Let us reference this as Pattern A (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001). In the last section we discussed what amounts to the second process of acquisition, Pattern B, or REC salience achieved through identity conversion (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001).

The question we now address is how REC salience is further enhanced across the life span, independent of whether one's original REC identity was achieved through Pattern A or B? For the sake of discussion, let us refer to the REC identity resulting from either Pattern A or B as one's foundational REC identity. Another way of phrasing the question is, "*How is growth to one's foundational REC identity achieved across the life span?*" This third form of growth we will call Pattern C (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001; Parham, 1989).

The dynamics of Pattern C have been theorized by Thomas Parham (1989), and we will modify and integrate his perspective into our presentation as Sector Six of Figure 8.1. In brief, Parham reasoned that a person's foundational identity is capable of addressing a finite number of questions, but with age and experience it is inevitable for a new challenge to arise that exposes the limits of one's foundational identity. Parham states that one must effectively process the challenge to resolution. Parham likens the working-to-resolution process to a form of identity recycling for which there are five stages. Stage One is the foundational REC identity one brings to the situation, and Stage Two is the life span encounter (question, dilemma, difficult experience, or what have you) that triggers awareness that one has come face to face with an REC related challenge that is beyond the resolution powers of one's foundational REC identity. Stage Three is the period of struggle—the vortex of change—wherein the new question is explored in considerable depth. Stage Four marks the successful resolution of the challenge, and Stage Five signals inclusion of the new insight as part of one's foundational identity, resulting in its enhancement (Enhanced Foundational REC Identity). Space does not allow us to discuss instances where recycling is not successful and instead, may be short-circuited, disrupted, or aborted.

## SUMMARY

At birth a child is immediately placed within a unique human ecology (Sector One). Over time and development the child's predispositions and personological plasticity reveal a unique sense of self. Much is contingent on the worldviews held by one's parents and guardians; consequently, we sampled the identity agendas REC parents bring to the socialization of their children (Sector Two). In Sector Three we showed that all paths funnel REC-identity trajectories through the kaleidoscope that is adolescence. We avoided romanticism by stressing the unrelenting opportunity to ingest REC negativity, suggesting that, to a certain extent, it is probably commonplace for most REC youth to show some signs of exposure to and ingestion of internalized oppression. It was stressed that, as researchers, perhaps we relax too quickly in the absence of documented damage to personality in the aftermath of ingesting REC negativity, and overlook damage done to the *collective* in the form of a lessening of one's participation in the community, a diminished sense of advocacy, and a loss of hope and faith that something positive can ever be accomplished by the group itself.

We explored the fascinating phenomenon of identity resocialization achieved through conversion (Sector Five), predictably visited upon those who enter adult life with either an alternate identity or one weighted down by REC negativity. The work

ended by sifting through the press for life-long change (Sector Six). In the eye of unexpected and even unwanted predicaments, the need arises to rethink one's philosophy of life, and this is no less true of the REC dimensions of one's worldview. Though merely marking its possibility, noted were those passing through life with an eerie sameness. We favored highlighting change and variation, because it is our belief that the discussion of the modal pattern of REC-identity development unintentionally creates too linear a picture of what REC-identity development is really like. *It is the diversity of REC-identity trajectories that give voice to the humanity of REC individuals.* The constraints of race, culture, and ethnicity are matched by the amazing and multiple ways REC youth contest their social categorization.

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## CHAPTER 9

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# Everyday Experiences of Ethnic and Racial Identity among Adolescents and Young Adults

TIFFANY YIP

"I'm not usually very conscious of being Chinese. When I am conscious, it's because I have been reminded of it . . . the other day I was in a gas station, and this lady . . . came up to me and said, "Do you speak English?". I was . . . taken aback—it actually took me a minute to figure out what she was talking about. And I felt like, what is she talking about? I can barely say a few words of Chinese." p. 84

"I don't have an accent—there's nothing about me that's obviously Korean. But in people's eyes, you're always Korean. I was in a meeting . . . it was all white . . . being a minority I always count how many whites and people of color there are when I walk into a room . . . they started asking me, "How do you say this in Korean?" . . . you can't ignore being Korean . . . because others won't let you." p. 93

—KIBRIA (2002) *BECOMING ASIAN AMERICAN: SECOND GENERATION CHINESE AND KOREAN AMERICAN IDENTITIES*

### INTRODUCTION

**A**S ILLUSTRATED in the above quotes, ethnic identity is an important aspect of the self that becomes relevant in everyday contexts. Whether as a direct result of one's context (as described in the first quote) or as a combination of the individual's characteristics in a particular context (as described in the second quote), ethnic identity has the potential to become psychologically salient in daily life. Although most individuals of color would agree with the notion that their ethnic identity varies as a function of their context, and could easily cite examples of when this is true, the

empirical literature in psychology is just beginning to document such experiences. Instead, the bulk of research on ethnic and racial identity focuses primarily on identity as a stable, trait-like aspect of the self that develops over the life course, but remains stable across situations.

Drawing from existing literature on African, Asian, and Latino American populations, this chapter will propose that in order to appreciate fully the role that ethnic and racial identity has in the lives of youths of color, identity must be conceptualized and studied as both a stable and dynamic aspect of the self. Although discussed as distinct in research, stable and dynamic identities are interconnected as described in notions of state and trait personality in social psychology (Mendoza-Denton, Ayduk, Mischel, Shoda, & Testa, 2001; Mischel, 1968, 1973; Shoda & Mischel, 2000). Specifically, personality dispositions that are stable over time and across different situations are referred to as traits; however, the expression of these traits at the level of the specific situation is a function of the interaction of a person in a particular situation, referred to as the state of one's personality. Applied to the notion of ethnic and racial identity, an individual may possess an identification with an ethnic or racial group that is part of his or her stable personality, but the expression or experience of ethnic or racial identity at a specific moment in time is derived as a function of both the person and the situation. Much of the current literature in psychology focuses on trait aspects of identity, with much less attention on how this trait identity is enacted at the level of the situation. This chapter will briefly review the literature on the development of stable ethnic identity, discuss theoretical frameworks that describe variability of ethnic identity within a person and across situations, discuss methodologies for assessing dynamic identity, review the empirical support for the fluidity of ethnic identity, explore the connection between stable and dynamic identity, review the behavioral and psychological implications of ethnic identity fluidity, and conclude with future directions.

Before proceeding to integrate the qualitatively different experiences of various groups into a single chapter, it seems necessary to address differences in ethnic versus racial identity. The psychological literature includes examples of both terms used interchangeably, although research on African Americans tends to focus on racial identity. Research conducted with Asian and Latino Americans as pan-ethnic groups tends to examine racial identity, and research examining only a specific ethnic group typically examines ethnic identity—although this also varies by subdisciplines within psychology. Jean Phinney (1996) suggests that ethnic identity is culturally-based and is accompanied by



behavioral correlates such as holiday celebrations and food practices. Racial identity, on the other hand, is based on socially constructed categories derived from physical attributes such as skin color, and therefore shapes how others respond to an individual (Phinney, 1996). This distinction is an important conceptual one whose discussion is beyond the scope of this chapter (please see Phinney, 1996; Quintana, 2007 for a discussion). For the purposes of the current chapter, in discussing the existing literature on identity, *ethnic* and *racial* are used according to the term used by the author or authors whose work is being reviewed. When referring to a more general aspect of identity that would be applicable to ethnic or racial identity, *ethnic or racial identity*, *ethnic and racial identity* or *identity* is used.

#### STABLE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF ETHNIC AND RACIAL IDENTITY IN PSYCHOLOGY—TRAIT IDENTITY

The seminal work of Kenneth and Mamie Clark in the 1930s and 1940s with African American children is often cited as the beginning of research on racial identity. One goal of the Clarks' work was to examine the linkage between skin color and racial identity. To this end, the Clarks showed African American children black dolls and white dolls and asked which doll was most like them. The Clarks observed that children were largely accurate; children with darker skin were more likely to pick the black doll and those with lighter skin chose the white doll (Clark & Clark, 1940). Since then, the area of identity research has advanced considerably, particularly in the areas of theory development and measurement. For example, in the 1960s, Erik Erikson introduced a theory of identity development over the human life course describing how identity search begins in early adolescence and culminates in adulthood (Erikson, 1968). Around the same time, James Marcia (1966) operationalized the theories outlined in Erikson's identity formation model as a progressive movement through four developmental stages or statuses. Most recently, Jean Phinney (1992) applies Erikson's and Marcia's theories of identity development to the study of ethnic identity. Setting the foundation for much of today's research on ethnic and racial identity, these approaches focus on identity as an aspect of the self that develops over the life course, but once achieved, remains stable over time. As such, the current literature on ethnic and racial identity is dominated by stable, trait-like conceptualizations and operationalizations of the construct. It is important to note that while these models of identity development inherently capture change over time, the rate of change and the level at which this change occurs is different from the moment-to-moment, daily- and situation-level variation that is the focus of this chapter.

One of the most significant contributions to the study of ethnic and racial identity has been the development of multidimensional scales (Phinney, 1992; Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, & Smith, 1997). Combining developmental theory with a measurement instrument, Jean Phinney developed one of the most widely used measures of ethnic identity appropriate for use with multiple groups (Phinney, 1992). In addition, Robert Sellers and his colleagues developed a multidimensional scale to study racial identity among African Americans (Sellers et al., 1997). Conceptualizing and measuring ethnic and racial identity as multidimensional has brought forth a

more nuanced understanding of the role that identity plays in the lives of individuals of color. For example, Robert Sellers and Nicole Shelton find that African Americans who report that race is more central to their self-concept also report higher levels of racial discrimination; however, when coupled with high levels of racial private regard (i.e., feeling good about being Black), these individuals also appear to be protected against the negative psychological effects of this discrimination (Sellers & Shelton, 2003). While multidimensional approaches to the study of identity provide an important advance in the literature, they too are grounded in perspectives that view identity as a transsituationally stable aspect of the self.

#### DYNAMIC AND FLUID CONCEPTUALIZATION OF ETHNIC AND RACIAL IDENTITY IN PSYCHOLOGY—STATE IDENTITY

More recently, scholars are beginning to discuss how identity varies within a person across situations. That is, in addition to a stable trait-like component, ethnic and racial identity also has a fluid state-like component. State identity is dynamic and varies as a function of personal characteristics and features of the setting, whereas trait identity is stable, and once established, remains invariant across situations. It is becoming increasingly clear that researchers must consider both aspects of identity, because they likely interact to make ethnic and racial identity relevant for the daily lives of youths of color. That is, in order for identity to become integrated into a youth's sense of self, it must first be a salient and relevant aspect of the self.

#### THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR IDENTITY FLUIDITY

Variability in awareness of race is discussed in the psychological literature by Sellers and his colleagues (Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998). Sellers et al. (1998) delineate a model of racial identity that includes various stable components (e.g., centrality, private regard, public regard) as well as a dynamic component which they refer to as salience. Salience is defined as the situationally-specific relevance of racial identity at a particular moment in time. In other words, salience is how psychologically relevant or prominent race is for an individual at the level of a specific situation. Salience is both a function of setting characteristics (e.g., who else is in the setting, activity) as well as individual differences (e.g., centrality). For instance, high race-central individuals who make race a defining aspect of their identity may be more likely to experience salience across a variety of situations simply because they are more likely to think about their race. On the other hand, there may be situations or events which are sufficient to trigger racial identity salience for all individuals irrespective of how important their race is in general (e.g., the Million Man March—a large gathering of African Americans convened in 1995 in Washington, DC to encourage political participation). Regardless of the specific trigger for variability in racial identity salience, researchers are beginning to acknowledge that it may fluctuate across situations.

Several social psychological theories provide frameworks for understanding how any given social identity, including ethnic identity, is sharply influenced by the immediate context. These theories vary in emphasis, with each highlighting different contexts and different effects on identity. However, they share a core emphasis on the power of situations to affect identity salience. These theories include self-complexity (Linville, 1987), distinctiveness (McGuire, McGuire, Child, & Fujioka, 1978), tokenism

(Saenz, 1994), and optimal distinctiveness (Brewer, 1991). Taken together, these theories suggest that the interaction of a person in his or her immediate environment influences the extent to which social identities become salient at a particular moment in time.

For example, self-complexity theory posits that of the social identities (e.g., gender, religion, profession, race) each individual will adopt a multitude of identities to form a unified sense of self. Of these multiple identities, specific ones are "activated depending on such factors as the context and associated thoughts, their relation to current activated self-aspects, and their recency and frequency of activation" (p. 664, Linville, 1987). Applied to the study of ethnic and racial identity as just one aspect of the self, we can think about how each individual carries a repertoire of social identities (some individuals may have larger repertoires than others) and how the specific features of any given setting will determine which of those aspects of the self are activated or made salient. Related to Linville's (1987) notion of self complexity, Stryker and Serpe (1994) not only propose that individuals have an array of social identities, but that these identities are organized hierarchically. Moreover, identities that are central (i.e., higher on the identity hierarchy) are likely to become salient across situations. While these theories provide a foundation for understanding the mechanism through which identity may become activated or salient for an individual, they do not provide specific hypotheses about which and when identities should be salient.

At the level of the specific situation, distinctiveness and token/solo status theories suggest specific hypotheses for when an identity should become salient. For example, by focusing on the other people in the setting, distinctiveness theory suggests that being in the numerical minority can trigger group identification in a particular situation (Abrams, Thomas, & Hogg, 1990; McGuire et al., 1978). Indeed, the effects of situational numerical distinctiveness have been observed for gender and race (McGuire et al., 1978; McGuire, McGuire, & Winton, 1979). As a specific instance of distinctiveness, token and solo status theories suggest that situations in which one is the only representative of a social group are particularly likely to render that group identity salient (Niemann & Dovidio, 1998; Pollak & Niemann, 1998; Saenz, 1994). The effects of numerical distinctiveness seem especially appropriate for the study of race and ethnicity, since as the numerical minority, youths of color are often in the minority in their everyday settings.

Finally, optimal distinctiveness theory builds upon both self-complexity and distinctiveness theories by emphasizing both the characteristics of the person and the situation for determining which aspect of the self will be salient at a given point in time (Brewer, 1991). According to this theory, depending upon the specific characteristics of a setting, individuals will pick the identity that provides *both* a sense of belonging *and* differentiation from the others in the setting. That is, as part of social interactions, individuals seek to feel connected to, yet unique from, participants of a setting. Moreover, like distinctiveness theory, it is suggested that in-group identities are more distinctive for groups who are in the numerical minority, which is often the case for youths of color. Interestingly, however, unlike distinctiveness theory, optimal distinctiveness theory also allows for the possibility that individuals will choose an identity that also emphasizes a sense of belonging. Hence, optimal distinctiveness theory portrays individuals as complex information processors who can choose to emphasize or de-emphasize a particular social identity to the extent that it best suits an individual in any given situation. As with self-complexity theory, optimal

distinctiveness points to the importance of contextual features for determining which aspect of the self is salient at a specific point in time.

Taken together, these social psychological theories illustrate the benefits of taking a person by situation approach to studying how social identities become salient across settings. Namely, the theories reviewed here underscore the complex interplay between an individual's stable identity and characteristics of the immediate situation for how social identities become relevant at the level of the specific situation. The next section builds upon these theories by reviewing the methodological approaches to operationalizing the fluidity of ethnic identity, which is then followed by a review of the current empirical support for identity fluidity.

#### METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO ASSESSING AND ANALYZING IDENTITY FLUIDITY

After reviewing theories that predict how ethnic and racial identity becomes salient, we now turn to some of the approaches and considerations for research on the construct of identity salience. The first, and perhaps most challenging, consideration is how to study the salience of an identity without rendering that identity salient. Extant ethnic and racial identity measures make identities salient by merely investigating them. As a result, the researcher is left with the unique challenge of observing the natural patterns of identity salience without artificially inducing salience. This is a question of ecological validity—how does a researcher know that salience exists outside of the research environment?

One strategy that seems to circumvent issues of ecological validity is to take repeated measures in the participant's natural environments using daily diary or experience sampling methodologies. Daily diary techniques are employed to study associations and patterns between variables in individuals' daily lives over time (Bolger, Davis, & Rafaeli, 2003). Typically, participants complete diaries at least once, but sometimes twice (e.g., morning and evening) a day over several days or weeks. Such methods provide intensive longitudinal data, and therefore, a rich snapshot into a person's life. Daily diary methods have been used to study stress and coping processes (Bolger, Zuckerman, & Kessler, 2000), time use (Fuligni, Yip, & Tseng, 2002), mood, and behavior (Yip & Fuligni, 2002) among youths and adults.

Experience sampling methods differ from daily diaries in that they typically take several measures throughout the day. Measurements within a day can be random, evenly spaced (e.g., every hour), or event contingent (e.g., whenever a youth is alone). Regardless of the spacing of measurements, the goal of experience sampling techniques is to gather information about participants' lives in their natural contexts. Reed Larson has had particular success with this methodology in studying the everyday lives of children and adolescents (e.g., Larson, 1989; Larson & Lampman-Petratis, 1989; Larson, Richards, Sims, & Dworkin, 2001).

One interesting question that arises for all longitudinal research, but particularly for such data intensive methods, is whether repeatedly asking participants to respond to a particular question implies that the construct of interest is variable. In other words, are there unique demand characteristics associated with asking participants to report on their identity several times a day? More importantly, does this influence participants' responses? Although diary and experience sampling methods are still relatively new, and there are few studies that compare their effects on participants' responses, it does not seem that the methodology suggests to the participants that

they should respond any differently than to a traditional survey (Gleason, Bolger, & Shrout, 2001). In addition, analyses of daily diary and experience sampling studies on ethnic identity find that youths' daily- and situation-level reports vary significantly from each other (Yip, 2005). In other words, some youths report substantial variability across days and situations, whereas other youths report stability in their identity across days and situations. As such, it does not seem that the intensive repeated measures methodology suggests to the participant that the variables in the study should change from one measurement to the next.

A potential drawback of diary and experience sampling methods (at least those that do not involve any experimental manipulations) is the inability to make causal conclusions. However, this is a limitation of most survey research that is not conducted in strictly controlled laboratory settings. At the same time, however, recent studies have used previous day (Day n-1) reports to predict current day (Day n) reports to observe temporal patterns over time (Kiang, Yip, Gonzales-Backen, Witkow, & Fuligni, 2006). While this still does not necessarily allow for causal conclusions, it does bring us one step closer to understanding the temporal sequencing of variables over time. In addition, researchers have made advances in modeling the reciprocal interaction between effects of the person and the situation (Griffin, 1997). Such approaches allow for estimating how much of an individual's behaviors and beliefs can be attributed to individual differences and how much can be attributed to the context.

#### EMPIRICAL SUPPORT FOR IDENTITY FLUIDITY

The advent of daily diary and experience sampling methods has contributed to the growing body of research suggesting that ethnic and racial identity does vary within persons across time in response to contextual cues and characteristics of the person. The following section reviews the current literature in this area, citing research spanning childhood to young adulthood across a diversity of samples. The following review includes studies which employ daily diary and experience sampling techniques to capture the everyday experiences of race and ethnicity for youths and young adults of color in their natural environments. In addition, the section also includes research employing experimental and observational methods that find support for the variability in ethnic identity salience. Together, these studies illustrate the principles of self complexity, distinctiveness, and optimal distinctiveness theories, and provide vivid evidence that many features of situations can have a profound impact on what aspect of an individual's identity are salient. Moreover, the following review suggests that not only should researchers acknowledge and study the dynamic properties of identity, but that failing to do so may overlook the relevance that ethnic and racial identity have for the everyday lives of youths of color.

*School-Aged Youths* In studies of the effects of school racial composition on a spontaneous self-concept task, first-, third-, seventh-, and eleventh-grade youths were asked to, "Tell us about yourself" (McGuire et al., 1978). Responses were coded based on whether youths mentioned their race or ethnicity. Youths in this sample attended predominantly European American schools. In this sample, 17 percent of African American and 14 percent of Latino students mention their ethnic background. In contrast, only 1 percent of the European American youths mention their ethnicity, suggesting that ethnicity is less salient for students in the predominant ethnic majority. Another

study comparing the racial identity of European and African American fourth-grade youths attending three types of schools (predominately African American, European American, and racially integrated) and found that youths in integrated schools reported a more heightened sense of their ethnic and racial identity (Dutton, Singer, & Devlin, 1998). In addition, consistent with the previous study, African American children were more likely to mention race overall. Results suggest that both African and European American youths attending racially integrated schools use ethnic and racial descriptors more frequently. Taken together, it seems that racial identity is more salient for minority youth in majority European American settings; however, as predicted by distinctiveness theory, all youths who are exposed to out-group others seem to report an increase in racial identity salience.

*High School Students* As students transition into high school, identity issues seem to be just as relevant. In an observational study of Asian American students, Lee (1994) notes how context can determine whether Korean American youth felt more Korean (ethnic label) or more Asian (pan-ethnic label). Lee recounts, "students would stress their Asian identity in interracial situations and would stress their specific group affiliations within Asian circles" (pp. 418). Within the same school context, youths would stress different aspects of their identity in response to who else was in the setting. This is a good illustration of optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991, 1993), where students are keenly aware of their context and adjust their identities (i.e., ethnic versus pan-ethnic) so that they feel connected to, yet different from, the others in their setting. Also noteworthy, this finding is consistent with research that finds that youths of color can choose to construct racial/pan-ethnic (e.g., Asian, Latino) as well as ethnic (e.g., Japanese, Mexican) identities (Fuligni, Witkow, & Garcia, 2005). Therefore, it is important to consider the psychological importance of each ethnic label independently, as well as the interplay between them.

Examining how ethnic identity salience varies at the daily level, Yip and Fuligni (2002) conducted a two-week daily diary study among Chinese American high school students. In this study, adolescents reported on their ethnic identity every day at the end of the day. Interestingly, some of the daily variation in ethnic identity salience seemed to be attributable to adolescents' engagement in ethnic behaviors (e.g., speaking Chinese, eating Chinese food, watching a Chinese program). That is, on days in which adolescents reported engaging in more ethnic behaviors, they also reported feeling more Chinese (Yip & Fuligni, 2002). By focusing on behaviors rather than people in the setting, this study illustrates how the principles of self complexity theory are enacted in the everyday lives of Chinese youths. That is, as just one of many identities, ethnic identity seemed to be associated with the context of engagement in ethnic behaviors.

*College Students* There is also a growing body of literature examining identity salience among college students. Cross and Strauss (1998) discuss the everyday implications of racial identity among African Americans in terms of everyday enactments or functions. Using daily diary methods, they found five functions of racial identity: buffering, bonding, bridging, code switching, and individualism. The specific enactment of identity is a conscious decision made by each person depending upon the characteristics of each situation. For example, *bridging* occurs in situations where African Americans are interacting with individuals who are not African American and involves stressing commonalities despite being members of different racial

groups. *Bonding*, on the other hand, is typically practiced in the presence of same-race peers and involves sharing in the common experiences of being a member of one's racial group. *Buffering* occurs when an individual is the target of a racist event and helps the individual to manage the negative effects of experiences with stigma. This research has important implications for thinking about how racial identity is expressed in daily life, because it observes the complex process that individuals undergo to decide the function of their identity in a specific situation. It would be interesting to pair research on the daily enactments of racial identity with research on the stable aspect of racial identity to see if individuals who are more strongly identified with being African American are more likely to employ certain functions as opposed to others.

To find support for variation in ethnic identity salience at the level of the specific situation, I (2005) employed experience sampling methods whereby Chinese college students carried PDAs for one week and were prompted at random six times a day. As with patterns observed in a daily diary study (Yip & Fuligni, 2002), variations in ethnic identity salience at the situation level seemed to be associated with aspects of the context. For example, participants reported stronger ethnic identity salience when they were in Chinese-language settings, with more Chinese people, and when they were with family (Yip, 2005). This may be an illustration of the emphasis on belonging offered by optimal distinctiveness theory, whereby individuals choose the identity that provides a sense of connection to important others in the setting (e.g., family members).

In another study of ethnic identity salience using experience sampling methods, Aires et al. (1998) prompted minority (i.e., African, Asian, and Latino American) and White college students seven times a day for one week. Since this study was conducted at a predominately White institution, it may not be surprising that the authors found that, in general, minority students reported higher racial identity salience compared to their White counterparts. In addition, across situations White students reported increased awareness of being White when they were in the numerical minority, whereas minority students reported being more aware of their race in numerical majority settings. Also, all students reported being more aware of their race when they were in public (e.g., on campus) versus private (e.g., alone, in their room) settings. Interestingly, this study finds that racial identity salience is an everyday experience for all students, irrespective of racial background. Moreover, identity salience is a complex intersection of characteristics of the person, the immediate situation, as well as macro-level features (e.g., racial composition of the university). This study points to the need for comprehensive and rich measurement of persons, persons in context, and multiple levels of the context itself.

Using qualitative approaches, Oyserman and Sakamoto (1997) illustrate the principle of optimal distinctiveness theory in a study of Asian American students attending a predominately White institution, who were asked to list when they think about their race. Responses included examples of tokenism and distinctiveness: "when I looked around and everyone else in my class is white" (p. 447) and "I was the only Asian in the class" (p. 448), as well as majority situations "when I am in a restaurant and I look around and everyone looks like me" (p. 447), "when I realized that there are a lot of Asians in class" (p. 448), and "when I felt comfortable in mingling with Asian friends" (p. 448). This study illustrates that across situations, when students are in the numerical minority in the larger university context, both the presence and absence of same-race peers triggered racial identity salience.

Studies employing experimental methods have also observed evidence of identity salience among college students in token status conditions. Among African and European American college students, token status increased racial identity salience (Pollak & Niemann, 1998). However, African American participants reported stronger racial awareness than their European American counterparts, even in the non-solo status condition. Interestingly, racial salience did not differ according to whether the participant was explicitly told that they were selected for the study because of their race. Therefore, it seems that being in the numerical minority in a setting can increase ethnic salience for all people regardless of their racial background, even when there are no explicit cues to pay attention to race. Across situations, however, it seems that African Americans may be more likely to experience racial identity salience compared to European Americans.

In other experimental work employing token status conditions, Shelton and Sellers (2000) manipulated racial identity salience among African American females by varying the setting conditions under which participants viewed video clips of an altercation between two people. In the race salient condition, participants were paired with three European American confederates and watched a video of a European American male assaulting an African American male. For these participants, a post-test measure of stable racial identity showed that race was more central when compared to the non-race salient conditions. This study demonstrates that situations in which people of color are made to feel racially distinctive through the presence of out-group members may heighten racial salience, and in turn, influence a person's experience of that setting. Furthermore, witnessing a European American person strike an African American person likely conjured up images of racial discrimination and unfair treatment, which may also have activated racial identity salience.

Taken together, these studies represent how theories of self-complexity, distinctiveness, and optimal distinctiveness have been applied to the current empirical literature on how ethnic and racial identity become salient in everyday life. Specifically, contexts in which youths spend time make a difference for how and when ethnic and racial identity becomes salient. Interestingly, these studies consider context at multiple levels. While some studies examine the influence of macro-level contexts such as schools (e.g., Lee, 1994; McGuire et al., 1978), others examine more proximal contexts, such as the immediate situation (Shelton & Sellers, 2000; Yip, 2005). Despite the level at which context was measured, these studies find that it matters for ethnic and racial identity salience. Clearly, many of these ecological contexts are nested within each other (Bronfenbrenner, 2005); however, the current literature has yet to systematically assess how these nested contexts interact to influence identity and its salience. This topic will be revisited in the discussion of future directions at the end of the chapter.

#### ASSOCIATION BETWEEN STABLE AND DYNAMIC ETHNIC AND RACIAL IDENTITY

Currently, the literatures on stable and dynamic identity remain largely separate; however, as reviewed in the following section, these aspects of identity are two sides of the same coin. As Sellers et al. (1998) discuss, salience is simply the expression of one's stable identity at a given point in time, which is a product of the interaction between stable identity and specific features of the setting. As such, salience and stable identity share a synergistic relationship with each other. The following section



will explore this association at two levels. First, what is the association between stable and dynamic identity at a specific moment in time? Second, what is the association between stable and dynamic identity over the developmental lifespan? The latter question is more exploratory in nature since the current dearth of longitudinal research on this topic precludes any definitive conclusions. However, in many ways, this latter question is at the crux of what it means to construct a sense of self as a youth of color in United States society.

#### AT A SPECIFIC MOMENT IN TIME

Stable ethnic and racial identity can be considered a lens through which everyday experiences are filtered. Extending this metaphor, one would expect that individuals who make ethnicity or race central to their self-concept will be more likely to construe their environments in terms of ethnicity or race. Indeed, empirical data suggest that this is the case. In a previously mentioned study, Shelton and Sellers (2000) find that African Americans who reported that race was more central to their identity were more likely to interpret an ambiguous scenario as relevant to race. Other research finds that African Americans who report high centrality are also more likely to report experiencing racial discrimination (Sellers & Shelton, 2003). Simply put, reporting that race is central to one's self-concept makes it more likely that one will think about everyday experiences in terms of race.

Returning to the two quotes that begin this chapter, we find a qualitative illustration of the link between ethnic identity centrality and ethnic identity salience. Notice that the first person says he rarely thinks about his Chinese ethnicity, whereas the second person seems to be often aware of being Korean. These two examples illustrate a day-to-day difference in experiences of ethnic identity salience for individuals with low and high ethnic centrality. Consistent with findings among African Americans (Sellers & Shelton, 2003; Shelton & Sellers, 2000), the Korean individual cited in the second quote reports having high centrality and thus seems more likely to think about his ethnicity across situations. In fact, he provides an example of how he always counts the number of minorities and Whites whenever he enters a room. Moreover, he adds that being Korean is something that he never forgets because his daily interactions serve as a constant reminder of his ethnicity. In contrast, the individual cited in the first quote says that he never really thinks about being Chinese. In fact, when asked if he spoke English, it was not immediately obvious to him why he was being asked that question. Interestingly, because both individuals were of the second generation (i.e., they were born in the United States to immigrant parents), the differences between them cannot be attributed to generational status. The juxtaposition of these quotes illustrates that the variation in the extent to which individuals identify with their ethnic group as a stable aspect of self-concept has implications for their experiences of ethnic identity variability (i.e., ethnic identity salience). It then follows that two individuals of the same ethnic group can experience the same objective setting in psychologically different ways depending on their overall propensity to think about themselves in terms of their ethnicity.

Empirical support for this contention has been found in a recent study using experience sampling methods, where individuals are repeatedly and randomly prompted throughout their day to answer questions about their ethnic identity salience. Using a person by situation approach to understand the influence of context and stable identity on feelings of salience, I (2005) found that in the presence of

ethnicity-relevant cues across situations (e.g., being with same ethnicity others, being in Chinese-language settings), ethnic identity was more salient for individuals who reported that being Chinese was a central component of their identity. In other words, individuals who reported high centrality with respect to being Chinese (as assessed by stable measures of ethnic centrality at the beginning of the study), reported feeling more Chinese when they were in situations that reminded them of their Chinese identity. Consistent with this finding, in a sample of African, Asian, Latino, and European American college students, Aires et al. (1998) employed experience sampling methods to randomly prompt students seven times a day for one week and found that participants for whom race was more central were more aware of their race across situations. In addition, they also observed that these same participants were also more variable in their awareness of their race across situations. Again we find evidence to suggest that individuals who make ethnicity important to their identity are more likely to construe their everyday contexts in terms of their ethnicity. Taken together, the current literature points to the interplay between characteristics of the setting and the person, and how they interact to produce feelings of ethnic identity salience at a particular moment in time.

#### ACROSS THE DEVELOPMENTAL LIFESPAN

To date, the question of how ethnic identity salience and stable identity are related across development remains one that requires further empirical investigation. Yet several related bodies of research lend themselves to predictions about the association between stable and dynamic identity over time. Taking a lifespan perspective, we know that children become aware of ethnicity and race as young children (Quintana, 1998). With this knowledge of the social categories of ethnicity and race comes an understanding of which category a child is a member. Through the course of development, particularly in a society where ethnicity and race are highly significant, a child is reminded of his or her membership in his or her particular ethnic and racial categories. Experiences of salience can either be intentional (e.g., parental ethnic and racial socialization) or unintentional (e.g., strangers touching an African American child's hair); yet, they likely accumulate over time to help shape what will develop into that child's sense of stable ethnic and racial identity. That is, repeated salience of ethnicity and race is likely the mechanism through which a stable sense of ethnic and racial identity is formed. In this context, the study of ethnic and racial identity salience becomes particularly important as a process for understanding what it means to construct an identity as a child of color. In the subsequent paragraphs, literature that might inform how salience is associated with the development of stable identity is explored. Specifically, a theoretical model of how everyday events trigger cycles of identity search is reviewed. In addition, research on racial socialization is discussed as parents' proactive attempts to facilitate a child's reflections and feelings about being a child of color.

In their model of African American racial identity development over the lifespan, Cross and Fhagen-Smith (2001) discuss the role of encounters. Encounters are single events that are emotionally significant, and somehow inconsistent with a person's current self concept, that initiate a search for self with respect to race. Such events include racially relevant experiences—for example, being the target of racial discrimination—as well as experiences that inherently have little to do with race, such as becoming a parent. Regardless of the trigger of the encounter, the

individual embarks on a search for the meaning of race and the role it plays in his or her life. It is noteworthy that an encounter can occur anywhere in the lifespan, and therefore is not contingent upon whether the individual has formally achieved an integrated sense of self. An encounter necessarily requires that race is made salient, not because of the nature of the encounter per se, but because of the ensuing process that it initiates. As such, racial salience becomes part of the search for the meaning of one's identity.

Thinking about this process from a developmental perspective, both the timing (within the developmental lifespan) and the frequency of encounters (and thereby salience) would seem to have implications for how an individual resolves his or her search for the meaning of his or her racial identity. For example, encounters occurring during developmental periods that are normatively characterized by identity search (e.g., adolescence and young adulthood) may be particularly powerful in terms of affecting the trajectory of one's racial identity search and development. Indeed, in a 5-year longitudinal study of ethnic identity exploration among Black and Latino adolescents, reports of racial discrimination were associated with a subsequent increase in ethnic identity exploration over time (Pahl & Way, 2006). On the other hand, encounters that occur later in life, when one has likely already experienced the process of identity search, may have less of an impact on the overall trajectory of that identity process. The experience of having already embarked upon and resolved an identity search may serve as a foundation for future identity searches, and thus require less identity exploration during subsequent identity searches. In addition, the frequency of encounters may also play a role in how stable identity develops. One might expect that frequent encounters, particularly race-relevant encounters, would lead to the conclusion that race is an unavoidably significant aspect of one's life and thereby render race a defining and central aspect of the self. On the other hand, infrequent encounters may lead to the opposite conclusion: If race is seldom relevant in one's daily life, then the individual may decide that race ought not to be a key component of identity. One might also postulate an interaction between timing and frequency of encounters such that high frequency of encounters during key developmental periods may be especially influential for identity development.

Of course, identity development is not a passive process whereby a child waits for encounters to occur. Instead, key figures such as parents and primary caregivers often play an active role in the development of a child's racial identity. Research on racial socialization finds that, indeed, parents do serve as important and proximal socializing agents when it comes to race (Hughes, 2003; Hughes & Chen, 1999; Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Hughes, Rodriguez et al., 2006; Quintana & Vera, 1999). In research on African American and Latino families, parents report imparting various messages to their children about what it means to be a person of color in the United States and providing strategies for how to cope with these unique challenges (O'Brien Caughy, Nettles, O'Campo, & Lohrfink, 2006). The process of socializing a child about race requires that the parent make race, and the child's membership in a racial group, salient.

As with the previous discussion about the role of encounters for identity development, it seems that both the timing and frequency of socialization practices may have implications for a youth's identity development. For example, discussions around race that occur during key periods of identity development may have more influence on how central race becomes in a child's identity than discussions that take

place outside of these developmental periods. In addition, parents who speak more frequently with their children about how everyday events are related to race seem to be more likely to raise children who choose to make race important to their identity (McHale et al., 2006). Racial socialization and developmental period may interact. Specifically, the level of parent racial socialization during development periods already marked by an identity search may be particularly influential for children's ethnic identity development. Indeed, research suggests that parents' racial socialization messages vary as a function of a child's age (Hughes & Chen, 1999; Hughes & Chen, 1997; McHale et al., 2006).

## RESEARCHING THE IMPLICATIONS OF ETHNIC AND RACIAL IDENTITY SALIENCE

Drawing from the psychological literature on ethnic and racial identity, the next section examines some of the implications of salience for everyday life. Specifically, this section focuses on research examining the variability and fluidity of ethnic identity and its implications for mental health and behavioral outcomes. Two bodies of research are reviewed: research on stereotype threat and on multicultural minds. Each of these subject areas provide examples of some of the implications of making one's racial or ethnic identity salient. In both cases, however, the researchers do not measure ethnic identity directly by employing the multidimensional identity scales discussed earlier in this chapter; rather, they make salient an individual's membership in a racial or ethnic group and measure the subsequent consequences. Interestingly, even without measuring stable identity (or even the salience of that identity, for that matter), these literatures find very robust and consistent patterns for the behavioral correlates of ethnic and racial identity salience across different ethnic and age groups. Even so, research in this area discusses the importance of identity salience as a mechanism for its effects (e.g., Good, Aronson, & Inzlicht, 2003).

### SALIENCE AS A MECHANISM FOR HOW IDENTITY BECOMES RELEVANT IN DAILY LIFE

As has been suggested in this chapter, salience is the mechanism through which stable identity becomes relevant in daily life. That is, stable ethnic and racial identity have implications for everyday experiences only to the extent to which it becomes salient as an aspect of everyday activities. A good example of this comes from the research on the impact of stereotype threat. Stereotype threat is the effect on performance in the stereotyped domain when a stereotyped identity is made salient (Steele & Aronson, 1995). Stereotype threat is a situation-level phenomenon that affects individuals in their daily lives. Research in this area has found that simply labeling a task as diagnostic of intellectual ability is sufficient to depress African American students' test scores. That is, rendering one's ethnic or racial identity salient, either by asking participants to indicate their group membership (Sinclair, Hardin, & Lowery, 2006), manipulating the others in the setting (Inzlicht & Ben-Zeev, 2000), using a cover story plus priming (Ambady, Paik, Steele, Owen-Smith, & Mitchell, 2004), or invoking a relevant racial or ethnic stereotype (e.g., McKown & Weinstein, 2003; Steele & Aronson, 1995) is sufficient to observe the stereotype threat effect. Although racial identity salience is not directly measured in any of these

studies, manipulation checks where participants are asked to complete ambiguous word fragments with the first word that comes to mind find that participants in the experimental condition are more likely to think of words that are related to race. This suggests that race was salient, and may even be the mechanism through which students' scores were reduced.

Although the first demonstrations of the effects of stereotype threat were observed among African American college students, research has since been conducted with adolescents, young children, and other ethnic and racial groups finding similar results. For example, Good et al. (2003) observed the stereotype threat effect among Latino adolescents. Ambady, Shih, Kim, and Pittinsky (2001) observed the effects among Asian American children as young as kindergarten through second grade. Moreover, Shih, Pittinsky, and Ambady (1999) find that for Asian American women, priming an Asian identity bolsters performance on math tasks, while priming gender leads to underperformance. The developmental research on this topic is beginning to elucidate some of the mechanisms for the stereotype threat effect. For example, the importance of stereotype consciousness for stereotype threat effects are highlighted in a study of African American and Latino school-aged children that found awareness of the negative stereotypes about one's group is a prerequisite for the effects of stereotype threat (McKown & Weinstein, 2003). Taken together, the body of literature on stereotype threat is a compelling illustration of the psychological and behavioral impact that identity salience (coupled with societal stereotypes) can have for children and adults from a diversity of groups.

Research in social psychology on multiculturalism also finds interesting behavioral correlates of making one of individuals' many identities salient. In a study of Chinese bilinguals in Hong Kong, Yang, and Bond (1980) found that the language in which a survey was administered influenced the values participants endorsed by stressing certain aspects of their identity. Surprisingly, respondents were more likely to subscribe to Chinese values when they completed the questionnaire in English than they were when they completed the same questionnaire in Chinese. In a study of Chinese biculturals, Hong, Morris, Chiu, and Benet-Martinez (2000) found that participants' willingness to endorse traditional Chinese values differed as a function of whether they were shown American primes (e.g., American flag, Capitol building) or Chinese primes (e.g., Chinese dragon, Chinese opera singer) in the laboratory. In addition, they found that the cultural primes influence biculturals' attribution of others' behaviors. For example, in the Chinese prime condition, participants are more likely to attribute another's behavior to external pressures and conditions; whereas in the American prime condition, participants are more likely to make internal attributions (e.g., personality) for the observed behavior. Cultural identity priming also seems to make a difference for how individuals view themselves. Comparing Chinese to American individuals, Hong, Ip, Chiu, Morris, and Menon (2001) observed that when cultural identity is activated, Chinese individuals are more likely to describe themselves in terms of the duties and obligations that shape their identity, whereas American individuals are more likely to describe themselves in terms of their rights and privileges. Interestingly, no differences were observed when cultural identity was not activated. In these studies, priming of one's cultural identities served to make that identity salient and had consequences for participants' behaviors and beliefs, as well as causal attributions for one's own and others' behaviors.

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Studying the ways in which ethnic and racial identity is salient and enacted in the daily lives of adolescents and youths is a new and exciting area of research. By studying these processes at the daily and situation level, we really begin to understand what it means to be a youth of color living in the United States. While the current literature begins to fill some of the gaps in our knowledge, many questions remain. One interesting future direction is exploring whether, like stable identity, dynamic identity is multidimensional. Current research suggests that how prominent or salient identity is at a particular moment in time can vary, but can the way one feels about being a member of his or her group (private regard) or how one thinks that others view his or her group (public regard) also vary from situation to situation? And if dynamic identity is indeed multidimensional, then how would researchers embark on studying its psychometric properties, and would these properties vary across individuals with differing levels of stable identity?

Another issue that warrants further consideration is context. To date, researchers seem to measure context at only one level (e.g., school, or immediate situation); however, as reviewed in this chapter, current research illustrates that context at multiple levels makes a difference for feelings of ethnic and racial identity salience. Future research should consider a more systematic and comprehensive approach to the study of context by measuring its effects at multiple levels, to examine how these levels interact with each other to produce identity salience. For example, youths who are in the numerical minority in their neighborhood may be more likely to report identity salience when they are in the numerical majority in their immediate situations. On the other hand, youths who are in the numerical majority in their school settings may report identity salience when they are in the numerical minority in their immediate setting. The current literature would suggest this to be the case, however future studies are needed to test these hypotheses.

In addition to constructing better measures of the objective context, it is also important to tap the social climate of these contexts. What is missing from purely objective measures of context are the subtleties and interactive nature of human contact. For example, a researcher might watch children on the playground and observe a racially heterogeneous group of children as a mixed-race setting. However, the lived experience and meaning of the children in that setting would likely be very different if all the White children were congregated in one section of the playground while all the children of color were in another section, as opposed to a situation in which all the children were observed to intermingle regardless of race. Future research needs to begin to incorporate these qualitative differences into its assessment of the impact of context on identity salience. One suggestion for doing this is to employ mixed-method approaches to combine quantitative with qualitative techniques in future research. For example, one could pair experience sampling methods with actual photographs of the context in which participants completed their reports.

Another aspect of context that needs further attention is the influence of sociocultural context. To date, much of the research on ethnic and racial identity salience has focused on Asian and African American adolescent and young adult populations. The importance of including different groups in the study of ethnic and racial identity fluidity is premised on acknowledging the importance of sociocultural contexts on identity development (Quintana et al., 2006). For example, since not all groups speak a language other than English, one might not expect language to be a contextual

correlate of identity salience for all individuals of color. On the other hand, since family is arguably the foundation of one's ethnic identity, it may be likely that all individuals report increased salience in the presence of family. The importance of culture and context also suggest the need to consider the experiences of European Americans. While still the majority in the overall United States population, in many large, urban areas, such as New York City, there are certain neighborhoods where this is no longer the case. As such, it is equally important to study identity salience among European Americans.

Related to increasing the representation of other ethnic and racial minority groups in the current literature on salience, an important distinction that was noted in the Lee (1994) ethnographic study was between racial/pan-ethnic and ethnic identity. For Asian, Latino, and African Americans, there are some individuals who identify both with being a member of a racial/pan-ethnic (e.g., Latino) and an ethnic group (e.g., Mexican). For these individuals, it would be fascinating to explore when each of these identities is salient, and how often both identities are salient. Because the origin of racial/pan-ethnic groups is founded upon social constructions (Espiritu, 1992), their salience may have very different triggers as compared to an ethnic identity that grounded in the origins of one's ancestors. By extension, it would also be important to then examine the psychological implications of the salience of a racial/pan-ethnic versus an ethnic identity.

Finally, longitudinal studies of the association between stable and fluid identity with various age groups are sorely needed. With such studies, we could begin to understand the relationship between stable and dynamic ethnic and racial identity over time. It seems possible that as youths experiences of state identity influence the development of trait identity; that is, how one experiences race and ethnicity in his or her daily life affects how he or she incorporates race and ethnicity into the construction of his or her overall identity. As adults, however, the current literature suggests that one has already undergone at least one search for the meaning of identity, and perhaps as such, trait identity is more likely to shape experiences of state identity. Only with longitudinal studies can we begin to test these hypotheses.

## CONCLUSIONS

This chapter concludes with an analogy between race and H<sub>2</sub>O that summarizes many of its key points. Troy Duster, a sociologist with expertise in race relations, likens the various properties of racial identity to states of matter. Duster states that, like H<sub>2</sub>O, race exists in many forms. In one form, H<sub>2</sub>O can exist in a solid form (i.e., ice); with a little heat, that solid form transforms into a liquid (i.e., water); yet with a little more heat, that liquid can become a vapor (i.e., condensation). So while the components of H<sub>2</sub>O remain invariant across these transformations, its physical properties do not. Importantly, H<sub>2</sub>O can also move through these states of matter an infinite number of times; that is, although existing in various forms, it never disappears. In the same way, race can exist for the person in a solid state (e.g., as the target of a racial slur, one may be "hit over the head"), in a liquid state (e.g., being at a mixed-race party and interacting with diverse individuals), and as a vapor (e.g., subtle, or even ambiguous, experiences such as where one is seated in a restaurant, which may be construed as racism by some but not others). This analogy of race as H<sub>2</sub>O has interesting applications when thinking about how ethnicity and race are relevant for the everyday lives of youths of color. As a dominant aspect of social interactions in

the United States, ethnicity and race are omnipresent, and yet, at a particular moment in time, can take on one of many physical forms, and hence vary in the degree to which is relevant.

Constructing a sense of self as a youth of color in a society that places much emphasis on race and color is likely a unique challenge for those growing up in the United States. And yet, research suggests that youths of color are as well adjusted as their nonminority peers (Crocker, Luhtanen, Blaine, & Broadnax, 1994; Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1997). As researchers, it is important to depict an accurate and rich story about what it is like to be a youth of color in this country. Studying the ways in which ethnic and racial identity becomes relevant in the daily lives of youth is an important tool for understanding the lives of these youths. Identity formation is an involved and multifaceted developmental task; combine with that the additional complexities of race and ethnicity, and we begin to appreciate the task that youths of color face in the United States. By focusing on the everyday experiences of race and ethnicity, we can begin to delve into the intricacies of what it means and what it feels like to try to make sense of oneself in the broader United States context.

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## CHAPTER 10

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# Racial Identification among Multiracial Youth: Implications for Adjustment

MELISSA R. HERMAN

### INTRODUCTION

**I**N 1980, 1.9 percent of children born in the United States had parents who were not of the same race. Since that time, there has been a biracial baby boom in which the percentage of multiracial births increased to 5.3 percent in 2000 (National Center for Health Statistics, 2002). The 2000 U.S. Census—which brought multiracial identification to national attention through a policy change that allowed respondents to check multiple boxes on the race item—also identified multiracial people as one of the fastest-growing populations. In 2000, there were 2,856,886 multiracial youth (persons under age 18), comprising 3.95 percent of all youth in the United States. Since the overturn of antimiscegenation laws in 1967, intermarriage for all racial groups has increased dramatically and will probably continue to rise (Lee & Bean 2004). With 41 percent of the multiracial population currently under 18 (compared with only 25 percent of the monoracial population being under 18), multiracial youth are a growing demographic whose developmental experiences are relevant to the experiences of all youth growing up in a multiethnic society.

In this chapter I cover both the determinants of racial identification among multiracial youth and its implications for their mental health, achievement, and self-esteem. The majority of research on racial identity examines monoracial people and considers racial identity development as a

process that depends on a single race or ethnic group (Cross, 1985; Omi & Winant, 1994; Phinney, 1992). Missing is a sense of the difference between ethnic identity (the set of roles and behaviors a person chooses to exhibit concerning his or her connection with a particular culture), racial identification (the group or groups a person uses to identify him- or herself racially), and racial ancestry (the geno-phenotypical racial group(s) which make up a person's biological family tree). Unlike monoracial youth, multiracial adolescents' ethnic identities and racial identifications are neither singular nor fixed (Root, 1997). Being forced to identify a single race category is an agonizing and all-too-common dilemma for multiracial people (Herman, 2004), but to date there is little research examining the effects of this dilemma on adjustment.

The goals for this chapter are, first, to describe the literature on identity development among biracials as a way of challenging the notion of race as a single and fixed aspect of identity. Racial identity develops more slowly for multiracial youth relative to monoracial youth, and their sense of racial boundaries is much less rigid—particularly those who grow up in mixed-race households (Johnson, 1992). Theories of biracial identity development focus on the phases and/or tasks that youth typically complete or accomplish on their way to establishing their identities, with variations for different racial mixes.

This first goal leads logically to the second goal, which is to examine the developmental implications of having what Tiffany Yip (Chapter 9, this volume) calls *flexible* racial identity. Understanding these implications for multiracial youth may even shed some light on the racial identity development of monoracial youth. In keeping with my two goals, I organize the literature into two sections: one on identity development, and the other on the impact of identity on child and adolescent outcomes. Within the section on identity development, I include three subsections. The first describes general theories of multiracial identity development, the second provides details about specific race combinations (part-Black, part-Asian, part-Hispanic, part-American Indian<sup>1</sup>), and the third explores the connections between context and racial identification. In the section on the impact of identity on developmental outcomes, I discuss the distinction between ancestry and racial identity for multiracial youth and explore the ways that context mediates the identification-development link among multiracial youth.

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<sup>1</sup>I do not include a part-White group as Caucasians are the racial group in the United States that is most likely to intermarry, and so most of the multiracial people discussed in the four multiracial subsections are likely to be part-White.

## IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

The first aim of this section is to examine how identity develops generally among multiracial youth. Following this, I highlight specific features of the developmental process across various racial combinations and then describe some general findings about identification among multiracial youth.

### THEORIES OF MULTIRACIAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

There are many theories of minority identity development that have contributed to multiracial identity development. A few early scholars used multiracial people as an example of social marginality (Park, 1928; Stonequist, 1935). This "Marginal Man" theory took a deficit model approach, arguing that multiracial people were perceived as marginal by both groups, and therefore stigmatized by all monoracial people. This treatment allegedly left them troubled in spirit and lackluster in attainment. To support the theory, Park (1928) used multiracial White-Indian mixes where reservation politics and economic barriers off the reservation did indeed hamper even those mixed race individuals who might have had a healthy sense of self. Though Stonequist's and Park's Marginal Man theory may have been applicable to multiracial people in the early and mid-1900s, current affirmative action laws and other social norms have changed the social context sufficiently that the Marginal Man theory no longer accurately depicts the status of multiracial people. However, its corollary that mixed race people struggle with identity and relationships remains common among lay-people, particularly in public discussions of the merits of interracial dating and childbearing (Williams, 2006). Even among psychologists and sociologists, there is sometimes an assumption that multiracial people suffer from a host of harmful social challenges, including the experience of dissonance between one's own chosen identity and the identity imposed by social norms (Nakashima, 1992; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2001), the need to justify one's identity choice (Gaskins, 1999), and the lack of congruent (same-race) peer groups, parents, or other role models (Renn, 2000).

After Park and Stonequist's original work on multiracial people, there was a dearth of attention to the topic for some 40 years. In the 1970s, when the biracial baby boom began (Root, 1996), theories of biracial identity and development focused on adaptation and de-emphasized pathology. Research and theory from the 1980s and 1990s, for example, suggests that multiracials and monoracials have equivalent, though slightly different, racial identity development processes (Morten & Atkinson, 1983; Thornton & Wason, 1996). However, the paucity of data made serious empirical tests of these theories impossible. Most datasets of this era contained 25 or fewer cases of a single racial mix (usually Black and White). Furthermore, there was criticism that these studies did not consider the issues of choosing between identities or asserting a multiracial identity in a world that was either unaware of multiraciality or only interested in sanctioning it rather than understanding it (Daniel, 2002).

The latest theories are focused on multiracials as a unique group for whom identity can be fluid across time and contexts. These theories address the conflict and guilt associated with choosing one identity over others and the resolution of these conflicts as a person comes to accept, integrate, and assert all parts of his or her identity. I have divided these theories into three types: developmental phase theories that are loosely based on Piaget's cognitive developmental stages (see Table 10.1); task

**Table 10.1**  
Stages of identity development among multiracials.

	Early awareness	Choice	Struggle	Strategize	Late stages
Poston, 1990	Personal identity; young children for whom membership in an ethnic group is just becoming salient. Child's sense of self is independent of race, though s/he is not unaware of race.	Choice of group categorization: choose an identity, usually of one ethnic group, sometimes a biracial identity.	Enmeshment/denial: confusion and guilt over having to choose one identity over others, disloyalty for rejecting one parent's culture, etc. May be accompanied by lack of acceptance from one or more groups. Person must resolve anger/guilt and learn to appreciate both parental cultures or stay at this level.	Appreciation: of chosen identity and broadening of racial group orientation.	Integration: experience wholeness, recognize and value all of their identities.
Jacobs, 1992	Pre-color constancy: play and experimentation with color (age 0–4.5 years)	Post-color constancy: value-free racial labels based on skin color (age 4.5–8 years).			Biracial identity: understanding that race is determined by parentage, but is correlated with skin color.

	Early awareness	Choice	Struggle	Strategize	Late stages
Kich, 1992		Initial awareness of differences and dissonance between self-presentation and others' perceptions.	Struggle for acceptance from others.	Transition from a questionable, sometimes devalued sense of self to one in racial self-concept is highly valued and secure.	Acceptance of self as a person with biracial and bicultural identity.
Root, 1999	Passively accept the ascribed identity (hypodescent rules apply)	Identify with both race groups or claim the labels of biracial or mixed.	Defend one's identity against hypodescent rules.	Actively choose to identify with a single race group. Learn and use coping strategies if the chosen race is inconsistent with hypodescent.	Actively choose to identify as multiracial; no longer feel marginalized by single race groups because the new reference group is multiracial.
Collins, 2000	Generalized identity process of assimilation and accommodation.	Questioning and confusion (what am I?)	Distancing and separation (attempting to define oneself), selecting one race over another (usually White), and suppressing or denying the unchosen race.	Infusion and exploration: reaching out to integrate the unchosen race, moving away from dominant culture toward the previously unchosen culture.	Resolution and acceptance: learn to regulate the self as a biracial self and develop a double identity.



**Table 10.2**

Tasks of identity development for multiracials.

Erikson, 1968	Form a stable identity by developing a personal sense of self-esteem and uniqueness.	Gain autonomy and independence from parents.	Relate to same and opposite sex peers and choose a career
Gibbs, 1989	Integration of dual racial and cultural identities while developing a positive self-concept.	Manage conformity expectations despite rejection by "both" groups, an unusual appearance, and odd family background.	Establish positive peer relations, sexual identity, and career options.
Herring, 1995	Integration of dual racial and cultural identities while developing a positive self-concept.	Integration of identifications into a consistent racial identity	Establish positive peer relations, sexual identity, and career options.

theories based on Erikson's identity development model (see Table 10.2), and a third group of specifically multiracial identity theories (see Table 10.3).

The phase theories (Poston, 1990; Jacobs, 1992; Kich, 1992; Root, 1999; and Collins, 2000) typically begin with a stage I call *awareness*, which describes young children's experiences of personal identity: becoming aware of skin tone and its connection with group membership. This phase includes passive acceptance of the racial categorization dictated by hypodescent.<sup>2</sup> The second phase, which I have labeled *choice*,

**Table 10.3**

Choices &amp; influences on racial identification among multiracials.

Rockquemore & Brunnsma, 2001	Different types of identity for mixed race people: 1) singular identity (single race), 2) border identity (exclusively biracial), 3) protean identity (sometimes one race, sometimes the other, sometimes biracial), 4) transcendent identity (no racial identity).
Root, 1999	Inherited influences, traits, and social environments predict identity. For example, phenotype, family and neighborhood environment, birth order, and personality.
Poston, 1990	Factors affecting choice include: status of parents' groups, peer and neighborhood demographics, parenting style, peer social support, physical appearance, language use, cultural knowledge, age, political involvement, and personality.
Herman, 2004	Factors affecting racial identification among multiracial youth: physiognomy, importance of ethnic identity, and race of co-resident parent(s). Also, for part-Hispanic youth, are the racial composition and socioeconomic status of the neighborhood and the racial composition of the school.

<sup>2</sup>Hypodescent is a system in which a mixed race person is assigned to the group with the lowest social value (Root, 1996).

typically includes a growing awareness of cultural differences based on skin tone, along with an internal struggle to embrace internally, and claim publicly, a particular racial identity. This identity may be monoracial or multiracial. The third phase is called struggle because it involves confusion and guilt over having chosen a particular identity, and by doing so, rejecting others such as those of parents, grandparents, siblings, and peers of a given race group. Multiracial youth may struggle over claiming an identity that is inconsistent with the norm of hypodescent, either because their chosen identity is multiracial, or because their chosen monoracial identity is not consistent with the norm of hypodescent. This phase can also feature the external work of defending the choice of a racial identity that does not fit the hypodescent norm. The fourth phase is one of *strategizing* ways to accomplish or resolve the struggle stage by convincing significant others that the choice is a legitimate one, and/or by broadening one's own conception of racial identity to include context or time-dependent racial identity. The final phase of biracial identity development includes *integrating* all of one's identities and accepting oneself as a multiracial person whose identity is not compromised or determined by others. There may be recognition of multiracial as the appropriate reference group, and/or a sense that all of one's different racial identities are valuable.

The task theories (Gibbs, 1987; Herring, 1995), based on Erikson's (1968) general theory of youth identity development, focus on the particular challenges of racial identity development for multiracial people. Erikson argued for the formation of a stable (and monoracial) identity by accomplishing tasks such as gaining autonomy and independence from parents, developing positive peer relations, sexual identity, and career options. The multiracial task theorists argue for a flexible but integrated identity that changes as needed over time and across context. While Eriksonian theory might consider such variability an unhealthy sign, the multiracial theorists recognize it as a strategy for negotiating sundry social expectations and multiple truthful ways to identify. Thus, to the traditional Eriksonian developmental tasks (establish peer relations, sexual identity, and career choice), the multiracial task theorists add the tasks of integrating racial identities and managing others' expectations for racial identification.

The theories of multiracial identification have no root in traditional developmental theory because monoracial adolescents, about whom the traditional theories were written, do not make racial identification choices. Root's (1999) model is neither a stage theory nor a task theory; it argues that peoples' identities are fluid and shaped by inherited influences, traits, and context. Inherited influences include birthplace, names, family values, phenotype, languages used at home, and parents' racial identities. Trait influences include temperament, social skills, talents, and coping skills. Social interactions in different contexts determine identity at a given moment because such interactions allow for the communication of norms of belonging to—and not belonging to—various social groups. These contexts include home, work and school, community groups, peer groups, and groups in which one is a stranger. Groups in which one is a stranger are particularly important because an individual's construction of him or herself is often influenced by encountering a new social context whose social norms differ from his or her own. Root (1999) explains how all of these influences are filtered through the lenses of generation, class, gender, and history of race relations to produce a variable but healthy racial and ethnic identity.

Poston's (1990) model is similar to Root's, but it also explains how the relative status of various ethnic groups in a person's background affect her or his choice of racial identity, along with physical appearance, language, age, and political involvement. Poston's and Root's models consider physiological factors as well as environmental

factors at the micro (family, peer group), mezzo (school, neighborhood), and macro (societal, national) levels. These two theories are designed to capture the identity formation of people of all racial mixes.

In contrast, Rockquemore and Brunnsma's (2001) model focuses exclusively on how the relatively small population of Black-White people identify. Despite its small size, this is a population worth special attention because of the social distance between Blacks and Whites in North American society and the resulting social pressures on part-Black youth to identify as Black (Turner, 1997; Weisman, 2001). Such pressures are either much less evident or nonexistent for other race groups (Daniel, 2002). Rockquemore and Brunnsma's model features four identity types: singular (Black or White), border (biracial), protean (sometimes Black, sometimes White), and transcendent (no race). They find that the "one-drop rule" defines who is Black in ways that constrain part-Black people, even those with only one Black grandparent or great grandparent, to identify as Black. The one-drop rule is enforced by Whites and Blacks alike—in order to maintain political and social group strength, the Black community has developed an interest in maintaining this oppressive rule (Davis, 1991). In contrast to part-Blacks, Rockquemore and Brunnsma argue that non-Black multiracial people are not subjected to the one-drop rule, and their racial background becomes analogous to a symbolic ethnicity.

The theories of multiracial identity development were largely written to fill gaps in theories of monoracial minority identity that had focused on the particular racial and cultural issues of distinct groups. However, most of the issues facing monoracial minority youth are also faced by most multiracial youth. Except for those who look and act White, multiracial youth face ethnic discrimination from Whites. All multiracial youth face ethnic discrimination from ethnic groups who think they are not "ethnic enough" to be legitimate members of their group. However, many multiracial youth are part-White, and some benefit from the privileges and networks of the White parts of their families, while others are cut off from all or most of their White relatives (Williams, 1995). Like the varieties of monoracial minority youth, multiracial youth develop in incredibly varied ethnic and cultural contexts.

While the racial identification choice theories described above were all developed using interviews with open-ended racial identification questions, others have tested these theories using survey data and closed-ended racial identification items. Open-ended items are more nuanced, and more challenging to summarize and compare. Closed-ended items, while they are somewhat limited uni-dimensional measures of racial identity, are nonetheless useful for two reasons. First, they are common on government forms, school and job applications, medical records, and affirmative action forms. Second, because of their ubiquity in the formal routines of life, these racial designations have great power to shape identity away from the survey context.

Survey research on multiracial populations shows that racial identification is associated most clearly with physiognomy, importance of ethnic identity, and race of co-resident parents (Herman, 2004; Brunnsma, 2005). However, the racial makeup of various social networks is also associated with racial identity in the following ways: Multiracial youth who live in wealthier and Whiter neighborhoods are more likely to identify as White, while those who attend predominantly White schools and are members of ethnic social crowds are more likely to identify as non-White. Some of these relationships may be endogenous—a youth's racial identity may influence parents' choice of a school or neighborhood with a particular racial composition and it is likely that racial identity is associated with a youth's choice of peers.

#### DETAILS ON PARTICULAR RACE COMBINATIONS

Scholars examining multiracial identity have been confronted with many challenges in analyzing the process through which mixed-race individuals form racial identity. The challenges arise partly because patterns of racial self-identification differ by the component race groups (Herman, 2004).

*Part-Black* Although Black-White people make up one of the smaller percentages of people who identify as multiracial (12 percent of all multiracial people in the 2000 Census, compared to 17 percent for White-Native, 13 percent for White-Asian, and 35 percent for Black-Native), the Black-White multiracial population is the one most well-researched in the literature. Blacks are the largest racial minority group in the United States<sup>3</sup> and have the longest history of interracial unions. Indeed, the Census Bureau estimates that over 75 percent of all African Americans are multiracial at some point in their ancestries (Daniel, 2002). However, Blacks have the lowest rate of identifying as multiracial in the 2000 Census (4.7 percent)<sup>4</sup> and the lowest rate of intermarriage with Whites (Qian, 1997).

People are fascinated with Black-White mixes, in part because White is the racial group most known for requiring an unmixed heritage to qualify for membership, while Black is the minority group to which the one-drop rule has most often been applied. In terms of social distance theory, these two groups bridge the greatest social distance<sup>5</sup> and are therefore the most incongruous and intriguing (Park, 1928; Stonequist, 1935).<sup>6</sup> The one-drop rule, also known as the norm of hypodescent, requires that children born with “even one drop” of Black blood in their bodies be labeled and treated as Black. The rule is a vestige of slavery that allowed White slave owners to take Black or mixed-race slaves as mistresses and then count their children as assets. These children were raised in the Black community, embraced as Black, and legally required to identify as Black during slavery, leaving a social norm of hypodescent well after emancipation.

Because of the history of the one-drop rule, multiracial identity for part-Blacks is a relatively new concept that challenges entrenched cultural and political norms. Those who wish to assert a multiracial identity must combat not only institutionalized racism, but also the American understanding of race as a fixed part of identity (Dalmage, 2000). A study by Hirschfeld (1995) showed that adolescents and adults both view Black-White biracial children as Black rather than White. Moreover, they expect children of mixed race couples to look more Black than White. Younger children do not have such fixed perceptions or expectations (Hirschfeld, 1995).

<sup>3</sup>According to Census 2000 figures, non-Hispanic Blacks are the largest minority race group (N=33,707,230). Hispanics (N=35,238,481) are considered an ethnic group rather than a race group.

<sup>4</sup>The 2000 Census showed that only 4.7 percent of respondents listing Black as a race group also listed another race group, whereas nearly 7 percent of Hispanic respondents listed two or more races.

<sup>5</sup>Social distance scales measure the affect and levels of acceptable interaction between people of different groups using questions such as “would you consider marrying a person of this group;” “would you invite a person of this group to join you in a club or association;” “would you welcome a person of this group to your street as a neighbor;” “would you want a person of this group to immigrate and hold a job in your country;” “. . . to be a citizen;” “. . . to visit your country” (Bogardus, 1925).

<sup>6</sup>Social distance theory holds that there are psychical as well as physical distances between groups, particularly racial groups, that separate us from groups that are different from our own (Simmel, 1971). People have an instinctive desire to maintain social distances, to conserve the status quo and the existing social order (Park, 1924). Social distance and prejudice are reciprocally related.

Black communities have also contributed to the hypodescent norm by maintaining a social hierarchy based on skin tone and by attempting to prepare biracial children for interactions in a society that will likely define them as Black, regardless of their appearance or preference (Dalmage, 2000). Parents who socialize their offspring this way believe that children are better able to cope with racism if they understand the existing social norms (Orbe, 1999). They also believe that holding a White reference group orientation might harm a child's self-concept (Field, 1996). There is a sense that biracial children will be more accepted and better supported in the Black than in the White community, so interracial families often affiliate with the Black community (Orbe, 1999).

Research supports some of these beliefs held by parents of biracial children. Biracial adolescents who have adopted a White racial group orientation hold lower self-concept than those who adopt a Black or biracial reference group orientation (Field, 1996). However, monoracial White youth also hold a lower self-concept than monoracial Blacks, and furthermore, there are no documented behavioral differences between biracial youth with these White versus Black reference group orientations (Field, 1996).

The racial identity of Black-White Americans must also be placed in cultural and historical context. Although *non*-Black mixed-race people have always been relatively free to choose their own racial identity, part-Blacks have only gained such freedom since the Civil Rights movement and the overturning of antimiscegenation laws in 1967 (*Loving v. Virginia*, 1967). Since these events, community and class have emerged and overtaken skin tone as the most important indicators of racial classification (Korgen, 1999). For example, involvement in Whiter, wealthier contexts (co-resident parents, peer group) is associated with Black-White youth identifying as White (Herman, 2004).

Compared to Stonequist's and Park's "Marginal Man" of the 1920s and 30s, the positive aspects of biracial identity are now believed to outweigh the negative. Rockquemore and Brunnsma (2002) provide evidence that there are multiple healthy identities for Black-White people to hold. Using a snowball sampling technique to identify biracial respondents, they reported that the most common racial identity among Black-White individuals is the border identity, in which individuals identify as exclusively biracial. The border identity is different from singular identity, which is either Black or White, and also different from the protean identity, which is sometimes Black, sometimes White, and sometimes both. Rockquemore and Brunnsma's study shows that in addition to context, socially mediated appearance (hairstyle, clothing, speech, associates, socioeconomic status) is associated with racial identity for Black-Whites, but that skin color is not. These identity types have not been studied in connection with developmental outcomes, but other similar work by Oyserman (2003) suggests that Rockquemore and Brunnsma's singular, protean, and border identities, like Oyserman's dual and minority racial-ethnic schemas, are associated with the most stable and adaptive development, while the transcendent (no racial identity) and singular identities are associated with the least healthy development.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Oyserman's *racial-ethnic self-schema* scale codes responses to the question "what does it mean to you to be a member of your racial or ethnic group?" and shows that dual and minority self-schemas are associated with higher grades and better persistence and engagement on academic tasks. See Oyserman et al. (2003). Rockquemore, Kerry Ann, and Tracey A. Laszloffy. 2003. *Raising Biracial Children*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Pub Inc. (2005) argue that there is no single healthiest identity for multiracial individuals, but they do not test this hypothesis.

The racial identities of preschool-aged Black-White children are not well understood. Studies of this population rely either on children's preferences for dolls of different skin tones or on the parents' reports of the children's identities. Studies of Black-White racial identity reported by parents show that adults' ratings are based on many factors, including father's race and region of the country (Brunnsma, 2005). Part-Hispanic racial identity reported by parents is additionally based on surname, gender, and generation of immigration (O'Hare, 1999). Some studies of children's reports have found that Black-White biracial children develop racial awareness more slowly than monoracial minority youth (Johnson, 1992) while others have suggested that the identities of biracial children develop in a nonlinear fashion influenced by experiential, physical, personal, and demographic factors, in addition to personal inclinations (Brown, 2001).

In summary, although they are a small proportion of the multiracial youth population, Black-White biracial children have one of the most challenging identity development experiences because of the legal history of hypodescent and its residual social norms. These children are most often viewed as Black, encouraged to identify as Black, and treated as Black regardless of their own preferences and inclinations. Many Black parents encourage this identity development because they want their children to be prepared for the racism they will undoubtedly face, though others argue that multiracial children should be free to choose their own identities despite social norms. The few studies of developmental outcomes and racial identity show that, as with monoracial Blacks, holding either a minority Black or a dual<sup>8</sup> identity is associated with better achievement and mental health than holding an in-group-only or aschematic identity.

*Part-Asian* In the 1930s, the arrival of large numbers of Asian immigrants to America complicated the existing largely Black and White racial divide, and raised questions about where the new immigrants fit along the social hierarchy (Lee & Bean 2004). Further complicating the integration of these immigrants is the fact that the different Asian national subgroups on the U.S. mainland (as opposed to Hawai'i) have their own social hierarchy, different levels of political influence, and different population sizes. They also have different levels of tolerance for *hapas*, as mixed-race Asian children are often called. Before the 1960s, when antimiscegenation laws prohibited White-Asian intermarriage, most Asian communities in the United States ostracized mixed-race families and their children. Filipinos, the major exception to this norm, intermarried despite the laws and embraced their hapa children. Since the 1970s, the political fortunes of the different Asian American communities have varied and so has their identification of and tolerance for hapa children (Spickard, 2001). The 2000 Census shows that 12.4 percent of the Asian population (1.4 of 11.7 million) identified themselves as multiracial.

There are variations in the acceptance of *hapas* based on their ancestry. Like Whites, Asian Americans have adopted the norm of hypodescent and consequently embrace Anglo-Amerasians more readily than Afro-Amerasians (Spickard, 1989). While many

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<sup>8</sup>Oyserman describes the racial-ethnic schema (RES) of dual-identity Blacks as holding membership in both the in-group (Blacks) and in the larger (White) society. "Dual RES connects individuals to positive larger societal roles and values as well as to in-group roles and values . . . dual RES can dismiss stereotypes about the in-group as not relevant because the self is a member of the larger society to which those stereotypes do not apply" (Oyserman et al., 2003, pp 336-337).

Black-White children are raised in Black families, many Afro-Amerasians were the product of U.S. soldier fathers and Japanese or Vietnamese mothers (Williams & Thornton, 1998), many of whom were raised exclusively by their Asian mothers. Because parents play such a strong role in socializing their children's racial identities, many Afro-Amerasians had little knowledge of, or personal connection to, the African American community with which they are expected (by others) to identify.

Although racial attitudes toward minorities have become more tolerant and social mobility through education is high for Asian Whites, Afro-Amerasians struggle as "double minorities" subject to the same one-drop rule as other part-Black multiracials. In contrast, Anglo-Amerasians are much more free to choose a racial identity (Herman, 2004). The decision is largely personal and far less affected by social norms than it is for Afro-Amerasians (Xie & Goyette, 1997). Most hapas assert their biracial identity gradually, through a process of changing or maintaining certain reference group perspectives, identifications, and allegiances as they mature. Instead of staying marginalized, they integrate both cultures, recognizing positive values of both, thus developing an integrated identity. For example, Brian Colwell, an Anglo-Amerasian boy in Pearl Fuyo Gaskins' (1999) book *What Are You?*, describes his changing perspective about his racial identity. He never thought much about his racial identity until he experienced discrimination in elementary school for being different from the White kids. Later he visited Japan and realized he was definitely not like native Japanese, and that they would never treat him as one of them. And yet, he recognized that he was not fully accepted as American, either. He says "that made me gravitate toward what I am, which is a mixture. You lean one way, and then the other. You try different things and then you find a medium where you realize the truth" (Gaskins, 1999, p. 175).

*Part-American-Indian, Part-Hawai'ian* Relatively little research has been conducted in the area of mixed-race American Indians. This dearth has several causes: first is the small size of the American Indian population relative to other American minority groups. Second are the politics of racial purity, tribal membership status, and blood quantum in the Indian community.<sup>9</sup> While the history of White-Black interaction spawned the one-drop rule, the history of White-Indian interaction spawned the need to prove blood quantum in order to claim tribal membership and its associated benefits. Third is the wide range of American Indian phenotypes, which makes it harder for most observers to recognize full-blooded American Indians, let alone those of mixed descent. And, finally, the commonness of having an Indian ancestor "somewhere in the family tree" means that defining part-Indians based on a "check all that apply" survey item means that results are not reliably applicable to part-Indians in the same way as they are for other mixed-race groups (Harris & Sim, 2002).

American Indians have a higher rate of intermarriage than other minority groups and are more likely to self-identify as mixed (Snipp, 2003). Identification as an American Indian has benefits not associated with other groups, such as tribal membership and the material and social gains that come with membership in federally recognized tribes or those with significant financial resources. Traceable ancestry,

<sup>9</sup>Blood quantum refers to the percentage of American Indian blood in a person. Typical quanta are full blooded, half, quarter, eighth, etc. Many tribes require a certificate authenticating a particular blood quantum to qualify for tribal membership and the benefits thereof (Baird-Olson, 2003; Tallbear, 2004).

cultural knowledge, and Indian community participation are all significant components of American Indian identity. These components are similar to factors associated with racial identity for other groups, but the community identity, values, symbols, history, language, connection to land, and features of social organization are especially strong indicators of racial identity for American Indians (Baird-Olson, 2003). Because their numbers are small and their cultural influence on mainstream America is diluted, youth who hold high blood quantum or tribal membership but do not live on or near a reservation can have difficulty developing and maintaining a strong Indian identity.

Some of the prominent work on multiracial indigenous Americans focuses on Hawai'i because of the very large proportion of Hawaiians who are multiracial. In the 2000 Census, 36.4 percent of the American Indian/ Alaska Native population, and 44.8 percent of the Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander population respectively self-identified as multiracial (Lee & Bean 2004). Racial mixing is common and accepted among indigenous Americans, possibly because physical and symbolic links to the culture help to maintain racial identification, even in the face of biological and ethnic dilution through mixing with other groups. For example, living in Hawai'i or on Indian reservation land is key to racial identification for these groups (Kana'iaupuni & Liebler, 2005). The greater the parent's ties to their respective ancestral heritage, the greater chances of the child being identified as Hawaiian in families whose ties are reinforced by geographic links. Similarly, parents with a strong American Indian identity (in the form of living on a reservation, speaking a native language, reporting a tribal affiliation, and/or reporting American Indian ancestry) are also more likely to designate the American Indian race for their multiracial children (Liebler, 2001). In terms of adjustment, children of interracial marriages in Hawai'i are not significantly different from monoracial children. However, one study found that multiracial boys were more socially desirable and multiracial girls were more extraverted than their monoracial counterparts (Johnson & Nagoshi, 1986).

While multiracial Native Hawaiians and American Indians are better able to blend into White American society than some other, more recognizable multiracial and monoracial groups, they face many of the same issues that the recognizable groups do, including discrimination by monoracial Whites and minorities, greater ability to code-switch, expanded social networks, and familiarity with both majority and minority cultures.

*Part-Hispanic, Part-Latino* Racial mixture is a part of life for Hispanics<sup>10</sup>. Called *mestizos*, a catchall term for mixed race, they are the products of a long history of mixture among Spanish, Indian, African, and other peoples (Fernandez, 1992). In contrast to the sharp racial categorizations used in U.S. law and society, "Latinos, and especially Mexican Americans, have been conditioned by their history . . . to accept racial ambiguity and mixture as 'normal.'" (Fernandez, 1992, pp. 126, 139). Indeed, "it is difficult to argue that Hispanics as a group are not largely a multiracial population, regardless of what people are willing to report on a government form" (Amaro & Zabрана, 2000, pp. 1724).

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<sup>10</sup>Hispanic and Latino are both acceptable terms for describing this racial and ethnic group. Although many prefer the term Latino, I employ the term Hispanic to be consistent with much of the academic literature and all of the data reported by the U.S. Census.



One major difference between part-Hispanic and other multiracial groups is that there is a single unifying language and a strong connection to the homeland among Hispanics, unlike Asians and American Indians, who are not linguistically unified, or African Americans, who have more distant connections to their homeland. Thus, part-Hispanic children are more likely to speak Spanish and to visit their ethnic homeland than other mixed-race youth (Trianosky, 2003). The Hispanic communities in the United States have strength in numbers and great opportunities to participate in and reinforce their culture among developing youth. To the extent that multiracial part-Hispanic youth are exposed to this culture, they will acknowledge their multiple racial identities (Trianosky, 2003).

However, the question of racial versus ethnic identity is, itself, a tricky one for Hispanics and scholars alike, multiracial or not. For example, Campbell and Rogalin (2006) ask "Is Hispanic/Latino an ethnicity or a race, and how does one match checkboxes to differing social realities?" On the U.S. Census, respondents face the ethnicity question first ("Are you of Spanish/Hispanic/Latino origin?"), and the race question second ("What is your race?") without Hispanic as one of the options. Surveys that solicit Hispanic identification on a separate question maximize Hispanic identification because the Hispanic label doesn't have to be particularly salient or meaningful to the individual since it doesn't have to "compete" with other identities as other racial categories must (Campbell & Rogalin, 2006). Many would argue, though, that a more accurate measure of social reality is provided by looking at Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) mandated affirmative action forms accompanying job applications, the Common College Application, and police records. On these forms, Hispanic is listed as one of the possible *race* groups.

The opinions on whether Hispanic is an ethnic group or a race group vary by social and political history, geographic location, generation or age at immigration, and class (Amaro & Zambrana, 2000), the same factors affect the identity of part-Hispanic youth. Spanish language use is associated with Hispanic identification, as is recency of immigration, density of Hispanics in the school and neighborhood contexts, feeling that ethnic background is important, and having darker skin tone (Herman, 2004). Higher family and neighborhood socioeconomic status are also associated with non-Hispanic identification (Herman, 2004). Identification depends on how the question is asked and who fills out the survey—when interviewers fill it out for respondents, as they often do for children, there are fewer multiracial responses. When parents fill it out for children, there are more multiracial responses (Campbell & Rogalin, 2006).

#### CONTEXT AND RACIAL IDENTIFICATION

Regardless of a multiracial youth's particular racial ancestry, the tasks of discovering and asserting a racial identity are complex. Unlike monoracial youth, multiracial youth find that racial identity is not always consistent with racial identification. Multiracial youth do not typically hold a single racial identity, although they are often forced to designate a single racial identification that ignores one or more of their racial ancestries. I am not aware of any research on differences between racial identity and racial identification that allow youth to designate more than one racial or ethnic group for both identity and identification. However, there are four published articles that use survey data to consider the factors affecting racial identification among multiracial youth. Herman (2004) and Hitlin, Brown, and Elder (2006) look at adolescents' self-identifications, while Brunsmma (2005) and O'Hare (1999) look at parents' identifications

of their young children. Although the respondent differs in these two sets of studies, their findings are largely similar: Parent and youth reports of racial identification are influenced by contextual factors such as neighborhood and school racial composition, regional history of racial categorization types, immigration status, language use at home, race of peers and co-resident parent(s), skin tone, and racial ancestry. To examine these factors in detail, I will present some background on context as it relates to development.

Bronfenbrenner's (1989) ecological systems theory argues that we cannot understand human development without examining its contexts. For multiracial youth, microsystems contain people and symbols of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, which may contribute to value and cultural incongruence in the mesosystem. However, multiracial youth cope with this inconsistency, in part, by having fluid racial identities over time and across contexts (Root, 1997; Rockquemore & Brunnsma, 2002). This strategy on the part of multiracial youth supports Bronfenbrenner's (1979) argument for examining "multiperson systems of interaction" in multiple settings and aspects of the environment beyond the immediate situation. Different aspects of a multiracial youth's racial identity become salient at different times and in different contexts. Bronfenbrenner describes how monoracial youth experience healthy inconsistency in other areas of identity formation, such as cultural identity or peer crowd identity. Just as any adolescent could be a brain in the classroom and a jock on the sports field, a multiracial youth can be a Black with his Black friends and an Asian with his Asian extended family. Although having an inconsistent racial identity has been considered detrimental, Root (1997) shows that it is a typical and healthy part of multiracial adolescent development. To the extent that multiracial youth can span boundaries and switch codes appropriately for each context, inconsistent values across the mesosystem may challenge but also strengthen social skills (Corrin & Cook, 1998).

Context influences much of an adolescent's exposure to stressors such as an incongruent racial context, for example, being the only minority in a high-track math course or living in a neighborhood where most people are of a different race. Incongruent racial contexts are challenging for all youth (Compas, Hinden, & Gerhardt, 1995; McLeod & Edwards, 1995; Tweed et al., 1990) and multiracial youth almost never have congruent racial contexts since it would require a context of people who all share their particular racial mixes. Some scholars argue that multiracial adolescents lack a sense of racial belonging since no single race group embraces or can properly support them (Gibbs, 1998; Kessler, Mickelson, & Williams, 1999). Others argue that this strengthens and diversifies their identities in a healthy way (Corrin & Cook, 1999).

Typical research on the developmental effects of context looks at the direct relationship between the *quality* of contexts and the outcomes (for example, Cook, Herman, Phillips, & Settersten, 2002). My research on multiracial youth and contexts uses, instead, a measure of *racial congruence* of contexts, measured as percent White (or percent of other race groups) in the neighborhood, school, family, or peer group. This work shows how racial congruence acts as an intermediary between identity and outcomes (Herman, 2004; 2007a; 2007b). For example, belonging to an ethnic crowd and having a smaller percentage of White students in a respondent's school were significantly associated with minority racial identification, while residing with a White parent was negatively associated with reporting most minority races. Neighborhood variables were significant only among part-Hispanics—the Whiter the neighborhood, the more likely part-Hispanics were to report being White. Thus, congruence of racial context is related to identification among multiracial youth.

Time, generation, and geographic location also are associated with racial identification among multiracial populations (Root 1997). Twine (1997) gives some ethnographic evidence of multiracial youth's changing identities, particularly during adolescence, when dating begins. Part-Black girls are most likely to experience a change in identity from non-Black to Black as they start dating. Hitlin et al. (2006) show that multiracial youth's racial identifications on surveys typically change over time, either by adding a category, subtracting a category, or changing categories altogether. Generation of immigration affects racial identity in the expected sense—the further away from immigration, the less likely multiracial part-Asian youth are to identify as Asian (Herman, 2004). There are arguments that the political and social history of a geographic location can impact people's racial identity (Farley & Haaga, 2005; Root, 1997). In Louisiana, which has a history of slavery and strict enforcement of the one-drop rule, most part-Black people identify as Black, whereas in Oklahoma, which has a history of tolerance for racial mixing between American Indians, Blacks, and Whites, many more part-Black people identify as mixed (Farley, 2004).

Thus, the multiple contexts and time periods in a multiracial person's life will all impact his or her racial identity, affinity for a particular race group, and involvement in ethnic culture. These processes are similar to those for monoracial youth, particularly those whose ethnic group is sufficiently different from the dominant culture to require code switching in order to smooth social relations. However, multiracial youth have the added twist of partial legitimacy in multiple racial and ethnic groups, which can both facilitate and demand code switching. Most interesting, however, are the effects of these changing identifications and identities on a child's development.

#### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IDENTITY, ANCESTRY, AND DEVELOPMENT

In recent work I have shown that identification and ancestry have different connections to several areas of development: achievement; depressive, and somatic symptoms; delinquent or deviant behavior; perceptions of ethnic discrimination; and strength of ethnic identity (Herman, 2007a; 2007b). This work is summarized in two sets of columns in Table 10.4. The left set of columns examines only multiracial youth and shows significant developmental differences between those who identify as Black, White, Asian, and Hispanic. The right set of columns shows significant differences between a given biracial group and one of its component monoracial groups. For example, the first two rows of the left set of columns show that those biracials who *identify* as White have higher grades than those biracials who *identify* as Black or Hispanic (Herman, 2007a). The first row of the right set of columns shows that those who have monoracial White *ancestry* have higher grades than those with Black-White or Hispanic-White *ancestry*. The absence of Black next to Black-White in the right set of columns shows that the grades of those with monoracial Black ancestry do not differ significantly from those of Black-White *ancestry*. Thus, *identifying* as Black makes a difference in the achievement of multiracial youth, but having Black *ancestry* does not. This striking result questions the biological bases of racial differences in achievement and points clearly toward environmental, social, and psychological bases. Furthermore, there is work to be done in exploring the causal direction(s) of this finding. It may be that multiracial youth who do poorly

**Table 10.4**

Significant mean differences between groups of multi- and monoracial youth.

	Identity: Multiracial sample contrasts only		Ancestry: Monoracial and multiracial contrasts	
	HIGHER	LOWER	HIGHER	LOWER
GPA	White White Asian Asian Asian	Black Hispanic Black Hispanic White	White White Asian Asian	Black-White Hispanic-White Black-Asian Hispanic-Asian
depressive symptoms	White White White	Black Asian Hispanic	Black-White	Black
somatic symptoms	White	Hispanic	White-Hispanic White-Asian Black-Hispanic Black-Hispanic	Hispanic Asian Black Hispanic
personal ethnic discrimination	Black Black Black	White Asian Hispanic	Black-Asian Black-Hispanic White-Black White-Asian White-Hispanic Black-Asian Black-Hispanic Hispanic Asian	Black Black White White White Asian Hispanic White-Hispanic Asian-Hispanic
importance of ethnic background	Black Hispanic	White White	Black-White White-Asian White-Hispanic Asian Hispanic	White White White White-Asian White-Hispanic
school misconduct	White	Hispanic	White	Hispanic

in school begin to identify with lower-achieving race groups, or it may be that identifying with those groups leads to lower achievement. The factors underlying the relationship need exploration, as well. Is stereotype threat at work, or is there actual stereotyping, expectations, and treatment by peers and teachers that would explain the relationship?

The same relationship holds among White-Hispanics—*identifying* as White is associated with higher grades than identifying as Hispanic, but there are no differences between *ancestrally* multiracial Hispanic-Whites and monoracial Hispanics. These relationships also hold for Asians with Blacks and Hispanics. Even for Asian-Whites, identifying as Asian is related to higher achievement than identifying as White, but there are no significant differences between monoracial Whites and White-Asians. Thus, although there are not significant differences between a given multiracial group and its lower achieving monoracial component group, identifying with the higher achieving component group is significantly associated

with higher achievement than identifying with the lower achieving group. Thus, racial identification is associated with important achievement differences for multiracial youth.

The outcome of personal ethnic discrimination has some results similar to those for achievement: Multiracial youth who *identify* as Black report much higher levels of discrimination than those multiracials who identify as White, Asian, or Hispanic (Herman 2007b). Of course this relationship is very likely to be reciprocal, with discrimination leading to identity as much as identity leading to discrimination. Similarly, multiracial youth who *identify* as White report that their ethnic background is a far less important aspect of themselves than do those who identify as Black or Hispanic. Ethnic background is also significantly less important to monoracial White youth than it is for any youth with part-White *ancestry*. Just as monoracial White youth report higher levels of deviance than monoracial Hispanic youth, multiracial White-Hispanic youth who *identify* as White report significantly higher levels of deviance than those who identify as Hispanic. However, there are no significant differences between *ancestrally* White-Hispanics and monoracial Whites or monoracial Hispanics. Multiracial youth who have White *ancestry* and who *identify* as White are much like monoracial Whites in reporting higher levels of depression and somatic symptoms relative to those who identify as Black, Hispanic, or Asian. Thus, there are some important differences in the relationship between ancestry and developmental outcomes as compared to the relationship between identity and outcomes. Identity has the strongest association with achievement, deviance, and, not surprisingly, the degree to which youth report that their ethnic background is important.

Although identity is more related to achievement and depressive symptoms, ancestry matters more for somatic symptoms and personal ethnic discrimination: *Ancestrally* White-Asian youth have significantly higher levels of somatic symptoms than monoracial Asians, but *identifying* as White versus Asian is not associated with significant differences (Herman 2007b). Similarly, although Black-Hispanics report more somatic symptoms than either Blacks or Hispanics, there are no differences in reported symptoms based on *identifying* as Black versus Hispanic. Monoracial Whites report significantly less personal ethnic discrimination than any of the multiracial groups, and monoracial Asians and monoracial Hispanics report less discrimination than Black-Asians or Black-Hispanics. Thus, ancestry makes the biggest difference in reported experiences of personal ethnic discrimination and somatic symptoms. These findings are logical if one assumes that ethnic discrimination is related to perceptions of physiognomy and that somatic symptoms are related to biological differences more than environmental ones. Thus, if one accepts that physiognomy is more related to ancestry than to identity, then youth who have more minority ancestry are likely to look darker *and* to experience more ethnic discrimination. Similarly, somatic symptoms are more likely to be related to ancestry (genetic, biological markers) while psychological symptoms would be more related to identity.

To summarize, having Black ancestry *or* identity is associated with reporting significantly more experiences as the target of personal ethnic discrimination among multiracial youth, while having White ancestry *or* identity is associated with significantly higher depressive and somatic symptoms. Even controlling for many background characteristics, many of the differences between identity and ancestry are significant. Thus, examining identity and ancestry separately is an

important component of multiracial research because their ancestry is fixed, but their identity is not.

## CONCLUSION

The research described here challenges existing assumptions or myths about multiracial youth in the 21st century: that they are disturbed, marginalized, depressed, and struggle more with normal challenges of childhood and adolescence. Most current research on representative samples (rather than clinical samples) shows that multiracial youth are typically as well-adjusted as their monoracial peers on psychological outcomes (Shih & Sanchez, 2005). Although multiracial youth develop in some different ways than monoracial youth, particularly with respect to racial identity, they are generally no more different from monoracial youth than monoracial youth are from each other. Multiracial youth develop in as varied ways as monoracial youth do. There are variations in their identity development, in the ways they are accepted in society, and in the accompanying stresses they face (Bradshaw, 1992).

These variations need examination in greater detail than is currently available. In addition to the existing theories of identity development for multiracial youth, the field needs further study of the ways significant others (parents, peers, teachers, siblings, etc.) shape identity for multiracial youth. This work would help to generate a theory of the various impacts of different types of identity choices and patterns on development. For example, we would like to know the differential impact of singular or minority racial identity versus dual or multiple racial identities on achievement, mental health, deviance, self-esteem, social health, and attainment. Perhaps Bronfenbrenner's ecological model could be expanded to account for variations in racial identity across contexts and time and to shed light on how those identity choices impact development.

The politics of ethnic studies has long suggested that each group has its own truth, but the rise of multiracial youth defies that status quo and urges the development of generalizable multi-race theories. In addition to understanding the ways that particular ethnic cultures shape development, we must discover the common mechanisms driving the outcome differences across groups. For example, the work of John Ogbu, leaving apart the controversy over its validity, is a global and culturally independent theory because it describes achievement patterns based on a distinction between the origins of minority status for a group (voluntary and involuntary minorities), rather than the culture of a particular group (Ogbu and Simons, 1998). His theory has largely been applied to the achievement of African American students, but it is not written exclusively to describe the behavior of this group—it applies to all involuntary minority groups. *Nonetheless*, Ogbu's theory fails to capture the experience of multiracial groups because multiracial youth are not easily categorized into voluntary or involuntary minorities. Ideally, we would like a theory of adolescent development that can account for the varied experiences of multi- and monoracial youth. Such a theory runs the risk of being so broad and generalizable that it explains nothing well. However, a detailed and specific theory of multiracial identity development might underscore the idea that racial identification is not as stable as it is portrayed in most theories—for any racial group (See also Chapter 9, this volume). Similarly, investigations of moment-to-moment fluctuations in monoracial identity may help to understand the identity fluidity of multiracial youth.

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## CHAPTER 11

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# How to Catch a Moonbeam: A Mixed-methods Approach to Understanding Ethnic Socialization Processes in Ethnically Diverse Families

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### INTRODUCTION

**F**or parents of color living in the United States, raising children can be a complicated process. While they hold hopes and dreams for their children, as all parents do, they do so with the awareness that their children may encounter stereotypes and discrimination that can challenge them, due to deeply rooted societal prejudices against many groups of color (Boykin & Toms, 1985). While they themselves hold close the traditions, beliefs, values, and folkways that constitute their cultural roots, they do so with the knowledge that their children may not embrace them, as they often vary from those of the dominant culture and may not be legitimized or affirmed. These issues are highly salient to parents across multiple ethnic groups (Hughes et al., 2006; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004), and the practices that result from them characterize what is commonly referred to in the scholarly literature as ethnic socialization. To define the term more precisely, ethnic socialization consists of the full range of parental practices that communicate messages about ethnicity and race to children (see Hughes, Bachman, Ruble, & Fuligni, 2006; Hughes & Chen, 1999 for an extended discussion of this definition).

Research in psychology and other disciplines regarding the nature of parents' racial socialization beliefs and practices dates back at least 25 years. Early efforts focused almost exclusively on African American parents (Boykin & Toms, 1985; Hughes & DuMont, 1993; Peters, 1985; Stevenson, 1994; Thornton, Chatters, Taylor, & Allen, 1990). In the context of scholarly debates about how to best interpret findings regarding African American children's racial preferences (out-group oriented) and self-esteem (equal to or higher than that of Whites), initial efforts sought to describe the extent to which African American parents prepared children for societal stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination, and the strategies they used to help children construct positive attitudes toward their group despite larger society's negative views. In a parallel line of inquiry, begun in the early 1990s, scholars also investigated ethnic socialization processes among Asian and Latino families. Here, studies sought to examine the emphasis parents placed on transmitting their native culture and language to their children, the strategies they employed for doing so, and the consequences of such transmission processes for youths' ethnic identity and development (Knight, Bernal, Cota, Garza, & Ocampo, 1993; Ou & McAdoo, 1993; Phinney & Chavira, 1995). Research on racial and ethnic socialization processes<sup>1</sup> has grown exponentially each decade since then, from a handful of studies in the mid-1980s to over 50 studies in peer review journals as of 2006. Correspondingly, our knowledge about the importance of the process to parents and of the types of messages parents transmit has increased as well.

Despite this increase, efforts to understand the nature of ethnic socialization and its consequences for youth have met with only moderate success. Many findings about its relationship to a particular outcome domain conflict (Hughes et al., 2006), and several studies have found that parents' reports on their ethnic socialization practices are only weakly, often nonsignificantly, associated with youth-reported outcomes (Hughes, 1997; Sellers, 2005). We believe that this may be partially due to the limitations of existing studies in fully or accurately assessing how ethnic socialization transpires within families. Although there have been innovations in approach—including development of observational measures of ethnic artifacts (Caughy, O'Campo, Randolph, & Nickerson, 2002), of racial socialization during hair combing interactions (Lewis, 1999), and of parent-adolescent interactions about racial events (Bynum, Usher, & Callands, 2005)—the vast majority of studies, including our own, rely on survey-based questions from a single

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<sup>1</sup>Our perspective regarding the use of the term "ethnic" versus "racial" socialization is outlined in Hughes et al., 2006. Here, we use the term "ethnic socialization" for purposes of simplicity.

source. As we know, survey-based measures often fail to capture aspects of parents' socialization that they are unwilling to report or unaware of. Thus, although survey-based approaches are clearly useful for quantifying these processes, reliance on survey approaches alone is insufficient.

Because race is an indelible aspect of U.S. society, ethnic socialization messages are often seamlessly woven into families' habits, customs, and daily routines. They can be verbal or nonverbal, deliberate or unintended, proactive or reactive, initiated by parents or initiated by children, and part of a larger child-rearing agenda or not (Hughes et al., 2006; Hughes & Chen, 1999; Stevenson, Cameron, Herrero-Taylor, & Davis, 2002). Moreover, any particular ethnic socialization message is multi-layered and can be characterized in terms of the content of the message, the mechanism of transmission, and the beliefs and goals underlying it. Multiple socialization themes and multiple underlying goals can coexist within any particular instance of socialization. For example, teachings about discrimination and unfair treatment may also include reference to the egalitarian principle that people should be viewed as individuals rather than as part of a racial group. In this example, multiple themes are embedded in a single socialization message. The content of messages may be different from the goals underlying them, for instance, a message may focus on issues related to racial pride and heritage although the parents' goal in transmitting it is to arm children with tools for coping with discrimination. Thus, trying to empirically capture the richness, depth, and complexity that characterizes racial-ethnic socialization as it unfolds in daily life is akin to "trying to catch a moonbeam." We argue that approaches that allow researchers to both quantify the process and to examine it up close are needed before knowledge regarding its influences on youth can move forward.

In this chapter, we have several overarching goals. First, we seek to provide a broad-brush overview of research on ethnic socialization for readers with only moderate familiarity with this literature. Here, we highlight major themes that have emerged to date about the types of messages parents transmit to children, which messages are most common across ethnic groups, and sources of variation in parents' ethnic socialization beliefs and practices. This first section also includes a brief discussion of what is known about the consequences of ethnic socialization among children and adolescents. Our second goal is to describe our approach to elucidating the complexity of how the process unfolds at a family level. We present findings from a mixed-methods research project in which we have simultaneously examined parents' ethnic socialization beliefs and their practices alongside adolescents' perceptions of these, using both quantitative and qualitative data. We highlight the meaning and underlying goals of multiple types of ethnic socialization practices across

diverse ethnic groups and on understanding: (1) situations or contexts that prompt such messages, (2) how they unfold, and (3) the extent to which adolescents accurately receive the messages parents intend to transmit. Our approach allows us to see that the beliefs underlying similar socialization practices often vary considerably. Moreover, whereas parents are often effective in communicating with children about ethnic pride and heritage, they are often ineffective at communicating with children about discrimination. Children often miss or misinterpret these communications, or have knowledge about discrimination of which parents are unaware. We conclude with suggested directions for additional research in this area.

### WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT ETHNIC SOCIALIZATION

Increases in the number of studies examining ethnic socialization have led to substantial increases in knowledge about the process. Advances in knowledge have been both conceptual and empirical. At the conceptual level, scholars have moved from the discussion of ethnic socialization as a unidimensional construct to making finer distinctions between different aspects of socialization (Hughes & Chen, 1999; Stevenson, 1994, 1999; Stevenson, Cameron, Herrero-Taylor, & Davis., 2002). Scholars have also examined variation in ethnic socialization across ethnic groups (Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Phinney & Chavira, 1995; Umaña-Taylor & Yazedjian, 2006), across historical time (Brown, 2006), across developmental stages (Hughes & Chen, 1997), across contexts (Caughy, Nettles, O'Campo, & Lohrfink, 2006), and across generations (Umaña-Taylor & Yazedjian, 2006).

As we have emphasized already, survey-based studies in which parents or their adolescent children are asked to report on parents' practices, attitudes, or beliefs in relation to ethnic socialization have provided much of the available information about the nature, frequency, antecedents, and consequences of ethnic socialization. We know, for example, that parents can and do transmit many different types of messages to their children. Although several typologies regarding the content of ethnic socialization have been proposed (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Stevenson, 1994, 1999; Stevenson et al., 2002), the most common themes to have emerged to date include an emphasis on cultural knowledge, history, and traditions (which we term *cultural socialization*), discussions about stereotypes, racial bias and discrimination (which we term *preparation for bias*), an emphasis on the value of diversity and equal treatment across groups (which we term *egalitarianism*), and messages that emphasize the need for wariness and mistrust of other groups (which we term *promotion of mistrust*). We also know that messages pertaining to these themes occur with different frequencies and have different antecedents and consequences. Across ethnic groups parents are more likely to report cultural socialization and egalitarianism than they are to report preparation for bias or promotion of mistrust (Hughes, 2003; Hughes & Chen, 1997, 1999; Hughes & Johnson, 2001). In our prior studies, over 90 percent of African American, Dominican, Puerto Rican, Mexican, and European American parents report cultural socialization (Hughes & Chen, 1997, 1999). In the National Survey of Black Americans (NSBA; Thornton et al., 1990), when African American parents were asked to describe "things they did to help children learn what it means to be Black," the most common answer concerned practices such as emphasizing hard work and a good education, equal treatment across groups, and

ethnic pride, whereas a much smaller percentage of participants reported teaching about discrimination or maintaining distance from Whites.

Although only a few studies include multiple ethnic groups, those that exist find ethnic group differences in the frequency of ethnic socialization (Hughes & Chen, 1999; Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Phinney & Chavira, 1995). In particular, studies have documented ethnic group differences in preparation for bias that mirror societal views regarding the social status of various ethnic groups within the United States. African American parents are more likely than parents from various Latino groups to report preparation for bias, and Latino parents are, in turn, more likely to report it than White parents (Hughes, 2003; Hughes & Chen, 1999; Rivas, Hughes, & Way, *in press*). Promotion of mistrust is not commonly reported by parents of any racial or ethnic background (Hughes & Chen, 1997, 1999).

The field has also focused on understanding sources of individual-level variation in ethnic socialization. To date, studies have most commonly examined child and parent demographic factors and characteristics of the contexts in which parents and youth operate. Studies have found, for example, that although parents report similar levels of cultural socialization across all stages of children's development, parents of older children—early adolescents and beyond—are more likely to discuss discrimination and intergroup relations with their children than are parents of younger children (Hughes & Chen, 1997; Hughes et al., 2006; McHale et al., 2006). This pattern likely reflects the fact that behaviors typically subsumed under measures of cultural socialization (reading ethnic books, participating in ethnic traditions) do not require children to have a sophisticated understanding of race as a social category. However, parents are unlikely to discuss the more complex concepts of discrimination and intergroup relations with young children, who evidence only a rudimentary understanding of ethnicity and race. Studies have also found that parents of girls are more likely to report cultural socialization than are parents of boys, whereas parents of boys are more likely to report preparation for bias than are parents of girls. This may reflect perceptions that females are the bearers of cultural tradition, or the fact that boys—especially ethnic minority boys—are more likely than are girls to be targets of discrimination, or both.

Parents' characteristics and experiences have also been associated with their ethnic socialization beliefs and practices. Among those that have received the most empirical attention have been socioeconomic status (SES), geographical location, ethnic identity, and prior experiences with discrimination. In existing studies, certain aspects of ethnic socialization, most notably cultural socialization, are more likely to be reported by middle SES parents than by their lower or higher SES counterparts (Caughy et al., 2002; Hughes et al., 2006). Data from the NSBA, the only study in this area to date to utilize a nationally representative sample, indicated that respondents in the Northeast were more likely to report socializing children about race than were respondents in the West, and that urban respondents were less likely to teach children about racial barriers than were rural respondents (Thornton, 1997). Stevenson (2005) and Caughy (Caughy et al., 2006) have each also documented variation in socialization according to neighborhood ethnic composition and social disorganization. In addition, parents who report greater attachment to their ethnic group report more cultural socialization practices (Hughes, 2003), and those who believe they have experienced discrimination report more preparation for bias (Hughes, 2003; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Hughes & Johnson, 2001).

The literature regarding the consequences of parents' ethnic socialization for children and adolescents is not well-developed but nevertheless suggests potentially important consequences for youths' ethnic identity, skills for coping with discrimination,

and other outcomes. The most consistent finding is that adolescents of parents who emphasize their ethnic or racial group's culture, history, and heritage report more knowledge about their own ethnic group and more favorable in-group attitudes (Lee & Quintana, 2005; O'Connor, Brooks-Gunn, & Graber, 2000; Quintana & Vera, 1999; Stevenson, 1995; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004; Umaña-Taylor, Bhanot, & Shin, 2006). Studies have also found small to moderate relationships between parents' discussions with their children about discrimination and children's strategies for coping with it (Phinney & Chavira, 1995). In other domains of development, however, findings across studies are inconsistent. For instance, some studies have found that parents' socialization regarding racial barriers is associated with favorable outcomes, including higher grades and academic efficacy (Bowman & Howard, 1985), lower depression (Stevenson, 1997), increased self-esteem (Fatimilehin, 1999), and fewer behavior problems (Stevenson, Herrero-Taylor, Cameron, & Davis, 2002). Other studies, however, have found that parents' emphasis on racial barriers and adolescents' expectations for discrimination are associated with poorer academic outcomes (Marshall, 1995), lower self-esteem (Hughes, Witherspoon, Rivas, & West-bey, submitted), more external locus of control (McHale et al., 2006), more externalizing behaviors, and less effective anger management (Stevenson, 1997).

To summarize, researchers' attention to and knowledge about ethnic socialization processes has increased tremendously over the past decade. Whereas early studies were primarily descriptive, and largely conceptualized racial-ethnic socialization as a unidimensional process, more recent studies have taken a more nuanced approach to representing the range of socialization messages that parents may transmit, and their antecedents and consequences. Early studies also primarily examined ethnic socialization within African American families, while more recent studies have examined these processes across multiple ethnic groups, permitting an understanding of similarities and differences in the way such socialization operates. Studies have identified child's age and gender, parents SES and geographic location, and parents' identity and discrimination experiences as important predictors of ethnic socialization. In turn, such socialization has been associated with varied youth outcomes, most notably ethnic identity exploration and affirmation. Research on other self-system, psychosocial, and behavioral outcomes is, to date, less well-developed. The number of studies on any particular outcome is small, and findings across studies often conflict and are, in fact, noncomparable due to wide variation in conceptualization, measurement, sampling, and other methodological issues (Hughes et al., 2006).

We turn now to describing findings from a recent empirical project in which we are trying to elaborate the complexities of ethnic socialization processes within families. The initial impetus behind this work was our belief that measurement of ethnic socialization processes has been restricted, at best, and has not been able to capture important information about how the process unfolds within families, including the range of practices in which parents engage, or the beliefs and goals that underlie their practices. This is due to (a) the fact that ethnic socialization can be subtle and inadvertent (b) characteristics of researchers' approaches to conceptualizing and measuring it, and (c) difficulties parents and youth may have in accurately reporting it. Thus, our approach has been to combine quantitative survey-based measures from both parents and adolescents, which provide a birds-eye view, with data from interviews in which we probe intensively to obtain information about the micro-level, day-to-day interactions that encapsulate ethnic socialization. Our goal here, then, is both to provide substantive insights into the nature of the process and to share our approach to capturing it.



## OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Our data is drawn from the Early Adolescent Cohort (EAC) study within the Center for Research on Culture, Development, and Education at New York University. The project is a longitudinal study of ethnically and socioeconomically diverse families in New York City, the goal of which is to examine parents' beliefs and their practices in three domains of development that are of central relevance during early adolescence: academics, peers, and ethnicity and race. Adolescents and their parents from six middle schools in New York City were recruited to participate in the study when the youth were in 6th grade. All of the schools begin in 6th grade and end in 8th grade, allowing us to examine changes in parents' and youths' experiences over the course of middle school.

The schools varied considerably in their ethnic composition and aggregate achievement levels. Two were ethnically homogeneous, three were not. One school contained three separate academic programs that were ethnically segregated. In addition, three of the schools had honors programs; one of these programs was predominantly White and the other two were predominantly Black and Latino. Approximately 700 adolescents from these five schools are participating in classroom administered surveys in the spring of their sixth, seventh, and eighth grade years. Approximately 200 adolescents have parents who are also participating in the study. These adolescents participate in 2-hour in-depth interviews with members of our field staff when they are in sixth and eighth grade. In these same years, their parents participate in in-depth interviews and standardized surveys. In-depth parent interviews typically take place over two sessions and last 2 to 4 hours. Fieldworkers visit parents a third time to conduct in-person surveys, which last 2 to 2.5 hours.

Each of the parent and adolescent protocols contains extensive measurement of parents' ethnic socialization beliefs and practices. In the surveys, we included the parent- and adolescent-report measures of cultural socialization, preparation for bias, egalitarianism, and promotion of mistrust that we have used in our prior work (Hughes, 2003; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Hughes & Johnson, 2001; Hughes et al., submitted; Rivas Hughes, & Way, in press). We also generated new measures of the salience to parents of ethnic socialization relative to other socialization goals and of parents' beliefs about the importance of these four domains of socialization. Our goal in pursuing such saturated quantitative assessment is, in part, to examine the correspondence between parents' beliefs and their practices, which are theoretically distinct, albeit interrelated (Sigel & McGillicuddy-DeLisi, 2002). That is, parents can instantiate particular beliefs in a multitude of ways, and parents who hold similar beliefs may differ in the degree to which their practices are consistent with those beliefs. Thus, a comprehensive understanding of parental socialization across diverse ethnic groups requires that beliefs and practices be examined as distinct variables. All survey-based measures demonstrated adequate reliability and are described in Table 11.1. An additional goal is to examine the correspondence between parents' and children's perceptions of parents' ethnic socialization practices. For a variety of reasons, children can miss, misinterpret, ignore, or reject the socialization messages their parents intend to transmit. Thus, we are trying to understand the conditions under which parents and adolescents' perceptions are congruent or incongruent, and the relative importance of these distinct perspectives in shaping adolescent outcomes.

In our in-depth interviews, we asked parents and adolescents to talk at length about the role of race and ethnicity in their lives; the circumstances in which race and ethnicity are discussed in their families; what is said, communicated, or directly taught; beliefs underlying these communications; views about relations between groups;

**Table 11.1**

Description of ethnic-racial socialization measures.

Dimension	Report	Description
Cultural Socialization	Parent Beliefs	Three items ask parents how important they feel it is to enculturate their children to their ethnic group and to instill a sense of ethnic pride (Response range: 1–4; $\alpha = .76$ )
	Parent Practices	Five-item measure assessed how often parents behave in ways to help enculturate their children, e.g., “done things to encourage child to learn about history and traditions” and “celebrated cultural holidays” (Response range: 0–5; $\alpha = .76$ )
	Child Perceptions	Two items asked child how frequently parents try to instill sense of ethnic pride (Response range: 1–3; $r = .46$ )
Preparation for Bias	Parent Beliefs	Four items assessed parents’ beliefs about the importance of preparing children for future bias by making their “children aware of stereotypes” and preparing children “to cope with discrimination” (Response range: 1–4; $\alpha = .54$ )
	Parent Practices	Four-item measure captured how often parents behaviorally express preparation for discrimination and future bias to their children, e.g., talking about it, explaining it, or pointing it out (Response range: 0–5; $\alpha = .76$ )
	Child Perceptions	Five items that asked about the extent to which parents tell them about future discrimination, e.g., “warned about discrimination” and “warned about exclusion from play because of race” (Response range: 1–3; $\alpha = .83$ )
Egalitarianism	Parent Beliefs	Three items were used to capture parents’ beliefs around the importance of teaching children that race doesn’t matter, e.g., how important is to “teach children all people are equal” and that they should “have friends of all races” (Response range: 1–4; $\alpha = .$ )
	Parent Practices	Parents were asked to indicate how often they do things to show their children that “all people are the same” (Response range: 0–5)

*(Continued)*

**Table 11.1**  
(Continued)

Dimension	Report	Description
	Child Perceptions	Four items asked children to indicate how often their parents had encouraged egalitarian views of society, such as the importance of “getting along with all races,” “viewing people as equal regardless of race,” and “promoting friendships with all races” (Response range: 1–3)
Promotion of Mistrust	Parent Beliefs	Two items were used to assess parents’ beliefs that it is important to teach their children to be careful around people of other ethnic groups, e.g., “It is important to teach my child not to trust people who are not [my ethnic group]” (Response range: 1–4; $r = .58$ )
	Parent Practices	Five-item measure assessed the frequency parents do or say “things to get child to keep her distance from kids who are not [same ethnic group]” (Response range: 0–5; $\alpha = .73$ )
	Child Perceptions	Four items ask child to indicate how often parents express preference of child to socialize primarily or exclusively with same ethnic group, e.g., “disapproves of inter-race dating” (Response range: 1–3; $\alpha = .53$ )

perceptions of various groups’ social status; and parents’ and adolescents’ experiences of unfair treatment. These interviews enabled us to understand how parents and adolescents with various ethnic socialization scores on quantitative measures talk about ethnicity, race, and socialization processes; to explore in greater depth the beliefs and goals that underlie particular types of socialization practices; and to explore the extent to which adolescents and parents held similar perspectives on how ethnic socialization transpires within their families.

Here, we present findings from the first wave of data from adolescents and their parents. The sample consists of 210 parent-adolescent pairs from diverse ethnic backgrounds, including Black/African American (26 percent), Latino (23 percent), Chinese (27 percent) and White/European American (24 percent). Using survey-based and qualitative data, we begin by discussing the salience of ethnic socialization to parents relative to other socialization goals. Then, organized according to four ethnic socialization themes (cultural socialization, preparation for bias, egalitarianism, promotion of mistrust), we describe ethnic variation in parental beliefs and practices as well as correspondence between beliefs, practices, and children’s reports of them.

Due to the fact that we are in the early stages of analyzing parent and youth interviews, our goal here is not to come to firm conclusions about any particular aspect of socialization, or to explain differences between beliefs and practices or between children's and parents' reports. Rather, we seek to present illustrative examples of how certain types of socialization unfold in families, to describe the variety of beliefs that underlie particular practices, and to unpack to the extent possible instances in which parents' and youths' reports are congruent or incongruent. To accomplish these objectives, we focused on a subset of transcripts that included parents and children who were consistent in their reports about each aspect of socialization according to quantitative measures (e.g., both were in the top or bottom quartile of their respective distribution), as well as those in which parents reported high socialization that their children did not perceive (e.g., parent was in the top quartile and child was in the bottom quartile). We reasoned that this approach would best enable us to extract illustrative examples from families at both ends of the spectrum of socialization within our sample. Below, we describe our findings based on this approach.

### THE SALIENCE OF ETHNIC-RACIAL SOCIALIZATION TO PARENTS

In order for parents to articulate beliefs and goals regarding ethnic socialization, this domain needs to be salient to them as an aspect of child-rearing. Thus, we set the stage for our discussion by exploring the salience of ethnic socialization to parents relative to other child-rearing goals. In the survey, after ranking from most to least important a set of four ethnic socialization goals, parents ranked their top-ranked ethnic socialization goal against their top-ranked goal in three other domains, including: (1) moral and self-development (e.g., helping others, being kind, respecting adults), (2) academics (e.g., getting good grades, working hard in school), and (3) peer relationships (e.g., having friends who he wants to be with; having friends who don't get in trouble). Results from these analyses are presented in Table 11.2. The first column in the table shows the mean ranking of ethnic socialization for each ethnic group. A lower mean score indicates a higher ranking in importance. The next columns show the percentage of parents who ranked each domain of socialization (ethnicity-race, general well-being, peers, academics) first, second, third, and fourth. For African Americans, for example, 10 percent ranked ethnic socialization as most important, 30 percent ranked it as second most important, 28 percent ranked it third, and 20 percent ranked it last. Fifty-two percent of African Americans ranked general well-being first, 28 percent ranked it second, and so on.

In terms of average ranking, Table 11.2 shows that ethnic socialization was most salient to African American parents, who ranked it as significantly higher in importance than did Chinese and Latino parents, who in turn ranked it higher than did White parents. The table also shows that fully 40 percent of African American parents ranked ethnic socialization as the first or second most important domain of socialization, compared with 22 percent of Chinese parents, 18 percent of Latino parents, and 17 percent of White parents. Virtually no White parents, and only 2 percent of Latino parents, ranked ethnic socialization first, however. At the same time, African American and Chinese parents were unlikely to rank ethnic socialization as the least important domain of socialization: 20 percent of African American parents and 23 percent of Chinese parents ranked ethnic socialization as least important, compared with 42 percent of Latino and 56 percent of White parents. Thus, socializing children about race is more likely to

**Table 11.2**  
Relative importance of ethnic-racial socialization.

Group	Rank	E-RS	Ethnic-	General		
		Mean Rank	racial Socialization	Well-being	Academic Issues	Peer Relationships
Black	1	2.69	10%	52%	32%	4%
	2		30%	28%	34%	6%
	3		38%	12%	24%	22%
	4		20%	6%	6%	64%
Chinese	1	2.90	9%	30%	47%	4%
	2		13%	40%	26%	11%
	3		45%	8%	8%	30%
	4		23%	13%	9%	45%
Latino	1	3.23	2%	40%	51%	7%
	2		16%	36%	31%	16%
	3		38%	16%	16%	29%
	4		42%	9%	2%	47%
White	1	3.40	0%	71%	17%	10%
	2		17%	19%	35%	27%
	3		25%	6%	31%	38%
	4		56%	2%	13%	25%

*Note.* E-RS = Ethnic-Racial Socialization.

be very important to African American parents than to parents from other ethnic groups, and to be unimportant to White and Latino parents. To further understand these patterns, which are consistent with findings in the literature that African Americans report more ethnic socialization than do parents from other ethnic groups (Hughes & Chen, 1999; Phinney & Chavira, 1995), we next examine parents' practices and beliefs regarding each domain of socialization assessed independently.

### CULTURAL SOCIALIZATION

As we have noted already, cultural socialization encompasses most of the practices parents engage in that transmit information regarding culture, history, and heritage to children, either deliberately or implicitly (Boykin and Toms, 1985; Thornton et al., 1990; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004). Much of the literature on ethnic socialization has focused on cultural socialization, especially as it relates to children's cultural knowledge and ethnic pride (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Knight, et al., 1993a; 1993b; Ou & McAdoo, 1993; Sanders Thompson, 1994; Spencer, 1983; Stevenson, 1994; Thornton et al., 1990).

Parents' and adolescents' average values on questions pertaining to cultural socialization are shown in Table 11.3, rows 1, 4, and 7. The average parent in our sample believed that cultural socialization was "somewhat" important. African American and Latino parents placed a greater importance on cultural socialization than did Chinese parents, who in turn placed a greater importance on it than did White parents. Consistent with these beliefs, the average parent had a summary score on the overall measure of cultural socialization practices that was a "3," representing that they "occasionally" engaged in these practices. Here, African American parents

reported significantly more cultural socialization than did White, Latino, or Chinese parents who, in turn, did not differ significantly from each other. Cultural socialization beliefs and practices were tightly intertwined for the sample as a whole ( $r = .61$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and within ethnic groups ( $r = .58-.63$ , all  $p$ 's  $< .001$ ). As shown in Table 11.2, African American and Latino youth reported that their parents engaged in significantly more cultural socialization than did Chinese youth, who in turn reported more cultural socialization than did White youth. Overall, children's reports of their parents' cultural socialization were more highly correlated with parents' reported beliefs ( $r = .30$ ,  $p < .001$ ) than with parents' reported practices ( $r = .20$ ,  $p < .01$ ), a finding that merits further research. Parents' beliefs may contribute to an ambient environment that youth would report as cultural socialization. It also seems possible that parents' cultural socialization beliefs reflect practices that parents engage in but did not report, or that our measure failed to capture certain practices.

The quantitative data provide important descriptive insights into cultural socialization beliefs and practices, particularly regarding the high level of consistency between beliefs and practices. It also provides information regarding ethnic group differences in average cultural socialization. However, focusing on average group differences masks substantial overlap between each group's distribution as well as substantial variability within groups. It also provides only limited insight into the meaning of these beliefs and practices to parents, how they transpire in families, and why parents' beliefs and practices often fail to surface in adolescents' reports. Our qualitative interviews were intended to provide insight into these issues.

We structured our in-depth interview protocols to elicit parents' practices, beliefs, and goals regarding multiple aspects of ethnicity and race (*What ethnicity/race would child say he/she is? What kinds of things do you think are important for [child] to know or understand about being [ethnicity]? What kinds of things do you do to help [child] learn or understand these things? What do you teach him/her about cultural beliefs? Traditions? History?*) as well as adolescents' perspectives on these (*What race/ethnicity are you? How important is it to you? What have your parents taught you about it? How is it talked about in your family? Tell me about the last time it came up.*). We selected transcripts according to parents' and adolescents' values on quantitative measures of each construct and examined them for parents' underlying beliefs about aspects of cultural socialization and for narratives about the practices in which parents engage.

#### PARENTAL CULTURAL SOCIALIZATION PRACTICES

Our first objective was to identify the practices that parents and adolescents who reported varying levels of cultural socialization described. We were most interested in concrete examples of specific times and places when cultural socialization occurred, but also attended to parents' or adolescents' descriptions of typical practices within families. As was evident from our quantitative data, many parents describe activities that connect children with their ethnic heritage. In many ways, the cultural socialization practices parents from all ethnic backgrounds described were typical of those identified in other qualitative studies, including exposing children to music, holidays, ethnic foods, language, books, and cultural figures (Coard, 2004; Hughes & Chen, 1999; Tatum, 1987). However, the specific nuances of cultural socialization varied within and across ethnic groups.

Among families in which the parent and the adolescent both reported high cultural socialization, practices were most similar among Chinese and Latino families, many

of whom were first generation immigrants to the United States. In particular, these families often alluded to special events, including family gatherings, birthday parties, religious or holiday celebrations, attending festivals (e.g., Chinese New Year, Puerto Rican or Dominican Day parade), school cultural history projects, and travel back to the homeland. Latino families were more likely than were Chinese families to include parents and adolescents who were both high on quantitative measures, such that these types of narratives, although not distinctly Latino, were most evident in interviews with Latino mothers and adolescents.

One Dominican mother, Roshelle<sup>2</sup>, provides a prototypical example of identity enhancing cultural socialization that takes place through special projects and events. As background, both Roshelle and her daughter Cara indicated in their interviews that being Dominican was “very important,” and both have quantitative scores in the top quartile of their respective distributions on reports of parents’ cultural socialization. The family is deeply embedded in a Dominican network in the United States and travels to the Dominican Republic twice a year, at Christmas and during the summer. Following questions about how Roshelle knows that Cara would identify herself as Dominican if asked, Roshelle relays a story about a school project Cara completed about the Dominican Republic: “They had a display, you know, a showroom for the projects. And they had visitors walking around and they asked her. She said ‘Oh, I’m Dominican!’ and she was wearing the flag of the Dominican Republic and she was very proud.” Asked about the last time something related to Cara being Dominican came up, Roshelle recalls a family celebration:

I: OK. Um, Can you tell me about the last time something related to Cara being Dominican came up? So, I know about the school project. Has there been another time when something else came up more recent than that?

R: Well, maybe, um, when we had a baby shower. Because, yeah, at the party everybody was Dominican. So, she didn’t have any other choice than to, you know, act Dominican. So she was dancing Meringue, she was doing this and doing that, so, I think she felt very Dominican that day, when we had the baby shower.

It is clear from Roshelle’s other comments that she identifies certain behaviors, such as eating late and family card games, as essentially Dominican. She states that Dominican culture is “in her blood” and makes numerous references to feeling Dominican when she is “with her people.” Cara also speaks with excitement about biannual trips to the Dominican Republic to visit family and friends, and numerous family gatherings, as times when she feels especially Dominican.

A second form of cultural socialization is that which is deeply embedded in the everyday practices or traditions inherent in being an ethnic group member, the form that Umaña-Taylor and Fine (2004) term *covert ethnic socialization*. It includes everyday food preparation and meals, native language use, music, dancing, conversation, media use, and the like. As with special celebrations, this form of socialization is often unintentional and is not inherently tied to a cultural socialization agenda. Further, although participation in these cultural practices would clearly mark a child as being an ethnic group member, it is equally evident in families who report high and low levels of cultural socialization.

<sup>2</sup>Pseudonyms are used in place of actual names throughout.

Mae, born in Fujhou in the Fujian Province in China, and her daughter Michelle, born in the United States, both have high values on quantitative measures of cultural socialization. However, neither of their descriptions of the meaning of their Chinese ethnicity contain reference to major celebrations or holidays. It does, however, contain references to everyday practices that she views as being uniquely Chinese. Indeed, Mae states that her family's daily routines and way of living are thoroughly Chinese. She stresses, "I feel I'm Chinese both when I'm out and when I'm home. We just inherit everything from China." A specific example, one that appeared frequently in the responses of Chinese mothers to questions about Chinese cultural practices, is in her description of family meal time. Mae says:

R: Our family is very accustomed to the Chinese way. Most of the time we all eat breakfast together. After we finish, we go to work. My husband rarely brings food to work. I usually cook something and he'll go after he eats. The only difference [from when we were in China] is we don't eat at home during lunch. We also cook at night. [Otherwise], there is no difference between [what we do here and] what we did when we were in China.

Mae assumes that her daughter Michelle identifies as "American born in China" because she speaks English, is part of the American education system, and seems to feel unfamiliarity and strangeness towards China, a feeling she counters by telling Michelle that "her face will always be Chinese wherever." Interestingly, although Michelle indicates in her interview that she does not understand what her parents try to teach her about being Chinese, she, like her mother, references Chinese meal preparations as a uniquely Chinese practice.

I: What kind of things did you learn about being Chinese when you were growing up?

R: I learned that the foods that we eat are really different from the foods that Americans eat. Like, Americans eat hotdogs, and we don't really eat that much, hotdogs. We normally just eat rice, fish, yeah.

I: What about an example of something your parents taught you about being Chinese?

R: Not really anything.

I: Nothing? What about the holidays? Did they teach you anything about the holidays?

R: No, they try to teach me, but I don't understand.

I: You don't understand? How come you don't understand?

R: 'Cuz I don't really understand the holidays. Sometimes, like Buddha's birthday, I don't really understand what's the point of that because I don't really believe in Buddha and I don't really believe in anything because you don't really see them and it's, like, I believe in scientific reasons.

Thus, in Mae's example, although little is transmitted regarding big holidays and celebrations, there is evidence that routine practices are viewed as being distinctively Chinese by both mother and daughter.

Notably, the form of cultural socialization that occurs through everyday routines and activities is also evident in the interviews of many Chinese and Latino mothers and adolescents who report low cultural socialization. For instance, Linda, a Chinese immigrant from Guanzhou, and her American-born daughter Louise both report minimal socialization about the meaning of being Chinese, and Linda places



little importance on developing Louise's Chinese identity. Yet Louise describes food shopping with her mother in Chinatown and attends Chinese school each Saturday. Linda's interview takes place in the waiting room outside of Louise's violin lesson: Most of the other mothers and youth in the waiting room are Chinese. Danielle and her mother Carol, both Puerto Rican, also score in the lowest quartile on quantitative measures of cultural socialization. Indeed, Danielle reports that "nothing is taught" and that she knows little about being Puerto Rican. Yet, she speaks in an animated tone about her love for her mother's rice and beans and fried plantains and provides vivid detail about the beaches, bicycle paths, and general lifestyle in Puerto Rico, where she spends her summers. Liz, a U.S.-born Dominican mother, conveys a similar absence of cultural socialization practices within her family. She states that she does not teach her daughter Marie anything about Dominican culture and that being Dominican is "never really an issue." In her words, "I don't even know stories or, you know, how they do [*things*] because I went to school here. My [own] mother didn't show me anything, you know, she didn't teach me anything." Marie confirms her mother's contention that nothing is explicitly taught: "We're here in New York so, like, we don't really talk about being Dominican." Despite this, indications of what researchers would term "cultural socialization" are evident in the field notes. Spanish music is playing when the interviewer enters the apartment, and Liz speaks Spanish when the interview is interrupted by the doorbell and the telephone.

In a few cases, observations that little cultural socialization takes place are accompanied by descriptions of vicarious socialization, that is, lessons learned from observing others. For example, Marie qualifies her statement that her family taught nothing about being Dominican with the observation that she "just saw it from other people":

*I:* Who'd you see it from?

*R:* My grandmother. She speaks Spanish to Dominicans a lot . . . to people from over there.

*I:* And what did you see from that, other than that she speaks Spanish?

*R:* That to be proud to be that, even though people like to criticize you. Just be proud.

*I:* And how did they show that?

*R:* Well, sometimes people would say stuff to my grandmother but she didn't care. She is proud to be Dominican. She doesn't care what you say.

Thus, cultural socialization that is not reported, even after explicit probing, can inadvertently take place in ways that are noted by adolescents. In addition, some adolescents are aware that they have been vicariously exposed to cultural values and beliefs even when nothing has been explicitly taught. Later, we will provide examples of other types of ethnic socialization that transpire in this manner.

A third form of cultural socialization was described almost exclusively by African American mother-adolescent pairs, and consisted of displaying ethnic art and artifacts in the home, sharing literature about important historical figures and events, and trips to ethnic museums and culturally relevant activities. A prototypical example of this type of socialization is evident in our interview with Brenda, an African American mother whose son Julian attends MS 5030. Brenda speaks extensively about her awareness of discrimination against African Americans and her desire for Julian to understand that being African American should never be viewed as a barrier to achieving his goals. When asked about the types of things she does to help Julian understand these things, she describes her efforts to instill knowledge about the contributions African Americans have made in the United States:

R: I have books for my son in his room about every Black American there ever was. You should see his room. His room has got a library in there. If you're looking for African American books—president, encyclopedia, science books, what you call it, Britannica books—all the books that I have got for my child over the years. Cause every thing you want to know about African Americans is in these books.

Another African American mother, Suzanne, also explained that she instills in her son Michael the importance of understanding African American history. She wants Michael to be proud of being African American because “that is who he is.” When asked to describe specific things she does to help Micheal feel proud she said:

R: He is surrounded by Africa in this house and he can see [himself]. Cause if he looks on TV he doesn't see [himself]. So that is why I have him read and read what he should read. He is reading *Buffalo Soliders*. And [he said] “I don't want to read that book.” I said “You got to read that book.” [He said] “My teacher told me that I shouldn't be reading that book.” I said, “What?” Then I found out from the teacher that he was acting like it was difficult. I said, “Don't you know that book is not difficult. That book [is] no more difficult than *Holes* that you are reading.”

Michael also reported extensive exposure to books about important African American figures. Interestingly, however, he attributed much of his exposure to his teacher's efforts, rather than to those of his mother, although he acknowledges that his mother would know where to buy books. After Michael says that he learned about slavery and the civil rights movement, the interviewer asked how he earned these things. Michael said:

R: Well, it was kind'a like, in my history class. Everyday when did our read-alouds, she read us these cards about each African American, like, um, Martin Luther King, Jesse Owens, poets like Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, Malcolm X, Elijah Mohammad.

I: Everyday?

R: Yeah, everyday.

I: Do you remember some of the things you learned about like African American culture, which your family, your mom and dad [taught you]? Like the last thing you learned?

R: The last thing?

I: Mhm.

R: It was about Malcolm X. And I read his autobiography.

I: Oh you did? What did you think?

R: It was good.

In addition to exposure to books and films, African American parents and adolescents also commonly reported verbal discussions about the history of African Americans in the United States. For instance, a large number of African American adolescents, including those reporting low cultural socialization, alluded to slavery when asked what they knew about the history of African Americans in this country. In addition to having been transmitted through the school curriculum and through films, parents and other family members intentionally transmitted this knowledge. Beatrice, whose daughter Erica attends MS 1015, says that she does not place a heavy emphasis on race,

yet both she and Erica have scores in the top quartile on quantitative measures of cultural socialization. When asked about the kinds of things she does to help Erica understand about being Black, Beatrice says:

*R: [I want her to understand] how much we've contributed to the world. I don't think she understands that . . . the inventions and things like that and how far we've come and how it used to be. I talk to her about that, as far as, um, how she would have never been able to go to school the way she do, and have the friends she do have because of segregation. I talk to her about that.*

Erica, for her part, reports substantial socialization in her interview, but especially from her grandmother who “talks about race a lot.” Regarding her parents, she reiterates the teachings that her mother described:

*I: What did your parents teach you about being African American?*

*R: They told me what they went through when they weren't allowed to go into an all White place. Like, the Black people and the White people were separated and stuff.*

*I: And how did that conversation come up?*

*R: I don't know. She just said, “And why do you like that you're Black?”*

*I: She asked you that? And what did you say?*

*R: I told her that Black people had a hard history and I wanted to know more about that.*

As a side note, Erica and her mother illustrate a pattern that is quite common in our interviews: Erica conveyed a sophisticated understanding of her background (“Black people had a hard history”) that her mother is unaware of (“I don't think she understands that”). That is, many mothers assume that their children do not understand aspects of their racial history and experience that children themselves clearly articulate.

A final form of cultural socialization that was identified primarily among African American families—and one that can also be construed as a form of resistance—is evident in explicit conversations about skin color and other phenotypic characteristics. Such conversations occur both in reaction to and in preparation for discrimination or negative societal views. For instance, Erica recounts a conversation with her grandmother that is clearly intended to instill ethnic pride in response to the prevalence of negative messages about being Black. In this example, the importance of viewing all groups as being equal and of ethnic pride (cultural socialization and egalitarianism) are both conveyed in the conversation:

*I: What did your grandmother tell you?*

*R: She says that you should respect fellow people that aren't your race too. And she said that you should just not look at skin.*

*I: How did that conversation come up—why were you and your grandmother talking about that?*

*R: Because one time my cousin said “I want to be White.” And I said, “Why?” And she said, “Because they have long hair and stuff.” And, I said, “Not all of them.” And she said “But I still want to be that.” And, my grandmother was telling us why you should be happy about who you are. And that's when she said that you should respect other people too.*

Callie, an African American mother, describes a similar discussion involving skin color that is also intended to counteract negative societal images of Blacks. However, Callie's discussion is reactive to a specific incident in which the driver of an ice cream truck made a derogatory comment about her daughter's skin color. She explains the extensive efforts her family made to counteract the comment:

- R: My mother use to always tell her, "Don't worry baby. The darker berry the sweeter the juice," you know, things like that. We have to keep [it] up or, you know. So, now I don't think it bothers her anymore. But at one time it was a big thing on her.
- I: Okay and what were some of the other things that you guys did to help her overcome those feelings that she was initially having?
- R: We just complimented her on a lot of, you know, just complimented her a lot. We tried to show her that being her color was not a problem. It coulda' been a color to other people, but she should she be very proud of who she [is and] what color she is. And, you know never let anybody treat you any different because of that 'cause that's ridiculous. I mean, yeah, a lot of encouragement it took.

So far, we have described a range of distinct practices that would each fall into the general category of "cultural socialization" as presently conceptualized in the literature. These practices include participation in cultural events, everyday practices (most common among Latino and Asian parents), exposure to books and films, discussions of group history (most common among African American parents), and discussion of phenotypic characteristics (also most common among African American parents). Due to the fact that our objective is to distinguish parents' actual practices from their underlying ethnic socialization beliefs and goals, we next describe parents' statements about the beliefs and goals that underlie their socialization efforts.

#### BELIEFS AND GOALS UNDERLYING CULTURAL SOCIALIZATION

Our objective was to extract narratives in which parents described particular beliefs and goals that underlie particular cultural socialization practices. In structuring our interview protocol and fieldworker training, we included questions and probes intended to elicit these sorts of narratives (*e.g.*, *What is important for [child] to know or understand about being [ethnic group]? Why is it important for [child] to understand or know this?*) Not surprisingly, parents articulated a variety of beliefs and goals as they described the practices they engaged in and their philosophies on managing race relations within their families. The most common themes were self-knowledge, retention of a particular value that respondents held dear, and, among African American parents in particular, arming children with strength and resistance against negative stereotypes and discrimination.

##### Self Knowledge

Bernard, one of the few fathers interviewed for our study, provides a good example of a narrative about cultural socialization as an essential path towards self-knowledge and future success. Bernard was born in the Dominican Republic and immigrated to the United States 24 years ago. His sixth-grade daughter Ana is enrolled in the honors program at MS 5030. Education and upward mobility are clearly high priorities for Bernard and his former wife, Ana's mother, both of whom Ana describes as being involved in her school work "every single day." The large extended family, members of which live in close proximity in upper Manhattan, is

also clearly rooted in Dominican traditions and networks. Although Bernard ranks ethnic socialization as third in importance, behind academics (first) and moral/self development (second), both Bernard and Ana are in the upper quartile of their respective quantitative distributions on measures of cultural socialization. Language, ethnic food, music, and family activities are all mentioned in his response to questions about ethnicity. When asked what is important for Ana to know about being Dominican, Bernard frames his response in terms of the need for self knowledge in order to promote confidence that one can succeed:

*I:* Is it important to you that Ana says she's Dominican?

*R:* Well it's important for me to know that she recognize[s] [and is] respecting the background that she has because if she don't respect where she's coming from I don't think she could respect what she could become.

*I:* Are there things that you tell her, "These things are important about being Dominican?"

*R:* Well, it's important [for] you [to] have the respect, first of all, for yourself. It's important to know what you [and] your parents [are] coming from. If you have a parent that made it in another country—now its a little bit easier—but back then, it was hard just to make it and have at least two jobs and raise your kid and give them a better education and a better future. I think its important that she knows that we would—we were able to make it because we hold our culture and we never lose the respect for who we are.

Bernard appears to have communicated many of his views about the importance of cultural knowledge to Ana. Throughout her interview, Ana alludes to the principles that her father refers to in his own interview as being important for her to know. For instance, when asked what types of things she had learned about being Dominican, she refers to the importance of "pride in who you are":

*I:* What kinds of things did you learn while growing up about what it means to be Hispanic?

*R:* Well, um. Take pride in who you are and no matter what people may say or criticize, you're still going to be the same way no matter what.

*I:* If you had kids of your own, what kinds of things would you teach them about being Hispanic?

*R:* I'll teach them the tradition, like the Roman Catholic and how to really respect it and one another. And I would teach them everything my parents taught me, being polite and understanding . . . I would tell them that they should take pride and that maybe one of you may become president of our country and that, um, you will always know that your mother was the one who was teaching you all the time.

Like Dominican parents, many immigrant Chinese mothers also mention that their underlying goal in developing children's ethnic awareness is that such awareness serves as a path towards self knowledge. An example is found in the interview of Irene, who was born in Guangzhou and came to the United States 14 years ago. When asked about things that she wants her daughter Kim to learn about being Chinese, she discusses the need for her to understand her lineage and to learn about the "Chinese way." Her narrative emphasizes self-knowledge as a way of showing

respect and gratitude to parents. She says that she admires the U.S. holidays of Thanksgiving and Mother's Day because each of these "educate their children not to forget about their parents raising them." She, like Bernard, alludes to the importance of instilling knowledge about one's lineage and of China:

*I:* Are there things about being Chinese you really wish Kim will learn?

*R:* Things about being Chinese? I hope she knows that her parents are from China, and *[that]* China has some customs. [I want her to] know how big the country is and what it was like before. But now that she's learning Chinese, she knows a little.

*I:* Then what do you think she needs to know, can you give me an example?

*R:* Hmm, language-wise, I like that she can speak Chinese, *[that she]* know[s] a little about China and stuff. At least she knows where the country is because her grandma is there. I took her back twice. I took her to see the Great Wall, Yellow Mountain, and I said "China's like this," to show her places in China.

*I:* How did she feel?

*R:* After she's seen it, then she knows what it is all about. She has an impression.

*I:* Then do you talk to her about these things?

*R:* We talked a little, but she doesn't understand.

*I:* What did you tell her?

*R:* I told her about Beijing, Shanghai, big cities like Guan-Zhou. We talked about how many big cities China has, where the capitol is, [and that there are] lots of people. Mainly *[I wanted]* to bring her back to see, to have an impression, "So this is where my parents lived," like that. Mainly *[I wanted]* to let her know more things than American things, because she's *[already]* the learning history and geography of America.

Consistent with Irene's view that Kim "doesn't understand," Kim's interview shows little awareness of her mother's socialization efforts or of her views about the importance of understanding her lineage. Although she alludes to learning about Chinese history in Saturday Chinese school, she is unable or unwilling to articulate specific things she has learned. When asked what it means to be Chinese, she says with a giggle, "I don't know." Fairly persistent probing on the part of the field worker did not yield additional insight into her feelings about her Chinese identity.

## RETENTION OF CULTURAL VALUES

A second, and distinct, goal underlying cultural socialization is parents' desire for children to retain a particular value, belief, or way of being parents' believe is important and associate with their culture. Indeed, this is among the most common goals or rationales that Chinese and Latino parents articulate, although it was also articulated by Jewish and African American parents. For instance, Chinese mothers commonly mention that it is important that their child learn about hard work, respect for elders, and thriftiness. African American parents mention issues such as respect for elders, family closeness, spirituality and religion, and soulfulness. Family closeness and altruism are among the cultural values mentioned by Latino mothers.

Roshelle introduced earlier, provide a good example of how mothers describe the importance of transmitting cultural values. In this instance, she describes feeling

connected to family as a strongly Dominican characteristic that she tries to instill in her daughter Cara:

*I:* So, what kinds of things do you think it's important for Cara—aside from the fact that her family is there—what other things do you think it is important for her to learn.

*R:* Well, um, you know, every culture has things that are negative. But, um, my family from the Dominican Republic we have, um, like we are very united, very close, you know. So that is something I would like her to take with her. It's like caring about the people and, you know, and, most Dominicans feel that way. Very caring and very supportive. And very close to our family, which is the reason why you see grown ups, 40 or 50, still who don't want to leave home. We respect our elders. And those are things I want Cara to learn and grow up with.

Indeed, Cara's interview shows traces of the value on interpersonal relationships that Roshelle holds:

*I:* So, what kind of things did you learn while growing up about what it means to be Dominican?

*R:* The language, the way that you're supposed to act, the different food we have.

*I:* So what ways are you supposed to act?

*R:* Well, you can act mean or you can act nice, but mostly you have to act nice. If you see a person next door and they ask you for help or something you help them instead of walking right past them.

*I:* So how do you know about it?

*R:* My parents told me.

Linda, a Chinese mother from the Fujian Province, similarly describes her efforts to ensure that her daughter Elaine learn the value of hard work and thriftiness, qualities that she views as being particularly Chinese. When asked what is important for her daughter to understand, she says:

*R:* I tell her she's Chinese. You have to be like [*the*] Chinese. [You] have to work hard, study hard, just—how to say this—earn. Don't just use money to buy things. If you have one dollar, don't use [it] all to buy things. [You] have to save some, a little bit.

*I:* You told her to save money?

*R:* Right, save some money. If you get fired, if your boss fires you, you have some money, not like foreigners.

*I:* Like who?

*R:* Just, sometimes, I used to work with [a particular ethnic group] people. When they have money, they use it to buy things, take from the government's some kind of fund.

*I:* Welfare.

*R:* Right. This, I say, if you have your own money, save it, don't spend it all, like that.

*I:* So you feel that this is different about Chinese from other people?

*R:* Yes.

## RESISTANCE AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

We mentioned earlier that a form of cultural socialization relatively distinct to African American families consists of intentional exposure to African American literature, important figures in African American history, and visiting cultural museums. Consistent with our view that these sorts of practices essentially constitute a mode of resistance to negative societal perspectives, a prevalent theme in African Americans' descriptions of their cultural socialization goals and messages is a desire for their children to understand how African Americans persevered in the struggle for racial equality within the United States and to be familiar with African American historical figures who were instrumental in the struggle. Many African American parents associate this practice with fostering a sense of ethnic identity and pride as well as a spirit of perseverance. In an excerpt we presented earlier, the mother Brenda responds to a question about things she does by saying that her son "*is surrounded by Africa in this house and he can see [himself]. Cause if he looks on TV he doesn't see [himself],*" implying a need to counteract the dominant images in the larger social world. Another example of this perspective is found in our interview with Bernadette, whose daughter Olivia attends MS 1015. Bernadette strongly identifies with being African American, although she is very aware of the negative stereotypes others hold about them. When asked what being African American means to her, she says: "Being African American is a beautiful thing. It has its ups and downs but I think it's a beautiful thing." Later when the fieldworker asked what is important for Olivia to know, she says:

R: I want her to always know, you know, what our history has been through. That's important for her to know, to keep her, you know, strong. I think that would keep her strong to know that our ancestors before have suffered a great deal for us to be in this world as we are now. I think that's important.

Adolescent children of mothers who articulate self-pride and resistance as an underlying goal of cultural socialization commonly echo the perspective that their mothers emphasize. Interestingly, however, as evidenced in Olivia's response to questions about what has been taught, their knowledge is sometimes incomplete and is often attributed to another source:

I: So, what kinds of things did you learn growing up about what it means to be African American?

R: That African American people went through a lot with slavery and all that, and it's really important to them because they don't have to go to slavery no more. It's the end of slavery so. . . . [answer trails off].

I: Uh huh. How did you learn about that?

R: I read books and my teachers told me.

I: You read books?

R: Yeah. And a movie that's called—what's that movie called? It's a movie about slavery.

I: Oh, you saw a movie about slavery? Okay!

R: I forgot what the movie's called. My mom knows, but I don't know.

In concluding this section, it seems important to note that although almost 25 percent of our sample is White, we rarely identified excerpts regarding cultural socialization in our interviews with White parents. Indeed, 11 of the 20 parent-adolescent pairs in which both the parent and the adolescent score in the bottom quartile on



quantitative measures of cultural socialization are White. Many White parents—especially those who were not Jewish—say that they do not discuss any cultural aspects of being White and, in fact, struggle to answer questions about its meaning or what is taught. A prototypical example is in the interviews of Marianne and her son Andrew. Here, the interviewer asked:

*I:* So, what kind of things do you believe are important for Andrew to understand or learn about being a Caucasian?

*R:* I can't answer that—

*I:* What kinds of things do you do or tell Andrew about being Caucasian?

*R:* I don't.

*I:* Okay. So you indicate that you really haven't had any kind of discussions around race or does he, has he ever had any questions about racial issues?

*R:* No. But you know, your questions raise an issue for me, which is talking about these things with my children because it's something I haven't talked about.

When parallel questions were asked of Andrew, he confirmed his mothers' account of the lack of race-related discussion in the household:

*I:* So what kinds of things did you learn while growing up about what it means to be White?

*R:* Um, I didn't, I hadn't, I um, well, when I was growing up, I had, there, I had no like idea, uh awareness of the difference between people, skin color.

*I:* Ok. And when did you become aware of it, of this?

*R:* I mean, when I started, uh mmm, well when I'm around, like um, when I was, when I started to be around more um, uh like different ethnic, ethnicities.

*I:* So um, how did that experience of being more aware of it, I mean, how, that teach you something about what it means to be White?

*R:* I mean, it didn't really, I just thought just a tiny bit more of, um, about the skin color, just a tiny bit more. And I mean it didn't affect how I thought about people.

*I:* Ok. What did your, what did, what are some of the issues related to being like White that are, or is ever talked about in your family or how do they come up?

*R:* Um, I dunno. Um, it has never been talked about.

*I:* Ok. What did your parents teach you about being White?

*R:* Um, like that is basically repetitive of the other question, I know, sorry. Uh, nothing. Nothing.

The three goals that we have discussed thus far—self-knowledge, cultural retention, and resistance were evident across many interviews with parents from varied ethnic backgrounds. We turn now to a discussion of socialization in a different area, which we term preparation for bias.

#### PREPARATION FOR BIAS:

Parents' efforts to promote their children's awareness of racial bias, and to prepare them to cope with prejudice and discrimination, have also been emphasized as a critical component of racial socialization. Several scholars have suggested that enabling children to navigate racial barriers and to negotiate potentially hostile social interactions are normative parenting tasks within ethnic minority families (Thornton et al., 1990; Fisher et al., 1998; Garcia Coll & Magnuson, 1997). Parents from all ethnic groups in our study had a conception of the role of race and the nature of discrimination in U.S. society. For some

parents, these conceptions were slight and did not warrant discussion or reflection. For other parents, however, race and discrimination were more connected to their daily experiences, and intergroup relations significantly influenced (whether positively or negatively) their approach to child-rearing and the extent to which they relayed information about ethnicity and race to their children.

Parents' and adolescents' average values on questions pertaining to preparation for bias are shown in Table 11.3, rows 2, 5, and 8. The mean value on parents' beliefs across all parents in the sample was 3.3, indicating that on average parents believed that preparation for bias was "somewhat important" and, comparatively speaking, they believed less strongly in its importance relative to cultural socialization ( $t(201) = 9.23, p < .001$ ). Preparation for bias beliefs varied across ethnic groups. As seen in Table 11.3, African American parents placed the greatest importance on preparation for bias, followed by Latino, Chinese, and White parents, with differences between all groups being statistically significant. In practice, the mean value on preparation for bias was 2.1, indicating

**Table 11.3**

Ethnic-racial Socialization Variable Means and Standard Deviations by Ethnic Group.

Variable	Overall	Black	Latino	Chinese	White	Statistic
<b>Parent Beliefs</b>						
CS	3.26 (.73)	3.63 <sub>a</sub> (.50)	3.50 <sub>a</sub> (.49)	3.25 <sub>a</sub> (.54)	2.63 <sub>b</sub> (.89)	$F = 25.68^{***}$
PFB	3.29 (.71)	3.76 <sub>a</sub> (.43)	3.36 <sub>a</sub> (.57)	3.12 <sub>b</sub> (.64)	2.86 <sub>b</sub> (.82)	$F = 19.85^{***}$
EGALIT	3.51 (.51)	3.56 <sub>a</sub> (.52)	3.68 <sub>a</sub> (.39)	3.22 <sub>b</sub> (.54)	3.57 <sub>a</sub> (.45)	$F = 8.58^{***}$
PM	1.95 (.71)	1.97 <sub>a</sub> (.71)	2.21 <sub>a</sub> (.81)	2.19 <sub>a</sub> (.59)	1.44 <sub>b</sub> (.39)	$F = 15.45^{***}$
<b>Parent Practices</b>						
CS	3.06 (1.00)	3.60 <sub>a</sub> (.98)	2.80 <sub>b</sub> (1.09)	3.14 <sub>b</sub> (.72)	2.61 <sub>b</sub> (.91)	$F = 11.44^{***}$
PFB	2.08 (1.14)	3.05 <sub>a</sub> (1.13)	1.81 <sub>b</sub> (1.23)	1.85 <sub>b</sub> (.78)	1.48 <sub>b</sub> (.53)	$F = 27.48^{***}$
EGALIT	3.57 (1.14)	3.66 <sub>a</sub> (1.23)	4.06 <sub>a</sub> (.99)	2.84 <sub>b</sub> (1.19)	3.73 <sub>a</sub> (.73)	$F = 11.92^{***}$
PM	1.45 (.75)	1.48 <sub>a</sub> (.75)	1.41 <sub>a,c</sub> (.92)	1.64 <sub>a</sub> (.73)	1.24 <sub>b,c</sub> (.54)	$F = 2.52^+$
<b>Child Perceptions</b>						
CS	2.05 (.56)	2.27 <sub>a</sub> (.53)	2.21 <sub>a,b</sub> (.57)	1.99 <sub>b,c</sub> (.50)	1.72 <sub>c</sub> (.48)	$F = 11.39^{***}$
PFB	1.36 (.48)	1.69 <sub>a</sub> (.58)	1.29 <sub>b</sub> (.41)	1.30 <sub>b</sub> (.40)	1.10 <sub>b</sub> (.23)	$F = 17.58^{***}$
EGALIT	2.00 (.57)	2.04 <sub>b,c</sub> (.60)	2.07 <sub>b,c</sub> (.53)	1.80 <sub>a,c</sub> (.57)	2.10 <sub>b</sub> (.55)	$F = 3.02^*$
PM	1.24 (.39)	1.24 <sub>a,b</sub> (.39)	1.27 <sub>a</sub> (.38)	1.40 <sub>a</sub> (.47)	1.05 <sub>b</sub> (.15)	$F = 7.81^{***}$

**Note.** Standard deviations are provided in parentheses. CS = Cultural Socialization. PFB = Preparation for Bias. EGALIT = Egalitarianism. PM = Promotion of Mistrust. Means that do not share subscripts differ significantly from each other in Tukey's honestly significant difference posthoc comparisons.  $d.f = 3,200$  for first 6 rows; 3,199 for rows 7 and 8; 3,197 for last 4 rows.

$^+p = .06$ .  $^*p \leq .05$ .  $^{**}p \leq .01$ .  $^{***}p \leq .001$ .

that parents, on average, reported “rarely” engaging in preparation for bias within the past year. However, African American parents reported significantly more frequent preparation for bias in practice than did White, Chinese, and Latino parents, who did not differ significantly from each other. Consistent with this, adolescents reported very little preparation for bias from their parents, with an average value of 1.3, between “never” and “a few times.” African American youth reported significantly more preparation for bias than did Chinese or Latino youth who, in turn, reported more preparation for bias than did White youth. Parents and adolescents both reported less frequent preparation for bias than cultural socialization ( $t(199) = 5.08, p < .01$  and  $t(202) = 7.43, p < .001$ , respectively). Parents’ beliefs about the importance of preparation for bias were only moderately correlated with their practices ( $r = .46, p < .001$ ), and these correlations were higher among African American and White parents ( $r = .38, p < .01$  and  $.46, p < .001$ , respectively) than among Chinese and Latino parents ( $r = .25, p = .08$  and  $.27, p = .07$ , respectively). Children’s perceptions of their parents’ practices were more highly correlated with parents’ practices ( $r = .31, p < .001$ ) than with parents’ beliefs ( $r = .18, p < .05$ ), a pattern that is opposite from that found for cultural socialization.

Again, these quantitative data provide information that allows us to compare preparation for bias across groups and that serves as a barometer for the frequency with which it occurs. In our qualitative interviews, we sought to complement these data with information regarding the contexts in which discrimination and unfair treatment against one’s own and other ethnic groups emerge as points of discussion or action within families. To ensure that we elicited such information from parents and adolescents, we explicitly asked mothers and adolescents to describe their experiences of unfair treatment and discrimination, dialogues that took place about these experiences, and what was said. As before, we began the analysis with transcripts in which both the parent and the adolescent scored in the highest or lowest quartile, or in which the parent scored high but the adolescent scored low on quantitative measures of preparation for bias. Notably, 17 of the 18 parent-adolescent pairs in which both the parent and the adolescent scored high were African American. Thus, to understand this aspect of socialization, we focused on a larger set of transcripts.

#### PREPARATION FOR BIAS PRACTICES

In our initial readings, we identified instances in which parents recall a particular time when they had done or said something to prepare children for racial bias, or when discrimination was evident in a situation that involved both the parent and the adolescent. Where specific instances were not apparent, we looked for evidence in parents’ and adolescents’ descriptive statements regarding ongoing orientations towards discrimination and unfair treatment. Our objective was to distinguish features of parents’ preparation for bias practices and to examine the circumstances in which parents engage in it. For our purposes, we conceived of preparation for bias as instances when parents engaged in a particular type of behavior that they explicitly ascribed to preparing children to cope with discrimination or stereotypes.

Preparation for bias most commonly takes the form of discussions about discrimination or unfair treatment and how to cope with it that emerged in conversations initiated by either the parent or the adolescent. Consistent with prior literature that has described features of ethnic socialization more generally, these conversations are distinguishable in terms of whether they were proactive or reactive (Hughes & Chen, 1999; Stevenson, 1999). More specifically, for some parents, discussions occur in

anticipation of experiences parents expect their adolescents to have, or of skills parents believe they will need. For others, discussions about discrimination are connected to and limited to a specific incident that has already occurred rather than to an anticipatory socialization goal.

Proactive discussions about discrimination are most evident in the narratives of African American and Chinese parents. Notably, however, most parents cannot recall specific instances in which discussions have taken place; they are most likely to describe proactive discussions in terms of their general practices. An exception is found in our interview with Titiana, an African American mother of two boys. Titiana is heavily identified with being African American and, when asked, says that it means “that I have come from a long legend of people who have come through adversity and still stand strong.” She and her sixth-grade son Malik both have high scores on quantitative measures of preparation for bias. Titiana is very aware of the existence of discrimination and relays the following worldview that she tries to transmit to her sons:

R: “You guys already start out with strikes against you because, one, you’re African American, and two, you’re male. So, the only way they [*presumably referring to Whites*] see you would be in the judicial system. People are not going to expect for you to be any more than a street hoodlum.”

When asked about the last time something came up in which this was discussed, she recounts a television documentary about a prominent African American heart surgeon:

R: When we saw the, um, on HBO the, um, first, the African American who did the open heart surgery. They couldn’t, they couldn’t believe, yes, they couldn’t half believe it. I was like, you see, they don’t expect you to do anything. They just expected him to be the janitor, they didn’t expect him, [*mocking what others’ would say*] He’s the doctor. What do you mean he’s the doctor? No! They don’t expect that from you. They don’t think you can do anything of the sort. So you have to go and you have to work extra hard and you have to prove to yourself that “this is what I can do.”

Even though Malik is in the top 25 percent of the adolescent distribution on measures of preparation for bias, he shows little awareness of his mother’s emphasis on the prevalence of low expectations and the importance of hard work. Moreover, he does not recount any discussions of discrimination with his mother. In the following segment, Malik describes what he has been taught about ethnicity and race:

I: What kind of things did you learn growing up from your parents about being an African American?

R: Like. . . growing up? . . . <pause> Church.

I: About, church. Like what about church?

R: Like everybody needs God.

I: Like everybody needs God? Like religion and stuff like that?

R: Yeah. We like . . . my family will like go to church every Sunday, like, like, I did different activities and stuff.

I: Are there other things that you learned about being an African American?

R: That’s it.

As with Titiana and Malik, we identified numerous instances in which parents—especially African American parents—articulate strong beliefs about the importance of preparing youth for discrimination that their adolescent do not mention. Thus, important questions arise regarding the underlying mechanisms that account for inconsistencies in parents' and adolescents' reports. As we have suggested in prior writings (Hughes et al., 2006), incongruency may be due to methodological constraints inherent in self-report measures. For instance, adolescents may be reticent to reveal conversations about discrimination or unfair treatment that they in fact recall. Alternatively, adolescents may miss, misinterpret, or reject messages that their parents intend to transmit.

Most parents could not recount a specific example of proactive preparation for bias, but many parents articulated a general orientation towards discussing discrimination with their children. Although it is difficult to identify the contexts of discussions or what prompted them when descriptions are not specific, such descriptions still provide insight into the content of preparation for bias messages. For instance, Margaret, an African American mother whose daughter Sharon attends MS 2040, is very aware of negative stereotypes others hold about African Americans. Although she says that she has not experienced discrimination personally, she believes that it is important for Sharon to know about others' views of African Americans. When asked to recall the last time she talked to Sharon about stereotypes and discrimination, she suggests that it has been an ongoing component of her socialization efforts:

R: I done talked to her already. I been talkin' to my kids since they was babies.

I: Right.

R: I been tellin' my kids things when they was in my stomach. Talkin' to them about life. So they know all about that.

I: Um hmm.

R: They know how to present themselves and all this and that. And not to let things get to them. You know, somebody call you a [n word], um, "well, I'm a beautiful [n word]." You know? I'm not gonna let them, you know, get it out of focus.

I: Um hmm.

R: You gotta stay focused.

Lian, in a similar manner, reports that her conversations with her son Tai about discrimination against Chinese are ongoing. In discussing ethnicity and race, she notes that others laugh at and degrade Chinese immigrants because they don't speak English: "We Chinese work like cows and are laughed at by people. Of course [that does not make me] feel good." The interviewer asked her to elaborate what is said to Tai about these issues:

I: Do you talk to Tai about how Chinese are discriminated against?

R: Yes, I *always* ask him to study hard.

I: You say it everyday?

R: Yes, everyday. Say study hard and get a good job. Don't let others look down upon you.

In both Margaret's and Lian's narratives, there are indications of what is taught about discrimination. Both caution their children about internalizing negative messages ("[they know] not to let things get to them," "[I tell him] don't let others look

down on you.”). It also seems evident from both descriptions that multiple discussions have taken place. For Margaret, they include directives about proper demeanor, how to cope with prejudice and discrimination, and an emphasis on racial pride. For Lian, they emphasize hard work as a strategy for overcoming discrimination.

Notably, neither of the adolescents, Sharon or Tai, indicate that they have received messages about coping with discrimination from their mothers. Here again, interesting questions remain regarding the factors that account for this incongruence, whether it be methodological (youth may be less willing to report preparation for bias than parents) or actual (youth may not hear or retain preparation for bias messages).

Importantly, some adolescents do report preparation for bias messages from their parents. For example, Luther’s mother, Betty, describes in detail the many conversations she has had to prepare Luther for the discrimination and prejudice she feels he will inevitably face. For example, she talks to Luther about “cops” and “harassment,” and about “what to be on the lookout for.” When asked about the most important things he needed to know, she says:

*R:* That you have to get a good education to succeed, because where a White person might not need as much education they will be successful because they’re White. They will be given more opportunities because they’re White. You’re not going to be given those opportunities. But if you show them how smart you are, and if you show them that you can do this job, then you have it. You always have to be better than they are. So that’s what I instill in him.

Luther notices and recalls these messages. In addition to demonstrating an astute knowledge of African American historical and literary figures, and of negative images of African Americans on television and in the movies, he is also very aware of his mother’s efforts to proactively teach him about how to handle discrimination:

*I:* So what did your parents teach you about being African American?

*R:* That, I need to do what I can and try to be smart in this world cause I’m going to need not only street smarts but regular smarts so I that can live in this world.

*I:* And, when stuff related to being African American is discussed in your family, how do they come up?

*R:* They [referring to his mother and brother] talk to me before, like, anything. happens, any issues about me being African American happens, so I’ll know what to do when it comes.

*I:* Can you give me an example of a time when you have had a conversation about that?

*R:* They told me once that, like, arguing isn’t always going to be the best thing, that like, that you shouldn’t retaliate, because—that you should ignore it and should always be proud of your race.

Thus, there are clearly instances in which preparation for bias messages from parents are loud, clear, and convincing enough for youth to recall and internalize them.

A final form of preparation for bias was that which occurs in the context of specific incidents or circumstances involving discrimination that required parental guidance or intervention. This type of reactive conversation is evident in interviews of parents from all ethnic groups. According to parents’ and adolescents’ descriptions, parents typically modeled or verbally emphasized a particular strategy for coping with a discriminatory

event. Strategies vary widely, ranging from encouraging the adolescent to ignore the event, downplaying the race-related origins of the event, and simply enabling adolescents to cope with the emotional aftermath of the event. Yvonne, an African American mother, talks about a time when her daughter Liza had been called “Blackie” by a group of Spanish girls. Although the incident angered Yvonne deeply, she explained to her daughter that “everyone in the world has been called names,” that “kids are just silly,” and that she needed to “brush it off and try to overlook it.” Jennifer, a White mother, tells a story about one of her son Peter’s friends who was beaten up in the schoolyard by two African American boys. In Jennifer’s account of the incident, she encouraged Peter to think of ways in which his friend’s behavior might have attributed to the event:

*R:* Peter’s friend was saying something like, I don’t know, some expression like “shizzle my fizzle,” and then the kids were beating him up. Well, it turns out that that is slang for, like “kiss my ass” or something. And I don’t think he knew what it meant. He was just saying it, just saying the phrase. So, I said to Peter, I gave that as an example, “Sometimes you are saying things and you do not know what they mean and people take offense and, who knows, these kids probably thought ‘Look, who is this little White kid talking,’” you know. So I remind him just to be respectful, look who you are, you are a White Jewish kid.

Maria, a Puerto Rican mother whose son Juan attends a predominantly Chinese school, tells of her son being teased by other students in his classes. She, like Jennifer, encourages her son to reframe the interaction:

*R:* I told him it wasn’t so much that he was different, you know. You are the new kid in the school and they were friends since kindergarten across the street. So you have to think about when you were at school and you had all your friends and you didn’t let new kids come in. I kind of took it from that angle of where it’s not that you are different, it’s just that you are new. So when you come into something that’s already there, it hard for you.

Emily, whose son Luke attends the honors program, recounts multiple instances in which she has helped Luke to deal with being picked on or accosted by African American youth at school and elsewhere. In the following narrative, she recalls her efforts to help him cope with a particularly painful incident in which they, together, were bullied by older African American youth:

*R:* On the way home the only thing I could think of, I said, “What are you feeling? Because I am really angry!” And he was kind of crying. I said, “What are the worst words you know?” And so we swore at the top of our lungs all the way home because I couldn’t think of, I couldn’t think my way out of this. It happened so fast I couldn’t react or protect him either and it scared me. So it was, I mean, I froze, you know.

Thus, preparation for bias occurs when parents are confronted with their adolescents experiences with prejudice and discrimination. In these cases, socialization is reactive to situations that presented themselves rather than tied to a specific a prior parental belief or goal.

It seems important to note that we identified many instances in which mothers whose children describe experiences with prejudice in detail indicate that their children have no awareness of discrimination. Some of these mothers do not acknowledge the existence of discrimination or stereotypes whereas others are quite cognizant of these, but chose not to discuss them with their children. Jackie, an African American mother, says that she has never experienced discrimination, is confident that her son Troy has not experienced it, is unaware of any stereotypes about African Americans, and reports no discussions with Troy about ethnicity or race. Although Troy also states that he does not discuss discrimination with his mother, he demonstrates a keen awareness of it in his interview. When asked to describe things he dislikes about being African American, he says that "other people think we are bad and do bad things," and that "certain groups are racist against Blacks." He also indicates that being African American is salient to him when "people act scared" of him, a classic form of discrimination experienced by Black male youth. The absence of discussions with his mother or other adults about these issues means that Troy is left to his own devices to interpret these events and deal with the emotional aftermath.

Even mothers who have experienced discrimination themselves and believe that it is pervasive are sometimes unaware of their adolescent children's understanding of discrimination. For instance, one Dominican mother, Arva, is very cognizant of bias against Dominicans and, indeed, recounts three recent incidents in which she believes she has been treated unfairly because she is Dominican. However, she never talks with her daughter June about discrimination, is confident that June has never experienced it, and doubts that June "even knows what discrimination is." June, on the other hand, speaks quite eloquently about her awareness of stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination at the individual and societal level. She indicates that she appreciates attending school with other Dominicans in the predominantly Black and Latino honors program at MS 5030, but that "sometimes people at school think that Dominicans are not smart." In particular she feels that students in her class assume that she gets bad grades and will not know the answers or how to do things because she is Dominican. She also notes that some of the neighborhoods Dominicans live in are dirty and unsafe, which she believes is "bad for the culture because when other people see it they think that every Dominican is like that." She has witnessed "people yelling at a group of Dominicans for no reason" and "the police watching a group of Dominicans outside of the building because they think they are going to do something wrong." This pattern, in which mothers of adolescent children who are quite savvy about race relations in the United States assume that children understand or recognize very little, appears in interviews with parents and adolescents from all four ethnic groups.

To summarize, although mothers and adolescents report preparation for bias less often than they report cultural socialization, we identified several different forms. Most often, preparation for bias is reported in the context of parent-adolescent conversations. Some occur in anticipation of adolescents' future experiences whereas others are tied to a specific instance of discrimination. Parents tend to describe a *type* of message or conversation that transpired and have trouble providing a specific example of an instance when socialization has taken place. The difficulty parents have in pinpointing specific instances suggest that preparation for bias may be an illusive process, even for parents. Thus, although parents sense that it happens, they are less readily able to report how or when it happens. This may account for the low correspondence between parents' and children's reports about it.



## BELIEFS AND GOALS: UNDERLYING PREPARATION FOR BIAS

Consistent with the finding that preparation for bias occurs relatively infrequently, parents articulate a relatively narrow set of beliefs and goals in relation to preparation for bias. Still, in our analyses thus far, we have distinguished several types, including: (1) those aimed at arming adolescents with specific tools for success; (2) those aimed at bolstering psychological resources, such as self-confidence, determination, and optimism about the future; and (3) those “in the moment” goals aimed at protecting youths’ emotions, which frequently accompany unanticipated discrimination experiences.

*Providing Tools for Success* Beliefs about the importance of providing students with specific tools for future success are among the most common that we identified. For instance, many parents speak at length about the importance of a good education as a tool for overcoming stereotypes and discrimination, and about the need to make children aware that they must proactively take advantage of the opportunities they are afforded. In particular, preparation for bias often emanates from parents’ beliefs that their children will need to compensate for negative stereotypes and low expectations through extra effort and achievement, and from assumptions that an understanding of discrimination will serve as an incentive for hard work. One mother, Isamara, states that her son Frankie can easily become another “statistic” if he does not have an informed sense of the causes and consequences of discrimination. Isamara is of African descent and self-identifies as Black and Dominican. Frankie’s father is Black, and though Isamara believes that Dominican culture, food, and music are much more present in Frankie’s daily life, she also talks to him about Blacks’ struggles for opportunity in the United States. She states that these conversations most typically occur when she suspects that Frankie is not putting enough effort into his schoolwork. These are the issues that come to mind when Isamara is asked what she teaches Frankie about ethnicity and race:

*I:* How do these conversations come about? How do you talk about these things with him?

*R:* Usually, a lot of the times if he’s not working to his full capacity, [I] just say, you know, “Understand why you have these opportunities, understand how you got here, and understand what will happen if you don’t take advantage of the opportunities that *are* being offered to you, that you *will* end up a statistic.” Usually I would say it’s those times when he’s not doing his best at school, or where he is being a little too defensive.

*I:* What other things are important for Frankie to understand about being a person of color?

*R:* Again, that he’s gotta work twice as hard as anyone else. To understand how easy it can be for him to end up somewhere where he never expected to. It’s not that difficult.

Consistent with cases that we have already presented, Frankie does not reference his mother’s extensive efforts to provide him with extra tools to combat discrimination. When asked, he initially indicates that “nothing” is taught about discrimination or unfair treatment, although he later says that his mother teaches him to “tell her and she’ll take care of it.”

Whereas the importance of hard work and education are at the forefront of discussions about discrimination among many African American and Latino mothers, Chinese mothers who discuss discrimination with their adolescent children more often do so to emphasize that speaking good English and high academic achievement are the necessary tools for overcoming it. Thus, although the underlying objective—to provide tools for overcoming barriers—are similar, the specific message focused distinctly on language proficiency. Jin’s response to questions about discrimination against Chinese is typical of responses that other Chinese mothers provide. She says:

*R:* Usually, sometimes, as a Chinese if our English is not good, even Filipino will bully us.

*I:* How do you know? Has this happened to you?

*R:* This is my own experience at work. Ten years ago, there were all kinds of people at my company, but if your English communication isn’t good, they’ll not think highly of you.

*I:* Have you ever brought these up for [your son] to know?

*R:* Yes.

*I:* Under what circumstances did you talk to him about this?

*R:* I told him that he has to study hard, study well, this way no one will look down on him.

*I:* How often do you tell him this?

*R:* Every now and then I bring this up. Whenever he’s not in the mood [to study] I’ll tell him this, and whenever his grades are bad I’ll bring this up too.

*Bolstering Psychological Resources* A second common underlying belief among mothers who report proactive preparation for bias is that adolescents needed to be psychologically prepared to expect discrimination, and that such preparedness will prevent them from being disabled by it. Notably, this belief is unique to the African American and Latino mothers in our sample and is firmly rooted in assumptions that their child will inevitably encounter discrimination at both the institutional (e.g., in employment and mobility) and interpersonal (in interactions with others) levels, regardless of their child’s future occupational or educational success. One African American mother, Naomi, speaks at length about discrimination against African Americans. When asked whether her views influence the types of things she teaches her son Matthew, she says:

*R:* He has to be reminded that being a Black man in this society you’re not looked at as equal to your White counterparts or any other counterparts. Always be mindful of that, ‘cause if you loose sight of that you’ll get swallowed up into the system and before you know it you’ll be coming in for a rude awakening because somebody will remind you.

Cheryl, another African American mother, gives a similar answer when asked what she talks about with her son Toby. Like Naomi, Cheryl provides numerous examples of the ways in which she believes African Americans are discriminated against and stereotyped in the United States. In the segment below, Cheryl outlines the reasons why she tries to prepare Toby for discrimination. Specifically, the interviewer has asked her to elaborate on a statement she has made regarding her worries about Toby becoming an African American man:

I: You mentioned that you worry about Toby being a Black boy who will grow to be a Black man. What are your worries specifically about him being a Black man?

R: I hear about all these things happening. My perception of White America towards Black men is that they don't care. They don't care. It's almost that you're sub-human, you're not a human really. I'm not saying it's the whole [White] race [that feels that way]. I'm just saying a lot of White America does not regard a Black man as being a man. Even if you're a doctor or a lawyer your still the "n word" that they use to call us in the day. It is implied. So I worry about the men. I worry about my son.

I: What worries you, exactly?

R: That if he's not, not educated, if he's not aware, if he doesn't know [about the nature of discrimination], if he's not prepared, he's going to get hurt, get killed, or be in jail. I don't want those bad things to happen to him.

Although not stated explicitly, both Naomi's and Cheryl's views appear to be connected to their own experiences with and observations of discrimination. This pattern is consistent with prior empirical findings that parents who report discrimination report more preparation for bias (Hughes, 2003; Hughes & Chen, 1997). Thus, like other beliefs, mothers' own beliefs about the importance of preparation for bias appear to be rooted in their own worldviews, which have been shaped both by their own experiences and by their constructions of the collective history of their racial and ethnic group.

*Protecting Youth's Emotions* Mothers also express varied beliefs about preferred ways of coping with discrimination, and these constitute a third class of beliefs that underlies preparation for bias. As with those underlying proactive efforts, these beliefs are embedded in mothers' views about the extent to which adolescents can control the interactions that are taking place within instances of discrimination (e.g., with relevant authorities), and the extent to which specific instances might have concrete consequences for their child. An example is found in Li's interview, as she tells of an incident in which a White boy spit on her daughter's coat. The excerpt reflects Li's belief that her daughter cannot control other people's actions and that the best way to handle these situations is to ignore them.

I: So how do you talk with her about it?

R: I told her not to care about those people, I don't know what she said to him in English. He [*the man*] did not care [*about what he had done*], and left.

I: In other words, you told her not to care about this kind of people?

R: How can you care? She is only a kid, that is an adult. You have the problem, just forget it.

I: Did you explain to her? . . .

R: I just said not to care about him, came back and washed it, and forget about it. You are not as strong as him, not as strong as him, he bullies you, and you have no right to fight back. Do you call the police? He is gone already, where can you find him? You don't know each other, you can't even recognize him, you only cross each other on the street.

Many of the instances we identified of reactive preparation for bias appear to be rooted in efforts to protect children and help them cope. Directives to ignore others' actions and attitudes, encouragement to reinterpret specific interactions, and efforts

to simply manage children's emotions are typically based on views that these instances of interpersonal discrimination will, ultimately, have few if any consequences for their adolescents' development.

Importantly, mothers who are highly aware of discrimination against their own or other groups, but chose not to discuss it with their children, also do so based on a set of beliefs about preparation for bias as a socialization goal. For some parents, the failure to discuss discrimination stems from concern that talking about discrimination will lead to animosity towards other groups. For example, the following excerpt from Anita's interview is embedded in an lengthy discussion of personal experiences with, and observation of, discrimination. When Anita is asked whether she talks with her daughter Meriam about discrimination, she explains that she wants Meriam to be able to develop relationships with people from varied ethnic backgrounds:

*I:* Do you ever talk to Meriam about discrimination?

*R:* No, no, no. I don't like that. Because, they growing up. But maybe in the future, she gonna know. But I don't want to put that in the child, though, because I want her to mix with any race, to mix with them and be nice with them and loving, and all, you know.

Implicit in the statement that "I don't want to put that in the child *because* I want her to mix" is a concern that discussing discrimination might undermine her inclination to cross racial boundaries. Allison, a White mother, expresses a similar belief as she explains the fact that she does not discuss an incident she perceives to be discriminatory as such with her daughter:

*I:* Has she ever been discriminated against in anyway, that you know of?

*R:* Um, well, maybe in terms of being picked on in the playground. She was the White girl who played on the kickball team and she was the only girl who was White. So, yes, but she didn't perceive it that way, so we didn't—I mean as parents we discussed it among ourselves but she didn't pick it up that way. She didn't feel it was about that so we didn't make a point about, "We think you were discriminated against because you were White." So, we didn't share that with her. I don't think . . . she may have overheard that in passing but certainly not to the point where we've had a conversation about it. And I think the reason that I haven't, sort of, focused on that is that I don't want to encourage her to discriminate or to assume that everyone's who's Black is going to treat her that way. In other words, it's an assumption that I'm making because I was raised with certain prejudices and things and I don't feel that she has those. So I'd rather her not be tainted with what might be an incorrect perception. Cause remember that I'm hearing about these things as stories from her and it's interesting that I'm surmising it that way, but maybe it really wasn't that.

Other parents believe that their children should learn about discrimination, but that discussions about it are premature because their children are not yet old enough to understand. In general, these mothers believe that their children are unaware of issues related to race, and should be protected from thinking about them until situations emerge that clearly require discussion. Collette's mother Brianna expresses this perspective in explaining why she does not discuss discrimination against Dominicans with Collette.

*I:* So have you talked about these things with Collette?

*R:* No, no, no, it has not come up. She doesn't know about these things. Later, she will certainly know, she will experience it [discrimination]. But I don't want her to know these things yet.

Overall, then, mothers' preparation for bias, whether proactive or reactive, appears to be based on varied underlying beliefs. Some mothers who report proactive preparation for bias, particularly African American and Chinese mothers, conceive of such socialization as a routine component of child-rearing that will provide adolescents with skills for, and an incentive to, achieve. Other mothers, especially African American and Latino mothers, view discrimination as inevitable and seek to arm children with tools for coping with its potentially damaging psychological aftermath. Still other mothers do not report proactive socialization, but find themselves having to manage their adolescent is unanticipated encounters with difficult situations involving race. This is evident among mothers from each of the four ethnic groups. Even mothers who report no preparation for bias often base their behavior on a set of beliefs about the potential consequences of introducing discrimination, or the appropriate age at which it should be introduced.

#### EGALITARIANISM

We use the term egalitarianism to refer to parental beliefs and practices that emanate from a desire for children to appreciate the values and experiences of all racial groups, and to notice people's individual qualities rather than their racial group membership. Researchers have consistently found that many parents either focus on egalitarian views or are silent about race. In Spencer's (1983) early studies, over half of the southern Black parents questioned reported that they taught their children to believe that all people are equal. In a retrospective study of southern Black adults (Parham & Williams, 1993), almost 30 percent of participants said that their parents had emphasized egalitarian views while they were growing up. Findings from our prior work have also documented a high prevalence of egalitarianism among parents from diverse ethnic groups (Hughes & Chen, 1999).

Average values on quantitative measures of socialization of egalitarianism for the present sample are shown in rows 3, 7, and 11 of Table 11.2. Regarding egalitarian beliefs, the table indicates that parents believe promoting the view that all people are equal was "somewhat important." Paired sample *t*-tests indicated that parents felt that egalitarianism was significantly less important than was cultural socialization [ $t(204) = -4.05, p < .001$ ], but that it was significantly more important than was preparation for bias [ $t(204) = -3.76, p < .001$ ] or promotion of mistrust [ $t(204) = -24.93, p < .001$ ]. Interestingly, Chinese parents reported significantly lower beliefs in the importance of egalitarianism than did parents from other ethnic groups, who, in turn, did not differ significantly from each other. In terms of practices, Table 11.2 indicates that parents communicated egalitarian messages to their children "occasionally" to "often" according to parents' reports, and "sometimes" according to adolescents' reports. Consistent with findings for egalitarian beliefs, Chinese mothers and their adolescent children reported less frequent socialization of egalitarianism than did their Dominican, African American, or White counterparts, who did not differ from one another. Mothers reported less egalitarianism than cultural socialization [ $t(203) = -5.23, p < .001$ ]. However, they reported more egalitarianism than preparation for bias

[ $t(203) = 15.01, p < .001$ ] or promotion of mistrust, [ $t(203) = 23.46, p < .001$ ], as did their adolescent children, [ $t(203) = 12.68, p < .001$  for adolescent reported preparation for bias; [ $t(203) = 15.20, p < .001$  for adolescent reported promotion of mistrust]. Thus, overall in our quantitative data egalitarianism was the second most frequently reported type of ethnic socialization, although Chinese parents reported notably less of it and believed in its importance less strongly than did their counterparts. Although there were no clear indicators of why this was so, it may be that egalitarianism is part of a national script that the Chinese mothers in our sample, who were most likely to be recent immigrants living in ethnically homogenous Chinatown, are less familiar with.

#### EGALITARIAN PRACTICES

Qualitative interviews provide an opportunity to understand how egalitarian messages unfold in families, the specific forms that they take, and the overarching beliefs and values underlying such messages. Consistent with our quantitative data, most parents and adolescents refer to a general appreciation for egalitarian principles in their interviews. Parents typically mention that they value diversity and want their children to be able to relate to individuals from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds. Likewise, most adolescents emphasize the importance of treating people as individuals and not paying attention to race, especially when asked what they would teach their own children about being a member of their ethnic group. Interestingly, however, although African American, Latino, and White parents and adolescents are quite similar in their reports of egalitarianism according to our quantitative data, in qualitative narratives they exhibit interesting differences in the actual messages they transmit.

Egalitarianism most commonly emerges as a general orientation towards openness and an acceptance of or disregard for differences. This is especially, albeit not exclusively, true of White mothers and adolescents. Mothers' openness is often reflected in claims that they do not notice race and do not use it as a basis for making life choices (e.g., about housing, friendship, activities, work). Notably, in describing their own and their children's social worlds, mothers often allude to ethnically homogenous friendship networks, neighborhoods, and workplaces. However, only rarely do they comment on the potential incongruence between the way they live their lives and the orientations towards intergroup relations that they articulate. Although some mothers acknowledge that their social worlds involve little intergroup contact, they tend to attribute this to economic differences or to structurally-based residential and occupational segregation. Carol is a White mother who lives on the upper east side of Manhattan. Both she and her son Tim espouse strong egalitarian values when asked to discuss race and ethnicity in their interviews. She and her husband choose to live in Manhattan in part because it is ethnically and culturally diverse. Although she indicates that her status as a White woman affords her access and advantages that people of color are unable to take for granted, she says that she does not discuss racial issues with her son. Moreover, her own and her sons social networks are ethnically homogenous. When asked about friendships, Carol indicates that although neither she nor Tim have friendships with people who are not White, this has more to do with shared interests and convenience than with race. In her words:

*R:* You see, what happens to me is that my community is really more about my child, so in school there is racial diversity and, frankly, it's pretty diverse at [the honors program]. But, I think he gravitates towards kids who share his

interests. He's interested in playing video games or sports, so—because he's looking for common overlap. He can't have play dates with people who live in the Bronx, because I can't travel up there or because he doesn't get home until 5 o'clock so its too late to go up there. His friends are people who are within a four or five block radius, and they just happen to be White

*I:* So, you're saying it's more about picking people who are similar to you rather than based upon racial lines?

*R:* Yeah, it's not racial at all.

Thus, one way in which egalitarianism appears is in the form of strong beliefs in egalitarian principles accompanied by a general reticence towards acknowledging race as a basis for conversation or action.

A second way in which socialization of egalitarianism occurs is in the context of explicit conversations between mothers and their adolescents about egalitarian principles and values. Much like preparation for bias, some conversations are proactive and tied to a specific socialization agenda, whereas others occur in reaction to events or situations. Some mothers describe specific instances in which egalitarian principles have been transmitted whereas other mothers describe general types of conversations.

Tara, a White mother, says that she intentionally incorporates egalitarian beliefs into her conversations with her daughter Sandy. Generally, Tara appears disaffected by her White identity because of the unfair social advantages it brings at the expense of others. Although she does not mention any specific times when she has attempted to transmit egalitarian beliefs, Tara says that she welcomes opportunities for her daughter to see beyond color and to experience being a part of a minority, as opposed to constantly being in the majority. When discussing discrimination, Tara comments that U.S. society is not a land of equal opportunity for all people, and, as an example, notes with much dismay that her daughter's school is ethnically mixed at the school level but segregated within programs. Tara seems acutely aware of and equally disturbed by racial inequities in the larger society and, in recognition of them, emphasizes to Sandy that all humans are genetically similar. What is notable about Tara's efforts is that rather than focusing on the abstract idea that "all people are equal" they include a focus on concrete evidence for this idea:

*R:* In general, I think that's one of the things we try to explain to her [is that] we're more similar to one another, different humans, than we are to any other species. So these differences that we make such a huge deal about are nothing, they're just nothing. Nothing, genetically they're nothing, and so that I think when we can we try and emphasize that.

*I:* How do you do that?

*R:* We talk to her about evolution, about how, you know, the first [people] were all African, you know and then we scattered about and the differences are just, first of all they're very recent differences and second of all they're, you know, pretty close to meaningless in terms of anything more significant. [And] we talk about all kinds of things: stereotypes about Jews, about Arabs, about Blacks. I mean, I guess we try hard to get her to look at things, [on an] individual basis, you know what I mean.

Tara's daughter Sandy also strongly believes that race is not an important aspect of her identity and that it should not determine one's beliefs or behaviors. Like her

mother, she is aware of the negative outcomes associated with her school's segregated structure. Interestingly, as with interviews about preparation for bias, Sandy does not mention the types of detailed conversations her mother alludes to. Thus, it is not possible to know the extent to which Sandy's views originate in Tara's socialization efforts, given that such views are prominent among most adolescents. Nevertheless, Sandy's thoughts regarding race and intergroup interactions are consistent with the beliefs that dominate her mother's interview:

*I:* If somebody were to ask you, what would you say that your ethnicity is?

*R:* Um, American and . . . well White American.

*I:* Do you think it's important to you to be White and American?

*R:* No, I really don't care.

*I:* Why? Why not?

*R:* Because I really don't think it matters. I don't think it matters what color you are.

Black and Latino mothers, like their White counterparts, encourage a disregard for differences, yet for some this stance is rooted in the ethnic group's historical and contemporary experiences with discrimination. These mothers often use the promotion of egalitarian principles as a mechanism for instilling a sense of individual worth in their children and for teaching them that differences are not a mark of inferiority or a basis for mistreatment. Thus, among Black and Latino mothers egalitarian messages are often intertwined with preparation for bias messages.

Betty, an African American mother, immediately refers to discrimination against Blacks when asked what it means to be African American. Like many African American mothers, she reports numerous experiences with discrimination in stores and in the community at large. Although she acknowledges that people from many ethnic groups experience discrimination, she believes that African Americans "get it the worst." She reports very strong feelings that judging people on the basis of race is wrong, and in reference to the treatment African Americans receive says, "I feel it's not right to be treated like that just because you're African American. I don't think that's fair at all." When asked what she teaches her son about being African American, she mentions egalitarian values and discrimination in the same breadth:

*R:* [I say] "Jordan, never hate nobody. I don't care matter what color they is. Never hate. Because if you start hating it's going to eat you up alive." I want my son to learn everything about his nationality that he can. I want to teach him as much as I can about not to be racist and not to let nobody tell you who you are or what you are. I want my son not to ever think that his color's going to hurt him.

Edna, a Dominican mother, wants her son Mario to have a strong sense of his Dominican heritage but places a greater emphasis on his individual worth and the need for him to treat all people with respect. Throughout her interview, Edna recounts many personal and work-related experiences in which she has been vocal about the need for people to see others as individuals and to treat every person with respect and dignity. When asked specifically what she communicated to Mario, she says:

*R:* I tell him, "You're a human being."

*I:* Yeah? Why is [race] not important?



*R:* It's not important to me because, to me, I don't think that's a major factor in this world. It's just surviving. I tell him, "Yeah, remember your race and where you came from. And, don't let anybody make you feel like you're different because you're Spanish." But, I told him, "The main focus is trying to do what you have to do to survive." I tell him, "We're living in a world where there's a lot of racism going on, there's a lot of injustice stuff going on, there's a lot of thing that's hatred." And I tell him, "You just got to live with it. You can't stick in your mind, and say, 'Oh, cause I'm this and I'm Spanish, I'm gonna feel this way.' No." I tell him, "You're a human being. Everybody bleeds the same. I haven't seen purple blood. I haven't seen green blood. We all bleed the same, and we all die and we end up being in the same place." So I tell him these things.

Many of Edna's teachings are evident in Mario's interview. Not only does he express values that are consistent with egalitarian principles, but he refers explicitly to the fact that his mother teaches him about both preparation for bias and egalitarian views:

*I:* What kinds of things did you learn while you were growing up about what it means to be a Hispanic?

*R:* Well, I didn't really learn anything except, like, some people might make fun of me—some people might make fun of my ethnicity, so [my mother] told me they might say something about my ethnicity. She [my mom] told me to ignore them.

*I:* Did they teach you about getting along with other groups?

*R:* Yeah, she told me just because other people are different doesn't mean that I have to make friends with my same ethnicity—I could make friends with people of other ethnicities.

As we shall discuss, the intermingling of socialization about egalitarianism and discussions about discrimination that is evident among African American and Latino mothers appears to emanate from underlying goals that are somewhat distinct from those among White mothers. Whereas White mothers' socialization of egalitarianism is rooted primarily in a desire to promote an appreciation of diversity in their adolescent children, such socialization among Black and Latino mothers is also embedded in a desire to protect their own child's self-esteem.

A third way that socialization of egalitarianism appeared is in mothers' effort to interrupt bias that the mother notices in her adolescent child. Mothers' recollections of specific instances of such bias permit us to imagine the circumstances that might surround egalitarianism within families. For instance, Edna recounted a time when Mario mocked an interaction between a Chinese father and his son outside of the school building because the interaction was in Chinese. Edna uses this as an opportunity to increase Mario's sensitivity towards other groups and to help him see that all people have common feelings:

*R:* I remember in second grade, there was this Asian friend from China and his father came to pick him up from school, and he had gotten in trouble. So [the father] was reprimanding [the son] in his language. Mario was laughing because of the way their language sounded in our ears. The way it sounds,

we don't understand it cause we [speak] English. So we just [assume] that [whoever is talking is] saying something bad. So, [Mario] was laughing!

*I:* Mario was laughing?

*R:* Yeah! So I was like, "Mario, that's not nice. Why are you laughing?" He was like, "No, cause he's saying whatever, something ding ding (imitating Chinese language)!" And I was like, "You don't understand what they're saying, number one. How would you feel if you're talking in Spanish and they would laugh and say the same thing?" I was like, "That's not nice. I don't want you ever to do that again; it's not right. You don't like it when your feelings get hurt, so guess what? Other people feel the same way too." So I explained that to him.

Alyssa, an African American mother, also worries that her daughter Tanya often displays biased attitudes towards other groups, attitudes that are inconsistent with Alyssa's efforts to instill egalitarian principles. Tanya's peer group is predominantly African American, and Alyssa indicates that she occasionally catches Tanya making comments about different racial groups and about others' backgrounds. She describes the typical nature of the interactions with Tanya in which she tries to instill the idea that people should not be judged on the basis of their racial group membership:

*R:* She'll make statements, like general statements. And I do my best to squash that, you know. I'll step in right away and say, "You know, don't say [that]. You don't lump anybody because we don't want it done to us." And that's the rule, you know?

Finally, socialization egalitarianism is evident in mothers' practices concerning deliberate exposure to information about, or cultural products of, multiple ethnic groups. For instance, some parents mention that they intentionally decide to live in a certain neighborhood because it is ethnically diverse, that they had avoid particular schools because they are ethnically homogenous, or that they participate in multicultural activities or exposed children to information about other groups in order to foster their appreciation for diversity. As an example, Ann, a White mother, was raised in a small Midwest town where there was "one Jewish person and one Black" in her high school class. Both she and her husband were attracted to New York City because of its energy and ethnic diversity, and chose it as the place they wanted to raise their children. When asked to describe the process of deciding on a middle school for their daughter Eileen, Ann says that they intentionally ruled out one school in which the strong academic program is predominantly White:

*I:* Can you tell me about how you chose MS 4015 for Eileen?

*R:* Well, we chose it together, really. There weren't that many choices. We knew that we wanted her to go to a middle school that would challenge her academically, and she had the academic record to go to almost any of the schools where you have to qualify based on a test. In the other school we were considering, the kids were mostly White and we didn't want that. She didn't want it either. Her elementary school was very diverse ethnically, so that's what she was used to. We just felt that being in an environment with kids from all kinds of backgrounds would be a much better experience for her all around.

## BELIEFS UNDERLYING EGALITARIAN PRACTICES

Most mothers situate their descriptions of their own egalitarian values, and of conversations they have with their children about them, within a larger set of beliefs or principles that guide their practices. Two overarching types of beliefs are most evident in parents' narratives: beliefs in the moral value of egalitarian principles and beliefs that egalitarian views serve an instrumental purpose.

Most evident in the transcripts are practices based on moral principles. The specific moral principles vary and include social justice values (e.g., discrimination is wrong), religious values (e.g., we're all God's children), and humanitarian values (e.g., we are all human). For example, Tana, an African American mother whose daughter Rebecca attends MS 5030, says that although she, herself, is proud of being African American, particularly in terms of identifying with those who fought for equality, she rarely discusses racial issues with Rebecca. Implicit in Tana's answers to questions about how important it is to her that Rebecca feels connected to or identifies with African Americans is the perspective that holding prejudicial attitudes is wrong:

*R:* How important? I really don't know. We have never discussed that, but you know what I try and tell her is that, ok, "It is important for you to mix with other people."

*I:* And why is it important?

*R:* Because she will get to know their background, you know, you are not just talking to your culture. You get to know their background you get to know what they are about; where they came from and everything like that. And then, if you get to understand and know about them, then you won't be prejudiced.

Other indications that egalitarian practices are based on moral principals are expressed in phrases such as "there's good and bad in all races," "god made us all human," and "it doesn't matter what color you are" that are echoed by numerous mothers and adolescents.

Other mothers who emphasize egalitarian views in their socialization efforts focus more on its instrumental value. For instance, many mothers indicate that their children need to have an understanding of others in order to function in ethnically diverse educational and occupational settings. Often, this perspective is accompanied by a desire for their child to maintain a strong ethnic identity as well. For instance, in the following excerpt, Betty, who we introduced in our discussion of preparation for bias, speaks about the importance to her that her son Luther develop a strong connection to other African Americans but, at the same time, be able to relate to diverse groups:

*R:* And how important is it to you that Luther feels connected to or, I guess, is be able to identify with other Blacks?

*I:* That's very important. But I also want him to be able to identify, to talk with, to be able to talk with and identify with, maybe not identify, but be able to um, get along with all kinds of people, because he's going to have to live in the world with them. He's going to have to work with other groups, you're going to have to go to school with other groups.

It seems important to note that although egalitarianism is relatively high among all groups, explicit socialization of egalitarianism is notably absent in interviews with Chinese mothers. Although some Chinese mothers express the view that race doesn't matter or that they would not object to their child having diverse friends, there are very few instances in which a Chinese mother describes specific conversations, types of conversations, or lifestyle choices in which socialization of egalitarianism is evident in practice. This finding is consistent with the findings in our quantitative data that Chinese mothers score lower than do other mothers on measures of egalitarian beliefs and practices. We plan to further explore this pattern in our future work to see if the construct of egalitarianism is statistically equivalent for Chinese as compared to other mothers, and has similar antecedents and consequences.

To summarize, reference to egalitarian beliefs and practices features prominently in parents' and adolescents' narratives about ethnicity and race. Socialization of egalitarianism is evident in parents' reluctance to make race salient to their children or use it as a basis for life choices, in conversations that adolescents and parents report, in mothers' efforts to interrupt their adolescents' expression of bias, and in efforts to expose adolescents to a diversity of ethnic people, practices, and places. Although egalitarianism is relatively high overall, the precise nature of mothers' messages differs slightly across groups. Among White mothers, egalitarianism is often intended to promote appreciation of all individuals, which is only sometimes its sole purpose among African American and Latino mothers. In the later cases, many mothers show a pattern in which socialization of egalitarianism is intimately intertwined with preparation for bias, which suggests to us that in addition to promoting respect for all people, socialization of egalitarianism among African American and Latino mothers is also intended to promote adolescents' respect for themselves and their group. Among Chinese mothers, we find little evidence that socialization of egalitarianism takes place, although some Chinese mothers and adolescents express egalitarian values, a finding that merits replication and additional study.

### PROMOTION OF MISTRUST

In our prior work, we use the term *promotion of mistrust* to refer to the transmission from parents to their children of cautions and warnings about interactions with individuals from particular ethnic and racial groups. This aspect of ethnic socialization has received only limited attention in the research literature, perhaps because it has been evident among a small minority of families. In the work of Thornton et al. (1990), only 3 percent of respondents indicated that they had emphasized caution and mistrust in their socialization efforts. Likewise, in our own prior work, promotion of mistrust has been reported by fewer than 10 percent of parents across multiple studies (Hughes & Chen, 1997; 1999). However, we believe that it is especially important for researchers to identify the ways that mistrust is transmitted within families, because it has potentially damaging consequences for individuals, communities, and for society at large. In particular, prior studies suggest that mistrust may prompt youth to develop an oppositional identity and to disengage from mainstream institutions and endeavors (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Biafora et al., 1993).

Mean values on our quantitative measures of practices and beliefs regarding promotion of mistrust are shown in Table 11.2, rows 4, 8, and 12. Parents in our sample had low scores on measures of beliefs about its importance, with average values of

1.95 indicating that it was “not very important,” on average. Mothers, overall, placed significantly less importance on promotion of mistrust than on any other dimensions of ethnic socialization, and White mothers place significantly less importance on it than did African American, Latino, or Chinese mothers. In terms of practices, mothers and their adolescent children both reported minimal promotion of mistrust, with average values of 1.24, (“never”) according to adolescents’ reports, and 1.45 (between “never” and “rarely”) according to parents reports. Not surprisingly, promotion of mistrust occurred significantly less often in practice than did other types of ethnic socialization. White mothers reported significantly less promotion of mistrust than did mothers from other ethnic groups. Mothers’ beliefs regarding promotion of mistrust were moderately correlated with their practices [ $r(204) = .42, p < .001$ ]. Children’s perception of their parents’ promotion of mistrust was only weakly associated with mothers’ beliefs [ $r(197) = .15, p < .05$ ], and were unrelated to mothers’ practices [ $r(197) = .08, n.s.$ ], indicating the very illusive nature of these sorts of messages.

In examining the qualitative interviews, we were primarily interested in examining transcripts in which both the mother and the adolescent had scores in the highest quartile on quantitative measures of promotion of mistrust. In our protocols, we included explicit questions about what parents teach about other ethnic groups, in general, and what they teach, specifically, about relationships with and treatment by people from other ethnic groups. In addition, we asked mothers to describe stereotypes about their own and other ethnic groups, to discuss the extent to which they believe these stereotypes, and to describe times when they or their adolescent children have been stereotyped. By including such questions, we expected to be able to elicit examples of times when mothers appeared to be socializing mistrust, or when adolescents perceived it.

#### PROMOTION OF MISTRUST IN PRACTICE

When reviewing transcripts, we looked for evidence in parents’ or adolescents’ statements that parents either emphasize the primacy of in-group rather than out-group relationships, or that they communicate in subtle ways to their adolescent children that they need to be on-guard about interactions with people from other ethnic groups. As we have mentioned already, most mothers and adolescents do not make any references to these sorts of practices. However, this type of socialization does emerge in some transcripts, although (consistent with low correlations between mothers’ and adolescents’ reports on quantitative measures) they rarely emerge for both the mother and the adolescent within the same family.

One way in which promotion of mistrust emerges is in cautions and warnings about other groups. Unlike preparation for bias or egalitarianism, these cautions and warnings tend to transpire in brief and fleeting exchanges, or in isolated comments that are embedded in other interactions: They rarely surface as extended conversations that can be readily recounted. Nicole, who is White and attends the honors program at MS 2040, describes a comment that her mother Judith made that constitutes a caution about other ethnic minority groups. Nicole’s family lives in an apartment building on the upper side of Manhattan that is socioeconomically and ethnically diverse. Over the past 10 years, the surrounding neighborhood has been gentrifying, such that there is a mix of lower income ethnic minority residents alongside middle- and upper-middle class White residents. Nicole attends the predominantly White honors program at MS 2040. According to her own and her mother’s interviews, she has relative freedom to walk to the nearby park and shop with her friends on the avenue outside of the

building. Egalitarian values and perspectives are evident in both Judith's and Nicole's interviews. However, when Nicole is asked how race is discussed in her family she indicates that it is rarely discussed, but notes subtle comments from her mother that she views as being inconsistent with her mothers' stated egalitarian principles:

*I:* So, like, with your mom, if you guys talk about your race, what kinds of things do you talk about?

*R:* Well, I don't think we really talk about my race. I mean, she might say "I don't want you walking down there cause there might be like . . . people." I know, sometimes, she makes comments that are racist.

*I:* What's that?

*R:* There's some, like, sometimes she makes a comment and I think that it is racist.

*I:* Like what?

*R:* I was afraid you were gonna ask that 'cause I don't really remember. Cause I know she said something [recently] and I went "Mom, that's racist," and she was like "No, it's not," and I was just like, "Yeah, whatever."

In this segment, the daughter alludes to fleeting comments that her mother periodically makes that suggest that she should be cautious and wary of people from a particular ethnic group. The mother does not report concern about other ethnic groups and does not allude to these sorts of interactions. We suspect that these sorts of comments, which may be unintentional and unlikely to be recalled by mothers, are a common form through which promotion of mistrust transpires.

Promotion of mistrust is also occasionally evident in mothers' or adolescents' stories about adolescents' direct interactions or relationships with other ethnic groups. Again, such messages are rarely if ever the intentional focus of conversation, but sometimes inadvertently emerge. For instance, when asked about how students of different races get along at her son Kevin's school, Delores, an African American mother, recounts an incident in which racial slurs were directed at Kevin by a Mexican peer who also attends the school. Delores describes her view that Mexican and other immigrant children learn from their parents and from larger societal stereotypes to look down on African Americans, and to ultimately believe that "they are better than we are." She continues with an extended discussion of her view that immigrant groups are willing to work for low wages, taking jobs that African Americans used to be able to get. In recounting her conversation with her son about the incident with the Mexican girl, which infuriated her, she says that she "went off a little." She recalls telling Kevin to stay away from students of particular ethnic groups and that she resents their tendency to judge African Americans given their own negative group characteristics. Delores indicates that she later regretted aspects of the conversation: "I said some things that I should not have said, you know, about her [the Mexican student's] race, but I did it because I felt it [the incident] was upsetting him."

There is also evidence that promotion of mistrust emerges in side comments or remarks made in jest that highlight negative or cautious attitudes towards other ethnic groups. These sorts of comments are rarely, if ever, the explicit focus of a respondent's story or narrative, but nevertheless appear in the form of a verbal slip or statement that is retracted. We identified a good example of this in our interview with an African American mother, Monique. In this instance, Monique recounts a conversation that she had with her son Marcus about permissible intergroup relationships. Notably, the story emerges in the context of a larger description of egalitarian views, and thus

permits us to see how mistrust messages can inadvertently slip into conversations in which mothers are pursuing an egalitarian agenda. The interviewer has asked Monique to describe her conversations with Marcus about ethnicity and race:

*R:* Uh-uh (no), just like my son he be like, "Well mama, what if I bring home a Chinese girl?" I say, "It ain't no problem. We've got Asians in the family already." "Uh, what about Spanish mom?" "What about Spanish? They're just as Black as we are, Marcus. We eat the same don't we? We eat rice, we eat beans, we eat this, you know we eat the same." "Well, ma, what if I bring a White girl?" "I'll kick your ass," no. (Laughter)

Anita, an African American adolescent, has difficulty articulating what it means to be African American or what she was taught. However, when asked how issues of race came up in her family, she says:

*R:* "I don't know, they just come up sometimes. We'll be sitting around talking and someone will say 'Y'all [Blacks] are crazy,' or they'll say 'You know how them White people are,' stuff like that.'

Both of these examples involve references made to social distance between groups that contain brief but potentially powerful derogatory comments. Although promotion of mistrust has not been widely studied, it is not difficult to imagine that these sorts of comments could undermine youths' openness toward intergroup relations or their positive orientations towards out-group members.

Although most mothers and adolescents do not make reference to cautions and warnings that are overtly embedded in the messages that they or their parents communicate, some did, suggesting to us that explicit socialization of mistrust is viewed as being legitimate in some families. Darnell, who is African American, attends a predominantly Black program in the same middle school, MS 2040, that holds the honors program that is predominantly White. In responding to questions about what his parents had taught about ethnicity and race, Darnell suggests that his parents warn him about trusting people who are White:

*I:* Okay, in terms in like race, what did they tell you about other groups?

*R:* They just say watch out for them.

*I:* Yeah? In what way do you think, like, in what terms do they mean?

*R:* Just to watch out for anything they do and that they're, um (small pause) slick and sneaky.

*I:* Ok, so tell me what your parents said while you were growing up about how African Americans are treated by other people who are not African American.

*R:* Well, they just tell me told me about, um, things that happened in the past and to watch out.

Ricky, a Chinese adolescent who attends an integrated middle school, talks a lot about his view that African Americans are "dangerous," a view expressed by many Chinese mothers as well. Like many who express this view, Ricky says that he developed this perspective on African Americans by watching the news and hearing other people talk. Thus, when asked explicitly what his parents told him about race, he says:

R: They tell me, like Blacks, right, don't play with them. They're dangerous.

I: Did they tell you about anything else, like, about any other groups, like White groups or Puerto Ricans?

R: White groups, no. But the Black neighborhoods, they are dangerous. Most people go to, like, jail.

Both of these are examples of messages youth receive rather than of messages that parents transmit. Indeed, neither Darnell's or Ricky's mothers make reference in their interviews to transmitting messages of mistrust to their children, although Ricky's mother's own views of Blacks mirror those that Ricky reveals.

Two additional patterns are evident in families in which the mother and adolescent both scored in the highest quartile on quantitative measures of promotion of mistrust. First, in many of these interviews, either the parent or the adolescent show a pattern of contrast training, in which they compare the beliefs and practices of their own group to the beliefs and practices of another group. This sort of contrast training serves to highlight the distinctiveness of one's own group, and at the same time, the ways in which other groups are "not like us" (and therefore perhaps should not be emulated). We have already provided examples of contrast training among Chinese mothers, who often contrast dietary habits, work ethic, and monetary spending patterns of Chinese to those of "foreigners" in general or specific ethnic groups. However, this contrast training is certainly not unique to Chinese mothers, and at times concerns superficial differences that the mother perceive. For instance, an African American mother, Carol, says:

R: I sometimes have to remind her that she's Black, I mean, she knows she's Black but, like, there are just certain things that we don't do.

I: Can you give me an example?

R: I guess maybe certain dressing, and more like—some White kids can go out in shorts when its cold and with sandals and they do. We don't. And you have to comb your hair. Some of them kids wake up and don't comb their hair. And they looking raggedy. I'm like, that's not our thing. You need to iron those clothes and get yourself looking a little neater.

I: And why do you think that's important, being that she's Black?

R: I think it's important anyway. It's not a Black thing. But, you know, it's just something you always see in terms of the White culture with the shorts and the sandals and its freezing. I guess that's more of a "White thing" that you don't see other cultures doing that.

The second pattern that emerges in interviews of respondents with high scores on quantitative measures of promotion of mistrust is an emphasis on promoting affiliations with peers (and sometimes future marital partners) from one's own ethnic background. This pattern, although arguably more benign than other manifestations of mistrust, again serves to highlight the distinctiveness of one's group and the primacy of in-group rather than cross-group relations. For instance, Marsha, an Eastern European Jewish mother, indicates that it was "very important to [her and her husband] that [their daughter] marry within the religion and, you know, keep that tradition going." An African American mother, Nikki, in discussing her daughter's experience in the predominantly White honors program, indicated that it is important to her that her daughter "try to connect with the other Black kids in the program, because there's so



few of them." She believes that their common status as ethnic minorities within the program are a basis for shared experience and understanding that can protect her daughter in situations in which she might experience racial bias.

Notably, since evidence of promotion of mistrust does not emerge often in the interviews, and since it often emerges in ways that are not acknowledged by mothers, we are unable to identify unique sets of beliefs underlying this type of ethnic socialization. In the few interviews among African American and Latino mothers that contain references to mistrust, mothers' views of race relations seem to be similar to those of mothers who articulate preparation for bias as a socialization strategy. That is, they perceive a great deal of discrimination against and stereotypes about their ethnic group, and believe that their children's own exposure to it is inevitable. Mothers who promote the primacy of in-group rather than cross-group relationships are typically those whose own identities as an ethnic group member are highly salient and central, and who see their group as having distinctive cultural values, beliefs, traditions, and shared experiences that they want their children to recognize and carry. For the most part, however, because evidence of mistrust is implicit rather than overt, mothers rarely articulate a comprehensive set of beliefs or worldviews that are consistent with this as a socialization strategy.

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Our primary goal in this chapter has been to provide descriptive information on ethnic socialization across diverse ethnic groups and to examine it up close in terms of the ways it unfolds in families' daily lives. We believe that ethnic socialization transpires in one form or another in the large majority of families, yet its precise nature is elusive. It often appears in routines and daily practices that mothers don't recognize as socialization (as with cultural socialization). Although many mothers make strong affirmations that it occurs, they have difficulty recalling specific instances of it (as with preparation for bias). And, it often transpires in fleeting exchanges or side remarks that are unrecognized as socialization by mothers (as in promotion of mistrust). Thus, like a moonbeam, it is ever present, its essence is powerful, yet one cannot fully capture it and hold it in one's hands.

We explored the beliefs, practices, and goals parents have for socializing their children around race and ethnicity, and we did so from the parent's and the child's perspectives, using a mix of quantitative and qualitative data sources and analyses. An equally important aspect of our approach was the effort to identify and emphasize specific instances of ethnic socialization. Thus, we aimed to provide a multi-faceted, nuanced view of what we perceive as being an elusive process. Although identifying how it unfolds in families sometimes represents an empirical challenge, we believe that a mixed-methods approach provides critical information about how race and ethnicity underlie the ways in which diverse families negotiate opportunities and constraints in American society.

Our exploration of ethnic socialization dynamics within families uncovered several interesting findings. We began by discussing cultural socialization, which appears to be a particularly important kind of family-level ethnic socialization. Among many families, cultural socialization pervades daily home life in ways that convey a sense of being ethnically distinctive, and even special, that is not necessarily intentional. Even among those who report low cultural socialization, for example, there is evidence of everyday routines that involve the use of a distinctive group language as well as symbols, foods, and activities (among Latino and Chinese

families) and books, films, and artifacts (among African American families). This finding is of particular interest because it demonstrates the extent to which race and ethnicity may be so deeply ingrained in family life that it is taken for granted.

Similar to cultural socialization, many families freely espouse egalitarian values in their interviews. Egalitarianism is consistent with a dominant cultural narrative of race in the United States—that one should be colorblind. Yet, it is interesting that these egalitarian views are held alongside actions that might potentially contradict the colorblind ideal. Parents tell their children to downplay the importance of race, to be friends with everyone, and to curb their prejudice, and yet actively choose or are forced to accept circumstances that reproduce the ethnic and racial inequality in their children's everyday environments, even in the broad context of a city as diverse as New York. The contradiction between beliefs and actions is not always conscious, but it is revealing. In addition, it is important to consider the examples we provided where parents or adolescents *were* aware of racial inequality and discussed egalitarianism and racial inequity in the same breath.

In contrast to cultural socialization and egalitarianism, preparation for bias and promotion of mistrust occur less often and thus stand out among the families' experiences. Further, the mechanisms for transmission of preparation for bias and promotion of mistrust—the ways in which parents' stated and unstated messages are understood by children—appear to be very complex. Parents' and children's processes vary widely; parents are often unaware of experiences with discrimination that their children have had or of their children's knowledge about stereotypes and racial stratification systems, and children often pick up on attitudes and values that their parents do not realize they have transmitted. Future research is needed to explain why preparation for bias and promotion of mistrust are less salient aspects of ethnic socialization than cultural socialization and egalitarianism across diverse families, as well as the circumstances under which the transmission of these types of socialization are more readily identified within families. In addition, we believe the parent-child reporting patterns may change as children progress through middle school in ways that will facilitate the identification of more concrete transmission of preparation for bias and promotion of mistrust.

Although families seem to differentially engage in the four types of ethnic socialization we discussed, we also observed that there are important interrelationships among these domains and the goals underlying them. Parents' stated preferences for their children's thoughts, behaviors, and actions with respect to race-related matters along one dimension (e.g., Egalitarianism) could be expressed in messages about another dimension (e.g., Preparation for Bias). Sometimes, these complementary goals, beliefs, and actions occurred simultaneously. Our future work will continue to attend to such intertwined expressions of multiple dimensions of ethnic socialization, using methods such as those employed in this chapter. We expect that this approach will allow us to describe the texture of such socialization more thoroughly.

Clearly, the content, goals, and enactment of ethnic socialization varies immensely. The extent to which parents' broader goals for rearing their children include ethnic socialization varies in frequency and intensity. Within families, the parent-child dynamics of ethnic socialization also appear to vary quite a bit, which leaves us with several important questions and directions for future work. For example, why do some children internalize parents' messages about race and ethnicity to the point that they will articulate similar views when asked, while others do not? We believe that some of the underlying mechanisms through which parents' messages become more or less internalized may have to do with other aspects of the parent-child relationship,

including, for instance, feelings of closeness to the parent(s) from whom the messages are received. It is possible that parents and children who feel close tend to interpret the intent, content, and value of ethnic socialization in similar ways. Conversely, parents and children who tend to disagree on other matters might also have differing views about how and when ethnic socialization is taking place.

Second, it is important to consider the ways in which family-level ethnic socialization dynamics might vary according to characteristics of the child. For example, parents might engage in different kinds of socialization with boys than girls, based on their differential expectations and goals for each. They might also vary according to what parents believe their child can handle given their intimate knowledge, and perception, of the child's receptivity or even personality characteristics.

We also suspect that as children received messages about ethnicity and race from individuals and contexts outside the home, those experiences reinforce or challenge received messages from parents (Hughes & Chen, 1997). Thus, what children articulate about their parents' beliefs and practices may be expressed through the lens of their own experiences. It would be important to further explore the ways in which children's experiences of discrimination and ethnic identity development, in particular, may influence their understanding of received ethnic socialization. Relatedly, we believe the age of the child is an important piece of the puzzle of how ethnic socialization unfolds within families. We would expect these dynamics to change as children grow older and accrue more personal life experiences around issues of race and ethnicity (Hughes & Chen, 1997).

Finally, our findings suggest that other, exogenous circumstances that frame the experiences of different families will be important to consider in our future analyses. In our cross-section of parents from throughout New York City, we know that their daily lives are shaped by their experiences as neighbors, members of religious communities, and as employed or unemployed persons, for example. The kinds of intergroup emotional, material, and social demands and opportunities that parents encounter across various settings are likely to shape the ways in which they would like to initiate or sustain the communication and practice of ethnic socialization with their children. Thus, it is important to consider the extrafamilial contexts that shape family ethnic socialization dynamics. Certainly, as the United States becomes increasingly diverse, a more complete understanding of the ways in which parents prepare their children to engage with and navigate this diversity will continue to be of critical importance.

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## CHAPTER 12

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# Racial Discrimination and the Mental Health of African American Adolescents

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### INTRODUCTION

**R**ACISM IS a complex phenomenon whose markers—stereotypes, prejudices, and discrimination—are distinct but interwoven (McKown, 2004). Negative beliefs (stereotypes) and attitudes (prejudices) toward subordinate racial and ethnic groups can eventuate in discrimination (behavior), defined as “actions or practices carried out by members of dominant racial or ethnic groups that have a differential negative impact on members of subordinate racial or ethnic groups” (Feagin, 1991, pp. 102). Discrimination includes explicit, overt actions (e.g., verbal antagonism, physical aggression) and more subtle, covert actions—the latter being a more prevalent form of individual-level discrimination in contemporary American society (Blank, Dadaby, & Citro, 2004; Feagin & Sikes, 1994; Harrell, 2000; Solórzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). However, as Feagin’s definition indicates, discrimination transcends individual-level actions or “personally mediated racism” (Jones, 2000) and encompasses institutional practices that result in racial disparities in access to goods, services, and opportunities. These practices render discrimination, and indeed racism itself, structural in nature. As Jones (2000) so aptly stated:

Institutionalized racism is normative, sometimes legalized, and often manifests as inherited disadvantage. It is structural, having been codified in our institutions of custom, practice, and law, so there need not be an identifiable perpetrator. Indeed, institutionalized racism is often evident as inaction in the face of need. (pp. 1212)

In its fullest sense, then, racism is a “system of advantage based on race” that includes institutional practices and policies, cultural messages, as well as the beliefs and actions of individuals (Tatum, 1997, pp. 7). Accounting for the persistence of racism requires consideration of the structural nature of racism and the systematic advantages and disadvantages that it confers (Wellman, 1977). In this chapter, we consider the implications of both individual-level acts of racial discrimination and structural racism for the mental health of African American adolescents. In keeping with Jones’ (2000) theoretical framework, we also briefly discuss internalized racism as a third level on which racism operates.

During the past decade, racism came under increased scrutiny as a force that shapes children’s development and psychological functioning (Fisher, Jackson, & Villaruel, 1998; García-Coll et al., 1996; McAdoo, 2002). For example in their much-cited integrative model of development in ethnic minority children, García-Coll and colleagues (1996) situate at the core, rather than at the periphery of the model, social position (e.g., race, ethnicity, social class) and its link to racial prejudice, discrimination, oppression, and the segregated environments to which children of color and their families are relegated. More recently, Brown and Bigler (2005) articulated a developmental framework for understanding children’s perceptions of discrimination that incorporates cognitive, situational, and individual difference variables. Conceptual work of this nature has helped propel efforts to document linkages between experiences of racism and mental health functioning in African American adolescents and to verify mediating and moderating influences. These efforts have proceeded slowly, however, and many conceptually defensible hypotheses, especially those concerning mediating and moderating influences, await empirical appraisal. Although we give primary attention in this chapter to findings from empirical studies of the racism-mental health link, we also bring together strands of disparate, but, related research that provide provisional support for some of these tenable, but untested, hypotheses. In doing so, we hope to advance the field and help set a research agenda in this area of study.

Scholars in social and behavioral science disciplines have employed four major methods to measure racial discrimination—laboratory experiments, field experiments, analysis of observational data and natural experiments, and analysis of survey and administrative record reports (Blank, Dadaby, & Citro, 2004). Studies relevant to our interest in the link between racial discrimination and mental health have relied almost exclusively on survey methods. For a variety of reasons, survey methods cannot be used to estimate the prevalence of actual discrimination, but are well-suited to assess self-reports of perceived



experiences of discrimination. Hence, the contents of this chapter concern primarily perceived, rather than actual, discrimination—although in our discussion of structural racism we report findings from field experiments (e.g., audit studies), which, unlike surveys, provide estimates of actual race-based discriminatory behavior. Unless otherwise indicated, perceived discrimination refers to personally experienced discrimination, not perceptions of discrimination experienced by one's ethnic group. Following a brief discussion of why experiences of discrimination may have special resonance during the period of adolescence, we turn to a consideration of factors that appear to influence the frequency with which African American adolescents directly encounter acts of racial discrimination. We then give attention to research assessing links between perceived discrimination and mental health functioning in African American adolescents and discuss the implications of both structural racism and internalized racism for adolescent mental health. The next section focuses on documented as well as hypothesized moderators of the association between racial discrimination and adolescent mental health. We discuss strategies to eliminate racism, drawing primarily from intervention studies that target teachers and peers in the school context, and conclude with suggestions for future research.

#### SITUATING EXPERIENCES OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT

Children as young as 6 years old have the ability to make attributions to discrimination, and by early adolescence, have a sophisticated understanding of both individual-level and institutional-level discrimination (Brown & Bigler, 2005; McKown, 2004). Parallel with this development is growth in children's awareness of racism. McKown and Weinstein (2003) found that the proportion of children who are aware of others' racism increases between ages 6 and 10, such that by age 10, 80 percent of African American children and 63 percent of White and Asian children manifest awareness of racism. Research also documents that older adolescents perceive more experiences with discrimination than children in early adolescence (Brown & Bigler, 2005; Greene, Way, & Pahl, 2006). Underlying these developmental changes are changes in children's social contexts (e.g., increased exposure to extrafamilial persons and societal agents, greater geographic mobility) and growth in abstract thought, cognitive processing skills, social perspective-taking abilities, and the ability to integrate one's own experiences and the experiences of others (McKown, 2004; Quintana, 1998; Simons et al., 2002; Steinberg & Silk, 2002).

Although cognitive growth during adolescence may endow youth with more cognitive resources to deal with experiences of racial discrimination, it may also result in increased vulnerability to these experiences and circumstances. In particular, with the expansion in cognitive processing skills that occurs during this period, adolescents

are not only more cognizant of the prevalence of racial discrimination, but also have the ability to integrate individual- and group-level experiences of discrimination and to incorporate these experiences into their self-perceptions and world-views (Tarrant et al., 2001). To the extent that these processes influence identity exploration and formation that characteristically occur during adolescence and young adulthood, their implications for the life course can be far reaching (Bowman, 1990). These considerations, taken together, underscore the importance of understanding how racial discrimination influences the mental health and psychological functioning of African American adolescents and taking seriously the policy and practice implications of research on this issue.

#### DEMOGRAPHIC CORRELATES OF PERCEIVED DISCRIMINATION AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN ADOLESCENTS

African American adolescents are more likely to report experiences with racial discrimination than other ethnic minority adolescents (McKown, 2004; Rosenbloom & Way, 2004; Waters, 1996). The percentage of African American adolescents and young adults who report personal experiences with racism and discrimination is high, with estimates ranging from 46 percent to over 90 percent, depending on the time period assessed (e.g., past year, lifetime events) (Dubois, Burk-Braxton, Swenson, Tevendale, & Hardesty, 2002; Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000; Guthrie, Young, Williams, Boyd, & Kitner, 2002; Romero & Roberts, 1998). These experiences are diverse in nature, and include race-based mistreatment or unfair treatment in school settings and semipublic and public settings (e.g., being treated as if one is less capable than Whites, being unfairly judged on the basis of negative group stereotypes, being treated with less courtesy than others, receiving poorer service than others in restaurants or stores, being harassed by the police). Perhaps because of more direct and vicarious experiences with racism, as well as greater parental socialization about racism, African American children think about racism in more complex ways than their non-African American peers. For example, African American children ages 6 to 10 express more elaborated ideas (i.e., independent statements made about racism) and differentiated ideas (different kinds of statements about racism, e.g., statements about prejudice vs. discrimination vs. stereotypes) than children from other ethnic groups (i.e., White, Latino, Asian). They are also more likely than their peers to mention dimensions of racism that reflect power relations (e.g., coercion, exclusion, violence) (McKown, 2004).

It is reasonable to presume that the frequency with which African American adolescents experience racially discriminatory events is not randomly distributed, but our knowledge about sources of individual differences in perceived discrimination is quite limited. In addition to age, mentioned previously (Brown & Bigler, 2005; Greene et al., 2006; McKown, 2004), research points to two additional factors—gender and social context—as demographic correlates of perceived experiences of discrimination. There is considerable evidence that perceived discrimination is higher among African American male adolescents and young adults than their female counterparts (Dubois et al., 2002; Fischer & Shaw, 1999; Sellers & Shelton, 2003; Waters, 1999), although a few studies have reported the reverse (e.g., Dubois, Burk-Braxton, Swenson, Evansdale, & Hardesty, 2002) or no gender difference (Caldwell, Kohn-Wood, Schmeelk-Cone, Chavous, & Zimmerman, 2004). In keeping with evidence of greater perceived discrimination among African American males than females, numerous

scholars contend that African American males are at greater risk of being unfairly targeted in mainstream society (e.g., racial profiling) owing to negative racial stereotypes (e.g., dangerous, violent, “superpredators,” poor work ethic, etc.) (Boyd-Franklin, Franklin, & Toussaint, 2000; Haley, Sidanius, Lowery, & Malmuth, 2004; Stevenson, 2004). Gender differences in perceived discrimination also may be a product of gender differences in adolescents’ spatial range or territory frequented outside of the home. Whereas female adolescents spend more of their time closer to home, in their own neighborhoods, male adolescents travel around cities more freely and frequently (van Vliet, 1983), potentially increasing their likelihood of encountering racially discriminatory behavior.

Undoubtedly, African American males’ lower educational attainment, higher levels of involvement in the criminal justice system, and higher unemployment rates derive partly from the fact that they are, on a daily basis, more subject to the cognitive (negative stereotypes), affective (prejudice), and behavioral (discrimination) components of racism (Davis, 2003; Fine et al., 2003; Noguera, 2003; Waters, 1996; Wilson, 1996). In a vicious cycle, negative stereotypes and racial prejudice can fuel unfair treatment (e.g., less academic assistance, more severe sanctions for violation of school rules) at an early age, leading to educational and social disadvantages among African American males, which in turn can promote further unfair treatment.

That African American males face greater odds for unfair treatment and low expectations in schools is well-captured in the words of Milo, one of 46 participants in O’Connor’s (1999) study of how low-income African American youth attending two nonselective public high schools in Chicago differentially assess life chances in light of their different social locations. Asked if he had been stereotyped in school because he was a Black male or had observed other Black males being stereotyped in school, Milo responded:

A lot of times when you will talk out in [class]. . . . and like if a White kid or a Black girl says something to the teacher like the teachers is saying something out of pocket or out of hand or something, and you be like, “Well, I don’t believe in that.” And the teacher seems to think that because you raise your voice, and you be like, “Well, I don’t like [that],” they think, well, he would hurt me or something. So they call security. But then it’s different with the White kid or the Black girl. The White kid or the Black girl, they just talk to them. They be like, “I’m going to call your mother” or something like that. But if you be that way, they be like, “I’m going to call security.” (O’Connor, 1999, pp. 152)

Asked whether African American males and females are given an equal chance of doing well in school, the same African American male said:

No, because Black females are helped more. They are helped more cause Black males are usually stereotyped. You know, all Black males going to be in jail. And they think, well, since you going to be in jail, ain’t no use of . . . really teaching you nothing. (O’Connor, 1999, pp. 152)

This comparative perspective, while underscoring the unique burdens that African American males may endure, is hardly to suggest that African American females enjoy a “protected” status, because experiences of racial discrimination and unfair

treatment driven by negative racial stereotypes are a reality for the latter as well (Crenshaw et al., 1995; Essed, 1991; Jones & Shorter-Gooden, 2003).

Social context is another factor that appears to influence the amount of racial discrimination African American adolescents experience, although the sparse evidence is hardly conclusive. Greater affluence seems to be linked to heightened awareness of racism and discrimination. There is some evidence that African American youth living in racially integrated environments have greater awareness of racism and discrimination than those living in less racially integrated environments—the former tending to be more economically advantaged than the latter (Dutton, Singer, & Devlin, 1998). This seems congruent with studies of African American adults indicating that those from higher socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds report more experiences of racial discrimination than their lower SES counterparts (Sigelman & Welch, 1991; cf. Kessler, Mickelson, & Williams, 1999). At the same time, in their recent longitudinal study, Brody and his colleagues (2006) found that higher SES African American youth experienced less discrimination (perceived) in childhood than their lower SES peers, but reported greater increases in discriminatory experiences in adolescence than lower SES African American peers.

More study is needed to determine if family income and social class, independent of the racial makeup of neighborhood and school contexts, are indeed robust determinants of African American adolescents' direct encounters with racial discrimination. Even without these data, however, we know that a notable proportion of affluent African Americans, despite their economic resources and cultural capital, experience racial discrimination on an ongoing basis (Comer, 1989; Tatum, 1997, 1987).

#### INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND MENTAL HEALTH AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN ADOLESCENTS

In this section, we consider the implications of adolescents' direct experiences of racial discrimination for various indicators of adolescent mental health, including psychological distress, engagement in risky behavior, and suicide. Two points bear mention as preface to our discussion. First, personally experienced (perceived) racism and perceptions of racism against one's group may not be related to adolescent mental health in parallel fashion (Rollins & Valdez, 2006). Second, although we focus on adolescents' direct experiences, parents' experiences of racial discrimination may also influence adolescent mental health through its impact on parenting. For example, research indicates that mothers' perceptions of racism exacerbate the adverse effects of maternal psychological distress on the quality of parent-adolescent relations (Murry, Brown, Brody, Cutrona, & Simons, 2001), an outcome associated with adolescents' mental health and psychosocial adjustment (Steinberg & Silk, 2002).

#### PSYCHOLOGICAL FUNCTIONING

Linkages between perceived racial discrimination and mental health problems have been documented in adult populations (Jackson et al., 1996; Klonoff, Landrine, & Ullman, 1999; Landrine & Klonoff, 1996; Sellers & Shelton, 2003; Utsey, Ponterotto, Reynolds, & Cancelli, 2000). Recently, scholars have undertaken similar studies with adolescents. The findings from these studies suggest that perceived racial discrimination can directly undermine African American adolescents' psychological functioning

and amplify the negative effects of other stressors. Reports of perceived racial discrimination as well as worry about race-related interactions are predictive of several negative indicators of psychological functioning among African American adolescents, including lower self-esteem (Fisher et al., 2000; Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003), increased depressive symptomatology (e.g., Simons et al., 2002; Wong et al., 2003), psychological distress (e.g., Fisher et al., 2000), feelings of hopelessness (e.g., Nyborg & Curry, 2003), anxiety (e.g., Gibbons, Gerrard, Cleveland, Wills, & Brody, 2004), and lower life satisfaction (Brown, Wallace, & Williams, 2001).

The association between perceived racial discrimination and psychological functioning has been documented in both cross-sectional (Fisher et al., 2000; Nyborg & Curry, 2003; Romero & Roberts, 2003) and longitudinal studies of adolescents (Dubois et al., 2002; Sellers, Caldwell, Schmeelk-Cone, & Zimmerman, 2003; Simons et al., 2002; Wong et al., 2003), although the latter tend to be short-term in nature. Some recent evidence from longer-term longitudinal research documents the continuing and persistent effects of racial discrimination among African American adolescents (Brody et al., 2006; Greene et al., 2006). Brody and colleagues (2006), for instance, found that perceived racial discrimination predicted decreased psychological functioning, including an increase in depressive symptoms, over a 5-year time span. Moreover, the link between racial discrimination and later psychological functioning was stronger than the link between previous psychological functioning and perceptions of racial discrimination, a finding that bolsters the claim that racial discrimination plays a causal role in African American adolescents' mental health functioning.

Qualitative research also suggests that negative racial stereotypes and race-related daily hassles exact an emotional toll on African American adolescents (Waters, 1996). Consider the appraisal of Anton, an African American student of Caribbean descent, in Rosenbloom and Way's (2004) qualitative investigation of experiences of discrimination in an urban high school. Asked what it meant to be African American, he responded:

*Anton:* I feel it's a struggle. . . . It's a struggle because . . . if you're not dressed . . . appropriate, and you go into a store. . . . they feel like if you're Dominican, or you're Black, or Puerto Rican, with your hat backwards, they think you're gonna steal something. . . . That's the . . . thing, I'm . . . really worried about.

*Interviewer:* How do you worry about it?

*Anton:* I'm just going to the store. . . . I'm just looking at stuff, I don't buy something . . . I just feel guilty, even though I didn't steal nothing. . . . People looking at me, look at my friends. But if you go into a store . . . you know, dressed nice, slacks, shoes, you know, they think you ain't gonna steal nothing . . . they just. . . .too quick to judge.

*Interviewer:* And who is . . . too quick to judge?

*Anton:* Like, anyone, people in general, people who are in control of the store.

*Interviewer:* Yeah. And does it happen in other places like school?

*Anton:* Yeah. It happens everywhere in the world. (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004, pp. 435)

As noted previously, in addition to directly affecting adolescents' mental health functioning, racial discrimination may accentuate the effects of other environmental risk factors. Prelow, Danoff-Burg, Swenson, and Pulgiano (2004), for example, found that perceived racism amplified the negative relation of negative life events and

neighborhood disadvantage to psychological well-being in African American adolescents.

#### SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT

Despite our focus on the mental health consequences of racial discrimination, it is important that we comment on school adjustment because of its implications for African American youths' economic well-being, family formation, marital and family processes, and psychological adjustment during adulthood. Numerous studies have documented the negative effects of racism on the schooling experiences of African American youth (Brown & Jones, 2004; Major & Schmader, 1998; Osborne, 1997; Steele, 1998; Taylor, Casten, Flickinger, Roberts, & Fulmore, 1994; Wong et al., 2003). These experiences with racism can directly and indirectly impact youths' achievement-related outcomes as well as their psychological functioning. In particular, adolescents who believe that their teachers and peers hold racial biases against them may experience declines in psychological well-being, including elevated stress and anxiety (Fisher et al., 2000; Phelan, Yu, & Davidson, 1994; Taylor et al., 1994). Wong et al. (2003), for instance, found that more frequent encounters with discrimination from teachers (e.g., receiving a lower grade or being disciplined more harshly due to race) and peers (e.g., not being chosen for particular teams or activities due to race) were associated with more depressive symptoms, higher levels of anger, and lower self-esteem among African American middle school students.

These studies are important given that psychological functioning has been established as a precipitant to (Schmeelk-Cone & Zimmerman, 2003) and outcome of school adjustment (Needham, Crosnoe, & Muller, 2004). Moreover, studies suggest that these effects become amplified during adolescence (Gutman, Sameroff, & Eccles, 2002; Seidman, Allen, Aber, Mitchell, & Feinman., 1994). Adolescents' experiences with racial prejudice, negative stereotypes, and discriminatory behavior may lead to less positive academic-specific perceptions as well as a decreased sense of self-efficacy, which in turn could adversely influence their psychological functioning. A circular pattern may develop whereby decreased psychological functioning further undermines academic engagement and persistence.

#### RISKY BEHAVIOR

Risky behavior may emerge as a result of decreased psychological functioning or may exacerbate preexisting and underlying mental health problems. Although relatively fewer in number, investigations with adolescent populations have shown that perceived discrimination is associated with engagement in risky behaviors, such as conduct disorder behavior (Brody et al., 2006), substance abuse (Gibbons et al., 2004; Guthrie, Young, Williams, Boyd, & Kinter, 2002), and violence (Caldwell et al., 2004). Links between discrimination and engagement in risky health behaviors have also been found in adult samples (e.g., Landrine & Klonoff, 2000; Martin, Tuch, & Roman, 2003).

Some have postulated that a decreased sense of self-efficacy and personal control over one's environment mediates this link (Caldwell et al., 2004; Schiele, 1998), but this hypothesis has not been tested directly. From the existing literature, we know that youth who have lower estimations of self-worth and a reduced sense of self-efficacy are more susceptible to engagement in risky behaviors (Ludwig &

Pittman, 1999). Because direct experiences with racial discrimination and negative racial stereotypes communicate that people of African descent are devalued and often discounted in larger society, it is highly conceivable that these experiences undermine African American youths' sense of self-worth, personal control, and beliefs about self-efficacy, in turn, increasing their propensity to engage in risky behaviors.

## SUICIDE

Research relying on aggregate-level data has linked suicide among Black male youth to racial inequality (discussed in the next section of this chapter), but we currently lack evidence that either perceived or actual experiences of discrimination at the individual level are significant predictors of suicide or suicidal ideation. Nonetheless, a racism-suicide link is plausible and a number of ideas relevant to this question seem worthy of empirical study. Goldberg and Hodes (1992), for example, hypothesize that racism increases the risk of suicide and suicidal ideation among adolescents, especially girls, through its impact on parent-adolescent conflict. Racism may increase parental protectiveness as children navigate adolescence, precisely when youth strive for increased autonomy and differentiation. This may heighten parent-adolescent conflict over and above normative parent-adolescent disagreements, culminating in a crisis in which suicidal attempts and suicide result. Goldberg and Hodes' analysis grew out of their experiences as family therapists working with ethnic minority families in England, though it may be of particular relevance to certain segments of the African American population (e.g., Blacks of Caribbean ancestry).

African Americans across all age groups have long had a substantially lower suicide rate than their European American counterparts, thought to be a consequence of strong religiosity and fidelity to the Black church—an institution with strict prohibitions against suicide. A mind-set that expects life to be extraordinarily difficult as a matter of course—understandable given the realities of slavery and the history of African American life—has also been posited as a deterrent to Black suicide (Belluck, 1998). However, over the last 20 years, the suicide rate among African American male adolescents and young adults has risen dramatically, such that by 1994, the racial gap in suicide for this age group had virtually closed (CDC, 1998; Joe & Marcus, 2003; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1997).

Several hypotheses have been proffered to account for this trend, although none has been adequately tested. Drawing on Gibbs and Martin's (1964) status integration theory of suicide, scholars have suggested that the increase in suicide rates among African American youth is linked to the rise to middle-class status and its attendant splintering of community and family support networks (especially among those living in predominantly White communities), weakening of bonds to religion, and psychological distress resulting from efforts to compete in historically White-dominated social circles (Belluck, 1998). These trends are thought to foster internal alienation, increasing the risk of self-destruction in the form of suicide (Rutledge, 1990). There also is speculation that the risk of suicide has increased because the greater interracial contact that typically comes with middle-class status exposes African American adolescents to more direct experiences of racial discrimination on the one hand, and increases the likelihood that they will adopt some of European American adolescents' strategies for coping with depression and other forms of psychological distress

on the other. These hypothesized processes may be even more pronounced among African American male adolescents than their female counterparts because, as mentioned previously, their larger spatial range or territory frequented outside of the home, as compared to that of female adolescents (van Vliet, 1983), may increase encounters with individuals who are racist. It is noteworthy that a recent study of adolescent suicide in the New York metropolitan area found that unlike European American and Latino adolescents, African American adolescents who committed suicide tended to come from higher socioeconomic backgrounds than African Americans in the general population (Belluck, 1998).

In summary, perceived racial discrimination is associated with poorer mental health and lower psychosocial adjustment in African American adolescents. These associations have been documented in both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies and in studies that employed quantitative as well as qualitative methodologies. In addition to its direct link to poorer psychological functioning, perceived discrimination can accentuate the negative effects of other stressors on adolescent functioning. Mothers' perceived discrimination also has implications for adolescent functioning because it strengthens the association between maternal psychological distress and discordant parent-adolescent relations.

#### STRUCTURAL RACISM AND MENTAL HEALTH AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN ADOLESCENTS

Institutionalized racism is "the extent to which racism is embedded in the dominant organizations and power structure of society, resulting in distinctive patterns of social disadvantage" (Wade, 1993, pp. 543). Personal experiences with discrimination and the associated mental health consequences should be considered within a larger societal context, because African Americans as a group are stigmatized and subjected to racial discrimination at the institutional level. Indeed, individual discriminatory attitudes and exclusionary behaviors are in many ways products of institutionalized racism and the existing racial hierarchy. Even among African American adolescents who report that they have not directly experienced racial discrimination, there is an awareness of structural racism and the unavailability of being touched by it. The comments of Mia, an African American high school student, exemplify this perspective. She was one of six academically successful, low-income students in O'Connor's (1997) qualitative study, all of whom expected to realize their ambitions, despite having an acute awareness of how race and class operated to constrain the life chances of individuals like themselves. Asked whether she had ever personally experienced discrimination, she said:

*Mia:* I've been fortunate. I haven't felt it yet. And I hope I never have to feel it. But that's only wishful thinking.

*Interviewer:* Why do you say that?

*Mia:* Like I said, America is a racist country. Is it possible for a Black person to live and die in this country and never face some form of discrimination? I don't think so. (O'Connor, 1997, pp. 612)

Institutionalized racism has had its largest impact through economic exclusion and marginalization, such that racial stratification maps onto socioeconomic stratification (Jones, 2000; Harrison-Hale, McLoyd, & Smedley, 2004). Economic



disadvantage, in turn, has been connected to poor mental health outcomes and inadequate access to mental health services (Conger & Elder, 1994; Conger et al., 2002; McLoyd, 1990). Economists and critical race theorists have conceptualized various types of discrimination and have developed models to describe how racial discrimination impacts the life chances of African Americans. For instance, Loury (2005) asserts that African Americans experience both reward bias and developmental bias. In line with traditional notions of discrimination, reward bias involves recompensing members of different racial groups unequally for the same achievements. Reward bias occurs, for example, when equally qualified African Americans are paid less than Whites for the same jobs. Developmental bias involves precluding a group from realizing its "productive potential," even when no inherent disparities in competence exist. For example, segregated neighborhoods, schools, and networks limit the ability of young African Americans to develop the human capital necessary to thrive in our society in adulthood. In essence, discrimination not only affects the ability of African Americans to obtain skills, training, and credentials, but also often prevents them from receiving rewards equal to those of their White counterparts when they do have comparable skills and training (Thomas, 2000). Each of these factors may have implications for the mental health of African American adolescents.

The lock-in model has been used to explain the long-term economic and social effects of racial discrimination, particularly how racial inequalities can persist, even after discriminatory practices have ceased (Roithmayr, 2000). This model suggests that the early advantages in resources and opportunities White Americans gained through past, exclusionary practices reproduce themselves through positive feedback loops that allow these advantages to continue to accumulate. In particular, racial disparities in family wealth transfers, social networks, and residential locations, resulting from discrimination, are reproduced over time and are unlikely to be eliminated without substantial policy intervention (Roithmayr, 2000). One limitation of this model is that discrimination is considered primarily an issue of the past. Consequently, it gives little attention to how contemporary discrimination also contributes to the persistence of inequality.

Yet, as a stigmatized group, African Americans remain the targets of some of the most disparaging negative racial stereotypes, and are particularly at risk for experiencing racial discrimination (Bobo, 2001). Studies have documented the persistence of racial stereotypes and have pointed to some of the implications of these negative attitudes and beliefs. For example, racial stigma colors how non-African Americans feel about social policies that they believe may disproportionately benefit African Americans (Loury, 2005). Racial stigma also influences how people feel about neighborhoods, such that neighborhoods with more African Americans are perceived to be more chaotic, even when objective measures suggest otherwise (Sampson & Raudenbush, 2005).

One of the reasons segregation persists is because of the racial stigma associated with Blackness. Farley and his colleagues (Farley, Steeh, Krysan, Jackson, & Reeves, 1994) found that most Whites believe that African Americans are less intelligent, prefer to be on welfare more than Whites, tend to be more difficult to get along with, and speak English less well than Whites. Whites who believed these stereotypes were less comfortable with integration. Whites are still reluctant to live in or move into integrated neighborhoods, despite more liberal attitudes toward integration overall. As the number of African Americans in a neighborhood increases, Whites feel increasingly uncomfortable, are more likely to want to move out, and are less willing to

move in. Residential segregation is perhaps the biggest reason that schools are segregated. School segregation has resulted in the concentration of minorities in economically disadvantaged schools, and school poverty levels have been linked to poor educational outcomes for minority students (Orfield, 1996).

Scholars have pointed to multiple ways in which structural-level racism may influence the mental health and well-being of African American youth. Racial disparities in access to health care services and educational resources are critical areas of concern (Mickelson, 2003; Shaffer, Ortman, & Denbo, 2002). For example, there is agreement that the disproportionate number of African American adolescents in the juvenile justice system is due, in part, to African Americans' lower access to mental health services (Bishop, 2005; Conley, 1994; Rawal, Romansky, Jenuwine, & Lyons, 2004). Rawal et al. (2004) found that African American juvenile offenders exhibited the most mental health service needs compared to European American and Hispanics.

These analyses notwithstanding, very few studies have directly examined how structural racism is associated with adolescent psychological functioning. One exception considered the relation of level of neighborhood segregation to health and academic achievement (Charles, Dinwiddie, & Massey, 2004). Using survey methodology, 4,000 African American, Latino, Asian, and White young adults were asked about negative life events experienced by their relatives during the first two years of college, including death among network members, crime victimization, health problems, and homelessness. Findings indicated that among African American college students from segregated neighborhoods, the negative life events experienced by friends and relatives were associated with worse mental and physical health and poorer academic achievement compared to students not from these neighborhoods. Further, the types of negative life events experienced by African Americans in highly segregated neighborhoods were the most challenging. For example, African American students from the most segregated neighborhoods experienced more death in their immediate and extended families than did Whites and other minorities across neighborhood contexts.

Disparities in employment also may influence psychological functioning. It has been documented that minority youths are less likely to be employed, experience more episodes of joblessness, and have lower earnings than White youths (Entwisle, Alexander, & Olson, 2000; Fuligni & Hardway, 2004). One study found that, although African American adolescents were applying for more jobs than Whites, they were less likely to actually obtain employment, even after controlling for socioeconomic status and academic achievement (Entwisle et al., 2000). Wilson (1996) suggests that the selective recruitment strategies practiced by many employers in Chicago appear to be deliberately designed to exclude inner-city African Americans from the employment applicant pool (e.g., avoid placing ads in the Chicago newspapers; avoid recruiting from Chicago public high schools [overwhelmingly African American] or from state employment service programs; limit advertisement of job vacancies to local, community-based newspapers that target recent East European immigrants and Latinos; recruit from Catholic schools [overwhelmingly White]; heavy reliance on informal job networks). It is likely that these factors have negative mental health consequences for minority youth.

In fact, research indicates that unemployment and discouragement in the job search process are linked to both attributions of personal blame and psychological distress among African American youth, and that youth who blame personal

limitations rather than external labor market barriers as the major cause of their failure are less active in their job search (Bowman, 1990). To the extent that employment discrimination against adolescents is documented, it remains difficult to directly connect systematic racial discrimination to specific, individual-level mental health outcomes. Instead, discrimination at this level may be more readily linked to racial disparities in mental health, employment outcomes, economic resources, and access to mental health treatment.

As previously noted, aggregate-level data have linked suicide among Black male youth to racial inequality. In a study based on data from 305 standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSAs), Burr, Hartman, and Matteson (1999) found that the probability of suicide among Black males ages 15 to 24 increased as inequalities in income and occupation between African Americans and Whites in SMSAs increased. Blocked opportunity as a marker of structural racism presumably underlies this effect, which held even controlling for social integration and social control (e.g., marital disruption, family structure, church membership), personal income and occupational status, and poverty rate.

#### INTERNALIZED RACISM AND MENTAL HEALTH AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN ADOLESCENTS

Internalized racism refers to “acceptance by members of the stigmatized races of negative messages about their own abilities and intrinsic worth . . . and is characterized by their not believing in others who look like them and not believing in themselves” (Jones, 2000, pp. 1213). Jones (2000) succinctly delineates what are most often cited as behavioral and psychological markers of internalized racism:

[Internalized racism] manifests as an embracing of “Whiteness” (use of hair straighteners and bleaching creams, stratification by skin tone within communities of color, and “the White man’s ice is colder” syndrome); self-devaluation (racial slurs as nicknames, rejection of ancestral culture, and fratricide); and resignation, helplessness, and hopelessness (dropping out of school, failing to vote, and engaging in risky health practices). (pp. 1213)

Scholars have devoted analytic attention to the nature, antecedents, consequences, and developmental course of internalized racism for decades (e.g., Cross, 1971, 1991; Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001; Fanon, 1967; Frazier, 1957; Hammack, 2003; Howard, 1972; Kardiner & Ovesey, 1951; Pugh, 1972; Taylor, 1992; Watts-Jones, 2002). That internalized racism persists as a nettlesome issue long after the “Black is Beautiful” era of the 1960s and early 1970s is evident in contemporary “Black” popular print media (e.g., Graham, 2000; Herron, 1997; Leyden, 1998). As a case in point, African American parenting books routinely caution about the ubiquity of racism and the threats that internalized racism pose for African American children’s psychological health. These books offer advice and strategies intended to help African American children and adolescents develop an appreciation of African physical features (e.g., kinky hair, dark-skin, broad features) and resist the inclination to judge their appearance and that of other African Americans in accord with European standards of beauty (Beal, Villarosa, & Abner, 1999; Kunjufu, 1984; McLaughlin, 1976; Ward, 2000). Moreover, they challenge African American parents to examine their own racial attitudes and biases. As one author admonished, “Catch yourself every time you make comments about how pretty someone is to determine what criteria you are using.

find the biggest picture you can of a dark-skin man and woman with woolly hair and broad features, and just look at it over and over again until you reprogram your computer. Keep telling yourself, good hair is hair that covers your head, and good eyes are those that don't need glasses!" (Kunjufu, 1984, pp. 26).

Scholars have argued that the ubiquity of racism in American society, particularly in combination with alienation from African and African American culture, makes internalized racism highly probable (Taylor, 1992). The "White man's ice is colder" syndrome as a marker of internalized racism manifests in children's judgments as well as those of adults. For example, experimental research indicates that 6- to 7-year-old African American children from both higher and lower SES backgrounds rate novel jobs (i.e., newly coined job titles) depicted with only European Americans as significantly higher in status than jobs depicted with only African Americans or jobs depicted with both European Americans and African Americans (Bigler, Averhart, & Liben, 2003). African American adults harbor the same racial prejudices about contexts that European American adults hold, though to a somewhat lesser degree. Specifically, like European Americans, African Americans perceive neighborhoods as more disorderly when more African Americans reside in them, even controlling for observed neighborhood disorder, census tract data, and crime (Sampson & Raudenbush, 2004). In a similar vein, African Americans, like European Americans, report that the quality of a neighborhood school has declined when there is more than a 2 percent increase in the number of African Americans attending a school over a 5-year period, independent of test scores, poverty rates, school violence, and other school characteristics (Goyette, Freely, & Farrie, 2006).

The view that internalized racism is antithetical to positive mental health among African Americans finds robust support in the empirical literature, although most of the evidence is based on adult populations. Internalized racism as assessed with self-report scales comprised of Likert-type items (e.g., "Blacks are born with greater sexual lust than Whites," "Blacks are just not as smart as Whites") is consistently associated with poorer psychosocial functioning in African American adults, including lower self-esteem, more impaired relationships with other African Americans, and increased levels of depressive symptomatology, aggression, alcohol consumption, and criminal behavior (Taylor, 1992).

Some of the psychological correlates of skin tone among African Americans have also been interpreted as evidence of internalized racism. For example, national survey data indicate that African Americans with darker skin tones (based on interviewer observation) tend to have lower self-esteem and lower self-efficacy than those with lighter skin tone, although the strength of these relations depends on gender, socioeconomic status, physical attractiveness, and other factors (Thompson & Keith, 2001). Racial context (i.e., predominantly Black vs. predominantly White university) also moderates the strength and direction of the association between skin tone and self-esteem when skin tone is based on self-report (Harvey, LaBeach, Pridgen, & Gocial, 2005). Whereas skin tone bears a direct relation to some psychosocial correlates, in other instances its association is indirect and mediated through social stratification processes. For example, national survey data indicate that the association between skin tone and self-efficacy is indirect, mediated through the consequences of skin tone for income and education (Thompson & Keith, 2001). This mediation process is not surprising given the longstanding link between skin tone and social stratification among African Americans. Darker skin tone predicts lower educational and occupational attainment among African Americans, net of the effects of parental

socioeconomic status, sex, region, urbanicity, age, and marital status (Keith & Herring, 1991).

Both adolescents who view themselves as “lighter” and those who view themselves as “darker” report lower levels of satisfaction with their skin tone than adolescents who characterize their skin tone as “somewhere in between” (Robinson & Ward, 1995). Underlying both kinds of dissatisfaction may be the skin tone hierarchy extant among African Americans, with lighter-skinned adolescents wanting to be darker, perhaps because they were “concerned about being perceived as stuck-up, unduly favored, or secretly wishing they were White,” whereas darker-skinned adolescents may desire to be lighter because of concern that “their . . . dating, marriage, and career options [are] diminished” as a consequence of darker skin (Ward, 2000, p. 269). A handful of studies based on African American college students have assessed the three identity clusters in Cross’s pre-encounter stage of Black identity development (i.e., self-hatred identity, miseducation identity, and assimilation) in relation to mental health and internalization of positive and negative race stereotypes (e.g., Cokley, 2002, Pillay, 2005), but there is a paucity of empirical work documenting the psychosocial correlates of internalized racism among precollege or noncollege African American youth. Some illumination of the psychological and behavioral costs of internalized racism can be found in case studies of African American adolescents in psychotherapy. Internalized racism clearly is implicated in one of the common presenting problems in Jones’ (1992) therapeutic work with middle-class African American adolescents living in predominantly White neighborhoods and attending predominantly White schools. This presenting problem, which Jones termed “Black and bad,” is characterized by adolescents who, “struggling with confused identities and searching for an authentic sense of self” (pp. 36), adopt negative cultural stereotypes of what it means to be Black. Having internalized negative stereotypes of African Americans, they respond to their need to feel authentically “Black” by engaging in delinquent and self-destructive behavior (e.g., gang membership, drug dealing, risky sexual behavior). Therapy with these adolescents is difficult, according to Jones, because they do not see themselves as needing help, but rather are “enthralled with the new life they have discovered” (pp. 36). In some cases, hospitalization is required to interrupt self-destructive behavior. One such case is briefly described below:

. . . an adolescent girl openly flaunted her relationship with a flamboyant African American boy she had met at a community theater production. In asking questions in the community, the therapist discovered that the girl’s boyfriend was a pimp who preyed on naïve young girls, eventually demanding that they become part of his stable of prostitutes. The girl totally denied the realities of the situation, and successful therapy was possible only via force hospitalization in a locked adolescent treatment facility. (Jones, 1992, pp. 36–37)

Empirical documentation of the mental health correlates of internalized racism among precollege or noncollege African American youth will help anchor the discourse about the psychological consequences of American racism, but there is no compelling reason to expect that these correlates are different than those found in studies of adults. Rather than redress this gap in the literature, researchers have begun to assess the influence of African American adolescents’ awareness and endorsement of positive and negative race stereotypes on their self-concepts and values and to delineate socialization experiences that lessen adolescents’ endorsement of these

stereotypes (e.g., Kurtz-Costes, Rowley, Harris-Britt, & Woods, 2006; Rowley, Kurtz-Costes, Mistry, & Feagans, in press; Woods, Kurtz-Costes, & Rowley, 2005). For example, Brega and Coleman (1999) found that African American high school students who were more involved in the church (church attendance, positive attitudes toward the Black church) and received more racial socialization messages of a particular type (e.g., racial barriers, racial pride) were less likely to have internalized negative attitudes and stereotypes toward African Americans, findings that are in accord with an extensive literature about sources and processes of resilience among African American youth and adults (e.g., Harrison-Hale et al., 2004; McLoyd, Hill, & Dodge, 2005; Tatum, 1987). We now turn to a discussion of one segment of that literature.

#### POTENTIAL BUFFERS OF THE IMPACT OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION ON ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH

Just as many African American adolescents manifest acute awareness of the existence of racial barriers, so do many resolve to overcome them. In Sanders' (1997) qualitative study of African American urban eighth-graders, several students with moderate to high awareness of racism as a potential obstacle to economic and social success viewed racism as a challenge and responded to it in ways that were conducive, rather than detrimental, to educational success. Some viewed their academic success as an opportunity to disprove negative stereotypes about African Americans. The comments of one 13-year-old adolescent in the study reveal both her anticipation of educational barriers and inchoate notions of resistance—perseverance being her strategy of choice.

Sometimes when I think about the future, I think that some White person might say that, "She is Black and probably been doing something wrong back when she was coming up, and she doesn't need to be here in this setting." I wonder how they will act when I want to go to college or cosmetology school. But I figure that I'll just keep trying until somebody lets me, they'll get tired of me coming back all of the time. (Sanders, 1997, pp. 89).

What is known about the experiences and psychological orientations that lessen the negative effects of racial discrimination on African American adolescents' psychological functioning and well-being? In what follows, we highlight the few extant studies that directly assess buffering effects (via tests of interaction effects) and discuss hypothesized moderating influences that merit examination in future research studies.

#### RACIAL IDENTITY

There is a great deal of research focusing on how racial identity, or one's feeling of belonging to their racial group, influences the lives of African Americans (Cross, 1971; Cross, Strauss, & Fhagen-Smith, 1999; Helms, 1990; Parham & Helms, 1985a; Parham & Helms, 1985b; Sellers et al., 1997; Tatum, 1997). Overall, this research suggests that the significance and meaning attributed to race are important aspects of one's racial or cultural identification (Cross, 1971; Helms, 1990; Phinney, 1990; Rowley, Sellers, Chavous, & Smith, 1998; Sellers et al., 1997). Scholars have asserted that racial identification serves as a protective factor for African American adolescents, particularly in the face of discrimination (Cross, Strauss, & Fhagen-Smith,

1999; Rowley, Cooper, & Clinton, 2005). Empirical investigations have supported this claim, with studies indicating that stronger identification with one's racial group buffers the negative effects of racial discrimination on African American adolescents' well-being (Caldwell, Kohn-Wood, Schmeelk-Cone, Chavous & Zimmerman, 2004; Sellers & Shelton, 2003; Wong et al., 2003).

Public regard, that is, the extent to which individuals view others as holding positive views toward African Americans, has also been found to moderate the effects of perceived discrimination. In particular, African American youth who believe that other groups view African Americans more favorably engage in *more* violent acts and report *more* depressive symptoms, *more* perceived stress, and *poorer* overall psychological well-being (e.g., self-acceptance, positive relations with others) when they experience racial discrimination (Caldwell, Kohn-Wood, Schmeelk-Cone, Chavous & Zimmerman, 2004; Sellers, Copeland-Linder, Martin, & Lewis, 2006). One interpretation of these findings is that youth who have more idealistic views about race relations may be less able to cope with racial discrimination because it is unexpected and confusing and hence, more stressful. Conversely, youth who believe that other groups hold more negative attitudes toward African Americans may have developed more effective coping strategies for dealing with racial discrimination as a result of having to use them more often. An awareness of racial discrimination and recognition of the potential for experiencing racial discrimination may be critical antecedents to adopting effective ways to cope with discrimination experiences (Caldwell et al., 2004; Sellers et al., 2006).

Aspects of one's racial identity not only buffer the negative effects of racial discrimination, but also directly enhance psychological adjustment. Numerous studies have documented direct links between racial identification and positive psychological and behavioral outcomes for African American youth, including higher self-esteem (Buckley & Carter, 2005; Crocker, Luhtanen, Blaine, & Broadnax, 1994; Phinney & Chavira, 1992; Rowley et al., 1998), lower psychological stress (Caldwell, Sellers, Bernat, & Zimmerman, 2004), lower depressive symptomatology (Yip, Seaton, & Sellers, 2006), psychological well-being (Seaton, Scottham, & Sellers, 2006), and greater school adjustment (Chavous et al., 2003; Ford & Harris, 1997; O'Connor, 1997; Oyserman, Harrison, & Bybee, 2001; Smith, Atkins, & Connell, 2003; Taylor et al., 1994; Witherspoon, Speight, & Thomas, 1997).

## RACIAL SOCIALIZATION

Whereas some European American parents discuss race with their children as a means of promoting attitudes of tolerance and equality, a sizeable proportion of African American parents discuss race as a means of preparing their children for encounters with prejudice and discrimination (cf. McLoyd, Cauce, Takeuchi, & Wilson, 2000). Most research on this topic has focused on the ways that African American parents connect their children with African American culture and history, help them understand how race may affect opportunities, and impart strategies for navigating within a discriminatory society (Boykin & Ellison, 1995; Boykin & Toms, 1985; Hughes et al., 2006; Miller, 1999; Miller & MacIntosh, 1999; Nobles, 1985; Peters & Massey, 1983; Thornton, Chatters, Taylor, & Allen, 1990).

Research indicates that racial socialization not only enhances psychological adjustment among African American adolescents (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Constantine & Blackmon, 2002; McHale et al., 2006; Sanders, 1997; Stevenson, Reed,

Bodison & Bishop, 1997), but also cushions the negative impact of racial discrimination on their school adjustment and mental health (Cooper, 2005; Fischer & Shaw, 1999; Neblett, Philip, Cogburn, & Sellers, 2006). The interrelations among perceived discrimination, different types of parental racial socialization, and adolescent functioning can be complicated, as Harris-Britt and colleagues (Harris-Britt, Valrie, Kurtz-Costes, & Rowley, *in press*) found in their recent investigation. Perceived discrimination was linked to low self-esteem in African American youth who reported low levels of race pride socialization and both high and low levels of preparation for bias. However, the link between perceived discrimination and low self-esteem was mitigated for youth who reported high levels of race pride socialization and moderate levels of preparation for bias.

There is also evidence that parental messages about race influence the type of coping strategies that ethnic minority youth employ in the face of racism and discrimination. In two separate studies of African American high school students attending private schools, Scott (2003, 2004) found that students who received more racial socialization messages (e.g., cultural pride, awareness of racial barriers) had more positive coping strategies for dealing with discrimination. In particular, they were more likely to seek social support and use problem-solving skills to deal with a discriminatory situation. Links between racial socialization and positive coping strategies have also been documented in other research (Phinney & Chavira, 1995). There is some indication, albeit scant, that use of more approach coping strategies (e.g., seeking social support, problem solving), as compared to more avoidant coping strategies (e.g., internalizing behaviors), lessen the effects of racial discrimination (Scott & House, 2005). These studies document racial socialization's direct effects on psychological functioning and its indirect effects via the use of more positive coping strategies, with more recent studies clarifying how social context (e.g., neighborhood, school) moderates the association between racial socialization and adolescent psychological functioning (e.g., neighborhood, school; e.g., Caughy, Nettles, O'Campo, & Lohrfink, 2006).

#### SOCIAL SUPPORT

Social support has been linked to positive psychological well-being among African American youth (Caldwell, Zimmerman, Bernat, Sellers, & Notaro., 2002; Greene & Way, 2005; Luster & McAdoo, 1995; McCreary, Slavin, & Berry, 1996; Way & Robinson, 2003; Zimmerman, Ramirez-Valles, Zapert, & Maton, 2000), raising the question of whether it mitigates the negative impact of racial discrimination. Although this possibility stands to reason, there is a paucity of studies that directly assess this issue with adolescents. In the only relevant study of which we are aware, Brody and colleagues (2006) found that nurturant-involved parenting and affiliation with prosocial peers moderated the association between perceived discrimination and depressive symptoms in African American youth. Specifically, the link between increases in perceived discrimination and depressive symptoms was significantly weaker among youth who received high levels of nurturant-involved parenting and whose friends encouraged involvement in prosocial activities. Nurturant-involved parenting also attenuated the association between perceived discrimination and conduct problems.

Brody et al.'s (2006) findings regarding the stress-buffering effects of nurturant-involved parents are consistent with research focusing on other types of stressors. For example, in their study of African American high school students, McCreary



et al. (1996) found that the relationship between stress from major life events and self-esteem weakened (and ultimately disappeared) as perceived emotional support from family increased. Other studies of ethnic minority adolescents and young adults, however, have failed to find support for the stress-buffering hypothesis, or have even found that some types of social support exacerbate the harmful impact of certain environmental stressors (e.g., Hammack, Richards, Luo, Edlynn, & Roy, 2004; Prelow, Mosher, & Bowman, 2006; Zimmerman et al., 2000). Even if future research fails to reveal social support as a robust mitigator of the negative effects of perceived discrimination, this does not necessarily mean that social support does not promote the psychological well-being of adolescents with high levels of perceived racial discrimination. On the contrary, the fact that there are main effect relationships between social support and mental health outcomes suggests that social support may enhance psychological well-being regardless of the level of perceived racial discrimination.

In summary, multiple studies have confirmed that two factors buffer the negative effects of perceived discrimination on African American adolescents' mental health and school adjustment—strong identification with African Americans as a group and higher levels of racial socialization. Although comparatively sparse, there is also evidence that social support can mitigate discrimination's negative psychological effects in this population.

#### STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING RACIAL STEREOTYPES, PREJUDICE, AND DISCRIMINATORY BEHAVIOR

It is important to nurture psychological and social resources that help African American children and adolescents repel the negative psychological effects of discrimination, but reducing the prevalence of racial stereotypes, prejudice, and discriminatory behavior is even more crucial. Although institutionalized racism has received scant attention in psychology, some psychologists have suggested that primary importance be placed on eradicating institutionalized racism, positing that this would result in the eventual elimination of all other forms of racism (i.e. personally mediated and internalized racism; García-Coll & Szalacha, 2004; Jones, 2000). Given the difficulty of altering institutions and systems, however, much of the literature has focused on interventions that target individual attitudes and behaviors. There is little doubt that schools are a significant source of discrimination experiences for ethnic minority adolescents, and that these experiences pose a threat to psychological well-being. Hence, we focus here on ways to reduce racist attitudes and behaviors in teachers and students.

#### TEACHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Most students in teacher education programs have had little or no contact with ethnic minority individuals (Nieto, 2000). Not surprisingly, some teacher educators have observed that a troubling number of preservice teachers hold culturally insensitive attitudes and beliefs (Cho & DeCastro-Ambrosetti, 2005) and are loath to acknowledge the existence of racism in our society (Case & Hemmings, 2005). Teacher training programs that include multicultural education can help to reduce racist attitudes in future teachers. Gibson (2004) has identified three characteristics of effective multicultural preservice education programs. First, these programs should provide teachers with knowledge and deep understanding of others' cultures. Second, they

should provide opportunities for student teachers to reflect upon and analyze their personal beliefs about cultural differences and how these beliefs are manifested in their classroom behaviors and practices. Finally, given that different groups of children may have different preferred ways of knowing, thinking, and learning (Banks, 2001), multicultural preservice programs should provide the pedagogical skills necessary for teaching students from diverse backgrounds. Each of these three multicultural education techniques has been empirically demonstrated to reduce racially biased attitudes in student teachers (e.g., Capella-Santa, 2003; Cho & DeCastro-Ambrosetti, 2005; Milner, 2006).

Presumably, the link between teachers' racial attitudes and student outcomes is mediated by teacher behaviors. Unfortunately, research linking these three variables is extremely limited. There is some evidence to suggest that elementary school teachers' attitudes are associated with their treatment and organization of students. For example, Epstein (1985) found that fifth-grade teachers who held positive perceptions of African American students' achievement and discipline were more likely to use grouping practices that emphasized the equal status of African American and European American students. These equal status programs, in turn, were associated with higher achievement among African American students. Additional work is needed to examine how teachers' racial attitudes influence their overt behaviors and practices and, by extension, student outcomes in middle and high school classrooms.

#### YOUTH ATTITUDES AND INTERGROUP RELATIONS

A number of promising strategies for reducing racially discriminatory attitudes and behaviors in youth have been identified, most of which are school-based. McKown (2005) has pointed out that, although a number of nonschool-based forces (e.g., family and the media) influence children's racial attitudes, certain characteristics of schools make them particularly amenable to prejudice reduction efforts. First of all, schools provide a setting in which contact with adults and classmates from diverse backgrounds is "intensive and enduring," thereby making schools appropriate settings for fostering tolerance and intergroup acceptance. In addition, the racial beliefs of school-aged individuals may be more flexible than those of adults and thus more likely to change in response to intervention (Aboud, 1988, cited in McKown, 2005). For these reasons, schools may be a more suitable locus for intervention than other venues.

Similar to teachers, multicultural education has also been advocated as a strategy for improving ethnic relations among adolescents. Multicultural education for youth generally entails highlighting the contributions of various racial and ethnic groups, with the goal of promoting intergroup understanding and harmonious interaction. Notably, there is little evidence that multicultural education programs actually help to reduce negative racial attitudes in children and adolescents (for reviews, see Aboud & Levy, 2000; Bigler, 1999), although these programs may still be an important medium for social change. Supporters of multicultural education contend that it is "enabling a slow but critical shift in paradigms" (Morelli & Spencer, 2000). Such a shift may play an important role in improving interracial attitudes and relations over the long term.

We now turn to research on antibias programs that *do* show promise for improving interracial attitudes and relations among youth over the short-term. Unfortunately, experimental evaluations of such programs have focused primarily on preadolescent youth, with relatively little attention given to program effects on middle and high

school students. Furthermore, of the antibias programs for adolescents considered to be especially promising, few have been tested in contexts that adequately represent the racial landscape of the United States. Consequently, additional research is needed to determine whether the interventions we describe are effective across the developmental periods and the racial and ethnic groups that are the focus of this chapter.

Certain types of intergroup contact may reduce racial prejudice in adolescents while promoting harmonious interactions between youth from different ethnic backgrounds. In particular, several cooperative learning programs that meet the four conditions of Allport's (1954) contact theory (i.e., equal status between group members, common goals, support from authority figures, and cooperative interdependence) have been shown to improve racial attitudes and relationships among adolescents. In a recent review, Slavin and Cooper (1999) reported that such programs may improve racial attitudes in both European American and ethnic minority youth, reduce interethnic conflict, and lead to more frequent cross-racial friendships. An example of a cooperative learning program that effectively capitalizes on Allport's conditions and that has been shown to impact intergroup attitudes is the jigsaw classroom (Aronson & Patnoe, 1997). In the jigsaw classroom, students are arranged into racially and academically heterogeneous groups. Each group member becomes an "expert" regarding a subsection of a lesson, which he or she then teaches to the rest of the group. Each person's contribution is necessary for the success of all other group members, and, therefore, group members depend upon each other for achieving success. Thus, the jigsaw classroom promotes equal status and cooperative interdependence. Walker and Crogan (1998) conducted a quasi-experimental investigation of the jigsaw classroom method in fourth- through sixth-grade classrooms in Australia. Results indicated that European Australian and Asian children who participated in the jigsaw condition reported increased liking of and reduced social distance from out-group peers as compared to control children and children participating in another type of cooperative learning paradigm that did not capitalize on the conditions of Allport's contact theory. In addition, European Australians in the jigsaw condition showed reduced negative stereotyping of Asians.

Other promising antiracism interventions are grounded in social cognitive theory. In contrast to cooperative learning interventions that focus on altering the structure of interpersonal relationships, interventions in the social cognitive tradition are designed to correct and/or improve individual-level cognitions regarding out-group members (McKown, 2005). For example, Levy and colleagues recently evaluated the impact of messages regarding similarities and differences between people on African American and Latino early adolescents' (ages 11 to 14) out-group attitudes (Levy et al., 2005). They found that youth who received messages highlighting both similarities between individuals (e.g., "All humans are the same") and individual differences (e.g., "Each person is a unique individual") reported higher levels of social tolerance and desired interracial closeness more than youth who received messages highlighting only similarities or differences. Interestingly, short science books served as the vehicle for transmission of these messages, suggesting that it may be possible to integrate antibias interventions into the regular curriculum.

Several barriers threaten the adoption and implementation of effective prejudice reduction programs in schools. Recent work by Morelli and Spencer (2000) suggests that racism and bigoted behaviors (e.g., racist jokes) are tolerated and even perpetuated within some schools, and that many school districts' efforts to reduce racism are less than genuine. Furthermore, teachers and administrators who endorse the use of

antiracism programs may be reluctant to openly embrace them because they fear negative reactions from conservative community members (Morelli & Spencer, 2000). In addition to these attitudinal barriers, within-school racial segregation of students may preclude the use of interventions based on intergroup contact and undermine messages intended to promote social tolerance. Specifically, the practice of ability group tracking, which is virtually ubiquitous, by definition prevents students from interacting in an atmosphere of equal status and interdependence. Recent research suggests that, irrespective of race, adolescents who are excluded from the advanced track may develop feelings of resentment and animosity toward the "privileged few" (Tyson, Darity, & Castellino, 2005), thereby dampening the likelihood of intergroup tolerance. Comprehensive efforts to reduce racial bias among youth may benefit from including strategies for dealing with barriers posed by teachers, communities, and structural factors within schools.

### SUMMARY AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Because mainstream developmental approaches have not adequately acknowledged how racism influences growth and development, we began this chapter with a discussion of recent conceptual approaches (e.g., García-Coll et al., 1996) that thoughtfully consider racism and discrimination within a developmental framework. In addition to highlighting how racism shapes children's developmental contexts and, thus, their competencies and psychological functioning, these approaches focus attention on how developmental and situational processes influence children's understanding of discrimination. This conceptual work has laid a sound foundation for programmatic study of the significance of racism and perceived racial discrimination for child and adolescent development.

Existing research indicates that African American children think about racism in more complex ways than their non-African American peers and are more likely than non-African American children to report experiences with discrimination. Within-group variation also exists in perceived discrimination. African Americans in late adolescence report more experiences with discrimination than those in early adolescence, and considerable empirical and qualitative evidence suggests that perceived discrimination is higher among African American male adolescents and young adults than their female counterparts. In addition, African American youth living in racially integrated environments have greater awareness of racism and discrimination than those living in more racially homogenous environments. Surprisingly, research assessing family income and socioeconomic status as correlates of perceived discrimination is both sketchy and inconclusive. In general, there is a pressing need for more study of what home, community, and school factors increase children's level of perceived discrimination and their actual encounters with discriminatory behavior.

Growing evidence links perceived discrimination to negative indicators of psychological adjustment in African American youth, including psychological distress, depressive symptomatology, anxiety, lower self-esteem, risky behavior, and less positive achievement-related outcomes. Rarely have studies established direct links between structural-level racial discrimination and adolescent mental health, but there is good reason to believe that these linkages exist, even controlling for individual-level experiences of discrimination.

It is a commonly held belief that racial socialization and a positive racial identity are important developmental stabilizers that help African American adolescents repel

the negative effects of racial discrimination. This belief finds support in empirical studies, and there is some suggestion that social support can function similarly. Nonetheless, especially given the statistical instability of interaction effects (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000a, 2000b; Roosa, 2000), combined with the small number of studies on which these findings are based, additional corroborating evidence is needed. Also sorely needed are studies that assess the generalizability of documented buffering effects across different contexts (e.g., schools and neighborhoods with varying racial/ethnic distributions), gender, developmental periods (e.g., early vs. late adolescence), dependent variables of interest, and other factors. A deeper understanding of how to thwart the psychological effects of racism is also dependent on rigorous tests of a broader range of potential moderators (e.g., interactions with siblings, grandparents, residential and non-residential fathers; social capital; neighborhood characteristics) and more differentiated moderators (e.g., sources and types of social support; types of racial socialization; concrete experiences vs. verbal messages as racial socialization strategies). Because corroboration is so central to building our knowledge base, future studies ideally will be designed to capitalize on strategies that increase the stability of interaction effects reported in the scientific literature (e.g., higher fidelity measurements, adequate sample size based on careful power analyses, multiple replications within a single program of research; Roosa, 2000).

As is clear from our review, school-based interventions can be effective in reducing prejudice and discrimination among teachers and students, but too few of the most promising antibias programs have been tested with American adolescents. The field needs studies that redress this gap and replication studies that clarify the extent to which findings from extant intervention studies generalize across developmental periods, national boundaries, and geographic context. Otherwise, America's middle schools and high schools will be severely limited in their ability to play a significant, if not leading role in achieving a more egalitarian and just society.

Other important avenues for future research concern improving conceptual and methodological precision (e.g., Paradies, 2006). Assessments of a range of conceptually related but distinct constructs have been construed as providing evidence of racism, including perceived racial discrimination (i.e., lifetime events, events within past year), actual racial discrimination, race-related stress, and awareness of negative racial stereotypes. To facilitate consolidation of findings about the effects of racism, researchers need to be more explicit in their definitions of racism and racial discrimination, and employ appropriate and psychometrically valid assessments based on their specific conceptualizations. Moreover, we need systematic study of how estimates of racial discrimination based on different measures are related to each other. Remarkably little is known, for example, about the relationship between perceived and actual discrimination, or the extent to which the strength of the relationship depends on the methods used to estimate discrimination. Because relevant data are lacking, the most that can be said is that perceived discrimination may overreport or underreport discrimination assessed by other methods (Blank et al., 2004).

Given the empirical complexity of assessing the influence of structural-level racism on individual-level mental health outcomes, analytic techniques, such as multilevel modeling, may hold promise for linking social structural factors, like racial discrimination, to individual level outcomes (O'Connor, Lewis, & Mueller, in preparation; Pettigrew, 2006). Some scholars have also pointed out the problems of using race as an independent variable and inferring discrimination, when racial differences in outcomes are observed, without adequate theory or actual measurement

of discrimination (Helms, Jernigan, & Mascher, 2005). Others have suggested that standard analytic practices may underestimate the impact of institutionalized racism. O'Connor et al. (in preparation), for example, point out that studies that find that race is not a significant predictor of educational outcomes, after controlling for prior academic achievement, may mask the totality of the influence of institutional discrimination on the early educational experiences and opportunities of African American youth.

The developmental appropriateness of assessments of racial discrimination is another important consideration in studies of children and adolescents. More longitudinal studies are needed to estimate the extent to which perceived discrimination during different developmental periods has enduring effects. We do not yet know how perceived racial discrimination experienced during adolescence influences African American youth's transition to adulthood, or the processes that might underlie linkages across developmental periods. Mixed-method approaches are especially attractive for these purposes. Documentation of statistical probabilities and growth curves, when done in concert with qualitative study of the subjective experience of racism and individuals' accounts of their efforts to repel racism's effects, is a potentially superior strategy for excavating the nature, psychological challenges, and developmental significance of racism for African American children and adolescents. Interdisciplinary collaborations stand to hasten our understanding of these issues because they are favorable to mixed-method approaches and to more sophisticated statistical methodologies, such as multi-level modeling techniques that allow for assessments of the independent contributions of structural discrimination and individual-level perceived discrimination.

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## CHAPTER 13

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# Social Identity Development and Children's Ethnic Attitudes in Australia

DREW NESDALE

### INTRODUCTION

**T**HE OCCURRENCE of ethnic or racial prejudice during the early and middle childhood years has been an issue of particular concern to theorists and researchers for more than 75 years. Although ethnic prejudice (i.e., dislike or hatred directed towards members of ethnic or racial out-groups) is harmful in any sector of a community, its presence in young children is of considerable concern because it has the potential to lead to short- and long-term psychological, if not physical, harm to young members of ethnic and racial minority groups (Nesdale, 2004). Moreover, there is the possibility that prejudice acquired at this time by children might endure into adulthood and foster intergroup divisions that are long lasting (Durkin, 1995).

Beginning in the 1930s, American researchers responded to these concerns with a stream of studies focused on identifying the age at which ethnic prejudice might emerge in children, together with related issues such as the development of ethnic awareness, ethnic self-identification, and ethnic stereotyping (see reviews by Aboud, 1988; Nesdale, 2001). It is probably fair to say that the research until the 1980s was mainly descriptive. Researchers utilized much the same measurement techniques to assess the attitudes of different samples of dominant White American children towards African American children (see Nesdale, 2001). With the passage of time, research broadened to include dominant children's attitudes towards indigenous

Americans and various immigrant groups, as well as the intra- and intergroup attitudes of African American and ethnic minority group children, themselves (Aboud, 1988; Nesdale, 2001).

The preceding issues were also taken up by researchers in a number of other countries, including the United Kingdom (e.g., Davey, 1983; Milner, 1973), Canada (e.g., Aboud & Mitchell, 1977; Corenblum & Annis, 1987, 1993, Doyle & Aboud, 1995), and New Zealand (e.g., Vaughan, 1964, 1988), as well as Australia (e.g., Black-Gutman & Hickson, 1996; Phillips, 1979). Australia is a particularly appropriate country for this type of research because it has a diverse population, including a dominant group of White Anglo-Australians (who still comprise approximately 70 percent of the population), an indigenous population of Black-skinned people (i.e., Australian Aborigines), as well as immigrants and refugees from more than 170 countries (with 60 countries contributing more than 10,000 immigrants each).

Of particular relevance to the present discussion, however, is the fact that Australia has had a history of troubled intercultural relations since it was first colonized by the British in 1788. As detailed in the following, this has included difficulties between Anglo-Australians and Australian Aborigines, as well as with various immigrant groups including, most recently, Islamic refugees and asylum seekers. Given this historical context, it is not surprising that intercultural relations in Australia have been of considerable interest to researchers. Much of this research has focused on the ethnic attitudes of adults towards various immigrant groups, especially those from Asian countries. Nonetheless, research on adults' attitudes towards indigenous Australians, as well as towards refugees and asylum seekers, has increased in recent years.

In a similar vein, researchers have examined the ethnic attitudes of Anglo-Australian children. Consistent with the adult research, the emphasis has been upon children's attitudes towards members of ethnic minority groups, with fewer studies focusing on their attitudes towards indigenous Australians, refugees, and asylum seekers. As with much of the North American research, these studies have tended to be more descriptive than theory driven. However, recent theoretical and empirical work in Australia has placed greater emphasis on the role played by children's social identity processes in the development of their ethnic attitudes (Nesdale, 2004, *in press*).

The aim of the present chapter is to review research relating to the development of Australian children's ethnic attitudes. To provide a context for the discussion, a brief overview is provided of the history of Australia's intercultural relations, together with research findings on adult's ethnic attitudes. This is followed by an outline of research on children's ethnic attitudes, together

with a description of a theoretical approach, social identity development theory (SIDT; Nesdale, 2004, in press), that has been proposed to account for findings among children. The chapter then describes a series of studies that were designed to evaluate SIDT, including a description of a new research paradigm that was utilized in that research program. The chapter concludes with some suggestions for interventions arising from the research program.

There are two points of clarification concerning this chapter that are worth noting. First, although the title of the chapter refers to children's ethnic attitudes, the theories and research that are the purview of this chapter relate to, or encompass, both racial and ethnic attitudes. Whereas some researchers have continued to use the term *race* and to focus on racial attitudes or prejudice (e.g., Aboud, 1993; Black-Gutman, & Hickson, 1996; Cramer & Anderson, 2003), others, presumably responding to the overlap between race and ethnicity, have used the terms interchangeably, or juxtaposed the terms, or have used *ethnic attitude/prejudice* as the more inclusive term (e.g., Kowalski, 2003; Van Ausdale & Feagin, 1996; Nesdale, 2004). The present chapter follows the latter practice and uses the term *ethnic prejudice* inclusively so as to encompass both ethnic and racial prejudice.

Second, the particular focus of this chapter is on the ethnic attitudes of the dominant or majority group Anglo-Australian children. As has been pointed out elsewhere, although prejudice occurs between members of different ethnic minority groups, it is the members of the dominant culture in a society that are most likely to express prejudice towards members of ethnic minority groups. Consequently, it is the ethnic attitudes of this group that have received most research attention (Verkuyten & Masson, 1995). Australia is no exception.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS IN AUSTRALIA

Australia was first colonized by the British in 1788. Their aim was to establish a self-sustaining settlement to which an excess of British convicts could be transported for the term of their incarceration (Hughes, 1987). As soon became apparent, however, relationships with the indigenous Black-skinned people became an ongoing problem for the new settlers.

### AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINES

Prior to colonization, the continent had been occupied by the indigenous people (who became known as Australian Aborigines) for some 60,000 years. They were comparatively few in number, and roamed the countryside in small groups as hunter-gatherers, without marking out boundaries or making fixed settlements (Hughes, 1987). The earliest European visitors to the continent viewed them as "the miserablest people in

the world because, setting aside their humane (*sic*) shape, they differ but little from brutes" (Clark, 1969, pp. 6–7).

This unpromising early view became even more negative as a result of subsequent disputes over land between the settlers and Aborigines. Given that the various Aboriginal tribes apparently did not lay claim to particular lands or territories, the colonial government simply declared all Australian land to be Crown land that could be distributed as land grants or sold (Clark, 1969). Although initially uneventful, relationships deteriorated when the Aborigines freely made use of the animals, crops and tools that had appeared on their land. The settlers responded by restricting the Aborigines' freedom to roam the land at will, which resulted in the Aborigines killing stock and setting fire to homesteads and crops. The resulting warfare led the settlers to view the Aborigines as shiftless, ignorant, debased, treacherous, and dangerous, and to hunt them down as native pests or vermin (Hughes, 1987). The Aborigines were decimated by the conflict and were subsequently relentlessly dispossessed, excluded, and marginalized, as the land taken up by White people extended further away from the coastal settlements (Clark, 1969).

Over the next 150 years the remaining Aboriginal groups became fringe-dwellers who lived in appalling and degraded circumstances (see Ruth, 1990). Indeed, it was not until 1967 that Aborigines were accorded the same status as Whites and were permitted to vote. Although their circumstances have improved in the last 50 years, Aborigines are still significantly disadvantaged compared with Whites in health, education, employment, income, and housing, and they are 19 times more likely to be incarcerated in prison (Pedersen, Clarke, Dudgeon, & Griffiths, 2005). In response, a former Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia, Sir William Deane, recently referred to their situation as "a national legacy of unutterable shame" (McKenna, 1997). As is detailed below, this view is still not widely shared (e.g., Pedersen, Beven, Walker, & Griffiths, 2005; Pedersen, Clarke, Dudgeon, & Griffiths, 2005; Pedersen, Griffiths, Contos, Bishop, & Walker, 2000; Pedersen & Walker, 1997).

#### NON-WHITE IMMIGRANTS

Anglo-Australians were first brought into contact with "Asiatics" when approximately 25,000 Chinese gold-seekers arrived on the goldfields in the states of New South Wales and Victoria in 1855–56. The "different" Chinese were soon roundly disliked and legislation was passed to restrict their entry (Clark, 1969). This issue reemerged later in the century following the arrival of indentured Black labor (*Kanakas*) from some of the Pacific Islands to work on the sugar cane farms in the state of Queensland. Although the farmers valued the cheaper labor, there was an emerging view by 1892 that "the use of Black labor was injurious to the best interests of the colony if it were to be regarded as a home for the British race" (Clark, 1969, pp. 161). By the time of the establishment of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901, the view that Australia should be populated by and for the White man (i.e., the White Australia policy) was widely supported, including by all of the main political parties. For example, the Australian Labor Party, Australia's oldest political party, adopted as policy the "cultivation of an Australian sentiment based upon the maintenance of racial purity and the development of an enlightened and self-reliant community" (Clark, 1969, pp. 190).

According to Clark (1969), the aim of establishing an Australia for the White man was to be achieved by "immigration restrictions, deportation, and discrimination"

(pp. 194). A number of pieces of legislation were enacted by the new federal parliament that were designed to formalize this intention. For example, one of the earliest pieces of legislation was the Immigration Restrictive Act, 1901, which controlled the immigration of non-Whites by the application of a language test. Initially, the test assessed potential immigrant's competence in the English language. However, since this test proved not to be sufficiently discriminating (i.e., did not unequivocally exclude non-Whites), the procedure was modified such that a potential immigrant from any country could be tested in any language (Clark, 1969). Thus, a potential Chinese immigrant could be tested on his or her knowledge of the Norwegian language. In a similar vein, the Pacific Island Labourers Act, 1901, provided for the deportation of all such workers by 1905, while the Commonwealth Franchise Act, 1902, excluded any aboriginal native of Australia (including Australian Aborigines), Asia, Africa, or the islands of the Pacific from being included on the electoral roll. Finally, the Commonwealth Posts and Telegraph Act, 1901, determined that only White labor was to be employed for the carriage of mail, anywhere in Australia.

This highly restrictive and racially focused legislative framework supporting the White Australia policy remained in force for much of the next 70 years, and it was not until the Whitlam Labor Government in the 1970s that it began to be dismantled. This decision was not universally acclaimed (Callan, 1986).

#### EUROPEAN IMMIGRATION

Since Australia was unable to meet all its post-World War II labor needs by recruiting British workers, it first sought immigrants from northern European countries (e.g., Baltic states, Germany, Poland) but was ultimately forced to accept less preferred migrants from southern European countries (e.g., Italy, Greece). Immigrants from non-European countries were not sought after. However, although British and European migrants continued to be those most preferred, from the 1970s onwards, Australia increasingly began to accept immigrants on the basis of merit (i.e., education and skills) rather than race, leading to the acceptance of immigrants from, for example, Middle Eastern countries such as Lebanon.

#### REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

Although Australia accepted displaced persons and refugees from war-torn European countries following World War II, its general change in approach towards immigration from the 1970s subsequently led to the acceptance of significant numbers of refugees from other countries, including Asian countries. Thus, refugees were accepted from Vietnam following the conclusion of the Vietnam War and from the People's Republic of China following the Tiananmen Square incident. More recently, refugees have also been accepted from war-torn and famine-affected African countries.

In contrast, recent Islamic refugees and asylum seekers from Iraq and Afghanistan, arriving by boat via Indonesia, have not fared so well. Under the current Howard conservative government, such refugees and asylum seekers are detained in barb-wire enclosed detention centers that have been established in several remote parts of Australia and on several offshore islands (the so-called, "Pacific Solution"). Some detainees have been incarcerated for more than 6 years thus far and, when they are released, may only be accorded 3-year Temporary Protection Visas status whereupon

they may be forcibly returned to their country of origin (Pedersen, Clarke et al., 2005). Australia is the only developed country that detains refugees and asylum seekers as a matter of course (Einfeld, 2002).

#### AUSTRALIAN ADULTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS ABORIGINES, IMMIGRANTS, REFUGEES, AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

The preceding brief historical overview reveals a pattern of Australian government policy and practice that has favored Anglo-Australians over Aboriginal Australians, White over non-White immigrants, and British (or people of Anglo descent from one of the former British colonies) over all other immigrants. Although research on people's attitudes on these matters has only occurred during the past 50 years or so, these recent social science findings suggest that people's attitudes reflect the same negative attitudes displayed in historical records, including law and policy.

For example, in early studies of attitudes towards *Australian Aborigines*, a significant number of university students expressed negative attitudes (Beswick & Hills, 1969, 1972; Western, 1969). Even more pronounced negative attitudes were expressed by randomly selected residents of a Queensland country town (Larsen, 1981). Similar findings were also reported in a study of randomly selected residents in Perth in the state of Western Australia (W.A.; Walker, 1994).

Subsequent research has revealed a tendency towards a decrease in the old fashioned or blatant form of prejudice (characterized by overt hostility and rejection) that was measured in the early studies and an increase in the expression of modern or subtle prejudice. Rather than displaying their dislike for out-groups overtly and without inhibition (e.g., "I don't like Aborigines"), recent research suggests that an increasing proportion of prejudiced individuals express their prejudice more subtly in terms of values such as fairness (e.g., "Aborigines receive more financial support than other groups," "Aborigines have more influence on government policy than they ought to have") or intercultural relations (e.g., "Immigrant groups never mix successfully and would be better off in their own country") (Pedersen, Beven et al., 2005; Pedersen, Clarke et al., 2005; Pedersen et al., 2000; Pedersen & Walker, 1997). For example, Pedersen et al. (2000) found that 50 percent of a sample of Perth (W.A.) residents revealed modern prejudice, whereas only 25 percent revealed old fashioned prejudice. Other contemporary research has revealed that attitudes were even less favorable towards Aborigines than towards Asians (Pedersen, Clarke et al., 2005; Walker, 1994).

In studies focused on attitudes towards *immigrants*, a continuing theme among Anglo-Australians has been the desire to terminate or, at least, to reduce immigration (e.g., Birrell & Birrell, 1981; Ho, Niles, Penny, & Thomas, 1994). Failing that, some immigrant groups have been favored by Anglo-Australians over others. For example, an early United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) study by Oeser and Hammond (1954) revealed that British immigrants were perceived most favorably, Northern Europeans gained intermediate favorability, followed by Southern Europeans, Jews, and Blacks. Asians were at the bottom of the hierarchy. Similar findings were recorded throughout the latter half of the 20th century, although there was a gradual liberalizing of attitudes towards Southern Europeans, but not to Asians (Beswick & Hills, 1969, 1972; Cahill & Ewen, 1987; Callan, 1983, 1986; Harris & Smolicz, 1976; Ho, 1987; Ho et al., 1994; Jones, 1997; Jupp, 1966; Mak & Nesdale, 2001; McAllister & Moore, 1991; Richardson & Taft, 1968; Stoller, 1966; Taft, 1978, Western, 1969; Walker, 1994).

Finally, several studies have reported negative attitudes by Australians towards *refugees and asylum seekers*, especially Islamic refugees (Betts, 2001; Klocker, 2004; Pedersen, Atwell, & Heveli, 2005; Schweitzer, Perkoulidis, Krome, Ludlow, & Ryan, 2005; Shanahan, 2002). For example, a national opinion poll indicated that 48 percent of participants supported turning away all asylum seekers arriving on the shores of Australia (Shanahan, 2002), whereas questionnaire studies by Schweitzer et al. (2005) and Pedersen, Atwell, and Heveli (2005) reported that 60 percent of a Queensland sample, and 71 percent of a Western Australian sample, respectively, expressed negative attitudes towards asylum seekers. Indeed, other research showed that respondents were most negative towards asylum seekers, followed by Aborigines, then Asians (Pedersen, Atwell, & Heveli, 2005).

In sum, a brief review of Australia's intercultural history, together with the more recent scientific findings, suggests that many Australians have continued to display negative attitudes towards groups that differ from the dominant Anglo-Australian group (i.e., different skin color, culture, religion). That said, whereas attitudes towards some groups (e.g., southern Europeans) have become more positive over time (Callan, 1986), attitudes towards other groups (e.g., Australian Aborigines, Asians, Islamic peoples) remain largely negative. On this basis, Pedersen, Clarke et al. (2005, pp. 177) concluded that "Australia is not the 'accepting' multi-cultural society on which we often pride ourselves. Australia's multi-culturalism is conditional and involves a strong element of institutional, cultural, and individual racism." Similar conclusions have been drawn by other researchers (e.g., Cahill, 1996; Kalantzis & Cope, 1984; Walker, 1994).

Among a number of critically important implications flowing from the preceding discussion, one relates to the development of children's ethnic attitudes. Given that Australia has a social environment that is marked by fairly pervasive and ongoing themes of racial or ethnic prejudice, particularly towards indigenous Australians and some immigrant and refugee groups, to what extent does such an environment have a formative impact on children's own ethnic attitudes? If so, when do these attitudes begin to emerge in children, and to what extent are children's attitudes influenced by their developing cognitive and linguistic abilities, as well as their increasing social knowledge?

#### RESEARCH ON CHILDREN'S ETHNIC ATTITUDES

Research on the development of Australian children's ethnic attitudes began in the 1960s, and the pace of progress has been slow. Much of the early research measured children's ethnic attitudes indirectly or vicariously through their cross-ethnic friendship choices and their level of acceptance of ethnic minority children (Cahill, 1996). For example, Lovegrove and Poole (1975) reported a preference by Australian children for British immigrant children to be neighbors, and that children as young as 7 years thought that Southern Europeans (i.e., Greeks, Italians) were people to be liked less. Similarly, Stoller (1966) found that about 50 percent of a sample of 600 students were reluctant to have social interaction with immigrant children, and about 30 percent preferred not to become close friends.

In an extensive study involving 2,279 children aged 9 to 13 years in the state of New South Wales (NSW), Phillips (1979) asked the participants which ethnic group members they would be prepared to marry. The results revealed a clear hierarchy that ranged from Australians (88.5 percent), to Americans (66 percent), French and Dutch (30 percent), Aborigines (24 percent), Spanish, Germans, and Japanese



(23 percent), Italians and Greeks (18 percent), Jews (13 percent), to Turks and Arabs (10 percent). British people were not included in the study because they were "regarded most positively by Australians" (pp. 114). While this measure is also clearly more indirect than direct, it is interesting that the results are similar to those relating to adults, especially concerning the level of endorsement of Italians and Greeks. That said, it is also noteworthy that, compared with adults, the children's ratings appeared to be more positive towards Aborigines. Indeed, they were as positive towards Aborigines as they were towards Spanish, Germans, and Japanese, and more positive than they were towards Southern Europeans.

In general, however, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions about children's ethnic prejudice based on such measures. The findings suggest differences in preference or liking, but it is less clear whether they reflect dislike or hatred for ethnic minority out-groups. Other studies are also consistent with this observation. Nesdale (1987), for example, measured 10- and 12-year-old children's stereotypes of Australians, Italians, and Vietnamese and found that all groups were attributed positive qualities (e.g., "hard-working", "family-oriented"), with the only negative qualities attributed to the latter two groups being that they were seen as "short," "complaining" and "dark-skinned" (the latter generally being seen as a negative quality, given the context of the White Australia Policy).

Similarly, Cahill (1996) interviewed principals, teachers, parents, and immigrant children in a selected set of 15 elementary and secondary schools in the states of NSW, Victoria, Queensland, and South Australia, concerning the incidence of ethnic prejudice or racism in each school. Although it was "accepted that problems exist in some schools . . . [it was concluded that] no evidence existed to support any notion that racist violence or vilification, however defined or categorized, is a very serious problem in Australian schools" (Cahill, 1996, pp. 121).

More recently, several studies (e.g., Augoustinos & Rosewarne, 2001; Black-Gutman & Hickson, 1996; Griffiths & Nesdale, 2006) have sought to measure children's ethnic attitudes more directly using trait attribution techniques pioneered in North America (see Nesdale, 2001, for a review). In the original version of this technique, children were asked to assign positive (e.g. "good," "clean," "nice") and negative traits and attributes (e.g. "bad," "dirty," "sad") to one of two (or more) stimulus figures (e.g. photo, drawing), or labeled boxes, representing the in-group and ethnic out-group (e.g. "Which child is the dirty boy?" "Which child is the smart boy?"). The children's ethnic attitudes were then based upon the ratio of positive to negative traits chosen for the in-group versus out-group stimulus figures.

However, given the confound of preference and rejection entailed in a forced choice response, some researchers subsequently extended the range of choice in assigning traits to include three or four possibilities; that is, traits could be assigned to the in-group and out-group figures, both figures, or neither figure (e.g. Boulton, 1995; Doyle, Beudet & Aboud, 1988). In addition, some researchers disaggregated the children's trait assignment responses so as to provide measures of children's in-group positivity minus out-group negativity (or bias) and in-group negativity minus out-group positivity (or counterbias).

Black-Gutman & Hickson (1996) used the latter technique to assess 5- to 6-, 7- to 9-, and 10- to 12-year-old Anglo-Australian children's attitudes towards their own group, Australian Aborigines, and Asian Australians. Consistent with Canadian findings (Doyle & Aboud, 1995), the results indicated that the Anglo-Australian

children, regardless of age, were more biased in favor of their own group compared with both the Australian Aboriginal and Asian Australian groups. However, contrary to Doyle and Aboud's results, counterbias did not increase with age. Instead, the results only indicated that the 7- to 9-year-old children were less negative toward Australian Aborigines than were the younger children, and that the 7- to 9-year-old children were more negative towards their own group and towards Asian Australians than they were towards Aborigines.

In a subsequent study, Augoustinos and Rosewarne (2001) had 5- to 6- and 8- to 9-year-old Anglo-Australian children assign positive and negative traits to drawings of White and Black stimulus figures. The findings indicated that, regardless of age, the children assigned more positive than negative traits to the figures, but that more positive traits were assigned to the White versus Black figure. However, there was no difference in the number of negative traits assigned to the White versus Black figures.

Finally, Griffiths and Nesdale (2006) examined the attitudes of 6- and 8-year-old Anglo-Australian and Pacific Islander (i.e., ethnic minority) children towards their own group, as well as towards the out-group. Pacific Islander children were chosen because they are clearly physically different (i.e., facial features, skin color, hair texture) from White Anglo-Australian children. In Australia, Pacific Islanders typically have lower socioeconomic status than Anglo-Australians, and this is known by Anglo-Australian children in the community as young as 5 years of age. In addition, the study assessed both groups' attitudes towards Australian Aborigines. Thus, each group of participants rated their own group, as well as two out-groups. In the study, each group was represented by three photos of children of the same age and gender as the participant, rather than the typical procedure of using only one representative figure (Nesdale, 2001). Further, to assess attitude intensity, each group was rated on the same five attributes, and the ratings were given on 5-point bi-polar response scales, each ranging from a positive to a negative quality of the particular attribute (e.g., "like" to "dislike").

The findings indicated that the Anglo-Australian participants rated their in-group more positively than the Pacific Islander group, who were rated more positively than the Aboriginal group. In contrast, the Pacific Islanders rated their in-group and the Anglo-Australian out-group equally positively, and significantly more positively than the Aboriginal out-group. In addition, the findings revealed that 6- and 8-year-olds rated Anglo-Australians and Pacific Islanders equally positively, and more positively than the Aborigines. In contrast, at 10 years of age, the participants rated Anglo-Australians, Pacific Islanders, and Aborigines equally positively. Finally, the findings indicated that the ratings for each of the groups occurred in the positive half of the bi-polar scale. That is, ethnic out-groups were not disliked or hated; they were simply liked less than the ethnic in-group.

The findings from the preceding studies give rise to several conclusions. First, Anglo-Australian children as young as 5 years of age indicate a clear preference or bias towards their own group in comparison with all other groups. Moreover, in most comparative studies in which they have been involved, Aboriginal Australians have received the lowest ranking, even when they were compared with another Black-skinned group (e.g., Pacific Islanders).

Second, the rankings provided by children revealed similarities to those of Australian adults. Most obviously, both were most positive towards their own Anglo-Australian group and were less positive towards Aborigines. However, it is also noteworthy that the modest endorsement given to Southern European

immigrants (e.g., Italians, Greeks) two or more decades ago tended to be matched by the children's ratings given at the same time (e.g., Lovegrove & Poole, 1975; Phillips, 1979).

Third, children's ratings, nevertheless, have tended to reflect relative positivity, in contrast to those of adults. Thus, even Anglo-Australian children's least liked group, the Aborigines, were rated positively rather than negatively. In comparison, adults' responses towards groups such as Aborigines, Asians, Islamic refugees, and asylum seekers have typically revealed considerable dislike and negativity. On this basis, there are grounds for arguing that Anglo-Australian children's responses reflect relative *ethnic preference* whereas those of many Australian adults reveal straightforward *ethnic prejudice*.

Fourth, the findings for Anglo-Australian children are remarkably similar to findings obtained with North American children. Thus, consistent with the present review, a considerable amount of research in North America has revealed that, by 6 to 7 years of age, children typically display greater positivity towards the in-group than towards any other group (see reviews by Aboud, 1988, Nesdale, 2001).

Fifth, in common with the North American findings (Nesdale, 2001), the Australian research also reveals variability in children's out-group attitudes as they increase in age beyond 6 to 7 years. Although it has been claimed that children's out-group attitudes become more positive as they increase in age (Aboud, 1988), North American research indicates that this certainly does not always occur. Some studies have reported an increase in positivity (e.g., Aboud & Mitchell, 1977; Doyle & Aboud, 1995; George & Hoppe, 1979; Williams, Best, & Boswell, 1975), other studies have found that attitudes remained stable (e.g., Asher & Allen, 1969; Banks & Rompf, 1973; Teplin, 1976; Weiland & Coughlin, 1979), whereas others revealed that out-group positivity actually decreased (e.g., Bartel, Bartel, & Grill, 1973; Hraba & Grant, 1970; Rice, Ruiz, & Padilla, 1974).

The Australian research reveals similar variability. Thus, Griffith and Nesdale (2006) reported an increase in out-group positivity as children increased in age, Augoustinos and Rosewarne (2001) found no change with age, whereas Black-Gutman and Hickson (1996) reported an increase in positivity towards Aborigines, but not Asians, from ages 5 through 6 to 7 through 9, but not 10 to 12 years of age.

#### APPROACHES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S ETHNIC PREJUDICE

Several quite divergent explanations have been proposed to account for such findings. For example, Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, and Sanford (1950) claimed that excessively harsh disciplinary measures by parents prompted an aggressive response which was displaced on to weaker targets, such as members of ethnic minority groups. In contrast, a long-standing and more commonly accepted view is that children simply learn their ethnic attitudes and behaviors from parents and peers in the same way that they are assumed to learn other social behaviors (e.g., Allport, 1954; Rosenfield & Stephan, 1981).

Yet another approach, sociocognitive theory, proposed by Aboud and her colleagues (1988; Aboud & Doyle, 1996a, 1996b) contends that most, if not all, children display ethnic prejudice by 6 to 7 years of age and that there is no strong evidence that children's prejudice is influenced by parents or peers. Instead, Aboud argues that children's prejudice is greatly influenced by their perceptual-cognitive processes, such that a young child of 5 years of age is very likely to be prejudiced, and that

declines after 7 years are attributable in large part to the cognitive attainments accompanying concrete operations. The effect of increasing cognitive abilities is that they allow the child to attend to the differences between people instead of responding to them as category members.

Although a detailed review of each of the foregoing approaches is beyond the scope of the present chapter, suffice it to say that each receives support from some of the extant research findings, but other findings remain a challenge (see reviews by Aboud, 1988; Brown, 1995; Nesdale, 2001). At the same time, the preceding approaches have given little attention to the possibility that social motivational considerations relating to children's social group membership(s) might have an influential impact on their ethnic attitudes (Milner, 1996; Nesdale, 2001; Nesdale & Flesser, 2001; Vaughan, 1988). Underpinning the latter suggestion is the view that children's ethnic attitudes are fundamentally social phenomena. That is, they are shared by groups of children and they are directed towards other groups of children. One approach that has focused on this possibility is social identity development theory (Nesdale, 1999, 2004, in press).

#### SOCIAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT THEORY

Central to SIDT is the assumption that inclusion and belonging are important to children and motivates them to pursue social contacts, friendships, and social group memberships from at least as young as 5 years of age (Milner, 1996; Nesdale, 2004; Rubin, Bukowski & Parker, 1998; Vaughan, 1987). Indeed, according to some writers, such behavior may reflect an inborn, fundamental need to belong and to be accepted (Baumister & Leary, 1995). It appears that if there is the possibility of inclusion in a group, children typically seek to be included and, once included, their group, and their membership in it, becomes a central focus of their attention (Bukowski, 2003; Ladd, Herald, & Andrews, 2006; Rubin et al., 1998).

Given that group membership is clearly important and desirable to young children, it is not surprising that children as young as 5 to 6 years tend to like, and see themselves as similar to, other in-group members (Bigler, 1995; Bigler, Jones, & Lobliner, 1997; Nesdale, Durkin, Maass, & Griffiths, 2004, 2005; Nesdale & Flesser, 2001). There is also evidence that children reveal a strong bias towards their in-group when they are required to make choices, indicate preferences, or allocate rewards (Nesdale, 2001). Research also indicates that such in-group favoritism positively and causally affects self-feelings (Verkuyten, in press) and that peer group rejection reduces self-esteem (Nesdale & Pelyhe, in press). In addition, research has shown that, from 5 years onwards, children show less and less liking for in-group members who do not conform to group norms (Abrams, Rutland, Cameron, & Marques, 2003; Abrams, Rutland, & Cameron, 2004; Nesdale, 2000; Nesdale & Brown, 2004). Importantly, it also follows that the social group has the potential to exert a considerable impact on group members, including their ethnic prejudice and discrimination, *via* the group's norms (i.e., the group's expectations concerning the appropriate attitudes, beliefs and behaviors to be displayed by group members).

In response to such observations, Nesdale (2004, in press) proposed social identity development theory (SIDT) as an explicitly group-based account of the development of children's ethnic attitudes. SIDT proposes that children who display ethnic prejudice pass through four sequential development phases (undifferentiated, ethnic awareness, ethnic preference, and ethnic prejudice). The phases differ in terms of the

behaviors that characterize them, and the events that precipitate changes from one phase to the next (see Nesdale, 2004, in press, for a more detailed account of SIDT).

In the *undifferentiated* phase (prior to 2 to 3 years), racial and ethnic cues are typically not salient to young children—they respond to objects and people in their environment mainly in terms of what catches their attention. Increasingly, however, they become more selective and discriminating and begin to respond differentially to cues such as gender and age.

The *ethnic awareness* phase begins to emerge at around 3 years, especially among those children who reside in multiethnic communities. As Katz (1976) has emphasized, it is likely that awareness begins following an adult's identification or labeling of an out-group member ("Yes, that person has Black skin—he is an Aboriginal."). It is the perception of such differences, particularly when accompanied by a verbal label, which is likely to facilitate social categorizations based on skin color. It is important to note, however, that young children do not appear to construct social categories on an idiosyncratic basis. As noted earlier, children enter a social environment in which the key social categories are already specified and the nature of intergroup relations is established. Accordingly, the social categories which children are likely to emphasize are not simply those that are strange and unfamiliar (c.f. Aboud, 1988)—they will be those that already have social significance in the community (e.g., Vaughan, 1987; Katz, 1976). However, children's awareness of these categories will be sharpened by any evaluations communicated by adults, verbally or nonverbally (Milner, 1983).

A crucial achievement in this phase concerns the child's ethnic self-identification—the realization that she or he is a member of a particular ethnic group. Evidence suggests that ethnic self-identification begins to occur soon after children become aware of ethnic or racial categories. Accurate ethnic self-identification has been reported in dominant group children as young as 3 years (Marsh, 1970), and it serves to usher in the next phase, ethnic preference, which overlaps the child's ongoing development of ethnic awareness.

According to SIDT, by 4 or 5 years of age, children in multiethnic communities are typically in the *ethnic preference* phase. They are aware of which ethnic and racial group they belong to, and they know which groups are better off and more highly regarded than others (e.g. Griffiths, 2006; Katz, 1987; Ramsey, 1991; Vaughan, 1987). They also prefer to be members of high rather than low status groups because they derive social self-esteem from group membership and group status.

Importantly, SIDT argues that ethnic preference does not instigate an automatic focus on the out-group with accompanying out-group prejudice. Instead, ethnic preference is considered to involve a focus on, and concern for, children's continuing membership in their *in-group*, as well as the positive distinctiveness of the in-group, in comparison with other groups (see also Cameron, Alvarez, Ruble, & Fuligni, 2001). SIDT argues that this focus on the in-group is revealed in in-group members' tendencies to like, and to see themselves as similar to, in-group compared with out-group members, to endorse and be influenced by the in-group's norms relating to intra- and intergroup attitudes and behaviors, and to favor in-group members over other individuals. On this basis, SIDT would predict that whereas children in the ethnic preference phase will always prefer their own ethnic group over other groups, they might still like other groups, just not as much as their own group.

In contrast, the transition to the *ethnic prejudice* phase implies a new focus on an ethnic or racial out-group(s), in addition to the child's ongoing concern for the in-group.

Instead of merely liking an ethnic out-group member less than an in-group member, prejudice means that ethnic out-group members are disliked or hated. According to SIDT, whether ethnic prejudice actually emerges and crystallizes in children depends upon the extent to which (1) children identify with their social group, and/or (2) prejudice is a norm held by the members of the child's social group, and/or (3) there is a belief among the in-group members that their group is threatened in some way by members of the out-group. As pointed out by Stephan, Ybarra, Martinez, Schwarzwald, and Tur-Kaspa (1998), such threats might include realistic (i.e., threats against the status, power, physical, or material well-being of the in-group), symbolic (i.e., threats against the values, beliefs, or standards of the in-group), or stereotype threats (i.e., threats arising from the in-group's view of the nature of the out-group).

The important implication here is that children in the *ethnic preference* phase will prefer their own group over other group(s), although other groups may also be viewed positively. In contrast, those children who move into the *ethnic prejudice* phase will like their own group and dislike or hate particular ethnic or racial out-groups.

On this basis, SIDT argues that there are conditions under which children may *never* display ethnic or racial prejudice (c.f., Aboud, 1988). These include contexts in which children identify strongly with a group that does not endorse prejudice towards ethnic minority groups. In contrast, some children might identify with a group in which ethnic prejudice is normative, whereas most in their community reject it. In a similar vein, some children's parents might display ethnic prejudice, whereas their children might not, or *vice versa*. In short, according to SIDT, what is critical is the children's particular group identifications and the norms of the groups.

A further implication is that since SIDT is primarily founded upon social motivational considerations, the emergence of ethnic prejudice in children is considered dependent upon their unique social situation. At any time, children's attitudes towards members of ethnic out-groups might become more positive, more negative, or remain the same, depending upon the social situation and their prevailing social group identification.

That said, given that children's social knowledge increases as they increase in age, SIDT would anticipate that a child's ethnic attitudes and behavior might be moderated in accordance with their beliefs about what is generally acceptable in a particular situation (Rutland, Cameron, Milne, & Mc George, 2003). This is likely in relation to out-group prejudice because there is evidence that, as children increase in age, they become increasingly aware that out-group prejudice and discrimination are generally considered to be unacceptable and inappropriate (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Killen, Pisacane, Lee-Kin, & Ardila-Rey, 2001; Rutland et al., 2005; Theimer, Killen, & Stangor, 2001).

#### RESEARCH SUPPORT FOR SOCIAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT THEORY

SIDT provides a good account of the results of the Australian studies outlined earlier on children's ethnic attitudes (e.g., Augoustinos & Rosewarne, 2001; Black-Gutman & Hickson, 1996; Griffiths & Nesdale, 2006; Lovegrove & Poole, 1975; Phillips, 1979), as well as the many earlier North American studies that have tackled this issue using ethnic choice and trait attribution techniques (see Aboud, 1988; Nesdale, 2001). Consistent with SIDT, these studies indicated that, in the absence of factors such as

in-group norms of out-group prejudice, as well as out-group threat, children typically revealed ethnic preference rather than ethnic prejudice.

In addition, support for SIDT's predictions has been revealed in a recent series of Australian studies that have used a variant of the minimal group paradigm (Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971). In these studies, 5- to 10-year-old children are randomly assigned membership of a same age, gender, and ethnicity in-group for a simulated intergroup drawing competition. This paradigm enables the manipulation of variables related to in-group membership (e.g., in-group identification, group norms), as well as the nature of the relationship with the out-group (e.g., out-group threat). Their attitudes towards their in-group are then compared with their attitudes towards an out-group comprised of same age and gender children who have the same or different ethnicity to the in-group. Importantly, in these studies, the intensity of children's attitudes towards the in-group versus the out-group is assessed via their responses on bi-polar scales, ranging from positive to negative qualities of each attribute (e.g., "like" to "dislike," "trust" to "don't trust," "want to play with" to "don't want to play with"), rather than by a forced choice or preference response. Thus, the measures allowed for an assessment of children's old fashioned prejudice.

Consistent with SIDT's *ethnic preference* stage, these studies have shown that young Anglo-Australian children always liked their in-group more than the comparison out-group, and that they liked their in-group even more when it had high versus low status. Moreover, in the absence of the conditions predicted by SIDT to instigate ethnic prejudice, these studies showed that, rather than being disliked, the out-group was simply liked less than the in-group, as SIDT would predict (Nesdale et al., 2004; Nesdale & Flessler, 2001).

Importantly, this research has also indicated that, even when the out-group was comprised of children with different (e.g., Pacific Islander) rather than the same ethnicity as the in-group (i.e., Anglo-Australian), the out-group was liked less rather than disliked. Interestingly, however, the different ethnicity out-group was liked less than the same ethnicity out-group. The ethnic difference seemingly sharpens and accentuates the category difference, with the effect that different ethnicity out-group members are liked less, although they are not disliked (Nesdale, Durkin et al., 2004; Nesdale & Kokkoris, 2006). This finding makes clear that, in the absence of threat and conflict, young children up to 9 years of age are simply not repositories of fixed ethnic dislike and prejudice (c.f., Aboud, 1988).

The preceding findings were extended by Nesdale, Maass, Griffiths, and Durkin (2003). In this study, Anglo-Australian children were assigned to a high-status in-group which included other Anglo-Australian (same ethnicity) or Pacific Islander (different ethnicity) children. As in the previous study, the children also expected to compete with an out-group which contained same ethnicity or different ethnicity children. Consistent with SIDT, children in a same ethnicity (i.e., Anglo-Australian) in-group indicated greater liking for the in-group over the out-group, but more so when the latter was comprised of members of the different ethnicity (i.e., Pacific Islander) versus the same ethnicity (i.e., Anglo-Australian).

However, being a member of a different ethnicity (i.e., Pacific Islander) in-group yielded an important and different pattern of findings. First, having in-group members whose ethnicity differed from one's own had no impact on the children's liking for their in-group — the same and different ethnicity in-groups were rated as being equally likeable and more likeable than the out-group. Clearly, these findings

indicate that, depending on the context, ethnicity may not matter to children, at least up to 9 years of age. As specified by SIDT, it is the categorization that matters, not the ethnicity, per se.

Second, the children liked the same ethnicity out-group *less* than the different ethnicity out-group. In short, the children's standard of comparison appeared to have changed. Rather than seeing different-ethnicity out-group members as markedly different (as occurred when the in-group was comprised of same ethnicity members), in the case of a different ethnicity in-group, the members of a different ethnicity out-group were perceived as less different than a same ethnicity out-group. Again, consistent with SIDT, this finding emphasizes that, in the absence of threat and conflict, young children do not display ethnic prejudice as a matter of course (c.f., Aboud, 1988).

Importantly, however, whereas the preceding results emphasized the impact of group processes on the children's *ethnic preferences*, recent research has also supported SIDT's proposals concerning the factors that turn ethnic preference into *ethnic prejudice*. Nesdale, Durkin et al. (2005) and Nesdale, Maass, Durkin, and Griffiths (2005) manipulated out-group threat by leading the in-group members to believe that the out-group considered that they were the better drawers and that they intended to beat the in-group in the competition in order to become the best team. The results demonstrated that young children's decreased liking for an ethnic out-group (i.e., Pacific Islanders), compared with their Anglo-Australian in-group, turned to explicit dislike or *prejudice* when the members of the in-group believed that the status of the in-group was threatened by the out-group. Specifically, for the first time, the children rated the members of the threatening out-group in the dislike half of the bi-polar scale. In addition, consistent with SIDT, these studies also revealed that reduced liking turned into explicit dislike (i.e., prejudice) when the children were highly identified with their in-group (Nesdale, Durkin et al., 2005), and/or the in-group had an explicit norm of out-group prejudice versus acceptance (Nesdale, Maass et al., 2005).

While the latter studies emphasize the influence exerted by peer groups on children's ethnic prejudice, other research has elaborated this influence. For example, Nesdale, Griffiths, Durkin, & Maass (2005) carried out two studies to examine the extent to which emotional empathy (i.e., the ability to experience the same feelings as those of another person in response to a particular situation) might moderate children's attitudes towards ethnic minority group members. In the first study, after assessing 5- to 12-year-old Anglo-Australian children's emotional empathy using a modified version of Bryant's (1982) Index of Empathy for Children and Adolescents, they participated in a minimal group study involving an out-group that was of the same (Anglo-Australian) or different (Pacific Islander) ethnicity. The results indicated that the children's greater liking for the same ethnicity out-group was unaffected by their level of empathy, whereas their liking for the different ethnicity out-group was significantly related to their level of empathy. Greater empathy was associated with greater liking for the ethnic minority out-group.

The second study was designed to examine the robustness of children's empathy-inspired positive feelings towards ethnic minority out-groups. In particular, the study assessed whether an in-group norm that emphasizes exclusion and rejection would blunt or inhibit a child's empathy-inspired liking for members of an ethnic minority group. To examine this possibility, 5- to 12-year-old Anglo-Australian children participated in a study in which their group had a norm of exclusion or inclusion.



In addition, in this study, the out-group always comprised different ethnicity (i.e., Pacific Islander) children. The results indicated that when the in-group had a norm of inclusion, children's liking for the ethnic minority out-group increased as their empathy increased. Importantly, however, when the in-group had a norm of exclusion, the children liked the ethnic minority group less, and their liking for that group was unaffected by their level of empathy.

Several observations follow from the preceding program of research. First, the research findings underline the importance of drawing a distinction between children's ethnic *preference* (i.e., in-group liking or bias) and ethnic *prejudice* (i.e., out-group dislike or hatred). Earlier accounts of children's ethnic attitudes (e.g., Aboud, 1988), certainly up to the 1990s, were based on children's choice of ethnically-differentiated dolls, photos, or drawings, or the attribution of traits to such stimuli (see Nesdale, 2001). However, whereas these findings were interpreted as prejudice (Aboud, 1988), other evidence suggests that they reflected children's ethnic preferences rather than their ethnic prejudice. For example, research revealed a lack of correspondence between children's ethnic choices on these tasks and their choice of friends and playmates (e.g., Fishbein & Imai, 1993; Jansen & Gallagher, 1966). In addition, when children did rate minority group children on bi-polar scales (i.e., like-dislike), they tended to express greater liking for the in-group versus the out-group, rather than liking for the in-group and dislike for the out-group (e.g., Aboud & Mitchell, 1977; Nesdale, 1999). The present program of research suggests that there is a clear distinction to be drawn between children's ethnic preferences and their ethnic prejudice.

Second, the present research also makes clear that children can express ethnic prejudice (i.e., out-group dislike or hatred). However, the evidence indicates that ethnic prejudice depends on the presence of additional factors including, for example, high in-group identification, in-group norms of rejection or prejudice, and/or perceived threat from an ethnic out-group. Under these circumstances, previously unaffected children will display ethnic prejudice. Consistent with this, research has shown that ethnic prejudice may even be shown before 6 or 7 years by children who live in communities that are driven by long-standing ethnic tension and violence, such as occurs in Northern Ireland between Protestants and Catholics, and in the Middle East between Jews and Palestinians (Teichman, 2006).

Third, the present program of research has been guided by a new theory, social identity development theory, which emphasizes the critical significance of social identity processes in the development of children's ethnic attitudes. Thus far, the case for SIDT as an account of children's ethnic prejudice has been well-supported. The theory provides an explanation of the North American findings that were revealed via ethnic choice and trait attribution studies (Aboud, 1988; Nesdale, 2001), as well as other Australian studies. In addition, the theory has been tested in newer paradigms that have enabled assessment of children's attitudes towards groups rather than individuals, and in which it has been possible to assess the intensity of children's ethnic attitudes. The results of the latter studies have provided consistent support for the main tenets of SIDT.

Finally, the present research utilized a new simulation or role-play paradigm in order to examine children's ethnic attitudes. Compared with correlational and field studies, the paradigm has considerable advantages, including the fact that it draws upon children's capacity for, and interest in, socio-dramatic play, that it encompasses the main elements of an intergroup situation, that it has considerable

flexibility, that it allows for the manipulation of variables thus enabling causal inferences to be drawn, and that it does so in an ethically responsible manner. Moreover, although the children's involvement in their "group" in the simulation paradigm is certainly abbreviated, findings from this experimental work are consistent with findings obtained from field and correlational studies, both in Australia (e.g., Cahill, 1996; Griffiths & Nesdale, 2006; Phillips, 1979), as well as in other countries (e.g., Bigler, 1995; Bigler et al, 1997; Verkuyten, in press). It is clear that a range of methodologies and techniques needs to be employed if the development of children's ethnic attitudes is to be fully understood. Given the considerable importance of the issue, nothing less would suffice.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERVENTIONS

One final issue that deserves consideration concerns the development of techniques or strategies that would minimize or moderate the development of children's ethnic prejudice. In view of the research support provided for SIDT to date, there appear to be some potentially important implications from that research for the development of an effective intervention program. Five elements appear to be critical.

The first element is that of *category awareness*. The critical starting point is with children's ethnic self-identification for this provides the platform upon which ethnic prejudice may be constructed in some (but not all) children. The effect of ethnic self-identification is two-fold. When a child identifies with his/her own ethnic group, ethnic minority out-groups are perceived to be different from and, typically, not as good as the ethnic in-group. In addition, the members of minority out-groups tend to be seen as similar, if not indistinguishable from each other, a tendency which increases with the acquisition of ethnic stereotypes.

The very real problem here is that the self-categorization process described above appears to be a natural process that underpins people's (i.e., children's, adolescents', and adults') preferences for *any* in-group of which they are a member, and that it is probably driven by a fundamental human motive to be accepted and to belong (Baumister & Leary, 1995). Whereas recognition of this fact serves to emphasize the difficulty of the task of minimizing children's prejudice, it also makes clear that, from an early age, and increasingly thereafter, children need to be made aware of what categories are, how people use them, and with what consequences. In other words, children need to be encouraged to develop a conscious awareness of how individuals tend to group objects and people, how some qualities are emphasized and others minimized in accomplishing this task, how attributes are assigned to the group members, and how this impacts on interactions with them. As part of this emphasis, there are also good grounds for having children simulate the experience of being a member of a low-status category, as has been successfully undertaken by several researchers (Breckheimer & Nelson, 1976; Weiner & Wright, 1973).

Complementing the emphasis on children's category awareness, the second element involves the need to develop their *individual differentiation* abilities. Rather than seeing and responding to children as undifferentiated members of particular ethnic minority groups (or, indeed, any particular social groups), there is a need for children to look beyond the socially endorsed categories and to recognize the attributes, abilities, and characteristics that combine to make up an individual child. The importance of this issue has been recognized by others (Aboud & Levy, 2000; Bowers & Swanson, 1988;

Katz, Sohn, & Zalk, 1975), and several studies have demonstrated that interventions designed to strengthen children's abilities to differentiate between members of an ethnic out-group can reduce prejudice (Aboud & Fenwick, 1999; Katz & Zalk, 1978).

The effect of category awareness and individual differentiation is elaborated and extended by the third element, *intercultural contact*. However, although the value of intercultural contact in reducing ethnic prejudice is now generally accepted (Aboud & Levy, 2000; Nesdale & Todd, 2000), research has made clear that positive results are not obtained simply by providing the opportunity for intercultural contact, such as would be present, for example, in an integrated pre-school or elementary school (Patchen, 1983; Schofield, 1982). Instead, for intercultural contact to be successful, contact situations need to be engineered that cut across children's existing social groups and which encompass features that facilitate positive intercultural contact (Allport, 1954). Two such situations include the jigsaw classroom (Aronson, Blaney, Stephan, Sikes, & Snapp, 1978) and cooperative learning groups (Johnson & Johnson, 1975). Underpinning the success of these approaches is the fact that they are designed to facilitate equal status and cooperative activity between members of different intercultural groups that allows for the disconfirmation of stereotypic traits and qualities and, instead, the appreciation of children's individual qualities.

Moreover, consistent with the common in-group identity model (Gaertner, Dovidio, Anastasio, Bachman, & Rust, 1993), these sorts of experiences also enhance the likelihood of children from two ethnic groups formulating a common, new identity. As outlined earlier, our research has shown that children from different ethnic backgrounds who become members of the same in-group can formulate a common identity without any loss in in-group favoritism (Nesdale et al., 2003). Further, in accordance with SIDT, the formation of ethnically mixed groups likely has two other potential benefits. One is that a group containing children from two or more ethnic groups should be less likely to develop an in-group norm that endorses prejudice and discrimination towards one of the ethnic groups that contributes members to the mixed group. In a similar vein, a second potential benefit is that ethnically mixed groups should be less likely to perceive one of the ethnic groups that contributes members to the mixed group, as a source of threat. As our research has shown, in-group norms of prejudice and discrimination, and the perception of out-group threat, are both potent instigators of ethnic prejudice and, hence, strategies are required to minimize their potential impact.

The fourth element is the development of children's *emotional empathy*; that is, the ability to experience the same feelings as those of another person in response to a particular situation. Although several writers have suggested that enhancing children's empathy is one technique that can be used to increase children's liking for ethnic out-group members (e.g., Aboud & Levy, 2000; Feshbach & Feshbach, 1998), little research has actually addressed the relationship directly. However, as outlined earlier, Nesdale et al. (2005) reported that greater empathy was associated with greater liking for the members of an ethnic minority out-group. At the same time, two points about this finding are worthy of note. First, although the children's liking for the different ethnicity out-group was significantly correlated with their level of empathy, the children still expressed greater liking for a same ethnicity out-group. Second, in a follow-up study, it was found that children's empathy exerted no effect when their in-group had a norm of out-group prejudice. The former finding emphasizes the influence of physical differences on children's categorization processes whereas the latter

finding re-affirms the powerful impact of in-group norms. Both underline the magnitude of the task involved in minimizing children's tendencies towards in-group bias and out-group rejection.

Accordingly, the final element in facilitating positive ethnic attitudes is *coalition building*. In short, it is critical that parents, teachers, and peers join together in showing zero tolerance for ethnic prejudice. At present, most of the pro-active efforts appear to be left in the hands of teachers with research showing that comparatively few parents even discuss the issue of ethnic prejudice with their children (Kofkin, Katz, & Downey, 1995), apparently out of fear of making their children prejudiced (Aboud & Fenwick, 1999). However, research shows that when the issue is discussed by parents and children, or by peers with differing attitudes, the outcome tends to be more positive (Aboud & Fenwick, 1999; Kofkin et al., 1995).

## CONCLUSION

The aim of the present chapter was to review research relating to the development of Anglo-Australian children's ethnic attitudes. Although this issue is important in any country, it has particular salience in a country such as Australia because of its long history of troubled intercultural relations. As we have seen, recent estimates suggest that 50-70 percent of the adult population endorse old fashioned or modern racism views towards Australian Aborigines and various immigrant groups (Pedersen et al., 2000, 2004; Pedersen & Walker, 1997; Walker, 1994) and that 60 to 70+ percent are prejudiced towards Islamic refugees and asylum seekers (Pedersen et al., 2005; Schweitzer et al., 2005). The straightforward question here is whether such a social environment has a significant formative impact on Anglo-Australian children's own ethnic attitudes.

The evidence from our research program, as well as that of other researchers, suggests that Anglo-Australian children display less positive attitudes towards the same groups that are targeted by adults. At the same time, however, children show little of the out-group antipathy displayed by Australian adults. Rather, the evidence suggests that, in general, Anglo-Australian children are not especially prejudiced towards members of ethnic minority groups, as a matter of course. Instead, the findings suggest that children generally like or prefer their own ethnic group over other ethnic minority groups, but that the latter are typically liked less, rather than disliked or hated.

Three points to be noted about these findings are, first, that the findings have been obtained over several decades, using a variety of techniques and measures, and drawing on the responses of dominant group children, as well as those of parents, teachers, and ethnic minority group children. The considerable consistency in the findings suggests that they provide a fairly good estimate of children's ethnic attitudes in Australia. Second, as noted earlier, the Australian findings have a considerable similarity to those revealed in North America, both in terms of the children's tendency towards in-group preference rather than out-group prejudice (Nesdale, 2001), as well as the variability in children's attitudes displayed after 6 to 7 years of age. Third, the lack of consistency between the attitudes of children and adults accords with SIDT's view that children do not simply ape the attitudes of "important others" in their immediate environment (e.g., parents), especially once they reach school age.

At the same time, consistent with field research carried out in Australia (Cahill, 1996), the present program of research also makes clear that Anglo-Australian children can, and sometimes do, display ethnic prejudice. However, the findings suggest that ethnic prejudice is certainly not something that all children express at some point in their development. Rather, the evidence indicates that the development and expression of ethnic prejudice by children is greatly influenced by the particular social context, including factors such as being highly identified with a particular group, the group having a norm of prejudice towards members of ethnic minority groups, and the perception of threat from an ethnic minority outgroup. Under these sorts of circumstances, ethnic prejudice by dominant group children is highly likely.

On this basis, five elements which appear to be critical to the success of an approach designed to reduce or minimize children's ethnic prejudice have been outlined. These include the elements of category awareness, individual differentiation, intercultural contact, emotional empathy, and coalition building. Although the efficacy of some of these individual elements in reducing children's ethnic prejudice has been explored, others need to be assessed in future research.

In addition, there is a need for continued research addressing the basis of the development of children's ethnic prejudice. Two areas are worthy of particular mention. One area includes the potential interactive effect of social and social cognitive processes (such as moral reasoning) on children's prejudice. The second area relates to the impact of social processes on children's prejudice in the context of children's increasing social knowledge concerning the expectations of the wider community (e.g., teachers, other peers). Given the importance of establishing harmonious relations at all age levels in the community, research addressing these and other issues is sorely needed.

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## CHAPTER 14

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# Perceived Discrimination, Ethnic Minority Identity, and Self-Esteem

MAYKEL VERKUYTEN

### INTRODUCTION

**I**N ALMOST all countries in the world, children from racial and ethnic minority groups are confronted with unfavorable images of their own group, stigmatization, and discrimination. Compared to majority group children, they have to deal with these negative messages more often and sometimes on a regular basis. Ethnic devaluation comes from various sources, including peers. Peer victimization based on one's racial or ethnic group membership tends to be interpreted by children as discrimination (Verkuyten, Kinket, & Van der Wielen, 1997) and is typically assumed to have a negative impact on psychological well-being and self-esteem in particular. Discrimination is an attack upon and a negative response to something about the self that is difficult to change. Hence, it is likely that being treated negatively on the basis of one's ethnic identity has a negative influence on self-esteem.

There are, however, relatively few studies on the effects of discrimination on feelings of global self-esteem among children and adolescents. Furthermore, the research to date has been predominantly carried out among African Americans. Hence, it is unclear "how different types of ethnic devaluation affect adolescents of different ethnic groups in diverse geographic settings" (Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003, pp. 1227). There is a clear need for considering research among different ethnic groups and in other countries. It is obvious that the particular national context has an influence on the ethnic groups considered, the ideas and questions asked, and the research conducted. This

is true for any national context, including the United States, where most developmental findings are produced. However, this does not exclude the possibility that a "one model fits all" approach to studying children and adolescents in various multiethnic settings is useful to a certain extent. Ethnic discrimination and devaluation may lead to similar coping reactions and may have similar effects on psychological well-being.

What research has been done on the relationship between discrimination and self-esteem presents a puzzle: In the face of discrimination, some studies find targets' self-esteem unaffected and other studies find targets' self-esteem harmed. Wide variation in findings suggests the need for a more differentiated view of self-esteem and a consideration of identity processes to solve this puzzle. This chapter focuses on the relationships between perceived ethnic discrimination, ethnic minority identity, and self-esteem. The aim is not to summarize the very extensive literature on racial and ethnic minority self-esteem (see Gray-Little & Hafdahl, 2000; Phinney, 1991; Twenge & Crocker, 2002; Verkuyten, 1994 for reviews), but rather to discuss some critical issues and theoretical models that are useful for assessing existing research and for improving understanding of these relationships. In doing so, not only will empirical research conducted in the United States be discussed, but also research based in other countries, particularly the Netherlands.

### THE DUTCH CONTEXT

There are approximately one and a half million immigrants residing in the Netherlands (10 percent of total population). It was not until the late 1960s that Dutch industry started recruiting male migrant labor on a large scale, mainly from Turkey and Morocco. In the mid-1970s, a process of family reunification began. At the same time, large numbers of Dutch nationals from the former colony of Suriname settled in the Netherlands. In the 1990s, many refugees and asylum seekers who had fled countries such as Iraq, Iran, Sudan, Ghana, Somalia, and Ethiopia sought refuge in the Netherlands. The position of most ethnic minority groups is worse than that of the ethnic Dutch in terms of housing, schooling, and employment. For example, studies indicate that ethnic minority group children consistently perform less well in school. It is the Moroccan-Dutch and the Turkish-Dutch who have the poorest academic results, regardless of how academic performance is defined (e.g. Tesser, Van Dugteren, & Merens, 1996). Furthermore, these two Islamic groups are at the bottom of the ethnic hierarchy, or put differently, they are the least accepted by the Dutch (Hagendoorn, 1995). In our studies, we have focused predominantly on the Turkish, Moroccan, and Surinamese groups.

## SELF-ESTEEM: CONCEPTUALIZATIONS

The number of studies concerned with the self-esteem of children and adolescents is large. Self-esteem has been linked with a variety of psychological and behavioral outcomes, including anxiety, depression, racial prejudice, crime, and delinquency, but also better performance and interpersonal success (see Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003; Emler, 2001). In general, too many minority children are thought to be growing up with a sense that they have little value, which hampers psychological functioning and causes them to engage in a wide range of unproductive behaviors, such as educational underachievement and dropping out of school.

Self-esteem is considered a kind of asset and is also discussed as a basic human right that is desirable for society as a whole. The self-esteem argument for multiculturalism, for example, relates to the "politics of recognition" (Sampson, 1993; Taylor, 1994) and stresses the value of cultural diversity and cultural recognition for personal feelings of self-esteem. The idea that acceptance and recognition of cultural diversity and cultural identities is crucial for self-feelings is, according to Burnet (1995), *the* multiculturalist assumption. For example, in his famous essay "The Politics of Recognition," the philosopher Taylor (1994, pp. 26) argues that "misrecognition shows not just a lack of due respect. It can inflict a grievous wound, saddling its victim with a crippling self-hatred. Due recognition is not just a courtesy we owe people. It is a vital human need." And in his book on rethinking multiculturalism, his British colleague Parekh (2000, pp. 8) argues that "we appreciate better than before that culture deeply matters to people, that their self-esteem depends on others' recognition and respect." This self-esteem argument for multiculturalism plays an important role in public and institutional debates on multiculturalism and its relationship with education and academic achievement.

Self-esteem is conceptualized in different ways, such as a motivation or need, as a ratio between one's achievements and one's aspirations, as an evaluative judgment about oneself, and as a self-feeling. Further, distinctions between global and domain specific self-esteem, between trait-like and state-like self-esteem, and between explicit (conscious) and implicit (unconscious) self-esteem are made. Most of the research on racial and ethnic minorities has treated self-esteem as a general attitude toward the self in which trait-like global self-feelings are examined. In addition, research has focused upon trait-like feelings that children have towards their racial or ethnic group membership: racial or ethnic self-esteem. How a child feels about him- or herself in general is something different from how a child feels about being a member of a specific ethnic or racial group.

### SELF-ESTEEM OF MINORITY GROUPS

The literature on the relationship between minority groups and self-esteem can be classified in different generations (Bat-Chava & Steen, 1997). A first generation of studies, including the famous Clark and Clark (1947) doll studies in the 1930s and 1940s, found out-group preference and negative self-stereotyping among African American children. These children were more ambivalent about their racial identity than Whites, sometimes also showing preference for and identification with the White out-group (see Brand, Ruiz, & Padilla, 1974; Milner, 1983, for reviews). These results were typically interpreted in terms of the nature of interethnic relations in society and existing social structure. The core idea was that minority group members come to internalize society's negative view about their group and therefore show the

“mark of oppression” (Kardiner & Ovesey, 1951). Although these early studies were criticized on methodological and theoretical grounds (e.g. Banks, 1976; Brand et al., 1974), research in other settings, such as Hong Kong (Morland, 1969), New Zealand (Vaughan, 1964), and Great Britain (Milner, 1973), reported similar outcomes.

A second generation of studies started to examine the assumption of low self-esteem among minority groups by using standardized self-esteem scales, such as the well-known Rosenberg’s self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965). In general, these studies found that despite the existence of prejudice and discrimination, minority group membership was not systematically related to lower self-esteem. The first empirical findings pointing in this direction triggered quite a debate (e.g., Adam, 1978; Pettigrew, 1978), and this counterintuitive finding has been called the puzzle of high self-esteem (Simmons, 1978).

Since then, numerous studies have confirmed this finding. In their meta-analysis, Gray-Little and Hafdahl (2000) reviewed research on children, adolescents, and adults. In every age group, the average self-esteem of African Americans was consistently higher than that of Whites, and the Black advantage increased with age. In addition, however, Twenge and Crocker’s (2002) meta-analysis showed that Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, and American Indians scored lower than Whites and African Americans on self-esteem measures. A review of research in Europe found no systematic self-esteem differences between ethnic minority and majority groups, but rather a tendency for higher self-esteem among the former groups (Verkuyten, 1994). For example, in a large-scale, nationwide study in the Netherlands (N = 2,851), Turkish, Moroccan, and Surinamese early adolescents had higher self-esteem than the Dutch (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2006). However, differences between ethnic minority groups have also been found in Europe. Richardson (1987), for example, found that the self-esteem scores of Caribbean adolescents living in the United Kingdom are higher than those of Indian adolescents, and the latter group has also been found to score lower than Anglo-Saxon British adolescents (Hogg, Abrams, & Patel, 1987). In the Netherlands, Hindustani adolescents (Surinamese of Indian origin) have also been found to report lower self-esteem compared to other groups (Verkuyten, 1988).

#### EXPLAINING SELF-ESTEEM AMONG MINORITIES

Third-generation researchers have put forward various explanations for the relatively high self-esteem, in general, of racial and ethnic minorities. Some have argued that there are methodological reasons and others have focused on theoretical explanations.

*Methodological Issues* It is possible that the meaning of responses to self-esteem measures varies across ethnic groups and cultures, making group comparisons difficult to interpret. If, for example, cultural norms prescribe modesty rather than self-promotion then the members of that culture may be less inclined to claim high personal self-esteem. Twenge and Crocker (2002) propose a close association between self-esteem and individualistic values. According to them this association is the reason why the self-esteem of African Americans, who are relatively high on individualism, is higher than that of other groups in the United States, including Whites and Asian Americans.

Questions of measurement equivalence were raised as early as the 1970s and used to explain the counterintuitive finding that African Americans did not have lower self-esteem than Whites. It was suggested that the items of standard self-esteem scales would have different meanings for majority and minority groups, and that

these scales would also fail to capture self-aspects that are relevant and meaningful for disadvantaged minority groups (e.g., Nobles, 1973). However, various studies in different countries as well as cross-national research found measurement equivalence for standard self-esteem scales (e.g., Hoelter, 1983; Loudon, 1981; Owens & King, 2001; Pallas, Entwisle, Alexander, & Weinstein, 1990; Watkins, 1989), including the Rosenberg self-esteem scale (Farruggia, Chen, Greenberger, Dmitrieva, & Macek, 2004; Schmitt & Allik, 2005).

It has also been argued that there certainly *is* a “mark of oppression,” but that methodological difficulties with standard scales fail to show this (e.g., Adam, 1978). For example, differences in response styles, such as African American’s tendency for “yea-saying,” the “use of extreme response categories,” and socially desirable responding would be responsible for the lack of group differences. Research examining these possibilities found some method effects, but not in a systematic way (e.g., Bachman, & O’Malley, 1984a, 1984b; Greenberg, 1972; Long, 1969). Thus, these methodological issues could not fully account for the equal or higher self-esteem of African Americans and of ethnic minority groups in other countries (see Verkuyten, 1994).

There is an additional methodological issue that might explain the different findings of the first and second generation researchers. By using dolls and photographic stimuli, the first generation of work was clearly concerned with racial and ethnic identity (Clark & Clark, 1947; Horowitz & Horowitz, 1938; Milner, 1983; Williams & Morland, 1976). Children were asked a series of questions about, for example, Black and White dolls, intending to measure racial or ethnic awareness, self-identification, and group evaluations. Hence, the focus was explicitly on racial and ethnic identity. In contrast, later research using standard self-esteem scales has predominantly focused on personal self-esteem. Standard scales are concerned with the personal self and explicitly avoid the racial or ethnic context of the earlier work. For example, Rosenberg and Simmons (1972, pp. 10) state “our measure carefully seeks to exclude judgments about any specific characteristics of the self; race, for example, is not made salient.”

The results of the earlier studies were sometimes interpreted as indicating low personal self-esteem, but strictly speaking this was not examined. Very few studies looked at both personal and racial or ethnic self-esteem simultaneously, and those that did found no reliable relationship (see Milner, 1983; Pettigrew, 1978). Typically, there is a degree of disjuncture between personal self-esteem and racial or ethnic self-esteem. In their meta-analysis of 62 studies from different countries involving more than 15,000 participants, Bat-Chava and Steen (1997) found a moderate overall association between personal and ethnic self-esteem (“*d*”) of 0.34, which was robust across ethnicities, genders, and age groups (see also Phinney, 1991). Hence, both forms of self-esteem are relatively independent and may be differently affected by negative experiences such as prejudice and discrimination. These experiences are an attack upon, and negative responses to, something about oneself as a member of a disadvantaged group. Hence, it is likely that being treated negatively on the basis of one’s group membership has a negative influence on the self-evaluation of this membership, but not necessarily on personal self-esteem.

*Theoretical Explanations* Third-generation researchers have also put forward various theoretical explanations for the relatively high self-esteem of racial and ethnic minorities. They argue that there are good developmental, social psychological, and sociological reasons that ethnic minority group membership in itself has no adverse effects on self-esteem.



First, developmental explanations stress that there is substantial genetic influences on self-esteem. Heritability estimates indicate that around one-third of the variance in self-esteem can be attributed to inherited differences (Kendler, Gardner, & Prescott, 1998). In addition, parents have great emotional significance for children and a large influence on the development of self-esteem well into adolescent years (Emler, 2001; Feiring & Taska, 1996; Harter, 1999). The importance of parental acceptance, approval, nurturance, and support to self-esteem is found in various (Western and Eastern) countries (e.g., Farruggia et al., 2004; Herz & Gullone, 1999; Scott, Scott, & McCabe, 1991; Shek, 1999) and among both ethnic majority and minority groups (e.g., Greenberger & Chen, 1996; Hughes & Demo, 1989). Furthermore, cultural socialization in minority families can contribute to children's pride in and knowledge about their ethnic group. For example, Turkish and Moroccan parents in the Netherlands are concerned with transmitting their traditions, history, and cultural values to their children, and this can contribute to strong ethnic identities and positive self-feelings (see Hughes et al., 2006). In addition, racial socialization involving parents' efforts to enhance children's awareness of discrimination and prepare them to cope with it can be protective for self-esteem (Barnes, 1980; Hughes et al., 2006; Yabiku, Axinn, & Thornton, 1999).

Longitudinal research has shown a gradual, but small, increase in average self-esteem with age. These trajectories of change generally hold across race and ethnicity (e.g., Greene & Way, 2005; Robins, Trzesniewski, Tracy, Gosling, & Potter, 2002; Whitesell, Mitchell, Kaufman, & Spicer, 2006) and have also been found for ethnic self-esteem (French, Seidman, Allen, & Aber, 2006). However, these changes appear to be quite common and cannot explain individual differences in self-esteem. The relative ordering of individuals' self-esteem is quite stable over time, comparable to stability found for personality traits, and this rank-order stability has been found for different racial and ethnic groups (Trzesniewski, Donellan, & Robins, 2003). Thus, early childhood socialization leads to the development of greater or lesser positive self-esteem. Parental influence appears to lay a strong foundation for self-feelings (Feiring & Taska, 1996).

Social psychologists have shown that established self-esteem is relatively immune to disconfirming feedback. Rather, the way people generally feel about themselves tends to bias the processing of information about themselves. In general, those with high self-esteem tend to ignore evidence of inadequacies, whereas those with low self-esteem tend to deny positive evidence. Social psychologists focus on how minority members themselves perceive and interpret their situation, or the mechanisms by which stigmatized people may protect their self-esteem (Crocker & Major, 1989). For example, negative feedback can be attributed to prejudice against one's group rather than to one's own performance. Also, outcomes can be selectively compared with in-group members or with out-groups that hold lower social position rather than with dominant group members. In addition, those attributes on which one's group typically fares poorly (e.g. educational and occupational success) can be selectively devalued, and at the same time those attributes at which one's group excels (e.g., family integrity, religious virtue) can be emphasized. These alternative contingencies of self-esteem may lead to psychological resilience in the face of disadvantage and discrimination (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001). These social psychological mechanisms have been investigated predominantly among student and adult samples, but there are also studies indicating that similar processes work among early adolescents (e.g., Rosenberg, 1979; Verkuyten, 1994).

Social context and relationships with peers and friends may also be critical in shaping adolescent self-esteem. Sociological explanations focus on the role of social networks and supporting social contexts. In their meta-analysis, Gray-Little and Hafdahl (2000) concluded, for example, that African Americans experience a self-esteem advantage in racially consonant or segregated environments. Adolescents who are in the majority have a greater opportunity for friendship and social support, a sense of belonging and less chance of being discriminated against or harassed. However, most of the empirical studies on which this conclusion is based have methodological problems. Many of these studies are concerned with the effects of segregated and desegregated schools. Typically, a limited number of schools are investigated and the data are analyzed at the individual-level, which implies that children are not considered as being nested within their schools. For example, Umaña-Taylor (2004) studied Latino adolescents in three schools that varied in the percentage of Latino pupils, and concluded that school segregation affects ethnic identity. However, the role of differences among schools other than the level of segregation was not considered.

Apart from the level of (de)segregation, there are many other school characteristics that may explain the differences found. Therefore, to examine these effects, a whole array of segregated and desegregated schools should be studied. In addition, studies that examine both individual and school variables have to deal with data that are hierarchically structured. The technique of multilevel modeling has been used in three studies among majority and minority (early) adolescents in the Netherlands (Kassenberg, 2002; Kinket & Verkuyten, 1997; Verkuyten & Thijs, 2004). In these studies, involving more than 250 classrooms, the samples consisted of school classes and pupils nested within these classes. Hence, self-esteem is explained by pupils' individual characteristics and by properties of the classroom. In all three studies, the multilevel analysis indicated that the class-level variance was significant for global and for ethnic self-esteem. A more segregated classroom was related to higher self-esteem among ethnic minority children.

However, in all three studies, the percentage of the variance explained by the grouping structure was low (between 4.5 percent and 7.5 percent). Hence the within-class variance (between 95.5 percent and 92.5 percent) was much larger than the between-class variance. Therefore, individual factors clearly explained more variance in self-esteem than did classroom features. Thus, although self-esteem was affected by the school setting, it predominantly depended on individual characteristics. These results indicate that the role of (de)segregated environments for the self-esteem of ethnic minority youth is quite limited. Numerical indicators, such as the level of segregation, do not tell us much about the content of contextual practices and behaviors, and this content is probably more important for the self-esteem of youth.

## ETHNIC DISCRIMINATION

Research on adolescence suggests the increasing importance of peer approval and acceptance. In her review, Harter (1999) concludes that during adolescence, social standing and acceptance within the wider peer group is more important for self-esteem than friendship. Leary, Tambor, Terdal, and Downs (1995) have proposed a sociometric perspective on self-esteem. They argue and show that self-esteem is a form of barometer that reflects the degree to which we are socially included or excluded by others. Furthermore, in general, social exclusion is more strongly related to self-esteem than is social inclusion (Leary & Baumeister, 2000). Consequently,

ethnic (peer) discrimination is a form of social exclusion that can be expected to affect self-esteem negatively.

The subjective interpretation of events as discriminatory may differ from actual discrimination, for example, because of a tendency to deny personal discrimination. However, it is the subjective experiences of ethnic discrimination that will affect psychological well-being and feelings of self-esteem. This raises the question of how children and adolescents understand and interpret discrimination. Brown and Bigler (2005) have identified developmental and individual differences as well as situational variables that are likely to influence children's and adolescents' perceptions and interpretations of discrimination. Their developmental model is quite complex and illustrates the many aspects and conditions of perceived discrimination. Discriminatory behaviors include a wide range of acts, forms, actors, and settings. Discrimination, for example, can involve social exclusion or harassment, can be subtle or more open, can be incidental or more systematic, can be context specific or cross-situational, and can be based on different category memberships such as race, ethnicity, and gender.

During the elementary school years, children develop an awareness of different types of discrimination. In the U.S. context, McKown and Weinstein (2003) showed that most 10-year-olds are able to infer that the endorsement of social stereotypes leads to engagement in discriminatory behavior. In the Netherlands, Verkuyten, Kinket, and Van Der Wielen (1997) found that almost all 10-year-olds are familiar with the meaning of discrimination. Examining children's own understandings about discrimination using open-ended instruments, they found consistent beliefs about when a specific act is considered discriminatory across both Dutch and ethnic minority children. The prototypical example of peer discrimination was a situation of ethnic teasing and name-calling. To a lesser degree, an unequal division of valued objects among contemporaries and social exclusion by peers of different ethnic groups was also seen as discrimination. However, negative behavior was not classified as discriminatory when the target was considered responsible for the behavior or when the perpetrator acted unintentionally. This shows that children can use different forms of reasoning to condemn or justify, for example, peer exclusion based on ethnic group membership. Similarly, Killen and Stangor (2001) studied early adolescents' moral reasoning about peer exclusion and inclusion in stereotypical race and gender group contexts. They found that exclusion may be viewed as legitimate in order to preserve the functioning of a social group. Hence, evaluations and interpretations of negative peer behavior are both content and context dependent.

Most studies on perceived discrimination have focused on the degree to which ethnic minority children and adolescents are confronted with negative peer behavior. Research in different countries has shown that many elementary and middle school age ethnic minority children perceive themselves to have been the victims of different forms of peer discrimination and in different settings (e.g., Boulton, 1995; Hanish & Guerra, 2000; Moran, Smith, Thompson, & Whitney, 1993; Siann, Callaghan, Glissov, Lockhart, & Lorraine, 1994; Simons et al., 2002; Szalacha et al., 2003; Quintana, 1998). For example, Fisher, Wallace, and Fenton (2000) found that more than half of the African American and Latino adolescents indicated being discriminated against in public settings, and a third reported discrimination in educational settings. In the United Kingdom, Eslea and Mukhtar (2000) found around half of Hindu, Indian Muslim, and Pakistani children to have experienced discrimination during a school term. In a large-scale national study in the Netherlands it was found that around a

third of the Turkish, Moroccan, and Surinamese early adolescents reported experiences with racist name-calling in school and in their neighborhood, and around a fourth perceived themselves to be ethnically excluded in these contexts (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002).

Research has also shown that ethnic minority groups experience different levels of discrimination. Hispanics, for example, experience lower levels of peer discrimination than African Americans (Hanish & Guerra, 2000). In the Netherlands, Turkish youth appear to face higher rates of peer discrimination than other minority groups (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002). In Finland, immigrants of Arab, Somali, and Turkish origin experience much more discrimination than immigrants of Russian, Estonian, or Vietnamese origin (Liebkind & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000). Thus, many minority group children experience discrimination, but some groups more so than others.

#### ETHNIC DISCRIMINATION AND SELF-ESTEEM

There are a limited number of studies on the relationship between ethnic discrimination and self-esteem. In general, a significant negative association between self-esteem and discrimination is found, but the relationship is not very strong. Ethnic discrimination tends to account for a relatively small proportion of the variance in self-esteem among children and adolescents.

Fisher and colleagues (2000) showed that perceived peer discrimination was significantly associated with psychological distress and low global self-esteem among adolescents (13 to 19 years of age) from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds who attended an urban public school in the United States. Rumbaut (1995) studied a sample of more than 5,000 immigrant adolescents between 14 and 15 years of age in Southern California and Florida. He found that perceived discrimination was associated with elevated depressive symptoms, and that anticipated discrimination on the labor market was significantly associated with decreased global self-esteem. I (Verkuyten, 1998) found a negative relationship between perceived discrimination by peers and global self-esteem among a similar age group of Turkish and Moroccan youth in the Netherlands. Among ethnic minority adolescents in the United Kingdom, Cassidy, O'Connor, Howe, and Warden (2004) found similar negative relationships between perceived discrimination and personal and ethnic self-esteem. Studies among early adolescents are more scarce. One example is a study conducted by Szalacha et al. (2003) among Puerto Rican children in the United States. The authors found that perceiving discrimination and worrying about discrimination were negatively associated with self-esteem and positively associated with depression and stress. Similar results were found by Wong et al. (2003) and by Simons et al. (2002) in their studies among African American children.

These studies, however, did not examine the role of ethnic identity and did not consider other types of negative peer behavior. Children may treat one another negatively in different ways, in various contexts, and on the basis of different criteria. Negative behavior may, for example, focus on individual characteristics or on membership in a social category. Tajfel (1981) has proposed a continuum of behavior from interpersonal to intergroup behavior. The former is characterized as being based on personal relationships and individual characteristics. The latter is a situation in which the interaction is shaped by membership in social groups. Both forms of behavior are ideal types, with all social situations falling somewhere in between, but the relative emphasis can differ considerably.

Similarly, interpersonal relations do not have to correspond with intergroup relations. Choices for particular others as best friends do not have to imply a positive attitude towards the ethnic group of one's friend. Dutch children can consider Ahmed their best friend but dislike Turks as a group. This distinction can be important for understanding ethnic discrimination. In conditions of ethnic peer discrimination children are called names, excluded, shunned, or treated unfairly because they belong to a particular ethnic group, and not because they are short or tall, moody, act "weird," or stutter. Hence, ethnic discrimination is an instance of intergroup behavior that involves children in a particular way. It has a strong internal component because something about oneself as a member of an ethnic group is at stake. Ethnic discrimination is an attack upon and negative response to one's ethnic self. It is likely that being treated negatively on the basis of one's ethnic identity has a negative influence on the self-evaluation of this identity (ethnic self-esteem), and not necessarily on the evaluation of one's personal self or personal self-esteem.

In a national study among Dutch, Turkish, Moroccan, and Surinamese early adolescents we (Verkuyten, & Thijs, 2006), examined the relationship between ethnic discrimination (ethnic name calling and social exclusion), other forms of negative treatment, and self-esteem by using the social psychological distinction between the personal and group level of behavior and identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). In this study, we asked about experiences of ethnic discrimination and personal victimization. Using structural equation modeling, we first examined whether the early adolescents make a distinction between personal victimization and ethnic discrimination, as well as between perceptions of name-calling and social exclusion from play. Indeed, early adolescents in all four ethnic groups did distinguish between personal victimization and ethnic discrimination, and between name-calling and social exclusion. There were some group differences. For example, personal victimization and ethnic discrimination were more strongly associated among the Turkish and Moroccan participants than they were for the Dutch and the Surinamese.

Hence, for the former two groups, ethnic discrimination was more closely related to personal victimization. One possible interpretation of this is that ethnic identity is a psychologically more central or important part of the Turkish and Moroccan early adolescents' self than it is for the Dutch and Surinamese (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2006). This could explain why members of these groups tend to make less of a distinction between personal victimization and ethnic discrimination. The Turks and the Moroccans are the two groups that are the least accepted in the Netherlands and face a higher level of uncertainty about whether the negative reactions of others are indicators of something about themselves as an individual, or as an ethnic group member. As a result, experiences of personal victimization and ethnic discrimination are perhaps more strongly intertwined.

A second aim of this study was to examine the relationship between ethnic discrimination and self-esteem. In doing so, we made a distinction between ethnic self-esteem and global self-esteem. Multifaceted or hierarchical models of the self place global self-esteem at the apex, with other self-evaluations, such as academic, social, and ethnic self-esteem, as sources for global self-esteem (e.g. Byrne, & Shavelson, 1996; Harter, 1999). The source of self-evaluations are themselves considered to be dependent on specific experiences and actual behavior. Hence, these models propose that the intermediate level in the hierarchy—in our case ethnic self-esteem—has a mediating role in linking experiences with ethnic discrimination to feelings of global self-esteem. For example, a child may have a generally negative view about him- or

herself because of a feeling about his or her ethnic background, and has this feeling because of experiences of ethnic discrimination. With ethnic discrimination, a part of the self is implicated. Therefore, it is likely that being treated negatively on the basis of one's ethnic identity has a negative influence on the self-evaluation of this identity, and thereby on global self-esteem.

Our results provided clear, supporting evidence for this idea. For all four groups, personal victimization was related negatively to global self-esteem but not to ethnic self-esteem. Furthermore, for all groups, ethnic self-esteem was found to mediate the relationship between perceived ethnic discrimination and feelings of global self-esteem. Hence, ethnic discrimination is related to global self-esteem because it affects the evaluation of ethnic identity, which is part of the individuals' self-concept. This result helps us to understand how exactly ethnic discrimination affects global self-esteem.

The results also showed that name-calling had a stronger and more consistent negative effect on global self-esteem than social exclusion from play. A possible reason is that situations involving teasing and name-calling are explicit and public expressions of negativity. In general, these forms of peer victimization are less ambiguous than being excluded from play activities. For example, children can argue that every child is free to choose with whom he or she wants to play and therefore has a right to choose his or her playmates (see Verkuyten et al., 1997), or that effective group functioning requires that some children are excluded (Killen, & Stangor, 2001). Hence, when peers make their evaluations and beliefs explicit they can exert considerable influence. Thus, it is important to examine factors such as the clarity and intensity of the discrimination as well as possible attributions and justifications. This is also important because not all individuals respond in the same way to discrimination.

## ETHNIC IDENTITY

There are personal and situational factors that affect perceptions of discrimination and the relationship between discrimination and self-esteem. For example, in their research among minority and immigrant adolescents (14 to 19 years of age) in the United States, Phinney, Madden, and Santos (1998) found that psychological variables such as lower intergroup competence and lower sense of mastery predicted higher levels of perceived ethnic discrimination. Another variable that is generally considered important is ethnic minority identity. The role of ethnic identity in perceived discrimination and self-esteem can be examined from different theoretical perspectives. In her review of research, Phinney (1990) distinguishes between developmental, intergroup, and acculturation perspectives.

## IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

Developmental models focus on the development of a strong and secure ethnic or racial identity. These models expect discrimination to play an important role in this development, but mainly in late adolescence. For example, Cross's (1978, 1991) model of nigrescence describes the social-developmental sequence through which African Americans come to terms with their racial status, and the prejudice and discrimination that they face in the society in which they live (see Chapter 8, this volume). The fact that the Cross model provides a framework for examining experiential and cultural influences on African American identity is valuable, but also potentially limited. On one hand, the model examines the qualitative aspects of racial identity

development in detail, however, on the other hand, the model does not have to apply to other ethnic minority groups in the United States (Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1990), and also not to other groups of Blacks outside the United States.

There are also models that focus on more general processes and structures of racial and ethnic identity development. The emphasis is on common psychological processes related to group identities and not on the unique experiences of each group. An example is Phinney (1989), who argues for ethnic identity entailing general phenomena that are relevant and comparable across groups. She proposes a three-stage progression from an unexamined ethnic identity, through a period of exploration, to an achieved or committed ethnic identity, and she has developed a measure for assessing ethnic identity achievement that can be applied across groups, including African Americans (Phinney, 1992). In a large-scale study among different ethnic minority groups in the United States, ethnic identity achieved adolescents had the highest self-esteem scores (Martinez & Dukes, 1997, see also Lorenzo-Hernandez, & Ouellette, 1998; Umaña-Taylor, 2004), and also higher scores for psychological well-being (Seaton, Scottham, & Sellers, 2006). However, the existing studies are predominantly restricted to the United States (but see Jasinskaja-Lahti & Liebkind, 1999; Verkuyten & Brug, 2002). Recent research including more than 5,000 immigrant adolescents in 13 countries suggests that ethnic identity development was positively, but not strongly ( $r = 0.18$ ), related to self-esteem (Sam, Vedder, Ward, & Horenczyk, 2006).

In these developmental models, the early stages of development are seen as typical for older children and early adolescents. Thus, for these age groups, these models expect no relationship between perceived discrimination and the importance attached to ethnic identity. In agreement with these models, Simons et al. (2002) found no association between identity development and perceived discrimination among African American early adolescents. In the Netherlands we found in two studies among Turkish, Moroccan, and Surinamese early adolescents that also showed no associations between perceived discrimination and ethnic identity (Verkuyten, 2002). Studies among middle adolescents have found stronger associations between identity development and peer discrimination, especially among African Americans (Pahl & Way, 2006). However, these studies have also shown that only a numerical minority of African Americans, Asian Americans, and Hispanic Americans, as well as Surinamese Dutch, have an achieved ethnic identity (see also Phinney et al., 1998; Verkuyten & Brug, 2002). In their longitudinal study among African and Latino Americans, French et al. (2006) found that ethnic identity exploration was very low among early adolescents and rose only for the middle adolescent cohort. Similarly, Pahl and Way (2006) found ethnic identity exploration to peak in middle adolescence (see also Yip, Seaton, & Sellers, 2006).

Thus, an achieved ethnic or racial identity, or the development of a committed and secure sense of being a member of one's ethnic or racial minority group, appears to be more typical for late adolescence and young adulthood rather than for early and middle adolescence (Seaton et al., 2006; Yip et al., 2006). Such an identity is important, however, because it can promote positive self-esteem and can compensate for potential threats posed by ethnic discrimination. Unfortunately, the research testing these models is limited, and more longitudinal studies examining developmental trajectories are especially needed (see Pahl & Way, 2006; Seaton et al., 2006).

### *Intergroup Perspective*

In social psychology, intergroup approaches such as social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) do not focus on developmental issues, but rather on the strength of ethnic identification that is expected to be positively associated with perceived discrimination. In these approaches, group identification is considered both an antecedent and a consequence of discrimination. On the one hand, high group identifiers are more likely to interpret information through a group lens than are low group identifiers. Group identification shapes cognition, leading to increased awareness and sensitivity to ethnic-relevant information such as discrimination. In two studies among early adolescents, we found that more ethnic discrimination was perceived by those who tend to be more attentive and sensitive to groups and group differences (Verkuyten, 2002). Hence, group identification can have a sensitizing effect for discrimination, leading to greater vigilance that in turn might negatively affect self-esteem.

On the other hand, it is argued that perceiving ethnic discrimination leads to stronger group identification (Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999). Discrimination as a form of rejection or exclusion can lead to a stronger orientation on the group and community in which acceptance and identity supportive relationships exist. This in-group orientation, in turn, is a resource for positive self-esteem. Among adults, there is evidence for this so-called *rejection-identification model*, including among ethnic minority groups (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002). However, the evidence for children and for early and middle adolescents is limited. In a study among Mexican American youth, Romero and Roberts (2003) found partial support for the rejection-identification model. Identification was associated with higher self-esteem, but perceived discrimination was not positively related to ethnic identification. In a study among Turkish and Moroccan early adolescents in the Netherlands, we also found that ethnic identification was positively related to self-esteem (Verkuyten, 2003). High identification was associated with more positive self-esteem, but it was not related to reduced self-depreciation. This suggests that ethnic identification serves as a source for self-worth.

Group identification can also act as a protective factor in reducing the association between ethnic discrimination and declines in psychological well-being. In their two-year longitudinal study among African American early adolescents, Wong et al. (2003) found evidence for this. Subjective experiences of racial peer discrimination in school were found to threaten adolescents' self-esteem and academic motivation. Children indicating more experiences with peer discrimination had lower self-esteem. Further, ethnic group identification was found to act as a promotive and protective factor by both compensating for and buffering against the impact of perceived discrimination.

### *Acculturation Perspective*

In the literature, most attention has been paid to Black-White differences in self-esteem. The emphasis on African Americans is understandable given the U.S. history of race relations, but has notable consequences. One is that minority identity and self-esteem have not been studied much from an acculturation perspective.

Questions of behaviors, attitudes, values, and identifications that change with contacts between cultures are considered key issues in understanding issues of immigration and acculturation. Ethnic identity becomes salient as part of the acculturation process. The concepts of ethnic identity and acculturation are often used interchangeably, but it seems better to consider the latter to be a broader construct that



encompasses a wide range of changes. A changing sense of ethnic identity and a developing sense of national identity can be considered central aspects of acculturation. Identification as a member of an ethnic group and as a member of the new society can be thought of as two dimensions that vary independently (Hutnik, 1991). For example, for many young Turks living in the Netherlands it is often not a question of being Turkish or Dutch, but a question of the extent to which they feel Turkish, as well as the degree to which they feel Dutch (Verkuyten, 2005b).

Hutnik (1991) makes a distinction between four identity positions: separation, where the identification is predominantly with one's own ethnic group; assimilation, where identification with the majority group predominates; integration (or hyphenated identity), where there is identification both with one's ethnic-minority group and with the majority group; and marginality or diffusion, where one identifies with neither the in-group nor the majority group. In several studies we have examined ethnic self-definitions among minority members of different ethnic groups and different ages (see Verkuyten, 2005b). In these studies, we asked participants how they see themselves and used four response categories representing Hutnik's four identity positions. In general, about half of the members of each ethnic and age group identified only with their ethnic minority group (separation). In addition, around a third opted for a hyphenated identity. In all samples there were few participants that took only the national identity or marginal position. In short, different studies have shown that the four forms of identification do exist, but not all to the same extent. Defining oneself in terms of one's own ethnic group or in terms of a hyphenated position is more frequent, whereas adopting an assimilative and/or marginal position is rather exceptional. The same has been found in other countries, such as the United States (e.g., Sanchez & Fernandez, 1993), Britain (Hutnik, 1991; Modood et al., 1997), Australia (e.g., Nesdale & Mak, 2000), and Belgium (e.g., Snauwaert, Snoenens, Vanbeselaere, & Boen, 2003), as well as in a study among more than 5,000 immigrant youth who have settled in 13 different countries (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006).

There are indications that, from a psychological point of view, the least desirable positions are the marginal ones. A marginal orientation is traditionally associated with psychological problems and stress. Assimilation is also thought, and found, to be related to psychological costs such as cultural alienation, depression, fear, and loneliness (e.g., Arroyo & Zigler, 1995). However, there is also evidence that assimilation is beneficial for psychological well-being and self-esteem (see Rudmin, 2003, 2006).

In contrast to marginalization and assimilation, the psychological correlates of integration and segregation appear to be positive. Our research among Surinamese, Turkish, and Chinese middle adolescents (Verkuyten & Brug, 2001; Verkuyten & Kwa, 1994) found that those with a marginal or predominantly assimilative position scored lower on a diverse range of psychological well-being measures, including self-esteem, than did young people with an integrative identification (Turkish-Dutch, Dutch-Chinese) or with a segregated identification (Turk, Chinese). In their cross-national study among immigrant youth, Berry et al. (2006) found that those in the integrated position were highest on psychological adaptation (including self-esteem) followed by segregation, and with assimilation and marginalization scoring lowest. This indicates that preserving a tie with their own group and culture has a positive influence on the well-being and self-esteem of immigrant youth. However, other studies do not support these findings, and the conclusion that the integration position is associated with the highest self-esteem is contested on methodological and conceptual grounds (Rudmin, 2006).

EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT SELF-ESTEEM

In a study among Asian immigrants to the United States, Hetts et al. (1999) found an interesting discrepancy in implicit (unconscious) and explicit (conscious) self-evaluations. They argued that responses on explicit self-esteem measures would be influenced by the normative individualistic demands of the American cultural context that are quickly learned in the acculturation process. In contrast, implicit measures would reflect the long-term influence of the immigrants' cultural collectivist upbringing that resists immediate change. Hence, acculturation would occur first at a conscious, explicit level and more slowly at a habitual, implicit level. In agreement with this reasoning, their findings showed that compared to Anglo Americans, these immigrants exhibited relatively low levels of personal self-esteem on implicit measures, whereas there were no differences on the explicit measures.

In a paper on racial identity, Erik Erikson (1966) argued that a sense of identity has conscious as well as unconscious aspects. He pointed out that there are aspects that are accessible only at moments of special awareness or not at all. In line with psychoanalytical ideas, he talked about repression and resistance. And he claimed that racial minorities would have more negative self-feelings on an unconscious or implicit level. The doll and picture methodologies employed in the first generation of studies are essentially implicit or projectively based methods requiring the use of the child's imagination to respond to the "imaginary" stimulus figures. The choice of an out-group doll or picture was taken to signify that a child feels unwilling, ambivalent, or psychologically unable to identify with the in-group figure. In contrast to this early work, the standard self-esteem scales used in second-generation studies employed explicit self-statements. Arguably, these measures tap into the more conscious or explicit aspects of the self.

Recently, in social psychology the distinction between conscious and unconscious, or explicit and implicit, has been conceptualized as one of dual attitudes (Wilson, Lindsey, & Schooler, 2000). The central idea is that people can have different evaluations of the same attitude object: an implicit attitude and an explicit attitude. The implicit-explicit distinction is also made in relation to self-esteem. Explicit self-esteem is the thoughtful responses one typically gets on self-report questions that predominate in studies on self-esteem, whereas implicit self-esteem refers to "the introspectively unidentified . . . effect of the self-attitude on evaluation of self-associated and self-dissociated objects" (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995, pp. 11).

An increasing number of studies have emphasized the need to take the distinction between explicit and implicit self-esteem into account (e.g., Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Hetts & Pelham, 2001; Wilson et al., 2000). Both may develop differently, resulting in a discrepancy in implicit and explicit self-evaluations. Studies have found that implicit and explicit self-esteem measures typically are uncorrelated (e.g., Bosson, Swann & Penebaker, 2000; Fazio & Olzon, 2003).

The distinction is important because it is possible that stereotypes and discrimination negatively affect the implicit rather than the explicit self-esteem of ethnic minorities. For example, Pelham and Hetts (1999) examined the puzzle of high self-esteem among minority groups. They suggest that this puzzle may refer to the explicit self-esteem of minority groups, and that on an implicit level minority members may feel less positive about their group membership. They found that, relative to Anglo Americans, minority group members were lower in implicit ethnic self-esteem. In addition, however, minority group members were not lower on implicit personal self-esteem. A similar result was found in a study among early adolescents living in the Netherlands

(Verkuyten, 2005). In this study, a distinction between the personal self and the ethnic self and between explicit and implicit self-esteem was made. The study was conducted among three groups of early adolescents: Dutch, Turkish-Dutch (of Turkish origin and living in the Netherlands), and Turkish participants living in Turkey. The results showed that compared to the Dutch early adolescents, the Turkish-Dutch did not score lower for *explicit* personal and ethnic self-esteem. In fact, the Turkish-Dutch reported more positive explicit self-esteem, and they had similar scores to the Turkish participants in Turkey. However, compared to the Dutch and the Turks in Turkey, the Turkish-Dutch participants had significantly less positive implicit ethnic self-esteem. Additionally, for the Turkish-Dutch perceived discrimination was negatively related to implicit ethnic self-esteem but not to other self-esteem measures. Hence, at an explicit or more conscious level, Turkish-Dutch seem to endorse the kind of favorable conceptions of themselves that are common in Dutch and Turkish society, whereas at an implicit or unconscious level their ethnic self-evaluation appears to be more consistent with their disadvantaged minority position.

The distinctions between the personal and the ethnic self and between implicit and explicit self-esteem offer the possibility of examining the self-esteem development of minority group children in a more differentiated, theoretically and practically meaningful way. However, the latter distinction is not without problems and the measurement of implicit self-esteem remains difficult (Bosson et al., 2000). Furthermore, the distinction between explicit and implicit self-esteem does not imply that only the latter is important or relevant. Explicit self-esteem has been found to be clearly associated with, and predictive of, a great variety of psychological and behavioral outcomes.

#### REASONS FOR THE WEAK RELATIONSHIPS

The great majority of the research among different ethnic and racial minority groups, among different age groups, and in different countries has found no significant lower average self-esteem among minority group children and adolescents compared to majority group peers. But this should not hide the fact that some minority groups in some situations do suffer from lower self-esteem, and that there are important differences within minority groups. It also does not mean that particular experiences such as peer discrimination do not affect self-esteem negatively. The research indicates that peer discrimination does have a negative effect on self-esteem, mainly because it affects ethnic self-esteem negatively. However, the relationship that is found between perceived discrimination and self-esteem is, in general, not very strong. There are three possible reasons for this rather weak relationship.

A first reason is the conceptualization and measurement of subjective experiences of ethnic peer discrimination. The perception and appraisal of discrimination is a complex issue that involves developing cognitive and moral abilities, situational cues, and individual differences in knowledge and experiences (Brown & Bigler, 2005). Empirically, little is known, however, about the developmental trajectory of children's learning about discrimination. Discrimination can exist at different levels, such as the levels of society, neighborhood, and school, and can involve different actors including teachers and peers. Further, discrimination can take many different forms ranging from overt behavior, such as physical and verbal aggression, to more indirect forms, such as shunning and spreading rumors. In addition, discrimination can be unusual or more pervasive, situational or more general, and can involve a

single or multiple perpetrators. Further, children and adolescents make interpretations about intentions and harm, and they reason about when and why forms of negative (peer) behavior, such as social exclusion, are considered discriminatory or are seen as understandable and acceptable. Ethnic discrimination is a multifaceted and complex issue, but research has typically focused on the frequency or degree to which children and adolescents have experienced discrimination. It is likely, however, that a more detailed and contextual investigation of perceived discrimination will show stronger relationships with self-esteem.

A second reason for the generally weak relationship found between discrimination and self-esteem has to do with the nature of self-esteem. Most studies on minority self-esteem have focused on trait-like global self-feelings. Research has shown that parents are the most important influences on a child's level of global self-esteem. This influence is partly genetic and partly produced by the degree of acceptance, support, and love shown by (majority and minority) parents through childhood and adolescence. In addition, there are many possible contingencies upon which to base one's global self-esteem (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001). Ethnic and racial identity is one possible contingency, but there are many more. Children and adolescents have many attributes, aspirations, and qualities, and belong to all kinds of categories and groups that can be less or more important to them. Research clearly shows that although measures of ethnic self-esteem and global self-esteem are positively associated, they have little overlap (around 10 percent shared variance). Hence, attacks upon and negative responses to the ethnic self, such as peer discrimination, are not similar attacks and responses to the global self. Furthermore, social psychological research has shown that established levels of self-esteem are relatively immune to disconfirming feedback because people use a range of mental strategies to discount information that contradicts their self-image. As a result, many circumstances and conditions do not have the expected impact on self-esteem.

It might also be relevant that almost all research has relied on self-report measures. Responses on these explicit measures may be influenced by the normative individualistic demands of the Western cultural context that are endorsed by many minority groups and quickly learned in the acculturation process (Hetts et al., 1999; Twenge & Crocker, 2002). There might be a discrepancy between explicit and implicit self-esteem, and peer discrimination can have a stronger negative impact on the latter than the former (Verkuyten, 2005). Further, the predominant focus on trait-like self-esteem should not ignore the importance of situational or state-like self-feelings. The former assesses how one feels about oneself on average or generally, whereas the latter is assessed by asking how one feels about oneself at the present moment (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991). In phenomenological terms both are important and real. All of us are familiar with temporary increases or decreases in self-esteem due to, for example, a compliment or a criticism. But, most of us have also developed a more habitual and characteristic form of self-esteem. Empirically, Savin-Williams and Demo (1983, pp. 131) found that "Self-feelings are apparently global and context dependent. The largest number of our adolescents had a baseline of self-evaluation from which fluctuations rose or fell mildly, most likely dependent of features of the context."

There are several studies that examine situational or state dependent self-esteem. For example, Brown (1998) showed that ethnic stigma is a contextual experience that leads to a negative self-image in the context of certain relationships, such as consequential interactions with dominant group members. Crocker (1999) has also argued and shown that state-like self-esteem is constructed in the situation and changes from

situation to situation. In one of our studies among Turkish early adolescents we elicited self-reports on experiences with peer victimization (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2001). To examine the causal effects of victimization, we assessed momentary self-feelings directly after self-reported peer victimization. Peer victimization had a negative effect on momentary self-feelings, independently of the level of trait-like personal and ethnic self-esteem. Hence, peer discrimination might have a stronger negative impact on implicit and situational self-feelings than on trait-like feelings of global self-worth.

A third reason for the generally weak association found between ethnic discrimination and self-esteem has to do with the role of ethnic identity. As discussed, there is important evidence that a strong and secure ethnic identity is a source for positive self-esteem and can compensate for and buffer against negative group reactions and experiences. This evidence comes from work on racial and ethnic identity development and from social psychological work on group identification. Ethnic identity achieved or committed adolescents seem more able to cope with discrimination and tend to have higher self-esteem. In addition, perceived discrimination has a direct harmful effect on self-esteem, but can also encourage minority group identification that enhances psychological well-being. Further, acculturation research suggests that a hyphenated identity where there is identification with both one's own minority group and the majority society can result in higher self-esteem among immigrant youth.

Thus, ethnic identity is a crucial factor to consider in examining the relationship between perceived discrimination and self-esteem. In doing so, we need to be aware that ethnic identity can play different roles. One possibility is that it has a buffering or moderating effect, in that a strong ethnic identity reduces the negative impact of discrimination. Another possibility is that ethnic identity mediates the relationship between perceived discrimination and self-esteem, as proposed in the *rejection-identification model* (Branscombe et al., 1999). But it is also possible that group identification has a sensitizing effect for discrimination. A further possibility is that a strong ethnic identity has a compensatory effect in that it functions as a valuable, independent contingency for self-esteem. Hence, ethnic identity can function differently and its precise role may depend on contextual and group characteristics. It also depends on the conceptualization of ethnic identity. It is not only possible to use different theoretical perspectives, but one can also consider the multidimensional and dynamic nature of ethnic identity. Ethnic identity is composed of a constellation of beliefs, feelings, and attitudes that develop with age (Ruble et al., 2004), and these might be differently related to discrimination and to self-esteem. Existing research on ethnic identity has also focused primarily on its more stable characteristics, such as the relative importance of ethnicity, and ignored the situational prominence of ethnic identity at a given point in time (Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, & Chavous, 1998). For example, in studying Chinese Americans, Yip (2005) found that the salience of ethnic identity fluctuates across daily situations and that ethnic salience bolstered positive self-feelings and reduced negative feelings (see also Yip & Fuligni, 2002). However, these positive situational effects were only found for Chinese Americans, who in general hold ethnicity as important to their self-concept.

#### FUTURE STUDIES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERVENTION

Research on the relationship between perceived discrimination, ethnic identity, and self-esteem is important for improving our understanding about what it means to grow up as a member of an ethnic minority group and in trying to improve children's

quality of life. There is a long research tradition on minority self-esteem, but much less is known about ethnic identity development and very little is known about the development of the perception and interpretation of discrimination. As indicated, there are many possible questions and issues for future studies to address. From a developmental perspective it is necessary that more longitudinal research is conducted. It is also important to systematically investigate social contexts, such as schools and neighborhoods, and to examine perceptions and justifying beliefs related to existing intergroup relations.

It is likely that there are common characteristics and developmental processes for all children and adolescents. Prejudice and discrimination against ethnic minorities is well-documented in many countries around the world, and, as cross-national research (e.g., Berry et al., 2006; Faruggia et al., 2004) shows, similar associations with ethnic identification and self-esteem exist among different groups of minority children. This suggests that similar processes are involved. Discrimination is a negative experience for all children, and this experience can in part be compensated for by an increased orientation on their own ethnic minority group. But there are also differences between countries and contexts. The majority group, for example, can be accepting and inclusive in its orientation toward ethnic and cultural diversity, or rather rejecting and exclusive. Cross-national research among immigrant youth has shown that a hyphenated identity is more likely in the former situation, whereas in the latter an exclusive commitment to the minority group is more common (Phinney, Berry, Vedder, & Liebkind, 2006).

There are also differences between ethnic minority groups and the experiences that children and adolescents of these groups have. Minority groups have their own history and cultural characteristics and not all groups are perceived in the same way in society. Some groups face higher levels of discrimination and have weaker supportive networks. In addition, there are individual differences that highlight the need to examine distinctions among children and adolescents, in general, and within the same ethnic group, in particular. Attention to between-group differences should not lead to overlooking the substantial within-group heterogeneity. The way children react to and perceive discrimination and develop their ethnic identity varies, but this does not mean that the number of trajectories or individual pathways is unlimited.

This discussion has many implications for intervention. The most important one is the need to address ethnic discrimination, and ethnic peer discrimination in particular, in a systematic and effective way. But this, of course, is more easily said than done as, for example, the many programs and initiatives for countering peer victimization and harassment indicate. One key issue is that it is necessary to have a better understanding about children's own perceptions, interpretations, and reasoning about discrimination. Effective intervention is more difficult without such an understanding and an appreciation of the importance of the ways that children negotiate, share, and create meanings and interpretations among each other. The behavior of significant adults can also have a positive effect on ethnic peer discrimination. For example, there is less ethnic discrimination in school classes where children see that teachers react to these negative forms of behavior by actively and explicitly doing something against them (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002).

In addition to addressing ethnic peer discrimination it seems important to try to establish conditions that help children and adolescents develop a secure and positive ethnic identity. Encouraging minority group identification and an achieved ethnic identity can be important sources for psychological well-being and protective

buffering factors against the impact of discrimination. In principle, multiculturalism and multicultural education are conditions that can be important for the ethnic identity development and ethnic identification of minority groups. The acceptance and recognition of cultural diversity and group identities can be relevant for self-feelings. There is some evidence that multicultural education makes (majority group) children more aware and sensitive of ethnic victimization, and has positive effects on group identification and self-esteem of minority youth (e.g., Bigler, 1999; Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002, 2004). The evidence, however, is limited, and in practice the diversity of multicultural ideas, initiatives, and programs is substantial (Banks & Banks, 1995). Further, there is danger that thinking in terms of groups and group differences, which is inherent in multiculturalism, leads to reified and essentialist group distinctions that promote group stereotyping and negative out-group feelings. Teaching about cultural group differences can be used by students to reinforce their stereotypes about individual group members (see Vogt, 1997) and can endanger social unity and cohesion at schools and in neighborhoods.

Finally, there are many popular ideas and programs about improving children's and adolescents' self-esteem. Various programs have been developed and disseminated to several thousand schools in the United States. And although the expectations and promises of these programs are substantial, there is little systematic and methodologically sound evidence for drawing firm conclusions about what works and why (see Emler, 2001). The effects of particular interventions seem to depend on various factors, such as the rationale for the intervention (Haney & Durlak, 1998). It is unclear, however, whether interventions work equally well for different ethnic and age groups, and whether they have long-term effects. Furthermore, it is important to note that the explicit concern with planned interventions for self-esteem improvement does not exist, or is much less common, in countries other than the United States. This means that the success of proposing and implementing these interventions is probably restricted to the cultural context of the United States.

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## CHAPTER 15

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# Social Influences on the Ethnic Achievement Gap

CLARK McKOWN and MICHAEL J. STRAMBLER

Let us think of education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is a private hope and dream which, fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength for our nation.

—JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY

### PROBLEM STATEMENT

**T**HIS STARK fact bedevils the American educational system: On standardized measures of achievement, Asian American and European American students achieve higher average scores than their African American and Latino peers (Jencks & Phillips, 1998). Through the 1970s, ethnic disparities in achievement declined. Thereafter, they remained steady (Lee, 2002; Phillips, Crouse, & Ralph, 1998). There are individual and collective consequences to this state of affairs. For individuals, educational success opens access to economic and personal fulfillment. When achievement depends in part on ethnicity, the private hopes and dreams of each citizen are more attainable for some than for others, in part because of ethnicity. The collective consequences of educational inequality may be less visible but more consequential: If large segments of the population are not reaping the benefits of the educational system, the strength of the nation, conferred by the sum total of individual innovation, may be diminished.

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A clear formulation of the source of the ethnic achievement gap is a critical prerequisite to developing effective strategies for eliminating the gap. Unfortunately, no consensus exists about either the sources of the gap or strategies for its reduction. In fact, the question of where the ethnic achievement gap originates has historically been a source of vigorous debate. Explanations have been highly variable, focusing on causes as diverse as racial differences in genetic endowment (Herrnstein & Murray, 1994; Jensen, 1969), ethnic differences in family resources (Brooks-Gunn, Klebanov, Smith, Duncan, & Lee, 2003), teacher expectations (Rist, 1973), ethnic differences in cultural values (Ogbu, 1988; Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 2002), and clashes between home and school cultures (Brice-Heath, 1983; Tharp, 1989). Most theories emphasize one contributing factor, but no theory fully accounts for the gap. Our goal in this chapter is to identify a set of principles by which we may identify a parsimonious set of social factors that account for ethnic differences in achievement. By doing so, we hope to foster an integrative view of the causes of the achievement gap and to suggest promising directions for its reduction. The research we cite focuses on the Black-White achievement gap<sup>1</sup>, largely because this gap has received the lion's share of attention. The points we make about the origins of this gap are, however, relevant to understanding any ethnic disparity in achievement.

## TWO KINDS OF EXPLANATIONS OF THE GAP'S ORIGIN

There are a great variety of causal explanations of the ethnic achievement gap. *Endogenous* causal explanations suggest that intrinsic characteristics of groups give rise to mean differences in achievement. *Transactional* causal explanations suggest that interactions among individuals and between individuals and institutions give rise to mean achievement differences. We review these two kinds of causal explanations briefly and explain our rationale for focusing on transactional causes.

### ENDOGENOUS EXPLANATIONS

The first general explanation of the gap is that ethnic differences in achievement are a product of unequal distribution between ethnic groups of an intrinsic, achievement-enhancing characteristic of individuals. Because these explanations focus on characteristics of individuals, we call them *endogenous* causal explanations. One endogenous explanation, the hereditarian or biological deficit hypothesis, states that some or all of the ethnic difference in academic achievement results from ethnic differences in genetic endowment (Rushton & Jensen, 2005). The logic underlying this hypothesis is that: (1) talent is heritable, (2) genetic factors influence intellectual ability, (3) race reflects genetically mediated biological differences between members of different races, (4) environmental forces do not fully account for the gap, and therefore (5) racial differences in achievement are largely a consequence of racial differences in genetically mediated traits that foster achievement. According to the biological deficit hypothesis, an endogenous characteristic of individuals—genetic endowment—that

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<sup>1</sup>Some of the research reviewed next focuses on the achievement gap, examining sources of achievement differences between ethnic groups. Some of the research focuses more specifically on factors within a specific ethnic group that suppress achievement among members of that group. We review both kinds of studies because they are both relevant to understanding the origins of the gap, whether the evidence focuses explicitly on between-group comparisons or not.



is distributed unequally across ethnic groups accounts for mean differences in achievement.

A second endogenous explanation, the cultural deficit hypothesis, states that some or all of the ethnic difference in academic achievement results from deficits in cultural endowment shared by members of some ethnic groups, and cultural strengths shared by members of other ethnic groups. In the 1960s and 1970s, for example, many argued that children from some ethnic groups, particularly African Americans, were “culturally deprived” (Reissman, 1962). More recently, authors have argued that attitudes, expectations, and work ethic vary by ethnic group and affect the gap. These explanations imply that some ethnic groups, particularly African Americans, suffer from cultural deficits that hamper achievement, while others, particularly Asian Americans, are endowed with cultural assets that foster achievement (Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 2002). According to the cultural deficit hypothesis, an endogenous characteristic—cultural endowment—that is distributed unequally across ethnic groups accounts for mean differences in achievement.

Endogenous explanations of the gap have been controversial. Biological explanations that imply racial inferiority or superiority have been offered throughout history to justify systematic discrimination. Cultural deficit explanations imply that ethnic minorities are to blame for their social disadvantages. Both explanations imply that little can be done to reduce the gap. Because endogenous explanations justify discrimination and inaction, they pose a substantial risk to members of lower-performing groups. Biological and cultural deficit explanations should thus require a very high standard of proof before they are accepted as adequate explanations for group differences. Many have offered evidence that contradicts the hereditarian hypothesis and have argued that the logic of the hereditarian hypothesis is flawed (Fischer et al., 1996; Gould, 1981; Nisbett, 2005; Sternberg, 2005; Sternberg, Grigorenko, & Kidd, 2005). Others have noted that cultural deficit models are incompatible with data suggesting minority children and parents hold high expectations and value education (Ainsworth-Darnell & Downey, 1998; Ferguson, 2002). We thus conclude that endogenous explanations of the gap have fallen short of an adequate standard of proof.

#### TRANSACTIONAL EXPLANATIONS

If endogenous explanations do not adequately explain ethnic differences in achievement, the question becomes what transactions operating across what critical developmental contexts account for the gap. We define a transactional process as any social transaction between individuals or individuals and institutions that propagates and maintains educational inequality between members of different ethnic groups. Transactional causes by definition do not exist solely within individuals or cultures. They require interaction between individuals in a particular context, and they require that the process of transacting causes and maintains inequity. Transactional processes can occur in a great variety of contexts, including families, schools, teacher-student relationships, testing situations, the workplace, the marketplace, and many others.

Like endogenous explanations for the gaps, transactional explanations have not fully accounted for the gap. Typically, studies of transactional causes focus intensively on one social process, and typically, they explain part of the gap. Proponents of endogenous causation, particularly biological determinists, cite this as evidence that social transactions are not the only cause of ethnic differences in achievement, arguing that

ethnic differences in genetic endowment explain the residual gap (Rushton & Jenson, 2005). A few studies examining transactional causation have moved beyond single social causes to examine the combined influence of multiple transactional contributors to ethnic differences in achievement. When undertaking this strategy, investigators explain a greater proportion of the gap (Brooks-Gunn et al., 1996; Lee & Burkam, 2002; Phillips, Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Klebanov, & Crane, 1998). Those studies raise the possibility that if the correct set of social factors are identified and studied simultaneously, the entirety of the gap may be explained.

#### OUR FOCUS

In sum, theories of the achievement gap focus on either endogenous characteristics of ethnic groups or social transactions among individuals and between individuals and institutions. Evidence in support of endogenous theories is at best mixed, and the underlying logic, particularly of biological explanations, has been forcefully challenged. In contrast, evidence consistently supports the proposition that individual social transactions *partially* explain the gap. Furthermore, whereas endogenous explanations may justify inaction or discrimination, transactional explanations lend themselves to policies and practices that may reduce the gap. As a result, we focus this chapter on reviewing evidence for the contribution of transactional causes to the achievement gap. In particular, we offer a model of the social causes of the ethnic achievement gap that is inclusive and flexible enough to account for varied social forces, yet specific enough to offer clear and useful guidance in the search for the problem's origins and solutions. We then review the evidence about what kinds of transactions partially explain the achievement gap and highlight promising future directions.

#### PROPOSITIONS OF AN INTEGRATIVE ACCOUNT OF THE GAP'S ORIGINS

A small number of organizing principles may help us select and evaluate the joint function of several transactional processes across developmental contexts in creating and maintaining the gap. Those principles specify the kind of transactions that create and maintain the gap, the contexts in which those transactions occur, and the role of culture in shaping the gap.

#### DIRECT AND SIGNAL EFFECTS

Researchers examining teacher expectancy effects have recognized that teacher expectations may influence children's achievement both directly, when teachers provide different learning opportunities to children towards whom they hold different expectations, and indirectly, through student awareness of the teacher's expectations (Braun, 1976; Brophy & Good, 1974; Weinstein & Middlestadt, 1979). This distinction holds promise for understanding a wide range of factors affecting the achievement gap. Adopting a similar distinction, we propose that two classes of transactional process contribute to the achievement gap. *Direct* effects are social transactions that promote academic achievement similarly for children from all ethnic groups. For example, exposure to high-quality instruction promotes achievement similarly for all

children. Direct effects contribute to the ethnic achievement gap when they are unequally distributed to children on the basis of ethnicity. There is no need that children are aware of the operation of direct effects for those effects to cause and maintain the gap. For example, if children from different ethnic groups are systematically exposed to instruction of different quality, this will contribute to ethnic differences in achievement. Children need not be aware of the systematic assignment to different quality instruction for the assignment patterns to produce differences in what is learned.

*Signal* effects are a particular kind of transactional cause in which social events signal to members of negatively stereotyped ethnic groups that their talents and abilities are devalued because of their ethnicity. Stereotype threat experiments have consistently demonstrated that when situational cues raise the prospect that an individual will be judged on the basis of a stereotype about a group to which the individual belongs, the situational threat can impair performance in the stereotyped domain (Steele & Aronson, 1995). Signal effects will contribute to the achievement gap when situational cues signal to students from academically stereotyped ethnic groups that their intelligence is devalued. For example, a child from an academically stereotyped ethnic group who is taking a high-stakes test may become concerned that her test performance will be judged on the basis of the stereotype or that poor performance on the test might confirm the stereotype. However, this is only the case if the child is aware of such stereotypes and only if the child interprets, even at an implicit level, the situation in connection to that stereotype. Thus, whereas children may or may not be aware of direct effects operating on their achievement, signal effects are by definition psychologically mediated.

#### CRITICAL CONTEXTS

Daily life includes a bewildering array of social transactions in a substantial number of contexts. What standing patterns of daily life in what contexts instantiate direct and signal effects? Which transactions reflect “wedge” events that widen or maintain the achievement gap and which transactions reduce the gap? We argue that the most critical social transactions affecting achievement and the gap take place in four developmental contexts: school, home, peer group, and neighborhood. Direct and signal processes may operate within each of these settings. Furthermore, a substantial body of research on single transactions or single settings suggests specific direct and signal transactions in each of these settings.

#### CULTURE AND BELIEFS ABOUT THE VALUE OF EDUCATION

A premise of this chapter is that if direct and signal transactions were removed from key developmental contexts, ethnic differences in achievement would disappear. Furthermore, cultural deficit models of the gap do not find strong support in the empirical literature. Nevertheless, for a small minority of students, cultural beliefs and attitudes about school may affect achievement. We posit that those cultural beliefs and attitudes are themselves the outcome of direct and signal effects. In our model, culture is therefore one mediator of the effects of direct and signal events on achievement (See Figure 15.1, p. 388). We review evidence for the modest role of culture in shaping achievement and evidence that these aspects of culture are themselves consequences of direct and signal effects.

## CONTRIBUTION OF DIRECT AND SIGNAL EFFECTS TO THE GAP

There are many social transactions that may shape individual student achievement, from which a subset may contribute to or maintain ethnic differences in achievement. We focus our review of the evidence on social transactions that occur in the home, neighborhood, school, and peer groups.

### DIRECT EFFECTS

We first review evidence that different direct effects in these contexts are distributed unequally to children across ethnic groups, and that the unequal distribution of these direct effects contributes to ethnic differences in achievement.

*Family Socioeconomic Status* Family socioeconomic status (SES) is a broad indicator of social status and the availability of social and material resources. SES is typically measured by some combination of parent level of education, income, and job status (Chen, Matthews, & Boyce, 2002). There are strong and consistent relationships between SES and a variety of important areas of functioning, including health (Adler, Boyce, Chesney, & Cohen, 1994) and academic achievement (Sirin, 2005). Furthermore, in the United States, SES is associated with ethnicity (Lee & Burkam, 2002; Magnuson & Duncan, 2006). For example, in 1999, twice as many African American families lived below the poverty line than families of other ethnic groups (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). Many have hypothesized that socioeconomic status operates as a direct effect in influencing the achievement gap. According to this hypothesis, socioeconomic resources support social transactions that foster achievement. As a result, the reason children from different ethnic groups achieve differently is because of differing levels of access to this direct effect.

If the socioeconomic hypothesis fully explained the gap, then when children from different ethnic groups from the same social class were compared, mean levels of achievement would be equivalent. Magnuson and Duncan (2006) summarized a number of studies examining the relationship between child race, SES, and achievement at school entry. Across the studies they reviewed, achievement at school entry was operationalized as performance on various tests, including the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, the Woodcock-Johnson Achievement Tests, and the Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence. Across those same studies, SES was also measured variously, but always as a composite continuous measure that included some combination of parental education, income, and occupational status. What is striking about the Magnuson and Duncan (2006) findings is that across a variety of studies, datasets, and measures, regardless of the magnitude of the initial Black-White gap, SES consistently accounted for about a half a standard deviation of the gap.

The studies reviewed by Magnuson and Duncan (2006) examined the role of SES in explaining the achievement gap at school entry. This raises the question of whether and how much SES might account for ethnic differences in achievement among older children, adolescents, and adults. Studies focusing on middle childhood and adolescence have found that accounting for SES reduces the magnitude of the achievement gap (Phillips, Brooks-Gunn et al., 1998). Similarly, in high school, the relationship between ethnicity and achievement is partially accounted for by SES. For example, a study examining a large number of nationally representative data sets collected between

1965 and 1992 found that controlling for SES consistently reduced the Black-White achievement gap by about a third of a standard deviation (Hedges & Nowell, 1999). Overall, these findings suggest a consistent relationship between race, SES, and achievement throughout childhood, with SES accounting for between one-third to one half of a standard deviation in the gap.

A strong causal interpretation of these findings would suggest that the more a family is endowed with the social and material resources associated with SES, the more these resources foster a child's academic development. Because these studies are nonexperimental, it is difficult to know whether SES causes these achievement differences. Consequently, it is possible that ethnic differences in achievement and SES are both byproducts of a third factor. However, studies that include indexes of parental genetic endowment suggest that SES explains a substantial proportion of the achievement gap, above and beyond any genetic contribution (Phillips, Brooks-Gunn et al., 1998).

Furthermore, experimental evidence suggests a causal role of SES in the achievement gap. In the New Hope Project, low-income working families were randomly assigned to receive wage supplements, support for child care, and health insurance. Families in the experiment fared better in terms of material and psychological well-being. In addition, boys whose parents participated in the experimental program exhibited substantial improvements in their behavior and academic performance (Huston, et al., 2001). In the Moving to Opportunity Program, a large-scale study of the effects of neighborhood poverty, low-income public housing residents were randomly assigned to: (1) public housing, (2) a voucher for housing in a low-poverty neighborhood, or (3) a voucher for housing in the neighborhood of their choice. Moving from high- to low-poverty neighborhoods produced short-term academic benefits, particularly for boys (Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2004), suggesting a causal role of socioeconomic context on children's achievement. The research suggests that SES plays a partial causal role in explaining part of the ethnic achievement gap.

In short, SES partly explains the gap. It seems likely that social policies that reduce overall levels of poverty will decrease stress on children and families, which may lead to improvements in home environment that in turn stimulate academic achievement. On the other hand, given limited resources, if the goal is to decrease the achievement gap, reducing poverty may be a costly, inefficient, and not wholly effective strategy. We propose that although SES plays a role in driving the achievement gap, and social policies to reduce poverty are sensible and humane, policies and practices to reduce the magnitude of the gap should focus on more proximal contributors to ethnic differences in achievement, such as parenting practices and the quality of instruction. Intervening to affect these more proximal factors are more likely to yield a greater academic return on investment and are more feasible to undertake.

*Family Relationships* SES is a gross measure of a family's social and material resources. Important social transactions occurring within the family that are proximal to children's daily experience may explain some or all of the residual gap after SES is accounted for. These transactions likely function as direct effects—they promote achievement when present; when they are distributed unequally to members of different ethnic groups, this contributes to ethnic differences in achievement. Brooks-Gunn and colleagues found that when family structure and maternal warmth and engagement were accounted for in addition to SES, the residual gap at school was nearly eliminated (Brooks-Gunn et al., 1996; Brooks-Gunn et al., 2003). Similarly, using the

ECLS-K data, Lee and Burkam (2002) found that accounting for parental expectations, type of pre-kindergarten childcare, type of at-home activities, and type of out-of-home activities reduced ethnic differences in achievement in reading and math by a substantial increment above and beyond accounting for family SES alone, in some cases virtually eliminating the gap. We were unable to find studies with older children that examined the role of these family resources in explaining the relationship between ethnicity and achievement beyond socioeconomic status alone. Such studies are critical, because if family socioeconomic status and family environment jointly account for a substantial amount of the ethnic achievement gap throughout childhood, this has profound implications for policies and practices to reduce the gap.

These studies suggest an important role, particularly for young children, of family processes in explaining ethnic differences in achievement. This raises the question of what specific social transactions within families might mediate the relationship between ethnicity and children's achievement. We review three main ways by which family life may shape children's achievement—parenting styles, parent racial socialization practices, and family-school relationships. We conceptualize all of these family factors as direct effects—the more parents engage in particular practices, the more successful their children will be academically. To the extent that these parental resources are available more for members of some ethnic groups and less for others, they will contribute to ethnic differences in achievement.

Research on the relationship between parenting style and children's development suggests that a combination of highly supportive and highly demanding parenting promotes optimal academic, social, and emotional outcomes (Baumrind, 1966; Baumrind & Black, 1967; Baumrind, 1967). Supportiveness refers to providing nurturance, love, and responsiveness, while demandingness reflects firmness, discipline, and direction. The combination of supportiveness and demandingness is typically referred to as authoritative parenting. Parenting that is high in demandingness but low in supportiveness is referred to as authoritarian parenting. High parental support but low demand is referred to as permissive parenting.

Most of the early research on parenting styles has been conducted with European American middle class families. More recent research with ethnic minority families suggests that parenting styles look similar in a variety of ethnic groups, but produce different outcomes for different groups. In a study that included a sample of 111 African American families, Mandara & Murray (2002) found that parents tended to use authoritative, authoritarian, or neglectful parenting styles, which is consistent with Baumrind's typology, developed largely with European American families. However, the nature of the parenting associated with each type was somewhat different than European American parenting styles. For example, the African American authoritative parenting style was more demanding and less compromising than European American parents. Research with ethnic minorities suggests a mixed picture regarding the relationship between parenting style and achievement. One study that included 7,836 students (Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, & Roberts, 1987) found no relationship between parenting style and achievement among African Americans. In another study, Steinberg, Mounts, Lamborn, & Dornbusch (1991) found that among African Americans, authoritative parenting was associated with mental health but not achievement.

Other studies suggest that firmer authoritative parenting may be adaptive in low-income, high-risk neighborhoods and may be linked to positive outcomes, particularly for African Americans. In a one-year prospective study of academic achievement

among 120 African American youth, Gonzales, Cauce, Friedman, and Mason (1996) found that in high-risk neighborhoods, restrictive maternal control was related to higher achievement, while this was not true in low-risk contexts. Similarly, Baldwin, Baldwin, and Cole (1990) found higher maternal control to be associated with greater academic competence in high-risk neighborhoods and lower maternal control to be associated with greater academic competence in low-risk neighborhoods. These studies suggest that neighborhood context plays an important role in moderating the impact of authoritative and authoritarian styles on achievement.

Another important aspect of parenting, particularly for ethnic minority families, is racial socialization, which refers to social transactions between parents and children to teach children about the meaning of being a member of an ethnic minority group. The goal of racial socialization is to help raise healthy, resilient children who can navigate a society that can at times be challenging due to their ethnic group membership (Marshall, 1995). Such practices are particularly important for stigmatized groups such as African Americans, who continue to face widely held negative stereotypes about intellectual ability and chronic discrimination. Racial socialization consists of three components: (1) teaching children about the culture, (2) teaching children about mainstream culture, and (3) teaching children about racism and discrimination (Boykin & Toms, 1985; Hughes et al., 2006; Phinney & Chavira, 1995). Empirical evidence supports the fact that parents—particularly ethnic minority parents—engage in these socialization practices (Chapter 11, this volume; Bowman & Howard, 1985; Phinney & Chavira, 1995; Thornton, Chatters, Taylor, & Allen, 1990).

A small number of studies have investigated the direct link between racial socialization and achievement. One study found that African American youth who were socialized about their race had higher self-efficacy scores and grades than those students who were not told anything about race (Bowman & Howard, 1985). In contrast, in a study of middle class African American children attending predominantly European American schools, children's reports of racial socialization were correlated with lower grades (Miller & McIntosh, 1999). Some argue that parents who overemphasize racial barriers or promote racial mistrust risk eroding their children's self-efficacy and promoting distrust of school (Hughes & Chen, 1997; Hughes et al., 2006).

Mandara (2006) developed a typology by which to understand how specific racial socialization messages relate to achievement and other outcomes in African American children. He conceptualizes the typology as being made up of two dimensions: (1) racial awareness and pride and (2) locus of control, or one's sense of personal power in shaping outcomes. When crossing these dimensions, four socialization practices emerge: (1) active socialization, characterized by high awareness and high external locus of control; (2) proactive socialization, characterized by high awareness and high internal locus of control; (3) a passive socialization approach, characterized by low awareness and high internal locus of control, and (4) a reactive approach characterized by low awareness and high external control. Mandara (2006) argued that proactive socialization that prepares children for obstacles and emphasizes racial pride is most strongly associated with achievement. This may explain the conflicting findings reviewed above: racial socialization *per se* neither promotes nor detracts from achievement. Rather, it is the type of socialization messages that shape children's development: Socialization that focuses on mistrust is associated with negative outcomes; in contrast, proactive socialization is associated with positive outcomes. Qualitative research conducted by Maton and colleagues (1998) among 60 high-achieving African American college males and their families also lends

support for Mandara's typology. Common themes found throughout the interview data consisted of strict limit setting and discipline, a determination of parents for their child to succeed against the odds, family nurturance, and community connectedness.

Intervention trials focused on supporting families to reduce the achievement gap would provide important information about the causal role of family relationships in giving rise to the gap and about what might be done to reduce it. Unfortunately, no family-focused interventions that we are aware of have been implemented with the specific aim of reducing the achievement gap. As we reviewed, and as others have pointed out (Cowan & Cowan, 2002), the quality of relationships in families is related to children's academic development, and the magnitude of this relationship is substantial. Furthermore, at least one randomized controlled trial with longitudinal follow-up suggests that interventions to improve marital quality during normative family transitions—before the birth of a first child and at a first child's entry to school—show immediate, lasting, and substantial academic benefits to children (Cowan, Johnson, Measelle, & Cowan, 2005). Although these interventions largely focused on White, middle-class families, it seems likely that the same strategies used in these prevention trials could be culturally adapted for work with ethnic minority families.

Parents may also foster their children's achievement through their engagement with school, which is a particular kind of social transaction distinct from parenting and racial socialization. A longitudinal study with 281 low-income children and families suggests that gaps in achievement between low- and high-status students substantially diminish when parents become involved in their children's school (Dearing, Kreider, Simpkins, & Weiss, 2006). One of the challenges is that low-income and less educated parents may not possess the knowledge and skills to advocate effectively for their children. More research is needed to understand how to encourage productive parent involvement with schools.

There are a number of comprehensive school-based prevention programs that include parent involvement elements. For example, the School Development Program (SDP) is a widely implemented whole-school intervention that includes a parent involvement component. Comer and Haynes (1991) reported that these interventions target three levels of parent involvement: (1) involvement in school governance, consisting of participation as part of a team of teachers, administrators, and other professional and non-professional support staff; (2) helping in the classroom, planning school activities, and joining parent organizations; and (3) attending general school activities. Through participation, parents bond with school, making it more likely their children will also bond with school. The impact of the parent component alone has not been tested. However, overall, SDP has been shown to improve achievement (Borman, Hewes, Overman, & Brown, 2003; Cook, Murphy, & Hunt, 2000), school climate, and child behavior (Cook et al., 2000), particularly among ethnic minority populations (Emmons, 2005). Unpublished longitudinal data involving the program in three districts also found reductions in the achievement gap (Emmons, 2005).

The Child Development Program (CDP) is another whole-school intervention with a parent involvement component that includes activities inside and outside of the school (Battistich, Schaps, & Wilson, 2004; Solomon, Battistich, Watson, Schaps, & Lewis, 2000). "Homeside activities" are short assignments designed to bridge the gap between home and schools by providing opportunities for parents to hear about what their children are learning at school and for students and parents to exchange



ideas. School-based activities are also regularly scheduled, such as “Grandparents Gatherings” and “Family Read-Alouds” designed to enhance the connection between home and school. Like the Comer Process, the family component alone was not evaluated. However, it is likely that such strategies help support the achievement of ethnic minority children through increasing the parents’ and children’s positive feelings towards schools and increasing the congruence between home and school environments.

In broad terms, family relationships and family-school connections reflect social transactions that serve as direct effects—positive parent-child relationships and parent involvement in school foster children’s achievement. To the extent that those positive relationships are distributed unequally, they contribute to the gap. It is difficult to know the extent to which family relationships differ systematically by ethnicity. This is in part because of ongoing debate about whether the same kind of parenting is best for children from all ethnic groups. The literature suggests that what parenting practices nurture children’s talent best depends in part on a family’s ethnicity and socioeconomic status, with authoritative parenting generally fostering achievement and other positive outcomes for White middle-class families, and a stricter form of authoritative parenting fostering achievement among Black families and families living in higher-poverty neighborhoods. Furthermore, for ethnic minority children, parental racial socialization practices that instill in children ethnic pride and a sense of agency foster academic success. Whether the parenting practices that promote optimal achievement are present in different degrees among parents from different ethnic groups, in turn contributing to the ethnic achievement gap, is an important area for ongoing research.

*School* Every day at school, children participate in a large number of social transactions critical to their academic development. These social transactions can be thought of as direct effects. High quality instruction, strong teacher-student relationships, and exposure to intellectually stimulating material all promote children’s academic achievement (Hamre & Pianta, 2005; Weinstein, 2002). To the extent that these resources are distributed unequally to children from different ethnic groups, they are likely to contribute to ethnic differences in achievement. Like SES, academic resources in schools thus promote achievement when they are present, and they contribute to ethnic differences in achievement when they are unequally available to children depending on their ethnic group membership.

Several lines of evidence suggest that social and instructional resources that foster the development of talent are more available to students from some ethnic groups than others. In a close examination of the ECLS-K data, Lee and Burkam (2002) found that at school entry, the teachers of African American and Latino students were less experienced and had access to fewer professional development opportunities, relative to the teachers of European American and Asian American students. In addition, African American and Latino students attended schools with larger class sizes, less parental outreach, lower skill levels among students, and lower average SES. Others have found that starting as early as first grade, students are systematically tracked by a variety of practices, including grade retention, special education placement, and between-school and within-class ability grouping (Entwisle, Alexander, & Olson, 1997). These structural practices functionally distribute resources that promote intellectual development to high status, largely European American schools and classrooms.

Other lines of research suggest that throughout schooling, African American and Latino students are substantially more likely to be placed in lower academic track classrooms or instructional groups (Lucas & Berends, 2002; Oakes, 2005; Rist, 1973). Furthermore, the amount and quality of material presented varies by academic track. Oakes (2005) found that compared to high-track English and math classes, in low-track classes, less time was spent on instruction, more time was spent off task, more time was spent on behavior management, and homework expectations were substantially lower. Furthermore, the nature of the social transactions are very different across tracks. Low-track courses tend to be repetitive, uninteresting, and focused on behavioral control. In contrast, instruction in high track classrooms tends to be novel, challenging, and focused on intellectual exploration (Oakes, 2005; Weinstein, 2002).

In addition to instructional resources, teacher-student relationships reflect an important transactional process that affects achievement. Research on teacher expectancy effects, student-teacher interactions, and student-teacher affective bonds suggest that when students have strong relationships with teachers, they are more engaged and successful in school (Weinstein, 2002). For example, Gregory and Weinstein (2004) found that adolescents who perceived more personal connection with their teachers did better in math. Similarly, others have documented that the quality of teacher-student relationships affects student achievement, particularly for children who are at elevated risk of failure (Hamre & Pianta, 2005). Thus, the quality of the teacher-student relationship can be considered a direct effect: It is an important determinant of student achievement, and if it is distributed to children unequally across ethnicity, it is a likely contributor to ethnic differences in achievement.

Indeed, European American students enjoy more positive relationships with their teachers than African American students. For example, in a study with 197 teachers and 880 students, Saft and Pianta (2001) found that African American and Hispanic students tended to have higher conflict with and more dependency on their teachers, particularly when the teacher was from a different ethnic group. Others have found that African American students were more likely than European American students to be referred for discipline, and that this was because of differential treatment rather than different behavior (Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002). In a sample of 607 first-grade students, Hughes, Gleason, & Zhang (2005) found that teachers had lower quality relationships with African American students and believed their African American students were less talented than their equally achieving peers. Others have found evidence that teachers often expect more of European American and Asian students than their similarly qualified African American and Latino peers (Baron, Tom, & Cooper, 1985; Ferguson, 1998; McKown & Weinstein, in press).

Teacher-student relationships are particularly influential for children from academically stereotyped ethnic groups. For example, a longitudinal study including 511 children aged 4 at the outset of the study (Burchinal, Peisner-Feinberg, Pianta, & Howes, 2002) found that the quality of the teacher-student relationship was more strongly predictive of language development for African American students than their non-African American peers. Ferguson (2002) found that in ethnically mixed suburban schools, African American students reported that teacher encouragement was a particularly important reason they work hard in school. Others have found that the relationship between teacher expectations and student achievement is stronger for African American students than their European American peers (Jussim, Eccles, & Madon, 1996; McKown & Weinstein, 2002). These studies suggest that for African American students, the relationship with teachers is a particularly powerful resource

for intellectual development. Thus, low-quality teacher-student relationships among African American students may have a particularly powerful and negative effect on African American student achievement.

Educational intervention studies provide important information about the relationship between school-based direct effects and the achievement gap, suggesting what works for whom. When the impact on achievement for members of different ethnic groups is evaluated, intervention studies help answer the question of whether the unequal distribution of social transactions in school has a causal impact on student achievement. Most intervention studies have focused on the impact of improved instructional practices on student achievement. Fewer studies have examined interventions to promote better teacher-student relationships. In general, intervention studies suggest equalizing access to instructional and relational resources in the classroom benefits low-achieving students and students from stereotyped ethnic groups, and does not harm high-achieving students and students from non-stereotyped ethnic groups.

One instructional strategy that has demonstrated benefits to low-achieving students, particularly ethnic minority students, has been cooperative learning, which is a strategy for changing the nature of social transactions between students in a classroom. In cooperative learning, students are assigned to work together in academically heterogeneous groups that are flexibly assigned and periodically changed. Group members are assigned roles that maximize student interdependence, defined as the extent to which one student's performance depends on her groupmate's performance. In some forms of cooperative learning (Aronson & Patnoe, 1997), lessons are segmented so that each student in a group is assigned to be an "expert" in one aspect of the assignment. Expert groups meet to cover their assignment and then each expert comes back to the home group to share what he or she learned. Each student's learning and performance thus depends on other students in the group. In other forms of cooperative learning (Slavin & Cooper, 1999), students complete assignments in groups and each student's score is influenced by the scores obtained by other members of the group. Thus, each student has a vested interest in his or her groupmate's performance. Others have integrated interventions to improve the status of low-achieving group members by publicly pointing out the students' strengths and calling on group members to take advantage of the student's talents (Cohen & Lotan, 1995). Studies have consistently found that cooperative learning strategies that foster interdependence and equalize status increase the engagement and achievement of low-achieving students while fostering the continued success of high-achievers. They also increase cross-race liking and reduce prejudice (McKown, 2005).

Other educational interventions that focus on multiple social transactions in school have shown great promise in reducing the achievement gap. One whole-school reform model incorporates true cooperative learning as part of a comprehensive intervention to deliver effective curriculum using effective instructional practices. Success for All (SFA) has been shown to improve literacy outcomes for students at all points on the achievement continuum (Slavin, 2005). The SFA model includes careful assessment of children's skill level; student assignment to academically heterogeneous work groups; shared responsibility and accountability for work completion; a highly scripted and effective, phonics-based curriculum; paraprofessional tutoring; and family support. One evaluation found that participation in SFA reduced the reading achievement gap between African American and European American students and between Latino and

European American students, and that more years students were exposed to SFA, the greater the reduction in the gap (Slavin & Madden, 2001).

Another promising whole-school reform model is KIPP, the Knowledge is Power Program. KIPP schools create social transactions between teachers, between teachers and students, and between students that promote achievement. Specifically, KIPP schools use an extended school day, clear and consistent behavioral expectations, highly structured instructional experiences, culturally appropriate instructional practices such as a call-and-response format, and individualized mentoring. No peer-reviewed evaluations of the KIPP schools are available. However, according to KIPP, participating students, most of whom are African American or Latino, dramatically improve their academic skills, and increase the likelihood of college entry and scholarship procurement. These claims are supported by reports from independent evaluators, all of whom present evidence that students in KIPP schools make substantial academic gains (David et al., 2006; Educational Policy Institute, 2005).

African American and Latino students participating in SFA and KIPP schools are exposed to rigorous instructional experiences. Furthermore, the highly structured lesson planning and an explicit focus on clear, high expectations for behavioral and academic performance likely improve the quality of teacher-student relationships. In other words, both SFA and KIPP can be seen as interventions to reduce the difference in instructional and relational resources available to students from different ethnic groups. The existing data suggest that equalizing the distribution of these resources narrows the achievement gap. African American and Latino students participating in SFA and KIPP schools benefit academically from participation, and other students do as well or better than they would in more typical instructional arrangements. These findings suggest SFA and KIPP are promising strategies for reducing the achievement gap. They also suggest that social transactions at school—expressed in the form of quality instruction and teacher-student relationships—contribute to the achievement gap when those resources are distributed unequally to children from different ethnic groups.

In contrast to a relatively large number of intervention studies focused on curriculum and instruction, a small number of intervention studies examine efforts to improve student-teacher relationships. One intervention strategy, called Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement, or TESA, focuses on training teachers to behave in ways that communicate more equitable expectations to their students. Evaluations of TESA suggest only modest benefits (Gottfredson, Marciniak, Birds-eye, & Gottfredson, 1995), perhaps because it focuses on teacher behavior without attending to the affective quality of the relationship between teacher and student. What is needed are studies examining interventions focused on improving relationships between teachers and students, particularly between European American teachers and ethnic minority students.

*Peers* A final noteworthy developmental context in which critical social transactions take place is the peer group. We know that the quality of children's peer relationships are predictive of later life outcomes, including academic outcomes such as dropping out of school (Parker & Asher, 1987). Furthermore, the nature, functioning, and importance of peers change dramatically between early childhood and adolescence (Bukowski, Newcomb, & Hartup, 1998), suggesting a greater influence of peers with age. What role might peers play in the genesis or maintenance of the ethnic achievement gap?

Ethnographic data from low- and high-income high school settings suggest that African American youth who are engaged in school and show signs of success may carry a “burden of acting White”. In other words, achievement-oriented behaviors are not considered by peers to be consistent with a positive African American identity. As a result, students who display these behaviors are discounted by peers for “acting White” and rejected from their larger peer groups (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). There is mixed evidence from empirical research examining this theory. Survey data reviewed later in this chapter does not suggest that ethnic minorities devalue education or pressure peers to de-identify from schooling (Ainsworth-Darnell & Downey, 1998; Ferguson, 2002). On the other hand, other research suggests that some ethnic minorities value low-performing peers more than high-performing peers (Graham, 2001) and ethnic minorities are more disconnected from learning (Osborne, 1997). At least one longitudinal study suggests that for African American youth, the relationship between peer support for achievement and academic success depends on the neighborhood level of risk, with peer influences playing a larger role in low-risk neighborhoods (Gonzales et al., 1996). Others find that for high-risk African American youth, peer support is protective in some academic subjects but not others (Gutman, Sameroff, & Eccles, 2002). More research is needed to understand the influence of peer processes in minority student patterns of achievement.

*Development, Direct Effects, and the Achievement Gap* What evidence is there of age-related changes in the impact of direct effects on the achievement gap? Many studies of family socioeconomic and relational resources suggest that at school entry, socioeconomic resources and family processes account for the lion’s share of the school readiness gap. After school entry, children are exposed to a broader range of environments. Teachers begin to play an influential role in children’s development. Peer relationships also play an increasingly important role in children’s lives (Bukowski, Newcomb, & Hartup, 1996). As a result, after school entry, with increasing age, we hypothesize that other factors in addition to family will shape children’s achievement and achievement-related beliefs and attitudes. Although families continue to play an important role, relationships with teachers, instructional practices, curriculum, and peer relationships may increasingly shape children’s achievement and, by extension, the gap.

Unfortunately, no studies that we are aware of explicitly examine age-related changes in the effects of a broad range of academic resources on the achievement gap. However, there is reason to believe that the magnitude of specific direct effects changes with age. One meta-analysis, for example, found that the strength of the relationship between teacher expectations and year-end achievement is strongest for younger children and becomes weaker as children get older (Raudenbush, 1984). This suggests that at least some aspects of the teacher-student relationship may be particularly influential to young children. However, others found that teacher expectations were more strongly predictive, particularly of negative achievement outcomes, for African American students compared to European American students, and that this relationship became stronger with age (McKown & Weinstein, 2002). Thus, the meaning and impact of instructional and relational resources on the achievement gap may change with age, but the exact nature of those developmental changes remains an area for future clarification.

## SIGNAL EFFECTS

In addition to direct effects, a second class of social transactions may contribute to the ethnic achievement gap. Signal effects occur when events signal to students that their intellectual ability is devalued because of their ethnic group membership, causing a self-fulfilling prophecy. Here, we review evidence for the operation of signal effects in childhood.

*Stereotype Threat* Signal effects are produced by social transactions that signal to members of negatively stereotyped ethnic groups that their talents and abilities are devalued because of their race. A paradigmatic example from the stereotype threat literature is the standardized testing situation. When testing conditions highlight that a challenging test is diagnostic of ability, for example, members of academically stereotyped groups may become concerned that their performance will be judged in light of a stereotype about their group's intellectual ability, leading to reduced performance (Steele & Aronson, 1995). From an observer's perspective, this environmental signal can appear identical to all children. However, the meaning of environmental signals can be very different for children depending on whether they are from a stereotyped group.

Among adults, signal effects, in the form of stereotype threat, have been robustly demonstrated with different signals, towards a variety of stereotyped groups, and in a myriad of stereotype-relevant outcome domains. For example, when African Americans indicate their ethnicity before taking a difficult test, they perform worse than when they do not indicate their ethnicity (Steele & Aronson, 1995). When a task in which participants read sentences about people doing things is framed as a memorization task, older but not younger adults remember less than when the same task is framed as a way to learn how people form impressions of others from their behavior (Chasteen, Bhattacharyya, Horhota, Tam, & Hasher, 2005). African Americans perform better and European Americans perform worse on a golf task when the task is characterized as diagnostic of "natural athletic ability"; in contrast European Americans perform better and African Americans perform worse when the same golf task is characterized as diagnostic of "sports intelligence" (Stone, Lynch, Sjomeling, & Darley, 1999). When gender is made salient, women but not men perform worse on difficult math tests (Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1999). When men are told that women typically perform better than men on a test of nonverbal sensitivity, men perform worse than when they are told that the same task assessed "information processing." (Koenig & Eagly, 2005). Each of these studies suggests that when a stereotyped identity is made salient before a performance task that lies in a stereotyped domain, this signals to members of stereotyped groups that they may be judged stereotypically, which in turn hampers performance on the task.

Signal effects will, by definition, exclusively affect individuals from groups that are negatively stereotyped. In the academic arena, this includes African Americans and Latinos. (Bobo, 2001; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1998). One important question is whether children are vulnerable to the same stereotype threat effects so consistently demonstrated among adults. Ambady, Shih, Kim, and Pittinsky (2001) found that after 5- to 7-year-old and 11- to 13- (but not 8- to 10-) year-old children completed a task that made a stereotyped identity salient, they performed on cognitive tasks consistent with a stereotype about their group. This suggests that for children, events preceding a performance task can lead to signal effects.

Other research suggests that subtler signals only influence children after they have developed the ability to detect the signal. McKown and Weinstein (2003) found that only after African American and Latino students become aware of cultural stereotypes about ability do testing conditions that emphasize the diagnostic nature of the test produce lower performance than testing conditions that characterize a test as not diagnostic of ability. In contrast, European American and Asian American students who were aware of the same stereotypes performed the same regardless of testing conditions. When children had not yet become aware of the cultural stereotypes, the conditions of testing did not have a differential impact on the performance of children from different ethnic groups. In that same study, McKown and Weinstein (2003) found that between the ages of 6 and 10, children become increasingly aware of the broadly held cultural stereotypes, and that African American and Latino students are particularly likely to be aware of such cultural stereotypes. This research suggests that for those children who are able to detect the signal, subtle environmental cues can communicate to children from stereotyped groups that they are less capable, creating a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The stereotype threat literature has offered important insights into the range of events that can lead to signal effects. With few exceptions, those cues were identified in the context of carefully controlled true experiments. Furthermore, the experimental manipulations used to induce stereotype threat were events occurring immediately preceding high-stakes conditions. By analogy, these experiments suggest the ways in which the context of testing might affect the test performance of members of stereotyped ethnic groups. It is important to note that there are a large range of events in school that are highly consequential to student learning. We know, for example, that teacher expectations can affect student achievement (Weinstein, 2002). McKown and Weinstein (in press) found that in highly diverse classrooms in which students report that teachers treat high and low achievers very differently, teacher expectations favor White and Asian students over their Black and Latino peers with equal records of achievement. Teacher behaviors that communicate those expectations may signal to Black and Latino students that the teacher devalues their intellectual ability because of their ethnicity. This may be why teacher expectations, particularly low teacher expectations, are more strongly related to achievement for students from stereotyped ethnic groups (Jussim et al., 1996; McKown & Weinstein, 2002). These findings suggest that a large range of events beyond the formal testing context may signal to students that their intellectual ability is devalued. A critical area of future inquiry will involve mapping the range of environmental events that may induce signal effects, and evaluating the range of outcomes that may be affected by those signals.

*Interventions to Reduce Signal Effects* A small number of intervention studies provide some insight into strategies that may reduce the negative consequences of signal events on the performance of negatively stereotyped individuals. Good, Aronson, and Inzlicht (2003) found that when female middle school students are taught that intelligence depends on effort and that academic difficulties are situational, stereotype threat effects on math test performance are reduced. In this randomized experiment, low-income Latino and African American middle school students worked with college-aged mentors to learn about determinants of academic success. For the intervention, students were randomly assigned to learn either that intelligence is malleable and depends on effort ("incremental" condition), that academic difficulties in seventh grade arise from the novelty of the situation ("attribution" condition), to a

combined condition in which students learned both lessons, or to a control lesson focusing on an anti-drug message. Lessons were reinforced by web-based research projects. Good et al. (2003) found that in the control condition, boys outperformed girls on a math test, but in the incremental, attribution, and combined conditions, girls' math test performance was equivalent to that of boys.

In another study, Cohen, Garcia, Apfel, and Master (2006) evaluated the role of self-affirmation statements in reducing signal effects at school. Specifically, in the fall of two consecutive years, middle school students were randomly assigned to complete a brief writing exercise. In both cohorts, the experimental group indicated their most important values, and wrote a paragraph about why those values were important. The control group indicated their least important values and wrote a paragraph explaining why. At all levels of prior performance, African American students in the affirmation condition showed lower levels of stereotype activation and received higher grades than their African American peers in the control condition. Furthermore, African American students in the intervention condition earned a higher proportion of possible points across the semester than their African American peers in the control group. There were no effects of condition on the performance of participating European American students. The Good et al. (2003) and Cohen et al. (2006) studies suggest that a variety of coping strategies—ranging from how to think about the sources of success and failure to self-affirming statements—have the potential to attenuate signal effects.

These studies have focused on equipping students with ways of thinking that may reduce signal effects. Interestingly, there have been no interventions that focus on reducing the frequency and intensity of the signals that propagate stereotype threat effects. McKown, Gregory, and Weinstein (in press) argued that several organizational and instructional practices in schools might signal important information to students about the value of their intellectual ability. Specifically, the level and salience of within-classroom competition, within- and between-classroom ability grouping practices, instructional goals (performance vs. mastery), teacher and student theories of intelligence, and teacher and student level of ethnic bias all are plausible sources of environmental signals to students that their intellectual ability either is or is not valued because of their ethnicity. Future intervention research should focus on the consequences of reducing the prevalence of events, particularly in schools, that propagate signal effects.

*Development, Signal Effects, and the Achievement Gap* There is an important but underappreciated developmental dimension to the achievement gap. For children to be affected by often subtle social cues that their intellectual ability is devalued because of their ethnic group membership, they must be able to infer others' stereotypes and must be aware that people often hold such stereotypes. Between the ages of 6 and 10, children's awareness of others' stereotypes changes profoundly (see Chapters 2 and 7, this volume; McKown & Weinstein, 2003; McKown, 2004). As a result, for younger children, it is likely that direct effects and overt messages about race and intellectual ability will affect the gap. In contrast, subtler cues about race and ability may have an effect only after children become aware of the broadly held stereotypes that can sometimes be expressed in others' behavior. As children develop greater social awareness across middle childhood, the range of events that may signal important information to children about their intellectual ability thus broadens greatly. Because of these developmental changes, we hypothesize that, across elementary



school, the relative impact on the achievement gap of signal effects increases. This remains an empirical question in need of investigation. However, the existing evidence suggests that interventions to reduce the achievement gap should focus on different social forces at different ages.

### THE ROLE OF CULTURE

Cultural differences are often invoked to explain ethnic disparities in achievement. Are cultural values responsible for ethnic differences in achievement? Where do those cultural values come from? How do they relate to direct and signal effects? We propose three general features about the role of culture in shaping achievement. First, viewed overall and among lower-achieving ethnic minority children and youth, culture's role in shaping achievement and the gap is minor compared to direct and signal effects. Second, for a small subset of children, cultural beliefs and attitudes do have an impact on achievement. Third, those cultural beliefs and attitudes are themselves the product of direct and signal effects. Conceptually, therefore, cultural beliefs and attitudes reflect one pathway through which direct and signal effects may shape achievement and therefore contribute to the ethnic achievement gap.

What do we mean by "culture"? We define culture as a learned and highly variable set of traditions, attitudes, and beliefs that exist within groups of people that is transmitted from one generation to the next, and that guides certain behaviors (Betancourt & López, 1993; Rohner, 1984). To further clarify our usage, the "groups" we refer to are stigmatized ethnic minorities as defined earlier in the chapter, and our analysis of culture is limited to the level of values, attitudes, roles, and beliefs about education and learning. We first review common cultural explanations for the gap. We conclude with our perspective on the role of culture in the achievement gap.

### CULTURE AND BELIEFS ABOUT THE VALUE OF EDUCATION

The dominant theory of the contribution of culture to the achievement gap holds that members of different ethnic-cultural groups value education differently, which gives rise to ethnic differences in academic achievement. As we describe next, there are several variants of this hypothesis.

*The Hypothesis* One cultural explanation for the achievement gap is the devaluation hypothesis, which states that members of academically stigmatized ethnic groups devalue education. Devaluation in turn leads to lower levels of achievement. There are three variants of the devaluation hypothesis. One variant is that ethnic minorities do not value academic achievement. We refer to this as *passive devaluation*. Another variant is that ethnic minorities develop an intentional opposition or resistance to achievement that can take the form of overt anti-intellectualism (McWhorter, 2000) or "low effort syndrome" (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). From this perspective, ethnic minorities behave in ways that interfere with academic success. We refer to this as *active devaluation*. Another line of thought is that some ethnic minorities become invested in nonacademic pursuits such as popular culture, style, and athletics. The result is that effort is directed away academics and towards behaviors that project suave calmness and imperviousness. Majors and Billson (1993) refer to this as a "Cool Pose" and theorize that it serves important self-esteem functions for some minorities. We refer to this as *alternative valuation*.

*The Evidence* Theories about passive and active devaluation among African Americans were developed from ethnographic data that is difficult to generalize (Ogbu, 1990). Survey research has tested the generalizability of these claims. For example, Cook and Ludwig (1998) used survey data from the National Educational Longitudinal Survey (NELS) to investigate whether African American students exert less effort and perceive greater social cost to academic success than European Americans. The study found that African American and European American students spend the same amount of time doing homework. These findings were echoed in a survey study of student attitudes in high-achieving, ethnically heterogeneous school districts, where there were few ethnic differences in the amount of time spent doing homework and self-reported investment in and valuing of education (Ferguson, 2002).

Cook and Ludwig (1998) also evaluated the perceived social costs of academic effort and success. Specifically, they asked students if they had ever been put down or threatened by other students, and about perceptions of their popularity. Results indicated that, across African Americans and European Americans, those students performing well in school (operationalized as those students who have received A's in math and students who were members of an academic honor society) did not feel more threatened, put down by others, or unpopular than non-high performing students. Also, African American high-achievers did not report greater social costs than high-performing European Americans. The authors suggest that if there are costs to succeeding in school, the burden of "acting White" for African Americans is no greater than the burden of working "too hard" for European Americans. Still others have found that when African American students identify with European American culture, this is related to lower achievement, which runs counter to the prediction of the "acting White" hypothesis (Spencer, Noll, Stoltzfus, & Harpalani, 2001).

Others investigated African American occupational perceptions of the returns to educational achievement and found that African American students are more likely than European Americans to report that education is important to getting a job later on, and to have more optimistic occupational expectations than European Americans (Ainsworth-Darnell & Downey, 1998). In addition, African American students are more likely to report a feeling of satisfaction for doing what they are supposed to do in class, and less likely to agree that it is okay to break rules. The authors conclude that although it is probable that the most discouraged African American students exhibit attitudes consistent with oppositional culture theory, more typically, their attitudes towards school are positive.

Studies that rely on questionnaire data pose a risk that self-report may not accurately reflect student attitudes towards academics, but may be more reflective of social desirability response biases or general societal beliefs rather than personal beliefs (Mickelson, 1990). To circumvent these shortcomings, Graham (2001) measured academic values by asking students who they most admired, respected, and wanted to be like. Among a sample of fourth-graders, Graham (2001) found that ethnic minority boys and girls valued same-gender high achieving peers. Among a sample of African American middle school students, African American girls nominated same-gender high-achieving peers; however, African American boys nominated low-achieving boys. These findings, along with other research on achievement orientation, suggest that most students begin valuing achievement, but over time some ethnic minority boys may be vulnerable to devaluing achievement (Tyson, 2002).

Other research that has employed indirect measures of academic engagement has found a similar pattern of disengagement among older ethnic minority boys. For example, Osborne (1997) examined the relationship between self-esteem and achievement as a measure of disidentification. Reasoning that for academically identified students, academic performance will affect self-esteem, Osborne (1997) inferred that the smaller the correlation between self-esteem and achievement, the greater the disidentification. Using a longitudinal data set consisting of African American, Latino, and White boys and girls, Osborne found that between 8th and 12th grades it was only African American boys who exhibited significant disidentification.

Very little research has examined the alternative valuation hypothesis. The authors of the "cool pose" theory based their theory on intensive interview data on 61 African American males who were initially from the same low-income setting (Majors & Billson, 1992). Drawing from these interviews, the authors identified trends that suggested that some African American males use posturing and posing as a means of protecting their self-worth. In particular, behaviors that expressed fearlessness, style, and detachment were argued to act as coping mechanisms for the degree of oppression and hopelessness they experienced. More recent research by Peterson-Lewis and Bratton (2004) found similar trends among 64 African American high school students who were interviewed regarding how they defined what it means to "act Black." The most common responses related to disposition and "acting Black" involved, "acting tough," "having a 'don't care' attitude," "acting lax," and "acting disrespectful." Further inquiry is required to determine how prevalent the "cool pose" is and how much it interferes with academic achievement.

#### PATTERNED INTERCULTURAL INTERACTIONS

Beyond cultural devaluing, others have argued that intercultural dynamics may contribute to the gap. These explanations are distinct from dynamics that give rise to direct and signal effects. For example, some have argued that African Americans' and European Americans' investment in White guilt has led to a lack of commitment to achievement (Steele, 2006). According to this argument, the civil rights movement led to a loss of moral authority among European Americans, particularly regarding race. Because European Americans have become stigmatized as a racist group, they respond in ways to disprove being racist. One such response is a tendency of European Americans to lower standards and expectations for African Americans in recognition that the playing field is not level, which is itself a form of racism. In turn, African Americans are invested in White guilt because it confers political advantage and offers an external explanation for failure. Steele concludes that European American culture holds back African Americans by not allowing them to compete at the highest level, and African Americans' own culture holds them back by fueling and reinforcing a culture of lower standards. We are not aware of systematic empirical research testing Steele's hypothesis.

Another intercultural dynamic that may contribute to the gap involves incongruities between the cultural rules at home and at school (Tharp, 1989). An obvious example involves language differences. If a child does not speak English and no one at the child's school speaks the child's language of origin, that child's opportunity to learn is constrained by language incongruity. Less obvious incongruities can also interfere with children's participation in school. For example, in an ethnography of homes and schools in a predominantly working-class, African American city, Brice-Heath (1983)

discovered a particular cultural barrier to children's participation. The way African American parents and European American teachers used questions was dramatically different. African American parents asked questions when they wanted to know something they did not already know. In contrast, European American teachers asked questions to evaluate what children knew. African American students knew that their teachers already knew the answers to their questions, and were confused about why they were being asked questions. As a result, teachers' questions were often met with puzzled looks rather than energetic discussion. A simple but invisible clash of cultural rules between home and school interfered with learning. Similar disjunctures have been found by others, including Delgado-Gaitan (1994), who examined home and school cultures among Mexican immigrant families.

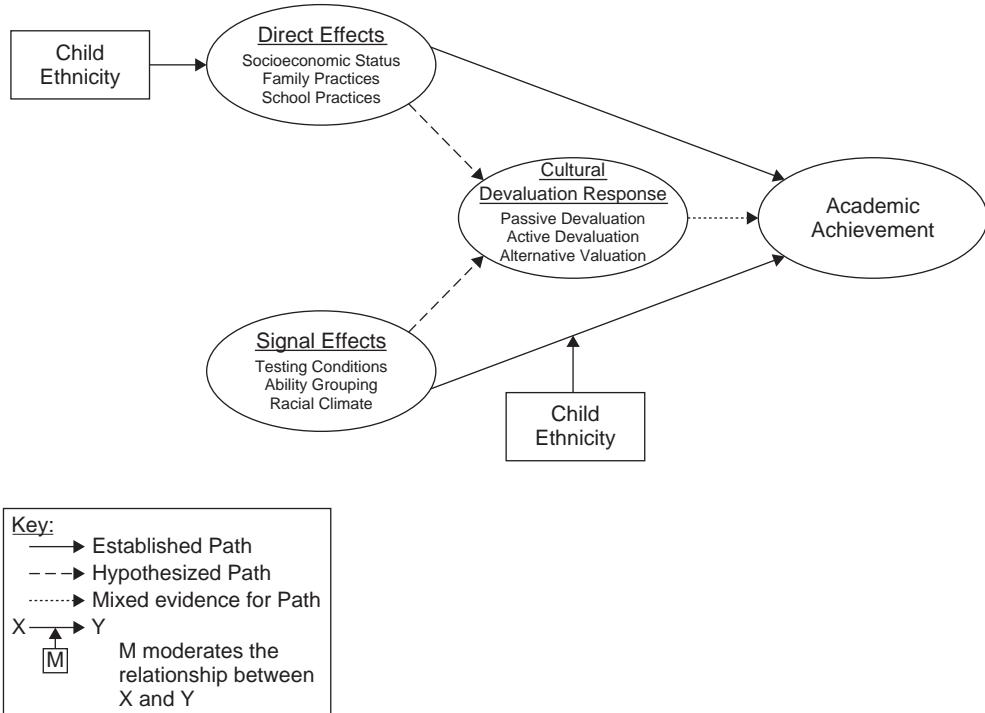
There are many possible incongruities between home culture and school culture that may interfere with achievement. Understanding what kinds of incongruities under what circumstances affect which children, and how families and educators can support children as they navigate these incongruities, is a major challenge. More broadly, it remains an important empirical question whether, after direct and signal effects are removed from children's lives, residual cultural incongruities between home and school would perpetuate the gap, and if so, how wide the residual gap would be.

#### CONCLUSION AND INTERVENTION IMPLICATION

Research on the role of culture is mixed. Some of the research suggests that ethnic minorities do indeed devalue academic learning more than European Americans while other research suggests that they value it just as much or more. African Americans and Latinos *as a whole* do not appear to devalue academic learning. Some ethnic minority boys may be at elevated risk of devaluation after elementary school. Overall, the current state of the research does not lead us to conclude that cultural devaluation of academic learning is a substantial contributor to the achievement gap beyond the direct and signal effects described earlier in the chapter. What devaluing does exist may arise from the direct and signal effects described earlier in this chapter. Furthermore, incongruities between the cultural rules of home and school may contribute to the achievement gap. However, further research is necessary before we can draw firm conclusions about how much these incongruities contribute to the gap.

In Figure 15.1, we illustrate the proposed roles that direct effects, signal effects, and culture play in shaping minority student achievement. The lines from direct effects and signal effects to academic achievement represent the independent influence that these two processes have on achievement. We maintain that these processes can operate on achievement in the absence of cultural effects. These associations are represented by solid lines to indicate them as pathways firmly substantiated by empirical evidence. In terms of direct effects, ethnic minority children are exposed to fewer social and economic resources that support achievement. Ethnic differences in exposure to social transactions that promote achievement in turn shape ethnic differences in achievement. In contrast, signals about the academic inferiority of a child's ethnic group only affect children about whom broadly held negatively stereotypes about intellectual ability persist. Thus, signal events have a different effect on children from stereotyped ethnic groups than on children from nonstereotyped ethnic groups.

Direct and signal effects thus shape achievement without reference to culture. In addition to the independent associations of direct and signal effects with achievement, we hypothesize (represented by dashed lines in Figure 15.1) that direct and signal



**Figure 15.1** Model of the role of direct effects and culture in shaping ethnic differences in academic achievement

effects produce and maintain cultural patterns, beliefs, and attitudes regarding school. In turn, these beliefs and attitudes about school and schooling can influence achievement (an association represented by the dotted line between culture and achievement). Thus, culture mediates some of the relationship between direct and signal effects and achievement. We propose that culture’s influence on the gap is in general less well-established and probably less central than direct and signal effects.

Given our premise that cultural attitudes and beliefs are largely in response to direct and signal effects, we posit that practices linked to direct and signal effects are likely to be most effective at preventing the development of cultural beliefs that are unsupportive of academic achievement. In particular, practices that reduce or counteract the negative power of direct and signal forces, such as those reviewed previously, are likely to be the most effective and efficient strategies for reducing the gap.

### DISCUSSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The existing research on social sources of influence on minority student achievement suggests that no one process completely explains the ethnic achievement gap. Examining the combined influence of multiple social forces on student achievement may provide a fuller explanation of the origins of the gap and suggest efficient remedies. There are many risks involved with examining multiple causes. The sheer cost of mounting appropriate research and intervention trials is enormous. Furthermore,

multiple-cause studies may lead to an atheoretical and unproductive search for causes. What is needed is a coherent social theory of educational equity that includes a limited number of propositions about the causes of inequity that lend themselves to empirical evaluation.

The principles described in this chapter have the features of such a theory. First, our model does not incorporate endogenous causal explanations of the achievement gap such as genetic factors linked to race or cultural deficits, because the logic and evidence for their effects on achievement is weak. Second, we propose generally that social transactions between individuals and between individuals and institutions give rise to the achievement gap. We specifically propose that there are two *kinds* of transactional processes that contribute to the ethnic achievement gap, direct effects and signal effects. Furthermore, we believe there are a finite number of critical developmental contexts in which those transactions may unfold, with a focus on school, home, neighborhood, and peers. Finally, we acknowledge a limited role of cultural beliefs and attitudes in shaping the achievement of a subset of children—we specifically propose that cultural beliefs and attitudes that affect achievement are themselves the product of direct and signal effects.

Furthermore, we propose that developmental factors play an important role in determining which direct and signal effects are likely to shape the achievement gap in specific contexts. Because of developmental changes in the centrality of different contexts and key relationships, the kinds of social forces that give rise to and maintain the achievement gap are likely to shift with age. Young children depend on and are strongly influenced by parents. After school entry, teachers play an important role in shaping student achievement. In addition, as children make their way through the elementary grades and grow towards adolescence, peer relationships play an increasingly important role in children's values, decisions, and investment of time and effort. It is likely then that the weight of influence of family, school, and peers will shift over time, with the range of influences and influential contexts increasing as children mature. Little empirical work has examined this hypothesis. This represents an important and exciting area for future inquiry.

The role of signal effects is also likely to change during childhood. As children traverse middle childhood and become aware of social stereotypes about their ethnic group, a growing range of events may signal to students that their intellectual ability is devaluated because of their ethnicity. Imagine, for example, an African American preschooler who is treated coldly by a teacher. This may affect her attachment to and engagement in school because of the low quality of their relationship. Fast forward to fifth grade, where another teacher treats her negatively. Now she wonders whether the poor teacher treatment is because the teacher devalues her intellectual ability because of her race. Now the child's achievement is doubly hindered by a negative relationship with a teacher and by the ongoing prospect of stereotype threat. As the child becomes more aware that these interactions may be a responses to her ethnicity, she may begin to culturally define herself in ways that are detached from academic learning as a means of protecting her self-worth.

The boundary between direct and signal effects is not absolute. Some forces, such as a family's access to resources, are likely to shape achievement purely as a direct effect. Others, such as the conditions of standardized testing, are likely to shape achievement purely as a signal event. A third class of events may shape student achievement through simultaneous direct and signal effects. Quality teacher-student relationships may be distributed unequally by ethnic group, contributing to

the achievement gap as a direct effect. Differential quality teacher-student relationships may also be interpreted by students as reflecting teacher ethnic stereotypes about intellectual ability, which may affect the gap through a signal effect. The same event shapes achievement through two pathways, both of which may shape cultural beliefs about schooling that produce or maintain the gap. We contend that it is nonetheless important to maintain a distinction between these two kinds of processes, because they reflect very different mechanisms of effect, even under circumstances in which they co-occur.

A substantial amount of evidence supports the component propositions of this social theory of educational equity. The literature on some direct and signal effects is mature. Our understanding of the relationship between socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and achievement is well established, for example. The kinds of standardized testing conditions that invoke stereotype threat, a key signal effect, are also well established. Furthermore, we are beginning to understand developmental changes in children's social awareness that allow us to predict when signal effects, promulgated by subtle social cues, might shape and maintain the gap (Brown & Bigler, 2005; Brown, 2006, Chapter 7, this volume; McKown & Weinstein, 2003; McKown, 2004). Other areas, such as the role of peer relationships and home-school cultural incongruities, are in need of further investigation.

A key next step is to evaluate the major propositions of this theory. Where the evidence of single transactional effects is mature, studies should focus on examining the joint effects of these transactions on the achievement gap. Where it is in need of further development, careful single cause studies are appropriate. In both cases, study of the achievement gap will ideally be undertaken in the form of intervention trials that seek to change the nature of transactions to promote talent. This will serve the goal of testing the theory and the goal of evaluating practical strategies for achieving a valued social end. If pursued with sufficient rigor, resources, and clarity of purpose, we can more fully understand this problem. Most importantly, we can apply what we learn to eliminate educational inequity and, in so doing, fulfill a great many private hopes and dreams and invigorate the strength of our nation.

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## CHAPTER 16

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# The Impact of Race on Children's Occupational Aspirations

JULIE MILLIGAN HUGHES and REBECCA S. BIGLER

### INTRODUCTION

**W**ORK CONSTITUTES an enormous component of human lives. At its best, work has the potential to lend meaning to individuals' lives and to provide people with a sense of community and belonging (Chia, Foo, & Fang, 2006; Donaldson-Feilder & Bond, 2004; Marchand, Demers, & Durand, 2005). Work also provides financial resources that shape individuals' lives in important ways. Income is correlated, for example, with physical and mental health (Marmot, Fuhrer, & Ettner, 1998; Ostrove, Adler, & Kuppermann, 2000; Williams, Yu, & Jackson, 1997) and with self-reports of happiness and life satisfaction (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2002; Hagerty, 2000; Myers, 2000). Unfortunately, work is also a domain that is marked by racial inequities.

Despite significant gains within recent decades, the workforce continues to be characterized by several types of disparities across groups. Unemployment and underemployment rates are consistently higher among African American and Latino individuals than among European American individuals (Census Bureau, 2003, 2005). Among full-time workers within the United States, African American and Latino individuals earn median annual incomes that are far below the median annual income among European American individuals (Census Bureau, 2005). This disparity is explained, in part, by the unequal representation of racial and ethnic groups in high status occupations. According to 2000 U.S. Census data, one-third of European Americans are employed in the highest-paying occupational category,

compared to one-quarter of African American workers and one-fifth of Latino workers (Census Bureau, 2003).

Despite the centrality of work to human life—and the continued presence of racial and ethnic occupational disparities—relatively little psychological research has addressed the intersection of race and work. In contrast, a great deal of sociological and anthropological research is addressed to this topic, much of it aimed at describing racial differences in workforce participation (see Brathwaite, 1976; Grusky, 2001; Jarrett, 2000; Moss & Tilly, 2001; Schneider, 2000; Wilson, 2007). Even less common is psychological work that addresses *children's* conceptualization of race and the workforce and the ways in which their understanding of these domains shapes their occupational aspirations. This chapter represents a first step toward developing an integrative theoretical account of the role of race in shaping children's occupational aspirations. Specifically, we review research on the effects of race and ethnicity on children's occupational judgments and aspirations, and present a new model of the psychological processes that contribute to race differences in occupational roles.

#### OVERVIEW: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES, DEFINITIONS, AND AIMS

There are many possible theoretical approaches to understanding the effect of race on children's occupational judgments and aspirations. So, for example, some theorists have focused on the role of financial resources in constraining occupational goals (e.g., Ransom & Sutch, 2001). Other researchers have adopted environmental learning perspectives that focus on the role of reinforcement histories in shaping occupational decisions (Hosie, 1975; Krumboltz & Schroeder, 1965). In this chapter, we adopt a *developmental constructivist* approach to understanding the role of race in shaping children's occupational judgments and aspirations. Such approaches typically focus on the role that children's cognitions play in guiding development. Thus, our account of the influence of race on occupational roles highlights the development of children's beliefs about the intersection of race and the workforce, and how these beliefs, in turn, affect occupational judgments and aspirations.

In this chapter, we use the term *race* when describing individuals' membership in groups that are commonly referred to as "White," "Asian American," "Latino," and so on. Although it is now clear that race as traditionally defined (i.e., with respect to biology) does not exist (e.g., Graves, 2004; Serre & Paabo, 2004), adults and children continue to think of race as a basis for human categorization. Furthermore, available work suggests that children view many social categories as essential (i.e., natural, innate) rather than socially

constructed (Hirschfeld, 1996), thereby blurring the lines between race, ethnicity, nationality, and culture. Additional research on children's conceptualization of race, ethnicity, and nationality is clearly needed. In the meantime, our use of the term race is inclusive of these other constructs.

We begin this chapter with an overview of racial differences in children's occupational aspirations. In the second section of the chapter, we describe theoretical and empirical work on the processes by which children come to acquire these occupational goals. Because the corpus of research on occupational aspirations spans many disciplines (e.g., educational psychology, counseling psychology, vocational guidance, developmental psychology), we are unable to cover this literature in detail. Instead, we review two prominent, constructivist approaches to understanding the development of occupational goals. In the third section, we build on these theoretical perspectives to propose a model of the effects of race on children's occupational judgments and aspirations and review supporting empirical work. In the fourth section, we describe intervention strategies that may be effective for minimizing the extent to which race constrains children's occupational interests and finally, in the fifth section, we make recommendations for future research.

## CHILDREN'S OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

Research indicates that beginning as early as three years of age and continuing throughout adolescence, individuals' occupational goals and judgments vary along racial lines (e.g., Kelly, 1989; Vondracek & Kirchner, 1974). Findings typically suggest that African American children have relatively modest occupational goals compared to European American children (e.g., Hale, 1980). Cook and colleagues (1996), for example, found African American boys desired—and expected to hold—occupations that are lower in status than those desired or expected by European American boys. Many African American children aspire to work in occupations that have traditionally employed African Americans, such as soldier, teacher, postal worker, barber/beautician, or cafeteria worker (Terrell, Terrell, & Miller, 1993). Latino children, too, have relatively modest occupational goals compared to European American children. Reisman and Bañuelos (1984), for example, reported that European American preschool, kindergarten, and first-grade students had higher-status occupational aspirations than Latino children of the same ages. Although European American children aspire to higher status occupations than African American and Latino children, majority group status is not invariably associated with high-status aspirations. The occupational aspirations of Asian American children, and children from immigrant families, are higher in status than the aspirations of European American children (e.g., Flouris, Kassotakis, & Vamvoukas, 1990; Marjoribanks, 2004).

A serious limitation of much of the existing research on children's occupational goals, however, is the confounding of socioeconomic status with race. European American participants are typically from higher socioeconomic backgrounds than



are Latino and African American participants. Because socioeconomic status is related to occupational aspirations (Hauser, Tsai, & Sewell, 1983; Henderson, Hesketh, & Tuffin, 1988; Solorzano, 1992), much more work is needed to disentangle the effects of socioeconomic status from those of race. In addition, there is substantial within-group variability in occupational goals that is unexplained by extant theories. We seek to advance the field by proposing a model that posits that race, apart from its links to socioeconomic status, is an important component of children's occupational knowledge, beliefs, and judgments. At the same time, the model posits that variations in children's thinking about race and occupations *within* racial groups arise from contextual factors such as socioeconomic status, neighborhood characteristics, family socialization, etc. Thus, we propose that, although race differences in children's occupational goals are multiply determined, race per se plays a significant role in children's occupational judgments and aspirations.

Children's occupational aspirations are inherently interesting for the glimpse that they provide into children's views of themselves, others, and the world. Nonetheless, one might wonder whether children's occupational judgments and goals have long-term consequences. Although empirical data are scant, some longitudinal research has demonstrated that children and adolescents who aspire to high-status occupations are more likely than other youth to *attain* high-status occupations in young adulthood (e.g., Hauser et al., 1983; Marjoribanks, 1991). Such findings are consistent with theoretical and empirical work on the importance of expectancies in shaping developmental outcomes (Eccles et al., 1983). Furthermore, the occupational status that individuals attain as young adults strongly predicts their occupational status throughout adulthood (Hauser et al., 1983). Thus, even young children's occupational goals may distally affect their eventual occupational attainment.

If children's occupational aspirations are indeed linked to occupational attainment, what are the mechanisms that serve to link children's goals to their later behavior? Multiple mechanisms are likely to operate across development to link occupational goals and outcomes. Occupational aspirations may, for example, influence occupational attainment via effects on children's academic attitudes and performance. Among a racially diverse sample of sixth-grade students in Australia, children with high occupational aspirations were more likely than their peers to study and to value academic success (Dandy & Nettelbeck, 2002). Other cross-sectional and longitudinal studies have also found a positive relation between occupational aspirations and educational performance among children and adolescents from several racial backgrounds (Chand, Crider, & Hillits, 1983; Marjoribanks, 1991; Schoon & Parsons, 2002). Other mechanisms that may mediate (or moderate) the link between occupational aspirations and later occupational attainment include the formation of specific occupational plans (see Yowell, 2002) and persistence in valued academic domains (Bandura, 1995). A full discussion of those mechanisms is beyond the scope of this chapter. Nonetheless, it is clear that racial disparities in occupational attainment may be rooted in children's occupational aspirations.

#### THEORETICAL MODELS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

Many models of the development of vocational interest have been proposed (Abele, 2000; Bandura, 1995; Eccles et al., 1983; Gottfredson, 1981; Kuldau & Hollis, 1971; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994; Schoon & Parsons, 2002; Wigfield & Eccles, 1992).

Rarely, however, do these models explicitly address the role of race in shaping occupational goals. Typically, general mechanisms are posited that are presumed to operate among all children. Although race is sometimes acknowledged to affect occupational outcomes, its effects are typically viewed as mediated by other processes, such as self-esteem or economic limitations. In other words, race is viewed in existing theoretical work as affecting occupational goals largely via its effects on other constructs (e.g., race is linked with economic background, which is causally related to occupational goals). As explained in greater detail later, our own model is unique in that it posits that race has both direct and indirect influences on children's occupational aspirations. In other words, even when all else (economics, self-competence, academic achievement, etc.) is equal, race *per se* can influence children's occupational goals.

In the following section, we review two prominent theories of vocational development. Neither theory addresses race explicitly, but both are constructivist in nature. That is, both perspectives view children as active in constructing—and then integrating—views of themselves (e.g., interests, aptitudes, opportunities) and the characteristics of occupational roles (e.g., required skills, workers' gender), and thus, these views form an important theoretical foundation for our own model of the effects of race on occupational aspirations.

#### GOTTFREDSON: CIRCUMSCRIPTION AND COMPROMISE

Gottfredson (1981) proposed that children's occupational aspirations are the result of (1) occupational preferences, which are based on salient aspects of individuals' self-concepts, (2) the perceived accessibility of individuals' preferred occupations, and (3) the stimulus to choose from among individuals' preferred occupations. Gottfredson proposed that children first use their developing self-knowledge to circumscribe their occupational preferences by salient aspects of their self-concepts. According to Gottfredson, gender is the most salient aspect of children's self-concept in early childhood, and thus she expected children's occupational preferences to adhere to cultural gender stereotypes. Consistent with this notion, a great deal of research indicates that children show greater interest in those occupations that are considered to be "sex appropriate" than those occupations considered "sex inappropriate" within their culture (Bigler & Liben, 1990; Helwig, 2004; Lapan & Jingleleski, 1992; Stockard & McGee, 1990).

Gottfredson argued that children begin to prefer occupations that reflect their unique talents during middle childhood. That is, behavioral features of children's developing self-concepts are hypothesized to dictate interests, in part because children overcome their perceptually bound perceptions of self and others (Inhelder & Piaget, 1958). Gottfredson also hypothesized that children's occupational preferences begin to reflect their perceived socioeconomic status during middle childhood, in part because economic status is understood to have behavioral correlates (Simmons & Rosenberg, 1971; Tudor, 1971). Although evidence supports the idea that abilities influence occupational preferences at these ages (Helwig, 2004), the role of perceived class in children's occupational preferences is less clear. Children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds aspire to lower status occupations than children from higher socioeconomic backgrounds (Hauser et al., 1983), but the mechanisms linking class and children's occupational goals are not well understood.

By early adolescence, children begin to base their occupational preferences primarily on internal characteristics, especially those values and interests they feel

are unique to themselves. This shift occurs because it is during adolescence that individuals develop the ability to use abstract, internal qualities (e.g., creativity, altruism) to guide their self- and other-perceptions (Barenboim, 1981; Inhelder & Piaget, 1958). Consistent with Gottfredson's hypothesis, research indicates that sex differences in values (e.g., money, power, altruism) play a role in producing sex differences in occupational goals (Eccles, 1987; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Weisgram & Bigler, 2006).

According to Gottfredson's theory (1981), children gradually narrow the range of their occupational goals during late childhood and early adolescence as a function of the perceived accessibility of their preferred occupations. The specific developmental mechanism responsible for changes in children's understanding of occupational accessibility is not described, but the theory predicts that by adolescence, children are able to differentiate between idealistic (i.e., aspired to) and realistic (i.e., expected) occupational outcomes. Children's perceptions of an acceptable range of occupational alternatives emerge as a compromise between occupational preferences and the perceived accessibility of those preferred occupations. Finally, some stimulus in the environment (e.g., graduation from high school) causes individuals to pursue one of their occupational alternatives.

#### BANDURA: SELF-EFFICACY

Whereas Gottfredson's work focuses on children's conceptions of self-interests and opportunities, other theoretical work focuses on self-efficacy as the central precursor to occupational aspirations. In 2001, Bandura, Barbaranelli, and Vittorio Caprara outlined the developmental pathways that promote high occupational aspirations among children. The theory proposed that academic self-efficacy develops early in childhood as a result of parental aspirations and parents' self-efficacy for promoting the academic development of their children. As children's academic self-efficacy increases, so too do children's efforts to attain their educational goals. As they attain these goals, their occupational self-efficacy beliefs in various domains (e.g., science and math, art and design, literature and writing) are elevated, and these elevated self-efficacy beliefs lead to high occupational aspirations in those domains. Thus, according to the theory proposed by Bandura, Barbaranelli, and Vittorio Caprara (2001), children's academic self-efficacy beliefs and achievement influence occupational self-efficacy, which in turn determines children's occupational aspirations.

To test their model, Bandura and colleagues (2001) conducted a longitudinal study of middle school students from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds in Rome, Italy. Bandura and colleagues measured sixth- and seventh-grade students' socioeconomic status, academic achievement and aspirations, and self-efficacy beliefs in a variety of domains (i.e., academic, social, self-regulatory, occupational), as well as parental aspirations for their children, and parents' self-efficacy for promoting the academic development of their children. One year later, the researchers assessed children's occupational interests in a variety of fields. Results largely supported researchers' expectations. Specifically, high parental academic aspirations were associated with high self-efficacy beliefs among children in cognitively demanding academic domains (e.g., writing, science). Children's academic self-efficacy in these domains, in turn, predicted academic achievement and aspirations one year later.

Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1994) elaborated on the role of self-efficacy in occupational aspirations, arguing that, in addition to self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations

of career-oriented behaviors (e.g., applying to college) also affect children's aspirations. Specifically, they posited that occupational aspirations increase (or decrease) when individuals expect positive (or negative) outcomes from career-oriented behaviors. So, for example, individuals who have high self-efficacy in the domain of music but who believe they are unlikely to find employment in that field will not aspire to careers in music. Lent and colleagues proposed that individuals' outcome expectations are the result of their appraisals (positive or negative) of personal and vicarious experiences with career-oriented behaviors. A good deal of empirical research with adolescent samples supports the notion that expectations are predictive of occupational goals (Ali, McWhirter, & Chronister, 2005; Fouad & Smith, 1996; Gushue, 2006).

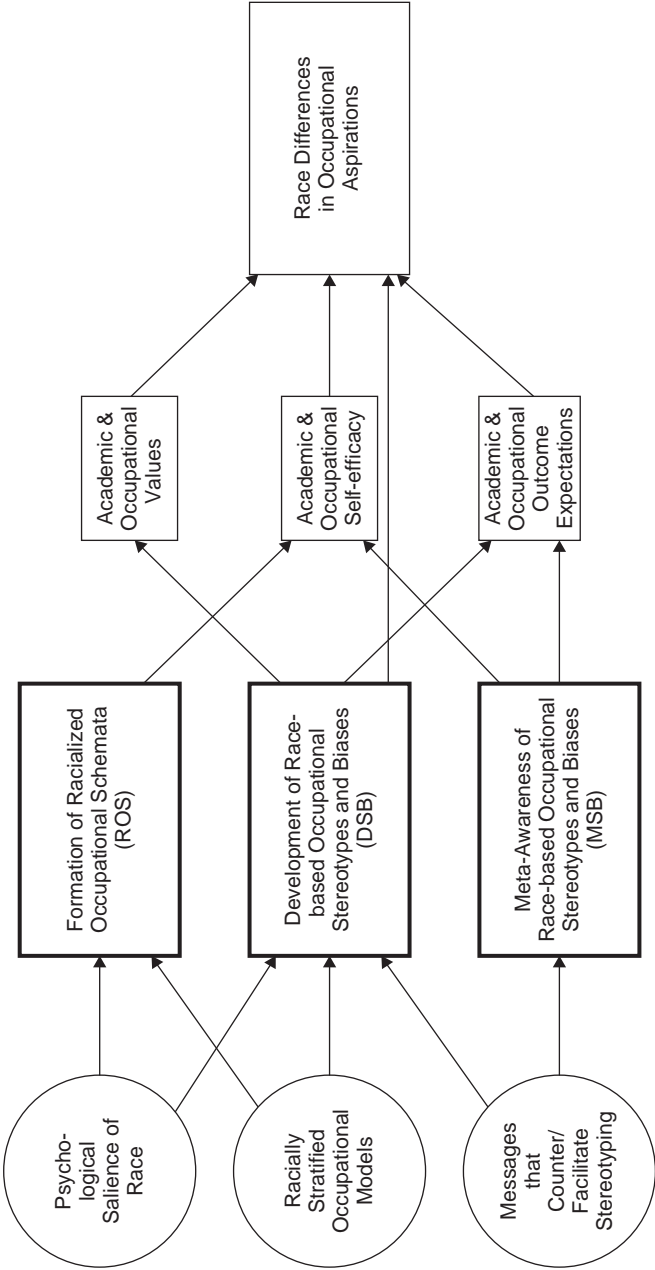
#### SUMMARY

Existing constructivist accounts of the development of children's occupational aspirations emphasize the role of self-knowledge. Gottfredson's circumscription and compromise theory (1981) proposed that children's developing self-concepts interact with their understanding of job opportunities to affect their occupational aspirations. Bandura and colleagues (2001) suggested that domain-specific self-efficacy beliefs influence academic achievement and occupational aspirations. Individuals' outcome expectations, which are rooted in personal and vicarious experiences in the occupational world, also appear to be important determinants of individuals' occupational aspirations (Lent et al., 1994). Neither theory, however, explicitly addresses the role of race in children's developing occupational aspirations, a topic to which we next turn.

#### A DEVELOPMENTAL MODEL OF THE EFFECTS OF RACE ON OCCUPATIONAL JUDGMENTS AND ASPIRATIONS

Prior theoretical and empirical work clearly indicates that children's developing beliefs and expectancies shape their occupational goals. The role that race plays in shaping these beliefs and expectancies is, however, far less clear. To help fill this gap, we describe a new theoretical model of the effects of race on children's occupational judgments and aspirations. Our theoretical model draws from existing accounts of vocational development but, unlike other accounts, explicitly outlines the ways in which race per se affects children's developing occupational schemata, occupation-related judgments and choices, and occupational aspirations. Because other theoretical and empirical work considers the importance of membership in other social categories (gender, socioeconomic) on occupational aspirations, we have not included these factors in our model. Ultimately, of course, a complete model of children's occupational development would include these factors.

Our model of the effects of race on occupational goals, depicted graphically in Figure 16.1, includes three central component processes (depicted by double-bordered rectangles): the formation of racialized occupational schemata (ROS), the development of race-based occupational stereotypes and biases (DSB), and meta-awareness of race-based occupational stereotypes and biases (MSB). In this portion of the chapter, we describe each component process in turn, outlining (1) environmental factors that shape the process, (2) mechanisms by which the process affects children's occupational aspirations, and (3) developmental changes that affect the process.



**Figure 16.1** Processes involved in racial differentiation of children's occupational aspirations.

#### FORMATION OF RACIALIZED OCCUPATIONAL SCHEMATA (ROS)

Occupational schemata are internal representations that contain children's knowledge of, and beliefs about, the world of work. We argue that children growing up in the United States develop *racialized* occupational schemata. That is, we believe that children's occupational schemata contain information about the associations between racial group membership and various occupational roles. Children with racialized occupational schemata (ROS) organize their conceptions of the occupational world according to race, such that children's knowledge about the occupational world contain information about which racial groups perform particular occupational roles.

*Environmental Factors Shaping ROS* Children could conceivably organize their occupational schemata around any number of human characteristics, including handedness, height, geographical origin, or personality. Why would children attend to race in the process of developing occupational schemata? The formation of racialized occupational schemata among children is hypothesized to be the result of two factors: the psychological salience of race and racially stratified occupational models present in children's environments (depicted by circles in Figure 16.1).

According to developmental intergroup theory (Bigler & Liben, 2006, 2007), human attributes are especially likely to become psychologically salient bases for categorization when they (1) are perceptually discriminable, (2) divide individuals into groups of disproportionate sizes, (3) are explicitly labeled, or (4) serve as the basis of implicit environmental sorting of individuals (e.g., racial segregation of neighborhoods and schools). Race meets all four criteria and thus, according to Bigler and Liben (2006, 2007), is likely to become the basis of categorization. Indeed, research indicates that infants can use skin color to discriminate human faces on the basis of race within the first year of life (Levy, 2003), and that most children show evidence of using race to determine peer preferences and make trait attributions by the age of 3 or 4 (Aboud, 1988). By the age of 6 or 7, race is an important feature of children's self-descriptions (Aboud & Skerry, 1983). The psychological salience of race to children may, therefore, lead them to organize their perceptions of the environment, including the workforce, according to race.

A second environmental factor that facilitates the formation of ROS is racial stratification of occupational models. The U.S. workforce continues to be stratified by race, and racial stereotyping continues to plague U.S. society (see Brown et al., 2003). Thus, the information that children receive about occupational roles is likely to vary along racial lines. Children acquire much of their knowledge of occupations via the media, especially television (Wright et al., 1995). Studies of media content indicate that African American and Latino individuals are depicted as performing different occupations than European American individuals (Cortes, 2000). A content analysis of prime-time and Saturday morning programming indicated that African American actors and actresses are shown primarily in cartoons or comedies, and that most are depicted as jobless or in low-status jobs (Greenberg & Baptista-Fernandez, 1980). A content analysis of child-directed television shows, computer games, and CD-ROMs also found that high-status occupations were performed more often by European American than African American characters (Calvert, 1999).

In addition to symbolic models (e.g., media depictions), the live workers that children encounter are likely to vary by race. National statistics indicate that individuals in the U.S. workforce are not randomly distributed across occupations. Instead, the distribution of workers is skewed by race. So, for example, among surgeons within

the United States, 57 percent are European American, 2 percent are African American, 2 percent are Latino, and 19 percent are Asian American (American Medical Association, 2004). Among building and grounds keepers, in contrast, 49 percent are European American, 15 percent are African American, and 31 percent are Latino (Jacobs, 2005). In general, European American and Asian American workers are overrepresented in high-status occupations and underrepresented in low-status occupations; the reverse pattern holds for the occupations African American and Latino workers are likely to perform (Census, 2003, 2005).

In summary, children are exposed to information about occupational roles in the media and in their communities that varies systematically by race. Because race is psychologically salient, we posit that children detect the patterns of correlations among workers and race, and construct well-developed knowledge about race and occupational roles. Furthermore, the accumulation of knowledge about the race of workers within specific occupations is likely to lead to knowledge about the relative status of occupations performed by workers of different races. Consistent with this notion, Bigler, Averhart, and Liben (2003) asked African American children between the ages 6 and 11 which racial group “usually” performs a series of high, middle, and lower status occupations (e.g., surgeon, school teacher, and janitor, respectively). They report that, across all ages, children stated that African Americans were more likely to perform lower status occupations than European Americans, suggesting that children’s conceptions about the work force are, indeed, organized by race.

*Mechanisms of Influence* Our model proposes that the formation of racialized occupational schemata contributes to the development of race differences in occupational aspirations via its effects on children’s values and self-efficacy. Specifically, based on work from Bandura and colleagues (2001) and Lent and colleagues (1994), we predict that occupational values and self-efficacy beliefs mediate the effects of ROS on children’s occupational goals (see Figure 16.1). One source of values and self-efficacy stems from children’s beliefs regarding the accomplishments of others like them within a particular domain (e.g., medicine, literature; Lent et al., 1994). If children’s perceptions of the workforce are organized according to race, they will attend to the successes (and failures) of same-race individuals in specific occupational domains. We expect, therefore, that children’s occupational schemata affect their aspirations by guiding children to form values and self-efficacy beliefs that reflect children’s perceptions of the occupational successes and failures of same-race individuals. For example, children with racialized occupational schemata are likely to attend to the racial composition of scientific occupations (e.g., physicist, biologist) and form values and self-efficacy beliefs that reflect their own racial group’s (non)representation in the field. This process should lead European American children, but not African American or Latino children, to value and feel competent within science, and as a consequence to want to pursue careers in scientific fields.

*Developmental Factors Shaping ROS* Race is likely to become the basis of children’s occupational schemata early in development, perhaps as early as the first year of life (Levy, 2003). Furthermore, by the age of 6 years, children demonstrate knowledge of race differences in occupational roles, linking high-status occupational roles to European Americans and low-status occupational roles to African Americans (Bigler et al., 2003).

There is reason to expect, however, that developmental factors influence the mechanisms through which racialized schemata affect occupational aspirations. Specifically, the processes of identity development that operate during adolescence may increase children's attention both to race and to occupational roles. Identity development during adolescence includes the exploration of possible occupational selves (Erikson, 1956), a process that is likely to increase the salience of the world of work to adolescents. Simultaneously, adolescents often engage in increased exploration of their racial identities (Phinney, 1989). As the salience of adolescents' racial identities and occupational futures increase, adolescents' racialized schemata are likely to exert greater influence on their occupational aspirations. Although little work is available to support this hypothesis, we predict race differences in occupational aspirations are larger among adolescents than younger children, partly as a result of increases in the salience of racial identities and occupational choices during adolescence.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF RACE-BASED OCCUPATIONAL STEREOTYPES AND BIASES (DSB)

The second major process included in our model concerns the development of race-based occupational stereotypes and prejudices. A great deal of psychological work indicates that young children endorse stereotypes associated with various racial groups (see Aboud, 1988; Aboud & Doyle, 1995, 1996; Bar-Tal, 1996; Bigler & Liben, 1993; Black-Gutman & Hickson, 1996; Williams, Best, & Boswell, 1975). Relatively little is known, however, about the emergence and development of race-based occupational stereotypes because the vast majority of research on racial stereotyping has focused on traits rather than roles (J. M. Hughes & Bigler, 2007). Nonetheless, we speculate that children exhibit racial stereotyping of the workforce quite early in life. Anecdotal evidence for such stereotyping includes the report for a young European American child who, after her first day at a racially diverse kindergarten, reported to her mother that she had seen "kid maids" at school (Estrada, 1995).

A key aspect of the development of race-based occupational stereotypes is that some children will come to think of the racial stratification of the workforce as normative and appropriate. That is, some children will *personally endorse* racial stereotypes. So, for example, a recent study found that 78 percent of a sample of African American 6- to 11-year-olds reported that "only White people" usually are president of the United States (i.e., they showed knowledge of the race associated with the role); perhaps more troubling, 24 percent of the sample reported that "only White people" *should* be president (J. M. Hughes et al., 2006).

Although not yet the topic of empirical study, it seems likely that children endorse implicit, as well as explicit, racial stereotypes of occupational roles. That is, children may endorse race-based occupational stereotypes about which they are unaware. Children's implicit stereotypes are likely to have a basis in their *knowledge* of the links between race and occupational roles. That is, children who know that racial differences characterize some occupational role may begin to use this knowledge—in ways that are automatic and unconscious—to engage in racially biased decision-making and behavior. Consider, for example, the children in the J. M. Hughes et al. study (2006) who were knowledgeable about the race of past presidents but who *did not* personally endorse the view that only Whites should be president. We would expect these children to exhibit unconscious racial biases when judging the qualifications of candidates to hold office.



*Environmental Factors Influencing DSB* Children show significant variations in their levels of racial stereotyping and in-group preference (Aboud, 1988). We propose that the types of messages—both implicit and explicit—that children receive about race and the workforce affect their developing endorsement of race-based occupational stereotyping (see circles depicted in Figure 16.1).

Exposure to racially stratified distributions of workers contributes to children's race-based occupational stereotypes (Bigler & Liben, 2006). That is, exposure to information that implicitly links race to occupational roles provides the content of race-based occupational stereotypes. As described earlier, J. M. Hughes et al. (2006) studied one example: the link between race and the U.S. presidency. Not only were children highly knowledgeable about the race of past presidents, but many children also endorsed stereotypes as a means of explaining the observed association (e.g., "Black people aren't as good leaders as White people"). We expect that children who are exposed to high degrees of racial segregation in the workforce are especially likely to develop race-based occupational stereotypes and biases.

Of course, children also receive explicit messages about race. One source of explicit messages about race and the workforce is parents. Among African American and Latino children, parental messages about racial pride may protect children from internalizing stereotypes of their racial in-group (Phinney, Lochner, & Murphy, 1990; Rollins & Valdez, 2006), and appear to have positive effects on occupational aspirations. Little is known, in contrast, about the types of explicit (or implicit) messages that European American parents provide about race and occupational roles.

While some environmental messages may minimize the formation of race-based occupational aspirations, other messages are likely to exacerbate children's racial stereotyping of occupational aspirations. Although much less common now than in the past, some children may be exposed to adults and peers who express the belief that some racial group is incapable of performing a particular role (as in the 1992 film *White Men Can't Jump*). Perhaps more commonly, children may hear adults and peers claim that racial barriers to educational and occupational success no longer exist in the United States and thus that the distribution of the races into occupations is reflective of individuals' abilities (see Levy, West, & Ramirez, 2006). Internalization of this belief is likely to facilitate racial stereotyping across domains (e.g., occupations, activities, and traits) and, in turn, prompt race differences in occupational aspirations. Children who are uninformed about the role of racial discrimination in U.S. society may be especially influenced by such messages.

*Mechanisms of Influence* Race-based occupational stereotypes may affect occupational aspirations by shaping children's outcome expectations of occupation- and achievement-related behaviors (Lent et al., 1994; see Figure 16.1). Children who endorse negative academic stereotypes about their racial group may expect to struggle in academics themselves and thus develop occupational aspirations that do not require academic success. For example, Latino children who endorse the stereotype that Latinos lack talent in science and math may expect to perform poorly in those academic fields themselves and, in turn, develop occupational aspirations outside of scientific or mathematical domains. The link between stereotype endorsement and self-perceptions is not well understood, however, and this possibility requires further empirical investigation.

Another mechanism through which occupational stereotypes may affect children's occupational aspirations is via their influence on children's academic and occupational values (see Figure 16.1). Eccles and colleagues (1983) have proposed that individuals' valuing of occupational characteristics (e.g., altruism, authority, financial gain) affects occupational aspirations. Past work suggests that values contribute to gender differences in occupational aspirations and attainment (e.g., Weisgram & Bigler, 2006). Women, for example, have been found to value altruism more highly than men, and altruism in turn predicts interest in "helping professions." Little work has examined whether African American, Latino, and European American individuals endorse different occupational values. Existing studies of immigrant and nonimmigrant parents and children, however, suggest that occupational and other values differ significantly across these groups (e.g., Burns, Homel, & Goonow, 1984; Gilkes, 1983). Children who endorse racial stereotypes and view racial groups as homogeneous may be more likely than their peers to adopt occupational values that they perceive to characterize their racial group. Thus, European American, Latino, and African American children might come to value occupational characteristics such as altruism, power, and financial compensation to different degrees. More research is needed to investigate the relations among racial stereotyping, occupational values, and occupational aspirations among children from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Racial stereotyping and in-group bias may also *directly* affect occupational aspirations (see Figure 16.1). Racial stereotype endorsement is characterized by viewing members of a racial group as more similar to each other than to members of another racial group (see Aboud & Doyle, 1995). Feelings of greater similarity with racial in-group members may lead children and adolescents to prefer social contact with racial in-group members over contact with racial out-group members (Killen, Lee-Kim, McGlothlin, & Stangor, 2002; Margie, Killen, Sinno, & McGlothlin, 2005; McGlothlin, Killen, & Edmonds, 2005). Perceptions of similarity guide adults' choices in a variety of domains, including romantic relationships, friendships, place of residence, and occupations (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). Thus, we expect those children who show evidence of racial stereotyping and in-group bias to prefer occupations that they perceive to be performed by racial in-group members.

An experimental investigation of the effects of workers' race on occupational aspirations by Bigler, Averhart, and Liben (2003) supports the notion that children are sensitive to information about the racial composition of jobs, and in some cases, will adjust their occupational preferences so that they match the (apparent) preferences of racial in-group members. Bigler and colleagues (2003) asked African American children aged 6 to 7 and 11 to 12 years about their preferences for unfamiliar (archaic and fictitious) occupations (i.e., higgler and nose) that were depicted as being performed by only European American individuals, only African American individuals, or both European American and African American individuals. Results indicated that among older children from lower (but not higher) socioeconomic backgrounds, occupations depicted with African American workers were preferred over those depicted with European American workers. These findings suggest that children's awareness of workers' race, in conjunction with developmental and economic factors, influence occupational aspirations.

There are, however, many unknowns about the effects of racial stereotypes and in-group biases on occupational aspirations. For example, it is not clear at present whether stereotype *knowledge* might impact occupational aspirations differently than

stereotype *endorsement*. As noted earlier, some children are aware of racial stereotypes that they do not personally endorse. Recent work on implicit racial attitudes suggests that mere knowledge of racial stereotypes affects children's (Baron & Banaji, 2006) and adults' (Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998) judgments. Thus, we expect that knowledge of cultural racial stereotypes of occupations affects children's occupational interests. It also seems likely, however, that children who personally endorse race-based occupational stereotypes are especially likely to adjust their own occupational aspirations as a function of their stereotypic beliefs.

Although most research focuses on the harmful consequences of stereotyping, racial stereotypes can sometimes facilitate positive occupational outcomes, especially among those individuals who are privileged (rather than stigmatized) by these stereotypes. In the case of occupations, for example, racial stereotyping may facilitate the formation of high status occupational aspirations among European Americans. Outcomes are likely to vary, however, by specific occupations. African American males who endorse racial stereotypes would be expected to show increased interest in professional basketball and decreased interest in politics; European American males, in contrast, would be expected to show increased interest in politics and decreased interest in professional basketball (see Graves, 2004).

*Developmental Factors Influencing DSB* Explicit knowledge and endorsement of racial stereotypes vary across age, with young children typically showing stronger endorsement of stereotypes than older children (e.g., Aboud, 1988; Doyle, Beaudet, & Aboud, 1988). Children's racial stereotypes become more flexible later in childhood, as they move from the preoperational stage to the concrete operational stage of cognitive development. For example, of those children interviewed by J. M. Hughes and colleagues (2006) who believed that "only White people should be the U.S. President," 92 percent were aged 5 to 7; only 8 percent were aged 8 to 11. Research also indicates that parental messages of racial pride become more frequent as children get older (D. Hughes, 2003). Therefore, the protective role of racial affirmation on children's occupational aspirations may be more pronounced in late elementary school than in early elementary school. Stereotyping may, however, increase again during adolescence as information about the occupational roles associated with various races increases (e.g., via media, schooling, etc.) and becomes more self-relevant (Karcher, 2000). Accordingly, we expect children to aspire to racially stereotypic occupations early in elementary school (ages 5 to 8) and in later adolescence (ages 14 to 17), and to entertain less stereotypic goals during the intervening years.

#### META-AWARENESS OF RACE-BASED OCCUPATIONAL STEREOTYPES AND BIASES (MSB)

The third component of our model concerns children's developing meta-awareness of racial stereotypes and biases. Children eventually understand that racial stereotypes and biases are widely shared within cultures (McKown, 2004; McKown & Weinstein, 2003; Quintana, 1994; Quintana & Vera, 1999). Because occupations are performed by groups of individuals and involve social group relations, the expectation that other individuals may endorse racial stereotypes or show racial biases is likely to impact children's occupational judgments and aspirations. So, for example, an African American child who comes to believe that the majority of European Americans endorse negative views of their racial group may be disinclined to work

in occupational roles dominated by European Americans. The perception of barriers associated with racial discrimination, in particular, is likely to affect occupational aspirations. Consistent with this notion, the gap in status between the occupations that children *expect* to hold and the occupations that they *aspire* to hold is wider among African American children than among European American children (Cook, et al., 1996), suggesting that African American children perceive more obstacles to occupational success than European American children. Indeed, a study of a diverse sample of high school students in Canada found that students' perceptions of discrimination predicted expectations of low occupational attainments (Burrell & Christensen, 1987).

*Environmental Factors Influencing MSB* Just as there are individual differences in children's levels of racial stereotyping and in-group bias, there are likely to be individual differences in children's meta-awareness of stereotypes and biases. One source of these individual differences may be parental messages that aim to prepare children for experiences with racial bias and stereotyping (Bowman & Howard, 1985; D. Hughes, 2003). As reviewed by D. Hughes, Rodrigue, and Smith (2006), some—but not all—parents of children of color provide children with information about racial stereotyping and discrimination. Much more work is needed to understand how particular messages about experiences with race-based occupational discrimination affects children's occupational aspirations. It is possible, for example, that messages that promote the belief that racial bias may be encountered but can be combated successfully may lead children to develop aspirations that are unaffected by race.

The potentially protective influence of parental preparation for racial bias on children's and adolescents' occupational aspirations is likely to increase across development. Parental messages that aim to prepare children for racial bias are more prevalent in adolescence than in childhood (D. Hughes, 2003). This suggests that the protective role of parental racial socialization against awareness of others' racial biases will also be more pronounced in adolescence than in childhood. Thus, it may be that adolescents whose parents teach them about racial bias—and emphasize that children can effectively resist that bias—will be less likely to adjust their occupational aspirations than younger children, and than those adolescents whose parents do not emphasize the importance and utility of challenging institutional and interpersonal forms of discrimination.

*Mechanisms of Influence on Occupational Aspirations* We predict that children's developing meta-awareness of race-based occupational stereotyping indirectly affects their occupational aspirations by influencing children's self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations for academic and career-oriented behavior (see Figure 16.1). For example, children are likely to develop and maintain interest in those occupations that they believe others view as appropriate for their race because children may expect more positive social outcomes (e.g., acceptance from racial in-group members) to arise from their pursuit of race typical occupations.

Meta-awareness of racial stereotypes and biases is also likely to affect children's self-efficacy beliefs, which in turn will affect their occupational aspirations, by introducing stereotype threat as a factor in children's academic performance. An awareness of broadly held academic racial stereotypes has been linked to susceptibility to stereotype threat in cognitive task performance among children,

adolescents, and adults from a variety of racial backgrounds (Good, Aronson, & Inzlicht, 2003; McKown & Weinstein, 2003; Shih, Pittinsky, & Ambady, 1999; Steele, 1997). Stereotype threat works both to hinder the performance of members of stigmatized groups, and to improve the performance of members of non-stigmatized groups (e.g., Shih, et al., 1999). Over time, stereotype threat experiences may affect academic self-efficacy beliefs among children and adolescents. The resulting racial differences in self-efficacy beliefs, in turn, may contribute to racial differences in occupational aspirations.

Children's meta-awareness of racial stereotypes and biases may also affect outcome expectations of career-oriented behaviors by influencing children's perceptions of the accessibility of particular occupations to members of their racial group. For example, if children and adolescents perceive educational systems to be discriminatory against their racial group, they may perceive occupations that require higher education as less accessible to them than other occupations. The reverse may be true, however, among children who perceive the educational system to *favor* their racial in-group. Among these children, the expectation of race-based preferential treatment may lead children to aspire to occupations that require higher education.

*Developmental Factors Influencing MSB* Developmental research has investigated the trajectory of children's awareness of broadly held negative racial stereotypes and biases. McKown and Weinstein (2003) tracked developmental changes in children's awareness of broadly held racial stereotypes in a racially diverse sample of children aged 6 to 10 years. Results indicated that among children from stigmatized racial groups, 46 percent were aware of broadly held stereotypes by age 8 and 80 percent were aware of broadly held stereotypes by age 10. These findings are in line with Quintana's (1994) work on ethnic perspective taking development, which predicts that individuals become aware of the negative racial stereotypes of others during late childhood.

According to a model presented by Brown and Bigler (2005), the development of perspective-taking abilities facilitates children's perceptions of discrimination. For example, to perceive interpersonal discrimination, children must be able to attribute an individual's behavior to his or her personal beliefs (i.e., biases). Children can do so early in elementary school (ages 5 and 7, see Pillow & Weed, 1995), and research by Quintana and Vera (1999) confirms that children develop an understanding of interpersonal forms of discrimination during the early elementary school years.

The perception of institutional discrimination may be especially influential in shaping children's occupational aspirations. According to Brown and Bigler (2005), the ability to perceive institutional discrimination requires an understanding that social institutions (e.g., government, educational systems) represent the collective beliefs of their members, an ability that develops during adolescence (Quintana, 1994; Selman, 1976, 1980). Thus, the likelihood that individuals will perceive instances of institutional discrimination increases greatly in adolescence. Those adolescents who perceive social institutions to discriminate against—or benefit—they because of their race are especially likely to show race-related constraints on their occupational aspirations (Evans & Herr, 1994).

## SUMMARY

We propose that three core processes underlie the effects of race on children's occupational aspirations. Specifically, we propose that children develop racialized occupational schemata (ROS; see Figure 16.1), which include knowledge of links between race and various occupational roles within their culture. Awareness of such links—and children's tendency to endorse racial stereotypes and biases—are hypothesized to lead to the development of race-based occupational stereotypes and biases (DSB; see Figure 16.1). That is, children at the group level are hypothesized to develop implicit and explicit stereotypes and biases about the way in which race constrains individuals' occupational choices. Finally, we propose that children come to understand that race-related occupational stereotypes and biases are widely held within cultures (MSB; see Figure 16.1). Children's occupational aspirations are, as a consequence, informed by the knowledge (both tacit and explicit) that they are likely to be to hurt by—or to benefit from—other individuals' racial stereotypes and biases.

In addition to describing core processes, we outlined several environmental and developmental factors hypothesized to produce individual variations in these processes. For example, age-related changes in children's social perspective taking and parental socialization messages are hypothesized to influence youths' meta-awareness of occupational stereotypes and biases. Finally, we have outlined the indirect and direct pathways through which core processes (i.e., ROS, DSB, and MSB) may influence children's occupational aspirations. For example, the development of race-based occupational stereotypes may directly constrain children's perceptions of the occupations that are appropriate to desire, but they may also indirectly constrain occupational aspirations through their effects on children's outcome expectations for occupation-related behaviors (e.g., applying to college). Our model of the processes that contribute to race-based inequalities in occupational aspirations admittedly is not exhaustive, but we hope the model will be useful for directing future research on the topic.

## INTERVENTION

Given the continuing presence of racial discrepancies in occupational attainment, there is a great deal of interest on the part of researchers and educators in developing interventions that effectively alter children's academic and vocational interests. Given current racial inequities, the bulk of attention has been aimed toward increasing the status of occupational aspirations among racial minority groups. A large number of strategies have been developed and implemented, but far fewer have been evaluated empirically. In the next section, we present several possible strategies for increasing children's interest in nonracially stereotypical occupations.

## COUNTER-STEREOTYPIC MODELING

Our model, like those of others theorists (e.g., Gottfredson, Bandura), posits that children's occupational goals are shaped, in part, by the models to which they are exposed. Children who are exposed to racially stratified occupational models, and as a consequence endorse (implicitly or explicitly) race-based occupational stereotypes, are less likely to show interest in race counter-stereotypic occupations than their peers. Thus, interventions that provide children with same-race role models

who work in race-atypical occupations may increase children's interest in those occupations.

There are, however, many factors that appear to constrain the effectiveness of modeling interventions (see Banks, 1995; Bigler, 1999). One issue concerns the imbalance of counter-stereotypic to stereotypic models that persists despite children's exposure to intervention programming. That is, the number of counter-stereotypic models that it is possible to provide within an intervention program is likely to be inundated by the far greater number of stereotypic models children are likely to encounter routinely. A second factor concerns the nature of the models themselves. According to Ogbu (2004), youths who value their racial identity may avoid emulating counter-stereotypic models because they view doing so as "acting White," and consequently as devaluing their racial group. That is, counter-stereotypic models are often subtyped as unusual members of their in-group and thus fail to affect children's occupational beliefs or interests (Bigler, 1999).

To address these limitations, intervention programming that employs counter-stereotypic models should (1) be presented over long periods of time, (2) be embedded in school curricula, and (3) employ diverse counter-stereotypic models (Bigler & Liben, 1993; Shamai & Coombs, 1992). For example, schools may invite community members who perform counter-stereotypical occupations to speak before classrooms about their occupations every week. Students in higher grades who excel in counter-stereotypical domains may also be invited to attend field trips with students or be otherwise mentored on a regular basis. Nonetheless, models presented as part of educational curricula are unlikely to outnumber the stereotypical images of racial groups to which children and adolescents are likely to be exposed in the media (e.g., Calvert, 1999; Huston, Wright, Rice, & Kerkman, 1990) and in their communities (e.g., Maly, 2000), and thus such interventions may be largely ineffective without additional components, such as lessons that explicitly address racial stereotyping and discrimination.

#### BIAS RESISTANCE

Our model predicts that children's occupational aspirations are constrained by their perceptions of the accessibility of occupations. Therefore, as children's awareness of racial discrimination increases, they should be taught that they can and should resist discrimination. In other words, it is important to discourage children from preferring same-race occupational environments merely because children expect those environments to be more welcoming to them. All children should be explicitly encouraged to value racial diversity in their own social interactions and to challenge others' racial prejudices. Because children are likely to perceive their peers to hold such biases (Stone & Han, 2005), we recommend that schools adopt curricula that address racial stereotyping and discrimination.

Furthermore, interventions that teach children to resist racial discrimination should be developmentally appropriate. As Quintana and Vera (1999) demonstrated, elementary school-aged children show better understanding of interpersonal than institutional discrimination. Therefore, elementary school programs designed to minimize children's perception of discrimination as an occupational barrier should teach children to respond actively to interpersonal (rather than institutional) discrimination. In middle school and high school, adolescents should be taught about resisting institutional forms of occupational discrimination. The most effective

interventions designed to improve children's occupational aspirations are likely to be programs tailored to prepare children for the types of racial discrimination that they are most likely to perceive as occupational barriers.

#### IMPROVED OUTCOME EXPECTATIONS

Ogbu (2004) and others have suggested that children may avoid valuing academic achievement or high-status occupations because doing so may lead to social sanctions for breaking racial group norms. Fear of social sanctions reflects the theoretical proposition from Lent and colleagues (1994) that negative outcome expectations for occupation-oriented behaviors (e.g., academic motivation) will negatively affect occupational aspirations. The creation of social honors and supportive peer contexts to reward and support academic motivation and valuing may reduce children's expectations of social sanctions for counter-stereotypical behaviors, and thereby possibly improve children's occupational aspirations.

There are several methods of creating supportive peer contexts and other social rewards for academic achievement. One is for schools to award social privileges, such as longer lunch hours or final exam exemption, to students who perform well in school. Another strategy may be to create racially identified clubs that are designated for high-achieving students, such as the Minority Achievement Committee Scholars program that Ogbu has described in several publications (Ogbu, 2003, 2004; Ogbu & Simons, 1998). Such programs may be difficult to implement, given the challenge of manipulating peer acceptance and social norms, but interventions that do so successfully may be especially effective in altering children's occupational aspirations.

#### FUTURE DIRECTIONS

We hope that the model presented here spurs further research on the important question of how and why race influences children's occupational aspirations. There is still much to learn about the topic. One of the major limitations of the existing research on race differences in children's occupational aspirations is the need for studies of occupational aspirations to disentangle race from confounds such as socioeconomic background. Populations that include children from a variety of racial groups and socioeconomic backgrounds should be sampled in future research in order to draw firmer conclusions about the roles of race and economics in shaping occupational goals.

Future research should also investigate the unique role of immigration status in the development of children's occupational aspirations. Much research has found differences in academic motivation and sources of academic motivation among children from American-born and immigrant families. For example, in a study by Tseng (2004) with a racially diverse sample of college students, family interdependence appeared to promote academic adjustment more strongly among college students from immigrant than American-born families, independent of racial background. Adolescent and parental valuing of education are also more strongly related to academic motivation and achievement among adolescents from immigrant families than among adolescents from nonimmigrant families (Fuligni, 1997). Furthermore, identity processes in the formation of academic goals differ between children and adolescents from immigrant and nonimmigrant families: Youth from immigrant families value their national or cultural identities more than their racial identities, whereas youth from nonimmigrant families show the reverse pattern (Rumbaut, 1994).



This research does not speak to the role of immigrant status in occupational aspiration development, but the close link between academic achievement and occupational aspirations (e.g., Hauser et al., 1983) suggests that immigrant status is an important factor to consider in future investigations of the impact of race on children's occupational aspirations.

Current understanding of parental racial socialization practices, including parents' attempts to prepare their children to encounter and combat race-based discrimination in academic and occupational settings, is also incomplete. Some research has found that parental preparation for bias benefits the overall adjustment of minority youth (Jasinskaja-Lahti & Liebkind, 2001; Liebkind, Jasinskaja-Lahti, & Solheim, 2004; Vega, Gill, Warheit, & Zimmerman, 1993), but other research has failed to replicate these findings (Phinney & Chavira, 1995). As D. Hughes et al. (2006) recommended, future research should untangle the consequences of different types of messages on child outcomes. Because the majority of research on parental racial socialization has included African American, Latino, and Korean American individuals, future research should also examine the racial socialization strategies of parents from other racial backgrounds, especially European American parents. It would be interesting to examine, for example, the consequences of educating European American youth about the consequences of "White privilege" within occupational roles and behavior (see Helms, 1990).

In addition to including racially diverse samples, additional research should be conducted within elementary-school-age children. Most work on the effects of parental preparation for bias has involved adolescents. Because children's understanding and awareness of the nature of racial discrimination increase with age (McKown, 2004; Phinney & Chavira, 1995; Quintana & Vera, 1999), it is possible that parental messages about racial discrimination may not act as protective factors against perceptions of racism among children younger than age 10. Little is yet known, however, about this topic.

Finally, the field would benefit from the use of experimental approaches to understanding the effects of race on occupational judgments and aspirations. Studies that document relations among factors such as endorsement of race-based occupational stereotypes and occupational aspirations are informative but unable to speak to possible causal relations among variables. Bigler and colleagues' (2003) study is one example of an experimental paradigm that might be useful for testing hypotheses about the roles of other potential influences, such as understanding of discrimination, racial affirmation, or peer support on racial differences in children's occupational aspirations.

## CONCLUSION

Racial differences in children's occupational aspirations appear in early childhood and are likely to contribute to racial inequalities that characterize the adult workforce within the United States. A good deal is known about the general processes by which children become interested in occupations, and the processes by which they select occupational goals. Far less is known about the role of race *per se* in children's occupational judgments and aspirations. Children's (1) awareness of the racial stratification of the workforce, (2) knowledge and endorsement of race-based occupational stereotypes, and (3) understanding that racial stereotypes are widely held are all likely to influence the occupational aspirations of children and adolescents. In this

chapter we presented a model detailing the hypothesized influences of these three factors on the development of occupational aspirations. Although it is likely that intervention strategies can successfully alter children's occupational judgments and goals, empirical demonstrations of the effectiveness of these programs are rare. Furthermore, altering children's occupational goals is often more difficult than anticipated, in part because occupational aspirations and attainment are multiply determined. If we expect children from all racial groups to aspire to and attain occupations that best match their talents and abilities, we must lay supportive groundwork. Minimizing the role that race plays in shaping children's occupational aspirations is a fundamental step toward that goal.

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## CHAPTER 17

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# Children's and Adolescents' Decision-Making about Intergroup Peer Relationships

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### INTRODUCTION

**P**EEER RELATIONSHIPS play an important role in children's growth and development. Research has shown that positive peer interaction is associated with the development of social skills and competence, prosocial behaviors, morality, and cognitive skills (see Rubin, Bukowski, & Parker, 1998, 2006). Moreover, difficulty with peer relations in childhood has been related to later maladjustments such as dropping out of school, depression, and loneliness (Parker & Asher, 1987). Peer relationships are also an important context for the development of racial attitudes. Peers with low prejudice have been found to reduce prejudice scores of friends with higher prejudice through discussion of racial issues (Aboud & Fenwick, 1999). Intergroup contact, which is defined as the opportunity to have contact with members of a different group, particularly an "out-group," has been theorized to be effective at reducing prejudice under particular conditions, with cross-race and cross-ethnic friendships being an especially effective form of contact (Allport, 1954; Tropp & Prenovost, in press). Thus, relationships with peers of different racial or ethnic groups can be beneficial to children and adolescents by promoting positive intergroup attitudes

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(see Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000, 2005). Positive intergroup attitudes include beliefs about fair and equal treatment of individuals from different ethnic groups, and a rejection or inhibition of stereotypes about others based on group membership (Killen, Margie, & Sinno, 2006). Unfortunately, close relationships between members of different racial or ethnic groups are relatively uncommon, especially as children get older.

In this chapter, we will first discuss the importance of intergroup peer relationships and the decline in their numbers with age. We will then discuss what current research on intergroup peer relationships and intergroup bias tells us about children's decision-making regarding these relationships. The role of parental attitudes about intergroup relationships and opportunities for intergroup contact will also be discussed. We will conclude with suggestions for future avenues of research emphasizing the importance of examining prejudice through the lens of peer relationships.

#### BENEFITS AND FREQUENCY OF INTERGROUP RELATIONSHIPS

Contact with members of different racial and ethnic groups has long been considered an important avenue for reducing prejudice and was first theorized by Gordon Allport, a social psychologist writing about prejudice following the second World War (Allport, 1954; Williams, 1947; for a review, see Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005). Because of the atrocities associated with the war, a new importance was placed on how intergroup attitudes emerge and develop, as well as the conditions that make contact effective as a mechanism for reducing prejudice. Throughout the second half of the 20th century and continuing today, researchers have worked to understand the dynamics of intergroup relations in the hope of combating the sometimes devastating and always hurtful effects of prejudice and racism. These effects can be on an individual level, such as lowered self-esteem of the target of prejudice, or they can ravage an entire country and world, as with genocide. Unfortunately, the impact of negative intergroup attitudes is still felt today at a global level, as well as at more local levels. Thus, finding effective strategies to encourage positive attitudes is an important goal.

One such strategy that appears to be beneficial is intergroup contact, especially contact among peers. Tropp and Prenovost (in press) reviewed over 100 developmental studies on intergroup contact and found significant positive relationships between intergroup contact and lower levels of prejudice. In their review, they included studies that examined contact between children of different ethnic backgrounds, as well as contact with the elderly, physically handicapped, and other group variables. They found that peer contact was beneficial across the range of group contexts.

Research has evidenced the beneficial effect of intergroup contact in work on desegregated schools, primarily with respect to long-term effects, such as the likelihood of living in integrated neighborhoods in adulthood (Killen, Crystal, & Ruck, 2007; Kurleander & Yun, 2001; McKown, 2005; Schofield, 1995; Stephan & Stephan, 1984, 1996). Empirical work on the relationship between cross-race friendships and

children's intergroup attitudes has also shown support for the hypothesis that more contact is often related to less prejudice (Killen, Sinno, & Margie, 2007; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2005). Aboud, Mendelson, and Purdy (2003) found that children who had high-quality cross-race friendships also had lower prejudice levels. While children with greater prejudice levels were more likely to exclude cross-race peers, they were not less likely to have a cross-race friend. Hunter and Elias (2000) also reported a relationship between high-quality cross-race friendships and positive interracial attitudes for girls. Further, Tropp and Prenovost (in press) reported that Anglo children in bilingual classrooms had more cross-ethnic (Anglo-Latino) friendships than did Anglo children in non-bilingual classrooms.

Children's cross-race friendships promote positive racial attitudes in a number of ways. Children who have friends of another race or ethnicity recognize that members of different groups share similar attitudes and interests (Pettigrew, 1997, 1998; Stephan & Stephan, 1984). Children also learn that members of racial or ethnic groups different from their own are unique individuals who differ from one another in a variety of ways (Pettigrew, 1997, 1998; Rothbart & John, 1985). While an understanding of variability exists about the in-group from an early age, children often view out-group members as "all alike," referred to as the "out-group homogeneity effect" (Park, Judd, & Ryan, 1992). Realizing that variability exists between members of an out-group prevents assumptions and judgments to be made about these individuals based on stereotypes. In addition, because friendships entail an emotional bond between two individuals, having a friend of another race or ethnicity increases sympathetic awareness of the wrongfulness of prejudice and discrimination (Cook, 1984; Pettigrew, 1997; Reich & Purbhoo, 1975). Observing discrimination against a friend illuminates the humiliation and pain caused by unfair treatment more so than witnessing discrimination against a stranger or by merely reading about it.

Although studies have documented a causal relationship between intergroup contact and reduced prejudice, it is important to note that the research reviewed in this chapter presents a more complex picture. The influence of contact, racial attitudes, and the selection of cross-race friendships is multi-directional. Thus, it is our view that these processes are interactive. Contact influences attitudes as well as judgments about cross-race relationships and these, in turn, influence the motivation for intergroup contact. We recognize that there is evidence of a direct link from contact to improved attitudes; however, our theoretical framework and research focus on the complex interplay and interaction between social experience and social cognition.

While many schools and communities have become increasingly diverse in the United States (Fisher, Jackson, & Villarruel, 1998), an extensive line of research has shown that children nominate same-race peers as friends more often than cross-race peers (Aboud et al., 2003; Graham & Cohen, 1997; Hallinan & Teixeira, 1987; Hartup, 1983; Howes & Wu, 1990; Kupersmidt, DeRosier, & Patterson, 1995; Shrum, Creek, & Hunter, 1988; Tropp & Prenovost, in press). For example, when children are asked to make a list of their friends, European American children's lists consist predominantly of other European American peers, with relatively few peers from other backgrounds. Thus, African American children are nominated as friends more often by African American peers than by European American peers. Moreover, several studies suggest that nominations of European American children by African American peers are less likely to be reciprocated (Graham & Cohen, 1997; Hallinan & Teixeira, 1987; Hallinan & Williams, 1987). This lack of reciprocation has been found to begin around

sixth grade, after which the nomination of European American children as friends by African Americans declines (Graham & Cohen, 1997; Hallinan & Teixeira, 1987). This is also the same period in which there is a dramatic decline in the number of cross-race friendships for both African American children and European American children (Aboud et al., 2003; Dubois & Hirsch, 1990; Graham & Cohen, 1997; Graham, Cohen, Zbikowski, & Secrist, 1998; Hallinan & Teixeira, 1987; Hartup, 1983; Shrum et al., 1988).

Given the benefits of interracial friendships on children's racial attitudes, it is important to understand the relative infrequency of these relationships, the reason for their decline with age, and how children make decisions about cross-race friendships. In the following sections we will discuss the various factors that influence the formation of intergroup relationships and how these may account for the decreased number of intergroup friendships in adolescence.

### PROXIMITY AND INTERGROUP RELATIONSHIPS

One basic and somewhat obvious factor that must be present in order for children to engage in relationships with out-group members is proximity. The opportunity for interracial relationships must be present in order for these friendships to form. Because children spend a large amount of time at school, proximity to out-group members in the classroom is vital. Classrooms which are majority European American offer few opportunities for majority children to engage in friendships with members of other ethnic groups. Likewise, classrooms which are majority African American or Latino limit the prospects of cross-race relationships for minority students. Thus, the larger the number of same-race peers there are in the classroom, the larger the number of same-race friendships there will be (Hallinan & Teixeira, 1987; Hallinan & Williams, 1987).

In addition to the significance of proximity in the classroom, contact with children of different racial and ethnic groups in one's neighborhood is also an important factor in the development of intergroup relationships. Children living in integrated neighborhoods have a significant number of cross-race friendships outside of school (DuBois & Hirsch, 1990). Yet, the majority of regions in the United States remain segregated, and this makes neighborhood intergroup contact unlikely (Glaeser & Vigdor, 2001). Further, the confound between race and class in the United States continues to make integrated interracial neighborhoods rare (Orfield, 2001). The effect of segregation at the neighborhood level, unfortunately, can be seen in a recent trend toward resegregation of schools. Despite progress in the desegregation of public schools between the 1950s and the late 1980s, recent studies have shown that resegregation has dramatically changed the composition of schools during the past decade (Frankenberg, Lee, & Orfield, 2003; Orfield, 2001).

Faced with significant neighborhood and school segregation, contact with students of different racial and ethnic groups may be increased or maintained in middle childhood and adolescence through cocurricular activities, such as sports teams or clubs (Epstein, 1986; Hallinan & Teixeira, 1987). In fact, cross-race friendliness and social acceptability of other groups have been shown to remain relatively high or to increase with age (Aboud & Mendelson, 1996; Aboud et al., 2003; Hallinan & Teixeira, 1987; Schofield & Whitley, 1983). In other words, less same-race preference is evident when students are asked to rate how much a cross-race classmate is liked as opposed to whether or not she is a friend. Nonetheless, African American students do not attain

comparable likeability ratings to European American children, except in classrooms in which they are the majority racial group (Jackson, Barth, Powell, & Lochman, 2006). Patchen (1982) found that friendly cross-race contact was common in high school when surveying adolescents about their interracial encounters. Contact was limited, however, to the school context; more intimate forms of interaction such as visiting one another at home or dating were extremely rare. Similarly, Fletcher, Rollins, and Nickerson (2004) found that while children's social networks in diverse schools were quite integrated, few friendships extended beyond the school context. The lack of intergroup relationships outside of school has been a common finding in other studies as well (see Aboud & Amato, 2001).

One possible explanation for the lack of close cross-race friendships that extend beyond the school context could be differences in the quality of cross-race friendships versus same-race friendships. Kerner and Aboud (1998) found that cross-race relationships differed from same-race relationships only with regard to levels of intimacy. Cross-race friendships were rated lower in intimacy than were same-race friendships (Aboud et al., 2003; DuBois & Hirsch, 1990). In other words, children are more comfortable revealing private matters with their same-race peers than with their cross-race peers. Since intimacy and the need to talk to a friend about secrets becomes more important to children as they approach adolescence (Rubin et al., 1998; Shulman, Laursen, Kalman, & Karpovsky, 1997; Buhrmester & Furman, 1987; Smetana, 2006), it stands to reason that if same-race friends are thought to fulfill intimacy and identity needs better than cross-race friends, the number of cross-race friendships will decline as children age.

In sum, proximity to other races and ethnicities is an important contributing factor to intergroup contact. It can occur in the classroom, in school, and in the neighborhood. Yet, proximity is limited by the extent to which neighborhoods and schools are desegregated. Furthermore, having close contact does not necessarily lead to close cross-race friendships. While greater proximity may lead to more cross-race friendships, these friendships differ in quality from same-race ones, especially as children get older. In the next section, we will review a series of studies which examined two factors, perceptions of similarity and attributions of intention, proposed to influence children's decision-making about cross-race friendships.

#### PERCEPTIONS OF SIMILARITY IN INTERGROUP RELATIONSHIPS

The perception of similarity between individuals is a relevant factor in the choices children make regarding personal relationships, particularly friendships. Similarity is important in intergroup relationships as well as in intragroup relationships. Social psychological research on friendship has hypothesized that perception of similarity plays an important role in friendship selection and maintenance because it increases attraction between individuals (see Aboud & Mendelson, 1996). The similarity-attraction hypothesis (Byrne & Griffitt, 1973) assumes that similarity between individuals on one or more of a variety of dimensions including attitudes, values, personality traits, behavior, and physical appearance, is critical to interpersonal attraction, which in turn is crucial to the formation of friendship.

Research on children's friendships has focused on the homogeneity between friends across a number of features. Researchers report that friends tend to be similar along a number of demographic variables, such as gender, race, and ethnicity,

and that this is common at all ages (Aboud, 1988; Finkelstein & Haskins, 1983; Hamm, 2000; Hartup, 1983, 1993; Rubin et al., 1998; Shrum et al., 1988). Similarity in activity preference is also important to friendships (Aboud & Mendelson, 1996; Gottman, 1983) because sharing interests operates at the initial stages of friendship to increase attraction between individuals and the desire to interact with one another. It also aids in maintaining friendships. When two people share an interest in the same hobbies and activities, they spend more time together, leading to longer-lasting friendships (Hallinan & Williams, 1987). Moreover, friends become more similar in attitudes, values, social perceptions, and activities the longer they are friends, indicating that friendships act as socialization agents (Deutsch & Mackesy, 1985; Lea & Duck, 1982).

While similarity in activity interests has a legitimate influence on the selection of friends and the maintenance of friendship, physical similarity may also impact decision-making but in a less beneficial way. Because demographic variables such as race are obviously salient, they could be used as the initial criteria for selecting or rejecting peers (Finkelstein & Haskins, 1983). For example, an African American child and a European American child may enjoy the same activity, but due to the focus placed on ethnicity and race in U. S. culture, the two children may not initially become friends because they do not share the same physical appearance. The priority given to race and ethnicity in contrast to shared interests or psychological reasons for friendship has rarely been studied. For this reason, it is important to investigate children's perceptions of similarity pertaining to race in order to understand why children prefer same-race peers to cross-race peers.

Research by social psychologists with adult populations has revealed that social categorization leads to social identity, and that becoming part of a group increases the sense of one's own identity as part of a group (Abrams, Hogg, & Marques, 2005). This often results in viewing oneself as more similar to a member of the in-group, even when shared interests are stronger with an out-group member. Perceptions of homogeneity are particularly strong, however, in judgments about the similarity of out-group members. This phenomenon, called the out-group homogeneity effect, refers to the finding that individuals perceive more variability between members of their own group than between members of another group (Park, Ryan, & Judd, 1992; Quattrone & Jones, 1980). In other words, European Americans recognize that they differ from other European Americans in numerous ways and on a variety of dimensions. However, they do not ascribe the same variability to other ethnic groups, instead attributing similar traits, attitudes, and behaviors to all members of the out-group. Attributing a label to an individual based solely on group membership is reflected in stereotyping, which involves a belief about the characteristics of a group. While not all stereotypic beliefs involve assumptions of homogeneity, one way to challenge stereotypic beliefs is to point to heterogeneity within the group (Aboud & Fenwick, 1999; Katz, 1973; Katz, Sohn, & Zalk, 1975). For example, the belief that girls are passive (a stereotype) can be undermined by demonstrating that there are many active girls (heterogeneity within the group).

As with adults, young children have been found to perceive out-group homogeneity (Doyle & Aboud, 1995; Katz, Sohn, & Zalk, 1975), and in some cases perceive homogeneity even among members of their in-group (Bigler, 1995; Bigler, Jones, & Lobliner, 1997). Doyle and Aboud (1995) measured 6- through 9-year-old European-Canadian children's perceptions of similarity by asking participants to rate the similarity of same-race versus cross-race pairs of children who were depicted in

photos. Findings indicated that participants did homogenize the same-race pairs by judging the pairs to be more similar than the cross-race pairs of children.

Age-related changes have also been found in measures of perceived similarity (Doyle & Aboud, 1995; Katz et al., 1975). In the same study, Doyle and Aboud (1995) found that both older (9-year-olds) and younger (6-year-olds) children perceived less similarity between a Black child and a White child than between two children of the same race. Older children, however, judged the cross-race pair higher in similarity than did younger children. Yet, older children still judged individuals of the same race to be more similar than younger children did (Doyle & Aboud, 1995). That is, older children perceived greater similarity between two Black children than the younger children did. Thus, there was evidence of out-group homogeneity in older children's ratings of similarity.

Although the above studies provided valuable information regarding children's perceptions of similarity regarding race, demonstrating that children judge same-race pairs of children to be more similar than cross-race pairs, they did not consider other factors of similarity in addition to skin color. Moreover, prior research has not directly addressed how perceptions of similarity impact decisions about friendship. Instead, children have been asked whether they could be friends with someone of a different race, as if this were the only variable to be considered as a basis for a friendship. They are not asked about how other factors, such as shared interests, affect their friendship decisions. This limitation in research focus may distort what it is that children focus on regarding friendship decisions because alternative possibilities are not being presented to them.

In a series of three studies, McGlothlin, Killen, and their colleagues (Margie, Killen, Sinno, & McGlothlin, 2005; McGlothlin & Killen, 2005; McGlothlin, Killen, & Edmonds, 2005) addressed these limitations and investigated how children weigh similarity across a variety of factors, including physical characteristics (e.g., skin color) and activity interests (e.g., playing basketball), and how this affects their perception of similarity and potential for friendship. For all three studies, participants were first- and fourth-graders. The ethnicity of participants in the three studies varied such that McGlothlin et al. (2005) included European American children who attended ethnically diverse schools, Margie et al. (2005) interviewed African American, Latino, and Asian American children who also attended ethnically diverse schools, and McGlothlin and Killen (2005) interviewed European American children who attended ethnically homogeneous (i.e., predominantly European American) schools. Sampling from different racial and ethnic backgrounds as well as from schools varying in ethnic student population added the dimension of intergroup contact on children's perceptions of similarity (see McGlothlin & Killen, 2005).

Children were presented with pictures of same-race and cross-race pairs of children. In addition, children were told that the pairs of children either shared the same interest in a sport activity or did not share the same interest. For instance, one pair of African American children both liked to play soccer, while the other pair of African American children consisted of one child who liked to play softball and another child who did not like to play softball. Participants were asked to rate the similarity of the two children and asked whether or not the two children could be friends.

The results indicated that children who attended heterogeneous schools focused primarily on the shared or unshared activity interests and not on differences in skin color (Margie et al., 2005; McGlothlin et al., 2005). This is important because it indicates that given another variable, such as shared interests, children focus on that

more than on race or skin color. However, race was not completely ignored by the European American children. These children rated the same-race peer dyads (both Black and White pairs) who shared the same activity interests as more similar than the cross-race peer dyad who also shared the same interests. Evidence of the out-group homogeneity effect was also found for the sample of European American children. In the unshared activity interest condition, the same-race Black peer dyad was judged to be more similar than the same-race White peer dyad. The European American children attributed greater variability to the same-race White dyad (the in-group) than to the same-race Black dyad (the out-group). Thus, while children from ethnic minority backgrounds did not use skin color as a basis for judgments of similarity, European American children attending ethnically heterogeneous schools differentiated some dyads based on race. Yet, when assessing friendship potential, the majority of children judged that all dyads, same-race or cross-race, could be friends. Thus, children from all backgrounds attending ethnically diverse schools, no matter how they viewed variability within and between groups, focused on the similarity of activity interests and not race when determining the possibility of friendship.

Similarly, McGlothlin and Killen (2005) found that European American children attending homogeneous schools also focused on shared (or unshared) sports interests more often than on race. Yet, the racial makeup of the dyad was a factor in the similarity ratings. These European American children rated the same-race Black dyads as more similar than the same-race White dyads, thus, again, demonstrating an out-group homogeneity effect. Similar to the studies in the heterogeneous schools, children's judgments of friendship potential focused on activity interests to a greater extent than skin color. When activity interests were shared, children were highly positive about the likelihood of friendship. When the dyad did not share activity interests, however, these European American children evaluated friendship potential differently based on the racial makeup of the dyad. In particular, while two Black characters were judged to have the greatest potential for friendship despite not sharing a sports interest, the cross-race dyad was judged as the least likely to be friends.

Further, regarding judgments of similarity, European American children attending ethnically homogeneous schools perceived greater variability for White dyads than did European American children or minority children in heterogeneous schools (McGlothlin & Killen, 2005). An unexpected finding was that European American children in heterogeneous schools attributed greater homogeneity to the Black dyads than did their counterparts in homogeneous schools. Interestingly, very few of these participants explicitly referred to skin color to justify their similarity rating, although skin color did impact ratings for several of the dyads. Instead, most children referred to physical characteristics other than race (for instance, clothes, shoes, hair) and to the shared or unshared sports interest.

Differences based on the ethnic composition of the schools were also found with regard to judgments of friendship potential. Children in heterogeneous schools were more inclusive, overall, than were the European American children in homogeneous schools. That is, children who attended ethnically diverse schools evaluated friendship as possible between children who did not share activity interests and/or skin color. European American children who attended ethnically homogeneous schools were less optimistic about friendship potential, especially when activity interest and race were not shared. Thus, the amount of contact children experienced with racial



and ethnic groups other than their own at school influenced their decisions about friendship. For this reason, it is important that future work include assessments of both the quantity and quality of contact in order to permit an interpretation of findings that differentiates intergroup contact from a global school composition measure.

In sum, these studies provide a relatively positive picture of children's decision-making about intergroup friendship, especially in diverse school environments. Supporting other work that has examined children's reasoning about friendship and race (Killen, Lee-Kim, McGlothlin, & Stangor, 2002), these findings demonstrate that children do not view race alone as a sufficient reason to preclude friendship. Contextual factors, specifically the presence or absence of a shared sports interest, also influenced children's race-related judgments, further supporting our theoretical model. These findings suggest that teachers and parents can encourage cross-race friendships by bringing attention to the shared attributes and interests of the children. The extensive research documenting the infrequency of cross-race friendships, however, suggests that factors inhibiting such relationships influence the decision-making process nonetheless. Previous findings (Doyle & Aboud, 1995; Katz et al., 1975) suggested that when children do not have information regarding activity interests, they base decisions about similarity on physical appearance. Assumptions or stereotypes about what members of particular groups like and do not like may preclude the opportunity for friendship. Biases in interpretations of behavior can also negatively influence decisions about intergroup relationships.

#### ATTRIBUTIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF INTENTIONS

In addition to perceptions of similarity, McGlothlin and colleagues (Margie et al., 2005; McGlothlin & Killen, 2006a; McGlothlin et al., 2005) examined children's attributions of intent and how these attributions varied according to the race of the character. The effect of attributions on decision-making about cross-race friendship, as well as the influence of school ethnic composition was also investigated. Ambiguous situations that varied according to whether the potential transgressor (i.e., the character who may or may not be mistreating another character) was White or Black were used in order to examine how indirect bias may influence children's attributions. A vast amount of research has shown that although explicit bias has declined in the past several decades, adults have implicit biases that operate unbeknownst to them, but are revealed in situations that demand a fast response or are ambiguous (Dovidio, 2001; Dovidio & Gaertner, 1998; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). There is also evidence that children and adolescents hold implicit biases that may not be revealed on explicit measures (Baron & Banaji, 2006; Rutland, Cameron, Milne, & McGeorge, 2005). Little work has looked at how these intergroup attitudes impact children's assessments of intergroup situations (for exceptions, see Lawrence, 1991; Sagar & Schofield, 1980).

Ambiguous situations can be used to detect indirect biases because the child is not asked explicitly about race, but only asked to describe what happened in the picture. If biases are present, different interpretations of the same act performed by either a White character or a Black character will be given. These differences, even when very subtle, suggest biases that may affect decision-making about friendship. For example, if an African American child is perceived as more aggressive than a European American child performing the same behavior, it is less likely the African American child will be considered a good candidate for friendship. Indeed, Lawrence (1991) and Sagar and Schofield (1980) found that children rated the ambiguous behavior of

a Black character more negatively than the same behavior of a White character. These studies did not, however, examine how bias in the interpretation of behaviors is related to decisions about friendship.

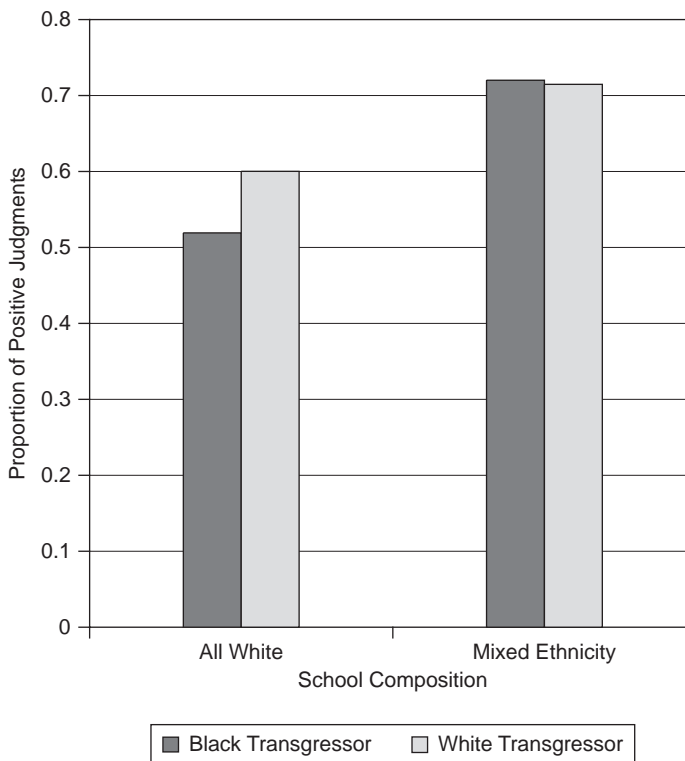
In order to investigate how children interpret ambiguous intergroup situations and how these interpretations bear on their decisions about cross-race friendship, we administered the Ambiguous Pictures Task, which consisted of picture cards displaying typical peer encounters in which it was ambiguous as to whether one child was committing a transgression (potential stealing, pushing, not sharing, and cheating) or was an innocent bystander. For example, in one scenario (*Stealing*), the potential transgressor was bending down to pick up money that has fallen out of the other child's pocket and it was unclear whether the money will be returned or kept. There were two versions of each situation: one in which the White character was the potential transgressor and one in which the Black character was the potential transgressor. Participants were asked to describe what happened in the picture, to rate the behavior of the potential transgressor, to decide what the potential transgressor would do next, and whether the two characters could be friends.

Results from McGlothlin et al. (2005) indicated that the European American participants attending ethnically heterogeneous schools did not interpret ambiguous situations differently on the basis of race. That is, no biases were revealed when asked to attribute intentions to potential protagonists. Although interpretations ranged from positive to negative, validating that the situations were ambiguous, the race of the potential transgressor did not influence how the behavior was perceived. White characters were as likely as Black characters to perform negative acts, and Black characters were as likely as White characters to perform positive acts.

Age-related patterns were documented, however, regarding the potential for cross-race friendship. Cross-race friendship was evaluated as less likely by older participants than by younger (i.e., 9.9 vs. 6.8 years) participants. Further, racial bias was detected regarding responses to cross-race friendship potential. Although negative interpretations of the perpetrator's action were correlated with negative evaluations of the possibility of friendship overall, the European American children, especially the males, were more pessimistic as to whether the two children could be friends when the perpetrator was Black as opposed to White in some contexts. In other words, a negative action by a Black child was viewed as precluding friendship more often than the same negative action by a White child. Overall, though, children did not use race as a cue to judge the positive or negative intentions of the perpetrators' actions. In contrast, Margie et al. (2005) found evidence of bias in the interpretations of ambiguous behavior by ethnic minority children in some situations. Specifically, participants rated the White character's action in the *Stealing* scenario as worse than the Black character's action. The study did not find bias in the ethnic minority children's judgments of friendship potential.

While the studies conducted with children who attended ethnically diverse schools (Margie et al., 2005; McGlothlin et al., 2005) found minimal amounts of intergroup bias, McGlothlin & Killen (2006a) found bias in the interpretations of ambiguous behavior and in the evaluations of cross-race friendship potential by European American children attending ethnically homogeneous schools. Participants judged the behavior of Black characters as more negative than the same behavior by White characters. This bias was also evident in the evaluations of cross-race friendship. In situations involving Black transgressors, the European American children judged friendship as less likely than in situations involving White transgressors.

Analyses examining the role of school environment (i.e., ethnically heterogeneous or homogeneous) in the above studies revealed that the bias displayed by the European American children attending homogeneous schools was one of in-group bias and not out-group negativity (McGlothlin & Killen, 2006b). These children rated the behavior of the Black characters as worse than that of the White characters, but their ratings of the Black characters' behavior did not differ from those of the children attending heterogeneous schools. In other words, they did not rate the Black characters' behavior as any more negative than did the European American, African American, Latino, or Asian American children attending ethnically diverse schools. What differed between these samples were the ratings of the White characters' actions. European American children attending homogeneous schools rated the behavior of in-group members (i.e., the White characters) as more positive than did the children in the heterogeneous schools. Regarding evaluations of cross-race friendship potential, as shown in Figure 17.1, European American children from homogeneous schools were less optimistic overall about friendship between the



*Note.* 0 = No, they could not be friends; 1 = Yes, they could be friends. "All White" refers to homogeneous European-American schools; "Mixed Ethnicity" refers to European-American and Ethnic Minority children attending ethnically heterogeneous schools.

**Figure 17.1** Children's judgments about cross-race friendship potential.

White and Black characters after a transgression, especially when the transgressor was Black, than were children from heterogeneous schools (see Figure 17.1).

The findings revealed in the McGlothlin and Killen (2006b) analysis of school environment illuminate two important points. First, differentiating between in-group bias and out-group negativity is vital to understanding intergroup attitudes. Although the European American children who had little intergroup contact demonstrated in-group bias, they did not display prejudice. That is, they did not dislike the out-group. In fact, they rated the behaviors of the Black characters at the midpoint of the scale, which was neither good nor bad. Instead, they thought more highly of the behavior of their in-group members. While it is encouraging that prejudice was not evident in these studies, in-group ethnic preference is not without its consequences, especially with regard to peer relationships. The European American children who displayed in-group bias evaluated friendship between the White and Black characters as less likely than did children attending heterogeneous schools, who did not display in-group bias. Thus, peer rejection based on race or ethnicity can still occur even though out-group members are not treated differently. In other words, discrimination and its hurtful consequences can just as easily result from in-group bias as out-group negativity.

A second consideration brought to light by McGlothlin and Killen (2006b) is the importance of examining children's intergroup contact. Without the comparison to children at heterogeneous schools, our understanding of the bias displayed by European American children at homogeneous schools is incomplete. Nonetheless, a more precise measure of intergroup contact, instead of the use of school composition as a proxy, is needed.

To address the issue of how intergroup contact is measured, a recent study with adolescents at 14 and 17 years of age involved two individually administered assessments: an intergroup contact survey along with an adolescent version of the ambiguous pictures task similar to that administered to young children. Further participants attended both heterogeneous and homogeneous public schools (Killen, McGlothlin, Henning, & O'Connor, 2006).

The adolescent version of the Ambiguous Pictures Task, modified from McGlothlin et al. (2005), included four interracial dyadic situations—two moral (pushing, stealing) and two social-conventional (leaving a mess in the cafeteria, leaving school early)—which were portrayed in pictures. Adolescents were asked to interpret what happened, whether it would be fair for peers or teachers to accuse the target of wrongdoing, and how likely it was that the target committed the act. The results revealed that the race of the target was infrequently used to attribute negative intentions. While some European American participants used race to attribute negative intentions for pushing and stealing, on the whole there was little use of race to interpret negative intentions. European American students were more likely to interpret the interracial situations as involving a wrongdoing, however, than were African-American or Latino students. Further, males were more likely to attribute negative intentions than were females, and younger students were more likely to attribute negative intentions than were older students.

These results indicate that different intentions are attached to interracial dyadic encounters by students varying in ethnic status, gender, and age of the participant. Preliminary results indicated that school composition was not significantly related to differences in how 14- and 17-year-old students rated the pictures. Instead, intergroup contact was a key variable. Students who reported high intergroup contact

were less likely to use race as a basis for attributing intentions than were students who reported low intergroup contact (Killen et al., 2006). This indicates that school composition may be a proxy for intergroup contact in the early years (6- and 9-year-olds). Yet, by adolescence, a more sensitive measure, such as intergroup contact assessments, is necessary to fully understand the relationship between experience and judgments.

In sum, research investigating bias in children's interpretations of behavior and the influence on decisions about intergroup relations has provided a glimpse into how bias reduces the likelihood of cross-race friendship. Young children, particularly European Americans attending homogeneous schools, viewed their in-group as performing more positive actions than members of their out-group. This in-group bias makes selecting a friend from the in-group a more desirable option than selecting an out-group member. These majority children in homogeneous schools were also less optimistic about cross-race friendship potential in general than were children from heterogeneous schools. An examination of recent research on the role of intergroup attitudes, social identity, and social reasoning about peer relationships will be presented next.

### INTERGROUP ATTITUDES AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS

As the above studies indicate, multiple factors influence children's and adolescents' decision-making about intergroup relationships, including the child's age, gender, and ethnicity. These variables are also significant to the understanding of intergroup attitudes. In addition, an understanding of the complexity of intergroup attitudes requires an analysis of the target (i.e., the group about which the attitude is held), the salience of the belief, and the components of the situation, or, in other words, a detailed examination of the context of the attitudes. Although measures assessing word associations and trait assignment as indications of intergroup bias contribute to our understanding of children's prejudice, developmental research examining how intergroup decisions are made in a social context with different social relationships, goals, and expectations has provided great gains in knowledge about the emergence of these attitudes. Illustrating the benefit of examining intergroup attitudes in context, several recent lines of research have shed light on how group processes and group norms impact children's intergroup attitudes and their decision-making about intergroup peer relationships.

### SOCIAL IDENTITY AND CATEGORIZATION

Emphasizing the importance of group processes in the development of children's intergroup attitudes, Nesdale and his colleagues (Chapter 13, this volume; Nesdale, Durkin, Maass, & Griffiths, 2004; Nesdale, Griffiths, Durkin, & Maass, 2005; Nesdale, Maass, Durkin, & Griffiths, 2005) have proposed social identity development theory (SIDT). SIDT contends that children's attitudes about ethnic groups develop over four sequential phases (undifferentiated, ethnic awareness, ethnic preference, and ethnic prejudice). For the current discussion, the last two phases are of interest. From as early as 4 years of age, most children in multiethnic communities are in the ethnic preference phase. That is, they prefer their in-group over out-groups. According to SIDT, children this young do not usually dislike out-groups. In other words, very young children do not hold prejudiced attitudes, but they do harbor a preference for their own group. This ethnic

preference, SIDT argues, is the result of children comparing groups in terms of status and preferring to be members of high- rather than low- status groups in order to heighten self-esteem.

As children get older, they expand their focus to include out-groups in addition to their in-group. In the ethnic prejudice phase, the out-group is disliked or hated. SIDT argues, however, that ethnic prejudice is not an inevitable outcome—children may or may not enter this phase. Whether prejudice develops depends on three factors. First, children must identify with their social group in order for prejudice to develop. Second, prejudice is more likely to develop if the child's social group shares and expresses prejudiced attitudes. Third, the belief that the in-group's well-being or status is being threatened by the out-group increases the likelihood that prejudice develops. Thus, group norms and group identification are critical elements of prejudiced attitudes.

A recent line of work based on SIDT (Nesdale, Griffiths et al., 2005; Nesdale, Maass et al., 2005) has revealed that in-group norms regarding inclusion or exclusion of the out-group, using a minimal group design, influenced Anglo-Australian children's own intergroup attitudes. Group norms promoting exclusion or rejection of the out-group were associated with decreased levels of liking of out-group members. In fact, children whose in-group norm was exclusion actually reported that they *disliked* out-group members, while children whose in-group norm was inclusion generally liked out-group members though to a lesser extent than in-group members. Thus, prejudiced attitudes were expressed when the child's in-group endorsed rejection of out-group members.

These findings point to the importance of the peer group, especially the norms of the peer group, on children's decision-making about intergroup peer relationships. The studies used a modification of the minimal group paradigm which traditionally entails random assignment to groups artificially created in the laboratory (for example, participants are assigned to the "blue" team or the "yellow" team). The design in these studies allowed for the impact of ethnicity to be examined by varying the out-group in terms of ethnicity. Interestingly, ethnicity did not affect children's ratings of liking out-group members beyond the effect of group norm. However, extrapolating from these findings, if the in-group norm consists of homogeneity of ethnicity or race, individual members may be less inclined to engage in cross-race/ethnic relationships.

#### GROUP DYNAMICS AND ATTITUDES ABOUT DEVIANT PEERS IN GROUP CONTEXTS

Work by Abrams, Rutland, and their colleagues (Abrams, Rutland, & Cameron, 2003; Abrams, Rutland, Cameron, & Marques, 2005) on developmental subjective group dynamics has also examined the role of group norms in children's evaluations of group members. Subjective group dynamics contends that as children get older, decisions about intergroup relations rely more heavily on the extent to which individual group members support the norms of the in-group than on group membership. Their research has shown that starting at around 10 years of age, children are more attentive to individuating information and begin to make intragroup comparisons in addition to intergroup comparisons when evaluating group members. More importance is placed on whether or not an individual promotes the norms of the in-group. Older children differentiate and evaluate group members based on the extent to which they conform to the group's norms. While the in-group as a whole is still

preferred, individual out-group members who endorse in-group norms may be favored over in-group members who deviate from the norms.

Although the work on subjective group dynamics has, to date, focused on non-racial or ethnic group categories such as nationality, the findings shed light on factors involved in children's decision-making about intergroup friendship. For children as young as 6, sharing group norms is an important basis on which to judge potential friends. If ethnic or racial categories are salient, children may only be open to friendship with an out-group member if that member is perceived to deviate from his or her own group norms. The findings also indicate that the influence of group processes and norms on intergroup attitudes increases with age.

#### EXTENDED CONTACT AS A PREDICTOR OF REDUCED PREJUDICE

Work on extended contact has shown that the intergroup experiences of peers can vicariously affect an individual's bias. Extended contact is an extension of the intergroup contact hypothesis and occurs when a child discovers that an in-group member has a close relationship with an out-group member (Cameron & Rutland, *in press*, 2006; Cameron, Rutland, & Brown, 2006a, 2006b; Wright, Aron, McLaughlin-Volpe, & Ropp, 1997). Cameron and her colleagues investigated the extended contact effect with young children regarding the physically disabled. They found that following an intervention in which stories were read regarding a physically disabled child who helps a nondisabled child achieve a goal (overcoming a fear), children held more positive attitudes regarding physically disabled peers. The findings have been replicated with children at different ages and regarding different group memberships. The importance of this work is that for children residing in homogeneous communities and schools, opportunities for extended contact may be the best mechanism for reducing prejudice when direct contact is not feasible.

While extended contact may be effective for reducing prejudice regarding certain stigmas associated with peers, this form of contact lacks many of the salient dimensions that have been shown to be effective for direct contact, which involves developing close relationships, perceiving variations within groups, and establishing intimacy. Moreover, close relationships between peers takes time to evolve and develop, and thus, face-to-face contact may be necessary for prejudice reduction regarding groups in which the stereotypes are deeply entrenched in the culture (such as race and ethnicity).

#### SOCIAL REASONING ABOUT INTERRACIAL PEER ENCOUNTERS

Killen and her colleagues (Killen et al., 2002; Killen & Stangor, 2001) have also looked at the influence of peers and peer groups on children's decision-making about intergroup relationships from a social cognitive domain perspective. This line of work has focused on children's and adolescents' reasoning about race-based exclusion from friendship and peer groups. The selection of friends is most often considered a matter of personal choice. That is, it is up to the individual to decide with whom to be friends. But is rejection of an individual from a different racial background just a matter of personal preference or a matter of discrimination? Social-cognitive domain theory provides a useful way of understanding decision-making about intergroup peer relationships.

Social-cognitive domain theory proposes that social judgments are influenced by the reasoning processes that individuals apply to the evaluations of events (Turiel, 1983, 1998; Turiel, Killen, & Helwig, 1987). Social reasoning can be categorized by three conceptually distinct domains: moral, social-conventional, and psychological (Turiel, 1983, 1998). The moral domain consists of concerns related to justice, rights, and others' welfare. Knowledge in the social-conventional domain relates to traditions, rules, and norms. Social conventions ensure smooth group functioning and promote group identity. The psychological domain pertains to issues of personal choice, such as choice of clothing or hairstyle. An extensive line of research has shown that individuals from as early as 2 years of age differentiate events along these domain distinctions (for reviews, see Smetana, 2006; Tisak, 1995; Turiel, 1998).

Biases toward individuals from different racial backgrounds bear on different domains. Racial biases can result in discrimination, which involves the treatment of others (i.e., the moral domain). At the same time, racial attitudes are informed by traditions of groups that reflect social-conventional judgments. Furthermore, appeals to group functioning and group identity, both social-conventional aspects, are often used to justify the exclusion of racial and ethnic minorities. These appeals may be guises for what is really prejudice. Racial biases can bear on the psychological domain as well. A study by Killen and her colleagues (Killen et al., 2002) investigated how children and adolescents evaluate exclusion based on race using the social-cognitive domain framework.

Killen et al. (2002) examined the judgments and reasoning of fourth-, seventh-, and tenth-graders regarding the exclusion of a Black child from three contexts: friendship, music club, and school. Participants were asked for their judgment of the exclusion (is it okay or not okay?) and for justifications for their judgment (why is it okay or not okay?). Results indicated that the majority of children and adolescents judged exclusion based on race as wrong and focused on the wrongfulness of discrimination and harm to the individual (i.e., moral concerns). Differences did arise between the contexts of exclusion. Virtually all children and adolescents viewed excluding a Black child from school as wrong; however, a small but significant number of participants judged exclusion in the friendship context and in the music club context as okay.

Analyses of the reasons behind the judgments indicated that children and adolescents appealed to personal choice when condoning not being friends with someone because of the person's race. That is, these participants reasoned that it is okay for someone to not be friends with a Black person because of his race due to the personal nature of the decision—it is up to the individual to decide who his or her friends are. For the music club context, exclusion was justified on the basis of preserving group identity and group functioning. For instance, the participants contended that group members may be uncomfortable with a Black child in the club and therefore, the group would not get along as well. Some participants argued that if the club wanted to remain all-White then that was their choice. For a small number of participants, appeals were made to stereotypes about the musical preferences of African American and European Americans (e.g., "He [the black child] probably listens to hip-hop and they don't, so he wouldn't fit in with the group."). Thus, justifications supporting exclusion in the friendship and music club contexts were based on social-conventional considerations, while reasoning condemning exclusion was based on moral concerns.

Age differences in judgments and reasoning about exclusion were also found. Adolescents were more likely than were younger children to evaluate exclusion from



friendship and a music club as okay. In other words, older children viewed racial exclusion as a multifaceted issue more often than did younger children, who focused primarily on moral considerations. The decline with age in evaluating exclusion as wrong is consistent with the findings that cross-race friendships decline as children grow older. While the majority of children and adolescents in the Killen et al. (2002) study judged exclusion as wrong across all contexts, the age-related findings that acceptance of racial exclusion increases is important to understand. It also suggests that social desirability was not a factor. However, participants did not base their acceptance of exclusion on stereotypes or negative views of race per se, but instead appealed to the individual's autonomy in making the friendship decision or the importance of the group to maintain an identity and high level of functioning. In another study, Killen and Stangor (2001) found that, with age, children used race as a reason for making decisions about friendship.

These findings, along with those from work on subjective group dynamics and social identity development theory, provide an explanation for the decline in cross-race friendships and relationships with age. As children reach adolescence, social conventions (i.e., group norms) take on greater importance (Horn, 2003; Smetana, 1989, 2006). Indeed, social cognitive domain theory contends that reasoning within the domains of social knowledge (moral, social conventional, and personal) undergoes developmental changes as the individual gains more social experience and knowledge (Turiel, 1983). For example, social-conventional reasons for group functioning with preschool-aged children are often activity-based (e.g., "It's okay to not let the boy play dolls because dolls are for girls."), whereas social-conventional reasons for exclusion from groups in adolescence are tied to social-reference groups and identity (e.g., "It's okay to not let the cheerleader join the gothics because they're different types of people and they don't get along or have much in common.") (for preschool: see Killen, Pisacane, Lee-Kim, & Ardila-Rey, 2001; for adolescence: see Horn, 2003).

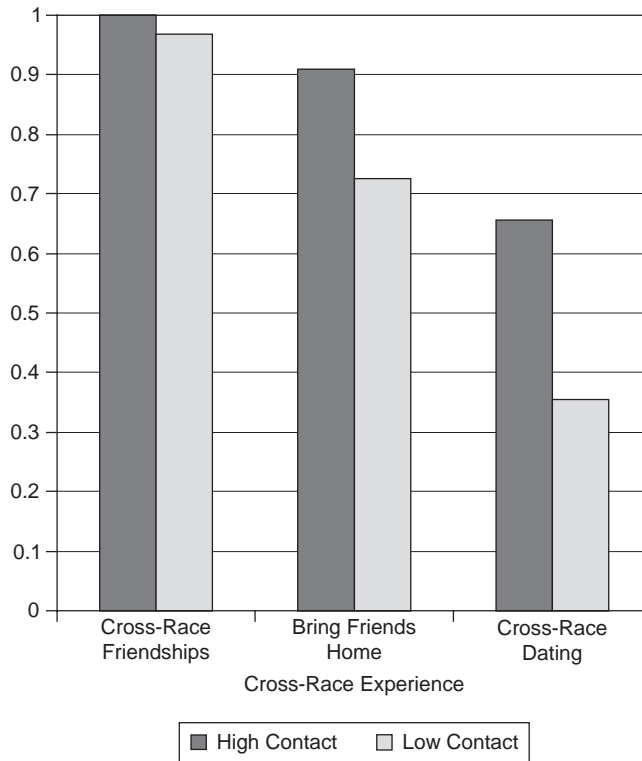
Research with children and adolescents from ethnic minority backgrounds points further to the importance of ethnic identity in relationship formation during adolescence (Quintana, 1998; Quintana & Vera, 1999). According to Quintana, adolescence ushers in a more complex understanding of prejudice, one in which the social aspects of ethnicity and prejudice are better perceived. Adolescents are more aware of the subtle acts and outcomes of prejudice and are more mindful of how ethnicity affects interpersonal relationships. These findings provide an explanation for the decline in cross-race friendship nominations by ethnic minority children in early adolescence (Graham & Cohen, 1997; Hallinan & Teixeira, 1987). The increased sensitivity to prejudice in adolescence may enhance the desirability of same-race groups in order to buffer the negative effects of bias (Crocker & Major, 1989; Quintana & Vera, 1999). Indeed, Quintana (1998) found that sixth-grade Mexican American children believed that ethnic similarity helped friendship formation and development. These children also reported that same-ethnicity peer groups would cooperate better and feel more comfortable than mixed-ethnicity groups. In other words, as in the Killen et al. (2002) study, social-conventional reasoning was invoked for why a group would function better when composed of the same ethnicity. Thus, there are theoretical bases, as well as empirical evidence, that the decline of intergroup relationships with age is related to changes in the identification with, and reasoning about, groups and their norms in adolescence for both majority and minority children.

#### INTERGROUP CONTACT AND PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTAL ATTITUDES ABOUT INTERGROUP RELATIONSHIPS

Along with peer group changes, there are also transformations in the nature and quality of close relationships during adolescence. With the onset of dating and the development of greater intimacy in adolescent relationships, greater weight is given to one's closest relationships. In some cases, if this close relationship happens to be a cross-race one, it may also lead to an increase in negative parental response toward these relationships. A study by Edmonds and Killen (2006) asked adolescents about their cross-race experiences in order to examine how perceptions of parents' racial attitudes interact with intergroup contact to influence cross-race relationships during adolescence.

Past research on intergroup contact has focused on the effect cross-race friendships have on future racial attitudes in adults (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000; Schofield, 1995; Schofield & Eurich-Fulcer, 2002; Slavin & Cooper, 1999), as well as on how cross-race friendships differ in quality from same-race friendships in terms of levels of intimacy (Kerner & Aboud, 1998). Expanding on this research, Edmonds and Killen (2006) examined cross-race friendship and dating to look for differences in intimacy for each type of relationship (e.g., comfort with different race peers, inviting cross-race peers or dates home). Fletcher et al. (2004) found that while intergroup contact predicted the number of cross-race friendships, these friendships lacked the intimacy found in same-race friendships. That is, cross-race friends were less likely to invite each other home or to date. Similarly, Edmonds and Killen (2006) found that participants who reported low intergroup contact (i.e., having fewer cross-race peers in their schools, neighborhoods, and outside of school, as well as lower comfort levels working with cross-race peers) were more likely to also say that they had few cross-race relationships of any kind, were less likely to bring cross-race friends or dates home, and were more likely to report that their parents held negative attitudes toward their cross-race friends or dates. Thus, perceptions of intergroup contact among the participants related to their actual cross-race relationships and the levels of intimacy within those relationships. Overall, Edmonds and Killen's (2006) results concerning the perceptions of intergroup contact supported previous research (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000, 2005).

Specifically, perceptions of high contact led to a greater number of reported cross-race friendships and dating experiences across a variety of contexts, and also to more positive attitudes about participating in these relationships. As shown in Figure 17.2, participants with low contact were not only more likely to report fewer cross-race friends, they were also less likely to bring those friends home and were less likely to have dated someone from a different race (see Figure 17.2). It should be noted that while participants who measured low on intergroup contact had fewer cross-race relationships, significance was not found when they were asked about having the opportunity to have cross-race friends or to date interracial. In other words, just because they perceived themselves as having low contact, they did not necessarily report that they lacked the opportunity for cross-race relationships, when compared to those who reported high intergroup contact. Therefore, the inference can be made that perceptions of low intergroup contact are related to fewer cross-race relationships, lack of intimacy within these relationships, as well as less positive attitudes toward these relationships. Furthermore, with greater intimacy within these relationships (friendship vs. dating), positive attitudes and experiences of bringing cross-race peers home increase. Thus, while Fletcher et al. (2004) found that intimacy was



Note. 0 = No; 1 = Yes. Cross-Race Friendships = Assessment: "Do you have any cross-race friends?" Bring Friends Home = Assessment: "Have you ever brought a cross-race friend home?" Cross-Race Dating = Assessment: "Have you ever dated someone from a different race?"

**Figure 17.2** Adolescents' amount of intergroup contact and cross-race experiences.

different for cross-race friendships and same-race friendships, Edmonds and Killen (2006) found that this was further exacerbated for adolescents who held the perception of low intergroup contact across settings.

When intergroup contact was paired with perceptions adolescents had of their parents' racial attitudes, low intergroup contact and the perception of negative racial attitudes in parents was associated with even fewer cross-race relationships and more negative attitudes toward cross-race relationships in general. Especially interesting is the fact that these adolescents were more likely to say they agreed with their parents' perceived negative attitudes toward cross-race relationships than were those with high intergroup contact. One possible explanation is that an adolescent with lower intergroup contact has fewer opportunities to see parental norms questioned and overturned. As discussed earlier, a positive contribution of intergroup contact is its ability to allow children to see variability within groups of individuals and question the legitimacy of stereotypes. If they have learned these stereotypes from parents or their immediate surroundings without messages to the contrary, adolescents might not question parental attitudes and more or less accept them. Similarly, seeing others engage in cross-race relationships may serve to offset negative parental messages. More contact leads to more exposure to cross-race relationships, thus normalizing the

relationship. Without this experience, one would be more likely to agree with parents that these relationships are in some way taboo or unacceptable.

Thus, when examining the role intergroup contact plays in adolescents' cross-race relationships, participants demonstrated that intergroup contact by itself has a positive effect. Children asked to evaluate ambiguous situations and adolescents questioned about their own experiences with cross-race relationships are more likely to positively judge the potential for intergroup friendship, to engage in these relationships, and to be more accepting of them. On the other hand, low contact leads to fewer relationships. And, the more intimate the relationship, the greater the divergence between those who report high contact versus those who report low contact. Furthermore, when paired with the perception of negative racial attitudes in parents, low contact leads to not only fewer relationships, but also to less comfort and acceptability of these relationships.

#### PARENTAL ATTITUDES AND MESSAGES ABOUT CROSS-RACE RELATIONSHIPS

In addition to intergroup contact, Edmonds and Killen (2006) examined how perceptions of parents' racial attitudes and messages might affect their experiences in cross-race relationships. Aboud and Doyle (1996) contend that children's racial attitudes are not part of a learning process or something they have picked up from their parents. Instead, they propose that racial attitudes and in-group/out-group category formation is part of a cognitive developmental process in which social agents, such as parents and peers, may identify the targets of prejudice, but the child's immature cognitive processes are responsible for translating social information into biased attitudes (Aboud, 1988; Aboud & Doyle, 1996). Aboud and Doyle (1996) found that children's racial attitudes are not strongly related to either their mothers' or their friends' attitudes. In addition, the children in their study incorrectly believed that they and their parents and friends held similar attitudes, influencing their judgments about others, and suggesting that this bias might not be inaccurate.

Aboud and Doyle (1996) also suggest that children could misinterpret the racial comments they hear or even reinterpret them in light of their own attitudes because of their own cognitive limitations. The messages they hear could be inconsistent or parents could share very little information about their racial views. Because of the lack of information, children may simply use their own attitudes as a standard for inferring others' attitudes. Taking social desirability into consideration, it would then be difficult to ascertain the actual attitudes of many adults. Most adults would not want to appear prejudiced and could mask their true feelings. Therefore, trusting the results of any study examining a direct link between children's attitudes and their parents' would be difficult (Aboud and Doyle, 1996).

Indeed, a study conducted by Sinclair, Dunn, and Lowery (2005) provides support for the indirect nature and effect of parent's messages regarding cross-race friendships. Sinclair et al. (2005) investigated the effect of parental attitudes on children's implicit racial prejudice using a measure of implicit prejudice for children (IAT) and an explicit measure of prejudice for parents (Modern Racism Scale). A significant relationship was found between parental explicit prejudice and children's implicit prejudice for those children who demonstrated strong identification with their parents and their values. Sinclair et al. (2005) proposed that children who identify with their parents adopt their parents' racial attitudes on an implicit level, often unaware of similarities they share with their parents' attitudes, while those who do not identify

with their parents reject their racial attitudes on an explicit level, actively expressing disagreement with their parents' beliefs. Thus, children who identify closely with their parents, having adopted their parents' values on a subconscious level, should be less likely, with age, to engage in cross-race relationships without explicit messages from their parents.

With this in mind, rather than directly ask parents about their racial attitudes, Edmonds and Killen (2006) surveyed adolescents' perceptions of their parents' attitudes, feelings, and expressions about race and cross-race relationships. The results indicated that adolescents who perceived their parents to have negative racial attitudes believed that parents treat and discuss cross-race relationships differently, meaning that they hold more negative attitudes and express their concerns more openly toward cross-race dating than toward cross-race friendships. Specifically, perceptions of negative parent racial attitudes added more obstacles to cross-race dating than to cross-race friendships, typically due to the more explicit and negative expression of their feelings regarding cross-race dating. As a result, participants reported that they felt less open toward cross-race dating, were less likely to have dated someone from a different race, had less intimacy with cross-race peers and dates (in terms of inviting home and comfort levels), and were more likely to have parents who had openly expressed negative feelings regarding cross-race dating relationships.

In sum, the study conducted by Edmonds and Killen (2006) demonstrated that intergroup contact among peers continues to be beneficial to children as they get older and enter adolescence. Intergroup contact provides opportunities for cross-race relationships to develop, as well as makes children feel more at ease exploring intimacy within these relationships, such as in the form of inviting cross-race friends and dates home. However, it is important when discussing the benefits of intergroup peer relationships that parents as socializing agents are not ignored. When paired with low intergroup contact, the perception of negative racial attitudes in parents can deter children from willingly engaging in cross-race relationships of all types, further lessening the chance for future cross-race relationships and the chance to reap the benefits of surrounding oneself with others who are different. Parents influence their children's attitudes regarding cross-race relationships both directly and indirectly. Without intergroup contact, children are less likely to engage in, experience, and develop cross-race peer relationships. Yet, even with contact, parents' attitudes and messages shape the experiences within those relationships and either encourage or discourage future development of these relationships into more intimate ones.

## CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Decisions about peer relationships rest on a myriad of factors, including proximity, similarity of interests, and parental approval, among many others. Decisions about intergroup peer relationships are further influenced by attitudes concerning race and ethnicity, stereotypes, as well as the above concerns magnified by the addition of race to the equation. In this chapter, we reviewed recent studies that have examined factors related to children's and adolescents' decision-making about intergroup peer relationships.

Findings by McGlothlin and colleagues (Margie et al., 2005; McGlothlin & Killen, 2005; McGlothlin & Killen, 2006; McGlothlin et al., 2005) and Edmonds & Killen (2006) point to the beneficial impact of intergroup contact on children's decisions about the

importance of similarity of race in intergroup friendship as well as its influence on promoting positive attitudes about intergroup relationships. Future research should examine how differences in the type and quality of contact affect children's intergroup relationships. Studies are also needed to better understand the development of in-group bias and why it appears to be more pronounced for children attending ethnically homogeneous schools. The findings on extended contact (Cameron & Rutland, in press, 2006; Wright et al., 1997), along with work on developmental subjective group dynamics (Abrams et al., 2003) and social identity development theory (Nesdale et al., 2004), illustrate the importance of the peer group in decision-making about peer relationships and on intergroup attitudes in general. These areas of work offer promising avenues of intervention.

Another source of influence on children's peer relationships are parents. Similar to peers, parents convey messages, both directly and indirectly, about their approval of intergroup relationships. Adolescents' perceptions of parental messages (i.e., their perception of the parent's attitude) as positive or negative are related to their own attitudes regarding intergroup relationships. The intersection of implicit bias and parental messages about race and ethnicity is, as yet, largely unexplored.

In sum, this chapter discussed research examining various factors proposed to influence children's and adolescents' intergroup peer relationships. Although some findings illuminated why these relationships are rare, especially with age, all of this work contributes to a greater understanding and ability to encourage positive intergroup relationships, which have the potential to extend the many benefits of peer relationships.

As Piaget (1932) theorized more than 70 years ago, peer interaction is significantly related to children's acquisition of the concepts of fairness, justice, and rights. Only in the past decade, however, has research focused on peer interaction in relationship to prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination. In the 1950s, Piaget (Piaget & Weil, 1951) interviewed children about their conceptions of countries, nationalities, and citizenship in a series of studies described in a sociology journal. His theoretical focus, however, was not on social justice, but on the logical and classification system that emerges with the child's identification with more than one category (town, nationality, and/or country).

The current work described in this chapter integrates social psychological research on social identity and prejudice with developmental research on fairness and justice concepts to provide an understanding of the role of peer interaction on children's developing prejudice and awareness of stereotypes. This topic is clearly within the moral domain (treatment of others), as well as the realm of social group formation (group functioning) and decisions about friendship (psychological decisions and shared interests). Future avenues will undoubtedly shed light on further complexities and nuances about children's experiences with peers that contribute to an understanding of the necessity of justice, fairness, and equality, particularly in the context of intergroup relationships.

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## CHAPTER 18

# Acquisition and Development of a Shared Psychological Intergroup Repertoire in a Context of an Intractable Conflict

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### INTRODUCTION

**T**HE STUDY of stereotypes<sup>2</sup>, prejudice<sup>3</sup>, and racism has evolved as one of the major research areas in the social sciences in general, and in social and developmental psychology in particular. Developmental psychology has focused on issues related to their acquisition, and through the years, numerous studies have tried to elucidate the general mechanisms and trajectories of their development. Gradually, attention has begun to turn to the context in which children and adolescents develop their social views and attitudes (Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005; Oppenheimer, 2006). Evidence suggests that social contexts affect how stereotypes, prejudice, and racism develop. One context that is particularly salient in the daily lives of children is intractable intergroup conflict.

The plan for this chapter is to present a perspective on the role of intractable conflicts in the development of children's stereotypes and prejudices,

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<sup>2</sup>We adopt the widely accepted definition for stereotypes as "beliefs about the personal attributes of a group of people" proposed by Ashmore and Del Boca (1981, pp. 16).

<sup>3</sup>Prejudice is defined as "an antipathy based upon a faulty and inflexible generalization" (Allport, 1954, pp. 9).

with a particular focus on the Israeli-Arab conflict. We will describe the Israeli-Arab conflict, and then we shall review current theories explaining the development of stereotypes and prejudice in children, and the empirical findings generated by them. After pointing out some challenges to these theoretical views, we shall present an alternative theoretical approach that we have identified as an Integrative Developmental Contextual Theory (IDCT). We will review empirical evidence supporting IDCT obtained from Jewish and Arab<sup>4</sup> children and adolescents in Israel. Based on the reported findings we will discuss contextual and age-related implications, and offer suggestions for further research and ideas for prevention and intervention.

### INTRACTABLE CONFLICT AND SHARED PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERGROUP REPERTOIRE (SPIR)

We define intractable conflicts between political, cultural, or ethnic groups as those that last at least 25 years. They evolve over goals that are perceived as existential, unsolvable, and of zero sum nature. Conflicts are often violent. Furthermore, they intensely preoccupy society members, who invest materially and psychologically in adjusting to them, and paradoxically in maintaining the conflict (Bar-Tal, 1998, in press; Kriesberg, 1993, 1998). Intractable conflicts, such as those in Sri Lanka, Northern Ireland, Kashmir, Rwanda, Chechnya, or the Middle East, involve all society members, including children.

Bar-Tal (in press) suggests that conflicts create a sociopsychological infrastructure, which eventually becomes part of the culture of conflict. This sociopsychological infrastructure includes narratives, beliefs, attitudes, and emotions related to the causes of the conflict outbreak, its course, the desired goals, and solutions. It serves as a prism through which society members view the conflict, the rival group, and themselves, and functions to help them meet the challenges of the conflict.

An important function of this infrastructure is to increase the identification of society members with their group. As noted by realistic conflict theory (Bar-Tal, 1990; Bobo, 1988; Campbell, 1965; LeVine & Campbell, 1972; Sherif, 1966, 1967), conflicts over major goals such as territory, resources, or values produce stereotypes, prejudice, associated emotions, and behavioral intentions toward the rival group. All constitute critical elements of the socio-psychological infrastructure that develops in the context of conflict. We refer to this infrastructure as the Shared Psychological Intergroup Repertoire (SPIR), and will elucidate it further when discussing the context for the development of stereotypes and prejudice.

Although the reviewed research in this chapter comes from studies carried out in the specific conflict known as the "Israeli-Arab conflict," we believe that our observations transcend that particular case and provide insights for a general understanding of the development and nature of SPIRs in the context of severe and violent conflicts. The line of research we present follows the developmental course of the view of the "rival" by the younger generation and provides information that may explain its

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<sup>4</sup>We are aware that many of the Arab citizens in the State of Israel consider their primary identity as Palestinians. In this chapter we use the formal label "Israeli Arabs," which is accepted by most Israelis.

deep influence on the psyche of society members, and the perseverance and intransigence of the conflict. Further, these insights may inform us as to why, in some instances, the vicious cycle of violent conflicts continues for generations, and may also suggest that when advancing reconciliation, changing both children's and adults' SPIR regarding the rival is of pivotal importance.

#### BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The conflict between Jews and Arabs who lived in the area defined until 1948 as Palestine has lasted over 100 years. These two nations claim the same territory as their homeland and through the years have engaged in a violent struggle to achieve their mutually contradictory goals (Gerner, 1991; Tessler, 1994). The conflict began as a sustained and small-scale sectarian conflict. In 1948, following the declaration of an Israeli state, it evolved into a full-blown interstate conflict between Israel and five Arab nations. Since then, the conflict has generated seven wars and two civil uprisings (Intifadas). For decades, it has represented all the prototypical characteristics of an intractable conflict (Bar-Tal, 1998).

The dramatic visit of the Egyptian President Anwar Sadat to Jerusalem in 1977, and the peace agreement with Egypt signed in 1979, was a turning point in the nature of the conflict, and contributed to its de-escalation. Another major positive turning point in the Israeli-Arab relations took place in 1993, when Israelis and Palestinians signed an agreement negotiated in Oslo. This agreement involved mutual recognition and assurance of a peaceful resolution of the conflict. The peace process that followed the Oslo agreement lasted (with ups and downs) until 2000. However, the failure of the Camp David Summit initiated by President Clinton with the participation of Israeli and Palestinian leaders, and the eruption of the second Intifada, led to its breakdown. As evidenced in the 2006 violent confrontations between Israelis and Palestinians in Gaza, and with Hezbollah in southern Lebanon, the conflict continues to flare up. The recent violent confrontations escalated the conflict, contributing to widespread pessimism about its resolution.

Within this context, on both sides, children grow to become members of their respective societies. From a very early age they absorb the SPIR prevailing in their society, including the stereotypes of the rival group and prejudice toward it. The context of conflict provides the specific contents, attitudes, and emotions, but the acquisition of the SPIR is also affected by developmental processes. This suggests that, in order to understand the intergroup representations held by children in any society, one has to examine both the contextual and developmental factors underlying their acquisition and change during the developmental trajectory.

#### THEORIES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF IN- AND OUT-GROUP STEREOTYPES AND PREJUDICE IN MULTIETHNIC SOCIETIES AND IN THE CONTEXT OF INTRACTABLE CONFLICT

In the last two decades, research on the developmental trajectory of intergroup stereotypes and prejudice has drawn on two major theories: social-cognitive theory (SCT) (Aboud, 1988; Chapter 4, this volume) and social identity development theory (SIDT), (Nesdale, 1999, 2000, Chapter 13, this volume; Nesdale, Durkin, Maass & Griffiths, 2005; Nesdale & Flessner, 2001). SCT suggests that due to limited cognitive capabilities, affective influence (fear), early emotional attachments to individuals perceived

as similar to the child, and egocentric social perspective, preschoolers prefer their own ethnic group. When children reach the age of 7 to 9, cognitive maturation is expected to introduce more flexibility and social tolerance. Indeed, ample findings indicate that in multiethnic, nonviolent social contexts, children aged 7 to 9 become less biased (Aboud, 1988, Bigler & Liben, 1993; Black-Gutman & Hickson, 1996; Doyle & Aboud, 1995; Doyle, Beaudet, & Aboud, 1988; Nesdale & Flessler, 2001; Nesdale, Durkin, Maass, & Griffiths, 2005).

Nesdale (Chapter 13) and his associates based their model on social identity theory SIT (Tajfel & Turner 1986), and proposed it as an alternative account of the development of stereotypes and prejudice to that offered by Aboud (1988). They identify their theory as social identity development theory (SIDT). SIDT draws on the tenets of SIT, suggesting that individuals develop their social identity as group members and as a result much of their experience, thinking, feeling, and acting occur within a group framework. They categorize groups, identify with the groups to which they belong, and integrate them as a part of their self-identity. Moreover, individuals not only relate to themselves as group members, but also perceive and treat others according to the knowledge they possess about the groups to which they belong, and about the relationship between their group and any given out-group. Subsequently, they engage in social comparison and, being motivated by a need to enhance their social esteem and through it also their self-esteem, they favor the in-group and devalue out-groups. Empirical evidence confirms that even a superficial newly-acquired group identity (in a minimal group paradigm) is sufficient to trigger in children and adults differentiation between in- and out-groups, favoring the former and discriminating against the latter (Bigler, Jones, & Lobliner, 1997; Hinkle, Taylor, Fox-Cardamon, & Crook, 1989; Howard & Rothbart, 1980; Mackie & Geothelas, 1987; Nesdale and Flessler, 2001; Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1961; Vaugham, Tajfel, & Williams, 1981).

SIT and SIDT highlight the fact that intergroup comparison and evaluation processes are influenced by the socio-structural context within which the groups exist. Thus, in addition to group identity, factors such as the status of groups and the nature of the boundaries between them, mainly permeability, determine intergroup attitudes (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Others added different factors that also contribute to the development of those attitudes, including group norms (Brown, 2000), intensity of group identification (Brewer, 1999), and the threat that groups pose for each other (Brewer, 1999; LeVine & Campbell, 1972; Sherif, 1966; Stephan & Stephan, 2000). By now, the influence of most of these factors has been examined in studies with children (Aboud, 2003; Augoustinos & Rosewarne, 2001; Bigler, Jones, & Lobliner, 1997; Nesdale & Brown, 2004; Nesdale & Flessler, 2001; Nesdale et al., 2004).

Early in its development SIDT predicted no effect of age on children's intergroup beliefs and attitudes (Nesdale & Flessler, 2001). However, data from Nesdale, Durkin, Maass, and Griffiths (2005) supported the age predictions suggested by SCT. As a result, Nesdale and colleagues suggested that children traverse four stages of social identity development between the ages of 2 and 7. According to this paradigm, progression to ethnic preference (age 4 to 5), and especially to ethnic prejudice (age 6 to 7), depends on the acquisition of self-identification, understanding of social structure, ability to engage in social comparison, and preference to belong to a high-status group.

The idea that out-group prejudice is based on more advanced cognitive faculties than in-group preference was also proposed by others (Aboud 2003; Augoustinos & Rosewarne, 2001; Brewer, 1999; Cameron, Alvarez, Ruble, & Fuligni, 2001). In addition, all agree that conditions of conflict may accelerate the appearance of prejudice.



This qualification acknowledges that the cognitive capabilities required for the development of intergroup responses and their positivity/negativity emerge quite early in life, and that their activation depends on the context. Indeed, the findings we shall report suggest that in the context of intractable conflict, children as young as 2 and 3 years old develop intergroup attitudes. Furthermore, in the context of intractable conflict, children aged 8 to 9 do not moderate their intergroup views, (Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005). Thus, we propose that the influence of cognitive development on social biases depends on the context.

Another challenge for cognitively based theories emerges from repeated findings showing that, irrespective of age, majority-group children prefer their own group, while young minority children also tend to prefer the majority group, and only in later ages prefer their own group (Aboud, 1988). Since cognitive development is based on universal patterns, cognitively based theories of prejudice cannot explain this difference between same-aged children from different social groups. Furthermore, recent findings for minority children in conflict indicated that under certain conditions, even 12- to 13-year-olds did not differentiate between their group and a majority group (Teichman & Zafrir, 2003).

Finally, following the reasoning that cognitive development reduces social biases leads to the assumption that children 10 years and older would manifest a further reduction in biases. However, studies conducted in nonviolent environments and in conflict reported a renewed elevation in prejudice during this age (Black-Gutman & Hickson, 1996; Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005; Rutland, 1999; Teichman, 2001; Vaughan, 1987). We attribute the findings obtained for minority children and for early adolescents to the influences of context and identity development. Put together, the findings for majority children aged 2 to 3 and 8 to 9 in conflict, as well as those for minority children and adolescents, led us to suggest an integrative theoretical framework relating to the acquisition and development of intergroup repertoires in the age range of 2 to 17.

#### INTEGRATIVE DEVELOPMENTAL-CONTEXTUAL THEORY (IDCT)

IDCT proposes that SPIRs are mediated by the simultaneous influence of multiple factors in a given social context. IDCT acknowledges the role of cognitive development and self-enhancement motivation, which were highlighted by SCT and SIDT as playing an important role in the development of SPIRs. However, instead of focusing on one specific factor, IDCT includes both and traces their influence within a developmental perspective. Since self-enhancement motivation was not embedded within a developmental framework, we propose to view it within the theory relating to identity development proposed by Erikson (1968) and Marcia (1980; 1998). Along with cognitive and identity development, IDCT points out an additional factor as exerting important influence on the development of SPIRs. The third factor is affect, and it is also considered developmentally.

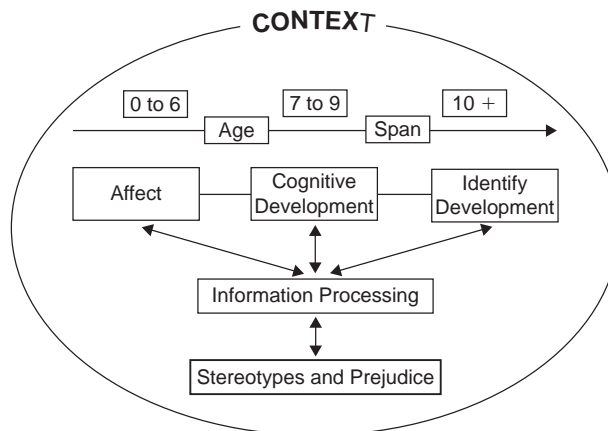
Another contribution of IDCT is a proposition derived from Marcia's (1980; 1998) theoretical expansion of Erickson's (1968) well known psychosocial developmental model. Marcia (1980) stressed the cumulative progression of experience along the life-span. Thus, although developmental experiences and issues are stage-specific, and critical stages are defined, all developmental issues have precursors and successors that unfold through life. Thus, advancing from stage to stage, individuals face

stage-related challenges, accumulated stage-related experiences that were encountered before the stage-specific issues gain major salience (Vertical progression), and experiences related to resolutions achieved in previous stages. The accumulated attainments and experiences from earlier stages are the foundation for the next developmental stage (horizontal progression). In Marcia's (1998) words:

... each stage has its preparatory predecessors in the form of partial resolutions occurring before that stage's ascendancy. As well, each stage, once its ascendancy has been reached and the psychological issues resolved, contributes its strength to the resolution of succeeding stages (p. 32).

Accordingly, we propose that, though having critical stages, all the factors involved in the development of SPIRs (affect, cognitive, and identity development) are active all along the developmental span. In different stages, a different factor has the potential for acquiring salience and major influence, but contextual conditions or previous experiences will influence the salience of each factor. Thus, in infancy the main factor is affect; in school age, cognitive development; and in pre- and early adolescence, identity development. Proposing that at any given time SPIRs are mediated by multiple factors expands the theoretical perspective to a wider developmental span than that covered by either SCT or SIDT. On the younger end of the developmental trajectory, IDCT accounts for development from the time children can use language, namely ages 2 to 3, all the way through adulthood.

Once established, SPIRs exert their influence on each of the factors involved in their development, and on the information children process. On the one hand, this may lead to their modification, but more often, SPIRs and external factors become self-reinforcing, stabilizing negative stereotypes and prejudice and producing extreme consequences such as ethnocentrism and delegitimization (Bar-Tal, 1989; 1990). This suggests a differential approach, in which the specific configurations of the different factors vary by age and context, thus influencing information processing and determining specific developmental trajectories for each case. This theoretical framework is depicted in Figure 18.1.



**Figure 18.1** Integrative Developmental Model of Stereotypes and Prejudice.

IDCT helps to account for puzzling findings not explained by SCT or SIDT, including the expression, in conflict contexts, of out-group negativity among very young children; the maintenance of prejudice, in conflict contexts, among 7- to 9-year-olds; differences in attitude development between majority and minority children, and findings regarding pre- and early adolescence.

#### THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL CONTEXTS ON SPIRS

As reflected in Figure 18.1, affective experiences and cognitive and identity development occur in a *social context*. In contrast to "situation," which is "a particular concrete physical and social setting in which a person is embedded in any one point in time," Ashmore, Deaux, and McLaughlin (2004) defined social context as a "general and continuing multilayered and interwoven set of material realities, social structures, and shared belief system that surround any situation" (pp. 103).

The most critical aspect of the social context for intergroup perspective is the layer of "shared beliefs" that is a central feature of the cultural context of social groups. This cultural context is constructed through years and is shaped by the cumulative experiences of each society. It includes products such as the tangible and nontangible symbols, scripts, habits, rules, narratives, concepts, and knowledge relating to one's group and other social categories. Together, these products represent the shared psychological repertoire that provides meaning and rules of practice for society members. The part of the cultural context relating to intergroup reality is the SPIR.

In every society the SPIR is transmitted to the younger generation by socialization agents (Bourdieu, 1977; Geertz, 1973; Goodnow, Miller, & Kessler, 1995; Nelson, 1996; Selman, 1980; Vygotsky, 1980). Children absorb cultural information and it shapes their perspectives on their social world, including their views about the nature of the relationships between their group and other groups within or outside their society. In the words of Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, and Nisbett (1998):

Children and adults actively use the locally available cultural practices to generate meaningful interactions. . . . To engage in culturally patterned relationships and practices, people must coordinate their responses to their particular social milieu. (pp. 916–917).

By adulthood, most members share the same SPIR and, further, transmit it to the next generation (Oppenheimer, 2006). With time, the repertoire becomes rigid and resistant to change. In conflict situations it inhibits de-escalation and peaceful resolution. Even when rival groups eventually embark on the road of peace, their SPIRs may serve as major barriers to the peace process.

Though generally stable, cultural contexts and SPIRs may be influenced by major events. A major event is experienced either directly or vicariously. It causes wide resonance, has relevance for the well-being of society members and for the society as a whole. It engages society members, holds a central position in public discourse and agenda, and generates information that forces society members to reconsider, and often change, their psychological repertoire (Oren, 2005). Bar-Tal and Sharvit (in press) identify such events as being a part of a transitional context, and propose that the more intense and negative the psychological conditions of the transitional context, the more extensive, profound, and unidirectional their influence on people.

Intractable conflicts and wars are obvious examples of major events that constitute a “transitional context” that hardens SPIRs. Because of their psychological implications, they exert intensive and lasting effects on personal and intergroup reality (Kelman, 1997; Staub & Bar-Tal, 2003). On the personal level, a conflict determines the level of threat, anger, hatred, sense of danger, uncertainty, and hardship (Bar-Tal, *in press*). It accelerates the acquisition of specific linguistic expressions, concepts, and knowledge, while at the same time controlling others. It intensifies awareness regarding group distinctiveness, and as a result the collective identification (Brewer, 1999) and commitment of the group (Spears, Doosje & Ellerms, 1999).

On the intergroup level, conflict determines the content, valence, and intensity of the SPIR. It institutionalizes the norms guiding the behavioral intentions and actual behaviors toward the enemy, the status of the involved groups, the type of boundaries between them, and as a result, the level and type of contact between them. Usually, the information disseminated in or through societal channels presents the in-group as pursuing moral goals, while the out-group is demonized (Sande, Geothals, Ferrari, & Worth, 1989). In creating this dichotomy, aggression, violence, and animosity become salient topics in societal discourse. Other influences of conflict are reflected in the structure of in- and out-group images (*i.e.*, the level of complexity or homogeneity with which they are perceived) promoting simplification of the out-group and generalizations about it. The various personal and intergroup consequences of conflict polarize and stabilize in- and out-group beliefs, emotions, and attitudes (Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005; Brown, 2000; Darby, 1976; LeVine & Campbell, 1972; Oppenheimer, 2006; Rieber, 1991; Sherif, 1966, 1967).

#### FACTORS INFLUENCING THE DEVELOPMENTAL TRAJECTORY OF STEREOTYPES AND PREJUDICE

The three factors identified by IDCT as influencing the development of SPIRs— affect, cognitive development, and identity development—are nourished by the social context, however, they also follow their own developmental course and exert specific influences on the developmental trajectory of stereotypes and prejudice.

*Affect* Examining the influence of affect, Aboud (1988) suggested that infants’ and toddlers’ basic reactions to others are determined by the emotions they arouse (positive or negative). Aboud (1988) also stated that “in the social domain, affective processes dominate from 3 to 6 years and then decline” (pp. 119). Contrary to this position, and closer to Allport’s view, IDCT proposes that negative affect (*i.e.* anxiety, threat, or fear) produces negative feelings toward the individuals or groups that arouse such feelings, create distance from them, and generate negativity toward them. These consequences interfere with information processing and reappraisal of experiences, thereby causing individuals to overlook new inputs and to judge out-group members by relying on expectations or stereotypes (Wilder & Simon 2001).

Thus, irrespective of developmental progression in other domains (cognitive, identity), affect may stabilize beliefs and attitudes established at very early age and perpetuate them (Holt & Silverstein, 1989; Silverstein & Flamenbaum, 1989; Oren & Bar-Tal, 2007, Rieber, 1991). Indeed, studies with children demonstrate that the influence of affect does not decline with age, positive and negative moods, or threat-determined attitudes towards out-groups (Nesdale, Durkin, Maass, & Griffiths, 2005; Nesdale, Maass, Durkin, & Griffiths, 2005; Ramsey, 1987). The same results were

reported for adults (Bar-Tal, 2001; Esses, Haddock, & Zanna, 1994; Forgas & Moylan, 1991; Jackson, Hodge, Gerard, Ingram, Ervin, & Sheppard, 1996; Lake & Rothchild, 1998; Stephan & Stephan, 2000; Tropp & Pettigrew, 2004). These findings suggest that through the lifespan, emotions play an important role in initiating, maintaining, or changing interpersonal and intergroup responses. Understanding these processes may provide insights for early prevention of biases.

*Cognitive Development* Since Aboud's (1988) contribution to the understanding of prejudice in children, age-related changes in children's cognitive skills are acknowledged as an influential correlate of prejudice. However, many findings cannot be explained solely by cognitive development. For example, SCT does not account for the very early development of prejudice (Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005). IDCT's proposition that all factors influencing the development of intergroup responses are present from infancy helps account for this finding.

The view that infants possess the cognitive capabilities needed for acquiring social knowledge, developing a theory about their environment, and expressing it is based on ample empirical evidence, which indicates that infants are aware of stimuli in their surroundings; they process information, absorb, encode, analyze, categorize, and remember their inanimate and social environment (Baillargeon & DeVos, 1992; Hirschfeld; 1996; Hirschfeld & Gelman, 1994; Mandler, 1990, 1992; Shermann, 1985; Wellman & Gelman, 1992; Wellman & Phillips, 2001; Younger, 1993; and others). Later in development, contextual inputs and experiences, and the desire to preserve consistency and continuity (Stangor & Ruble, 1989), reinforce and stabilize the initially formed categories, and beliefs and attitudes associated with them. In Piaget's (1952) terms, new information may be assimilated within the existing categories, or categories may be accommodated to fit new information. The old or readapted categories then guide information processing and understanding of the physical, natural, and social reality.

In a context where threat is repeatedly associated with an out-group, information about the out-group is encountered and processed very early, accelerating the acquisition of the knowledge and attitudes existing toward this group. Integrating affect and cognition as underlying factors in the development of SPIRs provides the developmental background for Allport's well-known definition of prejudice as "an antipathy based upon a faulty and inflexible generalization" (Allport, 1954, pp. 9). The early established antipathy and faulty generalizations create the primary intergroup biases. These biases continue to develop and gain power during preschool age.

Indeed, researchers reported that preschoolers display high in-group biases that prevail until about the age of 7 to 9, when moderation begins to emerge. SCT attributes the moderation to cognitive development. When children reach the age of 7 or 8 (concrete operational thinking in Piaget's terms) classification of people shifts from affective criteria to more objective ones, and the egocentric perspective broadens. At this stage children start to manifest cognitive flexibility and social tolerance. Our findings that, in the context of intractable conflict, prejudice does not moderate during this age-span (Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005; Teichman, Bar-Tal, & Abdolrazeq, in press) suggests that contextual conditions may overpower the influence of cognitive development. Accordingly, in any study of children's prejudice conducted in the context of intractable conflict, including our own studies, we would not expect 8- to 9-year-olds to express moderation toward the enemy.

From pre-adolescence (age 10 and later) abstract and hypothetical thinking begin to develop, providing the ground for valuing justice, dignity, equality, and human

rights. All of these contribute to the advancement of social tolerance (Kohlberg, 1969; Piaget, 1952; Selman, 1980). However, as with children aged 8 to 9, advances in cognitive development represent a potential contribution only, the realization of which depends on the context in which they grow up and on the other factors. A factor of major importance for this age is identity development.

*Identity Development* IDCT's theoretical proposition regarding the development of social biases beyond school age acknowledges the importance of processes related to identity. The development of integrated self-identity, including personal-identity, social-identity, and the self-esteem related to each<sup>5</sup>, begins in infancy (Amsterdam, 1972; Lewis & Brooks-Gun, 1979; Stern, 1985) and proceeds through the developmental span (Marcia, 1980, 1998). This suggests that in early development, along with affective and cognitive influences on SPIRs, we may also expect that processes related to identity acquisition and changes in self-esteem may influence the development of children's intergroup biases. It is plausible to suggest that because social identity is made salient by the social context among ethnic minority children, this factor influences their intergroup responses earlier than it does for majority children, motivating them to express out-group preference.

During pre- and early adolescence (ages 10 to 13), identity formation and consolidation become the main developmental task (Erikson, 1968; Damon & Hart, 1992; Marcia, 1980, 1998). The insecurity aroused by the processes involved in the integration of the different aspects of identity increases the need for self-reassurance. In this stage, the status of the groups to which one belongs, the drive for self-enhancement identified by SIT, and intergroup comparisons which reflect on self-esteem become highly relevant. As suggested by Hogg and Abrams (1990), low or threatened self-esteem leads to social biases. It follows that in this developmental stage the advancement in cognitive development alone cannot account for social biases. With further cognitive and identity development, older adolescents, 14 and on, may be expected to begin displaying social tolerance.

In the context of intractable conflict, we have found that, compared with younger children and adolescents, pre- and early adolescents demonstrate an increased in-group preference and out-group rejection (Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005; Black-Gutman & Hickson, 1996; Rutland, 1999; Teichman, 2001; Vaughan, 1987), supporting our contention that in this phase of development youth have a high need for self-enhancement. Likewise, findings reported by Nesdale and Brown (2004) and Nesdale, Maass, Durkin, and Griffith (2005) show that children aged 9 and 12 were more sensitive to a negative representative of their in-group than were younger children. In these studies the findings were attributed to the "black sheep" effect, referring to a tendency to derogate an unlikable in-group member more than an unlikable out-group member. However, the fact that this reaction was more pronounced at the ages of 9 to 12 may be attributed to the threat that the negative, unlikable in-group member posed for the group members' self-esteem.

A more direct examination of the association between self-worth, in-group favoritism, and out-group rejection would include a comparison between intergroup responses of participants with high and low self-esteem. Indeed, the adult literature devotes extensive attention to self-esteem (personal and collective) and in-and

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<sup>5</sup>Other aspects of self-identity—i.e., gender identity, religious identity, family identity, etc.—are also parts of the integrated identity, but are not considered in this chapter.

out-group biases. As indicated by general reviews (Crocker, Blaine, & Luhtanen, 1993; Long & Spears, 1998) and meta-analyses (Aberson, Healy, & Romero, 2000), the data are not conclusive. Some support Hogg and Abrams' (1990) proposition (Fein & Spencer, 2000; Hogg & Sunderland, 1991), while others suggest that the high self-esteem participants are those who tend to favor the in-group or to discriminate (Crocker, Blaine, & Luhtanen, 1993; Seta & Seta, 1992). The out-group biases displayed by the low self-esteem participants were defined as self-protection, while those displayed by high self-esteem participants were defined as self-enhancement (Crocker, Blaine, Luhtanen, 1993) or self-esteem maintenance (SEM; Tesser, 1988).

In the child and adolescence literature, few studies have examined issues related to self-esteem. The few studies that have been conducted have yielded inconclusive results. Studies that examined 6- to 9-year-olds reported that high self-esteem participants express higher in-group favoritism (Bigler, et. al., 1997; Gagnon & Morasse, 1995), whereas results reported for older participants, particularly for those aged 10 to 12, found this tendency in low self-esteem participants (Sasson, 2004, reviewed by Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005). It is possible that while younger children manifest self-enhancement or self-maintenance, older children, characterized by normative self-doubt, manifested self-protection. Although the manifestation of biases by the 10- to 12-year-olds offers support for the relationship between the identity-related needs during pre- and early adolescence and intergroup responses suggested by IDCT, further examination of this proposition is required and we shall present more empirical evidence to support it. With further cognitive and identity development, older adolescents, 14 and on, may be expected to begin displaying social tolerance.

#### SUMMARY OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL PREDICTIONS DERIVED FROM IDCT

IDCT suggests that in neutral intergroup contexts, social biases will emerge at the age of 3 to 4, and preschoolers will express only positive in-group biases. For school-age children, the leap in cognitive development and relatively conflict-free personal development will lead to a reduction in social biases that will reappear in pre- and early adolescence. Moderation may be expected in late adolescence when cognitive and identity development reach optimal stage.

IDCT also makes specific predictions about the acquisition and development of stereotypic beliefs and prejudice in children who grow up in an intractable conflict: IDCT predicts that in the context of intractable conflict, from a very early age forward, children will experience threat associated with a specific out-group. The threat will accelerate social categorization and the emergence of positive *and* negative social biases. In terms of further age-related trajectories, two opposing expectations are plausible: The conflict could either amplify or defuse the conflict-free developmental pattern. Amplification would suggest an intensification of the developmental trends outlined above; diffusion suggests a commonly shared social bias overpowering developmental, age-related influences.

#### REVIEW OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS RELATED TO IDCT

Examining the developmental trajectory of the SPIR of children and adolescents in the Israeli Jewish society who grow up in the shadow of conflict, we focus on the stereotypes and prejudice they express toward the generic category of the "enemy" identified as "Arab." The studies we present examined children in a wide

developmental range and addressed questions such as children's awareness of threat, group categorization, acquisition of social identity, and developmental trajectory of stereotypes and prejudice. To complete the picture we shall present additional data obtained for children and adolescents belonging to the Arab minority in Israel for whom the Israeli Jews represent the enemy. These data will further demonstrate the combined influence of context and age on the development of stereotypes and prejudice. With regard to measures, we presented children with separate in- and out-group stimuli, with explicit investigator determined trait and feelings lists or images, and with free-response implicit measures. Also, we differentiate between content variables (attributed traits, expressed feelings, etc.), and structure variables (homogeneity, complexity).

#### AWARENESS OF THREAT

A preliminary question to be addressed is whether children growing up in a conflict are aware of threat, and at what age they begin to report it. To examine children's awareness of threat, we presented children aged 2.5 to 3.5 years and children aged 5.5 to 6.5 years with two drawings of the same person, one dressed in traditional Arab clothing and the other dressed in Western clothing. The children were asked to look at each drawing and report whether they experienced fear. Seventy-five percent of the children in both groups reported fear when viewing the man in Arab dress. Only 25 percent of the younger group and 5 percent of the older group reported fear when viewing the drawing of the man dressed in Western clothing. Thus, from the early ages of 2.5 to 3.5 years, children who grow up in a context of an intractable conflict differentiate between social groups and absorb messages about the rival group and the emotional climate associated with it. Importantly, fear was rarely related to the unfamiliar target that represented the in-group. This means that the expressed threat was associated with a particular target (i.e., with the Arab).

To assess school-age children's and adolescents' awareness about the conflict, participants ages 8 to 17 were divided into five age groups and asked to report their belief about "How many Arabs want to annihilate the State of Israel?" The scale ranged from (1) none of them, 0 percent, to (5) all of them, 100 percent. The group comparisons indicated that the attribution of the wish to annihilate the State of Israel decreased with age, reaching the lowest point at the age of 16 to 17. However, the means ranged from 4.04 to 3.25. Namely, in all age groups, respondents attributed threatening aggressive intentions to a high proportion of Arabs and believed that more than half of them want to annihilate their country. Thus, the experience of threat is still evident in late adolescence and most probably in adulthood as well. Additionally, since the measure we used allows an examination of out-group homogenization, the results indicate that despite an age-related increase in out-group differentiation, perceptions of out-group homogeneity remained high.

Children's awareness about social conflict was also investigated in Northern Ireland, with children aged 6, 9, and 12. The authors (Sani, Bennett, Agostini, Malucchi, & Ferguson, 2000) found that most 6-year-olds were unaware of the conflict. They attributed this to the type of "conflict at the level of relatively abstract groups" (pp. 233) and to efforts by parents and teachers to shield children from the conflict. These findings suggest that conflicts may have different influences on children depending on the information disseminated by the respective SPIR.



## SOCIAL CATEGORIZATION AND ACQUISITION OF SOCIAL IDENTITY

After establishing that for Jewish children in Israel aged 2.5 to 3.5 years onward, people representing the enemy arouse fear and, for older participants, are associated with existential danger, we addressed developmental questions. The first question refers to the age at which, in an intractable conflict, children acquire social categories and social identity.

To answer this question, we individually interviewed 80 Jewish Israeli children aged 2 to 6. They were divided to four consecutive age groups, each including about 20 children. Following a short play session and some neutral questions, children were asked: (1) "Have you heard the word Arab/Jew/Israeli?"; (2) "Do you know what an Arab/Jew/Israeli is?"; and (3) "Can you describe or tell me something about an Arab/Jew/Israeli?" The second and third questions aimed at examining initial conceptual understanding and categorization associated with the words. Finally, in order to establish identity acquisition, children were asked, "Are you a Jew/Israeli?"

*Social Categorization* Ninety percent of children ages 2 to 3 years recognized the word "Jew"; 60 percent recognized the word "Israeli"; and none recognized the word "Arab." From the age of 3 to 4 and older, 100 percent of the children recognized the word Jew and 95 percent recognized the word Israeli. Recognition of the word Arab appeared at the ages of 3 to 4, when 40 percent of the children recognized it, while at ages 5 to 6, 82 percent recognized it. Acquisition of the categories corresponding to the three identity labels began to emerge at the age of 3 to 4—40 percent for Jew, 25 percent for Israeli, and 40 percent for Arab. In the next age group (4 to 5) the three categories were acquired by 67 percent, 61 percent, and 61 percent, respectively, and at the age of 5 to 6, 77 percent demonstrated acquisition of the Jew and Israeli categories, and 68 percent acquired the Arab category. Studies with older participants indicate that the acquisition of the three categories increased with age. However, the acquisition of the in-group categories was demonstrated by a higher proportion of the participants than the acquisition of the out-group category. By the age of 12 most of the Jewish Israeli children demonstrated a broad understanding regarding the social category labeled Arabs. The majority knew that Arabs speak Arabic, live in Arab countries, and that most practice Islam (Godsi, 1998; Koren 1997).

*Acquisition of Social Identity ("Jew/Israeli")* At the age of 2 to 3 years, when asked, "Are you a Jew/Israeli?" more than half of the children (65 percent and 55 percent, respectively) demonstrated ethnic and national self-categorization, many of them before demonstrating category acquisition. Ethnic and national self-categorization increased with age, and at the age of 5 to 6, 73 percent of the children identified themselves as Jews, and 77 percent as Israelis.

The findings regarding categorization and social identity are important because this kind of categorization represents the basis for the development of stereotypes and prejudice (Trew, 2004). In comparison to previous findings regarding identity acquisition (Aboud, 1988), our findings confirm the assumption that conflict accelerates social categorization, social identification, and intergroup differentiation. Children growing up amidst intractable conflict begin to categorize and identify themselves ethnically and nationally a year earlier than has been reported for children in conflict-free multiethnic contexts. This indicates that, depending on the context, differentiation between social groups and ethnic identification may emerge earlier than proposed by Nesdale, Durkin, Maass, and Griffiths (2005).

The findings we report for categorization and acquisition of social identity differ slightly from the findings obtained for children in the context of the conflict in Northern Ireland. Results from a study with preschoolers in Northern Ireland indicated that children begin to demonstrate categorization, as reflected in awareness of the meaning of the terms "Catholic" and "Protestant," only at the age of 6 and even then, only 20 percent did so. When asked to identify concrete items representing the two groups the results are comparable to our findings. Namely, half of the 3-year-olds and 90 percent of the 6-year-olds were able to identify at least one of the items (Connolly, Smith, & Kelly, 2002, cited by Trew, 2004). With regard to identity acquisition, Connelly et al.'s (2002) results indicate that it begins to emerge at the age of 5 to 6.

The difference between the verbal categorization and identification in Connolly et al.'s (2002) findings and ours may be attributed to the level of task difficulty presented to the children in the two studies. While we asked children to first identify national and ethnic labels and then explain them in their own words, or to relate them to themselves, Connelly et al. (2002) presented children with tasks that included identifying events in photographs and interviewed them regarding these events. The tasks faced by the children in Connelly et al.'s study demand a higher abstract ability and more advanced verbal skills. Also, it is plausible to suggest that, for children, religious categorization in the same society is more difficult than ethnic and national categorization that has concrete manifestations in appearance and clothing.

Despite some confirming findings for the early categorization manifested by children living in societies engulfed in an intractable conflict, more research with different tasks and different contexts is needed to clarify this issue. With regard to older children, the findings obtained in the two countries are very similar. In Northern Ireland and in Israel, by the age of 11, children demonstrated full understanding of the social categories representing the sides in the conflict, as well as acquisition of social identity (Cairns, 1987; Stringer & Irwin, 1998).

*Developmental Trajectory of Stereotypes and Prejudice: Jewish Israeli Children and Adolescents.* We tested the prediction that early categorization of the social environment, early acquisition of social identity, and experience of threat produce the developmental basis for the emergence of stereotypes and prejudice toward the enemy in very young children. We asked preschoolers who completed the categorization and identity acquisition tasks described above to rate the categories "Jew," "Israeli," and "Arab" as good or bad, and to indicate whether they felt love or hate toward them. Regardless of children's category acquisition, 70 percent of the youngest children (2- to 3-year-olds) and 80 percent of the next age group (3- to 4-year-olds) rated both the Jew and the Israeli as "good." Interestingly, 50 percent and 30 percent, respectively, of the children in these groups rated the Arab as good. In the two older groups (4- to 5-year-olds and 5- to 6-year-olds), all or almost all of the children rated Jew and Israeli as good (96 percent and 100 percent, respectively). However, only 17 percent of those aged 4 to 5 and 9 percent of those aged 5 to 6 rated the Arab as good.

Furthermore, 80 percent and 70 percent of the children in the youngest group expressed "love" toward the Jew and the Israeli, respectively, and 85 to 95 percent of the children in the different older groups did so. As for trait attributions (good or bad), positive feelings toward the in-group emerged at the age of 2 to 3. On the other hand, 50 percent of the youngest children and 40 percent of the next age group expressed "love" toward the Arab. Of those aged 4 to 5 and 5 to 6, only 27 percent and 11 percent, respectively, said they loved the Arab. Importantly, when rating the

Jew or the Israeli, children, especially the younger ones, occasionally did not provide an answer or could not decide, whereas when rating the Arab as "bad" and expressing "hate" toward him the answer was instantaneous. We replicated similar findings with other samples of preschoolers using longer lists of traits and more diverse examination of attitudes (as expressed in refusal of any social contact with Arab children), suggesting that in conflict situations 2- to 3-year olds express in-group preference and about half of them express out-group prejudice and negativity. The critical shift to in-group preference and out group rejection, apparently reflecting contextual influences occurred at the age 4 to 5 (Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005).

School-aged children display particularly striking patterns of attitudes in the context of intractable conflict. In conflict, despite their cognitive development, these children do not manifest the expected and often reported reduction in positivity toward the in-group or negativity toward the out-group. Rather, our data indicate instances that when compared with younger children, the 7- to 9-year-olds group was less positive toward Arabs, and when compared with older children and adolescents they manifested either the highest positivity toward the in-group or highest negativity toward the out-group (Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005). Similarly, Assaf (2006) showed children aged 5 to 6 and 8 to 9 photographs of two young men. The photographs were chosen on a basis of a pretest indicating that they could be equally identified as a Jew or as an Arab. The children were asked to rate the photographs on 4 bipolar traits. The list of traits included good or bad, nice or not nice, strong or weak, and frightening or not frightening. The positive pole of each trait was scored as 1 and the negative as 0. Thus, the range of scores was 0 to 4, in which low scores represent low positivity. Before the experimenter identified the photographs as a photograph of a Jew or an Arab there was no difference in the ratings, either by the full sample or by the different age groups. However, when one or the other photograph was randomly identified as a photograph of a Jew or an Arab the ratings changed. Participants expressed a pronounced in-group preference. More importantly, contrary to findings of studies in multiethnic nonviolent contexts, the positivity toward Arabs decreased with age ( $M = 2.80$ ,  $SD = 1.36$  for the 5- to 6-year olds, and  $M = 1.45$ ,  $SD = 1.20$  for the 8- to 9-year-olds).

In another study (Teichman 2001), however, children aged 7 to 9 expressed more positive attitudes and intentions toward Arabs than did 4- to 6-year olds. It thus appears that 7- to 9-year-olds possess the cognitive capabilities allowing for the reduction of out-group negativity, but at this age, children's attitudes depend on additional factors such as context and emotional arousal. Indeed, scrutinizing the context more carefully, it appears that Assaf's (2006) study was conducted in a period when the level of violence in the conflict was at one of its peaks, while Teichman's (2001) study was conducted in a time of low conflict level during which peace talks took place. The difference in the results of the two studies suggests that conflict maintains the stereotypic beliefs and social attitudes manifested by preschoolers for a longer time. Other findings we have reported confirm the suggestion that different levels of conflict may be associated with differences in relating to the enemy, and children in middle childhood appear particularly sensitive to these contextual influences (Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005).

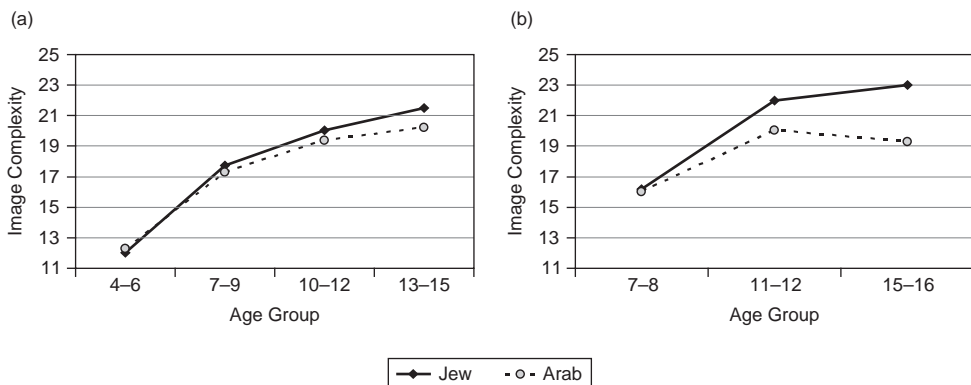
Moving along the developmental trajectory to pre- and early adolescence, when the development of self-identity and esteem is in focus, we would expect an elevation of in- and out-group biases. As noted, findings reported by others corroborate this prediction (Black-Gutmann & Hickson, 1996; Rutland, 1999; Nesdale, 2000; Nesdale

& Brown, 2004; Vaughan, 1987). Our findings, mainly those obtained from implicit measures, often corroborated this expected pattern, but findings from more direct measures were less consistent (Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005; Teichman, 2001; Teichman, Bar-Tal & Abdolrazeq, in press).

An interesting confirmation for the above prediction was obtained on a content-free implicit measure we developed for assessing children's stereotypes and prejudice. This measure is based on a systematic scoring of Human Figure Drawings (HFD)<sup>6</sup> of typical Jewish and Arab men and women. The count of the items included by participants in their drawings was defined as image complexity. This count was considered analogous to previous assessments of complexity of social images that were based on counting the number of terms or features used to describe people (Linville, 1982; Linville & Jones, 1980; Livesley & Bromley, 1973). The results of the item counts are presented in Figure 18.2.

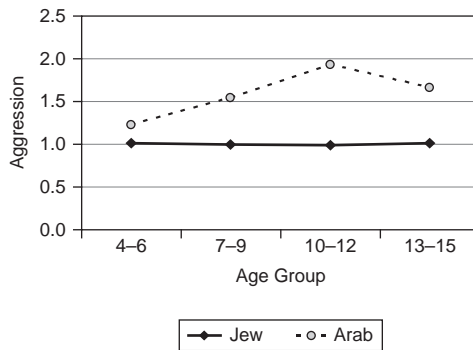
Comparing results for four groups of participants ages 4 to 6, 7 to 9, 10 to 12, and 15 to 16 (Teichman, 2001), the items included in the image of Jewish men increased by age with all pairwise comparisons between age groups reaching significance. However, the items included in the image of Arab men increased significantly across age groups only until the ages of 10 to 12, and for this and the following age-group (13 to 15) the complexity of the image of the Jew exceeded significantly that of the Arab (Figure 18.2a).

In a study of drawings of women conducted with different participants, preschoolers were not included, but the results for the other compared age groups replicated the findings obtained for drawings of men (Nir, 1999, reviewed by Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005). As in the drawings of men, significant differences in the complexity of images, favoring Jewish women, first appeared at ages 10 to 12 and endured for the 15- to 16-year-olds (Figure 18.2b). The less differentiated images of Arab men and women depicted by pre- and early adolescents demonstrate the phenomenon of out-group homogeneity (Linville, 1982; Linville & Jones, 1980), which in itself indicates the presence of stereotyping.



**Figure 18.2** Image Complexity as reflected in the number of items in drawings of Jews and Arabs (a. men, b. women)

<sup>6</sup>The development and scoring of this measure were described in detail in previous publications (Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005; Teichman, 2001; Teichman & Zafrir, 2003).



**Figure 18.3** Attributed Aggression as reflected in drawings of Jews and Arabs.

It is plausible to suggest that because the structure of images (i.e. complexity) is a content-free variable not involving a direct expression of beliefs or feelings, it allowed participants an indirect outlet for expressing social preferences. Other results obtained from the implicit measure we utilized (HFD) also revealed the highest negative attributions to Arabs by the 10- to 12-year-olds. An example of this pattern is the attribution of aggression depicted in Figure 18.3. Figure 18.3 also portrays the pattern of findings reported above for the 8- to 9-year-olds. As may be seen, the 8- to 9-year-olds attributed to Arabs a higher level of aggression than did the preschoolers. The aggression attributed to the in-group was significantly lower and was not affected by age.

Importantly, not all measures yielded as clear results for the 10- to 15-year-olds as those presented in Figures 18.2 and 18.3. At first sight, it appears that the inconsistent findings contradict our prediction regarding an elevation of social biases in pre- and early adolescence. However, a more careful consideration suggests that the inconsistency *as such* in fact confirms the developmental rationale offered by IDCT for this age. Apparently, the instability in self-identity and self-worth at this age is also reflected in inconsistency in social biases.

Sasson (2004, reviewed by Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005) took a more direct approach to examining the influence of level of self-esteem on implicit social biases. In this study, participants were divided into three age groups (8 to 9; 10 to 12; 13 to 14). Within each age group children were divided into high and low self-esteem subgroups. Sasson (2004) hypothesized that participants with low self-esteem, particularly those aged 10 to 12, would display the highest in-group favoritism and/or the highest out-group negativity.

Results obtained for four variables derived from the HFD measure showed that whereas the high self-esteem participants displayed small discrepancies between images of in- and out-groups, and this was consistent across ages, the low self-esteem participants displayed significant discrepancies between the images, and the discrepancies were affected by age, shifting from extreme in-group preference displayed by 10- to 12-year-olds to extreme out-group preference displayed by 13- to 14-year-olds. The fact that sharp oscillations between in- and out-group preference occurred only in the low self-esteem-group seems to indicate that this group is more susceptible to social biases. These findings support the prediction offered by IDCT regarding a relationship between insecure identity and out-group negativity. Additionally, the different response pattern manifested by the groups with the two levels

of self-esteem also offers more support for the self-enhancement hypothesis (Hogg & Abrams, 1990) than for the self-maintenance hypothesis (Tessler, 1988).

The support for IDCT's predictions for pre-adolescents and different groups of adolescents provides a possible explanation for their social responses. However, because the empirical findings are not conclusive, research with pre-adolescents and adolescents may benefit from more carefully differentiating between personal and collective self-esteem (e.g. Crocker, Blaine, & Luhtanen, 1993; Teichman, Bar-Tal & Abdolrazeq, in press; Chapter 14, this volume) and between implicit vs. explicit assessment procedures (Aberson et al., 2000; Chapter 14, this volume). These issues may also apply to studies with younger children.

With regard to the type of assessment, Aberson et al. (2000) suggested that high self-esteem participants may express biases on all types of measures while low self-esteem participants are more likely to express bias on implicit measures. Our findings provide some support for this proposition: On the one hand, on explicit measures like trait ratings, adolescents expressed feelings and readiness for social contact; on the other hand, on implicit measures, adolescents expressed strong and consistent bias (Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005).

Returning to developmental progression, more consistent moderations on the two types of measures in positive and negative biases were observed in late adolescence (14- to 17-year-olds and older). Thus, even in a society engulfed in an intractable conflict, threat becomes less generalized, contextual messages are more scrutinized, and biases related to enemies decrease when cognitive and moral development reach the highest stages (Kohlberg, 1969; Selman, 1980) and self-identity reaches relative stability and security (Erickson, 1968; Marcia, 1980, 1998). However, at the same time, in conflict the moderations still depend on the level of conflict or on the evaluated target (man/woman) (Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005; Teichman, 2001). An example of the reduction in attributed aggression in drawings of Arabs performed by Jewish adolescents aged 13-15 to may be observed in Figure 18.3.

#### **DEVELOPMENTAL TRAJECTORY OF STEREOTYPES AND PREJUDICE: ISRAELI ARAB CHILDREN**

In addition to an interest in developmental patterns, we were interested in intergroup attitudes among majority *and* minority children in Israeli society. The question we pose is how majority children (Israeli Jews), who represent one side of the conflict, and minority children (Israeli Arabs), who represent the other side of the conflict, are comparable in the way they develop mutual stereotypes and prejudice. In order to answer this question we examined Jewish and Arab children and adolescents in Israeli society, in which Arab citizens constitute about 20 percent of the population.

The social context of Jewish and Arab children in the State of Israel includes two inseparable components: a majority (Jews) and a minority (Arabs) status and an intractable conflict between their people. Because there are no Jewish or Arab children in Israel who experience only one component of this social situation, separating the two is impossible. Although it may be assumed that the two groups experience the conflict differently, it nevertheless constitutes a general developmental context for the development of their SPIRs. On the other hand, the experience of belonging either to the majority or to the minority distinguishes the two groups, and there is hardly any contact between them. The borders between the two social groups may be defined as impermeable.

Findings from two studies, one involving Arab children aged 5 to 8 and 8 to 9 (Idres, 2006), and the other involving Jewish and Arab children and adolescents aged 7 to 8 and 12 to 13 (Teichman & Zafrir 2003) are particularly illuminating. The first study utilized the same methodology that Assaf (2006) applied with Jewish children (Asking participants to rate the same photographs, first not identified and later identified as "Jew" or "Arab"). The results obtained for the Arab children by Idres (2006) differed from those reported by Assaf (2006) for Jewish children. Unlike the Jewish children, both age groups in the Arab sample expressed the same level of positivity toward Jews ( $M=1.80$ ,  $SD=1.49$  for the 5- to 6-year olds, and  $M=1.90$ ,  $SD=1.20$  for the 8- to 9-year-olds). Thus, neither the younger nor the older Arab children shifted toward in-group preference.

Similarly, Teichman and Zafrir (2003) assessed Jewish and Arab children and early adolescents utilizing HFDs (implicit measure) and a behavior and intentions questionnaire that accompanied the drawings (explicit measure). Drawing on previous findings (Aboud, 1988), and on the developmental and contextual considerations proposed by IDCT, it was predicted that while both Jewish and Arab children would express majority preference in early adolescence when self-identity is experienced as insecure, self-enhancement motivation gains importance, and conflict and a rigid majority-minority situation intensify identification with the in-group, differentiation between groups will surface and reciprocal in- and out-group biases would emerge. However, unlike minority children in multiethnic societies, both groups of Israeli Arab participants, on all implicit parameters, presented their ethnic group similarly to the majority Jewish group. On the other hand, on the explicit measure, the younger group displayed the expected pattern of not differentiating between the groups, while the early adolescents expressed a clear in-group preference.

The similarity between the images presented by the young Arab children reflects majority preference. As in previous studies, such preference may be interpreted as a possible delay in shifting to in-group preference or, more likely, as an expression of sensitivity to the low status of their group in the society and a way of enhancing their self-esteem. Nesdale and Flessner (2001) offered the self-enhancement interpretation for similar laboratory findings showing that, when mobility was impossible, children aged 5 to 8 from a low-status group saw themselves as similar to the high-status group.

The prevalence of majority preference at the age of 12 to 13 is unusual. The fact that this age group consistently expressed majority preference on the implicit measure may be interpreted as indicating the same motivations as those of the younger children. However, unlike the younger children, on the explicit measure Arab adolescents expressed significant in-group preference. Teichman and Zafrir (2003) suggested that on an explicit measure, self-enhancement could not be achieved by rejecting the in-group. The explicit measure elevated the self-awareness of the older Arab children and apparently also raised conformity and social desirability, and triggered more ethnocentric responses. Their wish for resembling the Jewish majority could not be openly expressed on the explicit measure.

In line with previous findings and reasoning (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Katz, Shon, & Zalk, 1975), it appears that the implicit measure represents the more genuine attitudes. In this case, the implicit measure reflected the wish of minority children and adolescents to resemble the majority. Importantly, contrary to previous contentions (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Dovidio, Kawakami, & Beach, 2001), genuine expression does not necessarily mean an expression of negative views toward out-groups—rather it may mean an expression of non-normative views.

In terms of context, the findings of both studies suggest that, whereas the social reactions of Jewish children are primarily influenced by the conflict, the Arab children are primarily influenced by their minority status. Teichman and Zafir (2003) explained the lack of intergroup differentiation displayed by children belonging to a low-status minority group in a rigid social situation with no possibility for mobility as reflecting coping by defensive identification. In order to defend their self-worth, these children and early adolescents enhance it by seeing themselves as similar to the majority and not by degrading it. The inner conflict is reflected in occasional explicit preference expressed toward their in-group and negativity expressed toward the out-group. On a more general level, the findings from the two studies involving Arab children also support IDCT. They point to the early adolescent group as inconsistent in relating to the out-group and demonstrate the importance of understanding intergroup responses in *specific* contexts.

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION: DEVELOPMENT OF INTERGROUP BIASES IN CONFLICT

The developmental trajectory of the SPIR reported in these studies confirms the proposition that its development does not follow a universal pattern. The difference between developmental trajectories for SPIRs presented in studies conducted in multiethnic societies with no violence and those emerging in the context of intractable conflict and the differences between majority and minority children confirm the proposition that context influences the developmental course of intergroup bias. In the same vein, results obtained from studies of a different conflict (Northern Ireland) indicate that conflicts as contexts of socialization may have different influences on children's awareness of threat and on the development of their social identity. The question regarding developmental trajectories of SPIRs in different conflicts and in different levels of conflict is still an open one, and pursuing it will shed additional light on the theoretical questions posed in this chapter. Furthermore, the studies discussed here support IDCT's proposition that in addition to contextual influences, SPIRs also depend on emotional experiences, cognitive development, and identity development. The dynamic interplay of these factors produces the specific developmental pattern for different age groups in different social contexts.

With regard to developmental sequence of bias in the context of intractable conflict, our findings suggest that, beginning at the ages of 2 to 3, children demonstrate understanding of the context of the conflict in which they grow up and experience threat. At this age about half of the children begin to express in-group preference *and* negativity toward the out-group (seeing its members as bad and expressing toward them the extreme emotion of hate). The fact that very young children manifested rudimentary stereotypes and prejudice calls for a further examination of how social information is obtained and processed. In this regard, investigators have pointed out the importance of television (Barrett & Short, 1992) and parents (Aboud, 1988; Aboud and Amato 2001). Questions about how parents transmit social biases and attitudes and the difference in influence between the two parents require further examination.

Both in-group positivity and out-group negativity increase during preschool years, with rare moderations expressed by the mid-childhood group (ages 7 to 9). In the context of intractable conflict, perhaps because of increased awareness of threat, salience of groups differences, and intensification of social identity, the cognitive



development occurring at the age of 7 to 9 does not reduce in-group positivity and out-group negativity. Further along the developmental trajectory, as cognitive faculties continue to develop, contextual influences may be more easily qualified or challenged; however, pre- and early adolescents maintain the patterns manifested by younger children in which in-group preference and out-group rejection is amplified. In addition, normative fragility in self-esteem among pre- and early adolescents suggests that, at this age, the need for self-enhancement may influence intergroup responses. This proposition, however, needs further empirical examination. When both cognitive development and identity development reach a more advanced level, older adolescents begin to manifest a decrease in biases, but this reduction still critically depends on the level of conflict and on other factors such as target gender. As will be demonstrated in the next sections, empirically substantiated information regarding developmental trajectories of SPIRs may inform interventions directed at preventing their becoming polarized, generalized, and rigid, and in defusing their persistent influence on conflicts.

#### IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERVENTIONS FOR CHANGING CHILDREN'S SOCIAL REPERTOIRE

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to review all the theoretical approaches and specific programs developed through the years for changing negative SPIRs (Allport, 1954; Amir, 1976; Brislin, Landis, & Brandt, 1983; Hewstone, 1994; Katz & Taylor, 1988; McKown, 2005; Oskamp, 2000; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006; Simpson & Yinger 1985; Stephan & Stephan, 2001). Instead, we chose to highlight a number of principles for changing the SPIRs developed by children and adolescents in societies that, after long years of experiencing intractable conflict, wish to embark on a reconciliation and peace process.

As noted, SPIRs produced in the context of intractable conflict are nourished by the conflict and at the same time maintain and even intensify it. Through years of atrocities, a complex culture of conflict evolves. Changing this multilayered, long-lasting culture—and within it the values, social perspective, views of the rival group, related feelings, and behavioral intentions—is a fundamental requirement for changing the hostile nature of intergroup relations (Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004). Changing views regarding the adversary group includes accepting it as legitimate and differentiated. Legitimization means accepting members of the adversary group, acknowledging their right to exist, and honoring their needs and goals as legitimate. Differentiation or personalization permits a view of rival group members as individuals with various positive and negative characteristics, rather than as an undifferentiated collective (Pettigrew, 1998). One of the most difficult changes involves the introduction of beliefs acknowledging the suffering of the rival group and seeing it, as well, as a victim of the conflict (Bar-Tal, 2000; Kelman, 1999).

Changes of such scope can occur only when violence comes to an end, a reconciliation process begins and eventually a peace agreement is achieved, and all parties fully commit to that agreement (Abu-Nimer, 2001; Bar-Siman-Tov, 2004; Bar-Tal, 2000; Bar-Tal & Rosen, *in press*; Bloomfield, Barnes, & Huyse, 2003; Lederach, 1997; Rothstein, 1999; Zartman, 2006). A peace agreement represents a major event, indicating that the context is changing. It is a formal symbolic act acknowledging that the

conflict has ended and that an enemy can be trusted and treated as an equal partner with whom it is possible to share goals and cooperate (Allport, 1954). To facilitate a change of mutual views of past rivals, it is necessary for both sides to show goodwill and readiness for peaceful relations, reciprocate with positive acts, and demonstrate good intentions.

#### INSTITUTIONALIZED CHANGES WITHIN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Allport (1954), who was one of the first to write about changing intergroup relationships, acknowledged the importance of support from recognized authorities to the reduction of prejudice. Advocating the implementation of change in the SPIR held by children and adolescents on an institutional level in schools, the support of those with decision-making authority is particularly important. This support is essential to legitimize the change; without it schools are unable to initiate and lead educational programs.

Individual school principals may initiate various programs for changing negative intergroup repertoires. However, these are limited and sporadic attempts that reach only a small number of participants and, therefore, have little social impact. In contrast, an institutionalized and systematic school approach refers to a planned policy disseminated by the central educational authorities. It involves a mandatory program for peace education that reaches all school-age children and adolescents (see review by Bar-Tal, Rosen, & Nets, *in press*).

The institutionalized approach is based on four premises. First, since schools are compulsory and all children and adolescents are required to attend, intervention in schools is sure to reach the entire population of children and youth, who will be tomorrow's adults and leaders. Second, because children and youth are still in the process of acquiring a psychological repertoire, they are less affected by the dominating SPIR and are more open to new ideas and information. Third, in comparison with other socialization agents, society has maximum control over the messages transmitted in schools. Educational authorities such as the Ministry of Education or the Board of Education can decide on curricula, educational programs, and school textbooks. Finally, schools are viewed as purveyors of objective, truthful, and factual knowledge. This background facilitates the adoption of the new ideas, beliefs, and attitudes.

#### EDUCATIONAL ORIENTATION

Learning a new repertoire about a rival cannot be viewed as a specific and separate subject matter or as "a project," but rather must be embedded within a new educational orientation. The themes of this orientation should represent the change of values and social perspective. They should include a broad scope of topics such as tolerance; conflict resolution legitimization, differentiation, and personalization of the past rival; empathic view of the other; openness to multi-cultural views; the benefits of a nonviolent environment; social sensitivity; respect for human rights, and so on (Bey & Turner, 1995; Deutsch, 1993; Hall, 1999; Hicks, 1988). This material should be incorporated within the curricula of various subject matters and be interwoven within their instruction (Harris, 1988). This approach requires a revision of school textbooks, producing new instructional materials, training teachers, and so

forth. Only a comprehensive, holistic orientation may provide a new prism through which students learn to view and evaluate past rivals in a different way.

#### EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Internalization of values, social perspectives, behavioral tendencies, and redefinitions of basic long-lasting themes and approaches cannot be achieved by preaching. Rather, the main mechanism for such changes is experience. In order to realize the negative consequences of delegitimization, stereotypes, and prejudice, students need to acknowledge them. In addition, they need to develop empathy toward the needs and suffering of the other group and to dissolve generalizations about it. These goals, as well as many of those delineated above, may be best achieved through experiential methods in which the rival is granted an equal status, cooperation with him is approved, and mutual goals are acknowledged (Allport, 1954).

Setting up experiential learning in schools is a difficult task for educators. It requires pedagogical expertise, but more importantly demands that teachers have the skills and ability to manage the learning environment while serving as role-models and creating the appropriate atmosphere for effective experiential learning.

#### AGE-RELATED INTERVENTIONS

Programs aiming to change SPIRs have to be implemented as early as kindergarten. Research findings (Devine 1989; Dovidio, Kawakami, & Beach, 2001) indicate that newly acquired knowledge does not change earlier social repertoires. The early repertoires remain stored in memory and continue to exercise implicit influences in later life. Therefore, programs to prevent negative social repertoires should begin before those repertoires are cemented. Programs oriented at very young children have to influence the vocabulary they acquire, their social categorization, concepts, images, and social knowledge. They should recognize and defuse the association between experienced threat and negativity towards the rival, as well as help children process information they absorb from a range of sources including television.

Program developers would be well advised to account for developmental changes in children's capabilities, needs, and developmental challenges. Accordingly, programs need to be adapted to the different age groups. For example, promoting differentiation and personalization of images of the rival among 7- to 9-year-olds may prevent out-group homogenization and generalized stereotyping. At a later age, interventions should aim to equalize the complexity of in- and out-group images. Pre- and early adolescents, especially those with low self-esteem, may use stereotyping and prejudice for self-enhancement. Thus, programs developed for them should address those personal needs. These programs may relate to identity issues, provide participants with positive growth experiences that increase self-worth, broaden social perspective, and moderate out-group negativity or uncritical in-group positivity. Furthermore, programs for intervention and prevention should recognize and address potential differences between male and female representatives of the target group. In addition, different ethnic or religious groups may need programs that are adapted to their cultural context and special needs. For example, in the Israeli society it may be that different ethnic groups, immigrants (Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005) or—as illustrated in this chapter—Jews and

Arabs, may need different programs to defuse children's early SPIRs so they do not become fuel for the conflict.

## CONCLUSION

This chapter presented an account of the acquisition and development of stereotypes, prejudice, emotions, and behavioral intentions that constitute children's shared psychological intergroup repertoire (SPIR). The theory presents an integrative developmental contextual approach (IDCT) proposing that the development of SPIRs is mediated by multiple factors including context, affect, and cognitive and identity development. These factors operate from infancy through development, gaining salience in specific developmental stages, and depend on specific societal contexts.

In the context of intractable conflict, very young majority children (aged 2 to 3) experience threat, have basic group identity, and express in-group preference and rejection of the rival out-group. In these contexts, 7- to 9-year-old-children are as or more biased than 5- to 6-year-old-children. Pre- and early adolescents tend to display in-group favoritism or out-group rejection, but the pattern is not consistent. Except in conditions of elevated conflict, older adolescents aged 14 to 15 displayed moderation in biases. Generally, in this context, minority Arab children and early adolescents tended to present their group as similar to the majority, and early adolescents only implicitly expressed out-group negativity.

The chapter focused on the context of intractable conflict, in which SPIRs play an important psychological function in fueling the conflict and maintaining it. Our work has convinced us that without changing the SPIRs held by rivals, it is impossible to launch any meaningful peace process. Our hope is that the theoretical account of the development of SPIRs in the context of intractable conflict and the empirical findings that follow from that theory may prove useful for the development of effective interventions to moderate SPIRs among children and youth who live with the burden of an intractable conflict. The challenge for leaders and educators is to apply this theory and the associated interventions and encourage their continuous examination.

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