Multiply Belonging: Identity Flexibility & Identity Denial

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The 1860 Census Had Three Race Categories: White, Black and Mulatto

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<tr>
<th>Dwelling House—numbered in the order of visitation.</th>
<th>Families numbered in the order of visitation.</th>
<th>The name of every person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June, 1860, was in this family.</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION.</th>
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Source: U.S. Census Bureau
Percent change in U.S. population from 2010-2050

CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

U.S. Census Bureau, 2009
Positive Outcomes

- Over 19 studies found overall multiracials feel positive about their multiple identities
  - Appreciate and empathize with both backgrounds (e.g., Gaskins, 1999; Hall, 1992; Salgado, Lopez, & Padilla, 1982; Shih, Bonam, & Sanchez, & Peck, 2007; Shih & Sanchez, 2009)
  - Function within both majority and minority environments (Daniel, 1996; Bonam & Shih, 2009; Gaither, Sommers, & Ambady, 2013; Gaither et al., 2014; Rockquemore, 1999)
EVIDENCE OF BIRACIAL IDENTITY FLEXIBILITY

• 56 Biracial Black/White individuals were recruited

• Participants were asked to write about either their mother or father (see Chiao et al., 2006)

• Video-taped interaction with either a White or Black partner

(Gaither, Sommers, & Ambady, 2013, JESP)
Do you know people who have benefitted from Affirmative Action?

VIDEO CLIP NOT ABLE TO BE POSTED PUBLICLY

Black-Primed Biracial Participant, Black Partner
Do you know people who have benefitted from Affirmative Action?

VIDEO CLIP NOT ABLE TO BE POSTED PUBLICLY

White-Primed Biracial Participant, Black Partner
Other Biracial Individuals: Other White Individuals: $t(32) = 2.37, p < .03, r = .39$
Other Black Individuals: $t(32) = 2.47, p < .02, r = .40$

*(Gaither, Sommers, & Ambady, 2013, JESP)*
• Might increased identity flexibility be associated with other types of flexible thinking?

• 58 multiracial (36 female) and 109 monoracial (54 female) undergraduates were recruited

• Randomly assigned to write either about their racial identity or their average day

• Remote Associates Test
  
  (Mednick, 1962; Tadmor et al., 2013)

  Paint, Doll, Cat: **HOUSE**

(Gaither, Remedios, Sanchez, & Sommers, 2015, SPPS)
MULITRACIAL PRIME INCREASES CREATIVITY

* (Gaither, Remedios, Sanchez, & Sommers, 2015, SPPS)
NEGATIVE OUTCOMES

• Over 14 studies highlight difficulties with forming a sense of self (e.g., Basu, 2003; Binning, Inzueta, Huo, & Molina, 2009; Cheng & Lee, 2009; McRoy & Freeman, 1986; Rafaeli-Mor & Steinberg, 2002; Sanchez, Shih, & Garcia, 2009; Shih & Sanchez, 2009)

• What Are You? Disclosing one’s biracial identity makes you more likely to receive negative feedback, higher social exclusion (Gaskins, 1999; Sanchez & Bonam, 2009)

"I'm actually multiracial and I'd really, really like to check a box that says multiracial or multiethnic. It means being able to acknowledge my whole self."

BIRACIAL IDENTITY DENIAL & STRESS

- 119 Biracial individuals recruited
- Randomly assigned to deny their White identity or a racial identity they don’t have
- Self-report, cortisol, verbal and nonverbal responses

(Albuja, Gaither, Sanchez, Straka, & Cipollina, r&r)
BUT DOES ALL EXCLUSION HURT THE SAME?

High status/Shared

Low status/Shared

Low status/Not-shared

White

Black

Asian

Straka & Gaither, in progress
BIRACIAL PERCEPTIONS: HYPODESCENT?

Meta-analysis:

– Hypodescent/Ingroup Over-Exclusion Effect
  (e.g., Ho et al., 2011; Leyens & Uzerbyt, 1992)

– Articles from 2000-2015 = 135 studies, 15% use participant race as a factor

– Overall hypodescent effect size = .17
  (SE = .13; 95% CI = 0.03, 0.53)

– White participants = .40
  (SE = .14; 95% CI = 0.12, 0.68)

– Minority participants = -.14
  (SE = .21; 95% CI = -0.60, 0.33)

(Young, Sanchez, Pauker, & Gaither, under review)
PERCEIVER RACE SHAPES BIRACIAL CATEGORIZATION

• 300 Adults Recruited through Qualtrics Panels
  – 75 White, 75 Black, 75 Asian, and 75 Biracial Black/White

• Categorized 12 Biracial Black/White Ambiguous Faces

(Gaither, Kinzler, & Woodward, in prep)
White Ps are significantly above chance ($p < .01$), Black Ps and Asian Ps significantly below chance ($ps < .03$), and Biracials at chance ($p = .45$)

(Gaither, Kinzler, & Woodward, in prep)
ONLY WHITE CHILDREN SHOW HYPODESCENT

Number of Faces as Black: Children

- 3-6 year olds from the Chicago area
- White Ps above chance, Black Ps below chance, (ps < .01), Biracial Ps at chance (p = .39)

(Gaither, Kinzler, & Woodward, in prep)
ARE THERE BIRACIAL STEREOTYPES?

• 7 Studies, \( N = 1,107 \) (71% White)

• Stereotype trait checklist 
  (Devine & Elliot, 1995)

  – Universal stereotypes = beautiful, ambitious, attractive, family-oriented

  – Biracial = Black/White

  – Otherwise, biracial stereotypes are unique from their “parent” monoracial groups

  – No trait hypodesent, meaning visual hypodescent may be a unique process

  (Skinner, Perry, & Gaither, in press, PSPB)
We all have multiple identities meaning we need to move beyond either/or thinking.

Suggests existing frameworks are limited in their applicability to complex identities.
THANK YOU FOR LISTENING

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