

“This IS Who I Am:” The Influence of Social Context and Ego Development on the Racial
Identity Choice of Multiracial Young Adults and the Implications for Well-being

Rebecca Suzuki

In collaboration with Adela Scharff

Advisor: Jennifer Lilgendahl

Haverford College Department of Psychology

April 29, 2016

Abstract

This study was an exploratory analysis of how a specific personality factor (ego development) and contextual factor (racial compositions of social networks in childhood) contributes to the development of a racial identity in multiracial young adults, and furthermore, how this identity choice affects well-being. We applied Rockquemore & Brunsma's (2002) Multidimensional Model of Biracial Identity to multiracial young adults (18-25) of many types of mixed backgrounds, and found that those who identified as Transcendent (e.g., someone who does not believe in racial in racial identities) were more likely to have grown up around people racially similar to them, while those who identified as Singular (e.g., someone who identifies as one race exclusively) were more likely to have lower ego development. Furthermore, we found that those who identified as Protean (e.g., someone who switches between different racial identifications) and as Singular were more likely to have lower well-being and those who identified as Validated Border (e.g., someone who had a uniquely multiracial identity that is validated by others) were more likely to have higher well-being, despite how they viewed their identity (measured using narrative qualities). Future research should continue to understand the multiracial experience as a whole by looking at other factors that contribute to racial identity development and how these identities relate to well-being.

“This IS Who I Am:” The Influence of Social Context and Ego Development on the Racial Identity Choice of Multiracial Young Adults and the Implications for Well-being

When it comes to race, we live in what could be called an “awkward historical moment” (Rockquemore, Brunσμα, & Delgado, 2009). From one perspective, it is a moment in which we have established that race has no biological root and have worked to erase its importance. Yet at the same time, it is a moment in which we must acknowledge that the social reality constructed around the notion of “race” continues to have real and dire repercussions for whole groups of people (Rockquemore et al., 2009). Furthermore, it is a time when burgeoning numbers of bi- and multiracial individuals (i.e., those whose parents identify as two or more different races) are uniquely challenging this social reality by straddling the blurring, yet still very present racial divides in America. On the 2010 United States Census, 2.9 % of the population self-identified as two or more races, up 32% from the 2000 Census, which marked the first time citizens could even record their multiple races on the census (U.S. Census Bureau 2012).

Many highly influential people count themselves among this new wave of multiracial Americans, including the President of the United States himself, Barack Obama. However, Obama is a poignant example of the tension that Rockquemore et al. (2009) describes: though the election of a Black President indicates some progress towards racial equality in the United States, Black Americans are still disproportionately poor and incarcerated (Macartney, Bishaw, & Fontenot, 2013; Carson, 2015). Adding to the complexity, there has been controversy since his election over whether Obama can even be called the first Black President of the United States given his mixed-race background: although Obama checked just African American on the 2010 Census, more Americans view him as mixed race (Roberts & Baker, 2010; Pew Research Center, 2010). This example illustrates the uniquely public space in which multiracial people must

develop their identity (Brunsma, 2006); while Obama identifies as Black, his race is subject to the scrutiny and interpretation of others. This discrepancy alone demonstrates the variety of ways in which multiracial people are understood, and alternatively, understand themselves.

In this study, we define identity as a continuous process of self-definition that develops over the lifespan and is augmented by a personal narrative that gives meaning to this categorization (Grotevant, 1987; McLean, 2008). Identity continuously changes as one ages, and identity exploration and commitment are key challenges of adolescence in particular; it is at this point that one begins to discover their social position, develop a sexual awareness, and contemplate steps towards the future (Erikson, 1964; Marcia, 1966). In his stages of psychosocial development, which detail the developmental arc of a person over the course of their life, Erikson (1963) described adolescence as a state of “moratorium,” when an individual is no longer a child yet has not achieved the ideological stability of adulthood. More recent research also considers emerging adulthood (between the ages of 18 and 25) an important life stage where one achieves relative independence from parents for the first time and therefore may be compelled to reflect on identity (Arnett, 2000). In building off of Erikson (1963), Marcia’s (1966) ego identity status model viewed adolescence and young adulthood as a time in which individuals navigate their identity using four different styles: 1) Achievement (exploration and subsequent commitment to an identity); 2) Moratorium (the process of exploration); 3) Foreclosure (committing to an identity without exploring); and 4) Diffusion (not committing to an identity, with or without clear exploration).

General identity theory posits that both personal characteristics and contextual factors are important in the identity formation process (Grotevant, 1987). In particular, factors such as self-esteem and cognitive flexibility may orient an individual towards pursuing exploration of

identity, whereas an inability to confront new challenges may deter this exploration. In addition, one's social and cultural environment also play a role in how one views themselves; for instance, one may believe they do not have alternatives when it comes to religious beliefs, and so therefore may feel discouraged from exploring different possibilities (Grotevant, 1987). Understanding the self as a member of a group is also central to identity development (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Identification with a group (e.g., religious group) can fundamentally affect one's idea of the self, and can lead to both positive outcomes (e.g., self-esteem) and negative outcomes (e.g., discrimination against those in the out-group; Brewer & Gardner, 1996). Racial groups are some of our most salient and physically obvious group memberships, and therefore often very central to identity development. Jean Phinney's work on ethnic identity (defined as a cultural belonging to a group, rather than racial) suggests that individuals vary in their attachment to their ethnic identity, and that this relationship changes over time, such that those who have explored this identity may feel confident in their group identification (Phinney, 1996). For those who exist between these traditional racial groups, reconciling this social identity may be especially important. As the population of multiracial Americans continues to grow, research must focus on how they develop healthy identities in an environment still influenced by such antiquated lines of color. In this study, we explore how both a personality factor (ego development) and a contextual factor (racial composition of childhood social networks) play a role in the development of a healthy identity for multiracial young adults and explore their possible implications for psychological well-being.

A Brief History of Research on Bi- and Multiracial Populations

While they have always inevitably faced experiences specific to their mixed heritage, the extent to which multiracial individuals have been allowed to acknowledge and interpret this

background has always been contingent on the accepted social ideologies of the day (Rockquemore et al., 2009). Historically, mixed-race individuals were either marginalized or completely overlooked: for instance, the infamous "one-drop" rule dictated that those with even "one drop" of Black blood were regarded as African American under the law, and accordingly subject to the myriad legal (and illegal) oppressions that came with lowered status (Spickard, 1992). Early researchers coined the term "marginal man," which referred to the theory that those who had mixed ancestry would find coming to terms with their identity inherently problematic, especially because at the time, anti-miscegenation laws effectively outlawed their existence (Park, 1928; Stonequist, 1937; Rockquemore et al., 2009). During the Civil Rights era these laws were struck down, and research regarding multiracial individuals began to recognize the equality of Black Americans. For instance, some research focused on the concept of Blackness and Black identity as both healthy and ideal, with the assumption that bi- or multiracial Black individuals would develop a positive Black identity just like any other Black person (Cross, 1971).

In the following decades, critics of this approach questioned the assumption that biracial Black people, or biracial people in general, would automatically choose a mono-racial identity. Such theories did not acknowledge the possibility of a positive, unproblematic identity that also integrated one's many racial backgrounds. This may be explained by a social climate that reinforced traditional racial divides, even when aiming to promote equality for historically oppressed groups. Researchers began to base their work off aspects of Erikson (1963), positing that biracial individuals must go through different periods of identity exploration in order to come to a stable, *integrated* identity that would uniquely combine a person's multiple racial backgrounds (e.g., Poston, 1990; Kich, 1992), as opposed to a mono-racial identity. The

recognition of even the possibility of an integrated identity reflects an increase in births of multiracial individuals and acknowledgement of their unique experiences.

Although this approach acknowledged that many racial backgrounds could be integrated into a stable identity, it assumed that there was only one way to develop a multiracial identity, and that this identity *had* to include some type of integration (Root, 1998). Root's (1998) ecological approach to multiracial identity recognized that while an integrated identity is one way in which some people may understand their multi-raciality, it is not the only way that mixed-race individuals may view themselves. Additionally, it emphasizes that the private and public identities of a mixed-race person may be very inconsistent with each other, and that in general, context is very important for how one chooses to identify (Root, 1998). More specifically, Root (1998) claimed that "contextual macrolenses" of gender, class, and regional history of race and the "microlenses" of inherited influences (e.g., parents' cultures) and social environment were equally as important to the development of a multiracial identity. For instance, she discusses, "a mixed race person from Oakland who asserts a Black-White identity may meet major resistance...if he or she moved to Washington, DC to attend Howard University, a traditionally Black college" (Root, 1998). Root argues that these external factors can and do shape how one may identify, because even if one claims a certain identity, they are not necessarily guaranteed the validation of that identity. Root (1998) is among the first to attempt to empirically account for this public-private dynamic and in doing so, concludes that the path to a stable racial identity for multiracial individuals is not linear, but rather, complex and evolving. Furthermore, this journey can lead to many different outcomes. In her study of biracial siblings, Root (1998) found that indeed, contextual factors such as hazing and family dysfunction were important in the development of each sibling's identity, and that experiencing violence within the

family or in the community generally caused individuals to shift away from the racial background of the perpetrators. For example, if a multiracial individual's Asian mother was verbally abusive, the child would attach a negative association to this race and have a more difficult time reconciling their identity. The importance of context has been widely supported in subsequent literature (e.g., Miville, Constantine, Baysden, & So-Lloyd, 2005; Brunnsma, 2006; Gillem, Cohn, & Throne, 2001).

The Current Theoretical Framework

Rockquemore (1999) and Rockquemore and Brunnsma (2002) built on Root's (1998) theory by conceptualizing the Multidimensional Model of Biracial Identity. This model consists of four options that a biracial individual may choose to identify as, and though originally conceived for biracial Black/White individuals, has been shown to apply to many other groups of half White biracial individuals including East Asians, South Asians, and Latino/as (Lou, Lalonde, & Wilson, 2011; Lou & Lalonde, 2015). The first of the categories in this model is the Singular Identity Option, in which the mixed race individual chooses to identify as solely one race or the other. Especially for biracial Black/White participants, choosing a Singular Black Identity may be indicative of social expectations and histories surrounding Black identity in the United States (Cross, 1971; Rockquemore et al., 2009). Secondly, individuals may choose a Border Identity, which involves identifying not as either of one's racial options, but specifically as biracial, or a unique blending of these categories. This option supports earlier models such as Poston's (1990) Biracial Identity Development Model: in a social landscape where being of mixed-race heritage is no longer rare, creating a wholly new self-understanding may be more of an option (Rockquemore & Brunnsma, 2002). They differentiate, however, between having a Border Identity that is validated by others and one that is not, again taking into account how social

expectations surrounding bi-raciality may play a role in constructing an identity. Individuals may also choose a Protean Identity, which involves switching back and forth between mono-racial identities and a biracial identity. Those who claim a Protean Identity may see themselves as fitting fully in all of their singular racial groups while also functioning as biracial whenever it is situationally appropriate (Rockquemore, 1999). This may reflect a diversification and potential integration of racial groups in the United States to the extent that multiracial individuals feel required or perhaps encouraged to move between many social situations and demographic shifts. Finally, biracial individuals may have a Transcendent Identity, in which they reject the concept of race and identify as “human.” It may be that the in-between status of biracial individuals leads them to feel rejected by the both of their racial heritages and therefore detach from the concept of race altogether (Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002). Through these four categories, Rockquemore and Brunsma's (2002) framework attempts to take into account the importance of social context in the development of a multiracial identity and provides a detailed framework in which to organize and understand multiracial identity development.

Chong and Kuo (2015) pointed out that although Rockquemore and Brunsma's (2002) typology attempts to make a distinction between the varied ways a person may identify, they measure this categorically. In doing so, the typology fails to “assess the *degree* to which biracial individuals relate to each identity type and assumed each identity was a separate, discrete variable” (Chong & Kuo, 2015). This observation points to the fact that identity, while stable in some sense, also changes over time (a finding that is supported by the canon of identity literature; Erikson, 1963; Marcia, 1966). It also supports earlier theories that focused on lifetime development as key to understanding identity (e.g., Erikson, 1963; Poston, 1990; Kich, 1992). It is important to recognize that how multiracial individuals view themselves will have changed

over time, and thus, they may see themselves in multiple of Rockquemore and Brunnsma's (2002) identity categories. By adapting Rockquemore and Brunnsma's (2002) typology into a dimensional measure as opposed to a categorical measure, we hoped to better capture the complexity of how a person identifies, no matter which category they feel the most identification with. In addition, while the typology has been shown to apply to different groups of biracial White individuals (e.g., Lou et al., 2011; Lou & Lalonde, 2015), to the author's knowledge, this typology has not been applied to those who identify with more than two races (e.g., someone whose mother is Asian/White and whose father is Black) and those whose background does not include White heritage at all (e.g., someone whose mother is Hispanic and father is Black). It is therefore important to understand how and if similar patterns of identity are found among individuals who do not fit the demographics for which the framework was originally conceptualized. By extension, then, more research must be done concerning the contextual and individual identity factors that may shape *multiracial* identity for young adults, not just *biracial* identity, which this study attempted to analyze.

Social Context and Multiracial Identity

Research has shown that one's *social context* (the key feature of the ecological approach) affects multiracial identity in diverse ways whether one has White/European ancestry or does not. More specifically, the racial composition of one's social networks in childhood has been shown to influence a person's identity development. Rockquemore and Brunnsma (2002) define the racial composition of social networks by how much "interracial contact" a person may have throughout their life: for instance, what is the racial composition of the neighborhood in which a multiracial person grows up? What are the racial backgrounds of the multiracial person's close friends? Previous literature has affirmed that social network composition is very important in

providing (or not providing) multiracial individuals the opportunity to navigate the many aspects of their heritage (Collins, 2000; Gillem et al., 2001; Miville et al., 2005). For instance, biracial White/Japanese Americans who grew up in predominantly White middle class neighborhoods viewed themselves as more White growing up and felt less encouragement to explore the Japanese side of their identity, yet after moving away from home, acquired a more nuanced and integrated self-understanding (Collins, 2000). Additionally, biracial Black individuals who grew up in a community that was predominantly Black more often chose to identify singularly as Black no matter the mixed nature of their background (Rockquemore & Brunnsma, 2002). Alternatively, it could be that those raised in diverse environments that provide opportunities to meet different types of people feel more comfortable identifying with unconventional racial categorization and thus develop a Border or Protean Identity. Though Rockquemore and Brunnsma (2002) found that biracial Black/White individuals who grew up in predominantly White social networks were more likely to have a Border Identity, the relationship may be different for people of non-White mixed backgrounds and those of multiple racial backgrounds.

Whatever the racial composition of one's community, social networks, even at the most personal level (e.g., close friends and family), are nested within larger social and cultural frames of reference (Root, 1998). It is therefore important to understand how the racial context of one's region and the United States as a whole may play a role in the development of such social networks. Brunnsma (2006) found that no biracial Blacks individuals on the East Coast identified solely as Black, whereas no biracial Black individuals in the South identified solely as White. This finding could reflect the racial composition and histories of those areas, and suggests the extent to which environment may influence one's choice of categorization. It is possible that similar results would be found for other groups of mixed race individuals as well - for example, a

half Asian person in California, where the population of Asian Americans is much higher, may be more likely to identify solely as Asian in comparison to a half Asian person from the Midwest, where the population of Asian Americans is much smaller. Additionally, although Rockquemore and Brunzma's (2002) framework was developed with the knowledge that those who are half White may feel confusion due to their membership in both a minority and majority group (e.g., Collins, 2000; Gillem et al., 2001), it may be that because the majority of Americans are White and the majority of multiracial individuals will have to navigate within a White context at some point in their lives, similar confusions will arise, whatever the mixed-race person's background. Because traditional conceptions of race in the United States have been built within a White context, the way multi-racial individuals are seen by others may still be contingent on this larger "contextual macrolense," no matter the race of the people one may come into contact with and the region or neighborhood one is raised in (Root, 1998).

The Importance of Individual Differences

In his foundational paper on identity, Harold Grotevant acknowledges the importance of contextual factors, such as racial composition of social networks, in spurring the exploration and formation of identity (Grotevant, 1987). However, the extent to which this context, or any context that a multiracial individual may exist within, affects how one identifies is likely reliant on factors other than social environment: for one person, growing up in a racially homogenous community may pressure them to form a Singular Identity, yet for another, this environment may lead them to develop a more malleable, Protean Identity (e.g., Gillem et al, 2001). For this reason, *individual characteristics* such as personality are just as important as contextual factors in shaping an individual's proclivity towards identity exploration and commitment (Grotevant, 1987). Decades of research have reinforced the importance of personality in the development of

identity. For instance, those who had not explored their identity were more likely to be less agreeable and less open to experience - a finding which has been replicated across time and culture (Clancy & Dollinger, 1993; Dollinger, 1995; Klimstra, Luyckx, Goossens, Teppers, & De Fruyt, 2013).

When it comes to multiracial identity and personality, there is evidence to suggest that being multiracial is inherently complex, and therefore multiracial individuals may benefit from being by nature more open. Additionally, being tolerant of complexity may influence one's propensity for choosing and committing to particular types of multiracial identity, in addition to integrating more than one race into the self. Interviews of both biracial and multiracial individuals of a variety of backgrounds demonstrate the exhaustion of having to navigate many different social environments while simultaneously attempting to find a secure and accepting in-group (Gillem et al., 2001; Collins, 2000, Miville et al., 2005). Literature suggests that those who are more "cognitively flexible" find it easier to negotiate having a somewhat ambiguous racial background (Miville et al., 2005). Sanchez, Shih, and Garcia (2009) found that biracial Asian/Whites who possessed a more dialectical self-view (i.e., had more tolerance for contradiction and change) were buffered against negative psychological outcomes when they had a malleable racial identity (akin to Rockquemore & Brunsma's (2002) Protean Identity category). However, research on bicultural identity (i.e., those who identify as having two cultures, such as Chinese and American) suggests that having a dialectical self view may be negatively related to viewing one's identities as compatible (Chen, Benet-Martinez, Wu, Lam, & Bond, 2012).

Research on the complexity of being multiracial suggests that the personality construct of ego development may be important in understanding how one chooses a multiracial identity. Ego development is defined as the extent to which one conceives of the world, the self, and others as

multi-faceted and complex (Loevinger & Blasi, 1976; Hy & Loevinger, 1996). In early stages of ego development, one may view oneself and the world in superficial, clichéd terms, whereas in later stages of ego development, one gains more respect for the depth and variability in both one's own life and the lives of others (Hy & Loevinger, 1996). People who are high in ego development also feel less pressure to conform to social standards and are more comfortable forging their own path deviant from the norm (Hy & Loevinger, 1996). There is a large body of well-established research on ego development to show that how one views the world has implications in a large variety of situations and for a variety of psychological outcomes. Those higher on ego development tend to be higher in resiliency and more flexible: for example, recently divorced women higher in ego development showed more adaptation a year after the break down of their marriage (King & Raspin, 2004). In addition, in narratives of their divorces, the women who showed more accommodative processing, defined as how much an individual processes how a life event changes the self after it has occurred, predicted increased levels of ego development two years later (King & Raspin, 2004). Lilgendahl, Helson, and John (2013) found similar results in a longitudinal study of middle-aged women: accommodative processing of difficult life events at age 43 predicted increased ego development at age 63. Bauer, McAdams, and Sakaeda (2005) equated ego development as the psychological operationalization of maturity, and found that more mature individuals tended to tell more narratives concentrating on growth throughout their lives. There seems to be little connection between ego development and well-being, suggesting that those higher in ego development may also be more aware of the trials and tribulations of life, and therefore more ambivalent towards its positive aspects (King, Scollon, Ramsey, & Williams, 2000; Bauer et al., 2005; King & Raspin, 2004). Most relevant to this study, research has shown that those high in ego development are also more likely to be in

the moratorium and achieved stages of Marcia's (1966) ego identity status model, as confirmed by a large meta-analysis of studies on identity status and ego development (Jespersen, Kroger, & Martinusson, 2013).

When it comes to racial identity in particular, there is a lack of research on ego development. This is surprising given the fraught and complicated history of race in America: one could expect having more appreciation for this complexity could very well influence how one views not just oneself, but those across racial divides and one's larger social context. The little research that does exist on racial identity and ego development supports this idea: Looney (1988) found that higher ego development in Black college students was related to the individual defining the self, whereas lower ego development was related to others defining the self. Black men and White women who choose to enter interracial relationships tend to have higher levels of ego development, suggesting that they view their partners as "human," opposed to their racial labels, and feel less concerned with societal expectations to marry within their own race (Bakken & Huber, 2005). Within mono-racial minority groups, the internal turmoil created by negative experiences, such as discrimination, may spur advancement through the stages of ego development and require more ego functioning (Spencer & Markstrom-Adams, 1990; Gfellner & Armstrong, 2012). Work on American Indian and First Nation adolescents has shown that level of ego development equates with stage of identity development and subsequent levels of psychological well-being; those who had the highest level of ego development had a more achieved identity, yet felt more anxiety and experienced more family conflict (Newman, 2005). Perhaps more important, there may be relationship between ego development and type of identity: First Nation adolescents who identified more traditionally (i.e., with their indigenous culture as opposed to mainstream culture) had higher levels of ego development than those who

identified with both, suggesting that identifying singularly may indicate higher ego development (Gfellner & Armstrong, 2012). This reflects specifically the importance of nonconformity to high ego development; First Nation adolescents who are high in ego development feel more comfortable rejecting the mainstream culture and embracing tradition, whereas those low feel the need to conform to societal norms.

This finding may not hold when looking at multiracial individuals, who, by definition, cannot conform to traditional racial standards: in this population, would having higher ego development then lead to a Singular Identity development? Though they do have to straddle lines between races, multiracial people do not necessarily straddle lines between cultures, unlike the First Nation adolescents in Gfellner and Armstrong (2012). The difference may be important, given that being *multicultural* assumes having distinct heritages with customs, traditions, and languages, whereas being *multiracial* surrounds divides that are not necessarily tied to inherent, concrete differences between groups. This unique dissonance may mean that having higher levels of ego development will lead to much different outcomes for multiracial individuals, and therefore that findings from studies on bicultural individuals will apply only weakly to multiracial individuals. At the same time, the social significance of race may make reconciling two or more races quite as difficult as reconciling two or more cultures. Plus, multiracial individuals (e.g., Black/Asian) often also identify as multicultural (e.g., American/Chinese). For this reason, it is plausible that individuals who assert an identity that is more accepting of the change and complexity this dissonance presents, such as a Protean Identity (e.g., switching between singular and multiracial identities) or a Border Identity (e.g., seeing the self as a unique mix of racial backgrounds), will be more likely to be higher in ego development. In contrast, asserting a Singular or Transcendent Identity may be more likely to indicate lower ego

development, since those with lower ego development see the world in more stark lines (e.g., Black vs. White or alternatively, race does not exist) and may feel find it easier to be accepted by others, as opposed to forging a new, unconventional identity.

Well-being and Multiracial Identity

As we have already established, being multiracial comes with unique and potentially very damaging consequences. In addition to facing tension due to inconsistencies between the private and public understanding of the self (i.e., how I view myself versus how others view me), multiracial individuals often face rejection based on appearance: how much an individual looks "Asian" or "Black," for example, has been shown to affect whether they will be accepted into a mono-racial group, thus weakening the already tenuous sense of belonging multiracial individuals may feel in any singular racial group (AhnAllen, Suyemoto, & Carter, 2006; Rockquemore & Brunisma, 2002). At the same time, multiracial individuals are often subject to the same racial discrimination that affects their mono-racial minority peers (Miville et al., 2005), but do not always have the same guarantee of refuge from such assaults within a minority group, like their peers often do (Root, 1998). Mixed-race individuals are also subject to discrimination based specifically on their status as multiracial - the infamous "what are you?" question is perhaps the most representative of this type of discrimination (Miville et al., 2005). Such everyday interrogations, as affirmed by literature on racial micro-aggressions, are often more detrimental to a person's well-being than outright racism (Wang, Leu, & Shoda, 2011). In addition, work by Sanchez and Bonam (2009) showed that biracial White/Asian and White/Black Americans were perceived to be colder and less competent than their White or minority peers and furthermore, less worthy of minority scholarships when applying to college.

Despite these difficulties, the literature does not suggest that being multiracial identity is associated with particularly negative psychological outcomes. While there are indeed many challenges that come with being multiracial, a review of both qualitative and quantitative data revealed that individuals generally showed more resilience based on having to navigate these many contexts and showed more appreciation for their varied backgrounds (Shih & Sanchez, 2005). Additionally, multiracial individuals experience similar levels of depression to their mono-racial minority peers, suggesting that there is not something specific about being multiracial that causes heightened risk for depression (Shih & Sanchez, 2005). In general, multiracial youth are well-adjusted and do not face more negative psychological outcomes than other groups. Studies have also found that multiracial adolescents have relatively high levels of self-esteem, plus larger and more diverse friend groups than mono-racial adolescents, suggesting that in general, there is not a lack of social support for mixed-race adolescents and that they are just as popular as their mono-racial peers (Phillips, 2004; Quillian & Reed, 2004).

There may be, however, differences in the well-being of different groups of multiracial individuals. In a large epidemiological study, Campbell and Eggerling-Boeck (2006) found that most groups of multiracial youth did not differ significantly in levels of depression, consideration of suicide, perceived social acceptance, perceived closeness to others at school, and extra-curricular participation from minority adolescents. This was true of all groups except for multiracial Native American/White adolescents, a finding which the researchers believe may be linked to the prevalent discrimination against Native Americans and the historically antagonistic relationship between European Americans and Native Americans. This could be well explained through Benet-Martinez and Haritatos' (2005) theory of Bicultural Identity Integration (BII), which analyzes the extent to which a person views their cultures to be compatible or

contradictory to each other (conflict) and the extent to which a person views their cultures as separate entities (distance). Bicultural individuals with low levels of conflict and distance have been shown to have less stress, more ability to reach out to social support than those who had high levels of conflict and distance among their cultures (Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005).

In light of the serious challenges being multiracial presents, the lack of evidence proving these challenges lead to negative psychological outcomes is pleasantly surprising. Nevertheless, it may be that well-being is influenced by how one interprets their multiracial status.

Rockquemore and Brunisma's (2002) typology, while adding complexity to how we view multiracial identity, fails to address the potential conflict that may be present in the choice of an identity category. Some research shows that psychological well-being of multiracial individuals does indeed depend on what type of identity they choose. As stated earlier, Sanchez et al., (2009) found that having a uniquely malleable racial identification where one switched between singular and multiracial identities depending on the context (akin to Rockquemore and Brunisma's (2002) Protean Identity category) was associated with negative psychological outcomes for those who had less dialectical self-views. Asserting a uniquely mixed identity is also associated with greater inter-group anxiety compared to those who identified as mono-racial, but less than those who identified with no racial group (Suzuki-Crumly & Hyers, 2004). However, when looking at multiracial high school students, Binning, Unzueta, Huo, and Molina (2009) found that in fact multiracial adolescents that identified with multiple groups (e.g., Black and White) had equal if not higher well-being in comparison to those who identified with a single group, whether this group was considered high status (e.g., Asian) or low status (e.g., Hispanic). While this evidence suggests that multiracial identity category and well-being are related, the nature of this relationship is not well understood, and not much research exists further reinforcing its

directionality. The literature also alludes to the possibility that individual difference (such as dialectical self-view) may partially account for the relationship between identity category and well-being, as suggested by the findings in Sanchez et al. (2009). In light of the ambiguous data, a question arises: could there be more and less healthy methods of negotiating one's identity category, no matter what category one chooses?

A Narrative Approach to Well-Being and Identity

In order to explore the relationship between identity category and well-being, we took a narrative approach to multiracial identity, which could be a useful tool to evaluate one's subjective feelings on their racial categorization. In general, the literature on narrative identity states that how one constructs narratives about their past experiences has implications for identity development (McAdams, 2001). Because the self is both changing yet coherent through time, one must continuously evaluate their previous experiences to create a narrative that "serves to integrate the person" as they accrue more life events (McLean, 2008). Because so much of "lived experience" can come out of how one interprets their social and cultural environments, the narrative approach can be particularly useful for analyzing ethnic identity development (Syed & Azmitia, 2010). The content of these "lived experiences" may be important for indicating one's stage of identity development: subjects who told more "personally meaningful" narratives that surrounded themes of prejudice or connection to culture were more likely to have an achieved ethnic identity status than those who did not (Syed & Azmitia, 2008). However, for some, it may be that race or culture does not play a central role to their self-understanding. Having another, more salient identity may cause an individual to view another facet of their identity (as opposed to race) as the most important part of the self. For instance, the pervasive stigma surrounding

physical disability in the United States may cause a person's identity to revolve more closely around their status as disabled than around their racial status (Alston, Bell, & Feist-Price, 1996).

As explained by Syed and Azmitia (2008), a narrative often involves a conflict of some kind, and it is how the person views this conflict that affects that well-being. Often narratives revolve around stories of growth or difficult life events, given the potential of these stories to have had a large impact on a person's life (e.g., Pals, 2006; Bauer et al., 2005). There is ample evidence to suggest that ending a narrative positively and having clarity within the narrative are both robustly related to more positive psychological outcomes (e.g., Baerger & McAdams, 1999; King et al., 2000). These qualities imply a sense of resolution and organization to conflict that may allow the person to move forward from a life experience in a healthy way (Pals, 2006). Narratives describing the moment a parent found out their child had Down Syndrome were associated with higher well-being if the narrative ended positively and showed coherence through the use of the narrative device foreshadowing (King et al., 2000). Bauer et al. (2005) found that memories oriented so as to emphasize a pattern of growth were associated with higher eudaimonic well-being (i.e., greater meaning in life). Studies have also shown that ending a narrative positively will predict well-being, no matter the valence of the story they are telling (Lilgendahl & McAdams, 2011). At the same time, narratives that contain rich detail of how a person reflected, processed, and analyzed an experience (coined exploratory narrative processing in the narrative literature), are associated with higher maturity, but when not paired with a positive ending, openness to growth, or clarity, are not necessarily associated with higher well-being (Pals, 2006; Bauer et al., 2005; King et al., 2000). According to McLean (2008), "this reflective process...may also be risky as we open ourselves up to the vulnerabilities of reflection" (p. 1692).

Previous work on bicultural identity development has used Benet-Martinez and Haritatos' (2005) theory on BII to show that levels of clarity and positive resolution in narratives could be due to feelings of confusion regarding how to manage two potentially very different cultural backgrounds. Lilgendahl & Benet-Martinez (2015) found that among bicultural college students, ending narratives positively was associated with having higher levels of BII and suggests that being able making positive meaning out of challenging bicultural experiences results in being able to integrate these experiences into a more coherent self compatible with multiple cultures, and thus, could lead to better psychological well-being. In a second study, bicultural adults who showed less conflict and exploration in their narratives had higher levels of BII, indicating that with age comes clarity surrounding bicultural identity.

In order to apply BII to multiracial individuals, Cheng and Lee (2009) created the theory of Multiracial Identity Integration (MII), and found that it is beliefs and past experiences that widely influence if people perceive conflict in their multiracial identity. Specifically, they found that those who recalled positive memories surrounding their multi-raciality had higher levels of MII, versus those who recalled negative memories. This suggests that having participants construct narratives around these past experiences could be important for understanding how they may play a role in the development of a healthy identity. This also gets at the concept of validation that Rockquemore and Brunsma (2002) emphasizes: if someone's past experiences regarding their multiracial identity include negative encounters where others do not validate their identity, it is probable that we could see this play out in how they construct their narrative. It may also be that for multiracial individuals, the "conflict" described in Benet-Martinez and Haritatos' (2005) model does not involve seeing one's distinct heritages as in conflict or harmony with each other, but rather finding a way to understand how each racial background influences one's

identity, how others view one's membership in these racial groups, and then to define an identity that feels stable and healthy. Again, this reflects the difference between being multicultural and being multiracial – when one's understanding of the self contains parts that are not necessarily in conflict with each other in the sense that they involve separate, concrete difference, the conflict that does arise may be much different in scope and impact.

Learning how to negotiate this conflict and integrate one's experiences into a healthy and clear understanding of the self may be important for well-being in multiracial individuals, despite what identity category they choose: among a sample of diverse half White participants, Lou and Lalonde (2015) found that there was no significant difference between self-concept clarity, or how organized a person's identity was across time, between individuals who asserted any of Rockquemore & Brunsma's (2002) identity categories. This indicates that indeed, it may not be choice of identity that affects a person's well-being, but how well they understand and are able to articulate that identity. For instance, someone may assert a Transcendent Identity (i.e. identifying as human versus by race), but feel confused in that assertion. This person's narrative may lack clarity and a positive ending. Alternatively, another person who asserts the same identity may have explored their options widely and thought deeply about how their experiences have led them to choose a Transcendent Identity. According to the literature, we would expect this person's narrative about their identity experiences to be clearer and end more positively.

Excerpts from narratives of biracial individuals in Lilgendahl and Benet-Martinez (2015) and pilot narratives from the current study give a sense of what these narrative constructions may look like for multiracial people. In Narrative 1, taken from Lilgendahl and Benet-Martinez (2005), the individual has little sense of clarity about their biracial background, and clear feelings of pain and confusion that have not been resolved:

“As a child, I was always made fun of by my siblings because I was lighter skinned than them. They would always call me ‘the white girl’. I was confused and sad, because in my mind I was just like them, we had the same parents and mom was white. *This is [a] continuous sore spot for me.*”

In Narrative 2, the biracial individual, though having dealt with both internal and external challenges due to her background, ends her narrative with a clear and strong assertion of an identity choice:

“...I have spent more time considering how I fit in or don't fit in to other people's conceptions of race, and realized that I identify as both and biracial. *This mixture of Jewish and Japanese IS who I am.*”

The Current Study

Given the fast-growing population of multiracial people in the United States, it is imperative that we learn better how these people develop healthy identities both within and outside the context of mono-racial groups in America. As we move towards a time when the majority of Americans will come from mixed race backgrounds, will the erroneous taxonomy that society has traditionally used to differentiate and discriminate between people continue to be reinforced, or will our understandings of race begin to fundamentally change? There is some evidence to suggest such a fundamental change: Lou and Lalonde (2015) found that a larger proportion of biracial White individuals asserted a Transcendent Identity than in previous studies using the same framework, which perhaps represents a social landscape that is becoming ever more accepting of bi- and multiracial individuals as unique and not tied down by conventional conceptions of race. Alternatively, this could represent a fraught racial environment in the United States, and therefore a compulsion to reject the concept of race instead of buying into it. Previous

research has failed to embrace the wide variety of mixed-race Americans to instead focus on only half White Americans, therefore sacrificing any understanding of themes within the mixed-race experience as a whole. In addition, a preoccupation with the importance of social environment in multiracial identity development has ignored the equal importance of individual difference in this development. The lack of strong evidence as to the relationship between being multiracial and well-being warrants more investigation into how identity choice may play a role in this relationship.

By adapting Rockquemore and Brunsma's (2002) Multidimensional Model for Biracial Identity, this study aims to analyze the extent to which both external (racial composition of social networks) and internal (ego development) factors play a role in the shaping of a multiracial identity, and furthermore, how narrative processing of multiracial experiences may affect one's well-being, no matter what type of identity they assert.

Hypothesis 1. We hypothesize that growing up in a more racially homogenous social network will be associated with having a Singular Identity. Such individuals may feel obligated to adhere to social and racial norms in a way that reflects those around them, whether that means to identify with the majority group or another group.

Hypothesis 2. Growing up in a more racially diverse social network will be associated with having a Protean or Border Identity, since individuals who are exposed to many types of people might feel more encouraged to develop a less traditional racial identity or feel they have to do so in order to successfully navigate many different social situations.

Hypotheses 3 and 4. We hypothesize that higher levels of ego development will be associated with having a Border or Protean Identity, whereas lower levels of ego development will be associated with Singular or Transcendent Identities. While neither identity is "wrong" nor

necessarily unhealthy, both Singular and Transcendent Identities assert a more polarized view of race: a Singular Identity reinforces traditional conceptions of racial categories, while a Transcendent Identity achieves a similar polarization through the rejection of race as a concept despite its social significance. Therefore, a greater tolerance of complexity and less need to conform may propel one towards choosing a more ambiguous racial identity, such as a Border or Protean Identity.

Hypothesis 5. We predict that the impact of social network composition will be weakened for people higher on ego development, since those with higher ego development may feel less pressure to reflect in their identity the racial composition in which they grew up.

Hypotheses 6 and 7. We also hypothesize that although identity category may be important for well-being, after controlling for its influence, narrative qualities will still significantly predict well-being. Specifically, we predict that narratives that show themes of high identity clarity, or positive ending valence will still significantly predict well-being after controlling for choice of identity category. Since memories describing conflict and challenge have shown to be formative (Pals, 2006), and both external and internal factors are important for identity development in general and racial identity in particular (Grotevant, 1987; Root, 1998), we asked participants to reflect on a time when they realized their perception of their racial identity was different from others' perception of their race. In doing so, we hoped to collect important personal narratives that were indicative of one's broader sense of self and well-being surrounding their racial identity, not just their choice of identity category.

Hypothesis 8. Finally, we hypothesize that the importance of racial identity to the self will moderate the relationship between narrative processing and well-being. If racial identity does not

make up a large part of how an individual views themselves, it follows that it will not as starkly affect well-being.

Method

Participants

A total of 117 multiracial college students from a variety of different backgrounds were recruited via Facebook as well as through emails to university affinity groups. Though 149 individuals actually completed some part of the survey, upon further investigation, 32 of this number were deemed ineligible based on their description of their racial background (e.g., multiple respondents had grown up in two cultural settings, but were of mono-racial Asian descent). The majority of participants identified as female ($n=88$; 75.2%) and ranged in age from 18 years to 25 years ($M=19.98$, $SD=1.45$). Previous research has shown that there may be confounds in recruiting participants by only asking if they identify as multiracial, since doing so may miss those who identify as mono-racial despite having a mixed race background (Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002; Cheng & Lee, 2009). Therefore, the recruitment advertisement stressed that researchers were specifically interested in recruiting individuals “whose two biological parents have different racial backgrounds.” Five participants selected only one racial category when asked about their own background, but multiple categories when recording their parents’ racial backgrounds, proving this emphasis to be useful. Eighty-eight percent of participants ($n=103$) selected two racial categories, ten participants (8.5%) chose three racial categories, and two participants chose four (1.7%). Fifty-two participants selected only Asian and White (44.4%), 15 selected only Black and White (12.8%), and 20 selected only Latino/a and White (17.1%). Sixteen participants did not select White as one of their multiple racial

backgrounds (13.7%). In addition, the majority of participants were raised in the United States ($n=99$; 84.6%). Subjects were compensated \$20 for their time.

Design and Procedure

This study had a cross-sectional, non-experimental design and contained no manipulation or control groups. Researchers were interested in doing an exploration of what factors may contribute to the development of a healthy identity for multiracial individuals.

Participants completed a survey distributed through various online platforms, including email and Facebook. The survey included a demographics section, a measure of identity categorization, measures of racial composition of social networks and ego development, a narrative prompt, and a battery of measures on psychological well-being. The measures are described below.

Measures

Multiracial identity category. We adapted The Survey of Multiracial Experience (Rockquemore, 1999; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002), which was originally created for biracial Black/White participants, for use with multiracial people of all types of racial backgrounds, whether White or non-White. The original measure consists of seven questions, all of which correspond with a specific identity category (Protean, Singular, Transcendent, and Border). In order to make the measure applicable for people of a variety of different racial backgrounds, participants answered multiple versions of the same questions, so as to ensure every potential racial identity category was accounted for. For example, participants who selected two races answered the following number of questions, with the appropriate races substituted for "Race 1" and "Race 2:" 1) I consider myself exclusively Race 1; 2) I consider myself exclusively Race 2; 3) I consider myself sometimes Race 1, sometimes Race 2, and sometimes multiracial,

depending on the circumstances; 4) I consider myself multiracial, but I experience the world as Race 1; 5) I consider myself multiracial, but I experience the world as Race 2; 6) I consider myself exclusively multiracial and not any other race specifically; 7) Race is meaningless, I do not believe in racial identities; and 8) Other – please specify. If a participant chose more than two races, they answered similar questions, but accounting for three races instead of two. Questions one and two corresponds to Singular Identity, question three corresponds with Protean Identity, questions four, five, and six to Border Identity (Un-validated and Validated), and question seven to Transcendent Identity. The participants rated all statements on a 5-point Likert scale (1=*strongly disagree*; 5=*strongly agree*).

Racial composition of social networks. This measure was adapted from Rockquemore and Brunnsma (2002), who in turn adapted it from Demo and Hughes (1990). The original measure consists of two scales: the adult and pre-adult scales. Because we were interested specifically in racial networks growing up, we only used the pre-adult scale, but included a question on the racial demographics of the individual's place of worship growing up, which was adapted from an item on the adult scale. Therefore, the adapted measure asked for the racial composition of the participant's 1) grammar or elementary school, 2) closest friends in elementary school, 3) junior high school, 4) high school, 5) closest friends in high school, 6) neighborhood while growing up, and 7) church or place of worship growing up. In the original measure, which was made for Black/White participants, the statements were assessed on a 5-point Likert scale from 0=*most all whites* to 4=*most all blacks*. We adapted this measure to operationalize racial diversity in two different ways: first, we looked at the homogeneity versus diversity of the participants' social networks growing up, and second, we measured the extent to which the participant perceived that these various social environments contained people who

were racially similar or different from themselves. Therefore, participants assessed the statements twice: first, on a 5-point Likert scale from 1=*no racial diversity* to 5=*extreme racial diversity* and second, on a 5-point Likert scale from 1=*no people racially similar to me* to 5=*(almost) all people racially similar to me*. Two separate 7-item composite scales were created, one evaluating racial similarity to the self over the seven different childhood contexts ($\alpha=.92$) and one evaluating racial diversity of the environment as a whole over these same contexts ($\alpha=.89$). The scales were not significantly correlated with each other ($r=.17, p=.11$).

Ego development. To assess ego development, we included the 18-item version of the Washington University Sentence Completion Test (Hy & Loevinger, 1996). Participants were given the stems of 18 sentences and asked to complete each sentences however they wished. Examples of sentence stems included: “What gets me into trouble is...;” “Crime and delinquency could be halted if...;” and “Men are lucky because...” Example answers to these sentences could be, respectively: “...not listening;” “...parents were more interested in their children;” and “...their roles allow them to be themselves.” These items were rated separately for each ego level using the coding categories for each level provided by Hy and Loevinger (1996). Inter-rater reliability for the first two items .71 and .81, respectively, with final scores for Items 1 and 2 settled upon through discussion of discrepancies among the coders. All other items were coded individually. Subsequently, all 18 items for each participant were summed together. Researchers then assigned a total protocol rating (TPR) based on that sum and in accordance with guidelines (Hy & Loevinger, 1996). The TPR corresponded to one of eight levels of personality development: 2) Impulsive (stereotyped thinking, dependent); 3) Self-Protective (controlling, manipulative); 4) Conformist (conventional thinking); 5) Self-Aware (recognition of complexity, awareness of own agency); 6) Conscientious (true conceptual complexity); 7) Individualistic

(toleration of others' complexity); 8) Autonomous (high tolerance for ambiguity); 9) Integrated (search for identity). After coding, the majority of respondents possessed an ego level between Self-Aware (stage 5) and Individualistic (stage 7), with 28 participants rated at the Self-Aware stage (23.9%), 46 participants at the Conscientious stage (stage 6; 39.3%), and 20 participants at the Individualistic stage (17.1%).

Narrative prompt. The survey included a narrative question that prompted participants to think about times in their lives when they became aware of a possible conflict between their public and private identities. The question was as follows:

We are interested in hearing about memories of experiences that in some way have affected your sense of bi/multiracial identity. Think of a specific time that you became aware of how your race was categorized or perceived by others. This could be the way you were perceived by a stranger, an acquaintance, a friend, or a family member. The important thing is that the memory relates to your recognition of the way your race is viewed by other people and how similar or different this is from the way you view yourself. Please provide a detailed account of this memory, including what happened, who was involved, what your thoughts and feelings were during the event, and why it was significant to you. In addition, please comment on the long-term impact of the event (if any) on your sense of who you are and what this event means to you today.

The researchers gathered pilot responses to this question from a variety of subjects with different mixed-race backgrounds, which were thoughtful and codable.

Narrative Coding

Coding procedure. Two coders coded the first five narratives for exploratory processing, ending valence, and conflict versus clarity separately and then discussed discrepancies in order to

become more reliable to each other. The rest of the narratives were coded separately by each coder and then compared for reliability.

Exploratory processing. Exploratory processing was coded for using a coding system that was adapted from Pals (2006). Exploratory processing was defined here as the extent to which an individual grappled with issues of racial identity, including questioning this identity, making sense of what it means to be multiracial, and acknowledgment of change over time with respect to how they perceive and understand their relationship to their race. Those narratives high in exploratory processing had descriptions of how the person has processed their racial identity (e.g, "...I have worked to familiarize myself with what it means to be black, how I can claim that identity in a way that works for me..."). Narratives lower in exploratory processing were more concrete and circumstantial, with little to no evidence of internal processing related to their racial identity. Exploratory processing was rated on a 4-point Likert scale from 1=*very concrete/non-exploratory* to 4=*strong, elaborated evidence for exploratory processing*. Inter-rater reliability for exploratory processing was .70, with final scores derived through averaging each coder's individual scores.

Ending valence. The narratives were also coded for ending valence, or how positively/negatively their narrative ends, independent of the valence of the memory itself. Ending valence was coded using a 5-point Likert scale (Pals, 2006; Lilgendahl & Benet-Martinez, 2015; 1=*very negative*, 2=*somewhat negative*, 3=*neutral or mixed*, 4=*somewhat positive*, 5=*very positive*). Inter-rater reliability for ending valence was .82, with final ending valence scores derived from averaging the scores of the individual coders.

Clarity. The narratives were also coded for identity clarity versus confusion. We adapted the coding system used in Lilgendahl and Benet-Martinez (2015). Coders used a 5-point Likert

scale that aimed to assess how clearly a participant described their journey towards and relationship with their racial identity. The scale went from 1=*very uncertain, confused, unclear about multiracial identity*, with explicit examples of negative emotion and conflict, to 3=*neutral/mixed – no sense of identity clarity or a very mixed sense*, where the subject does not explicitly refer to resolution or clarity, or feels very mixed about their racial identity, to 5=*explicitly described and very clearly expressed*, with a clear sense of how their racial background relates to their current identity. Inter-rater reliability was .64 for clarity, with final scores determined by averaging the two raters' scores together.

Well-being Measures

Satisfaction with life scale. In order to measure psychological well-being, we included a battery of different measures. The first was the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985). The SWLS consisted of five items, which aimed to analyze global life satisfaction (e.g., “In most ways my life is close to ideal”). Participants rated items on a scale from 1=*strongly disagree* to 7=*strongly agree*. The measure had a Chronbach’s alpha of .83.

Positive and negative affect scales. The second measure used to address psychological well-being was the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). The scale consists of 20 items, which can be split into two ten item subscales, positive affect and negative affect. Participants are asked to rate the extent to which they have felt positive (e.g., “interested”) and negative (e.g., “distressed”) emotions in the past week or in the present moment. All items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale, from 1=*very slightly* to 5=*extremely*. In this study, the negative ($\alpha=.88$) and positive affect ($\alpha=.88$) scales were kept separate.

Rosenberg self esteem scale. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was also used to address psychological well-being, and specifically used to evaluate self-esteem among the participants (Rosenberg, 1965). The scale consists of ten items that analyze self-worth ($\alpha=.90$). Examples include “I feel that I have a number of good qualities” and “I take a positive attitude towards myself.” Participants rated these items on a scale from 1=*strongly agree* to 4=*strongly disagree*.

Ryff psychological well-being scale. The Ryff Psychological Well-being Scale consists of 18 items rated on a scale from 1=*strongly disagree* to 6=*strongly agree* (Ryff, 1989). The questions are aimed at understanding how the participants presently feel about themselves and their situation (e.g., “I have a sense of direction and purpose in life”). The scale contains six dimensions of well-being: self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, personal growth, autonomy, purpose in life, and environmental mastery. For this study, the scale was used as a whole ($\alpha=.61$).

Additional Measures

Multiracial identity integration. We included the Multiracial Identity Integration scale (Cheng & Lee, 2009), which is aimed at understanding how much distance or conflict multiracial individuals view their multiple racial backgrounds. Participants rated seven items describing their multiracial identity (e.g., “My racial identity is best described by a blend of all the racial groups to which I belong;” “I keep everything about my racial identities separate”) on a scale from 1=*totally disagree* to 5=*totally agree*. The items belong to two 4-item subscales, one measuring conflict and one measuring distance. However, one item in the conflict scale (“I feel torn between my different racial identities”) was unintentionally left off of the online survey, and thus was not included in the final composite variable for this the conflict subscale, which had a

Chronbach's alpha of .77. The distance scale, which was not used in analyses, had a Chronbach's alpha of .57.

Importance of racial identity. Participants were supposed to answer the following question regarding the importance of racial identity to their overall identity on a 5-point Likert scale from 1=*not at all important* to 5=*very important*: "My racial identity is an important part of who I am." However, due to error on the part of the researchers, this question was accidentally excluded from the final survey. Therefore, analyses will not be included regarding Hypothesis 8.

Results

Table 1 shows general descriptive statistics for all main variables in the study, including all identity category variables, ego development, both measures of the racial composition of childhood social networks, narrative qualities, and well-being measures. Of the identity categories, means for Protean (3.63, $SD=1.17$) and Un-validated Border (3.96, $SD=.90$) were the highest, indicating that more participants identified with moving uniquely between singular and multiracial identities (Protean) or otherwise more often identified as a blend of their racial backgrounds, but were not validated by others in claiming this identity (Un-validated Border). There was a significant difference between these means, $t(128)=-2.98, p=.003$. Both measures of childhood social networks (racial diversity and racial similarity to the self) had means of 2.74 ($SD=.89$) and 2.23 ($SD=.88$) respectively, suggesting that participants in general perceived the racial composition of the social environments in childhood to be of middling racial diversity. The mean for ego development was 5.89, indicating that the average participant possessed a level 5 (Self-Aware) or level 6 (Conscientious) ego level (for more information on ego development levels, see Method). On the Satisfaction with Life scale (SWLS) the mean was 5.01 ($SD=1.19$), suggesting on average participants were more likely to rate their lives as satisfying.

Hypotheses 1 and 2

In order to test Hypothesis 1, which stated that growing up in a more racially homogenous social network would be associated with having a Singular Identity (i.e., identifying with a single racial group), and Hypothesis 2, that more racially diverse childhood social networks would be associated with having a Protean (i.e., identifying as multiracial or mono-racial depending on the context) or Border Identity (i.e., identifying only as multiracial), we ran a series of bivariate correlations reported in Table 2. Results showed that possessing a more Singular Identity was not significantly associated with growing up in a more racially diverse social network nor was it significantly associated with growing up with more people racially similar to oneself. In addition, possessing a more Protean or Border (both validated and un-validated) Identity was not significantly associated with either measure of racial composition of childhood social networks. However, those who identified more with a Transcendent Identity (i.e., rejecting the concept of race) were more likely to have grown up with more individuals in their social context who were racially similar to themselves. Furthermore, when we correlated individual contexts with the identity categories, we found that higher racial diversity in one's neighborhood growing up, closest friends in high school, and place of worship was significantly associated with having a more Transcendent Identity, although Transcendent Identity and the 7-item composite scale of racial diversity of social networks were not significantly correlated. To see correlation values between all identity categories and the main social network variables, see Table 2.

Hypotheses 3 and 4

In order to test Hypothesis 3, that higher levels of ego development would be associated with Border and Protean Identities, and Hypothesis 4, that lower levels of ego development

would be associated with Singular and Transcendent Identities, we conducted a series of bivariate correlations, also reported in Table 2. Results showed that identifying highly with either the Un-validated Border or Validated Border Identity categories was not significantly associated with ego development, nor was possessing a more Protean Identity significantly associated with ego development. Identifying with the Transcendent Identity category was not significantly associated with having lower ego development. However, having a more Singular Identity was significantly associated with having lower ego development, rendering Hypothesis 4 partially supported.

Hypothesis 5

Hypothesis 5 stated that although racial composition of social networks would be associated with identity categorization, this relationship would be moderated by ego development, such that those who have higher levels of ego development would be less influenced by the racial composition of their childhood social networks. In order to test Hypothesis 5, we conducted a series of moderated multiple regressions (Aiken & West, 1991). First, we tested whether the relationship between Transcendent Identity and racial similarity of social networks would be moderated by ego development. We created *z*-scores for ego development and racial similarity to self of childhood social networks, and multiplied those scores together to create an interaction term. We then conducted a regression with Transcendent Identity as the outcome variable and ego development, racial similarity, and the interaction as the predictor variables. We found that there was a main effect of racial similarity to self of childhood social networks ($\beta=.30, p=.007$), such that perceiving more people to be racially similar to oneself predicted more identification with the Transcendent Identity category. We did not find a significant main effect for ego development ($\beta=.08, p=.46$) nor did we find a significant

interaction between ego development and racial similarity ($\beta=.03, p=.29$), indicating that ego development did not moderate the relationship between Transcendent Identity and racial similarity. The same test was run for all identity variables, with no significant interactions between ego development and racial similarity to the self for any of the identity categories. However, there was a main effect of ego development on both Singular Identity ($\beta=-.20, p=.05$) and of Un-validated Border Identity ($\beta=-.21, p=.052$; marginal). For all regression results, see the top half of Table 3.

We then ran a parallel set of moderated multiple regressions to analyze whether the relationship between racial diversity of social networks and identity categories was moderated by ego development. The results are reported in the bottom half of Table 3. Though there were marginally significant main effects of ego development for both Singular Identity ($\beta=-.19, p=.07$) and Un-validated Border Identity ($\beta=-.19, p=.07$), there were no other significant main effects and no significant interactions between ego development and racial diversity of childhood social networks, indicating that ego development did not moderate the relationship between racial diversity of social networks and identity categories. To see all regression values, refer to Table 3.

Hypotheses 6 and 7

Hypothesis 6 stated that narratives which end positively would significantly predict well-being after controlling for identity categories, while Hypothesis 7 stated that narratives that demonstrate more coherence and clarity would significantly predict well-being after controlling for identity categories. First, as a preliminary step, we examined all of the bivariate correlations among the identity categories, narrative variables, and well-being variables, reported in Table 4. In order to test these hypotheses, we ran a series of multiple regressions. Specifically, we

simultaneously entered all five identity categories and the narrative variables of ending valence, clarity vs. confusion, and exploratory processing (though no hypotheses were made about this). A separate regression was run with each well-being measure (SWLS, PANAS-PA, PANAS-NA, Self-Esteem, and Psychological Well-Being) as the dependent variable. These results are reported in Table 5. Contrary to hypotheses, specific identity categories independently predicted various measures of well-being, even after accounting for narrative variables: having a more Singular Identity significantly predicted lower satisfaction with life ($\beta=-.31, p=.01$); having a more Protean Identity significantly predicted higher negative affect ($\beta=.25, p=.02$) and lower self-esteem ($\beta=-.27, p=.02$); and having a Validated Border Identity significantly predicted lower negative affect ($\beta=-.29, p=.01$). However, having higher levels of exploratory processing in one's narrative significantly predicted higher negative affect ($\beta=.27, p=.01$) independent of identity category, as well as marginally significantly predicted lower psychological well-being ($\beta=-.21, p=.06$).

Additional Analyses

A multiple regression was run in order to see whether the conflict subscale of the Multiracial Identity Integration scale (MII) partially explained the relationship between Singular Identity and lower well-being. Results indicated that feeling conflict between racial backgrounds did not significantly predict lower satisfaction with life ($\beta=.14, p=.16$), but that there was a main effect of Singular Identity on satisfaction with life ($\beta=-.28, p=.01$), such that having a Singular Identity significantly predicted lower satisfaction with life. Parallel multiple regressions were run to see whether the MII conflict subscale partially explained the relationship between negative affect and exploratory processing as well as negative affect and Protean Identity. Both exploratory processing ($\beta=.26, p=.03$) and Protean Identity ($\beta=.26, p=.01$) still significantly

predicted higher negative affect, even after accounting for how harmonious or conflicted participants viewed their racial identities.

Additionally, we ran a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to analyze whether there were significant differences in which identity categories individuals in different racial groups chose. We looked particularly at those who identified as Asian/White ($n=52$), Black/White ($n=15$), and Latino/White ($n=20$). We found that there was a significant effect of racial group on identity categorization for Transcendent Identity; $F(3, 110)=4.71, p=.004$. Tukey's post hocs revealed that Black/Whites ($M=1.14$) rated Transcendent Identity significantly lower than Asian/Whites ($M=1.63$), $t(53.62)=-3.06, p=.003$, who rated it significantly lower than Latino/Whites ($M=2.32$), $t(21.30)=-3.55, p=.002$. There was a marginally significant effect of racial group on Singular Identity, $F(3, 110)=2.44, p=.07$. Using Tukey's post hocs, we found there was a significant difference between how highly Black/White individuals rated Singular Identity ($M=3.21$) compared with Asian/White individuals ($M=2.33$) such that Black/White biracial participants rated Singular identity significantly higher, $t(22.28)=2.43, p=.02$.

Discussion

This study was an attempt to explore the possible factors that contribute how a multiracial young adult may understand and define their racial identity. While previous work on multiracial young adults has focused primarily on biracial individuals of particular racial backgrounds (e.g., Black and White; Rockquemore & Brunisma, 2002), the current study aimed to look at the multiracial experience as a whole by recruiting individuals of many mixed race backgrounds. In doing so, the researchers hoped to better understand how Rockquemore and Brunisma's (2002) Multidimensional Model of Biracial Identity applied to individuals of a wide array of multiracial backgrounds. Furthermore, we aimed to understand better how and if these identity categories

affected well-being in participants, and whether narrative qualities, such as positive ending valence and clarity, played a role in this relationship.

Transcendent Identity and Childhood Social Networks

Results indicated that contrary to predictions, claiming a more Singular Identity was not associated with more racially homogenous social networks in childhood (Hypothesis 1), nor were Protean or Border-identified individuals more likely to grow up in highly racially diverse social environments (Hypothesis 2). The only identity category that was significantly associated with the racial composition of social networks in childhood was Transcendent, in which those who perceived that they grew up with more individuals racially similar to them were significantly more likely to endorse a Transcendent Identity (i.e., identifying as “human” as opposed to a specific race). This finding could suggest that if an individual perceives that there are many people around them who are racially similar to them, they may find that they can rise above racial categorization because they are not forced to confront their racial difference from others, or rather, that they are not isolated from their communities because of their race.

A closer look at participant narratives reinforces the possibility that growing up around individuals who look similar to oneself can create a supportive environment in which race is not the most salient factor when it comes to identity development. Respondent 20 indicated that she both identified as Transcendent and came from a background where she had many close friends who were racially similar to her. In her narrative, she discusses how she often feels fetishized due to her half Asian background, but finds comfort in her “hapa best friends,” who have had similar experiences. Respondent 20’s experience reflects the importance of social groups to an individual’s identity (Brewer & Gardner, 1996), and indicates a movement towards new racial identity categorizations that function similarly to traditional ones in providing a source of pride,

refuge, and self-esteem. Hapa, which Respondent 20 mentions, is the Hawaiian term for “mixed,” and is used to describe individuals of mixed Asian or Pacific Islander descent. The Hapa movement has used political and artistic means to start a discourse on multi-raciality in the United States, according to Bernstein and De la Cruz (2009), and provided a new self-definition for the growing numbers of mixed Asian Americans in the United States: “The Hapa movement challenges normative cultural codes that constitute conceptions of race that deny the multiracial existence... Hapas seek both recognition and deconstruction simultaneously” (p. 740). For Respondent 20, it may be that being surrounded by Hapa friends growing up gave her a source of comfort and solidarity, and furthermore, the opportunity to seek identification beyond her race.

The findings suggest that racial similarity to the self is more important in the development of a racial identity than how diverse childhood social networks are in general. However, we also found evidence to suggest that diversity in *certain* childhood social networks may be important for how one identifies – specifically, we found that those who grew up in a racially diverse neighborhood, had racially diverse close friends in high school, or attended a racially diverse place of worship were all significantly more likely to rate their identity as more highly Transcendent. It may be that the existence of racial diversity within childhood social networks is specifically important in contexts where close personal relationships are often forged – such as the three contexts mentioned above. This evidence could suggest that it is not that racial diversity is insignificant, but that collapsing across racial contexts was not the most optimal way to assess the importance of diversity in childhood. Another explanation for the lack of significance of racial diversity in social networks could be that the study did not employ a rigorous definition of “diversity.” Participants’ personal definitions of diversity could have differed from one another: for some, high diversity could mean a small but active minority

population within a predominantly White community, but for others, high diversity could mean a true mix of races, cultures, and languages. For this reason, future studies should employ this question using more specific language to define what is meant by “diversity.”

The addition of a measure of racial context in young adulthood could have been important in explaining how racial composition of social networks affects the identity development of multiracial individuals. Our respondents were all current or former college students, and it is likely that for some, their collegiate racial context is quite different than their childhood racial context. Given that emerging adulthood is a time of profound reflection on identity (Arnett, 2000), such a sharp change in social environment could contribute significantly to a participant’s current feelings about their racial identity, and thus how they measured their identity in our study. This potentially dramatic shift is characterized in Respondent 30’s narrative about his identity: “When I first moved in on the first day of [college] one of my suitemates asked ‘so what are you?’ and I was confused and insulted...It really introduced me to a world where people don’t know squat about what is polite to ask ethnically ambiguous people, and just have a general unfamiliarity about race.” Rockquemore and Brunsma’s (2002) initial study on racial composition of social networks did include an adult scale, and found that Black/White biracial individuals with Un-validated Border Identities had the largest shift in racial demographics between the pre-adult and adult scales, while those with a Validated Border Identity saw little change in the demographics. Although neither Validated nor Un-validated Border Identity had any significant correlation with childhood social networks (which could reflect the difference in the racial backgrounds of participants in the current study), it could be that a change in racial context could be actively shifting how one identifies, therefore rendering childhood racial contexts less important in comparison to a participant’s current situation. The

importance of contextual change is also reflected in Collins (2000), when biracial Japanese/White Americans began to rethink their identity after leaving their middle class White childhood homes.

Singular Identity and Ego Development

Hypotheses 3 and 4 centered around the relationship of ego development to identity category, and posited that those who scored higher in the Border (both validated and unvalidated) and Protean Identity categories would be significantly more likely to have higher levels of ego development (Hypothesis 3), while those who scored higher in the Singular and Transcendent Identity categories would be significantly more likely to have lower levels of ego development (Hypothesis 4). In partial support of Hypothesis 4, results showed that having a more Singular identity was significantly associated with lower levels of ego development. The results seem to suggest that those with a Singular Identity might view the world according to stark societal and cultural codes, in contrast to the complexity with which a person with higher ego development may understand their personal choices as well as the choices of others. This conclusion is supported in the narratives of those who had a more Singular identity and lower ego development. Respondent 51 discusses a time when a “semi friend” made fun of his Asian background by bowing to him every time they saw each other. When explaining how this experience impacted his identity, Respondent 51 wrote, “Though these jokes never hurt me... The general perception of me as asian [sic] has definitely led me to identifying as primarily asian [sic].” The participant never mentions his inner feelings in response to the situation, and seems to adhere to normative views of his race, culture, and appearance when defining his own identity. In addition, his narrative is conceptually quite simplistic, failing to delve into the details of these encounters and what they might mean. When analyzing his answers to the Washington

University Sentence Completion Task, researchers assigned this participant to Level 4, the Conformist stage of ego development, in which individuals are particularly concerned with group identification and belonging, and lack the reflective self-awareness that begins to appear in the fifth stage of ego development (Hy & Loevinger, 1996).

Respondent 101, who also identified as highly Singular, writes that “no matter where my skin color comes from, people looking at me will always view me as black, and I am okay with that. So I began to embrace my black identity as the only one that exists, as it is the only one that others will recognize.” Here again we see an emphasis on the external social expectations, as opposed to internal feelings. Nevertheless, Respondent 101 seems to have more awareness that there is a difference between how others see him and how he views himself, although he asserts that this does not matter if others are not going to recognize only his Black identity. Researchers assigned this participant to Level 5, the Self-Aware stage, in which participants have a better sense of the “multiple possibilities” in different scenarios.

People with higher ego development are more comfortable deviating from the traditional path, and have an understanding and acceptance for the reasons that one may do so (Hy & Loevinger, 1996). If we equate the Singular identity category with the normative taxonomy of race in America (i.e., clear racial boundaries that are not often crossed), then it makes sense that those who claim a more Singular identity would have lower ego development, since they may see racial boundaries as stark and group membership as most important. Because none of the other categories were associated with significantly higher or lower ego development, we may interpret this as demonstrative that there are many factors at play in the development of a racial identity for multiracial young adults. Furthermore, while ego development increases or decreases the likelihood that one may develop a more Singular identity, there are other personality factors

(e.g., self-efficacy, shyness, etc.) that could lead someone to identify more with other identity categories.

The Interaction Between Personality and Contextual Factors: More to Learn

Results showed no support for Hypothesis 5, which stated that the relationship between the racial composition of childhood social networks and identity categorization would be weaker for those who possessed higher ego levels. However, there was a main effect of ego development on Singular Identity and a marginal main effect on Un-validated Border Identity, such that having lower ego development significantly predicted a higher rating of the Singular and Un-validated Border identity categories. In addition, there was a main effect of racial similarity to the self on Transcendent Identity, such that having more racial similarity in childhood social networks predicted a higher rating of the Transcendent Identity category. The main effects of ego development on Singular Identity as well as racial similarity on Transcendent Identity are reflected in the results from Hypotheses 1-4, and suggest there may be a more complicated relationship for multiracial individuals between the context in which they were raised, their personality, and the identity categories they identify with. Given the vast literature that supports the importance of both context and personality on the development of identity (e.g., Grotevant, 1987), future research should focus on expanding the inquiry into what specific factors within this framework affect multiracial identity development. The failure of both racial composition of social networks and ego development to be significantly associated with the majority of identity categorizations suggests that there are other factors that may better help explain racial identity choice for multiracial young adults. Alternatively, it could allude to the difficulty of treating multiracial individuals as a whole, regardless of specific racial backgrounds: since our

participants came from diverse origins, it is possible that their individual experiences differed so much that treating them as a cohesive sample was not wise.

It is also interesting that there was a marginal main effect of ego development for Un-validated Border Identity, such that those lower in ego development were more likely to rate their identity as more highly un-validated. This could suggest that because individuals whose uniquely multiracial identities were not validated by others, they are more aware of the importance of group membership, whether or not they wish to belong in a particular racial group. However, because this finding was not significant when we correlated ego development and identity categories, and is also only marginal, we must be cautious in interpreting this finding.

Identity Categories, Narrative Qualities, and Well-being

Hypotheses 6 and 7 predicted that having a narrative with identity clarity and that ended positively would significantly predict well-being even after controlling for identity categories. Contrary to researchers' expectations, neither ending valence nor clarity in narratives significantly predicted well-being, before or after controlling for identity categories. Rather, narratives that exhibited more exploratory processing significantly predicted higher negative affect after controlling for identity categories. While exploratory processing, or the extent to which an individual reflects on and elaborates on an experience, has been shown to be associated with greater maturity, it is not necessarily associated with well-being without an emphasis on growth, the presence of coherence within a narrative, or a positive ending (Bauer et al., 2005; King & Raspin, 2004). For example, King & Raspin (2004) found that divorced women who elaborated more on their lost possible selves following their divorce had greater maturity, but also more awareness of the sacrifices that came with life.

In addition, the significant relationship between exploratory processing and negative affect in particular supports previous literature, which shows that difficult life events often spark exploration of that event (Pals, 2006; Bauer et al., 2005). It may be that rather than the presence of exploratory processing within a narrative stimulating negative affect, it is the difficulties participants experienced due to their multiracial background (e.g., rejection, isolation) which stimulate more exploration of the meaning behind these events. This exploration could in turn help individuals integrate a negative life event into their perception of their identity (McLean, 2008). For example, Respondent 130, who exhibited high negative affect and high exploratory processing, describes a moment in her childhood where she was at the beach with her family:

“...my very pale Irish cousins who were my age all got sunburnt. I however, was fine...My one aunt...scolded me for wasting the aloe that they needed...When she pointed out that I was different and shooed me out of the bathroom, I ran back down to the beach and cried. My cousins are still some of my best friends, but feeling like an outsider among the people I was supposed to most belong with made me feel strange and unlovable. Some of those scars remain...”

Respondent 130 recalls a memory filled with pain and confusion, and describes her struggle to understand why she was isolated from her family. It may be that the intense negative emotion that she felt during and after this event compelled Respondent 130 to continue to reflect on its meaning, and its greater significance for her identity.

The process of understanding how life events change and shape identity over time is continuous and never finished (McLean, 2008): for study participants, it may be that high exploration is reflective of the particular identity upheaval that comes with adolescence and emerging adulthood, and that participants have not reached a stable understanding of their

identity in general, let alone their racial identity (Erikson, 1963; Marcia, 1966). This could in turn reflect higher negative affect, as this process may be difficult and confusing. In Respondent 2's narrative, the possible link between high exploration and high negative affect is demonstrated when she discusses how she has grown in understanding her heritage:

“I have worked to familiarize myself with what it means to be black, how I can claim that identity in a way that works for me, as well as my Native American and Asian heritages. The small percentage of me that is white is a more difficult part of my identity for me to accept; I still don't know what to think of it or how to reconcile it with the other parts of me...”

For Respondent 2, pride in claiming a Black identity is still marred by confusion in understanding how (or if) these identities fit together. This state of ambiguity reflects the Moratorium stage of Marcia's (1966) stages of identity development, where one is in the process of exploring the facets of their identity, before committing to a stable identity. This process, for Respondent 2, seems exhausting and complex; it may be that for multiracial individuals, each facet of their racial background must be explored and understood, in addition to understanding how and if these identities coexist.

What is surprising is that neither clarity nor positive ending valence in narratives predicted higher well-being, given that there is previous research to support both of these claims (Baerger & McAdams, 1999; King et al., 2000). This could be for a number of reasons, including the fact that the survey was administered online, therefore there was no interaction between the participants and researchers that could have served to clarify the narrative prompt or encourage participants to answer the prompt carefully. Although similar studies have used online surveys to collect narrative data (e.g., Lilgendahl & Benet-Martinez, 2015) and the data we received was

certainly rich and codable, it is possible that nevertheless, participants did not answer the question as carefully as they otherwise would have. Research also suggests that when other personal characteristics (e.g., gender, disability, cultural difference) play a more salient role in one's life, then race may not be so important for defining one's identity (e.g., Alston, Bell, & Feist-Price, 1996). It is possible that for some of our participants, race was not the most important part of their self-understanding, and therefore writing a narrative about their race was not the best way to gain insight about their identity in general. In the future, the importance of race to identity should be measured and analyzed.

Our findings suggest that despite controlling for narrative qualities that could have suggested more or less healthy styles of approaching multiracialism, participants who highly identified with certain types of identities nonetheless showed differing levels of well-being. In other words, it was the identity categories, not narrative qualities such as clarity and ending valence, which mattered for the well-being of participants. Results indicate that scoring highly in the Singular and Protean Identity categories predicted lower well-being, while the Validated Border Identity category predicted lower negative affect (or higher well-being).

In order to understand better the relationship between Singular Identity and well-being, participant narratives give a sense of why one may elect a Singular Identity, and why this may be associated with lower satisfaction with life. It may be that one feels tension between their racial backgrounds, and therefore is compelled to turn their back on one of their backgrounds.

Respondent 121, who identified as highly Singular, writes:

“[When friends] would tell me a pretty racist joke towards black people, I used to outwardly get offended and tell them my opinions on the matter. That changed when they would then turn the joke to be directly offensive to me by saying “Oh [name], you’re

only half black, so, therefore, you can only be half offended...” I started to believe that I was not ‘100% black and 100% white’ like my dad used to tell me, but rather half of each...Today I identify more with my black side not entirely out of choice, but rather for the conflicting feelings that tend to be negative towards white people and the white power structure that exists in the United States and beyond.”

To understand further the relationship between Singular and lower well-being, we ran a regression analysis using the conflict subscale of the Multiracial Identity Integration scale (Cheng & Lee, 2009), which aims to understand if multiracial individuals feel conflict between their racial backgrounds. While it seems clear that Respondent 121 does feel conflicted, the relationship between Singular Identity and satisfaction with life is still significant even when controlling for conflict. Therefore, feeling conflict between one’s backgrounds does not fully explain why someone with a Singular Identity may be less satisfied with life. There may be something specific about identifying as Singular that leads individuals to feel limited or unsatisfactory understanding of their other racial background(s).

Though there was little consensus in the literature regarding how well-being differed in multiracial adolescents (e.g., well-being may be dependent on how one views their malleable identity; Sanchez et al., 2009), our finding that those with a more Protean Identity showed higher negative affect supports the claim that those who have more inconsistency in their sense of self or a more malleable racial identity may feel more fragmented and have worse psychological outcomes (Sanchez et al., 2009; Rafaeli-Mor & Steinberg, 2002). The current study contributes to this understanding of malleable, Protean Identity by establishing that the relationship to well-being holds, even when controlling for the narrative variables clarity and positive ending valence, which have been associated with higher well-being (e.g., King et al., 2000). We thought

it possible that presence of identity conflict (measured using the MII conflict subscale; Cheng & Lee, 2009) could also partially explain the relationship between Protean Identity and negative affect, because a Protean Identity could suggest more conflict between different racial categories, and thus a feeling that one must move between them. However, results of a multiple regression showed that the relationship between Protean Identity and negative affect stayed significant even when identity conflict was accounted for. Indeed, it may be that there is something specific about having to switch between racial groups that is particularly detrimental to well-being, no matter how proud or reflective one is of their identity.

Finally, it is not surprising that having a Validated Border Identity predicted lower negative affect. As already explained, gaining validation from outside sources is important in gaining self-esteem and feelings of belonging (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). When one feels validated in their choice of identity, then it is likely that this validation will have positive effects independently of how clear, reflective, or positive one is about this identity choice.

Limitations and Future Directions

Limitations of the current study include the selection of the sample. In an effort to understand the multiracial experience as a whole, we elected to embrace diversity within our sample, including individuals of a variety of different racial backgrounds that spanned a wide array of combinations. Despite this diversity, almost half of all participants were of Asian/White descent (44.4%), while there were also sizable numbers of Black/White (12.8%) and Latino/White participants (17.1%). Therefore, our participant pool was heavily skewed towards half White biracial groups, which could have driven the effects we found, or rather, hidden other effects. Numbers for specific racial backgrounds were only high enough to analyze potential within-group differences for half White individuals. We found that there was some significant

difference between how each group identified, such that Black/White participants were more likely to identify as Singular, while Latino/White participants were more likely to identify as Transcendent. This could reflect the difference in how individuals are perceived – for instance, multiple Latino/White participants mentioned guilt at being perceived as White compared to their Latino parent, and therefore being able to navigate social institutions as a White person. For half Black subjects, it may be that the divisive nature of Black/White relations in the United States could compel one to choose a Black identity (as demonstrated above in Respondent 121's narrative). These findings show that there are fundamental differences in the experiences of those of different half White backgrounds, which matter greatly in the development of their identity. Therefore, treating all mixed race participants as a whole, cohesive sample was difficult.

Nevertheless, we believe it is important to understand what multiracial Americans of many backgrounds share in their experiences, as well as what they do not. The rise of unique biracial groups such as the Hapa movement are reshaping racial categorization in fundamental ways by creating solidarity between mixed people. Affinity groups specifically for people of mixed heritage are increasing on college campuses, potentially creating spaces where young people of many types of ancestry can come together and share their common experiences. Research must keep up with these trends, and continue to engage with the simultaneously stagnant and changing racial categorization in America. For this reason, studies in the future should gather larger samples of mixed participants and systematically take into account the distributions of racial backgrounds with the aim of distilling the similarities and differences in the experiences of mixed Americans, regardless of specific heritage.

The vast majority of participants were educated females (75.2%) who came from upper middle class households or higher (only 12.2% came from households with an annual incomes

below \$50,000 a year), rendering our results less generalizable to low income or male populations. Rockquemore and Brunsma (2002) found significant differences in how Black/White biracial individuals of differing income levels identified, and it is imperative that future research analyze the significance of socio-economic wealth in multiracial identity development. In addition, 17 participants indicated growing up outside of the United States (14.5%), which could have affected how they understood the complex system of race in America. There did seem to be differences in how those who grew up outside of the United States viewed their identity compared to those who grew up in the United States – for example, Respondent 53 describes his experience moving from Japan to the United States: “...I realized the racial situation in America is so different from Japan. In America there is racial awareness, and in Japan there really isn’t...I never had a word to describe the unique identity I had in relation to the larger Japanese society.” Since racial relations in the United States are embedded in the social framework of the country, it is important to acknowledge that this unique context is very different from other countries, and by extension, important in understanding how context may affect multiracial identity (Root, 1998). Future studies should be aware of this distinction in selecting participants.

Researchers did not do a systematic analysis of the content of participant narratives, which could have shed light on the specific problems that multiracial individuals may run into in developing their identity. In perusing the narratives, certain common themes emerged: for instance, many participants felt torn between their backgrounds, isolated from others, or feared they possessed a certain privilege for being multiracial (especially if they were part White). Pride seemed to also be a common theme among participant narratives – as Respondent 43 puts it, “I just take pride in the fact that my multi-racial identity allows me to bridge a gap of

understanding...It makes me a more diverse and well-rounded individual.” Particularly common was the mention of appearance – often participants felt discomfort due to the confusion of others surrounding their specific racial backgrounds, if they were white passing, or if they were sexualized because of the way they looked. In the future, studies should go in depth to analyze the themes that are common among multiracial individuals, regardless of racial background. Specifically, it is important to look at the impact of appearance on an individual’s affinity towards or against certain identity categories, and how it may or may not relate to racial context and personality factors, since appearance has been shown to be important for well-being in biracial individuals (AhnAllen, Suyemoto, & Carter, 2006).

While the factors we believed to be contributory to the development of racial identity in multiracial young adults (racial composition of social networks and ego development) were not as significant as we originally expected, this lack of significance acts as a strength because it informs what direction future inquiry should take; research should continue to explore what factors may help to explain why someone chooses or does not choose a specific type of identity. Additionally, more research should be done into the implications of Rockquemore and Brunisma’s (2002) framework on well-being, and in what ways the different categories of identity promote or detract from well-being among multiracial individuals. This would be best addressed longitudinally, given the relative importance of certain times of life in the development of identity (Erikson, 1963; Marcia, 1966), and the experiences that go along with these life stages. Especially due to our interest in childhood context and the age of our participants, this was probably our study’s most significant limitation – we were not able to address how childhood context had affected participants before they left home for college and after, for instance, which could have been significant for their perception of their racial identity (as discussed earlier).

In conclusion, this study was concerned with exploring the ways in which multiracial individuals of diverse backgrounds developed racial identities, and both the internal and external factors that may contribute to this identity. Furthermore, we took a narrative approach to understanding how this identity affected well-being. This study provides some preliminary evidence to suggest that the process of developing a racial identity is reliant on multiple different circumstances, life experiences, and personality traits, and that there are many possible factors that contribute to this understanding of the self. In addition, it suggests that there is a relationship between specific racial identity categories and well-being. The exploratory nature of this study provides future researchers some preliminary findings on which to begin building a greater understanding of multiracial identity – for instance, by looking into other important factors (e.g., concern with appearance) that may help or hinder a person’s identity search, as well as striving to create an intentional, diverse sample of multiracial individuals in order to distill what commonalities multiracial Americans possess as a whole. As we continue to move towards the moment when the majority of Americans will be of mixed race heritage, the urgency with which cultural and psychological research must understand the nuances of multiracial identity and its implications for health grows. This study is only one step towards analyzing and validating the unique experiences of multiracial Americans in empirical research.

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Table 1.

Means, Standard Deviations, Minimums, and Maximums for Main Variables (N=117)

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Singular	2.60	1.32	1	5
Un-validated border	3.96	.90	1	5
Validated border	2.78	1.28	1	5
Protean	3.63	1.17	1	5
Transcendent	1.67	.98	1	5
Racial diversity	2.74	.89	1	5
Racial similarity to self	2.23	.88	1	5
Ego development	5.89	1.07	3	9
Exploratory processing	2.63	1.01	1	4
Ending valence	2.69	1.08	1	5
Clarity vs. confusion	3.39	.96	1	5
SWLS	5.01	1.19	2	7
PANAS-PA	3.39	.71	2	5
PANAS-NA	2.42	.77	1	5
Self-esteem	3.66	.75	2	5
Psychological well- being	4.27	.44	4	5

Table 2.

Correlations between Identity Categories, Childhood Social Networks, and Ego Development Variables

	Childhood Social Networks – Racial Diversity	Childhood Social Networks – Racial Similarity to Self	Ego Development
Singular Identity	-.05	.15	-.20*
Un-validated Border Identity	-.09	.03	-.15
Validated Border Identity	-.02	-.07	.09
Protean Identity	.08	.07	.08
Transcendent Identity	.17	.27**	.004

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Table 3.

Moderated Multiple Regression Analyses for Hypothesis 5

Predictor Variables	Outcome Variables														
	Singular			Un-validated border			Validated border			Protean			Transcendent		
	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	B	SE	β
Ego development	-.28	.14	-.20*	-.19	.10	-.21+	.04	.14	.03	.20	.12	.17	.07	.10	.08
Racial similarity to self	.12	.14	.09	.003	.10	.003	-.12	.14	-.09	.14	.12	.12	.27	.10	.30**
Ego development x racial similarity to self	-.19	.15	-.13	.03	.11	.03	-.15	.15	-.11	.08	.14	.07	.03	.10	.03
Ego development	-.25	.14	-.19+	-.17	.09	-.19+	.05	.14	.04	.14	.12	.12	-.01	.10	-.01
Racial diversity	-.01	.14	-.008	-.04	.09	-.05	-.05	.14	-.04	.07	.12	.06	.15	.10	.16
Ego development x racial diversity	-.16	.15	-.11	-.05	.10	-.05	.02	.14	.01	.06	.13	.05	.05	.11	.05

⁺ $p < .08$ * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Note: Results for regressions for racial similarity in childhood social networks are in the top half of the table, and results for regressions with racial diversity of childhood social networks are in the bottom half of the table.

Table 4.

Identity Categories, Narrative Variables, and Well-being Variables	Variable												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
1. Singular identity													
2. Validated border identity	-.21*												
3. Un-validated border identity	.02	-.13											
4. Protean identity	-.30**	-.15	.18*										
5. Transcendent identity	.006	.05	-.20*	.01									
6. Exploratory processing	-.02	.06	-.05	-.04	-.07								
7. Clarity	-.06	-.01	.06	-.10	-.06	.23*							
8. Ending valence	-.06	.11	.01	.02	.12	.32**	.55**						
9. SWLS	-.26**	.07	-.15	-.06	.00	.01	-.07	.004					
10. PANAS-PA	-.05	-.12	-.08	.04	.02	-.01	.08	.08	.58**				
11. PANAS-NA	-.02	-.28**	.13	.37**	-.20*	.27**	-.07	-.01	-.26**	-.10			
12. Self-esteem	-.02	.04	.06	-.25**	.04	-.14	.06	-.03	.48**	.47**	-.47**		
13. Psychological well-being	-.13	.07	-.07	-.05	.03	-.12	.08	.11	.57**	.63**	-.35**	.65**	

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Table 5.

Multiple Regression Analyses for Hypotheses 6 and 7

<u>Variable</u>	<u>SWLS</u>		<u>PANAS-PA</u>		<u>PANAS-NA</u>		<u>Self-esteem</u>		<u>Psychological well-being</u>						
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β				
Singular	-.27	.10	-.31**	-.04	.06	-.07	-.002	.06	-.003	-.07	.06	-.13	-.08	.05	-.19
Un-validated border	-.08	.15	-.06	-.03	.09	-.03	-.04	.09	-.04	.06	.10	.07	-.01	.07	-.02
Validated border	-.01	.11	-.02	-.07	.07	-.13	-.17	.06	-.29**	-.03	.07	-.05	.004	.05	.01
Protan	-.11	.12	-.11	.01	.08	.02	.17	.07	.25*	-.18	.08	-.27	-.02	.06	-.03
Transcendent	-.14	.14	-.10	-.04	.09	-.09	-.11	.08	-.13	.05	.09	.06	-.01	.07	-.01
Ending valence	.16	.15	.14	.14	.09	.21	.01	.09	.02	.08	.10	.12	.11	.07	.21
Exploratory processing	-.001	.13	-.001	-.05	.08	-.07	.21	.08	.27**	-.12	.09	-.18	-.12	.06	-.21+
Clarity vs. Confusion	-.23	.16	-.18	-.04	.10	-.05	-.11	.09	-.14	-.02	.10	-.03	-.02	.08	-.03

* $p < .07$ ** $p < .05$ *** $p < .01$

Appendix A: Survey Recruitment Advertisement

Do you identify as multiracial? If so, complete our survey and get paid \$20!

We are collecting data for our senior thesis on the identities and experiences of multiracial people. ***By multiracial, we are specifically referring to people whose two biological parents have different racial backgrounds. If this is true of you, and if you between 18 and 25, we are very interested in hearing about you and your life experiences.*** All you have to do is complete our online survey, which will include questions about your background, your life experiences and your personality. All told, it should take about 45 minutes, and then we'll pay you \$20 - no lotteries, just money!

Interested? Click on the link below and you will be brought directly to the survey. At the end of the survey, you will be able to select from a few different options for how you would like to be paid.

https://haverford.col.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_02srpWOxxAUeyax

This study is being conducted by Adela Scharff (ascharff@haverford.edu) and Rebecca Suzuki (rsuzuki@haverford.edu) for their senior thesis at Haverford College. If you have any questions, please contact one of us or our faculty advisor, Jen Lilgendahl (jlilgend@haverford.edu).

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form

Study Title: Variations in Multiracial Identity: A Narrative Approach

Investigators: Adela Scharff (student researcher), Rebecca Suzuki (student researcher) and Jennifer Lilgendahl (faculty advisor, Haverford College)

Purpose and Procedure: The survey is being distributed for a senior thesis project at Haverford College. The purpose of the study is to gain a more in-depth understanding of the different ways that multiracial individuals understand their racial identity, and how variations in multiracial identity relate to personality, social networks, and overall well-being. This survey will include questions about your background (family, demographic factors, upbringing), your personality, and well-being, and it will also include an open-ended question in which you will be asked to write about past experiences that relate to your understanding of yourself as a multiracial person. Questions formats will also include multiple choice, rating scales, and sentence completions. It will take approximately 45 minutes to complete.

Compensation: You will receive \$20 for completing this survey. We will pay you via the method of your choice, as you indicate in your survey.

Benefits/Risks: Participation in this study poses no physical risk to you. You will be asked to reflect on yourself and your life experiences in an in-depth and honest fashion. We do not expect these activities to cause psychological discomfort beyond the normal emotional ups and downs encountered in everyday life. However, if participation in this study causes you emotional discomfort beyond what you perceive to be acceptable, or if you find any aspects of the survey questions to be offensive, you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty. In terms of possible benefits, you may find that you gain self-insight and knowledge about psychological research through your participation in this study.

Confidentiality: The responses you provide through this on-line survey will be maintained in a confidential fashion, on password protected computers that are housed in locked faculty lab spaces. Only members of the research team (faculty, trained staff, and student research assistants) who have approved access for the stated purposes of the research study and who have been trained in the ethical conduct of psychological research will have access to your survey responses. Additionally, personally identifying information that will collect for payment purposes (name, email address, mailing address) will be saved and stored separately from your survey responses and deleted after payment. An arbitrary study identification number will be assigned to you and this will be the only identifier stored with your survey responses for the purpose of data analysis. Data will be reported in the form of summaries about groups, not particular individuals. However, direct quotes from narrative responses will sometimes be used in order to illustrate general points in publications or presentations based on this project. If this happens, all possible identifying information (e.g., names, specific geographical locations) will be changed or removed.

Voluntary Nature of Participation: Your participation in this research project is completely voluntary – you are not required to participate. In addition, you can decline to answer any question you don't want to answer or discontinue your participation at any time without penalty

or any negative consequences.

Contact Information: If you have any questions about this research project or your rights as a research participant, please contact Prof. Jennifer Lilgendahl via email at jlilgend@haverford.edu. You may also address concerns to Prof. Benjamin Le (ble@haverford.edu), chairperson of Haverford College's IRB (a committee with oversight on human subject research).

If you would like to participate in this study and you are **AT LEAST 18 years of age**, please click below next to "I agree". By clicking "I agree", you are acknowledging that you have been informed about this study's purpose, procedures, possible benefits and risks and that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study. By stating that you agree to these terms, you are not waiving any of your legal rights.

I agree

Please indicate below if you would like to receive a copy of this informed consent form along with your \$20.

Yes, I would like to receive a copy of this informed consent form in campus mail.

Appendix C: General Survey Instructions

Thank you for agreeing to participate in our study on multiracial identity! This questionnaire contains several sections and a variety of different kinds of questions. *Please read the instructions for each section carefully and answer as thoroughly and honestly as possible.* Please remember that your answers will be kept confidential, separate from identifying information, and only used for research purposes. After you complete each page, click on the button at the bottom that will advance you to the next page. There will be a bar at the top of the survey that will indicate your progress. At the end of the survey, you will be brought to a separate to provide information that will allow us to pay you \$20 for your participation.

Appendix D: Demographics

1. What is your race? (Select ALL that apply)
 - a. Caucasian/White
 - b. Black/African American
 - c. American Indian/Alaska Native
 - d. Asian/Asian American/Pacific Islander
 - e. Latino/Latina
 - f. Other _____
2. What is the race of your biological father? (Select ALL that apply)
 - a. Caucasian/White
 - b. Black/African American
 - c. American Indian/Alaska Native
 - d. Asian/Asian American/Pacific Islander
 - e. Latino/Latina
 - f. Other _____
3. What is the race of your biological mother? (Select ALL that apply)
 - a. Caucasian/White
 - b. Black/African American
 - c. American Indian/Alaska Native
 - d. Asian/Asian American/Pacific Islander
 - e. Latino/Latina
 - f. Other _____
4. What is your age? _____
5. What is your gender?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
 - c. Other
6. Were you born in the United States?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - i. If no, how many years have you been in the United States?
7. Were you raised in the United States?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
8. For 2015, please estimate your family's household income (select one category).
 - a. Less than \$10,000
 - b. \$10,001 - \$30,000
 - c. \$30,001 - \$50,000
 - d. \$50,001 - \$70,000
 - e. \$70,001 - \$90,000
 - f. \$90,001 - \$120,000
 - g. \$120,001 - \$150,000
 - h. \$150,001 - \$200,000
 - i. More than \$200,000
9. What is the highest level of education your mother has received?
 - a. Less than high school

- b. High school graduate, general equivalency diploma, or vocational training instead of high school
 - c. Some college or vocational training after high school
 - d. 2 year degree
 - e. 4 year degree
 - f. Master's degree or equivalent
 - g. PhD, JD, MD, or equivalent
10. What is the highest level of education your mother has received?
- a. Less than high school
 - b. High school graduate, general equivalency diploma, or vocational training instead of high school
 - c. Some college or vocational training after high school
 - d. 2 year degree
 - e. 4 year degree
 - f. Master's degree or equivalent
 - g. PhD, JD, MD, or equivalent
11. Where are you from?
- a. Northeast region of the United States
 - b. Southeast region of the United States
 - c. Midwestern/plains region of the United States
 - d. South-central/southwest region of the United States
 - e. Mountain region of the United States
 - f. Northwest region of the United States
 - g. West coast region of the United States
 - h. From outside of the United States
12. Which kind of environment best describes where your family home is located?
- a. Rural
 - b. Urban
 - c. Suburban
 - d. Other _____
13. What type of high school did you attend?
- a. Private high school - boarding school
 - b. Private high school - lived at home
 - c. Public high school
 - d. Home-schooled for high school
 - e. More than one type of school - please explain _____
 - f. Other - please explain _____
14. Please select which one of the following best described you and your family with respect to college education:
- a. I am the first person in my immediate family (parents, siblings) to attend a four-year college, and no one else from previous generations (grandparents, great-grandparents, etc.) has.
 - b. I have an older sibling (or siblings) who has attended a four-year college, but neither of my parents and no one else from previous generation (grandparents, great-grandparents, etc.) have either.
 - c. Neither of my parents attended a four-year college, but at least one person in a

previous generation (grandparent, great-grandparent, etc.) did.

- d. One of my parents attended a four-year college and the other did not.
- e. Both of my parents attended a four-year college.

Appendix E: Survey of Multiracial Experience (adapted from Rockquemore & Brunnsma, 2002)

How do you view yourself as a multiracial person?

Please rate each of the following statements on the extent to which it describes how you identify as a multiracial individual (1=*strongly disagree*; 5=*strongly agree*). *Note: Each participant was provided with enough spaces to account for all possible race combinations; Race 1 and Race 2 are used here as placeholders for whatever races the participants chose. A Race 3 and Race 4 appeared when necessary.*

1. I consider myself exclusively Race 1.
2. I consider myself exclusively Race 2.
3. I consider myself sometimes Race 1, sometimes Race 2, and sometimes multiracial depending on the circumstances.
4. I consider myself multiracial, but I experience the world as Race 1.
5. I consider myself multiracial, but I experience the world as Race 2.
6. I consider myself exclusively multiracial and not any other race specifically.
7. Race is meaningless, I don't believe in racial identities.
8. Other – please specify: _____

Appendix F: Additional Multiracial Identity Scales

Multiracial Identity Integration (Cheng & Lee, 2009)

Instructions: Please rate the following items on the extent to which you agree that it describes your multiracial identity (1=*Totally disagree*; 3=*Neither agree nor disagree*; 5=*Totally agree*).

1. My racial identity is best described by a blend of all the racial groups to which I belong.
2. I keep everything about my racial identities separate.
3. I am a person with a multiracial identity.
4. In any given context, I am best described by a single racial identity.
5. I am conflicted between my different racial identities.
6. I feel like someone moving between the different racial identities.
7. I do not feel any tension between my racial identities.

Malleable Racial Identification (Sanchez, Shih, & Garcia, 2009)

Instructions: Please rate the following items on the extent to which you agree that it described you multiracial identity (1=*Totally disagree*; 3=*Neither agree nor disagree*; 5=*Totally agree*).

1. In different situations, I will identify more closely with one of my racial identities than another.
2. I often identify more with one racial identity than another depending on the race of the person I am with.
3. Depending on the activity, I feel closer to one racial identity than another.
4. I feel that I adapt to the situation at hand by identifying as one racial identity or another.
5. One racial identity can be more important than another in the moment depending on the race of the people I am with.

Appendix G: Washington University Sentence Completion Test (Hy & Loevinger, 1996)

Instructions: Complete the following sentences.

1. When a child will not join in group activities
2. Raising a family
3. When I am criticized
4. A man's job
5. Being with other people
6. The thing I like about myself is
7. My mother and I
8. What gets me into trouble is
9. Education
10. When people are helpless
11. Women are lucky because
12. A good father
13. A girl has a right to
14. When they talked about sex, I
15. A wife should
16. I feel sorry
17. A man feels good when
18. Rules are

Appendix H: Narrative Prompt

How have past experiences shaped your multiracial identity?

We are interested in hearing about memories of experiences that in some way have affected your sense of multiracial identity. Think of a specific time that you became aware of how your race was categorized or perceived by others. This could be the way you were perceived by a stranger, an acquaintance, a friend, or a family member. The important thing is that the memory relates to your recognition of the way your race is viewed by other people and how similar or different this is from the way you view yourself. Please provide a detailed account of this memory, including what happened, who was involved, what your thoughts and feelings were during the event, and why it was significant to you. In addition, please comment on the long-term impact of the event (if any) on your sense of who you are and what this event means to you today.

Appendix I: Racial Composition of Childhood Social Networks

Instructions: For each of the environments listed, please rate it on the following two dimensions:

This environment consisted of... (1=*No racial diversity*; 5=*Extreme racial diversity*)

Compared to me, this environment consisted of... (1=*No people racially similar to me*; 5=*(Almost) all people racially similar to me*)

1. Household growing up
2. Elementary school (student body)
3. Closest friends in elementary school
4. Junior high school/middle school (student body)
5. Closest friends in junior high school/middle school
6. High school (student body)
7. Closest friends in high school
8. Neighborhood while growing up
9. Church or place of worship usually attended before college

Appendix J: Well-being Scales

Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985)

Instructions: Below are five statements that you may agree or disagree with. Using the scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by selecting the appropriate level of agreement. Please be open and honest in your responding (1=*strongly disagree*; 2=*disagree*; 3=*slightly disagree*; 4=*neither agree nor disagree*; 5=*slightly agree*; 6=*agree*; 7=*strongly agree*).

1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.
2. The conditions of my life are excellent.
3. I am satisfied with my life.
4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.
5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988)

Instructions: Rate the extent to which you have felt the following emotional states over the past two weeks using the scale provided (1=*Very slightly or not at all*; 2=*A little*; 3=*Moderately*; 4=*Quite a bit*; 5=*Extremely*)

Positive Affect:

1. interested
2. excited
3. strong
4. enthusiastic
5. proud
6. alert
7. inspired
8. determined
9. attentive
10. active

Negative Affect:

1. distressed
2. upset
3. guilty
4. scared
5. hostile
6. irritable
7. ashamed
8. nervous

9. jittery
10. afraid

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE; Rosenberg, 1965)

Instructions: Rate the following items using the following scale:

1 = *Disagree strongly*; 2 = *Disagree*; 3 = *Neither agree nor disagree*; 4 = *Agree*; 5 = *Agree strongly*

1. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others.
2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.
7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.
9. I certainly feel useless at times.
10. At times I think I am no good at all.

Psychological Well-Being Scale (Ryff, 1989)

Instructions: The following set of questions deals with how you feel about yourself and your life. Please remember that there are no right or wrong answers. Choose the number from the following scale that best describes your present agreement or disagreement with each statement.

1=*Strongly disagree*; 2=*Disagree somewhat*; 3=*Disagree slightly*; 4=*Agree slightly*; 5=*Agree somewhat*; 6=*Strongly agree*

1. In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live.
2. I am not interested in activities that will expand my horizons.
3. When I look at the story of my life, I am pleased with how things have turned out so far.
4. Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me.
5. I am not afraid to voice my opinions, even when they are in opposition to the opinions of most people.
6. The demands of everyday life often get me down.
7. I live life one day at a time and I don't really think about the future.
8. In general, I feel confident and positive about myself.
9. I am quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life.
10. I have a sense of direction and purpose in life.
11. I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and about the world.
12. I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions.

13. In many ways, I feel disappointed about my achievements in life.
14. People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others.
15. I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus.
16. I have not experienced many warm and trusting relationships with others.
17. I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the values of what others think is important.
18. For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth.

Appendix K: Debriefing

Thank you very much for completing our survey! We greatly appreciate your efforts. Given the importance of race in our society and the potential for multiracial individuals to view their racial identities in a variety of different ways, we were interested in understanding variations in multiracial identity and how these variations relate to a number of different factors, including the amount of complexity a person uses when looking at the world and also the racial composition of people's social settings growing up (family, school, neighborhood, etc.). We also hypothesized that the type of identity a person chooses (e.g., multiracial vs. a singular racial identity) will not be related to well-being; no identity label is inherently "better" than any other. Rather, what will matter for well-being, according to our hypothesis, is the type of story a person tells about past experiences pertaining to race. Specifically, we hypothesize that especially for those for whom race is central to identity, sharing a narrative about multiracial identity that ends positively and communicates personal agency (as opposed to imposition of identity labels by others) will be related to higher levels of psychological well-being.

Please click on the red advance button below in order to be taken to a separate page to enter your information to receive your \$20 payment.

In order to be paid your \$20, we need to know how you would like to be paid. First, tell us whether or not you are current Haverford College student, and then we will give you your options:

Are you a current Haverford College student?

1. Yes
2. No

If Yes, following options appeared:

1. \$20 in campus through campus mail (if selected, opportunity enter name followed)
2. \$20 via PayPal (you must have a PayPal account) (if selected, opportunity to enter email address followed)

If No, following options appeared:

1. Check for \$20 sent via regular mail (if selected, opportunity to enter name, mailing address, and email address followed)
2. \$20 via PayPal (you must have a PayPal account) (if selected, opportunity to enter email address followed)

Finally, If you have any questions about this research project or comments you would like to share, please do not hesitate to contact Prof. Jennifer Lilgendahl via email at jlilgend@haverford.edu. You may also address concerns to Prof. Benjamin Le

(ble@haverford.edu), chairperson of Haverford College's IRB (a committee with oversight on human subject research).