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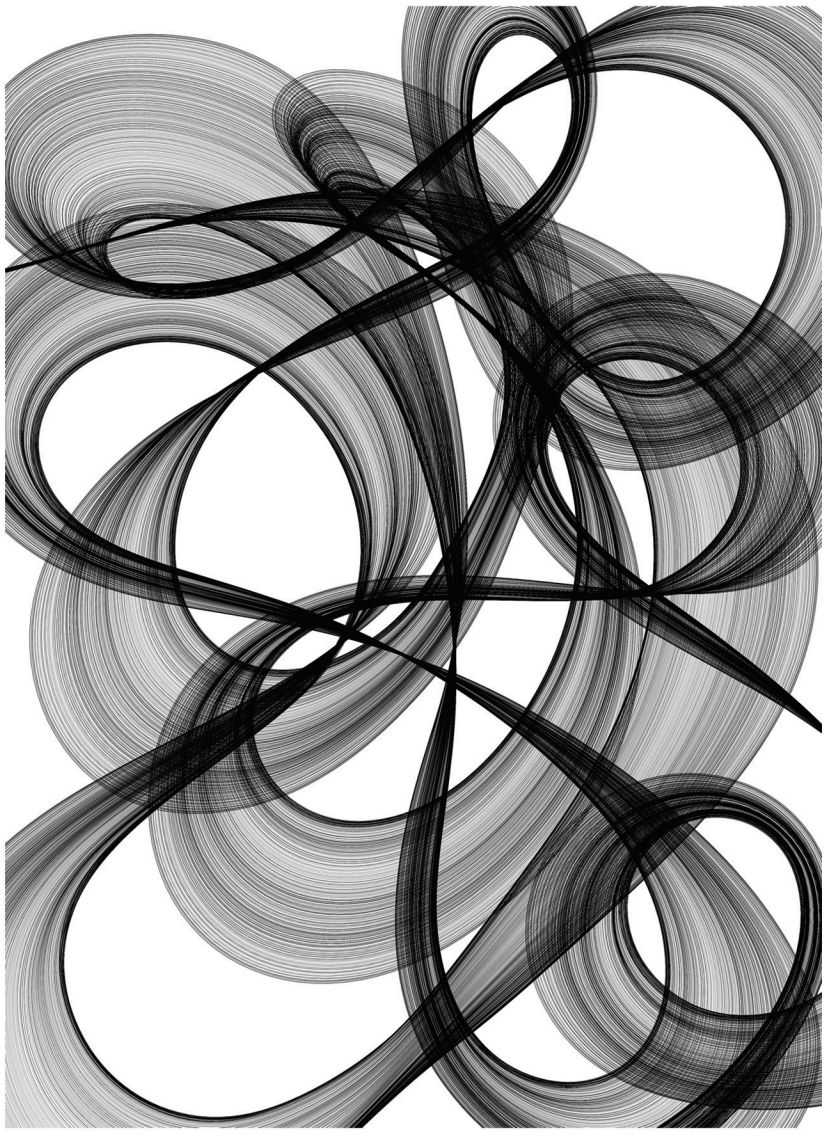

"IS THAT YOUR MOM?"

Voices of Cross Racially Raised Adults of the African Diaspora

Cyndy R. Snyder

“Is That Your Mom?”

Voices of Cross Racially Raised Adults of the African Diaspora

A Volume in
Contemporary Perspectives in Race and Ethnic Relations

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by

Cyndy R. Snyder
University of Washington, School of Medicine
Department of Family Medicine, Seattle, WA

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CHAPTER 1

LEARNING TO BE CROSS RACIALLY RAISED IN A RACIST WORLD

In 2008, the United States elected the first Black president—Barack Obama. While President Obama was raised in a racially complex, multiracial, and multicultural family context, his racial identity is often placed upon him by others. Though he is the highest ranking official in the country, President Obama is not exempt from racial slurs, exclusion, and criticism from White- and Black-identified communities. Indeed, his fellow politicians and aspiring presidents have questioned his racial allegiances, identity, and legitimacy, as attested by the comments below.

> *"He's an 'African' American. He was, you know, raised white…. So, for him to, you know, claim that, you know, he identifies with the experience of black Americans, I think, is a bit of a stretch."*
>
> —Ben Carson[1]

> *"I mean, you got the first mainstream African-American who is articulate and bright and clean and a nice-looking guy:"*
>
> —Joe Biden[2]

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These comments, the first from a 2016 presidential candidate and the second from a 2008 presidential candidate who, ironically, became President Obama's vice president, represent a few examples of the multifaceted, racialized judgments faced by multiracial Black people on a regular basis. The judgments highlight the complexity of how race is viewed in the United States; while President Obama is commonly referred to as the first Black president, his Blackness is also regularly questioned. Regardless of how he grew up and identifies now, President Obama has been challenged continually as not Black enough (as seen by the above examples dismissing him as "African" or praising his surprising articulateness) or has had his multiracial heritage (as in the first Black president) fully denied.

President Obama represents the racial realities that I personally live. I am a multiracial Black woman raised by my White maternal grandparents, whom I have referred to as "mom and dad" for as long as I can remember. While I was raised by two White maternal grandparents, I identify first as a Black woman. My identity and ability to navigate race and racism have been an ongoing, nebulous, and sometimes affirming process. Being raised in a White family did not shield me from the many faces of racism. Even today, I encounter slights from dear friends—Black and White—who refer to multiracial Black folks as "not real Blacks." Even today, I contend with White family members who question the reasoning behind my Black identity and proclaim that they "don't see me as Black" or remind me that I am "also White." Even today, I am asked, "Is that your mom?" when I walk arm and arm with my elderly (White) mother through the halls of the rural Central Washington nursing home where she resides.

However, neither my experiences nor those of President Obama are unique. Many Black people grow up in predominantly White environments, and because of the specifics of how we are raised, our racial heritage(s), the languages we speak, the schools we attend, and how we identify, we are often dismissed for not being "Black enough." Many people think and might even say, dismissively, that we talk and act White. Occasionally, the claim that we talk and act White is framed as an underhanded compliment, as Vice President Biden's comment about the articulateness of President Obama reflects. We are labeled as an "Oreo," "Coconut," or "Banana," and often considered to be "brown on the outside, White on the inside." While this dismissal extends to monoracial Black people (usually those who attended White schools or grew up in White communities), this dismissal is particularly salient for cross-racially raised multiracial and/or transracially adopted people. Indeed, this book ultimately argues that this dismissal of being insufficiently racial becomes a fundamental aspect of our identities.

Our experiences reflect centuries of debate about the appropriateness of White parents raising children of color and the "troubles" of interracial relationships (that, for most of my grandparents' lives, were illegal). Can

White parents raise Black children to be well-adjusted people of color? Will Black children languish in foster care if White parents are not allowed to adopt us? How are Black children impacted by repeatedly being asked throughout our schooling and adult years, "Is that your mom?" How do multiracial Black and Asian children navigate racialized experiences and spaces when told we "act White" by our peers? These questions have fueled controversies about cross-racial families in the United States (Banks, 1998; Barth, 1997; Bartholet, 1999; Kennedy & Moseley-Braun, 1995; Lovett-Tisdale & Purnell, 1996; National Association of Black Social Workers [NABSW], 1992; Perry, 1994; Raible, 1990; Taylor & Thornton, 1996). These racial debates have been thrust into mainstream conversations due to the vast attention given to high profile celebrity cases of White people raising children of color, such as Angelina Jolie, Tom Cruise, Madonna, Sandra Bullock, and Charlize Theron to name just a few, and the stereotypical comments of Dr. Carson challenging President Obama's racial legitimacy.

Who Is Cross Racially Raised?

Developing a terminology to describe the experiences of those raised by parents or guardians of a different racial background, either by birth or adoption, is a difficult task. First, many circumstances may lead to this situation, such as being adopted by White parents, being multiracial and raised by a White single birth mother, or being adopted by an interracial couple. Additionally, being of multiracial background blurs what is meant by same race and transracial adoptive families.

Traditionally, transracial adoptive families are thought to occur when parents (two White or one single White) adopt a child of a different race (e.g., Black), but what does it mean when this monoracial White couple adopts a multiracial "part-White" child? Is that still "transracial?" Similarly, who is the "same race" parent of an interracial couple who raised (by birth or adoption) a multiracial child? Or what about someone who was "passed" off by the adoption agency as White only to discover they are also "part-Black" after finding their birth parent(s)? These perplexing questions have led me to employ the term "Cross Racially Raised" to describe the multidimensionality of such experiences and circumstances. Cross Racially Raised describes individuals who grew up in contexts that "contradict monocentric race and kinship norms—that all family members and individuals embody a single racial-ethnic identity and cultural heritage" (Samuels, 2009, p. 82).

Why Both Interracial Birth Families and Transracial Adoptive Families?

While many multiracial individuals are raised by at least one birth parent, some enter the child welfare system. A significant reason multiracial Black children end up in the child welfare system is intrafamilial racism; White mothers feel pressure from family members to surrender their children because of their Black heritage (Folaron & Hess, 1993; Miranda, 2002; Patton, 2000). Ironically, many of these children are adopted by White families, a practice generally referred to as "transracial adoption."

Transracial adoption is generally defined as when an adopted child's race or ethnicity is different from that of the adoptive parents or parent in the case of single parents. The cases most often discussed or researched focus on White families adopting children of color; little discussion, data, or research exists on the prevalence of families of color adopting White children. While no exact statistic exists for the number of Black children being raised transracially in the United States, according to the 2010 Census, 78% of adoptive households were White while 15% of transracially adopted children were monoracial Black and 10% were multiracial Black/White (Kreider & Lofquist, 2014). Historically, a larger proportion of Black transracially adopted children are multiracial Black and White (Samuels, 2009). The high number of multiracial Black children adopted by White families can be attributed partially to historical practices by child welfare agencies; these agencies have attempted to circumvent traditional social norms ascribing Black identities based on the one-drop rule in an effort to appeal to the increasing number of White adopters seeking a limited number of healthy White babies. As a result, multiracial Black children have been more likely than monoracial Black children to be adopted by White families (McRoy & Zurcher, 1983), and White parents have been likely to indicate a preference for a multiracial Black child over a monoracial Black child (McRoy & Grape, 1999). These preferences were often predicated on adoptive parents' beliefs that they would feel more legitimately or biologically tied to a child with whom they share some racial background and that a racially mixed child would be less visibly "different" to relatives, neighbors, and friends (McRoy & Grape, 1999; McRoy & Zurcher, 1983; Steinberg & Hall, 2000).

Sometimes, it is assumed that multiracial Black people raised in their birth families experience life differently than those adopted into White families (Brown, 1995). However, the stigma associated with being a person of color in a society where racism toward Black people and other minorities continues affects both populations. The question is, "How do their parents or guardians prepare them to deal with such racism?"

Racism and Cross Racial Families

While the face of racism may have changed over the decades from a more overt form to a more complex, covert, or "color-blind" form (Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Dovidio, Gaertner, Kawakami, & Hodson, 2002; Pierce, 1974), the effects of racism are very real and observable in disproportionate rates from any social statistic imaginable. Often, the less obvious signs are even more troubling, including negative mental health concerns such as low self-esteem, depression, stress, and hopelessness, poor academic performance, anxiety, and risky behavior (Gaylor-Harden & Cunningham, 2009; Seaton, Caldwell, Sellers, & Jackson, 2008; Steele, 1997; Williams, Neighbors, & Jackson, 2003).

Families that cross racial lines are often lauded as evidence of the waning significance of race; our mere existence is used to symbolize that increased racial integration has decreased racism. In reality, the complicated experiences of people who grow up in cross-racial families illuminate how racism still exists based on presumed monoracial characteristics. Our existence —intimately tied to racism—if nothing else, suggests that racism is alive and well, and infinitely more complicated than our collective mainstream dichotomous understanding might suggest.

Despite being raised in racially complex families, we still must learn to navigate what being a person of color in a color-conscious, racially charged world means. We must learn to navigate a world where Black and brown bodies are subjugated to unequal treatment and unequal opportunities throughout many areas of our lives. We must learn to navigate a world where Black and brown bodies experience violence and death at higher rates than White people. We must learn to navigate a world in which no matter how much money we have, how educated we are, or whether we were raised by White folks, we are considered suspects at risk, less likely to succeed, either too Black (or Brown) or too White, and often both at the same time.

To combat the negative effects of racism, scholars have argued that people of color need to be taught about race and racism in order to develop a positive sense of self-identity and strategies to cope with racism (García-Coll et al., 1996; Pierce, 1974; Spencer, 1995; Stevenson, 1994a, 2014; Thornton, Chatters, Taylor, & Allen, 1990). Thus, providing the full, complicated, multiracial, transracially adopted spectrum people of color with the tools to cope adaptively with racism can potentially alleviate some of the negative implications associated with experiencing racism in various facets of life. Yet, for those raised in families that contradict monoracial assumptions of family, like President Obama, those who share their experiences in this book and me, these processes can be much more complicated.

Is That Your Mom? explores the complex racialized experiences of Cross Racially Raised, multiracial people of the African Diaspora, particularly the relationships between our parents' or guardians' approaches to socializing us to race and racism and our strategies for coping with racially charged incidents and environments along varying developmental stages.

UNDERSTANDING RACE AND RACISM IN A MULTIRACIAL U.S. CONTEXT

Given the complexities of race, defining and conceptualizing race and racism are no easy tasks. Both are multifaceted, complicated, and often contested constructs. Early notions of race focused on the concept as a biological phenomenon based on skin color and presumed differences in mental and physical abilities, which held that race was objective and fixed (Omi & Winant, 1994). More contemporary, generally accepted theories assert that race is socially constructed, meaning racial groups do not reflect discrete biological categories, but rather are social and political divisions based on superficial physical features created for the purposes of economic and political gain (Omi & Winant, 1994). Race becomes real when used to ascribe people to certain categories to determine inclusion or exclusion and maintain the status quo. According to Omi and Winant (1994), race is "a concept which signifies and symbolizes social conflicts and interest by referring to different types of human bodies" (p. 55). Historically, in the United States, those raced as "White" have been the privileged group and believed to be superior to other racial groups (Bell, 1992; Bonilla-Silva, 2001, 2003; Mills, 1999; Tatum, 1997).

Initially, race was imposed on people, but not necessarily personally claimed. However, people also have found cohesion and solidarity in the concept of race. Guinier and Torres (2002) outline a concept of political race in which people who have been "raced," in this case as Black, begin to understand their fate as linked to others who are also "raced." As Guinier and Torres note:

> They (people who are raced) see what happens to one happens to many others, if not to most others, who are similarly situated. Race becomes political in the sense of generating collective action only when it motivates people to connect their individual experience to the experiences of others and then to act collectively in response to those experiences. (p. 17)

Within the concept of political race, individuals can have many different types of individual racial identities yet recognize that the racial labels others ascribe to them hold implications for their well-being and life opportunities, as they do for others similarly "raced."

Race and Multiraciality

Previous (and to an extent current) notions of race uphold monoracial assumptions about race that rely on separate, unmixed racial populations in which each group can only be viewed as distinct populations. Membership in a specific racial category, specifically if that category is "Black," has been used to the exclusion of membership in another category.

For multiracial people of African descent, notions of race are rooted in histories of slavery, segregation, and hypodescent. Historically, multiracial children who were Black and White were often the product of violent, power-laden relationships between White slave owners and enslaved Black women, posing a threat to the racial hierarchy and practice of slavery (Daniel, 1996). To maintain the color-line and restrict access to White kinship, a 1662 Virginia statute legislated that slavery status follow the maternal bloodline (Higginbotham & Kopytoff, 1989; Khanna, 2010; Okizaki, 2000; Zack, 1993). This legislation gave way to the principle of hypo-descent, often referred to as the "one drop rule," which was based on the premise that any "drop" of Black blood contaminated pure White blood and resulted in the person being identified or labeled as Black (Brown, 2001; Graves, 2004). While the "one drop rule" was not legislated in all states, many states followed it by custom. In addition to maintaining the racial hierarchy and beliefs of White superiority, the enforcement of the principle of hypodescent provided an economic asset to White slave owners in that their mixed-race children remained slaves and could be used as additional labor (Khanna, 2010; Okizaki, 2000; Zack, 1993).

While laws prohibiting the coupling of individuals of different races persisted for several decades, these anti-miscegenation laws did not eradicate interracial couplings. Perhaps the most well-known historically significant event regarding interracial families was the 1967 *Loving v. the State of Virginia* court decision (*Loving v. Virginia*, 1967), which made such laws unconstitutional and led to a rise in interracial relationships, increasing the population of multiracial children (Jackson, 2009; Root, 1996; Spickard, 1989). The 2000 U.S. Census was the first one to allow individuals to indicate more than one race or ethnicity officially. Currently, individuals identifying with two or more racial/ethnic groups are one of the fastest growing groups in the United States with 9 million people reporting mixed racial/ethnic status in the 2010 census (Humes, Jones, & Ramirez, 2011). Of those, 3 million, or one third, reported their race as Black in combination with another race.

To challenge biological, essentialist, and monoracial notions of race as fixed, discernable, and categorizable, this book employs Knaus's (2006) definition of race as "*an overly simplistic social construction used to classify people based on presumed cultural characteristics*" (p. 53). The terms "Black"

and "African Diaspora" are used in this book as inclusive terms, which encompass individuals of African, Black, Afro Caribbean, and West Indian descent, to describe individuals who have been "raced" similarly and share a linked fate as described by Guinier and Torres (2003). The terms "monoracial" and "multiracial" used in this work are purely sociological and have no biological meaning. "Monoracial" refers individuals who claim a single race status and have parents who claim a single racial status as Black, but whose ancestors may be of a different race or ethnic group. Conversely, the term "multiracial" refers to individuals who have one parent who claims one racial status and another parent who claims a different racial status. Specifically, the term "multiracial Black" describes individuals who have one parent who claims a single race status as Black, and one who does not.

Defining Racism

Although many people generally accept that race is a social construct, racism still holds significant implications for those ascribed to specific racial categories (Bonilla-Silva, 2003). Some explain racism as an overt or covert act by individuals based on beliefs and values that deem other individuals of certain racial backgrounds as inferior (Dovidio, 2001; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Other perspectives focus on racism as a broader phenomenon that serves to maintain social and economic hierarchies, shaping social structures and institutions (Mills, 1999). These perspectives on racism do not oppose each other, but rather complement each other.

Jones (2002) defines racism as

> a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on phenotype ("race"), that: unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities, unfairly advantages other individuals and communities, [and] undermines realization of the full potential of the whole society through the waste of human resources. (p. 10)

Jones' work provides a useful framework for understanding how racism operates at three levels: personally-mediated, institutional, and internalized. At the personally mediated or individual level, racism includes overt or covert assumptions and acts, such as prejudice and discrimination, based upon the assumed abilities, motives, and intent of people and groups based on race. At the institutional level, racism restricts access to goods, services, and opportunities to certain racial groups, for example, restricting housing access and providing unequal educational facilities and opportunities to children of color. An important component of Jones' racism framework is that it incorporates the concept of internalized racism, which manifests as

"acceptance by members of the stigmatized 'races' of negative messages about our own abilities and intrinsic worth" (p. 11).

The absence or presence of one form of racism does not necessitate the absence or presence of the other. For example, Essed (1990) argues that daily experiences with racism faced by Black people can include overt acts experienced by individuals as well as covert and elusive acts that may not be apparent to individuals. Thus, Essed concludes that racism does not need to be perceived to exist. Moreover, the relationship between the structural, institutional, and individual aspects is mutually constitutive—the structural components influence individual ideology and behavior, which further influences structures and how people of color view themselves (internalization), serving to maintain the cycle of racism in society. Such continual encounters with the multiple levels and forms of racism can take a toll on a person of color's overall well-being.

The Toll of Racism on People of the African Diaspora

Given that racism is a commonplace occurrence for people who have been "raced" Black, it is important to understand the psychological toll racism has on the everyday lives of people of color; these tolls cut across gender and class divisions (Feagin & Sikes, 1994). Pierce (1970, 1974) describes the everyday, often subtle racism faced by people of color as *racial microaggressions*. Building upon Pierce's work, Pérez Huber and Solórzano (2014) employ a description of racial microaggressions that centers the lived experiences of people of color. As Perez Huber and Solórzano assert:

> racial microaggressions are a form of systemic, everyday racism used to keep those at the racial margins in their place. They are: (1) verbal and nonverbal assaults directed toward People of Color, often carried out in subtle, automatic or unconscious forms; (2) layered assaults, based on race and its intersections with gender, class, sexuality, language, immigration status, phenotype, accent, or surname; and (3) cumulative assaults that take a psychological, physiological, and academic toll on People of Color. (p. 2)

This explanation contextualizes racial microaggressions within a larger framework of macroaggressions and institutional racism; additionally, it illustrates how such contexts perpetuate the more subtle, everyday racism.

The model consists of three layers. The outermost layer includes macroaggressions, which are "the set of beliefs and/or ideologies that justify actual or potential social arrangements that legitimate the interests and/or positions of a dominant group over non-dominant groups, that in turn lead to related structures and acts of subordination" (Perez Huber & Solórzano, 2014, p. 7). Institutional racism encompasses the next layer, which includes

the policies, practices, and processes that subordinate and exclude people of color. Finally, at the center of the model are racial microaggressions, which are "the everyday reflections of larger racist structures and ideological beliefs that impact People of Color's lives" (Perez Huber & Solórzano, 2014, p. 6). Indeed, there is a growing amount of research and scholarship on racial microaggressions; studies have well documented reports of psychological distress by people of color reporting experiences of racial microaggressions (Wong, Derthick, David, Saw, & Okazak, 2014). The stress associated with experiencing a lifetime of racial microaggressions in various forms can have substantial psychological and physiological implications on individuals of color.

Stevenson (2014) describes these stressful encounters as *racial encounter stress* that "tax individual self-regulation of emotions, physiology, cognitions, and voice" (p. 29). The stress occurs not only during the racial encounter but may begin upon anticipation of the encounter and last well after the encounter has occurred. Moreover, such stress can result from a vicarious interaction; simply observing racial microaggressions or other forms of overt racism may lead to stress for people of color. For example, the numerous acts of violence against and killing of Black people can result in racial encounter stress among the larger community of people of color who may or may not have directly experienced such overt racism and violence themselves. Whether experienced directly or vicariously, such racial encounter stress can be debilitating to one's cognitive, verbal, and physical abilities (Carter, 2007; Stevenson, 2014).

Building on the concepts of racial microaggressions and racial encounter stress, Smith, Allen, and Danley (2007) employ the term *Racial Battle Fatigue (RBF)* to describe how racial microaggressions and racial encounter stress impact the well-being of people of color, particularly African Americans. They define RBF as "the result of constant physiological, psychological, cultural, and emotional coping with racial microaggressions in less-than-ideal and racially hostile or unsupportive environments" (p. 555). In short, the result of racial encounter stress can result in racial battle fatigue, which manifests psychologically and physiologically. At the psychological level, RBF leads to frustration, shock, anger, disappointment, resentment, anxiety, helplessness, hopelessness, and fear. Furthermore, racial battle fatigue can affect one's physiological well-being in the forms of headaches, sleeplessness, elevated heartbeat, stomach aches, and fatigue, among other symptoms (Smith, Hung, & Franklin, 2011; Soto, Dawson-Andoha, & BeLue, 2011). Supporting the theory of RBF, Soto and colleagues (2011) found that experiences of race-based discrimination predicted generalized anxiety disorder or GAD, which closely mirrors RBF, among African Americans.

Researchers have well documented the implications of racism on students' psychosocial and academic development (Neblett, Philip, Cogburn, & Sellers, 2006; Steele, 1997; Stevenson, 2014; Tatum, 1997; Spencer, 1995). Steele's (1997) well-known work on *stereotype threat* illustrates the anxiety associated with navigating racism and the internalization of racial stereotypes, which can lead to poor academic performance. Stereotype threat is "the social-psychological threat that arises when one is in a situation or doing something for which a negative stereotype about one's group applies" (p. 614). Steele argues that stereotype threat—the fear of conforming to a negative stereotype about one's group—can diminish one's academic performance, particularly for high achieving students. In one of the seminal studies on stereotype threat, Steele and Aronson (1995) discovered that when African Americans were asked to record their race on a test, making race and stereotypes more salient, they performed more poorly than situations in which race was not primed. Furthermore, stereotype threat conditions also elicit a physiological response. For example, Blascovich and colleagues (2001) found that African Americans experiencing stereotype threat exhibited high arterial blood pressure and poorer test performance. Together, stereotype threat and racial battle fatigue can have detrimental impacts on various facets of people's lives across their lifespan.

However, research also suggests that coping strategies to manage this stress can mitigate some negative outcomes of race-based stress (Carter, 2007; Clark, Anderson, Clark, & Williams, 1999; Seaton, Upon, Gilbert, & Volpe, 2014; Smith et al., 2007; Spencer, 1995; Stevenson, 2014). Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional model of coping and stress situates coping as a person-situation interaction whereby individuals engage in a process of "constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of a person" (p. 141). The first part of this process entails determining the level of threat the situation or context presents (primary appraisal); the second part entails assessing the resources one has to deal with the threat (secondary appraisal). Coping efforts, then, are the actual strategies used to mediate threat appraisals.

Racism is a stressor that, like other stressors, can lead to negative health and wellbeing (Clark et al., 1999; Paradies, 2006; Williams & Mohammed, 2009). The strategies utilized to cope with racism are thought to influence the impact of racism on personal well-being (Carter, 2007; Clark et al, 1999; Seaton et al., 2014; Smith, Allen, & Danley, 2007). Certain strategies, however, are more promising in mitigating the negative impact of stress associated with racism. Adaptive coping strategies, such as seeking social supports, are suggested to mitigate the symptoms of RBF and lead to more positive outcomes (self-efficacy, positive identity) while maladaptive coping strategies, such as withdrawal or internalizing negative stereotypes, have

been suggested to result in negative outcomes, such as heightened symptoms of RBF (anger, depression, hopelessness).

While multiracial people of African descent may experience racism and associated stress in similar ways to other people of African descent similarly "raced," many of the findings about coping with racism among people of color are based on the assumption that they possess certain resources, such as family and community, to help them develop coping strategies or serve as a consultative source regarding how to deal with racism and discrimination. However, the experiences of multiracial individuals may complicate what is known about the role of family and community in coping.

Race And Racism in a Multiracial Context

Decades of research and commentary have focused on how multiracial individuals identify racially and what factors contribute to this developmental process (Bracey, Bamaca, & Umana-Taylor, 2004; Brown 1995, 2001; Buckley & Carter, 2004; Funderburg, 1994; Gibbs & Hines, 1992; Jackson, 2009; Katz, 1996; Kich, 1992; Poston, 1990; Renn, 2003; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002; Root, 1992, 1996; Spickard, 1989; Wijeyesinghe, 2001; Zack, 1993). Early theories of multiracial Black individuals posited that the children of interracial couples were troubled and ill-adjusted because of their racially-mixed backgrounds (Brown, 2001; Johnson & Nagoshi, 1986; Stonequist, 1937; Wilson, 1987), framing them as "tragic mulattos" who were physically, intellectually, and emotionally inferior to monoracial individuals (Brown, 2001).

Modern research and theories of multiraciality challenge the "tragic mulatto" paradigm, exploring the myriad of ways multiracial individuals identify (e.g., mixed, Black, White, Black and White, multiracial, Blasian, Mexipino, Blaxican, other, human, etc.) and the different reasons for choosing such identities (Guevarra, 2012; Jackson, 2009; LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993; Root, 1992, 1996; Trueba, 2002; Wardle, 1991; Wijeyesinghe, 2001). Still, at times, external factors—friends, families, acquaintances, and strangers—push multiracial individuals to choose one race over the other (Dalmage, 2000; Harris & Sim, 2002; Jackson, 2009; Samuels, 2009; Tizard & Phoenix, 1993; Wijeyesinghe, 2001); the pressure to select one race is especially prevalent if the multiracial person has physical features more characteristic of a certain racial group (Waters, 1996).

For example, in a study that explored the role of the one-drop rule and societal perspectives on racial identity, Khanna (2010) found that multiracial respondents frequently explained their Black identities as due, in part, to how they believed they were viewed by others in society. Khanna notes that "Black/White biracial people may 'publicly' identify as biracial or mul-

tiracial yet societal ascriptions, via reflected appraisals and the one-drop rule, continue to tell them that they are Black, hence shaping 'internalized' Black identities" (p. 116). Relatedly, Harris and Sim (2002) found that Black/White multiracial youth were more likely than any other multiracial group to identify as Black and attributed this trend to "the enduring power of the one-drop rule" (p. 621).

The issue of how multiracial individuals can and should racially identify —monoracial or multiracial—is still highly debated in society. For example, an online search to find statistics using the terms "multiracial Black census 2010" yielded numerous results related to United States President Barack Obama's decision to check "Black" on the census. Articles and blog-postings decrying and applauding his decision were plentiful, reinforcing the politics of race and furthering the debate about appropriate ways for multiracial individuals to identify.

One critique of Obama's choice came from a mother of multiracial children who wrote an *Washington Post* op-ed piece disagreeing with Obama's decision to identify himself as Black on his census form. Elizabeth Chang wrote, "Despite being raised by a White mother and White grandparents, despite having spent most of his childhood in the rainbow state of Hawaii, despite clearly being comfortable in almost any type of crowd (though I suppose Tea Partyers might give him pause), the president apparently considers himself only Black."[3]

In contrast, comments applauding the idea that President Obama appropriately checked Black include, "Put a hoodie on him and have him walk down an alley, and see how biracial he is then."[4] Likewise, in response to Chang's op-ed piece, one individual commented:

> People have treated Obama as if he were Black since his infancy. That's the legacy of the one-drop rule. Neither Obama, nor his mother or White grandparents chose to have others treat Obama as if he were Black. It has much more to do with history than a personal decision by Obama. If Obama chose to label himself biracial that would not stop tea-partiers from portraying him as a witch doctor with distorted Black features … don't take Obama and people like him to task for the way others treat them.[5]

Additionally, a poll by the Pew Research Center (2010a) found 53% of White people said Obama is "mixed race" and 24% said he is Black. In contrast, 55% of Black people said Obama is Black and 34% said he is mixed.

Compounding efforts to confine the ways in which multiracial people can racially identify is the reality that multiracial individuals are not categorized easily as one race or another. Multiracial people are confronted with the question, "What are you?" in a number of contexts (Knaus, 2006; Okizaki, 2000; Williams, 1996) or exoticized for their ambiguous, racial melting pot features (Knaus, 2006; Senna, 1998; Root, 2001; Thornton,

1996). An important, often cited experience about multiracial individuals is the sense of feeling excluded from multiple racial or ethnic communities (Knaus, 2006; Samuels, 2009). For example, multiracial individuals with Black and White racial backgrounds often note feeling they are "not Black enough" in predominantly Black settings but are "too Black" to be accepted by the White community. Additionally, multiracial individuals often experience racism within the extended family, particularly if one side of the family does not accept the multiracial relationship or child resulting from such unions (Samuels, 2009). Thus, while multiracial people experience race and racism in similar ways to monoracial individuals, some situations are unique to their experiences. Yet, such experiences have the potential to impact their well-being and life opportunities just as they do for other people of color.

RACIAL SOCIALIZATION AS A TOOL FOR THE SURVIVAL OF RACISM

In response to the persistent racism that exists in society, people of color have developed multiple strategies to survive and persist in spite of the racially hostile environment in the Unite States. Racial socialization practices that teach about the reality of racism and prepare people to navigate a racially charged world are one means people of color have employed to combat the negative effects of racism. Scholars have noted family as one of the most important, and often initial, social contexts to play a formative role in how Black individuals make sense of the significance and meaning of race (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Boykin & Toms, 1985; Hughes et al., 2006; Lesane-Brown, 2006). Various scholars have defined racial socialization, what approaches parents take to socialize their children to race, and the outcomes of different racial socialization approaches.

What Is Racial Socialization?

The term socialization refers to the process of acquiring cultural norms, customs, and ideologies that provide individuals with the skills and habits necessary for participating in a society (Maccoby, 1992). Early theories approached the study of socialization in families through a deracialized lens. Since most studies of socialization were conducted with White families, they yielded theoretical frames that did not account for the socialization and developmental process that occurred in non-White families (Boykin & Toms, 1985). Additionally, as García Coll et al. (1996) and Spencer (1995, 1997) explain, socialization research has not traditionally included factors

such as racism and discrimination, which, they argue, can potentially impact the development of individuals of color.

Scholars have posited that families have a unique role in helping their children develop means of coping with and navigating a society where race still matters (Boykin & Toms, 1985; García Coll et al., 1996; Peters, 1985; Pierce, 1974; Spencer, 1995). Thus, the field of racial socialization developed from the need to understand how parents socialized Black children to perceive themselves in a society in which their race is devalued (Peters, 1985; Hughes et al, 2006). Perhaps the most comprehensive definition of racial socialization has been put forth by Stevenson (2014): "the transmission and acquisition of intellectual, affective, and behavioral skills to protect and affirm racial self-efficacy by recasting and reducing the stress that occurs during racial conflicts with the goal of successfully responding those conflicts" (p. 18).

The theory of racial socialization is two-fold. First, racial socialization is rooted in the assumption that teaching and preparing the next generation to deal with racism and discrimination will help them develop a positive sense of identity and persist in a society fraught with subtle and overt racism. Second, racial socialization is a means of giving people tools to combat racism (Pierce, 1970). According to Stevenson (2014), individuals must "recast" stressful racial encounters in a manner where they become more manageable. He summarizes this process by stating that

> recasting overwhelming racial stress into workable racial stress involves the active use of skills necessary to see the dance of racial politics; chose dynamic roles beyond villain, hero, or victim; change one's movement or role in the dance; and respond competently within future racial encounters. (p. 124)

This process can be facilitated through teaching individuals racial literacy skills, which provides the tools to identify, assess, recast, respond, and resolve racially stressful encounters.

What Does Racial Socialization Look Like?

Initial writings on racial socialization focused on theorizing about the necessity and nature of racial socialization in Black families. For example, the seminal work by Boykin and Toms (1985) posited that Black children should be socialized with a "triple consciousness," which they termed the *triple quandary*. This triple quandary consisted of (1) *mainstream socialization*, in which children are socialized to White middle class norms, (2) *minority socialization,* in which individuals are taught about racism and strategies to

help cope with or navigate it, and (3) *cultural socialization*, in which children are taught about Black cultural and social traditions and norms.

Progressing from theoretical beginnings, scholars began to investigate the techniques parents used to socialize their children. Studies support the theory that the majority of Black parents exhibit practices intended to socialize their children to race (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Peters, 2002; Thomas & Speight, 1999; Thornton et al., 1990). Thornton et al. (1990) employed Boykin and Toms's (1985) framework to explore the socialization messages of parents; they found that parents' messages mirrored the triple quandary framework—mainstream, minority, and cultural socializations. Additionally, Hughes and colleagues (2006) noted that parents' racial socialization practices most often are intended to prepare youth for encounters with racial bias, to enable youth to maintain positive self-beliefs despite prejudice, and to teach youth to negotiate diverse cultural contexts. Generally, parents' racial socialization messages can be classified into the five major categories below:

- **Cultural socialization:** including the promotion of cultural knowledge and pride (Boykin & Toms, 1985; Demo & Hughes, 1990; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Stevenson, Cameron, Herrero-Taylor, & Davis, 2002)
- **Preparation for bias or racism awareness training:** including emphasis on discrimination and coping strategies (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Boykin & Toms, 1985; Caughy, Randolph, & O'Campo, 2002; Constantine & Blackmon, 2002; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Marshall, 1995; McHale et al., 2006; Stevenson, 1994b)
- **Promotion of mistrust:** including cautioning children about interracial interactions (Caughy et al., 2002; Demo & Hughes, 1990; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Thomas & Speight, 1999)
- **Promotion of mainstream or egalitarian characteristics:** including messages about hard work, individual self-worth, and fitting into the dominant culture (Boykin & Toms, 1985; Demo & Hughes, 1990; Stevenson et al., 2002; Thornton et al., 1990)
- **Silence or denial:** including unwillingness to talk about race and race related issues (Bowman & Howard, 1985; Demo & Hughes, 1990; Marshall, 1995)

The Outcomes of Racial Socialization

A growing body of research on racial socialization focuses on understanding the outcomes of racial socialization approaches and linking those outcomes to various types of racial socialization messages. Racial socialization has been found to influence racial identity (Demo & Hughes, 1990;

Marshall, 1995; Thompson, 1994; Stevenson, 1995), self-esteem (Constantine & Blackmon, 2002), academic performance (Bowman & Howard, 1985), psychosocial functioning and development (Caughy, Nettles, & Lima, 2011; Neblett, Rivas-Drake, & Umana-Taylor, 2012; Stevenson, Reed, Bodison, & Bishop, 1997), and the ability to cope with racism (Brown, 2008; Edwards & Polite 1992; Neblett et al., 2008; Scott, 2003). Some efforts, such as preparation for bias messages, have had contradictory influences on youth outcomes because they often are confounded by messages of mistrust (Hughes et al., 2006). Stevenson (2014) cautions that over-socializing people to mistrust messages may create racial paranoia; therefore, approaches that balance various forms of socializations at appropriate times are necessary. Table 1.1 illustrates various outcomes of racial socialization messages and efforts.

Table 1.1. Racial Socialization Messages and Efforts

Socialization Message	*Outcome*
Cultural socialization	More advanced stages of identity development (Stevenson, 1995)
	More positive racial group attitudes (Demo & Hughes 1990; Feigelman & Silverman, 1983; Huh & Reid, 2000)
	Better academic preparation and performance (Bowman & Howard, 1985)
	Increased sense of ability to handle racism (Brown, 2008; Edwards & Polite, 1992; Scott, 2003)
	Fewer behavioral problems (Caughy et al., 2002; Demo & Hughes, 1990)
Preparation for bias	More advanced stages of identity development (Stevenson, 1995)
	May be confounded by promotion of mistrust messages (Hughes et al., 2006)
Promotion of mistrust	Maladaptive coping strategies and deviant behavior (Biafora et al., 1993)
Promotion of mainstream/ egalitarian norms	Lower racial identity exploration (Rollins, 2009)
	Less identification with Black people and culture (Rollins, 2009; McRoy & Zurcher, 1983)
Silence about or denial of race and racism	• Lower self-efficacy scores (Bowman & Howard, 1985)
	• Weaker sense of closeness to other Black people (Demo & Hughes, 1990)
	• May be a disconnect between intent and interpretation (e. g., parent thinks they are subtly conveying messages related to cultural socialization, yet child reports their parents did nothing)

Factors That Influence Parental Racial Socialization Practices

While scholars suggest that the most common messages and strategies communicated by Black parents to Black children include cultural socialization, preparation for bias, and egalitarianism, many factors, such as a child's age and gender as well as the parent's socioeconomic status (SES), race, racial identity, and experiences of discrimination, may all influence the messages and strategies parents choose to communicate to their children (Hughes et al., 2006). For example, studies have found that parents who experience discrimination are more likely to anticipate their children will experience racism and attempt to provide their children with tools for coping with such encounters (Hughes, 2003; Hughes & Chen, 1997; Umana-Taylor & Fine, 2004). Likewise, children's previous experiences of discrimination also prompt parents to discuss discrimination more openly (Hughes & Johnson, 2001). Another important factor in racial socialization is parent or guardian race and racial identities. Researchers have found that parents with more positive racial identity attitudes are more likely to view racial socialization as an important component to raising children (Thomas & Speight, 1999). Although little research focuses on how White parents socialize children to race, a few studies have found that White parents are less comfortable talking with children explicitly about race and racial discrimination. Bronson and Merryman (2009) found that non-White parents are nearly three times more likely to discuss race than White parents, and 75% of White parents reported never or almost never discussing race with their White children. Other studies have concluded that when White parents talk about race, they are more likely to focus on egalitarian messages that emphasize that everyone is equal while parents of color are more likely to focus on preparing children of color for bias (Hamm, 2001; Katz & Kofkin, 1997; Stevenson, 2014; Vittrup, 2007).

RACIAL SOCIALIZATION IN CROSS-RACIAL FAMILIES

Often, the responsibility of racial socialization rests with the family, and the family is assumed to be the same race as the child. However, for children of African descent raised by White or interracial parents or guardians, the racial socialization process is complicated by racial and ethnic differences between parents and children (Perry, 1994; Raible, 1990; Samuels, 2009). While the number of interracial couples is increasing and resulting in even larger numbers of multiracial individuals (Pew Research Center, 2010b), as was discussed earlier, racism is still a very real part of life for people who are "raced" as people of color or minorities. Multiracial people are

not exempt from incidents of racism, discrimination, and prejudice and may experience such incidents in unique ways. While theory and research on racial socialization of Black children have progressed over the last decades, with the exception of work specifically focused on multiracial or transracially adopted individuals, most studies of racial socialization take a monocentric view of race and spend little time clarifying the use of terms such as "Black" or "African American" when defining the population or describing whom these definitions include or exclude. Such oversights treat Black people as a homogenous group, makes certain assumptions about who is considered Black or African American, and presupposes that all "Black" children are raised solely with Black parents or guardians. Yet, only a few studies have documented the ways and extent to which parents of multiracial or transracially adopted individuals socialize and prepare them for the inevitable racialized experiences that await them.

Using data from the longitudinal Maryland Adolescent Development in Context Study (MADICS; Eccles, 1997), Rollins (2009) explored the racial socialization messages used by mothers of 104 multiracial adolescents and evaluated the relative impact of these messages on racial identity. This study found that mothers engaged in a range of racial socialization efforts, including cultural, minority (including preparation for bias), mainstream, egalitarian, and silence. Rollins also found that racial socialization varied by maternal race; Black mothers were most likely to use mainstream socialization messages while White and mothers of other minority groups were more likely to provide no direct racial socialization, concluding that Black mothers provide more socialization than their White and other minority counterparts (Rollins, 2009).

The findings of this study mirror other studies of monoracial White families that found White parents are less comfortable talking with White children explicitly about race and racial discrimination and tend to employ egalitarian socialization strategies (Bronson & Merryman, 2009; Hamm, 2001; Katz & Kofkin, 1997; Vittrup, 2007). Such findings reiterate the need for White parents to racially socialize children and youth to race and racism as well as develop a sense of racial competence and awareness themselves. The findings also highlight the need for cross-racial friendships and interactions as well as living in racially diverse neighborhoods that can help facilitate racial awareness and socialization (Allport 1954; Davies, Tropp, Aron, Pettigrew, & Wright, 2011; Pettigrew, 1998).

Another study by Csizmadia, Rollins, and Kaneakua (2014) explored the relationship between the frequency of parents' conversations about race and culture with their multiracial Black-White children. While the authors noted that racial socialization—in this case defined by discussions of cultural heritage—was prevalent among parents of mixed racial children, they found that biracial children whose parents identified them as "Black" or

"Biracial" received more frequent discussions about ethnic-racial heritage from their parents than those identified as "White." While this study did not explore the types or content of racial socialization messages parents conveyed, it underscores the potential significance of phenotypic features and parents' ascription of racial identity in shaping assumptions about experiences with racism and the parents' perceptions of the importance of racial socialization.

In terms of outcomes of parent racial socialization efforts, studies of multiracial Black individuals raised in interracial homes have most often focused on the connection of racial socialization to identity development. For example, Rollins's (2009) study found that multiracial adolescents whose mothers emphasized mainstream and egalitarian (color-blind) messages were less inclined to report that race was a salient part of their life. Rollins also discovered that multiracial adolescents with White mothers, who were more likely to employ egalitarian and color-blind approaches to socializing their children to race, reported lower racial identity exploration and less identification with Black culture.

Research also has documented the different socialization approaches of transracially adoptive families toward addressing issues of race, culture, and racism with their children. In a review summarizing the racial and cultural socialization processes for transracially adoptive families, Lee (2003) identified four salient themes in studies of how White parents approached racial socialization for children of color. The themes include: (a) *racial inculcation*, which included proactively teaching about racism and discrimination (Lee, Yoo, Weintraub, & Su, 2002); (b) *enculturation*, which focused on instilling a sense of cultural pride in children (Feigelman & Silverman, 1983; Huh & Reid, 2000; Steinberg & Hall, 2000); and (c) *assimilation*, which encouraged children to assimilate and adopt mainstream values (Andujo, 1988; DeBerry, Scarr, & Weinberg, 1996; McRoy & Zurcher, 1983).

Lee (2003) identified another approach related to enculturation taken by adoptive parents: the idea of *choice*, which occurred when parents let children determine how and when they would like to be culturally socialized (e.g.: "I'll tell them about their birth culture when/if they ask"). Relatedly, past studies have revealed that transracial adoptive parents varied in the ways they handled racial issues; some parents downplayed or ignored racist comments, others made derogatory comments about racists, and in a few cases, some became actively involved in community social justice efforts (Andujo, 1988; Freidlander et al., 2000; Johnson, Shireman, & Watson, 1987).

Current research suggests that a growing number of White adoptive parents take a cultural socialization approach by acknowledging differences within the family and making a concerted effort to teach their children about their birth cultures (Carstens & Julia, 2000; Freidlander et al., 2000;

Vonk & Angaran, 2001). Additionally, studies of transracial adoptees have found that parents' racial socialization practices are influenced by the child's skin tone. Black children with darker skin tones are more likely to receive preparation for bias messages in comparison to children with lighter skin who more often receive mainstream messages (DeBerry, Scarr & Weinberg, 1996; McRoy & Zurcher, 1983; Vroegh, 1997). The difference is partially due to the parents' belief that lighter skinned multiracial children would more easily be able to "blend into" White society and be less likely to experience racism and discrimination based on skin tone (McRoy & Zurcher, 1983; Samuels, 2009).

Among transracially adopted children, racial socialization practices have been positively associated with racial identity and acculturation (Andujo, 1988). Researchers have suggested that transracial adoptees exposed to messages that emphasize cultural assimilation are more likely to internalize their White adoptive parents' cultural worldview and identify more strongly with the majority (White) culture than with minority (e.g., Black) cultures (McRoy & Zurcher, 1983). Conversely, Feigelman and Silverman (1983) and Huh and Reid (2000) found that adoptees were more likely to show racial pride when adoptive parents emphasized cultural socialization messages and actions, embraced the child's racial backgrounds, encouraged and participated in ethnically and culturally related events and activities, and lived in racially integrated communities.

While scholars are beginning to explore the role of racial socialization in the development of multiracial and transracially adopted individuals, further research is needed to understand the role of such socialization in helping people navigate racism. Additionally, most studies on racial socialization, either with monoracial or cross racial families, have approached the topic from a unidirectional process in which the parent is the actor and the child is a passive recipient of messages. However, children can be active participants in their socialization; they can disagree with, misinterpret, or ignore parents' socialization messages. For example, Marshall (1995) found that many Black children whose parents had described a range of racial socialization strategies reported that their parents did not teach them anything about ethnicity or race. Additionally, one study that examined the experiences of transracial adoptees noted that only 35.2% of parents said they denied or de-emphasized their children's race, but 55.7% of adolescents in the same study noted their parents denied or de-emphasized race (DeBerry et al., 1996). This disconnect may influence how well children are able to address and navigate incidents of racism when they occur and who, if anyone, they seek for support should they not interpret their parents' efforts as adequate.

BOOK OVERVIEW

Is That Your Mom? centers the voices of Cross Racially Raised individuals of the African Diaspora to illustrate that racial socialization is a process in which individuals have agency in their racial socialization and development. In this book, Cross Racially Raised adults of African descent share their stories regarding experiences with racism in the following three ways: (1) encounters with racism within and beyond educational settings, (2) perceptions of their parents or guardians' efforts toward racial socialization, and (3) strategies used to navigate racially hostile environments (which sometimes are the families themselves).

Qualitative interviews, which allow for a focus on understanding people's lived experiences, were well suited for situating the meanings participants placed on events and interactions and connecting the meanings to the broader social realities (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Participants were recruited through a variety of means, including outreach to Black/African American college student groups, multiracial and transracial adoptee associations, and professionals and scholars in the field of education and social welfare. Adults were interviewed because their perspectives allowed for access to the full longitudinal and reflective perspectives regarding experiences with racism and racial socialization messages. Understanding racial socialization from the adult perspective also provided insights into how individuals have processed the messages they received about race and racism, from parents and society in general, and the impact such messages have had on their development.

Recognizing there is not one "multiracial Black" experience, this work focuses specifically on the experiences of multiracial Black people because of the unique historical connection to racism, particularly monoracism, stemming from the "one drop rule" which defined any person with one "drop" of Black blood as Black (Davis, 1991; Khanna, 2010). A total of 21 individuals participated in at least one, 90 minute interview. The age of participants ranged from 20 to 35 years old, with the average of 28 years old, and all of the interviewees, with the exception of one, were women. With regard to family racial context, 13 participants were raised in a family environment with no Black parent or guardian present, and eight were raised in interracial families with one Black parent or guardian. Twelve participants grew up with at least one birth parent, seven were raised by adoptive parents, and two were raised by step or foster parents. The majority of interviewees grew up in middle- to upper-class families in predominantly White neighborhoods and attended predominantly White schools while a smaller proportion of interviewees grew up in racially mixed or predominately Black communities and attended schools with a large number of students of color. The interviewees were highly educated,

with more than half holding a graduate or professional degree (MA, JD, PhD), one third holding a bachelor's degree, and the remaining having some college education but no degree.

The narratives of Cross Racially Raised individuals show that family approaches to addressing issues of race and racism vary greatly; some parents openly addressed issues of race and racism while others took a more colorblind approach and denied the growing significance of racism in their child's lives. The stories presented illuminate examples of how Cross Racially Raised individuals develop a sense of racial competency when parents do not discuss race or provide supports for navigating racism. The voices of the individuals in this book also illuminate a deeper conceptual understanding of how racial socialization practices are linked with one's ability to cope with racism and ways of addressing racism, particularly among those families that contradict monoracial assumptions of racial socialization processes.

The subsequent chapters of the book are organized as follows: Chapter Two focuses on interviewees' experiences with racism, including experiences with individual racism, experiences with institutional racism, experiences with Black communities, racism in the family, and monoracism. Chapter Three discusses parent/guardian approaches to racial socialization by comparing families that were open to talking about race and racism to those who denied or downplayed the existence of race and racism. Chapter Four presents findings regarding the resources and strategies interviewees used to cope with and respond to racism, including internalizing strategies, externalizing strategies, education and advocacy, seeking Black culture and community, and chameleon identities.

Finally, the book ends with a discussion of the implications of this research for the role schools can play in helping children and youth develop skills necessary to cope and remain resilient in the face of racism, particularly if the immediate family is not offering those supports. The goal is to help reframe services that support families raising children of African descent by illuminating how schools, educators, and parents can help children develop and deal with the potential challenges of being raced Black in a society that devalues their race.

A Note About Terminology

The following section is meant to clarify some of the terminology used in this book. Though many of the terms below have been defined throughout this chapter, they are worth revisiting to ensure clarity.

African Diaspora: This book employs Palmer's (2000) description of the African Diaspora as:

> The modern African diaspora, at its core, consists of the millions of peoples of African descent living in various societies who are united by a past based significantly but not exclusively upon "racial" oppression and the struggles against it and who, despite the cultural variations and political and other divisions among them, share an emotional bond with one another and with their ancestral continent and who also, regardless of their location face broadly similar problems in constructing and realizing themselves. (p. 30)

This book also employs the terms "African descent" and "Black" interchangeably as inclusive terms, which encompass individuals of African, Black, Afro Caribbean, and West Indian descent.

Cross Racially Raised: In this book, the term "Cross Racially Raised" describes individuals who grew up in contexts that "contradict monocentric race and kinship norms—that all family members and individuals embody a single racial-ethnic identity and cultural heritage" (Samuels, 2009, p. 82).

Multiracial: Refers to individuals who have one birth parent who claims one racial status and another birth parent who claims a different racial status. This book focuses on the experiences of individuals with one birth parent who claims a racial status as Black or African American and one who does not.

Race: This book employs Knaus's (2006) definition of race as "an overly simplistic social construction used to classify people based on presumed cultural characteristics" (p. 53).

Racial Socialization: Stevenson (2014) describes racial socialization as "the transmission and acquisition of intellectual, affective, and behavioral skills to protect and affirm racial self-efficacy by recasting and reducing the stress that occurs during racial conflicts with the goal of successfully responding those conflicts" (p. 18).

Racism: This book employs Jones's (2002) definition of racism as

> a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on phenotype ("race"), that: unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities, unfairly advantages other individuals and communities, [and] undermines realization of the full potential of the whole society through the waste of human resources. (p. 10)

NOTES

1. See: http://www.politico.com/story/2016/02/ben-carson-obama-was-raised-white-219657#ixzz40zxhuJMl
2. See: http://www.cnn.com/2007/POLITICS/01/31/biden.obama/

3. Chang, E. "Why Obama should not have checked Black on his census form" *Washington Post*. April 29th, 2010: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/04/28/AR2010042804156.html
4. Leila McDowell, vice president of communications for the NAACP as quoted in MSNBC op-ed entitled "Black or biracial? Census forces some to choose: Some Blacks with one White parent are deciding to simply 'stay Black'" by Jesse Washington April 19, 2010: http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/36646538/ns/us_news-census_2010/
5. Comment by reader on *Washington Post* regarding Chang op-ed