Chapter 5
The Infrastructure of Racism: The Psychic Dimensions

Racial scaffolding plays a large part in the development of the psyche for all Americans, either as the socially dominant group or as the socially subordinate groups. It helps to construct the mind-set that establishes who a person is. Racial scaffolding, as identified in Chap. 1, involves resource distributions within many societal structures, which make up the scaffolding poles and rungs. The poles: exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence, are held in place in the scaffolding by the rungs: colonialism, capitalism, class and legal structures, distribution of privileges and benefits, and intellectual thought and scientific theories. Further rung support is provided by the amorphous and ever-changing presence of privileges, dominance, and stereotypes as well other discriminatory practices. One's sense of being has a lot to process while traversing and scaling racial scaffolding that results in a person's psychic functioning. This chapter will discuss the psyche, examining racial internalization that leads to racial identity/sense of self. In addition, the differences between ethnic and racial identity and models toward racial acceptance will be discussed.

The American Psyche: Racial Internalization in Context

The social construction of race has played a profound part in the development of racism by means of race ranking, as well as the psychological belief system that relates to race and race ranking. Prior to the 1400s, ideology that involved ranking racial groups, skin color, and culture were not indelibly connected. A need for race consciousness emerged because of European world expansion that included resource exploitation, colonization or conquest, and enforced movement from one country to another (Sanjek, 1994). The several means of European expansion required scientific justification that embraced the belief that other racial groups because of phenotypic characteristics (such as hair, nose, lips, and pigmentation) were biologically/physically inferior. This scientific justification provided a psychological rationale

for suggesting that "human nature" was different (Marger, 2003; Omi & Winant, 2004, p. 16). Skewed ranking prevailed, which gave credence for broadening European dominion, rationalizing bigotry, and disparaging the physical features of other racial groups in the process. This race construction became not just a social phenomenon, but also an internalized psychological phenomenon.

This psychological perspective of race continued to be accepted, more so than not, in Europe and America through the beginning decades of the twentieth century (Marger, 2003). In the United States this racial point of view reinforced and justified all forms of enslavement (labor and internment) and westward expansion (broken treaties and seizure of land through gunpowder and military might). Such a belief structure and associated actions therefore reinforce the internalized thought processes of the psyche—the false sense of superiority of whites and the false belief in the inferiority of people of color.

This racist thinking still influences beliefs and attitudes in this country which, consciously or unconsciously, are internalized into the psyche for people of all races. Racist internalization has different standpoints, meanings, and outcomes for whites and for people of color. Internalization has also evolved independently and uniquely for people within a particular group based on that group's culture and heritage, as well as familial construction and individual personality structure. For whites, the accepted social and systemic operational systems are a normative gold standard and are rarely considered differently. Groups of color are vigilant and hyper-alert to events that impact them directly or indirectly. Having this awareness does not however prevent them from internalizing unswerving spurious information and untruths that reflect the dominant white perspective. Internalization of racism influences one's racial identity. In America this identity is synonymous with the development of a sense of self.

Racial Identity: Sense of Self

Racial *group membership* is a core aspect of identity development in the United States because of this country's emphasis on racial markers as preliminary credentials for access to reward and targeting for punishment (Helms, 1995). Although race may be phenotypic, it is socially constructed based on racial classification. For example, persons are assigned to different races based upon superficial characteristics but the heart of racial formation is a social, not a biological process. Identity, therefore, depends on social interaction. In fact, as suggested by Janet Helms (1994), the process by which identity development occurs is similar across all racial groups although the particulars may differ depending on the sociopolitical status of the group. Having made this point, across and within groups, individual distinct racial identity/sense of self formations emerge.

Racial identity, as related to *an individual's* sense of self, is the psychological internalization of perspectives that are based on social and environmental cues that infiltrate a person's thought processes. This means racial identity internalization

begins early in one's life. These social and environmental cues are based on various cultural dimensions (e.g., familial, nativist perspective, political dynamics, American historical development [race based], and economic structures) that mold our attitudes and beliefs, becoming a part of the "self" formation and establishing who we are. A sense of self reflects as well the interplay of the environment with conscious and unconscious thought processes. It is the essence of life as interpreted by any one person—the struggle between the objective and the subjective nature of being (Baldwin Jr., 1987; Stewart, 1976). People of color and whites, particularly children, may incorporate many of the values and beliefs of the dominant white culture, including the spurious fact that whites are better. Such beliefs are reinforced by stereotypes, omissions, distortions, and privileges that stress white superiority.

White Internalization

White evolution of the self in America involves being dominant over other races. This "self" can impart various forms of race bias. Yamato (2004) defined forms of racism as *aware/blatant* (e.g., a Caucasian man on a plane attacks a baby of color for crying, calling the parent and infant racially loaded derogatory names); *aware/covert* (e.g., changing state voting policies under the guise of upgrading voting policies but in fact such changes directly affect people of color and other marginalized groups from being able to register to vote); *unaware/unintentional* (e.g., a Mexican American individual is the first person at a store counter, whites come after, and the counter clerk asks who is next, even though it was obvious who was next); and *unaware/self-righteous* (e.g., whites believing that their mores, values and heritage are the principal customs—these norms are right—and they are astonished and miffed when their values and cultural perspectives are questioned or not accepted). These forms indicate the many ways that racism can manifest itself based on the internalized repertoire of an individual from the dominant racial group. Geographic segregation, marginalizing, and presuming and assuming intellectual and humanoid deficits of people who are racially different (Jaimes, 1994; Knowles & Prewitt, 1969; Omi & Winant, 2004; Sanjek, 1994; Stampp, 1956) may also be elements of the internalized repertoire. Often because there is a sense of conscious or unconscious superiority and righteousness of the self, discussions, questions, or actions by whites that speculate about the attributes of other races may have intended or unintended racial tones, for instance, wanting to feel or discuss "black" hair; asking a person of color if their presence on a job was related to affirmative action and not related to intelligence and skill; or explaining the obvious to people of color, which suggests people of color are intellectually inferior and do not understand. The intensity and degree of the racial internalization from the dominant group depends, for example, on the context of their life: family, region, societal distancing from people of color and the degree and level of pejorative belief in the societal structure. Abrams and Moio (2009) explicate a similar focus when they discuss the main tenets of Critical Race Theory and indicate that people of color are looked at differently at different

times within the "dominant social discourse and…[by]…people in power…depending on historic, social, or economic need" (p. 251). It is important therefore for whites to become aware of this differential racialization and "take responsibility for the implications of [their] racial identity and behavior" (Hardy & Laszloffy in McGoldrick & Hardy, 2008, p. 235) so that unintended affronts based on an unconscious sense of superiority, a sense of rightful position, and a limited world view of other racial groups are overcome.

People of Color Internalization

Simpson and Yinger (1974) aptly suggest that "built into the personality systems and group structures of minorities are some of the consequences of past discrimination" (p. 169). Internalization of societal views by subordinate racial groups can bring about a limited perspective of the self and of their capacity to be creative, provide positive images of the self, and be sensitive to their needs and the needs of others. According to Yamato (2004), racial groups who are not white have been so subjugated "spiritually, emotionally, and physically" that belief in the self may reflect the view of the oppressor. It is believed moreover that debased and confused meanings, implicit or explicit, continue the sense of being inferior and powerless. Moraga (2004) suggests, however, that those oppressed often forget the humiliations and limitations they have suffered for "to remember may mean giving up whatever privileges [they] have managed to squeeze out of this society by virtue of…race…" (p. 31). Such insight is important to have, but we contend that all members within a group of color do not forget, do not acquiesce to feeling spiritually, emotionally, and physically downtrodden, but most often have acquired a sense of self through strengths of family and community to overcome or offset the overt and covert past and contemporary assaults to their person. Racial groups other than white have strong cultural ties to their unique heritages that further speak to the strengths they bring to the present. These various cultures and heritages have assisted them in resisting and overcoming the devalued context in which they live in the United States and support their strengths. Take for example the following scenario.

> A well-dressed black developer has just left an important meeting with city officials where he was able to obtain a development site in the downtown area of the city. He was very pleased and feeling exhilarated at having accomplished something that had previously eluded developers of color. As he crossed the street, a disheveled white man crossed from the other side of the street. They met mid-stream in the street. When their eyes met, the black man smiled and nodded a hello. The white man's remark, looking the black man directly in the eyes was "you still a nigger." The two continued on their separate journeys. The black man shook his head noting that not too much had changed. The scowl and comment from the white man suggested that too much had changed.
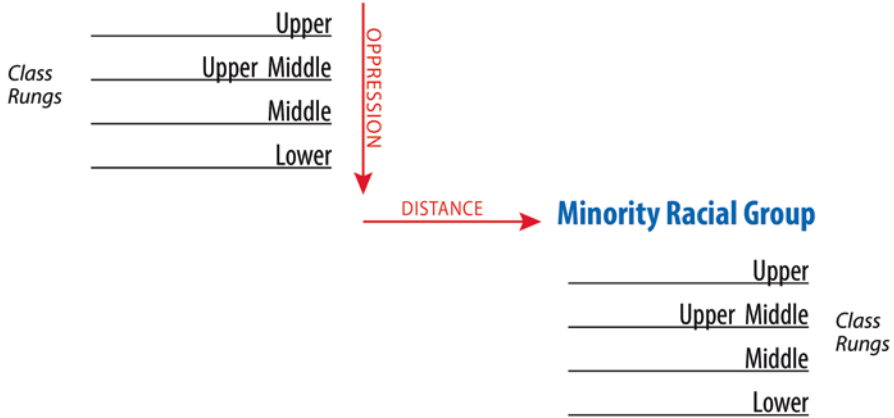
Fig. 5.1 An internalized racial process: putting people of color in their place (adapted from Tourse, 1984)

No matter how high on the economic ladder groups of color rise, they tend to be perceived as not equal psychologically and socially to their white counterparts because of the assorted forms of oppression and distancing (see Fig. 5.1) that can occur. This distancing and oppression (from micro aggression to geographic and interpersonal isolation to incarceration) influence the perception of self for whites and people of color.

The American psyche is cloaked in racial bias and this bias continues to assert its dominance and continues to reveal itself as it did with the disheveled white man. This man used his psychological sense of power and privilege to distance himself from and to try to oppress the black man. The white man's sense of self—the internalized scaffolding, whether conscious or unconscious, intimates he is superior and better than other racial groups in all respects. Although they should be equal as humans—psychologically and socially—the internalized presence of racism continues to oppress and distance subordinate groups and elevate the dominant group. In the case of America, the dominant group is white.

In the instance of the black developer, he possessed a well intact confident sense of self. The developer possessed the mental and social strength gained from his upbringing and heritage, and was able to process these two different racialization events: a) the first opportunity to develop a downtown site and b) what occurred with the disheveled white man. One situation was bittersweet for it was too long in coming (400 years in fact of racial scaffolding) and the other blatantly reiterated the negative persona of America. Both situations reflected the overlay of racism in American society based on the scaffolding that keeps racism in place. The continuous processing to navigate psychological and social inequities is an automatic circumstance for people of color, and the "[i]nternal meanings and feelings [that] result from racist beliefs, attitudes and values supported by individual, cultural and institutional systems in our society" (Hamilton-Mason, 2004, p. 316) are instinctively and naturally processed for survival.

The Influence of Discrimination on Internalization

There are many discriminatory acts that impact and sway whites and people of color. These acts can have limited or profound repercussions on an individual based on familial guidance and societal influences. Here are three discriminatory acts discussed in relation to an internal sense of self based on race: privilege, dominance/ power, and stereotypes.

Privilege

Privilege has been discussed by many from various perspectives; for example: inequality (Swenson, 1998); inequality and professional education (Longres & Scanlon, 2001; Walls et al., 2009); social class (Kivel, 2004); and white privilege (McIntosh, 2008). The central theme in all cases is that privilege benefits a particular group at the expense of others. In the context of race, privilege is an exclusive system of benefits or advantages unconsciously or knowingly experienced by members of the dominant white group. Individual and institutional privileges for whites provide inferred power, presumptive benefits, and a sense of being that is evident on cultural, structural, and societal levels.

People of color have a sense of privilege as well, but it does not emanate from institutional or societal power. Their sense of privilege emanates from positions in their communities, home life, and sometimes from their professional status. Race prevents there from being a more global sense of privilege and for most people of color, the understanding of their societal presence assists in understanding the need for humility in attaining and having privilege positions. Perspectives therefore for whites and people of color as to what is a given in life are different. Let us look again at the black developer scenario with a focus on privilege.

After leaving his meeting, the black developer exuded with pride, having accomplished what had not occurred previously—a person of color getting the opportunity to develop a downtown site. For a white developer this would have been just an ordinary coup—getting the okay to develop a downtown parcel of land. His sense of noblesse oblige is the norm—a conventional right, competing with other white developers—someone white would win—a standardized privilege. For the black developer, this was a first, an honor, and a privilege not taken for granted—this was not the norm. A situation for which he should have had a right, but racism that permeates the American society prevented this from being a right—a group of color norm.

Although groups of color have an opportunity to feel privilege through being honored, treated special, given opportunities and rights in their immediate environs, it is difficult, if not impossible for them to have privilege sustainability based on race in the broader society. This conscious racial position of "self" helps people of color develop an understanding of what constitutes a healthy and unhealthy sense of privilege. Psychological changes therefore in beliefs and attitudes of "the self"

through privilege attainment can be transformative for better or for worse. For most whites that sense of privilege is a given, for most people of color it is an opportunity. In any case, it is a gradual and intricate process (scaffold through individual, interpersonal, institutional, structural) and difficult for all.

Dominance/Power

Power speaks to privilege and privilege is a form of power. When race is in the equation in the United States, it speaks to the power structure that is dominated by whites. This dimension of racism is a systemic means to socially and structurally hold sway over people of color by verbal and/or physical assault, or through the establishment of laws that maintain the status quo and the control of economic resources for those in power (Tourse, 2016). Whites in addition, often disqualify the experiences of racial groups (Akamatsu, 2008), which assists with reinforcing white superiority and thereby reinforcing the inferiority of other racial groups. It denies the reality of people of color and reaffirms the biased realities of most whites.

Racial internalization happens for those who are dominant in this country (whites) as well as for those considered subordinate (people of color). The irony is however that as whites maintain conscious or unconscious power over other color groups through societal and structural dominance, they also oppress themselves by limiting their perspectives or world view, constricting their involvement with other racial groups, and denying or suppressing global possibilities through oppressing creativity of other racial groups. Hamilton-Mason (2004) explicates a similar position on dominance when she states "…all racial…minority groups in the United States share experiences of oppression as a result of living in the dominant White American culture" (p. 319). People of color reject oppressive situations but, because structural power is dominated by whites, they might, as the old cliché states, "'win the battle' at times but 'lose the war'."

A sense of dominance and power is intricately intertwined with the sense of self. The racial limitations placed by the dominant group therefore are perceived by them to be the reality of the subordinate group-self. Since the Civil Rights Era of the 1960s and subsequent liberation movements (e.g., **A**merican **I**ndian **M**ovement), this subordinate perception is gradually changing but those in superordinate or racial power positions are often ill-at-ease in accepting *intellectual parity*, in coming to terms with all groups having *equal privileges* and *benefits*, and in *sharing power*, for they would rather maintain social, economic, and structural power in its current form—systemic inequality as the norm. Social values and cues are also slowly changing; for instance, younger generations in the dominant group are more apt to interact with a person or persons of color than older generations, and therefore have a more relaxed and shared consciousness than previous generations. Conscious identification of the self, the racial self, assists one's "being" in understanding the self in relation to other racial groups, diffusing slowly for any racial group feelings of superiority or inferiority.

Stereotypes

Stereotypes further reinforce the assumptive positions of whites being dominant, deserving (consciously or unconsciously), privileges, rights and benefits accorded based on being superior. Within this racially dominated system, a sense of self, privilege, and dominance embrace and support demeaning stereotypes that often represent groups of color, for instance, that men of color are dangerous, that most do not want to work, refuting the intelligence of people of color through spurious research; or being overly solicitous to prove whites are not racist. Stereotypes can be complex (based on personal or social perceptions of characteristics as well as traits deemed odd or different) and usually provide intricate meanings and interpretations that are simplified through generalizations and labels. These generalizations and labels of stereotypes can lead to subversive depictions of a group (Sethi, 2004). As Dovidio, Major, and Crocker (2000) indicate, these situational events also are accepted or deemed unacceptable based on their interface with history. A group's traits can be viewed as inherent in the makeup of that group, but such traits for people of color can be based on stereotypes. The dominant group, therefore, has no need to see other racial groups any differently and, thus, no change is needed (Marden, Meyer, & Engel, 1992) to demystify stereotypes. These stereotypes are indiscernible to the internal self of the dominant group. Stereotypes on the societal level that maintain racial imbalance are quite evident, for instance, in the media, sports, education, and advertising. Let us use advertising as the exemplar. In post-emancipation, United States advertising assisted in the creation of what Du Bois identified as "double-consciousness," seeing the self as others see you (Paynter, Hautaniemi, & Muller, 1994), thus marginalizing blacks as the other by marketing only or developing products geared toward whites. This was also a backdoor means of stereotyping for other groups of color. Such advertising helped to lay the groundwork for base and demeaning beliefs by whites that other racial groups were less than. People of color could only find "the self," a sense of privilege, and a semblance of power through products that reflected a white sense of being. They were considered to be undeserving of social equality, but their financial resources for products advertised were welcomed. When people of color were used in advertisements in post-emancipation, their use was that of caricature: beastly, buffoon, and child-like (see Faulkner & Henderson, 2000; Riggs, 1987). It was only in the last quarter of the twentieth century, sometime after the Civil Rights Movement that there began to be more of a presence of groups of color in advertising. The intent may not be to stereotype, but ingrained internalized racist constructs are reflected in many well-meaning advertisements then and now. Often advertisements reflect subliminal stereotypes that say: less than, buffoonery, and incompetence. For whites, such advertisements do not reflect poorly on them for they are seen generally as on top, sensible, and competent. For people of color, such advertisements reinforce the pre- and post-emancipation, as well as the Jim Crow and post-civil rights eras depiction of them and stigmatize them further—"either literal[ly] or figutive[ly]" (Robbins, Chatterjee, Canda, 2012, p. 306). Such depictions help to internalize and

reinforce warped perceptions of racial groups and become norms honed by past and contemporary popular culture representations as well as in the news and social media. Inculcation of superiority, privileges, dominance/power within the norms of society, fostered by stereotypes, assists with internalizing attitudes and beliefs that have continued to support racial discrimination or racism—racial scaffolding continues. The dominant and subordinate lenses reflect even greater diverse perspectives when the multifaceted nature of culture becomes a part of the "self" equation. The sway of negative or positive culture influences significantly, the internalized self, especially when compounded by ethnic identity.

Ethnic Identity Versus Racial Identity

Ethnic identity is a subset of race and is often inaccurately confused with racial identity. One's ethnic identity is related to national ancestry (Luhman, 2002; Schriver, 2004; Smedley & Smedley, 2005). It relates to cultural phenomena that a particular group embrace and language is usually a connecting link. Unlike racial identity, it is not based on trying to categorize a group to oppress them and maintain superiority, but is, as Helms (1994) states, "self-defined and maintained because it 'feels good,' rather than because it is necessarily imposed by powerful others" (pp. 293–294). It is how a person feels internally toward their external environs (Schriver, 2004)—ethnic identity is dynamic and flexible. An individual can belong to more than one ethnic group, such as Italian and Irish and favor and practice the heritage of one of these cultural groups over the other. People have, therefore, the ability to self-define their ethnicity (Smedley & Smedley, 2005).

Racial identity in America was formulated based on a black and white racial paradigm. Identifying a person by race has been quite controversial. Biological and intellectual scientific discussions have long existed to determine the identity structure of humankind. Biological constructs addressed the genetic structure (genotype) and physical characteristics (phenotype) of race. The psychological sciences analyzed intelligence based on genetically determined aberrance in racial groups that could not be explained by environmental factors (see, for example, Brammer, 2004; Sanjek, 1994; Schaefer, 1998; Schriver, 2004; Smedley & Smedley, 2005). The research that came from these sciences placed individuals of African descent genetically, physically, and intellectually in an inferior position. All other non-white races were viewed higher on the biological, physical, and intellectual spectrum, but not at the same level as whites. The foundation of this ideological mind-set was grounded in "hierarchy and domination" (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Schriver, 2004). Most scientists today (for example, anthropologists, evolutionary biologists, and sociologists) have determined that identity based on race is more related to culture and social structures such as economics and politics, and not on the fallacies of "pure race," feature distinctions, and intellectual inferiority (Smedley & Smedley, 2005). Spickard, as quoted in Schriver (2004), indicates that race,

is by no means only negative, however. From the point of view of subordinate peoples, race [and thus, one's racial identity] can be a positive tool, a source of belonging, mutual help, and self-esteem. Racial categories…identify a set of people with whom to share a sense of identity and common experience…. It is to share a sense of peoplehood that helps locate individuals psychologically, and also provides the basis of common political action. Race, this socially constructed identity, can be a powerful tool, either for oppression or for group self-actualization (p. 24).

According to Bonilla-Silva (2014), this sense of racial identity cohesiveness is gradually eroding. He suggests that the white-nonwhite order, which includes the black-white paradigm, is changing into a more intricate dynamic order. He indicates the new order is that of white, honorary white, and the collective black, allowing people to make different choices about their identity and race. Even though the historical ideological order has long been refuted, and Bonilla-Silva's order perspective represents a new way of looking at people of color, the systemic elements of race continue to pigeonhole racial identity within the confines of the status quo.

The primary difference between racial identity and ethnic identity is, more succinctly, related to the following: Racial identity is (a) based on a sociopolitical model of oppression; (b) based on socially constructed definitions of race; and (c) concerned with how individuals approach the effects of disenfranchisement of others, and embrace attitudes toward theirs and other racial groups. On the other hand, ethnicity has significant meaning that also assists with a person's sense of belonging. Ethnic identity therefore (a) concerns one's attachment to, sense of belonging to and identification with a national group or, subgroup of the national group within the context of culture/heritage; (b) does not have a theoretical emphasis on oppression/racism; and (c) may include the prejudices and cultural pressures that ethnic individuals experience when their way of life comes in conflict with those of the dominant group (see Akiba & Coll, 2004; Luhman, 2002; Lum, 2000).

Racial identity is a discernable and identifiable marker for people of color in the United States (e.g., Mexican, First Nation, African, Asian). It is used to identify a racial group's belief in the goodness of the self. Ethnic identity in the United States for whites is often not symbolic in nature and rarely does one hear whites indicating they are Swedish, British, or Mediterranean Americans (Akiba & Coll, 2004). For European Americans the significant marker is socially constructed as being white.

Theories of Racial Identity and Two Racial Identity Models: Moving Toward Racial Acceptance from Within the Self

Racial identity theory helps to explain the emotions experienced by whites as well as people of color (Hamilton-Mason, 2001). Such emotions begin initially as interactions between individuals in response to particular overtly or covertly expressed racial events. These events serve as catalysts for racial identity expression and can be internal or external. These events can also be subjective and are not necessarily visible for others to react to or to interpret.

A sense of self becomes more differentiated when mores, values, and culture, as well as familial attitudes and beliefs, become a part of the "self" structure. When people are made aware of differences based on negative views within the American culture (the difference in this case is race) then the specter of racism prevails within the culture—but differently for whites and people of color.

Theories of the psychological development of racial identity for visible racial or ethnic and non-white immigrant populations have existed in the literature for some time (Cross, 1971, 1991; Helms, 1986, 1990, 1995). Racial identity theorists (Cross, 1978; Helms, 1985; Tatum, 2013) have indicated that racial identity is a dynamic process that evolves and changes over time. In many ways their conversion can be viewed as initially having concrete explanations of racial identity, to increasingly sophisticated explanations with more depth and complexity. In the late 1970s and 1980s, scholars began to extend black racial identity stage theories to other groups. Atkinson, Morten, and Sue (1998) introduced a minority identity development model that was applicable to all people of color. Later, Sue and Sue (1990) extended the minority identity model and defined it as racial/cultural identity development. These theorists have acknowledged that racial identity also depends on the context and situation in which it is being assessed. Identity models offer a way to comprehend the psychosocial complexity associated with racial identity issues. Models of racial identity also argue that an individual's sense of connection to a particular group varies with respect to his or her psychological identification with that group. We also suggest that each group of color has its own identity formation, but what each group shares are similar patterns of ethnic, racial, or cultural oppression. Each group moreover, has its own complexities based on their cultural mores, their own historical experiences and treatment, as well as role definition by the dominant group.

The first racial identity development model to explain black American identity was created by William Cross (1971, 1978). He presented a five-stage model of racial identity development in which each stage was characterized by self-concept issues concerning race. Each self-concept was proposed as having in each stage different implications for a person's feelings, thoughts, and behaviors. When Cross first wrote about "nigrescence" in the early 1970s, he referred to the identity change process as a "Negro to Black conversion experience" (Cross, 1991, p. 189). Whether talking about the new Negro in the 1920s, the Negro to black metamorphosis in the 1970s, or the search for Afrocentricity in the 1990s, the five stages of black identity development remain the same (Cross, 1995).

Helms (1995), an associate of Cross, expanded on his black identity model and in the 1990s articulated two racial identity theories based on black identity and white identity. Helms' black identity model is also transferable to other groups of color. The next section demonstrates how racial acceptance may evolve for people of color and whites based on Helms' models. These models demonstrate how each group might move toward racial acceptance of others from within the self.

A People of Color Identity Model

There are five racial identity statuses for people of color as articulated in Helms' (1995) Racial Identity Theory (RIT). These statuses are Conformity (PreEncounter), Dissonance (Encounter), Immersion/Emersion, Internalization, and Integrative Awareness (Autonomy). Statuses are defined as the dynamic cognitive, emotional, and behavioral processes that govern a person's interpretation of racial information in interpersonal environments. In the following descriptions, we present case examples that are aggregates of experiences.

Conformity is the first status. Here the person of color has absorbed many beliefs and values of the dominate culture and in the process devalues their own group and has an allegiance to white standards of merit. Through the negative internalization of stereotypes about people of color that are outside of his or her awareness, the individual seeks to assimilate and become accepted by whites and actively or passively distances him/herself from their like group of color such as African American, First Nation, Chinese, and Mexican. Franz Fanon (1967) termed this process "identification with the oppressor" (p. 73). As an example, a Chinese man may not be accepting of a lawyer to assist him in his lawsuit because the lawyer is Chinese and not white.

Dissonance, the second status, suggests that during this phase there is an ambivalence and confusion about one's own socioracial group commitment and sense of self. A change is precipitated by an event or series of events that forces the individual to acknowledge the effect of racism in their life. More often, there are instances of social rejection by white friends and colleagues. This stage can last quite a long time. In a racist society, African Americans and other people of color, especially Latinos, Asians Americans, and some First Nation peoples, are bombarded by racial affronts and indignities, regardless of whether or not they are directly involved in interaction with whites (Carter, 1995*)*. A fictional African American graduate student shares her reaction to a novella about an African American woman

> my first feeling was annoyance when the author wished for 'dark skin and dreads' and I wondered if that was all that she saw in Detroit or if that was the first picture that came to mind when she thought of being black. I told myself to calm down and continue reading. I felt myself nodding in agreement because I too have desperately wished that I could blend into my surroundings since I have moved to New England. I am tired of being greeted at my practicum on the North Shore as "Oh, you're black. You must not be from around here" Or "You're black! My Gosh you didn't sound black on the phone!" or "You go to an ivy league school? Are you on scholarship?" I have never been more painfully aware of my race or more ashamed.

Immersion/Emersion, the third status, is characterized by the paradoxical desire to surround oneself with visible symbols of one's racial identity. There is also an active avoidance of symbols of whiteness as the individual experiences aspects of their own history and culture with the support of peers from their own background (Helms & Cook, 1999).

In the following example, a fictional Korean woman, who idealized her particular heritage was asked what stood out about her racial/ethnic group. In responding, she tended to minimize white individuals. She also tended to use her respective own-group external standards to self-define as well as her own-group commitment/loyalty as core values to guide her. She came to this country as a youth with well-developed affiliations to her culture. When confronted with the stark realities of racism here she experienced shock and surprise.

> But, when I came here I felt almost segregated almost like I had to be with Asians. I sort of chose to do that. I don't know if it was a conscious decision or not, but I haven't really associated with that many other groups for me to form opinions or views on them. Which is really interesting.

Internalization, and Integrative Awareness Statuses/Autonomy are the fourth and fifth statuses. Cross and Helms differed somewhat on collapsing these two statuses. Cross (1991) stated that there are few differences between these two statuses. The two main themes of internalization are the process of adopting (1) a positive personal identity and (2) a socially relevant identity. However, a distinction between the two stages is that Commitment reflects a behavioral style characterized by social activism. Individuals in the fifth stage have generally found ways to translate their personal sense of identity into a consistent commitment for the concerns of the group. Helms (1986) amended Cross's model to suggest that each stage should be considered as a distinct "world view," which means that individuals use cognitive templates to organize [racial] information about themselves, other people, and institutions. Helms' model is also commonly assumed to be a strong stage model, although she intended her stages to be permeable (Helms, 1986). Consequently, Helms (1995) reformulated her model to address some of the dilemmas that occur when a strong stage model is used to conceptualize racial identity development by replacing the term "stages" with "statuses." The attempt was not to change the essential meaning of the concepts underlying either term. As was true with racial identity stages, racial identity statuses are assumed to permit increasingly more complex management of racial material. The statuses are assumed to mature sequentially, but are expressed according to the level of dominance within the individual's personality structure. Betty, who is a fictional African American, comments on her family of origin's historical legacy of achievement despite the odds of slavery. She states,

> I think it means that we have a distinct history of being in this country. I know that my ancestors were all slaves when they came here. They were slaves! I don't know how they were tied up, but I know they were all straight up slaves. So that means we came here under intense circumstances. My mom, my grandmother, was able to work and keep my mother in school and so that means that I was able to accomplish getting my masters. It's like a heritage that these people before me laid a foundation.

White Racial Identity Model

Helms' model for white racial identity development posits that racism and racialized experiences are a significant aspect of being EuroAmerican (Helms & Cook, 1999; Van Soest & Garcia, 2003). This highlights how whites are socialized into perceiving their merit and illustrates how movement through a developmental status involves recognition of how, through privilege, one has participated in oppressive practices. Moving through these statuses, however, provides an awareness process that assists whites to become more sensitive to other racial groups and helps them to work toward eliminating the systemic racism that reigns in America.

According to Helms (1995), there are six ego statuses in the abandonment of racism and evolving to an anti-racist identity. The first status, *Contact*, exists when the person is satisfied with the racial status quo and is oblivious to racism and one's participation in it. If racial factors influence life decisions, they do so in a simplistic fashion.

> Two black women (one fair skinned and the other dark-skinned) were in the check-out line of a grocery store in the dark-skinned woman's neighborhood. First the fair skinned woman paid for her items with a check without difficulty. The dark-skinned woman was next and also paid with a check. She however, had to wait until the cashier verified that her name did not appear in the "bad check book." Since the two women were together, the difference in treatment to them was obvious. It was clear that the white store clerk was oblivious to her response based on skin color, which influenced her decision on the differential treatment (Butler 2013).

Disintegration, the second status, involves disorientation and anxiety provoked by racial moral dilemmas that force one to choose between one's own group loyalty and humanism. A person at this stage may be stymied by life situations that arouse racial dilemmas.

> A particularly poignant and memorable discussion transpired between some women of color and a white woman. The women of color eloquently re-tell their personal narratives about race, culture and class as they encounter and struggle with America's worldview in varied contexts and settings. At the same time white privilege is exemplified as the white woman is somewhat agitated and persists in saying that she did not know she had a culture, she did not know she was special or had benefited from systemic dominance. The white woman is bewildered in hearing this conversation, and does not know whether to stand up for whites or support her associates of color.

Reintegration, status three, is seen as an idealization of one's socioracial group, and possible denigration and intolerance for other groups. Racial factors may strongly influence life decisions. For instance,

> a white man was angry that when he went to retrieve his car from a parking garage, he had to wait in the pay line until "those" in front paid. According to him, he should have been allowed in front of the various men and women who happened to be people of color.

Pseudo-independence is the fourth status, and exemplifies a person moving toward dealing with their own socioracial group and deceptive tolerance of other groups. A person may make life decisions to "help" other racial groups. For example, a person who is white might have a strong feeling about a person of color not having adequate housing based on skewed housing laws, but would be outraged if a person of color lived next door.

Immersion/Emersion, status five, suggests a person may search for an understanding of the personal meaning of racism and the ways by which one benefits and also a redefinition of whiteness. Life choices may incorporate racial activism. Taking part in national marches for social justice is an example.

Autonomy is status six. At this stage the person has a positive socioracial group commitment, uses internal standards for self-definition, and has a capacity to relinquish the privileges of racism. This person tries to avoid life options that require participation in racial oppression. A quote shared by a woman about her Racial Identity journey explicates this status:

> I learned racism in much more subtle, hidden, and indirect ways. What stands out to me more is how "ordinary," in that white "Ozzie and Harriet-with-an-Italian-flair" kind of way, that my upbringing was in regards to racism. Most profound is the recurring theme of my preoccupation with unraveling the continual contradictions— the verbal messages about equality contrasted with the overwhelming whiteness of my world (De Rosa, 2001 p. 5).

Here, the person understands a need to move her life in the direction toward equality and parity.

In summary, what is presented in this chapter is an overview of a much more intricate understanding and discussion of the American psyche. Trying to decipher the psychic dimension of racism is multilayered, complex, and entangled with social systemic and individual perceptions. When all the past and contemporary intricacies of identity are upheld by scaffolding, the country at hand, in this case the United States of America, either constructs scaffolding rung intersections that work for all people, or constructs scaffolding rung intersections that bring about collisions of norms, values, and the acceptance of the other. Scaling oppressive scaffolding requires perseverance, a good sense of self, and a belief that justice will prevail.

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