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School Ethnic–Racial Socialization: Learning About Race and Ethnicity Among African American Students

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Abstract Research has sought to understand how parents socialize their children around race and ethnicity, but few studies have considered how contexts outside the home are also important sources of socialization. In this paper we review and integrate literature on practices in school settings that have implications for ethnic–racial socialization using a framework based on Hughes et al. (Dev Psychol 42(5):747–770, 2006) review of parental socialization. The practices reviewed include cultural socialization, preparation for bias, promotion of mistrust, egalitarianism, colorblindness, and silence. Our review shows a wide range of practices in education that may influence the development of ethnic–racial identity and ethnic–racial consciousness, but more research is needed to understand the role that schools play in developing African American youth's understanding of race and identity.

Keywords Race/ethnicity · Socialization · Multicultural education · Youth

For many years, researchers have sought to understand how parents teach their children about their values and perspectives on race and ethnicity (Hughes et al. 2006). As with any form of psychological development, ethnic–racial socialization is a dynamic and interactive process between individuals, their contexts, and time (Bronfenbrenner and Morris 2006). Parents are children's primary source of ethnic–racial socialization, but as children move into adolescence and early adulthood, their sources of socialization broaden to include peers, teachers, and the educational curriculum. Research on ethnic and racial socialization must also be broadened to

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document the phenomenon of socialization beyond the family context, and specifically in schools.

Schools are sites of particular interest because youth spend a disproportionate amount of time in school. As youth grow older, the principal ecological niche they interact with—which typically includes parents in early childhood—changes to include peers, teachers, mentors, and other adults in the community. Consequently, the significance of schools as sites for ethnic–racial socialization and intergroup social interactions may increase during adolescence. Schools may also inform students' attitudes and beliefs about race and ethnicity through course curriculum, extracurricular activities, and in social interactions outside of the classroom (Banks 2007).

Schools formally and informally socialize youth about race and intergroup relations. Formally, a school's integration of multicultural curriculum may provide knowledge about diverse social groups, inform racial attitudes, and promote positive intergroup relations. For instance, K-12 teachers and staff use various ways to incorporate culturally-based materials in their classrooms that celebrate cultural differences (Milner 2005; Strange 2009). Some schools also provide prejudice reduction interventions that foster students' ability to resolve conflict peacefully and build relationships across difference (Nagda et al. 2006; Spencer et al. 2008). Although less common, some educators also engage students in participatory inquiry that transforms schools and teaches youth to critically analyze historical and contemporary racism (Cammarota and Fine 2008).

Schools also informally socialize students' racial attitudes and behaviors. The transition to secondary school in particular has been theorized to elicit exploration of one's social identity and racial attitudes (Tatum 1997). In secondary school—particularly racially and ethnically integrated schools—students are exposed to a broader set of peers than in elementary school. Encounters with new peers who do not share the same ethnic and racial background are expected to prompt exploration of one's ethnic and racial identity (Aldana et al. 2012; Cross and Cross 2008; Tatum 1997). However, the propensity to form friendships with others who share similar social identities (e.g., gender, race, and ethnicity) tends to increase in adolescence (Hallinan and Williams 1989; Hamm 2001; Moody 2001). Self-segregation may also be a strategy used by youth of color to avoid being discriminated against by others (Tatum 1994). Moreover, self-segregation is reinforced by racial segregation across schools (Orfield 2001) and policies that limit intergroup interactions, such as academic tracking (Conger 2005; Hallinan and Teixeira 1987; Hallinan and Williams 1989; Hallinan 1998; Orfield 2001; Tatum 1997). Thus, even in racially integrated schools, friendship segregation can limit intergroup interactions and foster group norms that maintain negative stereotypes, prejudice, and avoidance of others.

Multicultural education literature suggest that schools may socialize students ethnic–racial attitudes and beliefs through engagement with learning materials (e.g., books, class curriculum, extra-curricular activities), peer norms (e.g., lunchroom segregation), organizational characteristics and educational policies such as academic tracking and biased disciplinary actions.

In this paper, we review and discuss research on multicultural education within an ethnic–racial socialization framework (Hughes et al. 2006). The study of multicultural education is multidisciplinary and multidimensional, making it

difficult, at times, to integrate its findings for greater understanding of socialization processes. While we believe that ethnic–racial socialization is taking place for all youth, regardless of their race-ethnicity, this paper will focus on African American youth in order to provide greater depth of discussion for various socialization messages. The primary objective of this paper is to take inventory of multicultural education literature and organize it around a more comprehensive model of ethnic–racial socialization. Given that the literature is characterized by wide variations in terminology, we begin by defining key ethnic and racial constructs. We then provide an overview of multicultural education. In the remaining sections, we describe studies that have set out to examine how school practices influence racial and ethnic identity. We conclude with a summary of themes and outlining directions for future research and educational practice.

Defining Race and Ethnicity

In recent years, scholars have suggested that to conceptualize and study race and ethnicity as separate and/or interchangeable identities neglects the sociocultural experience of individuals who do not experience a differentiation between race and ethnicity (Cross and Cross 2008; Quintana 2007). Ethnicity and race represent a dynamic social phenomenon constructed by social, economic, and political forces that continually shape and redefine racial and ethnic meanings for individuals. That is, ethnic and racial socialization and identity are not separate entities but rather interconnected identities. Consequently, hereafter we use the term *ethnic–racial identity* to discuss findings on racial and ethnic identity development. Similarly, we will use the term *ethnic–racial consciousness* to refer to an awareness of one's emotional attachment to and significance of one's race and ethnicity (i.e., ethnic–racial identity) and knowledge of social systems that create and perpetuate power differentials between groups (i.e., racism, xenophobia). Thus, ethnic–racial consciousness includes an understanding of how historically people have been classified into ethnic and racial groups based on creed, phenotype, and cultural markers, which then serve to maintain social hierarchy that benefits some groups over others. Ethnic–racial consciousness goes beyond one's attachment to their own group and includes a nuanced understanding of similarities and differences among and between social groups that perpetuate systems of privilege and oppression.

Ethnic–Racial Socialization

Ethnic–racial socialization is a broad psychological construct used to refer to the process by which information regarding race and ethnicity is transmitted from adults to youth (Hughes et al. 2006). Parental socialization can be verbal or non-verbal messages that are either expressed directly at the child (direct socialization) or expressed in the child's presence (indirect socialization). Historically, the term racial socialization has been applied in studies that examine how African American parents promote their children's ethnic–racial consciousness and prepare them for discrimination in the United States (Peters 2002; Spencer and Markstrom-Adams 1990;

Thornton et al. 1990). Ethnic socialization has referred to practices focused on the cultural retention and in-group affiliation of immigrant youth and families such as Latinos, Asians, and Caribbean groups (Knight et al. 1993; Quintana and Vera 1999). Less research has been conducted on socialization practices among White/European American families (see Hamm 2001; Hughes and Chen 1999; Juang and Syed 2010).

Hughes et al. (2006) propose that scholars should differentiate between different types of socialization messages rather than refer to all forms of socialization under broad terms (e.g., ethnic–racial socialization). They identify several forms of socialization messages under this larger construct: cultural socialization, preparation for bias, promotion of mistrust, egalitarianism, and silence about race. Although these constructs have emerged from studies looking at parental socialization practices, they provide a useful starting rubric for considering the multicultural education practices in school settings that may also convey messages regarding race and ethnicity. The use of this framework as a heuristic is an initial step towards discussing the role of schools for racial socialization. As such, this paper does not intend to be exhaustive review, but rather give exemplars of educational practices that provide messages about race and ethnicity. Moreover, given the complex nature of education practices, some of the literature discussed under any one category may also fit in several socialization categories. For example, cultural socialization practices that teach the history of African Americans' historical struggle against discrimination may also serve as a form of preparation for bias by teaching youth how to cope with future discrimination. An asset of this theoretical framework is that ethnic–racial socialization is conceptualized as multidimensional and multifaceted, which allows researchers to explore the various ways parents inform their children about race and ethnicity.

Most racial socialization research has been limited to parents, but theoretical assumptions suggest that community members and adults at school also play an essential role (Hughes et al. 2011). Thus, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the acquisition of ethnic–racial socialization messages, the following section will look at educational practices within school that may be sources of ethnic–racial socialization. There is a growing body of literature that examines how various educational practices influence students' ethnic–racial identity, racial attitudes and intergroup orientation. We focus on how these educational practices have implications for the socialization of cultural values, preparation for bias, promotion of mistrust, egalitarianism, color-blindness, and silence about race and ethnicity.

Socialization Messages in Multicultural Education Practices

Multicultural education is a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach to education that is aimed at increasing educational equity. Although multicultural education began as a challenge to inequalities that African Americans and other students of color experienced in schools (Banks 1992; Grant 1994; Rezai-Rashti 1995; Sleeter and McLaren 1995), it has since then become an umbrella term for a variety of educational activities and efforts to showcase cultural diversity without necessarily showing concern for structural or institutional racism.

Cultural Socialization

The term cultural socialization, in the context of schooling and learning, is used to refer to educational practices that: teach children and youth about their racial and ethnic heritage and history; promote cultural customs and traditions; and foster children's cultural, racial and ethnic pride (Hughes et al. 2006). Examples in schools include the incorporation of authors of color in an English literature course, US history curricula that discuss the contributions of various ethnic and racial groups, elective courses focused on particular social groups (e.g., Women studies, Black studies, Chicano Studies), and multicultural celebrations such as Black History and Hispanic Heritage Months.

More specifically for African American youth, Afrocentric education is an example of cultural socialization. The goal of Afrocentric education is to socialize youth from an African world view (Asante 1991). As mainstream schools teach from a Eurocentric viewpoint that marginalizes African and African American contributions and perspectives (Asante 1991; Brown-Willis 2012), the goal of Afrocentric education is to teach African American youth about their culture and heritage without endorsing a racial hierarchy. Since the late 1980s, Afrocentric schools and programs have gained popularity in the United States (Brown-Willis 2012). Examples of Afrocentricity in classrooms and schools include prominently displaying pictures of African and African American historical figures, displaying cultural artifacts like drums, celebrating Kwanzaa, reading texts by African American authors, and using call-and-response (Chow-Hoy 2001; Clarkson and Johnstone 2011). At a deeper level, Afrocentric curricula can be guided by core values and beliefs such as collectivism, pan-Africanism, and Black nationalism. Similarly, culturally relevant pedagogy strives to use students' background to promote achievement and critical consciousness (Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995). Culturally relevant pedagogy developed through research looking at successful teachers of African American students; however, it can be applied to students of any race or ethnicity because its key goals are to enhance students' cultural identities and critical consciousness while also promoting academic achievement.

Studies of college students' retrospective accounts of their K-12 experiences with multicultural education show that there is a positive effect of being given opportunities to explore their ethnic–racial group's history, culture, and literature in school (Duarte 1998; Tatum 2004). Other studies have found positive influences of multicultural curricula for Latino (Brozo et al. 1996), African American (Carter 2000), and Native American students (Powers 2006). However, since these studies include small samples and are retrospective, more research on the influence of multicultural curriculum on adolescents from diverse backgrounds is warranted.

Interventions based on the principles of Afrocentric teaching or culturally relevant education showed mixed evidence for promoting a positive ethnic–racial identity. For example, a culturally relevant after-school program for African American girls increased racial identity and collectivist orientation (Thomas et al. 2008). On the other hand, the ethnic identity of youth in another school-day intervention decreased (Lewis et al. 2012), and other studies show no effect (Ginwright 2000). In all, there is little empirical work on the ethnic–racial identity

impacts of Afrocentric interventions (Lewis et al. 2012), although they are associated with improved academic outcomes (e.g., Ghee et al. 1998; Lewis et al. 2012). Research on Afrocentric and culturally relevant teaching also tends to be limited by a lack of a phenomenological perspective [i.e., the cultural relevance of the activities is defined from the teacher or researchers' perspective (Howard 2001)] and a lack of research in settings that are not predominantly Black (Morrison et al. 2008).

Preparation for Bias

In research with African American youth, preparation for bias has been conceptualized as discussions with children about ethnic and racial bias that includes strategies to deal with being a target of discrimination (Hughes et al. 2006). This form of socialization has also been termed racism awareness training (Stevenson 1994, 1995), racial barrier awareness (Bowman and Howard 1985), and cautious/defensive socialization (Demo and Hughes 1990). For the purpose of this paper, we define preparation for bias as the educational practices that raise youth's awareness of race- and ethnic-based disparities and racial discrimination at the individual and/or institutional level, as well as practice that teach youth (of any ethnic–racial group) to cope with and/or challenge racism.

   Theoretically, children and youth can learn about historical racism and its implication for contemporary issues through the school curriculum, particularly US history and civics courses. In practice, however, it is rare to have mainstream curriculum that discusses the implications of historical racism for contemporary injustice. Critical multiculturalists and anti-racist scholars have called for curriculum and pedagogy that moves beyond celebrating diversity and cultural understanding to engagement across difference for the analysis of power in US society and dismantle the normative status of Whiteness (Ladson-Billings and Tate 1995; Sleeter and Grant 2011). For example, schools can teach about the Civil Rights Movement and African Americans' struggle for voting rights without referencing current debates over the Voting Rights Act and voter ID laws. Such a presentation implies that voting rights have been won for good and that society is essentially fair and open. Despite the relative lack of preparation for bias in public schools, there are examples of youth activism that has successfully lobbied for more culturally relevant anti-bias curriculum in schools (Checkoway et al. 2003).

   Within the multicultural education literature, the area that is most relevant to preparation for bias is prejudice reduction (Bennett 2001). A common school practice is facilitating conversations about race. Having structured and facilitated discussions on race, ethnicity, and racial oppression have been found to promote positive attitude change (Dessel et al. 2006). These programs often teach about the negative implications that stereotypes and prejudices have on building relationships across racial difference. Research shows a positive link between fostering meaningful discussions about race, improved interethnic relations, and adolescents' awareness of racial discrimination and intergroup conflict (Aldana et al. 2012; Spencer et al. 2008; Thomas et al. 2008). Even at a young age, discussions of race can lead to less stereotyping and prejudice (Aboud and Fenwick 1999; Aboud and

Levy 2000). Discussion on race and ethnicity not only foster ethnic–racial identity, but also serves as a mechanism to raise awareness of racial bias and improve interethnic relations, in part because a strong ethnic–racial identity can help students engage with each other on a more equal footing (Phinney et al. 1997).

Promotion of Mistrust

Hughes and colleagues define promotion of mistrust as practices that highlight the need for wariness in interracial interactions (Hughes et al. 2006; Hughes and Chen 1999). In the ethnic–racial socialization literature this typically describes communication by parents of color that caution or warn children about other racial groups. A qualitative study with African American parents (Hughes and DuMont 1993) suggested that parents' discussions include encouraging youth's vigilance in interactions with White peers and adults and the need to maintain social distance from Whites. Hughes and colleagues argue that, conceptually and empirically, messages that promote cautions about intergroup relations are different from preparation from bias messages, in that promotion of mistrust socialization does not contain any advice for dealing with or managing discrimination and bigotry.

While no studies have examined if and how school-or community-based programs shape mistrust of others, educational research suggests that this form of socialization may be present in covert ways, through unintended racial segregation promoted by institutional and structural practices. For instance, policies and practices surrounding issues of academic tracking (Oakes 2005), and assignment to specific programs (Conchas 2001, 2006) such as special education are all deeply shaped by histories of racism in educational practices (Zirkel 2008). It may be that, in schools, the physical and social distance between racial and ethnic groups seen in lunchroom segregation and racial tracking may implicitly reinforce promotion of mistrust. Alternatively, schools with reforms such as detracking and the creation of heterogeneous classrooms create what Banks (1993) refers to an *empowering school culture*. An empowering school culture promotes equal status among different racial and ethnic groups, which can improve intergroup relations, promote cross-race friendships inside and outside of class, and improve teacher-student relations (Zirkel 2008, p. 1165–1166).

Egalitarianism, Color-Blindness, and Silence About Race

Socialization of egalitarianism includes any practice that encourages children and youth to value individual qualities over racial and ethnic group membership (Hughes et al. 2006). Color-blind messages are similar in de-emphasizing group membership but differ because color-blind messages completely deny the relevance of race in society and identity (Lewis 2003). Hughes and colleagues imply that egalitarian messages from minority families are similar to color-blind messages given in White families, citing Hamm (2001), but we would argue that color-blind messages are a product of the invisibility of Whiteness and the extent to which White adults and adolescents see racialized culture as something that racial and ethnic minorities, but not themselves, possess (e.g., Hughey 2010; Miller and

Fellows 2007; Perry 2001). Egalitarian messages, on the other hand, may extend from a worldview that acknowledges ethnic–racial identity but downplays their significance. Silence about race is the overall avoidance of discussions about race and ethnicity (Hughes et al. 2006). In agreement with Hughes and colleagues, we proposed that these socialization practices also implicitly communicate values and reasoning about race and ethnicity.

The inclusion of egalitarianism, color-blindness, and silence about race in the conceptualization of ethnic–racial socialization provides a framework for examining the implications of the hidden curriculum in educational practices. Looking at ethnic and racial omissions in curriculum, the lack of equity pedagogy in the classroom, and disempowering practice may provide some insight into the implicit messages about race and ethnicity that are transmitted to youth. One example of color-blind socialization messages may be the lack of critical discussions of race and ethnicity in textbooks. Content analyses of US history textbooks show that omissions, distortions, and misrepresentations have often portrayed Native Americans and African Americans as invisible in US history (Loewen 1995; Loewen et al. 2007). Similarly, the narratives of Arab Americans, Asian Americans, and Latina/o Americans are even less visible in K-12 education and multicultural education research, although these groups constitute a growing proportion of the US population. Color-blind text may limit students' ability to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to think critically about race, ethnicity, and racism. Implicit socialization processes may also be observed in school policy and practice. For example, academic tracking and magnet programs may stabilize or promote within-school segregation and beliefs about relative ability despite being technically race-blind (Oakes 2005; Tyson et al. 2005).

Integrating Frameworks of Racial Socialization and Multicultural Education

Sleeter and Grant (2011) present a framework of approaches to teaching about ethnic–racial and cultural differences that may be useful in understanding how different approaches to multicultural education function as ethnic–racial socialization. Table 1 summarizes the relationships between these approaches and the racial socialization framework we have discussed. In the *teaching the exceptional and culturally different* approach, teachers view minorities, lower-class students, English language learners, and girls in some subjects as lacking appropriate skills, values, and knowledge to be successful in mainstream society. The approach thus emphasizes gaining the correct skills. Socialization practices fitting under this approach would be consistent with egalitarianism. The human relations approach would also be consistent with egalitarianism socialization because of its emphasis on promoting tolerance and acceptance of others. Practices include celebrating multiple cultures and teaching conflict resolution and peer mediation skills, thus this approach could also socialization youth to prepare for bias.

The third approach, single-group studies, would primarily be consistent with cultural socialization practices because of the focus on the history and empowerment of a specific group. The fourth approach, multicultural education, is concerned with valuing cultural diversity and promoting equity and social justice. It is unique

Table 1 Comparison of Sleeter and Grant (2011) approaches to multicultural education and Hughes et al.'s (2006) racial socialization frameworks

	Teaching ECD	Human relations	Single-group studies	Multicultural education	Multicultural social justice education
Cultural socialization			X		
Egalitarianism	X	X		X	X
Preparation for bias		X		X	X
Promotion of mistrust				X	X
Silence					

from the previous approaches because of its critique of societal structures rather than simply accepting difference as a deficit to be remedied (as in the teaching the culturally different approach) or an individual marker unrelated to broader patterns of power (as in the human relations approach). This approach could include practices that communicate messages about preparation for bias and egalitarianism. The approach could also promote mistrust because it highlights inequities caused by dominant groups. Similarly, the multicultural social justice education approach, which aims to not only highlight societal injustice but to create a more equitable society, would also be a source of preparation for bias, egalitarianism, and promotion of mistrust messages. Note that none of the approaches would explicitly advocate silence about race because each starts with the assumption that ethnic–racial and cultural differences need to be addressed somehow.

Discussion

In the current paper we have described school multicultural education practices within a framework of parental racial socialization in order to examine their potential effects on ethnic–racial identity development. Evidence of the influence of multicultural education on ethnic–racial socialization is limited and inconclusive. This may be primarily due to the fact that little research has directly examined this relationship. Instead, the interdisciplinary nature of multicultural education literature has heavily relied on psychological and sociological research on the development of identity, prejudice, and intergroup relations (e.g., Sleeter 2011). Nevertheless, there is a growing line of research within multicultural education that includes scholarship on ethnic–racial identity development and reasoning mainly categorized as multicultural competence (Bennett 2001). Research on multicultural competence focuses on cognitive and psychological variables such as racial and ethnic knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs of teachers and/or teachers that may influence or interact with school and classroom climates, teaching strategies, and student learning. Research on multicultural competence has informed principles for best practice, but has yet to examine how multicultural education shapes adolescents' ethnic–racial identity and reasoning.

Psychosocial and cognitive characteristics of adolescence suggest that this developmental phase is optimal for advancing the ethnic–racial consciousness of

young people (Manning 1999). As adolescents gain cognitive and social abilities, their ethnic–racial attitudes and associated behaviors change accordingly (Aboud and Levy 2000). In adulthood racial biases are more difficult to influence (Stangor and Schaller 2000). Thus empirical evidence and theoretical assumptions suggest that educational practices may be a source of socialization that could inform ethnic–racial consciousness and have lasting results.

No singular multicultural education practice is more influential than another, because children continuously negotiate implicit and explicit socialization messages received from multiple sources. Future research must examine how youth coordinate the messages they receive from multiple sources. Similar socialization messages may be expected to have a stronger impact, whereas lack of synergy between sources may create conflict, making it difficult for the individual to maintain connections within multiple contexts. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the congruence in norms between families and schools, families and peers, and among different peer groups to have a better understanding of universal and culture-specific aspects of ethnic–racial identity development and racial reasoning.

Literature on racial identity development in schools, which has steadily grown in recent years, has not always been in direct conversation with the literature on parental racial socialization or with the literature on multicultural education. These distinct literatures engage with many of the same constructs but use different language to talk about similar developmental processes. Socialization research has focused on parental practices that promote a positive racial and ethnic identity, providing less information about how schools and communities inform students' ethnic-racial consciousness. Looking at school practices may provide insight into how these contexts act to enrich the experiences of African American youth.

The framework provided by Hughes and colleagues (2006) is useful in begin to conceptualize ways in which education influences students ethnic–racial consciousness, attitudes, and competencies. Nevertheless, this paper is not without limitations. Further analysis of ethnic–racial socialization in school and community educational settings should also consider the possibility that different themes or new processes might emerge in socialization processes located in different settings (i.e., home vs. school or community). Moreover, ethnic–racial socialization in school and community settings may reflect a set of practices or socialization messages that are not reflected in the framework used in this paper. Some of those themes may include the ways schools reinforce stereotypical, racialized roles. For example, textbooks may display African Americans as basketball players instead of scientists. Furthermore, some have discussed the criminalization of young African American boys through school practices such as zero-tolerance policies and increasing numbers of security guards (Ferguson 2001; Rios 2011). Peers are also involved in policing racially appropriate behavior (e.g., accusations of "acting White"), and researchers have demonstrated how school practices are complicit in reinforcing those norms (e.g., Tyson et al. 2005). Tyson et al.'s work is also relevant for understanding how schools reinforce racialized social boundaries, for example, segregation in the lunchroom, and the lower social status of minority groups even in the presence of multiculturalism messages celebrating diversity. Further research is needed on how these practices function as socialization, with attention to individual

differences in identity and cognitive development. Other themes would include how schools socialize dominant cultural values such as individualism and competition in contrast to minority cultural values like cooperation. Research on the socialization of these values would be informed by work on cultural styles (e.g., Boykin et al. 2006) and home-school cultural dissonance (Arunkumar et al. 1999).

Finally this paper is limited to the ethnic–racial socialization of African American youth. Reviewing ethnic–racial socialization practices that may be relevant to other ethnic–racial groups was beyond the scope of this paper. However, we would like to take a moment to acknowledge that ethnic–racial socialization is a factor for youth of all race-ethnicities, not just African American youth.

While this paper begins to articulate the direct connections between multicultural education practices and ethnic–racial socialization that are important to understanding socialization processes outside the family context, more research is needed that directly measures the messages and processes unique to school and community context. In this endeavor, developmental science in the discovery mode has much to gain from the use of qualitative methods, such as interviews, ethnographic observations, and content analysis of socialization sources (e.g., textbooks and media images). While traditional statistical models are useful in testing relations between factors, qualitative methods are helpful in discovering the meaning and nature of proximal processes that affect attitudes and behavior (Bronfenbrenner and Morris 2006). Researchers are increasingly using innovative and empowering methodology that can help further developmental and educational theory. Methodologies such as storytelling, oral histories, biographies, parables, testimonies, or cuentos have underscored the importance of alternative narratives to interrupt dominant explanations (Torre 2009). For instance, youth participatory action research projects build on local expertise knowledge, develop methodologies to surface counter narratives, and encourage the validation and analysis of underrepresented minorities in research. Theory and research on ethnic–racial identity development and racial reasoning has demonstrated that social cues influence and inform children and youth's cognitive understanding of race and ethnicity. Through qualitative and quantitative inquiry, researchers can better understand the racial and ethnic socialization practices of schools and communities that contribute to youths' critical consciousness.

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