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COMMENTARY

American Indian Identities: Issues of Individual Choices and Development

DEVON A. MIHESUAH

How Indianness is defined by American Indians[1] and non-Indians, who claims to be Indian and why, and the anxieties among multi-heritage Indians are complex historical and present-day issues. While the politics of identity and the life experiences of Indians have been addressed more in recent years by scholars, activists, and novelists, there is little research addressing how and why American Indians make their identity choices.

Unquestionably, the diversity of opinions over what it means to be American Indian renders the issue impossible to generalize and difficult to analyze. I am a historian, not a sociologist, but after historical study, self-analysis, observation, and much interaction with people concerned about what it means to be American Indian, it is obvious that any study of Indian identity will be complicated and that there are certainly more "types" of Indians than the ones proposed in 1964 by Clyde Warrior.[2]

Not all individuals claiming to be Indian "look Indian," nor were many born into tribal environments. Many are not tribal-

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ly enrolled and others who claim to be Indian are not Indian at all. Some Indians who appear Caucasian or Black go back and forth assuming Indian, white, and Black identities, while others who have lived most of their lives as non-Indians decide to "become Indians" at a later age. Some individuals are Indian by virtue of biological connection, but know little about their cultural mores either because of lack of interest; because there was no one to teach them; or because it was not (or is not) socially or economically profitable to pursue an Indian identity due to the time period, location, and degree of racism, prejudice, and stereotypes.

Because of assimilation, acculturation, and intermarriage with non-Indians, American Indians have a variety of references to describe themselves: full-blood, traditional, mixed-blood, cross-blood, half-breed, progressive, enrolled, unenrolled, re-Indianized, multi-heritage, bicultural, post-Indian, or simply, "I'm ______ (tribal affiliation)." Reflecting internal debate over identity, many individuals will also say that they are secure, confused, reborn, marginal, or lost. Those who are hopeful about being accepted as Indians declare that "I just discovered my grandmother was a full-blood," or "I'm part Indian but I'm not sure what kind," and so forth.

Most research on identity development focuses on African Americans (usually referred to as "Black" in the literature), Asian Americans, Mexican Americans, or biracial peoples in general.[3] One of the most thoughtful is the "life stages" paradigm for African Americans proposed by William Cross[4] and extended by Thomas Parham, termed "Cycles of Nigrescence" (the process of becoming black[5]). Cross posits that as Blacks respond to a variety of social events, pressures, and expectations, they progress through a set of definable stages that lead to identity resolution. If we substitute American Indians for Blacks and figure in social, economic, and political influences, it is possible to use the Nigrescense outline to logically consider here—albeit briefly—the various elements that influence the identity choices of persons who claim to be racially and/or ethnically American Indian.[6] For comprehensive psychological studies of American Indian identity choice and development, it is, of course, advantageous to investigate the construction of ethnic identity as studied by developmental psychologists.

One assumption of this discussion is that American Indians, like Blacks, live in a white world. Historically (and presently), they have had to deal with racism, stereotypes, and oppression. Sociologist Maria P.P. Root's assessment of biracial peoples is that "it is the marginal status imposed by society rather than the objective mixed race of biracial individuals which poses a severe stress to positive identity development."[7] When Root writes "society," she is referring to white society, but it is apparent that the standards, expectations, and prejudices of tribal societies have the same power to impact an Indian's identity formation. The self-image of Indian people not of mixed races (full-bloods) also are affected by white and Indian societies' influences.

In this essay, "multi-heritage" Indian refers to an individual of two or more races, one being American Indian, who defines Indian as his or her primary reference group. "Racial identity" is the biological race one claims. A multi-heritage person might claim all of his or her racial heritages or only one; he or she can be biologically mixed-blood or full-blood, and have no exposure to the cultural mores of an American Indian tribe, being connected to their group only by virtue of genetics.

"Cultural identity" reflects the cultural standards of a society to which one subscribes. Michael Green describes cultural identity as an identity that "gives the individual a sense of a common past and of a shared destiny."[8] Tribes have the commonalties of having to deal with the effects of colonialism (racism; prejudice; loss of culture, land, and population) and originally having members who were exclusively indigenous peoples. Indians who only recognize this general definition of Indians' common past, and who utilize a spectrum of tribal symbols and cultural mores to construct their version of an Indian, subscribe to a pan-Indian cultural identity. Green also asserts that culture "unifies and integrates the individuals, gives them a sense of belonging, and a sense of their own uniqueness as a people. Further, a culture provides the individuals within that culture a way of life that is constitutive of what it means to be a human being."[9] Using this definition of culture, Indians who practice their specific tribal traditions and are profoundly affected socially, religiously, and politically by those traditions are often referred to as "culturally Indian." Individuals who adhere to the cultural norms of two groups may refer to themselves as bicultural.

"Ethnic" or "group identity" is a term that is often interchangeable with "cultural identity." Borrowing from Rose, ethnicity is a "group classification in which the members share a unique social and cultural heritage passed on from one generation to the next."[10] It does not have a biological basis. "Traditional" Indians adhere to the culture of their tribe by speaking the language, practicing religious ceremonies, and living among their tribespeople. They might use the term *ethnic* to mean that both their racial background *and* cultural adherence are Indian. Other individuals who claim to be Indian but who have no cultural connection to their tribe may also refer to themselves as ethnically Indian. American Indian ethnic or cultural identities have a variety of meanings attached to them by Indian and non-Indian societies and by individuals who claim them; they are salient terms that change with the economic, political, and social tides.

LIFE STAGES

As applied to Blacks, those in Cross' first stage, *pre-encounter*, know they are Black, but they give little thought to race issues. Some see their Blackness as an imposition on their lives. Exposure to racial stereotypes and miseducation may lead them to perceive Blackness as negative, and some individuals may adopt a white worldview, using white/mainstream standards to judge themselves and everyone else. They may devalue Black culture (everything from their skin color and hair texture to African art and religion) and glorify white/mainstream culture.[11]

It is during the first part of Cross' second stage, *encounter*, that such persons experience a shocking event which jolts them into considering that their frame of reference for forming their identity is inadequate. Experiences such as Black people being denied access to an exclusive non-Black neighborhood because of their skin color, the death of Martin Luther King, Jr., or time spent in prison—as in the case of Malcolm X—act as catalysts to initiate an exploration of the Black Power movement and to listen to different opinions on life. The second part of the encounter stage is when the person decides to develop his Black identity.[12]

The third stage, *immersion-emersion*, is marked by an intense interest in all that is Black, and everything pertaining to "Blackness" (hairstyles, clothing, mannerisms, speech) is enthusiastically incorporated into that person's life. She attends activist meetings, studies Black history, and denigrates white and "less Black" people, sometimes aggressively. Feelings of insecurity about one's identity remain high, and the person often will criticize anyone who resembles unattractive aspects of the person's old self.[13]

The forth stage, *internalization,* is reached when the person attains a sense of inner security and self-confidence about his Black identity. Defensiveness, stress, and anti-white behavior regresses in favor of "ideological flexibility, psychological openness, and self-confidence."[14] The person is at peace with himself and is able to express feelings of dissatisfaction about racism and inequality through constructive, nonviolent means.[15]

THE CROSS MODEL AND INDIANS

Upon first reading the Cross model it was easy to insert the names of Indian acquaintances into the model, and I see myself scattered throughout. But, as Cross explains, the stages are not always clear-cut and simplistic for Blacks, and neither are they for Indians. Some individuals might remain at one level, or hover between two or more stages simultaneously, or some may arrive at one stage then move back to a previous stage. Some Indians never feel the need to change or develop their identities at all and fit into the *internalization* stage all their lives.

Cross' model presents an adequate outline to begin discussion of identity development for Indians, but numerous factors must be taken into consideration, most of which spur confusion. First, tribes are not alike. They have different languages, religions, histories, and methods of dealing with non-Indians. Full-blood members also retain a notable degree of physiological distinctiveness. Second, many tribes incorporate members with minimal biological heritage and no knowledge of tribal culture, giving the impression to some that all one needs in order to be Indian is to prove that one has a distant Indian ancestor. Third, many tribal members look phenotypically Caucasian. Fourth, many people with little or no knowledge of Indians *want* to identify and to be identified as Indian. Fifth, the historical time period of the person's life must be taken into account. In the 1990s, Indians are considerably more outspoken, populous, and accepted by non-Indians than they have been historically. Their physiologies, images among non-Indians, and individual and tribal socioeconomic situations are different, as are their worldviews.[16] Sixth, even within a group, the personal needs, physiology, and environmental influences of each individual is different.

Cross designed his model with the idea that Blacks will become *more so* after progressing through the stages. In regard to Indians, I posit that: (1) some Indians go through stages on their way to becoming like *whites;* (2) some white, Black, and Hispanic individuals and mixed-heritage people of minimal Indian heritage who desire to "become Indian" also progress through stages on their quest for an Indian identity;[17] and (3) multi-heritage individuals, especially those who do not have cultural knowledge of the group they aspire to become a member of and/or do not physically resemble other members of that group, will have more difficulty in establishing a comfortable identity.

INDIAN LIFE STAGES

Stage 1: Pre-encounter

Cross writes that Black individuals at this stage may identify with white culture or focus on aspects other than Blackness (such as their job), but their Blackness is denied in favor of being accepted as just a human being.[18] Some Indians in the pre-encounter stage are well aware of themselves as Indians yet they know little about their tribal history and culture, much less about other Indians or the political, economic, and social state of tribes in general. They do not necessarily identify with whites, although some do. Others see themselves as racially and culturally Indians, but they also believe themselves to be inferior to whites and at fault for their economic, social, and/or political conditions. Of course, many Indians have no feelings of inferiority. They are fulfilled, satisfied with their place in the world, and never seek an identity change.

The home environment is the place where children first learn values.[19] It is during adolescence that they strive to create an identity while at the same time attempting to conform to the norms of peer groups.[20] Neighbors' ethnicities and attitudes, television, radio, movies, and literature also affect the child's worldview. The parents may be full-blood, mixed-blood, or one may be white and one Indian—full or mixed—and possess a variety of values that impact their children, such as in one of the following modern scenarios:

1. The parents may possess only a white worldview and are Indians by merit of blood, not by cultural connection. These

individuals may be of minimal Indian blood, and they know they are Indian because of family legend (often without proof of tribal membership), or because their ancestors are indeed listed on tribal rolls. The children often hear that they are Indian throughout their childhood, but they are not taught any details about tribal life. Because of their possible connection to Indians they often romanticize Indian culture as monolithic and inherently good (one with nature, etc.) but they know nothing of tribal politics, health statistics, poverty levels, or other realities of daily tribal life. The child is essentially white in every way, including appearance. If they do pursue their Indianness, it is usually during adulthood.[21]

2. The parents may be white with no knowledge of Indians while the children are adopted Indians. Even if the parents teach the children about Indians, it is often a superficial attempt and the children desire to find out about their heritage as they grow older. The children are taught to live as whites, but they will know at an early age that they look different from their parents and neighbors.

3. The parents may have an understanding of their tribal culture and of the white world because they are forced to interact in mainstream society. For example, some Indians during the relocation period (1950s) moved to large cities and found themselves isolated from other Indians. They either learned about white society, remained frustrated in a foreign environment, or moved back home.[22] More currently, in Flagstaff, Arizona, because of the Navajo-Hopi land issue numerous Navajos have moved from their reservation homes to urban areas next to non-Indians. Although they attempt to retain traditions, they must learn about and interact with white society to survive. These individuals may be surprised at the level of racism towards Indians, but because of their traditional family values and extended family on the reservation most remain confident with their Indianness. Many of the children become acquainted with the values of non-Indian society while attending white schools and playing with white children. Some grow judgmental against their tribespeople and question the value of their tribal culture.

4. The parents possess both white and Indian blood and want the children to know about both cultures. The children may attend white schools and participate in tribal activities after school and on week-ends, and they have access to their extended family. They may have a confusing childhood, as

Root surmises that many multi-heritage people will encounter discrimination within their family from the group with higher social status.[23] The group of higher status, however, is not always white.

If a portion of the multi-heritage child's family is composed of a socially dominant racial group, the child may perceive that race as the superior one, especially if racist remarks and/or jokes are made about the other racial group.[24] For example, a multi-heritage child with a white mother and Indian father who is never allowed to visit her father's family may begin to believe that her white blood is superior to Indian blood. Conversely, if the child were to spend that time with her father's Indian relatives, he or she might hear enough negative comments about whites to believe that her white blood is inferior. This scenario could also be true of a full-blood, multicultural Indian child whose parents are representatives of two (or more) different tribes. Another cause for confusion is when the extended family refuses to accept an interracial marriage and will not visit a son or daughter who married outside the group. Children are, however, less likely to become upset and confused by their mixed ancestry if both parents and the extended families have pride in themselves and their cultures and if both have equal social status within the family unit.[25]

5. The parents may be bicultural. They appear to live like whites during the week when they work and socialize with non-Indians, and they resemble Indians on weekends or at other times when they attend powwows, sun dances, tribal activities, or other Indian social and familial functions. They are comfortable with the bicultural lifestyle, and the children have extended family members they can turn to for information about their heritage. This family will look phenotypically like Indians, some of mixed heritage.

6. One or both parents may be racially Indian and repress Indian values in the home and refuse to impart tribal knowledge to their children. Some parents may try to deemphasize Indian culture either because they think that white culture is superior to Indian cultures or because they believe that by learning only the ways of white society can their children succeed socially and economically.

An Indian's rejection of Indian culture does not necessarily lead to self-hatred. As Cross discusses, despite the reality that we live in a complex, pluralistic society, most white children usually "see the world in monoracial terms" and perceive no need to learn how to interact with other racial and/or cultural groups.[26] Most Black children, on the other hand, are taught to be biculturally competent. Similarly, many Indian parents who appear to reject Indian culture do not want their children to become white. They simply want them to have equal access to the socioeconomic privileges that whites have.

7. Children with parents who possess an Indian worldview exclusively are likely to live on a reservation or in an area inhabited by other traditionals. The family is mainly exposed to other Indians and their tribal cultures. The children are similar to those in the second example in that they may become alarmed at the racism they encounter if they leave the home environment. Some of the children may be similar to those who discover desirable aspects of white culture and begin to wonder about the usefulness of tribal culture. The same can be said of some Indian children who enroll in university away from their home environment and those who were forced to attend federal boarding schools in the 1800s.

8. The biological and cultural Indian family may live on the reservation or in an urban area in poverty. One or both parents and some extended family may be uneducated alcoholics in poor physical and mental health. This family identifies as Indian but they see little hope for advancement, so they do not try.

9. The family members look phenotypically Black and possess Indian blood. Even if they desire to pursue an Indian identity, their appearances alert others to the reality that they are part Black. Depending on the attitudes of the neighborhood and nearby tribes, the people who look Black will most likely be viewed as Black.[27]

There are other examples, of course, especially when the varying kinship, clan, and extended family systems among the numerous tribes are considered, but regardless of the home arrangement the individual will in large measure adopt the values and identities that are prevalent in the household. According to Parham, it is during late adolescence-early adulthood that the child begins to locate her place in the social environment. Indians, like Blacks, realize that they are at once a part of, yet apart from, American society.[28] Not every Indian, however, becomes aware of this. Individuals who are mixed Indian and white, are Caucasian in appearance, and who were not taught any aspects of Indian culture may experience none or only minimal negative feelings about being Indian because they do not perceive themselves to be Indian and neither does anyone else. They can "pass" as white and can "stay white" if they so choose. C. Matthew Snipp's analysis of the 1980 census reveals that the majority of persons who claimed Indian *ancestry* did not claim to be of the Indian *race* and are termed "Americans of Indian descent." Most of these individuals are no different from other whites except that they have an Indian ancestor in their family tree. He proposes that socioeconomic factors account for the choices evidenced on the census. Many people become Indian only when it is economically profitable and socially desirable to be an Indian.[29]

In addition to home values, the child is influenced by teachers, television, radio, books, sports mascots, and people on the street and their reaction to the child. Seemingly positive comments directed towards the mixed-heritage child may cause him to realize that he is different. To illustrate, at around the age of three children become aware of skin, hair, and eye color.[30] The child also becomes aware that his or her "ethnic" name sounds unlike other childrens'.[31] My son, for example, learned to say Mihesuah at three. Several times he has been asked, "What kind of name is that?" by people not meaning anything negative but the comments may start him thinking that despite the rich Comanche history behind his name he is different. Root posits that it is when the child encounters negative experiences at an older age that identity conflicts—including aspects such as names—will arise.[32]

Stage 2: Encounter

Cross explains that after a Black individual encounters a negative or positive event, she may be jolted into reevaluating her place in the world.[33] In regard to Indians, the person may hear a moving speech about American Indian history and culture that makes her want to know more about her tribal history. This is an *encounter* because the person had previously only heard a negative version of her history and is enthused enough by the new version to embark upon a quest to discover the truth. There are three basic goals of individuals who have an "Indian encounter":

1. Becoming an Indian

Appearance may be one of the first catalysts for exploring identity possibilities. If an Indian child is adopted by white parents, the child wonders at an early age why he appears different from the parents. If parents attempt to keep children from exploring their Indian heritage, the children will become curious as to why their parents feel Indianness is "bad" when other people may say the opposite. The adopted child's jolt may be a discovery of his tribe. Some white parents may attempt to educate the adopted child about his Indian heritage, but if they know nothing about Indians they may take the child to general events such as powwows and movies dealing with Indians, and read them books with Indian characters. The lack of depth in any of these activities usually proves to be unsatisfactory to the child. The parents may attempt to involve their adopted child in specific tribal functions, but usually this does not happen as most white parents keep their Indian children away from their true origins out of fear that they may be taken away from them. In a few instances, the white adoptive parents and their adoptive Indian child have good relations with the child's Indian families, thus providing the child with an outlet for obtaining information.

Two young men I knew when living in Texas, one a Kiowa/Muscogee and the other a Lakota, had been adopted as infants by white couples. Both sets of parents were extremely religious and discouraged either child from pursuing knowledge about their Indian heritages. In the mid 1980s when I met them, both were in their early thirties; they were angry, confused, estranged from their white parents, and were regular patrons of a drug and alcohol rehabilitation center in Fort Worth. They were attempting to "find themselves" by participating in powwows and attending generic sweat lodge ceremonies. Their lack of kin relations and knowledge of tribal culture reminded them that they were marginally Indian, and their distinctive Indian appearances disallowed them from becoming white. Although they were Indians by race, they remained culturally unsatisfied.[34]

Some children raised in households that did not impart values of Indian culture but are linked to a tribe because of blood might hear positive facts about Indians at school and become increasingly interested in meeting their extended family. Often the person will explore archives to find relatives listed on tribal rolls and will enroll themselves if they have not been already enrolled.

White adults who have "always been interested in Indians" and become disillusioned with other white people are sometimes jolted when they hear an Indian speak because they identify with put-upon peoples. Or perhaps they feel guilt for what has been done to Indians. They may especially admire radicals who garner attention through their flamboyant actions and rhetoric. These people adopt a mixed-blood Indian identity because that claim is easier to defend than a full-blood one.

A white person, after attending a "sweat lodge ceremony" conducted by white people discovers that it can be profitable to impart the teachings of Indian religions to others so she embarks on a journey "on the red road" to gather information. The "white shamans" usually retain their knowledge of white ways, marketing and accounting especially.[35] Still others can be seen in archives across the country attempting to locate an Indian ancestor on tribal rolls so they can receive whatever moneys they believe Indians have coming to them each month.[36]

Indians are not seen with the same prejudices in all parts of the country. Among affluent suburbanites in some cities a person who looks white but claims to be part Indian may garner the response, "That's so neat." Being "part Indian" but not really looking it affords a form of status among some Caucasian groups. Receiving kudos for one's racial claims can jolt the individual on to garner more attention.[37]

2. Becoming More Indian/Rediscovering Indianness

Some Indians may never have been aware of their history or culture. Some Indians move away from their tribal area while others join a non-Indian religious group or marry a non-Indian or Indian person with little interest in Indian culture and then lose their connection to their tribal cultures. They speak English exclusively and do not attend tribal ceremonies. Numerous events may jar Indians who have lost touch with their heritage into becoming an Indian or "rediscovering their Indianness":

(a) Indian people who have heard negative comments about Indians all their life from television, radio, and teachers—while the family did nothing to correct the misinformation—then hears from an informed teacher that Indians have a rich and positive history and culture, become alert to the possibility that the negative view of themselves and their cultures are unfounded. Another Indian attends a traditional marriage, puberty, or healing ceremony and is moved enough by the event to learn more about the religion and culture.

(b) An Indian student in an anthropology class hears the professor refer to Indians as "our" Indians. The student may visit an archive filled with skeletal remains and sacred cultural objects and become insulted, outraged, or even scared, and upon realizing that the professor is referring to his ancestors as "objects of study," the student is stirred into political activism.

(c) A prison sentence might give the Indian person the time and impetus to learn about other tribes and cultures with similar histories of oppression. The inmate decides that an organized movement to improve conditions for oppressed peoples is in order and becomes determined to learn about her tribe and to fight for her people. This was the case with many of the original members of the American Indian Movement.[38]

3. Becoming Less Indian

Not all Indians desire to find an identity that stresses their Indianness. Some Indians have and still do search for an identity that is more white-oriented. For example, from 1852 to 1909 Cherokee youth attended the Cherokee Male or Female Seminaries, both boarding schools established by the Cherokee tribe in an effort to acculturate their youth to the ways of white society. The Cherokee tribal council initially hired alumni from Mount Holyoke Female Seminary in South Hadley, Massachusetts and Yale as teachers, and by the 1870s, graduates of the Cherokee seminaries returned to teach at their alma maters. Both seminaries were patterned after the New England schools and offered the Cherokee students a sophisticated curriculum that included courses in physics, botany, mathematics, languages, and literature. Teachers did not include information about Cherokee culture,[39] an interesting aspect considering that the schools were not established by the federal government—an entity with a reputation for devaluing tribal culture.[40] One focus of both seminaries was to teach the students to imitate white people in every way. After a hefty dose of lessons that imbued students with information about how whites were superior to Cherokees, many of the students commented in school papers and in correspondence about the need to leave the old ways behind and began to refer to their more traditional tribesmen as "backwards" and "unenlightened."[41]

By the 1850s, at least, many mixed-heritage Cherokees expressed their confusion over race and culture. They knew that biologically they were both Cherokee and white, and they knew something about both cultures. They were, however, members of the Cherokee Nation. They did not want to leave their Cherokee *heritage* behind, just their current Cherokee *culture,* which many students believed was useless to them. They strived to establish a new Cherokee identity, that of a person knowledgeable about the white world, possessing Cherokee and white blood, and often looking Caucasian. They could be members of the Cherokee tribe and culturally white at the same time.

Just as some non-Indians attempt to legitimatize their claims to Indianness by marrying an Indian, or some multi-heritage Indians try to become more Indian by marrying an Indian darker in color and with cultural knowledge,[42] some Indians may attempt to become less Indian by marrying a white person or an Indian with lighter coloring. Examples of the latter are graduates of the Cherokee Female Seminary who married either white men or Cherokee men with smaller amounts of Cherokee blood than they had.[43] Frantz Fanon's remark about men of color and white women—"I wish to be acknowledged not as Black but as white . . . who but a white woman can do this for me? By loving me she proves that I am worthy of white love. I am loved like a white man"[44]—is a statement that could be a truism for some Indian men and women who marry whites, but this aspect requires further, sensitive inquiry.

IDENTITY RESOLUTIONS CONSIDERED DURING THE ENCOUNTER STAGE

Root's series of identity "resolutions"[45] for biracial peoples may be appropriate to include here because it is during Cross' encounter stage that the person considers what identities they can and cannot choose to pursue. Acceptance of these resolutions depend on the social, political, economic, and environmental situations the person encounters. Therefore, the person may change resolutions more than once in a lifetime, or may settle on two resolutions at once.

Resolution 1: Acceptance of the Identity Society Assigns

Root posits that multi-heritage people who are part white, who do not appear to be Caucasian, and who are reared in racially oppressive parts of the United States will have little choice about their racial identity.[46] If a person looks Black or Indian she will be seen as Black or Indian regardless of whether or not the person wants to identify as white. Her supposition can also be taken to mean that those Indians who look white or Black may not be accepted as an Indian among Indian societies.

A problem with this resolution is that persons may feel comfortable with their chosen identity in one area of the country and may be perceived by others in another area as belonging to a different racial group. For example, a multi-heritage person whose racial reference group is an Oklahoma tribe may be accepted as an Indian in the Plains states. In the Southwest, however, where Pueblos, Navajos, and other tribes have members with substantial blood quantums and distinctive Indian appearances, that same person may be viewed as "barely Indian" or as a non-Indian. In fact, numerous members of tribes from outside the Southwest either attending or working at Northern Arizona University complain that "Navajos think if you're not Navajo then you're not an Indian."

Indians who are enrolled in tribes but who look white often identify themselves as Caucasians in order to avoid racism. Lavera Rose writes in her thesis on biracial Lakota women that many biracial Lakota females try to hide their Indian racial heritage when moving to non-Indian society because they perceive that non-Indians view all Indians as inferior to Euro-Americans.[47] Some Black or mixed-heritage Indian-Black individuals identify as Indians in an attempt to escape racism against Blacks. As Brewton Berry describes the mind-set of many Nanticokes, Chickahominys, and Lumbees, "Most of them would doubtless prefer to be whites. But, since that goal is beyond their reach, they will settle for Indian. It is better to be red than black—even an off-shade of red."[48]

Solution 2: Identification With Two or More Racial or Cultural Groups

Root purports this to be a positive resolution only if the persons are able to retain their personality across groups and they feel welcomed in both groups. This resolution may only be possible in parts of the United States where interracial marriages and mixed-blood children are tolerated.[49] The challenge for multi-heritage Indians wishing to live in both worlds is to construct strategies for coping with social resistance to their membership in both groups. A problem for many is that if they look

Caucasian and/or have little knowledge of tribal culture, they may not be accepted by the Indian community they wish to be part of. This is especially true if they have inadequate background to enroll in their tribe and no kinship ties. Conversely, multi-heritage Indians who look phenotypically Indian may not be considered as equals by whites.

There are numerous multi-heritage individuals who identify as simultaneously Indian and non-Indian and are accepted by all sides of their family and tribe, and because of strong familial connections to all parts of their heritage they feel secure in themselves. These people resemble McFee's proposed "150% Man" in that they are able to absorb and use both new and old ways.[50] In addition, they are able to meet the "membership" demands required by both groups.

Many Indians who are able to pass as both Indian and white use their appearances and social knowledge to their advantage. Root defines one form of identification as "tokenism"—a process by which a person's ambiguous appearance, but identification with a racial group, allows that person to be hired to fill a minority quota because the person is seen as less threatening than a full-blood.[51] While Root asserts that the hiring agency assigns the identity for the person, often the person of ambiguous appearance seeks employment at an institution that desires an individual of the race the person wants to be. The hire validates his or her identity desires and bestows a title that can be recorded on a resume for the future, such as "Director of American Indian Programs." These people often claim Indianness as their "articulated identity," defined by Williams as the identity "one calls oneself publicly. It may or may not be in concert with one's intuitive or experiential identity."[52]

Solution 3: Identification as a New Racial Group

Although the U.S. government will allow citizens to mark more than one racial or ethnic category on the next census,[53] many mixed-heritage people identify themselves as a new race, such as the Hapa Haole in Hawaii[54] and the Métis in Canada,[55] or as "multi-heritage," "multi-racial," or "biracial" so they will not have to choose specific races or cultures. Many multi-heritage Indians prefer this type of classification either because they know little or nothing about their racial heritages or because they cannot decide which one to designate as the primary racial reference group. The option to choose more than one race has incurred debate from those who believe that people should make a decision about their racial choice; they argue that not choosing one's obvious heritage (because one looks Black, one is Black, as in the case of Tiger Woods) is a denial of self.[56]

Solution 4: Identification With a Single Racial and/or Cultural Group

This resolution is different from the first one because the person actively seeks identification with one group regardless of what society thinks, the choices made by one's siblings, or one's physical resemblance to that group. This resolution is positive if the person is accepted by the selected group, does not feel marginal to the group, and does not deny other aspects of her heritage.[57]

Numerous complicated and interwoven factors influence people when deciding what identity they can realistically pursue. For example, since contact, American Indians have been romanticized, reviled, admired, feared, and hated by Euro-Americans. These Euro-American views of Indians, and the negative and positive images of Indians that have become a part of American culture, continue to exert powerful effects on the self-image of Indian people.[58]

Indians hear and see negative stereotypes that American Indians are inferior to whites. Television, movies, cartoons, books, and teachers contribute to the ideas that Indians are heathens, savages, ignorant, and lazy. Children learn from juvenile literature that Indians are much like animals: primal, simple, and stupid. On television everyday are classic westerns that portray Indians as violent antagonists who were impediments to western civilization, and sports teams such as the Washington Redskins and the Atlanta Braves feature mascots that are war-like and ugly.[59] Movies such as Disney's *Pocahontas* (1995) portray the title character as a woman who wears minimal clothing, sings with animals, and is shaped like Barbie, a feature that angers many Indian women who argue that the character's unrealistic body image contributes to feelings of inferiority among Indian girls.[60]

On the other hand, positive stereotyping might account for some non-Indians' and mixed-heritage peoples' decision to become Indians. Individuals with little knowledge of their tribe might become enamored with images of Indians as physically attractive beings, valiant warriors, and mystical environmentalists who are "one with nature." Positive imagery of Indians in the 1960s and '70s probably accounts in part for the dramatic increase in the numbers of Indians on the 1980 census.[61]

In their 1987 article, "Dimensions of Native American Stereotyping," Hanson and Rouse propose that stereotypes are not static, that they change "in form and prevalence" depending on "historical and socio-cultural circumstances."[62] For example, in areas of the United States where Indians and non-Indians clash over treaty hunting and fishing rights and other economic resources, stereotypes of Indians are more negative. In a subsequent article the authors assert that "factual knowledge is not sufficient to counter status-based prejudice."[63] Indeed, those who have vested economic and social interest in images of Indians as inferior beings rarely will acknowledge Indians as equals. In areas of the country where Indians are not viewed with favor, the Indian's *perceived level of discrimination* plays a factor in whether or not the person wants to pursue their Indian identity in that area or if they prefer to express their Indianness elsewhere.

A stumbling block to identifying with only one group is if the persons' self-perception differs from how others perceive them. Just because a person—mixed-blood or full-blood—desires to join a particular racial or ethnic group does not mean that he or she has a guaranteed entrance into that group. One factor that hinders a person's acceptance by Indian groups is tribal membership standards. Almost always, tribes require that proposed enrollees supply proof that they are directly related to a member of the tribe who is listed on the current tribal roll or on specified historic tribal rolls. Some tribes allow a person membership regardless of blood quantum, while others require the person be at least half-blood. Others allow entrance only if the mother is a tribal member.

Federally recognized tribes[64] are granted specified rights such as self-government; benefits, including health care; and education, housing, and resource development programs. Tribal membership bestowed by a state or federally recognized tribe is important for some Indians. The Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990, for example, requires that anyone producing and selling "Indian products" be a member of a recognized tribe, thus excluding numerous self-proclaimed Indian artists who have been creating "Indian" works for years. In Texas, at least, individuals who wish to utilize peyote legally in Native American Church ceremonies must prove that they are at least one-quarter Indian blood, which also means they must be tribally enrolled. In addition, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the U.S. Department of Education recognize as Indians only those who are recognized as such by a tribe.[65]

Other limiting factors for choosing Indianness is lack of cultural knowledge and residence apart from the tribe, ethnocentrism, and what I term *culturalism.* Root purports that all racial groups have prejudices. When these prejudices are "projected" onto the multi-heritage person, the racial group becomes the "creators of marginal status."[66]

Among members of a single tribe, racism and suspicion often exist. Economics, politics, and social aspects surrounding kinship systems, clans, religion, and interaction with non-Indians are major factors affecting how tribespeople feel about each other. Culturalism exists when tribal members view each other with disdain because of their cultural adherences. Mixed-heritage members may see traditionals as uncivilized and backwards. Traditionalists may believe that progressives are "less Indian" because of their cultural naiveté and that multi-heritage peoples only claim tribal membership for land and annuity purposes. As a result of this attitude among Lakotas, those who do not live on the reservation, who do not speak the language, and are "less Indian looking" do not, according to Lavera Rose, enjoy the "cultural entirety of being Lakota."[67] Other examples: Zitkala-Sa (Yankton) and Charles Eastman (Dakota) lived away from their tribes and were successful, yet they failed to retain strong kinship ties and therefore lost status among their people.[68]

Current leadership of tribes often dictates how tribal membership is defined, how annuities are dispersed, and who receives tribal jobs. Indian persons out of favor with the current political tribal power, or who are successful by the whites' standards but not by tribal standards (such as completing a university degree or earning a substantial salary and accumulating material wealth), or who marry a person from an "inappropriate" racial group may find it easier to live apart from the tribe or to distance themselves completely and not enroll their children.

Another limiting factor in choosing identity is the most obvious aspect of one's racial heritage: appearance. The color of one's hair, eyes, and skin are the barometers used to measure how "Indian" one is and either limits or broadens one's choice of ethnicity. If an individual doesn't "look Indian," she is often suspect for claiming Indian identity regardless of her cultural knowledge.[69]

The idea that a Caucasian appearance is "better" serves as a point of contention among many people of color.[70] As among Blacks, darker-skinned Indians often distrust lighter-skinned ones, arguing that their non-Indian blood takes them out of touch with the realities of Indian life. Because it is assumed that light-skinned Indians have a choice as to which world they inhabit, their dedication to fighting the various social, political, religious, and economic oppressions faced by "real" Indians is questioned. A person who looks Caucasian, was raised in white society, and has little, if any, connection to his tribe but still claims an Indian identity will be looked at with suspicion. Why would people want to become Indian if they were not raised as an Indian? Why call oneself a "person of color" if one looks white?

Numerous white-looking people claim to be Indian and often are readily considered by many whites to be Indians. Why are they accepted as such? One answer may be that movies and television strongly influence public opinion (journalist Orville Schell comments that "Hollywood is the most powerful force in the world, besides the U.S. military"[71]), and Indian characters who look white supply a new definition of "Indian." For example, the blond, fair Mariel Hemingway is one-fourth Sioux in *Personal Best* (1982); the blond, fair Val Kilmer is one-fourth Sioux in *Thunderheart* (1992); the blond, fair Chuck Norris is one-half Cherokee in the current television series *Walker: Texas Ranger*. Indeed, many Indians and non-Indians believe that even the most tenuous biological affiliation with a tribal group is enough to qualify the person as Indian.

Multi-heritage Indians with a desire to identify as Indians are well aware that light-skinned and blue-eyed individuals are viewed as white, and they fret about being accepted by Indians *and* by white society. In her book, *When Nickels Were Indians: An Urban Mixed Blood Story*,[72] ethnic studies professor Patricia Penn Hilden writes that in the 1970s she did not claim to be Nez Perce when applying for an Office of Economic Opportunity position because she looks phenotypically white and was fearful that people might mistake her for a wannabe. Her repeated references to the "shovel nature" of her teeth (a feature that she claims was "that era's [1950s-1960s?] 'scientific' signifiers of Native blood") and to her cheekbones (are we to assume they are high?) illustrate her need apparent to convince readers that she does have a tribal connection.[73]

Okazawa-Rey argues that when light-skinned Black women degrade darker-skinned Black women their "identification with the racist oppressors is complete."[74] And this may be true for Indians in some cases. For example, progressive Cherokee women in the 1870s who were lighter in color than their tribeswomen used words like *heathen* to describe girls who were darker and therefore presumably inferior. During the process of preparing for one annual Shakespeare production, one light-skinned Cherokee female seminarian said to a classmate with darker skin who aspired to a certain role in the play, "You are too dark to be an angel."[75]

Indeed, some Indians preferred to mingle only with their own color group, as reflected by the comments of a Choctaw woman reminiscing on her school days at Tuskahoma, Oklahoma in 1910: "I have never been so scared in my life. I shake when I think about it. There were so many full-blood girls blacker than anybody you ever seen.... I don't believe they were all just Indian, they were mixed with this other race.... I cried and I cried and I cried because I was up there with them Black kids. I just don't like the looks of [those] people." She also referred to them as "that bunch of little old Black kids I tell you just looked like flies flying around."[76]

Many Indians attempt to keep their skin at a minimal darkness, presumably to distance themselves from Blacks or from their own African American blood. At a powwow outside of Lawton, Oklahoma about ten years ago, a Muscogee woman asked me to retrieve her umbrella from her truck's cab saying, "Get me my umbrella, Hon; otherwise I'll be lookin' like a nigger by supper." Cherokee female seminarians who were never without their parasols and wide-brimmed hats worried about the same thing more than a hundred years ago. On the other hand, many multi-heritage Indians may be comparatively dark in color but nevertheless lie in the sun to darken their skin. Despite her Indian appearance (to most non-Indians, at least), Mary Brave Bird recalled that in her youth she "waited for the summer, for the prairie sun, the Badlands sun, to tan me and make me into a real skin."[77]

Stage 3: Immersion-Emersion

Cross and Parham agree that Blacks at this stage attempt to develop a thorough Black frame of reference. For Indians, like Blacks, it can be a volatile stage, often causing anxiety, depression, and frustration over attempts at becoming the "right kind of Indian." In Cross' words, "the person begins to demolish the old perspective and simultaneously tries to construct what will become his or her new frame of reference."[78]

Many Indians at this stage engage in aggressive behavior. They seek information on Indians (not necessarily their own tribe) and participate in powwows and religious ceremonies. They protest against racial injustices (often violently), deny the racial and cultural non-Indian aspects of themselves, and become hostile towards non-Indians (whites, especially) and other Indians who do not conform to their ideas of Indianness. Those insecure in their economic or political worlds adopt a "redder than thou" attitude and question whether another Indian is "really Indian."

Although the founding members of the American Indian Movement were young and had been incarcerated and/or victimized by poverty, racism, and self-doubt, AIM and the Red Power movement—like the Black Power movement—touched individuals of all classes, identities, and motivations.[79] The male "radicals," however, garnered media attention and have subsequently demonstrated through rhetoric and actions that during AIM's formation many of them were indeed in the immersion stage of their life; some appear to be there still.

The aforementioned Cherokee Seminarians, on the other hand, began a "whiter than thou" campaign and judged their fellow Indians (Cherokees and members of other tribes) on the basis of their degree of assimilation. Whether or not a person was Christian, educated, and striving for the white ideal played a large part in how these young men and women evaluated each other as human beings. In the encounter stage, the Cherokee students were convinced, according to one alumnus, that the "white way was the only acceptable way,"[80] and they began strategizing to become more like the whites their teachers so overtly praised and less like the Indians they criticized.

Stage 4: Internalization

At this point a person develops inner security about her identity. She is able to discuss in a rational manner racial issues with members of other racial and/or ethnic groups. "In short," Parham writes, "the person becomes *biculturally* successful [emphasis added]."[81] But what about those individuals who never reach an equitable solution about their identity? Do they mirror Stonequist's model of a "marginal" person—one who lives a life of frustration, unable to fit comfortably into any group?[82]

Whether an Indian person can be at peace with himself can only be answered on a case-by-case basis. As an Ojibwa counselor at Northern Arizona University observed, "Every Indian person I know has an identity issue." As the few examples of the Cherokee seminarians, Indian adoptees of white parents, and the victims of prejudice and stereotypes illustrate, just because a person is visually recognized as an Indian does not mean that he is satisfied with his identity. In addition to the perceived level of discrimination, rejection of one's identity choice by Indians and non-Indians, unfamiliarity with tribal culture and residence away from the tribe, social status of the group, and appearance, another reason for Indian peoples' identity insecurities may be because they almost always suffer from "internalized oppression" because they often reject a part of their racial heritage that is also a part of themselves.[83]

Indians may believe that in order to achieve approval from one group, they must embrace only the personal aspects that conform to that group and reject the other parts. Rejected parts, as Root points out, cannot easily be forgotten. Parents, extended family, and physical attributes remain powerful reminders of what the individual is attempting to abandon.[84] Even parts that are not rejected are consistently evaluated and compared by the individual and by others. For instance, I remember distinctly that after passing my comprehensive Ph.D. exams in 1988 a professor asked me, "Have you considered that it's your white blood that makes you successful?"

Other aspects of self-identification that sociologists assume applies to all multi-heritage peoples may not apply to individuals claiming to be Indians. For example, Root asserts that persons have the right to identify themselves according to how they want to be identified. She also believes that they should develop strategies for coping with resistance to their proclaimed identities so that they do not "internalize questions as inferring that there is something wrong with them."[85]

Indeed, Indians should identify themselves as Indians if they feel the need, but obviously not if their identities are fabricated. In addition, one of the most hotly contested aspects of Indian identity today concerns whether or not a person of minimal Indian blood, no tribal cultural knowledge, and lack of kinship and familial ties should identify as Indian. Not everyone who claims to be Indian agrees that they need to be tribally enrolled or even recognized by their tribe in order to identify with them. It may cause stress to the "Indians" whose tribe will not claim them, but tribes which must contend with unrecognized individuals who insist that they should be members of the tribe may also feel stress. As voiced by a number of Indian writers, it is a violation of tribal rights not to allow tribes to determine who their members are.[86]

While the economic, political, and social forces affecting American Indians' identity choices and development often can be readily categorized, the vast differences among tribes and individual Indians, in addition to the complexities they face, disallow one empirical study on Indian identity to answer the myriad questions about how an individual or group maintains, alters, or loses identity. Studies focusing on specific groups of Indians at a definitive point in time and place must incorporate a host of variables the researcher may have trouble comprehending. For instance, many non-Indians are puzzled why persons of mixed-blood would call themselves an Indian and not a member of another group. In response, Mohawk poet Peter Blue Cloud echoes the sentiment of many multi-heritage Indians: "They wouldn't understand even if you explained it."[87]

The task of sorting out the elements that contribute to an Indian person's identity choice and development, and how that person's ethnic, gender, racial, political, occupational, and religious identities intersect may appear daunting. But these studies are important because: (1) identity conflicts among Indians are critical and ongoing psychological problems; (2) definitions of "American Indian" differ not only among non-Indians but also among Indians; (3) an Indian may have several identities (individual, occupational, religious, social, etc.) that correspond to their allegiances (such as family, tribe, community, state, country); (4) Indian identity constantly develops in response to the person's social, political, and economic environments; (5) the United States government has recently agreed to allow citizens to check more than one racial category on the next census, thus giving mixed-heritage peoples an opportunity to proclaim their mixed parentage; (6) health care and social workers, educators, and politicians, at least, need to understand that there are cultural differences among tribes and individual Indians; (7) physical appearance does not always coincide with an individual's chosen identity; (8) census surveys regarding Indian race, heritage, and ethnicity are often interpreted incorrectly;[88] (9) the number of individuals self-identifying as American Indians is growing;[89] and (10) the escalating incidences of ethnic fraud demonstrates the need for definitive guidelines for determining who is and is not Indian. Finally, any study on Indian identity, social history, acculturation, and assimilation must include *Indian* interpretations and debate, for Indians can best identify the forces that shape their unique self-images.[90]

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NOTES

1. Although it is preferable to refer to the indigenous people of this country by their specific tribal names, for the sake of space I opt for *American Indian* or *Indian* rather than *Native American,* which signifies anyone born in the United States.

2. Clyde Warrior, "Which One Are You?: Five Types of Young Indians," cited in Stan Steiner, *The New Indians* (New York: Dell, 1968), 305-307.

3. William E. Cross, Jr., *Shades of Black: Diversity in African-American Identity* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991); David E. Hayes-Bautista, "Becoming Chicano: A Disassimilation Theory of Transformation of Ethnic Identity," Ph.D. dissertation (University of California, Santa Barbara, 1974); Jean Kim, "Processes of Asian American Identity Development: A Study of Japanese American Women's Perceptions of Their Struggle to Achieve Positive Identities as Americans of Asian Ancestry," Ed.D. dissertation (University of Massachusetts, 1981). See also Donald R. Atkinson, George Morten, and Derald Wing Sue's "Minority Development Model," in *Counseling American Minorities: A Cross Cultural Perspective* (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Co. Publishers, 1989), 191-200.

4. Cross, *Shades of Black,* 189-223.

5. Thomas A. Parham, "Cycles of Psychological Nigrescence," *The Counseling Psychologist* 17:2 (April 1989): 187-226.

6. It is not within the scope of this paper to encompass the history of intermarriage or acculturation; the symbols and expressions of Indianness; how cultures persist, desist, and resurrect; the politics of blood quantum; or women's

identity issues. These aspects are explored in historical perspective in my book manuscript, "American Indian Racial and Ethnic Identities" (in progress).

7. Maria P.P. Root, "Resolving 'Other' Status: Identity Development of Biracial Individuals," in L. Brown and M.P.P. Root, *Diversity and Complexity in Feminist Theory and Therapy* (New York: Haworth, 1990), 188. The idea that "race is socially and economically constructed to serve the interests of the privileged" is expounded by Zena Moore in "Check the Box that Best Describes You," in Naomi Zack, ed., *American Mixed Race: The Culture of Microdiversity* (Lanham: MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1995), 39-51.

8. Michael K. Green, *Issues in Native American Identity* (New York: Peter Lang, 1995), 7.

9. Ibid.

10. Peter I. Rose, *They and We: Racial and Ethnic Relations in the United States* (New York: Random House, 1964), 7.

11. Cross, *Shades of Black,* 190-198.

12. Idem., 198-201.

13. Idem., 201-209.

14. Cross, "The Thomas and Cross Models on Psychological Nigrescence: A Literature Review," *Journal of Black Psychology* 4 (1978): 18.

15. Cross, *Shades of Black,* 209-216.

16. In this essay, "worldview" refers to a person's value system and how one interprets events and history. There is, of course, no one Indian worldview.

17. I base this assertion in part on personal observation of non-Indians in Texas who have grown from showing interest in Indians to becoming medicine people of tribes they at one time knew nothing about. One, a white man now deceased, married a Creek woman, shaved his arms ("Indians have no body hair you know"), and proceeded to hold sweats and ceremonies he claimed were Lakota. Another, a Hispanic man, followed the same routine. I met his mother at a Grand Prairie powwow where she admitted that the family was not Indian, yet her son is now a "spiritual leader of the Mescalero Apache tribe" who utilizes Lakota religious traditions.

18. Parham, "Cycles of Nigrescence," 199.

19. There are two major developmental stages of the identity process. The basic one is a simplistic category-style identity process which generally occurs in preschool. The second stage is more complex because as the children develop their cognitive capacity becomes more developed. See, for example, Erik H. Erikson, *Identity & the Life Cycle* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1980).

20. Parham, "Cycles of Nigrescence," 195.

21. The decision to identify as a member of an ancestor's race or culture when one does not subscribe to that culture is what Howard Stein and Robert Hill term "dime store" ethnicity or "unreal" ethnicity because one shops for an identity as one would for items at a dime store. See Howard Stein and Robert Hill, *The Ethnic Imperative: Examining the New White Ethnic Movement* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1977), 22.

22. For information about relocation, see Larry W. Burt, "Roots of the

Native American Urban Experience: Relocation Policy in the 1950s," *American Indian Quarterly* 10 (1986): 85-99; Donald L. Fixico, *Termination and Relocation: Federal Indian Policy, 1945-1960* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986); Jennie R. Joe, "Forced Relocation and Assimilation: Dillon Myer and the Native American," *Amerasia Journal* 13:2 (1986-87): 161-65.

23. Maria P.P. Root, "Resolving 'Other' Status," 191-3.

24. Idem., 190-2.

25. Idem., 192.

26. Cross, *Shades of Black*, 119.

27. See, for example, the letter to the editor from Orlando Tom in *Indian Country Today*, December 1-8, 1998, A5, expressing concerns over the current Miss Navajo being part Black. Discerning between cultural adherence and biology as prerequisite for tribal admission, Tom writes, "Language, weaving, beading, and being able to dance is all culturally correct, but nonetheless, it is still learned behavior ... when the Navajo people select a person to represent their nation as Miss Navajo, that person must possess the appearance and physical characteristics of the Navajo. Miss Cody's appearance and physical characteristics are black, and thus are representative of another race of people."
For information on Indian-Black relations, see Vernon Bellecourt, "The glorification of Buffalo Soldiers raises racial divisions between blacks, Indians," *Indian Country Today*, May 4, 1994, A5; William Loren Katz, *Black Indians: A Hidden Heritage* (New York: Atheneum, 1986); William G. McLoughlin, "Red Indians, Black Slavery and White Racism: America's Slaveholding Indians," *American Quarterly* 26 (October 1974): 367-385; Theda Perdue, *Slavery and the Evolution of Cherokee Society* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1979); the *American Indian Quarterly's* special issue on Indian-Black relations, forthcoming in 1998.

28. Parham, "Cycles of Psychological Nigrescence," 199.

29. See Snipp, "Who Are the American Indians? Some Observations about the Perils and Pitfalls of Data for Race and Ethnicity," *Population Research and Policy Review* 5 (1986): 237-252.

30. M.E. Goodman, *Race Awareness in Young Children* (New York: Collier Press, 1968), 19.

31. Root, "Resolving 'Other' Status," 189-90.

32. Root, "Resolving 'Other' Status," 189. For discussion on the importance of names to identity and how "family surnames carry with them all the associations of the language and tradition from which they come," see Harold R. Issacs, *Idols of the Tribe: Group Identity and Political Change* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), 71-92.

33. Cross, *Shades of Black*, 199.

34. As Michael R. Green states, "Deculturalization can lead to severe psychological disorientation, such as, dissolution of the self, a sense of meaninglessness, aimlessness, and depression. This creates a painful situation, which the individual then may attempt to escape by the use of alcohol or drugs or by self-stupefication through pleasures." See *Issues in Native American Cultural Identity* (New York: Peter Lang, 1995), 7.

35. After an assessment of the preponderance of ethnic fraud in the United States, I propose that the majority of wannabes have assessed the economic possibilities of becoming a member of the group and have formulated a new identity for monetary reasons. Therefore, a person claiming Indianness may be perceived as trying to fit in to get a job, to gain prestige, to write a book with an "authoritative voice," or to gain notoriety and fame as a medicine person. Some wannabes, however, do not necessarily desire money, but desire the attention as an Indian that perhaps they do not receive as a non-Indian. See Kara Gniewek, "The Silent Genocide," *Red Ink* 5:1 (Fall 1996): 60-71; "Plastic Indians," *Indian Country Today*, August 26-Sept 2, 1996, A3; A6; Wendy Rose, "The Great Pretenders: Further Reflections on Whiteshamanism," in M. Annette Jaimes, *The State of Native America: Genocide, Colonization, and Resistance* (Boston: South End Press, 1992), 403-421; Andrea Smith, "Opinion: The New Age Movement and Native Spirituality," *Indigenous Woman* (Spring 1991): 17-18; "White Shamans and Plastic Medicine Men," video (Native Voices Public Television, Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana).

36. Kent Carter, "Wantabes and Outalucks: Searching for Indian Ancestors in Federal Records," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 56 (Spring 1988): 94-104; Ron Andrade, "Are Tribes Too Exclusive?" *American Indian Journal* (July 1980): 12-3.

37. Herbert Gans decribes a leisure-time form of ethnicity that some engage in as "symbolic identification" with their ethnic heritage when they are reminded of it. For example, some people claim to be Irish only on St. Patrick's Day, while others may "become Indian" when Indians are in the news and are the topic of public conversation. They become ethnic only when they want to. See Gans, "Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America,"*Ethnic and Racial Studies* 2 (January 1979): 1-20.

38. Rachel A. Bonney, "The Role of AIM Leaders in Indian Nationalism," *American Indian Quarterly* 3:3 (1977): 209-224; "Interview: Vernon Bellecourt: He is the Symbol of the Most Militant Indian Group Since Geronimo," *Penthouse* (July): 58-60; 62; 64; 122; 131-2; Peter Matthiesson, *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse* (New York: Viking, 1984, 1991); Russell Means, *Where White Men Fear to Tread: Autobiography of Russell Means* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995); Bella Stumbo, "A World Apart: Indian Activists Dennis Banks and Russell Means ...," *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, June 15, 1986: 10-21; Gerald Vizenor, "Dennis of Wounded Knee," *American Indian Quarterly* 7:2 (1983): 51-65.

39. For information on the Cherokee seminaries, see Devon A. Mihesuah, *Cultivating the Rose Buds: The Education of Women at the Cherokee Female Seminary, 1851-1909* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993; 1997) and "Out of the Graves of the Polluted Debauches: The Boys of the Cherokee Male Seminary," *American Indian Quarterly* 15 (Fall 1991): 503-521.

40. For example, see David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 1995); Michael C. Coleman, *American Indian Children at School, 1850-1930* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1993; Clyde Ellis, *To Change Them Forever: Indian Education at the Rainy Mountain*

Boarding School, 1893-1920 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996); K. Tsianina Lomawaima, *They Called it Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994); Sally J. McBeth, *Ethnic Identity and the Boarding School Experience of West-Central Oklahoma American Indians* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1983); Robert A. Trennert, *The Phoenix Indian School: Forced Assimilation in Arizona, 1891-1935* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988).

41. The social hierarchy at the seminaries is the focus of Mihesuah's "'Too Dark to Be Angels': The Class System Among the Cherokee at the Female Seminary," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 15 (1991): 29-52.

42. I base this assertion on several male aquaintances who admit that this is why they married Indian women. One, a dark skinned non-Indian, commented to me in 1985 that he purposely sought out a Cherokee woman who could speak the language, had a recognizable "Indian " name, and who "looked Indian." He found her and now claims to be a full-blood Cherokee despite the fact that he is unenrolled and was asked to remove himself from two important Indian committees in Texas by tribal leaders who believed it important that anyone claiming tribal membership should be able to prove it.

43. One full-blood Cherokee man I knew in Texas said that he was always ashamed of being Cherokee in Oklahoma so he divorced his first (full-blood) wife and married a white woman in hopes that he would be more accepted by non-Indian society. He was not, so he divorced her, moved to Texas, and proceeded to marry a non-Indian woman who at first commented that she was not Indian at all, but now proclaims that she is Cherokee, Choctaw, and a direct descendant of Quanah Parker, even though none of the Comanches in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area, or any in my husband's family, have ever heard of her. Also see D. Mihesuah, *Cultivating the Rose Buds*, 105-6.

44. Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1967), 63.

45. Root, "Resolving 'Other' Status," 197-201.

46. Idem., 199-200.

47. Lavera Rose, "*Iyeska Win*: Intermarriage and Ethnicity Among the Lakota in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," M.A. thesis (Northern Arizona University, 1994), 100.

48. Brewton Berry, *Almost White* (Toronto: Collier-Macmillan, 1963), 160.

49. Root, "Resolving 'Other' Status," 200.

50. Malcolm McFee, "The 150% Man: A Product of Blackfeet Acculturation," *American Anthropologist* 70 (1968): 1,096-1,103. McFee writes that the "levels of acculturation" concept—the view that individuals of mixed heritage replace traditional cultural traits after exposure to different cultures—is often wrong. Many Indian Territory mixed-heritage people did just that.

51. Root, "Resolving 'Other' Status," 196.

52. Teresa Kay Williams, "The Theatre of Identity," in Naomi Zack, ed., *American Mixed Race: The Culture of Microdiversity* (Rowman and Littlefield, Inc., 1995), 79-96, 318-319.

53. "The New Sensitive Census," *American Indian Report* 8:12 (December 1997): 8; "Census changes to recognize mixed races," *The Arizona Republic*, October 30, 1997, A1, A11.

54. George Yamamoto, "Interracial Marriage in Hawaii," in I. R. Stuart and L. Edwin, eds., *Interracial Marriage: Expectations and Realities* (New York: Grossman Publishers, 1973).

55. Among the best works on the Métis include: Bruce A. Cox, ed., *Native People, Native Lands: Canadian Indians, Inuit, and Métis* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1988); Olive Patricia Dickason, *Canada's First Nations* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992); Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer S. Brown, *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985); Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, *Looking Forward, Looking Back*, Vols. 1-5 (Minister of Supply and Services, Canada, 1996).

56. Itabari Njeri, "Call for Census Category Creates Interracial Debate," *Los Angeles Times*, January 13, 1991, E1, 9-11. John Leland and Gregory Beals, "In Living Colors," *Newsweek*, May 5, 1997.

57. Root, "Resolving 'Other' Status," 200-1.

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75. Mihesuah, "'Too Dark to Be Angels': The Class System Among the Cherokees," 36.

76. Living Legends Collection interview #84.028, March 8, 1984, Mrs. Allie Mae Statha, Oklahoma Historical Society, Indian Archives Division, Oklahoma City.

77. Mary Crow Dog, *Lakota Woman* (New York: Harper, 1991), 9.

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79. Idem., 153.

80. Mihesuah, *Cultivating the Rose Buds,* 81.

81. Parham, "Cycles of Nigrescense," 201.

82. Everett Stonequist, *The Marginal Man: A Study in Personality and Culture Conflict* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1937); See also Arnold W. Green, "A Re-examination of the Marginal Man Concept," *Social Forces* 26 (1947): 167-171; Milton M. Goldberg, "A Qualification of the Marginal Man Theory," *American Sociological Review* 6 (1941): 52-58; Roy Dean Wright and Susan N. Wright, "A Plea for a Further Refinement of the Marginal Man Theory," *Phylon* 33 (1972): 361-368.

83. Root, "Resolution of 'Other' Status," 193.

84. Idem., 193.

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86. The debate over criteria for tribal enrollment and for identifying as an Indian is intensifying. In regard to extending tribal membership to individuals who are culturally ignorant, Jerry Bread, director of the American Indian Teacher Corps at the University of Oklahoma, commented, "It's a dilution of our identity. Many people who are culturally non-Indian will be classified as a member of that tribe, and they'll bring with them values that are not the same values that formulated the spirit of the tribe." See "Oklahomans Rush to Join Tribal Rolls," *Dallas Morning News*, June 12, 1995, 7A. See also *Indian Country Today's* series, "Indian Writers: Real or Imagined," September 8, 1993; "Indian Writers: The Good, The Bad, and the Could Be," September 15, 1993 and October 6, 1993, in addition to numerous letters to the editor; John Leville's review essay of Ward Churchill's *Indians Are Us?: Culture and Genocide in Native North America* (Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press, 1994), which addresses Churchill's notable essay, "Nobody's Pet Poodle: Jimmie Durham, An Artist for Native North America," in *American Indian Quarterly* 20 (Winter 1996): 109-118; James Clifton, ed., *Being and Becoming Indian: Biographical Studies of North American Frontiers* (Chicago: Dorsey Press, 1989); idem., *The Invented Indian: Cultural Fictions and Government Policies* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1990); Tim Giago, "It's time to establish guidelines for tribal enrollment criteria," *Indian Country Today*, March 10-17, 1997, A4; William W. Quinn, Jr., "The Southeast Syndrome: Notes on Indian Descendant Recruitment Organizations and Their Perceptions of Native American Culture," *American Indian Quarterly* 14:2 (Spring 1990) 147-154; William A. Starna, "The Southeast Syndrome: The Prior Restraint of a Non-Event," *American Indian Quarterly* (Fall 1991): 493-502; M. Annette Jaimes, "Federal Indian Identification Policy: An Usurpation of Indigenous Sovereignty in North America," in M.A. Jaimes, ed., *The State of Native America: Genocide, Colonization, and Resistance* (Boston: South End Press, 1992), 123-138.

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89. "Oklahoma Indians rush to join tribal rolls," *Dallas Morning News*, June 12, 1995, 7A ; David Foster, "Tribes face conflict over who's a real Indian," *Arizona Daily Sun*, January 27, 1997, 3. Melissa Dyea, editor of the Arizona State University-based H-AmIndian Listserv website, also reports a surge in the numbers of "new Indians" who subscribe to the list. See also Stephen Cornell, *The Return of the Native: American Indian Political Resurgence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Joane Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996, 1997).

90. See Morris Foster's *Being and Becoming Comanche: A Social History of an American Indian Community* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1991).