Signs of transcendence? A changing landscape of multiraciality in the 21st century

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ABSTRACT

The relation between multiracial identity selection and psychological outcomes related to the self and well-being was explored among minority/White biracials spanning four different mixed-race groups ($n = 201$): Black/Whites, East Asian/Whites, Latino/Whites, and South Asian/Whites. The mixed-race groups showed considerable variability in their selection of multiracial identity categories and different patterns of identity selection, as well as a higher overall representation of transcendent identity (i.e., identity that challenges traditional notions of race) than reported in previously published studies. Our findings demonstrated that biracial identity selection, especially when differentiating between identities that are socially validated or not socially validated by others, was related to a person's level of multiracial identity integration, identification with Whites, perceived discrimination from Whites and non-Whites, and psychological well-being. Identity selection groups did not significantly differ from each other in levels of self-concept clarity or identification with their non-White racial group. Theoretical implications for extending a multidimensional model to other mixed-race groups and redefining race as a social and cultural construction are discussed.

1. Introduction

The rapidly growing multiracial population has instigated many questions on what it means to be multiracial, how multiracial individuals understand themselves, and how they are understood by others. We use the term *multiracial* to refer to people who identify with two or more racial heritages based on their lived experience and upon common racial classification (e.g., U.S. Census categories). Given that racial identity is often an important aspect of one's social identity and self-concept, belonging to multiple racial groups may lead to unique and complex ways of self-understanding (Harris & Sim, 2002; Rockquemore, 1999). The existing literature on this topic has focused largely on Black/White biracials (Khanna, 2004; Root, 1990; Suyemoto, 2004), but members of different racial groups are increasingly engaging in interracial marriages and there is an increasing number of multiracial children in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2008) and the United States (Denton, 2013). It is important to consider different mixed-race groups because the processes by which individuals choose and manage their identities can be powerfully shaped by the racial and cultural groups to which they belong (Lou, Lalonde, & Wilson, 2011). For example, an important difference between Eastern and Western cultures is in how the self is defined (i.e., self-construal). Westerners tend to see themselves as individual beings, whereas Easterners tend to view themselves as belonging to a social

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group and look to their social environment to construct their identity (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Biracials from different mixed-raced groups (e.g., Asian Whites, Black/Whites) then may perceive and organize aspects of themselves in ways that are influenced by their mixed-race background.

1.1. The concept of race in Canada

Much of the literature on multiracial individuals has come out of the United States (see Shih & Sanchez, 2005), yet Canada also has a sizeable and growing multiracial population. Cross-national differences in the historical and political landscape (e.g., multiculturalism policy in Canada, history of slavery in the U.S.) and understanding of race (e.g., focus on ethnicity rather than race), however, may render it inaccurate to simply apply American understanding of race and multiracialism to the Canadian context. From a governmental perspective, race has not been used in formal documents, and for much of the 20th century, the political discourse in Canada has focused on ethnicity when references were made to group membership. As of the 1996 Census, however, Statistics Canada started to collect information on "visible minorities." Statistics Canada has used the standard "visible minority" to refer to "persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour," as defined by the Employment Equity Act (Statistics Canada, 2013). In national population surveys (where questions on race are avoided), respondents are instructed to indicate if they are White, South Asian (e.g., East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan), Chinese, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Arab, Southeast Asian (e.g., Vietnamese, Cambodian, Malaysian, Laotian), West Asian (e.g., Iranian, Afghan), Korean, Japanese, Other—specify. Individuals who choose White are categorized as non-visible and all other individuals are classified as visible minorities. It can be seen that Canadians are ambivalent about racial categorization and that they have combined categories based on colour, nationality, and geography (Fleras & Elliott, 1999).

Individuals who select multiple groups from the above question are considered to be "biracial" or "multiracial," and as the case in the U.S., this number is rapidly increasing. This increase has been recognized and as of 2006 the Canadian Census Guide provided the following instruction: "For persons who belong to more than one population group, mark all the circles that apply. Do not report 'bi-racial' or 'mixed' in the box provided." Data from the National Household Survey in 2011 indicate that couples in mixed unions accounted for 4.6% of all married or common-law coupons in Canada; this proportion is up from 2.6% in 1991 and 3.1% in 2001. Mixed unions are found to be more common among Canadians from certain visible minority groups, with Japanese, Black, and Latino groups boasting the highest numbers (Hamplová & le Bourdais, 2010; Statistics Canada, 2013). Although Chinese and South Asians have relatively low proportions of mixed unions, the fact that they are the two largest visible minority populations in Canada suggest that the number of mixed race children resulting from these unions would be still substantial.

Despite the ambiguity associated with its definition, race is omnipresent in the lives of non-Whites in the Canadian context (Fleras & Elliott, 1999). This current study uses the language of race that people use in everyday life because that is how race is often experienced. The purpose of the present study was to explore whether the multiracial experience varies across different mixed-race groups in Canada and examine how this experience may be related to psychological and social outcomes, such as self-understanding and well-being[1].

1.2. A multidimensional framework

Rockquemore and colleagues (e.g., Rockquemore, 1999; Rockquemore & Arend, 2002; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002; Rockquemore, Brunsma, & Delgado, 2009) proposed a multidimensional model that captures the wide variation in the ways individuals understand and respond to their multiracialism. This framework rests on the assumption that racial identities are socially constructed, and racial group boundaries are subjective. Moreover, racial identities can be fluid and dynamic according to the immediate context rather than adhering to fixed immutable categories (Harris & Sim, 2002; Shih & Sanchez, 2009). Rockquemore's (1999) model acknowledges that biracials may experience contextual shifting of their identities, hold multiple simultaneous identities, or adopt no racial identity at all. Respondents to a measure of her taxonomy are able to choose one of the following identity options:

1.2.1. Singular identity: Exclusively monoracial
Individuals who choose to racially self-identify with the race of only one rather than both parents is referred to as holding an exclusively monoracial identity. For example, some multiracials may consider themselves "exclusively Asian," "exclusively Black," or "exclusively White."

1.2.2. Border identity: Exclusively biracial
Some individuals understand themselves to be part of both races. Biracial identity is the most common category of self-understanding among Black/White biracials (Lou et al., 2011; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002). Individuals understand

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[1] We focus on Nonwhite/White biracials in this research because they represent the largest multiracial groups in the U.S. (Brittingham & de la Cruz, 2004) and Canada (Statistics Canada, 2008) and refer to the minority background first for the sake of convenience. While we recognize the variety and complexity of different heritages and ethnicities within racial populations, participants were not subdivided into separate ethnic groups due to sample size limitations.

and evaluate themselves and others through the process of social interaction and external validation. Taking into consideration that one's identity is socially validated to the extent that self-understanding is consistent with the view of others, Rockquemore's (1999) typology distinguishes between validated and unvalidated border identities. Individuals holding a *validated border identity* view themselves as biracial and are viewed by others in the same way.

Biracials holding an *unvalidated border identity* are those who view themselves as biracial, but other people may not accept them as biracial or recognize "biracial" as a meaningful category (Rockquemore & Arend, 2002). For these individuals, there is a discrepancy between their self-understanding (as biracial) and their actual lived racial experience (as a member of their minority racial group). Unvalidated border identifiers may be placed in a particular racial category (e.g., Black) by others based on external features (e.g., skin color), even if the category does not reflect how they see themselves. Biracial individuals who try to realize their appropriated identities in contexts where others' perceptions and self-perceptions are mismatched may face social challenges, such as discrimination (Sanchez & Bonam, 2009). Moreover, a mismatch between one's private self-understanding and the public's perception may contribute to internal identity conflict (Townsend, Markus, & Bergsieker, 2009). In Rockquemore and Brunsma's study (2002) with Black/White biracials, over half of the participants who selected the border identity option indicated that other people did not view them this way, suggesting that the distinction between the border identity options is important for Black/White biracials. Social validation of racial identity among other mixed-race groups, however, has not been extensively examined.

1.2.3. Protean identity: Multiple choices

Some multiracial individuals have a fluid self-understanding, such that they tend to shift between racial identities depending on the social context (Harris & Sim, 2002; Rockquemore, 1999; Root, 1996). Because these individuals shift between rather than blend together their assorted identities, their sense of self may be built upon components that are not culturally integrated, or that are separate from each other (Cheng & Lee, 2009; Rockquemore & Arend, 2002). In Lou et al.'s (2011) study, the protean option was the most frequent choice among East Asian/Whites but was less common among Black/Whites, representing 30.0% and 10.5% of the subsamples, respectively.

1.2.4. Transcendent identity: Beyond race

Individuals who hold a transcendent identity view their multiraciality as a position where they can "transcend" racial categorization altogether (Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002). These individuals identify with a superordinate identity, considering themselves to be simply "human" or a "world citizen" (Amiot & de la Sablonnière, 2010). Shih, Bonam, Sanchez, and Peck (2007) noted that compared to people of monoracial descent, multiracial people are more likely to challenge the validity of race itself, viewing race as a social construction.

1.3. Differences across mixed-race groups

In one of the first applications of Rockquemore's (1999) framework beyond Black/White samples, Lou et al. (2011) provided empirical evidence for different patterns of racial identities between Black/White and East Asian/White biracials. Although the two mixed-race groups both showed variation in their identity option selection, they differed in their *pattern* of identity selection. Consistent with Rockquemore and Brunsma (2002), the highest proportion of Black/Whites in Lou et al.'s sample viewed themselves as exclusively biracial (validated or unvalidated) whereas East Asian/Whites tended to shift between their racial identities depending on the immediate context (i.e., protean identity).

Differences in racial identity between Black/Whites and East Asian/Whites may stem in part from cross-cultural differences in how individual view themselves. Western societies tend to focus on independence whereas East Asian societies emphasize interdependence when defining the self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). A greater tendency for East Asians to perceive their self-concepts as flexible responses to the social context (Harris & Sim, 2002) may be associated with a greater likelihood of having fluid or protean identities. Protean identity may also be more highly represented among East Asian/Whites because of the smaller social distance historically between Whites and East Asians, relative to between Whites and Blacks, which would allow greater freedom to negotiate identities (Xie & Goyette, 1997). These views are consistent with research showing that, compared to their Black/White peers, East Asian/White youth exhibited less consistency in racial identity across school and home environments (Harris & Sim, 2002). Suyemoto (2004) also found that Japanese European Americans endorsed multiple identities if given the opportunity to do so.

Patterns of self-identification within mixed-race groups may also be influenced to some extent by the historical and political forces that define them. For instance, compared to many other visible minority groups, such as South Asians or Chinese, Blacks have a very long history residing in Canada (since the early 1600s) and are more likely to perceive racial or ethnic discrimination from others (Milan & Tran, 2004). In the United States, the African American experience is also unique historically and politically compared to the voluntary immigrant experience of individuals from Asia (Sears & Savalei, 2006). For African Americans, Black racial identity often refers to a historical sense of self that has emerged from the struggle against White oppression that has been reproduced over generations (Rockquemore & Arend, 2002). For Black/White mixed-race people, slavery and segregation were associated with the historical "one-drop" rule, which deemed all individuals with any Black ancestry as members of the Black race (Root, 1996; Suzuki-Crumly & Hyers, 2004). Even if Black/White individuals understand themselves as biracial, others may view them as part of the "collective Black," creating a disjuncture between self-identity and the way a person is understood by others (i.e., identity validation). Given the distribution of racial

identity selection documented in existing work (e.g., Lou et al., 2011; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002), we predicted that Black/Whites would be most likely to choose the border identity option (validated and unvalidated combined) out of all the available identity options. We also expected that Black/Whites would be more likely to have an unvalidated identity than East Asian/Whites.

Racial identity among Latino/Whites and South Asian/Whites has received even less research attention than racial identity among East Asian/Whites. In a U.S. study by Townsend et al. (2009), Latino/Whites were less likely than East Asian/Whites to identify as biracial in both spontaneous self-descriptions and multiple choice questions and were less likely than Black/Whites to identify as biracial in spontaneous self-descriptions. Wilton, Sanchez, and Garcia (2013) also found that Latino/Whites reported being ascribed a White identity by other people more so than Black/Whites or Asian/Whites, which may influence how they view their own identity. Qualitative research conducted in Britain by Song and Aspinall (2012) found that 60% of their South Asian/Whites sample (compared to 41% and 31% of their Black/White and East Asian/White samples, respectively) played down the importance of race for their sense of self, suggesting that transcendent identity may be more common among South Asian/Whites. None of the studies described above, however, examined racial identity within a multidimensional framework that helps capture the wide variation in which individuals may identify. In the current study, it was expected that compared to Black/Whites and East Asian/Whites, Latino/Whites would be less likely to report a border identity and more likely to report an exclusively White identity, and South Asian/Whites would be more likely to report a transcendent identity.

1.4. Racial identity selection and conceptions of self

Based on the multidimensional framework (Rockquemore, 1999), multiracials can identify with multiple racial groups and also have multiple ways to organize different dimensions of the self. *Multiracial identity integration* is the degree to which individuals perceive their two racial identities to be compatible or oppositional to one another (Cheng & Lee, 2009). Related to identity integration is the extent to which a person's racial identity is consistent or integrated from one situation to the next. *Self-concept clarity* refers to a structural aspect of the self, or the extent to which self-beliefs are clearly defined, internally consistent, and temporally stable (Campbell et al., 1996). Although identity integration and self-concept clarity have been used to examine identity negotiation processes within a variety of domains such as culture and gender (e.g., Benet-Martínez, Leu, Lee, & Morris, 2000; see Cheng & Lee, 2009), few studies have applied these constructs to multiracialism. Constructing a sense of self may be particularly complex for multiracial individuals (Phinney, 1990) because they face the challenge of reconciling potential differences between their racial identities (Cheng & Lee, 2009; Roccas & Brewer, 2002) as well as discrepancies between their self-understanding and others' perceptions (Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002).

In Lou et al.'s (2011) study, higher identity integration was reported by biracial participants holding a validated border identity compared to those holding a protean identity or an unvalidated border identity. Validated border identifiers also indicated higher self-concept clarity than protean identifiers. Thus, identity integration and self-concept clarity may be highest among individuals who have blended and integrated separate components into a single meaning and whose self-perceptions are confirmed or validated by those around them (see Yampolsky, Amiot, & de la Sablonnière, 2013). Individuals with an unvalidated identity, on the other hand, have identities that are incompatible with one another. They may feel caught between their self-definitions and the public ones ascribed by others and prefer to keep them separate (Townsend et al., 2009), resulting in lower identity integration. When a person's chosen racial identity is challenged or rejected by others, an unclear and inconsistent self-concept may develop. The contextual nature of protean identities may also be related to lower self-concept clarity as protean identifiers' self-beliefs tend to be less stable and consistent from one situation to the next (Lou et al., 2011). Given the dearth of published work on transcendent identity, no specific hypotheses were made with regards to this identity option.

1.5. Other social and psychological correlates

Previous research has suggested that evaluation of one's own racial identity is influenced by one's relationships to members of particular racial groups. According to Tajfel (1978), individuals' self-concept is built upon their knowledge or awareness of their membership in a social group and the emotional and personal importance they attribute to that group membership. In terms of racial social identification, the degree to which individuals identify with their biological parents' racial groups (Good, Chavez, & Sanchez, 2010) and their previous experiences of racial discrimination from members of these groups (Sanchez & Bonam, 2009) may be important factors shaping how they categorize themselves racially. High identity integration (Cheng et al., 2008) and high self-concept clarity (Campbell et al., 1996) have also been associated with positive effects on well-being (Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Springer & Hauser, 2006). Models of social identity change and integration have proposed that when multiple social identities within the self are integrated, the results include a coherent view of self and benefits for psychological well-being (Amiot & de la Sablonnière, 2010; Yampolsky et al., 2013). Thus, the relationships between these variables (i.e., racial group identification, perceived discrimination, and well-being) and racial identity selection were also investigated.

1.6. Overview of the present study

The purpose of the present study was to examine multiracial identity selection patterns across mixed-race groups. It was hypothesized that the pattern of racial identity selection would differ between the Black/White and East Asian/White subsamples, such that biracial identity (validated and unvalidated border) would be more highly represented among Black/Whites, and protean identity would be more highly represented among East Asian/Whites. Although our sample also included South Asian/Whites and Latino/Whites, analysis of the patterns of identity selection for these groups was mostly exploratory. It was predicted, however, that transcendent identity would be highly represented among South Asian/Whites. In addition, exclusively White identity was expected to be relatively common and border identity (validated and unvalidated) to be relatively uncommon among Latino/Whites.

The current study also investigated how multiracial identity selection may be associated with various psychological and social correlates—specifically, whether individuals who selected different racial identity options varied in the way self-understanding is organized (i.e., identity integration) and structured (i.e., self-concept clarity). We were also interested in the relations between multiracial identity selection and psychological well-being, identification with monoracial groups, and perceived discrimination experiences. Compared to their validated counterparts, individuals whose border identity was unvalidated by others were expected to report more feelings of identity conflict or confusion, as indicated by lower multiracial identity integration and self-concept clarity, lower psychological well-being, stronger identification with their minority race group, weaker identification with the majority race (i.e., White), and more perceived discrimination.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

A total of 201 self-identified biracial participants (135 women) with a mean age of 21.03 ($SD = 6.08$) from various racial backgrounds were recruited either through a Psychology research participant pool at a Canadian university ($n = 175$) or through convenience sampling from multiracial websites, social networking websites, and online discussion forums in Canada ($n = 26$)[2]. Participants from the subject pool received course credit towards their course requirements, while the remainder were given the opportunity to enter a draw for a $100 gift card. All participants indicated that they had one biological parent who was from a White racial group and one who was from a non-White racial group. The reported racial identity of both parents was used to confirm the biracial participants' self-reported mixed-race group (e.g., Black/White, East Asian/White). For participants who selected the "Other" fill-in option for racial background, the response (e.g., *Irish-American*) was re-coded if it could fall into a more general category (e.g., *White*). The sample was diverse in terms of mixed-race groups and consisted of 66 Black/Whites, 45 East Asian/Whites, 48 South Asian/Whites, and 42 Latino/Whites.

2.2. Procedure and measures

After providing their informed consent, participants were asked for demographic information and the race of their biological mother and father. Next, they completed a questionnaire comprised of the measures described below. All responses were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), unless otherwise indicated. Upon completion of the survey, all participants were given an online debriefing.

2.2.1. Multiracial identity

Rockquemore's Survey of Multiracial Experience (Rockquemore, 1999; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002) presents participants with a series of statements representing the different identity options described earlier. Because the items were originally developed for Black/White biracials, all words referring to Black identity were replaced by asterisks (*******) with instructions to replace the asterisks with the race of the non-White parent. The options were presented as follows: (1) I consider myself exclusively *******; (2) I consider myself exclusively White; (3) I consider myself biracial, but I experience myself as a ******* person; (4) I consider myself exclusively biracial (neither ******* nor White); (5) I sometimes consider myself *******, sometimes White, and sometimes biracial, depending on the circumstances or situation; (6) Race is meaningless, I do not believe in racial identities; and (7) Other—please specify. Options "1" and "2" represent monoracial identity options, options "3" and "4" are border identity options (validated and unvalidated), option "5" is the protean identity, and option "6" is the transcendent identity. Participants were asked to choose the one statement that best describes their racial identity[3].

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[2] Individuals who visit these sites or who responded to the survey may be particularly aware or conscious of their racial background, multiracial issues, and personal challenges, which may have influenced the type of identity they adopt and ways they think about racial identity. The use of snowball sampling for recruiting participants may have resulted in a biased sample, a common problem inherent in multiracial research which limits the ability to generalize our results.

[3] Given that multiracial identity is quite complex, a potential limitation of Rockquemore's (1999) measure is that a single item may not be sufficient to capture that experience. Thus, we also asked participants to rate the extent to which they agreed with *each* of Rockquemore's (1999) identity options

Table 1
Pattern of racial identity selection (%) within mixed-race groups.

Racial identity	Black/White	East Asian/White	South Asian/White	Latino/White
n	66	45	48	42
Exclusively minority	9.1	2.2	16.7	9.5
Exclusively White	9.1	0.0	4.2	11.9
Validated border	**34.8**	31.1	14.6	16.7
Unvalidated border	12.1	15.6	22.9	7.1
Protean	13.6	**40.0**	16.7	**31.0**
Transcendent	21.2	11.1	**25.0**	23.8

Note. Numbers in boldface represent the most common racial identity selection within each mixed-race group.

2.2.2. Multiracial identity integration

Cheng and Lee's (2009) 8-item multiracial identity integration scale measured the extent to which individuals perceived their different racial identities as being compatible (high integration) or conflicting (low integration). An example item is "I do not feel any tension between my different racial identities." Higher scores indicated higher integration. The reliability with our sample was acceptable, $\alpha = 70$.

2.2.3. Self-concept clarity

A modified 6-item self-concept clarity scale (Campbell et al., 1996) assessed the degree to which one's self-concept (in terms of cultural and racial identity) is clearly and confidently defined, internally consistent, and stable (e.g., "I spend a lot of time wondering what kind of cultural or racial identity I really have," reverse-keyed). Higher scores represented greater self-concept clarity. The modified scale showed acceptable reliability with our sample, $\alpha = .76$.

2.2.4. Identification with groups

Cameron's (2004) 12-item measure of social identity assessed participants' identification with the races of each parent, first with the race of their non-White parent (e.g., "I often think about the fact that I am *******") and then with the White race (e.g., "I often think about the fact that I am White"). Higher average scores indicated stronger identification with the group. This scale showed acceptable reliability with our sample, $\alpha = .73$ for non-White identity and $\alpha = .68$ for White identity.

2.2.5. Racial discrimination

The extent to which participants had experienced personal discrimination because of their biracial background was assessed using eight items (e.g., which were created for the purpose of this study. The items asked about discrimination from four White and four non-White sources (peers, family members, strangers, and people in positions of power). Each item was rated on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (never) to 7 (always). Means scores were calculated for two subscales to assess discrimination from Whites and non-Whites (4 items each), with higher subscale scores indicating more personal experience with discrimination from White and non-White sources. This scale showed acceptable reliability with our sample, $\alpha = .81$ for White discrimination and $\alpha = .84$ for non-White discrimination.

2.2.6. Psychological well-being

Ryff and Keyes's (1995) 18-item scale assessed psychological well-being (e.g., "I like most aspects of my personality," "I am quite good at managing the responsibilities of my daily life"). The original scale was developed to assess psychological well-being along six dimensions (autonomy, self-acceptance, positive relations, environmental mastery, personal growth, and purpose in life). Recent studies have called into question whether the six dimensions are distinct enough for research purposes (Springer & Hauser, 2006; Springer, Hauser, & Freese, 2006). Thus, for the present study, all items were combined into a single index of well-being. Each item was rated on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*), with a higher mean score indicating higher well-being. This scale demonstrated good reliability with our sample, $\alpha = .85$.

3. Results

3.1. Patterns of racial identity selection

Participants showed substantial variation in their selection of Rockquemore's (1999) racial identity options (see Table 1). Out of the six possible options, the four most frequent were validated border (25.4%), unvalidated border (14.4%), protean

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along a continuous 7-point scale. Results of a validation analysis (available upon request) indicated that Rockquemore's (1999) one-item measure of racial identity meaningfully captures one's racial identity selection, even when individuals are asked to consider the extent to which they hold different kinds of racial identities.

Table 2
Descriptive statistics of the primary measures across racial identity groups.

Measure	Validated border	Unvalidated border	Protean	Transcendent
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)
n	51	29	48	40
Multiracial identity integration	5.11$_a$ (.94)	4.42$_b$ (.82)	4.98$_a$ (.78)	4.83$_{ab}$ (.91)
Self-concept clarity	4.92 (1.20)	4.43 (1.09)	5.08 (1.05)	4.91 (.98)
Identification with minority race	4.76 (.79)	4.86 (.90)	4.87 (.70)	4.55 (.60)
Identification with Whites	4.85$_a$ (.62)	4.45$_b$ (.74)	5.00$_a$ (.72)	4.43$_b$ (.66)
Discrimination from Whites	1.91 (.95)	2.51 (1.22)	1.98 (1.00)	2.37 (1.01)
Discrimination from non-Whites	1.93$_{ab}$ (1.05)	2.43$_a$ (1.16)	1.74$_b$ (.89)	2.11$_{ab}$ (1.05)
Psychological well-being	4.65$_a$ (.57)	4.14$_b$ (.58)	4.56$_a$ (.51)	4.41$_{ab}$ (.69)

Note. Means in the same row that do not share a common subscript differ at $p < .05$.

(23.9%), and transcendent (20.4%). Because these were the only groups sufficiently large for statistical comparisons between-groups, we focused on these four identity options. The remaining participants indicated their racial identity as exclusively minority race (9.5%) or exclusively White (6.5%).

Results of a Chi-square test of independence indicated that the distribution of the more common identity options (validated border, unvalidated border, protean, transcendent) differed between the four mixed-race groups, χ^2 (9, $n = 169$) = 21.54, $p = .01$, Cramer's $V = .21$ (see Table 1). As hypothesized, the validated border identity was the most common among the Black/White participants, comprising 34.8% of the Black/White group. This was followed by the transcendent (21.2%), protean (13.6%), and unvalidated border (12.1%) identity options. Also consistent with our predictions, protean identity was the most common among East Asian/White participants, representing 40.0% of the East Asian/White group. The validated border identity (31.1%) was also highly represented, followed by the unvalidated border (15.6%) and transcendent (11.1%) identity options. South Asian/Whites were most likely to select the transcendent (25.0%) and unvalidated border (22.9%) identity options. Finally, Latino/Whites were most likely to select the protean (31.0%) and transcendent (23.8%) identity options, and a relatively small proportion selected the border identity options (16.7% and 7.1% for validated and unvalidated, respectively).

3.2. Differences between the more frequent identity options

3.2.1. Conceptions of self

The hypothesis that individuals holding an unvalidated border identity or a protean identity would be more likely than those holding a validated border identity to be low on identity integration and self-concept clarity was partially supported. One-way ANOVAs were conducted to determine if the four identity groups differed in identity integration and self-concept clarity[4] (see Table 2 for descriptives). Statistically significant differences in multiracial identity integration were found across the four identity groups, $F(3, 164) = 4.20$, $p = .007$, $\eta^2 = .07$. Post-hoc tests of means using the Games–Howell procedure revealed that the unvalidated border identity group was significantly lower on multiracial identity integration than the validated border and protean identity groups, $ps < .021$; the latter two groups did not differ from each other. The mean for the transcendent identity group fell in-between and did not differ from the other three groups.

The four identity groups differed (marginally) in their level of self-concept clarity, $F(3, 165) = 2.28$, $p = .08$, $\eta^2 = .04$. Specifically, participants who selected the unvalidated border identity option had marginally lower self-concept clarity than participants who selected the protean identity option, $p = .053$. The validated border identity and transcendent groups' self-concept clarity scores fell in-between those of the unvalidated border and protean groups and did not differ from either.

3.2.2. Identification, discrimination, and well-being

One-way ANOVAs were conducted to determine whether the four identity groups differed in their identification with racial groups (non-White and White), perceived discrimination from non-Whites and Whites, and psychological well-being (see Table 2). The groups did not vary in their identification with the group of their non-White parent, $F(3, 163) = 1.61$, $p = .19$, $\eta^2 = .03$, but they did differ in their identification with Whites, $F(3, 163) = 7.43$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .12$. Participants with transcendent or unvalidated border identities were lower in identification with Whites than those with protean or validated border identities, $ps < .01$ (except the difference between unvalidated and validated border identifiers was marginally significant, $p = .07$).

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[4] We planned to examine whether the relations between racial identity and conceptions of self were different between mixed-race groups, but small cell sizes did not allow for accurate tests of interactions between the four identity option groups and four mixed-race groups. Results from one-way ANOVAs showed that the four mixed-race groups did not differ in self-concept clarity, Welch $F(3, 109) = 1.95$, $p = .13$, $\eta^2 = .02$, but did vary in multiracial identity integration, Welch $F(3, 109) = 3.26$, $p = .02$, $\eta^2 = .05$, and well-being, $F(3, 204) = 7.01$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .09$. Specifically, South Asian/Whites were significantly lower than Black/Whites on multiracial identity integration ($p = .013$), and significantly lower than Black/Whites ($p = .001$) and East Asian/Whites ($p = .003$) on well-being. Latino/Whites were marginally significantly lower than Black/Whites on well-being, $p = .07$.

The groups also differed significantly in perceived discrimination from both non-Whites, $F(3, 164) = 2.92$, $p = .03$, $\eta^2 = .05$, and Whites, $F(3, 164) = 3.13$, $p = .03$, $\eta^2 = .05$. Specifically, participants with an unvalidated border identity perceived more discrimination from non-Whites than those having a protean identity, $p = .04$; no other group differences in discrimination from non-Whites were found. Although the omnibus F test statistic was statistically significant for discrimination from Whites, post-hoc analyses using the Games-Howell procedure revealed that none of the pairwise comparisons were statistically significant. Examination of the group means (see Table 2), however, suggested a trend where perceived discrimination from Whites was highest for the unvalidated border identity group, followed by the transcendent, protean, and validated border identity groups.

Finally, differences in psychological well-being were noted across the four groups, $F(3, 165) = 5.18$, $p = .002$, $\eta^2 = .09$. Similar to the pattern found for multiracial identity integration, the unvalidated border identity group reported significantly poorer well-being than the validated border and protean identity groups, $ps < .02$, who did not differ from each other, $p = .85$. The transcendent group's level of well-being fell in the middle and was not significantly different from the other three groups.

4. Discussion

A multidimensional framework was used to investigate the patterns of racial identities held by biracial individuals, the variation among different non-White/White biracial groups, and the psychological outcomes related to certain racial identities. The diversity of our sample allowed us to explore the experiences of being multiracial across four mixed-race groups (Black/Whites, East Asian/Whites, South Asian/Whites, and Latino/Whites). Results indicated that racial identity selection within each of the mixed-race groups spanned at least five out of six categories of Rockquemore's (1999) framework, adding to the mounting evidence that researchers need to move beyond singular definitions of "multiracial" in order to encompass the unique ways in which multiracial individuals view themselves in terms of race. It is also important to acknowledge complexities that contribute to these identities, such as social validation and experiences with discrimination.

4.1. Racial identity selection and the rise of transcendence

The four mixed-race groups in our sample differed in their patterns of racial identity selection. Consistent with the distribution of racial identity options reported by past research (e.g., Lou et al., 2011; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002), the validated border identity option (i.e., a biracial identity that is socially accepted by others) was the most common identity held by Black/Whites. Among East Asian/Whites, the most common identity was the protean identity (i.e., an identity that switches between monoracial and biracial identities across contexts), representing 40% of the subsample. This latter finding is in line with Eastern cultures' interdependent tendencies to define the self according to one's social context (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) and highlights the fluid nature of biracial identity among Asian/White individuals (Chong, 2012). The prediction that unvalidated border identity would be more highly represented among Black/Whites than among East Asian/Whites was not supported; rather, of the four mixed-race groups, South Asian/Whites were the most likely and Latino/Whites were the least likely to report holding an unvalidated border identity. The differential frequencies in validated and unvalidated border identifiers across groups suggest that the perception that one is exclusively biracial may not necessarily be validated by others to the same extent for biracials from different racial backgrounds.

Perhaps the most striking finding related to racial identity selection was that compared to other studies (e.g., Lou et al., 2011; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002), more participants self-identified as transcendent (i.e., an identity that challenges the notion of race), and fewer participants self-identified with the unvalidated border option (i.e., a biracial identity that is rejected by others). One reason for the rise of transcendence as an identity option may be our inclusion of South Asian/Whites and Latino/Whites; transcendent identity was the most common option among South Asian/Whites and the second most common among Latino/Whites. It was also more highly represented in our current Black/White sample than what has been in the previous literature.

The higher proportion of transcendent identity and decreased proportion of unvalidated border identity observed in our study may also be influenced by the growing number of multiracial individuals and recent changes in the social-political realm. The number of mixed unions in Canada increased 33% between 2001 and 2006, and mixed-union couples are twice as likely as other couples to have young children (Milan, Maheux, & Chui, 2010). Important events, such as the reformatting of the U.S. Census race question to allow respondents to select more than one racial category (Nobles, 2000) and the election of the first multiracial U.S. president, Barack Obama, are examples of public validation that biracial and multiracial identities are considered legitimate social categories. These occurrences are likely associated with increased recognition that many people identify with more than one racial group and that border identities are valid. Discourse on race has also become progressively more focused on race as a social and cultural construction, as opposed to taking the essentialist position that race is biologically-determined, inalterable, and indicative of traits and ability (No et al., 2008). A rise in the proportion of biracials holding a transcendent identity reinforces the ideas that race is a dynamic concept, racial group boundaries are arbitrary, and racial identity is malleable and subjective.

4.2. Racial identity and conceptions of self

The present study brings forth evidence that multiracial identity selection may be related to self-understanding and its psychological correlates. In terms of multiracial identity integration, unvalidated border individuals had a racial identity that was less integrated and more conflicted (i.e., private and public understanding of the self were inconsistent) than those whose border identity was validated by others. It was expected that individuals with a protean identity would also be lower in identity integration than those with a validated border identity because switching between identities according to the context may compartmentalize and separate their identities, but no difference was found between these two groups. A similar pattern of results emerged for psychological well-being: participants who indicated an unvalidated border identity scored lower on the psychological well-being measure than those who indicated a validated border or protean identity. These findings are consistent with empirical and theoretical work on the association between integration of multiple social identities within the self and positive outcomes on well-being (Amiot & de la Sablonnière, 2010; Cheng et al., 2008; Yampolsky, Amiot, & de la Sablonnière, 2014).

Contrary to our predictions, level of self-concept clarity, or the degree to which one's identity was organized and consistent across time and situations, was similar across the four identity groups. The increased variability in the mixed-race backgrounds of our sample compared to other studies may have contributed to these unexpected results. It is possible that the relationship between self-concept clarity and different identity options varies only for mixed-race individuals for whom selecting a certain racial identity has a strong impact on self-concept. It is well-established in the cross-cultural literature that the self in East Asian cultures is formed and defined by the social environment (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), such that situational changes are associated with changes in the self (Campbell et al., 1996). In line with the East Asian cultural traditions promoting acceptance of contradiction and change, Asians have reported greater variability in self-aspects across contexts compared to non-Asians (English & Chen, 2007). Thus, shifting between different components of their racial identity may not necessarily lead to lower self-concept clarity for biracials who identify to some degree as East Asian, as it might for their Western counterparts for whom the self is viewed as an autonomous, clearly-articulated entity that remains stable across situations (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Unfortunately, our subsample sizes were not large enough to reliably test whether the consistency and stability of self-concepts are interpreted differently or have different psychological effects on East Asian/Whites than on other mixed-race groups, such as Black/Whites.

Another reason why differences in self-concept clarity were not observed may be that this concept has to do with having consistent self-beliefs and being able to define one's identity in a confident way. Campbell et al. (1996) stated that "any particular set of self-beliefs could, in principle, be organized with varying degrees of complexity or be held with different levels of confidence and stability" (p. 142). In other words, unlike identity integration, which is dependent on the compatibility of the components within one's identity, self-concept clarity may be theoretically independent of the contents of one's self-beliefs. As the multiracial "category" becomes more validated by society and research uncovers more about the complexity of being multiracial, biracial individuals across different racial identity groups may have increased confidence and clarity in their conceptions of self, regardless of differences in how compartmentalized or integrated the contents of the identity may be.

4.3. The importance of social validation

Participants whose border identity was validated or unvalidated differed from one another on almost all of the measured variables. In addition to having lower identity integration and psychological well-being than their validated counterparts, individuals whose biracial self-understanding was not consistent with others' perceptions had lower identification with White people. Our results also suggested that unvalidated biracials were inclined to report also experiencing higher levels of discrimination from both non-Whites and Whites than biracials in some of the other identity groups. The finding that discrimination was perceived from both White and non-White sources exemplifies some of the social challenges associated with a biracial identity. Individuals whose receive divergent messages from both of their racial groups may experience conflict within themselves. They may also feel tremendous pressure to force themselves into the options provided to them, such as a monoracial identity (Townsend et al., 2009). On the other hand, they may feel that they are racially inadequate, such as not being "Black enough" or "Asian enough," when it comes to fitting in among their monoracial minority peers (Hyman, 2010). Ambiguity about what racial identity category they fall into, confusion about what racial identity they should express to others, or lack of membership in a well-defined racial community may lead to challenges or struggles for young multiracial adults. Together, these differences allude to the importance of distinguishing between socially validated and unvalidated racial identities in future multiracialism research and reiterate the importance of social relationships and acceptance in influencing the process of racial identity construction.

The unvalidated border identity group in Rockquemore's (1999) framework refers to mixed-race individuals who view themselves as exclusively biracial but who experience themselves only as a member of their minority racial group. It is possible, however, that a mismatch between self- and other-perceptions of racial identity can occur for non-border identifiers. For example, despite the fact that many participants did not fit themselves into a specific racial group by selecting the transcendent identity, people may still perceive and judge them based on the prescribed racial categories that the transcendent identity option rejects. Recent research by Remedios and Chasteen (2013) shows that multiracial individuals (compared to monoracials) place tremendous value on others' accuracy about their race. Future research should explore whether social

validation is more or less important for different identity options or for different mixed-race groups. It is important not only to look at how many individuals experience a disjuncture between self-identification and others' perceptions of them, but also at how having one's biracial identity validated can influence other psychological and social outcomes. The role of social validation of racial identity should also be examined while considering other forms of identity and belonging (e.g., national), which individuals may use to make sense of their self-understanding and experiences (Song & Aspinall, 2012).

4.4. Limitations and future directions

One of the strongest contributions of this study lies in the diversity of our sample, which allowed us to explore patterns of racial identity selection among samples of understudied biracial populations. The literature on the vast multiracial population has been overshadowed by the focus on Black/White individuals. The finding that the most common types of identity chosen were not consistent across these four mixed-race groups suggests that different mixed-race groups vary in the nature of their self-understanding. Our results need to be replicated in future studies using larger samples of each mixed-race group, but they represent a good starting point for increasing the scope to other mixed race groups. It would also be important to investigate whether the positive (or negative) psychological and social outcomes linked to a specific biracial identity option for one mixed-race group plays out differently for another mixed-race group. More systematic and in-depth analysis using multi-method approaches for gauging biracial identity are needed to determine whether psychological correlates of biracial identity differ for different mixed-race groups.

Future research may also consider examining multiple visible minorities (e.g., South Asian/Blacks), whose identification may be associated with unique experiences with different visible minority groups. In addition to the social validation challenges they may face from members of their parents' racial groups, they may struggle with seeking social validation from a majority race with which they do not racially identify. The experience of developing self-understanding may be even more complex for multiracials who identify with three or more racial groups. Although we did not include individuals reporting three or more races in this particularly study, the multiracial population in Canada and the U.S. is becoming increasingly diverse, with many other combinations of mixed-race backgrounds. It will be important for future studies to examine how these individuals understand themselves racially and how their self-concept is reflected in their lived experiences. As the multiracial population continues to grow in number and in diversity, it is more crucial than ever for individuals and society as a whole to recognize the multidimensional nature of racial identity and the complexity it adds to the way in which we understand ourselves and understand others around us.

Acknowledgements

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