

**THE AFRICAN AMERICAN RACIAL TAPESTRY:  
BLACK ADOLESCENTS' PRIVATE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL  
EXPERIENCES AND RACIAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT**

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Birts**

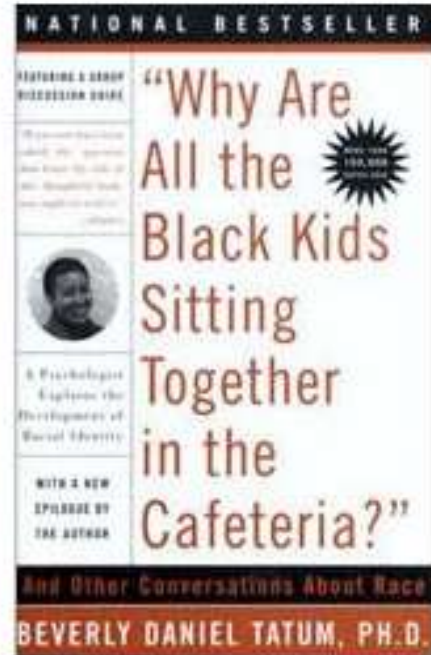
*CPED Session- Leading the (Re)  
Design of Your Online Program:  
A Bootcamp  
October 21, 2017  
Oakland, CA*



# WHY THIS RESEARCH TOPIC?



Tatum and her book



- \* “Our self-perceptions are shaped by the messages that we receive from those around us, and when young Black men and women enter adolescence, the racial content of those messages intensifies” (Tatum, 1997, p. 54).

# RACIAL IDENTITY IN RESEARCH ON ADOLESCENT IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

## \* **Racial Identity**

- \* *Who am I?* (Sharma & Sharma, 2010; Sadler, 2017)
- \* *Who am I racially?* (DeCuir-Gunby, et al., 2012)
- \* *What is my relationship to my ethnic/racial group membership?* (Peck et al., 2014)

## \* **Black Racial Identity Theories and Expanded Models**

- \* *Cross Nigrescence Model* (Cross, 1971)
- \* *Racial Identity Attitudes Scale* (Parham and Helms, 1981)
- \* *Cross Racial Identity Scale* (Vandiver et al., 2000)
- \* *Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity* (Sellers et al., 1998; Scottham et al., 2008)

# THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

## Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI)

### \* **Saliency**

- \* Defines oneself in terms of race at a particular moment or in a particular situation

### \* **Centrality**

- \* Defines himself or herself with regard to race overall

### \* **Regard**

- \* Feels positively or negatively about membership in African-American community
  - \* **Public** → Feels positively about his or her race
  - \* **Private** → Feels that others view African Americans positively or negatively

*Centrality* I feel close to other Black people.

I have a strong sense of belonging to other Black people.

If I were to describe myself to someone, one of the first things that I would say is that I'm Black.

*Private Regard* I am happy that I am Black.

I am proud to be Black.

I feel good about Black people.

Sellers, Shelton, Rowley, and Chavous, 1998



# RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND STUDY DESIGN

- \* RQ1: How do African American high school students attending independent schools identify racially and ethnically?
- \* RQ2: How do African American high school students experience independent schools as sites for racial identity development?

Research Design and Methodology

**Social Constructivism:**  
Epistemological stance

**Grounded Theory:**  
Data analysis and data interpretation

**The Study:**  
12 participants  
10 different school sites  
Grades 9-12  
Reside in the Bay Area, CA  
Semi-structured interviews

Data Analysis

Constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967)

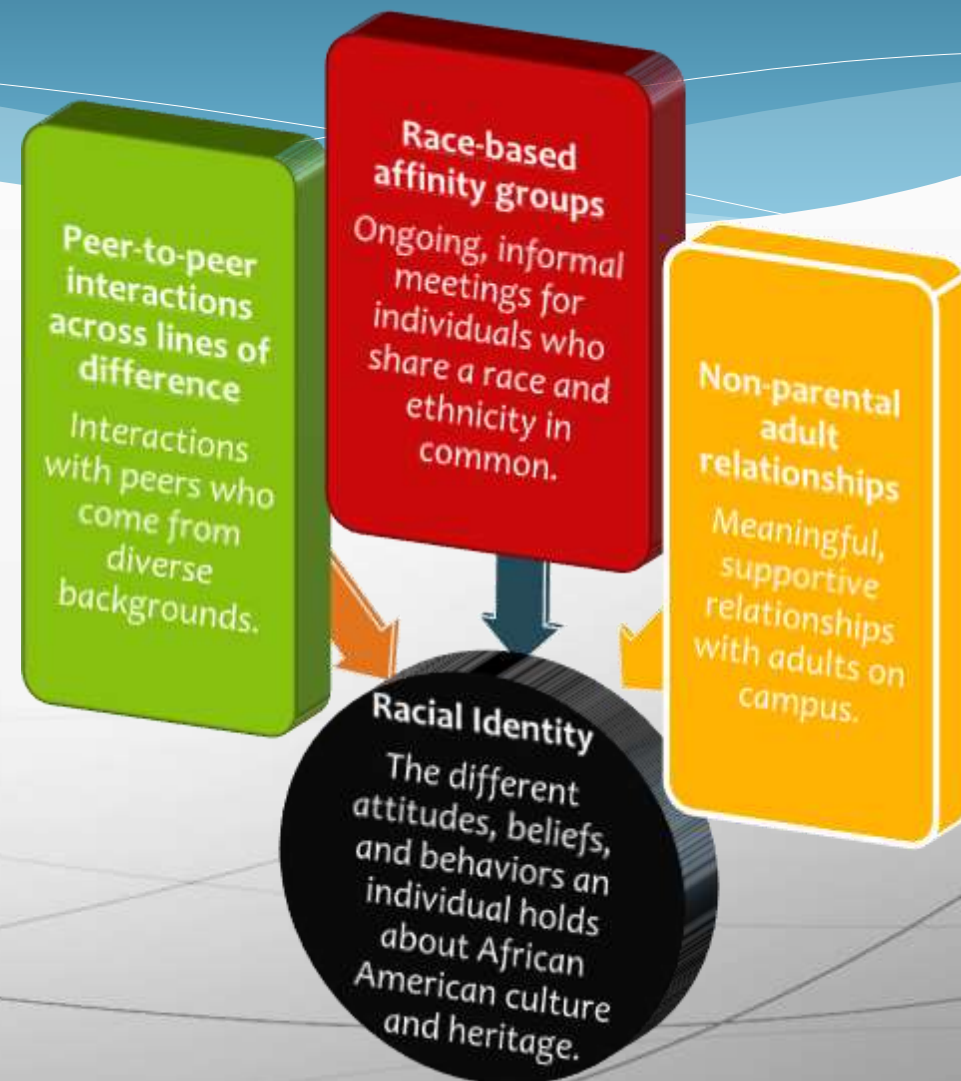
Comparison between interviews within the same group

Analyzed interviews



# FINDINGS

- ❖ Participants defined their self-concept and sense of belonging to their racial group.
- ❖ Participants' attitudes toward their own race were influenced by their interactions with and observations of the attitudes of those in school.
- ❖ Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI) dimensions elucidated participants':
  - ❖ Beliefs → Centrality
  - ❖ Understandings → Salience
  - ❖ Interpretations → Racial regard (public & private)





# Implications

## 1. School Administration/Educators

- ❖ Implement race based affinity groups
- ❖ Facilitate students' social networks and interactions with other peers and adults of similar ethnic and racial backgrounds
- ❖ Promote youth involvement in the school community
- ❖ Hire teachers and staff of color
- ❖ Allocate resources to create programs that focus on identity exploration

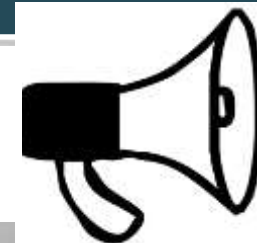
## 2. Black/African American Racial Tapestry

### A new model

- \* Explores the weaving of racial, ethnic, and cultural identities that weft thread, African descendants, and multi-ethnic Blacks, piecing together their intricate, and complex experiences in societies and institutions, to encompass their multidimensional Black realities:
  - \* Family background
  - \* Racial-ethnic self-identification
  - \* Knowledge
  - \* School relationships

## 3. How has what I've learned affected me on the job and in my life?

*Facebook, Prejudice, Privilege, Race, Racism, Understanding, White Privilege*



**YOU  
ARE  
SAFE  
HERE**