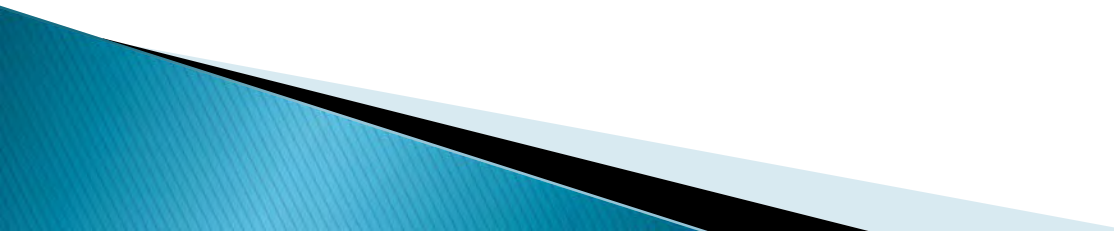


# Multicultural Identity: Benefits of Intercultural Code-switching for Students and Faculty

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# Participant Learning Outcomes

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- ▶ list 3–5 characteristics of multiracial and multicultural identity development
  - ▶ examine how these characteristics influence student success
  - ▶ explore activities that will benefit and enrich the learning experience of multiracial and multicultural student as well as of all MC students
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# Some experiences....

african american, thai

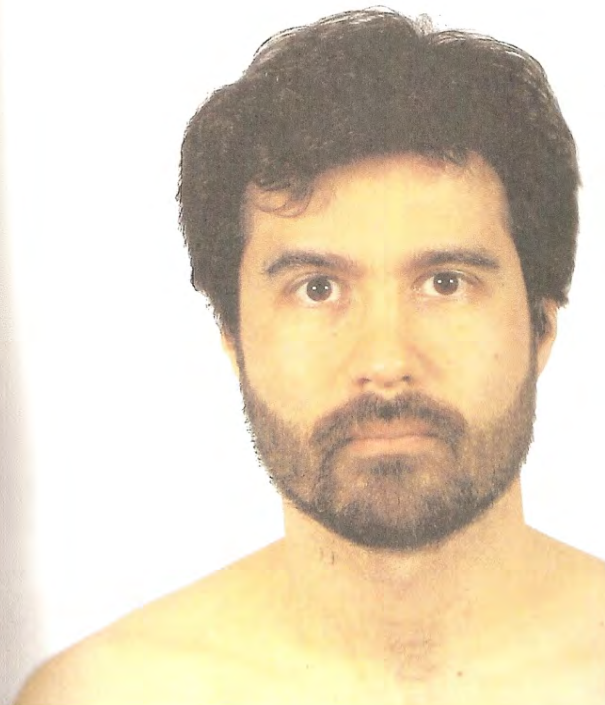
I'm ~~special~~ special. My dad is Black, and my mom is Thai. I've lived with my dad since I was 2. I haven't spoken with my mom since then, but nonetheless I am Asian. I don't really know anything about my Thai culture, but I still take pride in it. When I'm asked about my race, I say that I am Black & Thai. I am not one or the other. I am both, and I shouldn't have to choose. ~~I'm not really~~  
Asian



# Some experiences....

mm, caucasian

1. Mixed race, hapa, hapa haole, Korean, Korean American, Asian, Asian American, Eurasian, half Asian, half white.
2. Vaguely flattered and vaguely threatened by your scrutiny. Okay... more flattered... Unless you get weird on me
3. Apparently more racially ambiguous than ever since growing a beard... and having ambiguous feelings about that.
4. Sleepy.



# Some experiences....

dan, inupiaq, finnish, japanese, swedish, english

I am circumpolar. I am many little bridges joined. My parents + grandparents have many stories of making paths, and following paths, + crossing paths. I come from whalers, trappers, adventurers, nomads — all trails led to a point: me.



# Some experiences....

indonesian, african american

*I am the glowing around the moon. I am the  
endless summers that you don't forget. I am the  
permanent that leaves a mark....*

*I am ME!!*



# Some experiences....

unese, english

I'm a strange bird,  
and multi-racial although no  
believes me.

I'm a ballerina, a UCSB graduate,  
unemployed, and applying to grad  
school.

I'm vietnamese and if you hear my  
mom speak you would believe me too.

I'm scared of the real world...



# Some experiences....

ie, french, chinese, irish, swedish, sioux

What am I?

I am exactly the same  
as every other person in 2500.





# Who are you (culturally)?

- ▶ Write on index card
- ▶ Share with partner: “Guess who I am, culturally.”



# Multicultural Identity Formation

What influences multicultural identity formation?

- ▶ Multicultural individual looks – discomfort with not being able to pigeon hole – fellow students, faculty and staff
- ▶ Cultural knowledge of their heritage groups – language especially, culture – courses, study abroad
- ▶ Peer culture: –availability of multicultural community; –resistance of monocultural students of color; and –racism among white students, is of influence on the possibility to move among identity-based social groups.  
(Renn, 2008)

# Patterns in Identity Formation Among Multiracial College Students– (2000, 2004)

Kristen Renn (2000, 2004)

- ▶ **Monoracial identity** – chooses one of heritages
- ▶ **Multiple monoracial identities** – shifting identification depending on situation
- ▶ **Multiracial identity** – not one or another, but group/culture of mixed
- ▶ **Extraracial identity** – opting out of identification with established categories (see clip)
- ▶ **Situational identity** – fluid identity pattern, stable but with different elements more salient in different contexts.

*(College students: college provides opportunities for identity exploration and organizing)*

# Developments mid 1990s

- ▶ Who am I?
- ▶ Creating a new ethnic identity:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tUnTITqwwvo>

(Video clip: Rapper about being of mixed race)



# Multicultural Identity Formation

Other influences on multicultural identity formation:

- ▶ gender
- ▶ social class
- ▶ family and family status
- ▶ age
- ▶ spirituality
- ▶ social awareness and orientation
- ▶ geographical region

In sum:

Personal and environmental factors combine to influence multiracial identity in college students



# Research on Benefits



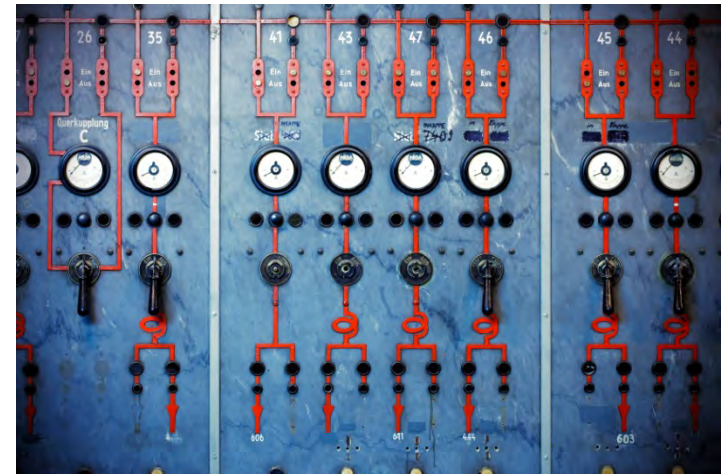
Recent scientific attention:

Positive multicultural identity linked to good psychological health:

higher self-esteem, higher sense of efficacy;  
lower stereotype vulnerability. (see study by  
Binning, Unzueta, Huon, Molina, 2009)

# Code switching – Manifestation of multicultural identity

- ▶ Linguists:  
switching/combining of  
**languages** by bilingual  
speakers
- ▶ MC: switching/combining of  
**cultural codes** (home  
versus school/mom versus  
dad)



What is it like shifting back and forth?  
What is it like to find a “new” group of  
bi/multiracial fellow students?

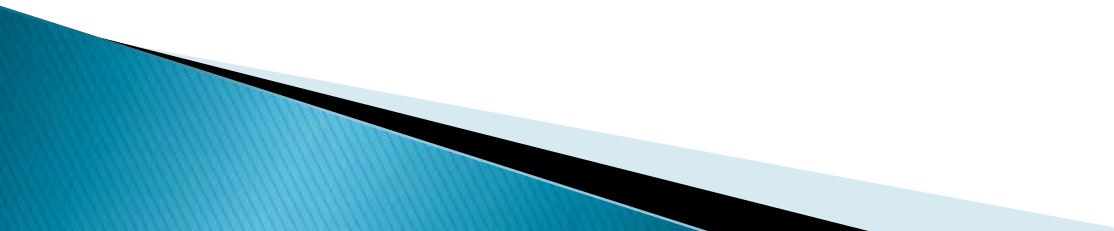
# Think-Share-Pair

What are some advantages of being a multicultural college student, growing up multiculturally and with a multicultural identity?





# Possible advantages

- ▶ Experience in comparing and contrasting
  - ▶ Critical thinking may come easier – realization of own assumptions and knowing different perspectives
  - ▶ Thinking in terms of “grey” instead of “black and white”
  - ▶ Understanding majority/minority perspectives and being able to function as “bridge”
  - ▶ Combining and creating new constructs
  - ▶ Experience that life is complicated, messy, irrational at times
- 

# What can YOU do?

In your own job, what change can you make to further improve your relationship with multicultural/multiracial MC students?

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