

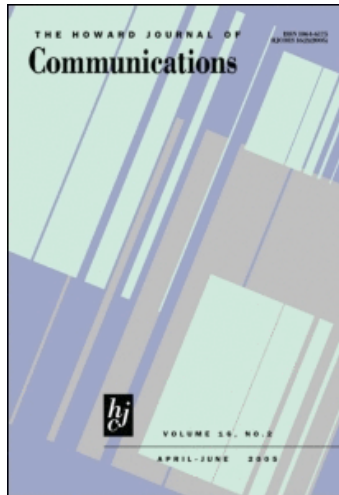
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Howard Journal of Communications

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713771688>

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To cite this Article Jackson, Ronald L.(1998) 'Tracing the Evolution of "Race," "Ethnicity," and "Culture" in Communication Studies', Howard Journal of Communications, 9: 1, 41 – 55

To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/106461798247104

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/106461798247104>

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Tracing the Evolution of “Race,” “Ethnicity,” and “Culture” in Communication Studies

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In the 1960s Clyde Kluckhohn recognized the ambiguous implications and usage of race, ethnicity, and culture within scientific inquiry; furthermore, he commented about the frequency and significance of this phenomenon. Even in the 1990s this conundrum persists. Prior research has not critically examined the tendency to freely substitute race, ethnicity, and culture as identity prefixes within communication studies. Much of the extant literature assigns the origin and meaning of these constructs to anthropological and/or social psychological studies rather than to the discipline of communication. This is not to suggest that identity studies be limited to a communication purview but that all cultural-studies scholars carefully scrutinize what is meant by these frequently used and loosely defined labels. Although there may be no universal agreement across disciplines, cultural communication studies will be enhanced by the clear differentiation of terms. This article is an initial exploration (not a definitive effort) that traces the evolution of race, ethnicity, and culture in communication studies. First, contemporary definitions of this trichotomy are presented as a foundation for the discussion of identity studies in communication. Second, selected research within the communication literature is reviewed to ascertain how the development of racial, ethnic, and cultural studies has contributed to current understanding of these terms in our discipline. A brief discussion of related literature, a comprehensive summary, and several implications for future research conclude the article.

Received 07 March 1997; accepted 11 September 1997.

This article emanated during initial drafts of the first author's forthcoming book (by Greenwood Press) entitled *The Negotiation of Cultural Identity*. The authors thank William Starosta, Lyndrey Niles, Melbourne Cummings, Molefi Asante, Deborah Atwater, and Richard Wright for evaluations and critiques of the article's first draft.

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The Howard Journal of Communications, 9:41-55, 1998

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1064-6175/98 \$12.00 + .00

KEY WORDS: *race, ethnicity, culture, codeswitching, counter-identity, identity politics, acculturation, accommodation, and adaptation*

Though the concept of race is genuine enough, there is perhaps no field of science in which the misunderstandings among educated people are so frequent and so serious.

(Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961, p. 107)

Whether one walks into a classroom, a boardroom, a congressional meeting, or a cultural studies convention, one can be sure of one thing—the participants will be unclear about the distinction of three widely used terms: *race, ethnicity, and culture*. To adequately discuss racial, ethnic, and cultural differences, the definitions must be clear. “The question,” Charles Silberman (1964) wrote, “is not whether race differences exist, it is what they mean.” (p. 73).

Prior research has not critically examined this tendency to interchange these identity referents. Current understanding of these constructs’ origins assumes either an anthropological or a social psychological posture, rather than a communication perspective of identity transference. It is imperative, however, that all cultural-studies scholars carefully scrutinize what is meant by these frequently used and loosely defined labels. Although there may be no universal agreement across disciplines, cultural communication studies will be enhanced by the clear differentiation of terms. This article is an initial exploration (not a definitive effort) that traces the evolution of race, ethnicity, and culture in communication studies. First, contemporary definitions of this trichotomy are presented as a foundation for the discussion of identity studies in communication. Second, selected research within the communication literature is reviewed to ascertain how the development of racial, ethnic, and cultural studies has contributed to current understanding of these terms in our discipline. A brief discussion of related literature, a comprehensive summary, and several implications for future research conclude the article.

Contemporary Definitions of Race, Ethnicity, and Culture

Critical examinations of race reveal a distinction among race, ethnicity, and culture. According to Robert Stebbins (1992), “Strictly speaking, from the standpoint of biological science, “races” do not exist. As we shall see, there is no biological basis for the concept of race The common sense idea of race is based on inherited physical similarities” (p. 22). Yet popular thinking dictates that race is a subdivision of *Homo sapiens*, who are physically differentiated. Stebbins’s (1992) primary contention that “races” do not exist is supported by sociologists and rejected by biologists, who claim that phylocentric differences are widely varied within and among races; the tremendous disparity among scientists regarding the existence, number, and types of races supports this claim.

Yehudi Webster (1992), author of *The Racialization of America*, complained that race is too often equated with culture. He clarified race as being the product of a classification scheme in which anatomical differences are tantamount but social

meaning is ignored. He rejected the alignment of race with culture and proposed that scholars not consider each race as having its own culture, lest he or she submit to a loose interpretation of culture. Webster further implied that culture be defined as something more than symbol construction or value transmutation, because any one person can achieve these criteria single-handedly, yet culture is a collective concept. Even if culture is described as the composite of shared symbols, beliefs, ideas, and values, there must be some characteristic that distinguishes it from ethnicity. Most dictionaries depict ethnicity as a possible characterization of any group that is not white Anglo-Saxon Protestant. However, several researchers contend that there is a white ethnic population consisting of Irish, Polish, Italian, German, and Mediterranean peoples (Fellows, 1972; Hraba, 1979; Lieberman, 1985; Ryan, 1973; Weber, 1961). These scholars explain that there has been some debate as to whether these groups can even be called "white."

Ethnicity is not a meaningless term reserved for non-whites. The etymology of the word *ethnic* traces to the Greek *ethnikos*, meaning "a foreign group or nationality within a society." Also, the Latin *ethnicus* meant not only foreigner but also *heathen*. Stebbins (1992) maintained that present conceptions of the word *ethnic* are understood similarly. Although he recognized that white ethnic groups exist, he claimed that ethnic group references are most often tied to groups considered to be non-white, foreign, and heathen. Asante (1990) also expounded on the description of ethnic groups as displaced peoples by referring to ethnomusicology and ethnomethodology and noting that Eurocentric writers omitted Europeans from their studies, suggesting that ethno-research included only non-Europeans. Yet Stebbins maintained that minority status is attained after a group has been victimized by white supremacy and relegated to secondary or tertiary status as an American citizen. Among the ethnic groups who share minority status in America are "Blacks, Irish, Italians, Germans, Chinese, Mexicans, French Canadians, Amerindians, and East Asians" (Stebbins, 1992, p. 404). It is important to note that blacks are the only group mentioned that lack a land referent within their group name. Abrahams (1970) argued that any critical definition of culture includes a connectedness to a land mass that represents the origin of the culture. The omission of a land referent facilitates the argument that blacks have no culture or cultural identity (Levine, 1977). A similar discussion has been going on in regard to *unhyphenated whites*. Lieberman (1985) introduced this term to imply a cultural displacement of some whites in America. His work clearly recognizes the dilemma created by labeling all other groups' ethnicities and not quite knowing what it means to be white. The rationale often given for "whiteness as absent center" is that identities change over time; thus it is unimportant to commit oneself to a cultural identity (Pajaczkowska & Young, 1992, p. 58).

Ethnicity is socially defined and constructed on the basis of cultural criteria (Jones, 1991). Hraba (1979, p. 27) provided the best definition of ethnic groups as "self-conscious collectivities of people, who on the basis of a common origin or a separate co-culture, maintain a distinction between themselves and outsiders." The co-culture that Hraba mentioned poses some sense of ambiguity, as it is often cited to mean religion, language, nationality, or culinary interests (Fellows, 1972; Montagu, 1945; Weber, 1961; Webster, 1992). Yet it is generally agreed that race is subsumed under the category of ethnicity, and ethnicity is a subdivision of culture.

As mentioned previously, culture was first defined in print by E. B. Tylor (1871/1889), who stated: "Culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense is that complex whole, which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (p. 3). Edward T. Hall (1959) criticized this definition, pointing out its "lack of rigorous specificity" (p. 20). Hall responded to this void with an entire theory on culture comprised of 10 elements called the *Primary Message System*, supported by three message components (sets, isolates, and patterns). The theory is explained as being bio-basic and infra-cultural, exhibiting a strong linkage between culture and communication. A less intricate, but suitable conception of culture is found in Clifford Geertz's (1973) *The Interpretation of Cultures*. Culture is defined within the text as "an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life" (p. 12). This definition is important, because it accounts for the evolutionary quality of culture, the process and pattern-based structure of culture, and the traditional/cross-generational transmission of culture. Moreover, the definition includes a description of culture that relates to symbol sharing and interpretations of reality. The only missing, but often assumed, component is the tie to a geographical location. Marshall Singer (1987) added that culture must be viewed perceptually and therefore instituted and incorporated by an identity group. Geertz seemed to comply and further submitted that culture has been ill defined and diluted because of a plethora of definitions. Culture is often used to describe subcultural groups such as those related to gender, age, physical impairment, sexual preference, language, nationality, or religion.

A concise depiction of culture devised for this article is as follows: *Culture* is a term used to describe a set of patterns, beliefs, behaviors, institutions, symbols, and practices shared and perpetuated by a consolidated group of individuals connected by an ancestral heritage and a concomitant geographical reference location (Ani, 1994; Diop, 1991; Holloway, 1990; Levine, 1977; Nobles, 1986).

Biological and sociological considerations of race have proposed disparate conceptions of race, ethnicity, and culture. By critically examining the history of these terms, we intend to expose a pattern of conceptual development within the communication discipline. It is important to note that *culture* is increasingly becoming the preferred term within communication; *ethnicity* and *race* are still used, but to a diminishing degree.

Very little of the identity research has critically examined the significance of these terms; therefore the following three reviews on racial, ethnic, and cultural identity will include literature that assumes that the reader will conceptually link race with something more than biological characteristics. The studies included under the heading *Race and Identity* are ones that mostly discuss race from a nomothetic orientation. Those included under *Ethnicity and Identity* either discuss ethnicity extensively or explain the study from a socially defined or group-oriented perspective, some emphasizing a co-cultural element. The *Culture and Identity* section comprises research related to several issues, including, but not limited to, worldview, cultural variability, and/or a patterned behavior within and among multiple groups.

Race and Identity

Communication scholars agree that there are multiple types of identity (Chen & Starosta, in press) and further assert that identity should be understood from a contracultural perspective. *Contraculture* is defined by Andrea Rich (1974) in her book *Interracial Communication* as that which occurs as a result of an "imposition of one culture on another" (p. 9). Rich recommended that intercultural and interracial relationships be appreciated within the context of intervening variables such as power and language. In addition, she charged whites with the creation of racist language embedded with divisive cues. The example she used is with regard to the terms *black* and *white* and their inherent polar opposition. "As a cultural phenomenon, language of course, is learned," Rich explained. "It is culturally induced and developed, and as such, reflects the values of the culture. Language enculturates the individual by predetermining how he sees the world" (p. 130). Rich also attributed race prejudice toward blacks as the instigator of assimilation and socialization. This is followed by role playing and the development of a counterculture or co-culture. The *counterculture* is defined as a representation of the norms and values of the established dominant group, at the expense of abandoning one's primary culture. Burke and Tully (1977) added another dynamic to this notion of counterculture by suggesting co-identities and counter-identities. *Co-identities* are the manifested form of an individual's multiple role and identities, such as those related to age, physical impairment, or sexual preference. *Counter-identities* are enacted roles that augment asymmetrical relationships, such as parent-child or supervisor-subordinate relationships.

Racial identity in communication research has traditionally accentuated racial imparity, interracial interaction, and accommodation. Giles, Coupland, and Coupland (1991) conducted research on sociolinguistic accommodation and addressed issues related to excessive concession of linguistic identity. This was termed *overaccommodation* and was pejoratively received as patronizing behavior. Kochman's (1981) ethnographic studies reveal that the communication patterns of blacks and whites are dissimilar, and therefore behavioral interpretations of each interaction episode can potentially become problematic. The principal reason for racial tension and infringement on black identity, Kochman (1981) admitted, is that "Whites assume they are operating according to identical speech and cultural conventions. . . . This assumption . . . speaks to the general public failure to recognize that Black norms and conventions in these areas differ from those of Whites" (pp. 7-8). The verbal and nonverbal communication between the two racial groups is quite distinctive. Asante (1978) posited that a convergence of situational and cultural modalities is key to a successful and effective relationship between the races. This notion of situational sensitivity and cultural awareness was endorsed by Dickens and Dickens (1992), who claimed that workplace organizations are experiencing decreased morale and productivity because of the lack of utilizing of their full human resource potential. Asante's (1990) establishment of situation, culture, and interaction as primary units of analysis has led to an improved appreciation of effective interracial communication. Since the late 1980s, identity has become a much more pervasive issue among intercultural communication scholars. In the 1990s, there is very little mention of interracial communication. It was formerly the name

of a communication subdiscipline, which is known at present as *intercultural communication*. This shift provided a pivotal point in communication research and encouraged a critical examination of the terms *race* and *culture* (Pajaczkowska & Young, 1992). Rattansi (1992) encouraged a “critical rereading of culture . . . [since] ‘race’ and identity are inherently contestable social and political categories” (p. 141).

Ethnicity and Identity

Identity research has been presented from differing perspectives pivoting from one tenet: Identity is relational (Giles & Johnson, 1981; Hecht, Collier, & Ribeau, 1993; Hecht & Ribeau, 1984; Hewstone & Brown, 1986; Hewstone & Jaspers, 1982; McCall & Simmons, 1978; Ting-Toomey, 1986). It is not stagnant but is situated within the context of space, time, and circumstance (Wiemann, 1977). Stella Ting-Toomey posited that “the ‘self’ or ‘identity’ is refined and modified through the process of dyadic verbal and nonverbal negotiation” (1989, p. 351). She further commented that identity is relational, reflexive, and multifaceted. In 1986 Ting-Toomey created the identity validation model, which consists of three dimensions: identity salience, perceived identity support, and communication. Role (group membership) identity and personal identity are the two poles on the continuum of low to high identity salience. *Role identity salience* is described as a set of self-definitional cultural and social role identities. *Personal identity salience* refers to the significance one affixes to certain personal characteristics, such as weight, height, and hair texture. *Perceived identity support*, according to Ting-Toomey (1986), is the validation of self-definition one receives from “relevant others” (p. 123). She further explained that two social or cultural group representatives are much more likely to initiate interaction after having perceived identity support. Communication, the final dimension, is the actual “identity-negotiation process between the self and relevant others” (p. 123). This identity negotiation refers to the careful selection of one among several role identities to engage within a particular communication context.

Specifically, Ting-Toomey (1986) inquired about the type of individual who would initiate interpersonal ties. She examined four identity types: balanced, personal, role, and marginal identifiers. Balanced identifiers are people who locate themselves high on the role and personal identity salience measures. In other words, they are communicatively competent and have a high self-evaluation of their personal attributes. Personal identifiers are those who have a high self-evaluation but find themselves less competent at switching roles to accommodate others. Role identifiers are the opposite—they switch roles well but do not have high self-esteem. Marginal identifiers define themselves as low on personal identity and role identity. Ting-Toomey concluded that balanced identifiers are most likely to initiate interpersonal ties among groups, and marginal identifiers are the least likely to initiate interaction. The identity validation model is the first interpretive framework found in the literature that not only indicates that identity is relational but also explicitly notes that identity is a negotiated process. Uncertainty reduction theory (Berger & Calabrese, 1975) is the basis on which Ting-Toomey’s research on initial interaction is founded; however, negotiation was considered only a general phenomenon, not an actual construct, in Berger and Calabrese’s (1975) formula. Ting-Toomey

proposed that future research examine the relational dilemmas and paradoxes that arise from members of two cultures “as they attempt to reach out and hold back at the same time, to seek for mutual validation, and yet at the same time to protect their own vulnerability” (1986, p. 126).

Giles and Johnson (1981) posited that language identity has been scientifically undervalued and that no clear connection has been identified between language and ethnicity within communication research. The heuristic contribution made by Giles and Johnson’s theorizing is the link between ethnic and linguistic identity. These concepts are introduced as in-group and out-group experiences that compel the group member to maintain ethnic group and language loyalty, alternatively labeled *ethnolinguistic vitality* (Giles, Bourhis, & Taylor, 1977). The language attitudes, roles, and interpretations are outlined to express linguistic distinctiveness. Giles et al. (1977) presented three categories influencing ethnolinguistic vitality: status, demographics, and institutional support. These authors mentioned institutions such as churches, schools, private industry, and government agencies. They further contended that the greater the institutional support, the linguistic population, and economic status, the greater the vitality level among the members. Bourhis (1985) offered another set of terms to describe language loyalty: *speech convergence* and *speech divergence*. He argued that speech convergence, or *codeswitching*, is the result of using the code of the dominant group. Speech divergence is indicative of strong in-group loyalty, even at the cost of suffering repercussions for deviant behavior. Scotton (1988) defined codeswitching as “the use of any two or more linguistic varieties in the same conversation, whether they are different languages, styles, or dialects” (p. 201). This broad definition encompasses lexical, syntax, and phoneme variation. When Scotton discussed style variation, she included references made from a speaker’s stylistic repertoire, which is indicative of that speaker’s social experiences and ethnic group membership.

Ethnic identity among African Americans has probably been most comprehensively presented within the communication discipline by Michael Hecht, Mary Jane Collier, and Sidney Ribeau (1993). Although these authors have provided ambiguous definitions of culture and ethnicity, the expansive amount of research presented within *African American Communication* is unsurpassed in identity research. There are more than 15 studies by Hecht, Collier, and Ribeau, concluded by a communication theory of ethnic identity. A full explanation of their communication theory of ethnic identity is offered later in this article. One of the criticisms that immediately surfaces within this book is the authors’ insistence on identifying African Americans as an ethnic group and not as a culture. Yet, interspersed throughout the book, culture is used as if it is a characteristic of African Americans—unlike ethnicity, which is paramount to their identity survival. Even recently, Martin, Hecht, and Larkey (1994) discussed the interethnic communication of African American and European American respondents.

Culture and Identity

Watzlawick, Beavin, and Jackson (1967) posited that “one cannot not communicate” (p. 51); therefore, communication is inevitable. Hecht and Ribeau (1984)

claimed that identity is communicated via interaction. Consequently, identity is a process of message exchange. Being that each individual has multiple and shifting identities (Collier & Thomas, 1988) present in everyday talk (Goffman, 1959), cultural identity is only one of several identities. Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) noted that culture is a "design for living," a "value-orientation," which introduces a worldview. Hofstede (1980) mentioned individualism–collectivism as an index for measuring variegated cultural dimensions. Asante (1980) proposed a culture-specific approach to self-analysis. African descendants are encouraged to appreciate other cultures while placing African ideas, communication, values, beliefs, customs, and patterns of behavior at the center of one's interpretation of reality. This readjustment from margin to center is critical to self-understanding and self-construal (M. Kim & Sharkey, 1995).

M. Kim and Sharkey (1995) examined interaction constraints within pluralistic workplace organizations using an individualistic–collectivistic equivalent which they identified as independent and interdependent self-construals. The terms are reconceptualized because of their generality. The results of the research are outlined by investigating three concerns: concern for clarity, concern for avoiding hurting the hearer's feelings, and concern for avoiding negative evaluation by the hearer. The two dimensions of independent and interdependent construals of the self prove to be useful because they account for an individual self-concept and a personality of the collective. The results of M. Kim and Sharkey's study indicate that cultural self-construals are directly related to a perceived importance of clarity, efforts to avoid hurting others' feelings, and avoidance of negative evaluation.

A rules-theory approach to studying culture, personality, and communication was offered by Collier and Thomas (1988) and fortified in Hecht et al.'s (1993) communication theory of ethnic identity. Collier and Thomas recommended that cultural identity be studied as one among many negotiated identities, not independently managed. The theory is presented as a set of six assumptions: five axioms and one theorem. Intercultural competence facilitates the negotiation and validation of cultural identity. Thus, the negotiation is mediated by discursive management. Cultural identity varies according to the scope, salience, and intensity of attributed and avowed identities. Collier and Thomas suggested a correlation between these three dimensions and the degree of intercultural communication competence. The highest competence is achieved when the interactant's attributed identity for his or her partner is consistent with the partner's avowed identity. Rubin and Martin (1994) provided the most detailed instrument for measuring intercultural communication competence, which includes the following constructs: empathy, self-disclosure, social relaxation, assertiveness, interaction management, altercentrism, expressiveness, supportiveness, immediacy, and environmental control. They defined *intercultural communication competence* as "an impression of judgment formed about a person's ability to manage interpersonal relationships in communication settings" (p. 33). Initially, communication competence was used by intercultural researchers to lessen the intergroup contact effect of culture shock (Oberg, 1960) and to ensure a "smooth and successful interaction" (Cupach & Spitzberg, 1983, p. 565) among culturally distinct interlocutors (Hammer, 1989).

Communication patterns are adapted to establish appropriate and effective interpersonal ties among interactants (Ting-Toomey, 1986). Adaptation, accommo-

dation, and acculturation literatures have contributed to the evolution of cultural identity studies within the field of communication (Dyal & Dyal, 1981; Gallois Franklyn-Stokes, Giles, & Coupland, 1988; Y. Y. Kim, 1986; Starosta & Olorunnisola, 1992; Ting-Toomey, 1986, 1989). The studies of immigrants and sojourners' adaptation and communication conflict (Kim, 1989), acculturative stress (Dyal & Dyal, 1981), third culture building (Starosta & Olorunnisola, 1992), interpersonal bonding across intergroup boundaries (Ting-Toomey, 1986, 1989), and group affiliation and accommodation (Gallois et al., 1988) have all heuristically advanced cultural identity research.

Discussion

W.E.B. DuBois (1903), considered a sociologist by many scholars, accurately predicted that the color line would be the major obstacle to race relations in the twentieth century (Allport, 1954; Amir, 1969; Hacker, 1992; Myrdal, 1944; Omi & Winant, 1986; Stoddard, 1920). The culmination of events that followed proved him correct. Gunnar Myrdal's (1944) classic, *The American Dilemma*, reported findings that suggested that all ethnic groups will be fully assimilated into the mainstream after committing themselves to an amalgamated climate of cultural control—the melting pot. Myrdal challenged the American people to unite as one culture, the American culture—essentially, to assimilate. Although such black intellectuals as Countee Cullen and Sterling Brown served as assistants on the Myrdal project, the results indicated an unfavorable resolution. At the time, this sounded like a second Reconstruction and was welcomed by blacks. A decade later, however, Allport (1954) announced that race relations had been unaltered, and racial prejudice persisted as normal. Racial conflict was quite apparent as the number of sit-ins and protests increased. Government officials, organizational leaders, and academicians began to devise methods of reducing racial tension (Silberman, 1964).

By the latter part of the 1960s, Yehudi Amir (1969) developed the *contact hypothesis*, which stated that ethnic prejudice was inversely proportionate to the extent of ethnic group contact. In other words, racial tension could theoretically be reduced if the ethnic groups were more exposed to one another. It was already clear that a major barrier to cross-cultural interaction was the anxiety produced by the unexpected (Oberg, 1960). Stephan and Stephan (1992) provided a modern analysis of this phenomenon and advanced Amir's work by forwarding a theory of intergroup anxiety. A reduction in intergroup anxiety was believed to be directly related to an improved climate of racial harmony. Meanwhile, the Kerner Commission on Civil Disorders, instituted in the 1960s, reported, decade after decade, that "Blacks and Whites are moving toward two societies, one Black, one White, separate, hostile, and unequal" (Hacker, 1992, p. 7). Several writers referred to this schism as the *two Americas* (Fager, 1967; Silberman, 1964; Staples, 1987). Fager (1967) indicated that both races have lived in the same social, cultural, political, and economic milieu but maintain contradictory experiences. From a social scientific perspective, William Cross's (1971) nigrescence theory is heralded as a pioneering theoretic explanation of negotiated black identities. Cross explained that the emotional and defensive disposition of identity shifting is exchanged for a politically acute awareness of other

ideologies and a greater understanding of these views. Since 1971 Cross has published an updated version of the model and has added internalization–commitment as a final step in the process of nigrescence (Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 1995). This step explores issues of high and low race and culture salience, presuming that those who have matured to this stage are high in race and culture awareness.

Recently, Cross and Fhagen-Smith modified the nigrescence paradigm so that it accounts for ego identity development. One of Cross and Fhagen-Smith's theoretic concerns relates to the range of identities and cultural ideologies of people who have matured to the internalization stage. The correlation between self-esteem, ego-identity development, and racial–cultural development greatly improves the nigrescence model. However, it may be possible that African Americans with high self-esteem will have high ego functioning due to self-satisfaction and self-comfort with their present perception of their identities. The reformulation of the nigrescence theory significantly contributes to the advancement of identity studies because it considers three dimensions of identity. First, it accounts for multiple realities by considering the divergent ideologies of contemporary conservative leaders. Second, it includes cross-disciplinary research within the reconfiguration. Finally, it theoretically considers the outcome- and process-oriented nature of identity throughout an entire life span.

Prior to the revision, White and Parham (1990) indicated that their concern for the nigrescence model was its restricted focus on young adults and adolescents, with little to no regard for identity transitions later in life. Parham (1989) theorized that identity transformation is a lived experience beginning in adolescence and continuing throughout life. Nigrescence, then, is a cyclical occurrence that exists in early, middle, and late adulthood. “Recycling” of identity stages accounts for the individual moving back and forth between the stages. The heuristic contribution Parham provided its to conceptualize “African American cultural identity” as an independent phenomenon, not established as a reactive formation to white oppression. This discredits the notion established by Mintz and Price (1976) that African American culture evolved from slavery, suggesting that without slavery African American culture would not exist. Parham intuited that African American cultural identity is able to stand alone and function without a European American identity to claim and alter it.

Kovel (1984) spoke of a psychohistorical matrix confounded by an I–other dialectic that has facilitated a link between culture and personality. The id, ego, superego, and culture are components of the matrix that forms the self-concept. In the tradition of a universal psychological mandate for all personality formation, Kovel (1984) hypothesized that the ego is never satisfied. Progress is never achieved, but simply made—the ego must continue making progress, extending its domain. Ani (1994), in response to Kovel, posited that the European self-image necessitates a parasitic I–other orientation, which must have an inferior to which it relates as superior.

Fager (1967) assigned the reason for this ontological disparity as the difference that exists between a prosperous worldview and a slave worldview. Perforce, “ethnic groups” who occupy the slave worldview struggle with a sense of inferiority. Staples (1987) captured the substance of what Fager unsuccessfully attempted to

explain. Staples asserted that colonial society has produced a racial hierarchy with whites in the domineering position; "The culturally distinct racial minority finds itself being judged by how close it conforms to Anglo-Saxon norms" (p. 13). He further noted that a major paradigm shift in race relations studies has been the study of racial domination itself. Whether labeled "minorities" (Stebbins, 1992) or the "fourth world" (Staples, 1987), racial groups sustain intergroup conflict as a consequence of hegemonic rule (Gramsci, 1983).

"Minorities" continue to avoid what Collins (1990) labeled the *matrix of domination* while struggling to maintain a sense of self in between identity shifts (Ani, 1994; Fanon, 1967; Hare, 1991). Frideres and Goldenberg (1982) endorsed the coordination of multiple identities as opposed to a singular self-concept. This coping strategy is considered to be both flexible and mobile. The debate concerning the maintenance of a single or multiple identities continues, while the emphasis shifts to using the terms *ethnicity* and *culture* as opposed to *race* to describe one's concept of communicated identities. As we move toward community cohesion and the improvement of the "global village," social scientific analyses are facilitated by the clarity of our terminologies. The assignment of identity prefixes, which are inconsistently defined, severely limits the clarity of cultural discussions within the classroom, the boardroom, and beyond.

As the work force, student populations, and academic leadership expand and diversify, there is an increasing need to recognize and legitimize marginalized voices. The language choices attached and stigmatized by traditionally exclusionary labels are rapidly changing. "Race" is a sensitive topic, with its nerve center being exclusionism, therefore the topic is often times avoided, at all costs, when in the presence of the person whose race is being discussed. The literature cited in this article informs us that race hatred is socially driven and biologically conceived. It is no mistake that *race hatred* is a more widely used term than *cultural hatred*, because the latter words would imply that a person's values, traditions, and norms, rather than the physiognomic differences, would be the primary point of contestation.

The pattern of conceptual development found within the history of the constructs of race, culture, and ethnicity within communication literature is the push toward defining the self as much more than a biological being. Furthermore, the literature informs us that humans are not immalleable fixtures within interaction episodes; instead, we are self- and other-defined composite beings characterized by or communicative histories, traditions, behaviors, styles, and values, which are sometimes interrupted by unanticipated social forces. As culturalized interactants, we become especially aware of public and private discourses that serve to define the self. Essentially, the conceptual pattern represents progressive transformation from the primitivity of race as biologicistic to race as social, which has yielded theoretic space for the study of communicated ethnicities (or otherness as it pertains to language, religion, nationality, etc). In turn, the paradigmatic shift within the discipline is increasingly moving toward the exploration of race as noncultural and irrespective of ethnicity. As a result, culture must be defined as something different than, but categorically inclusive of, ethnicity and race. Then the subsumed taxonomies of race and ethnicity are properly realigned with their original meanings, except that ethnicity would now embrace the possibility that whites may also be the "other."

Implications

Without conceptual clarity in the communication studies domain of the academy, researchers run the risk of obfuscating the conversation on the nature and scope of racial, ethnic, and cultural communication studies. The effort to divide these three areas of social scientific inquiry is not a trivial announcement but a necessary engagement. Coherence and conceptual legibility are two of the benchmarks of effective scholarship. The lack thereof facilitates intellectual regress within and beyond disciplinary walls. At this time, it is easy to imagine an extramural (to communications) scholar having difficulty finding and critiquing *culture*-specific writings in communication. This is partly so because ethnic research is indistinguishable from racial and/or cultural research.

Say, for example, a psychologist, Susan Moore, wants to use communication research to inform her cultural study of comedy. Yet after days of sorting through the literature, she finds that communication research is replete with studies analyzing how the racial/physiognomic characteristics of a comedian potentially interfere with the degree to which jokes are considered humorous. However, the cultural values, traditions, and norms are located only implicitly in the text of these writings, ergo the articles that claimed to be “cultural” were really something else that failed to account for cultural worldview as a primary mediating variable. Susan walks away disappointed after having spent an enormous amount of time only to discover nothing has been gained from her search except her acknowledgment of the truly confusing arrangement of race, ethnicity, and culture in communication studies. The articles and essays Susan purviewed consistently and frequently referenced “culture” within both their titles and the texts. Susan is not the first to experience this frustration, but it still persists. In this case as well as others, it would help to systematize and clearly define the meanings and distinctions among the terms *race*, *ethnicity*, and *culture*. By having these terms clearly and cogently differentiated within communication studies, we are offering theoretic direction for our extramural colleagues, and this focus also encourages future research that is approximately delineated in cultural communication studies.

We can imagine that this move to clarify may be met with some resistance by people who feel that their scholarly license to freely define their conceptual terms is being seized. We understood this perspective and do not intend to pretend as though we have the power to withdraw intellectual freedoms. We contend that nothing is lost by adding clarity to the terms we use to encapsulate our cosmological personhood, but much is conceded in conceptual ambiguity. At a time when critical white studies, body politics research, and President Clinton’s dialogue on race are the emerging focal points of global identity theories, laypeople and extramural academicians are looking more than ever for direction from those who claim to understand what these terms mean. Within the confines of cultural communications research, President Clinton’s task force should be able to find effectual answers and coherent treatments of these conceptual and ontological prefixes without significant slippage across subdisciplinary studies.

The primary goals of diversity efforts such as the President’s “One America” campaign are to enhance cross-cultural understanding, build alliances, and dismantle race hatred. The nearly 200 scholars at the 1997 National Communication

Association (NCA) Summer Diversity conference nodded their heads in agreement as NCA president Judith Trent indicated that cultural communication scholars should be at the forefront of (or at least consultants to) this new presidential initiative. Yet we are not. Perhaps, that is due at least partly to our conceptual groupthink and epistemological stagnation with regard to specifying appropriate and critical terms to be used in national, mass-mediated, organizational, and interpersonal dialogues. Binary pairs such as minority–majority, black–white, and marginal–central are signposts of socioeconomic division that are further exacerbated by racial, ethnic, and cultural ignorance. The substance of these pairs has been classically defined and intergenerationally perpetuated. In shifting the communication paradigms and intellectual discussions of difference, we also ameliorate the philosophical scope of identity studies. Moreover, by illustrating how utopian telos undermine the ontological importance of displaced or negotiated lived experiences, this new clarification within race, ethnicity, and culture science enhances the quality of the dialogue on race.

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