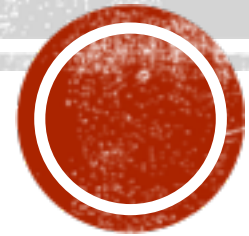


THE CRITICAL WORK OF RACIAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

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TURN AND TALK

- **What is race? How would you define it?**
- **How do you know what race someone is?**



SOCIAL CONSTRUCTS

- We need to understand that race (and gender, for example) are powerful ideas that lead us to believe in essential differences between people
- The **social constructs** create “**common sense**” understanding about people that can **make the discrimination** people face **or disparate outcomes seem natural**, mundane, or something earned by the minoritized group.



WHAT IS RACE?

- A category of people who are **regarded as socially distinct** as a result of their genetically transmitted physical characteristics, as well as other superficial characteristics.
- Race has symbolic and material structures
- Race is something that happens, not something that we are.



WORKING DEFINITION OF RACISM

A system that confers privilege and produces disparate outcomes on the basis of race.

- historically-based system**
- actions/beliefs/policies/practices/conceptions**
- confers visible and unacknowledged privilege**



RACE AND DISCIPLINE

When we see the racialized patterns in discipline data to what extent: :

Do we blame the students and their communities?

Are we surprised by the patterns we see?

Do we consider intersectional identities?

Do we consider the history of the communities we serve?

Do we consider the ecological factors beyond the control of our students and communities?

Do we see strengths in our “most-disciplined” students and their communities?

Do we see ourselves as constructing the patterns we see in the data?



RACIAL IDENTITY

- A developmental process of identifying with and/or belonging to a racial group that is informed by the contexts in which an individual is couched
- Racial identity is a complex process that is part who you say you are and part others showing/telling you are.



HOW DO THE FOLLOWING SCHOOLING PRACTICES INFORM STUDENTS' RACIAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT?

-syllabi: What are the topics covered? Who are the authority figures or experts?

-groupings: How does race interact with which sections students get placed in or what level of class they are placed in?

-assessment: Do certain groups of students consistently (on average) perform differently on course assessments or state exams?



HOW DO THE FOLLOWING SCHOOLING PRACTICES INFORM STUDENTS' RACIAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT? (CONT.)

- **Relationships with students and faculty** – what is the nature of your relationships with students, faculty, and staff and how does race intersect with that?
- **Relationships with the community** – How is the community framed in your schools? From a deficit or asset base? How are folks with authority and respect in the community invited into the life of your school or classroom? What community expertise are you tapping into?
- **Recruitment/Retention** – What are the racial demographics for your faculty/staff? How might race interact with what roles they have? How might race interact with the retention of teachers?



RESILIENT STUDENTS OF COLOR AND RACIAL IDENTITY

Research indicates that resilient students of color:

- Have **strong racial identities** (Sellers et al. 1998; Spencer, 2001; Sanders, 1997; Altschul, I., Oyserman, D., Bybee, D. 2006, Graves, 2006)
- **Components of “strong identities”**
 - **Recognition of racism and other forms of oppression as *currently existing***
- Are connected to peer groups that encourage academic success (Watson and Smitherman, 1996; Perry, 2003)



RESILIENT STUDENTS OF COLOR AND RACIAL IDENTITY

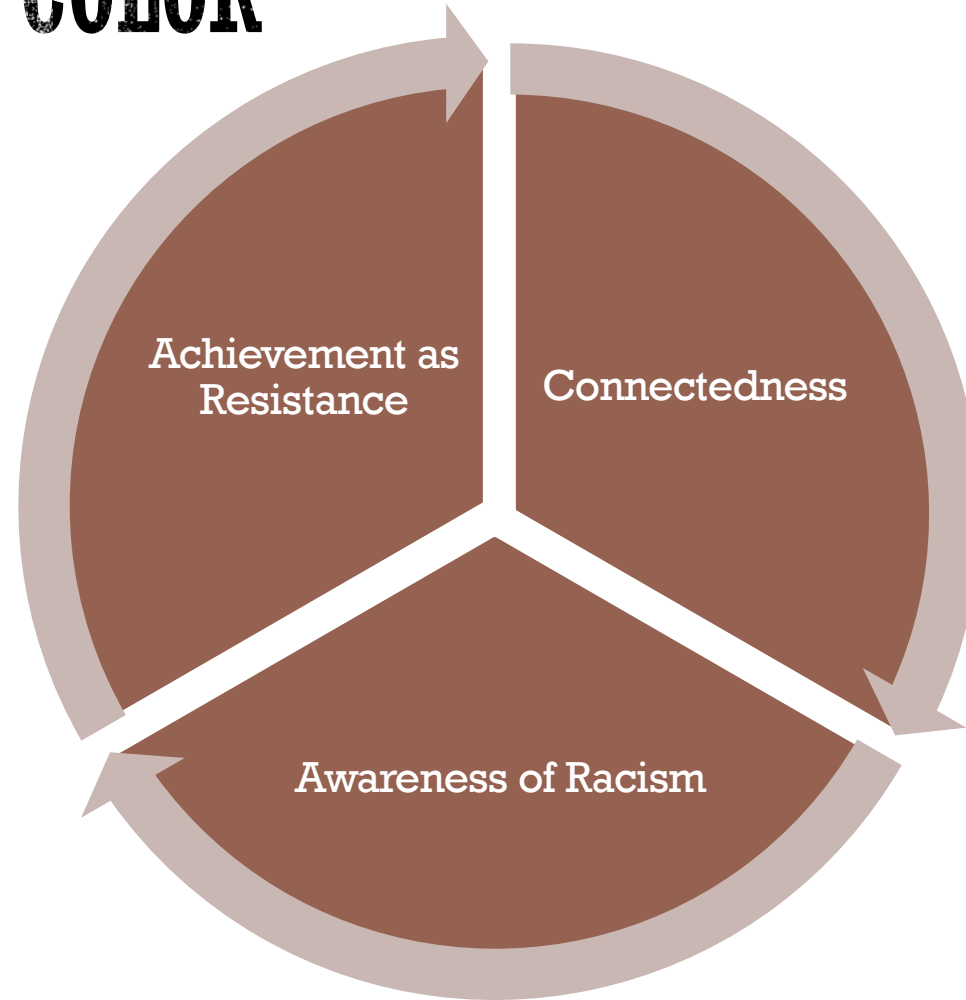
Black and Latinx youth with strong racial identity

- higher academic achievement
- Higher academic engagement
- Feelings of academic efficacy
- More resilient to effects of racism

(Oyserman & Yoon, 2009)



RACIAL IDENTITY, ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT & YOUTH OF COLOR



HOW TO HELP BUILD RESILIENCE THROUGH THE LENS OF RACIAL IDENTITY

Give youth the tools to interrogate inequalities by engaging youth as critical researchers

- **Youth-generated questions** that become the nucleus for learning.
- **Youths' lives and experiences serve as “texts”** in the pursuit of knowledge.
- **Acknowledge racialized realities** of youth while simultaneously creating **spaces** where **counter-narratives** are collectively constructed and implemented
- **Become a learner** of youths' racialized lives **to become a better teacher** of the youth



THANK YOU!

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