RACE SELF-LABELING CHOICES OF MULTIRACIAL INDIVIDUALS

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A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department

of Sociology

University of Houston

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In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

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By

Sarah E. Castillo

August, 2019

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ABSTRACT

Abstract: In 2000, the U.S. Census allowed multiracial people to select more than one race on the official U.S. Census survey for the first time in U.S. history. This resulted in a multiracial population of approximately seven million people that increased to approximately 9 million people on the 2010 U. S. Census survey (Humes et al. 2001; Jones and Symens Smith 2001; Mackun and Wilson 2011). The 32 percent increase in the multiracial population was significant in comparison to the overall U.S. population increase of only 9.7 percent in the same time frame. The growing prominence of the multiracial population in the United States is prompting new questions about the importance of social identities on race self-labeling decisions. Race is a subjective social construct with real social, political, and economic consequences (Albuja et al. 2017; Saperstein and Penner 2012; Shih and Sanchez 2009). Multiracial individuals have race labeling options available to them that single race individuals do not. I review and expand on a growing body of research on this population that focuses on identifying and describing non-racial categories important to shaping racial identities. Specifically, I utilized a national survey of U.S. adults administered by the Pew Research Center in order to investigate how social identities defined by non-racial categories such as gender, social class, and political party affiliation influence the race self-labels chosen by multiracial individuals in the United States. In addition, I take into account factors of discrimination, socialization, and racial identity importance and their potential influence on race self-labeling decisions. The findings indicate that gender, social class, and political party affiliation are potential predictors of the race self-labeling choices of multiracial individuals. After adding the factors of discrimination, socialization, and

racial identity, social class and political party affiliation, but not gender, remained as significant predictors of racial self-labeling. In addition, the results for social class and political party affiliation reinforce the actuality that a pervasive racial hierarchy and social stratification system is embedded within the U.S. social class system. Assessing the labeling decisions of multiracial individuals provides insight on how non-racial categories inform the contextual nature of race and reinforce the existing social construction of race in the United States.

Race Self-Labeling Choices of Multiracial Individuals

INTRODUCTION

In 2000, the U.S. Census allowed multiracial people to select more than one race on the official U.S. Census survey for the first time in U.S. history (Jones and Symens Smith 2001). Almost seven million people, 2.4 percent of the U.S. population, self-identified with two or more races (Humes et al. 2001). In comparison to the total population of the United States the number is small, yet large enough to be considered crucial to document. The official recognition of multiple racial categories alone signifies a change in the way that race is viewed in the United States. A decade later, on the 2010 U.S. Census, the overall population increased by 9.7 percent and the multiracial population increased by 32 percent to approximately nine million people (Humes et al. 2011; Jones and Symens Smith 2001; Mackun and Wilson 2011). Continued growth is expected as the country becomes more diverse and past stigmas associated with multiracial unions fades into history.

Government acknowledgement of the multiracial population on the U.S. Census is the first step in identifying this population. However, the actual number of multiracial people in the United States is expected to be larger due to multiracial people selecting a single race on the U.S. Census even if they are from a multiracial union (Rockquemoore et al. 2009). The private nature of the U.S. Census form provides an opportunity for agency in race labeling decisions that multiracial people lack in person to person interactions (Albuja et al. 2017; Bratter 2018; Saperstein and Penner 2012; Shih and Sanchez 2009). Individuals escape the phenotypical race assignments that they experience daily through the self-race selection on the U.S. Census form (Albuja et al.

2017; Bratter 2018; Saperstein and Penner 2012; Shih and Sanchez 2009). They have

ability to decide and record the race label that best matches their cultural understanding

of race, values, and beliefs without the identity verification and judgement that is present

in person to person interactions (Albuja et al. 2017; Bratter 2018; Saperstein and Penner

2012; Shih and Sanchez 2009). Understanding what prompts multiracial individuals to

report multiple races on the U.S. Census and other surveys can help provide a more

reliable estimate of the size of the multiracial population in the United States (Bratter

2018; Davenport 2016a; Rockquemoore et al. 2009).

Inaccurate race reporting on the U. S. Census has significant implications for

government funding and social support systems. The distribution of 675 billion dollars in

federal funding to local, state, and tribal governments is informed by U.S. Census data

(United States Census Bureau 2018a). State and local governments use this funding for

neighborhood improvements, public health programs, elderly services, education, and

transportation (United States Census Bureau 2018a). In addition, the U.S. Census

specifically facilitates research to improve data on race and ethnicity in the United States

(United States Census Bureau 2018b). Questions and response options are adjusted to

reflect the social shifts in race and ethnicity relations (United States Census Bureau

2018b). Overall, the U. S. Census is used as a political device not only for counting the

population of the United States, but also as an assessment of the social and cultural

discourse regarding race (Bratter 2018, Davenport 2016a; Rockquemoore et al. 2009).

The potential impact of the multiracial population on the concept of race is

primarily divided into two schools of thought. Some researchers believe that the

population has the potential to blur the color lines that divide the nation and eventually

work towards the elimination of race as we know it today (Lee and Bean 2004; Song and O'Neill Gutierrez 2015; Strmic-Pawl 2014). Exposure through interactions and the blending of families of different races has the potential to create a social environment eventually devoid of racial discrimination (Lee and Bean 2004; Song and O'Neill Gutierrez 2015; Strmic-Pawl 2014). In contrast, other research suggests that the multiracial population will perpetuate and reinforce an emerging Black versus non-Black racial hierarchy (Bratter 2018; Lee and Bean 2004). While less hopeful, this second concept is more probable as the meanings and structures related to race are deeply embedded in U.S. culture and tied to a history of racial oppression (Lee and Bean 2004; Rockquemoore et al. 2009; Strmic-Pawl 2014).

Implications of the Present Study

Coupled with the limitations of accurate self-race reporting on the U.S. Census and the potential impact of the multiracial population on the concept of race itself, it is becoming apparently important to understand the factors that influence race labeling decisions of multiracial people.

A prior study that specifically examined this topic was Lauren D. Davenport's (2016a) study titled "The Role of Gender, Class, and Religion in Biracial Americans' Race Labeling Decisions". This article inspired me to do research in this area. Davenport's (2016a) research addresses race labeling choices primarily through the lens of identity theory. In my research, I will also consider intersectionality theory and double jeopardy theory. The contextual nature of race identification is magnified in combination with other group memberships such as gender, social class, and political party affiliation. The intersectionality of multiple social categories in addition to multiple racial options

creates unique perspectives for multiracial individuals. Combining the three theories will provide a novel understanding of the influence of multiple non-racial categories on race labeling decisions.

In addition, I will use data from respondents with a wider age range, compared to prior research. Davenport's (2016a) study was administered to incoming college freshmen at universities and colleges across the country. The Survey of Multiracial Americans administered by the Pew Research Center, that I will be using in my study is a nationwide random sample of Americans aged 18 and older (Pew Research Center 2018). Values, beliefs, and identities change over time and the examination of age differences in race labeling can provide a better understanding of the complexity of this process (Morning and Saperstein 2018). Moreover, the Survey for Multiracial Americans was administered to a random sample of respondents from various socioeconomic groups, not only college students.

Furthermore, I will investigate the implications of political party affiliation instead of religious affiliations examined in the study by Davenport (2016a). Values, beliefs, and potential influence of religion and political party affiliation are comparable to a certain extent. Political party affiliation, however, allows for a simplified category identification with fewer selection possibilities. In addition, examining the influence of political party affiliation on race labeling choices will be timely in light of the current intensely bipartisan political landscape of the United States.

Moreover, I will add a multiracial versus biracial perspective to the examination of race self-labeling decisions. Davenport's (2016a) study examined the race self-labeling choices of three specific biracial race combinations: Black/White, Asian/White, and

Latino/White. The Survey of Multiracial Americans dataset allows for a variety of racial combinations and the selection of a multiracial identity that is not limited to a minority/White racial combination.

I will also investigate the implications of other factors such as discrimination and socialization on race self-labeling decisions and identity development. I will do this by exploring the impact of opinions of discrimination and experiences with discrimination. I will examine the impact of socialization by looking at neighborhood, family, and personal networks as well as social pressure. Davenport's (2016a) study does not examine the effects of discrimination and briefly addresses the impact of socialization in relation to family structure (i.e., single parent versus married parents) and neighborhood composition/location.

The growing prominence of the multiracial population in the United States is prompting new questions about the importance of social identities on race labeling decisions (Khanna 2012; Shih and Sanchez 2009). Race is a subjective social construct with real social, political, and economic consequences (Albuja et al. 2017; Saperstein and Penner 2012; Shih and Sanchez 2009). The intersection of equally socially constructed identities with multiple racial identities have the ability to influence self-race labeling decisions (Shih and Sanchez 2009). Assessing the labeling decisions of multiracial individuals provides insight on how non-racial categories inform the contextual nature and personal understandings of race in the United States.

BACKGROUND

Theoretical Frameworks

Social Identity Theory. According to social identity theory, a person's sense of who they are is based on their group membership (Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979). Individuals have multiple identities that are activated by different social contexts and emphasized by category membership and provide a sense of pride and self-esteem (Burke and Stets 2009; Owens et al. 2010; Stets and Burke 2000; Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979). The self is seen as a reflexive object that is categorized, classified, and self-named in relation to group membership that in turn provides a sense of common identification with a collective social category (Stets and Burke 2000; Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979; Turner and Reynolds 2011).

In order to increase self-esteem and obtain a common identification with a social category, categories are evaluated, compared, and divided into "in groups" and "out groups" within social identity theory (Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979). This is done through a three-part process that involves categorization, social identification, and social comparison (Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979). Categorization is the process in which appropriate behaviors and norms are defined for group membership. Establishing standards for group membership makes it easy to determine who belongs in the group and who does not belong in the group (Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979). Individuals can belong to many different groups such as being Republican, a man, Black, a student, or Christian to name a few examples (Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979).

Social identification is the process in which individuals adopt the identity of the group that they have categorized themselves as members of. For example, if a person has categorized themselves as a Republican they will act in ways that they feel Republicans act and conform to the norms of that identification (Stets and Burke 2000; Tajfel 1982;

Tajfel and Turner 1979). A sense of emotional significance to group membership occurs

that connects self-esteem of the individual to the identification of group membership

(Stets and Burke 2000; Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979).

The last process is social comparison and occurs after an individual has

categorized themselves and identified with a group (Stets and Burke 2000; Tajfel 1982;

Tajfel and Turner 1979). In this process individuals compare their group with other

groups. The selected group of the individual must compare favorably with other groups in

order to maintain or enhance self-esteem (Stets and Burke 2000; Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and

Turner 1979). This results in the creation of in groups and out groups that compete for

resources and members. Members of the in group work to enhance the status of the group

to which they belong and can go as far as to discriminate and or hold prejudices against

out groups (Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979).

Within the processes of social identity theory, group members go beyond simply

sharing attributes to engaging in social action that creates and maintain the groups social

image (Hogg 2018; Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979). Social identity associated with

a collective identity is motivated by several factors. One factor is the basic human desire

of self-enhancement and thus elevated self-esteem which is a desire for positive

distinctiveness (Geccas 1982, 1986, 1989; Hogg 2018; Tajfel and Turner 1979). Positive

distinctiveness maximizes the differences between in groups and out groups resulting in a

positive evaluation of in groups and a negative evaluation of out groups (Tajfel and

Turner 1979). People want to feel good about themselves and their group membership

choices so they select and participate within groups that have the potential to elevate their

social status and/or their self-esteem (Geccas 1982, 1986, 1989; Hogg 2018; Stets and

Burke 2014; Tajfel and Turner 1979). Another motivating factor is uncertainty reduction in which people work to reduce subjective uncertainty about their social world and where they fit in that world (Geccas 1982, 1986, 1989; Hogg 2018; Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979). In this instance, group membership presents a social script of behavior and expectations that provides social security to group members (Geccas 1982, 1986, 1989; Hogg 2018; Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979).

In addition, collective identity provides access to desired group resources (Stets and Cast 2007). Social identity theory conceptualizes a resource as both entities and social processes that sustain a system of social interaction associated with group membership (Stets and Cast 2007; Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979). Resources assist individuals in accomplishing goals and obtaining desired effects in social interaction (Stets and Cast 2007; Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979). An example of a group resource could be the social network associated with country club membership. A half-Black and half-White individual that emphasizes their White identity and self-labels as White could gain membership in an affluent country club and reap the benefits of club membership. Membership provides access to other successful people and business opportunities through the social network of the club. In essence, the club membership is a valued group resource. Another example, could be a political campaign. A half-Hispanic and half-White individual that self-labels as Hispanic and runs for office in predominantly Hispanic neighborhood could emphasize their Hispanic origins to obtain the acceptance and the voting power of the Hispanic population in their district. The Hispanic community support acts as a group resource that benefits the multiracial person running for office. Access to resources can influence the salience of a social identity in a

given social setting through the motivation of self enhancement and uncertainty reduction (Stets and Cast 2007).

Social identity theory facilitates the examination of the implications of the importance and motivations of social identities for personal decisions. The action and agency behind a collective identity provides a mechanism to portray and sustain a shared system of values and beliefs (Hogg 2018 Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979). Access to resources associated with social identities both supports and recruits group membership (Stets and Cast 2007 Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979). Insights into the motivations and benefits of social identities helps to understand how these identities influence personal decisions such as self-race labeling decisions. People have multiple social identities of varying salience that can be activated in any given social situation (Stryker 1968). It is crucial to further examine how theses identities influence racial self-labeling and social identity theory provides the first step in that process.

Intersectionality Theory. Intersectionality theory provides additional justification for including such factors as gender, social class, and political party affiliation into the examination of racial self-labeling. Specifically, this theoretical perspective argues that multiple social positions can influence identity choices (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016). According to Patricia Hill Collins and Sirma Bilge (2016:115), intersectionality theory is defined as a "multifaceted perspective acknowledging the richness of multiple socially constructed identities that combine to create each of us as unique individuals." Different combinations of social categories create different experiences with structure, culture, and personal interactions in society (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016). Mutually constructed identity categories resulting from shared intersections enable the development of a

collective identity because social categories related to group memberships are not mutually exclusive, but instead build on each other and work together (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016).

Through the lens of intersectionality, it is possible to see how self-race labels of multiracial individuals do not merely describe a person's racial identity, instead they represent a specific social stance that is used to justify the values and beliefs associated with a collective identity (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016). Black men experience the social world differently than white women. Black women experience the social world differently than Asian women. As mentioned previously group membership identities are not mutually exclusive, instead they build upon each other (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016; Wilkens 2012). Navigating the structural and cultural complexities of intersecting identities is difficult in and of itself when we look at binary relationships between distinguished social categories such as race and gender. Multiracial individuals have the added complexity of racial identity intersections that create unique experiences based on the social context and interaction with the social structure. The added layer of a racial identity intersection provides an avenue for agency in favoring one or another racial identity to suit the situation. Through the intersections of social identities, multiracial individuals have the ability to sustain or challenge the social organization of power in relation to race (Hill Collins and Bilge 2018).

Double Jeopardy Theory. Double jeopardy theory also highlights the importance of considering how multiple social positions might influence racial identity creation among individuals. Namely, this theoretical framework compliments intersectionality theory by arguing that the interplay among various social identities and positions might

lead to double and even multiple social burdens and as a result, discrimination (Berdahl and Moore 2006; Ferraro and Farmer 1996). Specifically, minority persons might experience double or multiple biases when they occupy additional disadvantaged social positions, including being a woman, a person of lower socioeconomic status, and/or an older individual (Ferraro and Farmer 1996). For example, double jeopardy theory was used to examine workplace harassment of minority women and found that minority women were significantly more harassed than minority men, majority women, and majority men (Berdahl and Moore 2006) The respondents' social categories of both gender and race contributed and compounded to increase the likelihood of harassment (Berdahl and Moore 2006). Applying double jeopardy theory can help explain the influence of discrimination resulting from multiple social categories exacerbated by multiple race categories (Berdahl and Moore 2006; Ferraro and Farmer 1996).

PRIOR RESEARCH

Importance of (Multi)racial Identity

Race is typically conceptualized as a social construct that creates, maintains, and perpetuates a stratified racial social system (Albuja et al. 2017; Saperstein and Penner 2012; Shih and Sanchez 2009). Race labels have real social, political, and economic consequences. Multiracial individuals have labeling choices afforded to them that single race individuals do not (Albuja et al. 2017; Harris and Sim 2002; Rockquemoore and Brunsma 2008; Saperstein and Penner 2012; Shih and Sanchez 2009). Multiracial individuals can choose a single race that resonates with them or they can choose a multiracial identity. These choices are contextual and often change according to the

expectations of social roles and group membership (Albuja et al. 2017; Harris and Sim 2002; Rockquemoore and Brunsma 2008; Saperstein and Penner 2012).

Research suggests that biracial people may face harsh social evaluations due to the fluidity of their identities (Albuja et.al 2017; Harris and Sim 2002; Rockquemoore and Brunsma 2008). To avoid social penalties multiracial people may act in a manner associated with a specific race in a specific interaction. For instance, if a half-Black, half-White person is interacting with a group of friends that are primarily Black in a social setting, this individual may behave in a manner that highlights his/her Black background. This can be as simple as preferred attire or the use of slang or language that is common with that group. In a different setting with primarily White people the same person may change the way they speak or the way they dress to garner acceptance. In essence, they act "White" when they are around White people and they act "Black" when they are around Black people.

Another example of the fluidity and enactment of race identities would be a job interview. Research indicates that social class signals race, with White being associated with affluence and Black being associated with poverty (Lei and Bodenhausen 2017; Thornhill 2015). A half-Black and half-White individual may emphasize their White racial identity to either gain access to an interview or to garner favor in an interview. They may down play or even attempt to conceal their Black identity in order to present the best impression that they think the interviewers are expecting.

Self-race labeling outside of person to person actions is similar to the social situations listed above (Albuja et al. 2017; Harris and Sim 2002; Rockquemoore and Brunsma 2008). For instance, a half-Black and half-White person may select Black as a

race option on a college scholarship application. The same person may select White on an application to join an affluent country club. The person decides what race they wish to be considered as in this situation instead of what race is typically assigned by others in interpersonal relations. A multiracial identity allows for the presentation of a fluid racial identity that is not as easily portrayed by single race individuals (Albuja et al. 2017; Harris and Sim 2002; Rockquemoore and Brunsma 2008).

Prior research suggests that multiracial people do not have a single race identity available to them (Albuja et al. 2017; Morning and Sapperstein 2018; Rockquemoore and Brunsma 2008) Instead, they select identities from a variety of racial choices that are influenced by the validation or lack of validation from other people in social interactions. Research has found that there are four common racial identity options for multiracial individuals and they are: singular, border (exclusively biracial), protean (sometimes Black, sometimes White, and sometimes biracial) and transcendent (no racial identity) (Harris and Sim 2002; Rockquemoore and Brunsma 2008). Findings indicated that the majority of respondents preferred the border identity. This was found to be the result of a constant process of validation that operates from a push and pull perspective (Harris and Sim 2002; Rockquemoore and Brunsma 2008; Thornhill 2015). Negative responses or treatment from single race persons pushes multiracial individuals away from identifying with that particular race and pulls them towards a biracial identity.

Research suggests that multiracial people may experience negative interactions with single race individuals due to the fluid experience of their multiracial identities (Albuja et al. 2017; Harris and Sim 2002; Xei and Goyette 1997). This fluidity violates the established social norms of a stable race identification and can lead to negative social

interactions. Multiracial people in turn learn or choose to enact a contextual racial presentation. They may privately identify in a certain way but regulate their public racial presentation according to the social situation (Albuja et al. 2017; Harris and Sim 2002). Findings suggest that even though the race presentation is regulated, it is still penalized by monoracial perceivers, especially White perceivers (Albuja et al. 2017; Harris and Sim 2002). However, other research found that awareness of being able to activate specific racial identities in certain social contexts provides social benefit for multiracial individuals (Gaither et al. 2013; Thornhill 2015).

Previous studies also argue that limited race labeling choices and various forms of identity invalidation have a negative effect on the wellbeing of multiracial people (Fisher et al. 2014; Franco and O'Brien 2018; Townsend et al. 2009). One research demonstrates that when multiracial individuals were limited to single race labeling choices they experienced negative psychological responses through lower performance, self-esteem, and motivation (Townsend et al. 2009). The findings of another study indicate that multiracial youth experience higher levels of anxiety and depressive symptoms than their monoracial peers (Fisher et al. 2014). Relatedly, Franco and O'Brien (2018) found that due to the different dimensions of racial identity invalidation experienced by multiracial individuals, they may internalize the environment as hostile toward their stigmatized minority identity which subsequently affects their mental health and self-esteem. In contrast, research by Thoits (1983) reveals that individuals who possess numerous social identities reported significantly less psychological stress and credited this with benefits of more extensive network ties. In particular, having multiple identities might provide a cushion for identity loss in the event of identity invalidation (Thoits 1983). Overall, prior

research suggests that identity is closely tied to psychological wellbeing (Fisher et al. 2014; Franco and O'Brien 2018; Townsend et al. 2009).

Implications of Gender

Multiracial women and men are likely to make different race labeling decisions based on their gender experiences. Research links women's appearance to their sense of group acceptance and rejection more so than for men (Hunter 2005; Rockquemoore and Brunsma 2008). For instance, Kerry Ann Rockquemoore (2002) found that multiracial women experienced negative interactions with Black women because of their appearance. The negative interactions centered on the physical appearance of the multiracial women and how they did not exhibit characteristics of what it meant to be Black, even partially Black. The respondents' Black portion of their identity was invalidated by the Black women and validated by other non-Black people creating issues with identity for the multiracial respondents (Rockquemoore 2002). Beauty standards act as a social resource and status marker for multiracial women making them less likely to be perceived as racial minorities (Hunter 2007). Women experience pressure to perform gender in a specific manner that emulates racist standards of beauty (Hunter 2005; Rockquemoore and Brunsma 2008). Overall, colorism, defined as skin tone stratification, affects both genders (Hunter 2005, Hunter 2007; Strmic-Pawl 2014).

Research has also found that biracial men are more easily accepted by minority peers than their female counterparts (Hunter 2005; Hunter 2007). Because men are accepted and validated by their minority peers, they are more likely to associate with that racial group (Butler-Sweet 2017; Hunter 2005; Hunter 2007; Rockquemoore 2002). However, biracial women often experience hostility from their minority peers and are

perceived as a social threat, specifically in what these studies refer to as the mating market (Butler-Sweet 2017; Hunter 2005; Rockquemoore 2002). Research suggests that there is a perceived shortage of eligible Black males by Black females and they in turn consider biracial women as competition that personifies both minority status and white beauty standards (Butler-Sweet 2017; Hunter 2005; Rockquemoore 2002).

Overall, research reports that women experience higher levels of behavior and phenotype invalidation in social interactions than men do (Franco and O'Brien 2018; Hunter 2005; Hunter 2007). A potential explanation for this trend is that women are perceived as less threatening than men and as easier targets for discussion and/or actions (Franco and O'Brien 2018; Hunter 2005; Hunter 2007). Although research suggests that biracial identity has emerged from a failure of acceptance from other race groups, gender might not have significant implications for racial identity choice (Rockquemoore and Brunsma 2008). At the same time, gender is believed to structure the identity process through the different experiences of men and women (Hunter 2005; Hunter 2007Rockquemoore and Brunsma 2008).

Group membership with gender is much more difficult to change than other group memberships. The effects of racial and gender biases are more difficult to avoid, as individuals must navigate the racial hierarchy and the gender hierarchy at the same time (Penner and Saperstein 2013). The contextual nature of race identification is magnified in combination with gender and highlights the intersectionality of other social categories (Albuja et al. 2017; Hill Collins and Bilge 2016; Hunter 2005; Rockquemoore and Brunsma 2008).

Impact of Social Class

Multiracial adults are likely to make race labeling decisions based on their social class. A pervasive racial hierarchy and social stratification system is embedded within the social class system (Lei and Bodenhausen 2017; Strmic-Pawl 2014). Research shows that social class might have implications for racial identification (Lei and Bodenhausen 2017). Specifically, the category of "poor people" is mentally represented as relatively Black or minority and the category "rich people" is mentally represented as White (Lei and Bodenhausen 2017; Penner and Saperstein 2013). Relatedly, prior research suggests that individuals experiencing economic hardships become more likely to connect with marginalized ethnic or racial groups and those that escape economic hardships do not (Penner and Saperstein 2013; Simonivits and Kezdi 2016). The interplay between race and poverty influences the likelihood or unlikelihood of a multiracial or minority race identification (Bratter 2018).

Colorism, as mentioned before, plays a significant role in the influence of social class on race labeling decisions as well, through the concept of dominant group ethnicity (Doane Jr. 1997; Hunter 2005; Hunter 2007). In the United States the dominant racial group consists of White individuals, typically of Western European ancestry (Doane Jr. 1997). There is a hidden ethnicity present within this dominant group that creates a "whiteness standard" that affects social class (Doane Jr. 1997). For instance, economic and residential affluence associated with White ethnicity "whitens" racial identification (Davenport 2016a). Multiracial people that have the ability to "pass" as a White person may be more inclined to self-identify as White to obtain access to the privileges and resources of the dominant group ethnicity (Bratter 2018; Davenport 2016a; Hunter 2005; Rockequemoore and Brunsma 2008). The status associated with different levels of social

class that is in turn reinforced by interactions with the dominant group ethnicity impacts race labeling decisions (Bratter 2018; Davenport 2016a; Hunter 2005; Penner and Saperstein 2013; Thornhill 2015).

The enactment of race labels is contextual and can change over time as people navigate or possibly change their social status positions (Bratter 2018). Prior research suggests that across racial and social class backgrounds, individuals from higher status groups are more likely to claim a biracial identity or a White identity than their counterparts from lower status groups (Thornhill 2015; Townsend et al. 2012). There is an incentive for multiracial people to conform to a set standard of Whiteness that eases the concerns of the previously mentioned dominant ethnic group (Doane Jr. 1997; Thornhill 2015).

Political Party Affiliation and Racial Identification

Similar to gender and social class, multiracial individuals might make different race labeling decisions based on their political party affiliations. Political party affiliation is often tied to a sense of culture, values, and moral convictions (Davenport 2016b; Hochschild and Weaver 2007; Weaver 2012). Prior research on multiracial political participation has focused on voting behaviors trends and policy support (Khanna 2012). Political party preference research is growing but has attributed political affiliation choices to parental influence and shared group attitudes (Davenport 2016b; Hochschild and Weaver 2007; Weaver 2012). Multiracial political identities have the potential to reinforce or challenge the existing racialized social structures (Rockquemore et al. 2009). How a person identifies politically depends on their shared group meanings and access to

the resources that result from group membership (Davenport 2016b; Hochschild and Weaver 2007; Rockquemoore et al. 2009; Weaver 2012).

Research has found that the brain treats race and politics as coalitional alliances (Pietraszewski et al. 2015). As of 2014, 49 percent of White people were Republican party leaning and 40 percent Democratic party leaning (Pew Research Center 2015). In contrast, 80 percent of Black people were Democratic party leaning and 11 percent were Republican party leaning (Pew Research Center 2015). This leads to an observation that politics is significantly racially divided (Davenport 2016b; Pietraszewski et al. 2015).

The political party preference aspect of race labeling decisions is slightly broader reaching than the other categories previously mentioned (Conover 1984; Davenport 2016b;). Political leanings often support or oppose the current racial stratification system through the political environment. Specifically, Conover (1984) argues that people respond to the political world in terms of what is deemed important by politicians, parties, and media coverage. In addition, politics often mirror group interests and indirectly self-interests. Moreover, group identifications, such as race, represent a critical factor in determining how people perceive the political world. In other words, claiming a racial group identity, could be indicative of a multiracial person's political affiliation or vice versa (Conover 1984).

Additional Factors (Discrimination, Socialization, and Racial Identity Importance)

Prior research on multiracial race identity labeling has also focused on the potential implication of discrimination, socialization, and importance of racial self-labeling (Fisher et al. 2014; Franco and O'Brien 2018; Hunter 2005; Miville et al. 2005; Morning and Saperstein 2018; Rockquemoore 2002; Townsend et al. 2009 and 2012).

For instance, previous studies considered whether and how experiences with racism and discriminations might have implications for racial identity formation. For example, a study by Miville and colleagues (2005) found that encounters with racism and discrimination raised individuals' awareness of group membership with one race or another. In addition, these encounters helped people realize their uniqueness as a multiracial individual and therefore, created two types of identity experiences, one being a person of color and the other being a multiracial individual. This study also demonstrated that multiracial individuals faced acts of racism in relation to both types of identity experiences (i.e., monoracial and multiracial). These experiences resulted in what Miville and colleagues (2005) refer to as the "chameleon effect" in which multiracial individuals select which identity to activate to reduce the likelihood of distress.

Colorism is a prominent and powerful form of racial discrimination towards multiracial individuals (Hunter 2005; Hunter 2007; Rockquemoore 2002; Rockquemoore and Brunsma 2008). Research indicates that multiracial individuals that have dark skin tone were just as likely to experience forms of racial discrimination as a single minority dark skinned individual (Hersch 2011; Keith et al. 2017; Thompson and Keith 2001). Darker individuals experience discrimination from family members as well with preferential treatment going to lighter siblings (Hunter 2005). Dark people are more likely to be treated with less respect and thought of as dishonest on the basis of their skin tone alone (Keith et al. 2017). Overall, skin tone has a significant effect on the type and degree to which individuals are exposed to routine race related discrimination and treatment (Hunter 2005; Keith et al. 2017; Thompson and Keith 2001).

One notable result of colorism is exclusion from racial groups (Hunter 2005). Colorism is a stratification system that works to divide people in order to maintain a system of White dominance (Hamilton et al. 2009; Hersch 2011; Hunter 2002; Hunter 2005; Thompson and Keith 2001). One aspect of this division is the sense of exclusion experienced by multiracial people from both sides of the color spectrum (Butler-Sweet 2017; Hunter 2005). Light skin multiracial individuals reported negative interactions with dark single minority individuals, most often women, that led them to develop strong anti-black and/or anti-minority sentiments (Butler-Sweet 2017; Hunter 2005; Rockquemoore 2002). Some of the interactions centered on racial identity with the lighter person being told that they were not racially authentic (Hunter 2005). Because the light person automatically received the privileges of being on the lighter side of the color spectrum, it was assumed that they embraced this view and could not claim an authentic minority identity (Butler-Sweet 2017; Hunter 2005; Rockquemoore 2002). For multiracial respondents, it was assumed that since they were not completely one race they could not possibly understand what it means to be a minority or dark skin person (Butler-Sweet 2017; Hunter 2005; Rockquemoore 2002). Respondents emphasized that they had to consciously work to legitimize their minority racial background (Butler-Sweet 2017; Hunter 2005; Rockquemoore 2002). There was a constant expectation to prove themselves and this often involved acting, dressing, or embracing body practices of their preferred racial background (Butler-Sweet 2017; Hunter 2005; Rockquemoore 2002).

It is also important to take into consideration the implication of socialization on the development of racial identity. Kerry Ann Rockquemoore (2002) examined the family dynamics of multiracial individuals. Her results indicate that multiracial

respondents that were raised by their White mothers frequently reported difficulty dealing with their White parent's explicit racism and racialized negativity towards their Black father. The same respondents experienced negative treatment from Black women in their community due to their multiracial status. Rockquemoore (2002) indicates that identity formation is a process of external categorization, constraint, individual agency, and negotiation of group interactions. Overall, these findings suggest that racial socialization in the context of family might make a difference in the development of racial identity and that the contested relations between Black and biracial individuals might illustrate the importance and power of skin color (Rockquemoore 2002).

At the same time, Davenport's (2016a) study indicates that family structure (i.e., single parent vs. married parents) might have little impact on racial identity and suggests that respondents preferred incorporating the race of both parents into self-identification. However, Davenport (2016a) found that neighborhood composition and region might be more predictive of racial identity. Namely, respondents were more likely to select a biracial identity as contact with their corresponding minority race increased in their neighborhood. Furthermore, research by Davenport (2016a) demonstrated some regional differences. Specifically, respondents living in the South were more likely to select a non-White racial identity, respondents in the Midwest tended to select a non-White or biracial identity, whereas respondents living in the Pacific West or Northeast were more likely to identify themselves as biracial. These findings suggest that neighborhood composition might be potentially related to racial socialization and hence might have an impact on race self-labeling decisions.

Another study in this area took into account racial socialization in the context of family and the linkages between racial identity and family racial heritage and investigated the associations between multiracial self-identification and generational locus (Morning and Saperstein 2018). This study found that generational distance (i.e., the number of generations between the initial multiracial generation and proceeding generations) reduces the likelihood of reporting more than one race after three generations. A potential explanation for this trend might be that greater distance between generations weakens the attachments to the racial aspects of heritage. Therefore, it is important to consider the generational structure and family context of the multiracial population and how relevant generational differences and dynamics might impact the accuracy of the U.S. Census (Morning and Saperstein 2018).

A similar study also found a trend towards racial dilution among multiracial children (Song and O'Neill Gutierrez 2015). Respondents in this study were concerned about a gradual lessening of importance of the minority racial background among their children (Song and O'Neill Gutierrez 2015). They feared that this would result in the loss of a politicized racial consciousness in which their children's racial identities would become exoticized (Song and O'Neill Gutierrez 2015). The study highlighted the mechanisms used by respondents that tried to address relevant concerns. For instance, respondents placed an emphasis on consciously educating their children about their minority heritage. In addition, they promoted a sense of cultural connectivity between the races that made up their children's racial background (Song and O'Neill Gutierrez 2015). Overall, the study found that respondents were generally optimistic and felt that their

children contributed to a growing racial concept of cosmopolitanism that promotes a diverse and racially accepting society (Song and O'Neill Gutierrez 2015).

Associations between Non-Racial Categories and Self-Race Labeling

Prior research specifically examining the influence of non-racial categories on self-race labeling decisions of multiracial individuals is practically non-existent. Specifically, Davenport 2016a) examined the effects of the nonracial social categories of gender, class and religion on the race labeling decisions of biracial Americans using data from the CIRP Freshman Surveys, which are conducted annually by the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. She divided the respondents into the following racial categories: Asian-White, Black-White and Latino-White (Davenport 2016a).

Davenport found that regardless of social category (i.e., gender, social class, or religious preference) biracial respondents were more likely to identify as a minority or biracial than as White (Davenport 2016a). Compared to the Asian-White and Black-White counterparts, Latino-White respondents were the most likely to adopt a White only label indicating that the boundaries of Whiteness are less rigid for Latinos. Most Asian-White and Black-White respondents selected a biracial label, with Black-Whites the least likely to identify exclusively with their minority race (Davenport 2016a).

In addition, the findings of Davenport's (2016a) study indicate that gender was a significant predictor of racial identification for all three mixed race categories. In particular, women were more likely than men to self-label as biracial within each biracial group category: by 31% for Asian-White women, by 39% for Latino-White women, and twice as likely for Black-White women (Davenport 2016a). Religiously affiliated Asian-White, Latino-White, and Black-White respondents were more likely to claim their

minority race label instead of a biracial or White race label (Davenport 2016a). This was especially true for Baptist Black-White respondents who were 56 % less likely to select a White race label. Moreover, higher social class (i.e., greater educational attainment and higher income) was associated with a greater likelihood that respondents from all three biracial categories selected a White only race self-label (Davenport 2016a).

PRESENT RESEARCH

On the basis of social identity theory, intersectionality theory, double jeopardy theory, and prior research, I examine whether non-racial social categories such as gender, social class, and political party affiliation influence self-race labeling of multiracial individuals. In addition, I investigate whether existence and experiences with racial discrimination, racial socialization, and the importance of racial identity have implications for race self-labeling and might make a difference in the associations between non-racial social categories (i.e. gender, social class, and political party affiliation) and race self-labeling. Because the body of research for this topic is relatively new and growing, I do not suggest specific hypotheses but formulate the following three research questions:

1) Do differences in race self-labeling of multiracial individuals vary by non-racial social categories of gender, socioeconomic status, and political affiliation?

2) Can additional factors such as the existence and experiences with racial discrimination, racial socialization, and the importance of racial identity be predictive of race self-labeling?

3) Can additional factors (i.e., existence and experiences with racial discrimination, racial socialization, and the importance of racial identity) intercede the impact of

non-racial social categories, (i.e., gender, socioeconomic status, and political

affiliation) on race self-labeling?

METHODS

Data

To assess the effects of non-racial categories on race labeling decisions and

identification of multiracial individuals, I used data from the Pew Research Center's

Survey of Multiracial Americans conducted by the GfK Group using KnowledgePanel.

KnowledgePanel members are a nationwide panel of participants recruited through RDD

(Random Digital Dialing) and ABS (Address Based Sampling) probability sampling

methods. Panel members are recruited annually to account for panel attrition. The Survey

of Multiracial Americans was conducted from February 6, 2015 through April 6, 2015

and was administered in both English and Spanish. The survey focused on identity,

personal experience, and the social views of multiracial people in the United States.

Demographic information was collected from 21,224 adults nationwide in two

stages. Stage one was a sample of general population adults as well as oversamples of

non-Hispanic single race Black and Asians that were identified using GfK's panelist

profile data. The second stage consisted of a general population sample split randomly

into four panel member replicates. Moreover, the dataset provides a qualifying filter,

qflag (1 = respondents qualified and 2 = respondents did not qualify) that indicates

whether or not a respondent qualified for the mix-race portion of the survey. In addition,

a mixed-race filter is provided to arrive at a final multiracial sample size of $N = 2,107$.

This filter included respondents that selected two or more races, identified parents with

different races, identified grandparents with different races, and/or identified great-grandparents with different races (Pew Research Center 2018).

Measures

All variables were based on the self-reports of adults, aged 18 and older. I used the *weight 2* weight option provided in the dataset. The researchers at the Pew Research Center recommended the weighting of the data from the Survey of Multiracial Americans in order to adjust to the results of studies that use this dataset to match the March 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS) in terms of the estimates on such characteristics as age, race, education, and language proficiency. In addition, individual racial and ethnic groups were weighted to be internally representative of age, gender, census region, metropolitan status, education, and household income (Pew Research Center 2018).

Dependent Variable. In this study, a set of four dummy variables (0 =*no*, 1 = *yes*) captured respondents' race self-labeling. Originally, in the survey, respondents were asked to mark all categories that applied to them from a list of possible races, including White Only, Black/African American Only, Asian/Asian American Only, American Indian Only, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Hispanic Only-No Races, 2 or More Races, and Some Other Race/Refused. The Asian/Asian American Only, American Indian Only, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and Some Other/Refused response categories were omitted from the analysis due to their small sample size. This resulted in four race-self labeling groups (*N=1,770)*: *White Only* (reference category), *Hispanic Only, Black Only,* and *Multiracial.*

Independent Variables. I examined three key independent variables in this study. The first independent variable *female* (0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*) captured the respondents gender.

The second independent variable was *social class*. Respondents were asked to select the social class that they belong to from the following commonly used categories: *lower class, lower middle class, middle class, upper middle class, and upper class*. This variable was used in the analysis as a continuous variable ranging from 0 to 4 with lower scores indicating lower social class.

The third independent variable examined was *political party affiliation*. Respondents were asked to select their political party affiliation from the following categories: *Republican*, *Democrat*, *Independent*, *and Something Else*. The *Independent* and *Something Else* categories were collapsed into one category due to small sample sizes. Thus, I created a set of three dummy variables (0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*) for self-reported political party affiliation: *Republican*, (reference category), *Democrat*, and *Independent/Other*.

I also considered several additional factors that might be predictive of race self-labeling, including measures of discrimination, socialization, and racial identity importance.

Discrimination. To take into account the influence of discrimination, I used two measures: respondents' opinions on the existence of discrimination and respondents' experiences with discrimination. To capture respondents' opinions on the existence of discrimination, I used the following question from the survey "How much discrimination do you think there is today against people in the United States who are of each of the following races or origins?" and a list of relevant sub-questions on racial minority groups examined in the present study (i.e., Hispanic or Latino and Black or African American). The original response categories for these questions were: *a lot of discrimination*, *some*

discrimination, *only a little discrimination*, and *no discrimination*. For the purposes of the present analysis, I collapsed the original response categories (i.e., *a lot of discrimination, some discrimination, and only a little discrimination* were recoded as 1 = *yes*) and created a dichotomous variable (0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*) to consider whether respondents perceive that discrimination exists against relative minority groups in the U.S.

To measure whether respondents have ever experienced discrimination, I constructed a dichotomous variable *experienced discrimination* (0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*). In particular, I used the survey question "For each of the following, please indicate whether or not it has happened to you because of your racial background" and a list of related sub-questions on potential types of discrimination, including: been threatened; been subject to slurs and jokes; been treated unfairly by an employer in hiring, pay, or promotion; been unfairly stopped by the police; and received poor service in restaurants, hotels, or other places of business. The original response categories or these questions were: *yes, has happened in the last 12 months*; *yes, has happened but not in the past 12 months*; and *no, has never happened*. I recoded the first two original response categories as 1 = *yes*.

Socialization. I constructed three measures to take into account racial socialization: respondents' *neighborhood networks, friend networks*, and *social pressure*. To capture respondents' *neighborhood networks* and *friend networks*, I used the following questions "How many of the people in your neighborhood are…?" and "How many of your close friends are…?", respectively. Each of these two questions had sub-questions on specific applicable racial groups Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, and mixed race or multiracial. The original response categories for these questions were: *all of them*; *most of them*; *some of them*; and *none of them*. First, I

collapsed these response categories into the following categories: 0 = *none,* 1 = *some to all* for analysis. Then I created two dichotomous variables for each type of networks (0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*) in order to measure whether the following individuals were present in each network 1) *single minority race individuals* (i.e. Hispanics or Blacks) and 2 *multiracial individuals.*

On the basis of the question, "Have you ever felt pressure to choose one of the races in your background over another from the following groups?" and a list of these social groups. I created three dichotomous measures of *social pressure* from *family members, friends*, and *society in general* (0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*). The original response categories were: *often, sometimes*, *rarely*, and *never*. For the purposes of the present analysis, I collapsed the original response categories into *yes* = often, sometimes, and rarely and *no* = never, in order to measure whether respondents perceive social pressure from family, friends, and society in general.

Racial identity importance. To capture the concept of *racial identity importance*, I used the question, "Now we want you to think about your own personal identity, that is, the various ways that you define yourself as a person. How important are each of these characteristics to your own personal identity?" and two sub-questions on respondents' racial background and the ancestry or country of origin of respondents' family. The original response categories were: *essential to your identity*; *important to your identity*; and *not too important*. The response categories were collapsed into the following categories: 0 = *not too important* and 1 = *important*. On the basis of these questions, I created a composite measure of *identity importance* (Cronbach's alpha = .714).

Control Variable. I controlled for age in the present study. Although the respondents were asked to list their age in years, the dataset provides four categories of pre-coded responses: 0 = *18-29 years,* 1 = *30-44 years,* 2 = *45-59 years* and 3 = *60 plus years*. I used this variable as a continuous measure in the analysis ranging from 0 to 3.

Analytical Approach

I present descriptive statistics for all of the study variables in Table 1. I also conducted zero-order correlations to test for multicollinearity (Table 2). The zero-order correlations did not indicate issues with multicollinearity because none of the correlations among the study variables exceeded .52. Only the Pearson's correlation for Democratic Party and Other Party was greater than .60 (p = -.65) but these two variables are dummy variables measuring the same concept (i.e., political party affiliation).

I used multinomial logistic regression analyses because my dependent variable race self-labeling is a nominal variable with more than two response categories. I started by examining the implications of my main independent variables (i.e., gender, social class, and political party affiliation) for race self-labeling (Table 3).

In order to investigate whether additional factors such as racial discrimination, racial socialization, and the importance of racial identity are predictive of race self-labeling and can intercede the impact of non-racial social categories (i.e., gender, social class, and political affiliation) on race self-labeling, I included separate blocks of measures of these additional factors one by one in Models 1-3 in Table 4. That is, Model 1 took into account opinions on the existence of racial discrimination and experiences with racial discrimination. Model 2 considered the covariates of neighborhood networks, friend networks, family pressure, friend pressure, and societal pressure. Model 3

examined the implication of the importance of racial identity. Finally, I present the full model that takes into account all the covariates in Table 5. All the models controlled for respondents' age.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics for the weighted sample are shown in Table 1. About 49% of respondents selected a White Only race self-label. The majority of respondents were female (55.79 %) and claimed a middle class social status (51.82 %). Approximately 42% of respondents reported a Democrat political party affiliation.

Regression Results

Gender, Social Class, and Political Party Affiliation. Table 3 presents the multinomial logistic regression results of the implications of gender, social class, and political party affiliation for race self-label choices.

Table 3 indicates that among individuals in the survey, women were more likely to self-identify as Hispanic only and Black only than White only, compared to men. However, women were less likely to report a multiracial identity than a White only identity. Compared to those with lower social class, individuals with higher social class were more likely to identify themselves as Hispanic only or multiracial than White only. At the same time, social class was not a statistically significant predictor of a Black only self-label. Compared to those respondents who reported being affiliated with the Republican party, individuals who claimed Democratic party or other political party affiliation were more likely to identify themselves as Hispanic only, Black only, and multiracial only than White only. Compared to young people, older individuals were more likely to self-label as Black only than White only, but old age was related to a lower

likelihood of reporting a multiracial identity. Age was not predictive of a Hispanic only race self-label.

Discrimination, Socialization, and Identity Importance. Table 4 presents the multinomial logistic regression results from three models that add one by one the factors of discrimination, socialization, and racial identity importance to the model presented in Table 3 in order to examine the effect of these additional factors for race self-labeling and to investigate whether these additional factors might intercede the implications of gender, social class, and political party affiliation for race self-labeling choices.

Model 1in Table 4 took into consideration the effects of opinions of the existence of discrimination and experiences of discrimination. Individuals in the survey that held the opinion that discrimination exists in society were more likely to select a Hispanic only self-label than a White only self-label. Opinions on the existence of discrimination were not predictive of a Black only or multiracial only self-label. Compared to those who have not experienced discrimination, individuals who have experienced discrimination were more likely to select a Hispanic only, Black only, or multiracial self-label. When compared to the model in Table 3, Model 1 in Table 4 demonstrates that after adding the measures of discrimination, there were no changes in the predictive abilities of gender, social class, political party affiliation, and age.

Model 2 in Table 4 explored the effects of socialization, specifically social networks and social pressure. Individuals in the survey that were part of a neighborhood network that included single race minority members were more likely to select a Hispanic only, Black only, or multiracial self-label than White only compared to neighborhoods that did not have single minority race representation. Individuals that were part of

neighborhood networks that included multiracial members were more likely to select a multiracial self-label than White only than individuals whose neighborhoods did not have multiracial persons. However, neighborhood networks with multiracial members were not predictive of a Hispanic only or Black only self-label. Members of friend networks with single minority race representation were more likely to select a Hispanic only or Black only self-label than White only in comparison to being part of a friend network that did not include single minority race members. At the same time, a friend network with single race minority representation was not predictive for a multiracial self-label. Individuals that were members of a friend network that included multiracial members were less likely to select a Hispanic only and more likely to select a multiracial self-label than a White only self-label in comparison to friend networks that did not have multiracial members. Friend networks that had multiracial members were not predictive of a Black only self-label.

Additionally, Model 2 in Table 4 suggests that individuals in the survey that experienced pressure from family members to choose one race from their background were less likely to select a Hispanic only or multiracial self-label than White only in comparison to individuals that had not experienced pressure from family. Family pressure to select a single race was not predictive for a Black only self-label. At the same time, friend pressure to select a single race was not predictive for race self-labeling. In contrast, pressure from society in general to select a single race from their background resulted in individuals being more likely to select a Hispanic Only, Black only, and multiracial self-label than White only in comparison to those that did not experience pressure from society in general to choose a single race from their background. When compared to the

model in Table 3, Model 2 in Table 4 demonstrates that after adding the measures of socialization, the estimate for gender became non-significant as a predictor of a Hispanic only, Black only, and multiracial self-label.

Model 3 in Table 4 took into consideration the effects of racial identity importance. Individuals from the survey that claimed race and ancestry as being essentially important to their racial identity were more likely to select a Hispanic only, Black only, or multiracial self-label than White only in comparison to individuals that do not feel that race and ancestry are essentially important to their racial identity. When compared to the model in Table 3, Model 3 in Table 4 demonstrates that after adding the measure of racial identity importance, the estimate for gender became non-significant as a predictor of a Black only self-label.

Gender, Social Class, Political Party Affiliation, and Additional Factors. Table 5 presents the full model that includes all the study variables. Taking into account all of the factors in the model in Table 5 and compared to the model in Table 3 with only main independent variables, the estimate for gender became non-significant as a predictor of racial self-labeling. Models in Table 4 that account for additional factors by introducing blocks of relevant measures one by one suggest measures of socialization (Model 2 in Table 4) and the measure of racial identity importance (Model 3 in Table 4) might be responsible for gender becoming a non-significant predictor of racial self-labeling. In addition, the estimate for age became non-significant as a predictor of a Black only self-label.

DISCUSSION

The growing prominence of the multiracial population in the United States is prompting new questions about the importance of social identities on race labeling decisions (Khanna 2012; Shih and Sanchez 2009). Race is a subjective social construct with real social, political, and economic consequences (Albuja et al. 2017; Harris and Sim 2002; Rockquemoore and Brunsma 2008; Saperstein and Penner 2012; Shih and Sanchez 2009). The intersection of equally socially constructed identities with multiple racial identities have the ability to influence self-race labeling decisions (Shih and Sanchez 2009). Assessing the labeling decisions of multiracial individuals provides insight on how non-racial categories such as gender, social class, and political party affiliation inform the contextual nature and personal understandings of race in the United States.

On the basis of social identity theory, intersectionality theory, double jeopardy theory, and prior research, I examined whether non-racial social categories such as gender, social class, and political party affiliation influence self-race labeling of multiracial individuals. In addition, I investigated whether existence and experiences with racial discrimination, racial socialization, and the importance of racial identity have implications for race self-labeling and might mediate the associations between non-racial social categories (i.e. gender, social class, and political party affiliation) and race self-labeling. Prior research on the influence of non-racial categories and self-race labeling decisions of multiracial individuals is growing. This study adds to the body of research and will possibly provide another starting point for further research into the social items that influence race self-labels of multiracial people.

Gender, Social Class and Political Party Affiliation

The results of this study indicate that the non-racial categories of gender, social class, and political party affiliation predict differences between individuals that claim a single minority or multiracial race self-label. When examining the three non-racial categories alone gender was a significant predictor of race self-labeling for single minority and multiracial race self-labels. Female respondents were more likely to select a Hispanic only or Black only race self-label and less likely to select a multiracial race self-label than a White only race self-label in comparison to males. This finding was inconsistent with expectations of prior research that indicated women would be less likely to select a single minority race label and more likely to select a multiracial race label as a result of negative interactions and lack of racial validation by their single race minority peers (Davenport 2016a; Hunter 2005; Rockquemoore 2002; Rockquemoore and Brunsma 2008).

Social class was associated with Hispanic only and multiracial race self-labeling respondents. Respondents with higher social class were more likely to select a Hispanic only or multiracial than White race self-label. The results were not significant for Black only respondents. This is somewhat in line with prior research that indicates the category of "poor people" is mentally represented as relatively Black or minority and the category "rich people" is mentally represented as White (Lei and Bodenhausen 2017; Penner and Saperstein 2013). In addition, prior research states that colorism plays a significant role in the influence of social class on race labeling decisions through the concept of dominant group ethnicity and/or a whiteness standard (Doane Jr. 1997; Hunter 2005; Hunter 2007). The Hispanic only or multiracial race self-labeling respondents may fall on the lighter

side of the colorism spectrum which could reduce the association between minority race and poverty (Doane Jr. 1997; Hunter 2005; Hunter 2007).

Political party affiliation was also predictive of race self-labeling for both single minority and multiracial race self-labels. Democrat and other political party affiliated respondents were more likely to select a Hispanic only, Black only or Multiracial race self-label in comparison to White only race self-labeled Republican respondents. This finding provides support for prior research that highlights the racial divide of political party preference with the majority of White people claiming a Republican party affiliation and the majority of minority people claiming a Democrat party affiliation (Davenport 2016b; Pew Research Center 2015; Pietraszewski et al. 2015). In addition, it highlights the mechanisms of social identity theory in which people self-categorize themselves into groups that elevate self-esteem, instill a sense of pride, and create situations of in group and out group social comparison (Stets and Burke 2000; Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979; Turner and Reynolds 2011).

Discrimination, Socialization, and Racial Identity

The addition of a discrimination factor did not have an impact on the implications of the non-racial categories of gender, social class, or political party affiliation for racial self-labeling in this study. Specifically, I considered opinions of the existence of discrimination in society and experiences with discrimination. Respondents that believed discrimination exists in society were more likely to select a Hispanic only race self–label than White only in comparison to respondents that did not believe discrimination exists. Respondents' perceptions of discrimination, however, were not related to a Black only or multiracial race self-label. This is somewhat consistent with prior research that suggests

that encounters with racism and discrimination raised individuals' awareness of group membership with one race or another creating two types of identity experiences, one being a person of color and the other being a multiracial individual. These experiences result in a "chameleon effect" in which multiracial individuals select which identity to activate in order to reduce the likelihood of distress (Miville 2005). Therefore, one possible explanation for the present results is that respondents who perceived that discrimination exists might select a Hispanic only race self-label because they might believe that this choice would result in the least amount of distress.

Respondents that experienced discrimination were more likely to select a Hispanic only, Black only, or multiracial race self-label than a White only race self-label in comparison to respondents that had not experienced discrimination. This is consistent with prior research. Specifically, previous studies on colorism suggest that single race minority individuals that have darker skin are more likely to be treated with less respect, thought of as dishonest, have reduced access to resources, and experience a limited marriage market (Hamilton et al. 2009; Hersch 2011; Hunter 2002; Hunter 2005; Thompson and Keith 2001). Multiracial individuals also experience the effects of colorism through racial exclusion and questioned racial legitimacy (Hamilton et al. 2009; Hersch 2011; Hunter 2002; Hunter 2005; Thompson and Keith 2001).

The addition of a socialization factor did not have implications for the significance of the non-racial categories of social class, and political party affiliation for racial self-labeling in this study. However, after controlling for socialization and racial identity importance, gender did not remain a predictor of racial self-labeling in some instances. The intersectionality and double jeopardy theories might provide an

explanation for these results. In particular, these theoretical frameworks argue that different combinations of social categories and processes create distinctive experiences and opportunities for discrimination and self-identity (Berdahl and Moore 2006; Ferraro and Farmer 1996; Hill Collins and Bilge 2016). Thus, the present findings suggest that socialization and to a lesser extent racial identity importance potentially changed the interplay between gender and racial self-labeling. Specifically, compared to these additional social factors, gender might be a less critical predictor of racial self-identity.

Respondents that lived in neighborhoods in which persons of single minority racial background were present were more likely to select a Hispanic only, Black only, or multiracial race self-label than White only. Similarly, respondents that lived in neighborhoods in which multiracial people were present were more likely to select a multiracial race self-label than White only. This is in line with prior research suggesting that multiracial people may face harsh social evaluations due to the fluidity of their identities and in order to avoid social penalties multiracial people may act in a manner associated with a specific race or combination of races (Albuja et.al 2017; Harris and Sim 2002; Rockquemoore and Brunsma 2008).

In the present study, respondents that were part of friend networks that included single minority race individuals were more likely to select a Hispanic only or Black only race self-label than White only, in comparison to respondents that were part of friend networks that did not include single race minority individuals. Similarly, respondents that were part of friend networks that included multiracial individuals were less likely to select a Hispanic only and more likely to select a multiracial self-label than White only. These findings provide support for prior research indicating racial identity choices for

multiracial individuals are contextual and often change according to the expectations of

social roles and group membership (Albuja et al. 2017; Harris and Sim 2002;

Rockquemoore and Brunsma 2008; Saperstein and Penner 2012). This can explain the

discrepancies between the implications of neighborhood networks and friend networks.

The expectations of the two groups can be different and individuals might adjust their

identity choice in order to meet the needs and expectations of each specific group. This is

also in accord with concept of positive distinctiveness postulated by social identity

theory. Namely, people are more likely to self-categorize with an identity that will

elevate their self-esteem in a given situation (Geccas 1982, 1986, 1989; Hogg 2018;

Tajfel and Turner 1979).

      Continuing with the socialization factor, respondents that experienced pressure to

select a racial identity from family members were less likely to select a Hispanic only or

multiracial race self-label than White only. At the same time, pressure to select a racial

identity from friends was not predictive of race self-labeling in the present study.

However, respondents that experienced pressure from society in general were more likely

to select a Hispanic only, Black only, or multiracial race self-label than White only. This

is consistent with prior research that suggests multiracial people possess a fluid

experience of racial identity. This fluidity violates the established social norms of a stable

race identification and can lead to negative social interactions (Albuja et al. 2017; Harris

and Sim 2002; Xei and Goyette 1997). Multiracial people in turn learn or choose to enact

a contextual racial presentation. They may privately identify in a certain way but regulate

their public racial presentation according to the social situation (Albuja et al. 2017; Harris

and Sim 2002). According to social identity theory individuals adopt the identity of the

group that they have categorized themselves as members of and in turn work to elevate the status of the group to increase pride and self-esteem (Stets and Burke 2000; Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979). The demands of group membership associated with family groups, friend groups, and being a member of society in general can differ in expectations and meaning resulting in different levels of relationships and effects on racial identity.

In the present study, respondents that felt racial identity was important to them were more likely to select a Hispanic only, Black, only or multiracial race self-label than White only. This is consistent with social identity theory's assertion that people self-categorize according to the values and meanings that are important to them as this creates a sense of pride and provides a script for appropriate behavior (Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979). The addition of a racial identity importance factor did not make a difference in the implications of the non-racial categories of social class and political party affiliation for racial self-labeling in this analysis. Yet, after the inclusion of this aspect of socialization, gender did not remain a statistically significant predictor of a Black only race self-label.

Overall, the results of the present study indicate that the non-racial categories of social class and political party affiliation remain independent predictors of race self-labeling even after taking into consideration the additional factors of discrimination, socialization, and racial identity importance. In contrast, after including socialization and racial identity importance, the estimate for gender was decreased to non-significance in some instances. The latter findings suggest that gender might be a less crucial predictor of racial self-labeling than socialization and racial identity importance. Moreover, these

findings provide support for the intersectionality and double jeopardy theories arguing that different intersections of social categories create different experiences and opportunities for discrimination and self-identification (Berdahl and Moore 2006; Ferraro and Farmer 1996; Hill Collins and Bilge 2016).

Age

In the study, I controlled for age. The findings demonstrated that age was not predictive of selecting a Hispanic only race self-label. However, older individuals were more likely to select a Black only race self-label but less likely to label themselves as multiracial. Interestingly, in the last model that included all the study variables, age was associated with selecting a Black only race self-label. This is consistent with prior research that suggests as people age they are more likely to adapt their identity to meet the societal expectations of race. Years of being corrected for violating the social norms and expectations of race impact the selection of a racial identity (Albuja et al. 2017; Harris and Sim 2002; Xei and Goyette 1997). At the same time, this finding also implies other factors (i.e., not age) might be more critical predictors of self-identifying oneself as Black only.

Limitations of the Present Study

This study had several limitations. For example, a major potential issue is that I did not control for racial background and used White only as a reference category in the regression models. It is possible that some of the respondents may not have a White racial background and this could potentially change the results of the analysis. In addition, the dataset used for this study excluded genders other than male and female. The survey did not provide possible responses for other gender possibilities, such as non-binary and

transgender individuals. This limited individuals to responses that may not accurately represent their gender identity and potentially changes the meanings associated with the non-racial category of gender. Another limitation is the data captures a single point in time and responses can change over time in reaction to social and life circumstances. Moreover, the use of survey data limits respondents to preselected responses and may not capture all possible responses. Finally, survey data captures choices but not the motivations behind the choices.

Implications for Future Research

There are three areas in which future research would benefit the examination of the influence of non-racial categories on race self-labeling choices of multiracial individuals. First, because the present study shows that age might be an important predictor of racial self-labeling, a longitudinal study, preferably similar to the Survey of Multiracial Americans, that can record and analyze race self-labeling choices over a lifetime, might be able to highlight whether and how race self-labeling decisions might be contextual and change over time as people mature and group memberships change (Albuja et al. 2017; Morning and Sapperstein 2018; Pew Research Center 2018; Rockquemoore and Brunsma 2008; Shih and Sanchez 2009). A longitudinal examination could capture and correlate social and life course changes and the impact they may have on race self-labeling choices.

Second, the present study demonstrates that additional factors such as discrimination, socialization, and racial identity importance do not explain completely, if at all, why people from certain groups defined by gender, social class, and/or political party affiliation select specific racial self-labels. Future research should explore other

factors that might make a difference in how individuals identify themselves in terms of race. In particular, a qualitative approach would be beneficial. In-depth interviews could help explore the distinctive meanings behind race self-labeling choices. This would also allow for a more detailed application of intersectionality theory (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016). The interviews could further examine the ways in which the non-racial categories intersect and inform race self-labeling choices. For example, respondents could explain how being a wealthy Republican multiracial woman influenced her decision to self-label as White only or why a poor, Democrat multiracial male identified as Black only. This form of inquiry could confirm, refute, or enhance the relationships identified from quantitative studies such as the current study.

Relatedly, it might be beneficial in the future to look at other social categories or social structures that could potentially influence race self-labeling decisions of multiracial individuals. For example, the U.S. educational system portrays the ideology that all citizens are entitled to an education. Yet the educations that individuals receive is often unequal, especially for people of color (Bonilla-Silva 2018; Dhillon-Jamerson 2018; Harvey et al. 2017). People of color are disproportionately targets of prejudice in the educational system. They are more likely to be graded more severely, receive harsher punishments, and receive less academic instruction (Bonilla-Silva 2018; Dhillon-Jamerson 2018; Harvey et al. 2017). This occurs in an educational system that is promoted as equal fair and a basic right to citizens. The choices of multiracial respondents on the survey could be influenced by their educational experience depending on the treatment they received based on their racial classification during their education. Adding additional non-racial categories and social structures to an examination of race

self-labeling choices could provide additional support needed to identify areas where social change is needed.

Conclusion

Coupled with the limitations of accurate self-race reporting on the U.S. Census and the potential impact of the multiracial population on the concept of race itself, it is becoming apparently important to understand the factors that influence race labeling decisions of multiracial people. In this study, I reviewed and expanded on the growing body of research on this population that focuses on identifying and describing non-racial categories important to shaping racial identities. Specifically, I utilized a national survey of U.S. adults administered by the Pew Research Center in order to investigate how social identities defined by non-racial categories such as gender, social class, and political party affiliation influence the race self-labels chosen by multiracial individuals in the United States.

The study found that gender, social class, and political party affiliation might be important predictors of the race self-labeling choices of multiracial individuals. After adding the factors of discrimination, socialization, and racial identity, social class and political party affiliation, but not gender, remain as significant predictors of racial self-labeling. The results for social class and political party affiliation reinforce the actuality that a pervasive racial hierarchy and social stratification system is embedded within the U.S. social class system (Lei and Bodenhausen 2017; Strmic-Pawl 2014). Relatedly, political party affiliation is tied to a sense of culture, values, and moral convictions and the results imply a considerable political and racial divide (Davenport 2016b; Hochschild and Weaver 2007; Weaver 2012).

The present study suggests that it is important to examine racial self-labeling from the perspectives of social identity and intersectionality theories (Hill-Collins and Bilge 2016; Tajfel 1982; Tajfel and Turner 1979). In particular, it is crucial to take into account multiple factors that might make a difference in how individuals assign themselves to racial groups. Namely, the non-racial categories of gender, social class, and political party affiliation do not exist separate from each other. For instance, it means something to be a female, middle class, and Democrat and to self-label as Hispanic only in comparison to Black only. According to intersectionality theory, each of these categories work together and influence each other to create unique identities and experiences (Hill Collins and Bilge 2016). These unique identities and experiences more than likely had an impact on the race self-labeling choices of respondents.

Furthermore, the same unique identities and experiences observed through the lens of intersectionality theory can be seen when we consider double jeopardy theory (Berdahl and Moore 2006; Hill Collins and Bilge 2016). However, the difference between the two theories is that double jeopardy theory highlights how the intersection of identities creates the potential for multiple social burdens (Berdahl and Moore 2006). For example, a female respondent that selected a Black only race self-label has the potential for discrimination as a result of being a woman and being Black. Other respondents may have selected a different race self-label in response to their awareness of the potential for multiple biases. This more than likely informed the race self-labeling choices of respondents as well.

Assessing the labeling decisions of multiracial individuals provides insight on how non-racial categories inform the contextual nature of personal understandings of race

in the United States (Davenport 2016a; Shih and Sanchez 2009). Thus, this study adds to

growing, but timely and crucial, body of research on race self-labeling choices.

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Table 1. Weighted Descriptive Statistics for the Study Variables ($N = 1,770$).

Variables	%	Range
Self-Race Label		
White Only (reference category)	49.5	0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*
Hispanic Only	12.09	0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*
Black Only	27.6	0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*
Multiracial	10.81	0 = *no*, 1 = *ye*s
Female	55.79	0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*
Social Class		0-4
Lower Class (0)	8.33	
Lower-Middle Class (1)	27.24	
Middle Class (2)	51.82	
Upper Middle Class (3)	11.9	
Upper Class (4)	0.71	
Political Party Affiliation		
Republican (reference category)	18.56	0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*
Democrat	42.28	0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*
Other Party	39.15	0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*
Discrimination Exists	96.73	0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*
Experienced Discrimination	65.36	0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*
Socialization		
Neighborhood Composition		
Single minority race present	90.02	0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*
Multiracials present	80.36	0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*
Friend Network Composition		
Single minority race present	86.43	0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*
Multiracials present	80.97	0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*
Family pressure	9.58	0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*
Friend pressure	8.29	0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*
Pressure from society in general	14.72	0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*
Racial Identity Importance	76.21	0 = *not too important*, 1 = *important*
Control Variable		
Age		0-3
18-29 (0)	25.02	
30-44 (1)	29.3	
45-59 (2)	26.0	
60+ (3)	19.69	

Note: Values were weighted using post stratification weights.

Table 2. Zero-Order Correlations for the Study Variables ($N = 1,770$).

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. Female	-															
2. Social Class	.01	-														
3. Democratic Party	.08***	.01	-													
4. Other Party	-.05*	-.08***	-.65***	-												
5. Discrimination Exists	.01	.05*	.08**	.02	-											
6. Experienced Discrimination	-.05	-.10***	.04	.04	.09***	-										
7. Neighborhood single minority race present	.03	-.02	.10***	-.05*	.05*	.08**	-									
8. Neighborhood multiracials present	.05*	-.05*	.02	.02	-.01	.07**	.05***	-								
9. Friend network single minority race present	-.00	.01	.05*	-.01	.02	.15***	.14***	.10***	-							
10. Friend network multiracials present	-.03	-.02	-.06*	.07**	-.02	.08***	.12***	.30***	.39***	-						
11. Family Pressure	.03	-.04	.01	.05*	.04	.13***	.03	.01	.04	.06**	-					
12. Friend Pressure	.01	-.07**	.04	.03	.04	.16***	.01	.06*	.02	.05*	.45***	-				
13. Pressure from society in general	-.01	-.05*	.03	.02	.05*	.20***	.03	.05*	.06*	.09***	.36***	.52***	-			
14. Racial Identity Importance	.08***	.02	.11***	-.15***	.06**	.09***	.04	.02	.09***	.05*	.03	.01	.05	-		
15. Age	-.18**	.10***	-.01	-.06	-.03	-.03	-.09***	-.03	.06*	.01	-.14***	-.11***	-.12***	.00	-	
16. Self-Race Label	-.01	-.03	.08**	.01	.06*	.16***	.04	.06**	.05*	.10**	.03	.06*	.15***	.08**	-.05*	-

*p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001.

Table 3. Multinomial Logistic Regression Results: Gender, Social Class, and Political Party Affiliation ($N = 1,770$).

	Hispanic	Black	Multiracial
Female	.191**	.158*	-.226*
Social Class	.383**	-.065	.203**
Political Party Affiliation[a]			
Democratic Party	1.243***	3.017***	.345**
Other Party	1.003***	1.511***	.320**
Age	.010	.247*	-.297***
Constant	-3.103	-3.024	-1.642
Pseudo R^2	.053		

[a]Reference category: Republican party.
*p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001.

Table 4. Multinomial Logistic Regression Results: Discrimination, Socialization, and Racial Identity Importance ($N = 1,770$).

	Model 1 Discrimination			Model 2 Socialization			Model 3 Racial Identity Importance		
	Hispanic	Black	Multiracial	Hispanic	Black	Multiracial	Hispanic	Black	Multiracial
Female	.310**	.231*	-.173*	.080	.082	-.205	.177**	.125	-.228**
Social Class	.440**	-.004	.222***	.426***	-.022	.199**	.357**	-.115	.193**
Political Party Affiliation[a]									
Democratic Party	1.234***	3.014***	.372**	1.352***	3.070***	.331**	1.326***	3.122***	.372**
Other Party	.835**	1.347**	.276**	1.062**	1.541***	.341**	1.107***	1.653***	.359**
Discrimination Exists	1.719**	-.002	-.073						
Experienced Discrimination	1.796***	1.753***	.602***						
Socialization									
Neighborhood Composition									
Single minority race present				3.560***	1.685**	.311**			
Multiracials present				-.091	.124	.219*			
Friend Network Composition									
Single minority race present				3.502***	2.411***	-.081			
Multiracials present				-.718*	-.456	.719**			
Family Pressure				-1.022**	-.335	-.689*			
Friend Pressure				.248	.187	-.147			
Societal Pressure				1.252*	.827*	1.092*			
Racial Identity Importance							.840***	1.485***	.252***
Age	-.009	.202*	-.302**	.025	.250**	-.281***	.001	.206**	-.300***
Constant	-6.111	-4.232	-1.962	-9.314	-6.643	-2.739	-3.748	-4.150	-1.823
Pseudo R^2	.078			.100			.064		

[a]Reference category: Republican party.
*p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001.

Table 5. Multinomial Logistic Regression Results: All Variables ($N = 1,770$).

	Hispanic	Black	Multiracial
Female	.188	.141	-.173
Social Class	.475***	-.010	.215**
Political Party Affiliation[a]			
Democratic Party	1.403**	3.187***	.393*
Other Party	1.025**	1.569**	.341*
Discrimination Exists	1.546**	-.342	-.023
Experienced Discrimination	1.669***	1.671***	.532**
Socialization			
Neighborhood Composition			
Single minority race present	3.524***	1.634*	.341***
Multiracials present	-.120	.045	.184*
Friend Network Composition			
Single minority race present	3.291**	2.131**	-.137
Multiracials present	-.656	-.455	.755**
Family Pressure	-1.159***	-.500*	-.834**
Friend Pressure	.238	.175	-.164
Pressure from society in general	1.004**	.621**	1.017**
Racial Identity Importance	.681*	1.305***	.189
Age	-.012	.171	-.300**
Constant	-12.358	-8.094	-3.150
Pseudo R^2	.123		

[a]Reference category: Republican party.
*p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001.