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HHS Public Access

Author manuscript

Soc Psychol Personal Sci. Author manuscript; available in PMC 2016 November 01.

Published in final edited form as:

Soc Psychol Personal Sci. 2015 November 1; 6(8): 887–895. doi:10.1177/1948550615598379.

When Societal Norms and Social Identity Collide: the Race Talk Dilemma for Racial Minority Children

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Abstract

Racial minorities face a unique "race talk" dilemma in contemporary American society: their racial background is often integral to their identity and how others perceive them, yet talk of race is taboo. This dilemma highlights the conflict between two fundamental social processes: social identity development and social norm adherence. To examine how, and with what costs, this dilemma is resolved, 9–12-year-old Latino, Asian, Black, and White children (*n*=108) completed a photo identification task in which acknowledging racial difference is beneficial to performance. Results indicate minority children are just as likely to avoid race as White children, and such avoidance exacted a cost to performance and nonverbal comfort. Results suggest that teachers are particularly important social referents for instilling norms regarding race. Norms that equate colorblindness with socially appropriate behavior appear more broadly influential than previously thought, stifling talk of race even among those for whom it may be most meaningful.

Keywords

colorblindness; social norms; racial categorization

In contemporary America, racial minority children face a fundamental dilemma. On one hand, race is central to their identities, a source of psychological well-being, and a lens through which others perceive them (Allport, 1954; García Coll et al., 1996; Rivas-Drake, Seaton, et al., 2014). On the other hand, they are exposed to prevailing societal norms of colorblindness that discourage discussion or even mere acknowledgment of racial difference (Apfelbaum, Norton, & Sommers, 2012; Plaut, 2010). How do minority children reconcile this conflict between their lived experiences, undeniably linked to their racial identity, and dominant social norms that dictate race should not matter? We conduct a novel empirical test of this question in an educational setting. Specifically, we investigate whether racial minority children readily acknowledge race in line with healthy social identity development

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processes or whether they instead adhere to societal norms of colorblindness. We also investigate why, and with what costs, minority (and majority) children may avoid race, and which social referents affect their decision to do so.

The Discord Between Social Identity and Societal Norms for Racial Minorities

During middle-childhood, two key processes underscore children's developing understanding of social identity. First, ethnic and racial group membership become relevant and important identities (Quintana, 2007; Ruble et al., 2004). Second, social norms increasingly affect children's intergroup behavior and explicit attitudes (Nesdale, 2004; Rutland, 2004). These processes have been theorized to work *harmoniously*, helping children formulate strong group identities and understand appropriate intragroup and intergroup behavior (Nesdale, 2011). With regard to White children, there is strong evidence that these processes operate in accord. Namely, societal colorblind norms are consistent with the less central role of racial identity for White children (Fuligni, Witkow, & Garcia, 2005; Roberts et al., 1999; Turner & Brown, 2007) and the colorblind racial socialization promoted by their parents (Pahlke, Bigler, & Suizzo, 2012; Vittrup & Holden, 2011). For racial minority children however, colorblind norms are inconsistent with a process of healthy racial identity development that relies on active discussions about race (e.g., Neblett, Rivas-Drake, & Umaña-Taylor, 2012).

Understanding minority children's response to the race talk dilemma is important because, relative to majority children, they derive considerable value from acknowledging their racial identity (Rivas-Drake, Seaton, et al., 2014). A strong positive racial identity is associated with greater psychological well-being and self-esteem among racial minorities (Rivas-Drake, Syed, et al., 2014; Roberts et al., 1999; Smith & Silva, 2011) and can buffer the negative effects of discrimination on academic outcomes (Eccles, Wong, & Peck, 2006; Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003).

The extant literature suggests two differing theories of how minority children navigate the race talk dilemma. One possibility is that they disregard societal colorblind norms and instead follow minority group-specific norms that encourage discussion of race. For racial minority children, discussing race often promotes positive racial identity development (Neblett et al., 2012). Consistent with this, previous work demonstrates that racial minority parents openly discuss race with their children (Hughes et al., 2006; Priest et al., 2014) and do so far more frequently than White parents (Brown, Tanner-Smith, Lesane-Brown, & Ezell, 2007). If minority children adopt group-specific norms consistent with this parental socialization, they should be comfortable talking openly about race. Research with adults supports the notion that Whites and racial minorities adhere to different group-specific race norms, as reflected in their differential comfort with discussing race (Apfelbaum, Sommers, & Norton, 2008; Trawalter & Richeson, 2008).

The alternative possibility is that pressures to adhere to colorblind norms override talk of race. Several lines of research support this account. First, colorblind norms have become pervasive in American society, extending beyond everyday social interactions (Apfelbaum,

Sommers, et al., 2008) to the development of educational curricula (Pollock, 2004) and legal and societal discourse (Apfelbaum et al., 2012; Peery, 2011). Second, among White adults, mere mention of race has become synonymous with racial prejudice (Apfelbaum, Sommers, et al., 2008). For instance, previous research has found that at 9–10-years, White children begin avoiding talk of race (Apfelbaum, Pauker, et al., 2008) and adhering to norms proscribing prejudice (Fitzroy & Rutland, 2010; Monteiro et al., 2009; Rutland et al., 2005). Thus, if racial minority children similarly become aware that colorblindness is considered normatively appropriate, they too may avoid talk of race.

This outcome may be particularly likely in U.S. educational contexts because teachers and school administrators—key socialization agents for children outside the home—frequently endorse colorblindness (Pollock, 2004). Schools communicate norms regarding race through informal and institutional mechanisms (Pollock, 2004; Schofield, 2007) and are powerful determinants of minority children's development and self-esteem (García Coll et al., 1996). Together, this work suggests schools play an especially important role in reinforcing race norms for majority and minority children alike.

Present Research

The race talk dilemma for racial minority children presents a unique theoretical opportunity to test the primacy of two social processes in conflict: one supporting social identity development and another supporting adherence to societal norms. To dissociate these competing processes, we compare how a socioeconomically diverse sample of 9–12-year-old Latino, Asian, Black, and White children complete a photo identification task in which acknowledging racial difference is advantageous.[1] Children completed this task with experimenters who mirrored the gender and racial demographics of the teachers in their schools. We also examine potential antecedents and consequences of racial majority and minority children's decisions to talk about race. We assess whether children's perceptions of their parents', peers', and teachers' approaches to race predict their own likelihood of acknowledging race and their concerns about appearing inappropriate, and whether these associations are similar or different across the sampled racial groups. Finally, we code videos of children completing the photo task to measure both their performance on the task and discomfort in their nonverbal behavior.

Method

Participants

We recruited 111 9–12-year-old children (*M* =10.85 years, *SD* =.55) from urban public elementary schools that serve low-income and middle-class families near San Francisco, California. To increase the generalizability of our results, we sampled across eight different teachers' classrooms and from three schools that differed in the racial composition of their students. All of the schools were relatively integrated, but their racial composition was confounded with socioeconomic status such that schools with fewer White children were

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[1]Although we recognize the conceptual difference between ethnicity and race (Markus, 2008), both ethnic and racial minorities face similar psychological experiences resulting from the racialized nature of colorblind norms. We thus use the term "racial minorities" to refer inclusively to ethnic and racial minorities.

also less socioeconomically advantaged. Characteristics of each school appear in Table 1. Three students' video data were lost due to researcher error. The final sample (n =108; 54 females) included 41 Latino, 21 Asian, 19 Black, and 27 White children. Children were not compensated for participating.

Materials and Procedure

We informed parents of the study and obtained consent via letters sent home by school administrators. Individual children completed a photo identification task that gauges children's willingness to talk about race (Apfelbaum, Pauker, et al., 2008). We video-recorded them completing this task in a quiet location, separate from other children, with one of four experimenters (two White females, one Asian female, one White male). Children sat in front of an array of 40 4×6-inch photographs of people (cropped above the waist) arranged in 4 rows of 10. The experimenter told children that the goal of the task was to ask as few yes/no questions as possible to narrow the array to a single photo held by the experimenter. This performance goal was explicitly stated three times during the course of the instructions. People in the array differed in many respects, but they varied systematically on two orthogonal dimensions: gender (male, female) and race (Black, White). Asking questions about gender or race were thus particularly beneficial for performance as they would eliminate half of the photos. A new experimenter completed the remainder of the study with the child. First, this experimenter asked the child whether they noticed that White and Black people were displayed in the photos. Next, the experimenter asked the child to discuss why they did or did not use race as a question, and video-recorded their response. Children then completed a series of items regarding their impressions of how their parents, peers, and teachers approach issues of race. Finally, children self-reported their racial or ethnic background.

Measures

Mention of race and gender—We examined the frequency with which Latino, Asian, Black, and White children asked questions about race as compared to gender. Acknowledgement of gender is a reasonable baseline of comparison to acknowledgment of race for theoretical, empirical, and methodological reasons. First, race and gender are two of the most relevant social identities for children (Ruble et al., 2004). Second, people perceive both racial and gender differences almost instantaneously (Ito & Urland, 2003). Third, asking about the race or gender of the target photo carries equal diagnostic value in the task. Accordingly, we assessed whether children mentioned race (0 = no, 1 = yes), based on use of the terms *Black, African American, White,* or *Caucasian,* and gender (0 = no, 1 = yes), based on use of the terms *girl*, *boy*, *male*, *female*, *man,* or *woman*. We also asked children whether they noticed the photos differed by race (0 = no, 1 = yes), which served as a second baseline of comparison to their acknowledgment of race in the task.

Performance—We counted the number of questions participants used to identify the target photo. Asking fewer questions indicated better performance.

Nonverbal comfort—Six judges, blind to hypotheses, independently viewed silent videos of children's behavior during the photo task. They evaluated children's nonverbal comfort:

the extent to which they appeared uncomfortable (reverse-scored), engaged, friendly, to be smiling, and to be making eye-contact using a 1 (*not at all*) to 9 (*extremely*) response scale. All six judges first coded a subset of 20 videos to achieve inter-rater reliability (αs =.63–.88).[2] The remaining videos were then divided evenly such that two judges rated each remaining video. We averaged ratings across all items to form an index of nonverbal comfort (α =.90).

Social appropriateness concerns—Four judges independently coded videos of children explaining why they did or did not use race as a question in the task. Previous research indicates people typically provide *either* task- or social-focused reasoning for why they did or did not use race (Apfelbaum, Pauker et al., 2008; Apfelbaum, Sommers, et al., 2008). Using this past work to develop our coding scheme, judges rated the content of children's rationale based on the degree to which it conveyed a concern for task performance (e.g., "I wanted to get rid of a lot of people") and a concern for social appropriateness (e.g., "I didn't want to be offensive") on 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*extremely*) response scales. All four judges first coded a subset of 15 videos to achieve inter-rater reliability (αs =.96–.97) and the remaining videos were evenly split such that two judges coded each remaining video. Consistent with past work, ratings of the two items were highly negatively correlated ($r = -.78$). We thus reverse-scored the task performance concern item and averaged it with the social appropriateness concern item to create an index (α =.88), with higher scores indicating greater concern for social appropriateness.

To provide a more detailed picture of children's rationale, two judges, blind to hypotheses, also coded children's responses for several *types* of social- and task-focused reasoning (Cohen's κ =.74-1). A third judge resolved all discrepancies. For social-focused concerns, we coded two general concerns: self-focused concerns (e.g., "I didn't want to sound mean") and other-focused concerns (e.g., "It would be hurtful"); and two specific concerns: mentioned inappropriate, rude, offensive (e.g., "It would be offensive") and mentioned racist, prejudice (e.g., "Because I don't want to be racist"). For task-focused concerns, we coded one general concern: good strategy (e.g., "To figure out the person quicker") and two specific concerns: other questions were better (e.g., "It would be easier to say girl, boy, color of the clothes"), and racial/ethnic differences are apparent (e.g., "Because there was lots of Black people"). Table 2 presents proportions of children from each racial background that expressed a particular type of reasoning separated by whether they mentioned race.

Perceptions of parent, peer, and teacher approaches to race—We measured perceived norms using items that assessed whether children perceived that their parents, peers, and teachers endorsed a colorblind approach to race. Children indicated their agreement with four items, such as "My [parents/peers/teachers] are uncomfortable talking about race", "My [parents/peers/teachers] bring up race in their everyday conversations" (reverse-scored) on a 1 (*very strongly disagree*) to 6 (*very strongly agree*) response scale. Children completed the same four items in reference to their parents (α =.66), peers (α =.

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[2]The range of inter-rater reliability in the current study is acceptable and is consistent with the range found in recent meta-analytic work with adults (αs = .64–.98; Toosi, Babbit, Ambady, & Sommers, 2012).

72), and teachers (α =.75), with higher scores indicating higher perceived endorsement of colorblindness.

Results

Analytic Approach

To account for the nested nature of our data (i.e., participants nested within schools), all data was analyzed with multilevel linear or logistic models using MIXED or GENLINMIXED with school as a random intercept in SPSS 22 (Heck, Thomas, & Tabata, 2012). We met requirements for logistic regression in the primary analyses presented below (see Vittinghoff & McCulloch, 2007). All continuous predictors were centered (Aiken & West, 1991). In addition to the main predictor in each model, participant race (dummy-coded: Latino, Asian, Black, with White as the reference group), and interactions with participant race were always included. We only report interactions when they contribute unique variance to the model. Initial models were run to examine experimenter differences, age, and school diversity (as a school-level predictor). None of these variables contributed significantly, so they were removed from the final models. Correlations and descriptive statistics for measures are presented in Tables 3 and 4.

Who Talks about Race?

We conducted a multilevel logistic model with repeated measures to investigate the frequency with which children mentioned race versus gender. Overall, children were significantly less likely to talk about race compared to gender, $B = -1.41$, SE =.34, $p < .001$, OR =.25, 95% CI [.13, .48]. Critically, this difference did not interact with participant race: racial minority children were just as reluctant to talk about race as White children. Overall, the odds of children mentioning race was four times lower than mentioning gender (Figure 1), despite the fact that both questions were equally useful for completing the task. It was also clear that children noticed race: Over 97% reported noticing that the photos varied by race in the post-task measures.

Performance

The performance measure reflected ordinal count data with a restricted range and a non-normal distribution, thus we conducted a multilevel multinomial logistic regression to examine the effect of mention of race (0 = no, 1 = yes) on number of questions asked. Those who avoided race, performed worse on the task, B =.43, SE =.07, $p < .001$, OR =1.54, 95% CI [1.35, 1.78]. The interaction with race was not significant, although Asian, Black and Latino children all performed worse than White children (Bs =.34, .51, .54; SEs =.08, .20, .10; ps < .02, ORs = 1.40–1.71).

Nonverbal Comfort

The avoidance of race was also associated with interpersonal costs: regressing children's nonverbal comfort during the task on participant race and mention of race (0 = no, 1 = yes), revealed that those who did not mention race appeared less comfortable, $B = .79$, SE =.22, $p = .001$. The interaction with race was not significant, indicating that children's avoidance of

race was associated with greater display of nonverbal discomfort, irrespective of their racial background.

Perceptions of Parent, Peer, and Teacher Approaches to Race

We examined whether children's decision (not) to talk about race in the experimental task was linked to their impressions of how three potential social referents handle race: parent(s), peers, and teachers. To do so, we regressed mention of race onto participant race and perceptions of others' approaches to race. A significant negative relation between children's perceptions of their parents', $B = -.65$, $SE = .31$, $p = .040$, $OR = .52$, 95% CI [.28, .97], and teachers', $B = -1.03$, $SE = .32$, $p = .002$, $OR = .36$, 95% CI [.19, .67], approaches to race emerged, such that children's impression that these adults avoid race independently predicted their own avoidance of race in the photo task (Figure 2). However, children's perceptions of their peers' approaches to race were not predictive of their behavior controlling for children's perceptions of adults' approaches to race, $B = .56$, $SE = .33$. $p = .09$. The lack of a significant interaction with race indicates that teachers and parents were important social referents for all children.

Why Do Perceptions of Parent and Teacher Approaches to Race Influence Children?

If children are indeed adhering to colorblind norms, concerns about appearing socially appropriate may mediate the relation between perceptions of parent and teacher approaches to race and children's mention of race. That is, these social referents may establish the standard for what is and is not considered appropriate in this context, which may explain children's reluctance to mention race. As indicated by the analysis above, Latino, Asian, Black and White children's impressions of parent and teacher approaches to race predicted their own avoidance, but we expected the mechanism explaining how these adults influence children to differ for majority and minority children. Specifically, because social appropriateness concerns tend to be more central to majority (versus minority) parents' racial socialization approach, we expected social appropriateness concerns to better explain parents' influence on White (versus minority) children's mention of race. Importantly, however, because teachers in our sample (and in the U.S.; Goldring, Gray, & Bitterman, 2013) are predominantly White, but their classrooms are comprised of both majority and minority children, we expected social appropriateness concerns to mediate the effect of teachers' influence on *all* children's mention of race. We used Hayes's (2012) PROCESS algorithm (model 8) to test two moderated mediation models (with parent and teacher approaches as predictors in separate models), controlling for school, with racial minority status as the moderator and social appropriateness concerns as the mediator. We met criteria to use a fixed effects approach to clustering and conducted this analyses at Level 1 (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003; Kenny, Korchmaros, & Bolger, 2003).

The indirect effect of parent approaches on mentioning race was moderated by racial majority/minority status, $B = 1.12$, $SE = .43$, 95% CI [.33, 1.98]. As expected, social appropriateness concerns mediated the effect of parent approaches on mentioning race for White (indirect effect = -1.32, $SE = .41$, 95% CI [-2.11, -.58]), but not racial minority children (95% CI [-.71, .24]). However, the indirect effect of teacher approaches on mentioning race was not moderated by racial majority/minority status, $B = .47$, $SE = .38$, 95%

CI [−.28, 1.26]; social appropriateness concerns mediated the effect of teacher approaches on mentioning race for both White (95% CI [-1.67, −.25]) and minority (95% CI [−.82, −.04]) children. Thus, when it comes to talking about race, teachers may be a particularly important, shared social referent defining what behavior is appropriate for children from a diverse range of backgrounds.

Discussion

For racial minority children in contemporary society, there is considerable tension between two basic social processes: social identity development and social norm adherence. Social identity development relies on recognizing and valuing their racial group membership, yet societal norms dictate that talk of race is taboo. Faced with this race talk dilemma, our results indicate that racial minority children, like White children, adhere to societal colorblind norms. Remarkably, minority children (especially Latino and Black children) were just as likely as White children to equate mention of race with prejudice —stating, for example, *I didn't want to be racist*—as an explanation for why they avoided acknowledging race (see Table 2). Not only did children avoid acknowledging race, they did so at the expense of their performance on and comfort with the task. While all children who avoided race incurred these costs, racial minority children performed worse than White children regardless of whether they avoided race. While speculative, their worse performance on the task may indicate their attention was directed elsewhere as they negotiated the tension between their racial identity and societal norms.

In sum, despite the benefits of acknowledging race for minority children's identity development, societal colorblindness norms appear to prevail, at least in the present educational context where children likely feel particularly accountable to adult norms. It is possible minority children would talk more openly about race in contexts where norms associated with their peers are most salient (see Abrams, Rutland, Cameron, & Ferrell, 2007). Future research should further develop a framework for understanding when group-specific versus societal norms take precedence in influencing children's intergroup behavior.

Consistent with past research (e.g., Brown et al., 2007) our results suggest that White and racial minority children receive different socialization messages from their parents. Although both perceived parental and teacher approaches to race relate to children's mention of race, there is important variability in *who* elicits concerns about appearing socially appropriate. Perceived parental approaches to race predict social appropriateness concerns among White, but not racial minority, children. However, perceived teacher approaches to race predict both White and racial minority children's social appropriateness concerns and, ultimately, whether they talk about race. This finding suggests that teachers may be especially influential social referents because they are in a position to define race norms among children from a diverse range of racial backgrounds. Given that the majority of pre-K-12 teachers are White (Goldring et al., 2013), it is not surprising they may reinforce the notion that colorblindness is tantamount to social appropriateness or cultural sensitivity. The current work underscores the importance of examining how schools and other social institutions communicate race norms and recognizing sources of racial

socialization beyond parents and peers (Barr & Neville, 2014; Lesane-Brown, Brown, Caldwell, & Sellers, 2005; Plaut, 2010; Priest et al., 2014).

This research makes a number of important theoretical contributions. First, given that racial minorities have been largely absent from empirical work examining how social norms influence intergroup behavior and attitudes, the current investigation helps illuminate whether these processes generalize beyond a White middle-class population. This work also underscores the importance of examining the interplay of social identity processes and norms at multiple levels (i.e., broad societal norms and localized group-specific norms). This interplay is easily overlooked because social identity processes and norms typically do not conflict for White individuals. Yet it is in circumstances where social identity processes and norms do collide—as they do for racial minorities—that we obtain a more theoretically rich understanding of the determinants of intergroup behavior (see also Killen, Rutland, Abrams, Mulvey & Hitti, 2013; Nesdale & Dalton, 2011; Nesdale & Lawson, 2011).

Rather than indicating that racial minority children openly embrace a colorblind ideology, we suspect our findings indicate that they are aware that others support colorblindness as an appropriate response to race. Avoidance of race in mainstream contexts may thus represent a reactive coping response (Spencer, 1995) or a form of "social acumen," where minority children understand and adapt to the preferred norms in their school context, even if they differ from their own views (Abrams, Rutland, Pelletier, & Ferrell, 2009; Killen et al., 2013; Nesdale, 2013). This sort of adaption to mainstream norms is consistent with code-switching (Strauss & Cross, 2005) and parental socialization that helps minority children negotiate a predominantly White society (e.g., Boykin & Toms, 1985; Caughy, Nettles, & Lima, 2011; Stevenson, Cameron, Herrero-Taylor, & Davis, 2002). Even if it is the case that racial minorities openly talk about race in other settings, colorblindness is likely to perpetuate as White classmates look to racial minorities to infer what is appropriate when it comes to race (Apfelbaum, Sommers, et al., 2008).

It is troubling that pressures to adhere to colorblind norms override talk of race, even among racial minority children. Research with adults has documented the potential for colorblindness to facilitate the expression of racial bias and negative affect in intergroup interaction and to perpetuate group-based inequities (Knowles et al., 2009; Richeson & Nussbaum, 2004; Vorauer, Gagnon, & Sasaki, 2009). Moreover, research with older adolescent and college samples has found that a "race doesn't matter" socialization message can interfere with positive racial identity development among Black students (Lesane-Brown et al., 2005). Our results underscore the strength of colorblind norms in schools and highlight the need for future research to consider their impact on both majority and minority children's social development. They also illuminate a fundamental challenge facing society: issues of race continue to be a source of controversy and contention in American society, from education and business to policing and the law, yet it remains unclear how these issues can be resolved, much less articulated, if no one is willing to acknowledge race.

Acknowledgments

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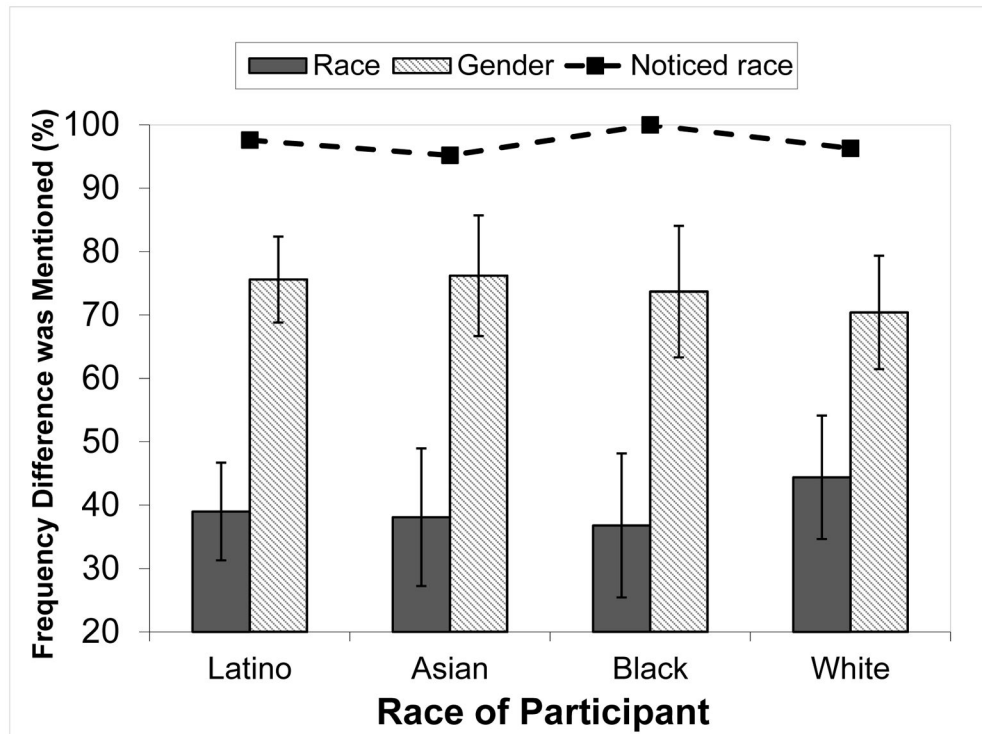
Figure 1.
Percentage of Latino, Asian, Black, and White children who mentioned race as compared with a) gender and b) whether they self-reported noticing race. Error bars denote SE.
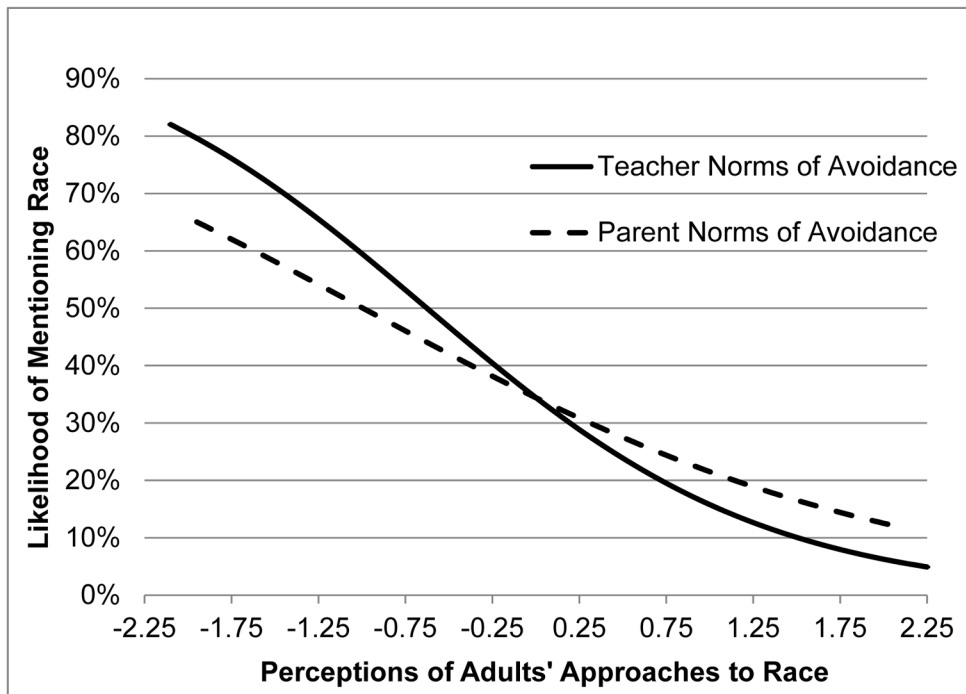
Figure 2.
Likelihood of mentioning race as a function of children's perceptions of teacher and parent norms (mean centered). Higher scores indicate greater perceptions that adults avoid race.

Table 1

School Student Demographics

	Racial demographics (largest groups)				Socioeconomically disadvantaged
	Latino	Asian	Black	White	
School 1 (n = 53)	42%	30%	15%	8%	68%
School 2 (n = 24)	12%	14%	12%	48%	18%
School 3 (n = 31)	15%	25%	34%	13%	56%

Table 2

Children's Reasoning for Why They Did or Did Not Mention Race by Child Race

	Mentioned Race					Did not Mention Race				
	Latino	Asian	Black	White	Total	Latino	Asian	Black	White	Total
Social-focused concerns										
Self-focused concern (g)	.06 (.25)	0	0	.10 (.32)	.05 (.22)	.36 (.49)	.15 (.38)	.33 (.49)	.43 (.51)	.33 (.47)
Other-focused concern (g)	.19 (.40)	0	0	0	.07 (.26)	.24 (.44)	.46 (.52)	.33 (.49)	.21 (.43)	.30 (.46)
Inappropriate, rude, offensive (s)	.19 (.40)	.25 (.46)	0	.10 (.32)	.15 (.36)	.56 (.51)	.62 (.51)	.67 (.49)	.50 (.52)	.58 (.50)
Racist, prejudice (s)	0	.13 (.35)	0	0	.02 (.16)	.24 (.44)	.08 (.28)	.25 (.45)	.36 (.50)	.23 (.43)
Task-focused concerns										
Good strategy (g)	.56 (.51)	.50 (.54)	.43 (.54)	.50 (.53)	.51 (.51)	.04 (.20)	.08 (.28)	.17 (.39)	0	.06 (.24)
Other questions were better (s)	.13 (.34)	.13 (.35)	0	0	.07 (.26)	.20 (.41)	0	0	.29 (.47)	.14 (.35)
Racial/ethnic differences are apparent (s)	.44 (.51)	.38 (.52)	.57 (.54)	.60 (.52)	.49 (.51)	0	.15 (.38)	0	0	.03 (.18)
Miscellaneous										
Unsure, no answer	0	.13 (.35)	.29 (.49)	.10 (.32)	.10 (.30)	.12 (.33)	0	0	0	.05 (.21)

Note: Means indicate proportion of children in a category that expressed a particular type of reasoning. (g) denotes *general* concerns. (s) denotes *specific* concerns. General concerns encompassed some specific concerns. Some children's responses presented multiple types of reasoning.

Table 3

Correlations Among Continuous Measures

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Age						
2. Peer approaches to race	.02					
3. Parent approaches to race	.12	.52***				
4. Teacher approaches to race	.06	.39***	.48***			
5. Social appropriateness concerns	.12	.06	.25*	.34***		
6. Nonverbal comfort	.14	.06	.07	.02	−.07	
7. Performance	.06	.16	.10	.15	.02	−03

Note: Correlations with performance use Spearman's rho.

*
p < .05,

**
p < .01,

***
p < .001

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for All Measures Based on Whether Race was Mentioned and Child Race: Means (SD)

	Range	Mentioned Race					Did not Mention Race				
		Latino	Asian	Black	White	Total	Latino	Asian	Black	White	Total
Mentioned Race	0–1	.39 (.49)	.38 (.50)	.37 (.50)	.44 (.51)	.40 (.49)	.61 (.49)	.62 (.50)	.63 (.50)	.56 (.51)	.60 (.49)
Mentioned Gender	0–1	.87 (.34)	.88 (.35)	.86 (.38)	.67 (.49)	.81 (.39)	.68 (.48)	.69 (.48)	.67 (.49)	.73 (.46)	.69 (.46)
Noticed Race	0–1	.94 (.25)	1.0 (0.0)	1.0 (0.0)	1.0 (0.0)	.98 (.15)	1.0 (0.0)	.92 (.28)	1.0 (0.0)	.93 (.26)	.97 (.17)
Performance	3–12	7.5 (1.8)	7.1 (1.7)	6.7 (1.4)	6.9 (2.4)	7.1 (1.9)	7.7 (2.0)	7.6 (1.9)	7.8 (2.4)	7.3 (2.0)	7.6 (2.0)
Nonverbal Comfort	2.5–8.8	6.4 (1.1)	6.9 (1.2)	5.5 (1.6)	4.9 (.74)	5.9 (1.2)	5.6 (1.3)	5.3 (1.1)	4.5 (1.1)	5.6 (1.5)	5.3 (1.3)
Parent Approaches to Race	1–6	3.6 (1.0)	3.5 (.90)	4.0 (.62)	2.7 (.77)	3.4 (.99)	4.3 (1.1)	4.3 (.94)	3.9 (.83)	3.9 (.74)	4.1 (.99)
Peer Approaches to Race	1–6	3.6 (.98)	4.2 (1.1)	4.0 (.82)	3.6 (1.1)	3.7 (1.0)	4.0 (.87)	3.7 (.61)	4.2 (1.0)	4.0 (.77)	3.9 (.86)
Teacher Approaches to Race	1–6	2.9 (.93)	3.7 (1.0)	3.3 (1.1	2.7 (.75)	3.0 (.97)	4.0 (.96)	3.8 (1.0)	4.0 (.93)	4.1 (1.1)	4.0 (.98)
Social Appropriateness Concerns	1–7	2.8 (1.7)	3.0 (2.2)	2.8 (1.3)	2.0 (1.3)	2.6 (1.7)	5.7 (1.3)	5.3 (2.1)	5.7 (1.7)	5.8 (1.4)	5.7 (1.6)