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Benjamin Bailey

Article

SHIFTING NEGOTIATIONS OF IDENTITY IN A DOMINICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Benjamin Bailey
University of Massachusetts-Amherst, Amherst, MA

Abstract

This article examines shifting negotiations of language, identity, and acculturation among US-raised Dominicans in a changing community in Providence, RI. It documents multiple, situational claims of identity among high-school students and situational discrepancies between the ways US-raised Dominicans see themselves and the black–white racial terms in which others sometimes see them. Narrative and interview data from second-generation adults suggest that issues of ethnic/racial identity shift for many individuals as they become re-immersed in Spanish-speaking contexts as adults. The situational and shifting nature of these identity negotiations suggests limitations of the dominant theories of immigrant acculturation in the US – assimilation and segmented assimilation – for understanding trajectories of acculturation among this second-generation group.

Keywords

Dominican American; identity; acculturation; assimilation; ethnicity; race

Introduction

US-raised Dominicans,[1] like other children of immigrants to the US, must negotiate between the socio-cultural meanings of the US and those of their parents' world. Although members of the second generation in immigrant enclaves receive their early socialization in immigrant families and networks,

1 For the purposes of this article, I use the terms "second-

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generation Dominican," "Dominican American," and "US-raised Dominican" in a highly specific sense that diverges from several common folk and academic uses. I use these terms to refer *only* to (a) the United States-born children of Dominican immigrants and (b) Dominican-born individuals who came to the United States by the first years of elementary school (what some have dubbed the "1.5 generation").

they engage with dominant US discourses on language, race, and ethnicity in popular culture, schools, neighborhoods, and workplaces. These negotiations between the worlds of immigrant parents and the adopted country are particularly interesting among Dominican Americans because of differences in social organization between the US and the Dominican Republic.

In the Dominican Republic, skin color does not play the paramount role in structuring social life that it does in the United States. There is no binary division among Dominicans into social categories based on the perceived presence or absence of sub-Saharan African ancestry, and Dominicans do not have a notion of race that differentiates among Dominicans in the way the American folk-notion of black/white differentiates among Americans (Hoetink, 1967, 1985; Fennema and Loewenthal, 1987; Moya Pons, 1996; Duany, 1998; Itzigsohn and Dore-Cabral, 2000). While Dominicans recognize and label individual differences in physical appearance – and privileges accrue to individuals with lighter skin – there is no sense of ethnicity based on, or symbolized by, relative degrees of African or European ancestry. Blackness and African ancestry have historically been attributed to neighboring Haitians, who are racialized in similar ways to African Americans in the US (Silie, 1989; Duany, 1994a). Among Dominicans, however, Dominican nationality, ethnicity, and race are more or less the same thing (Del Castillo and Murphy, 1987; Davis, 1994).

In the US, in contrast, the black–white color line remains one of the most central principles of social organization, in terms of, for example, patterns of residence, of association, and marriage (Omi and Winant, 1994). Black and white are popularly seen as representing an essential and unbridgeable difference (Smedley, 1993). The essentialist racial category "black" has historically preceded any ethnic or cultural identification as a basis for classification, and African-descent *race* has been treated as equivalent to African American *ethnicity* (Waters, 1991). There is thus no popularly recognized category to which to assign African-descent individuals who diverge ethnically and culturally from the descendants of US slaves.

Because of US racial essentialism, Dominicans do not fit neatly into a single historically dominant United States social category. While academics have long recognized various Afro-Latino categories, such categories do not have the popular and official recognition that categories such as black, white, Asian, and Latino have in the United States.[2] In terms of physical appearance, Dominicans span a continuum that, by traditional US standards, ranges from individuals who would count as white to individuals who would count as black.[3] In terms of language and cultural heritage, however, Dominicans as a group match criteria for assignment to the popularly and officially recognized category "Hispanic" (Duany, 1998; Torres-Saillant, 1998, 2005; Itzigsohn and Dore-Cabral, 2000; Bailey, 2001a).

As a group whose members are Latino, American, and often of significant African-descent, second-generation Dominicans must thus negotiate contradictions

2 The one US public arena in which a large number of Americans have had to make sense of Afro-Latino identities is Major League Baseball. Many contemporary high-profile stars – including Dominicans

between the identity categories and meanings of the local immigrant community and those of the larger US society. Individuals' negotiations confront not just cultural difference but also issues of social inequality. The available social categories are fundamentally hierarchical: white is the privileged, unmarked category; black is the most denigrated category; and other categories – for example, Latino – are intermediate, excluding members from the privileges of the white category.

In this article, I first review ways in which current Dominican second-generation trajectories of acculturation fit – and do not fit – with dominant theoretical approaches to immigrant acculturation and assimilation. After a brief methods section, I examine the situational nature of identity claims, illustrating how disparate identities may be invoked or claimed across specific situations and contexts. Finally, I argue that the issues of ethnic and racial identity faced by individuals are tied to particular phases of the life cycle and to the nature of the local community. I argue that the racial structuring of the United States limits the usefulness of dominant theories of assimilation for understanding the lives of second-generation Dominican immigrants and that such racial politics can explain some of the multiple and shifting identities documented here.

Theoretical context of immigrant acculturation and assimilation in the US

Both popular and social scientific assumptions about immigration, acculturation, and ethnicity in the United States have been fundamentally shaped by the historical experiences of European immigrants from the 1880–1920 period[4] and their descendants. The descendants of these European groups not only acculturated – that is, adopted versions of the language, behavioral patterns, and values of the host society – but they also largely assimilated – that is, they gained admission to non-immigrant, non-ethnic social institutions and categories. As part of this process of assimilation, these descendants of immigrants gained access to the unmarked ethnic/racial category "white." The fact that these European immigrant groups acculturated and assimilated made the process of assimilation over time seem natural and universal to many Americans, including academics, rather than a function of specific historical circumstances. Assimilation was seen as proceeding in a linear fashion across time and generations (Warner and Srole, 1945; Gordon, 1964).

Dominican immigrants to the US, in contrast, form part of the large post-1965 immigrant stream, referred to as the New Immigration.[5] The majority of post-1965 immigrants come from parts of the world – the Caribbean, Latin America, and Asia – that were colonized by Europe and the United States. This colonial history is central to understanding these new immigrants' potential trajectories of acculturation because of the centrality of race in US social

David Ortiz, Pedro Martinez, Sammy Sosa, Miguel Tejada, Vladimir Guerrero, and Alfonso Soriano – are clearly of African descent, but their Spanish names and preference for Spanish over English clearly differentiate them from other Americans of African descent.

3 Historically, imputed ancestry was more important than individual physical appearance in United States constructions of race. (Thus, a person who had African American ancestry but was perceived to be white was considered to be "passing," that is, passing for something other than what s/he *actually* was). Currently, this distinction is less important, and physical appearance is treated as equivalent to race by many Americans. Those US Dominicans whose phenotypes match popular US stereotypes of "black" or "white" experience ascription to those categories much more frequently and forcefully than those Dominicans who do not.

4 Massey (1995) points out that the actual peak period of

organization. The historical inequalities of colonialism are mapped onto the physical appearances of colonizer and colonized, and these differences in physical appearance then become symbols of racial difference and inequality within a society. Historical colonial relations are thus preserved through United States ethnic and racial hierarchies that differentiate among peoples based on perceived physical appearance.

To account for differences between the older European immigration and the New Immigration, Portes and Zhou (1993) developed the theory of segmented assimilation. It suggests that assimilation among contemporary, non-European immigrants will be "segmented," that is, the trajectories of acculturation will vary and fall into distinct types. Portes and Zhou (1993, 82) postulate the following three trajectories of assimilation: (1) Children of immigrants of higher education and social class will be likely to use education as a means to social and economic mobility, approximating the traditional notion of linear assimilation and upward mobility over time.[6] (2) Others will assimilate to marginalized, impoverished ethnic/racial groups already in the United States (Gans, 1992). (3) Still others will maintain strong, multiple relationships and solidarity within the immigrant community, maintaining the community's values and experiencing economic stability or some upward mobility.

Data presented in this article suggest that identities among the Dominican second generation are not so discrete and monolithic as these three trajectories suggest. I show, for example, that an individual second-generation Dominican can situationally identify himself/herself in ways that fall within all three of Portes and Zhou's trajectories. A single individual can refer to himself/herself (1) as "American" and "very white" (traditional assimilation), (2) as "black" (assimilation to a marginalized group), and (3) as "Spanish," "Hispanic," or "100% Dominican" (acculturation to the immigrant community). Individuals can use such terms to position themselves strategically in ethnic/racial hierarchies, in both Dominican and American cultural frameworks, according to context. Such agency suggests limitations of theories of assimilation that present discrete trajectories of acculturation and monolithic idealizations of identity (e.g., "Dominican" or "American").

In addition to varying across situations in the present, ascriptions and negotiations of identity can vary significantly across periods of the life cycle. Some individuals in this case study, who experienced no racial ambiguity as children, were regularly seen by others as black Americans during adolescence, even as they continued to describe themselves as Dominican or Spanish. These same individuals, however, experienced this ambiguity less frequently when they reached adulthood. Adoption of adult work and family roles both re-invigorated the Spanish language of many and enmeshed many in Spanish-speaking social networks and positions in which there is little ambiguity of identity.[7]

The ways in which issues of identity shift over the lifespan of the second generation counter the linear–temporal assumption of theories of assimilation,

immigration was from about 1901 to 1930. I use "1880–1920" as a conventionalized term to refer to this period of large-scale European immigration to the United States rather than as literal dates. Massey similarly argues that the "post-1965" immigration is more accurately a "post-1970" immigration.

5 The watershed event defining the New Immigration was the enactment of changes in American immigration law in 1965. Highly restrictive immigration quotas that were based on nationality and that favored Northwestern European countries were abandoned in favor of increased quotas based on hemisphere, not country. In addition, quotas were lifted entirely for "family reunification," that is, immigrants who were already in the United States and who met certain criteria could be joined by close relatives. Those who were given visas as part of such family reunification could then eventually sponsor *their* close relatives, resulting in elaborately linked

that is, that acculturation of immigrants occurs linearly and inexorably over time. While acculturation does occur linearly across immigrant *generations*, it does not necessarily occur linearly across the life cycle of second-generation individuals. The ability of many US-raised Dominican adults to resist black–white racialization, for example, counters the assumption that second-generation immigrants will acculturate into the historically dominant United States black–white dichotomy over time as they leave first-generation immigrant households.[8]

Finally, for the majority of Dominicans, the on-going racial structuring of the US precludes assimilation – in the sense of admission to the unmarked category white American. Unlike immigrant languages and cultural practices, which shift with acculturation over time and generation, phenotypes popularly associated with Asia, Latin America, and Africa do not fade across generations with acculturation. While the privileged social category "white" has become more inclusive over time, for example, for descendants of early 20th century Jewish immigrants (Brodkin, 1998), it has not broadened to include African-descent immigrants, who are particularly susceptible to US racialization (Lopez, 2004). While African-descent Dominicans can acculturate and experience socio-economic mobility in the United States, there is currently no prospect for assimilation into an unmarked racial status. The identity issues negotiated by many members of the Dominican second generation (and other non-white children of immigrants in the contemporary United States) are thus fundamentally distinct from the types of issues faced by earlier, European second-generation immigrants (Portes, 1996; Zhou 1997; Rumbaut and Portes, 2001).

webs of large numbers of immigrants (Kraly, 1987). The result of these changes in immigration law was a new wave of immigration beginning in the late 1960s that represents the largest influx of immigrants to America since the 1880–1920 period.

6 See Gray (2001) for case studies among Dominican Americans.

7 See Pedraza and Attinasi (1980) and Zentella (1997) for examples among New York Puerto Ricans.

8 See Rodriguez (1994, 1989) for examples among NY Puerto Ricans.

Community and methods

Fieldwork for this study took place in Providence, Rhode Island (RI) between July 1996 and July 2000 as part of both dissertation and postdoctoral research. Data for this article are based on audio-recorded interviews of over 30 high-school students and 15 adults, and participant observation of high-school students in school, home, work, and community contexts. I interviewed roughly equal numbers of males and females.

Audio-recorded interview sessions lasted 1–2 hours and were conducted in English, with occasional references, in Spanish, to institutions, practices, and other phenomena that do not have readily available English translations (e.g., skin color descriptors such as *indio oscuro* ("dark Indian-colored")). They were administered at schools, in homes, at workplaces, at a South Providence Church, and in other community locations. Interviews were organized loosely around a questionnaire that addressed issues of ethnic and racial identity in Providence, peer and family social networks, and perceptions of different ethnic groups. This relatively open-ended form of interviewing resulted in many longer, discursive answers and discussions, transcribed portions of which are presented in this article.

Contacts with US-raised high-school students were initially made through Spanish teachers at two Providence high schools and then directly recruited from classrooms where I accompanied students I had previously met. Roughly 80% of the high-school-aged students came from Central High School, a Providence city school of 1,350 students, which was over 20% Dominican in the late 1990s. Approximately 60% of the student body was Hispanic, with Puerto Ricans and Guatemalans comprising the second and third largest Hispanic groups. About 16% of the students were non-Hispanic of African-descent (including many immigrants), 16% were Southeast Asian, and about 5% were white American. Almost 90% of the students at Central High School were categorized as poor based on federal guidelines, and more than half of the students officially enrolled in the ninth grade drop out by the 11th grade (Lopez, 2003). All but one of the high-school students quoted in this article attended Central High School. The other attended the nearby college-preparatory magnet school, which was predominantly white.

Several US-raised adults were identified through community contacts and several others I met by chance at community events. Members of these first two adult groups identified the remaining adults through a snowball sample method. All but one of the adults quoted in this article attended Central High School.

The Providence Dominican and Latino communities have been growing very rapidly. According to census data, the Hispanic population grew from fewer than 9,000 in 1980, to nearly 25,000 in 1990, to over 52,000 in 2000. Between 1990, when Dominicans become the largest Latino group in the city, and 2000, the Dominican population grew from 7,973 to 14,647, according to census data. With Puerto Ricans as the second largest Latino group (12,721), Caribbean Latinos constituted over half the Latino population of the city. Coupled with a declining white American population in Providence, this explosive growth resulted in Latinos accounting for 30% of the city's population and 50% of its school children in 2000.

Shifting ascriptions of identity

While race and ethnicity are popularly seen as natural categories that embody essential dimensions of members of a group, social scientists since the 1960s have emphasized that such ethnic and racial categories – and social reality more generally (Berger and Luckmann, 1967; Schutz, 1967) – are socially constructed. Race or ethnicity, as such, is not a static thing, but part of an on-going process of social differentiation, with different configurations and meanings across time and space.

Ethnic and racial boundaries have both symbolic dimensions and more structural ones. Symbolic boundaries are the subjective, conceptual distinctions that social actors use to categorize people. Structural boundaries are the material and institutional dimension of social boundaries, such as residential

segregation, patterns of association, and differential access to resources and opportunities. Lamont and Molnar (2002) argue that symbolic boundaries are, in some senses, prior to social boundaries, in that it is only when distinctions among social groups are widely recognized and agreed upon that they can translate into more fixed social boundaries and patterns of exclusion.

My focus here is symbolic boundaries – the subjective, conceptual distinctions through which social actors constitute social categories through self- and other-ascription (Barth, 1969, 13). If an individual defines himself/herself as an *x* ("self-ascription") and others see that individual as an *x* ("other-ascription"), then that individual effectively counts as an *x*. It is this phenomenological foundation of identities that makes self- and other-ascriptions central to the constitution of identity, rather than an analyst's or bureaucracy's *a priori* categories.

Ascription of identities is a situated social act. There is no neutral context or neutral interlocutor to elicit self-ascriptions of identity, and any self-ascription is always a function of multiple situational and audience factors. Ascriptions of identity reported in this article are no exception to this, and the identity ascriptions documented in this article are not meant to represent a closed or categorical set. They are meant, rather, to represent some of the range of ascriptions that occur and their situational and shifting nature.

Self-ascriptions that individuals report in interview situations are designed to be appropriate for particular audiences and contexts. It can be difficult, however, to specify which aspects of context or audience identity are relevant at any given moment.[9] Some aspects of my identity and interests that may have been situationally relevant to such ascriptions include: white American, male, anthropology graduate student in my early 30s; was situationally associated with Los Angeles, California (CA) because of the location of my graduate program; could speak Spanish to monolingual parents and grandparents; had been to the Dominican Republic twice; was interested in race and identity in the Dominican Republic; knew many institutions (Spanish-language radio stations, newspapers, businesses, churches, and youth groups), people (teachers and community leaders), and events in the local Dominican community; and expressed interest in the Dominican Republic and the views of US-raised children of Dominican immigrants.

Individual subjects are aware that self-ascriptions of identity are situational acts that can vary across time and context. In the following exchange, Orieta (27, US-born, two-year-college degree) gives a self-ascription of identity in response to an interview question from the researcher, but then volunteers that how she describes herself depends on who is asking:

(1)
BB: How do you describe yourself in terms of ethnicity or culture?[10] What are the different terms?

9 Ethnicity of interviewers and language of interview surely affect Dominican ascriptions of color and race. A survey conducted in Spanish by Latino scholars Itzigsohn and Dore-Cabral (2000), for example, found a number of Dominican immigrants identifying themselves as "black," which I never found among young Dominican Americans in Providence. In addition to various sample and

Orieta: I've used Latina, I've used Hispanic. It kind of really depends on who you're speaking to, also. If I'm speaking to like a South American, I say Latina. It depends on what they call it.
BB: What if someone just says, 'What are you?'
Orieta: Depends who's asking.
BB: Someone you're meeting for the first time.
Orieta: What am I? Hispanic.
Orieta: If it's another Hispanic asking what am I, I say Dominican.

For Orieta, "what she is" depends on who is asking. This does not imply dissimulation on her part. The words "What are you?" imply a false stability and homogeneity of identity, whereas self-ascriptions always draw attention to particular aspects or dimensions of one's identities. Orieta attempts to give answers to this question that are meaningful to her interlocutors – when asked by a South American, she calls herself Latina, and when asked by another (Caribbean) Hispanic,[11] she gives a narrower self-ascription, as Dominican. In an important sense, ethnicity or other identities exist only in relation to a field of alternate identities. The particular field of alternate identities at play in any sequence of interaction varies, depending on such contextual features as interlocutors' identities, location of interaction, and topics of talk.

Written forms, administered anonymously, are also seen as representing particular interests and identities. Ana (US born, 29, four-year-college graduate), for example, sees a particular white American perspective – in a hierarchical society in which white Americans are in power – permeating written forms that elicit ethnic and racial identities. When trying to choose a racial identity from a closed-ended question, she asks herself how she would be seen by a white American, not how she views herself:

(2)
Ana: Now as far as the forms are concerned, when, and this is a discussion I had with someone, maybe a couple of years ago, you know when you have the list of races, White, Black, Asian, Indian, Other. When you only have those options, I would check off Black.
BB: You would?
Ana: I would. I wouldn't check off White. My skin color is not white, so an American[12] would not believe that I'm White anyways.

For Ana, the perspective inherent in such surveys is a white American one that excludes Dominicans from the privilege of the unmarked racial category white. Ana does not define herself as black in her everyday talk, and she reported that she was not perceived by others to be black. When presented with the scenario of "just talking to someone" – as opposed to filling out forms – she defines herself as Hispanic.

methodological differences between the studies, my white American identity may have encouraged subjects to emphasize their distinctiveness from white and black Americans. They may have been accustomed to being perceived as African American by white Americans and formulated self-ascriptions to make clear to me that they were distinct from African Americans. Subjects may also have been less inclined to note group-internal boundaries to a non-member outsider than they would be to a fellow Latino.

10 I found that many Dominican American subjects in Providence used the term "culture" in much the same ways that social scientists use the term "ethnicity."

11 By "Hispanic," she presumably means Caribbean Hispanic. Social or geographic commonalty between speakers, for example, a common Caribbean background, makes relevant the specific answer "Dominican."

12 In everyday Dominican American usage in Providence, the term "American" (or *americano*) refers to "white American."

In this case, a written form allows her to describe herself as black, thus expressing a political position without assuming the stigma that is directed toward black Americans in everyday life. While written forms bear an aura of timeless neutrality – and are treated as such by many bureaucratic institutions – respondents treat them as representing particular perspectives and interests that call for specific types of answers (Itzigsohn *et al.*, 2005).

Elicitations of ethnic or racial identities are understood in relation to social hierarchies in more discursive contexts, too. In the following exchange from an interview during a break at school, Janelle (16, US-born), Jose (17, arrived at age 8), and the researcher grapple with various ascriptions of identity for US-born Janelle. Although Jose and Janelle agree that she is "American" in one sense, and "Dominican" in another, Janelle points out that when people ask her "What are you?," they do not want her to answer that she is "American."

Dominican Americans in Providence also refer to other non-white American groups in terms that are marked: African Americans are not "Americans" (or *americanos*) but "blacks" (or *negros/prietos/morenos*), and Asian Americans are not Americans but rather "Asians" (or *chinos*).

(3)
BB: If someone asks 'What's your race?' what would you say?
Janelle: I would say Hispanic.
BB: If a person says, 'I'm American,' what group do you think they belong to?
Janelle: 'American' to me would be White, but I consider myself American even though I would say Spanish.
BB: If a person has Dominican parents but was born here and grew up here, should they say they're American or should they say they're Dominican?
[….]
Janelle: What should they say? I say Dominican, but I know I'm not really Dominican, my parents are.
[….]
Jose: … then you would tell them… . I was just born here, that's why they call me American.
Janelle: That's why they call me bootleg (laughing). Cause I live here. So what am I supposed to say, I'm American?
Jose: You're American.
[….]
Janelle: But when people say, 'What are you?' they usually want like 'Dominican.' I'm saying that's what they want, or 'Puerto Rican', not 'I was born here.'

This interaction highlights some of the competing ways in which Dominican Americans can think of themselves, and can be seen by others. In response to a direct question about race, Janelle calls herself Hispanic, but in the subsequent exchanges, she refers to herself as "Hispanic," "American," "Spanish," "Dominican," and "not really Dominican," and notes that others call her "bootleg."[13] She sees the term "Americans" as implying a white identity, but she also sees herself, as US-born, as American. She defines herself as Dominican, as

13 Teen-aged Dominican

Americans in Providence who speak relatively less Spanish or are unfamiliar with institutions and geography on the island are sometimes jokingly accused by peers of being "bootleg," or inauthentic, Dominicans. They are still considered to be Dominican, however, even if they have lost Spanish (cf. Zentella, 1997 among second-generation New York Puerto Ricans).

opposed to American, but then concedes that she is "not really Dominican," but that her parents are.

Salient in this search for terms for self-definition is the exclusion she experiences from the unmarked category of "American." Even though she was United States-born, thus fulfilling a defining and sufficient criterion for citizenship, she situationally excludes herself – and is excluded by others – from the unmarked category of "American." The very question that Janelle faces – "What are you?" – implies a marked status for which a certain type of account needs to be given.

The narrative references to identity of Maria, a 16-year-old, US-born Dominican high-school student, similarly suggest the complex and contradictory forces influencing how Dominican Americans can identify themselves. During several hours of open-ended interviewing on two occasions, she refers to herself in many different ways: as Dominican, Dominican-Puerto Rican, American, Hispanic, Spanish, black, and "very white." Some of these ascriptions have roots in traditional Dominican frameworks for self-definition. Others are rooted in the experience of growing up in a low-income, urban environment in which evidence of United States ethnic and racial inequality is ubiquitous in school and residential segregation, differential labor market participation, popular culture, and everyday experiences of racism (Itzigsohn and Dore-Cabral, 2001).

An initial, direct elicitation by the white American researcher results in a clear pair of self-ascriptions of identity: "Dominican," and then, subsequently "Dominican-Puerto Rican":

(4)
BB: …How do you describe yourself, like in terms of race, or ethnicity, or culture? What do you call yourself? Do you call yourself American? [Maria begins laughing] Do you call yourself Dominican?
Maria: Dominican [laughing]
[….]
BB: Do you call yourself Dominican American sometimes?
Maria: Oh no, I really say I'm Dominican.
BB: Hispanic?
Maria: No, Dominican.
BB: Latino?
Maria: No, Dominican.
Maria: Sometimes I say like I'm 'Mud.' Like 'Mud' it means like you're Dominican-Puerto Rican. You're two.[14]

14 Maria's estranged biological father had one parent who was Puerto Rican by birth.

This short segment of interaction suggests more about Maria's views of her ethnic identity than simply her literal self-ascriptions. Although Maria was US-born, she does not call herself American in this context, and she begins laughing

when asked if she calls herself American. In many everyday Dominican American contexts, the term "American" (or *americano*) refers specifically to the category "white American," as in examples #2 and #3, above, a group against which Maria appears to be defining herself.[15] The humor may be a function of a white American naively asking her if she considers herself white, the answer to which should have been apparent from phenotype, the salience of her Dominican identity in this context, and the wider social context that by default excludes Dominicans from the unmarked category white.

15 Urciuoli (1996) among New York Puerto Ricans.

At the same time that she denies describing herself as American (when directly questioned by a white American researcher), she calls herself "American" in other, more discursive contexts. During the same interview, for example, she contrasts herself, as an American, with newly arriving immigrants from the Dominican Republic:

(5)
People that come from DR think it's going to be easy here, but it's going to be more difficult. And us Americans, we know what you have to go through.

Unlike such newly arriving immigrants, Maria, as an American, does not have unrealistic expectations about the ease of work and life in the US. When discussing such newly arriving Dominican immigrants, Maria self-identifies as American.

Maria also refers to herself – and her younger siblings – as Americans in recounting an argument with her mother over the strictness of her mother's child-rearing practices:

(6)
My mom, that's the way she mentions it, 'I'm Dominican, I raise you as a Dominican'…[then recounting her own response to her mother as a direct quote] 'We are not Dominican, we're American.'

While Maria laughed at the notion of calling herself "American" in a structured interview question from a white American researcher, she refers to herself as American in other contexts; in this case, those involving newly arriving and first-generation Dominican immigrants. In both these cases, the identity "American" carries prestige, as it is contrasted with first-generation immigrant personas that may be less worldly and knowing than second-generation "American" ones.

In another narrative, in contrast, she emphasized her *Dominican* identity, displaying solidarity with a recent Dominican immigrant, her stepfather. Maria characterizes herself as "100%" Dominican in the context of discussing the term "alien" for non-citizens and the contrasting passports that she and her stepfather must produce when passing through international customs. While her stepfather

has a red Dominican passport, Maria has the blue passport of a United States citizen:

(7)
I'm still Dominican, no matter what. I could have a green passport. 'Are you Dominican?' 'Yes.' 'Are you 100%?' 'Yeah, I'm 100%.'

While she has United States citizenship and situationally identifies as American, she situationally defines herself as 100% Dominican when Dominican identities are disparaged (in this case as "aliens") by outsiders.

Maria denied identifying herself as Hispanic when directly questioned about ethnic identity (#4, above), but in particular discursive contexts during the same interview, she refers to herself as Hispanic several times:

(8)
BB: Have you or your family experienced discrimination or prejudice because you're not White?
Maria: When we go to restaurants to eat, we Hispanics, everybody look at us like weird...like at Ponderosa, in Massachusetts or Cranston [suburban, Whiter areas adjoining Providence].
BB: Why do you think people look at you?
Maria: Cause we're Hispanic, people just know we're Hispanic.

In this case, the self-ascription Hispanic occurs in the context of a question about experiences of discrimination. Although she identifies herself as Dominican and *not* Hispanic when directly questioned, in this situation her adoption of a pan-Hispanic racialized term may capture how she is seen by the white Americans at the restaurant, who may see Latinos as a relatively undifferentiated non-white ethnic/racial group. Describing discrimination by the dominant US racial group may make salient a term, Hispanic, that has become quasi-racialized in the US (Oboler, 1995; Itzigsohn and Dore-Cabral, 2000; Rumbaut and Portes, 2001). Such racialized identities can be a source of stigma, but they can also be a source of ethnic pride and solidarity, which Maria may be invoking here.

Two further ethnic and racial self-ascriptions emerge in Maria's talk: "black" and "very white." These self-ascriptions are seemingly at odds with her many self-ascriptions that center on her Latin American cultural and national origins, for example, Hispanic, Spanish, Dominican, and Puerto Rican. They are also seemingly incongruous because Dominicans – like many Latinos – generally identify their race as outside of the US black–white dichotomy (Duany, 1998; Torres-Saillant, 1998; Bailey, 2000a, 2002; Itzigsohn and Dore-Cabral, 2000; Howard, 2003).

Although Maria did not self-identify as black in everyday contexts or report being perceived by others as black, she refers to Spanish people – and by

extension, herself – as black, in discussing her experiences of white Americans at the suburban Catholic school she had attended:

(9)
These white girls they're like, 'Look at these Dominican girls, those Spanish Black girls' this and that…I always say that Spanish people are Black…. in America, there's only White and Black, that's the only colors we have.

In response to a question about her mother's opinions about white Americans, Maria reported an exchange between herself and her mother that again includes self-ascriptions as black:

(10)
I told my Mom she's prejudice, because she always says, 'White people this, White people that….' She's like 'Black people this, Black people that,' I'm like 'No, mom, you are so prejudice….. Cause we Hispanics are Black.' She's like 'No'. 'We're Black, so I don't know what you're talking about.' I just leave her.

As with Ana's decision to select "black" on forms (#2, above), Maria's self-ascriptions as black are counter to the ones she uses when asked directly, "What do you call yourself?" Like Ana, Maria did not report ever being perceived as black American, but she did see herself as effectively excluded from the privilege of unmarked white American status. This example parallels the finding of Itzigsohn *et al.* (2005), that situational self-identification as black among first-generation Dominicans correlates with a critical view of hierarchical relations between white Americans and Dominicans. Maria can express such a position without assuming the stigma of a black identity because her fair skin prevents others from seeing her as black.

At the same time that Maria situationally identifies Caribbean Latinos and herself as black, she also situationally calls attention to her relatively light skin color and her European ancestry. In describing to the researcher the range of phenotypes typical of Dominicans, she volunteers that her skin is "very white" and that most of her ancestors came from Europe.

(11)
I know a lot of kids that are white with blue eyes and all this stuff, and they from Dominican too, like my cousin, she from Dominican…. Cause like my family, most of them from Spain, that's why I came out like-… Like this [indicating her arm], this is only a tan, but I'm very white, very white, I'm almost as white, I think I'm almost whiter than you [the white American researcher].

Light skin and European ancestry have historically been considered prestigious in the Dominican Republic, where they are associated with higher

social class and physical beauty (Gonzalez, 1975; Alarcón, 1994; Davis, 1994; Howard 2001). In drawing attention to her relatively fair skin, Maria invokes a traditional Dominican framework for seeing herself. While fair skin can be a source of pride or prestige among other American groups (e.g., "blonde and blue eyed" among white Americans or "high yellow" among African Americans), such pride is not typically openly expressed among non-white groups in the US for whom such pride or preference can be interpreted as a lack of racial consciousness and solidarity.

When directly questioned about how she defines herself in terms of race, ethnicity, or culture, Maria gives unambiguous answers: Dominican and Dominican-Puerto Rican. Examination of her self-ascriptions during more discursive talk, however, reveals that she situationally defines herself in many other ways. In such talk, she uses terms to describe herself – Hispanic and American – that she denies using when directly questioned about those terms (#4). At other moments, she makes self-ascriptions – as black, Spanish, 100% Dominican, and "very white" – that superficially contradict each other. Such varying ascriptions reflect her agency in negotiating Dominican and American social worlds to construct a positive self in a broader context of ethnic and racial hierarchies (Zentella, 1997, 13).

This broad range of identity claims suggests the methodological difficulty of determining discrete, monolithic trajectories of acculturation among this second-generation group. Data to support theories of assimilation or segmented assimilation typically come from surveys, which fail to account for the situational and political specificity of identity claims. Discursive data presented here, in contrast, illustrate the complexity of identity negotiation and suggest limitations of positing discrete, linear trajectories of acculturation, as is done in theories of assimilation and segmented assimilation.

Ambiguity in the achievement of identities

Self-ascription alone does not constitute successful achievement of an ethnic or racial identity. When an individual defines herself as Dominican, *and* others see her as Dominican in that context, she then counts herself as Dominican in those particular circumstances. When self-ascription and other-ascription of identity are not congruent, the achieved identity remains ambiguous. This is not an individual, psychological ambiguity, but rather a socially constituted ambiguity resulting from conflicting historical forms of social categorization.

This can pose distinctive issues of identity for those second-generation Dominicans whose phenotypes and spoken English are indistinguishable from those of individuals who count as black Americans and white Americans. Dominican Americans who are of predominantly European ancestry are

sometimes perceived to be white Americans, for example:

(12)
Alex (US-born, age 17, attended predominantly White college-preparatory magnet school): I don't really look Spanish. People don't think that I'm Spanish until I tell them I speak Spanish, or whatever. If they just look at me, 'Oh, it doesn't look like he's Spanish.'
BB: Do Dominicans tease you and say, 'Oh you're White?'
Alex: No – sometimes that'll happen. Sometimes they don't know I'm Spanish, and they'll say something or whatever and I'll say something back in Spanish but not directly to them, but just so they can hear it, though.

For Alex, displays of Spanish speaking are a means of countering other Latinos' assumptions that he is white American.

A larger percentage of US-raised Dominican Americans in Providence are situationally perceived to be African American. The widespread adoption of language, dress, and musical fashions associated with African American urban youth contribute to this effect among low-income, adolescent Dominican immigrants in Providence, making many second-generation Dominican high-school students situationally indistinguishable from local African Americans (Bailey, 2000a, 2001b).

This ambiguity is salient for individuals of more African phenotype, who volunteer, when asked about identity, that they are often seen as black American:

(13)
BB: How do you describe yourself in terms of ethnicity or culture? If somebody asks you 'What are you?' what do you say?
Janelle: I usually say Spanish, Dominican.
BB: Do you say Spanish or Dominican first?
Janelle: I'll usually say Dominican first, cause most people – most people think I'm Black though. A lot of people think I'm Black. A lot of people! They say like, 'Oh, my god, you know Spanish?' I'm like, yeah, I'm Spanish. Well, usually I'll say Dominican, probably, first.

Even those Dominican Americans who are themselves regularly taken to be African American at times perceive other Dominican Americans to be African Americans:

(14)
BB: Do people ever ask you what you are?
Melissa (age 17, immigrated at age 2): Mm-hmm. They sometimes assume that I'm Black American. Or Cape Verdean….
BB: Who thinks you're Black? White Americans, Dominicans?
Melissa: Black Americans. It's kind of, it's kind of different, because they should know their own people. *I* would know who's Dominican. Actually, no,

> there was this guy, he's Dominican, and I thought he was Black. And then when I heard him speak Spanish, I was like, 'He's Spanish! He's a Dominican.'

In each of the above three cases, code switches into Spanish served to mark second-generation Dominicans as Hispanic, countering others' assumptions that they are white Americans or African Americans. For these US-raised Dominicans, these opportunities to speak Spanish are a key to marking themselves as something other than black or white American (Toribio, 2000).

Outside of community contexts, or in situations where there are few opportunities to display Spanish fluency, such individuals may consistently be seen in ways that are at odds with the ways in which they define themselves ethnically and racially. Valentina (age 21, came to the US at age 5), for example, attended the University of Rhode Island, in a rural setting where there were few Latinos and relatively few opportunities to speak Spanish:

> (15)
> BB: Do people ever ask you what you are?
> Valentina: They mostly assume I'm Black, they never really ask, but when they hear me speaking Spanish, 'Oh, what are you, Dominican? I didn't know that.' They get all shocked and surprised because they didn't think that I was Dominican….
> BB: Can you think of a particular time that someone thought you were African-American?
> Valentina: Well, that's all the time.

While Valentina was a Dominican-born child of immigrants who ascribed herself a Dominican or Spanish identity in response to direct interview questions, she effectively counted as black American in many situations at her college.

In some cases, black–white racialization is so strong that even displays of Spanish speaking do not result in other-ascriptions of a Hispanic identity. US-born Janelle's performance of a black American identity was so convincing at times and her use of Spanish at high school was so restricted, that she was unable, in the following reported case, to successfully achieve an unambiguously Spanish identity:

> (16)
> There's a [African American] girl in my fifth period class, she thought I was Black the whole time. And I was like 'No, I'm Spanish' and she was like [disbelievingly] 'Yeah, right.' and she was arguing with me, and I'm like, 'I am Spanish.' She goes, 'How are you Spanish? You look Black and you act Black.' I'm like 'How can you act Black? What is 'acting Black'?' And she's like, 'Oh my god, I don't care what you say, you're Black to me.'

Janelle reported that even displays of Spanish speaking were not sufficient for this African American interlocutor to assign her a Spanish or Dominican identity. Conflicting historical systems of social categorization collide in this moment, and these conflicting ways of seeing the world are maintained, resulting in social ambiguity regarding Janelle's identity.

Such ambiguity and contingency of identity fit uneasily with theories of acculturation and assimilation that rely on abstract idealizations of identity. Janelle's self-ascriptions and performance of identities defy assignment to single trajectories of acculturation. Her ways of speaking English and behaving in school can convince US African Americans that she is a co-member of that group, but her self-ascriptions, social networks, and Spanish–English code switching with close friends are those of second-generation Latino immigrant youth in an immigrant enclave.

Shifting identities across the life cycle

The variation in self-ascriptions and achievement of identity described above capture variation across situational, or moment-to-moment time. There are two further temporal dimensions in which such situational identity claims and enactments are embedded: (1) individual developmental time across the life cycle, and (2) socio-historical time as local communities and the United States are transformed by immigration and other historical processes. Maria's self-ascriptions of identity and accounts of identity enactments (#4–11) thus take place at the intersection of three types of time: (1) particular moments in an interview (situational time), (2) adolescence (individual developmental time), and (3) the late 1990s, a period of explosive growth in the local Dominican community and United States Latino population (historical time).

These three dimensions of time – situational, developmental, and historical time – are simultaneous, of course, but presenting them discretely draws attention to the layers of social factors that shape instances of identity ascription and achievement. Historical time, for example, can determine the very availability of categories. The growth of the Dominican population in the 1980s and 1990s in Providence made the ascription "Dominican" widely recognized in local contexts, where it had not been recognized before. A Dominican American subject who attended high school in the mid-1970s, for example, found herself identifying, at times as she grew up, as Puerto Rican, because there was no locally recognizable category to describe herself:

(17)

> I went through the identity crisis of either 'You're not Black, you're not White, so I guess you got to be Puerto Rican.' And I was resentful, so I had to say that I was Puerto Rican, I couldn't even say that I was Dominican. And it

> was weird. They used to do the Puerto Ricans parade, I used to go and act like I was Puerto Rican.

By the 1990s, in contrast, the categories "Dominican" and "Spanish" were locally well established. The high school where Maria had been unable to call herself Dominican in the 1970s, for example, had a Latino majority and a plurality of Dominicans by the mid-1990s.

Differences in historical and community contexts are reflected in different identity ascriptions and achievements among Dominican immigrants in New York (Duany, 1994b, 1998; Itzigsohn and Dore-Cabral, 2000), Puerto Rico (Duany, 1998), and Washington, DC (Candelario, 2001). Candelario, in particular, documents a high rate of identification as black among second-generation Dominicans who grew up in Washington, DC in the 1950s and 1960s. This contrasts sharply with my findings of maintenance of a *non*-black Dominican or "Spanish" or Latino identity among the second generation in Providence. A number of historical and community factors contribute to this discrepancy: there was no large, local Latino community to reinforce a non-black identity in Washington, DC during that period; Washington has historically had a large and socially and economically diverse African American population; in the pre-Civil Rights era, racial lines were less negotiable and ambiguous, particularly in Southern cities; and many members of the DC Dominican community were descendants of West Indian *cocolos* (immigrant workers to the Dominican Republic), who were more apt than other Dominicans to acknowledge African descent (Candelario, 2001, 69). Local communities are thus a key mediator between socio-historical time and individual trajectories of development and identity formation.

This intersection of developmental time and historical time can explain a difference in issues of identity *achievement* between adult Dominican Americans and high-school students in the current study. Specifically, the second-generation adults reported far fewer instances in which they were perceived to be black Americans. Individuals' phenotypes do not change after high school, but the social contexts in which these subjects find themselves – and in which racial identities are instantiated – are different. Adoption of adult roles through marriage, work, and religion both re-invigorated the Spanish language of many and put many in positions where their Spanish speaking was frequent and salient. Such regular use of Spanish serves to mark individuals as Latino when they might otherwise be seen as black or white American (examples #12–16, above).

Immigrant language loss in the US is typically associated with generations: the first generation who arrive after adolescence remain immigrant-language dominant; the second generation become English dominant and maintain various degrees of bilingualism; and the third generation are raised in homes where English (of second-generation parents) predominates, and the immigrant

language is lost (Portes and Schauffler, 1994). This trajectory of language loss *across* generations does not parallel the trajectory of language use *within* the lifespan of the second generation. While there is a shift from Spanish dominance to English dominance and preference between early childhood and the teen-age years (Bailey, 2000b; Portes and Rumbaut, 2001), there is a strengthening of Spanish for many Dominicans during their 20s and 30s. This coincides with the ending of formal schooling and the adoption of adult family, community, and vocational roles.[16]

16 See Pedraza and Attinasi (1980) among Puerto Ricans in New York.

During adolescence, ethnic and racial identities are particularly ambiguous at school. School creates daily interethnic contexts and contact in institutionally structured ways that serve to veil ethnic and immigrant identities of those who are native or native-like speakers of English. English is the language of the curriculum, and Spanish–English bilingual programs are nearly always transitional, that is, they are designed to transition students into monolingual English classes within a limited number of years. The focus on curriculum – for example, history, literature, and science – during class further conceals student ethnicity. Compulsory school attendance and centralized school buildings can similarly veil family and neighborhood social networks. Although immigrant ethnic enclaves can provide members with non-English language jobs, media, businesses, and services, they do not provide universal schooling.

At the same time that the second-generation adults in Providence that I interviewed became re-engaged in Spanish-language social networks and jobs, they used salient African American Vernacular English forms much less than their 1990's high-school counterparts. Such language – popularly associated with low-income, urban, African American youth – contributes to the phenomenological ambiguity of identity of high-school students who use such forms.

The adult roles that re-invigorate Spanish language and Dominican identities are afforded by the historical burgeoning of Dominican and Latino immigration to Providence, RI. While bilingualism is treated as a handicap during schooling, during adulthood it can become a highly marketable skill in communities with on-going, large-scale immigration. As bilinguals who have learned two languages from childhood, the second generation are uniquely equipped as linguistic and cultural mediators between a growing and constantly replenished first-generation pool of immigrants with limited English skills, and the wider, monolingual English society. During periods of rapidly increasing immigration, there are proportionally more monolingual adult arrivals than there are second-generation bilinguals (the children of smaller, earlier waves of immigration), creating a demand for such bilinguals as language and cultural brokers.

The sheer size and growth of the Spanish-speaking immigrant community in Providence make it an attractive market for goods and services offered by non-Hispanics in the private sector. In 2000, no more than 20% of the businesses in the local, 200-page Spanish-language yellow pages (*Directorio Hispano*), for

example, were Hispanic owned. The great majority of the businesses advertising in Spanish were run by Anglophones, who employed Spanish–English bilinguals, typically members of the second generation. This economic niche for the second generation is distinct from the intra-community socio-economic opportunities created by ethnic or immigrant entrepreneurs. While economic sociologists of immigration (Portes, 1998) have emphasized that vibrant immigrant communities can create internal economic opportunities for members through ethnic enterprises, burgeoning new-immigrant communities also create a large category of bilingual positions that mediate between enclave members and the larger society.

Of the 15 second-generation adults that I interviewed and observed in Providence, 10 had jobs that were predicated on their bilingualism.[17] There was a wide range of jobs that required daily interaction in Spanish, including drug rehabilitation counselor, school principal, social worker, prison guard, medical assistant, high-school Spanish teacher, and bank loan officer. In these bilingual, cultural broker positions, second-generation Dominicans who are English dominant increase their Spanish fluency in adulthood, acquiring specialized vocabulary for such activities as running a temporary employment agency or administering social services, or teaching Spanish to Anglophone high-school students. Many of these positions put individuals in contact with the broader Latino community, making them more familiar with non-Dominican varieties of Spanish.

17 Of the five (all male), whose jobs did not call for regular Spanish use, three were highly educated professionals who worked in jobs that primarily served white Americans, and two were skilled tradesmen whose work was primarily outside of the immigrant community.

US-born Ana, for example, had a string of jobs that were not only predicated on her bilingualism but that also served to continually improve her Spanish:

(18)
Ana: I wanted to add, also, that my Spanish also, has improved, because … I worked for Fleet Bank, right here, down the street, and I worked as a loan officer. And the majority of borrowers that come in or individuals having questions on buying a house, were Spanish. So I dealt with not just with Dominicans, I dealt with all countries, all Latinos, from Guatemala, El Salvador, Cubans, Colombians, Dominicans, Puerto Ricans and again, I was forced to improve my Spanish.
BB: So would you say that your Spanish is better now that it was in high school?
Ana: Oh yes, oh yes.

In the interethnic contexts encountered at work, the Spanish ethnolinguistic identities of such second-generation bilinguals are regularly highlighted through their code switching and service to Spanish-speaking clients.

A second adult role that served to re-invigorate the Spanish language of many second-generation adults is romantic partnership with a recent immigrant. Because of the growth of Dominican and other Hispanic immigration to

Providence in the 1980s and 1990s, there are more Dominican and Hispanic adults who are recent immigrants than there are US-raised Dominican and Hispanic adults. There is thus a larger pool of recently immigrated, co-ethnic potential partners than US-raised co-ethnics, and there is a high rate of intra-Latino marriage, even in the second generation (Gurak, 1987).

Of the 15 Dominican American adults interviewed, 11 were married or co-habiting with a significant other, three lived with their mothers, and one lived on his own. Of the 11 who co-habited, four lived with recent Dominican immigrants, three lived with Anglo-Americans, two lived with US-raised Dominicans, one lived with a Cape Verdean American, and one lived with a member of a local Native American group. The fact that three individuals lived with their mothers, and another four lived with recent immigrant partners, meant that seven of these 15 Dominican American adults were in what essentially were first-generation households, with Spanish-dominant or Spanish-monolingual speakers. This maintenance of Spanish fluency – and opportunities for its use – are a key to resistance to black–white racialization of second-generation Dominicans, as Spanish speaking is locally seen as an evidence that one is not a member of the category African American or white American.

In burgeoning Latino immigrant communities, second-generation trajectories of linguistic and identity acculturation are not directly linear across the life cycle. Immigrant enclaves socialize those adults who remain connected to the enclave and have powerful, on-going effects on language use and the interrelated sense of identity in the second generation. This community level of socialization and language maintenance is central to resisting pressure from other US groups to acculturate to historically dominant phenotype-symbolized identities. The vigor of the ethnolinguistic community is central to both the maintenance of traditional Dominican socio-cultural frameworks for understanding ethnic/racial identities and to the creation of Spanish-speaking contexts that support the achievement of identities outside the black–white dichotomy.

The continuing significance of "race"

The dual cultural socialization of the Dominican Americans in this study as well as their negotiation of US ethnic and racial categories leads to a distinctive set of situational self-ascriptions. The same individual can claim identities that seem to contradict each other: Dominican, American, very white, Hispanic, and black, for example. Some Dominicans, whose physical appearances match stereotypes of white American or black American appearances, regularly experience discrepancies between the ways they see themselves and the ways that others see them. This ambiguity is tied to particular social contexts, so the degree of racial ambiguity experienced by an individual can shift moment to moment as well as across socio-geographical spaces and periods of the life cycle.

This broad range of situational identities suggests the limitations of dominant models of assimilation for understanding acculturation and identities among second-generation Dominicans. Both linear–temporal models of assimilation and Portes and Zhou's (1993) influential model of segmented assimilation rely on relatively monolithic, idealized identities as reference points for immigrant acculturation. Neither model addresses the shifting, non-linear trajectories of acculturation that occur within the life cycle of the second generation in growing immigrant communities. Such models may better describe third- and fourth-generation immigrants, whose lives typically bridge social worlds less than those of the second generation. Members of the Dominican third and fourth generations will likely find it more difficult to differentiate themselves from non-Hispanics, as they lose even passive knowledge of Spanish and become generations further removed from the Dominican Republic.

At the same time, however, various Latino categories may become increasingly available to the third and fourth generations in the United States due to the size and growth of US Latino communities. The social landscape in local communities has already been transformed, making "Spanish" and "Dominican" locally available ethnic/racial categories, even for individuals who are initially seen by many as black or white, based on physical appearance.

The agency of Dominican immigrants in these processes, however, is limited by the on-going centrality of race in the US as well as the more subtle hierarchies of color that exist throughout the hemisphere. Assimilation, in the sense of admission to the unmarked US category white, will only be possible for the fraction of Dominicans who do not appear to be of African descent. Second, the symbolic power that Dominican Americans exercise in claiming Spanish or Hispanic identities and rejecting black–white racialization is limited. When African-descent Dominicans successfully enact non-black identities, it denaturalizes the category black, but it does not alter or call into question the privileges associated with whiteness. Successful enactment of a Dominican identity also does nothing to counter the privileging of light skin color within the Dominican community itself. Dominican American agency in claiming a racial identity outside of the black–white system may simply represent the inadvertent collaboration of the oppressed with their oppressors that is characteristic of hegemonic systems. Successful enactment of a non-white, non-black Hispanic identity can indirectly reinforce existing color lines and hierarchies: (i) a white/non-white color line that preserves white privilege and excludes Latinos and (ii) a black/non-black color line that reconstitutes blacks as the most disparaged group of all.

About the author

Benjamin Bailey is Associate Professor of Communication at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. His research interests center on language and

negotiations of identity in face-to-face interaction. His publications include *Language, Race, and Negotiation of Identity: A Study of Dominican Americans* (2002, NY: LFB Scholarly) and various articles and chapters on race, code switching, bilingualism, immigration, and intercultural communication.

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