Identifying with a single identity? A way of the past. A Review of Ruthellen Josselson and Michele Harway (Eds.). Navigating Multiple Identities: Race, Gender, Culture, Nationality, and Roles.

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In their edited book, *Navigating Multiple Identities: Race, Gender, Culture, Nationality, and Roles*, Ruthellen Josselson and Michele Harway explore the ways in which individuals navigate across their multiple identities and achieve personal integration in the context of our increasingly complex, globalized world. Josselson, Professor of Clinical Psychology at Fielding Graduate University, along with her co-editor Michele Harway, Faculty Research Specialist in the School of Psychology at Fielding Graduate University, bring to the table extensive experience in examining human development in the areas of research and practice, particularly regarding issues of gender development and the intersection of multiple identities.

The book is intended to examine how individuals balance changes in their personal and social location, while integrating and balancing various aspects of their personal and social selves. Approaching their topic from a psychological standpoint, the authors are particularly interested in the personal psychological processes in which individuals engage in order to shift from or transition between multiple identity intersections. Although Josselson and Harway’s explicit interest is in the personal processes of identity navigation, the various authors recognize the significant impact of
the social world on internal dialogues and subsequent development across multiple identities. The authors are transparent regarding their positionality on identity as a fluid, socially constructed idea that reflects the social and historical context of our world. These constructs, which were salient across all chapters of the book, serve as a way to connect the wide spectrum of explorations of development that unfold within this text.

To explore the navigation of multiple identities, this book centers upon individuals who are navigating across five identity structures: (a) racial minority status and majority status, particularly as it relates to life in the United States; (b) cultures with different values of collectivism versus individualism (or other culturally related values), with examinations of both internal and external conflict; (c) gender identities, including the masculine, feminine, and transgender experiences; (d) roles, particularly as they are related to socially constructed ideas of gender; and (e) cultural expectations versus individual definitions and how those two are often pitted against each other throughout one’s identity development.

The 13 chapters of the book are organized into three loosely thematic sections. The first section, consisting of Chapters 2 and 3, considers development both theoretically and phenomenologically in order to address the ways in which current theory can be utilized to understand the navigation of multiple identities. The second section of the book, Chapters 4-8, illuminates the identity navigation process through examples of several groups within the United States, particularly focusing on issues related to masculine and feminine experiences and the multiple identities of women and transgender individuals as well as the duality experienced in Japanese American identity development. Given the background of the authors in issues of gender development, I
was not surprised by the heavy influence of gender that can be seen in these chapters and elsewhere within the book.

Chapters 4 and 7, particularly, are important given the growing interest in examining the intersectional nature of masculine and transgender experiences. Section 3, Chapters 9-13, considers a series of cross-cultural populations, including areas relating to Black identity, mixed identity in the context of long-term committed relationships, intersectionality of immigrant males, discourse analysis of multiple identities, and transnational development.

Overall, the text is written from a predominantly psychological approach and is intended as an introduction to multiple identities--perfect for graduate students studying identity development in a variety of fields. It has the potential to be used in such fields as psychology, social work, gender studies, and higher education. The authors write in an inviting, easily accessible style, and the editors have organized the material lucidly. Although it is an edited book, it remains true to the theme throughout, even though the theme of navigating multiple identities is very loose and often lends itself to diffused exploration. I appreciated the diverse nature of identities presented in this book, which included race, gender, culture, nationality, and roles. This text provided an excellent example of how one may balance theory and literature with the case study format, making this text easily usable as a teaching tool.

Although not specifically addressed to the higher education community, this work remains applicable to shaping student identity development and serving students while they are in college. Intersectionality helps us to understand how students may move among or meld identities during the college process. Josselson and Harway provide a
more intricate picture of student development—much more nuanced than simply looking at one type of student development. Their work forces us to consider the multifaceted development present throughout a student’s college career. Higher education researchers, faculty members, and administrators will benefit from this book’s in-depth theoretical exploration of multiple identities, its potential as a teaching text for intersectional approaches to student development, and its practical approach to understanding and enhancing opportunities for student identity development.