



Counseling Multiple Heritage Individuals, Couples, and Families

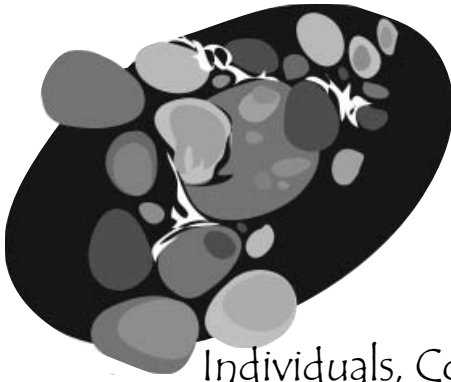
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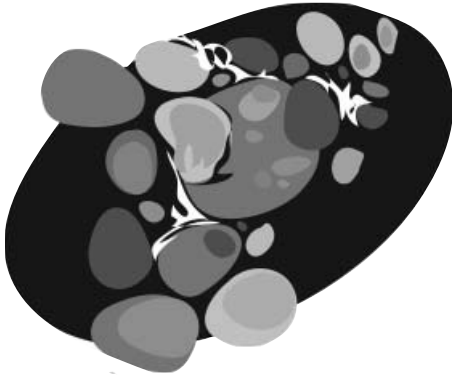
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Dedication

To all of the women who have helped shape my life as a multiple heritage individual: Deborah, my wife; Malia, Richelle, and Leticia, my daughters; Mary, my grandmother; Jean, my mother; and Cindy, my sister.

—Richard C. Henriksen Jr.

To my parents, David and Mary Paladino, who have always offered their unconditional love and support through my life.

—Derrick A. Paladino

This book is also dedicated to Richard and Mildred Loving, who fought to set all multiple heritage individuals, couples, and families free, and to all the multiple heritage individuals and families around the world who have paved the way for the future.

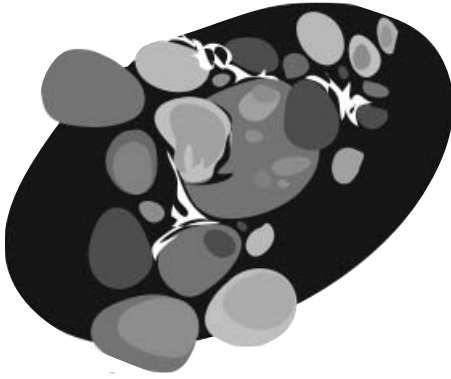
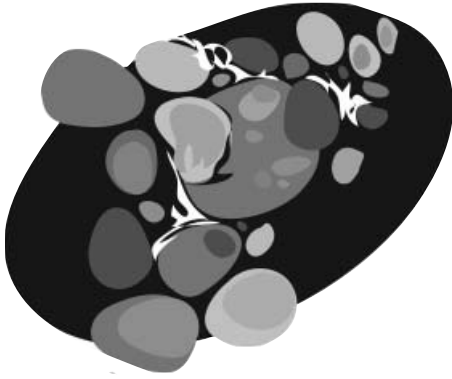


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Foreword

Patricia Arredondo

A few years ago, one of my doctoral students expressed an interest in addressing biracial and multiracial identity development for her doctoral research. Her motivation was not incidental; Tiffany self-defines as biracial (she has Asian and European roots). At the time (2002–2005), she could locate only two or three primary sources. In fact, it was not until the early 1990s that research on biracial and multiracial issues began to appear in the counseling literature. Poston (1990) advocated for the addition of a biracial identity development to the discourse on ethnic identity. Maria Root also began writing around this time (Root, 1992); her work culminated in the often-quoted edited text *The Multiracial Experience* (Root, 1996). Influenced by her international counseling experiences, Wehrly (1996) asserted that interracial individuals needed to be recognized by the counseling profession. Fast-forward to 2008 and to the many events motivating this essential attention to multiple heritage individuals.

The personal becomes professional, and this motivation has resulted in a very timely and essential text—*Counseling Multiple Heritage Individuals, Couples, and Families*. Richard C. Henriksen Jr. and Derrick A. Paladino have authored and coedited this text from their personal and lived experiences as multiple heritage individuals in the United States. Their coauthors offer varying perspectives, through case examples, on what it means to have multiple heritages in numerous contexts, from school to the workplace and even one's own family.

In many respects, this text underscores the necessity for cultural competency advocated in the American Counseling Association's multicultural counseling competencies (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992). It meets the knowledge-building criteria comprehensively, with sections on historical facts, theoretical models, and relevant research to support counselors' knowledge of others' worldviews. The coeditors begin with a valuable factual accounting of historical racial classifications and a discussion of how the construct of race caused particularly those of African heritage to be constantly marginalized. Furthermore, as the authors remind us, the

application of racial purity laws via the “one-drop” policy was a powerful statement against persons of multiple heritages in this country.

Can love be legislated any more than personal religious beliefs? At one time in this country, the answer was “yes.” Today’s individuals of multiple heritages are beneficiaries of the *Loving v. Virginia* (1967) case. Regardless of laws, however, interracial couples and their children are still not accepted in all social circles. Paladino and Henriksen share their own experiences in this regard and remind the reader of the struggles particularly of helpless children. What did multiple heritage children do to be taunted, harassed, and otherwise excluded from games, friendship circles, and other normal social activities?

Through case examples, the contributors introduce vivid and, at times, emotion-laden dilemmas faced by multiple heritage individuals and their family members. There are recurring themes in the various chapters that the reader can anticipate. Among these are identity challenges; dynamics of visibility and invisibility; lack of acceptance in social circles, including one’s extended family; and feelings of loss, isolation, and marginalization. In Chapter 3, Henriksen and Paladino introduce the Multiple Heritage Identity Development (MHID) Model, which underscores the complexity of integrating multiple dimensions of identity (e.g., indigenous heritage, sexual orientation, religion) with one’s multiple heritages. Existing models for ethnic and racial identity development may have to be reframed or be used along with the MHID Model.

The themes that emerge across the various chapters also interact with individuals’ experiences in different developmental eras and unique circumstances. For example, multiple heritage adults may begin to reexperience identity challenges through their children’s choices of partners and spouses. Attention to unresolved identity conflicts is familiar in the literature, but a discussion with regard to identity conflicts for multiple heritage persons is new. In Chapter 7 there is an excellent case example pointing out the dilemma for many adults who have lived silently with their multiple heritage identity conflict. Another valuable topic is that of transracial adoptions. Here again, there are intersecting relationships and dimensions of sameness and difference that emerge as a result of adoption. Perhaps like many of my counseling peers, I had not considered the effects of transracial adoptions, but now that I have, I see the enormous benefit of this chapter for practitioners. Although a counselor might not have lived another’s experiences, cultural empathy is requisite to sensitive and caring interventions.

This text opens the door to all aspects of mental health counseling, from education and training to research and practice. I foresee continuing education opportunities for professional counselors, who will have another set of data to inform their work. This is not to say that information is all that counselors need, however. The multicultural counseling competencies (Sue et al., 1992) indicate that counselors’ awareness of values, biases, and assumptions is a first and necessary step toward cultural competency development. This premise applies to counselors working with multiple

heritage individuals, couples, and families. They must inventory their own biases and beliefs about multiple heritage individuals to practice both ethically and effectively.

It is true that there have always been multiple heritage individuals; however, with the entrée of Tiger Woods to the international golf arena in 1995, the country has gained a new awareness of multiple heritages. Although his phenotype may signal that he is of African heritage, Woods describes his multiple roots with the term *Cablinasian*. With this self-identification, he claims his parents' multiple heritages as well—African, American Indian, Thai, and European.

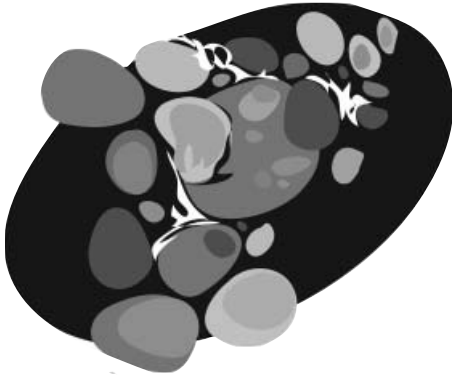
Also taking center stage is Barack Obama, potentially the first president of the United States of multiple heritages. The son of a U.S.-born mother and a Kenyan father, Obama was raised in multiple locations, which gave him the cultural dimensions and outlooks that shaped his worldview. Henriksen, a military veteran, had a similar experience, living in different settings as a result of his military assignments.

Everywhere we turn in the entertainment and sports fields, persons of multiple heritages are very much in evidence. On college campuses today, there are organizations for students of multiple heritages. Recognition is always a first step to inclusion in discussions, opportunities, and self-determination.

Previous to the 2000 census, individuals of multiple heritages had to choose one racial category. Although there has been criticism of the decision to allow individuals to check off more than one racial classification, the fact remains that identity self-definition is giving social and psychological voice to a previously ignored group. I believe that this book, the consequence of the coeditors' decision to go public and recognize multiple heritages as a birthright of many American citizens, will have an empowering effect for many, many individuals and families for the foreseeable future. I want to thank Richard and Derrick for having the courage to take personal life experiences and frame them in an academic context. *Counseling Multiple Heritage Individuals, Couples, and Families* is a monumental contribution to the counseling literature.

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Prologue

Richard C. Henriksen Jr. (Ed.) [Norwegian and African American]

I was born, in 1952, to parents who were from different backgrounds. My father had roots that led to Norway, and my mother was African American. They got married when such a marriage was still illegal in 16 states.

I grew up not knowing my father's family because they disapproved of my mother, and my grandparents let it be known that they never wanted to meet their grandchildren. I did get to meet my uncles and a few cousins, but no lasting relationships were built. My mother's family was different. Although there were questions about my mother's marriage to a White man, he was accepted, and my siblings and I developed long-lasting relationships with most of the family, especially my grandfather, my two grandmothers, and my uncles. I felt accepted by most of the family but knew that there were family members who never believed I was Black enough.

I grew up during the civil rights movement and always questioned why Blacks and Whites could not get along. I began to feel left out because nobody talked about accepting people like me, and I was always being told that I was Black, but I also began to hear from my friends and schoolmates that I was not Black enough to be Black. I realized that something had to be done to change how people viewed me and the things they would say about me. I did not realize until I was a young adult that there were many other people like me and that they were facing the same issues. I always remembered, however, that my Grandmother Mary used to tell me that I was special and that "God made special people to do special things, and you will make a difference in the lives of many people." Those words were never forgotten, and they have carried me to this day.

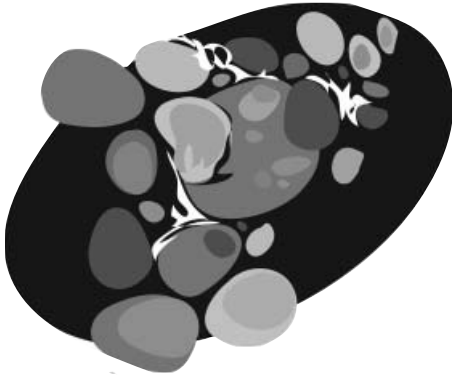
I have spoken out about issues involving biracial and multiracial individuals and families all of my life, which has led me to write this book with Derrick. Derrick's life has also brought him to a point where he is

sharing some of his experiences so that others may have an opportunity to learn and grow.

Derrick A. Palađino (Ed.) [Puerto Rican and Italian]

I was born in 1976 to a Puerto Rican mother and an Italian father (married in 1970, 3 years after *Loving v. Virginia*). Like many multiple heritage individuals, I was not keenly aware of what this identity would mean, even though from childhood on I encountered all the issues it typically comes along with. I remember someone saying to me as a child, "You're not White enough for the Whites and you're not Puerto Rican enough for the Latinos." Of course, I had no idea what this meant then, but reminiscing on my youth and development, I can see that I intuitively did know. "Riding the fence" and navigating my cultural and racial identity through several environments, peer groups, and individuals, although not consciously, became a way of life. Looking back, I can see that this approach created confusion, but it also brought with it a lot of strength. It was when I reached graduate school and read an article on biracial identity development by Carlos Poston that I first saw my own experiences reflected in print. One could imagine the wave of emotions, "oh yeah"s, and "I get it now"s that quickly followed. It is a very intense experience to finally understand one's identity. Today I look back on my experiences as a multiple heritage person and celebrate their impact.

This book takes on an insider perspective so that others may hear about the strengths and challenges faced by multiple heritage individuals, couples, and families and learn about how this population has developed the strength to face the many challenges of living. The majority of authors have multiple heritage backgrounds or are involved in multiple heritage relationships; however, this is not true of everyone. This book provides a perspective that comes from lived experiences, and it is supported throughout with research and practical counseling experience. It is a book about courage and the strength to be successful in the face of all odds, and its goal is to inspire. Together we can make a difference, and we hope that this book makes a difference in the lives of everyone who reads it.



Preface

Since Stonequist wrote his book about the identity of biracial individuals (*The Marginal Man: A Study in Personality and Culture Conflict*) in 1937, individuals with one Black parent and one White parent have often been referred to as mulatto, biracial, multiracial, and many other terms that focus solely on racial identifications. Since then, the accepted method of describing individuals has evolved away from such terms toward a more diverse definition that includes people of other racial backgrounds, other ethnicities, and indigenous heritages. Identifying people strictly by race has limited our understanding of the challenges faced by people who have multiple heritage backgrounds. Looking beyond race, one can witness the complexity of identity development and the overall developmental process that is impacted by the intersections of gender, ethnicity, religion and spirituality, sexual orientation, national origin, indigenous heritage, geographic region, and other cultural factors. Because of the complex and unique challenges inherent in helping people with diverse backgrounds who also happen to have multiple racial or ethnic backgrounds, a new and more appropriate description is necessary. This description should move the focus of attention from one aspect of the individual to the multifaceted facets of an individual's background.

The 10th edition of *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* defines *multiple* as "consisting of, including, or involving more than one," "many," and "having numerous aspects." *Heritage* is defined as "property that descends to an heir"; "something transmitted by or acquired from a predecessor," such as a legacy, inheritance, or tradition; and "something possessed as a result of one's natural situation or birth." From these definitions, one can see that an individual can possess multiple aspects of heritage, including race, ethnicity, religion, language, gender, and national origin. We have chosen to move forward the discussion of people who have multiple dimensions to their backgrounds by using the term *multiple heritage*. We believe this is necessary because people are more than race, especially as race is a social construction and does not truly describe the individual. By

using the term *multiple heritage*, we are able to address the many facets of an individual's heritage as well as other characteristics, including sexual orientation, and how they affect development. In addition, this term allows the multiple heritage individual to self-define the important aspects of himself or herself. For counselors and other helping professionals to provide services to multiple heritage clients, it is necessary that they see the whole person, not just his or her racial make-up. Imagine a young woman who is defined as biracial but whose background is Korean and German, Buddhist and Lutheran; whose parents speak both languages; and who was born in America. If a counselor only recognizes the racial complexities of the person, important understandings could be missed or ignored. This book seeks to bring together a broader perspective of individuals, couples, and families with multiple heritage backgrounds and to start broadening the discussion of the strengths and challenges they face.

The book begins with a discussion of the history of racial classifications in Chapter 1 to provide a foundation for the remainder of the text. With the constant focus on racial issues in the United States, it is important that counselors have insight into how racial classifications have affected the multiple heritage population. Multiple heritage individuals are first viewed by most people as being multiracial, which makes the most logical beginning. Next, in Chapter 2, we look at the history of miscegenation and the impact that has had on the development of families from diverse cultural backgrounds. Focusing on some of the key court cases that led to the landmark *Loving v. Virginia* U.S. Supreme Court case in 1967, Chapter 2 helps give a foundation for the societal issues faced by multiple heritage individuals, couples, and families. In Chapter 3, a comprehensive discussion of multiracial identity development is presented, focusing on the presentation of the Multiple Heritage Identity Development Model. This model serves as a foundation for understanding the challenges faced by multiple heritage individuals and provides a framework for the development of effective counseling practices with multiple heritage individuals, couples, and families. The remainder of the book focuses on understanding and providing services to multiple heritage individuals, couples, and families, as well as issues related to attending college and to sexual orientation.

Chapter 4 addresses the topic of children, particularly how they face the realities of being from multiple heritages. Adolescence is the focus of Chapter 5. The discussion of how to help adolescents cope with the expected identity crisis, along with their multiple heritage identity, provides counselors with a basis for understanding the challenges faced by multiple heritage individuals at this developmental level. In addition, counselors are presented with ways to assist in the resolution of some of those issues.

College students often face a new environment alone and without the supports that other ethnic and racial groups find available. Chapter 6 details ways counselors can help multiple heritage college students adjust to their environment as well as have a successful and enjoyable college

experience. Adulthood for multiple heritage individuals can be full of joy and challenges. This is the area of development that has received the least amount of research, yet during this time multiple heritage individuals incur many challenging experiences. In Chapter 7, we seek to provide insight into the world of multiple heritage adulthood and ways counselors can be effective helpers.

Beginning with Chapter 8, we take a different look at some of the issues faced by the multiple heritage population. In this chapter, the focus is on couples and families and the unique ways of assisting them. In Chapter 9, the discussion turns to issues surrounding transracial adoption and counseling issues that affect the individual and family. The intersection of the multiple heritage identity and social identities is explored in Chapter 10. Through the chapter's focus on these issues, readers are able to gain a deeper understanding of the complexity of developing a multiple heritage identity. Sexual orientation and multiple heritage identities are explored in Chapter 11. By bringing to light the challenges faced by this population, this chapter provides readers with new insights and positive ways of helping. Chapter 12 presents five case studies for readers to apply the knowledge they have gained as well as find insight into some of the issues experienced by multiple heritage individuals, couples, and families.

The Appendix provides the readers with a list of resources that includes print materials and films. Information is also given on a wide range of organizations that offer services to individuals, couples, and families with multiple heritage backgrounds. A list of books appropriate for use with children, adolescents, and parents is a valuable resource for everyone who reads this book.

Throughout this book, the authors have included case studies to clarify points and to give readers an inside look into the lives of people who make up the multiple heritage population. We have used chapter review questions to help you integrate the knowledge gained from each chapter. Finally, we have used a sequence of chapters that we believe best gives you, the reader, the opportunity to observe the life process and development of multiple heritage individuals, couples, and families.

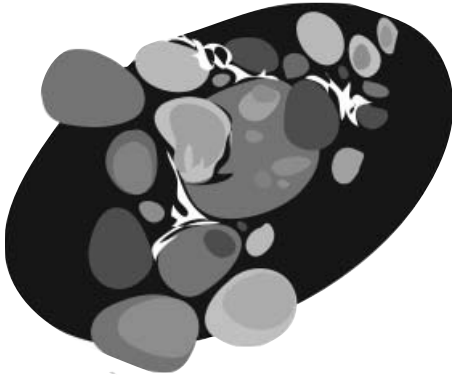
The intent of this book is to present an overall look at the challenges and successes faced by multiple heritage individuals, couples, and families and to offer a framework for providing best practice counseling services. The multicultural counseling competencies form a foundation for much of the material presented.

It is our hope that this book will assist counselors and other helping professionals in gaining greater insight into the challenges faced by multiple heritage individuals, couples, and families. In addition, we wanted to provide professionals with new skills and approaches for the provision of effective counseling services. We celebrate the bravery of those who have often been forgotten or invisible and yet still seek to grow, and we honor their contributions to our society. Together we can move beyond seeing people through racial classifications and learn to see them as individuals.

We would like to thank the many researchers and multiple heritage pioneers who have come before us and laid the foundation for the work that culminated in the creation of this book. We thank Andrew Benesh for his wonderful assistance with editing this book; Amanda K. Bailey for her assistance in editing, reading, and researching; Richard E. Watts for providing an ear to listen and the support needed to keep this project going; and Jerry Trusty, who has been a supporter of this work for many years. In addition, we would like to express many thanks to Patricia Arredondo for her support in assisting us to turn an idea and our passion into a much-needed and important text. A lot of gratitude goes out to all the contributors and authors in this book. Their passion and experience in the field of multiple heritage research and counseling have greatly added to the vision of this publication. We are indebted to our graduate assistants, who always go beyond their duties.

Richard would like to thank his wife, Deborah, and his daughters, Malia and Richelle, whose love, understanding, and personal achievements provided inspiration during the course of this project. Derrick would like to thank his parents (David and Mary Paladino) for their continued love and support. In addition, he thanks his colleagues for their support and encouragement throughout this process.

Finally, we would like to thank the multiple heritage population, as without their stories and inspiration, this work would not exist.

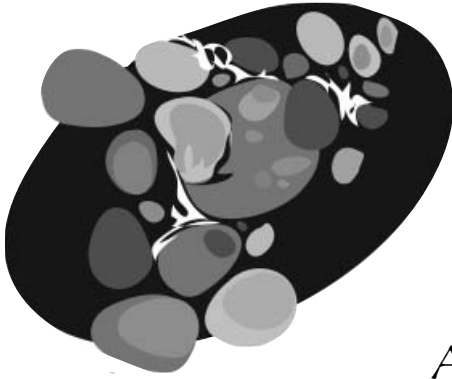


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