Asian American Identity Development Model


The five stages are sequential in nature, although the process is not linear or automatic. For example, it is possible for an Asian American to get stuck in a certain stage and never move to the next stage. Whether Asian Americans move onto the next stage in their racial identity development is dependent primarily on their social environment and various factors in this environment determine both the lengthy and the quality of experience in a given stage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage One</td>
<td>Ethnic Awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Two</td>
<td>White Identification (Passive &amp; Active)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Three</td>
<td>Awakening to Social Political Consciousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Four</td>
<td>Redirection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Five</td>
<td>Incorporation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Stage 1: Ethnic Awareness

**Social environment**: mostly at home with family

**Critical factor**: extent of participation in Asian ethnic activities

**Self-concept**: greater participation leads to positive self-concept; less participation leads to neutral self-concept

**Ego identity**: greater participation leads to clear sense as a person of Asian heritage; less participation leads to less clear meaning about being a person of Asian heritage

**Primary reference group**: family

**Hallmark of the stage**: discovery of ethnic heritage

### Stage 2: White Identification (Passive & Active)

**Social environment**: public arenas such as school systems

**Critical factor**: increased contact with white society which leads to acceptance of white values and standards

**Self-concept**: negative self-image, especially body image

**Ego identity**: being different, not fitting in, inferior to white peers

**Primary reference group**: white people and dominant society

**Hallmark of the stage**: feelings of being different, alienation from self and other Asian Americans

### Stage 3: Awakening to Social Political Consciousness

**Social environment**: social political movements and or campus politics

**Critical factor**: gaining political consciousness related to being a racial/political minority

**Self-concept**: positive self concept, identification as a minority in the US

**Ego identity**: accepts being a minority but resists white values and white domination

**Primary reference group**: individuals with similar social political philosophy and perspectives

**Hallmark of the stage**: gaining new political perspective and sociological imagination

### Stage 4: Redirection

**Social environment**: Asian American community

**Critical factor**: immersion in Asian American experience

**Self-concept**: positive self-concept, and identification as Asian American

**Ego identity**: Proud of being Asian American, experience a sense of belonging

**Primary reference group**: Asian Americans, especially those at similar stage of identity development

**Hallmark of the stage**: focus on personal and Asian American experience, feel anger against Whites about treatment of Asian Americans.

### Stage 5: Incorporation

**Social environment**: various environments, including various Asian American communities

**Critical factor**: various factors in the social environment

**Self-concept**: positive self-concept, participation in Asian American communities

**Ego identity**: proud of being Asian American, experience a sense of belonging

**Primary reference group**: Asian Americans, especially those at similar stage of identity development

**Hallmark of the stage**: focus on the social environment, participation in Asian American communities.
Stage 5: Incorporation

Social environment: general

Critical factor: clear and firm Asian identity

Self-concept: positive as a person

Ego identity: whole person with race as only a part of their social identity

Primary reference group: people in general

Hallmark of the stage: blending of Asian American identity with the rest of an individual’s identities.
Black Identity Development

Transition occurs between these stages when an individual recognizes that his or her current worldview is either illogical or contradicted by new experiences and/or information. A transition may also be prompted by an awareness that one’s current worldview or stage of consciousness is detrimental to a healthy self-concept or no longer serves some important self-interest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage One</td>
<td>Naïve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Two</td>
<td>Acceptance (passive &amp; active)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Three</td>
<td>Resistance (passive &amp; active)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Four</td>
<td>Redefinition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Five</td>
<td>Internalization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important to understand that the transition from one stage of consciousness to another can be, and often is, a challenging, even a traumatic process. When a Black person is making this transition, usually unconsciously at first, it can be extremely disorienting.

Naïve - absence of a social consciousness or identity
Acceptance - suggesting the acceptance of the prevailing white/majority description and perceived worth of Black people, Black culture or experience
Resistance - the rejection of the prevailing majority culture’s definition and valuing of Black people and culture
Redefinition - the renaming, reaffirming and reclaiming of one’s sense of Blackness, black culture and racial identity
Internalization - the integration of a redefined racial identity into all aspects of one’s self-concept or identity.
The Factor Model of Multiracial Identity

The Factor Model of Multiracial Identity consists of eight factors that affect choice of racial identity by Multiracial people. A multiracial person’s choice of racial identity can be based on some, but usually not all, of these factors. Although the factors are represented by distinct circles, many of them are interrelated.

- Racial Ancestry
- Physical Appearance
- Social and Historical Context
- Cultural Attachment
- Early Experience
- Political Awareness and Orientation
- Spirituality
- Other Social
The most important dimensions in defining one’s orientation toward one’s identity as Latino/a according to this model, include one’s “lens” toward identity, how individuals prefer to identify themselves, how Latinos as a group are seen, how Whites are seen, and how “race” fits into the equation.

The metaphor of a “lens” fits well into this model as it summarizes the way individuals view their ethnicity, how they “see” the wider issues and context of racial groups in the United States, and how much they take in versus how much they keep out. Our lenses for race limit the data we take in and support our frameworks for making sense of the environment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orientation</th>
<th>Lens</th>
<th>Identify as/prefer</th>
<th>Latinos are seen</th>
<th>Whites are seen</th>
<th>Framing of Race</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latino-integrated</td>
<td>Wide</td>
<td>individuals in a group context</td>
<td>Positively</td>
<td>Complex</td>
<td>Dynamic, contextual, socially constructed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino-identified (Racial/Raza)</td>
<td>Broad</td>
<td>Latinos</td>
<td>Very positively</td>
<td>Distinct; could be barriers or allies</td>
<td>Latino/not Latino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subgroup-identified</td>
<td>Narrow</td>
<td>Own subgroup</td>
<td>My group ok, others maybe</td>
<td>Not Central *(could be barriers or blockers)</td>
<td>Not clear or central secondary to nationality, ethnicity, culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino as Other</td>
<td>External</td>
<td>Not White</td>
<td>Generically fuzzily</td>
<td>Negatively</td>
<td>White/not white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undifferentiated/Denial</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>People</td>
<td>“who are Latinos”</td>
<td>Supposed color-blind (accept dominant norms)</td>
<td>Denial, irrelevant invisible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White-identified</td>
<td>Tinted</td>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>Negatively</td>
<td>Very positively</td>
<td>White/Black, either/or, one-drop or “mejorar la raza” (i.e. improve the race)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cass Model


Stages of the Coming Out Model

Stage 1 - Identity Confusion
- Who am I?
- Feeling one is different from peers
- Sense of personal alienation
- Beginning consciousness of same-sex feelings or behavior
- No sharing of inner turmoil

Stage 2 - Identity Comparison
- Rationalization or Bargaining stage: maybe this is just temporary, just a phase
- Sense of not belonging anywhere
- I am the only one in the world

Stage 3 - Identity Tolerance
- I probably am gay/lesbian
- Beginning contact with other gay/lesbian people
- Barely tolerates own gay/lesbian identity
- Feelings of not belonging with heterosexuals

Stage 4 - Identity Acceptance
- Continued and increased contact with other gay/lesbian people
- Forming friendships
- Beginning to accept more positive self-image
- Beginning to feel a sense of belonging.

Stage 5 - Identity Pride
- These are my people
- Increasing awareness of gap between gay/lesbian and no-gay worlds.
- Anger towards non-gays; rejects their values and institutions
- Discloses gay/lesbian identity to more people
- Desires to immerse self in gay/lesbian sub culture.

Stage 6 - Identity Synthesis
- Anger towards non-gay world mellows
- Realization some non-gay people are friends, allies, supporters
- Some continuing anger at injustice of society’s attitudes/treatment
- Gay/Lesbian identity becomes integrated into personality.
# Individual Sexual Identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1: Awareness</th>
<th>Group Membership Identity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- of feeling or being different</td>
<td>- of existence of different sexual orientations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Statement Examples (for women):</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I feel pulled toward women in ways I don’t understand.” (I)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I had no idea there were lesbian/gay people out there.” (G)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase 2: Exploration</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- of strong/erotic feelings for same sex people or a particular same sex person</td>
<td>- of one’s position regarding gay people as a group (both attitudes and membership)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Statement Examples (for men):</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I want to be closer to men or to a certain man.” (I)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I think a lot about fitting in as a gay man and developing my own gay style.” (G)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase 3: Deepening/Commitment</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- to self-knowledge, self-fulfillment, and crystallization of choices about sexuality</td>
<td>- to personal involvement with a reference group, with awareness of oppression and consequences of choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Statement Examples (for women):</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I clearly feel more intimate sexually and emotionally with women than with men.” (I)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Sometimes I have been mistreated because of my lesbianism.” (G)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase 4: Internalization/Synthesis</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- of love for same sex people, sexual choices, into overall identity</td>
<td>- of identity as a member of a minority group, across contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Statement Examples (for men):</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I feel a deep contentment about my love of other men.” (I)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I rely on my gay/lesbian friends for support, but I have some good heterosexual friends as well.” (G)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The intersecting circles and the various locations indicating salience of particular identity dimensions also represent that more than one identity dimension can be engaged by the individual at any one time. Identity dimensions then may be experienced simultaneously as well as more or less salient than other dimensions. The context within which the individual experiences multiple dimensions of identity is represented by the larger circle that includes both the core and intersecting identity dimensions. These dimensions become more or less salient as they interact with contextual influences such as family background, sociocultural conditions, current life experiences, and career decisions and life planning.

The model reflects an acknowledgment that different dimensions of identity will be more or less important for each individual given a range of contextual influences. It also presents identity development as a fluid and dynamic process rather than a more linear and static stage model.