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Ethnoracial Mixology: A Poetic Ethnography of Mixed-Heritage Individuals' Experiences of Racial and Ethnic Identification and Identity

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ETHNORACIAL MIXOLOGY: A POETIC ETHNOGRAPHY OF MIXED-HERITAGE
INDIVIDUALS' EXPERIENCES OF RACIAL AND ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION AND
IDENTITY

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

Tarah Dunn

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Title: Ethnoracial Mixology: A Poetic Ethnography of Mixed-Heritage Individuals' Experiences of Racial and Ethnic Identification and Identity

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Building on the literature of Wallace (2004), Potowski and Matts (2008), and Anderson (2014), this study investigated mixed-heritage individuals' perceived experiences of racial and ethnic identification and identity through critical race theory (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001). This study explored how race and ethnicity were challenged and celebrated in U.S. contexts through the research questions: How do mixed-heritage individuals perceive their racial and ethnic identities are negotiated and (re)constructed in their lived-experiences? How can poetic representations (developed through arts-based inquiry) produce insights into the perceived identities of mixed-heritage individuals? Poetic ethnographic methods included open-ended surveys and interviews from three participants yielded 30 narrative poems and 5 lyrics poems. Findings indicated that participants individually and collectively conceptualized race and ethnicity in differing and similar ways. Themes included: identity mismatch, awkward meetings, unknown borderlands, identity guessing-game, and identity embracement. Finally, this study considers how perceptions and experiences influence English language teachers.