

A plateau called pseudo independence

Growing with Racial Identity Development Theory

Veronica Erb | @verbistheword

I stumbled upon just the podcast episode I needed

“The woke spectrum?” episode of Season 3 of
We Live Here, hosted by Kameel Stanley and Tim Lloyd

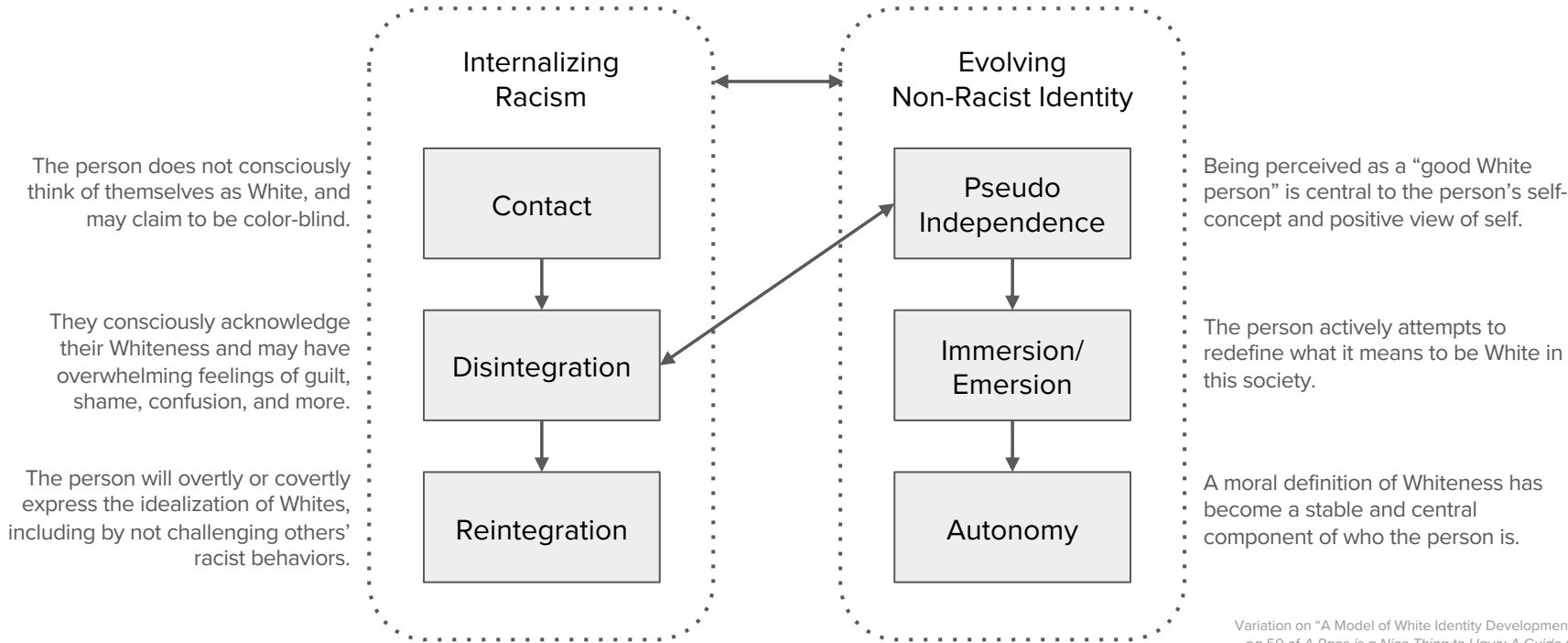
In it, Professor Kira Banks of St. Louis University describes psychologist Janet Helm’s theory of white racial identity development.



I had come to a plateau in a personal project

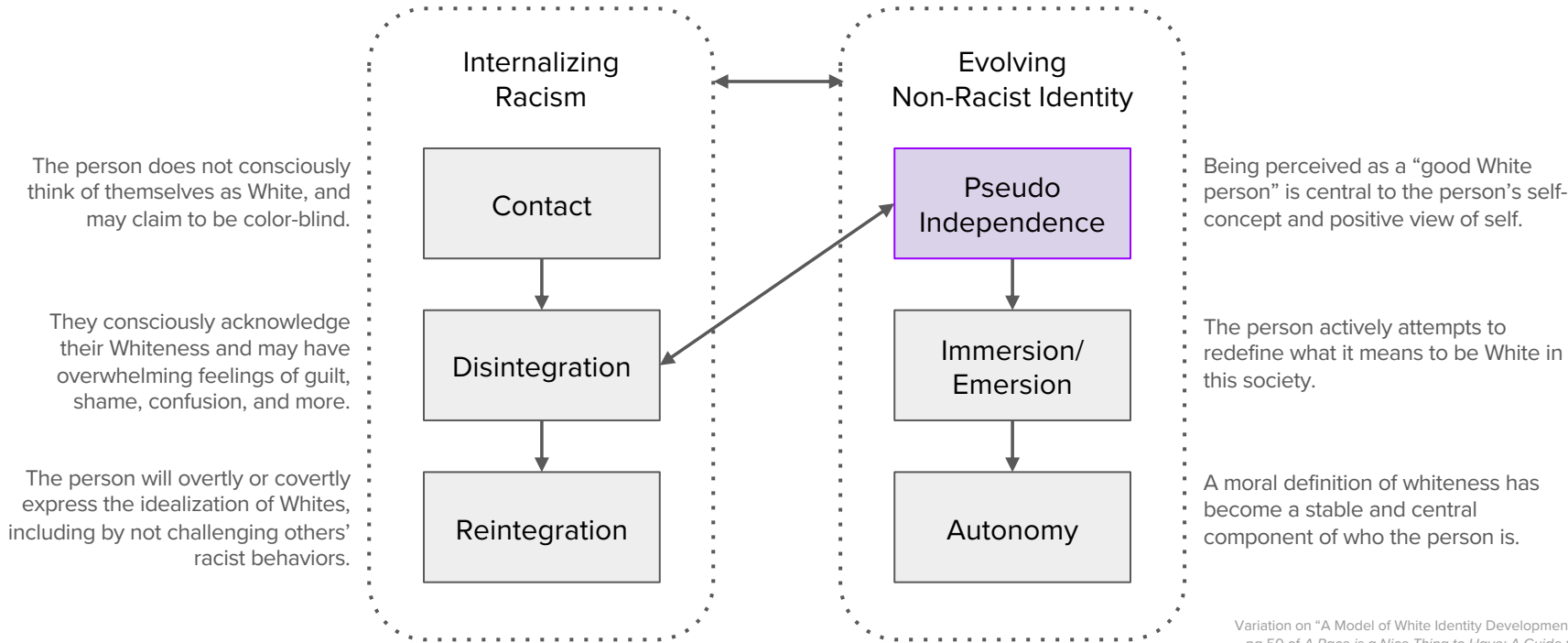
...a project to get my
instinctive reactions to match
my intellectual beliefs.

Helm's White Racial Identity Development theory



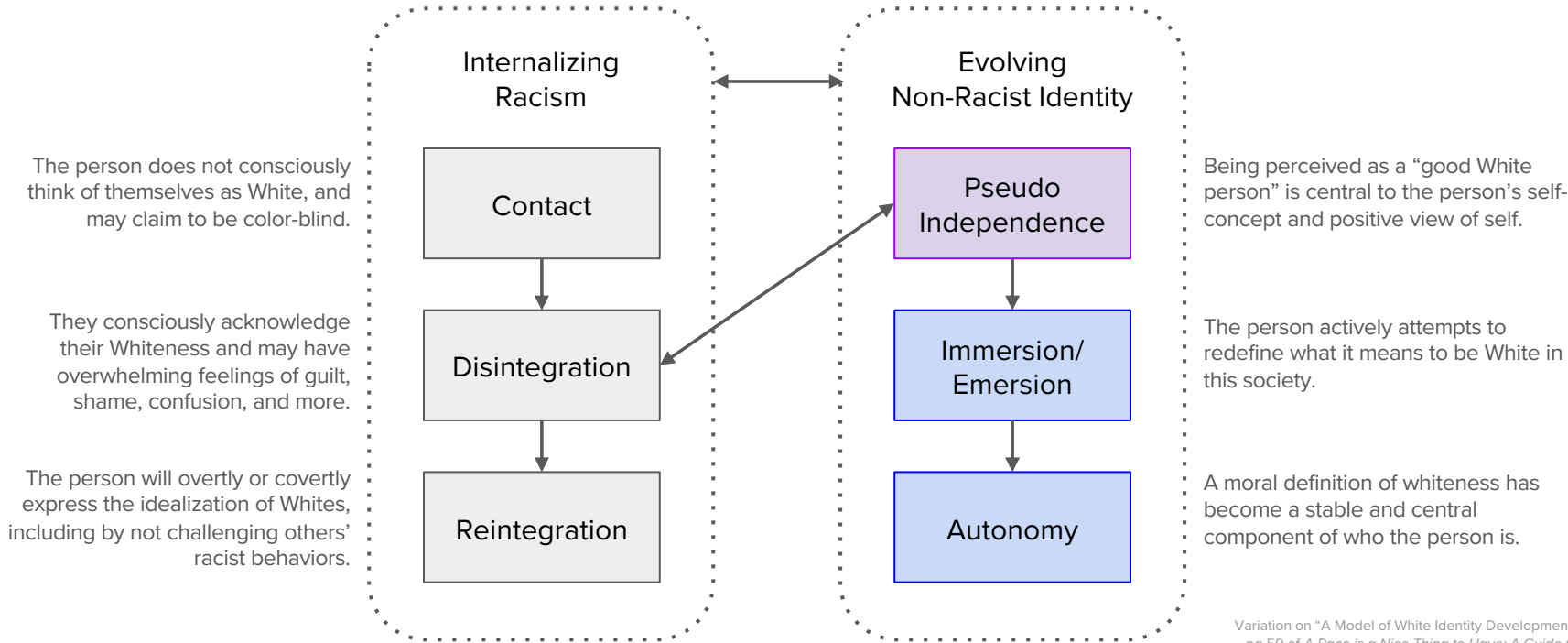
Variation on "A Model of White Identity Development"
pg 50 of *A Race is a Nice Thing to Have: A Guide to Being a White Person or Understanding the White Persons in Your Life*, Second Edition by Janet E. Helms

Helm's White Racial Identity Development theory



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A racial identity development theory for us each

Each is a take on how a person goes from being unaware of race's impact to being comfortable interacting with other races and choosing to address inequality.

- **Racial and Cultural Identity Development** by Atkinson, Morten and Sue
- **Black Identity Development** by Cross and Fhagen-Smith
- **Latino Identity Development** by Ferdman and Gallego
- **White Identity Development** by Helm
- **Perspective on American Indian Identity Development** by Horse
- **Asian American Identity Development Model** by Kim
- **White Racial Consciousness Model** by Rowe, Bennett, and Atkinson
- and more...

List from Michelle Robinson. "Racial Identity Development: Student Development Theory Overview."

If a person works on their identity development...

“When people develop advanced schemata in racial identity, they also are able to **develop constructive ways to work against social injustice** in general.”

AND

“In terms of mental health treatment, facilitating racial identity development promotes **positive mental health.**”

Thompson, Chalmer E. "Peace and Mental Health Practice: Integrating Racial Identity Theory in a Multicultural Psychology." *Transformations: The Journal of Inclusive Scholarship and Pedagogy*, Vol. 15! No. 2, Teaching Peace (Fall 2004), pg 65.

...they can collaborate to create change.

“I have found through my teaching that people can **create social change when they are willing to change.**”

Thompson, Chalmer E. "Peace and Mental Health Practice: Integrating Racial Identity Theory in a Multicultural Psychology." *Transformations: The Journal of Inclusive Scholarship and Pedagogy*, Vol. 15! No. 2, Teaching Peace (Fall 2004), pg 73.

Or said more bluntly...



Shannon Downey, @badasscrossstich [4 March 2019](#)

Works cited

- Downey, Shannon. [*Untitled*](#). 2019.
- Helms, Janet E. *A Race is a Nice Thing to Have: A Guide to Being a White Person or Understanding the White Persons in Your Life*, Second Edition.
- Robinson, Michelle. “Racial Identity Development: Student Development Theory Overview.” *Student Development Theory*.
- Stanley, Kameel and Tim Lloyd. “The woke spectrum?” *We Live Here* Season 3.
- Thompson, Chalmer E. “Peace and Mental Health Practice: Integrating Racial Identity Theory in a Multicultural Psychology.” *Transformations: The Journal of Inclusive Scholarship and Pedagogy*, Vol. 15! No. 2, Teaching Peace (Fall 2004), pg 65-74.

Discussion questions

- What's a piece of information or an experience that have **supported your own racial identity development?**
- What work by **white antiracists** do you admire?
- What media do you enjoy that includes the perspective, **writing**, and representation of people of color?