More than Prejudice: Restatement, Reflections, and New Directions in Critical Race Theory

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Abstract

Racism has always been "more than prejudice," but mainstream social analysts have mostly framed race matters as organized by the logic of prejudice. In this paper, I do four things. First, I restate my criticism of the dominant approach to race matters and emphasize the need to ground our racial analysis materially, that is, understanding that racism is systemic and rooted in differences in power between the races. Second, I reflect critically on my own theorization on race (the racialized social system approach) and acknowledge that I should have explained better the role of culture and ideology in the making and remaking of race. Third, I describe some of the work I have done since this early work. Fourth, I advance several new directions for research and theory in the field of race stratification.

Twenty-five years ago, while teaching a course inappropriately labeled "Problems of American Racial and Ethnic Minorities" at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, I formed the core ideas for my 1997 *American Sociological Review* (hereafter *ASR*) article "Rethinking Racism." After surveying the basic materials for the class, I was profoundly unhappy with the theoretical basis that all textbooks and, for that matter, most analysts of racial matters used: the prejudice approach (e.g., attitude or belief that operates at the individual level). Nevertheless, I found a few gems, such as an article by British scholar Charles Husbands (1984), David Wellman's important book *Portraits of White Racism* (1993), particularly his provocatively titled chapter "Prejudiced People Are Not the Only Racists in America," Omi and Winant's groundbreaking *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s* (1986), and Manning Marable's monumental *How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America* (1983), that gave me some of the tools and language I needed for

elaborating my structural theory of racism. Albeit, ultimately, none of these authors' theorizations gave me the clarity and satisfaction I was looking for, they all helped me figure out what was desperately needed in the field of racial ethnic matters: a coherent theory of how racism works, operates, and becomes institutionalized. For me, race was but an epiphenomenon of a system of racial domination, a system I believed emerged in modernity (Mitchell 2012).

For those interested in the history of knowledge in sociology, I will share some personal background that might explain the kind of work I have done in the field of race and ethnicity. At the time I was trying to theorize "racism" in a more rigorous

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way, I was transitioning from being a class-is-everything type Marxist[1] to a race scholar, fighting the monster of structuralism—a monster which I probably will never rid completely from my system, and working on a dissertation titled "Squatters, Politics, and State Reponses in Puerto Rico: The Political Economy of Squatting in Puerto Rico, 1900–1992" (1993), which had absolutely nothing to do with race. My dissertation topic surprises those who know me only as a professional sociologist (my life since 1993) but not those who knew me before coming to the United States to work on my PhD. In Puerto Rico I worked with squatters in a community called *Villa Sin Miedo* and was a minor leader in the student strike of 1981 (Picó, Pabón, and Alejandro 1982), which paralyzed the University of Puerto Rico–Río Piedras for four months. This political work shaped me forever even though I shifted my main focus of interest to the issue of racial justice. Second, all my formal academic work in Wisconsin was in the areas of development, political sociology, and class analysis. In fact, I never took a course on race in college or graduate school! Accordingly, my early theoretical work on racism has the strong imprint of a scholar in transition as I, much like my fellow Caribbean colleague and friend, Charles W. Mills, moved from class to race (Mills 2003). I slowly morphed into a "race scholar" from the late 1980s onward and did not feel as a member of the club until the middle part of the 1990s.

Now onto the four things I do in this essay. First, I restate the basics of what I said in "Rethinking Racism" (Bonilla-Silva 1997) and in several follow-up papers on racial theory. Second, I reflect on this work and its limitations. Third, I describe some of the work I have done since this early work. Fourth, I offer some suggestions about future directions on racial theory and in the field of racial and ethnic stratification.

RESTATEMENT

About half of my *ASR* piece was dedicated to a critique of the "prejudice problematic" and the major alternatives to this theorization—all which, despite their contributions, were still wedded to the prejudice perspective. My criticism revolved around the theoretical limitations derived from conceiving racism as an attitude or belief that operates at the individual level. Specifically, I outlined six major problems with this perspective, namely, (1) racism is viewed as external to the structure of society, (2) racism is psychologized, (3) racism is treated as a static phenomenon, (4) racism is regarded as irrational behavior, (5) the analysis of racism is limited to the "racists" and their overt racialized behavior, and (6) racism is seen as something societies have today because of the sins in their past (e.g., slavery, colonization, and genocide). My counter arguments to each of these limitations were that (1) racism is embedded in the structure of a society, (2) racism has a psychology, but it is fundamentally organized around a material reality (i.e., racism has what I characterized as a "material foundation"), (3) racism changes over time, (4) racism has a "rationality" (actors support or resist a racial order in various ways because they believe doing so is beneficial to them), (5) overt, covert, and normative racialized behaviors (following the racial etiquette of a racial order) are all paths that "racial subjects" (Goldberg 1997) have in any society, and (6) racism has a contemporary foundation and is not a mere remnant of the past (Bonilla-Silva 2001:25–36).

The prejudice approach so central in sociology and psychology is ultimately a direct reflection of the "common sense" view on racism and does not provide an adequate causal explanation of why whites follow the racial protocols of a society. If the core of the phenomenon coded as "racism" is prejudice, then education and time should have cured this disease a long time ago. People today are more educated than ever before in American history (Wagner and Zick 1995), yet "prejudice," particularly in its new forms, remains unabated in the United States and the world (Pettigrew 2008). Those who subscribe to the racism-is-prejudice view do all sorts of contortions to account for the continuation of racism in America. Some remain convinced that "cohort replacement" will take care of business—that is, that as the remaining racists die off, prejudice will dissipate (Schuman et al. 1997). Others insist that education is still the key to solve our racial troubles, while others regard the problem now as a regional one (Valentino and Sears 2005). But these analysts still base their assessments on answers to basic, dated questions on race (e.g., "If a black family with about your same income moves into your neighborhood, do you mind it a little, a lot, or not at all?"[2]), whereas the bulk of survey analysts on racial attitudes have reached a consensus: that a new type of prejudice orients how the majority of whites frames race issues in post–Civil Rights America (Sears, Sidanius, and Bobo 2000).

I named the alternative perspective for studying racism the "racialized social system" approach—not the most elegant or sticky term, but it was the

concept that came to me then. By this I meant "societies in which economic, political, social, and ideological levels are partially structured by the placement of actors in racial categories or races" (Bonilla-Silva 2001:37). The basis of my theory was that racialization[3] forms a real structure—that racialized groups are hierarchically ordered and "social relations" and "practices" emerge that fit the position of the groups in the racial regime. Those at the top of the order develop views and practices that support the racial status quo and those at the bottom develop views and practices that challenge it. Although "prejudice" is part of the structure of any racialized society, I argued then and still believe today that the analytical crux for understanding racism is uncovering the mechanisms and practices (behaviors, styles, cultural affectations, traditions, and organizational procedures) at the social, economic, ideological, and political levels responsible for the reproduction of racial domination. I labeled my approach as *materialist* because the views and behaviors of actors are fundamentally connected to their position a racial regime.

Racial ideology (the equivalent to "prejudice" in my theorization) is one of the central elements for the maintenance of racial order but cannot by itself guarantee racial domination. Why do I think that prejudice alone cannot guarantee racial domination? Because, as I wrote recently (Bonilla-Silva forthcoming),

> variations on the level and kind of prejudice among the individuals in a population would produce randomness in racial outcomes and, hence, domination would be contingent; the fact that racial domination is reproduced in everyday life in (mostly) consistent fashion reflects the fact that (most) actors follow the "path of least resistance" (Johnson 2006) and behave as expected. Of course, not all actors comply with the rules of engagement and follow the racial etiquette of a society which is why social control strategies and sanctions against transgressors are always part of any racial order. But it is because some actors do not play the game that the system is ultimately unstable and subject to change.

Another important point in my theorization was the idea that there is no one "racism" but rather variations in how racial regimes are organized and, hence, variations in the racial ideologies of those regimes. In the article I alluded to the history of the Unites States' racial regime and *grosso modo* suggested that it had gone through three periods, namely, slavery (conquest and genocide), Jim Crow, and what I labeled then as the "new racism" or the post–Civil Rights racial regime characterized by subtle, institutionalized, and seemingly nonracial practices and mechanisms to reproduce racial inequality (for a full description of the new racism and its typical mechanisms, see Chapter 4 in my *White Supremacy and Racism in the Post–Civil Rights Era*).

Last, I outlined a social constructionist view on races, but with a structuralist, Poulantzas-inspired bent. Races, I wrote, "are the effect of racial practices of opposition" at the various levels. And because races are always in a relation of opposition, *racial contestation* is the crucial driving force of any racialized social system. Although much of this contestation, as I elaborated, "is expressed at the individual level and disjointed, sometimes it becomes collective and general and can effect meaningful systemic changes in a society's racial organization" (Bonilla-Silva 2001:43). And, like most social constructionists, I also argued that although the meaning and content of the "races" change over time, "race is not a secondary category of group association" (Bonilla-Silva 2001:41).

It is interesting that few analysts, if any, have publicly[4] criticized the most controversial elements of my "Rethinking Racism" article: the notion that whites form a social collectivity (Lewis 2004) and that, as such, they develop a racial interest to preserve the racial status quo. Those claims, constitutive of my materialist interpretation of racial matters, were the core to my theory. The other critical race theories I reviewed in the piece and elsewhere (Bonilla-Silva 2001), namely, Feagin, Vera, and Batur's racism as "societal waste" (2001), Feagin's "systemic racism" (2006), Omi and Winant's "racial formation" (1986), and even the early "institutional racism" work of Kwame Toure (Stokely Carmichael) and Charles Hamilton (1967) all missed a clear explanation of why whites follow a racialized path in life, an explanation of why certain social actors behave in racist ways. For instance, the most sophisticated racial theory until the 1980s, Omi and Winant's racial formation approach,[5] does not explain why race is a vital social category. If racial formations exist in the world, they must exist for a reason. Absence of this explanation makes their theory incoherent, unstable, and dependent on elite-led *racial projects* (Omi and Winant 1994) (are nonelite whites nonracialized subjects with no interest in racial

domination?). This is why Omi and Winant end up saying things such as blacks can be racist (I have made a distinction between exhibiting prejudicial attitudes and commanding a racial structure [Bonilla-Silva 2014:220–1]) or that advocating for majority-minority districts is essentialist and racist. Blacks and people of color can be "prejudiced" (and they are, albeit surveys suggest they are less so than whites [Krysan 2011]), but so far no society has created a social order fundamentally organized around the logic and practice of black or brown supremacy. To be clear, I believe that any racial group could, given conditions and opportunities, create an order to their own benefit and that no racial group is morally superior (Graves 2001). But black or brown supremacy has not materialized, and given the historical resistance to racial domination, it is highly unlikely that the struggles against white supremacy will result in pro-black and pro-brown racial regimes. For example, in the aftermath of South Africa's Apartheid regime, a situation where one would expect a lot of animosity against whites, the ANC worked quite hard against the development of a race-based regime and insisted on democracy and racial reconciliation (Giliomee, Myburgh, and Schlemmer 2001).

To Omi and Winant's claim that majority-minority districts are an essentialist and racist practice, my response is that to get beyond race we must go *through* race (see Guinier 1994 on why we need majority-minority districts). Assuming that race-based policies are racist ignores that the goal of such policies is to advance racial justice and, more significantly, that these policies are needed because we still have a race-based reality. Therefore, the reason to have majority-minority districts, affirmative action, and many other race-based social policies in America is because race still matters, positively for whites and negatively for nonwhites.

Mainstream and some progressive social analysts cannot accept the argument that racism is structural because they are white and whites form a social collectivity (Lewis 2004) bonded by the fact that they receive benefits from the way the racial regime is organized. Social analysts are part of the racial regime in which they live; hence, their views are ultimately dependent on their position in the regime. I know this is a very controversial statement and want to be clear that some whites appreciate that racism is structural. What I am suggesting is that the identity of all analysts affects what they see and study and poses general limits on their ability to understand the world (Bonilla-Silva and

Zuberi 2008). This argument is not just about race but about all social locations (most men cannot truly appreciate that they benefit from patriarchy and most elite people cannot accept they are the beneficiaries of class privilege) and has been made by many others in the past (Mills 1997; Schmitt, Branscombe, and Brehm 2004).

REFLECTIONS

I wrote my race theory article almost twenty years ago; thus, with the benefit of time, maturity, and security (I am a full professor), I can now reflect on my arguments and evaluate areas that need work or modification. For the sake of simplicity, I outline my reflections below.

First, like almost all race and class theorists, I did not deal very well with the intersectionality challenge. Like many, I acknowledged that race, class, and gender matter; that the categories work together; and that in all modern societies there is a "matrix of domination" (Collins 1990). But I did not develop a theoretical apparatus to deal with intersectionality and make predictions about when race trumps class or gender or vice versa or whether these categories always have the same level of salience regardless of contexts. I will have a bit more to say about this in the section "New Directions."

Second, I wish I had spent more time explaining that racism as ideology ("prejudice") is also material and consequential.[6] But when I wrote the article I believed it was imperative to emphasize the material aspects of racism given that mainstream analysts were focusing (and still are) almost all their attention on the psychology of racism, that is, on the study of prejudice. Like Marx and Engels, I regret the one-sidedness in my earlier work,[7] but I hope that my later work on racial ideology—both theoretical and empirical (see next section)—is evidence of my belief about the centrality and, indeed, materiality of racial ideology.

Why do I say that racism as ideology is material and, therefore, consequential? Because ideology, racial or otherwise, is intrinsically connected to domination, as Marx and Engels argued in *The German Ideology* (1985). Ideology[8] is material force as we are all "interpellated" by it (Althusser 1972) and without racial ideology or prejudice (Bonilla-Silva 2001), Europeans could not have conquered, enslaved, and exploited people based on the claim that some people are different (better) than others (Hall 1997). They needed an ideology to convince them that the people they were

subordinating were inferior, lesser beings and that Europeans were the "chosen people" (Gossett 1997; Hannaford 1996). Last, racialized societies could not survive without ideology as it fulfills five vital social functions, namely, accounting for the existence of racial inequality, providing basic rules on engagement in interracial interactions, furnishing the basis for actors' racial subjectivity, shaping and influencing the views of dominated actors, and, by claiming universality, hiding the fact of racial domination (see Chapter 3 in *White Supremacy and Racism in the Post–Civil Right Era*). Hence, racial ideology, one may say, is *co-constitutive* of all racial domination situations. Albeit the prejudice of individuals[9] is not—and can never be—the basis for maintaining racial inequality, racial domination would not be possible without ideology.

Third, in a theory piece I could not explain and illustrate adequately how races and racial formations, as historical productions, are always "in the making" (Thompson 1963). I addressed briefly the making of races by saying,

> The placement of a group of people in a racial category stemmed initially from the interests of powerful actors in the social system (e.g., the capitalists class, the planter class, colonizers). After racial categories were employed to organize social relations in societies, however, race became an independent element in the operation of the system. (Bonilla-Silva 1997:473)

But this statement was not sufficient to guide analysts to do the necessary empirical work: to examine not just the historical making of race but also the continuous process of remaking races throughout history. Race has a "changing same" (Gilroy 1993) character, but it is in constant flux and we must examine its remaking in societies. This constant change (or constant remaking) is due to factors such as racial contestation, the changing demography of a racial formation (in our contemporary landscape, all races are going through monumental changes, a point I have addressed in my work on the Latin Americanization of racial stratification in the United States [Bonilla-Silva 2004]), and the impact of sociopolitical developments in the world-system (e.g., the Civil Rights movement in the United States empowered people of color in Latin American and Caribbean countries to question racism in their own countries).

These are the major weaknesses I see in how I framed racial things twenty years ago. But as real

as they are, they pale in comparison with what I think is still attractive about my theory: its material explanation of racial matters, which has opened space for much thinking and writing on race.

MY THEORETICAL WORK AFTER RACIALIZED SOCIAL SYSTEM ARGUMENT

After I finished my *ASR* piece, I worked frantically on two papers—a long monograph on what I called the "new racism" or the post–Civil Rights set of arrangements responsible for the reproduction of racial inequality (Bonilla-Silva and Lewis 1999) and a paper challenging our understanding of prejudice as racial attitudes, urging analysts to understand it as racial ideology (Bonilla-Silva 2003). The thrust of my argument in the latter piece was that prejudice is the ideological expression of whites' dominance (prejudice is thus a collective rather than an individual attribute). Albeit racially subordinated subjects develop their own ideology, because of the privileged location of the dominant race, their views become normative and thus dominant as we all are affected by what sediments as (racial) common sense.

The following are a few important highlights of my theorization. First, racial ideology is flexible as it must deal with new information to maintain its legitimation purposes. Thus, for example, when multiculturalism and diversity emerged as demands of people of color in the 1970s and 1980s, the demands were rearticulated and today diversity and multiculturalism have become ideological (Embrick forthcoming). Second, although segments of every racial group have more influence than others in shaping the views of their group (white capitalists or elite blacks), all the members of any racial group participate in the creation, elaboration, and transformation of a racial ideology. The agency of segments of racial groups and of individuals in the groups accounts for the John Browns ("race traitors" if you will) as well as for the Clarence Thomases of the world (sell-outs). Last, although the ideas of the "ruling race" are the ruling ideas of a social formation, racial contestation and individuals' agency produce crises, which means that ideological domination is never all-encompassing.

After I finished these projects, I was pushed by a student at Michigan[10] to apply for the now-defunct Detroit Area Study. I applied reluctantly, thinking it was a waste of my time, and somehow got the deal. The data I gathered from that project are the foundation for my book *Racism without*

Racists: Color-blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in America. In this book I deconstruct color-blind racism or the dominant racial ideology of the post–Civil Rights Era. This ideology, based on the frame I label as *abstract liberalism*,[11] is suave yet deadly as it reinforces the contemporary racial order of things in a "killing me softly" fashion. To illustrate how this ideology operates, I examine three recent racial incidents that transpired while I was working on this article. The first two were racist comments by two old white men: Mr. Bundy, the Nevada rancher who said that blacks would be better off picking cotton as slaves, and Mr. Sterling, the owner of the Clippers NBA team, who was taped telling his girlfriend he did not want her posing in pictures with blacks or bringing them to games. Both of these men were almost universally condemned as racist, and actions were taken immediately to address what they did (Bundy lost almost all the support he had from big honchos in the Republican party, and Sterling was fined and the Commissioner of the NBA is trying to force him to sell his team). In contrast, the Supreme Court's decision to uphold the Michigan ban against affirmative action, which is significantly more detrimental to the welfare of people of color, was not deemed racist and did not lead to any moral outrage or call to action from whites. The decision was not deemed racist because it was couched in color-blind racism's notions such as the idea that using race is itself racist ("How can one use race to try to move "beyond race"?[12]) or that including race as a factor in college admissions is not only "racism in reverse" but unnecessary as race is no longer a central factor in American life. The color-blind eyeglasses whites wear nowadays are tinted with the myth that race is no longer relevant in this nation. But their seemingly naïve color-blindness is just an ideology that legitimates contemporary racial inequality. Sadly, as all dominant ideologies, color-blind racism prevents whites from *seeing* and *understanding* our racial reality and, thus, whites and nonwhites, in general terms, see two very different realities (Norton and Sommers 2011). Accordingly, to challenge color-blind racism, the accompanying music of the "new racism" regime, will require more than just race dialogues, race workshops, tolerance, or clear and convincing data. We will need, as during the slavery and Jim Crow periods, social movements to fight against contemporary racial domination. This may not be sweet to the ears of most sociologists who believe that data are the antidote for every social disease, but it is derived from the

theorization I have advanced in my work as well as from the weight of the historical record.

In the past few years, after finishing a book on race and methodology with Tukufu Zuberi (2008) where we laid out some fundamental epistemological postulates with theoretical implications, I spent time working on a project dealing with the idea that there is something like a *racial grammar* organizing the normative field of racial transactions. Racial grammar, I have argued, facilitates racial domination and may be more central than coercion and other practices of social control for reproducing racial domination. On this I have written,

> The racial grammar helps accomplish this task [maintaining racial domination] by shaping in significant ways how we see/or don't see race in social phenomena, how we frame matters as racial or not race-related, and even how we feel about race matters. Racial grammar, I argue, is a *distillate* of racial ideology and, hence, of white supremacy. (Bonilla-Silva 2012:174)

I used seemingly disjointed examples (e.g., movies and TV shows, child abductions, school shootings, historically white colleges and universities, and others) to illustrate how the racial grammar works because I wanted to show that the grammar is "out there" affecting all sort of things. In terms of movies and television shows, I have argued that most are *white* yet they are read as universal, nonracial cultural artifacts. In contrast, when television shows or movies have a mostly minority cast, they are framed as black- or Latino-oriented products. In the paper and in a book chapter (Bonilla-Silva and Ashe 2014), I discuss how people of color are still underrepresented in white movies, how they play stereotypical roles, and how the plots reinforce a felicitous view of race matters in America (e.g., all interracial buddy movies begin with racial conflict but end with the main characters becoming the best of friends [Hughey 2009]). In the case of child abductions, I document how white children are overrepresented in news stories on these incidents even though 36 percent of all abductions involve children of color (Sedlak, Finkkelhor, and Hammer 2005). Similarly, when a white woman or young girl disappears, the white-dominated media reports the story intensely and consistently, which has led one analyst to label this as the "missing white woman syndrome" (Parks 2006). One grammatical element of these stories is that they are presented as universal stories of family pain and suffering, which would be the case if

stories of missing minority women are shown at the same rate. Sadly, but racially predictably, this is not the case. As I pointed out:

> When Laci Peterson was brutally murdered by her husband in Modesto, California, in 2002, Evelyn Hernandez, a Salvadorean woman also went missing at the same time: her decapitated torso, like Laci's, was found in San Francisco Bay. In 2005, Natalee Holloway, a young woman, disappeared while on vacation in Aruba; LaToyia Figueroa, a black pregnant Puerto Rican woman from Chester, Philadelphia, also went missing, like Natalee, in 2005. (Bonilla-Silva 2012:177–8)

In the conclusion of the article I suggested that we should fight the racial grammar because it affects, as one would expect, whites but also non-whites. Although the racially subaltern always develop alternative ways of thinking and framing race matters, the racial grammar, like smog, affects us all in an invisible way.[13] We people of color cry watching white movies, feel for the families of missing white women or of abducted white children, and suffer when a shooting happens in a white school. But we must understand that most of these feelings and cognitions are not reciprocated because all these things "are not processed by whites the same way as folks of color . . . in short, these things are for whites ungrammatical" (Bonilla-Silva 2012:186).

NEW DIRECTIONS

The area of race and ethnic relations has, as I pointed out at the beginning of this essay, a very weak foundation. In this section I highlight new directions for scholars in the field to think, research, theorize, and ponder. Most of the subjects I point out deserve theoretical work, others just deserve attention, and yet others are mostly of interest to me (but, hopefully, to other race scholars, too). For ease of communication, I outline each area below.

Anchoring Race Theory in Latin America and the Caribbean

Although some analysts still believe that race goes back to antiquity, most (me included) argue that race is a relatively modern social category (but see Heng 2011 for a convincing argument about its roots in the Middle Ages) that emerged with the racialization of the proto-proletariat out of the peasantries in European nations and, more significantly, with the racialization of the peoples of the "new

world" (Silverblatt 2004). Logically, then, racial theory should have been rooted in the experiences of the first peoples who experienced racialization, but that was not the case. Almost all of our racial and ethnic theorization has come from the United States or Europe (but not based on the racialization of the proto-proletariat). Even when Latin American and Caribbean writers have written about race, they have relied mostly on American or European theorizations. We would be in a better explanatory position today to understand not only race in the world-system, but even developments in the United States and Europe, if we were to go back and follow the King's advice in *Alice in Wonderland*, "begin at the beginning." Rooting our racial theory on the historical experiences of the oldest racial regimes in the world might help us understand things such as the importance of intermediate racial categories, the rationality of pigmentocractic regimes, the disappearance of race in discourse but not in practice, the seemingly nonconscious way in which race works in most of the world, and how color-blind racism, which is dominant in the Western nations of the world-system (Bonilla-Silva 2000), is but an offshoot of the racial democracy myth.

Epistemology and Race

Even though all are welcomed in "las viñas del Señor," I believe the bulk of the theoretical and empirical work needed to retool our field will come from subaltern analysts and progressive whites. This is because, as philosopher Charles Mills has argued, "hegemonic groups characteristically have experiences that foster illusory perceptions about society's functioning, whereas subordinate groups characteristically have experiences that (at least potentially) give rise to more adequate conceptualizations" (1998:28). Zuberi and I (2008) have argued for an epistemology of racial liberation to challenge "white logic" and "white methods," logic and methods that have reflected white supremacy and helped maintain racial domination. We have asked (and we hope young scholars of color and their allies have heard us) race scholars to decolonize their imagination, unlearn received truths on race, and conduct a "For-Us social science on racial affairs" (Zuberi and Bonilla-Silva 2008:338). But we are cognizant that mainstream race scholars, most of whom are white, will continue focusing on assimilation, insisting that ethnicity and boundaries are better conceptual tools to study race, and claiming that race is declining in significance while the world racism has made burns hot and heavy.

Racialization of Space and Organizations

Sociologists have done a pretty decent job documenting and theorizing how class (Marx, Lefebvre,[14] and many others) and gender (from the work of Joanne Acker 1990 onward) shape space and organizations. But we are behind in theorizing how race does the same. While geographers and urban planners have worked hard at theorizing and investigating the racialization of space, we have barely begun doing work on this matter despite our work on ghettos, the urban underclass, residential apartheid, and the like (but see Lewis and Diamond as well as Anderson in this special issue and the 2013 edited book by Twine and Gardener, *Geographies of Privilege*). My own small contribution in this area has been empirical—the investigation of the racialization of colleges and universities in the United States, which led me to label most as HWCUs (historically white colleges and universities), that is, arguing that their history, demography, curriculum, climate, and symbols and traditions embody, signify, and reproduce whiteness and systemic racism.

Intermediate Racial Categories

A problem that has been tackled (albeit not settled) in Latin America and the Caribbean but not in the United States and Europe is the issue of intermediate racial groups. Most American analysts doing research in Latin America and the Caribbean believe mulattos, *mestizos*, browns, *ladinos, pardos*, or *trigueños* are no different from blacks and Indians. Thus, they interpret their claims of not being black or Indian as examples of false racial consciousness. But other scholars believe these sectors have an independent middle social location; hence, they regard their behaviors and consciousness as expressions of their racial standing. In my work I have taken a position close to the latter group but have claimed (Bonilla-Silva 2014) that it is better to conceive of racial groups in the Americas as inhabiting "spaces"—that is, as sharing a location without necessarily crystalizing into a social collectivity. I have used this argument for my thesis about the Latin Americanization of racial stratification in the United States, that is, my claim that we are developing three racial spaces (white, honorary white, and the collective black) and that a pigmentocratic logic will be a central factor for locating racial actors. Whether you agree or disagree with my prediction, we must investigate where Arabs, white Latinos, Asian Americans, ethnic blacks, multiracial and biracial people, and others will fit in the more seemingly fluid American racial order that is emerging.

Racially Based Social Movements

The 1960s to early 1980s produced a fundamental shift in the theorization of social movements away from the collective behavior tradition (Smelser 1963) that emphasized the spontaneity of action to the organizational analysis of social action by authors in the Resource Mobilization tradition. The latter tradition, which used the Civil Rights Movements as its basic case study, unfortunately assumed that all movements have similar structures and goals. It is time for social movement analysts to rethink this position and contemplate the possibility that racially based social movements have their own specificities. And we have the foundational work of Aldon Morris (1984), but the task at a moment where most race-based social movements are happening in Latin America and elsewhere (Dixon and Burdick 2012; Mullings 2009; Yashar 2005) is to go against the (sociological) grain and consider whether, given the nature of racial domination, racially based movements deserve their own theorizations and concepts. (As an aside, the social movement party needs to be crashed as it has made generalizations that are problematic, such as the idea that all social movements, whether conservative or progressive, organize along similar lines.) Lacking a theory on race-based social movements may prevent us from adequately understanding how race rebellions emerge (Kelley 1996).

Intersectionality

I pointed out that most race and class theorists (most of whom are men) have done quite little work of theorizing "intersectionality." Intersectionality thinking has been mostly connected to the work done by women of color such as Collins, Nakano-Glenn, Crenshaw, Anzaldúa, Thornton Dill, and many others who have insisted that "forms of inequality are not additive, but intersecting" (Acker 2011:68). These scholars have recognized the limitations of the intersectionality challenge they have posed, such as (1) what are the definitions of the categories that intersect?, (2) if social categories are mutually reproduced, how does one study them?, and (3) what should be the level of analysis, macro, mezzo, or micro? At this juncture, intersectionality theory needs to move to the next level and

move from the concept as a metaphor (Collins) to a more formalized theory or approach to produce new methods for investigating inequality. On this, the empirical work of Nakano-Glenn (1992, 2002) and the methodological observations of McCall (2005) may prove pivotal in shifting directions and forcing all of us to dig deeper theoretically so that we can make predictions about when, where, and why X category will be more salient than Y and Z.

Deep Whiteness

W. E. B. Du Bois stated in his essay "The Souls of White Folk" that "whiteness is the ownership of the earth forever and ever, Amen!" and pondered about the "effect on a man or a nation when it comes passionately to believe such an extraordinary dictum?" (2003:56). Although we have developed a great amount of work on whiteness since "The Souls of White Folks" (e.g., the work of Cherryl Harris, Roediger, Lipsitz, Frankenberg, and many others), we have not answered Du Bois' poignant question. Even though Du Bois as well as Fanon (1967) provided a first-level answer by suggesting that in racialized regimes, whites develop a sense of superiority, "regular black folks"[15] have coined a term based on their experiences with white people[16] that may help deepen our understanding of whiteness: the "white shit." They use this term to critically capture things whites do and seem oblivious to, such as always wanting to educate people of color, always telling them how to pronounce words, and walking around as if they are God's gift to humanity. The term forces us to think about how the superiority complex of whites that Du Bois addressed, reinforced by years of living in a white supremacist world, has produced a *deep whiteness* that may not be seen as such even by "antiracist" whites (Wise 2008; Chapter 10 in Warren 2010; Hughey 2012). Accordingly, the investigation of deep whiteness, as part of a program to research the psychology of racial domination, is not only empirically important but politically fundamental. We cannot change the world of race if we do not know how deeply the practice of whiteness has affected those we wish to transform.

Racial Consciousness and Racial Behavior: On "Race Traitors"

Some analysts of racial attitudes have alluded to the issue of "racial consciousness" and how it leads to behavior congruent with it (Dawson 1994). But we know relatively little about why certain people do not exhibit the consciousness and behavior one would expect given their racial location. Why would anyone be a race traitor, whether white or non-white (but see Chapter 7 of my *Racism without Racists*)? What are the characteristics and experiences that lead some whites to relinquish the "wages of whiteness"? Is it class, education, socialization, activism[17] (O'Brien 2001), or what? (For the record, I have argued that education is not a sufficient factor to account for the existence of white race traitors.) And for black and brown folks, what factors lead them to become sell-outs? We know that there are tremendous financial benefits for those who sell out (Carbado and Gulati 2013); however, given these benefits, why do few people of color sell out? These are all burning questions that will require a refined structural racial theory to help us understand individual behavioral variations within racial groups (Robert Reece, one of my superb graduate students at Duke, is wrestling with this matter).

The Racialization of Immigrants

After the passage in 1986 of Reagan's Immigration Reform and Control Act, many sociology departments began looking for "immigration" scholars. This trend has grown exponentially since the late 1990s with the huge influx of Latinos from Mexico and Central America. But much of the immigration work has missed the boat by failing to address the racialization of immigrants. To date, few studies have sought to analyze the racialization of immigrants, that is, how some have been racialized "upward" (i.e., become white) and some "downward" (i.e., become non-white) (but see Roth 2012 and Molina 2014 for the racialization of Latinos). The focus so far has been mostly descriptive (how do they come and how are they received?), economistic (do we benefit from immigration?), and political (are immigrants good or bad for the nation?). Albeit these are all important matters, understanding the racialization of immigrants is central if we want to explore and predict how they will ultimately fit in the American racial landscape. (Bonus new direction: We have not done much work to theorize racialization itself and the bulk of the work, except for work on whiteness, has missed the agency of actors. Albeit race is mostly an externally imposed category, actors fight, reposition, and retool themselves as racial subjects and can even change their racial classification [e.g., traditional passing and the neo-passing of many Latinos, Middle Easterners, and Asian Americans]).

Racial Socialization

The literature on racial socialization suggests that minority youth undergo a more thorough race-based socialization that teaches them cultural values and prepares them for bias and, in some cases, concentrates on mainstreaming them (see review by Hughes et al. 2006). But this literature has mostly focused on African Americans and failed to examine how, in addition to direct parental socialization, racial socialization happens indirectly and contextually. For whites, racial socialization may be strong but is mostly accomplished indirectly through what I have called the "white habitus."[18] White parents do not need to teach their children how to be white as their children learn the white ways through nonverbal behaviors (Castelli, De Dea, and Nesdale 2008), from cultural productions such as TV shows and movies, from inhabiting their racialized spaces (Ausdale and Feagin 2001), and from normativity itself that is pegged to the views, values, and style of the white middle class. For youth of color, there may be two paths: a strong protective socialization when raised in mostly minority settings and a more assimilationist but problematic socialization when raised in the white habitus (see study by Barr and Neville 2014 for a consideration on context on racial socialization). My concerns here are twofold: (1) expanding the racial groups we study (*all* actors undergo racial socialization) and (2) exploring the different ways in which racial socialization is accomplished. The new studies in this area may help us understand how youth learn skills for interracial interaction and what factors account for their crossing boundaries in terms of friendship and romantic partnerships.

Interracial Relationships

There is a vast literature on interracial relationships couched on the old notion of "social distance" (Bogardus 1926). This literature assumes that as interracial marriage increases, social distance decreases and assimilation occurs. Of course, this literature has been parochial and not considered that in countries like Brazil, Puerto Rico, or Mexico, interracial unions have led not to democratic racial regimes but to more complex and, ultimately, more formidable orders. Besides their parochialism, analysts in this tradition have done relatively little to explain why interracial attraction occurs in the first place, how it works, and whether interracial unions truly challenge the foundation of a racial regime. Is interracial attraction a purely instrumental "exchange" (Blau 1964) in which

actors exchange social status or seek more beautiful partners?[19] Some analysts have suggested that interracial couples are not "beyond race" (Moran 2001; Nemoto 2009), but we need more systematic work on the social psychology of interracial attraction as well as on the practice of interracial unions—the analysis of interracial relations does not end after relations are coded as interracial.

Local Racial Formations

I have been thinking for some years about the subject of local racial formations, that is, about how racial formations operate at the local level. Omi and Winant (1994), Feagin, and I have made mostly macrolevel claims about race in America, but racial formation always has a local component; that is, race, like class and gender, is locally lived and experienced and may have enough variance to warrant theorizing why this is the case. For example, during the slavery period, there was more flexibility in some localities that in others (e.g., Louisiana was more flexible on race matters than Mississippi). This was also the case during the Jim Crow period when segregation was enforced differently between states but also between localities and in regions within a state (for the case of Mexicans in Texas, see Montejano 1987). In my view, some of the central factors determining racial formation at the local level are racial history, racial demography, and level of urbanicity. But this is just a preliminary sketch of factors, and what we desperately need is comparative research on localities to extract a robust theory that can predict how and why race will be organized and lived in various contexts.

CONCLUSION

In this article I restated the basics of my materialist theorization on racism, reflected on the limitations of my theory, discussed some of the work I have done since my *ASR* piece, and suggested new directions for critical race theory and research. This should be all but, unfortunately, we must still do some defensive work against the various incarnations of (mostly white) academic myopia. Hence, I conclude by pointing out some of the most pressing things we must address.

As part of the struggle for racial emancipation, we must still defend critical race theory. We have not done an all-out, robust critique of those who argue for replacing race with ethnicity or any other category (Bruebaker and Cooper 2000).[20] In the same vein, we must debate vigorously those

scholars who have claimed that racism does not exist in France and who have labeled "imperialist" those who talk about race in Latin America (this statement shows, more than anything else, their cunning ignorance)[21] as well as those who interpret racial matters as a matter of "boundaries" (a soft approach to understand racism). We must also, once again, deal with the biological school of race and its related, perhaps more dangerous cousin: the networks-based version of race work. When we "killed" sociobiology some years ago, we thought we were done. But like Freddy Krueger, the biological monstrous tradition on race has come back dressed in new attires: evolutionary sociology, evolutionary psychology, biodemography, etc. (for a recent critique of this tradition, see Roberts 2012). And far too many well-intended social scientists slip into this tradition by studying the "race effect" in crime, disease, and the like rather than the "racism effect." On the networks version of race work, I point out that stating that "in a diverse demographic context, racial and gender groups self-segregate"[22] hints at a biological explanation from the backdoor. Description is never neutral or innocent.

Last, I received a lot of criticism for my critique of the Obama phenomenon, but I firmly believe that the politics of postracialism he represents, which are intrinsically connected to color-blind racism and the Latin Americanization of racial stratification in the United States, must be resisted. Postracialism is the highest stage of white supremacy and is in fact the reality of most societies in the world-system (race in most societies in the world works without having a discursive space). To repeat a point I made before: We cannot get to *post*-racialism without first eliminating the racialism from our midst.

I now go "on the run" to take cover.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

NOTES

1. I am still a Marxist, but one who believes that race, gender, and other social cleavages are not an epiphenomenon of class. All societies have a complex "matrix of domination" (Collins 1990), and reducing everything to class does not allow us to develop the politics we need for progressive social change. But unlike Marxists who became disenchanted with Marx and Marxism after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, I never abandoned the claim that class is a central factor shaping all societies and the idea that a democratic socialist economic and political system is preferable to a capitalist one (Bonilla-Silva 2014).

2. Visit the following website to view the Variable RACOBJCT: Neighborhood Integrated by Same SES: http://www3.norc.org/GSS+Website/Browse+GSS+Variables/Subject+Index/.

3. Omi and Winant regard racialization as "the extension of racial meaning to a previously racially unclassified relationship, social practice, or group" (Omi and Winant 1994:64). I concur with this definition in general but add that the extension can also be to things (e.g., music, space, etc.) and, more significantly, that when groups are involved, racialization is accompanied by practices of racial domination. If someone is called black or white, it is because in that society the people labeled as such are already experiencing racialization—some as the dominant actors and others as the subordinated.

4. The debate I had in *ASR* in 1999 with Mara Loveman was not *directly* on these matters (see Loveman 1999 and Bonilla-Silva 1999). Of course, her claim that I was "essentializing" races indirectly challenged my materialist claim because if races are just one of the many names we can use to refer to people in groups, then groups themselves are not socially real. But her soft, boundary take on race and her sociology of group making did not advance our understanding of race (or of other social categories for that matter). It did make some white sociologists happy, but happiness is not a substitute for analysis.

5. Michael Omi and Howard Winant are colleagues and comrades in the struggle against racism. We have debated in various fora and I believe there is room for more. But I want to state for the historical record that our theoretical debate is not personal and that I admire and respect both of them for their long struggle for racial and social justice in America and in sociology. At the end of the day, we are closer theoretically and politically than our differences would suggest.

6. Although critics claim I do not take seriously prejudice or racial hostility (Bobo, etc.), I pointed out in my original article that racial ideology is relatively autonomous and can have "pertinent effects" and that it is not a mere "'superstructural' phenomenon (a mere reflection of the racialized system) but becomes the organizational map that guides actions of racial actors in society" and "becomes as real as the racial relations it organizes" (Bonilla-Silva 2001:45). More significantly, in the original manuscript I submitted to *ASR*, I included a long section explaining what I meant by "racial ideology." That piece appeared later as a chapter in my book *White*

Supremacy and Racism in the Post–Civil Rights Era (2001) and in an article in the *Journal of Political Ideologies* (2003). Last, my book *Racism without Racists* (2014) is an examination of the dominant racial ideology of contemporary America, which I think is clear and convincing evidence that I take ideology seriously.

7. Engels wrote in 1890, "We had to stress this leading principle [the economic aspect] in the face of opponents who denied it, and we did not always have the time, space or opportunity to do justice to the other factors that interacted upon each other" (in *Collected Works*, Volume 48:36, New York, International Publishers).

8. I define ideology in my work as "the *broad mental and moral frameworks, or 'grids,' that social groups use to make sense of the world, to decide what is right and wrong, true or false, important or unimportant*" (Bonilla-Silva, 2001:62). For more, see Chapter 3 in my *White Supremacy and Racism in the Post–Civil Rights Era*.

9. No domination project can be organized around prejudice as such a foundation cannot guarantee systemic rewards for some and disadvantages for others. Thus, capitalism is not organized around elitism, patriarchy around the sexist views of men, and racism on the prejudice of whites. And this is why I argue that racism is systemic and produces practices, behaviors, and mechanisms that are responsible for the reproduction of racial order.

10. The student was Tyrone A. Forman, now vice provost for diversity at the University of Illinois at Chicago. I must state for the record that had Professor Forman not pushed me, I would not have applied to the DAS and would have not gathered the data that appear in my book *Racism without Racists*.

11. This frame uses liberalism in an abstract and decontextualized manner to justify racial affairs in a seemingly nonracial way.

12. Justice Scalia, citing Justice Harlan's dissenting statement in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (the case that upheld segregation under the "separate but equal" doctrine), stated that the Constitution is color-blind and claimed the decision of the "people of Michigan" to amend their state Constitution was also a knock on racial discrimination and, therefore, that it would be "shameful for us to stand in their way" (*Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action* 2014:18).

13. On this, see Weber's idea about discipline as a way in which habituation produces automatic obedience (Weber 1978: 53) as well as Foucault's notion of power as having worked in the minds and bodies of subjects (Foucault 1981).

14. Sociologists should read Henri Lefebvre's *State, Space, World* (2009) if, for no other reason, because of his conceptualization of "social space."

15. This term was used by a student of mine in a heated discussion in a class where "ethnic blacks" with African and Caribbean backgrounds were talking trash about other blacks. The student, who was from Georgia, fought back by self-identifying as a "regular black" and taught ethnic blacks a lesson by highlighting their silly sense of superiority.

16. Tim Wise is right when he writes that, "Black people understand race long before white people do" (2008:23).

17. O'Brien's mentions three elements that can account for why some whites become antiracist (activism, empathy through approximating experiences, and the turning point). But some work on antiracist groups suggests that even the antiracists have racialized cognitions and share views with the "racists" (Daniels 1997; Hughey 2012).

18. By white habitus I refer to how whites' racial isolation conditions all their views, cognitions, and emotions on racial matters.

19. In black communities it is commonplace to hear about brothers dating ugly white women, and some white men admit that by dating across the color line they can develop relationships with women who are more beautiful than those within their own racial group.

20. In their writing they show, without intending, their belonging to the white racial group. I ask readers to check the people whom they thank in their acknowledgements and you will see my point.

21. For a critique of these scholars, see French (2000) and Wieviorka (2004). For more on racism in France, see Bourdieu and Wacquant (1999) and for more on the Latin American case, see Hanchard (1994).

22. This is an invented quote, but not too far from what some of the people in this tradition claim. What these analysts fail to understand is that contexts such as universities or workplaces are racialized; hence, what they label as "self-segregation" is the product of both power dynamics in these contexts and the history of the groups before entering these contexts.

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