

THE HEART OF RACISM

J.L.A. Garcia

The phenomenon of racism having plagued us for many centuries now, it is somewhat surprising to learn that the concept is so young. The second edition of *The Oxford English Dictionary* (1989) dates the earliest appearances of the term 'racism' only to the 1930s.¹ During that decade, as the shadow of Nazism lengthened across Europe, social thinkers coined the term to describe the ideas and theories of racial biology and anthropology to which the Nazi movement's intellectual defenders appealed in justifying its political program. Thus, Ruth Benedict, in a book published in 1940, called racism "the dogma that one ethnic group is condemned by nature to congenital inferiority and another group is destined to congenital superiority"² (Benedict, 1940).

These origins are reflected in the definition that the *O.E.D.* still offers: "The theory that distinctive human characteristics and abilities are determined by race."³ Textbook definitions also echo this origin: "Racism—a doctrine that one race is superior" (Schaefer, 1990: p. 27). Recently, however, some have argued that these definitions no longer capture what people mean when they talk of racism in the moral and political discourse that has become the term's primary context. Some on the political left argue that definitions reducing racism to people's beliefs do not do justice to racism as a sociopolitical reality. Robert Miles records the transition in the thought of Ambalvaner Sivanandan, director of Britain's Institute of Race Relations, who abandoned his earlier account of racism (1973) as "an explicit and systematic ideology of racial superiority" because later (1983) he came to think that "racism is about power not prejudice." Eventually (1985), he saw racism as "structures and institutions with power to discriminate" (1985). (Quoted at Miles, 1989: p. 54.)⁴ From the right, the philosopher Antony Flew has suggested that, to identify racism with "negative beliefs" about "actual or alleged matters of fact" is a "sinister and potentially dangerous thing"—it "is to demand, irrespective of any evidence which might be turned up to the contrary, that everyone must renounce certain disapproved propositions."⁵ Flew worries that this poses a serious threat to intellectual freedom, and proposes a behavioral understanding of 'racism' as "mean-

ing the advantaging or disadvantaging of individuals for no better reason than that they happen to be members of this racial group rather than that."

I agree with these critics that in contemporary moral and political discourse and thought, what we have in mind when we talk of racism is no longer simply a matter of beliefs.⁶ However, I think their proposed reconceptions are themselves inadequate. In this paper, I present an account of racism that, I think, better reflects contemporary usage of the term, especially its primary employment as both descriptive and evaluative, and I sketch some of this view's implications for the morality of race-sensitive discrimination in private and public life. I will also briefly point out some of this account's advantages over various other ways of thinking about racism that we have already mentioned—racism as a doctrine, as a socioeconomic system of oppression, or as a form of action. One notable feature of my argument is that it begins to bring to bear on this topic in social philosophy points made in recent criticisms of modernist moral theory offered by those who call for increased emphasis on the virtues. (This voice has hitherto largely been silent in controversies within practical social philosophy.)

I. A Volitional Conception of Racism

Kwame Anthony Appiah rightly complains that, although people frequently voice their abhorrence of racism, "rarely does anyone stop to say what it is, or what is wrong with it" (Appiah, 1990: 3). This way of stating the program of inquiry we need is promising, because, although racism is not essentially "a moral doctrine," *pace* Appiah, it is always a moral evil⁷ (Appiah, 1990: 13). No account of what racism is can be adequate unless it at the same time makes clear what is wrong with it. How should we conceive racism, then, if we follow Appiah's advice "to take our ordinary ways of thinking about race and racism and point up some of their presuppositions"? (Appiah, 1990: 4) My proposal is that we conceive of racism as fundamentally a vicious kind of racially based disregard for the welfare of certain people. In its central and most vicious form, it is a hatred, ill-will, directed against a person or persons on account of their assigned race. In a derivative form, one is a racist when one either does not care at all or does not care enough (i. e., as much as morality requires) or does not care in the right ways about people assigned to a certain racial group, where this disregard is based on racial classification. Racism, then, is something that essentially involves not our beliefs and their rationality or irrationality, but our wants, intentions, likes, and dislikes and their distance from the moral virtues.⁸ Such

a view helps explain racism's conceptual ties to various forms of *hatred* and contempt. (Note that 'contempt' derives from 'to condemn'—not to care (about someone's needs and rights).)

It might be objected that there can be no such thing as racism because, as many now affirm, "there are no races." This objection fails. First, that 'race' is partially a social construction does not entail that there are no races. One might even maintain, though I would not, that race-terms, like 'person', 'preference', 'choice', 'welfare', etc., and, more controversially, such terms as 'reason for action', 'immoral', 'morally obligatory', etc. may be terms that, while neither included within nor translatable into, the language of physics, nevertheless arise in such a way and at such a fundamental level of social or anthropological discourse that they should be counted as real, at least, for purposes of political and ethical theory.⁹ Second, as many racial anti-realists concede, even if it were true that race is unreal, what we call racism could still be real (Appiah, 1992: p. 45). What my account of racism requires is not that there be races, but that people make distinctions in their hearts, whether consciously or not on the basis of their (or others') racial classifications. That implies nothing about the truth of those classifications.¹⁰

Lawrence Blum raises a puzzling question about this. We can properly classify a person S as a racist even if *we* do not believe in races. But what if S herself does not believe in them? Suppose S is a White person who hates Black people, but picks them out by African origin, attachment to African cultures, residence or rearing in certain U. S. neighborhoods, and so on. Should we call S racist if she does not hate Black people *as such* (i. e., on the basis of her assigning them to a Black race), but hates all people she thinks have been corrupted by their internalizing undesirable cultural elements from Harlem or Watts, or from Nairobi, or the Bunyoro? I think the case underdescribed. Surely, a person can disapprove of a culture or a family of cultures without being racist. However, cultural criticism can be a mask for a deeper (even unconscious) dislike that is defined by racial classifications. If the person transfers her disapproval of the group's culture to contempt or disregard for those designated as the group's members, then she is already doing something morally vicious. When she assigns all the groups disliked to the same racial classification, then we are entitled to suspect racism, because we have good grounds to suspect that her disavowals of underlying racial classifications are false. If S hates the cultures of various Black groups for having a certain feature, but does not extend that disapproval to other cultures with similar features, then that strongly indicates racism.

Even if she is more consistent, there may still be racism, but of a different sort. Adrian Piper suggests that, in the phenomenon she calls

'higher order discrimination,' a person may claim to dislike members of a group because she thinks they have a certain feature, but really disapprove of the feature because she associates it with the despised group. This 'higher order discrimination' would, of course, still count as racist in my account, because the subject's distaste for the cultural element derives from and is morally infected by race-based disregard.

We should also consider an additional possibility. A person may falsely attribute an undesirable feature to people she assigns to a racial group because of her disregard for those in the group. This will often take the forms of exaggeration, seeing another in the worst light, and withholding from someone the benefit of the doubt. So, an anti-Semite may interpret a Jew's reasonable frugality as greed; a White racist may see indolence in a Black person's legitimate resistance to unfair expectations of her, and so on.

Thinking of racism as thus rooted in the heart fits common sense and ordinary usage in a number of ways. It is instructive that contemptuous White racists have sometimes called certain of their enemies 'Nigger-lovers.' When we seek to uncover the implied contrast-term for this epithet, it surely suggests that enemies of those who "love" Black people, as manifested in their efforts to combat segregation, and so forth, are those who hate Black people or who have little or no human feelings toward us at all. This is surely born out by the behavior and rhetoric of paradigmatic White racists.

This account makes racism similar to other familiar forms of inter-group animosity. Activists in favor of Israel and of what they perceive as Jewish interests sometimes call anti-Semites 'Jew-haters.' Wistrich, for example, says that "'anti-Semitism,' which never really meant hatred of [all] Semites, but rather hatred of Jews, has come to be accepted in general usage as denoting all forms of hostility toward Jews and Judaism throughout history" (Wistrich, 1992: p. xv). He opposes this expansion of meaning, especially extending the term to cover opposition to the religion of Judaism. According to him, those who coined the term for their own doctrines were "not opposed to Jews on religious grounds, but claimed to be motivated by social, economic, political, or 'racial' considerations."¹¹ What is important for us is to note that *hostility* toward Jews is the heart of anti-Semitism.

It is also worth noting that, immediately prior to the coining of the term 'racism', even some of the early anti-Nazi polemicists referred to their subject as 'race hatred'.¹² This suggests such thinkers may have realized that the true problem was not so much the doctrines of the scientists of race-biology and race-anthropology, but the antipathy these doctrines rationalized and encouraged.

Racism also seems, intuitively, to be structurally similar to xenopho-

bia and the anti-homosexual malice sometimes called 'homophobia'. However, xenophobia is commonly understood not primarily as consisting in holding certain irrational beliefs about foreigners, but in *hatred* or disregard of them. This suggests that racism should, as I here claim, be considered a form of disaffection.¹³ The gay activists Kirk and Madsen urge that we reclassify some so-called 'homophobes' as 'homohaters'. They cite studies indicating that many people who detest homosexuals betray none of the telltale physiological signs of phobia, and remind us that what is at stake is primarily a hostility toward homosexual persons on account of their homosexuality.¹⁴ Again, by analogy, racism should be deemed a form of disregard.

On my account, racism retains its strong ties to intolerance. This tie is uncontroversial. Marable, for example, writes of "racism, and other types of intolerance, such as anti-Semitism . . . [and] homophobia. . ." (Marable, 1992: 3, 10). Intolerant behavior is to be expected if racism is hatred.¹⁵ How, after all, can one tolerate those whom one wants to injure, and why ought one to trouble oneself to tolerate those whom one disregards?

Such an account of racism as I propose can both retain and explain the link between the two "senses of" racism found in some dictionaries: (i) belief in superiority of R1s to R2s, and (ii) inter-racial 'antagonism'.¹⁶ I suggest that we think of these as two elements within most common forms of racism. In real racists, I think, (ii) is normally a ground of (i) (though sometimes the reverse is true), and (i) is usually a rationalization of (ii). What is more important is that (i) may not be logically *necessary* for racism. (In some people, it may nonetheless be a psychological necessity.) However, even when (ii) is a result of (i), it is (ii) and not (i), that makes a person a racist. (Logically, not causally.)

My view helps explain why racism is always immoral. As Stephen Nathanson says, "Racism, as we ordinarily speak of it, . . . implies . . . a special disregard for other groups. Hence, there is a sense in which racism is necessarily immoral" (Nathanson, 1992: p. 9).¹⁷ Its immorality stems from its being opposed to the virtues of benevolence and justice. Racism is a form of morally insufficient (i. e., vicious) concern or respect for some others. It infects actions in which one (a) tries to injure people assigned to a racial group because of theirXXXXX, or (b) objectionably fails to take care *not* to injure them (where the agent accepts harm to R1s because she disregards the interests and needs of R1s because they are R1s). We can also allow that an action is racist in a derivative and weaker sense when it is less directly connected to racist disregard, for example, when someone (c) does something that (regardless of its intended, probable, or actual effects) stems in significant part from a belief or apprehension about other people, that one has (in significant part)

because of one's disaffection toward them because of (what one thinks to be their) race. Racism, thus, will often offend against justice, not just against benevolence, because one sort of injury to another is withholding from her the respect she is owed and the deference and trust that properly express that respect. Certain forms of paternalism, while benevolent in some of their goals, may be vicious in the means employed. The paternalist may deliberately choose to deprive another of some goods, such as those of (licit) freedom and (limited) self-determination in order to obtain other goods for her. Here, as elsewhere, the good end need not justify the unjust means. Extreme paternalism constitutes an instrumentally malevolent benevolence: one harms A to help her. I return to this below in my discussion of 'Kiplingesque' racism.

If, as I maintain, racism is essentially a form of racially focused ill-will or disregard (including disrespect), then that explains why "'Racism' is inescapably a morally loaded term. To call a person a racist is to impugn his character by suggesting deliberate, malign discrimination . . . " (Lichtenberg, 1992: p. 5).

My account of racism suggests a new understanding of racist behavior and of its immorality. This view allows for the existence of both individual racism and institutional racism. Moreover, it makes clear the connection between the two, and enables us better to understand racism's nature and limits. Miles challenges those who insist on talking only of 'racisms' in the plural to "specify what the many different racisms have in common" (Miles, 1989: p.65). This may go too far. Some philosophers have offered respected accounts of common terms that seem not to require that every time A is an F and B is an F, then A and B must have some feature in common (other than that of being-an-F, if that *is* a feature). Nominalism and Wittgenstein's "family resemblance" view are two examples. However, if we are not dealing with two unrelated concepts the English terms for which merely happen to have the same spelling and pronunciation (like the 'bank' of a river and the 'bank' that offers loans), then we should be able to explain how the one notion develops out of the other.

Some think that institutions, etc. are racist when they are structures of racial domination, and that individual beliefs, etc. are racist when they express, support, or justify racial superiority. Both, of course, involve denying or violating the equal dignity and worth of all human beings independent of race. This sort of approach contains some insight. However, it leaves unclear how the two levels or types of racism are related, if they are related at all. Thus, such views leave us rather in the dark about what it is in virtue of which each is a form of racism. Some say that institutional racism is what is of central importance; individual racism, then, matters only inasmuch as it perpetuates institutional

racism. I think that claim reverses the order of moral importance, and I shall maintain that the individual level has more explanatory importance.

At the individual level, it is in desires, wishes, intentions, and the like that racism fundamentally lies, not in actions or beliefs. Actions and beliefs are racist in virtue of their *coming from* racism in the desires, wishes, and intentions of individuals, not in virtue of their *leading to* these or other undesirable effects. Racism is, for this reason, an interesting case study in what we might call 'infection' (or 'input-centered' or backward-looking) models of wrongdoing, in contrast to the more familiar consequentialist and other result-driven approaches. Infection models of wrongdoing—according to which an action is wrong because of the moral disvalue of what goes into it rather than the nonmoral value of what comes out of it—seem the best approach within virtues-based ethics. In such ethical systems, actions are immoral insofar as they are greedy, arrogant, uncaring, lustful, contemptuous, or otherwise corrupted in their motivational sources.¹⁸ Finally, desires, wishes, and intentions *are* racist when they either are, or in certain ways reflect, attitudes that withhold from people, on the basis of their being assigned to a particular race, levels or forms of good-will, caring, and well-wishing that moral virtue demands.¹⁹ At its core, then, racism consists in vicious attitudes toward people based on their assigned race. From there, it extends to corrupt the people, individual actions, institutional behavior, and systemic operations it infects. Some, however, seem not to think of racism in this way, as something that, like cruelty or stupidity, can escalate from its primary occurrence in individual people to infect collective thought and decision-making of organizations and, from there, to contaminate the behavior of institutions as well. So to think of it is to see the term as not merely descriptive and evaluative, but also as having some explanatory force.

How is institutional racism connected to racism within the individual? Let us contrast two pictures. On the first, institutional racism is of prime moral and explanatory importance. Individual racism, then, matters (and, perhaps, occurs) only insofar as it contributes to the institutional racism which subjugates a racial group. On the second, opposed view, racism within individual persons is of prime moral and explanatory import, and institutional racism occurs and matters because racist attitudes (desires, aims, hopes, fears, plans) infect the reasoning, decision-making, and action of individuals not only in their private behavior, but also when they make and execute the policies of those institutions in which they operate. I take the second view. Institutional racism, in the central sense of the term, occurs when institutional behavior stems from (a) or (b) above or, in an extended sense, when it

stems from (c). Obvious examples would be the infamous Jim Crow laws that originated in the former Confederacy after Reconstruction. Personal racism exists when and insofar as a person is racist in her desires, plans, aims, etc., most notably when this racism informs her conduct. In the same way, institutional racism exists when and insofar as an institution is racist in the aims, plans, etc., that people give it, especially when their racism informs its behavior. Institutional racism begins when racism extends from the hearts of individual people to become institutionalized. What matters is that racist attitudes contaminate the operation of the institution; it is irrelevant what its original point may have been, what its designers meant it to do. If it does not operate from those motives (at time T1), then it does not embody institutional racism (at T1). On this view, some phenomena sometimes described as institutionally racist will turn out not to be properly so describable, but others not normally considered to be institutionally racist will fit the description. (I return to this below.)

Not only is individual racism of greater explanatory import, I think it also more important morally. Those of us who see morality primarily as a matter of suitably responding to other people and to the opportunities they present for us to pursue value will understand racism as an offense against the virtues of benevolence and justice in that it is an undue restriction on the respect and goodwill owed people. (Ourselves as well as others; racism, we must remember, can take the form of self-hate.) Indeed, as follows from what I have elsewhere argued, it is hard to render coherent the view that racist hate is bad mainly for its bad effects. The sense in which an action's effects are bad is that they are undesirable. But that it is to say that these effects are evil things to want and thus things the desire for which is evil, vicious. Thus, any claim that racial disadvantage is a bad thing presupposes a more basic claim that race-hatred is vicious. What is more basic morally is also morally more important in at least one sense of that term.²⁰ Of course, we should bear in mind that morality is not the same as politics. What is morally most important may not be the problem whose rectification is of greatest political urgency.

II. Implications and Advantages

There are some noteworthy implications and advantages of the proposed way of conceiving of racism.

First, it suggests that prejudice, in its strict sense of 'pre-judgment', is not essential to racism, and that some racial prejudice may not be racist, strictly speaking. Racism is not, on this view, primarily a cognitive

matter, and so it is not in its essence a matter of how or when one makes one's judgments. Of course, we can still properly call prejudiced-based beliefs racist in that they *characteristically* either are rooted in prior racial disregard, which they rationalize, or they foster such disregard.²¹ Whether having such a belief is immoral in a given case will depend in large part on whether it is a rationalization for racial disaffection. It may depend on *why* the individual is so quick to think the worst of people assigned to the other racial group. Of course, even when the order is reversed and the prejudice does not whitewash a prior and independent racial disaffection, but causes a subsequent one, the person will still be racist because of that disaffection, even if she is not racist in holding that belief, that is, even if she does not hold it for what we might call 'racist reasons.' My guess is that, in most people who have been racists for some expanse of time, the belief and the disregard will reinforce each other.

A person may hold prejudices about people assigned to a race without herself being racist and without it being racist of her to hold those prejudices.²² The beliefs themselves can be called 'racist' in an extended sense because they are characteristically racist. However, just as one may make a wise move without acting wisely (as when one makes a sound investment for stupid reasons), so one may hold a racist belief without holding it for racist reasons. One holds such a belief for racist reasons when it is duly connected to racial disregard: when it is held in order to rationalize that disaffection or when contempt inclines one to attribute undesirable features to people assigned to a racial group. One whose racist beliefs have no such connection to any racial disregard in her heart does not hold them in a racist way and if she has no such disregard, she is not herself a racist, irrespective of her prejudices.

Second, when racism is so conceived, the person with racist feelings, desires, hopes, fears, and dispositions is racist even if she never acts on these attitudes in such a way as to harm people designated as members of the hated race. (This is not true when racism is conceived as consisting in a system of social oppression.) It is important to know that racism can exist in (and even pervade) societies in which there is no systematic oppression, if only because the attempts to oppress fail. Even those who think racism important primarily because of its effects should find this possibility of inactive racism worrisome for, so long as this latent racism persists, there is constant threat of oppressive behavior.

Third, on this view, race-based preference (favoritism) need not be racist. *Preferential* treatment in affirmative action, while race-based, is not normally based on any racial disregard. This is a crucial difference between James Meredith's complaint against the University of Mississippi and Allan Bakke's complaint against the University of California at

Davis Medical School (see Appiah, 1990: p. 15). Appiah says that what he calls "Extrinsic racism has usually been the basis [1] for treating people worse than we otherwise might, [2] for giving them less than their humanity entitles them to" (Appiah, 1992: 18). What is important to note here is that (1) and (2) are not at all morally equivalent. Giving someone less than her humanity entitles her to is morally wrong. To give someone less than we could give her, and even to give her less than we would if she (or we, or things) were different is to treat her "worse [in the sense of 'less well'] than we otherwise might." However, the latter is not normally morally objectionable. Of course, we may not deny people even gratuitous favors out of hatred or contempt, whether or not race-based, but that does not entail that we may not licitly choose to bestow favors instead on those to whom we feel more warmly. That I feel closer to A than I do to B does not mean that I feel hatred or callousness toward B. I may give A more than A has a claim to get from me and more than I give B, while nevertheless giving B everything to which she is entitled (and even more). Thus, race-based favoritism does not have to involve (2) and need not violate morality.

Appiah recognizes this fact, saying that 'intrinsic racism,' because of its ties to solidarity, fraternity, and even "family feeling," is often merely "the basis for acts of supererogation, the treatment of others better than we otherwise might, better than moral duty demands of us" (Appiah, 1990: 11). However, he warns ominously, "This is a contingent fact. There is no logical impossibility in the idea of racists whose moral beliefs lead them to feelings of hatred for other races while leaving them no room for love for members of their own" (Appiah, 1990: 12). But why should the fact that this remains a logical possibility incline us to condemn racial preference? When the possibility is actualized, and someone feels, not special regard for those who share assignment to her own racial group (along with adequate affection for people assigned to other groups), but hatred for those allocated to other groups (whether or not there is affection for people allocated to her own), then we have illicit antipathy not licit favoritism. When this ugly possibility is not actualized, however, then we need some independent argument against favoritism.²³ Appiah invokes Kant for this purpose (Appiah, 1992: 18; 1990: 14, 15). However, the invocation is insufficient. There is no obvious inconsistency in willing that a moderate form of race preference, like other moderate forms of kinship preference, should be a universal law of nature, as Kant's own principal test of universalization requires.²⁴

Discrimination *on the basis of* race, then, need not be immoral. It is discrimination *against* people because of their racial assignment that cannot but be immoral. Christopher Jencks says "we need formal discrimination in favor of blacks to offset the effects of persistent infor-

mal discrimination against them."²⁵ Suppose Jencks' claim about our need for discrimination is true. Can racial favoritism ever be justified? It will help to remind ourselves that discriminating *in favor of* R1s need not entail discriminating *against* R2s.²⁶ The latter consists in acting either (i) with intention of harming R2s, or (ii) with hard-hearted racist indifference to the action's foreseeable ill effects on R2s,²⁷ or (iii) from racist beliefs held because of racist disaffection. Similarly, racial self-segregation need not be immoral. It may be especially suspect when White people do it, because we have good historical reason to be suspicious that what is presented as merely greater-than-morally-required concern for fellow White people really involves less-than-morally-required concern for Black people. It may also be ill-advised even when it is Black people who do it. However, in neither case must it be immoral.²⁸ In neither case must it be racist.

According to this conception of racism, *de jure* racial segregation violates political morality primarily because (and, therefore, when) it expresses a majority's (or minority's) racial indifference, contempt, or ill-will. It is therein vicious, offending against the virtues of both benevolence and justice. However, it need not have such origin, a fact illustrated by recent suggestions to establish separate academies to deal with the educational challenges confronting young Black males, and by efforts to control the racial demography of public housing projects in order to avoid problems that have sometimes arisen when such projects became virtually all-Black or virtually all-White. Whatever the social merit of such proposals, in cases like these, even if the segregation in the end proves immoral, this is not intrinsic. There must be some special additional factor present that makes it immoral. *De facto* racial segregation (mere separation or disproportional representation) need not be morally problematic at all when it happens to result from decently and responsibly motivated individual or social actions.²⁹ However, it will be immoral if its bad effects on, say, R1s are accepted out of racist hard-heartedness, that is, out of racist indifference to the harm done R1s. This will sometimes, but not always, be the case when harms are disproportionately distributed across the various racial groupings to which people are assigned.

Fourth, on this view of racism, racist discrimination need not always be conscious. The real reason why person P1 does not rent person P2 a room may be that P1 views P2 as a member of a racial group R2, to whose members P1 has an aversion. That may be what it is about P2 that turns P1 off, even if P1 convinces herself it was for some other reason that she did not rent. As racist discrimination need not always be conscious, so it need not always be intended to harm. Some of what is called 'environmental racism,' especially the location of waste dumps so as

disproportionally to burden Black people, is normally not intended to harm anyone at all. Nevertheless, it is racist if, for example, the dumpers regard it as less important if it is 'only,' say, Black people who suffer. However, it will usually be the case that intentional discrimination based on racist attitudes will be more objectionable morally, and harder to justify, than is unintentional, unconscious racist discrimination. *Racial* discrimination is not always racist discrimination. The latter is always immoral, because racism is inherently vicious and it corrupts any differentiation that it infects. The former—racial discrimination—is not inherently immoral. Its moral status will depend on the usual factors—intent, knowledge, motive, and so on—to which we turn to determine what is vicious.

This understanding of racism also offers a new perspective on the controversy over efforts to restrict racist "hate speech." Unlike racially *offensive* speech, which is defined by its (actual or probable) effects, racist *hate* speech is defined by its origins, i. e., by whether it expresses (and is thus an act of) racially directed hate. So we cannot classify a remark as racist hate speech simply on the basis of *what* was said, we need to look to *why* the speaker said it. Speech laden with racial slurs and epithets is presumptively hateful, of course, but merely voicing an opinion that members of R1 are inferior (in some germane way) will count as racist (in any of the term's chief senses, at least) only if, for example, it expresses an opinion held from the operation of some predisposition to believe bad things about R1s, which predisposition itself stems in part from racial disregard.³⁰ This understanding of racist hate speech should allay the fears of those who think that racial oversensitivity and the fear of offending the oversensitive will stifle the discussion of delicate and important matters beneath a blanket of what is called 'political correctness.' Racist hate speech is defined by its motive forces and, given a fair presumption of innocence, it will be difficult to give convincing evidence of ugly motive behind controversial opinions whose statement is free of racial insults.

III. Some Difficulties

It may seem that my view fails to meet the test of accommodating clear cases of racism from history. Consider some members of the southern White aristocracy in the antebellum or Jim Crow periods of American history—people who would never permit racial epithets to escape their lips, and who were solicitous and even protective of those they considered 'their Negroes' (especially Black servants and their kin), but who not only acquiesced in, but actively and strongly supported the

social system of racial separatism, hierarchy, and oppression. These people strongly opposed Black equality in the social, economic, and political realms, but they appear to have been free of any vehement racial hatred. It appears that we should call such people racists. The question is: Does the account offered here allow them to be so classified?"

This presents a nice difficulty, I think, and one it will be illuminating to grapple with. There is, plainly, a kind of hatred that consists in opposition to a person's (or group's) welfare. Hatred is the opposite of love and, as to love someone is to wish her well (i. e., to want and will that she enjoy life and its benefits), so one kind of hatred for her is to wish her ill (i. e., to want and will that she not enjoy them). It is important to remember, however, that not all hatred is wishing another ill for its own sake. When I take revenge, for example, I act from hate, but I also want to do my enemy ill for a purpose (to get even). So too when I act from envy. (I want to deprive the other of goods in order to keep her from being better off than I, or from being better off than I wish her to be.) I have sometimes talked here about racial "antipathy" ("animosity," "aversion," "hostility," etc.), but I do not mean that the attitude in question has to be especially negative or passionate. Nor need it be notably ill-mannered or crude in its expression. What is essential is that it consists in either opposition to the well-being of people classified as members of the targeted racial group or in a racially based callousness to the needs and interests of such people.

This, I think, gives us what we need in order to see part of what makes our patricians racists, for all their well-bred dispassion and good manners. They stand against the advancement of Black people (as a group, even if they make an exception for 'their Negroes'). They are averse to it as such, not merely doing things that have the *side* effect of setting back the interests of Black people.² Rather, they *mean* to retard those interests, to keep Black people "in their place" relative to White people. They may adopt this stance of active, conscious, and deliberate hostility to Black welfare either simply to benefit themselves at the expense of Black people or out of the contemptuous belief that, because they are Black, they merit no better. In any event, these aristocrats and their behavior can properly be classified as racist.

Recall, too, that even if the central case of racism is racial hatred (male-volence), the racial disaffection that constitutes racism also extends to racial callousness, heartlessness, coldness, or uncaring. (We might group these as the vice of nonbenevolence). These too are racism, for it is surely vicious morally to be so disposed toward people classified as belonging to a certain racial group that one does not care whether they prosper or suffer, and is thus indifferent to the way in which the side effects of one's action disadvantage them. Indeed, I think that, as

described, our genteel, oppressive members of the gentry go beyond this to manifest a kind of practical hostility: they consciously and actively act to suppress Black people. However, even those who do not go that far are still racist. (Dr. King famously reminded us that to the extent that the good are silent in the face of evil, they are not (being) good). Morally, much will depend on what these agents mean to do. Do they seek to deprive Black people of various positions and opportunities precisely because they wish Black people not to have these things because the things are good? If so, this is a still deeper type of race malice.

It may not be clear how the understanding of racism offered here accommodates the common-sense view that the attitudes, rhetoric, behavior, and representatives of the mindset we might characterize as the 'white man's burden'-view count as racist.³³ One who holds such a Kiplingesque view (let's call her K) thinks non-Whites ignorant, backward, undisciplined, and generally in need of a tough dose of European 'civilizing' in important aspects of their lives. This training in civilization may sometimes be harsh, but it is supposed to be for the good of the 'primitive' people. Moreover, it is important, for our purposes, to remember that K may think that, for all their ignorance, lack of discipline, and other intellectual and moral failings, individuals within the purportedly primitive people may in certain respects, and even on the whole, be moral superiors to certain of their European 'civilizers.' Thus, Kipling's notorious coda to "Gunga Din."³⁴

The matter is a complex one, of course, but I think that, at least in extreme instances, such an approach can be seen to fit the model of racism whose adoption I have urged. What is needed is to attend to and apply our earlier remarks about breaches of respect and the vice of injustice. An important part of respect is recognizing the other as a human like oneself, including treating her like one. There can be extremes of condescension so inordinate they constitute degradation. In such cases, a subject goes beyond more familiar forms of paternalism to demean the other, treating her as utterly irresponsible. Plainly, those who take it upon themselves to conscript mature, responsible, healthy, socialized (and innocent) adults into a regimen of education designed to strip them of all authority over their own lives and make them into 'civilized' folk condescend in just this way.³⁵ This abusive paternalism borders on contempt and it can violate the rights of the subjugated people by denying them the respect and deference to which their status entitles them. By willfully depriving the oppressed people of the goods of freedom, even as part of an ultimately well-meant project of 'improving' them, the colonizers act with the kind of instrumentally malevolent benevolence we discussed above. The colonizers stunt and maim in

order to help, and therein plainly will certain evils to the victims they think of as beneficiaries. Thus, their conduct counts as a kind of malevolence insofar as we take the term literally to mean willing evils.*

Of course, the Kiplingesque agent will not think of herself as depriving responsible, socialized people of their rights over their lives; she does not see them that way and thinks them too immature to have such rights. However, we need to ask why she regards Third World peoples as she does. Here, I suspect, the answer is likely to be that her view of them is influenced, quite possibly without her being conscious of it, by her interest in maintaining the social and economic advantages of having her group wield control over its subjects. If so, her beliefs are relevantly motivated and affected by (instrumental) ill-will, her desire to gain by harming others. When this is so, then her beliefs are racist not just in the weak sense that their content is the sort that characteristically is tied to racial disaffection, but in the stronger and morally more important sense that her own acceptance of these beliefs is partially motivated by racial disaffection. She is *being* racist in thinking as she does. I conclude that the account of racism offered here can allow that, and help explain why, many people who hold the 'white man's burden'-mentality are racist, indeed, why they may be racist in several different (but connected) ways.

Having said all this about some who are what I have called Kiplingesque racists and about some 'well-meaning' southern aristocrats, I must admit that my account suggests that some people in these situations, some involved in racially oppressive social systems, will not themselves be racist in their attitudes, in their behavior, or even in their beliefs (at least, in the stronger sense of being racist in holding her beliefs). I do not shrink from this result, and think it should temper our reliance on the concept of collective responsibility. There are real cases where people share in both wrongdoing and blameworthiness, but collective responsibility for racism is philosophically problematic (in ways I cannot here pursue) and, I think, it is neither so common nor so important morally as some maintain (see May, 1992).

IV. Some Cases

John Cottingham asks us to imagine that "walking down the street, I come across two beggars, both equally in need of assistance, and I have only a single banknote, so that I cannot assist both." If, moreover, "one of the mendicants is white and the other black, may not a black passer-by legitimately choose to give his banknote to the latter for no other reason than 'he's one of my race'?" (Cottingham, 1986: pp. 359, 362). He also asks us to imagine ourselves in a position heroically to rescue only

one of two people trapped in a burning building. If they are of different races, may I legitimately direct my supererogatory efforts to saving the one who is of my own race?³⁷

The view of racism suggested here can help us see how to think about such cases. It indicates, at least, that its being done from nonmalicious racial partiality need not tend to render an action wrong. For a Black person, or a White one, to give to the Black mendicant out of racial preference seems to me unobjectionable, so long as the gift is not likely to mean the difference between life and death. Giving preferentially to the White mendicant is more suspicious, but there is no more vicious ('wrong-making,' as some say) tendency *inherent* in this preference than there is in the other. (I see little or none in the other.) However, if 'Because he's Black [like me or like the ones I prefer]' states a morally acceptable answer to the question why someone gave to the Black beggar when she acts from the pro-Black preference, then do we not have to say that 'Because he's Black' (or 'Because he isn't White [as I am and as are the ones I prefer]') is a legitimate answer to the question why one did not give to the Black beggar when she acts from a different preference? And mustn't we avoid being committed to this, and admit that the latter answer is clearly racist and illegitimate? Well, no; we do not have to admit that. To explain a failure to help someone by saying 'Because he's Black' sounds ugly because, given the history of anti-Black attitudes and behavior in this society, it sounds as if the agent were acting in order to deprive Black people of certain goods. This is likely racist. In our case, however, this answer is merely a misleading way of saying that this person lost out, not on his rights, but on special favors, and not because of ill-will toward Black people but because of extra good will toward some other group. Once the explanation 'Because he's Black' is itself explained, I think, some of our initial suspicion of racism evaporates. (Of course, we might still deem the conduct undesirable and insensitive.)

What of the rescues from the burning building? Even here, I suspect, appeals to race are not as such immoral. They may, however, be inappropriate to the gravity of what is at stake. Surely, it would be objectionable to make the two trapped people play a game, or pick a number, to decide who gets saved. For similar reasons, it would be improper to subject them to a questionnaire and then save the one whose answers were "correct" in matching one's own trivial preferences. No one should lose her life even in part because her favorite color, or football team, or musical performer is different from mine. That is not because there is anything wrong with my having such preferences or, normally, with acting from them. It is because it mocks the seriousness of what is at stake and demeans the persons involved to bring such frivolous

matters into these deliberations. By the same token, it may be that strictly racial preference, though innocent in itself, remains too trifling a basis for choice to be made the crux in so weighty a matter. Exactly what seems objectionable about these procedures is hard to specify, but surely it centers on the contrast between the comparative insignificance of the decisive factor (race) and the gravity of what is to be decided (life and death). It makes it more difficult to attend to the importance and solemnity of the end when we must deal with means we have properly trained ourselves to take none too seriously.*Race, of course, is a more serious matter in our society than are sports or color preferences, primarily because of its historical over-emphasis in programs of oppression and their rationalization. In itself, and more properly, it forms no deep part of one's identity, I think; but, like rooting for the sports teams of one's neighborhood or hometown or school, it may be associated psychologically with interpersonal connections of a more serious nature.

Nonetheless, while perhaps racial classification as such cannot bear the moral weight of life and death choices, the notions of race and of shared race may be masking work done by more serious features and affinities: e. g., heightened compassion for those with a history of shared or comparable suffering, a sense of kinship, shared community (not of race but) of social / political connection, and so on. In any case, within a properly virtues-based ethical theory, the important question is not (i) what has B done that legitimizes A's abandoning her? but (ii) in what way is A vicious toward B (cruel? unjust? callous?) if A prefers to help C even when that precludes her also helping B? It is not at all clear that or how attending to affinities connected with the admittedly crude notion of race must always suffice to render A's choice vicious.

Consider the related problem of disfavoritism.³⁹ Suppose Persons D and E both have more regard for people assigned to every race than morality requires of them. D plays favorites, however, loving (people she considers to be) members of R1 more than she loves those of any other racial group. E plays disfavorites (as we might say), specially reserving (people she considers to be) members of R1 for *less* concern than she has for others. Is what E does / feels racism? Is it morally permissible?

It seems to me that what E does is not racism, because her so-called "disfavoritism" is only a special case of favoritism. She picks out all (people she considers to be) *nonmembers* of R1 for preferential good treatment. (I. e., better than that she accords R1s.) This is likely to be more dangerous socially than are standard cases of favoritism, because it threatens more easily to degenerate into insufficient regard for R1s (or even into antipathy toward them). It is thus a dangerous business, but it lacks the moral ugliness of true racism.

Perhaps it would be a better world without any such racial favoritism. The more important human interconnections, after all, are those founded on joint projects, shared understandings, and common commitments. In short, they are ones that help more fully to humanize us, that bind us one to another in binding us to what is greater than ourselves. All that is a separate matter, however, and one that has no direct bearing on our question of whether acting from such favoritism is permissible.⁴⁰

What should we say of some different cases, discussed by Andrew Hacker and Gertrude Ezorsky, among others, in which a person who herself harbors no racial disregard or disrespect, nonetheless accedes to others' racism by refusing to hire, promote, or serve those assigned to a targeted racial group? Here the agent's action is infected, poisoned by racial hatred. It has such hate in its motivational structure, and that is the usual hallmark of racist behavior. I think what crucially distinguishes this agent's behavior is that it is not *the agent's own* hatred. I suggest that in addition to the two forms of racist disaffection we have already identified—the core concept of racial malevolence and the derivative concept of a race-based insufficiency of good-will—we can allow that an action may be called racist in an extended sense of the term when it is poisoned by racism, even where the racial disaffection that corrupts it does not lie in the agent's own heart but in those to whom the agent accedes. Thus, the agent in our example, while not herself racist, performs an action that is in an important way infected by other people's racism. I doubt we should simply say without qualification that her own action is racist, but it is surely morally objectionable.⁴¹ Her action *reflects* the racial disaffection that constitutes racism, although it may not *express* or manifest any racist motivation in the agent. (It may, as I note below, but also it may not.) Actions of this sort are morally objectionable, but the moral objection to them will not normally be so severe as is that to actions in which the agent's own racial antipathy motivates her to try to harm members of the targeted group. They may reflect an insufficiency of good-will, but they may also fall short of actual malevolence.⁴² We should, however, note different and more vicious cases. Consider a person who denies service, or promotion, or admission, or employment to people assigned to group G1 in order to appease people with a racial disaffection directed against them. Now suppose further that she herself cooperates in the latter's malevolence by *trying* to harm those classified as G1s in order to placate their enemies. (This would be a form of what moral theologians have called "formal cooperation.") When the agent goes that far, she has internalized racist malice into her own intentions, and thus corrupted her actions in a more grievous way than has the person who merely goes along with neighboring racists in her external

actions. This is so whether or not her *feelings* toward people assigned to G1 are hostile.

What should we say of a case Judith Lichtenberg raises, in which, acting from racial fear, a White person crosses the street to avoid Black pedestrians she perceives as possible dangers?" Lichtenberg thinks it acceptable for the fearful (and prejudiced?) White person to cross the street in order to avoid proximity with the Black teenagers who approach her at night (p. 4). She sensibly suggests that this is not racist if the person would respond in the same way with White teenagers. "She might well do the same if the teenagers were white. In that case her behavior does not constitute racial discrimination." (Of course, her behavior now raises a question of age discrimination, but, like Lichtenberg, I will not pursue that topic.) Helpfully, Lichtenberg cites several factors she thinks relevant to deciding when it is unjust to take race into account. How much harm does the victim suffer? How much does the agent stand to suffer if she does not discriminate? Is the person who discriminates acting in a public or official capacity?

Lichtenberg maintains that the Black teenagers suffer "a minimal slight—if it's even noticed." She even suggests that the White person might spare their feelings "by a display of ulterior motivation, like [pretending to] inspect the rosebushes on the other side" of the street in order to make it look as if it were her admiration for the flowers, and not her fear of Black people, that motivated her to cross the street. The latter pretense is, in my judgment, insulting and unlikely to succeed. More important, this appears to be a guilty response, as if the person is trying to cover up something she knows is wrong. I think that fact should cause Lichtenberg and her imagined agent to reconsider the claim that the action is unobjectionable. It is also quite wrong-headed to think that the harm of insult is entirely a matter of whether a person has hurt feelings. Does it make a difference that the victims suffer little direct and tangible harm? Some, but not much. After all, by that criterion, egregiously racist behavior such as engaging in caricatures or telling jokes that mock Black people would be justified if done in an all-White setting.

According to Lichtenberg, it is acceptable for the White woman to try to avoid the Black teenager on the street, but much harder to justify her racially discriminating when he applies for a job. It will be difficult to maintain this position, however. How is this woman—so terrified of contact with young Black males that she will not walk on the same side of the street with them—simply to turn off this uneasiness when the time comes for her to decide whether to offer a job to the Black male? Suppose that the job is to help out in her family's grocery store, and that this is likely to mean that the woman and the teenager will be alone in the store

some evenings? Lichtenberg's advice, that the woman indulge her prejudice in her private life but rigorously exclude it from their official conduct, seems unstable. Indeed, Lichtenberg seems to assume that the woman can take refuge in bureaucracy, that she will be the personnel officer who does the hiring, while it is other people who will actually have to work in proximity with the new employee. It is the worst of liberal bad faith, however, for this woman to practice her tolerance in official decision-making, but only on the condition that it is other people who will have to bear the burden of adjusting to the pluralistic environment those decisions create and of making that environment work. (Compare the liberal politician who boldly integrates the public schools while taking care to "protect" her own kids in all-White private schools.)

Lichtenberg assumes that private discrimination is less serious morally, but this is doubtful. The heart is where racism, like all immorality, begins and dwells. Even if some moral *virtue*-traits were differentially distributed along racial lines (and even if that were for genetic rather than historical reasons), each individual would still retain the right to be given the benefit of the probability that she is *not* herself specially inclined toward vice. Of course, this sort of racial discrimination need not be racist, since it can be entirely unconnected to any racial disaffection, just as it may not be irrational if it is a response to a genuine statistical disparity in risk. (Similarly, there need be nothing immoral in age-based discrimination should the woman seek to avoid being on dark streets alone with teenagers but not with the elderly.) Nevertheless, such conduct runs substantial risk of reinforcing some of the ugly racial stereotypes that are used to rationalize racial antipathy, and there is reason to avoid relying upon it.

Our view of institutional racism is both narrower and wider than some others that have been offered. To see how it is narrower, that is, less inclusive, let us consider the practice of 'word-of-mouth' job-recruitment, in which people assigned to a privileged racial group, who tend to socialize only with one another, distribute special access to employment benefits to social acquaintances similarly assigned. Some deem this institutional racism, because of its adverse impact on those considered members of the disadvantaged group. (See, for example, Ezorsky, 1991.) Miles protests against those who expansively identify institutional racism with, as he puts it, "all actions or processes (whatever their origin or motivation) which result in one group being placed or retained in a subordinate position by another." In his eyes, the practice of 'word-of-mouth' recruitment is not racist because, although it has an admittedly disproportionately adverse impact on people assigned to the disadvantaged racial group (e.g., African-Americans), it has similar impact on

members of other groups—ethnic, gender, economic—that are under-represented among the elite (Miles, 1989: pp. 52, 61).

One can, however, respond that this fact does not show the practice is not an instance of institutional racism. It may be an instance of institutional racism and, at the same time, an instance of institutional sexism, of institutional 'classism,' etc.⁴ Miles' critics have a point. I think, however, what this shows is that we go wrong when we try to identify institutional racism merely by examining the effects of institutional practices. On the view taken here, the practice, while possibly undesirable and perhaps even unjust, is not racist unless it stems from racist antipathy or lack of empathy or from negative beliefs born of such disaffection, in the hearts of the people who carry out the practice.⁵

Consider, similarly, the so-called 'old boy network.'⁶ Person F, upon hearing of an opening at his place of employment, tells the people he thinks of (who are all White males like himself) about the job and recommends one of them (Person G) to the boss, who hires him. Ignoring the exaggeration in calling anything so informal an 'institution,' let us explore whether this 'institution' of the 'old boy network' is racist. Is F (or F's behavior) racist? Is G (or G's behavior) racist? Some are ready to offer affirmative answers. What should we say? First, G cannot be racist just for receiving the job; that's not sufficiently active. What about G's act of *accepting* the job? That can be racist. I think, however, that it is racist only in the exceptional circumstance where the institutions are so corrupt that G should have nothing to do with them. Second, F may be racist insofar as his mental process skips over some possible candidates simply because the stereotypes he uses (perhaps to mask his racial disaffection from himself and others) keep him from thinking of them as possible job candidates. Third, one needs some further reason not yet given to label racist the practice of the 'old boy network.' It may work 'systematically' to the detriment of Black people. That, however, merely shows that, in our society, with our history of racism, Black people can be disadvantaged by many things other than race-based factors. (Glenn Loury offers several other examples of this, interestingly including the custom of endogamy among both White and Black people.⁷) What is important to note is that it is misleading to call all these things racist, because that terminology fails to differentiate the very different ways in which and reasons for which they disadvantage people. This classification and broad use of the term, then, fails adequately to inform us and, of more practical importance, it fails to direct our attention (and efforts) to the source of the difficulty. It doesn't identify for us *how* things are going wrong and thus *what* needs to be changed.

Some accounts of institutional racism threaten to be excessively

broad in other ways. Some implicitly restrict institutional racism to operations *within* a society—they see it as one group maintaining its social control over the other.* This is too narrow, since it would exclude, for example, what seem to be some clear cases of institutional racism, such as discrimination in immigration and in foreign assistance policies. However, if this restriction to intra-group behavior is simply removed from these accounts, then they will have to count as instances of institutional racism some actions which do not properly fall within the class. Suppose, for example, the government of a hostile planet, free of any bigotry toward any Earthling racial group, but unenamored of all Earthlings, launches a missile to destroy the Earth. Suppose it lands in Africa. This institutional (governmental) action has a disproportionately adverse impact on Black people, but it is silly to describe it as racist. (It remains silly even if the aliens decide to target *all* their attacks on the same continent—say, because its size or subterranean mineral deposits make it easier for their tracking systems to locate—and the effect thus becomes ‘systematic’.) Talk of racism here is inane because the action, its motivation, and its agents are entirely untainted by any racial disaffection or prejudice. By the same token, however, although the agents of many earthly institutions *are* tainted by racism (e.g., in the U.S. government), that fact cannot suffice, even in combination with adverse impacts, to make its actions institutionally racist. The racism has first to *get into* the institutional conduct somehow by informing the conduct of individual agents. In contrast, proponents of expansive accounts of institutional racism, by focusing on the action’s effects, end up in the untenable position of claiming that racism somehow *comes out of* institutional behavior, while simultaneously denying that it must ever even get into the action at the action’s source in the aims, beliefs, desires, hopes, fears, and so on of the agents who execute institutional policy.”

We can also profitably turn our account to an interesting case Skillen offers. He writes:

Suppose Dr Smythe-Browne’s surgery has been ticking over happily for years until it is realized that few of the many local Asians visit him. It turns out that they travel some distance to Dr Patel’s surgery. Dr Smythe-Browne and his staff are upset. Then they realise that, stupidly, he has never taken the trouble to make himself understood by or to understand the Asians in his area. His surgery practices have had the effect of excluding or at least discouraging Asians. Newly aware, he sets out to fix the situation.

By the same token as his practices have been ‘consequentially’, not ‘constitutively’ discriminatory, they have been ‘blind’, lacking in awareness.

The example shows the possibility of a certain sort of ‘racism’ that,

if we must attribute blame, is a function of a lack of thought (energy, resources, etc.). If that lack of thought is itself to be described as 'discriminatory' it would need to be shown Dr Smythe-Browne showed no such lack of attention when one of the local streets became gentrified. . . In such cases, it is not racial sets as such that are the focus of attention, but race as culturally 'inscribed'. In other words, one is concerned with people in respect of how they identify themselves and are identified by others (for example, intimidating institutions or outright racists). (Skillen, p. 81)

Despite what Skillen implies, that an institution intimidates some racial groups ("sets") does not make it racist. Flew is right about the insufficiency (even the irrelevance) of mere effects to establish racism, as he is right about the sufficiency of racism to establish immorality.⁵ Otherwise, the interplanetary attacks in our earlier example would count as instances of institutional racism. Moreover, that Smythe-Browne was thoughtless about what might be needed to attract Asians in no way shows his conduct was racist, not even if he was more sensitive and interested in how to attract 'yuppies' brought close by local gentrification. Insensitivity to certain race-related differences is not racist, even if one is sensitive to class-related differences or to differences associated with other racial differences. Smythe-Browne does not so much "discourage" Asians as fail to encourage them. Psychologically and ontologically, that is a very different matter, and those differences are likely to correlate with moral differences as well. (Failure to encourage is likely merely to be at worst an offense of *nonbenevolence* rather of *malevolence*.) *Perhaps* the Asians were 'invisible' to Smythe-Browne in way that he is culpable for. To show this, however, more would need to be said about why he did not notice them, their absence, and their special interests. Is it that he cares so little about Asians and their well-being? If there is nothing like this involved, then there is no racism in Smythe-Browne's professional behavior, I say. And if there is something like this involved, then Smythe-Browne's conduct is not purely "'consequentially' . . . discriminatory." It is corrupted by its motivation in racial disaffection.

When it comes to defending racial preferences against Flew's strictures, however, Skillen shows more insight. He adds further detail to his case, asking us to suppose that Dr. Smythe-Browne "decides that the only way to cope with the situation is to get an Asian doctor, preferably female, onto the staff. He advertises the job and, finding a good person of the sort he needs, she joins the practice, whereas a number of, in other respects at least, equally good applicants (white, male for the most part) do not. Is this 'racism'?" Skillen thinks not, and I think he argues his point well. "Is it not, in Flew's terms, a case of 'discriminating in favor

of a racially defined subset out of a total set'? Well, not necessarily. Dr. Smythe-Browne's criteria remain medical. His selection is legitimate insofar as we accept that medicine is a human and communicative 'art' in respect of which socially significant variables are relevant. In that sense it is simply not the case that bypassed candidates with better degree results were necessarily 'better candidates'" (Skillen, p. 82).

With this understanding and assessment, I agree wholeheartedly. Dr. Smythe-Brown's hiring preference here seems to me to exemplify the sort of race-based distinction that is in its nature and its morality quite different from racist discrimination.²²

As I mentioned, this account of institutional racism is also more inclusive than some. Flew's account, for example, is too narrow in ways I shall point out below. Usually, people apply the term institutional racism only to practices that reinforce existing inter-group power relations. However, a company of people, all of whom are assigned to an oppressed racial group, may harbor reactive racist attitudes toward all those designated as members of the dominant group, and may institutionalize their racism in such institutions as they control: excluding people considered members of the resented group from access to certain schools, scholarships, employment positions, memberships, etc., not out of fraternal/sororal solidarity with others similarly oppressed, nor out of a concern to realize more just distribution of benefits, but simply from resentful racial antipathy. That is racism in the operations of a social organization, institutionalized racism, and should therefore count as institutional racism. This bears out an observation of Randall Kennedy's. "Some argue that, at least with respect to whites, African Americans cannot be racist because, as a group, they lack the power to subordinate whites. Among other failings, this theory ignores nitty-gritty realities. Regardless of the relative strength of African-American and Jewish communities, the African Americans who beat Jews in Crown Heights for racially motivated reasons were, at the moment, sufficiently powerful to subordinate their victims. This theory, moreover, ignores the plain fact African Americans—as judges, teachers, mayors, police officers, members of Congress and army officers—increasingly occupy positions of power and influence from which they could, if so minded, tremendously damage clients, coworkers, dependents, and beyond, the society as a whole" (Kennedy, 1994).

The approach taken here opens the door to the sort of research H. L. Gates has recently called for. He writes, "[W]e have finessed the gap between rhetoric and reality by forging new and subtler definitions of the word 'racism.' Hence a new model of institutional racism is one that can operate in the absence of actual racists. By redefining our terms we can always say of the economic gap between black and white America:

the problem is still racism . . . and by stipulation it would be true. But the grip of this vocabulary has tended to foreclose the more sophisticated models of political economy we so desperately need" (Gates, 1994).

V. Other Views

This way of understanding the nature of racism contrasts with certain other views from the literature. Elizabeth Young-Bruehl and Cornel West have recently articulated the common view that White male sexual insecurity is at the heart of White racism. "White fear of black sexuality is a basic ingredient of white racism. . . . Social scientists have long acknowledged that interracial sex and marriage is the most *perceived* source of white fear of black people—just as the repeated castrations of lynched black men cries out for serious psychocultural explanation" (West, 1992, pp. 86-87. Also see Young-Bruehl, 1992.).

Suppose that West and Young-Bruehl are right to think that most of the White racists around today (or in history) were driven to their racism through fear of Black male sexuality. Even if this claim about the psychological causes of racism is true, it leaves unaffected our claim about what racism consists in. It is implausible to think such insecurity essential to (a necessary condition for) racism, even for White racism, because if we came across someone who hated Black people, thought us inherently inferior, worked to maintain structures of White domination over us, and so on, but came to all this for reasons other than sexual insecurity, we would and should still classify her attitude as racism. Nor is this hypothesis a near-impossibility; we may come across such people quite often, especially when we consider other forms of racism—hostility against Asians, for example. "Psychocultural explanation" is unlikely to reveal (logically) necessary truths about the nature of racism.

Finally, let us examine the views offered by Antony Flew and Anthony Skillen in the recent exchange to which we have already several times attended (Skillen, 1993; Flew, 1990). Skillen writes,³¹ "According to Antony Flew, when people, beliefs or practices are spoken of as 'racist,' one of three sorts of thing is usually being said. These express three concepts of racism'. But only one of the them, the first, is valid.

"(1) Racism as 'unjust discrimination.' In this first of Flew's senses, to be 'racist' is to discriminate in favor of [emphasis added] or against people for no other or better reason than that they belong to one particular racial set and not another. Since the 'defining characteristics' of a race are 'skin pigmentation, shape of skull, etc.' and since such attributes are strictly superficial and properly irrelevant to (almost) all questions of social status and employment', racism in this sense is as

grotesquely unfair as to disqualify competing candidates because they are bald, or blond, or red-headed'. So this is a valid use of the term 'racist', which both picks out a recognizable practice, color discrimination, and indicates why it is abominable.

"(2) Racism as 'heretical belief.' In this second sense, to be racist is to *believe* that there are substantial inherited differences among racial sets in attributes relevant to important practical questions. Such differences in accompanying characteristics might be differences in intelligence . . . in aggressiveness, etc. . . But, Flew contends, the person accused of racism in this sense (provided they are not simply aiming to throw up a smoke-screen for true racism—racism 1), is accused wrongly. (p. 73)

"(3) 'Institutionalized racism.' [emphasis added] In this third sense, 'institutions' (schools, firms, government, courts) are said to be racist when their routine practices, however 'legitimated' have the *effect* [Skillen's emphasis] of and typically, it is alleged, the unadmitted purpose, of excluding or disadvantaging racial sets. Against this Flew argues, again apriori, that institutions cannot have intentions and hence cannot be the target of moral blame (p. 74).

"In Flew's terms, then, 'racism 3' (pervasive 'disadvantage') is falsely represented as a function of 'racism 1' by representing the claims of inherited inferiorities ('racism 2') as a legitimating smoke-screen. Thus armed, 'anti-racism' becomes the ideology of a genuine and abhorrent racism with blacks getting preference simply on the basis of the color of their skin. . . [According to Flew's p. 66: "discriminating in favor of a racially defined subset out of the total set of all those worse off than the majority . . . is paradigmatically racist" (quoted at Skillen, p. 74)].

Skillen rejects Flew's narrow view of what properly counts as racism in favor of his own more expansive conception. "On the contrary, I [Skillen] see racism, which is by no means peculiar to Europeans, as being like misogyny, bigotry, and chauvinism in its *straddling the theory-practice (belief-action) dichotomy* essential to Flew's scheme of things. *Racism, in my view, is a belief-validated or 'ideological' disposition or attitude. As such, racism is not just a feature of this or that individual but a largely cultural matter*" (emphases added, except Skillen emphasizes 'cultural') (Skillen, p. 75). "[R]acism is a complex of ideological attitudes and practices, more or less bound up with institutionalized barriers. . . In all cases there is an exercise, through ideology, of power" (Skillen, p. 87).

The volitional account of racism, advocated here, captures what is valuable in the views of Flew and Skillen, while helping to identify and correct their difficulties. As regards Flew, it is not clear what counts as "discrimination" for him. Does a mere differentiation I make in my mind count? (E.g., thinking all Xs are stupid, corrupt, lazy, greedy, conniving?

Thinking they tend disproportionately to be stupid, etc.?) Or must I go on to *do* things to some Xs? If the latter, then what kinds of things? Must it involve withholding real benefits? (How about just keeping away from them?) What if I do things, but don't really do much of anything to Xs? (Suppose I malign the intelligence or character of Xs when I speak to my fellow Ys.) What counts as "discriminating" for Flew? I suspect his criterion is too behavioral and insufficiently centered in the racists' desires and goals. Further, Flew's rejection as racist of discrimination in favor even of those socially assigned to an oppressed racial group merely misses the distinction made above between *racist* discrimination and modes of discriminating that are merely race-based. In addition, one wonders about Flew's concession that someone accused of racism for holding so-called "heretical" beliefs will not escape the charge if, in offering factual claims to defend her position, she is "simply aiming to throw up a smoke-screen for [unjust discrimination]." What if she throws out a smoke-screen without aiming to? Or without consciously aiming to?

Contra Skillen's position, it is not clear that a "belief-validated disposition or attitude" does straddle the belief-action divide. If the "attitude" is the doxastic attitude of belief, then racism doesn't straddle, it's just a belief. Nor need it straddle if the "disposition" is a disposition to perform certain (which?) actions. Much depends on how one understands dispositions (and beliefs) but, assuming that a belief is not just a disposition to act, then that would place racism on the action/practice side. (The disposition would count as racist, however, only if it stood in the right relationship to certain beliefs.)

Skillen nicely counters Flew by pointing out that expressing a negative view of the capabilities of Blacks "is paradigmatic of racism. [However] Flew excludes it from racism proper. . . [Such] utterances . . . can't, on Flew's view, be racist at all, because racism by proper definition is morally abominable, whereas [Flew thinks that] morally to condemn a belief is to be categorically mistaken" (Skillen, p. 77). So, "not only can beliefs be racist but racism typically entails a belief 'system'. Hence Flew's dissection of 'racism in the second sense' [i. e., as belief] involves considerable misdirection." (Skillen, p. 79) Skillen adds that "the person who sees the world in terms of the sort of essentialising divisions [drawn by those who think races like species or natural kinds] is at least suffering from a shortfall of vision. If his racism is sincere, he ought not to be 'condemned' and vilified. . . though he may need to be argued with, contested and, if he is in position of power, fought." (Skillen, p. 79) For me, typically holding such beliefs is racist because one holds them in part to justify racial antipathy, ill-will, or disregard. So, some people can be

condemned for holding these beliefs, pace both Flew and Skillen. In any case, someone with such beliefs is likely to have racist desires and volitions whether they cause, or are caused by, the beliefs. It is important to observe, pace Skillen, first, that racism need entail no 'system' of beliefs and, second, while various institutions and other elements of the cultural environment may nurture racism and derived racist beliefs, racism nevertheless lies fundamentally in individuals.

Racism has, according to Skillen, an "institutional character." "If it is the case that individuals, not institutions, have intentions or goals, we need to say that institutions operate through individuals, that our intentions are structured by institutions (going home, teaching, keeping the country or the club white and so on) . . . Racism, like sexism or confessional discrimination can be an implicit thing, taken for granted, a traditional part of the way we've always done things" (Skillen, p. 80).

"[A]s Flew's . . . objection charging the opponent of 'institutionalized racism' with definition in terms of 'consequences' bears out, his main concern is not with institutions whose racism is more or less constitutive of their identity [as in a club or school founded to give Whites refuge from integration], . . . [but] with regulative practices: tests, entry requirements, employment practices, which, *as it turns out*, result in poor outcomes for members of certain racial sets" (p. 81, original emphasis).

This is wrong-headed for reasons that should by now be clear. No institutional practices can be racist—nor malicious, dishonest, or in any other way morally vicious—merely because "*as it turns out*" they have undesirable effects. Flew is right that an institution can be racist in the way it is constituted, and Skillen is right that institutions can also be racist in their operations, even when innocently founded. However, Skillen goes too far that its effects alone can suffice to make an institution racist. Institutional racism exists, as we said, when the racism in individuals becomes institutionalized. To become institutionalized, racism must infect the institution's operations by informing the ends it adopts, or the means it employs, or the grounds on which it accepts undesirable side effects (as is normally the case in 'environmental racism'), or the assumptions on which it works. Failing any such basis, Skillen is unable to explain how racism gets into the institution to corrupt its behavior. Any suggestion that it gets into the institution and its behavior after the fact from the behavior's effects is incoherent. Skillen's error is to confuse output-driven concepts, such as being dangerous or harmful or lethal, with a moral concept such as racism. Output-driven concepts can be useful for moral judgment, because they help us to ask the right questions about why the agent (here: the institution) acted as it did and why it did not abandon its plans in favor some less harmful course of action.

Answers to these questions can help us to decide whether the action is negligent or malicious or otherwise vicious. However, output-driven concepts cannot suffice to ground assigning any moral status, because vice and virtue are by nature tied to the action's motivation. Effects can only be (defeasible) evidence of motivation.⁴

Finally, Skillen is correct to observe that oftentimes institutions shape individual intentions and actions. Institutional racism will often exist in reciprocal relation to individual racism. The racism of some Individual (or individuals) first infects the institution, and the institution's resultant racism then reinforces racism in that individual or breeds it in others. Once individual racism exists, institutional racism can be a powerful instrument of its perpetuation. This reciprocity of causal influence, however, should not blind us to the question of origins. Individual racism can come into the world without depending on some prior institutionalization. (It could come to be, say, as a result of some twist in one person's temperament.) The converse is not true. Institutional racism can reinforce and perpetuate individual racism. Unless an institution is corrupted (in its ends, means, priorities, or assumptions) by a prior and independent racism in some individual's heart, however, institutional racism can never come to exist.

Nevertheless, we should take care not to overstate the dependence of institutional racism upon individual. Institutional racism appears to be capable of continuing after individual racism has largely died out. Think of a case where, for example, officials continue, uncomprehendingly, to implement policies originally designed, and still functioning, to disadvantage those assigned to a certain racial group. Indeed, I strongly doubt that the qualifier 'and still functioning' is necessary. Institutional racism can exist without actually functioning to harm anyone. Suppose, a few generations back, some R1s designed a certain institutional procedure P specifically to harm R2s, an oppressed racial group, though the designers were never explicit about this aim. Later, anti-R2 feeling among R1s faded away, and in time real social equality was achieved. The R1s, however, are a traditionalist lot, and they continue faithfully to execute P out of deference to custom and their ancestors. P no longer specially harms R2s. (Perhaps it excludes from various privileges those who come from some specific, traditionally poor R2 neighborhoods, and R2s are no longer disproportionately represented in those neighborhoods, 'which, perhaps, are also no longer disproportionately poor.)

In that case, it appears that the racism of the earlier generation persists in the institutional procedure P, even though P no longer specially harms R2s. This indicates that institutional racism, no less than individual racism, can be either effective or ineffective, either harmful or

innocuous. Institutional racism, then, is a bad thing; but it is a bad thing not because of its actual effects, but sometimes merely because of its aims. The study of people's aims directs the social theorist's attention into their hearts, to what they care about, to what they have set themselves on having, or being, or making, or doing. Such is the stuff of the moral virtues, of course. Neither the social theorist nor the moral theorist can continue to neglect them if she wishes to understand the world. Or to change it.

VI. Conclusion

These reflections suggest that an improved understanding of racism and its immorality calls for a comprehensive rethinking of racial discrimination, of the preferential treatment programs sometimes disparaged as 'reverse discrimination,' and of institutional conduct as well. They also indicate the direction such a rethinking should take, and its dependence on the virtues and other concepts from moral psychology. That may require a significant change in the way social philosophers have recently treated these and related topics.

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Notes

¹The same dictionary dates the cognate 'racist', as both adjective and noun, to the same period, but places the first appearances of 'racialism' and 'racialist' three decades earlier.

²Miles begins a summary of his review of the first uses of the term in the effort of certain intellectuals to attack the pseudo-scientific defenses of the Nazi movement by saying that "the concept of racism was forged largely in the course of a conscious attempt to withdraw the sanction of science from a particular meaning of the idea of 'race'"; and he chides these early critics on the grounds that their interpretation of racism, "by focusing on the product of nineteenth century scientific theorizing, tended to presume that racism was always, and therefore was only, a structured and relatively coherent set of assertions. . . . Such a definition [is problematic insofar as it] excludes less formally structured assertions, stereotypical ascriptions and symbolic representations. . . ." (Miles, 1986: pp. 47, 48).

³Merriam-Webster's *Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* offers a secondary definition: "racial prejudice or discrimination."

⁴For a negative appraisal of Sivanandan's thought, see David Dale, "Racial Mischief: The Case of Dr. Sivanandan," in Palmer, 1986: pp. 82-94.

⁵Discussing an account of racism offered by Britain's Commission for Racial Equality, Flew writes: "[a] sinister and potentially dangerous thing here is the reference to actual or alleged matters of fact—to 'negative beliefs'. . . . For this is to demand, irrespective of any evidence which might be turned up to the contrary, that everyone must renounce certain disapproved propositions about average or universal differences and similarities as between races and racial groups: difference and similarities, that is, either in respect of biology or in respect of culture. To concede such a demand to the often Marxist militants of race relations is to open the door to purges: not only of libraries and of textbooks and of curricula; but also of people. It is not ten years since many a campus in the U.S.A. was ringing with calls to 'Sack' and even to 'Kill

Jensen'—Jensen being a psychologist who dared to publish evidence suggesting that there may be genetically determined average differences between different races and racial groups in respect of other than their racial defining characteristics" (Flew, 1986: p. 22). I critically examine Flew's view of racism at the end of this essay.

⁶Banton suggests that we should restrict our usage of the term, withholding its application from many people we nowadays call racists. In his view, these people are not racists because they use arguments of cultural superiority in preference to the doctrines of biologically based superiority the term was coined to pick out (Banton, 1970). This proposal is unrealistic, and serves to illustrate what makes unacceptable the excessively conservative approach to word meaning of those who still insist that racism consists solely in certain beliefs, ideology, doctrines, and theories.

⁷That is not to say that its definition must include a moral evaluation. The act-utilitarian must hold that nonoptimific behavior is always wrong simply in virtue of what it is and what morality is, but she need not think the term 'nonoptimific' includes a moral evaluation in its definition. Similarly, a divine command theorist may judge every act against God's will to be immoral *eo ipso*, without thinking this wrongness analytically derivable from the meaning of 'against God's will'.

⁸According to Miles, the term 'racism' originally denoted certain pseudo-scientific doctrines. I think the term changed its meaning, and speculate that this change occurred as race became important less for the discredited beliefs than for attitudes and resultant social practices. (See Miles, 1989: chaps. 2, 3.) On the linguistic history, also see the *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed.

⁹Compare David Wiggins and John McDowell on Kantian moral realism. (See Wiggins, "Truth, Invention, and the Meaning of Life," in Wiggins, 1987; and McDowell, 1986).

Although in conversation with me he has denied any such dependence, there is reason to worry that Appiah's position may covertly rely on a form of scientism, the supposition that no serious use of a once-pseudo-scientific term is permissible if it plays no role within legitimate science. In any case, he seems to allow that neither the fact that the concept of 'race' is inexact in its criteria and extension, nor the fact that it was the subject of a discredited science, nor the fact that it was used to justify unjust social practices, is by itself sufficient to show that the notion must be banished from speech. (Perhaps he thinks they are jointly sufficient, but that remains to be shown.) Moreover, he is willing to talk informally of this person being Black and that one White, so he and I are not so far apart. I do not see why this informal, but acceptable, way of speaking cannot be extended to allow us to call such talk acceptable (albeit informal) racial classifications. Of course, informal talk of races cannot be accepted if racial terms must really be scientific. That, however, returns us to our question why anyone should think that.

Appiah's criticism of talk of races on the grounds that there are no "racial essences" suggests that he may presuppose a metaphysical essentialism that does not count against using racial terms on the looser bases of Wittgensteinian "family resemblances": perhaps a combination of surface and ancestral features, ordered in no one way, underlies the legitimate application of race terms to many but not all persons.

¹⁰Miles objects to some early accounts of the nature of racism on the grounds that they "tended to remain inextricably entangled with, and consequently to legitimate, the idea of 'race'" (Miles, 1989: p. 48).

¹¹After an Arab dismissed a charge of anti-Semitism by the late Meir Kahane, on the grounds that Arabs are themselves a Semitic people, I once heard Kahane sensibly (if not necessarily accurately) respond by amending his charge to that of 'Jew-hater'. Of course, Kahane himself was often described, with some justification, as an Arab-hater. The connection between racism and anti-Semitism may be more than analogical. It is

sometimes said that anti-Semitism is itself a type of racism. Thus, Miles writes of "that form of racism which others label anti-Semitism" (Miles, 1989: p. 68).

It is worth remarking that, whereas Wistrich thinks anti-Semitism "the longest hatred," Castoriadis claims that the Hebrew Bible is, because of its exaltation of the Jews, the oldest extant racist document (Castoriadis, 1992: p. 3). I think that Castoriadis' view serves as a *reductio* of understanding racism as a matter of beliefs. Whether or not one thinks God selected the Jews for a special role in human salvation, this election hardly constitutes the sort of contemptuous or aversive dismissal of others that properly counts as racist.

¹² "Critics of scientific theories of race prior to this decade [the 1930s] did not use a concept of racism to identify their ideological object. For example, in a wide-ranging critique published in the late 1920s, Friedrich Hertz referred to 'race hatred'" (Miles, 1989: p. 42).

¹³ As I said at the outset, the term 'xenophobia' also suggests that this aversion to others is accompanied or caused by fear of them, but I do not think this association carries over to 'racism'.

¹⁴ They write, "'Homophobia' is a comforting word, isn't it? It suggests that . . . all who oppose, threaten, and persecute us [that is, homosexuals] are actually scared of us! [However, f]ear need have nothing to do with it. A well-designed study . . . demonstrat[ed] that although some 'homonegative' males respond to homosexual stimuli with the 'tell-tale racing heart' of phobia, plenty of others don't." Kirk and Madsen condemn "the specious 'diagnosis'" of homophobia as a "medically exculpatory euphemism," and offer a proposal: "Let's reserve the term 'homophobia' for the psychiatric cases to which it really applies, and find a more honest label for the attitudes, words, and acts of hatred that are, after all, the real problem." As for their own linguistic procedure, "when we really do mean 'fear of homosexuals,' [then] 'homophobia' it will be; when we're talking about hatred of homosexuals, we'll speak (without the hyphen) of 'homohatred,' 'homohating,' and 'homohaters.' We urge the reader to follow suit." (See Kirk and Madsen, 1989: pp. xxii-xxiii.) This is sensible advice, though some caveats are in order. First, we should bear in mind that not every fear is a phobia. Second, even the quasi-scientific term "homonegative" tends to lump together such very different matters as (i) a person's personal aversion to her own engaging in homosexual activities, (ii) her concern over perceived social effects of other peoples' homosexual conduct, and (iii) her holding the belief that such conduct is morally impermissible. Hatred of homosexual persons is immoral (although, as Kirk and Madsen point out, to see it simply as a medical condition tends to exculpate). Moral disapproval of homosexual practices, whether on medical, moral, or religious grounds, is a different matter, however, and it may often be an unrelated one. Third, to use the prefix 'homo' to mean 'homosexual' is objectionable for obvious reasons, so it seems preferable to speak of 'homosexual-haters' and 'homosexual-hatred,' retaining the hyphen. This would also make it clear, as the term 'homophobia' does not, that what is to be condemned is an attitude of ill-will or contempt toward certain people, and not a moral judgment on certain practices.

¹⁵ The Freudian theorist Elizabeth Young-Bruehl, in an unpublished paper, argues that anti-Semitism differs from racism in that anti-Semitism, which she thinks rooted in a combination of assumed male Gentile sexual superiority and economic and intellectual inferiority, aims to exterminate its targets, while racism, which she thinks rooted in assumed White male sexual inferiority, seeks to keep its victims around for humiliation (Young-Bruehl, 1992). I suspect all this wrong-headed. For our purposes, what is important is that no such causality is essential to racism or anti-Semitism, because we should label haters of Jews or Black people anti-Semite and racists even if we knew their hatred had different causes.

- ¹⁶I shall use such terms as 'R1' and 'R2' to refer to racial groups, and such expressions as 'R1s' and 'R2s' to refer to people assigned to such groups. This usage holds potential for some confusion, since the plural term 'R1s' is not the plural of the singular term 'R1', but I think the context will always disambiguate each instance of this usage.
- ¹⁷Two caveats. First, since our interest is in the central sense(s) of the term 'racism', I see little reason to add Cottingham's qualifier "there is a sense in which" to our claim that racism must be illicit. Any sense of the term in which racism is not illicit must be decidedly peripheral. Second, Cottingham seems to think of this "disregard" as primarily a matter of negative evaluative beliefs, while I reject any such doxastic account and construe 'disregard' as disaffection or malice.
- ¹⁸See Slote, 1994, and Garcia, forthcoming.
- ¹⁹I will not try to identify minimal levels of good will such that having less is against the virtue of benevolence, nor minimal levels of respect such that less offends against justice. I doubt these levels can be identified in abstraction, and it will be difficult or impossible for us to determine them even in minutely described particular situations. Throughout, I generally restrict my talk of disrespect and other forms of disregard to cases where the levels are morally vicious, offending against the moral virtues of benevolence and justice, respectively.
- ²⁰See Garcia, 1986, and Garcia, 1987.
- ²¹In a way similar to my nondoxastic account of racism, John Dewey seems to have offered an account of race-prejudice that is nondoxastic. Recent scholarship reminds us that, for Dewey, prejudice was not primarily a matter of hasty judgment, but of a fear of, and aversion to, what is unfamiliar. Gregory Pappas expounded Dewey's view in his paper, "Dewey's Philosophical Interpretation of Racial Prejudice," presented at a session of the 1992 Ford Fellows Conference in Irvine, California.
- ²²See Appiah, 1992.
- ²³Iris Young offers the interesting suggestion that modernist moral theory's aversion to partiality, like its aversion to appeals to feelings and its insistence on the irrelevance of gender, ethnicity, and other aspects of personal or group experience, history, and situatedness, originates as part of an endeavor to eliminate from the viewpoint of the moral judge those factors that are deemed inessential to her as a rational agent and that serve to differentiate her from others. This effort is perhaps most evident in Kant's famous insistence that an agent's moral requirements be rooted in her (universal) reason, and not be contingent upon her desires (unlike "hypothetical imperatives"), lest the requirements vary across persons and times, as he thought all substantive desires did. Young also thinks the impartialist unfairly presents impartiality as the only alternative to egoism (see Young, 1990: chap. 4). If that is right, then the impartialist position rests upon several dubious assumptions, most notably, assumptions about the constituents of the moral agent's identity (or "essence"), about the irreducible variability of desires and feelings, and about the supposed gap between human passions and desires on the one hand and abstract reason on the other. All these assumptions are currently undergoing philosophical reconsideration. (See, especially, Blum, 1994.)
- ²⁴Note that action from maxims that pass Kant's universalizability test is therein permissible, not necessarily obligatory.
- ²⁵Quoted in Hacker, "The New Civil War," p. 30.
- ²⁶Arguing against some writers who use the slogan "Preference is not prejudice" to support their view that moderate racial preference is permissible, Miles complains, "[T]o prefer is to rank and to choose to value something or person or group, and therefore necessarily to preclude some other thing, person or group." (Miles, 1989: 8) What Miles says is true, but it does nothing to prove the controverted point that excluding person S1 in the course of expressing greater-than-morally-required regard

for S2 is the moral equivalent of excluding S1 out of less-than-morally-required concern for S1. That said, I do certainly not wish to associate myself with the further doctrines of the thinkers Miles is criticizing, who use the inflammatory example of preferring to marry within one race as an example of supposedly innocent preference. In a society such as ours, any such "preference" is likely to be informed by and to result in part from an aversion to interracial marriage as 'race-treachery' or 'miscegenation'. Such a preference is not at all innocent, in my view, having roots in deep-seated racial antipathy.

In personal correspondence, Glenn Loury has expressed misgivings about my view, reminding me that "what ends in personal viciousness towards the 'other' finds its beginning in the more benign celebration of the virtues of one's 'own kind'." I wonder whether, in fact, racial antipathy does *always* begin in such a benign attitude. However, even if it does, the danger that it may lead to racial antipathy is a reason to be cautious of racial favoritism. It is not a reason to condemn this partiality as malign nor, more to the point, as racist. Even the framers of a recent California measure proposing to outlaw racial preferences observe a distinction between discriminating against A and according B a preference. "The anti-affirmative action measure is essentially a simple declaration: 'Neither the State of California nor any of its political subdivisions shall use race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin as a criterion for either discriminating against or granting preferential treatment to, any individual or group in the operation of the state's system of public employment, public education, or public contracting'" (Schrag, 1995: p. 18). The drafters may, however, make the distinction merely to close a possible linguistic loophole, and not deem it a distinction that marks any genuine and morally significant difference. With that, of course, I disagree.

²⁷ I say 'foreseeable' effects rather than 'foreseen' because S's racist contempt may be the reason she does not bother to find out, and thus does not foresee some of the bad effects of her behavior.

²⁸ I think this undermines an argument recently offered by Gomberg. He argues against what has been called "moderate patriotism," which "includ[es limited] preference for fellow nationals," on the grounds that any argument in defense of it will also legitimize what he calls "moderate racism," which allows someone to "discriminate against black or Hispanic people or against immigrants" so long as one is careful not to "violate their fundamental rights" (p. 147). Assuming that such "moderate racism" is unjustifiable, then so too is moderate patriotism or any form of preference. The problem is that it is hard to see why Gomberg's "moderate racism" need be unjustifiable, or even why it is racism. His analogy with patriotism suggests that what Gomberg has in mind is merely a mild form of preference for people of one's own racial group. This will sometimes be suspicious morally, especially when the one discriminating on the basis of race belongs to a group that has enforced and benefited from forms of discrimination that are racist, that is, that are driven by racial disaffection. However, it is unclear that there is anything morally troubling in same-race favoritism by those on the bottom, or by those who live in a situation, unlike ours, where favoritism has been historically divorced from race hatred. Similarly, there seems to be nothing morally troubling in other-race favoritism; at least, there is nothing morally troubling where this favoritism is likely to be divorced from hatred of one's own racial group, as is the case with other-race favoritism by those from historically oppressing groups.

Indeed, while same-race favoritism by people considered members of the oppressing group and other-race favoritism by those allocated to the oppressed group are disturbing morally, I think that, to the extent this discomfort is legitimate, it will be rooted in our suspicion that it is really race-hatred masking as mere favoritism, or

in our worry that such a practice, should it become widespread, will have the bad effect of exacerbating the comparatively disadvantaged position of those assigned to the historically oppressed group. The latter worry may be serious, but it is a concern about the general effects of a social (or personal) policy, not a concern that individuals may be treated unjustly. As such, it is much less significant morally.

(Since first writing this, I have seen a similar point made in Stephen Nathanson's response to Gomberg. Nathanson sensibly writes that "a racial preference might not be inherently wrong or evil. American Blacks have been an oppressed group that has needed special attention. Whites are not similarly oppressed as a group. Thus, a person with a special affection and concern for whites might not be equally justified in promoting their interests. . . ." Actions done from such favoritism will even "be wrong if they require neglect of the much more pressing need of others" Nathanson, 1992: pp. 10, 11).

In this connection, it is worth noting that Appiah rejects what he calls "intrinsic speciesism," adherents of which think it would be morally permissible "to kill cattle for beef, even if cattle exercised all the complex cultural skills of human beings" (Appiah, 1992: 19). Such a position is to be condemned, of course, but we can condemn it without necessarily rejecting the view ("moderate speciesism"?) that even in the world of Appiah's cosmopolitan cattle, we may, and perhaps even should, show greater concern for members of our own species simply because of their relation to us. The impermissibility of such favoritism does not follow from the recognition that there are moral limits on the ways in which we may treat the various others outside the favored group. I can think morality allows and even demands that I care specially for my family without thereby committing myself to thinking that we may slaughter, butcher, and eat the folks next door.

²⁹ See Carter, 1991.

³⁰ For a helpful discussion of the controversy surrounding efforts to identify and regulate hate speech, and of the different grounds offered for these restrictions, see Simon, 1991.

³¹ Lichtenberg reminds us that such figures are often seen as paradigms of racism, though, unfortunately, she ties this to her claim that Black people and White people tend to have fundamentally different understandings of the nature of racism. "The white picture of the racist is the old-time southern white supremacist" (p.3). Sure it is not merely what is sometimes disparaged as "thinking White" to see such people as plausible instances of racism.

³² Contrast a religious school that (like the Westminster Academy, in the newspapers a few years back) refuses to hire non-Christians. This policy deprives those who would otherwise have been hired of prestige and salary. However, this deprivation is incidental to the policy's purpose, benign or benighted as it may be, of securing a certain sort of instruction by hiring only instructors with certain relevant convictions.

³³ Philip Kitcher directed my attention to this topic.

³⁴ "Though I've belted you and flayed you, By the livin' Gawd that made you, You're a better man than I am, Gunga Din." Rudyard Kipling, "Gunga Din," in *Kipling: a Selection of his Stories and Poems* (Garden City: Doubleday, n.d.).

³⁵ It is in the form of Kiplingesque, "white man's burden"-racism that racism most nearly approaches the structure of sexism. Sexism is, of course, a form of social bias to which many assume racism is structurally similar, and those who introduced the notion of sexism as a concept of social explanation explicitly modeled it on (their understanding of) racism. In general, however, I think the similarity is not great. Sexism appears *normally* to be a form of condescension, wherein males deprive women of authority and power in order to protect them from the consequences of their supposed immaturity and weakness. This sort of disrespect can violate the virtue of justice in

just the ways I have been describing. However, noticing that racism in certain peripheral forms can resemble what sexism seems to be in its most central forms helps reveal a significant dissimilarity between these two social vices. (For a sophisticated comparative account of racism and sexism, see Thomas, 1980.)

³⁶ See Garcia, 1987.

³⁷ I follow him in assuming that the prospective agent stands in no special personal relationship to either of the trapped people (e.g., son) and occupies no role that specially calls for impartiality (e.g., paid village fire-fighter).

³⁸ I think this problem also besets various schemes of randomization, such as flipping a coin and throwing dice, though this drawback is seldom noticed by philosophers so blinded by their attachment to the goal of impartiality that they cannot see the grotesquerie of the means sometimes suggested for achieving it. (Hursthouse makes a similar point in Hursthouse, 1990.)

³⁹ Robert Audi raised this problem with me in conversation.

⁴⁰ A world without partiality to family members, in contrast, would surely be a worse one, less rich in virtues and in other goods.

⁴¹ I am inclined to think we should say a racist act in the strict sense is one that is done from racist attitudes (in the agent, whether settled dispositions or a passing episode of nasty whimsy), rather than merely being one done in acquiescence to others' racist attitudes. A's act is not cowardly merely because it is one in which A accedes to B's cowardice. (Consider the remark: "OK, we'll take the longer way to school if it will calm you down, but I still say there's no real danger we would be attacked by dogs if we took the shortcut." Here the speaker accedes to the listener's cowardice, but does not therein act from her own cowardice.) Likewise with racism.

⁴² This action of hers reflects an insufficiency of good-will, whether or not she does something or feels something else (e.g., regret, sympathy) that manifests some measure of fellow-feeling. It just is not enough. (I am, of course, aware that at this point I am relying merely on intuition; I offer here no suggestion of how much good-will morality requires, let alone any theoretical justification for drawing this line at one place rather than another.)

⁴³ Reflecting on this case should help inform our answers to related questions: What should we say of those, White or Black, who lock car doors when driving through Black neighborhoods but not White ones? Or of store-owners (again, White or Black) who will not admit Black teenagers to their premises?

⁴⁴ It was Larry Blum who pointed out to me the availability of this line of response to Miles.

⁴⁵ It is also doubtful whether such an informal practice, not tied to any organizational structure in particular and part of no determined policy, properly counts as institutional behavior at all. However, I will not pursue that classificatory matter here. Philosophers and other social thinkers nowadays use the term 'institution' in quite a broad and vague way, and this is not the place to try to correct that practice. (That 'institution'? For a step toward a more discriminate use, see the brief discussion of 'institutions' and 'practices' in MacIntyre, 1984, chap. 14.)

⁴⁶ This phenomenon is closely related to that of word-of-mouth job recruiting. There are, however, some distinctions. The 'old boy network' is defined by an educational elite of private schools (which often embeds a still more restricted elite who are members of secret societies, dining halls, and special clubs). This educationally elite network may also extend its privileging beyond recruitment to include admission to restricted social occasions and establishments where business is conducted, employment advancement, informal help and advice, and the wielding of influence to gain preference in academic admissions and fellowships, the awarding of contracts and consultantships, immunity from having to pay for misconduct, and other social and economic privileges.

⁴⁷Loury, 1992.

⁴⁸For instance, "[T]he essential feature of racism is . . . the *defense* of a system from which advantage is derived on the basis of race" (D. Wellman, quoted at Miles, 1989: p. 52. emphasis added).

⁴⁹This reflection illuminates a further example. Young-Bruehl says, "A current law [in the United States] which has as its known consequence that women using federally funded family planning clinics—a majority of whom are women of color— will be deprived of information to make informed reproductive choices is, simply, racist" (Young-Bruehl, 1992: p. 10). The law she seems to have had in mind was an executive order, which, because of court action, was never enforced and was later rescinded.

Young-Bruehl clearly assumes that this information would have been given outside the context of a clerisy of family planning professionals trying to encourage poor, predominantly Black, women to terminate their pregnancies for what the professionals see as their own good. She also seems to assume that it is somehow wrong for the state to try to discourage such choices and that withholding this information about where to get an abortion is objectionable in a way that depriving women of detailed information about the effects of abortion on the developing life within is not. She sees the effects of the regulation as a harm to poor, Black women as individuals, while it is, arguably, better to understand the provision as a protection of poor Black people as a group. I do not here challenge her assumptions. Permit me to observe only that she does not argue for them, that they are not at all obvious, and that I think them all implausible and some plainly false.

⁵⁰Young-Bruehl's classification of the law as racist is highly implausible. Presumably, the requirement was part of a general policy of getting the government out of the provision and support of abortion—a policy which also militates against funding overseas abortion—"providers" through foreign aid, against federal facilities performing abortions on government property (such as military bases) or in U.S. protectorates or the federal district, against using federal payments to employees' insurance funds to pay for abortions, and against using federal insurance payments to provide abortions. Some of these restrictions will wind up having statistically disproportionate impact on minority women and children; some will not. (Some will interpret this impact as specially burdening minority women, others as specially protecting minority children.)

It does not appear, however, that any beliefs or feelings or desires about race enter into these policies in their design or execution. Thus, those who agree with Young-Bruehl, if they mean to rise above nasty rhetoric to serious argument, need to reveal to us where, when, and how the racism gets into this institutional practice, if they are going to back up their claim that this law is a manifestation or instance of institutional racism. Of course, they might instead claim that the law is racist because of the racist conduct of those who execute it. This will probably be true of some administrators. In just the same way, however, it is true of some of the law's opponents that they are motivated by a racist desire to reduce the numbers of Black people, especially the poor female ones who are most likely to be lost should the government make abortion cheap and easy while it leaves the having and rearing of children a disproportionately heavy financial burden. Advocacy of facilitated abortion access, no less than opposition to it, *can* be marked by both racism and sexism. That fact does nothing to support Young-Bruehl's one-sided criticism.

⁵¹It is not clear what Skillen thinks about the latter point. I agree that some people with racist beliefs should not be condemned morally, but that is because I think that racist beliefs don't make one a real racist and that the beliefs are 'racist' only in a derivative sense. Does Skillen agree?

- ⁵² One must, however, take care not to proceed too far down this path. One must assure that the White candidates are not victims of reverse racism. For it would normally be wrong to keep out Black candidates even if the White patients related better to White physicians. One may not bow to primary racism by becoming illicitly collaborative in its workings. See the discussion in section IV above.
- ⁵³ Throughout this discussion, I have had to rely on Skillen for a presentation of Flew's views. Flew's paper is difficult to locate and the periodical in which it appeared is no longer published. Fortunately, Skillen is aware of the difficulty, and takes extra care to present Flew's views at length, separating summary from interpretation or critique. I follow his practice in presenting sometimes extensive verbatim passages quoted from Flew.
- ⁵⁴ I am aware that the charge I here level against Skillen would also militate against all forms of direct, optimizing consequentialism, and against other result-driven accounts of wrongdoing, such as the satisficing consequentialism Slote discussed. (For more on this, see Garcia, 1990, Garcia, 1992, and Slote, 1985.)

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