

Current Conceptions of Racism: A Critical Examination of Some Recent Social Philosophy

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Introduction: Problems of Method

The concept of racism has come under fire. The sociologist Michael Banton suggests the term be restricted to those (increasingly rare) people who believe in biologically based racial hierarchies, thereby delegitimizing most ordinary current usage (Banton, 1970). Robert Miles objects to what he calls the "conceptual inflation" that afflicts the notion of racism (Miles, 1989: chap. 2). The editors of the neoconservative opinion journal *First Things* decide against calling for the total abandonment of the term, but only after close consideration, and seem to warn that if we do not tighten up our usage, then they will consign it to the same dustbin to which they have already consigned the terms 'sexism' and 'homophobia'.¹ The journalist Russell Baker is reported to have said that charges of racism nowadays are as empty as charges of communism were in the heyday of McCarthyism.² As we shall see, some claim that White people and Black people use the term with different meanings. All this suggests that those of us who want to retain the term have some work to do in clarifying what racism is. Unfortunately, such conceptual work is seldom done, and, I will argue, when it has been done, the results have been unsatisfactory.

David Theo Goldberg says that those addressing the nature of racism have proceeded in one of two ways: "There are two basic ways to get at the meanings of socially significant terms: The first is purely conceptual: to stipulate definitions largely a priori on the basis of what the terms *ought* to signify . . . The second way is historical: to lay out how the terms have predominantly been used, the sorts of implications and effects they have had, and how these have all and interrelatedly transformed over time" (Goldberg, 1992: p. 544). Plainly, neither of these ways is adequate for our purposes. As for the "first way," stipulative definitions can be useful, but not when the term for which a meaning is stipulated is the one whose meaning one is investigating. It would be silly merely to stipulate a meaning which we decide a priori that the term 'racism' ought to have. On what could such a normative judgment be based? Nevertheless, we have reason to reject as inadequate any proposed understanding of racism if it is internally inconsistent, or if its implications are inconsistent with either plain facts or accepted usages of related terms.

What of Goldberg's "second way"? A historical survey of different usages is helpful, but a mere record of the things to which the term has in the past been applied is not enough to tell us what people then, let alone now, have meant by it. Goldberg recognizes this. What we seek to discover is what, in applying the term, we are saying about the things to which we apply it. To find this out in light of the origins of the term 'racism', and to sort out various inconsistencies and misunderstandings in the ways people use it, is the most promising path to discovering what racism is. That is what we need to do in order to answer our question of how properly to conceive of racism. In this connection, it is worth keeping in mind that the fact that the term 'racism' has been employed historically in a variety of senses does *not* entail that there have been many *forms* of racism, just as the fact that the word 'bank' can be used to mean either financial establishments or riversides does not mean that there are two types of bank. Ontology does not so closely track semantics; lexicography is not taxonomy. There will be two forms of racism (or two types of bank) only if there are two subclasses of the same class. It is also worth remembering that, even if there are many forms of racism, it does not follow that there is no one thing that racism is.³ Our task is to figure out what it is in virtue of which something belongs to the class of racisms, that is, to determine what racism consists in.

There are several conditions any conception of racism should meet if it is to be adequate to social philosophy's task of understanding social phenomena and determining their significance and value. Among other things, it should count in favor of an understanding of racism if it does, and count against it if it does not:

A) clarify why racism is always immoral (without trivializing the moral judgment by making it a matter of definition);⁴

B) permit racism to be a feature of both individuals and institutions, and explain the connection between the two (e.g., by showing how racism at one level normally derives from racism at the other);⁵

C) allow that practices, procedures, actions, beliefs, hopes, fears, goals, desires, etc., at both the level of individuals and (where appropriate) at the level of organizations, are among the things that can be racist;

D) accommodate clear cases of racism from history and imagination, and exclude cases where racism is clearly absent;

E) remain internally consistent and free of unacceptable implications;

F) conform to our everyday discourse about racism, insofar as this free from confusion;

G) either stand continuous with past uses of the term 'racism', or involve a change of the term's meaning that represents a plausible transformation along reasonable lines of development; and

H) have a structure similar to, and be immoral for some of the same reasons as are, central forms of antisemitism, xenophobia, misogyny, the hostility against homosexuals that is nowadays sometimes called 'homophobia', and other kinds of ethnic, cultural, or religious enmity familiar from history.⁶ (Of course, it may be immoral for additional reasons as well.)

An understanding of racism will be fully adequate only if it has all these features, which we can therefore regard as conditions on the adequacy of any proposed account. I think these criteria unexceptionable, but it has been suggested that such criteria betray hidden Kantian, and therefore anti-Hegelian, epistemological sympathies. Before proceeding, I wish to consider this objection.

Banton and Miles, two leading social scientists in this field, have jointly written:

Within sociology . . . it is certain that there will continue to be two kinds of definition [of racism] corresponding to two contrasting theories of knowledge. Those writers who stand within the Kantian philosophical tradition believe their definitions have to be elaborated by the observer in the attempt to formulate theories that will explain as many observations as possible. Those writers who stand within the Hegelian tradition believe that the observer is part of the world he studies. The observer has to understand the principles underlying the development of the world [sic] and first work out definitions which grasp the essence of historical relationships. (Banton and Miles, 1988: p. 248)

These authors immediately go on to offer two illustrations of what they mean by this dense passage. "The implications of this distinction can be better appreciated if the definition of racism is compared with that of antisemitism. Social scientists who use a Kantian epistemology will start from common elements in the prejudice against black people and Jews. Those who use a Hegelian epistemology may . . . assert that racism and antisemitism are different phenomena serving different functions in the social system. . . ."

If Banton and Miles are right that sociological accounts of the meaning of the term 'racism' divide along epistemological lines into Kantian and Hegelian camps, then a fortiori we can expect that a philosophical inquiry into what the phenomenon of racism consists in will similarly divide. Must we, then, take epistemological sides before we can proceed? I think not. Plainly, nobody today will deny the "Hegelian's" claim that the observer is part of the world she observes. Nor should anyone deny that any proposed definition of 'racism' ought both to make sense against the background of the word's history and to explain as much as possible. The conditions listed above affirm this. Surely, these more modest goals better fit the task of determining what racism, as we now understand it, consists in than does grandiose talk of understanding "the principles underlying the [term's] development" and "grasp[ing] the essence of historical relationships." Those might be grand achievements, but they are neither parts of, nor preconditions to, our task.

Similarly, the discussion of antisemitism and racism offers a false dichotomy. We can, with the "Kantian," begin with common elements in the two phenomena, while also acknowledging, with the "Hegelian," that they are two "different phenomena" and may serve different systemic "func-

tions." (Or none at all, for that matter, though "Hegelians" may discount this possibility.⁷) Functional dissimilarity does not preclude their belonging to the same category. (All my proposed test requires is that, if one of them ultimately consists in a kind of fear, for example, or in a belief in inferiority, then so too does the other.)

Banton and Miles offer a second illustration that is, perhaps, more to the point. Noting that in Britain, there is sometimes bitter hatred between Afro-Caribbeans and Asians, they say that "Hegelian" thinkers will be reluctant to call this racism, "not only because of differences in ideological content [from White racism], but also because explanatory significance is attached to the structural position of the respective groups. From this perspective, hostility between Afro-Caribbeans and Asians will be traced to their respective historical experience within British imperialism and/or to conflicts arising out of their structural positions within Britain. It is in the context of such an analysis that the ideological content of hostility will be assessed to ascertain whether it can be considered racist" (Banton and Miles, 1988: pp. 248-49).

Again, there is nothing in the recognition that hostility between Afro-Caribbeans and Asians derives from "their respective historical experience of British imperialism," or from "conflicts arising out of their structural positions within Britain," or from *both*, that precludes our classifying this intergroup antipathy as racist. Indeed, I see nothing in that recognition that should even increase any antecedent reluctance we might have about classifying it as racist. Racism, whatever it turns out to be, is plainly something that can have many different causes. I am not ruling out in advance the possibility that a correct account of racism will show that those socially situated where British Afro-Caribbeans and Asians are situated cannot be racists. (In the next section, however, I do argue against this contention.) My point is merely that that question must be decided by evaluating the adequacy of the account of racism offered, and that the evaluation needed should be done by attending to the adequacy conditions delineated above. Adopting this method does not require us to opt for one controversial epistemology, a "Kantian" one, over an "Hegelian" alternative.⁸

Perhaps what those who invoke Hegel here have in mind is a position which we can provisionally label 'historicist quasi-nominalism.' The following schematic may illustrate what I have in mind. At one time, Time One, the term 'racism' is meant to predicate one social phenomenon, P1, say, individual belief in the moral inferiority of people assigned to a certain racial group. At a later time, Time Two, the same term is used to predicate something slightly different (P2), individual belief in the intellectual inferiority of the group's members, for example. Still later, at Time Three, people use the term 'racism' to mean a third thing, P3, such as certain social practices which presuppose the group's intellectual inferiority and which serve to ensure it through systematic denial of educational resources. On this picture, over time, the single term 'racism' means three different things, P1, P2, and P3, which we might call, Racism One, Racism Two, and Racism

Three, respectively. These three racisms do share some features—most notably, they all concern racial inferiority. However, there is no one thing in which racism consists over time. All we can do, the advocate of ‘historicist quasi-nominalism’ may tell us, is say that the term ‘racism’ meant P1 at Time One, that it meant P2 at Time Two, and so on. These different uses, we will be told, are not united by a common core of meaning. In response to the philosophers’ ancient question why we use the same term to pick out these different things, the ‘historicist quasi-nominalist’ simply tells the story of the word’s shifts in meaning over time and of the sociohistorical forces that drove them. The uses of the same term to pick out both P1 and P2 (at different times) is not *justified* by some common meaning expressing an unchanging essence, but is instead *explained* by the linguistic and social histories. From this vantage, the quest to uncover the transhistorical nature of racism is futile. Moreover, it is futile because its ahistoricist and essentialist presuppositions are objectionably pre-Hegelian in their failure to appreciate historical change and the social engines that drive it. (Hence the references to historicism and to nominalism in the name ‘historicist quasi-nominalism’.)

So construed, the Hegelian claim has some bite. What is important for our purpose, however, is to point out that this view does not contradict the assumptions of my project here. For that project, all that has to be true is that there is some one thing in which racism *now* consists, some single thing that the term means as *we* use it *today*. I do not need to deny that the term has changed meaning. (Indeed, I argue that it has, changing from a term for a certain belief to one chiefly used for a certain range of feelings, desires, and volitions.) Because of this temporal focus, the historicist element within ‘historicist quasi-nominalism’ is irrelevant to my project. What, then, of the nominalist element? Genuine nominalism would be quite relevant to it, of course. Indeed, its truth would be devastating, for it would entail that there is nothing in which racism now consists, thereby dooming our quest to failure. Notice, however, that the position to which I provisionally gave the label ‘historicist quasi-nominalism’ is not a genuine nominalism. It is not genuine nominalism, because it does not deny the existence of nonlinguistic essences or natures.⁹ It merely situates them at a lower level. This ‘historicist quasi-nominalism’ does tell us that there is no one thing in which racism consists, corresponding to all *transhistorical* uses of the term ‘racism’. However, it still allows that there is some one thing, namely, P1, in which Racism One consists, and which corresponds to the meaning that the term ‘racism’ has at Time One, and so on for Racism Two and Racism Three. That is all I mean to investigate here. Moreover, our discussion of this Hegelian position should help make it clear that, in investigating what I will sometimes call the ‘nature’ or ‘essence’ of racism, all we seek to know is what racism is, to uncover that in which racism, as we now understand it, consists. Although, for purposes of linguistic concision, I may sometimes employ this metaphysical language, we make no presupposition that what we find (if anything) will constitute an ‘essence’ of racism in the ontologically

robust sense of something that captures the various meanings of the term across times and across possible worlds, that exists independently of human thought, and that reveals to us one of the natural 'joints' of Being.¹⁰ I take no position here on such ontological questions, except to the extent that I have already conceded that the word has changed meaning and that racism may take different forms at different times and in different social conditions. I hope thus to forestall the charge that undertaking this project makes one into an 'essentialist', 'foundationalist', 'Platonist', or some comparable bogeyman haunting the postmodernists' fevered imaginations.

I conclude, then, that the truth or falsity of positions like the one I labeled 'historicist quasi-nominalism' leaves my endeavor untouched, and I will not bother about them further. Using the criteria itemized above, then, in this essay I will critically consider some accounts philosophers and others have offered of the nature of racism—as a group of beliefs, especially moral beliefs (or as a certain way of holding such beliefs), as a system of social subjugation, as a field of discourse, and as a mode of behavior. I also treat the view that racism is not one thing, but two quite different and largely unrelated things. I will argue that these accounts fail our tests, and that some are afflicted by additional difficulties as well. Finally, I will offer an alternative conception, which, I argue, fares better. My argument brings to bear on this topic in social philosophy points made in recent criticisms of modernist moral theory, especially criticisms offered by those who call for increased attention to the virtues. (This voice has hitherto largely been silent in controversies within practical social philosophy.)

The cross-disciplinary work on racism is now vast, and I make no claim of having even begun to master it. I will discuss what I see as some principal ways of conceiving racism by focusing on one or two representative presentations of each approach. The works I examine here are selected for their clarity and concision or philosophical sophistication, for their tight focus on what racism *is* rather than on various historical or sociological features of a particular manifestation of it, and, finally, for their amenability to analysis using techniques developed in twentieth-century Anglophone philosophy. These techniques will sometimes take us on flights of imagination that those unaccustomed to conceptual inquiry may find disconcerting. I have tried to minimize these, and there is, of course, danger that considering unrealized possibilities, alternative pasts, and outlandish futures will disconnect our ideas from reality. However, the standard literature tends to err in the opposite direction. Wittgenstein warned of the perils of nourishing our thought on too restrictive a diet of examples, and these are only exacerbated if we restrict our feeding to historical facts. Such a procedure inclines us to mistake what a particular historical manifestation of racism is like with that in which racism itself consists, and disposes us to confuse racism with various inessential concomitant phenomena.

1. Systemic and Social-Power Conceptions: Marable and Hacker

One way of understanding racism identifies racism with systems of social control. In a recent discussion, Manning Marable writes, "Racism is the system of ignorance, exploitation, and power used to oppress African-Americans, Latinos, Asians, Pacific Americans, American Indians and other people on the basis of ethnicity, culture, mannerisms, and color." He adds that it "is the systematic exploitation of people of color in the process of production and labor, the attempt to subordinate our cultural, social, educational and political life. The key concepts here are *subordinate* and *systemic*" (Marable, 1992: pp. 3, 5.¹¹ Emphasis retained). This sort of conception of racism has merit, but it also suffers several drawbacks, drawbacks sufficient, I think, to warrant its rejection.¹²

First, judging by the examples Marable offers, it appears to restrict all victims of racism (the victims of all actual racism, at least, and, if meant as a definition, even of all possible racism) to people who are not White. But, surely, we must allow that there are White victims of (anti-White) racism, even if, following those who tie racism to power, we thought White people were victims of racism only in places where nonWhite people rule or constitute a majority. (Sometimes this will be what Sartre memorably called "anti-racist racism.")

Second, Marable's view allows no place for unsuccessful racism, for apolitical racism, or for personal racism. Surely, the person who advocates a program of race-hate-based murder is a racist, even if she fails and no such "system of discrimination . . . [and] domination" ever comes to be (Marable, 1992). Similarly, an apolitical person who preaches her race-hatred only to a few friends and family members, and who practices racial abuse only at the retail level, is herself a racist, irrespective of whether any *system* of oppression is in place. It would be absurd to think that such people *become* racists only when and if, their own attitudes and behavior remaining the same, a system of oppression grows up around them.

Third, this is an unappealing way to think of racism because it would be absurd to think of antisemitism, or even of xenophobia, in this way. Antisemitism, in the narrow sense of a certain kind of opposition to Jews, exists where and when antisemites exist¹³—not only in medieval Christian Europe (where gentiles oppressed Jews), but also in modern Israel and Palestine (where Jews are in power), and in America (where Jews generally are neither dominant nor oppressed). Marable himself recognizes this fact, for he writes: "There are blacks who are unfortunately antisemitic" (Marable, 1992: p. 10). Antisemitism, however, is a close relative of racism, perhaps even constituting a form of racism.

Fourth, this view leaves it unclear how or even whether individuals and their desires, plans, hopes, fears, joys, sorrows, beliefs, and emotional responses can be racist. How do these fit into the "system"? Of course, they might support it. But, then, they might not, and they seem to be subject to condemnation as racist whether or not they do. We do not and should not excuse the apostle of racial hatred from the charge of racism just be-

cause she happens to live in a society that is, contrary to her preferences, free of systemic racial domination. Desires, plans, fears, and even people and their actions are racist, when they are racist, because of what they are or come from, not because of what they do.¹⁴

It is not hard to see the appeal of identifying racism with systems that impede Black progress. A principal motive for understanding racism is to help identify and overcome what disadvantages Black people today. So, it is tempting to use the term 'racism' as a convenient catch-all label. One difficulty with doing this, however, is that we need a vocabulary sufficiently fine-grained to enable us to distinguish among the many different causes, both past and present, of Black disadvantage. These will include a vast array of factors, including, as Glenn Loury has recently reminded us, such informal traditional practices as 'word-of-mouth' hiring and even the tendency to marry within one's own assigned racial group and economic class.¹⁵ Racism is surely prominent among these factors in that concern about race, whether or not acknowledged, plays a role in them. However, it does not aid our understanding of the complexity of these factors—indeed, it impedes it—when we use the term 'racism' merely as a catch-all for whatever happens to work against (or even merely fails to advance) the progress of disadvantaged racial groups.

One reason for this is that racism is immoral, not just presumptively but conclusively, while not everything that works against racial progress is conclusively immoral. Government, after all, has many legitimate goals, and even if distributive justice has what Rawls would call lexicographic precedence over all other goals, it remains the case that advancing the interests of disadvantaged racial groups need not be assigned lexicographic precedence over every other aspect of distributive justice with which it could conceivably conflict. Another reason not to deem racist everything that happens to work against the interests of Black people is that the term 'racism' is most useful and illuminating as an analytical tool when it is reserved for those factors in the disadvantaging of racial groups which harm its members because of their race, as distinct from those which work against them on account of their economic condition, their educational status, their gender, etc. (See Miles, 1989: chapters 2, 3, *passim*.) Finally, the claim that (some part of) Black disadvantage stems from racism should be *explanatory*, not merely tautological.

In this connection, we should also mention the views of those who hold racism to be essentially linked to social power, even if not to an established system of domination. Thus, Andrew Hacker approvingly offers this paraphrase of former Detroit Mayor Coleman Young's view: "Racism, he [Young] has said, should be attributed only to those who have the power to cause suffering." Hacker acknowledges that White people are not the only racists and, in response to the question, whether Black people can "harbor racist sentiments," he allows that "Some certainly talk that way."¹⁶ Hacker, however, thinks Young is close to the truth. "What he [Young] is suggesting is that it is insufficient to define racism as a set of ideas that some people may

hold. Racism takes its full form only when it has an impact on the real world . . . [Young] raises an important point. If we care about racism, it is because it scars people's lives. Individuals who do not have power may hold racist views, but they seldom cause much harm . . . The significance of racism lies in the way it consigns human beings to the margins of society, if not painful lives and early deaths. In the United States, racism takes its highest toll on Blacks. No white person can claim to have suffered in such ways because of ideas that may be held about them by some black citizens" (Hacker, 1992: pp. 28, 29).

The view attributed to Mayor Young is unacceptable for reasons similar to those we marshaled against Marable's position. The bitter, solitary old bigot, alone in her room, is a racist for all her powerlessness. What makes her a racist is how she feels about members of the targeted racial group, what she wishes for them, and thus what she is inclined to do to them.¹⁷ These feelings, when expressed in an individual's abusive acts, may be just as hurtful as institutional behavior, and even when unexpressed, they pit people against one another in a manner that undermines community, solidarity, mutuality, and other goods of social life.¹⁸

Hacker's own view appears to be somewhat more moderate than that he attributes to Mayor Young. Hacker does not deny that racism can be attributed to those without power. Hacker's view seems to allow, as the one ascribed to Mayor Young does not, that the powerless can be racists.¹⁹ However, Hacker does maintain that the racism of the powerless is not racism in its "full form," and is without "significance." This is also unsatisfactory for several reasons. First, we know that the powerless sometimes respond with antisemitism or xenophobia against a dominant group. This is familiar, albeit disheartening. Racism, however, should turn out to be structurally similar to these forms of intolerance, and it is hard to see why racism should, then, be restricted to the powerful and should be insignificant when it occurs among the powerless. Second, if Hacker's claim that racism has made no White person "suffer in such ways" as Black people have suffered means that racism *never* makes any White person suffer as much as it makes any Black person suffer, then that will be news to those White people who have been singled out for violent attack in part because of their race.²⁰ This is related to a third point, that even a member of a racial group generally without social, economic, or political power may nevertheless have power over a given member of the dominant group, at least for a limited time. Even if racism is "significant" only when tied to power, it is unclear why contextual power of this sort is excluded, even when it consigns someone to a "painful life" or an "early death." (I return to this in the next paragraph.) Fourth, while enmity directed against the powerful may cause less harm than that directed against the oppressed, there is no reason at all to think its *moral* significance lies only or even chiefly in these effects. Hatred, disregard, and contempt are immoral *for what they are*, quite independently of their effects in a given situation. (Indeed, I should maintain they are immoral even independently of their general effects, but I will

not pursue that claim here.²¹) The same holds a fortiori for racial hatred, disregard, and contempt. It "impacts" the "real world," by constituting a deformation of it, by being a moral evil, irrespective of its further effects. Why should powerless haters or bigots get off the hook morally? Given this fact, I can see little basis for Hacker's claim that this sort of racism is not in "full form" unless it has negative social effects. Evil desires, motives, and intentions are likely to have bad effects, and this holds true in the case of racism, but their badness is not entirely derivative from their outcome (if, as I should deny, it depends on outcome at all).²²

A less implausible version of the thesis that racism is possible only among the comparatively powerful might hold that an individual A treats an individual B in a racist way only if A is in a situation of power over B. This new version differs from the one discussed earlier because, unlike the version treated above, it allows that a member of a less powerful, and even oppressed, group can be a racist in a certain situation provided that she holds power in that particular situation. So, even in a Black-controlled African region, a mob of poor Whites attacking a prosperous (but defenseless) Black family might still be racist.²³ Nevertheless, while this contextualized version of the view that racism is possible only among the more powerful is less implausible, I think this position should still be rejected for reasons that should now be familiar. It excludes the solitary, impotent, but intolerant proponent of race-hatred, even one who longs for the power to harm or annihilate those she assigns to the hated race.

Hacker asserts that an account of racism that conceives of it simply as a set of beliefs cannot be adequate. Here, I think, he has a point. To see why, let us next consider an account of racism focused upon belief.

2. A Doxastic Conception: Appiah

The understandings of racism most common among intellectuals might be classified as 'doxastic' ones.²⁴ Such views conceive racism as a belief, "ideology," "dogma," "doctrine," or "theory."²⁵ Kwame Anthony Appiah has developed a sophisticated version of this position. In his view, "'racism' involves both propositions and dispositions." More specifically, he holds racism to be a tendency, which he calls "racial prejudice," to hold certain false propositions about the existence and moral significance of races, "even in the face of evidence and argument that should appropriately lead to giving those propositions up" (Appiah, 1990: pp. 15, 16).

Appiah distinguishes racism from "racialism," calling the latter "the view . . . that there are heritable characteristics, possessed by members of our species, which allow us to divide them into a small set of races, in such a way that all the members of those races share certain traits and tendencies with each other that they do not share with members of any other race. These traits and tendencies characteristic of a race constitute, on the racialist view, a sort of racial essence" (Appiah, 1992: p. 13; 1990: pp. 4-5. Also see Miles, 1989, chap. 2). After claiming that all forms of racism presuppose

racialism, Appiah identifies two forms of racism, extrinsic and intrinsic. Of those who hold the former "doctrine," he writes, "extrinsic racists make moral distinctions between members of different races because they believe that the racial essence entails certain morally relevant qualities." They believe that "members of different races differ in respects that warrant the differential treatment—respects like honesty or courage or intelligence . . ." (Appiah, 1992: p. 13; 1990: p. 5. Emphasis retained). In contrast, "intrinsic racists, on my definition, are people who differentiate morally between members of different races, because they believe that each race has a different moral status, quite independently of the moral characteristics entailed by its racial essence" (Appiah, 1992: p. 14; 1990: pp. 5-6).

Appiah does not explain what he means by this "mak[ing] moral distinctions" or "differentiat[ing] morally" which, he claims, racists do "between members of different races." Is it, for example, a cognitive matter, thinking that R1s (members of race R1) are morally better than are members of R2? Is it a matter of treating R1s, because they are R1s, differently from the way in which one treats R2s, e.g., distributing to R1s more benefits or fewer harms?

There is nothing to be said in favor of what Appiah calls "extrinsic racism." He remarks that "those who have used race as the basis for oppression and hatred have appealed to extrinsic racist ideas" (Appiah, 1992: 17; 1990: pp. 10-11). "[M]ost racial hatred is in fact expressed through extrinsic racism: most people who have used race as the basis for harm to others have felt the need to see the others as independently morally flawed" (Appiah, 1992: p. 18; 1990: p. 12). There are, however, difficulties with his discussion. First, it is not at all clear how institutions and their behavior, or how individuals' desires, feelings, hopes, fears, and so on can count as racist if racism is purely a matter of dispositions to believe certain propositions. Second, it is implausible to think that a racist must make "*moral distinctions*" across races. Suppose someone merely hates members of another group, and acts on this hatred, without attempting to rationalize her attitude and behavior by endorsing a doctrine of racially differentiated moral qualities that might support them. We would call both the person and her conduct racist, but these applications of the term are not permitted on Appiah's account. Third, it is not clear why Appiah thinks it essential that racists hold their beliefs in a certain irrational way, which Appiah deems prejudicial and ideological. "[R]acism—the suffix *-ism* indicat[es] that what we have in mind is not simply a theory but an ideology . . . [M]ost real-live contemporary racists exhibit a systematically distorted rationality . . . that we often recognize in ideology." (Appiah, 1992: pp. 14, 15; see also 1990: p. 8).²⁶ He sensibly asserts that "It would be odd to call someone brought up in a remote corner of the world with false and demeaning beliefs about white people a *racist* if she gave up these beliefs quite easily in the face of evidence" (Appiah, 1992: p. 14; 1990: p. 8. Emphasis retained). In a similar vein, he says, "propositional racists in a racist culture may have false moral beliefs but may not suffer from racial prejudice" if they are open to aban-

doning these beliefs upon further inquiry and reflection²⁷ (Appiah, 1990: p. 9).

Appiah refrains from moral condemnation of such persons and that seems correct. It is too harsh to denounce someone morally simply for believing certain propositions. At the heart of morality, on the most enlightening philosophical understandings of it, are people's commitments, choices, and relationships. Thus, there is little reason to think the person Appiah describes a morally bad person, although she certainly holds some dangerous and ugly doctrines.²⁸ A person may properly be subject to moral criticism on the basis of her beliefs only when she holds those beliefs because of some moral vice. Certainly, someone may hold a "racist belief," in the sense of a belief characteristic of racists, though she herself is not a racist.

In this connection, consider someone dwelling in Plato's "city in speech" in *The Republic*. Its citizens are told the supposedly "noble" lie that, when the gods made human beings, they mixed gold in some, silver in others, and bronze in a third group, creating three "races." The golden race are, in virtue of this admixture, to be the "most honored," although "all are brothers" (*Republic* 415a). People taken in by Plato's lie would believe in the superiority of one racial group to all others, but need not be "bad people." Since they affirm members of all races as brothers (and sisters), and despise none, Plato's story should also remind us that, contrary to what many social thinkers nowadays claim about racism, mere belief that one racial group is better than another need not entail the sort of disaffection that characterizes those we ordinarily think of as racists.²⁹ Indeed, while the golden are to be honored with special offices, in Plato's conception, this privilege is granted for the good of the wider community, not that of the favored class. (I return to this point below.)

To say that the person Appiah describes holds racist beliefs in the relevant sense is to say, roughly, that she holds beliefs characteristic of racists—beliefs, for example, that racism is likely to cause, and that are unlikely to have other roots. However, it seems to me that the reason this person is not herself a racist, despite her racist beliefs, is that her beliefs are neither a rationalization for, nor the basis of, any racial hatred or disregard. It is these beliefs' usual connection to racial disaffection that inclines us to condemn them as racist. When no such connection obtains, then the beliefs can be called 'racist' only in an attenuated and derivative sense, and the person holding the beliefs does not have the affective/desiderative/volitional stance on whose basis we feel justified in applying the term 'racist'. (Here I anticipate the positive account of racism I sketch in the final section.) Indeed, the fact that these beliefs often function to rationalize racial disaffection is not only the reason we call them 'racist', it is also a major part of the reason they have the resistance to rational suasion that Appiah calls "ideology" and "prejudice."

Appiah thinks this prejudice is what distinguishes the real racist from the merely "propositional racist." For him, racism is a matter not simply of what one believes but of how one believes it. Real racists have a deforma-

tion in their rationality, and it is this prejudice (ideology) that makes them resistant to rational dissuasion from their racial beliefs.

Appiah attributes this resistance to the role that the racist's beliefs play in serving her "interests or self-image." More than that, however, needs to be said. One of the important ways in which beliefs in racial superiority serve the racist's interests is that they offer moral defense for her efforts not just to help herself but to help herself *by harming certain others*. Thus, these beliefs help the racist to preserve her self-image because they enable her to continue to see herself as a morally decent person in spite of her antipathy. Thus, it may be their role as rationalizations for racial disaffection that frequently gives to "extrinsically racist" beliefs their ideological character.

Seeing the racist's mind this way has an important advantage over Appiah's view. We noted above that he was careful not to condemn someone morally just for being a propositional racist. And we endorsed that restraint. However, Appiah is also reluctant morally to blame even the real racist, whose deformed rationality blinds her to her evidence against her racist beliefs. He says of the racially prejudiced that they "are bad people. But it is not clear to me that they are responsible for the fact that they are bad" (Appiah, 1990: p. 9). This is unacceptable, for any adequate account of racism must explain why to describe someone (or something) as racist—in the focal senses of the term, at least—is to criticize her (or it) morally. Insofar as someone's racial prejudice is a device for preserving a vicious disregard for those assigned to a racial group, it is open to moral criticism. An individual may well be morally responsible for holding racist beliefs, insofar as she viciously wills to victimize others and tries to rationalize this ill will.³⁰ The focus of our moral scrutiny and of our attribution of racism, then, is on the racist's desires, will, and wishes. The beliefs themselves are of moral interest primarily for their work in rationalizing prior racist conative attitudes or in giving rise to consequent ones. The importance of this becomes clearer in my final section below. Right now, what is important is that, contrary to Appiah's view, it seems better to attribute the *moral* status of a racist's prejudice, not to its epistemological aspect as ideological and rationally defective, but to its role in shielding moral vice.³¹

Appiah's initial definition of intrinsic racism, quoted above, leaves the impression that he has in mind *the broad view* that *everyone* has reason to treat R1s differently (e.g., better) than she treats R2s, rather than *the narrow view* that R1s have reason to treat R1s differently (better).³² He says, for example, that intrinsic racists hold a "moral doctrine" according to which different races have "different moral status." Moreover, the explicit contrast with "extrinsic racists" who think, for example, that R1s are morally better than R2s because R1s are more courageous or industrious, suggests that the intrinsic racist will think that R1s are morally better intrinsically, just, that is, for the race to which they belong.

Appiah's rhetoric is, however, misleading on this point. His discussion makes it clear that what Appiah means by "intrinsic racism" is what I have called the narrow view. "An intrinsic racist," he tells us, "holds that the

bare fact of being of the *same* race is a reason for preferring one person to another" (Appiah, 1992: p. 14; 1990: p. 6. Emphasis added). She thinks that "the bare fact of race provides a reason for treating members of his or her own race differently from others," even as many people (but, perhaps, not Appiah) think that the bare fact of having been born of the same parents is reason to treat a sibling differently (Appiah, 1992: p. 14; 1990: p. 10).

Appiah thinks Black Nationalists and various other advocates of racial solidarity are, in general, intrinsic racists. This is odd, and he himself admits this claim is somewhat counter-intuitive.³³ "Part of our resistance . . . to calling [racist] the racial ideas of those, such as the Black Nationalists of the 1960s, who advocate racial solidarity . . . surely resides in the fact that they did not contemplate using race as a basis for inflicting harm" (Appiah, 1990: 10; also see 1992: p. 17). This is, I think, a crucial fact. If we are reluctant to call a group or an individual racist because their racial beliefs are disconnected from any desire to harm (or lack of due concern), then that indicates that what we think essential to racism is race-based antipathy (or disregard). (I will return to this point when I sketch my own view at the end of this essay.)

Appiah goes on to claim that "the discourse of [racial] solidarity is usually expressed through the language of intrinsic racism"; and "the fact of a shared race . . . provides the basis for solidarity . . . and makes the idea of fraternity one that is naturally applied in nationalist discourse" (Appiah, 1990: pp. 10, 11). He allows that "intrinsic racism seem[s] so much less objectionable than extrinsic," that it "is acknowledged almost exclusively as the basis of feelings of community," and serves "as the basis of acts of supererogation, the treatment of others better than moral duty demands of us" (Appiah, 1992: p. 17; 1990: pp. 11-12). These concessions make it difficult to see why what Appiah calls 'intrinsic racism' is properly seen as a form of racism at all. For racism is vicious, not a source of fellow-feeling; it is a way of falling short of one's moral duty not of going beyond it.

I will attempt no general moral defense of everything Appiah builds into "intrinsic racism." I do, however, want to say something on behalf of the belief, also attributed to the intrinsic racist, that "the bare fact of being of the same race is [or, as I should prefer to say, may be] a reason for preferring one person to another" (Appiah, 1992: p. 14; 1990: p. 6). We need a further distinction here, a distinction between *the strong view* that *such differential treatment is morally required*, and *the weak view* that *this differential treatment is (merely) permissible morally*. (The latter view is compatible both with the claim that such racial preference is morally superior to racial neutrality, and with the opposed view that it is less admirable than neutrality). If Appiah means that the intrinsic racist believes there is a reason *requiring* a person to accord preference to members of her own race, then he may well be right to reject it, for this does seem false as a general claim. Appiah helps explain this when he points out that such distant kinship ties as may be internal to being assigned to the same race are too greatly attenuated to warrant such a claim. (He talks of "the essentially unintimate nature of relations within

'races'," Appiah, 1990: 15.) There are certain goods of intimacy realizable only within family, close friendship, spousal love, and so on. These call for special concern, and morality endorses this call, making it a moral requirement. Racial connection, lacking such intimacy or any comparably fundamental element of human thriving, may not justify such a requirement. As Cottingham writes, "Partiality to loved ones is justified [as, in many circumstances, a moral requirement] because it is an essential ingredient in one of the highest human goods . . . [Whereas, in] the case of racial partiality . . . there appears to be no remotely plausible case for arguing that it must find a place in all or most plausible blueprints for human welfare." He concludes, reasonably, that there are no good grounds for thinking racial preference morally obligatory (Cottingham, 1986: pp. 369, 371).³⁴

For all that, morality may still *allow* such favoritism.³⁵ Thus, if Appiah means the intrinsic racist believes there is a reason *permitting* a person to accord such preference, then a problem arises from a different corner. To say that such a reason permits such preference suggests that this sort of preference is somehow questionable and *in need of* the sort of justification that renders it permissible. However, there need be nothing morally objectionable about the preference even on its face. Of course, when talk of a special preference for members of group G1 is really just a smoke-screen to hide what is really antipathy or callous disregard toward members of group G2, then the "preference" is vicious. Similarly, when widespread action from such a preference is likely to exacerbate an undesirable and even unjust social situation, as it would were large numbers of White Americans to proclaim and act on such a preference, then there may be good social reason to discourage it. It may even sometimes be that to encourage people to act on it would manifest social insensitivity and irresponsibility.³⁶ Still, even if racial fellow feeling is not of itself obligatory or even virtuous in the way that family feeling is, there is no reason in the abstract to condemn it when it amounts to nothing more than solidarity with or special affection for those deemed similar to oneself in ways one innocently values.³⁷

Appiah suggests personal favoritism has a place only in "private." "In our public lives, people are owed treatment independently of their biological characters; if they are to be differently treated there must be some morally relevant difference between them. In our private lives, we are morally free to have 'esthetic' preferences between people, but once our treatment of people raises moral issues, we must not make arbitrary decisions" (Appiah, 1992: p. 18; 1990: p. 12). Appiah recognizes that questions of racial morality sometimes have a place in private life. The person who spurns another's offer of friendship solely out of race-based hatred or its bigoted rationalizations, or who rejects inviting a certain neighbor to a party for such reasons, therein does something wrong, whether or not her 'victim' ever finds out about the matter.

More important, Appiah's view seems greatly to exaggerate the extent to which "public life" is governed by a requirement to act impartially. (Where

public life can be distinguished from private life—a problematic distinction Appiah treats rather facetiously.) Such a view threatens to privilege impartiality, rights, principles, and detachment over special ties, virtues, affective inclinations, and relationships. It also threatens to devalue the private sphere, and thus, one fears, it will devalue the domestic sphere as well.³⁸ I cannot go into these matters here. Suffice it to say that these issues are disputed in recent ethical theory, especially that influenced by what some writers, influenced by the writings of feminist moral thinkers Carol Gilligan and Nel Noddings, have called “the ethics of care” (Gilligan, 1982; Noddings, 1986. Also see Larrabee, 1993). Moreover, Appiah’s view leaves it unclear how he can defend forms of racial preference and race-sensitive discrimination that seem justified, as in programs of preferential treatment, whether they are rooted in racial fraternity, or in a concern for civic unity, or in a vision of a better society.

Appiah calls intrinsic racism “a moral error.” Need there be something morally objectionable in the kinds of racial solidarity, preference, and fraternity that seem to mark some of those whom Appiah labels ‘intrinsic racists’? Must some vice lie at the heart of what, he tells us, has “tended in our time to be the natural expression of feelings of community?” I, for one, cannot see what it is. Such fraternity (and sorority), he concedes, “does not *have* to be directed *against* anyone” (Appiah, 1990: p. 16. Emphases retained). This is a damaging admission, because if it is not directed against anyone, however, then there seems little point to calling it ‘a racism’ at all. For, if anything is evident to someone who reflects on our ordinary talk about racism, it is that racism is always directed against members of one group or another. Racism always has targets, enemies.³⁹ As Castoriadis says (with some exaggeration), “Racism does not want the conversion of the others, it wants their death” (Castoriadis, 1992: p. 8).

That said, before we quit Appiah, we should note that his position and mine may not be in ultimate conflict. He proposes his accounts of ‘racialism’, ‘extrinsic racism’, and ‘intrinsic racism’ as “stipulat[ive]” efforts made in the course of making a critique of racism “in the form in which it stands the best chance of meeting objections” (Appiah, 1990: p. 4). My project is not in this way “rationally [to] reconstruct” racism in its intellectually strongest form the better to critique it. Rather, I aim to capture, albeit in more precise form, what people, Black and White, are getting at in their ordinary talk about racism. I take it for granted that genuine racism is inherently vicious, and wish to develop an understanding of it that, in revealing its nature, shows why it is so evil. The account of racism I offer below will be false if it does not well capture people’s pre-theoretical understanding of racism. The definitions Appiah stipulates may not be meant to stand that test.⁴⁰

Appiah’s position also highlights a difficulty that besets any effort to identify racism with the belief (or doctrine or ideology) that some racial groups are superior to others: it is possible to have such a view without being a racist. To see this, imagine that someone is an aficionado of racial

groups in the way that some people are wine-lovers. As the oenophile expansively delights in all wines, relishing their differences, so our aficionado of races revels in what she deems the variety of human races, their complexity and nuances. She exults in being around people of differing races, sometimes as a visitor to otherwise single-race gatherings, sometimes in richly multiracial settings. However, just as some oenophiles, when pressed, admit to having a favorite out of all the wines they so treasure, so our aficionado admits to having a favorite race.⁴¹ Moreover, as the oenophile, because of her expertise, may give reasons for her choice, explaining why it is not merely the one she happens to like most but the one she thinks the best wine, so our aficionado of races may back up her judgment that, of all the world's races, in every one of which she rejoices, it is R1 that is the very best of all.⁴² Such a person as we have imagined may be very foolish in her attitudes. She may be in the grip of the dangerous idea that science can fruitfully divide humanity into distinct races. (Thus, she may be what Appiah calls a 'racialist'.) She may also relate to people too much in terms of stereotypes and groups rather than as individuals. The fact remains that she is not a racist. She affirms the superiority of a certain race (notice that it need not be her own), but this is by way of deeming one the jewel within the crown of human racial groups.

It seems that there are (or, at least, could be) people who are racist in that they feel and act as racists do, although they make no effort to rationalize their attitudes and conduct with affirmations of racial superiority. Such belief, then, is not necessary for racism. The example of the aficionado of races indicates that it is also not sufficient. It remains logically open, of course, for someone to maintain that while, insufficient in itself, belief in racial superiority is sufficient for racism when it is ideologically held or when it is embraced as a "doctrine." The oenophile example does not directly close this possibility, but it does, I think, render it highly implausible. This is because it suggests that what distinguishes the racist is that she reacts quite negatively to those she sees as members of one of the groups. This is a different and deeper matter than her merely accepting a certain comparative evaluation about, say, races R1 and R2. As a last move, one could revise the doxastic accounts, so that the racist's distinctive belief was a belief in the evil or worthlessness of one group, rather than belief in the superiority of one race to another.⁴³ I will not pursue that position here. Rather, I will suggest at the end that what makes one a racist is not that one believes that members of one group are bad (or without value), but that one has negative nonepistemic attitudes (emotional, desiderative, and intentional) toward them.

3. A Discursive Conception: Goldberg

Taking off from Cornel West's suggestion that "modern discourse . . . produces and promotes" White racism, D. T. Goldberg argues for "the hypothesis . . . that racism is to be considered in terms of a field of discourse,"

a position he sometimes suggests is the same as "the view that racism consists in a field of discourse"⁴⁴ (Goldberg, 1990: pp. 296, 314, 315. Emphases retained). According to Goldberg, "the discourse of racism . . . includes a set of hypothetical premises about human kinds . . . and about the differences between them (both mental and physical). It involves a class of ethical choices (e.g., domination and subjugation, entitlement and restriction, disrespect and abuse)" (Goldberg, 1990: p. 300). Developing the resources within his discursive conception of racism, Goldberg maintains that "exclusion on the basis of [purportedly racial] difference . . . is the most basic primitive term of the deep structure definitive of racist discourse. As the basic propositional content of racist desires, dispositions, beliefs, hypotheses, and expressions . . . racial exclusion motivates the entire superstructure of racist discourse" (Goldberg, 1990: p. 304). "Racists may intend, desire or be disposed to exclude racial others with the goal in mind of domination or subjugation," but, according to Goldberg, they may instead have very different aims, to gain profits by insuring cheap labor, for example, or to preserve "indigenous culture"⁴⁵ (Goldberg, 1990: p. 310).

In a later essay, Goldberg enhances this account. He claims "there is no single transhistorical phenomenon that we can identify as racism *per se*." He proposes to "stipulate a definition" that he means both to "be sensitive to the way in which the word has been used," and to "enable identification of those features constitutive of various social formations that have been expressed. . . ." Preferring to talk of "racist expressions" rather than of "racisms," he says that "racist expressions minimally . . . consist in the promotion or actual exclusion of people in virtue of their being deemed to be members of different racial groups, however racial groups are taken to be constituted" (Goldberg, 1992: pp. 543-45).

Goldberg's contention that "racism consists in a field of discourse" of the sort he sketches is unsatisfactory. Despite Goldberg's jargon of "semantics," "deep structure," and "primitive term[s]," racism cannot be reduced to a discourse. Any discourse, properly so called, is composed of linguistic items, but racism cannot merely be a matter of what people say, speak, write, affirm, question, and so on. There is more to the phenomenon of racism than "racist expressions," which are said to include "[r]acist descriptions, hypotheses, choices, and rules of discourse . . ."⁴⁶ (Goldberg, 1990: p. 300). Surely, to understand what makes someone a racist we must look beyond *what* she says to *why* she says it. Otherwise, we will be unable to distinguish the person who is a racist from the actor who is merely portraying one. There are expressions whose use on a particular occasion is racist, and there are expressions that can be called racist because of the way in which they are normally used. However, to understand what makes them racist we need to look to the aims, desires, and beliefs of the people who employ them. A piece of language cannot be racist merely in virtue of what it is, says, or means, but only in virtue of the mental states and actions that it *expresses*.

Nor will it suffice to pick out truly racist speech-acts by their effects.

The racist remarks in a too-subtle piece of anti-racist satire, for example, might in fact go over the heads of its audience, and serve to encourage and re-enforce their practices of race-based mistreatment.⁴⁷ That doesn't make racist its actors, their performances, or their discourse. Moreover, the racist need *say* nothing (orally or in writing). She will still be a racist so long as she thinks, does, or feels certain things, at least if she thinks, does, or feels them for the right (that is, morally wrong) reasons.⁴⁸ It is misleading to reduce the varied phenomena Goldberg cites—domination, subjugation, restriction, disrespect, abuse, apartheid, and “separate development”—simply to elements of a social discourse. Words can hurt, contrary to the childhood saying, but linguistic items are not the *only* things that hurt. To characterize all these social relationships, political arrangements, personal actions, etc. as elements within a discourse requires such a bloated reconception of the notion of discourse that the term loses meaning. If all these things are discursive, then one wonders what is excluded when one classifies racism as a field of discourse. What else is there for anything to be? This is important, because it is only in virtue of this unacceptable broadening of the concept of ‘discourse’ that Goldberg is able to offer any explanation of how not only speech acts, but also people, beliefs, feelings, desires, intentions, nonverbal conduct, institutions and collective behavior, can also count as racist.⁴⁹

Setting aside the rhetoric of ‘discourse’ and its difficulties, the down-to-earth implications Goldberg draws from his account reveal more important shortcomings. Thus, he says that “in some cases behavior may be deemed racist on the basis only of its outcome. The mark of racism here will be whether the discriminatory behavior reflects a persistent pattern *or* could reasonably have been avoided” (Goldberg, 1990: p. 296). This is too inclusive. Suppose, to adapt an example from the literature, a city administrator, looking only to increase revenue, raises the subway fare by a nickel. The negative impact of this measure, let us suppose, falls disproportionately upon Black people because they disproportionately use mass transit. The administrator may have been insensitive in failing to find out whether this action would further harm Black people, but such insensitivity (even if, in the extreme case, morally objectionable) falls well short of the sorts of moral outrages properly classified as racist.⁵⁰ Indeed, even if this action is characteristic of the administrator in its heedlessness to racial aspects, so that her conduct *both* “reflects a persistent pattern” *and* “could reasonably have been avoided,” the action lacks any connection to the kind of race-sensitive prejudice or antipathy or disregard for people that would warrant classification as racist. The outcome of her action is insufficient to render her behavior racist.

Notice, it is not that our administrator does not care about the harm her action does Black people (but does care about that done Asians, say). That would still make her racist. Rather, she fails to figure out in advance, or to notice afterward, whether those harmed are Black, White, Asian, or other. It is arguable that failure to attend to racial differences may sometimes indi-

cate a morally insufficient zeal to correct racial injustice and its effects. However, if we classify such inattentiveness as racist, then we undervalue the great gap of moral seriousness that separates it from the sort of over-attentiveness to perceived racial difference, the ugly disposition to negative feelings and actions on its basis, that the term 'racist' properly calls to mind. Racism must be an objectionable way of taking race into account, while the charge against the administrator can only be that she does *not* take race into account where she should. That may be unfortunate, but it cannot be racist.

Goldberg continues the passage from which we just quoted in this way, "Racist institutions are those [1] whose formative principles incorporate and [2] whose social functions serve to institute and perpetuate [racist] beliefs and acts. . . ." This conjunctive account of institutional racism is also problematic. The first condition seems unnecessary, for the operations of an institution founded entirely on innocent principles, but now deliberately turned to the harming of members of a hated racial group, should count as institutional racism. Moreover, this example also reveals a flaw in the second condition. Once we dispose of Goldberg's unnecessary first condition for institutional racism, we cannot adopt his second condition as sufficient for institutional racism.⁵¹ The effects of an institution's operations cannot render it racist, as this would entail, in complete abstraction from the desires, motives, and goals that inform them. Suppose, for a moment, that one of the criticisms sometimes lodged against preferential treatment programs is correct. (If the reader finds that supposition odious, she may instead imagine a possible world, very different from our own, in which they *were* correct.) In that case, these programs really do have the effect of breeding racist resentment and acts of vengeance against those who receive benefits because of them. Such programs, then, would "perpetuate" racist "beliefs and acts." Nevertheless, it would be preposterous to say that, in the circumstances described, the programs of preferential treatment must be instances of institutional racism. They may be sensible and well-intentioned, but ultimately counter-productive, efforts to end racial disparities. Surely, an account of institutional racism according to which both racial disparities and reasonable, well-meant, but ineffectual efforts to eradicate them all count as racist is unacceptably harsh and indiscriminate.

Goldberg himself maintains that, on his view, "beliefs and descriptions are theoretically basic," and says that "racists are those who explicitly or implicitly ascribe racial characteristics of others that they take to differ from their own and those they take to be like them" (Goldberg, 1992: p. 297; 1990: p. 296). These acknowledgments, together with the critical examination we have undertaken, suggest that, in the end, the discursive conception of racism may not constitute a genuine alternative to the doxastic conception we discussed above. In it, racism may ultimately reduce to a matter of what a person believes about certain people, of what descriptions she thinks fit them. Goldberg's account, however, is instructive. At one point, he says that the racial ascriptions that, on his view, racists as such make "assign racial preferences, and they express desired, intended or actual in-

clusions or exclusions, entitlements or restrictions" (Goldberg, 1990: p. 296). At the end, I will suggest that it is the desire and the intention to exclude, restrict, or otherwise injure that constitutes the core of racism in its chief form.

4. A Double-Sense Conception: Lichtenberg

It has been suggested that we should not see the systemic and the doxastic as competing conceptions of racism, because there are two senses of the term, which roughly correspond to the two views we have discussed. Thus, Judith Lichtenberg contrasts what she calls "racism-in-the-head" with "racism-in-the-world." The former fits roughly what I call the doxastic conception, and the latter the systemic conception.

According to Lichtenberg, "In general, white people today use the word 'racism' to refer to the explicit conscious belief in racial superiority," while "for the most part black people mean something different by racism: they mean a set of practices and institutions that result in the oppression of black people" (Lichtenberg, 1992: p. 3; Duke, 1992). It is unclear what we should make of the claim that Black people tend to hold the racism-in-the-world conception and White people the racism-in-the-head conception. How do we know that we should infer from the data that Black people hold a systemic conception of racism and White people a doxastic one? Perhaps it is just that Black people are more likely to think that racism-in-the-head (or, as I will suggest, in the heart) pervades the behavior of White people acting in their institutional capacities as well as in their private conduct. Or perhaps Black people tend, rightly or wrongly, to be more concerned about institutional racism than about individual racist beliefs.

There is, in any case, a deeper problem. Lichtenberg interprets such data as exist to indicate that people who hold a systemic conception of racism use the word 'racism' and its cognates in one *sense*, while those who hold a doxastic conception use the term in another sense. (According to her, most Black people hold the former view, but I will not further pursue the question of racial demography.) This implies that when proponents of the two sides argue about what people, institutions, and actions are racist, and why, then they are not really disagreeing either about any normative or merely factual issue. They only *think* they are disagreeing, for the statements of the one side do not (logically) contradict those of the other. This implication is implausible, and it seems rather arrogant for the theorist in this way to insist that others misunderstand their own use of language in such a systematic and fundamental way. Lichtenberg wants to have it both ways, insisting that this is a "dispute about words," but offering an analysis in which the dispute disappears.

Fortunately, there are other interpretations available. An attractive one—which does not require us condescendingly to maintain that the people who ordinarily use and argue with these terms fundamentally misunderstand their own claims—holds that one of the things that the two sides

disagree about, and are arguing over, is how the ordinary language term 'racism' *should* be used. How is such a dispute to be resolved?⁵² Some approach this as a question of will and power. This view, which might be called a left-Nietzschean one, is that people should use terms (or, at least, contested political terms) in such a way that their political cause, or some preferred cause, is best advanced. However, that recommendation threatens to render irresolvable not only the dispute about language but also the political dispute itself. For reasoned discourse cannot operate where there is no willingness to use terms in the same sense. If this position on meaning is adopted across the board, it becomes quite difficult even to formulate the common premises from which any common reasoning must proceed. More promising is an approach on which this normative question about what we *should* mean by certain terms is one we properly answer by first determining what the words *do* mean. The task, then, is to identify a meaning that preserves the accepted truth-value of uncontested statements, matches and renders intelligible past claims, fits what is known about etymology and derivation, fits our less theoretical judgments about meaning, and so on.

At one point, Lichtenberg associates racism-in-the-head with a conception of racism as "a matter of their [people's] private, individual intentions." She then identifies the racism-in-the-head conception as restricting racism to "overt or out-and-out racism," adding that, "On this view, you are responsible only for what you intend; thus, if *consciously* you harbor no ill will toward people of another race or background you are in that respect innocent." She concludes, "It is comfortable for white people to think racism is dead just as long as they harbor no *conscious* feelings of antipathy or superiority to blacks. And, conversely, it is less painful for blacks, seeing what they see, to think otherwise" (Lichtenberg, 1992: p. 3. Emphases added). There are some fast and problematic moves in this.

First, my chief difficulty with Lichtenberg is that her account of racism-in-the-world seems to go too far. It appears to allow that institutional racism could exist independently of individual racial hatred or prejudice. Any doctrine thus committed, as this one seems to be, to the thesis that racism could exist *even if there never had been any racists* is patently unacceptable. The racism of a group of people can, I concede, continue to inhabit the institutions they set up even after the people have perished. The institutions cannot be racist, however, if there never were any racist people or attitudes to invest those institutions with their racism in the first place. To think otherwise runs the risk of both de-personalizing racism and reifying it. Indeed, one of the chief dangers in an account like Lichtenberg's is that it allows people to see racism as a thing out there somewhere ("in the world") rather than as something ugly inside themselves.

Second, as she first describes it, racism-in-the-head resides in *beliefs*, not in intentions or "feelings of antipathy". So, her remarks just cited do not fit her own conception of racism-in-the-head. Third, it is obviously absurd for any moral theorist to hold that "you are responsible only for what you intend." This would, among its other failings, make nonsense of culpable

negligence. It is tendentious to tax the reasonable view that racism is primarily a matter of intentions, desires, and feelings for supposed commitment to this excessive claim. Fourth, it is unclear whether intentions need be fully conscious in the way that Lichtenberg presupposes. In any case, we can agree that an agent may be responsible for acts done from racial "antipathy" even when she is not fully conscious of that antipathy. One who rejects the systemic conception of racism can allow, nonetheless, that institutional racism may persist for some time after what below I suggest is the principal form of racism—racism-in-the-heart—is expunged. Institutional racism is the institutionalizing of racism in such fashion that a policy operates from racist motives—whether those of its current executors or its original designers—or on the assumption of beliefs that are tinged with racist origins. Thus, there is some truth to Lichtenberg's claim that "even if 'racism-in-the-head' disappeared, then, 'racism-in-the-world' would not" (Lichtenberg, 1992: p. 5). (It would be better, of course, to say that it *might* not disappear.) Any individualist or internalist conception of racism that denies this goes too far.

I will conclude our treatment of Lichtenberg's discussion by pointing out a fifth difficulty. As she correctly says, "'Racism' is inescapably a morally loaded term. To call a person a racist is to impugn his character by suggesting deliberate, malign discrimination . . ." (p. 5). (This is generally right, I think, though the discrimination needn't be deliberate so long as it is malign or uncaring.) But then how does the racism-in-the-world conception account for the inherent immorality of racism? What makes these social systems morally corrupt if they are not corrupted by the viciousness of the individual people who design, or establish, or maintain them?⁵³ Indeed, one wonders, how can any *individual* be a racist on the racism-in-the-world conception? Without an adequate answer to this question, the systemic account of racism lacks plausibility, and the double-sense conception, which incorporates the systemic account, must fall with it.⁵⁴

5. A Behavioral Conception: Ture and Hamilton

The understanding of racism Kwame Ture and Charles Hamilton first offered three decades ago deservedly remains influential. To their own question, "What is racism?" they answered, "By 'racism' we mean the predication of decisions and policies on considerations of race for the purpose of subordinating a racial group and maintaining control over that group" (Ture and Hamilton, 1992: p. 3).

There are several things to be said about their view. Intuitively, we think that racism can exist even if no decisions or policies are predicated on race. It should be enough that there is the sort of ill will that inclines a person or group to make decisions or adopt policies of the relevant sort. As Ture and Hamilton note, a racist typically has a desire or purpose of subordinating (or otherwise harming) the (members of) the racial group. It is not also required that she mean to "maintain . . . [social] control over that group."

There are at least two reasons for this. First, there may be no such extant control to be "maintained"; the racist might first need to establish it. Second, and more important, the agent(s) may not have social control in mind; it is sufficient that they act from malevolence. (Malice is not necessary, however, because an insufficiency of goodwill, when goodwill is diminished on the basis of race, should also suffice for racism.)

Ture and Hamilton go on to maintain,

Racism is both overt and covert. It takes two, closely related, forms: individual whites acting against individual blacks, and acts by the total white community against the black community. We call these individual racism and institutional racism. The first consists of overt acts by individuals, which cause death, injury or the violent destruction of property. . . . The second type is . . . less identifiable in terms of *specific* [original emphasis] individuals committing the acts. . . . The second type originates in the operation of established and respected forces in society. . . .

Institutional racism relies on the active and pervasive operation of anti-black attitudes and practices. Whites are "better" than blacks; therefore blacks should be subordinated to whites. This is a racist attitude. . . . [I]nstitutional racism has another name: colonialism. Obviously, the analogy [between racism and colonialism] is imperfect. (Ture and Hamilton, 1992: p. 5)

Again, there are several difficulties attending these claims. First, contrary to what Ture and Hamilton say, individual racist acts need not be overt, or even conscious. However, their view is on target in its insistence that institutional racism requires attitudes that are "anti-black" or against the members of some racial group. I think we should go further, and assert that institutional racism relies on such attitudes in a strong sense: no institutional practice counts as racist, even institutionally racist, unless it is itself grounded in racist attitudes in the minds of those who devised the policy, or those who later execute (or ignore) it. I think the most important insight to be gleaned from Ture and Hamilton is that racism, even institutional racism, lies ultimately not simply in beliefs about racial superiority but in the urge to "subordinate" or, more generally, to harm. Second, as individual racism need not be overt, institutional racism need not be covert. Surely, the chattel enslavement of Africans was an open institutionalization of racist ill will. Third, individual racist conduct need not actually cause death, or property destruction, or even injury. When a hater of Black people tries to subjugate them, then her conduct is racist, even if she fails and causes no one harm. Fourth, institutional racism may be similarly ineffectual without being any less racist for that. Suppose a targeted group devises effective ways of thwarting institutionalized efforts to them. The institutional efforts surely still count as racist even on Ture and Hamilton's own original account, for they are race-cognizant policies "for the *purpose* of subordinating a racial group" (Emphasis added). What suffices to classify the institutional conduct as racist is its malignant purpose, even if the efforts are too futile to amount to anything so imposing as "colonialism."⁵⁵

6. An Alternative Approach: A Volitional Conception

I suggest that we rethink the concept of racism. We can find clues to the direction we should take in Ture and Hamilton's attribution to racists of the "purpose of subordinating a racial group" and in Stephen Carter's remark that "[T]rue racists, [are] people who really do mean black people ill" (Carter, 1989: p. 165). The latter is not quite right in its details. Racism may be directed against people who are not Black, and it needn't be so severe as actual ill will. A race-based disregard for or indifference toward some people should also count as racist. When Huck Finn remarks that, although no people were injured in a certain episode, a "nigger" got killed, we think of the casual contempt he voices as a kind of racism.⁵⁶

Racism, I maintain, is not in its primary instance a matter of systems of social control, of an individual's conviction (ideological or not) that some races are superior to others, of fields of discourse, or of the effects of institutional behavior, though it may be found in all these things. Racism is, in the first instance, a race-based disaffection for persons deemed to belong to a certain race.⁵⁷ As we have already mentioned, racism will take two principal forms. In the first form, it consists in racial antipathy, the desire (self-acknowledged or not) to harm people assigned to a certain racial group motivated in part, at least, simply by the desire to have them suffer. This sort of racist manifests the vice of malevolence, and, in her aim to deprive members of the hated race of things to which they are entitled, she also manifests the vice of injustice.

In the second form, it consists not in ill will, but in a differential lack of goodwill such that one doesn't much care about people assigned to a certain racial group, precisely because they are deemed to belong to that group. It doesn't make much difference to this sort of racist whether members of the disregarded racial group suffer or prosper. Indeed, it doesn't much matter to her whether her own actions happen to harm them. Such a racist has the vice of moral disregard, indifference. She will also have the vice of injustice, because, caring little about those she assigns to a certain racial group, she will disdain them and their rights as beneath notice, therein breaching that respect for others and their dignity which the virtue of justice demands.⁵⁸ A person who is racially disaffected in such a way is a racist, and her actions, beliefs, feelings, hopes, fears, etc. will be racist insofar as her racism infects them. Someone's belief in the inferiority of R1s to R2s, for example, will be racist when it serves to rationalize or motivate her antipathy or disregard for R1s. Although racism is primarily a matter of what a person wants, hopes for, fears, and intends, it can also infect a person's actions. An action will be racist when it is motivated by racist ill will, or informed by racist indifference or contempt, or driven by beliefs so informed. I think it can also be racist, in a somewhat extended sense and a more derivative manner, when race is viciously used to harm, intimidate, or insult—as when, hostile to B for other reasons, A chooses to express her feelings by employing a racial epithet. Likewise, racism can spread from an

organization's administrators and functionaries to contaminate collective behavior, instrumental choices, and goals. When it is thus institutionalized, we may properly employ the name, coined in the 1960s, 'institutional racism'. In an extended sense, people may also call an institution and its operation racist when the institution works from beliefs that serve to rationalize one or another form of racial disaffection in the hearts of those who formulate and execute its policies.

So conceived, racism resides primarily in people's desires, feelings, and volitions, so we can, for short, call ours a volitional or conative conception of racism.⁵⁹ I will conclude by briefly indicating how this volitional account of racism meets the adequacy conditions we specified at the outset.

As A requires, it explains why racism is always immoral by revealing it as vicious in a variety of ways: the racist is unjust, and is either malevolent or callously indifferent. Recall that, on this score, we questioned the conceptual adequacy of 'racism-in-the-world'. As B requires, our account allows racism to occur in both individuals and institutions, and it explains the occurrence of racism in the latter as derivative from its appearance in the former. In contrast, systemic conceptions had difficulty properly classifying individuals as racist, and doxastic conceptions have comparable trouble classifying institutions. In keeping with C, our volitional account sees racism as a possible feature of practices, procedures, actions, and beliefs, while treating its appearance in desires, aims, and attitudes (e.g., hope and fear) as primary. Discursive, systemic, and doxastic conceptions all founder when faced with this condition. In accordance with D, our understanding of racism correctly classifies paradigmatic historical instances of racism and racists, though I will not take time to try to show that here.

As for E, our account appears to be free from internal inconsistency and from the sorts of implausible implications and clear counter-examples that we raised against alternative conceptions. At least, it replicates none of those mistakes to the small extent we have here developed it. Unlike Marable's, our view does not restrict racism to situations where systems of social control are in place or contemplated, let alone to the winning side of such situations. Unlike Appiah's, our conception of racism need not charge proponents of racial solidarity, pride, and nationalism with racism. Unlike Goldberg's, our account does not implausibly classify acts of racist violence as elements within a discourse. Unlike Lichtenberg's, our position closely ties 'racism-in-the-[social]-world' to the racism that lies within. So, our account appears to satisfy E.

Consistent with F, it matches ordinary discourse about racism both as regards the things and people we classify as racist and as regards the grounds on which we so classify them. I argued that each of the other approaches allowed troubling misclassifications of isolated haters, of people innocently afflicted with ignorant prejudices, of victims of Platonic lies, or of other possible groups. I think that our volitional approach allows, as G requires, a plausible explanation of how the term 'racism' has come to designate certain forms of disaffection from its original use to pick out quasi-scientific

theories of the classification of human beings. This transformation is not surprising when we remember, as Miles reminds us, that, while the term 'racism' originated in social-scientific polemics against the flimsy intellectual bases of the Nazi movement, after the Second World War its primary use was in the context of the United States anti-segregation movement. In this new context, racists seldom adverted to theories of racial classification, and it should not surprise us if the term's chief use shifted from picking out intellectual defenses to that of picking out the motives within the hearts of those who defended the segregationist regime. Double-sense conceptions have special difficulty in explaining the division and transformation of the term's meaning, and in accounting for why various phenomena may all properly count as forms of racism. Finally, in accordance with H, if the view taken here is correct, then racism shares with antisemitism, xenophobia, misogyny, and homophobia the quality of consisting in a certain form of disaffection. In being a phenomenon of the same ontological and psychological sort (that is, it is not, say, a belief or a system, where the others are forms of disaffection), and in inhering in the same sorts of entities (that is, in persons and their psychological attributes and then derivatively in their individual and organizational behavior), racism is, as I have put it, "structurally similar" to other, comparable forms of intergroup animosity. The systemic approach has special problems with this adequacy condition, which also besets doxastic and discursive conceptions.

I have tried to show how some familiar and recent understandings of racism are inadequate, and have suggested that the heart of racism lies within the human heart, that is, in what people want, hope for, fear, aim at, and intend. My hope is that, in addition to helping to clarify our understanding of the phenomenon of racism and to sharpen our use of the term, my inquiry will induce social theorists to attend more than they have in the recent past to the seat of morality in the human heart and to the theory of moral virtues. The redirection of attention to the virtues has recently begun to transform ethical theory. It is time for political philosophy to follow this lead. The study of racism should be only a beginning.

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Notes

- ¹ "One might ask whether words such as 'antisemitism,' 'sexism,' 'homophobia,' and 'racism' have been so debased as terms of political correctness that they should be consigned to the linguistic dustbin. In the case of 'sexism' and 'homophobia' we are inclined to answer in the affirmative. . . . [They] are terms of recent ideological invention and are designed as weapons to discredit opponents in the culture wars in which our society is embroiled. . . . The situation is different with 'racism' and 'anti-Semitism.' . . . [P]eople should take care not to make charges of anti-semitism too lightly, [lest it come to pass that] as has unhappily happened with the term 'racism,' the mention of 'antisemitism' loses its power to evoke caution and reflection among decent people." Editorial: "The Year that Conservatism Turned Ugly," *First Things* 23 (May, 1992), p. 13.
- ² "The columnist Russell Baker has called racism the new communism—the implication being that just as in the 1950s, when one only had to cry 'Communist!' in order to shut opponents up, and possibly get them fired, as we enter the 1990s, the cry 'Racist!' serves the same function." (Carter, 1991: p. 170. Carter gives no reference for Baker's remark.)
- ³ Indeed, respected philosophical traditions maintain that it entails just the opposite. They want to press the question: if something, X, takes many forms, then what is the thing, X, which takes them?
- ⁴ The sociologist Robert Miles says that, among concepts that figure prominently in both

everyday discourse and sociological theory, that of racism "has a peculiarity in so far as it is heavily negatively loaded. Thus, to claim that someone has expressed a racist opinion is to denounce them as immoral . . ." (Miles, 1989: p.1).

⁵ I think an adequate conception of racism should also allow neither cultural-historical nor racial barriers logically to preclude anyone's being a racist. However, since this claim is widely controverted, I will not insist upon it as a condition for an adequate conception, but allow it to emerge as an important and appealing feature of certain conceptions which meet the criteria mentioned.

⁶ "The way in which racism 'works' has certain similarities with other discourses . . . [including] nationalism and sexism" (Miles, 1989: p. 3). In my treatment, I purposely omit 'sexism', because it is a term consciously modeled on a certain politically informed understanding of racism. (For discussion of the similarity alleged between racism and sexism, see Garcia, 1997.) For my purposes here, it is better to work with notions more nearly pre-theoretical. For similar reasons, I also omit here such concepts as 'heterosexism,' 'speciesism,' 'ageism,' 'ableism' and 'handicapism,' and many similar terms of recent coinage. I should also note that some say that antisemitism is not merely an analogue of racism but a type of it. (See, for example, Miles, 1989: 68). Others stress that slurs directed against Black people usually have different "themes" from antisemitic slurs, but even if that is true, it poses no objection to my insistence that racism and antisemitism are structurally similar. (See Goldberg, 1990: 300.)

'Nationalism' seems to me to lack the strongly negative attitude toward the outsider that is characteristic of racism. Perhaps it can be merely a matter of fellowship and solidarity rather than opposition to others. Below I distinguish true racism from comparable fellowship in the realm of race. In any case, nationalism is more explicitly focused on political arrangements than racism need be. (I owe this last observation to Larry Blum.)

An additional point. I recognize that some of the terms I do mention have connotations and associations that differentiate them from 'racism' and from one another. The suffix '-phobia', for example, which both 'xenophobia' and 'homophobia' share, suggests an aversion specifically born of fear. When I talk of 'structural similarity' with racism, I do not mean that this sort of association, which I think inessential in the political use of these terms, should be carried over. The 'homophobia' I talk of is hatred of homosexuals, what Kirk and Madsen (1989) say, with some justice, should be relabeled 'homohatred'. This will normally include personal distaste for homosexual practices, and it may also include moral disapproval of them. What is more important morally, though not for our purposes here, is the fact that neither such distaste for homosexual practices nor moral disapproval of them suffices for "homo[sexual]-hatred" in the proper sense of the term, because neither entails disaffection for homosexual persons.

⁷ It is not my concern at this point to dispute the assumption Banton and Miles make that antisemitism and racism are both primarily forms of "prejudice," and thus primarily matters of belief. In section 2, however, I do question and reject any such doxastic conception of racism.

⁸ What is presented as a Hegelian alternative is not merely unclear in its content. It is also unclear both whether it is Hegelian and whether it is genuinely an alternative.

It is unclear whether it is Hegelian because it is doubtful whether Hegel would welcome the claim that social functions account for the changes in the form racism takes or in the meaning of the term in different epochs and socioeconomic conditions. One noted Hegel scholar writes of such views in general that "Quite consistently, if problematically, Hegel would clearly claim that all such appeals to causal origins or functional correlations, or to unconscious motives, etc., are themselves claims of a certain sort, embedded in complex, historically specific theoretical projects, projects that require their own account or phenomenology, if they are to be legitimated. We would first have to understand why we have come to find it plausible to look for this or that category as *explicans* before we could set off in search of 'the answer.'" (Pippin, 1991: p. 73. For this reference, and some discussion of the points I attempt to make in this note, I am indebted to Terry Pinkard.) The historicist's functionalism is itself in danger of being undermined by the historicist's own tools. This is just another instance of the

problems relativists always have in avoiding self-refutation.

It is unclear whether these claims constitute a genuine alternative to the method I sketched because the dispute between, for example, Pippin's Hegel, a Marxist functionalist, and Richard Rorty's post-Hegelian is about *how* one set of terms, or one set of forms of certain social phenomenon, or one set of meanings for a certain term (in our case, 'racism') gets replaced by a different set. For the first, this evolution results from the workings of some recondite metaphysical process; for the second, it is an adjustment in a society's ideological superstructure mandated by some change in the materials and means of production; for the last, it is mere contingency. (See the discussion in Pippin, 1991: chap. 3.) Whichever side wins this controversy, however, it remains an open question whether the different and historically successive sets of terms, social phenomena, and meanings share some nonlinguistic feature, whose sharing warrants the common name. It is this last issue that is in dispute between those of us who think that, in the case of racism, they do, and those who think there are only racisms but no such thing as what racism itself is. The latter position owes less to Hegel, I think, than it does to medieval nominalism. (I treat a form of Hegelian quasi-nominalism below.)

⁹ This should not be surprising. If the 'historicist quasi-nominalist' position that I sketched is really informed by Hegelian thought then, while we might reasonably expect it to contain an element of historicism, it would seem perverse to expect it to entail nominalism. The philosopher of the Absolute Spirit, after all, makes an unconvincing ally of ontological penury.

¹⁰ "We must only divide where there is a real cleavage between specific Forms." (Plato, *Statesman*, 262b; J. B. Skemp translation in *Plato: the Collected Dialogues*, edited by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton: Princeton University Press, c. 1961). I have capitalized the final word to emphasize the metaphysical presuppositions of Plato's view.)

¹¹ My discussion focuses on Marable's 1992 pamphlet and all parenthetical page references in the text and notes are to that edition. He has since allowed the pamphlet to be reprinted twice without major revision. (For information on the reprints, see the bibliographical entry.)

This paper is a more precise definitional statement of a position he has held for some time. In an article first published in 1981, reprinted in a volume of his essays that same year and again in a 1993 reissue, Marable wrote: "Racism should be understood as an institutional process . . . Broadly defined, it is process of persecution and violence in the service of white power; its purpose is the systemic exploitation of black life and labor. The key word here is *systemic*." He concludes this essay by stating that "Racism then is not merely intolerance toward blacks, or the 'superstructural justification' of the exploitation of black labor, or the collective projection of white sexual neuroses. All of these elements rise out of the social nexus of Western capitalist society and culture." ("On Being Black," in Marable, 1993, pp. 69-76. Emphasis retained.)

¹² The most celebrated proponent of such a conception of racism is probably Franz Fanon. (See Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, translated by Constance Farrington [New York: Grove, 1968].) I do not know a place in Fanon's work, however, where he displays a conceptual clarity comparable to that in Marable's.

¹³ Note that this states only a sufficient condition for racism. In section 4 below, I deny that it is necessary that racists exist at a certain time for racism to exist at that time. I expand on this point in a companion paper (Garcia, 1996), where I develop my own understanding of racism.

¹⁴ This sort of view of racism is also problematic because it tends to restrict all racists to White people. Some people with similar conceptions explicitly restrict racism to White people. (Rothenberg writes: "While an individual person of color may discriminate against white people or even hate them, his or her behavior or attitude cannot be called 'racist' . . . [R]acism requires something more than anger, hatred, or prejudice; at the very least, it requires prejudice plus power" (Rothenberg, 1988: p. 6. Emphasis added). I think any such restriction unacceptable, both morally and intellectually. Note, too, that poor Black people who are antisemitic need not be colluding in any systematic subordination of Jews; they may have too little power to make such a contribution. For an

individual to be an antisemite, she need have no part in (indeed, there need not exist any) system of subordinating Jews. It is enough that she hate people simply because they are Jews. But then the same, *mutatis mutandis*, should hold for racism: race-based hatred should suffice. (I develop this point in the final section.)

¹⁵ See Loury, 1988, 1992.

¹⁶ Apparently with his CUNY colleague Leonard Jeffries in mind, Hacker at this point mentions an African-American scholar who honors Black people as "sun people" characterized by "caring and community responsibility," while deriding White people as "ice people" marked by materialism, greed and an urge to dominate.

¹⁷ Throughout, when I talk in *propria voce* about people belonging to a racial group, of someone's being (a member of) group R1, and so on, I mean to speak of how people are assigned to racial classifications—by themselves, by some pertinent other, or by dominant social conventions. Thus, my language should not be read as presupposing that traditional ways of dividing humanity into races capture 'real' or natural categories. Racial groupings are, to some significant extent, socially determined classifications, though I do not mean to take a position on the stronger claim that the very concept of race is itself entirely a "social construction." (See Appiah, 1993. I briefly discuss some of Appiah's views on these topics below.)

¹⁸ See Patricia Williams' vivid account of her encounters with private, furtive racism in Williams, 1991.

¹⁹ It is worth noting that Hacker also does not *assert* that powerless people can be, and sometimes are, racist. Indeed, his resort to circumlocutions in discussion of Jeffries' doctrines appears designed precisely to spare him making any such assertion.

The desire to restrict racism to the powerful appears to be widespread. Miles quotes Sivanandan as saying, "Racism is about power not about prejudice," and attributes to J. H. Katz "the simplistic definition of (White) racism as 'prejudice + power'" (Miles, 1989: pp. 54, 55).

²⁰ This was alleged in the case of the Central Park jogger a few years ago, and in the attacks on Reginald Denny (during the violence that erupted in Los Angeles following the initial acquittal of the police officers accused of beating Rodney King) to cite merely two infamous recent incidents.

²¹ Some philosophers have recently spoken up for hatred and resentment in certain circumstances. (See Jeffrie Murphy's contributions to Murphy and Hampton, 1988.) While moral outrage and righteous indignation, however, are morally admirable, I think hate and resentment unacceptable.

²² Perhaps their badness is not even partially derivative from the badness of their effects, but that involves a separate and deeper issue in moral theory which I will not explore here. (For my views, see J. L. A. Garcia, 1987.)

²³ Or, in the stereotyped example too often discussed in these contexts, a Black street criminal in a U.S. city might be said to act in a racist manner toward the White person she assaults, even in a society dominated by White racism.

²⁴ Thus, some philosophers have coined the term "metaphysical racism" to cover such claims as the one, attributed to Heidegger, that "the German people, or at least their poets and philosophers, were uniquely and exclusively destined to save the West from nihilism." (See Sheehan, 1992, p. 31.)

²⁵ Thus (using my emphases throughout): Some call racism "the *dogma* that one group is condemned by Nature to congenital inferiority and another group is destined to congenital superiority. It is the dogma that the hope of civilization depends upon eliminating some races and keeping others pure" (Benedict, 1982: 98). Others say racism is "the *doctrine* that a man's behavior is determined by stable inherited characteristics deriving from separate racial stocks having distinctive attributes and usually considered to stand to one another in relations of superiority and inferiority" (Banton, 1970: p. 18). To others, racism is "an explicit and systematic *ideology* of racial superiority" (Sivanandan, quoted at Miles, 1989: p. 53). Finally, we find racism defined as "the *theory* that distinctive human characteristics and abilities are determined by race." (*Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., 1989: vol. 13, p. 75.)

²⁶ If he thinks ideology is essential to racism, then Appiah should say this of *all* forms of

racism.

²⁷ Presumably, in Appiah's usage here, 'propositional' is, like 'counterfeit', what philosophers call an *alienans* adjective: that someone is a propositional racist does not entail that she is a racist. A true racist, in his view, not only believes the propositions a propositional racist believes, she believes them in a special (i.e., ideological) way. Blum helpfully suggests that the person Appiah calls a "propositional racist" (for holding racist beliefs dispassionately and detached from her interests) is only *nominally* a racist, not substantially one.

²⁸ Nor is it sufficient merely to say, as Appiah does, that she is not to blame for being "a bad person." To assert that she is a morally bad person is already to condemn her in the relevant sense, for it is to evaluate her negatively.

For a sensitive discussion of the moral evaluation of cognitive attitudes and the people in which they occur, see Adams, 1987. Adams suggests that one may be morally faulted for believing something when her belief (1) stems from a bad desire, or (2) stems from negligence, or when it (3) is a false ethical principle or belief about some people's rights or about some group's capabilities. Adams seems to have racial prejudice in mind for his third type of case, but I have doubts about this class. Let us use the term 'noncognitive embracing' to cover being in favor of something ('for' it) affectively, desideratively, or volitionally, by, among other things, wanting it, hoping for it, or aiming at it (as either a means or an end). I think that any time a person's believing something is morally objectionable, then its fault lies in its connection to her noncognitively embracing something she shouldn't, or in its connection to her failing noncognitively to embrace something she should. Ignorance of an "ethical principle" often involves a failure to acknowledge that a certain thing has impersonal value or disvalue. One sort of circumstance in which this is vicious can occur when someone, A, doesn't care about some aspect of the welfare of another, B, or doesn't care enough to safeguard it in such ways as morality requires of her. When A then tries to mask this moral shortcoming from herself by seducing herself from the conviction that B is entitled to such concern, or by refusing to accept it that the good at stake is really an aspect of B's welfare, then her failure to acknowledge the moral principle condemning her treatment of B will be vicious morally as well as intellectually. (For some remarks on the connection between value-response and moral virtue and vice, see Garcia, 1990.)

Blum also discusses cognitive moral failings—specifically, failures to notice or "appreciate" another person's needs, plight, or rights. (See Blum, "Moral Perception and Particularity," in Blum, 1994.) Blum offers three cases of morally flawed imperceptiveness, involving, respectively, a subway rider who doesn't notice another passenger's difficulties, a supervisor who fails to heed a subordinate's discomfort, and a White male taxi passenger who doesn't perceive as racist a cab driver's decision to pass by a Black family in order to pick him up. Without going into it here, let me say simply that, to the extent any of the three failures to notice manifests a moral fault, it seems to stem from some form of self-absorption or lack of sympathy. This would fit my view that cognitive failings, cases of "imperceptiveness," take on moral significance only when they reflect an affective or desiderative or volitional fault. (By the way, Blum's use of terms such as "appreciate" and "sensitivity" to describe the forms of moral "perception" obscures an important ambiguity. Appreciation has both cognitive and noncognitive aspects, and "sensitivity" has both a perceptual and an affective use.) The case of possible racism is especially difficult because, while a sense of justice should incline the rider to insure that the members of the Black family have been duly respected, a sense of charity should make the rider leery of imputing to the cab driver immoral motives.

²⁹ For some examples of views that understand racism as some sort of belief in racial inferiority, see the quotations from Benedict, Banton, and Sivanandan above in the note on racism as ideology, dogma, doctrine, and theory.

³⁰ She may also properly be condemned morally when her beliefs serve not to rationalize a prior racial disregard but serve to generate a consequent racial ill will or contempt. Whether she is, in that instance, to blame for her having the belief itself or only for the conative attitudes to which it gives rise is a question I will not here explore.

³¹ Castoriadis asks, "Why does that which could have remained a mere affirmation of the 'inferiority' of others become discrimination, contempt, confinement, so as to exacerbate ultimately into rage, hatred, and murderous folly?" (Castoriadis, 1992: p. 6.) His psychoanalytic answer is, in part, to say that "from the moment a racist fixation occurs the 'others' are not only excluded and inferior; they become, as individuals and as collectivity, the point of support for a second-order imaginary crystallization whereby they are endowed with a series of attributes and, behind these attributes, an evil and perverse essence justifying in advance everything one might propose to subject them to." (Castoriadis, 1992: p. 7.) A still deeper response might be to reject Castoriadis' question itself for its dubious assumption that normally racist belief "become[s]" discrimination and "exacerbate[s] ultimately" into hate. On the contrary, often the hatred, and the related disposition to discriminate, predate the "affirmation of . . . [others'] inferiority." I suspect that the latter, cognitive position arises in order to cloak or vindicate the other, and more deeply seated, desiderative/affective stance.

Castoriadis also makes the sensational claim that "the Old Testament is the first written racist document that we possess" (Castoriadis, 1992: p. 3). His reason for thinking the Hebrew scriptures racist is not explicit, but it seems to go like this: Those scriptures say the Jews are God's chosen people. Therefore they affirm that the Jews are special over every other race. Therefore, they claim that the Jews are superior to other races. Therefore, they are racist.

Castoriadis' statement reeks of Jew-baiting. Indeed, since Islam and Christianity also affirm that God singled out the Jews for election, it appears to be directed against several of the major world religions. (Anti-religious bigots will probably think this improves the smell, but I disagree.) Surely, it would be surprising if believing in the election of the Jews committed one to a pro-Jewish racism. All Muslims and Christians hold this belief, after all, and they have not always been noted for their markedly pro-Jewish conduct. What should we make of Castoriadis' argument insofar as I have speculatively reconstructed it? Not much, I shall try to show.

Let us distinguish antecedent superiority from consequent superiority. Does the claim the God specially chose the Jews entail that the Jews were antecedently superior to other races? Not by itself, it doesn't. Of course, if their scriptures said that the Jews were chosen because they deserved it, then that might commit them to the claim that the Jews were superior. (Actually, it would only commit them to the claim that the Jews were better *in some respect*, not that they were better *tout court*, as Castoriadis' argument seems to require.) However, Castoriadis would have a hard time showing that the Hebrew scriptures made this stronger claim about the Jews' desert. Certainly, many who believe that God chose the Jews deny that this was a response to their antecedent merit—the Calvinist doctrine of unconditional election attests to this. In any case, the scriptures seem to say that the election of the Jews (Abraham's descendants) was a reward God gave Abraham for his fidelity. If this involves any desert-claim (and it is not clear that it does), it would be Abraham's merit, not that of the Jews.

What, then, of consequent superiority? Even if the Hebrew scriptures need not claim that the Jews were chosen because they were antecedently superior, then must it nonetheless allow that they were better for having been chosen? Wouldn't they have to be better than everyone else simply for being God's elect? I think not. Certainly, election was thought to be a great benefit to them. However, that, at most, would only make them better off, not a superior race, as Castoriadis' argument needs.

Of course, I have already argued that belief in racial superiority is insufficient to render one a racist. So, it would not follow that the Hebrew scriptures were racist, even if Castoriadis were right in thinking them committed to the claim that the Jews are a superior race. However, it is an ugly and disagreeable claim, so it is worth pointing out that Castoriadis' argument, as I have reconstructed it, utterly fails to establish that the Hebrew scriptures are committed to making it.

³² This kind of distinction is crucial not only for egoism, but for any other account that attempts to justify differential concern. It is absurd, notice, to think that rationality requires everyone to have special concern about a certain nameable individual. However, it is not absurd in the same way to maintain that rationality requires everyone to

care specially for herself. (*Saturday Night Live* used to have a continuing skit in which Al Franken urged viewers to make sure that the "Me Decade," in which each person worried only about herself, was followed by "The Al Franken Decade," in which each person would worry only about Al Franken. Part of the joke lay in Franken's efforts to make it seem a small step from accepting it that he (Franken) should look out only for himself to accepting it that everyone should look out only for him.) In a similar way, we need to distinguish the broad thesis that morality requires, or encourages, or permits everyone to care specially for Black people, from the narrower claim that it requires, or encourages, or permits Black people to have special concern for other Black people.

³³ It may be a good deal worse than merely odd and counter-intuitive. Judith Green criticizes philosophers who devise accounts of racism according to which, for example, Martin Luther King, Jr. counts as a "moderate racist." She says of one such invention, "to analyze King as a 'moderate racist' . . . is not only to incorrectly analyze his language and to unjustly evaluate his life; it is also unwittingly to lend the considerable weight of his historical and rhetorical influence to the work of detaching the 'hinge' political concepts on which American political life turns from the historical realities that are the basis of claims for practical rectification and political transformation; an often effective strategy of confusion and denial employed by opponents of King's goals" (Green, 1992: p. 13). Some proponents of Black Nationalism and racial solidarity might justly raise a similar complaint against Appiah's account of racism.

³⁴ Appiah also observes both that the importance of human intimacy may justify partiality to family members and that the absence of such intimacy in racial connections provides no such justification for racial partiality. There seems, however, to be a crucial difference. While Cottingham says his general project deals with whether partiality is permissible, at this point in his argument, he is concerned to justify such intuitions as that "a parent [morally] *should* give extra . . . weight to his children's interests precisely because they are his" (Emphasis added). He is concerned, then, with identifying those factors in virtue of which we sometimes *ought* to be partial, and thus with why partiality is required (or, at least, better) morally. When those factors are absent, as they seem to be in cases of racial preference, then it follows only that partiality may not be obligatory (or superior). The absence of these special justificatory factors, however, does nothing to show that partiality is wrong. For Appiah, in contrast, the kind of justification in question serves to render partiality to family members permissible. Because it is missing in the case of racial preference, and because there is nothing of comparable moral importance available to take its place, he concludes that such preference is wrong. As we shall see, Appiah's view relies on the impartialist assumption that there is some sort of moral presumption against the permissibility of personal favoritism, at least, in "public" behavior. Below I call this assumption into question.

³⁵ Some philosophers talk of "reasons for action that we can decide whether to make our reasons." (Kamm, 1992: p. 356. She attributes a similar view to Thomas Nagel.)

³⁶ Paul Gomberg points out that nepotism that is trivial in the individual case (as when the owner of a small business "hir[es] a teenage daughter part-time to do paperwork") may, when widespread, have disastrous social effects (as when those underrepresented among the class of owners' relatives are left unemployed), (Gomberg, 1990: pp. 147-48). Gomberg fancies that this cumulative effect casts doubt on the legitimacy of the store-owner's trivial nepotism or the moral system that permits it. However, all it shows is that there is moral reason to discourage people from widespread practice of such behavior. It reveals no moral flaw in the individual's action, and no theoretical flaw in the larger moral view that permits the action. Indeed, except insofar as the bad effect of an action is something that its agent, whether individual or institutional, should have anticipated and tried to avoid, I cannot see how consideration of its effects can be relevant to the action's morality. The bad effects of other people's actions, performed independently of the agent's, though for the same reasons, are irrelevant a fortiori. (To think otherwise, I should argue, is to commit a "mistake in moral mathematics" of a sort Derek Parfit (who coined this term) seems not to recognize, and even to endorse. For a criticism of Parfit, see Garcia, 1990.)

³⁷ The connection between racial favoritism and family partiality is an old one, and has

sometimes been treated as more than an analogy. Thus, the African American expatriate writer Alexander Crummell, who thought both to be "of divine origin," proclaimed that "[A] race is a family." (Quoted in Appiah, 1992: p. 17.)

³⁸ On the depreciation of the domestic sphere, see Okin, 1992.

³⁹ As Nathanson writes, "racism involves not just a sense of positive connection with one's own group but also a negative attitude toward members of other races." Unfortunately, his gloss on this, "Racism necessarily involves a belief in the superiority and inferiority of various groups," suggests that the "attitudes" to which he refers are epistemic ones (evaluative beliefs). Below, I propose that the heart of racism, as I call it, lies in certain desires, dislikes, and intentions (Nathanson, 1992: p. 10).

⁴⁰ That may not be the end of the matter. Green insists that racism is not a morally neutral term for which philosophers may stipulate definitions as they wish, conceiving racism in a neutral way so as to test it for truth, cogency, and morality. On the contrary, we must regard it against the background of its actual social and linguistic significance. She writes, "Racism is not a unitary, unvalenced concept that is readily employable in quasi-mathematical uses that allow either a positive or negative valence to be attached to it at will . . . Rather, it has a particular history that determines its clustered patterns of meaningful, responsible use, all of which have developed a negative valence by now, at least, among 'respectable' people" (Green, 1992: p. 13). We should take care, however, lest we follow Green too far. There is danger in keeping our mind too narrowly focused on the most familiar actual, historical cases of racism—the danger of mistaking one set of historical manifestations of racism for what racism itself is. This threatens to tell us only what some racists are like when what we want to know is what it is for something for to be racist. In this vein, Miles warns that "a concept of racism that is formulated by reference to a single historical example . . . has a degree of specificity that seriously limits its analytic scope." He concludes his review of accounts of racism with the lament that often "we are offered definitions and theories of racism which are so specific to the history of overseas colonization (that is, specific to the domination of 'white' over 'black' as so many writers express it) that they are of little value in explaining any other (noncolonial) context" (Miles, 1989: pp. 60, 68).

⁴¹ She may affirmatively answer about what she understands to be the human racial groups the same rhetorical question Socrates asks about Glaucon's dogs: "[A]lthough they are all noble, aren't there some among them who are and prove to be best?" (Plato, *The Republic* of Plato, trans. Allan Bloom, 2nd ed. (New York: Basic Books, 1991), p. 138 (459a).

⁴² In some unpublished work, T. M. Scanlon has recently pointed out that, within certain established traditions of cooking (e.g., ethnic traditions), which include standards and goals of cooking and eating, it is plausible to talk of some meals as being objectively better tasting than others. So, too, we may assume that, according to traditions and standards accepted within an oenophile community, one wine may be (or, at least, may reasonably be thought to be) objectively superior to another. (Taking into account its taste, color, aroma, etc.) I will not address here the question of whether this sort of relativized objectivity counts as a form of value relativism, or as a form of objectivism, or whether we should reject the usual assumption that relativism and objectivism are incompatible.

⁴³ "The deterministic ascription of real or supposed negative characteristics to a particular group is generally seen as a central characteristic of racism as ideology" (Banton and Miles, 1988: p. 250).

⁴⁴ In Goldberg, 1993, Goldberg puts forward a somewhat different account of racism, one that relocates the concept of a field of discourse. I limit my discussion here to the position he takes in the articles I discuss and reserve comment on his book's account for another occasion. I should add that, notwithstanding the relocation mentioned, much of the discussion of racism from these articles is reasserted in the book.

⁴⁵ Goldberg's context leaves it unclear whether he means the indigenous culture that the racist hopes to maintain is her own or that of the targeted racial group. Right-wing opposition to unchecked immigration might be an instance of the former. The opposition of some on the left to assimilating peoples held under colonial rule might be an instance of the latter. This opposition is nowadays couched in terms of 'multiculturalism'

and the rights of minority populations to maintain their distinctive customs.

It is unusual to charge those on the left with racism, but note that Glenn Loury has objected to what he calls "the new liberal racism—the patronizing attitude that conveys contempt by means of evasion and apology, explaining every failure or foible as the result of something white people have or have not done" (See Loury, 1993). In my view, the crucial term in Loury's critique is 'contempt'. Even if, as is often the case in paternalism, these liberals' well-intentioned aim to protect and defend the interests of Black people sometimes leads them into breaches of due respect and deference, it is harsh to attribute these breaches to the sort of disdain and self-exaltation properly categorized as contempt. So, Loury's charge of 'racism' seems off target, even if he is right to see the position to which he objects as paternalistic and condescending.

- ⁴⁶ Choice, of course, does not belong in this list. Choice is not itself a linguistic phenomenon, even if every human choice is made under a (linguistic) description of the option.
- ⁴⁷ When the T.V. show *All in the Family* first aired in the United States, as I recall, some feared that bigots would feel vindicated to hear their own sentiments unashamedly voiced before a nationwide audience, issuing from the mouth of a popular and even "loveable" character.
- ⁴⁸ The trinity of 'thinks, does and feels' indicates the way of distinguishing the principal nonsystemic ways of conceiving the nature of racism that I have used here. The doxastic conception gives priority to what a person thinks, the behavioral conception (discussed below) to what she does. I will sketch an understanding of racism that gives priority to what she feels, where this includes what she wants and intends.
- ⁴⁹ Henry Louis Gates, Jr. has criticized the exaggerated claims of some proponents of curbs on hate speech by suggesting that "the pendulum has swung from the absurd position that words don't matter to the equally absurd position that only words matter. . . . Critical race theory, it seems has fallen under the sway of a species of academic nominalism. Yes, speech is a species of action. Yes, there are some acts that only speech can perform. But there are some acts that speech alone cannot accomplish" (Gates, 1993: p. 48). If Gates' targets inflate speech to accomplish what must go beyond speaking, Goldberg inflates the notion of discourse to include things that cannot be confined to the merely discursive.
- ⁵⁰ This example was suggested to me by Larry Blum. He adapted it from Lawrence, 1987. Lawrence agrees with my view that there is inadequate reason to call the increase racist; Blum was uncertain.
- ⁵¹ In correspondence with me, Goldberg says that the "formative" principles to which he referred were not necessarily those involved in the practice's origin. Rather, he seems to mean that they are conceptually or practically foundational in some way. Before we could judge this view, we should need greater clarity about what he has in mind.
- ⁵² On the general question of method, see Benson Mates, "The Verification of Statements about Ordinary Language," in Lysas, 1969.
- ⁵³ I realize the question is not entirely rhetorical; answers have been proposed to it. Following Marx, for example, some might maintain that institutions follow larger social dynamics, which shape (much more than they are shaped by) individual motivations, and which serve to oppress certain groups. However, it is worth noting that Marx himself, at least, as standardly understood, had no use for morality and did not think this institutional conduct could ground a *moral* judgment against the institution, however much he condemned it and demanded its destruction. "Whenever anyone started to talk to Marx about morality, he would roar with laughter." (Karl Vorlander, as quoted in Lukes, 1987: p. 27. For a range of views on the issue of whether Marx endorsed any morality, see Cohen, 1980). Lukes maintains that Marx's repeated deprecation of morality was directed only against capitalist morality (and other 'class'-moralities), and that Marx himself endorsed a proletarian morality. It is interesting that in making his case that Marxism can licitly make moral judgments, the only explicitly moral claims Lukes cites come from Engels, Kautsky, Trotsky, and others, not from Marx himself. See Lukes, 1980, especially, chap. 2.)

Of course, a theorist could agree with Marx's claim that institutions act from social causes prior to individual motivation, while denying his cynical rejection of moral-

ity and accepting an account according to which institutional behavior can be judged wrong solely on the basis of its undesirable effects. Without going into the matter here, let me say only that even many act-consequentialists today reject such an extreme position which allows the wrongness of action to hang on accidents, mistakes, flukes, and unpredictable events.

- ⁵⁴ Blum offers a more promising account along similar lines. He writes, "Here is my definition of racism. . . . Racism refers both to an institutional or social structure of racial domination or injustice—as when we speak of a racist institution—and also to individual actions, beliefs, and attitudes, whether consciously held or not, which express, support, or justify the superiority of one racial group over another" (Blum, 1991: p. 4). The idea is 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. He adds that, "on both the individual levels, racism involves denying or violating the equal dignity and worth of all human beings independent of race; and on both levels, racism is bound up with dominance and hierarchy." (Blum, 1991: p. 4) This is good, but it leaves it unclear how the two levels are related, and thus leaves us rather in the dark about what it is in virtue of which each is a form of racism. One approach, which Blum elsewhere rightly rejects, is to say that institutional racism is what is of central importance; individual racism, then, matters only inasmuch as it perpetuates institutional racism. I think this reverses the order of moral importance. Below, I will suggest that the individual level is more important, and that institutional racism occurs when institutions and their behavior are corrupted by the racism of individuals.) Moreover, at the individual level, it is in desires, wishes, intentions, etc. that racism fundamentally lies, not in actions or beliefs. Actions and beliefs are racist in virtue of their *coming from* (not in virtue of their *leading to*) racism in the desires, wishes, and intentions of individuals.
- ⁵⁵ Finally, a picky point. Ture and Hamilton's account may be too narrow. If, as they assume, it makes sense to talk of acting against a group in a way that is not merely acting against its individual members, then we should allow that there can be individual racism not only when an individual acts against an individual or a group acts against a group, but also when a member of one race acts against another racial group as a group.
- ⁵⁶ "[Finn:] . . . We blowed out a cylinder-head [on the boat's engine]. [Aunt Sally:] Good gracious! anybody hurt? [Finn:] No'm. Killed a nigger. [Aunt Sally:] Well, it's lucky; because sometimes people do get hurt." (Twain, ch. 32 (p. 328 in Modern Library edition).
- ⁵⁷ This is *normally* a race different from that to which one assigns oneself, but it does not have to be. Some race-hatred is racial self-hatred, not hatred of the other. The sort of complexion-based Black-on-Black discrimination explored in Spike Lee's film *School Daze* is an example of such racially motivated self-hatred. Surely, a lighter-skinned Black person who hates other Black people for being dark is likely also to hate herself for being darker than White people are. (On such color-based intragroup prejudice, see Njeri, 1993.) Certain extreme forms of the phenomenon known as "White guilt" may also be examples of racial self-hatred.
- By the way, what is required is that the racist think (in a sense of the term that includes wanting, choosing, and feeling) in racial terms, whether or not in her theoretical reflections she affirms the existence and validity of races as biological or sociocultural categories.
- ⁵⁸ We often think of injustice in terms of contempt, and it is worth remembering that the root of our word 'contempt' lies in the (now nearly archaic term) 'contemn', meaning to ignore or not to care about.
- ⁵⁹ More vividly, we can borrow, adapt, and extend Lichtenberg's imagery of racism-in-the-head and racism-in-the-world, to call the account offered here 'racism-in-the-heart.' I develop this view in more detail, apply it to some cases from the literature, and defend it against some objections in Garcia, 1996.