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Global Inequality and Race

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How does “race” figure into our understanding of global inequality and injustice? Although racial inequality is a matter of great interest and concern, it is striking how little contact the philosophical literature on global inequality makes with issues of race. This lack of contact is manifest from both directions. Issues of race, racism, and racial inequality have garnered a good deal less attention from philosophers than they have from social scientists and the public more generally. With the exception of the issue of affirmative action, on which philosophical attention is extensive, normative scrutiny of race-related issues—especially in a transnational context—has been the province of a relatively small group of philosophers.¹ Myriad important issues related to race have been relatively undertheorized.

At the same time, the increasingly sophisticated literature on global inequality has paid strikingly little attention to issues of race. This should seem surprising, since existing global inequalities tend in the main to divide along racial lines, with *whites* a generally favored group (or collections of groups, if looked at in a national context) and *nonwhites* relatively disfavored. Moreover, distinctly race-related dynamics—slavery and colonialism—have certainly provided the historical background in which these inequalities have arisen and continue to be perpetuated.

In this paper I will be concerned with both aspects of this lack of contact between philosophical scrutiny and race, especially the former—the undertheorizing of normative, race-related concerns. To do so, I will utilize

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the 2001 World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance (WCAR), held in Durban, South Africa, as a starting point. The conference gave issues of racism heightened international attention, and was the latest in the United Nations’ ambitious goal of the total and unconditional elimination of racism and racial discrimination throughout the world.² Previous conferences were held in 1978 and 1983 and were related to the UN declaring “Decades for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination,” beginning in 1973. (The UN General Assembly has periodically lamented the failure of these efforts, and the 1993 decadal and subsequent resolutions have declared an increase in racism.)³

Although the WCAR does not attempt to provide philosophical justification for its recommendations, it nevertheless brings together a wide range of contemporary concerns related to race. It is useful as a springboard to explore the relations between race, racism, and inequality in the international context.

A bit of history is pertinent to understanding the WCAR. The Holocaust, and colonial empires rationalized by doctrines of racial superiority (and, a few years later, the establishment of apartheid in

South Africa), provided an important context for the human rights dimension of the origin of the United Nations.⁴ Race thus played a formative role in the UN's self-understanding and in the early development of human rights doctrine.

The International Covenant on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), adopted in 1966 and put in force in 1969, was an outgrowth of the centrality of racial concerns. Prior to 1993 ICERD was the most widely ratified international human rights treaty.⁵ The context of colonialism, apartheid, and segregation has continued to guide understandings of the "racism" that the Covenant seeks to abolish, in several respects—in the focus on state action as perpetrating racism; in an implication of *blacks* as the paradigm victims of racism, and *whites* as the dominant perpetrators; in a focus on structures of injustice rather than merely individual acts; and in attention to the legacy and continuing effects of slavery and colonialism. Nevertheless, what counts as race-related wrongs in the ICERD is not limited to this context. The Covenant defines "racial discrimination" as

[a]ny distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, or any other field of public life.⁶

This definition implies that individual and not only systemic acts of racial discrimination are covered, and that the victim and perpetrators of racially discriminatory acts can be of any race.

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The WCAR adds "xenophobia and related intolerance" to ICERD's proscribed behavior. Xenophobia appears to be meant to encompass antipathy to immigrants or potential immigrants, including refugees; these groups are often singled out for attention in the WCAR report.⁷ "Related intolerance" appears to embrace other forms of ethnic or national antipathy that some may not wish to classify under *racism* or *xenophobia*. Roma/gypsies and indigenous groups are also singled out for distinct attention in the WCAR report;⁸ and in both cases the report sees attention to the plight of these groups as previously insufficient, as urgent, and as long overdue.

Thus the WCAR appears to envision three distinct types of groups, in relation to race. One are uncontrovertibly racial groups, such as "blacks" (generally referred to in terms of persons of African descent). A second ("ethnic-like" groups) are indigenous, ethnic, national, religious, and national origin groups, hostility or discrimination toward which may not be racism, strictly speaking (though some might loosely refer to it as such), but which clearly falls under the category of "related intolerance."⁹ A third ("citizenship-related" groups) are aliens, immigrants, refugees, asylum-seekers, and displaced persons. These groups are not "race-like" in the way that the second groups are. They are defined in terms of their relationships to a sending or receiving nation, rather than according to distinctive characteristics of the groups themselves.

So the WCAR report is not content simply to include a broad range of groups that are the target of various kinds of hatreds and animosities, differences among which are not regarded as of much

significance. On the contrary, the document frequently (though by no means consistently) attempts to delineate a distinctively *racial* dimension to the animosities directed against immigrants, refugees, indigenous peoples, and so on. For example, it mentions that refugees are “often” a target of racism, thereby implying that the plight of refugees is not solely an issue of race, and that this fact is of some significance. ICERD and especially the WCAR report seem to envision that hostility toward immigrants as stemming in part from hostility toward “the foreign” (xenophobia, or what has been called, in the U.S. context, “nativism”) but also in part from hostility toward those seen as racially different from dominant groups in the receiving societies. Race is thus privileged as a form of victimization. As a result, many different kinds of groups framed their grievances in racial terms.¹⁰

A different reason for this distinguishing between the second (ethnic-like) and the third (citizenship-related) groups is that ICERD recognizes state sovereignty and so allows that a distinction between citizens and noncitizens can be normatively appropriate in a way that distinctions based on race, ethnicity, culture, descent, or national origin are not.¹¹ This is not to say that hostility toward “the foreign” as such is regarded as justified, but only that there may be reason to place it in a different moral category from the

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“racial and related intolerances” mentioned above, and that some forms of differential treatment may be permissible with regard to citizenship-related groups but not ethnic-like ones.

What makes a form of hostility or intolerance an instance of racism is, in any case, not that its target is in some sense a racial group, but that the perpetrator *regards* the group (or an individual in respect to her group membership) as a racial one. What made Nazism a form of racism against Jews is that the Nazi outlook construed Jews as a race—not that Jews *are* a race.¹² The idea of “racism” in its personal mode, then, is “perpetrator-centered” in that it is the consciousness of the perpetrator that determines whether her intolerance is of a racial, ethnic, cultural, or religious character, not whether in some sense the group of which she is intolerant is “in reality” racial, ethnic, cultural, or religious.¹³ Often groups that many would regard as ethnic, linguistic, cultural, or national may be victimized because they are *regarded* as racial by their victimizers. And this may be a reason why it may not always seem important to determine whether they are actually a racial group as opposed to an ethnic, linguistic, and so on group.

REGARDING A GROUP AS A RACE

But what does it mean to say that a group is “regarded as a race (or racial group)?” How is regarding a group “ethnically” or “culturally” *different* from regarding it “racially?” Unless one can give some substance to answering this question, one will not be able to utilize the “perpetrator-centeredness” of racism in a meaningful way, and will not be able to address our two main questions.

I would suggest that “seeing a group (group X) as a race” involves something like the following: Seeing group X as sharing a set of humanly important, inherent, hereditary characteristics that distinguish it from other races (Y, Z, and so on). These characteristics are sometimes called a “racial essence.” The

imputed inherent differences imply an intensified sense of “otherness” and moral distance among persons of different races. Seeing a group as a race involves seeing the racial essence as permanent and unchangeable.¹⁴ Race also generally carries the implication that members of different races are distinguishable by phenotypic elements such as skin color and eye shape, so that the distinctive phenotype becomes an alleged sign of a distinctive essence or genotype. The emphasis on phenotypic difference is stronger in some conceptions of race (for example, the United States and South African) than others (for example, the Nazi, Japanese, and “racialized ethnicity” discussed below).

Viewing a group *ethnically*, by contrast, construes the group in terms of a putatively shared origin and/or culture. Although human characteristics

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may be attributed to ethnic groups (e.g., being loud, irresponsible, verbally adept), they are not seen as inherent and genetically or quasi-genetically based, as in the racial case. *Cultural* groups also are seen in terms of an (allegedly) shared culture; so cultural groups can be ethnic groups, but not every ethnic group is a cultural group, nor every cultural group an ethnic group. For example, in certain locations outside of Greece, one could be ethnically “Greek” in the sense of having Greek ancestry, but not possess, nor be thought to possess, any culturally distinctive “Greek” characteristics. Racial groups are distinct from both ethnic and cultural groups in the emphasis on an inherent, genetic-like or genetically based racial essence (i.e., a set of humanly important characteristics).

There can, I think, be ways of viewing cultural and ethnic groups that are more and less “racial” in character. If a group is defined in terms of a common culture or putative ancestry, but the cultural characteristics attributed to it are viewed (falsely and irrationally, yet intelligibly) as virtually innate, then the group is seen, in a sense, both ethnoculturally *and* racially. Some of the rhetoric of the Hutu-led government in Rwanda that carried out genocide against the Tutsi minority involved this sort of “racialized ethnicity.”¹⁵ Racialized ethnicity need not take such a heinous form. Although culture is a human product and cannot in any sense be “inherent” in a group, it seems clear that people sometimes do regard it as something akin to inherent or innate.¹⁶ However, in general the “racial other” is seen as more different and morally distant than the “ethnocultural other.” This provides for a greater potentiality regarding race than ethnicity for dehumanization, although that potentiality need not always be realized.

Race, then, involves attributing an inherent and inescapable hereditary essence to a group. It is worth spelling this out, even if briefly, since a good deal of confusion has been occasioned by the now generally accepted idea that, in some very real and important sense, there are no races. The scientific assault on the notion of race, greatly intensified since World War II in response to the Nazi horrors, has largely been successful. The current scientific consensus is that what have traditionally been called “races”—“blacks,” “whites,” “Asians,” and so on—do not possess the genetic commonality regarding humanly important characteristics of mind and temperament that the idea of race implies.¹⁷ Groups defined by the purported phenotypes associated with “white,” “black,” “Asian” (the earlier more distinctly racial term “Mongoloid” having been abandoned as too deprecatory), and so on are not genetically distinct from one another except in very minor ways, and do not differ significantly in the

hereditary component of characteristics of mind and temperament.¹⁸

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RACES, RACIALIZED GROUPS, AND SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS

In respect of its falsity, race is disanalogous to culture and ethnicity as a defining feature of groups. Tutsis, Italian Americans, people of Korean ancestry in Japan, Albanians in Kosovo are all actual ethnic groups. They possess an identity as groups that share a history as cross-generational groups with ancestrally grounded cultures; this is (roughly) what it means to be an ethnic group. In the analogous sense, “whites” are *not* a race, as they do not possess the genetic commonality implied by calling them a race.

To say that “whites” are not a race is not to deny that “white” is a meaningful social identity. But its meaningfulness derives solely from its denoting a group that has been regarded, and has regarded itself, as a race—rather than its actually being a race. In the case of whites, that has involved seeing itself as superior to other race-defined groups, and as possessing characteristics (such as intelligence and industriousness) that exemplify that inherent superiority. Whites have treated themselves (and been in a position to treat themselves) as a superior group, so their historical experience as a distinct group has been bound up both with that positional superiority, and with a subjective sense of superiority. “White” denotes the group, and the descendants of that group, that has had such experiences, and it is that group to which the designation “white” properly applies. I will call “whites,” “blacks,” and “Asians” (the latter understood as a racial group, rather than a pan-ethnic or geographically defined group) “*racialized groups*.” This terminology is meant to express the fact that such groups do not possess the inherent, genetic characteristics required for them actually to be races, yet have been treated and regarded historically as if they did possess such characteristics, and have, in that regard, come to constitute genuine, socially distinct and significant groups.

The disanalogy between race and ethnicity—that ethnicities exist while races do not—poses no problem for the attempt to eradicate racism and related intolerances, since these depend not on the actual existence of the groups in question but on perpetrators believing that there are such groups, and acting in a discriminatory, intolerant, or deprecatory manner.

However, the perpetrator-centered definition of (personal) racism, together with the nonexistence of race, has become linked to the idea that races are “socially constructed,” and this has sown a good deal of unnecessary confusion. For example, Sandra Fredman, drawing on Stuart Hall’s influential characterization of race as a “politically and culturally constructed category,” comments that “The characterization of race as a social construct also makes it clear that, as a target for racism, ‘race’ encompasses a bundle of personal and social attributes, including religion, culture, nationality, and ethnicity.”¹⁹ This would be correct if it meant that if a perpetrator sees a religious or national group as a racial group—a group with certain inherent

characteristics, built into its genetic structure—then the language of race is appropriate in characterizing the moral ill involved in the perpetrator’s actions and attitude. But Fredman seems to imply something different than this—that the designator “race” can be applied indiscriminately to various groups and group identities, since it has no actual referent in biological reality. This view would obliterate any distinction between racism, on the one hand, and xenophobia, cultural superiority, religious bigotry, and so on, on the other.

The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain, an important and influential report released in the UK in 2000, contains a similar, instructive confusion on this matter.

Race, as is now widely acknowledged, is a social and political construct, not a biological or genetic fact. It cannot be used scientifically to account for the wide range of differences among people... This does not mean that racism is a myth, for although it does not have a scientific basis it does create social and political realities—those things that men and women believe to be true, it is often said, are true in their consequences; that is, they have real effects.²⁰

The reason that racism is not a myth (although race is) is that it requires only that people believe that races exist (and exclude, discriminate, or hate the racialized other on this basis). It is true that this belief has served to create groups—racialized groups—just as, to take a now famous analogy, the fact that people believed witches existed created a group of persecuted women regarded as witches. But it did not create witches themselves, any more than a belief in race created races. Racialized groups are indeed social constructs, in some sense, but their existence as constructs requires that someone regarded them as having a biological or genetic character. That biological, inherentist character can not be jettisoned in any meaningful retention of a discourse of “race.”

RACISM AND EQUALITY

What is the relationship between “racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerances,” and *inequality*? It seems clear to the writers of the WCAR report that inequality is not the only thing wrong with the former. The report frequently talks about racism as “exacerbating” inequality, and, in turn, of inequality as exacerbating racism, implying that these are distinct phenomenon. It sometimes talks of groups as suffering from ethnic hatred, which contributes to unjust inequalities. For example, ethnic intolerance on the part of a majority group can translate into policies that discriminate against a minority in access to jobs, education, health care, and income, or political goods such as access and influence.

The WCAR report is correct not to collapse the wrongs of intolerance and hatred into those traditionally associated with inequality. The wrong of intolerance and hatred is bound up with their expressing vices; it is bad to be intolerant or hateful.²¹ The evil involved in someone’s being a target of racial intolerance is

inseparable from her being treated in an evil manner by a fellow human being or fellow citizen. But lacking access to health care is a bad state of affairs in its own right, independent of how it is brought about. (It is a *further* wrong if someone is deliberately denied that access because of hostility toward her ethnic group.) In this sense, wrongs of inequality are consequentialist or outcome-centered, whereas wrongs of intolerance are both agentic and relational.

Inequality wrongs differ from intolerance wrongs in a different way as well. Intolerance can harm socially and economically *favoured* groups. For example, upon coming to power in Uganda in 1972, Idi Amin's regime expelled ethnic Asian groups, whose economic and social standing was favorable compared to other Ugandans. Indeed, ethnic minorities who are in economically favorable circumstances but are not part of the ruling elite are often vulnerable to ethnic hatred, intolerance, and scapegoating. These wrongs, then, are distinct from those involved in sustaining a disfavored group in an unequal situation—the case envisioned in the WCAR report when it speaks of (intolerance contributing to) inequality.

So the WCAR report is right to distinguish equality-related ills from intolerance-related ones (though it does not explicitly spell out the character of the distinction). In this regard, the WCAR's name perhaps unwittingly privileges inequalities based on *race* over other forms of inequality, in a way that the report itself does not, or at least does not do so consistently. For "racism" and "racial discrimination" invoke equality-related matters in a way that "xenophobia" and "related intolerance" do not. So discrimination and unjust inequalities based on ethnic, linguistic, national origin, religious, and other similar factors are not, strictly speaking, encompassed in the report's title. In this sense, the choice of the word "intolerance" may have been unnecessarily restrictive regarding the *type of wrong* with which the WCAR was concerned, even though "related intolerance" may have been meant in an expansive manner with regard to the type of groups with which it was concerned.

DISCRIMINATION: WHY IS IT WRONG?

At the same time, although the report does not quite say so explicitly, it clearly sees issues of discrimination and inequality as *central* to its concern with "racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance." Yet the report leaves unexplored the precise character of the wrongs involved in

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race-related inequality and discrimination, and how they might relate to one another.

First, we must distinguish between the wrong of *discrimination* and that of *inequality*. Discrimination is used in two distinct ways in the report, and in common speech generally. It can refer to an act or activity—drawing a distinction among persons on the basis of group membership, and allocating benefits or burdens on that basis (Tariq's denying Joe a job because of Joe's race), or a practice that has the effect of treating racial groups unequally, even if this is no one's intention (using the passing of a written test as a job prerequisite when the test has no bearing on job performance, but has the effect of

disadvantaging one racial group in securing employment). The latter has been called “indirect discrimination,” and the former, “direct discrimination.” Discrimination can also refer to the *result* of the activity just described (Joe’s not having a job because Tariq discriminated against him; a racial group disproportionately failing to get a job). This distinction raises no particular moral or conceptual problems. However, discrimination in its “result” sense is sometimes used more broadly to encompass inequity between racial groups, even where the inequity has not been brought about, or at least not solely brought about, by discriminatory acts or practices. Discrimination used in this way can too readily be taken to imply that the inequities are the result of acts of discrimination when that is not the case. For example, suppose a black American is denied a job because he lacks the educational qualifications actually required to carry out the job.²² And suppose blacks in a certain city are disproportionately jobless for this reason. Referring to the latter state of affairs as “(racial) discrimination” is misleading, for it implies a different picture, in which that state of affairs is the result of acts of job discrimination (in the activity sense) against blacks. Instead, the disproportionate joblessness should be referred to as inequality, and it should not be presumed that inequality is wrong or bad for the same reason that discrimination is.

Then United Nations secretary-general Kofi Annan’s opening statement to the WCAR manifests some familiar sentiments and confusions along these lines:

Often this discrimination veils itself behind spurious pretexts. People are denied jobs ostensibly because they lack educational qualifications; or they are refused housing because there is a high crime rate in their community. Yet these very facts, even when true, are often the result of discrimination. Injustice traps people in poverty, poverty becomes the pretext for injustice—and so new wrongs are piled on the old.²³

Poverty can certainly be a product of injustice, and also a source of further injustice (directly or indirectly). And employers can set educational “qualifications” which they intend to use to exclude certain persons or groups and

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which they know to bear little or no relation to the capacity to perform the job in question. But not every educational qualification is a “pretext.” That an applicant’s lacking a legitimate such qualification may well be a product of poverty and inadequate schooling which is in no way his fault. But that does not make the qualification a “pretext,” and it does not render his being denied the job “discrimination.” The wrong involved in denying someone a job on an illegitimate pretext is quite different from that (if there is such) involved in doing so based on a legitimate job qualification that the applicant lacks through no fault of his own. It is true that the applicant is out of a job in both cases, and there may be a kind of injustice in both. But they are distinct forms of injustice, and they also call for quite distinct remedies.

What exactly is wrong with discrimination, in either the act/practice or the result sense? Let us remain with job discrimination as an example. Discrimination seems to be wrong in involving a certain kind of unfairness to the rejected applicant. The unfairness lies in utilizing an irrelevant criterion to deny the

applicant the job. The applicant need not have a right to the job, though she may have a right to be judged according to criteria pertinent to performance of the job. Yet, even if not an actual right, failure to so judge her constitutes an injustice to her. (I will leave aside complexities about how one determines what counts as a “relevant criterion” for job performance.)

But such “discrimination on the basis of an irrelevant characteristic” does not seem to capture the full force of what is wrong with *racial* discrimination. Rejecting someone because of her race seems worse than rejecting her because of her attire, say, or because she does not have a certain educational pedigree. Race is an especially “invidious” basis of discrimination, in the language of American discrimination law. The reason for this surely has to do with the history of using race as a basis for oppressing or excluding whole groups of people, or for imposing a form of caste-like inequality. This is the reason that the American legal system has come to regard race as an especially unworthy basis for allocating benefits and burdens (although it remains only presumptively, not always conclusively, legally wrong to discriminate on the basis of race).

It may be that race is not alone in constituting an especially invidious basis for discrimination, a basis more morally questionable than merely an irrelevant characteristic. Other important bases for group identity—gender, religion, class, national origin, ethnicity—may do so as well, because, like race, these categories have a history of use as bases for oppression and exclusion. I will not comment further on this possibility. Notice, however, that the opprobrium of racial discrimination applies to any instance of racial oppression, even if the person being discriminated against is not a member of a historically or currently oppressed group. Unjust discrimination against white persons, out of racial prejudice, carries an opprobrium that distinguishes it from discriminating against someone because one does not like

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the way she dresses, even though whites are not a historically oppressed group.²⁴

If so, then racial discrimination is wrong for two distinct reasons. It utilizes an irrelevant characteristic and thereby constitutes an injustice to an applicant. And it utilizes an especially invidious characteristic to make such a discrimination. If this is so, however, it seems that these two features do not fully capture what many, perhaps most, persons would regard as the full moral wrong of racial discrimination in all circumstances. Many would argue that not all forms of unjust racial discrimination (even of the same exact type) are morally equivalent and that, everything else being equal, it is worse to discriminate against (members of) a currently disadvantaged group than a currently advantaged group. So, in the United States, it would be worse, all else equal, for whites to discriminate against blacks than for blacks to discriminate against whites. The reason for this has something to do with the differing social consequences of the two cases. It seems worse to engage in an act of discrimination that contributes to the unjust disadvantage of the group in question than to engage in an otherwise comparable act that does not.²⁵

Let me clarify the distinction between the second and the third reason, since both appeal to the use of race to unjustly disadvantage a group. The second reason is meant to explain why racial discrimination in general is a worse *kind* of discrimination than types of discrimination that rely on irrelevant

characteristics, but ones not tied to a history of use for evil purposes. The second reason is neutral as between acts that disadvantage members of already disadvantaged groups and ones that disadvantage members of advantaged groups. The third reason appeals to *current* unjust disadvantages, and says that acts of discrimination that reinforce these disadvantages are worse than those that do not. So the second reason explains why discrimination against white people is worse than discrimination on the basis of idiosyncratic prejudice, for example, based on attire (where this is not further grounded in ethnic, class, cultural, or comparable prejudice). The third reason, by contrast, explains why, in addition to the second reason, discrimination against blacks is, *ceteris paribus*, worse than discrimination against whites. When the WCAR speaks of “racial discrimination,” it seems clearly to envision only discrimination against disadvantaged groups, although, as we saw, the ICERD language is not thus restricted.

Let us turn now to the difference between the wrong of *discrimination* and the wrong of *inequality*. First let us note that the wrongness of discrimination applies to the two forms we noted—an activity, and the result of that activity. The injustice to the rejected but deserving applicant, and the wrongness of that particular form of injustice (race-based discrimination), explains both why it is wrong to engage in such discrimination, and also why the result of it is a bad thing. So the first two types of, or reasons for, the wrongness of discrimination have little to do with general inequality among

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groups. They identify a wrongness that lies within the act of discrimination itself, apart from its consequences for social groups in the society in question. It is true that the historic relations of unjust advantage and disadvantage between those groups play some role in explaining the wrong of the *racial form* of discrimination—but it is not the current relations between these groups, nor consequences of the act itself, that explains the general wrong of racial discrimination.

By contrast, the third reason for the wrongness of racial discrimination derives entirely from the wrong of unjust inequality. This third reason applies only to certain types of racial discrimination, namely those that contribute to unjust inequalities. The first two reasons—inequality-independent ones—apply to a wider set of acts of discrimination.

RACE AND INEQUALITY

This leads to the obvious question, what is wrong with inequality? This question—in addition to that of why discrimination is wrong—has, perhaps surprisingly, garnered little attention in literature related to racism and racial inequality. I have referred to “unjust” inequalities, thus ensuring that the inequalities to which I have so far referred are morally wrong. This locution implies that not every inequality is unjust. Philosophical literature on inequality in general (not specifically racial inequality) has recognized this quite clearly. Some inequalities reflect unequal desert; some persons deserve to be rewarded more than others (though there is a good deal of controversy over what constitutes an adequate basis of

desert). Other inequalities, including inequalities in the bases for personal happiness, result from forms of luck that are neither just nor unjust.

It is not that literature on race denies these forms of non-unjust inequalities. However, it seldom builds a recognition of such inequalities into an overall view of what is wrong with racial inequality. There is a tendency to point to inequalities of various sorts—educational attainment, test scores, income, health, poverty rates, distribution among various occupations, infant mortality, and so on—with the implication that they are all unjust, or reflect injustice, or are at least morally troubling in some way, even if not flatly unjust. Often the further implication is licensed, that all of these inequalities are *equally* unjust or morally troubling; in any case, there is seldom a recognition that there might be different forms of injustice that warrant differential moral concern, or that some racial inequalities might not be unjust at all.

Two different reasons for the failure to pay more attention to the varieties of racial inequality and their possibly differing moral valences suggest

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themselves. One is the thought that in the case of race, though perhaps not with regard to other socially significant categories such as ethnicity, gender, or religion, there is a presumption of equality—that is, a presumption that any significant inequality constitutes an injustice. One possible reason for thinking this may stem from a misunderstanding about the nonexistence of races, discussed earlier. The nonexistence of races means that there is negligible genetic difference among racial groups, especially with regard to qualities of mind and character that might be thought to have some empirical bearing on important social measures of status and well-being. The negligible genetic differences might be thought to imply that racial populations should end up relatively equal in terms of major social indicators.

This reasoning is faulty. Even if racial populations are not genetically distinct, they are (at least to some extent) historically, socially, and culturally distinct populations. In the Americas, people of African origin have had very different historical experiences from those of European origin. Obviously those differences involve a good deal of injustice, but let us leave that aside for the moment. These different populations have developed distinctive cultural and social modes. In the case of other comparably distinct populations, we do not necessarily find differences in social indicators especially troubling, and this is not because we do not suspect genetic differences. Compare, for example, Japanese Americans and European Americans; the former have a higher level of education and income than the latter. This likely has to do with differing historical experiences and cultural modes rather than anything genetic. But we do not find these differences morally troubling; nor should we.

The absence of genetic differences should not translate automatically into an expectation of equality in social indicators. So genetic similarity—the nonexistence of races—is not a good reason for expecting racial equality of this sort, and not itself a reason for condemning departures from it.

A second possible reason for condemning racial inequality in social indicators as such is the thought that even if not every inequality constitutes an injustice, the *degree of* racial inequality on a particular social

measure is so great as to clearly involve some degree of injustice. For instance, in 1999 in the United States the white poverty rate was 8 percent and the black, 22 percent.²⁶ It is plausible to think that this large divergence certainly involves some degree of injustice.

The idea that a particularly large racial difference in some important social indicator is by itself a sign of injustice must be distinguished from the idea that large disparities are likely to be strongly grounded in historical injustices, such as slavery, colonialism, segregation, systematic discrimination, and the like. The former does not rely on a historically driven moral intuition but simply on the idea that too great a disparity itself constitutes an injustice. The latter does not take the degree of disparity as itself an injustice,

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but rather as an indicator of an injustice that consists in being causally rooted in an (undoubted) injustice. (The historical dimension will be discussed below.)

By themselves, however, neither the sufficiently wide disparity nor the historical approaches provide a clear standard for discerning unjust inequalities. I want to take some small steps toward addressing this matter. First, some inequalities are such that any group inequality seems morally troubling. Health care is an example. It is a basic need. If a condition such as diabetes or heart failure is treated differently in different racial groups, this is cause for concern. Contrast the percentage of persons in racial groups receiving advanced college degrees (beyond a bachelors). It is true that advanced degrees are a route to higher income and status and are thus an indicator of social well-being. Nevertheless, in contrast to health care, it would not be appropriate to regard any deviation from equality among racial groups as morally troubling. There may be two related reasons for this. First, possessing an advanced degree is not nearly so fundamental to individual well-being and functioning as is the receipt of adequate health care; so inequalities are in that sense less morally troubling. Second, ethnocultural (including racial) groups may differ in the value placed on the pursuit of advanced degrees in relation to other social values such as taking care of one's family, making money sooner rather than later, or remaining physically close to one's community of origin (which may constrain one's ability to travel to an institution that confers advanced degrees). For this reason, even in a context of equal opportunity, one would not necessarily expect every group to have an equal percentage of advanced degrees.

So one will want to draw a distinction between social disparities that are necessarily, and with nothing else known about the situation, morally troubling, and those that are not (or not necessarily), even if one can not give a clear criterion for differentiating them. Among those that are not necessarily morally troubling, one would therefore want to find a way to discern those that are from those that are not. In the education case just mentioned, for example, group inequalities in the *opportunity to pursue* an advanced degree would be morally troubling and would likely show up in inequalities in receipt of the degree itself. Although discerning the degree to which the latter inequalities were due to the former would not be possible with any precision, at least the attempt to do so would provide a normatively more adequate way to think about the original inequality than remaining content with the presumption that the degree of inequality very likely involves an injustice.

Yet perhaps this distinction between disparities that are presumptively morally troubling and those that are not does not *fully* account for why we regard racial inequalities of the health-care sort as morally troubling. Are the former necessarily *unjust*, or *wrong*? Let us imagine a very oversimplified

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account in which there are two different sources of health-care disparities. In the first, health-care providers are less concerned about the well-being of black patients than white (although they are not aware of this), and for this reason, give less adequate attention to their black patients, resulting in inferior health care.²⁷ In the second scenario, black patients follow the health prescriptions of their providers less well than do white patients. Let us say that the reason for this is that blacks are not as trusting and confident in their providers as white patients, and that the reason for this in turn is rooted in historical differences in care that no longer exist, making the distrust no longer rational and appropriate.

It seems clear that an injustice is being done *to* the black patients in the first scenario, whereas this is far from clear in the second. In the first case, the providers discriminate against black patients; but they do not in the second. The discrimination in the first case partakes of all three reasons mentioned earlier why doing so is wrong—it bases treatment on an arbitrary feature, it uses an especially invidious characteristic as such a basis, and it contributes to an already existing racial inequality. The second scenario does not (necessarily) involve injustice in the first two modes. No one is discriminating against blacks. Providers are not proffering an inferior form of health provision to them.

Yet the inferior health resulting from the second scenario remains morally troubling nevertheless. It seems morally troubling in a way that a similar scenario with geographical groups substituting for racial groups does not. Imagine, for example that residents of New Hampshire follow their health providers' prescriptions better than residents of Tennessee, even though the providers proffer the same care in the two states. Holding other factors constant, this means that residents of Tennessee are less healthy. This might be a wake-up call to health officials in Tennessee to look at possible explanations. But, by itself, it does not seem of moral concern.²⁸

GLENN LOURY'S ACCOUNT

When race is involved, however, disparities in health care that are not due to discrimination are of moral concern. To explore further why this might be, let us look briefly at Glenn Loury's account in *The Anatomy of Racial Inequality*. Loury's 2002 book represents a quantum leap in the way that racial inequality is normatively analyzed in a philosophical manner. His argument is quite complex, but one can pull out some themes pertinent to my concerns here. At one level, Loury is concerned to establish racial disparities in important social measures of well-being as morally troubling, as against those who set up "race-blindness" (what is more customarily called

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“color-blindness” in the United States) as a fundamental principle. By “race-blindness,” Loury means the procedural norm of “not using race when carrying out a policy” (133). Many persons have convinced themselves that race blindness should be an overriding principle governing policy—that is, that it is virtually always wrong to take race into account in formulating policy. Loury compellingly argues that this is morally obtuse. Race blindness should be evaluated by its empirical role in promoting “race egalitarianism,” which Loury defines as reducing the gap in important social measures (he mentions wealth and power, but implies others) (112).²⁹ Loury argues that sometimes race blind policies do promote racial egalitarianism; for example, so-called percentage plans that guarantee places in public colleges for the top n percent of a graduating high school class. In many states, because of segregation in high schools, this plan has the effect of guaranteeing places for a certain rough percentage of Latino and black students in the state colleges, even though race is never mentioned in the policy itself. Loury notes that such a policy, though race *blind*, is not “race *indifferent*.” That is, those who favor the policy are concerned about the impact of the policy on different racial groups; indeed, this race egalitarianism is the point of the policy.

Loury is concerned to establish two other theses. The first is that race egalitarianism is a morally legitimate goal, that existing racial inequalities are not morally legitimate and are of moral concern. The second is that these inequalities are only minimally due to current racial discrimination, which he calls “discrimination in contract.”³⁰ Thus Loury does not ground the source of moral concern for inequality in the wrong of discrimination (of which he gives no further account). Rather he sees it in the present legacy of past discrimination:

[M]uch of social life takes place outside the reach of public regulation, and extant social affiliations condition the development of personal and intellectual skills in the young. As a result, present inequality—among individuals and between groups—must embody to some degree the social and economic disparities that have existed in the past. *If the past disparities are morally illegitimate, the propriety of the contemporary order must also be called into question* (103). (emphasis in original)

Later, Loury eschews any attempt to draw clear causal lines between the discrimination of the past and inequalities of the present. “An ‘epistemological fog’ obscures the causal dynamics at work across the generations and limits our ability to know in detail how past events have shaped current arrangements” (125).

This link between past depredations and current racial injustice is often mentioned in the WCAR report. Mary Robinson, the UN high commissioner for human rights at the time of the WCAR and the conference’s secretary-general, remarks in her brief statement to the conference that forms

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part of the final report, “I have also learned how closely contemporary forms of racism are bound up with the past. I believe this Conference could mark a historic breakthrough in the struggle against racism if agreement could be reached on language that recognizes historic injustices and expresses deep remorse for the crimes of the past” (161).³¹

The relation between the injustices of the past and the inequities of the present played a crucial role at the WCAR. Although there was no official attempt to trace tight causal connections, the mere connection was a politically charged issue. It is widely believed that one reason the United States failed to participate in the conference was its concern that its own history of slavery and involvement in the slave trade would be used as moral leverage to make claim on public resources (in the form of reparations) to address the disparities currently suffered by persons of African ancestry in the United States or elsewhere, or at least to African Americans. The NGO conference attached to the WCAR attempted to get the WCAR to adopt language that would declare slavery and the slave trade “crimes against humanity,” hoping that this would give the movement for reparations a stronger standing in international law. Resistance to this language was led by European delegates to the WCAR, presumably to resist the very same result.³²

So the affirmation of *some* causal relation between past depredations and current inequalities should not be seen as morally trivial, even if Loury is right that its character cannot be spelled out any further. Yet one cannot help but be struck by how much it does *not* tell us. Loury’s “race egalitarianism” essentially calls for “more equality.” It does not differentiate *types* of equality, seeing some as resting on a firmer foundation than others, or some as being more urgent than others. It provides no indication of when we might have reduced the inequalities enough to have met the moral force of the causal link to past discrimination. Can Loury really remain so agnostic about the degree of the causal link, and yet imply a fairly weighty moral demand to reduce unspecified racial inequality to an unspecified degree?³³

A second shortcoming of Loury’s account is that he allows our moral intuition about racial wrongs to be driven solely by the disparities themselves, without any moral attention to the specific processes that lead to those disparities (as opposed to the unspecified causal link to slavery). For example, Loury points to the disproportionately high rate of black incarceration (7 percent of black males and 1 percent of white males in prison in 1997 [201]) as an inequity about which all Americans should be deeply troubled. But Loury devotes no attention to whether blacks commit crimes at anything like this same rate of disparity; yet certainly our sense of what exactly is *wrong* with such a large racial disparity among the incarcerated should be driven at least in part by the rate of commission of crimes.³⁴ Obviously, if the disproportion in incarceration were due entirely to racial

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bias in arrest, conviction, and sentencing, this would be a great deal more morally troubling than if it were due entirely to differential rates of crime commission.³⁵

“INSTITUTIONAL RACISM”

Loury’s approach to moral wrong concerning race is in line with much writing about race that emphasizes disparities but not the processes leading to them. The concept of *institutional racism* has gained great popularity as a way to focus attention on presumed morally troubling disparities that are not created by race prejudice or direct racial discrimination.³⁶ For example, blacks underperform white

students on important measures (such as grades and test scores) in the United States; but while schooling is seen as contributing to this troubling outcome, few regard racial prejudice or direct discrimination as its cause.

Institutional racism undoubtedly corrects for a tendency stemming from an earlier understanding of racism to think that racial prejudice and direct discrimination are the only racial wrongs, or that what makes anything else wrong (e.g., racial inequality) is that it is a product of either of these. This understanding, moreover, remains quite widespread. But the notion of institutional racism contains a complementary erroneous tendency —implying that we can discern the moral wrong of a state of affairs without attention to what led to it. In the 1971 U.S. Supreme Court case of *Griggs v. Duke Power*,³⁷ an employer required passage of a literacy test or completion of high school as a job qualification, even though the jobs in question were unskilled and did not require possession of such achievements to carry out. But the result of setting the qualifications was that blacks were disproportionately denied jobs at the Duke Power Company. (Indeed, the work force remained almost entirely white.) Here the resultant disparity was morally troubling, and the immediate source of that disparity (the literacy/high school graduation requirement) had very little to be said for it, to temper the wrong involved in the resultant state of affairs. By contrast, in the situation mentioned earlier in relation to Kofi Annan’s remarks, the resultant racial disparity in employment was due in part to a disparity in reasonable educational requirements. So the overall process leading to the disparity was less troubling, or at least troubling in a different way, than the one in the *Duke Power* case.

So moral evaluation of racial disparities cannot dispense with moral attention to the processes that lead to these disparities. To say this is not to deny the insight to which Loury points so effectively, and to which the concept of “institutional racism” is meant to point as well—namely that certain

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disparities do seem troubling in their own right. It is disturbing that so disproportionately more blacks are incarcerated than whites. However this has come about, Loury is right that Americans should all find this fact morally distressing. This is true as well of disparities in school achievement, rates of poverty, and health. But we cannot make progress in knowing what the appropriate form of moral concern about these disparities should be (nor, of course, what policies we should adopt to try to correct for them), unless we are in a position to morally assess the processes that lead to them.

The WCAR report does not follow Loury in distinguishing clearly between discrimination and inequality. Indeed, in contexts that link past and present, it is often stated that colonialism, slavery, apartheid, and the like are causes, not of inequality, but of “racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and other intolerance.” I think *racial discrimination* in this context probably does not refer only to acts and practices of racial discrimination, but rather to inequality in general. (Perhaps in some countries inequality is more directly a product of discrimination than in the United States, and the discrimination itself a direct legacy of prior colonialism and other racist structures.)

RACISM AND CULTURE

The past several decades have seen a rising sensitivity to the existence and importance of distinct ethnocultures. “Respect for cultural diversity” has often encapsulated a norm arising from this consciousness. The groups whose ethnocultures have garnered the most attention in this new consciousness tend to be the sorts of vulnerable groups mentioned in the WCAR report—immigrant groups, ethnic and ethnoreligious minorities, migrants, indigenous peoples.³⁸ The vulnerability to exclusion, discrimination, disempowering, and devaluing by the host societies or former colonizing powers of these ethnocultural groups has come to be seen as a distinct sort of moral and political wrong. Charles Taylor and others have articulated a value of “recognition” applying to ethnocultural groups, that is meant both to provide a general standard for policy approaches to such groups and to name a distinct sort of value at stake in their relation to the larger societies of which they are a part.³⁹

Respect for cultural diversity can be seen to encompass several distinct values. One is the freedom of a group to express its culture and to engage in its cultural practices (subject to reasonable social and political constraints of various kinds); this value is grounded in the importance of cultures to the identities of members of the groups in question. A second value is recognition *by others* of the value of an ethnoculture to members of that ethnocultural group. This value is perhaps based on the assumption that members of

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societies (broadly or narrowly construed) are or should be bound to one another in relations of mutual respect, together with a recognition that various group identities and especially ethnocultural ones are of vital significance to the individuals in question. A third value of cultural diversity is a valorizing of cultural diversity itself, a belief that cultural diversity within a given society enriches the lives of all members of that society. All benefit from being exposed to the forms of artistic and religious expression, the distinct values and ways of life, the belief systems of groups other than their own.

These three values have nothing to do with race per se; but the discussion of cultural diversity has become entangled with race and racism. For example, opposition to racism has sometimes been claimed to require rejection of assimilation.⁴⁰ More generally, the values of cultural diversity have been implied to be required by the rejection of racism.

This close linking of racism and culture has embodied some genuine insight into previously unrecognized dimensions of racism. For example, it is true that one of the ways that a racialized group can suffer from racism is in the suppression or devaluing of the culture or cultures attached to the ethnoracial groups in question. For example, one manifestation of anti-black racism in, say, the United Kingdom or the United States, can be a devaluing of forms of black musical expression or interpersonal norms—seeing rhythm and blues, or reggae, as “uncivilized” music, for example, or treating black dialect with derision. This is racism when it involves devaluing a group understood racially; the cultural manifestations of the group are devalued *because* the group is racially devalued. The “cultural” insight here is that racism can manifest itself not only in hatred toward a group, depriving it of rights or opportunities, or passing laws

to limit the group's immigration because of racial antipathy toward the group—but also in the devaluing of its cultural forms.

A different sort of connection between culture and race, however, is in evidence when certain alleged cultural characteristics are attributed to a group in a racial manner, that is, a manner that implies that the characteristics are inherent in the nature of the group, and especially when those characteristics would generally be regarded as involving inferiority. For example, a disposition to shun academic achievement is sometimes attributed to blacks, or a rejection of democratic modes of life to Muslims, in this way. This form of racist attribution is little different from the standard form of racial inherentism—attributing qualities of mind and temperament to whole racial groups as a part of their inherent nature. The only difference is that here the attributed characteristics are seen not only as characteristics shared by members of the group, but as characteristics that are (allegedly) part of the group's *culture*. I suggested earlier that such attributions count as racial because they construe culture in a quasi-geneticist, or “essentialist”—that is, inherentist—manner. These attributions are false in two ways. They

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both overgeneralize about the presence of a characteristic (undemocraticness, musical talent, rejection of academic success) in a racialized group; and they wrongly see the characteristic as being (entirely or largely) inherent in the group's nature. (In the case of the essentialist cultural attribution, this inherentism is generally tacit and implied rather than explicit.) So the objectionableness of such racist attributions lies in part in the implication that members of the group cannot escape the “fate” implied by the characteristic.

But not all objectionable attributions of cultural characteristics to groups are inherentist. People constantly overgeneralize about or stereotype racialized or ethnocultural groups without in any way implying that the attributed characteristics are innate or inherent. Someone may, for example, have a wildly overblown image of the number of children Mexican families have, without thinking that “having large families” is anything other than a contingent cultural characteristic of Mexicans—something that holds at present but could change in the future. Overgeneralizing or stereotyping is objectionable even when not linked to essentialism or inherentism. It still involves falsehood and masks individuality. And it is true that these ills infect *racial* stereotyping as well. But they are not limited to race or to racialized culturalism. I think we should be able to condemn the nonessentialist stereotyping of racial or ethnocultural groups without feeling that we have to call it “racism.” There may be no single word, no readily available “ism,” to use in such condemnation. But sensitivity to the variety and distinctness of ills in the racial and cultural domain should incline us to be wary of the inflation involved in naming as “racism” the nonessentialist stereotyping of ethnocultural groups *tout court*.⁴¹

A further objection to implying that *racism* should be understood to encompass the attribution of negative cultural characteristics to a group is that some cultural attributions are valid, not stereotypes or overgeneralizations, and that a characteristic rightly attributed to a group's culture may be a bad thing, for one of several distinct reasons. By contrast, attributions of characteristics to racial groups in virtue of their “racial nature” are never valid, since there are no racial natures. It may be, for example, that a culture devalues or discriminates against members of its own group in a manner objectionable from the

vantage point of democracy, liberty, equality, or some other plausible value. Some cultures, for example, may embody objectionable tendencies toward the devaluing of women; in any case, such an attribution cannot be ruled out prior to investigation. Such cultural attributions are the sorts of things that, if made in a nuanced manner, *can* be true of an ethnocultural group. Opposition to racism should not be construed as requiring the automatic refraining from attributing negative characteristics to an ethnoculture.

Since a cultural group can have (tendencies toward) objectionable attitudes or practices toward subgroups of its own members, it can not,

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certainly not always, be wrong to say so. There is no analogy in the case of racial attributions. Racist attributions are always false. This is not to say that no valid generalizations can be made about racialized groups—about blacks, or whites. Obviously, one can say, for example that such and such percentage of blacks, or whites, vote for Labor, or the National Front, or the Republicans. But no generalization that implies that the psychological or behavioral characteristic is inherent is true.

In addition to cultural values that support treating subgroups of its own members badly, unjustly, objectionably, some cultural values can be detrimental to the cultural group as a whole. Not every value generated within a cultural group (including, of course, in its interaction with other groups) is necessarily a positive good for that group, given its particular current life circumstances. To take an obvious example, a cultural group's culinary preferences may turn out to be detrimental to the health of its members, or, more precisely, detrimental with respect to contemporary standards of health. An overabundance of starchy and fatty foods can both be a genuine component of a group's ethnoculture, yet also detrimental to its health now that the group has come to live a more urbanized and sedentary existence than previously.

Another example, often discussed in the U.S. context, of ethnocultural values detrimental to a group's flourishing concerns African American youth allegedly devaluing, or failing adequately to value, school success. In one influential and generally respected form of this view, John Ogbu has argued that such values have developed among what he calls "involuntary minorities," as a response to a partially accurate perception of blocked mobility for the group in question because of historic discrimination against the group. (Ogbu claims to find this phenomenon in many minority cultures, not only African Americans, for example, the Ainu in Japan.)⁴² Over time, on Ogbu's view, this sense of discouragement has connected black self-identity to a rejection of certain forms of success in the wider society as defined by the dominant culture—success in school constituting one example of this.⁴³ Although a response to genuine discrimination, Ogbu claims that this value works to the detriment of African Americans putting their best effort into school, and this results in diminished school, and occupational, success.

For my argument, it is not necessary that Ogbu's view be true, or fully true, but only that it *might* be true, and that whether it is true be an empirical matter. The hypothesis that African American culture has developed some cultural tendencies among its members, or among some of its members (especially

young males), that are detrimental to its flourishing should not be rejected on the grounds that it is racist to place negative value on any ethnoculture.

To decouple opposition to racism from affirming ethnocultures is not to license prejudicial, stereotypic, or ill-founded attributions of characteristics to a group. As mentioned earlier, it is wrong to slide from an accurate

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attribution of some negative characteristic to a wholesale condemnation of the culture of the group in question. Ogbu is discussing only one element of African American culture; he is not condemning the culture in any overall sense, nor claiming that their ethnoculture is detrimental to the flourishing of African Americans in a general way. (The latter move is made by Dinesh D’Souza in his best-selling book, *The End of Racism*, in which American black culture *in general* is frequently characterized as pathological, prone to criminality and other self-destructive and anti-social tendencies.)⁴⁴

No doubt many negative attributions of characteristics to ethnocultural groups do arise from racial or ethnic prejudice and ignorance, or an unwarranted assumption of superiority on the part of dominant or majority groups, or former colonial powers. In this sense an attribution of negative cultural norms to a marginal or subordinate ethnocultural group might very well be racist in the sense of arising from a racist stance toward the group.

Nevertheless, the connection between racism and the attribution of negative characteristics to an ethnocultural group is a contingent one. The reach of “racism” in light of the insight that racism can prompt a devaluing of the culture of a group should not be extended so that opposition to racism actually *requires* an affirmation of the culture of an ethnocultural group. Beyond this, it is also dangerous to make “affirmation of culture” a core social value, whether connected or not with anti-racism. Well-informed criticism of ethnocultures must be allowed, whether directed toward minority or majority, dominant or subordinate, ethnocultures. This is necessary not only for the protection of members of cultures against the injustices done by others in the name of cultural norms, and for the protection of the wider society against harmful tendencies within cultures, but also for the welfare of the ethnocultures as a whole themselves.⁴⁵ Again, the case of African Americans illustrates this well. Many, such as Ogbu or Cross, who allege unfortunate tendencies within African American youth culture are motivated primarily by a concern for the well-being of the African American community. Only if we recognize these tendencies can we understand how best to promote school achievement in our young people, they argue. And, indeed, even those who do not have the welfare of a group at heart may nevertheless have some insight into genuine, if negative, tendencies within that group.

The WCAR report states, “We also affirm the great importance we attach to the values of solidarity, respect, tolerance, and multiculturalism, which constitute the moral ground and inspiration for our worldwide struggle against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance” (par. 5 under “General issues”). If my argument is correct, this is partially misleading. Multiculturalism as cultural respect is not as fundamental a value as anti-racism and cannot be regarded as its basis (although it is more closely connected to the values of tolerance). Underlying the struggle against racism

and racial discrimination are values related to equality and

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equal treatment regarding fundamental needs and interests, not a general respect for culture.⁴⁶

Although cultural identity can indeed be a vital part of individuals' identity and well-being, this does not mean that "affirmation of cultures" should be treated as a fundamental social value, applying both to the official treatment of distinct cultures within a given society, or to a more general prescription to individuals in relation to cultures other than their own. Values such as equality, liberty, and democracy should constrain the degree and form of affirmation of a given culture; and restricting criticism of cultures, in the name of affirmation of cultures, must be avoided.⁴⁷

This qualifying of the value of affirming cultures, and its severance from the values related to rejecting racism, still leaves in place many of the concerns articulated in the WCAR report with regard to indigenous groups, immigrant minorities, and ethnoreligious minorities. First, such groups are often the victims of racism in the strict sense; that is, they are viewed in light of an assigned racial designation and are demeaned and discriminated against on that score. Moreover, such groups often inherit a legacy of disadvantage and cultural vulnerability stemming from a history of racist mistreatment, either in their current nation-state or their state of origin. Second, these groups are also vulnerable with respect to the broader category of xenophobia and related intolerances from dominant and majority cultural groups—from hostility to nonnationals, ethnocentrism, and unexamined and unwarranted assumptions of cultural superiority. Iraqi treatment of the Kurds, Russians of the Chechens, and Serbians of the (Kosovar) Albanians, are only three prominent among many recent examples of how criticism of the cultures of minority groups of various kinds can be unwarrantedly put in the service of group oppression. Nothing in my argument is meant to cast into question the WCAR report's call for the protection of such groups.

At the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Other Intolerance, a wide array of groups—refugees, indigenous groups, caste-like groups, minority immigrant cultural groups, religious minorities, and others—garnered attention. The WCAR report articulates an array of values concerning recognition and flourishing that can ground such moral attention to these groups, and also notes that these groups can themselves suffer from forms of racism. But sometimes the report goes further and asserts an unwarranted link between the values related to the flourishing of these cultural groups and racism or other racial wrongs.

DOES RACE MAKE INEQUALITIES WORSE?

While literature on racial inequality and racism tends to undertheorize the issue of equality and inequality, mainstream philosophical literature on

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global inequality is equally striking in its inattention specifically to racial matters. The general thrust of

the philosophical global inequalities literature writing is to pit more universal claims of global equality against particularistic loyalties—to country and local community and family—that would restrict or minimize the obligations of members of wealthy nations toward those in materially less favored circumstances in other nations. Those who advocate greater global equality, and who view international distribution of resources as an issue of basic justice—a position referred to as “cosmopolitanism” in this literature—often argue that national borders are not morally significant at all, that their significance is entirely instrumental to more universal values, or that their significance for underwriting preference to co-nationals is fairly weak.⁴⁸ A different argument in a cosmopolitan direction is that duties to human beings as such are stronger than one might think.⁴⁹ Yet a third is that globalization and other forces have connected human beings around the world in a form of distinct economic association that grounds distinct duties of international distributive justice.⁵⁰

These arguments all call for redistributive initiatives from rich to poor, which distinction is conceived in two overlapping but distinct ways—from rich nations to poor nations, and from an international elite of different national origins but increasingly disconnected from the ties of nationality, and everyone else. The latter points to globalization’s effect both of increasing the inequalities in life conditions among those in the advanced capitalist democracies and of weakening national ties in an international elite. In general, the favored group in both forms of the distinction is white, the disfavored nonwhite, although there are many exceptions. In the mainstream philosophical literature on global inequality, virtually nothing is made of this racial dimension. At the same time, the main thrust of this literature is, as I have said, in an international egalitarian direction. So it argues for a redistribution along what amounts to racial lines, from white to nonwhite, but without calling any attention to this feature.

This redistribution corresponds, in general, to the thrust of the WCAR report’s recommendations. That report, however, relies almost solely on race-related arguments. Although it points to race-neutral factors as exacerbating racial inequality, the moral resources the report utilizes to advocate correcting or compensating for the international racial injustice are confined entirely to those that can be construed as opposing racism. The report does not avail itself of the kinds of race-neutral moral arguments found in the philosophical literature, even though these would complement its own race-based moral arguments and point in the direction of the same racially redistributive policies.

It might be thought inappropriate of a report that is confined to racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerances to go outside that moral framework to correct for the ills with which it is concerned. Yet the report realistically recognizes that the factors leading to, or at least sustaining,

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prior, race-based injustices are by no means confined to racial ones (even as broadly construed). It names “globalization” as a general category for a range of such factors. But if it can recognize non-race-related *empirical* factors that sustain and magnify race-related disparity, it ought also to be able to recognize non-racism-related *moral* arguments that would press toward correction of those injustices.

It might also be argued that as a UN-sponsored enterprise, the WCAR is confined to the framework laid down in the relevant documents, and the institutions that have arisen to interpret, ratify, and enforce them. But here, too, various UN human rights and other documents articulate race-neutral rights and standards that, were they to be honored, would disproportionately benefit nonwhite persons. For example, article 25 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services,” and article 23, “Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.”

So opponents of the global racial inequalities decried by the WCAR report might enrich their arsenal of moral resources for arguments against such inequalities. And philosophical discussions of global inequality and injustice would be an important source of such resources. But the further question arises whether the race-based character of the inequalities provides a moral reason to oppose them that is not captured by the sorts of arguments used in the mainstream philosophical literature mentioned above. I want to touch briefly on this question.

There seem to be three different arguments concerning race that might be able to complement these cosmopolitan arguments: (1) reparations for race-based historical injustices; (2) when inequalities correlate with race, they encourage racism (distancing, false beliefs) as a rationalization, and thereby lead to further inequality; and (3) a racial inequality (i.e., an inequality between racial groups) is in itself more morally objectionable than other group inequalities.

Reparations arguments draw explicitly on past injustices committed against persons of one group by those of another. Slavery and the slave trade are two (related) atrocities for which the WCAR suggests that reparations are appropriate (if not quite morally required).⁵¹ The report does not suggest the many difficulties and complexities that attend the idea of reparations. Who is it who owes reparations? Is it descendants of perpetrators? Nations, as corporate entities, that profited from the slave trade or slavery? Nationals of those nations who are not themselves descendants of slaves? Companies who are continuous with those who were deeply involved in the slave trade or slavery?

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Comparable problems attend the question, to whom should reparations be paid? Direct descendants of those victimized? The current incarnation of a historical community violated by the slave trade or slavery (African Americans, Africans, all persons of African descent)? Only members of those current communities who are not “doing well” by some measure?

Other questions remain as well. Is the grounds for reparation to be understood in terms of the degree of unjust benefit of those who benefited from the wrong (e.g., slavery)? The type of wrong done to the victims (bypassing complex questions about estimating the degree of wrong)? The causal impact on present inequalities? Finally, even among those who favor reparations, there is not universal agreement that appropriate reparations would have a redistributive effect. Some argue that monetary

compensation, or other forms of material benefit, are not the appropriate response to historical atrocities. Rather, forms of public acknowledgment through apology, memorialization, and the like are more appropriate.⁵²(WCAR 100, 101)

In spite of these difficulties and complexities, it seems to me probable that some form of reparations argument that would transfer assets from (some) whites to (at least some) persons of African descent would stand up to scrutiny. A historical community was wronged by slavery, just as the historical community of Japanese Americans was wronged by unjust internment and confiscation of property. The wrong, in its own right and independent of its subsequent effects on that historical community, is recognized as generating some moral claim in the case of Germany and Holocaust survivors and in the case of the American government and Japanese Americans. Although the passage of time can be argued to have some impact on the force of the moral claim thus generated, the wrong itself was so massive in scope and time that at least some moral claim can be plausibly argued to remain.

Moreover, in the case of persons of African descent in societies deeply involved in slavery in the modern era, such as the United States and Brazil, a second, distinct moral basis complements the original wrong to a historical community. That basis is the continuing inequalities of a morally significant sort mentioned earlier (health, education, wealth, and so on) that in some part rest on the exploitation involved in slavery, with its various unjust benefits accruing to whites (even whites and their descendants who arrived subsequent to emancipation in these societies). Perhaps the moral force of the injustice in question is dependent on the continuing forms of discrimination afflicting slave descendants, as these contributed to the unjust advantages of whites at the expense of blacks, in addition to the causal impact of past injustice on present inequality.⁵³ Nevertheless, in light of those continuing forms, that moral force contributes to an argument in favor of reparations.

Recognizing distinct historical entities as both the wronged parties (or historically continuous descendants of the wronged parties) and as the party

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owing the reparations (states, governments) obviate a familiar objection to reparations—the alleged difficulty of identifying appropriate individuals to be compensated, as well as to pay the compensation. Such an argument is proffered by Darrell Moellendorf in one of the few discussions of reparations arguments in the wider context of international distributive justice.⁵⁴ Moellendorf says that the descendants of slaves or colonials cannot be said to have been harmed by slavery or colonialism since they would not have existed if it were not for the original injustice. This is like saying that a descendant of a Holocaust survivor who remarries after her husband was killed in the Holocaust is not entitled to reparations since she would not have existed but for the Holocaust. The larger point is that the appropriate target, generally recognized in reparations literature, is a historically continuous corporate entity, such as European Jews and their descendants or Australian aboriginals. That there are some difficulties in determining the precise boundaries of such communities—in the African American case, for example, whether second-generation Ethiopian Americans should count—does not cast the entire moral scheme of reparations into question.⁵⁵

Such arguments would be of a different form than the cosmopolitan arguments in the philosophical literature; they have a more historically and socially particular basis. The cosmopolitan arguments generally depend on either the fact of shared humanity or of economic interdependence. They do not attach normative importance to the historical provenance of the inequalities. By contrast, reparations arguments point to a distinct wrong committed by one historical group against another.

The second way that race might supply a global redistributive argument above the race-neutral ones is suggested by an item in the WCAR report: “We recognize that inequitable political, economic, cultural and social conditions can breed and foster racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, which in turn exacerbate the inequity” (para. 76, 19). (In this context, unlike some others, the report clearly does *not* mean to include racial inequality in “racism” or “racial discrimination.”) We might gloss this remark as suggesting that where racially marked groups are unequally placed along important social, economic, and political measures, there will be a tendency for these groups to be seen as inferiors, and, perhaps, also to be seen as more “other” than members of dominant groups. The combination of these two factors, in turn, might have the effect of seeming to justify the inequality and dampening a social conscience that would see it as unjust; and these sentiments, in turn, facilitate a further intensifying of the positional inequalities.⁵⁶

One would have to test this hypothesis empirically. For example, it may be that the racial dimension of the inequality renders dominant groups more complacent and accepting of those inequalities, but does not by itself generate *greater* inequality. (It might generate a more ready countenancing

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of inequalities that were generated by other factors, e.g., ones connected with globalization). Nevertheless, the general thrust of the argument seems quite intuitively plausible. If it is, this provides a further way in which attention to race generates an argument against race-related inequalities beyond the race-neutral cosmopolitan arguments.

The third type of race-based approach suggests that unjust inequalities of a racial nature—in health care, education, other measures of well-being—are, purely in their own right and independent of how they were produced, more morally objectionable than the same inequalities *within* a racial group or between groups not defined by race. It is difficult to separate this out from the historically based moral intuitions fueling the reparations argument. But perhaps one could argue that because race has been such a divisive and inequality-generating form of human identity, any inequality that is redolent of those associations thereby acquires some extra moral objectionability.

If, as I have argued, race makes inequalities worse, then a full moral understanding of global inequalities requires an attention to race that is seldom given in the literature on this subject. In addition, race-based arguments point in a similar racially redistributive direction as do most cosmopolitan arguments; so advocates of the latter would do well to avail themselves of the moral resources of the former. Finally, and more generally, all sides would benefit from a greater engagement with race as an axis of moral concern by political philosophers concerned with global inequality.

Notes

¹Bernard Boxill, *Blacks and Social Justice* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1992; rev. ed.), was a pioneering work in this area. Cf. also Howard McGary, *Race and Social Justice* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), and David Theo Goldberg, *Racist Culture* (New York: Blackwell, 1993). ²Kevin Boyle and Anneliese Baldaccini, "A Critical Evaluation of International Human Rights Approaches to Racism," in *Discrimination and Human Rights: The Case of Racism*, ed. Sandra Fredman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). ³*Ibid.*, 185. ⁴Racial segregation in the United States formed part of this context as well, although efforts explicitly to condemn segregation were unsuccessful. ⁵Boyle and Baldaccini, "Critical Evaluation," 149. The Convention on the Rights of the Child has since surpassed ICERD in this respect. The United States did not ratify ICERD until 1994. ⁶*Ibid.*, 151. Boyle and Baldaccini comment, somewhat misleadingly, that the definition "covers all acts of discrimination based on motivations of a racial nature." By speaking of "purpose or effect" [emphasis added], the definition appears to encompass practices *not* motivated by invidious racial motives, yet still having racially deleterious effects. ⁷By "the WCAR report," I am referring to the "Report of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance." This report includes several documents officially adopted by the conference, including a "Declaration," — 320 — a "Programme of Action," various statements on behalf of national governments and international officials (such as Kofi Annan, then president of the United Nations), lists of participants in the conference, and so on. ⁸The report takes note of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People both as an opportunity to "consider the invaluable contributions of indigenous peoples to political, economic, social, cultural, and spiritual development throughout the world to our societies, as well as the challenges faced by them, including racism and racial discrimination." ⁹The report also includes "dalit"—low caste groups in India—which are race-like but not ethnic-like. ¹⁰Gary Delgado, "Bridging the Racial Justice Chasm," *Poverty and Race* 11, 1 (January/February 2002): 11. "So caste, national origin, a number of forms of religious repression, efforts to promote indigenous rights, and anti-colonial struggles were all framed racially." A document prepared for the WCAR by the National Network for Immigration and Refugee Rights is called *From the Borderline to the Colorline: A Report on Anti-Immigrant Racism in the United States*. By no means are all the articles in this report concerned with the racial dimension of anti-immigrant discrimination or hostility, but the title is significant for the privileging of race. ¹¹Boyle and Baldaccini comment, "CERD [the committee that oversees implementation of ICERD] has recognized that states have the sovereign right to impose distinctions between citizens and non-citizens insofar as their purpose or effect contains no element of discrimination based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin" (155). ¹²In making the claim that Nazi hatred of Jews was a form of racism, I am not taking a stand on the question whether "anti-Semitism," the term conventionally used to refer to Jew-hatred (and specifically coined for this purpose) possesses some features marking it out as importantly distinct from other forms of racism. George Frederickson's *Racism: A Short History* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2002) discusses this issue thoroughly. ¹³This claim of the "subjectivity" or perpetrator-centeredness involved in racism applies only to intentional discrimination. Below we will discuss indirect or unintentional forms of racism regarding which the perpetrator need *not* regard the target group as a race. ¹⁴For a sustained argument

in favor of this view of race, see Lawrence Blum, *"I'm Not a Racist, But...": The Moral Quandary of Race* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2002) [Henceforth *INRB*]. It essentially corresponds to that defended by George Fredrickson in *Racism: A Short History*.¹⁵ Cf. Phillip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families: Stories from Rwanda* (Picador, 1998).¹⁶ Further argument for this idea of racialized ethnicity can be found in *INRB*, chapter 7.¹⁷ There remains some disagreement within the scientific community whether the term "race" has any value as a scientific term; however, neither side in this controversy views the term as carrying the same connotation that it does in traditional race thinking. On this matter, see *INRB*, chapter 7, and Audrey Smedley, *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a Worldview*, 2d ed. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1999), ch. 13.¹⁸ Blum, *INRB*. Appiah in *Color Conscious*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996). Smedley, *Race in North America*.¹⁹ Fredman, *Discrimination and Human Rights*, 10.²⁰ Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain, *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain* [aka *The Parekh Report*], (London: Profile Books, 2000), 63. My criticism of this passage should not be taken to detract from my admiration for this report, which is both theoretically informed and empirically rich.²¹ In *INRB*, ch. 1, I argue that racial hatred is a worse vice than hatred for other reasons.²² Contrast this with the case in which educational qualifications are set as requirements for being hired, but possession of such qualifications is not actually required to carry out the — 321 — tasks involved in the job. William Julius Wilson's *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor* (New York: Vintage, 1996), chapter 5, "The Meaning and Significance of Race: Employers and Inner-City Workers," is a rich account of the manifold factors that bear on employers' decisions about hiring inner-city black workers.²³ Kofi Annan, "Opening Remarks," WCAR report, Annex II, 147.²⁴ This account of the wrong of racial discrimination is drawn from *INRB*, chapter 4.²⁵ I defend this moral asymmetry among acts of discrimination, and other race-based wrongs, at much more length in *INRB*, esp. chapters 3 and 4.²⁶ See Glenn Loury, *The Anatomy of Racial Inequality*.²⁷ This assumption is in line with several recent studies of racial disparities in health care in the United States, as one among several distinct explanatory factors. "Racial and ethnic minorities tend to receive a lower quality of health care than non-minorities, even when access-related factors, such as patients' insurance status and income, are controlled... [t]he study committee focused part of its analysis on the clinical encounter itself, and found evidence that stereotyping, biases, and uncertainty on the part of healthcare providers can all contribute to unequal treatment." (Language, cultural familiarity, and geographical factors are also mentioned.) "Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care." Institute of Medicine. <http://books.nap.edu/books/030908265X/html/1.html#pagetop>.²⁸ This brief discussion of ways to fill out the concept of equality and differing wrongs connected with different types of inequalities as they bear on racial disparities is only the tip of the iceberg of a large literature concerned with the concept of equality. Should equality as a valid norm be construed as equality of well-being, of resources, of capabilities, of a voice in deciding on policies that bear on inequality, and so on? This literature could be mined for its relevance to a normative analysis of racial inequality.²⁹ I make a similar argument against race blindness in *INRB*, 91–95.³⁰ "Discrimination in contract" is slightly narrower than what I have meant by discrimination in this paper, since it concerns only employment discrimination, and, more generally, discrimination in *reward*. Health care is not a reward in Loury's sense, so it would not fall under "discrimination in contract." Nevertheless, I think it clear that Loury would take the position that discrimination in health and education, and comparable non-reward goods, is not the primary cause of morally troubling disparities in these areas.³¹ Loury is concerned only with

the U.S. situation. His argument for the link between past and present, schematic though it is, can not be transferred as it stands to the racial inequalities in most other nations, and between nations, to which Robinson refers. Loury's argument makes use of the particular form of American segregation in the context of majority/minority dynamics, that has little exact parallel anywhere else. Nevertheless, I think the general spirit of his argument would allow a comparable case to be made in many other contexts. ³²I am indebted to Leon Dunkel, an NGO conference representative from the Mary Lou Williams Center for Black Culture at Duke University, for this account of the politics of the "crimes against humanity" language at the conference. That language found its way into the report at paragraph 13: "We... further acknowledge that slavery and the slave trade are a crime against humanity and should always have been so, especially the transatlantic slave trade" (11). A weaker formulation is the following passage: "We acknowledge and profoundly regret the untold suffering and evils inflicted on millions of men, women and children as a result of slavery, the slave trade, the transatlantic slave trade, apartheid, genocide and past tragedies. We further note that some States have taken the initiative to apologize and have paid reparation, where appropriate, for grave and massive violations committed. With a view to closing those dark chapters in history and as a means of reconciliation and healing, we invite the international community and its members to honour the memory of the victims of these tragedies. We further note that some have taken the initiative of regretting or expressing remorse or presenting apologies, and call on all those who have not yet contributed to restoring the dignity of the victims to find — 322 — appropriate ways to do so and, to this end, appreciate the countries that have done so." (paragraphs 100 and 101, 23) Differences in wording in different passages in the document no doubt reflect the intense political controversy concerning the issue of reparations at the WCAR. ³³Although Loury explicitly locates the moral force of existing inequalities in their causal relation to past discrimination, it is possible to read other parts of his argument as implying that unwarranted racial stigma is an important force in sustaining blacks in their current unequal situation. Chapter 3, "Racial Stigma," could be read this way. ³⁴Jorge L. A. Garcia makes a similar point in his review of Loury's book, "Race and Inequality: An Exchange," in *First Things* 123 (May 2002): 25. Garcia takes Loury to be claiming that racial stigma attached to blacks in the United States is one of the major causes of the incarceration disparity (and other disparities). Although Loury is less than entirely clear on this matter, I read him as giving stigma a different role—namely as explaining why whites are less concerned about the plight of blacks than they are, or would be, about comparable ills suffered by whites. ³⁵No doubt the truth about the causes of the racial disparity in incarceration among males lies somewhere in between. Studies have found bias in sentencing, conviction, and arrest. ³⁶By "direct racial discrimination" I mean the conscious taking of someone's race as a reason to deny a benefit, when this is clearly unjust. We saw earlier that "discrimination" can also be used to refer to practices with racially inequitable, unjust, effects ("indirect discrimination"); in this meaning discrimination is equivalent to institutional racism as here understood. ³⁷401 U.S. 424 (1971). ³⁸The WCAR report speaks of cultural diversity as a "cherished asset." ³⁹Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in Gutmann (ed.), *Multiculturalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994). Nancy Fraser, "From Redistribution to Recognition," in C. Willett (ed.), *Theories of Multiculturalism* (Malden, MA: Blackwell's, 1998). ⁴⁰Fredman, *Discrimination and Human Rights*, 13. ⁴¹In practice it is often difficult to determine whether an attribution of a characteristic to a group is done in an inherentist or essentialist manner, or not. ⁴²John Ogbu, *Minority Education and Caste: The American System in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (New York: Academic Press, 1978). ⁴³Ogbu. See also

William E. Cross, "Oppositional Identity and African-American Youth," in *Toward and Common Destiny: Improving Race and Ethnic Relations in America*, ed. Willis Hawley and Anthony Jackson (San Francisco, Calif.: Jossey-Bass, 1995). ⁴⁴D'Souza, *The End of Racism*, 477 and *passim*. ⁴⁵Cf. Spinner-Halev's argument that even if a (oppressed) minority cultural group contains cultural tendencies detrimental to its own members, or a subgroup thereof, it is often inappropriate for the dominant society to attempt to use its coercive powers to effect change in the group. "Feminism, Multiculturalism, Oppression, and the State," *Ethics* (October 2001). ⁴⁶These desiderata suggest both the value and the risks of the neologism "cultural racism," increasingly utilized in contemporary discussions. For example, Goldberg, *Racist Culture*, 71; Back and Solomos, *Racism and Society*; and Frederickson, *Racism: A Short History*. Tariq Modood has thought most systematically about this term, and defines it (in reference to the British context) thus: "[C]ultural racism builds on biological racism a further discourse which evokes cultural differences from an alleged British or 'civilized' norm to vilify, marginalize, or demand assimilation from groups who also suffer from biological racism" ("Difference, Cultural Racism, and Anti-Racism," in *Debating Cultural Hybridity*, ed. Werbner and Modood, 155–56). Modood claims that biological racism came to play less of a part in white people's response to non-white minorities in Britain. "They were far more likely to ascribe group differences to upbringing, customs, forms of socialization and self-identity than to biological heredity" (156). But ethnic group differences *are* a product of upbringing, customs, and forms of socialization and self-identity, and are not — 323 — a product of biology. Such attributions can be false, stem from a racist view of the group, be made in an essentialist, hence race-like manner, or be ill-founded. But they do not in themselves have the status of racist attributions, and the term "cultural racism" misleads in this respect. ⁴⁷A further problem for linking cultural affirmation to the rejection of racism is that it is part of the *national* culture of certain nation-states to discourage public cultural recognition and self-affirmation among any subcultures of that nation-state. France is the obvious example here. Though a "a nation of immigrants," France has traditionally discouraged public and official ethnic recognition among its component ethnocultural groups. Erik Bleich, "The French Model: Color-blind Integration," in *Color Lines*, ed. John David Skrentny (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1998). This is not only a matter of policy but of national self-understanding, hence possessing a cultural dimension. Of course this approach can be criticized—the valorizing of assimilation can be grounded in xenophobia—as a strong proponent of multiculturalism will do. But why should national cultures escape the "affirmation of diversity" that is said to underlie multiculturalism? If that affirmation is to apply *only* to minority cultures, it loses its grounding in the idea that cultural diversity itself is a good thing (see above, p. 309), and appears to seek a basis in something more like the protection of the vulnerable, a value not specifically connected to *culture*. ⁴⁸Brian Barry, "Statism and Nationalism: A Cosmopolitan Critique," in *Global Justice, NOMOS XLI*, ed. Ian Shapiro and Lea Brilmayer (New York: New York University Press, 1999). ⁴⁹See, for example, Charles Jones, *Global Justice: Defending Cosmopolitanism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). ⁵⁰Darrell Moellendorf, *Cosmopolitan Justice* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 2002). ⁵¹There is not universal agreement on the event(s) on which reparations are to be normatively based. Robert Fullinwider, for example, argues that in the American context, it is the failure of Reconstruction, and the consequent continuing oppression of African Americans after the demise of slavery, rather than slavery itself, that should be the focus of reparations. R. K. Fullinwider, "The Case for Reparations," *Report from the Institute for Philosophy and Public Policy* 20, 2/3 (summer 2000): 1–8. But the difference between this view and the more traditional, slavery-

based one is not as great as Fullinwider implies. The moral import of the failure of Reconstruction is entirely dependent on its being a failure to *eradicate the legacy of slavery*. “[T]he legacy of slavery would have faded considerably” had the civil and voting rights of blacks been protected after the civil war, says Fullinwider (6).⁵² Loury, *Anatomy*. Janna Thompson, “Historical Injustice and Reparation: Justifying Claims of Descendants,” *Ethics* (October 2001); Jeremy Waldron, “Superseding Historical Injustice,” *Ethics* 103 (1992); and Elazar Barkan, *The Guilt of Nations: Restitution and Negotiating Historical Injustices* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), are recent or influential explorations of these and many other complexities in the reparations issue.⁵³ The terminology of “whites” and “blacks” is not generally employed in the Brazilian context, and is not employed in precisely the same way as the United States in any other nation. Nevertheless, the moral point holds in the Brazil case, as those of visible African ancestry—the descendants of slaves—are markedly more poorly positioned than those of predominant, visible European ancestry, and this is clearly both a legacy of slavery and a product of subsequent dynamics that perpetuate these inequalities.⁵⁴ Moellendorf, *Cosmopolitan Justice*, 71–72. Moellendorf is motivated in part to show that his own theory of global justice would benefit descendants of colonialism more than would one-time reparations. Still, his two-page discussion is entirely inadequate to the complexity of the subject.⁵⁵ Fullinwider helpfully argues that states and their governments are the appropriate reparations-providing entity, obviating the need to assess the *personal* liability of every white individual for the wrongs and injustice-legacy of slavery. He argues that it is individuals as citizens of the state in question who have *civic* liability to contribute to the reparations (e.g., through taxes). Fullinwider, “The Case for Reparations,” 3–4.⁵⁶ In “Residential Segregation and Regional Democracy,” Iris Marion Young argues that residential segregation along racial lines has the effect of making the racially disadvantaged groups invisible to the majority white group, and contributes to them failing to see injustice in the arrangement. Young, *Inclusion and Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 196–235. My argument in the text is distinct but complementary to this one. Thomas and Mary Edsall argue, in *Chain Reaction* (New York: Norton, 1992), that when whites perceive blacks to be the prime beneficiary of social programs, they are less likely to be supportive of those programs. This suggests that the racializing of an inequality renders it less likely to be perceived (by whites) as an injustice. Young argues that whites are less comfortable with race-based injustices than class-based ones (213). But she does not address the issue of when inequities are perceived as injustices in the first place. I suggest that, although whites might be more willing to perceive direct racial discrimination as a wrong, they are less likely to perceive mere inequality of circumstances as a wrong requiring redress.