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EPISTEMIC INJUSTICE AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF RACE

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1. Introduction

The Black Lives Matter movement (BLM) emerged recently in the U.S. in response to what many view as the continued use of state-sanctioned violence against Black bodies and the impunity with which state agents operate. It has been noted that police killed more than 100 unarmed Black people in the U.S. during 2014 alone (Unarmed Victims, n.d.). Also, the Washington Post reported that “blacks were killed at three times the rate of whites or other minorities” (Kindy, 2015). It is not surprising, then, that communities who find themselves disproportionate victims of such violence would respond in protest.

For many, the meaning of the phrase “Black Lives Matter” is quite clear. There is an implicit “too” attached to the end of the phrase so that it should read “Black lives matter, too!” We can call this an inclusive reading. A central message of the movement is that we as a society have historically treated Black lives as if they are valueless and expendable, and that this should no longer be the case. Not everyone interprets the phrase in this way, however. A common retort to “Black Lives Matter” is “All Lives Matter,” expressing the idea that by singling out Black lives, the former phrase represents a devaluing of non-Black lives. Thus, the elliptical element in the phrase is more like “Only Black lives matter.” We might call this an exclusive reading. For instance, we find this sentiment expressed in a column for conservative website Townhall. The author, Bill Murchison, contrasts the “morally incontestable claim” that “all lives matter,” with what he says is pushed by BLM and the media as the real issue, i.e. “Black Lives Matter” (Murchison, 2015). The title of the article, “Do ‘All Lives Matter’ or Not?” further reinforces the notion that the BLM slogan is exclusively about Black lives and a dismissal of all others.

Murchison and his ilk could very well be part of a propagandizing conspiracy to undermine any potential effectiveness of the BLM movement, and so could be regarded as disingenuously expressing moral objections. But it seems clear that many ordinary U.S. citizens sincerely share the same sentiment. That is, many ordinary citizens are inclined to attribute an exclusive reading to “Black Lives Matter.” One could say that this is simply a misreading, perhaps an uncharitable one. I think the proper response goes deeper than this, however. I want to argue that the misreading wrongs the protestors in their capacity as knowers, a phenomenon that has been referred to as epistemic injustice. In this particular case, there is a gap in the collective interpretive resources that unjustly disadvantages the protestors’ ability to express themselves intelligibly, i.e. what is...
called a hermeneutical injustice. We find plenty of examples of this phenomenon, for instance, in letters sent to Martin Luther King, Jr., in which some “concerned citizen” accuses King of starting trouble “between the races.” In these instances King is read as a rabble-rouser and not a protesting citizen with a legitimate concern. 3

In what follows, I aim to show that hermeneutical injustices remain even as we pursue strategies intended to get us beyond the corrupting influence of race and racism. In Section 2, I provide a brief summary of the concept of hermeneutical injustice. Section 3 discusses the so-called post-racial ideal. I argue that pursuing a post-racial strategy not only fails to produce racial justice, but it perpetuates the sorts of hermeneutical injustices previously mentioned by obscuring our resources for referring to distinctively racial wrongs. In Section 4, I draw on resources from the philosophy of language to illuminate some of the ways speech can be marshaled to produce hermeneutical injustices. I conclude in Section 5 by clarifying how post-racialism gives rise to hermeneutical injustices via the linguistic mechanisms outlined in Section 4.

2. Hermeneutical injustice

In her book, *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing* (2007), Miranda Fricker describes two kinds of epistemic injustice: hermeneutical injustices and testimonial injustices. Testimonial injustices arise when a hearer, due to prejudice triggered by the speaker’s social identity, attributes a credibility deficit to the speaker’s utterance. Hermeneutical injustices, on the other hand, are described as occurring “when a gap in collective interpretive resources puts someone at an unfair disadvantage when it comes to making sense of their social experiences” (1). Due to limitations of space, I will restrict my attention to injustices of the hermeneutical variety in what follows. 4

In chapter 7 of her book, Fricker notes that certain social groups often face an inequality in hermeneutical participation. There are some situations (“hermeneutical hotspots” in Fricker’s parlance) in which it serves the interests of the socially powerful to maintain ignorance or a misinterpretation of certain social experiences. Contributions to interpretations of those experiences by members of marginalized groups are excluded or evaded through misinterpretation. Fricker describes this scenario as hermeneutical marginalization, which she defines in the following way: “when there is unequal hermeneutical participation with respect to some significant area(s) of social experience, members of the disadvantaged group are hermeneutically marginalized” (153). In particular social situations, members of disadvantaged groups are “prevented from generating meanings pertaining to some areas of the social world” (153–4). This might be evident, for instance, in the cases presented in the introductory section. BLM protestors are being prevented from successfully describing the manner in which Black lives are taken as reflective of a general devaluation of Black lives in general.

Of course, to get a fuller sense of hermeneutical marginalization we would need to delve deeper into the details. For instance, we might need an account of “hermeneutical participation” and the particular ways it happens, or perhaps a fuller account of what constitutes a “hermeneutical hotspot.” But let’s not allow the details to detain our attention; the intuitive sense of the notion will suffice for our purposes. Having provided a description of hermeneutical marginalization, Fricker uses it to define hermeneutical injustice: “the injustice of having some significant area of one’s social experience obscured from collective understanding owing to hermeneutical marginalization” (158). Fricker notes that this is the generic definition meant to cover both systematic and incidental cases. What makes a case systematic, according to Fricker, is that the hermeneutical marginalization is “persistent and wide-ranging,” triggered by prejudice that tracks a “subject through different dimensions of social activity” (27). Incidental cases, on the other hand, are
ones in which hermeneutical marginalization occurs in “a highly localized patch of the subject’s experience,” which are reflective of “one-off moment[s] of powerlessness” (156).

To be sure, Fricker is not the first to think through issues concerning the harms done to persons as givers and receivers of knowledge or the difficulties and injustices experienced by individuals denied a place in the production of social meanings. For instance, Audre Lorde (2007), in her essay “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House,” takes white feminists to task for failing to include the voices of Black women and women of Color in a substantial way in discussions concerning the fate of women in general. Lorde’s criticisms certainly map onto discussions of hermeneutical marginalization. Patricia Hill Collins (1999) discusses the exclusion of Black women’s voices in knowledge production and the perpetuation of “controlling images” that contribute to the “ideological dimension of U.S. Black women’s oppression.” And Anna Julia Cooper also discusses the importance of Black Women’s voices in conversations concerning racial uplift in “A Voice From the South” (Cooper, 1990, 5). These are but a few of the many women of Color who have contributed valuable insights with respect to marginalized persons and epistemic oppression. Thus, while Fricker is widely recognized in “mainstream” philosophical circles as shining a light on these issues, it is important not to perpetuate exclusionary practices that render the voices of women of Color invisible, even while attempting to give them voice.5

3. Post-racialism

Having provided a brief overview of hermeneutical injustice, we can now consider some ways race intervenes in our epistemic practices. There are several points of entry for intersections involving the literature on epistemic injustice and the philosophy of race. For instance, we might talk about the role of education found in the work of Carter G. Woodson as a means of bridging epistemic gaps for members of marginalized groups. Alternatively, we could visit the thoughts of thinkers like W.E.B. Du Bois or Frantz Fanon to investigate the ways the experiences of individuals in marginalized groups shape their cognitive lives and the resulting epistemic consequences in terms of double-consciousness (Du Bois) and racial interpellation (Fanon).6 However, I will restrict my attention to the idea of post-racialism, a notion that has garnered discussion recently from critical philosophers of race such as Kathryn Gines, Ron Sundstrom, Howard McGary, Paul C. Taylor, Falguni Sheth, and sociologist Eduardo Bonilla-Silva. In this section I briefly review a few ways post-racialism has been characterized. My ultimate aim is to argue that pursuing post-racialism as a strategy for creating a society in which race no longer unduly affects people’s lives ends up producing hermeneutical injustices.

What exactly is post-racialism? Ron Sundstrom (P. Taylor, Alcoff, & Anderson, forthcoming) suggests that conceptualizations of the notion can be divided into two broad categories: descriptive and prescriptive. The first type is illustrated by some thoughts about America in the age of Obama. There has been a lot of talk about post-racialism in recent years, especially after the election of Barack Obama as president of the United States. News stories and headlines emerged proclaiming the arrival of a post-racial America. The claim that we now live in a post-racial America represents the notion of post-racialism as an achieved status or state of affairs, perhaps a state in which race no longer matters politically, economically, or socially. We can call this version, as Paul C. Taylor dubs it, “idiot post-racialism” (2014). On this naïve account, as Taylor characterizes it, we are said to be in a state in which we’ve “moved beyond race” as evidenced by some significant event that would not have happened in more racially dark times, in this case the election of a Black man named Barack Obama. The event is supposed to show the obsolescence of race-thinking.

Taylor quickly dispenses of idiot post-racialism by pointing out that racism and the effects of past racial injustices are still with us. For example, social psychologists have presented evidence
of pervasive implicit biases that continue to influence people’s actions (Greenwald & Pettigrew, 2014; Nosek & Banaji, 2009). There are also significant racial disparities in housing (Elmelech, 2004; Kirk, 2006), wealth (Oliver & Shapiro, 2006; Shin, 2015), and the criminal justice system (Clemons, 2014; Lynch, Patterson, & Childs, 2008) that persist due to past racial injustices. Even the treatment of the figure whose election was supposed to serve as our epochal shift into “postrace-dom,” i.e. President Obama, belies the veracity of this naïve view. As a descriptive claim about the state of race in America, this version of post-racialism is manifestly false and thus not something we should waste time entertaining.

Whereas descriptive characterizations of post-racialism focus on demographics and the role that race actually plays in the present states of affairs, prescriptive notions direct their attention towards the realization of an ideal. Kathryn Gines (2014) represents the content of that ideal in the following forms: (i) assimilationism, (ii) eliminativism, (iii) color-blindness, and (iv) post-racism. Assimilationism, according to Bernard Boxill, maintains that “a society in which racial differences have no moral, political, or economic significance . . . is both possible and desirable in America” (119). Presumably, this would mean that in a post-racial society, racial differences would be insignificant along moral, political, and economic dimensions. On this view one gets a picture of a society in which people no longer see themselves as subdivided into their own special groups, but as members of one group, at least when it comes to race.

An eliminativist version of post-racialism views the elimination of racial categories as paramount. Advocates of eliminativism typically regard race as one of the sources of the injustices we are fighting against. Thus, we can only move beyond racial ills if we jettison race altogether. At least, this is the picture presented by the strongest variant of the view. Josh Glasgow (2008) identifies two weaker versions: political eliminativism, which calls for the erasure of race from political documents, policies, proceedings, and institutions, and public eliminativism, which seeks to erase race from our public, as opposed to our private, lives. The strongest form, which he calls global eliminativism, is the one I’ve already discussed. Thus, on the strongest version, a post-racial society will be one in which race no longer plays any role in our discursive or cognitive practices, both publicly and privately.

Some propose a colorblind version of post-racialism. The spirit of the principle is captured in the sentiment that policies should not be designed to treat people differently because of their race (Boxill, 1992, 10). Race is not something one achieves – i.e. it has no meritocratic value. In our purported meritocratic society, race is not the kind of thing that should advantage some while disadvantaging others. Thus, policy should be “colorblind” with respect to how it is constructed and applied. The colorblind principle can be broadened to apply to all of social life. A post-racial society of the colorblind variety would be one in which race makes no moral, legal, political, or social difference to how people are treated.

Gines points out that Howard McGary (2012) considers each of the proposed versions just presented to be assimilationist views. One might think there exists no real distinction between the aforementioned versions of post-racialism. The reasoning might go as follows. Each view calls for the jettisoning of race in moral, political, social, and economic decisions. Each view also seems to suggest that acknowledging or encouraging racial difference generates unwelcome moral and social problems. Thus, the best course, perhaps the most just one, is to come to a place where everyone shares the same values and, in some sense, identity.

I want to acknowledge the skepticism, but I do think there is reason to recognize a distinction, at least between the eliminativist position and the others. Assimilation and possibly colorblindness conceivably allow for the continued existence of racial categories, whereas the eliminativist version does not. On the assimilation and colorblind positions, we can conceive of the preservation of racial identities, though they may function differently, perhaps much the way other
voluntary identities – e.g. “Cardinals fans,” “soccer moms,” “academics,” “blue collar workers,” etc. – do. In contrast, eliminativism calls for the obliteration of race and racial identities. There may not be much of a distinction to make between the assimilationist and colorblind versions, however. It is not important to settle these issues in this essay.

One final form post-racialism might take is as post-racism (Gines, 2014; Joseph, 2009; Pettigrew, 2009). According to this version, a post-racialist society is one in which racist structures and institutions no longer exist. As a purely future-oriented ideal, post-racialism as post-racism desires much of what the previously mentioned forms do, namely a society in which race no longer disadvantages some while unjustly advantaging others. The post-racist variety of post-racialism, as opposed to the others, focuses on the institutional structures that perpetuate racism rather than targeting race and racial identities.

As a claim about the current state of affairs, post-racialism as a post-racist society would obviously be false. There are also those who think we should not conflate post-racialism and post-racism. Both Kathryn Gines (2014) and Ron Sundstrom (P. Taylor et al., forthcoming), for instance, see a clear distinction between the two notions. Just to point out one problem, we could quite easily imagine a world that was post-racist but not post-racial: a world that has moved beyond racism, perhaps in both its interpersonal and institutional varieties, while still holding onto racial distinctions. Thus, if the idea of post-racialism must carry with it the disappearance of race, and post-racism lacks this element, then we might concur with Gines and Sundstrom that post-racialism and post-racism should be kept conceptually distinct. 9

Given the reservations about “post-racialism as post-racism,” we can ignore it for what follows. I will argue that whichever of the three remaining forms post-racialism takes, the pursuit and/or realization of them would result in the production of hermeneutical injustices for members of marginalized groups. Before doing so, I turn next to the linguistic mechanisms underlying the hermeneutical injustices generated by the pursuit of post-racial strategies.

4. Illocution and silencing

How might post-racialism result in the production of hermeneutical injustices? Recall the responses to the “Black Lives Matter” slogan mentioned in the introduction. It is plausible to think that at least some of these responses are motived by something like a post-racial ideal. The post-racial response to the slogan has at least two effects. First, there is an obscuring of what the speaker intends to be the import of her speech. And second, there is a loss in the ability of certain speakers to both produce certain utterances and be interpreted correctly. In this section I will provide a brief description of the linguistic mechanisms that underlie these effects in order to prepare the ground for establishing, in the final section, the claim that post-racial discourse perpetuates hermeneutical injustice.

Language is a complex social practice with various moving parts. Some of those parts involve the speaker, some involve the recipient/hearer/audience, and others concern the circumstances surrounding the interaction between speaker and audience. When two or more people wish to communicate with each other, there is an exchange that occurs between them. To take as our starting point a simple exchange, a speaker has a thought she wants to share with her interlocutor, and she translates that thought into words she believes her audience will understand. This simple picture already suggests quite a few things. Firstly, it assumes the existence of a system of meaningful strings of symbols and sounds commonly shared by our interlocutors. Secondly, it also presupposes a relatively facile ability on the part of speaker and audience to coordinate in such a way that communication is successful, i.e. the speaker is able to “get across” the message she wants to share.
J.L. Austin, in his famous William James Lecture *How To Do Things With Words* (1975), investigated the various ways in which we use language to perform various actions. He made a distinction between three types of linguistic acts: *locutionary acts*, *illocutionary acts*, and *perlocutionary effects*. One performs a locutionary act when one makes a meaningful utterance. Illocutionary acts are actions that have a specific kind of force, e.g. making a request, issuing a command, asking a question, etc. Perlocutionary acts are acts that achieve certain effects in a hearer by making an utterance with a particular force, e.g. getting an audience to laugh at a joke or the feelings of offense provoked by an insult.

Austin focused most of his attention on the illocutionary act, and that is where our focus will be as well. In a typical exchange between speaker and hearer (and/or audience), the speaker makes an utterance with an intended force. The hearer/audience receives or understands the utterance in part by recognizing the intended force. When this transaction goes smoothly, communication is successful. But it can also go wrong in several ways. Sometimes the illocutionary act fails due to certain background conditions not being met. For instance, no matter how sincere, a pronouncement of marriage by a speaker who is not licensed in the proper way does not succeed in changing a couple’s marital status. An intended act might also fail because the hearer/audience does not recognize the intended force. In some of those cases, the speaker is at fault in some way. In others, the fault lies with the audience. For the purposes of this essay I will be concerned with a subset of cases of the latter sort.

I want to briefly highlight two ways speech can fail to register with its intended force. The first way involves the systematic undermining of the very ability to perform certain speech acts because of the speaker’s social identity, what Rebecca Kukla refers to as a *discursive injustice* (Kukla, 2014). Kukla understands speech acts in terms of *inputs* and *outputs*. Pragmatic inputs are entitlement conditions like contextual constraints, constraints concerning the speaker/audience relationship, and the instantiation of conventions that must obtain before a speech act can have “its characteristic performative force” (442). Pragmatic outputs are the sets of normative statuses instituted by the speech act. On Kukla’s account, in order for a speech act to have performative force, it must make a difference to people’s behavioral dispositions. For instance, marriage pronouncements change the couple’s tax status and family relationships and how people previously unrelated now relate to one another.

The failure Kukla highlights is one in which a speaker sets out to perform one speech act – while being entitled to perform it in that context and use the conventionally appropriate words, tones, and gestures – but the kind of uptake given constitutes an entirely different act. With these cases the incapacity to perform an act with its characteristic force is due to the speaker’s social identity. For instance, a woman trying to resist the sexual advances of another might say, “No,” which characteristically has the force of denial, but be read as performing an act with the force of affirmation. Let us call this *illocutionary flipping*.

The second kind of failure of illocution has been discussed in the work of philosophers such as Jennifer Hornsby (2012), Rae Langton (1993), Langton and Hornsby (1998), Ishani Maitra (2009), and Mary Kate McGowan (2014). The case in view here is what has come to be known as *silencing*, and the way it is discussed in the literature is basically as a short-circuiting of illocution. In the example above concerning the woman being misread as affirming rather than denying sexual advances, her illocution is silenced just in case her speech act is not given uptake as a denial. That is, it is not read as a different speech act, i.e. affirmation, but rendered inert – what Langton and Hornsby (1998) have referred to as “illocutionary disablement.”

Both of these kinds of failure, when systematically applied to members of marginalized social groups, constitute oppressive harm. Whether caused through illocutionary flipping or silencing,
the gap in shared interpretive resources creates the occasion for misinterpreting or dismissing the experiences of the members of marginalized groups.

5. The post-racial ideal and hermeneutical injustice

Having set in place some key concepts from the epistemic injustice literature and speech act theory, I will conclude with a brief expansion of and support for the claim that pursuit of the post-racial ideal results in hermeneutic injustices. It achieves this by either illocutionarily flipping or silencing the utterances of members of marginalized groups concerning racial injustice. The post-racial ideal, in either of the assimilationist, eliminativist, or colorblind forms, seeks to establish a society in which we’re “moved beyond race” in some significant fashion. How would we achieve such a state?

Presumably, the journey involves ceasing to think, act, and feel in terms of race. One would have to alter one’s perceptions of oneself and others as raced beings on the eliminativist, colorblind, and assimilationist accounts. This would seem to involve a change not only in how we think, but also in how we speak. In fact, one might think that the way to effectively change how we think is via our discursive practices. We find support for such an argument, for example, in Lera Boroditsky (2001), where she discusses the effects of language on English and Mandarin speakers’ conceptions of time. Boroditsky claims that the way we speak, shapes the way we think.\textsuperscript{11} If she is right, then the way to achieve a post-racial state will necessarily involve new discursive practices surrounding race.

Quite often we find proponents of post-racialism endorsing the elimination of race-talk, at least from the public square. One example of this move is California Proposition 54, the so-called “Racial Privacy Initiative.” The proposition, if passed, would have “restricted state and local governments in California from collecting or using information on a person’s race, ethnicity, color, or national origin for the purposes of public education, public contracting, public employment, and other government operations” (California Proposition 54). This policy, exemplifying either the more restricted political or public eliminativist positions, or the broader global eliminativist position, would rob our ordinary discursive practices of linguistic and hermeneutic resources for identifying racial harms. It naively assumes the absence of race-talk means the elimination of racism. But as Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2013) has argued, explicitly racist animus or beliefs are not necessary for the continuation of racial inequality. Bonilla-Silva points out the various apparently non-racial ways racial discrimination takes place. Therefore, eliminating race from our discourse does not necessarily lead to a deflated importance of race for orchestrating our lives. Indeed, such elimination obscures the role race plays and impoverishes our shared hermeneutical resources. Given our discussion in sections 2 and 3, we can now see that this impoverishment constitutes a hermeneutical injustice.

I think we end up in much the same place on the assimilationist and colorblind versions of post-racialism as well. Each views the use of race or racial distinctions as irrelevant for moral, political, economic, and social decision-making. But if the strategy is to rid our vocabularies of racial terms and categories, this leaves the various non-verbal ways we communicate race unaccounted for.\textsuperscript{12} It is likely that an erasure of race-talk would lull us into falsely believing we’ve undone the significance of race in decision-making, while in reality we’ve simply obscured the presence of race still at work in our everyday practices. Thus, it is not difficult to see that creating such a lacuna would result in the production of hermeneutical gaps that in turn give rise to hermeneutical injustices. If we do indeed communicate things about race non-verbally as well as verbally, then reordering our verbal behavior does not automatically adjust the non-verbal behavior.
Race would still be operative in our decision-making processes — even deleteriously so in many instances — while our post-racial vocabulary would rob us of the shared hermeneutical resources to describe them. My view thus represents an extension of Fricker’s analysis. Hermeneutical gaps arise not only due to the lack of development of certain concepts for certain speakers — i.e. hermeneutical marginalization — but also from the suppression of existing concepts. Hermeneutical gaps are also actively maintained through the use of alternative concepts such as, e.g. ‘postracial.’

The chant of “Black Lives Matter” being met with the response “All Lives Matter” also displays the kind of hermeneutical injustice that results from a post-racial understanding. The most plausible reading of “Black Lives Matter,” as I stated in the introductory section, is an inclusive one; that is, one that implores us not to exclude the value of Black lives. In fact, the misreading of this phrase underscores the lack of understanding concerning the structural epistemic injustices endured by Black Americans. Those who give an exclusive reading to the slogan are belittling, downplaying, or ignoring the turbulent history of how Black people have been treated in the United States. I submit that the inclusive reading is the most natural if one considers the context in which it is uttered (i.e. suspicious killings by police officers of Black individuals without indictments in many cases, or conviction in others), the broader historical context of the treatment of Black people in the U.S., and the contrary treatment of White people in this same historical and present context. In order for someone to interpret the phrase as an exclusionary one, i.e. “Only Black lives matter,” that person has to either accept the idiot post-racialism Taylor describes or believe the use of racial terms is inappropriate because it provokes division and upsets the path to a post-racial society. In either case, it has the effect of blocking the marginalized speaker’s contribution to making sense of social reality. And because this hermeneutical blocking results in further material disadvantages beyond discursive ones, it is — channeling Fricker — a systematic rather than incidental harm.

Ultimately, the pursuit of a post-racial society by means of a change in our discursive practices leaves in place the social structures that fuel racial injustices. Rather than achieving a state of post-racial harmony, pursuit of the post-racial ideal entrenches existing disharmony while creating hermeneutical lacunae that make harmony even more difficult to achieve.

**Related chapters:** 3, 9, 10, 13, 23, 24, 27

**Notes**

1. For an argument supporting this interpretation, see (Patterson, 2015).
2. For an argument that propaganda can be sincere, see (Stanley, 2015).
3. Examples of such letters can be found at The Archive at the King Center website: http://thekingcenter.org/archive.
4. Certainly, the slogan “Black Lives Matter” and responses to it can be analyzed in terms of both hermeneutical and testimonial injustice. Testimonial injustice, on Fricker’s account, “occurs when prejudice causes a hearer to give a deflated level of credibility to a speaker’s word” (2009, 1). Fricker notes the possibility of a speaker being “doubly wronged,” i.e. “once by the structural prejudice in the shared hermeneutical resource, and once by the hearer in making an identity-prejudiced credibility judgement [sic]” (2009, 159). She intimates that this double wrong is possible but not inevitable. José Medina (2012), however, suggests a tighter connection between hermeneutic and testimonial injustice, that the two become “intertwined,” feeding and deepening the effects of each other (96).
5. For a nice discussion of this point, cf. (Dotson, 2012). Additionally, many chapters in this handbook include discussions of the rich ‘prehistory’ of concerns surrounding issues of epistemic injustice across various traditions, disciplines, and communities, some of which informed Fricker’s account.
6. One might also make the case that the Negritude and *Africanité* movements were attempts by African and Afro-Caribbean intellectuals to enrich shared hermeneutical resources. Thanks to Ian James Kidd for this suggestion.
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7 For instance, see (Davis, 2015).
8 It could be argued that racial assimilation is compatible with the continuance of other types of social groups, e.g. political affiliations, professional identities, or nationality. Thus, assimilationism should be understood in a restricted sense, i.e. as referring only to the racial dimension.
9 I suspect the two ideals aren’t as distinct as it might appear. As I understand it, the purpose for assimilation, eliminativism, or adoption of the colorblind principle is the wresting of the grip of race on our social, moral, political, and economic decision-making, presumably because it results in racist societies. That is, a non-racist society is the end game. Thus, in a sense, these strategies could be read as ultimately pursuing a post-racist society. But I will leave this fight for another day.
10 An interesting alternative analysis that might complement Kukla’s is presented in Andrew Peet (forthcoming).
11 It is important to note here that the view Boroditsky advocates – the idea that language influences thought, so-called linguistic relativism thesis – is weaker than the view commonly known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, encapsulated in the following quote by Edward Sapir: “Human beings . . . are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society . . . The fact of the matter is that the “real world” is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group” (1929).
12 For a nice review of the literature on nonverbal behavior in intergroup contexts, see (Dovidio, Hebl, Richeson, & Shelton, 2006).
13 Thanks to Ian James Kidd for pointing out this insight.
14 Gaile Pohlhaus, Jr. makes a good case for willful hermeneutical ignorance occurring in dominantly situated knowers with respect to the epistemic tools marginally situated knowers develop to make sense of social experiences. See Pohlhaus, Jr. (2012).

References


