

Anti-Racism Building a Better Tomorrow



by

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Q: How do you murder a million people?

A: Label them subhumans.

Abstract

Conventional sociology tends to reproduce rather than resolve social injustice. Rather than perpetuating that odious tradition, in this article the author proposes a remedy for racism. Sociologists often sneer at “activist” science of this nature. However, scientists in other fields tend to agree with Karl Popper’s (1999) conviction that good science is an exercise in problem solving. The author argues that sociology can finally become relevant by attacking social problems the way that medical researchers attack cancer.

Introduction

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The thesis of this article is simple, but incendiary. Most sociologists view efforts to solve social problems as being beneath their dignity (Bonilla-Silva, 2017; Embrick, 2017; Go, 2017; Mignon, 2017; Morris, 2017a, 2017b; Romero, 2017). However, the more widely held view among scientists is that dilettantes study problems whereas scientists solve them. No scientist has ever won a Nobel Prize for studying problems. Scientists win Nobel Prizes for solving intractable scientific problems.

All social problems are solvable. Humans create social problems and, if they have a mind to do so, humans can also solve those problems (McGettigan, 2011). There is nothing intrinsically more difficult about solving social problems than solving problems in other scientific fields. For scientifically unjustifiable reasons, sociologists have decided that solving problems is verboten. Not only has this peculiar bias perpetuated a lot of unnecessary problems (Bonilla-Silva, 2017; Embrick, 2017; Go, 2017; Mignon, 2017; Morris, 2017a, 2017b; Romero, 2017), but it has also made sociologists a laughingstock among real scientists. Real scientists, regardless of their chosen field, are problem solvers.

If sociologists had a mind to do so, they could solve all of the problems that, at present, they only permit themselves to study. For example, in this article, the authors argue that racism--perhaps the single most damaging social problem that humans have ever invented--is solvable. The authors acknowledge that most sociologists will dispute the details of our solution, but that is beside the point. Our point is that good sociologists should emulate good scientists *by at least trying* to solve the most urgent social problems of the day.

We will begin by proposing a solution to the problem of racism.

Argument Overview

Racism is so pervasive that few are hopeful of ever finding a remedy for it. Racism may seem inextinguishable, but all manifestations of racism have identifiable points of origin and, in some cases, cessation. That is certainly the case for white supremacy in the US. White supremacist racism in the western hemisphere emigrated to the US with its European colonizers.

In this paper, the authors will argue that social and political authorities create racism through the combined powers of policy-making and suggestion. When authorities institute dehumanizing social policies (such as slavery, the Holocaust, apartheid, Terra Nullius, Manifest Destiny, etc.) members of privileged groups often take delight in tormenting officially-designated inferiors. Though many believe that racism is a product of ignorance, the authors will propose that racism is form of sadism. Sadism can be defined as deriving pornographic delight from abusing power, or "malevolent dominance," over people who have been labeled inferior. That is also an apt definition of racism.

The idea that something as complicated as racist-sadism can be created and destroyed via anything as straightforward as social policy (i.e., the power of "authoritative suggestion") might strike some as an oversimplification. However, social scientists have famously demonstrated

that sadism is alarmingly simple to create in the laboratory. Decades ago, Stanley Milgram demonstrated that it took little more than a suggestion from a recognized authority figure to transform subjects into rabid sadists.

Many Americans reject the idea that white supremacist racism is pervasive throughout the US. However, there is abundant evidence that the US has privileged white men at the expense of people of color throughout its entire history. Article 1, Section 2, Clause Three of the US Constitution flatly states that African Americans are subhuman--equivalent to $\frac{3}{5}$ of the value of white male citizens. The authors argue that racially derogatory language in the US Constitution contributes significantly to the widely held belief among white racists that people of color are subhuman. After all, the $\frac{3}{5}$ Compromise was incorporated in the Constitution to justify slavery for Africans and genocide for Native Peoples.

Would white males allow themselves under any circumstances to be valued at $\frac{3}{5}$ of a human being? The authors sincerely doubt it.

Doing Meaningful Sociology: Solving the Problem of Racism

Racism is a form of suggestion-induced sadism that authorities create by selectively dehumanizing people (Authors, 2016). Racism begins with dehumanization and ends with rehumanization. Authorities can eradicate racist-sadism by invalidating dehumanizing suggestions. On many occasions, Jane Elliott (Peters, 1987) has created and destroyed "eye pigment racism" purely through the power of suggestion. The US created skin pigment racism (Authors, 2016; Hochschild and Weaver, 2007) by establishing a white supremacist democracy. The US can destroy skin pigment racism by terminating policies that promote white supremacy:

1. Removing dehumanizing white supremacist language from the US Constitution
 - a. This could be accomplished via a national referendum, or through the courts, e.g., filing a Federal Civil Rights suit asserting that the $\frac{3}{5}$ Compromise violates the letter and spirit of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
2. Replacing the $\frac{3}{5}$ Compromise with a rehumanizing Universal Declaration of Human Equality.

On many occasions the US has generated nationwide support for terrible ideas, such as unjust wars in Iraq and Vietnam. In theory, the US could also mobilize nationwide support for good ideas, such as eradicating skin pigment racism (Bennett, 1962).

The US invented its own unique brand of skin pigment racism (Hochschild and Weaver, 2007) by establishing a white supremacist democracy. Promoting white supremacy has always been the USA's paramount policy initiative. Americans have been obsessed with skin pigment racism ever since the first shipload of white Europeans colonized

(or invaded) a hemisphere to which they were not native. Where the US Constitution mentions people of color it denigrates them. America has always been the land of anti-pigment democracy (Hochschild and Weaver, 2007). Dehumanizing people of color gave rise to slavery, genocide, segregation, Jim Crow, mass incarceration, and the mythology of white nativism and white supremacy (Montserrat, 2007). It also swept Donald Trump into the White House (Bradner and Mattingly, 2016; Moreno, 2016; Neate, 2016; O'Connor and Marans, 2016).

Fanatical as skin-pigment racism may be it is a social construct that people can erect and dismantle by choice. People are alarmingly susceptible to suggestion (Merton and Sztompka, 1996, p. 183). When authorities dehumanize people, Americans often mutely condone their leaders' prejudices (Reeves, 2015). Once dehumanized, Americans indulge in orgies of violence against officially-designated enemies (O'Reilly and Dugard, 2016). To this day, the US celebrates continent-wide genocide under the sacred banner of Manifest Destiny (Stephanson, 1996).

The US inaugurated a climate of white supremacist violence against people of color at its founding (Churchill, 1997; Deloria, 1995; Freehling, 1972), but the US has never formally ceased hostilities against people of color. During President and Michelle Obama's years in the White House they were repeatedly subjected to reprehensible expressions of racism. One West Virginia mayor referred to Michelle Obama as an "Ape in Heels" (Browning and Bever, 2016). The US has abolished a variety of racist practices, such as slavery and segregation, but the US has never taken the necessary steps to eradicate white supremacist racism (Author, 2014). The US can terminate white supremacist racism by officially rescinding its foundational commitments to white supremacy and skin pigment racism. As a practical matter, the US can eradicate its foundational endorsement of white supremacy by purging the dehumanizing Three-Fifths Compromise from the US Constitution and replacing it with a rehumanizing Universal Declaration of Human Equality² (McGettigan and Smith, 2016). This process could begin filing a Federal Civil Rights suit asserting that the $\frac{3}{5}$ Compromise violates the letter and spirit of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.³

Difficult as eradicating racism might seem, political leaders have often mobilized nationwide support for dreadful ideas: Operation Iraqi Freedom and the Vietnam War amounted to little more than monumental wastes of humanity and resources. If the entire nation can mobilize around dreadful ideas, then (at least in theory) the US can also mobilize in support of good ideas. Using the approach that we have proposed, the authors believe the US has the power to terminate skin pigment racism at any moment of our choosing.

2 The United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) offers a working example of such a declaration.

3 The author has tried to initiate such a legal challenge, but has not yet found a civil rights attorney who will take the project seriously.

Sadism in the Lab

Though it is often mischaracterized as ignorance, racism is actually a form of sadism (Authors, 2016). Sadism is a type of inhumanity (Meloy, 1997) that precipitates from power disparities. Rather than sympathizing with the less fortunate, sadists derive pleasure from wielding unchecked power over the powerless (Winter, 2010). Researchers have demonstrated that it is alarmingly easy to transform laboratory subjects into sadists (Milgram, 2004; Zimbardo, 1999, 2007). When researchers confer power on subjects who perceive their subordinates as inferiors (e.g., guards vs. prisoners, teachers vs. students, blue eyes vs. brown eyes) those freshly empowered subjects often behave like sadists.

Racism is simply one type of sadism. Racist-sadism erupts in contexts wherein a socially-ascendant group believes that their subordinates are congenitally inferior (Malott, 2011; Omi and Winant, 2014). Geneticists have debunked race as biological nonsense (Corcos, 1997; Graves, 2004; Krimsky, Sheldon, 2011; Montagu, 1964; Spelsberg, 2011; Sussman, 2014), but racists cling doggedly to the anti-scientific belief that race is real (Wade, 2014). Racists derive demented pleasure from mistreating their perceived inferiors (Hitler, 2000; Wade, 1998). Racists are often so passionate about their misanthropy that a remedy for racism seems beyond the pale. However, there is a fairly straightforward solution to racist-sadism.

Racism begins with dehumanization and ends with rehumanization. When the Allies vanquished the Third Reich they also brought Hitler's Holocaust to a screeching halt (Young, 1989). When South Africans terminated apartheid they also extinguished an era of appalling racist terror (Kaminer, et al., 2001). Similarly, the US can terminate white supremacist racism by rehumanizing people of color: replacing the ⅓ Compromise with a much more democratic Universal Declaration of Human Equality.

The US enshrined white supremacy in its foundational documents:

Be it enacted...That any Alien *being a free white person*, who shall have resided within the limits and under the jurisdiction of the United States for the term of two years, may be admitted to become a citizen (Naturalization Act of 1790, Emphasis added).

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and *excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons* (United States Constitution, Article 1, Section 2, Paragraph 3. Emphasis added).

The US can terminate its tenacious climate of white supremacist racism by rescinding the policies which normalize (in the Durkheimian sense) white supremacy: most notably the Three Fifths Compromise. In 2002, Oregonians removed racist language from their state Constitution -- so

there is a precedent for expunging racist language from democratic Constitutions. Unfortunately, Donald Trump's successful presidential bid suggests that, at least for now, Americans are more inclined to intensify rather than eradicate racism. Hope remains that Americans will soon return to their senses and complete the USA's long march to democracy.

Ending Racism as We Know It

The authors (2016) argue that racism is a form of sadism that people can construct and dismantle by choice. So far, the typical reaction to the authors' proposal has been mute disbelief. The authors understand. Suggesting that the authors have cracked the problem of racism sounds audacious in the extreme.

No one understands better than the authors that they are being audacious, but the authors are convinced that, if audacity is required to solve the world's worst social problem, then audacious they shall be. Nor do the authors believe it is an overstatement to characterize racism as the world's worst social problem. Under what other circumstances, apart from a demented fog of racism, have people casually annihilated the denizens of entire continents?

If you have read this far, no doubt you are wondering what sort of audacious remedy the authors have concocted. In a nutshell, the authors argue that racism is a reversible form of suggestion-induced sadism. Recall that experimenters like Stanley Milgram (2004) and Philip Zimbardo (1999, 2007) constructed horrifying forms of sadism in their laboratories. Sadism is a deranged frame of mind wherein people gleefully abuse power over those they consider inferiors (Author, 2010). Thus, Milgram's sadistic "teachers" helped him understand how ordinary people became cogs in Hitler's Holocaust (Goldhagen 1996). Zimbardo's sadistic "prison guards" revealed the sad truth that, so long as privileged guards wield unchecked power over dehumanized prisoners, humane rehabilitation will remain impracticable.

Illuminating as these insights certainly were the most remarkable moments in Milgram's and Zimbardo's experiments took place at their respective conclusions. Without fuss or fanfare both researchers dismantled the sadism-inspiring environments that they had constructed by rehumanizing their subjects. Trivial as that may seem, Milgram and Zimbardo demonstrated that they could construct and dismantle sadism purely through the power of suggestion. If researchers can construct and dismantle sadism in the laboratory, then a cure for racist-sadism is within our reach.

It is What it is

Many people misconstrue racism as a form of ignorance. If racism derived from ignorance, remedying racism would be as simple as debunking racist nonsense (Hall, 2000). Racists, however, are impervious to

rational discourse (Wise, 2013). Racists often cling more fanatically to hatred when challenged by countervailing evidence: birthers became even more shrill when President Obama put his birth certificate on display (Hughey, 2012).

Rather than ignorance racism is a form of sadism. Sadism is a type of inhumane thinking that has been warped by power. Sadists derive perverted pleasure from inflicting harm on the powerless (Jones, 2011). When one group acquires power over another, the powerful often view the powerless as loathsome inferiors (Hagan and Raymond-Richmond, 2008; Zimbardo, 1999, 2007). The Three-Fifths Compromise is based on the assumption that whites are not only politically ascendant, but African Americans are, from the perspective of white racists, a degraded form of humanity.

Objectionable as racist-sadism may be -- especially in a nation that purports to be the World's Greatest Democracy -- it is an alarmingly durable form of dementia. White vs. Black ethnic hatreds have persisted for centuries (Frederickson, 2015). Racist-sadism endures in part because the powerful treat tormenting the powerless as a form of entertainment. Gory spectacles in ancient Rome (Harley, 1998) illustrate the perverse pleasure that the powerful derive from terrorizing the powerless. Similarly, lynch mobs have treated murderous vigilantism as a chummy exercise in community bonding (Berg, 2011).

Racist-sadism also endures because the power imbalances that produce racist sadism are welded to the USA's socio-political structures (Freehling, 1972). White racists cling to the social norms that perpetuate white supremacist racism because those practices confer power and privilege on white racists (Hamilton, 1995). For decades, white southerners obstructed voting rights for African Americans in order to prevent meaningful political challenges to white supremacy (Lawson, 1976). A white racist's worst nightmare is waking up in a world wherein people of color have the power to torment whites the same way that whites have tormented people of color (Blauner, 1969).

An Eye for Racism: The Power of Suggestion

Socially entrenched as racism may be, people still have the power to construct and dismantle it. Jane Elliott's Blue Eye/Brown Eye exercise (Erickson, 2004) illustrates how easy it is to construct and dismantle racism in small group settings. In 1968, Jane Elliott was a third grade teacher who, following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., decided to teach her students an eye-opening lesson (Peters, 1971). Since Elliott's students were all white kids from Riceville, Iowa, Elliott could not create a palpable environment of racism among them on the basis of skin pigment. Instead, Elliott decided to racially segregate her students on the basis of eye pigment.

Eye pigment typically plays no role in determining social status in the US. Individuals might harbor idiosyncratic eye pigment preferences, but eye pigment biases are irrelevant compared to the USA's soul-

crushing skin pigment prejudices. Purely through the power of suggestion, however, Jane Elliott transformed her sweet little third graders into malicious eye pigment racists.

In part one of Elliott's eye pigment exercise, Elliott conferred superior social status on blue eyed kids. As soon as Elliott established this prejudicial distinction, the blue-eyed kids started behaving like sadistic bullies. Blue-eyes mistreated brown-eyes much as Germans victimized Jews during WWII. In part two, Elliott reversed the eye pigment hierarchy. No sooner had Elliott elevated the social status of brown-eyes than they began sadistically denigrating blue-eyes.

Through each stage of Elliott's angry eye exercise students were aware that they were taking part in a simulation. Nevertheless, they all treated the simulation as if it were real. This is a textbook example of the Thomas Theorem at work, "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (Merton, 1995). When Jane Elliott, the uber authority in her third grade classroom, instructed her students to play by the rules of a warped alternate reality, all of the kids suspended disbelief and did as they were told. Kids learn a lot of lessons in school. Among the most crucial is maintaining strict obedience (in Milgram's sense) to their teachers.

As if she were a "sadism magician," on day one Elliott conjured eye pigment racism out of thin air. On day two she reversed the previous day's prejudice and, in response, her students dutifully realigned their eye pigment prejudice. At the conclusion of her exercise Elliott snapped her fingers and obliterated eye pigment racism from her classroom. Elliott's angry eye exercise demonstrates that every aspect of racism is subject to human control: authorities can voluntarily create, reverse and eradicate racism. Admittedly, Elliott created a climate of eye pigment racism in the microenvironment of her third grade classroom. It is one thing to create and destroy an ephemeral form of racism in a grade school classroom, but it is an entirely different matter to destroy the kind of racism that has plagued an entire nation for centuries.

Doubtless, it will be more difficult to destroy skin pigment racism than Elliott's eye pigment racism, but it is by no means impossible. Indeed, there is evidence that throughout its history the US has created and destroyed racist-sadism routinely.

Thou Shalt Not Kill: Racist-Sadism and the US War Machine

War is a form of violence that is more grandiose than any other. Modern wars terrorize millions of people. To win wars, nations must commit atrocities that would be unthinkable in peacetime.

In peacetime, people value human life above all things. The harshest criminal sanctions are usually reserved for murderers who callously destroy human life (Paternoster, 1991). Murderers not only violate the law, they also violate humanity's most sacred moral values. *Thou shalt not kill!*

During wartime, nations abandon peacetime morality with hardly a backward glance. Rather than revering the sanctity of human life, in wartime nations slaughter their enemies without quarter: carpet bombing

non-combatants into oblivion (Tilford, 1991). How can morally upright people condone such atrocities? Once again, we need look no further than the power of suggestion.

When nations go to war, they begin by dehumanizing their enemies (Steuter and Wills, 2010). People are morally obligated to treat fellow humans with respect, but -- and this is the crucial moral loophole -- they are not required to do the same for *subhumans* (Fiske, et al., 2004). At a glance that statement sounds ludicrous. Surely, there is no such thing as a subhuman. Right? Humans treat all living things, from puppies to blue whales, with all due respect. Right?

Nothing could be further from the truth.

How do you murder 10 million people?

Consider, if you will, Christopher Columbus' arrival in the New World (Columbus and de Las Casas, 1991). According to Columbus' own account, when he set foot on the Island of Hispaniola he was greeted by Indians. How is it that, if Columbus encountered hordes of indigenous people, he came to be known as the New World's discoverer (Bigelow, 1998)? Discoverers are, by definition, the first people to encounter something new. So, shouldn't America's first peoples be considered its discoverers? The answer lies in how one defines the term, "people."

As Europeans set off on medieval voyages of discovery the Vatican issued a series of papal bulls known as the Doctrine of Discovery (Miller, et al., 2010). The Doctrine of Discovery established artificial, but all-important distinctions between Real Men and Others. Anti-Christian as it may have been the Doctrine of Discovery put forward the abhorrent idea that non-Catholics were non-people (Newcomb, 2008). This ideological maneuver enabled Europeans to treat continents that were brimming with people as Terra Nullius (Benton and Straumann, 2010), or empty territories that were ripe for the taking by Real Men, like Columbus.

One might think that such a transparent lie -- claiming that people don't exist, or have no value if they aren't Christian -- would fail to persuade rational people, but history demonstrates otherwise. For more than five hundred years Europeans have credited Columbus with discovering America (Craven, 1942; Todorov, 1984) and they have also treated indigenous Americans like subhuman vermin (Mann, 2005). By way of illustration, here's a quote from the outspoken musician Ted Nugent after a Native American-owned casino canceled one of his performances:

I take it as a badge of honor that such unclean *vermin* are upset by me and my positive energy...By all indicators, *I don't think they actually qualify as people*, but there has always been a lunatic fringe of hateful, rotten, dishonest people that hate happy, successful people (ICTMN Staff, 2014, emphasis added)

Nugent uttered the quote on July 24, 2014, but the sentiments he

articulates come straight out of the Indian Wars, "The only good Indians I ever saw were dead" (Wheelan, 2012, p. 253). Old prejudices die hard. If you think that, thanks to Barack Obama's post-millennial presidency, the US has become a post-racial society, then you need to think again.

Social scientists have demonstrated that people have an alarming capacity to be duped by authorities (Milgram, 2004; Peters, 1987; Zimbardo, 2007). If authorities ask the public to embrace authoritative lies, people often embrace those lies to their bosom. Consider a few examples: Columbus discovered America, Europeans are America's true natives, and Saddam had WMDs (Hartnett and Stengrim, 2004; Rampton and Stauber, 2003). Even though rational people should know better, Jane and John Q. Public consistently take conniving authorities at their word. In so doing, a somnambulant public often rubber stamps their leaders' worst prejudices. That was true for Hitler, and it is also true of Donald Trump and his admirers (Giroux, 2017).

The Doctrine of Discovery provided a convenient rationale to dehumanize non-Europeans. When upstanding citizens perceive Others as subhumans, those good citizens will often condone the worst imaginable crimes against the Others they despise (Churchill, 1997; Walzer, 2015). Human laws protect human beings. We generally do not prosecute people who commit crimes against subhumans. People can eat cows, poison mice, and exterminate termites without the slightest fear of prosecution. Similarly, the advantaged often esteem violence against dehumanized Others as examples of virtue (Deloria, 1995). Hitler (Kershaw, 2008) and hate groups like the KKK (Chalmers, 1981) celebrate horrific violence against those they despise. Also, when nations wage war they classify mass murder as a form of heroism rather than atrocity (Nelson, 2003). The more enemy-Others that soldiers kill, the more accolades they earn (Gilbert, 2004).

The Doctrine of Discovery asserted that non-Catholics were non-people. Even though the facts clearly indicated otherwise, beginning with Columbus, Europeans have treated Native Americans like reprehensible subhumans (Pewewardy, 1998). This mindset still operates today at places like Standing Rock (Sheppard, 2016). The consequences of this authoritative lie have been enormously beneficial for white Europeans and catastrophic for indigenous Americans (Author, 2015). History is written by the winners (Olson, 1993), so instead of treating American conquest as a hate crime of hemispheric proportions (Zinn, 2010), orthodox histories usually treat Native American genocide as an act of altruism: Europeans brought democracy, Christianity and Manifest Destiny to an otherwise uncivilized hemisphere (Mann, 2011; Stephanson, 1996).

War and Peace: A Conclusion Worth Fighting For

The US loves to wage war (Epstein, 2014) and the US loves to wage peace. An essential part of the peacemaking process involves rehumanizing wartime enemies (Gibson, 2016; Schneider, 2016). As with Jane Elliott's third graders, on some level Americans understand that

dehumanizing and rehumanizing wartime enemies is pure caprice. Friends and foes remain full-fledged human beings before, during and after America's wars. What changes is official "suggestions" about America's friends and foes. When authorities call upon Americans to embrace new allies, Americans embrace those allies like family (Holm, 2016). When authorities ask Americans to despise new enemies, Americans despise those enemies with venom (Randall, 2016).

It is hard to believe that free-thinking adults would permit cynical policy shifts to shape their perceptions, but it happens often. Whenever the US declares war, most Americans condone unlimited atrocities against designated enemies (Valentino, 2016). When the US declares peace, Americans obediently condemn the war-like violence that they had previously celebrated (Walzer, 2016).

After D-Day, heroes murdered Germans.
After VE Day, only murderers murdered Germans.

When it comes to molding public perceptions capricious social policies matter more than reality.

The US began as a white supremacist democracy. The founding fathers did not invite input from people of color when they mapped the contours of American democracy (Lehman, 2016). Instead, America's founders designed a democracy that heaped privilege on white men and dehumanized people of color (Guyatt, 2016). It is not surprising that people of color have experienced racist injustice throughout US history (Author, 2012) because that is precisely what the USA's white supremacist democracy was designed to accomplish: conferring power and privilege on white men and racism on people of color. Those who dispute this assertion should consult the US Constitution:

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and *excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons* (US Constitution, Article I, Section 2, Clause 3. Emphasis added).

Though privileged whites are inclined to object (Sommers and Norton, 2016), the US Constitution is a declaration of war against people of color. The Three-Fifths Compromise explicitly dehumanizes people of color. As we have seen, whenever the US dehumanizes a new class of enemies sadistic violence is quick to follow (Foner, 2016).

Cynical as this view of US democracy may be, it explains anomalies like slavery, genocide, Jim Crow, segregation, Manifest Destiny and mass incarceration (Alexander, 2012) far better than orthodox histories tend to (Zinn, 2010). The US declared war on people of color at its founding and racist violence persists to this very day (Hinton, 2016; Lobo, et al., 2016; Sheppard, 2016). Interminable as this parade of violence has been it need

not continue.

As we have argued throughout, racism begins with dehumanization and ends with rehumanization. The US has always had the power to rehumanize people of color, terminate skin pigment racism and create a real democracy.

Recall that social researchers (Peters, 1987; Milgram, 2004; Zimbardo, 1999, 2007) easily obliterated the sadism that they created in their labs. They did so by invalidating the dehumanizing policies that they used to instigate sadism. Likewise, the US could eradicate skin pigment racism by invalidating the dehumanizing policies that have instigated skin pigment racism.

Sacred though the US Constitution may be, it has serious flaws. The Three-Fifths Compromise explicitly embeds white supremacy into the bedrock of US democracy and, thus, propagates the all-pervasive suggestion that there are two kinds of people: privileged whites and subhuman Others. That is unacceptable. A nation that describes itself as the world's greatest democracy cannot allow itself to operate on the principles of white supremacy.

Scientists have concluded that race is a biological fiction (Smedley, 1998). The time has arrived to toss skin pigment racism into the dustbin of history. As long as the Three Fifths Compromise remains part of its Constitution, the US will continue treating people of color as if they are subhuman enemies. Americans can eradicate skin pigment racism by terminating hostilities against people of color the same way that the US has terminated hostilities against wartime enemies.

After D-Day heroes murdered Germans.

After VE Day only murderers murdered Germans.

To rehumanize people of color the US will need to obliterate all of its anti-skin pigment policies and practices -- beginning with the Three Fifths Compromise. The Constitution has been amended many times, but Americans have never erased offensive language from the Constitution. The time has arrived to do precisely that. Voters did so in Oregon, therefore, we can do also so at the national level.

The authors argue that the Three Fifths Compromise should never have polluted the pages of a so-called democratic constitution. A Constitution that explicitly ranks whites above people of color is not a recipe for democracy, it is a battle plan for white supremacy. Ever since its adoption, the Three Fifths Compromise has consistently achieved its mission: ensuring that the World's Greatest Democracy operates like a de facto white supremacy.

Despite America's white supremacist history, the US can still become the democracy that it has always dreamed of being (Obama, 2008). A real democracy would treat all humans as equals. To achieve that long-delayed goal, the US must purge the Three Fifths Compromise from the US Constitution -- which, once again, could be accomplished via a national referendum, or through the courts -- and replace it with a Universal

Declaration of Human Equality. That policy shift will formally knock white supremacists down a peg while it also improves America's official attitude toward people of color: from dehumanized enemies to rehumanized citizens.

Many will, no doubt, view the solution that the authors have proposed as wrong-headed. Regardless, the authors believe that:

1. Americans (and sociologists in particular) need to begin treating racism like a remediable social problem and;
2. Americans (with the invaluable assistance of problem-solving sociologists) need to terminate racist-sadism as soon as possible.

On many occasions, authorities have rallied Americans around pointless and destructive causes: the Vietnam War and Operation Iraqi Freedom offer two shining examples. If the US can mobilize around ill-conceived causes, then the US can also rally around worthwhile causes, such as terminating skin pigment racism.

We have all the necessary tools. We need only put them to work.

Conclusion

Social problems are human problems. Humans create social problems and humans can solve social problems. Many will argue that sociology is not in the business of solving social problems; solving social problems is too low-brow for real scientists.

That is balderdash.

Imagine if a group of cancer researchers were to announce that they were not in the business of solving the problem of cancer. That, as "pure scientists," they preferred to use public funds to study, rather than solve the problem of cancer. The public would be rightfully outraged.

Good scientists have an obligation to solve problems. Sometimes the problems that scientists solve are conceptual: Einstein's gedanken experiments (Isaacson, 2007) offer a fine example. In other situations, the problems that scientists solve are practical, such as Jonas Salk's discovery of a polio vaccine (Oshinsky, 2006). In most cases, scientific problem-solving integrates both conceptual and practical components. Scientists will never invent a sustained nuclear fusion reaction without the aid of both practical and conceptual problem-solving.

Sociology is stuck in a rut (Bonilla-Silva, 2017; Embrick, 2017; Go, 2017; Mignon, 2017; Morris, 2017a, 2017b; Romero, 2017). Sociology's inertia crisis emanates from an aloof unwillingness to solve social problems. Admittedly, trying to solve social problems can be intimidating. White racists are unlikely to celebrate efforts to eradicate white supremacist racism. Nevertheless, abdicating the scientific responsibility to solve problems is even more problematic. So-called objective analyses of racism have often conveniently aided and abetted the racist status quo (Bonilla-Silva, 2017; Embrick, 2017; Morris, 2017a, 2017b; Romero, 2017).

Scientific progress is dependent on acknowledging and correcting the errors of the past. It's never easy to admit errors. Given the choice, the

authors would rather risk a modicum of public embarrassment than do the kind of anti-scientific white sociology (Bonilla-Silva, 2017; Embrick, 2017; Morris, 2017a, 2017b; Romero, 2017) that aids and abets the racist status quo.

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