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The Meaning of "Racism"

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Abstract

This article explores the meanings of racism in the sociology of race/ethnicity and provides a descriptive framework for comparing theories of racism. The authors argue that sociologists use racism to refer to four constructs: (1) individual attitudes, (2) cultural schema, and two constructs associated with structural racism: (3) preexisting consequential inequalities, that is, racial dominance, and (4) processes that create or maintain racial dominance. The article compares this framework with a content and citation analysis of 1,037 sociology journal articles published from 1995 to 2015, a period stretching from a major call to renew sociological attention to racism, to the founding of the American Sociological Association journal, *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*. The authors find six communities organized around distinctive citations and using different meanings of racism. They conclude by pushing toward the question of what racism ought to mean by discussing the implications for both sociological research and public sociology.

Keywords

theory, racism, racial and ethnic minorities, content analysis, citation analysis

Racism is one of the most important words in the lexicon of contemporary sociology, and yet constructing a precise theory of racism is difficult because it is a concept that is both inflated and deflated. In the sociology of race and ethnicity, the concept of racism has come to encompass a wide array of social phenomena, such as systemic inequality, institutional discrimination, internalized stereotypes, and racial attitudes. Some researchers have argued that the wide and also inconsistent use of "racism" has meant that the term now "weakens rather than enhances arguments concerning race" (Wilson 1987:12), especially when its purpose is not descriptive but rather to "signal the speaker's unambiguous condemnation of the belief or practice in question" (Quillian 2006:301). However, when researchers focus the conceptual scope of what they mean by racism, they narrowly discuss it in terms of racial attitudes and their consequences, partly because of disciplinary politics that discourage its wider use in favor of more moderate or precise language. This second tendency, which is also prevalent outside academia, treats racism as an "individual disease," limiting its utility for fully representing the organization of social life along racial lines (Byrd 2011:1013).

If racism has come to take on a variety of meanings due to its simultaneous overuse and underuse, then what *ought* racism mean in the sociological language? We propose that answering this

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question requires a first step of sorting out some of the ways sociologists talk about racism.[1] This paper explores the meanings of racism across various texts in the sociology of race and ethnicity, and we provide a descriptive framework for comparing theories of racism. Sociologists use racism as an explanation for racial differences that qualify for characterization as racial inequalities,[2] but beyond this shared trope, sociologists refer to a range of distinct phenomena.

We identify three meanings of racism to which sociologists often refer: attitudes, culture, and structure. By attitudes, sociologists mean the mental states of individuals, which affect and reflect their behaviors, including deliberate inaction. These mental states range from individuals' unconscious dispositions, to their conscious evaluations of some object, to their personal beliefs (Bobo and Charles 2009). By culture, sociologists refer to the many kinds of schema with which humans make sense of the world, including themselves, all of which affect the social connotations of group membership. These schema range from (1) "the binary oppositions that make up a given society's fundamental tools of thought" (Sewell 1992:7–8) to (2) cultural repertoires, defined as "the available schemas, frames, narratives, scripts, and boundaries that actors draw on in social situations" (Lamont et al. 2017:1) to (3) even larger networks or systems of schema (e.g., language, religion, and ideology; Brubaker 2015). By structure, sociologists refer to both (1) the immediate circumstances of individuals and (2) the broader world that humans make sense of, that is, the social relations to which they are oriented and that are oriented toward them, particularly those that reproduce themselves even against the desires of the actors involved, both of which differentiate life chances and lived experiences (Sewell 1992).

Our characterization of these meanings is intentionally complementary because we observe that sociologists seem to favor antagonistic characterizations. Indeed, the moral condemnation associated with "racism" now extends to critiques among sociologists, for example, Joe Feagin and Sean Elias's (2012:25) critique of Omi and Winant's racial formation theory for possessing an "evasive" conception of racism, and Winant's (2015:2181) critique of Andreas Wimmer's theory of ethnic boundary-making as needing "redemption." Instead, we propose that an inclusive yet deliberately differentiated conception of racism permits researchers to access the analytic contributions of each meaning. Without conceptions of racism as structure, sociologists lose the vocabulary for how inequality and social closure iteratively influence and constitute group experiences and life chances. Without conceptions of racism as culture, sociologists lose the vocabulary for the social meanings that people impose on each other, as they make sense of, and respond to, their lived experiences. Without conceptions of racism as attitudes, sociologists lose the vocabulary for how individuals are affected by and participate in their cultural and structural contexts. Similar to C. J. Pascoe and Sarah Diefendorf's (2018:124) call to retheorize homophobia, we argue that sociologists need a differentiated conception of racism because "a singular concept may obscure multiple social processes at play." In brief, we characterize each meaning as a component in a broader conception of racism.

In this paper, we first provide a review of sociological research that exemplifies different meanings of racism, using the work of comparative sociologists as well as U.S.-focused scholars. We recognize that our decision to connect concepts across the divide between comparative ethnicity and critical race theory may be controversial, but we find the general terminology of comparativists to be helpful for differentiating among uses of racism as structure and integrating the historically and group-specific analyses of U.S. critical race scholars. We then connect our review to a content and citation analysis of 1,037 sociology journal articles published from 1995 to 2015, an important period that includes both Eduardo Bonilla-Silva's (1997) now-classic "Rethinking Racism: Toward a Structural Interpretation" and the founding in 2014 of *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, the official journal of the American Sociological Association's Section on Racial and Ethnic Minorities. The empirical analysis captures a critical period from (1) Bonilla-Silva's call for sociologists to renew their attention to racism to (2) the establishment of a journal that

provides U.S. sociologists of race with a distinctive publication outlet apart in particular from their British counterparts (*Ethnic and Racial Studies*) and U.S. sociology's generalist journals.

We examine citation patterns because researchers cite publications, whether positively or negatively, that they regard as relevant to their own (Moody and Light 2006). We thus use citation patterns to identify the work regarded as the most relevant among sociologists who openly use the terms *racism* or *racist*. To our knowledge, this article is the first empirical analysis of how sociologists use these terms at the level of the discipline. In brief, we find six communities organized around distinctive citations and using different meanings of racism both across and within our core conceptions of structure, culture, and attitudes. Indeed, even though Bonilla-Silva's work is "a standard among race scholars" (Ray 2019:26), his publications are primarily cited in only one of the six communities. Last, we push toward the question of what racism ought to mean by discussing the implications of our findings for both sociological research and public sociology.

Racism_1, Racism_2, $\text{Racism}_{3.1}$, and $\text{Racism}_{3.2}$

Our three meanings of racism expand on Bonilla-Silva's (1997:466–67) distinction between conceptualizations of racism as (1) an "ultimately psychological phenomenon," (2) the "cultural processes [of an] all powerful ideology," and (3) "the foundation or structure of the social system" by observing that sociologists typically conceptualize each meaning in less restrictive terms. Attitudes can be important indicators of not only psychological but also social phenomena, culture encompasses more than the dominant ideology, and structure can describe consequential processes of social stratification that emerge after the founding of a social system. In sum, sociologists often use "racism" to refer to one or more of four constructs: individual attitudes (Racism_1), cultural schema (Racism_2), and two constructs associated with structure: preexisting consequential inequalities (i.e., racial dominance; $\text{Racism}_{3.1}$), and processes that create or maintain racial dominance ($\text{Racism}_{3.2}$). Table 1 presents these four constructs and their important variants.

Attitudes (Racism_1)

In their book, *Creating a New Racial Order*, Jennifer Hochschild, Vesla Weaver, and Traci Burch (2012:145) assert that racism has failed as "a language with which to understand persistent racially inflected disadvantage [in part because] the concepts of institutional racism [and] structural bias [have] become more abstract, more purely rhetorical, more detached from how people can make sense of their lives." Instead, they prefer their conception of a racial order as "the widely understood and accepted system of beliefs, laws, and practices that organize relationships among groups defined as races or ethnicities" (p. 9). They contend that a new racial order might emerge in the United States, based partly on survey data showing that younger whites are more likely to reject boundaries between whites and nonwhites. While Hochschild et al. (2012:139) recognize "deeper structural conditions" such as wealth disparities, mass incarceration, and spatially concentrated poverty, they classify them as blockages impeding further progress. Instead, "racism" is best used to refer to racial attitudes, specifically negative perceptions of nonwhite groups that are associated with the unwillingness to vote for nonwhite political candidates, an opposition to residential integration and interracial marriage, and dismissals of the continuing significance of discrimination.

Similarly, in Nancy DiTomaso's (2013:6) *The American Non-Dilemma*, she argues that

> one of the most important privileges of being white in the United States is not having to be racist in order to enjoy racial advantage. Rather than racism being the primary mechanism by which racial

Table 1. Meanings of "Racism."

Major constructs	Construct variations
Attitudes ($Racism_1$)	Negative perceptions of nonwhite groups Normative sense of group position
Cultural schema ($Racism_2$)	Racializations or representations in a field of group positions Deep schema (i.e., collective heredity of traits, suitability for civic inclusion, and superiority/inferiority) Dominant ideologies that narrate the status quo
Structure	
Preexisting consequential inequalities (i.e., racial dominance; $Racism_{3.1}$)	Demographic, organizational, and socioeconomic inequalities (e.g., in housing markets, education, labor markets, health services, criminal justice, and credit markets) Cultural dominance (e.g., normative whiteness, white racial frame, social distribution of honor, the necessity of double consciousness, and symbolic violence)
Processes that create or maintain racial dominance ($Racism_{3.2}$)	Coercion and violence • Genocide, ethnic cleansing, enslavement, rioting, terror, forced assimilation Discrimination • Denied or differentiated citizenship and other legal rules and practices • Systematic informal practices of social closure Political mobilization (e.g., antiminority populism and other racist racial projects) Cultural mobilization (e.g., antiblack racism, Islamophobia, Orientalism, settler colonialism) • Explicit justification • Symbolic coercion • Symbolic perversity

> inequality is reproduced . . . , it is the acts of favoritism that whites show each other that contribute most to continued racial inequality.

She reserves "racism" for the overtly racial attitudes of those she classifies as *working class "racists"* and distinguishes them from both (1) the racial subtext beneath the attitudes of other whites such as her *religious conservatives* and (2) the acts of white favoritism populating the work histories of every subgroup of whites. For DiTomaso, declining racist attitudes are unlikely to lead to racial progress because whites do not experience a moral contradiction between their beliefs in equality, justice, and fair opportunity and the numerous ways they help one another in the job search process. Indeed, her "racists" themselves do not regard their negative characterizations of nonwhites as bigotry.

In contrast, Lawrence Bobo and Mia Tuan's conception of racial attitudes is rooted less in individual psychology than in political history and less about putative group characteristics than about relative group position. In *Prejudice in Politics* (Bobo and Tuan 2006), they argue for measuring racial attitudes as multidimensional mental states that reflect historically constituted interests and that influence both voting behavior and social movement participation. In their analysis of the controversy over Chippewa treaty rights, the attitudes that most predicted white opposition to treaty rights were neither negative affect toward American Indians nor negative stereotypes of them, but instead the perception of group competition and political threat. In other words, what DiTomaso regards as whites' incidentally racial but genuine concerns about economic vulnerability, religious values, and individualism, Bobo and Tuan regard as masks for their actual

concerns about the rising social status of nonwhites. In brief, racist attitudes also include racial resentments that presume "normative ideas about where one's own group should stand in the social order" relative to other groups (Bobo and Tuan 2006:32).

Culture (Racism$_2$)

These "ideas" about relative group standing are even more central in research that uses racism to refer to the cultural environment for both individual attitudes and social relations (i.e., the schema that social actors draw on in social situations). Michael Omi and Howard Winant's (1986:64) original conception of *racialization* has become central to how sociologists understand racism as cultural, that is, "the extension of racial meaning to a previously racially unclassified relationship, social practice, or group." Since then, scholars of race and ethnicity have extended racialization to refer to (1) the cultural representation of different groups (e.g., Asian racialization vs. black racialization), (2) the consistency with which certain representations serve as social boundaries (e.g., total vs. situational racialization), (3) the intersection of race with other differences (e.g., gendered racialization and racialized masculinity), and (4) the representation of different groups within a "race" (e.g., the differential racialization of Cubans and Mexicans). These representations are most visible as stereotypes in U.S. media that shape how individuals perceive and relate to each other (e.g., creating challenges for nonwhite actors in Hollywood; Golash-Boza 2016; Yuen 2016).

Accordingly, these representations undergird cognition by constituting both the content of attitudes and the assumptions and scripts that render specific behaviors understandable to audiences, including the actors themselves. In Mary Waters's (1999) *Black Identities*, she catalogs her West Indian respondents' experiences with both blatant and subtle forms of interpersonal denigration that socialize recent immigrants to the prevailing schema of race relations, especially cultural assumptions about African Americans' trustworthiness, intelligence, and resources, relative to whites. In turn, many West Indian immigrants respond by emphasizing their foreignness to whites and socializing their children to regard themselves as better than "American blacks." In brief, they negotiate a distinctive position[3] within what Rogers Brubaker (2015) calls the categorically unequal *social distribution of honor* and thereby reinforce the relational positioning of whites and blacks.

These schema are present in not only the media and interpersonal situations but also public discourse about relative group status, which renders them "mutually constitutive of each other . . . [and thereby] generates a field of racial positions" (Kim 1999:106). Extending Claire Kim's theory of racial positions, Moon-Kie Jung (2015:35) characterizes racism as resting on three deep schema: (1) the categorical division of humans into racial groups "by some notion of stock or collective heredity of traits," (2) "the presumption of suitability/unsuitability for civic inclusion on the basis of race," and (3) "the presumption of superiority/inferiority on the basis of race."

Finally, researchers use racism as culture to refer to the schema by which dominant groups understand their own position. Most notably, in Eduardo Bonilla-Silva's (2018) *Racism without Racists*, he examines how whites understand the persistence of racial inequality through (1) certain frames or set paths for interpreting information, which they substantiate with (2) storylines or socially shared tales. Together, these schema serve as the content of racial ideology, that is, the racially based frameworks used by actors to "explain and justify the racial status quo" (Bonilla-Silva 2018:9).

Structure (Racism$_{3.1}$ and Racism$_{3.2}$)

In turn, this status quo, or the specific relations between these "now" culturally constituted groups, is the focus of research that uses racism to refer to structures that enable, coordinate,

channel, or constrain aggregate human behavior. In this sense, racism can refer to the whole of social relations theorized in sociology so long as they lead to racially unequal lived experiences and life chances. Despite this expansiveness, researchers often use racism as structure to highlight two processes: racial dominance and racially oriented boundary-making.

In Matthew Desmond and Mustafa Emirbayer's formulation, racial domination refers to multiple kinds of sociological power, in particular

> . . . the *symbolic power* to classify one group of people as "normal" and other groups of people as "abnormal"; the *political power* to withhold basic rights from people of color and marshal the full power of the state to enforce segregation and inequality; the *social power* to deny people of color full inclusion or membership in associational life; and the *economic power* that privileges Whites in terms of job placement, advancement, wealth, and property accumulation. (Desmond and Emirbayer 2009:245)

Racial dominance does not describe behavior, for example, "intentional acts of humiliation" (p. 342), but instead characterizes the preexisting circumstance of *racial inequality* as consequential in itself ($Racism_{3.1}$). Socioeconomic inequality is the best-known form of consequential inequality, for example, wealth inequalities that lead to unequal educational opportunities. Barbara Reskin's (2012) model of a "race discrimination system" further describes the reciprocal feedback between the race-linked disparities within multiple domains (e.g., housing markets, health services, and criminal justice), which tends to counteract attempts to alter any single domain.

A revealing case is the situation of demographic inequality, that is, when a population is the majority group in a given setting, which grants greater weight to its associated attitudes and schema than to those associated with smaller groups. For example, when whites are in the majority, this demographic inequality has consequences for their aggregate symbolic, political, social, and economic power, regardless of the preferences of individual whites. A critical setting for demographic inequality is the residential neighborhood, especially in its consequences for childhood racial socialization (Perry 2002), but another increasingly important "setting" is the training data used to refine machine-learning algorithms, for example, the use of "white" faces for calibrating facial recognition software. Another consequential inequality is organizational inequality in terms of both which groups occupy more advantaged positions (Ray 2019) and how formal practices affect groups differently, for example, the unequal criminal justice penalties for the possession and sale of crack vs. powder cocaine (Alexander 2012), regardless of individual preferences. To be clear, this division of structure from individual preference is an analytic distinction. Researchers use the trope of "structure without prejudice" as a heuristic to identify the legacies of historic boundary-making processes and not to claim the disappearance of *the processes that maintain or create new forms of racial dominance*, that is, the second kind of processes associated with racism as structure ($Racism_{3.2}$). Indeed researchers have critiqued assertions of racial progress in both public and scholarly discourse for highlighting the decline of certain forms of dominance while glossing the rise of new forms of dominance that maintain the inequalities of older forms (Ray and Seamster 2016). For example, in the critical case of African Americans, slavery was replaced with new forms of racial dominance, from Jim Crow to residential segregation and mass incarceration, while publicly aired beliefs in white superiority were replaced in the post–civil rights era with coded and private assertions of black inferiority (Bobo 2017). In brief, racial inequality ($Racism_{3.1}$) in the present is the legacy of older forms of $Racism_{3.2}$, compounded by new forms of $Racism_{3.2}$.

Although Andreas Wimmer's (2013) *Ethnic Boundary-Making* does not mention "racism," his typology of the means of ethnic boundary-making is a systematic inventory of the active processes for creating or maintaining racial dominance ($Racism_{3.2}$). Historically, the most important means have been *coercion and violence*, which he divides analytically into (1) ethnic

cleansing such as the wartime internment of Japanese Americans and the removal of Native Americans from their homelands; (2) rioting, especially against persons such as communal violence targeting nonwhite communities; (3) terror such as the lynching of African Americans; and (4) forced assimilation such as the removal of Native American children to segregated boarding schools. We would add the noticeably absent categories of (5) genocide and (6) enslavement, as were directed against the indigenous peoples of the Americas and against African peoples through the transatlantic slave trade.

Discrimination is another means of creating or maintaining racial dominance, which Wimmer broadly defines as strategies that withhold access to goods, positions, spaces, or relationships from certain individuals. The most formal of these strategies is legal discrimination, particularly in the denial, differentiation, or withdrawal of citizenship rights, but also in the quotidian practice of state administration, for example, the work of county clerks in denying marriage licenses to interracial couples (Pascoe 2009). Discrimination also includes the informal, everyday practices by state and nonstate actors that "if pursued systematically by a sufficiently large number of individuals" leads to social closure, especially in job, housing, and marriage markets, even when these practices lack or violate a legal basis (Wimmer 2013:68), including DiTomaso's (2013) white favoritism. For example, Devah Pager, Bruce Western, and Bart Bonikowski (2009) document multiple forms of employment discrimination from categorical exclusion to shifting standards of evaluation and race-coded job channeling.

A third means is *political mobilization*, both normal efforts to "carry the weight of mass opinion into the public arena" (Wimmer 2013:69) and social movements that pursue exclusionary social closure, often in the name of nation-building, for example, white nationalism or antiminority populism (Bobo 2017). This form of boundary-making includes what Omi and Winant (2015:125) characterize as *racial projects* or "effort[s] to organize and distribute resources along particular racial lines." In their language, a racial project "can be defined as racist if it creates or reproduces structures of domination based on racial significations and identities" (Omi and Winant 2015:128). Successful political mobilization leads to formal discrimination, but even when it falls short of its goals, it can still encourage informal discrimination and produce new organizations and social networks, within which its schema continue to prevail.

Culture in structure. Wimmer's fourth category of means for boundary-making, *discourse and symbols*, involves two processes: making categories and classifying persons into categories. Rather than classifying these as racism, most sociologists regard them as constituting the group boundaries for the processes that directly create or maintain racial dominance. For example, classification relies on symbolic markers that "police boundaries against potential crossovers," that is, marking certain behaviors as typical of groups, emphasizing visual cues that cannot be easily altered, and recording group membership on official documents (Wimmer 2013:65). In turn, the resulting boundaries become the basis for coercion, discrimination, and political mobilization.

Cultural schema more directly constitute racism as structure when the resulting distribution of honor leads to systemic inequalities in lived experience (Brubaker 2015) through (1) exposure to categorically targeted violence, chronic affronts to dignity, interactions laced with contempt, and diminished respect; (2) the internalization of self-devaluating schema; and (3) the adjustment of aspirations and expectations, from social-psychological minimization to the politics of de-stigmatization (Lamont and Mizrachi 2012). This *cultural dominance* is a unique form of consequential inequality, as it inherently involves prejudice. Nevertheless, one can distinguish the more prejudicial practice of categorical exclusion from what Brubaker (2015:37) calls categorically inflected selection processes or "category-linked associations [that] bias gatekeepers' assessments of individual characteristics" without requiring an intent to exclude. Regardless of mechanism, this type of racial dominance amounts to the existence of a societal in-group whose attitudes and schema are asymmetrically salient, that is, what U.S. sociologists have termed *normative*

whiteness (Bell and Hartmann 2007) and the *white racial frame* (Feagin 2009), which necessitate for other groups what W. E. B. Du Bois ([1903] 2017) characterized long ago as *double consciousness*.

In addition, researchers refer to culture as structural in the more active sense of *cultural mobilizations* that seek to alter the field of racial schema. In Jung's (2015) *Beneath the Surface of White Supremacy*, he refines Pierre Bourdieu's conception of symbolic violence (i.e., the tacit consent of the dominated) to allow for systematic disagreement between dominant and dominated groups. Jung argues that racism includes more than the verbose schema that justifies the status quo, such as the linguistic manners, rhetorical strategies, and personal testimonials that mobilize the content of racial ideology (Bonilla-Silva 2018). It also includes schema that (1) ignores the existence of oppositional schema and their implication of a *double consciousness* for the dominated (symbolic coercion) or (2) fails to register the suffering clearly present in the status quo being justified, for example, indifference to black unemployment, followed by alarm when white unemployment rises to the same level (symbolic perversity). Indeed, these mobilizations span the social functions associated with the century-spanning ideologies of antiblack racism, Orientalism, and settler colonialism (Smith 2012). In brief, cultural mobilizations are the networks of schema that seek to create or maintain categorical inequalities in the distribution of honor. For example, certain schema become *controlling images* when group representations are manipulated "to make racism, sexism, and poverty appear to be natural, normal, and an inevitable part of everyday life" and even become internalized by the groups themselves (Collins 1990:68).

Racism in Sociological Abstracts and Citations

In Bonilla-Silva's (1997) call for renewed attention to racism, he proposed a structural conception as an alternative to the mainstream conception of racism as attitudes and critical conceptions of racism as primarily cultural. To determine which meanings of racism have since become prevalent in sociology, we examine the citation records for the 1,037 English-language articles indexed as sociology in the Web of Science Core Collection,[4] published from 1995 to 2015, and whose titles, keywords, or abstracts include the words *racism* or *racist*. We filter our full sample on these keywords to emphasize research that openly refers to racism instead of alternative terminology regarded as more professional. From this point forward, we refer to these keywords in aggregate as *racis* wording*. Specifically, we examine the distribution of meanings of racism, the citations regarded as the most relevant in the scholarly field represented by the sample, the relative fragmentation of the field into citation communities, the meanings and citations of interest to each community, and the distribution of meanings and communities across time periods (i.e., publication years). In brief, we find that racism as structure has actually been the most prevalent meaning of racism since the mid-1990s, but that its prevalence and specific meaning varies substantially across communities.

Method

To examine the distribution of meanings, we extract an analytic sample of 470 articles that include *racis* wording* in their abstracts with sufficient specification to code as attitudes, culture, or structure. The analytic sample includes 289 articles that used racis* wording only as nouns, for example, "structural racism" or a group of "racists," whereas another 110 articles used the word "racist" only as an adjective, for example, "racist attitudes," and another 71 articles used "racism" or "racist" as both nouns and adjectives.

Within the analytic sample, we code racis* wording in the abstracts with 38 inductively identified categories (i.e., 22 codes for racis* nouns and 16 codes for racis* adjectives) before

Table 2. Content Codes for Racis* Wording in the Abstracts of the Analytic Sample.

Meanings of racism	Content codes	Description or examples of select content-code in bold
Attitudes ($Racism_1$)	Nouns: Racism as racial attitudes or bias; symbolic racism; **racist or anti-racist personification** Adjectives: Racist attitudes or bias; racist, anti-racist, or seemingly nonracist actions	Description of an individual or group of individuals as a "racist" or an "anti-racist"
Cultural schema ($Racism_2$)	Nouns: Racism as discourse, ideology, language; **colorblind racism** Adjectives: Racist discourse, ideology, language; postracist frames	"In the post-civil rights era, colorblind racism is the hegemonic ideology."
Structure		
Preexisting consequential inequalities (i.e., racial dominance; $Racism_{3.1}$)	[Preexisting racial dominance] Nouns: **Environmental racism** or internalized racism Adjective: Racist social structure	"Contrary to the environmental racism [hypothesis], residents of tracts with landfills or incinerators . . . were less likely to be minority group members."
Processes that create or maintain racial dominance ($Racism_{3.2}$)	[Active dominance] Nouns: Racism as discrimination, racialized practices, overt racism Adjectives: Racist groups or movements, incidences, institutions, **policies**, practices, or violence	"Racist immigration laws"
	[Cultural mobilization] Nouns (only): Anti-racism, **cultural racism**, or biological racism	"Cultural racism operates as a strategy of 'sorting out' outsiders from insiders . . ."
	["Undifferentiated" dominance] Nouns (only): Racism as covert racism, institutional racism, lived experience, structural racism, systemic racism, or **an all-encompassing social system**	An all-encompassing social system characterized by the amalgamation of institutions, practices, and discursive regimes that put people of color in a position of disadvantage
Excluded codes	Noun: Insufficient detail to classify Adjective: Insufficient detail to classify	Specific meaning of "racism" or "racist" not contextualized, specified, or even implied in abstract

integrating them into our typology of three major meanings for an abductive synthesis (Timmermans and Tavory 2012). Table 2 presents the integration of the 38 codes into our framework. We classify 10 codes as related to attitudes, eight codes as related to culture, and 21 codes as related to structure. Among the structure codes, we further classify three codes as preexisting racial dominance, nine codes as active racial dominance (noncultural), three codes as cultural mobilization, and six codes as "undifferentiated" racial dominance because the abstracts were not sufficiently detailed to distinguish more specific meanings. Our coding is qualitative, allowing for a single article to be associated with multiple meanings, and we use the Qualitative Comparative Analysis program *Kirq* (Reichert and Rubinson 2011) to examine the frequency of meanings both separately and in combination with each other.

For the analysis of citations, we extract the 37,790 references cited by the full sample of 1,037 articles and the 893 articles that shared two or more references with each other. We use the science of science toolkit *Sci2* (Sci2 Team 2009) to identify (1) the most-cited publications and (2)

the subsets of articles with the most shared citations (i.e., citation communities). Following Scott Emmons et al.'s (2016) comparison of clustering algorithms, we use the *smart local moving* (SLM) algorithm available in Sci2 to identify 13 communities before excluding seven small communities, each with fewer than four articles, and leaving six communities, which we labeled A to F, that range from 49 to 285 articles each. By combining content and citation analysis, we also examine the distribution of meanings associated with each community (see Appendix A for the technical procedures for replicating the analysis).

We recognize certain limitations in our evidence and sampling procedures. Our data source, Web of Science, employs the criteria of librarians to classify articles as sociology, which likely include publications that some panels of professional sociologists might exclude. Also, we only examine the abstracts in our content analysis. Abstracts highlight the primary components of their articles, but our focus would miss secondary components that are nevertheless central to the authors' arguments (e.g., a closing discussion of the article's implications for theorizing racism). Third, filtering on racis* wording provides a sharp focus on scholarship and authors that give explicit salience to racism (e.g., studies of "racist culture") while glossing latent attention to racism behind an article's explicit focus (e.g., in studies of "racial discourse").

To put these limitations in perspective, they primarily affect our content analysis and are partially offset by our citation analysis which covers the full sample and not merely the 470 articles with code-able abstracts. Instead, the citation analysis also includes the articles whose abstracts use racis* wording with little specification and whose titles and keywords include racis* wording even when their abstracts do not. Thus, our citation communities include both articles with code-able abstracts and other articles with similar citation patterns, that is, they cite the same work as relevant to their own. In fact, the most frequent journals to appear in the analytic sample are the same as in full sample: *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *Discourse & Society*, and *Race & Class*. Citation data also allow us to guard against the opposing bias of overinclusion. Specifically, we use Google searches on the authors of the most-cited references within each community to confirm whether sociology is their disciplinary background or affiliation, and we find that one community is qualitatively less sociological than the other five. In sum, our methods provide a "view from above" to compare with our particular review of the literature as specialists in the sociology of race and ethnicity.

Content Analysis: The Prevalence of Racism as Structure

Table 3 presents in two panels the distribution of our coded meanings of racism across the analytic sample (470 articles). The first panel shows the distribution of articles across the three meanings of attitudes, culture, and structure, which shows that the modal meaning is the use of *racis* wording* associated with structure by itself (40.6 percent of the analytic sample). We refer to these meanings using the notation of Qualitative Comparative Analysis (Ragin and Rubinson 2009), which capitalizes present conditions and places absent conditions in lower case; for example, the modal meaning is *acS* for the combination of attitudes (absent), cultural schema (absent), and structure (present). In addition, 23.4 percent use racis* wording associated with attitudes exclusively (Acs), another 23.4 percent exclusively use racis* wording associated with cultural schema (aCs), and only 12.6 percent of the analytic sample use some combination of the three constructs. Including the combinations, articles using attitudes increase their share to 33.0 percent (i.e., Acs, AcS, ACs, and ACS), articles using culture increase to 31.5 percent, but articles using structure remain with the greatest share at 48.9 percent. On one hand, it seems as if the discipline responded positively to Bonilla-Silva's call for a more structural conception of racism. In actuality, however, the share of articles using structure changes little over the 20-year period: Articles exclusively using structure are 41.2 percent of articles published from 1995 to 1999 and 42.9 percent of articles published from 2010 to 2015, and the comparable percentages for articles

Table 3. Distribution of Meanings of Racism in the Analytic Sample ($N = 470$ Articles).

Panel A: Distribution of three core meanings of racism.

Attitudes (A)	Culture (C)	Structure (S)	QCA notation for combination	*N* of articles	% of analytic sample
Absent	Absent	PRESENT	acS	191	40.6
PRESENT	Absent	Absent	Acs	110	23.4
Absent	PRESENT	Absent	aCs	110	23.4
PRESENT	Absent	PRESENT	AcS	21	4.5
PRESENT	PRESENT	Absent	ACs	20	4.3
Absent	PRESENT	PRESENT	aCS	14	3.0
PRESENT	PRESENT	PRESENT	ACS	4	0.9

Note. The only remainder is the impossible combination of attitudes (absent), culture (absent), and structure (absent) (i.e., acs in QCA notation). QCA = Qualitative Comparative Analysis.

Panel B: Distribution of six meanings of racism

		Structure						
Attitudes (A)	Cultural schema (C)	Preexisting racial dominance (P)	Active racial dominance (R)	Cultural mobilization (M)	"Undifferentiated" racial dominance (U)	QCA notation for combination	*N*	% of analytic sample
PRESENT	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Acprmu	110	23.4
Absent	PRESENT	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	aCprmu	110	23.4
Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	PRESENT	acprmU	98	20.9
Absent	Absent	Absent	PRESENT	Absent	Absent	acpRmu	47	10.0
Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	PRESENT	Absent	acprMu	27	5.7
PRESENT	PRESENT	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	ACprmu	20	4.3
Absent	Absent	PRESENT	Absent	Absent	Absent	acPrmu	10	2.1
Absent	PRESENT	Absent	Absent	PRESENT	Absent	aCprMu	8	1.7
PRESENT	Absent	Absent	Absent	PRESENT	Absent	AcprMu	7	1.5
PRESENT	Absent	Absent	Absent	Absent	PRESENT	AcprmU	7	1.5
PRESENT	Absent	Absent	PRESENT	Absent	Absent	AcpRmu	5	1.1
Absent	Absent	Absent	PRESENT	Absent	PRESENT	acpRmU	5	1.1
						11 other combinations	16	<1% each

Note. There are 41 remainders or combinations without articles. QCA = Qualitative Comparative Analysis.

using structure in combination with other meanings are similarly stable, 49.0 percent (1995–1999) and 53.0 percent (2010–2015).

The second panel shows the distribution of articles across six meanings: attitudes, cultural schema, and four types of structure. Accordingly, the number of articles for attitudes alone (Acs), cultural schema alone (aCs), and their combination only (ACs) do not change from the first panel. Focusing on the articles that exclusively use racis* wording associated with structure (i.e., the acS articles in the first panel), we find a mode of 98 articles, or 20.9 percent of the analytic sample, that exclusively use wording associated with "undifferentiated" racial dominance (acprmU in Table 3, Panel B). Indeed, the articles using "undifferentiated" dominance comprise 51.8 percent of the articles using any form of structure (i.e., all combinations with capital P, R, M, or U in Table 3, Panel B). We find a similar prevalence of structure and "undifferentiated" dominance within subsets of the analytic sample divided by geography and whether the abstracts connect racism to other forms of dominance[5] (not shown). This finding confirms our own sense

that many scholars of structural racism regard preexisting, active, and cultural racial dominance to be indivisible constructs, even within the page limits of journal articles (e.g., Golash-Boza 2016). Indeed, in contrast to the stable share of articles using any type of structure, the percentage of articles using "undifferentiated" dominance nearly doubles over the 20-year period, from 17.7 percent (1995–1999) to 30.1 percent (2010–2015). A recent example of "undifferentiated" racial dominance is Zulema Valdez and Tanya Golash-Boza's (2018:2257, 2258) critique of immigration research for failing to recognize "the larger macro-level structural context . . . that is founded on and embedded within a system of white supremacy." Instead, they regard immigration researchers as fragmenting structural racism into group-specific constraints on the process of assimilation, for example, how racist nativism (i.e., cultural racial dominance) constrains Mexican Americans, whereas white discrimination (i.e., active racial dominance) constrains African Americans.

Citation Analysis: Who Cites Whom?

Turning from abstracts to citations, Table 4 presents the top 10 most-cited references in the full sample (1,037 articles), the analytic sample, the subsample of articles that use *racis* wording* associated with attitudes either exclusively or in combination, the subsample of articles that use any wording associated with culture, and the subsample of articles that use any wording associated with structure. Among the top 10 references most cited by the full sample, the top three are Bonilla-Silva's (1997) article in *American Sociological Review*, Omi and Winant's *Racial Formation in the United States*, and Teun van Dijk's (1993) article in *Discourse & Society*, "Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis," with 114, 113, and 74 citations, respectively. In comparison, the mean number of citations is only 1.4 among the 37,790 references cited by the full sample. In addition, seven of the top 10 references are books and only three are articles, a pattern that is repeated across almost all of our samples.

In the analytic sample, the top three references include two of the same references as the full sample: 53 citations for Omi and Winant's book, 46 for van Dijk's article, plus 64 for Bonilla-Silva's *Racism without Racists*. In addition, the top 10 include eight books and three articles, including a tie for 10th place. In the attitudes sample, Donald Kinder and David O. Sears's (1981) article in *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, "Prejudice and Politics: Symbolic Racism versus Racial Threats to the Good Life," rises into the top three most-cited with 19 citations, joining Bonilla-Silva's and Omi and Winant's books and their 20 and 17 citations, respectively. Notably, the number of articles increases to six, outnumbering books for once.

In the culture sample, books again dominate the most-cited references, although van Dijk's article rises to the top with 38 citations, and Margaret Wetherell and Jonathan Potter's (1992) *Mapping the Language of Racism* also joins Omi and Winant's book in the top three most-cited with 23 and 24 citations, respectively. In the structure sample, Philomena Essed's (1991) *Understanding Everyday Racism* finally rises into the top three with 21 citations, joining Bonilla-Silva's and Omi and Winant's books with their 29 and 21 citations, respectively. In addition, the number of articles shrinks to only one. Across the samples, the relative representation of books to articles appears to vary from highest for the structure sample to lowest for the attitudes sample, indicating that meanings of racism may be associated with publication outlets. One cause may be the relative prevalence of qualitative to quantitative research in each sample. In general, however, there is a coherent set of references and authors that sociologists regard as relevant, regardless of how they use racis* wording in their abstracts.

Citation communities: The fragmentation of who is actually relevant to whom. When we focus on each citation community, however, the coherence around racism as structure and the publications of Bonilla-Silva, Omi and Winant, and van Dijk begins to fray. Table 5 presents the top 10

Table 4. Top 10 References Cited by Sociology Articles in Five Samples.

Full sample (N = 1,037 articles)		Analytic sample (n = 470)		Attitudes sample (n = 155)		Culture sample (n = 148)		Structure sample (n = 230)	
Reference	Citation count	Reference	Citation count	Reference	Citation count	Reference	Citation count	Reference	Citation count
Bonilla-Silva (1997). *American Sociological Review*	114	Bonilla-Silva (2003). *Racism without Racists*	64	Bonilla-Silva (2003). *Racism without Racists*	20	van Dijk (1993). *Discourse & Society*	38	Bonilla-Silva (2003). *Racism without Racists*	29
Omi and Winant (1986). *Racial Formation in the United States*	113	Omi and Winant (1986). *Racial Formation in the United States*	53	Kinder and Sears (1981). *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*	19	Omi and Winant (1986). *Racial Formation in the United States*	24	Essed (1991). *Understanding Everyday Racism*	21 (tie)
van Dijk (1993). *Discourse & Society*	74	van Dijk (1993). *Discourse & Society*	46	Omi and Winant (1986). *Racial Formation in the United States*	17	Wetherell and Potter (1992). *Mapping the Language of Racism*	23	Omi and Winant (1986). *Racial Formation in the United States*	21
Kinder and Sears (1981). *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*	60	Essed (1991). *Understanding Everyday Racism*	37	Sears (1988). *Eliminating racism*, edited by Katz and Taylor	14	Bonilla-Silva (2003). *Racism without Racists*	21 (tie)	Balibar and Wallerstein (1991). *Race, Nation, Class*	20
Balibar and Wallerstein (1991). *Race, Nation, Class*	56*	Wetherell and Potter (1992). *Mapping the Language of Racism*	30	van Dijk (1993). *Discourse & Society*	13	Van Dijk (1987). *Communicating Racism*	21	Collins (2000). *Black Feminist Thought*	17
Allport (1985). *The Nature of Prejudice*	52 (tie)	van Dijk (1993). *Elite Discourse and Racism*	26	Essed (1991). *Understanding Everyday Racism*	12	van Dijk (1993). *Elite Discourse and Racism*	19	Goldberg (1993). *Racist Culture*	15 (tie)
Essed (1991). *Understanding Everyday Racism*	52	Bonilla-Silva (1997). *American Sociological Review*	25 (tie)	Bonilla-Silva and Forman (2000). *Discourse & Society*	11 (tie)	Essed (1991). *Understanding Everyday Racism*	14 (tie)	Miles (1993). *Racism*	15
Gilroy (1991). *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack*	52	Collins (2000). *Black Feminist Thought*	25	Frankenberg (1993). *White Women, Race Matters*	11	Van Dijk (1991). *Racism and the Press*	14	Massey and Denton (1993). *American Apartheid*	12
Miles (1993). *Racism*	52	Van Dijk (1987). *Communicating Racism*	25	van Dijk (1993). *Elite Discourse and Racism*	11	Bonilla-Silva and Forman (2000). *Discourse & Society*	13	Bonilla-Silva (1997). *American Sociological Review*	11 (tie)
Wetherell and Potter (1992). *Mapping the Language of Racism*	49	Kinder and Sears (1981). *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*	24 (tie)	Allport (1985). *The Nature of Prejudice*	10 (tie)	Bonilla-Silva (2001). *White Supremacy and Racism in the Post-Civil Rights Era*	12	Gilroy (1991). *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack*	11
		Miles (1993). *Racism*	24	Van Dijk (1987). *Communicating Racism*	10				

Note. References identified by author/editor last name, publication year, and volume title. Citation counts for multiple editions combined to their earliest cited edition. Full citations available on request from the authors.

Table 5. Top 10 References Cited by Sociology Articles Across Citation Communities, with Shared Citations in Bold (Total $N = 893$).

Community A: British racism as structure ($N = 285$ articles)		Community B: U.S. racism as attitudes ($N = 138$)		Community C: European racism as culture ($N = 94$)		Community D: U.S. racism as spatial structure ($N = 97$)		Community E: U.S. racism as far-right movement ($N = 49$)		Community F: U.S. racism as structure & culture ($N = 214$)	
Reference	Citation count	Reference	Citation count	Reference	Citation count	Reference	Citation count	Reference	Citation count	Reference	Citation count
Miles (1993). *Racism*	42	Kinder and Sears (1981). *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*	41	**van Dijk (1993). *Discourse & Society***	**44**	Feagin and Sikes (1994). *Living with Racism.*	13	Snow, Zurcher, and Ekland-Olson (1980). *American Sociological Review.*	9	Bonilla-Silva (2003). *Racism without Racists*	65
Balibar and Wallerstein (1991). *Race, Nation, Class*	35	Blumer (1958). *The Pacific Sociological Review*	28 (tie)	**Wetherell and Potter (1992). *Mapping the Language of Racism***	**36**	Massey and Denton (1993). *American Apartheid.*	12	Blee (2003). *Inside Organized Racism.*	7	**Omi and Winant (1986). *Racial Formation in the United States***	**55**
Gilroy (1991). *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack*	32	**van Dijk (1993). *Discourse & Society***	**28**	Van Dijk (1987). *Communicating Racism*	28	Feagin (1991). *American Sociological Review.*	11 (tie)	Taylor and Whittier (1992). *Frontiers in social movement theory.*	6	Bonilla-Silva (1997). *American Sociological Review*	22
Omi and Winant (1986). *Racial Formation in the United States*	**22**	Allport (1985). *The Nature of Prejudice*	25	van Dijk (1993). *Elite Discourse and Racism*	25	Wilson (1987). *The Truly Disadvantaged.*	11	Blee (1992). *Women of the Klan.*	5 (tie)	Collins (2000). *Black Feminist Thought*	21
Modood et al. (1997). *Ethnic Minorities in Britain: Diversity and Disadvantage*	20	Kinder and Sanders (1996). *Divided by Color*	22	Edwards and Potter (1992). *Discursive Psychology*	22	Hamilton (1995). *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management.*	9	MacLean (1995). *Behind the Mask of Chivalry.*	5	Frankenberg (1993). *White Women, Race Matters*	20

(continued)

Table 5. (continued)

Community A: British racism as structure (N = 285 articles)		Community B: U.S. racism as attitudes (N = 138)		Community C: European racism as culture (N = 94)		Community D: U.S. racism as spatial structure (N = 97)		Community E: U.S. racism as far-right movement (N = 49)		Community F: U.S. racism as structure & culture (N = 214)	
Reference	Citation count	Reference	Citation count	Reference	Citation count	Reference	Citation count	Reference	Citation count	Reference	Citation count
Goldberg (1993). *Racist Culture*	19	**Wetherell and Potter (1992). *Mapping the Language of Racism***	**21**	Essed (1991). *Understanding Everyday Racism*	18	Anderton, Anderson, Oakes, et al. (1994). *Demography*.	7 (tie)	Tarrow (1994). *Power in Movement*.	5	Bonilla-Silva (2001). *White Supremacy and Racism in the Post-Civil Rights Era*	19
Anderson (1991). *Imagined Communities*	18	Schuman et al. (1997). *Racial Attitudes in America: Trends and Interpretation*	20	Billig et al. (1988). *Ideological Dilemmas*	17 (tie)	Clark et al. (1999). *American Psychologist*.	7	Taylor and Whittier (1995). *Social movements and culture*.	5	Feagin (2013). *The White Racial Frame*	18
Hall et al. (1978). *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order*	15 (tie)	Sears (1988). *Eliminating racism*, edited by Katz and Taylor	19	Potter (1996). *Representing Reality*	17	Anderton, Anderson, Rossi, et al. (1994). *Evaluation Review*.	6 (tie)	Wade (1998). *The Fiery Cross*.	5	Bonilla-Silva and Forman (2000). *Discourse & Society*	16 (tie)
Said (1979). *Orientalism*	15	Blalock (1967). *Toward a Theory of Minority Group Relations*	18 (tie)	Van Dijk (1991). *Racism and the Press*	17	Been and Gupta (1997). *Ecology Law Quarterly*.	6	Van Dijk (1992). *Discourse & Society*.	5	Feagin (2006). *Systemic Racism: A Theory of Oppression*	16
Solomos (1989). *Race and Racism in Contemporary Britain*	14	Quillian (1995). *American Sociological Review*	18	Billig (1996). *Arguing and Thinking*	14	Bullard (1990). *Dumping in Dixie*.	6			Mills (2011). *The Racial Contract*	16
						Pastor, Sadd, and Hipp (2001). *Journal of Urban Affairs*.	6				

Note. Communities are named by their modal foci. References identified by author/editor last name, publication year, and volume title. Citation counts for multiple editions combined to their earliest cited edition. Full citations available on request from the authors. Community E excludes nine-way tie for 10th.

most-cited references in each community, revealing that only three publications are highly cited in more than one: Omi and Winant's *Racial Formation in the United States* is highly cited only by Communities A and F, whereas only Communities B and C share Van Dijk's "Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis" and Wetherell and Potter's *Mapping the Language of Racism.* In addition, among the 57 unique publications in Table 5, only 14 have female authors (24.6 percent). Among these 14 publications, only two have exclusively female co-authors, Verta Taylor and Nancy Whittier (Community E), and only six have female sole-authors, Kathleen Blee (Community E), Patricia Hill Collins (Community F), Philomena Essed (Community C), Ruth Frankenberg (Community F), and Nancy McLean (Community E). The infrequent citation of female authors in all communities except Community E may be related to the scarcity of intersectionality in the analytic sample where only 98 of its 470 articles connect racism to other social inequalities (20.9 percent). Another notable similarity across the otherwise fragmented citation communities is that a single journal, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, is the most prevalent outlet, by far, for the citing articles in four of the six communities (i.e., as opposed to the cited articles).

Each community's most-cited references suggest distinguishing characteristics, which we confirmed in the distribution of articles across our conceptual framework.[6] There are no communities that reflect the analytic sample's distribution of meanings wherein structure is the modal meaning, followed by roughly equal shares for attitudes and culture. The most similar is Community A, whose top citations are particularly British in substantive focus and institutional affiliation. It is both the largest and most "egalitarian" community, in that no author has multiple publications among its top 10 most-cited references, and its most-cited reference (Miles 1993) receives citations from only 14.7 percent of the Community A articles. About 55.7 percent of its articles use racis* wording associated with structure, mostly exclusively with emphasis on "undifferentiated" racial dominance. However, unlike the analytic sample, there are more articles exclusively using attitudes than those exclusively using culture: 27.4 versus 16.0 percent, respectively.

In contrast, structure is not dominant in either Communities B or C. Community B's top citations are particularly American and focused on racist attitudes, including multiple publications by Donald Kinder and David Sears, who receive 34.2 percent of the community's citations. Indeed, 66.7 percent of its articles use wording associated with attitudes, mostly exclusively. The percentage of articles that use any structure is smaller (23.1 percent), and smaller still is the percentage that exclusively use culture (12.8 percent). That said, this community also has the proportionally smallest analytic sample, suggesting that its content analysis is the least representative of its actual conceptions of racism.[7] Also distinctive is Community C, whose top citations are particularly international or rather European, focused on culture, and the least egalitarian, with three authors accounting for nine of its top 10 publications: van Dijk, Michael Billig, and Jonathan Potter. Van Dijk is also the founder of *Discourse & Society*, the journal outlet for most of its articles, far outpacing *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, and on whose editorial board Billig and Potter also sit. Indeed, 72.9 percent of Community C's articles use wording associated with culture, mostly exclusively.

The remaining communities, all particularly American, focus on racism as structure but in different ways. In Community D, the top citations seem primarily focused on place-based processes such as residential segregation and environmental discrimination and include multiple publications by Joe Feagin, Douglas Anderton, Andy Anderson, John Oakes, and Michael Fraser, who receive 39.4 percent of the citations. Indeed, 78.8 percent of the articles use wording associated with structure, almost all exclusively, including the highest use of preexisting racial dominance among any of the communities. In Community E, the top citations seem primarily focused on far-right social movements such as the Ku Klux Klan and uniquely include multiple publications by three female authors, Kathleen Blee, Verta Taylor, and Nancy Whittier, who receive 44.2 percent of its citations. About 66.7 percent of its articles use wording associated with structure, mostly exclusively and with uniquely high attention to active racial dominance (22.2 percent,

exclusively). Fewer articles use culture exclusively (22.2 percent), and fewer still use attitudes exclusively (11.1 percent). This is also the other community for which *Ethnic and Racial Studies* is not the most prevalent article outlet, which is instead *Gender & Society.*

Last but not least, Community F is the second largest community, and its top citations include multiple publications by Bonilla-Silva (2018) and Feagin, who receive 58.2 percent of the citations, including 30.4 percent to *Racism without Racists* alone. About 43.9 percent of its articles use wording associated with structure, followed very closely by culture (42.7 percent). Indeed, the articles that exclusively use culture are slightly more prevalent than those exclusively using structure (32.9 vs. 31.7 percent), whereas fewer exclusively use attitudes (19.5 percent). Thus, it is only among these U.S. sociologists of racism as both structure and culture that Bonilla-Silva's work is among the most-cited references. However, this is also the community that experiences substantial growth over the 20-year period, from comprising only 7.6 percent of articles published in 1995–1999 to 31.8 percent of articles published in 2010–2015. In contrast, the British community (A) declines from 37.9 to 31.0 percent and the U.S. community focused on far-right movements (E) declines from 15.2 to 3.1 percent, whereas the shares of articles published by the remaining communities change by less than 5 percent over the two decades.[8]

Conclusion: Toward an Inclusive Yet Differentiated Conception of Racism

Sociologists have long debated how to conceptualize racism since the civil rights movement and its challenges to a coherent state-centered system for maintaining racial inequality (Byrd 2011). In his critical call (Bonilla-Silva 1997), Bonilla-Silva (2018) proposed a structural theory of racism to overcome the limitations of both a dominant conception of racism as attitudes and critical conceptions of racism as culture. Indeed, we find his scholarship, especially *Racism without Racists*, is highly cited across our sample of articles, regardless of whether their authors use *racis* wording* associated with attitudes, culture, or structure.

Further analysis, however, indicates a more uneven reception, as we also identify six citation communities, labeled A to F, each of which cites mostly unique sets of references. Although racism as structure is the modal meaning of racism in four communities, only one regards Bonilla-Silva's work as highly relevant to their scholarship. We suggest that this separation between intellectual communities explains how his call for a structural interpretation of racism occurred at the same time that structure was already the most prevalent meaning of racism in sociology. Bonilla-Silva's work was central to the rise of a specific community of U.S. sociologists (Community F) that supplanted the initially larger U.S. communities that focused on racism as attitudes (Community B) and far-right movements (Community E), while apparently ignoring the initially dominant British community which has long focused on racism as structure (Community A).

The result has been a fragmentation in the discipline's conception of racism across citation communities, each using different meanings of racism. These community differences suggest three directions for theoretical and empirical integration:

1. Bridging the uniquely attitudes-focused scholarship of U.S. community (B) with other communities' scholarship on racism as culture and structure;
2. Bridging the shared scholarship on racism as culture of the European community (C) and the U.S. community (F) that focuses on both structure and culture; and
3. Bridging the shared scholarship on racism as structure across the British community (A) and the three remaining U.S. communities that focus on spatial structure, far-right movements, and both structure and culture (Communities D, E, and F, respectively).

To bridge racism as attitudes with other conceptions of racism, we observe that a substantial minority of the Community B articles actually use racism as either culture or structure. These

researchers may already have a broader conception of racism than simply attitudes, and their work may provide a model for bridging the remainder of Community B with nonattitudinal conceptions of racism. One example is the work of Lawrence Bobo who interprets empirical patterns in attitudes as indicating racial resentment, a cultural schema characterizing nonwhites as undeserving of "special treatment." In Lawrence Bobo and Mia Tuan's (2006) analysis of the attitudes of whites about Chippewa treaty rights, they use mixed methods to argue that historical events produced cultural schema that were escalated into prejudices by political mobilization culminating in discrimination, specifically court rulings that limited Chippewa access to ceded tribal territory while guaranteeing non-Indian access to the associated natural resources. Future researchers in Community B might similarly use mixed-methods research to connect their analysis of attitudes with conceptions of racism as culture and structure (cf. Byrd 2011). Conversely, researchers in other communities might use similar approaches to connect their analysis with conceptions of racism as attitudes by examining variations in how individuals respond to the same cultural and structural contexts, especially the far-right movement researchers of Community E, among whom racism as attitudes is surprisingly scarce.

To bridge Communities C and F's respective scholarship on racism as culture, we note that Bonilla-Silva's (2018) work provides a start, in that he repeatedly cites van Dijk's publications in *Racism without Racists*. However, the connection seems unidirectional, as his work is not among the references most cited by van Dijk's European community (C). Similarly, one of Van Dijk's (1992) articles is the ninth most-cited publication by the movement-oriented community (E), but none of the latter's top citations appear among the European community's most-cited references. A possible reason for this asymmetry is that none of Community C's most-cited authors are sociologists, with the notable exception of Philomena Essed. Future research might deepen these connections by comparing the conceptions of racism as culture that are prevalent in each community. For example, one might evaluate the compatibility of (1) the variants of racialization inspired by Omi and Winant (1986), (2) van Dijk's *semantic moves*, and (3) Kathleen Blee's (2003) conception of racist identities as more the product, than cause, of participation in far-right movements. Such an integration is especially pressing if, as Victor Ray (2019) argues, cultural schema are critical for the coordination of racial domination across organizational fields.

With regard to bridging Communities A, D, E, and F's scholarship on racism as structure, we observe that the British community's (A) and the largest U.S. community's (F) shared citation of Omi and Winant's *Racial Formation in the United States* provide a starting point. Future research might compare how the two communities use Omi and Winant's work, especially how each conceptualizes racial dominance in the United Kingdom and the United States, both separately and comparatively.

Another strategy might be to use our subtypes of racism as structure as a framework for evaluating conceptions of racism as structure in different communities. To illustrate, we note that Omi and Winant understand racism primarily through the lens of a single form of active dominance (i.e., political mobilization).[9] This narrow identification has the consequence of forcing other racisms, defined by other forms of racial dominance, attitudes, cultural schema, and even other forms of active dominance, to fit into Omi and Winant's (1986) concept of racism as a kind of social movement. Oddly, their conception of racism as political mobilization remains disengaged from the literature on social movements that animates Community E's conception of organized racism. Similarly, we suggest that Omi and Winant's narrow identification of racism may also overlook the role of space not only as a constitutive context for social movements but also as a critical unit of the preexisting inequalities that animate Community D's focus on segregation and environmental racism (cf. Liévanos 2019).

Our finding of *a fragmented, if not combative, agreement on conceptualizing racism as structure* also raises broader questions for the sociology of race/ethnicity. How much do different uses of racism shape debates regarding the social significance of race, whether historically or in relation to ethnicity, sexuality, or other social differences? For example, which communities are involved in

the debate between critical race theory and comparative ethnicity, and how have prior debates (e.g., the race-class debate) shaped contemporary communities? How much do particular uses of racism serve as the default conceptions for different publication outlets and their reviewer networks? For example, how is the recently established ASA journal, *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, oriented toward the six communities, especially the substantial growth of Community F, and how have the communities been oriented toward the generalist journals of sociology and specific book publishers? Also, how has the historically predominant journal, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, experienced and managed two decades of intellectual fragmentation within its own pages? In brief, how much do divergent uses of racism indicate persistent differences in not only networks but also conceptions of the intellectual and professional stakes of scholarship about racism?

Certain limitations of our method also call for further research on the meaning of racism in sociology. In this article, our empirical analysis focuses on journal articles that are primarily read by professional sociologists. Future research might examine the meaning of racism at the interface of social science and lay audiences (e.g., in college, and even K–12, textbooks) similar to Ann Morning's (2008) study of conceptualizations of race in high school biology textbooks. Our identification of articles with a primary emphasis on racism relies on the presence of "racism" or "racist" in their abstracts. Future research might examine whether similar meanings of racism are present in articles that use alternative terms instead such as *racial*, *prejudice*, *discrimination*, and *oppression*. In brief, are the meanings of racism associated with *racis* wording* a superset, or only a subset, of the meanings associated with alternative terms? Third, we restricted our sample to English-language publications. Future research might examine whether similar meanings of racism are present in sociology published in other languages.

Turning to public sociology, our differentiated conception of racism implies a differentiated conception of anti-racism (i.e., practices that seek to diminish racism), in distinction from nonracist practices that only seek to avoid increasing racism (Bonilla-Silva 2018). Parallel to racism_1 (racism as attitudes), we might classify as anti-racism_1 those practices that reduce prejudice or seek to prevent attitudes from leading to forms of racial dominance that manifest in individuals' behavior. Parallel to racism_2 (racism as cultural schema), anti-racism_2 practices would question racialized representations, seek to undermine the coherence of cultural schema into status hierarchies, and address their use in normalizing racial inequalities. Next, $\text{anti-racism}_{3.1}$ practices would abolish racial privileges by providing reparations, redistributing resources, or otherwise seeking to level preexisting inequalities, including those associated with cultural dominance. Fourth, $\text{anti-racism}_{3.2}$ practices would punish coercion and violence, end discrimination, defeat political and cultural mobilizations, or otherwise seek to counter the processes that create or maintain racial dominance. Rather than equate different anti-racisms with each other, sociologists might contribute to public discourse by questioning the relevance and effectiveness of certain anti-racist practices for addressing particular racisms, both alone and in combination with each other. In sum, an inclusive but differentiated conception of racism suggests that its persistence depends importantly on the distribution of anti-racisms that stand against it.

Appendix

Technical Procedures for Content, Citation, and Community Analysis

Content analysis. To prepare our data, we imported the coded Web of Science data for our analytic sample from *Excel* into *Stata*, recoded the codes into Boolean sets, and imported the sets into *Kirq*. We determined the distribution of coded meanings of racism by using Kirq to calculate the frequencies of the codes both alone and in all their logical combinations. Specifically, we produced Boolean truth tables that defined the outcome set as membership in the analytic sample (=1 for all articles) and used as causal conditions the sets for the three components (the first panel in Table 3) and the six meanings (the second panel).

Citation analysis. To prepare our data, we imported the coded Web of Science data for our full sample into *Sci2* to check the sample for duplicate citations, using their Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) identifications, and to extract its paper citation network, which is composed of (a) nodes for every article in the sample and all of their references and (b) undirected edges for the citations that link articles and references. We used Sci2 to calculate the citation count for all references cited by every article in each sample (the localCitationCount field in Sci2) and then to automatically detect duplicate nodes, at a merge-identification threshold of 90 percent similarity in the node labels among labels that shared the same first two characters, assigning them a shared index number. We then used *Stata* to sum citation counts across duplicate nodes. We determined the top 10 most-cited references by identifying the top 30 nodes among the automatically detected nodes and then manually reviewing and merging them with undetected duplicates, before identifying the top 10 among the remerged nodes. Similarly, we determined the top 10 for the analytic sample and the attitudes, culture, and structure samples by separately repeating these procedures on each subsample (Table 4).

Citation community detection. To prepare our analysis, we used *Sci2* to transform the merged network for the full sample (nodes and edges) into a reference co-occurrence network (or bibliographic coupling similarity network) where the edges are weighted by the number of citations shared among nodes. The full bibliographic coupling similarity network possessed 49,157 edges among its 38,488 nodes, of which 37,491 were isolates, and a density of 0.0001. After removal of the isolates and edges not above 1.0 in weight, the remaining network possessed 13,724 edges among its 893 nodes.

Following Emmons et al.'s (2016) comparison of clustering algorithms, we detected citation communities by using Sci2 to apply the *smart local moving* (SLM) procedure for weighted and undirected networks to the co-occurrence network. This identified 13 communities with a density of 0.0345, indicating relatively little overlap between communities in shared citations, which we corroborated with a review of first-listed authors across the 146 articles with the most similar citations, finding only two authors with articles in more than one community, indicating the distinctiveness of the communities across the 20-year span of the sample. We then excluded seven communities, each with fewer than four articles, leaving six major citation communities, and used *Stata* to merge their identifiers back into the Sci2 paper citation network and the Web of Science data, using the citations' Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs). We determined the top 10 citations for each community (Table 5) by separately repeating our citation analysis procedures on each community subsample, and we determined the distribution of meanings in each community by separately repeating our content analysis procedures on each subsample (Tables available on request from the authors).

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Notes

1. Our approach is partially inspired by how Gabriel Abend (2008) sorts out seven ways sociologists talk about theory and thereby talk past each other unintentionally.

2. In this paper, we do not resolve the question of which differences *ought* to be regarded as illegitimate, which we regard to be a semantic predicament that can only be resolved politically (Abend 2008).
3. The success of West Indians' efforts to negotiate a higher group position is explicitly implied in Mosi Ifatunji's (2016) research showing that cultural attributes and immigrant selectivity (Ifatunji 2017) have relatively weak effects on socioeconomic disparities between African Americans and Afro-Caribbeans.
4. We downloaded these records in August 2016.
5. A total of 195 articles focused on the United States, 212 had a non-U.S. scope, and 63 focused on both places. A total of 369 articles focused on race/ethnicity, whereas 98 connected race/ethnicity with other social differences.
6. Tables available on request from the authors.
7. An alternative explanation is that this community is the least likely to use *racis* wording* and more likely to use alternative language.
8. The U.S. community focused on attitudes (B) declines from 18.2 to 15.2 percent, the European community focused on culture (C) declines from 15.2 to 10.7 percent, and the U.S. community focused on spatial structure (D) increases from 6.1 to 8.2 percent. The rise of Bonilla-Silva's community (F) and the decline of the community (E) focused on far-right movements are the most dramatic quantitative changes across the two decades. The Pearson chi-square for the distribution of articles in Community F by publication-year quartiles has a p value $<.001$. The equivalent chi-square for Community E by publication-year quartile has a p value $<.01$. All other distributions of community by publication-year quartile have $p > .05$, as do the all distributions of meanings of racism by publication-year quartiles.
9. Omi and Winant's (1986) conception of racism is complicated, as it was absent from their first edition (1986) and later carved out of their conception of racial projects (1994), which they generalized from their analysis in their first edition of post–World War II social movements.

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