

INTRODUCTION: HAS THE UNITED STATES REALLY MOVED BEYOND RACE?

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Many people in the United States believe that the country has moved beyond race and racism, especially after the 2008 election of Barack Obama as president and his reelection in 2012. The logic of this position is that the United States could not be racist if a Black man was twice elected into the nation's highest office. Others counterargue that race and racism persist in the United States, as evidenced by a range of disparities in education, income, health, and incarceration rates between people of color and Whites as well as by the attacks and killings of unarmed Black and Latino men and women by police officers. The 2014 killing of Michael Brown symbolizes these later abuses. On August 9 of that year, Michael Brown, an unarmed African American teenager, was shot and killed by a White officer, Darren Wilson, in Ferguson, Missouri. The African American community erupted in protest after the shooting and the subsequent disrespectful and shameful handling

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The Myth of Racial Color Blindness: Manifestations, Dynamics, and Impact, H. A. Neville, M. E. Gallardo, and D. W. Sue (Editors)

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of the situation: Brown's lifeless body was left by law enforcement personnel in the street for more than 4 hours, and community members reported that the police desecrated the impromptu memorial site. Police responded to the mostly peaceful demonstrators in riot gear and with military-grade weapons. They even patrolled the neighborhood in armored vehicles and brandished tear gas, a chemical weapon that has been banned in war by most nations, including the United States, since the Chemical Weapons Convention of 1993 (Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, 1993). Cities throughout the nation protested again after the acquittal of Wilson by a grand jury; for some, the acquittal symbolized the mounting injustice of the killing of unarmed Black and Latino people by police officers that have gone unpunished. These incidents provided impetus for the development of the Black Lives Matter movement and other calls to action to affirm the humanity of Black people in the face of racial oppression.

Not surprisingly, people differed markedly in their interpretations of the killing of Michael Brown; some maintained a view that race and racism did not play a role even in this specific tragedy, whereas others believed Brown's death provided evidence of the persistence of racism in law enforcement and the criminal justice system. These varied positions reflected a stark racial divide both in initial perceptions of Brown's killing and in the later acquittal of Wilson. According to a Pew Research Center (2014b) poll, about 80% of the Black Americans compared with 37% of White Americans polled believed that the Brown killing raised important issues about race in the United States. Moreover, nearly five of 10 (47%) of the White Americans polled believed that race was getting more attention than it deserved. There were also racial differences in the perception of the grand jury decision acquitting officer Darren Wilson: About six of 10 White individuals polled agreed with the decision to acquit, whereas about the same proportion of Black adults believed the verdict was wrong and that Wilson should have been indicted (Pew Research Center, 2014a). Early in 2015, the U.S. Department of Justice (2015) released an investigative report on the Ferguson Police Department, which described the prevalence of racial bias on the force:

Ferguson's approach to law enforcement both reflects and reinforces racial bias, including stereotyping. The harms of Ferguson's police and court practices are borne disproportionately by African Americans, and there is evidence that this is due in part to intentional discrimination on the basis of race. (p. 5)

The killings of unarmed boys and men of color by police around the United States, including Eric Garner (Bronx, New York), Michael Brown (Ferguson, Missouri), Ezell Ford (Los Angeles, California), and Darrien Hunt (Salt Lake City, Utah)—all of which occurred in the summer of 2014—speak

to potential police misconduct directed at communities of color. These were followed by two more deaths in early 2015—those of Walter Scott (Charleston, South Carolina) and Freddie Gray (Baltimore, Maryland); in both cases, police were charged with murder. Although the killing of unarmed girls and women of color by police are less frequent and does not receive attention, they occur and further highlight police misconduct. For example, within a span of 3 months, Tanisha Anderson (37) was killed by Cleveland police in November 2014 and Jessica Hernandez (17) was killed by Denver police in February 2015; both killings were ruled homicides.

The divergent views of community members in assessing the role that race and racism played in the incidents highlight the varying racial worldviews in society. Some people—mostly Whites but also a few people of color—argue that as a society we have moved beyond race and racism. For such individuals, race did not play a role in the killing of unarmed men of color by police; instead, these incidents were either justified or an unfortunate turn of events. Those who argue that race and racism played a role in the killings argue that men of color are stereotyped as violent and aggressive, there are racial tensions between the police and communities of color (particularly Black and Latino communities) primarily because of police misconduct and harassment, and society is organized in such a way that creates and perpetuates racial inequality. Ferguson offers a case in point. At the time of Brown's death, approximately 67% of Ferguson residents were Black, but the city council was 83% White, and the police force was about 94% White; it is not surprising, then, that the overwhelming majority of the traffic stops in Ferguson involve Black motorists (85%) and that 92% of those searched by police are Black, even though few illegal articles are found in such searches (Leber, 2014). The systematic practices in Ferguson were part of a larger system of policing that failed to protect the members of the community from harm and instead exploited the community for financial gain (U.S. Department of Justice, 2015).

This edited volume is designed to provide an interdisciplinary exploration of the concept of *color-blind racial ideology* (CBRI)—the widely held belief that skin color does not play a role in interpersonal interactions and institutional policies/practices. In this collection, scholars in psychology, education, sociology, and related fields provide a probing analysis deconstructing racial color blindness; all of the contributors point out the problems with the concept as it is currently practiced in society. These scholars deconstruct the theoretical and empirical literature on the definitions and manifestations of racial color blindness, point out major flaws in the myth of racial color blindness, and reveal its harmful impact on the lives of people of color. Moreover, the contributors provide new conceptual frameworks to understand the clash of racial realities that occur between people of color and White Americans and why such highly publicized killings

of unarmed Blacks and Latinos are viewed so differently. As long as the philosophy of color blindness maintains its role as a dominant belief in our society, not only will people of color continue to suffer individually, but it will perpetuate inequities in health care, education, and employment. The balanced strength of the text is that all authors provide useful research, practice, and policy implications for anyone interested in reducing racial inequalities in society and thus challenging so-called racial color-blind discourse and policies. The volume thus is intended to serve as a resource for students, researchers, and practitioners interested in understanding contemporary expressions of racism and race relations.

As a way to contextualize the topic, we first outline the varying perspectives on racial color blindness; there are multiple approaches to the concept, and there is not one agreed-on definition. We then debunk the myth of a racial color-blind society by outlining current national racial disparities and by unpacking three key arguments used to assert a racial color-blind position. This is followed by the organization of the collection and a summary of each chapter. We conclude with a discussion of future directions for researchers and practitioners, together with the need to increase the sophistication of empirical studies in this area and to disrupt the faulty logic of racial color blindness.

DEFINING CBRI

A color-blind racial perspective embodies the view that the United States has moved beyond race and racism and that the color of someone's skin does not matter in today's society. People arguing that "race" was made too much of an issue in the Brown killing reflect a certain type of racial color blindness. There are debates in the field about the definition of racial color blindness that include whether the term is best captured through the denial of the color of someone's skin, through the denial of institutional racism, or both. These varied positions are outlined in Neville, Awad, Brooks, Flores, and Bluemel (2013) and Sue (2015); they also correspond to the sociologist Ruth Frankenberg's (1993) articulation of color- and power-evasion approaches. Frankenberg defined *color evasion* as the emphasis on "sameness as a way of rejecting the idea of white racial superiority" (p. 14). From this standpoint, researchers explore the development and implications of someone adopting the belief that "I do not see race." In contrast, power evasion can be captured by the sentiment that "racism is not a big deal today" or rather that everyone has the same opportunities to succeed and consequently "any failure to achieve is therefore the fault of people of color themselves" (Frankenberg, 1993, p. 14).

Because the contributors of this collection represent varying ideological and disciplinary approaches to the topic, most authors provide a brief definition

of racial color blindness in their chapter. These definitions provide a context in which to understand the perspectives of the authors and subsequently the arguments they present.

RACISM PERSISTS: THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT MOVED BEYOND RACE

The persistence of racial disparities in education, health, wealth, poverty, and incarceration supports the notion that we live in racially hierarchical society, which affords unearned benefits to White Americans and unfairly burdens people of color. The very existence of these disparities challenges claims that race does not matter in U.S. society. Although a handful of people of color have been elected to political offices, confirmed to sit on the U.S. Supreme Court, or earned millions of dollars, these individuals are the exceptions. The reality is that people of color are disproportionately represented among many indicators of poor quality of life broadly defined.

People of color are overrepresented among the poor and those who are unemployed (U.S. Department of Labor, 2012), and consequently, they have lower wealth compared with White Americans (Kochar & Fry, 2014). The poverty rates for American Indians and Alaskan Natives (27%) and Black Americans (25.8%) are nearly twice the national average (14.3%); specific Latino ethnic groups such as Mexican Americans and Dominican Americans also have high rates of poverty (upward of 23%; Macartney, Bishaw, & Fontenot, 2013). The unemployment rates of Black Americans is consistently at least two times higher than those of their White American counterparts; for example, in 2014, Black American unemployment for persons aged over 20 years was about 9.7% compared with 4.2% for White Americans; the unemployment rates for Latinos and Asian Americans were 5.9% and 4.5%, respectively (U.S. Department of Labor, 2015). Furthermore, the gap in wealth between Whites and Black and Latinos is growing. In 2014, the average wealth of White Americans was \$141,900 compared with only \$11,000 for Black Americans, and \$13,700 non-Black Latinos (Kochar & Fry, 2014).

There are mounting data documenting the racial disparities in all aspects of the criminal justice system (Alexander, 2010). The Department of Justice report on Ferguson highlights the nature and extent of the disparities in one American town. These disparities reflect national trends. For example, in 2013, Black (38%), Latino (21%), and other races (6%) constituted the majority of those incarcerated during the year, and although Whites make up about 63% of the U.S. population, they comprised only 35% of those incarcerated during that time (Carson, 2014). Black Americans suffer the largest disparity. Nationally, the racial and ethnic disparity in incarceration is 5.6 Black

Americans to 1.0 White American and for Latinos it is 1.8:1; felony disenfranchisement for Black Americans is 7.7% compared with 2.5% nationally (Sentencing Project, n.d.).

Many people of color experience health inequalities, primarily due to limited access to quality health care or living in neighborhoods with higher concentrations of poverty. For example, the infant mortality rates for Black women are twice that of White women, and Blacks are more likely to die from a stroke or coronary heart disease before age 75 compared with their White counterparts. They also have the highest rates of diabetes. Blacks and Latinos have greater rates of tuberculosis, HIV infection, and preventable hospitalization compared with Whites (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013).

DEBUNKING THE MYTH OF RACIAL COLOR BLINDNESS

Even when confronted with government statistics documenting the disparities in a range of quality-of-life indicators between people of color and White Americans, some individuals maintain their viewpoint that race does not matter in a person's life experiences or day-to-day reality. This edited volume provides cogent retorts to three commonly held interrelated assertions we hear from people who continue to argue for the virtues of a racially color-blind perspective.

"Racial color blindness is a good thing." This comment is often associated with a vague reference to Martin Luther King's (1963) "I Have a Dream" speech delivered on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial more than 50 years ago. King eloquently stated, "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character" (para. 16). The quote is commonly decontextualized in these lay discussions because the speaker does not take into consideration the context or entirety of the comments. King never intended for people to ignore the realities of racial inequalities. To live in a society in which race does not matter and that people are judged solely on the content of their character is ideal and assumes a level playing field; unfortunately, as King noted in his speech, we did not then—nor do we now, for that matter—live in an ideal society in terms of race. The United States remains a racially hierarchical society in which people of color face individual and institutionalized discrimination. Race matters in terms of social indicators and peoples' lived experiences. Thus, to deny race and ignore the existence of racism actually causes harm to people of color because it (a) falsely perpetuates the myth of equal access and opportunity, (b) blames people of color for

their lot in life, and (c) allows Whites to their lives in ignorance, naiveté, and innocence.

The idea of a living in a world in which the color of someone's skin does not matter in terms of social relationships and lived experiences is especially attractive to some. For example, for White individuals who benefit from racial privilege, not seeing race or racism provides an opportunity to maintain a positive sense of self: "I am a good, moral, and decent human being and do not discriminate. I do not think about someone else's race." On the surface, it may seem like "good people" do not consider race when interacting with others. The assumption here is that by not noticing race, the individual does not treat people differently based on racial group membership. As we shall see in future chapters, engaging in strategic color blindness is nearly impossible because it has been shown that we begin to distinguish race and gender differences early in life.

Unfortunately, "good people" with the notable goal of ignoring race actually do harm in interracial interactions. There are multiple theories and emerging research documenting the problems with "ignoring" race in interpersonal interactions. Jones (Chapter 2, this volume), Gullett and West (Chapter 4), and M. C. Jackson, Wilde, and Goff (Chapter 7) review the research that examines this question, primarily from the color-evasion perspective. Findings overwhelming suggest that when White individuals do not pay attention to race (e.g., "I don't see race"), there is often a negative effect on people of color, such as feeling less motivated and engaged in the workplace. Part of the issue is that because the United States is racialized, to say one does not see the color of someone's skin is similar to not acknowledging the proverbial elephant in the room.

Researchers adopting a power-evasion perspective argue and provide empirical data indicating that by ignoring the reality of institutional racism, people rationalize or explain away racial inequality that exists in terms of, for example, income, housing, education, and criminal justice. Often underneath the color-blind racial discourse is antipathy toward people of color and justification for policies that, in the end, create race problems. For example, the implementation of stop-and-frisk policing was intended to create safe neighborhoods regardless of race. However, because of racial stereotyping, the actual implementation of this policy in places such as New York City has created racial disparities. In 2013, District Judge Shira Scheindlin ruled in *Floyd, et al. v. City of New York, et al.* that the "stop-and-frisk" practices of the New York Police Department violated the constitutional rights of racial and ethnic minorities in the city and reflected a form of racial profiling of Blacks and Latinos.

"Race(ism) isn't as relevant today as it was before the civil rights movement." The assumption here is that the United States has moved beyond racism,

as exemplified by the election of Barack Obama as president. However, a number of the authors in this collection argue that contemporary forms of racism have morphed from the publicly sanctioned vitriol and corresponding racial policies of the Jim Crow era to public discourse that masks covert forms of racism that may on the surface appear more “civil” (see Chapter 1 by Bonilla-Silva, Chapter 2 by Jones, Chapter 5 by Warren, and Chapter 6 by Bell, all in this volume). After the election of President Obama in 2008, membership in hate groups rose about 60% over a 5-year period (Chiles, 2013). On average, the unemployment rate for Blacks is consistently double that of their White counterparts (Desilver, 2013). Asian American teenagers experience bullying at significantly higher rates than other racial and ethnic groups (DeVoe & Murphy, 2011). Together with the death of Michael Brown and other unarmed people of color by police officers, these facts all point to the persistence of racial inequality.

“Talking about race makes things worse.” Some people claim that talking about race promotes racism or is racist in and of itself. By claiming that the discourse is the problem, people are able to evade the real culprit—that is, racist acts or behavior. The following example exemplifies our point. “Laura,” a Latina freshman living in a predominantly White residence hall, was given the nickname “Taco Lover.” She told her residence hall coordinator about the incident and mentioned that she found the joke racially offensive. The coordinator told Laura that everyone was given nicknames and that she was making things worse by implicating racial insensitivity to a harmless moniker. In situations like these, the spotlight is shifted from the perpetrator to the person (or people) harmed by the racial insensitivity. Shining the light on racism is not racist, nor does it heighten racial tension. What is made worse in such situations is the comfort level of Whites who want to ignore race. By noticing race and naming racism, one calls into question racial privilege and unequal treatment of people of color. For some, this causes anxiety and discomfort. On a larger scale, claims that discussions about race and racism cause racial problems provides people and institutions with a convenient rationale not to explore policies and practices that create inequalities, either intentionally or unintentionally.

FRAMING CBRI: ORGANIZATION OF THIS EDITED VOLUME

This book is organized around answering three main questions:

1. What is CBRI?
2. How is CBRI measured or assessed?
3. What are the manifestations of CBRI?

We organized the book to appeal to the varied interests of the targeted audience. The first question has the broadest appeal, and answering this question is essential to ensuring a common language in which to understand the nature of the problem. The second question is of primary concern to people interested in researching racial beliefs, particularly racial color blindness. We end by describing the multiple ways in which racial color blindness manifests in everyday interactions at the intrapsychic, interpersonal, group, institutional, and societal levels. Delineating these manifestations is of special concern to practitioners and others committed to identifying policies and practices that will counter the ill effects of racial color blindness and promote more racial equity.

What Is CBRI?

In Part I, “Theoretical and Methodological Foundations,” the contributors provide a review of the theoretical perspectives of CBRI. The chapters differ in their theoretical standpoint (e.g., color and power evasion) and in their (sub)disciplinary approach (e.g., sociology, social psychology, counseling psychology, education, international studies); they also differ in their foci. Included in this section is a broad sociological view of the issues, consideration of racial color blindness on individual and interpersonal levels, and consideration of alternative perspectives. To understand what CBRI is, it is important to conceptualize what it is not. Chapters incorporate alternatives to CBRI, specifically multiculturalism (i.e., appreciation of cultural diversity) and race consciousness (i.e., critical awareness of policies and actions that serve to disrupt racial inequality). Although most of the chapters center on the dynamics within the United States, Warren’s chapter includes a multinational analysis, with an emphasis on Brazil. This chapter was included in the text as a case study in the ways in which racial color blindness operates in a multiracial country outside the United States. Warren’s analysis helps to bring perspective on the boundaries of racial color blindness and whiteness in racially hierarchical societies.

Sociologist Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2001) popularized contemporary articulations of color-blind racism in his seminal text, *White Supremacy and Racism in the Post-Civil Rights Era*. He builds on his earlier work in the first chapter of the current volume. Bonilla-Silva sets the stage for first the conversation by defining color-blind racism as the new racism that emerged after the civil rights era and that has deepened since the 2008 election of President Obama. Color blindness from his standpoint represents the dominant racial ideology of the contemporary moment in which people—individually or collectively—use racial frames, styles, and stories to minimize or justify racial inequalities in society. While Obama for some represents a definitive end to

racism in the United States, Bonilla-Silva argues against this stance, citing the continued persistence of racism in all sectors in society. He further argues that Obama himself contributed to the racial narrative minimizing race and racism through the “raceless” persona he adopted during the campaign, his distancing himself from dominant civil rights era leaders, and his lack of consideration of structural racism in his public talks on race issues in the United States. Bonilla-Silva argues that what is needed to counteract the dominant racial perspective that denies the existence of racism, and ultimately to transform society, is new social movements that will raise critical racial consciousness of people of color.

In Chapter 2, Jones asks a central question that seems to undergird much of our ambivalence, confusion, and fear about acknowledging race: Does it really matter? He reviews the social psychological literature on social categorization, stereotyping, reaction time studies to racial stimuli, correlation of Afrocentric features to criminal justice outcomes, and the impact of color-blind policies in organizations to build a case that ignoring race is impossible. He addresses the myth of color blindness while outlining how it provides cover for many Whites: (a) It prevents Whites from critically examining their racial beliefs and behaviors, (b) it exonerates them from complicit responsibility for obstructing the rights of groups of color, and (c) it allows them to continue their lives in innocence and naiveté. Jones concludes that color blindness has major detrimental consequences to people of color because it perpetuates the myth of meritocracy and denies their racial reality. Similar to Bonilla-Silva’s critique of President Obama’s adoption of “racelessness,” Jones presents an interesting new perspective to color blindness by asserting that racelessness (when people of color downplay or minimize their own race) is another side of the same coin as “color blindness.” Like color blindness, he concludes that racelessness is self-protective, self-delusional, and also not possible for people of color. Although racelessness may have functional value in limited situations, it has major harmful consequences for the holder.

In Chapter 3, Babbitt, Toosi, and Sommers explore the various motivations that people have for endorsing color blindness as a racial ideology. The authors provide a useful discussion of how White individuals who perceive zero-sum competition between racial groups may endorse color blindness as a way to preserve their own privileged status. This is one of the few discussions in the literature that explores in depth “why” people find CBRI attractive from the perspective of White individuals. They discuss the psychological mechanisms through which individuals may harbor apprehension about being labeled a racist simply for mentioning race, may believe that racial categorization is to blame for racism, and thus endorse color blindness as a way to avoid this label and because they believe it to be beneficial to people of color.

In Chapter 4, Gullett and West examine the anticipatory tensions that arise in interracial relationships and how entering an interracial interaction with a color-blind or multicultural mind-set influences the cognitive and affective processes that unfold during interracial interactions. The authors use an actor partner interdependence model framework to discuss how individuals' color-blind or multicultural mind-sets influence not only their own outcomes but their partners' as well. The authors compare the effectiveness of color-blind and multicultural approaches to interracial interactions with alternative methods for cultivating interracial relationships.

Warren broadens the discussion of CBRI in Chapter 5 by presenting a scholarly rationale on the theoretical and heuristic value of critical race studies in other parts of the world, especially Brazil. He adeptly illustrates how the study of race in Brazil helps to push back against attacks on black counter-publics, teach how racial literacy is learned, and delegitimize liberal forms of racism. In his analysis of Brazilian worldviews on race, Warren concludes that White supremacist consciousness is defined by color blindness, race evasiveness, and whitening narratives. In short, an international perspective is useful to the tasks of undermining color blindness and universalizing color consciousness in the United States. He concludes with a seldom spoken truth: "To move closer toward full emancipation, cultures will have to be violated rather than respected." In other words, to move from color blindness toward color consciousness necessitates upending White identities and worldviews.

In the final chapter in this part, Bell builds on Warren's conclusions by presenting an insightful discussion of race consciousness as an alternative to CBRI. Bell provides a critique of CBRI for its failure to understand racial inequality in society. A race conscious perspective, she argues, is essential to deconstruct race and dismantle racism. She outlines the stories we tell ourselves and others to reinforce a CBRI perspective, which she refers to as *stock stories*; there are also stories that counter racism and uncover the ways in which race matter as well as stories of resistance, the latter of which Bell characterizes as race-conscious stories. Bell provides concrete strategies to develop race consciousness. Some of these strategies include recognizing stock or dominant stories that support CBRI, working to uncover ways in which Whiteness and race are hidden, exploring the root causes of current disadvantages, creating opportunities to interrupt stock stories through rehearsal or role-play, and working to increase racial literacy.

How Is CBRI Measured or Assessed?

Understanding and synthesizing the literature on CBRI in the social sciences requires an exploration of the conceptual framework of the researchers and also the methodology used to empirically investigate the topic. Part II,

“Context and Costs,” consists of three chapters that cover the most common methodological approaches in the social sciences (i.e., experimental, survey, and qualitative or ethnographic). Each of these methods provides researchers with the tools to answer different types of interrelated questions.

In Chapter 7, M. C. Jackson, Wilde, and Goff review the social psychological research methods used to assess the causes and consequences of CBRI. The authors frame the various methodology into two broad groups. They discuss first the research that illustrates the consequences when CBRI is the norm and, second, the research that investigates which contexts motivate individuals to endorse CBRI. They further discuss that predominate research methodologies in social psychology laboratory experimental methods. The authors discuss that results from this body of research indicate that CBRI often has drawbacks even when implemented with egalitarian motivations. Finally, they discuss how future CBRI research could benefit from mixed-method approaches.

Whereas M. C. Jackson and colleagues’ discussion centers on assessing racial color blindness through experimental designs, Awad and K. M. Jackson review the primary CBRI measures used in survey research. Their review focuses on five published measures with psychometric information, but they also identify a handful of other measures that have limited information about the validity of the measure. A summary of the scale purpose, sample items, and psychometric information for the scales are part of the review. This type of information is especially helpful to researchers who may be interested in measuring CBRI in future studies. In their identification of future directions, Awad and K. M. Jackson encourage researchers to develop additional psychometrically sound measures that assess both color- and power-evasion dimensions of CBRI; to date, measures only assess one or the other dimension but not both.

In Chapter 9, Lewis and Hagerman identify the limitations in quantitative explorations of CBRI. Racial color blindness is complex, and the nuances of how race and racism are enacted in systems are not easily captured through experimental or survey methods. Instead, they argue that ethnographic research designs and in-depth interviews are essential in uncovering the hidden ways in which CBRI is practiced in institutional settings and in interpersonal relationships. The authors provide three research case examples to illustrate the benefits of and methodological strategies used in ethnographic and interview studies in the schools.

What Are the Manifestations of CBRI?

In the final section, “Manifestations of Color-Blind Racial Ideology,” contributors document the multiple ways in which CBRI operates on individual and interpersonal levels and within various contexts. We intentionally

selected three large contexts in which CBRI operates to produce racial disparities: education, the workplace, and health care–related settings. We have included two chapters on each of these broad settings to capture the complexities in the manifestations while honoring the diversity represented in the broad context categories. The chapters in this section bring to life the damaging effects of the denial of race and racism on individuals and within institutions. As a way of acknowledging human agency, authors also provide concrete strategies that researchers, educators, and applied psychologists can use to disrupt CBRI and promote color- or race-conscious practices as a means of reducing racial inequalities. We include two chapters that focus on the individual manifestation of racial color blindness, one primarily centering on White individuals and the other on people of color. We also include chapters that outline the broader manifestation of CBRI on contexts in which social scientists have collected data and have intervened to promote increased race or color-conscious policies designed to disrupt disparities.

Tettegah weaves together research from psychology, philosophy, and neuroscience to connect CBRI to expressions (or lack of) empathy in Chapter 10. A chapter on empathy was included to better capture an underlying dimension of racial color blindness that remains underdeveloped in the literature. Tettegah argues that people are wired to see group differences; thus, although people may believe they “don’t see race,” denial of race in our society is unrealistic. Drawing on the interdisciplinary research, Tettegah raises thought provoking questions about our moral obligation as humans to find appropriate ways to understand differences to develop compassion and perspective taking, which are critical dimensions of empathy. Tettegah critiques White people’s use of “preferential” or strategic color blindness; people articulate a vision of themselves as being color-blind with respect (and therefore “good”) in some situations but many times inadvertently fall back on racial assumptions when judging situations that are racialized, such as the killing of Michael Brown or the 2012 murder of Trayvon Martin by George Zimmerman, a neighborhood watch volunteer. The manifestation of racial color blindness is thus lack of empathy. In this novel exploration of CBRI, Tettegah holds the concept of inclusive empathy—empathy built on context and cultural understanding—as a desired goal.

Both White people and people of color can adopt a color-blind racial perspective; however, the frequency and consequences of this endorsement differ by race. Endorsement of CBRI among White people helps protect the individual from “appearing” racially intolerant and moreover perpetuates racial privileges through inaction (and thus maintenance of the racial status quo). People of color who adopt a racial color-blind perspective may work against their individual and group interest by supporting policies and practices that unfairly discriminate against people of color. We have included

a chapter in the collection to explicate the manifestation of CBRI among people of color. In Chapter 11, Speight, Hewitt, and Cook provide a thought-provoking discussion of the link between internalized racism and expressions of CBRI among people of color. They provide a sharp analysis that conceptualizes CBRI as existing within the context of structural racism and as an attitude that people of color may, to their detriment, adopt. Writing from a power-evasion perspective, Speight and her colleagues identify the underlying core dimensions of CBRI as being the denial of racism. This denial serves to legitimize racial inequality and thus suppresses action to remedy the social maladies. According to Speight et al.'s review, CBRI and internalized racism go hand in hand among people of color. They offer the development of critical consciousness (similar to Bell's conceptualization of race consciousness in Chapter 6, but Speight and colleagues draw more on the work of liberation education and psychology scholars) as a way to guard against internalized racism and CBRI. Speight et al. conclude by urging scholars to focus their work on critiques of systems of oppression to eliminate inequality.

Racial disparities are well documented in educational settings, and there is growing research on the ways in which color-blind racial beliefs create or maintain these disparities. We included two chapters on the manifestations of CBRI in the school context to capture the different expressions in the kindergarten through Grade 12 (K–12) context compared with the higher education. In Chapter 12, Castro-Atwater provides compelling data about the detrimental effect of CBRI on learning outcomes for K–12 students of color and on teachers' effectiveness among these children. She unpacks the ways in which race matters in schools. For example, teachers' (inadvertent) biased attitudes and behaviors can lead to lower expectations of students of color and to lower student achievement. In addition, teachers' indifference or inadvertent biases may lead youth to ignore or dismiss their own experiences with discrimination. Castro-Atwater reviews a set of teacher variables that promote CBRI in the schools, primarily through a restricted worldview or cultural lens that they bring to the classroom. The hopeful news is that teachers can and do provide counternarratives and practices that promote a color- or race-conscious school climate. Schools can encourage these narratives and practices by promoting the inclusion of cultural pedagogy in the classroom and incorporating color- or race-consciousness training in teacher education.

In Chapter 13, Kernahan extends the discussion of CBRI to the context of higher education. She specifically focuses on the role of higher education in challenging CBRI, which is consistent with many colleges' and universities' goal to promote inclusivity. Kernahan evaluates the research on the role of courses and extracurricular activities in disrupting CBRI. Overwhelming empirical data support the effectiveness toward this goal of courses with

significant “diversity-related” content. Emerging research also centers on uncovering the active ingredients in the courses that promote the desired learning outcomes. On the basis of Kernahan’s review, lectures plus intergroup dialogue and learning from other students appear to be key pedagogical tools. Kernahan also weaves in the long-standing empirical research on the “contact hypothesis” to illustrate the need of institutions of higher education to provide students with meaningful opportunities to promote intergroup friendships. Kernahan suggests faculty development around these issues be provided as one way to better prepare teachers for the difficulty in incorporating these types of experiences and information in the classroom.

We balance our discussion of color blindness in the workplace by including a chapter on the effects it has on organizational contexts, such as in the hiring, retention, and promotion of people of color and on the individual adaptive strategies employees of color use to deal with an institutional culture that professes not to see color. Block, in Chapter 14, provides an eye-opener on how CBRI in institutional policies, practices, and structures contributes to inequities in workplace outcomes. Reviewing the large body of literature on the workplace, she reveals how disparities for people of colors in the labor force exist in every step of the process: entering the job market, the type of job an individual is assigned, career advancement, and the associated wages that accompany each of these areas. Using the two-component analysis of color blindness (power evasion and color evasion) proposed by Neville et al. (2013), Block reveals how they manifest in the sociocultural organizational context. When organizational philosophy operates from a color-blind philosophy, it places the blame on employees of color for their lack of success and also perpetuates the threat of stereotype. Countering CBRI in organizational settings means that movement toward awareness of diversity dynamics must be instituted. Block takes issue with some who profess that multiculturalism alone offers an alternative to combatting injustices in organizational settings. Although many aspects of appreciating cultural diversity in employees and highlighting the value of different cultures may contribute to a positive climate for employees of color, it is not enough. She believes that these programs do not adequately address the systems that create and maintain the disparities and focus primarily on individuals. Block provides alternative goals to enhance systemic change.

In Chapter 15, Shih and Young extend the discussion of CBRI to understand policies and practices in the workplace. The authors define *organizational color blindness* as possessing a policy that emphasizes an overarching organizational identity while ignoring differences in race, culture, and ethnicity. Although misguided, a CBRI is intended to eliminate discrimination by treating everyone the same and preventing one group from being advantaged over another. The problem, as the authors point out, is that a

default standard to White norms and values become the criteria from which policies and practices are created. The downside is that instead of eliminating bias, it actually promotes and perpetuates inequities toward socially devalued groups in the workforce. It forces assimilation and acculturation and uses White prototypical norms to judge performance and the worth of employees of color. If color-blind workplaces are detrimental to women and employees of color, what does research tell us about how they cope in such an environment? The authors identify two major identity management strategies used by employees from socially devalued groups: (a) identity switching that involves deemphasizing a negatively valued identity and (b) identity regeneration or replacing a negative identity with a positively regarded one. Both are complex methods of dealing with color blindness and surviving in an organization that fails either to acknowledge or value differences. For those who use identity management strategies, there may be benefits such as helping individuals control how they experience discrimination, protect their self-esteem, increase performance outcomes, reduce anxiety, and increase interpersonal comfort. The authors point out however, that there are major psychological costs associated with these strategies: backlash effects, failure to accurately perceive important feedback, being placed in a double bind, and alienation from one's group. Again, the key for solution and major responsibility seems to lie with organizations and their recognition of the harmful consequences of CBRI.

We conclude the book with two chapters on the manifestations of CBRI in health-related contexts. Hospital settings and the provision of health care are additional contexts in which CBRI operates and unfortunately perpetuates inequality on indicators of physical health. In Chapter 16, Penner and Dovidio provide a focused discussion on how racial color blindness can negatively affect the quality of health care that Black patients, relative to White patients, receive. The authors focus primarily on Black patients, and primarily non-Black physicians, in the United States, considering the historical and continued disparities in health care that have dominated the literature for Black relative to White patients. Although the authors focus on Black patient–White physician relationships in the United States, they believe their discussions about the causes of disparities in health and health care between races would generally apply to other racial and ethnic minorities in the United States and in many other countries around the world.

In Chapter 17, Burkard, Edwards, and Adams address the manifestation of CBRI in mental health settings, particularly in the contexts of counseling and supervision. They invite readers to consider the advantages of implementing a racially conscious and inclusive perspective as a way to increase opportunities for deeper exploration and understanding within counseling and supervisory relationships. The authors review conceptual associations

between CBRI and other multicultural counseling constructs that are specific to counseling practitioners and trainees and examine empirical findings specific to color blindness in counseling and supervision processes.

CONCLUSION

The authors in this edited volume provide a rich discussion of the racial color blindness literature in terms of theoretical perspectives, research methods, and the manifestations that shape individuals' and groups' experiences. The insights offered in the chapters provide students, scholars, and practitioners with information to identify the ways in which race is still present in U.S. society, the reasons some people endorse CBRI, and the harmful effects of CBRI on interracial interactions and in policies that intentionally or unintentionally create racial disparities. The authors' critical analysis of the theory and empirical research on CBRI reveals several gaps in our current thinking. Of particular note is the lack of interdisciplinary research that incorporates both color- and power-evasion dimensions of CBRI and how they may potentially affect interpersonal interactions and organizational practices differentially.

These chapters offer a number of consistent recommendations for reducing CBRI. A particularly noteworthy strategy is to provide educators, researchers, and practitioners with professional development opportunities to learn how to increase their critical awareness about racism and to develop efficacy and skills to identify and implement race-conscious actions. Such actions would reduce anxiety in interracial interactions and promote inclusive policies that increase racial equity in a given setting. In addition to covering information on theories and research on race and racism in these development opportunities, it may be helpful to offer training in how to talk about and facilitate difficult dialogues about race and inequality. Being racially color-blind is to be racially color mute, so we must begin to help one another address nondefensively issues of race, racism, Whiteness, and White privilege. On an individual level, talking about race or helping others talk about it requires a firm sense of who we are as racial and cultural beings and a willingness to acknowledge and explore racial biases. On institutional and societal levels, several educational goals seem important. First, we must make the "invisible" visible by identifying the manifestation, dynamics, and harmful impact of racially color-blind policies or practices that create racial inequality in specific settings. Second, we must learn to work within systems and organizations to advocate and implement race-conscious policies and practices that will help to create equal access and opportunities for all.

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