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CHAPTER 12

Power and Racism

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This chapter examines the relationship between the social psychological conceptualizations of power and of racism, and outlines how research on racism can benefit from incorporating the understanding of power processes at the intergroup level. Until recently, the social psychology literatures on power and racism developed largely independently (for an exception see Opatario & Fiske, 1998). Before presenting our analysis of the relationship between racism and power, we provide theoretical definitions of these constructs. Social psychologists have rarely explicitly defined *racism* (for an exception, see Jones, 1997), despite their considerable attention to prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping of racial and ethnic groups. Rather, they either rely on colloquial meanings or have defined particular varieties of racism (e.g., symbolic racism, modern racism, aversive racism, institutionalized racism). Hence, we begin by defining *racism*. Then we summarize how *power* is defined and used in social psychological research, and find that current practices are not adequate for encompassing our definition of racism. The remainder of the chapter reexamines extant theories of racial prejudice and beliefs through the lens of power. We argue that by incorporating a broader definition of *power*, research on racism can more fully understand the effects of intergroup power on phenomena recognized as racist.

DEFINITION AND CONCEPTUALIZATION ISSUES SURROUNDING POWER AND RACISM

"Race" and Racism

Races are not natural categories that classify people by their inherent features. Races are social constructions that people create as they try to lend meaning to, account for, and justify social differences, such as differential role distribution, differential performance at tasks deemed socially meaningful, and most especially, group differences in political ascendancy. Historians of race hold that people largely create race concepts as social control mechanisms to justify the colonization, subordination, enslavement, exclusion, segregation, exploitation, or other oppressive treatment of others to benefit themselves (e.g., Allen, 1994, 1997; Fredrickson, 1981; Gossett, 1963/1997). Among the groups that have been referred to as a separate "race" by someone else are Africans, Asians, and their descendants by U.S. Americans; Irish and Scots by English invaders; Anasahs by Aryans in the Indus Valley; descendants of Noah's son Ham in the Talmud; Jews by European Christian leaders after the Crusades; numerous Native peoples by Spanish, French, and English conquistadores; Celts and Germans by some European and American scholars; and Aryans and Semites by the Nazis (Allen, 1994; Gossett, 1963/1997).

Once *race* definitions correspond to social realities, such as identities, income levels, language use patterns, religious and cultural practices, race designations can help to distinguish these realities, without reinforcing racial inequality. The U.S. Census divides the population into five different race groups: Indigenous American (North and South), White (European), African, Asian, Pacific Islander, plus mixed-race people, which is useful for documenting race differences in household composition and income, for example. Race is considered in medicine (Paradies, 2006), because certain health problems are more characteristic of some races than of others. For example, people whose ancestors hail from Northern Europe or the U.S./Mexico border area are more likely to get diabetes (Moalem & Prince, 2007), whereas Africans and African Americans have higher rates of sickle-cell anemia (e.g., Mankad & Hoff, 1992). Religious practices, family patterns, aesthetics of music and speech, and many other habits of living are passed on intergenerationally and contribute to perceptions of race differences. Because "race" persists as a social category system, it may be one of the few socially remembered markers we have that correspond to a history of shared environmental influences and cultural patterns.

However, when perceived racial differences are evaluated, such that they justify differential treatment to produce race-based hierarchy, we have the contemporary lay definition of *racism*, given by these current dictionary entries:

Merriam-Webster: "A belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race."

Cambridge: "The belief that people's qualities are influenced by their race and that the members of other races are not as good as the members of your own, or the resulting unfair treatment of members of other races."

American Heritage: "The belief that race accounts for differences in human character or ability and that a particular race is superior to others."¹

These everyday definitions of *racism* in fact represent 19th-century scientific racism (see Gossett, 1963/1997) and early 20th-century scientific conceptions of racism (e.g., Allport, 1954).

Yet contemporary social psychological research demonstrates that racism is manifest in far more complex ways. This research identifies four main shortcomings in lay definitions of racism. First, these definitions imply that racism is blatant, and do not take into consideration the very *subtle* forms that racism can take in its more modern manifestations (e.g., Dovidio & S. Gaertner, 2004; McConahay, 1986; Sears & Henry, 2005).

Second, lay definitions imply that racism is a consciously held belief resulting in intentional action. However, racial attitudes may be *implicit*, and racist behavior can be performed *without self-awareness and without intent*. For example, Whites who have negative implicit associations with Blacks are likely to show negative nonverbal behaviors toward Blacks, although they are not aware of these behaviors (Dovidio, Kawakami, & S. Gaertner, 2002; McConnell & Leibold, 2001). Whites who treat Blacks in a discriminatory fashion when there are nonracial explanations available for their actions deny that their actions were racist (Dovidio & S. Gaertner, 2004). On the other hand, Whites who hold negative associations with Blacks may still treat Blacks fairly when they are motivated to suppress expressions of race prejudice (e.g., Olson & Fazio, 2004) or when their racist attributions have been exposed (e.g., Czopp, Monteith, & Mark, 2006). To summarize, much research has shown dissociations among conscious beliefs, implicit attitudes, and actual behaviors in White racism.

A third shortcoming is that lay definitions focus on attributions that individuals make to account for individual behavior, often toward other individuals. This characterization ignores the important fact that racist beliefs, stereotypes, and practices are *socially coordinated* in many ways. Implicit negative race associations and automatic stereotype activation are not just individual cognitive phenomena but are widely shared within cultures (e.g., Karpinski & Hilton, 2001). Hence, racial beliefs can appear consensual and self-evident. Race definitions and prescribed racist practices

are associated with important cultural ideologies and practices, so racism is embedded not only in individuals' minds but also within cultures and institutions (e.g., Henry, in press; Jones, 1997; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). For example, legalized racist practices such as fugitive slave laws and racial profiling enforce discriminatory behaviors across actors, regardless of their personal beliefs about race. Social institutions, such as the criminal justice system, the labor market, the housing and retail markets, the education system, and the health care system, systematically discriminate against certain racial groups (see Sidanius & Pratto, 1999, for a review). Individual beliefs, attitudes, and actions may have little influence on the standard operating procedures of institutions, so individual cognition-focused theories of racism are inadequate.

Finally, and of most importance here, although lay definitions acknowledge social hierarchy, they fail to acknowledge overtly that racism fundamentally concerns group-based *power*. Racism is the package of attitudes, affect, associations, beliefs, language, practices, and behaviors that create or perpetuate power differences among racial groups. Racism is understood by social scientists, including psychologists, to be directed against those racial groups in society with less power (Jones, 1997; Paradies, 2006). Hence, one cannot talk sensibly about racism against racial groups in society that have greater power. For example, few would consider resistance to and negative attitudes toward Nazis (representing the "German Race" in Hitler's vision) as a form of "racism." As such, a lay term like "reverse racism," which was created to allege discrimination against Whites due to affirmative action programs, is an oxymoron to a social scientist, insofar as racism conceptually is not directed against racial groups in power. Today, papers in respected social psychology journals do not refer to racism against Whites.

In contrast, other terms in use in the intergroup literature, such as *stereotyping*, *prejudice*, and *discrimination*, are not defined by power relations. Consequently, one can speak sensibly of stereotypes about Whites (e.g., "White people can't jump"), prejudice against Whites (e.g., "I don't like White people"), and discrimination against Whites (e.g., behaviors that exclude Whites). Strong negative language (e.g., Black Panther speeches) and certain hate crimes against Whites may be racially prejudiced but, again, do not constitute "racism" because of Whites' superior position in the social power hierarchy.

A central thesis of this chapter is that explicit consideration of group power is necessary for understanding the ways racism is instantiated in stereotypes and stereotyping, prejudice, discriminatory practices and policies, and their consequences. Many intergroup processes are very different when directed against members of higher- versus lower-power groups. Prejudice

and antipathy against members of higher-power groups may have different roots and different consequences than prejudice and antipathy against members of lower-power groups. For example, intergroup contact may positively change implicit intergroup attitudes of those in lower power social groups more readily than it does for those in higher-power groups (Henry & Hardin, 2006). Furthermore, whereas the law often privileges the family structures and personal vices of Whites, it differentially punishes those of Blacks (e.g., Maurer & King, 2007; Moynihan, 1965). These asymmetries cannot be adequately accounted for without acknowledging group power.

In summary, social psychology's conceptions of racism are broader than lay definitions that restrict racism to blatant, intentional, individual processes. The breadth of the social psychological conceptions result from the fact that racism can be intentional or unintentional, conscious or unconscious, and active or passive, and can be manifest in individuals, institutions, and cultures.²

Conceptualizing Power in Terms of Intergroup Processes

Because power is a characteristic feature of racism, we must consider what is meant by *power*. Although racism by definition involves *intergroup* processes, the two most influential approaches to power in social psychology have both focused on *interpersonal* social influence processes. French and Raven (1959) delineated several means by which one person could influence another, such as through authoritative roles or coercion (see also Raven, 1992). Thibaut and Kelley's (1959) interdependence theory defined *power* as relational, in that whichever party could more easily exit a relationship or obtain desired things elsewhere had more influence within the relationship. The interdependence approach also implies that a consequence of having power is freedom to realize one's desires (e.g., Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003). This approach is mostly applied at the individual level or to interpersonal relations (e.g., Rusbult & van Lange, 2003).

However, power can and should be studied as an intergroup and not just an interpersonal phenomenon. This calls for an expanded conception of power, so that we can more fully address how power pertains to racism. The conception of power as social influence or outcome control emphasizes having *power over* another person (Fiske & Berdahl, 2007). To the extent that Whites control more desirable resources and more often have authority positions over non-Whites than the reverse, this understanding of power as outcome control is suitable for analyzing racism. From a self-categorization theory perspective, Turner (2005) argues that alongside *power over*, we consider *power through* a group, or getting others to do one's will and that of one's group because of desire to affiliate with the group. And in fact the

history of racism demonstrates that Whites forming coalitions and creating social categories of race was essential to subjugating Blacks on whose free labor they depended (e.g., Allen, 1997). To the extent that Whites form more effective blocs than those who are not White, and when racial identity motivates racist action, the *power through* understanding of power is suitable.

Although all three of these conceptualizations of power (freedom to act, influence over others, power through group cohesion) contribute to understanding racism, all three are insufficient to understand some of the most important aspects of racism. For one, racial segregation, both physical and economic, limits how much interracial power relations can be said to be described by Whites' controlling Blacks' outcomes. Additionally, not all of interracial power stems from White identification processes. And finally, if being low in power means having fewer opportunities and/or stronger social constraints, then the social environment must be considered part of the analysis of power. Racial disparities in power are exhibited in how easily people of different races can fulfill their basic needs, as well as in how easily they can realize their desires. As we will argue, this disparity is not simply due to race differences in power as agency. Moreover, disparities exist in a variety of domains, suggesting that multiple kinds of power exist. For now, let us simply consider interracial power as *comparative* power, or one group having more power compared to another group. To spell out this conception of power, we turn to power basis theory.

Power basis theory uses an ecological definition of *power* that encompasses how people's capabilities and their environments together enable or disable them to meet their survival requirements (Pratto, Lee, Tan, & Pitpitan, in press). Constructive power enables people to meet basic needs, and destructive power creates deficits other's in needs or prevents others from meeting their needs. Because people can provide the means of other people's needs and desires, there is the possibility of social influence, including "soft" tactics such as rewards, and affiliation and "hard" tactics such as coercion (Raven, Schwarzwald, & Koslowsky, 1998). According to power basis theory, power is not situated in the person or group, or only in social relations, but in the relation between human needs, human capacities, and their local environment. Thus, both the social and physical aspects of environments can afford or constrain the meeting of needs. From this viewpoint, neither agency nor environmental affordances alone, can guarantee that needs are met.

Power basis theory explains recurrent types of power in social relations (e.g., force, control of resources, legitimacy) by positing that each basic survival need has a correspondent basic type of power. For example, the need to eat healthy foods and use other material resources makes access to such resources a recurrent type of power, whereas the need to belong makes

legitimizing acceptance in or rejection from a community a constructive or destructive type of power, respectively. Using this conceptualization, it makes sense to say that income inequalities between races bespeak differences in power, because they pertain to how well members can take care of their material needs, regardless of whether they have any interpersonal relations with people of other races. Likewise, prejudice and stigma associated with racism are a kind of destructive power, because they limit the communities in which members of certain races can be accepted. For this reason, constructive power is not simply agency, because such power also depends on the availability of the means of meeting needs in the environment.

This conception of *power* as the ability to determine whether needs are met better describes the reality of racial power disparities than does interpersonal influence, because it considers personal and group characteristics along with environmental features. Here we provide examples of these kinds of power disparities in race that involve people's needs for health, consumable resources, belonging, and knowledge, between Blacks and Whites in the United States.

The most fundamental survival need is the need for wholeness or health. Blacks suffer from ill health at higher rates than do Whites in many ways, as evidenced in the tragic markers of shorter life expectancies (Arias, 2006) and higher infant mortality rates (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2007). Race discrimination in medical access and treatment contributes to this group power difference, as does lack of access to grocery stores stocked with healthy foods (Crister, 2000; Zenk et al., 2005). However, violence also contributes. For example, Blacks are five times as likely to be murder victims as Whites (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2007). Race disparities in health behaviors, as well as in how well environments afford health behavior and health care, jointly create race differences in health (e.g., Sidanius & Pratto, 1999).

Survival also requires consuming resources such as clothing and shelter. Wealth is one means of meeting the need for consumable resources, and White wealth is greater than Black wealth. For example, in 2000, the median net worth of White American households was over 10 times that of Black households (\$79,400 vs. \$7,500; Orzechowski & Sepielli, 2003).

All people have a need to belong (e.g., Baumeister & Leary, 1995), and power basis theory views social legitimacy and stigma as indicators of belonging or its lack. A third dimension in which Whites maintain greater power than Blacks is legitimacy or status. Whites hold positions of authority, have a greater voice in community affairs, and receive more attention than Blacks. For example, company presidents and business executives in the United States are disproportionately White (e.g., U.S. Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995), and media coverage of crime victims disproportionately

ately focuses on Whites (e.g., Romer, Jameison, & de Couteau, 1998). In a plethora of ways, Black belonging is in question, whereas White belonging is a given.

The fourth dimension, knowledge, addresses the need to interact competently with one's environment. Formal educational systems privilege White knowledge more than Black knowledge, for example, in how "standard English" and "American history" are defined. Blacks are statistically discriminated against, in that schools receive less government support to the extent they have larger proportions of Blacks (Kozol, 1991). In addition, Blacks often have to be competent at interacting with both Blacks and Whites, whereas relatively few Whites need bicultural competence (e.g., Ogbu, 1994). Thus, obtaining competence at interacting with one's environment is more difficult for Blacks than for Whites in many ways.

With respect to these survival needs and others, Blacks are substantially lower in power than Whites in the United States. We argue that racism is the main cause of these power disparities.

The Operationalization of Interpersonal versus Intergroup Power

Our analysis addresses power at the intergroup level. But in contemporary experiments, power often is operationalized as *interpersonal* influence rather than as intergroup influence. Interpersonal power is manipulated when participants are told to recall a time in their lives when they had power over another individual or individuals (Galinsky, Magee, Inesi, & Gruenfeld, 2006), and when individuals are assigned to leadership roles in some team task (Vescio, Snyder, & Butz, 2003). Other studies do examine intergroup power dynamics in experimental situations, but such studies also typically use deliberate influence over outgroup members as the conception of power. For example, group power often is manipulated as direct, conscious control over the outcomes of others (Guinote, Judd, & Brauer, 2002; Sachdev & Bourhis, 1985, 1991; Saguy, Dovidio, & Pratto, 2008), or as being the victim of others who directly and consciously control one's outcomes (Dépret & Fiske, 1999). As discussed in the previous section, group-based power is neither always nor typically about the direct and intentional exertion of power over others' outcomes.

Nevertheless, an interpersonal influence conception of power can describe some forms of racism. For example, the fact that the vast majority of employers in the United States are White gives Whites much more authority to hire and fire, to set salaries, and to prescribe the terms of employment over Blacks, Latinos, and Asian Americans. Racism in hiring discrimination is one kind of biased treatment that can be seen as interpersonal influence (e.g., Biernat & Kobrynowicz, 1997), even though it occurs within institutional contexts and has institutional as well as per-

sonal consequences. In parallel, many teachers of non-White students are White, and teachers have the opportunity to educate and to create records that influence students' outcomes for years to come. These kinds of interpersonal action fit the conception of racism as members of one race having power over members of another. When the treatment is differentially worse depending on the target's race, it is racist.

However, because racism is inherently group-based, there may be considerable utility in understanding that intergroup power goes beyond interpersonal influence, or power over others, for several reasons. First, interpersonal power is felt as a personal experience (e.g., Galinsky et al., 2006), whereas group-based power more typically is an implicitly assumed privilege (Powell, Branscombe, & Schmitt, 2005). Members of high-power racial groups in society do not "feel" their greater power and are often unaware of it, and often will not believe it when told that, as a group, they have more power than other racial groups in society. For example, a powerful and widely endorsed item of the Symbolic Racism 2000 scale (Henry & Sears, 2002) is the denial of discrimination, or the denial that racial differences are perpetuated by the greater power that Whites have over Blacks. Likewise, those who score highest on the Social Dominance Orientation scale perceive the smallest Black-White status differences (Kahn, Ho, Sidanius, & Pratto, 2009). Consequently, experimental manipulations of power that directly give individuals the feeling that they have control over the resources or outcomes of others, even of others who belong to a different group, may not capture aspects of intergroup power that are more consistent with the realities of intergroup resource distributions, where individuals in higher-power groups do not have—or acknowledge having—direct control.

Second, race-based power is institutionalized (Henry, in press; Jones, 1997; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999), such that it is not always clear to what extent interpersonal power differences contribute to racial differences. For example, when police officers use harsh physical constraints on Black suspects, and when juries and judges are more likely to convict and give severe sentences to Black than to White defendants, such actions are not merely functions of interpersonal dynamics. The legal and authoritative institutional roles of police officers, attorneys, and jurists make such treatment institutional racism. Finally, racial segregation where people live, worship, work, and attend school must be considered an important aspect of racism, and because segregation limits interpersonal contact, it is hard to see how interpersonal outcome dependence approaches address that aspect of racism.

Social psychologists have developed some innovations toward broadening the conception of group-based power by manipulating individuals into groups that are powerful, without giving those individuals direct inter-

power differences in society are stabilized. This balance occurs through the trade-off between what are called *hierarchy-enhancing legitimizing myths* (HE-LMs) and *hierarchy-attenuating legitimizing myths* (HA-LMs). As the name suggests, HE-LMs serve to enhance or maintain existing hierarchies through beliefs and attitudes that justify the hierarchy. These beliefs include current ideas that Blacks are responsible for their lower position in society, that discrimination is largely a thing of the past, and that people generally get what they deserve (see Pratto et al., 2000). HE-LMs are powerful in maintaining racial hierarchies in the United States, because they are rooted in beliefs that form the basis of a national conscience, such as the Protestant work ethic and rugged individualism, which stipulate that everyone can do or be anything they want provided they try, particularly in a land of opportunity (Lipset, 1996; McClosky & Zaller, 1984).

Conversely, HA-LMs serve to reduce social power hierarchies. In the case of racism, they might include current beliefs that we should place the blame for power disparities between Blacks and Whites not on Blacks but on societal discrimination, that discrimination is wrong, that social equality between the races is necessary for a healthy society, and so forth (e.g., Sidanius, Levin, Federico, & Pratto, 2001). HA-LMs can also be rooted in values that form the core of a nation's conscience, including (in the United States) the values of equality and justice. All of these beliefs are thought to lead to the push-and-pull tension in response to HE-LMs.

This push and pull against HE-LMs is dynamic. Reactions against inequality can occur, first, by curtailing institutional discrimination and using institutions to broaden people's means of meeting needs. One important example of such a change has been through legal rulings, and federal and state education practices: Whereas in 1940, fewer than 8% of African Americans graduated from high school, in 2000, over 80% did so (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). Second, changes in which equality-oriented ideologies are consensual, more culturally potent, and normative should help to reduce discriminatory behavior and reorganize the distribution of needed resources. For example, activists eventually won abolition partly by identifying the hypocrites in how the American credos of equality and Christian theology were used to legitimize slavery (e.g., Truth, 1854).

But social dominance theory's analysis also cautions that backlash can occur in reaction to change toward equality. Once opposition to inequality in any form becomes apparent, one can expect countermoving forces to deploy ideology and other social control devices (e.g., the law, powerful institutions) against change. For example, American conservatives have changed the meaning of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "color-blind" ideal from one in which discrimination against Blacks is not performed to one in which reparations toward Blacks are made problematic.

personal power. First, students can be led to compare their own school's power with more or less successful and prestigious schools (Jost & Burgess, 2000; Schmader, Major, Eccleston, & McCoy, 2001). This manipulation mentally puts individuals into groups of different power, without imbuing them with conscious and direct power over other individuals. Second, a manipulation of group size into majority and minority groups could be considered a proxy for power (e.g., Ebenbach & Keltner, 1998; Guinote, Brown, & Fiske, 2006), although it is important to not forget that power is sometimes held by minority groups (e.g., colonizers, Whites in apartheid South Africa). Additionally, one can consider patterns of power differences as they occur naturally in social groups, including those based on race, in examining different effects of high versus low group-based power (e.g., Henry & Hardin, 2006; Major et al., 2002).³

In summary, there may be considerable value for expanding conceptions of power differences to include those that do not involve direct, interpersonal influence. From the perspective of power basis theory, it is more important to consider the ease with which environments afford people's needs and people's assumptions about such affordances, or the lack thereof.

THEORETICAL ISSUES SURROUNDING POWER AND RACISM

Power and the Racial Hierarchy Homeostasis

The evidence noted earlier with respect to power basis theory demonstrating inequalities in the ability of Whites and Blacks to have their survival needs met (see also Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) demonstrates that racial inequality persists in the United States.

We now more fully spell out our understanding of racism and prejudice in the context of racial power hierarchies, before addressing how it pertains to a number of other theories of racial prejudice. According to the theory of social dominance (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999), once a power hierarchy system that is well-legitimized with ideologies and cultural patterns is in place, little effort is needed to sustain it in a kind of power-hierarchy homeostasis; that is, if institutional discrimination is in place and legitimizing ideologies are widely spread, seem self-apparently true, and organize practices and relationships, then societies will maintain intergroup power differences without much effort. Socialization processes can also contribute to the persistence of racism over time (Sears & Henry, 2005).

The maintenance of these power differences requires a push and pull of forces promoting and reducing inequality, such that, in the balance, racial

Contextualizing Research on Racial Fear and Threat within a Power Framework

Our analysis of power and racism also suggests ways to reconsider the many theories of racial prejudice based on perceived threat to the dominant group from subordinate groups. We summarize this literature before providing our analysis.

Realistic group conflict research describes the roots of prejudice and stereotypes in threats that one group poses to another's resources and interests (Jackson, 1993; Sherif & Sherif, 1953). In the racial arena, Whites' negative racial attitudes may have roots in threats that they perceive Blacks make to their interests (Bobo, 1983), or in their perception that Blacks' advancements mean losses for Whites (Eibach & Keegan, 2006). Integrated threat theory broadens the construct to include threats not only to groups' resources and interests but also to values and worldviews (Stephan & Stephan, 2000). Additionally, the basic effects of intergroup contact on changing negative racial attitudes (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006) rely in part on the idea that interracial contact disabuses people of fears and threats that other racial groups may pose (Islam & Hewstone, 1993; Stephan et al., 2002). Separate lines of research confirm that even generalized abstract threats to one's world can influence negative racial attitudes. For example, research on authoritarianism shows that particular kinds of threat (normative threat) strengthen the relationship between authoritarianism and racial intolerance (Feldman & Stenner, 1997).

Racial threat and fears also may be invoked as a form of ideological communication, and fear messages can also serve as legitimizing myths, as a number of studies have shown. For example, George H. W. Bush's famous "Willie Horton" campaign in the 1988 presidential election may have triggered race-based fears among Whites concerning crime laws, and may have helped garner Bush substantial votes (Kinder & Sanders, 1996). Other research shows that presidential campaign advertisements that provoke racial fears can persuade Whites who hold subtle forms of racism to vote against White candidates who are not "sufficiently" hostile to Blacks or protective of Whites (Mendelberg, 2001).

From the perspective of the relationship between racism and power, perceived threats can be different from actual threats. However, because perceived threats are so strong in invoking prejudice, one can expect legitimizing ideologies that invoke perceptions of threat to be convincing, regardless of their basis in reality. In other words, the actual dangers behind fears and threats are less important than the idea that fears and threats provide ample, reasonable explanations for racist beliefs and behavior. The hypothesis we would forward, then, is that the removal of any actual threats that Blacks might pose to Whites' power would *not* make racism go away.

Contextualizing Current Racial Prejudice Research within a Power Framework

According to social dominance theory, the dynamic conflict between HE and HA forces helps to maintain a homeostatic power hierarchy. The standard for deciding how much equality or inequality groups have is not to be found in the contents of legitimizing beliefs, nor in whether the government is imperial, democratic, or despotic, nor in the economic system, but simply in whether groups are able to meet their own needs and equally are able to create deficits in others or prevent others from meeting their needs.

This view of power dynamics contrasts markedly most contemporary theories of racial prejudice, which do not address power. Rather, they were developed in response to the findings in public opinion polls from the late 1960s when White Americans began to deny that they endorsed racial inequality, while failing to endorse policies that actually do reduce racial inequality, such as affirmative action and school desegregation (e.g., Jackman, 1978; Schuman, Steeh, Bobo, & Kyrsan, 1997). Such theories include modern racism (McConahay, 1986), symbolic racism (Sears & Henry, 2005), ambivalent racism (Katz & Hass, 1988), and aversive racism (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004). Although motivations for and manifestations of racial prejudice vary across theories, all assume that there has been a shift away from blatant expressions of racial superiority that relies on such subtle psychological processes or ideological reasoning that Whites are unaware of their prejudice. For example, reductions in legal race discrimination bolster the belief in equal opportunity, making racial inequality attributable to Blacks' shortcomings (Major et al., 2002). Furthermore, Blacks are not resentful for having Black characteristics, but for violating values such as individualism (McConahay, 1986; Sears & Henry, 2005). Aversive racists do not seem racist to themselves, because they treat Blacks worse than Whites only when there is a plausible, nonracial explanation available for their discriminatory behavior (Dovidio & S. Gaertner, 2004).

Our explication of power and racism suggests different interpretations of these sorts of racism. First, social dominance theory allows that any kind of racial prejudice or beliefs and, indeed, other ostensibly nonracial ideologies can function as legitimizing myths to garner approval of racist practices and foment opposition to antiracist practices. In particular, modern racism and symbolic racism have been shown to mediate between antiegalitarian values and opposition to progressive race policies (e.g., Pratto, Stallworth, & Conway-Lanz, 1998; Sidanius et al., 2001; Sidanius, Devereux, & Pratto, 1992). In other words, these kinds of more modern racial prejudices, even if considered "subtle," may serve as power- and hierarchy-enhancing legitimizing ideologies.

Power and Racial Identity

The one arena in which social psychologists have long-recognized asymmetries in power with respect to race is in identity and public acceptance. Being a normative member of society is conflated with being White (Devos & Banaji, 2005; Leach, Snider, & Iyer, 2002). Ethnographic studies consistently show that adolescent White Americans rarely consider themselves to have a race (e.g., Tatum, 1997), whereas Black adolescents do considerable work in developing their racial identity against a backdrop of racism (e.g., White & Burke, 1987). Blacks, unlike Whites, are labeled with their race, as though it were peculiar and explanatory (Pratto, Korchmaros, & Hegarty, 2007). People who are neither Black nor White in the United States grapple with whether they are like, or should be viewed as being like, Blacks or Whites (Cyrus, 1993).

Stereotypes and stereotyping foist other identity problems on those who are not White. For example, stereotype threat (Steele & Aronson, 1995) and rejection sensitivity (Mendoza-Denton, Downey, Purdie, Davis, & Pietrzak, 2002) are more common and chronic among lower-power racial groups. The content of stereotypes that powerful racial groups create and promote about minority racial groups creates other kinds of real interpersonal and identity traps, too. Black people often fear that they will be perceived through a racist lens, for example, as criminals or as dangerous (Staples, 1978; Lee, 2000). Such concerns are realistic inasmuch as those who are not White are subject to police brutality and false witness identification and conviction at high rates (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999, Chapter 8). However, to posture as nonthreatening to Whites, Blacks might consider affecting an obsequious posture that also would run the risk of confirming a different, odious stereotype, that of Uncle Tom. The trap between being an aggressive threat or a harmless servant narrows the ways Blacks can be recognized as respectable and agentic in Whites' eyes. There is no strong, parallel, stereotypical double-bind for Whites, particularly not one in which power backs up fears of being stereotyped.

Using Power against Racism

There are important historical examples of individuals in power who have made far-reaching decisions that have encouraged antiracism, often in the face of considerable public opposition. President Truman ordered the armed forces to desegregate fully following World War II, an act that began one of the most successful desegregation efforts in American history. President Johnson later pushed through the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act in the 1960s, actions that outlawed formal segregation and discrimi-

nation against Blacks. The literature in social psychology has also shown how individual power can be used against racism. One study showed that people who have a communal relationship orientation, or concern for the needs of others without the expectation of the return of any favors, show a *decrease* in their racism when put into a position of power (Chen, Lee-Chai, & Bargh, 2001). These findings show that power need not always lead to the kinds of attitudes that are harmful toward people of lower-power races, at least when power is bestowed upon certain individuals.

Other studies in the context of stereotyping reveal circumstances where powerful people may resort to individuating information rather than stereotypes concerning subordinates. Use of individuating information about lower-status people seems to occur in situations where that information clearly has some advantage to the powerful person's pursuit of goals (Vescio et al., 2003), or contexts where there are clear advantages to gathering correct information about those lower-power individuals (Overbeck & Park, 2001). Such studies provide an optimistic view that some types of power, at least as manifest in individuals in interpersonal or organizational relationships, may serve to reduce racism.

However, some caveats should be attached to these findings as they concern the reality of racism at the group-based level. Most especially, these studies establish laboratory conditions that rarely occur naturally in racially hierarchical societies. For example, to expect power to reduce racism in society broadly, Chen et al.'s (2001) work would require that most Whites be communal and include Blacks as part of their "community," assumptions that seem unlikely given what we know about Black-White relations in society. This caveat is not meant to cast doubt on the ability of power to have a positive effect on race relations; rather, the caveat suggests that the positive effect of power on racism is probably a relatively rare phenomenon.

CONCLUSION

We have argued that racism is an intergroup power situation, not always because individual Whites usually, deliberately, and knowingly exert more personal influence on Blacks, but because Whites are advantaged over Blacks in terms of many kinds of power, that is, ability to meet needs. We assume that power imbues all aspects of racism, including racial prejudice, the contents and functions of racist legitimizing ideologies, racial identity processes, and stereotyping and stereotype contents. Analyses of power may provide new ways of understanding asymmetries in these processes. We believe that researchers of these processes should theoretically and

empirically investigate when "basic" social psychological processes will not be symmetrical for people in low- and high-power groups.

Because public distaste for racism is still increasing, it is equally important to spread new scientific conceptions of racism that acknowledge power in its subtle and complex forms to the general public. Just as scientific definitions of racism have become the common understanding of racism so that they may be combated in public, the acknowledgment that racism is about presumptive power and privileges, as well as about survival needs, can be disseminated to the public, so that the fight against racism does not exclude changing the racial power hierarchy.

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NOTES

1. These definitions were obtained from the OneLook Dictionary website: *www.onelook.com*.
2. For a comprehensive analysis of racism as it is manifest at different levels of analysis (i.e., individual, institutional, and cultural), see Jones (1997).
3. One important consideration is that of group-based status, which is theoretically distinguishable from power (e.g., Boldry & L. Gaertner, 2006). Many of these analyses of group-based power may be conflated with group-based status. To this point in the literature on status, power, and racism, it is not clear the extent to which there is conflation and how it might be problematic for some of the points raised here.

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CHAPTER 13

Power and Sexism

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Social psychological theory has assumed implicit linkages among power, gender, and sexism, but the specific nature of these linkages has yet to be thoroughly explicated and critically tested. To begin to consider and elaborate upon the theoretical nature and proposed function we first focus attention on a single question that has received only limited prior attention; namely, when and why men may exert power in gender interactions by means of soft influence tactics (e.g., praise, reward) versus harsh influence tactics (e.g., coercion, aggression, hostility; Raven, Schwarzwald, & Koslowsky, 1998). To consider possible answers to this question, we review theory and research on masculinity, because power is a central component of masculinity, and because threats to masculinity lead to aggression. As a result, a consideration of masculinity, we suggest, is central to attempts to understand the nature, content, and function of men's means of exerting power over women.

To consider critically the question of when and why men may exert power in gender interactions by means of soft versus harsh influence tactics, this chapter is divided into four sections. First, we review mainstream social psychological theory and research on gender, noting the linkages between power and gender that have been implied but have yet to be fully specified and empirically examined. We conclude the first section by noting that common across many contemporary theories of sexism is the notion that gender-based inequities or power differentials in gender relations are more typically and effectively maintained through the sweet, persuasive influences of paternalism (or soft influence tactics) than open acts of hostile-