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## Canonizing the Critical Race Artifice

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# CANONIZING THE CRITICAL RACE ARTIFICE

## An Analysis of Philosophy's Gentrification of Critical Race Theory

*Tommy J. Curry*

### Introduction

As a discipline, philosophy has established its character through an obdurateness dedicated to preserving the truth of its authors, the efficacy of its logic, and the legacy of its theoretical schools. However, when engaging black theory little effort is made to maintain the heritage of black schools of thought. To the contrary, black theory is canonized by the extent to which its founding authors are displaced, and the particularity of its methods and concepts assimilated within the disciplinary narratives of the larger canon (Curry, 2011a; Curry, 2011b; Curry 2010). Critical Race Theory (CRT) is perhaps the clearest example of this anti-black dynamic within the academic discipline of philosophy. Richard Delgado's "Crossroads and Blind Alleys: A Critical Examination of Recent Writing About Race" argues that the popularization of CRT and its adoption by predominately white institutions and academic departments have hastened the deradicalization of the material analyses formulated by the original race-critics across multiple disciplines (Delgado 2004). The adoption of Continental philosophy and post-structuralism as the methods of analyzing problems of racism and other social inequalities has allowed many disciplines to embrace CRT as a general label designating any number of inquiries into questions concerning race generally without any attention to the methodological and theoretical commitments of Critical Race Theory in its original formulation. The initial formulation of CRT was racial realist, meaning it focused on the empirical and historically defined differences in economic status and political power, and made its concern the social stratifications which had emerged throughout America as the foundation of its analysis into not only the law but the routine function of white supremacist ideology more generally. The present-day interpretation and popular understanding of CRT however, is quite different, and imagined only to exist as a conceptual and discursive engagement with issues of identity, or privilege.

This chapter aims to articulate two major deficiencies in the adoption of Critical Race Theory within the discipline of philosophy—specifically how philosophers understand Bell’s thinking about racism and CRT’s methodological assumptions. The first section will discuss the idealist shift in Critical Race Theory as well as the thinking that came to replace its initial racial realist orientation. The second section will address the lack of engagement with the foundational works of Derrick Bell. Because many scholars associate Derrick Bell’s work with one statement, “racism is permanent,” there is not an exploration of his analyses of economics, history, and institutional power which are common themes throughout his corpus. In an attempt to correct the reductionism of Bell, which caricaturizes black radicals, I will analyze some of his lesser known works and contextualize them to his larger project and method. Finally, I will end with a brief reflection on the recent creation of Critical Philosophies of Race within the discipline of philosophy and its relationship to the misrepresentation of CRT. This comparative approach will highlight what I take to be a reinvention/rearticulating of arguments made over 30 years ago within a disciplinary tradition which altogether erases and ignores the substantive contributions of black, brown, and Indigenous authors for a disciplinary invention aimed at incorporating white voices and white authorship over black theory.

### The Idealist Shift of Critical Race Theory

This shift in the focus of CRT towards more conceptual ventures was not altogether natural. There was nothing intuitively drawing CRT from its previous questions concerning the functioning of history, economics, politics, and law towards more contemporary constructs like discourse and identity. The popularization of CRT allowed a dispersion of its core ideas. The conceptualization and literatures philosophers are given and told are representative of CRT emerges from a mid-1990s institutionalization of CRT by elite institutions; ultimately the product of a mediation between younger scholars in the 1990s seeking entrance into the highest ranks of the academy by abandoning nationalist, Pan-African, and economic explanations of racism for works interpreting racism symbolically—an approach that “placed texts, narratives, scripts, stereotypes, and Freudian entities at the center of analysis” (Delgado 2004: 145). This viewing of race was not based on an amelioration of racism in American society such that a dissolving of the material, economic, and political differences between blacks, Indigenous, Latin peoples, and whites made it necessary to explain racial conflicts in terms of the attitudinal prejudice and discursive representations of non-white *others*; rather this was a paradigmatic shift within the academy as to how scholars studying American racism would be rewarded for understanding and interpreting racism. In philosophy, scholars with little to no actual course work concerning the origins of CRT, or a working knowledge of Derrick Bell’s development of the theory, are embraced precisely because they seek to ameliorate racism, discrimination, and social inequality through dialogue, appeals to love, and calls to acknowledge one’s (racial) privilege.

Fabio Rojas’s *From Black Power to Black Studies: How a Radical Social Movement Became an Academic Discipline* (2007) explains how race conscious programs in Black Studies that echoed any form of cultural or politically oriented Black Nationalist thought were targeted and systematically de-radicalized. Ford Foundation grants were used to engineer the direction and scholarship of these departments toward political ideologies

of desegregation and multiculturalism because “foundation officers were in strong disagreement with those activists and scholars who saw black studies as an institution primarily for the African American community . . . and discouraged black militancy within the academy” (Rojas 2007: 141). CRT sought institutionalization within an academic climate incentivized to censor and remain hostile to systemic nationalist paradigms and race conscious analyses of American racism. This attack on race conscious analyses coincided with idealism’s proliferation across disciplines, and explains how the aims of deans, tenure committees, and elite institutions’ ability to co-opt CRT was hastened within more traditional disciplines because of the threat a radical race-conscious paradigm represented. According to Delgado,

Around the time that Critical Race Theory took the turn I mentioned, it was also gaining a degree of legitimacy in academic circles. Deans were bankrolling workshops and conferences and subsidizing new specialized law reviews to publish their proceedings . . . from the dean’s perspective, is it not safer to fund scholarship that examines literary tropes than that which has the effrontery to propose that America’s proudest moment—*Brown v. Board of Education*—came about because white folks decided to do themselves a favor? . . . From the perspective of the young scholar seeking tenure, it is certainly safer to attack a word or media image than law school hiring, the Supreme Court, or the Pioneer Fund. A media image cannot fight back or send a letter to one’s dean.  
(Delgado 2004: 145–146)

Delgado’s analysis should not be interpreted without the context of Fabio Rojas’s aforementioned text—conversations and studies of American racism must be decidedly integrationist, multicultural, and non-militant. For racial realists, inspired by the works of black revolutionaries like Robert F. Williams, W.E.B. Du Bois, Paul Robeson, Huey P. Newton, and the militant resistance movements of the 1960s and 1970s which rejected desegregation as little more than a Cold War strategy to further US imperial interests abroad (Dudziak 1988, 2002, 2004), the predetermined and institutionalized consensus of universities in the United States meant their incorporation into disciplines would require a dire reformulation.

Racial realists begin their analysis with a historicization of *Brown v. Board of Education* and subsequent attempts to achieve racial integration which find these events to be primarily driven by white economic and political interests (Bell 2004). Following the pessimism of W.E.B. Du Bois, found throughout his work in the 1960s like “American Negroes and Africa’s Rise to Freedom,” and “[W]hites in Africa after Negro Autonomy,” early realists like Derrick Bell, Richard Delgado (1992), Delgado and Stefancic (1995), Linda Greene (1998), and Kenneth Nunn (1997) found integration to be a superficial and politically expedient way to usurp the domestic power of black radicals while expanding their cultural allure abroad (Du Bois 1965). The racial realist demands a relevant historical and political analysis to ground their interpretation of racial events, while “Liberal integrationist ideology” as Gary Peller (2012) notes in *Critical Race Consciousness: Reconsidering American Ideologies of Racial Justice*, “is structured so that some social practices are taken out of the economy of race relations and understood to be undistorted by racial power” (14). This abstraction of racism away from the material is the calculus through which Critical Race Theory is interpreted as

conforming-confirming established disciplinary theory and highlights the attractiveness of idealist theorizations over realist analysis. The idealist perspective

holds that race and discrimination are largely functions of attitude and social formation. For these thinkers, race is a social construction created out of words, symbols, stereotypes, and categories. As such, we may purge discrimination by ridding ourselves of the texts, narratives, ideas, and meanings that give rise to it and that convey the message that people of other racial groups are unworthy, lazy, and dangerous.

Formulating racism as largely semiotic, a misrepresentation of the actual relationships race has to malicious meanings of the language structuring our thinking, idealism allows a post-1970s university to accept a paradigmatic approach to American racism which focuses on racial identity, mutual dialogue, and cross-racial understanding.

Throughout the academy, scholarship on racism is treated as theory or political ideology (a term used to mark its non-academic or anti-intellectual status) based on its underlying formulation of American racism. If a work on racism engages race and whiteness through an integrationist lens—as capable of transformation—which concedes the possibilities of American democracy as shown during the Civil Rights era, then it is considered suitable as race or political theory. If a work does not hold to the multiculturalist and integrationist trajectory of American democracy, it is largely excluded from disciplinary knowledge and condemned as overly political and ideological. In “Race Consciousness,” Gary Peller (1990) argues that integrationist ideology has determined the precepts through which race and racism are understood in mainstream American political culture as well as its institutions of higher learning. Because “integrationist ideology locates racial oppression in the social structure of prejudice and stereotype based on skin color, and . . . identifies progress with the transcendence of a racial consciousness” (Peller 1990: 760), race conscious orientations, like Black Nationalism, which critique the underlying assumptions of objectivity and racial neutrality to colonialism and the power to control cultural meanings, “became marginalized as an extremist and backward worldview, as the irrational correlate in the black community to the never-say-die segregationists of the white community” (Peller 1990: 790). This very rudimentary division of knowledge operates to censor and designate those works and scholars worthy of consideration, and those who are not, within disciplines. Scholars who articulate positions where racism and white supremacy are at the core of all other societal stratifications are routinely referred to as “radical,” “ideological,” or accused of being intellectually immature and backwards. These works are usually deemed non-philosophical, and more appropriate in more marginal fields like Black or Ethnic Studies.

Philosophy relies on the consensus of its audience towards integration. In the mind of many white liberals, segregation was the basis of racism, thus integration appears to be anti-racist a priori. In this way, racist theories and practices are absolved of their evil if done under the guise of integration, plurality, and inclusion. Consequently, philosophy remains unshakably racist (both in theory and practice) since no amount of empirical or historical evidence is ever considered a refutation of the failures or ineffectiveness of its cherished racial ideations. What white scholars believe to be anti-racism inevitably becomes the parameter of the conversations, theories, and authors allowed to comment on the problem at large. In short, the discipline of philosophy remains racist

because one cannot test out of racism, no amount of evidence can challenge its a priori formulations. As such, the impressions of the white majority in philosophy, even when demonstrated to be empirically denied or historically untrue, remain the guiding ethos of black engagements with racism and oppression, as well as the barometer determining the value of Critical Race scholarship within the discipline.

### Understanding Derrick Bell's Corpus: The Themes of Bell's Racial Realism

Derrick Bell is perhaps the most ignored black political theorist of the twentieth century. While Critical Race Theory is routinely mentioned in practically every philosophical text on race over the last two decades, the political theories, phenomenological investigations, and critical interventions by Bell have remained ignored (Curry 2008; 2011a; 2015). By and large, Derrick Bell's work is understood in the discipline of philosophy through his 1992 book *Face at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism* (1992a) and his provocation of racial realism which argues that:

Black people will never gain full equality in this country. Even those Herculean efforts we hail as successful will produce no more than temporary "peaks of progress," short-lived victories that slide into irrelevance as racial patterns adapt in ways that maintain white dominance. This is a hard-to-accept fact that all history verifies. We must acknowledge it and move on to adopt policies based on what I call: "Racial Realism." This mind-set or philosophy requires us to acknowledge the permanence of our subordinate status.

(Bell 1992b, 373–374)

Many scholars simply stop here in their engagement(s) with Bell's thought. Since many scholars, black and white, in the academy identify as liberal or progressive, Bell's indictment of the Civil Rights movement is not only challenging, but offensive. The aversion many scholars and disciplines have to Bell's challenge leads not only to misunderstanding Bell's system and reducing racial realism to an ideological claim, but devalues Bell as a thinker and resource for race theorists. Bell envisioned racial realism as a paradigm aiming to understand how racism persists, and black conditions subtly worsen, while symbols of racial progress proliferate throughout American society and are celebrated as concrete racial advances. While the *racism is permanent thesis* is a position formulated by a marriage of sociology and jurisprudence that suggests racism is structural and immutable, a position bolstered by Bell's use of internal colonization analysis to understand the racial organization of American society, it is not synonymous to racial realism. Bell only reaches this conclusion at the end of his racial realist analysis which evaluates history, law, and the political economics behind the Civil Rights era (Bell 1993).

According to Bell, racial realism has four major themes. The first theme is historical and argues that "there has been no linear progress in civil rights. American racial history has demonstrated both steady subordination of blacks in one way or another, and if examined closely, a pattern of cyclical progress and cyclical regression" (1992a: 98). The second theme of Bell's theory is economic and argues for economic analysis to be utilized over ethical appeals to equality. Bell is adamant that "in our battles with



racism, we need less discussion of ethics and more discussion of economics . . . Ideals must not be allowed to obscure the blacks' real position in the socioeconomic realm, which happens to be the real indicator of power in this country" (1992a: 98). The third theme of "salvation through struggle," or the rejection of "any philosophy that insists on measuring life's success on the achieving of specific goals—overlooking the process of living" (1992a: 98) is heavily related to Bell's fourth theme of the racial realist imperative which argues that "those who presently battle oppression must at least consider looking at racism in this realistic way, however unfamiliar and defeatist it may sound" (1992a: 99). For Bell, racial realism holds the possibility of truth and justice, but these values can only be had by honesty with ourselves that does not allow our intellect and imaginations for struggle to be captured by the lullabies of our oppressors. Because our abstract normative values (freedom, justice, etc.) are rooted in the consensus of whites, rather than the guarantee of rights enforced by law, the enjoyment blacks have of their hard-fought civil rights fluctuate based on the agendas and interests of the white populace and the state.

The more popular readings of Bell which that interpret him almost solely through some of his more provocative claims may be expedient, but such approaches do not allow for a careful or scholarly engagement with the founder of CRT—such an approach is simply reactive and lends to serious inaccuracies and misinterpretations of Bell's overall corpus. Bell's thinking did not simply emerge as a theoretical intuition about the world, rather it was the conclusion of a systematic analysis of the law, politics, civil rights cases, and economics. In fact, Bell's thinking about segregation, the ineffectiveness of civil rights policy, and racism was inspired by Judge Robert L. Carter—a pioneer civil rights lawyer and colleague of Thurgood Marshall. The parallel between Derrick Bell's work and that of Judge Robert L. Carter is uncanny. It was not until March of 2009 that Derrick Bell told me "Judge Carter is my major mentor and I could do a book about his influence on my outlook" (Bell, email, 2009). Carter's work is an interesting account of the jurisprudential issues at stake for blacks and the fickle constitutional doctrine of racial equality. If one reads Carter's work from his proclamations from the 1950s to the late 1960s, we see a transforming account of racism as being located within segregation to an account of racism that saw the institutional, cultural, and societal milieu of white superiority the foundation of American white supremacy (Carter 1953, 1955; Carter and Marshall 1955). Carter was well aware that "in dealing with the question of segregation, it must be recognized that these effects do not the place in a vacuum, but in a social context" (Carter 1953: 68). Because the "segregation of Negroes and other groups in the United States takes place in a social milieu in which race prejudice and discrimination exist" (Carter 1953: 68), Carter maintained that social cultural analyses (by this meaning the sociological, anthropological, psychological, and psychiatric) must be a fundamental component of understanding American race relations. In all reality, it is Carter's work that set the stage for Bell's future account of racism as white supremacy and his theory of interest convergence. As Robert L. Carter remarked in "The Warren Court and Desegregation,"

*Brown's* indirect consequences, therefore, have been awesome. It has completely altered the style, the spirit, and the stance of race relations. Yet the pre-existing pattern of white superiority and black subordination remains unchanged; indeed, it is now revealed as a national rather than a regional

phenomenon. Thus, *Brown* has promised more than it could give, and therefore has contributed to black alienation and bitterness, to a loss of confidence in white institutions, and to the growing racial polarization of our society . . . Few in the country, black or white, understood in 1954 that racial segregation was merely a symptom, not the disease; that the real sickness is that our society in all of its manifestations is geared to the maintenance of white superiority.  
(Carter 1968: 243)

Exposing the shortcomings of *Brown v. Board* was a monumental criticism in the 1970s. Black and white scholars and activists alike were celebrating the recent achievements of the 1960s and 1970s, so a criticism of desegregation by black lawyers who worked to dismantle segregation was seen as heresy.

In 1977, Derrick Bell published “Racial Remediation: An Historical Perspective on Current Conditions,” an article heavily influenced by Carter’s “The Warren Court and Desegregation,” which sought to explain how the racist-economic dimension of America’s political organization determined the landmark racial achievements from the abolition of slavery to desegregation that were driving many of the ideas that American racism have improved, progressed, and in some cases dissipated. This essay introduced the economic premise behind what would later become Racial Realism. In the late 1970s, Bell argued that white interest determined black rights. Bell understood that the economic and political forces of white America awarded or took away black rights as it saw necessary for its own advancement. Bell was adamant that the

measurable improvement in the status of some blacks, and predictions of further progress have not substantially altered the maxim: white self-interest will prevail over black rights. This unstated, but firmly followed principle has characterized racial policy decisions in this society for three centuries. Racial policies are still based on the sense—no less deeply held when it is unconscious—that America is a white nation, and that white dominance over blacks is natural, right and necessary as well as profitable and satisfying. This pervasive belief, the very essence of racism, remains a viable and valuable national resource.  
(Bell 1977: 6)

In the late 1970s, Bell conceptualized Civil Rights as a contingent rather than epochal change in American racism. Attention to Bell’s intellectual genealogy shows that his arguments against liberal constitutionalism and political liberalism precedes the arguments Critical Legal Studies (CLS) launched against legal indeterminacy in the 1980s, and is at least contemporaneous with the founding of the CLS movement in 1977 (Unger 1983). Contrary to the characterization of Bell as simply addressing race, Bell’s work is seeking to establish a paradigm to understand the complexities and historical duration of American racism. In his first book, *And We Are Not Saved: The Elusive Quest for Racial Justice* (1987), Bell constructs his argument against the alleged success of the Civil Rights movement as an empirical study of the socio-economic condition of the newly integrated black population in the United States. Unsurprisingly, Bell finds that after three decades of desegregation, and two decades after the passing of civil rights legislation, black Americans remain impoverished, jobless, and by effect politically impotent.



Throughout this text Bell asserts that the failure of the normative political and racial values to deliver economic ends to Black America doom actual black progress because black people become dependent on the political economy of white society for sustenance. A serious reading of Bell shows his analysis of American racism, even his pessimism in a political economic account of America's structural organization and cultural predilection against black progress, is based in the cumulative disadvantage that persists despite the promises of liberalism. Bell argues that the

pattern of racial oppression in the past created the huge black underclass, as the accumulation of disadvantages were passed on from generation to generation, and the technological and economic revolution of advanced industrial society combined to insure it a permanent status.

(124)

Similarly, in a conversation with the fictional character Geneva Crenshaw who argued that it was the fear America has of inter-racial sexual relations between black men and white women behind anti-miscegenation laws instead of the economic justifications proposed by Bell, Bell answers that

one need not deny [these sanctions were motivated by whites' basic fear and abhorrence of interracial sex], to agree with Frantz Fanon that it is reasonable to assume that attitudes about sex are embedded in a given cultural and historical context; and that even if sexuality is basically biological, its form of expression is influenced by variables including economics, status, and access to power.

(207–208)

Racism is enforced by the perambulation of everyday whites who are able to extend or retract the law based solely on their will. It is precisely this mirroring function of the law to white racial interests, be it bourgeois or not, that defines and constrains blackness. It is this economic dynamic and the power of racism (white racial interest) that directs and regulates black political progress; it is this process that Bell names as interest-convergence in "*Brown v. Board of Education* and the Interest Convergence Dilemma" (Bell 1980).

His most popularly known work, *Faces at the Bottom of the Well*, is at its core the product of his more empirically dense and historical work from years prior. In *Faces at the Bottom of the Well*, Bell attempts to convince the reader of the viability of a racial realist perspective through multiple case studies and hypotheticals. The chapters titled "Space Traders" and "Afrolantica" push black people to see the reality of the Civil Rights movement; this text is written as a play on the fears of black citizens after their celebration of racial equality. Bell asks the black citizenry, "Are your rights permanent?" "Can they be taken away?" "What and who allows you to enjoy equality temporarily?" These questions are sociological and historical, and as Bell shows central to the interpretation the group in power operationalizes through the law. "Space Traders" is an illustration of a new American slavery that shows black people do not in fact have to power to maintain their rights to American citizenship without the consent of the white population. Bell convincingly argues that if black equality is only maintained by white compassion, and whites are fickle creatures, then law and civil rights are contingent and not assured. If white interests and power award black rights, then blacks actually live in a constant state of fear, since both the white violence used against

blacks, and white sympathy with blacks are dependent on white racial interests. This proposition has been called nihilist and fatalistic, because it suggests that the incremental progress black people have made in the United States is illusory. These criticisms however miss the point of Bell's normative thought. Bell argues that struggle against racism creates the value and existential worth for the oppressed, not the temporary rewards within a racist structure. Bell imagines black struggle as creating a world that is possible. "Afrolantica" is Bell's narrative of black cultural potency; it demonstrates that there is a conceptual geography, a reason, a material cultural reality that black Americans have access to that can create a different world. Bell believes that struggle against racism is culturally renewing and powerful, even though he remains pessimistic about the viability of racism's end (Curry 2012). Bell's alternative to the structural solidification of American racism is the marking out of a possible world for black people and new black realities.

### The Critical Race Artifice

As demonstrated above, philosophy has not yet adequately understood or explored the works of the first generation of race-crits and the debates they had within the literature to justify moving beyond the primary authors or texts of the field. Critical Race Theory has not only exceeded the limitations of the law, but achieved a transdisciplinary reach whose conceptualizations and configurations of American racism influence scholarship in sociology, history, and education. Despite the widespread utilization of CRT, it is philosophy that finds this tradition wanting, in need of new thinkers—white thinkers—and more critical (Frankfurt School) tools. Given the new work in history concerning the Black Panthers and their views of black masculinity and black femininity, and the motivations behind Civil Rights organizations and armed resistance, it would seem that the exploration of the ideas and political theories behind the work of Bell and other first generation race-crits remain a rich and untapped intellectual resource for explorations of racism, economics, and sexuality (Joseph 2001, 2003; Cobb 2014). There is no need to turn to Europe simply because philosophy lacks the attention span or interest to dig into black America. The idealist tradition opened the door for various Continental theories to comment on the realities of anti-black racism. Today, it is believed that racism is merely an object of theory, a problem that can be analyzed most effectively through already canonized European thought and figures.

Critical philosophies of race (CPR) maintains a loose association with the currency utilized by many disciplines around the country for doing CRT, but differs from disciplines like sociology and education in that no black theorists are centralized at the historical helm and theoretical foundation of the movement. There is no mention of Derrick Bell, Mari Matsuda, or even Charles Lawrence III—the theorist credited by Richard Delgado for ushering in the idealist wave (bringing Continental philosophy) to CRT, or the problems encountered by race-crit scholars in their attempts to deal with anti-essentialist identities through post-intersectionality, the multiple histories of settlerism and genocide by Robert A. Williams Jr., the Eurocentricism and colonialism by Kenneth Nunn, and immigration. In the first reference piece on CPR, Robert Bernasconi argues:

Critical Philosophy of Race calls itself "critical" not only because it investigations and attacks racisms wherever they may be found, but also in recognition of the pioneering work done both by critical race theory within legal studies, which is a forerunner of work in this area, and by critical theory (the Frankfurt

school). Although there is some overlap between [CRT] and [CPR] the former at least as developed initially tended to offer only a partial picture. It provided clear evidence for the view of race as socially constructed, for example, by documenting not only the differences between the laws defining someone's racial status from one state to the other, but also the various ways in which courts would apply these laws. This showed the extent to which the concept of race was not primarily a scientific concept, but critical race theorists might still be criticized for not giving sufficient weight to the role played by science in legitimating racial thinking. Critical race theory also tended to focus excessively on the legal framework established in the North American context, whereas critical philosophies of race is committed to a global perspective.

(Bernasconi 2012: 551)

But this explanation is as vague as it is puzzling. Bernasconi suggests that the advantage of a CPR perspective over a CRT perspective is that the philosophical variant exceeds the confines of American jurisprudence and as well as the geographical borders of the United States. Yet an investigation of the first three volumes of the *Critical Philosophy of Race* journal show that its focus is overwhelmingly Americanist. For example, the first volume of the *Critical Philosophy of Race* journal announcing the field of CPR focused on the black-white binary in race theory. The essays in the first volume of *CPR* primarily deal with American race relations and identity, as does the second issue of the volume, with the exception of an article about Afro-Mexicans by Mariana Ortega. The later volumes in 2014 and 2015 largely represent the same Americanist context with little to no internationalist or global perspective.

CPR's approach to race theory is consistent with Critical Race Theory literature in general and mimics the themes anthologized over a decade earlier in *Crossroads, Directions, and a New Critical Race Theory*.<sup>1</sup> This anthology specifically claimed that Critical Race Theory had to consider and develop towards more global and multidimensional considerations. In the introduction, the editors state:

Despite the doubts, sneers, and attacks, CRT has not only survived but is also flourishing as it enters its second decade. Critical race feminists, critical race queers, and Latino/a critical theorists (LatCrits) have added sexual oppression, transnationality, culture, language, immigration, and social status to our original understanding of racism and class stratification to racial injustice.

(Valdes, Culp, and Harris 2002)

The first volume, both issues 1 and 2, of the *Critical Philosophy of Race* journal actually dedicates its attention to specifically American understandings of race and racism (Otto 2017; Floya and Yuval Davis 1992). While there are discussions of racial identity beyond Blackness and whiteness, the writings in the first volume of *CPR* simply echo the work of LatCrits like Elizabeth Iglesias, Kevin R. Johnson, and Francisco Valdes from the 1990s who called for a transatlantic and global account of citizenship, state power, and immigration (Valdes 1997a, 1997b; Martinez 1998; Iglesias 2001). If *CPR* simply reiterates work previously done by CRT that philosophers are not familiar with, then it would seem the perspective is not a methodologically or conceptually distinct approach, but rather a disciplinary iteration of previously written theories and themes said not to exist.

From a materialist account, one must consider the conditions, cultural conditions, and institutions responsible for creating a new field of studying race within a racist discipline like philosophy. Who were the actors? What are the historical foundation and literatures that differentiate the perspective? What are the theoretical assumptions and how do these resist or empower certain political ideologies and actors? Whereas black intellectual traditions have rarely been recognized immediately, or acknowledged historically for their analysis and theoretical clarification of racism and colonialism, the creation of a field of study dedicated to racism should be a case study and object for investigation for some time into the future. This chapter is an attempt to better situate and historicize some of the debates and scholarship surrounding the mythology of Derrick Bell's work and the growing utilization of intersectionality. While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to fully account for the recent adoption of Critical Philosophies of Race as a perspective from which race can be studied, it is necessary for a comparative analysis and study of the concepts, precepts, and apparatus utilized and assumed by the CPR and CRT. Further study and investigation into the normative ideas and historical literature of CPR is necessary for such study to occur. It is my intent that this chapter at least clarify some of the central ideas and debates within CRT literature and the misperceptions of the racial realist tradition. Without a delineation between the debates, concepts, and literatures of CPR and CRT, intersectionality and post-intersectionality, and racial realism and idealism, philosophy will be able to occupy the intellectual traditions of black and brown thinkers, their schools of thought and methods, while demanding these original texts and authors belong only to Black or Ethnic Studies or law. In other words, philosophy's gentrification of these territories of theory must be arrested and challenged.

### Note

- 1 The first volume of the *CPR* journal includes a session dedicated to the black-white binary. The essays primarily deal with American race relations and identity. The volume begins with Charles W. Mills, "Retrieving Rawls for Racial Justice? A Critique of Tommie Shelby," *Critical Philosophy of Race* 1.1 (2013): 1–27. The second essay is José Medina's "Colorblindness, Meta-Ignorance, and the Racial Imagination," 38–67, which is followed by Kyoo Lee's "Why Asian Female Stereotypes Matter to All: Beyond the Black and White, East and West, 86–103. Arguably the only transnational consideration is Namita Goswami's "The (M)other of all Posts: Post-Colonial Melancholia in the Age of Global Warming, 104–120. The second issue of volume 1 starts with a reply to Mills by Tommie Shelby titled "Racial Realities and Corrective Justice: A Reply to Mills," *Critical Philosophy of Race* 1.2 (2013): 145–162.

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