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 question, "¿Cómo esta frijol?"
 (original). Inside, the card
 [translation] How ya bean?" (Of
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Louisois-White and Dolores
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 California State University at San
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 the Los Angeles area were
 choose fully Spanish pronun-
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aim to a sense of humor. But I
 Mock Spanish, and I urge others
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 that *de lujo* is as common as *de*
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 k that Mock Spanish is harm-
 e expense of people who don't
 ns.

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Culture and Research Journal,

nique and Dolores Valencia
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SOURCE: *Mock Spanish: A Site for the Indexical*
Reproduction of Racism in America English by Jane H.
 Hill. Reprinted by permission of the author.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If racism is covert and unintended, is it
 still racism? How does Hill make the case that Mock
 Spanish helps to reproduce and sustain racism in
 the larger society? Is her case convincing? What evi-
 dence does she cite? If she is correct, under what
 conditions would it *not* be racist to tell an "ethnic"
 joke? Is ethnic or racial humor always racist?

2. What is "dual indexicality" and how does it
 work? What's the difference between direct and
 indirect indexicality? Cite and explore an example
 from your own discourse, the conversations of
 others, or from the mass media (TV, movies, and
 so on).

SEEING MORE THAN BLACK AND WHITE: LATINOS, RACISM, AND THE CULTURAL DIVIDE

Elizabeth Martinez

...
 When [Henry] Kissinger [Secretary of State
 under President Nixon] said years ago "nothing
 important ever happens in the south," he artic-
 ulated a contemptuous indifference toward
 Latin America, its people, and their culture
 which has long dominated U.S. institutions and
 attitudes. Mexico may be great for a vacation,
 and some people like burritos but the usual
 image of Latin America combines incompe-
 tence with absurdity in loud colors. My parents,
 both Spanish teachers, endured decades of
 being told kids were better off learning French.

U.S. political culture is not only Anglo-
 dominated but also embraces an exceptionally
 stubborn national self-centeredness, with no
 global vision other than relations of domination.
 The U.S. refuses to see itself as one nation sitting
 on a continent with 20 others all speaking

languages other than English and having the
 right not to be dominated.

Such arrogant indifference extends to Latinos
 within the U.S. The mass media complain,
 "people can't relate to Hispanics"—or Asians,
 they say. Such arrogant indifference has played
 an important role in invisibilizing La Raza
 (except where we become a serious nuisance or a
 handy scapegoat). It is one reason the U.S. har-
 bors an exclusively white-on-Black concept of
 racism. It is one barrier to new thinking about
 racism which is crucial today. There are others.

GOOD-BYE WHITE MAJORITY

In a society as thoroughly and violently racial-
 ized as the United States, white-Black relations
 have defined racism for centuries. Today the

composition and culture of the U.S. are changing rapidly. We need to consider seriously whether we can afford to maintain an exclusively white/Black model of racism when the population will be 32 percent Latin/Asian/Pacific American and Native American—in short, neither Black nor white—by the year 2050. We are challenged to recognize that multi-colored racism is mushrooming, and then strategize how to resist it. We are challenged to move beyond a dualism comprised of two white supremacist inventions: Blackness and Whiteness.

At stake in those challenges is building a united anti-racist force strong enough to resist contemporary racist strategies of divide-and-conquer. Strong enough in the long run, to help defeat racism itself. Doesn't an exclusively Black/white model of racism discourage the perception of common interests among people of color and thus impede a solidarity that can challenge white supremacy? Doesn't it encourage the isolation of African Americans from potential allies? Doesn't it advise all people of color to spend too much energy understanding our lives in relation to Whiteness, and thus freeze us in a defensive, often self-destructive mode?

NO "OPPRESSION OLYMPICS"

For a Latina to talk about recognizing the multi-colored varieties of racism is not, and should not be, yet another round in the Oppression Olympics. We don't need more competition among different social groupings for that "Most Oppressed" gold. We don't need more comparisons of suffering between women and Blacks, the disabled and the gay, Latino teenagers and white seniors, or whatever. We don't need more surveys like the recent much publicized Harris Poll showing that different peoples of color are prejudiced toward each other—a poll patently

designed to demonstrate that us coloreds are no better than white folk. (The survey never asked people about positive attitudes.)

Rather, we need greater knowledge, understanding, and openness to learning about each other's histories and present needs as a basis for working together. Nothing could seem more urgent in an era when increasing impoverishment encourages a self-imposed separatism among people of color as a desperate attempt at community survival. Nothing could seem more important as we search for new social change strategies in a time of ideological confusion.

My call to rethink concepts of racism in the U.S. today is being sounded elsewhere. Among academics, liberal foundation administrators, and activist-intellectuals, you can hear talk of the need for a new "racial paradigm" or model. But new thinking seems to proceed in fits and starts, as if dogged by a fear of stepping on toes, of feeling threatened, or of losing one's base. With a few notable exceptions, even our progressive scholars of color do not make the leap from perfunctorily saluting a vague multiculturalism to serious analysis. We seem to have made little progress, if any, since Bob Blauner's 1972 book *Racial Oppression in America*. Recognizing the limits of the white-Black axis, Blauner critiqued White America's ignorance of and indifference to the Chicano/a experience with racism.

Real opposition to new paradigms also exists. There are academics scrambling for one flavor of ethnic studies funds versus another. There are politicians who cultivate distrust of others to keep their own communities loyal. When we hear, for example, of Black/Latino friction, dismay should be quickly followed by investigation. In cities like Los Angeles and New York, it may turn out that political figures scrapping for patronage and payola have played a narrow nationalist game, whipping up economic anxiety and generating resentment that sets communities against each other.

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So the goal here, in speaking about moving beyond a bipolar concept of racism, is to build stronger unity against white supremacy. The goal is to see our similarities of experience and needs. If that goal sounds naive, think about the hundreds of organizations formed by grassroots women of different colors coming together in recent years. Their growth is one of today's most energetic motions and it spans all ages. Think about the multicultural environmental justice movement. Think about the coalitions to save schools. Small rainbows of our own making are there, to brighten a long road through hellish times.

It is in such practice, through daily struggle together, that we are most likely to find the road to greater solidarity against a common enemy. But we also need a will to find it and ideas about where, including some new theory.

THE WEST GOES EAST

Until very recently, Latino invisibility—like that of Native Americans and Asian/Pacific Americans—has been close to absolute in U.S. seats of power, major institutions, and the non-Latino public mind. Having lived on both the East and West Coasts for long periods, I feel qualified to pronounce: an especially myopic view of Latinos prevails in the East. This, despite such data as a 24.4 percent Latino population of New York City alone in 1991, or the fact that in 1990 more Puerto Ricans were killed by New York police under suspicious circumstances than any other ethnic group. Latino populations are growing rapidly in many eastern cities and the rural South, yet remain invisible or stigmatized—usually both.

Eastern blinders persist. I've even heard that the need for a new racial paradigm is dismissed in New York as a California hang-up. A black Puerto Rican friend in New York, when we talked about experiences of racism common to

Black and brown, said "People here don't see Border Patrol brutality against Mexicans as a form of police repression," despite the fact that the Border Patrol is the largest and most uncontrolled police force in the U.S. It would seem that an old ignorance has combined with new immigrant bashing to sustain divisions today.

While the East (and most of the Midwest) usually remains myopic, the West Coast has barely begun to move away from its own denial. Less than two years ago in San Francisco, a city almost half Latino or Asian/Pacific American, a leading daily newspaper could publish a major series on contemporary racial issues and follow the exclusively Black-white paradigm. Although millions of TV viewers saw massive Latino participation in the April 1992 Los Angeles uprising, which included 18 out of 50 deaths and the majority of arrests, the mass media and most people labeled that event "a Black riot."

If the West Coast has more recognition of those who are neither Black nor white, it is mostly out of fear about the proximate demise of its white majority. A second, closely related reason is the relentless campaign by California Governor Pete Wilson to scapegoat immigrants for economic problems and pass racist, unconstitutional laws attacking their health, education, and children's future. Wilson has almost single-handedly made the word "immigrant" mean Mexican or other Latino (and sometimes Asian). Who thinks of all the people coming from the former Soviet Union and other countries? The absolute racism of this has too often been successfully masked by reactionary anti-immigrant groups like FAIR [the Federation for American Immigration Reform] blaming immigrants for the staggering African-American unemployment rate. . . .

As this suggests, what has been a regional issue mostly limited to western states is becoming a national issue. If you thought Latinos were just "Messicans" down at the border, wake up—they are all over North Carolina, Pennsylvania

and 8th Avenue Manhattan now. A qualitative change is taking place. With the broader geographic spread of Latinos and Asian/Pacific Islanders has come a nationalization of racist practices and attitudes that were once regional. The west goes east, we could say.

Like the monster Hydra, racism is growing some ugly new heads. We will have to look at them closely.

THE ROOTS OF RACISM AND LATINOS

A bipolar model of racism—racism as white on Black—has never really been accurate. Looking for the roots of racism in the U.S. we can begin with the genocide against American Indians which made possible the U.S. land base, crucial to white settlement and early capitalist growth. Soon came the massive enslavement of African people which facilitated that growth. As slave labor became economically critical, “blackness” became ideologically critical; it provided the very source of “whiteness” and the heart of racism. Frantz Fanon would write, “colour is the most outward manifestation of race.”

If Native Americans had been a crucial labor force during those same centuries, living and working in the white man’s sphere, our racist ideology might have evolved differently. “The tawny,” as Ben Franklin dubbed them, might have defined the opposite of what he called “the lovely white.” But with Indians decimated and survivors moved to distant concentration camps they became unlikely candidates for this function. Similarly, Mexicans were concentrated in the distant West; elsewhere Anglo fear of them or need to control was rare. They also did not provide the foundation for a definition of whiteness.

Some anti-racist left activists have put forth the idea that only African Americans experience racism as such and that the suffering of other people of color results from national minority rather than racial oppression. From

this viewpoint, the exclusively white/Black model for racism is correct. Latinos, then, experience exploitation and repression for reasons of culture and nationality—not for their “race.” (It should go without saying . . . that while racism is an all-too-real social fact, race has no scientific basis.)

Does the distinction hold? This and other theoretical questions call for more analysis and more expertise than one article can offer. In the meantime let’s try on the idea that Latinos do suffer for their nationality and culture, especially language. They became part of the U.S. through the 1846–48 war on Mexico and thus a foreign population to be colonized. But as they were reduced to cheap or semi-slave labor, they quickly came to suffer for their “race”—meaning, as non-whites. In the Southwest of a super-racialized nation the broad parallelism of race and class embraces Mexicans ferociously.

The bridge here might be a definition of racism as “the reduction of the cultural to the biological,” in the words of French scholar Christian Delacampagne now working in Egypt. Or: “racism exists wherever it is claimed that a given social status is explained by a given natural characteristic.” We know that line: Mexicans are just naturally lazy and have too many children so they’re poor and exploited.

The discrimination, oppression and hatred experienced by Native Americans, Mexicans, Asian/Pacific Islanders, and Arab Americans are forms of racism. Speaking only of Latinos, we have seen in California and the Southwest especially along the border, almost 150 years of relentless repression which today includes Central Americans among its targets. That history reveals hundreds of lynchings between 1847 and 1935, the use of counter-insurgency armed forces beginning with the Texas Rangers, random torture and murder by Anglo ranchers, forced labor, rape by border lawmen, and the prevailing Anglo belief that a Mexican life doesn’t equal a dog’s in value.

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But wait. If color is so key to racial definition, as Fanon and others say, perhaps people of Mexican background experience racism less than national minority oppression because they are not dark enough as a group. For White America, shades of skin color are crucial to defining worth. The influence of those shades has also been internalized by communities of color. Many Latinos can and often want to pass for whites; therefore, White America may see them as less threatening than darker sisters and brothers.

Here we confront more of the complexity around us today, with questions like: What about the usually poor, very dark Mexican or Central American of strong Indian or African heritage? (Yes, folks, 200,000–300,000 Africans were brought to Mexico as slaves, which is far, far more than the Spaniards who came.) And what about the effects of accented speech or foreign name, characteristics that may instantly subvert “passing”?

What about those cases where a Mexican-American is never accepted, no matter how light-skinned, well-dressed or well-spoken? A Chicano lawyer friend coming home from a professional conference in suit, tie and briefcase found himself on a bus near San Diego that was suddenly stopped by the Border Patrol. An agent came on board and made a beeline through the all-white rows of passengers direct to my friend. “Your papers.” The agent didn’t believe Jose was coming from a U.S. conference and took him off the bus to await proof. Jose was lucky; too many Chicanos and Mexicans end up killed.

In a land where the national identity is white, having the “wrong” nationality becomes grounds for racist abuse. Who would draw a sharp line between today’s national minority oppression in the form of immigrant-bashing, and racism?

None of this aims to equate the African American and Latino experiences; that isn’t

necessary even if it were accurate. Many reasons exist for the persistence of the white/Black paradigm of racism; they include numbers, history, and the psychology of whiteness. In particular they include centuries of slave revolts, a Civil War, and an ongoing resistance to racism that cracked this society wide open while the world watched. Nor has the misery imposed on Black people lessened in recent years. New thinking about racism can and should keep this experience at the center.

A DEADLY DUALISM

The exclusively white/Black concept of race and racism in the U.S. rests on a western, Protestant form of dualism woven into both race and gender relations from earliest times. In the dualist universe there is only black and white. A disdain, indeed fear, of mixture haunts the Yankee soul; there is no room for any kind of multifaceted identity, any hybridism.

As a people, La Raza combines three sets of roots—indigenous, European, and African—all in widely varying degrees. In short, we represent a profoundly un-American concept: *mestizaje* (pronounced mess-tee-zah-hey), the mixing of peoples and emergence of new peoples. A highly racialized society like this one cannot deal with or allow room for *mestizaje*. It has never learned to do much more than hiss “miscegenation!” Or, like that Alabama high school principal who recently denied the right of a mixed-blood pupil to attend the prom, to say: “your parents made a mistake.” Apparently we, all the millions of La Raza, are just that—a mistake.

Mexicans in the U.S. also defy the either-or, dualistic mind in that, on the one hand, we are a colonized people displaced from the ancestral homeland with roots in the present-day U.S. that go back centuries. Those ancestors didn’t cross the border; the border crossed

them. At the same time many of us have come to the U.S. more recently as “immigrants” seeking work. The complexity of Raza baffles and frustrates most Anglos; they want to put one neat label on us. It baffles many Latinos too, who often end up categorizing themselves racially as “Other” for lack of anything better. For that matter, the term “Latino” which I use here is a monumental simplification; it refers to 20-plus nationalities and a wide range of classes.

But we need to grapple with the complexity, for there is more to come. If anything, this nation will see more *mestizaje* in future, embracing innumerable ethnic combinations. What will be its effects? Only one thing seems certain: “white” shall cease to be the national identity.

A glimpse at the next century tells us how much we need to look beyond the white/Black model of race relations and racism. White/Black are real poles, central to the history of U.S. racism. We can neither ignore them nor stop there. But our effectiveness in fighting

racism depends on seeing the changes taking place, trying to perceive the contours of the future. From the time of the Greeks to the present, racism around the world has had certain commonalities but no permanently fixed character. It is evolving again today, and we'd best labor to read the new faces of this Hydra-headed monster. Remember, for every head that Hydra lost it grew two more.

Sometimes the problem seems so clear. Last year I showed slides of Chicano history to an Oakland high school class with 47 African Americans and three Latino students. The images included lynchings and police beatings of Mexicans and other Latinos, and many years of resistance. At the end one Black student asked, “Seems like we have had a lot of experiences in common—so why can't Blacks and Mexicans get along better?” No answers, but there was the first step: asking the question.

...

SOURCE: From *De Colores Means All of Us: Latina Views for a Multi-Colored Century* by Elizabeth Martinez. Reprinted by permission of the author.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does Martinez mean by the “Oppression Olympics”? Why is it destructive, from her point of view, to compete for the “most oppressed” gold? What should nonwhites be pursuing instead? What can minority groups learn from each other? How would (white) America change if nonwhite groups learned to “get along better”?

2. Martinez argues that the dualistic white/black model of racism encourages people of color “to spend too much energy understanding our lives in relation to Whiteness.” What does she mean by this? What is “whiteness” and how does it relate to nonwhite groups? Is Martinez addressing a psychological process only, or are there political or economic (or other) dimensions?

3. Martinez discusses the struggle of nonwhite and dispossessed groups against “a common enemy.” Who is that enemy? White people? Whiteness?

4. What are some specific ways discussed by Martinez in which nonwhites and Hispanic Americans in general are “invisibilized” and scapegoated?

5. Is the oppression and discrimination faced by Latinos mainly based on race or ethnicity, culture, and language? How would Martinez answer this question? What difference does it make? How?

NOT WHITE OR BLACK, BUT IN BETWEEN: LATINOS AND ASIAN AMERICANS EXPANDING THE LANGUAGE OF COLORBLIND RACISM

Eileen O'Brien

Population experts predict that the percentage of Americans in "minority groups" will increase radically by the middle of this century with Latinos and Asian Americans leading the way. U.S. society has largely been defined by a dichotomous racial order: blacks vs. whites. What will happen to this simple structure as America becomes more "brown" and "yellow"? Will the ancient racial order find a way to perpetuate itself or will it be transformed? What changes can we expect in the way race and group membership are discussed and perceived?

Some scholars predict that the growth of Latinos and Asians signifies the impending end of white domination (the "coming white minority"), and foreshadows the coming of a new racial democracy (e.g., Feagin 2000; Feagin and O'Brien 2003). I will call this the "pluralism" or "browning" prediction. These scholars point to the similarities of black, Latino, and Asian experiences with discrimination. In effect, the browning argument posits that Latinos and Asians are "people of color" too and thus more like blacks than like whites.

A second interpretation is that Latinos and Asians will actually eventually "whiten" as did immigrant ethnic groups such as Irish, Italians, and Russian Jews before them. This "whitening thesis" is supported by George Yancey (2003) with survey data, demonstrating how Latinos' and Asians' residential, intermarriage, and voting patterns are more like whites than blacks. According to this school of thought, the black-white dichotomy will remain the paradigmatic structure of US race relations, with Latinos and Asians falling on the white, or "nonblack," side of the dichotomy. This perspective not only posits that Latinos and Asians are more

"like whites," but it follows the classic model of assimilation (Gordon 1964) that states that immigrant groups should model themselves after the dominant group if they expect to reap the advantages of all their new society is to offer them.

However, it could be that the racial reality that eventually emerges will be more complex than either model suggests. The basic predictions that Latinos and Asians will simply become "white" or "black" simplify the possibilities.

To acknowledge this complexity, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva has developed what he calls the Latin-Americanization of race relations thesis (Bonilla-Silva and Embrick 2006). This third perspective takes a middle ground by proposing a "trichotomy" of groups: whites, honorary whites, and the "collective black." Bonilla-Silva predicts that about 25% of Latinos and Asians will be allowed to become "honorary whites," at least partially substantiating Yancey's "whitening" claim (though "honorary white" status is tenuous and not as solid as the "white" status that the Irish and Jews have been able to achieve). The other 75%, the large majority, of Latino and Asian Americans are predicted to fall into a "collective black" category, where they will share the common experiences of discrimination and alienation that blacks currently face. This perspective offers the most promise in terms of acknowledging a middle ground for Latinos and Asians that would be qualitatively different than either that experienced by blacks or that experienced by whites. While no data has been presented yet to empirically document the "honorary white" experience, it suggests a degree of assimilation, with skin tone and

ethnicity still limiting full access to the privileges of whiteness.

What is missing from all three of these perspectives is a consideration of how the intermediate space of "honorary white" would be distinct, not just due to lack of full structural access to the material benefits of whiteness, but due also to the more unique racialized space. How will "honorary whites" think of themselves? How will they distinguish themselves from blacks? Will their self conceptions and emerging ideologies bolster or challenge white supremacy?

COLORBLIND RACISM'S IDEOLOGY

Research has identified *colorblind racism* as the dominant racial ideology of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries (Bonilla-Silva 2003; Carr 1997; Frankenberg 1993). Through colorblind racism (Bonilla-Silva 2003; Carr 1997) or color and power evasiveness (Frankenberg 1993), people discourage overt references to "color" as reasoning for why certain racial groups are "ahead" or "behind." We may continue to communicate racism through code words (e.g., "at-risk" children, "welfare mothers," "ghetto," the "bad part of town") or through language that minimizes the significance of systemic racism and instead "blames the victims" for their plight.

By studying the discourse of U.S. blacks and whites, Bonilla-Silva (2003) identified four frames of colorblind racism, and various other rhetorical styles and storylines common to its usage. The first frame is abstract liberalism, an individualistic discourse which evaluates people's success or lack thereof as a result of their individual motivations, talents and free choice, downplaying any structural limitations. Quotes about "people are people" and "I don't see color" would be demonstrative of this

frame. The second frame is naturalization, which views social facts such as racial segregation as race-neutral results of "human nature" and a benign desire for people to be with others most like themselves. The third frame is cultural racism, which interprets a social fact such as racial differences in income as a result of cultural factors not having to do with discrimination—such as lack of work ethic, lack of education, or lack of "family values"—"anything but race." The fourth frame is minimization, which largely dismisses claims that people of color face discrimination, often by way of rhetorical devices like distancing (e.g., "I'm not black, so I don't really know . . .") or projection (e.g., "blacks are the only ones I see discriminating").

Due to its focus on blacks and whites, the research on colorblind racism leaves open the question of how Latinos and Asians might make use of its ideological framework to make sense of U.S. race relations. Leslie Carr's (1997) survey of students found that 77 percent of students agreed with the statement "I am colorblind when it comes to race" while only 40 percent of black students agreed. Bonilla-Silva's (2003) study reports that, on the four frames of colorblind racism analyzed, blacks used them from 6 to 35 percent of the time, while whites used them 43 to 96 percent of the time (Bonilla-Silva 2003: 153). Moreover, while a small minority (12 to 15 percent) of whites is racially progressive by Bonilla-Silva's criteria (they support intermarriage, affirmative action, and recognize the significance of contemporary racial discrimination), about three-quarters of blacks share these progressive (and non-colorblind) views. If Latinos and Asians are "browning" or joining the "collective black" we would expect them to use colorblind rhetoric sparingly, but if they are indeed "whitening" we would expect them to use it often, much in the same way that whites do.

RESEARCH
AND SAMPLING

The data in this study consists of twenty interviews with Asian Americans and twenty interviews with white Americans related to the study. The sample was drawn from a diverse range of backgrounds and ages ranging from 18 to 80 and one generation of immigrants. The education levels of the interviewees ranged from high school to postgraduate with an average of a college degree.

My sample was not representative of the population as a whole. The participants are neither representative of the population nor do they represent a cross-section of the population. The sample would be representative of the population if it were a random sample of the population. Bonilla-Silva's (2003) study reports that, on the four frames of colorblind racism analyzed, blacks used them from 6 to 35 percent of the time, while whites used them 43 to 96 percent of the time (Bonilla-Silva 2003: 153). Moreover, while a small minority (12 to 15 percent) of whites is racially progressive by Bonilla-Silva's criteria (they support intermarriage, affirmative action, and recognize the significance of contemporary racial discrimination), about three-quarters of blacks share these progressive (and non-colorblind) views. If Latinos and Asians are "browning" or joining the "collective black" we would expect them to use colorblind rhetoric sparingly, but if they are indeed "whitening" we would expect them to use it often, much in the same way that whites do.

Table 7

Abstract
Cultural
Naturalization
Minimization

RESEARCH METHODS
AND SAMPLE INFORMATION

The data gathered for this project come from twenty in-depth interviews with Latinos and Asian Americans about their racial and ethnic related experiences in the United States. This sample was purposefully selected to represent a diverse range of ethnicities, ages, generation of migration, and both genders. The sample includes nine Asian/Pacific Islander respondents and eleven Hispanic/Latino respondents. Their ages range from 18 to 60—six are under thirty, eight are in their thirties, five are in their forties, and one is sixty. They share a range of ethnicities, generations, geographic locations, levels of education, and occupations. Respondents were interviewed using an in-depth interview method with an interview guide.

My sample suggests that Latinos and Asians are neither completely like blacks nor completely like whites. A full 50% of my sample would actually be classified as progressive by Bonilla-Silva's standards above, quite higher than the 12 to 15 percent typical of whites, and thus supporting the "browning" thesis. Yet more than half of them use colorblind racism, which partly supports the "whitening" position. However, it will be my contention that, rather than simply parroting the dominant discourse of colorblind racism, some Latinos and Asians are indeed perpetuating the discourse of colorblind racism, but in ways that are not only unique to them, but arguably accessible only to

them. This positions them in a decidedly middle ground not reducible to black or white Americans' racial ideologies.

LATINOS, ASIANS, AND COLORBLIND RACISM

At first glance, counting up percentages of our own respondents' usage of the 4 frames of colorblind racism, Latinos and Asians seem to fit neatly in between blacks' and whites' percentages, ranging from 35 to 65 percent, but share more overlap with whites, as Yancey's whitening thesis might predict. In Table 7.1, I use Bonilla-Silva's (2003) results for whites and blacks, and my own results for the Latino/Asian column. Although these are not entirely comparable data sources, they serve as a good beginning point from which to springboard to a more detailed analysis of our qualitative data.

For all frames, we can see that Latinos and Asians seem to use colorblind racism more than blacks do. For three out of four frames, their usage is closer to whites than blacks (echoing Yancey's findings on other outcomes), and in the case of naturalization, their rate of usage is nearly identical to whites. However, it is important to note that on abstract liberalism, Latinos and Asians talk much more like blacks. Thus, even upon this cursory glance, we can see that the whitening thesis is partially substantiated in Latinos' and Asians' racial attitudes, although not entirely. The browning thesis is more correct only when it comes to abstract liberalism.

Table 7.1 Comparison of Usage of Colorblind Racism Frames, by Race

| | <i>Whites</i> | <i>Latinos/Asians</i> | <i>Blacks</i> |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Abstract Liberalism | 96% | 35% (7/20) | 35% |
| Cultural Racism | 88% | 65% (13/20) | 24% |
| Naturalization | 43% | 40% (8/20) | 24% |
| Minimization | 84% | 50% (10/20) | 6% |

The picture gets even more complex once we take note of an important aspect that differentiates both Latinos and Asians from the bipolar black/white comparison. When whites discuss the factors they perceive as responsible for racial differences, they typically are either referring mainly to blacks, or else they are lumping all people of color together. Likewise, when blacks use colorblind language, they are usually referring to their own group. However, when Latinos and Asians use the two frames of cultural racism and minimization in particular, they are much more likely to either be talking about their own specific ethnic group or another nonblack racial/ethnic group, rather than about blacks. If we restrict our analysis of cultural racism to instances of *antiblack* colorblind racism, the percentage jumps down from 72% to only 33% of the respondents. Likewise, if we restrict our analysis of the minimization frame to the times when our respondents are talking about how blacks over-exaggerate discrimination (or, for instance, how blacks “use it as a crutch”) the percentage again jumps down, from 56% to just 17% of the respondents. What is clear from this breakdown is that Latinos and Asians seem to be more willing to use colorblind racism when referring to their own and other “intermediate” racial groups, rather than towards blacks. However, a more detailed qualitative analysis reveals that sometimes, even when blacks are not mentioned, they are the actual “unmentioned” target of racism. Blacks end up being the unspoken reference point through which other groups are evaluated and compared.

ANTI-BLACK RACISM—VEILED AND UNVEILED

Latino and Asian respondents do discuss antiblack racism explicitly at times, while other times it is “veiled” through reference to another racial or ethnic group. Demonstrating colorblind racism, this Dominican American woman

recalls her daughter’s relationship with an African American young man, which was unacceptable to her and other members of the family, although she insists it was not because of his “race”:

Well, one of my daughters, she had a relationship with an African American, and I didn’t judge him because of his ethnicity, I judged him because of his actions, that’s what I didn’t like, his actions. . . . [Interviewer: how did the other people in the family react when your daughter was dating an African American? Did they have mixed feelings?] Yes, they did, they had mixed feelings. They had mixed feelings because he was older than her, and didn’t have the same goals as she had. And but also I’m not going to lie. There was unkind, when they found out it was black. But that didn’t come from me, it came from my mother. [Interviewer: she didn’t really like it?] She didn’t like it. [Interviewer: it’s just because she has a view of—] She has a view of—that African Americans—like she is scared. But it’s something that me and my brother and sister have tried to teach her, that no it’s not like that.

In this exchange, our respondent uses some discourse familiar to Bonilla-Silva’s white respondents who express some back-and-forth resistance to interracial relationships. They may approve of them in the abstract, but once they are pressed to discuss details, and how it impacts their own families, they discuss their resistance by valorizing a view that blacks are “just different” in terms of values, and in this case “goals” and “actions.” She also uses a common storyline that Bonilla-Silva identifies when she distances herself from a racist family member to prove her own nonracism.

However, the unique “intermediate” dimension to this respondent’s negative view of African Americans comes out later in the interview, when she is asked which racial or ethnic group she identifies with most and the least. She states she feels furthest away from Ecuadorians because:

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I don't know, because maybe how they also have relationship with black community. Well not all of them, some of them. I don't know I don't know maybe I'm wrong.

This respondent uses some of the rhetorical styles Bonilla-Silva identifies to distance herself from her own views by using the "I don't know, maybe I'm wrong" maneuver. Yet because the respondent never goes as far as to say that she herself feels negatively towards the black community, rather she says she cannot identify with another Hispanic group because of their perceived ties to the "black community." Ecuadorians serve as the "veil" through which this respondent feels comfortable enough to express her disdain for African Americans without having to do it more explicitly. There is a sense that, in the unwritten rules of racial discourse, it is within the realm of nonracist acceptability for her to be able to make negative judgments about Ecuadorians without seeming racist, since she is somewhat of an insider by being Latino just like them. Non-Hispanic whites would be more likely to either find both references inappropriate, or to go ahead and make generalizations about both blacks and Hispanics. When they do refer to the "intermediate groups" alone, they are more likely to single them out for more positive stereotyping than blacks. They tend to choose other code words, rather than words that were explicitly ethnic, to cast negative light on what they believed to be black-associated behaviors.

Similarly, this Filipino respondent separates herself out from others in her own group, especially those whom she characterizes as more like blacks. However, unlike the above respondent, she never mentions blacks explicitly. Instead, she divides her own ethnic group into categories that are either more or less like blacks, as indicated by the racial code words of "hip-hop" and "ghetto." The subgroup of Filipinos that she considers to be more like

whites, though, she does actually describe as "more white":

I know a lot of Asians that grew up in communities that are predominantly white and that's because most Asians in terms of economics they just tend to be more affluent because it's like you know they're just hardworking. . . . they're much more white. And at the same time I know a lot of like Filipinos and Koreans that are really like ghetto, I mean really like into the hip hop culture. . . . So Filipinos are either really white or really ghetto [laughs] it's weird.

Elsewhere in this interview, this respondent points out that she was unlike most Filipinos at her school growing up in that she did not identify with "hip-hop" and "ghetto" culture. In the above quote, though, she characterizes Asians on the whole as "more white" because of their "hardworking nature." The adjectives she chooses like "secure" and "well off" cast a more positive light on this group. Here, veiled antiblack racism operates by essentially saying, "I look down upon/distance myself from X group because they are too much like blacks." Being culturally "like blacks" is cast as a negative, but other ethnic groups (here, one's own ethnic group) get substituted as a proxy for blacks.

I'M OK, YOU'RE NOT OK—SELECTIVE DECONSTRUCTION OF STEREOTYPES

As indicated by the above quote, several of the interviews touched upon stereotypical generalizations about particular racial and/or ethnic groups—whether they were groups in which the respondent claimed membership or not. Sometimes respondents reflected upon stereotypes that *others* held about their own group, while other times they admitted to holding stereotypes of their own. Recall that half of our

sample would be categorized as progressive based upon the conceptual definition in prior related research. When these progressive respondents discussed stereotypes, they were quite consistent in breaking them down as faulty overgeneralizations and treating them as problematic. In contrast, our other (non-progressive) respondents would tend to display an interesting pattern—within the same interview, they would use progressive racial ideology to deconstruct a particular stereotype, yet elsewhere throw these analytical skills out the window by agreeing with other stereotypes.

Recall the Filipino student quoted above, relying upon the stereotype of Asians as “well off” due to their “hardworking nature.” One could actually present a more progressive critique of this “model minority” generalization, as indeed another Asian respondent, a statistician originally from India, does in the following quote:

They think that, the perception now, because Indians do so well is that they are really smart and that they are all educated and they are very successful and that's not true because there are a lot of dumb Indians in India. It's just that the ones that come here, the smart ones come here to go to school. Those that are not career oriented, not very smart stay in India. So you got the crème of the crop, and you know that [the stereotype]'s not necessarily true.

As it turns out, however, her sophisticated understanding of the structural factors operating to create a certain group's experience do not extend much past Indians. She indeed uses a stereotypical cultural racism frame to interpret the experience of her Chinese coworker, and contrasts it with her own experience as an Indian:

We are so diverse within India because each state is so different . . . not like China were everyone is Chinese and speaks the same language and stuff

like that. . . . Most Indians will integrate, you know, they have white friends, they, you know first of all with the language, everyone speaks English so that makes a difference. You know the Chinese don't. I know this girl at work . . . she's been here since she was 2 years old . . . can you believe is living in the heart of New York and she can't even speak English?! . . . Everything is in Chinatown—Chinese hospitals, Chinese food . . . Chinese libraries . . . Chinese friends . . . you will never find that with Indians. . . . It's bizarre. I'm shocked.

While she acknowledges Indians are not monolithic, she speaks with sweeping generalizations about “the Chinese.” Instead of exploring the structural factors that account for why Indians already speak English upon arrival to the US (colonization by the British, higher education, etc.), she poses it as her Chinese coworker's own lack of effort, interest, or motivation that she does not speak English as well as herself. Her argument is very similar to the one often used by whites about blacks “segregating themselves,” especially when she contrasts with Indians who “integrate” and “have white friends.” Elsewhere in her interview, she continues on extolling the virtues of the great diversity of India, and this time contrasts it with Hispanics: “The Hispanic culture has a very strong culture and representation. Indians are very divided even among themselves in terms of culture.” While we might give Trina some benefit of the doubt in characterizing India as more diverse than China, nation to nation, clearly, her overgeneralization about dozens of Latin American cultures shows that she is more willing to challenge white supremacist notions about her own group, while she uncritically accepts them about others'.

In contrast to the above respondent's glossing over ethnic differences among Latinos, this white-Cuban biracial man, who is well-traveled in many Latin American countries due to his occupation, makes sharp distinctions among

them. In particular, he singles out his own ethnic group as more deserving of the "model minority" stereotype than many of the others:

I say this not because I'm Cuban, but as my observation, and I think the statistics bear it out as well, but—Cubans are seen in higher status than most Latins that have come to the United States, compared to let's say Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, and Central Americans for the most part. And even to an extent maybe even Venezuelans and Colombians—though maybe it starts to blur there. Cubans are very industrious. They've done extremely well for themselves compared to the other Latin American populations . . . doing especially better than the Nicaraguans, or Salvadorians . . . Cubans are very crafty, they're very industrious, they'll think outside the box. I mean who else would take a 1960 Chevrolet something or other and turn it into a boat in order to cross the Florida straits. I mean really!? You know—a boat! And it worked, but that's how they are.

The phrase "that's how they are" sounds familiar as stereotypical language whites tend to use to generalize about blacks and/or other minorities, but here it is being used by someone who identifies as white/Cuban, so theoretically he is speaking about "his own" group (using the third person pronoun *they*). Perhaps he uses this voice to position himself as an objective observer, since he begins by saying that he is not just saying it because he is Cuban. The kind of structural analysis that the Indian respondent quoted earlier used to critique the model minority stereotype (analyzing human capital factors, economic conditions of each country and its migrants, government/refugee assistance unique to Cubans, etc.) could certainly have been applied to the various Latino groups listed in the above quote. However, this respondent instead relies on a combination of naturalization and cultural racism to explain the differences in these various Latino groups'

socioeconomic positions. The hardworking/"industrious" generalization that the Filipino student used to describe Asians comes up again here, and posited as an essential trait of Cubans this time.

However, this Cuban respondent understands at the abstract level that generalizations about an entire group only go so far when he makes this comment:

I could care less if who lives next door to me, or across the street, or behind me is black, Hispanic, Asian, Muslim, as long as they're good people. That's what I care about. I just want to live next to people that are good people. Because you know, I could live next door to a Cuban guy and he could be a jack ass. Right [laughter] And there's plenty of them too, plenty of Cuban jackasses.

Here we see the abstract liberalism frame of "I could care less . . . as long as they're good people." By making the point that there are "good" and "jackass" people in every ethnic group (particularly his own) he demonstrates that he could potentially have the ability to deconstruct stereotypical generalizations about his own group. But he fails to do so in the previous example.

More to the point, this respondent can recall personal family experiences attesting to how painful it can be to be the victim of unjustly applied stereotypes. He remembers how difficult it was for their family to leave Miami and relocate to a Midwestern state where it was constantly assumed that his Cuban father was a drug dealer. Even though at some level this respondent critiques the unfairness of such stereotypes, ultimately he finds them as inevitable and even justified:

So if you got a lot of Cubans in the drug trade, and you're Cuban then unfortunately you may be associated with that. Is it fair? Maybe not, probably not . . . Mexican groups are seen as kinda being lazy. I don't think that's necessarily fair.

I mean they work . . . back breaking work. But Mexico is seen generally in terms of government as being corrupt . . . That's a fact . . . Is it fair for that to reflect on all Mexicans? No. But when you have something that's going on . . . until you get it cleaned up that's kinda what you're gonna have to be prepared to live with . . . Are all people of the Islamic faith terrorists? Of course not, no. But right now they've got a small minority of people . . . doing heinous crimes in the name of the Islamic religion. Well, until they get that cleaned up, they're going to have live with the repercussions of that.

The usage of the pronoun "they" is interesting here, because while he acknowledges that stereotypes are true of only a "small minority" of any given group, "they" have to "live with the repercussions" since "they" have not "cleaned up." Here the "they" is one and the same—it is as if those who do not live out the stereotype are still at fault, guilty by association. Those who erroneously apply a stereotype to all members of a group are somehow not at all at fault in this equation.

CONCLUSION

Occupying an intermediate position in the US racial hierarchy does not simply mean that one is somewhat like whites and somewhat like blacks. While certainly the above quotes demonstrate that several Latino and Asian American respondents use colorblind ideology in ways similar to that which has been documented in research on whites, they additionally make use of colorblind racism in ways unique to them. Indeed, whites particularly have been reported to be a bit more simplistic in their usage of colorblindness than my respondents are. Whites typically use blacks as their nonwhite group of comparison, and "intermediate" groups are often lumped together with all people of color. If whites do separate out intermediate groups in

their discussions, they tend to be singled out for more "positive" stereotyping than blacks. For instance, some elite white men in Feagin and O'Brien's (2003) study praised the work ethic of Mexicans and Asian Americans as a whole while viewing negatively that of blacks. They are held up as "model minorities" if only to cast a negative comparison with African Americans. From a white perspective, a distinct hierarchy seems to emerge on a scale of valued to devalued—whites, Asians/Latinos, blacks—consistent with social distance studies done (on whites) since the 1920s. In contrast, from the viewpoint of Latinos and Asians themselves, the situation is more complex. Latinos and Asians seem to resist racialized generalizations about their own groups, stressing the ethnic distinctions among them that are sometimes lost on other whites, and even on members of other "outsider" non-white groups. In the process of stressing these ethnic distinctions, they use them both to deconstruct racist ideology for some groups (especially their own) and to reify it for others.

Since racist ideology has been constructed for the benefit of the dominant group (whites), in order to make it work towards their advantage, Latinos and Asians must be much more sophisticated about how they use it, since in its most commonly used forms it does not address them directly. While the fact that racist ideology has been constructed for the benefit of whites might suggest that there is less flexibility in its usage for Latinos and Asians, actually in some ways there is more flexibility for them to make use of it. Specifically, they have room to exercise antiblack racism in ways even more camouflaged than whites do by using these ethnic distinctions between themselves and other racially-similar groups through which to "veil" their negative sentiments about blacks. We saw a Dominican respondent "veil" her antiblack racism through Ecuadorians, and a Filipino respondent "veil" her antiblack racism through

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Filipinos who are “ghetto” or like hip-hop. This veiling dynamic demonstrates that as “insiders,” Latinos and Asians can exercise an ideological option which makes them more comfortable casting negative light upon African Americans if they combine their own racial group along with it.

If colorblind racism has been characterized as a more sophisticated and savvy form of racism than the more overt racism that preceded it historically, then clearly Latinos and Asians, as intermediate groups, have taken this sophistication to an even more elevated level. Bonilla-Silva and Embrick (2006) discuss this more complex manifestation of colorblind racism as they compare Latin American race relations to that of the United States. My research suggests that both Latinos and Asians, as intermediate racial groups in the US racial hierarchy, may indeed contribute to these new dimensions of racism. The challenge for antiracist scholars and activists will be to also research the unique forms of racial progressivism among US Latinos and Asians in order to demonstrate how an intricate form of racism can also be undone.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What makes both Latinos and Asians different from whites in terms of how they express color-blind racism?

2. Latinos are now a slightly larger percentage of the U.S. population than African Americans. Due to the ethnic diversity among Latinos (and Asians), what kinds of ethnic distinctions do they make when discussing race relations that often do not appear in blacks’ or whites’ discourse?

3. We might expect people who are able to use their sociological imaginations to debunk *some* racial-ethnic stereotypes to also apply that logic to

others. Why does this expectation not hold true with the respondents quoted here? Have you known others who seem open-minded about one group yet prejudiced about another? How and why do you think this happens, and what might be done to change it?

4. Elizabeth Martinez’s reading in this chapter is optimistic about people of color coming together and realizing the common struggles with racism that they share. What challenges does O’Brien’s reading suggest would need to be overcome before such cross-racial and cross-ethnic coalitions could be built?