

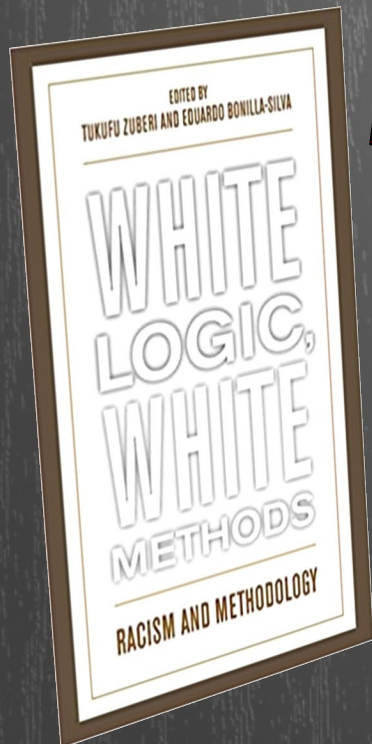
METHODS ARE METHODS AND STATS ARE STATS!

**WHY A STRUCTURAL THEORY OF RACISM
MUST GUIDE OUR RACE-RELATED WORK**

EDUARDO BONILLA-SILVA

DUKE

No mystery in the title...I will talk about structural or systemic racism, but with the goal of connecting it to methods, metrics, and indices!



IN THE BEGINNING, THERE WAS "PREJUDICE"

- Common sense **still** regards "racism" as...prejudice.

This explains the seeming contradiction of officers of color being as likely as their White counterparts to use lethal force against people of color. See by Menifield, Charles E; Shin, Geiguen; Strother, Logan, "Do White Law Enforcement Officers Target Minority Suspects?" Public Administration Review, 2019, Volume 79, Issue 1: 56-68.

- Despite the Post-George Floyd change in language (we now say "systemic" or "structural racism"), we still do not appreciate what makes racism **systemic**!

A systemic racism understanding of the police force would begin with
1) **its history as an outgrowth of the slave patrols.** And today, **that agency of racial & social control,**
2) **selects certain people to be police officers** and 3) **trains them in racialized fashion,** 4) **creates a macho-military culture of US versus THEM,** and 5) **has militarized the entire force.** These elements together all but guarantee that police officers will carry out race-based policing regardless of who they are.

SOME LIMITATIONS OF THE “PREJUDICE APPROACH”

- 1) Focus on individuals psychology/attitudes
Collective, societal, and not limited to attitudes (forms an IDEOLOGY)
- 2) Ahistorical stand
SR can be dated (the process began in the 15th century), forms a regime (set of practices), changes over time (racial regimes change), and exhibits variations across countries, regions, localities
- 3) Focus on overt actions
Limits our analysis severely as it does not allow us to appreciate the mundane, everyday, and often covert ways in which race matters
- 4) Moral/psychological focus (rotten apples)
SR has a material foundation (but please keep in mind that the *material* encompasses more than \$\$)

RETHINKING RACISM: TOWARD A STRUCTURAL INTERPRETATION*

Eduardo Bonilla-Silva
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The study of race and ethnic conflict historically has been hampered by inadequate and simplistic theories. I contend that the central problem of the various approaches to the study of racial phenomena is their lack of a structural theory of racism. I review traditional approaches and alternative approaches to the study of racism, and discuss their limitations. Following the leads suggested by some of the alternative frameworks, I advance a structural theory of racism based on the notion of racialized social systems.

“The habit of considering racism as a mental quirk, as a psychological flaw, must be abandoned.”
—Frantz Fanon (1967:77)

The area of race and ethnic studies lacks a sound theoretical apparatus. To complicate matters, many analysts of racial matters have abandoned the serious theorization and reconceptualization of their central topic: racism. Too many social analysts researching racism assume that the phenomenon is self-evident, and therefore either do not provide a definition or provide an elementary definition (Schuman, Steeh, and Bobo 1985; Sniderman and Piazza 1993). Nevertheless, whether implicitly or explicitly, most analysts regard racism as a purely ideological phenomenon.

Although the concept of racism has become the central analytical category in most contemporary social scientific discourse on racial phenomena, the concept is of recent origin (Banton 1970; Miles 1989, 1993). It was not employed at all in the classic works of Thomas and Znaniecki (1918), Edward Reuter (1934), Gunnar Myrdal (1944), and Robert Park (1950).¹ Benedict (1945) was one of the first scholars to use the notion of racism in her book, *Race and Racism*. She defined racism as “the dogma that one ethnic group is condemned by nature to congenital inferiority and another group is destined to congenital superiority” (p. 87). Despite some refinements, current use of the concept of racism in the social sciences is similar to Benedict’s. Thus van den Berghe (1967) states that racism is “any set of beliefs that states that racism is a legitimate basis of organic, genetically transmitted differences (whether real or imagined) between human groups are intrinsically associated with the presence or the absence of certain socially relevant abilities or characteristics, hence that such differences are a legitimate basis of invidious distinctions between groups so-

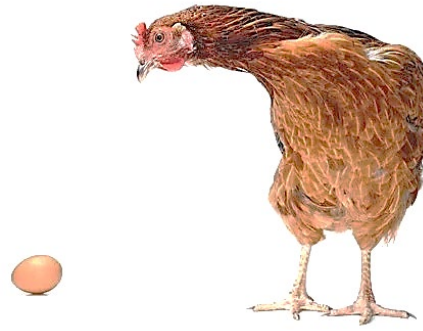
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STRUCTURAL ALTERNATIVES

- There are options such as Joe Feagin's "systemic racism" take, M. Omi and H. Winant's classic "racial formation theory," Charles Mills' "the racial contract," but the BEST one is....

- The **RACIALIZED SOCIAL SYSTEM, RSS** approach I advanced in my 1997 "Rethinking Racism" ASR paper to which I have added some theoretical texture and nuance over the years.

BASICS OF THE **RSS**

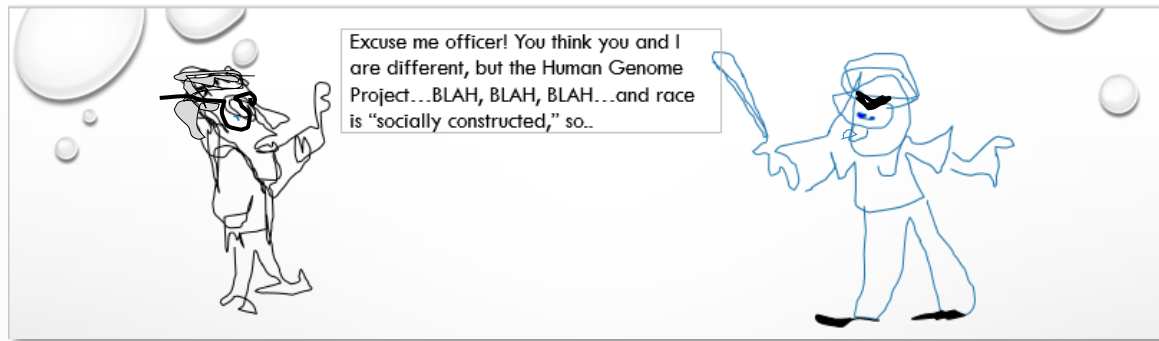


1) World-system was racialized in 15th century creating **RACIALIZED SOCIAL SYSTEMS** where social, economic, political, and even psychological goods have been *partially* allocated by “race.”

2) Race and racism as **social** and “**political**” constructs that

...are **mutually reinforced**, we **racialize** as we enforce racial order and we enforce **racial order** as we racialize (thus, race and racism co-emerged and are co-determined).

BASICS OF THE **RSS**



3) Races are constructs, but they are socially **real**.^{*} Being a member of X or Y race has consequences, positive for whites and negative for non-whites.

4) Races, accordingly, develop different **racial interests**—subordinated racial groups fight to challenge their position in the system and dominant races defend the racial order in **various ways** and **modalities**.

5) “**Racial contestation**” refers to the **struggle for position in the racial order** which transpires infrequently through concerted collective action (CRM or BLM), but often through individuals’ actions (e.g., fighting a microaggression, etc.) or **mostly** through actors following the dominant racial script of a period (for example, Whites keep trucking like all is OK and receive passively the “wages of whiteness” (Roediger 1992)).

A FEW IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF A GOOD STRUCTURAL THEORY OF RACISM



Must take seriously **collective** nature of practices and behaviors of actors in society (this is **the** core of any **STRUCTURAL** approach)

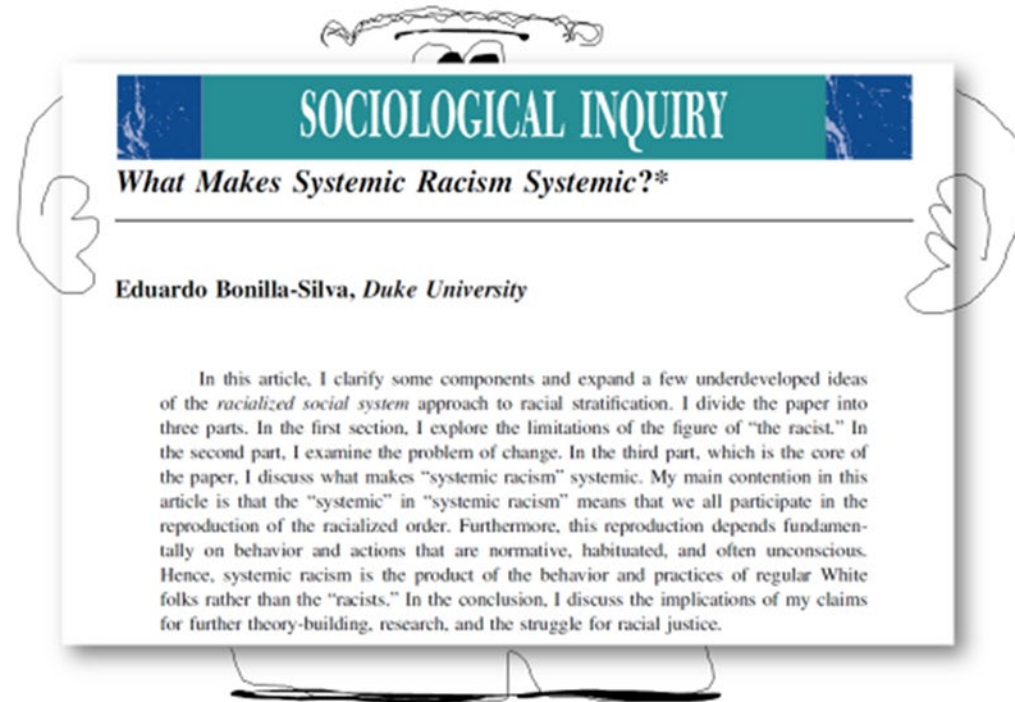
Must be **HISTORICALLY-BOUND** and sensitive to regional, local, and societal variations

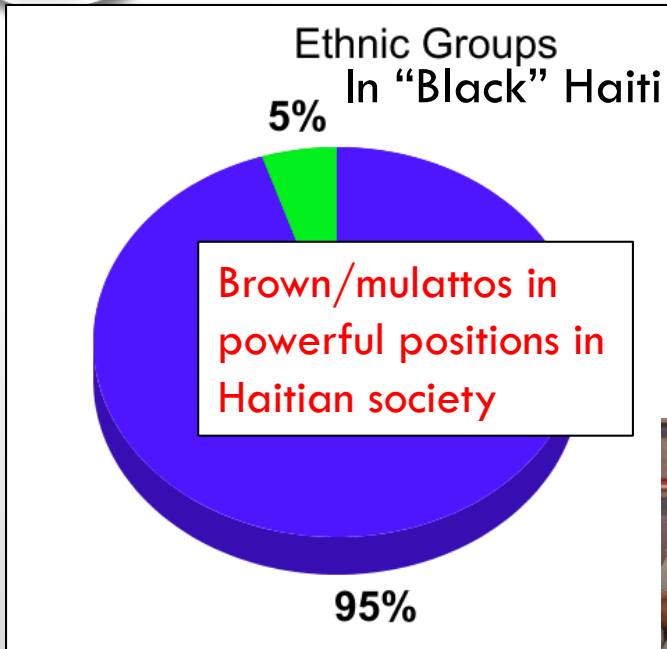
Must be **MATERIALIST** (explain why people contest over racial affairs)

Must account for **INDIVIDUALS**, their **SOCIAL SUBJECTIVITY**, and how the **RACIAL STRUCTURE** is produced and reproduced...(STRUCTURE CAN NOT BE A GHOST)

SOME OF THE **NEW** TEXTURE & NUANCE ADDED TO **RSS**

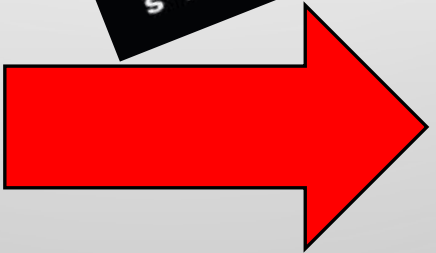
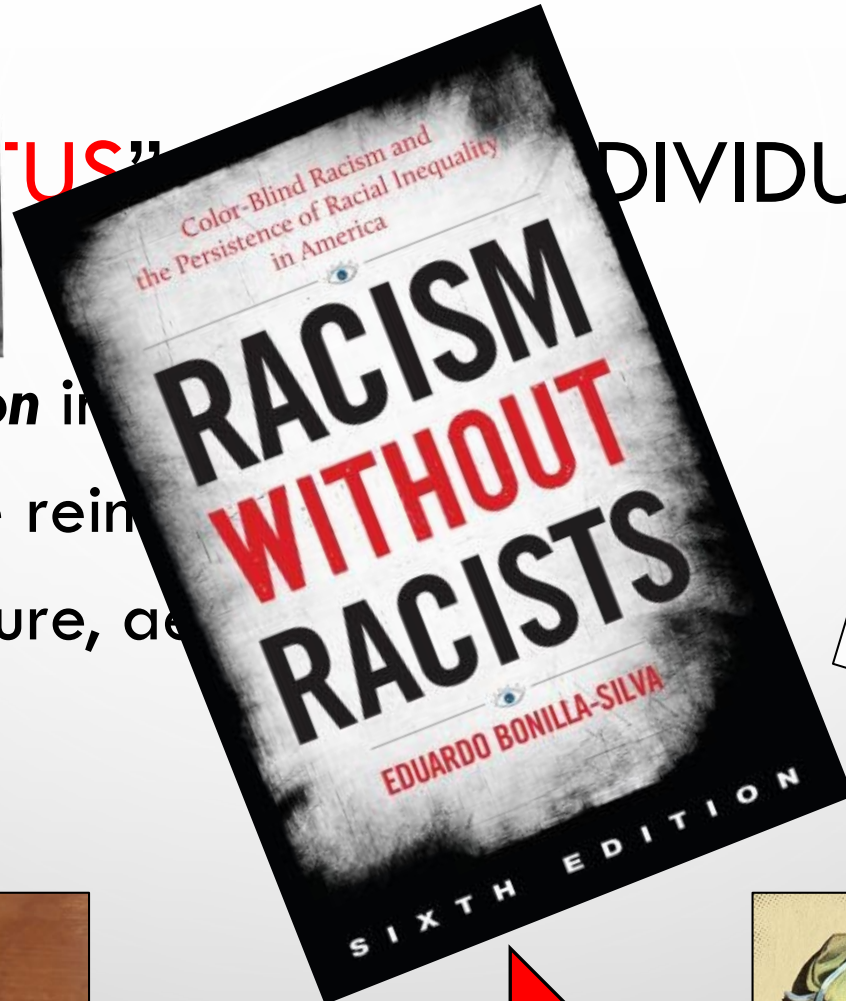
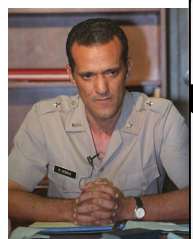
[citation needed]





■ Black

■ Mulatto & White



RACIAL SUBJECTIVITY IS ALWAYS
MAKING,” NEVER FULLY FINISHED

- Actors are always more than “**racialized**”
gendered subjects (one source of internal
- White Habitus is not like night school (vari
- Other factors (political orientation, education, levels of interaction across
race, etc.) affect an individual’s racial sensibilities (**variance** on all racial groups)/**EGGS***
- Nevertheless, for **fundamental** structural and cultural change on race to
happen, **RACIAL CONTESTATION** is necessary. PERIOD!



THE **BIG** RACIAL PROBLEM IS, & HAS ALWAYS BEEN...



ILLUSTRATION OF HOW A **SR** APPROACH HELPS US MEASURE/THINK THROUGH RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION

INDEX OF RESIDENTIAL DISSIMILARITY measures **evenness of population distribution** in a geographical area

$$D = 1/2 \left(\sum [b_i/b - w_i/w] \right),$$

Where b_i and w_i are the number of black and white persons living in an area, and b and w are the total number of blacks and whites in the city, respectively. (RUNS from 0 to 100)

MI



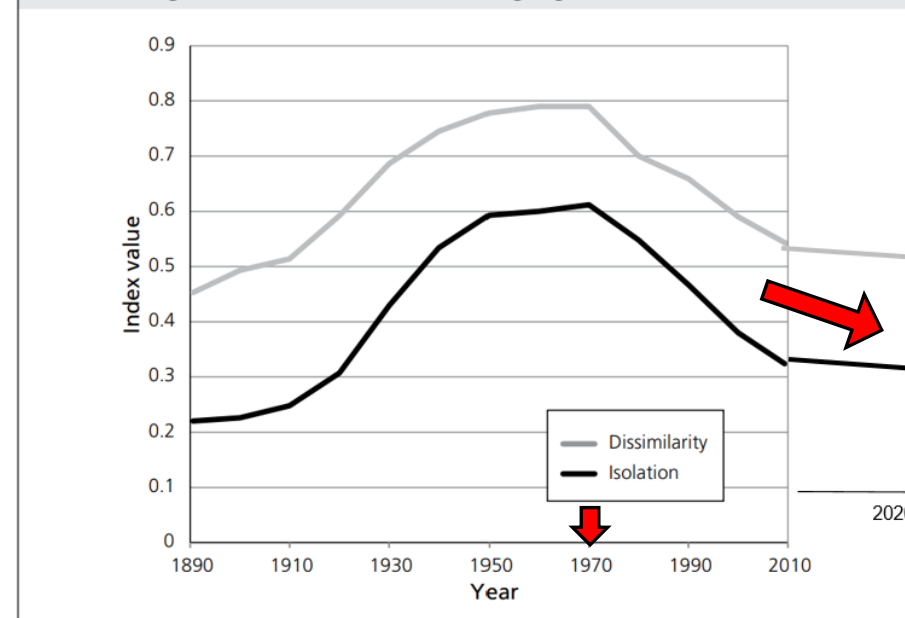
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REPORT


The End of the Segregated Century: Racial Separation in America's Neighborhoods, 1890-2010

Jacob L. Vigdor, Edward L. Glaeser
January 22, 2012
Urban Policy: Housing; Race: Other

Figure I. Black/Nonblack Segregation 1890–2010



Sociologists Angelina Grigoryeva and Martin Ruef explain that this **residential closeness** **was instead a reflection of history** 📖. Residential patterns in southern cities manifested the heritage of the nineteenth century, when “blacks who were engaged as slaves or servants lived in close proximity to the whites who owned or employed them.” Plantation culture had moved to the cities: White families dominated front streets, while “blacks were relegated to living on smaller streets and alleys.”

This “backyard” pattern of segregation 
“reproduced the residential inequality
that had once existed under slavery.”

“Rooted in a legacy of slavery and indicative of highly unequal status relationships between blacks and whites, the pattern of segregation along street networks was not captured by conventional measures of segregation,” write Grigoryeva and Ruef.

N HERE?

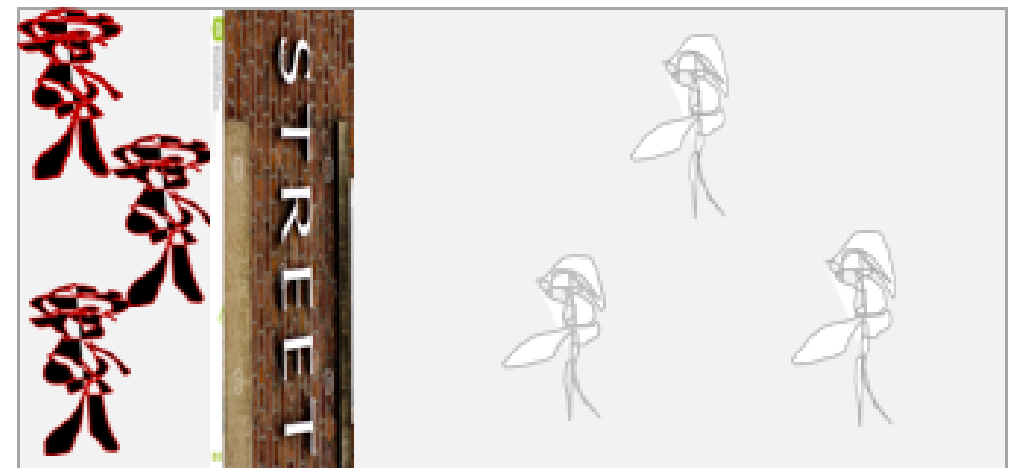
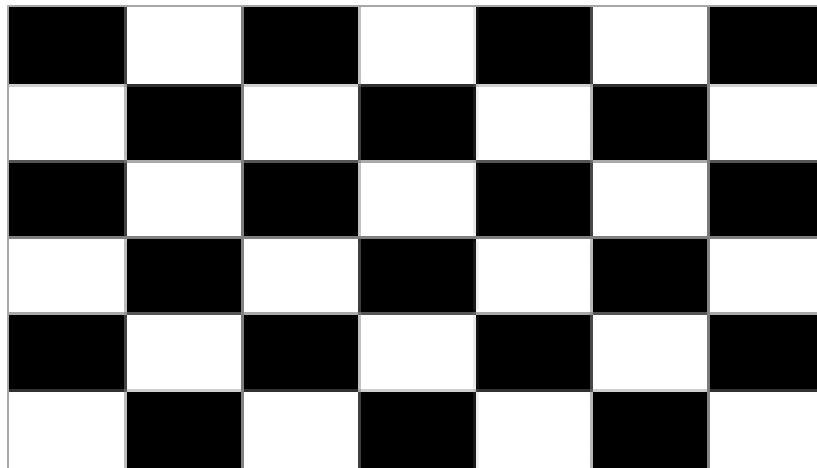
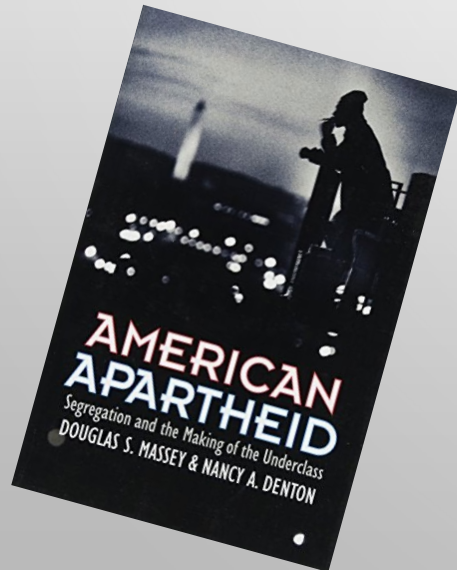
EAT, at least **Jim Crow great**, but not...

“better” than in Midwest/Northeast (not in table but

WHY?*

3) The magic of 50

GENTRIFICATION & SPATIAL MEASUREMENTS



DURHAM, NC: NEW KIND OF WHITES' HYPERSEGREGATION



HOW TO DO RESIDENTIAL ANALYSIS **SR** RIC

- 1) Do not reify metrics (context and history matter). The racial matter in **Time 1** may not be as useful in **Time 2**.
- 2) Be mindful that space and organizations are “racialized”.
- 3) Measure contacts and their valence! (The hidden argument **D** is Gordon Allport's old “**contact hypothesis theory**”).
- 4) Racial life in spaces (tracts, blocs, neighborhoods) need to be examined rather than assumed.
- 5) Always think about power dynamics and the implications of your arguments. Be mindful that **actors' positions in RSS are not symmetrical**.
E.g., saying that “Blacks and Whites levels of segregation are similar, **SD...**” or that Blacks “**self-segregate**” ignore how racial power structures the life chances of all us differently in places and spaces.



THAT'S IT!

