The entire civil rights struggle needs a new interpretation, a broader interpretation. We need to look at this civil rights thing from another angle—from the inside as well as from the outside. To those of us whose philosophy is black nationalism, the only way you can get involved in the civil rights struggle is to give it a new interpretation. The old interpretation excluded us. It kept us out.1

—Malcolm X, 1963

This Essay is, in part, a reaction to the emergence of critical race theory, the new scholarship about race being produced by people of color in American law schools.2 As I see it, one of the historically significant features of the critical race theory movement is that, after nearly two decades of relative consensus about what a progressive race reform agenda encompasses, a new generation of scholars is in a sense following Malcolm X’s advice, and reinterpreting the meaning of “this civil rights thing.”

The reappearance and refinement of race consciousness in many critical race theory works symbolizes the break with the dominant civil rights discourse. For example, Mari Matsuda calls for a new jurisprudence that would look “to the bottom,” with the central idea that one’s position in the social structure of race relations makes a qualitative difference in how one sees and experiences the world.3 Kimberlé Crenshaw argues that everyday institutional practices embody “white norms” that are camouflaged by a stance of cultural neutrality presented as “perspec-
Gerald Torres demonstrates how legal categories embody dominant cultural assumptions that mistranslate the inner reality of Native American communities and require cultural conformity as the price of legal recognition. And Richard Delgado more generally contends that race makes a substantial difference in how scholars approach legal topics; he emphasizes storytelling and narrative as elements of a distinctive voice employed by people of color.

The commitment to a race-conscious perspective by many critical race theorists is dramatic because explicit race consciousness has been considered taboo for at least fifteen years within mainstream American politics and for far longer within the particular conventions of law and legal scholarship. Instead, race has been understood through a set of beliefs—what I call "integrationist" ideology—that locates racial oppressionlessness.4 Crenshaw, Race Reform and Retrenchment: Transformation and Legitimation in Antidiscrimination Law, 101 Harv. L. Rev. 1331, 1379-80 (1988) [hereinafter Crenshaw, Race Reform and Retrenchment] (discussing the "white norm... as a statement of the positive social norm, legitimating the continuing domination of those who do not meet it"); Crenshaw, Foreword: Toward a Race-Conscious Pedagogy in Legal Education, 11 Nat'l Black L.J. 1, 2 (1989) [hereinafter Crenshaw, Foreword] (discussing the day-to-day culture of law schools as embodying a false assumption of "perspectiveness").


I have referred only to a few of the writers in the emerging Critical Race Theory approach. Others who utilize a race conscious perspective in their work include Derrick Bell, see D. Bell, AND WE ARE NOT SAVED: THE ELUSIVE QUEST FOR RACIAL JUSTICE (1987) [hereinafter D. Bell, AND WE ARE NOT SAVED]; John Calmore, see Calmore, Fair Housing vs. Fairhousing: The Problems with Providing Increased Housing Opportunities through Spatial Deconcentration, 14 Clearinghouse Rev. 7 (1980) [hereinafter Calmore, Fair Housing]; Calmore, Exploring the Significance of Race and Class in Representing the Black Poor, 61 Or. L. Rev. 201 (1982); Harlon Dalton, see Dalton, The Clouded Prism, 22 Harv. C.R.-C.L. L. Rev. 435 (1987); Neil Gotanda, see N. Gotanda, A Critique of "Our Constitution Is Colorblind": Racial Categories and White Supremacy (unpublished manuscript) (available from author); Angela Harris, see Harris, Race and Essentialism in Feminist Legal Theory, 42 Stan. L. Rev. 581 (1990); Charles Lawrence, see Lawrence, The Id, the Ego and Equal Protection: Reckoning With Unconscious Racism, 39 Stan. L. Rev. 317 (1987); Theresa Miller, see T. Miller, An Anti-Integrationist's Critique of School Desegregation: Making the Case for Black Colleges (unpublished manuscript) (available from author); Patricia Williams, see Williams, Alchemical Notes: Reconstructing Ideals from Deconstructed Rights, 22 Harv. C.R.-C.L. L. Rev. 401 (1987); Williams, The Obliging Shell: An Informal Essay on Formal Equal Opportunity, 87 Mich. L. Rev. 2128 (1989) [hereinafter Williams, The Obliging Shell]; Robert Williams, see Williams, Taking Rights Aggressively: The Perils and Promise of Critical Legal Theory for Peoples of Color, 5 Law & Inequality 103 (1987); Williams, The Algebra of Federal Indian Law: The Hard Trail of Decolonizing and Americanizing the White Man's Indian Jurisprudence, 1986 Wis. L. Rev. 219.

Race consciousness in the work of Critical Race Theorists has been noted and criticized by Randall Kennedy in R. Kennedy, Racial Critiques of Legal Academia, 102 Harv. L. Rev. 1745 (1989).
sion in the social structure of prejudice and stereotype based on skin color, and that identifies progress with the transcendence of a racial consciousness about the world. In 1964, when Malcolm X asserted that this conventional interpretation of civil rights excluded black nationalists, he could not have foreseen that nationalist activism would revitalize and transform the struggle against racial oppression in the late 1960s and early 1970s, only to be relegated once more to the cultural margins and the desperate streets in the 1980s.

But Malcolm X did identify the basic racial compromise that the incorporation of the “the civil rights struggle” into mainstream American culture would eventually embody: Along with the suppression of white racism that was the widely celebrated aim of civil rights reform, the dominant conception of racial justice was framed to require that black nationalists be equated with white supremacists, and that race consciousness on the part of either whites or blacks be marginalized as beyond the good sense of enlightened American culture. When a new generation of scholars embraced race consciousness as a fundamental prism through which to organize social analysis in the latter half of the 1980s, a negative reaction from mainstream academics was predictable. That is, Randall Kennedy’s criticism of the work of critical race theorists for being based on racial “stereotypes” and “status-based” standards is coherent from the vantage point of the reigning interpretation of racial justice. And it was the exclusionary borders of this ideology that Malcolm X identified.

In this Essay, I want to explore the ideological roots of this particular political moment—in which the repudiation of race consciousness defines conventional civil rights thinking—by contrasting integrationist and black nationalist images of racial justice, and by comparing the ways that white and black communities have understood race. My argument, in summary form, is that the boundaries of today’s dominant rhetoric about race were set in the late 1960s and early 1970s, in the context of an intense cultural clash between black nationalists on one side, and integrationists (white and black) on the other. Current mainstream race reform discourse reflects the resolution of that conflict through a tacit, enlightened consensus that integrationism—understood as the replacement of prejudice and discrimination with reason and neutrality—is the proper way to conceive of racial justice, and that the price of the national commitment to suppress white supremacists would be the rejection of race consciousness among African Americans.

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7. See R. Kennedy, supra note 6, at 1786-1807.
To understand the dynamics that produced this particular cultural bargain, it is important to comprehend the different meaning that race consciousness historically represents for whites and blacks in America. Within the white community, the conflict over race traditionally has been structured around an opposition between white supremacists who supported segregation, and white liberals and progressives committed to integration and civil rights reform. To white liberals and progressives, looking through the prism of integrationist ideology, a nationalist conception of racial identity was understood to distinguish backward, ignorant whites from cosmopolitan, educated whites. Whites who took race as central to their self-identity thereby expressed a commitment to racial supremacy, whereas whites who opposed racism understood that opposition to require the transcendence of racial identity in favor of integration and color-blindness. In other words, most white liberals and progressives, projecting themselves as the enlightened avant garde of the white community, automatically associated race nationalism with the repressive history of white supremacy, and never developed either a consciousness or a political practice that comprehended racial identity and power as centrally formative factors in American social relations.

In contrast, within at least a faction of the African American community, advocates of black nationalism consistently have opposed an integrationist understanding of racial progress. Instead, black nationalists asserted a positive and liberating role for race consciousness, as a source of community, culture, and solidarity to build upon rather than transcend. They developed a thoroughgoing critique of integrationism as either inevitably, or at the very least historically, linked to assimilation. Within the white community, the issue of race consciousness symbolically divided whites committed to racial justice from whites committed to racial domination. But within the black community, the issue of race consciousness historically divided those committed to norms of racial solidarity from two groups: first, from assimilationists who found white culture more attractive; and second from those who concluded that if the price of black racial identity was the continuation of white racial identity in its traditional, repressive form, then integration was preferable.

The conflict between nationalists and integrationists in the late 1960s and early 1970s represented a critical juncture in American race relations. At that time, black nationalism arguably had overtaken integrationism as the dominant ideology of racial liberation among African Americans, while virtually all liberal and progressive whites embraced a theory of integration as the ultimate definition of racial justice. Although there has been some refinement since this historical moment—particularly with the development of a national commitment to a limited form
of "cultural pluralism"—the basic boundaries of contemporary mainstream thinking about race were set in the early 1970s when a loose coalition of "moderate" African Americans joined with liberal and progressive whites to resist—and equate—black nationalists and white supremacists.

The reemergence of race consciousness among scholars of color should be an occasion for liberal and progressive whites to reevaluate our position concerning the racial compromise that mainstream visions of racial justice embody. I believe that the failure of the progressive and liberal white community to comprehend the possibility of a liberating rather than repressive meaning of race consciousness has distorted our understanding of the politics of race in the past and obscures the ways that we might contribute to a meaningful transformation of race relations in the future. Specifically, deep-rooted assumptions of cultural universality and neutrality have removed from critical view the ways that American institutions reflect dominant racial and ethnic characteristics, with the consequence that race reform has proceeded on the basis of integration into "white" cultural practices—practices that many whites mistake as racially neutral. And even when a commitment to consider the possible ethnocentrism of institutional practices exists, the attempt to construct a racially neutral culture has commonly produced only bland institutional forms whose antiseptic attempts at universalism have ensured the alienation of anyone with any cultural identity at all.9

It is now time to rethink the ways that racial justice has been understood in dominant discourse for the past several decades. The civil rights era consensus among the "enlightened" over how to effectuate racial progress has ended. In our times, conservatives utilize the very rhetoric of tolerance, color-blindness, and equal opportunity that once characterized progressive discourse to mark the limits of reform.10 But it would be a mistake to think that today's conservative discourse is simply a bad faith distortion of a progressive worldview. Serious limits to the integrationist vision existed from the beginning. The fact that support for substantively reformist programs such as affirmative action is articulated in the defensive rhetoric of "remedy" or "diversity," posed as counterbalancing factors to "lack of merit," is only one manifestation of deeper ways that civil

8. For example, the institutionalization of "Black History Month" as an element of official American culture.

9. I am thinking, for example, about the public school culture created in part to reform previously racist schools. See infra notes 35-41 and accompanying text.

10. See, e.g., City of Richmond v. Croson, 488 U.S. 469, 521 (1989) (Scalia, J., concurring) ("only a social emergency rising to the level of life and limb ... can justify an exception to the principle embodied in the Fourteenth Amendment that 'our Constitution is color-blind'...") (quoting Plessy v. Ferguson, 163 U.S. 537, 559 (1896) (Harlan, J., dissenting)).
rights reformism has worked to legitimate the very social relations that originally were to be reformed.

In order to comprehend the historical frame within which contemporary race reform discourse operates, it is necessary to review the ideological and cultural dynamics that led to the installation of integrationism as the dominant and enlightened way to understand race, and to the rejection of black nationalism as an extremist and backward doctrine. Of course, this is a complex story; I want simply to describe this cultural development in broad outline form. To that end, Part I summarizes the central analytics and assumptions of the integrationist worldview, roughly in the form that it was understood in the 1960s and 1970s. In Part II, I contrast integrationism with black nationalism as it was articulated during the 1960s by Malcolm X and others. My purpose in these first two parts is to depict integrationism and nationalism as starkly contrasting discourses of racial justice—in part to identify integrationism as a particular racial ideology, depending for its persuasiveness on certain background images of social life that are controversial rather than self-evident—and in part to present black nationalism in a systematic, theoretical frame, to counter the deep-seated image in dominant discourse that black nationalism embodied merely an emotional and angry reaction to oppression, rather than an alternative, coherent, and reasoned analysis of the meaning of racial domination. In Part III, I discuss the different ways that integrationism and nationalism can manifest themselves, suggesting that the two worldviews do not necessarily need to take the kind of pure and bipolar forms that I describe. Nevertheless, I argue in Part IV that the contemporary mainstream image of racial justice in terms of transcending race consciousness was embraced in part to resolve the particular "threat" that black nationalism represented in the late 1960s and early 1970s: In the background of today's dominant discourse about race are the traces of profound cultural anxiety rooted in the broad-ranging critique that militant nationalists lodged against the assumptions of everyday life in American institutions.

I. THE ANALYTICS AND ASSUMPTIONS OF INTEGRATIONISM

[A] segregated school system isn't necessarily the same situation that exists in an all-white neighborhood. A school system in an all-white neighborhood is not a segregated school system. The only time it's segregated is when it is in a community other than white, but at the same time it is controlled by the whites. So my understanding of a segregated school system, or a segregated community, or a segregated school, is a school that's controlled by people other than those that go there. . . . On the other hand, if we can get an all-black school, that we can control, staff it ourselves with the type of teachers that have our
good at heart, with the type of books that have in them many of the
missing ingredients that have produced this inferiority complex in our
people, then we don't feel that an all-black school is necessarily a seg-
regated school. It's only segregated when it's controlled by someone
from outside. I hope I'm making my point. I just can't see where if
white people can go to a white classroom and there are no Negroes
present and it doesn't affect the academic diet they're receiving, then I
don't see where an all-black classroom can be affected by the absence
of white children. . . . So, what the integrationists, in my opinion, are
saying, when they say that whites and blacks must go to school to-
gether, is that the whites are so much superior that just their presence
in a black classroom balances it out. I can't go along with that.11
—Malcolm X, 1963

Today the story of the civil rights struggle commonly is told in lin-
ear fashion, as if progress in race relations followed a teleological evolu-
tion—from an ignorant time when racial status was taken to signify real
and meaningful differences between people, to the present, enlightened
time, when race properly is understood in mainstream culture not to
make a difference except as vestiges of unfortunate historical oppression
or in terms of a vague and largely privatized "ethnic heritage." This
sense of linear evolution has lent an aura of inevitability to the story, as if
progression from the racial caste system of American slavery to the wide-
spread acceptance of integration and the transcendence of race con-
sciousness as the unquestioned goals of social progress was historically
determined. But the process has been neither linear nor inevitable. The
institution of racial integration as a social norm results from a cultural
struggle—played out in various theaters of social power—over the mean-
ing of racial domination and racial justice in America. The sense of in-
tegrationism as the inevitable means to achieve racial enlightenment
reflects both the institutionalization of a particular understanding of
what racism means and the marginalization, not only of white
supremacists, but also of the opposing analysis represented in the 1960s
by Malcolm X and other black nationalists.

It is no longer controversial within mainstream American culture
that the goal of racial justice consists of something called "integration." The
disagreements today revolve around how to achieve integration and
identify its violation, or, more generally, over how widely to enforce inte-
gregationist norms. Conservatives and liberals distinguish themselves ac-
cording to their positions on affirmative action;12 on whether intent must

11. MALCOLM X, BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY: SPEECHES, INTERVIEWS AND A LETTER 16-
17 (G. Breitman ed. 1970) [hereinafter MALCOLM X, BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY].
12. For examples of opposition to affirmative action among academics, see A. BICKEL, THE
MORALITY OF CONSENT 133-34 (1975) (affirmative action divides society, reduces productivity and
promotes inequality); T. SOWELL, CIVIL RIGHTS: RHETORIC OR REALITY 13-48, 109-16 (1984);
exist for a determination of discrimination;\textsuperscript{13} on whether rights against discrimination should be understood on a de jure or de facto basis; and whether there is merely a negative right against segregation, rather than

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{13} Compare Ward's Cove Packing Co. v. Atonio, 109 S. Ct. 2115 (1989) (plaintiffs in Title VII suits must demonstrate how particular invidious employment practices caused discriminatory results to shift burden of production to the defendants) and Washington v. Davis, 426 U.S. 229 (1976) (holding that a "racially discriminatory purpose" must be proved to make out a claim under the equal protection clause) with Griggs v. Duke Power Co., 401 U.S. 424 (1971) (disparate impact of facially neutral employment practices makes out a prima facie Title VII claim, subject to showing of "business necessity") and White v. Register, 412 U.S. 755 (1973) (inhibiting effect of redistricting on minority political participation sufficient for prima facie violation of equal protection clause).


For general discussions of the constitutional issues, see Brest, supra note 12; Eisenberg, Disproportionate Impact and Illicit Motive: Theories of Constitutional Adjudication, 52 N.Y.U. L. REV. 36 (1977).
\end{footnotesize}
an affirmative right to attend integrated institutions. To be sure, these are important issues, and often the choice between a narrow or a wide interpretation of the integrationist vision makes a real, material difference. But the constant and repetitive struggle over the proper way to implement integrationist norms suppresses from consideration the fact that the disagreements occur only within the confines of a shared set of beliefs that comprehend racism as a form of “discrimination.”

I want to discuss here how integrationism has come to define official racial enlightenment less than thirty years after the goal of racial integration symbolized demands for radical reform of American society. I argue that integrationism has achieved mainstream, institutionalized status in part because it has been domesticated. Rather than constituting a broad-ranging indictment of the reigning social structure, as it once did, the goal of civil rights itself has been “integrated” into the dominant cultural rhetoric. Seen through the universalizing lenses of the liberal American ideology of progress and enlightenment, racial integration appears as part of a general societal discourse that comprehends legitimacy in terms of policing borders between rationality and objectivity on the one hand and prejudice and bias on the other.

In the first Section, I describe the analytic components of integrationism as it has been understood in mainstream American culture; in the second, I relate the integrationist categories of prejudice, discrimination, and segregation to background images of rationality and universality in liberal and enlightenment thought. I then suggest that this way of thinking about race can serve not only to criticize, but also to legitimate

various social practices; this analysis concludes with a discussion of how the integrationist reform of public schools reflects at a practical, institutional level the features that I describe at an ideological level.

The point of discussing integrationism in this way is to show that the currently dominant vision of racial justice is not inevitable or self-evident, but rather is situated within the confines of a particular set of social, cultural, and philosophical assumptions about the world. Its dominance presupposes a set of political and social choices that could have been—and can be—made differently. After describing integrationism, I contrast it with the opposing black nationalist analysis of race.

A. The Analytic Components of Integrationism

The goal of racial integration has taken many forms and has been supported by various worldviews. At one time, the idea of racial integration represented a powerful, spiritually-rooted social resistance movement that threatened to destabilize the status quo of American institutional life in profound ways. Under the banner of integrationism, hundreds of thousands of people mobilized to challenge the political, economic, and cultural power relations in cities and towns across the country, employing tactics that included mass protest, economic boycotts, civil disobedience, sit-ins, and strikes. There is therefore nothing intrinsic to the concept of racial integration that demands that it be understood in the way I am about to describe it. What I want to capture here is the general cultural sense that became dominant in the 1960s and 1970s of what racism consists of and how to overcome it.

From this perspective, integrationism should be understood to comprise a set of attitudes and beliefs for perceiving the meaning of racist domination and for identifying the goals of racial justice. The concepts

of prejudice, discrimination, and segregation are the key structural elements of this ideology. Each idea embodies a different manifestation of what is seen as the central aspect of racism—the distortion of reason through the prism of myth and ignorance.

In the integrationist perspective, racism is rooted in consciousness, in the cognitive process that attributes social significance to the arbitrary fact of skin color. The mental side of racism is accordingly represented as either "prejudice"—the prejudging of a person according to mythological stereotypes—or "bias"—the process of being influenced by subjective factors. The key image here is of irrationalism—the problem with prejudice is that it obscures the work of reason by clouding perception with beliefs rooted in superstition. The paradigmatic manifestation is the white supremacist myth structure that asserts natural, biological differences between blacks and whites—the familiar identification of whites with the qualities of intelligence, industriousness, and pioussness, and the corresponding association of blacks with the qualities of dullness, laziness and lustfulness. The opposite of the ignorance that appears as rac-


This view of racism as based in prejudice was embodied in the REPORT OF THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMISSION ON CIVIL DISORDERS (Bantam ed. 1968) [hereinafter COMMISSION REPORT]; for criticisms of this vision in the Commission's report, see Marx, Two Cheers for the National Riot Commission, in BLACK AMERICA 78 (J. Szwed ed. 1970); Tabb, Race Relations Models and Social Change, 18 SOC. PROBS. 431-34 (1971). For general critiques of the way social scientists have comprehended race through the images of irrationality and bias, see L. BENNETT, THE CHALLENGE OF BLACKNESS 121 (1972) (discussing the vision of racism as a mental error); R. BLAUNER, supra, at 2-11; W. WILSON, POWER, RACISM, AND PRIVILEGE: RACE RELATIONS IN THEORETICAL AND SOCIOHISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES 29-68 (1973). For a recent work presupposing this prejudice/stereotype model as the definition of racism, see R. Kennedy, supra note 6, at 1787-1807.

RACE CONSCIOUSNESS

Racism is knowledge—knowledge gleaned from actual interracial experience rather than mythologies of stereotype.

In the integrationist ideology, racism achieves social form when the distortion of prejudice in consciousness subsequently translates into practice. Here racism manifests itself in the practice of “discrimination,” in the disparate treatment of whites and blacks that the irrational attribution of difference is supposed to justify. The paradigm practice of racism in its systematic, social form was the Jim Crow system of de jure segregation, which institutionalized racial apartheid on the basis of an ideology of white supremacy. And just as “prejudice” is implicitly contrasted with knowledge, discrimination is contrasted with neutrality—the social practice of equal treatment.

The solution to segregation, then, is integration, understood as a social vision opposed to racism, in each realm in which racism manifests itself. Within consciousness, integration means overcoming prejudice based on skin color. Therefore, reflecting one dimension of integrationist ideology, people began to understand themselves as possible racists to the extent they believed in irrational images of people based on skin-color stereotypes. The ideal was to transcend stereotypes in favor of treating people as individuals, free from racial group identification.

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19. See Fein, Community Schools and Social Theory: The Limits of Universalism, in COMMUNITY CONTROL OF SCHOOLS 76, 91 (H. Levin ed. 1970). According to Leonard Fein, the central tenet of liberals, when dealing with race, has been to assert its irrelevance. The argument has been that color is an accidental characteristic, which, in the truly rational, liberated, social order, ceases to have any empirical correlates. . . . The main thrust of the civil rights movement has been, therefore, in the direction of persuading white America to become color-blind. The corollary of the liberal ethic that white people ought not to pay attention to the blackness of Negroes was the proposition that Negroes ought not to pay attention to their own blackness.

James Farmer tells a story indicating the extreme manifestation of the colorblindness affliction, at least among some whites. A 20 year-old white CORE worker was mugged in her apartment. She described the assailant with great detail to the police, including height, weight, eyes, teeth, and clothing, but she didn’t mention that fact that he was black “for fear of indicating prejudice.” J. Farmer, Freedom—When? 85 (1965).

As Farmer makes clear, this analysis of racism and prejudice was extremely individualistic; the error of prejudice was taken to be reaching conclusions about people on the basis of any group association at all. See also R. Blauner, supra note 16, at 2-50 (describing the focus of sociologists of race on prejudice, stereotype, and assimilation and linking such a frame with individualist norms); H. Cruse, The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual 6-8 (1967) (describing integrationist link to individualist mythology of merit); Miller, Farewell to Liberals, in BLACK PROTEST THOUGHT IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY 379 (A. Meier, E. Rudwick & F. Broderick eds. 1971) (liberals individ-

At the level of practice, the integrationist cure for discrimination is equal treatment according to neutral norms. And at the institutional level, integrationism obviously means an end to the social system of racial segregation. In sum, the cure for racism would be equal treatment on an individual level and integration on an institutional level. In any event, integrationists believed the two would go hand in hand. Once neutrality replaced discrimination, equal opportunity would lead to integrated institutions; experience in integrated institutions would, in turn, replace the ignorance of racism with the knowledge that actual contact provides. This deep link between racism and ignorance on the one hand, and integration and knowledge on the other, helps explain the initial focus of integrationists on public education: Children who attended integrated schools would learn the truth about each others' unique individuality before they came to believe stereotypes rooted in ignorance. By attending the same schools, children would in turn have equal opportunity at the various roles in American social life.21
The integrationists’ diagnosis of the distortions of the white supremacy ideology focuses on the failure of white supremacists to recognize the universal characteristics shared by whites and blacks. According to the integrationists, white racists perceive the world through a false structure of “same” and “other” that utilizes a concept of blacks as “other” and denies that the attributes that characterize whites exist in blacks. Thus the rationality and piousness that supposedly characterize whites are, within racist ideology, denied to blacks. The integrationist proposes to correct this situation by distributing these characteristics across race lines: Blacks can be rational and pious; whites can be emotional and lustful. In other words, according to integrationist ideology, racists make the mistake of “essentializing” racial categories and believing that there is some necessary, intrinsic relationship between race and particular social characteristics. Integrationists are committed to the view that race makes no real difference between people, except as unfortunate historical vestiges of irrational discrimination. In an extreme form of the integrationist picture, the hope is that when contact occurs between different groups in society, not only race, but all “ethnic identity will become a thing of the past.”

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M. Gordon, Assimilation in American Life 62-64 (1964) (discussing Park’s definition of assimilation). For discussions of the influence of Park’s basic model, see R. Blauner, supra note 16, at 5-12; Alkalimat, supra note 18, at 173-81. For a description of this perspective at the level of everyday culture among civil rights activists in the 1950s and early 1960s, see J. Farmer, supra note 19, at 53-128; Epps, The Integrationists, in Through Different Eyes: Black and White Perspectives on American Race Relations (P. Rose, S. Rothman & W. Wilson eds. 1973).

22. See R. Blauner, supra note 16, at 266-68; Alkalimat, supra note 18, at 177-82; J. Farmer, supra note 19, at 85-86; Fein, supra note 19, at 89-93.

Although integrationism rejected the essentialism of white supremacy ideology, it constituted its own form of essentialism by assuming that the categories of description themselves were outside the social economy of race—that is, the assumption that the division of the world between the rational and the emotional, or the pious and the lustful, was not itself part and parcel of a rhetoric of domination. According to integrationists, racism consists only in the failure to recognize the distribution of these characteristics across racial lines, rather than in the ideological structure that conceives of the mind and the body, reason and desire, and intelligence and ignorance as the natural categories to organize social perception. See infra notes 94-103 and accompanying text.


Human beings throughout the world are fundamentally alike. . . . Hence, whenever social distance is reduced, individuals recognize their resemblances. The basic differences between ethnic groups are cultural, and conventional norms serve as masks to cover the similarities. Whenever men interact informally, the common human nature comes through. It would appear, then, that it is only a matter of time before a more enlightened citizenry will realize this. Then, there will be a realignment of group loyalties, and ethnic identity will become a thing of the past.
B. Race, Universal Reason, and Liberal Progress

Of course, this is a highly abstracted model of what I mean by the "ideology of integrationism"; I assume that these general ideas about race are so familiar that simply evoking them calls to mind the fuller meaning of integrationism in mainstream American culture. But at the same time it is important to grasp the integrationist worldview at this level of generality. Integrationists comprehend racism at a high level of abstraction in part because they wish to transcend the bias of particularity that they see as the root of racist consciousness. Integrationism, in short, links up with a broader set of liberal images—images that connect truth, universalism, and progress.

A commitment to a form of universalism, and an association of universalism with truth and particularism with ignorance, forms the infrastructure of American integrationist consciousness. This universalism is the common theme that connects the integrationist analytic distinctions between reason and prejudice, objectivity and bias, neutrality and discrimination, and integration and segregation. Each dichotomy envisions a realm of impersonality, understood as the transcendence of subjective bias and contrasted with an image of a realm of distortion where particularity and stereotype reign. Integrationist beliefs are organized around the familiar enlightenment story of progress as consisting of the movement from mere belief and superstition to knowledge and reason, from the particular and therefore parochial to the universal and therefore enlightened.

Within this frame for organizing social perception, controversy revolves around how to categorize particular social practices—as either rational and neutral or irrational and biased. Liberals and conservatives can be distinguished by how far they believe the realms of either bias or neutrality extend. But conservatives' and liberals' basic comprehension

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24. See Fein, supra note 19, at 87-94 (describing the centrality of the idea of universalism to liberal integrationists). For other writers linking integrationism with a commitment to universalism, see R. Blauner, supra note 16, at 266-67; L. Bennett, supra note 16, at 35-36; R. Staples, Introduction to Black Sociology 260-61 (1976); Alkalimat, supra note 18, at 188.

25. See R. Blauner, supra note 16, at 266-67 ("The liberal wants to judge a man in terms of his individual uniqueness and his universal humanity, not in terms of 'accidental' features like skin color. Universalism thus goes hand in hand with individualism, and in the area of race the two join in the ideal of 'color blindness'.") For descriptions of the centrality of these distinctions to Enlightenment thought generally, see M. Horkheimer & T. Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment (J. Cumming trans. 1972); H. Marcuse, Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory (1955).

of racial justice has the same underlying structure—to universalize institutional practices in order to efface the distortions of irrational factors like race, to make social life neutral to racial identity. To both liberals and conservatives, racism consists of a form of distortion that could be superseded by an aracial arena of social understanding. Once we remove prejudice, reason will take its place; once we remove discrimination, neutrality will take its place; and once we remove segregation, integration will take its place.\(^{26}\)

One way that this universalizing character of integrationism manifests itself in perception is that diverse social phenomena begin to appear the same because they are all viewed through the same analytic lens. From within this structure for cataloguing and organizing thinking about social life, racism becomes equivalent to other forms of prejudice and discrimination based on irrational stereotype. Social domination based on race, gender, sexual preference, religion, age, national origin, language, and physical disability or appearance, can all be categorized as the same phenomena because they all represent bias—understood as a deviation from a neutral, rational standard. Similarly, the fact that relations between Anglos and African Americans, Asians, and Hispanics are all perceived as presenting the issues of “discrimination against racial minorities” in legal and political discourse reflects the same structure of abstraction. From this structure, it begins to appear that the social subordination of various groups does not have a complex, particular, and historical context, but rather is a formal, numeric problem of the relations of majorities to minorities, unified under the concept “discrimination.”

Moreover, given this universalist dimension to integrationist thinking, it is plausible to conceive of a category of “reverse racism,” which is really not “reverse” at all. Since racism means a deviation from a universal norm of objectivity, it can be practiced by anyone, and anyone can be its victim, regardless of their particular historical circumstances or power relations. Thus, within the integrationist ideology, a black person who stereotypes whites is racist in the same way as a white person who harbors prejudice against blacks. And blacks who discriminate against whites are guilty of the same kind of racism as whites who discriminate against blacks. Anyone can engage in racism because we can identify racism from a vantage point of race neutrality, of not making someone’s race count for anything. In short, the symmetry of the integrationist picture is rooted in the idea that racism consists of possessing a race con-

\(^{26}\) See Fein, supra note 19, at 87 ("The liberal commitment, in education as in other spheres, is to universalism. We approach liberal salvation as we move from the sacred to the secular . . . from tradition through charismas to rational bureaucracy.").
sciousness about the world, in thinking that race should make a difference in social relations.

Finally, given the idea of immutability common to categories of “discrimination,” the story of the struggle against racism can be related in a way that follows the basic script of liberal progress more generally. Race consciousness is associated with status-based social coercion, where individuals are treated in a particular way because of the arbitrary fact of membership in a social group they did not choose. The transcendence of race consciousness represents a social movement toward the freedom of the individual to choose group identification. Like classical images of the common law, the vision underlying integrationist ideology is of American culture working itself pure by overcoming the distortions of various kinds of prejudice in favor of the increasing rationalization of institutional forms, which in turn provides greater individual liberty to choose, free of coercive social power. Freedom from racial discrimination is but one instance of the historical move from status to contract, from caste to individual liberty.27 Individualism and universalism are thereby linked together.28

The aims of racial integration seem self-evident because they are one part of a web of meaning that constitutes the dominant ideology of the nature of social progress itself. The meaning of race has been grafted onto other central cultural images of progress, so that the transition from segregation to integration and from race consciousness to race neutrality mirrors movements from myth to enlightenment, from ignorance to knowledge, from superstition to reason, from the primitive to the civilized, from religion to secularism,29 and, most importantly, the historical self-understanding of liberal society as representing the movement from status to individual liberty. In other words, integrationist ideology comprehends the issue of racial domination by viewing race relations through stock images about the nature of progress in liberal society and through the prism of a qualitative difference between liberal enlightenment and

27. R. NISBET, COMMUNITY AND POWER (1962). Robert Nisbet describes the liberal vision of progress as a move toward increasing secularization:

The demands of freedom appeared to be in the direction of the release of large numbers of individuals from the statuses and identities that had been forged in them by the dead hand of the past. A free society would be one in which individuals were morally and socially as well as politically free, free from groups and classes. . . . Freedom would arise from the individual's release from all the inherited personal interdependencies of traditional community, and from his existence in an impersonal, natural, economic order.

Id. at 22. For other discussions of the general secularization associated with liberal visions of progress, see generally M. HORKHEIMER & T. ADORNO, supra note 25; R. UNGER, LAW IN MODERN SOCIETY: TOWARD A CRITICISM OF SOCIAL THEORY (1976).

28. See supra note 25.

29. See R. BLAUNER, supra note 16, at 19-21 (linking repudiation of race consciousness with similar images of religiosity and other forms of “primordial” belief).
feudal hierarchy. The struggle against racism thus appears natural and inevitable, as simply another part of the teleological progression toward the liberation of social life.30

C. Integration and Legitimation

This liberal integrationist approach to race has some real attractions. The image of universality, and its correlate aim of transcending racial consciousness, forms a large part of the deep appeal that the integrationism vision has for many of us. This vision seems to reflect, at the ideological level, the occasional glimpses we attain in personal relations of a deep shared identity as fellow human beings in what are often the very best moments of social life. The aspiration for racial integration confirms our sense of the possibility of true and authentic relations that transcend racial status and other forms of cultural distance and difference. And integrationism appeals to the utopian ideal that these moments could be translated into organized institutional practices because, at the core, we are all the same, "regardless of race."

But this universalism also marks the narrowing limits of integrationist ideology. Understanding this aspect of integrationism helps one to comprehend how well-intentioned people could view the manner in which racial integration has actually proceeded in American life as, without question, a progressive reform of race relations.

As I have described it, integrationism is organized around an image of reason and neutrality that represents the transcendence of bias and prejudice. The liberal discourse of race represented by integrationism actually contains within itself two distinct ways to perceive social practices. On the one hand, the possibility of bias and prejudice constitutes a language of critique and reform that provides a framework to articulate what needs to be changed in society. On the other hand, this liberal discourse also constitutes a narrative of legitimation, a language for concluding that particular social practices are fair because they are objective and unbiased. This second aspect of liberal discourse embodies a conception of a realm of social life outside the influence of racial history and politics.

30. The link between images of universalism and progress in liberal ideology are well summarized by Robert Nisbet:

To regard all evil as a persistence or revival of the past has been a favorite conceit of liberals nourished by the idea of Progress. . . . Present evils could safely be regarded as regrettable evidences of incomplete emancipation from the past—from tribalism, from agrarianism, religion, localism, and the like. In one form or another, the theory of cultural lag has been the secular approach to the problem of evil.

R. NISBET, supra note 27, at 214.
Take, for example, the debate about affirmative action. In this context, race consciousness is employed by those interested in race reform. The familiar “dilemma” that surrounds affirmative action is that it requires the use of race as a socially significant category, although the deepest aims of integrationist ideology point toward the transcendence of race consciousness.

The dominant discourse about affirmative action reflects the core categories of the liberal theory of race that I described. The issues in the affirmative action debate are organized around the same structural opposition between reason and bias. Here, the category of “merit” represents the universal, impersonal side of integrationist perception. The use of race-conscious means to distribute social goods is problematic because it represents a deviation from the impersonality of merit. Thus, liberal support of affirmative action has always been defensive because its proponents themselves experience it, at least in part, as dissonant with their most fundamental convictions. Affirmative action has been characterized as merely an exceptional remedy for past injustice, rather than an affirmative right rooted in present social circumstances. It has been characterized as temporary and only necessary to achieve integration, at which time equal opportunity can take over. And affirmative action has been defended on the grounds that its beneficiaries have suffered from a “deprived” background, so that putting a thumb on the side of minorities in the scales of social decisionmaking helps even out the otherwise rationalized competition for social goods.31

Alternatively, affirmative action has been defended on the grounds of promoting diversity, an approach that challenges the notion of merit as the sole basis on which to distribute social opportunities. According to this justification, merit is only one value to be vindicated in determining admission to various institutions. Alongside merit is the value of

31. See C. JENCKS, INEQUALITY: A REASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECT OF FAMILY AND SCHOOLING IN AMERICA 253-65 (1972); Fiss, supra note 12, at 154-55.

The “cultural deprivation” analysis was especially prevalent in the 1960s. See, e.g., N. GLAZER & D. MOYNIHAN, supra note 21, at 53 (arguing that lower-class problems are so great and the line dividing lower from middle class so thin that the “middle-class Negro” cannot deal with them); E. LIEBOW, TALLY'S CORNER: A STUDY OF NEGRO STREETCORNER MEN 208-22 (1966) (concluding that black male street culture is not distinct from white culture but is merely a shadow system of values); C. SILBERMAN, CRISIS IN BLACK AND WHITE 249-307 (1964) (arguing that an “overall poverty of environment” accounts for the problems in slum schools and the poor educational performance of Negro children). Silberman later repudiated the position in C. SILBERMAN, CRISIS IN THE CLASSROOM: THE REMAKING OF AMERICAN EDUCATION 81 (1970). For one of many criticisms of the “cultural deprivation” approach as racist, see K. CLARK, DARK GHETTO: DILEMMAS OF POWER 129-53 (1965).
having a racially diversified society, a justification that can be used to counterbalance merit as a criterion.\(^{32}\)

Whether articulated in terms of remedy or diversity, this discourse assumes that minority applicants are less qualified on neutral, impersonal, and objective criteria. Thus, to integrate institutions, we must compromise meritocratic standards either temporarily—in order to break the cycles of institutional life that racial domination entailed—or permanently, by diffusing merit with other ends such as diversity. Today, conservative integrationists preach a principled commitment to color-blindness in institutional practices, even if it results in segregated institutions, and liberal integrationists advocate limited, effects-oriented race consciousness in order to ensure that some integration actually takes place. But from within the discourse through which they perceive the issues, both commit to the premise that the category of merit itself is neutral, impersonal, and somehow developed outside the economy of social power, with its significant currency of race, class, and gender, that marks American social life.\(^{33}\)

Given their view of the pervasive nature of American racism, at least in the recent past, it is conceivable that integrationists might have demanded a radical transformation of social practices before they assumed the existence of merit-based decisionmaking. But instead, integrationists assumed that fair, impersonal criteria simply would be what remained once the distortion of race consciousness was removed. One manifestation of this assumption was that the purportedly broad social transformation reflected in the national struggle against racism resulted in hardly any change in administrative personnel. The transformation from a Jim Crow to an integrationist racial regime was thought to re-

\(^{32}\) See Regents of the Univ. of Cal. v. Bakke, 438 U.S. 265, 311-15 (1978) (finding the goal of a diverse student body to be a compelling justification for affirmative action admissions); R. Dworkin, A MATtER OF PRINCIPLE 301-03 (1985) ("Places in medical schools are scarce resources and must be used to provide what...society most needs....Racial justice is now a special need."); Letter from Robert Lack to the Editors, N.Y. Times, Mar. 9, 1981, at A22, col. 3 (defending affirmative action plan for Harvard Law Review based on "the need for diversity").

\(^{33}\) I don't mean to suggest that the ideology of merit has never been questioned within the mainstream discourse. See, e.g., Fallon, supra note 20 (merit is but one value which competes and conflicts with other values); Wasserstrom, supra note 12, at 619 (arguing that no normative justification can be found for meritocracy). Conventional discourse, however, has contained the critique of meritocracy to low-level, blue collar positions; the assumption has been that higher-level jobs are truly based on merit. See Bartholet, Application of Title VII to Jobs in High Places, 95 HARv. L. REV. 945 (1982). For a particularly telling example of this elitism, see the sharp reaction that the usually "liberal" New York Times editors expressed in opposing the adoption of an affirmative action program for membership on the Harvard Law Review. Drawing Distinctions at Harvard Law, N.Y. Times, Mar. 3, 1981, at A18, col. 1 (characterizing selection procedures as "a fixed standard of [absolute] merit"). For an extended analysis of the link between the ideology of meritocracy and issues of race, see Freeman, supra note 12, at 295, 362-85.
quire only a change in the rules of social decisionmaking. The same whites who once carried out the formal program of American apartheid actually kept their jobs as the decisionmakers charged with evaluating merit in the employment offices of companies and in the admissions offices of schools in the post-segregation world. In institution after institution, progressive reformists have found themselves struggling over the implementation of racial integration with the former administrators of racial segregation, many of whom soon constituted an old guard "concerned" over the deterioration of "standards."

The point here is not to suggest that racism so permeated those who managed segregated institutions that the only solution was to purge them all. There can be no doubt that many people who kept their jobs should at least have been relieved of institutional authority—but that is not my point. I want to suggest that the continuity of institutional authority symbolizes the limited nature of social reform that most integrationists associated with the achievement of racial justice.

Even more dramatic than the continuity of personnel (since the particular people in power eventually age, retire and die), the same criteria that defined the "standards" during the period of explicit racism continue to be used, as long as they cannot be linked "directly" to racial factors. Within liberal integrationism, racism, seen to consist of a deviation from neutral, impersonal norms, focused on the exclusion of people of color, with the idea that all the rest of the cultural practices of formerly segregated institutions would stay the same. From within the integrationist ideology of neutral standards, no conceptual base existed from which integrationists could question whether "standards," definitions of "merit," and the other myriad features of the day-to-day aspects of institutional life constructed or maintained during segregation might have reflected deeper aspects of a culture within which the explicit exclusion of blacks seemed uncontroversial. And integrationists, organizing their perception of racial justice around images of objectivity, rationality, and neutrality, never considered whether this language for distinguishing the worthy from the unworthy itself might serve to help justify racial domination—if not to its victims, then at least to white beneficiaries who need to believe that their social positions are the result of something more than the brute fact of social power and racial domination.34

34. See R. STAPLES, supra note 24, at 260-61. Robert Staples linked the origin of the theory that whites and blacks are identical to the ideology of universalism:

The theory that no important differences exist between Blacks and Whites in America—either biologically or culturally—is of recent origin. It gained prominence at precisely the time when Blacks began to insist they did have distinctive attitudes, values, and lifestyles and began to question the validity and relevance of White culture. At the same time that Whites wanted to be color-blind, Blacks were demanding separate admissions standards to
Liberal integrationist ideology is structured so that some social practices are taken out of the economy of race relations, and understood to be undistorted by racial power. To be sure, no analytically necessary point from within the terms of the integrationist view of race exists at which the line between racial discrimination and neutral meritocracy must be drawn. One can imagine that the very definition of what constitutes qualifications to attend law school, to work as a police officer, to own a home, to live in a particular neighborhood, or to have a particular income could be challenged as either directly rooted in the distortions of race consciousness or more indirectly dependent on a rhetoric through which the powerful generally justify their share of the distribution of social benefits. And, in some contexts, reform within the integrationist tradition followed this path. But integrationism also labels the distribution of social goods as impersonal and neutral once we remove "distortions" like race consciousness. Integrationists tend to understand racism as a particular, identifiable deviation from an otherwise rational decisionmaking process that is not itself based in the history of social struggle between groups and worldviews. This narrow image of the domain of racial power characterizes the tendency of liberal integrationism to become part of a self-justifying ideology of privilege and status. The realm of "neutral" social practices from which to identify bias and deviation constitutes a whole realm of institutional characteristics removed from critical view as themselves historical, contingent and rooted in the particularities of culture—a realm that is itself a manifestation of group power, of politics. This obscures the possibility that the very core values of liberal integrationists—the ideals of objectivity, rationality, and neutrality—were historically constructed out of particular perspectives and as responses to specific historical situations rather than representing the transcendence of perspective itself.

D. Integrationism in Social Form: Public Schools

To this point, I have described integrationism simply as a set of ideas that form a recognizable worldview about race. But the ideology that I am evoking does not simply exist in people's heads as a group of concepts. That is, although these beliefs do characterize recognizable social and legal philosophies, integrationist ideology and the liberal dualities that provide its context are more diffuse and in the background of our social world than the image of a philosophy suggests. We should see integrationism as one part of a more general cultural meaning system,
rather than as a worked-out theory. Integrationist assumptions do not manifest themselves solely in self-conscious legal and political argument about race, but instead provide the filter for how we experience, perceive, and construct a broad range of social relations and institutional practices. Seeing integrationism as the "race" component of a wider cultural ideology reflects the sense we have that a wide array of social practices and programs for reform "hang" together—not as necessarily implicated by analytic necessity, but recognizable as a particular discourse in our culture nevertheless.

Consider the program for reform of Southern public schools in which integrationism played a central part in the 1960s. Public education, at least in the South, embodied the most realized attempt to institutionalize the cultural assumptions of the liberal, enlightenment ideology underlying integrationism. Integrationists put tremendous energy and effort into the struggle over Southern schools. Here the universalism of liberal race ideology appeared as a commitment to centralism in institutional culture and a corresponding opposition to local control. And here the terms of the cultural compromise reflected in the national embrace of integrationism were clearest: In liberal education reform, the definition of what constitutes enlightened good sense was drawn in negative contrast to an image of the "backward" and ignorant whites who opposed racial integration of Southern public schools, and whose lack of enlightenment was further symbolized by their embrace of the "mythologies" of fundamentalist religion. Liberal integrationism entailed a trade-off of this "redneck" culture with African American culture; in consideration for the suppression of white Southern working class culture in schools, blacks were expected to accede to the suppression of African American culture as well. Instead, school life would be characterized by the particular culture of technocracy and professionalism, presented as the aracial, neutral face of "quality" in education, and as the transcendence of localism and particularity.

Racial integration of Southern schools represented only one aspect of the liberal reform of public education. Roughly simultaneous with the constitutional prohibition of racial segregation in public education, school prayer was also declared an unconstitutional violation of the norm of state neutrality.35 There was a deep link between these two major reforms. The logic of the joint rejection of school segregation and school

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prayer was contained in the sense that each reform reflected a progressive move from ignorance and parochialism to enlightenment and equality, from the particular and biased to the universal and objective. Just as school segregation represented the bias of the primitive beliefs of white supremacists, school prayer represented the bias of local, primitive religious beliefs. Just as school segregation formed one manifestation of the social face of racial discrimination, compulsory school prayer was the social face of religious intolerance, of discrimination according to theology. And just as school integration substituted universal and neutral norms for the particularities of white supremacist myths, the ban on school prayer substituted a neutral, secular discourse for the particularities of religious belief.

The similarity in the way that segregation and prayer were understood is one manifestation of the deep connections between integrationism as an ideology and centralism as an institutional norm. Today's culture of public education is marked by a commitment in institutional life to the same kind of universalizing that integrationism reflects in ideological form. Along with the banning of the perceived local biases of segregationism and religion, a great centralization of curriculum and administration has occurred. The advanced degrees of administrators, the prevalent professional status of school board members, the implementation of standardized tests on a widespread basis, the exclusion of religion from schools, and the near-universal replacement of corporal punishment ("paddling" in the Southern vernacular) with therapeutic or contractual counseling approaches to student discipline, all reflect the attempt to substitute a standardized national culture of public school administration for the perceived repression—rooted in parochialism—of the former institutional culture of Southern schools. There is no analytic reason for the simultaneous occurrence of all these changes in the culture of the public schools: Racial integration has been just one part of a more general sanitization of Southern public education—the formerly maternal relationship between teacher and student has been replaced by the cool of professional distance. Graduate schools teaching expertly tested methods of instruction replaced traditional training of teachers through contact with older faculty. The decentralization of curriculum now exists only as a formality, as public education has, for all practical purposes

36. See R. BLAUNER, supra note 16, at 19 (linking social science view of religious belief as irrational with similar view about race consciousness).

37. The link between integration and the ban on school prayer was made explicit by both George Wallace and Martin Luther King, Jr. See M. L. KING, JR., A TESTAMENT OF HOPE: THE ESSENTIAL WRITINGS OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. 374 (J. Washington ed. 1986) [hereinafter M. L. KING, A TESTAMENT OF HOPE]; see also Fein, supra note 15, at 87 (linking secularism and integrationism).
except funding, been nationalized. The standardized test and the cultural commitment to the No. 2 pencil are the lived, institutionalized rituals that reflect the commitment to impersonality and objectivity at the ideological level.  

In educational discourse, professionalism plays the same symbolic role as merit, as a neutral alternative to irrational bias. Liberal reformers of public education in the late 1950s and 1960s associated professionalism with centralism, and understood that both provide a way to oppose local parochialism: "The public interest is almost invariably better served by leaving professional questions to the professionals." Likewise, "local control results in the same kind of intellectual parochialism that characterizes schools in totalitarian countries." Professionalism is the legitimating rhetoric of public school administration.

Centralism and professionalism became responsive images to the liberal perception of the previous problems with public education—the idea that localism and parochialism compromised neutrality and objectivity. And the underlying assumption was that once public education eradicated the influences of locality and bias, it would achieve a neutral, acultural form that, precisely because of its impersonality, would treat everyone alike. Localism—like race consciousness—had to be resisted because it threatened the connection between universalism, individualism and truth with the particularism of culture, community and politics. Myron Lieberman argued that:

National survival now requires educational policies which are not subject to local veto. . . . It is becoming increasingly clear that local control cannot in practice be reconciled with the ideals of a democratic society. . . . Local control is a major cause of the dull parochialism and attenuated totalitarianism that characterizes public education in operation.

Which brings us back to the Malcolm X quote that introduces this section. In his view, the problem with school "segregation" was not the failure to integrate black and white children, but rather the dynamics of power and control that formed the historical context of racial separation. Whereas liberals experienced integrationism as a progressive rejection of the bias and parochialism of the local in favor of the impersonality of centralized authority, Malcolm X asserted that the very goal of the strug-
gle against racism was to achieve local control, to liberate community institutions from outside, colonial rule. While the dominant culture translated the demand for local control as the "states' rights" discourse of Southern racism and the religious dogma of Southern fundamentalists, Malcolm X associated local control with racial liberation. And while integrationists understood public school integration to be the institutional synonym for racial justice, Malcolm X asserted that integration was a manifestation of white supremacist ideology. To grasp how he could understand racial liberation in terms so diametrically opposed to the mainstream discourse of liberal integrationism, it makes sense to turn now to the alternative ideology of race developed by Malcolm X and other black nationalists.

II. THE BLACK NATIONALIST CRITIQUE

Thus, within the black community there are two separate challenges to the traditional integration policy which long has constituted the major objective of established Negro leadership. There is the general skepticism that the Negro, even after having transformed himself into a white black-man, will enjoy full acceptance in American society; and there is the longer-range doubt that even should complete integration somehow be achieved, it would prove to be really desirable, for its price may be the total absorption and disappearance of the race—a sort of painless genocide.

Understandably, it is the black masses who have most vociferously articulated these dangers of assimilation, for they have watched with alarm as the more fortunate among their ranks have gradually risen to the top only to be promptly "integrated" off into the white community—absorbed into another culture, often with undisguised contempt for all that had previously constituted their racial and cultural heritage. Also, it was the black masses who first perceived that integration actually increases the white community's control over the black one by destroying institutions, and by absorbing black leadership and coinciding its interests with those of the white community. . . . Such injurious, if unintended, side effects of integration have been felt in almost every layer of the black community.42

—Robert S. Browne, 1963

Like integrationism, black nationalism among African Americans has taken various forms and has been associated with divergent

worldviews. The long tradition dates back to antebellum proposals by Martin Delany and others to colonize parts of Africa as a homeland for American blacks. Some form of nationalism was manifest in Booker T. Washington's self-help and separatist ideas of black advancement. Black nationalism in its modern, urban form can be traced among the


44. For Delany's views of American race relations, see M. Delany, THE CONDITION, ELEVATION, EMIGRATION AND DESTINY OF THE COLORED PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES 159-73 (1852) ("[T]hat there are circumstances under which emigration is absolutely necessary to [our] political elevation cannot be disputed. . . . We desire the civilization and enlightenment of Africa."). Recently, a body of scholarly work has considered Delany's significance in terms of the black nationalist tradition. See T. Draper, supra note 42, at 21-41; C. Griffith, THE AFRICAN DREAM: MARTIN R. DELANY AND THE EMERGENCE OF PAN-AFRICAN THOUGHT (1975); A. Pinkney, supra note 43, at 23-27; V. Ullman, Martin R. Delany: The Beginnings of Black Nationalism (1971).

Prior to Delany, Paul Cuffe had called for repatriation of blacks to Africa, petitioned Congress for assistance in 1814, and actually resettled 38 blacks to Sierra Leone in 1815. See also S. Harris, PAUL CUFFE: BLACK AMERICA AND THE AFRICAN RETURN 62-65 (1972); W. Alexander, Memoir of Captain Paul Cuffee, A Man of Colour: To Which is Subjoined the Epistle of the Society of Sierra Leone, in Africa &c. (1811). Congress funded the American Colonization Society, founded by whites to resettle free blacks to Africa, in 1819. The Society purchased land on the west coast of Africa and began what became, in 1847, the country of Liberia. The Society had an explicit white supremacist ideology and was opposed by most African Americans, although it claimed to have resettled 13,000 blacks prior to the Civil War. Delany, among other black leaders, refused to cooperate with the American Colonization Society, denouncing its leaders as "arrant hypocrites." E. Redkey, BLACK EXODUS 18-21 (1969). See R. Carlisle, supra note 43 (summaries of antebellum emigration proposals and efforts); T. Draper, supra note 42, at 14-33; A. Pinkney, supra note 43, at 19-23. Delany's nationalism was explicitly opposed to the ideology of constitutional civil rights, and he and Frederick Douglass had public disagreements. See Delany, I Have No Hopes in this Country, quoted in T. Wagstaff, Black Power: The Radical Response to White America 43 (1969).


poor to the organizing efforts of Marcus Garvey in the 1930s, and of the Black Muslims since, and among the middle class to W.E.B. Du Bois' critique of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's (NAACP) policy of integrationism in the 1930s. There is little doubt, however, that black nationalism had its most complete and sophisticated theoretical development, as well as its greatest mass appeal, during the 1960s and early 1970s, when it was articulated as an alternative worldview to integrationism and as part of a program of


46. The most effective early 20th century black nationalist leader, Marcus Garvey, a Jamaican emigrant to the United States, founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). The UNIA advocated black unity, a mass migration to Africa and the liberation and unification of Africa as a homeland for all black people. Garvey urged the immediate organization of all-black businesses and established UNIA operated cooperatives, including the Black Star Line steamship company. Garvey also started Negro World. Critical of the NAACP's focus on politics and civil rights and disparaging of its intellectual leader, W.E.B. Du Bois, Garvey attacked NAACP activists as race traitors. The UNIA attracted a half-million people at its height in the 1920s, almost entirely from the poor of the urban ghettos, with chapters in cities across the United States and abroad. For the best studies of Garvey, see E. Cronon, Black Moses: The Story of Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association (1955) (focusing on Garvey's shortcomings as a leader); A. Garvey, Garvey and Garveyism (1970) (a description of Garvey and the movement by his widow); T. Martin, Race First: The Ideological and Organizational Struggles of Marcus Garvey and the Negro Improvement Association (1976) (arguing that Garvey was a revolutionary and the greatest black figure of the century); T. Vincent, Black Power and the Garvey Movement (1971) (contending that Garvey was the direct forerunner of 1960s nationalists). The religious component of Garveyism is analyzed in R. Burkett, Garveyism as a Civil Religious Movement: The Institutionalization of a Black Civil Religion (1978). For a collection of Garvey's pre-1925 views, see Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey (A. Garvey ed. 1968) (two volumes); see also Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association (R. Hill ed. 1983) (two volumes) (collection of documents relating to the Garvey movement).

47. For diverse views of the Muslims, see E. Essien-Udom, Black Nationalism: A Search for an Identity in America (1962); C. Lincoln, The Black Muslims in America (1962); E. Muhammad, Message to the Black Man in America (1965); A. Pinkney, supra note 43, at 155-64. For an analysis that connects the Nation of Islam to Booker T. Washington, see H. Cruse, Rebellion or Revolution?, supra note 43, at 211. Cruse writes that:

[The] Nation of Islam was nothing but a form of Booker T. Washington's economic self-help, black unity, bourgeois hard work, law abiding, vocational training, stay-out-of-the-civil-rights-struggle agitation, separate-from-the-white-man, etc., etc., morality. The only difference was that Elijah Muhammad added the potent factor of the Muslim religion to a race, economic, and social philosophy of which the first prophet was none other than Booker T. Washington. Elijah also added an element of "hate Whitey" ideology which Washington, of course, would never have accepted.

radical social transformation by, among others, Malcolm X,\textsuperscript{49} Eldridge Cleaver,\textsuperscript{50} Stokely Carmichael,\textsuperscript{51} Imamu Baraka,\textsuperscript{52} Harold Cruse,\textsuperscript{53} the Black Panthers,\textsuperscript{54} and quickly-expanding factions of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE).\textsuperscript{55}

I will discuss black nationalism with specific reference to the ways in which it was articulated in the late 1960s and early 1970s. My goal here is not to provide a complete social history or philosophical account, but instead to sketch out, in general form, the ways that nationalists opposed the understanding of race embodied by integrationist ideology.

The controversy in the mid-1960s over the slogan "Black Power" exemplifies the contrast between integrationists and black nationalists. I begin the introduction to nationalism with a brief analysis of the issues at stake in the "Black Power" idea. I then discuss the nationalist critique of integration at an institutional level, focusing on public schools and the movement for community control. In the third Section, I describe ways in which national intellectual contested more general and abstract epistemological assumptions of liberal integrationism. I conclude this Part with a discussion of the systematic differences between integrationist and nationalist analyses of the meaning of racial domination and reform.


\textsuperscript{51} See S. Carmichael & C. Hamilton, \textit{Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America} (1967) (Carmichael, a former chairperson of SNCC, is now known as Kwame Toure).


\textsuperscript{55} See C. Carson, supra note 15, at 50-55, 66-71 (describing the nationalist turn within SNCC); A. Meier & E. Rudwick, supra note 15, at 431 (describing the nationalist turn within CORE).

A. Black Power

The black nationalist position received its first modern wave of sustained mass exposure in 1966 when Willie Ricks and Stokely Carmichael began using the term “Black Power” during the March Against Fear in Mississippi.\(^{56}\) Tension between integrationist and nationalist approaches had already erupted within and between various civil rights organizations. But the high-profile and polarized controversy over the term “Black Power” transformed what had been largely an underground conflict into a full-scale, highly-charged public debate over the fundamental direction and conception of the civil rights movement.\(^{57}\)

\(^{56}\) The March Against Fear was begun as a solitary march across Mississippi by James Meredith to protest the slaying of Medgar Evers. After Meredith was shot by a would-be assassin, the leaders of SCLC, SNCC, CORE, the NAACP, and the Urban League got together in Memphis to plan to continue the march symbolically on Meredith’s behalf. The Urban League and the NAACP eventually refused to participate in opposition to the manner in which the March’s manifesto sharply criticized the slow pace of civil rights reform of the federal government. See D. Garrow, supra note 15, at 475-97; V. Harding, The Other American Revolution 185-87 (1980); R. Weissbrodt, supra note 15, at 193-222; J. White, supra note 48, at 139-43.

\(^{57}\) The term “Black Power” first gained publicity when Richard Wright so entitled his autobiographical reflections on Africa. R. Wright, Black Power: A Record of Reactions in a Land of Pathos (1954). It initially was used as a political slogan, without much notoriety, by Representative Adam Clayton Powell in 1966, during Howard University commencement exercises. See H. Cruse, Rebellion or Revolution?, supra note 43, at 207. But it was not until Ricks and Carmichael began using the slogan during the March Against Fear that it gained mass appeal. The slogan originated as part of the competition between the King/SCLC faction and the SNCC faction of the March’s organizers. Tension between the civil rights groups dated back at least to the 1961 Albany campaign, where SNCC organizers attempted to mobilize the black community en masse to resist the racial structure of the city as a whole, and where disagreements arose between SNCC organizers and the SCLC as to the militancy of nonviolent tactics, whether to violate federal court orders against marches, and more generally whether the civil rights campaign should be focused on building community strength or on persuading the federal government to grant civil rights. See C. Carson, supra note 15, at 56-65, 83-95; A. Morris, supra note 15, at 239-50; R. Weissbrodt, supra note 15, at 30-38, 130-43.

By the 1963 March on Washington, the ideology of the groups had substantially diverged, with the SCLC leadership supporting the passage of the civil rights bill and cooperation with the Kennedy Administration and John Lewis of SNCC prepared to deliver a scathing attack on the government and on the slow pace of race reform, including opposition to the Civil Rights Act as “too little, too late.” See R. Allen, supra note 43, at 20-21; T. Branch, supra note 15, at 869-70, 873-74, 878-80; D. Garrow, supra note 15, at 281-83; R. Weissbrodt, supra note 15, at 76-83.

At the March Against Fear, the rift opened around the question of nonviolence, and, reflecting the beginnings of nationalist sentiment among the SNCC/CORE organizers, around the issue of whether to permit white participation in the March. Symbolically, the positions were represented by competing crowd chants, with the SCLC organizers trying to get the crowd to chant “Freedom Now” while the SNCC organizers were challenging with “Black Power.” For descriptions of this context of the march, see C. Carson, supra note 15, at 209-10; D. Garrow, supra note 15, at 475-97; M. L. King, Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community 31-32 (1967); R. Weissbrodt, supra note 15, 193-221.

To be sure, the slogan “Black Power” did not itself have a necessary nationalist meaning; in fact, a virtual cottage industry was created around attempts to define its meaning, and many of its exponents were clearly integrationist. For examples of the substantial writing devoted to defining

For general commentaries on the Black Power controversy, see R. ALLEN, supra note 43; T. DRAPER, supra note 42, at 118-31; H. HAINES, supra note 55, at 57-70; V. HARDING, supra note 56, at 177-200; B. MUSE, supra note 15, at 243-44; F. POWLEDGE, BLACK POWER, WHITE RESISTANCE: NOTES ON THE NEW CIVIL WAR (1967).

The Black Power Conference called by Adam Clayton Powell and held in Newark in 1967 reflected the broad disagreements among those characterizing themselves as Black Power activists. See R. ALLEN, supra note 43, at 132-61; V. HARDING, supra note 56, at 194-95; Stone, The National Conference on Black Power, in THE BLACK POWER REVOLT, supra, at 189. Further evidence of the elasticity of the slogan is produced by a recent book by Theodore Cross, supra note 16, who uses the concept of "Black Power" as an organizing idea for a clearly integrationist-oriented, anti-nationalist argument. Nevertheless, it is clear that for most, the "Black Power" slogan represented the beginning of repudiation of integrationist/civil rights ideology in favor of some form of nationalism. See A. PINKEY, supra note 43, at 64 ("The introduction of the concept of black power was the beginning of the current spread of nationalist sentiment among Afro-Americans, and signalled the decline of integration as the dominant thrust of the black movement."); T. WAGSTAFF, BLACK POWER: THE RADICAL RESPONSE TO WHITE AMERICA 103 (1969) ("The Black Power Movement is a conscious attempt to harness the emotional power of Black Nationalism to a practical program for the elimination of racial oppression in America."); R. WEISBROT, supra note 15, at 169-70, 236-56.

58. For discussions of the mainstream reactions to the slogan "Black Power" from which these examples are drawn, and from which my analysis proceeds, see R. ALLEN, supra note 43, at 66-67; C. CARSON, supra note 15, at 153-243; J. FARMER, supra note 19, at 91-93; Marable, Black Nationalism in the 1970s: Through the Prism of Race and Class, SOCIALIST REV., Mar.-June 1980, at 66-72. For empirical research on white and black reactions to the term "Black Power," see Aberbach & Walker, The Meanings of Black Power: A Comparison of White and Black Interpretations of a Political Slogan, 64 AM. POL. SCI. REV. 367, 370 (1970) (interviewed 855 whites and blacks in Detroit asking, "What do the words 'black power' mean to you?"); the largest percentage of whites said that the words meant "black rules white," while about 65% of blacks said the words meant "nothing" or "a fair share for black people" or "racial unity"). For discussions of the reactions to "Black Power" as reverse racism, see Duberman, Black Power in America, PARTISAN REV., Winter 1968, at 34-48 (ambiguity in the phrase "Black Power" derives from a failure in clarity or frankness on the part of its advocates; the dangers of black racism in "Black Power" are real and not the invention of frightened white liberals); Feldman, How the Cry for "Black Power" Began, 13 DISSERT 472 (1966) (reactions to Black Power include thoughts of racial war, "racism in reverse" and actual withdrawal of support from the civil rights movement); see also C. FAGER, WHITE REFLECTIONS ON BLACK POWER 41-63, 83-96 (1967); F. POWLEDGE, supra note 57; Scott & Brockreide, THE RHETORIC OF BLACK POWER: ORDER AND DISORDER IN THE FUTURE, in RHETORIC, supra note 57, at 194, 204.
white or one that is black." Roy Wilkins charged that "no matter how endlessly they try to explain it, the term 'Black Power' means anti-white power." He characterized Black Power as "a reverse Mississippi, a reverse Hitler, a reverse Ku Klux Klan." Time and Kenneth Clark each referred to Black Power as a "racist philosophy," and Crisis, the publication of the NAACP, called Black Power advocates "black neo-segregationists" and "advocates of apartheid." In fact, the virulent and extreme denunciation of Black Power symbolized the unity of what would quickly become the new center of American consciousness about race.

The integrationists saw two problems with Black Power. First, the concept assumed that power should be distributed on a racial basis, thereby assuming that American society should be thought of in terms of

59. Address by Hubert Humphrey, 57th Annual NAACP Convention (July 6, 1966), reprinted in RHETORIC, supra note 57, at 65, 71.


61. C. CARSON, supra note 15, at 22.


63. For further examples of writers identifying Black Power as racism, see O. COX, supra note 16, at 210-18, 298-302; Cook, The Tragic Myth of Black Power, NEW SOUTH, Summer 1966, at 58 ("[T]he slogan 'Black Power' does have, when words, context, shorn of pretensions, hypocrisy and intellectual dishonesty and program are combined, a generic or core meaning, and that meaning is racist."); Wechler, Killers of the Dream, PROGRESSIVE, Dec. 1966, at 12. For a more complicated association of Black Power with racial domination that locates Black Power proponents on the dominated side of the relationship, see COMMISSION REPORT, supra note 16, at 235 ("Black Power advocates . . . function as an accommodation to white racism . . . reminiscent of Booker T. Washington."). Several "moderate" black leaders, including Roy Wilkins, Whitney Young, Jr., Bayard Rustin, Bishop Carey Gibbs (leader of the AME Church), Dorothy Height (president of the National Council of Negro Women), and Marion Bryant (president of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs) issued a statement which appeared in an advertisement in the New York Times and black-owned newspapers across the country denouncing "any strategies of violence, reprisal or vigilantism" and rejecting "the way of separatism, either moral or spatial." The statement declared that blacks fighting and dying in Vietnam were more representative of the black community than those blacks who were rioting in the streets. N.Y. Times, Oct. 14, 1966, at 35, col. 3 (advertisement), reprinted in Crisis and Commitment, 73 CRISIS 474 (1966); see also Johnson, Negro Leaders Issue a Statement of Principles Repudiating "Black Power" Concepts, N.Y. Times, Oct. 14, 1966, at 27, col. 2. Interestingly, Martin Luther King's response was more ambiguous. To the extent the "Black Power" slogan was associated with a renunciation of the principle of nonviolence or with separatism and withdrawal from the struggle for equality, he was clearly opposed; however, he saw positive aspects to the concept in terms of building race pride and solidarity in political and economic struggles. See M.L. KING, supra note 57, at 23-66. See also D. GARROW, supra note 15, at 475-574; Scott, Black Power Bends Martin Luther King, in RHETORIC, supra note 57, at 166 (describing King's utilization of Black Power imagery in speech to Tenth Anniversary Convention of the SCLC shortly before he was assassinated).

For a critique of the Black Power/nationalist turn from the viewpoint of a black socialist who saw the issue as fundamentally strategic, see Rustin, "Black Power" and Coalition Politics, COMMENTARY, Sept. 1966, at 35.
separate white and black communities. Black Power thus violated both the integrationist principle to transcend race consciousness at the ideological level and the integrationist program to end the segregation of whites and blacks at the institutional and community level.

Second, the Black Power concept troubled integrationists because it assumed that power determined the distribution of social resources and opportunities, rather than reason or merit. It was not simply the theory of Black Power that engendered the charged reaction, but rather the resistance to the reigning liberal idea of progress through reasoned discussion and deliberation that the Black Power movement, for a time, embodied. The clenched fist of the Black Power salute and the militaristic affectation of many black nationalist groups were the overt physical manifestations of this dimension of the movement.

Through the ideological filters of integrationism, black nationalism and white supremacy appear essentially the same because both are rooted in race consciousness, in the idea that race matters to one's perception and experience of the world. Integrationists saw nationalists as regressive because, in the integrationist view, progress meant transcending race as a basis of social decisionmaking, and in the long term, replacing power with reason as the basis for the distribution of resources. With the centering of integrationism as the mainstream ideology of American good sense, nationalism 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.

But the equation of black nationalists and white supremacists assumes a neutral standard from which to identify race consciousness as a deviation, and from which to link race inherently to prejudice and domination. When viewed in terms of the actual context of history and power relations between racial groups in America, however, white supremacy and black nationalism embodied very different understandings of race.

The mainstream reactions to black nationalism were so vociferous not because the Black Power movement presented any real threat of racial domination by blacks, but rather because black nationalism embodied a profound rejection of the reigning ideology for understanding the distribution of power and privilege in American society. Just as integrationism became the mainstream discourse for racial justice—to the extent that it could be articulated in the terms of a deep cultural self-identity of enlightenment-through-evolution toward rationality and objectivity—the nationalist analysis of racial justice became threatening, in part, because it challenged the universalist assumptions underlying these images of progress. These images were challenged as themselves elements of a particular ideology of power and of the particular culture of whites.
B. Nationalism as a Critique of Universalism

Integrationists by and large never comprehended the analysis of racial domination presented by black nationalists. From their universalist view of racism as a distortion of an otherwise aracial rationality, integrationists interpreted the race consciousness of black nationalists as the mark of racism and never considered the nationalist position as a competing, alternative, and systematic analysis of the meaning of racial domination. Thus, when black nationalists declared that integration was “a subterfuge for white supremacy”\(^6\) and even represented “a form of painless genocide,”\(^6\) integrationists literally could not understand what they were talking about. The nationalist worldview was based on a fundamentally different set of beliefs and perceptual categories through which reforms that looked progressive to integrationists looked regressive to nationalists.

The contrast between the integrationist commitment to centralization and expertise in public education and Malcolm X’s discourse of local, community control was only one manifestation of the deep and thoroughgoing opposition between integrationists and nationalists on the more basic issue of the meaning of race in America. Where integrationists understood race through the prism of universalism—from within which race consciousness appeared arbitrary, irrational, and symmetrically evil whether practiced by whites or blacks—nationalists viewed race in the particular context of American history, where racial identity was seen as a central basis for comprehending the significance of various social relations as they are actually lived and experienced, and within which the meaning of race was anything but symmetrical. The opposition between centralism and local control that distinguished integrationist and nationalist rhetoric about schools had its philosophical correlates in the opposition between timeless—as opposed to historicist—views about identity and group consciousness, between the discourses of impersonal professionalism and ideas of organic community, and most generally between the assumptions of “universalism” and the assertions of qualitative cultural differences encompassed in the idea of “nationalism.”

These basic differences are reflected in the very idea that African Americans comprise a “nation.” This starting point is commonly associated with separatism in general, and with the demand for a separate nation as a homeland for American blacks in particular. But while at least some geographic separation has often characterized nationalist pro-

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64. S. Carmichael & C. Hamilton, supra note 51, at 54.
65. Browne, supra note 42 at 7.
grams, and while the idea of a formal nation-state has been advocated by several nationalist groups, there is, as I see it, no necessary relation between nationalism as a way to understand race relations and a formal demand for geographic separation.

Instead, the image of African Americans as a "nation within a nation" should be understood as a symbol of the core assertion that race consciousness constitutes African Americans as a distinct social community, in much the same way that national self-identity operates to establish the terms of recognition and identity in "regular" nations. In contrast to the integrationist premise that blacks and whites are essentially the same, the idea of race as the organizing basis for group consciousness asserts that blacks and whites are different, in the sense of coming from different communities, neighborhoods, churches, families, and histories, and of being in various ways foreigners to each other.

66. See supra notes 44 & 46 and infra note 67.

67. This program characterized the early colonization efforts, as well as Garvey's Back to Africa movement and the Black Muslims' program. See supra note 46. See also the "Republic of New Africa" movement's proposal that the states of Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina be ceded by the U.S. government for the creation of an independent black nation, along with the payment of $200 billion in reparations. R. BRISBANE, supra note 15, at 183-85; A. PINKNEY, supra note 43, at 125-26; Sherrill, Birth of a (Black) Nation, ESQUIRE, Jan. 1969, at 70, 72.

68. Theodore Draper complains that a nationalist ideology is incoherent without geographic separation rooted in sovereignty over land. T. DRAFER, supra note 42, at 120-25, 131-47, 168-81. I believe that Draper has an overly formalistic and traditional view of nationhood and sovereignty. All that Draper proves is that the language of "nationhood" does not precisely match the way that "nations" were recognized in a particular world order that, at least in the 1960s, was explicitly linked to the African American situation through an analysis centering around the concept of "colonialism." See infra text accompanying notes 152-54. See, e.g., R. ALLEN, supra note 43, at 1-14; S. CARMICHAEL & C. HAMILTON, supra note 51, at 3-32 (discussing the "colonial situation" in America under which policies are based on subordinating a racial group and maintaining control); A. PINKNEY, supra note 43, at 3-13; R. STAPLES, supra note 24, at 13-14, 300-10.

69. The phrase originated with Martin Delany. M. DELANY, supra note 44, at 203. Delany has been called "the first major Negro nationalist," see L. BENNETT, BEFORE THE MAYFLOWER: A HISTORY OF THE NEGRO IN AMERICA, 1619-1966, at 137 (1966), but Draper argues that "Delany's black nationalism was based on unrequited love on rejection by whites." T. DRAFER, supra note 42, at 24. For more inspiring views of Delany, see R. CARLISLE, supra note 43, at 67-84; A. PINKNEY, supra note 43, at 23.

70. "The central significance of Black Nationalism is the emergence of Black group-consciousness, self-assertion and cultural identity." Turner, supra note 55, at 8.

71. The idea that African Americans have created a distinct culture that is not reducible to class or Americanism has been a controversial notion in the fields of sociology and anthropology. For example, it was long the dominant view that African Americans have no ethnic culture, but instead "the Negro is only an American and nothing else. He has no values and culture to guard and protect." N. GLAZER & D. MOYNIHAN, supra note 21, at 53. For other writers articulating the same idea, see E. FRAZIER, THE NEGRO IN THE UNITED STATES 680-81 (rev. ed. 1957); G. MYRDAL, supra note 16, at 928 ("In practically all of its divergencies, American Negro culture is not something independent of general American culture. It is a distorted development, or a pathological condition of American culture."); R. PARK, supra note 16; K. STAMPP, THE PECULIAR INSTITU-
And in contrast to the white supremacist ideology of natural, essential racial characteristics, the image of nationhood locates differences between whites and blacks in social history, in the temporal context in which all national identity must come into being. As Dr. C. Munford put it:

It is different from other emergent nations only in that it consists of forcibly transplanted colonial subjects who have acquired cohesive identity in the course of centuries of struggle against enslavement, cultural alienation, and the spiritual cannibalism of white racism. This common history which the Black people of America share is manifested in a concrete national culture with a peculiar 'spiritual complexion,' or psychological temperament. Though the Black nation expresses its thoughts, emotions, and aspirations in the same tongue as American whites, the different conditions of existence . . . have, from generation to generation, welded the bonds of a national experience as different from that of white existence as day is from night. And what differentiates nations from one another are dissimilar conditions of life.

The depth of identification of self and recognition of others implicit in the idea of nationhood based on generations of "dissimilar conditions of life" marks a vision of community that cannot be captured in the liberal dichotomies of either liberty and coercion, or reason and myth. The

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Tion: Slavery in the Anti-Bellum South vii (1956) ("slaves were merely ordinary human beings . . . innately Negroes are, after all, only white men with black skins, nothing more, nothing less").

For criticism of this tradition in social science, see R. Blauner, supra note 16, at 124-55; R. Ellison, An American Dilemma: A Review, in Shadow and Act 303-17 (1964); R. Staples, supra note 24, at 6-9; W. Wilson, supra note 16, at 143; Alkalimat, supra note 18; Ladner, Introduction, in The Death of White Sociology, supra note 18, at xxiii.


Black nationalist descriptions of the character of African American culture have roughly divided between an emphasis on African roots in the Pan-Africanism tradition, see, e.g., Baraka, supra, and the description of a unique Afro-American culture and community, see, e.g., H. Cruse, Rebellion or Revolution?, supra note 43, at 48-138. See generally Afro-American Anthropology: Contemporary Perspectives (N. Whitten & J. Szwed eds. 1970); A. Pinkney, supra note 43, at 127-50. For a critique of the cultural "distinctiveness" thesis, see R. Kennedy, supra note 6, at 1778-1818.

72. Turner, supra note 55, at 7-8 (quoting Address by C. Munford, Black National Revolution in America, Utah State University (May 1970)).
public assertion of spiritual cohesion represented by black nationhood contested the liberal border between public objectivity and private sentiment underlying the link between universality and individualism. Nationhood, understood as an historically created community, assumes that social bonds of identity, recognition, and solidarity can be liberating and fulfilling outside the family.

In this way, nationalists articulated what might be seen as an “historicized” view of social relations. In opposition to the universal vantage point used by integrationists to identify bias and prejudice, nationalists presented the time-bound, messy, and inherently particular social relations between nations as the central ground from which to perceive race. In opposition to the essentializing of race engaged in by white supremacists, nationalists located the meaning of race in history, in the social structures that people—rather than God or some objectified nature—have created.

Again, the commitment to an historical view means that there is no objective or natural necessity to the way that groups, identities, and social meanings have been structured. Because the structure of race relations is a social creation, it could have been constructed differently in the past and could still be changed in the future. But the nationalist view contrasts with the liberal image of group identity either as an irrational status or as a matter of choice—a voluntary, willed association. The idea of a nationalist base of social identity is that we are, in a sense, thrown into history, with aspects of social reality already structured to limit some possibilities, while making other ones available. Rather than imagining that people simply exist as autonomous individuals who create social relations out of acts of private will, C. Munford, for example, saw African Americans in terms of traditions and communities that provide the historical context for individual identity. From a nationalist perspective, the fact that African Americans compose a socially-created community, in terms of a contingent history, does not mean that the community that exists should be rejected because it represents either a distortion that must be transcended or the result of domination that must be erased. Against the liberal image that group identity and status are opposed to the possibility of individual freedom, the nationalist perspective sees in historical structures the very basis for social meaning.

73. Liberals associate the phenomenon of nationalism in general with irrationality, danger, and regression. The invocation of organic communities are identified with status-based feudalism and group irrationality; emotional “patriotism” to country is the mark of backwardness.

74. Along with C. Munford and James Turner, Harold Cruse's conception of black nationalism exemplifies the historicist perspective that I believe marked the intellectual and theoretical advances made in the black nationalist position in the 1960s. See H. CRUSE, THE CRISIS OF THE NEGRO INTELLECTUAL, supra note 19, at 20-44, 544-65; H. CRUSE, REBELLION OR REVOLUTION?, supra
C. The Nationalist Interpretation of School Integration

"Integration" as a goal speaks to the problem of blackness not only in an unrealistic way but also in a despicable way. It is based on complete acceptance of the fact that in order to have a decent house or education, black people must move into a white neighborhood, or send their children to a white school. This reinforces, among both black and white, the idea that "white" is automatically superior and "black" is by definition inferior. For this reason, "integration" is a subterfuge for the maintenance of white supremacy. . . . The goal is not to take black children out of the black community and expose them to white middle-class values; the goal is to build and strengthen the black community. . . . "Integration" also means that black people must give up their identity, deny their heritage. . . . The fact is that integration, as traditionally articulated, would abolish the black community. The fact is that what must be abolished is not the black community but the dependent colonial status that has been inflicted on it.75

—Stokely Carmichael, 1967

The conception that African Americans created "a concrete national culture" and constitute an integral, historically created national community within the structure of American social relations is crucial to understanding the divergent ways that nationalists and integrationists understand racial domination. Compare, for example, the different ways that nationalists and integrationists interpreted public school integration.

Nationalists believed that school integration was undesirable for two main reasons. First, integration of black and white schools entailed the abolition of one of the few organized institutions in the black community. School integration therefore contributed an even greater loss of social power: Blacks lost the ability to control and shape their children's education. As Malcolm X described community control, it was necessary in order to create the curriculum, textbooks, and general content of educational life in a way that would respond to the needs and wishes of the black community. By conceiving of African Americans in nationalist terms, black nationalists focused attention on the impact of race reform on the community as a whole and evaluated integration according to whether the black community was made stronger or weaker.76 As Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton stated, "[T]he racial and cultural personality of the black community must be preserved and the community must win its freedom while preserving its cultural integrity . . . .

75. S. CARMICHAEL & C. HAMILTON, supra note 51, at 54-55.
76. See H. CRUSE, PLURAL BUT EQUAL, supra note 48, at 1-52, 192-202, 244-60; H. CRUSE, REBELLION OR REVOLUTION?, supra note 43, at 51-65.
This is the essential difference between integration as it is currently practiced and the concept of Black Power.\textsuperscript{77}

Second, nationalists asserted that school integration meant the adaptation of blacks to white norms—to quote Carmichael, integration entailed "taking black children out of the black community and exposing them to white middle-class values." Of course, there was no analytically intrinsic content to the idea of integration that mandated that school integration proceed on the basis of white cultural norms—just as there was nothing intrinsic to the concept of integration that entailed Robert Browne's image of "the Negro . . . transform[ing] himself into a white black-man."\textsuperscript{78} But Carmichael and Browne highlighted an aspect of American racial integration buried in the mainstream ideology of neutrality and universalism, but central to the black nationalists' analysis—a consideration of the cultural terms on which integration in social institutions would proceed. According to Harold Cruse, the commitment to integration embodied absorption into white culture through the failure to recognize the integrity of the black culture created in conditions of domination:

\begin{quote}
[T]he Negro working class has been roped in and tied to the chariot of racial integration driven by the Negro middle class. In this drive for integration the Negro working class is being told in a thousand ways that it must give up its ethnicity and become human, universal, full-fledged American. Within the context of this forced alliance of class claims there can be no room for Negro art . . . or art institutions . . . because all of this is self-segregation which hangs up 'our' drive for integration.\textsuperscript{79}
\end{quote}

In fact, "[t]he integrationist philosophy sees Negro ghettos as products of racial segregation that should not even exist. Hence, nothing in the traditions of ghettos are worth preserving even when the ghettos do exist in actuality. This is typical integrationist logic on all things social."\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{77} S. CARMICHAEL & C. HAMILTON, supra note 51, at 55.

\textsuperscript{78} Id.

\textsuperscript{79} H. CRUSE, THE CRISIS OF THE NEGRO INTELLECTUAL, supra note 19, at 283.

\textsuperscript{80} Id. at 234. For further examples of the association of integration with assimilation to white norms, see D. BELL, AND WE ARE NOT SAVED, supra note 6, at 110, discussing R. RIST, THE INVISIBLE CHILDREN: SCHOOL INTEGRATION IN AMERICAN SOCIETY (1978) and stating that, Rist . . . followed . . . a group of young black children bused to an upper-class, mainly white school. The principal's policy was to "treat all the kids just alike." This evenhanded policy meant—in practice—that the handful of black children from the ghetto were expected to perform and behave no differently than did the white children from comfortable suburbs in this mainly white school where the curriculum, texts, and teaching approaches were designed for the middle-class white kids. As you can imagine, the results of this evenhanded integration were disastrous.

See also H. CRUSE, REBELLION OR REVOLUTION?, supra note 43, at 48-125; H. CRUSE, THE CRISIS OF THE NEGRO INTELLECTUAL, supra note 19, at 7-9, 64-95, 240-52; see, e.g., R. ALLEN, supra note 43, at 101; R. STAPLES, supra note 24, at 35-36, 251-54, 301 (public schools an important site for the transmission of the white majority's worldview); Alkalimat, supra note 18, at 175-183; Browne,
In more general terms, this understanding of integrationism as based on a vision of a "universal, full-fledged American" underlies the sense expressed by Carmichael and Browne that integration entailed the abolition of the black community. Because integrationists had no conceptual category with which to comprehend African Americans as a separate national group, they, by and large, ignored the possibility of understanding racial justice in terms of the transfer of resources and power to the black community as an entity. Hence, rather than providing the material means for improving the housing, schools, cultural life, and economy of black neighborhoods, nationalists saw mainstream race reform as entailing "progress" only through blacks moving into historically white neighborhoods, attending historically white schools, participating in white cultural activities, and working in white-owned and white-controlled economic enterprises. "Even if such a program were possible, its result would be, not to develop the black community as a functional and honorable segment of the total society, with its own cultural identity, life patterns, and institutions, but to abolish it—the final solution to the Negro problem."\(^8\)

Accordingly, although there was nothing intrinsic to the liberal theory of integrationism that required public school integration to proceed by closing black schools, firing black teachers and administrators, and integrating black children into formerly white schools,\(^8\)\(^3\) the mainstream discourse of school integration perceived implementation in terms of "symmetry" and "quality," rather than in terms of the particular needs of the black community to use schools as a base of empowerment and unity for the community as a whole. Given the integrationist analysis

\(^{81}\) See H. CRUSE, THE CRISIS OF THE NEGRO INTELLECTUAL, supra note 19, at 64-95; Calmore, Fair Housing, supra note 6 (discussing impact of integrationist housing policy on African American communities).

\(^{82}\) S. CARMICHAEL, STOKELY SPEAKS 39 (1971); see also H. CRUSE, REBELLION OR REVOLUTION?, supra note 43, at 72 (the trend toward integrationism has "favored the eradication of the Negro community as a symbol of segregation"); id. at 33-67 (criticizing integrationism in the arts as entailing destruction of African American cultural forms in favor of an already despiritualized and deadened European tradition).

\(^{83}\) See D. BELL, The Chronicle of the Sacrificed Black Schoolchildren, in AND WE ARE NOT SAVED, supra note 6, at 102, 109 (citing amicus curiae brief for the National Educational Association, United States v. Georgia, 445 F.2d 303 (5th Cir. 1971) (No. 30,338) (for empirical data on burden borne by black teachers, administrators and students by school integration)); H. CRUSE, PLURAL BUT EQUAL, supra note 48, at 20-24 (public school integration resulted in loss of traditional black educator class); J. BLACKWELL, supra note 71, at 107-10 (same).
that racism stemmed from race consciousness, the issue of the effect of school reform on African Americans as a separate, integral community was categorically excluded from thinking about school reform.

From the nationalist viewpoint, integration has meant the loss of local institutions in the African American community geared to the needs and aspirations of African Americans, but integrationists did not even notice this consequence of a reform like public school integration. For them, African Americans do not comprise a community at all, but rather are simply individuals who just "happen to be black." Without the idea of racial difference, no space existed within integrationist ideology where one could conceive of African Americans as constituting a national community, as a group with common historical experience, cultural bonds, and aspirations for the future.

The correlate of the nationalist critique, that school integration meant not only the loss of an important institution in the black community but also the assimilation of blacks into white cultural practices, likewise was invisible to integrationists. Just as integrationists translated the race consciousness of the nationalist focus on the need for black institutional life as a form of reverse prejudice, they also failed to comprehend the idea that racially integrated schools might manifest white culture. Instead, the images of expertise and professionalism that became the ideology of public education signified for integrationists the institutional face of the commitment to reason and impersonality at a philosophical level. In school integration, integrationists believed that black children would be integrated into the aracial culture of quality education. The clinical computer printouts, reflecting the cognitive achievement level gleaned from standardized tests in statistical, percentile terms, symbolized the impersonality and hence cultural neutrality of the liberal reform of public education.

But where integrationists saw school integration in terms of transcending the bias at the root of segregation in favor of an "objectively" defined "quality education," nationalists saw that process as assimilating black children to white middle class norms. The nationalist perspective characterized the norms that constituted the neutral, impersonal, aracial, professional character of school integration as particular cultural assumptions of a specific economic class of whites. The vision of integration as a form of "painless genocide," then, stemmed from an analysis of integration as meaning, not the liberation of the black community from racial domination, but instead the transcendence of the black community itself in favor of "neutral" social practices that could only be identified as historically situated and culturally particular from the outside, by those
for whom their supposed universality is experienced as a particular form of otherness.\textsuperscript{84}

One can imagine a form of school integration that would have entailed consideration of the integrity of African American culture and recognition of the cultural assumptions of dominant public school practices. Nothing in the simple idea of racial integration necessitated that it be linked with universalist assumptions. But the nationalist analysis did correlate well with the ways that integrationism proceeded. The dismantling of dual school systems in reality meant closing black schools and integrating black children into white school systems. Moreover, for two reasons, the loss of black community control over the education process did not even result in integration. First, whites fled urban schools in favor of predominantly white private or suburban schools, a move that left urban education with the universalist ideology of centralized professionalism, a segregated student population, and an insufficient tax base.

Perhaps more telling, in light of the nationalist critique of integration as a "subterfuge for white supremacy," even where integration has been "successful," it has largely meant resegregation within the walls of formally integrated schools. On the purported basis of intelligence rather than race, the process of "tracking" utilizes various "objective" tests to segregate school children according to "cognitive ability." In school district after school district, the slower tracks are disproportionately comprised of black children and faster tracks are disproportionately comprised of whites.\textsuperscript{85}

The nationalist critique of integration highlights the ideological background against which this manner of conducting racial integration could seem plausible. Within the integrationist vision, once race consciousness (and other "biases") are removed, neutral, objective social practices remain. Thus, the logic of conducting school integration by

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{84} See, e.g., Crenshaw, Foreword, supra note 4, at 2-6 (describing typical law school classes as assuming white perspective under the guise of "perspectivelessness"); Davidson, The Furious Passage of the Black Graduate Student, in The Death of White Sociology, supra note 18, at 23 (describing graduate education as based on white norms); Hamilton, An Advocate of Black Power Defines It, in Rhetoric, supra note 57, at 190-91 (discussing ways that black-controlled schools would be reorganized to reflect the culture of the black community); T. Miller, supra note 6 (describing the cultural alienation of black students from predominantly white colleges).
  
  For more general discussions of the idea that dominant images of neutrality and objectivity reflect white, European culture, see Jones, The Need for a Cultural Base, supra note 71; Chrisman, supra note 80, at 2-6; M. Gordon, supra note 21, at 9 (the central images of American culture are the expressions of white Anglo-Saxon Protestant ethnic consciousness).

  \item \textsuperscript{85} For discussions of the racial impact of student classification schemes, see T. Cross, supra note 16, at 488-95, 668; J. Oakes, Keeping Track: How Schools Structure Inequality (1985); Kirp, Schools as Sorters: The Constitutional and Policy Implications of Student Classifications, 121 U. Pa. L. Rev. 705 (1973).
\end{itemize}
closing black schools and firing black teachers and principals was premised on the ability to identify "quality" schools, teachers, and administrators in a neutral, objective way. In these neutral terms, black schools were closed because they were inferior as a result of discrimination between white and black institutions under segregation. Similarly, tracking supposedly measures an acultural, objective mental process called "cognitive ability." Signifying the transcendence of race as a meaningful social category, integrationists rationalize the disproportionate representation of black children in decaying schools and slower educational tracks not as the manifestation of black inferiority, but instead as the result of poverty—articulated bureaucratically as "low socioeconomic status" or in the acronym, "low SES."86 Just as integrationists failed to recognize the cultural achievements of black schools, and saw them, as Harold Cruse noted, simply as "products of racial segregation that should not even exist,"87 they also failed to recognize the cultural specificity of white schools, which were instead seen only as "superior" education. The intense reaction on the part of liberals to black nationalist movements for community control of schools and for the establishment of separate and autonomous Afro-American Studies Departments88 reflected the depth of the challenge that nationalism posed to the dominant cultural ideology that linked rationality, enlightenment, and progress with racial integration.

For a brief period in the late 1960s and early 1970s, issues of educational public policy crystallized the dramatic opposition between the nationalist ideology of cultural difference and organic community, and the integrationist ideology of universal reason and neutral institutions. In terms of community support and interest, nationalists produced their greatest organizational successes in the arenas of public schools and university politics. For low-income people of color, the nationalist approach to education unified popular movements for community control over schools in urban communities such as Harlem and Ocean Hill-Brownsville in New York City, and Adams-Morgan in Washington, D.C. In the middle class, nationalist activism took the form of demands for the establishment of Afro-American Studies Departments in predominantly white

86. See R. STAPLES, supra note 24, at 36-38 (poverty has come to replace race as explanation for disparate black performance in schools); Feller, supra note 38, at 74-75 (same).
colleges and universities across the country. In each dimension, “the movement toward community control is a profound rejection of the core of liberal ideology” because liberal integrationism assumes that society is the “aggregation of independent individuals, rather than an organic compact of groups.” Nationalists asserted that educational reform cannot be understood in terms of a “quality” education neutral as to race, but instead must be examined in terms of how schools serve the needs of an organic community held together by bonds of a particular racial culture and history. They therefore challenged the fundamental philosophical

89. The most well-known movement for community control occurred in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville area of Brooklyn, New York, where the City agreed to the establishment of an experimental school district over which local parents would have authority; when the local committee requested the transfer of several teachers to schools outside their neighborhood, the teachers' union went on strike city-wide, and relations in New York—in particular between Jews and African Americans—reached high levels of hostility. For an account of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville movement, see Mayer, The Full and Sometimes Very Surprising Story of Ocean Hill, the Teachers' Union and the Teacher Strikes of 1968, N.Y. Times, Feb. 2, 1969, § 6 (magazine), at 18; see also H. Cruse, PLURAL BUT EQUAL, supra note 48 at 246-48; N. Levine & R. Cohen, supra note 88; CONFRONTATION AT OCEAN HILL-BROWNSVILLE (M. Berube & M. Gittell eds. 1969); R. Bendiner, THE POLITICS OF SCHOOLS: A CRISIS IN SELF-GOVERNMENT (1969); O. Cox, supra note 16, at 182-88; Brooks, Tragedy at Ocean Hill, 16 DISSERT 28 (1969); Fein, supra note 19; Maynard, Black Nationalism and Community Schools, in COMMUNITY CONTROL OF SCHOOLS, (H. Levin ed. 1970); McCoy, The Formation of a Community-Controlled School District, in COMMUNITY CONTROL OF SCHOOLS (Levin ed. 1970). The Ocean Hill-Brownsville movement was the best known of several community control of schools movements influenced by the Black Power movement. For accounts of other movements, see also Lauter, The Short, Happy Life of the Adams-Morgan Community School Project, 38 HARV. EDUC. REV. 235 (1968) (detailing the origin of the Adams-Morgan project in Washington, D.C. and the ensuing difficulties inherent in such projects); Epstein, THE POLITICS OF SCHOOL DECENTRALIZATION, 10 N.Y. REV. BOOKS, June 6, 1968, at 26-32 (describing movements in Washington, D.C. and East Harlem).

On the movement for the creation of Afro-American Studies, see R. Allen, supra note 43, at 215-20; A. Pinkney, supra note 71, at 177-198; Fischer, Ghetto and Gown: The Birth of Black Studies, 57 CURRENT HIST. 290 (1969); Lythcott, The Case for Black Studies, 29 ANTOIC REV. 149 (1969); Turner, Black Students and their Changing Perspective, EBONY, Aug. 1969, at 135; see also A. Ballard, THE EDUCATION OF BLACK FOLK: THE AFRO-AMERICAN STRUGGLE FOR KNOWLEDGE IN WHITE AMERICA (1973); BLACK STUDIES IN THE UNIVERSITY (A. Robinson, C. Foster & D. Ogilvie eds. 1969); BLACK POWER AND STUDENT REBELLION (J. McEvoy & A. Miller ed. 1969); H. Edwards, BLACK STUDIES (1970). The most notorious movement for a Black Studies curriculum occurred at Cornell University in 1968-69, when African American students demanded an autonomous Afro-American Studies Department and separate living quarters. During the course of the movement, there were several confrontations, including the seizure of the student union building during Parents' Weekend, April 1969. After several attempts by white students to evict them, the African American students acquired guns, and when they finally gave up the occupation, they left in military formation, bearing arms, a scene that was plastered on the front page of newspapers across the country. For various descriptions, see A. Bloom, THE CLOSING OF THE AMERICAN MIND 91-97, 315-18, 347-56 (1987); DIVIDED WE STAND: REFLECTIONS ON THE CRISIS AT CORNELL (C. Strout & D. Grossvogel eds. 1970); T. Draper, supra note 42, at 151-62; H. Edwards, supra, at 158-83; A. Pinkney, supra note 71, at 182-83; T. Sowell, BLACK EDUCATION: MYTHS AND TRAGEDIES 112-18; 192-99 (1972); Friedland & Edwards, CONFRONTATION AT CORNELL, TRANS-ACTION, June 1969, at 29.

90. Fein, supra note 19, at 92.
ideology that "knowledge" itself represents some acultural achievement and that schools could be evaluated according to some aracial standard based on how well they impart the neutral educational commodity of knowledge and reason. Rather, "the word 'better' can only be taken to mean better according to some secular standards, and it is precisely those standards that are now rejected."91

The equation of integration with assimilation—as drawn by Stokely Carmichael, Robert Browne, Harold Cruse, and many other nationalists—constituted the most threatening aspect of the nationalist critique. Here the rejection of universalism took the form not only of an assertion that African Americans constitute a distinct community, a "nation," but correspondingly that white Americans also constitute an historically identifiable group within the structure of American race relations.92

Integrationists believed that the transcendence of white supremacy would be achieved by eliminating the exclusion of blacks from mainstream institutions, as if racism as a regime of domination and power consisted only of exclusion and did not inform the broader self-definition of white institutions. Nationalists sought to expose these limits of the integrationist vision and to focus critically on the manner in which white cultural assumptions extended to the everyday construction of institutional practices.93

D. Nationalism as a Critique of Liberalism

It is necessary for us to develop a new frame of reference which transcends the limits of white concepts. It is necessary for us to develop and maintain a total intellectual offensive against the false universality of white concepts, whether they are expressed by William Styron or Daniel Patrick Moynihan. By and large, reality has been conceptualized in terms of narrow point of view of the small minority of white men who live in Europe and North America. We must abandon the partial frame of reference of our oppressors and create new concepts which will release our reality, which is the reality of the overwhelming majority of men and women on this globe. We must say to the white world that there are things in the world that are not dreamt of in your history and your sociology and your philosophy.94

—Lerone Bennett, 1972

91. Id. at 94.
92. See R. BLAUNER, supra note 16, at 267 ("The liberal is uncomfortable with the consciousness of color. Again, unlike the conservative, particularly the Southern breed, the liberal does not like to think of himself as white . . . ."); Sobran, Plural But Equal: Blacks and Minorities in America's Plural Society (Book Review), NAT'L REV., Sept. 11, 1987, at 64 ("For most [whites], liberal or conservative, race is an embarrassing residual category, something we should have gotten beyond by now.").
93. See R. STAPLES, supra note 24, at 260-61; Delgado, The Imperial Scholar, supra note 6.
The alternative nationalist worldview embodied in the critique of public school integration manifested itself not only in an analysis of particular institutional practices, but also in a critique of each component of the integrationist worldview. At a more general and abstract level of nationalist analysis, the repudiation of the dominant ideology of public education corresponded to a thoroughgoing critique of the epistemological assumptions of liberalism as a whole. Black nationalists depicted the ideas of rationality, neutrality, and objectivity that integrationists associated with the transcendence of bias and prejudice as the particular cultural rhetoric of "the small minority of white men who live in Europe and North America." According to nationalists in the 1960s, these traditional categories of liberal and enlightenment thought do not constitute an aracial or culturally neutral standard that measures social progress in overcoming partiality, parochialism, and bias, but instead are simply parts of the dominant worldview of white elites.

The rejection of prevailing scholarly standards and methodologies represented one dimension of the challenge to the philosophic assumptions underlying liberal integrationism. Black nationalist scholars in the field of sociology, for instance, began to critique the social science norms of objectivity and value neutrality, and to draw a link between those general assumptions about the nature of intellectual and academic inquiry and the particular concepts that justified racial domination. Nationalist sociologists argued that American scholarly norms constituted a form of "academic colonialism" in which the discourse of universality and neutrality embodied an assumption of the superiority of white cultural practices and the corresponding inferiority of African American culture.95 According to one line of attack, the mind/body dichotomy implicit in the distinction between intellectual and manual work, and the tradition of distinguishing scholarship as a specialized activity in the mental realm, represented an attempt at class rationalization—the elevation of mental

95. See Alkalimat, supra note 18, at 188 (criticizing conventional social science assumption that "society evolves to a higher level based on more universalistic rational standards of operation"); Davidson, supra note 84, at 27-42; Hare, The Challenge of a Black Scholar, in The Death of White Sociology, supra note 18, at 67-78; Forsythe, Radical Sociology and Blacks, in id. at 213 (criticizing mainstream sociology's "ideology of objectivity"). See also Cruse, Black and White: Outlines of the Next Stage, BLACK WORLD, Jan. 1971, at 19 (emphasizing the centrality of culture as a unifying concept for black studies and arguing that black studies should mean the construction of new interpretative paradigms related to black culture, rather than simply focusing existing scholarly assumptions on black subjects); Cruse, Part 2: Black and White: Outlines of the Next Stage, BLACK WORLD, March 1971, at 4, 13 (criticizing the "liberal consensus" of mainstream scholarship for "reflecting a 'universalist' stance in interpretation").
activity symbolized the superior entitlement of the leisure class to the distribution of goods in society.⁹⁶

Black nationalist sociologists further criticized the idea of impartiality and the notion of a sharp dichotomy between the detachment that marks good research skills and the emotionalism that constitutes a form of bias. The sociologists contended that the research norms that require a lack of empathy and existential connection with the subjects of sociological studies reflect a particular value-orientation that ultimately helps to legitimate conditions of racial hierarchy. According to black nationalist academics, the relationship between the “objective” researcher and his research subject mirrors the relationship between dominant and suppressed cultural groups. The researcher represents, vis-a-vis the social groups under study, the same rhetoric of rationality and objectivity that the powerful use to justify their domination generally.⁹⁷

Many black sociologists also sought to demonstrate a systematic bias in the ways that mainstream sociological research was conducted, arguing that white culture represented the implicit standard in empirical research and that black cultural practices were represented as “deviations.”⁹⁸ Similarly, nationalist sociologists criticized the analytic categories of prejudice and discrimination as based on a false image of reason and neutrality that embodied white cultural norms and concluded that integration as understood in mainstream sociological analysis was pre-

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⁹⁶. Hare, supra note 95, at 68-69 (citing T. VEBLEN, THE THEORY OF THE LEISURE CLASS (1934)).

⁹⁷. See Ladner, Tomorrow’s Tomorrow: The Black Woman, in THE DEATH OF WHITE SOCIOLOGY, supra note 18, at 414, 420-21. Ladner writes that:

[The relationship between the researcher and his subjects . . . resembles that of the oppressor and the oppressed, because it is the oppressor who defines the problem, the nature of the research, and to some extent, the quality of the interaction between him and his subjects. . . . [White sociologists’] inability to understand the nature and effects of neo-colonialism in the same manner as black people is rooted in the inherent bias of the social sciences. The basic concepts and tools of white Western society are permeated by this partiality to the conceptual framework of the oppressor. . . . Simply put, the slave and his master do not view and respond to the world in the same way. . . . “George Washington and George Washington’s slaves lived different realities. And if we extend that insight to all the dimensions of white American history we will realize that blacks lived at a different time and a different reality in this country. And the terrifying implications of all this is that there is another time, another reality, another America.”]

⁹⁸. Murray, White Norms, Black Deviation, in THE DEATH OF WHITE SOCIOLOGY, supra note 18, at 96.
mised on the annihilation of black culture through assimilation into white American culture.99

The nationalists did not limit their attack on the idea of an objective, impersonal reason to a critique of academic work. Eldridge Cleaver focused on the dominant image of rationality to launch a critique of white culture as manifesting a repression of sexuality which provided the psychological ground for a deep fear of blacks. Cleaver argued that the liberal contrast between reason and desire was part of a particular, historic language of power, within which dominant social groups differentiated themselves from those who are taken to be irrational, uncivilized, and ruled by myth. The white supremacist discourse that depicted whites as rational and civilized, and blacks as irrational and lustful was one manifestation of the reason/desire polarity. But, according to Cleaver, white supremacist ideology amounted to more than a failure to view the characteristics of reason and desire as symmetrically distributed among whites and blacks. Instead, the very definition and content of rationality itself represented an ideology rooted in the sexual politics of race.100

Specifically, Cleaver argued that the manner of understanding reason in contrast to desire reflects the fear of black sexuality that formed the infrastructure of white self-identity. The notion of reason as asexual was part of a legitimating rhetoric that itself justified white rule over blacks by providing the conceptual categories within which whites represented the head and blacks the body; in Cleaver’s depiction of white racism, whites became the “bodiless Omnipotent Administrators and Ultrafeminines” and blacks were “mindless Supermasculine Menials and Black Amazons.”101 That is, the rhetoric of superior evolution that characterizes explicit white racism was reflected in the reason/desire dichotomy through the differentiation of whites as rational and blacks as ruled by passion. Such a filter in turn formed the basis for the projection of white male sexual anxiety through the image of unbridled black sexuality. In this description, reason was understood not as the universal, objective transcendence of bias, but rather as the particular discourse by which whites justified their status in the social structure of racial domination as based on their asserted superior evolution from primordial sexual-

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99. Alkalimat, supra note 18, at 175-81.
100. E. CLEAVER, SOUL ON ICE, supra note 50, at 145-73; see also Facion, Still Soul on Ice, 15 DISSENT 310, 313-15 (1969) (discussing Cleaver’s mind/body and sexual frame for analyzing racial relations); Mailer, in Black Power: A Discussion, supra note 57, at 218 (discussing challenge of black power as a critique of dominant white culture marked by the elevation of the head and the repression of the body); Peller, Reason and the Mob: The Politics of Representation, TIKKUN, July-Aug. 1987, at 28 (arguing that the reason/desire dichotomy is the language of a particular technique of power and subordination).
101. E. CLEAVER, SOUL ON ICE, supra note 50, at 145-73.
ity. By denying "reason" to blacks, whites eroticized blacks as embodying the sexual license that whites denied to themselves as "rational" administrators—explaining, Cleaver claimed, the fear and simultaneous attraction to blacks that form the psychological infrastructure of white sexuality.\textsuperscript{102}

In general, the radical critique launched by black nationalist sociologists and cultural critics claimed that objective reason or knowledge could not exist, because one's position in the social structure of race relations influenced what one would call "knowledge" or "rationality." The cultural differences between blacks and whites could not be studied through a neutral frame of reference, because any frame of reference assumed the perspective of either the oppressed or the oppressor, either African Americans or whites, either the sociologist or the subject. Cultural differences were not limited to particular social practices like religious activity or artistic production, but instead were infused more generally into how people perceived reality and experienced the world. There could be no neutral theory of knowledge—knowledge was itself a function of the ability of the powerful to impose their own views, to differentiate between knowledge and myth, reason and emotion, and objectivity and subjectivity. In the historicizing perspective of black nationalists, knowledge was necessarily a social construct. Understanding what society deemed worthy of calling "knowledge" depends on a prior inquiry into a social situation.\textsuperscript{103} Culture precedes epistemology.

This kind of generalized challenge to reigning cultural assumptions also characterized black nationalist perspectives on the debate about affirmative action. Rather than perceiving a conflict between "objective" merit and the goal of racial integration, the nationalist approach challenged the objectivity of the category of merit by viewing it in terms of the particular social practices by which whites historically distributed so-

\textsuperscript{102} Id.

\textsuperscript{103} Hare, supra note 95, at 74. Hare concluded that the black scholar has a different mission than that of the white scholar: The challenge facing the black scholar "is to cleanse his mind — and the minds of his people — of the white colonial attitudes toward scholarship and people as well. This includes the icons of objectivity, amoral knowledge and its methodology, and the total demolition of the antisocial attitudes of Ivory-Towerism." Id. at 78. See also Staples, What is Black Sociology? Toward a Sociology of Black Liberation, in THE DEATH OF WHITE SOCIOLOGY, supra note 18, at 163-68. Robert Staples argues that prevalent "structuralist-functionalist" model of sociological inquiry is oriented toward the assumption of stability in social structure, whereas black sociologists should be oriented toward the transformation of the social order. "[I]f white sociology is the science of oppression, Black sociology must be the science of liberation." Id. at 168.

For a general exposition of the idea that social position structures perception and experience of the world so that there can be no universal category of "knowledge," see G. LUKÁCS, Reflection and the Consciousness of the Proletariat, in HISTORY AND CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS: STUDIES IN MARXIST DIALECTICS 83 (R. Livingstone trans. 1971) (focusing on economic class).
cial goods. From the nationalist worldview, integrationist debates about affirmative action are a "subterfuge" for white supremacy: The debates focus on white cultural mores, present them as universal and objective, and then utilize them to characterize blacks as not "qualified."

A contemporary example of this process can be found in legal education. In law schools throughout the country, admissions, hiring, and tenure debates proceed on the basis of standards of academic and scholarly merit that were constructed in an historical period when African Americans were excluded from mainstream law schools, and when the very law to be studied itself sanctioned white supremacism. The notion that racism was limited only to the exclusion of blacks from law schools, and was not a part of the infrastructure for thinking about and constructing "qualifications" is emblematic of the limiting assumptions that nationalists perceived as underlying integrationism. The concepts of merit and qualifications have a function only in relation to existing social practices; black nationalists insisted that the existing social practices should not be taken as the standard since those practices were created by a culture that considered it normal to exclude blacks—that is, a culture itself in need of transformation.104

For example, imagine a legal challenge to the disproportionate racial impact of the LSAT test. The use of the LSAT test might be justified based on a functional correlation with performance in law school. But that functional defense views the status quo of legal education as the standard. Nationalists would argue that there is no intrinsic necessity to the current ways that law schools conduct legal education, and would emphasize the genealogy of existing law school practices in terms of their roots in white culture. To be sure, the status quo of legal education itself might be justified by a functional relation to existing legal practice, but that merely pushes the controversy to another level—the nature of existing legal culture. And that is exactly what a challenge to the exclusionary aspects of the LSAT contests, the way that the legal profession is currently constituted as a reflection of white culture. In short, the nationalist approach emphasized and criticized the self-justifying character of meritocratic assumptions about qualifications. Once we consider the possibility that existing social practices might reflect the domination of particular racial groups, those practices can no longer provide a neutral ground from which to defend existing definitions of either qualifications or merit as functionally correlated with necessary social roles.

104. See R. STAPLES, supra note 24.
E. Power, Subordination and Colonialism

The assertion of nationhood on the part of African Americans also comprised a declaration of alien-nation between races, an assertion that white culture is experienced as "other" to blacks. Integrationists saw the transcendence of the structure of racism as replacing the same/other image of white supremacists with expansion of sameness to blacks; nationalists conceived of the relations as other to other.

Integrationists located the roots of racism in consciousness, in the cognitive distortion of stereotype and prejudice. In contrast, the nationalist perception of whites and blacks as occupying different national spaces entailed a view of racial domination as located in the particular power relations between black and white communities, in the exteriors of social life rather than the interiors of consciousness. And given the focus on social context rather than consciousness, the "cure" for racial domination could not be centered on education and interracial contact to dispel stereotypes, but instead depended on the transformation of power relations between black and white communities, or, in other words, on the achievement of "Black Power."

Similarly, since racism referred to the particular power relations between black and white communities, there was no center of comparison from which to equate racial identity with other forms of identity, nor to equate the domination of African Americans with discrimination against other groups. The significance of race in terms of social relations and the self-identity of people was seen by nationalists to have a particular weight and depth that could not be comprehended by abstracting from historical context and flattening out racial domination into one of many structurally equivalent forms of "discrimination." And nationalists asserted that a group identity that centers around race was not structurally the same as the "ethnic heritage" that every American has, because, in our social history, race has acquired a particular significance and centrality that is qualitatively different than the differences, say, between Italian Americans and Polish Americans.105

In contrast to the integrationist image of discrimination as the social practice of racism, the nationalist image was subordination, the hierarchy of the white community over the black community. Rather than conceive of race reform in terms of affirmative action aimed at integrating formerly white institutions, nationalists sought to strengthen and develop institutions in the black community that would serve African Americans. Thus, nationalists tended to see racial justice in terms of

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105. See H. Cruse, PLURAL BUT EQUAL, supra note 48, at 53-58, 280-86, 362-70 (criticizing the conjunction of racial status with gender, immigrant and minority status).
reparations,106 or foreign "aid" from developed countries to the third world.107 And that is why Malcolm X distinguished "segregation" from racial separation. According to his analysis, segregation amounted to a form of racial domination, in which the black community was not only separate from the white, but also ruled by the white community. As he saw it, if the power relations were changed, the meaning of the separation would be dramatically different.

In contrast to the integrationist image of segregation as a systematic form of racism, black nationalists developed an analysis that relied primarily on an image of whites and blacks constituting separate national communities. The systematic nature of American racism was described not as segregation, but as a form of colonialism.108 According to Harold Cruse's description, "domestic colonialism . . . instead of establishing a colonial empire in Africa, [the United states] brought the colonial system home and installed it in the Southern states . . . . Emancipation elevated [the Negro] only to the position of a semi-dependent man, not to that of

106. For descriptions of the movements for reparations in the late 1960s and 1970s, see BLACK MANIFESTO: RELIGION, RACISM, AND REPARATIONS 1-2 (R. Lecky & H. Wright eds. 1969) (collection of views from the religious community on the reparations controversy); D. BELL, AND WE ARE NOT SAVED, supra note 6, at 123-39 (hypothetical discussion of the broad social changes that serious racial reparations might have effected); R. BRISBANE, supra note 15, at 186-90 (discussing James Forman's Black Manifesto movement for reparations). For a recent work linking race consciousness and a program of reparations, see Matsuda, supra note 3. For analyses of the legal dimensions of black nationalist demands for reparations, see B. BITTKE, THE CASE FOR BLACK REPARATIONS (1973); Hughes, Reparations for Blacks?, 43 N.Y.U. L. REV. 1063 (1968).


108. The term was first used in a comprehensive analysis of the situation of African Americans by Cruse, Revolutionary Nationalism and the Afro-American, 2 STUDIES ON THE LEFT 12-13 (1962). See also H. CRUSE, An Afro-American's Cultural Views, in REBELLION OR REVOLUTION?, supra note 43, at 48-67 (first published in Présence africaine, Dec. 1957-Jan. 1958, at 31); Cruse, Negro Nationalism's New Wave, New Leader, Mar. 19, 1962, at 16. By the mid-1960s, the neocolonial analogy was widely used by black nationalists. See, e.g., Alkalimat, supra note 18, at 183-188; R. ALLEN, BLACK AWAKENING IN CAPITALIST AMERICA: AN ANALYTIC HISTORY 5-17 (1969); J. BLACKWELL, supra note 71, at 12-14; J. BOGGS & G. BOGGS, REVOLUTION AND EVOLUTION IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY (1974); S. CARMICHAEL & C. HAMILTON, supra note 51, at 2-56; E. CLEAVER, POST-PRISON WRITINGS AND SPEECHES, supra note 30, at 57-72; H. NEWTON, ESSAYS FROM THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE HUEY NEWTON 2-10 (1968); A. PINKNEY, supra note 43, at 8-13; R. STAPLES, supra note 24, at 13-14; W. TABB, THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE BLACK GHETTO (1970); The Black Panther Party Platform and Program, in BLACK LIBERATION POLITICS, supra note 54. See also O'Dell, A Special Variety of Colonialism, FREEDOMWAYS, Winter 1967, at 1. Robert Blauner summarizes the analysis of black communities through the colonialist metaphor by focusing on four elements of colonization: (1) the colonized subjects enter the system involuntarily; (2) the subjects' indigenous culture is transformed or destroyed; (3) the subjects are managed or controlled by those outside their own ethnic status; and (4) racism prevails or the group is oppressed psychologically and socially by an outside group that conceives of itself as superior. Black communities are an example of the colonization process in that they are controlled politically, economically, and administratively from the outside, distinguishing them from the voluntary ethnic business and social communities of the Poles, Jews, Italians and Irish. R. BLAUNER, supra note 16, at 83-89.
an equal or independent being.”109 In the nationalist analysis, African Americans exist in a “neo-colonial” relationship with whites—as a colonized people “dispersed” throughout North America:

Black Power must be viewed as a projection of sovereignty, an embryonic sovereignty that black people can focus on and through which they can make distinctions between themselves and others, between themselves and their enemies—in short, the white mother country of America and the black colony dispersed throughout the continent on absentee-owned land, making Afro America a decentralized colony. Black Power says to black people that it is possible to build a national organization on someone else’s land.110

Comprehending the relations between blacks and whites on a colonial model, 1960s nationalists asserted that even black control of the black community would be insufficient if it merely meant that blacks would administer the same structural power relations that previously existed between white and black communities. The metaphor of colonialism thus symbolically placed 1960s nationalists outside the parameters of the pluralist wing of integrationism by suggesting that the racial diversification of existing American institutions and social patterns might simply be another form of the colonial relationship. A radical transformation of the status quo institutional practices would be necessary before identifiable black and white communities could relate on a just basis.111

The colonialism metaphor unified the nationalist analysis by capturing, in one image, the totalizing sense of alienation between whites and blacks that the rejection of common nationality represented, the depiction of structural and systematic power exercised by the white commu-

110. E. Cleaver, Post-Prison Writings and Speeches, supra note 50, at 57-72.
111. See Chrisman, supra note 80; H. Cruse, Rebellion or Revolution?, supra note 43. Nationalists speaking in terms of “colonialism” tended to cite F. Fanon, Studies in a Dying Colonialism (1965); F. Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth (C. Farrington, trans. 1965); F. Fanon, Black Skin, White Masks (C. Markmann trans. 1967); A. Memmi, The Colonizer and the Colonized (H. Greenfeld, trans. 1967). Stokely Carmichael pointed to the colonialist relationship as an explanation of the apparent similarity between the material conditions of African Americans in diverse cities:

The American city, in essence, is going to be populated by the peoples of the Third World, while the white middle classes will flee to the suburbs. Now the black people do not control, nor do we own, the resources—we do not control the land, the houses or the stores. These are all owned by whites who live outside the community. These are very real colonies, in the sense that they are capital and cheap labor exploited by those who live outside the cities. . . . It does not seem that the men who control the power and resources of the United States ever sat down and designed those black enclaves, and formally articulated the terms of their dependent and colonial status. . . . Indeed, if the ghettos had been formally and deliberately planned instead of growing spontaneously and inevitably from the racist functionings of the various institutions that combine to make the society, it would be somehow less frightening—one could understand their similarity as being artificially and consciously imposed, rather than the result of identical patterns of white racism which repeat themselves in cities as far apart as Boston and Watts . . . .

S. Carmichael, supra note 82, at 86-87.
nity, and the conviction that group solidarity was necessary to change existing power relations. It also provided the rhetoric for a critical analysis of relations within the black community between economic classes. Nationalists deploying a "neo-colonialism" analysis accounted for opposition to the nationalist position in the black community as the effects of "indirect rule," within which an elite was created among the colonized class, to administer and mediate on behalf of colonialist interests. According to many black nationalists, the black middle class played this role in America, and class differences with the black poor and working class accounted for the middle class support of integration.¹¹²

This orientation around colonialism connected various projects in the 1960s and early 1970s, including movements for community control over schools; for black political, economic, and police control over black neighborhoods; for race-conscious economic cooperation among African Americans; for race-conscious reparations from the white community to African American communities; for the establishment and control of Afro-American Studies Departments in universities; for the preservation and transformation of black colleges and universities; and for cultural autonomy in arts, music, literature, and intellectual life.

III. DIFFERENT MANIFESTATIONS OF INTEGRATIONISM AND NATIONALISM

To this point, I have described integrationism and nationalism as distinct and diametrically opposed ideologies about race. My goal was to highlight the philosophic and cultural context within which integrationism is situated and to describe black nationalism as a comprehensive analysis of racial power resting on a competing, interlocking set of ideas about what race means in American social life. Given the cultural dy-

¹¹². As Cruse saw it, the black middle class was frightened of the masses, dependent on the white power structure, and ambivalent about their own identity; consequently, the installation of the black bourgeoisie as administrators of the black community did not necessarily serve the community's interests:

The tragedy of the black bourgeoisie in America is not that it simply "sells out," since all bourgeois classes are prone to compromise their sovereignty during a crisis. It is rather that no class the world over sells out so cheaply as the American black bourgeoisie, whose nation, the richest in the world, wastes billions overseas buying the fickle friendship of unworthy allies.

H. CRUSE, THE CRISIS OF THE NEGRO INTELLECTUAL, supra note 19, at 91. See also R. STAPLES, supra note 24, at 205. Robert Staples notes the structurally different interests of the black middle class and predicts,

[The emergence of a class of Black petty bourgeoisie who will undertake the exploitation of the Black masses that is now done directly by the White colonial power structure. Hence, we shall witness large numbers of Blacks being elected to public office, programs created to develop a Black capitalist class, and Black functionaries replacing Whites in the role of colonial mediating positions such as teachers, social workers, policemen, etc.

namic through which integrationism became the mainstream ideology of race and nationalism was marginalized as an extremist ideology, it is necessary to contrast the two ideologies in these oppositional and bipolar ways. Only then can we recover the integrity of the nationalist position as a liberating discourse about race and counter the deeply-held stereotype that Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, the Black Panthers, and other nationalists were simply reverse racists or violent, militaristic extremists.

But one of the difficulties in describing cultural ideologies is that they can never really be captured in their lived and complex forms. These descriptions thus tend to sound like worked-out theories rather than the more complicated and contradictory ways people in actual historic situations come to terms with social life. Although these polarized descriptions capture important differences between the two cultural stances, in actual social life no one experienced or articulated their commitment either to nationalism or to integrationism in the clean, philosophic manner in which I identified the worldviews. Before beginning an analysis of the cultural dynamics underlying the rejection of nationalism in the 1970s, I want first to discuss other ways that integrationism and nationalism might be—and have been—understood.

A. Integrationism and Group Consciousness

I have identified the structure of integrationist ideology as a cluster of ideas connecting belief in universalism, objectivity, and individualism, and I have suggested that integrationism consequently obscured consideration of the racial character of practices in institutions such as public schools. But this depiction itself tends to obscure the ways that the demand for racial integration has often been radically oppositional, spiritual, and communal.

One important dimension of integrationism, as it manifested itself in American culture, was the manner in which the goal of racial integration helped generate an authentic community of people who understood themselves as profoundly committed to the eradication of racial domination in American society. For them, the ideology of integrationism was not experienced as simply the working out of a liberal theory of enlightenment; instead, integrationism provided a frame for articulating their more deeply rooted, existential revulsion to racial domination. The flattening out of integrationism as a “philosophy” should not obscure the dramatic courage of its proponents, fueled by authentic spiritual connections between individuals and displayed by thousands of people in the civil rights movement. Despite the cognitive dimension of integration-

113. For descriptions of this dimension of the civil rights movement, see supra note 15.
ism that reflected assumptions of individualism and universalism, the goal of racial integration spawned a social movement based, ironically, on a sense of group consciousness, communal support, and intersubjective recognition that transcended the ideological limits of integrationism as a "theory." The religious imagery of broad-based spiritual communion was intertwined with the more rationalist political and legal rhetoric of civic equality that symbolized the civil rights movement for many years; the combination captured real aspirations for human freedom and social decency.

B. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Black Power

The stark opposition between integrationism and nationalism that I have drawn also lends itself to an overly simplified categorization of particular movements that were, in fact, much more complex. For example, by viewing race relations issues as fundamentally organized around a clear opposition between nationalism and integrationism, one tends to associate Martin Luther King, Jr. with the integrationist, rights-oriented wing of the black liberation movement, and to associate Malcolm X with the nationalist faction. But whatever accuracy might exist in that depiction of Malcolm X, the King position was far more complicated and ambiguous. It is true that King's rhetoric was organized around universalist imagery of the Beloved Community, drawn from both Christianity and American liberal constitutionalism, and his articulated goals were the transcendence of race consciousness in favor of integration.\textsuperscript{114} In addition, much of the King/SCLC discourse appeared "integrationist" insofar as it was framed as an appeal to morality and conscience as the framework for the achievement of racial justice, in contrast to the nationalist analysis that racial justice depended on achieving Black Power.

King has become more of an "integrationist" in death, however, than he was in life. With the elevation of King to the status of a national hero, mainstream culture has focused exclusively on King's non-violent, universalist rhetoric. But if integrationism means a commitment to transcend race consciousness, or if integrationism is tied to the rejection of Black Power as a goal of mass organization, then King cannot properly be perceived as an integrationist. The domesticated, popularized image of King leaves out a critical aspect of King's work, an aspect that might

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\textsuperscript{114} Perhaps the best known testament to this is Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech: I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, sons of former slaves and sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood . . . . I have a dream my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

\end{flushright}
be interpreted as the more revolutionary dimension to his organizational strategy.

In terms of community organizing, King accomplished a critical dimension of the nationalist project while speaking the language of integration. In a profound way, King represented the symbolic message that African Americans could conceive of themselves as an organic community bound together by a unique history, by a present whose power relations demanded solidarity and support, and by a shared future that demanded collective action. Thus, the civil rights movement under King's leadership assumed an important part of the nationalist worldview: the idea that African Americans could, as a community, self-consciously develop a strategy of social transformation through participation in politics on the basis of group power. This aspect of King's work is obscured when he is sharply distinguished from Black Power advocates; King's commitment to nonviolent means has come to signify the movement's goal as neutral reason and institutional impersonality rather than community power. But, in contrast to the image of nonviolence, one of the most significant features of the civil rights movement under King's leadership was the manner in which civil rights activists actually transformed race relations in cities and towns across the South by exerting the power of African American community and acting in solidarity and through alliances with other groups, both within and outside of the particular locale, to force social change.

115. This dimension of King's work might help explain why, for example, Thurgood Marshall (now Justice Marshall) initially opposed mass organizing to achieve school integration in favor of litigation. See T. Branch, supra note 15, at 190 (describing Marshall's hostility to the idea of utilizing tactics developed in the Montgomery Bus Boycott to achieve school integration). For a more general discussion about the cautionary attitude of many black leaders towards direct action protest, see L. Lomax, The Negro Revolt 167-68, 209 (1962); R. Weisbrod, supra note 15, at 30-44. The difference between the movement that King led and the position represented by Marshall mirrors the contrast that I have drawn between nationalism and integrationism more generally. In the legalist conception, racial justice was to be achieved, in a sense, through reason, by mastering the elite discourse of the white power structure in order to integrate that power structure. In King's direct action conception, racial justice was infused with the particular cadences of African American spiritualism. The roots of the civil rights movement in the black church symbolized the fundamental difference between integrationism as it became institutionalized in American discourse through the imagery of a secular reason and the vision of integration articulated by King. See generally A. Morris, supra note 15.

For most white integrationists, and for many black ones as well, the connection between the civil rights movement and black churches was a source of background dissonance because it clashed with their comprehension of religion as representing irrationality and backwardness. Secular liberals soon came up with mediations for this incongruity. They attempted to translate the Christian character of King's discourse into a secular ethics, and to explain the prevalence of ministers among black civil rights leaders and central role of the black church in the movement as merely a functional result of the lack of other organized black institutions.
This power challenge to the status quo was manifested in an important way by the fact of black protest and resistance itself. Major portions of the white community, especially in the South, had resolved their own participation in racial domination through an ideological construction of African Americans as “happy,” “smiling,” and “contented.” Whites imagined that these images were confirmed, at the micro-level of daily interaction within the hierarchies of race, by the (coerced) deference, gratitude, and loyalty that formed the social language of public contact between whites and blacks. One reflection of this dynamic was that many Southerners saw black resistance as the work of “outside agitators.”

King mobilized hundreds of thousands of blacks to declare their alienation from this social structure, to demonstrate that the peaceful, contented, and settled quality of race relations was a charade, to show that the social structure of race had invaded on a mass scale virtually every relation between blacks and whites, and to give notice that the black community en masse was prepared to assault the social structure through organized social power. The emphasis on nonviolence hides this power/confrontation dimension of King’s organizing, and tends to make invisible the threat to fundamental-power relations manifest in the mass organizing of the black community during the civil rights movement.

The image of King pleading with the conscience of white America on the grounds of morality leaves much out of the picture: King helped organize masses of black people to step out of the daily roles of accommodation or defeat, and to utilize racial solidarity to boycott buses, banks, and stores; to strike from jobs; to disrupt the business-as-usual...

116. See B. Doyle, The Etiquette of Race Relations in the South: A Study in Social Control (1937) (describing the way that the social protocol developed during slavery continued during segregation); Boyle, Inside a Segregationist, in White on Black: The Views of Twenty-Two White Americans on the Negro 48 (E. Thompson & H. Nipson eds. 1963) (“Good Negroes” and “Bad Negroes” distinguished by former’s “good humor,” “cheerfulness,” “contentment,” and “gratitude”; the latter were conceived as “dangerous,” and “sub-human”); Killian, White Southerners, in Through Different Eyes: Black and White Perspectives on American Race Relations 89, 96-101 (P. Rose, S. Rothman & W. Wilson eds. 1973) (describing the Southern image of the “courteous, patient domestics... so willing, so loving and so happy... The worst indignity inflicted on black Southerners was that they were forced to act as accomplices in preserving the indifference of their oppressors.”); Quinn, The Transmission of Racial Attitudes Among White Southerners, 33 Soc. FORCES 41 (1954) (discussing the subtle and pervasive way that the social protocol of race relations was transmitted among whites so that issues of race never reached the level of conscious choice or decision). See also T. Shibutani & K. Kwan, supra note 23, at 318-21 (describing symbolic social rituals signifying hierarchies between blacks and whites in Southern society); C. Hernton, Sex and Racism in America 127-29 (1965) (describing white sexual exploitation of black women and taboos on contact between black men and white women). Cf. Sheatsley, White Attitudes Toward the Negro, in The Negro American 303, 317 (T. Parsons & K. Clark eds. 1966) (concluding that survey data of the civil rights movement demonstrates that white attitudes have changed to recognize integration is correct).
aspect of settled racial domination with small sit-ins as well as mass mobilizations; and to demonstrate the power of African Americans to re-
claim and transform streets, institutions, and communities. To be sure, King's strategy clearly included a coalition with white liberals, moder-
ates, and the federal government—but an important dimension of his or-
ganizing was implicit in the mass mobilization of blacks themselves. From the viewpoint of many whites, the formal fact of "nonviolence" was overwhelmed by the pervasive threat of the disintegration of the social structure of deference and subordination that black mobilization embodied.117

C. Nationalism as an Influence Within Integrationist Practice

An absolute association of integrationism with the discourse of universalism and individualism also obscures the ways that nationalist ideology might exert influence within the discourse of integrationism itself. The stereotypical conflicts among integrationists—over affirmative action, whether to identify racism in terms of intent or impact, the roles of "diversity" and "merit" in institutional decisionmaking, and whether to engage in race-conscious remediation—could represent a split between integrationist and nationalist interpretations of integrationism itself. In this view, the "conservative" side of the controversies within integrationism form a particularly universalist and individualist version of integrationism within which intent becomes critical because racism is seen as rooted in individual consciousness, in prejudice and bias. Here "color-blindness" is the goal; any deviation is suspect; and it is assumed that once we transcend intentional consciousness about race, we will be left with neutral, rational, and objective social practices and institutional forms.

117. See H. HAINES, supra note 55, at 29-41 (describing King-led direct action integrationism as a radical and disruptive force in the context of the late 1950s and early 1960s); V. HARDING, supra note 56, at 194-95 (describing King's view of protest as not counting "on government goodwill but serv[ing] instead to compel unwilling authporities [sic] to yield to the mandates of justice"); A. MORRIS, supra note 15, at 37-119 (describing the direct action activities of the SCLC as confrontational as compared with the legalistic strategy of the NAACP); RHETORIC, supra note 57, at 166-77 (describing King as a black power proponent before his death); Colaiaco, supra note 15, at 16-28 (emphasizing disruptive quality of direct action tactics despite their nonviolence); Killian, supra note 116, at 102 (describing white Southern sense of a radical disruption of social order in the Montgomery bus boycott); id. at 69-75, 106-11 (nonviolent direct action was not designed for test cases, but was a strategy to coerce negotiation, a "strategy of power, not persuasion.... While the apostles of nonviolence have spoken a language of love and reconciliation, their actions have moved steadily in the direction of a naked display of power."); M. L. KING, The Burning Truth in the South, in A TESTAMENT OF HOPE, supra note 37, at 97 (relating nonviolent tactic to "the necessity of creating discord to alter established community patterns"); see also W. WILSON, supra note 16, at 131, 137 ("[T]he technique of nonviolence was in reality an aggressive manifestation of pressure.").
On the other hand, the “liberal” discourse—consisting of support for affirmative action, an impact standard to identify racism, a de facto view of the equal protection clause, and diversity as a goal for institutional life—can be interpreted in two ways. First, the liberal positions might simply represent a different means to the same normative end of integrationism; or second, they might constitute a more radical, nationalist-oriented challenge to the universalizing assumptions of integrationist ideology. In the first interpretation, the liberal wing of the integrationist argument appears as a tougher version of integrationism—the demand for an impact standard can be understood to ensure more rigorously and cautiously that irrationality and bias have been eradicated. The racially identifiable results of a purportedly neutral selection procedure are simply taken as more reliable evidence of racial bias than the vague and subjective inquiry into intent. Affirmative action and the diversity commitment can be seen as empirically verifiable means to ensure that selection procedures are not biased, because through such special efforts proportionate numbers of racial minorities are chosen.

On the other hand, the liberal wing of the integrationist conflict might be understood alternatively as a nationalist-oriented tendency within integrationism, or at least as an accommodation to the nationalist commitment that the focus of racial justice should be on the impact of social practices on the black community as a whole. The impact perspective accordingly would signify not the possibility of “bias,” but rather the qualitatively different view that “civil rights” means a transfer of opportunities and resources on a group basis—a view comprehending that race marks a culturally significant group. Rather than accepting the central commitment of integrationism—a desire to transcend race consciousness—the progressive aspect of mainstream legal and political civil rights discourse might be interpreted as contesting the issue of race consciousness in the trenches of integrationist doctrine, as demanding that selection procedures, for example, be understood through their effect on the power of racially defined communities. Thus, liberal integrationist discourse can be understood as rejecting the individualist focus of the enlightenment assertion that race-consciousness is irrational, in favor of an interpretation of history through the prism of social groups.\textsuperscript{118}

Extending this wing of liberal integrationism, one can imagine a sophisticated vision of racial justice that would systematically replace the individualist focus of traditional integrationism with a focus on cultural communities, and simultaneously view institutional practices as a reflec-

\textsuperscript{118} In this way, the transformation in liberal discourse from a belief in “colorblindness” in the 1960s, see R. Blauner, supra note 16, at 267, to a commitment to diversity and pluralism in the 1970s and 80s can be seen as a partial accommodation to the nationalist position.
tion of particular manifestations of cultural power. Rather than comprehending identity in terms of the diluted practice of cultural pluralism, within which ethnic and racial difference become privatized to the home and marginalized to episodic public celebrations, this kind of ideology would interpret norms of diversity in terms of the creation of a "creole" institutional and public culture that would contain within itself the elements of composite cultures, rather than flatten out difference into an assumed universal and neutral set of public practices.119

D. Black Nationalism as a Conservative Force

Just as my description of integrationism as a universalizing ideology excluded its more complicated manifestations, so my description of nationalism as fundamentally historical in orientation obscures significant aspects of the social history of black nationalism. In fact, nationalism has often taken an extremely conservative stance with respect to the identity of the African American culture that forms the ground for community solidarity and intra-group recognition.

The relatively rapid transformation in formal community self-description (colored, Negro, black, Afro-American, African American) indicates one facet of a deeper controversy over what actually makes up "the concrete national culture" that C. Munford evoked. Given that a structure of racial domination and oppression marks African American history, many nationalists, like integrationists, rejected the possibility of identifying with the particular culture that black people created in America on the ground that it reflects the pathologies of subordination and repression. Rather than view African Americans as constituting a particular and unique community whose culture has been deeply influenced by its formation in the context of American race relations, these nationalists define the community in terms of an earlier time of imagined purity, before the American experience.120 In social life, this stance is reflected through an exclusive identification with African cultural symbols and a demand that community members Africanize according to some central, universal image of what an African heritage means.

119. See, e.g., D. Kennedy, Radical Intellectuals in American Culture and Politics, or My Talk at the Gramsci Institute, RETHINKING MARXISM, Fall 1988, at 121 (describing such a "creole" culture as a utopian possibility immanent in American life). For Duncan Kennedy's description of a liberating form of cultural pluralism see D. Kennedy, A Cultural Pluralist Case for Affirmative Action In Legal Academia, 1990 DUKE L.J. 705.

One cultural manifestation of this dynamic occurred in the 1960s through the often repressive and authoritarian demand for conformity in African dress (e.g., dashikis) and "natural" hairstyles (Afros). But the "Back to Africa" consciousness was only one aspect of a continual tension within nationalist ideology between an historicized or essentialized understanding of the self-identity of the black community. Another manifestation was the insistence by many 1960s black nationalists that male domination was a part of authentic black culture, thus making problematic the opportunity of black women to experience nationalism as liberating rather than repressive. The essentialized identification of black culture with patriarchy extended from the generally conservative ideology of the Nation of Islam to the otherwise countercultural mindset of radicals such as Stokely Carmichael. The same tension between an essentialist and historicist conception of group identity also underlay conflicts between nationalists over whether to form coalitions with white groups. The essentialists within the black nationalist movement tended to exaggerate the cultural separation of whites and blacks so that any influence of white norms on the development of black culture—as well as the reciprocal influence of black culture on the dominant American culture—was denied.

Similarly, the association of black nationalism with an historicized view of social relations obscures how nationalists often essentialized not only the black community, but also the white community. The extreme manifestation of this tendency occurred in the rhetoric of mainstream Black Muslims, for example, which regarded the white community in monolithic and universal terms as the eternal "white devil." But the tendency toward reductionism also was reflected in more subtle ways by a conception of the white community as a unitary, timeless entity, rather than a complex group of subcommunities and subcultures, organized around and within histories of bitter conflict over issues of class, ethnicity, age, region, and sexuality.

And, just as integrationism could be interpreted with a nationalist tilt, so, too, could nationalism also be interpreted to contain a distinctly integrationist influence. Thus, Black Power could be understood not as the challenge to the fundamental premises for the distribution of power

121. See H. Cruse, The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual, supra note 19, at 333-34.
122. That is, the intensity about barring white participation in SNCC, see C. Carson, supra note 15, or the general "hate whitey" rhetoric of some nationalists, might have reflected the attempt to "purify" the black community from white influences. Harold Cruse and Eldridge Cleaver argued that such a posture reflected the cultural insecurity of middle class black nationalists who had formerly been committed to integrationism. See H. Cruse, The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual, supra note 19, at 363-65; T. Draper, supra note 42, at 110.
123. See supra note 47.
that I described, but rather as a call for African Americans to integrate either into electoral politics, by registering to vote and by becoming an interest group in a pluralist polity,124 or into the economy by becoming entrepreneurs and capitalists.125 Under this kind of interpretation, nationalism could become such a limited and non-threatening ideology that even Richard Nixon would call for "black capitalism."126 But even without a particular capitalist spin, it is difficult to distinguish this tendency within black nationalism from the pluralist, group-based interpretation of integrationism that demands the respectful coexistence of diverse cultural groups within the existing structure of social relations.127

In addition, the nationalist position could overlap with integrationism to the extent that, in particular contexts, nationalists would conclude that integration was the best means to ensure community power. For example, a nationalist-oriented argument for school integration might advocate integration as the only way to guarantee that public education resources are actually distributed to the black community on an equitable basis.128 The idea that black children must sit beside white children in order to prevent a maldistribution of resources does not in and of itself contradict the nationalist commitment to a race-conscious focus on the impact of social arrangements on the black community.

Despite all the ways that nationalism and integrationism overlap and intersect, however, their opposition constitutes a critical frame through which to understand race relations in recent American history. Although a group-based integrationist perspective can accommodate nationalism, and a nationalist perspective can include integration to gain community power, the struggle over the issue of race consciousness symbolizes the cultural compromise underlying the institutionalization of the civil rights movement in the American cultural mainstream.

IV. THE CONfrontATION OVER RACE IN THE 1960s

As I have suggested, there was no analytically necessary reason that would require the identification of the social reform of racial integration

125. See R. Allen, supra note 43, at 212-38; T. Cross, supra note 16.
128. According to Judge Robert Carter, this is what the NAACP lawyers thought was being accomplished through the litigation strategy in Brown v. Board of Education. Carter, A Reassessment of Brown v. Board, in SHADES OF BROWN: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON SCHOOL DESEGREGATION 21 (D. Bell ed. 1980).
with cultural assimilation, individualist norms, or with the idea that race consciousness is evil. But racial integration, and its oppositional relation to black nationalism, have acquired this particular meaning within the last two decades. The ideology of integrationism—with its analytic components of prejudice, discrimination, and segregation—forms the framework for American mainstream thinking about race. Black nationalism—focusing on race relations in terms of racial power, social subordination, and domestic colonialism—has been diffused to the social margins of the “underclass,” to the outposts of artistic production, and to the Nation of Islam.129 To the extent that the integrity of African American culture and community is recognized as a commitment of mainstream American life, it has been safely absorbed into the pluralist respect for everyone’s “cultural heritage” or “different voice.” The rejection of black nationalism as reverse racism, with the corresponding idea that any race consciousness implies a form of domination and oppression, now forms part of the underlying structure of mainstream discourse about race in legal, political, and cultural spheres. When liberal positions within integrationist discourse (for instance, support for affirmative action or an impact standard for identifying discrimination) echo the remnants of race consciousness, they appear marginalized and inconsistent with the basic integrationist premise that race consciousness must be transcended.

The borders of contemporary political and legal discourse about race formed in the cultural crisis that militant black nationalism engendered when it was first articulated on a mass scale in the late 1960s. Although there was nothing intrinsic in the concept of racial integration that demanded that it be understood according to the universalist ideology that I described, and although there was no reason why African American racial consciousness had to be equated with the racial consciousness of white supremacists, this way of thinking about race was produced in part to justify the rejection of black nationalism.

On one level, the rejection of nationalism and the institutionalizing of integrationism as the official way to think about race relations can be accounted for as a philosophical choice: Integrationists rejected nationalism out of a commitment to the principle that race consciousness was a

129. The plausibility of the range of cognizable arguments about racial reform being limited to the basic question of intent or impact, the rhetorical ground for the controversy over “affirmative action,” and the common sense of understanding calls for Black Power as reverse racism, are connected together around the unifying cultural commitment to make race consciousness the very definition of racial oppression, and thereby to relegate black nationalism to an area outside the realm of serious possibility. For a description of the demise of black nationalism as an organized community presence, see Poinsett, Where are the Revolutionaries?, EBONY, Feb. 1976, at 84; Marable, supra note 58, at 50-51, 57-108 (1980).
deviant and distorted way to look at the world because it was irrational. The shared opposition to white supremacy and black nationalism accordingly reflected a commitment to objectivity, neutrality and reason, whose background image was the universalism of our shared humanity.

But this kind of account takes the ideologies of integrationism and nationalism as being pre-defined philosophic options from which people choose. My sense is that the mainstream ways to think about race in America are both produced in, and help to produce, particular cultural conflicts and struggles. What I mean when I say that this ideology was "produced" is that we cannot understand the integrationist worldview simply as a philosophy or a set of concepts that themselves demanded that black nationalism be translated in a particular way. We should understand the dominance of integrationism as at least in part an effect, as well as a cause, of the marginalization of nationalism—as a discourse that was created to justify the rejection of nationalism as well as a discourse that, simultaneously, informed the way that nationalism was perceived.130

Integrationism was supported by a wide range of denouncers of the "Black Power" slogan—a coalition between black, predominantly middle class moderates, and white, predominantly middle and upper class liberals and progressives. Understanding themselves as specifically opposed to race consciousness, integrationists needed to reject black nationalists because of the threat that they posed to the cultural self-identity of both the black middle class moderates and the white upper class liberals. The commitment to a universalist vision of racial justice reflected the shared ambiguities that these two groups had about their own racial identities. The upshot of their implicit coalition was that they constructed and embraced a conservative race ideology that helped to contain the issue of racial liberation—together with other disruptive challenges to the assumptions of everyday institutional life, such as the feminist movement—by perceiving all of these challenges as part of a single discourse, unified around an idea of "discrimination." This integrationist ideology served simultaneously to recognize racial power as a formal matter and yet to set boundaries for its critique. Without attempting a complete account of how and why this coalition formed in this particular manner, I want to recall briefly the cultural politics of that period and to speculate about the dynamics that enabled the present mainstream ideology about race to achieve its dominant status.

130. On this view of the dialectic character of ideologies as "discourses of power," see M. Foucault, supra note 97.
The clash between nationalism and integrationism extended from the period starting in 1966—when the “Black Power” slogan first gained national prominence—and lasted until the marginalization of black nationalists was complete in the mid-1970s. This was, to say the least, a particularly intense and significant historical juncture for both black and white communities in America. The list of events, in no particular order, is staggering: The Black Panther Party was organized on a national scale; Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke out against the Vietnam War and began criticizing capitalism; King and Robert Kennedy were assassinated; African Americans rioted yearly in urban ghettos across the country; the Vietnam War galvanized an increasingly radical white and black youth, who helped force a president out of office; Southern institutions had used up “all deliberate speed” and many were forced to desegregate; George Wallace mounted two national campaigns for the presidency on a white supremacist platform; the federal government was in the midst of civil rights enforcement; Nixon was twice elected by the “silent majority”; white middle-class women were organizing on feminist issues on a mass scale; the Woodstock Nation was born; and the sexual revolution and the counter-cultural movement of white and black youth were connected to anti-war and more general leftist projects in a large-scale rebellion of young against old.

Against this intense background, in which it seemed that so much in American society was up for grabs, black nationalism achieved its most sophisticated articulation and its greatest mass appeal. As various ruptures of American society were resolved in favor of the integrationist/discrimination ideology, black nationalism was pushed to the cultural margins.

To understand the particular way that the conflict between nationalists and integrationists in the late 1960s and early 1970s constituted a pivotal, constitutive cultural moment for contemporary race discourse, it is important to comprehend what the conflict meant for the black and white communities. In this Section, I first trace the particular significance that 1960s nationalism had in the black community, arguing that 1960s nationalism for the first time in the 20th century shed its historic association with a conservative, accommodationist, and disgraced tradition. Moreover, this conflict within black communities had sharp class and generational dimensions. For many middle class and conservative blacks, the universalist interpretation of integrationism was crucial to understanding their own position as not implying group betrayal. In the next Section, I discuss what the black nationalist position meant in the white community, and contend that for many white liberals and progressives, understanding racial justice through a universalist prism was cru-
cial to avoiding deep-seated anxieties that they lacked the kind of rich culture and sense of community that the nationalists asserted for blacks and that, in a distorted way, was also attributed to blacks by white supremacist ideology.

A. The Transformed Meaning of Black Nationalism

One important aspect of the confrontation between nationalism and integrationism in the 1960s was that after decades of marginality within the African American community, nationalism achieved mass appeal and arguably overtook integrationism as the dominant ideology of racial liberation. Black nationalism in the 1960s represented both the reappearance of a long tradition that began at least as early as Martin Delany in the 1850s—a tradition that had been obscured by the unity created by integrationist-oriented leadership from the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s—and also embodied a reinterpretation of the nationalist ideology. This reinterpretation dramatically severed the associations between nationalism and accommodationism—a link dating back to the confluence, under Booker T. Washington's leadership, of separatist organizing and accommodationist relations with white domination.

1. The Continuity of the Civil Rights/Nationalism Opposition.

According to Harold Cruse, "American Negro history is basically a history of the conflict between integrationist and nationalist forces in politics, economics and culture, no matter what leaders are involved and what slogans are used."131 This conflict has reappeared repeatedly; for

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131. H. CRUSE, THE CRISIS OF THE NEGRO INTELLECTUAL, supra note 19, at 564. Not surprisingly, there is a historiographic controversy about this point that correlates with the position of the historian on the integration/nationalism issue. Integrationist-oriented commentators tend to see nationalism as a discontinuous tradition in African American history, arising only as a movement of despair and frustration when hopes for civic equality and integration have been raised and then frustrated. See, e.g., Meier & Rudwick, Introduction, in BLACK NATIONALISM IN AMERICA, supra note 43, at iii-lvi (arguing that black nationalism is simply a form of ethnic solidarity akin to that of American Jews, and a response to worsening social conditions). For other writers contending that black nationalism reflects disappointment with the pace of integration, see J. BLACKWELL, supra note 71, at 287 (describing blacks' efforts during Vietnam period to make the military more responsive to their needs, i.e., black literature at the post exchanges, "rakes" for Afro hair and barbers who could style black people's hair); O. COX, supra note 16, at 226-41; T. DRAPER, supra note 42, at 180; R. WEISBROT, supra note 15, at 223; W. WILSON, supra note 16, at 136, 139; COMMISSION REPORT, supra note 16, at 206-19. On the other hand, nationalist-oriented commentators tend to see the nationalist tradition as continuous and roughly independent of the opportunity for integration. See R. ALLEN, supra note 43, at 75-98 ("[N]ationalism, and overt separatism, are ever-present undercurrents in the collective black psyche which . . . in times of crisis, rise to the surface to become major themes"); most whites do not notice this ever-present belief because they communicate only with middle-class, college-educated African Americans, who in most historical periods are the least likely to be nationalist in orientation); BLACK NATIONALISM IN AMERICA, supra note 43, at lvi-lx (John Bracey—dissenting from the views of his fellow editors—argues that black nationalism is an ideol-
example, when Martin Delany articulated the formation of black colonies as a strategy for racial liberation in the mid-19th century, his proposals were opposed by Frederick Douglass' discourse of militant abolitionism, articulated in terms of American constitutional and civil rights.\(^\text{132}\) The nationalist strain subsided during Reconstruction, but was rejuvenated in the post-Reconstruction world by the widely influential self-help and separatist ideas of Booker T. Washington,\(^\text{133}\) which W.E.B. Du Bois challenged at the turn of the century. In the tradition of Douglass, Du Bois argued for political and legal equality as the proper vision of racial justice. From his influence, one can directly trace the origins of the NAACP in the early 20th century.\(^\text{134}\) And just as the NAACP was consolidating its legal and political strategies in the 1930s and 1940s, nationalist organizing reached a new mass base in Northern urban centers through the leadership of Marcus Garvey.\(^\text{135}\) Even in the late 1950s, when King galvanized the African American community behind an integrationist vision fused with images of religious and moral transcendence, the Nation of Islam—articulating programs of economic cooperatives, cultural discipline, self-help and solidarity, and African American separation from the United States through a land grant—continued to contest the integrationist program, and attracted significant support in urban centers and among the most economically deprived groups.\(^\text{136}\)

Moreover, the tensions between integrationist and nationalist ideologies were reflected within individuals as well as between political factions. Du Bois provided the most vivid example of this inner conflict. Initially, he publicly represented the integrationist/civil rights ideology in his critique of Booker T. Washington. In fact, to this day, he is probably the person most responsible for the popular image of Washington as a conservative accommodationist to Southern racial apartheid.\(^\text{137}\) Du Bois edited the publication of the NAACP, *Crisis*, for several decades, but he

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\(^\text{133}\) See supra note 45.

\(^\text{134}\) For descriptions of Du Bois' opposition to Washington, and his influence on the Niagara Movement and its successor, the NAACP, see M. Marable, *supra* note 48, at 46-98; J. White, *supra* note 48, at 44-57.

\(^\text{135}\) See R. Allen, *supra* note 43, at 100-01.


ultimately resigned his position, broke with the NAACP in the early 1940s in dramatic opposition to its policy of integrationism, and began to emphasize Pan-Africanism, the organization of economic cooperatives on a race-conscious basis, and "voluntary self-segregation" as the key ideas of black liberation.\textsuperscript{138} And this invocation of the highly publicized tension between integrationism and nationalism among community leaders does not even begin to describe the tensions and ambiguities that have traditionally characterized the popular, day-to-day culture of African American life. The demands and fruits of community solidarity are in constant tension with the ambiguity of simultaneous hostility and attraction to the possibility of assimilation into the white world.\textsuperscript{139}

In short, the reappearance of nationalism in the 1960s reflected a long-standing conflict within the African American community that the brief unity around Martin Luther King's leadership temporarily obscured. But what made the struggle between black nationalists and black integrationists particularly significant in the 1960s was not its continuity, but its changed cultural meaning. Integrationism and nationalism traditionally have been the stark choices the African American community associated with racial politics, but that does not mean that the two ideologies were always understood in the same way.

2. The 1960s Transformation of Black Nationalism. In addition to the conflict over nationalist and integrationist conceptions of race, the issue of "accommodationism" versus resistance embodies another central dimension of African American racial discourse.\textsuperscript{140} The degree of resistance and opposition associated with either integrationism or nationalism was an independently important cultural issue—with its own history of conflict—in the perception of each stance.

Although the black nationalist stance was unmistakably identified with a commitment to militancy—and eventually violent revolution—by the late 1960s and early 1970s, there was no necessary historic or analytic connection between black nationalism and the desire to confront and resist the white power structure. To the contrary, virtually every other significant black nationalist movement in American history bore marks of accommodationism. Early 19th century colonization movements were framed in an historical context in which African American support for

\textsuperscript{138} See Du Bois, \textit{A Negro Nation within the Nation}, \textit{Current Hist.}, June 1935, at 265-70; 3 \textit{Writings by W.E.B. Du Bois in Periodicals Edited by Others} 1-6 (H. Aptheker ed. 1982).

\textsuperscript{139} See M. Gordon, \textit{supra} note 21, at 113.

"Back-to-Africa" programs was linked closely to white supremacists who supported colonization as a means to deport black people from North America. In contrast to the colonists, the abolitionist/civil rights/integrationist rhetoric of, say, Frederick Douglass appeared far more militant and oppositionist. Similarly, Du Bois based his critique of the self-help, racial solidarity and separatism rhetoric of Booker T. Washington on the manner in which Washington's approach amounted to a "submission" and a "surrender" to the Jim Crow social structure, rather than a challenge to that structure. Du Bois' differences with Garvey centered on the same issue, although Garvey was clearly more militant and confrontational than Washington. By the time that the integrationists' momentum increased in the 1940s and 1950s, black nationalism—represented mainly by the socially and religiously conservative dogma of the Nation of Islam—had achieved the role of a kind of "traditionalism." Thus, in the early years of the civil rights movement, nationalist approaches—organized in the cultural margins of the black community—seemed to many civil rights activists to imply an accommodation to the racial apartheid structure of white society through a retreat to the "isolation" of the black community. In generational terms, this

141. An early colonization effort was undertaken by Paul Cuffe in 1815, who arranged for a small expedition of black colonists to Africa, which inspired the creation of the American Colonization Society, a white-controlled group whose purpose was to relocate free blacks to Africa because they were "a dangerous and useless part of the community." A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF THE NEGRO PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES 71 (H. Aptheker ed. 1951). See R. ALLEN, supra note 43, at 76-77. For a general description of white deportationists, and an analysis of the "ideological failure of colonization" focused on its associations with racist whites, see R. CARLISLE, supra note 43, at 10-12, 24-30.

142. In criticizing Washington's famous Atlanta Compromise, where Washington advocated that "[i]n all things purely social we can be as separate as the five fingers, and yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress," W.E.B. DU BOIS, supra note 137, at 42, Du Bois concluded that "Mr. Washington represents in Negro thought the old attitude of adjustment and submission . . . [which] practically accepts the alleged inferiority of the Negro races." Id. at 50. See generally id. at 41-59.

143. See T. MARTIN, supra note 46, at 297-99 (describing Du Bois' attempt to link Garvey with the accommodationism of Washington). While this was Du Bois' interpretation of Garveyism, Garvey painted the opposite picture. See J. WHITE, supra note 48, at 61, 89-95; T. MARTIN, supra note 46, at 297-99; H. CRUSE, REBELLION OR REVOLUTION?, supra note 43, at 86 ("The rise of Garvey nationalism meant that the NAACP became the accommodationists, and the nationalists became the militants.").

144. See, e.g., J. JOHNSON, NEGRO AMERICANS, WHAT NOW? 35-40 (1934) ("[T]he outcome of voluntary isolation would be a permanent secondary status . . . I do not believe we should ever be willing to pay such a price for security and peace."); Bunche, A Critical Analysis of the Tactics and Programs of Minority Groups, 4 J. NEGRO EDUC. 308, 312 (1935) ("Because of the seeming hopelessness of the fight to win equal rights for many minority racial groups, some of the leadership of such groups has often espoused a 'defeatist' philosophy, which takes the form of racial separatism."); Farmer, We Cannot Destroy Segregation with a Weapon of Segregation, EQUALITY, Nov. 1944, at 2 (editorial) ("Garveyism [and other nationalisms] . . . are not liberating the Negro people; they are further enslaving their minds under the yoke of caste."); White, Segregation: A Symposium, 41
meant that nationalist appeals to young civil rights workers were likely experienced as the conservative voice of an older generation saying "don't make waves" and "stick with your own people," in contrast to the sense within the civil rights movement of building a drive for resistance to and confrontation with the white power structure.

This symbolic association of nationalism with accommodationism, and integrationism with resistance in the cultural perception of the basic choices helps account for how King could simultaneously represent the militant, confrontation-oriented aspirations of black activists, while speaking in the rhetoric of integrationism, moralism, and civil rights. When King began in Montgomery, one could divide civil rights activists and groups according to whether they supported a legalist, litigation-oriented strategy of race reform or the approach of direct action and confrontation. As an early leader of mass direct action, King began his career representing the militant, non-accommodationist wing of the civil rights movement, a faction whose strategies embodied the nationalist belief that racial solidarity and assertions of group power were the means to attain racial liberation. That is—even while nationalist ideology was most marginalized in the black community during the 1950s and early 1960s—one can detect aspects of nationalism within the integrationist civil rights movement itself. The historic opposition between nationalism and integrationism was reproduced in the conflict between the legalistic and direct-action factions of the civil rights movement.

Prior to the resurgence of nationalist ideology in the mid-1960s, this tension within the civil rights movement was understood to encompass only the strategic question of the degree of militancy. The decision to turn back the marchers at the Petus Bridge in Selma became the cultural symbol of a split between black activists over how far to extend confrontational organizing. But, in retrospect, this argument over tactics can be seen to have contained the seeds of the later, more explicit opposition between nationalism and integrationism. For a time in the early 1960s, in fact, the two tendencies merged in cultural perception. Militant, confrontational integrationists like Robert Williams who advocated "armed self-defense" became associated with militant, confrontational

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Crisis 80, 81 (1934) (responding to Du Bois' calls for voluntary self-segregation, White, then executive secretary of the NAACP, argued that "no Negro who respects himself and his race can accept these segregated systems without at least some inward protest."); R. Staples, supra note 24, at 301 ("[Garveyism] was an escapist philosophy"); id. at 302 ("Muslims did not engage in political action and insulated themselves from both the culture and everyday life of the Black community.") (footnote omitted); R. Weissbrod, supra note 15, at 31 (direct actionists advised by elders to be cautious).

145. See H. Haines, supra note 55, at 30-32, 44, 75; see also supra text accompanying note 117.

146. See supra text accompanying note 117.

nationalists like Malcolm X.\textsuperscript{148} It was possible to perceive as similar individuals and groups with such ultimately opposing and inconsistent ideologies because the issue of militancy versus accommodation embodied central cultural significance in ways that both transcended, and eventually subsumed, the split between nationalist and integrationist positions.\textsuperscript{149} It is therefore no coincidence that the most "direct action"-oriented groups within the civil rights umbrella, SNCC and CORE, would eventually renounce the civil rights analytics of prejudice, discrimination, and segregation in favor of the nationalist analytics of power, subordination, and colonialism.\textsuperscript{150}

In short, black nationalism in the 1960s embodied two important African American traditions—on the one hand, the long tradition of explicit nationalist ideology, and, on the other hand, the long tradition of resistance by blacks to racial domination. Given the different roles that integrationism and nationalism played in relation to this separate conflict between resistance and accommodation, it would be a mistake to limit the historical antecedents of the nationalist presence in the mid- to late-1960s to groups, such as the Nation of Islam, that embraced black nationalism as a formal ideology. In addition to roots in movements such as the Nation of Islam, Pan-Africanism, and Garveyism, an important historical antecedent for 1960s black nationalism was the split among

\begin{itemize}
  \item The confluence of these two issues—militancy versus accommodation and nationalism versus integration—helps explain what otherwise appears to be confusion on the part of the 1960s nationalists about their historical antecedents and heroes. Harold Cruse criticizes 1960s nationalists for their lack of historical comprehension of the nationalist tradition, since they looked to Robert Williams and Frederick Douglass as heroes. Williams was the NAACP Chapter head in Monroe, North Carolina who advocated and began to act upon the use of violence to achieve civil rights. See R. WILLIAMS, NEGROES WITH GUNS 39 (1962). For a description of Williams' role in Monroe, his subsequent expulsion from the NAACP, his exile to Cuba and the People's Republic of China, see Poinsett, supra note 129. As Cruse points out, while Williams and Douglass employed militant rhetoric and activism, both were committed to the ideology of integrationism. Similarly, Cruse argues that the ideological confusion of 1960s nationalists was confirmed by their adoption of Marcus Garvey as a hero but their failure to recognize Booker T. Washington as in many ways the founder of black nationalism among African Americans, instead making "Booker T.-ism" a synonym for assimilationism. See H. CRUSE, THE CRISIS OF THE NEGRO INTELLECTUAL, supra note 19, at 347-401, 544-65. But whatever merit there might be to Cruse's criticism in general, it leaves out of the analysis the fact that the ability of 1960s nationalists to combine black nationalism with a confrontationalist commitment was an independently significant historical development. They valorized both nationalist and militant integrationist figures because they sought to link nationalism with militancy.
  \item The community-organizing militancy of the direct action factions of the civil rights movement in the 1950s and early 1960s, and the later critique of nonviolence as a means to achieve integration, can be seen to have reflected a submerged form of nationalist ideology itself, to be made explicit by the mid-1960s when CORE and SNCC adopted formal nationalist programs and when, in 1967, Rap Brown, Stokely Carmichael, and James Foreman joined the Black Panthers. See C. CARSON, supra note 15, at 196-207; H. HAINES, supra note 55, at 57-75; A. MEIER & E. RUDICK, supra note 15, at 17-18.
\end{itemize}
integrationists in the 1950s and early 1960s between those who advocated "direct action" and those who advocated legal and civil remedies for racial discrimination.\textsuperscript{151}

The widespread invocation of the colonialism model to describe race relations\textsuperscript{152} symbolized how 1960s black nationalists linked nationalism and social struggle, and thus symbolically broke the traditional association of separatism with accommodationism. Previous nationalist movements, even militant Garveyism,\textsuperscript{153} always could be associated with the degradation of accommodationism to the extent that they seemed to accept American racial segregation. Rather than oppose the power dynamics between white and black communities in the United States, the separatist proposals for a return to Africa (Delany and Garvey), the creation of a separate land base in the United States (the Nation of Islam, the Republic of New Africa), or the various proposals for the creation of a separate black economic base (Du Bois, the Nation of Islam, Washington), all carried a sense of retreat from mainstream American life into isolation and nonconfrontation. In contrast, the articulation of the relations between blacks and whites as "neo-colonialist" served as a bridge between the aspirations for community power that were always at least implicit in the nationalist ideology of racial solidarity and self-help, and the militancy and confrontationism that had been the province of direct action integrationists. Rather than representing a fantasy of separation or isolation from whites, the colonialism metaphor presented nationalists as engaged in the struggle for power in the United States—it posed the problem facing African Americans as the form of relations between white and black communities, instead of the fact that there were relations at all. And the colonialist analysis located the solution not in a retreat from the United States, but rather as a struggle to transform relations of subordination within America. Unlike the conservative aspects of earlier manifestations of black nationalism, the colonialist analysis comprehended the imposition of an external power structure on the African American community, and accordingly provided a symbolic mediation of the tendency for self-blame that a nationalist emphasis on self-help and personal discipline might otherwise imply.

\textsuperscript{151} For an analysis of the early years of the civil rights movement centered on the ideological and cultural differences between "legalist" and "direct action" ideologies, see A. Morris, supra note 15; H. Haines, supra note 55, at 29-46; R. Weissrot, supra note 15, at 30-38; Killian, supra note 116, at 69-75. See also supra note 15 (describing differences between direct action and legalist approaches to civil rights reform).

\textsuperscript{152} See supra text accompanying note 108. It is ironic that Harold Cruse misses the changed meaning of nationalism symbolized by the colonialism analysis, since he was one of the first to set it forth in a comprehensive way. See supra note 108.

\textsuperscript{153} See supra note 46.
In the 1960s, black nationalists began to conceive of their project not as geographic separation from whites, but rather as the dismantling of the power relations between white and black communities. Instead of the choices appearing as either integration and assimilation on the one hand, or total geographic separation on the other, 1960s nationalists, led most notably by Malcolm X, developed a “third” way that combined militant engagement with the white power structure with the racial solidarity and anti-assimilationism traditionally associated with nationalism.\(^{154}\) 

In short, after embodying the opposite associations for most of the 20th century, nationalism became associated with resistance and militancy in the 1960s, and integrationism appeared as the more accommodationist and conservative position. Early in the decade, Malcolm X symbolized this dimension of 1960s nationalism. By the mid-1960s, this reinterpretation of the black nationalist tradition that Malcolm X began (and that helps explain his eventual break with the Nation of Islam)\(^ {155}\) was embodied by “Black Power” movement, the explicit symbolic conjunction of the two traditions of nationalism and confrontation.\(^ {156}\) 

In this new context, nationalist activism both reproduced the class splits that historically characterized the opposition between integrationism and nationalism, and for the first time appeared poised to transcend

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154. See R. Staples, supra note 24, at 291-93; Turner, supra note 55, at 7-8; Rhetoric, supra note 57, at 4-5.

155. See Malcolm X, The Autobiography of Malcolm X, supra note 49, at 294. According to Malcolm X, it was precisely the Muslim policy of not engaging in conflict with the white power structure that led to his frustration and eventual break with the Nation of Islam:

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(\text{O}ur \ Nation \ of \ Islam \ could \ be \ an \ even \ greater \ force \ in \ the \ American \ black \ man's \ overall \ struggle—if \ we \ engaged \ in \ more \ action. \ W)e \ should \ have \ amended \ or \ relaxed \ our \ general \ non-engagement \ policy. \ I \ felt \ that, \ whenever \ black \ people \ committed \ themselves, \ in \ the \ Little \ Rocks \ and \ Birminghams \ . . . \ militantly \ disciplined \ Muslims \ should \ be \ there \ also.}
\]

\text{Id.}

156. Robert Staples explores the simultaneous oppositional and nationalist meaning of Black Power:

Black power ideology . . . evolved into different nationalist expressions, but it gave rise to the modern-day Black Nationalist movement . . . . Millions of Black people were inspired by the concept that they should develop the political power to take control over their political, economic and social fortunes. This new Black consciousness was seen in the ghetto rebellions of the 1960s. It was also expressed in the increased support among Afro-Americans for the liberation struggles in the colonial world, in the protests by Black high school and college students, and in the development of militancy and organization by Black workers and professionals. It probably had more influence on Black cultural change than any other social movement. In the short period of five years it laid revolutionized Black cultural lifestyles. It most eloquently symbolizes the idea whose time has arrived.

R. Staples, supra note 24, at 290-92.

See also Turner, supra note 55, at 7-8 (nationalism usually politically conservative until the 1960s). But see Gershnman, Black Nationalism and Conservative Politics, 17 Dissent 10, 11 (1970) (arguing black nationalism is a conservative movement); K. Clark, supra note 31, at 612 ("black power" is accommodationism); Commission Report, supra note 16, at 235 (same).
In rough terms, prior to King’s leadership, integrationism was the central ideology of the black middle class, and the nationalist ideology primarily received support only from the black poor and working class. Part of King’s significance as a political leader was his ability to unite African Americans around integrationism across class lines for the first time in the 20th century. Yet even during the period of King’s greatest mass appeal, membership in Muslim temples continued to grow, and Malcolm X’s militant nationalist appeals became popular in Northern urban centers. And as King started to lose black support, it was the urban poor who most substantially challenged his leadership.

By the late 1950s, King had united virtually the entire black community behind a program of confrontational direct action aimed at the achievement of integration, but the situation had changed by the late 1960s. Nationalists claimed the symbolic ground of militancy. They developed a sophisticated critique of dominant American culture and power relations that at least rhetorically connected African Americans to the Africans and Asians who were achieving independence from colonial rule, and they utilized a class-based neo-colonialist analysis to identify black integrationists with “moderate” and “assimilationist” middle-class accommodation to the white power structure. A dramatic example of the differences is the respective reactions of integrationists and nationalists to urban riots in the mid- and late 1960s. In contrast to the attempt of those in the mainstream to interpret urban riots as the unfortunate and irrational frustration with the slow pace of civil rights reform, nationalists identified with and tended to support riots as decolonizing revolts.

157. See H. Edwards, supra note 89 (noting that the radicalization of black students during the 1960s brought collaboration between black bourgeoisie and poorer classes). Manning Marable states that, by the late months of 1966 . . . the young nationalists had succeeded in creating a broadbased wave of support, touching virtually every segment of the black population. . . . By the end of the decade the Old Guard seemed to be fighting a losing battle . . . . It is difficult to find an appropriate parallel to any previous stage of black American struggle. . . . By 1971, the Old Guard leadership appeared to be thoroughly discredited. Marable, supra note 58, at 20-21.

158. Most (integrationist) commentators have interpreted black nationalism simply as an ideology of frustration when integration does not seem to work. See supra note 131. But at least in the 20th century, such a diagnosis at most accounts for the cultural position of a segment of the black middle class. See H. Cruse, The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual, supra note 19, at 175-248; J. Farmer, supra note 19, at 92-93; R. Weissbrot, supra note 15, at 169-70; Kilson, The New Black Intellectuals, 16 Disent 304 (1969). Among poorer African Americans, a nationalist political and cultural stance has had a more continuous presence. R. Allen, supra note 43, at 75-98.

159. See Commission Report, supra note 16, at 205-38 (interpreting the rise of Black Power ideology and the increased militancy of ghetto youth as a reflection of frustration with the slow pace of civil rights reform).
against the white power and property structure. These contrasting positions with respect to the hot issue of urban disruption were only one face of more thoroughgoing ruptures of the consensus that King had achieved. Nationalists also contested the class unity that King had achieved, so that by the mid-1960s, integrationism again bore the mark of the black middle class and seemed to have little to offer the poor or working class. Furthermore, significant portions of the relatively small black middle class, represented most strongly by black students, repudiated integrationism. Integrationists were on the defensive within the black community, and all the momentum seemed to be moving toward the nationalist position.

The explicit ideological changes within organizations evidenced the sense of nationalist momentum. In the mid- to late 1960s, both SNCC and CORE, which previously had been direct action-oriented civil rights groups advocating integration, adopted explicit nationalist positions. In addition, the power of the nationalist drift was evident within the SCLC itself. King's decision finally to oppose the Vietnam War publicly in 1967, and the SCLC's shift in focus both from civil to economic rights and from the South to Northern ghettos shortly before King's assassination, were arguably in response to the sense that King and the SCLC were quickly losing the support of both black youth in general and the urban poor in particular.

The conflict between these two groups soon became acute: Nationalists developed a rhetoric within which any association with whites was seen to be the sign of race treachery, captured by the epithet of "oreo"; integrationists developed a rhetoric in which the nationalists represented a form of extremism akin to that of white supremacists and other hate groups. And, in fact, the polarization of the discourse between black integrationists and nationalists was a manifestation of the ways that each group threatened the other.

Nationalism upset the confidence that the black middle class had held since the turn of the century in the achievement of civil rights and integration into dominant American institutions—a goal which to them

160. See H. Haines, supra note 55, at 55-76.
161. See id. at 46-74; Marable, supra note 58, at 20-21; A. Pinkney, supra note 43, at ix (in 1970, "there seemed to be little doubt that black nationalism was the dominant ethos of the black movement").
162. See H. Haines, supra note 55, at 35-36 (noting the rapid shift in SNCC ideology), 46-76 (chronology of the momentum towards Black Power and "black separatism" in the late 1960s, and how sense of radicalism shifted from direct action integrationism in the late 1950s and early 1960s to black nationalism in the mid- to late-1960s).
163. For a description of the sense within the SCLC and on the part of King himself that he was losing support, see D. Garrow, supra note 15, at 431-547.
had appeared a real possibility. Nationalist ideology threatened the self-
identity of the middle class as the elite of black society, who symbolized
the achievement possible when blacks are accorded opportunity. Nation-
alists also undermined the black middle class' conception that their role
in racial liberation was to help the "brothers and sisters" left behind to
"escape" the ghetto and join mainstream institutions. In the nationalist
analysis, the very success of the black middle class in American society
might undermine individual identity and betray the aspirations of the
black community because it reflected gains granted by a white power
structure in exchange for black administration of white interests. This
rhetoric called to mind the shame of the long history of accommodation
by black middle class leaders and thus generated a kind of group anxiety.
Integrationism—in the particular, universalist form that it took in the
1960s—responded to this anxiety by denying that the world to which the
black middle class aspired was racially identifiable as a particularly white
world, rather than a realm of universal, culturally-neutral social
practices.

Similarly, the very predominance and strength of the integrationist/
civil rights tradition engendered a correlate anxiety for nationalists, an
anxiety that extreme and polar expressions of black separatism helped
resolve. According to Harold Cruse, the particular violence and hateful
rhetoric that came to characterize black nationalist discourse by the end
of the 1960s was rooted in a psychological attempt to overcome the ways
that blacks had been conditioned historically to depend on whites in the
realm of political action. In order to overcome the deeply ingrained in-
terracialism that had characterized progressive coalitions for several de-
cades, Cruse asserted that black nationalists had to muster hatred "to
avoid the necessity of apologizing to whites for excluding them."164
Thus, just as black integrationists gravitated toward a particularly uni-
iversalist interpretation of racial justice to help resolve anxiety that na-
tionalists raised about their self-identity, so black nationalists gravitated
toward particularly extreme interpretations in order to overcome their
anxiety about their own relation to whites. And, in this cultural posture,
each group tended to confirm the suspicions of the other. The more uni-
iversalist the integrationist ideology, the more nationalists saw an apolo-
geptic for assimilation into the white world and a corresponding betrayal
of the black community. The more hateful the nationalist ideology be-
came, the more integrationists saw the same bitterness and parochialism
that they saw in white supremacists.

B. Black Nationalism and Whites

The ultimate marginalization of black nationalists from mainstream discourse reflects several historical factors. One important feature was the State repression that groups like the Black Panthers faced. Another was the way in which the increasingly extremist and revolutionary rhetoric and social actions on the part of both the black and the white Left began to appear more and more fantastic as time went on.\textsuperscript{165} Furthermore, limitations in ideology often led to a rigid other-worldly revolutionary dogma gleaned from a conglomeration of Marx, Lenin, Mao, Fanon, and others—a dogma that took on an extremist, righteous tone that began to associate with the "white" power structure anyone who had a job. This approach alienated masses of African Americans and others who were not prepared to engage in an armed guerrilla campaign in America.\textsuperscript{166} In addition, just as the economic health of black communities deteriorated during the early 1970s "recession" and the associated cutback in federal spending, the black middle class expanded with the advent of integrationism as a national policy and, by and large, abandoned traditionally black neighborhoods.\textsuperscript{167} By the mid-1970s, successes in struggles for political influence in or control of many cities, combined with the national commitment to "cultural diversity," began to echo features of the nationalist program as American mainstream institutions seemed to accommodate a diffused and limited version of black race consciousness—developments that all tended to obscure the nationalist position as a sharp alternative to integration.

Whatever else "caused" the decline of nationalism, however, there can be no question that its near-total rejection by whites played a critical factor in its exclusion from mainstream American discourse. As indicated above, the overt analytic framework for this reaction was the identification of race consciousness with the evil of racism and the consequent perception of black nationalists as racists. In this Section, I now want to speculate about what led whites to the adoption of this view of race and to the mistranslation of black nationalism as the black equivalent of white supremacy.

\textsuperscript{165} For example, plans by various splinter groups to engage the police in urban guerrilla war, to assassinate political figures, etc. See Poinsett, supra note 129.

\textsuperscript{166} See Cruse, The Fire This Time?, supra note 74 (criticizing simplistic social theories of 1960s nationalists); see also H. Cruse, The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual, supra note 19, at 347-401 (criticizing as unrealistic and romanticizing the 1960s nationalists' invocation of images of armed revolution).

Various factors partially explain why white liberals and progressives in particular rejected nationalism as a way to analyze race relations. First, unlike the long tradition of progressive black nationalism in African American communities, the only whites who explicitly perceived race as a significant feature of group identity were white supremacists—a group historically comprised of a loose cultural coalition of Southern well-to-do whites and major segments of the white working class across the country. In their congruence of race and nationalism, race consciousness was tied to an interest in racial domination—specifically the perpetuation of white domination—and, in more recent years, the exaggerated fears of black domination should African Americans achieve significant social power in American society. One factor that led to the failure of white liberals and progressives to comprehend black nationalism as a liberating rather than repressive movement was that race consciousness had been historically associated with precisely the segments of the white community from whom enlightened whites wished to distinguish themselves for their own self-respect.\footnote{168}

Moreover, because black nationalism before the 1960s was largely separatist and isolationist, almost by definition whites had little or no contact with the different tradition of race consciousness among African Americans. In terms of their perception of the black nationalist position,

\footnote{168. The only significant nondeportationist white support for nationalism as a way to comprehend race relations prior to the 1960s was the formal position of the American Communist Party. From 1928 to 1959, the Communist Party argued that the “black belt” in the South should be recognized as a sovereign entity of African Americans. In 1959, the Communists changed their position to a call for immediate integration and an end to racial discrimination, and even during the period in which Communists formally supported black nationalism, their support and understanding were deduced from theoretical postulates of Marxism-Leninism, rather than from any engagement with the black nationalist tradition in the United States. See W. Foster, The Negro People In American History 461 (1954) (including the text of the 1928 resolution). For a full analysis of the Communist Party's position on black nationalism, see H. Cruse, Rebellion Or Revolution?, supra note 43, at 78-94; for more general analysis of the relation of Marxists to black nationalism, see id. at 139-55 (analyzing Trotskyist racial ideology); id. at 193-258 (analyzing limitations of Marxist analysis more generally).

In any event, the Communists spent their organizing energies on antidiscrimination efforts and attempts to establish interracial trade union and farm worker organizations. See R. Allen, supra note 43, at 85-90. In the Left more generally, the tendency was to see “the race issue” as subordinate to the more fundamental analytic of economic class; accordingly, the reigning image of racial liberation for most American leftists was the creation of an integrated working class movement that would overthrow capitalism and thereby remove the “cause” of exploitation of all workers, whether black or white. The sorry record of organized labor on race issues is a source of great embarrassment for the traditional Left. To be sure, there are many historic examples of courageous leftist support for civil rights, and there have been many occasions in the history of American race relations when white leftists were the only dependable allies of African Americans; the point here is that, in the Left tradition, integrationism was “integrated” into the class analysis under the general assumption that the structure of racial domination was subsidiary to and comprehended by the structure of capitalist domination.}
most white liberals and progressives were influenced by the conventional understanding of the racial separatism advocated by Booker T. Washington as black accommodationism to segregation. Like most black activists, white civil rights supporters in the early 1960s took the confrontation-oriented direct action wing of civil rights protest as the very definition of committed struggle. They perceived that the choices were between moderation and activism, or between legalism and street action coupled with community organizing, and that these choices defined the parameters of political and ideological issues posed by race.

Prior to the 1960s, whites who were serious about race reform worked with, supported, and often directed the legalist strategies of the NAACP and the direct action integrationism of groups like the SCLC, the Urban League, SNCC, and CORE. This decades-long civil rights tradition carried on by white liberals and progressives, with longer roots to 19th century abolitionists, defined racial enlightenment in relation to the staunch and often violent opposition of white supremacists. By the mid-1960s, when black nationalism reached its height of popularity within the black community, white liberals and progressives still understood the issue as a choice between militancy in support of immediate integration as opposed to the conservative stance of foot-dragging. While black integrationists with any connections to the black community simply could not avoid confronting the black nationalist analysis of race in the 1960s, it is striking that, except for some relatively isolated leftist factions, whites as a group never considered the possibility that race consciousness might have a liberating, rather than repressive, meaning.

Against this historical background of nonengagement with, and ignorance of, the black nationalist tradition, black nationalism confronted white integrationists in the 1960s through the militant rhetoric first of Malcolm X, and then of Black Power proponents. Although the particular form that nationalist rhetoric took in the 1960s was largely responsive to the struggle between integrationists and nationalists within the black community, an obviously significant factor in the white response was the rejection and repudiation that whites experienced from black nationalists.

One important episode that marked the white response to 1960s nationalists was the expulsion and exclusion of whites from civil rights organizations like SNCC and CORE when the organizations took a nationalist turn in the mid-1960s. The rageful rhetoric of hate against

169. C. Silberman, supra note 31, at 212.
170. See S. Carmichael & C. Hamilton, supra note 51, at 58-84; C. Carson, supra note 15, at 229-43; H. Haines, supra note 55, at 57-70. As Stokely Carmichael stated the nationalist position on white participation,
whites adopted by many nationalist groups and leaders seemed to confirm to whites the idea that black nationalism and white supremacy were identical manifestations of irrational and indiscriminate hate. As the nationalists began to achieve power within the former direct action wing of the civil rights movement, liberal and progressive whites who had participated in the movement either withdrew from racial politics altogether or made alliances with "moderate" and mostly middle-class blacks around the commitment to integrationism, understood as the transcendence of race consciousness.171

But the image that whites were simply repelled by black nationalists does not fully account for the ways that white liberals and progressives reacted to nationalism as an ideology of race reform. Their embrace of integrationism in the particular universalist form that it took in the 1960s

S. CARMICHAEL, supra note 82, at 57.

171. This conflict helps account for what seems in retrospect the particular and often seemingly gratuitous extremism of middle class black nationalists during the 1960s. It is possible that the extreme militancy that many others experienced as "posturing" played a defensive role in helping to repress the actual cultural ambiguity that has historically marked the black middle class self-identity. See supra note 111. See also F. POWLEDGE, supra note 57; C. FAGER, supra note 58, at 89-96. While many black nationalist groups and individuals adopted the "hate whitey" rhetoric that had historically characterized the Nation of Islam ideology, other black nationalists analyzed the dynamic as part of a pathology rooted in the historic commitment to interracialism on the part of the black middle class. According to Eldridge Cleaver, who on behalf of the Black Panthers actively advocated and organized coalitions with radical whites, the expulsion of whites from SNCC resulted from a "paranoid fear" of white domination rooted in the fact that SNCC nationalists had to wrest control over SNCC from whites, a situation the Panthers never faced. T. DRAPER, supra note 42, at 110. According to Cruse, hatred of whites on the part of new nationalists resulted from the particular ideology of interracialism that had become

inculcated into the Negro's mind. Even before the average Negro attempts to undertake any action himself, he assumes, almost involuntarily, that he must not, cannot, dare not exclude whites, because he cannot succeed without them. He has been so conditioned that he cannot separate personal and individual associations with individual whites... from that interior business that is the specific concern of his group's existence.... But with LeRoi Jones and his young Afro-American nationalists, anti-interracialism was equated not only with anti-whiteness, but with hatred of whiteness. In other words, Negroes had become so deeply mired in an institutionalized form of political interracialism that they could not break with it unless sufficient hatred were mustered to avoid the necessity of apologizing to whites for excluding them. That this was a paranoia-producing rationalization was not understood. If Negroes were actually thinking and functioning on a mature political level, then the exclusion of whites—organizationally and politically—should be based not on hatred but on strategy. It would be much like the tradition that no one outside one's immediate family is ever admitted into a discussion of intimate family problems. It is, therefore, an unfortunate development in Negro life that political interracialism has become so doctrinaire that certain nationalist Negroes have been forced to resort to race hate in order to block out the negative effect of interracialism on ethnic consciousness.

was more subtly related to anxieties of their own cultural self-identity than can be accounted for solely by the pain of exclusion and rejection by blacks. For this group of whites, the nationalist assertion of the particularities of black culture brought to the surface unresolved anxieties that "nonracist" whites had about their own feelings about both blacks and themselves.

With respect to blacks, the nationalist assertion of difference, and the location of that difference in terms of the particularities of culture, simultaneously connected to two key issues for whites: First, whites committed to nonracism had expended energy and concentrated on overcoming the teachings of a society permeated with racist ideology that black difference—specifically inferiority—justified racial hierarchy. Second, to the extent that a residue of racist dogma remained in white liberal consciousness, it existed as a vague sense of envy that blacks were different from whites specifically because blacks possessed a rich and spiritual culture—filled with music, dance, religion, and passionate sexuality—that whites experienced most strongly as lacking in the dominant white American culture. In other words, for white liberals and progressives, the nationalist assertion of a particular African American culture immediately brought to the surface white anxiety that, in fact, the nationalists were right—blacks had the kind of cohesive and rich culture that whites felt they themselves lacked—and simultaneously created feelings of guilt about believing such a thing, since that kind of attribution of characteristics to blacks seemed just like the racist ideology that these whites had worked so hard to overcome. More specifically, the culture whites secretly feared that blacks possessed tended toward the same symbolic structure as white supremacist ideology—having a particular culture was like being a primitive and having a folklife, a spirituality and a sexuality, which stood in opposition to rationalism, objectivity and civilization. Black nationalism, particularly in the machismo and Africanist forms that it took in the late 1960s, specifically exposed the deepest inner anxieties that whites as a cultural group possessed—anxieties that white liberals and progressives had worked hard to repress. Integrationism, understood as the transcendence of race consciousness, provided a vehicle for resolving the anxiety that nationalists raised by denying that blacks or whites as such had any identifiable culture at all. People "happen to be black" or "happen to be white." In the integrationist mindset that white liberals and progressives adopted, it made no sense to think about institutional practices in racial/cultural terms, because there were no cultures tied to racial identity, anyway. And so it came to be, paradoxically, that for whites, integrationism actually constituted an indirect defense of status quo social and institutional practices to the extent that
integrationist ideology was constructed to foreclose consideration of the cultural manifestations of racial power.

Seen in this way, the psychological identity issues engendered by black nationalists were in some ways similar for both black and white integrationists. The otherwise paradoxical coalition between black moderates and conservatives, and white liberals and progressives, had its roots in the way that universalism helped resolve the identity anxieties of each group. Black integrationists could identify with a commitment to an objective, aracial set of social norms, rather than perceive themselves as assimilating into the white world. And white integrationists could understand themselves as advocating the equal distribution of opportunity rather than asserting the superiority of white social norms or acknowledging their more deep-seated fears about black passion, culture, and sexuality.

In short, enlightened whites helped construct and deploy a liberal understanding of racial justice that incorporated universalist and objectivist assumptions. This understanding rejected race consciousness as a categorical matter, in part as a way to avoid issues of white cultural identity that black nationalism brought to the fore. The near universal rejection of a nationalist understanding of race was not required in order for whites to oppose white supremacists, nor was it based on simply a "philosophical" commitment to integrationism, since the repudiation of racial domination could have taken many other forms. Instead, the particular view of race embraced during the 1960s reflected a cultural response on the part of white liberals and progressives, not only to white supremacists, but also to black nationalists.

To be sure, the embrace of integrationism did not represent the only way that the broad avoidance of white racial identity took place. Although the mainstream white response was to denounce black nationalists as reverse racists, significant elements of the white liberal and progressive community attempted to embrace nationalists as allies. A roughly identifiable group of Northeastern liberal elites, depicted in Tom Wolfe's account of this cultural phenomenon in Radical Chic & Mau-Mauing the Flak Catchers, sympathized with nationalist groups and personalities, but their comprehension of the issues did not extend to the actual substantive programs or theoretical commitments of the nationalists. Instead, they perceived black nationalists from a civil liberties standpoint within which nationalists appeared as militant and aggressive civil rights groups who were wrongfully repressed by the State.

On the other hand, radical white groups such as the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) did embrace the nationalist critique of existing American cultural forms as well as the critique of the conservative underside of liberal integrationism. In fact, during the 1960s there was a great degree of reciprocal influence between the developing social analysis that came to be known as the “New Left” and the developing black nationalist approaches. But relations between white radicals and black nationalists in the 1960s and early 1970s tended to have a distorted and pathological dynamic: White radicals approached nationalists as representing an oppressed group that possessed, by virtue of their oppression, the unique insight and entitlement to determine how the social struggle should proceed, as well as to decide virtually any other issue that arose. Lacking success with the traditional Left constituency—the working class—white radicals began to substitute a “third worldism” for an economic analysis. Black nationalists, in turn, approached white radicals as representatives of historic white power.

The relationship was repetitive in nature: Black radicals made more and more demands for control of white groups as evidence of white commitment, and white radicals continually deferred to blacks as acts of white atonement. The more general cultural manifestation of this stance of white radicals was the constant tendency to make blacks the paradigms of political and cultural insight. In interracial contexts in radical circles, this tendency led to the development of a dynamic of black self-assertion and racial critique, and white submission and deference—colloquially known as white “self-flagellation”—that came to define race relations among radicals.

These predominant relations to black nationalism linked together manifestations of a central dynamic that characterized the liberal and progressive white community—the inability to come to terms with white self-identity. The virulence with which white liberals denounced black nationalism as reverse racism, the patronizing tolerance of Northeastern liberal elites, and the self-effacing submission that characterized many white radicals who engaged nationalists, reflected a similar cultural position among “nonracist” whites during the 1960s. In fact, the widespread embrace of integrationism and the idea that racial enlightenment con-

173. Of course, this is not the whole story of white radical response to nationalism. Many white activists took seriously the black nationalist analysis that suggested the need for black leadership and mass participation in the black liberation struggle, and that pointed to the reform of the white community as the best role for whites to play. The mass struggle against the Vietnam War soon came to pervade virtually all aspects of politics within the white community, and many such activists were quickly absorbed in antiwar issues. Others went to poor white communities, such as Appalachia, where they tended more quickly to experience a sense of being outsiders. See C. FAGER, supra note 58, at 89-91.
sisted of transcending race consciousness was only the reigning ideological face of a more diffuse and widespread cultural avoidance that seemed to include measures of guilt, desires for atonement, and needs for absolution.174

This discomfort with whiteness has led to a kind of self-negation. One manifestation is the attempt to construct racially neutral settings—for example, public education—where the problem of interracialism is imagined to be resolved by effacing any culture at all. Another manifestation is the attempt to embrace black culture by making it one's own; that is, by talking and acting according to how whites think blacks act. At the individual level, this flight from racial identification appears as the exaggerated need for acceptance from blacks on the ground that one is not like the rest of the whites, that one is not really white. And the broad-scale ideological dimension is a commitment to integrationism in the particular form that has characterized mainstream race discourse for the last two decades—integrationism understood as the transcendence of race consciousness.

Black nationalism caused great anxiety and turmoil for whites, in part because of the violence that nationalists symbolized, but also in part because nationalism represented whites as constituting a community with particular cultural norms. As whites articulated their rejection of black nationalists, they complained of “reverse racism” because they experienced the nationalist depiction of a white culture as the same kind of essentializing and stereotyping that white racists utilized in describing black culture. And, to be sure, much of nationalist rhetoric was reductionist with respect to the complexity of group relations within the white community. But through the identification of racial identity and group consciousness as central to the structure of American social relations, the black nationalists of the 1960s also identified the particular aspect of avoidance and denial that white support of black liberation assumed—the commitment by whites to deny the centrality of race as an historically constructed, and powerful, factor in the social structure of American life. Understanding racism as a form of “discrimination” from an

174. This dynamic of white cultural identification also manifested itself in small, everyday ways. At the micro-level of social intercourse, the dynamic appeared in the cultural politics of interracial relations. One example was the familiar phenomenon of whites beginning to talk “black,” using what they conceived of as black vernacular and slang when in the presence of blacks, or adopting black musical tastes. The flip side of this cultural phenomenon, reflecting the same discomfort with one's own culture, is the sense of awkwardness that whites sometimes experience in interracial contexts concerning any aspect of their lifestyle that might reflect whiteness—the sense that indications of white culture are signs of bias, leading to the aspiration for a culture of “neutrality” in interracial settings and a corresponding compulsion to integrate social and institutional arenas to demonstrate their aracial character.
assumed neutral norm was the cognitive face of a widespread cultural flight from white self-identity. The resurgence of ethnic group consciousness on the part of whites during the 1970s, although in part a liberating attempt to reclaim cultural authenticity in the face of the mainstream culture of neutrality, was also in part a reflection of this same dynamic. Being Polish, Italian, or Irish meant, to a degree, not being simply white.

The upshot of this cultural situation is that, despite the fact that race has worked as such a powerful element of the economy and culture of social relationships, no group of whites has formed who could identify themselves with the white community without also associating whiteness with either paralyzing guilt or interests in racial domination. Explicit white racial identification was left to lower class, "ignorant" whites; the implicit racial identification was left to the universalizing aspirations of the culturally dominant white upper middle class.

The broadscale effect of this particular resolution of the "race" issue within mainstream discourse was that the very whites who might otherwise have been allies of black nationalists during the 1960s were motivated, in terms of their own cultural identity, to avoid racial identification altogether. Without the development of white race consciousness, no significant group of whites either understood themselves as struggling to transform the white community itself in terms of race relations or as supporting African Americans as a people, a nation. In terms of national policy, tremendous energy was committed to the centralized policy of integration, but little attention was paid to the integrity and health of black neighborhoods and institutions. Integration of dominant institutions, rather than reparations from one community to another, became the paradigm for racial enlightenment.

The kind of cultural dynamic that I describe here is not presented as the basis for white guilt. We can be empathetic with the particular historical and cultural situation within which whites rejected African American race consciousness, and yet also recognize that it had powerful, self-serving effects in insulating a wide range of social practices from cultural critique. Moreover, we can recognize the reductionist ways that 1960s nationalists described the white community without thereby completely repressing the fundamental ways that the economy of race has historically constructed our social identities and relations—in complex and often contradictory ways, but central to American life nonetheless and irreducible to class or to various forms of "discrimination." And just as membership in the African American community does not exhaust the social bases upon which blacks self-identify, a recognition of membership in a white community that we did not construct, but of which we are historically a part, does not exclude the various other ways that we self-
identify—as Jews, Italian Americans, men and women, straights and gays, working class and middle class, and so on.

V. CONCLUSION

I have argued that the basic assumptions of contemporary race discourse—of what passes for common sense among the educated and enlightened where issues of race are concerned—should be understood to reflect a particular ideology rather than the necessary and transcendent meaning of progress itself. The commitment to integration as the ultimate goal of race reform, like the understanding of Brown v. Board of Education as the exemplar of progressive jurisprudence, is connected in our social context to a whole range of images about the nature of truth, progress, and enlightenment within which race consciousness appears arbitrary, subjective, primitive, and backward. But this particular ideology about race was not simply “chosen” because it conformed with traditional liberal ideas about epistemology, historical progress, or social justice; it was constructed in this universalist form in part because the myth of universalism helped resolve at the ideological level the psychocultural anxieties about group and self-identity that both black moderates and white liberals and progressives experienced when militant nationalists such as Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, and the Black Panthers revitalized the tradition of black nationalism in the 1960s.

The embrace of integrationism as the dominant ethos of race discourse is the symbolic face of the new cultural “center” that was created in the context of the various ruptures of American society in the 1960s. Relative to this center, black “militants” and white “rednecks” were defined together as extremists; comprehending racism as a form of “discrimination” meant that race could be understood as just another example of the range of arbitrary social characteristics—like gender, physical handicap or sexual preference—that right-thinking people should learn to ignore. For the cultural centrists, the concept of overcoming bias became the way to comprehend all the various challenges to mainstream culture in the 1960s—movements by women, the poor, gays and lesbians, blacks, and young anti-war and leftist counter-culturists—as together representing the basic idea that bias should be overcome in favor of objectivity and neutrality.

From the “outside,” it was apparent that this “reasonable” and “enlightened” cultural center had a distinctly white, upper-middle class and Protestant flavor—a correlate in the cultural sphere to what Unitarianism, or maybe Presbyterianism, represents in the religious sphere. The

culture that seemed to descend upon public schools throughout the South in the late 1960s and 1970s, for example, constituted more than the new policy of racial integration or a stricter separation of church and state. Its norms of professionalism, impersonality, and centralism were experienced in the South—by both blacks and whites—as imposed from the outside, vaguely from the upper-middle class, white Northeast.

But that character of the center was invisible from within it; instead, for the whites who embraced integrationism, the realm of social practices and attitudes they associated with racially integrated institutions were taken as culturally neutral and objective. The fact that everyday public school culture in integrated schools was essentially a white culture never really occurred to a whole range of otherwise decent and committed white liberals. And for the middle class black moderates who aligned with whites in constructing and supporting the integrationist ideology, the racial character of “integrated” institutions must have been more apparent, and yet its very obviousness made the embrace of universalist imagery all the more important to their self-respect.

Whatever the intentions and psycho-cultural needs of black and white integrationists in the past, it should now be apparent that the exclusion of a nationalist approach to racial justice from mainstream discourse has been a cultural and political mistake that has constrained the boundaries of racial politics. Instead of comprehending racial justice in terms of the relations of distinct, historically-defined communities, the embrace of integrationism has signified the broad cultural attempt not to think in terms of race at all. Integrationists filter discussion of the wide disparities between African American and white communities through the nonracial language of poverty and class, and avoid altogether any consideration of the racial implications of the institutional practices of “integrated” arenas of social life.

Moreover, the construction of race reform as being concerned with overcoming bias at the level of consciousness, overcoming discrimination at the practice level, and achieving integration at the institutional level has meant that tremendous social resources and personal energy have been expended on integrating formerly white schools, workplaces, neighborhoods, and attitudes. This program, such as it is, has had some success in improving the lives of specific people and in transforming the climate of overt racial domination that pervaded American society thirty years ago. But it has been pursued to the exclusion of a commitment to the vitality of the black community as a whole and to the economic and cultural health of black neighborhoods, schools, economic enterprises, and individuals.
It is frustrating to reconsider the long history of American race relations from this perspective. One gets the sense that if, at any number of points in American history, a nationalist program of race reform had been adopted, African Americans in virtually every urban center would not be concentrated into disintegrating housing, would not be sending their children to underfunded and overcrowded schools to learn a nationally-prescribed curriculum, would not be sending them to play in parks and on streets alongside drug dealers and gang warriors, and would not be working at the bottom of the economic hierarchy (if they are lucky enough to have a job at all). If community-to-community reparations had been made (as promised), if there had actually been a massive transfer of economic resources from the white to the black community in the 1940s, then the kind of black economic cooperatives and black-run schools, newspapers and cultural institutions advocated by Du Bois would likely exist today as foundations for healthy African American neighborhoods. Or, if a similar program had been adopted in the 1960s, one can imagine that black neighborhoods would be by and large healthy, cosmopolitan parts of the urban scene rather than ghettos of hopelessness and frustration. But, in the integrationist ideology, as Harold Cruse observed, black communities should not even exist because they are vestiges of segregation; it was therefore inconceivable to devote resources to their health rather than to programs like urban renewal plans of the late 1960s premised on their destruction.

I do not mean to suggest that black nationalists in the 1960s, or at any other point in our history, had the perfect plan for social transformation, nor that they pursued the best strategies for acquiring political power and mass support. To the contrary, black nationalism is not a monolithic tradition; it has taken various forms, with its own internal dynamics and a wide range of external relations with white and black integrationists. In particular, the tendency towards essentializing black identity around centrally prescribed images of "authentic" black culture has been a recurring and regressive undercurrent of the nationalist presence that at times generated its own forms of craziness and oppression.

But the dominant image, especially among whites, that black nationalism is simply a form of reverse racism, or that it manifests frustration with the pace of mainstream civil rights reform, and is therefore merely an emotional reaction on the part of some blacks, is just plain wrong. In terms of intellectual and philosophical sophistication, the historicizing and anti-universalist assumptions of black nationalist views about culture and identity represent a profound critique of the liberal presuppositions of integrationism—a critique that extends from social theory to episte-
mology. And, if support for nationalism can be accounted for in terms of group emotions, so too can the embrace of integrationism.

The assumptions of integrationism have become so deeply ingrained in the dominant culture of educated Americans that it is easy to forget that a sharp and dramatic alternative exists for a progressive and liberating way to think about, and effectuate, race reform. The reappearance of race consciousness in the scholarly work of critical race theorists in part reflects an attempt to reopen a political discourse that was closed off in the 1960s. It should be the occasion for whites to reconsider our position in the cultural compromise that defined the discourse of race and reform for the past few decades. We should, I think, reinterpret our role in race relations so that we might self-consciously understand ourselves as whites, as having a particular identity that was historically constructed through the economy of race relations. This kind of identification need not mean an interest in racial domination, nor must it mean a paralyzing guilt and self-flagellation. Rather than despise what reveals one as white, and engage in neurotic self-improvement to remove such “biases,” a precondition to meaningful negotiation of the terms of our social spaces—whether they are separate or shared—is to recognize that racial cultures form a significant element of what goes into the construction of our social relations. And, finally, such a historicist notion of identity also, of course, means the simultaneous recognition first, that there are other important dimensions to our self-identity and group life that are not captured by race; and second, that the meaning of race itself will necessarily change with time. An embrace of a nationalist perspective on race does not mean comprehending nationalism in the specific form that it took in the 1960s or at any other time. It means utilizing race consciousness to approach our social relations in the context of where we are right now, in the 1990s. The historicized view of nationalism, in short, means that new programs for race reform will make sense in the circumstances of today’s world, where some institutions and neighborhoods do in fact represent space that is shared by blacks and whites.