

Notes

Part I White Privilege and Black Power

1. In addition to the discussion in the last chapter of Riggins Earl, Jr.'s *Dark Symbols, Obscure Signs: God, Self, and Community in the Slave Mind*, cf. also Albert Raboteau's *Slave Religion: The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South*.

I White Boy in the Ghetto

1. See bibliography for book titles by those names; Bynum, 92; Morrison, 1970, 68; Hopkins, 1993, 57–60; Hurston, 197; Porterfield, 728–729, Smith, 1989, 384–387; West, 1989b, 93.
2. In the sense of Nietzsche's "sounding out" of idols and of African American vernacular traditions of "sounding out" and "signifying" (Nietzsche, 1990, 31–32; Gates, 1988, 81, 94).

2 The Crisis of Race in the New Millennium

1. After the song title by that name of the hip hop group, Public Enemy.
2. The African American teenager shot and killed by a Korean shopkeeper on video tape while trying to purchase a pop two months before the announcement of the verdict on the police officers accused of beating King. The shopkeeper reportedly suspected her of stealing and feared attack in the confrontation.
3. For example, *Racial Formation in the United State: From the 1960s to the 1990s*, Michael Omi and Howard Winant, 69, 95–96, 101.
4. Cf. Perry Miller's *Errand Into the Wilderness*.
5. At least up to this point in our collective history. It is theoretically conceivable that at some point in the future, the demographic balance of power could shift in favor of groups that currently remain minority and with it, the possibility of new forms of racism promulgated by such new majority groups. But for the

foreseeable future, racism remains the coercive collective effect of white power structures and white cultural norms.

6. This, in fact, is exactly how James Cone describes white racism: "According to the New Testament, these powers can get hold of a man's total being and can control his life to such a degree that he is incapable of distinguishing himself from the alien power. This seems to be what has happened to white racism in America. It is a part of the spirit of the age, the ethos of the culture, so embedded in the social, economic, and political structure that white society is incapable of knowing its destructive nature" (Cone, 1969, 41).
7. Even when, in a book like *Black Theology & Black Power*, he expressly indicates he is not writing chiefly for black people, but is addressing "a word to the oppressor, a word to Whitey," Cone nonetheless qualifies his motive by immediately adding, "not in hope that he will listen (after King's death who can hope?) but in the expectation that *my own existence* will be clarified" (Cone, 1969, 3; emphasis added).
8. This might appear to be a question typologically similar to Rosemary Radford Ruether's feminist question, voiced as the title of a chapter, "Can a Male Savior Save Women?" in *Sexism and God Talk*. But it is a deceptive similarity, as Ruether's question is about the relevance of a dominant culture construction for those in the position of the oppressed. Here the question is inverted.
9. Susan Thistlethwaite, for instance, deals with race and gender together in a compelling manner in *Sex, Race, and God: A Christian Feminism in Black and White*.
10. Witvliet traces the effects of this dynamism in both Martin Luther King's response to Vietnam, and Malcolm X's to Mecca. Each began by speaking for and to a *particular* constituency, but ended by pursuing a *global* vision.
11. Cf. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism*, chapter 2.
12. See Pierre Bourdieu for the notion of *habitus*, the enculturated and internalized patterns of perception and calculations of response to one's cultural environment and social others that normally are simply taken for granted and thus operate almost outside of consciousness, but which can be brought to the forefront of intentionality if put under pressure by sudden social change or contact with another cultural formation (Bourdieu, 17).
13. For another expression of this same point, see Karen McCarthy Brown's description (in *Mama Lola*) of how possession performances in a Haitian *Vodun* community in Brooklyn facilitate experimentation with various forms of social conflict faced in "real life" and the various feeling-structures and bodily postures required in different modes of response.

Part II History, Consciousness, and Performance

1. And thus theologically "legitimate" in the white academy (in some quarters at least).

2. Cf. especially, Thomas F. Slaughter, Jr.'s "Epidermalizing the World: A Basic Mode of Being Black," in *Philosophy Born of Struggle: Anthology of Afro-American Philosophy from 1917*.

3 Modern White Supremacy and Western Christian Soteriology

1. For an account of this New Testament idea in relationship to more modern notions of various forms of collective power, see in particular, Walter Wink's trilogy on the Powers and William Stringfellow's *An Ethic for Christians and Other Aliens in a Strange Land*.
2. I am indebted, for the basic insight here, to George Pickering in a talk he gave on April 24, 1995, at the University of Chicago Divinity School during a conference entitled, "'Our God is Able': A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement as an Interfaith and Ecumenical Movement."
3. Cf. Dwight Hopkins, in *Shoes that Fit Our Feet*, where he says, "If anything, the white church's systematic lineage and practice of racism call forth the Devil and certainly do not reveal a just God" (Hopkins, 1993, 144).
4. Cf. especially T. Todorov, *The Conquest of America* and V. Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa*. It is also the case that indigenous soteriologies have figured quite dramatically in native receptions of Europeans, such as in the Hopi Indian struggle to "place" Coronado's dispatch, Pedro de Tovar, in the Sixteenth century, or all the white settlers that have followed since, in their own redeemer-myth of the return of Pahana, the White Brother who will bring about the transition of this world into its next phase (Rudolf Kaiser, *The Voice of the Great Spirit: Prophecies of the Hopi Indian*). Cf. also Aztec mis-figurations of Cortez as the promised Quetzalcoatl as detailed in Dussel's *The Invention of the Americas*.
5. Cf. Jose Rabasa, *Inventing America: Spanish Historiography and the Formation of Eurocentrism*.
6. The Wild Man or Woman represented the distillation of anxiety about the three main areas of life supposedly secured and civilized in the Christian institutions of family, society, and church: sex, sustenance, and salvation.
7. Cf., e.g., Mudimbe, who traces the way notions of blackness filter back into European artistic traditions and religious explanations of cultural difference (Mudimbe, 7-9).
8. Cf. Frantz Fanon, commenting on George Balandier in *Black Skins, White Masks* (Fanon, 95).
9. Cf., e.g., the debates recounted in Dussel's brief summary of the Valladolid disputes between Bartolemeo de las Casas and Sepulveda in sixteenth-century Spain (Dussel, 1995, 64, 67).
10. I have chosen to use the term "America" in this writing in its popular rather than technical sense. Technically, the United States is only a part of America, which actually encompasses all of the northern, central, and southern land masses and peoples that began to be referred to as the "Americas" some time

- after Amerigo Vespucci's name was first appended to the geography Columbus had mistaken as India.
11. Bastide's discussion is not limited only to Protestant configurations of race. He argues that color symbolism articulates with social practice differently in contexts dominated either by Protestantism and Roman Catholicism, tending to show up in the latter not so much in severe strictures of segregation between black and white as in various forms of color hierarchy that govern "racial interbreeding" (Bastide, 276).
 12. Bastide notes the Christian justification of slavery in which the claim was made that "black skin was a punishment from God" (Bastide, 272).
 13. Bastide argues, e.g., that although black and white "have taken on other meanings," the "'frontier-complex' between two conflicting mentalities has held firm" (Bastide, 285). And these other meanings then "still follow . . . the basic antithesis founded centuries before on the white purity of the elect and the blackness of Satan."
 14. In tracing the ramifications of the black/white symbolism through "the double process of secularization in America and of de-Christianization in Europe," Bastide claims, that in America, "Calvinism remained just under the surface, ready to be revived at the slightest opportunity" (Bastide, 282).
 15. For a theoretically dense rendition of this picture of modernity, see Bhabha's "Dissemination," in *The Location of Culture*, 139–170.
 16. This is the burden of Dussel's argument in *The Invention of the Americas*.
 17. Cf. Steven Ozment's *The Reformation in Medieval Perspective*.
 18. Hegel carries the fracture begun with Kant, between self as subject and self as object, to full term in the final reconciliation of identity and difference as an identity between "identity" and "identity-and-difference" dialectically achieved in Absolute Spirit. Marx, in turn, stands Hegel on his head, identifies the universal class as the proletariat, within whose coming into full possession of the forces of production (in communism) will be accomplished the resolution of historical contradictions in the classless society.
 19. The idea that "like can only be saved by like" has a long history in Christian theology, going all the way back to the patristic era. In *Inventing Africa*, Mudimbe traces some of the changing effects of this way of thinking by relating the Foucaultian model of epistemic shifts to the colonizing process (Mudimbe, 9).
 20. Cf. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.
 21. Cf. Richard Kearney's *Transitions*, tracing the struggle of the bourgeois hero of the novel to invest the world of modern meaninglessness with some intimation of transcendence absent input of a providential god (Kearney, 35).
 22. Including contemporary efforts such as Andrew Murray's attempt to re-racialize "intelligence" in *The Bell Curve* (Herrnstein and Murray, *The Bell Curve*), or American Association of Criminology President James Q. Wilson's theories of "somatotyping" (addressed in chapter 6).
 23. Cf. Michel Foucault's *The Order of Things* for one accounting of the shift.
 24. In one sense, Weber's entire project in *Economy and Society* is an attempt to account for this distinctive emergence of spheres of autonomous interests and knowledges in Western modernity as compared with other social formations developed elsewhere in the world.

25. The “revised Marxisms” in question would include those issuing from the Birmingham Center for Cultural Studies connected with names like Stuart Hall and Dick Hebdige, and those showing up among various colonial and postcolonial discourse theorists like Gayatri Spivak (Spivak, e.g., has described herself as a feminist, deconstructionist, Marxist; Spivak, 1990, 104, 116).
26. For further discussion of this issue see Juan Luis Segundo, *Faith and Ideologies*; Clodovis Boff, *Theory and Praxis*; Claude Lefort, *The Political Forms of Modern Society*; and Ernesto Laclau and Claude Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*.
27. Cf. Gilroy’s argument in the following section.
28. Spivak, e.g., identifies Kant’s critique of Descartes as the inaugural moment in the “breaking up of the individual subject” of modernity (Spivak, 1988, 310).
29. For instance, Hume’s nature as “divine mind” shriven under Kant’s critical acumen.
30. As we shall examine in some depth in chapter 4.
31. Literally the “other” who is “under,” a class of those whose voice and agency are submerged in a hegemonic social formation. Cf. Spivak’s “Can the Subaltern Speak?” and Benita Perry’s critique (Spivak, 1988, 271–313; Perry, 35).
32. An incident that has found new currency in a reinvented form in Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*.
33. Cf. Alice Stone Blackwell, *Lucy Stone: Pioneer of Women’s Rights*, 183–184.
34. Cf. Anna Bontemps, *Free at Last: The Life of Frederick Douglass*, 180.
35. It is worth noting, here, although it is beyond our exploring in depth, that Jamaican Rastafari have developed an implicit “theology of dread” that informs their religious practice. “Dread” becomes, in part, something they associate with their own experience of “Babylon,” the white Euro-world-structures that enslaved Africans and now oppresses their diaspora descendants. Babylon dominates for the present, but faces in the future a “dread” judgment and downfall. “Dread” locks, the long natural curls worn by Rastafari men and women, symbolize a certain “leonine” presence that is also embodied at times in their silent defiant presence in white society, reflecting both their own certainty of coming judgment and a kind of congealed opaque testament of all of the dead who have suffered Babylon in the past and now await vindication. “Embodied dread” is thus significant of living power for black sufferers and of an impenetrable apocalyptic exclusion of white oppressors. It is the sign of the irresistible end of exile and a return to the glories of “Ithiopia” (Africa) that requires no comment from blacks and brooks no response from white Babylon. I am indebted for these comments to anthropologist Greg Downey from the University of Chicago in a conversation we had in 1995.
36. Cf. Ephialtes Smith’s Girardian reading of the Civil Rights movement, in which the movement’s strategy is analyzed as the continual staging of a kind of public inoculation ritual for North American racial violence by way of the (black led) “*pharmakon*” of nonviolence (Smith, 1994, 211–218). The trick was to create the conditions for enough violence to manifest itself to

be undeniable and inexcusable, and simultaneously to build in enough controls on the situation to avoid any absolute victimage.

37. Cf. Vincent Harding's 1967 article "Black Power and the American Christ" giving provocative articulation to Black Power as a spiritual counterforce in part brought into being by the blue-eyed, blond-haired "American Christ" of white Christianity in North America (Harding, 40).

4 Black Double-Consciousness and White Double Takes

1. Cf. James Scott's notion of hidden transcripts that are part of the in-group consciousness and conversations on both sides of the divide between domination and subordination, normally camouflaged and only under pressure erupting in contravention of the "public transcript" tacitly agreed to and maintained by both sides (though imposed and policed by the dominant). In reference to white supremacy, the idea of a white "hidden transcript" fits well with Charles Mills's notion of the Racial Contract (Scott, 14; Mills, 11).
2. I am indebted for some of my thinking on Du Bois in what follows to a presentation of a paper by anthropologist Nahum Chandler in a Workshop on Race and the Reproduction of Ideologies at the University of Chicago, May 2, 1992 as well as two subsequent articles in *Displacement, Diaspora, and Geographies of Identity* and *Callaloo*, respectively (Chandler, 1996a, 240, 250, 253; 1996b, 83–84, 86, 90, ft. nt. 7).
3. In dealing with a different difference, Freud, too, will halt before the "split" of this kind of "split-second" look, catch it, give it extension in a piled-up Germanism, rendering it unlike itself as an *Augenblick*, a seeing washed by lids, but not washed away.
4. Chandler says, e.g., that "although critical of the indecisiveness and incoherence that this sense produced in Negro political and social life, private and public, and deeply responsive to the *violence* of the *sense* of this heterogeneity, the actual experience of this sense, Du Bois never ceased to affirm this heterogeneity as *also* a good, a resource, in general" (Chandler, 1996b, 85).
5. Part of the seminal originality of Du Bois's work, according to Chandler, is the fact that DuBois quite carefully thought through his experience of race not so much as an isolated individual, but rather as one inscribed within a system, written upon and partially ruled by, a "concept," whose career in his own life history, Du Bois then tracks and rewrites. Du Bois's own description of what he is doing, underscored as the subtitle of *Dusk of Dawn*, is working out an "autobiography of a race concept" (Chandler, 1996a, 240–250).
6. As in the trope on Marx by historian Thomas Holt to the effect that, "human beings make race, but they are not free to make it in any old way they please" (offered in a comment during the Newberry Seminar in American Social History, University of Chicago, May 30, 1991).

5 Black Performance

1. It is impossible here not to note the most recent reiteration of this entire equation—the video-taped beating to the death of Nathaniel Jones on November 30, 2003, by four white and one black officers of a Cincinnati police force that had only in April of 2001 provoked a full scale “riot” for shooting a black youth in the back who was fleeing arrest. The police were summoned to deal with Jones because he suddenly began dancing in some privately conceived revelry in a fast food restaurant.
2. As quoted in the John McDermott edited, *The Writings of William James*, 3 (from Henry James, Sr. 1879. *Society: The Redeemed Form of Man*. Cambridge: Houghton, Osgood & Co., 44–49).
3. Remarkably from an American theological point of view, what Long labors into expression here by a way of a Lutheran (Ottonian) category could be comprehended as a failure of Calvinism. The *majestas* of Divine Freedom finds its proximate human symbolization not in the Puritanism of the American founders, but among the *sufferers* of Puritan theological foundationalism. In one sense, we could say “sovereign majesty” becomes accessible, as the divine reality that “overshadows” the “total depravity” of humanity, only in the concreteness of history. It is not an effect of theological formulation, but of historical experience—the experience of those who have been made to know depravity “in the flesh.” The foundation of the nation—the Puritan covenant made material in the Jeffersonian “slave” republic—is the hard matter against which *majestas* splintered into a *tremendum* horrified at its own reduction to mere fascination.
4. I am indebted for this idea to a comment of Long delivered at the 2003 American Academy of Religions conference.
5. The choice of the word “tactical” here is informed by Michel de Certeau’s way of differentiating *tactical* uses of spaces and practices, by those who are not invested with institutional powers and authority but must seize opportunities to resist order “on the run” as it were, from those who do enjoy institutional places from which to mobilize *strategies* of domination (de Certeau, xiv, xix, 35–39). I use the word “strategies” for white practices of whiteness in chapter 6.
6. A play on the Buddhist notion of the “Third Eye,” the “wisdom eye” that is opened in meditation practice.
7. Cf. Paul Connerton’s exploration of the role of the body in social memory in his *How Societies Remember*.
8. Saying such is already a dangerous statement, obviously vulnerable to a de-humanizing tendency that simultaneously bestializes and divinizes, but refuses the humanity of the other as simply that: ordinary humanness. At the same time, however, it is obvious that the problem of otherness does not just go away because we decide to call it “merely” human. We will return to this question in chapter 8. The place of difference between human beings remains one of the questions that must be attended to with theological diligence and critical acumen. Its potency as a source of theophany or sacral encounter will not be exorcised of violence by mere fiat or denial. At stake rather is the kind of sacrality

that is attributed to the otherness that appears there, the way a theological claim is made for a new possibility of human wholeness and salvation, whether divinity is linked to the exclusionary terrors of a scapegoating operation or the honoring of all human flesh as incarnational. Cf. Rene Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, and a critical commentary on Girard by Tod Swanson, “Colonial Violence and Inca Analogies to Christianity,” *Curing Violence*.

Part III Presumption, Initiation, and Practice

1. Cf. the citation by James Cone of a Malcolm X speech in which Malcolm asserted that by and large his castigation of the white man as a “devil” had reference primarily not to any individual white man, but “the *collective* white man’s *historical* record . . . [of] cruelties, and evils, and greeds, that have seen him *act* like a devil toward the non-white man” (Cone, 1991, 103; emphasis added).

6 White Posture

1. In many urban centers, “profiling” results in the arrest of many poor young males of color with virtual impunity, who are then encouraged to plea bargain for a reduced sentence rather than fight for their innocence championed by an overworked, underpaid, often undereducated court-assigned attorney in a court room under pressure to clear its dockets as rapidly as possible.
2. Cf. footnote on section entitled Tactical Performances in chapter 4.
3. As the gospel of Matthew might have it (Mt. 12: 43–45).
4. As some of the recent literature on the Christian men’s movement, Promise Keepers, e.g., details—“the late 18th century transition from a masculine identity based on community and family service to one based on individual conquest in the capitalist marketplace” has bequeathed the twentieth century its stereotypes of maleness as “tough, stoic, isolated, unemotional,” constituted in competitiveness, freely expressing the “manly passions” of assertiveness, ambition, avarice, lust for power” (Deardorff, 77; Cole, 125).
5. In the words of philosopher Thomas Slaughter, Jr.—giving phenomenological articulation to the predicament of blackness in a white world “which is the omnipresent possessor of all goods, save some exotic African artifacts”—the “act of pigmentizing the world extends even to the natural world. Today all grains are hybrid; all grass has been sodded; all trees have been seeded; all rivers dammed. And throughout, the producer’s imprint is White” (Slaughter, 285).
6. A reference to Frantz Fanon’s characterization, in the words of Slaughter, of “contemporary cultural contact between a dominating Western world and colored, colonized and neo-colonized people the world over. He thereby invokes the ancient philosophy which conceived the cosmos in terms of a struggle

between the principles of Good and Evil. In that scheme, black was designated the color of evil, and White, the color of ‘Right’ ” (Slaughter, 284).

7. A sense that is reinforced in blacks if there is also present, in the same classroom, some amount of “countercultural” (“lower class”) white input in a style more closely resembling black argumentative style (Kochman, 30).
8. Of no small interest here is the Spanish colonial term “reducciones” for indigenous peoples “reduced” from their wildness to more civilized manners of dress, speaking, believing, and living.

7 White Passage and Black Pedagogy

1. Mills surveys the estimates (conservative and liberal) to arrive at a figure of roughly 100 million killed by European colonial violence directed at nonwhite populations around the world—easily the most heinous case of genocide in history (Mills, 98, 142, ft. 35, 146, nt. 21).
2. Compare the Apostle Paul’s descriptions in I Cor. 4: 9–13; II Cor. 11: 23–29.

8 Anti-Supremacist Solidarity and Post-White Practice

1. Cited in a talk given by Joe Feagin, entitled “Racism and the Coming White Minority,” on April 20, 2000 at Wayne State University, Detroit, MI.; cf. also Mills, 38–39.
2. Cf. the work by Nibs Stroupe and Inez Fleming entitled *While We Run This Race: Confronting the Power of Racism in a Southern Church* for a metaphorical discussion of race as “infection.”
3. Cf. Long’s argument for such in *The History of Religions: Retrospect and Prospect*, ed. Kitigawa, 87–104.
4. Parts of this section and the one following entitled “White (Anti-)Theology and Post-White Practice,” appeared (in different versions) in “Rage With a Purpose, Weep Without Regret: A White Theology of Solidarity,” *Soundings* Vol. 82, Nos. 3–4 (Fall/Winter 1999), 437–463; “White Church Response to Black Theology: Like a Thief in the Night,” *Theology Today*, Vol. 60, No. 4 (January 2004), 508–524; and “Black Theology and the White Church in the Third Millennium: Like A Thief in the Night,” in *Living Stones in the Household of God: The Legacy and Future of Black Theology*, ed. L. Thomas, Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 83–98.
5. Though as remains abundantly clear in continuing episodes of “profiling” and arrest, it does continue to draw attention and surveillance, or worse.
6. Like the beating of Rodney King seemingly “verified” his supposed violence in the eyes of the Simi Valley jury that acquitted the police officers involved (he was being hit by officers of the law, therefore he must have been a threat).
7. Suburbs, and the highways leading to suburbs, e.g., were constructed with Federal monies and backing (in the mortgage guarantee corporation) supplied

by tax dollars collected from everyone but generally made available, from immediately after World War II until the mid-1960s civil rights legislation, only to white identified people. The Federal budget, in effect, functioned as a transfer payment out of communities of color and into white community wherewithal.

8. Gloria Albrecht discusses something similar in her white feminist work on ethics, *The Character of Our Communities*, 95, 98.
9. In the ritual metaphor of the author of Hebrews, concerning the operation of the word of God in revealing intentions and opening interiority to a new saving scrutiny (Heb. 4: 11–13).

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