

Pan-African Psychologies

Series Editors

Chalmer E. F. Thompson

Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis
Indianapolis, IN, USA

Guerda Nicolas

University of Miami
Coral Gables, FL, USA

African people and their descendants from various regions of the Diaspora have endured a history of struggle that has been replete in violence and structural oppression. Offering a *psychology* of Black people entails an understanding of these pervasive, sustaining structures and their intersection with culture, gender socialization, and the panoply of “isms” that shape people and contexts. What is needed as part of a knowledge base on Black psychology is an elaboration of the common themes that cut across global contexts and the conditions that characterize specific regions, all of which have bearing on individual, interpersonal, and societal functioning. More than ever, there is an urgent need for psychological scholarship that unapologetically centers race and the ever-changing role of context in understanding the history, struggles, and strengths of Black lives and communities around the globe. The series seeks to make a novel contribution to the broader area of critical & radical psychology by drawing on marginalized voices and perspectives and by engaging with the praxis agenda of improving the lives of African/Black peoples. It both seeks to critique oppression (more particularly, of the racialized, neo-colonial world) and provide prospective strategies (practices of liberation, of peace) to respond to such forms of oppression.

More information about this series at
<http://www.palgrave.com/gp/series/15830>

Chalmer E. F. Thompson

A Psychology of Liberation and Peace

For the Greater Good

palgrave
macmillan

Chalmer E. F. Thompson
Indiana University – Purdue University
Indianapolis
Indianapolis, IN, USA

ISSN 2523-8264 ISSN 2523-8272 (electronic)
Pan-African Psychologies
ISBN 978-3-030-13596-6 ISBN 978-3-030-13597-3 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-13597-3>

Library of Congress Control Number: 2019932967

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer
Nature Switzerland AG, part of Springer Nature 2019

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the
Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights
of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction
on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and
retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology
now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this
publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are
exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.
The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and
information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication.
Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, expressed or implied,
with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have
been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published
maps and institutional affiliations.

Cover illustration: Untitled Images/E+ Collection/Getty Images

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature
Switzerland AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

*To the Silver Spring badass moms: Mrs. Sarah Thompson,
Dorothy Dines, and Rosalind Brown*

SERIES EDITOR'S FOREWORD

The *Pan-African Psychologies* book series is a collection of works by psychologists and other applied professionals who have dedicated years of our lives to the meaningful improvement of Black lives. We come from societies across the globe like South Africa, Jamaica, Senegal, Uganda, and the United States. We may refer to ourselves variously as professionals in Black/African, liberation, radical, Fanonian, critical, or cultural psychology or related fields. No matter what labels we choose, our common thread is to demonstrate how we have helped evoke growth, maturity, and enhanced life quality in the lives of African-descended people. Healing, in our view, is to take into full account the centuries of bloodshed, exploitation, and corruption that influence Black lives, rather than ignore, exaggerate, or diminish these devastations. The serious study of Black well-being requires an understanding of the “whys” and the “hows”—why the devastations continue to happen, how it is continually stoked, and how Black people are enduring them in their daily lives. To us, the connection between the person and his or her environment is an irrefutable one; our focus is to liberate, therefore we insist that the healing of societies is as important as the healing of people. Racism, ethnoviolence, class exploitation, sexism and men’s violence against women, and violence against people on the basis of their sexual orientation and trans identity are infestations that seep into our socialization—how we see the world and interact with people—and destroy the prospect of morally strong and just societies.

We place a high premium on fostering strong relationships with other Black people as well as all those who have been historically oppressed. We honor healthy discourses even though they can trouble the proverbial waters, and we embrace such discourses over unhealthy ones that feed into oppression. We emphasize the crucial need to build coalitions with others, professionals and laypersons alike, who are on similar quests to act strongly against injustice and violence. We pay homage to those who lead and participate in harmony-affirming rituals that help people mend generational trauma and its trajectories.

Our intent in this series is to share with readers the array of psychologies that exists throughout the African Diaspora but with a very specific focus: it is to spread knowledge about the freedom to “be” and revel in the freedom that many already experience, at least psychologically, as they experience liberation personally and professionally. In some cases, we transcend our regional spaces by addressing similarities across contexts within the Diaspora. This particular effort to engage transnationally is one we hope will inspire our readers to (continue to) act toward liberation and peace at the global level.

Indianapolis, USA

Chalmer E. F. Thompson

PREFACE

Life re-shapes our lenses, and ultimately re-shapes our purpose for living and loving. If we are fortunate, we embrace the re-shaping and avail ourselves of new tools to help improve the lives of others.

For many years, I have dedicated countless hours to studying, writing about, teaching and/or otherwise influencing others based on the tenets of Helms' racial identity development theory (e.g., Thompson, 2003a; Thompson, Alfred, Edwards, & Garcia, 2006; Thompson & Carter, 1997; Thompson, Murry, Harris, & Annan, 2003). Arguably the most comprehensive of the racial identity theories, Helms' (e.g., 1990a, 1990b, 1995) conceptualization is an explication of how racism is a malignancy that wreaks havoc on our lives. The theory bridges psychological concepts of cognition and perception, moral development, as well as human and organizational development. It also guides psychologists and other professionals to encourage people to think complexly and flexibly, engage in calculated risk-taking, and deliberately search for *truth* in societies that thrive on subterfuge, secrecy, and distortions. It is a theory that also challenges professionals to bridge distances that adversely influence intra-racial interactions, for example, relationships *among* Black people, as well as inter-racial interactions among all groups. This challenge is what we, the professionals, adopt for ourselves and in encourage others, like our psychotherapy clients, fellow community activists, and students. With the theory as a guide, we are equipped to act courageously to forge against the tides of racial oppression. Because the theory concerns about all aspects of human complexity besides race, it

invites us also to understand and address the intersecting aspects of identity, like gender, socioeconomic class, sexuality, and nationality as integral to our healing mission.

Fully committed to this mission, I began appreciating the importance of developmental stagnation when I personally it in my own racial identity development about 10 years into my career as a professor. It was not long after I received tenure and I began conducting a series of studies that were extensions of my pre-tenure research program. This earlier work entailed examinations of counseling interactions involving White and Black counselors paired with Black clients (Thompson & Jenal, 1994; Thompson, Worthington, & Atkinson, 1994). Whereas the earlier studies were based on one-time interactions, the new studies involved 12-session counseling interventions involving mainly White counselors with Black and Asian clients and did not include certain experimental conditions. In other words, these students allowed these dyads the opportunity to develop relationships and move much further beyond the initial discourse of problem-solving and sharing and into a commitment of time and action for the sake of the clients' progress and well-being. Potential participant-clients were selected on the invitation to talk about interpersonal problems that pertained to the racial and/or cultural matters they experienced and were willing to address with a therapist.

What my team and I discovered quite vividly was that these interactions were often characterized by a string of therapist derailments when the clients raised issues concerning racism. These derailments were not entirely surprising as we expected there to be some initial issues in applying this learning in counseling, but what became more revealing was that my efforts to assist the practitioners in creating more engaging, authentic discourse over the 12 sessions did not yield the progress for which I had hoped. These volunteer therapists, most of whom were students, were selected because they had already shown "sensitivity" to racial issues yet they showed considerable difficulty transferring their learning from supervision sessions to the actual counseling of their clients. To their credit, the therapists were aghast when I pointed out the derailments in playing the videotapes of their sessions. They tended eventually to become more silent during the sessions, explaining to me later that they were at a loss for words even after we had practiced certain exchanges during the supervision.

An equally significant finding was that throughout the course of the counseling relationship, clients expressed satisfaction with these encounters. In interviews conducted by student researchers intermittently

across sessions, the clients sometimes acknowledged certain mishaps in the counseling interactions, but tended not to talk about the limited attention to their racial problems in these sessions (Thompson, 2003b; Thompson et al., 1997).

I dedicated time at the conclusion of the study meeting with the client-participants. I presented preliminary findings of the study and information on the relevance of their racial problems to their overall health. They seemed pleased with the information and eager to learn more and I offered them referrals. Yet the distressing realization that my research team and I reached was that these clients expressed satisfaction with the counseling and counselor in part because they were able to dodge the proverbial bullet of difficult, racial discourse. They were presented with opportunities to speak about these problems to be sure, but the efforts for understanding and doing something concrete about the dilemmas were largely absent on the part of the counselor. There also was a flow to these interactions that was experienced as normative and relatively unfettered when the discourse was absent racial issues.

These were not the only events that would rattle my racial identity development. I also witnessed other implicit contractual arrangements in a variety of interactions, for example when attending a so-called diversity training workshop where Black and White presenters colluded to elude racial qualifiers (with usage of such terms as “a diverse person,” “someone who is different,” and so forth), followed by a multi-racial group of audience members expressing their satisfaction with the workshop. A few Black and Latinx members attending the workshop posed questions during the question-answer period about race and ethnicity that followed a similar pattern of racial erasures and codification.

I also recalled when my husband, a local activist, told me about a meeting he attended where presenters were to give “tips” to Black parents on parenting; the presenters were White and no mention of the differences was uttered or explained (to which he stood up, told the presenters that he had trouble with the “optics” of having White people talk to Black people about parenting, and promptly left). I observed these contractual arrangements when students in my graduate classes—all of them, but most prominently among the White students, would embark zealously on social justice education while they were enrolled in my courses, yet resist struggling with new concepts related to social justice during qualifying examination and dissertation committee meetings. These students showed a willingness to struggle with other topics, but when it came to

racial issues in particular, they often spoke dismissively. In one case, a student was rescued by a committee member who decided that he, the committee member, would himself make an effort to respond to a question I posed to the student during the qualifying oral exam. This faculty member did not respond to the question well.

“Flow” became synonymous for the desire for acceptability, for the sanctity of the self whether in the presence of White or status-quo supporting people of color. That desire for acceptability simultaneously jeopardizes needed discussions on racism, and its spurious intersections with sexism, economic exploitation, and nationality. At times, the other forces besides racism were spoken about more liberally. I recall a conference of the African Studies Association when the European presenters in three separate sessions emphasized culture while eliminating race as pertinent to their research analyses and findings.

In the case of research participants, supervisees, and students in my classrooms, all were instances in which I was in the position to exercise influence. Yet it had become increasingly clear that my efforts to chart new understanding and different courses of action were merely band-aid approaches to a gaping, festering, and enormous wound.

My experiences were not entirely bleak. I have experienced gratification in working with students, consultees, fellow community activists, and colleagues whose application of theory proved most useful to them. I founded and for six years led an African-centered and social justice intervention in which mostly Black teachers showered Black children with love and attention, and who met voluntarily for hours outside their regular workday to ensure that the children were blessed with the knowledge they did not receive at their school. However, it appeared that my circle of interactions was limited and that the people who were most desperate for gritty discussions about racism were outside of my reach. I would also come to discover on reflection that those who were courageous enough to disrupt the disturbing calm of malevolence tended to rattle my personal calm. I had to admit that I too often participated in the flow even though I prided myself as someone who was fiery when it came to confronting racial injustice.

Consequently, I began many years ago heeding the words of the late poet Audre Lorde (1984) who wrote that “[t]he true focus of revolutionary change is never merely the oppressive situation that we seek to escape, but the price of the oppression which is planted deep within each

of us” (p. 76). I deliberately and patiently reflected on the deep-seated oppression that had narrowed my view on racism and that affected by scholarship, teaching, and praxis.

The violence associated with Blackness is difficult for people *not* to notice, so much of my journey entailed serious contemplation about how and why *I* had managed not to notice its enormous presence. Up to about 10 years ago, I was often inclined to avoid depictions of violence on the television news and in movies. This avoidance likely emerged from my experiences in the aftermath of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s assassination on April 4, 1968 and the riots that followed in the city in which we, my family, lived, the southeast section of Washington, DC. Our home was so close to the riots that we heard the sirens of the police cars. I remember that we all felt quite frightened and helpless, not only because of the possibility that the rioters would come to our house, but also because we felt unprotected. By the age of 11, I already had come to know that the police were not inclined to serve and protect Black people. This fear would become re-kindled again and again by my parents’ insistence that my 5 siblings and I were under attack from all sides: White people, harassing police officers, “thugs,” and virtually any stranger. These warnings went beyond helping to arm us against reasonable threats to our safety. It sparked in us a certain neurotic distrust of all people.

But the not-noticing was more than the outgrowth of family dynamics. It was the hegemonic insistence that Black people were instrumental in the violence that was disproportionately exacted upon us as a racial group. In the alarming cases of police action shootings of Black people, that the shooters *could* be Black can prove confusing to many, as if the subject of racism could be effectively erased away when Whites were no longer considered the culprits of these killings. Reports of Blacks who are killed by White people (often termed racial violence and classified as hate crimes) have virtually disappeared from the mainstream media, while hate crime legislation—a common-sense measure to curtail histories of physical violence based on race and/or sexual orientation, becomes difficult to pass in certain states. Practically written off in the media and in legislative circles, are efforts to make sense of the maiming and slaughter of Black people. The implicit message appears to be that Black people, are killed because they live in dangerous places (hence we mourn but “move on” when we hear of drive-bys or houses

shot up) Black people's lives hang in the balance because they are involved in drugs and therefore, they simply meet their demise because of bad choices. What these messages meant to me personally and to other Black people. I knew was that one had to elude violence by disassociating ourselves from a certain kind of Blackness. It followed then that I succumbed to the chaotic belief that I personally could elude violence by staying away from the ghettos, not protesting too loudly or with the wrong words, and by being always at the right place at the right time.

Although I had long avoided visual violent images, it actually was impossible for me to be unaware of the overwhelming violence that was being committed on Black people. Locally, I learned about police beatings and the fights that happened between the people from one particular housing project and another. On television, there was the continual drone of news stories about Black-on-Black crime, or on the international front, of tribal warfare that were at times attributed to "historical tensions." Like others, I hoped that these problems would eventually dissipate, as if the passage of time would somehow erase the violence. The not-noticing was akin to burying my head in the sand and this realization became the most painful to my self-search: violence against Black people was not only not dissipating into nothingness, but that is was not intended to end.

This reality influences personal neuroticism and family dynamics. My parents physically escaped the racialized oppression of the South where they both were raised while psychologically living with it from day to day. To them, opportunities for jobs and promotions would sail by them. Their children were appraised unfairly at school in comparison to the White counterparts. My parents would encounter everything from minor slights to major offenses as they walked city streets, entered retail establishments, and encountered civil service employees, White pastors, and errant, hate-mongers who hurled racial slurs at them as they entered unsuspected unsafe places. Along with the barrage of hate, my parents wisely passed along words of wisdom on how to combat it. They were critically conscious and encouraged us to learn and embrace African traditions and history; they insisted that we internalize a strength of worth based on culture and spirituality and sociopolitical awareness. Even if this inspired socialization was constant, we had the bombardments to contend.

I avoided accounts and displays of violence because I could not make sense of them. However, it was vital that I try to make sense of the senseless violence that had lasting power. This quest was profoundly personal and professional.

A history buff, I read thousands of journal and newspaper articles and dozens of books and watched countless documentaries about the past lives of Black people in the United States and throughout the Diaspora. I tuned in to the more obscure accounts of violent actions involving Black people, like YouTube videos and social media sources of violent accounts, as well as non-Black people, and the mainstream stories, captivated by the differences between the received view and the perspectives by many close to these events. I even began watching violent feature movies, something I had persistently avoided all my life. I found a need to understand this billion-dollar industry that largely targeted young male audiences. I would learn that the growing spread of violence is not only numbing, but dangerous to our ability to trust one another and truly know one another without fear of conflict. Finally, and although it was not outwardly an intentional goal, I found myself developing close and lasting relationships with people who have known the violence of the “streets,” or war, and of rape and abuse.

In working through the stagnation, I also found myself receiving more attacks and rejections as I took more risks to talk openly about race. Some of these reactions came not solely during these engagements, but more generally as the “word” got out that I was prone to speaking candidly about racism. I initially feared these reactions but eventually became less threatened and more emboldened in my interactions over time. I learned to relinquish the false invincibility, the pretense of displaying a brave front, and began replacing it with more honesty and with greater effort to avoid ugly realities (see Brown, 2010). My evolving understanding of racism led me and indeed, continues to lead me to be a *constant* observer of the myriad nuances inherent in racial interactions; these interactions can reveal both ugly and wondrous, constructive engagements between all sorts of people of same or different racial backgrounds. One thing I have learned is that racial discourses can obliterate or downplay the other important socializing forces that shape who we are, like culture, gender, sexism, generational status, and nationality, and therefore, quash our ability to think complexity about ourselves, others, and our contexts.

What I share in this book is the outgrowth of what I have learned from study, praxis, and self-reflection. I re-formulate Helms’ racial identity theory by focusing on violence as the principle structure that underlines racism. In the United States, and in other racialized societies, people take part in a series of constructions in which Black people’s existences are cast as lowly and expendable in relation to White people’s

existences. White people's lives can become a proxy for institutional and organizational structures that govern the sociopolitical hegemony in these societies, like laws, media, and how schools are generally run, consequently, the equation of White people need not only include White people, but also Black people and other People of Color who uphold these structures. Moreover, hidden structures of violence reinforce racism. When Black people conform to racial norms, they invariably downplay, distort, and/or defend the myriad manifestations of racialized violence and affirm the violence. This complicity can *appear* like actions that are peace-promoting but are far from it.

When Black people fight against the norm—resist the flow—we can experience repercussions that are mildly unpleasant on one end of the spectrum, and rejecting, corruption-ridden, and deadly on the other end.

Fighting against the norm is to wage liberation and peace. It means availing ourselves of opportunities to make connections with people most affected by or vulnerable to physical violence. Rather than maintaining or creating greater distance between ourselves and the people we consider to be “less” than us, we see the “other” in ourselves. Creating a psychology of liberation and peace means that we put forth the efforts to help Black people overcome our inclination to resist confronting oppression and resist reproducing new stratifications that keep us from restoring and embracing our culture. Rather than replicating the stratifications, we can break from it and commit more fully to the battle against violence.

I propose that some of the best ways to knit together liberation and peace among African-descended people at interpersonal levels is to build strong allegiances with the most vulnerable, to agree to disagree while not being disagreeable, and continue our legacy of non-violent approaches to addressing structural violence. Creating authentic, expressive relationships is vital to the process of personal emancipation and in building coalitions within and across regions of the Diaspora. I have had the joy and honor of working with small groups of people in my local community on a number of issues related to positive, spirited psychological growth, like African-centered education. My Ugandan colleagues, with whom I have worked to advance agendas of peace and liberation psychology, are some of the best models I know in authentic communication and protecting cultural traditions.

To address racialized violence as it pertains to Black people also means addressing White people, as well as other people of color. Race

emerges to polarize people. Its creation involves the cultivation of ideologies about Black people and White people in relation to one another. I dedicate some attention to these implications of violence for Whites, but briefly only because of space limitations. Although space also does not allow a fuller examination of the different configurations of people of other races, I acknowledge here that such an examination is important to future analyses on racialized violence. What *is* examined most prominently are the divisions that exist *between* groups of Black people and that are spawned by racialized violence. Overcoming these within-group divisions and confronting the pathology inherent in the between-group divisions between Whites/White institutions and Black people, is at the heart of the book. This book centers primarily on the lives of Black Americans with some attention to African-descended people outside of the United States.

I begin in Chapter 1 with an overview of the book, and in Chapter 2 with an introduction of *racialized violence* in which Black Americans are the targets of maiming, rape, labor exploitation, and murder for purposes of economic greed, and with an explication of how this violence has remained a constant over the generations. Chapter 3 centers on a re-formulated theory of racial identity, which I propose is a conceptualization that can help us best understand the constancy of violence against Black people in the United States and in other racialized societies. It is also a theory that acts as a heuristic to help us advance a movement that will naturally include others besides psychologists. In Chapter 4, I address how the theory can be applied to guide the work of people who wage liberation and peace on behalf of Black people in the United States. In the final chapter, I explain how racial identity theory can be applied to waging liberation and peace at the global level.

Building peace means stepping outside of established or even respectable ways of behaving while still maintaining a high regard for people as humans. Living a liberationist and peace-advancing existence means that our interactions will not always be peaceful or of course, not entirely free of conflict. Yet it need not mean that our relationships are irreparable and our lives subject to complete isolation and despair. When we embrace the value of authentic expression and our vulnerability as humans, we live authentically. Living authentically is liberating because it means we can display a deep care and love for ourselves and other people even when it leaves us open to interpersonal rifts and harm. It is to exist and live for the greater good.

The enormity of violence and the threat of violence in our lives as Black people is immensely tragic and enraging. For many, it is a hopeless reality that seems unstoppable. However, we are fortunate for the ample accounts of organized effort and resources that have helped sustain hope and improve Black lives, love, dignity, and the pursuit of a generations-long revolution against the tyranny of racialized violence. But it is not enough. Meaningful change will not occur merely through corrective socialization or persuasion. It will occur more than likely from a pitch that is reached in which ongoing violence, in all its forms, is no longer tolerated and when the dominant forces seize military control over those who refuse to accept it. Meaningful change may occur when we have all reached our limit. Yet, living and working authentically requires that we do more than await the inevitable crumbling of societies built on oligarchies, despotism, and corporate greed. In part it requires the establishment of genuine allegiances with other Blacks and other racial groups, the sustaining of cultural traditions, language, and dialect, as well as pursuing the unthinkable, like reparations for past wrongs, insist on markedly improving prisons, and developing economic justice avenues that disrupt the violence exacted on Black people, other people of color, and ultimately non-elite White people. As I show at the concluding two chapters of this book, we as practitioners, educators, and leaders can participate and lead projects to (better) understand the barbarism that underlines racism and other intersecting systems of oppression. We must ask ourselves to what degree are we willing to try to reinvent collectivist traditions, true to the work of liberationists, and to act against the violence to create a more just and peaceful future.

Indianapolis, USA

Chalmer E. F. Thompson

REFERENCES

- Brown, B. (2010). *Gifts of imperfection: Let go of who you think you're supposed to be and embrace who you are*. Center City, MN: Hazeldon.
- Helms, J. E. (1990a). *Black and white racial identity: Theory, research, and practice*. Westport, CT: Greenwood.
- Helms, J. E. (1990b). *Training manual for diagnosing racial identity in social interactions*. Topeka, KS: Cultural Communications.

- Helms, J. E. (1995). An update of Helms' white and people of color racial identity models. In J. Ponterotto, J. M. Casas, L. A. Suzuki, & C. M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counseling* (pp. 181–198). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lorde, A. (1984). *Sister outsider: Essays and speeches*. Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed.
- Thompson, C. E. (2003a). Applying racial identity theory to peace education: Tools for the teacher in all of us. *Interchange*, *34*, 421–447.
- Thompson, C. E. (2003b). Critical theory and psychotherapy process: A focus on racism. Symposium presented and chaired, American Psychological Association (APA) Annual Meeting, August 8–10, Toronto, Canada.
- Thompson, C. E., Alfred, D. M., Edwards, S. L., & Garcia, P. G. (2006). Transformative endeavors: An implementation of Helm's racial identity theory to a school-based heritage project. In R. L. Toporek, L. H. Gerstein, N. A. Fouad, G. Roysircar, & T. Israel (Eds.), *Handbook for social justice in counseling psychology: Leadership, vision, and action* (pp. 100–116). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Thompson, C. E., Berrian, A., Brown, T., Cumberlander, N., Murry, S., Chow, J., Hayes, M., & Mullen, C. (1997). *Facilitating racial identity development in psychotherapy*. A symposium presented at the American Psychological Association Meeting, August 15–19, Chicago, IL.
- Thompson, C. E., & Carter, R. T. (1997). *Racial identity theory: Applications to individual, group, and organizational interventions*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Thompson, C. E., & Jenal, S. L. (1994). Interracial and intraracial quasi-counseling interactions when counselors avoid discussing racial issues. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *41*, 484–491.
- Thompson, C. E., Murry, S., Harris, D., & Annan, J. (2003). Healing inside and out: Applying racial identity theory to community empowerment and peace advancement. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, *25*, 215–223.
- Thompson, C. E., Worthington, R., & Atkinson, D. R. (1994). Counselor orientation, counselor race, and Black women's cultural mistrust and self-disclosures. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *41*(2), 155–161.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Over the past several years, the people who know me very well or with whom I have worked for stretches of time also know of my preoccupation with a psychology of racism and oppression. So many students, fellow scholars, activists, and friends have helped sharpen my thinking through dialogue and action as I grew, obsessively pouring over every article, book, song, film, poem, museum artifact, and interview transcript I could find to add to my education. I first thank my students with whom I have presented papers and published manuscripts and book chapters over the years and who have nurtured my thinking in important ways: Dorienna Alfred, Sherri Murry, Bong Joo Hwang, Yoonhwa Choi, Josh and Angela Manlove, Anne Theis, Matt Sorley, Khym Isaac de Barros, Caroline Shin, Joy Stephens Lane, Jeannie Annan, Patricia Garcia, Mercedes Cannon, and Seunghee Kwon. I thank Joyce Alexander, then chair of my department at Indiana University (IU) in Bloomington who in 2006 allowed me to teach a seminar course on the psychology of oppression, conflict, and peace despite the small handful of students who enrolled in its one-time offering. I offer special thanks to this handful of enthusiastic students—Tim Bagwell, Amy Bartleson, Deleska Crockett, and Seunghee Kwon, who as a group, wrestled beautifully with a most ungraceful project: to develop interventions to promote liberation and peace to the residents of a primarily White community in the U.S. South whose prominent, evangelical members sought to adopt Sudanese children in the midst of centuries-long strife with the Black residents in the town. You all handled this case by anticipating the violence

at each and every turn, acknowledging the need for influential townspeople who operated with mature racial identity schemata, and inserting the intermittent messiness and beauty of a perpetually changing region with its ebb and flow of refugees, immigrants, and newcomers of every stripe. The project idea was a gift from Julia Duany whose dedication to peace in her native Sudan and in the United States still lifts me to this day.

I thank Khaula Murtadha who invited me to join the faculty at the IU Indianapolis campus when I could no longer resist the calling to work in an urban context, and for the subsequent executive associate deans Patricia Rogan and Robin Hughes who supported my efforts to establish a university-community forum on the school-to-prison pipeline. I thank my co-organizers of the forum who were just as riled up as I was about the practice of ensnaring of school children into confined spaces that also subjected them to colonized practices of segregation, pedagogy, and discipline: Karen Dace and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Office at IUPUI, Khalilah Shabazz and her student staff at the IUPUI Multicultural Success Center, Mark Foreman and the Indianapolis Urban League, the late Byron Vaughn of Prisoners Reformed, Inc., Mmoja Ajabu of the Naked Truth, Pat Payne of the Indianapolis Public School District, Mashariki and Kamau Kunjufu of NCOBRA, doctoral student and spoken word artist Robin Jackson, and the staff of the Indianapolis Black Expo. And to my fellow Turnites, the members of the Turner Forum for Truth and Justice: I am because we are.

I extend thanks to my colleagues Edward Delgado-Romero and Barbara Dennis whose collaborations on the critical psychotherapy process studies proved to be important sparks to my formulations on racial identity theory. Barbara has remained an active collaborator to this day and I prize her intellect and scholarship on critical qualitative methodology, as well as her endless warmth and generosity. I offer loads of thanks to my friend from Wales, writer and artist Isabel Adonis, who forced me to think about the impacts of racialized violence on Black people residing in the more remote areas of the world and who urged me to think inwardly.

I am indebted to the early psychology researchers and theorists, like Kenneth and Mamie Clark, William E. Cross, Jr., and Charles W. Thomas, who helped galvanize the flurry of scholarship on racial identity. I am especially grateful to Janet Helms, my adopted mentor and an intellectual giant, whose work continues to help advance my development, and who I admire for her sagacity and captivating wit. I also

am grateful for my co-editor of this series on Pan-African Psychologies Guerda Nicolas who accepted my invitation in the midst of completing major projects and expressed delight over the possibility of producing a series of books with a decided emphasis on Black liberation and peace. I also thank Rod Watts, who in support of the project helped connect Guerda and I with other liberation-inspired scholars. Heartfelt thanks to Hussein Bulhan whose warmth and brilliance shines through not only in his writings, but in our conversations and email exchanges, and whose work at the Fanon Frantz University is a global triumph of our times. To my new friend Earline Walker, I extend thanks to you for generously offering your time in talking about difficult subjects. I also thank Anthony Marsella for generously sharing a bounty of resources, his own poetry, songs, and prose, and the writings of others. I offer many thanks and much love to my friend Janet Cheatham Bell who came to my rescue when the editing was becoming mind-numbing and did so with brilliant skill and the eloquence that embodies her spirit.

I express gratitude to Michael Ford for his unquestioned commitment to our children's welfare, to Youshin Choi for his spiritual guidance and deep friendship, Pat Johnson for her infectious kindness, and Linda Alis whose lasting friendship and profound wisdom guided me through some rocky terrain. I thank my Ugandan colleagues with whom I have collaborated in carving a path for research on liberation and peace psychology for 16 years. The late Santos Auma-Okumu embraced me quickly as a colleague and family member and his brilliance still shines; you live in my heart, Mr. Okumu. I extend heartfelt gratitude to Edward Ntare Rutondoki, Gastone Byamugisha, Jane Namusoke, Nathaniel Mayengo, James Kagaari, Sister Kaahwa, Paul Ssebukalu Ssemakula, Richard Atuhairwe, Nakasiita Kirabo Nkambwe, Gerald Ojok Okumu, and to Cyprian Adupa and Jeannie Annan for introducing me to my Department of Psychology family at Kyambogo University.

I thank my spouse, Mmoja Ajabu, whose radical love knows no bounds. I thank you for being you, and for being unbought, unbossed and unafraid to speak out unabashedly about police violence against Black people, Black economic underdevelopment, and the lack of will by elected officials, school administrators, fellow activists, and lay people to do the right things for the besieged and indeed, all the people in Indianapolis. I also thank you for all the engaging dialogues that have helped deepen my learning and appreciate you greatly for the consequences you've endured in endeavoring to live sanely in a world wrought in moral bankruptcy.

Thank you Dibo Ajabu for the long conversations and for showing me firsthand how psychic strength, discipline, and love rule the day.

Finally, I thank my children Mudiwa, Noni, and Gyasi, who have taught me so much about life and myself, and whose lives I cherish deeply. This book could not have been written without your presence in my life. In each of you, and in the members of my enlarged and loving family, I see future generations of Black people and allies continuing the *struggle* for liberation where every person is fully free and with it, a way of being, living, and loving in which we see ourselves wrapped in the humanity of one another, no one excluded.

CONTENTS

1	Introduction	1
2	Violence and Racialized Lives	25
3	How Racial Identity Theory Is Relevant to Liberation and Peace Psychology	61
4	Waging Liberation and Peace	91
5	The World Stage: Engaging in Transnational Liberation and Peace Work	117
	References	141
	Index	163