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Author's Note

Highlights

- Community psychologists can support activists working toward a moral reckoning on structural racism.

- The political and commercial determinants maintain structural racism and racial inequities.

- Structural thinking and structural intervention are essential for addressing structural racism.

- First-order change interventions should build structural competency or critical consciousness.

- Second-order change interventions should leverage systemic-level promotion and prevention.

Abstract

The *racial reckoning* of 2020 involved the largest social movement protest in U.S. history, but support for the Black Lives Matter movement declined shortly after. To advance a *moral reckoning* on structural racism that dismantles racialized structures and redresses racial inequities, we call on activist scholars within the field of community psychology to realign their own practices by a) examining *structural* factors; b) encouraging *structural* thinking; and c) supporting *structural* intervention for racial justice. Two structural factors–political determinants and commercial determinants–maintain the status quo of structural racism, undermining efforts for racial equity. As a result, we encourage the development of structural thinking, which provides a structural analysis of racism and leads to support for structural intervention. With an intersectional race and class perspective, we detail how structural thinking could be developed among the professional managerial class (through structural competency) and among the oppressed class (through critical consciousness). Finally, we discuss structural intervention factors and approaches that can redress racial inequities and produce structural change. Ultimately, we provide a pathway for community psychologists to support activists building a multi-racial, multi-class coalition to eliminate structures and systems of racial, political, and economic injustice.

Keywords: structural racism; structural thinking; structural competency; critical consciousness; Black Lives Matter movement

Toward a Moral Reckoning on Structural Racism

Activists and scholars have examined anti-Black racism as central to the founding of the United States of America (Hannah-Jones et al., 2021), a "conjoined twin" with racial capitalism (Kendi, 2019, p. 156), and the manifestation of a caste system and white supremacy (Cox, 1948; X, 1989). Racism has, directly and indirectly, harmed the health, safety, and well-being of Black people, Indigenous people, and people of color (BIPOC; Williams et al., 2019). Additionally, racism leads to "dying of whiteness" when some White people support racist policies that undermine their own health and safety (Metzl, 2019). White Americans' political support of racist policies has over-funded police and defunded investments in public goods, disproportionately harming Black Americans (Alexander, 2010; Haney-Lopez, 2014; McGhee, 2021). A historical legacy exists among abolitionists, Black preachers, White allies, and activist scholars who have led movements calling for a moral reckoning to address structural racism and interconnected oppressive systems throughout U.S. history (e.g., Barber II & Wilson-Hartgrove, 2016; Clark et al., 2018; Davis, 2005; King, 1968; K.-Y. Taylor, 2016).

To advance the legacy of racial justice activists, we call on community psychologists to examine and realign their own practices to promote racial justice, prevent racial injustice, and redress racial inequities in communities. In this article, we offer activist scholars a path toward a moral reckoning on structural racism by a) examining *structural factors*, b) encouraging *structural thinking*, and c) supporting *structural intervention*. First, we review periods of moral reckoning within U.S. history. Then, we define structural racism and highlight research on structural inequities. Thereafter, we review a psychological framework for understanding structural racism and discuss how *harmful structural factors*–commercial and political determinants–maintain structural racism and produce racial inequities. Additionally, we apply a

class analysis to the concept of *structural thinking*, advocating for structural competency among

the professional-managerial class and critical consciousness among the oppressed class. Finally,

we review factors facilitating and inhibiting *structural intervention* for racial justice.

Periods of Moral Reckoning on Anti-Black Racism

Reconstruction after the U.S. Civil War and the Second Reconstruction after World War

II were crucial periods of moral reckoning when America was faced "with an honest recognition

of our sins" and an opportunity to "begin again" (Barber II & Wilson-Hartgrove, 2016; Glaude,

2020). While Reconstruction (1865-1877) aimed to address some of the harmful social, political,

and economic determinants of racial inequities caused by slavery, the Second Reconstruction

(1945-1968) resulted in the codification of laws to end segregation in businesses and public

spaces, integrate public schools, remove barriers to voting and employment, and reduce housing

discrimination on the basis of race (Gates, 2019). During this time, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther

King, Jr. spoke at the 1967 American Psychological Association (APA) convention to discuss

the moral imperative for psychologists to support the Civil Rights Movement (King, 1968). Fifty

years later, activist scholars envision ways to build on his work (Stewart & Sweetman, 2018).

Some activist scholars have suggested we are in the midst of a Third Reconstruction with

another chance to reckon with slavery and structural racism (Barber II & Wilson-Hartgrove,

2016; Glaude, 2020; Joseph, 2022). In this present period, a multi-racial coalition is advancing

the work of Dr. King through the Poor People's Campaign and an intersectional, Black-led

coalition is building power for policy change and advocating for Black liberation through the

Black Lives Matter [BLM] movement, Say Her Name, and the Movement for Black Lives. After

George Floyd's murder by a police officer in spring 2020, an estimated 26 million people

protested police brutality and anti-Black racism as part of the largest social movement in U.S.

history (Buchanan et al., 2020). Despite sustained allyship from some White Americans during

the "racial reckoning", racial sympathy led to temporary support from most White Americans

(Chudy, 2021; Chudy et al., 2019). Polling data shows that White Americans *support* of the

BLM movement reached its peak in Summer 2020 (44% support/35% oppose) and has dropped

steadily by Oct 2022 (33% support/52% oppose: Chudy & Jefferson, 2021; Civiqs, 2022).

Temporary support for BLM is unsurprising given the "active discipline of denial enabled by

U.S. legal, political, and carceral institutions" to create a perpetual state of 'racial innocence'"

(K. Taylor, 2021, p. 704). As history has shown, efforts by reconstructionists to build a multi-

racial democracy were countered by redemptionists who undermine these aspirations through

"acts of deconstruction" (Barber II & Wilson-Hartgrove, 2016, p. 117; Joseph, 2022).

Structural Racism and Racial Inequities

The APA (2021a) conceptualizes racism as a multi-level construct consisting of

internalized racism, interpersonal racism, institutional racism, and structural racism (Jones, 2000;

Neblett, 2019). Given the psychology of American racism (Roberts & Rizzo, 2020) and its link

to the American political economy (Hacker et al., 2021), we focus on *structural racism* within

the U.S.: "laws, policies, and practices that produce cumulative, durable, and race-based

inequalities, and includes the failure to correct previous laws and practices that were explicitly

racist" (Yearby et al., 2020 as cited in APA, 2021a, p. 2). Structural racism is maintained by

cultural racism and remains embedded within state laws, such as stand-your-ground, racial

profiling, mandatory minimum sentencing, corporal punishment, predatory lending, and

minimum wage laws (Agénor et al., 2021; Hicken et al., 2018). Structural racism has been

identified as the fundamental cause of racial inequities in wages, toxic exposure, psychosocial

trauma, health care access, and state-sanctioned violence (Bailey et al., 2017).

The social determinants of health (SDOH) are known as the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, work, play, worship, and age (Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion [ODPHP], 2022). These are downstream from structural racism and can be categorized into five domains: a) economic stability, b) education access and quality, c) health care access and quality, d) neighborhood and built environment, and e) social and community context (ODPHP, 2022). In 1966, The Black Panther Party (BPP) detailed a ten-point plan to address health through direct intervention (e.g., free health clinics) and advocacy to change (what we now call a *structural* factor or *social* determinant of health): employment, capitalism, housing, education, military service, police brutality, incarceration, a fair trial, and other human rights (Morabia, 2016; Newton, 1980). While the BPP promoted health equity and the SDOH for multiple decades, the SDOH have only recently been accepted as the primary cause of racial health disparities (Commission on Social Determinants of Health, 2008; Osmick & Wilson, 2020). Structural racism affects all of society (e.g., Desmond & Emirbayer, 2010), especially in the areas of housing (e.g., Lynch et al., 2021), medicine (e.g., Bailey et al., 2017), criminal justice (e.g., Alexander, 2010), and policing (e.g., Bowleg et al., 2022). Despite this research, segments of people lack understanding of the ubiquity and impact of structural racism.

A Structural Understanding of Racism

A significant gap exists between Americans' *perceptions* and the modern-day *realities* produced by structural racism in American life. In July 2021, Americans believe "a lot" (50%), "a little" (34%), and "nothing at all" (15%) needs to be done to ensure racial equality (Pew Research Center, 2021). Further, a September 2020 poll shows Black and White Americans differ in perceptions of the "major obstacles to Black people achieving equal outcomes with White people": structural or systemic racism (79% of Black Americans vs. 43% of White

Americans), historic wealth gaps (76% vs. 51%), individual acts of racism and discrimination

(73% vs. 46%), and unconscious bias (71% vs. 45%) (Hamel et al., 2020, Figure 4). A

significant perceptual gap occurs for all indices of racism, but the largest gap is structural racism.

A psychological framework on the *denial of structural racism* (Rucker & Richeson,

2021) consists of various antecedents–racial group membership, knowledge of historical racism,

informational factors (e.g., critical education, socialization, and direct/vicarious racism

experiences), motivational factors (e.g., system threats, identity-based threats, and egalitarian

motives), and hierarchy-legitimizing beliefs–that influence one's perception of racial inequality,

which affects a person's support for reparative policy preferences and engagement in collective

action. In the next three sections, we expand on this psychological framework with theories,

concepts, and intervention approaches from community psychology, community health, and

social medicine by: a) adding two *structural factors*; b) re-naming critical education as *structural

thinking* and examining the constructs of *structural competency* and *critical consciousness;* and

c) adding *structural intervention* approaches to facilitate reparative policy and equitable

intervention. Furthermore, we pose questions to spur reflexivity among community psychologists

to advance teaching, research, and practice for a moral reckoning on structural racism.

Structural Factors

The field of community psychology deemphasizes individual factors (e.g., implicit bias)

related to individual-level racism and emphasizes *structural factors* (e.g., racialized social,

economic, and political factors) related to systemic-level racism (Kloos et al., 2020). To address

structural racism, we focus on the problems with the current cultural context of neoliberalism

and recommend a cultural shift toward a public, critical community psychology. Then, we focus

on *structural factors*–commercial and political determinants–maintaining structural racism.

The Cultural Context of Neoliberal Psychology: Toward a Public and Critical Psychology

After King (1968) urged social scientists to "tell it like it is" (p. 2) in reference to the immorality of racial injustice, APA President George Miller (1969) called on the field to "give psychology away" to the public. In the decade that followed, U.S. political and economic interests embraced neoliberalism–"an economic agenda [that] advocated deregulation of markets and free movement of capital" (Adams et al., 2019, p. 191)–that was quite simply the opposite of the antiracist sentiment expressed by King and pro-public stance expressed by Miller. To this day, this economic agenda continues to drive the "marketplace of ideas", diminishing public intellectuals while elevating thought leaders (within and outside of psychology) who sell their solutions to plutocrats and commercial industry (Giridharadas, 2018; Singal, 2021). To counter the current *neoliberal psychology*, we direct readers to a special issue on a *public psychology* that: a) centers social issues, b) engages diverse publics, c) communicates and democratizes psychology, and d) reimagines the field of psychology (Eaton et al., 2021). Public psychologists are essential for rejecting a neoliberal (mainstream) psychology that maintains structural racism.

In October 2021, the APA acknowledged its role in perpetuating racism, apologized for its racist history, and specified reparative steps (e.g., policies, guidelines, and investments). Within the resolution to dismantle U.S. systemic racism (APA, 2021b), a critical perspective is acknowledged, but there is *not* a clear directive for the field to embrace critical psychology even though it offers an idealistic, epistemic, educative, and transformative approach to counter oppressive systems and structural problems (Evans et al., 2017). Drawing on critical race theory (Crenshaw et al., 1995), Salter and Adams (2013) advocate for a Critical Race Psychology (CRP) with five tenets: "1) approach racism as a systemic force embedded in everyday society (rather than a problem of individual bias); 2) illuminate how ideologies of neoliberal

individualism (e.g., merit, choice) often reflect and reproduce racial domination; 3) identify

interest convergence as the typical source of broad-based support for reparative action; 4)

emphasize possessive investment in privileged identities and identity-infused realities that

reproduce racial domination; and 5) propose practices of counter-storytelling to reveal and

contest identity-infused bases of everyday society" (p. 781). CRP offers a framework for

community and public psychologists working toward a moral reckoning on structural racism.

A *critical psychology*–rooted in cultural and liberation psychology–is simply the opposite

of *neoliberal psychology* wherein psychologists are embedded *and* active participants in the

politics and economics of racial capitalism (see Adams et al., 2019; Evans et al., 2017; Ratner,

2019). As a result, *critical* community psychologists are essential for addressing structural

racism because they "a) work alongside those most harmed; b) expose the psychosocial and

political systems that do the most harm; and c) engage in research and social action to promote

fair and equitable allocation of social and economic resources, bargaining power, and obligations

in society" (Evans et al., 2017, p. 107). Public, critical, and community psychologists are

addressing structural racism with different frameworks and approaches. *Are you contributing to*

a public psychology, working with people harmed by structural racism, exposing racist and

oppressive systems, and addressing the inequitable distribution of resources by race?

Commercial Determinants: Toward a Public Good

Harmful *commercial determinants* are "strategies and approaches used by the private

sector to promote products and choices that are detrimental" (Kickbusch et al., 2016, p. e895),

resulting in environmental racism, racial health inequities, and harmful responses during events

such as the COVID-19 pandemic and economic crises (Freudenberg et al., 2021; Maani et al.,

2021; Washington, 2019). However, we focus on how the public's understanding of racism may

be undermined by commercial-oriented *popular psychology*, which refers to "psychological

knowledge as understood by members of the general public, which may be oversimplified,

misinterpreted, and out of date" (APA, n.d.). The antiracist training industry of popular

psychology includes simplistic interventions for corporations, such as the implicit association

test/training and White privilege awareness training (Kahn, 2018; Kempf, 2020). In a market-

based system, these concepts and training courses are quite popular as evidenced by the

ascendance of *White Fragility* and other best-selling nonfiction books at the height of the "racial

reckoning". Further, implicit bias training has been criticized for being a "quick fix" solution to

racial inequities (Singal, 2021). This approach individualizes racism into a social-cognitive bias,

leading researchers to refer to this as biologizing racism (Kahn, 2018), psychologizing racism

(Trawalter et al., 2020), and an "atomistic construction of racism" (Salter & Adams, 2013, p.

785); in these cases, racism is divorced from its structural cause into a neutral, neuro-cognitive,

cognitive, or behavioral deficiency (Bowleg et al., 2022; Trawalter et al., 2020). Singal (2021)

highlights simplistic interventions, such as *implicit bias training* and *wise interventions*, stating

"interventions advertised as being capable of affecting behavior in fairly minimalist, low-cost

ways–could change people's conception of inequality and oppression" (p. 282). Research shows

participants (especially conservatives) who read about media coverage on *wise interventions*

assigned greater blame to disadvantaged groups (especially in the context of racial disadvantage)

(Ikizer & Blanton, 2016). These "quick fix" solutions reinforce individualistic attributions, a key

tenet of neoliberal psychology, that undermine structural thinking of social issues (see Adams et

al., 2019). Thus, harmful commercial determinants must be replaced with public-oriented

determinants. *Are you rejecting commercial-oriented solutions for racism at the individual level*

and supporting public-oriented solutions focused on structural racism at the systemic level?

Political Determinants: Toward Racial Justice Policies

The *political determinants* are "political strategies, decisions, and actions that have resulted in reinforcing systems that ensure the status quo or dismantling systems that challenge the status quo" (Dawes, 2020, p. 16). Legislation can focus either on facilitating or inhibiting the public's understanding of racism/antiracism or addressing a social determinant with racial equity/inequity. For instance, U.S. policies, led by Democrats and Republicans, targeting aspects of the *SDOH* have produced racial inequities by: a) excluding Black Americans from *housing* (e.g., redlining and residential segregation: Lynch et al., 2021); b) harming Black Americans disproportionately through *mass incarceration* (e.g., 1994 crime bill: Alexander, 2010); and c) benefitting White Americans disproportionately by increasing their wages and *employment* opportunities (e.g., the New Deal: Reed, 2020). As of June 2022, 17 Republican-controlled state legislatures passed legislation prohibiting discussions of structural racism and critical race theory in schools and on college campuses (Schwartz et al., 2021), which undermine historical realities and a structural analysis of racism. As Rucker and Richeson (2021) demonstrate, this push "likely reflect[s] a motivation among the dominant group to maintain their place atop the status hierarchy by further propagating the denial of structural racism (p. 3)." In addition to legislation, numerous right-wing politicians, media personalities, and social media influencers are presenting myths on racial issues and likely producing a denial of structural racism. For example, some conservative commentators have promoted the great replacement theory claiming "White people are being systematically wiped out" and strategically replaced by people of color, threatening White American culture as well as resources for White Americans (Reyna et al., 2022, p. 90). The great replacement theory is a belief that likely undermines an understanding of structural racism because it makes the racial hierarchy salient, facilitating hierarchy-enhancing beliefs and

identity-based threats for White Americans (Rucker & Richeson, 2021). Rather than redress

racial inequities, a Republican U.S. Senator proposed "color blind equality" whereby the

"Government will never again ask American citizens to disclose their race, ethnicity, or skin

color on any government form" (Rescue America, 2022). Such a proposal would eliminate

analysis of racial disparities, which is needed to combat structural racism. *Are you

institutionalizing antiracist education, teaching students how to interpret racial inequities, and

organizing people to counter racist legislation?*

Structural Thinking

For decades, the field of community psychology has been advancing a structural

perspective and social-ecological thinking in lieu of individualistic thinking (Hawe, 2017; Kloos

et al., 2020). Lopez et al. (1998) proposes *structural thinking*–the ability to attribute structural

causes to group inequities–as a way to counter individualistic biases and cultural attributions for

racial or ethnic inequalities; their research demonstrates how structural thinking can generalize to

other axes of inequality. Ideally, a "structural thinker" would be able to identify structures and

explain how they benefit and harm groups based on race, class, gender, ethnicity, sexual

orientation, ability, citizenship status, and other social locations. In this view, social structures

and powerful actors advantage and disadvantage groups to produce two sides of inequality:

privilege and oppression (Goodman, 2015). Rather than focus narrowly on structural thinking

about *structural racism*, we focus broadly on *structural thinking* about *structural inequities*.

Because racial capitalism produces structural inequities by race and class within the U.S.

(Hacker et al., 2021), a *multi-class* coalition of the *oppressed class* (i.e., low-wage labor and the

working-class) and the *professional managerial class* (i.e., "the new class" of mostly white-

collar liberals: Liu, 2021) may be necessary to address collaboratively the harmful commercial

and political determinants of racism. Therefore, we focus on two forms of structural thinking that originated in different cultural and class contexts: a) critical consciousness which emerged with laborers in the most oppressed class (Freire, 1970), and b) structural competency which emerged within medicine of the professional managerial class (Hansen & Metzl, 2019).

Structural Competency for the Professional Managerial Class

Structural competency (SC) originated with physicians in medicine to guide effective diagnosis and treatment responses for patients (Hansen & Metzl, 2019). Rooted in preventive medicine and treatment approaches to reduce health inequities, the SC model has five domains: 1) recognition of structures that shape clinical interactions; 2) development of an extraclinical language of structure; 3) rearticulation of 'cultural' presentations in structural terms; 4) observation and imagination of structural intervention; and 5) development of structural humility (Metzl & Hansen, 2014). Metzl and Roberts (2014) encourage structural engagement to understand the relationship between structural racism and population-level inequalities in an effort to address a limitation of cultural competency (i.e., ascribing a cultural pathology for racialized groups). Beyond health professions, SC could be adapted for credentialed professionals (e.g., academics, lawyers, and teachers) and aspiring managers (e.g., nonprofit executives, financial managers) across the professional managerial class and institutionalized within professional associations to facilitate structural thinking about racial disparities in their industries. *Are you encouraging assessment of structural competency within academic courses and professional training to enhance structural thinking among the professional class?*

Critical Consciousness for the Oppressed Class

Critical consciousness (CC) originated with Brazilian educator Paulo Freire and laborers who learn about their social conditions, develop a sense of agency, and take action to address the

structures and systems facilitating inequality (Freire, 1970). CC has three main components:

critical reflection, critical motivation, and critical action (Seider et al., 2020). Current research

shows how components of CC affect youth outcomes related to structural racism, such as

favoring structural attributions over individual attributions in achievement gaps (Bañales et al.,

2020) and increasing voting likelihood and sociopolitical action (Bañales et al., 2019). CC is a

key psychological mechanism for marginalized people to engage in sociopolitical action. *Are you*

teaching concepts to build critical consciousness and assessing it as an educational/training

intervention outcome when working with people from the oppressed class?

Structural Intervention

Most interventions are simplistic, individual-level interventions to ameliorate harm. With

structural thinking, people can analyze the social-ecology and advance systemic-level

interventions for structural change. Below, intervention factors and approaches are reviewed,

including the type of intervention change, scope of intervention, and reparative approach.

Type of Intervention Change: Toward First-Order and Second-Order Change

Interventions can produce *ameliorative* change (also known as first-order order) that

respond to problems or *transformational* change (also known as second-order change) that

address structural factors (Prilleltensky, 2008). As a result, Bond et al. (2017) pose a key

question to the field of community psychology: "Should we disapprove of all first-order change

because it sustains significant aspects of the status quo even if it brings well-being to many?" (p.

17). In most cases, the answer may be "yes", but it depends. We reject *first-order change*

interventions that inhibit structural thinking and undermine a structural understanding of racism,

such as certain products in the commercial-oriented popular psychology. We support *first-order*

change interventions that build structural thinking among intervention recipients, because their

future efforts will be more likely to facilitate second-order change. Therefore, we embrace a *diunital worldview of change* whereby first-order change *and* second-order change provide value toward a moral reckoning (see Pope et al., 2019, p. 660). For example, critical participatory action research produces first-order change wherein individuals likely enhance structural thinking and improve their school or community on a path toward second-order transformational change (e.g., sociopolitical action for policy change) (see Fine & Torre, 2021). *Are you embracing a diunital worldview of change for first-order change and second-order change?*

Scope of Intervention: Toward Upstream Change

The initial worldviews of two Civil Rights leaders were at odds: "Malcolm [X] focused on systemic patterns of racial injustice and [Dr. Martin Luther] King attuned to racism's invidious damage on hearts, minds, and souls" (Joseph, 2020, p. 13). These two distinct worldviews are reflected in the disciplines studying racism and its consequences. Economics, political science, public health, and sociology tend to align with Malcolm X's worldview of focusing on *upstream structural causes* (e.g., social, economic, and political determinants of health, safety, and well-being) within the sociopolitical tradition while mainstream psychology and applied mental health professions tend to align with King's initial worldview of focusing on the *downstream effects* of racism on health, safety, and well-being within the psychosocial tradition (Benjamins & De Maio, 2021). Eventually, a radical King called for the "scientific examination [of] political action" during his 1967 APA speech to psychologists (King, 1968, p. 8). His personal shift in worldview toward upstream change should inspire us to *eradicate*, rather than *mitigate*, structural racism. Many social scientists are not only researching *downstream* psychosocial effects of racism on BIPOC communities, but also mindsets related to *upstream structural* change (e.g., sociopolitical development; Anyiwo et al., 2018).

To achieve upstream and downstream change, interventions must attend to the timing of intervention (i.e., the *scope of intervention*) which can be conceptualized within the graded continuum of care (promotion, prevention, treatment, and recovery; Institute of Medicine, 1994) or the national preparedness goals (prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery; FEMA, n.d.). It's noteworthy that *promotion* and *prevention* are more proactive scopes of intervention, whereas response/treatment and recovery are more reactive in nature. The scope of intervention is reflected in metaphors of these two Civil Rights leaders: "Malcolm wielding a sword in pursuit of black dignity while King carried a shield for the defense of black humanity" (Joseph, 2020, p. 23). The *sword* reflects *promotion* of wellness and pursuit of Black liberation whereas the *shield* reflects *prevention* and *protection* from harm by defending Black humanity from oppression. Also, these metaphors align with a community psychology conception of how to use power to promote wellness, resist oppression, and pursue liberation (Prilleltensky, 2008).

Promotion and prevention strategies can address manifestations of racism or racialized structural factors. Targeting racism with promotion and prevention can include promoting antiracism and reducing/preventing racism (Kendi, 2019; Roberts & Rizzo, 2020) as well as promoting racial microaffirmations and preventing microaggressions (Rolón-Dow & Davison, 2021). In contrast, targeting racialized structures or social determinants can also occur through promotion and prevention of: economic stability (e.g., promoting economic stability and preventing instability: see ODPHP, 2022; promoting safe drinking water and preventing lead poisoning: see Washington, 2019), political determinant (e.g., promoting voting rights and preventing voting disenfranchisement; see Dawes, 2020), and commercial determinant (e.g., promoting public information and preventing harmful commercial marketing; see Kickbusch et al., 2016). Promotion-prevention interventions–policies, approaches, and programs–can produce

racial equity or inequity. Equitable promotion-prevention interventions aim to produce racial

equity and prevent inequity, respectively; whereas inequitable promotion-prevention

interventions produce benefits that privilege a group and facilitate harms/costs that oppress

another group. *Is your worldview rooted in upstream or downstream change? Are you promoting*

and preventing to address racism or a racialized structural/social determinant?

Reparative Intervention Approach: Toward Targeting and Equitable Universalism

Centuries of structural racism necessitates reparative interventions to redress racial

inequities. In this section, we examine two reparative intervention approaches: the direct, race-

based approach (i.e., targeted intervention) versus the indirect, class-based approach (using

proportionate universalism; Carey et al., 2015). Each of these approaches redresses racial and

class inequities, but the benefits are delivered to either racial groups or classes. In the context of

racial injustice, some activists and scholars have argued for a targeted policy of race-based

reparations for American descendants of slavery (e.g., restitution), whereas others have

advocated for a universal class-based policy (e.g., universal health care) with additional benefits

for disadvantaged classes as part of a "public-good-oriented" approach (Reed, 2020). From a

class perspective, Usmani and Zachariah (2021) highlight that race-based and class-based

strategies require different coalitions, which puts them at odds strategically; they argue "the path

to racial liberation…runs through race-blind, class-based policies and coalitions" (p. 84).

Similarly, Johnson (2022) suggests that divorcing race and class produces a "liberal anti-racism"

that undermines structural understanding and the potential for class-based solidarity. In fact, a

recent poll of working-class voters shows a preference toward "universalism rather than identity-

focused rhetoric" (Abbot et al., 2021). Similarly, another study shows progressive policies have

more support across political orientations with a class frame (i.e., universal benefits for all)

compared to a race-only frame or race-class combined frame (English & Kalla, 2021). Another

research study differs from those findings and shows support for a race-class frame (Demos,

2018). Clearly, more research should examine race, class, and race-class framing.

Race-based reparations aim to redress racial inequities caused by slavery, racial

segregation, and present-day racial discrimination (Darity & Mullen, 2020; Glaude, 2020;

Hannah-Jones et al., 2021). These activist scholars suggest the U.S. government and its citizens

must acknowledge slavery and structural racism, redress racial inequities, and facilitate closure

through racial healing (Darity & Mullen, 2020). Therefore, community psychologists must

determine the receptivity of a race-based, class-based, or race-class framing within and across

communities and the associated reparative approach (race-based or class-based intervention)

most likely to redress racial inequities and facilitate a moral reckoning. *Are you designing,*

implementing, or advocating for targeted, race-based intervention (i.e., direct approach) or

universal, class-based intervention to redress racial inequities (i.e., indirect approach)?

Discussion

Just as racial justice activists called on psychologists to support the Civil Rights

movement during the Second Reconstruction (King, 1968), we call on community psychologists

to align their own practices toward a moral reckoning on structural racism during this Third

Reconstruction (Barber II & Wilson-Hartgrove, 2016; Joseph, 2022). We are all embedded

within racial capitalism, unknowing contributors to neoliberal psychology that errs toward

individualistic attributions of behavior, decontextualizes the racial hierarchy into an implicit

racial bias, and constrains intervention for commercialization. And yet, we can counter these

forces by examining structural forces, encouraging structural thinking, and supporting structural

intervention to redress racial injustice.

Our interdisciplinary perspective uplifted research across community psychology, public health, and social medicine to (re)introduce activist scholars to the theories, concepts, and intervention approaches relevant for a moral reckoning. We applied aspects of critical race psychology, public psychology, and critical community psychology toward this vision (Adams et al., 2019; Eaton et al., 2021; Evans et al., 2017; Prilleltensky & Nelson, 2009; Ratner, 2019; Salter & Adams, 2013). We focused on structural factors, structural thinking, and reparative approaches to enhance a psychological framework on the *denial of structural racism* (Rucker & Richeson, 2021). We extended thinking on a *diunital worldview* from multicultural competence (Pope et al., 2019) to structural thinking. We attended to the levels of racism (Jones, 2000), providing theoretical, historical, and evidentiary reasons for systemic-level intervention, rather than individual-level intervention, to address structural racism. We applied the political and commercial determinants of health (Dawes, 2020; Freudenberg et al., 2021) to structural racism, demonstrating how market-based and political actors undermine public understanding of racism. Finally, we emphasized how the structural and social determinants should be incorporated into research on promoting antiracism and preventing/reducing racism (see Roberts & Rizzo, 2020).

Conscious of racial capitalism (e.g., Taylor, 2021), we called attention to our privileged class position as members of the professional managerial class to reflect on how we may undermine racial equality (Liu, 2021). Reflexivity of social location–especially race *and* class–is essential for psychologists who want to promote egalitarian values because, as Usmani and Zachariah (2021) argue, "class-based redistribution is the only viable anti-racist tool in the racial egalitarian's tool kit" (p. 78). We introduced reparative approaches, through race-based reparations and a class-based approach (see Darity & Mullen, 2020; Reed, 2020; Usmani & Zachariah, 2021), siding with *structural thinking* as the psychological mechanism to raise

consciousness for both approaches among the oppressed class (i.e., critical consciousness: Freire, 1970) and professional managerial class (i.e., structural competency: Hansen & Metzl, 2019).

Limitations

To address structural racism, we introduced a singular pathway of structural factors, structural thinking, and structural intervention; however, other pathways can advance a moral reckoning (e.g., addressing cultural racism as a vehicle to structural racism; Hicken et al., 2018). We prioritized Black activists' scholarship on anti-Black racism, but there are Indigenous leaders and people of color who are also countering racism and pursuing liberation. Because we favored a race and class analysis within the context of American racism, we did not focus on other social identities, imperialism, and colonialism that affect the social, political, economic, and environmental determinants of racism globally. We discussed the political and commercial determinants of health (Dawes, 2020; Freudenberg et al., 2021) as distinct categories when they are inextricably linked and embedded within neoliberalism. The *nonprofit industrial complex*, a system of commercial/political determinants, involves philanthrocapitalists' foundations funding community-based nonprofits to refocus their efforts toward service delivery (downstream) in lieu of sociopolitical action (upstream) (INCITE!, 2007; K.-Y. Taylor, 2016). Similarly, the *academic industrial complex* encourages academics to research proximal factors and develop first-order change interventions that will not tackle the structural nature of structural racism.

Future Direction

To eliminate structural racism and racial inequities, policies must be changed, but public support for these policies may be undermined by the racial prejudice of some White Americans. While some progressive policies appear "race-neutral" (in a class-only frame), the bipartisan political establishment racialized "underclass ideology" (e.g., portraying Black women as

welfare queens) to undermine universal programs (e.g., social safety net; Reed, 2020). In the

book *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, K.-Y. Taylor (2016) rejects class

reductionism because class-only framing for universal policies ignores "the interplay of race and

class" and suggests that for "the policies favored by the class reductionist to work—be they

social democrats or Marxists—or even to come into being, racism and white supremacy must be

challenged directly." In *Dying of Whiteness*, Metzl (2019) conducts interviews with White

Americans situated in rural places who explicitly reject universal policies because these policies

benefit people of color. In *The Sum of Us*, McGhee (2021) explains how public investments (e.g.,

in public swimming pools) are thwarted because racism undermines an *integrated* public good.

For these reasons, future research must explore how to promote transformative, universal

policies to redress racial inequities when racism itself undermines these key policies.

Conclusion

Activists gave their lives to raise consciousness and intervene on the harmful

determinants of structural racism during and between these three periods of moral reckoning. We

stand on the shoulders of activist scholars, artists, clergy, critical philosophers, doulas, health

equity professionals, public interest lawyers, public school teachers, union members, and

countless people who are building a multi-racial, multi-class coalition to address systems of

oppression and promote racial, social, economic, and political justice. To support them, we raise

a question for the field of community psychology: *How can we move toward a moral reckoning*

on structural racism? In the wise words of activist scholar Angela Davis (2005): "The challenge

of the twenty-first century is...to identify and dismantle those structures in which racism

continues to be embedded so freedom can be extended to masses of people" (p. 26).

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1.	*EXAMINE STRUCTURAL FACTORS*
1.1 | The Cultural Context of Neoliberal Psychology: Toward a Public and Critical Psychology	
Are you contributing to a public psychology, working with people harmed by structural racism, exposing racist and oppressive systems, and addressing the inequitable distribution of resources by race?	
1.2 | Commercial Determinants: Toward a Public Good	
Are you rejecting commercial-oriented solutions for racism at the individual level and supporting public-oriented solutions focused on structural racism at the systemic level?	
1.3 | Political Determinants: Toward Racial Justice Policies	
Are you institutionalizing antiracist education, teaching students how to interpret racial inequities, and organizing people to counter racist legislation?	
2.	*ENCOURAGE STRUCTURAL THINKING*
2.1 | Structural Competency for the Professional Managerial Class	
Are you encouraging assessment of structural competency within academic courses and professional training to enhance structural thinking among the professional class?	
2.2 | Critical Consciousness for the Oppressed Class	
Are you teaching concepts to build critical consciousness and assessing it as an educational/training intervention outcome when working with people from the oppressed class?	
3.	*SUPPORT STRUCTURAL INTERVENTION*
3.1 | Type of Intervention Change: Toward First-Order and Second-Order Change	
Are you embracing a diunital worldview of change for first-order change and second-order change?	
3.2 | Scope of Intervention: Toward Upstream Change	
Is your worldview rooted in upstream or downstream change? Are you promoting and preventing to address racism or a racialized structural/social determinant?	
3.3 | Reparative Intervention Approach: Toward Targeting and Equitable Universalism	
Are you designing, implementing, or advocating for targeted, race-based intervention (i.e., direct approach) or universal, class-based intervention to redress racial inequities (i.e., indirect approach)?	