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DOI:

[10.1177/01914537241244824](https://doi.org/10.1177/01914537241244824)

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*Document Version*

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

*Citation for published version (Harvard):*

Bufkin, S 2024, 'Racism, epistemic injustice, and ideology critique', *Philosophy and Social Criticism*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/01914537241244824>

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# Racism, epistemic injustice, and ideology critique

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Philosophy and Social Criticism

2024, Vol. 0(0) 1–25

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DOI: 10.1177/01914537241244824

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## Abstract

Since its 2007 publication, Miranda Fricker's *Epistemic Injustice* has sparked a vigorous conversation in analytic philosophy about how social power corrodes individual's epistemic capacities and distorts collective meaning-making in unjust ways. Yet for all its normative insights into social silencing, I argue that Fricker's theorization of epistemic dysfunction remains too individualized, cognitivist, and dematerialized to account for racialized imaginaries. Rather than view racisms as normal and normative in racist cultures, Fricker frames identity-driven prejudice as a troubling *aberration* from otherwise unblemished epistemic and moral norms. This leads her into adopting an overly voluntarist and idealist theory of social change that centres training better knowers rather than unmaking racialized worlds. Ultimately, I contend that we should return to a materialist theory of ideology, following the work of Stuart Hall. Doing so jettisons the narrow focus on individual epistemic failures and instead problematizes how certain social ideas consolidate and reproduce racial hierarchies.

## Keywords

epistemic injustice, hermeneutical injustice, ideology, knowledge production, racism, race, silencing, Stuart Hall, testimonial injustice

## Introduction

Social epistemologists and Anglo-American political philosophers have recently given more sustained attention to the problem of how social hierarchies, including racialized ones, can corrode the production and transfer of knowledge. Following on from the work of feminist standpoint theorists, analytic philosophers like Miranda Fricker and José

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Medina have argued that systemic racism and other forms of identity-driven prejudice can produce deficient knowers and defective hermeneutical resources.<sup>1</sup> Much of this scholarly discussion takes as its starting point Fricker's 2007 book, *Epistemic Injustice*, in which she argues that these socially produced epistemic dysfunctions inflict a distinctive form of injustice. Fricker differentiates between those epistemic obstacles that interfere at the interactional, micro-level of individual knowledge exchange and those that operate on the structural, macro-level of differentiated group knowledges. She characterizes these two distinct categories of epistemic harm as testimonial injustice and hermeneutical injustice, respectively. The former encapsulates the ways that individuals can be harmed as knowers when interlocutors unfairly devalue their epistemic authority in testimonial exchanges. The latter focuses on the asymmetrical hermeneutic resources available to epistemic subjects for making their lived experiences intelligible.

The idea that social power conditions what people are predisposed to know or find intelligible is, of course, not new,<sup>2</sup> but it has found a rigorous philosophical articulation in Fricker's work. The epistemic injustice approach makes two key contributions to these broader debates about how power conditions and shapes the workings of social reason. First, it avoids treating individual knowers as passive dupes who blindly accept deficient or otherwise ideological resources. Instead, Fricker tries to show how these (mis)judgements can be both epistemically and ethically flawed while still reasonable in certain circumstances. Her virtue-ethics approach, in turn, creates space for theorizing individual epistemic agency (and responsibility) in the face of these systemic patterns of social silencing. And second, Fricker and other analytic philosophers introduce an explicitly normative framework into what was previously a more structuralist approach to social knowledge, whether in the Marxist tradition or within feminist standpoint theory. By adopting the language of injustice, they give voice to the lived experience of disrespect that many individuals face when they are silenced, devalued as knowers, or otherwise rendered less capable of contributing to collective meaning-making, simply by virtue of their marginalized positionality within a social hierarchy.

Yet even with these analytical advantages, I worry that the epistemic injustice literature runs into theoretical and political obstacles when it comes to the critique of what Paul Gilroy calls 'raciology, [or] the lore that brings the virtual realities of "race" to dismal and destructive life'.<sup>3</sup> In particular, I contend that social epistemologists tend to analyze the social production of knowledge as an epistemic problem for individual knowers. This leads them to overemphasize the 'falsity' of such racist beliefs and to presume that 'unmasking' or revealing their epistemic flaws will necessarily eliminate or undo racialized forms of practical consciousness. In this article, I explore this claim primarily through an analysis of Fricker's work. This is primarily for two reasons. First, Fricker's theorization remains at the heart of the epistemic injustice debates.<sup>4</sup> Since its publication, *Epistemic Injustice* has sparked a veritable cottage industry as scholars have applied her framework to diverse aspects of social life. Testimonial injustices have been identified in healthcare settings and psychiatric diagnosis,<sup>5</sup> in education,<sup>6</sup> in governmental crisis response,<sup>7</sup> in the criminal justice system,<sup>8</sup> and in the #MeToo Movement,<sup>9</sup> for example. In turn, hermeneutical marginalization in medical research,<sup>10</sup> in academic disciplines like philosophy and anthropology,<sup>11</sup> in scientific research,<sup>12</sup> and in comedy<sup>13</sup> have created

unjust gaps in collective knowledge production. And second, as I will argue in this article, Fricker's project encapsulates and exemplifies how many social epistemologists frame, diagnose, and think about remedying the epistemic distortions and harms that racism produces. While thinkers like José Medina, Rebecca Mason, Gaile Pohlhaus Jr., and Kristie Dotson have critically revised and expanded on Fricker's analyses, especially when it comes to theorizing the epistemic agency of marginalized groups,<sup>14</sup> much of the broader epistemic injustice literature remains tethered to an individualist and overly cognitivist approach to social reason.<sup>15</sup> In this respect, engaging with Fricker provides an effective demonstrative of both the strengths and limitations of the epistemic injustice approach.

This article argues that Fricker's account of epistemic dysfunction remains too individualized, cognitivist, and dematerialized to account for racialized discourses and their political consequences. Rather than view racism as a set of regulative social practices in racist cultures, Fricker frames identity-driven prejudice as a troubling *aberration* from otherwise unblemished epistemic and moral norms. At the level of testimonial interactions, she adopts a disembodied and overly rationalist model of the individual knower, which misses the psychosocial dynamics that can lead individuals to adopt flawed beliefs or to act in ways otherwise inconsistent with their rational commitments. At the structural level of shared hermeneutical resources, in turn, she foregrounds a narrowly propositional account of social knowledge, which focuses on "racially motivated concept suppression" rather than on racialized imaginaries that remain ethically suspect but have become socially hegemonic. In this respect, the epistemic injustice approach tends to under-theorize, if not outright ignore, the objective conditions under which racialized ideas become a part of the social "common sense" and the practical knowhow embedded within certain institutional spaces, such as policing or the housing market. Such a dematerialized approach to the problematic of social reason, I'll argue, means that Fricker places too much faith in the social efficacy of epistemic norms. Ultimately, adopting a virtue-driven approach to remedying epistemic injustices privileges an overly voluntarist and idealist theory of social change, one that centres on training better knowers rather than unmaking racialized worlds.

This is why I contend that the problem of 'race' and racialized knowledge production is better tackled by returning to a Marxist-inspired conception of ideology and ideology critique. Within the Marxist tradition, the negativist concept of 'ideology' has generally been used to theorize modes of social knowledge that (a) are epistemically flawed or distorting in some way, (b) emerge out of and become socially hegemonic in large part because of an unjust arrangement of power relations, and (c) continue to functionally stabilize or reproduce those hierarchies. I contend that a critical conception of ideology can be generative for providing a deeper link between institutionalized power hierarchies and social groups' differentiated perspectives on the social formation in which they live.<sup>16</sup> In doing so, I draw on Stuart Hall's crucial theorization of the ideological as a 'terrain of struggle' rather than as a crude form of false consciousness.<sup>17</sup> What makes his materialist approach to ideology critique productive, I will argue, is that it moves away from the narrow question of racist beliefs and towards the problem of how certain kinds of racialized knowledge *function* in order to consolidate and reproduce White hegemony.<sup>18</sup>

This article proceeds in three parts. I begin by reconstructing Fricker's account of testimonial injustice (I) and hermeneutical injustice (II) to examine both their analytical potential and limits when it comes to diagnosing racialized cognition under conditions of White supremacy. In the final section (III), I explore what the tradition of ideology critique offers antiracist theorizing instead and close by gesturing towards what a materialist conception of racial ideology might look like.

## Testimonial silencing and racist devaluation

Fricker develops the concept of 'testimonial injustice' to theorize the unfair and prejudicial forms of social silencing that individual knowers can experience in interactions with other knowers. In listening to another person's testimony, she points out, hearers must first evaluate whether the speaker is worthy of belief.<sup>19</sup> Such evaluative judgements often rely upon stereotypes and other cognitive 'short cuts' that enable us to quickly ascertain how much epistemic credibility to award to another. But this is where invalid modes of prejudicial thinking – which associate certain 'kinds of people' with knowledge or ignorance, trustworthiness or deceit, rationality or irrationality – can distort our judgement. Speakers who are racialized as Black or Brown are therefore likely to be undercut and devalued in racist societies, given the centuries of ideological work that have framed Black and Brown people as epistemically inferior to White people.<sup>20</sup> These distorted credibility judgements, in turn, mean that hearers can give a testimonial utterance less authority than it ought to have or that they fail to register the utterance entirely – effectively silencing the speaker and preventing the transmission of knowledge.<sup>21</sup>

Fricker argues that these prejudicial credibility deficits – when systematic – can constitute a special kind of epistemic injustice 'in which someone is *wronged specifically in her capacity as a knower*' (italics in original).<sup>22</sup> To be devalued and disrespected in this way, she argues, strikes at the heart of what it means to be a person by denying equal standing as a contributor to collectively produced knowledge.<sup>23</sup> When sustained, these experiences of diminishment can drive socially marginalized knowers to silence themselves in hostile discursive spaces and even to doubt the epistemic validity of their own perspective.<sup>24</sup> Fricker, of course, is not the first to identify the oppressive impact that racist stereotypes can have on Black subjects as knowers. Black feminists have long criticized how White understandings of Black women have oppressed them and constrained their capacities for self-expression, and at times, self-understanding.<sup>25</sup> They point out that these unfair forms of social silencing can have devastating consequences. Black and Brown knowers whose testimonial claims are invalidated or denied can be wrongfully accused, sentenced, and imprisoned; they can have their applications for employment or housing denied; they are more likely to be undermined and to experience racist discrimination at work; they can be violently searched, harassed, and killed by the police; and they can be ignored by their doctors when they report serious pain and life-threatening conditions.<sup>26</sup> In turn, even small instances of epistemic diminishment – what are often today called 'microaggressions'<sup>27</sup> – can add up, exhausting Black and Brown knowers and making them less motivated to speak openly to White Others.<sup>28</sup> In this respect, Fricker's work

does not disclose anything that oppressed knowers did not already understand about the disempowering effects of social stigma. But it does provide a normative framework within social epistemology to acknowledge these instances of silencing as moral wrongs and foregrounds the epistemic dimensions of oppression.

The other advantage of Fricker's approach is that she explains how an individual's social positionality matters for who they are predisposed to believe without making recourse to a conspiratorial view of false consciousness.<sup>29</sup> As Fricker notes, these prejudicial credibility deficits can *appear* to take place 'behind the knower's back', as it were.<sup>30</sup> We can become habituated to and internalize social prejudice in ways that corrode our practical judgement below the level of conscious reflection. Such a vision of how otherwise rational actors can wrongly misperceive and misjudge speakers from stigmatized groups, of course, resonates with contemporary social psychology research on how implicit bias and unconscious prejudice function.<sup>31</sup> Other scholars have since expanded on Fricker's model of testimonial injustice to look at other ways in which social power conditions individual subjects' judgement in reasonable, if not defensible, ways. Epistemic vices like closed-mindedness,<sup>32</sup> centring certain group's experiences as an unstated norm,<sup>33</sup> inculcated practices of inattention and insensitivity,<sup>34</sup> affective investments in failing to know,<sup>35</sup> controlling narratives that make certain claims unintelligible or unimaginable,<sup>36</sup> material and social hierarchies that award different degrees of epistemic power<sup>37</sup> – all of these factors can influence how knowledge is produced and to whose benefit it operates. In this respect, social epistemologists like Fricker provide a way to analyze how individual knowers' epistemic practices are shaped by social power without sacrificing their critical faculties. Fricker's project, therefore, brings the action-theoretical level back into view, which enables us to talk meaningfully about epistemic responsibility and ethics.

And yet I worry that the epistemic injustice framework is too narrow in its diagnostic scope and too optimistic in its political vision to be of much use for antiracist critique and praxis. I have two primary concerns. First, Fricker's account remains wedded to an overly rationalist and disembodied model of the individual subject *qua* knower. This betrays an unsupportable optimism about the guiding force of epistemic norms on individual perception, judgement, belief formation, and action. As social psychologists have documented, individuals often act in irrational ways. They mistakenly accept unfounded claims as true because they better align with their existing beliefs.<sup>38</sup> They can become materially and libidinally invested in the 'veracity' of a particular worldview, either because it legitimates their social advantages or it protects their ego ideal.<sup>39</sup> Perhaps no one has done more to explain the phantasmorgic life of raciological reason than Frantz Fanon, who analyzes how both White and Black subjects can become irrationally and 'neurotically' attached to the ontological fallacy of the 'race' idea. Within racist cultures, 'the white man is locked in his whiteness', Fanon argues. 'The black man in his blackness'.<sup>40</sup> By contrast, Fricker's framework targets only those epistemic mistakes which are socially produced, which 'track' existing power hierarchies, and which individuals accept for epistemic reasons, rather than 'non-epistemic' reasons like ego protection, material interest, or self-delusion.<sup>41</sup>

The second worry that I have with the testimonial injustice approach that Fricker develops is that it offers a largely dematerialized account of social cognition. In her phenomenological account, she treats these testimonial credibility deficits as epistemic mistakes or aberrations.<sup>42</sup> Such a narrowly epistemic reckoning with the distorting influence of racialized cognition overlooks the ways in which racisms have become embedded in institutional apparatuses, in economic relations of production, in hegemonic social imaginaries, in the technologies and architectures that arrange and make visible certain kinds of racialized bodies and landscapes. The material conditions that structure societies in racial dominance generally produce a ‘racist common-sense’<sup>43</sup> – certain forms of racialized practical knowhow that rational individuals adopt to interpret and navigate their worlds, regardless of their cognitive commitments to the idea of racial hierarchy or moral investments in White supremacy. This means that it can be both irrational *and* rational to make racialized judgements. Such judgements are epistemically unreliable in the sense that they are based on ontologically fallacious claims about different ‘kinds’ of human beings and their essential (in)capacities. And yet they can be instrumentally reasonable in that individual knowers must navigate worlds where racialized divisions in the human have become social facts that act with material force. As sociologist Imani Perry points out, the problem is not that many knowers continue to make racist evaluations of Others at a pre-reflective, non-cognitive level, but more that they make racialized judgements at a reflective level in ways that they don’t see as morally or epistemically problematic.<sup>44</sup> For example, police departments deploy more officers per capita in majority-minority urban neighbourhoods because that is ostensibly where the most crime takes place,<sup>45</sup> and lenders target Black and other racially minoritized homeowners for subprime mortgage loans to maximize their profits.<sup>46</sup>

By focussing her attention on the narrow set of cases in which individual knowers adopt epistemically flawed beliefs for rational reasons, Fricker’s account ignores the psychosocial *and* prudential incentives that individuals may have for internalizing racial stereotypes and racialized imaginaries. This, in turn, leads Fricker to offer an overly optimistic account of how individuals might avoid or fix these unjust credibility deficits. In her 2007 book, Fricker adopts a virtue-ethics approach to argue that individual knowers must first train themselves out of epistemic ‘vices’ by adjusting their credibility assessments ‘upwards’ to account for these sedimented anti-Black biases.<sup>47</sup> Over time, she claims, these new credibility-inflated judgements of Black speakers will become habitual, almost as if a good knower has developed a better ‘epistemic norm’ for themselves. But there are reasons to doubt that even knowers who have undergone such ethical re-training could approximate the virtue of testimonial justice while the broader social imaginary is riven by racist narratives and presuppositions.<sup>48</sup> A White knower may have been able to stave off their usual credibility deflation in certain cases, but those anti-Black expectations lay dormant in the background. It only takes a minor slip-up on the part of the Black speaker (or the introjection of a perceived threat to the White knower’s ego) for the entire force of the negative stereotype or imaginary to return.<sup>49</sup> These forms of racial common-sense, we might say, remain sedimented into the popular consciousness, and they can easily be reactivated into new forms and interpretative responses.

Fricker's political response to widespread testimonial injustice is largely limited to ethical questions about what it means to become a 'better' knower in an unjust world. Such a narrowly individualist approach, however, locates the problems firmly at the level of the individual knower and their 'flawed beliefs', rather than at the level of socially hegemonic ideas and the material relations which underwrite them. In doing so, it leaves intact – and largely unchallenged – the racialized recognitional order that is all too ready to read Blackness as inferiority, laziness, stupidity, and deviance. As Linda Martin Alcoff has pointed out, it is difficult to envision how such an individualist project of self-improvement could ever bring about a wholesale transformation in our shared hermeneutic horizons.<sup>50</sup> That would require a collective politics that contests and re-articulates the dominant set of 'social ideas' and the practical common-sense that they inform. In this respect, the epistemic virtue approach foregrounds an idealist account of knowledge production and a 'voluntarist' model of social change, whereby what is primarily required to create better worlds are more virtuous knowers – especially White knowers. But as Fanon reminds us, 'it is... not as a result of the evolution of people's minds that racism loses its virulence'.<sup>51</sup>

To be fair to Fricker, she has since acknowledged the limits of solely focussing on individual virtue as a mechanism for broader social change.<sup>52</sup> And she does propose a second conception of epistemic injustice that is designed to address this structural plane of social intelligibility – that of hermeneutical injustice. Yet as I'll explore in the next section, her work on hermeneutical marginalization focuses too narrowly on problems of conceptual 'lack' and not enough on the racialization of existing social imaginaries.

## Hermeneutical lacunae and concept suppression

Fricker develops the concept of hermeneutical injustice to theorize how power hierarchies can distort the 'shared pool' of collective meanings which individual knowers use to make sense of themselves and their worlds.<sup>53</sup> Individuals from oppressed social groups, she points out, are likely to be hermeneutically marginalized, either because they are subjected to systemic testimonial injustice or because they do not have the same access to the key institutional sites like media outlets, universities and schools, the courts, and the culture industry that shape the production and dissemination of collective knowledge. Fricker contends that persistent hermeneutical marginalization can produce conceptual 'lacunae', or zones of unintelligibility in the shared set of social meanings.<sup>54</sup> These hermeneutical gaps, in turn, can produce a distinctive type of injustice when they prevent a marginalized knower from making sense of a significant experience, either to themselves or to others. Fricker gives the example of Carmita Wood, a woman who struggled to both understand and verbalize to others why a work colleague's persistent sexualized overtures made her so uncomfortable because the concept of sexual harassment had not yet become socially available.<sup>55</sup> The epistemic dysfunction here, then, is not one of mistaken credibility judgements in testimonial interactions, but of failures in shared intelligibility driven by differential access to social power.

Social epistemologists like Medina, Dotson, and Pohlhaus have since critiqued Fricker's 2007 formulation of hermeneutical injustice for minimizing or eliding the



epistemic agency of socially oppressed groups.<sup>56</sup> The fact that a dominant knower doesn't have access to a particular concept does not mean that oppressed knowers also lack the hermeneutical resources to render their experiences intelligible amongst themselves. More often than not, the oppressed are aware of the shared and social nature of their suffering, and they've developed their own epistemic toolkit to understand and talk about their domination.<sup>57</sup> In a 2016 essay, Fricker takes on board this intervention and clarifies that instances of hermeneutical injustice take place on a spectrum between maximal and minimal cases. In the minimal case, she argues, an individual may be able to make sense of a significant experience with their hermeneutical 'in-group', but the necessary concepts may not be available to members of the 'out-group' – who are more likely to stand in proximity to material resources, social capital, and political power. Minimal hermeneutical injustices, then, take place primarily at the level of knowledge transmission. By contrast, in the maximal case, an individual does not have access to the hermeneutical resources that can appropriately frame their experience. This creates problems not just for social knowledge production, but also for self-knowledge.<sup>58</sup> Such maximal cases, however, are few and far between, Fricker says. In making this allowance in her later work, Fricker shifts her structural critique of epistemic dysfunction from those groups that are hermeneutically marginalized towards the hermeneutically privileged and their failure to know.<sup>59</sup> Such a move is a welcome one, as it makes space for alternative decodings of the social world and acknowledges the vital work of subaltern knowledge production.

And yet Fricker wants to distinguish her account from the kind of socially produced White ignorance that Charles Mills theorized in which White knowers in racial hierarchies actively cultivate forms of 'unknowing' to pursue or protect their own material interests. As she puts it in a 2016 essay, 'in the case of the straightforward racist cognizer's white ignorance, there *is* no hermeneutical gap, indeed no poverty of *concepts* at all, for the racist cognizer's ignorance is not caused by any lack of conceptual-interpretative resources... It is an independent phenomenon, played out at the level of belief and (culpable) epistemic conduct'.<sup>60</sup> While Mills' 'racist cognizer' accepts flawed knowledge or fails to know for epistemically suspect reasons, Fricker stresses that cases of hermeneutical injustice generally involve good knowers who are simply working with inadequate tools. For example, she argues that hermeneutical injustice perhaps only captures the phenomena of 'racially motivated concept suppression' in which Black and Brown knowers are hermeneutically marginalized in racist cultures, thereby 'kettling' their concept development and preventing it from shaping the broader collective hermeneutical resource.<sup>61</sup> In this respect, Fricker's project seems designed to explain to some privileged knowers how they can mean well and still make bad judgements or fail to interpret things correctly. This narrow focus, however, invites the question of whether Fricker's conceptualization of hermeneutical injustice actually has all that much to say about racio-logical unreason, given that it only accounts for a small set of the epistemic dysfunctions that emerge out of racial hierarchies.<sup>62</sup>

Part of the problem is that Fricker's account is grounded in an overly cognitivist and elite view of hermeneutical agency – one that focuses exclusively on the mechanism of 'conceptual lack'. In her 2007 book, she compares these intelligibility gaps to holes in the ozone layer that happen to make certain people more vulnerable to epistemic obstacles.<sup>63</sup>

But forms of White ‘ignorance’ or racist common-sense don’t seem to be primarily driven by the absence of ‘good concepts’ but instead by the dominance of racialized imaginaries that legitimate White hegemony and naturalize racial oppression.<sup>64</sup> In White settler contexts like that of the U.S., the hermeneutical problems confronting White knowers tend to derive from socially hegemonic yet fallacious ideas about ‘merit’ in employment or ‘rightful’ property ownership, rather than from the lack of concepts like ‘institutional discrimination’ or ‘land expropriation’. (In a similar vein, the postimperial U.K. is structured around an imperial ‘forgetting’ that turns Black and Asian populations into ‘migrants’ and ‘foreigners’ rather than British citizens.) It is not that White knowers lack the right cue cards; they are working from a set of ideological scripts that consistently misinterpret or selectively understand social reality.<sup>65</sup>

But perhaps more problematically, Fricker’s theorization of hermeneutical injustice also relies on an idealist account of social rationality. By idealist, I mean two things. First, that she leaves undertheorized the relationship between power hierarchies and the social ideas which become practically (rather than merely abstractly) available to specific knowers. And second, she gives the epistemic undue primacy over the socio-structural when it comes to ameliorating oppression. Fricker acknowledges that different knowers or hermeneutical communities are empowered or disempowered to determine the plane of collective meaning-making, but she does little to analyze ‘the ideological terrains of struggle’ crosscut by asymmetrical power relations. Left unexamined are the mass media technologies, institutional apparatuses, architectures, and systemic relations of capital that fuel the culture industry and that help to consolidate the social common sense. Nor does she make space for the possibility that certain knowers’ perspectives are not just ‘partial’ or ‘incomplete’ without input from marginalized social groups, but that they stand in contradiction or opposition to one another. Fricker tends to frame the process of collective knowledge production in cooperative terms, whereby people work together in good faith to arrive at the ‘best’ meanings or concepts.<sup>66</sup> But such a vision of epistemic mutuality ignores the fact that some knowers are positioned in relations of structural opposition or antagonism, whether by the capitalist mode of production or White supremacist settler colonialism. It is not merely that these social groups’ material interests are at cross purposes – that is, that they are not motivated to come to an agreement with one another – but that their perspectives on the social world conflict.<sup>67</sup> One White knower’s justice looks like a Black knower’s injustice; a White community’s ideal of freedom looks to an Indigenous knower like dominion.<sup>68</sup>

By distancing the social production of knowledge from the structuring field of material relations, then, Fricker once again ends up placing too much faith in the force of epistemic norms. In her discussion of how individuals might ameliorate or repair for hermeneutical marginalization and the ‘lacunae’ they produce, she stresses the importance of making the public sphere more dialogic and inclusive.<sup>69</sup> If members of marginalized communities were able to voice their perspectives on more equal terms, then the quality of the collective ‘pool’ of hermeneutical resources will be improved, or so the logic goes. While a laudatory aim, such measures are necessary but not sufficient to challenge or unmake an entire racialized apparatus of seeing, judging, and reasoning about the world. The mere introduction of subaltern voices into public discourse does not mean that the most

epistemically reliable ideas will ‘win’ the ideological struggle over the nature of social reality. As Emmalon Davis and Medina caution, many marginalized speakers may find that their epistemic contributions – when shared in these hegemonic spaces – are simply ‘appropriated’ and neutralized by dominant knowers, rather than taken up seriously.<sup>70</sup> Racisms – and the epistemic failures they proliferate – are more material, dynamic and systemic than the social epistemology literature makes them out to be. They are embedded in a complex matrix of institutions, systemic practices, and discourses that connect their racializing images of the Other to power hierarchies.

In this respect, Fricker’s ‘dematerialized’ approach to epistemic injustice remains worrying limited, both in its diagnostic scope and its political vision. Social epistemologists like Fricker end up either individualizing epistemic dysfunctions to the problem of the personal consciousness or offering an idealized and abstract account of collective hermeneutical improvement through the ‘addition’ of alternative viewpoints and the concepts they bring. But racial hierarchies cannot be overcome simply by encouraging White knowers to think twice about their credibility evaluations of Black and Brown knowers or through the ‘engineering’ of better concepts. This is because racisms – for all that they are epistemically flawed and morally repugnant – are not an aberration from a set of ‘better’ norms and judgements, but instead have become both normal and normative in racist cultures. By treating racism as little more than a problem of bad epistemic habits, Fricker and the broader epistemic injustice project tend to overlook the ways in which racialized cognition operates through and is grounded in routine social praxis, institutional apparatuses, and material architectures that delimit proximity to capital.<sup>71</sup> The connections between White supremacy as a political project, racialized hierarchies of wealth and status, and the flawed social cognition that they generate go ‘deeper’ than Fricker’s discussions of testimonial devaluation and hermeneutical lack would indicate, as Charles Mills put it.<sup>72</sup> Racialized hierarchies are first and foremost a political problem, not a moral or even an epistemic one.

In this respect, while the concepts of hermeneutical injustice and ideology might at first glance seem to be responding to a similar problematic, I contend that Fricker’s account is addressed to a different set of questions than the ones which motivate a Marxist-inspired ideology critique. She is primarily concerned with the normative question of when an individual knower can rightly be blamed for failing to know or to understand the experience of another person. By contrast, ideology critique is generally concerned with (a) understanding how certain social ideas become hegemonic, even as they reflect a partial, mythologized, or otherwise suspect view of the world, and with (b) disclosing the power relations that produce and naturalize that epistemically suspect yet socially functional perspective. This is why I contend, in the next section, that antiracist critique would be better served by returning to a critical conception of ideology and to the practice of ideology critique, if it is to adequately disclose, interrogate, and overcome the ‘inverted’ and reified worlds produced through racialized reason.

## Racism and ideology critique

Marx himself didn't offer a fully worked out theory of ideology in his writings, which has led to heated scholarly debate over what the concept ought to mean and to what use, if any, ideology critique might be put.<sup>73</sup> What is clear is that Marx remained committed, throughout his career, to the materialism premise, by which I mean his claim that the plane of social ideas precipitates out of and is conditioned by the material conditions of individuals' practical existence.<sup>74</sup> At times, he seems too to advance a more critical (and polemical) stance – one that indicts certain forms of social knowledge for both being partial, distorted, or otherwise epistemically suspect and for serving to naturalize capitalism and legitimate bourgeois class hegemony. Within the Marxist-inspired tradition of ideology critique, this negativist or pejorative approach to ideology tends to combine three key characteristics, according to Raymond Geuss.<sup>75</sup> First, an ideological form of knowledge is, at one and the same time, both true and false. Second, ideologies arise out of oppressive social contexts – not as coincidence, but as a form of knowledge that corresponds to and helps to consolidate those practices of domination. And third, ideologies remain functionally entangled with domination in the sense that they somehow contribute to or help to stabilize existing power hierarchies.

It is my claim that racism should be understood as an ideological assemblage in this negative sense. 'Race' is an obvious example of an ideological phenomenon that is both true and false in the way that Geuss (following Adorno) described.<sup>76</sup> Racial categories are epistemically suspect in the sense they are based on unsound and demonstrably false ideas about essential human difference. And yet they are often made true to the extent that they continue to act as a regulative social norm that determines the conduct of individuals and institutions alike in racial orders. As Hall notes, 'race is indeed a sociohistorical concept, not a transhistorical discourse grounded in biology...the biological trace still functions even when it's silent, but now, not as truth, but as the guarantor of the truth'.<sup>77</sup> Raciological (un)reason takes what is a socially produced and overdetermined phenomenon – that of racial differentiation – and reifies it into the natural and inert order of things. Such a project, of course, emerged out of and legitimated early modern Europe's projects of conquest, colonization, enslavement, dispossession, and the industrial management of enslaved and indentured labour in its colonial holdings.<sup>78</sup> As an idea, then, 'race', isn't just epistemically untenable. It marks the site of a profound historical wrong.

This is not to say that the kinds of racist thinking that were hegemonic in the past remain so today, nor that racisms function in the same way under late capitalism than they did in the hey-day of European high imperialism. At a representational level, the 'scientific' bases for these racial distinctions have shifted since Darwinian-inspired accounts of racial determinism. Today, social scientists and cultural commentators have largely abandoned the old anatomical narratives of racial type in favour of newer explanatory modes that focus on 'culture' or 'civilization'.<sup>79</sup> Yet raciological reason remains a salient part of the collective hermeneutic resource in postcolonial contexts, from the African, Asian, and Latin American postcolonies to White settler states to the European metropole. To simply note that many scientific discourses have rejected the biological or cultural

basis of racial divisions – which today is not guaranteed, as the genomics literature has shown – does not mean that such racial ideas and racialized forms of seeing the world have been disinterred from the level of individuals' practical consciousness. Within these racial orders, these sedimented forms of common-sense continue to naturalize 'race', giving what is a political artifact produced through practices of subordination at least the appearance of 'objective' facticity.

Racisms, of course, have historically been and remain intimately related to the stabilization of racial hierarchies in two obvious ways. First, they provide visible practical distinctions that both individuals and institutions use to differentiate among which kinds of subjects can be considered equal and worthy of concern and which can be exploited, dispossessed, intimidated, violated, or killed.<sup>80</sup> Part of what makes 'race' such a difficult phenomenon to expose and contest is that its ideological work is hidden behind the visual. As knowers, we are predisposed to give primacy to what we can see with our own eyes; the power of the visible is such that it appears to be obvious, essential, natural, and immediate – even though an entire social architecture goes into the production of that visibility. 'The human sensorium has had to be educated to the appreciation of racial differences', Gilroy notes.<sup>81</sup> Identities that are marked on the body prove particularly difficult to dislodge from the social gaze.<sup>82</sup> Simply declaring that racial distinctions have no metaphysical grounding does little to contest the ways that 'race' is a regulative social fact in racialized social formations like that of the United States or postimperial Britain. To fail to see racial distinctions, in these conjunctures, is to be a dysfunctional knower. In turn, those individuals who do advocate for an interpretive posture of 'race-blindness' or pretend to 'not see race' are performing a political sleight-of-hand that denies the facticity of racial perception to avoid the reparative burdens that such a situation would place in particular on White communities and the state.

And second, racialized ideologies reify and naturalize practices of racial inequality by portraying them as somehow natural, rational, or otherwise deserved. Given the naturalizing fallacy at the heart of the 'race' idea itself, it becomes all too easy to read the kinds of disadvantage that afflict Black communities as problems endemic to Blackness itself. Emirbayer and Desmond note how even sympathetic social scientists can fall into this reification trap when they treat 'race' as an independent variable in their analyses, as if belonging to a minority group had some independent causal force of its own rather than simply marking out a complex site through which power operated.<sup>83</sup> The problem then doesn't lie with anti-Black racisms, racial capitalism or a White-controlled state apparatus that today manages racialized populations through strategies of organized neglect. Instead, this picture of racialized inequality is explained through a series of racist and racialized tropes – it's the Black subject's 'inferior nature', the 'dysfunctional' Black family, the 'violent excesses' of Black street culture that are to blame. In this respect, raciological thinking can delimit what sorts of sufferings are visible and seen as worthy of redress as well as condition the political imaginaries and strategic coalitions that appear possible.

I am of course not the first to argue that racisms and racial thinking should be thought of in ideological terms. Radical Black political thought has long analyzed how White supremacy produces its own forms of raciological unreason, even if these thinkers did not

embrace the language of ‘ideology’ or ‘ideology critique’.<sup>84</sup> More recently, political theorists like Charles Mills, Tommie Shelby, and Sally Haslanger have made a direct call for a return to thinking about racisms through the lens of a negativist ideology critique.<sup>85</sup> As Shelby puts it, ‘It is the task of the specifically epistemic dimension of ideology-critique to unmask or reveal the illusory character of racist and other ideologies’.<sup>86</sup> I have learned much from their work, and yet this ‘new ideology critique’, as Kirun Sankaran has described it,<sup>87</sup> has generally paid more attention to the epistemic and moral dimensions of racial thinking than to its socio-theoretical function in the reproduction of racial hierarchies. Such a narrow preoccupation with the epistemic or moral sufficiency of social ideas, however, tends to offer an overly rationalist account of social change – one that presumes that individuals will be motivated to change their practices if their consciousness can be raised. But as Keunchang Oh notes, ‘Knowing epistemic or moral truth does not by itself overcome ideology’.<sup>88</sup>

This is why I contend that antiracist ideology critique needs to pay more attention to the socio-functional dimensions of raciological (un)reason if it is to fully grasp the ‘deep connection’ between racial hierarchies and racialized praxis.<sup>89</sup> It is vital to theorize the *subjective* dimensions of epistemic praxis in relation to the *objective conditions* of social life that make particular ways of seeing, knowing, and evaluating into controlling norms. A materialist and pragmatic conception of ideology critique, in my view, would move beyond this narrow methodological focus on individual knowers and their epistemic deficiencies and instead adopt a socio-theoretical concern with, as Stuart Hall puts it, giving ‘an account, within a materialist theory, of how social ideas arise’.<sup>90</sup> Such a task, therefore, requires analyzing how mass technologies, institutional apparatuses, material relations of production and capital accumulation, and existing hegemonic discourses condition the practices of cultural meaning-making within discrete conjunctures – with an eye to diagnosing how specific ideas become articulated to relations of domination or practices of inequality.<sup>91</sup> This necessarily returns the problem of knowledge production to the plane of historical concreteness. And it offers a more complex account of how ideas, both elite and popular, intersect with the relations of force that stabilize particular governing coalitions – without relying on mechanistic or elitist narratives of the oppressed as ‘dupes’.<sup>92</sup> As Hall points out, what is interesting about ideologies is not necessarily what is false or falsifiable about them, but what about them appears to be true or productive for helping certain individuals make sense of their world.<sup>93</sup>

A materialist commitment to ideology critique, then, provides three key advantages over the epistemic injustice literature when it comes to interrogating and contesting racialized imaginaries in White settler states and postcolonial contexts. First, it replaces an individualist and cognitivist emphasis on racist beliefs as a kind of epistemic mistake and moral aberration with an account that acknowledges how racisms have become normal and normative in the wake of colonial capitalism and European imperial rule. As Frantz Fanon pointed out, ‘The racist in a culture with racism is therefore normal’.<sup>94</sup> Second and relatedly, ideology critique can account for the way in which raciological reason is not merely ‘true’ or ‘false’ but functions as a ‘regime of truth’<sup>95</sup> in given social orders. For while racial distinctions might not have an ontological grounding, they often have been made ‘true’ by an entire architecture of racialized world-making whose ‘epistemic

grounding' is seen to be as obvious and natural as the visual sign of the raced body. The epistemic injustice literature tends to under-describe the kind of ontological fallacy at work in racialization by characterizing it merely as a problem of bad belief. And third, a materialist version of ideology critique jettisons a virtue-ethics approach to creating 'better' (i.e. antiracist) knowers as overly voluntarist and individualized, preferring instead to focus on the collective political work needed to change the racialized worlds and racist cultures that make prejudice appear to be both instrumentally rational and intersubjectively reasonable. The solution here is not linked to the proliferation of unconscious bias training or antiracist self-help techniques, but instead to the difficult work of social transformation and political contestation. As Hall notes, racism cannot be 'overcome, as a general virus in the social body, by a heavy dose of liberal inoculation'.<sup>96</sup>

Antiracist struggle, in this sense, can and ought to take place on many different fronts, in keeping with the Gramscian 'war of position' waged across industrial relations, the state and civil society.<sup>97</sup> Ultimately, such a politics must be geared towards the material dismantling of social formations structured in racial dominance – which will require both antiracist challenges to state power and policing, for example, as well as a broader campaign to seize control back from capital and its racialized logics of dispossession and exploitation. But when it comes to challenging the discursive production of racist commonsense and its political mobilization for oppressive and exploitative ends, however, there are two obvious sites of intervention. First, critical social theorists and activists alike can get involved directly in the demystifying critique of the racialized narratives, affects, and imaginaries that reactionary populisms are weaponizing today to win popular support for authoritarian policies, especially in the wake of neoliberal efforts to sell off the welfare state for scrap. And second, we can work to democratize and reshape the institutional apparatuses that consolidate the mainstream 'common-sense' – including schools, corporate-funded mass media, the culture industry, and social media networks that monetize violent spectacle, racialized and engendered affects, and conspiratorial thinking. None of this collective work, of course, will be easy. But it shows that merely revealing the epistemic and moral failures inherent to all racist thinking cannot be the end goal of antiracist organizing. Instead of focussing on questions of truth or falsity, antiracist critique should instead seek to understand what political work racisms accomplish in concrete historical formations.<sup>98</sup> Only then can we understand how best to target and dismantle the social forces that continue to make racist ideologies materially effective in the aftermath of empire.

## **Conclusion**

The epistemic injustice literature provides a promising look at how individual knowers can be, so to speak, 'taken in' by racist imaginaries – and how Black knowers can be denied the opportunities to challenge those hegemonic hermeneutical resources. But as I've argued in this article, Fricker's project remains worryingly limited when it comes to conceptualizing and ameliorating the forms of raciological reason operative within White settler and postimperial social formations. Her theorizations of testimonial injustice and hermeneutical incapacity construe racism primarily as an epistemic problem – as a series

of mistaken judgements with immoral consequences. Yet within racial hierarchies like that of the United States, there is no regular epistemic norm against which we can measure or account for the ‘devaluation’ that anti-Black imaginaries inject into epistemic subjects’ interior reasoning processes. Racialized stereotypes, images, and affects cathect and shape our interpretative judgements in complicated ways. It is misguided to think that lone and ‘virtuous’ individuals could fully eliminate these racist pre-judgements and habits from their practical way of being-in-the-world while the social institutions, modes of governance, and normative practices that make race a part of the ‘real’ relations of their social lives are left untouched. In this respect, her virtue-ethics approach to the amelioration of these epistemic injustices fails to offer the correct political teeth when it comes to repairing the deleterious effects of these racialized imaginaries.

Instead of theorizing racist social cognition through an optimistic account of epistemic norms, then, I argue that political theorists ought to return to a negativist conception of ideology and ideology critique. In doing so, I am not advocating for a crude account of false consciousness whereby the oppressed have been duped or otherwise incapacitated by the ideas and concepts of the ruling class (or a racialized class segment). Instead, I follow the work of Stuart Hall in arguing for a more pragmatic and materialist conception of ideology that sees raciological imaginaries as part of a broader field of ideological contestation between differently situated publics. This materialist approach to raciological unreason, in turn, provides a way of disclosing and contesting the ‘deeper’ connections between racial capitalism and White supremacy, on the one hand, and the forms of racialized ‘common-sense’, on the other. Namely, it treats racisms first and foremost as political artifacts, rather than as mere epistemic mistakes or moral errors. After all, racialized narratives, images, and concepts, therefore, can on one level be indicted for corroding individuals’ capacities as epistemic subjects and yet, on the other, seem to respond to the systemic imperatives of a racial order that fiercely conditions what can be said or acted upon. By reclaiming ideology critique for antiracist theorizing and politics, scholars and activists alike can move beyond narrowly individualist projects geared towards making White people ‘better knowers’ and instead towards challenging the institutional apparatuses, mainstream discourses, and hegemonic political coalitions which continue to make racisms into politically salient and economically rational modes of reasoning and practice.

## Acknowledgements

Thank you to Lois McNay, John McGowan, Patrick Wheatley, and the Political Theory Research Group at the University of Birmingham for providing thoughtful feedback on earlier drafts. I would also like to thank the Department of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Birmingham for its research support.

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## Notes

1. See Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*; Medina, *The Epistemology of Resistance*; Fricker, 'Epistemic Injustice and the Preservation of Ignorance'.
2. Long before Fricker's book was published, the entanglement of social power and knowledge production had surfaced as a distinctive problematic within different scholarly milieus, including in Black feminism, feminist standpoint epistemology, the Marxist-inspired tradition of ideology critique, and postcolonial and decolonial theory's critiques of the coloniality of the Western episteme. These predecessors and points of theoretical overlap often go unrecognized in the epistemic injustice debates.
3. Gilroy, *Against Race*, 11–12.
4. For example, Rachel McKinnon's 2016 review article on the epistemic injustice debates centres Fricker's work. McKinnon, 'Epistemic Injustice'.
5. Carel and Kidd, 'Epistemic Injustice in Healthcare'; Kidd, Spencer, and Carel, 'Epistemic Injustice in Psychiatric Research and Practice'.
6. Kotzee, 'Education and Epistemic Injustice'; Omodan, 'Unveiling Epistemic Injustice in Education'.
7. Doan, 'Epistemic Injustice and Epistemic Redlining'.
8. Sullivan, 'Epistemic Injustice and the Law'; Lackey, *Criminal Testimonial Injustice*.
9. Hänel, '#MeToo and Testimonial Injustice: An Investigation of Moral and Conceptual Knowledge'.
10. Michaels, 'Potential for Epistemic Injustice in Evidence-Based Healthcare Policy and Guidance'.
11. Alcoff, 'Philosophy and Philosophical Practice: Eurocentrism as an Epistemology of Ignorance'; Tsosie, 'Indigenous Peoples, Anthropology, and the Legacy of Epistemic Injustice'.
12. Grasswick, 'Epistemic Injustice in Science'; Herzog and Lepenies, 'Citizen Science in Deliberative Systems'.
13. Butterfield, 'Comedic Hermeneutical Injustice'.
14. See, for example, Davis, 'Typecasts, Tokens, and Spokespersons'; Dotson, 'Tracking Epistemic Violence, Tracking Practices of Silencing'; Dotson, 'A Cautionary Tale'; Medina, *The Epistemology of Resistance*; Mason, 'Two Kinds of Unknowing'; Medina, 'Ignorance and Racial Insensitivity'; Pohlhaus Jr, 'Relational Knowing and Epistemic Injustice'.
15. There are, of course, exceptions to this within the epistemic injustice literature. For example, Kristie Dotson takes a structural and systemic view to the problems of knowledge production and dissemination, especially in her later work on conceptualizing epistemic oppression. My critique in this article is directed at the individualist approach taken by Fricker and Medina. I am generally in agreement with Dotson's discussion of the difficulties of resolving epistemic exclusions produced by 'features' internal to epistemological systems themselves rather than social and political relations. The critique that I mobilize, however, is operating at a different level of abstraction and sociological scale. Rather than target the limits of a hegemonic epistemological system as such, I am more concerned with the processes by which certain ideas become materially effective in concrete social formations – by which I mean that they work to naturalize or otherwise legitimate existing racial hierarchies and contribute to the practices of racial inequality and domination that reproduce those hierarchies. For Dotson's incisive account

- of epistemic oppression, see Dotson, 'Conceptualizing Epistemic Oppression'; Dotson, 'Accumulating Epistemic Power'; Berenstain et al., 'Epistemic Oppression, Resistance, and Resurgence'.
16. In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in ideology critique, including among analytical political philosophers, self-described 'political realists', and Critical Theorists working in the Frankfurt School tradition. Part of that surge in scholarly engagement can be explained by the changing objective conditions which have posed anew problems that break with liberal modes of political reason – from disinformation and propaganda campaigns to the consolidation of new authoritarian-popular formations under the banner of ethno-nationalism. See, for example, Celikates, 'From Critical Social Theory to a Social Theory of Critique'; Jaeggi, 'Rethinking Ideology'; Ng, 'Ideology Critique from Hegel and Marx to Critical Theory'; Stanley, *How Propaganda Works*; Haslanger, 'Taking a Stand: Second-Order Social Pathologies or First-Order Critique'; Aytac and Rossi, 'Ideology Critique without Morality'.
  17. Hall, 'The Problem of Ideology: Marxism without Guarantees', 151.
  18. In this respect, my approach to ideology critique differs in emphasis from the epistemological approach advocated recently by political realists like Ugur Aytac and Enzo Rossi as well as from the moralist approach taken by Haslanger and Shelby. While both approaches hit on important aspects of ideological phenomena, I think that they each overemphasize – in their own ways – the problematic origins of 'bad beliefs' and undertheorize the sociological relation between these ideas and the reproduction of power asymmetries.
  19. Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 60.
  20. See Hannaford, *Race*; McCarthy, *Race, Empire, and the Idea of Human Development*, 73–78; Staub, *The Mismeasure of Minds*.
  21. Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 28.
  22. Fricker, 20.
  23. Fricker, 145.
  24. Scholars like Paul Giladi and Nicola McMillan have noted the theoretical similarities between Fricker's concept of epistemic injustice and Axel Honneth's use of a Hegelian account of intersubjective recognition. See Giladi and McMillan, *Epistemic Injustice and the Philosophy of Recognition*.
  25. For example, Patricia Hill Collins examined how Black women are regularly subjected to racist and sexist 'controlling stereotypes', including that of the mammy, the matriarch, the welfare queen, and the jezebel. Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*, second ed. (New York; Routledge, 2000), 72–84.
  26. For an overview of ongoing practices of racial inequality in diverse areas of social life, see Perry, *More Beautiful and More Terrible*, 35–37.
  27. Sue, *Microaggressions in Everyday Life*.
  28. Dotson, 'Tracking Epistemic Violence, Tracking Practices of Silencing', 247.
  29. Critics have pointed out that Marxist ideology critique has tended to treat individual subjects as little more than passive vessels for the imprints of structural and symbolic forces. Rehmman, *Theories of Ideology*, 6; Hall, 'The Problem of Ideology: Marxism without Guarantees', 141.
  30. Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 37.
  31. Brownstein and Saul, *Implicit Bias and Philosophy*; Holroyd and Puddifoot, 'Epistemic Injustice and Implicit Bias'.

32. Medina, *The Epistemology of Resistance*, 35–39.
33. Mills, ‘White Ignorance’, 25.
34. Medina, ‘Ignorance and Racial Insensitivity’, 182.
35. Spelman, ‘Managing Ignorance’, 122.
36. Medina, *The Epistemology of Resistance*, 67–69.
37. Dotson, ‘Conceptualizing Epistemic Oppression’, 125–26.
38. See, for example, Joel Cooper, *Cognitive Dissonance*; Prasad et al., “‘There Must Be a Reason’”; Nauroth et al., ‘The Effects of Social Identity Threat and Social Identity Affirmation on Laypersons’ Perception of Scientists’.
39. For a view predicated on White knowers’ material interests in not knowing, see Mills, ‘White Ignorance’.
40. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, xiv.
41. Fricker, ‘Epistemic Injustice and the Preservation of Ignorance’, 170–72.
42. While there is no ‘precise science’ of appropriately attributing credibility to other knowers, Fricker notes, ‘clearly there can be error in the direction of excess or deficit...’ Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 18.
43. Hall, ‘The Whites of Their Eyes: Racist Ideologies and the Media’, 101.
44. Perry, *More Beautiful and More Terrible*, 21, 31.
45. For a discussion of policing and ‘crises’ over Black men and other racialized deviants, see Felker-Kantor, *Policing Los Angeles*. For a similar analysis of Britain, see Gilroy, *There Ain’t No Black in the Union Jack*.
46. Nguyen and Pontell, ‘Fraud and Inequality in the Subprime Mortgage Crisis’.
47. Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 91.
48. Sherman, ‘There’s No (Testimonial) Justice’, 244–45; Dotson, ‘Conceptualizing Epistemic Oppression’, 129. For a defence of Fricker’s turn to virtue epistemology, see McWilliams, ‘Can Epistemic Virtues Help Combat Epistemologies of Ignorance?’
49. Fanon discusses the reactivation of racial stereotypes in the case of a Black doctor. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 97.
50. Alcoff, ‘Epistemic Identities’, 131.
51. Fanon, *Toward the African Revolution*, 35.
52. Fricker, ‘Epistemic Injustice and the Preservation of Ignorance’, 175–76.
53. Fricker, 163.
54. Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 155–59.
55. Fricker, 149–51.
56. See Medina, *The Epistemology of Resistance*; Mason, ‘Two Kinds of Unknowing’; Pohlhaus Jr, ‘Relational Knowing and Epistemic Injustice’; Dotson, ‘A Cautionary Tale’.
57. Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, 8.
58. Fricker, ‘Epistemic Injustice and the Preservation of Ignorance’, 165–67.
59. Gaile Pohlhaus develops her account of privileged knowers’ ‘willful hermeneutical ignorance’ partly in response to Fricker’s focus on the marginalized knower in her account of hermeneutical injustice. Pohlhaus Jr, ‘Relational Knowing and Epistemic Injustice’, 724–25.
60. Fricker, ‘Epistemic Injustice and the Preservation of Ignorance’, 172.
61. Fricker, 175.

62. Dotson and Pohlhaus raise similar concerns about how Fricker's narrow conceptualization of testimonial and hermeneutical injustice overlooks other kinds of culpable epistemic dysfunction, including wilful forms of situated ignorance that harm marginalized knowers. Dotson describes these 'contributory injustices' as pervasive. Dotson, 'A Cautionary Tale', 41; Pohlhaus Jr, 'Relational Knowing and Epistemic Injustice', 734.
63. In her revised reflections on hermeneutical injustice in the 2016 chapter, she stresses yet again that the defining feature of hermeneutical injustice is 'some impoverishment in shared conceptual resources' Fricker, 'Epistemic Injustice and the Preservation of Ignorance', 173.
64. Audre Lorde's analysis of the 'mythical norm' of the White, male, cisgender, heterosexual, and middle-class subject is illustrative here. See Lorde, *Sister Outsider*, 116.
65. Fricker, notably, describes motivated forms of White ignorance as a 'racialised form of ideological thinking', lending further credence to my claim that a theory of ideology provides a more useful toolkit for demystifying and critiquing raciological (un)reason. Fricker, 'Epistemic Injustice and the Preservation of Ignorance', 170.
66. Charles Mills raises a similar point when he worries that Fricker's account of knowledge production is too liberal. Mills, 'Ideology', 106.
67. As Stuart Hall and his CCCS colleagues pointed out in their discussion of the conflict between the White and Black working classes in 1970s Britain, it wasn't that workers from both groups were operating under some sort of 'false consciousness', but that 'race' had become the phenomenal form through which their specific class position was being lived out. Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis*, 394–5.
68. See, for example, Cristina Beltrán's book on how U.S. democracy is predicated on the freedom of White movement, at the expense of Indigenous peoples and their claims to their land. Beltrán, *Cruelty as Citizenship*.
69. Fricker doesn't provide much on what sorts of political solutions might be warranted, but she notes that 'structural remedies' to the problem of hermeneutical marginalization are 'no doubt called for'. Fricker, 'Epistemic Injustice and the Preservation of Ignorance', 175–76.
70. Davis, 'On Epistemic Appropriation'; Medina, 'Group Agential Epistemic Injustice'.
71. Bufkin, 'The Politics of White Misrecognition and Practices of Racial Inequality'.
72. Mills, 'Ideology', 110.
73. The Marxist tradition of ideology critique, of course, has not been without its detractors. Scholars have criticized its practitioners for offering a crude account of the 'false consciousness' of the oppressed; for overinflating and naturalizing the critic's presumed epistemic authority and greater insight into the nature of oppression; and for blaming the absence of organized resistance to capital on 'false beliefs' among the workers instead of attributing it to their lack of power. See, for example, Rosen, *On Voluntary Servitude*; Celikates, 'From Critical Social Theory to a Social Theory of Critique'; Sankaran, 'What's New in the New Ideology Critique?'
74. Marx, 'Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy', 159–60.
75. Geuss, *The Idea of a Critical Theory*, 13.
76. Adorno writes that 'truth and untruth are always intertwined' in ideologies. Quoted in Jaeggi, 'Rethinking Ideology', 66.
77. Hall, 'Subjects in History', 330.
78. Goldberg, *The Threat of Race*, 329.

79. Gilroy, *Against Race*, 25.
80. Mbembe, 'Necropolitics', 16–25; Gilroy, *After Empire*, 46–49.
81. Gilroy, *Against Race*, 42.
82. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 89.
83. Emirbayer and Desmond, *The Racial Order*, 3–5.
84. For example, W.E.B. DuBois claimed that White workers chose an alliance with White capital because they had become more affectively invested in the symbolic status afforded by a shared whiteness than they were in the prospect of building class power with Black workers. See Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America*. For an in-depth discussion of racist discourses that foregrounds their 'ideological' elements, see Goldberg, *Racist Culture*.
85. See, for example, Shelby, 'Is Racism in the "Heart"?'; Shelby, 'Ideology, Racism, and Critical Social Theory'; Shelby, 'Racism, Moralism, and Social Criticism'; Mills, *The Racial Contract*; Mills, 'Ideology'; Haslanger, 'Racism, Ideology, and Social Movements'; Haslanger, *Ideology in Practice*.
86. Shelby, 'Ideology, Racism, and Critical Social Theory', 169.
87. Sankaran, 'What's New in the New Ideology Critique?'
88. Oh, 'Critiquing Racist Ideology as Harmful Social Norms', 11.
89. I do not have the space in this article to give a full account of what the more materialist approach to ideology critique entails and how it operates, but I am working on an article that reconstructs this alternative approach based on the work of Stuart Hall.
90. Hall, 'The Problem of Ideology: Marxism without Guarantees', 136.
91. In this respect, my project shares some key aims with the political realist approach to ideology critique. Aytac and Rossi stress that the critical test, instead, should be whether a belief or set of ideas were produced by forms of 'self-justifying power' – that is, by socially dominant groups who are free to circulate their own motivated beliefs without sufficient accountability or epistemic contestation from subordinate knowers. In doing so, they return to the etiological premise central to a Marxist account of ideology, namely, that power relations condition which modes of knowledge are taken up as authoritative. But I worry that their epistemological analyses focus too much on origins and not enough on the social and political work that certain rationalities and modes of knowing do, regardless of who comes up with them. This is likely more of a difference in diagnostic emphasis than it is of conceptual kind. See Aytac and Rossi, 'Ideology Critique without Morality'.
92. Gramsci, *The Modern Prince, and Other Writings*, 157; Hall, 'Gramsci's Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity', 317–21.
93. Hall, 'The Problem of Ideology: Marxism without Guarantees', 149.
94. Fanon, *Toward the African Revolution*, 40.
95. Foucault, 'The Political Function of the Intellectual', 13.
96. Hall, 'Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Dominance', 240.
97. Hall, 'Gramsci's Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity', 311–14.
98. Hall, 'Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Dominance', 234–36.

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