

**Racial Equity in Social Psychological Science:
A Guide for Scholars, Institutions, and the Field**

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Abstract

How can social psychologists ensure their scholarship does not maintain racial inequality—or, better, is anti-racist? This article serves as a reference for scholars by briefly reviewing the state of racial inequality in psychological science before providing concise yet comprehensive recommendations. Challenges include a) the field's historic role in inequality-maintenance, especially by reinforcing harmful stereotypes, b) pervasive objectivity norms that reify Whiteness as the status quo, and c) the inequitable allocation of resources to White scholars and White-centered scholarship. Recommendations center on a) methodological practices during the research process, from idea generation to manuscript preparation, b) empirical transparency from scholars during the publication process, and c) institutional, resource-focused support from gatekeepers (e.g., editors, senior faculty) to incentivize the diversification of our science.

Keywords: race and ethnicity, inequality, academia, meta-science, objectivity, stereotypes

Racial Equity in Social Psychological Science: A Guide for Scholars, Institutions, and the Field

In 2020, the world was rocked by the brutal killing of Mr. George Floyd. Millions around the world took to the streets in protest. Organizations rushed to release statements affirming their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Institutions changed the names of buildings, awards, and even schools to avoid associations with racist history (Jones, 2020). The field of psychology was not untouched by this social movement. In the months that followed, multiple papers were retracted from top scientific journals for perpetuating harmful stereotypes (Bauer, 2020; Johnson et al., 2020). Recent empirical findings (e.g., Roberts et al., 2020) reinforced what is easily revealed by examining the field's major conferences or journals' editorial boards: social psychology is overwhelmingly White, across levels and sub-disciplines. This has implications for the quality and impact of our science—the research questions that are asked, the participants whose views are represented, the scholarship that is funded, published, and disseminated.

The field has shown some self-awareness (Dupree & Kraus, 2022; Ledgerwood et al., 2022). Task forces have been created, reports produced, calls to action written, and awards funded. But progress, along many metrics, has been frustratingly slow. In this article, we provide a guide for social psychologists who wish to help move our field toward racial equity, ensuring that our science is representative of the world around us, inclusive of historically-marginalized scholars, and aiding progress toward an equitable society. These concrete, data-driven recommendations are aimed at scholars across levels—from graduate student to full professor, from the individual to the field. We discuss the importance of methodological practice, empirical transparency, and resource-driven institutional support (particularly from gatekeepers such as

journal editors, principal investigators, or senior faculty on hiring and promotion committees). We begin with critical socio-historical context of racial inequality in social psychology.

Foundations of Racial Inequality in Psychological Science

For decades, social psychologists have studied the antecedents and consequences of racism. However, when we look inward, the evidence is clear: social psychology is by no means immune from perpetuating racial inequality. Anecdotally, the field is rife with stories of scholars of color being tokenized, suffering from micro-aggressions to explicit bigotry, and ultimately, leaving the field due to chronic racial injustices (see #BlackInTheAcademy for examples). Empirically, recent scholarship illustrates the pervasiveness of racial inequality in our field. Roberts and colleagues (2020) queried more than 11,500 empirical articles published in two of social psychology's top journals (e.g., *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*), finding that the vast majority did not reference participant race (95%), were edited by White editors (92%), and were written by White scholars (72%). Those edited by White editors were less likely to highlight race, and among those that did highlight race, those authored by White scholars were less likely to report participant race. These stories and findings reinforce the notion that psychological science—a field that was created by and for wealthy, White men—has maintained its exclusivity nearly 150 years after its inception. As such, the field that purports to reveal how humans think, feel, and behave is only representative and inclusive of a select few.

Historical Foundations

Any scholar who seeks to eradicate racial inequality in psychological science must understand the field's historic role in building and maintaining racial inequality. We do not find ourselves here by accident. Historically, psychological science has long buttressed systems of racial inequality. Psychology played a crucial role in the creation and maintenance of stereotypes

depicting people of color as cognitively, biologically, and socially inferior to White people (Saini, 2019). Since the 1800s, psychologists have played a crucial role in biological or genetic determinism—the notion that different genetic material corresponds to different levels of intelligence. According to this theory, people of color are cognitively inferior due to their genetic inferiority, leaving them governed by base, animal-like instincts (Plomin, 2018; Saini, 2019). Such theories persisted for decades, justifying a global slave trade, a eugenics movement that gave rise to World War II, and Jim Crow laws that persisted until the Civil Rights Movement. Genetic determinism was taught widely in psychology courses throughout the 1900s, and, troublingly, such arguments are still made in published work (Plomin, 2018; Comfort, 2018).

Psychological Foundations

Racism is a systemic phenomenon, baked into the fabric of our society (see Saini, 2019, for a longer review). As social psychologists, we have studied the contextual and psychological factors that contribute to the maintenance of racial inequality. These same mechanisms contribute to racial bias and inequality within our field.

Racial Ignorance. A wealth of psychological research has established that race plays a crucial role in how people perceive and move through the world (Roberts & Rizzo, 2021). Despite pervasive evidence of these racialized experiences, many White scholars remain racially ignorant, in large part due to overwhelmingly White social and professional networks (Mills, 2014; Mueller, 2020). People of color, in contrast, are often forced to navigate mostly-White workspaces as the token person of color, leaving them subject to subtle and deliberate manifestations of bias that only reduce their belonging (Anderson, 2015). Racial segregation, which has long been the norm in the United States (Massey & Denton, 1993; Rothstein, 2017) means that White psychologists are less likely to have lived experiences that give them a

nuanced understanding of racism. Such personal experiences are critical for recognizing and rejecting dominant worldviews that maintain racial inequality (e.g., Dubois, 1903; Hill Collins, 1991). As such, White editors and other gatekeepers are less likely to recognize the validity and importance of research questions related to race.

The Denial of Racism. Social psychology reveals that people are motivated to believe in a just world and to see the world as a meritocracy. In the domain of race, White people, who benefit from hiding the uncomfortable existence of racial privilege—privilege from which they benefit—tend to deny that such privilege exists (Lowery et al., 2007). It is possible to override this tendency, but only if other positive personal characteristics have already been affirmed (e.g., Knowles & Lowery, 2012; Phillips & Lowery, 2018). This dovetails with recent research revealing that individuals have a motivated tendency to underestimate racial inequality in society and their institutions (Boykin et al., 2019; Kraus et al., 2017; Ray, 2019). Indeed, those who do underestimate racial inequality are less likely to hire Black job applicants seeking a high-status job or support policies that reduce inequality (Dupree et al., 2021).

The Interrogation of Racially Minoritized Scholars. These psychological foundations manifest in behaviors that contribute to the interrogation and isolation of racially minoritized scholars. Due to their racial identity, racially minoritized scholars who seek to bring their lived experiences to their research may be perceived as unable to shed personal biases—leaving them subject to empirical interrogation. In contrast, due to historical power dynamics, White scholars' personal biases and lived experiences are perceived as default, neutral, more easily adhering to traditional notions of objective science—excusing them from such interrogation.

Such dynamics are made clear when we examine our field's own literature on bias confrontation. Minority groups who confront bias are often met with skepticism (Czopp &

Monteith, 2003; Drury & Kaiser, 2014; Rasinski & Czopp, 2010). Indeed, Black people who confront racial bias face more backlash compared to White confronters (Schultz & Maddox, 2013). This is especially concerning considering the tendency for marginalized scholars to study topics related to inequalities relative to other research topics (Hoppe et al., 2019); indeed, such topics may also be met with greater skepticism. Scholarship focused on racial justice violates the status quo of psychological science, wherein racial scholarship is severely underrepresented (Roberts et al., 2020). When people confront bias or challenge the status quo, they are more likely to be discredited by others (Ashburn-Nardo et al., 2008; Kaiser & Miller, 2001).

Racially minoritized scholars may take notice of these backlash effects, stifling their innovative and radical racial scholarship by attempting to objectify their work. This process fundamentally shapes racial discourse and racial scholarship in the academy in ways that are anything but objective (Anderson, 2015). For example, deterred by frequent and unconstructive interrogations of their work, underrepresented racial minorities may present their work in ways that align with the status quo—ultimately stalling efforts to encourage radical and novel racial scholarship and instead advancing a psychology of race filtered through the perspective of Whiteness (Andersen, 2003). Applying these findings to publication and science communication, strong negative reactions to researchers who challenge the status quo can contribute to racially minoritized scholars' feelings of alienation in academia.

Institutional Foundations

Objectivity Norms. Another factor driving racial inequality in psychological science may be the implicit norms enforced by institutions and stakeholders in our field. One such norm is objectivity. Objectivity, defined as the “extent to which a researcher’s methods are free from prejudice”, is a norm typically upheld across the sciences that enforces scientific rigor, personal

detachment, and a lack of bias (Armstrong, 1979, p. 423; Zuberi & Bonilla-Silva, 2008).

However, applying traditional standards of objectivity to the study of an undeniably subjective topic, such as racial scholarship, may hold implications for the reproduction of racial inequality in psychological science. For example, as previously mentioned, racially minoritized scholars who conduct research on racialized topics may be seen as too invested in the conclusions of their research, inviting interrogation over whether they are truly objective. In addition, the approaches and methodologies that are most likely to center the perspectives of racially marginalized people and provide a more critical lens to psychological studies of race are likely to be run counter to predominant norms of objectivity (e.g., Critical Race Psychology; see Salter & Adams, 2013; Salter & Haugen, 2017). Similarly, the difficulties associated with sampling racially minoritized groups members (Okazaki & Sue, 1995) and the use of qualitative methodologies to elevate the marginalized perspectives of these groups (e.g., Bowleg, 2013; Settles, 2006) are likely to invite scrutiny in a field devoted to rigorous, quantitative science in its pursuit of objectivity.

The Prioritization of Individualistic Approaches. Approaching racism as a systemic issue existing not only within the minds of individuals but also, largely, in the fabric of our society runs counter to the predominant individualistic approach of psychological science. Critical race psychology is an area of scholarship that imposes a critical lens upon hegemonic perspectives in psychology—in large part to transform the psychological study of race from an approach that views racism as embedded within the psychology of individuals to one that views racism as systemic (Salter & Adams, 2013). However, as this approach challenges the status quo, it may prompt a more skeptical review process, whereby ordinary claims require extraordinary evidence (e.g., evidence that racism is systemic). These higher standards may increase the

barriers to publication, particularly in top-tier journals, potentially stalling programs of research, promotions, and careers.

Implications of Racial Inequality in Social Psychological Science

Before turning to recommendations, we briefly note the implications of racial inequality in social psychological science—for they are grave. In short, the field of social psychology is a microcosm of a society that has a long legacy of upholding racial inequality. Individually, racial ignorance derived from segregation, the motivated tendency to deny racial privilege, and the interrogation of racially marginalized scholars who challenge the status quo keeping White editors and grant reviewers from seeing the importance of race-centered research questions and keep scholars of color marginalized. Structurally, objectivity norms and an emphasis on individuality maintain the Whiteness of our field, keeping White and racially minoritized psychological scientists from firmly and explicitly centering race in their scholarship.

These barriers contradict every intention set forth by psychological scholars who wish to improve the rigor of our field. For instance, scholars' attempts to objectify their research in order to align themselves with the status quo and seek approval from institutional gatekeepers (e.g., editors and reviewers) fundamentally shapes the landscape of racial scholarship in the academy. Thus, rather than creating a psychology of race that is free from bias, norms of objectivity create a psychology of race wherein racial scholarship is simultaneously too biased toward dominant (i.e., White) perspectives and lacking necessary nuance to capture the full range of mechanisms processes involved in experiences of racism.

The centering of White perspectives has consequences for the quality and impact of our science, and the cost our field to society is also great. For scientists wishing to elevate our psychological science's rigor and standing amongst policymakers, organizational stakeholders,

and colleagues in the hard sciences, decontextualized research proliferating ineffective approaches to diversity across society is antithetical to these goals. Ultimately, a psychology of race that does not fully incorporate and value the perspectives of racially minoritized people is limited in its imagination and potentially harmful in its policy-building capacity. Adjacent fields like political science and sociology have been grappling with race and taking its impact more seriously, and they are generating theories that are advancing our understanding of racial phenomena in paradigm-shifting ways. Political scientists Sen and Masow (2016) argue that “race is a bundle of sticks”, better understood as a bundle of related categories that co-occur with the latent factor we call “race”, while sociologist Ellis Monk (2022) argues that scientists are placing rigid categories (e.g., race) onto inherently fluid concepts. Social psychology must follow their lead to produce science that aids society, rather than shying away from these radical and innovative approaches to race.

Recommendations

By now, we hope it is clear that social psychology has a problem with race and it is imperative we address it. We now outline ways that individuals, departments, and institutions can take concrete steps to mitigate their contribution to the field’s centering of Whiteness and ultimately incorporate explicitly anti-racist methods and practices to their scholarship.

Understand the Scope of the Problem

First and foremost, it is imperative that we know the scope of the problem. While anecdotes can be powerful illustrators of racism’s impact, our field is primarily influenced by empirical evidence. Thus, individuals and organizations must audit themselves to see the extent to which they are unknowingly perpetuating racism. For example, many departments fielded surveys in 2020 and 2021 to assess the racial climate felt by graduate students, postdoctoral

fellows, and faculty as well as gather suggestions on how to improve the climate in the future. Relatedly, scholars have audited the race (and other identities) of those they cite in their manuscripts as an academic “racial Bechdel Test”, revealing just how White-centered is the scholarship in which they engage. Finally, in 2020, individuals and departments hosted implicit bias and anti-racist workshops and book clubs to improve understanding of interpersonal and structural racism, which often led to deep reflection and awareness of White privilege. Such data-driven steps—involving both empirical audits and conversations—are crucial; we must fully understand the nature of the problem before we can effectively intervene upon it.

Scholars must increase their awareness of White-centric practices and norms at all stages of research: from hypothesis generation, operationalization, and analysis, to interpretation of findings, the review process, and ultimately, publishing. One useful tool to assist in this awareness is Elizabeth Cole’s model for increasing awareness in psychology of intersectionality, or the interconnected hegemonic nature of social identities (Cole, 2009). She encourages scholars to ask three central questions at each stage of the research process, such as “who is included within this category” and “what role does inequality play?” Centering these questions can help underscore when assumptions are being made regarding prototypicality and norms that are rooted within whiteness as well as offer follow-up questions that will help mitigate it. Scholars can ask “who is included in my sample?”, leading them to increase sample diversity for generalizability or clarify to whom the sample refers (e.g., including racial qualifiers before generic words like “women”, “men” and “people” in titles and abstracts).

We note that, while addressing racial ignorance is a critical first step (Livingston, 2021), it is just the tip of the iceberg. Many well-meaning interventions aimed at improving racial equity focus solely on awareness without a strategy for implementation, allowing people to feel

good for doing something that ultimately changes nothing (e.g., implicit bias workshops; Onyeador et al., 2019). In fact, only engaging in shallow forms of addressing racial disparities can further entrench hierarchy by promoting an illusory sense of progress and fairness (Kaiser et al, 2013; Kraus et al., 2022).

Address White-Centered Practices

While there are many areas in which social psychology can decenter Whiteness, we focus on three here: explicitly decentering Whiteness in research representativeness, decentering Whiteness as a field-level norm, and decentering Whiteness in institutional incentive structures.

Decentering Whiteness in research representativeness. First, we propose for the field to decenter Whiteness by reconsidering a) whom we invest in as research assistants, graduate students, and faculty members, b) whom we request for invited talks and special issue submissions, and c) whom we research, cite, and elevate. The problem of racial diversity within our field is well-known. At the most senior level, the number of full tenured Black professors within social psychology is scarce, with full tenured Latinx and Native American professors at even more dismal numbers. Many programs exist to address pipeline issues, from summer research opportunity programs to community spaces like the *Black Social Psychology Retreat* and *Flourish*, which take place after the Society for Personality and Social Psychology's annual conference. However, very few of these programs focus on community-building and the ones that do are rarely institutionalized, with financial, temporal, and cognitive burden of maintaining them falling on the shoulders of racially minoritized scholars. We propose an increase in institutionalized support for programs that increase inclusion and networking opportunities. Examples to follow include the *Emerging Scholars Talk Series* in the psychology departments of Princeton and NYU, which explicitly bring in diverse scholars to present their work. Rather than

passively waiting for scholars to reach out and request to give a talk—requests that require a level of cultural knowledge that not all academics possess—organizers can reach out on social media and organizational listservs to request speakers, providing them with professional growth and increasing the exposure of their work. If at all possible, organizers should also consider providing an honorarium to speakers and covering travel costs, which can further incentivize a diverse array of scholars to present. Investing in scholars of color can go a long way toward diversifying the field, but it will require effort and financial capital.

Similarly, we encourage scholars to think deeply about the representativeness of their research samples, materials, and methods. Many scholars use convenience samples such as psychology students and online databases, which are notoriously non-representative, in part due to the overwhelming pressure to “publish or perish” (C. A. Anderson et al., 2004). Research stimuli for race-neutral work often feature White-only faces, names, and relevant scenarios, in an effort to “control for extraneous variance” (Cook & Over, 2021). However, titles, abstracts, and general findings are often described as if the research was done on representative samples using representative materials ([Henrich](#) et al., 2010; Rad et al., 2018). To decenter Whiteness in research design, we encourage scholars to be clearly and accurately describe who their research is about and to whom it can generalize—and to increase sample and stimuli diversity to be more inclusive. Scholars must also urge institutions to create better avenues to support finding and adequately compensating samples of racial minorities.

Increasing sample and stimuli diversity is easier said than done, and the field must invest in diversifying both. Online databases charge a premium for access to racially diverse samples, and there are few stimuli databases that have enough non-White targets to be useful. A special issue on diversifying standard paradigms in psychology—such as the “mind in the eyes” task,

currently assessed using only White faces—may encourage researchers to create these materials. We also urge departments and institutions to develop innovative ways of increasing access. There are some mechanisms for running representative or community samples at low cost, notably the Time-sharing Experiments for the Social Sciences (TESS; <http://tessexperiments.org/>) initiative and Harvard Digital Laboratory for the Social Sciences (DLABSS; <https://dlabss.harvard.edu/>). However, these mechanisms are idiosyncratic and access often depends on institutional prestige or luck. Other mechanisms such as The University of Chicago Survey Lab (<https://voices.uchicago.edu/surveylab/>) and Project Implicit (<https://www.projectimplicit.net/>) increase access to hard-to-recruit populations but are prohibitively expensive. These examples suggest that pooling resources can be an effective way to increase access to minoritized populations without drastically increasing costs.

Finally, we encourage scholars to acknowledge and celebrate the value of non-quantitative methods in decentering Whiteness. Qualitative methods—including storytelling and participatory action research—are at the forefront of the research paradigms of critical race theory and liberation psychology (Comas-Diaz & Rivera, 2020). In contrast to quantitative methods (e.g., experiment and survey research), qualitative methods give voice to the lived experiences of marginalized groups. Analyses that use or are informed by these methods have a greater capacity to place racial issues in a broader historical and societal context—bringing issues of race and power into the spaces where they are likely to be best understood (Kraus & Torrez, 2020). People of color are one of the most important sources of information on race and racism (Adams et al., 2018) and yet, qualitative methodologies centering their perspectives are often devalued and deemed less empirically rigorous in psychological science (Kidd, 2002)—thanks, in no small part, to objectivity norms.

Decentering Whiteness in social psychological norms. Second, we propose decentering Whiteness in social psychological norms. Norms are powerful tools for changing behaviors and altering outcomes; the social psychological research supporting this claim is vast (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004; Tankard & Paluck, 2016). And yet, our field hasn't fully grappled with the impact of these norms on perpetuating racial inequality.

The role of institutional gatekeepers. The norms of social psychological gatekeepers—those who are tenured, associate editors at major journals, heads of funding agencies, etc.—can have an outsized effect on increased equity. We can look to the open science movement as a great example of gatekeeper norms reverberating throughout the discipline. When journals such as the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* started to require sensitivity analysis to ensure that study effects were adequately powered, other journals soon followed suit. Requiring such analyses for a top journal increased scholars' familiarity with the concept, making it much more likely they would conduct sensitivity analyses for other manuscripts and not just the ones that require it. Scholars will become more comfortable with doing anti-racist work if they have the chance to practice, and discipline gatekeepers have a fundamental role in creating systems and spaces that make anti-racist behaviors valued and easy to implement.

Increasing the diversity and lived experience of gatekeepers is another way of changing the norms. For instance, returning to the notion of colorblindness, individuals who grew up in more racially-diverse spaces are less likely to endorse colorblindness and more likely to be race-conscious in how they view and react to racial dynamics (Meyers et al., 2021). Having people with more diverse cultural experiences at the helm of important social psychological organizations is critical for altering disciplinary norms. A diverse set of gatekeepers will be more cognizant of inequity and in a lack of inclusivity—and have the institutional power to implement

solutions to those problems. For example, people who are more race-conscious may be more likely to notice White-washing within the publishing process, including racial research receiving greater scrutiny, samples being predominantly-White (but referenced using in race-neutral language), and research focusing exclusively on racial minorities being forced to include White control samples for publication. Having a diverse set of gatekeepers with the power to address these problems—for instance, by changing reviewer guidelines, empowering associate editors to explicitly disregard reviewer advice for White control samples, and requiring precise language in the use of convenience samples—would go a long way to changing norms within the field.

The role of open science. Although the open science movement has imparted important lessons around setting and proliferating norms to improve the quality of our science, the particular norms it seeks to advance may inadvertently contribute to racial inequality in the field. In many ways, the open science movement was sparked by the highly publicized “replication crisis” in psychology. A key aim of the open science movement in our field is to increase the quality of psychological science by making scientific research (e.g., methodological decisions, pre-registered hypotheses, analysis syntax) more accessible and transparent in order to increase replicability (Crüwell et al., 2018). In an effort to increase the legitimacy of psychological science, open science advocates pushed forth more rigorous methodological and analytical standards for hypothesis testing. While these efforts are well-intentioned, without careful attention to the way in which these standards are applied, they may inadvertently contribute to objectivity norms in our field. For example, scholars of color conducting work on race, who are already more likely to receive interrogations to their objectivity in the form of methodological critique (Torrez et al., 2022), may see an increased intensity in these interrogations with the elevation of open science. Further, these interrogations, which disproportionately affect scholars

of color, may be lauded as part of our field's natural scientific practice of increasing open science, rather than critiqued for their unique burden on scholars of color.

The role of scholars. Non-gatekeepers can also alter field norms. One solution aimed at raising awareness of scholarship subjectivity is the implementation of reflexivity statements, also known as positionality statements. Typical academic norms would prescribe that scholars keep emotion and personal investment as separate from the research process as possible (Nzinga et al., 2018). However, White and racially minoritized scholars who study racial issues can and should make readers aware of their perspective, position, and (for some) privilege. Additionally, researchers who study topics they perceive to be race-neutral might reflect on how their positionality may nonetheless manifest in their work (Dupree & Kraus, 2022). Reflexivity statements require all scholars to reflect on the experiences and perspectives that they intentionally or unintentionally infuse into the research process, from ideation to interpretation. Several examples of such reflexivity statements exist. For example, Roberts and colleagues (2020) provide a note in the Acknowledgement section of their recent manuscript: “When the manuscript for this article was drafted, one author self-identified as U.S. Black-White American, and four authors self-identified as U.S. White American” (p. 12). Similarly, the current authors provide a reflexivity statement in the Acknowledgement of this article.

Returning to institutional gatekeepers, journals could require a reflexivity statement prior to submission in all social scientific papers—a practice typically more common in qualitative research. Editors could reflect on their own positionality and require reviewers provide a reflexivity statement when reviewing racial scholarship. In this way, scholars can reflect on their positionality in a way that invites structural changes by raising awareness of all scholars' subjectivity, rather than interrogating the objectivity of the few scholars of color in our field.

These reflexivity statements fit well in the field's focus on increasing the transparency and openness of our science. In the same way that journals require individuals to disclose their financial conflicts with their research, we should also disclose how our experiences and positions within society impacts our science.

Decentering Whiteness in incentive structures. Last, but not least, current incentivizes in the field do not match purported values. If we state that antiracism is a core value, those values should align with what gets rewarded within the field. As an example, publishing as many articles as possible is desired and highly rewarded, with no caveats given for racial dynamics (e.g., sample recruitment) that impact the capacity to publish quickly. Racially minoritized populations can be harder to recruit than White populations for a variety of reasons, ranging from deep distrust of academics due to historical racism (e.g., the Tuskegee experiments) to a lack of institutional compensation that aids recruitment. If we want to make social psychology less White, we must also change the expectations that are built on White-centered norms.

Importantly, we would like to see our field incentivize scholarship that not only investigates racial topics but does so from a critical lens that challenges the status quo. This can include, but is not limited to, a series of articles in every issue of the top social psychological journals (e.g., *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *Psychological Science*) focused on critical race psychology or qualitative methodologies that are authored by scholars of color. As the status quo currently marginalizes these perspectives and approaches (Hoppe et al., 2019), the relegation of this work to lower-tier specialty journals or special issues exacerbates racial inequality by contributing to racial disparities in publishing, citations, hiring, and promotions (Hofstra et al., 2020; Roberts et al., 2020) A proactive approach that prioritizes this work across issues in top-tier journals would bring those perspectives from the periphery (e.g., special issues

and specialty journals) into high-status, mainstream spaces, helping to alleviate these racial disparities. Editors and reviewers in these mainstream journals must also be required to become more acquainted with alternative perspectives and approaches in order to better evaluate and promote critical work on racial inequality. Short-term changes might involve adding more expertise in qualitative methods and critical scholarship to editorial boards, whereas long-term changes would involve more methodological training in psychology doctoral programs.

Conclusions

Social psychology is not immune from racism; racism lives here, too. It is no longer enough for our discipline to be aware of racism—social psychological scholars, gatekeepers, and the field must be actively anti-racist in the practice of our science. In this article, we aimed to provide social psychologists with the sociohistorical context, psychological foundation, and practical recommendations necessary to accomplish this task. We firmly believe that social psychology is well-positioned to fight against one of society’s most troubling ills: racial inequality. However, before we profess our intent to save the world’s ills, we must save ourselves. We hope that this article encourages social psychological scholars, gatekeepers, and institutions to take concrete steps toward racial equity, for the world needs us healthy and whole to effectively inform and assist a troubled society.

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