

I. The problem of laundry-list oppressions

II. Understanding the Theoretical Specificity of Racial Oppression, racial domination, racial inequality

1. *Methodological point: what do we mean by “theoretical specificity”?* three sorts of tasks:

- Specifying what is the abstract category within which “racism” would count as one specific type.
- Within this abstract category, specifying what distinguishes racism as a specific sub-type.
- Figuring out which historically concrete forms of oppression are instances of racial oppression

2. *The problem of “Essentialism”*

3. *The Abstract Category within which “race” is an instance:* alienated communal identity

4. *The specificity of Racial Oppression*

- i. Racial division is a *socially recognized distinction* between people based on *biological lineage*:
- ii. Typically the biological lineage is linked to some socially recognized and symbolically salient *visible physical attribute*
- iii. Racial *division* becomes racial *oppression* when it corresponds to some form of socially-significant exclusion connected to communal identities.
- iv. When racial division takes the form of racial oppression, the oppressed group is also invariably stigmatized

III. A Class Analysis of Racial Oppression

1. *Two Questions*

- 1) what are the processes which actively reproduce racial cleavage?
- 2) what are the processes that block challenges to eliminating racial cleavages?

2. *Who Benefits from Racism: four answers*

1. *white workers exploit black workers:*
2. *white workers oppress black workers* but do not exploit them
3. *white workers neither oppress nor exploit black workers:* capitalists differentially exploit different categories of workers
4. *The differential exploitation of black and white workers is of decreasing relevance.*

3. Why racialized inequality is especially robust

3.1 The problem of rational material interests of privileged white workers: an illustration of the problem

		Strata within the working class	
		High paid skilled workers: good jobs	Low paid unskilled workers: bad jobs
Race	White	Skilled white	Unskilled white
	Black	Skilled black	Unskilled black

Situation #1: significant economic gap between high paid low paid workers corresponding to a racial division (few unskilled whites; few skilled blacks)

Situation #2: significant economic gap between high paid and low paid workers but no racial correspondence

3.2 Racial Division and cross-strata class solidarity

Key issue: the way race defines *communities of deep interpersonal relations*, especially kinship.

Racialized social division, especially, is a powerful obstacle to intermarriage, and this blocks the proliferation of the kinds of ties that stretch interests. The problem of intermarriage across racial divisions has always been one of the most salient, biting features of racism and is fundamental to cementing the social mechanisms of racial oppression.

3.3 Two Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: The greater the correspondence between strata within the working class and racial division, the weaker will be the potential for class solidarity across these strata. This weakened class solidarity will, in turn, reinforce the distinctively racial form of inequality.

Hypothesis 2: As the correspondence between class/strata and race declines or is eroded, the basis for collective challenges to racial inequality increases.

3.4 The specificity of effects of Racial Oppression within class analysis:

Racial division, and sometimes ethnic division, is a form of social division that blocks the creation of communal ties across strata within the working class through kinship.

IV. The Transformation of the Southern Racial State

1. *Core thesis:* The Southern racial state was instituted and stabilized because it was a solution to a serious problem of reproducing class relation relations in the post-civil war era.

2. *Empirical claim* (David James): if the class analysis thesis is correct, then two predictions =

- The resiliency or fragility of the racial state would depend significantly upon its correspondence to the underlying material conditions linked to the class structure.
- Challenges to the racial state would be both easier and more likely to be successful when the class structure no longer functionally depended upon it.

3. *Historical Trajectory of creation, stability, dissolution of the Southern Racial State*