

Reparations for Racism and the Existence of White Supremacy in the United States
by
Zainab Bhindarwala

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Advisor: Professor Derrick Darby

Second Reader: Professor Elizabeth Anderson

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I. Introduction

The United States of America is a nation built on white supremacy, the notion that white people are superior to people of other races. White supremacy has existed in this country since its inception, and the marginalization of people of color in the United States has still not ended. Reparations are owed to people of color and I argue that these reparations can be fulfilled by constructing a more comprehensive collective memory of racism and the existence of white supremacy in the United States.

My conception of white supremacy is based on what Charles Mills calls “The Racial Contract.” Mills claims The Racial Contract is an implicit agreement between white people to oppress people of color. He emphasizes that all white people are beneficiaries of The Racial Contract, although not all agree with it.¹ Specifically, in my thesis, I focus on the negative perceptions that people of color face because of The Racial Contract and white supremacy.

Glenn Loury divides the causes of inequality into two categories: racial discrimination and racial stigma. Racial discrimination is how people are treated and racial stigma refers to how people are perceived.² De jure racial discrimination was abolished in the United States with the passing of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, however, this did not completely eradicate racial inequality. Racial discrimination continued, despite being illegal. This racial discrimination was motivated by racial stigma which cannot be completely eliminated by a change in the law. Racial stigma has a significant impact on the daily interactions people have with one another and it can have a large impact on the success of individuals and entire

¹ Mills, Charles. *The Racial Contract* (New York: Cornell University Press 1997), 11.

² Loury, Glenn. “Transgenerational Justice - Compensatory Versus Interpretative Approaches,” in *Reparations: Interdisciplinary Inquiries*, ed. Jon Miller and Rahul Kumar (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 89.

communities. Different communities of color hold misconceptions of one another and each of these misconceptions, or what I also refer to as racial stigma, stems from and serves to uphold white supremacy. Thus, I focus on measures that aim to eliminate racial stigma, as the elimination of racial stigma will lead to the elimination of racial discrimination.

Loury's definitions of racial discrimination and racial stigma specifically refer to Black people, but for my thesis, I extend these definitions to reference people of color broadly, including Native American, Black, South Asian, Arab, Latinx, East Asian, Southeast Asian, mixed race, and all other non-white people. My decision to focus on people of color as opposed to a single race is because white supremacists believe people who are white are superior to people that are not white. This is not limited to just Black people, although white supremacy has roots in anti-Blackness and the oppression of Black people is particularly egregious. White supremacy impacts different communities in different ways and to varying degrees and since the United States has become more multicultural and diverse in the last century, the perceptions of different communities of color are influenced by white supremacy.

The United States government is partially responsible for the plight of people of color in this country. In some instances, the government used white supremacist ideas to further their agenda, such as using slavery to build the United States' economy, and in other cases, the government failed to protect people of color when other groups acted discriminatorily towards them, such as allowing lynchings to occur legally until 2018.³ The government has a duty to make a reasonable attempt to protect its citizens and the failure to do so implicates the

³ Justice for Victims of Lynching Act, S. 3178, 115th Congress (2018).

government for the continued marginalization of people of color. Thus, the United States government owes reparations for its role in upholding white supremacy.

In the United States, the discourse on reparations focuses primarily on reparations for Black and Indigenous communities. These communities have been deeply wronged by the government and the government has not done a sufficient job at redressing these harms. Although my thesis focuses on reparations for people of color broadly as victims of white supremacy, substantial reparations must first be given to Black and Indigenous communities. My thesis aims to change the pervasiveness of white supremacy ideology in the United States and does not claim to offer ideas for reparations for specific communities or specific injustices.

The topic of reparations is not new - philosophers have debated this topic for centuries. My thesis offers insight into a reparations program that can lead to more substantial reparations in the future, by beginning with a focus on collective memory. First, I give background information on why my thesis focuses on collective memory and how memory relates to identity. Second, I explain the problem — the collective memory of racism is not comprehensive because of white supremacy — and offer a solution focused on fostering empathy to address racial stigma. Third, I go through the five models of reparations that the United Nations proposes and explain how they each influence the collective memory of racism throughout the history of the United States. I conclude with an argument in favor of the Satisfaction Model because it can foster empathy and change the perceptions of people of color to be more positive by making the collective memory of racism and the existence of white supremacy in the United States more comprehensive.

II. Background

In this chapter, I offer context for why my thesis is significant and what it adds to the literature on reparations. My thesis expands on Thomas McCarthy's idea that the politics of memory is linked to a nation's identity formation and public consciousness can be reformed through memory work. This section also defines collective memory and identifies how it connects to identity-formation. This discussion is crucial as it provides context for my claim that the collective memory of racism in the United States is not comprehensive. The reparations I propose aim to address this problem in order to minimize racial stigma.

Thomas McCarthy's work analyzing post-World War II Germany and comparing it to the United States provides the framework that I operate in. My thesis expands on McCarthy's ideas and picks up where he left off in "Coming to Terms with Our Past, Part II: On the Morality and Politics of Reparations for Slavery." McCarthy uses post-World War II Germany to illustrate how a country can deal with its unattractive history. Germany underwent a period in which the focus shifted from supporting victims of Nazism to supporting the German army. Supporting victims of a previous German regime was seen as hindering to patriotism in the country and this warping of history was a deliberate attempt to boost Germany's self-image by embellishing the country's ugly past. McCarthy emphasizes how academia in Germany moved past this period and moved to depictions of history that were more inclusive of the perspectives of victims of Nazism; however, the public consciousness did not follow suit. He compares this to events in the United States. After the Civil War, the racist South was largely in control of the narrative, and racism from the South permeated American culture and history after the Civil War. Although historians have reversed these narratives in academia, the public's consciousness is still largely

based on the narrative that the South infused into society after the war ended.⁴ This disparity between academia and the public enables the continued injustices against people of color.

My argument that the nation's collective memory of racism must be more comprehensive stems from McCarthy's assertion that there will continue to be obstacles to overcoming racism if the country's past injustices are not brought into the public consciousness.⁵ McCarthy argues that these past injustices impact conditions of justice in the present day⁶ and in order to build a just society, they must be addressed.⁷ McCarthy believes a reparations movement can start a national conversation on race that will influence the public consciousness.⁸ I, on the other hand, believe the reparations movement itself should focus on public consciousness by altering the nation's collective memory in order to allow for other reparations in the future.

One way to change the perceptions of communities of color in a way that does not burden people of color with the duty of asking for reparations is to focus on making the nation's collective memory more comprehensive. People of color must be involved in the construction of a more comprehensive collective memory of racism; however, the burden to fulfill reparations should be on the government, not on the victims of racism. The history of white supremacy must be brought into the public sphere by reconstructing the nation's memory of its racist history. If the public had a better understanding of how white supremacy is responsible for the injustices that communities of color face, their perceptions of people of color would be more positive.

⁴ McCarthy, Thomas. "Vergangenheitsbewältigung in the USA: On the Politics of the Memory of Slavery," *Political Theory*, Vol. 30 No. 5 (October 2002): 624-34.

⁵ McCarthy, "Vergangenheitsbewältigung in the USA," 636.

⁶ McCarthy, Thomas. "Coming to Terms with Our Past, Part II: On the Morality and Politics of Reparations for Slavery," *Political Theory*, Vol. 32 No. 6 (December 2004): 751.

⁷ McCarthy, "Vergangenheitsbewältigung in the USA," 627.

⁸ McCarthy, "Coming to Terms with Our Past," 765.

My interest in collective memory stems from McCarthy's claims about public consciousness and my desire to focus reparations on minimizing racial stigma. I argue that the key to reducing racial stigma is to promote empathy for people of color, and the way to foster empathy is to alter the nation's collective memory of racism. Before I establish the link between empathy and collective memory, I must first define collective memory and its relationship to group-identity and to white supremacy.

This chapter is an overview of the literature on collective memory. I begin by showing how memories are linked to our identities and how our memories are crucial to the groups we identify with. This is important because it informs my later suggestion that the collective memory of racism in the United States is not comprehensive because of factors that uphold white supremacy, including the psychology of white people and how their identity as a white person impacts collective memory. Before explaining the connection between collective memory and white supremacy, it is crucial to have background information on the relationship between memory and identity.

When a group of people forms their identity based on shared experiences and memories, they are considered a collective. The memories that this group uses to form their group identity is called *collective memory*. Thus, collective memory is a community's shared version of the past that helps shape their group identity. Collective memory helps groups form and helps us determine which social groups we identify with. Social identities are the identities we hold based on belonging to a group and having a relationship with that group and its members.⁹

⁹ Bavel, Jay Van and Cunningham, William. "A Social Identity Approach to Person Memory: Group Membership, Collective Identification, and Social Role Shape Attention and Memory," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, No. 12 (December 2012): 1567.

Brown, Adam, Nicole Kouri and William Hirst. "Memory's Malleability: Its Role in Shaping Collective Memory and Social Identity," *Frontiers in Psychology*, Vol. 3 (2012): 1-3.

Henri Tajfel and John Turner's Social Identity Theory explains how we determine our social identities: first, we classify people into different groups to make sense of our social environment. This stage is called Categorization.¹⁰ We then move to the second stage, Social Identification, where we adopt the identity of the group(s) that we see ourselves fitting into. One way we categorize ourselves into these groups is based on our knowledge that the experiences we have had are similar to the experiences of others in that group.¹¹ Our social identities are thus linked to our memories. This requires us to have memories of our own experiences, and knowledge of people who might be in the same categories as ourselves. To do this, we must have an awareness of the experiences and memories of others. We must understand how those experiences are similar and different from our own to determine which groups have memories most similar to our own. This stage is crucial to deciding our group membership and the formation of our self-identity.

Maurice Halbwachs has a different conception of memory's influence on group membership. In Halbwachs' view, we retain memories because something in our social environment stimulates us to remember something from our past. The more often something in our social environment triggers us to recall something that happened in the past, and the more often we come across such triggers, the more often we will recall the past event and the stronger that memory will become. Memories that are not recalled are eventually forgotten. This happens because nothing in our social environments triggers us to remember those specific memories, causing them to fade. The memories that remain are crucial to our identities because they are the

¹⁰ Tajfel, Henri and Turner, John. "The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior," *Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, 2nd ed. (1986): 7-24.

¹¹ Tajfel and Turner, "The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior," 7-24.

memories that impact our lives in the present day.¹² Tajfel and Halbwachs have different frameworks for how memories impact our identity, but both agree that memories play a significant role in our group memberships.

Psychologists such as Jay Bavel and William Cunningham have also found that the categories one occupies are psychologically significant and impact one's memory.¹³ For example, if you categorize a group of people into two teams: Team A and Team B, each individual on Team A is more likely to remember the faces of the people on their own team, even if they had the same amount of interaction with people on Team B, and vice versa. Being categorized into a specific group produces own-group memory bias where we remember people in our own groups better than we remember people in other groups.¹⁴ Bavel and Cunningham's study used mixed-race groups to ensure the results were not biased based on racial categories. The cross-race effect says we are more likely to remember and more easily able to identify people that are the same race as us than people of a different race. Bavel and Cunningham's study is significant because it shows that the phenomena of group membership influencing memory occurs across racial groups in addition to groupings that are not based on race.

Our individual memories influence our self-identity and memories that groups share influence group identities. Group membership is based on people sharing memories that are similar. Halbwachs stresses that it is not the case that memories are grouped together because their content is similar. Rather, memories are grouped together because the *same group* is

¹² Halbwachs, Maurice. *On Collective Memory*, ed. Lewis Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

¹³ Bavel and Cunningham, "A Social Identity Approach to Person Memory," 1566-78.

¹⁴ Bavel and Cunningham, "A Social Identity Approach to Person Memory," 1566-78.

interested in those memories.¹⁵ The memories relevant to group membership follow this same principle: it is not the case that the content of memories that groups share are similar — although they can be — it is the case that the same people are interested in these memories.

There is a difference between the collective memory of a group and the collective memory of a nation. Just as a group is composed of individuals who all retain their own memories, a nation is composed of groups that each have their own collective memory. However, the group in power determines the collective memory of the nation. Different communities of color have their own collective memory, especially of events in history relevant to their group. The collective memory of events that impacted other groups is weaker and not as comprehensive. This is best illustrated via an example: suppose there are three groups of people working together in an office. If the managers make a mistake and the employees face a pay decrease because of the manager's mistake, the group of managers and employees will retain a different collective memory of this event. The collective memory of the group of managers will minimize their mistake and perhaps they will not even have a strong memory of it at all, as they left the conflict unscathed. The employees, on the other hand, will have a sharp memory of the event and the repercussions from the managers' mistake will foster solidarity among the employees and strengthen their group identity. The interns will also develop a collective memory of this event, even if they were not directly involved. However, the collective memory of the interns is influenced by the managers' collective memory — since the managers are in power. This makes it so that two out of the three groups have a similar collective memory of the event, making it so that the collective memory of the combination of these groups — the collective

¹⁵ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 52.

memory of the office they work in — will be most similar to the collective memory of the managers, who are the people in power.

The collective memory of a nation works similarly: the dominant narrative is the one that becomes the nation's collective memory of an event. White people are the majority in the United States and they are the group that holds social and cultural power in our society. The government comprises primarily of white people and thus it aligns itself with the white population. Therefore, the narrative that white people have adopted drives the collective memory of the United States' racist history. The collective memory of white people is motivated by factors that uphold white supremacy. The reparations I argue for are measures that will change the nation's collective memory of its racist history and the role that white supremacy has played in the country's past and present. I return to this point later. From this point forward, when I say "the collective memory of racism," I am referring to the nation's collective memory and not the collective memory of a specific group, even though the nation's collective memory is largely based on the collective memory of white people.

As I have already established, collective memory influences group formation and how individuals identify themselves with a group. Collective memory influences the way people interact with one another at every level: collective memory helps individuals understand themselves and their own group membership, it help groups understand their relationship to one another, and it determines how current and future interactions between groups will look like, based on the respective collective memory of each group. The scholarship on collective memory can be grouped into five themes, each corresponding to a function of collective memory: (i) defining a group's identity, (ii) maintaining group continuity over time and space, (iii) deriving

meaning from the present day, (iv) influencing present-day politics and intergroup relations, (v) and fulfilling the imperative to remember the dead.

First, the literature suggests collective memory defines a group's identity. In addition to helping people determine their social identities, collective memory binds people together and helps a group distinguish itself from other groups.¹⁶ The process of distinguishing one's own group from other groups based on collective memory preserves the group's collective identity.¹⁷ Collective memory can also form after a group goes through a collective trauma; the trauma binds people together and the memory of the collective becomes integrated into one's own memory, just as elements of one's own memory becomes integrated into the memory of the collective.¹⁸ This is important for reparations claims because the ability to define groups based on their collective memory helps us determine whether groups are owed reparations.

Second, collective memory maintains group continuity. Communities are transgenerational entities that have a sense of group cohesion over time.¹⁹ This sense of continuity of the group is rooted in having a stable identity over time and a shared social status in the present day.²⁰ The group's identity is sustained over time by the collective memory of that group. A common objection to reparations is that the people that were impacted by past

¹⁶ Booth, W. James. "The Work of Memory: Time, Identity, and Justice," *Social Research: An International Quarterly*, Vol. 75 No. 1 (Spring 2008): 255.

Saint-Laurent, Constance de and Obradovic, Sandra. "Uses of the Past: History as a Resource for the Present," *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science*, Vol. 53 (October 2018): 1-13.

Bikmen, Nida. "Collective Memory as Identity Content After Ethnic Conflict: An Exploratory Study," *Journal of Peace Psychology*, Vol. 19 (February 2013): 23-33.

¹⁷ Hirschberger, Gilad. "Collective Trauma and the Social Construction of Meaning," *Frontiers in Psychology*, Vol. 9 (August 2018): 3.

¹⁸ Hirschberger, "Collective Trauma and the Social Construction of Meaning," 4.

¹⁹ A transgenerational entity is one that has a "historical identity that provides a sense of continuity between past, present and future members of the group". Hirschberger, "Collective Trauma and the Social Construction of Meaning," 4.

²⁰ Saint Laurent and Obradovic, "Uses of the Past: History as a Resource for the Present," 1-13.

injustices — both the perpetrators and victims — are no longer alive and thus reparations cannot be made. The idea of group continuity refutes this objection by making it clear that harm can be passed down generationally, and so can privilege that is gained from committing an injustice.

Third, collective memory derives meaning from the past for the present day. Gilad Hirschberger suggests communities that were victims of collective traumas use collective memory as a guide for present and future generations to identify and respond to threats.²¹ The history of trauma that communities have faced is used to make sense of their situations in the present day.²² These claims are crucial to reparations claims, as they recognize that the harm communities have faced in the past still impact their present-day. The collective memory of a community is interpreted as a source of meaning for the present and a way to position oneself in current society.²³ This aligns with Halbwachs' theory about memory being dependent on our environment and enduring as a result of being recollected.

Fourth, collective memory influences present-day relationships and politics. A study by Ryan Gabriel and Stewart Tolnay shows that areas with a high number of lynchings in the past tend to have higher numbers of white-on-Black homicides in the present day. They found that areas that had a history of resistance to white supremacy had a lower rate of white-on-Black homicides, even if they had a higher number of lynchings in the past.²⁴ This shows that memories of resistance to racism and white supremacy influence the present day. Sociologists Larry Griffin and Kenneth Bollen found that memories of past events also impact what people think about

²¹ Hirschberger, "Collective Trauma and the Social Construction of Meaning," 1-14.

²² Hirschberger, "Collective Trauma and the Social Construction of Meaning," 1-14.

Autry, Robyn. "The Political Economy of Memory: The Challenges of Representing National Conflict at 'Identity-Driven' Museums," *Theory and Society*, Vol. 42 No. 1 (January 2013): 57-80.

²³ Saint Laurent and Obradovic, "Uses of the Past: History as a Resource for the Present," 1-13.

²⁴ Gabriel, Ryan and Tolnay, Stewart. "The Legacy of Lynching? An Empirical Replication and Conceptual Extension," *Sociological Spectrum*, Vol. 37 No. 2 (2017): 77-96.

politics in the present day.²⁵ In particular, they studied how the memory of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States impacted people's political opinions. They found a positive correlation between strong memories of the Civil Rights Movement and more politically liberal opinions, especially in regards to issues related to race. Griffin and Bollen clarify that they are unsure if the correlation between strong memory recall of the Civil Rights Movement and liberal political opinions is causal. Although this is not conclusive evidence that a more comprehensive collective memory will cause more liberal political opinions, I believe reparations that construct a more comprehensive collective memory that fosters empathy can eventually shift politics in the United States to be more liberal and more open to fulfilling more substantial reparations.

Lastly, collective memory fulfills the imperative to remember the dead. Memories have a preservatory purpose: W. James Booth claims those who remember act as a witness to history, and the current community can do justice to the past by bearing witness to it and keeping it present via collective memory. There is an imperative to remember the dead as a form of honoring them and ensuring that their sacrifices and their experiences are not forgotten.²⁶ The reparations I propose aim to fulfill this imperative to remember the dead and their experiences.

Collective memory plays a significant role in influencing the groups that people identify with. The process of Categorization and Social Identification forces people to make judgments about different groups and this creates the possibility for negative biases to form. When these biases form, they are not rejected because the nation's collective memory does not provide outsiders with the information to reject these biases. This creates racial stigma, which I seek to combat via reparations focused on empathy.

²⁵ Griffin, Larry and Bollen, Kenneth. "What Do These Memories Do? Civil Rights Remembrance and Racial Attitudes," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 74 No. 4 (August 2009): 594-614.

²⁶ Booth, W. James. "The Work of Memory: Time, Identity, and Justice," 252.

While the literature on collective memory spans decades, more recently, there has been a debate in the literature between cultural and collective memory. Jan Assmann, a foundational scholar on this topic, determined that cultural memory is a type of collective memory, but not all collective memory can be considered cultural memory. Cultural memory includes sites of memory that put forward specific narratives of historical events²⁷. Collective memory is the combined narratives of past experiences that are crucial to the formation of a group's identity.²⁸ My thesis focuses on changing the nation's *collective* memory to incorporate the history of racism in the United States.

Collective memory is directly connected to identity-formation and people's group membership, and thus it influences the relationship that different groups have with one another. This background is crucial to consider for the rest of my thesis, as I explain how the nation's collective memory is linked to white supremacy. As mentioned, the collective memory of white people is motivated by white supremacy, and this results in a national collective memory of racism that is not comprehensive. This is the problem that I identify in my next chapter.

²⁷ Weedon, Chris and Glenn Jordan. "Special Section on Collective Memory," *Cultural Studies* (August 2011): 843-847.

²⁸ Assmann, Jan. "Communicative and Cultural Memory," in *Cultural Memory Studies* (Berlin, New York Press 2008): 109-118.

III. Empathy and Collective Memory

In my previous chapter, I established why I focus on collective memory for this thesis and how racial stigma connects to collective memory. Racial stigma exists in the United States because the national collective memory of racism is not comprehensive. I use this chapter to show how the nation's incomprehensive collective memory of racism is linked to white supremacy and offer a solution to this problem. The solution I propose is to foster empathy for people of color. This can be accomplished by altering the nation's collective memory of racism to be more comprehensive.

The nation's incomprehensive collective memory of racism exists because of white supremacy. Thus, to determine how to solve this problem, I examine the factors that contribute to white supremacy and how it creates an incomprehensive collective memory of racism. I explained why the national collective memory and the narratives of history that the government promotes are most similar to the collective memory of white people. The collective memory of white people is motivated by white supremacy for various reasons, each of which is partially responsible for the negative perceptions of people of color. If we can determine how white supremacy impacts collective memory, we will have identified specifically what problems we must address to minimize racial stigma. I examine the factors that allow white supremacy to exist in the United States and how these factors influence the collective memory of racism in the United States.

White guilt is a powerful motivator that makes it so the narratives of communities of color are not part of the national collective memory. Chana Teeger found that in post-apartheid South Africa, school teachers taught their students about apartheid by using a "both sides of the

story” narrative. The “both sides of the story” narrative emphasizes that every white person was not in favor of apartheid and not every Black person was a victim. Although this is true, this narrative deliberately overemphasizes examples outside the norm and de-emphasizes the existence of white supremacy and the benefits that white people retained due to apartheid, even if they did not support it. Teeger found teachers told “both sides of the story” in order to assuage the guilt that white students may feel upon learning that their in-group was responsible for such atrocities and that they themselves benefit from the legacy of apartheid. In order to minimize the risk of conflict arising from this guilt, teachers prioritized a narrative that would not make students feel guilty.²⁹

In this case, teachers place the importance of exempting students from misplaced guilt over the imperative to teach history through a lens that acknowledges white supremacy. A further reason teachers opted to teach apartheid through “both sides of the story” was the desire to maintain superiority in the classroom. Teeger found that teachers did not want their status as an authority figure questioned by their students. This was true of both white and Black teachers. White teachers did not want to give Black students an “excuse” and wanted to instill in them that “hard work will get them through life.”³⁰ Teeger found that Black teachers will challenge the notion of “both sides of the story” in their graduate classes when they were a student, but not in the classroom when they were the teacher.³¹ Teachers also feared conflict would arise if students made connections between past injustices and their present-day circumstances. This desire to reduce the risk of conflict in the classroom led teachers to teach history in a way that minimized

²⁹ Teeger, Chana. “‘Both Sides of the Story’: History Education in Post-Apartheid South Africa,” *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 80 No. 6 (December 2015): 1175-1200.

³⁰ Teeger, “‘Both Sides of the Story’: History Education in Post-Apartheid South Africa,” 1192.

³¹ Teeger, “‘Both Sides of the Story’: History Education in Post-Apartheid South Africa,” 1193.

the systemic racism and white supremacy that allowed apartheid to exist. This hindered students' ability to connect the past to the present.³²

This study illuminates how individual teachers use their positions of power in the classroom to dissociate apartheid from white supremacy. The teachers in Teeger's study failed to teach students skills that would allow them to recognize the way the racist past of their nation is connected to the present day. I elaborate on these skills later in this thesis. This "colorblind" approach to teaching history is also present in the way racial injustices are taught in the United States: in order to minimize feelings of guilt and the potential for conflict, teachers resort to teaching history in a way that does not include the existence of white supremacy and other structural forms of discrimination. This inhibits students' ability to draw connections between past racial injustices and current politics. Additionally, students are unable to see patterns of discrimination in the present day because they lack exposure to what those patterns looked like in the past.³³ When students are not taught about systemic injustices, they are more likely to believe that the situations that people of color can be found in — such as poverty, mass incarceration, and surveillance — are due to intrinsic flaws, rather than systemic oppression. This perpetuates the negative perception that people have of communities of color and also contributes to internalized racism that many people of color have.

It is additionally important to acknowledge the role that in-group bias and group attribution error play in the forming of collective memory. Since the nation's collective memory of injustices is shaped by the collective memory of white people, there is a bias against people of color. Groups tend to portray themselves in a positive light, even when they are perpetrators of

³² Teeger, "Both Sides of the Story": History Education in Post-Apartheid South Africa," 1175-1200.

³³ McCarthy, "Vergangenheitsbewältigung in the USA," 636.

horrible injustices.³⁴ Collective memory serves to define a group's identity and thus there is a tendency to portray one's in-group positively in those memories³⁵. Hirschberger found that a group's sense of worth is tied to their collective memory, thus making it so groups selectively forget historical events where they were in the wrong, and actively remember instances that empower their group and put forward a positive image. Furthermore, he found groups experience group-level attribution error where the perpetrators of injustices attribute negative in-group behavior to external causes to alleviate their own responsibility.³⁶

The collective memory of racism in the United States is directly linked to the negative perceptions of minorities. This deficit in information on the continued existence of white supremacy in the United States is responsible for the racist and stereotypical perceptions that many white people have of communities of color, and that communities of color have of each other. McCarthy argues that it is impossible to solve the problem of present day racial injustices if there is no public consciousness of past injustices.³⁷ The shock that many white people experience at being told that they have white privilege, or the denial that stems from learning racism still exists, is a result of an incomprehensive understanding of what white supremacy is, what it has looked like historically, and how it exists to this day.

Each of these different factors continues to uphold white supremacy and is responsible for the incomprehensive collective memory of racism in the United States that is in turn responsible for racial stigma. Now that I have identified the problem, I turn to a solution: fostering empathy.

³⁴ Hirschberger, "Collective Trauma and the Social Construction of Meaning," 1-14.

³⁵ Darby, Derrick and Richard Levy. "Postracial Remedies," *University of Michigan Journal of Law Reform* Vol. 50 (2016): 421-426.

³⁶ Hirschberger, "Collective Trauma and the Social Construction of Meaning," 1-14.

³⁷ McCarthy, "Vergangenheitsbewältigung in the USA," 636.

The reparations I propose will change people's perception of communities of color to be more positive. I argue we can accomplish this by constructing a more comprehensive national collective memory of the history of racism in the United States. A more comprehensive collective memory will mean the public has more exposure to the injustices that people of color have faced and they will be more empathetic towards the situations that people of color are currently in. Racial stigma exists because people have *little to no* information or *misinformation* about communities of color. Closing the information discrepancy and correcting people's misconceptions will build empathy and thus generate more positive perceptions of communities of color.

Empathy is a social interaction between two people where one person experiences the feelings of the second.³⁸ Most definitions imply that the process of empathy is one where people can see the world from another person's point of view and experience their emotions.³⁹ A key aspect of empathy is that people attempt to experience what another person is experiencing by placing themselves in their shoes. It is not possible to ever completely understand what someone else is feeling, but the aim of empathy is to do so to the best of one's ability.

Ethnocultural empathy is the ability to understand the perspective of someone with a different racial or ethnic background.⁴⁰ Fostering this specific form of empathy is key to fulfilling reparations for racism in the United States. There are many ways to foster empathy, and

³⁸ Salkind, Neil. *Encyclopedia of Educational Psychology*, Vol. 2, s.v. "Empathy." Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Inc., 2008.

³⁹ Bennett, Janet M. *SAGE Encyclopedia of Intercultural Competence*, Vol. 2, s.v. "Empathy." Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Inc., 2015.

Thompson, Sherwood. *Encyclopedia of Diversity and Social Justice*, s.v. "Empathy." Blue Ridge Summit: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2014.

Kaldi, Byron. *Encyclopedia of Philosophy and the Social Sciences*, Vol. 2, s.v. "Empathy." Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Inc., 2013.

⁴⁰ Thompson, *Encyclopedia of Diversity and Social Justice*, s.v. "Empathy."

each method requires a form of exposure. Many studies focus on the impact of direct contact exposure. Those who are exposed to people of different races show reduced intergroup prejudice⁴¹ and reduced negative stereotypes of that group.⁴² Pettigrew's overview of Intergroup Contact Theory found that one factor that reduces intergroup prejudice is the "mere exposure effect". The mere exposure effect says more exposure to a certain target will foster an increase in positive feelings towards that target. In other words, the more often one is exposed to a person, the more likely you are to feel more positively about that person.⁴³ This is evidence that exposure to people of color — whether that is through direct contact, narratives, or education — will reduce racial stigma.

A study conducted by Mariette Berndsen and Craig McGarty looked at whether thinking about an injustice from the perspective of the harmed group increases the desire of people in the perpetrating group to compensate victims. Specifically, Berndsen and McGarty looked at the feelings of non-Indigenous Australians towards fulfilling reparations to the Stolen Generation, or Indigenous Australians that were forcefully separated from their families in the 1900s. They found that when the perpetrating group took the perspective of the victim group, members of the perpetrating group were more open to supporting reparations claims. During the experiment, members of the perpetrating group reported feeling that the victims had a fundamental right to reparations because of the harm they had faced.⁴⁴ This study is significant as it shows that if people in the United States understood the horrors that people of color have faced, they may also

⁴¹ Pettigrew, Thomas, Linda Tropp, Ulrich Wagner, and Oliver Christ. "Recent Advances in Intergroup Contact Theory." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* (March 2011): 271-280.

⁴² Berndsen, Mariette and Craig McGarty. "Perspective Taking and Opinions About Forms of Reparations for Victims of Historical Harm." *Personality and Psychology Bulletin*, Vol. 38 (October 2012): 1318-28.

⁴³ Pettigrew, "Recent Advances in Intergroup Contact Theory." 275.

⁴⁴ Berndsen and McGarty, "Perspective Taking and Opinions About Forms of Reparations for Victims of Historical Harm." 1318-28.

be more open to fulfilling reparations. This is what I aim to accomplish by constructing a more comprehensive memory of racism that fosters empathy.

Another way to make people more empathetic is direct contact with people of color over prolonged periods of time. Johanne Boisjoly, Greg Duncan, Michael Kremer, Dan M. Levy, and Jacque Eccles' work is one example of such studies where close personal interaction with people of another race increases empathy for that group and results in shifts in political views. Their study focused on white college students that were randomly assigned a Black roommate. They found that having a roommate that is a different race increased the white roommate's likelihood of supporting policies they might not have otherwise, such as affirmative action. Having a Black roommate freshman year also increased the likelihood that white students will continue to have interracial friendships during their remaining years in college.⁴⁵ This study focused on direct contact over a long period of time, but I believe these findings can be extended to include indirect exposure. If people are regularly exposed to the experiences of people of color and the history of racism in the United States, we may see similar results.

Exposure via narratives, such as literature, memoirs, and performances are also powerful tools for building empathy. These forms of exposure offer the audience a new perspective and an increased appreciation for people different from themselves, according to Valerie Lee and Marjorie E. Madden. Understanding the experiences of characters in these kinds of narratives helps the audience understand the characters who are in complex situations that the audience members themselves have never faced. Narratives have the power to invoke strong emotions in

⁴⁵ Boisjoly, Johanne, Greg Duncan, Michael Kremer, Dan M. Levy, and Jacque Eccles. "Empathy or Antipathy? The Impact of Diversity." *American Economic Review*, Vol. 96 No. 5 (December 2006): 1890-1905.

the audience which is shown to build empathy.⁴⁶ Lee and Madden's study focused on school children, but their findings also apply to adults. The media has a significant influence on the perceptions of communities of color. If more narratives of people of color were distributed via the media, then the public would recognize that communities of color are multi-faceted and not singular like the stereotypical portrayals we typically see in the media.

Lastly, exposure via education is also effective. A study by Nolan Cabrera showed how exposure to educational materials and information on systemic white supremacy fostered ethnocultural empathy among white, male college students. Cabrera showed how race-conscious education was effective for students who never had to think about their racial identity or their white privilege prior to this specific learning experience.⁴⁷ Race-conscious and multicultural course content shaped students' understanding of systemic racism and the impacts it has on the daily lives of people of color. By becoming aware of their ignorance, these students became more empathetic towards people of color and more cognizant of their own white privilege. This needs to happen to the United States' public. The aim of constructing a more comprehensive collective memory is not to educate everybody on every injustice that people of color have faced. Rather, the aim is to make the public aware of the different systemic inequalities in society, and how certain people — primarily white people — benefit from these systems and how others are disadvantaged. This increase in empathy and awareness will lead people to make better political decisions⁴⁸ and can move people towards social justice activism.⁴⁹ This last claim —

⁴⁶ Lee, Valerie and Marjorie E. Madden. "The Power of Life Histories: Moving Readers to Greater Acts of Empathy Through Literature and Memoir." *Forum on Public Policy* (2017): 1-17.

⁴⁷ Cabrera, Nolan. "Working through Whiteness: White, Male College Students Challenging Racism." *Review of Higher Education*, Vol. 35 No. (Spring 2012): 375-401.

⁴⁸ Berndsen and McGarty, "Perspective Taking and Opinions About Forms of Reparations for Victims of Historical Harm." 1318-28.

increased empathy can move people towards political action — is crucial, because this means the public can become open to fulfilling substantive reparations to people of color that move past making the collective memory of racism more comprehensive.

Additionally, Katalin Eszter Morgan found that students who are taught that textbooks are political vehicles and constructions of the past show more empathy towards outside groups. The curriculum in Morgan's study used primary sources with narratives of people's real experiences to allow students to place themselves in other people's shoes and understand that there are different perspectives among different actors in all historical events. These exercises helped to develop empathy among students and gave them the tools to recognize when history was being oversimplified or distorted to serve a political agenda.⁵⁰ Morgan's study was very specific and used textbooks written to accomplish these goals. Thus, this is difficult to replicate in an average classroom, since most schools are not equipped with textbooks that cater to an education of this sort.

History education in the United States lacks this perspective. Often, students only question the history they have learned when they enter college. People who do not attend college, or who attend a conservative university, may never gain this perspective. In a later chapter, I elaborate on the idea of including more information about the history of racism in the United States' education system in an effort to foster empathy and construct a more comprehensive collective memory of racism.

Sirin, Cigdem, Nicholas Valentino, and Jose Villalobos. "The Social Causes and Political Consequences of Group Empathy." *Political Psychology*, Vol. 38 No. 3 (2017): 427-448.

⁴⁹ Gair, Susan. "Pondering the Colour of Empathy: Social Work Students' Reasoning on Activism, Empathy and Racism." *British Journal of Social Work*, Vol. 47 (2017): 162-180.

⁵⁰ Morgan, Katalin Eszter. "Learning Empathy Through School History Textbooks? A Case Study." *Journal of Theory and Practice*, Vol. 19 (March 2014): 370-392.

This chapter identified white supremacy as a cause of the problem of the collective memory of racism in the United States being incomprehensive. The solution to this problem is empathy: if people feel more empathetic towards people of color, this will reduce racial stigma. The national collective memory we have in the present day is motivated by a desire to sustain white supremacy. Therefore, a more comprehensive national collective memory of racism in the United States will cause people to be more empathetic towards one another which will ultimately lead to better perceptions of racial minorities. The solution to the problem of racial stigma is creating empathy, which can be fostered via the construction of a more comprehensive collective memory of racism. In my next chapter, I discuss different models of reparations that the United States can adopt to construct a more comprehensive collective memory of racism and the existence of white supremacy.

IV. Models of Reparations

This chapter reviews the literature on reparations. I discuss different models of reparations that scholars have proposed and the impacts these models will have on fostering empathy and constructing a collective memory of racism. Historians and philosophers have discussed reparations for many years and applied their ideas to specific cases of racism. In the context of the United States, much of the focus is placed on reparations to Black and Indigenous People. Thus, most of the authors who write about reparations write about the experiences of these communities. Although much of the literature is focused specifically on these communities in the United States, I focus my discussion on finding a model that encompasses the injustices committed against victims of white supremacy that is not limited to specific communities.

Before determining which model of reparations is best suited for victims of white supremacy, it is important to analyze the injustices themselves. Nancy Fraser distinguishes between two types of injustices: socioeconomic injustices and cultural injustices. Socioeconomic injustices such as labor exploitation, workplace discrimination, and lower wages than white peers would require political and economic restructuring, which Fraser labels “redistribution.” Cultural injustices are attacks on one’s dignity or status as an equal and they require “recognition” which is a cultural change in society. Racial minorities are bivalent groups — groups that face both socioeconomic injustices and cultural injustices. Thus, bivalent groups would require redistribution and recognition remedies.⁵¹ Constructing a collective memory is a recognition remedy that will eventually lead to redistribution.

⁵¹ Fraser, Nancy. “From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a ‘Post-Socialist’ Age.” *Justice Interruptus* (1997): 68-93.

Philosophers and reparations advocates often categorize reparations using terminology that differs from Fraser. Many scholars categorize reparations as either economic or symbolic. Economic reparations include the distribution of money and other economic resources. Symbolic reparations are meant to convey messages. However, in reality, it is difficult to suggest reparations that are purely symbolic or purely economic. The reparations that philosophers suggest tend to have both economic and symbolic components to them, even if philosophers classify them to be just one or the other. By virtue of giving reparations, the government conveys that they acknowledge harm has occurred and they feel obligated to remedy it — this has symbolic significance. Any government action requires resources, therefore, the reparations are economic as well.

Another way to categorize reparations is based on how they influence systems of oppression. Broadly, reparations can be affirmative or transformative.⁵² Affirmative remedies correct inequitable outcomes without disturbing the underlying frameworks that generate the injustices. These are short term solutions that work in the existing system and do not change the oppressive framework. Transformative remedies, on the other hand, correct inequitable outcomes by restructuring the underlying generative framework of oppression in society. These remedies are more long term and aim to overthrow the existing system that allowed for the injustices to occur in the first place.

An important goal of reparations that aim to construct a collective memory is to begin destabilizing existing hierarchies of racial oppression. Consequently, constructing collective memory is a transformative remedy. Transformative remedies seek to fulfill long-term goals and

⁵² Fraser, "From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a 'Post-Socialist' Age." 68-93.

they do not yield tangible results immediately. Often, the results of transformative remedies are not seen until many years into the future. However, it is vital to acknowledge the harms that communities face in the present day. This is where affirmative remedies are required. The existing system is built on a racial hierarchy that places white people on top, making it so that people of color will continue to be victims of white supremacy. Operating within this system is an unappealing task, but it is important to take into consideration that overthrowing this system via transformative remedies will take time and will not benefit people suffering in the present day. It is not possible to change systems of oppression overnight; reparations must be accessible and achievable within the world we currently live in. Affirmative remedies would have short-term goals that will contribute to the achievement of long-term goals. Thus, both affirmative and transformative remedies are required to fulfill reparations for white supremacy in the United States.

The framework I use categorizes reparations by what they aim to accomplish. The previous frameworks mentioned are compelling, but they focus on the form that the reparations should take rather than their objectives. This makes it difficult to distinguish between the categories and thus is not the most useful way to organize different models of reparations.

The United Nations' "Rule-of-Law Tools for Post-Conflict States: Reparations Programmes" divides the goals of reparations into five categories: Restitution, Compensation, Rehabilitation, Satisfaction, and Guarantees of Non-Repetition. The United Nations released this report for countries emerging from states of conflict to facilitate the transitional justice process.⁵³ Although the United States is not technically a "post-conflict state", the violence against people

⁵³ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. "Rule-of-Law Tools for Post-Conflict States: Reparations Programmes." (New York and Geneva, 2008): 1-41.

of color since the conception of the nation warrants the application of these models of reparations. Without a doubt, the existence of white supremacy has constituted a gross violation of the human rights of people of color in the United States. Even though the conflict between the government and communities of color began when this land was first colonized and seized from Indigenous peoples, this conflict has not yet ended — communities of color are still under attack by the United States government and other accessories to white supremacy.⁵⁴ As a result, I believe any model of reparations for racism must include the cessation of ongoing injustices against victims of white supremacy.

The United Nations' framework for categorizing reparations is useful because it is more clear in its focus on the goal of the reparations rather than the actual form that the reparations take. The reparations that philosophers have suggested all fit into one or more of these goals. Each of the United Nations' five models of reparations offers benefits and disadvantages for the goal of constructing a more comprehensive collective memory of racism. I discuss each model of reparations and what it can and cannot accomplish in terms of fulfilling reparations to people of color. Then, I discuss how each model influences the construction of collective memory.

Ultimately, I argue that the United States government ought to embrace the Satisfaction Model of reparations for racism. However, it is important to note that I state this directly in relation to fostering empathy and the construction of collective memory. I do not dismiss the other models of reparations — in fact, I believe each of the other models can be applied in specific cases to fulfill reparations. My thesis focuses on the construction of collective memory, thus that is the rubric I use to determine which model to adopt.

⁵⁴ Civil Rights Congress (U.S.). "We Charge Genocide: the Historic Petition to the United Nations for Relief from a Crime of the United States Government against the Negro People." (New York: 1951).

Restitution

The goal of Restitution aligns with Aristotle’s definition of justice: the Restitution Model aims to restore victims to their original situations prior to the injustice. According to Aristotle, wrongs are corrected by giving back to the injured that which restores equality.⁵⁵ For example, if Person A steals \$10 from Person B, Person A would have to return \$10 to Person B to restore equality between them. But, instances of injustice are rarely so simple.

Furthermore, injustices against communities of color have occurred for hundreds of years in the United States. It is impossible to restore many of the victims of white supremacy in the United States to their original situation. Many would argue that if the original victims of injustice are deceased, their descendants should receive reparations for the injustices that their ancestors faced. Additionally, descendants of victims can suffer from intergenerational trauma which is a further injustice to the community. I agree that descendants of victims are owed reparations, however, in the case of Restitution, it is important to consider how the wishes of descendants differ from the original victims.

It is possible that some communities will benefit from Restitution, but others will not. For example, slaves that were forcibly brought to the United States wanted to return to their original situations pre-slavery. However, it is unlikely that descendants of slaves would want the same thing — African Americans in the United States are not looking to “return” to Africa. Restitution is often advocated for regarding reparations to Indigenous communities. J. Angelo Corlett argues that the lands seized from Indigenous communities ought to be returned.⁵⁶ However, there is a discussion among scholars about whether this is a practical solution — much of the United States

⁵⁵ Aristotle. “The Nicomachean Ethics.” ed. W. D. Ross and Lesley Brown (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

⁵⁶ Corlett, J. Angelo. *Race, Racism, and Reparations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 147-190.

is built on this land and returning it to Indigenous peoples would displace millions of others⁵⁷. Addressing this question is outside the scope of this thesis, however, it is important to acknowledge that Restitution would not be preferred by many victims that are owed reparations.

Restitution can also be applied in cases where people are targeted for their race and wrongfully imprisoned. In these situations, the Restitution Model means they ought to be immediately released and have their records expunged. Yet, restoring these people to their original situation of not being imprisoned does not make up for the days, weeks, months, or years they have lost while in prison. Furthermore, there are many other considerations to keep in mind when it comes to the system of mass incarceration in the United States, including, but not limited to, the injustices prisoners face in the prisons and the difficulties they have readjusting to society once they are freed.

The Restitution Model can be beneficial when applied to specific scenarios, however, this model does not foster empathy or impact the nation's collective memory of the original injustices. Even in situations where it is possible to restore victims of injustices to their original situations, the nation's collective memory of those injustices does not become more clear or comprehensive. Reparations for white supremacy will require more than just Restitution.

Compensation

The goal of the Compensation Model is to give material and economic reparations to victims of injustices. According to the United Nations, victims are owed compensation for “any economically assessable damage.”⁵⁸ For example, if Person A breaks Person B's leg, and Person

⁵⁷ Waldron, Jeremy. “Superseding Historic Injustice.” *Ethics*, Vol. 103 No. 1 (October 1992): 4-28.

⁵⁸ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. “Rule-of-Law Tools for Post-Conflict States: Reparations Programmes.” 7.

B has to take time off work to recover, there are certain assessable costs associated with this injury — Person A would then owe Person B his lost wages and his hospital fees.

The Compensation Model includes different transfers of economic and material wealth such as payments to individuals, scholarship funds, and land transfers. Philosophers have discussed each of these forms of reparations extensively. Discussing the merits of each form is outside the scope of this thesis, but it is important to recognize that the Compensation Model can be applied in various ways. Alfred Brophy and Corlett, in addition to other philosophers, have suggested giving payments to individuals for injustices they or their ancestors have faced as a potential form of reparations.⁵⁹ This involves determining who was impacted by a specific injustice and then allocating specific amounts of money to them. A historical precedent for this type of reparation in the United States is the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 which authorized the payment of \$20,000 to each individual with Japanese ancestry that the United States government wrongfully interned.⁶⁰

Scholars like Corlett have also suggested the transfer of land as a form of wealth distribution and compensation for injustices.⁶¹ Roy Brooks argues in favor of an Atonement Trust Fund for Black students to use in their pursuit of higher education.⁶² Each of these suggestions fits under the Compensation Model as they all have the goal of compensating victims for their loss with economic resources.

⁵⁹ Brophy, Alfred. *Reparations: Pro and Con* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006) 147-150.
Corlett, *Race, Racism, and Reparations*, 194.

⁶⁰ Civil Liberties Act of 1988, H.R. 442, 100th Congress (1988).

⁶¹ Corlett, *Race, Racism, and Reparations*, 147-190.

⁶² Brooks, Roy. *Atonement and Forgiveness: A New Model for Black Reparations* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 157.

The Compensation Model is an attractive model of reparations since the reason many people of color live in poverty is a consequence of white supremacy. Native Americans and Black slaves were deliberately positioned at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder at the beginning of our nation's history, but even after slavery was abolished, and discrimination based on race was made illegal, white people have remained at the top of the socioeconomic ladder. Related factors that perpetuate white supremacy such as over-policing, housing segregation and barriers to education are responsible for this. Economic reparations seem desirable to compensate for these injustices because they have the potential to make an immediate impact on people's lives.

However, there are also many negative aspects of the Compensation Model. Although economic and material reparations seem attractive, it is not the case that every person of color will benefit from receiving money. There are many wealthy people of color who will remain largely unaffected by added wealth. However, these wealthy people of color are still impacted by racism and are thus still owed reparations. Additionally, it is almost impossible to calculate how much money is owed to each community of color or each person of color — the injustices that communities face extend beyond specific instances of discrimination. The pervasiveness of white supremacy impacts people of color every single day. The amount of money required to compensate communities of color for the injustices they have faced at the hands of the government would be beyond any amount that the government could ever produce. Corlett calculated that Black Americans are owed over trillions of dollars for slavery alone.⁶³ This in itself is already too much for the government to pay — and it does not account for injustices the

⁶³ Corlett, J. Angelo. *Heirs of Oppression: Racism and Reparations* (Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2010), 237.

Black community faced after the abolition of slavery or any of the injustices that other communities of color have faced.

Corlett suggests an interesting solution to the large sums of money that would be needed for the Compensation Model. He suggests a tax on white people that would pay for reparations.⁶⁴ In Corlett's case, he talks about reparations specifically for Black and Indigenous people. Although a tax is one way to help the government afford the cost of reparations, it would be detrimental to the construction of a collective memory of racism. People typically dislike paying taxes and the perception that money is being taken away from them to be given to someone else would only further the negative perceptions that people have of communities of color in the United States, which negates the goal of these reparations in the first place.

A further disadvantage of the Compensation Model is that it can be perceived as the government paying people off to stop bringing up past injustices. In fact, this is one reason that many people who are otherwise against race-based initiatives have supported economic reparations — they believe if people of color are given monetary compensation, then they will not make claims in the future regarding injustices perpetrated by the government. My thesis focuses on reparations that construct a more comprehensive national collective memory of racism in order to minimize racial stigma. Economic reparations can potentially form a collective memory that is harmful — if people believe injustices against people of color have been “paid for”, then they will not take ongoing injustices seriously. Reparations cannot be a one-time event, they must be part of an ongoing process to correct the harms that communities of color

⁶⁴ Corlett, *Race, Racism, and Reparations*, 188-190.

face. Furthermore, putting a value on suffering is an affront to those who endured the harm and to their memory.

Compensation alone is not enough to restore moral equality to people of color. Gerald Gaus makes a compelling argument regarding compensation. He believes the redistribution of resources is not equivalent to the restoration of moral equality to the person who was impacted by unjustifiable harm. If the reason an injustice occurs is something morally unjustifiable, such as racism, no amount of material compensation can restore equality between the parties.⁶⁵

The Compensation Model is not ideal for victims of white supremacy for these reasons. The construction of a collective memory of racism in the United States is not something that can be accomplished over a short period. It must be a continuous effort. While I believe economic reparations are important, we must also consider how giving economic reparations will impact the collective memory of the injustices in the eyes of those who are not receiving economic resources — the white population. Many communities of color are already perceived as receiving “handouts” from the government. If the government were to give people of color economic reparations, this may be viewed similarly and will be more detrimental to the negative perceptions that people have of communities of color. Thus, reparations for white supremacy cannot be fulfilled using just the Compensation Model, especially when considering the construction of the nation’s collective memory of racism.

Rehabilitation

The Rehabilitation Model includes medical and psychological services for victims of injustices and legal and social services.⁶⁶ This model is designed to help victims that are still

⁶⁵ Gaus, Gerald. “Does Compensation Restore Equality?” *Nomos*, Vol. 33 (1991): 45-81.

⁶⁶ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. “Rule-of-Law Tools for Post-Conflict States: Reparations Programmes.” 7.

recovering from an injustice. For example, the Rehabilitation Model can be utilized in cases where victims of violence are hospitalized. The state can pay for the victim's medical bills and provide psychological counseling for victims dealing with trauma. Additionally, the Rehabilitation Model includes the rehabilitation of victims' "civic status."⁶⁷ This means the government ought to restore the reputation of victims that were harmed. This can be done via public declarations of the innocence of victims, and legal services such as expunging criminal records and restoring passports and other documents that were forcefully taken.

These services can be very helpful for victims of injustices, however, this model can only be applied to immediate victims of injustice. For instance, the Rehabilitation Model can be applied to the South Asians and Arabs who were subjected to torture after the United States government wrongfully imprisoned them for unfounded links to terrorism. These victims and their families are still directly impacted by the injustice and violence they faced due to their imprisonment and subsequent torture. Under the Rehabilitation Model, the victims of this specific state-sanctioned injustice should be released if they are still imprisoned, have their records expunged, and given psychological counseling.

A drawback of the Rehabilitation Model is that it is not as useful for injustices that occurred in the past. For example, if the victims of injustice are no longer alive, the Rehabilitation Model cannot be applied to them. Additionally, the Rehabilitation Model does not offer adequate reparations to victims of injustices that are non-violent. Many of the injustices communities of color face today are non-violent. Although the non-violent nature of the injustice does not mean the injustice is not as egregious or damaging, it is more difficult to provide

⁶⁷ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. "Rule-of-Law Tools for Post-Conflict States: Reparations Programmes." 25.

Rehabilitation reparations for injustices such as diminished access to higher education or unequal wages. Thus, the Rehabilitation Model will not address many of the injustices that communities of color face today and will have little to no impact at minimizing racial stigma.

The Rehabilitation Model focuses on the individuals that are impacted as opposed to the impact that the injustices have on other people or even the community as a whole. The focus on the individuals impacted is important, but it is difficult to change people's perceptions of minorities based on individual cases that the government provides assistance for. For these reasons, the types of reparations included in the Rehabilitation Model won't influence the United States' collective memory. Therefore, this model of reparations is not the most desirable for constructing a collective memory of racism.

Satisfaction

The fourth model that the United Nations' Reparations Programme suggests is the Satisfaction Model. This model includes a wide variety of reparations that contribute to fostering empathy and the construction of a more comprehensive collective memory of racism. This is the model that the United States government ought to embrace. I expand on this specific model in my next chapter.

Guarantees of Non-Repetition

The last reparations model that the United Nations Reparations Programme proposes is the Guarantees of Non-Repetition Model. This model of reparations focuses on implementing systems to prevent injustices from occurring again. Like the Satisfaction Model, the Guarantees of Non-Repetition Model is a broad category that encompasses a variety of reparations. Primarily, the goal of this model is to institutionalize methods that prevent violations of human

rights from happening again.⁶⁸ Often, this model focuses on decentralizing power from the government and protecting human rights workers. This model also includes making sure different public sectors, such as law enforcement and social services, understand and meet international human rights standards.

This model of reparations is more useful for countries that are truly “post-conflict”. In the United States, there are legal mechanisms already in place to prevent racial discrimination. However, they are not effective. Different laws contradict the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments by targeting specific groups for law enforcement. Thus, legal mechanisms implemented to prevent injustices such as slavery and disenfranchisement are not effective.

The Guarantees of Non-Repetition Model has the potential to make a large impact on the nation’s collective memory of racism. I argue that this influence can be both positive and negative. These reparations can be positive because they send a message to the public that the government will no longer tolerate these injustices. However, the Guarantees of Non-Repetition Model can also have a negative impact on collective memory by making it seem as if the government has taken sufficient action to redress the issue, when in fact more needs to be done. If a policy passes, but is not followed, then it is ineffective. For example, after *Brown v. Board*, there was a great deal of resistance to integrating schools, especially in the South. The policies put forward by the government are not enough to cause change — the public must also be willing to make these changes. Constructing a collective memory of racism will change the culture and encourage the public to support change.

⁶⁸ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. “Rule-of-Law Tools for Post-Conflict States: Reparations Programmes.” 1-41.

It is crucial for the government to release statements and articulate that they will not allow such injustices to occur again, however, it is important to remember that the government will always be held accountable by its people. If the public determines that injustices against people of color are warranted, such as voting in favor of a candidate who wants to stop immigration into the country, then the government will not live up to its promise to prevent future injustices. Rather, it is important for people to be educated so they oppose unjust actions or policies. If enough people reject unjust policies, then they will not pass. In order for people to reject them, the public must understand white supremacy, how it impacts people of color, and what makes the policies unjust. This national collective memory will inform people's decisions and encourage them to oppose unjust policies that could further perpetuate white supremacy.

Requirements of Reparations

Reparations for white supremacy must meet certain requirements that philosophers have proposed. Reparations must create a new basis of trust between victims and perpetrators so that future relationships between victims and perpetrators are positive.⁶⁹ If the relationship between victims and perpetrators is one where either party still distrusts the other after reparations have been made, then the reparations were not adequate. As the government makes reparations to communities of color, the government must communicate that they are committed to not doing any further harm to these communities. Although distrust of the United States government will not disappear immediately, the government must demonstrate its commitment to future good relations with people of color in a convincing manner. In my next chapter, I argue that the government can do so via reparations under the Satisfaction Model.

⁶⁹ Walker, Margaret Urban. *What is Reparative Justice?* (Marquette University Press, 2010), 25.
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. "Rule-of-Law Tools for Post-Conflict States: Reparations Programmes." 31.

Margaret Urban Walker argues that reparations must be sensitive to the “moral vulnerability of victims.”⁷⁰ Once an injustice has occurred, the victim is vulnerable and reparations must aim to correct and transform the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim. In order for this relationship to change from one of distrust, hostility, and fear, the perpetrator themselves must acknowledge the harm and their responsibility in causing it. The victims of injustices do not have any reason to trust the perpetrator, and thus reparations must aim to rebuild trust between the two parties.

The new relationship between perpetrator and victim must be one of accountability – after reparations are fulfilled, the victims must be in the position to hold the perpetrator responsible for any future transgressions.⁷¹ And, the perpetrator must recognize their obligation to respond to the victim when concerns are brought up. For example, if the perpetrator were to do something in the future that indicates that they do not view the two parties as equal, the victim must feel as if they are able to voice their related concerns. In the United States, this manifests as more representation of people of color in all levels of government to ensure their voices are heard. If the nation’s collective memory of racism is more comprehensive, perceptions of communities of color will be more positive, and more people of color will be elected into office.

According to the United Nations’ Reparations Programme, a further requirement of reparations is that they must achieve “completeness”. Completeness is the ability of a reparations programme to impact every victim.⁷² A reparations model that constructs a national collective

⁷⁰ Walker, *What is Reparative Justice?* 29.

⁷¹ Walker, *What is Reparative Justice?* 33.

⁷²Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. “Rule-of-Law Tools for Post-Conflict States: Reparations Programmes.” 15.

memory of racism will impact every victim of racism because it will improve the perceptions of communities of color as a whole. This improved image will have a positive impact on all members of those communities.

Reparations must also be *fair* and *appropriate*. Fair reparations are those that do not discriminate among reparations beneficiaries in ways that perpetuate the systems of oppression that caused the initial need for reparations.⁷³ For example, anti-Blackness is one of the most prevalent issues stemming from white supremacy. In order for reparations to be fair, they must combat anti-Blackness in white and non-Black communities of color. If reparations to other communities of color were to perpetuate anti-Blackness, then these reparations would not be fair and they should not be adopted.

Appropriate reparations are reparations that consider factors such as the specific harm, the victim, and the impact the harm had on society as a whole. Appropriate reparations are transformative. They recognize that it is imperative to dismantle the systems that allowed for injustices to occur in the first place.⁷⁴ Appropriate, transformative reparations in the United States would look like a complete turnover of the system of government in place today. Our current system enables white supremacy at every stage and thus must be replaced or drastically altered.

⁷³Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. "Rule-of-Law Tools for Post-Conflict States: Reparations Programmes." 29.

⁷⁴Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. "Rule-of-Law Tools for Post-Conflict States: Reparations Programmes." 1-41.

The United Nations' Reparations Programme cites two main goals of reparations: "to provide a measure of *recognition* to victims and thus to make a contribution to the full recovery of their dignity" and "to foster trust among persons and particularly between citizens and State institutions."⁷⁵ These goals are reflected in the aims of reparations that other philosophers advocate for. In particular, Fraser believes cultural injustices require recognition remedies and Walker emphasizes that reparations must rebuild trust between the victims and perpetrators.

In conclusion, there are many types of reparations that the government can fulfill to combat white supremacy and different ways of categorizing these reparations. Philosophers often categorize their reparations as economic or symbolic, but these two categories are not completely distinct. Instead, I categorize reparations based on their goals by using the framework proposed by the United Nations' "Rule-of-Law Tools for Post-Conflict States: Reparations Programmes". The United Nations' framework has allowed me to analyze each model of reparation based on what it aims to accomplish and determine which model is the best fit for constructing a national collective memory of racism in the United States. In my next chapter, I discuss how the Satisfaction Model accomplishes this goal and why it is the model of reparations that the government ought to adopt.

⁷⁵Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. "Rule-of-Law Tools for Post-Conflict States: Reparations Programmes." 30.

V. The Satisfaction Model

My previous chapters identified the problem of white supremacy. A product of white supremacy is racial stigma, which can be minimized by fostering empathy. The reparations I propose will foster empathy by constructing a collective memory of the history of racism in the United States. The United Nations' models can all be used to fulfill reparations to communities of color for white supremacy. However, I argue in favor of the Satisfaction Model on the basis that it is the one that will construct a more comprehensive collective memory of racism and foster empathy. In this chapter, I outline the different components of the Satisfaction Model and illustrate how each component influences collective memory and fosters empathy.

The Satisfaction Model is broad and encompasses various forms of reparations for victims of racism. The overall goal of the Satisfaction Model is to ensure that the dignity of the victims is preserved by making the public aware of the facts related to the injustice. Since the focus is informing the public what happened and respecting the reputations of the victims, this model of reparations is the most equipped to foster empathy by constructing a more comprehensive collective memory of racism. There are different actions the government can take to fulfill reparations under the Satisfaction Model. I address each separately and show how philosophers have advocated on behalf of one or more of these forms throughout history.

Reparations under the Satisfaction Model include public apologies, truth-seeking, public disclosure of the facts through commemoration and memorialization, and including the facts in educational materials. Each of these measures helps shape the collective memory of an injustice. The Satisfaction Model also calls for judicial and administrative sanctions, human rights training, and an end to ongoing violations. Although these do not have a significant impact on the

collective memory of racism, each of these components of the Satisfaction Model is equally important and also included in the reparations that philosophers have proposed. In order for the United States government to begin fulfilling reparations for white supremacy, the government ought to make an honest effort to fulfill each component of the reparations under the Satisfaction Model. The government can facilitate the construction of collective memory of racism and foster empathy for people of color by fulfilling each of these components of the Satisfaction Model.

Apologies

Reparations advocates have often cited an apology as a crucial component of reparations for racial injustices. Alfred Brophy, Roy Brooks, and Rodney Roberts in particular advocate in favor of apologies to the Black community for the discrimination they faced in the United States, especially the eras of slavery and Jim Crow. Rodney believes rectification, or remedying an injustice by setting it right, involves restoration, compensation, and an apology. He believes an apology is what rights a wrong, as the apology is a “reaffirmation that those who suffered the injustice have moral standing.”⁷⁶ Until the government acknowledges the part they played in allowing white supremacy to exist and racist injustices to occur, they are failing to affirm the moral standing of the people the injustices targeted: people of color. Thus, reparations must include an apology.

Brooks lays out requirements for what an apology for slavery ought to look like: apologies ought to be an acknowledgment of guilt and they should be voluntary. The required components of an apology, or as Brooks calls them, the “anatomy of an apology” is as follows: apologies must confess to the crime, admit that it was unjust, and repent.⁷⁷ Additionally,

⁷⁶ Rodney Roberts, “Why Have the Injustices Perpetrated against Blacks in America Not Been Rectified?” *Journal of Social Philosophy*, Vol. 32 No. 3 (2001): 358.

⁷⁷ Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness: A New Model for Black Reparations*, 143-148.

perpetrators must ask for forgiveness and ensure that the injustice will not happen again.⁷⁸ Each of these components is necessary for an apology to be complete. Brooks further asserts that the refusal to give such an apology is considered a further injustice against those that were treated unjustly.⁷⁹

Apologies must also “intend to do justice,” as Walker says.⁸⁰ Apologies that intend to do justice signify a commitment to good relations in the future and recognize the victim’s suffering in a way that is *interactive, useful, fitting, and effective*. An *interactive* apology aims to initiate a new phase of the relationship that acknowledges that all parties are equal. A *useful* apology will offer something of value to the victims — what is offered will be something the victims actually want. A *fitting* apology is one that recognizes that the reparations are an act of required justice, and not merely charity. The perpetrators must know that they are obligated to give these reparations, and it is not optional for them to do so. Lastly, an *effective* apology is one that takes into account whether the victim can actually access and make use of the reparations offered.⁸¹

Brophy considers apologies and truth commissions to be very similar forms of reparations and thus he groups them together. According to Brophy, apologies and truth commissions will “shape the public’s understanding of history and the current effects of that history.”⁸² This is important as this impacts collective memory: when the government apologizes for an injustice, they acknowledge that the injustice occurred and admit they were responsible for it. Issuing an apology is in itself a powerful statement for the government to make. Once this

⁷⁸ Brooks notes that while it is required for perpetrators to ask for forgiveness, it is not necessary for victims to forgive them. *Atonement and Forgiveness: A New Model for Black Reparations*, 143.

⁷⁹ Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness: A New Model for Black Reparations*, 141-179.

⁸⁰ Walker, *What is Reparative Justice?* 21.

⁸¹ Walker, *What is Reparative Justice?* 21-23.

⁸² Brophy, *Reparations: Pro and Con*, 145.

apology becomes part of the nation's collective memory, the public may be prompted to think twice about their previous notions of the event in question and recognize the circumstances that people endured were unjust. Apologies also open the door for the public to more easily identify other injustices that are similar. If the government admits wrongdoing in one circumstance, this serves to show the public that the government is not immune from making mistakes, thus making it so the public is more willing to question the government's role in current injustices.

Furthermore, Brophy claims apologies and truth commissions have the power to include people in the narrative who have historically been forgotten. Constructing collective memories of injustices that include those who were historically ignored is in itself a form of redress, according to Brophy: it is a form of respecting those who were harmed during the injustice and then continue to be harmed when their experiences are not acknowledged.⁸³ Much like the duty to remember that Booth believes is a function of collective memory⁸⁴, it is a harm to forget people who have suffered injustices. In Brooks' book, he advocates for atonement, which he argues can only be accomplished if there is an apology in addition to other reparations.⁸⁵ Brooks does not consider an apology to be a form of reparations and Brophy believes an apology is only sincere if it is paired with action. I agree that an apology alone is insufficient, but it can be one component of a extensive reparations program.

Truth-Seeking

Brophy combines apologies and truth-seeking measures together; however, under the Satisfaction Model, these are two distinct forms of reparations. Truth-seeking measures are actions taken by the government to discover the facts of what happened at a certain event or

⁸³ Brophy, *Reparations: Pro and Con*, 153.

⁸⁴ Booth, W. James. "The Work of Memory: Time, Identity, and Justice," 252.

⁸⁵ Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness: A New Model for Black Reparations*, 143.

during a certain period. This includes uncovering information that was deliberately buried or re-written by the government itself.

Most transitional justice scholars agree that it is important for post-conflict societies to establish some sort of truth about their past.⁸⁶ The process of seeking the truth gives individuals the opportunity to share their experiences and bring this knowledge into the public sphere. Acknowledging what happened is crucial to ensuring the dignity and autonomy of victims. The aim of many truth-seeking commissions is to build a “shared truth” of the past so that the public understands the reality of the nation’s history and how the structural mechanisms that persist today are rooted in this history. This is precisely the aim of the reparations I propose — it is crucial to facilitate the construction of a more comprehensive collective memory of racism, and truth-seeking is one way to do so.

The two main mechanisms for truth-seeking that are discussed in the literature are trials and truth commissions. Trials focus on retributive measures and aim to prosecute perpetrators for their wrongdoing, while truth commissions emphasize establishing facts about the past rather than assigning blame. Truth commissions aim to identify institutionalized patterns and look into the root causes of injustices — this cannot happen via lawsuits or trials.⁸⁷ Rather, truth commissions are a form of reparations that I believe will foster empathy and should be used in the construction of a more comprehensive collective memory of the history of racism in the United States.

⁸⁶ Valinas, Marta and Kris Vanspauwen. “Truth-Seeking After Violent Conflict: Experiences from South Africa and Bosnia and Herzegovina,” *Contemporary Justice Review*, Vol. 12 No. 3 (September 2009): 269.

⁸⁷ Brophy, *Reparations: Pro and Con*, 97-140.

Truth commissions also focus on victims' experiences and provide victims with the opportunity to tell their stories and be heard. A further goal of truth commissions is to learn from the past and prevent similar abuses from happening again in the future.⁸⁸ A key aspect of truth commissions that relates to the construction of collective memory in the United States is that truth commissions seek to collect and present evidence in a capacity that makes it impossible for the public to deny that an injustice occurred. If the United States were to do this, perceptions of minorities would be more positive because people would not be able to deny that people of color have been negatively impacted by white supremacy and marginalized throughout history.

In the United States, it is not necessary to have truth commissions in the traditional sense. For example, truth-seeking measures in the United States would not involve bringing together the perpetrators and victims and having both sides share their stories. In the case of the United States, the perpetrator is the government as a whole and the victims are entire communities impacted by white supremacy. In the United States, truth-seeking would look like investigating different governmental institutions, and determining how they are discriminatory. It is also crucial for the government to be transparent about the ways in which it has failed people of color throughout the history of the United States. The government must admit that the United States has a long history of broken treaties with Indigenous peoples, policies implemented with the goal of targeting specific communities of color, and eugenics programs, just to name a few. Furthermore, it is not enough for the government to uncover the facts, they must also share this information with the public in a way that is accessible.

⁸⁸ Hayner, Priscilla. *Encyclopedia of Genocide and Crimes against Humanity*, Vol. 3, s.v. "Truth Commissions." Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005.

Truth commissions and other truth-seeking measures are closely linked with reparative measures under the Satisfaction Model that aim to publicly disclose the facts. The information found during truth-seeking ought to be shared with the public via methods such as commemorations and memorialization.

Public Disclosure of the Facts

A crucial aspect of reparations that aim to construct a collective memory of racism is the public disclosure of the facts. In order for perceptions of communities of color to improve, the public must be aware of the history of white supremacy in the United States and the specific ways that white supremacy has impacted, and continues to impact, people of color. Reparations under the Satisfaction Model that include the public disclosure of the facts involve commemoration and memorialization of victims and the circumstances they endured.

Commemorations can include replacing Columbus Day with a holiday that commemorates Indigenous Peoples, for example. Commemorations can also look like making holidays like Juneteenth a national holiday. Each of these holidays and commemorations can serve as a learning moment for people unfamiliar with them and an annual reminder that the United States has been complicit in injustices against people of color. This reminder will serve as a way to ensure that these injustices do not happen again because the public will remember the horrors of the past.

Brooks argues that reparations ought to take the form of a Museum of Slavery and an Atonement Trust Fund for Black kids.⁸⁹ The trust fund is a form of economic reparations and falls under the Compensation Model of reparations, but the Museum of Slavery is both economic

⁸⁹ Brooks, *Atonement and Forgiveness: A New Model for Black Reparations*, 157.

and symbolic. It is economic because it would take a great deal of money and resources to create a Museum of Slavery. The existence of such a museum is also symbolic because it is an acknowledgment by the government that the horrors of slavery were very real and severely impact the present-day circumstances of Black people in the United States. Additionally, a Museum of Slavery aims to educate the public about the facts of slavery, making it a type of memorialization.

Memorialization entails preserving the memories of specific people or events. Reparations that aim to minimize racial stigma must memorialize events throughout history that involve people of color. In order to minimize racial stigma, memorials should highlight instances when people of color resisted oppression or succeeded despite it. The contributions of people of color should be highlighted and celebrated, rather than overshadowed by contributions made by white people, especially when the white person's contribution would not have been possible without the contributions of people of color or were stolen from people of color.

Aside from commemoration and memorialization, the public disclosure of facts can look like the release of reports and documents that show how communities of color are systematically targeted by the government. This information will reveal how prevalent racism is in the government and show the public how intentional it is. There are currently misperceptions that certain communities are more prone to certain crimes, even when there is evidence that contradicts these claims. Overall, if the government discloses more information, there will be more empathy for people of color. Once the public realizes that the government has deliberately crafted negative narratives about certain communities, such as Ronald Reagan's creation of the "welfare queen" stereotype and George Bush's characterization of Muslim countries as hubs of

terrorism, the public will become more aware of this pattern. This awareness of this pattern and one's own privilege of being exempt from such negative characterizations is important as it will increase empathy and minimize racial stigma.

Loury is against reparations in the form of compensation and instead argues in favor of constructing public narratives that acknowledge the horrors of slavery and other injustices perpetrated by the United States government. For Loury, the public must be aware of the facts of an injustice so they are continuously confronted with the nation's ugly history.⁹⁰ This is what reparations that construct a more comprehensive collective memory of racism aim to do: shine a spotlight on the injustices of the past, in order to educate the public.

Education

Perhaps the most important aspect of the Satisfaction Model is the requirement that the facts of the country's history of racism be included in educational materials at every level. Earlier, I showed how exposure to the injustices that people of color have faced and an increased understanding of the realities of systemic oppression make people more empathetic. This empathy then translates to a willingness to be more open-minded which leads to more positive perceptions of communities of color. This is the goal of the reparations I propose and the primary reason I focus on constructing a more comprehensive national collective memory of racism.

In order to minimize racial stigma, school children must be exposed to the injustices that people of color have faced throughout the history of the United States. Instead of teaching students about "manifest destiny" and "the American dream", students should learn about imperialism and the way colonialism devastated non-Western nations that the United States and

⁹⁰ Loury, "Transgenerational Justice - Compensatory Versus Interpretative Approaches," 107.

other Western imperialist countries imposed themselves on. Some details about the injustices that people of color have faced are not appropriate for young children to learn about, but it is deceiving to teach these injustices through false framing to make them more palatable for younger kids. Students should be exposed to the reality of racism, white supremacy, and systemic oppression from a young age. As students grow older, their classes should reveal more details about the injustices and encourage students to engage with history critically. These lesson plans will teach students to think more critically and question how the world works. It is only through the proper education that residents of the United States will become more empathetic and willing to change our country's institutions.

These are the aspects of the Satisfaction Model that are best suited to facilitate the construction of a more comprehensive collective memory of racism in the United States. This model is the one the United States ought to adopt because it includes measures to construct a collective memory and other important measures that will foster empathy. The Satisfaction Model is also attractive due to aspects of this model that do not necessarily contribute directly to the construction of memory, but nevertheless ought to happen in the process of reparations.

One of the most appealing aspects of the Satisfaction Model that does not necessarily facilitate the construction of collective memory is the requirement that ongoing violations be stopped. In the United States, countless laws and practices stem from white supremacy. Each of these must be eradicated completely, in order for the government to prove that they are committed to eliminating white supremacy. If governmental agencies fail to end ongoing violations, they should be penalized by judicial and administrative sanctions that are also components of the Satisfaction Model. I interpret these sanctions to mean that government

agencies that fail to end ongoing violations should be be penalized via budget cuts, changes in leadership, and other equally drastic measures. Lastly, the Satisfaction Model calls for human rights training. Since the Satisfaction Model was created by the United Nations, a focus on human rights is not surprising. In the United States, these trainings can focus on how racism constitutes a violation of human rights and what actions specific government agencies can take to prevent these violations from occurring.

Overall, the Satisfaction Model will facilitate the construction of a more comprehensive collective memory of racism in the United States that will foster empathy and minimize racial stigma. It is crucial for these measures to be taken in order to fulfill the reparations that are owed to people of color for enduring the effects of white supremacy throughout the history of the United States. This chapter provided an in-depth explanation of what reparations under the Satisfaction Model would look like. My next chapter addresses objections to these reparations.

VI. Objections

The Satisfaction Model is a broad category of measures that can be taken to fulfill reparations to people of color. There are individuals that oppose reparations no matter what form — I do not address their objections here, as countless philosophers have already addressed them. Instead, I address objections specific to the Satisfaction Model.

The first objection is that reparations aimed at minimizing racial stigma are not politically feasible because white supremacy is ingrained in our society and cannot be easily combated. White supremacy is prevalent in every level of infrastructure in the United States. This makes it unlikely that a movement that aims to change this reality can come to fruition. Derrick Darby argues that white people will never support Black radical liberalism, including reparations, because they are afraid to see their in-group in a negative light.⁹¹ The political climate after the 2016 presidential election makes it seem even more unlikely that the government will admit that white supremacy still exists. The benefits of white supremacy lend the government's makeup to be the way that it is. Admitting that white supremacy exists in the United States is the equivalent of admitting that many of the people who run our government are there because they are immensely privileged, and their accomplishments stem not from just their work, but from the advantages that the system gives members of their race.

The fact that white supremacy is so ingrained in our society is the reason that reparations to victims of racism are so necessary. My thesis focuses on what reparations ought to look like, not how to convince the government they are necessary. Scholars and activists have attempted to do this for decades, with each argument more convincing than the last. Moreover, the perceived

⁹¹ Darby, Derrick. "Charles Mills's Liberal Redemption Song," *Ethics*, Vol. 129 No. 2 (January 2019): 370-397.

infeasibility of reparations for victims of white supremacy indicates how ingrained white supremacy is in our society.

A reason that people are unwilling to support reparations for victims of white supremacy is they do not believe white supremacy is a problem. Undoubtedly, many United States citizens would agree that white supremacy is wrong, but not all believe it is pervasive in our society. Due to their white privilege and the pervasiveness of white supremacy, white people are unable to see that they are systematically advantaged. Furthermore, white people are unwilling to admit that they have benefitted from a system that simultaneously disadvantages people of color. This also has to do with the social psychology of in-group bias. People are reluctant to accept that members of their in-group, or their in-group as a whole, are responsible for something that is viewed negatively⁹². This in-group bias impedes on people's ability to detect patterns of discrimination that boost their own group and disadvantages out-groups. If the government were to adopt reparations that show how pervasive white supremacy is throughout the nation's history, the public would gain the skill-set to identify other aspects of their life where white supremacy is at play and where they hold white privilege. In-group bias can be disrupted by making people aware of it and giving them the tools to recognize when they are complicit. The reparations I propose aim to do this by making people aware of the pervasiveness of white supremacy and how it impacts their perceptions of people of color.

A second reason that objectors say reparations are not politically feasible is because reparations require money and resources that objectors claim the government does not have. Some would argue that there are other problems that the government should put their resources

⁹² Rotella, Katie and Jennifer Richeson. "Motivated to 'Forget': The Effects of In-Group Wrongdoing on Memory and Collective Guilt," *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, Vol. 4 (March 2013): 730-737.

towards, instead of reparations for racism. These problems include, but are not limited to poverty, unemployment, and debt. These issues take precedence over white supremacy in the minds of many, and thus people believe the government's limited resources should be allocated towards these problems, rather than towards reparations.

It is true that these issues are concerning and require attention. Yet, it is also true that people of color bear the brunt of these issues. Thus, in order to eradicate problems like these, race-specific measures, such as the reparations I propose, are necessary. To fund reparations, I argue the budget should be taken from programs that are responsible for harms to people of color. For example, we can take money from the budget of the Department of Defense, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and other harmful agencies that systematically target people of color, to fund reparations. Under the Satisfaction Model, many of these agencies' operations would already be eliminated, in order to stop ongoing violations. Those resources should then be reallocated towards funding reparations.

Another objection is that any attempt to change the collective memory of racism will only increase racial stigma. Upon hearing about the pervasiveness of white supremacy, white people will feel defensive and due to white fragility, they are resistant to accepting the reality of white supremacy and how they benefit from it.⁹³ Scholars believe this defensiveness will cause further political divide as people feel more inclined to protect their in-group and categorize out-groups in negative lights. Even when people agree that the government owes reparations, there is a fear

⁹³ White fragility is defined as "a state in which even a minimal amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves."
DiAngelo, Robin. "White Fragility," *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*, Vol. 3 (2011): 54-70.

that reparations will make race relations in the United States more polarized, which would counteract the goal of reparations.⁹⁴

Although there is a possibility that introducing race-specific measures will worsen race relations in the United States, the reparations I propose, if fulfilled correctly, will counteract any of these unfavorable effects. Reparations under the Satisfaction Model will create more positive perceptions of people of color. By doing so, race relations in the United States will improve. Often, it is the *idea* of reparations that people oppose, and not necessarily the actual reparations themselves. When a race-specific policy is proposed, this puts many people on the defensive and makes it so they object to the policy, without considering how it could be beneficial. The idea of giving reparations to people of color is very contentious, without consideration of what the proposed reparations are. However, if the reparations I propose are fulfilled, people will be more empathetic and will view people of color in a more positive light. This increased empathy will prevent future injustices from occurring and minimize racial stigma.

The last objection is that reparations under the Satisfaction Model are symbolic and do not help people in the present day. In other words, the Satisfaction Model does not offer material reparations to people of color from the government. This is an important consideration, as symbolic reparations do not make a significant impact on the immediate quality of people's lives. This objection, while valid, fails to realize the importance of fulfilling symbolic reparations so that racial reconciliation and healing can occur. Furthermore, the reparations I propose will lay the groundwork for the public to fulfill additional, more substantive reparations in the future. Once the nation's collective memory of racism is more comprehensive, people will feel

⁹⁴ Loury, "Transgenerational Justice - Compensatory Versus Interpretative Approaches," 87-113.

compelled to provide more material reparations to people of color for the wrongs they have endured and continue to endure because of white supremacy.

The Satisfaction Model of reparations is more transformative than affirmative. The goal of these reparations is to overthrow the nation's entire system. The current system is built on white supremacy and once dismantled, we can repair the damage it has done. Typically, affirmative remedies are a kind of placeholder before fulfilling transformative remedies. However, in this case, I suggest that transformative remedies will lead to affirmative remedies. It is only by fulfilling the long-term goal of dismantling white supremacy that we can expect people of color to be fully compensated for the injustices they have faced.

If the different components of the Satisfaction Model are fulfilled, these reparations will construct a collective memory of racism in the United States and lead the public to have more positive perceptions of communities of color. The strongest objections to this model of reparations ask whether these reparations are politically feasible and whether they do enough for the victims of racism. The political feasibility objection will always be brought up for reparations proposals, but at the end of the day, we cannot dismiss a proposal simply because we fear retaliation. Every political action will be met with resistance, and reparations are no exception. In terms of the other objection that asks whether reparations under the Satisfaction Model do enough for victims of racism, the reparations I propose are not the only reparations that I believe the government ought to fulfill. Rather, reparations under the Satisfaction Model are a first step that will lead to additional reparations in the future. The reparations I propose are an important step to dismantling white supremacy in the United States and ensuring that injustices against people of color do not occur again.

VII. Conclusion

We cannot ignore the systematic oppression of people of color that is ingrained in the history of the United States. In order for the country to reconcile with its past, it is important to fulfill reparations to people of color. We simply cannot ignore the reality of racism and the existence of white supremacy in our society. The failure to acknowledge the injustices that people of color have faced throughout history has resulted in a culture where white supremacist ideology is ever present and the injustices faced by people of color are dismissed as commonplace occurrences. The current situation in the United States is not representative of what a just society looks like. In order to move towards a more just society, the United States government must fulfill reparations to people of color.

My thesis has established that a pervasive product of white supremacy is racial stigma. Racial stigma can be eliminated via fostering empathy for people of color and the injustices communities of color have faced. Empathy can be nurtured by constructing a more comprehensive collective memory of racism in the United States throughout its history. I analyzed various models of reparations that scholars have proposed by organizing them in the United Nations' framework for Reparations Programmes. Ultimately, I propose the United States ought to adopt the Satisfaction Model of reparations due to its ability to foster empathy and contribute to the construction of a more comprehensive national collective memory of racism and the existence of white supremacy.

The Satisfaction Model will foster empathy and construct a collective memory of racism, but only if it is fulfilled properly. Determining exactly how the Satisfaction Model should be implemented is outside the scope of my thesis, but there are some crucial elements to keep in

mind that I suggest. First, people of color must be in leadership positions and must be consulted at every step of this project. The burden of fulfilling these reparations falls on the government, however, these reparations will not be successful without the leadership and expertise of people of color. Second, the people of color that contribute to this project must be compensated adequately for their time and labor, including the emotional labor of engaging with injustices their community faced. Lastly, the government must keep in mind that the process of fulfilling reparations is not a one-time event. We must invest resources in this project to ensure its sustainability. There are countless other considerations to keep in mind for reparations under the Satisfaction Model — these are the three that I believe must be at the forefront of every conversation on this topic.

If the United States adopts the Satisfaction Model of reparations and fulfills them successfully, the pervasiveness of racial stigma will be reduced. This reduction in racial stigma and increased empathy for people of color will lead the public to adopt more substantial reparations for individual injustices to specific communities of color. Starting a national conversation on race by constructing a more comprehensive collective memory of racism and the existence of white supremacy is the first step to eliminating white supremacy completely from the United States.

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