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Issues of “Race” and Early Radical Geography

Our Invisible Proponents

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No topic illustrates more cogently the question of “What is radical about radical geography?” than that of race. Radical geography began with common cause between the Civil Rights movement and the anti-war movement. One of the first overt and public acts was to move the annual meeting of the AAG from Chicago to Ann Arbor after the use of police force at the 1968 Democratic Convention, a geographical act that was worthy of the origins of radical geography. Haynes Johnson (2008) writes:

The 1968 Chicago convention became a lacerating event, a distillation of a year of heartbreak, assassinations, riots and a breakdown in law and order that made it seem as if the country were coming apart. In its psychic impact, and its long-term political consequences, it eclipsed any other such convention in American history, destroying faith in politicians, in the political system, in the country and in its institutions. No one who was there, or who watched it on television, could escape the memory of what took place before their eyes.

The relocation of the annual meeting and attendant discussions mobilized concerned geographers to address questions of racism in relation to the discipline of geography, but the radical focus soon shifted to class. A few activist geographers of color, such as Thelma Glass in Alabama, were passionate – and radical – activists within the Civil Rights movement, but their work has been little recognized, much less

theorized, in the literature. Nor, for the most part, were they strongly represented in the political movement that became radical geography. According to my informal interviews with those who were around at the time, many geographers participated in either civil rights or anti-war marches, or even joined the Students for a Democratic Society, but such activities were in the main considered personal (and political) rather than academic. In this chapter I attempt to recognize the work of such activists, including activists of color, who are seldom acknowledged when the term “radical geography” is invoked, and then to untangle the complex relationship between the concepts of radicalism and anti-racism. I show that, in established urban geography, the dominant issue has been the relationship between race and class, which has tended to leave many of the geographers of color out of the picture. Relatedly, early radical scholars who recognized the link between racism and colonialism either did not link, or were not seen to link, the structure of inner cities and global colonialism. Now, many years later, the work of anti-racism in geography is ongoing, and the social events that anti-racist geography addresses are as urgent and challenging as ever.

Early Activism in the Discipline

The issue of “race” was high on the agenda of the AAG throughout the 1960s. In 1964–1965, President Gilbert White appointed Saul Cohen, then at Boston University, as the Executive Officer of the AAG. As the Civil Rights movement gained momentum, Cohen toured the historically Black universities of the south, and then applied to the National Science Foundation (NSF) for funding to enhance graduate training in geography with a view to enhancing – or in some cases establishing – Geography curricula in those colleges (AAG Diversity Task Force 2006; Waterman 2002). Cohen received a call from the NSF to say that the funding had been approved on the condition that the program be aimed at students from “small Southern colleges” rather than “black students.” The NSF thus funded the Commission on Geography and Afro-America (COMGA), tasked with sending undergraduates from these colleges to Northern universities. Don Deskins, a faculty member in Geography at the University of Michigan, became the first COMGA Director in 1968. Eventually, 20 students (19 Black and one White) were recruited to undertake training at Clark University (Cohen, personal interview, March 12, 2014).

At a 1968 meeting of the AAG Executive Committee (prior to the annual meeting), plans were still being made for the meeting to take

place in Chicago, but issues of racism were not absent (*The Professional Geographer* 1968). In addition to the COMGA activities:

The committee talked about a new commission which would promote teacher training for Negroes [sic]. ... The committee suggested that the name be changed to "Commission for Black American Geographers." The Council moved that the question of the name of the committee be deferred until the group has had a chance to assess its responsibilities and opportunities. (Minutes of the AAG Executive, 1968, AAG Archives B188F13)¹

Alan Pred was appointed as the first Chair of this committee, titled the "Southern College Program," and a place was created in the Washington office for a committee administrator who would organize an inventory of geographers and geography, create a newsletter, and encourage exchanges and curriculum development. The agenda was forthrightly a liberal one, meant to bring a greater diversity of students into the academy, and especially to allow them to enter the public education system. Yet there is no mention of race-related research, or of a role for geographers to address the fundamental social conditions that the Civil Rights movement addressed.

Meanwhile, a series of meetings occurred in Michigan under Deskins' leadership that culminated in a "Proposal for the AAG session on 'The Status of Negroes in American Geography'" (AAG Archives, B188 F13) to recognize that "many of the AAG's current activities are pertinent to recruiting more Negroes into geography, to strengthening and expanding geographic activity in predominantly negro educational institutions, to increasing the interaction between black and white geographers, and to making geography more relevant to the pressing social problems of the nation." This group made a number of suggestions aimed at changing the institutional ethos of the AAG, including "personal commitment," also encouraging new approaches to teaching. Organization occurred using a mailing list containing 41 names – many of them known to this author – among whom 29 were white, male, early-career university professors, 7 were white, male graduate students, and 5 (two of whom were women) of unknown affiliation, who may have been undergraduate students.² An evening "open forum" was planned for the annual meeting in Washington in 1967, consisting of three paper presentations: "The geographic dimension of race relations – urgent research" (Richard Morrill); "Recruiting Black American Geographers" (Theodore Speigner); and "The Geographer in the Community" (William Bunge), with commentary from Don Deskins ("Washington Meeting: Special Session on 'The Status of Negroes in Geography'" AAG archives B188

F13). Ron Horvath, then at Michigan State, also presented a position paper in which he wrote:

America is in crisis. Times of crisis are times for reassessment. It is appropriate that the geography profession reassess its position on the matter of race relations in America. Why? Because we have utterly failed to make any significant contribution to a solution to the racial dilemma facing America today. Most appalling is the obvious fact that we are a segregated community – only a fraction of *one* percent of our membership is Afro-American. Only two black professors were revealed by a survey of geography M.A.- and Ph.D.-granting institutions in this country. Only a handful of geography departments have even a single black major at either the graduate or undergraduate levels. (Horvath 1968: n.p.)

Horvath's data came from surveys conducted in Northern, predominantly white, geography departments with graduate programs, subsequently published (Horvath *et al.* 1969; Deskins and Speil 1971). The initial survey had found only two black geographers with Ph.Ds teaching in Northern established geography departments (Deskins and Harold Rose). Expanding the survey to include non-Ph.D. holders, they found a further 12 individuals teaching in departments with graduate programs in geography, a number that Deskins and Speil (1971: 284) describe as having risen "markedly." They also found that more than half of Southern, historically Black universities offered introductory geography courses, given by between 30 and 40 Black faculty members (few of whom held Ph.D. degrees), although only 12 Black students graduated with geography degrees in the entire U.S. in 1969.

Had Horvath's words been written today, we would be able to point to greater "diversity" in the discipline, but otherwise his observations still ring depressingly true. COMGA became defunct in the 1970s. In retrospect, it seems a half-hearted effort, a small liberal band-aid covering a major wound that could do next to nothing to staunch the existing racism inside and outside of geography. Subsequent surveys of the discipline showed only gradual change during the 1980s (Shrestha and Davis 1988, 1989). Interest sparked again within the AAG with the appointment in 2002 of the AAG Diversity Task Force, chaired by Joe Darden. Its "Final Report" (AAG Diversity Task Force 2006) reiterated many of the issues already identified in the 1960s reports, and called again for renewed attention to anti-racism in the discipline. Throughout those decades, however, anti-racist activism, anti-racist scholarship, and radical geography ran on parallel tracks. To understand this disconnected situation requires an examination not only of the content of radical and anti-racist scholarship, but also of some of the personal relationships that marked these events.

Early Anti-Racist Scholarship

Until the late 1960s, anti-racist literature was virtually non-existent in the geographical literature. Don Deskins (1969) created a bibliography that found 43 publications plus 15 Master's and Ph.D. theses "on the American negro and racial issues" between 1949 and 1968, almost half of them published between 1964 and 1968.³ He found that the majority of these were descriptive, many following the tradition of population geography. Only two geographers of color feature in the list: Deskins and Rose; and only one publication, by Richard Morrill, can be described as addressing the problem of racism as a social process. Morrill wrote:

Inferiority in almost every conceivable material respect is the mark of the ghetto. But also, to the minority person, the ghetto implies a rejection, a stamp of inferiority, which stifles ambition and initiative. The very fact of residential segregation reinforces other forms of discrimination by preventing the normal contacts through which prejudice may be gradually overcome. Yet because the home and the neighborhood are so personal and intimate, housing will be the last and most difficult step in the struggle for equal rights. (Morrill 1965: 339)

For a time during the late 1960s, questions of racism, especially with respect to residential segregation, were debated in the pages of *Antipode* and among practitioners of radical geography. Certainly, segregation was one of the most significant issues addressed by urban geographers, who took their cue from the Chicago School emphasis on the spatial order of the city since the 1920s. But the influence of the Chicago School led to a fixation among geographers for quantifying the spatial order. Most of the radical geographers were becoming skeptical of analyses based on neoclassical economic theories, including Morrill's, however, and the discussions were passionate but short lived, as the issue of class eclipsed race. For two decades the pages of the geography journals were almost completely silent (even during the "relevance debates" of the 1970s) (for a review, see Kobayashi 2014b). For the likes of David Harvey and other Marxian geographers, revolution to achieve social justice was in order (as other chapters in this collection discuss), but social change "does not entail yet another empirical investigation of the social conditions in the ghettos." Harvey viewed such work as "moral masturbation" on the part of "bleeding heart liberal[s]" (Harvey 1972: 10). Harvey saw spatial phenomena, including residential segregation, as a product of class, thereby shifting attention among radical geographers away from processes of racialization.

Certainly, Harvey did not mince words. His masculinist tone served to entrench the idea of radical geography as a project over which the boys could duke things out. The brash, virtually uncensored tone of *Antipode* in its early days was no doubt part of its appeal, but dissenting voices, or even alternative voices, were effectively silenced. A decade after *Antipode's* founding there was very little discussion of race in its articles, and an almost complete shift to class. Jim Blaut was an exception, working along with Brazilian geographer Milton Santos to link racism and colonialism at a global scale. Yet this work had more purchase in development geography than it had in the circles of urban geography in North America, a point to which we return later.

Even as Harvey's position won the day, Bill Bunge's "geographical expeditions" became the first major attempt to undertake participatory action research in the inner city. Reading between the lines of the *Antipode* article, Harvey's words were a disdainful dismissal of Bunge's work in Fitzgerald, Detroit, and later in other cities, with a range of collaborators (Katz *et al.*, this volume). Indeed at that time, racialization was not well understood by geographers and almost all of the geographical scholarship involved mapping "race" as a demographic variable and discussions about the problem of residential segregation. There was virtually no engagement with African-American communities. But Bunge (perhaps for these reasons) did not confine his writing to the geographical journals. He wrote this line in a typically sardonic pitch in the African-American journal *Crisis*: "How backward of them [African Americans] for us not to have found them" (Bunge 1965: 495; cited in Donaldson 1969: 26). Relatedly, the anthropologist Hortense Powdermaker wrote that she had: "found the field of geography to be wholly inadequate in its treatment of the Black American. The Black man knows more about whites than they do about him" (Powdermaker 1968: 361). At the same time, as Warren, Katz, and Heynen (this volume) demonstrate, Bunge's approach never transcended its masculinist origins and its intellectual and social influence was limited.

A very small number of black geographers were writing anti-racist articles, the main ones being Harold Rose and Don Deskins, and later Joe Darden, making only limited connection with either the radical geography literature or, later on, the critical poststructuralist literature. Much later, during the 1990s, a rapprochement among various strands of radical geography would emphasize both the construction and the situation of anti-racism, creating openings for theoretically informed geographical scholarship on racism in North America. That ongoing anti-racist project could benefit from a consideration of some of the geographers of color who – if they were considered at all – were never seen as a part of radical geography. Yet, while their theoretical

perspectives did not align with the dominant radical paradigm, their views of a society in which overcoming racism was possible were decidedly radical. Thelma Glass was one of those.

Thelma Glass: Activist (1916–2012)

When I looked at that bus as it passed my house and nobody was on it, it was a feeling of joy that will be with me forever, ... I had the idea that maybe we were finally going to be successful in getting everybody to cooperate. (Glass quoted in Bernstein, 2012: n.p.)

Thelma Glass, a geography professor at Alabama State University from 1947 until her retirement in the 1970s, was one of the original modern Civil Rights activists long before the radicalization of the discipline of Geography. In 1947, Glass had joined the Women's Political Council, a group of women with strong affiliation to Alabama State College. She was the secretary in 1955 when Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a bus, an act of defiance that she had initiated with the support of these women. The night Parks was arrested, December 1 1955, the group stayed up mimeographing 35,000 handbills calling for what became the Montgomery bus boycott, which lasted more than a year, until a Supreme Court decision (*Browder vs Gayle*) on December 20 1956 ruled segregated buses unconstitutional. Martin Luther King, Ralph Abernathy, and other prominent or soon-to-be-prominent civil rights leaders joined the bus boycott, but it was the Women's Political Council that did the organizing, and the "secretarial" work to keep it going. During that entire time, members of the group helped to transport boycotters around the city by organizing carpools (Robinson 1987), while remaining "invisible" to the wider public (Barnett 1993). Glass was highly regarded in her university and surrounding community; in a survey of Black women who stood out in the Civil Rights movement, Barnett ranked Glass as number 12.

Glass is best recognized for her activities during the 1950s, but they did not stop then. In 1987, she filed a civil rights case against the Montgomery Sheriff's Department for harassment involving a stop in which there was a dispute over the speed of a car in which she was a passenger, along with two other black senior citizens. She alleged that her "civil rights were violated by the manner in which we were approached by these law enforcement officers and that by the pointing of their guns and tone of their voices, that I was being threatened" (Airtel, SAC Mobile to Director FBI, FD 601, 4 May 1987; see also Craven, 2013).⁴ The FBI mounted an investigation, which not surprisingly found the allegations

to be unfounded, but Glass's protest was a significant expression of an issue of racial profiling and police violence that was only to increase well into the twenty-first century.

The likes of Thelma Glass are seldom mentioned in histories of the discipline or cited in geographical literature, but her role as an activist is well remembered by African Americans, and many are the students whose lives she influenced (George and Monk, 2004). What a radical idea! Rather than her scholarly words, the results of her actions survive to speak volumes about her radicalism. But she worked in a discipline segregated by both race and gender. She "supported" the likes of King and Abernathy, and was virtually ignored by geographers, who apparently failed to make the connection between her work and the project of changing the world.

Harold Rose: The Flaming Liberal (1930–2016)

Harold Rose spent a career distinctly, even deliberately, apart from the project of radical geography; yet, if only in retrospect, his work articulates a broader definition of the term "radical" aimed at making an anti-racist difference. Rose's career began when the issue of residential segregation was very high on the geographical agenda, although for the most part, especially in such subfields as urban ecology, "race" was a variable to be mapped but not explained. Mainstream geography not only cringed from the prospect of going beyond the bounds of its maps, but also held firmly to the view that spatial science required a detached analysis of external patterns (Rose 1969).

Rose took up a teaching position at the Florida A&M University while completing his Ph.D. at the Ohio State University, then held a post-doctoral position in population studies at the University of Chicago (where he became well acquainted with Brian Berry), before accepting a tenure-track job at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. He told me that he sought the position at the University of Chicago because he was worried that, as a black man, he had to do everything he could to enhance his recognized credentials. Urban geographers at the time drew very selectively from the theories of the Chicago School, ignoring the more humanistic interpretations that have influenced the tradition of symbolic interactionism. As Rose (1978) was to write several years later, a preoccupation with the concept of space had led geographers to ignore the lives of the people who actually occupied what geographers called "space." He disagreed profoundly with the radical geographers of the time, because he did not believe that their theories fit very well with the ways in which American cities were actually occupied. His work

progressed over the 1970s from fairly descriptive accounts of emerging African-American communities to more and more passionate statements of anti-racism (Kobayashi, 2014a, 2014b).

Rose was elected AAG president in 1976, and gave his Presidential Address in 1977 (Rose 1978) on the topic of lethal violence against young black men. He seems ahead of his times in recognizing that "Black lives matter"; the major theme of his talk was that there are spatial patterns to violence and that understanding violence goes far beyond mapping the variables of residential segregation. He was adamant, also, in stressing that he was talking about the threat of violence to young black men, and not about some vaguely defined threat to white Americans. Rose was well aware of what he was doing. Within the first two paragraphs he used carefully chosen words to state that (1) he did not intend to dwell upon his own accomplishments; and (2) he did not intend to turn his Presidential Address into a "geography of happiness" when so many lived a geography of despair. At the same time, he bemoaned the lack of what he called "appropriate" demographic training to fit the topic. Notwithstanding his claim that he was not a theorist, he proceeded to debunk most of the extant theories on violence, including the "culture of violence" theory, suggesting that violence occurs in a context of despair created by the formation of ghettos through segregation and impoverishment. His tone was radical, challenging both established ways of seeing geographically as well as the moral basis of choosing what geographers study, but his methods remained highly conventional. Still, it was another poke at the white, male establishment in the discipline.

It seemed that Rose received considerable respect for his position, but this had little impact on the discipline. I found a total of 24 citations (few for a Presidential Address), nearly all of them focused on the issue of racism. Just three of these used the words "race" or "racism" in their title, and it does not give me great pleasure to say that I authored all them in a direct attempt to situate and bring attention to Rose's work within the discipline (Kobayashi 2014a, 2014b, 2017). We might ask ourselves, therefore, why Rose's work did not have a greater disciplinary impact.

The first and possibly most important reason is that the discipline did not feel comfortable with anti-racist scholarship. In an extended personal interview in April, 2014, Rose expressed to me the up-hill battle he faced throughout his career:

The atmosphere was pretty negative and ... I persevered ... I was able to do what I wanted to do. I was able to get a post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Chicago in 1960 ... I studied in the population research

center there for a year. I did that primarily to legitimate what I was doing. People saying, 'You don't have any credentials to allow you to do this kind of stuff. Where are your credentials?' So I got the post-doc simply to ward off naysayers and those who were opposed to the kinds of stuff I was doing. ...

... I remember I was giving a talk at the University of Kentucky once and the guy came to take me ... to give the talk. ... There was a little hotel near the campus of the university and ... he said [he was there to] pick-up Professor Rose. They said "that nigger upstairs?" [laughs] I don't know, I didn't know what to expect [at the] University of Kentucky. ... all in a day's work.

... things got better over time. But for the first ten years or so, well, maybe not first ... things began to open up a little bit around 1969, 70. Attitudes began to change a little. And as more people entered urban geography as a specialty, it was hard to overlook the race issue. Pressure against that at the local university was so strong. ... Somebody said I'm gonna walk [out of here] because it's not worth the hassle. Things began to change outside the university environment, then the pressure to change *inside* the university environment became more intense.

... Geographers did not address issues dealing with race in the United States. They might do this somewhere else but not in the United States. And so, but things began to change ... we started the COMGA program. ... What we wanted to do was create a cadre of young black PhDs who could strengthen geography in the black institutions in the southern United States. At least that was the attitude at the beginning. Much of that thinking ... represented the work of Saul Cohen. ... Don Deskins did the legwork but Saul initiated the idea.

... I don't know. Luck probably. ... So I helped the Department of Geography, you know. They knew that. But they were satisfied never to hire another black man. They had their black.

... So geography was very conservative here. I was a burning liberal ... yeah I was a burning liberal in geography in the middle of the road of urban studies. Operating in two different worlds. (Personal interview with Harold Rose, Milwaukee, April 2014)

Rose's life between the two worlds of academia and urban Milwaukee was emblematic of the times. When he received tenure during the 1970s, the first thing he did was to buy a new house in a middle-class suburb. His was the first Black family to move into that development. Within two years of their moving in, White flight had resulted in a complete turnover from an all-White to a predominantly Black neighborhood, an experience that was of immense importance in Rose's own research on the transformation of American cities. But he also related to me that Bill

Bunge was a regular visitor. Bunge's family was still living nearby in Milwaukee at the time; indeed, his father had owned the very land upon which the suburb was built before selling it for urban development. Bunge would arrive on foot and tap on the window of the living room, which also served as Rose's office. Over coffee, Bill would admonish Harold for not taking (what he considered) a more radical stand on questions of racism

This is much more than a simple story about "Bill and Harold." Rose appreciated Bunge's commitment and passion toward anti-racism, but did not share his disdain for the academy or for Rose's desire to live on what Bunge called "the plantation." Rose was committed to a radical view of geography that would allow his scholarship to be recognized on the same basis as that of his white colleagues. Unlike Bunge, he had not come from a privileged background that he could throw over as a matter of choice. He believed that the best way to have his say was to do so in a way that would garner established recognition. Of course, we have only Rose's recollections many years after the fact, but he spoke of Bunge with a chuckle in his voice and a twinkle in his eye, expressing a deep friendship for someone he regarded, but largely forgave, as a bad boy of the discipline. He spoke in a similar tone of the relationship between Bunge and certain members of the University of Chicago, as though he considered himself a friend and arbiter to all. But he maintained a firm opinion that Bunge was wrong in his belief that revolutionary social change was required to overcome racism. Much as he disparaged, and even resented, the inability of the disciplinary mainstream to address racism, he had faith that mainstream methods would do the best job.

Rose also told the story of how, after publishing several articles in good journals in the early 1970s (Rose 1970, 1972), he was called into the office of the Head of the Department and told that the university did not expect him to publish such articles, and that he should be more mainstream. Hence his "flaming liberal" comment: Rose was not a revolutionary, but certainly not a bleeding-heart liberal either.

Thus, in different ways, both Rose and Bunge lived their lives outside the mainstream. The discussions between these two men also represented a microcosm of larger discussions in the discipline about the geographer as activist that have only come to light in the geographical journals in much more recent years. Bunge always worked against the grain; Rose attempted to work with the grain but to change it. His understanding of activism was practical and involved committed citizenship: Serving on the commission to address school busing (which he opposed), on the school board, and on a range of committees to overcome poverty in Milwaukee.

I remain deeply moved by the insight I have gained as a bystander in the relationship between Bill Bunge and Harold Rose, both of whom were deeply and passionately committed to social change, notwithstanding their political differences and different social backgrounds. I think that my analysis, like those of others, demonstrates both the terribly human side of all scholarship and the importance of passion and political commitment in scholarship. We can learn much by documenting those lived moments of scholarship that do not always make it into the pages of the scholarly journals.

The incorporation of anti-racism into the discipline of Geography remains very much an unfinished project. Recent events, such as the violence in North Carolina in the summer of 2017, are all too reminiscent of what occurred five decades ago during the Civil Rights movement. We might therefore ask what radical geography has contributed to the struggle. Yet there is no question concerning the contributions of these two highly charged, passionate, committed individuals. They will be remembered for their path-breaking work to revolutionize not only how we study geography, but also who studies geography: whose faces and ideas represent the discipline.

Anti-Racism and Radicalism: A Re-Mapping

Long before geographers were inspired by the work of Robert Park in Chicago to map residential segregation, W.E.B. Du Bois began mapping the results of racialization in the city of Philadelphia. It is widely acknowledged that Dubois' *The Philadelphia Negro* (1967 [1899]) was the first in-depth field study of its kind. Dubois was already deeply committed to anti-racism and to addressing the conditions that arose in American cities as a result of the events of the Civil War, and later industrialization and the Great Migration. He exerted a strong influence upon the many civic groups that attempted to address the development of slum conditions in Philadelphia and beyond, later becoming the founding President of the NAACP. Beyond this contribution, however, Dubois also recognized the tension between European and Black epistemologies, the sources of conflict therein, and the possibilities for political transformations of modern social conditions. Gilroy (1995: 112) calls this contrast a "politics of fulfillment and a politics of transfiguration," placing it between smug conservatism and radical scholarship. For Dubois, who was well connected with the pan-African movement, there were fundamental connections between conditions in the residentially segregated streets of Philadelphia and other American cities and the global project of colonialism (Dubois 2007[1940]). Yet this connection – despite

its fundamental spatiality – went relatively unnoticed in the discipline of geography until quite recently (Wilson 2005).

Park's and Dubois' paths crossed in a variety of ways, particularly over their relationship with Dubois' reputedly more conservative nemesis Booker T. Washington (Dubois 2008 [1903]; Harlan 1998; Walters 2002), for whom Park briefly worked as a research assistant. Park postulated both a "moral order" and a spatial order in the contemporary city, claiming that while blacks were trapped by their low position on the moral order, other groups, including European immigrants, could move through the spatial order (inner city to suburb) to improve their conditions. Yet urban geographers turned to Park (1925, 1939), not Dubois, in order to understand the role of race in the modern city, espousing a particular understanding of Park's work. Notwithstanding Park's immense intellectual influence, particularly on the broader field of symbolic interactionism (Plummer 1991, 1997) geographers seized upon the idea of urban ecology (Entrikin 1980), rescued it from vestiges of environmentalism, and applied it to models of urban development that by the 1970s had become the cornerstone of the sub-discipline of urban geography (Peach 1975; Berry and Kasarda 1977).

It was against just such deterministic and rule-bound interpretations of spatial science and location theory that radical geographers reacted so strongly by the 1970s (see the debate between Harvey 1973 and Morrill 1973; Kobayashi 2014a, 2014b). Yet while radical geographers vilified the urban ecological work exemplified by Berry and Kasarda, they virtually ignored the more liberal approaches of the likes of Rose and Deskins. Indeed, among the acrimonious debates that characterized *Antipode* at that time, Berry (1972: 33) admonished that

Harvey remains a product of the white European experience; he still has faith in logical rationalism, and views the central city negatively as a problem. Yet bubbling Black ethnocentrism, with an alternative twentieth-century core of theories of social change, provides an alternative value system that provides a fundamental basis for optimism.

Of course, Berry's comment can only be taken as ironic but interesting social commentary, and one cannot help but wonder just what he meant by "optimism": even an instrumental notion of social change does not seem to have permeated his or other urban geographers' approach to treating "race" as a variable rather than understanding racialization as a social process. But Berry's sentiments point to the question of how things *might* have transpired if the idea of anti-racism had not been suppressed by the idea of class in the first decade of North American radical geography, or if the analytical concept of double consciousness that Gilroy so

perceptively identified in Dubois (and later in the work of Frantz Fanon) had been taken up in order to uproot – or at least unsettle – geographers' fixation upon spatial pattern. Ultimately, Berry and Kasarda's work is as assimilationist as any at the time, and there is no basis for believing that their project aligns with that of Dubois. Indeed, rather than enter the fray of social activism, they caution against instrumentalism of the sort that would result in social change on the grounds that it would be unscientific (Berry and Kasarda 1977: 429). But we need to look beyond urban geography to see the possibilities of anti-racism in early radical geography.

James Blaut (1927–2000): Anti-Racist Visionary

Finally, I turn to James Blaut, the scholar who perhaps more than any other early radical geographer insisted upon the salience of racialization, which in his terms was coterminous with colonialism in the formation of the capitalist world. Blaut got the conversation started in the very first issue of *Antipode*, when he characterized the discipline as “full of jingoistic prejudice” (Blaut 1969: 10). He also was one of the first geographers to point out the symbiotic relationship between the discipline of geography and the larger colonial project. Blaut expanded about that relationship in many publications thereafter, sometimes addressing racism more explicitly.

Dubois also eventually received a brief but significant mention, when Blaut (2012 [1993]: 55) recognized the significance of colonial scholars striking back at the European metropole. It is ironic that Blaut should mention him in a list of international scholars, since Dubois was not from the developing world; he was born in rural Massachusetts (the first African-American to receive a Ph.D. from Harvard, in 1895). But then, as Blaut wrote, “No single geographer is wholly free from ethnocentric bias” (Blaut 1969: 10).

This little slip is perhaps not so insignificant. Blaut is most well-known for his work on colonialism and in a global context. He wrote convincingly of the modern, efficient, and powerful course of imperialism, both within the discipline and in the world. But his work was about racism far away, a product of the colonial development ethos. Indeed, he was one of the first geographers from a northern country to engage in activist work outside the northern context. The issue here is not so much, however, with what Blaut thought or wrote. In several pieces, most notably, “The theory of cultural racism” (1992) and his introduction to *The Colonizer's Model of the World* (2012 [1993]) he wrote specifically on the problems of racialized thinking. Moreover, in an article that deviates

somewhat from the major themes of his work, Blaut (1983) actually links residential segregation in America to larger processes of colonialism, something that received very little attention at the time notwithstanding the vast numbers of articles by geographers on segregation. If Blaut was ahead of his contemporaries with respect to colonialism – and we could argue that even today his approach is neither well understood nor appreciated – he was so far ahead in terms of linking urban processes in the advanced capitalist city with colonialism that his thinking on this was hardly considered.

Conclusion

Eric Sheppard (2015) reminds us of the many reasons why we should not treat geography as a club. Rather, we should think geographically and advance activism based on engaged pluralism, transcending both antagonism and exclusion. There were some important anti-racists among the early radical geographers, most notably Jim Blaut, Fred Donaldson, Ron Horvath, Richard Morrill, as well as Harold Rose and Don Deskins. But while their work was certainly not forgotten, it was pushed aside in short order as geographers went on to engage in both antagonism and exclusion when it came to incorporating anti-racism. Radical geographers boisterously and antagonistically challenged racialization, favoring class formation as an explanatory process. They also excluded feminist and anti-racist voices from discussions of urban geography, as much in response to the conservative approach of urban ecology as to any deliberate response to plural voices. They may have denied Robert Park but they ignored W.E.B. Dubois and other writers of the pan-African movement – scholars who belatedly have emerged as significant in anti-racist geography. They discounted or ignored local activism such as that engaged in by the likes of Thelma Glass. But they also engaged passionately, all too humanly, in a cause for which they believed only an engagement with the more brutal forms of capitalism could bring success.

It is certainly too simple to say that analyses of the process of racialization suffered at the expense of attention to class formation, although there is no question that the emphasis on class formation on the part of radical geographers led many away from "race" formation. The fact that analysis of residential segregation was firmly in the grasp of neoclassical economic geography until relatively recently did not help. In hindsight, we can see two things. First, with few exceptions the interests of the few geographers of color did not align well with either school. White radical geographers lost interest in racialization as a spatial phenomenon, as

part of an overall turn away from the study of landscape and culture that marked humanistic geography in the 1970s (which, by the way, was even more White).

Black geographers had a diverse agenda. Thelma Glass's mission was to educate Black students and to bring about change on the ground. Her mission was fundamentally geographical, focused on place and relations in place, but she did not publish enough to make a dent on mainstream geographical thinking. Don Deskins wanted to change the face of the discipline, through efforts that have been part of a slow and very partial movement of diversification. Harold Rose turned his political sights not upon the discipline but upon the ways that geographers could contribute to public policy, particularly around such issues as school bussing, residential change, and racialized violence. Today, his work is as relevant – and geographical – as it ever was.

Jean-Paul Sartre, who benefited from many years of sometimes fraught collaboration with Frantz Fanon, once wrote that it was only once the colonized had migrated to the metropole, in the years after de-colonialization (at least officially), and with the creation of new concentrations of oppression such as those found in the *banlieu* (suburbs) of Paris, that scholars in the metropole began to come to terms with what Sartre called the “new racism” (Sartre 1972; Kobayashi and Boyle 2014). All racisms, from the suburbs of Paris, to the inner cities of Philadelphia or Chicago, to the streets of San Juan, Puerto Rico, where Jim Blaut was politically active, are the products of colonialism, capitalism, and the out-and-out hatreds that drive inequality and oppression, but Sartre's point should be well taken in our discipline. These disparate places represent very different geographies, and if it took us a long time to recognize their connections, and to give due credit as a result to early activists such as Thelma Glass, surely making those connections is one of the most important tasks of the geographer today.

In retrospect, geographers of the 1970s occupied distinct and seldom intersecting intellectual worlds. For the most part, Marxian scholars, humanists, and spatial scientists neither agreed with one another, nor overlapped (Kobayashi and Mackenzie 1989). Both development geographers and anti-racist scholars were beginning to emerge (although the latter did not really get going until the 1990s), but in general the racialization wrought by colonialism far away and the racialization of North American cities were not considered as part of a larger global context of racism. Jim Blaut and Bill Bunge did not write on the same page. Notwithstanding the brief florescence of discussions of racism in the first pages of *Antipode*, these issues rode on parallel tracks for some decades. Yet the passion of the early radical geographers has carried forward. We build upon their raucous voices and their silences, their

passions about class and colonialism and as well as their blinkered understanding of racialization, positioning us to glance back, listening to the countervailing voices, radical in their own ways, whose perspectives have contributed, albeit many years later, to what we might hope to be a transformative vision.

That vision must surely include the most pressing issues that involve contemporary geographical manifestations of racialization: the effects of enslavement that have carried forward into entrenched poverty and segregation in North American cities; the racialized violence that marks ordinary life in cities; the impact of migration throughout the world in further entwining relations between former colonies and the metropole; and the pernicious effects of political relations in which elected and appointed public officials deny racialization and even engage in direct racist attacks upon their citizens (and others). Geographers today are more and more engaged with the anti-racist vision, but they have as much as ever to fill their plates.

Notes

- 1 This excerpt comes from a carbon copy of Executive minutes in the AAG Archives, dated only with the year, 1968. The published Executive Committee and Council minutes for 1968 do not contain these lines (*The Professional Geographer* 1968). Curiously, a survey of the minutes of Executive and Council meetings throughout the 1960s and early 1970s (published regularly in summary form in *The Professional Geographer*) finds no mention of the events under discussion here.
- 2 I have tried to trace subsequent information about the five, but have been unable to do so.
- 3 This bibliography was originally handed out in mimeographed form at the Washington AAG Annual Meeting.
- 4 The FBI documentation on this case is publicly available as a result of a Freedom of Information Act request made by Shawn Musgrave of *Muckrock*. Available at: <https://www.muckrock.com/foi/united-states-of-america-10/thelma-glass-fbi-1862/> (accessed October 25, 2017)

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