How Racial Injustice Undermines News Sources and News-Based Inferences

Forthcoming in *Episteme*

Penultimate Version

An area of inquiry that social epistemologists have taken as important involves how subjects' environment, world or community affect whether subjects' cognitive commitments are true, rational or properly evaluated as knowledge (Goldman, 1987, 1999). To this end, social epistemologists have in large measure focused on testimony (Coady, 1992). But social epistemologists have in comparatively smaller measure attended to newspapers, journalism and journalistic practices (Goldman, 1999; Goldman & Cox, 1999; Goldberg, 2010) even though information from these information sources serve as the basis of so many of subjects' cognitive commitments. So, the epistemology of journalism is an area of inquiry that deserves more attention that it has received.

 Media studies and journalism studies scholars have picked up the slack left by epistemologists in terms of evaluating journalistic practices (Godler et al., 2020; Maras, 2013; Mindich, 2000; Ward, 2005). But some social epistemologists have noted that these fields lack the conceptual tools that social epistemology has to evaluate journalistic practices even if these fields helpfully distinguish between journalistic practices (Godler et al., 2020). I take up some of this slack because I evaluate news organizations in terms of their propensity to cause subjects to be in good epistemic states such as justified belief. As a result, this paper is a contribution to the epistemology of journalism literature.

I not only contribute to the epistemology of journalism literature, but I also contribute to the journalism studies literature because I explain empirical findings in journalism studies such as that whites are overrepresented in news reports as victims of crimes and police and, on the other hand, that Latinx folks and black folks are overrepresented as criminals (Dixon, 2017; Dixon & Linz, 2000; Dixon & Williams, 2015; Johnston, 2019). Journalism studies scholars have also noted that some news organizations that have increased the diversity of their journalist staff members have not

proportionately increased the diversity of the information that they report (Benson, 2005; Sylvie, 2011) even though news staff diversity has been shown to affect journalistic practices and the information they report to some degree (Everbach, 2006; Zeldes et al., 2007). I proffer an argument that partly explains how diversity in content can lag behind diversity in staff without diminishing the epistemic importance of diversity in staff.

This is also a contribution to the epistemological body of work that takes up non-ideal rather than ideal epistemic states. Epistemologists have long focused on describing the conditions subjects must meet to count as is in ideal epistemic states such as knowing and rationally believing (Chisholm, 1989; Conee & Feldman, 2004; Goldman, 1979; Nozick, 1981; Pritchard, 2010; Schafer, 2014; Schoenfield, 2019). This parallels a similar focus in political philosophy because political philosophers have long focused on describing the conditions a society must meet to be properly evaluated as in an ideally just state (Kant, 1996; Locke, 1988; Rawls, 2001; Rousseau, 1997). Despite these long dominant foci both some epistemologists (Alcoff, 1999, 2007; Bayruns García, 2019; Collins, 1990; Davis, 2018; Dotson, 2011; Fricker, 2007; Medina, 2013; Mills, 2007; Pohlhaus, 2012) and some political philosophers (Khader, 2008, 2019; Mills, 1997; Nussbaum, 2000; Sen, 1992) have begun to turn away from focusing on ideal target states to focus on non-ideal states. These non-ideal political philosophers have turned to analyzing, explaining and offering prescriptions for non-ideal societal states such as injustice, oppression and wealth mal-distributions. Similarly, non-ideal epistemologists analyze, explain and offer prescriptions for non-ideal epistemic states such as error, ignorance and irrational belief. This paper is a contribution to this work because in it I explain how non-ideal political societal features cause news organizations to fail as reliable sources of information and as epistemically good inference bases.

But this paper also contributes to the process reliabilist and social epistemology literature (Goldman, 1979; Goldman & Cox, 1996; Goldberg, 2010, 2018; Kitcher, 1990; Zollman, 2011). This

paper contributes to the process reliabilist literature because I argue that social-political phenomena such as racial injustice can affect whether inferences are reliably formed. This paper contributes to the broader social epistemology literature because in it I argue that racial injustice can undermine a primary conduit for information to flow from those who have it to those who lack it, namely newspapers or news organizations. And one of this paper's goals is to follow up Charles Mills' suggestion in "White Ignorance" that social epistemological-analytical tools such as veritism can be helpfully brought to bear when explaining racial injustice's epistemic effects (Goldman, 1999; Mills, 2007).

Subjects depend on news organizations for information of innumerable kinds (Coady, 1992). And individuals make inferences that depend on these news sources reliably informing them about information in domains such as sports, weather, politics and injustice. One species of inference that relies on news sources providing reliable coverage in a given information domain is coverage-supported inference (Goldberg, 2010).

A subject makes a coverage-supported inference if she infers that p because of an absence of a report that ~p from a reliable source in a domain. Suppose that I infer that the New York Yankees have not moved their stadium to Connecticut because reliable sources such as the New York Times have not reported that they have moved it to Connecticut. Here I base this inference on (1) the absence of a report that the Yankees moved to Connecticut and (2) my belief that 'if it were true that the Yankees had moved, I would have heard about it by now' (Goldberg, 2010). This absence of a report from a reliable source on topics partly confers doxastic justification on this inference (Goldberg, 2010; Pedersen & Kallestrup, 2013).

That I am doxastically justified in my coverage-supported inference partly depends on whether *I am sensitive* to whether my sources reliably uncover and publicize information in this domain (Goldberg, 2010). If my doxastic justification partly depends on this sensitivity, then phenomena that undermine this sensitivity as a consequence undermine my capacity to justly infer in this domain. I

aim to motivate the idea that *racial injustice* is precisely this kind of phenomenon. So, I am making a claim about whether subjects can justly infer in the *information domain of racial injustice*.

I defend the claim that racial injustice undermines subjects' doxastic justification in inferences they make in the domain of racial injustice. I assume that I will have successfully defended this claim if I defend (1) that features of racially unjust societies such as testimonial injustice and testimonial quieting depress the likelihood that news sources unreliably uncover and report racial injustice information (Dotson, 2011; Fricker, 2007) and (2) that the unjust structure of racially unjust societies depresses the likelihood that news sources that do uncover this information actually successfully transmit this information to subjects who lack it.

I focus on inferences made in the information domain of race and racial injustice. This is a domain of information that invokes the geographic region of North America. But unfortunately, North America does not have a monopoly on racial injustice. As a result, this claim could go through in other areas of the world that have similar histories of racial injustice. But even though I focus on racial injustice, if *an* injustice causes prejudice to be widely harbored and the structure of a society to be unjust, then injustice can undermine a society's coverage-supported inferences irrespective of whether the injustice accrues to subjects because of their gender, sexual orientation, religious membership or geographic origin.

Even though I focus on racial injustice's effect on news-based inferences, racial injustice affects news sources in many other ways. Some of these are that racial injustice can at least partly cause reporters and editors to propagate falsehoods such as Latinx and Black male's inherent criminality (Saul, 2018), that reporters tend to portray white drug users as victims while they portray Black, Latinx and Indigenous Americans as "addicts" (Hall, 1997; Johnston, 2019; Reinarman & Levine, 2004) and that mainstream news sources often cover racial injustice in a "neutral" way that causes non-whites to distrust these news sources (Robinson & Culver, 2016). These negative effects of racial injustice on

the news can also be understood as part of a larger phenomenon of how racial injustice causes negative and false misrepresentation of Black folks, Indigenous folks, Latinx folks and people of color through media such as art, film, music and novels (Darby & Shelby, 1997; Hall, 1997; Smith, 1997; Taylor, 2006). This paper contributes to this body of work because news sources partly compose these media that negatively and falsely misrepresent non-white folks.

Racial injustice's negative epistemic effect on coverage-supported inference is just one of racial injustice's negative effects. Epistemologists have labeled some of these negative epistemic effects, white ignorance, (Mills, 2007), testimonial and hermeneutical injustice (Fricker, 2007), testimonial quieting and smothering (Dotson, 2011), epistemic appropriation (Davis, 2019), expression-style exclusion (Bayruns-García, 2019) and agential insensitivity (Woomer, 2019). And racial injustice's negative effect on coverage-supported inference is only one way that racial injustice negatively epistemically affects news reporting and journalism and as a result this is an area where much more social epistemological work ought to be done.

In section one, I describe coverage-supported belief, coverage-reliance ignorance, its bad epistemic consequences and cases of coverage-reliance ignorance. In section two, I argue that racial prejudice can make a news source unreliable in a domain because racial prejudice can depress the likelihood that news sources report on racial injustice related topics. In section three, I argue that a society's unjust structure can make a news source's coverage unreliable because it depresses the likelihood that reports on racial-injustice-related topics reach subjects who lack this information. In section four, I argue that racial injustice can undermine a subject's capacity to properly sense her social conditions such that she is doxastically justified in her coverage-supported inference.

<center>I</center>

In this section, I describe, (1) coverage-supported belief, (2) features of coverage-reliance ignorance (3) its bad epistemic consequences and (4) a case of coverage-reliance ignorance where a subject holds a true but unjustified belief.

Canada Declares War Case

Suppose Victoria works in current day Manhattan. And, suppose that Victoria overhears her co-worker tell someone that Canada has declared war on the US. A few minutes later Victoria *reflects* on whether this is true, and then she rejects the claim that Canada has declared war on the US at least partly because *if it were true* that Canada declared war on the US, *then she would have heard about it by now from reliable sources* such as the New York Times, Washington Post or The Wall Street Journal (Goldberg, 2010). Suppose that Canada has *not* declared war on the US. Here, Victoria infers that Canada did not declare war on the US. She bases this inference on her belief that if Canada *had* declared war on the US, then she would have heard about it by now. So, a consequence of this is that Victoria properly infers a *true* belief that Canada has not declared war on the US. Sanford Goldberg calls this phenomenon *coverage-supported belief* (Goldberg, 2010).

Detroit Police Case

Suppose Jim is a white industrial worker who lives and works in Detroit during the mid-1980s. While at work, Jim overhears a co-worker tell someone that the police consistently pull over black folks in his neighborhood for no legitimate reason while driving and that this kind of treatment is of a piece with how the Detroit police unjustly treat black folks relative to how they treat white folks. A few hours after Jim hears this, he *reflects* on whether this is true, and then he rejects this claim that the police treat black folks in this unjust way partly because he believes *if it were true* that police treated black folks this way, *then he would have heard about it by now from reliable sources* such as the *Detroit Free Press.*

Suppose that police *do* treat black folks this way in Jim's community. Here, Jim falsely infers primarily because of his *belief* that if this claim were true, then he would have heard about it by now. And, suppose that Jim would not have heard about how police unjustly treat black folks by now *because of racial injustice* in his society. This is a bad case of coverage-supported belief. It is a bad case of coverage-supported belief because of racial injustice. I will call this phenomenon, *coverage-reliance ignorance.* Here 'ignorance' refers to bad epistemic states caused by injustice. And the view of ignorance I assume is the standard theory of ignorance where a subject is ignorant of p if she lacks knowledge of p (Le Morvan & Peels, 2016). On this view, a subject is ignorant of p if she lacks a true belief that p, if she lacks knowledge that p or she suspends judgement that p. And if one assumes a theory of justification that allows that someone can have a justified true belief that does not count as knowledge, then on this standard view of ignorance a subject can have a justified true belief that counts as ignorance.

1.1: Coverage-Supported Knowledge and Justified Belief

For Goldberg, a subject's coverage supported belief can result in knowledge or a doxastically justified belief. Coverage-supported knowledge differs from coverage-supported justified belief because a subject's coverage-supported belief need only satisfy reliability conditions to count as knowledge but a subject must properly sense whether these reliability conditions obtain to justly infer. So, coverage-supported justified belief involves a *first-personal sensitivity* that coverage-supported knowledge does not.

By Goldberg's lights, a subject's coverage-supported belief counts as knowledge only if it satisfies (1) five jointly sufficient conditions and (2) a non-Gettier condition. These five jointly sufficient conditions must be satisfied for a coverage-supported belief to count as knowledge because if they are satisfied, then the belief is sufficiently reliable to be properly evaluated as knowledge.

The first condition is the *source-existence* condition. The source-existence condition obtains if there is a person, group or organization that is disposed to report on matters such as whether 'Canada

has declared war on the US' ('W'). So, in the Canada Declares War Case, Victoria's belief that ~W satisfies the source existence condition because sources exist, like the New York Times and Washington Post, that are disposed to report on matters like whether Canada has declared war on the US ('W').

The second condition is the *reliable-coverage* condition. The reliable-coverage condition is satisfied if there is a source who reliably uncovers and publicizes information in a domain of *interest* to a subject. In the Canada Declares War Case, Victoria's belief that ~W satisfies the reliable-coverage condition because the New York Times reliably uncovers and publicizes W-like information.

The third condition is the *sufficient-interval* condition. The sufficient-interval condition is satisfied if a source relays information in some domain of interest to a subject according to the "time-related expectations of [the subject], on the one hand, and the abilities of the [source] to make any relevant discoveries, on the other" (Goldberg, 2010, p. 161). In the Canada Declares War Case Victoria's belief that ~W satisfies the sufficient-interval condition if, say, the New York Times reports W-like information in a time interval such that it meets Victoria's time-related expectations where her time-related expectation is that if W were true, she would expect to see it reported on the New York Times' website within, say, an hour from when Canada declared war on the US.

The fourth condition is the *silence* condition. A subject satisfies the silence condition if she has not come across a report regarding her coverage-supported belief. In the Canada Declares War Case Victoria satisfies this condition because she has not come across or encountered any report that W. In other words, Victoria's reliable sources are silent on whether W.

The fifth condition is the *receptivity* condition. A subject satisfies the receptivity condition if she "*would* come across whatever relevant reports were offered by the source(s)" (Goldberg 2010, p. 164, original emphasis). In the Canada Declares War Case, Victoria satisfies this condition if, say, her internet is working properly and reliably such that if the New York Times did report that W, then she

would *receive* the report that W. In this case, the New York Times has not reported W so she is justified in believing ~W partly because she is properly receptive to any New York Times reports that W.

By Goldberg's lights, a subject is doxastically justified in her coverage-supported belief if she is sensitive to the social conditions that "make it likely" that the five knowledge conditions obtain. These social conditions involve the "various social institutions and practices that form the processes(es) by which news is generated and disseminated in her community" (Goldberg 2010, p. 179). For example, Victoria properly expects her news sources such as the New York Times to inform her in a timely and reliable way about whether Canada has declared war on the US. Her expectations are calibrated to the reliability of the processes that compose her community's information gathering and disseminating (Goldberg, 2010). The sufficient reliability of these processes make one of her inference bases sufficiently reliable to make her doxastically justified in her coverage supported inference. This inference base is her belief that 'if Canada had declared war, then she would have heard about it by now.' Goldberg calls coverage-supported inference bases of this kind, truth-to-testimony conditionals. They take the general form of 'if ~p were true, then I would have heard about it by now.'

In Victoria's case, the truth-to-testimony conditional is true. But a subject can be doxastically justified in her coverage-supported inference even if the relevant truth-to-testimony conditional, that serves as an inference base, is false. A false truth-to-testimony-conditional-inference base can confer doxastic justification if the processes that compose a subject's community are reliable enough. Suppose that in Victoria's case that her sources such as the New York Times could not report on whether foreign nation states have declared war on the US for the hour when she considered whether Canada had declared war on the US. By Goldberg's lights, Victoria is doxastically justified because her belief in the truth-to-testimony conditional would often enough be true despite its falsity in this supposed instant. As a result, Victoria's justified true coverage-supported inference does not count as knowledge.

Suppose that I infer that Canada has not declared war on the US partly on the basis of my belief that 'if Canada had declared war on the US, then I would have heard about it by now.' But in this case, Canada has actually declared war on the US. By Goldberg's lights, I am doxastically justified in my false coverage-supported inference if my belief in the truth-to-testimony-conditional-inference base is reliably true. This belief is reliably true if I properly sense the social conditions that make it likely that my sources apprise me of information in the relevant domain.

1.2: Features of Coverage-Reliance Ignorance

Coverage-reliance ignorance obtains if (a) a subject infers either a false belief or a doxastically unjustified true belief *because* (b) she bases her inference in a false belief that sources reliably apprise her of information in a domain in a timely fashion where (c) *injustice* causes her sources to unreliably apprise her of information in this domain.

I understand injustice to involve asymmetrical power relations between a dominant group and at least one non-dominant group in a given society. Racial injustice, gender injustice, injustice that involves sexual orientation and disability are examples of injustice as I understand it. I take US society as a paradigm case of a society where racial injustice obtains (Mills, 1997; Omi & Winant, 1994; Taylor, 2013).

Coverage-reliance ignorance is an epistemically bad case of coverage-supported belief because racial injustice causes, say, Jim's news sources to unreliably report race-and-racial-injustice-related information. If Jose bases his inference that the New York Yankees have not moved to Hartford Connecticut on the belief that the New York Times reliably apprises him of information like this and the New York Times has *not* reported that the New York Yankees have moved to Hartford, then he is justified in his inference that the Yankees have *not* moved to Hartford. The *absence of a report* from the New York Times and his justified belief in the relevant truth-to-testimony conditional *justifies him* in his inference that it is not the case that the Yankees have moved (Pedersen & Kallestrup, 2013).

This case is epistemically good partly because the New York Times would and does reliably report on matters like these such that the absence of a report justifies him.

Jose's and Jim's cases epistemically differ because Jim bases his inference in an *unjustified false belief about* his sources' *reliable coverage* of racial-injustice-related topics and Jose bases his inference in a justified *true belief about* his sources' *reliable coverage* of sports-related topics. But Jim's case is epistemically bad because of racial injustice. Racial injustice makes Jim's belief about his source's reliability false and unjustified because racial injustice makes his sources unreliable and him insensitive.

1.3: Unjustified True Belief Case of Coverage-Reliance Ignorance

In the Detroit Police case, Jim infers a *false* belief at least partly because of racial injustice. But a subject can also infer an unjustified *true* belief because of racial injustice. Take the following case.

Native American News Case

Thomas is an 18th century Anglo-Saxon-Philadelphian man. During the 1700s, news publications such as the *Pennsylvania Gazette* overwhelmingly reported that Native Americans "were cunning, barbaric, and evil – and certainly undeserving of the vast lands coveted by the European settlers" (Gonzalez & Torres, 2011, p. 22). The vast majority of these reports were false or exaggerated, and reports of European violence against Native Americans were rarely reported even though it comprised much of the violence between Europeans and Native Americans (Gonzalez & Torres, 2011).

Suppose that Thomas overhears someone in a Philadelphia crowd claim that two months ago European settlers viciously attacked a Native American village outside of Germantown Pennsylvania. An hour later, Thomas reflects on whether this claim is true, and then he infers that it is *not true* that European settlers viciously attacked a Native American village outside of Germantown. He bases his inference in his belief that if Europeans had viciously attacked a Native American village outside of Germantown, then he would have heard about it by now from a reliable news source such as the

Pennsylvania Gazette. Suppose that *this* report Thomas overhears is *actually false* even though Europeans often committed acts like these against Native American villages. Here, Thomas infers a true, but unjustified, belief because he bases his inference on his unreliably true belief that news sources such as the *Pennsylvania Gazette* accurately report on matters like these. But, in point of historical fact, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* did *not* reliably report on such matters and thus Thomas' true belief is unjustified (Gonzalez & Torres, 2011). So, Thomas' case is similar to Jim's case because racial injustice plays a role in undermining the reliability of the news-gathering-and-disseminating processes such that their inference bases are epistemically bad.

II

In this section, I defend the claim that racial prejudice can make a news organization report unreliably regarding racial injustice-related topics because racial prejudice can make hearers less reliably perceive speakers' trustworthiness. I provide two reasons that support this claim. The first is that news organizations rely on hearers reliably perceiving non-white speakers' trustworthiness to reliably report about racial injustice-related topics. A second reason is that racial prejudice can make hearers less reliably perceive non-white speakers' trustworthiness.

I argue that racial prejudice can make a source unreliably report in a given domain where this differs from whether a source provides a subject with *reliable coverage* such that she either knows or is doxastically justified in her coverage-supported belief. That is, if a subject is properly evaluated as knowing her coverage-supported belief only if her source reliably reports in a domain and a subject is more likely justified in her coverage-supported belief if her source reliably reports in a domain, then whether a subject knows or is doxastically justified in her belief can depend on her sources' reliability in a given domain.

I take up how racial prejudice affects individual subjects' perceptions of speakers' trustworthiness. But even though this explanation involves individual subjects' trustworthiness

perceptions, this is a systems-level explanation rather than an individualistic explanation of how racial prejudice causes news sources to unreliably report in the domain of race and racial injustice. I take it that racial prejudice is partly constitutive of racial injustice or a racially unjust society. The New York Times is not an individual, but explaining how racial prejudice affects the New York Times' coverage reliability involves reference to individuals such as reporters and editors who partly constitute the New York Times.

2.1: News Organizations qua Information Channels

News organizations rely on reporters and editors reliably perceiving speakers' trustworthiness to reliably report in a domain because news organizations function as information channels. An information channel is a medium through which a signal carries information (Dretske, 1981). An information channel is reliable if enough of the signals that enter it are transmitted. So, if a news organization functions as a reliable information channel, then this news organization must be composed of processes that reliably transmit information through it.

Following Fred Dretske, Sanford Goldberg roughly defines reliable information transmission in this way:

"…a signal φ, carries the information that p, just in case φ wouldn't have transpired unless p"

(Dretske, 1981; Goldberg, 2018).

On this view of reliable information transmission, information is reliably transmitted through a news organization only if a news organization would not have reported that the New York Yankees beat the Boston Red Sox unless the New York Yankees actually beat the Boston Red Sox. Here, the report that *the Yankees beat the Red Sox* is the signal that is carried through a news organization qua information channel.

News organizations such as the New York Times function as information channels partly because of reporters and editors who instantiate reliable processes and methods. News organization

editors and reporters act as *gatekeepers* who follow methods to reliably transmit information through their newspapers qua information channels. Alvin Goldman characterizes gatekeeping in these ways:

"Broadly speaking, gatekeeping is any kind of third-party activity that controls the production of speech or affects the dissemination of messages to possible audiences" (Goldman, 1999, p. 189).

"This 'gatekeeper' function affects what messages are received by hearers or the number of hearers who receive them, and thereby impinges on information-state changes" (Goldman, 1999, p. 189).

By Goldman's lights, a gatekeeper can be veritistically assessed in terms of whether her practices lead to her audience holding more true beliefs and fewer false beliefs (Goldman 1999, p. 189). On assessing gatekeepers, Goldman says:

"Given the importance of gatekeepers…social epistemology must inquire into the practices available to gatekeepers and the veritistic consequences that might flow from these practices" (Goldman 1999, 189).

A reporter or editor performs her gatekeeping function veritistically well if she employs practices that elevate the likelihood of true belief and depress the likelihood of false belief among her readers. I assume that practices can include following rules and methods.

John Greco suggests that norms that govern gatekeeping are (1) that information should be let into a social system and (2) that false information should be kept from entering into or continuing to pass through a social system (Greco 2016, p. 492, 2017).

In this section, I have argued that a gatekeeper who follows these two gatekeeping norms promotes her information channel's reliability. I have provided the following reasons to support this claim. Reporters and editors are gatekeepers. Information channels are social systems. And these two gatekeeping norms promote the likelihood that information is transmitted through an information channel. The basic idea here is that reporters and editors qua gatekeepers can follow rules or methods

that aim to funnel information into the channel and prevent bad information from entering or continuing to pass through the channel (Greco, 2016, 2017).

Racial prejudice can make a news organization unreliably transmit information because it can make hearers less reliably perceive speakers' trustworthiness. A news reporter may improperly take a trustworthy news source as untrustworthy and thus not allow this trustworthy source's information into her news organization qua information channel such that the source reports it. I now defend the claim that racial prejudice can make a news organization qua information channel transmit information unreliably. The following two reasons support this claim. First, racial prejudice can affect whether a reporter allows information into her news organization qua information channel. Second, allowing information into a channel partly constitutes reliable information transmission.

Take the Detroit Police Case. Jim relies on local and national news organizations to reliably report on matters such as whether the Detroit police unjustly treat black folks relative to white folks. Jim's commitment to the truth of this belief involves a commitment to the view that his newspapers' reporters will likely trust speakers who are actually trustworthy and not trust speakers who are untrustworthy.

Hearers who harbor racial prejudice will tend to perceive, say, Black and Latinx speakers as untrustworthy even though they are actually trustworthy (Fricker, 2007). Hearers who harbor racial prejudices will tend to misperceive black and Latino speakers this way because racial prejudice is a kind of identity prejudice and identity prejudice can affect hearers' perceptions of speakers in a subpersonal way (Fricker, 2007).

In this case, if a reporter for, say, the *Detroit Free Press* harbors a racial prejudice, racial prejudice can cause reporters to misperceive trustworthy speakers as untrustworthy and a non-white speaker's attempt to transmit that the Detroit police unjustly treat black folks to a reporter is likely unsuccessful

because the reporter likely commits testimonial injustice, then racial prejudice makes the news organizations qua information channel that Jim relies on unreliable. Racial prejudice makes these news organizations unreliable because racial prejudice depresses the likelihood that this speaker will transmit this information to the reporter who could publish this information so that Jim can receive it in a newspaper. So, racial prejudice can make a news organization unreliable because news reporters are constituents of news organizations where racial prejudice influences news reporters' ability to reliably perceive speaker trustworthiness.

2.3: Racial Prejudice and Racial Injustice Information

I now argue that non-dominant-racial-group speakers who are *most likely* to have information about racial injustice are *less likely* to have this information reported by news organizations because non-dominant-racial group speakers are less likely to successfully convey information about racial injustice to reporters. I provide three supporting reasons. The first reason is that speakers who are *most likely to have information* about racial injustice are members of non-dominant racial groups. The second reason is that racial prejudices in societies with entrenched racial injustice tend to be about non-dominant racial groups. And the third reason is that negative racial prejudices reduce the likelihood that non-dominant group speakers successfully convey information about racial injustice.

Non-dominant racial groups such as Blacks, Latinx folks and Native Americans are more likely than whites to have information about racial injustice because of their social locations (Harding, 1993, 2015). Social locations can include any identity dimension such as sexual orientation, economic class or religion. Non-dominant social locations are positions from which subjects are more likely to hypothesize or pose questions that lead to information in certain domains (Harding, 1993, 2015). Similarly, whether an archer can hit her target can depend on whether she is *located* too far from the target or whether her *location* is too foggy or windy. Similarly, a *social* location can differ from others as a location from which to acquire a true belief.

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If a group of non-dominant racial subjects experience the effects of racial injustice, then they may be more likely to float hypotheses or ask questions that answer racial injustice related questions or queries than dominant racial group subjects who have likely only experienced the benefits and few of the bad effects of racial injustice. For Nancy Hartsock, women's role in reproduction and caring for family members provides them with a standpoint such that women are more likely than men to know about the nature of oppression in a patriarchal society (Hartsock, 1987). For Patricia Hill Collins, Black women's experience of both racism and sexism elevates the likelihood that Black women will understand or know about how racism and sexism function in society (Collins, 1990). By Linda Martín Alcoff's lights, a subject's identity can bear on whether she accurately believes in certain domains of information and thus proper credibility judgements of speakers should involve identity as a criterion (Alcoff, 1999). According to W.E.B. DuBois, Black Americans experience a double consciousness that involves seeing the world from their perspective and seeing the world from a white perspective and as a result Black American have more knowledge or deeper understanding of how America works and the role that race plays in America (Taylor, 2016, p. 39). A common feature that these views have is that a subject's situation increases the likelihood that she knows or understands about injustice or oppression in her society.

Negative racial prejudices tend to prevent non-dominant group speakers from successfully conveying racial-injustice information partly because if they are widely-held, then not only will testimonial injustice likely widely obtain, but testimonial quieting and testimonial smothering and will also likely widely obtain (Dotson, 2011). Suppose a black speaker, Michael, tells a reporter, from a newspaper that Jim reads, that the Detroit police unjustly treat black people relative to white people. But this reporter commits testimonial injustice against Michael due to an anti-black racial prejudice she bears. As a result, this reporter does not consider investigating whether black people are unjustly treated in this way. Here the likelihood that racial injustice information is depressed *because of racial*

prejudice. And here racial prejudice makes it less likely that a non-dominant speaker successfully conveys information about racial prejudice to hearers in general and to newspaper reporters in particular. *Michael is more likely to have information about racial injustice because of his social location* qua black man. Here a non-dominant speaker who is in a better epistemic position to have information in a domain is less likely to successfully convey it because of racial prejudice.

<center>III</center>

In this section, I argue that a society's unjust structure can make a news organization unreliable because it can make it less likely that its reports on racial-injustice-related topics reach subjects who lack information in this domain. I take up two supporting reasons. The first is that if racial injustice obtains in a society, then it has an unjust structure. The second reason is that a society's unjust structure can make news sources that are more likely to report on racial-injustice-related topics less likely to reach subjects who lack such information.

3.1: Racial Injustice and a Society's Unjust Structure

The legacy of slavery, Jim Crow and discriminatory hiring practices in the US shape the structure of US society today in ways that negatively affect socio-economic outcomes for blacks, Latinos and Native Americans (Mills, 1997; Omi & Winant, 1994; Taylor, 2013). Charles Mills points to the following to justify the claim that US society is structured to favor whites:

> …if one [attempts to calculate] the cumulative value, with compound interest, of unpaid slave
> labor before 1863, underpayment since 1863, and denial of opportunity to acquire land and
> natural resources available to white settlers, then the total *amount required to compensate blacks*
> 'could take *more than the entire wealth of the Unites States*' (Mills, 1997, p. 39, my emphases).

This only concerns blacks qua non-dominant-racial group in the US. It does not concern the value diverted from nondominant groups such as Latinos and Native Americans. If the ways that income and opportunities have been diverted from these groups to whites is considered, then the idea

that US society is structured in favor of whites should at least seem plausible. I assume, rather than argue that if racial injustice obtains in a society, then it will likely have an unjust structure, because entire fields of inquiry such as Black Studies, Africana Studies, Latino Studies, Native American studies and parts of entire disciplines such as sociology and history explain the ways these structures have affected people in the past and continue to affect people today.

3.2: Racial Injustice Information and a Society's Unjust Structure

A society's unjust structure can make news organizations that are *more likely to report* on racial injustice related topics *less likely to reach* subjects who lack information about racial injustice. If non-dominant-controlled-news sources are more likely to report on racial injustice related topics, news sources that lack resources such as capital, loans and proper funding are less likely to successfully convey their information to recipients who lack it, a society's unjust structure makes it less likely that non-dominant-group news sources have these resources, then a society's unjust structure makes reports from news sources that are *more likely to report* racial injustice information *less likely received* by subjects who lack this information.

New York City's black owned and edited newspaper, *Freedom's Journal,* was more likely than its New York City counterparts to publish on issues that took up Black experience and racial injustice (Gonzalez & Torres, 2011). *Freedom's Journal* was in circulation from 1827 to 1829 (Gonzalez & Torres, 2011). During this time the *Freedom's Journal* rebuffed falsehoods reported by the mainstream press in New York City. One example of this is when *Freedom's Journal* provided counterevidence to an article that the *New-York Evening Post* published that claimed that "the condition of blacks on Southern plantations, despite some 'occasional exceptions,' was 'one of contentment, of gaiety and happiness'" (Gonzalez & Torres, 2011, p. 110). The *New-York Evening Post* went so far as to claim that "the master-slave relationship [was] 'one of mutual attachment'" (Gonzalez & Torres, 2011, p. 110).

In 1892, Ida B. Wells as editor and part owner of Memphis' *Free Speech* periodical published an article that offered counterevidence and counterargument to the false, but widely-held, belief that many of the Black men who were lynched for raping white women had indeed raped white women (Chideya, 2018; Gonzalez & Torres, 2011). Wells suggested that these Black men were lynched not because they forced themselves on white women, but rather that they were lynched at least partly because white women willingly engaged or wanted to engage in relationships with them (Gonzalez & Torres, 2011). Both *Free Speech* and New York's *Freedom's Journal* were more likely to uncover and publicize facts about racial-injustice than mainstream newspapers. Both of these periodicals had less funding or capital than their white-owned or mainstream counterparts (Gonzalez & Torres, 2011).

If a news source has poorer *distribution, advertising, printing material* and *insufficient staff* and these things contribute to a news source's reports more likely reaching subjects, then this news source's reports are less likely read by subjects. If a newspaper has poorer distribution than other newspapers it will reach fewer subjects than these other newspapers because it will be available at fewer venues such as newsstands. Here subjects are not as widely privy to the information that newspapers with poor distribution carry. And even if a subject happens to come across a newspaper that is poorly distributed at a newsstand that carries it, this subject may improperly infer that this newspaper is not epistemically as good as others because it has poor distribution.

Take the Detroit Police Case. Suppose Jim comes across a newspaper that is disposed to report that the Detroit police unjustly treat black people relative to how they treat white people, he may not pick up this newspaper because he infers that if this were a good news source, then he would have seen it at other newsstands. Here, Jim associates wide distribution with epistemic goodness and on this basis he infers that newspapers with good distribution are epistemically better than newspapers with poor distribution. But, of course, newspapers with poor distribution can be epistemically better than newspapers with good distribution

If a newspaper has poorer advertising than other newspapers, then fewer subjects will either attempt to secure information from this newspaper or know that it is even a source from which they could secure information (Wong, 2013). If a subject does not know that a newspaper exists, then she cannot seek it out for the information it has. And if a subject comes across a newspaper that she has not heard of because it is poorly advertised, then she may infer that it is not epistemically good because *either* she has not heard that it is an epistemically good newspaper from a reliable source *or* that newspapers that are poorly advertised likely do not have sufficient funds to provide good news coverage. The basic idea here is that a subject may not pick up an epistemically good newspaper because she is not familiar with it, due to its poor advertising

If a newspaper's printing materials are poorer than other newspapers, then subjects may improperly take the newspaper as less epistemically good than newspapers that are printed on better materials because subjects may infer that if a newspaper has insufficient resources to print on better materials, then it likely has insufficient resources to provide good news coverage (Langer et al., 2013; Marlow & Jansson-Boyd, 2011; Hampel et al., 2012). Suppose that Jim sees a newspaper printed in black and white on rough paper and next to it he sees a newspaper printed in color on high quality paper. Jim is likely attracted to the newspaper printed in color on high quality paper even if the newspaper printed in black and white on rough paper has more relevant information or even less false information.

 If a newspaper has insufficient staff and it is disposed to report on racial-injustice-related topics, then it may not report on certain racial-injustice-related topics because it has to prioritize its limited staff on some stories rather than others. Suppose that Jim often picks up a newspaper at his newsstand that *is disposed* to cover racial-injustice-related information, but this newspaper had to prioritize covering city government's decision to underfund education and housing in primarily black neighborhoods over covering how Detroit police are disproportionately pulling over black drivers

relative to white drivers. Here one of Jim's news sources does not apprise him of this information because it has insufficient staff.

So far, I have focused on how a society's unjust structure can depress the likelihood that a non-white news organization successfully informs subjects of racial injustice information. But a society's unjust structure can also depress the likelihood that non-white reporters successfully convey racial injustice information to subjects who lack this information.

The structure of US society negatively affects whether non-white reporters in major news organizations such as the New York Times can successfully convey this information because non-white reporters are often underrepresented in major news organizations and the few non-whites who are staff members of such organizations often find that they are not in a position to convey such information. One glaring example of underrepresentation (Frissell et al., 2017) is that despite improvement across the journalism industry since the 1960s (Sylvie, 2011), in 2016, the New York Times' political reporting team was composed of 90% whites, 10% Blacks and no Latinx or Asians (Chideya, 2018). But news organization management often assign, say, Black reporters to cover what management believed were "Black" topics (Somani & Hopkinson, 2018). And even those few Black reporters who are not assigned to such positions, often report on issues of race in ways that are consistent with how major new organizations have tended to report in the domain of racial injustice information (Robinson & Culver, 2016).

I have defended the claim that a society's structure can depress the likelihood that subjects will read Black owned news sources. I have provided four supporting reasons for this claim. The first reason is that black-owned news sources have poorer access to capital than white news sources. The second reason is that poorer access to capital makes it less likely that such a newspaper will have good distribution, advertising, printing materials and sufficient staff. The third reason is that society's unjust structure makes it more likely that Black newspapers have poorer access to capital than white

newspapers. And the fourth is that good distribution, printing material, advertising and sufficient staff make it more likely that a subject will read a news source.

I have also defended the claim that society's unjust structure reduces the likelihood that white subjects' available news sources will apprise them of information about racial injustice. I have discussed three reasons that support this claim. The first reason is that white subjects are less likely to have information about racial injustice. The second reason is that black subjects are more likely to have information about racial injustice. The third reason is that a society's unjust structure makes it less likely that subjects receive reports from black-owned newspapers.

3.3: Racial Injustice's Disjunctive Effect

So far, I have provided two ways that racial injustice can make news or information sources fail to provide reliable coverage for a subject in the race and racial injustice domain. Racial prejudice is the first way and a society's unjust structure is the second way. In the US, racial injustice affects coverage reliability, or causes coverage-reliance ignorance, simultaneously through both causal routes. But, analytically, racial injustice need only cause this through one route for coverage-reliance ignorance to obtain. Racial injustice can cause a subject to be in a coverage-reliance ignorant state *either* because of (1) racial prejudice *or* (2) a society's unjust structure even if, as a matter of empirical fact, both (1) and (2) tend to simultaneously obtain.

If racial prejudice makes a subject's news sources unreliable because of how their constituent parts, reporters and editors, reliably misperceive speakers' trustworthiness, then this subject's sources will not provide reliable coverage in this domain even if the structure of society does not affect information dissemination or delivery. The basic idea here is that even if a source would reliably transmit information in a domain to subjects who lack it, reliable transmission, and thus reliable coverage, requires that a source actually reliably uncover information in this domain.

Similarly, if a society's unjust structure makes a subject's news sources unreliably apprise her of information in the race-and-racial-injustice domain because this structure depresses the likelihood that her sources' reports reach her, then these sources will likely not provide reliable coverage in this domain even if these sources reliably uncover this information. The idea here is that even if a source reliably uncovers information in this domain, reliable coverage involves that a subject's sources' reports actually reach her.

That either widespread racial prejudice or a society's unjust structure can cause coverage-reliance ignorance to obtain matters because even if society becomes less racially unjust along either of these dimensions, coverage-reliance ignorance could still obtain. So, even if US society seems much better in terms of, say, society's structure disfavoring, say, Black and Latinx folks, racial injustice may still cause these bad epistemic outcomes.

3.4: Other Causal Explanations

I have so far focused on how racial injustice diminishes news sources' reliability in the race-and-racial-injustice-information domain through racial prejudice and its unjust structuring of society. These causal explanations differ because one affects subjects' mental attitudes and the other affects the structure of society that subjects must negotiate.

I have focused on testimonial injustice, quieting and smothering as part of explanations that involve racial injustice's effect on subjects' mental attitudes. But, unfortunately, there are other such explanations that involve subjects' mental attitudes. Some of these are that journalists will tend not to inquire into racial injustice related areas because such stories challenge their preferred worldview and that journalists and editors decide to exclude stories about racial injustice because such stories do not rise to the level of what they consider newsworthy (Dixon, 2017; Dixon & Williams, 2015; Frissel et al., 2017; Hall, 1997; Somani & Hopkinson, 2018).

I have focused on how racial injustice unjustly structures society in ways that disfavor non-white news sources. But how society is unjustly structured can affect whether news sources provide subjects with reliable coverage in the domain of racial-injustice information. Some of these are that non-white reporters will not have the social connections that white reporters have such that they can successfully follow up on leads and that non-white journalists will tend to be assigned to columns or beats that only cover 'race and culture' which readers take less seriously and whites will tend to avoid.

IV

I now argue that racial injustice not only can undermine the reliability of the processes that would make a subject's inference base epistemically good, but it can also undermine a subject's *sensitivity* to the social conditions that elevate the likelihood that his news sources apprise him of racial-injustice-related topics in a timely and reliable way. That is, I now argue that racial injustice can undermine a subject's capacity to be properly sensitive to their social conditions such that they are doxastically justified in their coverage-supported belief.

4.1: News Sources and Proper Sensitivity

I now defend the claim that racial injustice depresses the odds that a subject properly senses these social conditions because a primary way to be sensitive to these conditions is undermined by racial injustice. Three reasons support this claim. The first reason is that a doxastically justified subject is properly sensitive to the social conditions that *make it likely* that she is reliably apprised of racial-injustice-related information. The second reason is that a primary way to be sensitive to these social conditions is through sensitivity to reports from news sources. The third reason is that racial injustice undermines the reliability of these news sources. If there is more information for a subject to be sensitive to, then she will find it easier to properly calibrate her expectations of her source's coverage reliability to her sources' likely coverage reliability such that she is justified. Similarly, if there is less information for a subject to be sensitive to, then she will find it more difficult to properly calibrate

these expectations to her sources' likely coverage reliability. So, racial injustice itself undermines a primary way for a subject to be sensitive to whether her news sources reliably report racial injustice information.

Racial injustice undermines what Lauren Woomer calls epistemic tools (Woomer, 2019). Subjects use epistemic tools to gain "an accurate view of their environment" (Woomer, 2019, p. 77). *Access tools* are epistemic tools that subjects use to access evidence. Examples of access tools are subjects' capacities to attend, store information and receive testimony from speakers. *Interpretative tools* are epistemic tools that subjects use to interpret evidence. Examples of interpretative tools are collectively shared conceptual resources, evidence standards, ways of reasoning and investigative methods.

Racial injustice undermines *access* tools in two ways. If news sources are a kind of testimony and testimony is an access tool, then racial injustice undermines subjects' access to an access tool because racial injustice diminishes the likelihood that subjects actually come to receive news in the domain of race and racial injustice. That is racial injustice depresses the likelihood that news that contains information about race and racial injustice *reach* subjects. This is the first way that racial injustice undermines access tools.

But racial injustice not only depresses the likelihood that subjects receive news sources with racial injustice and race information, it also depresses the likelihood that the news sources *they do receive* actually report such information. This is the second way that racial injustice undermines access tools.

By Woomer's lights, a subject is agentially insensitive if she does not use her epistemic tools such that her beliefs accord with her evidence. She explains white ignorance in terms of agent insensitivity (Woomer, 2019). The explanation of coverage-reliance ignorance that I proffer complements her explanation of white ignorance because if testimony regarding racial injustice from

news organizations is undermined by racial injustice, then the likelihood that a subject is a white ignorant state will be higher.

In the Native American News Case, one of the primary ways that Thomas can be sensitive to whether the social conditions obtain such that his news sources reliably report information about racial-injustice-related topics is to be sensitive to reports from these same news sources. So, Thomas in part relies on information from sources that are unreliable for information about these sources' coverage reliability. But, of course, if these sources are unreliable, then they may not provide information for him to be sensitive to such that his expectations about coverage reliability in this domain are properly calibrated. The basic idea here is that racial injustice is a social phenomenon that obtains at a society-wide scale such that it is difficult for subjects to be sensitive to it without relying on news sources that can inform them about the world beyond the reach of their individual perceptual capacities.

4.2: Testimonial Injustice, Testimonial Quieting and Proper Sensitivity

A subject is *less likely properly sensitive* to whether these social conditions obtain because non-dominant speakers who are *more likely to have this information* are *likely either taken as not trustworthy* or *not recognized as knowers* because of racial prejudice. One reason that supports this claim is that a doxastically justified subject's sensitivity involves sensitivity to information from *speakers* about whether the social conditions obtain that make it likely that she is reliably apprised of information on racial injustice. A second reason is that this subject likely commits either testimonial injustice or quieting against non-white speakers who would convey information that these social conditions do not obtain. And a third reason is that these non-dominant speakers are more likely to have information about whether these social conditions obtain.

4.3: Racial Injustice and Dominant-Group Psychology

White subjects are unlikely properly sensitive to information that concerns the social conditions that make it likely that her news sources reliably apprise her of racial-injustice-related topics. One reason that supports this claim is that a doxastically justified subject's sensitivity involves sensitivity to information from speakers about whether the social conditions obtain that make it likely that she is reliably apprised of information regarding racial injustice. A second reason is that dominant group subjects are unlikely to revise their initial beliefs regarding a domain. A third reason is that dominant-group subjects are unlikely to believe information that conflicts with their dominant-group status. A fourth reason is that dominant-group subjects form beliefs that support their dominant status at an early age. Here, I assume that the set of beliefs that a subject learns early in childhood overlaps with the set of beliefs that she has first come to hold in a domain.

Suppose Thomas encountered well-supported information that newspapers such as the *Pennsylvania Gazette* are not likely to report instances of Europeans attacking Native American villages because of racial injustice's effect on what Colonial-American newspapers publish. And suppose Thomas was taught at an early age that proper Anglo-Christian Americans would publicly address wrongs done to any of God's children where this includes Native Americans. Thomas would find it difficult to believe this new well-supported information he encountered because it conflicts with a belief that he acquired at an early age. The belief perseverance effect predicts that Thomas would find it difficult to believe this new information (Nisbett and Ross 1980). The belief perseverance effect is a tendency that subjects have where they stubbornly retain beliefs that are their first beliefs, or some of their earliest beliefs, on a topic (Nisbett and Ross 1980). That is, subjects' initial beliefs regarding a domain tend to be stubbornly resistant to counterevidence in comparison to beliefs in the same domain formed much later.

Another psychological feature of subjects that predicts that Thomas would find it difficult to believe this well-supported information is 'identity protective cognition' (Stanley, 2015, p. 230).

"[Identity] protective cognition is motivated reasoning with the goal of 'affirming one's membership in an important reference group'" (Stanley, 2015, p. 230). According to this psychological feature of subjects, white subjects are unlikely receptive to information that conflicts with their dominant-group status because they want to *protect* this status. Similarly, social psychological research on dissonance suggests subjects' reception of "disconfirming evidence…actually causes discomfort" (Elliot & Devine 1994; Mandelbaum, 2018, p. 11). And, by Eric Mandelbaum's lights, the social psychology literature suggests that if a subject encounters evidence that either is inconsistent with a belief that they identify with or threatens their positive sense of self, then not only will they reject this evidence but they may strengthen their confidence in the belief that they identify with (Mandelbaum, 2015: Mandelbaum, 2018). The basic idea here is that subjects have a psychological mechanism that either aims to preserve a subject's positive self-conception or aims to avoid the discomfort that is associated with believing negative things about oneself. And if this psychological mechanism obtains, then Thomas is unlikely sensitive to this information about Europeans attacking Native Americans that either undermines his positive self-conception or is likely to cause him to believe something negative about himself.

4.4: A Generality Problem Variant

Someone could object that whether a subject is doxastically justified in his coverage-supported inference depends on how broadly he takes a news source's reliability-information domain. Take Jim's case. Jim infers that the Detroit police do not unjustly pull over Black folks while driving (~D) on the basis of (1) an absence of a report that D and (2) that if D were true, then he would have heard about it by now from the *Detroit Free Press*. Jim is justified in believing (2) if he is sensitive to the reliability of the *Detroit Free Press'* reports in the *domain of racial injustice information*. And suppose that Jim falsely infers here. So, Jim infers a false and unjustified belief because he is not justified in believing (2) which serves as his inference base.

According to this objection, if the information domain that Jim is sensitive to is the *information domain of news in general*, then Jim will infer a false but justified belief. This inference is justified because the *Detroit Free Press* is generally reliable regarding information in the general-news-information domain even though it isn't reliable in the racial injustice domain. If the general news information domain does not largely consist in racial injustice information, then the Detroit Free Press can reliably report in the general news information domain even if they are unreliable regarding racial injustice information.

And that Jim properly senses the *Detroit Free Press'* reliability in this domain makes him doxastically justified in his inference. Here racial injustice does not undermine Jim's doxastic justification. Seemingly this is in tension with the central claim I defend, namely that racial injustice undermines subjects' capacity to be doxastically justified in beliefs in the information domain of racial injustice.

Someone could rebut that racial injustice information may make up the majority of newsworthy information in the domain of general news information in locales with pervasive and persistent racial injustice such as Detroit. So, if racial injustice properly composes most of the information in the general news domain, then Jim would not be doxastically justified in his false inference. In such a case, the objection fails because racial injustice does undermine his capacity to be doxastically justified in racial injustice information domain inferences.

Someone could also object that Goldberg's account of coverage-supported inference justification faces a variant of the generality problem. The generality problem is a problem that at least reliabilist theories of justification face (Bishop, 2010; Goldman, 1979; Kampa, 2018; Lyons, 2019). This problem is that reliabilist theories of justification do not offer any principled way to determine which process type is causally relevant when assessing whether a particular belief is reliably formed. If one cannot determine a belief's causally relevant process type, then one cannot evaluate whether a

subject is justified because according to reliabilism a subject is justified if and only if a process type that reliably produces true beliefs causes her belief.

Coverage-supported inference justification faces a *variant* of the generality problem rather than the traditional generality problem because if one evaluates whether a subject is doxastically justified in her coverage-supported inference, one must have a principled way to determine a coverage-supported inference's relevant information domain. This matters because, by Goldberg's lights, whether a subject is doxastically justified in her coverage-supported inference depends on whether she is properly sensitive to her information source's coverage reliability in a *particular* information domain. And this matters for my central claim because if an evaluator cannot determine a coverage-supported inference's relevant domain, then it is unclear how racial injustice can undermine a subject's justification because it will be unclear whether racial injustice undermines a subject's sensitivity to this relevant domain.

Someone could rebut that this generality problem variant does not present an issue for my claim because this variant is an instance of meta-blindness (Medina, 2013, 2013a). By Jose Medina's lights, meta-blindness obtains if a subject is blind to her own blindness. Jurors who falsely judge a Black witness as not credible exhibit meta-blindness if they are unaware that they could render such a judgement (Medina, 2013, 2013a). On the other hand, a juror that senses that they might issue such a credibility judgement is not meta-blind.

Consider the case where Jim seems doxastically justified because he is sensitive to the *Detroit Free Press'* reliability in the domain of general news information. Here what seems like justification-conferring sensitivity is actually an instance of meta-blindness because Jim cannot sense that his news source could be unreliable on racial injustice information. Put differently, Jim exhibits meta-blindness because he is unaware that there could even be an epistemic problem regarding coverage-supported inferences. If Jim is meta-blind, racial injustice causes this meta-blindness and this meta-blindness

diminishes Jim's capacity to be doxastically justified in coverage-supported inferences, then racial injustice contributes to the undermining of Jim's capacity to be doxastically justified. Ipso facto, that there is a generality problem variant does not defeat my central claim. Regarding coverage-supported inferences in the domain of racial injustice information, I point to this generality problem variant to highlight a way that racial injustice diminishes subjects' capacity to be doxastically justified.

Conclusion

I have argued (1) that racial injustice can make news sources unreliably uncover and publicize information in the race-and-racial-injustice domain because of racial prejudice's effects on news organizations qua information channels, (2) that racial injustice can make news sources, that are more likely reliable in this domain, unreliably transmit their information to subjects who lack it because of a society's unjust structure and (3) that racial injustice can undermine subjects' doxastic justification in a coverage-supported belief because if racial injustice obtains in a society, then information that subjects can be sensitive to is less likely available.

I have focused on how racial injustice negatively affects news sources' reliability and subjects' inferences that depend on this reliability to be justified. This is one epistemic problem among many that racial injustice causes. A common feature that these epistemic problems share is that the historical and current dominance of White folks over Black folks, Indigenous folks and peoples of color at least partly explain why many subjects in US society are in bad epistemic states such as error, lacking true belief, justified belief, knowledge and understanding.

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