## A. Link

**[Link]** They rely on **ABSTRACT PHILOSOPHY –** their framework assumes a neutral, universal starting point.

## B. Impacts

#### 1. [Curry & Curry 1] First, MISDIAGNOSIS: their assertion of universal humanistic principles reduces systemic racism to a problem of recognition that prevents mobilization against White supremacy.

**Curry & Curry 1:** Curry, Tommy J. [Tommy, PhD, Prof. of Philosophy @ TAMU, Gwenetta, PhD, Ass. Prof. of Gender and Race Studies @ Alabama], “On the Perils of Race Neutrality and Anti-Blackness: Philosophy as an Irreconcilable Obstacle to (Black) Thought,” American Journal of Economics and Sociology, Vol. 77, Nos. 3-4 (May-September 2018). DOI: 10.1111/ajes.12244 GC/CH

We begin with the first author’s reflections on philosophy and its recurring problem of denying the realities of race and racism, reflections that have arisen as a Black (male) philosopher whose life has been threatened for doing Black philosophy. The experience of confronting death, being fearful of being killed doing my job as a critical race theorist, and being threatened with violence for thinking about racism in America has a profound effect on concretizing what is at stake in our theories about anti-Black racism. Whereas my work on race and racism in philosophy earlier in my career was dedicated to the problems created by the mass ignorance of the discipline to the political debates and ethnological history of Black philosophers in the 19th and 20th centuries, I now find myself thinking more seriously about the way that **philosophy**, really theory itself—our present categories of knowledge, such as race, class, and gender, found through disciplines—actually **hastens the deaths of subjugated peoples in the U**nited **S**tates. **Academic philosophy routinely abstracts away from**—directs thought to not attend to the realities of death, dying, and despair created by—**antiBlack racism. Black, Brown, and Indigenous populations are routinely** rationalized as disposable flesh. The deaths of these groups launch philosophical discussions of social injustice and spark awareness by whites , while the deaths of white people direct policy and demand outrage. **Because racialized bodies are confined to inhumane living conditions that nurture violence** and despair **that become attributed to the savage nature of nonwhites and evidence of their inhumanity, the deaths of these** **dehumanized peoples are** often **measured against the dangers they are thought to pose to** others. The **interpretation of the inferior position that racialized groups occupy in the U**nited **S**tates **is grounded in how whites often think of themselves in relation to problem populations. This relationship is** often **rationalized by avoidance and by** the **denials** of whites **about being causally related to the harsh conditions imposed on nonwhites in the world. Philosophy, and its glorification of the rational individual, ignores the complexity of anti-Black racism by blaming the complacency**, if not outright hostility, **towards Blacks on the mass ignorance of white America**. To remedy this problem, Black philosophers are asked to respond by gearing their writings, lectures, and professional presence to further educate and dialogue with white philosophers in order to enable them to better understand anti-Black racism and white supremacy (Curry 2008, 2015). This therapy is often rewarded as scholarship. **Philosophical positions that analyze racism as a problem of miscommunication, misunderstanding, and ignorance** (philosophies predicated on the capacity of whites to change) **are rewarded and praised as the cutting edge and most impactful theories about race and racism. Reducing racism to a problem of recognition** and understanding **allows white philosophers to remain absolved of their contribution to the apathy that white America has to the death** and subjugation **Black Americans endure** at the hands of the white race.

To some readers, speaking about races as different groups with opposite, if not antagonistic, social lives seems to run contrary to the idea that there are no real races, just people, only the human race. This is the core of **race-neutral theory** in academic philosophy. Race neutrality **asserts that while race, class, and gender may** in fact **differentiate bodies, the capacity for reason—the human essence beneath it all—is what is ultimately at stake in the recognition of difference**. While **this mantra** has been offered to whites since the integrationist strategies of the U.S. Supreme Court in the 1950s under Chief Justice Earl Warren, it **has had little effect in restructuring the psychology of white individuals or remedying** the **institutional** practices of **racism that continue to exclude** or punish **Black Americans**. How are Black scholars to speak about racism, specifically the violence and death that seem to gravitate towards Black bodies if the rules of philosophy and the fragility of white Americans insist that racism is not the cause of the disproportionate death Black Americans suffer and race is not a significant factor in Black people’s lives? This article is an attempt to debunk the seemingly neutral starting point of academic philosophy. **For decades, Black philosophers have attempted to** educate white philosophers and **reorient the philosophical anthropologies of the discipline. Black, Brown, and Indigenous philosophers have dedicated their lives** and careers **to educating white philosophers** and students, **with little to no effect on the composition** and disposition **of the discipline**. While it is not uncommon for philosophy departments to say they support diversity, the reality is that many, if not most, Black philosophers continue to write about the problem of racism, their experiences of marginalization, and the violence they suffer from white colleagues, disciplinary organizations, and universities. **This article should be read as an attempt not to amend the Western metaphysical tradition but to reveal the obstacles that indicate its perennial** failure. It is the position of the authors that many of the demands for disciplinary change are often expressed as politics, when in reality **there are issues of metaphysics** (the concerns of being) **and philosophical anthropology** (the concerns about the (non)being capable of thinking) **that are unaddressed in much of the current literature**. Section I of this article describes what Black philosophy has taken to be the problem of racism in academic philosophy more broadly. Since the 1970s Black philosophers have criticized, attacked, and attempted to reform the discipline with little effect. This section interrogates why that is the case. Section II argues that the failure of philosophy to change is a problem of metaphysics or the illusion that Blackness is compatible with the idea of the white human. Section III presents the social scientific evidence demonstrating the seeming permanence of anti-Black racism and the dangerous nature of colorblind ideology, which does not recognize that societal organization and racism determine the life chances of Blacks. This article ends with a suggestion of what Black philosophy would look like if its primary mandate were not to persuade whites to remedy their own racist practices, but to diagnose and build strategies against the present problems of racism in philosophy before us.