THE POLITICS OF RACE-BLINDNESS

(Anti)Blackness and Category-blindness in Contemporary France

Trica Danielle Keaton
Department of African American and Diaspora Studies, Vanderbilt University

Abstract

The discourse of "race-blindness" in contemporary France cannot help but engender what it seeks to evade, "race" consciousness. Nowhere, is this dynamic better illustrated than by the current public debate on "Black" consciousness, "Black" identity discourses, and "French Black" activism that have emerge in response to an avoided "race" question in hexagonal France where "Blacks" have now reached a critical mass. In examining these issues, I argue that "French Black" activists are, however, limiting their own effectiveness when its adherents also retreat from a critical concept of "race" in their anti-black struggles. While the potent ideals of French republicanism are intrinsic to "race" avoidance, this stance unwittingly contributes to the prevalent practice of camouflaging the very discrimination and racism that such activists seek to document through controversial ethno-racial statistics, presently proscribed in France. Negated with "race" is the under-stated significance of the semantic particularity of the notion of "black" and its relevance in anti-black discrimination, also explored in this essay. By this, I am referring to those stigmatizing meanings of "black" prior to its incorporation into social categories used to designate and rank people so-perceived and so-denoted in Europe where those meanings crystallized and migrated beyond its shores. The critical use of "race" by these activists, then, would force the recognition, presently occulted, that this construct has played a fundamental role in structuring belonging and opportunity in France, and thereby buttress demands for statistics to demonstrate and analyze that lived reality towards its undoing. Ultimately, the existence of anti-blackness and anti-black struggles serve to illustrate that France has not escaped its "race" question or fulfilled it promises of "race-blind" equality.

Keywords: Race, Race-blindness, Discrimination, Blackness, Black Subjectivity, Black Identity, Ethno-racial Statistics

> He strides nonchalantly up and down the quai of the Montparnasse train station, waiting to begin the long journey back to his outer-city. Willy shows no signs of anxiety. No, he's not afraid. He only wonders *when* it will happen. When will *they*

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> show up? They? The plain clothes police who will inevitably push their way through the crowd, position themselves before *him*, demand to see his identity papers, pat him down, make him empty his pockets, and ask the sempiternal question: "Tu es d'ou?" (Where are you from?)[1]

Willy embodies the contradictions and confronts daily the practical consequences of France's "race-blind" ideals that are ironically freighted with "race-based" assumptions.[2] These ideals inhere in contemporary French identity politics *qua* social discourses that specify who it is (im)possible, (in)appropriate, and/or (in)valuable to be in French society. These ways of representing, as products of power, prescribe what they describe in shaping "self-recognition and [mis]recognition by other," in politics wherein a "crucial aspect of the project of subjectivity is identity," as sociologist Craig Calhoun affirms ([1994] 2003, p. 20).[3]

In the piece from which Willy's narrative is drawn, he is described as having been born and raised in France to parents who are French, as were their parents on down the line. In principle, he qualifies, then, as a "Français de souche" (French of an old stock), owing to his lineage. However, Willy is also identified as "black,"[4] so in lived everyday reality, he is apprehended as anything but a native son of France, by dint of the social meanings that "blackness" provokes in French society. Willy's case crystallizes further when placed within the context of a recent controversial study on racial profiling—controversial for attempting to document *statistically* this issue in the nomenclature of "race"—and in a presumptively "race-blind" France that constitutionally (through its principle of equality) and legally proscribes the ethno-racial classification and ethno-racial data generation of its citizens. In short, French republicanism, masking nationalism, is hostile to these practices and advocates instead a category-blind approach. This study, which was conducted in Paris, found that individuals were stopped by French police based not on behavior but rather "appearances," that is, their perceived or imputed "ethno-racial" differences:

> Persons perceived to be ethnic minorities were disproportionately stopped by the police. The results show that persons perceived to be "Black" [upper case theirs] (of sub-Saharan African or Caribbean origin) and "Arab" (of North African or Maghrebian origin) were stopped at proportionally much higher rates than persons perceived to be "White" [upper case theirs] (of Western European origin) (Goris et al., 2009, p. 10).

In other terms, these researchers found that "[b]lacks were overall six times more likely than Whites to be stopped by police . . . [while] Arabs were generally 7.6 times more likely than Whites to be stopped by the police" (Goris et al., 2009, p. 9).[5]

France's "race-blind" model took an earlier statistical blow in 2007 when sixty-one percent of self-recognized "Black" and mixed-race (*métis*) respondents to the first-ever survey on perceptions of anti-black discrimination in France indicated that they "had experienced at least one racist incident within the past year," which increased to a reported seventy-five percent in the Paris region (Ile de France).[6] Further, sixty-seven percent reported that "they were personally victims of *racial* discrimination in their daily life," ranging from the verbal to the structural in terms of housing and employment.[7] According to the Representative Council of Black Associations (le Conseil Representatif des Associations Noires [Le CRAN]), a prominent "Black" lobby in France[8] that conducted this Ford Foundation funded survey,[9] the estimated 1.9 million[10] "Blacks" *of* not merely *in* France (representing in total

roughly four percent of the population) are particularly the targets of racial discrimination because of their visible differences,[11] namely skin color.

The CRAN, whose activism is explored later in this essay, like other anti-discrimination groups in France, vehemently rejects using the term and concept of "race" to characterize themselves, others, and the struggles in which they are engaged. As Patrick Lozès, the president of this association, contends: "Races do not exist. And, there are no ethnic groups in France. Skin color is a simple basic fact, like hair color, height, or weight;" what's at issue in France is "diversity."[12] Moreover, on the CRAN website and in their literature, this organization states quite plainly that "[t]he CRAN is not a *communitarian* movement," nor do they seek "to celebrate" their self-declared blackness, but rather use it strategically "to battle discriminations of which Blacks [uppercase, theirs][13] are victims because of their color."[14] In other words, their Black/*Noir* identity is, as they assert it, pragmatic, seemingly reflecting what theorist Gayatri Spivak (1987) refers to as "strategic essentialism." That is, while essentialism is openly rejected, group identity serves rather as a basis of struggle to expose oppression, not as a basis for community formation among "Blacks" in France whose distinctive ways of being are acknowledged in this formation. Yet, their emphasis on "color" and "diversity," as non-racial constructs, is indicative more of how French republicanism expresses its power to delegitimize discrimination termed "racial" by disqualifying "race," which also relies upon the consent of the racialized for it to be effective. Political scientists, Daniel Sabbagh and Shanny Peer (2008), expand upon this point in noting further that "[t]he rejection of race remains so powerful [and seductive] in contemporary French society that even those advocates asking for the collection of statistical data on phenotypically defined minorities for antidiscrimination purposes are still reluctant to detract from it" (p. 2).

This essay examines, then, not merely the question and effects of "race-blindness" in contemporary France, but more centrally how the discourse of "race-blindness" in this context cannot help but engender what it denies or seeks to evade—"race" consciousness—among people whose visible differences trigger social meanings that are seized upon to represent them—against normative racialized ideals of "Frenchness"—and used to set them apart. Nowhere is this dynamic better illustrated than by the current public debate on a contemporary "Black" consciousness, "Black" identity discourses, and an incipient "Black" populism that has emerged in response to anti-blackness in a supposedly "race and category-blind" Republic. In short, France is forced to confront a "race" question that it can no longer avoid, but so, too, are certain self-recognized "French Black" activists who are also attempting to retreat from "race" in anti-black discrimination struggles. In so doing, they unwittingly partake in the prevailing practice of concealing the very discrimination that they seek to document, which cloaks with it France's race-making past of which anti-blackness and such identity politics are products. As I argue, employing a critical concept of "race" forces the recognition of such "race"-making by exposing how "race" has been constituted and how it operates in perpetuating inequalities that the society seeks to occult through "race-blindness," a point to which I will return. In this way, deploying "race" critically in social justice battles renders it a formidable arm that buttresses activists' demands for those controversial statistics to document discrimination and racism. It would also justify their focus on anti-blackness, even though Arabs remain a highly-stigmatized and negatively-discriminated-against group, at times more than "Blacks" (Goris et al., 2009, p. 9). The often under-stated significance of the particularity (and peculiarity) of the social meanings of the word "black" and its role in implicit discrimination adds legitimacy to this focus and specifically to anti-black struggles in France, as I contend. Here, I am referring to

meanings of "black" prior to its incorporation into assigned social categories in European societies and beyond, meanings that serve to illustrate that the notion is not merely a piece of data, "like hair color, height, or weight,"[15] but rather a complex of incorporated pernicious social constructs that form a distinctive stigmata of inferiority grafted onto people so-denoted and so-treated, as W. E. B. Du Bois ([1903] 2003) aptly demonstrates.

This dimension is essential in light of the decades of compelling empirical social and cognitive psychological research on implicit stereotypes and biases that are shown to be absorbed from our socio-cultural environment over generations. As this research demonstrates, these formations are easily triggered by the simple presence or representations of negatively stereotyped groups that can engender discrimination and racism—even among the well-intentioned—against those thusly stereotyped. More significantly within the context of this essay, this research demonstrates that "race-consciousness," not "race-blindness," is critical to neutralizing the effects of implicit stereotypes and biases, suggesting further that French category-blind republicanism cannot bear its fruit, as anti-black struggles already make clear. While implicit bias research is not my focus—something already well documented elsewhere[16]—its findings are illuminating because this research invites a closer inspection of what could be called a genealogy of "black" relative to anti-blackness, examined later in this essay. Indeed, understandings of "black" and "blackness" would fundamentally contribute to the invention of a so-called "black race" by Europeans from which "Black" identities have emerged in France. As studies and literature cited throughout this essay maintain, people are the targets not merely of discrimination, but more saliently of *racial* discrimination and racism in France, owing to those socio-historically constituted and embodied meanings, both explicit and implicit, that have been accumulated and transmitted through social structures and against which those *raced* have ultimately responded.

Further, current self-declared "Black/Noir" activists make plain glaring contradictions in French society wherein, on the one hand, a spectrum of stakeholders (including many "Blacks") perpetuate the republican ideal of national indivisibility or non-distinction of its citizenry, predicated on common bonds of culture, enshrined in a national narrative that professes to ignore racial and other differences in the interest of national unity. On the other, however, there is the on-going practice, recognition, and documented acts of anti-black discrimination wherein "black" signifies more than mere color and whose very existence in anti-blackness illustrates the limits of "race-blind" approaches to that same national unity and its promise of blind equality. In these collective struggles aimed at imposing, preserving, or transforming the status quo, while seeking to legitimately define it, these "race" and identity politics illustrate that France has not resolved its "race" question simply by discrediting "race" as biology or by dismissing analyses of "race" in France and Europe as mere hegemonic U.S. or, the interestingly termed, "Anglo-Saxon" imports, assertions that ultimately sustain the fiction that peoples in France have not been defined by "race" (Fassin 2010; Fassin and Fassin, 2006; Fassin and Simon, 2008; Simon 2008).

Currently in France, there is a critical mass of urban "Blacks" who are highly visible in French public space and who are making demands to be recognized and included—*à part entire*—as fully *French*, which is part of the process of identity formation that emerges from the French republican narrative of universal "civilization" and national identity applicable, in principle, to all. In short, they want, indeed expect, a place inside *their* Republic in keeping with its powerful and seductive principles of "race-blind" equality and universalism, exposed to them from a tender

age through statist institutions (in particular national education). However, that place, as they see it, has been denied to them, owing to what they identify as an ascribed "blackness" that misrecognizes them and their sense of reflexive truth (Diouf forthcoming, Lozès 2007; Thomas 2007; Yade 2007). This Du Boisian "double consciousness" that evolves from anti-black discrimination has, then, radicalized and politicized them *racially*, as their incipient "Black" populism illustrates. Their activism-in-"Black" appears to have caught France off guard, similar to the 2005 uprisings whose writing had also been on the wall for quite some time. As I have documented elsewhere (Keaton 2006, 2009), those revolts constitute a watershed in the politics of "race" in France that also helped to spur such activism. Indeed, what those uprisings glaringly exposed was the vacuity of the rhetoric of French republicanism whose promises of "race-blindness" simply have not corresponded with lived discrimination and racism on the ground. The failure to deliver on "race-blind" inclusion has been witnessed over a longer duration by this generation—particularly well-educated urban professionals who have hit glass ceilings, if hired at all. These individuals represent a public that has also resisted being absorbed into the dominant, homogenizing media representations that emerged following the 2005 revolts, representations that equated "Blacks" and Arabs with violence, poverty, and undereducation indistinguishably. Indeed, their deployment of "blackness," as upwardly mobile "French Blacks" serves to decouple "race" from class in acts of anti-blackness, even if that is not an expressed goal.

"Blacks" in and of France (or anywhere), to be sure, are not a monolith, and even the very use of the term "race" and "Black" is not readily embraced by all people of African origin in France to name their exclusion and their self. As political scientist Fred Constant (forthcoming) documents further in his study and interviews of elite "French Blacks" in metropolitan France, older generations are less likely to accept this discourse ". . . because they have so fully internalized "Republican principles," such as the (theoretical) "race-neutrality" of the state . . . they were often disinclined to even address or acknowledge the aforementioned construct," in other words "race." A spotlight, then, on "blackness" and anti-blackness by self-recognized "Blacks" in a putatively "race-blind" France also allows us to examine and interrogate the shifts in "Black" subjectivity from "Black" (inter)nationalist, anti-imperial formations of the past, apprehended as essentialist, to an avowed transcended pragmatic iteration of the present within the specific contours of "French Black" identity politics and the politics of "race" in France.

SETTING A CONTEXT

When a concept or an idea is made relevant to the ways of knowing and being in a society, critical questioning of when, how, and why this happens provides important insights into how that society operates and treats those presumed and not presumed to be its members. This point is wonderfully captured by a question posed as the title of the piece from which Willy's experience is drawn that trenchantly highlights the issue of "blackness" and belonging in French society: "Is," queries this piece, "black and French an impossible equation?" Because of its differing significations, the term "black," in the lowercase here, refers to an imposed racial identification, as opposed to a politicized self-identity or subjectivity that will be distinguished in this essay by "Black" in uppercase. In light of criticisms or assertions of "blackness" as essentialist, I wish to stress that "Black" [in upper case] need not, however, mean common culture, common perspective, race pride, non-strategic essentialism, or limited and

limiting notions of community. It should be recognized, however, that community formation has been an effective mechanism for self and group preservation in hostile racialized societies and has continued value, particularly when such hostilities persist. But it must be equally recognized that French republicanism, powerfully structuring the "French Black" model of subjectivity and activism, is hostile to such notions, as they cut against its Constitutional construct of equality: "France (in principle) is an indivisible, secular, and democratic Republic that ensures equality before the law without distinction of origin, race or religion."[17]

Even so, two fundamental barriers contribute to the seeming irreconcilability of "Frenchness" and "blackness," as posed in Willy's narrative. One clear issue is the official discourse of and popular support for "race-blindness" in France, which is in keeping with its ideals and myths, so, in effect, per this reasoning, one cannot be both French and "black," because the latter simply doesn't exist. Coupled with this issue is the official rejection of the ethno-racial classifications of French people, and thereby the absence of ethno-racial statistics in France, again, statistics banned under French law, where category-blindness is favored instead. This renders it difficult to document statistically the discrimination confronted by visibly different French people, as the fiery debates on this topic demonstrate. Thus, "Frenchness" and "blackness" in the discourse of "race-blindness," reinforced by the Republic's myths, become an impossible equation because "blackness" is demographically rendered non-existent. In effect, the first issue—"race-blindness"—precludes the second—racial statistical data generation of a diverse population—because said-diversity is rendered null and void. Again, this does not correspond, however, with realities on the ground.

Interestingly, these debates about ethno-racial or "diversity" statistics have made strange bedfellows of proponents and opponents in these battles and have polarized two of France's high profile anti-exclusion organizations the CRAN, closely associated with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and even described as being modeled after it, and SOS Racisme, essentially absorbed into the French Socialist Party. The latter also rejects the concept of "race" and its application to the French population, similar to the CRAN, but it also abjures and has successfully challenged ethno-racial data collection in France. Moreover, in framing its rejection of such statistics by way of "color-blind" French republicanism, in some ways, SOS Racisme inadvertently resembles voices in the National Front, or extreme right, who express similar arguments, but with a different intent.

"Race" here is understood as a social construction, a concept that still has currency for its recognition that race is a human invention or set of ideas about observable and implied differences (which is why those ideas evolve and transform). And while, as historian Barbara Fields (1982) correctly maintains, it is an ideological construct to be explained, the fact that "race" is constructed does not mean that it lacks social significance, as both Fields and critical race theorist Kimberlé Crenshaw demonstrate in their respective work on this issue.[18] Racial classification (as a system of division/domination), the narratives spun in societies about the meanings of observable differences (real, imputed, and perceived), differences deployed to rank human worth, and the cultural, social, psychological, and physical violence that race and racism inflict (as products of power/politics), all make race a social, not biological, reality. Effectively, as social scientists have argued repeatedly, in order to combat racial discrimination, indeed racism, attention must be given to "race."[19]

However, public and popular discourses in France (as elsewhere) conflate ordinary, everyday language with technical or scholarly concepts of "race" for which there is no universally agreed upon understanding or definition. Thus, "color," held as a visible feature of "race," comes to be semantically indistinguishable, similar to

discrimination and racism, while exercising considerable influence on peoples' assigned and asserted identities. Interestingly, one telling particularity of the French context is the long-standing public and scholarly recognition of racism within France, but the systematic misrecognition of the existence and, at times, virulent denial of *racial* discrimination, typically absorbed into other forms of social inequalities relative to class, immigration, integration and the kind. In fact, it has only been since the late 1990s, argues anthropologist Didier Fassin (2002), that the term appeared in statist interventions and became the object of intellectual and political debates in a society whose general public appeared to lack critical consciousness of "racial discrimination" in such terms, hitherto restricted to rare actionable offenses adjudicated in the French courts. However, as Fassin reasons further, euphemisms became untenable when faced with lived-reality, that is, despite the "usual practice consisting of occulting everything that can qualify as differences in nature, there is a recognition of the racial basis of this specific [form of] inequality . . . the reference to "skin color" well indicates that one is using the register of pheonotypical distinction. From that moment, in official language, discrimination exist[ed], and it [was] racial" (p. 407). Thus, in deploying the concept and term of "discrimination" in the French and European contexts, the objective was not solely a theoretical or political exercise, but rather one that sought to draw light to acts declared illegal and thereby responsive to law:

> . . . it is a matter of showing that there well exists an illegal treatment (in this case unfavorable) and that the criterion that follows from it is illegitimate . . . The battle against discrimination becomes from that moment a legal combat [and] is resolutely pragmatic. . . . Far from ideological battles, it is a matter above all else of allowing the victim to obtain the factual recognition of and reparations from prejudice . . . . from the perspective of French society . . . discrimination calls into question the principle of equality that constitutes the foundation of the Republican ideology. . .because in qualifying it as racial, it signifies that the inequality draws its justification from natural differences, even biological, from [that is] a sinister memory. The recognition of racial discrimination, then, revealed the failure of a model that served precisely to occult it . . . the recognition of racial discrimination for statist forces (and the public concerned) constituted *an acid test* [emphasis his] of the politics of justice (Fassin 2002, pp. 411–412, 414, 415).

It is through this optic that the term "discrimination" is used in this piece in order to place in sharp relief a form of social domination whose expression is anti-blackness. And while not denying or diminishing the existence of racism in France, this ideology also losses traction when its principle constituent—"race"—is effaced, leaving what theorist Etienne Balibar (1988) refers to as a "racism without races" wherein the threat of differences occupies this void while being devoid of the asymmetrical "race" privilege, power, and subordination indicative of racism.

European Union member states, including France, have objected, however, to any action that would reinvigorate what they deem an obsolete concept contrary to their fundamental principles of the unity of humanity. And yet, racial discrimination and racism persist in these same societies so much so that the European Commission has specifically identified "race" in its directive—*la directive sur l'égalité raciale* (the directive on racial equality)—as one of several forms of discrimination to which member states should attend in protecting their inhabitants.[20] And, as legal scholar Linda Hamilton Krieger (2008) notes in her analysis of implicit stereotypes and

discrimination in France, the European Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs has admitted that without more available quantitative and qualitative data, it becomes quite difficult to measure and assess the effectiveness of anti-discrimination policies and the inequalities they target, "[s]uggesting that there can be no effective category-blind evaluation of antidiscrimination efforts" absent such data (p. 2). In drawing on over forty years of empirical research in cognitive and social psychology studies, Krieger argues further that attention to social categories, as opposed to ignoring them, can prevent discrimination because these categories have been made socially relevant. They exist by having been reified and made salient by social meanings, history, law, and spatial patterns in societies where they obtain. In many ways, then, the W. I. Thomas theorem finds fertile ground in supposed "color- or race-blind" societies: "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences."

RACE-MAKING: OBJECTIVITY IN "BLACK"

> "[T]he title of French citizen will only be borne, in the expanse of this colony and its territories, by Whites [capital theirs]. No other individual can assume this title or exercise the functions or employment to which it is attached."
>
> *Les Codes Noirs* (The Black Codes), 1802[21]

That France does not officially categorize its populations according to racial categories or that racialized groups resist and/or avoid the use of "race" (whatever the idiom), is actually a testament to the power of its "race-blind" ideology that succeeds in diminishing the significance of the socio-historical formation of "race," its on-going social potency, and its inherence in the objectivity and subjectivity of blackness (and whiteness) in the French context. The invention and long-established recognition of a "white" and "black race" in France is well exemplified in France's *Les Codes Noirs* (The Black Codes) that fundamentally detail "white" authority predicated on racial slavery, as "black" human subjugation, from 1685 to 1802 (when slavery was re-established) (Castaldo 2006; Dubois 2003; Sharpley-Whiting 1999).[22] These Codes would impact subsequent colonial codes and policies that promulgated the necessity of maintaining a racial line of demarcation between groups that was routinely transgressed with each sexual violation of enslaved women whose visible mixed-race (*métis*) children bore the evidence of such transgressions. Racialism, racialization, and racism were not diminished by the core principles of universalism and humanism underpinning the French Republic whose trafficking of "black" bodies, or those presumed as such, was not disconnected from meanings of "blackness" that would contribute significantly to the formation of racialist thought and practices in France and the West more broadly.

Before what would become pseudo-scientifically crystallized into "race" as biology, pre-existing meanings of "black" and perceptions of "blackness" came to structure discrimination against people so-denoted. Theorist Tracy Sharpley-Whiting (1999) illuminates this point in her exploration of the French literary and cultural imagination relative to the black female/mulatta (dis)figured in literary, social, and cultural (con)texts. In her examination of a number of literary and historical studies from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century, Sharpley-Whiting insightfully documents the French obsession with and meanings of "black" and "blackness" that would become self-referential in defining normative "whiteness." Expanding on these observations in her study of Black Africans in Renaissance Europe, historian

Kate Lowe (2005a, 2005b) notes that visible differences, in particular skin color, were defining features in already "status-conscious and hierarchical societies" in Europe during that era:

> To the majority of Europeans, the defining feature of Africans was their skin colour. . . It does . . . seem clear that African ancestry and possession of a black skin led directly to all sorts of differentiation, prejudice and discrimination. . . Black and the devil were firmly allied in the popular imagination; in folklore beliefs, stories and sayings about people with "black" skin provided a cultural context for prejudice . . . precisely at this juncture . . . the whole idea of civilization became critical to the European self-image, that certain European notions of civilization were labeled as civilized and various other sets of non-European behavior were (by contrast) labeled as uncivilized (pp. 7, 20, 18).

As Lowe argues further, this period is crucial for understanding the evolution of individual and institutional discrimination, as it is at this juncture that one finds significant contact between sub-Saharan Africans and Europeans. Theorist Michelle Wright (2004) amplifies Sharpley-Whiting and Lowe's elucidations in noting that "the belief in [b]lack inferiority is the result not of objective observation but instead the need for self-definition. In order to posit itself as civilized, advanced, and superior, Western discourse must endlessly reify Africa and [b]lacks as its binary opposite" (p. 27). Indeed, Frantz Fanon long recognized that the construction of "black," as an assigned and assumed psycho-social pathology, is co-constitutive of "white" and indicative of Manichean racial binaries of a self defined by the so-called "other"—binaries only made possible by antithesis and anathema in Western ideologies that have justified domination of one social group over another according to proximity to and from idealized biological types.

Because language functions as a system of representations, "blackness" had a "powerful impact on how Europeans first perceived Africans, as historian Winthrop Jordan (2000) illustrates. Even the peoples of North African seemed so dark that Englishmen tended to call them "black" (p. 35). Jordan further excavates the very meanings of "black" that would come to inform those perceptions: "Long before they found that some men were black, Englishmen found in the idea of blackness a way of expressing some of the most ingrained values. No other color except white conveys so much emotional impact" (p. 35). Blackness signified before the sixteenth century a range of pernicious connotations, including, as Jordon notes: "[d]eeply stained with dirt . . . foul . . . malignant . . . deadly; baneful . . . sinister . . . iniquitous . . . horrible, indicating disgrace. . ." (2000, p. 35). Blackness and "race," as historian James Walvin (1996) elaborates further, became part of the "intellectual bloodstream of the Western world," such that "to be black was to be enslaved:"

> Blackness had powerful—and negative—cultural assumptions. . . Here was a colour (though, of course, it was more a spectrum of shades of darkness), which suggested dirt, evil, and sin. The colour black stood in contrast to a range of cultural values associated with whiteness; with purity, goodness, virtue, and beauty. Africans were black—so were sin and ugliness. Europeans were white; as were purity and beauty. While it is tempting to overstate this polarity, here was a conflict about the most deeply held cultural values which found a particular form in the apparent differences between two species of humanity, black and white (p. 75).

Tellingly, the former secretary of Human Rights appointed by Nicolas Sarkozy, and founding member of the CRAN, Rama Yade (2007), reinforces this point in her book *Noirs de France* when recounting a childhood memory in which her classmates were asked during a vocabulary lesson to share what came to mind when they heard the word "noir." So inimical were the responses and painful that memory, it prompted Yade to write: "I became aware of, for the first time, at nine and a half years old, all the negative mental representations attached to the color black, notably in France" (p. 10).

The stigmata of "blackness,"[23] devoid of all favorable or honorable qualities, also emerges in the exegeses of religious parables that have been transliterated and translated over generations, making them subject to varied interpretations. An often cited example is the "Hamitic hypothesis," or myth, in which one common version highlights the racialization of the progeny of Noah's son, Ham, who is cursed with "black" skin and perpetual servitude for openly gazing upon his father in a moment of indiscretion. Consequently, the stain of "blackness" becomes equated with social degradation in ways that would eventually provide a religious pretext for racial slavery, even as competing interpretations also suggest that "blackness" served to connote, not "race," but rather punishment for the purposes of moral education (Aaron 1995; Mamdani 2001). Still, the derogatory nature of the term is what makes it effective. And while, as Lowe (2005a, 2005b) argues, racialized people were not indistinctly categorized as a group during the Renaissance or earlier eras, eventually, however, the force of the malignant meanings of "blackness" would become part of a collective consciousness expressed in discourses that *made* what it saw. The meanings would be projected onto bodies as well as ways of being and knowing associated with those bodies that came to be identified in a range of texts as "black." Returning, then, to implicit bias research and its schema theory, these encoded understandings, once activated (knowingly and unknowingly), become the stuff of "stereotypes [that can] cause discrimination in part by biasing how we process information about other people" (Krieger 2008, p. 11).

Philosopher Tzvetan Todorov's (1993) analysis of the development of "popular racialism" in France is also instructive in this context. Effectively, Todorov elucidates how influential thinkers such as Renan, Le Bon, Gobineau, and Taine advanced ideas of "the division of humanity into several major races—white, yellow, and black—and the hierarchization of this division" (p. 106). Such racialism represents a break with prevailing humanist thought forged in the European Enlightenment, another formidable barrier to the salience of "race" in French society. The Enlightenment, as one form of modernity, becomes pivotal in the archeology of "race" in France not only for the ways in which its doctrines of universalism and humanism structured French republicanism and, thereby, its ideals of "race-blindness," but also for its universalizing assertions that encoded whiteness (and maleness) as normative, and "blackness" as a-normative (Bernasconi and Lott, 2000; Dubois 2004; Eze [1997] 2003; Hall [1995] 2007; Muthu 2003).[24]

In *Discourse on Colonialism*, Aimé Césaire ([1950] 2000) rails against what he calls "pseudo-humanism," as "sordidly racist" for its biases and capacity to diminish rather than recognize and accord rights. Brilliantly, he exteriorizes this point in citing the philosopher and humanist, Ernest Renan:

> "We aspire not to equality but to domination. The country of a foreign race must become once again a country of serfs, of agricultural laborers, or industrial workers. It is not a question of eliminating the inequalities among men but of widening them and making them into law." That rings clear, haughty, and brutal,

> and plants us squarely in the middle of howling savagery. But let us come down a step. Who is speaking? I am ashamed so say it: it is the Western *humanist*, the "idealist" philosopher. That his name is Renan is [no] accident . . . [and] tells us a great deal about bourgeois morals (Césaire 2000, p. 37).

As Stuart Hall ([1995] 2007) phrases it in his analysis of modernity, "the emergence of the idea of the 'West,'" as a "white" construct "was central to the Enlightenment" and each succeeding age would view its achievements through these ideas that were held to be the illustration of the height of human reasoning. Moreover, Western ideas of "race," as products of such reasoning, would also provide a conscious-soothing justification for economic colonial expansion into a number of countries. In France, the principal architect of this was the celebrated statesman Jules Ferry. The influential and well-educated men of Ferry's time believed firmly that theirs was a modern, industrial society, a democratic society, and a superior society whose "superior races . . . have the duty to civilized the inferior races," and raise them to a higher level of culture (Gaillard 1989, p. 540; Wieviorka 1995, p. 6).

These already entrenched ideas migrated with(in) people across time and space, and where sustained contact with "black" populations may have been fleeting or non-existent in France, racialist ideas were brought to the French public during the Third and subsequent Republics through, for instance, colonial expositions and racial iconography used in commercial trademarks that represented—in reality constructed—stereotypes of colonized Africans (and Asians) as inferior "races" vis-à-vis the Enlightened imperial French. "Commercial trademark images" argues historian Dana Hale (2003):

> were one important medium through which ideas about Africans and Asians in the French territories reached the public during this period (the Third Republic, 1871–1940). Trademark illustrations document an important aspect of cultural history because they represent images the French encountered in their daily home environment (such as on bottles of laundry bleach or tea canisters)—images that had the power to mold or reinforce ideas about race (p. 131).[25]

Political scientist Fred Constant (2009) picks up on this point in analyzing what he refers to as the "tyranny of phenotype" indicative of the entrenched stigma of "blackness" distilled into present day racial stereotypes, representations that are in "flagrant contradiction to the democratic ideals to which the society clings," that is, a society wherein "[o]fficially color [denoting "race"] is invisible," and yet:

> representations of "Blacks" are not far removed from those that generally prevail in the French population [which range [f]rom the "man-child" to the "sexual beast," from "the nice but irresponsible jester" to "the exploited worker," from "the accomplished athlete" to "the femme fatale," from "the rap singer" to "the crack dealer," etc. A commonplace image of a "Black person" is not around the corner (Constant, 2009).[26]

Returning to Krieger's (2008) analysis, social stereotypes, as assimilated schemas or structures of knowledge, prejudice perceptions and are commonly triggered by encounters (real and simulated) with negatively stereotyped groups. A specific focus on anti-black discrimination by groups in France (and elsewhere) is necessarily significant when placed within a genealogy of the racial constructs of "black" and "black-

ness," understood as socially-incorporated stereotype-producing information that biases perception. The very existence of the aforementioned representations are evidence of embedded racialist thought from which "Black" consciousness movements would emerge and to which they are compelled to respond, resignify, and reclaim, often as a matter of survival. In the French context, historian Jennifer Anne Boittin (2009) well demonstrates in her revealing piece, "Black in France: The Language and Politics of Race in the Late Third Republic" that "[r]ace was used in multiple ways by colonial subjects and citizens who lived and worked in the metropole" (p. 23) during that period. Anti-imperialists and nationalists who were largely laborers, documents Boittin, self-recognized racially as a conscious and explicit expression of political agency against existing racial colonial discourses, exemplified in particular by the appellation, *nègre*. This would transform with the advent of Négritude, as a socio-cultural Black consciousness counter-discourse and movement that sought to force social change. Négritude inaugurates a theory and practice of Black humanism predicated on an evident "race" consciousness (both social and cultural), indeed a subjectivity of "being-[B]lack-in-the-world," and of being racialized as a "black" object while resituating Africa in a world from which it had been removed (Diouf 1999; Edwards 2003; Gueye 2006; Irele 1990; Kesteloot 1991; Sharpley-Whiting 2002).

SOCIAL RACE CONSCIOUSNESS: SUBJECTIVITY IN "BLACK"

As a counter-discourse, Négritude's essential project entails the restoration of the full integrity of a *denigrated* Africa and its peoples deemed inherently subhuman by strands of Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment thought presented to the world as modernity. Hegelian "race" discourse becomes particularly telling and pivotal in these politics for how it fashioned and projected racial antinomies against which Négritude (and "Black" consciousness more broadly) came to position itself in fusing the racial with the political. "Race is reality," states Leopold Senghor, in acknowledging that it has been made and made to matter, adding "I do not mean racial purity," though there is a biological aspect to his view that is historically and materially conditioned by pre-existing dominant ideas (Irele 1990, p. 71). The perduring representation that Hegelian thought erects is an a-historical, a-moral, and a-conscious "black" Africa, one "enveloped in the *dark* mantle of *night* [emphasis mine]" and inhabited, in this discourse, by beings who lay outside of humanity itself: ". . . there is nothing harmonious with humanity to be found in [their] character" (Hegel 1956). Africans are, thus, determined to be spiritually spent and morally bankrupt. In fact, "morality has no determinate influence upon them," argues Hegel. "Anyone who wishes to study the most terrible manifestations of human nature will find them in Africa" (Eze [1997] 2003, p. 142). It is precisely to this persistent representation that Négritude would respond.

Jean Paul Sartre's ". . .contribution to the formulation of the concept," as theorist and Négritude scholar Abiola Irele (1990) argues, "can be said to have been determinant in its establishment" of Négritude within a "race" dialectic ". . . as a contingent stage in a total historical process," (p. 69) and one directed toward a synthesis of human society devoid of "race" and racism, which is clearly still in the offing. Sartre recognized the social realities of "race" in French society through "Black" consciousness activism, in particular French Négritude, and he well elucidated how racial oppression not only has the capacity to subordinate but also to empower, to consciousness-raise, and to command counter subjectivities:

> If he is oppressed for his race and because of it, he must first become aware of his race. Those who have vainly attempted for centuries because he was a Negro to reduce him to the animal level must be compelled to recognize him as a man . . . Insulted, enslaved, he draws himself up, picks up the word "nigger" ["*negre*"] that has been thrown at him like a stone, and proudly asserts himself as a [B]lack man facing a white man (Kesteloot 1991, p. 109).

Aimé Césaire, who embodied the political project of Négritude, would powerfully articulate these sentiments during the question and answer period following his conference paper at the First International Congress of Black Writers and Artists, organized in Paris in 1956. This watershed gathering of African and African-diasporic intellectuals convened to examine nothing short of the "Black" condition worldwide and, in so doing, demonstrated how symbolic struggles effectively reveal the stakes and interests in maintaining and/or subverting a certain vision of the world, a certain status quo. When asked by a European [read "white"] what his Négritude consisted of and why he deemed it important, Césaire was reported by James Baldwin, who chronicled the event, to have said: "We do not choose our cultures; we belong to them. . . We are not "black" by our own desire, but, in effect, because of Europe" (Baldwin 1961, pp. 52–54).[27]

In recognition and defiance, then, of that invention, "blackness" becomes affirmed socially and culturally in the French context, as is it made fundamental to a collective "Black" identity, to a collective experience of anti-black oppression, to a nationalist worldview—in opposition to an Enlightened colonial status quo—and to a *community*. In short, an insult becomes transformed into a weapon of resistance against what thus far had exhibited itself as a hostile anti-black world. What "Blacks" had in common, declared Césaire, in keeping with a critical theme of the 1956 Conference, were "the injustices they suffered at European hands," or as Baldwin would further describe it:

> What they held in common was their precarious, their unutterably painful, relation to the white world. What they held in common was the necessity to remake the world in their own image, to impose this image on the world, and no longer by controlled by the vision of the world, and of themselves, held by other people (Baldwin 1961, p. 29).

It would be, however, that vision held by other people, that "recognition by others," to return to Calhoun's ([1994] 2003) formulation of identity politics, that would structure "Black" subjectivity in its past and present iterations, both of which emerge in response to the social effects of "race," racial discrimination, and racism; indeed of a stigmatized "blackness," marking inferiority that was foisted on people whose very identities have histories, as Stuart Hall (1989) would remind us. Identities, whatever their expression, are ". . . a matter of becoming as well as being. . . . But like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation . . . ," if they are destined to evolve and to transcend their limitations (p. 5).

It is precisely this understanding that captures a contemporary and prominent counter-identity discourse of "Black" subjectivity by those who are the inheritors of Négritude, but who feel that they have overcome its supposed "infantile maladies" and "ethnocentric insularity" (Ndiaye 2008, p. 356). In distinguishing themselves from past Black consciousness movements, these adherents of a contemporary "Black" consciousness draw heavily from theorists who categorically reject calls for a common "Black" identity, as are their self assertions strategically informed by Sartre's

ruminations on "race," as well as by philosopher Tommie Shelby's (2005) pragmatic "thin conception of blackness." That is, this understanding emphasizes the common-oppression and common-cause aspects, rather than nationalist impulses, as the basis for Black solidarity in battles for racial justice. Similarly, sociologist Paul Gilroy's (1993, 2000) concept of "ethnic absolutism" is also central to such subjectivity in terms of his rejection of biologized, essentialist fixations on the body that indelibly mark people with a single, unchanging identity.

CRAN spokesperson and scholar, Louis-George Tin (2008), captures the essence of a contemporary pragmatic "French Black" identity in his insightful piece, "Who is afraid of Blacks in France?: The Black Question, the Name Taboo, and the Number Taboo" (the latter point concerning the ethno-racial statistics debate to which I'll return). "Race-blindness" is critical to this formation in its retreat from "race" toward practical "blackness," which remains all too evocative of festering wounds lingering in French society. This perspective merits citing at length, particularly for how it reflects such identity politics while echoing and shifting from Négritude, of which it is an extension and yet seeks to eclipse:

> In response to the question "who is black?" we do not reply with arguments about nature (which make reference to a biological concept of race) nor with cultural arguments (which refer to the infinite variety of cultural differences between people) but rather to sociopolitical arguments. In societies where blacks are minorities, at the very least they are reputed to be a population of men and women whose common social experience is that of discrimination suffered because of biases based on skin color. Blacks have in common living in societies where they are perceived as blacks. They don't have a choice about the way in which they are seen. To paraphrase Sartre, "a black is someone whom other people believe is black." This purposefully minimalist definition of "blackness," necessarily based on external ascription, does not rule out another definition, under which a black person is someone who perceives him—or herself—as such. Therefore, an objective approach and subjective one must be articulated to understand the black question in its totality (pp. 34–35).

Unlike Tin, however, his colleague and co-CRAN member, Pap Ndiaye (2008), who appears to share many of these views, breaks with Tin by advocating the use of "race" as an instructive concept for analyzing social inequalities in France—"race," for him, understood as social construction. By extension, for Ndiaye, a "Black" identity is strategic in struggles against anti-black discrimination, and under no uncertain terms referential to an essence, culture, pride, or a "Black" community,[28] a formation he rejects. In France, these formations are held to be *communitarian*, indicative of a divisive "race"-based multiculturalism that is equated primarily with the United States or the United Kingdom and reflective of what Shelby (2005) refers to as a "thick conception of blackness." "Blacks," argues Ndiaye (2008), "are black [lowercase his] because they are packed away in a specific racial category; in short they are black because they are held as such," indeed constituted as such (p. 38). And while Ndiaye views "Blacks" in France as resembling their U.S. homologues socially, he rejects what he interprets as U.S.-style identity politics and solidarity formations, owing to the racial essentialism they are held to harbor.[29]

In actuality, "Blacks" of and in France are a community in formation (even as that is not the intent) and made so by the very construction of "blackness" in the society that has transformed common oppression into shared outlook and shared ways of being, perceiving, and knowing, especially for a younger generation who

appear at times not to be limited by "blackness," but are nevertheless defined by it. One witnesses this phenomenon in popular culture, in particular the visual and performing arts,[30] and I have encountered this understanding when speaking with persons in their twenties and early thirties who self-identify as "French" and "Black" and who claim to never have encountered discrimination or racism in France, even as they acknowledge its existence in the society. Further, the formation of a "Black/black community" is being defined by a variety of activities that the media have also picked up on in their attempt to package and market multiculturalism and "blackness" in France. This ranges from the commemoration of the memory of slavery (i.e., 2001 Taubira law) to high profile media selections (i.e., Harry Roselmack and Audrey Pulvar as prime time news anchors), to the literary (2009 Goncourt winner, Marie Ndiaye, Pap Ndiaye's sister) and the political (i.e., Rama Yade, former Secretary of Human Rights and George Pau Langevin, Députée of the National Assembly), that is, appointments of often self-identified "Blacks" in ways unprecedented in the past, though few non-whites still hold top positions.[31]

It is also worth noting that the 2001 Taubira law, which recognizes the Atlantic slave trade and slavery as crimes against humanity, also established a national day of remembrance of the abolition of slavery in France whose yearly celebration helps set the foundation for community formation by planting seeds of unity out of common grounds of oppression that are cultural and political. This milestone was celebrated publicly for the first time in May 2005 in the presence of long-term activist and politician, Christine Taubira, after whom the law was named—a self-identified Black woman who made an exceptional bid for the presidency in 2002 and is currently one of a handful of faces of color in the National Assembly, most of whom do not represent any region in metropolitan France.

It should not be overlooked as well that the creation of the CRAN and other similar associations have also, in unanticipated ways, contributed to the very community formation that they denounce in promoting a basis of shared interests and outlook, however tenuous, from which communities often begin to emerge. Indeed, from racism and discrimination communities emerge as a defense mechanism against a group-based attack, well illustrated by the 2005 "riots" and the *sans papiers* movements in France specific to African immigration. Césaire (2004) eloquently captures, as only he can, the signification of "community" that evolves from oppression in his paper delivered at the Première Conférence Hémisphérique des Peuples de la Diaspora at Florida International University in 1987:

> Yes, we do indeed form a community, but a particular type of community, one identifiable by what it has been. In any case, it became a community: first a community of sustained oppression, a community of imposed exclusion, a community of profound discrimination. Naturally, and entirely to its credit, it was also a community of continuous resistance, unrelentless struggles for freedom and invincible hope (p. 87).

While analysis of the pros and cons and the uses and abuses of "community" is too vast a topic to develop here, a critical analysis of "community" warrants greater attention against the literalness, reductionism, and failure to recognize the great diversity within and positive dimensions of "Black" community constructs, be they in France, Britain, the United States, Brazil, South Africa or other countries where "race" inheres in social structures.

The point is that by decontextualizing and/or dismissing the significance of "race," or diluting the notion of "blackness" as merely stigmatized color devoid of

socio-historical content, such adherents unwittingly play into the hands of those who wish to exonerate the larger society of any responsibility for ever having structured different peoples' trajectories and opportunities on the grounds of "race." It also suggests that there are, in effect, no legacies or lasting effects of France's race-making past, which the existence of anti-blackness clearly contradicts. Further, to wage anti-black struggles, as a self-declared "Black/Noir" organization absent a key element that has fundamentally structured the literal terms of engagement, "race," is to delegitimize their object (i.e., a specific focus on anti-black discrimination) and their objective (i.e., ending it). Further, when "race" is decontextualized and/or euphemized as "diversity," said "diversity" becomes a hollow man sustained by manipulation that relies on consent, and, in so being, also denies France's racial past and how ascriptive traits determined placement in a social hierarchy and thereby in the distribution of social privileges, resources, and opportunities (accorded and denied) on the grounds of "race." This, however, is clearly contradicted by slavery, through colonization, through spatial separation, to the contemporary ranking and profiling of groups targeted not merely because of the color of their skin, but rather for the inferiorized social meanings that their skin color socio-historically continues to signify *racially*. To acknowledge and foreground the structuring role of "race" in present anti-discrimination battles in France is decidedly risky, given France's arsenal of universalism, the principle of equality, and "race-blindness" itself that groups confront, which are also intrinsic to their activism as "French Blacks." But, to do so would also provide such groups with the ammunition of history and legacy that would buttress one of their primary goals of statistically documenting anti-black discrimination whose necessity is challenged by a variety of stakeholders for and against ethno-racial classification in France.

STATISTICAL BLINDNESS, RACE-BLINDNESS, AND FRENCH ACTIVISM-IN-BLACK: "FRANÇAIS DES MINORITIÉS VISIBLES ISSUE DE LA DIVERSITÉ"[32]

> . . . the vision that the national media gives us about the ethnic composition of France is biased. For a "Parisian" who takes the metro, the France represented on television is too white and for a "provincial," the France represented on the television is too colored and does not reflect an image that conforms to what he sees around him.
>
> *Bondy Blog*[33]

At the core of the ethno-racial statistics debate is a basic question that has also been posed in the United States by sociologists in response to "race-blind" discourses there. Under what circumstances would ethno-racial classification foster social divisions and/or reinvigorate discredited notions of "race" and when would such categories advance instead greater social inclusion. Advocates of ethno-racial classification in the United States support the measurement and study of "race as a principle category in the organization of daily life . . . [race understood] . . . as a changing social construct" that shapes life chances.[34] In the French context, demographer and proponent of ethno-racial statistics, Patrick Simon (2008), describes the divisiveness of this debate in his provocatively-titled essay directed at his opponents, "The Choice of Ignorance," in which he maintains that the debate surrounding this issue largely serves to deflect attention from the realities of lived discrimination and the

"flaws of the Republican model that are at the root of the controversy in the first place:"

> The concept of "ethnic and racial minority" as such is not used in France . . . there are no data describing the situation of minorities in France that could be compared with those produced in the United States. This state of affairs in French statistics-gathering has been the subject of major criticism for some twenty years now; it has gotten to the point that it has triggered a controversy of rare violence between those who would like to see statistics take into account the diversity of the population and those who denounce the danger that such statistics might pose in ethnicizing and racializing [French] society (p. 8).

In some ways, this battle is not only over documenting diversity, but rather over a racialized conception of French national identity. "Diversity statistics," advocated by "Black" activists to measure differential treatment and outcomes across social categories are also supported by an array of prominent, established scholars.[35] Moreover, the categories proposed by statistics advocates, hitherto non-existent, would derive not from state imposed classifications but from how individuals self-identify and perceive themselves to be identified based on their color or "visible difference." Such activism, inscribed in pre-1990s multicultural differentialist protests, is now spearheaded by the CRAN's grassroots campaign and policy appeals to the state and common person, the most controversial of which being their unorthodox (for France) and highly publicized effort to demonstrate the statistical relevancy of anti-blackness in France where no such data have existed previously.[36] Indeed, the question of "race" and its capacity to reinvigorate nineteenth century ideas or invoke racialism equated with Nazism weigh heavily on this debate. Even saying the word "race" in the French language is phonetically evocative in France, so it is not surprising, as Tin stated once in an interview in *Le Monde*, similar to Lozès's earlier statement about the non-existence of "race," "For my part, I avoid the word" (Birnbaum and Hopquin, 2008).

Opponents to the generation of these data, such as social scientists Alain Blum and France Guérin-Pace (2008), defend their position in an equally provocative article whose subtitle appears to target statistics advocates, "The Illusion of 'Ethnic Statistics.'" As these scholars contend, those opposing such statistics point out that there is no scientific basis for the very categories they seek to construct, adding that "an ethnic group is not an objective entity; and, on the other hand, even if such statistics were collected, they would be of no help for measuring discrimination, since the latter is a complex process that cannot be reduced simply to the victim's appearance" (p. 46). Further, anti-statistics critics, as these scholars document, see these data as "dangerous," because they harbor notions of "race" as biology, and reflect not diversity but rather end up "oversimplifying it," (p. 49) thereby potentially concealing actual diversity while constituting boundaries where none had existed: "Ethnic statistics would have the effect of bringing in the notion of 'race'—whose non-scientific character and danger are well known by all—and to foster intercommunity conflicts" (p. 49). In short, for those opposed to ethno-racial categories and statistics, they are anything but non-neutral and "reflect little more than a caricature of race conceived as appearance," (p. 57), and, in so doing, are made to perform a labor for which they are ill-equipped to assess: illuminating discrimination and inequalities. Blum and Guérin-Pace (2008) also point to the very real dangers of the misuse of such data in a country where the specter of former abuses always looms large. Ethno-racial documentation, it is believed, stands to open widely a door onto

similar abuses by the state or private sectors that could promote (rather than obstruct) discrimination with such data, as has already tragically happened in the past, particularly during the Vichy regime in France and more recently in relation to Jean-Marie Le Pen of the National Front, discussed below.

Proponents argue, however, that the lack of such statistics masks diversity in French society and perpetuates the illusion of non-differentiation of its citizenry that is easily belied by acts of discrimination on the basis of visible differences, something widely recognized as existing (even by opponents), but is not statistically validated. It is for this reason that the controversial CRAN surveys become salient in these battles for how they actually highlight what the state seeks to camouflage by its "race-blind" discourse and what anti-statistics opponents invalidate as scientifically real; that is, *racial* discrimination expressed as anti-blackness, even as the CRAN, too, seeks not to document "race."

This debate bled from the academy onto the streets where opponents and proponents have enlisted leading French agencies that specialize in public polling and market surveys to galvanize support for their stances. The cases of the CRAN (headed by Patrick Lozès of Benin origins) and SOS Racisme (headed by Dominique Sopo of Franco-Togolese origin, ten years Lozès' junior) are fascinating and emblematic of these tensions. In short, these two leading anti-racism associations in France are polarized on these issues, the latter being fundamentally opposed to ethno-racial data generation, even to battle racism and discrimination. Their respective stances appear to reflect the orientations of influential political organizations and parties with which each correspondingly maintains close affiliation: the CRAN and the NAACP on one end, and SOS Racisme and the French Socialist Party, therefore statist, on the other. Each association cites public support in favor of their position, and both have used the same public opinion polling agency (the CSA Politique-Opinion) to shape and document the public's viewpoint about the efficacy of collecting such data whose findings have received wide media coverage.

For instance, the CSA telephone survey conducted by SOS Racisme and the *Union des Etudiants Juifs en France* (Jewish Student Union of France [UEJF]) with whom they partnered found that the majority of French people polled, fifty-five percent, deemed the collection of such data "ineffective" (*pas efficace*) "in the battle against racism, anti-semitism, and discriminations," anti-blackness being one form of many discriminations.[37] However, the CSA-CRAN study asks a slightly different question whose principle finding troubles that of the CSA-UEJF-SOS study. That is, rather than inquiring whether the statistics should be part of the *national census*, as queried the UEJF-SOS survey, the CRAN survey asks the public about their sentiments toward a *general study* being conducted, as opposed to a state-driven project already associated with state-sponsored necro-politics and misdeeds of the past. Rather, the CRAN study sought to gauge the "French public's feelings of belonging in order to measure diversity and discriminations" in France to which over sixty percent, according to their findings, were in favor.[38] And while "diversity" is supposedly a more neutral term than "race" for statistics advocates, it becomes a euphemized "race-blind" way to talk about conceptions of difference in order to make the issue of discrimination and inequalities more marketable and palatable to itself and the French public for whom the denial of both "race" and "ethnicity" is well entrenched. So, on the CRAN side of the aisle, the nomenclature of "race" and "ethnicity" are rejected on the surface, though are implicitly stated.

SOS Racisme and their supporters are, however, of another mind in voicing strong opposition to ethno-racial statistics in public forums and petitions: "It is

urgent to take action against this abandonment of the founding principles of our Republic," asserting further that,

> Today, we are issuing an appeal: I refuse "ethnic statistics" . . . I refuse to be asked about the color of my skin, my origin or my religion . . . I refuse to have my identity reduced to criteria . . . I refuse that the attention and investigation be focused on the victims rather than perpetrators of discrimination . . . the reality of discrimination should be gathered by other means (Sabbagh 2008, p. 3).

By 'other means,' they refer to various forms of testing, for instance, to determine racial biases, heavily advocated by those on their side of the aisle, yet rejected by detractors who often cite one telling example to illustrate its limitations. As anti-discrimination agencies have found, there is considerable discrimination in France against names that are perceived as being of non-French origin, so one method used to capture employer discrimination focuses on how employers respond to the names of prospective applicants on curriculum vitas with identical qualification. Opponents of what is called "anonymous CVs" or testing of this nature maintain, however, that this overlooks the fact that people of color in France, such as the non-metropolitan French, also have French names. Recent studies using this approach combined with other methods have, on the other hand, documented name-based discrimination in France against those perceived as Muslims by prospective employers, thereby illustrating the conspicuousness of perceived and attributed religion (Adida et al., 2010).[39]

As Daniel Sabbagh (2008b) reports, SOS Racisme demanded that France's *Conseil Constitutionnel* (Constitutional Court) strike any questions about skin color in a far-reaching 2008–2009 survey, *Trajectoires et Origines* (Trajectories and Origins [TeO]), co-directed by Patrick Simon and his colleagues at the National Institute for Demographic Studies (INED) and by the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) whose preliminary findings were recently released (Beauchemin et al., 2010).[40] The Court complied with SOS's request, but, the TeO team was nevertheless allowed to ask informants what they believed accounted for the discrimination that they suffered. According to these researchers' preliminary findings: "[t]he motives cited were first origins (or nationality) and skin color (fifty-seven percent and seventeen percent), then sex and age." They also state that "the most visible are the first to be victims. Nearly one half of the sons and daughters of sub-Saharan African origin (forty-nine percent) reported having experienced discrimination in the last five years versus only ten percent of the majority population" (Beauchemin et al., 2010, p. 4). Further, in 2009, the French High Commissioner to Diversity, Yazid Sabeg, sought to convene a group of scholars, politicians, and activists to examine not *whether* but *how* to generate such data, only to meet stiff opposition from one of France's leading political scientists and a specialist on immigration, Patrick Weil. In a highly public forum, Weil refused Sabeg's invitation to join his committee, describing it and the Sarkozy administration as "pursuing a policy that was discretely and objectively discriminatory at a level not attained since the World War II."[41] For Weil's part, this committee was attempting to step outside of the constitutional framework by using already discredited and presumptively illegal categories of "race" and "ethnicity" to measure what existing methods and categories cross-referenced (e.g., nationality, birthplace, and socio-professional class) could produce without corrupting Republican ideals enshrined in the Constitution.[42]

In many ways, these arguments for and against these statistics share the common practice of "race" avoidance that deemphasizes "race," yet seeks to acknowledge "diversity." Similar to its U.S. cousin, these "diversity discourses" emphasize, how-

ever, "difference" or being different, which carries an unspoken question: "different from what or whom," as sociologists Joyce Bell and Doug Hartmann (2007) document in their study on diversity in everyday discourse in the United States. As they show, "diversity" may sound race-neutral or appear to transcend "race" altogether, but the discourse of diversity is, nonetheless, deeply racialized in the United States and harbors an unspoken recognition of "white" normativity. This can be said of France as well, in which, as stated in the previous sections, "blackness" (pragmatic or otherwise) is co-constitutive of "whiteness;" the latter, as I have shown elsewhere, is implied in French national identity (Keaton 2006). While "diversity" discourse on both sides of the pond is ubiquitous and rife with contradictions, it is shaping perceptions and practices, even as it also serves to evade discussions of "race" and its persistent effects that wind up perpetuating a status quo.

However, in the United States, "diversity" discourse also functions as a type of "happy talk," according to Bell and Hartmann (2007), an optimistic, uplifting celebration of cultural difference (a codeword for "race") and reflects the hope of diversity that still, nonetheless, evades "race talk." This celebratory aspect of diversity is absent in the French context unless it operates within the national frame, which is not really challenged by advocates for and against these statistics; rather what is challenged are France's promises of equality yet to be attained. Indeed, "[r]ace is both everywhere and nowhere, a deep cultural self-deception that is difficult to identify and counter" (Bell and Hartmann, 2007, p. 910). This observation stands as a testament to the powerful effects of state-sponsored ideological hegemony as "race-blindness" in France and, perhaps, post-race discourse in the United States that seeks to obfuscate the persistent social realities of "race."

Ironically, those on all sides of these debates who dismiss, reject, or ignore the structuring role of "race" and its effects in French society, particularly those who assert racialized identities, come to sound much like their arch-detractors, the extreme right who also denounce attempts to identify and differentiate the French population on principles of universalism. However, the ends of the far right are obviously different, having more to do with denying Frenchness to those visibly different while advancing implicit notions of racial purity. At the risk of arguing by extremes, but in this case the extremity makes the point, former presidential candidate and head of the Front National, Jean-Marie Le Pen (and his followers, including his daughter, Marine Le Pen, the vice-president of the National Front) can always be counted on to illustrate such points, as he has done over the course of his infamous career, including his horrifying first-round win in the 2002 presidential elections that resulted in the stunning elimination of the presumptive winner, Socialist Prime Minister Lionel Jospin.

Two salient examples come to mind where Le Pen is concerned, one having to do with his highly publicized reaction to the multi-"ethnic" 1998 World Cup winners, celebrated as "Black, Blanc, Beur" (Black, White and Arab), whom he referred to as "not a true French team," a view that still resonants today. And more recently, during the 2007 presidential election, the questions of representation and discrimination were very much on the table. In election and other speeches, Le Pen has been known to project on life-size screens his stated conception of French national identity: "Ni pote, Ni black, Ni blanc, Ni beur, Français!;" that is, neither a "friend/pal" or "homeboy" (lambasting the motto of SOS Racisme), neither black, neither white, neither Arab, [but] French!," the latter deemed indivisible as well as normatively "white," and embodied by him. Similarly, Le Pen also expresses a belief in non-differentiation of the citizenry and the rejection of ethno-racial statistics for "pure" French citizens, but advocates them for "ethnic" minorities. It is important to note in

this context that Le Pen often cites exaggerated and/or fabricated statistics in his inflammatory anti-immigrant rants that attempt to draw sharp correlations between ethno-immigrant origins and crime (*Le Monde* 2009). National Front members' ostensible advocacy of these statistics serve an alternative purpose, however: to document ethnicity and "race" in order to further criminalize and demonize undesired groups, immigrants in particular, which is precisely what voices in the anti-statistics debate caution against. However, it is also for this reason that it matters who generates these data as well as why they are needed; that is, to demonstrate the actual state of affairs that could counter such wanton misdeeds and abuses that are taking place anyway in the absence of actual data.

The CRAN also seized the election moment to invoke the "Black question," taking at times amusing swipes at the presidential frontrunners, something keenly exemplified by their Dailymotion clip, "Les candidats en black," that mimicked the "race-makeover" idea featured in the U.S. reality show "Black/White" and in its French version, "*Dans la peau d'un noir*" or "Being Black." Both shows aim at promoting awareness and sensitivity about racism and anti-black discrimination in the United States and France respectively. The CRAN ran with the idea, depicting "en black" the major candidates (all white) with a spiritualized version of the national anthem playing in tandem to their "racial" transformation.[43]

Ultimately, what all of these aforementioned groups have in common is their belief in and defense of the French republican model as the path for achieving their respective goals. It is perhaps sociologist Patrick Simon (2008) who best sums up this debate rightly pointing out that in a broader Europe, France is not the only country grappling with these issues (Blakely 1986, 1993; Carter 1997; Essed 1991; Essed and Goldberg, 2002; Gnammankou and Modzinou, 2008; Clark Hine et al., 2009; Hondius forthcoming; McIntosh 2007, forthcoming):[44]

> The collective blindness and silence that prevailed on racial discrimination were not perceived to be a matter of collective responsibility. That being said, it is obvious today that the choice of ignorance no longer protects the population exposed to discrimination; on the contrary, it reinforces the system that puts them at an unfair disadvantage (Simon 2008, p. 26).

CONCLUSION

In November 2009, France attempted to launch a debate on national identity, asking the public to respond to a seemingly innocent question: "For you, what does it mean to be French?" (in the twenty-first century). This debate was largely perceived by observers as a political device launched by a desperate President Sarkozy, indeed an attempt to bolster his popularity and seduce extreme right voters by fanning nationalists and anti-"other" flames before critical regional elections in which, in the end, his UMP party suffered a crushing defeat. However, this debate carried with it another more implicit and sinister question during this moment of permanent visible difference in French society, that is, "who is and who is not French," wherein "French" connotes normative whiteness.[45] In many ways, the public debate about "Black" identity politics and activism challenge that question in being representative of a semantic evolution in a "race-blind" society that seeks not to acknowledge "race" in principle, yet has deployed it in practice.

However, as I have argued, to battle historically engrained notions of "race" and their social realities in French society absent a concept of "race," as promulgated by

certain self-declared "Black" adherents of an incipient "French Black" populism, limits considerably the effectiveness of that effort. In this context, retreating from "race" in anti-blackness struggles inadvertently assists in the cloaking of France's race-making past and with it how "blackness" and anti-blackness have been constructed, made socially significant, indeed, socially real. Consequently, a potentially potent weapon never makes it to the battle, leaving those engaged in such struggles essentially empty handed, as the very powerful and seductive discourse of "race-blindness" in the French republican model would have them be.

What becomes clear, however, in societies where "race" or its proxies have been made central to opportunity and privilege, denying, ignoring, or avoiding its use and its effects does not eliminate its existence on the ground, in daily life, and within societal institutions. France (and Europe) cannot escape its role in race-making and the social effects of having done so are manifested, in this case, as (anti)black(ness) with all the social meanings inhering in that construct. In the French context, as I have described it, "race" is indeed everywhere but nowhere at the same time, and "race-blind" discourse in a racialized society is blind only to itself and to the racial discrimination that it seeks to conceal.

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Corresponding author: Professor Trica Danielle Keaton, Department of African American and Diaspora Studies, Vanderbilt University, 2301 Vanderbilt Place, Box 351516, Nashville, TN 37235-1516. E-mail: trica.d.keaton@vanderbilt.edu

NOTES

1. *Brune*, from which this article is drawn, is a popular magazine that caters to "Black women in all their diversity and on all continents," which was relaunched in 2007, though begun in 1991. See, Bally and Peters (2009). Willy's case exemplifies countless cases of racial profiling, both documented and not documented, acts that I have experienced and written about elsewhere. See Keaton (2006, 2009).
2. In this piece, I use "race-blindness" instead of the conventional "color-blindness" in order draw attention to what I feel to be the underlying and obfuscated issue, "race," which becomes masked by a discourse of "color," even as "color" functions as a site of discrimination.
3. Calhoun ([1994] 2003) correctly observes further that ". . . identity pursuits are "politics" for several reasons . . . they are collective, not merely individual, and public, not only private. They are struggles, not merely gropings; power partially determines outcomes and power relations are changed by the struggles. They involve seeking recognition, legitimacy (and sometimes power), not only expression or autonomy; other people, groups, and organizations (including states) are called upon to respond . . . identity politics movements are political because they involve refusing, diminishing or displacing identities others wish to recognize in individuals," (p. 21).
4. Because of its differing significations, the term "black," in the lowercase in this article, refers to an imposed racial identification, as opposed to a politicized self-identity or subjectivity that will be distinguished in this essay by "Black" in uppercase when used by me.
5. These authors additionally note the site-specific rates of disproporationality of stops that ranged for "Blacks" versus "Whites" "from 3.3 to 11.5. Arabs were generally 7.6 times more likely than Whites to be stopped by the police, although again, the specific rate of

disproportionality across the five locations ranged from 1.8 and 14.8" (Goris et al., 2009, p. 10).

6. These findings derive from a survey conducted by TNS/SOFRES, a private market research group in conjunction with the Representative Council of Black Associations (CRAN) and with state approval. However, the state mandated that no files documenting "race" or "ethnicity" were to be kept on respondents. See the CRAN's website, which reports these findings, at http://www.csa-fr.com/dataset/data2009/opi20090423-les-francais-les-minorites-visibles-et-les-discriminations.pdf (accessed August 30, 2009). An interesting dimension to this survey, however, is that it does not make clear who is doing the discriminating against self-declared "Blacks" and mixed-raced groups who could and have discriminated against each other, including along color-lines. What is implied is that those discriminating against them are "white."
7. See TNS/SOFRES survey results in the appendix of Ndiaye (2008).
8. Differing origins narratives abound about how and what influenced the creation of the CRAN. Rama Yade (2007) documents their first meeting, which appears to have been spurred largely by the 2005 uprisings. As she describes it, brought together that day were a number of high profile "Black" activists, such as Manu Dibango and Lilian Thuram, as well as a variety of existing associations devoted to African and Antillean interests and anti-racism in France. Missing, however, was representation from the outer-cities, notes Yade. According to, Patrick Lozès (2007), president of the CRAN, this organization, which he actively sought to model after the NAACP, emerged in response to the February 23, 2005 law that would have teachers and textbooks recognize the positive role of colonization, considered by many to be a whitewashing of French colonialism (Yade 2007, p. 23).
9. The CRAN received $150,000 in 2008–09 and $100,000 in 2007–2008 "for survey research and training activities to combat anti-black discrimination in France and for a march commemorating the 160th anniversary of the end of slavery in France." See http://www.fordfound.org/searchresults?Representative%20Council%20of%20Black%20Associations%20of%20France (accessed August 28, 2009).
10. Given the nature of ethno-racial statistical gathering and identity politics in France, it is unsurprising that more exact figures concerning the "Black" population are not available. The CRAN estimates that for all categories combined, the number of "French Blacks" is between three to five million persons. Popular presses estimate the population to be between two and five million (see, for example, *Le Nouvel Observateur*'s April 2006 edition featuring "Nous, les Noirs de France." Ndiaye (2008) indicates that for the population over eighteen years of age, there are roughly 1.9 million. He sees the figures as grossly under-calculated, putting the numbers closer to four percent or higher of the population.
11. By visibility in the French context, scholars such as Ndiaye (2008) mean ". . . the presence of phentotypical characteristics that racially or ethnically characterize those persons concerned . . . that is, people whose supposed ethno-racial membership can be deduced from their appearance" (pp. 57, 58).
12. See the CRAN website, specifically the section: "FAQ sur les statistiques de la diversité" (FAQ about diversity statistics) at http://lecran.org/index.php?s=Tns+sofres (accessed August 15, 2009).
13. It is unclear what "Black" in uppercase versus lowercase means for its adherents, which is not specified, though it suggests a U.S. influence in light of the scholarship which is drawn upon as well as the social capital of and close association with the NAACP with whom the CRAN is closely affiliated. Also see Ndiaye (2008) for a discussion of the CRAN's extensive international networks and ties with the NAACP.
14. It bears noting that a notion of "Black pride" is not rejected in the subjectivity advanced by Patrick Lozès (2007), that is, pride in "Blacks" contributions to the economic development of France and Europe via their free labor, and pride in their resilience in having already overcome multiple forms of inhumane oppression. See chapter 12.
15. See the CRAN website, *ibid*., "Why Diversity Statistics: Question 1."
16. The material cited in English on implicit biases derives from Linda Krieger's (2008) "Category Problems: Implicit Stereotypes & The Struggle Against Discrimination," an unpublished conference paper given to me by its author, following her presentation of this research in 2008 at Sciences Po in Paris, France. See Krieger's (2008) policy paper on these topics in French released the same year while she was a scholar in residence at Sciences Po (2007–2008). Also see the "Project Implicit" website, devoted to research on

a variety of implicit associations, at https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/ (accessed October 4, 2009).

17. See Article 1 of the French Constitution.
18. Black American feminists in the USA have offered illuminating analyses of race and (anti)blackness both within and beyond the United States that can prove instructive to "French Black" consciousness movements for the ways in which they have articulated their intersectionality or transversality with other modes of domination. See also, sociologist Karen Fields (2001) who insightfully observes that "[t]he invisible aspect of race becomes apparent, however, as soon as we reflect that the focus of racecraft (or biologizing 'race' as ideology) is not the outward, visible color of a person's skin (hair type, bone structure, etc.) but the presumed inward, invisible content of that person's character. It is always black *and*, yellow *but*, white *therefore*, [emphasis hers] and so on, and is rarely a matter of appearance standing by itself." (296). See also Nell Irvin Painter (2010) as well as writing by Patricia Hill Collins and Angela Davis.
19. In the social sciences in France, Michel Wieviorka, the Fassin brothers (Didier and Eric), and Patrick Simon have been quite visible in analyzing the social question of "race" in French society. See Wievorka (1995, 2002), Fassin and Fassin (2006), Fassin (2010), Fassin and Simon (2008). Comparatively, in the United States, see the Statement of the American Sociological Association (2003) on "The Importance of Collecting Data and Doing Social Scientific Research on Race."
20. Directive 2000/43/CE du Conseil du 29 juin 2000 at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32000L0043:fr:HTML (accessed October 4, 2009).
21. Taken from the first article of the 1802 *Codes Noires* or "Black Codes" that re-established slavery in the French colonies. See Castaldo (2006, pp. 21, 74).
22. Dubois' (2003) analysis is quite interesting for the ways in which colonial administrators in the French Caribbean in the 1790s deployed what he calls a form of 'Republican racism' that would legitimate other forms of exclusion, as recently emancipated enslaved peoples attempted to hold France to its Republican ideals of non-distinction racially and full inclusion. As he argues, this becomes a key period in the development of "color-blindness" in France.
23. Even today, in one of the more popular online U.S. dictionaries, "black," in lowercase, is defined as "soiled, stained with dirt, and harmful," a definition coupled with its reference to people in:" a.) pertaining or belonging to any of the various populations characterized by dark skin pigmentation, specifically the dark-skinned peoples of Africa, Oceania, and Australia [and] b.) "African Americans." Similarly, in its French equivalent, baleful meanings of "black" are joined with its designation of a *personne de race noire* (person of the black race). Interestingly, scholar Françoise Vergès (2005) also observes that there is an absence of the "race" question, colonization, and slavery in major historical dictionaries over the last decade. See Dictionary.com at http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/black (accessed on September 30, 2009). See also Le Dictionnaire at http://www.le-dictionnaire.com/definition.php?mot=noir" (accessed on August 8, 2009). It is worth noting that the online dictionary of the Académie Française, which is much more elaborated, highlights foremost the absence of color or light in the definition of "black."
24. Also See Muthu (2003) for how eighteenth-century thought more broadly was comprised of multiple Enlightenments, strains that included a commitment to universal principles. See also Dubois (2004) for an illuminating analysis of how the colonized in the French Caribbean made claims to universalism to challenge the imperial institutions; that is, peoples in whom those in authority held little confidence in their capacity to appreciate universal rights (similar to those newly emancipated by the French Revolution).
25. Also see Auslander and Holt (2003).
26. This quote comes from an interesting collection of conference papers on what appears to be a virtual university website devoted to "Black French Studies": UDMN: université des mondes noirs: Black worlds university. Also see CSA (2009a), which documents that French television remains largely white, though the study itself raises some methodological questions.
27. In the quote, Baldwin uses the term "Negros," though Césaire is likely to have said "Nègre."
28. It merits noting that Ndiaye (2008) acknowledges the rich traditions and cultures of communities that he identifies as legitimately indicative of the term in France, such as African and Antillean communities.

29. Again, public discourse is important for the ways it constitutes what it conveys and shapes public perception. See also, for example, Hopquin (2009) "Pap Ndiaye: Républicain de souche."
30. Here, the work of visual artist Alexis Peskine is quite representative: http://www.alexispeskine.com/ (accessed August 30, 2009) or the array of hip hop artists who have produced a distinctly Black hip hop French sound. There are also a number of community-centered magazines of which *Brune*, cited earlier, is one example. Also see the *Nouvel Observateur*'s April 13, 2006 edition titled, "Nous les Noirs de France."
31. It is important to note that it has only been during the summer, when the regular anchor is on break, that Roselmack assumes that role. Similarly, the daily, *Libération*, runs a summer cartoon strip featuring Blacks/Africans titled "Aya de Yopougon" by Marguerite Abouet and Clément Oubreire. As a friend who lives in Paris once remarked; "You know when it's summer in France; they let the Blacks out of the closet."
32. In some ways, this "identity" discourse becomes lost in translation, particularly the expression "issue de la diversité," which is, nevertheless, a racialized social category (though not apprehended as such) that conveys something roughly equivalent to "people of color" or connotes "non-whiteness."
33. From an article on *Bondy Blog* entitled "Patrick Lozès, le French-African so American."
34. See the "Statement of the American Sociological Association (on) The Importance of Collecting Data and Doing Social Scientific Research on Race."
35. See the CRAN website at http://lecran.org/?p=211 (accessed April 1, 2010) for a partial list of signatories favoring "diversity statistics".
36. A number of quantitative studies precede the efforts of the CRAN, but focus more on questions of "integrating" immigrants and their children, while only implicitly addressing the issue of discrimination. One controversial study in the 1990s sought to break with this mode in an attempt to document "ethnic" origins only to run head-first into the machinery of "race/color blindness" (Tribalat et al., 1996).
37. See Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel (2009b), "L'efficacité des statistiques ethniques dans la lutte contre le racisme, l'antisémitisme et les discriminations," an exclusive CSA/UEJF (Union des Etudiants Juif en France)/SOS RACISME phone survey conducted March 4–5, 2009.
38. See Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel (2009c), "Les français, les minorities visible et les discriminations," an exclusive CSA/CRAN telephone survey carried out from 1–23 April, 2009. On the CRAN website these figures from the same study are reported as sixty-five percent of "French people" favor "diversity statistics" of which eighty-four percent are less than thirty years old.
39. The 2006 report by E. Cediey and F. Foroni of the Inter Service Migrants—Centre d'Observation et de Recherche sur l'Urbain et ses Mutations (ISM-CORUM) entitled "Les Discriminations à raison de 'l'origine' dans les embauches en France: Une enquête nationale par tests de discrimination selon la méthode du BIT" is insightful for showing how a great deal of discrimination in the process of obtaining employment actually occurs before the interview, and derives from assessing the CV alone. It suggests then that rendering CVs anonymous may reduce this form of discrimination.
40. The TeO study seeks to analyze claims of discrimination experienced by a range of individuals surveyed in France in order to identify the factors contributing to, as well as motives identified by, informants for such treatment. See Beauchemin et al.(2010).
41. See *Libération* journalist, Catherine Croller's Hexagone blog post, "Patrick Weil: 'pourquoi je refuse de participer au Comité sur la diversité.'
42. The 2007 petition, "Engagement républicain contre les discriminations," whose signatories include Patrick Weil and others in opposition to these statistics, outlines their central position; that is, existing methods essentially suffice. See, *Libération* (2007) for the published petition.
43. See "Les Candidats en Black" at http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x1mtft_les-candidats-en-black_ads (accessed October 9, 2009).
44. Space limitations preclude providing an exhaustive list of the scholarship on "race" and anti-blackness in Europe, especially the already rich British scholarship on these issues. These listings represents, rather, just a few, including some of the more recent and forthcoming sources on these issues in Europe. Also see past projects by scholars Peggy Piesche and Fatima El-Tayeb concerning Black European Studies (BEST) and their events at http://www.best.uni-mainz.de/modules/Informationen/index.php?id=13 (accessed April 10, 2010). Also, see the forthcoming anthology edited by Eve Rosenhaft

based on her conference titled: "Africans in Europe in the Long Twentieth Century: Transnationalism, Translation and Transfer" that was held at the University of Liverpool, October 30–31, 2009.

45. See the website initiated by Eric Besson, the Minister of Immigration and National Identity at http://www.debatidentitenationale.fr/participation/pour-vous-qu-est-ce-qu-etre/ (accessed November 5, 2009).

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