Introduction

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Repositioning Race

Prophetic Research in a Postracial Obama Age

On Tuesday, January 20, 2009, 75-year-old Mildred Pierce sat mesmerized during the televised inauguration of Barack Obama as the 44th president of the United States. Her experiences as a Black child living in the Jim Crow South and later as an adult resident of several northern cities all confirmed that such an event would never take place—at least not in her lifetime. Yet she silently shed a tear as the seemingly impossible episode unfolded. This scenario took place in homes around the country as U.S. citizens witnessed the historic inauguration. Some people were overjoyed, others were dismayed, and still others were ambivalent. Yet no one could deny the reality that the United States had elected its first Black president. Our collective understandings of race and national politics would forever be altered. That the majority of Blacks voted for Obama is not surprising (note: Black and African American are used interchangeably throughout this volume). Furthermore, that members of other minority groups also provided strong support may not be surprising. Racial and ethnic minorities have for several decades formed an important part of the Democratic base (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990). Yet many scholars, political pundits, and skeptics were astonished by the substantial number of Whites—most reports show about 40%—who helped elect Obama. Younger as well as more formally educated Whites were

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particularly supportive as they moved across racial lines, and some across party lines, to support the Black candidate (Cohen 2008; Kuhn 2008). Similar voting patterns were evident for the now President Obama during the 2012 election (Sherman 2012; Sherwood 2012). What do these seminal turns of events mean for racial identity, race relations, and racial reconciliation, as well as international, national, regional, and local views about race in the twenty-first century? Of equal importance, what do the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections mean for people, particularly racial minorities, on a day-to-day basis? While in some ways discussions, research, and even our ideas and beliefs about race have been irrevocably turned on end, in other ways a tradition of *prophetic* research and scholarship that dates back to Alexander Crummell, Ida B. Wells, and W. E. B. Du Bois, has prepared us to proactively examine these relatively unchartered intellectual and emotional spaces.

We formally borrow this term from scholar, theologian, cleric, and social democrat Cornel West in *Race Matters* (1993) calls for *prophetic* Black thinkers and leaders to turn the tide of nihilism in Black America and apathy toward race matters in the larger society. A prophetic mode of inquiry is inherently inquisitive, proactive, culturally sensitive, introspective, collaborative, and creative. It is not necessarily religious, but it is invariably radical. In our volume, prophetic research is framed by sound sociological approaches and draws on other disciplines and thought processes where productive to comprehensively consider subjects of inquiry. Most importantly, repositioning race based on a prophetic stance means recognizing that rigorous academic research is impotent without applied efforts and social policy that empower the Black community and other disenfranchised people worldwide. One is not required to be Black or a sociologist to participate in the prophetic repositioning of race for the twenty-first century, but one must be willing to center her or his research within the experiences of the historically oppressed—and willing to accept the challenge to grapple with the exciting but often-troubling complexities inherent in such an undertaking. In this context, prophetic research is a metaphor for the cutting-edge approaches and academic lenses required to study the nuances of race and racial matters in society today as well as to *move* academic disciplines, researchers, students, grassroots activists, and everyday folks beyond our current views and responses on the subject.

Crummell, Wells, and Du Bois were engaged in prophetic work that not only highlighted and challenged the social construction of race but also inspired activist interventions on local, national, and international levels. Yet, in a "postracial" era, is the kind of prophetic research in which Crummell, Wells, Du Bois, and others engaged still necessary?

The election of a Black man to the highest office of the most powerful country in the world signifies, for some, the end of the "race problem" and constitutes the ultimate reparations for slavery and Jim Crow. This volume recognizes the postracial discourses that have emerged in the wake of President Obama's election and reelection, but systematically rejects the notion that his election moves us "beyond race." Moreover, this volume continues in the prophetic tradition of making the workings of race visible—even when they are obscured by powerful discourses—by drawing on varied theories, analytical approaches, and data sources. The writers contextualize President Obama's historic election and reelection, examining the features and consequences of the "postracial" era his elections have ushered in.

The chapters herein include research on race and race-related subjects from a cross-section of scholars in the humanities and social sciences. Writers take on a prophetic examination of the multidimensionality of race by using unexpected lenses, critiquing prevailing sentiments, or providing contradictory findings using traditional research methods. This mosaic of intellectual engagement means that subject matter is addressed from a variety of methods beyond anecdotal assessments. The comparative nature of the chapters will help readers better understand: (1) how race and race matters currently manifest in a postracial Obama age; (2) how laypersons, scholars, and policymakers attempt to "make sense" of race and race matters; (3) social policy implications of the twenty-first century racial moment; and (4) the changing contours of contemporary race relations. To our knowledge, no existing edited volume specifically examines these topics from the perspective of top scholars in the discipline, burgeoning researchers, and community activists.

'Good News' and 'Bad News': Repositioning Race Prophetically

Many opine that we now live in a *postracial society*: one in which race no longer matters or influences individual opportunities and life chances. Therefore, in this postracial society, the success of Blacks and other racial minorities is limited only by their initiative, work ethic, and dedication (Bonilla-Silva 2001, 2010; Feagin 2006, 2010). Statistics show that Blacks are graduating from college in record numbers (*Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* 2005, 2010). The relatively resilient Black middle class (Kalil and Wightman 2010; Pattillo-McCoy 1999) and its more elite upper-class counterpart (Graham 1999) represent other postracial markers. Moreover, family income among Blacks has risen over the

past few decades (Isaacs 2008). Black and brown folks are negotiating international and national spaces and marketplaces in unprecedented ways. Oprah Winfrey continues to make *Forbes*'s list of wealthiest Americans (*Forbes* 2013); other Blacks such as Tiger Woods, Robert Johnson, Michael Jordan, Artron Brown, William Cosby, and Sheila Johnson have experienced notable success as athletes, media moguls, entertainers, and entrepreneurs (Blount 2012; *Forbes* 2009).

Yet, for most people who espouse a postracial perspective, the 2008 election of Barack Obama, the first Black president of the United States is the clearest indication that we are now in a definitively postracial moment. President Obama's subsequent *reelection* in 2012 only reinforced this belief. True, in light of the legacy of chattel slavery and subsequent racial oppression and segregation (Billingsley 1992; Cox 1948; Drake and Cayton [1942] 1962; Frazier 1964; Hannerz 1969; Massey and Denton 1993; Morris 1984; Omi and Winant 1994), few people, particularly people like Mildred Pierce, could have possibly imagined that a Black man would be elected and reelected leader of the most powerful country in the world. These dramatic changes are resulting in new norms, values, beliefs, and behavior about race for Blacks and non-Blacks alike. Yet, despite the ascendancy of the Black middle class, the election and reelection of Barack Obama, and other oft-cited indicators of a postracial society, segments of the Black populace continue to experience challenges on multiple levels.

For example, according to 2009 Census statistics, almost 26% of Blacks are impoverished—at least twice the rate of both Whites and Asians. Additionally, more than 50% of Black children are growing up in poverty. Whites are more likely than their Black counterparts to complete high school (89.4% and 80.0%, respectively) and to earn a four-year college degree (30.0% versus 17.3%, respectively) (Kalil and Wightman 2010). Furthermore, perhaps most challenging to the notion of a postracial society is the fact that even middle-class African Americans experience negative health, employment, and housing disparities compared to their White counterparts (Isaacs 2008; Kalil and Wightman 2010; Oliver and Shapiro 1997). Isaacs finds that middle-class Blacks are significantly less likely to maintain a middle-class status across generations: 45% of Black children who grew up in middle-class homes are in the bottom quintile of the earnings distribution as adults, whereas only 16% of their White peers experienced similar levels of downward mobility. Black men continue to be incarcerated at substantially higher rates than White men (*Bureau of Justice Statistics* 2005) and Blacks tend to be without health insurance at higher rates than Whites (U.S. Bureau of Census 2002). According to statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Preven-

tion (2008), about 50% of infected men, 63% of all new cases among females, and 66% of pediatric AIDS cases are Black.

These reports provide a sobering reminder that a disproportionate percentage of Blacks continue to lag beyond their White counterparts on most of the major indices associated with economic stability and positive quality of life (Oliver and Shapiro 1997; U.S. Bureau of Census 2009). The good news associated with Black progress cannot supplant these significant challenges. The chasm between the haves and have-nots grows (Isaacs 2008; Kalil and Wightman 2010; Massey and Denton 1993; Oliver and Shapiro 1997; Wilson 1987), and racism continues (Bonilla-Silva 2001, 2010; Feagin 2006, 2010; Gallagher 2003). Because of the paradox of unprecedented successes and suffering in the Black community, scholars are challenged to consider how race, racism, and race-related dynamics are manifesting in the Obama age. They are compelled to examine what race means anew, as well as how it is framed in academic discourses and in the lives of everyday citizens. We contend that responding to this challenge requires researchers to think in prophetic ways. This symbolism is more than a buzzword; it is a call to radical, transformative research that informs readers and challenges them to individually and collectively engage in community action and social justice work. This prophetic research is a continuation of long-established sociological, Black intellectual, and activist trends that engages modern configurations of race with the long view of racial histories squarely in sight.

This edited volume examines questions such as: Does race as we have known it *still matter*? How is race being reconstructed at both institutional and individual levels? How must sociologists, other researchers, community leaders, and laypersons reposition race prophetically to do justice to the triumphs and trials in the Black community? What are some of the international and national implications of race for people of African descent in the Diaspora? Theories and empirical work herein suggest that although contemporary forms of racism are often less visible than previous instantiations of racism, they are no less pernicious in their outcomes for marginalized groups. Modern forms of racism are embedded in individual attitudes and actions as well as in structural forces and shrouded in a "color-blind" posture that is more difficult to detect.

The impetus for this volume was the 40th annual meeting of the Association of Black Sociologists (ABS) in August 2010. Scholars, grassroots leaders, and students grappled with the concept of race in light of the recent presidential elections. Most attendees have been directly or indirectly studying race or race-related subjects for years. But the energy and excitement of the presidential election and its broader implications

engendered a plethora of discussions, discourses, and on several occasions, heated debates as attendees considered how issues and interactions tied to race should now be assessed. Clearly, additional information was needed, and rigorous academic inquiry would have to undergird such efforts. But race and race matters are complicated, nuanced subjects; they cannot be effectively studied in isolation. For this same reason, diverse analytical approaches, theories, methodologies, and models are incorporated to systematically consider contemporary emergent themes, issues, and implications of race in the twenty-first century. This volume therefore includes theoretical and empirical work from multiple disciplines and interdisciplinary areas of inquiry, including sociology, cultural studies, and Afro-Hispanic studies. Findings are intriguing and sometimes controversial, yet each chapter engages and challenges readers to move beyond myopic, dichotomous, and often entrenched definitions and views about race and racism. These forward-thinking analyses position the volume for academics, undergraduate and graduate students, community leaders, as well as mainstream readers interested in tackling contemporary issues related to race.

Scholarship on Race, Racism, and Race Matters

In the nineteenth century, biologists developed three broad categories of race—Caucasoid, Mongoloid, and Negroid—to identify groups phenotypically associated with Whites, Asians, and Blacks, respectively. This conceptualization of race ascribed racial inequality to naturally occurring biological differences, evident, these scientists argued, in phenotypical differences such as eye shape, hair texture, and head shape (Cox 1948; Graves 2001). Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, social scientists from W. E. B. Du Bois to Franz Boas challenged the assumed causal link between phenotype and ability. As biological notions of race became increasingly untenable, they were replaced with cultural notions of race. Popularized during the latter half of the twentieth century, cultural notions of race asserted that biological difference or inferiority did not necessarily lead to racial inequalities, but rather cultural differences did (Ladner 1973; Moynihan 1965; Myrdal 1975; Omi and Winant 1994; Wilson 1987). In general, sociologists reject both biological and cultural conceptualizations of race. Instead, in sociology, *race* is commonly considered a socially constructed concept used to broadly categorize groups of people and disproportionately allocate resources based on those categorizations (Blackwell and Janowitz 1974a, 1974b; Ladner 1973). Sociologists work to uncover how the concept of race

is deployed to engender, maintain, and justify inequality. Understanding the concept of race has important implications for analyzing topics related to ethnicity, the minority experience, prejudices, stereotypes, and discrimination. Furthermore, beyond its academic implications, race and racial matters are inextricably linked to life chances and quality of life (Blackwell and Janowitz 1974a, 1974b; Cox 1948; Ladner 1973; West 1993; Wilson 1987). To contextualize the chapters in this volume, this section provides an overview of some of the seminal theories and research associated with race, especially by Black scholars. Although not exhaustive, this summary provides a segue into an examination of how race is repositioned prophetically in this volume.

Beyond definitional debates, many existing studies about race focus on its history, institutionalized nature, and the deleterious consequences associated with racism and racial discrimination. Early U.S. studies tended to focus on relationships and comparisons between Blacks and Whites, examining topics from lynching, chattel slavery, and segregation to interpersonal prejudice, economic disenfranchisement, and structural inequality. Sociologist and prolific intellectual W. E. B. Du Bois is credited with performing the first comprehensive studies on the subject, beginning with the seminal 1899 text, *The Philadelphia Negro*, and continuing this tradition with the many studies accomplished during his tenure as director of the Atlanta University Studies on the Negro Problems. As a trailblazer, scholar, and community activist, Du Bois is an exemplar of prophetic leadership. Among numerous works Du Bois produced, *The Negro Church* ([1903] 2003) and *Souls of Black Folk* ([1903] 1996) shine a sociological light on the Black experience. The former's empirical analysis of Black religious life in a racist society provides both documentation of a key dimension of the Black community and a societal critique. The latter "slender book" helps both academic and mainstream readers understand the trials of racial identity and race prejudice in the United States as well as the triumphant spirit of a people fraught by such difficulties.

The comprehensive manner in which early African American sociologists, including Du Bois, Ida B. Wells, and Charles S. Johnson, examined race and its legacy provided the context for the development of subsequent theories and studies. In the post–World War II period, scholars across disciplines continued the work of interrogating race, expanding their analyses to broader, global systems of power that perpetuated racial inequality in the United States and abroad. Groundbreaking tomes such as Oliver Cox's *Class, Caste, and Race* (1948) illustrate the ideological underpinnings of race and racism, its benefits to Whites at the expense of non-Whites, and the historical use of race

to pit majority against minority groups in a capitalistic society. In addition to examining the workings of race on structural levels in global contexts, Black intellectuals, particularly those working in the academy, turned a critical eye to the systems of power at work in the academic hierarchy that silenced the perspectives of racial and ethnic minorities. Working in tandem with the momentum of the Civil Rights and Black Power movements, Black intellectuals in the 1960s and 1970s carved out spaces to address myriad issues unique to Black people because of their structural positioning. Out of this period came key structural analyses of race such as Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton's *Black Power* (1967); articulations of the transformative and radical nature of culture and religion such as James Cone's ([1969] 1999) *Black Theology and Black Power* and *God of the Oppressed* (1997); and, increased attention to the role of women in liberation struggles from slavery to freedom through the writings and activism of scholars such as Angela Davis, Francis Beale, and Michele Wallace.

The work of Black feminist scholars built the foundation for an expanded exploration of the combined effects of race, class, and gender as interlocking systems of power beginning in the 1980s. In *Black Feminist Thought* (2000), Patricia Hill Collins combined conflict theory and symbolic interactionism in an analysis of the nexus of race, class, and gender, contending that centering the poor Black female experience illuminated how Black women and other excluded groups negotiate a society characterized by inequities. Concepts Collins developed, such as *outsider-within*, *controlling images*, and *self-definition*, provided new and exciting language for the study of race, its interconnectedness with class and gender oppression, and the adaptive, resilient nature of the Black community. These analyses emerged alongside new theoretical appraisals of the history and structural functioning of the concept of race. Omi and Winant (1994) described the systemic nature of racial inequality embedded in racial projects. Still other scholars examined how residential segregation, economic inequality, and poverty evidenced the cumulative effects of racism (West 1993; Wilson 1980, 1987).

Recent social science studies report a decline in more overt forms of racism and an increase in more covert manifestations of racial slights. "Old fashioned" or dominative racism appears to be largely supplanted by an aversive racism that manifests in the form of discomfort, uneasiness, disgust, and fear of Blacks; avoidance of Blacks; and rejection of social policy and programs intended to address historic racism and discrimination (Gaertner and Dovidio 1986). Ground-breaking work on color-blind racism by Gallagher (2003), Bonilla-Silva (2001, 2010), and Feagin (2006, 2010) provides startling results about what many

Whites in the United States believe about race, racism, and minority group interactions. The latter two scholars continue their expositions on the subject in this book.

This summary, though not exhaustive, endeavors to remind readers about existing research on race as a social system, racial inequality, and the effects of racism on marginalized groups. Just as these noted studies are seminal, many other scholars not mentioned are also engaged in this important work. Beyond their academic import, these types of endeavors remind us about the microlevel implications of race matters in terms of personal identity and interracial interactions, as well as macrolevel correlates to social problems such as poverty, health-care inequities, and environmental racism. Continued efforts such as those in this book help ensure that we remain abreast about ever-changing dynamics associated with race.

Black Sociologists and the Critical Tradition

This is not the first volume to bring together the theory and research of Black sociologists at a key and collaborative political and intellectual moment. Shortly after the inception of ABS 40 years ago, a group of Black sociologists contributed to three key edited volumes that took stock of the work of Black sociologists over the course of the twentieth century and asserted a critical Black epistemological position that provided comprehensive structural analyses of conditions in the Black community by Black scholars. In the context of the monumental changes of the Civil Rights and Black Power movements, these volumes represent a pivotal moment in the discipline. Joyce Ladner's 1973 volume *The Death of White Sociology*, along with James E. Blackwell and Morris Janowitz's 1974 volumes *Black Sociologists: The First Half Century* and *Black Sociologists: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, challenged "White sociology" and encouraged Black scholars to engage in research that augmented understandings of the social processes affecting Black communities. Ladner's volume exposed the epistemological pitfalls and detrimental policy consequences of White sociology's interpretation of Black issues, presenting Black reevaluations of subjects from the Black family to Black identity. Blackwell and Janowitz's works presented a previously obscured history of radical Black sociology that situated Black intellectuals as astute and prophetic analysts who could anticipate racial outcomes through thorough, empirically and theoretically sound research. In *Sociology and the Race Problem: Failure of a Perspective* (1993), author James McKee argues that because most White

sociologists ignored the contributions of Blacks to the discipline, and by extension Black theoretical and epistemological perspectives, the discipline was unable to fully assess and comprehend race as both a concept and system of power. Essentially, White sociology underestimated the prophetic nature of Black sociology.

While significant changes have occurred in the discipline and scholarship on race since the publication of Ladner's and Blackwell and Janowitz's volumes during the early years of ABS, the need for the critical tradition in sociology endures. This volume continues that tradition with attention to the ways in which race matters in everyday interactions and social institutions; in classrooms and communities; and in domestic and global contexts. We hope in this moment of intellectual and activist energy—one not unlike the moment in which ABS was formed—that this volume embodies a prophetic assessment of race that will inform the positioning of the concept across disciplines and inspire intellectuals and communities to work to address the continuing challenges of the future.

Volume's Format: Race Matters Past, Present, and Future

In addition to its introduction and conclusion, the eight chapters herein are grouped into three broad themes: (1) theories and new frameworks; (2) implications and responses; and (3) international issues. We focus on these three broad themes because considering the influence of structural forces such as capitalism, culture, and politics on contemporary understandings of racial dynamics is important. Key aspects of theories presented in part I are tested in national and international contexts in parts II and III, respectively. This strategy facilitates the volume's examination of common themes and dynamics relative to race and racism today as well as the conceptual multifacetedness of race across contexts.

In part I, "The Pitfalls and Possibilities of Prophetic Race Theory: Cultivating Leadership," the first three chapters theoretically illuminate race as a concept and its implications for Black leadership, beginning with a provocative appraisal of the contemporary moment and the foreseeable racial future. In Chapter 1, "Race Matters in 'Postracial' *OBAMERICA* and How to Climb Out of the Rabbit Hole," Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (with Trenita Brookshire Childers) engages in an examination of Barack Obama's presidential election as the backdrop for understanding contemporary racial politics. Bonilla-Silva challenges prevailing sentiments that the election represents an example of strides toward eliminating racism, deconstructing the accompanying prevailing notion of a bourgeoning color-blind nation. Contrary to the dominant postracial logics

outlined above, he posits that President Obama's success is the product neither of social movement politics nor of Whites' racial altruism, but a direct expression of the fundamental racial transformation that transpired in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s. The new racial order that has emerged—the "new racism"—reproduces racial domination through subtle and covert discrimination that is often institutionalized, defended with coded language, and bonded by the racial ideology of color-blind racism. Bonilla-Silva challenges readers to be reflective and to become leaders and activists inside and outside academe.

Next, chapter 2, "Am I My Brother's and My Sister's Keeper? W. E. B. Du Bois's New Talented Tenth," is a novel reconsideration of Du Bois's theory of the talented tenth as a prophetic directive for Black leadership—leadership Bonilla-Silva asserts is absent in contemporary Black politics and academia. In chapter 2, author Earl Wright II addresses misinterpretations of Du Bois's talented tenth as members of the Black community with the social capital to lead, but who, in turn capitulated to the allure and trappings of upper-class status. Wright uses Du Bois's notion of the talented tenth as an "ideal type" to examine inaccuracies and position this thesis for consideration by contemporary Black leaders. Based on Du Bois's role as one of the premier race scholars in the United States, this chapter provides another theoretical catapult for this volume by challenging readers to reassess a commonly believed premise about an historic scholar. In chapter 3, "Blackening Up Critical Whiteness: Dave Chappelle as Critical Race Theorist," author Robert Reece uses the performances of this often controversial comedian to develop contemporary race theory. His analysis of Chappelle's use of whiteface and sketches about Black-White interactions illustrates the comedian's attempts to describe and critique racism and race relations in the United States. Reece contends that by using nontraditional teaching and learning moments, Chappelle reaches younger audiences in ways academics have not and that this constitutes prophetic work.

Part II, "Daily Experiences and Implications of a Postracial Obama Age," includes chapters 4 and 5 that are empirical studies about more contemporary socioeconomic and cultural implications of race. These writers illustrate the troubling truth that, despite the postracial sentiments that have emerged, the presidential election of Barack Obama did not significantly improve the economic problems and negative racial experiences segments of the Black community continue to face. The quantitative analysis Cedric Herring, Loren Henderson, and Hayward Derrick Horton performed, "Race, the Great Recession, and the Foreclosure Crisis: From American Dream to Nightmare," illustrates how the consequences of the recent U.S. recession were not evenly distributed,

but disproportionately affected Blacks in unemployment, health care, foreclosures, and the ability to complete the daily round. The authors also provide policy recommendations to help stimulate economic growth and reduce racial and ethnic disparities resulting from the recession. Chapter 5 presents another analytical consideration. "Black Experiences, White Experiences: Why We Need a Theory of Systemic Racism" by Louwanda Evans and imminent race scholar Joe Feagin, makes the case for more nuanced theoretical concepts about race that reflects both the systemic and foundational nature of racism and oppression. Based on open-ended surveys and candid, often troubling, interviews with White and Black students, the writers suggest that concepts such as "White racial frame" and "systemic racism" most appropriately convey the impetus, extent, and nature of structural and interpersonal racism in society today. These two chapters are prophetic in the manner in which they provide direct evidence to challenge postracial perspectives as well as strategies and best practices to stem the tide of economic and race-based social problems in the Black community.

In part III, "Diasporic Black Identities in International Contexts," the final three chapters consider the implications of race in international contexts, as well as the function of global notions of blackness in highlighting the nuances of racism. In chapter 6, "Contextualizing 'Race' in the Dominican Republic: Discourses on Whitening, Nationalism, and Anti-Haitianism," Antonio D. Tillis, one of the leading scholars on the Afro-Hispanic experience, investigates the ideology of race as presented within the nationalistic framework of Dominicanness. His analysis considers how Dominicans view themselves as global citizens as well as how they view themselves vis-à-vis their relationship with their conjoined neighbor, the Republic of Haiti. Tillis argues that Dominicans' construction of themselves as a Spanish-origin community is predicated on anti-Black, and specifically anti-Haitian, sentiment. Analyzing the neoslave sugar cane community or *batey* as a geopolitical space, Tillis demonstrates the universality of the effect of anti-Black sentiment on spatial arrangements, economic outcomes, and everyday interactions for groups racialized as Black. Drawing on a sociohistorical analysis of the concept of race in Haiti and the Dominican Republic as well as modern conceptualizations of race in Dominican popular culture, chapter 6 is not only a global prophetic reflection of race relations, but also a prophetic consideration of important differences in racialization in specific place contexts.

In Chapter 7, " 'U.S. Blacks are beautiful but Brazilian Blacks are not racist': Brazilian Return Migrants' Perceptions of U.S. and Brazilian Blacks," Tiffany D. Joseph's study shines a lens on Brazilian immigrants

and U.S. Blacks' relations. The chapter chronicles the experiences of Brazilian return migrants to examine how residing in the United States influences their perceptions of racial stratification in this country and Brazil. The author's novel comparative study illustrates how Black Brazilians understand race and racism through reflections on their experiences in the United States once they have returned to Brazil. Her results show that Brazilian immigrants consider U.S. Blacks more beautiful, upwardly mobile, and politically engaged and powerful than Brazilian Blacks. However, she finds that these return migrants also see U.S. Blacks as "racist" because many American Blacks do not interact with or live near Whites. Conversely, her respondents argue that Brazilian Blacks, who they consider generally more impoverished, are engaged in more positive interactions with non-Black Brazilians. Still, these respondents argue that unlike U.S. Blacks, Brazilian Blacks are politically apathetic. Her findings are prophetic because they reveal the ways in which global naiveté about racialization processes for Blacks in the United States, coupled with perceptions of U.S. Blacks' affluence, may complicate global Black solidarity against anti-Black oppression. Joseph's findings also suggest how we might increase understandings of race and racism across national contexts to address this complication.

Lastly, in chapter 8, "Africa Speaks: The 'Place' of Africa in Constructing African American Identity in Museum Exhibits," Derrick R. Brooms uses Africa as a point of departure to investigate issues of cultural consumption and cultural authenticity in Black-centered museums. Moreover, he explores how Africa is presented within institutions specifically designed to narrate the Black experience and chronicle its historical and cultural vitality. Brooms focuses on an underresearched social and representational space—the museum—to examine the representation of the relationship between African and Black culture. This research is prophetic in its examination of an understudied space where race is strategically presented and framed to educate and empower visitors.

Finally, the volume's conclusion provides commentary to frame the overall endeavor and challenges readers to continue to navigate the exciting, potentially arduous, often uncharted scholarly terrain this edited volume has traversed. We ask them to reflect on the varied ways a prophetic discourse is presented in the volume, their own thoughts on prophetic research praxis, as well as next steps as leaders and community servants. Through constant engagement with the prophetic tradition in Black sociological scholarship, the production of new prophetic scholarship, cross-disciplinary conversations, and collaborations between community members, scholars, and policymakers, we can strive toward a more equitable, *postracism* future.

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