

**ROBERT F. HARNEY PROGRAM IN ETHNIC, IMMIGRATION AND PLURALISM STUDIES**  
**MUNK SCHOOL OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS**  
**2013 - 2014 HARNEY LECTURE SERIES**

# Patrick Simon

## Discrimination, identities and racial boundaries in France

November 7, 2013 2:00~4:00pm  
Room 108N Munk School of Global Affairs  
1 Devonshire Place University of Toronto



**ABSTRACT:** In an attempt to overcome its colonial history and involvement in slave trading, the French nation building process has followed a colorblind approach, removing any reference to ethnic or racial origin from policies or laws. However, this official colorblindness does not mean that race and ethnicity are irrelevant to selection to jobs, housing and service; nor that they do not shape identification and affiliation of many racial minority persons. Supporting data come from a 2009 survey on population diversity in France, "Trajectories and Origins." Promoted by INED and the French National Statistical Institute (INSEE), the survey gathered information in face-to-face interviews with 22,000 respondents, and is the largest such survey ever done in France. The data show the extent to which immigrants and second generations tend to define themselves by combining various identity markers including national identity, ethnicity and skin color. They also show that experiences of discrimination shape the salience of ethnicity and race for immigrants and second generations in France. Discrimination has a devastating impact on the political strategy of colorblindness; it challenges the republican model of equality through uniformity.

**PATRICK SIMON** is Director of research at INED (Institut National d'Etudes Demographiques -National demographic institute) and is fellow researcher at the Center of European Studies (CEE) at Sciences Po. He was Visiting Scholar at the Russell Sage Foundation in NYC and Fulbright Fellow in 2011-2012. Trained as socio-demographer at EHESS (Doctoral degree 1994), he is teaching political science at Sciences Po on ethnic minorities, integration and discrimination. He has participated in several European projects, such as EMILIE (A European Approach to Multicultural Citizenship. Legal Political and Educational Challenges), 2007-2010 and MEDIS (Measuring Discrimination in US, Canada, UK, The Netherlands and Australia), 2004. He has chaired the scientific panel "Integration of immigrants" at the IUSSP (International Union for the Scientific Studies of Population) and is appointed at the Scientific Board of the Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Commission in Vienna. He recently edited with V.Piché a special issue of *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, "Accounting for ethnic and racial diversity: the challenge of enumeration" (35:8, 2012), and with C.Beauchemin and C.Hamel *Trajectories and Origins. Survey on Population Diversity in France. Initial findings*, Paris, INED, Documents de Travail n°168, 2010.

### Upcoming events in the Harney Lecture Series

November 28, 2013

Scot Wortley, Centre of Criminology, University of Toronto

*Racial Profiling by the Toronto Police*

LOCATION: Room 108N Munk School of Global Affairs TIME: 2-4pm

January 30, 2014

Barrington Walker, Department of History, Queen's University

LOCATION: Upper Library, Massey College



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