

in an approval rating of 11 per cent at the end of his tenure. While many believe Mulroney's Canadian Dream was more like a nightmare, *Transforming the Nation* goes to great lengths to help readers understand, if not sympathize with, the former prime minister within the context of his time and place.

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BOULLE, Pierre H. — *Race et esclavage dans la France de l'Ancien Régime*, Paris, Perrin, 2007, 286 p.

Ultra-nationalist French politicians frequently quote Charles de Gaulle as saying that he was comfortable with the presence of a few “yellow Frenchmen, black Frenchmen, brown Frenchmen,” but only “on the condition that they remain a small minority. Otherwise, France would no longer be France. We are after all primarily a European people of the white race.” In *Race et esclavage dans la France de l'Ancien Régime*, Pierre Boule shows that such sentiments have deep roots. Boule explores the ideological, legal, and social manifestations of racial prejudice in early modern France, concluding that the racism of the nineteenth-century empire originated in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century encounter between France and the peoples of west Africa and the Indian Ocean.

Boule divides this fine study into three parts. The first — “La construction du concept de race en France” — is a largely intellectual history tracing notions of race as they were transformed by Atlantic expansion and the development of plantation slavery. In the seventeenth century and before, the French tended to view Africans as benign — if culturally backward — curiosities. Most believed that, with time and religious instruction, they could become like Europeans. As the French began to participate in Africans' enslavement, however, they came to regard them as more permanently inferior, their moral and intellectual capacities inescapably limited by biology rather than culture. This “hardening of the concept of race” found many expressions, but by the mid-eighteenth century became so widespread that Boule considers it the prevailing French attitude (p. 66).

In its broad contours, Boule's story is not surprising: slavery encouraged the formation of racial hierarchies throughout the early modern Atlantic. The French descended along their own path toward racism, however, and Boule is an excellent (not to mention our only) guide as we retrace their steps. Boule attributes the rise of modern French racism to three factors: the French encounter with non-Europeans, the rise of modern science (including the obsession with biological classification), and France's growing secularization (which caused many to turn to biological explanations for cultural difference). The tragic historical coincidence of Africans' enslavement led Caribbean planters, along with their missionary accomplices, to create an ideology that equated blackness with inferiority and slavery. In this theory, Africans became children who needed to remain in

slavery for their own good, because freedom would only ensure a return to their libertine ways. As these notions circulated, secular thinkers found new ways of explaining human difference, dividing humanity into “species” that were permanently and biologically distinct. Beginning with the lesser-known work of François Bernier in the 1680s and culminating with the infamous writings of George-Louis Leduc de Buffon in the 1750s, Boulle demonstrates the prevalence of scientific racism long before its nineteenth-century heyday. Supplemented by an excellent discussion of pro-slavery rhetoric, Boulle’s is the most complete published account of early modern French racial ideology.

In the book’s second section — “La question du statut des esclaves et des gens de couleur libres en métropole” — Boulle analyses how these ideas translated into laws. Expanding on the work of Susan Peabody, Boulle discusses the legal status of slaves, former slaves, and other people of colour in metropolitan France. After a brief recounting of the 1716 and 1738 edicts on the legal status of slaves — orders that declared slavery illegal in France even as they codified exceptions to that rule — Boulle focuses on later, more clearly racialized ordinances. Using a series of legal cases between 1762 and 1777, Boulle reveals that French officials walked a thin line between providing legal clarity and preserving racial purity. On the side of legal clarity, many supported the “freedom principle,” the notion that touching French soil automatically rendered one free. Such a policy would leave many free blacks in France, however, a condition that these officials, influenced by hardening racism, found untenable. Boulle uses the laws, and especially the debates surrounding their adoption and implementation, as a window into French racial attitudes, which by this time were both more negative and more fixed than they had been a century earlier. Many argued for an absolute prohibition on black people entering France, worrying about the supposedly libertine character of non-whites and the influence they would have on French culture and the purity of French blood.

Despite these fears and the laws crafted to alleviate them, the non-white population in France grew to a small, but still significant, number. In the book’s third section — “Les non-blancs dans la France de la fin du XVIII^e siècle” — Boulle turns to a social history of people of colour in eighteenth-century France. Boulle worked for years in local archives all over France to build a demographic and socio-economic portrait of non-whites from Africa and the Indian Ocean world. Although the data are too rich to recount here, Boulle does demonstrate that French fears about being overrun by unruly outsiders were unfounded. As a proportion of the French population, the 4,000 or 5,000 black residents comprised a small group, and Boulle shows that they exhibited no greater tendency to crime or indigence than their white counterparts. They also had families, maintained stable households, and achieved literacy at rates comparable to poor whites. That racial attitudes nevertheless continued to portray them otherwise only suggests how deeply ingrained these attitudes had become.

Boulle’s book provides several important innovations. His discussion of French racial ideology — especially in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries — expands significantly on our current understanding of racial thought in early

modern Europe. His rich analysis of the legal climate reflecting these prejudices is likewise a nice addition to earlier work on the topic. Most importantly, his data on the black population within France will provide the raw material for much work to come — and there is still much that needs to be done. We need a richer, more chronologically sensitive account of the relationship between slavery and race in the seventeenth-century French Caribbean, where Boulle suggests many of these attitudes first developed. We also need to understand where Amerindians fit into this emerging racial ideology, work that is already underway by Guillaume Aubert and by Boulle's own student Masarah Van Eyck. None of this, however, should detract from what Boulle has accomplished in this excellent piece of scholarship. Students of slavery, the Atlantic world, French colonialism, and early modern France will have to reckon with his findings for years to come.

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BRONSTEIN, Jamie L. — *Caught in the Machinery: Workplace Accidents and Injured Workers in Nineteenth-Century Britain*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008. Pp. 222.

The “factory cripple,” the “fossey-jawed” matchmaker, the collier with “black lung,” the mutilated miner, mill hand, or navy, and the worker condemned to a slow, painful death from an occupational disease were the familiar casualties of industrializing Britain: the men, women, and children who frequent the pages of nineteenth-century newspapers, parliamentary blue books, inspectors' reports, short-time advocates' polemics, and “condition of England” tracts. How did they and their families cope? How did employers, coworkers, and the public react? How were death and suffering in the workplace represented in printed accounts? How did ideas about employer liability develop? Few labour historians have systematically tackled such questions; Jamie Bronstein, in an important, focused contribution to a developing field, deftly intertwines legal, social, and cultural history in providing some persuasive answers.

She begins with the scale of the carnage. On the railways, to cite one example, an undated report on the casualty rate over a six-year period for a single stretch of track counted 32 deaths, 23 compound fractures, 74 simple fractures, 140 “severe” cases of blast burns, bruising, cuts, and dislocations, and 400 “minor” instances of lacerations, amputated fingers, and the like. Down the coal mines, to cite a second example, 2,143 miners were killed between 1850 and 1852 — in explosions (from flying debris and “choke damp”), roof falls, and shaft accidents, as well as from other causes — and, during the century as a whole, nonfatal injuries outpaced deaths by a factor of 100. In the textile mills, for a third example, in one six-month period in 1849, factory inspectors in England and Scotland reported 2,021 accidents resulting in 22 deaths and 109 amputations; factory workers were particularly susceptible to injury from unguarded machinery (spiked