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The Factness of Diaspora

The Social Sources of Genetic Genealogy

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Family history research is a popular pastime for those seeking to discover unknown ancestors. For many, this pursuit has taken the form of genealogical journeys modeled on *Roots: The Saga of an American Family*, Alex Haley's famous (and infamously embellished) account of his successful efforts to trace his familial lineage to Africa (Haley, 1976). The book and subsequent award-winning miniseries of the same name were the result of the author's efforts to uncover the mystery of his ancestral origins with clues garnered from Gambian griots, deciphered linguistic retentions, archival research, and his own genealogical imagination. Haley's account became an ur-text of African diasporic reconciliation for a generation of Americans. Despite this example, few African Americans are able to fill in the contours of their past as Haley did, owing to the decimation of families that was a hallmark of the era of racial slavery and to the dearth of records that remain from this period. As a consequence, genetic genealogy testing, which is broadly available and also less taxing and seemingly more authoritative than conventional genealogical research, holds considerable appeal for some root-seekers of African descent.

Drawing on sampling techniques and statistical models developed in human population genetics (Cavalli-Sforza, Menozzi, & Piazza, 1994; Hammer, 1995; Jobling & Tyler-Smith, 1995; Shriver & Kittles, this volume), direct-to-consumer commercial genetic genealogy services analyze DNA in order to infer information about an individual's family history, ethnic affiliation, or "biogeographic ancestry" (see Fullwiley, this volume). These services are becoming widely used. Some are niche marketed to specific social groups, such as the testing sold by African Ancestry (www.africanancestry.com) that is promoted among African Americans and "matches" customers to

ethnic groups in Africa. Molecular biologist Rick Kittles established African Ancestry with his business partner Gina Paige in early 2003 (Hostetler, 2003; Maganini, 2003; Sailer, 2003; Roylance, 2003; Kittles, personal communication, February 4, 2006). The company sells two forms of DNA analysis with the brand names MatriClan and PatriClan that trace matrilineage and patrilineage, respectively: MatriClan analyzes genetic information linked to mitochondrial DNA that is inherited by both male and female children from their mothers. The PatriClan test examines the genetic sequence of the Y-chromosome to trace lineage from son to father, to father's father, to father's father's father, and so on.

African Ancestry is an information-age business—the exchange of a fee for service takes place online and through the mail. The company mails test kits to customers that contain the implements necessary to secure a DNA sample. The customer returns the sample to African Ancestry by mail; it is amplified and sequenced by the company's lab partner, Sorenson Genomics of Salt Lake City, Utah. African Ancestry then compares the resulting data to its proprietary DNA bio-bank—the African Lineage Database (ALD)—that is said to contain more than 25,000 DNA samples from over 30 countries and 160 ethnic groups in Africa (African Ancestry, 2006). After several weeks, a customer will receive a results package that includes a printout of the customer's Y- or mt-DNA markers, a "Certificate of Ancestry," and sociohistorical information about the African continent.

A hypothetical root-seeker employing African Ancestry's analysis may learn that her mt-DNA traces to the current Mende people of Sierra Leone and that her Y-DNA test, for which she submitted her brother's DNA, traces to the Bubi group of present-day Equatorial Guinea.[1] African Ancestry analyses might thus be regarded as ethnic lineage instruments through which an undifferentiated racial identity is translated into African ethnicity and kinship. By linking blacks to inferred ethnic communities and nation-states of Africa, African Ancestry's service offers root-seekers the possibility of constituting new forms of diasporic affiliation and identification.

On the surface, both the appeal and most likely outcome of ethnic lineage testing, such as that offered by African Ancestry, appear to confirm that the practice is essentialist—that genealogy testing, as a vehicle of diasporic identification, amounts to the reduction of transnational affiliation to genetics, in the process abetting the "reauthroriz[ation] of race as a biological category" (El-Haj, 2007, p. 284; also Duster, 2003) and eliding the historical, political, and economic diversity of black experiences (Gilroy, 1993). As I describe here, however, the experiences of root-seekers suggest that a more complex dynamic is at play. The genetic facts rendered as the outcome of genealogy testing may provide the circumstance for reconfigured social arrangements, yet this potential transformation does not stem solely

from these data. Rather, the cogency of African Ancestry's testing is derived significantly from social sources that shape how facts are anticipated, interpreted, and mobilized by root-seekers.

In this chapter, I begin to develop the concept of the *factness of diaspora* to describe the particular process of co-production (Jasanoff, 2004; Reardon, 2005) through which genetic genealogy testing attains value and validation for the root-seekers of African descent that I have encountered in the course my ethnographic fieldwork. "Factness" means possessing the state, condition, or quality of fact, yet not being only or exactly fact.[2] The "factness of diaspora" denotes the imbrication of the "biogenetic facts" (Schneider, 1968) of genealogy testing *and* aspirations for African affiliation against the backdrop of histories of forced displacement and through the subsequent enactment of "reconciliation projects"—cultural practices through which resolution of the injuries of racial slavery is sought. I elaborate the factness of diaspora through a discussion of three significant points in the interpretive trajectory of African Ancestry's genetic genealogy testing service: the "authentic expertise" of the company's chief science officer, Rick Kittles, which significantly influences root-seekers' confidence in its product; the forms of self-fashioning that may be spurred following the receipt of one's genetic genealogy test results; and, related to this, the extra-genetic forms of "kinship" that the test outcomes may foster.

Authentic Expertise

In October 2005, I attended the three-day national meeting of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society (AAHGS) for the first time. The conference program consisted of social events, tours of historic sites, invited lectures by prominent figures, and concurrent panels on topics of interest to the genealogists in attendance. Panel topics included accounts of family history research hurdles and successes, how to use the now fully digitized Freedman's Bureau records for family history research, how to participate in the Library of Congress's oral history project for veterans, and how to document one's genealogical research in compelling narrative form to share with family, friends, and local historical societies. The Saturday morning keynote address, a lecture entitled "Trace Your DNA and Find Your Roots: The Genetic Ancestries of African Americans," was delivered by Rick Kittles, African Ancestry's co-founder and chief science officer. I previously attended other public presentations by Kittles, and, as on these prior occasions, I watched with wonder as he performed his unique combination of erudition, charisma, and folksiness for a rapt audience comprising over one hundred people—women and some men who, with a few exceptions, appeared to be over age fifty, and many sixty years of age or older.

Kittles discussed how genetics could be used to help blacks trace their roots to African ethnic groups, detailing the scientific basis of African Ancestry's products. In addition to educating those in attendance about the technical aspects of MatriClan and PatriClan analysis, his presentation was also clearly intended to demonstrate how much Kittles held in common with his customer base, including their concerns about privacy and the unique historical circumstances that inspired their root-seeking pursuits. "African Ancestry is the only [genetic genealogy] company that focuses on people of African descent; it's run by black folks and it's going to stay that way," Kittles proclaimed. Genetic genealogy research should be "guarded by someone who shares the same sensitivity to the concerns of the community," he continued to applause. The many audience members who cheered in response to Kittles's assertion of community-mindedness testified to the effectiveness of the geneticist's claim to cultural authenticity.

This legitimacy was shored up as Kittles continued his pitch, changing registers slightly from man of the people to genealogist colleague. He recalled that he "caught the genealogy bug"—using a phrase common among genealogists who liken their interest in the pursuit of the past to a virus—as a doctoral student in the biological sciences at George Washington University. "AAHGS is near and dear to my heart," Kittles said. "I came to this event even before my research interests emerged in this area." Continuing to speak as a fellow traveler, with a PowerPoint slide of the iconic image of the cross section of a slave ship packed with black bodies in the background, Kittles recounted his personal frustrations with genealogical research and spoke of the challenges facing even the most diligent amateur historians seeking to trace their African roots. He discussed how genetic genealogy testing had helped him discover that his maternal mt-DNA matched to the Mandinka of Mali. His paternal Y-chromosome line traced to Germany, a result that he attributed to what he described as "the Thomas Jefferson effect"—a characterization that doubly signaled the sexual violence of racial slavery and the forensic DNA analysis that along with archival records established that the third U.S. president fathered the children of his slave Sally Hemings (Thomas Jefferson Foundation, 2000; also Bay, 2006).

At the conclusion of his formal presentation, Kittles raffled a free African Ancestry test and then spoke with the 30 or so audience members who stood in a queue that wound through the aisles of the auditorium to await their turn to offer questions, comments, and compliments. One African American woman attired in red, white, and blue clothing adorned with rhinestone American flags and a lanyard for her ID cards, embroidered with the acronym DAR (for Daughters of the American Revolution), introduced herself as a member of the "underground railroad of the DAR, called the Daughters of Color," before proceeding to ask Kittles for further interpretation of the

genetic genealogy results she had recently received from his company.[3] The great majority of Kittles's audience, however, gathered in the lobby just outside of the auditorium where the lecture had taken place. Here vendors had set up tables arrayed with items for sale ranging from African-themed knickknacks to genealogical research primers. Most merchants sat noticeably idle. But one vendor's table was surrounded by enthusiastic customers. In the center of this crowd was African Ancestry co-founder Gina Paige, who struggled to stay on top of the many orders being placed for her company's testing service. Her business partner's presentation, during which Kittles had stressed his shared experience with the audience, had succeeded in persuading many of the AAHGS membership to purchase African Ancestry's genetic genealogy testing service.

The audience's indisputably positive response to African Ancestry, evidenced both by their reception to the lecture and their purchase of its product, was perhaps preconditioned by the fact that Rick Kittles is among the most well-known molecular biologists in the United States. The authenticity Kittles displayed at the AAHGS gathering is bolstered by scientific authority established through press coverage, scholarly publications, and institutional associations. He has made frequent media appearances over the last several years in his capacity as chief scientist of African Ancestry. For example, he appeared in *Motherland: A Genetic Journey*, a 2003 British Broadcasting Company documentary that aired in the United States on the Sundance Channel, as well as in the PBS documentary *African American Lives* in 2006, in which his company's services were employed to trace the roots of black celebrities. He has also been featured on ABC's *Good Morning, America* and *The Morning Show* and *60 Minutes* on the CBS network. Since 2002, scores of newspaper and magazine articles, including those in *The New York Times, Time, New York Daily News, Black Enterprise, Wired*, *Fortune*, and *The Los Angeles Times* have included commentary from Kittles, solidifying his position as an expert on genetic genealogy testing.

Kittles's professional ascent has included the publication of scholarly papers in leading science journals as well as stints at prestigious institutions. He has authored numerous articles in the area of human variation and genetics in notable journals, including *The American Journal of Human Genetics, Science, The Annals of Epidemiology*, and *The American Journal of Public Health*. He has also held positions at the National Human Genome Center at Howard University, Ohio State University, and, at present, the Cancer Research Center at the University of Chicago. Kittles's "hard" scientific research at prominent institutional settings on the genetic determinants of prostate cancer—a disease that disproportionately afflicts African American men—is concomitant with his investigations into what might be regarded as the "softer" science of the genetic genealogy testing.

As the public face of African Ancestry, Rick Kittles draws together cultural and scientific legitimacy into a complex I term "authentic expertise." In his guise as a genealogist colleague who shares his customers' desires for ancestral reckoning, Kittles establishes genetic genealogy testing as a legitimate and safe practice for African American root-seekers. At the same time, his renown as a scientist and his involvement with cutting-edge medical genetics research lend authority to his commercial genetics enterprise. Thus, many root-seekers are as compelled by Kittles as they are convinced by genetic science. "I trust Dr. Kittles," a root-seeker named Pat explained to me when I asked if she had any apprehensions prior to purchasing the MatriClan test that linked her to the Akan of Ghana and Cote D'Ivoire.[4] Although Alicia, another informant, had reservations about the genetic genealogy results she received from African Ancestry because they were inconsistent with those from another company, she took great pride in telling me that she had been in contact with Kittles by both telephone and email. Her misgivings were subsequently assuaged through her interactions with him. Kittles's authentic expertise is an unmistakably important aspect of the appeal of African Ancestry's genetic genealogy testing and of consumers' faith in the genetic facts it supplies to its customers. This symbolic capital produces value around genetic genealogy tests that extends beyond the presumed capacity of DNA to assign identity and subsumes yearnings for African diasporic affiliation.

Affiliative Self-Fashioning

The AAHGS conference "sharing dinner" took place in a large ballroom of the on-campus hotel of Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. During the dinner, genealogists were invited to stand and share highlights of their experiences as family history researchers, if they were so inclined. Although none at my table availed themselves of this opportunity, we spoke amongst ourselves about our respective genealogical research projects. I struck up a conversation with Bess, an African American woman in her fifties who lives near Baltimore, Maryland, and was seated next to me. I told her about my ethnographic study of conventional and genetic root-seeking—including my preliminary foray into my own family's history—that had brought me to the AAHGS meeting. Bess shared that she had been conducting genealogical research on her family for about a decade and also had recently received genetic genealogy test results from African Ancestry.

The next morning, I ran into Bess in the hotel lobby where merchants, including Gina Paige, were setting up their tables for the day. Bess said to me, "I have something for you." We sat together on the edge of a water fountain in the hotel atrium and she showed me the results of her recent

genetic genealogy test that she had arranged in a binder. A letter from African Ancestry indicated that mt-DNA analysis had linked Bess to the Kru of Liberia "plus/or Mende-Temne of Sierra Leone." Her result package also contained a "Certificate of Ancestry" signed by Rick Kittles, a printout of the genetic markers from which Bess's African ethnicity was inferred, a map of the African continent with Liberia foregrounded, and a flier advertising Encarta Africana, a CD-ROM encyclopedia, at a discounted rate.

Bess explained to me that she wants to "do something" with her results, like perhaps "travel to Africa." Curious as to which of the two possible ethnicities suggested by African Ancestry was most compelling to Bess, I asked whether she planned to visit Liberia, neighboring Sierra Leone, or both countries in the future. "My sister was married to a man from Sierra Leone; his name was Abdul," she replied obliquely, intimating that she would likely travel to the natal home of her deceased brother-in-law. "When will you be ready to travel to Africa?" I asked. "After I get back further in time [with my genealogical research]," she responded. As is common with other root-seekers who make use of genetic ancestry tracing, Bess assumed a role in determining her test's significance and its potential import to her life. Her intention to engage in practices motivated by the findings she received from African Ancestry *after* she advanced with conventional genealogy underscores how the interpretative work that commences following the receipt of genetic genealogy results can involve consumers' efforts to "align" genetic DNA analysis with other evidence of their ancestry as well as with their genealogical aspirations and with prior experience or extant relationships (Nelson, 2008).

The conduct by which root-seekers decide to accept or jettison genetic genealogy test results in the constitution of African diasporic connection and identity can be described as "affiliative self-fashioning" (Nelson, 2008). Writing about the interface of brain imaging techniques and social identity, Joseph Dumit employs the phrase "objective self-fashioning" to explain how subjectivity can be "fashion[ed] and refashion[ed]" from the "received-facts of science and medicine" (2003, p. 39). By extending this useful analytic from objective self-fashioning to affiliative self-fashioning, I seek to emphasize that root-seekers' aspirations to be oriented on the African continent and/or within its diaspora mediate how technoscience becomes incorporated into self-making. Affiliative self-fashioning accounts for how identities culled from genetic genealogy are shaped not only by "received-facts" but also by desires for diasporic connection—a confluence that impacts root-seekers' evaluations of genetic genealogy testing and, in turn, the way that the data it provides is incorporated into their lives. Affiliative self-fashioning thus reflects, on subjective and interpersonal levels, an aspect of the interpretive arc of ethnic lineage testing that I term the factness of diaspora.

Diaspora and Relatedness

Purveyors of genetic genealogy testing claim that their services trace or reveal otherwise unavailable information about ancestry and ethnicity. However, at present, matching a consumer's DNA against proprietary genetic databases comprised of samples from contemporary populations, as African Ancestry and other genetic ancestry tracing companies do, cannot establish kinship with any certainty; ethnic lineage analysis does not associate a root-seeker with specific persons at precise spatial-temporal locations. Also, owing to both technical limitations (e.g., mt-DNA and Y-DNA tests compare a consumer's genetic sample to a selective proprietary sample database and analyze less than 1% of a test-taker's DNA, providing probabilistic outcomes) and historical dynamics (e.g., racial and ethnic identities are sociocultural phenomenon and human migration patterns suggest that contemporary social groups cannot be easily correlated with earlier ones), the associations inferred through the use of genetic genealogy are necessarily provisional (Bolnick et al., 2007; Bolnick, this volume).

In providing associations that are under-specified, genetic genealogy tracing presents consumers with the paradox of *imprecise pedigree*. Root-seekers' awareness of this paradox is indicated by their use of ostensibly redundant phrases such as "DNA cousins" and "genetic kin" (Nash, 2004). These composite descriptors, of course, acknowledge DNA analysis as the medium of affiliation. However, because the words "cousin" and "kin" are already commonly understood to connote "biogenetic ties" (Schneider, 1968), the placement of the adjectives "DNA" and "genetic" before these words should therefore be unnecessary.[5] Thus the circulation of these phrases also seems to suggest that the associations supplied through genetic genealogy are qualified and, therefore, must be rhetorically set apart from "natural" kinship or, in other words, that genetic genealogy testing is categorical yet imprecise. It is in this space of indeterminancy that factness of diaspora unfolds. Root-seekers forge "cultures of relatedness" (Carsten, 2000)—relationships, experiences, and narratives—that have some basis in molecular-level analysis but are also extra-genetic.

The recent family reunion of Marvin, a genealogist from the southern United States, featured an appearance by someone he described as a "genetic kinswoman." Some months prior, Marvin had purchased a genetic genealogy test from African Ancestry that associated him with the Mbundu people, the second largest ethnic group in the south-central African country of Angola. Marvin shared his results with a friend who subsequently put him in touch with Gertrudes, an Angolan immigrant neighbor of Mbundu ethnicity. At their first meeting, Marvin recalled Gertrudes as being "very accepting."

He continued, "She said that one of her passions is to connect with African Americans and tell them about their history in Africa and to let them know that, as she always says, 'We are one.' [She believes that] there is a disconnect between African Americans and Africans, and she's trying to bridge the gap. One of her missions is to connect with more African Americans [and] teach them about Africa."

Gertrudes subsequently invited Marvin to attend a celebration of the 30th anniversary of Angola's independence from Portugal, hosted by the voluntary association that she helms for immigrants from the African country. Here, Marvin and a cousin who attended the party with him felt accepted by the larger Angolan expatriate community as well. "Once we told everyone there that our family came from Angola, they all said, 'Welcome home. You're home now.' They even made me and my cousin get up on the dance floor. You know, they do a ring dance? . . . They told us, 'You gotta come dance. Dance for your homeland!' "

In turn, Gertrudes would attend Marvin's family reunion some months later. "Her presence was powerful," Marvin recollected. "[She talked] about the importance of us coming together as a group of Africans. She expressed that we are all Africans and that Europeans try to divide us but now we must come together. And she also told our family some very interesting facts about the Mbundu people. And that was awesome, just for the family to hear about the people we descend from . . . directly from an Mbundu person. It was very powerful. She had the full attention of the whole family. Everybody was just sitting there in awe of her presence. . . . It was uplifting and powerful just to hear her tell us something about our African roots."

The social exchange carried out between Marvin and Gertrudes points to how genetic genealogy testing circulates as a "diasporic resource" (Brown, 1998, p. 298; 2005, p. 53). As anthropologist Jacqueline Nassy Brown explains, diasporic resources can include "cultural productions such as music, but also people and places . . . [and the] iconography, ideas, and ideologies" of one black community (1998, p. 298) that are employed by another as formative schema for political consciousness, collective empowerment, and identity formation. In Brown's work, the concept describes, for example, how knowledge of a historic event such as the civil rights movement of the mid-20th-century United States circulated globally via the media, popular culture, and social networks to become an important touchstone of self-determination for blacks in Liverpool, England, in the 1990s. In the context of genetic genealogy testing, the concept of diasporic resources elucidates how genetic information occasions "biosociality" (Rabinow, 1996) between African communities and their diasporas, even in the absence of evidence of specific kinship ties. An imprecise pedigree connects Marvin and Gertrudes as "genetic kin" and "Africans." The diasporic relatedness resulting from

ethnic lineage testing is genetic inference inspired by genealogical aspiration and enacted through social interaction.

The Ethics of Diaspora

In recent years, there has been increased scholarly interest in the study of "deterritorialized" (Appadurai, 1996) or diasporic communities. Rogers Brubaker recently described this ideational proliferation as a "'diaspora' diaspora": "a dispersion of the meanings of the term in semantic, conceptual, and disciplinary space" (2005, p. 1). While efforts to refine the concept of diaspora persist, many scholars are in agreement that its hallmarks include dispersal from long-held geographic homes, the constitution of a collective identity or consciousness in response to the experience of dispersal, connection to a place of geographic origin forged through practices such as communication, travel/tourism, philanthropy, and political engagement, and the circulation of collective memories, myths, or imaginaries about the homeland. Diverse diasporas, born of distinct historical, political, and economic push-and-pull factors, share these general contours.

Some theorists suggest that the African diaspora that began in the 16th century is "exceptional" (Tölölyan, 1996, p. 13) among human dispersals of the past and present because it was a forced migration set in motion by the demand for slave labor and one which spurred the process of ethnogenesis—the substitution of specific African identities for more general collectivities, such as Pan-African, African American, and Afro-Caribbean (Gomez, 1998; Kelley & Patterson, 2000).[6] For, as Safran maintains, a "*specific* homeland cannot be restored" to slave descendents (1991, p. 90, emphasis added). Because an African homeland cannot be restored, it has been imagined or "rememoried" (Morrison, 1988).[7]

How "Africa" has been envisioned by its slave descendent diaspora is a topic of debate among theorists. At issue is the *ethics* of imagining Africa and diasporic connection: What is the substance of diaspora? Who in the diaspora gets to imagine "home"? How is it imagined and to what ends? While some scholars maintain that the conceptions of Africa that underlie diasporic consciousness may have many foundational bases, including political ideology, cultural production, desire, common experiences of oppression or redemption, and communication practices (e.g., Appadurai, 1996; Clifford, 1994, p. 304–305; Edwards, 2003; Kelley & Patterson, 2000, p. 13–15; Safran, 1991, p. 83–84; Walcott, 2005), others contend that diasporic claims to and about Africa—particularly those of African Americans—can be essentialist, homogenizing, and instrumental (e.g., Appiah, 1993; Clarke, 2004; Gilroy, 1993; White, 1990).

Paul Gilroy (1993), arguably the most influential critic of originary imaginings of Africa, argues in *The Black Atlantic* that "Africa" has been inaccurately conceived of as a trans-historical umbilicus linking blacks globally to a regal, pre-lapsarian past. Indeed, a principal theme of the theorist's body of work is anti-essentialism, in particular, the contention that notions of black transnationalism should not be based upon "the stern discipline of primordial kinship and rooted belonging" (Gilroy, 2000, p. 123). Gilroy's discomfort with the idealization of roots stems from insights gained from his valuable inquiries into "raciology"—the constellation of discourses, many drawn from the biological sciences, which sustain and justify epistemologies of race and racism and, in turn, social inequality. As an antidote to racial essentialism, Gilroy alternately advances an understanding of diaspora as network, interchange, and circulation. "Primordial kinship" and the search for roots are thus contrasted with an ethico-cultural conception of diaspora.

Notions of diapora rooted in kinship may be better conceptualized as "cultures of relatedness" (Carsten, 2000) in which biological facts are not the necessary conditions of possibility for social ones. In Carol Stack's classic ethnography, *All Our Kin* (1974), for example, kinship among urban blacks in "The Flats" is based on the exchange of economic resources and caring labor between residents. As Stack shows, kinship terms such as "aunt" and "brother" are used by members of the community, but these categories do not connote nature or blood; rather, these terms are engaged despite lack of demonstrable biogenetic links. Similarly, Judith Butler offers "the social organization of need" as one example of kinship based on "consensual affiliation" rather than "blood ties" (2002, p. 74). Recent scholarship on new reproductive technologies has shown that "biology" and "family" can be decoupled through egg donation, surrogacy, and adoption (e.g., Carsten, 2000; Franklin & McKinnon, 2000; Grayson, 1998; Hayden, 1995).

Kinship can thus have many bases. Viewed through the prism of this recent scholarship, the discourses and practices of kinship facilitated by genetic genealogy testing can be understood to scale up to diaspora without necessarily scaling down to human biological essences. Indeed, the forms of sociality fostered by genealogy testing—both the aspirations for affiliation that inspire its use and the relationships it may occasion—are conduits through which the networked conception of diaspora that Gilroy advocates may take shape. Affiliations that incorporate biogenetic facts may nonetheless be the "families we choose" (Weston, 1997).

Conclusion

I have advanced the concept of the factness of diaspora to describe how phenomena seemingly extrinsic to genetic genealogy testing like that offered by

African Ancestry facilitate its legitimacy. The legitimacy of genetic genealogy testing is built on cultural scaffolding, including the "authentic expertise" of scientist-entrepreneur Rick Kittles; the process of affiliative self-fashioning embarked upon following the receipt of test results; and the diasporic relatedness that this information may support. Mistrust of scientific authority and concerns about privacy have a non-unique but significant history in black communities. A shared background between a scientist and consumers, then, becomes crucial to making the facts of genetic genealogy testing efficacious and meaningful. As Greely (this volume) points out, the forms of association on offer through genetic genealogy testing, while tracing lines of matrilineage and patrilineage, do not and cannot establish direct lines of descent, and thus in practice are necessarily flexible and "fictive." As a consequence, root-seekers also become root-makers, taking up those elements of the testing that facilitate associations that are important to them. The factness of diaspora provides a window on how diasporic resources are put to the purpose of constructing individual and collective identity, helping us to understand why root-seekers selectively invest in genetic genealogy testing.

NOTES

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1. African Ancestry reports that approximately 25% to 30% of root-seekers using its PatriClan (Y-chromosome) test will not match any of the paternal lines in the African Lineage Database (ALD). In such instances, the customer may be advised to have his or her sample (a male relative's sample in the case of a female root-seeker) matched against a "European database" (Langley, 2003). Because the ALD is extensive but not exhaustive, however, there is some chance that matching "African" genetic markers are not yet contained in African Ancestry's database.
2. I distinguish "the factness of diaspora" from Latour's (1999) "factish" (fact and fetish). While both concepts are concerned with and reflect the dual constitution of scientific and cultural knowledge—the combination of the artifacts of reason with a field of value—with the factness of diaspora, I am specifically concerned with the historical experience of displacement and oppression and the subsequent

aspirations for reconciliation that animate a particular orientation to the cultures of science. In *Pandora's Hope*, Latour asks whether an idea is "constructed well enough to become an autonomous fact" (1999, p. 274). Here, I am interested in the values that shape the adjudication and interpretation of facts, such that we must understand them as "factness." My thanks to Natasha Dow Schull for encouraging me to draw this distinction explicitly.

3. Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) is a genealogy- and membership-based organization for women who can trace their lineage to an individual who aided in the cause of the United States' independence from England. The DAR has a checkered history with regard to race relations. In 1939, it prohibited renowned African American singer Marion Anderson from performing at the DAR-owned venue Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C., that only allowed whites on its stage (Anderson, 1956). As recently as 1984, a woman who fulfilled all DAR membership requirements was not initially allowed to join the group because she was African American (Kessler, 1984).
4. In order to protect the privacy of my informants, all names used here are pseudonyms unless otherwise indicated. The actual names of purveyors of African Ancestry are used because they are public figures. I interviewed subjects who attempted to trace their family genealogy by conventional means prior to purchasing genetic genealogy testing services as well as subjects whose first foray into genealogy was the purchase of a test kit.
5. As I address below, this is the common usage of these kinship terms, but not their exclusive meaning. See also contributions by Dolgin, McKinnon, Rapp, and Weston in *Naturalizing Power* (Yanagisako & Delany, 1995).
6. There are, of course, many African diasporas, including post-1965 immigration from the Caribbean to the United States (Bryce-Laporte & Mortimer, 1983), the "windrush" of the mid-20th century that brought blacks from the Caribbean to the United Kingdom (Phillips & Phillips, 1999), and the more recent migration of Africans to the United States in greater numbers than during the slave trade (Roberts, 2005). This chapter is concerned primarily with the older migrations that were spurred by the slave trade and dispersed Africans to the Americas, although its insights are, hopefully, more broadly applicable.
7. As developed in Morrison's *Beloved*, "rememory" is the continuous existence in the present of something lost or forgotten in the past.

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