At Home in Canada? Second Generation Negotiations in Racism and Citizenship

by

Meghan C. Brooks

A thesis submitted to the Department of Geography
in conformity with the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

Queen’s University
Kingston, Ontario, Canada
(September, 2008)

Copyright ©Meghan C. Brooks, 2008
Abstract

This thesis research examines second generation Canadians’ negotiations of racism and citizenship with the aim of understanding how the former influences the latter. Through questionnaires and focus group discussion, I examine how they understand their racialized experiences and how they believe those experiences are different from, or related to, those of their parents. In addition, I conducted focus groups with an equivalent number of white Canadians in order to observe how the experiences of second generation Canadians of colour differ from those of their white counterparts.

The findings of this thesis show that the negotiations of citizenship and racism of second generation Canadians of colour are not only varied, but multidimensional. Focus group discussions reveal that although they experience a variety of forms of racism, participants maintain a relatively positive outlook on Canadian society. This is likely the outcome of processes of identification and rationalization that distinguish them from both their parents and their white counterparts. That their experiences and perceptions of racism are prone to paradox only adds to the necessity for in-depth study and analysis. Although the influences of racism on feelings of belonging in Canada differ, the majority of second generation Canadians of colour report strong attachments to the country.
Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the assistance of a number of people. First, I am indebted to my supervisor Dr. Audrey Kobayashi for her guidance and patience throughout the research and writing process, as well as for her enthusiasm for researching issues of inequity. I would also like to extend sincere thanks to the staff and faculty of the Department of Geography and to my fellow graduate students at Queen’s University.

I would like to recognize and express thanks to all of the participants in my research who took the time to answer questionnaires, participate in focus groups as well as email correspondence. I am extremely grateful that you have given me the opportunity to listen to your interesting stories and learn more about your experiences of being Canadian.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the contribution of my parents, Marge and Jim, and my brother Geoff. Over the past two years they have spent countless hours assisting with editing, debating ideas, and generally providing encouragement and support. I am very grateful for your efforts.
Table of Contents

Abstract............................................................................................................................................ ii
Acknowledgements......................................................................................................................... iii
Table of Contents......................................................................................................................... iv
List of Figures................................................................................................................................ vii
List of Tables ................................................................................................................................ viii
Chapter 1: Introduction..................................................................................................................... 1
   Thesis Structure.............................................................................................................................. 5
Chapter 2: Theoretical Underpinnings............................................................................................. 7
   Race and Racism............................................................................................................................ 7
   Multiculturalism............................................................................................................................ 21
   Citizenship................................................................................................................................... 30
Chapter 3: Ethnocultural Portrait of Canada.................................................................................. 37
   Canadians by the Numbers.......................................................................................................... 37
   Ethnic Affiliations....................................................................................................................... 42
   Second Generation Research...................................................................................................... 46
Chapter 4: Research Methodologies.............................................................................................. 48
   Qualitative Research in Geography........................................................................................... 48
   Ethics, Power, and Subjectivity................................................................................................. 50
   Research Design......................................................................................................................... 54
   Questionnaires........................................................................................................................... 56
   Focus Groups............................................................................................................................. 60
Chapter 5: Research Findings and Discussion.............................................................................. 65
   Discourse #1: Racism is an issue in Canada............................................................................. 66
   Discourse #2: Racism Denial...................................................................................................... 71
   Discourse #3: Discrimination, not Racism............................................................................... 74
   Discourse #4: Hide and See....................................................................................................... 76
   Discourse #5: Insider Racism.................................................................................................... 79
   Discourse #6: Geographies of Racism..................................................................................... 80
   Discourse #7: Generational Divergences............................................................................... 87
   Discourse #8: Belonging in Canada......................................................................................... 91
Chapter 6: Conclusion.......................................................................................................... 97
Bibliography ..................................................................................................................... 101
Appendix A: Consent Form .............................................................................................. 108
Appendix B: Letter of Information .................................................................................. 109
Appendix C: Recruitment Poster ..................................................................................... 110
Appendix D: Questionnaire (Second Generation Canadians of Colour) ....................... 111
Appendix E: Focus Group Schedule (Second Generation Canadians of Colour) ........... 118
Appendix F: Questionnaire (White Canadians) ............................................................... 121
Appendix G: Focus Group Schedule (White Canadians) .................................................. 129
List of Figures

Figure 3.1 Ethnic origins of the second generation aged 15 years and older in Canada, 2006

Census ........................................................................................................................................ 41

Figure 5.1 Second generation participant perceptions of racism in Canada today, 2008 .......... 66

Figure 5.2 Second generation participant perceptions of racism experienced by their

parents, 2008 ...................................................................................................................................... 67

Figure 5.3 Second generation participant perceptions of change in levels of racism, 2008 .... 68

Figure 5.4 Second generation and white participant perceptions of levels of racism in

Canada, 2008 ...................................................................................................................................... 69

Figure 5.5 White participant perceptions of levels of racism, by sex, 2008 ............................ 69

Figure 5.6 Second generation perceptions of differential treatment, 2008 .............................. 72

Figure 5.7 Frequency of racism by situation, second generation participants, 2008 ............ 81

Figure 5.8 Frequency of racism by situation, white participants, 2008 ................................. 83

Figure 5.9 Second generation perceptions of generational levels of racism, 2008 ................. 89

Figure 5.10 Comparison of influence of racism on belonging, second generation and white

participants, 2008.............................................................................................................................. 92
List of Tables

Table 3.1 Visible minority population counts for Canada, provinces, and territories, 2006 Census ........................................................................................................................................ 38
Table 3.2 Generational breakdown of visible minority population, 2006 Census ........................ 41
Table 3.3 Numbers of “Canadian” responses for ethnic origin, 1996-2006 ............................. 44
Table 3.4 Single and multiple ethnic origins for selected groups, 2006 ........................................ 44
Table 3.5 Declarations of single and multiple ethnic origins for selected groups of second generation Canadians, 2006 ......................................................................................... 45
Chapter 1
Introduction

The histories and meanings of Canada are as varied as the people who call it their home. Emerging from their experiences and understandings are a myriad of stories that not only serve to shape and define what it means to live in Canada, but at times even call into question the very ideological foundations of our country. Canadians have long deliberated over questions of identity. Simultaneously a reflection of self and a representation of a people, it appears that defining what it means to be Canadian is a project necessitating not only deep personal reflection, but imagination. For one in five people of colour living in Canada, experiences of racial discrimination are an unfortunate fact of life (Canada 2002). For these individuals, self-reflection often reveals the detrimental affects of the inequity that they and others like them endure, while imaginings of Canada are often tarnished with the disappointment of unfulfilled promises.

The prevalence and effects of racism have not escaped the lens of critical and politically active citizens, officials and researchers. Determined to uncover the many forms of inequity facing people of colour in Canada, a significant collection of work has centred on the meaning and utility of national identity and its exclusionary tendencies. Statistics and research evincing startling rates of racial discrimination have, over the last three decades, impelled considerable studies in the relationship between citizens and the state. In particular, this examination has taken the form of research in areas of identity and identity formation, socio-political and economic inequity, and the role of the state in producing these conditions. Among those scholars and researchers at the vanguard of this research are geographers.

The concepts of citizenship, multiculturalism and racism have long been topics of discussion in geographic discourse and research. Within the literature on race and racism are discussions of the changing nature and meanings of the concepts as well as how they are negotiated and played out within personal, social and institutional realms (Henry and Tator 2006). At their
core, discourses of race and racism are about domination and exclusion (Young 1990; Goldberg 1993) and invoke power relations in such a way as to privilege some groups over others (Foucault 1980; Frideres 1989; Hall 1997). Research shows that racism and racial discrimination not only remain significant issues in Canada (Berry and Kalin 2000; Canada 2005; Fleras 2006), but have detrimental impacts on racialized minorities in areas including employment (Pendakur and Pendakur 2002) and social belonging (Reitz and Banerjee 2007). In particular, insightful work on institutional or systemic racism points to the strengths and weaknesses of the Canadian government’s policies and practices (Henry and Tator 2006).

As both an ideology and practice adopted by the Canadian government, multiculturalism refers not only to recognition and acceptance of difference by all members of society (Wood and Gilbert 2005), but also the philosophies and policies that result from a relationship between a state and its citizenship (Mitchell 2004). Debates over the role of multiculturalism as tool of assimilation or pluralism (Bissoondath 1994; Taylor 2000) and its utility as a vehicle for the provision of individual or group rights (Kymlicka 1995; Parekh 2000) are at the forefront of theoretical research. By virtue of its unique and significant social contributions, much research has focused on the origin and transformation of Multiculturalism in Canada (Kobayashi 1993; Mitchell 2004). Within this critical academic literature is a generalized discourse of state-sponsored multiculturalism perpetuating and/or failing to address racism and power asymmetries in Canadian society (Kobayashi 1993, 2007; Abu-Laban 2002; Wood and Gilbert 2005). Similar parallels can also be traced in the academic literature on citizenship.

Citizenship frameworks and discourses possess a normative power that determines the inclusion and exclusion of its membership and the symbolic and material spaces and resources to which they have access (Smith 2000). The provision of not only formal citizenship (recognition of rights to access) but of substantive citizenship (provision of rights to outcomes) is necessary in the study of social issues (Isin and Wood 1999; Young 2000). This is especially the case with racialized communities. The development of a multicultural citizenship regime as a means to address issues of
racism in Canadian society is one avenue of possible change (Abu-Laban 2000; Parekh 2000), although it has not yet achieved its potential.

One segment of the Canadian population whose experiences serve to inform discussions of racism, multiculturalism and citizenship is the second generation of colour. For a person to be considered second generation he or she must be born in Canada to at least one immigrant parent. A person of colour, as defined by the Canadian Government¹, is someone who is not Aboriginal and non-white in racialized identity. By virtue of their unique positioning within society—as full Canadians they are extended the benefits of citizenship that our country has to offer, yet as racialized individuals they remain vulnerable to discrimination in Canadian society—the experiences of second generation Canadians of colour reflect some of the most insidious forms of contemporary inequity. In fact, it has been documented that the experiences of second generation Canadians are most illustrative of the success of processes of integration. Since they constitute an emerging young adult population with a perspective that differs from that of immigrants, this second generation is critical to an assessment of the long-term impact of immigration (Boyd 2000; Reitz and Somerville 2004).

Previous research on the experiences of second generation Canadians of colour shows that they are not only subject to racial discrimination, but that these experiences significantly impact social, political, economic and cultural dimensions of their lives. In particular, accounts of identity dilemma (Tonks and Paranjpe 1999) and dislocation (Pratt 2002) show that they endure difficulties finding and understanding their role in Canadian society. The adoption of multiple identities, that is the accommodation of “Canadian” and other identities, is one way in which this segment of the population copes (Walters and Teo 2003). Research on educational achievements shows that while the racialized children of immigrants fare relatively well in the school system, these accomplishments do not necessarily carry over into employment spheres (Pendakur and Pendakur

¹ Although the Government of Canada uses the term “visible minority” to describe people of colour, for the purpose of my research I do not use this term as it reinforces problematic racial classifications.
2002). Despite suggestions of inadequate funding in primary and secondary schools to meet the needs of culturally and racially diverse student population, many scholars still view education as one of the most valuable tools in improving the circumstances of second generation Canadians of colour (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002). Research by Reitz and Banerjee (2007) examining the relationship between racial inequality, discrimination, and the social integration of racial minorities in Canada, suggests that second generation individuals are less likely to report feeling that they belong than do either their parents or their white counterparts, and that they indicate Canadian identity less frequently than the latter.

My research addresses the perceptions and experiences of racism amongst second generation Canadians of colour currently enrolled in university, and how such experiences influence their feelings of belonging in the national community. Through the use of a questionnaire and focus group sessions it investigates how second generation individuals compare their experiences of racial discrimination to those of their parents. Although individual experiences of racial discrimination vary, there is a consensus that it is a significant issue in Canada. Processes of identity ascription by mainstream society mark the body of the racialized Canadian as “other” and this process not only serves to exclude the second generation participant, but also reminds them of their perpetual difference. In comparison to the experiences of their parents, the second generation participants report experiencing less racism, although they acknowledge important shifts in the nature of contemporary racism toward increasingly subtler forms. Recognition of this intergenerational divergence is the outcome of different contextual and perceptual frameworks that position second generation Canadians in complex spaces of awareness and tolerance that render them, in some ways, less sensitive to the nuances of difference.

My research reveals that experiences of racism have a generally neutral or slightly negative effect on the second generation participant’s sense of belonging in Canada. Although they describe their identities as Canadians as partial, ambiguous, and at times critical, further analysis reveals the presence of multiple imaginings of Canada (in which the terms of belonging differ). It is within
these alternative visions that some second generation racialized Canadians critically reflect on the
duality of the social landscape upon which they are simultaneously included and excluded, and
challenge the racialized structures that seek to define them. Their continuous struggle to eliminate
racial barriers in Canada, and their willingness to contest the homogenous images of national
culture, promises to reshape the ethnocultural landscape of the future.

**Thesis Structure**

The second chapter of this thesis serves as a literature review and examines the
intersections of theories of race and racism, multiculturalism, and citizenship. With a view to
examining issues of identity and belonging, these collections are referenced for the ways in which
they shed light on matters affecting the lives of racialized minorities. Within the literature on race
and racism I trace the evolution of the meanings and forms of these concepts and how they
influence the lives of Canadians in general, but the second generation of colour in particular. In the
section focussing on multiculturalism, I explore the ways in which the concept has been
transformed in Canada, question the ability of government sponsored multiculturalism to address
issues of racism in society, and consider the work of critical theorists and their suggestions for the
future. Finally, the literature pertaining to theories of citizenship is presented. In this section I
discuss the nature of the relationship between the state and its citizens and highlight potentially
more inclusive forms of citizenship.

In the third chapter, I take the opportunity to closely examine the segment of Canadian
population of interest in this study. To begin, I provide an outline of the demographics, distribution
and make-up of second generation Canadians of colour and discuss why they constitute a group
worthy of research. In the second half of the chapter I review the existing work relating to this
group and contextualize my study within this collection.

In chapter four, I address many of the important dimensions involved in the design and
implementation of my research project. This includes an overview of the role of qualitative methods
within the discipline of geography, the role of ethics, power and subjectivity in research, deliberations over my role as a white researcher interested in issues of racism, and details of the planning and administering of my questionnaire and focus groups.

The findings of my questionnaire and focus groups and discussions of their significance are presented in chapter five. Additionally, discussions relating the findings of my investigations with previous research and theory of the subject are included. In the sixth and final chapter I offer some concluding remarks on the research and point to possibilities for further study.
Chapter 2
Theoretical Underpinnings

The review of literature presented in this chapter is divided into three major sections, each focusing on a specific body of scholarship. The first section on race and racism reviews the theories and definitions of the concepts, and traces their evolution in scholarship and in Canadian society. The second section on multiculturalism looks at the meanings and purposes of this ideology and practice, how it has been implemented in Canada’s institutions, and its ability to confront racism. The final body of literature is that on citizenship, focusing on theory and research relating to issues of belonging and the achievement of substantive citizenship. Concepts of citizenship as both an analytical and normative tool will serve to guide a discussion of whether a theory of multicultural citizenship has the capacity to confront racism in Canada, and in turn to enact real change that improves the situation of second generation, racialized minorities.

Race and Racism

While the forms of racism may have changed over the years, it is undeniable that race persists as a category of oppression in Canada today. In the words of Kobayashi (in Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002:9), “Canadian society is a landscape of negotiation in which skin colour takes on multiple meanings.” Knowledge of the literature and theory on race and racism is fundamental to understanding racial discrimination as experienced by some second generation, racialized Canadians. For this reason, I begin this section by defining and reviewing the major concepts. This is followed by a discussion of the theoretical perspectives of race and racism, an overview of theory relating to racism and the state, and finally an outline of the various forms of racism. I conclude by highlighting some recent research that paints a picture of racism in Canada and begins to inform my research into the life-experiences of Canadians of colour.
Defining Race and Racism

According to Henry and Tator (2006), racism can be defined as the erroneous assumption that physical differences (such as skin colour or facial features) are related to intellectual, moral, or cultural superiority. Despite efforts to naturalize the term in social and political spheres, since the 1990s race has come to be understood by scholars as a social construction (Kobayashi and Peake 1994). Simply put, the concept of “race,” much like “class” or “gender,” is viewed as a product of social interaction and is not, as some would argue, an inherent category of classification. The history of the use and meanings of the concept of race is both complex and problematic. As Henry and Tator (2006) explain, race was used in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a means both to distinguish between groups and also to establish hierarchical divisions among them. In particular, skin colour has been used to legitimize the oppression of racial minorities. Although the concept of race may be complex, contradictory and changing, it is never neutral and cannot be separated from goals of domination (Guillaumin 1999). Race is today, in the twenty-first century, a legal, political, social and historical reality that plays a very real and constraining role within societies. For this reason its effects simply cannot be dismissed as impartial.

Racism can be broadly defined as “the assumptions, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours, as well as the institutional policies, processes, and practices,” that emerge from understandings of race (Henry and Tator 2006:5). Racism, therefore, is an ideology—a set of beliefs, perceptions, assumptions and values—that provides an understanding and explanation of the world (Henry and Tator 2006). In this way, racism provides a framework for the interpretation and meaning of racial thought (Essed 1990:44) that organizes and perpetuates the power structures of society as employed by those in a position of influence. By virtue of its normalization into everyday life, racial discrimination can often be invisible to mainstream society. As a result, it is a challenge both to define and to confront it. This invisibility, coupled with the denial of racism on behalf of dominant groups in society, facilitates the marginalization of racialized. This is especially the case if, as Foucault (1980:131) suggests, “nothing is more material, physical, and corporeal than the exercise
of power.” Considered in this light, racism represents a set of interrelated ideologies and practices that have grave material effects and severely impact the well-being and life-chances of those targeted persons or groups.

According to Goldberg (1993), racism also constitutes an element of a wider racialized discourse in which social conditions determine the expressive forms the discourse takes. In a field of such discourse, the concepts and ideas that are exchanged do not constitute truth, but rather truth-claims or representations. Representations gain legitimacy from traditions and institutions that guide social, political and cultural life. Throughout modern times racialized discourse has largely dominated the process of defining otherness and racist practices have furnished the material power for the exclusion of the different (Goldberg 1993). A related concept, racialization, refers to the process by which meanings are attributed to particular objects, bodily features and social processes, in such a way that they gain connotation (Miles 1989:70). As an element of broader social processes, racialization entails the construction of categories of population that serve to differentiate, render inferior and exclude segments of the population (Anthias 1998:574). As a process of defining otherness, racialization is carried out by dominant segments of society through the use of racialized discourse (Henry and Tator 2006).

Processes of racial discrimination are founded in the representation of difference. Stuart Hall (1997) has sought to investigate how difference is portrayed in society and why it is such a contested area of representation. One explanation, which originates in the anthropological tradition, suggests that culture necessitates the ascription of meanings and positions within a classification system so as to maintain order. This marking of difference leads us to stigmatize and expel anything defined as impure or abnormal, thus creating the “Other.”

Racialized representation involves the naturalizing of racial difference through the construction of “otherness” (the “non-white” as deviant). Stereotyping reduces, essentializes, naturalizes and fixes the categories of difference and

---

2 Edward Said’s “Orientalism” (1978) is a seminal work on the topic of Eurocentrism and the “Other”.

9
in doing so creates symbolic boundaries for exclusion (Hall 1997); however, as the discussion on power that follows highlights, the formation of even symbolic boundaries can have very negative and tangible impacts on those who are deemed “other.”

According to Johnson (2000), the concept of power is most frequently used to describe interpersonal and intergroup relationships. Three conceptualizations of power include: power as an inscribed capacity (a potential to direct the actions of others); as a resource (something to be mobilized at will); and as strategies, practices, and techniques (Allen 1997). The last conceptualization of power is most closely associated with Foucault’s work on the spatiality of power, which posits that power is organized and exercised at all scales and levels of society from individuals up to and including the state. Power is most readily exercised when its source is recognized as legitimate, and this is often achieved through appeal to tradition, persuasion, or by its institutionalization into societal structures, including the state (Johnson 2000). Within geography, the state has been a particularly important site of research on power as it encompasses a large range of inscribed capacities, is the focal point of a variety of networks, and employs a wide array of strategies in pursuit of its goals.

Foucault’s (1980) insistence on the circulation of power is central to ideas of representation. Taken in summation, his work highlights the fact that every individual is caught up in the workings of power, although perhaps not to the same degree or on the same terms. In a similar vein, Gramsci reminds us that power involves knowledge and the creation of knowledge. In this sense, power implicates both the dominant and dominated in a productive process wherein new discourses are formed. When power is viewed as both a product and producer of discourse, it becomes possible to consider racialization as a precursor to, and product of, power (Hall 1997).

Also critical to understanding how the discourses of race and racism function are the concepts of domination and oppression. Young (1990:31) defines domination as the “structural or systemic phenomena which exclude people from participating in determining their actions or the conditions of their actions”. Thus, people live in structures of domination if other groups can directly or
indirectly dictate, without reproach, the conditions of their actions (Young 1990). Oppression can be defined as a general condition of injustice whereby the state limits or constrains self-development. In contrast, just social institutions provide conditions for all persons to not only learn, use skills, and interact with others, but also provides for basic needs (Young 1990). Young (1990) has developed five criteria against which oppression may be compared and understood. These five criteria include exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence. Given these definitions, race can without doubt be considered a structure of domination (perpetuated by those with power to control the options of those without) and those groups who unjustly experience the racial discrimination can be considered oppressed.

_Theoretical Perspectives of Racism_

Although the concept of race as a biological category has a long history, it was not until the 19th century that it began to include social dimensions. No longer simply used as a tool of classification, the concept of race acquired hierarchical meanings that facilitated and legitimized the oppression of some racial groups above others. Guided by claims that ideas of race are scientifically unfounded, the United Nations denounced the term in 1950. Despite this rejection of the concept’s theoretical validity, the lived effects of racial discrimination remain potent for people of colour. Much like the meanings and implications of race have changed over time, so too have the sociopolitical frameworks developed to manage difference in increasingly diverse societies. In the section that follows I trace the development of these perspectives on race and the sociopolitical ramifications of these understandings.

Until relatively recently, two models primarily informed the management of increasingly diverse, racialized populations. The assimilation models of the early part of the twentieth century assumed race to be an element of ethnicity and expected members of racial groups to assimilate, or integrate, into mainstream society. This integration necessitated the adoption of the culture, values, language and other characteristics of the dominant culture and left no room for the retention of
ethnocultural difference (Ogden 2000). The second perspective, race relations, was developed after World War II to examine the quality and pattern of interaction among different racial groups in society, but like assimilation theories, it does not address the unequal distribution of power and privilege between white Canadians and Canadians of colour (Henry and Tator 2006).

The 1960s and 1970s mark a shift in the study of racism as the gaze of researchers begins to turn away from racialized groups toward an examination of mainstream society. Critical Race Theory and Anti-racist approaches stand in contrast to previous perspectives in that instead of focussing on the characteristics of the racialized, they examine the roles of social and political institutions in creating the conditions for racism. Critical Race Theory emerged as a theory and movement in the mid-1970s. Led predominantly by legal scholars, it was developed to provide a counter-legal discourse of civil rights. As a critique of liberalism, Critical Race Theory was founded on the tenet that racism is “normal” within society and that the complex linkages among race, class and gender are not fully taken into account in government policy, especially legislation and its applications (Henry and Tator 2006). The Anti-racism perspective has at its foundation not only opposition to the use of the term “race” (which validates its erroneous underlying assumptions), but critically examining the discourses of race and racism. The core focus of the Anti-racism movement is to counteract racialized institutional policies and practices while maintaining an oppositional stance to White dominant culture (Dei 1996). It focuses on the urgent need for “a social system that is more representative, equitable, inclusive, and capable of responding to the concerns and aspirations of marginalized communities” (Calliste and Dei 2000 in Henry and Tator 2006:38).

The most recent theoretical developments on race and racism are in the field of cultural studies. Continuing along the oppositional path of anti-racist research, cultural studies encourage a critical examination of, and resistance to, dominant culture. It affirms otherness and difference as central to the dynamic of pluralism and works toward creating conditions of equity and autonomy for “othered” groups (Henry and Tator 2006). A central tenet of this perspective is the contestation of homogenous images of national culture and the maintenance of traditional power relations.
Assessing discourses plays a large part in cultural studies, for discourses, as they are defined by Fiske (1994 in Henry and Tator 2006:44), are languages “marked by [their] history of domination, subordination, and resistance and shaped by the social conditions of those who use it.” Discourses comprise diverse ways of structuring knowledge and social practice and are invoked not only to represent social beings and the relationships among them, but to construct systems of belief that position these players socially (Henry and Tator 2006). Discourse analysis can therefore be used to identify power relations (be they social, economic or historical) between dominant and subordinate groups in society.

Several specific discourses influence studies of race and racism. The first, racist discourse, refers to the words, images and practices through which the racial power of the dominant group is directed toward minorities and the deeper racist assumptions and ideas that underlie their relations (Goldberg 1993). Closely related to racist discourse is “eurocentrism,” or the belief in the superiority of everything European in origin. When perceived and assessed through a eurocentric lens, other cultures are automatically viewed as inferior if they do not conform to liberal democratic values. A second discourse of significance is that of “Whiteness.” Recognizing that the powerful, white segments of society have largely escaped the focus of studies in race and racism, discourses of “whiteness” emphasize that people who are “white” themselves constitute a socially constructed racial category- albeit a very powerful one (Henry and Tator 2006). Within this framework, the role of “whites” in constructing and perpetuating social inequity is problematized (Bonnett 2005).

According to Frankenberg (1993), whiteness consists of three dimensions: a location of structural advantage, a standpoint from which the evaluation of self and other occurs, and a set of unnamed cultural practices. Theorists contend that most white people do not identify themselves as members of a racial category and as such, often do not recognize or accept their role as architects of exclusion and racial discrimination (Henry and Tator 2006).
The Name Game

Racism can take many forms and this attribute is often cited as one of the difficulties associated with eliminating it. As Hall (1978:7) notes, “there have been many significantly different racisms - each historically specific and articulated in a different way in the societies in which they appear… always historically specific in this way, whatever common features it may appear to share with similar social phenomena.” Some theorists posit that this characterization of racism (or, more appropriately, the lack thereof) precludes the development of any general theory on the subject (Gilroy 1992). Others argue that a general, but open-ended theory is possible so long as it is able to account for historical alterations and discontinuities in the process of racial normalization (see in particular Goldberg 1993). It is the latter position with which I align myself in this discussion of racism.

As suggested by Henry and Tator (2006) there are three major forms of racism. They include: individual/everyday racism, institutional and systemic racism, and cultural racism. Individual racism manifests itself in an individual's attitudes and behaviours, and is the easiest type to identify. It involves the numerous and often subtle ways in which racial discrimination is experienced by people of colour in interaction with the dominant white population. This form of racism is expressed in gestures, glances, forms of speech and physical movements that can even be subconscious to the perpetrator. The subtlety with which everyday racism may be invoked is one reason why its study is a difficult endeavour. In analyzing this form of racism the distinction has been made between active racism (acts that emerge from a desire to exclude others) and passive racism (acts of compliance with another’s racism).

Institutional racism consists of the policies and practices of organizations which directly or indirectly operate to sustain the advantages of peoples of certain "races." This type of racism is more difficult to address than individual racism because it is built into the policies and practices of organizations and often is applied unconsciously, filtered through ideological practice. Institutional racism encompasses individual acts of racism as well as those organizational structures that
disadvantage racialized minorities. Systemic racism refers more broadly to the “laws, rules, and norms woven into the social system that result in an unequal distribution of economic, political, and social resources and rewards among various racial groups” (Henry and Tator 2006:53). This form of racism is manifested through the negative representation of racialized individuals and groups, the marginalization of their voices and experiences, as well as the perpetuation of racist discourse. It is fundamentally about the denial of material and discursive resources.

The third and final form of racism noted by Henry and Tator (2006) is cultural racism. Cultural racism is considered the basis of both other forms of racism for it represents the value system in society that supports and allows discriminatory actions based on perceptions of racial difference, cultural superiority and inferiority. The misunderstanding of the cultural patterns and traditions of some racial groups is cited as the basis of this type of discrimination (Lawrence 1982). Accordingly, cultural racism serves as an ideology, or set of values and ideas that guide society, and is maintained through the socialization of subsequent generations. A final component of cultural or ideological racism is what has been identified by theorists as new, or modern, racism in which liberal democratic values and racist beliefs and behaviours paradoxically coexist (See Gilroy 1987; Henry and Tator 2006).

While the delineation of several forms of racism does lend itself to the discussion of differential experiences of racism, Henry and Tator (2006) remind us that the lived realities of racialized minorities and the experiences of racism endured are complex and highlight the dynamic and transformative nature of racism itself. The ideology of racism engages not only time, as Hall (1981) would have us note, but also space. As Jackson (1987) observes, spatial structures are implicated in the production and reproduction of social relations because territorial forms both produce and reflect social processes. The concepts of segregation and assimilation, and most importantly their social and material outcomes, illustrate the oftentimes very spatial nature of racism. The analysis of racism through a spatial lens additionally reveals a shift in the research focus away from racialized groups, and toward those groups in dominant positions and spaces they
occupy. As Hall (1981:69) remarks, “the issue of race provides one of the most important ways of understanding how this society actually works and how it has arrived where it is.” It is within this tradition that much current geographical research and ideology is situated.

Studying the contemporary forms of racism more in terms of its ideological effects and less in terms of an explanatory concept is perhaps most useful in the context of enabling change and resistance. Since racism is structured in a context of deeply entrenched, unequal power relations and institutionalized (Sivanadan 1983:2), measuring prejudice is a complex task that is not always amenable to empirical investigation (Jackson 1987:10). This is in part because the effects of racism on individuals and groups, as well as its sociopolitical ramifications, can be both numerous and varied in nature. Thus, any attempt to understand and confront the problem must be tempered with the flexibility to recognize and adapt to both the changing nature of racism and the circumstances of individual lives.

State-Sponsored Racism?

The relationship between racism and the state is multifaceted and rooted in historical experiences. The history of the modern state and racial definition are intimately linked for, as Goldberg (2002) states, in its conception, the state was configured as a racial unit. The transformation of states into racist states can be seen as part of the modernization process whereby the internalization of exclusions, and the privileging of the included legitimize its exclusionary character (Goldberg 2006). The adoption of “racelessness,” colour-blind, or otherwise race-denying ideologies by a state can be viewed as both an attempt to respond to legacies of racial oppression and discrimination, but also as a refusal to address other historical inequities (Goldberg 2006; Henry and Tator 2006).

There are many ways through which the state perpetuates racism, some more easily dealt with than others. Institutional racism (previously introduced) is considered the most insidious form as it operates through the state and can often be easily denied or overlooked (Jackson 1987). It
refers to the processes by which organizational policies, practices, and procedures discriminate against those racialized as “other” (Henry and Tator 2006) and specifically refers to the rules, procedures, practices, and institutional norms that have the intent or result of excluding racially marginalized people (Elliott and Fleras 2003). Institutions are systemically racist when they ignore how organizational practices and structures reflect and reinforce “white” experiences as normative. While applied rules of a universal nature seem ostensibly colour-blind, they often have the real impact of privileging those whose experiences match underlying constructions of normativity and do not, in fact, address underlying inequalities.

Democratic racism exists in Canadian institutions. As Fiske (1994) claims, the elusive nature of the dominant discourse (in the case of Canada that of the non-racialized majority) allows it to mask its racialized ideas. As a result of this racist system the economic, social and political resources of society are not evenly distributed to racialized minority people. At the base of the concept is a struggle over social power. Resistance to changes that positively impact racialized minorities can only be viewed as a perpetuation of racism and an unwillingness to question the beliefs, values and discursive practices of the dominant segment of society (Henry and Tator 2006).

Discourses of colour-blindness and equal opportunity are two examples of how democratic racism functions within government. According to Henry and Tator (2006:25) colour-blindness is a “powerful tool and appealing liberal discourse in which White people insist that they do not notice the skin colour of a racial minority person.” In claiming that skin colour is not a factor in interpersonal relations, dominant group members essentially forbid any acknowledgement of discrimination and this, in turn, leads to the evasion of the principle issues of power distribution (Frankenberg 1993). The discourse of equal opportunity works in much the same way. It suggests that fairness within society can be achieved through the equal treatment of all individuals; however, what is not taken into account is that all individuals do not begin on a level playing field. The discourse essentially ignores the nature of the social construction of race, and thus the power and privilege that accompany a position within the dominant group (Henry and Tator 2006).
Both the discourses of colour-blindness and of equal opportunity act to prohibit the questioning and dismantling of historically dominant social positions. It is only by acknowledging the implications of racism, not by adopting language and policy that fundamentally denies it, that we can create a space within which open dialogue on the topic can occur and resolution of the issues facing racialized minorities may be found. Fortunately, dominant ideologies never achieve a position of unquestioned authority (Jackson 1987:14). Opposition to racism takes as many forms as racism itself and can range from acute episodes of confrontation to prolonged, symbolic movements of resistance. As the discourses guiding the actions of the government change, one can only hope that this will be coupled with a decrease in the levels of racism acceptable in society.

**Shedding light on a national issue**

Racism in Canada is deeply rooted in historically unequal power structures and is perpetuated by the intended, and indeed, often unintended, outcomes of institutional policies and practices. These policies and practices are in part guided by academic theorizing about race and determine both government’s and the public’s ability to react effectively to racial tensions and conflict (Li 1990). For many racialized minorities, the idealism of a multicultural society promoted by the government is difficult to reconcile with the lived reality of inequity. In this way, discourses of race and multiculturalism are linked. While multiculturalism encourages the protection and retention of cultural distinctiveness, it is precisely distinctiveness from white, mainstream culture that places racialized individuals in positions of disadvantage with respect to employment, social services and the justice system. Although multiculturalism as originally formulated by the Trudeau government denies the “official” nature of dominant culture, by failing to address changes to that dominant culture effectively, as both an ideology and a practice, it does little to challenge actively the destructive nature of power asymmetries within Canadian society. This is despite the general expectation that it is capable of eliminating racism. As Kobayashi (1993) notes, multiculturalism is constructed against conflict and is therefore ill-equipped to deal with the demands of contemporary
Canadian society. The hardships faced by marginalized groups within Canada are many, and there has been considerable research conducted by governmental, non-governmental and academic bodies that document their realities. Although this collection of work is substantial, one need only review a handful of those projects to get an idea of the racial discrimination in this country.

Berry et al. (1976) examined the attribution of negative attitudes onto various minorities, revealing that visible minority groups were ranked significantly lower than their non-visible minority counterparts on selective criteria. In another study, Reid (1991) was commissioned by the Multiculturalism and Citizenship branch of the Government of Canada to probe the public on their opinions regarding how comfortable Canadians felt around recent immigrants. The results reveal that feelings of discomfort clearly increased as respondents moved from considering white European groups to visible minorities. In a more recent study by Bibby (1995), a sample of Canadians was asked about their views of the “mosaic” versus the “melting pot” and also the extent to which they felt at ease with members of visible minority groups. His findings show (by comparing data from 1985 and 1995) that respondents not only favoured the idea of a Canadian “mosaic” less, but felt less at ease around visible minorities than a decade earlier.

Not only do Canadians express varying degrees of discomfort in their relations with racialized minorities, the experience of discrimination extends to material conditions. Pendakur and Pendakur (2002) have determined that the earnings gap between visible minority males and white males has widened and that while earning differentials for some visible minority groups have improved, outcomes have worsened for other groups, especially blacks. Milan and Tran (2004) note the higher levels of unemployment among blacks compared to other foreign-born and Canadian-born workers. As the findings of these studies clearly show, there are important trends to note with respect to the acceptance and equitable treatment of racialized minorities in Canada. There seems to be a recursive relationship between the fact that darkness of skin colour affects attitudes that increase poverty, and lower social status because poverty deepens discriminatory attitudes.
Notwithstanding these results, studies also show favourable findings. In fact, a majority of Canadians continue to support the concept of multiculturalism, although that support has waned in recent years. Findings by Jedwab (2004) suggest that Canadians react favourably to the use of the term multiculturalism and tend to equate multiculturalism with the country’s diverse demographic character which they value. This is especially the case among younger Canadians, aged 18-29.

Since racism and its many manifestations are increasingly becoming issues of concern for policy makers, the question of measurement is a critical issue. As Henry and Tator (2006) lament, little research has been undertaken in Canada on the matter. Questions surrounding the definition of racism, its prevalence in Canadian society, and how it can be measured are invaluable for researchers and public officials alike to answer. Although surveys and polls may serve to capture a snapshot of the population’s opinions, these methods remain unsuited to the study of the unconscious and non-deliberate racial attitudes. As Phillips (1971) adroitly notes, self-reports of racial attitudes do not necessarily mirror behaviour and effectively represent a gap within which the degree of divergence between intent and action is unclear (Barrett 1987). Evidence based on the everyday experiences of targeted individuals has traditionally been disregarded by policy-makers as a suitable method of data collection. It has been believed that the accounts of victims are not objective and as a result, provide unreliable results. Today, a balanced perspective on racism includes both testimonials and measured findings (Henry and Tator 2006:57).

Conclusion

If academic theories can influence and alter the way individuals think and act about “race”, then state policies certainly possess the potential to shape the racial relations of a country. Historically the Canadian government has orchestrated the process of racialization of specific segments of the population. Through policies and legislation the Canadian government influences the demographics of the Canadian population (largely through immigration and settlement programs) and is responsible for many of the conditions of interaction among Canada’s diverse groups. There is no
doubt that the power and resource base of minority groups has continuously been controlled and restructured by the government. In this way the racialized environment of Canada is the product of state actions and policies that reflect (and perpetuate) the dominant interests in society (Li 1990).

**Multiculturalism**

The meanings of the term multiculturalism can be as vague as they are complex. Although it may be viewed in several ways, all perspectives have at their core a desire to manage the increasingly diverse character of contemporary societies. The idea of multiculturalism can be viewed through a lens of grand theory, political policy, and also as the genuine experiences of individuals. In the section that follows, I present multiculturalism in both its ideological and practical forms. To begin I introduce the theoretical debates surrounding multiculturalism, in particular focussing on the debates over its structure and purpose. Subsequently, I present the critical responses to multiculturalism that have emerged in the past decade. This dialogue is followed by an overview of Multiculturalism\(^3\) as it is institutionalized in Canada with specific attention paid both to its changing nature and to its role in producing or confronting racism. I conclude the section with reflection on how race and racism theorists have informed the multiculturalism debate.

On its most basic level, multiculturalism is about the recognition and acceptance of difference (Wood and Gilbert 2005). While recognition may be instituted from below by communities and groups looking to forge a unique place in Canadian society, it may also be spearheaded and endorsed by the state. Institutions play a strong mediating role between theory and the experiences of individuals, and this is particularly the case with multiculturalism; to such an extent, notes Kymlicka (1998), that to understand the meaning of multiculturalism one must look at how it is set into practice. There are several convincing reasons to encourage a complete

---

\(^3\) Multiculturalism when it is capitalized refers to the official government program.
understanding and evaluation of multiculturalism at the level of the institution. It is at this scale that ideology and practice converge with respect to multiculturalism, race and racism as well as citizenship, and as such it represents a practical level at which to address issues relating to all three. As a site at which inequalities are formed and contested (Li 1999), and where racial and national identities are produced, institutions of the state become a site of struggle. Understanding the relationship between state and citizens assists in defining not only the frameworks that structure the definition of its comprising groups, but also the subsequent race relations that take shape (Li 1999).

Visions from the ‘Outside’: Critical Responses to Multiculturalism

Although it may be claimed that Canadian Multiculturalism is founded on a liberal model of the provision of minority rights (including such principles as autonomy, individualism, assimilation, hierarchy)\(^4\), multiculturalism theorists outside of the liberal tradition have also made important observations and contributions to understandings of the subject. In particular, they offer solutions for, or suggestions on, many of the shortcomings of liberal political pluralism. Parekh (2000) defines multiculturalism as the normative response of a society composed of at least two distinct cultural communities. While a society may be multicultural in terms of the composition of its population, to become characteristically multicultural there must be a movement to either accept or assimilate these distinct minority groups. Within a multicultural society there are always questions about the manner through which states can respect cultural diversity while ensuring political unity.

For Abu-Laban (2000), multiculturalism ideally engages both the dominant and non-dominant segments of society in a dialogue that focuses on the ways in which these groups accept or reject, or even expand the ideas of a plural society. Abu-Laban suggests a lack of government funding and misguided priorities as the root cause of multiculturalism’s inability to tackle racial

\(^4\) For example see the work of Raz, Rawls and Kymlicka.
discrimination. Nonetheless, she does not disregard the role of historical and social forces that have generated discrimination prior to adoption of multiculturalism policies, and notes that “the policy [of multiculturalism] might provide a better basis for fighting discrimination than no policy at all” (2000:255).

**Canadian-Brand Multiculturalism**

The implementation of Canadian multiculturalism began with the official Multicultural Policy of 1971. Canada’s policy of Multiculturalism, at the time under the direction of Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau, is credited with instituting the idea of cultural pluralism not only into Canadian government, but incorporating it into the Canadian identity (Wood and Gilbert 2005). Touted as a tool of unity, the primary focus of Multiculturalism is the promotion of social cohesion through discourses of unity in difference. The adoption of multiculturalism into the ideologies and structures of the Canadian government exemplifies but one of three notions of multiculturalism described by Kallen (1982). In addition to a government policy of political pluralism, Kallen also describes a complementary view of social reality in which demographic diversity figures prominently in the daily lives of citizens and results in the shaping of a multicultural ideal. The third conceptualization portrays multiculturalism as an ethnopolitical movement in search of reform.

Gaining insight into the function of government policy pertaining to multiculturalism and its ability to deal with difference in general, and racism in particular, is paramount to understanding the circumstances of racialized Canadians. For this reason, it is important to evaluate the institution of multiculturalism within the structures of government to distinguish if, in fact, they are representative of Canadian cultural life (Kobayashi 1993). Canadian multiculturalism, including the adoption of Canada’s Multiculturalism Policy (1971) and the passage of the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* (1988), has not only evolved through the years (as Kobayashi describes), but is also embedded in a broad policy and legislation framework that is national and international in scope.
In the last several decades several theorists have traced the development of Canadian multiculturalism. The most useful of these analyses is Kobayashi’s (1993) division of Multiculturalism policy into four broadly defined stages: demographic, symbolic, structural, and neoliberal, demarcates what she believes are the major shifts in multiculturalism policy in Canada. While effectively highlighting the major, distinctive changes (especially in terms of the institutionalization of multiculturalism), the stages are best understood not as mutually exclusive categories, but as uneven zones of transition.

The first stage, demographic multiculturalism, reflects the increasing ethnocultural diversity of the Canadian population. Although past Canadian immigration policy allowed for some diversification of the population, it was not until the 1960s when immigration policies were liberalized that immigration sources shifted from primarily European countries to non-European sources (Kobayashi 1993). In particular, racialized minorities began to compose an increasing proportion of Canada’s immigrants. Census data show an increase in the percentage of visible minorities in the Canadian population from 4.7% in 1981 to 13.4% in 2001 (Dewing and Leman 2006).

The second stage, termed symbolic multiculturalism, includes the process of official recognition (vis-à-vis government discourse) of the desire of different cultural groups to maintain their cultural distinctiveness. During the symbolic stage there is a characteristic avoidance of areas of reform that impact the “majority” of citizens. In this way, the dominant segments of society remain exempt from the processes of redistribution (be it in the form of wealth, rights, etc.). In total, multiculturalism at this stage points to positive adaptations in government discourse, but remains mostly gesticular with regards to the provision of rights to minorities.

The adoption of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act (1988), following upon full implementation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, marks the shift from symbolic multiculturalism to the third stage, structural multiculturalism, where legislative reform provides the basis for social change. Legal and bureaucratic mechanisms are in evidence to enforce government
policy initiatives and are now capable of dealing with accusations of discrimination and inequality. The structural stage of multiculturalism may be viewed as the attempt made by the Canadian Federal government to provide more substantive assistance to minorities.

More recently, Kobayashi (2008) has proposed a fourth stage to her previous three transitive stages, neoliberal multiculturalism. In this phase she observes a shift in the role of the government in promoting difference that can be traced to the second administration of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney (1988-1993). She notes that the previous, collaborative relationship between the Canadian government and minority groups is in the process of transforming into one that increasingly relegates ethnocultural dimensions to the private sphere (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002), outside of the self-prescribed purview of institutional management. Researchers including Peck and Tickell (2002:380) who have documented its ascension as “the dominant ideological rationalization for globalization and state ‘reform,’” professing the virtues of free trade, flexible labour, and active individualism and espouses a commitment to competitiveness that can only be achieved through aggressive forms of state downsizing, scaled-back financing and public service restructuring. In these neoliberal times Multiculturalism is simultaneously reflected in global and local terms. On a global scale, Canadian Multiculturalism serves as a commodity benefiting the politics of the state; all-the-while internally it necessitates the self-marketing of minority groups in search of competitive advantage by way of recognition or funding (Kobayashi 2008).

Unfortunately, as Abu-Laban and Gabriel (2002) remark, the ascendancy of a minimalist state may pose considerable challenges to mobilization of ethnocultural minorities and their influence in political processes. This may, in fact, be representative of an “Era of Decline” for multiculturalism (Abu-Laban and Nieguth 2000).

The four stages of multiculturalism, and the trends they underscore, inform an understanding of the history of multiculturalism in Canadian institutions and society and detail its evolution into a contemporary phenomenon. This history of the changes in both structure and focus points to shifts in conceptualizations of the term and the elements of social and political life that it
was developed to influence. Above all, the fourth stage reveals the complexities facing multiculturalism in its current institutionalized form, and foreshadows the kinds of effects it will continue to have on experiences of Canadians of colour. In particular, one must question the impact of increasing withdrawal of the state from ethnocultural affairs on the fight against systemic or institutional forms of racism.

**Racist or Anti-racist Initiative?**

There is much debate surrounding whether multiculturalism is a discourse that legitimizes difference or serves as a tool of integration that produces (or masks) racism in Canada. While there are numerous supporters of the ability of Multiculturalism to positively impact the lives of racialized minorities in Canada, there are also critics who claim that it is not only ill-equipped to deal with the demands of contemporary Canadian society (Kobayashi 1993), but also produces and/or reinforces racism (Blatchford 2004). Even among critics there is much disagreement as to the reasons for the failure of multiculturalism to address issues of race. In an attempt to understand some of the limitations of multiculturalism, I will discuss several of these critiques.

Multiculturalism can be viewed as a single method through which the Canadian government opted to deal with novel immigration issues (Kymlicka 1998; Wood and Gilbert 2005). In fact, Wood and Gilbert (2005) note that the purpose of the policy may have been more to ease existing tensions between French and English Canadians than crafting a vision for Canada’s future. They also argue that the history of multicultural policy in Canada, in fact, represents a continuation of exclusionary practices toward minorities and has not translated into the inclusion of all citizens as it is purported to do. Bissoondath (1994) argues that because it was born of, and sustained by, political opportunism, multiculturalism as government discourse and policy ultimately fails because it lacks a viable vision for Canada. In its struggle to promote the assimilation of different groups, he believes that the Canadian approach encourages the retention of ethnic or cultural ties and fails to promote the integration and acceptance of others. In his words (1998:1), “to accept the role of
ethnic is also to accept a gentle marginalization, it is to accept that one will never just be a part of the landscape but always a little apart from it, not quite belonging.” Despite the assimilationist nature of Bissoondath theorization and the problematic assumption of a dominant society into which he believes minorities should assimilate, there are valuable ideas to take from his comments with respect to the production of racism.

Bissoondath is not the first to question the efficacy of Multiculturalism to manage difference in Canada. In 1965, Porter engaged the Canadian public and institutions in a dialogue surrounding the necessity of the elimination of ethnic affiliations in Canada. Offered as a solution to the increasing class differences of the time (ethnicity being but one mechanism), this drastic step was posited as critical to maintaining Canadian unity. Although Porter’s work supports a vision of multiculturalism that varies greatly from that of other scholars from whose work I draw, it is nonetheless important to acknowledge its critique of pluralism and the insights it provides into economic and sociopolitical processes that impact racialized minorities.

Other criticisms of Multiculturalism stem from claims of its inability not only to guarantee and enforce the rights afforded to individuals though citizenship practices, but to provide the opportunity for minority groups to participate fully in both ethnic and national communities. Notwithstanding the fact that great gains were made with the structural institution of multiculturalism by way of legal rights, some scholars and activists argue that very little has been achieved in providing the full benefits of citizenship to racialized minorities, including a sense of belonging. One explanation offered for this limitation of multiculturalism is the persistence of a discourse of equality that continues to hide racist and discriminatory practices (Kallen 1982; Wood and Gilbert 2005). As Kobayashi (1993) points out, outside of French and English charter groups, there remain significant issues of rights to be resolved with minority groups in Canada. Regardless of the formation of government branches and divisions dedicated to reducing racism in Canada and the implementation of policies to counter the phenomenon, racism persists as perhaps one of the greatest barriers to the realization of full, social citizenship of racialized minorities. In the words of
Ley (2005:5), “criticisms do not exhaust the potential capacities of multiculturalism” and as the ethnocultural diversity of Canada population continues to increase, the philosophical and policy frameworks enabled by multicultural governance remain a necessary element of Canadian society (Ley 2007).

Notions of race and racism are ever-changing. So too are the categories and meanings based on these concepts. Mitchell (1993) argues that when the meanings of race and nation are articulated together, as they are in the principles of multiculturalism in Canada, it is necessary to question that union as a process that is embedded in historically and geographically specific networks of power. In her work Kobayashi (1993) also stresses the need for a clearer understanding of “race” on behalf of the general public and the Canadian government if racism is to be better understood. Until this occurs, difference will continue to be founded in discriminatory ideology and practice.

For many, the discursive frameworks of multiculturalism and anti-racism are viewed as opposing. Multiculturalism is dismissed as the celebration of difference, directed towards changing attitudes and culture. Anti-racism is about actively challenging the systems and structures that perpetuate racial discrimination. Fleras (2006) challenges this assumed contradiction by highlighting the fact that multiculturalism is not about the celebration of difference, but focused rather on “eliminating the racial disadvantages produced by prejudicial perceptions of cultural differences” and that Canada’s Multiculturalism is quietly at the vanguard of anti-racism. In this light, the contradiction between multiculturalism and anti-racism becomes a false distinction.

If we wish to understand not only the role of multiculturalism in producing and masking racism, but also subsequent impacts on the citizenship experiences of racialized minorities, then we must seriously question whether change can be achieved within the structures and discourses of multiculturalism. If multicultural policy is, as Kobayashi (1993: 224) points out, “formulated against conflict,” then it is perhaps by definition fundamentally unable to address the problem of racism in Canadian society. If this is the case, we must ask how racism operates within the discourse and policies of multiculturalism and probe whatever theoretical avenues may be best
suited to support change. As a tool to promote diversity, multiculturalism has shown relative success and holds promise for the future; however, as a means to confront racism and truly legitimize difference within Canadian society the outlook is perhaps a task in what Fleras (2006:27) terms, “imagining the improbable.”

Conclusion

Questions of social inclusion and exclusion are central to the ideological and institutionalized forms of multiculturalism. An inclusive multiculturalism underscores a commitment to the integration of new and racialized Canadians, in part by renegotiating a two-way process of incorporation (Fleras 2006:26). At its core, if multiculturalism is to be successful it must have the ability to recognize and adapt to the changing nature of racism in Canadian society. What this feasibly entails is an effort to wholly recognize the shortcomings of the policy and practices to address racial discrimination. Although it may be said that most Canadians are no longer racists in the classical sense of the word, racism continues to “fester in unobtrusive ways, deliberately or unconsciously, through action or inaction” (Fleras 2006). Issues of hate, racism and discriminatory practices in access to public services, employment and civic participation are a priority.

Finding solutions to the issues of inequity that unjustly and negatively impact the lives of racialized groups and individuals in Canada are rapidly becoming the target of a new multicultural trajectory (based increasingly on equity) and organized efforts by government and non-governmental organizations to provide a safe and supportive environment for all Canadian citizens. The meaningfulness of citizenship experiences of visible minorities is an important measure of the effectiveness of current multicultural policy and theory. When applied to the analysis of multicultural ideology and practice, anti-racism serves as a lens through which to critique the role of the government and offer practical and lasting solutions. Whether multiculturalism is examined on the level of social reality, within the framework of Canadian government or in wider academic theory, there is sufficient evidence to support the assertion that it is indeed problematic. As the
literature on race and racism and the work of critical multiculturalists brings to light, neither the motivation for, nor the configuration of, contemporary multiculturalism is singularly adequate to address the issues of discrimination facing racialized minorities. One needs look no further than accounts of institutional racism to evidence this claim.

**Citizenship**

On a basic level the concept of citizenship refers not only to the terms of membership of a political unit that secures rights and privileges to those individuals who fulfill their obligations (Leydet 2003), but also a set of practices (Isin and Wood 1999). Citizenship as a sociological and legal concept refers to the processes that serve to determine the inclusion and exclusion of citizens with respect to symbolic and material spaces and resources (Smith 2000). Understandings of the nature and purpose of citizenship are numerous. Smith (2000) notes that citizenship studies can be used analytically to expose differences and inequalities at state and individual scales, and may also serve in a normative manner as a means to shape a socially just community, sensitive to individual needs. These two conceptualizations (sociological/legal and analytic/normative) can inform discussions of racism and multiculturalism in Canada for both consist of a political realignment that attempts to legitimize and promote diversity. Although this realignment has renegotiated the boundaries of inclusion between civil society and the state in Canada, formal citizenship is neither a “necessary nor sufficient guarantee that rights and entitlements are extended to those who need them” (Garcia 1996). In fact, as the normative conception of citizenship suggests, the attainment of full citizenship does not represent an end-point, but rather is a goal that provides a vision of, and catalyst for, social transformation. In this way the pursuit of citizenship mirrors Kallen’s (1982) idea of multiculturalism as consisting of a dimension of ethnopolitical movement for reform (see also Kobayashi 1993). The search for citizenship of racialized minorities in Canada often finds its genesis in experiences of discrimination (Smith 2000).
The ideas relating to citizenship used to inform this debate on multiculturalism and racism in Canada are primarily related to conceptions of substantive citizenship as opposed to those of formal citizenship. As Canadians, racialized individuals and groups are afforded full formal citizenship rights under the law, and as such, this will not form the focal point of this analysis of citizenship. Instead, this analysis will involve deliberation over the deeper, sociological meanings of the concept and the barriers to its full realization. Acknowledging and managing racism in Canadian society can only serve to enhance the substantive experience of citizenship of racialized groups. Many scholars have argued for broader understandings of citizenship that reach beyond juridical and legal realms (Isin and Wood 1999; Lara 2002). Such arguments invoke a desire for what Isin and Wood (1999) have termed “deep” citizenship through which there is a extension of the scope of the meaning of the concept. As Leydet (2003) points outs, one’s sense of belonging can greatly affect the strength of political communities and as such, should be regarded as an important goal of citizenship.

In the sections to follow I further introduce the concept of citizenship and present general theories on the subject. I discuss Canada’s citizenship regime and highlight the manner in which it impacts the climate of belonging in the country.

*Theories of Citizenship*

Theories of citizenship have emerged from a variety of intellectual traditions. Each of these traditions has a history and a geography that has influenced and continues to influence that adoption. The liberal conception of citizenship has deep historical and political roots and understands citizenship to be primarily a legal status. As such, political liberty is seen as the means to protect individual rights, predominantly in the private sphere. Others theories such as neoliberal and multicultural citizenship share a more recent development, and represent critical expansions of the liberal conceptualization.
Although the relationship between the state and its citizens is subject to a multitude of forces of change, the role of the state in managing citizenship discourse and practice has neither been lessened nor abrogated by globalization. Current trends of increased mobility, however, have brought new issues and challenges to the forefront of the debate and have, as a result, produced new forms of citizenship (Staliulis and Bakan 2005). The terms and conditions of citizenship (that is, the “contract” between state and citizen) are the product of active and ongoing negotiation. With the expansion of neoliberal policies and globalization, the hierarchical and exclusionary tendencies of citizenship have deepened. What has emerged in its wake is neoliberal citizenship, that reflects “less a relationship between a collective membership with the nation-state…and more of a way of life defined by individuals’ competitive initiative and capacity to succeed in the global economy” (Staliulis and Bakan 2005:21). Guided by a neoliberal agenda, the relationship between the citizen and the state is one based on exclusion, as rights to access become increasingly connected to marketplace performance.

Multicultural Citizenship

The development of a multicultural citizenship regime as a means to address issues of racism in Canadian society is supported by the writing of several theorists. In particular, the works of Abu-Laban and Parekh speak to many of the principles and objectives of multicultural citizenship, and fit well within the notion of “deep” citizenship introduced earlier (Isin and Wood 1999). Although these theorists make use of slightly different understandings of citizenship and multiculturalism (and the associated perspectives and models each prescribes), they share a common dissatisfaction with current conceptualizations and their ability to accommodate diversity and generate genuine acceptance.

Parekh’s (2000) powerful argument for multicultural citizenship claims that “diversity should not simply be accommodated but cherished.” Although this statement is made in the context of multiculturalism, its premise may be easily and usefully extended to encompass the concept of
multicultural citizenship. The sense of belonging that Parekh envisions from an inclusive evaluation of difference, and that Abu-Laban (2000) also believes is critical to participatory citizenship, forms a fundamental element of multicultural citizenship. Multicultural citizenship has at its roots the intertwining of many of the principles and objectives of anti-racism, multiculturalism and citizenship. Although Abu-Laban (2000) acknowledges that citizenship sometimes creates inequalities, she maintains the generation of equality is its ultimate goal. Racism, she notes, is one of several forms of discrimination that significantly impact participatory citizenship.

The deepening of citizenship that is proposed under multicultural citizenship—which retains the formal, legal and juridical functions of citizenship, but adds a social dimension—is structured to allow minority groups to employ both the discourse of equality (as housed within the principles of citizenship) and also difference (as espoused in anti-racism). In this unique way, multicultural citizenship can inform and challenge the relations of power that currently impact matters relating to rights. By nature of its definition as a relationship between the state and its citizens, a multicultural citizenship may be better positioned to hold the state more accountable for failures to provide meaningful, participatory citizenship than multiculturalism in its current form. Arguably, it is this framework that allows for valuing difference and equality that will, in the long run, be most conducive to eliminating racial discrimination (Abu-Laban and Nieguth 2000).

Through its authoritative and juridical structures, as well as the other symbolic and material resources Parekh (2000) describes, there is the potential for the creation of a space where inclusion is inextricably linked to recognition and captured in the rights of the law and ideals of society. The notion of respect for an individual’s culture (and I would argue, identity more generally) as an integral part of the principle of equal citizenship stressed by Parekh (2000) takes shape in both political and social worlds under multicultural citizenship. No longer is multiculturalism simply a tool of legitimization, but as attitudes and ways of thought change, it evolves into a holistic, normative view of society. In this way, perhaps the development of a sufficient Multiculturalism Policy for which Kobayashi (1995) calls can be achieved. Cautions that multiculturalism weakens
ties of citizenship need not be heeded when the assumption of a dominant culture is over-turn and all members of the national community subscribe to a common, blended identity (surely among others).

Conclusion

The composition of society in Canada is such that the reality of its multicultural nature cannot be dismissed. Combating racism is an important step in alleviating barriers to full citizenship (formal and substantive) and fostering a strong sense of belonging among Canadians. Multiculturalism in its current form represents an admirable and ambitious (yet unattained) goal of promoting and ensuring respect, understanding and equity among Canada’s citizens and groups.

Proponents of a plural concept of citizenship argue for the necessity of a multicultural citizenship that includes an equitable relationship among all members of society, Canadian governments and institutions. The goal of these new relationships being a sociological redefinition of citizenship, as well as a complete renegotiation of discourses that promotes inclusion. It is in a quest in search of deep citizenship that claims of racial discrimination can be acknowledged and validated and other frameworks (such as legal and juridical) can be engaged so as to implement some of the suggestions forwarded by race and anti-racism theorists. There is much about which to remain positive when evaluating the capacity of citizenship discourses, and particularly in combination with multiculturalism discourses, to promote change in Canadian society. Numerous writers (Marston and Stacheli 1994; Young 2000; Pulido 2006) have shown that people can form (and have historically formed) their own alternative citizenships that challenge the inconsistencies and inequalities that exist within the norms of contemporary society (even if a norm such as multiculturalism is an attempt at attaining an ideal!).

Discourses of citizenship and, in particular multicultural citizenship, serve not only to legitimize concerns over the substantive citizenship denied to racialized minorities under discriminatory ideologies and practices, but effectively provide a space where individuals and
groups can challenge multiculturalism under the umbrella of citizenship rights. While possessing the capacity to promote diversity, it is only through the introduction of discourses of substantive citizenship that racism can be acknowledged and hopefully eliminated. The legal, political and identity dimensions of citizenship are particularly well suited to this cause as they serve to organize and legitimize the struggle for meaningful, multicultural citizenship in a space that is itself continuously regenerated.

Conclusion

A review of the literature on race and racism highlights the complex and shifting nature of the phenomenon. As perceptions of racial difference have changed, so too have the theories and frameworks that have been developed to combat them. Recent focus on the role of institutions in not only masking, but perpetuating, racial discrimination has shed light on several issues affecting Canadians of colour and has opened new avenues for research. No longer relegated to the margins of social conscience and action, the concerns of Canadians unjustly treated because of skin colour are beginning to assume a prominent space in ethnocultural, political and academic circles.

The theories and practices of multiculturalism significantly influence the lives of immigrants and their children. Formulated as a tool for the integration of immigrant groups, multiculturalism has historically been constructed to manage the differences between new-comers (who bring with them their own cultures, beliefs and traditions) and the existing Canadian population. The means by which multicultural ideology and practice attempts to remove barriers to participation in Canadian life while simultaneously crafting a vision of Canada to be shared by all its peoples is complex and has its limitations.

While investigating the utility of multiculturalism to legitimize diversity and combat racism, it is important to remain cognizant of the fact that there are both theoretical and practical dimensions to the concept. While it may be easy to assume a consistency between theory and
practice (or ideology and practice), it is precisely this erroneous assumption that masks the
deficiencies of multiculturalism. Acknowledging the discord between theory and the realities
experienced by individuals of colour is fundamental to understanding how effective the
implementation of multiculturalism has been to date.

It is encouraging to consider the gains to be had through the invocation of deep citizenship
discourses. The addition of real processes of change in institutions may indeed possess the ability to
evolve into what may be considered the ideal “end-point” of multiculturalism—a social reality
based on acceptance and respect for racial diversity that brings the lived realities of all Canadians in
step with the image of Canada produced through discourses of multiculturalism.
The ethnocultural make-up of Canada’s population has been shaped over time by different patterns of immigration and varies considerably according to ancestral profiles. The sources of immigrants to Canada have changed significantly in the last half century, with increasing numbers coming from non-European countries. As a result the country is fast becoming one of the most ethnically diverse nations in the world. To understand the significance of researching the experiences of second generation Canadians of colour, it is useful to consider both their positioning in Canadian society as well as how they fit into the demographic make-up of Canada’s population.

In the sections to follow I review two broad collections of information relevant to this research project. To begin, I present an overview of government statistics pertaining to the size, distribution and composition of visible minority and second generation populations. This information not only highlights the value of studying these populations today, but makes a clear case for future research. In this section I additionally refer to findings on ethnic affiliations and how they relate to the populations of interest. The remainder of the chapter contains discussions describing the research that has been conducted to date on second generation Canadians of colour.

**Canadians by the Numbers**

*“Visible Minorities”*

There are numerous ways to categorize individuals and groups according to somatic differences. Statistics Canada, the country’s national statistical agency, contends that the concept of visible minority “applies to persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are identified according to the Employment Equity Act as being non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour (Canada 2006).” Despite its being labelled a racist term by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of
Racial Discrimination in March 2007, the Canadian Government continues to utilize the concept when referring to the non-dominant, non-white segments of the country’s population and collects extensive population data according to this demographic category.  

Table 3.1 Visible minority population counts for Canada, provinces, and territories, 2006 Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Total Canadian Population</th>
<th>Total Visible Minority Population</th>
<th>Total Visible Minority Population (% of total population)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CANADA</td>
<td>31,241,030</td>
<td>5,068,090</td>
<td>16.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newfoundland and Labrador</td>
<td>500,605</td>
<td>5,720</td>
<td>1.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
<td>234,205</td>
<td>1,830</td>
<td>0.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>903,090</td>
<td>37,680</td>
<td>4.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>719,650</td>
<td>13,345</td>
<td>1.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>7,435,905</td>
<td>654,355</td>
<td>8.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>12,028,895</td>
<td>2,745,205</td>
<td>22.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>1,133,510</td>
<td>109,095</td>
<td>9.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>953,845</td>
<td>33,900</td>
<td>3.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>3,256,355</td>
<td>454,200</td>
<td>13.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>4,074,385</td>
<td>1,008,855</td>
<td>24.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yukon Territory</td>
<td>30,195</td>
<td>1,220</td>
<td>4.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Territories</td>
<td>41,060</td>
<td>2,270</td>
<td>5.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nunavut</td>
<td>29,325</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>1.43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In 2001, visible minorities represented 13.4% of Canada’s population, an increase from 9.4% in 1991 and 4.1% in 1981. Visible minority populations are not evenly distributed across the country.  

---

5 Due to the problematic nature of the term “visible minority”, I use it only in reference to those specific
Data collected in 2006 rank British Columbia as the province with the highest proportion of visible minorities (24.8%), followed by Ontario (22.8%) in a close second (Table 3.1). The same census findings also show the three largest visible minority groups as Chinese (3.5%), South Asian (3.1%) and Blacks (2.2%).

Population trends suggest that the visible minority population will continue to increase at a rate far greater than that of the general population. Between 1996 and 2001, the visible minority population in Canada increased by 25% while the general rate posted an increase of only 4%. Projections published by Statistics Canada estimate that by 2017 Canada will be home to between 6 and 9 million visible minority persons, an increase of anywhere between 56%-111% of the 2001 total (Bélanger and Malenfant 2005). According to the same report, in 2017 roughly one in five Canadians will be a member of a visible minority, representing approximately 22% of Canada’s population, a figure ostensibly equivalent to the highest level recorded in the twentieth century.

It is projected that in 2017 roughly half of the visible minority population will be made up of persons of South Asian or Chinese background. Blacks are estimated to remain the third largest visible minority group in Canada with just over 1 million people. In 2001, the median age of visible minority persons was 31.5, significantly lower that the rest of the Canadian population (37.6) and is expected to remain as such for some time. The age structure of visible minority Canadians is significant because as the rest of the Canadian population ages they will offset departures from the labour force.

The Ethnic Diversity Survey (2002) developed by Statistics Canada in partnership with the Department of Canadian Heritage examines Canada’s ethnocultural mosaic, presenting a portrait and analysis of not only generational but ethnic breakdowns with respect to the level of attachment that people have to their own ethnocultural backgrounds and to the broader Canadian society. In the context of racism in Canada, these population statistics highlight a potentially frightening scenario.
of discrimination in the years to come. In 2002, one in five Canadians, representing almost 587,000 people, reported experiencing discrimination or unfair treatment sometimes or often because of their ethnicity or culture, race, skin colour, language, accent or religion. Of those respondents, over 70% reported race or skin colour as the dominant reasons for experiencing discrimination or unfair treatment.

Current and projected statistics show that visible minority populations in Canada will continue to grow at a significant rate and represent a larger segment of the country’s total population. The issues facing this group of Canadians will increasingly become issues facing Canadians and Canadian society as a whole, and will demand action and resources capable of remedying the effects of racism.

The Second Generation

Second generation Canadians are individuals who were born in Canada to at least one foreign-born parent. According to Statistics Canada, in 2002 the second generation population represented 17% of the country’s total population over the age of fifteen (3.9 million people). Of that second generation population, over half reported European, British, French, and/or Canadian ancestry, while approximately one fifth reported only non-European ancestry, Aboriginal or Other (Figure 3.1).

Much like the visible minority population, second generation Canadians are not evenly distributed across the country. British Columbia is the province with the highest concentration of second generation Canadians with nearly 25% calling it home. The Prairie Provinces rank a close second with 24% and Ontario rounds out the top three with 21%. Of the leading regions, the ancestry of the second generation varies tremendously. The greatest number of visible minority second generation are located in British Columbia and Ontario, while second generation Canadians of European descent dominate in the Prairies (Canada 2002).
Statistics from the Ethnic Diversity Survey (2002) show that of Canada’s 3 million visible minority persons (13% of total Canadian population fifteen years and over), 16% or approximately 214,000 are second generation. As a percentage of the total Canadian population, second generation, visible minority Canadians represent just less than two percent (Figure 3.2).

**Figure 3.1 Ethnic origins of the second generation aged 15 years and older in Canada, 2006 Census**

![Pie chart showing ethnic origins of second generation in Canada](image)


**Table 3.2 Generational breakdown of visible minority population, 2006 Census**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Category</th>
<th>Total-Generation Status</th>
<th>2nd Generation Status (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Canadian Population</td>
<td>25,664,220</td>
<td>4,006,420 (15.61%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Visible Minority Population</td>
<td>3,922,700</td>
<td>551,740 (14.07%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>1,005,635</td>
<td>138,520 (13.77%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asian</td>
<td>957,645</td>
<td>132,190 (13.80%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>562,135</td>
<td>115,090 (20.47%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>320,915</td>
<td>35,760 (11.14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asian</td>
<td>184,575</td>
<td>23,450 (12.70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Others</td>
<td>891,780</td>
<td>106,725 (11.97%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Visible Minority Population</td>
<td>21,741,525</td>
<td>3,454,685 (15.89%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Given that the visible minority population as a whole is expected to significantly increase over the next 10 years (Canada 2006), it is expected that the numbers of second generation individuals of colour will also rise as a result. This prediction, coupled with statistics that reveal that the second generation of visible minority groups is comparatively young, suggest that this increase may be even more substantial.

**Ethnic Affiliations**

Questions concerning the “origins” of persons in Canada have appeared in virtually every census in Canada since Confederation. While these questions have asked variously about “race,” “ethnic group” or “ethnocultural ancestry,” the concept of ethnicity has evolved over time. Today scholars subscribe to numerous understandings of ethnicity. While some consider ethnicity to be inherited, consisting of comparatively permanent traits, others view it as a categorization based on shared language, culture, traditions, values or sense of belonging. Over the last half century, however, a general consensus has emerged that recognizes ethnic affiliations as fluid constructs that change according to sociopolitical contexts (Henry and Tator 2006).

The word “ethnic” first appeared in a Canadian Government census in 1946. Since that time citizens have been asked, in a variety of ways, with which group or groups they most readily identify. It was not until the 1996 Census that “Canadian” was included as one of a list of examples. The late inclusion of “Canadian” as a listed option is one of the reasons forwarded for why it so rapidly became the most frequently reported origin on the census form (Thomas 2005). By choosing an identity, or an ethnic group with which one identifies, individuals effectively situate themselves in specific social dimensions. Whether increases in the reporting of “Canadian” are the result of processes of identification with differentiating groups cannot be proven. Some scholars hypothesize that over the last half century Canadians have sought out ways in which to distinguish themselves.
This claim can be traced to periods of preoccupation with French/English classifications, distinction from American neighbours and, of late, comparisons between settled European groups and more recently arrived immigrants (Li 2003). Still, others argue that there is no evidence to support the claim that there exists a connection between attachment to Canada (as defined by ethnic affiliation) and tolerance of difference (Berry and Kalin 1995).

Several important findings should be noted with respect to the ethnic affiliations of white and non-white Canadians. Ethnocultural data gathered in the 2006 Census reveal that persons describing their ethnic backgrounds as “Canadian” made up 39.4% of the population (over 11 million people). Of the remaining “top-ten” selections, the only racialized groups included in rank were “Chinese” (8th) and “North American Indian” (10th) with 3.7% and 3.4% respectively. This list does not include the multitude of racialized identities that were provided through the write-in option.

Since respondents are not limited to indicating only one ethnic origin on their census form, the understanding of ethnic origins is complex. In fact, many choose to report more than one ethnicity in the census, also opting to write in an option that does not appear in the “top ten” list. According to census statistics, the number of total Canadians who indicated multiple ethnic origins increased from 1996 to 2006 (Table 3.3). Although these increases were small, they highlight the increasingly multicultural identities of Canadians as a whole. When considered in greater detail it is also apparent that the distribution of declarations of single and multiple ethnic identities among visible minority Canadians is varied. Of the total census population, 41% of Canadians indicated multiple ethnic origins. A large number of individuals indicating African (40%), Caribbean (42%) and Latin, Central and South American (45%) origin were more likely to also select Canadian ethnic origins as well. These statistics stand in contrast to other groups including Arab and Asian origins where only 33% and 17% declared multiple ethnic origins (Table 3.4). Despite the fact that more and more Canadians are declaring multiple ethnic origins in the census, these findings confirm the fact that this trend is not evident across all ethnic groups.
When considering the census response of “Canadian” it is practical to remain cautious about what it means. Offering little insight in processes identity formation, the category merely represents a political construct that has as its purpose the generation of specific representations of ethnicity. The census, as Kobayashi (1992) notes, is just one of the sites upon which the relations between the state and its membership are played out.

### Table 3.3 Numbers of “Canadian” responses for ethnic origin, 1996-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Single ethnic origin</th>
<th>Multiple ethnic origins</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>8,806,275</td>
<td>5,326,995 (60.49%)</td>
<td>3,479,285 (39.51%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>11,682,680</td>
<td>6,748,135 (57.76%)</td>
<td>4,934,550 (42.24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>10,066,290</td>
<td>5,748,720 (57.11%)</td>
<td>4,317,570 (42.89%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Table 3.4 Single and multiple ethnic origins for selected groups, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Origin</th>
<th>Total ethnic origin responses</th>
<th>Single ethnic origin responses (%)</th>
<th>Multiple ethnic origin responses (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31,241,030</td>
<td>18,319,580 (58.64%)</td>
<td>12,921,445 (41.36%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>10,066,290</td>
<td>5,748,720 (57.11%)</td>
<td>4,317,570 (42.89%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>578,695</td>
<td>335,230 (57.93%)</td>
<td>243,470 (42.07%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin, Central and South American</td>
<td>360,235</td>
<td>196,670 (54.59%)</td>
<td>163,565 (45.41%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>421,185</td>
<td>251,060 (59.61%)</td>
<td>170,125 (40.39%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>470,580</td>
<td>315,995 (67.15%)</td>
<td>154,585 (32.85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian (West, South, East and Southeast)</td>
<td>3,831,665</td>
<td>3,166,220 (82.63%)</td>
<td>662,435 (17.29%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Statistics on the declaration of multiple identities on the part of second generation visible minorities are varied in nature and mirror those results of the Canadian population as a whole.
While declarations of Canadian and Polish ethnic origin are more often included in multiple ethnic responses, others including European and Arab are employed equally in single, as well as multiple, responses (Table 3.5). On the contrary, Chinese and Italian ethnic origins are about three times more likely to be used singularly by second generation individuals. Although there could be numerous explanations for these group divergences, it may be generally understood that there exist differential processes of identification among the second generation groups that results in the recognition or non-recognition of additional ethnic attachments.

**Table 3.5 Declarations of single and multiple ethnic origins for selected groups of second generation Canadians, 2006**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Second Generation Ethnic Origins</th>
<th>Single Response</th>
<th>Multiple Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>141,440</td>
<td>472,005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European</td>
<td>1,099,745</td>
<td>1,058,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>119,550</td>
<td>37,445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>89,995</td>
<td>32,455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>63,185</td>
<td>140,535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab</td>
<td>27,190</td>
<td>27,645</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Second Generation Research

Research relating to second generation individuals has only in the last ten years emerged as a focus of government policy and academic inquiry. Recent research on their experiences shows that they are not only subject to racial discrimination, but that these experiences significantly impact the social, political, economic and cultural dimensions of their lives. In particular, significant scholarship has centred on questions of identity, discrimination in educational and employment spheres, as well as belonging in Canada.

Tonks and Paranjpe (1999) reveal accounts of an identity dilemma among second generation Canadians who struggle to balance ancestral and mainstream cultures. That they self-identify along a continuum of Ethnic-Canadian identities is related to perceived benefits and disadvantages of identification on a variety of scales. This dilemma leads to stress and conflict, and consequently social difficulties within the home, school, ethnic community and the wider society. Pratt’s (2002) work in the Filipino/a-Canadian community in Vancouver documents feelings of dislocation in Canada among her second generation participants that result from marginalization from mainstream society through assumptions of perpetual immigrant status and stereotyping. While in some ways the increasing adoption of Filipino/a identities is a response to exclusion from Canadian society, for Filipino/a youths, belonging stretches beyond the borders of Canada and as such transforms claims of Canadian identity and belonging in Canada. The adoption of multiple identities, that is the accommodation of Canadian and other identities, is one way in which Canada’s second generation population copes and their liminal status and maintains transnational ties with ancestral countries (Walters and Teo 2003).

Research on the educational system shows that while the racialized children of immigrants fare relatively well in school, these accomplishments do not necessarily carry over into employment (Pendakur and Pendakur 2002). Findings by Jansen, Plaza and James (1998) suggest that second generation Caribbean-origin men and women with postsecondary qualifications face numerous
challenges with respect to employment. In particular, their findings show that institutional and systemic discrimination operate as barriers to gaining employment and promotion, that postsecondary education provides more mobility to women than to men, and that ethnicity and skin colour are important factors that regulate the levels of discrimination experienced in Canada. Complementary work by Pendakur and Pendakur (2002) shows that in a wider context, Canadian-born visible minority people face a significant earnings penalty compared to whites. Despite suggestions of inadequate funding in primary and secondary schools to meet the needs of a culturally and racially diverse student population, many scholars still view education as one of the greatest tools to improving the circumstances of second generation Canadians of colour (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002).

Research by Reitz and Banerjee (2007) examining the relationship between racial inequality, discrimination and the social integration of racial minorities in Canada, suggests that racial inequality is a significant issue, and that second generation individuals are less likely than either their parents or their white counterparts to report feeling that they belong and that they indicate Canadian identity less frequently than do white second generation individuals. Also, their work shows that reports of experiences of racism vary among racialized groups, as do overall levels of belonging.
Researching the experiences and perceptions of racism of second generation Canadians of colour is a complex task. This project required considerable organization and attention to detail throughout the design process. In order to produce a well-informed and comprehensive research project, I felt it was necessary to not only acknowledge and incorporate ideas emerging from the literature on qualitative methods in geography, but also that in the areas of ethics, fieldwork, positionality, and reflexivity. In doing so, I prepared myself for some of the potential setbacks or challenges of conducting research with humans.

This chapter details both the theoretical and practical explorations of my research. I briefly review the role and history of qualitative methodologies in geography. Subsequently, I go over the rationale behind, and protocols supporting, the execution of ethical research and reflect on how this information can guide my project. I dedicate a significant amount of discussion to issues of ethics, in particular focussing on my position as a researcher and how it affects and, in turn, is impacted by my relationship to the research topic and the research participants. Following this theoretical discussion I explain the practical elements of my research, detailing the research design, some of the limitations of the selected methods, and how I intend to ensure rigour throughout the research process.

**Qualitative Research in Geography**

The discipline of geography has to some extent always incorporated a wide range of methodological and interpretive approaches. In the 1970s, the “humanist wave” emerged and popularized qualitative geographical research (Crang 2002). Humanist geographers sought to challenge

---

6 Which largely served as a critique of the Quantitative Revolution, a period of time during which positivist perspectives dominated research.
the mechanistic and objective approaches that characterized positivism and emphasized instead the importance of values and meanings held by researchers and research subjects (Entrikin 1976).

Humanistic geographers stressed the need to understand the lives of individuals and strove to return them to the centre of geographic enquiry. This included the understandings of what Tuan (1977) notes as the psychological, emotional, and existential attachments that individuals exhibit. At this time, humanist geographers were not alone in the promotion of qualitative methods. Feminist geographers engaging in increasingly personal research were instrumental in both developing critical standards for qualitative methods and popularizing them (Winchester 2000). As accounts of the expansion indicate, qualitative methodologies now represent legitimate techniques to inform a range of empirical and philosophical work. As Crang (2002) contentedly notes, today there is no longer the need to justify qualitative work.

Qualitative research methods are valued for their ability to explore the feelings, understandings, and knowledges of others in an attempt to elucidate human environments and social processes and capture dynamics of change (Winchester 2000; Limb and Dwyer 2001). The research questions they enable range from the analysis of social structures to deeply personal experiences. Several different kinds of research techniques are included within qualitative methodologies. They include oral techniques (such as interviews, questionnaires, and group discussions), textual analysis (documentary, archival, or cartographic in nature) and participatory research (which involves the observation of participants as well as cooperative action) (Winchester 2000; Limb and Dwyer 2001). It is not essential that qualitative research methods be used exclusively. To the contrary, researchers often combine these methods with quantitative ones in a process of triangulation. While this technique has the potential to inform and enhance qualitative findings, there are also concerns from the academic community that the complementarity it generates may be illusory (Winchester 1999).
Ethics, Power, and Subjectivity

Designing Ethical Research

The ethical behaviour of researchers has several important practical elements. They include the protection of the individuals, communities, and environments involved in research, the creation of a favourable climate for continued investigation (which most often necessitates the earning and maintenance of trust), and the demand for accountability (Hay 2003). A growing number of organizations encouraging the ethical undertaking of research have established committees that review research proposals to ensure that they follow ethical procedures. Universities are especially cognizant of the importance of scrutinizing and monitoring research undertaken by their students and faculty that they most often have an ethics committee or board. It is the mandate of these organizations to emphasize justice and respect in research projects. While these principles provide a good general framework for understandings of ethical research, ethics committees often consider additional, more detailed issues when evaluating proposals. These issues include questions of participant consent, confidentiality, harm, cultural awareness and the dissemination of findings (Hay 2003). At Queen’s University all human research must be approved by the General Research Ethics Board, which is governed by the Tri-Council7 and its policies. As required by the Tri-Council and Queen’s University8, the research I have undertaken has received ethics clearance.

Fieldwork, Positionality, Reflexivity

Within the discipline of geography there has been a directed concern over ethical research. In particular, this discussion has centred on issues of fieldwork, reflexivity, positionality, and power.

---

7 The Tri-Council consists of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).
8 For more information on the General Research Ethics Board at Queen’s University please visit the Office of Research Services online at http://www.queensu.ca/vpr/.
Although I will attempt to discuss these issues separately, it should be noted that their nature, tendencies, and outcomes are intimately related and in some cases are mutually constitutive.

It was not until the 1990s that the politically committed research of feminist scholars began to include discussions of fieldwork and representation. Since then, increased scholarship has focused on the political roots of power and has drawn attention to the relationship between the researcher and the researched. Understanding this relationship is considered especially vital in field research where the interaction between the two parties is periodic, short, and intense (Nast 1994).

Concerns raised while conducting field research have practical, political, ethical, strategic, and personal dimensions, and although they may seem separate from the "research itself," they remain integral to it. Several divides characterize the concept of fieldwork. They include the separation of the process and act of engaging in fieldwork and the products of the fieldwork itself, the gap between the academy and the world-at large, and perceptions of “insider” and “outsider.” By addressing what constitutes the “field” as well as a “field researcher,” it is possible to begin to flush out the nature and implications of fieldwork.

A field need not necessarily be defined as a concrete place or people, but can be “located and defined in terms of specific political objectives that…cut across space and time” (Nast 1994:57). A field is always “politically situated, …and its social, political and spatial boundaries shift with changing circumstances” (Nast 1994:57). Moreover, it represents a social terrain in which bonds can be forged between the academy and the lives of the people it professes to represent (Kobayashi 1994). With respect to notions of “inside” and “outside,” feminist discussions of fieldwork acknowledge the co-construction of the field by both the researcher and the researched and reveal its nature as a discursive process (England 2001). In this sense, the purpose and construction of the field allows for what Katz (1994) terms spaces of “betweeness,” wherein the researcher is always in the field and always works with “others” who are separate and distinct from themselves. This notion of “betweeness” emphasizes that the researcher is neither an insider nor an outsider, but that his or her position is entwined in processes of negotiation founded in difference. This phenomenon is discussed by Kobayashi (1994) in
her article “Colouring the Field” where she describes how her positioning in the field as a Japanese-Canadian changed with political context and time.

The concept of positionality is closely related. Crang (2003) broadly defines positionality as a theoretical division between insiders and outsiders that can be based on a wide array of criteria. One’s position in the social and political structures of society invariably influences how the world is understood (Hartsock 1983; Haraway 1988). Within the discipline of geography, the idea of positionality has been debated by feminist scholars who challenge hegemonic and universalist claims to knowledge. Centred on the nature and role of the researcher, questions of positionality reflect concerns over representation of the “other” and the production of knowledge.

Although dealing with or resolving issues surrounding positionality necessitates the definition of all parties involved in research, it is the researcher in particular who engages in extensive self-evaluation. Although this task is purported to generate greater transparency and ethics in the research, some scholars have cautioned against the essentializing of the “researcher.” This claim is based in the understanding that much like his or her subjects of study, the researcher too can embody dynamic or unstable identities (Crang 2003)). Instead of merely providing accounts recognizing how bodies are positioned and made socially meaningful, critical evaluations should seek to unpack the body (of both the researcher and the researched) as an active agent in the production of knowledge (Crang 2003).

As Kobayashi (In Press) notes, to be reflexive is to engage in an examination of one’s position as a researcher in relation to those researched. Reflexivity is not, however, a project about self knowledge. Rather, it is concerned with the condition of production of the “self” and its knowledges (Sidaway 2000). This process of critical self-examination is multifaceted and demands the situation of one’s own knowledge, the recognition that this knowledge is contextual by nature, and the appreciation that the researcher invariably symbolizes a multiplicity of affect, social meanings, and power (Kobayashi In Press). Many scholars believe that while positionality emphasizes and demands the recognition and disclosure of the dimensions of the relationships among researcher, the subject of study and the audience, Rose (1997) remarks that claims by authors to have resolved issues of positionality
are founded on the erroneous perception of perfect self-knowledge. If this is so, one must ask whether undertaking the project self-reflection represents merely a symbolic gesture. For many academics, this project of positioning represents a first step in re-situating the body of the researcher. Described as a “point of departure for political action” (Kobayashi In Press), critical geographers, once attuned to their positioning, can begin to learn and act in ways that diminish the distance between themselves and those whom they study.

*My Positionality*

As I have discovered through deliberations over my own role as a researcher, engaging in acts of self-reflection is challenging and raises some very interesting and complicated ethical, methodological, and theoretical issues. At the forefront of the ethical concerns over which I have deliberated in the process of envisioning, planning, and undertaking my research are questions over my role in the production of knowledge on experiences of racism. Central to this concern is my right as a white person to speak about, or on behalf of, individuals of colour. By nature of being white, I am not privy to the circumstances of oppression facing people of colour, nor am I able to relate to their experiences of inequity. As a student of theories of race and racism, I am aware of the recent scholarship on topics such as “whiteness” and institutional racism that document the role of white systems of power in perpetuating racism and emphasize the need to look at these systems critically.

It is easy to get caught up in questions of who is an “insider” and who is an “outsider” and this preoccupation can sometimes cloud the subtleties of an issue. While it is true that as a white researcher I embody a positionality that is privileged and different from those whose experiences I study, this need not necessarily exclude me from engaging in the research. As a researcher (and an individual) I embody multiple and simultaneous identities. Even though on the one hand I am a part of a white system of oppression, I am also an anti-racist, passionate about issues of racial discrimination and the promotion of equity. I am also ardent about the critical evaluation of the systems of power of which I am a part and actively search out ways to enable or facilitate change. As a Canadian I can learn about the strengths
and shortcomings of my country and make a conscious effort to improve the daily realities of my fellow citizens.

There is no doubt that self-awareness and thoughtful reflection are necessary components of research. A researcher should be aware of the intricacies of the topic, especially when power asymmetries are involved. The acknowledgement of my identity as a researcher stems not from a desire to apologize for those characteristics that define or differentiate me from those whom I study, but rather, I forward the appraisal of my identities as a first step in recognizing my role in the formation and maintenance of systems of racial discrimination. I do not believe, however, that self-examination should end in emotional and political paralysis. As previously detailed, I represent numerous identities, several of which may positively influence my participation in this research. Engaging in research that not only uncovers new truths, but also challenges the researcher and the research process can be a worthwhile endeavour. If the research process and the interaction among researchers, researched and audience is tempered with not only conscientiousness on the part of the researcher, but also humility and empathy, I am optimistic that many of the ethical, methodological, and theoretical dilemmas can be overcome.9

Research Design

Selecting Cases and Participants

According to Bradshaw and Stratford (2000), cases can be considered examples of general processes or structure which can be theorized; they represent categorical questions of study. Participants are elements of the case in question and their characteristics vary as a result. When researchers begin a project, they first either find a case or participants. I was first attracted to a specific group of participants (second generation Canadians of colour) and secondly, to a case (effects of racism on belonging in Canada). In order to focus my research interests I engaged in exploratory work to gain insight into the issues facing racialized minorities in Canada, but also to contextualize these experiences within
academic research and literature. My exploratory work included reading previous research documenting the experiences of second generation individuals in Canada as well as matters on racism and racialization more broadly.

In order to elicit the experiences of second generation Canadians of colour I employed a combination of purposeful criteria and snowball sampling\textsuperscript{10} to find Queen’s University students between the ages of 20 and 29 years of age. This recruiting was completed in two steps. First, in order to fulfill the criteria of the research topic, only individuals who were second generation Canadians of colour were extended an invitation to participate. They were asked to inform other people they knew who fit the profile of the project and invite them to join the research. By nature of the sampling technique employed, the sample of participants I was able to recruit may be thought to constitute a distinct segment of the generation as a whole. Level of education is one dimension that may differentiate the experiences of the sample from the second generation of colour in Canada as a whole.

The second stage consisted of recruiting a sample of white Canadian students against whom the responses of the former sample group could be compared and contrasted. This similarly required university students between the ages of 20 and 29. It is important to note that while one of the criteria for inclusion in the group of individuals of colour was generational status, this was not used to select white participants. Since the primary reason for the addition of groups of white participants to the study was to provide a backdrop or comparison for the contributions of the second generation participants of colour I did not consider their generational status as integral to the research process. This decision may be viewed as one limitation of the research as it reduces the comparative value of generational experiences.

These two sets of participants constituted the snowball or chain sampling portion of my sampling. In addition to the snowball sampling technique previously discussed, I also advertised in several academic departments and resource centres at Queen’s University and distributed information at

\textsuperscript{9} This is not always the case though and England (1994) details her experiences of removing herself from research with members of a Lesbian community.
the meetings of a variety of University clubs. The greatest numbers of participants were those recruited by word of mouth or those to whom I extended personal invitations.

The question of sample size in qualitative methodologies is significantly different than in quantitative research. In qualitative methods the sample is not intended to be representative since the analysis centres on meanings generated in specific contexts (Robinson 1998). As Patton (1990) notes, sample size is dependent (among others things) on the purpose of the inquiry, what is at stake, and what can be done with the time and resources available. In summation, (Patton 1990:185) the “validity, meaningfulness, and insights generated from qualitative inquiry have more to do with…information-richness…than with sample size.”

In total, I was able to recruit eighteen second generation Canadians of colour and eighteen white Canadians to participate in my research. Each of the thirty-six participants volunteered approximately two hours of their time to correspond by email, complete a questionnaire, and participate in a focus group discussion. In the section that follows I present in greater detail the research instruments I developed and their utility in my research.

**Questionnaires**

*What are questionnaires?*

A questionnaire is an instrument used in the collection of data and is comprised of carefully structured and ordered questions designed to elucidate information on a desired topic. Questionnaires may be delivered face-to-face or over the telephone by a trained individual or distributed by mail or internet and may be self-administered (Johnson 2000). The design of a questionnaire greatly influences the type of responses gathered. Factual questionnaires are designed to obtain information relating to things such as biographical data and closed-ended or ranking questions are frequently used. Other kinds of questionnaires focus less on collecting factual data and more on eliciting the respondents’ beliefs and
opinions. These attitudinal surveys incorporate open-ended or “free” questions that invite the respondents to share their thoughts liberally (Johnson 2000). Although the development of questionnaires appears to be a relatively straightforward task, this is simply not the case. Creating an instrument that is concise, unambiguous, and unbiased requires extensive planning and testing.

There are several benefits to incorporating questionnaires into a research project. Since the responses available for selection by the respondents are standardized in a factual questionnaire, the aggregation of information for the sample is facilitated. While this is not the case with attitudinal questionnaires, both styles offer consistency in the questions provided. In comparison to more intensive research methodologies, the use of questionnaires may offer cost and time savings for they demand fewer resources for implementation.

The use of questionnaires is not without drawbacks. One of the limitations of questionnaires is the potential for the misinterpretation of questions or respondents being led to answer the questions in specific ways. When designing and developing questionnaires it is important that questions are written so that participants can understand them. This task may require the use of everyday language or the use of a language familiar to the respondent. Questions may be leading if they suggest what answer the respondent should select. In some cases, respondents may feel there is benefit to pleasing the researcher and such skewing of their answers may ultimately affect the reliability or authenticity of the information. Furthermore, when questionnaires are administered in the absence of a trained researcher or associate, there is a greater likelihood that they will be returned with errors or omissions (Johnson 2000).

For the purposes of my study, I created a short questionnaire comprising both factual and attitudinal styles and drawing on an array of formats including charts, scales and close-ended questions. I chose to use this approach in order to capitalize on the strengths of both design styles and to maximize the types of data I was able to collect on the research topic. The charts proved to be easy to understand, eliminating the need for excessive wording and response options, and provided a structure for the biographical section of the questionnaire.
The development of the questionnaire occurred in three stages. The first stage involved detailing what research themes needed to be incorporated into the questionnaire and how this could be best achieved. In the end, I decided to divide the questionnaire into three sections. The first section of the questionnaire asks respondents to supply biographical information relating to the age, place of birth, ethnicity, languages, religion, residence, level of education, and occupation for themselves, their parents, and their grandparents. The second section, composed of two scale questions, asks respondents to reflect on racism in Canada. The final section, entitled “Racism and Me,” focuses on the respondents’ specific experiences of racism and asks them to comment on the frequency of racism encountered in various locations, the extent to which they feel they are the target of racial discrimination, whether they believe it is more than what was experienced by their parents, and how, if at all, these experiences have influenced their feelings of belonging in Canada. The selection of these three themes, or sections, in the questionnaire served to not only organize it effectively, but also gently to guide the respondent through reflections of potentially unsettling thoughts or memories. The questions included in the questionnaire were also used as a starting point for the focus group discussions and as background to inform subsequent interpretations of recorded discussion dialogue.

The second stage of building the questionnaire revolved around question structure, with particular focus on the flow of the material and the individual question formats. During this stage I frequently rearranged the order of the questions in attempts to go from the most general to the most specific. For some questions I struggled with selecting the most appropriate format. To resolve these issues I developed several different versions of the same question so as to better judge which one was comprehended without difficulty by the participants. While composing the questions it was also important to scrutinize the language used to convey the questions. In particular, I was cautious to use an intermediate level of English and was careful not to write leading questions. Throughout this stage of assessing the language appropriateness of the questionnaire, I frequently asked for the opinions of others, especially individuals unfamiliar with the research.
The final stage of the formation of the questionnaire consisted of a number of trial runs. For this task I enlisted the assistance of a range of individuals including professors, graduate and undergraduate students, as well as members of the general public. I asked each of individual to complete the questionnaire to the best of their ability and to note any concerns or necessary clarifications in the margins. Once I reviewed and incorporated all of the suitable suggestions, I administered the questionnaire a final time. At this point, no further suggestions were forwarded and I deemed the questionnaire ready for use.

Administering and Analyzing the Questionnaire

The questionnaire I developed to gather biographical data and opinions relating to racism was administered immediately prior to the respondents’ participation in a focus group session. The participants were seated around a circular table and given between fifteen and twenty minutes to complete the questionnaire. Each questionnaire was tagged with a code to identify the participant without the use of their name and these codes were also used to record their participation in the discussion.

In general, few issues arose with the structure and administration of the questionnaire. On occasion I was asked by participants to clarify the meaning of a question. This was usually related to differences in the meanings of some of the terms used in the instrument. For example, in one question I asked respondents to comment on their feelings of belonging in Canada and was asked by two respondents to define what I meant by belonging. To resolve this matter I simply offered the term “attachment” as a synonym for the term belonging. By providing the same explanation of the term to both respondents I feel as though I minimized the variability of the responses and reduced the amount of bias injected into the answer. The use of flow charts in the opening pages of the questionnaire proved to be an efficient and user-friendly way to collect biographical information. In fact, some participants commented on the novelty of the organization and the resulting ease with which they could complete the questions.
Focus Groups

What is a focus Group?

Focus groups are small group discussions on topics or issues that are defined by the researcher. Briefly, the researcher introduces the topic and invites the group to participate in discussion as they sit around a table. Throughout the course of the focus group the researcher acts as a mediator of the discussion so as to ensure the conversation flows smoothly and remains adequately on topic. As with any methodology, there are advantages and limitations to the use of focus groups. These have been documented within the literature on qualitative methodologies.

Focus groups place the individual in a group context likened to a commonplace social situation. Interaction among the members of focus groups is a key characteristic of the research method and as a result, the setting is often one of dynamism and energy as people respond to the contributions of others (Cameron 2000). This type of dialogic interaction has been described as having a “synergistic effect” that generates more, richer information than other methods. One reason for the heightened quality and quantity of information may be the result of increased opportunities of members to explore different points of view. In the group context, people’s opinions and beliefs can be questioned and/or amplified by others in the group, leading to the formation of multiple understandings and meanings.

The objective of the focus groups was not only to compare the differences in the experiences of racial discrimination of second generation racialized individuals and their parents, but to additionally understand how racism affects these individuals’ feelings of belonging in Canada. I identified three main themes relating to these objectives and they were 1) being Canadian and living in Canada 2) specific experiences of racial discrimination and 3) the effects of experiencing racism.

In both sets of focus groups (both white and “non-white” students) I was able to observe processes of negotiation on the topic of racism. In the groups with students of colour I was able to watch as participants with a variety of experiences of racism (ranging from never having experienced it
to those who reported experiencing it more frequently) discuss how racism has influenced their lives as well as their perceptions of Canada. In some cases participants who experienced greater levels of discrimination were able to inform other participants of some of its more subtle forms. Also, when some participants were shy about sharing experiences, or were unable to fully articulate their thoughts, the fact that they were surrounded with individuals with similar life experiences was helpful in making them feel more comfortable. This atmosphere was supportive both in offering communicative support to participants, but also emotional support when discussing sensitive issues.

Many of the same processes occurred in the focus groups with white Canadians. With regards to the generation of richer information, when discussing their role in perpetuating or witnessing racism it was clear that some participants made an effort to share information relating to a range of racist behaviours of which they felt others might not be aware. For example, when a participant commented that there was no racism evident in Canadian society, other members offered examples of subtle forms of discrimination such as hiring practices or seemingly harmless jokes.

It is important to note that the group dynamic and relatively free-flowing conversation style of focus group is not always advantageous to the researcher. In some cases, it may be very difficult to promote conversation among members on a topic that is of little interest to them, and it also impossible to judge how the individual members will interact with one another. While the ultimate goal of focus groups is to create an inviting environment within which people can share and discuss opinions, this may be undermined by inappropriate participation.11

To my knowledge, there were no significant instances of discomfort in the focus groups I facilitated. On occasion I found it challenging to promote conversation among second generation Canadians of colour on their experiences of racism because there was such a diversity of experiences. Sometimes when a participant would share that they did not feel racism was an issue they dealt with in their daily life, it was clear that others who felt differently were hesitant to disagree. Overall, I do not

11 This may include the use of inappropriate or hurtful statements, failure to acknowledge the existence of other beliefs and the manipulation of the focus of discussion.
feel that this discomfort affected the discussion or the information that was shared; however, it did challenge both myself and the participants to be open and empathic toward others.

One important limitation of focus groups is that the findings may not be applicable to larger populations. Acknowledged by scholars writing on methodologies, qualitative methodologies are not intended to be representative of the general population. By including a questionnaire that incorporated written questions, I was able to maximize the time spent on discussing the most pressing dimensions of the research project. Focus groups can be a useful way to follow up on the interpretation of survey findings. The focus groups organized for my research were useful in generating two sets of research findings. First, the discussions proved to be a good way to learn why participants answered questionnaire questions the way that they did. For example, while the questionnaire simply asked respondents to note the degree to which they felt racism was an issue in Canada, the focus group provided the opportunity for participants to explain why they felt that way. This expansion of the data is invaluable when trying to understand the different experiences and perceptions of racism held by individuals.

The second set of research findings for which the focus group discussion supplied interpretation is from the Ethnic Diversity Survey conducted by the Canadian Government. In this survey, respondents were asked to answer questions on the subjects of racial discrimination and belonging by selecting a response along a scale. Holding the focus group gave me the opportunity compare findings and either add, enhance or challenge the validity of these statistical conclusions.

Planning the focus group

The focus groups served to elucidate personal narratives on the subject of racism and belonging in Canada. I conducted focus groups with a total of thirty-six participants, each group consisting of between four and eight participants. In order to generate some comparative capacity, the focus groups were made up of either participants of colour or white participants. I decided to divide the focus groups in such a way as to be able to discern whether the makeup of the group
influenced the nature of the discussion or the depth of the information shared by participants. Also included in the planning stage of my research was the development of the research questions and topics. This process included delimiting themes and considering probe questions. It additionally involved deliberation over the sequencing of the focus group material as well as the forging of links between discussion material and the questionnaire. Probe questions were designed to suggest material upon which a discussion could be built and involved asking for the opinions of the participants. Where necessary I included them to prompt participants to offer more detail in their accounts or to relate them more explicitly to the research themes. Furthermore, I included several probes that related to the information provided in the questionnaire. This was done with the purpose of facilitating discussion in the opening stages when individuals may have felt unsure about what to say.

Much deliberation went into sequencing the themes and questions of the focus groups. As a result of the sensitive nature of the information, it was necessary to create an open and safe environment in which the participants could share highly personal information. To do so, I began the focus groups with a general discussion on what it means to be Canadian. The questions became more personal as the discussion progressed, ending with a discussion of experiences of belonging.

Conducting the Focus Groups and Analyzing the Results

Issues of setting, facilitation, and documentation need to be considered prior to conducting focus groups. Since the majority of my participants were currently enrolled at Queen’s University, I decided to make use of a seminar room on campus for the discussions. Most participants were familiar with the campus and I believe this served to reduce some of the anxiety associated with their participation. The focus group sessions were scheduled in the evening to maximize the number of individuals able to participate. I was the only facilitator present for the administration of the questionnaire and the group discussion.
Each of the participants was given a pre-coded nametag and asked to place his or her name on it (real or fake) to facilitate the discussion. While the names were used among the participants throughout the discussion, only the codes were used for purposes of data collection. Each questionnaire was identified with the same code as the nametag and this assisted the linking of questionnaire and discussion responses. By using nametags and codes not only was the anonymity of the respondents upheld, but their contributions remained organized. A voice recording device was used to document the verbal responses of the participants in the focus group. As facilitator, I recorded the order of the speakers so that I could easily and accurately transcribe the data.

In the chapter that follows I detail the results of the questionnaire and focus groups and discuss the significance of the findings as they relate to wider discussions of racism and belonging.
Chapter 5
Research Findings and Discussion

The results I present in this chapter are divided into the eight major discourses that emerged in the course of the research. As discussed in the literature review, discourses are ways of structuring knowledge and social practice and are used to not only represent people and the relationships among them, but also to construct the systems of belief in which these players are situated (Henry and Tator 2006). I organize my findings according to a number of discourses because the perspectives that emerge from each of these ways truly do place the participants within different structures and in different positionalities. Since they are the experiences and understandings of the second generation participants that lie at the heart of the research questions, the discourse analysis and contained in this chapter, and the quotes inserted to support it, reflects their contributions.

Within each of the sections or discourses I include the results of the questionnaires and focus groups from both the second generation and white participants. The first discourse looks at perceptions of racism in Canada on a general level. The second discourse reflects on the perceptions of the second generation participants as they relate to acts of racism and their views relating to victimization. The third discourse highlights the changing nature and forms of racism. The fourth, presents findings on the racialization of second generation Canadians participants and how this visibility materializes in their everyday lives. The fifth showcases the pervasiveness of processes of “othering” as it occurs not only outside, but inside ethnocultural groups. The sixth examines the geographies of racism as conveyed by the second generation and white participants and comments on the places of racism as well as some of its geographical dimensions. The seventh discourse offers some insight into intergenerational comparisons made by the participants of colour. The eighth and final discourse concerns belonging in Canada and I present findings on what it means to
be Canadian for the second generation individual of colour, and what influence, if any, experiences of racism have had this conceptualization.

**Discourse #1: Racism is an issue in Canada**

One of the most prominent discourses that emerged in my research is that second generation participants believe racism is an issue in this country. In the questionnaire in particular, given a scale of levels of racism in Canada today, the majority of second generation participants responded “some” (Figure 5.1). As point of departure into the larger research questions I investigate, this finding shows that participants possess an awareness and interest in the topic. It is from this basic result that I begin to build an understanding of the second generation individuals’ conceptualizations and experiences of racism, and as it will become sufficiently apparent, the finding that there is “some” racism in Canadian society is extremely nuanced.

**Figure 5.1 Second generation participants perceptions of racism in Canada today, 2008**

![Figure 5.1 Second generation participants perceptions of racism in Canada today, 2008](image-url)
Perceptions of racism in Canada often incorporate ideas of change over time, and this is especially the case as it relates to the second generation participant’s views of the country’s recent history. One dimension of the research question necessitated the compilation of perceptions of racism in the past and present, and I was able to gain this information by asking the participants to discuss their vision of racism in Canada as it has been shaped by their educational and everyday experiences, but also stories told to them by their first generation parent(s). When asked in the questionnaire to rate the level of racism experienced by their foreign-born parent(s) upon immigration to Canada, the majority of second generation responded that there was “some” (Figure 5.2). Much like the initial result on levels of present racism provided a basis for learning about personal experiences of racism, this finding provided a foundation upon which I could construct understandings of the second generation participant’s knowledge and of racial inequity, but also its generational dimensions.

Figure 5.2 Second generation participants’ perceptions of racism experienced by their parents, 2008
Comparison of participant responses across the two questions (perceived levels of racism in the present and recent past) indicates that the majority of participants support the position that there are similar levels of racism evident (Figure 5.3). As I present later on in the discussion of the focus groups, however, this same finding was not generated.

**Figure 5.3 Second generation participants’ perceptions of change in levels of racism, 2008**

![Bar chart showing the percentage of participants' perceptions of change in levels of racism in 2008.](image)

Unlike the moderate levels of racism noted by the second generation in questionnaire responses, white participants in my research overwhelmingly reported “a lot” of racism in contemporary Canadian society. In fact, only a third of respondents chose the option “some” as their answer, whereas this was the option most frequently selected by the second generation (Figure 5.4). Additional analysis of responses to this question also reveals a significant gender bias in the responses as 88% of all females compared to 29% of all males selected “a lot” as the most appropriate answer, and 12% of females compared to 71% of males indicated “some” (Figure 5.5). When this difference is taken into account, the responses of male participants can be viewed as most accurately reflecting those opinions of the second generation of colour. It is unclear to what the divergence between white male and female participants, and the convergence between white...
male and second generation can be attributed; however, additional investigation into this question is needed.

Figure 5.4 Perceived levels of racism in Canada, second generation and white participants, 2008

Figure 5.5 Perceived levels of racism, white participants by sex, 2008
When asked about the perceived differences in levels of racism in the past and present, half of the white participants indicated that they “neither agree nor disagree” that there is more racism today than one generation ago. I believe that these findings are expected due to the fact that individuals simply may not possess what they feel is an accurate understanding of racism in Canada’s recent history and therefore adopt a neutral stance. Just under one third of the remaining respondents indicated that they “strongly disagree” with that statement, indicating that they felt that there was more racism one generation ago than there is today. These results stand in contrast to those shared by the second generation participants who believe that there are similar levels of racism.

The significance of the findings that white participants believe that there is more racism than do the second generation participants is perhaps due in part to exposure to or education on the topic. As university students, many of them have been trained in human rights issues or have an awareness of racial discrimination at school and in the community. As a result, the participants may be more attuned to issues of racism than are members of the general public and this would be reflected in their perception of higher levels of racism. That training itself may have also positively affected their willingness to participate in the focus groups in the first place. Conversely, the results may also have to do with the characteristics of the second generation participants and point to a lack of awareness of the various forms of racism or appropriate labeling of experiences of racism on their part. In any case, the position of many second generation challenges research on racism in Canada that cites it as a major barrier.

Questions relating to the nature and prevalence of racism in Canada elicited a wide range of responses in focus group discussions. These contributions allow for a greater depth of analysis than the results from the questionnaires and in many ways showcase the unique positioning of the second generation Canadian of colour. Focus group discussions support the finding that while participants of colour claim that there is some racism evident in Canadian society, there is a diversity of
perspectives. This is illustrated by the two quotes that follow, although as I will explain, these two statements on racism in Canada do not necessary reflect opposing viewpoints.

I think it is. I think they like to cover it up a lot but I think it’s definitely very prevalent. (FG5-01)

I don’t think so, in comparison to other countries. I think Canada is pretty much inclusive. (FG3-01)

Claims of racism, although numerous, were presented in discussions more like passing trends than a serious shortcoming of society. While acknowledging the presence of racist ideologies and behaviours in Canada allowed many participants to take a moral stance against this form of inequity, these admissions did not appear to detract from their belief in the inclusivity of Canadian society. It seems that for the majority of second generation participants Canadian society can be at once exclusionary of those judged as different, but inclusive when compared to other countries.

**Discourse #2: Racism Denial**

Understandably, there is a wide range of experiences of discrimination shared among second generation participants. When prompted to respond to the statement “I have been treated differently or unfairly because of my skin colour” an equal number of respondents indicated “agree” as did those who selected “disagree.” The remaining quarter selected that they “neither agree nor disagree” (Figure 5.6). On a broad level, I am able to conclude that the darker the participants skin colour, the more likely they were to admit that they were victims of unfair treatment. It does not appear that birthplace or place of residence plays a significant factor in this finding; however a majority of the sample was from the greater Toronto area. The circumstances surrounding the responses of the other half of second generation participants (those who indicated that they had not been treated differently as a result of their skin colour) are slightly more ambiguous, but I suspect
that the explanation may be found in the self-positioning of these individuals within the mainstream.

Focus group discussions with second generation Canadians of colour paint a very different picture of racism than do their questionnaire responses. In fact, while a majority of participants indicated not having personally experienced racial discrimination in the questionnaire, a large proportion related personal stories in focus groups in which they identify racism. Emerging from discussions with the entire group of second generation participants is a firm sense that they believe that people generally do not intend to harm or insult others based on their skin colour. At the very least, about ninety-percent of the second generation participants stated that they felt that most people simply do not understand the implications of their actions.

In most cases, the second generation participants did not frame their story in terms of highly personal incidents, but rather positioned themselves as rational observers. The following quotes
touch on the ideas presented in the discussion findings that many participants chalk racism up to ignorance.

It’s ignorance. Like this weekend we went to Aurora, to stay with my friend’s family, and there youngest daughter was like... “So what are you?” She had probably never seen anyone that wasn’t white before us. And she was like, “Are you Chinese?” And her dad was like “Rebecca! You are being ignorant!” But like it was so innocent; it wasn’t racism. It was just ignorance. (FG4-01)

I think its more people being ignorant than anything. Some people get very upset if you think they are a racist and sometimes I think they don’t even say what they think of someone because they don’t want to be seen as a racist….Some people are like ‘Maybe I don’t know what their background is…’ They are extra careful about that. But that’s how much people don’t want to be seen as racist. (FG4-01)

When these assertions (or lack thereof) of personal experiences of racism are considered alongside findings that support the second generation belief that acts of racism are the unintended outcomes of unwitting individuals, a very fascinating image of racial discrimination is shaped. Of all of the discourses raised in focus group discussions, I contend that this condition is the one most closely connected to scholarship on the subject. In this case, the findings of my research mirror the discourse of racism denial forwarded by Henry and Tator (2006). According to Henry and Tator (2006:24) the discourse of denial has as its principle assumption that racism does not exist in a democratic society. It is additionally a discursive theme that dominates mainstream culture and is reflected in the everyday communications of individuals and institutions and is characterized by a refusal on the part of the dominant population to accept the reality of racism, despite evidence to the contrary. When acts of racism do occur, they are most likely to be identified as isolated phenomena so as not to upset existing visions of Canadian ideals.

The second generation participants of colour are in many ways representative of mainstream society in the way that that take up the discourse of denial. By virtue of their socialization and education in mainstream society, it is highly possible, if not entirely probable, that the second generation Canadian of colour views or defines herself or himself not solely as a person
of colour, vulnerable to acts of discrimination, but an “everyday Canadian” who does not, or dare not, allow him or herself to believe the presence of intolerance in Canadian society. By claiming that they are not the target of racism, or that the perpetrators of racism are unaware of their actions, the second generation, although able to avoid dealing with the emotional and intellectual effects of inequity, perpetuates a system in which there is no demand for change. As I will discuss in more detail in a subsequent section, this adoption of mainstream identities that reflect dominant, “white” interests is neither surprising nor unrealistic, and acts as an effective mechanism of protection for the individual of colour.

**Discourse #3: Discrimination, not racism**

Second generation participants share stories in which today’s racism is described as subtle in comparison to its historical forms. The most distinctive qualities of this subtlety can be traced to changes in its form (more generalized discrimination) and its expression (a shift towards less noticeable or explicit ways). The subtlety with which racism is perpetrated may be the result of its pervasiveness, but also a product of shifts in mainstream perceptions of race and how they are incorporated into daily life. As one participant describes, racism seems to be increasingly present in all aspects of life, although not in the same ways as in the past, or in other countries.

I don’t know if I’d say there’s racism in Canada…definitely discrimination. And I would say more than anything it seems to be very subtle. It’s not KKK or anything, but I think it’s quite prevalent on all levels of society; within government policy, in the classroom. (FG5-02)

Although many interpersonal interactions continue to be characterized as abrasive and as direct racial discrimination, many second generation participants feel that this is not typical of their experiences. Rather, they describe more nuanced forms of discrimination that have become so entrenched in social relations that they appear as normal or acceptable. It is interesting that the
second generation participants differentiate racism and discrimination for it is almost as if “racism” is put in a box of extreme behaviour or that use of the word racism is problematic. In either case, the compulsion to deny racism is emphasized (previously discussed).

Focus group discussions reveal a set of specific forms of racism experienced by the second generation individual of colour in Canada. Of all the ways in which the second generation describes being racially discriminated against, stereotyping is one that a majority both recognizes and acknowledges by term. As the basis of mainstream understandings of different ethnic groups and ways of life, stereotypes and their perpetuation are posited as one of the principal causes of inaccurate judgements and inappropriate classifications of people and groups. Interesting findings emerged from discussions with second generation Canadians on the topic of stereotypes, the most salient of these being that although a large majority of the participants openly acknowledged the prevalence of stereotypes and the detrimental effects they cause, not one participant explicitly referred to stereotypes as a form of racism. Instead, the most common sentiment was that stereotyping is a product of ignorance and not intentional racial discrimination. The two quotes below illustrate just how the second generation participants are acutely aware of the role of stereotypes.

I think that … stereotyping is definitely there. Like people assume not that they would hate those things that you stand for, but assume that you stand for a number of things just because of your background. (FG4-03)

As Asians we have kind of like that; you are supposed to be good at math and science so. I mean it’s a positive, but if you aren’t good at math and science it might make you feel awful. I certainly have been treated differently…like you should do better you’re from a different background. (FG3-03)

Ironically, despite possessing conceptualizations of the role of racial stereotypes, no second generation participants discussed their detrimental impact on their lives. Beyond commenting on the prevalence of stereotyping in all aspects of their lives, participants did not comment on how stereotypes reinforce intolerance and the inequitable treatment of people of colour. In fact, by summing up stereotypes as acts of ignorant discrimination on the part of the perpetrator, the second
generation entirely neglects to problematize those foundations upon which the wider population
djudges ethnocultural groups and their members. In this sense, they contribute to the normalization of
racism in society.

Racial jokes are another form of discrimination that second generation report frequently
experiencing. Although most participants recognized the harm and inappropriateness of racial jokes,
like stereotypes, they did not necessarily attribute negative intentions to the behaviour. In fact, jokes
were described by the majority of second generation participants as annoyances or rude behaviour,
but at never as a form of racism. Of a total of eighteen participants, only one relayed the fear that
jokes may represent a deeper resentment than most individuals are willing to admit.

I remember in high school one of the kids on our volleyball team had- it’s not a
turban, I don’t know what it’s called- but like a kind of headwear and they started
calling him Osama….It was of course right after 9/11 so everybody thought that it
was an okay thing to say. Yeah, definitely the jokes went up, and sometimes they
were funny because they were harmless, but sometimes you were worried that they
were coming from a bad place. (FG3-02)

While this quote is not representative of the concerns of the majority of second generation
participants of colour, it raises the issue of the visibility of people of colour and the consequences of
this racialization on their daily lives. In the section that follows I consider this idea and comment on
the variance in the degree of visibility of people of colour in Canada and speak broadly about some
of its implications.

**Discourse #4: Hide and See**

Claims of perpetual immigrant status are central among the challenges in fostering and
maintaining a sense of belonging in Canadian society raised by second generation participants.
Despite being born in Canada, the second generation of colour is not only tasked with dealing with
racism as a result of their skin colour, but also proving their Canadian identity. This stems from
unremitting assumptions of immigrant status originating from the mainstream that deny the second
second generation report strong Canadian identities in focus group discussions, the continuous questioning of their heritage evidently creates difficulties. As one participant describes, for some white Canadians, being a person of colour equates with being a foreigner to this country. The uncertainty that comes with the unknown (in this case the perceived origins of a second generation Canadian,) is seen to drive racially motivated questioning.

I find for me too there’s an obsession to know exactly where you’re from. I can’t count the number of times. … ‘Well, where are you from?’ … because they can’t exactly pinpoint it. People like to know exactly where everyone’s from. I don’t know if that’s a form of racism, but I find that I especially deal with that. (FG3-01)

The sentiments illustrated in this quote were reflected in the contributions of every one of the eighteen participants in the focus groups. Similarly, in all group discussions once the topic was raised, the entire group actively engaged in deliberations over its impact. In doing so they not only validated but amplified the significance of the initial contribution.

Focus group accounts additionally reveal that there is variation in the degree to which second generation Canadians of colour are racialized into the Canadian ethnocultural landscape. As participants note, skin colour is the leading marker of difference from mainstream society. This finding corroborates the results of the Ethnic Diversity Survey (2002) that reports that some groups experience greater racialization, and as such, higher levels of racial discrimination than others. It is through this process of racialization that the second generation Canadian becomes “visible” to the mainstream (which is assumed to be invisible, or normal) and is ascribed racial meanings.

Interestingly, discussions also show that there are degrees of visibility associated with the identities embodied by the participants and this variation is measured by the degree of awareness of one’s position of difference within society. These identities are dynamic through time and across social situations. As the two accounts below illustrate, not only is this range of difference evident in
the experiences of the participants, but that some ethnocultural groups are consequently rendered more visible than others.

For me I’ve never been identified as a visible minority unless I tell people that I’m Spanish- then they look down [on me]. Typically no one really sees me as a racial minority or a visible minority. I’ve never had that. (FG1-04)

The week or two after September 11th you’re kind of like, nobody ever said anything directly, but you can sort of tell that people are doing a double-take. You are a lot more visible than you had been a few hours before. (FG3-02)

I haven’t really experienced [racism] to a significant extent, but I think that it also depends on if people perceive you as different because of the way you speak or what you believe or how much you bring that to the foreground. I haven’t encountered a lot of racism, but then again I don’t try to make people deal with me as someone who is different. (FG4-02)

Several important notes can be made concerning the quotes presented above. They include comments on the representativeness of ascribed identities, issues of visibility among the participants, as well as strategies adopted by the second generation to deal with racism. Participants in the focus groups embody a wide range of ethnocultural heritages and a corresponding range of darkness of skin colour. Although these characteristics play a leading role in rendering the individual visible, they cannot account for all of the variation. Special attention should be paid to geopolitical and social contexts that position some individuals and groups in more, or less, advantageous circumstances than others.

As the first quotation shows, some second generation Canadians of colour recognize that they are able to “blend” into mainstream society more easily than others. This significantly reduces their experiences of racism. Unfortunately, as the second excerpt demonstrates, since the terrorist attacks on the United States in September 2001, individuals and groups of (or who appear to be of) Arab or Middle Eastern descent have quickly become more visible targets for racism. Given these circumstances, it is clear why the participant to whom the second quote is attributed is keenly aware of his or her difference and feels strongly about his or her visibility. Finally, the fact that the
contribution of the third participant implies the use of a strategy to avoid becoming a target of racism points to an awareness, on some level, that they occupy a vulnerable position within ethnocultural relations. This preventative mentality stems from a very different mind-frame than do the preceding quotes.

**Discourse #5: Insider Racism**

For some second generation participants visibility is also based in the recognition of identities by one’s own ethnocultural community. In sharing stories of their experiences of racism with other Canadians of colour, participants reveal not only the existence of intra-racial discrimination, but the damaging impacts of marginalization from their own ethnocultural groups. As both of these excerpts explain, this exclusion is equally, if not more, injurious than that from white society.

I’ve been called like a “white-washed” brown person…I’ll get that from other people who are of Middle Eastern descent and that, I find, is more meaningful sometimes. (FG5-04)

Before I said that I was being made aware of being perceived different especially in Caucasian environments…but I should also say that among my first generation and second generation peer group of immigrant children. I think when associating with other black children…as a Jamaican black guy…but you’re not ‘black’ enough. (FG5-02)

As these two quotes highlight very well, racialization or the social construction of racialized identities, is not limited to interactions between white people and people of colour. It is possible that intra-group racialization is used as a form of self-protection, in the same way that the exclusion of the “different” is seen to promote ethnocultural preservation. Much scholarship is now being published on the dynamics of intra-group racialization and racism, as is research on complicity. Additional inquiry into those collections may provide meaningful insight into the lives of second generation as it concerns their sense of belonging in their own ethnocultural groups. For our
purposes, these experiences can only be examined for their influence on the participants of colour. Focus group discussions reveal that on the surface, second generation Canadians reacted similarly to all racism, including that coming from members of their own ethnocultural group(s).

**Discourse #6: Geographies of Racism**

Analyses of information from second generation participants show that their experiences and understandings of racism are highly geographical. Not only are some places and situations noted by participants as more inequitable than others, but geographical themes such as scale, dualism and context are additionally brought to the surface. In the section that follows I briefly present each of these dimensions of racism, and discuss how they are manifest in the lives of the second generation.

*Places of Racism*

According to the data gathered in questionnaires, second generation Canadians of colour report that there they experience the highest levels of racism while using services, attending school and working (Figure 5.7). About one quarter of participants of colour indicated that they “sometimes” experienced racism while using services, while nearly half indicated experiencing racism or “rarely.” Personal interactions is another category with greater numbers of second generation participants in “sometimes” experiencing racism, although fewer responses were recorded on the “rarely” option. For many participants school is a place where they endure discrimination as one fifth reported “sometimes” and about half indicated “rarely”. In the work category a small number of second generation individuals reported “sometimes” experiencing racism, with the majority noting rare or no occurrences. When asked about racism in the home a significantly large percentage of participants indicated that there was none.
Summations of the degree of racism experienced by each participant over the six situations reveals that although males and females share a similar range of experiences of racism, men report higher levels of racial discrimination than do females. This is a significant finding and could have one of several explanations. In one scenario, it is possible that males actually experience more racism than do females. In another, it may demonstrate that men are more keenly aware of the racial discrimination they endure or witness. Or, men may simply be more willing to comment on their experiences of racism than are their female counterparts. It is clear that additional inquiry is necessary to fully flesh out this finding.

Focus group discussions about places of racism were very useful in complementing the findings of the six broad situations of racism on which participants were asked to comment in the
questionnaire. In particular, participants forwarded specific examples of situations within which they experienced discrimination. For example, participants noted that while attending school they endure racism on varsity sports teams, in research labs, using school counseling services, as well as in the classroom. In these cases the outcomes of the interactions were the exoticizing, stereotyping and eventual marginalization of the participant. Several other examples of places in which participants were subjected to racism that were raised in focus group discussions include playing sports, crossing international borders, and vacationing (in and outside of Canada).

Although white participants choose the same situations as those in which Canadians of colour experience the most racism, the degree to which they claim Canadians of colour are victimized is highly skewed. Similar to the responses of the second generation, white participants ranked school, workplace and using services as the three most likely places of racism (Figure 5.8). Their results differ significantly, however, in the levels of racism that they believe are experienced. For both school and the workplace, all white participants answered that people of colour experience discrimination “very often” or “sometimes”. This is in comparison to the results of second generation of whom the majority replied “rarely.” This trend of overestimation is evident across all of the six categories. It is also worth noting that the responses of white male participants reflected about twice the prevalence reported by males of colour and those of females were over three times greater (Figure 5.8).
Two general conclusions may be drawn from these results. First, the responses from the sample of white participants reveal that they are aware of the most prominent places of racism. This is a positive finding as shared knowledge is a good first step in crafting solutions to issues of inequity. The second conclusion that deals with the overestimation of experiences of racism in particular situations is more ambiguous and calls for speculation. Given other findings of my research, two explanations are most plausible. The higher levels of racism suggested by white participants may be the outcome of a conscious, or even unconscious, effort to prove their commitment to issues of inequity and a desire to appear anti-racist. By acknowledging high levels of racism these individuals are able to not only appease an inner desire to be anti-racist, but gain the respect of those persons of colour who do endure racism. Although this reasoning may appear pessimistic, it supports discussions with the second generation participants in which they describe experiences with white Canadians. Sensitivity to racism in society may also be the result of a
knowledge or understanding on the part of white Canadians of the motivations and behaviours of other whites that is not apparent to people of colour. In this way, their positioning within the dominant sphere confers insight into racially discriminatory structures and practices in a way that outsiders are not.

This phenomenon of over-compensation or hyper-sensitivity on the part of members of dominant segments of society is documented in the literature on racism. Included in this collection are discussions of the forms of racism that have the illusion of positive behaviour (Henry and Tator 2006). Another, albeit contrasting point of interest can be found in the emerging scholarship on whiteness that stresses the need to look at not only the minoritized peoples when studying racism, but those who occupy positions of power. Through whiteness studies, white people become racialized and as a result, are afforded responsibility in dealing with issues of racial discrimination. In short, ideas of whiteness seek to “colour” the non-racialized individual.

A second possible explanation for these findings is that the conclusions of the white participant sample are more accurate than those of the second generation. This argument is supported by the findings that second generation, despite recognizing the presence of racism in Canada, do not necessarily view themselves as targets. Whether the second generation is reluctant to label themselves as victims of racism because they are genuinely unaware or have not experienced that form of discrimination or because their denial acts as an effective coping tactic is uncertain. As a coping strategy denial does allow for the maintenance of strong feelings of attachment to local communities as well as to Canada, but I do not believe that this is the full explanation. It is most likely a combination of “positive” racism, whiteness awareness as well as survival approach. As I discuss in the final discourse, for the second generation Canadian belonging, albeit complicated, is not altogether naïve.
Geographical themes

For some second generation participants understandings of racism are influenced by geographical ideas including scale, duality and geopolitical context. In focus group discussions the question of scale in the analysis of racism was initially raised when I inquired whether or not racism was a significant issue in Canada. In their responses, many participants referred to local, regional and national understandings of the topic. The following quotes illustrate the scalar nature of racism. What is interesting to note is that although in text the participants are describing places where racism is rarely experienced, upon analysis, it is possible to observe broader processes of racialization occurring that escape their view. I argue that this blindness is the result of their immersion in a mainstream culture which, at its core, retains racist tendencies.

I grew up in Scarborough in Toronto and it was a place where every Asian went to Agincourt… ‘Asian-court’…that’s what they called it. (FG3-01)

I think it sort of depends on which part of the country you are talking about…in bigger cities there’s more people and more diversity so we’re more respecting. Whereas in smaller towns…stereotypes and everything get amplified a little bit more… (FG3-02)

In these quotes not only is it evident that there are different scales, including the community, region, and nation that are used to conceptualize racism, but that they are enabled through the use of racial generalizations on the part of both the person of colour and the mainstream. In addition to the geographical concept of scale, understandings of racism are sometimes described in dualistic terms by the second generation participant. The most common dualism is the distinction between rural and urban although participants have also termed their discussion along divisions of ethnic/white areas. The following quote highlights the two-fold nature of racism as perceived by the participants.
I think it really depends on where you are in Canada. Like small town compared to big cities. I think there is a big difference. I grew up in a small town and there are people who generally weren’t… who just didn’t know people of other cultures. So there was a bit of racism. (FG5-03)

Although these intellectual divisions may facilitate discussions of racism in the short term, the over-simplification that results could cloud the intricacies of identity, racialization and social acceptance for the second generation participants of colour. Failure to question the homogenization of these spaces (cities, regions, etc.) in social and policy spheres could have potentially detrimental outcomes for individuals and communities alike.

Another geographical dimension of racism is its historical transformation. In focus group discussion, about one quarter of participants shared the observation that the places they used to inhabit have changed over time, and, in particular, noted a rise in racial discrimination in those spaces.

I’m from a multicultural place and there weren’t a lot of non-white people but then more people came in time. But then because there were a lot of coloured people then you find that sometimes people become slightly hostile…. (FG3-02)

When I was growing up…I never found any racism towards me or my family per se. But, in the past I guess there’s a lot more immigrants moving into the same place. We don’t live there now but I go back to visit friends and I find… the pockets. As there are more immigrants, there are more pockets in the community and I find there’s more, it’s more segregated. So I do see more racism then when I was growing up. (FG5-01)

These descriptions highlight the very dynamic and contextual nature of racism. On the surface both descriptions simultaneously reflect geographical processes such as immigrant settlement and clustering, as well as ideological shifts that inform boundaries of inclusion and exclusion. On a more analytical level, the ideas of definition and threshold emerge as central aspects of the experience of members of ethnic communities as they engage in negotiations over the character and meaning of places through socio-political context and time.
As my research with both the second generation of colour and the white participants reveals, there exist crucial geographies of racism. Although some of these geographies are very personal, some general trends can be discerned that allow for commentary on ethnocultural and sociopolitical landscapes of Canada. As the literature on race and racism suggests, it is important to consider not only how geography enables or inhibits racism and the racialization of human populations, but also how these behaviours and process give meaning to the daily lives of those affected. In these spaces of oppression also lie the possibility for transformation and as such, they should be fully studied (Kobayashi and Peake 2000).

**Discourse #7: Generational Divergences**

While there are many similarities between the experiences of immigrants of colour and their Canadian born children, there remain several key differences that significantly influence sense of belonging. The most important of these divergences include awareness of the changing nature of racial exclusions and the balancing of multiple cultural identities. Although there is a general consensus among the group that racial discrimination exists in Canadian society, as previously mentioned, many believe that they face less racism than their parent(s).

Crafting and supporting a link between the culture and beliefs of their parent(s) and a “Canadian way of life” is a vital, yet challenging element of belonging for the second generation participants and plays a significant role in processes of identification. Engaging in this bridging process, although shaping new possibilities for self-definition, reportedly increases feelings of exclusion from either or both cultures. This exclusion is further complicated by identities ascribed by mainstream society. As a result, individuals report difficulties negotiating the terms of their cultural memberships; a struggle that they feel is different from any experienced by their immigrant parent(s).
...Things changed a lot from Jamaica, but they still have their Jamaican community. Whereas for myself, I had people in those circles of friends growing up, but then you have to make your own friends...and you don't have that Jamaican-Caribbean anymore...I think that’s the huge difference- having to form your own community, renegotiate boundaries, identities that they haven’t had to go through. So actually for I’d say sometimes it’s hard for them to relate. (FG5-02)

I kind of feel caught in the middle, I guess... If I experienced any sort of racism from other people it would kind of just make me think twice about how I treat other people. Whereas I don’t think that’s my parents would do that. It’s different between the generations. (FG3-04)

These two first-hand accounts of growing up as Canadians of colour point to the difficulties that second generation individuals encounter with respect to relating their experiences of racism to those of their parent(s). Some second generation Canadians feel that they are more keenly attuned to racism today than are their parents. Particularly with respect to increasingly more subtle forms of racism including systemic discrimination, the second generation participants feel that their parent(s) are simply not aware of how they are treated inequitably. One participant describes the role of education in this distinction.

...Both my sister and I have gone on to graduate studies so I mean we are a little more conscious and aware of what’s going on. They don’t realize the way they’re being discriminated. They just don’t see that. (FG1-05)

Despite this perceived generational difference in recognition, both generations agree that education possesses the potential to ameliorate the lives of people of colour. As two participants admit:

...Immigrant parents are right that education gives you an edge because a lot of them, even if they have an education their credentials aren’t recognized. So if you do well in the Canadian school system then you can kind of push your way through certain barriers that are there. (FG1-01)

I never thought it was as apparent as it was here, actually, to be honest. Maybe it’s because of the fact that it’s stuff that I’m learning in school as well. I’m hyper-aware of everything now than when I was a kid. It certainly makes a difference
when you are having a discussion in a classroom about a minority and suddenly oh, you notice that that’s white and you’re kind of the only one in the room that’s …and you … oh, okay, I’ll be the voice for everyone… (FG3-04)

Although this research project involved the discussion and comparison of first and second generation’ experiences of racism as related by the second generation participant, the information they provided was useful in understanding both the context and the dynamic nature of racism. When asked to compare the levels of racism they experience to those facing their parent(s), just under half of the second generation participants reported that they “strongly disagree” with the statement that they experience more racism than their parent(s). Two thirds of the participants indicated that they either “disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Although females were more likely to select that they “strongly disagree” with the statement, they are also more likely to report that they “neither agree nor disagree” (Figure 5.9). One potential explanation for this finding could be that unlike their first generation parent(s), the second generation child has not entered the full-time labour force.

Figure 5.9 Second generation perceptions of generational levels of racism, 2008
Emerging from the results of questionnaire and focus group discussions is the consensus that first generation Canadians not only experience more racism than their children, but that the forms of racism they endured in the past, and sometimes continue to endure, are often different. Second generation participants note two major forms of racism in stories their parent(s) told them. They include avoidance behaviours, as well as discrimination in hiring. Below two second generation participants recall these stories.

I think it wasn’t racism like someone being rude to them or something. But I think that a lot of people, let’s say in our neighbourhood, would be a little hesitant to talk to them…. At first it was kind of like we were the mysterious folks… (FG4-02)

…Language barrier is obviously blocking a lot of immigrants getting jobs and I think it’s the perceptions of the employers that you can’t really infiltrate a career path because of your background. My parents, they had an education from Hong Kong, but they couldn’t apply it in Canada because it’s a different standard…so they had to follow a career which was lower than what they were expecting. (FG3-01)

The stories and information offered by the second generation participants on the experiences of their parents, although varied, ultimately reflect themes of exclusion based not only on skin colour, but the non-recognition of credentials and language barriers. One important point raised by nearly a quarter of the participants is that the discrimination that followed their parent(s) immigration to Canada, although harmful, was anticipated. Simply put, by nature of their moving to a new (and one could also add predominantly white) country, their parents did not expect to be fully included or integrated into sociopolitical and economic spheres right away.

Although second generation share that their parent(s) identify strongly with Canada and fellow Canadians, many report that they possess stronger emotional ties to Canada than do their parent(s). The primary reason offered in explanation for the lesser sense of belonging held by their parents was racism. Stories of first generation parents tell of discrimination based on accent,
unrecognized credentials as well as stereotyping, and paint a picture of a very different life in Canada.

Interestingly, not all of the experiences of the first generation shared in the focus group sessions appeared to detract from a sense of belonging in Canada for the first generation. One reason for this is that when immigrating to Canada the first generation had a certain level of anticipation of discrimination and as such, felt less disenchanted by the reality they entered. This stands in contrast to the expectations of second generation who, by nature of their full citizenship, expect to be treated equitably. While some second generation could recall stories of racism told to them by their parent(s), an even larger number believed that their parent(s) withheld this knowledge from them so that they would maintain positive views of the country and what it has to offer. Many second generation participants reported thinking that their parent(s) adopted this strategy so that their children would value the opportunities and freedoms that attracted them in the first place. Throughout discussions with the second generation participants it was evident that their parents’ positive regard toward Canada, despite their experiences of racism, played a significant part in the formation and maintenance of strong feelings of attachment to the country.

**Discourse #8: Belonging in Canada**

When asked to define what it means to be Canadian, or to provide examples of things that are considered typically Canadian, the responses of the second generation participants of colour are not unlike those of their white counterparts. Words such as multiculturalism, travelling, hockey, snow, diversity, peacekeepers, freedom, inclusive and polite are frequently employed, as are phrases like helping others, able to keep heritage, and hand in world affairs. This illustrates that there exists, in some form or another, at least a broad vision of Canada identifiable to participants. The question that remains is whether or not this collection of common features is enough to sustain a sense of Canadian identity in the face of exclusion.
Questionnaire findings show that for over two thirds of second generation participants, experiences of racism have actually had a neutral influence on their feelings on belonging in Canada. Of the remaining half, one third of participants indicated that their experiences had a slightly negative or very negative influence. Only one individual reported a positive impact (Figure 5.10). In terms of a gender breakdown, males were more likely to report higher levels of negative influence while females were more likely to select the neutral response. The reason underlying this difference requires further investigation.

Figure 5.10 Comparison of influence of racism on belonging, second generation and white samples, 2008

Focus group discussions were instrumental in examining how second generation Canadians shape their sense of belonging in Canada and how this identification is challenged by experiences of racism. In particular, they were useful in showing how, despite the neutral or slightly negative
influences of racism on sentiments of attachment to their country of birth, the second generation participants possess multiple imaginings of Canada and have found unique ways to belong. In their view, these ways of belonging are no less Canadian than those of the white participants.

For some participants of colour a sense of belonging in Canada can be partial, ambiguous, or at times even critical. In the face of exclusion some have found it beneficial, if not necessary, to complement their Canadian sense of belonging with additional types of attachment. While these connections to local, provincial and regional communities are not much unlike those held by other Canadians, for the second generation it is one way in which they handle the partiality of their acceptance into society. Interestingly enough, these attachments serve to strengthen a pan-Canadian identity, albeit one that is different from that of other Canadians.

I think the ideas of community and nationality for me are really fluid and very difficult to pin down... I’m always Filipino-Canadian. So my sense of belonging...I do feel like I belong here and I can get by here, but I also feel very comfortable around Filipino groups... I feel like the whole idea of racism is kind of complicated with second generation people. (FG3-04)

There is also an ambiguity associated with belonging in Canada that is experienced by many second generation participants. Even though this results from struggles over findings one’s place in both Canadian and ancestral cultures, it is also a consequence of the uncertainty surrounding what it actually means to be “Canadian.” As earlier discussion shows, while there are numerous words and phrases frequently used by all to define or describe what it means to be Canadian, it is not clear how these characterizations of Canada actually support a sense of belonging.

Complicating this process are wider claims that ethnocultural attachments preclude or lessen one’s sense of being Canadian, even though research shows that this is not necessarily the case. Whether or not these assertions ultimately affect the belonging of second generation Canadians remains unclear. Yet it is apparent that this line of questioning creates a sense of doubt within the mind of the second generation participants that perhaps they will never be fully accepted into
Canadian society, regardless of the intensity of their identification with it. As the following quote illustrates, there is awareness on the part of the second generation participant that questions of inclusion in society influences sense of belonging.

I would say of course. It’s hard, the point we made earlier, to not feel like you belong and to be constantly questioned and doubting… If people come here because of the ideal of inclusion, it can be like a broken dream or hope that wasn’t realized. (FG5-04)

Approximately one half of the second generation participants shared the feeling that the exclusionary tendencies of Canadians society renders it difficult to feel like one belongs. Those whose comments did not reflect similar sentiments reported either that they did not perceive racial exclusion on the part of the mainstream, or felt that their sense of belonging was not dependent on the perceptions of other Canadians. With reference to the issue of ideals and broken dreams, the majority of the focus group participants described Canada as a country in which people are free to pursue their own goals and a country in which people live harmoniously and prosperously. This finding is indicative of a positive attachment to Canada.

Emerging from discussions with some second generation participants is a reflexive and critical evaluation of not only the importance of national belonging, but the possibility of actualizing this identity and having it acknowledged and supported by other Canadians. More specifically, for many the parameters of Canadian identity, although multiple, do not wholly reflect inclusive ideals. For example, the ideal of multiculturalism, though laudable in objective, largely lacks the capacity to effectively address racial inequalities for all ethnocultural groups in Canada. This is easily seen through accounts of the experiences of the first generation parents. Similarly, the ability to retain one’s cultural heritage and to express identities freely and without persecution sounds good on paper, but is not representative of the issues facing Canadians. As such, the critical belonging that materializes is often mobilized by both a personal determination to resist definition
based on criteria of exclusion and a desire to remedy the inequities faced by all Canadians of colour. In the words of a second generation Canadian, “My sense of belonging gives me the right to be critical. If I didn’t belong somewhere I wouldn’t really even care to criticize.” (FG3-02)

Conclusion

As the results of the questionnaire and focus groups show, the negotiations of citizenship and racism of second generation Canadians of colour are many and multifaceted. Perhaps the most significant observation to be made is that the stories and ideas shared by the second generation appear, at times, to be incompatible with one another. Upon deeper analysis it is possible to decipher a set of probable explanations that illuminate the very shadowed nature of identity, difference, and belonging. In order to understand fully the influence of racism on the perceptions and experiences of the second generation it is necessary to consider these incongruities and trace the linkages among them.

As discussion over the discursive themes of the research shows, numerous paradoxes characterize the negotiations of the second generation. One needs look no further than the following examples of paradox to support this claim.

- Members of the second generation identify strongly as Canadian and assert their citizenship rights actively. They do not question whether they can be part of mainstream Canada, but they have doubts about whether mainstream Canada will ever accept them.

- While members of the second generation of colour believe that they are not the individual targets of racism, they actively engage in strategies to avoid racism.

- Participants in the study embody both mainstream and marginalized identities, and as a result engage simultaneously in both inclusionary and exclusionary practices.
• Despite the positioning of the participants of colour within the actual structures of racial oppression, white participants appear to be more attuned to the nature and effects of racism in Canada than are second generation participants of colour.

• Although the foreign-born parent(s) of the second generation participants are said to have tolerated a greater degree of racially discriminatory behaviours and ideologies, they are nonetheless credited with instilling in their children a strong sense of attachment to Canada. Ironically, it is the second generation who admit to possessing a more critical view of Canadian society than their parents.

There are numerous ways in which the discourses, and the above-mentioned paradoxes that are inherent within them, inform, strengthen and sustain each other. This is achieved primarily by dulling some aspects of racialization and heightening others. The paradoxes are the result of processes of identification that involve rationalization of their own place within Canadian society that results in denial of their racialization. Second generation individuals create spaces wherein they are insiders. By seeking to position themselves within the mainstream, they give up (or perhaps ignore) the reality of either the racialized aspects of their own experiences, or the experiences of others. In other words, they may become less sensitive to issues of racism towards outsiders. Conversely, the insistence by immigrant parents that Canada is a country of freedom and opportunity (despite the hardship they endured), heightens the desire of second generation individuals to belong and succeed. These are only a few of the ways that the paradoxes of the second generation interrelate to create the perspectives unique to their position in society.
Chapter 6
Conclusion

Attempts at crafting a cohesive Canadian identity, as numerous and ambitious as they are, have ultimately failed to paint a portrait of our country that is recognizable or accessible to all its residents. For some Canadians of colour this has led to varied imaginings of Canada and what it means to be Canadian. This thesis has explored the perception and experiences of racism of a group of second generation Canadians of colour by looking at issues of identity, ethnocultural relationships, forms of belonging, as well as intergenerational relations.

The experiences of the second generation participants of colour must be understood as a consequence of both historical and contemporary contexts. Legacies of racial discrimination in Canada have created an ethnocultural landscape where today some Canadians have a right to more meaningful, or substantive, citizenship than others. Today, experiences of racism have noteworthy effects on the second generation individuals themselves, but also transform modes of belonging in different and unexpected ways.

To say that the participants of colour experience racism is too simple a statement. As the results of my research show, the experiences of racism and citizenship of the second generation are characterized by numerous paradoxes that are not only significant, but incredibly complex to understand. These contradictions reveal themselves in the analyses of the various discourses and speak to the complexity of the identity, citizenship and societal structures of which the second generation is a part. Given the methodological design of this project, discourse analysis has proven to be a useful way to interpret the information gathered in my research. Focus groups enabled the establishment of a dialectical relationship among participants that facilitated the constructive exchange, expansion and modification of ideas that allowed them to deepen understanding of their
own experiences. While most of the participants did not move beyond a denial of personal experiences of racism in the course of the discussions, most of them recognized the experiences of other members of the group as racialized. Perhaps more discussion, or even different questions, would have led to a greater recognition among the participants of their own racialization, but my objective was not one of such raising of awareness (with all of the ethical implications that that process might involve), but only to hear from them what they are dealing with now and how they understand their ongoing experiences. Like the white participants, I am keenly aware of the experiences of racism that came out of their stories, and I believe that those experiences have influenced what seems to be a process of rationalization and denial on the part of the participants of colour.

This brings me back to the question of positionality, and my role as a white researcher. I am concerned about my ability, and indeed my right, to represent their experiences accurately, and I recognize that my judgement comes from a particular positionality and ideological perspective. While I may not be privy to all those things that go into their perspectives, and while I cannot live their experiences, my “reading” of those experiences conforms to what other scholars have said about discourses of denial. I have also, however, learned much more from their narratives than I could have learned only from reading the academic literature.

Even as this research project has generated important findings, it has also prompted many questions. Discussions on the prevalence of racism in Canada reveal that not only do the second generation and white participants disagree on the prevalence and definitions of racism, but findings suggest that white participants possess a view of racial inequity that is strongly in line with scholarship on the subject. They additionally appear to possess a keener sense of the nature and forms of racism; however the underlying reasons for these divergences require additional examination. Through processes of racialization, second generation individuals are rendered more visible in society and unfortunately, coupled with this visibility is a vulnerability to racism. Little information was generated in my research that explains the intricacies of this differential
racialization, though it remains an interesting direction to pursue. With respect to the influence of experiences of racism on feelings of belonging in Canada, the majority of second generation participants report little consequence. If anything, the results show that these experiences have merely transformed the ways in which the participants imagine Canada as well as the terms of their belonging. Further research could investigate how this sense of attachment changes over time.

My research project is not without limitations. A whole range of questions that lie outside of the parameters of the original study were raised throughout the design, implementation, and analysis stages. Although certainly not the only limitations, four restrictions are particularly noteworthy. First, despite intriguing inferences on the gendered dimensions of experiences and understandings of racism, a deep analysis on this topic was not possible given the design and objectives of the study. Second, since those with a university education occupy a position of privilege in our society, the university education of my participants should be considered an influential factor in the nature and outcomes of the research findings. Third, due to the fact that the project was not designed to be representative of the entire second generation population in Canada, it is possible that studies drawing from the experiences of second generation Canadians with different backgrounds (including different educational backgrounds) would yield a greater diversity of results. An increase in the sample size of second generation Canadians of colour could begin to resolve this question; however, this was not possible given the resources of the project. A final limitation worth mentioning is that the white participant groups were not required to be second generation and therefore a direct comparison of “second generation” experiences was impossible. Although I was able to generate some significant comparative findings, a deeper understanding of generation and belonging could be obtained through use of more selective criteria.

A new generation is struggling to redefine what it means to be Canadian. For the second generation individuals in my study, being Canadian is about mixing and matching identities, accommodating social constructions of race, religion and culture, all-the-while straddling the worlds of their ancestral heritage and of the mainstream. For them, belonging in Canada is played
out on a number of scales and from a multitude of positionalities and is about imagination and creating positive spaces in which their contributions to society can be recognized and valued. As one participant of colour (FG1-04) stated so poignantly, “It seems that being Canadian takes on different shapes for everyone. The Canada I see is far from perfect, but there is a place for me in it. If being Canadian for me means that I am critical of the way things are, in the end, aren’t we all better for it?” If they are not just new imaginings of Canada that are sought, but transformations of the country’s ethnocultural relations, then there is much that can be learned from the experiences of second generation Canadians of colour. The acquisition of this knowledge alone is not enough, and should be accompanied by a push for policy that will address racism.


Jedwab, J. 2004. Paradoxes of Diversity; Examining Multiculturalism’s Multiple Meanings: Association for Canadian Studies.


Appendix A

CONSENT FORM

Belonging in Canada: Understanding Racism in Canada

I am aware of the purpose and procedures of this study, and I have been informed that the focus group will be recorded by audiotape. I am also aware that my participation will be anonymous.

I have been notified that participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any point during the study and I may request the removal of my data from the study without any consequences to myself.

I am aware that if I have any questions about this project, I can contact Meghan Brooks at 533-6000 ext. 75732. I am also aware that for questions, concerns or complaints about the research ethics of this study, I can contact the Acting Head of the Department of Geography, Dr. Paul M. Treitz (613)533-6448, Dr. Audrey Kobayashi (613)533-3035, or the Chair of the General Research Ethics Board, Dr. Steven Leighton, (613) 533-6081, email GREB@post.queensu.ca.

Participant’s Name: ____________________________________________

Signature: ____________________________________________________

Date: _________________________________________________________

For Meghan Brooks, M.A. Candidate
Department of Geography, Queen’s University
Appendix B
LETTER OF INFORMATION

Belonging in Canada: Racism and Second Generation Canadians of Colour

I would like to request your participation in research aimed at understanding the experiences of racism of second generation Canadians who belong to a racialized group. In particular, I am interested in comparing your experiences with those of your parents as well as understanding how racism has affected your feelings of belonging in Canada. I am an M.A. Candidate in the department of Geography at Queen’s University. This research has been cleared by the Queen’s University General Research Ethics Board.

I wish to document the views of how racialized, second generation Canadians perceive and experience racism. To do this, I am planning to administer a short questionnaire as well as facilitate a focus group session. I am inviting you to participate in both of these processes. A focus group is somewhat like a group discussion and will involve about 6 to 10 people (individuals who are second generation, racialized individuals like yourself). I will be present to distribute the questionnaires and lead the focus group.

The focus group interview will be conducted at a time that is convenient to all who are being invited. The location will be at Queen’s University. The questionnaire should take no longer than fifteen minutes to complete. The focus group interview will take approximately one and a half to two hours and will be audio taped.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. Research relating to second generation Canadians is only now beginning to emerge and the research I propose to undertake will be a valuable addition to this collection. I sincerely hope you will consider participating in this progressive research!

If you are interested in being a part of my research I invite you to email me at the address below. Also, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Contact Information:
Meghan Brooks
Department of Geography, Queen’s University
Email: 6mb5@queensu.ca
Phone: (613)533-6000 ext. 75732.
Appendix C

Are You A Second Generation Canadian?

Do you want to be a part of cutting-edge research?

Then I need YOU!

I am presently recruiting individuals who are second generation, “non-white” Canadians to participate in my M.A. research.

This project has been approved by the Queen’s University General Research Ethics Board, and will be entirely confidential. It involves completing a short questionnaire and participating in an optional discussion on topics including:

- What being Canadian means to you
- How your experiences compare to those of your parents
- How racial discrimination has affected your life

Research relating to second generation Canadians is only now beginning to emerge and the research I propose to undertake will be a valuable addition to this collection.

If you are interested in being a part of my research I invite you to email me in strict confidence at the address below.

Contact Me: Meghan Brooks
M.A. Candidate
Department of Geography
Queen’s University
Email: 6mb5@queensu.ca
Project Title: **Belonging in Canada: Understanding the Experiences of Second Generation Canadians of Colour**

**Section One: Biographical Information**

1. Sex: ☐ male ☐ female

The following questions relate to you, your parents and your grandparents. Please write the answers to all of the questions in the corresponding boxes. If you are unsure of any of the answers please provide the most accurate information you can given the circumstances. If there is a family member for whom you do not wish to provide information, you do not have information on them, please mark an ‘X’ in the corresponding box.

2. In the corresponding boxes, please indicate the year of birth of each individual.
3. Please indicate in the appropriate box each individual’s country of birth.

4. While most people in Canada view themselves as Canadians, their family roots can be historically traced beyond Canada’s borders. For this reason it is important to consider the origins of a person’s ancestors. To which ethnic or cultural group(s) does each of the person’s below belong? For example: Chinese, Inuit, Jamaican, etc.
5. In the corresponding boxes, please indicate the language(s) spoken in order of fluency.

6. Please indicate the religion of each individual. For example: Roman Catholic, Islam, Hindu, Buddhist, etc.
7. Please indicate the year of immigration to Canada (where applicable).

8. Please indicate the current city of residence of each individual.
9. What is the highest certificate, diplomas or degrees that person has obtained? Please fill in the number that corresponds in their box.

1. None  
2. Secondary (high) school or equivalent  
3. Trades certificate or diploma  
4. Other non-University certificate or diploma (for example community college)  
5. University certificate below a bachelor level  
6. Bachelor’s Degree (e.g. B.A., B.Sc.)  
7. Master’s Degree (M.A., M. Ed.)  
8. Degree in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or optometry (M.D., D.M.D.)  
9. Earned Doctorate (Ph.D.)

10. Please indicate in the corresponding box the primary occupation of each individual.
Section Two: Racism in Canada

For each of the following questions please place a check mark beside the appropriate answer.

11. How much racism do you feel there is in Canada today?
   - ○ A lot
   - ○ Some
   - ○ Little
   - ○ None
   - ○ Not Applicable

12. How much racism do you feel your parents experienced when they moved to Canada?
   - ○ A lot
   - ○ Some
   - ○ Little
   - ○ None
   - ○ Not Applicable

Section Three: Racism and Me

13. For each of the options below please indicate the frequency with which you feel discriminated.

   a. School
   - ○ Very Often
   - ○ Sometimes
   - ○ Rarely
   - ○ Never
   - ○ Not

   b. Workplace
   - ○ Very Often
   - ○ Sometimes
   - ○ Rarely
   - ○ Never
   - ○ Not

   c. At home
   - ○ Very Often
   - ○ Sometimes
   - ○ Rarely
   - ○ Never
   - ○ Not

   d. Social gatherings
   - ○ Very Often
   - ○ Sometimes
   - ○ Rarely
   - ○ Never
   - ○ Not

   e. Using services
   - ○ Very Often
   - ○ Sometimes
   - ○ Rarely
   - ○ Never
   - ○ Not

   f. Personal interactions
   - ○ Very Often
   - ○ Sometimes
   - ○ Rarely
   - ○ Never
   - ○ Not

   g. Other:__________
   - ○ Very Often
   - ○ Sometimes
   - ○ Rarely
   - ○ Never
   - ○ Not
14. I have been treated differently or unfairly because of my skin colour.
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Not Applicable

15. I experience more racism than my parents do.
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Not Applicable

16. Experiences of racism have had a _____________ impact on my feelings of belonging in Canada.
   - Very Negative
   - Slightly Negative
   - Neither Negative nor Positive
   - Slightly Positive
   - Very Positive
   - Not Applicable
Focus Group Agenda

Objective:

To compare the differences in the experiences of racial discrimination of second generation racialized individuals and their parents. I also aim to understand how racism affects these individuals’ feelings of belonging (experiences of citizenship) in Canada.

Research Questions:

Do these individuals feel they experience differential or unfair treatment as a result of their racialized minority status? In what places and situations do these individuals report experiencing racial discrimination? What frameworks or understandings influence how they perceive racial discrimination? Do these experiences of discrimination affect feelings of belonging in Canadian society?

Introductions

Hello, I'd like to take a minute to introduce myself. My name is Meghan Brooks and I am the coordinator of this research and will be facilitating this focus group session. I am currently enrolled in an MA in Geography here at Queen’s and am in the process of completing the research portion of my degree requirements.

I'd like to thank you all for making the time to come out today to share your knowledge. In this project that I am working on, I am looking at the experiences of racial discrimination of second-generation, visible minority individuals and how it affects their sense of belonging. In the context of this research, being ‘second-generation’ means a person is Canadian-born, but has at least one parent who has immigrated to Canada. The term ‘visible minority’ refers to individuals and groups who are considered to be “non-white”. Other terms that might be used interchangeably with ‘visible minority’ include racialized individual, a person of colour, etc.

In particular the focus group today will centre on experiences of racial discrimination, touching on where and in what situations it occurs, as well as your perceptions of discrimination. I am interested in understanding how you have come to understand or negotiate your personal identity within the context of wider racial discussions.

Only recently have researchers begun to look at the experiences of second-generation individuals within Canada. I believe that pursuing research in this area is very important and insightful because all of you are uniquely positioned within society. As full Canadians you are extended the benefits of citizenship that our country has to offer. As individuals of visible minority status, you remain vulnerable as a group and individuals to the racism in Canadian society. What I am hoping to learn today from all of you is how you experience and interpret
racialized situations so that as researchers we can compare this information with work about the experiences of new immigrants (likely your parents) and also white-European second-generation persons.

What I am looking for today is a frank and open discussion about your thoughts and feelings on the topic. As we go through the session I’ll ask you both general and specific questions to help flesh out answers and issues that may be raised. I am interested in a range of ideas and opinions and hope that you will share your views even if they are not in agreement with those of other speakers. I want everyone to feel free to offer their reflections at any time throughout the focus group. I only ask that out of courtesy we take turns speaking. As the moderator of the focus group at times it may be necessary for me to direct conversation or manage the order or duration of speaking. This is with the aim of facilitating the flow of conversation. I encourage you to take notes during the conversation so that you don’t forget anything you would like to share.

Does anyone have any questions so far?

Focus Group Material

Question #1 (General)

1. What does it mean to you to be Canadian?
   - Can you think of any symbols or trademarks that represent Canada?
   - What are some features of society that are unique to our country?

Question #2

2. In general, do you feel that racism is a significant issue in Canada?

2.1 Do you feel that racism was an issue that your parents had to deal with when they moved to Canada?
   - Can you think of any stories your parents have told you about experiencing racism?
   - Do you think that they are in denial?

Question #3

3. Have you ever felt that you have been treated differently or unfairly because of your skin colour or other features?
3.1 Can anyone one think of examples of places or situations in which they have felt racially discriminated? For example, think about times when you’ve been at school, at work, or out with friends.

Question #4

Do you feel that your experiences of racism impact your feelings of belonging in Canada?

Question #5

Why do you feel your experiences of racism and those of your parents differ?
Appendix F

Belonging in Canada: Understanding Racism in Canada

Section One: Biographical Information

1. Sex:  □ male  □ female

The following questions relate to you, your parents and your grandparents. Please write the answers to all of the questions in the corresponding boxes. If you are unsure of any of the answers please provide the most accurate information you can given the circumstances. If there is a family member for whom you do not wish to provide information, you do not have information on them, please mark an ‘X” in the corresponding box.

2. In the corresponding boxes, please indicate the year of birth of each individual.
3. Please indicate in the appropriate box each individual’s country of birth.

4. While most people in Canada view themselves as Canadians, their family roots can be historically traced beyond Canada’s borders. For this reason it is important to consider the origins of a person’s ancestors. To which ethnic or cultural group(s) does each of the person’s below belong? For example: Chinese, Inuit, Jamaican, etc.
5. In the corresponding boxes, please indicate the language(s) spoken in order of fluency.

6. Please indicate the religion of each individual. For example: Roman Catholic, Islam, Hindu, Buddhist, etc.
7. Please indicate the year of immigration to Canada (where applicable).

8. Please indicate the current city of residence of each individual.
9. What is the highest certificate, diplomas or degrees that person has obtained? Please fill in the number that corresponds in their box.
   1. None   2. Secondary (high) school or equivalent   3. Trades certificate or diploma   4. Other non-University certificate or diploma (for example community college)   5. University certificate below a bachelor level   6. Bachelor’s Degree (e.g. B.A., B.Sc.)   7. Master’s Degree (M.A., M. Ed.)   8. Degree in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or optometry (M.D., D.M.D.)   9. Earned Doctorate (Ph.D.)

You

Father

Mother

Grandparents

10. Please indicate in the corresponding box the primary occupation of each individual.
Section Two: Racism in Canada

For each of the following questions please place a check mark beside the appropriate answer.

11. How much racism do you feel there is in Canada today?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

12. How much racism would you say your parents perceive in Canada?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

13. For each of the options below please indicate the frequency with which you believe discrimination occurs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social gatherings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal interactions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:__________</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14. Racism can take many forms; ranging from overt acts of aggression to subtle structural or attitudinal biases. The following list contains a selection of forms of racism noted by scholars. From the list below, check all of the forms of racism that have you witnessed or perpetrated.

○ Hate Crimes
○ Police Violence
○ Bullying
○ Harassment
○ Verbal Abusive
○ Racist jokes
○ Racism Denial
○ Excessive Politeness
○ Job discrimination
○ Institutional discrimination
○ Culturally insensitive services
○ Other: ____________________

For each of the following questions please place a check mark beside the appropriate answer.

15. Claims of racial discrimination are usually accurate.
   ○ Strongly Agree
   ○ Agree
   ○ Neither Agree nor Disagree
   ○ Disagree
   ○ Strongly Disagree
   ○ Not Applicable

16. There is more racism in contemporary Canadian society than when my parents were my age.
   ○ Strongly Agree
   ○ Agree
   ○ Neither Agree nor Disagree
   ○ Disagree
   ○ Strongly Disagree
   ○ Not Applicable

17. I believe that for people of colour, experiences of racism have a ___________ impact on feelings of belonging in Canada.
   ○ Very Negative
   ○ Slightly Negative
   ○ Neither Negative nor Positive
   ○ Slightly Positive
   ○ Very Positive
   ○ Not Applicable
18. As a “white” individual I feel that I ________________ challenge racist behaviours and practices.
   ○ Actively
   ○ Occasionally
   ○ Rarely
   ○ Never
   ○ Not Applicable

19. On a scale from one to five, please indicate the degree to which you feel that you ‘belong’ in Canada.

   1  2  3  4  5
   ○ ------------------- ○ ------------------- ○ ------------------- ○ ------------------- ○
   Not at all     Somewhat     Very Much

20. On a scale from one to five, please indicate the degree to which you feel you are accepting of Canada’s increasingly multicultural population.

   1  2  3  4  5
   ○ ------------------- ○ ------------------- ○ ------------------- ○ ------------------- ○
   Not at all     Somewhat     Very Much

21. On a scale from one to five, please indicate the degree to which you feel Canadians in general are accepting of the country’s increasingly multicultural population.

   1  2  3  4  5
   ○ ------------------- ○ ------------------- ○ ------------------- ○ ------------------- ○
   Not at all     Somewhat     Very Much
Focus Group Agenda

Introductions

Hello, I’d like to take a minute to introduce myself. My name is Meghan Brooks and I am the coordinator of this research and will be facilitating this focus group session. I am currently enrolled in an MA in Geography here at Queen’s and am in the process of completing the research portion of my degree requirements.

I’d like to thank you all for making the time to come out today to share your knowledge. In this project that I am working on, I am looking at the experiences of racial discrimination of second-generation, visible minority individuals and how it affects their sense of belonging. In the context of this research, being ‘second-generation’ means a person is Canadian-born, but has at least one parent who has immigrated to Canada. The term ‘visible minority’ refers to individuals and groups who are considered to be “non-white”. Other terms that might be used interchangeably with ‘visible minority’ include racialized individual, a person of colour, etc.

In particular the focus group today will centre on experiences of racial discrimination, touching on where and in what situations it occurs, as well as your perceptions of discrimination. I am interested in understanding how you have come to understand this topic within the context of wider racial discussions.

What I am looking for today is a frank and open discussion about your thoughts and feelings on the topic. As we go through the session I’ll ask you both general and specific questions to help flesh out answers and issues that may be raised. I am interested in a range of ideas and opinions and hope that you will share you views even if they are not in agreement with those of other speakers. I want everyone to feel free to offer their reflections at any time throughout the focus group. I only ask that out of courtesy we take turns speaking. As the moderator of the focus group at times it may be necessary for me to direct conversation or manage the order or duration of speaking. This is with the aim of facilitating the flow of conversation. I encourage you to take notes during the conversation so that you don’t forget anything you would like to share.

Does anyone have any questions so far?
Focus Group Material

1. What does it mean to you to be Canadian?

2. Do you feel that racism is a significant issue in Canada today?

3. Do you think that racism in Canada impacts the feelings of belonging of people of colour?

4. Are there certain places or situations where you feel that discrimination more frequently occurs?

5. How do you partake in/or challenge racism?