# CITC

**CANADIAN ISSUES**
**THÈMES CANADIENS**

SPRING/SUMMER 2023

# Who Are We?

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# Canadian Identity – Past, present and future

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No need to travel through time to identify turning points in Canadian thinking and understanding of ourselves. Still fresh in our minds is the Covid-19 pandemic. The unification of Canadians in the early days was followed by some degree of polarisation in the thoughts and values toward public health measures, the media, and democratic institutions in general--though perhaps not to the same extent as our neighbours to the south.

The pandemic also put into question some historical sources of Canadian pride, notably Canada's universal health-care system, which has become strained with staff shortages and postponed surgeries and routine preventative care. The labour market and economy also took a hit, and with regards to Canadian identity, it magnified the divide between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'. Challenges to job and income stability were most often experienced by the lower-paying and essential sectors (e.g., grocery store clerks), while knowledge-based jobs were less impacted, as workers were able to shift online. This

was coupled with the possible lasting impacts on upward economic mobility for the younger generation and immigrants, brought on by the rising cost of living and financial barriers to homeownership.

Against the backdrop of the pandemic, pride in Canadian history was put to the test, as the country witnessed the discovery of unmarked burial sites at previous residential school locations. These injustices and other examples of systemic racism were punctuated by the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement that sparked protests in Canada and around the world over discrimination faced by Indigenous and racialized people. These events ultimately provoked Canadians to think about themselves and our traditional sources of pride.

Have these transformative events signalled a change in being Canadian, or was there ever a single Canadian identity to begin with? Questions on national identity can be a source of much esoteric debate, though data can help simplify and make sense of who we were, who we are, and where we are headed.

Over the years, Canada's identity as a country has continuously changed, being shaped by shifts in the socio-demographic landscape of Canada and the intertwined dimensions of social change, geopolitical events (e.g., wars, the Great Depression) and policy shifts. And while identity, in itself, can be an interesting declaration of who Canadians are and what they stand for, the notion of how Canadians view themselves and others can have implications on our social cohesion, civic engagement and participation, and connections with others. It also manifests into the degree Canadians believe that everyone should have a chance to succeed, regardless of differences in gender, age, ethnicity, language, disability status, or sexual orientation.

Looking at the history of this country, the sheer pace of social and demographic change in the past 50 years is unprecedented, and yet for the most part, we live alongside one another peacefully. The crime rate has been generally decreasing since the 1990s, and our social services, open-access political systems, and overall quality of life are often the envy of the world, consistently ranking among the top internationally. In many ways, Canada is a country that has successfully channelled the resources and talents of individuals from diverse ethnic, linguistic, and religious backgrounds.

Our diversity is in large part thanks to immigration, combined with the cultural richness flowing from Canada's Indigenous groups who have lived on this land for thousands of years. European settlers represented the bulk of new immigrants during the first 100 years after Confederation. And, while not a homogenous group, the shift in immigration policy in the 1960s meant the growth in the plurality of ethnic backgrounds alongside languages other than English and French, as well as non-Christian religions, notably Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism.

In 2021, the majority of immigrants were from Asia, including the Middle East, and an increasing share were born in Africa. Meanwhile, the share of immigrants born in Europe continued to drop, going from 62% of immigrants in 1971 to 10% in 2021.[1]

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[1] Statistics Canada. 2022 (October). 'Immigrants make up the largest share of the population in over 150 years and continue to shape who we are as Canadians' *The Daily.*

Reflecting the change in immigrant source countries and their descendants, 1 in 4 people now belong to a racialized group, compared to fewer than 1 in 20 people in the early 1980s. This proportion is projected to grow between 38% and 43% by 2041.[2] Indeed, with the recent federal *Immigration plan to grow the economy,*[3] it is expected that both population growth and diversity will accelerate at an impressive pace.

Currently, in the two large urban centres, racialized Canadians already represent the majority of the population, standing at 59% in Toronto and 58% in Vancouver. And, while Toronto and Vancouver are currently the two most racialized major cities, other areas of Canada will likely see changes in the demographic composition in the future, with an increasing share of immigrants residing in other cities in Ontario, notably Ottawa and Kingston, as well as Atlantic Canada.

In addition to the racialized populations, Indigenous populations are increasing and representing a larger share of the population. In 2021, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis accounted for 5% of the Canadian population, up from less than 3% in the mid-1990s.

This growing cultural mosaic, where different groups coexist and flourish together, has often defined Canada's identity, both within our country and on the world stage. Indeed, the official multiculturalism policy of Canada is often a source of national pride and a stark contrast to the melting pot system, emphasised in other immigrant-receiving countries. Does this tenet still define our national identity? Does the idea of multiculturalism envelop the intersecting identities, based not only on culture but age, gender, region, disability status, sexual orientation, and various other markers of individual identity? Are we moving towards a more individualistic sense of identity, and possibly a more divisive society?

Data tells us that while we may be increasingly diverse in a growing number of ways with potential challenges to social cohesion, Canadians continue to stand united in the fundamental values of equality and protection of human rights. With it, there is a mutual respect and responsibility to uphold these values. It is perhaps these shared values, combined with our diversity, that makes Canada stand out internationally, and what defines us as Canadians.

One of the clearest examples of this collective value system is the pride in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Adopted in 1982, the vast majority of Canadians (93%) still consider the Charter an important symbol of Canadian identity, guaranteeing the rights to equality, democracy, and mobility.[4] While this symbol and other national symbols are largely conceptual representations of a country's identity, they can have a positive effect on bonding and emotional attachment to our country.

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[2] Statistics Canada. 2022 (September). '[Canada in 2041: A larger, more diverse population with greater differences between regions](#)' *The Daily.*

[3] See [An Immigration Plan to Grow the Economy  - Canada.ca](#) (November 2022)

[4] Based on results from the [General Social Survey on Social Identity](#) (2020).

The appreciation of the Charter is perhaps a tangible representation of the values that Canadians hold dear to their figurative hearts, including human rights, gender equality, ethnic and cultural diversity, linguistic duality and respect for Indigenous culture.

Nearly all Canadians (98%) personally agree with the value of human rights, with 85% agreeing to a great extent (Chart 1).  Similarly, 97% believe in the respect for the law and 95% for gender equality. Other values are also highly regarded among Canadians. Take for example ethnic and cultural diversity. Overall, 92% personally agree with this value – identical to the proportion who agree with the value of respecting Indigenous culture.

And, just as Canada is diverse, so are our personal adherence to these values. Women, immigrants and particularly recent immigrants, and Francophones are generally more likely to personally hold these values. Also, Indigenous peoples, whether First Nations, Inuit, or Métis, are more likely than non-Indigenous people to believe to a great extent in the need to respect Indigenous culture (84% versus 67%).



Chart 1: Nearly all Canadians personally agree with the value of human rights
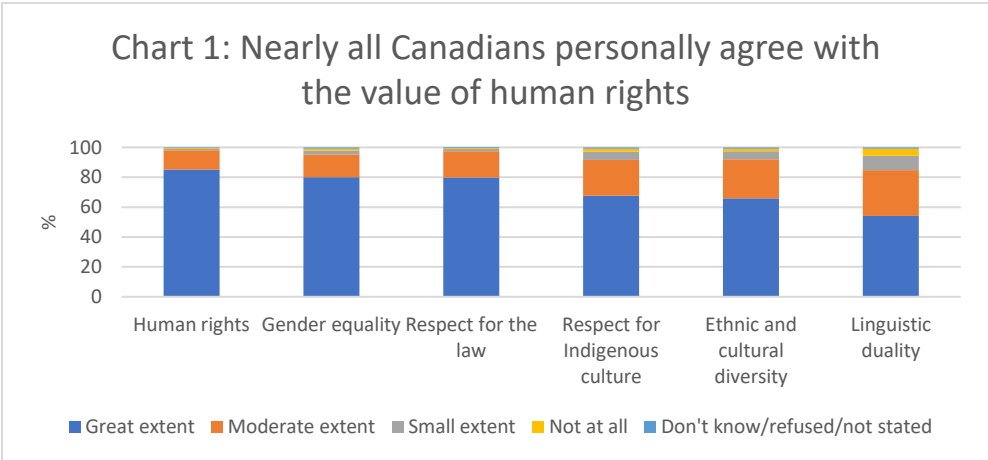
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey on Social Identity, 2020

This possible rosy picture of Canada, however, may need to be tempered when we draw the distinction between personal belief systems and perceptions of collective Canadian values. Across a range of values, people are less inclined to identify them as *shared* Canadians values. In 2020, 92% of Canadians believed human rights to be a shared Canadian value, with 57% feeling to a great extent that Canadians valued human rights. This was the only value where more than half of the population strongly believed it was a Canadian ideal. And even for this shared value, there has been a decline over time in people's beliefs in it as a shared value.

The share of Canadians believing to a great extent in the shared collective values of human rights, gender equality, ethnic and cultural diversity, linguistic duality and Indigenous culture has dropped since 2013. The largest drop was seen for gender equality, where 36% of Canadians agreed to a great degree that it was a shared value in 2020, compared to nearly half (47%) a decade earlier. A similar drop was evident for the shared value of ethnic and cultural diversity (30% versus 41% in 2013).

Perhaps these decreases reflect the ongoing challenges in Canadian society.  There are indications of differential treatment and opportunity. Discrimination against racialized groups in Canadian society has been increasing. For instance, a higher percentage of Black Canadians experienced discrimination in

2019 compared to 2014 (46% versus 28%).[5] Similarly, experiences of discrimination were more prevalent among Indigenous people in 2019 (33%) than they were in 2014 (23%).

And the pandemic appears to have further exacerbated these issues. Discrimination based on race and ethnicity increased since the start of the pandemic, particularly against Asian groups.[6] Also coinciding with the start of the pandemic, police-reported hate crimes have been increasing over the past few years, with the largest increase between 2019 and 2020 (37% increase), including hate crimes based on race or ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation.[7]

Having a balanced view of our country and our national identity – both the good and the bad - is critical moving forward as a country. No doubt there are challenges to social cohesion that we must tackle in order to survive and thrive as a country. Indeed, this need will be ever-growing, as we will increasingly rely on immigrants and their full integration into our knowledge-based labour market, in the face of an ageing population and the corresponding demands on our social systems. Correspondingly, we will need to reverse the downward trend in immigrants' propensity to become Canadian citizens.[8] Doing so will ensure that new Canadians and their progeny stay and succeed in Canada for generations to come.

So, what is the answer to the big question of Canadian identity? It is conceivably a combination of intersecting identities living alongside one another in relative harmony, guided by a common set of values. At the same time, Canadians do not have their heads in the sand. They know there are areas of improvement, but on a personal level, they appear ready and willing to ensure that what makes us Canadian remains intact, now and into the future.

**Anil Arora** is the Chief Statistician of Canada. Mr. Arora has led significant transformational initiatives throughout his career, with experience and partnerships spanning all three levels of government, the

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[5] Cotter, A. 2022 (February). 'Experiences of discrimination among the Black and Indigenous populations in Canada, 2019' *Juristat.* Catalogue no. 85-002-X.

[6] Statistics Canada. 2022 (March). 'Discrimination before and since the start of the pandemic' *Infographics.* Catalogue no. 11-627-M.

[7] Wang, J. H. and G. Moreau. 'Police-reported hate crime in Canada, 2020' *Juristat.* Catalogue no. 85-002-X.

[8] Hou, F. and G. Picot. 2019. 'Trends in Citizenship Rate Among New Immigrants to Canada' *Economic Insights.* Catalogue no. 11-626-X.

private sector and international organisations, including the UN and the OECD. He has led projects on high-profile policy issues, legislative and regulatory reform, and overseen large national programs.

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# Categorization "Them and Us", Multiple Identity and Discrimination in Canada

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Social psychology uses four concepts to study harmonious or conflictual intergroup relations in multi-ethnic societies, such as Canada: categorization, multiple identities, prejudice, and discrimination (Bourhis, 2021). Let's approach the theme of categorization with a quote from Albert Einstein, the scientist who proposed the theory of relativity on the eve of the Second World War. Here is his observation in 1936 on the categories prescribed to him and the prejudices he suffered from.

"If my theory of relativity is proven successful, Germany will claim me as a German, Switzerland will say that I am a Swiss citizen and France will state that I am a great scientist. Should my theory prove untrue, France will say that I am a Swiss, the Swiss will say I am German and the Germans will declare that I am a Jew"

Beyond the great scientist Einstein, there is Einstein the German, Einstein the Jew, and Einstein the resident of France and the United States. There is Einstein, a person who belongs to several distinct social categories, but also an individual who belongs to the largest of tribes, that of humans. These affiliations are as real as they are arbitrary. Belonging to one social category rather than another means you may or may not be the target of prejudice and discrimination. If the theory of relativity had been wrong, Einstein could have been only a foreigner or an asylum seeker, and not any usual kind. Fortunately for Einstein, the scientist, the theory of relativity proved to be correct. But above all, regardless of his genius and scientific contributions, it was thanks to his political acumen that he was

able to leave Nazi Germany just in time to avoid the genocide extermination against the Jews– his most vulnerable categorical affiliation.  Thus, belonging to one social category rather than another may or may not make us the target of prejudice, discrimination, or genocide.

Social categorization is a cognitive tool that helps us partition and classify our physical from our social environment. Categorization is a fundamental, normal, efficient, and necessary process in human beings. But social categorization also has its dark side, as it has been the case since the dawn of time.

We are likely to say "us" when referring to our in-group–individuals whom we categorize as members of our own group to which we belong and with whom we tend to identify. On the other hand, we define an out-group as people whom we categorize as members belonging to a group other than our own, and with whom we do not identify. Thus, we tend to refer to an out-group as "them".

In social psychology, there is a lot of interest in intergroup phenomena that are related to imposed social categories, which are linked to gender, age, ethnic origin, religious, linguistic, cultural background, as well as physical or mental disability. In many of these cases, we did not choose to be affiliated with valued or undervalued groups at birth. Individuals encompassed by these categories can hardly deny that they are members of these groups, and they cannot easily change their affiliation, even if the impenetrability of these categories and their social status vary according to cultural, political, and historical contexts. In Quebec, for example, a Haitian woman of a certain age who is afflicted by racism, sexism, and ageism cannot easily extricate herself from her devalued affiliation to escape the prejudice and discrimination she may experience on a daily basis.

We are all part of a multitude of social groups and categories. Our self-categorization bridges the gap between our unique personal self and our belonging to multiple categories.   At what point does the "personal self" become the "collective us"? Social context and our beliefs and emotions have a lot to do with it. Our "personal self" is most prominent in our emotional relationships with our parents, siblings, friends, and life partners. The "collective we" becomes important when our personal fate becomes dependent on our collective destiny as a member of our social categories, such as gender, ethnicity, religion, or language.

Here's an example of belonging to multiple categories. I quote from an interview with the Montreal athlete Bruny Surin, who had just won the 100 meters at the British Athletics Grand Prix on August 5, 2000.

The journalist asks: "Is there anything you'd like to say, without any questions being asked?"

Bruny Surin: "Yes ... I don't like to talk politics. You may be aware that I belong to several communities. Yes, I'm proud to be Haitian. Yes, I'm proud to be a Quebecer, and yes, I will proudly wear Canada's colors at the Sydney Olympics. But my personal choice would be to wear a jersey bearing the colors of Haiti, Quebec, and Canada at the same time. And above all, to be the first to cross the finish line in the 100-meter final at the Sydney Games."  La Presse, August 13, 2000, 'The personality of the week'.

The athlete, Bruny Surin, demonstrates the possibility of representing multiple belongings and how his positive identities have enriched his personal athletic achievements. In 2022, Bruni Surin received the Order of Canada's medal for his commitment to facilitating sports activities for young people from all cultural backgrounds in Montreal's underprivileged neighborhoods for over twenty years.

Multiple positive identities can be additive and contribute to a more integrated and harmonious personal self. The idea of a free, plural, and democratic society, such as Canada, is to enable all individuals to express and live their multiple identities without forcing them to identify with a single national, ethnic, religious, or gender category. Social cohesion is developed by enabling individuals to express a multitude of identities without being accused of treachery, being punished, or being repudiated by the group to which they belong or by the dominant majority. Alas, in polarized societies, social groups often force

individuals to prove their loyalty by choosing a single identity affiliation. Whether in the name of a majority or a minority, individuals are forced to take sides: "Are you part of the problem or part of the solution?", "Are you with us or against us?"

Sometimes, "critical events" force individuals to choose a single category, often marginalized by the majority. Let's take the example of September 11, 2001, the day of the deadliest terrorist attack in US history. These attacks were carried out in New York and Washington by 19 suicide bombers, including 15 from Saudi Arabia, led by Osama Bin Laden, who was based in Afghanistan at the time. The attacks were followed in real-time by millions of television viewers around the world, who watched in horror as the planes hit the World Trade Center. The official death toll was 2,977, with 6,291 injured.

Ten years later, in 2021, Rima Elkouri, a journalist working at La Presse in Montreal, examined the before and after September 11, 2001 regarding the Muslims who make up 3% of Quebec's population. Coming from a variety of backgrounds, including Syrian, Rima Elkouri notes the way that the Western majority stigmatizes Muslim minorities as being guilty by association, and, thus, contributes to the construction of the "suspicious Arab Muslim" stereotype. Rima Elkouri describes the impact September 11th tragedy on her self-perception, and how it has affected her multiple identities. Published in La Presse on September 7, 2021, Rima Elkouri describes her experience in this way:

"I didn't change on the night of September 10th to 11th 2001. What changed was the way people looked at me. For me, as for thousands of other citizens with Arab roots, there was a 'before' and an 'after', with very personal implications. The day before, we may have been a thousand different things–Christians, Muslims, atheists, born in Montreal, Aleppo, Chicoutimi, Beirut, or Algiers, but on the morning of September 11, we were just one single thing: Arabs, and as such, suspects. We may have had a thousand faces, a thousand professions, a thousand backgrounds with hyphenated identities that didn't fit into any little box–Quebecer-Syrian-Armenian-Senegalese-French-Lebanese in my case–but the hyphens were put away. There were only two boxes left, as suggested by George W. Bush: 'Us' and 'Them'. Do not choose sides. We have done it for you... In the face of horror, our puffy eyes were filled with fear, our hearts were broken for the American victims; nonetheless, we unwillingly drifted into the 'Them' camp. Those who, while mourning 3,000 innocent deaths, were designated guilty by association. Those who must be watched and distrusted. Those who are constantly asked to prove their innocence, to explain that no, Arab is not being synonymous with Islamist or terrorist, no, we have no sympathy for al-Qaeda fanatics, no, violent extremism is not 'in our culture'...".

The Montreal journalist's personal experience reflects what many Arabs who live in the West have experienced since the events of September 11, 2001: their nuanced identities are reduced to a single category: suspicious minority. This is the collateral damage of the "us-them" polarization, which followed a tragic event that claimed so many victims in the United States. These factors bring us to the psychology of prejudice and discrimination.

Prejudice is a negative attitude towards members of an out-group, based on false and fixed generalizations. Prejudice is expressed primarily at the affective and emotional levels.  Feelings associated with prejudice can range from a simple discomfort in the presence of an out-group member to distrust, fear, disgust, and hostility.

Discrimination depends on both social categorization as "us-them" and prejudice. When people take action, when behavioral reactions can be observed, it becomes a question of discrimination. On the one hand, discrimination can manifest itself in verbal and non-verbal behaviors by expressing antipathy towards an out-group. Discrimination involves behaviors that favor the in-group, but can also reject people because they belong to an out-group. Research reveals that discrimination based on in-group bias is a universal attitude that consists in treating members of our own group more favorably than members of out-groups. A consequence of consciously or unconsciously providing preferential treatment to candidates from our own group when it comes to hiring in companies or public

administrations, which is valuable for the advancement of our in-group, is that it ends up disadvantaging out-groups that are excluded from these institutions. Public health research reveals that, in the long run, discrimination undermines the mental and physical health of its victims (Bourhis, 2020).

Both Individual and systemic discrimination are often consciously or implicitly legitimized by underlying ideologies such as sexism, racism, anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia. As John Berry notes, discrimination remains a global phenomenon that has corrosive consequences for its victims and is ultimately dehumanizing for those who perpetrate it. It is in the interest of all citizens to support efforts to fight against individual and systemic discrimination in Canada and around the world.

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# Dimensions of Diversity

*Charles Taylor*

In Canada, we face challenges to our very conception of diversity. In the wake of the battle surrounding the Meech lake constitutional accord, many of those who rallied around the Charter and multiculturalism to reject the notion of Quebec as a distinct society were proud of their acceptance of diversity - and in some respects rightly so. They saw themselves as defenders of what one might call first-level diversity – the view that a population with great differences in culture and outlook and background nevertheless shares the same idea of what it is to belong to Canada. Whatever their other differences, their patriotism or manner of belonging is seen as uniform, and this is felt to be a necessity if the country is to hold together.
Of course, multiculturalism as a policy has been criticized for failing to address all the forms of diversity requiring protection. It is argued that a too exclusive concentration on it deflects our attention from the injustices and discrimination rooted in the systemic racism which narrows and blights the lives of many racialized Canadians including Indigenous peoples, African and Asian Canadians.

Beyond this, there is also another dimension of diversity. For many Quebeckers, the way of being a Canadian (for those who still want to be) is, by their belonging to a constituent element of Canada, la nation québécoise. Something analogous holds for Indigenous communities in this country; their way of participating in the Canadian polity is not accommodated by first-level diversity. This resulting sense of exclusion felt by these groups is puzzling to Canadians who only fully acknowledge and are sensitive to first-level diversity.

To build a country for everyone, Canada would have to allow for second-level or "deep" diversity, in which a plurality of ways of belonging would also be acknowledged and accepted. Someone of, say,

Italian extraction in Toronto or Chinese origin in Vancouver might indeed feel Canadian as a bearer of individual rights in a multicultural mosaic. His or her belonging would not "pass through" some other community, although their transnational identity might shape who they are and how they contribute to Canada. But this person might nevertheless accept that a Québécois or a Cree or a Dene can belong in a very different way, that these persons are part of Canada through being members of their national communities. Reciprocally, the Québécois, Cree, or Dene would accept the perfect legitimacy of the "mosaic" identity.

Is this utopian? Could people ever come to see their country this way? Could they even find it exciting and an object of pride that they belong to a country that allows deep diversity? Pessimists say no, because they do not see how such a country could have a sense of unity. They feel that the model of citizenship has to be uniform, or people will have no sense of belonging to the same polity. Those who hold this view tend to take the United States as their paradigm, which has indeed been hostile to deep diversity and has sometimes tried to stamp it out as "un-American".

These pessimists should bear in mind three things. First, deep diversity is the only formula on which a united federal Canada can be rebuilt, once we recall the reasons why we all need Canada - namely, for law and order, collective provision, regional equality, and mutual self-help, as mentioned above. Second, in many parts of the world today, the degree and nature of difference resembles the Canadian reality rather than the American one. Thirdly, if a uniform model of citizenship better fits the classical image of the Western liberal state, it is also true that this is a straitjacket for many political societies. The world needs other models to be legitimated in order to allow for more humane and less constraining modes of political cohabitation.

Instead of pushing ourselves to the point of breakup in the name of the uniform model, we would do our own and other peoples a favour by exploring the space of deep diversity. To those who believe in according people the freedom to be themselves, this would be counted as a gain in civilization.

In this exploration we would not be alone. Europe watchers will have noticed how certain attempts in the European community to impose a rigorous unity have created even deeper divisions in these societies.

Finally, even if a break-up were to occur, and we divided to form two polities with uniform citizenship, both successor states would find that they had failed after all to banish the challenge of deep diversity; because the only way that they can do justice to Indigenous peoples is by adopting a pluralist mould. Neither Quebec nor the Rest of Canada (ROC) could succeed in imitating the United States - or the European national states in their chauvinist prime. So let us recognize this now and take the road of deep diversity together.

# Are we there yet? 40 years of Employment Equity: The good, the bad and the ugly

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## Abstract

Canada's *Employment Equity (EE) Act* from 1986 was designed to help "level the playing field" for groups that were historically discriminated against. It required federally regulated corporations and federal contractors to track and report on the proportion of "designated groups'' and their strategies to advance inclusion. The designated groups were: women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities. Evidence suggests that while progress has been slow, the legislation has had positive impacts. Federally regulated organizations - financial institutions and communications companies in particular - tend to have better representation generally and in leadership than other sectors. While there is little doubt that EE has focused the attention of organizations on their EDI strategies, there are issues to be addressed. Not only is enforcement lacking, but the term "designated groups' ' uses outdated language such as "visible minority,' ' ignores populations such as the 2SLGBTQ+ community, and masks important differences within groups. There is also significant evidence that the lack of disaggregation has concealed, for example, the particular impact of anti-Black racism and needed remedies.

## Introduction

The *Employment Equity (EE) Act*, established in 1986, requires employers of federally regulated organizations with at least 100 employees and federal contractors to identify and address employment barriers for employees from four "designated groups": women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities,[9] although the terms have been updated to "racialized people" and Indigenous peoples recognizing shifting norms.[10] The *Act* also requires disclosure of policies, but reporting and monitoring of the policies is uneven.[11]

## Progress and Shortcomings

Impact
The effects of the *Employment Equity Act* have been the subject of some debate. There is evidence that it has led to greater attention to setting targets, tracking representation, and developing equity, diversity and inclusion strategies and as a result sectors subject to the *Act* tend to have higher representation of designated groups throughout the organization and in leadership roles than sectors not subject to the *Act*. For example, the Prosperity Project's *2023 Annual Report Card on Gender Diversity and Leadership*[12] found that women had higher representation in leadership roles in the finance and insurance and transportation and warehousing sectors (industries that are subject to the *Employment Equity Act*) compared to the manufacturing sector (which is not subject to the *Employment Equity Act*) (See Table 1).

Table 1: Representation of women in leadership roles across industries in Canada

|  | Finance & Insurance | Manufacturing | Mining, Quarrying, Oil & Gas Extraction, and Services | Retail Trade | Transportation and Warehousing | Utilities |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Board Roles | 39% | 36% | 23% | 32% | 49% | 44% |
| Executive Officer Roles | 35% | 25% | 18% | 33% | 34% | 37% |
| Senior Management Roles | 42% | 20% | 31% | 47% | 37% | 42% |

Source: The Prosperity Project. (2023). *2023 Annual Report Card on Gender Diversity and Leadership*. The Prosperity Project. https://blog.canadianprosperityproject.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/TPP_ARC_2023_EN.pdf

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[9] Employment Equity Act, SC 1995, c 44. https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/e-5.401/
[10] National Research Council Canada. (2023, April 27). *Employment Equity Annual Report 2021-2022*. Government of Canada. https://nrc.canada.ca/en/corporate/planning-reporting/employment-equity-annual-report-2021-2022
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[12] The Prosperity Project. (2023). *2023 Annual Report Card on Gender Diversity and Leadership*. The Prosperity Project. https://blog.canadianprosperityproject.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/TPP_ARC_2023_EN.pdf

At the same time, there is evidence that representation is improving but not at the senior most roles; that wage gaps are diminishing but remain, particularly for people with intersectional identities and there are still issues with occupational segregation, with access to resources and services and many of the enablers of generational wealth.[13, 14, 15, 16,17, 18] Under-representation is even more pronounced for racialized women. For example, In Toronto, where there are more racialized women than non-racialized women in the general population, non-racialized women outnumber racialized women in corporate leadership roles by a ratio of 12:1.[19]

A key indicator of employment equity is attainment rate, which refers to the extent to which representation of a certain group approaches, meets, or exceeds labour market availability (LMA).[20] For example, if representation for a designated group is below its LMA, the attainment rate will be less than 100% indicating that barriers to employment exist and corrective measures would need to be implemented.[21] Progress is being made when the gap between representation and LMA narrows (i.e. when attainment rate approaches 100%) or when representation equals or exceeds LMA (i.e. when attainment rate equals or exceeds 100%).

However, what is known so far is that the attainment rate of the four designated employment equity groups in the federally regulated private sector (FRPS) at the national level has fluctuated from 1987 to 2020 (see Figure 2). While it has trended upward over this time period

[13] England, K. (2014). Chapter 4. Women, intersectionality, and employment equity. In Agocs, C. (Ed.), *Employment equity in canada: The legacy of the abella report* (pp. 71-98)*.* University of Toronto Press.

[14] Rioux, M. & Patton, L. (2014). Chapter 6. Employment equity and disability: Moving forward to achieve employment integration and fulfill promises of inclusion and participation. In Agocs, C. (Ed.), *Employment equity in canada: The legacy of the abella report* (pp. 133-155)*.* University of Toronto Press.

[15] Devillard, S., Bonin, G., Madgavkar, A., Krishnan, M., Pan, T., Zhang, H., & Ng. M. (2019). *Women matter. The present and future of women at work in Canada*. McKinsey Company. https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/featured%20insights/gender%20equality/the%20present%20and%20future%20of%20women%20at%20work%20in%20canada/the-present-and-future-of-women-at-work-in-canada-vf.pdf

[16] Canadian Women's Foundation. (2021). *Resetting Normal: Gender, Intersectionality and Leadership*. Canadian Women's Foundation. https://canadianwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Resetting-Normal-Gender-Intersectionality-and-Leadership-Report-Final-EN.pdf

[17] UN Women. (2020). *COVID-19 and Women's Leadership: From an Effective Response to Building Back Better*. UN Women. https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2020/Policy-brief-COVID-19-and-womens-leadership-en.pdf

[18] Ng, E., Sultana, A., Wilson, K., Blanchette, S., & Wijesingha, R. (2021). *Building inclusive workplaces*. Public Policy Forum, Diversity Institute, Future Skills Centre. https://fsc-ccf.ca/research/building-inclusive-workplaces/

[19] Cukier, W., Latif, R, Atputharajah, A., Parameswaran, H., & Hon, H. (2020). *Diversity Leads - Diverse Representation in Leadership: A Review of Eight Canadian Cities*. Diversity Institute. https://www.torontomu.ca/diversity/reports/DiversityLeads_2020_Canada.pdf

[20] Employment and Social Development Canada. (2022, April 21) *Employment Equity Act: Annual Report 2019*. Government of Canada. https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/portfolio/labour/programs/employment-equity/reports/2019-annual.html

[21] Employment and Social Development Canada. (2022, April 21) *Employment Equity Act: Annual Report 2019*. Government of Canada. https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/portfolio/labour/programs/employment-equity/reports/2019-annual.html

for Indigenous peoples, racialized people, and persons living with disabilities, indicating positive developments in employment equity in the FRPS since 1986, it has dropped, especially for women during COVID-19.

Figure 1: Attainment rates for designated Canadian employment equity groups from 1987 to 2020
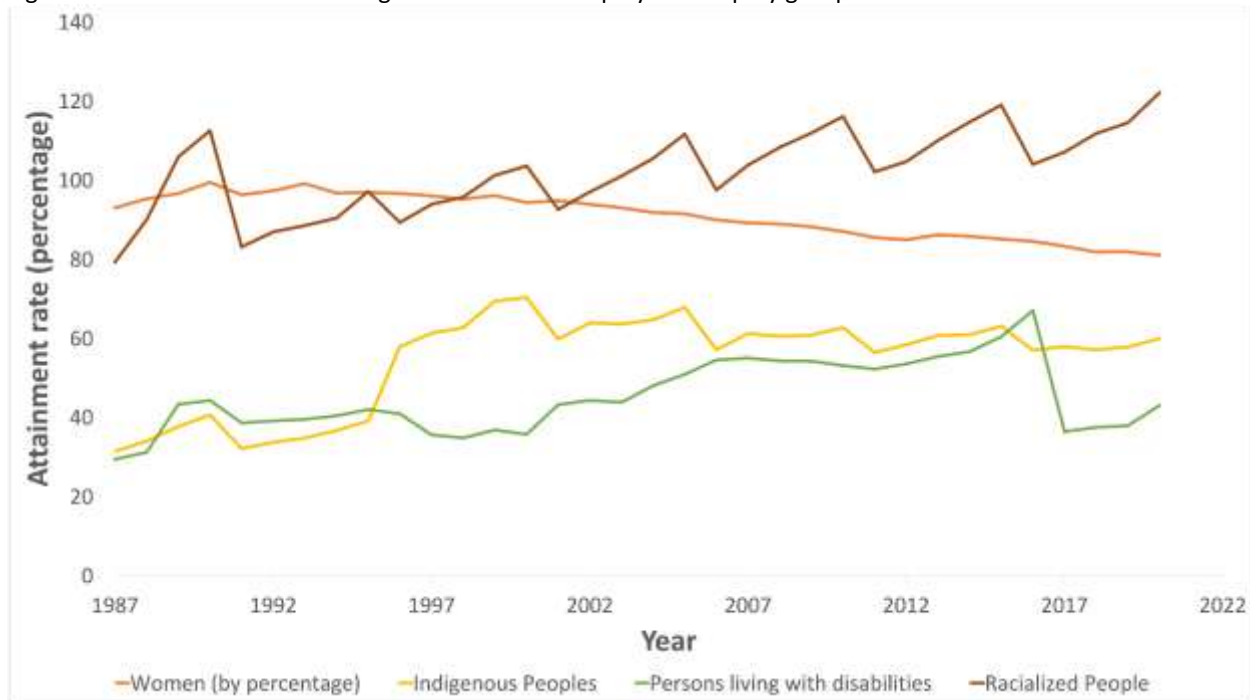


Source: Employment and Social Development Canada. (2022, August 13). Employment Equity Act: Annual Report 2021. https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/portfolio/labour/programs/employment-equity/reports/2021-annual.html#chart1

A significant gap in the *Act* also lies in the current definition of "members of visible minorities" who are considered "persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour."[22] According to the 2021 Canadian Census, 26.5% of Canada's population are visible minorities,[23] which includes South Asian, Chinese, Black, Filipino, Arab, Latin American, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Korean, and Japanese people, among other groups. This broad categorization of "visible minority" in the *Act* masks the significant differences between these groups in terms of demographics, employment, income, and discrimination. For example, there is a significant difference in the recruitment process of Black applicants in the labour market, such as, in terms of applicant success rate in organizational screening, assessment and appointment - all of which adds to the fact that no other visible minorities experiences the same level of attrition (e.g., job application to the appointment stage for Black

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[22] Employment Equity Act, SC 1995, c 44. https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/e-5.401/

[23] Statistics Canada. (2022, November 26). *Visible minority and population group by generation status: Canada, provinces and territories, census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations with parts*. Statistics Canada. https://doi.org/10.25318/9810032401-eng

applicants drops from 10.3% to 6.6%).[24] Besides, there is evidence that suggests that anti-Black racism exists as reports suggest that Black employees over the age of 15 experience unfair discrimination within workplaces.[25]

Definitions

Criticism of the *Employment Equity Act* has highlighted its failure to update legal definitions of designated groups to reflect current social norms. For example, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination deemed the use of the term "visible minority" as contravening the aims and objectives of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.[26] The category obscures significant differences in the experiences of different groups within the category - for example those who identify as Chinese versus Black, a risk recognized when the *Act* was written.[27] In addition, reporting under the *Employment Equity Act* considers Indigenous peoples as one group rather than taking a more nuanced distinctions-based approach that recognizes First Nations, the Métis Nation, and Inuit as distinct, rights-bearing communities with their own histories.[28] The *Act* also does not include 2SLGBTQ+ people even though they earn lower incomes and are more likely to experience discrimination on the job and encounter barriers in finding and advancing in employment, compared to heterosexual individuals.[29]

Until recently, disaggregated data for racialized and Indigenous individuals employed in federal public administration was only available through census data every five years.[30] However, in 2020, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat provided disaggregated data (e.g. employment

[24] Public Service Commission of Canada. (n.d.). *Audit of Employment Equity Representation in Recruitment*. Public Service Commission of Canada. https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/psc-cfp/documents/publications/audit-ee/audit-ee-eng.pdf

[25] Statistics Canada. (2020). *Canada's Black Population: Education, labour and resilience*. Statistics Canada. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/89-657-x/89-657-x2020002-eng.pdf?st=KDHjG178

[26] Edwards, S. (2011, July 5). Canada ready to spar with UN over 'visible minorities.' *National Post*. https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/canada-ready-to-spar-with-un-over-visible-minorities

[27] Taylor, P.S. (2022, February 19). *It's Time to Abolish the Absurd (and Slightly Racist) Concept of "Visible Minorities."* C2C Journal. https://c2cjournal.ca/2022/02/its-time-to-abolish-the-absurd-and-slightly-racist-concept-of-visible-minorities/

[28] Department of Justice Canada. (2021, September 1). *Principles respecting the Government of Canada's relationship with Indigenous peoples*. Government of Canada. https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/principles-principes.html

[29] Statistics Canada. (2022, October 4). *Labour and economic characteristics of lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Canada*. Statistics Canada. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-28-0001/2022001/article/00003-eng.htm

[30] Griffith A. (2020). *What new disaggregated data tells us about federal public service diversity*. Policy Options. https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/october-2020/what-new-disaggregated-data-tells-us-about-federal-public-service-diversity/

and income statistics for intersectional groups) related to the diversity of the public service as part of its annual *Employment Equity in the Public Service of Canada* report.[31,32]

Definitions must be updated so that categories of equity-deserving groups can be more precise and inclusive to effectively address systemic inequalities.[33]

Monitoring and Implementation
Critics note that the *Act* has failed to address implementation of an effective monitoring and enforcement capability and sanctions for organizations' failure to implement employment equity.[34]  While companies report there are no consequences if they fail to show progress. For example, a recent survey by The Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) conducted to advise the Task Force on the *Employment Equity Act* Review found that more than 70% of employees displayed a lack of awareness as to what initiatives the employer had in place to promote employment equity in the workplace, and almost 25% were not sure if those initiatives existed.[35] In terms of representation, only 41.3% of racialized respondents felt that their workplaces were representative of racialized workers. The survey also found that Indigenous peoples (33.59%) and persons living with disabilities (34.09%) had low representation.[36] PSAC therefore recommends addressing these shortcomings as well as aligning the *Act* with other acts such as the *Accessible Canada Act* and the *Financial Administration Act* to ensure that all legislation reinforces and supports one another.[37]

The Act has also been critiqued along with other "comply or explain" models for allowing organizations to set targets rather than establishing quotas.[38]

# The way forward

[31] Griffith A. (2020). *What new disaggregated data tells us about federal public service diversity*. Policy Options. https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/october-2020/what-new-disaggregated-data-tells-us-about-federal-public-service-diversity/

[32] Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. (March 30, 2023). *Employment equity in the public service of Canada for fiscal year 2021 to 2022*. Government of Canada. https://www.canada.ca/en/government/publicservice/wellness-inclusion-diversity-public-service/diversity-inclusion-public-service/employment-equity-annual-reports/employment-equity-public-service-canada-2021-2022.html#toc-5

[33] Boisvert, N. (2021, July 14). For the first time in decades, major changes are coming to Canada's workplace equity laws. *CBC News*. https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/employment-equity-task-force-1.6103132

[34] Agocs, C. (2002). Canada's employment equity legislation and policy, 1987-2000: The gap between policy and practice. *International Journal of Manpower, 23*(3), 256–276. https://doi.org/10.1108/01437720210432220

[35] Public Service Alliance of Canada. (2022). *Employment Equity Act Review Report: What we heard*. Public Service Alliance of Canada. https://psacunion.ca/sites/psac/files/2022-psac-employmentequityactreview_en_0.pdf

[36]  Public Service Alliance of Canada. (2022). *Employment Equity Act Review Report: What we heard*. Public Service Alliance of Canada. https://psacunion.ca/sites/psac/files/2022-psac-employmentequityactreview_en_0.pdf

[37] Public Service Alliance of Canada. (2022). *Employment Equity Act review report: What we heard.* Public Service Alliance of Canada. https://psacunion.ca/sites/psac/files/2022-psac-employmentequityactreview_en_0.pdf

[38] Ofrath, N., & Cukier, W. (2021). *Moving Forward: Advancing Diversity on Boards and in Senior Management in the Canadian Financial Sector*. Diversity Institute. Internal Report.

Recognizing the need to address these issues, the Government of Canada has established the *Employment Equity Act* Review Task Force to engage with stakeholders to determine how the *Act* could be modernized to include more equity-deserving groups. However, it remains to be seen how the *Act* will be formulated upon completion of the review and to what extent individuals from other equity-deserving groups such as those with intersecting identities will be considered.

The *Employment Equity Act* should continue to build on its strengths.[39] For example, in 2021, the *Pay Equity Act* introduced pay gap reporting measurements to address the pay gaps that still exist for all four designated groups.[40] Despite its effects being restricted to a small share of working Canadians, the earning gap faced by women, for example, will likely be reduced.[41,42]

Ensuring companies subject to the *Act* have effective strategies is also key. Working to develop comprehensive standards and guidelines in support of the 50-30 Challenge may help. The Challenge brings together more than 2000 businesses, and diversity organizations, to increase representation in workplaces by achieving gender parity (50% women and/or non-binary people) in board leadership and having 30% of their board leadership and/or senior management from equity-deserving groups.[43] As Canada continues to embrace its diversity, systemic barriers must be addressed and overcome to create equity and to achieve economic benefits for all Canadians.[44]

## Concluding remarks

Though the *Employment Equity Act* has helped strengthen the position of women, Indigenous Peoples, persons living with disabilities, and racialized people since its implementation in 1986, employment barriers for many Canadians remain. Yet, there are significant opportunities to improve employment equity, educate and build awareness on addressing stereotypes, address misperception on equity-deserving groups, and mitigate conscious and unconscious biases to promote workplace diversity and inclusion into the Canadian labour force.

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[39] Employment and Social Development Canada. (2021). *Employment Equity Act - Annual report 2021.* Government of Canada. https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/esdc-edsc/documents/corporate/portfolio/labour/programs/employment-equity/reports/2021-annual/EEAR-2021-Report-PDF-3357-EN.pdf

[40] Employment and Social Development Canada. (2021). *Employment Equity Act - Annual report 2021.* Government of Canada. https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/esdc-edsc/documents/corporate/portfolio/labour/programs/employment-equity/reports/2021-annual/EEAR-2021-Report-PDF-3357-EN.pdf

[41] Pay Equity Act, S.C., c. 27. (2018). https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/P-4.2/

[42] Boisvert, N. (2021, July 11). Canadian women make 89 cents for every dollar men earn: Can new federal legislation narrow that gap? *CBC News.* https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/pay-equity-legislation-1.6097263

[43] Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada. (2023, May 4). *The 50 - 30 Challenge: Your diversity advantage.* Government of Canada. https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/ised/en/50-30-challenge-your-diversity-advantage

[44] Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada. (2021, December 13). *The 50 - 30 Challenge prospectus*. Government of Canada. https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/ised/en/programs-and-initiatives/50-30-challenge-prospectus

# From A Multicultural To A Multiracial Society? Some Trends In Current Research

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*Jean-Philippe Warren is a Professor of Sociology at Concordia University. He has published extensively on Quebec history. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada.*

**Summary**

A review of all SSHRC grant submissions reveals a clear shift in research themes over the past fifteen years (2006-2021). The prism of multiculturalism seems to have been abandoned in favor of diversity. Moreover, studies of ethnic groups are becoming less popular than those focusing on indigenous or racialized groups. Given this trend, we may be left asking ourselves whether the image of a multicultural society is not giving way to a multiracial society.

**From A Multicultural To A Multiracial Society? Some Trends In Current Research**

Canadian research in social sciences and humanities continues to evolve in response to the debates that shape the contemporary world. In order to track its evolution in regard to the struggle against ethnic, racial, and cultural discrimination, this article presents an analysis of all grant applications

submitted to SSHRC since 2006, whether funded or not[45]. From this vast collection, we have retained, as an initial approximation, only the key terms used to describe the submissions[46]. Our aim is to gain a better understanding of how the Canadian academic community has positioned itself over the past fifteen years in relation to what is, undeniably, one of the great challenges of living together.

**The decline of multiculturalism**

The first trend that emerges from a review of our corpus is that, while Canadian public opinion remains generally attached to the ideal of a multicultural society[47], researchers are witnessing a certain abandonment of the terms "multiculturalism" and "interculturalism" (and their derivatives)—the use of which has dropped by half since 2006 in applications submitted to SSHRC (Chart 1).

This decline may be partly related to a growing distrust of an intercultural or multicultural approach that is insufficiently critical. In Quebec, we know that interculturalism, regularly presented as the defense of a (historical) "us" against the (said "visible"[48]) "others", is very often reduced to what Jack Jedwab calls univocal or one-dimensional interculturalism, where precedence is given to the majority culture[49]. Yet, it seems that a similar criticism is increasingly being expressed regarding multiculturalism, which is increasingly portrayed as an attempt to reduce social exclusion to its mere cultural dimension, to produce a "post-racial" version of systemic racism and absolve it from any political burden[50]. For some time now, the vision advocated by multicultural policies has been strongly questioned by postcolonial theorists, who view it as a subtle way of perpetuating white domination[51]. As a Canadian researcher recently wrote: "At a more complex level, multiculturalism can be defined as a biopolitical form of governance that regulates the following triangulation: Canadian settler society (English and French), Indigenous populations, and racialized immigrants[52]."

Seemingly taking note of such criticisms, funding applications submitted to SSHRC have increasingly opted to address the challenges of social integration and mobility using terms related to "social justice" (rising from 0.7% to 1.3% between 2006 and 2021), "diversity" (rising from 1.1% to 2.3% between 2006 and 2021) or "decolonization" (rising from 0.3% to 2.4% between 2006 and 2021) (Chart 1). Over the past twenty years, a similar trend has been observed in Australia, where certain forms of

[45] It is clear that the applications submitted to SSHRC are by no means encompassing the realities of research performed in social sciences and humanities in Canada. This is just one indicator among others.

[46] The body of projects is composed of the following funding programs: Master's and Doctoral Scholarships, Knowledge Development, Knowledge, Connection, Major Collaborative Research Initiatives, Partnership Engagement, Partnership Development, Partnership, Standard Research Grants.

[47] Michael J. Donnelly (2021) Discrimination and Multiculturalism in Canada: Exceptional or Incoherent Public Attitudes?, *American Review of Canadian Studies*, 51:1, p. 166-188; Augie Fleras, 50 Years Of Canadian Multiculturalism: Accounting for its Durability, Theorizing the Crisis, Anticipating the Future, Canadian Ethnic Studies, *Canadian Ethnic Studies Association*, Volume 51, Number 2, 2019, pp. 9-59. For an excellent insight into the debates revolving around multiculturalism, read Multiculturalism@50 and the Promise of a Just Society, *Canadian Issues*, autumn-winter 2021

[48] Benessaieh, A. (2019). Dix ans après Bouchard-Taylor : l'interculturalisme en question. Recherches sociographiques, 60(1), 11–34.

[49] Jack Jedwab, « Il y a plus qu'une définition de l'interculturalisme », Le Devoir, 21 septembre 2016, p. A6.

[50] Alana Lentin (2014) Post-race, post politics: the paradoxical rise of culture after multiculturalism, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 37:8, p. 1268-1285.

[51] Sneja Gunew. *Haunted Nations: The Colonial Dimensions of Multiculturalism*. London: Routledge, 2004; Ghassan Hage. *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society*. Annandale: Pluto Press, 1998; Gerald Kernerman. *Multicultural Nationalism: Civilizing Difference, Constituting Community*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005.

[52] Marina Gomá, Challenging the Narrative of Canadian Multicultural Benevolence: A Feminist Anti-Racist Critique, *OMNES : The Journal of Multicultural Society*, 2020, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 81-113,

critical fatigue of the term equity (known as "equity fatigue") has led to the adoption of a new vocabulary centered around the notion of diversity[53]. The enthusiasm for the concept of diversity is such, in Canada[54], as elsewhere in the world, that it has become a "buzzword" that can refer to a "myriad of realities and definitions"[55], which, paradoxically, added to its appeal.

**The rise in the study of indigenous and racialized groups**

The decline of multicultural or intercultural themes is accompanied by a new interest in the study of racialized and indigenous groups in SSHRC grant applications. In analyzing the contents of the *Canadian Review of Sociology*, Howard Ramos has established that, from 1964 to 2010, "[e]thnicity is overtaken by race as time goes on[56]." "Generally, the in-text mention of the terms ethnicity and ethnic far outnumbered race over the last half century of the CRS, especially in the 1970s and 1980s. [...] Interestingly, however, their prominence shifted over time with race being mentioned in a greater proportion of publications in the 2000s[57]."

As far as our corpus is concerned, it can be said that the surge in applications submitted to SSHRC involving indigenous nations was noted in 2006, as a result of the surge of claims that followed the submission of the report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People (the Erasmus-Dussault Commission) a decade earlier. As for applications pertaining to racialized groups, they have mainly emerged in the last ten years, alongside the rise of prominent social movements, such as the establishment of the Black Lives Matter movement in 2013, and perhaps even more notably with the protests that followed the murder of George Floyd in 2020.

The SSHRC has not remained indifferent to the evolution of debates on these issues. In 2003, for example, the federal agency issued several recommendations in a report entitled *Les possibilités de la recherche autochtone*. One of the report's objectives was to encourage research "by and with" Canada's indigenous researchers and communities on a range of issues of concern to them. In 2021, SSHRC's Advisory Committee on Addressing Black Racism in Research and Research Training Programs identified several promising avenues for strengthening equity, diversity, and inclusion in higher education institutions.

Prompted by SSHRC initiatives, as well as by researchers who denounced the slow progress of equity issues in Canada's predominantly liberal[58] universities, there has been a noticeable increase in researchers' preoccupation with issues affecting indigenous and racialized groups over the past fifteen years (Chart 2). By 2021, nearly one in eight (13.3%) of SSHRC project submissions used one or more keywords derived from the terms race or indigenous compared with around 1 in 15 in 2006 (6.7%).

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[53] Sara Ahmed, "Doing Diversity Work in Higher Education in Australia", *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, vol. 38 no 6, Dec 2006, p. 745-768.

[54] Jean-Philippe Warren « L'usage du concept de diversité en histoire Québécoise », *Bulletin d'histoire politique*, Volume 27, numéro 3, été 2019, p. 180-194.

[55] Sophia Labadi, "Introduction: investing in cultural diversity", *International social science journal*, LXI(61), 2010, p. 2-13; Dirk Jacobs, "Diversity. Polyphony of the concept", Contested Concepts in Migration Studies, Routledge, 2021, p. 95-110.

[56] Howard Ramos, From Ethnicity to Race in the Canadian Review of Sociology, 1964 to 2010, *Canadian Review of Sociology/Revue canadienne de sociologie*, 50(3), p. 337-356.

[57] *Ibid.*, p. 342.

[58] Frances Henry, Enakshi Dua, Carl E. James, Audrey Kobayashi, Peter Li, Howard Ramos, and Malinda S. Smith. *The Equity Myth. Racialization and Indigeneity at Canadian Universities*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007.

**Conclusion**

Relying merely on the number of applications submitted to SSHRC (which obviously offers an incomplete view of the situation, and would benefit from further refinement, particularly with regard to the age and language of applicants), Canadian researchers increasingly perceive Canada as a ("settler-colonial") and racialized society. The prism of multiculturalism seems to have been abandoned in favor of a more critical perspective, in which issues of colonization and racialization take precedence. In the United States, the dissemination of Critical Race Theory has provoked considerable controversy and even led to ideological censorship measures, especially in Florida at the instigation of conservative Governor DeSantis.[59] So far, in Canada, the similar shift in research themes has been much less controversial, partly because it is based on an already fragmented conception of Canada as a mosaic. Researchers have, therefore, been able to replace the study of ethnic groups, in part, with a focus on colonized and racialized groups, in line with the quest for social justice that has always inspired multicultural policies. Such a trend may lead us to believe that we are witnessing the replacement, within humanities and social science research projects, at least partially, of an image of Canada as a multicultural society by that of Canada as a multiracial society.

**Chart 1. Evolution of the share of SSHRC projects focusing on multiculturalism, diversity, and social justice, 2006-2021**



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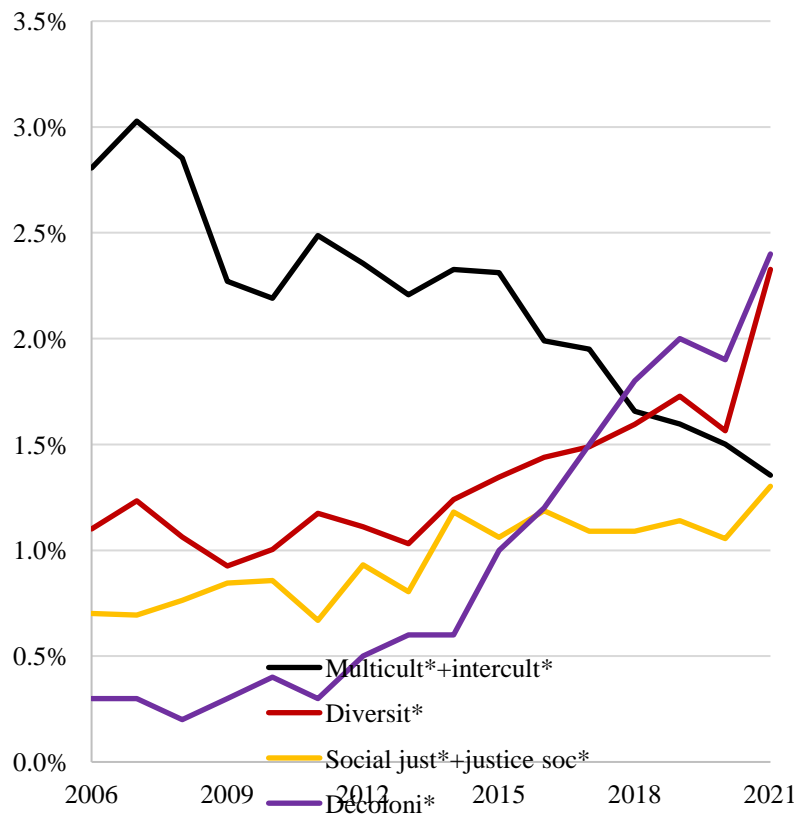
[59] Victor Ray. *On Critical Race Theory: Why It Matters & Why You Should Care*. New York: Random House, 2022.

**Chart 2. Changes in the share of SSHRC projects focusing on race, ethnicity, indigenous peoples and Francophones, 2006-2021**
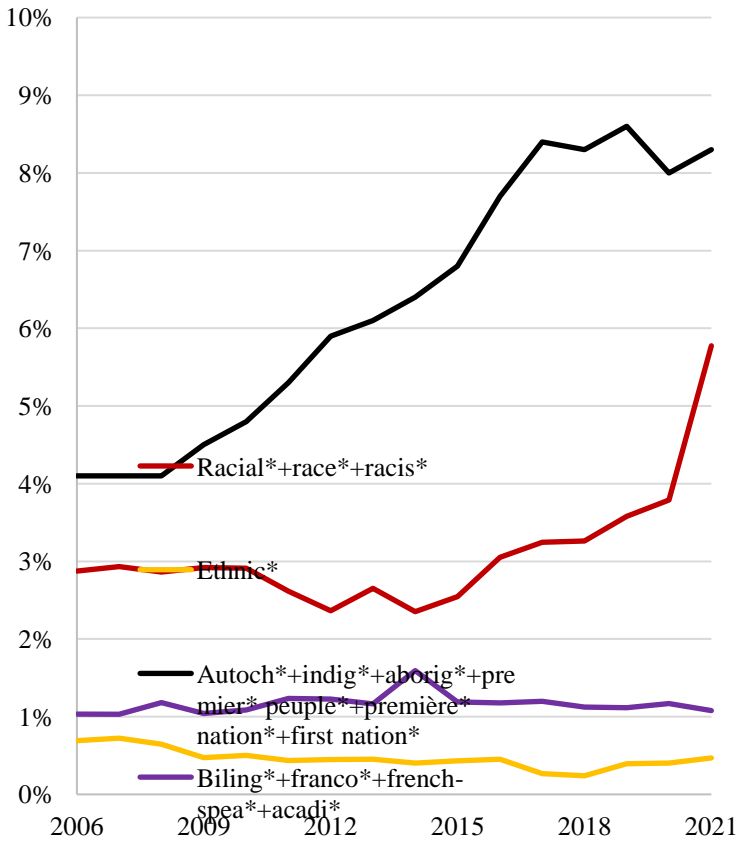
# This is not a zero-sum game: Protect French in Canada without constricting the rights of English-speaking Quebecers

*By Eva Ludvig*

*Eva Ludvig is President of the Quebec Community Groups Network. Prior to her retirement in 2014, Eva worked for two decades as the Quebec Representative for the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages. There she developed a deep understanding of the needs and issues of Quebec's English-speaking community and worked very closely with its leadership on such issues as community and institutional vitality, support for English-language education and schools, as well as increased recognition and support for the community by both federal and provincial governments.*

Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Association of Canadian Studies and its many important contributions to Canada and Canadians provides a useful moment to consider where we are as English-speaking Quebecers and the obstacles and opportunities that await us as we look forward.

It is also a moment, some would say a dangerous moment, fraught with challenges and, frankly, an increasingly angry rhetorical tone that risks poisoning the relationships generations of Quebecers have built and shaped throughout our shared history.

In the most basic ways, English- and French-speaking Quebecers get along. Every single day. Vastly more English-speakers today are comfortable in the language of Molière, feel a touch out of place when they travel beyond Quebec and don't hear French in the streets and cafés, and enjoy the elevated sense of Canadian nationhood that comes from a deeper and richer understanding of the country's two official-language communities.

And to Canadians from beyond our province's borders, Quebec no longer appears to be quite as scary a place as they once thought. How else to account for the fact Quebec's net loss of population to other provinces recently reached its lowest level since 1971? That 2,645 more English speakers moved to Quebec than left it in that period is unprecedented, as Association for Canadian Studies President Jack Jedwab observed last fall in The Montreal Gazette. While such factors as more affordable housing played a role, the result is nonetheless a welcome boost to our community, and all of Quebec.

And recent reports of an enormous jump in immigration to Quebec –150,000 in 2022, a shattering of the old record – can only be good news. Eventually, more immigration leads to more diversity, which leads to more tolerance, understanding and acceptance. It takes time. It is not always a smooth road. But it is an inexorable process.

In our current tumultuous setting, however, we seem to have forgotten how to celebrate each other, how to look upon each other's aspirations through anything other than a suspicious, even frightened eye.

Recent reactions to both the debate over Bill C-13, the federal bill updating Canada's Official Languages Act, and the announcement of a new federal Action Plan for official-language minorities, are illustrative. On the latter, rather than celebrating the plan to devote $4.1 billion over five years to support Canada' official language minority communities, including about 20 percent of $1.4 billion in new spending directed toward English-speaking community groups in Quebec, the English-speaking community's traditional share, much of the reaction from some in government and many in media in Quebec has been venomously negative.

Most critics, whether politicians or pundits, have demanded that all the money be directed to the protection and promotion of the French language or that it be used solely to teach English-speakers French. It is French, they say, that is threatened, even in Quebec, whereas English is not.

The provincial government has made French the only official language in Quebec. It has succeeded in persuading the federal government to include references to the province's Charter of the French Language (formerly Bill 101; now Bill 96) in Bill C-13. That update of Canada's Official Languages Act is expected to be passed within weeks. A quiet deal between the Quebec and Canadian governments has, in effect, applied the language charter to federally regulated businesses in Quebec, including banks, airlines and such. As amended by Bill 96 last year, the Charter of the French Language invokes the notwithstanding clause, which shields the law from court challenges and allows it to override constitutionally guaranteed rights.

Vigorous attempts by a few courageous Liberal MPs during the House of Commons Official Languages Committee's study of C-13 were unsuccessful in eliminating the incorporations by reference to Quebec's language law. For their troubles, they faced scathing attacks in the media and from some caucus colleagues. They were widely and unjustly branded as anti-French.

There are several positives for English-speaking Quebecers in the Action Plan. We see important new investments for our education, access-to-justice and health and social services sectors. We are particularly pleased the government heard us on the need to address unemployment in English-speaking Quebec, as well as a new program to assist our arts, culture, and heritage organizations. Led by the QCGN, community stakeholders have worked hard to ensure the needs of 1.3 million English-speaking Quebecers are equitably addressed by the 2023-28 Action Plan.

It will, however, be important for English-speaking Quebecers and the groups that serve them to work hard, not only to inform ourselves of available opportunities, but to ensure the provincial government, through which the federal funds flow, is diligent in ensuring this money is forthcoming. History, and the initial reactions from Quebec ministers, have not been at all encouraging for us.

There are already indications the Quebec government is less interested in supporting our community groups in their work to help English-speaking Quebecers gain access to a wide variety of services – education, health care and the legal system – than it is in directing the funds toward francization programs. Also distressing are rumblings out of Quebec City that anyone seeking to take advantage of the Action Plan's newly beefed-up court challenges program should not be taking aim at provincial legislation like Bills 21 or 96.

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We live in an age of hyperbole exacerbated by social media, where outrage is as common as the Toonie in your pocket, and quiet discussion between reasonable people is about as trendy as a polyester leisure

suit. But there are reasonable people among us who understand the need for some give and some take. These are the partners we must find and work with to enhance our community's opportunities and future. We must work with these partners to demonstrate good faith in furthering French in Canada. This must be done without constricting or denying the rights of English-speaking Quebecers and other minorities. We must see opportunity in adversity and find new and different solutions to old problems. As we have said multiple times, this is not a zero-sum game.

Fear of a decline in the presence and strength of the French language in Quebec has generated a political climate that supports a decidedly more nationalist government in Quebec City. It has also created an increasingly hostile environment for anyone expressing support for Quebec's English-speaking minority community and its historic rights.

While perhaps predictable, this is nonetheless discouraging. Much of the hostility seems to grow from a fundamental misunderstanding. Our community's objections to provincial Bills 21 and 96, and federal Bill C-13, have not been expressed as a means to try to reduce the presence or importance of French in Quebec. Far from it!  We have raised concerns about how those pieces of legislation can and do have negative effects on the constitutional rights of all Quebecers – Anglophones, Allophones and Francophones alike.

No matter how often it is repeated, that position is not being heard. Mythology – that English-speaking Quebecers are the best-treated minority in the world – has become ideology. This makes stripping English speakers of constitutionally guaranteed rights an acceptable, even essential, measure in order to buttress French. Old, inaccurate tropes are dredged up in support:

- "English" institutions like hospitals and universities (which, it is never mentioned, function in both languages and serve both linguistic communities) are disproportionately funded because English speakers make up a smaller slice of Quebec's population;
- The English-speaking community doesn't need more funding because it is wealthy;
- Any resources allocated to English-speaking Quebecers support the "anglicization" of Quebec, which the federal government is actively pursuing.

It goes on and, from familiar corners, gets worse. The tenor of discourse has been unproductively hostile. Surely, it's again time for everyone to take a Valium.

This is difficult terrain for us as members of Quebec's English-speaking minority. Even attempts to defend and protect what we have now are considered by many – and some in positions of power both in Ottawa and Quebec City – to be a threat to French Quebec.

What can we do about it? We can lead. We can inform. We can enlist allies who share our concerns – economic, political, and societal. We can insist on playing a significant role in the processes of renewal that political parties regularly undertake.

If we can no longer trust our political leaders to stand on guard for fundamental rights and freedoms against the siren call of political expediency, we must fall back on ourselves and those of like mind and disposition who are prepared to engage in our continuing endeavour.

So join us, as citizens, in rebuilding the bridges between our communities. Join us in showing how in everyday life our communities enhance and embrace each other. Join us – English speakers in Quebec;

French speakers in Quebec and the rest of Canada; and Canadians from sea to sea to sea – in challenging the stereotypes and busting the myths that imprison us in a place where we seem unable to fully understand and respect each other.

*Eva Ludvig is the President of the Quebec Community Groups Network*

# Canada: Post-National, Multinational or Neither?

Jack Jedwab

Introduction

In 2015, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau described Canada as a country with "no core identity" and thus called it post-national (Foran, 2017). The notion that a country has no core identity is sometimes associated with such things as deep diversity, multiculturalism and/or more specifically multiethnic countries or states. In effect, they presume that the country has no dominant ethnic majority and/or other identity-based majority as its defining demographic characteristic. Underlying academic and/or political conversations about whether Canada is post, bi-national or multi-national are varying or diverging definitions of the term nation and its related use or misuse.  Ongoing conversation in Canada about nationalism, nations and nationhood are important towards helping us define who we are as Canadians in the era of multiple and intersecting identities. That which follows will examine these issues with a focus on how Quebec defines national identity and what that implies for Canadian identities.

What kind of national identity? From French Canadian to Quebec Nationalism
Nadeau and Barlow (2006) point out that: "…French Canadians tend to see Canada as a country made up of two nations, while the English tend to think that 'country' and 'nation' are one and the same".  But prior to the 1960's that view was largely predicated on equating nation (s) with ethnic or ethno-national groups and thus many French Canadians assumed that the other nation was British or English Canadian (and not simply Canadian).  Until well into the 1960's the French population in Quebec (hereafter francophones) and those elsewhere in Canada described themselves as *Canadiens* and/or *Canadien-Francais* (French Canadian). The pre-1960's vision of two nations in Canada, one ethnically British and the other ethnically French, also meant that there were two such nations in the province of Quebec (we'll return to this issue shortly).

During the 1960's during the period hailed at the Quiet Revolution, there was considerable movement amongst francophone Quebecers away from French-Canadian nationalism towards Quebec nationalism. In effect, the growing sense that the protection of French language and culture was best secured in Quebec saw many French-Canadian nationalists become Quebec nationalists increasingly looked to the provincial government to preserve and promote their core identity and determined it was preferable to identify as a national majority in Quebec-as a Quebecois-rather than as part of the national francophone minority in Canada.

In recognition of the growing concerns over the future of the French language and culture across the country, in 1963, the Government of Canada established a Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism aimed at developing an equal partnership between the country's British and French peoples which were also referred to as its founding peoples. After considerable deliberation, the Government did not go for the bicultural model and rather opted

for multiculturalism within a bilingual framework. In April 1971, then Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau stated that no singular culture could define Canada and thus while there could be official languages (as enshrined in the 1969 Official Languages Act) there could be no official culture (Jedwab 2005).

Reacting to Trudeau's bilingual/multicultural vision for Canada, then Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa argued that the policy of multiculturalism was highly unsuited to Québec where, he said, "…the predominant population group is linguistically and culturally French, where a large minority is linguistically and culturally English, and where there are many minorities having other linguistic and cultural origins."

During the late 1960's several gestures aimed at affirming Quebec's national identity and the legislature was renamed Quebec National Assembly and the province's library became the National Library. That said, the transition to Quebec nationalism did not imply the outright detachment from Canada (other than amongst some Quebecers that favored establishing a separate country). Rather the majority of Quebec nationalists identified primarily with Quebec and therefore tended to render Canadian identification subordinate to it (ironically this might be seen as putting the nation before the country). That was predominantly the case for the many Quebec francophones that felt reflected in the nationalist vision-a feeling not shared by most of Quebec's non-francophones.


Blurring the nation


Although they're often used interchangeably it is widely held that there are important differences between nation, state, and country. Country and State are sometimes seen as symmetrical as they tend to apply to self-governing political entities while a nation is widely seen as a group of people who share the same culture but do not have sovereignty. For the better part of the twentieth century most people tended to equate nation with country (and many still do so). By consequence, in the later part of that century and into the next one when Quebec politicians, intellectuals and others called for Quebec to be recognized by the rest of Canada as a nation it was widely assumed that they were speaking about one that was independent or separate from Canada (or the rest of Canada).


However, the way in which some politicians use the term nation may blur the aforementioned distinctions and unintentionally or intentionally promote ambiguity by allowing multiple interpretations by citizens. When in 2001 he was sworn in as Quebec Premier, the late Bernard Landry declared in French that "my action in this sense is based on a central and powerful idea that is largely accepted: that Quebec forms a nation." Switching to English, Landry added, "I warmly invite you, English-speaking compatriots, to participate fully in the construction of a plural and inclusive Quebec, a Quebec that will stand proud beside the other occidental nations." (CBC, 2001). Elsewhere Landry observed that "Quebec is a nation without the complete status of one." These observations suggest that nation may or may not imply country. In 2006 in the House of Commons, the separatist Bloc Quebecois asked for a vote on a motion to recognize that Quebecers form a nation. In response to what was regarded as "an unusual request", then Prime Minister Stephen Harper put forward a motion asking that "...this House recognize that the Québécois form a nation within a united Canada."

During the debate in Parliament over the motion, Bloc Quebecois leader Gilles Duceppe contended that the refusal to recognize the Quebec nation, to recognize an obvious reality, could be called a great Canadian mental block. He added that the only attitude that shows

respect for Quebecers is to recognize them for what they are, that is, a nation that continues to be a nation even if it is no longer part of Canada…a nation because that is what we are…Quebecers form a nation whether or not they remain within a so-called united Canada. They form a nation whether or not they become a country."

Harper used the French term Québécois rather than Quebecer in the English version of the motion thus raising questions about whether he referred to all Quebecers or just the majority French population. It raised concerns that the motion's formulation might imply that Quebec is being recognized as an ethnic nation rather than a civic entity. But this all became academic, as soon after the motion's adoption it has become increasingly common for Quebec politicians (federalist and sovereignist alike) to simply refer to the Quebec nation in public discourse (as opposed to the Quebecois nation). This thereby disassociates the "nation" from its ethnic dimension even for some the Quebec nation, sought primarily to reflect the interests of the ethnocultural French majority (about which not all saw something morally or ethically wrong).

In its 2017 Policy on Québec Affirmation and Canadian Relations, the Liberal Government of Quebec remarked that "… Québec is free to make its own choices and able to shape its own destiny and development. Québec has all the characteristics of, and recognizes itself as, a nation…the Québec nation is not limited to its reality as a predominantly French-speaking society in North America. The Québec nation includes all the people living in Québec. It includes, in particular, Québec's English-speaking community, which has certain specific rights and prerogatives. It also recognizes eleven Aboriginal nations."

Nations in the Nation: How many nations are there in Canada and in Quebec?
A multinational state is a sovereign entity that comprises two or more nations or states within. By contrast, a nation state is a singularity that is not characterized by dual or multiple national identities. Political scientist Alain Noël declares "Canada is undeniably a multinational federation but he says this fact is not recognized either constitutionally or politically." Proponents of the vision of Canada as a multinational federation tend to repeat that it is an indisputable fact and therefore not open to debate (as Duceppe suggested those with opposing views suffer from a mental block). As said, however, Canadians still equate nation with country.
It is worth noting that while Quebec politicians often refer to Quebec as a singular nation the Government officially acknowledges that there are eleven Indigenous nations with the territory (https://www.quebec.ca/gouvernement/portrait-quebec/premieres-nations-inuits/profil-des-nations/a-propos-nations).  Hence, Quebec can be classified as a multination or multinational nation. Indeed, in following the logic of multinational recognition, the Indigenous nations of Quebec are nations within a multinational entity (Quebec) that is in turn part of another multinational entity (Canada).
When asked how many nations Canadians believe there are in the country, there are important differences between Quebecers and other Canadians. A survey conducted by Leger Marketing for the Association for Canadians in July 2022 reveals that while some one in six Quebecers think that there is one nation in Canada, that view is held by nearly one in two persons outside of Quebec (with some variation between Ontario and British Columbia and the other regions of the country). Nearly 60% of Quebecers believe that there are at least ten nations in Canada, a view shared by half of British Columbians surveyed. Those outside of Quebec who subscribe to the idea that there are a multiplicity of nations within the country are likely thinking of the many First Nations across the country).

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| Table 1 | Quebec increasingly refers to itself as a nation as do several indigenous groups. How many nations do you think that there are in the country? | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Canada** | **BC** | **AB** | **Prairies** | **ON** | **QC** | **Atlantic** |
| **One** | 38% | 42% | 49% | 53% | 41% | 16% | 49% |
| **Two** | 8% | 4% | 7% | 5% | 10% | 9% | 6% |
| **Three** | 11% | 4% | 11% | 9% | 11% | 15% | 8% |
| **Ten** | 16% | 19% | 8% | 15% | 14% | 23% | 11% |
| **Fifty plus** | 28% | 31% | 25% | 19% | 24% | 36% | 27% |

Source: Leger for the Association for Canadian Studies. July 8-10, 2022

There is also a noteworthy difference in views amongst Quebecers around how many nations there are in Canada as over one in three non-francophones believe that there is only one nation compared with some one in ten Quebec francophones.

| Table 2 | Quebec increasingly refers to itself as a nation as do several indigenous groups. How many nations do you think that there are in the country? | |
|---|---|---|
| **Quebec** | **Francophone** | **Non-Francophone** |
| **One** | 11% | 36% |
| **Two** | 9.% | 8% |
| **Three** | 17% | 13% |
| **Ten** | 26% | 17% |
| **Fifty plus** | 37% | 26% |

Source: Leger for the Association for Canadian Studies. July 8-10, 2022

Who's in and who's out? Attachment and Identification with the Quebec Nation
A key issue arising from debates about nation and country is the impact on people's respective attachment, belonging and/or identification. Leadership of a given nation likes to see, and therefore, often describes their members as a cohesive and coherent unit with shared culture and experiences. Identity formation of the nation centers around language, ethnicity and/or religion amongst other identity markers. But where the nation is defined by geographic boundaries not all members may feel reflected and/or represented in the vision of the nation and that seems especially to be the case for those persons who simply don't identify by the dominant marker that is the defining characteristic of the nation. Debates around who feels as though they are part of the nation and who doesn't have often been said to determine whether the nation should be described as civic (inclusive) or ethnic (exclusive). Yet others have suggested that the term sociological nation is more appropriate than ethnic nation with the former referring to "a status group united by common historical memory and fighting for the prestige of power and culture with other nations" (Norkus 2004).

The distinctions between the sociological, civic and ethnic nation are a good deal more complex and nuanced than the way in which they get presented. Still there are varying degrees within nations in terms of who feels they do or don't identify and why that is the case. Canada is a good example in that regard as historically large numbers of francophones have not felt

reflected or represented in the vision underlying the nation/country. The same is true for Quebec as much of its anglophone population does not feel a strong sense of attachment to Quebec (and probably less so to the Quebec nation).

The 2017 Quebec Liberal party policy statement declares that: "…the majority of Quebecers feel that they are both Quebecers and Canadians. A vast majority of Quebecers feel a strong attachment to Québec, based on a national identity" Yet it is clear that the majority of anglophone Quebecers feel a much weaker sense of attachment to Quebec than do francophones. As illustrated in the Table below, the degree to which anglophones express attachment to Quebec is roughly similar to the extent to which francophones feel attached to Canada. Still, majorities of francophones and anglophones in Quebec feel attached to Quebec and Canada respectively but it would be hard to deny, when considering the survey results below, that either 'nation' is not without problems of 'national' unity.

| Table 3 | Attachment to Quebec and Canada on the part of Quebec francophones and anglophones | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | French | | English | |
| Quebec | Attachment to Canada | Attachment to Quebec | Attachment to Canada | Attachment to Quebec |
| Very Attached | 29.5% | 53.9% | 61.5% | 23.7% |
| Somewhat Attached | 39.5% | 35.4% | 28.2% | 44.7% |
| Not very attached | 21.3% | 8.2% | 5.1% | 18.4% |
| Not attached at all | 9.1% | 1.6% | 2.6% | 10.5% |
| I don't know / I prefer not to answer | 0.6% | 0.9% | 2.6% | 2.6% |
| Total | | 100.0% | | 100.0% |

Source: Leger for the Association for Canadian Studies, February 20-March 3, 2023

Conclusion: Is Canada post national, binational or multinational?

In response to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's characterization of Canada as post national, respected writer Charles Foran claims that no "nation" can truly behave post nationally as it possesses established mechanisms of state governance and control via armies, borders and passports which the PM oversees. Still Justin Trudeau's characterization of Canada as having no core identity or as former PM Pierre Trudeau said has "no official culture" is probably at the root of the view that it is not post-national. Post-nationalism or non-nationalism is the process or trend by which nation states and national identities lose their importance. On the other hand a multiplicity of nations within a given territory risks diminishing the political importance and status of affirming national status. Underlying all this is an ongoing debate about how nations and multinationalism is defined, a conversation that is not easy to undertake when its respective visions are not the object of debate.

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# We Need To Talk: Canadian Identity And Reimaging Our Tradition Of Dialogue

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Have you ever noticed how few old movies survive the changing nature of our society? How many of us have sat down to enjoy an old favourite and cringed as scene after scene clashed with present day values, norms, and attitudes?

There are exceptions. The 1976 Academy Award winner *Network* is one of them. Although it has a few cringeworthy moments that reference race or the role of women in the workforce, the overall plot is as relevant today as it was almost 50 years ago.

For those who have never seen the film, it is the story of Howard Beale, an aging American national news anchor, who is about to be replaced due to falling ratings. Rather than quietly leave, he decides to use his platform on national television to call out the hypocrisy of his time.

Beale's television monologues are masterful and with a bit of minor tweaking would be equally as powerful today. His most famous rant begins with a litany of problems facing society, many of which sound eerily familiar – economic turmoil, inflation, crime, air that is "unfit to breathe" and food that "is unfit to eat".

Beale offers no direct solutions. As he puts it: "I don't know what to do about the depression and the inflation and the defense budget and the Russians and crime in the street. All I know is first you got to get mad. You've got to say: 'I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take this anymore'."

Beale's mantra has entered our modern lexicon as the ultimate expression of our frustration toward a world that seems out of control. In the movie, Beale's rantings catch the imagination of a public sick and tired of all that is ailing their society. At his urging, people across the nation throw open their windows and begin yelling about being as "mad as hell" into the streets.

Their anger becomes a unifying force for a nation that is simply fed up. They may be separated by a wide variety of factors - economic, geography, race - but their shared anger becomes their common identity.

Does *Network* represent Canada's future identity? Are we on the verge of becoming a nation of people whose main common denominator is rage?

Although there are many parallels between *Network* and our modern day, we don't appear to be there yet.  Public opinion research shows that most Canadians consider themselves happy and the vast majority are proud of their country.

But as the list of our nation's challenges grow, it is easy to imagine us heading in that direction.

High inflation, rising mortgage rates, financial insecurity, a crumbling healthcare system, and a seemingly intractable war in the Ukraine dominate the news as do disturbing reports of increasing crime in our urban centres. The idea of home ownership, once one of our life's natural stepping stones, appears out of reach for many young people – a psychological hit that many older Canadians don't fully appreciate.

The threat of climate change continues to grow, creating an underlying grimness about the future of our planet. Despite international agreements, government programs and targeted taxes, the climate change news never seems to be good.

Then there are national divisions based on geography, ideology, race, ethnicity and religion: regional tensions involving Quebec and Western Canada, particularly Alberta; increasingly shrill and hyper partisan political discourse; and louder calls for the greater inclusion of racialized Canadians in the mainstream and the dismantling of what many believe is systemic racism prevalent in our society.  Many argue that Indigenous Reconciliation is proceeding at glacial speed while growing Antisemitism and Islamophobia should be a concern to us all.

The pandemic raised the "anger stakes" to new levels. Fueled by what felt like a never-ending lockdown, tensions between those supportive of strict public health measures, including vaccine mandates, and their critics, reached a boiling point in early 2022 as the so-called "Freedom Convoy" descended on Parliament Hill. The anger was not limited to the truck drivers with their epithet laden signs and their supporters. It extended to the many Canadians who found their behaviour reprehensible.

There is nothing inherently wrong with anger.  One can think of "righteous anger" that drives individuals to take dramatic steps to correct the wrongs of our world.

Howard Beale's anger was not of that variety.  Not only does Beale acknowledge that he doesn't have the answers to the problems facing his nation, but he demands very little from his viewers other than being mad. As he explains at one point: "I don't want you to riot. I don't want you to protest. I don't want you to write your congressmen.  Because I wouldn't know what to tell you to write."

Beale is not pedaling anger; he is pedaling hopelessness. He is promoting a type of passive criticism that involves sitting back and calling out the world's ills and demanding that someone else fixes them while at the same time believing that those in charge - government, business, and other institutions - are incompetent or corrupt.

Maybe this is where the parallels between the movie and modern Canada start to become very close. Our society, like many others, appears to be slipping into the habit of passive criticism. Constructive debate and follow-up action often seems to be replaced by performative exhibits of outrage, social media pile-ons, and finding refuge in the comfort of those who hold similar views.

And yet beyond slogans, buzz words and vague calls for radical change, very little is usually on offer in terms of grass roots solutions.  And like Beale, many seem to have little faith in politics or politicians, academics, business, or organized religion to address our challenges.

There is no question that as a nation we need to talk – to each other.  And the term "talk" is not used here as a synonym for armchair criticism or the lobbing of jeremiads at the "other side".  It's about the type of dialogue between different sides of an issue focused on finding a way for us to live together so that everyone flourishes.

Luckily, we are a nation of "talkers" and this is another aspect of our common identity that we can draw upon. The history of Canada has been one of dialogue.  Pre-Confederation saw efforts by English Protestants and French Catholics to engage in discussion about a nation where both groups could succeed.  The religious nature of this ongoing dialogue lessened over the years and by the 60s, the focus of our national dialogue was on Francophone Quebec verses the "Rest of Canada" – a discussion that continued through several federal commissions, the election of separatist Governments in Quebec and two referendums.

The steady stream of non-European newcomers to Canada and the growing cultural diversity of our population led to a focus on multiculturalism starting in the late 1960s. Dialogue focused on how we could build a nation that welcomed diversity and accommodated cultural differences in a manner where once again, everyone succeeded.

Canada's Indigenous People were absent from much of this dialogue and it wasn't until the Oka crisis of the early 1990s that we saw efforts begin to include them in the conversation. The report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2015 and the subsequent discovery of unmarked graves at the site of former Residential Schools placed this dialogue much higher on the agenda and it continues to be a dominant area of concern for many Canadians even if progress seems to be very slow.

Yes, being Canadian has been all about dialogue and discussion.  And up until now, the backdrop to all this talk has been nation building and we should be proud of the Canada that we have built, warts and all.

But has this type of dialogue run its course? It has been traditionally led by elites who appear to have lost their credibility in the eyes of most Canadians.  Its top-down nature involved institutions like governments, universities, business, and faith communities who are today viewed with a degree of cynicism and in many cases seen as relics of colonialism, systemically racist and defenders of the status quo.

The answer, it would appear, would be to have ordinary Canadians talk to ordinary Canadians without the involvement of mediating institutions that nobody trusts. But would that work?

Yes, there are huge issues with "fake news" and our inability to establish an agreed upon set of facts to govern our discussions and that needs to be addressed. But the problem runs deeper.
As a colleague once privately asked me about a planned inter-faith dialogue event – a great example of ordinary people talking to ordinary people – what exactly are we going to talk about?

My colleague raises an important question. Beyond the logistical barriers of "regular folks" talking to "regular folks" what would they say to each other about their differences over the issues of the day?

Anyone whose experienced a ruined Thanksgiving dinner conversation between a "pro-vaxxer" and an "anti-vaxxer" can attest to the difficulty of talking things through and finding common ground.

Locking people in a room and telling them that they can't leave until they have reached an agreement is often little more than a fantasy.  Without an appreciation of each other as fellow human beings worthy of respect, each with a distinct biography combined with some humility about ourselves and our opinions, little is going to happen.

Instead of talking through issues what if we worked through issues – together?

It may sound trite but how many of us haven't marveled at media stories of members of a Mosque and a Synagogue jointly coming together to help welcome a refugee family.  How many involved in a volunteer initiative haven't been struck by the cross section of individuals participating? No matter the differences of their backgrounds, economic standing, race, or religion they have plenty to talk about – the project underway. They come to learn and appreciate each other.  They tend not to be "Mad as Hell" and more open to building a common life together where each side flourishes.

Canada is a nation of grass root community builders. Although international comparisons are always difficult, we appear to be a leading nation in terms of volunteer rates.  According to Statistics Canada, 8/10 Canadians over the age of 15 engage in some sort of formal or informal volunteering adding to up to billions of hours of volunteering and making a significant contribution to our GDP.

There are clouds on the horizon. Recent statistics show that Canada's non-profit sector is facing challenges when it comes to attracting and retaining volunteers with more than 2/3 facing a shortage. Some this decline is certainly tied to COVID-19, but it may also reflect a certain hopelessness that is lurking in our society.

Should our political agenda involve a national strategy on volunteering? Are there other ways to call Canadians to action? What about empowering individuals and communities in direct decision making and giving them a role in implementing solutions? What about programs aimed at community development; increased national service opportunities; exchanges and other travel opportunities across Canada? Would this give us something to talk about and prevent our anger from growing?

Some may argue that it is too reminiscent of the failed "Big Society" policy introduced by the Cameron government in the United Kingdom - a nation-wide effort to shift decision making to the local level, empower citizens and build community. There is no question that the "Big Society" failed to deliver, and the Cameron government quietly dropped the initiative.  It's failure, however, was not because idea of government trying to facilitate community building and encouraging its citizens to engage on problems was inherently bad. It failed because it became an excuse for the government of the day to cut government spending and try to foist the costs on civil society and cheaper private sector delivery agents.

No matter the guise it takes, addressing the anger that is out there and channeling it into nation building and the dialogue that naturally emerges from it needs to be a priority.  It should be top of mind of government, civil society, and ordinary citizens.  We cannot allow anger to be our identity; not simply because it destroys our motivation to act or prevents the type of dialogue associated with that action. Passive anger is dangerous because it allows us to be manipulated.

In the movie, as Howard Beale's popularity increases, forces begin to recognize how they can profit off the anger that he is fomenting. The transfer of the network's news division to its entertainment division is a wonderful point of satire that is alarmingly prescient of the modern day. And when Beale actually tries to use the anger of the general population to prevent a takeover of the media giant he works for, those at the top collude to stop him.

Exploiting anger for political ends is a danger that we need to avoid. Although thoughts might immediately turn to the new Conservative Party Leader and his efforts to appeal to people's frustration with a "broken Canada", he is not an outlier. In recent years political parties of all stripes have increasingly used anger as a way of gaining votes whether that anger is directed at those who refused to get vaccinated or the "super rich" and "wealthy corporations".

Is Canada heading to a world where our identity is defined by anger and hopelessness? Although the warning signs are there, we still have an opportunity to change course. We need to create an environment of action that naturally leads to the dialogue that has allowed us to build Canada. A nation whose citizens identify as nation builders devoted to engagement has a better future than one defined by citizens whose only common attribute is that they are "Mad as Hell and aren't going to take it anymore".

# Teachers' Understandings Of Ethnic Diversity: After 50+ Years Of Official Multiculturalism In Canada, Are We Any Further Ahead? [60]

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On October 8, 1971, then Prime Minister of Canada, Pierre Elliot Trudeau, rose in the House of Commons to announce his government's response to a set of recommendations contained in the report of the *Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism*. Trudeau's speech dealt with recommendations in *Volume IV* of the Commission's report concentrating on "the contribution by other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada and the measures that should be taken to safeguard that contribution" (Trudeau, 1971). The Prime Minister's purpose was largely to allay concerns of some non-English and non-French Canadians that their cultures might be threatened or diminished in the rush to implement official bilingualism across the country. Trudeau asserted that "although there are two official languages, there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other." He went on to say, "A policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework commends itself to the government as the most suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of Canadians." This brief statement of policy, however, was significant for the development of the Canadian state, Canadians' sense of their own identity(ies), and the evolution of policy and practice in diversity education across the country.

The period following the initial articulation of the multiculturalism policy saw a shift in approaches to diversity education from more assimilationist models to ones more focused on inclusion and social justice. Joshee (2004), Joshee and Johnson (2007), and Peck et al. (2010) document these changes in detail arguing that while the general trend has been toward policies more oriented to social justice there has been some retrenchment in recent years with an increasing focus on promoting social cohesion. Still, in an extensive review of research in the area, Bickmore (2014) concludes that "research

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[60] This research was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, SRG #410-2010-1180.

shows that Canadian citizenship education about intercultural diversity and equity issues is increasingly inclusive and justice-oriented in policy pronouncements but still practiced and understood in much less inclusive or thoughtful terms by teachers and students in actual schools" (p. 265).

### Teachers' Understandings of Ethnic Diversity

In this article we explore the conceptions of ethnic diversity held by two groups of four teachers, one from a mid-sized urban elementary school in Alberta and the other from a mid-sized urban elementary school in New Brunswick. Consistent with the majority of teachers across the country, these eight teachers were members of the White, dominant society (Macintoh, 2022; Ryan, et al., 2009; Turner, 2014) and used the term "Canadian" to describe their ethnic identity. Space constraints prevent us from exploring all aspects of our findings but we wish to highlight the two we think have the most bearing on teachers' understandings of ethnic diversity, following by a brief discussion about implications of these findings on teaching.

### Ethnic diversity as an "accessory"

During focus group and individual interviews, a distinct conception of "ethnic diversity as an accessory" emerged among participants. This conception derives from the belief that the expression of one's ethnic identity involves choice; that as easily as someone can put on an earring, or decide which pair of shoes to wear, so too can they decide whether or not to express their ethnic identity through material (e.g., clothing) or other means. In other words, ethnic identity is an external element and not something that is internal or intrinsic to one's identity, and expressing it is always a matter of individual choice. There appeared to be no understanding among our participants that identity is also, in part, group-defined and that the expression of certain aspects of one's ethnic identity is – or at least might be – in some ways involuntary. Nor did our participants seem to understand that ethnicity is fluid and plural (or at least potentially plural); the expression of one's ethnic identity may change depending on the social, political, and/or cultural context in which one finds oneself.

Most participants demonstrated a superficial understanding of how people may express their ethnicity, consistently referencing foods, fairs and festivals as markers of ethnic identity. Other markers of ethnic identity, such as religion, regionality, cultural practices, and language were largely absent from our participants' conceptions of ethnic diversity. We were somewhat shocked when Francophone French Immersion teachers in particular seemed unable to make connections between language, culture and ethnic identity. The focus for these teachers was on "doing their job" of teaching the French language. They made no connections between language and identity, even when asked explicit questions about it.

According to our participants, when people "choose" to express their ethnic identity, this is both exotic and foreign. The exotic view involves strangeness but also, for some, a desire to possess the same imagined exotic quality of the Other. Said one participant: "I don't have any ethnic anything and I've *always* wanted it." The foreign view of diversity is that it exists and/or originates outside of Canada. For example, when discussing whether or not a school should change a Christmas concert to a Winter concert, one teacher said, "there have been discussions before where staff members have said, "well, this is Canada, and this is how we do it here. If they don't like it, they can stay home." Almost none of our participants expressed the understanding that diversity has been a characteristic of Canadian society since before Confederation.

### Diversity without difference

In a rather interesting turn, while our participants othered those they imagined as not like them, they also attempted to erase perceived differences through the discourse of sameness. All of our participants argued that all people have the same hopes for their lives and therefore any other

differences related to one's ethnic identity are not substantive in nature and can be "overcome." This is an assumed sameness on the part of participants; they assumed that everyone shares the same basic values, or that they *should* share them. Here we assert that these teachers want to teach about diversity *without* difference. Over and over again, teachers explained that the most important thing to emphasize when teaching about diversity are the characteristics people have in common. We have numerous examples of this in our data, from one participant claiming that "people are people are people" to another's emphasis on finding "the commonalities and work towards getting better collectively, not staying the same individually."

This colour-blind approach to thinking about ethnic diversity has serious implications not only for teaching about diversity, but also for how teachers respond to and interact with the students (and families of students) in their classes. As Martin (2014) points out "a majority of white pre-service and practising teachers subscribe and adherently follow the colour-blind ideology and will claim to be ignorant of whiteness ideology (that is, ignorant of the structural advantages they have and cultural norms they promote)" (p.2). For example, while all participants acknowledged and described various elements that contribute to their sense of their ethnic identity, the label "Canadian" remained unmarked and therefore unremarkable. What we mean by this is that "Canadian" was an empty term unmarked by ethnicity (or "race", or culture). Instead, our participants relied on citizenship (by birth) and locality to explain "Canadian." For example, one participant argued that "Canadian means that you're not…you don't have any background or anything." While it is possible that this implies an openness to multiple, possible Canadian identities, based on our other data we believe that it is more a case of our participants exerting (perhaps unknowingly) a form of White or dominant society privilege (Carr & Lund, 2007) masked in an ideal of liberal neutrality. Such privilege goes unnamed by members of the dominant society and enables them to be willfully ignorant of the structural and attitudinal dimensions of the privilege that shapes every aspect of their lives (Dei et al., 2004; Martin, 2014; Pearce, 2005; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017) including, in the case of our study, our participants' ideas about students and teaching. The majority of teachers affirmed that over their teaching careers they had never thought about their ethnic identities and how they might influence how they teach and interact with their students and their families. Yet, our data seem to indicate that our participants' sense of their ethnic identities shaped the way they thought about ethnic diversity generally, and in the context of their professional practice specifically.

We hope that mapping teachers' conceptions of ethnic diversity will lead to a more complete understanding of the knowledge structures that inform their understandings of ethnic diversity and how these understandings shape the pedagogical decisions they make. Given that teachers are responsible for interpreting and implementing school curricula generally, and outcomes related to ethnic diversity in particular, more research into their understandings of ethnic diversity is warranted.

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# Reflection On A Personal Journey For Full Citizenship To Explore Canadian Identity And Vision For Canada In The 21st Centenary

*Teresa Woo-Paw received Governor in Council appointment and is the Chair of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation since 2018.*
*Teresa is the first Asian Canadian woman elected Trustee to the Calgary Board of Education; Alberta MLA and Cabinet Minister.*
*She is an advocate and educator for diversity and inclusion through her work with public and civil society organizations for more than four decades. Teresa found and built eight non-profit organizations including the Actions, Chinese Canadians Together-ACCT Foundation, ACT2EndRacism Network, Action Dignity, Asian Heritage Foundation and the Chinese Community Services Association (DiverseCities).*

Contributing to the special edition of the *Canadian Issues/Thèmes Canadiens* in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the Association for Canadian Studies offered me an opportunity to reflect on my journey for full citizenship as a way to respond to the questions of who we are as Canadians; the evolution of identity; and a vision for our country moving forward.

My maternal grandfather wrote a letter to my parents in the sixties urging my parents to immigrant to Canada after my father's decades of failed attempts to reunite with my paternal grandparents in the US so that my siblings and I would have access to good education in a safe and secure environment. My grandfather's letter wrote "Canada is heaven for the children, purgatory for the middle aged and grave for the aged". Our arrival to Calgary fifty years ago marked the first family reunion of my maternal family and the first meeting of my forty-one years old father and paternal grandfather in his sixties --two family milestones since the first arrival of my great grandfathers to North America in the 1920s.

My becoming a Canadian citizen connected me to Judge Sinclair who introduced the concept of multiculturalism to my family. We were awe struck when he told my family to retain our Chinese language and culture and become good citizens.

This legislative framework that acknowledged multiculturalism as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society guided by the recognition of "the right of all individuals to preserve and share their cultural heritage while retaining their right to full and equitable participation in Canadian society". The act also speaks on the need to remove any barriers preventing full participation in society and promised to assist individuals in eliminating and overcoming discrimination.

The policy emerged in 1988 in response to the changing racial and ethnic diversity with increasing numbers of immigrants coming from Asia, Africa and the Middle East and newcomers expressed concerns about employment, education and discrimination.

This act would play an integral role in shaping Canada's future as well as mine.

The visionary Multiculturalism Act trickled down into civil society in the eighties igniting a new sense of hope and imagination for great possibilities to fulfill missions in enhancing equitable access, social justice and inclusion amongst public servants, educators, healthcare providers, community builders, artists, police officers, private enterprises and change makers.

I came of age at the time of the inspirational Multiculturalism act and dedicated a large part of my life doing my part to realize that vision which reflect the larger shared sentiments amongst generations of Canadians especially those Canada is their chosen land.

While we have come to recognize various inadequacy of this act; this inspirational policy nonetheless propelled changes in school systems, police and community services primarily by inspired personnel in the frontline. I was engaged in intercultural dialogues with educators and parents; cross-cultural training with police, health workers and institutions.  Driven by the vision encompassed in the Multiculturalism act, I started the Chinese Community Services Association; a weekend Chinese language school with a Canadian belief that heritage languages are valuable resource and connector amongst generations and nations; I started the first Multicultural camp for youth with the aim to instill connections and pride in heritage and activate multiculturalism on the ground.

I entered into the helping profession of social work in part witnessing the lack of equitable support to linguistic and racial minority communities. My social work education and practice would transform me from attending classes with a mental process of assimilation -to cater to the dominant Euro Canadian environment, to being immersed in the struggles of those who are disproportionately disadvantaged by our systems and; in turn, the organizations I was leading and myself were unfairly treated by the systems / institutional that did not live up to their stated missions and the vision of an inclusive multicultural Canada.


The people who sought help from my organizations about their experiences of mistreatment; systemic neglect to their needs and issues; and inequitable access to opportunities and support became my issues and experience as a community builder and advocate. I learned how community members never had the chance to air their concerns for the mistreatment by law enforcement and when I and others advocated for the people we were personally threatened.

Racialized communities are by an large excluded by major funders in social, service sector. I spent a total of fifteen years to overcome barriers from all levels of government and major funders. The inequitable access to public support is a result from existing systems continuing to function within structures and programs that only cater to seventy percent of the population.

I was told "Chinese should not be born here" by youth in my multicultural youth program struggling with their identify development. I often encounter adult Chinese Canadians "mourning for the loss of their identity-heritage, language and culture" in my leadership programs. The experiences of second-generation immigrants possessing a lower sense of belonging than their immigrant parents are later validated by research.

I observed first-hand education systems that do not share the belief and value in the importance and benefit of heritage languages as fundamental to identity development with cognitive, social and economic benefits. Educational systems have the responsibility and opportunities to work with other actors in society to nurture and contribute to the development of confident and contributing citizens that fully actualize their aspirations and talents in authentic ways secured with sense of belonging. I experienced the direct and indirect tactics to block community efforts to offer international language programs. Federal and provincial governments from embracing multiculturalism with support to heritage language programs ($55/year to provincial support of $25/year) to total elimination of support.

My civic engagement reached the political spectrum when I became the first Asian Canadian woman elected to the school board. It was. momentous for the diverse communities that was so integral in making this historic milestone happened People see me with an institutional title and called it another immigrant success story.

My first month in elected office including receipt of a letter from someone who called me the "yellow peril" and a message from a student teacher that I have to work extra hard as people in her school said I don't represent them because of my racial background. A management personnel questioned if all the people who voted for me were Chinese.

When the Chinese bilingual program was passed fellow trustees stated "they (Chinese) are taking over and balkanizing the system" and racial slurs echoed in the backgrounds.

The glaring and persistent underrepresentation of racialized groups in the public institutions during my time in public offices perpetuated the omission of the needs, perspectives and life experiences of diverse communities throughout the systems. The impacts of that exclusion and omission can be devastating whether it is the huge disproportionate cuts to English as Second Language programs (50% vs 3% system wide cut); disproportionate support for families with children with disabilities; internationally trained professionals; omissions in seniors policy studies and potential sanction to exclusionary treatment of diverse groups by changes to human rights codes.

While living up to the vison of multiculturalism from the perspective of breaking barriers and achieving diversity in leadership and personally upholding the belief and intents of the act; the minority experience within the systems most often are filled with added hurdles; raising and addressing issues against the grain of the establishments; silencing and isolations; and enduring insults and disrespects to marginalized groups including one's own ethnicity and community. Some would focus on being above the fray as trailblazers and some would question are all "the other" (underrepresented) groups-women, Indigenous and all racialized Canadians and those with disabilities just not good enough to be here – and deeply questioning whether the systems have been living up to their stated mission and vision -whether it is under the banner of multiculturalism; welcoming and inclusive communities or others.

The experiment with the vastly embraced concept of multiculturalism and transformation as a pluralistic society fostered generations of pioneers within the full spectrum of civic engagement in Canada. Their journeys filled with new visions and hopes; ever evolving and iterative; and evoke states of triumphant and purgatory.


Movements of the Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, Black Lives Matter, anti-Islamophobia, resurgence of anti-Semitism and anti-Asian racism in recent years resurfaced and magnified the need for, as well as examination and declaration by institutions for systemic or institutional change – as stated in the Multiculturalism Act fifty years ago.

We must now build on the insights and experiences from those who have contributed to Canada's experiment for social change towards a more just, fair and inclusive society.

I'd like to conclude with my vision for Canada based on the Indigenous seven generation teaching framework  "Indigenous peoples and settlers -new and old - embark on a collective journey towards an equitable n inclusive pluralistic society – that honour (*respect*) truth; embrace diversity with *humility*; gain *wisdom* from our dynamic / evolving culture; uphold *courage* and *honesty* through passages of change; demonstrate *compassion*, *respect* and love during times of tension and challenge.