Mixed Race Life Stories: The Multiracializing Gaze in Canada's Multicultural Era

by

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Abstract: Mixed Race Life Stories: The Multiracializing Gaze in Canada's Multicultural Era

The social production of bodies as mixed race provides insights into the particular operation of the external racial gaze within the context of multiculturalism in Canada. This project explores those insights by applying a combination of critical race and life course perspectives to the life story narratives of those who grew up during the era of official multiculturalism. I move from examining the social interactions of the racial gaze to the lived experience of the gaze on mixed race bodies, drawing on 21 in-depth life story interviews conducted with people of mixed race aged 37-59 in three Canadian cities. Drawing on Haritaworn's conceptualization of multiracialization and this corpus of interview respondents' life story narratives, I examine how mixed race bodies are produced and reproduced through an external racial gaze. I show how the multiracializing gaze operates through the particular discourses of official multiculturalism and how mixed race individuals learn and respond to the gaze across their life course.

Respondents' narratives indicate that within the context of official multiculturalism, the multiracializing gaze operates in three particular ways. Firstly, it operates through the assumption of categorical identities of origin and belonging – an assumption deeply linked to the dominant imaginary of whiteness. On the one hand, mixed race confounds the 'pure' categories of race and blood through which identity and kinship are recognized, unhinging the categorical gaze. On the other hand, that same categorical gaze is recuperated through the desire to imagine and know the originary point of mixing read off of the multiracialized body. Respondents' experiences of learning about race and the racial gaze across the life course demonstrate this two-way operation of categorical identity production, setting the stage for understanding how they navigate the social and discursive terrain of their identities.

Secondly, the multiracializing gaze produces a key problematic: a tension between mixed race's transformative possibilities and its concomitant potential to reproduce dominant discourses. This echoes a debate in the literature on cultural hybridity regarding the politics of hybridity as transcendent. I examine three key arenas where respondents provided insight into this complex and contradictory social terrain: navigating 'mixed race', navigating national belonging ('Canadian' and 'multicultural') and navigating complex commonalities. The 'story' of identity that respondents form through their navigations of these three key arenas is evident in what I call the ready identity narrative: the narrative that respondents have ready to give to others when they are questioned about their identities.

Thirdly, I argue that the multiracializing gaze is lived not only on the body in the immediate 'moment' of the gaze on the body, but also in anticipation of it. I argue that the ready identity narrative illuminates the link between the immediate experience of the gaze and the anticipation of it. The narrative is developed iteratively in response to and in anticipation of the gaze, including across the life course. Respondents' formative moments (and their memories of those moments) shape the ready identity narrative, as does moving through the world in a body that is produced as mixed race: all of these make up the 'luggage' of anticipation. Put another way, the immediate and the anticipatory are two-sided moments that feed off each other. I point to three key facets that enable us to get at the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze: the everyday embodied lived experience of the gaze is made up of both respondents' felt sense, as well as how they make sense of their encounters with the gaze; the phenomenology of the everyday is iterative; and that encounters occur at different times and across different spaces and are part of a broader social milieu.

Preface

This thesis is an original work by Jillian Paragg. The research project, of which this thesis is a part, received research ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board, Project Name "MIXED RACE LIFE STORIES: GROWING UP IN CANADA'S MULTICULTURAL ERA", Pro00040840, JULY 29, 2013.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

INTRODUCTION

When my mother was pregnant with my older sister in Regina, Saskatchewan in the early 1980s, a woman acquainted with my (white) mother and my (brown) father asked my mother if the baby was going to "come out with zebra stripes". My family and I continue to laugh at the absurdity of this comment over 30 years later: as if it were a complete mystery how babies born to parents from different racial groups come out! But the question also signaled the operation of something much larger: how notions about race and racial imaginaries are constantly being produced and reproduced, and how mixed race bodies serve as a particular site through which this (re)production occurs. Similar moments were echoed in the narratives of the 21 mixed race people whose life stories are the core of this thesis. Respondents' earliest memories as children involve a 'baptism by fire' regarding the operation of dominant racial imaginaries. The external racial gaze (Bannerji 2000; Fanon 1967) on their bodies (how others read and fix race on their bodies) disrupts hegemonic imaginaries of the monoracial or discrete raced body. But through that disruption, hegemonic imaginaries of interracial mixing – that the mixed race body is the result of the coming together of two singular raced bodies – are also (re)produced. I use the term (re)produced to refer to how race is always already in production on bodies, drawing on Haritaworn (2009, 2012). Race is constantly in production and is constantly producing itself through such bodies, or even the very idea of those bodies. Put another way, race is always already being produced in the social. Even before my sister's birth, dominant racial imaginaries of discrete racial categories were being produced on and through her (imagined) body.

This moment captures a key entry point from which to consider the operation of race discourse and mixed race in Canada. Firstly, it demonstrates how kin relations are central to the "interracial popular imaginary" (Dorow and Swiffen 2009: 569) in which discourses about racial mixing circulate[1]. This imaginary produces a notion of linear origins 'coming together' in the mixed race body, which relies on the assumed correspondence of race, biology and blood. Secondly, it demonstrates a hegemonic racial imaginary where race categories are discrete, mutually exclusive and physically essentialist (Gatson 2003). This is an imaginary that underpins and is further reinforced by official multiculturalism. Canadian multicultural discourse (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002) demands and expects a discrete narrative based in the 'origin' of the people – especially non-white racialized people – who form its multicultural mosaic (e.g. 'you were *there*, then you came *here*'). This influences social subjects to narrate their identities – and the identities of others – in a linear and non-complex manner (even if their lived experiences are bound up in multiplicity). Thirdly, the moment points to the operation of what I call the multiracializing gaze. This concept combines Haritaworn's (2012) work on multiracialization – the processes by which race gets produced and reproduced on and through mixed race bodies – with well-established scholarship on the gaze. The external racial gaze does its fixing work (Bannerji 2000; Fanon 1967) through questions like 'what are you?' and in the process produces bodies as multiracial: imagined as formed through the coming together of two people from two discrete racial groups (Haritaworn 2009). This process 'multiracializes' (Haritaworn 2012) by socially naming or calling bodies into being as mixed race. Althusser (1971) refers to this process of bodies called into being as interpellation.

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[1] While no comprehensive study of mixed race discourses in Canada has been completed, I have conducted a study of mixed race discourses in newspaper media, which will be a separate article.

Considering the social production of mixed race provides one way of theorizing the operation of the external racial gaze and of race discourse within the context of multiculturalism in Canada. The question of mixed race experiences is not well documented, and I am interested in contributing to this documentation. In this dissertation, I move from examining the social interactions of the racial gaze to the lived experience of the gaze on mixed race bodies, drawing on life story interviews conducted with adults of mixed race in three Canadian urban contexts. Between the fall of 2013 and the spring of 2014 I conducted life story interviews with 21 adults of mixed race (aged 37-59) in Toronto, Ontario and in two cities in Alberta: Edmonton and Calgary. This research focuses on respondents' experiences as mixed race across their life course within what I refer to as the multicultural era, meaning the time period encompassed from circulation of the Two Founding Nations discourse in the 1960s, the advent of Canadian multicultural policy (in a bilingual framework) in 1971, through the upswing in non-white migration that began in the 1970s, into today's increasingly diverse – and, according to some, post-racial – Canadian society. Respondents' narratives show the particular ways that the multiracializing gaze works in the context of official multiculturalism in Canada. Their stories of learning about race, navigating social discourses and experiencing the gaze extend our understanding of the operation of the racial gaze.

Foregrounding the context of race and ethnicity in Canada over the last number of decades enables us to develop an understanding of mixed race experiences. The era of 'official multiculturalism' has been central to the shaping of race discourse in the Canadian context over the past 50 years. It has posited the nation as made up of a mosaic of (discrete) cultural groups and deployed a celebratory discourse that glosses over the foundations of Canada as a white settler state, the continued structuring power of those foundations in Canadian institutions, and

the processes of racialization that position non-white groups as Other outside of the nation. In other words, this discourse of inclusion is actually one that marks certain bodies as Other (Bannerji 2000; Mackey 2002).

The life story narratives of people of mixed race who were born between the 1950s and 1970s enables a consideration of the specificities of race's operation within the era of official multiculturalism in Canada, including temporal shifts within race discourse, discerned through their lived realities. We can learn about the operation of the racial gaze in the context of Canadian multiculturalism, as well as mixed race discourses, through foregrounding the experiences of mixed race people. Because they do not easily fit within the dominant racial imaginary, their identity narratives are in constant negotiation with it, including through others' imposed perceptions and expectations of their selves. The perspectives and experiences of mixed race people provide a way into examining the national imaginary of Canada as an officially multicultural nation, in that they refract this vision and open up understandings of the operation of race discourse in Canada.

The narratives of the mixed race people I interviewed demonstrate three key ways that race discourse operates within this national imaginary. Firstly, race discourse operates through discrete linear categories, particularly within a context of official multiculturalism. From study respondent's narratives, it was evident that the racial gaze is categorical and works to (re)produce linear or discrete racial imaginaries, which whiteness operates through. Secondly, the politics of race discourse are slippery and complex: the mixed race body opens up possibilities for transformation of discrete linear categorization, while simultaneously reproducing this same imaginary. Thirdly, the multiracializing gaze is lived. It is experienced not only on the body in the immediate 'moment' of the gaze on the body, but in anticipation of it.

There is an inherent conundrum in researching 'mixed race': how to define it. How do researchers do work on 'mixed race' without ourselves reifying the hegemonic racial imaginary and the social processes of racial production that we are trying to call out? Streeter (1996) recognizes that there exists a tension in mixed race scholarship, in that researchers must negotiate the language of race in order to articulate mixed race realities. She states that in this case "discourse is simultaneously a trap and an enabling condition" (Streeter 1996: 320). Thinking about mixedness[2] and considering it as a topic of study is fraught, in that the very phenomenon of interest ('mixing') takes on meaning and is produced through socially constructed and historically informed categories, as well as through geographical context (Fozdar and Perkins 2014; Small and King-O'Riain 2014).

By 'mixed race' I refer to people who are of a mixed racial background, defined as those whose biological parents are from different racialized groups, meaning different "socially defined racial groups" (Streeter 1996: 316) – this could refer to having one parent who is socially marked as white and one parent who is socially marked as non-white[3], or having parents who are socially marked as non-white but from two different racialized groups. I draw on this definition while recognizing that the very phenomenon being studied ('mixing') takes on meaning and is produced through socially constructed and historically informed categories. Racialized imaginaries are what give mixedness meaning, and they impact how people - who are produced as mixed according to these imaginaries - understand and narrate their identities. Social

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[2] I position 'mixedness' in the Canadian context as a discourse that is produced through the social construction of discrete racialized ethnicities.

[3] It could be argued that using the terms white and non-white automatically privileges the term white, making it the norm against which all other groups are measured (James 2001). However, scholars have argued that using the term white is useful in that it denotes the existence of power relations at work in our society. As Mukherjee states: "I use the term 'non-white' in order to talk about the binary relationship of power in which 'white' is the dominant term" (2001: 214).

researchers often work within the definitions of the social world in order to examine the production and operation of social phenomena.

Mixed race scholarship, especially coming out of the UK, the US and Canada, addresses the constant questioning faced by people of mixed race. In various narrative collections, mixed race people have reflected on their experiences of being questioned ('what are you?') in their everyday lives (Farjardo-Anstine 2011; Huang Kingsley 1994). This kind of questioning occurs in practically every context mixed race people find themselves in (work, school, during social activities, and while travelling), and between them and any number of people in their lives (co-workers, customers, teachers, friends, and strangers), which was evident in the interviews that I conducted with people of mixed race. Some of the literature theorizes the 'what are you?' question as a reaction to the ambiguity of mixed race people's appearances operating within rigid racialized frameworks, indicating that people of mixed race are expected to explain their existence (Gilbert 2005; Song 2003; Williams 1996). Other literature focuses on how the gaze is fascinated by the very existence of such a point of mixing and wants to know more about its genesis and content (how a differently racialized man and woman came together, what 'kind' of race they were, where they came from) (Haritaworn 2009; Gatson 2003; Tyler 2005; Paragg Forthcoming). Questions such as 'what are you?' are also said to create feelings of Otherness for the person of mixed race (Bradshaw 1992; Nakashima 1992; Root 1998). Haritaworn (2012) provides a critical intervention to this line of thinking, arguing that when scholars assert that mixed race bodies are *read ambiguously*, they (even if inadvertently) position such readings as pre-social. Instead, as I discuss below in my review of the mixed race literature, Haritaworn (2012) argues that the questioning interaction needs to be considered as a *space of production* of race itself.

The line of questioning that people of mixed race experience in their everyday lives is evident in how all of the people I interviewed have developed and deploy a variety of identity narratives. These identity narratives have emerged from navigations of the 'terms of engagement' around identity and belonging across their lives. In particular, because of the questioning encounter they travel with what I call ready identity narratives. The ready identity narrative serves as an orientating or sensitizing concept (Blumer 1954) for this study. A sensitizing concept, as defined by Blumer is a concept that gives "a general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances" (1954: 7), or as Charmaz states "those background ideas that inform the overall research problem" (2003: 259). Previous critical mixed race scholarship has, importantly, considered the deployment of the term mixed race as an identification (Mahtani 2002b), explored mixed race people's responses to being 'racially mismatched' by others (Song and Aspinall 2012a; 2012b) and examined mixed race people's perceptions of how the external gaze impacts on their self-identification (Khanna 2011). Building on this scholarship, my study finds that mixed race people also have ready identity narratives in response to the 'what are you?' question. The existence of ready identity narratives signals the constant questioning and continuous presence of the external racial gaze in respondents' everyday lives (as well as their awareness of its presence). These are narratives that respondents 'carry' with them, ready to deploy at all times under the racial gaze. They are simultaneously agential and incomplete.

The 'what are you?' question, a moment of racial production, asks after the assumed 'point of entry' or temporality to mixedness (e.g. 'how did it (you) *come to be*?') (Haritaworn 2009; Gatson 2003; Tyler 2005). This reference to origins is narrated in two interrelated ways: firstly, through assumptions of heteronormative kinship; and secondly, through conceptions of

national origin as inherited through blood. The content of the interview respondents' ready

narratives also illuminates how race is in production on the multiracialized body in the Canadian

context, specifically through a framework of *non-white racialized ethnicities and white*

racialized ethnicities. This framework builds on Chow's (2002) and Mahtani's (2002a)

conceptualization of racialized ethnicities, which is explored later in the chapter. The

respondents' narrations of the 'what are you?' question point to how the gaze desires to imagine

and know their originary point of racial mixing (Haritaworn 2009; Gatson 2003; Tyler 2005).

RACE AND MIXED RACE IN CANADA: STUDY CONTEXTS

I now turn to a brief discussion of Canadian demographics in order to gain a broader

picture of the contexts in which my interview participants' lives unfold. However, I remain

aware of how demographics do not necessarily attend to specificities in lived experience, as well

as to how complexities are inherent in mixed race statistics.

Scholarly, media and government bodies have increasingly pointed to the rise in the

frequency of interracial relationships and in the size of the mixed race population (Milan,

Maheux and Chui 2010). Yet this fact is always already complicated by the very slipperiness of

race/ethnicity/identity and uncertainty over how these number can and should be measured. A

report on the 2006 Canadian census entitled *Canada's Ethnocultural Mosaic, 2006 Census*

(Statistics Canada 2008) outlines how the incidence of individuals reporting multiple ethnic

origins is increasing. In 2006, 41.4% of the population reported more than one ethnic origin,

compared to 38.2% in 2001, and 35.8% in 1996 (Statistics Canada 2008: 10). However, this

statistic includes white individuals reporting more than one white ethnic identity. For instance, it

includes someone who reports that she or he is both English and Irish. In 2006, 17.1% of the

visible minority population reported two or more ethnic origins on the census (Statistics Canada

2008: 15). Both the absence of a direct question on the census regarding visible minority status and the discourses that the census produces around 'mixing' (i.e. everyone is mixed) can be seen as fragile (and contradictory) productions of post-race. While those reporting more than one ethnic origin (that are imagined and racialized as white) are considered to have "multiple ethnic origins", those within this 17.1% who reported both white and non-white ethnic origins are classified as solely belonging to a singular non-white visible minority group (i.e. as not having "multiple ethnic origins"). For instance, the report states that 13.1% of those who they label as "South Asian visible minorities" did report "multiple origins" and that out of this number, 2.5% reported "British Isles origins" (such as English, Irish, and Scottish), and 2.6% reported "other European origins" (Statistics Canada 2008: 16). Furthermore, 30% of those classified by Statistics Canada solely as "Japanese visible minorities" also reported "multiple ethnic origins". By classifying these individuals as "Japanese visible minorities" and "South Asian visible minorities," Statistics Canada works within a binary opposition of white/non-white: it not only fails to take people's self-identification into account (making the state responsible for naming), but also simultaneously erases identities that do not fit the pre-existing categories.

The locations of this project, Edmonton and Calgary, Alberta and Toronto, Ontario, were selected because of their specificities, as well as how the contexts will help provide a picture of the operation of race discourse in two urban Canadian multicultural presents. My hope was to enable the theorization of race discourse more broadly within English Canada. The cities exist in the current 'multicultural moment' in slightly different ways: Toronto is celebrated as one of the most multicultural city in the world, and Edmonton and Calgary are positioned as spaces of emerging and contemporary diversity.

Today, Edmonton is becoming an increasingly racially diverse city, however, it is not as

racially diverse as Canada's largest cities and demographically could be positioned as a predominantly white space. According to the 2006 Federal census what Statistics Canada refers to as the "visible minority" population, meaning those belonging to racialized non-white groups, included 165,465 individuals, or 22.9% of the total population in the Edmonton census metropolis area (CMA) (Statistics Canada 2006). This is in contrast to 1996, when the total visible minority population in Edmonton was 115,430, or 13.5% (Statistics Canada 1996). According to the 2006 Federal census, 23.7% of Calgary's CMA population belonged to racialized non-white groups, in contrast to 16.5% in 1996 (Statistics Canada 1996). In the Toronto CMA, a city that is often touted and touts itself to be one of (if not the most) multicultural cities in the world, 2,174,070 or 42.9% of the total population belonged to racialized non-white groups in 2006 (Statistics Canada 2006). This is in contrast to the 1996 Federal census, which reported that 1,338,095 or 31.6% of the Toronto population were visible minorities (Statistics Canada 1996).

Over the course of the past four decades, the racialized non-white populations in these contexts have grown immensely, but at differing rates (Li 2003). Furthermore, other contexts where respondents have lived over the course of their lives also largely impacted their experiences. In this sense, while Edmonton, Calgary and Toronto can be considered broadly representative of current urban Canada in the multicultural present, respondents' experiences across the life course have occurred not just in these cities but across multiple contexts. The racialized discourse of Canada as a whole, across the multicultural era, becomes relevant in their narratives.

Major demographic changes have occurred across the multicultural era in Canada, with non-white racialized populations increasing, particularly with the opening up of the immigration

system to these groups. According to the 1961 census, 3.3% of the Canadian population belonged to non-European groups (meaning non-British, non-French, and non-Other European – i.e. non-white), categorized as Asian (0.7%), Aboriginal (1.2%), Black (0.2%) and Other (1.2%) according to the census (Li 2000). The 1961 census was taken just as changes to Canadian immigration policy were in process (Li 2003). By 1971, the year official multicultural policy was introduced, 3.8% of the Canadian population belonged to non-European groups, categorized as Asian (1.3%), Aboriginal (1.5%), Black (0.2%) and Other (0.8%) (Li 2000). In 1981, when the term 'visible minority' was introduced, 4.7% of the Canadian population belonged to visible minority groups (Statistics Canada 2008). By 1991, this had increased to 9.4% of the population, and increased to 11.2% of the population in 1996. By 2001, this increased again to 13.4% of the population. Between 2001-2006, the greatest increase of the visible minority population occurred, in that as of 2006, 16.2%, or 5,068,100 of the total Canadian population belonged to "visible minority" groups (Statistics Canada 2008).

The racialized character of multicultural Canada is also related to questions of the acceptance of interracial relationships. With the increase in non-white racialized populations in Canada has come an increase (and greater acceptance of) interracial partnering between white people and non-white people. According to the 2006 census, 3.9% of couples in Canada were part of what Statistics Canada terms "mixed unions" or interracial relationships (meaning partners who are racialized differently from each other) (Milan, Maheux and Chui 2010). This is in contrast to 3.1% of mixed unions in 2001, and 2.6% in 1991. Therefore, between 2001 and 2006, interracial couples grew by 33%, more than five times the growth rate of all couples (Milan, Maheux and Chui 2010). Statistics Canada began to quantify interracial coupling in Canada in 1991, and so statistics on interracial coupling from previous years is not possible (and

as previously discussed, the counting of those with "multiple ethnic origins" on the census within these spaces can be seen as a fragile and contradictory production of post-race).

While these statistics help to paint a picture of the contexts in which my interview respondents live, it was also important for me to allow the complexities of contexts to emerge in the interviews themselves, including challenges to dominant assumptions about spaces that are deemed to be white and spaces that are deemed to be multicultural. For example, while Toronto is often touted as the most multicultural city in Canada, respondents' narratives showed that while this is now true demographically, at the time when they were growing up, racial diversity in the city of Toronto was just beginning to emerge. Most Toronto respondents narrated that they grew up in predominantly white spaces, and that while the demographic reality of Toronto has changed, institutional power remains structured through hegemonic whiteness. It is predominantly people racialized as white who continue to hold positions of power in political and social institutions, and respondents work and exist within predominantly white institutions where they are positioned as raced Others. In turn, representations of the Alberta context tend to portray it as a space of hegemonic whiteness both historically and presently (in terms of its institutions as well as demographics), yet Alberta respondents' narrations of their childhood experiences and present experiences did not vary greatly from those of Toronto respondents.

Representations work to position Western Canada (specifically) as a historically white space, but there are disjunctures that exist between discourse, representations, and lived realities (Kelly 2004). Historical representations exist in tension and contradiction with historical memory, and lived experiences. As Kelly (1998) notes, Canadian history continues to erase the contributions of the historical black community in the Albertan context, disregarding historical multiculturalism. Many non-white groups have been in Canada since the 1800s, if not before,

and their long-standing histories in Canada have been documented, including Blacks (Kelly 1998; 2004), Japanese (Adachi 1976), Chinese (Li 1998) and Indigenous, including Métis, groups (Lawrence 2000; Mawani 2009). In this sense, the opportunity for mixed race people has existed in the Canadian context for a long time, as have mixed race people. As Mawani (2009) importantly argues, cross-racial encounters are central to Canada's settlement histories. The question at hand is how this has been shaped and produced in the last 40 years in relation to multiculturalism.

Interracial relationships are often deemed more accepted in Canada (compared to other contexts, such as the US) because of a relatively high rate (per capita) of interracial coupling (Milan and Hamm 2004). This is often, in turn, attributed to official multiculturalism and the notion that the existence of the policy itself encourages immigrants to want to integrate (Kymlicka 1998). For example, in their Statistics Canada report Milan, Maheux, and Chiu (2010) found that generational status impacts visible minority involvement in mixed unions: second generation and later visible minorities were found to have higher rates of interracial coupling than first generation visible minorities. One problem with this argument, however, is that higher statistical rates do not necessarily correlate to a higher acceptance of interracial coupling or interracial families, nor does it mean that families do not face particular racialized experiences because of their "interracial status" (Delivosky 2002). I interviewed people of mixed race who grew up across what I refer to as the multicultural era. As members of interracial families and 'products' of interracial relationships, they shed light on how the racial gaze operated through kinship and biological mixing, within the very terms offered by multiculturalism. I will now move to provide a sketch of this multicultural era in which the lives of the respondents have unfolded.

THE MULTICULTURAL ERA AND RACE DISCOURSE

The official policy of multiculturalism in Canada, begun in 1971, has become a central

way that Canada describes its identity. It is central to the national imaginary, and has found its

way into multiple social institutions and practices. While Canada is celebrated for its adoption of

official multiculturalism, the story of multicultural policy is complex. Multiple shifts have

occurred within official multicultural policy over time, which have impacted race discourse and

popular discourses about multiculturalism in Canada. Multiple stories of why and how the

official policy came about also circulate. I provide a brief sketch of these shifts below.

Prior to the 1960s, Canada was referred to in official state discourse as having Two

Founding Nations: the French and the English. This framed the Canadian nation-building project.

In 1963, the *Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism* was established. Within this

commission was a recognition of a Third Force of Canada (meaning ethnic and racial groups

outside of the English and the French), which marked a shift in the official discourse away from

the Two Founding Nations discourse (Haque 2012). In 1971, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau

outlined his vision for "a policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework" (House of

Commons: 1971), which again shifted the discourse from a "bicultural" to a "multicultural"

framing. This initial period of multicultural discourse, as scholars have pointed out, was largely

symbolic; it focused on cultural preservation through the formation of ethnocultural

organizations and celebratory cultural festivals (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002; Kymlicka 1998;

Mahtani 2014). In 1974, immigration numbers were at their highest levels ever, with 218,465

immigrants granted entry into Canada that year. In the 1980s there was a push for an anti-racism

component to the policy focusing on race relations from grassroots ethnic community organizers

and associations (Kobayashi 2008; Li 2003). Pressure from these groups led to the establishment

of the *Royal Commission on Equality and Employment* in 1983 (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002), as well as the formation of a *Parliamentary Special Committee on the Participation of Visible Minorities in Canadian Society* in 1983. In 1988 the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* Multiculturalism Act was passed. While the Act's emphasis on equity and rights-based issues marked a shift from the previous focus on symbolic cultural preservation (Mahtani 2014; Kobayashi 1998), the latter focus was not abandoned: the Act also formalized the distribution of Federal funding for ethnic association groups and their 'cultural preservation' activities. Critical multicultural scholars (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002) have noted that during this period multiculturalism began to link to business interests, and was seen as a way of enhancing Canada's global competitiveness. The multicultural program parallels neo-liberal discussions, and such ideas have entered the realm of citizenship, speaking to a neo-liberal turn in the 1990s, which has continued into the 2000s.

Official multicultural policy has found its way into social life in a number of ways, including the very existence of the policy as a reason that immigrants make the decision to apply to immigrate to Canada, the establishment of funding for multicultural festivals and official ethnic group associations (Kobayashi 1998), and the introduction of multicultural activities into the school curriculum. All of these facets of multicultural policy were reflected in study respondents' narratives. The context of official multiculturalism emerged as important for the life course experiences of respondents: a policy that is often perceived as solely symbolic did have consequences for respondents' everyday lives and the contexts through which their lives unfold, which will be discussed throughout the chapters.

Understanding the Racial Gaze in Multicultural Canada

Multiculturalism in Canada is a demographic reality (given the makeup of the population), an official policy, and an ideology or philosophical ideal within the Canadian national imaginary. The advent of official multiculturalism provides an important backdrop for the production and experience of mixed race. Official multiculturalism has meant a number of things for race discourse and race relations in Canada. It has set up a celebratory discourse around ethnic differences, but at the same time this celebratory discourse fails to account for the operation of processes of racialization and easily latches onto the post-race notion that race no longer matters and we are all equal because we celebrate our differences, equally. It sets up English and French Canadians as the founders of the nation, positioning all others as Ethnic Others and lacks an account of Canada's settler colonial past and present. Lastly, it sets up a notion of multiple cultures making up the Canadian mosaic, but this multiplicity is not extended to cultural groups themselves: rather, cultural groups (which are also largely racialized groups) are represented as static and siloed, which I expand on below.

Understanding the racial gaze in the context of official multiculturalism is important to an exploration of the specific operation and experience of the multiracializing gaze in Canada. It is key to understanding how mixed race is socially produced, to grasping the social discourses that mixed race people need to navigate (and narrate to) over their life course, and to articulating the lived experiences of racialization and multiracialization in the Canadian context. At the same time, mixed race complicates our understanding of the operation of this gaze. In what follows, I lay out a way of understanding the racial gaze and then, against this backdrop, introduce the multiracializing gaze.

A well-established critical literature addresses and theorizes on race discourse and the external racial gaze (Fanon 1967) in the Canadian context (Bannerji 1993, 2000; Day 2000; Elliot and Fleras 2002; Kelly 1998; Mackey 2002; Razack 2008). For example, Bannerji (2000) argues that in Canada, ways of thinking about race manifest themselves through a need to fix the Self/Other as white or non-white. Extending Bannerji (2000), I posit that there are discrete categories of identity at work in the Canadian context that variably reference articulations of ethnicity and race (and want to fix these articulations together). Within Canadian multicultural discourse (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002; Kymlicka 1998) there are constant slippages between the terms race, ethnicity, origin, nationality and blood. These different forces are often read next to each other, stand in for each other and become implicated in one another. The particular ways that race and ethnicity are represented mediate how people come to understand their own and one another's identities (and how they expect and are expected to narrate their identities). As Mahtani states, in "the Canadian context, the concept of racialized ethnicities (as opposed to race) has figured largely regarding questions of identity for Canadians" (2002a: 71). In other words, in the Canadian context people narrate their identities drawing on ethnicity, yet this occurs within a context where racialization is constantly producing race and racialized identities, which mark bodies (with their varying ethnic identities) as 'white' *or* as 'of colour'. Similarly, Chow (2002) usefully asserts that ethnicity is often racialized: ethnicity is simultaneously used as a universalizing concept and as a boundary marker. It is positioned as a universalizing concept insofar as 'everybody is ethnic.' However, while 'everybody is ethnic,' some are held more captive by their histories. In the literature on Canadian multiculturalism, some usefully argue that one problem in discourses of multiculturalism is how the very notion of culture relies on linear notions of both race and ethnicity (Gagnon 2000; Mahtani 2002a). In this thesis, I show how in

an officially multicultural context, race discourse is further complicated by mixed race. Through mixed race respondents' experiences, a new framework to think of the operation of race in an officially multicultural context emerges: that of *non-white racialized* and *white racialized ethnicities*.

Drawing on Chow (2002) and Mahtani (2002a), I posit that the operation of the external racial gaze in the Canadian context, and therefore how people narrate their identities *to* the gaze, is based on a framework of non-white racialized ethnicities and white racialized ethnicities. While I work with Bannerji's (2000) initial arguments, the experiences of mixed race respondents and how they narrate identity (which entails co-narrating race, ethnicity, origin, nationality and blood) reveals a complication of Bannerji's (2000) white/non-white binary framework[4]. My research findings suggest that there needs to be a more nuanced consideration, especially in a context of *official* multiculturalism, of how discourses of multiculturalism bind together with identity discourses. A framework of non-white racialized ethnicities and white racialized ethnicities is a way to understand what is produced in the 'what are you?' encounter: in other words, it sheds light on what the external racial gaze is about. Origins and blood are also important to this imaginary of racialized ethnicities.

Canadian multicultural discourse (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002) demands and expects a narrative of ethnicization based in the origin of the people who form its multicultural mosaic (e.g. 'you were *there*, then you came *here*'). However, I posit that for whites, the expectation to name ethnicity is a way of claiming certain kinds of belonging *to* the nation. Whiteness subsumes multiple ethnicities under itself, working to maintain its own dominance (Ignatiev

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[4] This framework also fails to reflect how Indigeneity is generally considered outside both white and non-white categories. The white/non-white binary framework lacks the ability to consider the Canadian state's policies towards Indigenous groups, including its policing of the *Indian Act*, its anti-miscegenation laws, and its attempted regulation of Indigenous mixed race people (Mawani 2002).

2008)[5]. While Waters (1990) discusses how in the US context whites have a choice to be ethnic or not ethnic, I argue that in the Canadian context, those who are racialized as white have the ability to claim multiple ethnicites (e.g. 'I'm Scottish *and* Ukranian'[6]). In other words the ability to claim multiple ethnicities is subsumed under whiteness, and this is a way that whiteness (re)produces itself to Canada's racial imaginary of the multicultural mosaic – through its produced multiplicity. In contrast, non-white racialized peoples are expected to narrate their identities in ways that denote a kind of continued connection (or belonging) to outside of the nation (Bannerji 2000)[7]. There exists an expectation of a linear narrative of subject position for non-whites, which fixes non-white (and non-Indigenous) bodies relative to the nation through a single origin. In other words, non-white racialized ethnicities (which are assumed to connect to outside of the Canadian nation) fix identity to origins, while white racialized ethnicities (which are solidified to the Canadian nation) do not.

The external racial gaze within the multicultural Canadian context demands of non-white racialized people a narrative of non-white racialized ethnicities which are static and discrete, or at least stable (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002; Paragg Forthcoming). The denial of flexible, changing, fluid identities to racialized peoples signals a way to produce, contain and manage their identities within a racial imaginary of hegemonic whiteness. Bannerji (2000) argues that in the Canadian racial imaginary non-white racialized people are racialized as the Other, and are

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[5] While white bodies in the Canadian context are also asked questions like "what is your background?" (and slippages between race, culture, and ethnicity in the Canadian multicultural nation are also evident in the questioning of white bodies) it is out of the scope of this study to address this. However, my preliminary inference is that the intent behind such questions on white bodies is not the same, nor is the question entwined in the same power relations of Othering and fixing as the questioning of non-white monoracialized bodies.
[6] The operation of whiteness, and who is seen as being able to move in and out of being ethnic is historically variable (e.g. in the Canadian context, Irish and Ukranians were not always constructed as white ethnicities).
[7] For example, theorizing on the experiences of Asian-Canadians, Gagnon (2000) posits that Asian-Canadians are situated in the dominant imaginary at the edge of the nation: while situated at the cusp of belonging, there is some part of being Asian-Canadian that will always be positioned as foreign.

positioned as the multicultural element that enriches Canada culturally, reduced to solely having a status as static cultural beings.

This demand for narrativization is further complicated for mixed race bodies, because their racialized ethnicities contain multiple multiplicities. I use the phrasing of 'multiple multiplicities' to assert the unexpectedness to my respondents' identity narratives, in that the multiplicity to their narratives does not, and/or cannot be represented or signified, in multicultural discourse (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002). My respondents' narratives had a multiplicity to them that disrupts multiculturalism's anticipated singularity of origins. The multiplicity of mixed race subjects' identity narratives confounds the discrete leanings of racial categorization within the dominant racial imaginary. In turn, mixed race subjects' ready narratives, which become comprehensible with reference to origins, give the gaze some anchor points for making sense of multiracialized bodies. The gaze comes to multiracialize these bodies – it is a multiracializing gaze.

In the Canadian context, bodies that are racialized as non-white and that are monoracialized[8] are questioned in a way that seeks to place them at the edge of the nation and/or to place them (put them in their place) within the nation. However, multiracialized bodies are not only questioned due to the racialized aspect of who can claim Canadian and who is accepted as Canadian, but also because of their transgression of multicultural discourse's anticipated linear origin narrative for non-white racialized people: the imagined mosaic metaphor of singular, linear racialized immigrant origins (see Kymlicka 1998 and Porter 1968 as examples). Nevertheless, the gaze on multiracialized bodies does not easily (re)produce this attachement and/or detachment to origins. Respondents' ready identity narratives illuminate how the gaze

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[8] Monoracial is a term that is at times used in mixed race literature to describe non-mixed race bodies. Here I use the term monoracialized to signal how such bodies are also socially produced (like multiracialized bodies), but how their production is within belonging to singular racial categories.

produces the multiracialized body, as well as the importance of origins and blood to the imaginary of racialized ethnicities.

A celebratory discourse of racial mixing is also in operation: interracial unions and partnerships are presented as proof of Canadian tolerance and the efficacy of multicultural policies and ideologies (Milan, Maheux and Chiu 2010). The 'what are you?' question thus becomes an invitation to tell the success of Canadian tolerance and multiculturalism, while at the same time working as an exoticizing racial gaze. It is important to consider the nuanced social stance of mixed race within contemporary multicultural Canada, while understanding that it is a stance that simultaneously operates to keep mixed race subjects from belonging to the nation (Paragg 2015).

Race Discourse in Canada

While the full story of how the multicultural era has unfolded can be found elsewhere (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002; Day 2000; Haque 2012), my purpose here is to focus on the race discourses that circulated in different eras of this complex history, and to refract or complicate this history by pointing to why and how these racial discourses start to both matter and look a bit different when we consider mixed race experiences and discourses.

Here, I focus on three key discourses circulating within Canada's racial imaginary in the multicultural era: the Linear Immigrant Nation; the Celebratory Multicultural Nation; and the Post-race Nation. Drawn from what other critical scholars have said about race and nation discourse in Canada, they provide a way to set the stage for my project, especially in how they have strived to take up or solve the diversity problem in the Canadian national imaginary, a problem posited by state policy and discourse (Bannerji 2000; Day 2000). Discourse is about contradiction: these multiple sedimented discourses can live next to each other (Saukko 2000).

These discourses of race and nation also impacts respondents' identity narratives, including those that they have ready for the gaze. In other words, the ready identity narrative respondents deploy for the external racial gaze is formed within the social context of circulating discourses of race and nation.

Linear immigrant nation

A popular discourse of Canada as a nation of linear origins circulates within how multiculturalism in Canada is imagined. As articulated in the previous section, multicultural discourse (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002; Kymlicka 1998) demands and expects a narrative of ethnicization based on the origins of the people who form its multicultural mosaic. As I have argued above, non-white racialized peoples are expected to narrate their identities in ways that denote a kind of continued connection (or belonging) to outside of the nation (Bannerji 2000). There exists an expectation of a linear narrative of subject position for non-whites, which fixes non-white (and non-Indigenous) bodies relative to the nation through a single origin. The very idea of origins implies a static, discrete, unbroken line of racial-national singularity, and the external racial gaze within the multicultural Canadian context demands that non-white racialized people present a narrative of non-white racialized ethnicities which are static and discrete, or at least, stable (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002; Mackey 2002; Paragg 2015).

For mixed race bodies – bodies that are produced as such – this is further complicated because their racialized ethnicities contain multiple multiplicities: the gaze on multiracialized bodies does not easily (re)produce this attachment or detachment to origins and respondents' ready identity narratives contain multiplicities that defy the expected linear origin story. This study's respondents' ready identity narratives illuminate how the gaze produces the multiracialized body, as well as the importance of origins and blood to the imaginary of

racialized ethnicities. At times, respondents are required to narrate where they come from – i.e., what their origin story is – while at other times they are asked to skip the life course narration in that the gaze wants to only know 'what they are' (which is another mode through which they are asked to tell their origin story). Put another way, respondents are required to either narrate where they are from, or to skip to naming 'what they are'.

Celebratory multicultural nation

A second discourse pulled from the literature on race and multiculturalism is that of the Celebratory Multicultural Nation. A popular discourse of Canada as a celebratory multicultural nation circulates within how multiculturalism in Canada is imagined. The celebratory discourse and the racialized body also go together. Non-whites are positioned as the multicultural element that enriches Canada culturally (Bannerji 2000). This celebratory discourse results in what has been critically referred to as song and dance multiculturalism, or food court multiculturalism (George 2006; Mahtani 2002a), which involves the promotion of surface level diversity, meaning a largely symbolic celebration of culture through the funding of cultural festivals (Kymlicka 1998). This is in opposition to deep level diversity, which strives for equity, shared power, and resources (Taylor 1993).

The Canadian government defines official multiculturalism as "fundamental to our belief that all citizens are equal. Multiculturalism ensures that all citizens can keep their identities, can take pride in their ancestry and have a sense of belonging" (Government of Canada Website 2011). Canadian multiculturalism reinforces the need to belong to a culture and emphasizes ethno-cultural identities and origin over other identities, such as racial identities (Mahtani 2002a). The celebration of said ethnocultural identities links back to the discourse of the Linear Immigrant Nation discussed above (through which discrete race discourse operates) and is a

continuation of that theme: the myth of linear origin and the story of the Canadian nation play off of each other in the imaginary of the celebratory multicultural nation (Gagnon 2000). In this celebratory discourse, the questioning of non-white monoracial bodies (i.e. 'where are you from?') seeks to fix them relative to the nation through a singular origin, allowing a kind of linear narrative of subject position (signaled through the dominant imaginary of immigrant origins highlighted above).

As Day (2000) and Bannerji (2000) have argued, the Celebratory Multicultural Nation discourse goes hand in hand with the discourse of diversity. By the discourse of diversity, I refer to the language of diversity - meaning the term itself, as well as associated concepts – that circulate, and are used to signal multiplicity with the multicultural Canadian context. Official policy and discourse suggests that the problem has been resolved through a celebration of culture approach (and as evidenced by the so-called post-race present). Yet, Bannerji and Day argue that the discourse of diversity is not an innocent discourse. Day (2000) discusses what he describes as "the problem of diversity" (2000: 3), wherein the state sponsors attempts to structure, define and know problematic Others who are differentiated from the unproblematic Canadian self. This is exemplified through government policy and legislation, such as the *Indian Act,* the policing of Métis identities, and immigration policy. Similarly, Bannerji (2000) argues that the Canadian national imaginary assumes a homogeneity of Canadianness, and that the language of diversity is a coping mechanism to deal with the heterogeneity of Canada's foreign Others. While the term diversity signifies a multiplicity of socio-cultural presences in the nation, it is positioned as a power neutral indicator. However, this neutral appearance becomes a useful ideology for practices of power and processes of racialization. Firstly, it motions to simple multiplicity, marking difference solely as a descriptive plurality. Secondly, it introduces the need for the

content of these seemingly neutral differences. However, the discourse of diversity is not

innocent pluralism: it works to erase social relations of power in Canada, and in particular

racialized power relations. Diversity, while signaling multiplicity, "obscures any understanding

of difference as a construction of power" (Bannerji 2000: 36).

The multicultural imaginary is spurred on by the diversity discourse in Canada: in this

context, the asking of someone's background is framed in a socially acceptable celebratory way,

i.e., 'I'm only asking you what your background is because I want to celebrate you and your

culture, with you'. Additionally, this gaze involves cultural expectations (that you 'know what

your culture is', and that you have 'knowledge' and perform cultural practices), but it is also a

racialized gaze. Such questions are framed through a lens of 'multicultural interest' through the

discourse of the Celebratory Multicultural Nation and its discourse of diversity. However, mixed

race refracts or ruptures (Ferguson 2012) the celebratory discourse, as people of mixed race are

simultaneously positioned within and outside of celebratory multicultural discourses because

they are not easily placed within imagined discrete categories of belonging. People of mixed race

multiply and confound the celebratory linear narrative of origin. The questioning of mixed race

bodies (often positioned within this celebratory framing) appears to be working differently than

that of non-white monoracial bodies. The questioning does not necessarily seek to place the

person of mixed race on the edge of the nation, but rather works as a kind of suspended puzzle

over where and how to place and celebrate them within the multicultural nation.

Post-race nation

In public and state discourses, the key problematic of Canadian diversity is said to have

been resolved through the celebration of culture mandated through official multiculturalism,

enabling a post-race turn. This leads to a third discourse I note in the critical literature on race

and multiculturalism, that of the Post-race Nation. Post-race discourse operates through a *flattening* of difference (the notion that we are all the same or racial transcendence) while at the same time operating through a *fracturing* of difference (the notion that we are all individually different and therefore have no need for collective identities, particularly those that are politicized – what can also be referred to as post-structural racism). Within the post-race discourse of the present, race is no longer deemed significant, which masks the continued racial stratification of society. Crenshaw (1995) argues that colour-blind thinkers have a "curiously constricted understanding of race and power" (xv). Post-race and colour-blind discourses also involve a different-but-equal rhetoric (Mahtani 2002a; Taylor 2008a), which also de-emphasizes the need for discussions about race and racism. For example, Winter (2011) conducted a newspaper analysis in her study of representations of Canadian multiculturalism, and Canada's construction as a multicultural society through public discourse, and she found a lack of discussion of racism and a depoliticization and individualization of discourses around race in the present period. Similarly, Taylor notes how "multiculturalism increasingly places unbalanced focus on ideals of colour-blindness, ethnicity, culture, and neo-liberal ideals that favour individualism" (2008b: 7). The way that discourses of the Multicultural Celebratory Nation and the Linear Immigrant Nation discourses operate raises the question of how post-racial nation sits uneasily, and/or comes out of Canada's racialized history.

MIXED RACE LITERATURES

Academic scholarship on mixed race is also implicated in circulating discourses on race. One key division within mixed race scholarship is around how some scholars in the literature uncritically reproduce neo-liberal post-race discourse. For example, critical mixed race scholars, who take up anti-racist and decolonial frameworks, delineate themselves from the psychosocial

identity literature, which could be positioned as taking up post-race discourse both implicitly and explicitly. Here, I outline key issues that critical mixed race studies grapples with, and position my project within this literature.

While mixed race academic literature and research has increased in volume in the past two decades, particularly in the UK and the US, in the Canadian context it is still at a nascent stage (see Mahtani 2002a; Mahtani 2014; Mahtani, Kwan-Lafond and Taylor 2014; McNeil 2010; Paragg 2014, 2015; Taylor 2007). In the US and the UK, the emergence of work on mixed race identity can be traced from the first half of the 20th Century. Ifekwunigwe (2004) has posited one framing of the trajectory of mixed race scholarship. She argues that there are three ages in the mixed race scholarship within the social science disciplines: the age of pathology throughout most of the 20th Century[9]; a movement to an age of celebration in the 1990s[10]; and, then the emergence of an age of critique in the late 1990s and 2000s[11]. While Ifekwunigwe's (2004) framework is useful for thinking about the historical context of scholarship out of which the current moment has emerged, it is also important to complicate this historicization. The plotting of ages sets up a linear temporal treatment of mixed race scholarship that does not necessarily provide a way to consider how the threads of 'earlier' ages persist and continue to circulate and be grappled with. For example, within mixed race scholarship, celebratory discourses sit beside pathologization: discourses remain extant and are in conversation with each other. Ifekwunigwe's history of scholarship does not fully take into account the ways in which these are at work.

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[9] In this age of literature not fitting into a particular racial group was said to result in a psychopathology for the person of mixed race, as a result of being socially, emotionally and psychologically confused due to transgressing discrete racial categories.

[10] In this age people of mixed race - in larger numbers than ever before - enter the scholarship themselves, and take up "actor-centred" frameworks that revolve around the fluidity and non-fixity of their personal identities, which is entwined with the emergence of the so-called multiracial movement in the US.

[11] This age of literature is critical of the multiracial movement and its post-race tendencies.

I situate myself within critical mixed race work as an emergent body of scholarship distinct from earlier (and continual) sociological and psychological studies of mixed race identities. Aligning itself with Critical Race Theory (CRT), critical mixed race studies (see for example Edwards et. al 2012; Elam 2011; Haritaworn 2012; Mahtani 2014; McNeil 2010; King-O'Riain et al. 2014; Sexton 2008; Sharma 2012; Spencer 2011) considers the impact of structural forces on how race and mixed race subjectivities are constructed and perceived (Delgado and Stefancic 2000), which involves a consideration of how mixed race identities are created in relation to the social world, and how power and race operate together. It also critiques mixed race scholarship that fails to consider race, structure and power. Issues that such contemporary mixed race theorists grapple with include, firstly, post-race discourse and mixed race bodies being held up as post-race emblems (Mahtani 2014; McNeil 2010; Spencer 2011). Secondly, the intersections of mixed race identities along with race including gender, sexuality, class, ability, nationality or nation-state (Edwards et al. 2012; King-O'Riain et al. 2014). Thirdly, the privileging of part-white multiraciality and the existence of anti-blackness in mixed race scholarship (Elam 2011; Mahtani 2014; King-O'Riain et al. 2014; Sexton 2008). Fourthly, the depoliticization of projects and lack of an anti-racist position, through a focus on individual narration in mixed race scholarship as opposed to structural considerations and thinking through responsibilities to other communities of colour (Mahtani 2014; Sharma 2012; Spencer 2011). Lastly, critical mixed race scholarship seeks to interrogate the production of mixed race identities' complicity in attaining unequal systems and structures of power in the social and involves calls for articulating a politics of mixed race (Haritaworn 2012; Ibrahim 2012; Mahtani 2014; Sharma 2012).

Additionally, within critical mixed race studies – and most pointedly in the Canadian

context – there have been calls for further interrogation of the division between anti-racist scholarship and anti-colonial scholarship (Mahtani 2014). The separation of literature signals a larger division in scholarship in the Canadian context between Indigenous or anti-colonial scholarship and anti-racist scholarship, and the need to decolonize anti-racism (Lawrence and Dua 2005). Mahtani (2014) points to the growing importance of an anti-colonial framework in mixed race work, and calls for greater consideration of the disjunctures between the literatures, and how they are operating and what they are doing. Critical mixed race studies approaches also problematize the emphasis, in mixed race scholarship and in popular media, on individual mixed race voices narrating their experiences, in that their individual experiences, as opposed to structural patterns of inequality, become the focus. Critics point out that the focus on individual identity rights has failed to consider how power and race are operating (Nakashima 1996; Mahtani 2001, 2014; Parker and Song 2001), and assert that mixed race celebratory discourses and the US multiracial movement are actually anti-Black movements (Elam 2011; Sexton 2008). Additionally, the neo-liberal turn (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002) has tied multiracialism to marketability (McClain DaCosta 2007). Squires refers to the marketing of ambiguity chic as about "exoticism and intrigue, providing opportunities for consumers to fantasize and speculate about the Other with no expectations of critical consideration of power and racial categories" (2007: 169).

I use and build on several key concepts from this literature. These include a focus on the 'what are you?' (Farjardo-Anstine 2011; Huang Kingsley 1994) question, as well as theorizing on the multiracializing gaze, which provides an intervention to how the 'what are you?' question is taken up (Haritaworn 2012). A key entry point for much mixed race literature and scholarship are the constant questions faced by people of mixed race. In various narrative collections, mixed

race people have reflected on their experiences of being questioned in their everyday lives (Farjardo-Anstine 2011; Huang Kingsley 1994). Some of this literature theorizes it as a reaction to the ambiguity of mixed race people's appearances operating within rigid racialized frameworks, indicating that people of mixed race are expected to explain their existence (Gilbert 2005; Song 2003; Williams 1996). Questions such as 'what are you?' are also said to create feelings of Otherness for the person of mixed race (Bradshaw 1992; Nakashima 1992; Root 1998). Drawing on the framework of the external racial gaze (Alcoff 2006; Fanon 1967; Hall 1990; Weate 2001) to understand the 'what are you?' question, some scholars posit that mixed race bodies are read as ambivalent through dominant racial imaginaries, which creates a crisis for the gazer (Elam 2011; Mahtani 2014; Williams 1996). Haritaworn (2009, 2012) positions this kind of dissective process as an act of symbolic violence in the everyday encounter, but also argues that positioning mixed race bodies as *read ambiguously* problematically suggests that the racial imaginary works through pre-social assumptions of difference. Instead, Haritaworn considers the notion of an "[ambiguous phenotype] as a socially produced—and productive— idea that is constituted in broader power relations" (2012: 28).

Haritaworn raises critical points about how race is theorized and talked about within mixed race scholarship. This includes how the frameworks scholars themselves use may re-inscribe power relations within a "hegemonic discourse on multiraciality" (2012: 30). They call for a return to the examination of the gaze and what "dominant people gain by keeping racialized bodies in place" (2012: 43) and warn of framing phenotype as the trigger for such encounters, arguing that ambiguous readings are *constructed* in the 'what are you?' encounter itself, working to multiracialize bodies. Drawing on Haritaworn's (2012) framework, I argue that respondents' ready narratives show us how the multiracializing gaze works. In other words, how respondents

experience and respond to the gaze tells us what sort of multiracializing processes are at work in the 'what are you?' question.

NARRATIVE IDENTITY AND THE LIFE COURSE

Narrative identity approaches consider how people come to tell the story of their own life, what factors impact what occurs in this story, as well as how this story is told. In particular, sociological approaches to narrative identity consider how the social (structures and discourses) shape a person's life story, and how people negotiate between the self and the social in their own lives. As Jovchelovitch and Bauer state (2000) in their discussion of narrative identity approaches, "[in] projects combining life histories and socio-historical contexts, personal stories are expressive of larger societal and historical contexts, and the narratives produced by individuals are also constitutive of specific socio-historical phenomena in which biographies are grounded" (67). A narrative approach to identity compliments life story methodological approaches. The strength of a life story methodological approach is that discourses are brought to life through individual perspectives and experiences (Ewick and Silbey 1995; Maynes, Pierce and Laslatt 2008). Maynes, Pierce, and Laslett (2008) argue for the value of personal narrative to understanding broader discourses, stating:

> The value of personal narrative analyses lies in their potential to see people and their actions as both individual and social, and to understand human lives as governed simultaneously according to the dynamics and temporalities of the individual life course and of collective histories (Maynes, Pierce, and Laslett 2008: 69).

A narrative approach enables a consideration of how people telling the stories of their lives is impacted by those broader discourses and structures, both implicitly and explicitly.

Such an approach is particularly useful for scholars doing work on race, because it moves beyond a consideration of the operation of race at an *individual* level[12]. Conversely, it also works

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[12] Current dominant race discourse tends to problematically position race as operating solely at an individual level –

in the other direction, helping to understand how broader racialized structures are experienced and made in everyday life. Respondents' life story narratives tell us how they navigate discourses of race and multiculturalism in Canada over the course of their lives. Their narratives provide a lens on shifts in race discourse in Canada across their lifetimes, and ultimately, what race has meant in the multicultural era, theorizing on the operation of the external racial gaze. Considering life narratives next to race discourse through narrative identity approaches enables resonances and linkages *between* them to be brought out, without being reduced to one another. Through such an approach, it is important to consider what kind of relationship there is between life stories and broader social discourses, specifically, how stories map onto broader race-multicultural articulations.

Some scholars have studied mixed race through autoethnography or autobiography, which are subcategories of narrative identity approaches. Gatson (2003), using a "sociological autoethnographic framework" (42), seeks to inscribe social discourse onto her own mixed race life narrative. She usefully quotes W.E.B. Du Bois (1995 [1940]) to illustrate how she positions autoethnography: "my discussion of the concept of race…[is] not to be regarded as digressions from the history of my life; rather, my autobiography is a digressive illustration and exemplification of what race has meant in the world in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries" (in Gatson 2003: 22). Gatson focuses on three moments in her life when she confronted her blackness, her whiteness, and her 'multiracialness', but positions these moments as connected to the larger racial imaginaries of the social context in which she resides (the United States). Parham (2008) draws upon a similar approach, wherein she connects race histories (public histories) and family histories (private lives) drawing on Mills' (1959) conceptualization of the

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– our institutions and systems are post-race and "colour-blind'" (or specifically in the Canadian context are "multicultural") and therefore any experiences with racism are individual experiences, perpetuated by racist individuals, as opposed to a consideration of structural racism.

Sociological Imagination, or how biography and history are interrelated. Parham shows through this framework how race, memory and family history are complexly intertwined, focusing on how these histories are traced and taken up by the black and white descendants of a family. She suggests that 'private' family histories are telling and can be linked up to 'public' issues of race, power and inequality in significant ways. In this way, Parham positions lived experiences as directly intertwined with "the social", providing another entry point into the relationship between life stories and broader social discourses (Parham 2008). Tyler (2005) takes up a genealogical approach to the ways female members of interracial families narrated kinship, ancestry, descent, belonging, place, biology and culture and suggests that the histories and genealogies interracial people narrate about themselves can work to disrupt conceptions of race.

In my project, life course perspectives add another important dimension to understanding respondents' life narratives; that is, how these narratives shift temporally across the life course. Life course approaches are interested in the interconnections and overlapping impacts of institutional factors and the dynamics of a person's biography across their life span, a process of "biographization" (Heinz and Kruger 2001; Kohli 2007). While I do not fully take up life course theory in the project, certain aspects of life course theory contribute to understanding the narration respondents' life stories. I designed my project so that study respondents would narrate their lives over time, across their life course stages (by choosing particular participants of a particular age, and by asking certain kinds of questions in the interview). Life pathways were a point of reflection for respondents even when I was not explicitly asking about them. In this way, even when respondents were narrating the texture of their lives 'in the present' as adults, their 'present' was informed by the trajectory of their life course: their memories of past experiences. In their narratives, respondents recognized how their narrative about their 'self' has shifted

across their various life course stages. Life course approaches help to keep these shifts in mind, while also providing a framework that applies macro sociological frames and micro sociological perspectives together (Heinz and Kruger 2001; Kohli 2007). However, life course's approach to considering the role of historical time and its impact on social mechanisms and individual lives - creating what can be conceptualized as a type of "master narrative" (Kohli 2007) - differs from my approach. Instead of considering the way the 'usual' life course unfolds amidst the institutional structure and policies of a particular social context (the "master narrative") my focus involves how individual people construct particular narrative frames for *making sense* of their life stories, and how they resonate with other individuals' life stories, as they are formed within common cultural discourse and social institutional processes. At the same time, my study participants told me about their lives (growing up, school, dating, having kids etc.) in ways that are informed by a particular sense of the 'normal' unfolding life course; they also then give particularity to the life course through their encounters with race discourse and how their memories meet up with the present.

THE READY IDENTITY NARRATIVE AS CORE TO MIXED RACE EXPERIENCE

For mixed race people, there is probably no moment that better captures their experience than the encounter with the question 'what are you?' and the narrative that they deploy in response to the question, or what I call the ready identity narrative. This moment illuminates and holds within it the constellation of concepts discussed above: the racial gaze on the 'difficult-to-categorize' body, the social desire to make sense of race, the operation of race discourse in the multicultural era in Canada, and how respondents narrate identity across the life course. As Haritaworn (2012) so poignantly argues, this questioning interaction needs to be considered as the very *space of production* of race itself. Given the importance of this encounter to my

respondents' experiences, and its usefulness for understanding the operation of the multiracializing gaze as discussed across the chapters of the dissertation, I include here an introduction to how respondents' ready identity narratives develop out of conscious moments of knowledge of the multiracializing gaze on their bodies. I briefly draw on respondents' discussions of their ready identity narratives to illustrate the multiple-sided significance of the ready identity narrative and how the narrative can be drawn on to unpack how the encounter reflects intersections of race, kinship and nation in the dominant imaginary. This in turn sets the stage for the chapters to come, where I explore respondents' negotiations of kinship, origins and linearity, and examine how respondents are expected to story their selves for others.

Respondents attested that being questioned in regard to their racial identities is pervasive in their everyday lives and across their life course. It occurs in practically every context they find themselves in (work, school, during social activities, and while travelling), and between them and any number of people in their lives (co-workers, customers, teachers, friends and strangers).

People's response to the 'what are you?' question often begins with 'what their parents are.' This reference to origins points to two interrelated ways in which kinship is central to the interracial popular imaginary: firstly, through assumptions of heteronormative kinship; and secondly, through conceptions of 'national origin' being inherited 'through blood'. Throughout all of the interviews, it was evident that an imaginary of heteronormative kinship (Butler 2000, 2002; Dorow and Swiffen, 2009) is central in the framing of the originary point of mixing between non-white racialized and white racialized ethnicities. Respondents specifically made sense of non-white racialized ethnicities and white racialized ethnicities in their ready narratives through referencing origins, or 'how their lineage came together'. The content of respondents'

ready narratives illuminates how race is in production on the multiracialized body in the Canadian context.

The multiracializing gaze's interest in lineage on each 'side' (mother and father) is a way to 'break down' people's identities, to 'know' the non-white racialized and white racialized ethnicities at work. If respondents do not state in their ready narrative 'which parent is what,' they are often asked to specify. Some respondents react by intentionally providing unnecessary information, signaling how while the questioning gaze has an interest in origins and asks after them, the question itself opens up possibilities through asking for a response. Lanny describes his ready identity narrative (couched within the language of heteronormative kinship and national origin), but then suggests that this can also be an act of resistance by overloading questioners with information about his family, stating:

> Well I used to just say "I'm mulatto", and that kind of fell out of…favour. I just say now "my Mom's white and my Dad's black". Simple as that. I don't say "well my Dad might be…come out of slavery – might only be 9/10ths black, part Indian or something". I just leave it at that. "Mom's Scots/Irish, Dad's black"….If they press me any further I say "my Dad's black American, and my Mom's Scots/Irish". Then if they want to press me any further than that, I can give them my whole history right back to [laughter]…yeah. They'll be sorry they ever asked.

While often working within language that makes their narratives legible to the gaze, respondents also purposefully make their narratives illegible, simultaneously, which I have previously theorized as 'playing on the gaze' (Paragg Forthcoming). Ram also narrates his origins to the gaze through heteronormative kinship and national origin while attempting to complicate others' assumptions. He notes that despite his semi-illegible responses the questioning does not just end with the identity narrative that he gives, as people will go on to question him about other aspects of his family life: the 'curiosity' of the gaze on multiracial bodies is incessant. Ram states:

> If they ask "where are you from?" and I give them my slightly cheeky answer, I say "I'm from Canada" [inaudible] but if I kept getting "where were you born?" or "where are you really from?" something like that, I'll usually lead with 'I was born in England' and that's a little bit – I'm aware that's a little bit of a continuation of the cheeky answer. It's not what they were expecting.

> But I say it just to kind of get them to stop and think for a second. So I say "I was born in England", I usually give my father's ethnicity first, then my mom's – "my father was Indian" and then in Canada [emphasis] you often have to explain that you mean "Eastern Indian". "My father's Indian my mother was Scottish", I'll often kind of give them that thumb nail sketch, most people that satisfies and knowing that I was born in England, then the conversation will drift in the direction of "oh, so when did you guys move to Canada" or…something like that. Or "how did your parents meet", or something like that.

Ram's narrative begins to demonstrate how the politics of race discourse are slippery and complex: the mixed race body opens up possibilities for transformation of discrete linear categorization (through his "cheeky" narration), while simultaneously reproducing this same imaginary (the narrative that is demanded of him always shifts back to one that draws on origin as nation/blood through the mother and father).

From the study respondent's narratives, it was evident that the racial gaze is categorical and works to (re)produce linear or discrete racial imaginaries. As I outlined above, race discourse operates through discrete linear categories, particularly within a context of official multiculturalism, which also emerged in interviewees' narratives. Alex compares her experiences of living in both Canada and the US in her adult life, reflecting that in Canada she has found that people are more immersed in labels and are more obsessed with categorizing her than they were in the US. She points out that the ready identity narrative she uses in Canada is deployed pre-emptively, before she is even asked, because she can sense the gaze - how people are looking at her - working upon her body, attempting to dissect its 'origins':

> In the States, I felt like there was much bigger of a mixing pot in terms of different ethnicities, and…for some reason it just didn't necessarily stand out maybe, in some ways. But…I don't know, it's – [in Canada] I can see the look in people's eye. They're just trying to figure out the place, background and so…rather than have them assume something that's incorrect, now I just volunteer it.

Alex further noted the role that her family name plays in people's questioning of her:

> I think another aspect that was different that I didn't realize then, but I do realize now, is a connotation to my last name, which is Arabic, and…but does not denote anything about me as a person, because I'm Catholic actually, and our whole family is Catholic, and so…now it's become more of an apparent issue to me when I introduce myself to other people. Now

sometimes I might make a point of saying "oh yeah, I'm [full name] and interestingly my background is Italian and Trinidadian" something like that. Because…and that's only in the last six to 12 months, I've actually noticed…that – and since being in Canada, as opposed to the States, I've notice people more draw attention to that for some reason, that I didn't notice before, or maybe I just noticed it recently [slight laughter].

Throughout their narratives, respondents relayed the multiple contexts over the course of their lives – from being 'on the street' to school/work or in other public spaces like multicultural festivals – where they encounter the multiracializing gaze. Respondents anticipate, as Alex's narrative shows above, that when they find themselves in new situations, they will likely have to narrate their identities. This is bound up in the discourses and discursive threads around mixedness that circulate within the social. In turn, respondents have formed their anticipatory identity narratives in ways that they know will be legible to the person asking them to narrate their identity, the particularities of which are formed within the imagined linearity of multicultural and race discourse and its gaze in Canada.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

In this dissertation, I move from examining the social interactions of the racial gaze to the lived experience of the gaze on mixed race bodies. Drawing on Haritaworn's (2012) conceptualization of multiracialization, I explore the in-depth life stories of 21 people of mixed race aged 37-59 in three Canadian cities. I show how the multiracializing gaze operates through the particular discourses of official multiculturalism and how mixed race individuals learn and respond to the gaze across their life course. In the Introduction, I have set up the study's theory, context and methodological approach. In Chapter Two, I outline the method and methodological framework of the study and reflect on my own biography and reflexive practice in relation to the study.

The remaining chapters focus on the substantive study findings, showing how respondents' interview narratives provide insight into the complex and contradictory social

terrain that they negotiate across their life course. In Chapter Three, I draw on respondents'

narrations of their racial learnings about race and mixed race in the context of kinship to

demonstrate the two-way operation of categorical identity production. I do this by highlighting

four key learnings about race and mixed race that respondents absorbed over the course of their

lives. These include: not having an identified space of collective or socially recognized

belonging; being perceived as defective and impure (which emerges most during dating stages in

the life course); learning to recognize, narrate and identify with serialized forms of articulated

difference (serial-multiple); and learning that you have to have a story - a response to the calling

out of your difference. Over their life course, particularly as respondents become parents, these

lessons come to the fore in different ways or are re-thought.

Discerning this operation of categorical identity production through respondents'

learnings about race and mixed race sets the backdrop for Chapter Four, which looks at three key

arenas of social and discursive terrain through which respondents' navigate their identities:

navigating 'mixed race', navigating national belonging ('Canadian' and 'multicultural') and

navigating complex commonalities. Respondents form 'storied identities' through their

navigations of these three key arenas, and these shape the ready identity narrative that they carry

with them to respond to questions about their identities in the world.

Chapter Five shifts from these social navigations to theorizing on the everyday lived

experience of the multiracializing gaze on the mixed race body. Respondents' narratives show

both immediate and anticipatory qualities to being under the gaze, and illuminate how these two-

sided moments feed off each other.

In the concluding chapter, I come back to discussing the three ways that the multiracializing gaze operates. I then reflect further on tensions emerging from the study and on research contributions stemming from the study.

Chapter 2. Method and Methodology

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I delineate the methodological framework of the study, outline the methods used, and discuss why these methods matter to the study (i.e. its methodology). I begin with an overview of the life story method and methodologies, followed by two reflexive sections that deepen and extend the layers of life narrative. The first reflexive section offers ways of understanding the complexities of life narrative about mixed race through reflecting on research moments and interactions. The second reflexive section furthers these understandings of the complexities of life narrative by interrogating my own complicated positioning and experience as mixed race. Together, these two reflexive sections deepen and extend the layers of life narrative, especially when they are about mixed race, and particularly when they resonate with my own life.

METHODS AND DESIGN OF STUDY

For the study, I conducted nine interviews in Toronto, Ontario, and 12 interviews in Alberta (nine in Edmonton and three in Calgary), for a total of 21 narratives. Following a life story method approach, the interviews took place over multiple sessions (two interviews with each person, with three exceptions when I was only able to meet with the participant once, equaling approximately 50 hours of interview time). The interviews ran approximately an hour and a half each, which accumulated approximately three hours of interview data per participant, across sittings. This approach of multiple interviews with each respondent enabled me to probe in order to fill in the respondents' narratives, and to ask different sets of questions across the interview sittings (Atkinson 2002). Having a small number of interviews also enabled a richer relationship between respondents' life stories and broader historical changes to develop. It

enabled an unpacking of how respondents' experiences (and memories of their experiences) of mixed race have changed (or not changed) across the trajectory of their lives in the multicultural era. The age range of the study's respondents (37-59), is a generation that forms a particular historical cohort whose life course spans from the advent of Canadian multicultural policy in the 1960s, through the upswing of diverse migration that began in the 1970s, and then into today's increasingly diverse Canada and (according to some) post-racial society.

In my recruitment, I did not focus on solely recruiting persons of a 'particular mix', as I was interested in a diversity of experiences, and a diverse range of socially defined racial groups. While academic literature on mixed race identity has increased in volume in the past two decades, this research has mostly focused on individuals of black and white parentage (Ifekwunigwe 1999; Rockquemore and Brunsma 2008; Root 1996) rather than a more diverse range of socially defined racial groups. However, I still created some guidelines around who I recruited and included for the study. I only targeted individuals who are *not* part of the official mixing discourse in Canada (i.e. not Métis). This is because Métis as an official category stems from a particular historical trajectory and context in Canada (Lawrence 2003; Mawani 2009), which is outside the scope of this project. However, I did have two respondents in the Alberta context, whose mothers were racialized as black and whose fathers held Métis status.

I conducted my interview recruitment through posting a recruitment ad (Appendix A) in community and activist online networks and email list servers in Edmonton and Toronto, through snowball sampling (which led me to my three Calgary respondents) and through my personal network and the networks of colleagues. My original recruitment parameters were: people who have been in Canada since the mid-1960s (and since the mid-1970s at the latest); either Canadian born or those who immigrated as children, who were between the ages of 40-60; and those who

have two parents who are read as belonging to different racialized groups in the Canadian context. During recruitment, I was contacted by a few potential respondents who fell just outside my allotted age range of 40-60 (two respondents who were 37, and one who was 38). I decided to include them in the sample. I also attempted to recruit equal parts women and men, and people of a range of socio-economic statuses and backgrounds. Out of the 21 respondents, 6 were men, and 15 were women. I can also only speculate as to the reasons for this gender skew. Firstly, it may speak to a gendered difference for males — as a result of their socialization, they may not feel as comfortable sharing and talking about their experiences, therefore leading to a lack of interest in participating in research. Secondly, my abundance of female respondents may also speak to how women of mixed race's multiracialization – due to the importance of appearance in cultural narratives of femaleness (Rockquemore and Laszloffy 2005) – has a more substantial impact on their everyday lives.

Through my recruitment methods (my own networks, email list servers and snow ball sampling), I also found that respondents tended to be politically active, or at least aware, and the majority had accessed (and had access to) post-secondary education. I further reflect on socio-economic status during my discussion of the 'complex commonalities' between myself and respondents later in the chapter.

I have provided a table below summarizing respondents' genders, ages, whether Canadian or non-Canadian born, and which city and province they currently reside in, for reference. Sketches of each respondent can be found in Appendix D, in order to introduce the respondents and set up how respondents spoke of their life experiences and their identities in the interviews: the types of life issues they emphasized through the telling of their life stories and how they entwine with their narratives of mixed race. However, due to the nature of the life story

interviews, their richness and depth, I found it extremely difficult to narrow down respondents'

narratives in paragraph form. Constructing such a sketch is less than straightforward from a

methodological life story standpoint. I was concerned about leaving out parts of respondents'

stories that they would deem central or important, of misrepresenting their narratives, or of

making the telling of their life stories seem like a linear life course/stage progression, when often

times the telling of the life story was not. In the sketches I have attempted to highlight points that

respondents stressed in their narratives.

<div align="center">Table 1 – Interview Respondents</div>

Name	Gender	Age	Canadian Born	City/Province
Karen	Female	59	No	Toronto, Ontario
Yvonne	Female	45	No	Toronto, Ontario
Korrie	Female	50	Yes	Toronto, Ontario
Ayesha	Female	58	No	Toronto, Ontario
Winston	Male	45	Canadian 'born abroad'	Toronto, Ontario
Ram	Male	55	No	Toronto, Ontario
Charles	Male	41	Yes	Toronto, Ontario
Miranda	Female	54	Yes	Toronto, Ontario
Natalie	Female	41	Yes	Toronto, Ontario
Melissa	Female	40	No	Edmonton, Alberta
Karen	Female	39	Yes	Edmonton, Alberta
Alex	Female	45	Yes	Edmonton, Alberta
Leanne	Female	49	Yes	Edmonton, Alberta
Gordan	Male	38	Yes	Calgary, Alberta

Candace	Female	37	Yes	Edmonton, Alberta
Catherine	Female	41	Yes	Edmonton, Alberta
George	Male	38	Yes	Edmonton, Alberta
Regan	Female	37	Yes	Edmonton, Alberta
Lanny	Male	59	Yes	Edmonton, Alberta
Tanya	Female	46	No	Calgary, Alberta
Indira	Female	44	Yes	Calgary, Alberta

Respondents discussed their life stories in a variety of ways, including:

- Foregrounding critical and life defining moments, or events that they viewed as predominant or central to their life story (at times these narratives were emotionally charged: see the consent form in Appendix B which explained voluntary consent and confidentiality);

- Ordering their narratives in a chronological manner, by giving the sequential story of their life;

- General accounts of subjectivity or experiences, through a discussion of their experiences as mixed race people.

My interview schedule (Appendix C) attempted to ensure that all three narrative modes emerged. The interview guide was structured drawing on a life course-type trajectory of family and childhood relationships, experiences in school, experiences in the workforce, and intimate relationships in the present. While respondents' narratives did not flow in such a chronological or linear fashion (and neither did the trajectory of their lives), it was useful to structure the interview guide in this manner, to serve as a reminder to me in the interview about what questions I wanted to ask about interviewee's lives. Additionally, the two interview sittings

enabled the breadth and depth of respondents' life stories to be captured in a way that one interview sitting would not enable. I expand on this further in my methodological reflections later in the chapter.

METHODOLOGY: LIFE STORY INTERVIEWING

> Stories people tell about themselves and their lives both constitute and interpret those lives, the stories describe the world as it is lived and understood by the storyteller (Ewick and Silbey 1995: 198).

The 21 life story interviews produced rich data, enabling an understanding of the relationship between structural forces and identity. Life stories illuminate categories of belonging and shifting racial discourses in the Canadian context by gathering respondents' perspectives and recollections of lived experiences across their life course (Atkinson 2002). A strength of life story interviewing methodology is that it can enable an understanding of how people negotiate and experience mixed race identity over the course of their lives, as they narrate – from the present – experiences at different stages and times in their lives, and over a particular social timespan (the multicultural era). Life story interview methods were appropriate for this study, but it also has limitations as a methodological approach. For example, since the life story approach requires respondents to engage in a *re-telling* of the past, a *looking back* onto past events, there is the possibility of the accuracy life story method being challenged. Life story approaches are especially conducive to understanding negotiations across the lifetime of the interviewee.

In addition, I have reflexively engaged with and considered my own identity as a person of mixed race throughout the project, as my identity impacted the social relationship formed between myself and the respondents in the situation of the interview (Bornat 2007; Rapley 2007). While conducting interviews with people of mixed race, my own autoethnographic work – my reflexive practice – became part of how I conducted the life story interviews. This

included: how I hailed (Althusser 1971) respondents into being mixed race through my very recruitment of them and through the interview itself; whether (and where) I pushed respondents in the space of the interview to think again about how power and race are at work in their lives; and, how respondents negotiated and hailed me as a researcher and as a person of mixed race who may (or may not) have similar experiences to them (Paragg 2014). My own identification and mixed race politics were bound up in the interview process, entwined in how I interacted with and engaged respondents, their life stories, and my analysis of their life stories. These are processes that I continuously reflected on across each stage of the project. I come back to a more in-depth discussion of this later in the chapter.

Life story methodological approaches developed out of oral history or life history and ethnographic approaches. Atkinson (2002) notes that while life history and life story methods have similar approaches, the goals of the methodologies tend to differ. While oral histories are interested in the storyteller's remembrance of a *specific* event, a life story approach is interested in the storyteller's *entire* life. Considering "how one person experiences and understands life over time…enables us to see and identify threads and links that connect one part of a person's life to another" (Atkinson 2002: 126). For the purposes of my project, the mixed race life stories that I collected and the bridges between them, sought to illuminate how race-multicultural articulations map onto each other across mixed race peoples' life times.

Epistemological and ontological assumptions that are at the base of life story and other narrative method approaches (and which also inform the foundation of this project) include that there are multiple truths and perspectives, and that the stories people tell are always based within particular contexts which shape how they are told and what meanings are made within that story (Andrews 2014). That the project asks people to remember and tell, from the context of 2013-14

in urban Canada where certain kinds of discourses about race and multiculturalism are at work, also stems from this idea.

The goal of collecting the life stories is not necessarily historical accuracy but instead focuses on what was and is important to the individual telling the story. As such, life story tellers' perspectives are positioned (and valued for) their subjectivity, what they tell us about lived experiences and how they are experienced (phenomenologically) by the teller (Etter-Lewis 1991; Josselson 1995). As Patton (2000) states, "our struggles for social meaning occur in narrative form" (4). I sought to connect respondents' narratives to race-multicultural articulations, in that their struggles for social meaning over that time period provide a framework contributing towards an understanding of race-multicultural articulations in the multicultural era.

REFLECTIONS ON CONDUCTING LIFE STORY INTERVIEWS

Much of the research on mixed race has been conducted by people of mixed race. Mahtani suggests that as researchers, we need to more carefully consider our identities as mixed race: "what is the impact of these identifications upon scholastic endeavors in this subfield? How do our own mixed race identities influence how we do our research? Is our work inevitably narcissistic, whether we want to admit it or not?" (2014: 60). Through reflexive practice, I seek to address some of these issues in this section.

Research Moments and Interactions

Through the interview project I wanted to examine a particular set of racialized experiences (this thing that is 'being mixed'). In order to recruit this population of interest, I drew on particular terminology in my recruitment ad, but this terminology is not without its tensions. The recruitment ad stated:

> Are you of mixed racial background? Are your parents from different racial groups? Do you/have you identified as "mixed race", "multiracial", or with other "mixed" self-

identifications (i.e. biracial, mulatto, eurasian, happa, creole etc.)? Do other people identify you as "mixed"?

I emphasized "mixed racial background" in the ad, because I found in a previous study that while respondents recognized that mixed race is one way that they are "hailed" (Althusser 1971), they did not tend to explicitly self-identify as 'mixed race' (Paragg 2014). This was also the impetus behind emphasizing that respondents may have previously identified with mixed self-identifications, through stating "do you/have you identified". This was also to recognize that respondents' identities may have changed over the life course, as well as recognizing that different 'mixed terminologies' shift and move in and out of favour temporally (i.e. while some respondents may have identified as 'mulatto' while growing up, this may have changed, particularly as the term has fallen out of favour and been deemed offensive in popular discourse).

In all but one case (more of which I will discuss later), all potential research participants who contacted me about being interviewed fell within my definition of mixed, which was respondents whose biological parents are from different racialized groups. (Respondents who were multigenerationally mixed still described parents who tended to be produced as visibly or racially different from each other within race discourse in the Canadian imaginary). Three respondents, Ayesha, Karen and Yvonne, whose longer family lineages were narrated as mixed stemming from the colonial contexts of Jamaica, South Africa and Hong Kong, respectively, did complicate my definition of mixed race as people whose biological parents are from different racialized groups. However, Ayesha, Karen and Yvonne, all of whom immigrated to Canada with their families as children, described their parents as visibly different from one another, either in skin tone and/or features. The extent to which respondents' parents were consistently read as visibly different from one another (and therefore interracial) in Jamaica, South Africa and Hong Kong and then in Canada, varied. However, there are tensions within my own definition of

mixed race. While I wanted to get at a particular set of racialized experiences (this thing that is 'being mixed'), at the same time there is danger in reifying race, as well as mixedness itself.

Overall, people are aware that mixed means *something*, which signals in itself how discourses of mixing circulate and operate. That people 'know what mixed race means' is of interest, because of the messiness of race discourse and the complexity of race discourse. Yet, who is mixed race in people's minds and who is not, seems to be demarcated in particular ways, which I will expand on later.

I was able to meet with 18 of the respondents for two interview sittings. I met with the three other interview respondents once. Conducting a second interview sitting with the majority of respondents enabled me to follow-up and expand with participants on questions if I felt that respondents had more to say, if I felt I could ask questions that did not work the first time I asked them in a different way, and to go more in-depth within respondents' life story narrative tellings. It was incredibly useful to meet respondents for two sittings, particularly because of the nature of the life story interview, where intimate moments and relationships are discussed, as well as racialized experiences, which can bring out a lot of emotion. Generally, participants seemed more at ease and comfortable in the second sitting, and then our rapport was easier. In this sense, trust was built up over the course of the sittings. I also tended to save more personal questions (for example discussions about dating and partnering as well as discussions about post-race discourses) for the second sitting, if I felt that respondents were uneasy in the first sitting. Additionally, due to the nature of the intimate and detailed stories of respondents' lives, there is also a concern regarding the potential for confidentiality to be broken, even with the use of pseudonyms. I therefore have taken care for respondents' identities to not be revealed, through leaving out identifying details where possible.

Another point of interest was that despite the insightfulness of interviewees reflecting back on their life experiences, they often continually questioned the usefulness of their own experiences for the project throughout the interview process. Often, respondents would ask me "am I giving you what you are looking for?" during the first and second interview sittings. In these situations I did my best to reassure respondents that what I was interested in was their lives and the stories that they felt were important tell.

Since the life story approach requires respondents to engage in a *re-telling* of the past, a *looking back* onto past events, there is the possibility of the rigor of life story method being challenged, in that what respondents recall may not be "accurate" regarding the retelling of events. However, within a life story framework what the story teller recalls or does not recall (and how they recall it) is significant because it signals the interviewees' own lived experience and what they think is important (Atkinson 2002; Ewick and Silbey 1995; Gibbs 2007), an approach that is reflected in the epistemological and ontological assumptions within the methodological framework. Life story method is intertwined with questions of memory, narrative and how meaning is given to social-historical contexts. How people talk about their narratives – the sequencing of their stories – is itself important for theorizing their stories, as well as the larger structures in which they live.

Narrating Race

Tensions emerged in the space of the interview for some respondents, in that they were in a space where race and talking about racial identity and racialized experiences was the impetus for the conversation. This is contrasted with racialized people of colour's experiences in the everyday, where colour-blind post-race discourse is in operation, and which respondents learn to narrate within (for example, some may learn to narrate racialized experiences as benign

processes and experiences, as opposed to processes of racialized power). In the interviews, respondents at times struggled to make sense of how they are subject to processes of racialization in an era that is deemed to be post-race, ambiguously narrating post-race racializations. Other respondents explicitly stated that they were talking about race and identity, not because they saw it as central to their experiences, but *only* because it was the impetus of the interview, while then going on to narrate racialized experiences that had largely impacted their lives. Also evident in respondents' narratives was the difficulty of describing and dealing with institutional discrimination and barriers that they experience in their lives. The difficulty in articulating institutional racism (for example in educational institutions and in the labour market and work place settings), and of respondents questioning whether or not what they experienced was institutional racism and discrimination, was tangible in the interviews, as well as respondents who described being made out to be crazy or angry and therefore not legitimate in their claims.

Additionally, throughout the process of analyzing respondents' life story interviews, I was concerned about being perceived as challenging respondents' narratives, reading too much in to racialized experiences that respondents themselves said were not necessarily the most defining experiences of their lives, while at the same time wanting to be aware of how respondents' narratives were told and the emotion in their voices as they talked about racialized experiences in their lives. How respondents choose to narrate and represent their lives and stories and how discourses (hegemonic and counter discourses) run through respondents' narratives was of interest. Merrill and West (2009) importantly discuss "narrative as data", and narrative as interpretation. It is recognized through this approach that respondents construct their own worlds *and* are constructed through them. As Merrill and West argue, "people may not realize the

significance of what they say, or how they are 'storied'. Narratives as observed, can be structured by powerful discourse of which individual narratives may barely be aware" (2009: 129).

Researchers also 'story' their participants, through the work of identifying "shared experience and patterns which connect across the transcripts so that the individual stories become collective ones" (Merrill and West 2009: 133). Similarly, Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000) state " [in] projects combining life histories and socio-historical contexts, personal stories are expressive of larger societal and historical contexts, and the narratives produced by individuals are also constitutive of specific socio-historical phenomena in which biographies are grounded" (67). Therefore, following Merrill and West, while researchers have an ethical imperative to respect respondents' stories and what they are saying, researchers need to equally be held to the task of thinking about "the nature of the material and how this ought not simply be accepted at face value" (2009: 144). I argue that this approach is particularly important when thinking about the operation of racialized power structures in respondents' lives, in an era where 'post-race' is a prominent discourse, and one through which people learn to narrate their racialized experiences.

Complex Commonalities

A number of reflexive methodological reflections emerged from conducting the life story interviews. The interviews complicated my 'insider status' with interview respondents, despite our shared multiracialization (although this idea of mixedness as a common category can also be troubled). This included a new twist on my theorization of complex commonalities within multiracial research (Paragg 2014) in that I was not of the same generation as respondents: I was a decade younger than the youngest respondents, and three decades younger than the oldest respondents. For example, in the interview I conducted with Ayesha, she discussed how

interracial couples in the 1960s and 1970s were at times seen as part of the 'free love'

movement, and she wondered if this is something that I also remembered, but then corrected

herself, realizing that I would not yet have been born:

> Ayesha: …Today we would talk about "playing the race card", in the '60s and '70s that was more playing the – I would call it playing the "lurrrve [exaggerated] card". I don't know if you remember the '60s – or maybe you don't. You weren't born.

> Interviewer: [Laughter] I wasn't born yet!

Generational differences were also evident in the interview I conducted with Charles.

Discussing who is imagined as Canadian, how it is attached to whiteness, versus the actual

reality of what Canadians look like, he drew on a particular type of imaginary that I was not

familiar with:

> Charles: I don't know if the Lanny MacDonald image of the Canadian – majority of Canadians looking like that, I don't think that's really applicable anymore. And it's going to be less applicable continually, as each generation keeps going on. But that's what it's denoting. "Here's Lanny MacDonald, and he's the majority, he's got red hair and hewers of wood and drawers of water". Whatever they used to say Canadians were. You remember that saying?

> Interviewer: I don't think so?

Other complexities included geographic differences in lived experiences across the life

course, particularly between the Toronto respondents and myself.

The majority of respondents identified themselves as middle class. However, my insider

status was also complicated by differences in class identities between myself, a person who

identifies as middle class, and respondents who identified or would be defined in the dominant

imaginary as working class, as well as respondents who identified as professional class. Because

of my own class privilege, I was not always attuned to the operation of class and privilege in the

interviews. For example, at times I found myself defaulting to assuming a particular life course

trajectory of respondents (school, to post-secondary, to work and family life), courses which

respondents' lives did not necessarily follow.

This also relates to *who* responds to interview recruitment ads, and whom I was able to recruit as respondents. In the interview I conducted with Ram, when I asked him in the second sitting if he had anything he wanted to expand on from the first interview sitting, he responded that he was interested in who I was able to recruit, and questioned who, as respondents, I would have access to on the socio-economic spectrum:

> Ram: The other bit of curiosity I had about the cross section of people you're getting. It would be easy – a lot easier for you to get access to people like yourself and like me and people who have some kind of connection to academia.

> Interviewer: Yeah.

> Ram: And it's much less likely that – it would be harder to find people who have exactly the same kind of period of life experience, but are working in the garment industry, or are unemployed, or hospitalized because they became a paraplegic because of some industrial accident. There's that whole kind of different strata of society that – whose stories might be very different. My guess is a lot of people who – the people who you would have first contact with, or people that I would have first contact with - my guess is most of their stories would be basically positive. They – they're – Canada's kind of worked out for them. They're middle class or upper middle class, it's a good chance that life here has turned out better than it might have in another country. But then there's that whole other group that's harder to access [laughing] that might have a very different view about how tough it can be in Canada.

> Interviewer: Yeah, exactly. I do have a couple of respondents who really aren't associated with the university in any way and who may be considered of a different socio-economic status, but I'm definitely aware that in terms of who I'm recruiting, that's definitely an issue. But it's interesting too, because I found that…countries where people have migrated from - it's interesting to think about their migration path. So maybe they grew up in a lower socio-economic category or however you want to put it, and you're right, upon migrating to Canada, that's where experiences and opportunities opened up. There's definitely a range of experience within people's own lives, but I'm definitely cognizant of that there is a particular population that is really easily accessible to me in a way that another population might not be.

Additionally, there tends to be an assumption in the North American context (this is in contrast to the UK context) (Edwards et al. 2012) that couples in interracial unions tend to have higher levels of education, and higher incomes (Milan, Maheux and Chiu 2010). In turn, the children of these unions stand on that cultural and social capital. Respondents who migrated as children did tend to come from families of a higher socio-economic status in their origin country, in that that is what enabled them to migrate to Canada in the first place.

Other complexities in the interview interactions between respondents and I arose in terms of being called out on the privileges of my own appearance, specifically having physical features (hair texture, eye colour) that are associated with whiteness. For example, a number of the female participants who identify as black or have a parent who is racialized as black had experiences with navigating discourses of 'good hair' throughout their lives, and commented that my hair texture is the 'type' of hair that is considered desirable. Other respondents asked if having green eyes impacted my experiences, in that it is something that is associated with whiteness, and in some ways marks me as mixed or at least 'not just brown'. During my time in Toronto, it was also suggested to me (by a non-research participant) that I might be read as white in the Toronto context, which I found unsettling (in part because it may be true) which is in contrast to my experiences of having lived my entire life in Western Canadian contexts. My identity is deeply entrenched as a person of colour, as racialized and non-white. However, at the same time a person who is read and (re)produced as 'monoracial' would not be subject to the (in some ways privileged) suggestion that they might be read as white, or the (in some ways privileged) reaction of realizing that others may read you as white.

This led me to reflect on how I relate to whiteness, negotiate it, and how I am simultaneously privileged (i.e. being told that I have white features, and the assumption that these are 'good' features to have – good because they are white in a society that has a white power structure) and unprivileged by it. Being produced as mixed is in some ways about privilege (as is being asked 'what are you?'), and is about how whiteness attaches itself to certain bodies (how race is produced) within racialized imaginaries. I further discuss this in Chapter Five in my discussion of the production of ambiguous and unambiguous multiracialized bodies in public encounters.

Respondents' Reasons for Participating

At the outset of each first interview sitting, I asked respondents what sparked their interest in participating in the project. Some respondents gave more passive answers (in relation to the actual subject matter of the project), stating that it was because a friend or family member had encouraged them to participate, or because they knew that it could be difficult for researchers to recruit participants, and they wanted to help out, as opposed to expressing an actual interest in discussing the subject matter of the project. Other respondents stated that they were passively open or interested in talking about being mixed race, but that it was not something that they saw as central to their lives. For example, Charles stated, in response to me asking what got him interested in participating in the project: "I'm just open. It's not…I wouldn't say that I'm necessarily interested, but if I feel like I can contribute, why not. Yeah, I don't feel a burning desire to talk about identity, but I feel I can". Alex expressed that she was interested in participating because mixed race identity was not something she had thought a lot about: "…I guess I really haven't thought a lot about mixed race identity or anything like that. So, it sounded kind of interesting to…think about it". Perhaps this hesitation is related to a social stigma against being too wrapped up in one's identity. People may seek to distance themselves from identity categories, unless they are in a space where it is deemed acceptable to be interested in the self and the formation of the self, such as the space of the interview.

Other respondents were drawn to the specificity of the recruitment ad and criteria, and felt that they had something to contribute to the project, reflecting that their experiences growing up tended to be different than their peers. For example, Gordon stated "for the number of mixed race kids and people in that age group, I figure I was a contributing member of that, so I thought that was interesting….I recognize that my upbringing was a little bit different than others, so it

would be interesting to see what [evolves out of] your study." Korrie also stated that being

'mixed' for her has been a unique experience:

> Well, it is a really – a unique experience, and something that I haven't really spoken a lot about – about being mixed race, in particular. And when I was growing up that sense of identity, of being mixed race was a very strong one that I had. I was…adopted when I was a baby, so I grew up with a white immigrant family, and in an all white community. And there weren't many images of people of colour at that time in the media. And, especially being kind of brown-skinned. Kind of…neither this nor that, was – for me it was a real kind of puzzle of understanding who I was. So I thought it was a really interesting study.

Yvonne's interest in participating in the project was also sparked by how growing up mixed race

in the era that she did, may be different than growing up mixed race now:

> But also because I think your research project [is] really focused on…experiences of people growing up mixed race in kind of – as multiculturalism emerged, and I thought, well that's an interesting angle, because there's kind of a point in time when that really seemed to surface. And so I thought it was an interesting – that was an interesting lens to take it from. Versus you know, just growing up mixed race now or whatever. Because I do think it is a different experience.

Other respondents mentioned that the topic is something that they have started to think

about recently. Natalie reflected that her identity has changed in the past few years: "This kind of

thing is fairly interesting to me. Just the whole experience of…non-whites in…Canada. Yeah, so

I've become more in touch with my…ethnicity in the past few years [laughter]". Candace

reflected that participation in the project was timely, due to training that she's been facilitating

through her work, which has made her talk about her identity:

> I mean I am somebody of mixed race and I've had a ton of experiences. And lately, we've been doing…some training around…multiculturalism and…I'm speaking a lot about my history. So it kind of just fit where I am right now, so that's kind of what sparked it for me.

Other respondents spoke about how thinking about being mixed race has been central to

their lives, and are in turn involved in a number of creative and research projects on the basis of

their identities, which impacted their desire to participate in the research project. Karen was

involved in a number of written creative projects that explored her experiences with race and

identity:

Interviewer: Just to start off, what got you interested in wanting to participate, what peaked your interest?

Karen: It's a topic that is…very compelling for me, because, first of all I was born in South Africa, so any issue related to race is unavoidably interesting. My whole family came over, my immediate family, parents, and siblings of which there are four. It's a topic within the family…and in particular in South Africa we are classified as mixed race so, and I'm using the present tense because that's – even in a post-apartheid era, that's still something that I think is a kind of legacy of blood, a [blood] legacy. That sort of self-conception. We…were classified as coloured, which means mixed race. That's one reason. Another reason is that I'm a writer, I should have said [laughing] that as part of my occupation.

Interviewer: [Laughter] I can add that in!

Karen: And…so I'm – I've written [part of a] memoir of growing up in South Africa. And I'm working right now on…a play…about…that's partially about some of these issues, related to identity, and so that's part of it.

Lanny reflected on how he was interested in differences in his life, growing up in Edmonton, and the lives of people who grew up and live in Toronto. His experience is also particular to the prairie context, being a descendent of Black prairie settlers.

Interviewer: To start off, can you tell me a bit about what sparked your interest in wanting to participate when you heard about the project?

Lanny: Well, when I was growing up…not that many people with mixed race - there were very few black people at all. So…I'm also interested in…genealogy, as well as Western Canadian black history, because my ancestors came up and settled – my Black ancestors on my Dad's side came up and settled in Saskatchewan in 1910 so they were part of a black immigration from the United States into Canada. That aspect of my heritage I was always interested in, and…as an adult I've…done quite a bit of research into that, so…I like people – I like history and…just put it down for history that I've gone through…which is probably quite a bit different than…some of the people who you've talked to or interviewed in Toronto or someone…I think my experience would be…quite a bit different. Having been raised here in Edmonton, born during the mid '50s when…interracial marriages were very very far and few between. So. So – it's an interesting subject as well.

Regan, who has been involved in a theatre group for women of colour, and was in the process of producing and staging a theatre piece on mixed race experiences during our first interview sitting - and had just staged the production in Edmonton before our second interview sitting - reflected that she chose to participate in that the project called for a very particular group of people, and that the topic comes up a lot in her artistic work. She stated:

I just get excited whenever there's a chance to…even with this project, with [theatre company] just being very race-based…the original call – it's just like there's not a lot of opportunity for that as an artist in…Alberta I guess, where things are actually requiring you to not be white, so that was really interesting. And the chance to – identity has always…it always comes up in my…solo artist work…racial identity I guess. 'Cause there's a lot of…I think being mixed, but also…just the way my family dynamics are there's a lot of mystery surrounding things, so it's like…the question of always trying to answer for myself. So, it was just – yeah. I get really excited about those things.

In all of these cases, despite the range of responses participants gave for wanting to participate and regardless of what kind of response they gave, participants had a depth and breadth of experiences as mixed race people across their lives that they were able to share with me across the interviews.

Some respondents (but not all) also asked me about what got me interested in conducting the project. At times this seemed a way of asking me if I was also mixed race, working to hail me in to that identity as well. Regan, who had created, produced and participated in the theatre piece, discussed how her mixed race performers thanked her for staging the piece, in that they had been looking for a collective space in which to share their stories. This led Regan to ask me if that was also what got me interested in conducting my own project:

Regan: My performers – they didn't know each other before either, so when they first met each other, they were like "hey, what kind of halfie are you?" [slight laughter]. They're all just talking about – that kind of – silly stuff. And then the one performer just being like "thank you, I've really been looking for – thank you for inviting me to be involved with this, because this really means something". So to know other people are actually looking for that too is…yeah. I don't know. Have you ever had those feelings? Are you looking for [that community]…

Interviewer: Yes and no. I think that certainly one of the reasons why I started doing this kind of work, in terms of my academic work, for sure [was] an interest in trying to figure out some of my experiences, through other peoples', in a way. But also…as I've done this work more and more, I'm more interested…I think I've realized what my interest lies in is how we produce race, how our ideas about race, as a society, are being produced constantly through people. And that as mixed race people, the very idea of mixed itself is part of that discourse of "what is race" and when you think about it, what does it mean to say that someone is mixed or not. That's kind of where I've started to go – not so much about my experiences [directly anymore]. And it's because of how I look too. I have [non-white] racialized experiences, there's no question about that for me. So I'm coming from a different place. But, yeah, it's definitely at the basis of why I started doing this kind of work, for sure. But it's gone off into [an interest in] theorizing about the production of race.

BIOGRAPHY AND REFLEXIVE PRACTICE

> Stories are never told in a vacuum, and nor do we as researchers simply tabulate information which we gather. Rather, we feed into the process at every level, and our subjectivity is always a part of that which we are documenting (Andrews 2007: 3)

What is taking place in our lives while we do research inevitably becomes part of the research, but this is particularly the case when the research is so intimately tied to or intersects with your own biography. Overall, the process of conducting this project was at times an emotional one for me. Other mixed race scholars who have done research on mixed race have noted that it is an emotional process, but they have also noted that if there is emotion there (if you as a researcher have an emotional reaction to something), there is something important there to interrogate (Caballero 2014). There is a lot at stake for me in this project, beyond the Academy. It is about my life and the lives of others, and a commitment to interrogating how racialized power dynamics are at work in mixed race people's lives in Canada.

Throughout the process of conducting the interviews and transcribing and analyzing, I often found commonalities in experiences with respondents. Other times, the ways that respondents phrased how they felt about certain experiences that they had, truly resonated with me, and put in to words feelings that I had also experienced. For example, Charles described feelings of uneasiness in certain spaces, in particular football [soccer] games that he has attended, which he described as having an "English hooligan vibe". He stated that in this space and other 'patriotic' type spaces "there's an assumption when you're being that patriotic Canadian that it should look a certain – feel a certain way. And like I say, it has that 'Englishy' bent to it". Charles's phrasing resonated with affective experiences I have had, for example attending football games in my home town of Regina, Saskatchewan, or other public events such as Canada Day celebrations, where there is a feeling of encroaching whiteness on my sense of

safety, a type of hyper-awareness in such spaces. Tanya also put these feelings in to words, when

I asked her about spaces of comfort or discomfort in Calgary. She reflected:

> I definitely feel…I feel different. And I feel…I just feel aware of it, you know. And definitely around a bunch of white guys – hockey player white guys, I don't feel that safe. And sometimes when I would be at these parental hockey parties, where all our kids were on hockey teams and my son was there, and no one was really watching what they were saying, I would pick up on little things. Like – the mentality – *being* [emphasis] there, entrenched in there.

Tanya also described her interactions with whites and the feeling of having to win them over,

putting in to words experiences that I have had over the course of my life navigating white

institutions and interactions with white people, but was previously not able to succinctly

articulate. Tanya stated:

> I went to my friend's wedding in Saskatchewan and I was like "wow" like really aware that…I was – I felt like I was back in [hometown] there. I had to win people over and stuff, because they thought that I was weird because I was East Indian and stuff like that. And that's small town Saskatchewan, so I don't think things have changed at all there.

The phrasing of "winning white people over", perfectly encapsulated, for me, many interactions

that I have had throughout my life, as well as over the course of conducting this project.

Working on this project has also brought out issues within my own immediate family that

I have had to navigate across my life. Listening to respondents as they discussed how people

perceived them and their families in public spaces triggered my own memories as a child of

feeling that my father's visibility justified my own visibility growing up. In public spaces with

my white mother I often felt like an outsider, because people did not perceive me as being her

child, amplified by the predominantly white context of Regina, Saskatchewan that I grew up in

the late 1980s and 1990s. When my father accompanied my mother and I out in public as I child,

I always felt a sense of relief, in that I knew his presence would justify my own, signaling how

crucial kinship can be for mixed race people and within interracial families. I continue to have a

heightened awareness of how people my mother and I interact with perceive our relationship,

and how at times I feel the need to in a sense perform our relationship, for example referring to

her as "mom" extra loudly in public spaces. Additionally, the project has led me to reflect on how my relationship with my mother and her resistance (at times) to talking about race - and specifically whiteness - impact my own relationship to whiteness, how I negotiate whiteness, and strategies that I deploy to navigate my own racialization.

While I was in Toronto conducting life story interviews with respondents, I went to spend Thanksgiving in a nearby city with my mother's brother and his partner, both of whom are white. A number of incidents occurred over the course of this weekend that exemplify negotiations that I experience in my life, as well as in interactions with my own family.

Upon arrival in the city, my Uncle picked me up from the train station and took me to his neighbours' house, where he and his partner were having dinner. Immediately I knew that when my Uncle told his friend that he was bringing his niece, that they would not be expecting someone who looks like me, which brought on the usual thoughts of "how am I going to explain what I am to them", thoughts and feelings that (I can only assume) white people do not experience upon being invited to a dinner. My point here is that as a person who is multiracialized, no interaction, no social setting, ever comes without the expectation of your multiracialized body being (re)produced, over and over, as such. Overall, the interactions with my Uncle's friends at the dinner were friendly (despite me having my 'back up' about when I would be asked 'what are you?', which did not overtly occur). However, once the conversation shifted to why I was in Toronto and to what my research was about (mixed race people), I can only assume that it was deduced by my Uncle's friends that I too was mixed. The kicker came when my Uncle stated "I've never asked you this before, but growing up did you feel isolated?", with no thought to the idea that this may not be something I would feel comfortable discussing with a table full of white people, who I had only just met. I simply stated "yes, when you're one

of the only non-whites around, it can be difficult", attempting to get across I was also the only non-white person at the table.

At the Thanksgiving dinner that my Uncle hosted with his friends the next day, myself and a friend of mine who lived in the same city as my Uncle, were the only non-white people in attendance. Other guests included people who my Uncle considers to be his closest friends and their families, as well as my Uncle's partners' children. The first racialized encounter occurred upon the arrival of one of my Uncle's friends. My friend and I were standing in the living room with our drinks, and the friend came up to us, and in the most patronizing voice said "and *who* are you?" [emphasis], with the expectation, I can only assume, that we were international students who my Uncle had generously taken in for Thanksgiving dinner. I stated "I am [Uncle's name]'s niece". Puzzled, she looked around to see if my Uncle was there to clarify for her how this could be. She finally stated "so whose daughter are you? The nurse or the teacher?" (referring to the occupations of my mother and my aunt). I stated "my Mom's the nurse" (which still does not clear up how I am not white, unless the friend knew that "the nurse" was married to a man of colour). Having to explain that I was my Uncle's niece but then also *how* I was his niece, in some ways is another version of being asked 'what are you?', although perhaps in an even more dissective way. Her exoticized interest in who I was is a common response that I receive when talking about my research, but also in my daily life.

During the dinner, my friend and I were seated beside another white friend of my Uncle's. When the subject of my research came up, the friend expressed more types of responses of what I have come to expect when I talk to people, and specifically white people, about the project. He first said "well what about me? I'm mixed too!" in reference to perceiving himself as "multi-ethnic". Recognizing that white Canadians learn to narrate their multiple ethnicities when

talking about their identities, I tried to explain that while the notion of white ethnicities 'mixing' has its own history, it is not the focus of my project, in that I am interested in the operation of processes of racialization and the life stories of people whose parents belong to different racialized groups. This elicited another reaction that I have come to expect when talking about the project: people being baffled by the concept of racialization, referring to the process of how ideas about race are produced and given meaning (Murji and Solomos 2005). In response to my explanation of racialization, my Uncles' friend stated "but to people like *us* [gesturing to my friend], race is real…[struggling to put in to words what he meant]. By "us" I inferred that my Uncle's friend meant non-Sociologists, in that my friend is also non-white. I again tried to explain that biological notions of race are given meaning socially, but my Uncle's friend could not hear what I was saying.

I reflected on the dinner in a Facebook message to a friend two months later:

Thanksgiving was pretty good but also interesting - I had dinner at my Uncle and Aunt's with some of their friends, and it's always interesting talking with friends/acquaintances of my (white) relatives about my research (at one point I had to describe to this one dude how in Sociology we talk about race as a social construction and he just.didn't.get.it) as well as seeing them try to negotiate how to figure out "*how* are you related to [Uncle's name]?" (who is my Uncle) - aka why am I brown when he's white - which is something that I've really started to notice when I visit family as I've gotten older without my parents (who are no longer present as 'visible markers' to make it clear why I look the way that I look, if that makes sense). It's definitely at times [an] uncomfortable space to be in though, that's for sure (December 9, 2013)

I find these kinds of dinner party interactions to be quite exhausting. I find it tiring to have to justify to white people why I am not looking at their experiences with being multi-ethnic. And because my biography is so tied to the project, I find these to be hard, emotional, personal and difficult things to express and talk about (especially with white strangers), even though it is my work and even though it is my project and my area of specialty.

Such negotiations with whiteness were also exemplified in one encounter that I had with recruiting a potential study participant. A participant who I knew from a workshop that I

facilitated on oral histories the previous summer (as part of a volunteer project) contacted me through email about my study. Because I knew who she was from the oral history workshop, I suspected that she did not fall under the definition I am using for 'mixed race', but I called her at the number she provided. During the phone call, she asked if I was "one of the ones who participated in the project last summer," and I said "yes, I was the one who facilitated it." She then said "oh, you're Jillian – you're the one who I couldn't tell what you were!…I think it was East Indian?" I responded saying, "well, my father is Trinidadian". I initially was interested in interviewing her, as she was the only white person who responded to my recruitment ad (and ended being the only one who did throughout the recruitment process.) However, after this interaction, I decided against this. I therefore reiterated to her how I was defining mixed race, and asked her if this also described her. She stated that it did not, and we therefore did not proceed with setting up an interview.

I was angered by this interaction for a number of reasons. Her stating that she "couldn't tell what I was" was coupled with her inability to understand that these very interactions were the types of experiences that I was interested in, through the project (not her experiences as someone who may identify as multi-ethnic yet who is racialized as white). This leads back to my discussion of different reactions that I receive when I talk about my work and how it is unfathomable that something not be about whiteness. Making everything about you is a way that whiteness operates through white bodies. It is part of a defensiveness and privileged positioning. The woman also stated to me during the phone conversation that she wanted to talk about her experiences growing up as the child of white immigrants. This was another reason that I decided not to go forward with the interview, in that it also gets back to the leveling out discourse that "we are all immigrants, we all have the same story" which fails to recognize racialized processes

and inequities. Additionally, white immigrant stories are stories that get told all the time and that circulate in our national imaginary. I wanted to disrupt the hegemony of this narrative through the telling of other stories in my project. After I clarified to the potential respondent what my definition of mixed race was, she made a comment to the effect that "white multi-ethnic people had it hard too". White multi-ethnic families in Canada faced prejudice in the first half of the 20th century (which is documented in academic and popular literature, and again, is a narrative that circulates widely in popular discourse). Additionally, generational differences may occur in definitions of 'mixed', in that older generations definitions of 'mixed' were more broad, in that inter-marriage between different religious and ethnic, let alone racial groups, were considered taboo (i.e. Protestants and Catholics marrying or Ukrainians and English people marrying). Perhaps it would have been interesting to consider this potential respondent's experiences as a second-generation white immigrant, to those of my non-white racialized respondents (to examine how race and race privilege are implicated in her experiences). However, I decided against this, as this entry I made in my methodological memos as part of my research log after our conversation, notes:

> *I don't feel like I should put myself in a space where I feel discomfort, gazed upon and microagressed against, for her sake, or waste any more of my energy on her. I was tempted [to tell her] 'I am interested in the experiences of people who can't be placed, like how you couldn't place me' but feel the point would be lost on her/she doesn't seem to understand how her own race privilege operates (January 30, 2014).*

In this project I am interested in how the racial gaze is (re)produced on multiracialized bodies, just as her gaze operated, and produced, ambiguous racial categories on my body. I also made the decision to not go forward with the interview, in that I consider these interviews to be safe spaces for myself, where my racial identity is part of, but not the only thing, that people see about me. This phone conversation reiterated to me that whatever I do, no matter what I accomplish, I will be seen as the raced person, who people "do not quite know how to place" (the

frustration of which is difficult to describe). I was not interested in conducting an interview with someone who reproduced such notions on my body.

Given this interaction, and other interactions that I encounter when I discuss my work, leads me to ask questions like: what is happening in the Canadian context? (i.e. what makes white people go "I'm mixed too!" and/or "we all have the same immigrant story!") How is privilege at work here, as well as the role of claiming mixed race, for both whites who claim multi-ethnic and for myself? Is the fascination with boundary crossing also a flattening of difference?

As I continued to recruit respondents for the project, I began to realize that processes of multiracialization were inherent to the recruitment process itself (for example my asking acquaintances if they could think of participants who 'meet my criteria'). Put another way, my recruiting reinforced multiracialized people's hypervisibility and how their mixedness is at times demanded of them. As I noted in another entry in my methodological memos as part of my research log: *what does it mean for me to ask [people in my social networks] to multiracialize/ racialize others, for the purpose of my recruitment? Having a hard time with this (February 15, 2014).* While I ended up recruiting more respondents in Alberta than I did in Toronto, it was a slower process in Alberta. In February 2014 I wrote the following in an email to another friend, after she inquired about how my recruitment was going. I reflected on what the difference in Toronto compared to Alberta might be, and why the recruitment in Toronto was a faster process, as well as how it felt strange to be asking people "do you know any mixed people?":

> *I would think that the dominant conservative ideologies and the (in some spaces) suffocating whiteness - or at least how whiteness is a lot more visible here than it is in Toronto – [less visible in bodies] (although obviously it is still operating in a dominant/hegemonic way in Toronto, it is just less visible in the everyday/on the streets) - would make people want to talk about their experiences more, but it is hard to say. It may also just be sheer total population numbers. The funny thing is I know a lot more people in Edmonton, so I have probably already sent double the amount of emails that I had to throughout my whole recruitment process in Toronto. One of the*

things I've been thinking about though in my recruitment, is how when I send emails out to contacts, I'm basically asking people to racialize people who they know in a weird way (like "oh they're non-white, but are they 'mixed?'") so asking people to racialize people ('for me', in a way) feels very strange to me, and then on top of that it works to render mixed people as well even more hypervisible than they already are in their everyday lives. It actually does not sit well with me at all….But I had a really awesome second sitting with a participant today, so I feel really good about that. And the two people who I have interviewed so far have both said that they have friends who they think would be interested, and I do feel better about recruiting that way because it's more about my respondents recognizing shared experiences with their friends who are also 'mixed' as opposed to just 'placing the gaze' on people.

Additionally, if, through recruitment I rendered other mixed race people hypervisible, I also render myself hypervisible discussing my scholarship with others. In any given interaction where people ask what I do or what I study, I say mixed race identity.

Another incident while recruiting further brought home to me how doing work on race and on 'mixed race' is loaded and messy. A friend posted my recruitment ad on her Facebook page, and two of her (white) friends commented on the post. The first said (in response to the call for participants): "How about mixed species. I am half cat and human." The second said: "Feel so conflicted since I found out we're all a bit Neanderthal". I messaged my friend on Facebook, asking her to delete the comments. I said that there was no need to respond, but just to delete them. We had the following conversation over Facebook messaging:

Friend: Oh that's my bike club. I don't think they're being jerks, just not aware of the comments.

It's gone. Sorry. I'll probably end up talking to them about it. [Friend's partner's name] says "that sucks. It's racism, but they don't know." (the first comment was from my bike coach who is obsessed with cats, so he probably means to joke about himself. but it is completely inappropriate.

Jillian: Thanks, but no need to apologize. You can talk to them if you want. You can tell them that I will be using the comments in the dissertation because they say a lot about discourses of 'mixing' and 'mixedness' ;) But in all seriousness, there's a long history of mixed people being compared to animals/being considered less than human, which their comments reflect, even if they 'don't realize it'.

CONCLUSION

My experiences with recruiting research participants and my interactions with interview respondents, along with my talking about my research with others, provide insight into how notions about race are produced through mixed race. They also begin to demonstrate the operation of whiteness within race discourse. Through my recruitment of interview participants, tensions emerged in my own definition of mixed race, including the danger of reifying notions of mixed race through specifying who qualified as a research participant. Yet, it became evident that by responding to my recruitment ad, my respondents recognized their social hailing as mixed race, regardless of their racial self-identification. Participants' various reasons for participating in the project and the way they talked about their identities signaled different ways that discourses about identity - and in particular racial identity - get taken up in public discourse. This included, at times, hesitation in recognizing or naming the role that racialization plays in the formation of identification and across life experiences. The social relationship formed between myself and respondents in the space of the interview showed the existence of complex commonalities across age differences, class and socio-economic statuses and racialized phenotype (and its impact on experiences in the social). Additionally, my own biographical 'hailing' as mixed race occurred across the research process. Respondents at times gave voice to or verbalized affects that I had encountered in moving through predominantly white spaces and institutions throughout my life, and brought up memories of the role of visibility and kinship in these negotiations. In the following chapter, I move to a more explicit consideration of what interview respondents learned over the course of their lives about how mixed race and race work, and I demonstrate the importance of kinship to these learnings and to the operation of the multiracialized gaze.

Chapter 3. Multiracialized Kinships and Racial Learnings Across the Life Course

INTRODUCTION

Mixed race respondents' identity narratives are deployed in interactions across their life course in order to respond to and navigate the external racial gaze. But those narratives do not just spring fully-formed: they are contingent and learned over time. One thing that is especially important to those narratives is what is learned about race across the life course. This chapter examines how and what respondents have learned over the course of their lives about race and racism, with a focus on how racial knowledges are both received and transmitted within their social and familial networks. I show how kinship emerges as a crucial site for mixed race people in the work of creating relations of identity, race and culture. Family serves as an important reference point across the life course in the making of identity (Chamerlain and Leydesdorff 2004; McAdams 1997). Racial learnings are learned *in* the family, but those learnings are also, importantly, *in reference* to family, throughout the life course. Put another way, family, as a socially determined point of reference for the production of racialized categories of belonging, is especially foregrounded in mixed race. The ways that respondents talk about their experiences in learning about race are almost always directly or indirectly about the mixedness of blood and kinship, and vary across the different stages of their life course.

By racial learnings I refer to a changing process across respondents' lives. It is not that respondents learn about how race works early in their lives and then take those learnings on for the remainder of their lives. Rather, I consider respondents' learnings as an ongoing process that occurs over the life course. In turn, respondents' stories tell us about the operation of race in the social world. Narrative identity approaches focus on how people's stories tell us about how the

world works: social knowledge generation or production is not fixed, and it is an ongoing process that occurs over the life course (Ezzy 1998l; Somers 1994).

In the interviews, I found that starting early on in their lives, respondents encountered and absorbed four key learnings about race and mixed race. To be mixed race means: not having an identified space of collective or socially recognized belonging; being perceived as defective and impure (which is most prominent during dating stages in the life course); learning to recognize, narrate and identify with serialized forms of articulated difference (serial-multiple); and learning that you have to have a story – a response to the calling out of your difference. In turn, over their life course, particularly as respondents become parents, these lessons come to the fore in different ways, or are re-thought (McAdams 1985). These key themes that emerged from respondents' narratives regarding learning about race provide an overarching picture of its complexities and key characteristics as a matter of kinship.

I have chosen to use the term kinship as opposed to solely using the term family, because family as a concept often signals specific forms of the social unit of the family, as opposed to getting at the social production and tracing of ties in a way that the concept of kinship does (Ebtehaj, Lindley and Richards 2006). Kinship is tied to recognition and belonging in the social. The expectation of kinship tracings is read onto respondents' bodies (it impacts how they are gazed upon), and also impacts how respondents construct their various identity narratives. For mixed race families, there is a question in the social around that belonging, in that their kinship is perceived of as different and is likely going to be questioned (in a way which is not questioned for 'same-raced' families) (Tizard and Pheonix 2002).

While the racial imaginary of kinship conflates blood and race (Hill Collins 1998), I argue that mixed race families' kinship is simultaneously where the assumed correspondence or

conflation of race and blood is complicated (they are de-linked), yet recuperated: a two way operation of categorical identity production. Mixed race raises the assumption of categorical identities of origin and belonging – an assumption deeply linked to the dominant imaginary of whiteness. Drawing on Haritaworn's (2012) use of the term 'multiracialize', I use the term 'multiracialized kinships' to foreground how the gaze produces mixed race people and their kinships through an imaginary of miscegenation as a mixing of naturalized categories (whether naturalized as biological and/or cultural and/or national). Respondents' narratives about their racial learnings across the life course tell us about the operation of the multiracialized gaze in that they demonstrate this two-way operation of categorical identity production (confounded yet recuperated).

On the one hand, mixed race confounds the 'pure' categories of race and blood through which identity and kinship are recognized, therefore unhinging the categorical gaze. Through mixed race families' kinships, race and blood are de-linked, in that these kinship ties (i.e. miscegenated ties) are outside of a particular origin, unrecognizable to the categorical gaze. This confounding emerges through respondents' learning that they lack socially recognized belonging and their learning that they are socially read as impure. On the other hand, that same categorical gaze is recuperated through the desire to imagine and know the originary point of mixing read off the multiracialized body. This recuperation emerges though respondents' learning serial-multiple forms of articulated difference, and their learning how to respond to the calling out of difference. I next turn to an overview of literature on kinship production and racial learnings to develop a framework from which to understand study respondents' narratives. I consider the proliferation of kinship forms next to the literature on intergenerational transmission of racial

knowledge, working between both literatures. I then move to the discussion of respondents'

racial learnings across their life course that emerged from the interview narratives.

KINSHIP AND INTERGENERATIONAL RACIAL TRANSMISSION LITERATURE

Readings of Race and Kinship Production

Smith's (1993) analysis of the Standard North American Family (SNAF) (i.e. the white

heteronormative family) demonstrates this family form's centrality as an ideological code in the

North American context. Yet, across the past three decades there has also been a rapid

diversification of kinship understandings in the North American context (in both literature and

social discourse), with some flexibility introduced into what forms of kinships are or are not

recognized socially (Butler 2000; Dorow 2006). Put another way in the North American context,

there has been a proliferation of recognized forms of kinship and intimacy; a movement away

from the white heteronormative family as the normalized family form.

Butler (2002) theorizes on what modes of kinship are deemed 'intelligible' or

recognizable, arguing that heteronormativity constitutes the grid that is the basis of cultural ideas

of kinship. She states that within the social "kinship does not work or does not qualify as kinship,

unless it assumes a recognizable family form" (2002: 14). Kinship is produced as a social

construct through the tying of blood and social origin, which can lead us to theorize how modes

of recognizable kinship are also racialized. Critical race theory literature has also considered how

blood and race become conflated (and depend on each other for definition), and has critiqued the

biologizing of race (Williams 1992; Winant 2007). Hill Collins (1998) argues that like families,

racial groups are perceived of as 'naturally occurring biologically linked entities' in dominant

race discourse. In other words, definitions of race in the North American context have focused

largely on notions of blood ties and there exist parallel conceptions of biological families and

racial families. Hill Collins states of the US context: "race itself [is positioned] as an enduring principle of social organization that connotes family ties….Just as members of 'real' families linked by blood were expected to resemble one another, so were members of racial groups descended from a common bloodline seen as sharing similar physical, intellectual, and moral attributes" (1998: 66, 70).

Respondents' narratives reflected how their identities change across the life course. This is due to how racialized understandings shift with life course stages and how shifts in the broader context - including understandings of kinship - also occur across life stages. Howell (2006) developed the concept of kinning in order to illuminate the processes through which transnational adoptees are folded into new kin networks and the narratives that are constructed to enable this. Kinning helps to focus on the social and political aspects of producing relational belonging. This focus on how relational belonging is *socially produced* is also useful when considering mixed race experiences. There exists an "interracial popular imaginary" (Dorow and Swiffen 2009: 569) in which discourses about 'racial mixing' circulate, which imagines linear origins coming together in the mixed race body. In other words, ideas about mixed race identity in the interracial popular imaginary often over-rely on notions of biology/blood (which also at times occurs within mixed race literature).

I posit that multiracialized kinship has a number of things in common with transracial adoptive and queer kinships. Firstly, this is the recognition question asked in the social, that of: how did you come to be who you are within this (strange) family unit? However, in mixed race families the dominant social imaginary of the blood-based family is deepened (the heterobiological origins question) whereas in adoptive and queer families it is challenged or problematized. Secondly, what mixed race kinship has in common with 'same-race' racialized

families (and also transracial adoptive and queer families) is the intergenerational transmission question: how to prepare children for a world of discrimination and the gaze – the kinning work (Howell 2006). However, in mixed race families (more than in 'same-race' racialized families) the preparation or issue is always already about how kinship has complicated or confounded the dominant order of racial categorization (and similar to transracial adoptive families, one parent might not have much experience with the racial gaze).

Learning About Race and the Racial Gaze

Kinship is a key space where racial knowledge is transmitted, and this has been taken up across literature that focuses on race and family and the intergenerational transmission of racial knowledge. This literature considers how intersections between kinship, descent and belonging impact how racial identities are learned and inherited, and how private lives and public histories are interconnected through racialized imaginaries. The literature on the transmission of racial knowledge speaks to the issues that emerged in the interview respondents' narratives. Yet, respondents' narratives also complicate this literature, in that for them, family is both part of the external multiracializing gaze and is a site of learning about self and race.

There are numerous subsections of the intergenerational transmission of racial knowledge literature, which I will briefly examine. Firstly, psychosocial approaches to identity development have taken up the impact of kinship or family on racial identity. For example, Crawford and Alaggia (2008) found that black/white mixed race youth narrated that their biracial identity formation was influenced by their parents' understandings of race, their family structure, and communication in the family around race issues. While the psychosocial literature provides a useful starting point from which to consider mixed race identities, rather than focusing on

identity development, my interest is on how circulating discourses tell us about the operation of race.

Another subsection of literature on kinship and the transmission of racial knowledge focuses on the racial socialization of non-white children in monoracialized families (Hughes and Chen 1997; Hughes 2003). For example, Wilder and Cain (2011) focus on racial learnings within black families in the US. While families function as spaces in which to socialize family members with ways to counter racism, they also found that black families also socialize their members through colourism: an ideology that privileges light skin tones over dark skin tones. Family serves as a space through which notions about skin tone are learned, reproduced, but also challenged. Kelly (1998), focusing on black youth in the Western Canadian context showed how such youth learn about race and form their identities as black through multiple processes, including: through intergenerational cultural reproduction; being under the racial gaze; popular culture and social interactions; and, in particular, through schooling and in friendship groups.

The transmission of racial knowledge is also a focus of the literature on transracial adoption, which predominantly focused on white parents' parenting of non-white children whom they have adopted (Dorow 2006; Smith, Juarez and Jacbosen 2011; Stevenson 2015). A closely related subsection to the transracial adoption literature is that which focuses on people who have entered into interracial partnerships and how they parent their mixed race children (Edwards and Caballero 2015; Twine 2010). In a study of interracial families, Luke (2003) found that movements of identity formation and racial learnings or transmissions in interracial family life (in particular for interracial couples) include passing, crossing, and estrangements. Killian (2001), taking a psychosocial approach to interracial partnering found that black partners in white/black relationships were more aware of resistances to their partnerships in the social world,

as well as how black partners' personal and familial histories (trauma and impacts of structural and institutional racism) were at times unrecognized or lacked validation in the relationship. Canadian literature on interracial families tends to rely on the experiences of those who form heterosexual interracial partnerships, yet it has mainly focused on the experiences of white and non-white partners, or people who fall within discrete racial categories (sometimes referred to as monoracial) (Benson 1981; Hamplová and Le Bourdais 2010; Kalbach, Sptizer and Bitar 2002). This literature does little to complicate dominant notions of kinship, race and blood, except perhaps how it works to question the perception of the same-raced family as the norm.

While these various subsections of scholarship do important work of bringing non-white experiences with kinship to the fore and muddying understandings of *who* can transmit racial knowledges (Twine 2005; Tyler 2005), it often leaves out the experiences of mixed race people themselves (the "products" of hetero-interracial relationships), how their kinship relations impact the transmission of racial knowledges, and what and how they learn about race. However, there are also important exceptions: Tyler (2005), Parham (2008) and Gatson (2003) all take up the experiences of people of mixed race, considering the intersections between kinship, ancestry, descent, belonging, place, biology, and culture on how their respondents think about their racial identities and learn about race. In their study of mixed race young people in the UK, Tizard and Phoenix (1993) also touch on kinship and the transmission of racial knowledges to mixed race children. It was found that respondents' tended to copy the strategies that they witnessed their parents using for dealing with racism, as opposed to following the advice that their parents gave them in conversations.

Through a consideration of the genealogical narratives of female members of interracial families, Tyler (2005) examined how the inheritance of interracial identities is negotiated for

them and their mixed race children, through ideas about kinship, ancestry, descent, biology and culture, which merged into what Tyler calls an "interracial genealogical imagination" (2005: 491). Tyler (2005), drawing on Franklin (2001), found that her mixed race female respondents (whom she prefers to refer to as 'interracial' in order to challenge the binary imaginary that is created through terms like 'mixed race'), experienced genealogical journeys which "widened the possibilities of what counts as kinship out from under the long shadow of genealogy and biology" (485-486).

Parham (2008), focusing on how race, memory and family history are complexly intertwined, argues for the importance of recognizing the social significance of private lives to public stories and histories. Put another way, the sociological imagination is central to narratives of race: seemingly personal understandings of racial identity are interconnected with public discourse and the production of race, and our own autobiographies (including what gets transmitted through family) influence our thoughts on race and structure. Gatson (2003) drawing on autoethnography relays key moments where her blackness, multiracialness and whiteness are confronted when exploring her genealogy or family history.

Gatson (2003), Tyler (2005), Parham (2008) represent an important body of scholarship that interrogates connections between kinship, identity, multiraciality and racial transmissions or learning race, but the fact remains that there is little literature in this area. In this chapter I seek to add to this literature through showing how multiracialized kinship is also a site of tension between biological and socially recognizable kinship. Multiracialized kinship is the site of undoing notions of race/blood and kinship, in that these kinships unsettle the dominant order of racial categorization which relies on racial categories that are mutually exclusive, singular and

discrete[13]. At the same time, multiracialized kinship is also the site of reinforcing notions of

race/blood and kinship through the recognition question, in that the popular imaginary of

miscegenation is one of 'mixing' naturalized categories (whether naturalized as biological and/or

cultural and/or national). In other words, raced understandings of blood and kinship are

complicated (made unrecognizable) through multiracialized kinships not falling under the

dominant order of racial categorization, yet recuperated (made recognizable) through

interrogations of mixed race people's kinship relations. However, even as kin relations are a key

ingredient in the dominant understanding of mixed race identity (via the gaze), kin relations are

also lived and dynamic and are key to nurturing a sense of self for mixed race people amidst that

gaze.

THE LEARNING OF THE MULTIRACIALIZED CATEGORICAL GAZE IN THE
CONTEXT OF KINSHIP

Four key themes emerged from respondents' narratives regarding learning about race

and mixed race over their lives, which provide an overarching picture of its complexities and key

characteristics as a matter of kinship. I now turn to discussing these four themes, and then move

to consider how these lessons are re-made in the context of respondents parenting their own

children. I argue that these learnings signal the operation of the multiracializing categorical gaze.

Learning (Lack of) Socially Recognized Belonging

For respondents, learning about the multiracializing gaze in the context of multiracialized

kinship involves, firstly, learning that to be mixed race is to not have an identified space of

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[13] Kinship relations are crucial for non-white racialized bodies within the Canadian multicultural context as non-white racialized people are expected to narrate their (linear) origin story or lineage for others in a particular way. For mixed race people, this is further complicated in that their origin stories do not fall within the expected linear trajectory or discrete racial imaginary expected of non-white bodies in the Canadian nation, and that they are required to narrate their 'origin point of racial mixing' for the gaze to be able to imagine how they 'came to be'. The racial gaze impacts what racial knowledge and how racial knowledge is produced within kin relations. The multiracializing gaze not only exerts itself over the mixed race body, but over the kinship relations of those bodies.

collective or socially recognized belonging – that there is 'no clear belonging'. Put another way, there is not a space in which respondents are *not* being read and/or questioned about 'how they belong' (often through the 'what are you?' question). Natalie's narrative exemplifies what came up across multiple interviews regarding experiences with a lack of socially recognized belonging. When I asked Natalie in her interview if there had been conversations with her parents about the racism that she experienced as a child, Natalie discussed how she did not recall any particular conversations that occurred between her and her parents around what she was experiencing:

> Interviewer: You mentioned that your mom had come in to the school, and a couple of those incidents [with teachers and classmates] occurred, was there ever a conversation between you or your parents about how to deal with some of these issues or some of the racism?

> Natalie: Not that I recall…yeah, I really don't recall any conversation like that. There may have been, I may have forgotten it, but…not really that I remember. I don't recall discussing it very much. And – and really even my parents' friends - they had a couple of black friends, but again there weren't very many in the community, and…most of their friends are through the medical community, and so they were…a good portion were Jewish. And still are, and…so again a minority, but very different. And...yeah, so I don't really recall that. And I have to say that I – although I…didn't completely want to negate my race, I really wanted to be white.

Here, the non-discussion of encounters with racism in her family prompted Natalie to point to the isolation of being a mixed race family: a minority - in that place and time - without a recognized community or collective. As a child, Natalie learned that her mixed race status did not have an identified space of socially recognized belonging, and this led her to yearn to not be different (in this case to be white). In turn, Natalie's narrative signaled how the isolation from a collective community and knowledge/practice was exacerbated through Natalie being a girl with 'black hair' with a white mother, which further translated into her desire to be white or 'normal':

> Natalie: Yeah, so my mom had absolutely no idea [how to do my hair]. No idea at all. And she had no resources. There was – she didn't have the Internet, she…didn't – there weren't black people in – if I wanted to get my hair done we had to go to Toronto. So…it was always an issue, and I never knew what to do with it. Never really knew how to take care of it. And I always wanted hair like yours. I wanted silky, smooth, straight hair that didn't stick up, that wasn't always fuzzy around the edges, that…I wanted a nice long ponytail, I wanted it to flow, I wanted

it to look like the dolls. I wanted to look like the people on TV…I clearly remember just suffering with my hair, and so I mean I went through every hair thing. I had jerry curl, I had care-free curl, I had perms, I shaved it off, I had braids, I had…when I was little I had an afro. But it was the '70s so it was all good, right [laughter].

Interviewer: [Laughter]

Natalie: And I wish those days were back [laughter]. And…the only – I think basically the only thing – I had straightened hair, and that was always a nightmare, because…trying to keep your hair not puffy when it's straightened, when you're 10 is just impossible. It was always 'bigger' than I wanted it to be. No one else's was ever that big, even in the '80s [laughing] it wasn't that big. Yeah, and so the only thing I think I never had was locs, which I have now. So, yeah, it was always an issue, it was always a negative. Yeah, always. I suffered with my hair.

Natalie's experience with her hair is one that she equates with suffering, and she emphasized this throughout the above narrative as well as throughout her interviews. For Natalie, the exposure to white supremacist/hegemonic ideals of female beauty through social and media discourses was compounded by her white mother's lack of knowledge and access to resources, through their family not being part of a greater collective or community. The gendered expectation that it is up to Natalie's white mother to 'do hair' further signals how, for Natalie, kinship is an intimate space in which non-belonging arises.

Yvonne's narrative also exemplified the lack of socially recognized belonging that came up across multiple interviews. She narrated how across her life, as well as her father's life and now her children's lives, they are always questioned about "how they belong". Yvonne stated:

Now of course I'm married, my partner is – his parents are Jamaican heritage, black Jamaican. So, it's the kids – our kids get comments a lot...*from all sorts of people* [mocking suggestive voice] and I'm just like, you know I'm kind of the third – my children are the third generation in my family to be subject to people making comments [laughing] everywhere they go, I'm kind of tired of it. Maybe if I wasn't mixed I'd be like 'ohhhh yeah' but I'm like 'okay, this is getting ridiculous'…so people just generally comment on "wow the mixedness" of my entire family. I'm mixed, my husband is very light skinned "are you mixed too?" [idiotic voice] 'cause like [me] [slight laughter], my kids, we all must be like so it's kind of a novelty of us being like possibly a multigeneration of it, so people make a big deal about that. It's more of a big deal than if you were just 'monoracial' if you want to describe it that way, and another 'monoracial person' and then you have a mixed child. It's like – people kind of "oh look at that you guys are so mixed…you've got *everything*" [emphasis] "no actually we don't [have everything] [mock stern voice] some things [are] missing". People say "you guys have everything in there!" [mock bewildered voice]. I'm like "oh I guess we do, [but] you know – there's actually a whole bunch of ethnicities we've completely missed. We plan that for the next round" [laughter].

For Yvonne, as well as for multiple generations of her family, there is never a space in which they are automatically granted identification as belonging. The gaze can make sense of Yvonne and her family as melting pots, creating their belonging, but that is the only way that belonging is conferred. At an abstract level, the idea of the presence of all groups in Yvonne's family is rendered as an ideal within a context of official multiculturalism. But, in everyday life, Yvonne and her children are read by the external racial gaze as parts of things, rather than as full or whole. They are not read as fully anything: at their fullest they are read as pejoratively impure, despite the idealized fantasy under multiculturalism that they are a bit of everything. This lack of identifiable space, in turn, relates to a second learning that emerged from respondents' narratives: being perceived as partial (and therefore 'impure') by others.

Learning About Being Impure

Respondents' learning of not having an identifiable space of belonging creates the conditions for another learning: that of lacking identifiable categories or being perceived of as partial - and therefore impure - by others. This 'partialness' and impurity is also idealized by others in the social world, which respondents raised and resisted in their narratives. Respondents are perceived of as partial, even as there are times when some of their 'parts' (like blackness) are taken as whole. In a context where discrete forms of belonging are dominant and the norm, those who do not fit within discrete categories of belonging are, in turn, either positioned as impure or are idealized as multicultural bridges and exotic Others. That is to say that impurity and idealization are two sides of the same coin: they both emerge from bodies not being viewed as full or complete, but rather as partial. This is particularly true in a context where post-race discourses circulate (Mahtani 2001; Nakashima 1996; Parker and Song 2001). "Exoticism" stems from an inability to categorize and Huggan (2001) describes it as "a particular mode of aesthetic

perception….which oscillates between the opposite poles of strangeness and familiarity" (13).

Huggan's (2001) notion of oscillation importantly signals how 'exotic' is often applied to those

who are not easily categorized; in other words those who are 'partial'. Respondents' narratives in

the interviews reflected their negotiations of being perceived of as partial and impure, by others,

across the life course.

Respondents learned early on about the operation of discrete racial categories through

discourses around their parents' "racial mixing" and the consequences of these boundary-

crossing relationships. As Lanny stated:

> My Dad…he had a pretty hot temper…white men would call my Mom a whore and the fight
> would be on. Stuff like that always carries home. My Dad would always…we would always be
> warned…what to expect once we got out there…. Like you were a kid, you got in a spat, they'd
> let you know that they knew you were different, right.

Lanny's black father and white mother faced consequences due to their interracial union,

including violent reactions entrenched within anxieties around 'racial border crossings'. This

reality impacted not only Lanny's learning of self but also the family dynamics as a whole. In a

sense, the discrimination Lanny faced as a child (the sin of being mixed, or at least not white, or

especially black) is indistinguishable from the social sin of his parents (that of miscegenation),

and the perception that his white mother failed to live up to her role, as a white woman, of

preserving 'racial purity' and raising a white family (Hill Collins 1998).

These incidents provided Lanny with an early education about society's views of

interracial relationships, and how he as a mixed race person would also be perceived. Yet, at the

same time, Lanny's father made sure to prepare Lanny and his siblings for what to expect as they

moved through the world as both mixed race and black subjects. In other words, Lanny's

learnings about race were entrenched in discourses around mixed race but also blackness. Like

Lanny, Yvonne also learned about race through discourses around her parents' (and

grandparents') interracial union and the consequences of their boundary-crossing relationships.

Yvonne reflected on how the taboo of interracial unions, in the eyes of her community, impacted

views about her own sexual morality:

> So…within the Chinese community, it is kind of that 'exotic' sense, but there is a real sort of assumption that you [as a mixed race person] are more sexually promiscuous. You're kind of more – 'loose morals' kind of thing. And it stems from the fact – or I assume it stems from the assumption that your parents got together and it was…[due to their] 'loose morals'. So then, as a child, you must…be of the same [laughter].

While Yvonne learned about others' perceptions of her sexual morality through her parents'

relationship, she also described learning about what it meant to be mixed race through discourses

circulating within the Chinese community that she grew up in, in Toronto. She stated:

> So, there's a term, I think it's called jook-sing it basically means that you're – bamboo is like a Chinese thing right, but you're kind of a twisted or slightly deformed bamboo. So, it means you're not – totally Chinese, you're kind of a twisted version of [it]. But then my parents were like that's actually – sounds negative right, like 'you're defective'. So, they didn't use those terms. But it didn't stop other people in the community from saying that.

Jook-sing, a Cantonese term that, while not specifically used in reference to mixed race people,

does refer to being 'caught in-between worlds'. Unlike similar terms used to describe mixed race

people such banana or oreo – yellow or black on the outside but white on the inside - to Yvonne

the term implies a kind of incompleteness or lack of wholeness: a twisted version of something

that does not belong in one place. This echoes themes within the literature on Hapa identity

which takes up questions of: what does it mean to be seen as half, reclaiming a half identity label

and forming community with others who have the experience of being caught between two

groups (while also often being rejected by those same groups) (Bernstein and Dela Cruz 2009;

Murphy-Shigematsu 2012). Similar themes are found in theorizing on mestizo consciousness and

the existential state of feeling torn or caught between two places (Anzaldua 1987).

Significantly, the life course stage where learning about being perceived by others as

impure/ideal – as partial – comes up most predominantly in dating interactions, particularly for

female respondents. In dating interactions, my female multiracialized study respondents experience others labeling their physical appearances and bodies as 'exotic'. Mixed race literature (Iijima Hall 1996; 2004; Rockquemore and Laszloffy 2005; Root 2004) discusses how women of mixed race are often ascribed this term, in that through their ambiguous appearances they look like no particular racial or ethnic group and thus could potentially belong to any racial or ethnic group. Building on Huggan (2001) and the mixed race literature, I posit exoticism as an expression of discrete ordering of desire, in that it is a way of managing bodies that are produced as ambiguous. Exoticization is an expression of being unable to deal with ambiguity or, put another way, as emergent from perceptions of impurity.

Yvonne narrated how others' ambiguous readings of her went hand in hand with her positioning as the 'exotic ideal' when it came to dating, which she learned from the perspectives of her dating partners, but also from her family members. In Yvonne's narrative, kinship emerges as an intimate space, where consequences of impurity arise:

> [Growing up] Chinese people knew and recognized I was mixed race. Especially if they saw my family together. But other people just – I don't know what they thought. They may have thought I was Aboriginal, they may have thought I was Chinese. They just typically didn't really clue in. It wasn't until high school that my looks started to change and stuff like that…. And then people just thought I was Filipino, or maybe Spanish, something like that…the other thing to is to get…stereotypes in your own house. And within safe zones. It feels very disconcerting. So, it was like I always remember, my parents – we would go to family gatherings, or have Mahjong parties, like all my Aunts, especially my Aunts. They would always make comments about the way we looked and…they would say things like 'you better watch out for the guys' and I would be like 'why are you saying stuff like that?' So that's strange when it happens in your own house. And then of course, as I got older…then there was sort of the notions or beliefs – I don't know if they're stereotypes – that 'mixed race people don't have any real problems'. And there was this kind of sense of – like 'it's kind of an ideal'. 'You must have the best of both worlds'….There was this kind of talk all the time, of it being…ideal and attractive. I just always found that very uncomfortable…it's like people want to go pick these things. And…those were the stereotypes. It was still a version of exotic. And it always minimized some of the real experience that might have been more negative.

Racialization occurs in Yvonne's narrative across various racialized groups, but in different ways – Yvonne is racialized by Chinese and non-Chinese people; she's racialized by both but in

different ways and thus to different ends. Here, Yvonne recognizes how 'ideal' – the inverse of

defective – is deployed as a mode of exoticization, which is another way to discursively manage

those who do not fit within discrete categories of belonging. Yet, Yvonne also resisted such

impure/ideal discourses as she was growing up by making conscious choices about who to build

dating relationships with:

> My mom had kind of a hierarchy….It was basically a colour hierarchy. And, as long as anyone was darker than me, that would be bad. So, I crossed those lines because I did date guys that – their skin was darker than mine. They were black or different versions of men of colour. But – so it was a colour hierarchy. Part of it I think to be honest is I didn't…I tended not to date Chinese men, because for them, me being a mixed race woman of Chinese heritage was the…biggest novelty for them. Like other guys I dated would be like 'oh, okay'. I tried to avoid dating people that made a big deal about it, as something 'exotic' and 'amazing'. And that happened to be more…Chinese guys that I knew. So…I think I dated one Chinese guy, that was it. I think one or two – I think maybe one white guy made a big deal about it, because I didn't think he had ever dated anyone of mixed race. So…but the other guys I dated, it was like they were either kind of mixed or family members had dated interracially or married interracially, or they were men of colour so it was kind of not a big deal.

In order to avoid exoticization (and the objectification that comes with it), Yvonne chose to date

particular men who had exposure to interracial kinship relations and were less likely to position

Yvonne as the exotic impure/ideal.

Like Yvonne, Natalie also reflected on choosing dating partners, but her narrative also

importantly speaks to highly gendered discourses around blackness:

> I did date another Trinidadian guy, for a while actually, and he was sort of light skinned – he was kind of along my lines. And people from the Caribbean…they're all sorts of stuff. So – he looked brown, but I…it was pretty heavily mixed with a lot of Indian….So, racially I probably felt… the most comfortable with him, because I would say it probably didn't feel like an interracial relationship, because he – well he looked like me. And he was West Indian, but not West Indian. He…wasn't heavily into West Indian culture, which I'm not particularly. And…so he was really Canadian, right. Which is really what I feel. I do not feel that I'm…because it's just not my culture….So I have to say that that was probably the time that I felt most…racially comfortable, maybe? The other thing, I was always worried that…people would – and I don't know why I was worried, but I was always worried that people would assume that I should or would always date people of my own race. And…I'd completely forgotten about this. I didn't want – one of the reasons I probably didn't want to date black guys, although I just didn't have the opportunity, was that I was afraid that I would be pigeonholed and other guys wouldn't want to date me. Yeah, I forgot about that. And…I was set up with my husband on a blind date, and it was actually quite a shock when I met him, and he was black. And I really wasn't sure what to think about that. That

was really – I wasn't totally comfortable with it actually. Yeah, I really wasn't. I felt distinctly uncomfortable.

Here, Natalie narrates how a tension emerged for her in the past in relation to only dating black men. At that time, Natalie recognized the gravitational pull of black men, and how they are read as the epitome of blackness in the social. Black men are read as fully black, and Natalie anticipated that this would impact how non-black men (and perhaps specifically white men) would see her. Natalie perceived that she would be read as impure through her partiality as a mixed race person regardless of her dating partners. However, if she dated a black man, she anticipated that she would be read as fully black through her kinship choices, and was concerned about being pigeonholed as black. Perhaps what was also emerging at the time – to some extent – was Natalie's internalization of anti-blackness (Sexton 2008). Either way, Natalie perceived that she would be called into blackness (and pigeonholed) in a particular way: if she dated black men she would be seen as a black woman, versus being perceived as a racially ambiguous woman if she dated white men. However, over her life course, Natalie has taken on a black identity through her kinship relations, specifically through her marriage and her children:

> Most of the people that I interact with are not black. They see me as black. They look at my husband, they definitely see him as black, and they see the two of us together and they see the children, we're all black to them. It doesn't really matter that I've got some red in my hair, or my skin is lighter. It's that one-drop kind of thing, right. A little bit of black is black, and no one would ever think "oh, yeah, she's white". You don't get that [slight laughter] despite the fact that I'm half and half, as far as I'm concern – as far as anyone in the world is concerned, I'm black. So, now as I said, I tend to more identify just as black. If I really think about it I would say "yes I'm biracial" but for all intents and purposes, if everybody sees you a way, then…that's the way you are, that's what counts.

Now, married to a black man and as a mother to children who are racialized as black, Natalie finds herself identifying as black more and more, which is also due to how others read her and her kinship ties. Natalie spoke at length throughout the interview about her hair and how she now wears her hair natural as opposed to straightened or relaxed. She was no longer worried about pigeonholing; her black identity now forged through her kinship relations and family unity which

is read as black. Yet, Natalie's narrative about her hair also demonstrates how such choices are tinged with hierarchies of race over the life course (Paragg 2011).

While all female respondents had experiences where they found that others labeled them as exotic, the multiracialized female respondents with one racialized black parent found that they were ordered in particular ways by potential dating partners both into and outside of the racial category of 'black'. Candace reflected on her dating interactions, stating:

> Candace: I've heard "I'll only date a mixed chick because I don't want to date a full black girl". So I've heard things like that, which is kind of like "well that's kind of rude". 'Cause that's half of who I am, in a sense. So…Yeah. And that's a negative part of it…"oh, I would never date someone who's full black or full native"…
>
> Interview: Like what does that even mean?
>
> Candace: Yeah, like or "your colouring is nicer" or "your hair is nicer" or whatever, right. I think some people would beg to differ [slight laughter]…who are actually mixed, but yeah, I've heard that a lot. One guy was like "I'm so glad that you're…just mixed" and I'm like "what does that mean?" Like really? We're done. Not even thinking what they're saying before they say it. So, that's the negative part of it. I mean it's nice to be called "exotic" and "beautiful" and "you [have] such nice features" and all those things, but yeah. There's negatives. Negative feelings about it sometimes.

Candace's lack of fullness, echoing themes in the happa and mestizo consciousness literature, (Anzaldua 1987) was perceived by her dating partners as making her more desirable, in that her physical features were construed to be 'less black'. This signals how mainstream hegemonic beauty standards are highly racialized (the closer one is to whiteness – and further from blackness, the more desirable one is). That Candace was seen as "just mixed" by her dating partner may also refer to the perception that she still possesses some whiteness. The dating partner named what made her "okay and interesting" to date, perhaps also signaling how she could cross boundaries more easily because she had some whiteness. Candace's racial ambiguity was produced and ordered into the discrete hierarchy of desire of the dating partner who was reading her and producing her race. Yet, this also appears to be a highly gendered discourse: ambiguity is taken up so long as it is feminized.

Whereas Candace experienced being folded outside or read as outside of blackness in her dating interactions, Charles experienced a folding into blackness in his dating interactions. He stated:

> When I was dating another Caribbean girl before my wife, her mother had weird ideas about [my Jamaican side] - I don't know why.…I'm trying to think – oh yeah, the South African girl that I dated. Her mom wasn't crazy about me. Go figure [slight laughter]. But she eventually came around. But, you know, it's more on race, being black than it is with mixed. Because again, this is a – I don't know if it works the same with other mixed race or not, but being half black and half white or half black and half Chinese, or half black and half Indian, it doesn't – you're still black. And black people say 'that's nice, but you're still black'. And most people are like 'yeah, okay, you're half white, but really you're still black' so you can't…it's not like you want to, but you can't really 'get out' of being black, until…I don't know. Some black people say I'm not black enough and some white people now say I'm not black. But for the most part, it doesn't matter if you're half or a quarter or an eighth, or one-sixteenth. It's that one-drop rule that still works so. [I've experienced] more stereotypes along being black than [I have] about being mixed. I don't even know what a stereotype about being mixed is. Confused or something.

Charles' experiences with dating signal how readings of black male bodies operate. White racial ideology constructs black masculinity as a threat (Sexton 2015) and the need for black masculinity and the bodies associated with it to be ordered and contained (and therefore controlled). That "part black is still black", as Charles is told, gestures to this construction and containment – in particular of black masculinity – through the white gaze. This is contrasted with the desiring of the female black body (made all the more palatable if not constructed as fully black, as in Candace's narrative), indicating a gendering of racial boundary transgressions. Within an (assumed) heteronormative context white men transgress boundaries and date black women. In contrast, recall how Lanny's white mother was called a "whore" by white men, in that she transgressed the boundary and her duty to reproduce whiteness through bearing white children. This signals how female sexuality and discourses around racial purity are inherently tied (Hill Collins 1998; McClintock 1997; Twine 2010), which also impacts the recognition of interracial kinships.

Learning Serial-multiple Forms of Articulated Difference

Discourses of race, gender, and sexuality intersect and connect in complex ways, as demonstrated above. These intersections lead to a third learning that emerged across respondents' narratives about their lives: that of learning serial-multiple forms of articulated difference, or how respondents learn serialized and multiple identities. Young (1994) developed the concept of "gender as seriality" (735) in order to think about how women can make political claims as a collective while also recognizing differences within this collective (for example raced and classed identities, sexualities, and abilities). Others, such as Ferguson (2012), Nash (2008) and Josselson and Harway (2012) have worked to re-think intersectionality so as to keep the dynamics of multiplicity alive while avoiding the notion that those multiple differences are "embodied in a stable and discrete object that is ready for measurement and data extraction" (Ferguson 2012: 93). Serial-multiple as a term is an attempt to allow for the "fuzzy edges and intersections" of lived experiences (El-Tayeb 47-48 in Ferguson 2012: 97).

Dominant racial imaginaries paint a picture of mixedness as that which emerges when two people from discrete racial groups come together to form an interracial union. Yet, the reality is that the perception of two people coming together and the meanings that are ascribed to mixed race families are only part of the story of the lived experiences of my study respondents. There are multiple forms of multiplicity, such as being mixed and an immigrant, or being mixed and adopted. Mixed race itself also articulates to other racial categories, as well as the intersections of gender, class, sexuality and ability. These are all forms of multiplicity that respondents navigate and claim over the course of their lives. Learning about mixed race is thus a process of learning about serial-multiple forms of articulated difference. Additionally, for respondents, learning about multiple differences and learning about the dominance of whiteness

– through a white parent, non-white imaginaries of whiteness (hooks 1992) or through how multiple forms of difference always go back to whiteness, either explicitly or not – go hand in hand, in that white is learned across their lives as the core universal against which race is measured and understood.

This multiplicity of identities emerged in Yvonne's narrative, evident from the discussion in the previous section. Yvonne's early learnings about race occurred through a jumble of kin relations, discourses around mixedness/being 'mixed race' and the multiplicity of her identities, including through her own identities and the identities others placed on her. Yvonne was the only respondent who had a parent who self-identified as mixed race. Other respondents had parents who would be considered mixed race in Canada, but used other terms to described themselves stemming from their countries of origin, and therefore did not necessarily identify themselves to be mixed race (for example, Karen's parents were identified in South Africa as Coloured and identified that way). Yvonne's father's identity mattered to what was transmitted to her about mixed race identification and experiences over the course of her life. Firstly, the challenges Yvonne's father faced as mixed race while growing up in Hong Kong led him to be open with Yvonne about his experiences and the challenges that she might also face. But, at the same time, her sense of being 'mixed' was complicated through her status as an immigrant and others' perceptions of her as such, as well as through her family's Chinese cultural practices:

> [My father's] experience of having a white father was not very positive. And then kind of being left – and so even though I was growing up mixed race – I was born in 1968, so [I grew up] in the '70s, he would have grown up in post-World War II, [in the] '50s which was even more challenging. And so, he was quite open about what those challenges were, so I always had a sense of being mixed. Even though in – [after immigrating to Canada] growing up and…[attending] school [in Toronto], all these kids saw me as this strange Chinese kid. So, that was always a point of "that's confusing", 'cause I am Chinese and our family is quite traditionally Chinese, and our food and practices, and language, but, I'm also mixed.

Here, Yvonne describes the multiplicity of identities (mixed race *and* Chinese *and* Immigrant *and* 1.5 generation Canadian) that she identified with – but that were also placed on her – growing up, providing her with lessons early on about the messiness and complexity (as well as potential fluidity) of identity categories.

Similar to Yvonne, Miranda relayed an experience that signaled learning about the multiple social positionings of her body as race and gendered, including, importantly, how different racialized bodies are read off each other when in proximity. Miranda was adopted into a white family but described her biological mother as white and her biological father as black:

> Miranda: [When my Dad was in the hospital]…everybody who came in that room thought I was his personal health care worker. And that was – that's a horrible feeling. They don't even have to say anything. I know I always feel like I have to say something. For one, because if you think I'm their healthcare worker, you're probably going to treat me [laughter] like their health care worker and I see how you were treating that black woman over there. So… that was really important, and it's – it's my dad. I don't want people to think I'm being paid to sit here.

> Interviewer: Yeah, exactly.

> Miranda: One instance in particular, I was…bawling and the woman across there, I could see her, she was looking at me with disgust...not disgust so much but "what the hell is your problem" and she didn't even say anything to me, and I looked at her and I said "this is my father" and she was like "oh I'm sorry". I said "yeah, I know what you thought" [slight laughter]. Oh well. During one of his more coherent moments [slight laughter] [he] introduced me to one of his nurses as his "youngest son" [laughter].

Miranda's narrative shows how race, kinship and recognition play out together. Here, Miranda's relationship to her white adopted father – through her blackness – is misrecognized. However, in that moment, Miranda is also able to remake (Hemmings 2005) the perception of her body in relation to the meanings given to the relationship between her black body and the body of her white father in the social world, disrupting the impossibility of an intimate-kin relationship through her statement "this is my father".

While learning about mixed race is about serial-multiple forms of articulated difference, there is also a simultaneous impossibility of serial-multiple when the dominant discourse of

multiculturalism works to deny recognition of that which does not fit within its discrete

imaginary. However, as I will discuss in the following chapter, respondents often claimed a rich

lived multiculturalism that went beyond the expectations of the external racial gaze.

My study participants' learnings about multiple forms of difference also had to do with

parental biographies and choices, which emerged in Tanya and Indira's narratives. The sisters

recalled how their parents had differing ways with which to navigate race and racism. Indira

narrated how their white mother was the parent who was the most involved in conversations with

her daughters about race, as well as the parent who dealt with racialized issues that emerged at

school:

> My memory is that my mother was…always really aware of those kinds of issues. She was really aware. Because she was the one who was in the mixed race marriage. So she was always aware that this was different. [My parents] spent time in Europe as well and she tells a story of how she was pushing the pram, had the two of us with her, these two little brown babies, and people would ask her "are you the nanny?" type of thing, "are these your kids?". And actually, now that I remember it…I kind of always wondered if my mother was my real mother! [slight laughter] Because she's white, which was kind of weird. But I was like "you're not my mom, you're white!" when I would get mad at her. So I think she was [more] attuned to those kinds of issues than we were. And… I don't remember [many incidents] – my sister would probably – she has a better memory for our childhood than I do. But I'm sure that my mom would be all up in arms about it. Because she also kind of has that 'Jewish chip on her shoulder' as well [slight laughter] that historically warranted, chip on her shoulder for racism or anything like that. So she was always kind of a 'solider' for standing up against any kind of discrimination at all. And wanted to protect us all the time….I don't remember ever sitting down and having a conversation like "is everything going alright" because we were raised in the '70s, your parents let you get on with things….So, I never remember having those [explicit conversations], but I think my mom was always right there.

Here, Tanya's and Indira's white parent thought about exclusion through her Jewish history,

signalling multiple forms of difference at work. Yet, in Tanya's narrative whiteness is positioned

as the core or universal against which race is measured and understood, in that it is the brown

bodies of the father and children that are perceived as deviating from the (normalized) white

body of the mother. As Tanya states her mother "was the one who was in the mixed race

marriage." Tanya's and Indira's father's approach to how difference, and the effects of that

difference, should be handled was in contrast with their mother's approach. Tanya reflected on this, stating:

> I think my Dad was very committed to multiculturalism. He was very adamant that we be Canadian. So he was not really that concerned with us…holding on to our – his culture that wasn't Canadian. He was really interested in…embracing what he thought that Canada was all about. It was definitely a focus of his, why he didn't really…keep us culturally specific I guess....In that way, I think it had a big effect in the way that I was brought up. And my Dad, still − I don't know if he thinks that it's a successful model, like Canada as a multicultural country but I think he was definitely…into that, into that idea and supported the idea that…we should all – we should all become Canadian. Whatever that means.

Tanya's and Indira's father took up multicultural discourse as a racialized immigrant, and was insistent on their assimilation into 'mainstream' (i.e. white) Canadian culture, signaling a dominant discourse that many racialized immigrants fall into: that of the demand of multiculturalism for "ethnic Others" (Bannerji 2000) to fit in, in the effort to become 'Canadian' (even as that dominant discourse celebrates different cultures) (Mackey 2002). As mixed race children, Tanya and Indira learned the difficulty that deviated kinship, or kinship that is perceived of as racially deviant, encounters within a context of multicultural discourse.

The demand of multiculturalism for ethnic Others to fit in works alongside a celebration of culture discourse, where these ethnic Others – who are expected to fit in, in order to belong – are also tasked with providing Canada with its cultural enrichment. Both discourses work to fix ethnic Others, through multicultural discourse, as static cultural beings in that they cannot ever be *Canadian-Canadian* (Bannerji 2000; Mackey 2002). Multicultural festivals are one way that the celebration of cultures discourse is enacted. In her narrative, Melissa talked about her experiences in spaces of multicultural festivals, and contrasted her experience at Heritage Days in Edmonton with her experience at Cariwest, a West Indian festival that is also held in Edmonton. For Melissa, Heritage Days is a more pleasurable easy learning experience in a space

that reflects one's own multiplicity, whereas Cariwest is experienced as a more conscious,

obligatory learning of the self she is supposed to be:

> If I go to Heritage Days….it's just sort of like – there's everybody there….Everything and everybody. And for me, something like that, I'm really proud to be of British origin, so therefore there's that for me as well. And…when I go to Cariwest…it is different, it…you will get – and I can't say that they've been negative looks or things, but you just feel a little more – and I don't know, it could be because I'm hanging out with my Caucasian brother and his wife and kids [laughter] I mean you don't know. And it could be no different than me looking at a mixed girl and being like "ohhh, we kind of look the same", "oh, she's mixed, ohhh", you know….So that would be me jumping to conclusions and assumptions, which you can't really do. But it is a very different feeling, just because it is a culture and a community that, although I may be half West Indian - and whatever that means exactly, we don't know - I could have Dutch in me for all we know. It just was never a part of my culture growing up, it's not something that I feel I am a part of. So when I go, it's also…in my mind I'm reminding myself: "this is part of who you are". And sort of self-educating? I don't know if it's just "this is part of who you are" and with that being said…trying to…experience it. Trying to experience the experience. But I think it's…just something that you have to try and sort out for yourself I guess. And sometimes…I can look at…a black person and in my mind be like "you are a part of that" I have to still remind myself, because I just wasn't…raised that way. So that's interesting. The trials and tribulations they must go through…I think…at the end of the day, [it's] probably a lot easier if you're mixed than [black] unfortunately. Sad but true.

Melissa is more comfortable at Heritage Days because it has "a bit of everything", or put another

way one is there to consume a bit of everything (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002; Bannerji 2000).

To Melissa, there is something about the multiplicity of Heritage Days that mirrors (although not

exactly) her experience, or at least that allows her to not be "one particular thing". In contrast,

Cariwest makes her feel uncertain about what she is supposed to be. This speaks back to the

exotic interest, from Yvonne's narrative, of someone "being a bit of everything" – a new kind of

universal at the abstract level, but at the level of everyday life means being perceived as parts of

different things. While Heritage Days can be positioned as a reinforcing song and dance

multiculturalism (George 2006; Mahtani 2002a), it also can be positioned – drawing on

Melissa's narrative – as a precursor to this idealized world where people do not have to be a

particular thing, but that does still rely on categories. Yet, at the same time, it does operate as a

space of multiplicity.

The celebration of West Indian culture at Cariwest mixes with Melissa's uncertainty regarding her West Indian background, through her closed adoption into a white family. This uncertainty plays off Melissa's uncertainty of why people in that space are gazing at her (and if they are actually looking at her or if it is just her misreading the situation). This is combined with her white brother's presence and her questioning how people may be reading their kin relationality. Melissa's uncertainty as to her heritage contrasts with the necessity of knowing and being able to narrate one's heritage in the official multicultural Canadian context, where such a narration (and related celebration) is demanded of you. Melissa knows that she is supposed to be able to narrate or provide a story about the 'parts' that make up of her body, but is not able to, and this is further complicated by how her body is perceived in relation to her white adoptive family. Such expected narrations will be further explored in the following chapter, focused on respondents' storied identities.

The learning of serial-multiple forms of articulated difference does not solely take place at a particular stage of the life course. Rather, it takes on different salience across the life course: it weaves in and out. Reflecting back on his life, Lanny narrated that he created his own identity story, through the stories he learned as a child and specifically through the conversations he heard between his father and uncles. This in turn enabled him, as an adult, to become a specialist on the history of his family's black settlement in Saskatchewan and to develop a reputation as an expert on black history and genealogy on the Prairies:

> It was my Uncles that I admired as black men. I used to love sitting around and listening to my Dad and them talk about old times and the homestead…. I just loved sitting there and listening to them tell their stories, and that's probably why I was able to later in my life…embrace all that history that came out of [settlement name]. I started reading about these names that I remembered hearing about when I was a kid. I was able to make these connections really really fast, because, not only [did] I [know] a lot of the old-timers, I knew their kids and stuff like that. So, yeah. That's what I used to love doing. That's how I gained my blackness I guess, if you want to say that.

The exposure that Lanny had to his family's stories as a child enabled him to develop his black identity and feel entrenched within it – to 'gain his blackness' – specifically as a black/white mixed race person, in the face of a context that perpetuates anti-black racism and denies multiplicity. Lanny also described how he perceives this work and tracing genealogies as the work that he was meant to do with his life. He suggests that this work was only enabled because of the multiplicities of his identity (black *and* mixed race), working outside of the discrete terms of reference that he is imagined in, through the discourses circulating in the Canadian nation:

> The [settlement] Church has been restored. The [settlement descendants] know the history…it was all done for…I guess it was destiny. My destiny. Sitting there listening to my Uncles and Dad talking and arguing over their bottles of whiskey – it was not for nothing. If I hadn't heard all of that, this would never have been done, all these people would not know their heritage, [Church name] would probably be dust by now…. So it was all for a reason. It's all good now. I learned a tremendous amount from it. I think I can leave this world thinking that I made a difference and…was put here for a reason and that's the reason. I really think that. I don't think if I had been "all black" or "all white" or anything other than what I was or am, I don't think it would have – it never would have happened. So yeah. The first…40 years of my life was a preparation for the last [40 years].

Similar to Lanny's narrative, Gordan's narrative relayed that how respondents learn about mixedness and multiple identification changes across the life course as one's own family and life stages change. Gordan's narrative highlights a back and forth process of what cultural meanings and traditions he has been exposed to over time through both sides of his extended family as well as through his choice of partner, and how this has impacted his connection to varying identities:

> I have noticed as I've gotten older I'm a little more appreciative of…the cultural celebrations. I remember as kid the whole going to grandma's house for weird food, Chinese New Year, whatever the strangeness was, was kind of a bit of a…ordeal and we had to be very quiet, and you couldn't drop the chopsticks, you couldn't talk, and all this stuff, that seemed painful [slight laughter]. Now, as I'm older, I understand the importance of it and I understand that it's…something very very valuable to my grandmother and whatever hardship I have to go through is fine. And there's one chance a year that we…as a family make that commitment to get all to the same place at the same time and have a big dinner, and…I've made that connection as I've gotten older. Whereas I had that connection as a kid growing up around…Thanksgiving or Christmas, in that that was definitely my mom's side of the family celebration, and we definitely had – I connected those holidays with being family events, and being together with…a whole group of people, and you did all these stupid things to get everybody at the same place and cram them around the same table just so that you could be together, and as a kid I didn't have that same connection with the Chinese or the…Asian type celebrations…. Now with my family I bring my

> wife, and my two kids, and we have to move up - go up there for the weekend…. So it's – no small undertaking…. But…I [know] that it is important. That is something that just as is important to get my family together for…Christmas, and as I now know, it's important to get together with my wife's family on New Year's, 'cause that's the…Russian equivalent of the same sort of…important family occasion. Those things mean a little bit more to me now that I've got my own family, now that I'm a little bit older.

Here, Gordan narrates how at different points in his life, he has connected with the white and Chinese cultural aspects of his heritage, and now with his wife's Russian heritage. As a child, the cultural connection to family was via Thanksgiving or Christmas (his mother's side), and in retrospect he now embraces the Chinese cultural connection as well (shifting from it being "strange" to "appreciated"). This is part of a broader, fluid interest in family connections through culture, showing how learning serial-multiple forms of articulated difference emerges across Gordan's life. Next, I turn to a fourth learning that respondents expressed, that of learning how to respond when one's differences are used to mark you as Other.

Learning (How) to Respond

A fourth learning on the part of respondents is the need to develop narratives that respond to the three previous learnings discussed: in other words, responding to racism and explaining yourself in the face of your difference being called out. How and in what ways participants were taught to respond – the narratives that they began to develop as children – relates to what their own parents' learnings in their lives about how to respond (which they in turn pass on to their own children). Kinship matters here in that respondents learn that their mixed racedness is *read* via blood, origins and kinship: they learn that they need to have a story because people want to know "what they are". In the following chapter I deal with the identity narratives and how respondents story themselves across their lives, but here my focus is that my interview participants learned early on – and have continued to learn over their lives – about the *need* for a story. In other words, learning how to respond is about how race specifically operates in relation

to kinship (family, origins and blood). Respondents' experiences in their families and with the origin-fetish of the multiracializing gaze cannot be separated out from learning to respond. How participants learn to respond, the narratives they have for others, is inseparable from the narrative of one's life course (even though the identity narrative can never fully do justice to the multiplicity and complexity of one's identity and life experiences). Yet, at the same time, the narrative is also about the stories people tell themselves about who they are. Firstly, I will discuss the multiple kinds of responses parents passed on to the study participants, which shaped the narratives they began to develop as children. I then move to a focus on participants' learning that they must be the ones to narratively manage their response to the calling out of difference.

My interview participants discussed how their parents provided them with multiple kinds of responses or stories, and these responses were contingent on their parents' racialized identities. Respondents recalled conversations and advice that their parents gave them about how to handle racism that they were experiencing, although this advice varied according to the particular racialized experiences of their parents. Similar to Tanya and Indira as discussed in the previous section, Charles' parents had different approaches for how to deal with racism. Charles recalled the two different strategic approaches that his parents suggested for dealing with the racialized experiences and racism that he was encountering in his life, including at school:

> Interviewer: When you were [living] out East and also when you lived around Toronto growing up, was the conversation about the racism you were experiencing happening in the family? Were your parents telling you how you should deal with it?
>
> Charles: Two totally different approaches, but my father…I feel like there's something to this. My father grew up in WWII. My father had a concept of Nazis…. So he had an awareness – he also was kind of more politically active…left-leaning kind of…'60s European guy. So he told me "just kick 'em in the balls, punch 'em in the face, don't take any shit from anyone". My mother on the other hand, being…she was very religious. She would say "kill them with love". Now, the truth of the matter is, my mom had gone through a whole shit load of racism more than my father. [Ranging from] the innocent ignorance in England, where people literally said "well, do you live in a tree [in Jamaica]?" to…blatant racism when she was in France, and in Norway it's very…monocultural. They're not rude outwardly, they're not like American Southerners, who will threaten to kill you or anything, they just…completely and utterly isolate you. So [in

> Norway] she was the only black person in the whole bloody country, with nobody willing to talk to her. Totally isolated, totally lonely, totally alone. But she still always said "I'll kill them with love". Just "pray for them and bless them" to ad nauseam.

Here, Charles recognized how his parents' differing approaches to strategies for negotiating racism and racialized experiences were firmly based within their own racialized lived experiences as white and black (as well as the socio-historical contexts in which their lives unfolded). This also impacted their perceptions of how racism operates. While Charles' father, a white Norwegian man, grew up with an understanding of white supremacist groups in the era of Nazi Germany, he lacked the lived experience of being racialized as black which Charles' mother – a black Jamaican woman – negotiated throughout her adult life living in Europe and North America. Charles' father's strategy of meeting racist encounters with aggression reflects his perception of racism as blatant and easy to call out, and from the position of white masculinity (the authority to call it out). In contrast, Charles' mother's strategy of "killing them with love" perhaps reflected her own racialized experiences, which were at times overt, at other times insidious, and/or perhaps reflected a choice on her part not to respond in kind.

Other respondents' parents lacked understanding of what their children were encountering in the social world. Miranda recalled her white adopted parents' lack of realization that she would be racialized as black and/or that she would have to learn how to deal with her difference being called out. She stated:

> I think [my white adopted parents] were kind of in denial. Never seemed – yeah, I think they were kind of in denial that [racism] should bother me or anything. And I didn't really – it's not like I would come home and tell my parents. [Although] I do remember crying one time because somebody had called me "chocolate face" and I could tell my mom was fighting not to burst out laughing, and was explaining to me that "everybody likes chocolate better than vanilla" [laughter]. And so that was my retort "I like chocolate better than vanilla!" But I do have tiny little scratch marks on my arm that are – you can't really notice anymore, where I took a wire brush, very young, wanting to get rid of my brown skin.

While Miranda's white adopted parents' attempted to address the calling out of her difference with a humorous comeback, they also lacked an understanding of the depth to which racialized

people of colour often internalize hegemonic whiteness and white supremacy and desire to be

'normal' (i.e. white), which is key to the operation of those systems. Well some respondents'

parents were silent because they lacked understanding, the silence of other parents was an

attempt to shield. Candace recalled the intergenerational silences that existed within her Métis

mother's family in an attempt to protect children in a settler colonial context. However, these

silences also further Indigenous erasure, advancing the goals of the settler state:

> We had a neighbour who just despised us…And called us "niggers" all the time, and "dirty Indians"…that's around the time where I was questioning my mother. That really kind of struck home [when you realize] "Oh, she's talking about us" and it [was] really directed towards us in a nasty way….Prior to that, I think any discussion that was had…was above me, right, and I wasn't…partaking in those conversations….My grandparents speak Cree, and fluently, but they didn't teach their children, and that was because they didn't want their children to be…punished, ostracized in school. And so – I think that same…way of parenting or whatever, followed my mother, where she didn't really talk to us about it. And… after that I started asking more questions like "what's Cree?" and "what does Métis mean?" But it was when the conversations got more…real for me. At probably the right age, where I started to have a better understanding.

Here, Candace's interpellation as Other led her to start asking questions of her mother and their

family's identity. This led her to begin to develop an understanding of her own identity and to

begin construction of an identity narrative.

The silences experienced by some respondents in their families around issues of race and

racism was often related to their parents' identities and experiences. This can be juxtaposed with

other respondents who spoke about open conversations about race and racism, and an openness

which was also connected to their parents' identities and experiences. Yvonne recalled that

conversations about racism were fairly open with her parents. In her narrative, she reflected on

how her parents' own experiences with racism (interpersonal and structural) were interconnected

to their status as immigrants (Yvonne's mother as Chinese and her father as mixed race white

and Chinese):

> We were very open about our discussion about racism, although my parents had no name for it. Because of course they were experiencing it as part of their assimil – as part of their integration into Canadian society. And through work. They experienced a lot through work, and the way our

families were, it was always an extended family table at lunch and dim sum – we went to dim sum every weekend - and so people talked about it openly….And in some ways it also became very hard to talk to my parents, because I knew that they were going through their own stuff….I mostly talked to my Dad. Because I picked up very early that my Mom's understanding of race was problematic in my mind. And because there was this kind of – she really was, in many ways [laughing] very anti-Chinese. Even though she is [Chinese]…. And my Dad was much more open about it. Because he also – he had grown up mixed, so he could talk about it.

Being the 1.5 generation mixed race child of a mixed race parent provided Yvonne with a parent who had some understanding of the experiences that she was having. Yet, Yvonne's mother's own internalized racism made it difficult for Yvonne to approach her mother with her concerns about what she was experiencing. As Yvonne grew older, her mother's internalized "colour hierarchy" led them to clash over who Yvonne was dating, further complicating their relationship and adding to Yvonne's own negotiations of her race and racism. While Yvonne learned from her father that racism was "a pain that she had to endure", she did recall one rebuttal that her father suggested she use when experiencing racial slurs:

> And I remember my Dad…he dealt with [racial slurs] in different ways. But one of the ways he always kept saying – which wasn't really a good rebuttal – was: "you're not". I would say "oh they're calling me 'chink'" or "they're making fun of me because I'm Chinese" and he'd say "you're not 100% Chinese, you're mixed, you're mixed" as if that was like some sort of – like "they're getting it wrong" and you know "it's okay, you're absolved from it".

Yvonne's father perceived her mixed race status as cushioning her against racist taunts, suggesting that they should not impact her because of their inaccuracy, perhaps also reflecting how he as a mixed race man negotiated his own racialized experiences.

Amongst Yvonne's immediate and extended family, there were open conversations about barriers that they were facing as racialized immigrants, shared around the family table. Yet, at the same time, Yvonne found it difficult to share her racialized experiences with her parents, for fear that this would only add to the weight that she saw they were carrying as new racialized immigrants. In this sense, Yvonne was learning not to burden her parents with her experiences. In our interview, Yvonne further reflected on strategies that she was learning at this time from

her parents, strategies which they deployed for dealing with the racialized encounters that they

were experiencing:

> The ways that [my parents] dealt with [racism and barriers] sometimes was: they made fun of Canadians [laughing] which was kind of a back [talk] response, like "Canadians are stupid, they don't know how to run businesses, they're lazy", like there was this kind of counter "they're just not as advanced"…and part of that was because [of our] Chinese cultural practices and language, there was a sense of "they just don't get us". So that was…in some ways a [self-] protective factor of "we're facing this kind of racism or discrimination but the people who are acting that way are really actually the dumb ones". And I think as a kid…we picked that up. [But in responding to]…name calling from other kids, that doesn't really [translate]…you can't say… "you're dumb" [laughing] "you don't know how to run a business, your math is simple" [laughter]…it's like what do you say. And my Dad just kind of talked about it like it's…a pain you have to endure. And – I mean he was quite empathetic, and I remember there were some serious incidents at school where there was quite a bit of violence or bullying, and he would go right to the school, but he didn't know how to navigate that. And the schools were very unresponsive. Their strategies were, "well don't let your kids walk home by themselves. They are different" [slight laugh]. But he would try [in] his own way to… assert – '*there's something wrong here*' [emphasis]. But then he would back off. And I knew it was painful for my parents, to see us have [these experiences] - so as you got older you kind of just tried to manage it yourself.

From an early age, then, Yvonne's learnings about race involved three interrelated things:

learning that the calling out of difference is hurtful, learning that she had to narratively manage

it, and learning that she had to do that herself. Other respondents who immigrated to Canada as

children – or who are sometimes referred to as 1.5 generation Canadians – reflected on the sense

of uprootedness created through immigration, and how this led to silences within their families

around how to respond to the calling out of difference. Like Yvonne, Karen also learned that it

was up to her to narratively manage the calling out of her difference. Karen spoke of how these

tensions operated in her family, who had immigrated to Toronto from South Africa:

> There was a lot of tension and a lot of anger and a lot of frustration in the family as siblings. Which we didn't recognize until later, had a lot to do with just struggling [as] immigrants…and my parents not figuring out at all that they needed to be a lot more hands on. Because in South Africa we had lived on a street where my Grandparents and Aunts and Uncles [also] were. There were just so many other people who could parent. And here we were by ourselves. And so my brother did not tell my parents that he was called "nigger" at school. I didn't – I certainly never told my parents that my teachers were surprised that I was smart….I never thought of telling them that. And…my sister [Katie] never told my parents that her friends thought that she was [laughing] "almost white". So, we just kind of muddled along.

Karen and her siblings carried a multiplicity of identities with them as immigrants and racialized people, but they were also variously read as black, brown, Indigenous, or "almost white" depending on what context they found themselves in. Yet, Karen and her siblings – like Yvonne – learned not to burden their parents with the experiences they were having in Canada. In some ways they followed the example that their parents set in their own lack of dialogue around their experiences as racialized immigrants.

In her interview, Regan also reflected on her parents' silences around discussions of race and identity during her childhood. These silences, combined with: a lack of exposure to her father's side of the family; a cultural landscape where blackness was the predominant non-white identity in popular culture; and, where black/white is often considered the default or quintessential mixed race identity in the popular imaginary, led Regan to equate her father's brownness as a black identity:

> Because my father strongly identified as Malaysian but…never really talked about it, and anytime I had the question he'd just sort of shut me down. And he never ever mentioned India, 'cause I don't think he ever went to India until – as an adult, like with my mother. So…I kind of had – sometimes I think maybe I was just a stupid child [laughter]…I kind of had no idea that…we were Indian, until I was like 16 to18…. I just knew [that] my Dad…didn't look like everybody else's' dad. My Dad wasn't white. That's what I knew. And then my mom wasn't very clear about things either…and my Dad didn't really share his culture…and we watched a lot of Cosby Show, listened to a lot of Motown….Like all I really interpreted in my community where I lived-which was largely white…[was] there were only two ends of the spectrum: you were either white or you were black. So… I did not know brown was a thing. And so…I told people until I was like 16 "yeah, I'm half-white, half-black".

Through a combination of Regan's ambiguous racial appearance and the limited horizon of racial discourses she was exposed to, Regan learned to narratively manage her response to the calling out of her difference, by herself. She took on an identity as "half-white, half-black", as it was the only identity option that she was exposed to which came close to describing her and her family.

Respondents learned from an early age that they would need to have a response to the calling out of their difference. They were very aware of the responses provided to them by their

parents (including non-responses like silence) but they also learned found that they had to

negotiate their own way through this murky territory. This is closely tied to respondents'

learning serial-multiple forms of articulated difference. It is these serial-multiple forms of

articulated difference that led respondents to need a response, yet they also provide respondents

with a range of narrative ways through which to respond to that calling out of difference. What

also emerged from respondents' narratives was how they re-made various lessons that they

encountered in their lives around race, difference, and racism as they became parents themselves.

RE-MAKING LESSONS IN THE CONTEXT OF PARENTING

Narrating in the present moment in the interviews, respondents indicated how, over time,

they have become more settled in themselves and in their own stories. While this is part of the

cultural narrative of the life course (Shanahan 2000) – that people settle into themselves as they

age and more fully become themselves – what also emerges for mixed race respondents is a less

fraught narrative: their anxiety of being constantly read lessens, to some extent, as they age over

time. This is also tied to kinship, in that as respondents' kinship networks became more stable

over time, so did their narratives. In a previous quote given above, Natalie narrated that because

of her kinship ties (she is now married to a black man and their children are read as black), she is

read as black and now largely identifies this way. She further expanded on this, stating:

> My husband is black. He's Jamaican, as much as any Jamaican can be fully black, he's got dark
> skin, and very curly hair. And…I have three children, two girls who are almost the same colour as
> me, about the same, and then my son who is much closer in hue to my husband. And…since I've
> been married and since I've had children, particularly, I tend to less self-identify as biracial and
> more just identify as black, if I do identify myself at all. Yeah, because as much as I am definitely
> the product of two races in so many ways, not just physically, but intellectually and socially…if
> anything I'm socially kind of a white person. I'm less so as I get older. But… most of the people
> that I interact with are not black. They see me as black. They look at my husband, they definitely
> see him as black, and they see the two of us together and they see the children: we're all black to
> them. It doesn't really matter that I've got some red in my hair, or my skin is lighter. It's that one-
> drop kind of thing, right. A little bit of black is black, and no one would ever think "oh, yeah,
> she's white". You don't get that [slight laughter] despite the fact that I'm half and half…as far as
> anyone in the world is concerned, I'm black. So, now as I said, I tend to more identify just as
> black. If I really think about it I would say yes I'm biracial but for all intents and purposes, if

> everybody sees you a way, then…that's the way you are, that's what counts. But even now, obviously my husband is black, I never, never thought I would marry a black man. It never occurred to me. But…I did, and…so that sort of pushes me over to the black side.

Here Natalie describes how her identity narrative has settled to some extent, in that through others' readings of her and her kinship ties she is identified by others as black. As she states: "we're all black to them". Throughout the interviews, participants re-narrated racial learnings across different sociohistorical times and life stages, with partnering and parenting being two crucial life stage moments. The four racial learnings outlined above get brought into, and re-made, specifically in the context of parenting. While some respondents reflected on the lessons that they learned across their life course, re-making them in order to pass them onto their children, others in the interviews highlighted their children's own narratives about how they think of and understand themselves. In the case of my respondents, their movement into the partnering and parenting life stages also coincided with the diffusion of post-race discourse in the popular imaginary, which is reflected in their navigations and narrations.

Many respondents narrated that key learnings that they wanted to pass on to their own children were: firstly, that there is strength in multiplicity (or at least normalcy in multiplicity); and, secondly, that they want their children to develop identity stories for themselves within this learning. Yet, what also emerged in the interviews was that it is not so much that participants are teaching their children how to respond or understand themselves. Rather, in the interviews respondents emphasized particular things about their children's own self-understanding; their own individual versions of multiplicity. Respondents relayed in their narratives that it was important for them to help their children to think about their identities, because they are going to need to have a story for themselves (which respondents recognized will also likely need to be narrated to others at some point, but also how that narration to others can never do their experience of multiplicity justice). Tensions also emerged in this narrative for respondents whose

children are racialized as black in that it is not as easy as these children simply having a narrative of multiplicity for themselves: children who are racialized as black need to specifically have strategies in order to navigate others' readings of their blackness. Other respondents spoke of how their children can "pass" as white depending on context. Yet for all respondents regardless of how their children are racialized and multiracialized, emphasis was placed on the importance of their children "knowing their heritage".

A range of narratives emerged when respondents talked about their children, including a narrative that their experiences "are what they are", as well as the "importance of knowing their heritage" narrative. This "knowing heritage" narrative signals the operation of racialized multiculturalism, but also perhaps a reclaiming of the "heritage narrative" that is available within multicultural discourse, in order to give mixedness some solidity. Respondents expressed a normalization of mixed race and a "hope in multiplicity" throughout the narratives that they gave of their children's experiences (including children who are racialized as black). Yet this re-working of learnings and "hope in multiplicity" narrative seems to have also emerged for respondents at a later time in their lives, specifically with post-race discourse being taken up more broadly within Canada. Respondents' encouragement of their own children to have a narrative for themselves could potentially be read as part of a neo-liberal post-race self-making, a discourse where children only need a narrative for themselves (not others) since racialized power relations are deemed to no longer exist. However, this is not a reading that should be made too quickly, because respondents' expressed complex negotiations of post-race discourse in the interviews, which I explore more below as well as in the following chapter.

When talking about their children's experiences, the trickiness of post-race discourse, its related celebratory multicultural discourse, and how this works together with neo-liberal self-

making, emerged. A number of respondents emphasized the amount of racial diversity evident in their children's school classrooms and peer groups in general, and how much this differed from their own experiences as children where they were often surrounded by whiteness. However, respondents did not necessarily narrate this as a sign of transcending race, it was just that it is better for their children in these spaces than it was for them. While the experience in the class room has changed for the respondents' children compared to their own experience, many respondents were also quick to point out how demographic diversity does not equate to an absence of power differentials or a post-race reality. While respondents narrated that their children can claim an individual story (which they carve out despite others' readings of them) this also sat right next to a narrative of their children having "pride in multiple heritages". For respondents, the carving out of an individual story is not necessarily something different from multiplicity, but is a particular version of it. Their children's carving out of an individual story is transformative in that it pushes against the learning of impurity or not belonging, but at the same time it is difficult to pin down the politics of claiming such an individual identity. A tension emerges in that it is difficult to figure out the politics of claiming a mixed race identity: while the claim to individual identity invokes neo-liberal self-making, there is also the possibility of transformative politics given the perceived impurity of this individual identity narrative. This individual identity narrative can also cut off the demand that mixed race people provide an origin story for the external racial gaze. I return to the difficulties of naming the politics of mixed race in the concluding chapter.

In our interview, Gordan contrasted his children's experiences growing up with his own, and spoke of how mixedness is perceived as the norm in their lives. But he also wondered what his children's experiences will be like as they get older:

[Will] they…experience the same sort of…prejudice based on their appearance [like I did] or are they…just…Caucasian enough that they blend in well enough that people don't really know what to call them. It will be interesting – I'll probably be more attuned to that as I see them go through what comes. For them, they don't know any different. Daddy looks kind of Chinese, Grandpa [Grandpa's name] looks *really* [emphasis] Chinese. Mom and her family are very Caucasian and that's just the way it is. They don't…they haven't seen that as being raised different[ly] or odd[ly]. And there's other…we have other families and friends that are also mixed race and things like that, so again, if they see enough of it, it's just normal. If they see it now [on] TV represented quite often, so it doesn't…it doesn't really faze them. So yeah, it will be interesting to see…what their experience is as they grow up. What sort of things they see. But, yeah. I've definitely seen a change as I've grown up…culturally from growing [up in] a small town [where] it was very easy to pick me out of a crowd - 'cause I was [the] only [person] in a school of 300 people [who] was different - versus [now I'm] one [of] a million people in a town where, you walk down the street and see all sorts of different types [of people]. Or [you] walk down the hallway at work and see different cultural groups, so. It's definitely very different.

Here, Gordan reflects on the normality of mixedness in his children's lives, through his family life, the family's wider social circle, as well as representations in popular media. In other words, they see themselves reflected as they move throughout the world. This can be contrasted with Regan, who took up an identity as "half-white half-black" because black was the only non-white identity that she was exposed to in race discourse and popular media. Like Gordan, Winston narrated the growing perception of commonality or normality of mixed race, and described his view of his children's experiences, stating:

I think the nice thing is as [my children are] growing up, that it's – [racial mixing] seems way more common, like I see kids that are clearly not of one… stock or ancestry or the other. And so, I think they might have an easier time with it, perhaps.

Here, Winston asserts, although with some caution, that because of the growing commonality of mixed race children (or at least children who identify and are identified as mixed race), his children may have more positive experiences than he did as a child.

Perhaps respondents take up an "it is easier now" discourse as a coping mechanism, in that it enables them to hope that their children will not be Othered or be perceived by others (or themselves) as different. Yet, respondents' emphasis that their children need to have a story for themselves also has transformative possibilities, through the multiplicity of their racial

identifications which challenge discrete race discourse. Rather than respondents' hope in

multiplicity solely being about respondents buying into post-race bridging discourses, it can also

be about navigating how their children are perceived of as different. This notion of hope in

multiplicity is evident in Winston's narrative, through his emphasis on how well his children

know their heritage:

> My partner is Canadian, but of Filipina extraction, she came here when she was about six. And so my kids are even more jumbled up [laughing] [and] I thought my story was complicated [laughter]….I haven't told them how to deal with those questions. They know their heritage very well. But, we haven't really strategized [laughter]. Yeah, but they still have questions, and my son's name. My son's name is [son's name] which is a very Irish name. But…he looks Asian. My daughter's name is [daughter's name], which is a very South Asian name…but she looks more East Asian I'd say. Anyway, but they do get the "where do [you] come from?" and how they respond, I don't actually know how they respond….We haven't strategized.

Here, Winston emphasizes the importance of his children knowing their heritage, pointing to the

importance of having a strategy (even if they do not have one yet). Having a story for themselves

about their heritage is what they will need in order to answer questions that they themselves

have, as well as questions that others will have of them. Like Winston, Gordan emphasized that

his children know their heritage, but he also took up a position that their experiences "will be

what they will be".

> [Talking about how they may be perceived of as different] hasn't really come up and kind of my attitude is that…it just is [slight laughter]. I haven't felt the need to make a distinction for them that they need to know that some people might consider them different then themselves. I kind of just let them fit in to their class and in with their friends, and I don't think it has come up yet. They're still pre-school/kindergarten; they're not quite into that space yet. But yeah, it will be interesting to see if there's a time where that becomes a complication for them. [If] it becomes a concern for them. Like I said, I haven't made a specific point to…point it out. They've definitely seen a lot of different cultural things, 'cause like I said, my wife's family is – has some Jewish background.

Again, Gordan takes up the discourse of hope in multiplicity. There is a hope among respondents

that their children's multiplicity will pave the way forward by allowing them to fit in as

mixedness becomes part of the normalization of non-white bodies in social space, but also by

providing them with a way to respond (that aligns and is even representative of Canadian

multicultural discourse), if questions do arise.

While discussing her children, Indira also took up the hope in multiplicity discourse. She

narrated how aware her children are of their heritage, stating:

> They're very aware – they're much more aware I think, than I ever was, of how they look and…what mixtures they are. So my son, who's 12, I remember when he was little, he drew a self-portrait, and in his self-portrait – his colouring is slightly lighter than me. But in his self-portrait, he was like really really dark brown. And that's how he – that's how he sees him[self] – and they were always like, my sisters' kids, they would say "oh yeah [cousin's name] looks like this, and…Grandpa's this dark, here's how it goes from darkest to lightest". They were super aware of that. My daughter is really white. You wouldn't be able to tell, I mean she's white. Pretty much. Completely. And she's got hazel eyes, whereas [son's name], is dark hair and he's also Caucasian looking, but you can tell, he's got…some colouring, especially in the summertime he gets this kind of honey colour. So he's much more aware of it….They're …super proud of all of their backgrounds. Of the different kinds of backgrounds. So my husband's family are…English and Welsh, and [son's name] and [daughter's name], my kids, were born in London. So they identify themselves really, with being English, for some reason. And, they were born in London. I think that what kind of makes them unique. Right, among their friends. And – but they're also proud of their heritage.

Indira narrates the ways that her children are perceived as different. While she suggests that both

can 'pass' for white, they seem to identify themselves on a spectrum of "darkness to lightness"

amongst the skin colours in their family. Pride in multiplicity, plus the individualization of that

story for each child emerges here; an individual narrative carved out of multiplicity. Ram also

narrated his children's navigations, stating:

> I have kids of my own. Their sense of who they are, and…my daughter has…a completely Anglo-name, her – the name she uses, so it's [daughter's first name], but she has my [Indian] last name. And she really likes having [family name] as her last name. My son is actually – [slight laughter] for odd reasons, he has his mother's last name. [Ex-wife's name] was Canadian Irish - Canadian stock, born in [town name] Nova Scotia. About as 'Canadian-Canadian' as you can get. So, my son has [Ex-wife's family name] as his last name, but his first name is [first name] so…with each of the kids that there's an… 'India' bit of their name. And…they're curious about their Indian half, because we eat Indian food at home, I cook it. We'll probably go to India next year for an extended bit for them to see it…but…I like the fact that both [daughter's name] and [son's name] are, clearly Canadian, born in Canada. They're aware of what their parentage is. And they don't try and duck it or hide it.

Here, Ram narrates the importance of his children knowing what their parentage is, however

there is also a reclaiming of the heritage narrative that is available, to give mixedness solidity. At

the same time, he reinforces that being Canadian is part of their narrative (not *Canadian-*

Canadian, but Canadian).

The majority of narratives that respondents gave about their children were about how the

children understand themselves, as they have their own experiences of the world. In the

narratives it was not so much parents teaching children how to respond or understand

themselves, but rather parents emphasizing particular things about their children's own self-

understandings - their own individual version of multiplicity. As Tanya stated of her children's

identities:

> Well, I think that my older son, definitely identifies himself as Brown. For sure. Yeah. And he used to joke about it a lot…he was very sensitive about it because he did get kind of bullied about it. And he's much darker than my other son, who doesn't look at all like – I mean he's got green eyes and he's very fair. Blonde hair. So…my older son for sure did, and he identified exclusively as that. And I was like "hey, you're only a quarter of that" but he really, really identified that way, and always referred to himself that way. I think also because he played hockey and so in the hockey culture he really stood out too, because hockey's generally such a white sport, with lots of white kids…he is very aware of it and I think…mostly I've just heard him joking around about it. About being Brown. But I don't know how…he's processing it now. Like he's 20 now, so I don't know how he's thinking about it now. My other one, I think it's not a big deal. He's more like…just really proud of his grandpa, because he's going to the same university and…he's not really aware of any of that stuff, because he just never dealt with any of that….People are always really surprised that he has…any kind of colour or any kind of…'cause he just looks like a regular white kid. He just looks like everybody else. Yeah. And my little ones [twins], they're too young….They just have absolutely no idea that they're - they're just little, they're only 8. So they don't really know. I don't think they've experienced anything strange, and their school is very multicultural so they have a lot of kids from all over the world at their school, so they are…they're kind of very open about it, like "so and so's a Muslim" and "so and so's a – from China" and "so and so is not from China, they're from Taiwan" and they're much more specific about things like that. They have a lot of little friends that are just from all different backgrounds. Their babysitter is Filipino and they hang out with her and her kids and so they – I think they're more culturally open. They would definitely, I say, identify themselves as white.

Tanya's children also have knowledge about their heritage, but their multiple identifications are

simply perceived of as 'the norm'. Yet, the way that Tanya's children are read by others has also

greatly impacted their identification: her children who are racialized as white can take on

multiplicity, but without the experience of having difference called out (as she states: "he just

never dealt with any of that" or "I don't think they've experienced anything strange").

Respondents' whose children are racialized as white and respondents' whose children are racialized as non-white took up hope in multiplicity discourse, emphasizing that their children know their heritage and that this will enable them to have a narrative for themselves and fit within a context where multiplicity is celebrated in the dominant discourse of multiculturalism. This narrative is also perceived as providing respondents' children with ways to deal when their difference is called out. However, as I have argued drawing on Bannerji (2000) and Mackey (2002), this celebratory discourse is focused on discrete racial categories. Multicultural discourse's categorical gaze perceives mixed race subjects as embodying the coming together of discrete racial and cultural categories (Mahtani, Kwan-Lafond and Taylor 2014) as opposed to recognizing the rich, complex, lived experiences of mixed race subjects that go beyond the expectations of the gaze, such as serial-multiple identities as discussed above. In turn, parents whose children are racialized as non-white, and specifically those who are racialized as black, tended to recognize that while they take up this hope in multiplicity discourse, at the same time, it is not enough.

The operation of racialized blackness in people's lives was evident in the narratives of respondents whose children are racialized as black. For example, Natalie narrated the different ways that her male child and female children are racialized as black:

> The older one, the six year old. She… goes to a very multicultural school, which I think helps a lot. But…she wants long hair, she wants to be able to shake it and flow. But she also wants hair like mine…And so she actually said 'I want my hair to look like yours' which is – and I'm like "okay, done".…I think she'll be okay, at least for now, as long as it's long and she can put it in ponytails and do the stuff that…other girls with long straight hair can do. Now, she's been very clear a number of times that she doesn't want – she would really like not to have "darker skin" than what she does. She's sort of my colour. And her brother and her father are a fair bit darker…[whispers into recorder] "I don't want to look like them"…she's very clear on that. But there's also other things, she's like "I don't want to be fat".

Here it is evident that highly gendered hegemonic white beauty standards were already having an impact on Natalie's daughter in terms of her preferences for her hair, skin colour and body shape, despite attending a multicultural school. Natalie also narrated her son's experiences, stating:

> I could see [racism] potentially becoming a problem, although probably less so *because* [emphasis] we live in Toronto. I think if we lived outside of Toronto in a smaller town, then…race would definitely be a larger issue. And, in fact…[son's name] had some issues…when he was younger…but he was specifically saying that he "did not want dark skin"….We're always very very sensitive, particularly with [son's name], to people assuming that he's going to be a bad student, or a bad influence, or…maybe mark him down more than if he weren't black. And it's always a bit hard to tell in individual situations whether this is happening. Did he just get a bad mark or was it….But we're very conscious of that – particularly because my husband had a lot of – people were always trying to put him in the technical school track in high school. He was lucky he had such a pro-active mother…it was always like "oh, you're not going to get far", like really overt racism.

For Natalie's son, his maleness and blackness work together to pigeonhole him into a particular mode of being, through the external racial gaze. Despite living in multicultural Toronto and attending multicultural schools, Natalie and her husband are aware of how their son will likely be perceived and what assumptions will be placed on him due to his masculinity and his blackness. This awareness also emerged through the experiences that Natalie's husband had growing up. In other words, the hope in multiplicity, both within children's identities as well as in their context, is not enough. This predominantly emerged in respondents' narratives in which blackness is salient, as opposed to other mixed race experiences.

Yvonne reflected on how different relationships enable or constrain discussions about issues of race and the importance of making choices about entering into certain relationships where such issues can be discussed. She narrated how she and her husband have worked to make space in their relationship with each other and their relationship with their children for conversations around race:

> So…my husband's black, and I think in my household we have more discussions about issues of race and discrimination, because I think it just is there. I don't think either of us try to pretend that it's all great. But I do think maybe sometimes when people make choices 'cause of the

relationships they enter, they create spaces within those new relationships about whether or not these things can be talked about.

Yvonne, whose children tend to be racialized as black, also narrated how gendered discourses affect her children's experiences. Echoing Natalie's narrative, Yvonne stated "I think it's the physical [appearance] piece for my daughter and for my son it's his behaviour and how he carries himself". Yvonne narrated how her daughter's hair is often something that others comment to her and her daughter about, whereas her son is often called out for "not being black enough". Like Gordan, Yvonne was cautious with taking up the hope in multiplicity discourse, navigating back and forth between the reality that there is more diversity amongst her children's peers than she experienced growing up, including more 'mixed racedness'. She recognized that this does not necessarily mean that her children's experiences are more positive, suggesting that this is an idealized version of what is occurring in the social world:

> I don't necessarily think or assume that it's better [for my children] with peers. Other than that it is more common now. So that the sense of being seen as "oh, you're like the only one that's like this"…there's a larger community…if you want to describe it as such. So there's more kids that are mixed. So sheer numbers. Even though it's still made [to be] a novelty. But I think the piece that hopefully could be better, and this is my own read into this, my hope for this, is at least having a parent who can understand or…because I can speak to, not in my experience, but I understand…I acknowledge them being mixed race children….My parents were not able to do that. They weren't able to – my dad…he wasn't able to – he didn't have a language around that. So that piece of having some language…so that's kind of why I think it's better. There's still a lot of issues there, and challenges I think that they experience.

Here, rather than taking up a hope in multiplicity discourse as governed by multicultural discourse (multiplicity that is siloed and discrete), Yvonne places hope in her own complex lived experiences as a mixed race person to help her children navigate their experiences as they move through the world as mixed race people, while at the same time placing hope in there being a language with which to name and claim multiplicity and mixedness.

Whereas Yvonne actively worked to circumvent post-race discourse, Ayesha's narrative demonstrates the trickiness of navigating race discourse. While Ayesha took on an identity as

Other due to her experiences as a 1.5 generation Canadian and through her racialization as black, she reads that her son – who is also racialized as black – took a different approach:

> [My son] doesn't live his life the way I did, in terms of having that – the painful…"I resent being made to feel different and Othered" he just chills and says "[I'm] me". Yeah, and I feel that's a good thing….To me it's part of his being Canadian, I've never – I've never been that, I don't know whether I'm ever going to be that in Canada. But he is that, and I think his kids are that.

In her role as a grandmother, Ayesha seeks to help her grandchildren understand their history and in particular to affirm their black identity. She sees black identity as a tool that they can draw on when they experience racism in their lives and a calling out of difference. Yet, while doing this, Ayesha also positions the future as an idealized thing:

> But [my son] like – he's created a different world for [his kids]. They don't have a *clue* [emphasis] where all this came from. Now my role, [as] Grandma - Dr. Grandma - is to just get historical books, I have all these things "people of colour" and whatever. I'm the one infusing that. Just to remind them of who they are and what that means, because I know the rude awakenings are going to happen. They are happening, but they deal with it. You don't want to take [my granddaughter] on. Somebody comes and tells her she's a "nigger" or something, they're going to have to deal with her. But, I want her to understand the struggle and how we're living on the shoulders of all these other people. But they're in another world. I think that generation is – it's going to be something I can't even imagine. I really think it's going to be a different space. Because the world is coloured, it's a coloured place, and if we're going to keep marginalizing that experience and at the same time have this expectation, I think we're screwing ourselves up. Let's get real. So don't blame it on any hegemonic whiteness, let's just get real, get busy, fix these things, get on with it.

Ayesha's narrative demonstrates the trickiness of navigating race discourse: while there is importance in recognizing and representing the histories of people of colour and of emphasizing the racial multiplicity that exists in the world, doing so can lead to a failure to recognize that diversity, demographically speaking, does not negate whiteness' structural domination or who holds power. Demographic diversity does not equate shared power within structures and institutions or a shared distribution of resources in the social world. Ayesha emphasizes that the future will be brown but people of colour need to pull themselves up by their boot straps and stop blaming hegemonic whiteness for their oppression, signals the operation of post-race discourse's

flattening of difference and its lack of consideration of (or glossing over for its own ends) how race and structure operate.

The complexity of navigating race discourse also emerged in Lanny's narrative. Lanny relayed the experiences of his children, whose mother was Indigenous and showed how his children are navigating all kinds of spaces at all times. They have had to learn over their lives that there will always be multiple readings of them, by others:

> [Race and racism] has always been an ongoing conversation [with my kids]. I've always told them…"the white people are going to look at you as Indians and the Indians are going to look at you as Black and the Blacks aren't going to know what to think" and that is the way it's been. Because they've – like me, there is a certain amount of racism in the native community because [of me marrying my wife] that a lot of people weren't happy about. Even my oldest son. He grew up sort of…a few years on the reserve and went to school out there and…the white kids…lumped him in with the Indians and the Indian kids all called him "nigger". Even though he's only a quarter black, if you really want to get down and do your math.

Here, Lanny's children's experiences demonstrate the operation of the hegemonic white gaze, but also how there are multiple forms of looking upon mixed race: in other words, the gaze is categorical and contextual. While Ayesha's 'I'm just me' narrative carves out a unique individual sense of self amidst multiplicity, Lanny's narrative shows how his children navigate multiple-serial selves across different spaces, yet both narratives bump up against whiteness. Lanny's children navigate spaces where they constantly have multiple categorical identities to negotiate. Mixed race raises how whiteness operates along with other categorical identities (there is an assumption that you will always be of a particular origin). Oppression and being under the oppression of whiteness leads groups (including non-whites and Indigenous groups, in the case of Lanny's children) to discipline in particular ways, including through a tightening of identity.

CONCLUSION

Four key learnings about race and mixed race emerged in respondents' narratives, and these learnings point to what respondents are taught about race and how race works over their

life course. Respondents learn, perhaps most significantly, that race is understood as discrete and categorical – it is produced as such through the gaze. As Yvonne's narrative demonstrated, she and her family are only understood under the gaze as 'a little bit of everything': it is the only way she and her kinship ties can be made sense of by others. Kinship emerges as an intimate space in which non-belonging arises, through the production and reproduction of discrete understandings of race, but this is also complicated in mixed race families, and these kin relations are also key to nurturing a sense of self for mixed race people amidst that gaze.

Respondents' narratives about their racial learnings across the life course also tell us about the operation of the multiracializing gaze. I have argued that these narratives demonstrate a two-way operation of categorical identity production. Mixed race confounds notions of pure categories of race and blood through which identity and kinship are recognized, unhinging the categorical gaze. This is demonstrated through respondents' learnings that they lack socially recognized belonging and that they are socially read as impure. Yet, that same categorical gaze is recuperated through its desire to imagine and know the originary point of mixing read off the multiracialized body. This desire on the part of the categorical gaze emerges through respondents learning serial-multiple forms of articulated difference (which has transformative potential but also threatens to reproduce dominant discourse), and their learning how to respond to the calling out of difference.

Life course stages emerge as key to these learnings about how race works. Respondents received an early introduction to dominant racial imaginaries in their childhoods. Their bodies are perceived as the site of miscegenation – the coming together of discrete racial categories. As I have argued, mixed race bodies are particular sites through which understandings about race are produced and reproduced. The fact that lessons about race are learned early for respondents

as children – and which are remade in adulthood at the narrative level – provides us with an understanding of how respondents navigate the production and reproduction of race on their bodies across their various life course stages.

A number of specificities regarding how race is produced also emerged from respondents' narratives, include the importance of blood/origins to understandings of miscegenation, the operation of a black/white racial imaginary, intersections between gender and race, and how race is contextual and contingent. Firstly, the importance of blood/origins to understandings of miscegenation (both a fascination with and a repulsion of) comes through in respondents' narratives at the discursive level of the racial imaginary through which their identities are produced. The dominant "interracial imaginary" (Dorow and Swiffen 2006) is composed of the notion of two people of discrete and linear origins coming together, and mixed race people (produced through this same imaginary), learn that this is how their mixedness is read, via blood, origins and kinship.

A binary of blackness/whiteness emerged as a dominant racial imaginary through which respondents learn about race, including how black/white is often positioned in the dominant imaginary as the quintessential mixed race identity. Regan's narrative showed the operation of a dominant binary - you are either white or black - where growing up she equated her father's brownness as a black identity. The fact that race is gendered also surfaced from respondents' key learnings. The exoticized objectification of respondents' bodies emerged, particularly through female respondents' experiences with dating. Specificities about the operation of blackness and gender were also evident. Gendered readings impacted whose racial identities were read as fluid, and whose were not. Black mixed race female bodies are read as "not just black" – as in Candace's narrative – whereas black mixed race male bodies are read as "just black" – as in

Charles' narrative. In respondents' experiences, the black mixed race female body is desired, whereas a fear of the black mixed race male body emerges.

Respondents' narratives also showed how race is contextual and contingent: different kinds of racialized bodies are constantly being read off each other, dependent on proximity. This becomes evident in a number of ways in respondents' narratives. Firstly, it was evident that racialization occurs across racialized groups but in different ways. As Yvonne narrated, she was racialized by both Chinese people in her community and by non-Chinese people but in different ways. Lanny's children's experiences also demonstrate the contextual and contingent aspects of race categories, where they are subject to various Indigenous and racial slurs depending on how they were being racialized, which itself depended on context and the identities of those around them. Secondly, race – which is (re)produced through a discrete categorical lens – is read off bodies through respondents' kinship choices, as demonstrated by Natalie's narrative. However, agency also plays a role, in that Natalie also consciously chooses to claim a black identity at this point in her life. Respondents' experiences with their kinship relations being misrecognized - as demonstrated in Miranda's narrative – also show the discrete categorical lens through which recognizable kinships are produced.

Respondents' multiple learnings about race and mixed race through kinship across the life course signals the operation of a categorical gaze. A tightening of identity is attempted under the categorical gaze. Through the multiplicities of their identities, respondents continuously fail over the course of their lives to meet the socially expected script of belonging in discrete racial categories. They learn that they must have a story in order to explain their multiple multiplicities. The operation of this categorical gaze is also evident in who is recognizable or unrecognizable as kin (Butler 2002). Multiracialized kinship is simultaneously the site of undoing notions of

race/blood and kinship, in that the kinship complicates the dominant order of racial categorization. Kinship is also the site of reinforcing notions of race/blood and kinship through the recognition question, in that the imaginary of miscegenation is one of the mixing of naturalized categories (whether naturalized as biological and/or cultural and/or national).

While respondents' re-make these lessons in the context of parenting, what also emerged from respondents' parenting narrations is how crossing boundaries seems to be explicitly tied to whiteness: whiteness works alongside the categorical gaze. 'Passing' emerged most predominantly in the narratives that respondents had about their children. Respondents' whose children can 'pass' (i.e. are read as white) demonstrated this white categorical gaze. Now, particular bodies are folded or invited into whiteness (when in previous times the one-drop rule was always in operation). Yet, this ambiguousness is only afforded to particular bodies who can 'pass' – they cross boundaries more easily because they are viewed as having whiteness. This suggests how mixed race can raise how whiteness operates along with other categorical identities.

Respondents' remaking their lessons in the context of parenting, as well as the operation of categorical identities, demonstrate how respondents' need to story themselves (for their selves and others) across their life course, in order to navigate the social and discursive terrain of their identities. In the following chapter, I move to a discussion of three arenas where respondents provided insight into the complex terrain of their identification. This includes how respondents' multiplicities of identity lead them to come up against transcendence of race discourses, and respondents' resistances to being made into post-race emblems.

Chapter 4. Storied Identities

INTRODUCTION

Respondents' experiences of learning about race and the racial gaze through kinship across the life course demonstrates a two-way operation of categorical identity production. It is against this backdrop that we begin to understand how they navigate the social and discursive terrain of their identities. Respondents draw on a variety of identity narratives to story themselves for these discursive navigations. They developed and deployed multiple sorts of identity narratives throughout their lives. One such narrative, highlighted in the Introductory chapter, is the ready identity narrative – the stories that people (re)produced as mixed race have on hand to explain themselves to others in the everyday spaces of their lives. But respondents' understandings of themselves and of mixed race are more complicated than this ready narrative. During our interview conversations, as we talked about mixed race, respondents especially focused on their navigations of the terms of engagement around identity and belonging in their lives. By terms of engagement I mean the various discourses or patterns of social meaning (Parker 1999) that circulate about the possible ways of being and/or living in the world, which respondents must navigate across their lives in the social. Put another way, the terms of identity engagement available to respondents are shaped in the social world and circulate in discourse. Such an approach highlights how identity is always socially formed within particular available discourses. In this chapter, I focus on three key arenas where respondents provided insight into the complex social terrain of identification and belonging (the identity narratives that arose in the interview talk itself): navigating 'mixed race', navigating national belonging ('Canadian' and 'multicultural'), and navigating complex commonalities.

Respondents learn over the course of their lives – through their navigations of the complex and contradictory social terrain – that they need to story their selves, not only for

themselves, but also for others, in order to have a narrative ready to give when they are questioned by others about their identities. Considering such storied identities extends and builds on the previous chapter, which focused on learnings in and in relation to family. Learnings in the family about race and the racial gaze – learnings that begin early in childhood – create the foundation through which respondents come to navigate race discourses across their life course. This chapter shifts lenses, using a narrative identity approach to consider how respondents story their selves.

A narrative identity approach enables a consideration of how respondents' storied identities are shaped by the operation of race discourse, but also how respondents' navigations may work to impact the operation of those same discourses in the contexts where their lives unfold and where their storied identities are narrated. As Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000) state of narrative identity approaches, "[In] projects combining life histories and socio-historical contexts, personal stories are expressive of larger societal and historical contexts, and the narratives produced by individuals are also constitutive of specific socio-historical phenomena in which biographies are grounded" (67). Put another way, narrative identity approaches bring discourses to life through individual perspectives and experiences (Ewick and Silbey 1995; Maynes, Pierce and Laslatt 2008). Respondents' narratives help to develop an understanding of race discourse in the social world. Considering life narratives next to race discourse enables resonances and linkages between narrative and discourse to be brought out, without reducing one to the other (Maynes, Pierce, and Laslett 2008), and points to the contours of racialized structures over time (Connell 2005; Ifekwunigwe 1999; Tuan and Shiao 2011). Tensions that are brought out through respondents' identity narratives tell us about the centrality of categories and categorical identities within the operation of race discourse (and help to further theorize the

existence of a categorical external racial gaze as introduced in the previous chapter). The three arenas of identification or belonging – mixed race, nation, and complex commonalities – also foreground the power of various discourses across respondents' life courses and the multicultural era. Respondents' life stories, which span this same time period, provide yet another perspective on mixedness in Canada. Their narrations and experiences of mixed race across the life course foreground the everyday negotiations of the changing terrain of race and multiculturalism.

The first arena of belonging emerging from respondents' narratives, that of 'mixed race', shows how mixed race vocabulary names transformative multiplicity, but also how there is a danger of reifying social categories of mixing or binary origins through this. In particular, there is a certain salience of black-white mixing (the depth and complexity of mixedness that especially applies, given dominant social notions of race), but there is also the larger vocabulary of socially developed terms to make sense of black-white mixing, and thus to be navigated by respondents.

The second arena, that of national belonging ('Canadian' and 'multicultural'), shows how respondents' draw on 'Canadian' as a narrative resource with which to identify themselves, the claiming of which works to challenge the national racialized imaginary. Yet, this simultaneously involves the labour of undoing the imaginary's whiteness. Respondents also draw on 'multicultural' as a narrative resource, working to claim a rich lived multiculturalism that goes beyond the expectations of the gaze. At the same time, there also exists a danger of reproducing the discourse that mixed race is the embodiment of multiculturalism or that the existence of mixed race bodies symbolizes that multiculturalism is successful. These two arenas highlight, firstly, how available discourses (mixed race, Canadian, multicultural) become resources – but difficult ones – to deploy in that they butt up against entrenched racial categories; secondly, how

their use and usefulness as resources changes across the life course and thus by socio-historical context; and thirdly, how these are always negotiations of individual experience and social/external readings (i.e., identity as socially produced between the self and the social).

The third arena of belonging that emerged from respondents' narratives is what I refer to as complex commonalities and the formation of (un)collective identities. (Un)collective identities refers to how respondents expressed in their narratives a recognition of a complex jumble of shared and unshared experiences between themselves and other mixed race people (the recognition that we are not all the same, with a simultaneous claiming of collective identities). In this way, (un)collective as a concept refers to a sense of commonality that comes from experiencing how race works in the world (in other words the experience of being under the multiracializing gaze) as opposed to commonality *across* difference. It is not about various differences that meet up, but rather how multiple multiplicities is the common experience, and how it meets the singular gaze. Put another way, it is a collective of different experiences held together by the common experience of multiple multiplicities. I argue that (un)collective identification has transformative anti-racist political potential through its carving out of a different space of identity in regard to (white) 'Canadianness' and (discrete categorical) multiculturalism. Yet, the notion of (un)collectives also presents the danger of post-race racism using 'mixed race' to reproduce its own fracturing and flattening work. I use the term (un)collective – with the parenthetical 'un' qualifying 'collective' in order to capture this idea of the common experience of multiple multiplicities meeting the singular gaze: a common experience of difference, as opposed to a common experience across difference.

Throughout respondents' narratives the messiness of their lived experiences of negotiating the multiracializing gaze becomes evident, and contradictions and tensions in the

three arenas of identification as social process are brought to the fore. Respondents' navigations of mixed race terms, national belonging, and complex commonalities raise how there is a tension between the transformative possibilities of mixed race and its reproduction of dominant discourses, through the multiracializing gaze. This echoes a key puzzle in the literature on cultural hybridity, namely the tension within the politics of hybridity between the transcendent blurring of boundaries and the reproduction of binary categories: how "cultural hybridity manages to be both transgressive and normal, and why it is experienced as dangerous, difficult or revitalising despite its quotidian normalcy" (Werbner 2015: 4).

Some mixed race scholars have claimed hybridity in their work. For example, in their empirical research, Rockquemore and Brunsma (2004) have found many of their respondents identify with a border identity, meaning they consider themselves to be neither black nor white, but rather a blending of the two. Other scholars such as Mengel (2001) have theorized that people of mixed race are the epitome of hybridity and constitute the ultimate hybrid. Yet this position has also been problematized by scholars like Mahtani (2005) who argue that such notions are empty of any consideration for power structures in society and the wider social discourses that affect all racialized groups. Within mixed race scholarship, drawing on hybridity literature can be problematic in that it may presuppose the binary. Rather than seeking to resolve the tension or claim hybridity as some previous mixed race literature has, I show how mixed race raises the politics of cultural hybridity (the tension between transformative and reproductive) – through the three key discursive arenas of identity negotiation – differently. While the multiracializing gaze (re)produces linear or discrete racial imaginaries through the production of bodies as mixed race, this same production opens up spaces of transformative possibilities

(which I discuss more later in the chapter.) Next, I move to discussing the three arenas of identification as a social process.

ARENAS OF IDENTITY AND BELONGING

Navigating Terms of Mixed Race

Respondents' navigations of mixed race terminologies are important areas of identity negotiation. Interviewees responded to a call for participants that used the term mixed race as the predominant term in which to recruit research participants; yet, respondents made sense of the term mixed race in a variety of ways in the interviews. Most respondents embraced the term mixed race for political or social purposes, while also claiming some distance from it and from other terms inadequate to the task of encapsulating respondents' identities and experiences. Crucially, respondents expressed changes across time in their relationships to terms: in other words, fluidity across time is central to their understanding of race and mixed race.

Multiple respondents expressed that labels like mixed race (or terms such as multiracial) provide them with an identificatory terminology that represents the multiplicities of their identities. Leanne narrates an early adoption in her life course of such terms, stating:

> Leanne: I have identified as "multiracial" for a long time. "Mixed race/multiracial". I'm all good with it. Because it doesn't…it doesn't say "you're just one thing". And…I always hate when you get your tax…or…
>
> Interviewer: Census or…
>
> Leanne: Census, or something like that, where you have to check one box for them. I always check "other" or I don't check any [slight laughter].

For Leanne, the terms mixed race and multiracial move beyond linear origin discourses that expect her to be "one thing", in both state discourses (such as through the census) as well as in her everyday life. Similarly for Karen, these types of terms denote multiplicity, but over time,

she has shifted away from using them and identifies as "Brown" (an identification that I return

to later in the chapter in my discussion of post-race discourse and (un)collective identities):

> [Mixed race] is not a term I use. I think it's an accurate term on one level, on another level it's completely inaccurate, because I don't think race exists anymore, even scientifically, it's been disproved. But, if you were to ask what I most often sort of think of myself as now, I would say [slightly laughing] after 15 years of teaching at [school name], I think of myself as a Brown person, with a capital "B". As the kids there would say, I'm "a Brown" or I'm "a Desi" or whatever [slight laughter].

Here, Karen emphasizes her ambiguous relationship to the term mixed race, and the conundrum

that the term itself sets up: on one level it is accurate in that it describes how such bodies are read

within dominant race discourse – the products of discrete racial groups mixing – while at the

same time it is inaccurate in that it works to reify the notion of distinct racial categories that can

mix.

In a similar fashion to Karen, Charles expressed an ambiguous relationship to such

identificatory terms, noting how while he is forced to narrate his identity with terms like mixed,

biracial and multiracial, such terms work both with and against the complexities of his family

history and identity:

> I say I'm "mixed". I…I don't really know. "Biracial", "multiracial", I mean it's, there's a fallacy to all of this. I think…if I look at my mother's racial profile, she would have to check a box that says "black". But if you dig in, like I say, there's an Indian in there. Two generations ago there was an Indian grandfather. There was a Jewish-Portuguese guy. There was some English and Irish in there. And then the African that's in there most likely is from one part of the world. The idea of – "black" is a different thing when you're actually from somewhere, right. If you're black you're not really from a physical place. Just like you're white, you're not from a physical place. But…I realize how…false it [is]….I can get on a plane, and be identified here as black in Toronto, and three hours later I can get off the plane in Jamaica and be considered white. I haven't changed. Now, if I call myself "biracial' it's the same sort of thing, it's just a term. And depending on…the sort of social context, I could be - I don't know, maybe I wouldn't be "biracial" anymore. I don't know – I can't imagine a day. My kids will eventually be something. One way or another, I don't know what they'll be. So, I just find it – it's a weird sort of term, but it doesn't bother me. I just find it intellectually kind of curious.

"Mixed race" provides a vocabulary for naming multiplicity, while also posing the danger of

reifying the social categories of mixing. Here, Charles narrates his own navigations of these

kinds of terms, while also imagining how it will change for his future children. He seeks to push against these terminologies through an intergenerational imaginary that defies origins and fixing, working to challenge notions of hybridity and how they rely on binary origins (Werbner and Modood 2015).

Additionally of interest is the use of the terms biracial, mixed race and multiracial: when they are used interchangeably and by whom. While Charles uses these terms interchangeably (which respondents who were black-white mixed tended to do more in the interviews) other respondents, including Kara, spoke of how biracial seems to imply "half and half", whereas mixed race and multiracial are terms that denote more "hybrid" identities. Kara narrated how her identification with mixed race terminologies has changed across time, and lands on the term mixed race after various life experiences:

> Kara: I think as a kid I used "Eurasian" a lot, which is a weird word, 'cause I'm not necessarily "European" and "Asian" in my head I don't – anyway – but I think "mixed race" is what I've turned to – 'cause then it doesn't identify you as what races it is, it just says you're a variety. 'Cause a lot of people from all cultures see me, and they know that there's something unique about me, but they can't tell which blend it is. A lot of – like a lot of Chinese people tend to know 'cause they can tell, but a lot of other Asians are never actually sure. So, I enjoy using "mixed race", it keeps people guessing. "I'm mixed, I'm not going to tell you what mixes…until we're friends".

> Interviewer: Yeah, totally, and was there…I don't know if you remember a particular time in your life when you started using that term, or was it a term you always knew?

> Kara: Probably not until my 30s, not until you're slightly more comfortable as a person anyway. In your 20s you're still trying to figure out who you are. So yeah, it took a while, and maybe some therapy [slight laughter], to be comfortable, like "oh yeah, who cares". 'Cause I remember being very freaked out in my mid-20s about people judging me by looking at me first, and worrying about that. But now it's like whatever…that's on them, that's not on me.

Kara also defies the binary origin story through actively claiming "mixing" as a term denoting multiplicity, but also as a term that is in and of itself ambiguous or lacking in racial specificity, as an adult (while also remembering how she tried to give a "bi" narrative as a child that did not fit within a binary origin story).

Throughout the above narratives, it is evident that respondents' identification with mixed race (and terms like it), change across time: from early adoption of the term, to landing on it after various life experiences, to imagining how it will change with their own children. Mixed race discourse is a flexible social resource – flexible by socio-spatial context and by temporal life course experience. This also complicates assumptions about the racial imaginary within the Linear Immigrant Nation discourse, which demands of non-white racialized people a narrative of non-white racialized ethnicities which are static and discrete, or at least stable, as highlighted in the introductory chapter. The narratives of my respondents who are socially identified and read as black-white mixed were especially poignant for highlighting changing terminology across time, along with changes in their life course. Black-white is often positioned as the quintessential mixed race identity in the North American racial imaginary (Ibrahim 2012; Mahtani 2014). Here, black-white mixed race further becomes a lens for clarifying how spatial and temporal context makes a difference to changes over the life course. Black-white mixed respondents spoke continuously of how their identification has changed over the course of their lives, but also how this has been navigated through how they perceive themselves versus how other perceive them. Put another way, there is a relationship between changes over the life course, context and particular racialized mix.

Natalie's discussion of her self-identification reflected that her identification has changed temporally over her various life stages, which was also impacted by the different spatial contexts that she's found herself in:

> My self-identification has gone through a number of different phases.…As I said, I really wanted to be white, or at least look white when I was a child. When I came in to a more accepting environment, university, that became less so, and for a long time I quite strongly identified as a biracial person.

Growing up in a predominantly white context led Natalie to want to identify as white.

During her university years in the early 1990s – which was also a time of emerging literature on mixed race experiences in the US, which Natalie stated impacted her – she began to identify more as biracial. Similar shifts across time are evident in Kara's quote above, with both Natalie and Kara adopting terms like mixed race or biracial as they got older and became more comfortable with their identities. However, the fluidity and ambiguity afforded to Kara in her self-identification and her identity narratives was not available to Natalie. In other words, mixed race as a flexible social resource depends on the salience of particular racial categories (such as black). Now, married to a black man and having children who are racialized as black, Natalie finds herself identifying as black more and more, which is also due to how others read her. How she sees herself versus how she is seen by others is a constant theme across Natalie's narrative, signalling the power that the gaze has over multiracialized bodies, and in particular bodies that are produced through blackness. As Natalie put it "a little bit of black is black" and how others see you is "what counts". Korrie's narrative also reflected how others' perceptions of her as black have impacted shifts in her identification across the life course, both temporally and spatially. She gives the example of the first time she came across children who were also "mixed race black", but that she prevented herself from forming a relationship with them in that she wanted to distance herself from identifying as a person of colour. Korrie reflected that she had not yet formed a sense of political awareness as a person of colour, which she now holds:

> I would speak of myself as a woman of colour, I consider myself to be part of a brown-skinned community that includes lots of different people…and yeah, I think – I do have a very strong sense of my mixed race identity, but I think in a way how I'm perceived is as a brown skinned person, it doesn't really matter, whether I'm mixed or not, 'cause people – yeah….When I was a teenager I moved to [town name] and there were actually two other mixed race black kids there that were from one other black family in the town. And it was interesting because we never spoke to each other. We sort of kept our distance, and…because I felt at that point really we are trying to fit in, and didn't really have a sense of identity as a person of colour.

Korrie's awareness of others' perceptions of her – "I'm perceived as a brown skinned person" – greatly impacts her identity: she identifies as mixed race but this occurs alongside her identity as a woman of colour, a term and community that she has come to identify with over time, in part because her blackness overrides her mixedness in others' perceptions of her.

Shifts in dominant social discourses over time also impact how respondents, and in particular those of black-white mix, navigate and identify with the terms of reference at work in different contexts across their life course. Mixed race as an available vocabulary or resource depends on changing social discourses (especially given the salience of the black-white imaginary). Miranda's identification has shifted multiple times across her life course:

> Over the years [my identification] has changed many times. But…I would use "biracial" unless I [was] talking about my growing up. In that sense. I…. identify as black, though that's only for other people's comfort. Especially in the black community, I have issues with that because I am 50% white, yet I would look stupid walking around telling people I was white. And for years I would say "biracial". Now I identify as black. If there's a drop down box and I can narrow it down I – "biracial" just sounds really old now. "Biracial". "Mixed race" – 'cause at one time "biracial" was always black and white. And now it's kind of everybody. Which is more "multiracial" or something, I guess. "Mixed race" is everybody. So to find something that defines me…there isn't one. I'm not comfortable with…"Afro-Can[adian]", 'cause for one, my ancestry – apparently we all come from Africa, but as far as I know I'm from the Islands [slight laughter] and I'm Canadian. I wouldn't put that – a lot of people would like to put that on me "you're African-Canadian". And I'm like "no I'm not" [slight laughter]….But I don't have my own name. Years ago when "mulatto" was politically correct [I used the term], and it was actually my mulatto friends who set me straight on that [slight laughter]. Because I didn't know it was a derogatory term. I still hear old folks use that, "mulatto".

Miranda's identification has been greatly impacted by her perception of how others read her, identifying as black "for other people's comfort", as well as through her negotiations of the ins and outs of the dominant (and politically correct) parlance across her life course. Such discursive temporal shifts in the terms used to define people of black-white mix – and how they are themselves fraught with meaning – signals the need for blackness to be controlled, particularly when it comes into contact or is 'mixed with whiteness'.

Respondents who are read and (re)produced through blackness have particular

experiences with multiracialization and negotiating blackness. Terms such as mulatto carry a

history with them entrenched within a specific racial project of policing blackness.

Multiracialized respondents with one black parent are produced into identity categories through

assumptions about what blackness is, or what it 'should be'. The lack of ambiguousness allowed

for such respondents in their identity categories across the life course signals how blackness is

produced, managed, and contained (and therefore controlled) by the external racial gaze.

Interviewees of black-white mix were highly cognizant of what terms were available to them,

and what agency they did or did not have over their own identity narrative through the

relationship between how they see themselves and how others see them. Lanny's narrative

illustrates how power/knowledge are working in such negotiations through his awareness of what

terms are available to him and how this has changed throughout his life course over time. Lanny

described how he has narrated his identity over the course of the multicultural era. While he

presently identifies with the term mixed race this has not always been the case.

> Lanny: Well I used to just say "I'm mulatto", and that kind of fell out of…favour. I just say now "my Mom's white and my Dad's black". Simple as that. I don't say "well my Dad…came out of slavery – might only be 9/10ths black, part Indian or something". I just leave it at that. "Mom's Scots/Irish, Dad's black".

> Interviewer: And do you remember – you mentioned that you used to use the word mulatto to describe yourself. Do you remember when you stopped using that term and started using…mixed as a term?

> Lanny: Probably within the last ten years I think. Yeah. Especially since I got involved with the research I've been doing….And…you get – started doing a little more reading, start to know a few more educated people who had stopped using that term, and were using a more…politically correct "mixed race", "biracial", "multiethnic" whatever you want to use. Anything [like] that…so…I just…start growing with the times. Vocabulary changes. A lot of people don't even know [what] that the word means anymore. They say it's…yeah. There's one segment of mixed race population – you read…Internet blogs and…there's all kinds of Internet sites for mixed race people, and that's a real debate among people of mixed race, black and white heritage. How…

> Interviewer: Whether to use that term.

> Lanny: Yeah, whether to use that term mulatto. Some say it's derogatory, other one's say, well it's just an accepted term, an old term. It's no different than any other. So, you know, the…people's ideas about the subject vary. But, for myself I just…decided mixed race. It takes a little more explaining sometimes, especially if people do know what mulatto means. But, like I say, a lot of the times they don't, so…you end up having to tell them…a bit of your genealogy anyways, 90% of the time.

Lanny's narrative highlights where historical eras meet up with individual life course narratives, but also how power and knowledge are working; the terms of reference, the terms on which one can imagine one's self and/or be imagined by others. The social terms of identification, particularly for mixed race people, are especially anchored to genealogy or origins. The terms that Lanny uses to describe his identity, ranging from mulatto to mixed race – and how they have shifted over his life course – are bound up in his ready identity narrative as well as what terms are circulating in popular discourse and parlance. Lanny narrates the various negotiations that he goes through. How he identifies himself for *himself* as well as to others is decided through what terms people who he narrates his identity to will understand, debates about what terms are acceptable to use, as well as what terms appeal to him. In other words, identification is a sociohistorically contextual practice. Naming is a changing thing: it happens over the life course and is genealogical, but negotiations also change over time. However, it is also impossible to be attentive to each moment of the gaze, in that you end up narrating "a bit of your genealogy anyways", as Lanny puts it, regardless of your ready identity narrative or what terms you give.

Navigating National Belonging

While respondents navigate terms of mixed race across the life course, they also do so within a particular context. The second arena of belonging or identity negotiation that emerged from respondents' narratives is their navigations of the terms of belonging to the Canadian nation. Here, I pull out two discourses of national belonging that emerged: the discourses of

'Canadian' identity and 'Multiculturalism'. These two terms are intertwined, but I treat them separately, while attending to their overlap in my discussion.

Respondents' claiming of the term Canadian as an identity emerged in two ways: as "proud to be Canadian", but also to explicitly challenge the idea that "Canadian means white". Respondents' claiming national identity is also a narrative resource, but involves the labour of undoing its whiteness (especially because of settler colonial history). Respondents' claiming of Canadian was woven within multicultural/settler mythologies and imaginaries. Respondents often cited being a proud Canadian touting Canada's tolerance and benevolence for diversity and official multiculturalism, while failing to recognize Canada as a settler colonial state (Thobani 2007). Yet, through their claiming of Canadian, respondents explicitly challenged Canada's linear racialized imaginary in that they recognized that *Canadian-Canadians* (Mackey 2002) are perceived of as white. In this way they worked to challenge Canada's national imaginary, as well as implicitly nodded towards Canada as a white settler state**.**

As with mixed race terms, respondents' claims to being Canadian varied across their life course, and were a matter of negotiating between their own and others' perceptions. For respondents, claiming Canadianness works to create a sense of belonging, in a context where to be mixed race is not to have an identified space of collective or socially recognized belonging.

Many respondents recognized that while they self-identify as Canadian others do not identify them as such, leading respondents to once again articulate how they are constantly negotiating between how they see themselves and how others see them. Ram reflected that he self-identifies as Canadian but that his name often serves as a marker of what are perceived as non-white immigrant origins that are attached to outside of the nation:

> I self-identify as Canadian. And I realize that a lot of Canadians don't identify me as Canadian. Often people ask me about my name, and "what kind of name is that?" and I'll say "it's a Canadian name" and then they'll laugh and [say] "really, really, where is it actually from?" And

> there are times when…its clear to me that other people are clearly seeing me as an immigrant…based, I think on the name, mostly. I think when people see me – they're such dumb questions. I could be Mexican for all they know. It's on sight that they say "he's from somewhere else", but the name could be Eastern European or those kind of Yugoslavian names.

Here, Ram reflects on how not only are people determined by others to be Canadian or not Canadian "on sight" by the gaze, but that other markers such as names also work to trigger an assessment of how Canadian one is. If a name is deemed to be ethnically ambiguous, this only adds to the questions one receives. Yet, Ram seeks to counter the assumption that he (and his given and family names) are not Canadian, through representing his name as Canadian – "it's a Canadian name'"– even though others question its belonging to the nation.

Multiple respondents worked to complicate how others perceive them by purposefully responding to questions about their identities with "Canadian". Natalie relayed how she will respond with "Canadian" to questions about what she is or where she is from, because she knows that it is not what response the question asker wants:

> Yeah, sometimes I do say "I'm Canadian" but I know that that's not what they're asking. I mean, really. 'Cause when they're asking, they're in Canada. They know I'm Canadian. I sound Canadian, I'm Canadian. Sometimes – if they ask me where I'm *from* [emphasis], then I'll often say "born and bred right here". But then they usually ask a follow-up question. Almost always.

Responding to such questioning with "I'm Canadian", works to complicate how questioners are looking for a linear origin response that attaches respondents' origins to outside of the nation. Despite such strategies, the gaze is not so easily evaded, and its need to place (and fix) respondents' origins is not satiated through the response of "Canadian", with follow-up questions, as Natalie notes, being the norm. Such a response is also similar to how monoracialized non-white people navigate the gaze (Mackey 2002). Yet, for mixed race respondents their response of "Canadian" is complicated in that the multiplicity of their origin story simultaneously challenges Canada's linear racial imaginary and who gets to be Canadian, but is also taken up within the imaginary of Canadian. The multiplicity of mixed race bodies can

be drawn on as proof that multiculturalism in the Canadian nation is successful (Mahtani, Kwan-Lafond, Taylor 2014), and even that such bodies represent the "New Métis" of Canada (Mahtani 2014).

Other respondents sought to explicitly turn the dominant racialized imaginary that circulates in Canada on its head by identifying as "Canadian", while recognizing the power that this imaginary has on who is and is not perceived as Canadian. Charles took this up when I asked him about whether he identifies as a visible minority:

> Interviewer: I'm wondering about the term visible minority and what your thoughts are around that term and if you would identify as a visible minority as well?
>
> Charles: I think – sure. I would identify. It's an interesting…term in the same way that biracial is an interesting term, or multiracial is an interesting term. It – all of these things are trying to differentiate something other than "norm" right. So I don't – would I identify, sure. I guess there's not, again, I don't look like…the *perceived* [emphasis] majority anymore. I don't really know what the majority is. And again, especially down here, I don't know if the Lanny MacDonald image of the Canadian – majority of Canadians looking like that, I don't think that's really applicable anymore. And it's going to be less applicable continually, as each generation keeps going on. But that's what it's denoting. "Here's Lanny MacDonald, and he's the majority. He's got red hair and hewers of wood and drawers of water". Whatever they used to say Canadians were.

Here, Charles describes how the term visible minority works to reinforce the normalized imaginary of "Canadian as white". The term visible minority works to keep whiteness at the centre of the imaginary, even with shifts in the makeup of the population[14]. Visible minorities – as opposed to majority Canadians who are white – are those with linear origin stories and skin colours that tie them to belonging outside of the nation.

Respondents thought about the term Canadian in general in the interviews, including who is and is not identified as Canadian. But they also reflected on how they use the term in their own

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[14] The term Visible Minority is also taken up as a way to avoid engaging in race talk explicitly (who is and is not visible is about who is and is not white). This emphasis on visibility works to shift attention within public discourse to demographic concerns (e.g. x percent of Canadians will be visible minorities by 2017; how this will impact mainstream Canadians), versus interrogating how the structure of Canadian society and the functioning of its institutions perpetuates racism against racialized people, and how those who hold political and institutional power remain predominantly white.

ready identity narratives. Like Charles, Kara sought to challenge the imaginary of what a

Canadian is both inside and outside of Canada, which she at times deployed in her ready identity

narrative:

> It's very easy when you're not in Canada to be very Canadian. I think when you're here
> you…feel a certain cultural diversity need to be kind of unique or something. But I think - yeah, I
> generally tell most people first "I'm Canadian" if they ask. Just to be slightly sassy, but also just
> to have them recognize that "this is what Canadian is".

Here, Kara talks through one type of identity narrative that she deploys, in order to both play

with the racial gaze, as well as to challenge others' assumptions about who is Canadian and

"what Canadian is". The multiplicity of her origin story (which gets positioned as "unique") is

both folded into celebratory discourses of Canada's cultural diversity, while also positioned

outside of belonging in the nation.

Like Kara, Ayesha explicitly deploys her identity as "Canadian" while travelling outside

of the country. She positions herself as Canadian, not only through her ready identity narrative,

but through the marker of the Canadian flag on her backpack. Without it she has faced negative

experiences while travelling, through her racialization as black:

> I have my Canadian flag logo thing when I travel. I make sure it's very visible….because I've
> seen the negative ramifications of [not having] it…I had my Canadian [flag on my bag while
> travelling] and everybody who noticed it had something to say. I just thought that was amazing.
> And I was determined that I would never travel without making sure my pin was on there….but
> the issue with being Canadian is that the comments I get are typically, something like "oh…my
> cousin's in Canada, and I've always meant to go". Or "all Canadians I've met are so nice" or
> something, but I've never had anything negative – anything. So I love my little Canadian
> identifier. I made a point of [wearing it] anywhere I go in the world - internationally. People have
> different perceptions of what that means to them, to be Canadian. But it's all been so far positive.
> And that's okay, I….out of that may then flow a conversation… since obviously I'm a traveller,
> they may assume that "oh, you're a travelling kind of person…were you born in Canada" and
> then that's where it will – I'll decide whether I'm going to have that out with that person today.

Ayesha's blackness and how it gets read off her body greatly impacts how she moves through the

world, both inside and outside of Canada. She purposefully draws on her narrative of "I'm

Canadian", for her own safety while travelling, but also to add to others' perceptions of who is

Canadian. Yet, her narrative of being Canadian does not entirely shield her from others'

questions about how her origins are tied to outside of the Canadian nation, signaling how

whiteness is centred in the racialized imaginary of Canada both inside and outside the nation

(Mackey 2002).

As emphasized in the introductory chapter, the questioning of non-white and mixed race

bodies occurs through the discourse of the Linear Immigrant Nation, but it also gestures towards

the operation of another discourse in the multicultural era: Canada as a Multicultural Nation and

its celebratory narrative of cultural preservation and enrichment. In this context the asking of

someone's cultural background is framed in a socially acceptable celebratory way: i.e. I'm only

asking you what your background is because I want to celebrate you and your culture, with you

(Bannerji 2000; Mackey 2002). In other words, the racial imaginary of the Linear Immigrant

Nation relies on non-white bodies being put into discrete cultural categories for the sake of

multicultural interest, while at the same time being confused by the multiracialized body.

The discourse of Canada as a multicultural society was a notion that also emerged as key

to respondents' navigations of belonging within the nation, and specifically "multicultural" as a

term that generated belonging. In particular, it emerged that specific expectations were placed

upon respondents (about cultural knowledge, practices, and how they embody these) as part of

the multicultural imaginary. The gaze of the Celebratory Multicultural Nation seeks to actively

differentiate racialized Others' through cultural practices from Canadians and Canadian culture,

while simultaneously recruiting these Others or folding these others into its celebratory

discourse. Multiple respondents expressed how once the gaze dissects their origins through

determining "what they are", they are expected to have knowledge of "their cultural practices" to

share with the gaze (and for this knowledge to be folded into the discourse of the Celebratory

Multicultural Nation). For example, Gordan reflected on a memory he had as a child of the

expectation that was placed on him to share cultural knowledge:

> Gordan: There was times in junior high, I can't remember…where it was kind of a…UN type thing, where you were sharing…different things. And I remember dressing up with – some sort of Chinese thing, I'm trying to remember what the heck it was. I recall wearing a Chinese costume type pajamas and talking about Chinese culture and stuff like that. Which for me at the time, I remember felt kind of very strange. Because it would have been about the same as a Caucasian doing the same sort of thing, because it wasn't really very natural for me. I don't think I identified myself as being Chinese so much, it wasn't like I was like "oh, this is what I do at home"…more like "okay, this is what people would do in China". Wear this type of clothing, and they would talk about this sort of thing. It was more, again, like any other Canadian kid, exploring different cultures, but that there was some sort of cultural link for me. But I remember doing that – in I think it was junior high, where there was that sort of activity going on. Otherwise it was just a small town rural area that didn't really do a lot of cultural celebration things. But, I remember strange little events like that, yeah.
>
> Interviewer: Do you remember your classmates also…dressing up like that too?
>
> Gordan: Yeah, they were doing – there'd be Ukrainian kids, [who] were doing different parts again, dressing up and presenting and talking about this country. I think – I can't remember if it was…a lot of it was derived from…what culture you were or had background in, some of it was assigned if they didn't have something that was distinctive. But yeah, again, it was kind of the same sort of…costumed theatre type thing, where it's like "oh, well they're dressed up in this very kind of strange abstract thing that they don't really connect with. It's not really them". Where I'm sure a number of people who saw me doing the same sort of thing thought "oh, well he's Chinese, that makes sense. There's a connection there". But for me, like I said, I was just being…another Canadian kid exploring whatever [the] social studies requirement was at that time.

Because others racialize Gordan as Asian, there are also expectations of his connection and

knowledge of Chinese cultural practices, despite Gordan's own distance from them: he saw it as

strange and unnatural in that he felt like someone who was playing a part. There was a

disconnection between what was assigned to Gordan's mixed race body ("oh, well he's Chinese,

that makes sense") and his self-understanding as "just another Canadian kid" doing a social

studies assignment. Gordan's body was read through the fixing work of the multicultural

imaginary. These same fixed readings are also put on racialized bodies that are not produced as

mixed or multiracialized. However, as a resource, while "multiculturalism" fixes, it can also be

bent, muddled and manipulated by mixed race people (perhaps even more so than "Canadian").

Respondents' narratives around family and kinship were an especially salient lens through which to understand negotiation of the multicultural imaginary, including how respondents challenge the multicultural imaginary. Gordan's narrative highlights shifts across his life course narrative: as a child he performed "what people would do in China", while negotiating between how he saw himself and the multicultural imaginary on his body. Yet over time, he developed an understanding of the importance of Chinese cultural celebrations and traditions for feeling connected to (and connecting with) his family. While I used this same quote in the previous chapter to convey the learning of serial-multiple forms of articulated difference, I quote the passage in full again to convey the full meaning of Gordan's life course narrative in the context of the multicultural imaginary:

> I have noticed as I've gotten older I'm a little more appreciative of…the cultural celebrations. I remember as a kid the whole going to grandma's house for weird food, Chinese New Year, whatever the strangeness was, was kind of a bit of a…ordeal and we had to be very quiet, and you couldn't drop the chopsticks, you couldn't talk, and all this stuff, that seemed painful [slight laughter]. Now, as I'm older, I understand the importance of it and I understand that it's…something very very valuable to my grandmother and whatever hardship I have to go through is fine. And there's one chance a year that we…as a family make that commitment to get all to the same place at the same time and have a big dinner, and…I've made that connection as I've gotten older. Whereas I had that connection as a kid growing up around…Thanksgiving or Christmas, in that that was definitely my mom's side of the family celebration, and we definitely had - I connected those holidays with being family events, and being together with…a whole group of people, and you did all these stupid things to get everybody at the same place and cram them around the same table just so that you could be together, and as a kid I didn't have that same connection with the Chinese or the…Asian type celebrations.... Now with my family I bring my wife, and my two kids, and we have to move up – go up there for the weekend…. So it's – no small undertaking…. But…I [know] that it is important. That is something that just as important to get my family together for…Christmas, and as I now know, it's important to get together with my wife's family on New Year's, 'cause that's the…Russian equivalent of the same sort of…important family occasion. Those things mean a little bit more to me now that I've got my own family, now that I'm a little bit older.

For Gordan, the multicultural imaginary is refracted or ruptured (Ferguson 2012) through the way multiple cultural connections co-exist within his biographical story of kinship. He discusses how at different points in his life, he connected with his white/Scottish and Chinese cultural heritage, and now with his wife's Russian heritage. As a child, the cultural connection to family was via Thanksgiving or Christmas (his mother's side), and in retrospect he now embraces the

Chinese cultural connection as well (shifting from perceiving it as "strange" to "appreciated").

This is part of a broader, fluid interest in family connections through culture. Here, Gordan does

not so much navigate the expectations of the multicultural imaginary but rather claims a rich,

lived multiculturalism that might even go beyond what the imaginary expects.

For Karen, the multicultural imaginary is refracted or ruptured through the muddling of

origins and the reality of "not knowing", narrating her origin story as possible (but not definite). I

also include Karen's narrative in full to convey its depth:

> Interviewer: Could you talk a bit about your family growing up and describe your parents, and talk about when you came to Canada as well.
>
> Karen: We came in '67, 1967, it was at the end of the summer, so just before school started. I was 13, I had just turned 13…and in South Africa, as I said we were classified 'coloured' – 'mixed race'…our genetic background is sort of not exactly certain, which I think is often the case with mixed race people. At least, this is what I've heard and read. So, what I'm about to tell you is possible, but not definite. My mother – my mother's mother was a woman of mixed race. My mother's father was a man who was, I'm guessing, a man who was of 100% European heritage, whatever that might have been. My mother's grandmother on her mother's side was Xhosa which would be, I'm guessing, maybe not 100% black African, but probably…and her grandfather I don't know anything about. I met her mother, who was my grandmother on her side, and she looked sort of like me. Maybe with fairer hair and sort of more greeny eyes, and curlier hair. And then my father's side of the family is the family that we grew up with present every day, because they lived in the same town. And in fact on the same street. And, so my father's father's family came from India originally. And probably, and this has been a little bit of a…detective story, because I only have one uncle, my father's brother, who actually went to India sort of in search of the – that branch of the family, and the best they could come up with was that possibly they were from Kampur/Kanpur…I think, so somewhere in the north of India. But my grandfather himself, was born in South Africa. His family – I've seen a photograph of his mom, and she looks just like maybe a Tamil, darker skinned Indian woman. My grandmother on my father's side has mixed heritage, she looked like she might be Southern European, she spoke some Portuguese and some Spanish, and her mother was Irish, and my father and his siblings actually met her, and there's a photograph of her somewhere. So that's sort of the short story [slight laughter].

This passage demonstrates an active undoing of certainty of origins – a certainty which is

expected by the multicultural imaginary and is expected to be discrete and linear ('you were

there, then you came here') – particularly for racialized people. While this is not necessarily the

version of the narrative that Karen gives others when her identity narrative is asked after, it is

part of Karen's broader narrative of self.

The multicultural imaginary works to dissect mixed race people's origins ('you are all these things') while also emphasizing how this demonstrates a successful multicultural nation and signals the possibility of transcending race. One way that celebratory and post-race discourses map onto each other is through the notion that mixed race people embody multiculturalism: they symbolize that multiculturalism in Canada is a success. Not only that, but mixed race people transcend race and will bring an end to racism. In my introductory chapter I positioned this kind of discourse as an iteration of celebratory discourses, which is another discursive mode tied to notions of futurity which is also at work. The fascination with the possibility of going beyond racism is more than celebratory: it is also about imagining another way of being, moving towards post-race discourse.

Navigating Complex Commonalities

Tensions within post-race claims – including tensions in post-race's celebratory draw – intersect with the third narrative theme that emerged from respondents' interviews: their expression of what I call complex commonalities. This builds off of my call to recognize *complex commonalities* between mixed race researchers and their mixed race respondents in research on mixed race identity, through a consideration of the variations across experience resulting from different racialized, gendered, sexual, ability and classed identities (Paragg 2014). Across their interviews, respondents also recognized complex commonalities with other people of mixed race through simultaneously recognizing what they have in common (such as being asked the 'what are you?' question and having parents from different racialized groups) while also recognizing differences across these racialized experiences (due to variance of mix and racialization, gender, class, abilities, sexualities...) with other people of mixed race. I suggest that despite the increasing desire to use multiracialized bodies as a post-race sign-post, complex

commonalities have both political potential, but also embody the difficulty of finding political space around mixedness. In turn, mixed race people form what I refer to as an (un)collective. I use the term (un)collective to capture a way that my interview participants claimed *a common experience of difference* in their narratives as a collective of mixed race people (for example, negotiating across discourses of mixedness, having ready identity narratives and the experience of the multiracializing gaze)**,** while also recognizing differences amongst each other as mixed race people (again, recognizing how variance of mix/racialization can impact respondents' experiences, along with gender, sexualities, abilities and class identities). In other words, a sense of (un)collectivity refers to how mixed race people recognize that they are not all individually different: there is a redrawing of lines and a fluidity of lines of commonality, without them being the same. This sense of (un)collectivity that emerged in respondents' narratives perhaps also signals how mixed race is not solidified in Canada as an identity position, as compared to the US (Brunsma 2006; McClain DaCosta 2007).

Post-race discourse espouses a celebratory doctrine of racial transcendence, which operates through a simultaneous flattening and fracturing of differences that are in tension with one another (McClain DaCosta 2007; Spencer 2011). My interview participants' narratives bring this tension to the fore. On the one hand, post-race discourse's flattening of difference – its espousal that 'we are all the same' – is challenged through respondents' narrations of a common experience of difference between themselves and other people of mixed race. However, this recognition of shared experiences between my interview respondents does not follow from the painting of mixed race people as symbols of racial transcendence. Rather, it is a recognition of how racisms and racialization are at work through multiracialization and navigating the multiracializing gaze. On the other hand, post-race discourse's fracturing of difference – its

espousal that 'we are all *individually* different' – is challenged through respondents' narrations

of finding commonalities of experience within communities of colour. This complicates mixed

race people's folding in of difference into individualized identities. Yet, complex commonalities

are not necessarily a conscious or direct response from mixed race respondents to post-race

discourse. Respondents had different ways in which they navigated how the racial gaze laid

claim to their bodies. Some respondents cautiously took up these discourses to varying degrees[15],

but this tended to be coupled with some awareness of the power dynamics at work. Respondents'

narratives and experiences show how messy tensions are brought out in respondents' navigations

of post-race.

In her narrative, Regan unravels her internalization of how mixed race people are always

celebrated as post-race symbols. She reflected on how she has learned to embrace the idea of

Canada as a multicultural mosaic, from early on in her schooling:

> [In Social Studies class in] elementary [school], where you're colouring pictures of "multicultural Canada" I feel like it was an idea that I was very – made to feel proud about. You know that "Canada is a multicultural mosaic" or whatever we want to call ourselves. And…I think I did – I must have identified a little bit. Because anytime we got to a unit in social studies…in like elementary or junior high…that had to do with culture, or…countries, or Canada. Or multiculturalism, [I'd] get really excited, because I'd really want to tell this story of my parents. Oh my gosh. Yeah, I'm just realizing….I guess I totally have internalized that. For sure, in those ways, as a kid…those [were] the parts where I'd be like "I have something to contribute to this class".

Through her own body and the "story" of her parents, Regan learned early on that she was seen

by others as contributing to the multicultural nation, demonstrating how mixed race bodies get

taken up in this setting (i.e. they embody this idea).

In similar fashion to Regan, Winston took up the celebratory narrative about his

embodiment of racial transcendence as a mixed race person. However, he did so recognizing that

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[15]Respondents at times had ambivalent narrations about prejudice and structural racism, for example exclaiming that they too can be racist, i.e. "it's not just white people who are racist, everyone can be racist", gesturing to the other side of post-race, which signals another way of getting around power and hierarchies (sub/dominant).

his experience is largely shaped by his ability to pass as white in some situations. Additionally,

the full celebration of such multiculturalism that Winston narrates is contextual, in that he has

lived in Toronto for almost all of his life:

> Well, I know among my more critical…activist colleagues, they would say that idea [that Canada is multicultural and has moved past difference is] a bit of a myth…but I have to say my personal feelings on it are we kind of make it work [slight laughter]. I really do feel that way….I know many people…friends, acquaintances of colour that have *not* [emphasis] had good experiences and that as a result, have felt that…multiculturalism was a bit of a…mirage. But my personal experience has been…largely positive. And maybe it's because I'm biracial, and because I can sometimes pass [as white]….I fully admit that that's a possibility, but I kind of feel that it's biracial folks that are the proof of multiculturalism [slight laughter] having some success, and that we have...had some success in this country because of multiculturalism. Because of that policy. And I do feel like there are lots of opportunities, at least in Toronto, to celebrate cultural diversity. I really do. I think back, we were talking about Caravan last time, I think back to that – I have really fond memories of. I think of Caribana and – yeah. Just lots of opportunities to…celebrate that diversity. My experience [is that] it has been a successful policy. Yeah. And as I said, I think maybe Toronto's a bit of a bubble in Canada. And I haven't…explored a lot of Canada outside of Toronto….So my perspective might be skewed in that respect.

Winston finds that he has overall had "a good experience". However, his experience further

complicates the idealization of coffee-coloured Toronto (Mahtani 2014), in that he can have

these "good experiences" because he can "pass" as white. Winston's narrative moves back and

forth between taking up and complicating post-race discourses. In her narrative, Melissa begins

to further complicate the taking up of such discourses. She jokingly positions herself as a symbol

that people of different races can get along "for an hour or two", but recognizes that mixed race

people can also serve as symbols of the operation of colonial power (giving the example of white

male slave owners raping their black female slaves was one way that the system of slavery in the

US was upheld and reproduced):

> I've said many times, through the years growing up, I'm a symbol, in essence. Not that I wish to be, but in essence I'm a symbol that people can get along of different races, and then my joke is at least for an hour or something [laughter]…. I mean on the other hand, yes. On the other hand, no. An American who comes from slaves might take that very personally, because it's like "really? My [great grandmother], the master came out to the field and raped her" or something…But for my personal situation…You see more diversity of people coming together and creating families and it's just everywhere. Everywhere, it's amazing. Who did I see this weekend, what was the mix? It was a black baby and a white man. It was a bit "oh!" you know, because you usually don't see it. But… yeah, it was beautiful. I remember in Toronto, every mixture in Toronto.

> There's all these kids running around that are so…unique, it's amazing. It's really amazing. My best friend's nieces and nephews are…half-Chinese, a quarter black and quarter white. Cutest kids. So…that's [where] things…are at now, people are becoming even more than just "Caucasian and West Indian", or "Asian and Caucasian". Now, mixed people are…having kids, and now there's these kids that are like…a massive multitude of things. I remember reading an article in the [Edmonton] Journal a few years back that said by 2050, 5-0, everyone – the majority of the people in the country will be coffee coloured. So it's, yeah. There's a massive shift in just…people bunking in with other cultures [laughter].

Melissa's narrative highlights the many messy tensions involved in navigating post-race discourses. She calls out the operation of power and race and how mixed race bodies can be seen as symbols of this, using the example of slavery in the US. Her narrative then shifts to one that is situated within the multicultural imaginary (which, as discussed above, maps onto the operation of post-race discourses in Canada), drawing on dissective language ("half" and "quarters") to describe mixed race people. However, she also complicates this by implicitly referencing how such multiplicity is in some ways beyond the scope of the multicultural imaginary (i.e. some mixed race people are a "massive multitude of things"). She then moves back to articulating a discourse entrenched within notions of post-race transcendence: soon we will all be "coffee coloured", which fails to take into account how demographic shifts do not automatically mean that this will lessen the hold of white power structures.

Where respondents like Melissa and Winston indirectly or implicitly foregrounded the inherent contradictions at work in navigating celebratory post-race discourse, others offered more explicit critiques. Yvonne equated how mixed race bodies are positioned as a sign that multiculturalism is successful, with the idea that racism is over because there is a black US President:

> People make those kinds of comments. "It's a sign of multiculturalism" I'm like "really?"….I equate that to saying when people make comments like "oh racism is gone because Obama's the President"…. I categorize it in the same kind of [way]…boy you really are fooling yourself.

Here, Yvonne challenges two circulating post-race discourses, which hold up particular bodies as symbols of racial transcendence (mixed race bodies embody yet transcend multicultural difference, and Obama signals the end of racism). Charles narrated how this kind of discourse (embodying multiculturalism) is not only tied to Othering discourses that work to continually place non-white racialized bodies outside of the nation, but how mixing – understood in the dominant discourse as slowly becoming white – is what makes one a successful Other (while claims of "the end of white Toronto" are simultaneously heard as an alarm bell that signals the end of whiteness). Charles joked that he is seen as a "starter" for whites who want to familiarize themselves with black people, because as a mixed race person who is half-white he is perceived as "safe", highlighting how whiteness at times invites multiracialized bodies into whiteness' fold to create the illusion of an inclusive multicultural nation:

> Charles: The Toronto Life article called "The End of White Toronto" I think it was, had this brown mixed kid's face. And there is that notion, that "you are proof that this is working out. You're proof, look at you. You're well adjusted, and you're successful, and you're really doing a great job for *all* [emphasis] of your peoples".

> Interviewer: [Laughter]

> Charles: So I think there…definitely is that notion. And I think in some ways – there's a guy at my work who's not very obviously homosexual, but he is gay. He's kind of like a regular dude – he's a "regular dude" with quotes around it. We joke that we're "starters" we're the "ease into whatever else you're going to do". "*Wanna get to know black people? Start here. It's safe*" [putting on tone]. "Wanna know a gay guy? Here he is. He's not going to really freak you out. He's not going to talk about beef dip tours, and I'm not going to talk about scary things that you're not going to understand". It's just "here is a nice safe place to start". That's what makes people in some weird way [feel safe]. Because you're only – you're usually your "darker side" whatever that is…your non-white side is what people identify *you* [emphasis] as. So you're a way into that world. But…my wife, shook her head, because I was obsessing [about] that [article] "The End of White Toronto". It's like why is it the end of something instead of the beginning of something.

Here, Charles powerfully narrates how whiteness operates: it works to maintain its dominance at all costs (folding some bodies in, rejecting others), while hailing its own end, which actually works to reassert its own dominance (i.e. "it is the end of something rather than the beginning of

something"). Post-race discourse takes up fluidity and "uses" it to celebrate and signal an end, demonstrating fluidity's potential to reproduce how dominant discourses work.

Similar to Yvonne and Charles' explicit critiques, Ayesha challenges post-race discourses by working to politicize mixedness. She positions her mixed race identity within a colonial framework, but comes up against post-race erasure of racialized power dynamics and a linear race discourse:

> [When I say to people] "I'm mixed and I'm part of the colonial…project"…of course nobody wants to touch that….They want to hear about "ouuu, your mom [was white] and [your dad was black]"…. [When I say "I'm part of the colonial project"] they're like "ewww, I don't want to know this because it's too politicized…colonialism and racism". They just want to [know about the] cute [interracial] couple.

In her interactions with others, and when giving her identity narrative, Ayesha works to recontextualize mixedness as explicitly tied to colonization, colonial processes and power relations, countering attempts at romanticizing mixedness, and how mixedness gets held up as proof that multiculturalism is a success. Overall, respondents' narratives demonstrate the messy tensions involved in navigating post-race discourse: some respondents implicitly foregrounded the contradictions at work, while others more explicitly critiqued them. Post-race relies on a flattening and fracturing of difference (the operation of post-structural/neo-liberal racism) and (un)collective permutations are one way that respondents deal with that flattening and fracturing. In other words, I position (un)collective identities as a response and potential challenge to post-race discourses.

In many respondents' narratives, there was a back and forth between feeling commonality with other people of mixed race, while simultaneously recognizing differences across experiences. Before our second interview, Regan had just finished directing a theatre production focused on mixed race people's experiences with race over their lives. In the interview sitting, Regan expressed the critical collective possibilities of this production. Through

the theatre production, Regan worked to create a collective story around what she called the "mixed experience" – the shared experience of living across a complex range of racialized identities under an external racial gaze that is singular and fixes. I quote Regan's narrative here in full so that the description of the production is in her own words:

> I asked people I knew who were mixed and they either wrote in little stories about experiences they had, and then one woman [and I]…did hang out…and I just recorded her….Out of recording her, an hour, there were about ten stories or so I had, just from her. And…so that made up the bulk of it. And then there were about five other people who contributed stories. So the whole piece ran about 20 minutes. And then we had three performers, me and two other women and…we basically just read these stories off a piece of paper. And I introduced the piece, I was very…didactic, I don't know if that's the right word. I wanted to…for me what I knew would connect with an audience was always, when you are just yourself and you're not on stage acting….So…sharing that, it didn't surprise me that…people…received [it] very well. But what did surprise me was…all of a sudden, I'm putting all these stories out there, these really personal stories, and then I'm sharing one of my own and the other two people were [inaudible] and then we just realized "there's actually a community for us" or a space – like a needed community for us….Because sometimes you feel a little bit alone in this mixed experience because sometimes you're kind of like…the odd one out, or you're always like "oh, I'm too white for this space" or "I'm too coloured for this space" so I just – my experience has been a lot of…sitting on the fence. And a lot of living intersections….So [the realization that] "oh, there's other people out there who maybe don't look like me, maybe have different racial makeups than me, but have the same experience in that they never…quite fit in, or they never quite know, and they're always kind of confused". So…that's what kind of shocked me, that I wasn't alone in that.

Through the theatre production, the way that identities are storied are revisited in conscious and public ways. A commonality across difference emerges within Regan's theatre production's stories, as a kind of politics. As highlighted in the previous chapter, personal identity and learnings about how race works are strongly impacted and created through family. But here, Regan's understanding moves from "this is something that I've inherited" to "this is something that I have in common with others". Yet, the circulation of post-race discourses complicates this.

The question of recognizing or claiming something in common was also evident through Catherine and George's interview. Catherine and George, the couple that I interviewed together who both identify as mixed race, talked about being able to "tell" when someone is mixed race:

> Catherine: I think…visually we always say someone's a "halfie" because we can tell right away that they're mixed. We're just a little more – people look and they're not sure what I am. I…[go]

to the Dominican, I get "Spanish". We're in Chinatown, I get "Chinese". Visibly we can pick up on it pretty quickly. Culturally, again, we grew up very differently…Am I "multicultural"? I think so…we're not just [like] some…families "Italian mom, Italian dad" I can't associate with that….

George:…My perception, being involved in it my whole life…and you hear about Canada being "so diverse" and "multicultural". I always assume though that people…know this is going on. But…still – it's still surprising [to lots of people], I don't know why [to find out we're mixed]. And we see it all the time and we always joke about picking out people that are "halfies" visually. There's certain markers that tell you that they're half and…it's very frequent, you see it all the time…in my perception. But…people are still so curious about it, and there's no understanding. It's strange.

Here, Catherine and George, along with suggesting that there are certain visible markers that mark themselves and other people as "mixed", call out one commonality of experience among mixed race people: that their origin narrative is not a linear one. It disrupts the Linear Immigrant Nation discourse that operates within Canadian race discourse. Likewise, Charles recognized this in his narrative, stating that "there's nothing universal about being mixed other than just the phenomenon of having two parents who are coming from two different places in the world". Here, Charles narrates a sense of commonality (a lack of a linear origin story), but also difference (in that this shared lack is the sole commonality). This recognition of a shared lack of linear origin story in a context that expects one – or what I would call a shared experience of multiracialization – was evident in how other respondents sought out others with this same experience. Winston expressed this in his interview, stating:

It does feel a little bit isolating at times to be mixed race, I will say. That's another reason [that [seek] out other people. It's an isolating experience, and I think actually it's – I talked about the critical mass of people. I think that's actually the one group who doesn't have a critical mass. Mixed race folks. They *don't* [emphasis] have that, and that's hard. It's a very isolating.

Seeking out other mixed race people was a common desire that many respondents had across their lives. Some respondents did this from an early age. Lanny narrated his experience with seeking out other black-white mixed men:

When I was in high school, I more or less hung with…other young half black guys…there is a small group of us who – because we were…all mixed, we were just maybe a little bit tighter…. Our fathers all came up [in the] mid-50s, married white women…in Edmonton, had the

> same…type of heritage. And we all knew our heritage. We all knew about it. Even growing up as a child, I knew that my Dad grew up in a…black settlement in Saskatchewan. And…we were different.

Like Winston and Lanny, Regan came to the realization that she craved a sense of connection with other mixed race people, and her theatre production ended up serving as a way to seek other mixed race people out. However, she also narrated across the commonalities and differences in experience that she perceived between her experiences and the experiences of other people of mixed race. The constant back and forth in her narrative signals a sense of (un)collective: it is about commonalities and differences all at once.

> I've heard from other people…the experience of being mixed [means] you're around different people, and maybe they don't know and they're reading you one way – they're reading you as white, and they're throwing around all this…racist shit. Throwing out the n word, and…then you having to be like "okay, yo, are you talking about me?" [and then] them being like "whaaat" [laughter]. Or having to be the racial police all the time…but there is a common experience in that….My performers – they didn't know each other before either, so when they first met each other, they were like "hey, what kind of halfie are you" [slight laughter]. They're all just talking about…that kind of…silly stuff. And then one performer [saying] "thank you, I've really been looking for [this]. Thank you for inviting me to be involved with this, because this really means something". So to know other people are actually looking for that too.

In George and Catherine's interview, while multiplicity was recognized as a commonality amongst mixed race people, George described how he at first assumed that I would only be interviewing people who were the same mix as himself and Catherine, but then realized that this was likely not the case.

> It's kind of funny, thinking about it after [our first interview sitting]. I was telling some people at work what we were doing and…then I thought about it and I was like "we always just think of *our* [emphasis] situation", in terms of being mixed race. "Culturally" I always think of Chinese. It's probably more than just Chinese people that you're talking to! [laughter].

While George recognized how racialization or variance of mix would impact others' experiences, other respondents spoke of a sense of (un)collective through not just being mixed race but with other people of colour who share similar experiences with racialization. Korrie's sense of (un)collective was evident through her relationship to the term "woman of colour":

> I would speak of myself as a woman of colour, I consider myself to be part of a brown-skinned community that includes lots of different people…and yeah…I do have a very strong sense of my mixed race identity, but I think in a way [because of] how I'm perceived is as a brown skinned person, it doesn't really matter whether I'm mixed or not….I do feel that in…a place like Toronto there is a more sophisticated kind of understanding of diversity, 'cause it is just so prevalent now, it is a completely different world. Like I look at people who are walking in the street – like the idea of when I was young, in high school, early twenties, mixed race relationships were still…something to gawk at…and now – at least in Toronto – I mean, it's just the norm. And… the images on TV - there's so much more…. I don't feel so foreign anymore, I don't feel like I'm particularly unique and stand out here...but it's part of who I am. It's an awareness I have, and it does come up in my relationship sometimes…I am always aware that I am a woman of colour. I don't forget it. I'd never forget it.

Here, Korrie reasserts her identity as a woman of colour in a politicized way, despite the increasing desire to use multiracialized bodies as a post-race sign-post. Tanya also narrated a sense of collectivity, referring to both shared and self-acceptance of her brownness:

> I feel really happy because now…I feel like I'm – because I own this hip hop studio now, called [studio name]…a lot of Filipino kids are into hip hop, and a lot of brown kids are into hip hop. And, so, the brown kids – I totally feel like "they're my people"…I feel like "I'm a brown person". I can be brown – I'm brown. And I totally can be stoked on that, which…feels nice, and…even though brown is [Afghan], and Pakistani, Kazakhstani, and all these different things, but all the brown people totally adopt me as being brown.

Regan, Korrie and Tanya's narratives of their (un)collective identities are not solely about challenging post-race discourse, but are about carving out a different space of identity in regard to (white) Canadianness and (discrete categorical) multiculturalism. Put another way, there is a politics of the (un)collective in relation to "being mixed race" and/or "being Canadian/multicultural". Identifying in this way is a differentiation from whiteness, a politicized move that works to undo the hold of whiteness (it assumes that everyone not only should be, but wants to be folded into it, especially mixed race people who have one white parent). The sense of (un)collectivity that respondents expressed through the complex commonalities that they recognize between themselves and other mixed race people signals the political potential of mixedness: the transformative possibilities that exist through the fluidity of respondents' identities. Through this sense of (un)collectivity, respondents recognize the commonalities in

their experiences with racialization amongst themselves, as well as with other racialized

communities. Whiteness has often worked to reject mixed race people in order to solidify its

borders. But increasingly the imaginary of whiteness actively works to fold or invite them in

(e.g. multiracialized bodies that are also produced as ambiguous within whiteness may be

positioned as "honourary whites"). As found amongst respondents' children in the previous

chapter, those who are racialized as white can claim multiplicity, but do not have the experience

of having difference called out or being racialized as Other. It is not so much that respondents'

children live in a context with less racism, but rather that the boundaries of whiteness are

changing to invite them in, and enfolding mechanism that has lone done this work of maintaining

dominance (Ignatiev 1998).

Some respondents outright reject this folding in by identifying explicitly as "brown" or as

"people of colour", yet, in other respondents' narratives whiteness works as an elephant in the

room. Respondents' narratives show the tension between the transformative possibilities – but

also embody the difficulty – of finding political space around mixedness. For example, whiteness

continues to be implicitly recognized as part of what being "mixed race" or a "halfie" is. George

and Catherine captured this point as they reflected on their initial assumption that I would only

be interviewing people who were the same "mix" as them, and on their ability to "spot" other

mixed race people:

> George: It's kind of funny how you think about your own situation and it's like – pretty set in your mind what [being mixed] looks like and it's like "well, it's really not what this is limited to!" [slight laughter]. It's kind of funny, I was thinking…that way [about the project].
>
> Catherine: We can tell almost instantly [when someone is mixed], we can pick it up. When we go out.
>
> George: Asians….You see a lot, right, so when you spend your entire childhood going to Dim Sum, to Chinese restaurants on an almost daily basis, you see other families, right. And…it seems to be there's a lot of our families that ended up with a white wife and a Chinese husband and you see a lot of those children. Right, so. I think that's what it is, it's just exposure, right. You see

more, and then you…recognize that "look" those features, and then…start spying it everywhere. Because…Edmonton's not that big of a world, right. And, especially when we were growing up in the '80s, it was even smaller. There weren't that many restaurants that you could go to as a Chinese family that served real Chinese food. So, the community was a little smaller. So you would see almost everybody.

Catherine: Yeah, Chinese restaurants I think, as a child. That's where I spent my time, sometimes, and also in the community where my Grandmother was living, you'd see…I don't recall any of them ever being halfies of any variety. So I knew what that looked like. So the first mixed Asian friend I can recall was high school, and she was a halfie. And I'd say we looked similar in features and skin colour and hair colour and so…I think from that point it became a differentiation of…like even now.

Throughout Catherine and George's narrative, whiteness has an absent presence – it is never directly referenced as what constitutes the "other half" of being a "halfie", which reinforces the normalization of whiteness. Regan's narrative also referenced a sense of commonality through being "half", although once again any explicit mention of whiteness is absent:

So when I do meet people that are half, I want to…like my friend [name], who's half-Chinese, half-Greek, she was telling me when she first thought – she kept talking about this 'Welch's Grape Juice' commercial, which I think is from the early '90s, or '80s or something….But she's like "when I saw it, I knew that kid was 'half' I knew he was….I knew he was just like me!" and I don't know what kind of "halfie" he was, but she talks about distinctly recognizing this kid in a commercial as "being half". Not as being "half" what she is, like "half-Chinese half-Greek" but as being "half"….And I feel like there is this…recognition, which isn't always accurate, because sometimes people present in different ways. But…I do feel like – oh my God, it's probably just me, fetishizing mixed people [laughter] that they are better looking, or that when I do see people that are mixed, there is something…that I feel in me recognizes "you are mixed".
There's…something unique. But maybe the rest of the world is also like "that person's mixed".

While interview participants' navigations of mixed race terms and the terms of belonging in the nation ("Canadian" and "multicultural") were impacted by how they navigate whiteness over the course of their lives, very few respondents talked about whiteness explicitly.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I examine three key arenas where respondents provided insight into the complex and contradictory social terrain that they navigate: navigating 'mixed race', navigating national belonging ('Canadian' and 'multicultural') and navigating complex commonalities. I argue that respondents' navigations within these arenas signals how the multiracializing gaze

produces a key problematic: a tension between mixed race's transformative possibilities and its concomitant potential to reproduce dominant discourses. Respondents deploy these discourses, use them as resources, wrestle with their contradictions and carve out a different space of identity in regard to (white) Canadianness and (discrete categorical) multiculturalism.

In respondents' navigations of mixed race terminology, it firstly became evident that mixed race provides a vocabulary for naming multiplicity, while also posing the danger of reifying the social categories of mixing; secondly, that mixed race discourse is a flexible social resource – flexible by socio-spatial context and by temporal life course experience – but that flexibility depends on the salience of particular racial categories (such as black). Additionally, mixed race as an available vocabulary/resource depends on changing social discourses (especially given the salience of the black-white imaginary). In respondents' navigations of the terms of national belonging, it became evident, firstly that claiming national identity is also a narrative resource, but involves the labour of undoing its whiteness (especially because of settler colonial history); secondly, that respondents' claims to "being Canadian" varies across the life course, and is a matter of negotiation between their own and others' perceptions; and thirdly, that multiculturalism is a resource that fixes or does fixing work but can also be bent, challenged, manipulated and surpassed.

These navigations on the part of respondents show how the gaze (re)produces linear or discrete racial imaginaries, while its production of bodies as mixed race simultaneously opens up spaces of transformative possibilities (raising the politics of hybridity in a different way, through the gaze). This is particularly evident through the political contradictions around complex commonalities in respondents' narratives. Respondents' stories of navigating complex commonalities and forming (un)collective identities show the transformative anti-racist political

potential of carving out spaces of identity on their own terms, outside of white Canadianness and discrete categorical multiculturalism.

Yet, at the same time, there is always the danger of post-race racism and discourse using mixed race to reproduce its own fracturing and flattening work. Whiteness at times invites multiracialized bodies into its fold to create the illusion of an inclusive multicultural nation while maintaining its own dominance – a problematic side of fluidity that reproduces dominant discourses. I argue that whiteness reproduces its dominance through mixed race people's bodies. This is linked to those whose bodies are (re)produced as racially ambiguous and those whose bodies are (re)produced as racially unambiguous by the white gaze. For example, only certain bodies are privy to the 'what are you?' question, and this is attached to how they are positioned in relation to whiteness. While being asked the 'what are you?' question works to (re)produce race categories (Haritaworn 2012) the question also signals that one's body has not yet been produced as fixed or slotted into a finalized category. Put another way, the 'what are you?' question is asked only of certain bodies, bodies that are produced as racially ambiguous (and potentially white or at least not a fixed Other). Bodies that are produced as unambiguous tend to be less subject to questions like 'what are you?', which also emerged in respondents' narratives of their children's experiences. This also (re)produces whiteness, in that the moment of possibility for fixed bodies that are racialized as non-white to be enveloped into whiteness never manifests itself (the question is never asked), and bodies that are racialized as white are assumed to be white. Yet, there are also transformative possibilities to fluidity, through complex commonalities and the formation of (un)collective identities, which enable respondents to complicate their folding into whiteness, as demonstrated in the narratives above.

(Un)collective identities are not solely about challenging post-race discourse, but are also about carving out a different space of identity in regard to (white) Canadianness and (discrete categorical) multiculturalism. In this sense, (un)collective identities can perhaps be theorized as a kind of third space. Bhabha (1990) positions hybridity not merely as a merging of oppositions, but as creating a new third space (Bonnett 1997). He states, "…for me the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the 'Third Space' which enables other positions to emerge" (Bhabha 1990: 211). In this way, working from the hybrid third space itself enables the negotiation of new positions, in that "by exploring this Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of ourselves" (2004:56). In her work on mixed race identities in the British Columbian (Canadian) colonial context, Mawani (2009) discusses space and hybridity, and how space impacts mixed race identities. As Mawani (2009) contends, Bhabha begins (although does not fully develop) what is perceived as hybridity's ultimate threat: "an 'almost the same but not quite' that unsettled 'normalized' knowledges and disciplinary powers" (Mawani 2009: 488). Although the hybridity literature, including Bhabha's (1990) third space, can be critiqued for its difficulty in escaping the assumption of binaries, it is useful for considering spaces of agency. According to Bhabha (1990), "the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the 'Third Space' which enables other positions to emerge". In this way, for Bhabha, the hybrid third space itself enables the negotiation of positions—of identities. The third space is a space where identity is made through negotiation, which works to blur identity and agency.

The story of identity that is explored in this chapter, which respondents form through their navigations of three key arenas, is evident in what I call the ready identity narrative: the

narrative that respondents have ready to give to others when they are questioned about their

identities. In the following chapter I move to considering how the ready narrative indicates the

lived experience of the multiracializing gaze. While this chapter has focused on the operation of

three key discourses in respondents' narratives and how they navigate them, in the following

chapter I focus in on the everyday lived experience of the gaze that is necessitated by, and

reflected in, the ready identity narrative.

Chapter 5. The Lived Experience of the Multiracializing Gaze

INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2014 I spent a semester in the Department of Sociology at the University of Minnesota as a visiting graduate student while I was in the early stages of analyzing my dissertation interviews. Towards the end of my visit I had a discussion with a fellow graduate student and friend who I made there, who is also mixed race. I had noticed a continual pattern of students from my friend's teaching assistantship ask him "what he was" when they came into our shared office space for class help and I was interested in the identity narrative that he had ready to use when talking with students ("my mother is x and my father is x"). When I brought this up, he asked if anyone had asked me 'what are you?' while in Minnesota. I responded that I had not felt that anyone had asked me 'what are you?' per se, but that perhaps my narrative of "being Canadian" had directed away people's potential questioning of me in this way (in this space, being "Canadian" is what people were interested in hearing about, from me). But I reflected in this conversation that from my experience it does not actually matter if anyone asks me 'what are you?' or not, because there is always the expectation, the anticipation, the 'having your back up' that it will be asked (in any situation, in any encounter). Such questions may be asked at any time by anybody. It is this anticipation, this expectation, shaped by immediate moments that have come before, and past memories that signals the iterative process of the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze. And this constant anticipation impacts how people move through the world. Anticipation may be connected to past experience, or to observations about the world that lead one to expect that the question might be asked.

I begin with this vignette of my own lived experience to describe the power of the external multiracializing gaze is not just in 'a moment': those moments are just the tip of the iceberg. The gaze is always with you. It is in the air reading race off your body, or, there is always the possibly of it reading race off your body. The ready identity narrative is a thing that is formed because of that, because the gaze is always a possibility. In this sense, the ready identity narrative becomes a sign of something that is happening experientially: it is evidence of other things that are harder to name.

In this chapter, I focus on the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze. In Chapter Four I introduced the concept of (un)collectivity to refer to the sense of commonality that emerged in respondents' narratives from their experiences with how race works in the world.

Rather than referring to a commonality *across* difference, (un)collectivity refers to the common experience of respondents' multiple multiplicities meeting the singular gaze. While the previous chapter focused on how my interviewees narratively navigated their multiple multiplicities in their identity stories, what I now turn to is the way that this experience of how race works in the world – the meeting of multiple multiplicities with the singular gaze – is lived by the multiracialized body. Put another way, I turn my focus to how (and why) the ready identity narrative 'is', thereby positioning the ready identity narrative – my sensitizing concept (Blumer 1954) – as an iterative outcome of lived experiences.

Throughout the chapter I focus on three key facets of the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze. The first facet is the embodied felt experience of the gaze in the everyday. What emerged out of the interviews was not only how participants answer others' questions about their identities, but also how they experience and reflect on this 'embodied felt thing' of the encounter with the gaze. In these narratives, there was no neat separation between the felt and the cerebral. Put another way, sensing *and* making sense of the gaze are two interrelated facets of the lived experience of being subject to the gaze. Ahmed's (2000, 2015) approach to phenomenology as that of the everyday embodied encounter and life story and narrative approaches that foreground the relationship between the felt and the cerebral (Atkinson 2002; Chaitin 2004), inform my reading of how respondents' lived experiences emerged from both the felt (sense of) and the cerebral (making sense of).

The second facet was the everyday encounter with the gaze as iterative. I examine the iterative process between the immediate experience of multiracialization in the moment of the gaze and the lifelong experience of anticipating the multiracializing gaze. I argue that the lived experience of being under the multiracializing gaze is not only what happens in the moment of

the gaze (including the 'what are you?' question), but also what happens in between: how those moments speak to each other across the life course and iteratively (if not continuously) *anticipate* the moment of the gaze.

Respondents' formative moments (and their memories of those moments) shape the ready identity narrative, as does walking around in the mixed race body: all of these make up the luggage of anticipation. Put another way, the immediate and the anticipatory are two-sided moments that feed off each other. I draw on respondents' narratives of experiences across the life course to understand the relationship between the moment of the gaze and the anticipation of it, including how this is shaped by the histories and discourses of multiculturalism, race, and immigration in Canada. Here, I find Hemmings' (2005) conceptualization of "affective cycles" helpful for understanding the iterative process of the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze (immediate and anticipatory) that emerged from interviewees' narratives.

The third facet of the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze is that it occurs at different times and across different spaces. My interview participants' encounters with the multiracializing gaze are contextually shaped and experienced within the particularity of a social space. The moment of the gaze and what respondents carry around are there because of how the body and the social are interacting. Moments are not just moments; they are part of a broader social milieu.

I begin the chapter by outlining some of the modes of operation of the external racial gaze in the Canadian context (the linear expectations of the gaze and how bodies are (re)produced as racially ambiguous), pointing to how they enable an understanding of the iterative process (immediate and anticipatory) of the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze across the life course. I then provide a brief discussion of the literature that helps me think

through lived experience. With this background, I move to considering respondents' narratives. Firstly, I focus on their immediate lived experience 'in the moment of the gaze' – but which I also position as repeated iterations. I pull out their experiences as adults in the workplace and experiences 'on the street' in particular. Secondly, I move 'back in time' to focus on respondents' memories. I pull out their memories of school and of multicultural festivals as children, in particular, and the iterative anticipatory process of the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze. Respondents' memories, and how they recall their memories, are a key way to think through the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze. How interviewees talked about their memories signals earlier instances of the lived experience in the moment. Respondents recall these moments so well and vividly that they 'live' in the present and also signal the anticipation of encounters with the gaze in the present. Yet, it is also subtler than this: both the vivid encounters with the gaze and the repeated experiences of the gaze (and the mundane knowledge that it will happen again, if not exactly in the same way) mean that there is an anticipation that lives there in the body even if it does so semi-consciously. Throughout the chapter I move between how participants' make sense of how they are being read in encounters in their narratives as well as how their narratives illustrate their felt embodied sense during encounters.

Throughout the chapter I am also attentive to, how, as Ahmed (2014b) states, "intersectionality is messy and embodied". Respondents' lived experiences of the gaze vary in relation to different sub-categories of identity, such as variance of mix, immigrant or Canadian-born, and locality or context of respondents' lives. This messy intersectionality and specificity of experience matters to understanding the experience of the gaze as iterative and anticipatory across the life course. Encounters with the multiracializing gaze take place in social moments:

they are lived. The chapter then moves to suggesting that the lived experience of the

multiracializing gaze can bring us to thinking about a kind of multiracialized affect.

ENCOUNTERING THE MULTIRACIALIZING GAZE: BEING READ AS MULTIRACIAL
IN THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF MULTIRACIAL "RECOGNITION" IN CANADA

As I introduced in Chapter One, respondents' ready identity narratives develop out of

conscious moments of knowledge of the multiracializing gaze on their bodies: in other words,

the narratives are reflexive. How respondents form their ready identity narratives is closely tied

to multicultural discourse, in that respondents must craft a ready identity narrative that is

understandable within Canadian multicultural discourse. Furthermore, considering the linear

expectations of the gaze sheds light on the anticipatory aspect of the lived experience. As

discussed in the introductory chapter, Canadian multicultural discourse demands that bodies (in

particular, non-white racialized bodies) follow a linear origin tracing and present as 'culturally

authentic'; this leads respondents to narrate their identities (and anticipate the need to narrate) on

these terms, through an originary point of racial mixing. The character of the multiracializing

gaze is crucial to understanding the experience of the immediate moment, the experience of

anticipation and the relationship between them. This is because these are already socially and

historically determined moments. The gazer (the subject who is looking) and the gazee (the

subject who is looked upon) live in a context that shapes the possible ways of reading

multiraciality or of being multiracial. But the mixed race person senses this social reality, makes

sense of it and remembers and anticipates it in particular ways.

Respondents' experiences in celebratory multicultural spaces (which include

multicultural days at school and multicultural festivals) signal particular instances of these linear

and celebratory discourses operating. For example, respondents expressed that in these spaces,

others often perceive their ethno-cultural affiliations as 'not in the right body'. (This perception

is related to the operation of racialized ethnicities, which, as I argue in the introductory chapter, is central to Canada's racialized imaginary). The perception of their bodies is that they do not fit in the space of the multicultural festival. This perception also creates a desire for respondents' bodies to feel whole or real (or at least comfortable). Put another way, through Canadian multicultural discourse, the desire for respondents to feel authentic in their bodies corresponds to the need to be socially recognized by others as authentic. However, interviewees' ready identity narratives also demonstrate the ambiguity or impossibility of ever being able to meet the linear expectations of the gaze.

In turn, through the linear/authentic expectations of the gaze, multiracialized bodies that are (re)produced as ambiguous may be held up and used for particular ends. Mahtani (2014) found in her Toronto study that mixed race people are positioned as model Canadian citizens, however this positioning is only available to particular multiracialized bodies: "this 'exalted status' (Thobani 2007) is available only to certain racially identified mixed race bodies – individuals who present a particular phenotype as racially ambiguous" (2014: 132). Mahtani builds off Elam's (2011) theorizing of the role of ambiguity in the multiracial movement in the US, in that "people who wish to self-identify [as multiracial] but [did] not appear ambiguous – or ambiguous enough…[were] less suited to serve as political representatives" (2011: 136). Building on Mahtani (2014) and Elam (2011) by drawing on Haritaworn (2012) I posit that it is not just that bodies "present" or "appear" as racially ambiguous. Rather, bodies are (re)produced as racially ambiguous – multiracialized – within the Canadian racial imaginary, which centres on whiteness. Bodies that are (re)produced as racially ambiguous are welcomed in to the fold of the Canadian imaginary (providing the illusion of an inclusive multicultural nation), but these bodies

are only welcomed because of their perceived proximity to whiteness. Other bodies that are (re)produced as non-white without question or interruption, are excluded from belonging.

Placing a lens on this process of constant (re)production of bodies through the gaze, in turn, enables a way to understand the immediate or 'in the moment' aspect of the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze. The racial gaze (re)produces itself in moments of racial encounters. I use the term (re)produce in order to demonstrate how, as introduced in the introductory chapter, Haritaworn (2012) argues that race categories are not "pre-social". Acts of questioning within moments of racial encounters work to produce race categories on and through bodies in an iterative process. Bodies are not read as ambiguous, but are instead produced, over and over again, as such through these interactions. It is through this process that bodies are produced as mixed. Put another way, it is a mistake to assume that this is the order of racial encounters for mixed race people: the mixed race person is out in the world, another person, reading the mixed race person as ambiguous, asks 'what are you?' and the mixed race person gives their identity narrative because they are mixed. Instead, the asking of the 'what are you?' question is itself a (re)production of the racial gaze[16].

Respondents' experiences with the multiracializing gaze are greatly impacted by what is produced, and through their bodies in encounters with the gaze. Some respondents expressed how they are (re)produced as ambiguous by the gaze, rendering them further visible: over the course of their lives their racial identities have been perceived and produced by others as racially

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[16] Additionally, as mentioned in Chapter Two, through my own recruitment of respondents, I actually produced notions of who is (and is not) mixed, by having a particular definition of who I would interview as a researcher (someone whose parents are from different racialized groups). The difficulty lies in that mixed race people, as defined by me, do have particular experiences in the social world that I am interested in. But the only way of getting at them is to reify mixedness: to start from the premise that mixed race "means this" or that "this is the definition of mixed", when in actuality through drawing on such a definition, I contribute to the production of mixedness. As Mahtani (2012) argues, as scholars who do work on mixed race we are all caught up in the social relations that we critique.

ambiguous. Mahtani (2014) found in her research that her mixed race participants who were

(re)produced as racially ambiguous had access to white spaces, whereas those who were not

(re)produced as racially ambiguous, did not:

> Of interest to me is that some of these women had grown up in middle- to upper-class environments and that this context, combined with the reality that some of them were seen as racially ambiguous or possessed an ability to identify as mixed race, provided an excess of cultural currency that gave them access to predominantly white spaces. They had access to the benefits associated with white networks (2014: 136).

For participants who I interviewed, being produced and (re)produced as ambiguous or

unambiguous came down to whether, and to what extent, people are perceived as/(re)produced as

light skinned as opposed to dark skinned, a theme that has been found over and over again in

mixed race scholarship (Elam 2011). People who are produced as light skinned or racially

ambiguous tend to often be asked 'what are you?'. Tanya reflected on being asked this question

in our interview, stating:

> I get asked that…I would say I probably get asked that at least once a day. But sometimes more. If I'm out at a social situation, at a bar or something, I'll get asked it three or four times. I get asked *all the time* [emphasis]. All the time. Or people will just come up to me and start guessing what they think I am. "Are you Lebanese, are you Portuguese, are you Italian, are you Greek, are you…Serbian"…they never guess what I am, actually. I'm like "no, no, no, no"….they never guess what I am, but…people try to guess all the time.

Tanya's socially produced racial ambiguity leads her to be any number of things, including some

ethnic groups that are perceived as white in the contemporary Canadian context. The

ambiguity/impossibility of meeting the expectations of the gaze, as demonstrated in Tanya's

narrative, is part of the difficulty of the immediate aspect of the lived experience of the

multiracializing gaze, showing how ready identity narratives are both agential and incomplete.

Interviewees who are read and (re)produced within blackness have particular experiences

with multiracialization and blackness (again, variance of mix or perceived mix greatly impacts

respondents' experiences). Charles provided one example of this in his narrative, stating:

Charles: In Canada, I'm all kinds of things but white. I could be anything. People look at me and think 'Arab, Indian, West Indian, South American, Brazilian' whatever….

Interviewer: And…this idea that you could maybe be from anywhere – except that you're not white – has that been the case throughout your life, and, do you get that "what are you?" question or "where are you from?"

Charles: All the time. And people make assumptions. They didn't – when you're in Markham, because I think they're a bit more sophisticated. The ones in Nova Scotia, and I hate to say it, but I think it's because they knew there was such a thing called a black person. There were some black people in Sydney. So we automatically became black, and the worst name for black. When we moved here, funnily enough…the kids when they wanted to be mean in the early days in Markham, used the worst name for Indians. The 'P word', right….I've had Indian people think I'm Indian. Especially when my hair is short and straight. So, yeah, I've had it all my life. But it's – an interesting thing when people want to be hurtful, they just sort of guess. So now people think I'm an Arab, which never happened before, until 9/11, now I'm married to an Arab, but it's kind of an interesting thing is that now…it's now in the people's public imagination.

Here, Charles is read in different ways depending on the context (geographical and temporal) that he finds himself in but the black/white binary is (re)produced through his body in different ways. As Charles points out, despite his skin being reproduced as light – besides his production as racially ambiguous – he is still read as "anything but white". This further extends our understanding of the 'in the moment' aspect of the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze because the context in which the gaze is encountered makes a difference. The gaze both is and is not always the same predictable gaze. And even if it is, it is not fully escapable or transcendable. In turn, the burden to escape the gaze is on the racialized body. For Candace, her blackness often overrides her Indigeneity in how people (re)produce racial ambiguity on her body:

Interviewer: And… because how you understand people read you, has that changed as you've gotten older…has that idea that you're black always been there for people, or does it depend where you are as well?

Candace: I think it depends on where I am. *Most* [emphasis] black people right away know that I'm part black anyways, right. But I think…I would have to say if I'm hanging…I used to hang out with a lot of Latino friends, so a lot of people would make the assumption that I was Latino. So yeah, it kind of just depends on where I am and who I'm hanging out with, but I actually had a staff – I work in an Aboriginal organization, and I had a staff – one of my staff, and I've been her supervisor for…over two years. She had no idea that I was part Métis. And I mean I have told the group that before, I'm just not sure if she's been around or not. And she was like "oh, I just thought you were Trinidadian". So, yeah. So I guess it just depends on where I am, and… different situations.

Other interview participants who are read through blackness expressed how they are

(re)produced as unambiguous (e.g. socially produced as dark skinned), but nonetheless visible.

This tends to take the form of *not* being asked questions like 'what are you?'. I discussed this

with Ayesha:

> Interviewer: So you find that – people just kind of assume that you're black, you don't get asked
> that question ['what are you?']
>
> Ayesha: No, I don't get asked anything. They just assume whatever they want to assume, and
> then act, and then I have to interrupt somewhere. And I do that with glee, because I just feel that's
> my job on earth [slight laughter].

Here, the 'what are you?' question, so often the focus of work on mixed race people's

experiences, and touted as a central *oppression* that mixed race people experience in some mixed

race scholarship and in the multiracial movement (Elam 2011; Sexton 2008), can actually be

read as a mark of privilege in a white settler officially multicultural state (Thobani 2007). For

Ayesha, her blackness does not come in to question, it is always being (re)produced, without

interruption. Instead *she* is the one who needs to interrupt the production of race, to question

people's assumptions about her body.

THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF THE MULTIRACIALIZING GAZE: AN ITERATIVE PROCESS

Throughout their lives, then, my interview participants have the experience of being read

by a gaze that multiracializes their bodies (Haritaworn 2012) and this occurs within a particular

economy of multiracial recognition in the Canadian context. However, I am interested not only

in the gaze's economy of recognition, but also in how such encounters with the multiracializing

gaze are lived for respondents, both during and beyond the particular direct moment of the

encounter with the gaze.

I draw on Ahmed's (2000) approach to phenomenology, which focuses on the everyday embodied encounter, in order to take up the everyday lived experience of the gaze that emerged from my interview respondents' narratives. Ahmed's (2000) approach to phenomenology is not just focused on affect, but also on the phenomenon in question as experienced by people in everyday ways. While there are debates around whether or not we can really know someone's experience – stemming from post-structuralist Feminist critiques (Scott 1991), other scholars argue that while perhaps we cannot know someone's experience, we can get a sense of a subject's experience through how they talk about or narrate their everyday lives. This is a central tenet of narrative identity approaches. For example, Pierce states "the value of personal narratives lies precisely in their tendency to go beyond the facts because they tap into realms of meaning, subjectivity, emotion and imagination (Pierce 2012: 66)".

Others within the phenomenology, embodiment and race literature focus on the relationship between perception and felt experiences of racialization. This is reflected in my interviewees' narratives through their everyday embodied lived experience, through how they spoke about their sense of encountering the gaze, and/or in how they described how they made sense of these encounters. Work on narrative identity addresses the relationship between sensing and making sense. For example, Cunliffe and Coupland's (2011) notion of *embodied narrative sensemaking* posits that "we make our lives and ourselves 'sensible' through embodied (bodily) interpretations in our ongoing everyday interactions" (64). They position sensemaking itself as embodied interpretation, stating "we argue that embodiment is integral to sensemaking – that we make life sensible through our lived, felt, bodily experiences and 'sensing' of our surroundings – a 'sensing' in which individual and collective narratives are implicated" (Cunliffe and Coupland 2011: 68). What emerged from my respondents' narratives is a similar relationship – but on the

part of the subject who is being racialized – between their perception or readings of when they encounter the gaze (how they made sense of these encounters), and the senses or feelings on/within their bodies when they encounter the gaze. For my respondents' there was no neat separation between the felt and cerebral in their everyday embodied lived experiences. The interweaving of feeling and perception (sensing and making sense of) in people's narratives is particularly captured through life story interviews (Atkinson 2002; Chaitin 2004). As Atkinson (2002) states "a life story gives us a vantage point from which to see how one person experiences and understands life, his or her own especially, over time" (Atkinson 2002: 126). Life story interviews tend to capture, simultaneously, felt experience and perception of experience. People's narratives move between describing felt lived experiences and reflecting on (thinking about) them. Life story and narrative approaches are interested in how narratives are made up of both (sensing and making sense of) in interconnected ways (Atkinson 2002; Chaitin 2004; Cunliffe and Coupland 2011).

What also emerged in respondents' narrations of their everyday embodied lived experiences signals the operation of what Al-Saji (2014) refers to as the cycle of hesitation: the reactionary paralyzing affective hesitation that individuals who are produced and fixed as racialized (Fanon 1957) encounter in their bodies. Ahmed (2014c) reflects that living as a person of colour involves living a life of hesitancy, never knowing for sure how to respond to racialized encounters. The cycle of sensing and then "hesitating" for racialized bodies, including multiracialized bodies, is central to the work of the racial gaze and how it exercises power over racialized bodies (i.e. you have a felt sense that something is happening, but it may not be easily put in to words) (Al-Saji 2014). This is also about hesitancy in naming the operation of race

itself: about the impossibility of naming it within a context where post-race discourses circulate (you are challenged if you do name it, and if you do not name it, something goes unsaid). For my study participants, hesitation emerged in that they at times hesitated in naming their experiences specifically as raced in the interview. This spoke to the difficulty of calling out the operation of the external racial gaze and racism because of its nuances and ambiguities (in everyday interactions, in institutions and structures), and which I position as central to the operation of race and power. For some, hesitancy may also be related to the (re)production of their bodies as ambiguous: not knowing whether one is being interpellated (as a racialized subject, or not). Interpellation (Althusser 1971) as a concept can also be drawn upon to provide nuance to the operation of the gaze. The gaze's readings of bodies works to call those bodies into being, i.e., to call respondents into being mixed race. Through interpellation, one's body is presented to one through *the gaze's* response, which seeks to (re)produce race on the multiracialized body (but which can also be misrecognized). In turn, while respondents can be ready to deploy their identity narratives, they are never quite ready enough: 'in the moment' encounters with the gaze are destabilizing (such encounters can knock you off your feet).

Other concepts from literatures on phenomenology, embodiment and race can be drawn on to understand the iterative process of this everyday embodied lived experience. What became evident from the narratives was that interviewees have the constant experience, over the course of their lives, of their bodies being dissected through encounters with the gaze. They are constantly involved in a cycle of anticipating, reading and reacting to the moments where race is in (re)production on their bodies (their multiracialization). This involves respondents' remembering – both in thought and body – due to previous encounters in their biographies.

Hemming's concept of "affective cycle" helps to describe and understand this cyclical process.

As Hemmings (2005) states:

> Affective cycles form patterns that are subject to reflective or political, rather than momentary or arbitrary judgment. Such affective cycles might be described not as a series of repeated moments –body-affect-emotion–a self-contained phrase repeated in time, but as an ongoing, incrementally altering chain –body-affect-emotion-affect-body– doubling back upon the body and influencing the individual's capacity to act in the world (564).

Affective cycles are a dynamic that links the past (experience) and the future (anticipation). In other words, how interviewees talk about their memories signal (past) in the moment experiences, but they can also tell us about the experience in the present (and the anticipatory character of the experience in the present). Hemmings' conceptualization of affective cycles can help us to think about the iterative process of the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze and how the immediate 'in the moment' and 'anticipation of the moment' aspects of being under the multiracializing gaze co-exist. Ahmed's (2015) conceptualization of how bodies carry histories with them "under the skin" as part of the everyday embodied encounter is also useful for understanding this iterative effect:

> I often think of histories as "under the skin." And by this I refer to how your body can remember something even what you might have forgotten something. A body can remind you. That history might be biographical, dependent on your own comings and goings: like the time you walked down a street, and your skin prickles before you even recall that frightening thing that happened there before. Or a history that gets under the skin might register something more collective: that sense when you walk into a room and things become uncomfortable, and you just "know" what it is about, because you have been there before. You bring a history with you, a history that surfaces through you: a brown body can bring things up just by turning up; a history of racism, a reminder of whiteness as occupying, a history that thickens the atmosphere.

For multiracialized bodies in the Canadian context, these histories are informed by how others have an endless fascination with the mixed race body (Haritaworn 2009), which is itself part of the (re)production of race on these same bodies, particularly within a multicultural and settler colonial context.

To reiterate, I argue that for the multiracialized people in this study, the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze involves their sense of *the moment* when race is being (re)produced on their bodies, as well as *anticipating* these moments. I do not seek to place this process on a linear temporal line, but rather, echoing Hemmings' (2005) theorizing of the affective cycle, to understand it as iterative. Next, I move to an in-depth discussion of the iterative aspects of the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze, drawing from respondents' narratives. Firstly, I draw on respondents' narrations of their experiences at their present life course stages, specifically in the workplace and 'on the street', to set up a discussion of repeated iterations across the life course. Secondly, I move to a focus on respondents' childhood memories, particularly of school and multicultural festivals, to demonstrate the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze and the iterative relationship between the immediate moment of the gaze and the ongoing anticipation of the gaze.

Immediate Lived Experience: Repeated Iterations

The everyday embodied lived experience of multiracialization is learned early by respondents and becomes ingrained through that learning. The immediate lived experience of the gaze is not just about formative school memories, but it repeats across the life course in kin relations, work, and other social spaces and relations (there are repeated iterations of the lived experience 'in the moment' of the gaze). The lived experience 'in the moment' of the gaze for respondents formatively experienced in school also returns (or is learned again) in the workplace and in everyday public spaces that respondents find themselves in.

In our interview, Korrie reflected on experiences in workplaces across her life, and the sense of her body as out of place (but not necessarily being able to explicitly name that it is due to race). This is the case at her current job: "I think that…sometimes even now, even here in the

hospital, I don't feel like I'm part of the club. And…that's probably for a number of reasons, but…I do think that looking the part is part of being…accepted into part of the club". Here, Korrie reflects on how her multiracialized body "does not look the part", which leads her to feel like an outsider in her working environment. However, she hesitates in solely naming her multiracialized body as the reason for her lack of inclusion in her workplace culture ("it's probably for a number of reasons") signalling a sense of hesitancy in naming race, as well as hesitancy in her reading of the situation (Ahmed 2014c; Al-Saji 2014). While Kara described a sense of acceptance and inclusion in her current workplace, at the same time she questioned why she continually gets asked to be in its training videos, as well as why she tends to be asked to be a media spokesperson, stating that it may be because of her multiracialized body, but also hesitates in her naming of race as the reason:

> You know what happens to media with [workplace] is that they need somebody to talk about kids programming in this area, or we need someone to talk about [city landmark] and I always get chosen. And I don't – maybe it's because I'm particularly chatty, and reasonably comfortable with talking to the camera, but I also feel that sometimes they choose me…on purpose, just 'cause it's somebody else and it's unique or whatever. Who knows, maybe it's just me and my personality, maybe it's because I'm a…look different [slight laughter].

Here, Kara perceives her mixed race body as both invisible and over-determined in its representation, two side of the same coin of perceived representational power (signalling diversity and multiculturalism, but in a relatable way to a white audience). Additionally, similar to Korrie, a hesitation in naming what is going on emerges for Kara – the ambiguity of the gaze and the difficulty of knowing for sure whether racializing is taking place.

Other respondents expressed being misrecognized at work. For some respondents, this is particularly facilitated through how people read (and racialize) their family names. Both George and Gordan relayed experiences of colleagues expressing surprise when they met them:

> George: Even now at work when people – you know how you email and phone people a lot, you never see them, and then they meet you, and "wow, I was expecting some Chinese guy to walk

in". I used to work with a Chinese guy in my old office, and people would walk in and look for him when they were looking for me. They would walk in and stop at his desk and like "hey, you must be [full name]".

Interviewer: Nope [slight laughter].

George: It happened to him all the time.

In the workplace, people are surprised upon meeting George, in that his family name (a Chinese name) does not 'match up' to his multiracialized body: his 'authentic' Chinese last name is instead placed on to the body of someone who is 'authentically Chinese looking'. In his professional life, Gordan had similar encounters with others' expectations around his last name not matching his racialized appearance, as well as around where he was born and his English speaking ability:

> Yeah, I think so [amused tone]. I've confused a lot of people even as I've gotten into my professional career, because they don't – I've had [slight laughter] many people say "I didn't really expect you to look like that" or they didn't…they thought when they saw [family name] that I would be…"truly Asian" Chinese first [language] speaker, and I would have language skills or something like that…there would definitely be some of that belief that there's some difference to it.

Gordon notes that this is particularly compounded by his not fitting into the predominant image (and stereotype) that exists of "the Asian Engineer". Echoing his sister Kara's experience at work, Gordan's body is experienced as both dissonant (his family name not matching his appearance when he is perceived as racially ambiguous, as described above) and over-determined (his behaviour not matching his appearance when he is racialized as Asian, as he describes below):

> Yeah, I think in some regards people are trying to figure out where you're from…definitely as I was growing up. In a professional environment there's a large number of people that I work with that did indeed immigrate straight from China. There are…engineering students or…other professionals that have come over. So…again, when people see my name or see my email, when I first start talking to them and they realize that…one, I have this very low voice, they think I'm much bigger than my 5 foot 6 that I am [slight laughter]. They…see – they realize that I'm very fluent in English and stuff like that. They're like "oh, so you're not…your English is very good". "Well, yes. I was born here". So I think people have an interest in just trying to…[putting] those pieces together. Like I said…in my professional career, a lot of early contact is through…email or some other form like that where you start exchanging emails and they maybe build up this image

in the head that I'm this "Asian Engineer" which is a very classic image that exists. And when they meet me and again they go "okay, I didn't really expect that. You're far more outgoing, you're not quiet and shy, like a typical Asian stereotype would be". I'm not…I'm not an introvert. So, like I said, I can cause confusion – I'll let people bring it [up so] we can move on past it. Then there often is "well…all the Asian/Chinese engineers I've met are very different, so why are you different". They'll sometimes dig into that if they're interested.

Here, Gordan's body (as well as how he acts in and through his body – his mannerisms, language skills and personality), are perceived as 'not in the right body' and he also anticipates these reactions to his body.

In her workplace, Yvonne also finds that she is often misrecognized. And because of this, people question what perspective she is speaking from or whose interests she represents:

> I find myself sometimes feeling – even though I don't know if it's like a role I put onto myself, or a role that has been put on me. But I – especially 'cause of where I work, I am…there are very few visible minorities. And so sometimes I'm like "do people know that I'm actually a racial minority or mixed…did I kind of slip in?" So there's a real sense of "am I passing, but I didn't mean to pass?" and so that actually happens quite a bit for me. Because so many times people – well two things. A lot of times people think I'm Aboriginal, and I think I shared where sometimes, on some files that I work on, because I work so strongly in the areas of access to education, that when people find out I'm not Aboriginal, I think I've actually disappointed them…. 'Cause people really thought I was. And I'm like "I'm not". And somehow I'm like is there a complete illegitimacy to everything I've said. Because people don't tend to see…people of Chinese heritage facing *any* [emphasis] challenges to education, apparently we're over represented, "apparently". So suddenly it's like, there's a shift in people. And I've actually joked with my colleagues "I think this person on that access whatever committee, [laughing] liked me better when they thought I was Aboriginal because [now] they don't know what space I speak from"….Mixed race isn't a category or group that has been identified as facing challenges.

Here, Yvonne's ambiguity, (re)produced on her body by the multiracializing gaze her unplaceability of being – is put on her but it is also lived: she is made responsible for the gaze's reaction to her, as the person in the gaze.

These immediate moments of being under the gaze could include sensing/making sense of how others perceive you as you walk by them on the street. Charles, a Toronto respondent, reflected on such an experience when he was out for a morning walk, on the same day as our second interview sitting. We had been discussing how he was often stopped by police as a young

man in downtown Toronto – a context where he tends to be racialized as black – and he reflected

how he does not often have those same kind of experiences now that he is older:

> Interviewer: And the police stops, was that kind of the same thing? When you were younger?

> Charles: Yeah. [But now] I've got grey in my beard. [Laughing] I don't think I look like –and you know, I say that. Just today I was walking…over there [gesturing to street] there's a few very demarcation lines in Toronto, transitioning from one space to another… in the space of a road. This neighbourhood for some reason has a bunch. But…if you cross from…this side over into Rosedale, Rosedale is very very wealthy. Stupid rich. Where the big family names live, like people named after streets the Rogers, old Toronto money. Stodgy, stuck up. So when I was walking in that neighbourhood today…which I think I looked pretty much like this [gestures to self], there was a bit of a stranger reaction that I hadn't felt in a very long time, which is just like "you're not really here, are you", "you're not really supposed to be here. You're probably from *that* [emphasis] side of the street". In reality I'm not really from either, but there was that notion up there that there was like "oh, you should be on the St. James side, not on the Rosedale side."

> Interviewer: You were getting that from how people were looking at you?

> Charles: Yeah, just the feeling. It could be internalized. There was interaction with some people just to figure out where I was 'cause I was a little lost. And it was like that sort of very pleasant "Canadian stand off-ishness". 'Cause I think in the States they would probably just punch you. Here in Canada we just do that…sort of give you a bit of a cold shoulder, and say "well maybe you should be over there". Yeah, but I haven't felt that in a long time. I haven't felt that in years.

Here, Charles expresses the felt sense of race being (re)produced on his body in this passing

interaction on the street to get directions, making sense of this feeling through unspoken

boundaries of who belongs in particular spaces in Toronto.

George also expressed how he thinks about how people perceive he and Catherine on the

street, in Edmonton, which includes the thoughts that he has to himself in that moment, which

help to signal his everyday embodied lived experience:

> George: I don't know how people would perceive us, walking down the street. Sometimes in my mind I kind of have this feeling because there's a stereotype about Caucasian's liking Asian women, Chinese women. Like, do they think I'm some kind of guy that [thinks] "I'm gonna go get me an Asian girl" [laughter] I don't know.

> Interviewer: [Laughter].

> George: Sometimes it runs through my mind. It's like "you have no idea".

> Catherine: Yeah, he's trying to be trendy! [Laughter].

George: People have no idea!

Catherine: That's funny.

George: That's what I wonder when…[slight laughter] we're walking down the street. "What are people thinking?"

Catherine: Interesting.

George: It's just one of those silly jokes in your mind.

Catherine: Is it trendy? I think it's trendy, it must be trendy to have an Asian girlfriend.

George: I don't think it's trendy, it's like a stereotype, it's like…"a thing". You hear it often.

George's reflections in regard to what people think about he and Catherine on the street connects to the anticipatory and ambiguous nature of the lived experience of being under the gaze. People who they encounter may or may not actually say anything, but they might be thinking something (but they also might not be). Yet, George's awareness (from interactions across his life course) that others tend to read and (re)produce his body as ambiguous, if not white, and that others tend to read and (re)produce Catherine's body as Asian, coupled with an awareness about stereotypes around interracial relationships between white men and Asian women, leads him to hyper-focus on how others are perceiving them on the street, constantly reflecting on how to make sense of those (possible but not definite) perceptions.

Memories and the Iterative Anticipatory Process of the Lived Experience

Participants who I interviewed develop their ready identity narratives across their lives: the snowball collects information over time from experiences that they have about what the gaze is looking for. This embodied memory-based core social 'stuff' is written into memory. Respondents' memories feed off the ready narrative, but the ready narrative is a product of their memories and expectations of what other people are looking for on their bodies (through their encounters with others). Put another way, memories move within socio-historical contexts.

Childhood memories demonstrate the iterative process of the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze in that such memories do not go away, but rather come back in different ways—they are iterative traces, not continuous. In particular, memories of school present formative moments as embodied, representing stories 'in the moment'. But school memories also show how anticipation of the gaze is built in respondents' lives. These aspects of the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze ('in the moment' and anticipation) operate in relation to each other.

The 'in the moment' or immediate aspect of the everyday embodied lived experience of the multiracializing gaze is something remembered from early experiences (Hemmings 2005), but it is also still experienced in various ways, even alongside the more reflexive ready narrative. The anticipation of the gaze is itself a lived experience of the multiracializing gaze, which has developed over time in a reflexive manner.

Respondents' memories and their narrations of their memories further signal that there are spatial and temporal facets to how interactions are lived and how such interactions are made on the body/make bodies, as well as how spatial and temporal facets are intertwined. Everyday embodied lived experiences can help think through spaces. It is not just that a body enters a space, but that a body has a history of moving or not moving (some bodies do not fit in a space). Intertwined with this is the way that life courses are iterative over time: anticipation of the gaze is temporal. Respondents' memories of school are one example of where the spatial and temporal facets of the everyday embodied lived experience come to the fore.

Almost all respondents had strong memories from experiences in school: this was often where their first memories of encounters with others occurred, and it was often the first place where respondents were called in to being (Althusser 1971) multiracialized subjects and asked

(and demanded) to narrate their identities in interactions with teachers and fellow students. These are memories of experiences 'in moments', ones that can be recalled precisely because they were so embodied "under the skin" as Ahmed (2015) puts it. These early moments of the gaze on respondents' bodies and their continued repetition over the life course are, in turn, what have led respondents to carry their ready identity narratives with them in anticipation (a lived experience of the gaze).

Additionally, many respondents came of age during the introduction of multicultural celebrations in the school curriculum, where schools become a space of expression of multicultural discourse and enactments of the cultural mosaic through requesting students perform their cultural identities (through food, costume, dance, etc.). The terminology of being "culturally authentic" seeps into the multiracialized respondents' narratives, as well as a desire to feel whole or real in one's body. While respondents' lived experience in their bodies in the moment, and lived experience in anticipation of the moment of the multiracializing gaze were highly evident in respondents' memories of school, I position the spaces of such encounters more as a backdrop than as a constitutive element of the lived experience of the gaze. Overall, school is an example of one space of encounter and subject (re)making for respondents that produces the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze.

For Tanya, returning to the school she attended as an adult left her with a visceral reaction in her body, signaling how the lived experience of the gaze that she experienced there was embodied and carried or "under the skin" (Ahmed 2015). In the interview, she recalled how the school was the site of her experiencing severe interpersonal racism for the first time in her life from her fellow students, as she was the only non-white person in her grade.

> But when I went to [name of school]…I had never experienced anything like – I still cannot go into that school. As a dancer and a dance teacher I do a lot of classes in different schools, and the dance – phys ed. teacher there used to call me every year and ask me to come and teach dance at

school and the first…year I went there and I really had a physical reaction to the school, and it was really weird. And…I just told her "I really can't work in this school" it's weird, like I can't…I can't be in the school [slight laughter]. 'Cause at that school, I was the only non-white person in my class, in my grade….And I…had never experienced anything like that before, I would be walking down the hall and a boy would walk up to me and tell me he was going to kill me after school. And I would be in gym, running laps in the gym and boys would be screaming names at me as I'm running by them. Stuff like that. And I just…was mostly just really shocked by it. And freaked out, and scared. I was very scared because they were telling me they were going to kill me, and they were big and I didn't really understand.

At the same time, Tanya recalled how her sister, Indira (who I also interviewed) had a different response to her experiences at the school, despite presumably being perceived as more visibly different than Tanya due to her "darker skin":

But my sister…who was a super tomboy, and she was in the grade younger than me…she was just super tough, and so no one messed with my sister. Even though her skin is darker than mine…. They tried to mess with her, and she just didn't take it, and she was getting in fights with people, and she just didn't stand for it. But I had just a different personality….[although] she might have a totally different story. We've talked about it and were like "God, we've had totally different life experiences!" even though we were in this isolated community together and grew up for so many years together, we had totally different lives.

While Tanya and Indira had different ways of dealing with reactions of their classmates to their visible difference, school was, for both of them, the first place where their racialized visibility was foregrounded for them.

Yvonne had similar racialized memories in school to Tanya and Indira, and slippages that occur within dominant discourse between racialization and nationality were also foregrounded. Recalling her early memories of school, she stated:

But I remember, it was brutal, the kids in our school when I was in grade two or three were really brutal. And they would try to beat us up, or try to – call us names, and they would target my cousin and I because we walked home together and they would constantly call us "chinks, chinks" and I remember my cousin always getting upset, because she was Canadian. She was born here, and she would say "I'm not a chink, I'm Canadian. I'm Canadian"….And I remember being silent because I was like "oh I can't say that, so…I guess I'm a chink but maybe not?" [laughter].

The derogatory label of "chink", which is also tied up in nationality, was used by their schoolmates to mark Yvonne and her cousin (who is also mixed) as visibly different and to belonging outside the nation. While Yvonne's cousin was able to retort back that she was in fact

Canadian by birth, the label left Yvonne with the realization that because she was not born in

Canada, this added to her racialized difference.

       For other interviewees the multiracializing of their bodies led their classmates to give

them a "conditional pass" on their visible difference. Natalie reflected that she and her sister

were two of a handful of non-white students in her school, which brought her visible difference,

and its coupled feelings of isolation, to her attention for the first time:

> I have an older sister, she's four years older than me, and… there were very very few non-whites in my schools. In [town name] definitely, and in [city name]as well. And…yeah, and I generally felt fairly ethnically isolated throughout my…childhood. Both my sister and I. You could sort of count on two hands the number of non-whites in the school. There was two black children, both boys, and…one Japanese girl, a couple of Chinese girls, maybe four or six Indians, South Asians. And that was it. And pretty much all the way along. So I as pretty isolated and I really felt that as a child.

Natalie readily identifies herself among the non-white children in the school, the small number

of whom she was easily able to recall from over 40 years before, perhaps signalling how

formative this period in her life was. Yet, Natalie also recalled experiences of being somewhat

more accepted as a multiracialized subject (or perhaps through being produced as "light

skinned"):

> The other black child that – in the neighborhood, he used to get teased and…quite – called "nigger" and stuff like that on the bus. And [then] they'd say [to me] "oh, but we don't mean you"….And another time I remember, and I think it probably happened more than once, my mom coming in to pick me up or drop me off and people asking if I was adopted. Very white with red hair and…I'm obviously not.

Here, for Natalie's multiracialization gave her two experiences in school: one of limited

inclusion and one of exclusion. Limited inclusion in that the children clarify for her that their

racist taunts are directed towards the other black child, not her, and one of exclusion through her

and her mother's kinship relation being misidentified due to how visibility is produced

differently on their bodies (Natalie as black and her mother as white).

While some respondents had good experiences with teachers as children in the classroom, others had overtly negative experiences that they continue to carry with them. Karen recalled that her racialization and perceived difference by teachers was closely tied up in her status as an immigrant:

> I think back to those days and I think from the staff, there was never any mention of colour, but there was a lot of…attention paid to the fact that I was an immigrant, that I was from somewhere else. I remember this one teacher saying something like – and she was saying it as a criticism of the other students: "look at Karen, she's not even from here, and she can – she knows all this blah blah blah blah blah" and I thought 'yeaaah' [laughter]. It was kind of funny. So I guess there was the expectation that because I was not from *here* [emphasis] I wouldn't be as bright as the other students.

Leanne and Candace, whose mothers are Métis and fathers are Black, experienced the full brunt of anti-black and anti-Indigenous racism in school, which left them with lasting negative impressions of school. When I asked Leanne to tell me about her experiences with teachers and in school she reflected:

> We had very bad experiences [slight laughter] with teachers from the very beginning, very racist and…pointing us out, and in those days they could hit kids…with objects. And I think the four oldest kids were all hit. I probably was hit the worst…yeah, it wasn't a very good experience in school. Until – until we got to a certain age, and people then just – we had been around for a while, that didn't happen until…I was in grade five. And my brother got beat up *really* [emphasis] badly, by a gang of…boys. Older – very older, he was 13 or 11, something like that. And anyways, he got beat up and some people beating him up…because he was a very good athlete, good at all kinds of sports, hockey…and, anyways, it created a lot of jealousy among other…and he got beat up really bad by a gang of boys and put in the hospital that was really a turning point, for our family, and…a lot of anger over that, a lot of…it just wasn't a good time for our family at that point. We just wanted to get out of there. But, I mean it sort of ended up before we left that we were like…the toast of the community kind of because we were all really good athletes and…that sort of thing. But I always wanted to leave. I never liked [town name], I still don't. They're having a 100 year reunion at our school, and they want us to all to come, but…I'm not interested in doing that [laughter] I have no fond memories of that, at all. I didn't want to. But my brothers, funny enough, want to participate. So…we don't all feel the same about it. Or if they have gotten over it, or…forgiven them, maybe. Maybe I hold a longer grudge [laughter].

As Leanne and her siblings grew older, she reflects that the negativity they experienced as black and Indigenous was slightly mitigated by the fact that they were talented athletes competing for the school. Yet, to this day the community and school is experienced by Leanne as a space where

racialization and racism were enacted on her and her siblings' bodies, so much so that she cannot

bring herself to be a part of the community in any way.

Candace spoke of similar negative experiences in school to Leanne, and particularly their

impact on her as a learner. She spoke of school in the interview as a place where she first learned

what being the object of someone else's disdain felt like on and in her body. When I asked her to

describe her experiences in school, she stated:

> So I attended – I believe it was called [name of school]. And I want to say that I was in grade one. And I had a teacher who really just didn't like me. And my brother and I were – like I said, two of the few…children that were visibly minorities. And…I used to get…it was kind of like once she realized that we were Aboriginal, she did a 360 on me and started treating me really differently. I used to get the strap a lot, she used to hit me on the head with a ruler, and I'd be just kind of stunned because I had no idea – you're in grade one and I just – really didn't understand her…disdain….I just – I remember being very kind of afraid of her, and just…and then as a result, not speaking very much in class and stuff. I had a hard time learning how to read, and I'd get in so much trouble for that. And then all of a sudden I became a 'problematic child' and maybe distracted because I wasn't fully engaged....I…was saying something to my brother about it, 'cause he was often in trouble, and he would – him and another black boy…were always in the office. And…I said to him 'I don't know why [teacher's name]…is so mean all the time' and he's like 'it's because she's racist. And I'm like 'I don't know what that means'….My mom – I remember finally she came into the school [slight laughter] she didn't even go to the office, she came straight into the school, straight into the classroom, opened the classroom door and said 'if you ever hit my child again, I will take that ruler and hit you on the head so you know what it feels like'. I never got hit again after that. But…probably just as much disdain.

Here, Candace reflects on the visceral disdain she felt in and on her body through her

experiences with the teacher as well as her brothers' experiences in school. While Candace did

not understand at the time why she was mistreated by her teacher or the felt sense she

experienced in her body, school served as her introduction to racialization, the lived experience

of the multiracializing gaze and the visceral felt sense of disdain on the body.

My interview participants whose schools took on a multicultural celebratory curriculum –

usually in the form of a 'multicultural day' or 'multicultural week' – had strong memories of the

curriculum being brought in and their felt sense/sense making of how their bodies were made to

feel to fit in (or not).

Yvonne reflected on such a celebratory curriculum and her navigations within it as mixed race. Here, she talks about her and her mixed race cousin of the same age's experiences:

> It was interesting, because…[with] multiculturalism policy, how that implemented in my high school was multiculturalism week and then people joined the tables, and they had like – they would do events – [and our question was always] "what table do we join?" [because] there wasn't [a] mixed people table. And so we joined the Chinese table. And that was an interesting time, because – so in my early teens, or pre-teens [I had the mentality of] "I want to stay away from Chinese people because I don't want to be lumped with the people who took over all of the spots in Scarborough", but then later in high school, there was this kind of resurgence of cultural pride. I mean I guess I could have tried to join the Scottish table, but it was like – there was less acceptance there. And then I distinctly remember, learning all things Chinese. We learned Chinese fan dancing, and how to cook the food, and there was this new resurgence of pride, and there was also a larger community. We still saw ourselves as different than the people that are the more recent immigrants, but there was also this kind of weird thing that happened because my grandmother didn't speak English hardly at all, so we had retained a lot of Chinese cultural practice. And so, the more recent Chinese immigrant students were kind of fascinated that we actually spoke Chinese and kind of retained it. And so there was this sort of [mentality of] "well yeah, we did" [cocky tone]. And then I remember even my grandmother coming and she was like doing Chinese writing and everybody was marvelling at that, and so there was this kind of – for my cousins and I - this resurgence of "yes we are Chinese, you didn't think we looked like it, and in fact we are as Chinese if not more than most of you" [laughter].

While Yvonne, as mixed race, felt that she did not fit within the discrete 'cultural' categories that the school tables were organized as (and she did not feel welcome at the Scottish table, also signalling the operation of a discrete whiteness), her joining the Chinese table enabled her embodied 'authenticity' as Chinese to be established and felt, within her own body as well as in the gazes of the more recent Chinese immigrants (whom she had previously wanted to distance herself from, because of perceptions of the Chinese "taking over" the city). Additionally, her kin relationship to her grandmother, an elderly Chinese woman with knowledge of cultural practices, led to Yvonne being seen as "authentically Chinese". At the same time, while Yvonne took up her multicultural placement as Chinese, her perceived 'Chineseness' and her taking up of Chinese cultural practices continued to be questioned by others because of her multiracialized status. This also reflects a shift from her early childhood experiences, from being read as a foreigner to her no longer being considered Chinese with the arrival of newer waves of

immigrants in the 1980s. Reflecting back on her involvement in multiculturalism week, Yvonne

also perceived celebratory practices as a potential stepping-stone for dealing with racism:

> I remember for two years my cousin and I worked so hard, [our table] won the international night, so we were like really proud, and even amongst the Chinese students, they were like "wow, you guys really did this" and then even in my final year of high school, I was the co-ordinator for the whole program…and I think in some ways it was like…we didn't have the language of racism and anti-racism, it was like "multiculturalism was going to be the answer", because now there was an end to all of the things we had experienced. And now we were actually celebrating. So now of course as I got older I was like okay, that's kind of just – a bit of a shallow…but it was sort of the first step in…it was like the dance and the food and the decorations, and the clothing, that that was sort of the first exposure to [a] school endorsed kind of a multicultural[ism].

Here, Yvonne notes an anti-racist potential or possibility of multiculturalism as an ideology or

philosophy, while also negotiating across what has been referred to as song and dance or

samosas and saris multiculturalism (George 2006; Mahtani 2002a). This reflected a sentiment

expressed by many of my study respondents regarding what they see as the continuing anti-racist

potential of multiculturalism. While reflecting on the limits of this shallow celebratory type of

curriculum, Yvonne found that at the same time, a school-endorsed multicultural component of

the curriculum led her to begin to feel a sense of acceptance in a space where she previously was

made to feel on the outside. This signals the possibilities that can emerge from official

multiculturalism in creating at least some ideological space for discourse on membership and

belonging, despite its lack of ability to respond to racism (Abu-Laban and Stasiulis 2000).

Overall, the multicultural curriculum and discourses surrounding it led Yvonne to have a felt

sense of how authenticity was (and was not) produced on her multiracialized body.

Similarly to Yvonne, Kara's memories around the multicultural curriculum (how she

made sense of it, as well as her felt sense of her everyday embodied lived experience), varied.

She stated:

> Our teacher collected all the ethnicities [of the students] and then kind of put them out on chart to show everybody….thinking back that was *weird* [emphasis]. Of course it's all "English", "Scottish", "Ukrainian", and…then there was one Czechoslovakian kid and then myself. So I had a little bit of a "Scottish" line or an "English" line and then there was this chunk that was only *me*

[emphasis] that was "Chinese". And that was grade one....grade five I remember studying China, and I remember getting a couple of the answers wrong on one of the quizzes we took, and feeling really devastated that I should know more, and I just didn't study hard enough, 'cause I was like "pssh, I know this". And I got a couple answers wrong, like I think I thought the capital was "Hong Kong" or something, instead of "Beijing" and I was like "ugh, that's embarrassing" [amused tone]. But, of course they all loved when my Grandma would come on the multicultural day and Grandma would make deep fried wontons, or something that's not really that Chinese, but something that little Caucasian kids...and other kids can eat. So everybody – I always loved those days. But I even loved bringing my Scottish grandfather in to talk about his life growing up as a homesteader and that thing too. So, I was always very proud to share.

For Kara, the multicultural curriculum, on the one hand, enabled her to share her "Chineseness"

with her white classmates, in a (literally) palatable way. Her kin relationships with both her

Chinese grandmother and Scottish grandfather, enabled a felt sense of wholeness in and on her

body. However, at the same time, her body in this space was charted – parsed into a set of

external whole categories – along discrete lines. Gordan, Kara's brother, had a slightly different

embodied lived experience within the multicultural curriculum. While Kara questioned her

authenticity as Chinese through the multicultural curriculum, it led Gordan to refute the

naturalized attachment of it to his body:

> Gordan: There was times in junior high, I can't remember…where it was kind of a…UN type thing, where you were sharing…different things. And I remember dressing up with – some sort of Chinese thing, I'm trying to remember what the heck it was. I recall wearing a Chinese costume type pajamas and talking about Chinese culture and stuff like that. Which for me at the time, I remember felt kind of very strange. Because it would have been about the same as a Caucasian doing the same sort of thing, because it wasn't really very natural for me. I don't think I identified myself as being "Chinese" so much, it wasn't like I was like "oh, this is what I do at home" [it] is more like "okay, this is what people would do in China". Wear this type of clothing, and they would talk about this sort of thing. It was more, again, like any other Canadian kid, exploring different cultures, but that there was some sort of cultural link for me. But I remember doing that – in I think it was junior high, where there was that sort of activity going on. Otherwise it was just a small town rural area that didn't really do a lot of cultural celebration things. But, I remember strange little events like that, yeah.
>
> Interviewer: And…do you remember your classmates also…dressing up like that too?
>
> G: Yeah, they were doing – there'd be Ukrainian kids, that were doing different parts again, dressing up and presenting and talking about this country. I think – I can't remember if it was…a lot of it was derived from…what culture you were or had background in, some of it was assigned if they didn't have something that was distinctive. But yeah, again, it was kind of the same sort of… "costumed theatre" type thing, where it's like "oh, well they're dressed up in this very kind of strange abstract thing that they don't really connect with. It's not really 'them'". Where I'm

sure a number of people who saw me doing the same sort of thing though "oh, well he's Chinese, that makes sense. There's a connection there". But for me, like I said, I was just being…another Canadian kid exploring whatever social studies requirement was at that time.

Here, Gordan describes himself as "just another Canadian kid", who felt that he was playing an assigned role within the multicultural curriculum. But at the same time he recognized that he would be seen as authentic – as embodying Chineseness – through his racialization. Additionally, to his teacher, Gordan's "half Chineseness" (his multiracialized subjectivity) was perceived as authentic *enough* to play the part (even as there are other kinds of context where being 'half', would mean not being 'authentic enough', signaling the operation of a kind of one-drop cultural rule in the Canadian context through how multiracialization and multiculturalism operate together). Put another way, race discourse and its rules operate contextually and always do so in relation to the dominance of the white gaze.

The multicultural curriculum led Yvonne, Kara and Gordan to prove, question and challenge the authenticity of their bodies as Chinese. Their bodies serve as social touchstones of belonging: to specific cultures (if imperfectly) and to multicultural Canada, all at once. Narratives around a felt sense of 'bodily authenticity' through the multicultural curriculum varied for Regan, whose body tends to be (but is not always) (re)produced as white (and is therefore not always racialized as 'cultural'). In her narrative, connections emerged between her mixed family and her school's multicultural week, with her as the (imperfect) go-between:

> Interviewer: Did you have a multicultural day or week at school?
>
> Regan: [Laughing] Yeah totally. I used to love those days. Because I think it was the time I could be like "this is what I am!" I was really excited about that kind of stuff. And bringing Malaysian – I never really was like "ouuu, I'm Irish too, I'm going to bring this". I was like "my Dad's from Malaysia" and, I didn't really know [why], because we didn't grow up with the culture or the food. And he was…quite Canadian. So…even though I didn't know anything about it, I always really wanted that opportunity to talk about it. Show it off in some ways…. Those kind of things happened a lot in elementary [school], I feel like, and I was always excited about them….Yeah. I feel like rice is always [laughing] involved. Always some sort of rice based dish…. There was always a lot of…tension around it, because I'd be really excited for that day, and I'd be like "we're doing this at school" and I would tend to tell my mom instead of my Dad directly,

because…my Dad's not always the greatest person [slight laughter]. So…"I want to bring this and I want to bring something from Malaysia" and my mom would be like… "okay, yeah, we'll talk to your Dad" and she would sort of bring it up in front of him and he would always be like "why do I want to do that? I don't want to do that"….I don't know if that's…a response to – immigrating's a traumatic experience [slight laughter]. I don't know if it came out of that, or, like I mean obviously that played into it partially in some way. But…anytime I wanted to be like "hey Dad, I want to connect with you, show me what is it", he'd be like "no, why do you want to know that"….I remember this hunt for turmeric this one year, I was like "this rice needs to be yellow!" [laughter] "how do we make that happen!"…And I didn't know anything about flavour or cooking at that time in my life. I just knew it had to be yellow….So it was always really this inauthentic experience for me, but really wanting it to be authentic, but it never really was, and at the end of the day I was still a white kid [laughter]

Through the experience of multicultural day at school, Regan challenged her perceived lack of "multiculturalness", through the perceived whiteness of her body. She positioned the multicultural day as a moment in which to prove her cultural authenticity (in particular through food), although she notes that she never had a felt sense of it as authentic. Added to this dynamic is Regan's complex relationship with her father: both using the multicultural day to try and further establish a kin connection with her father, as well as attempting to be seen as more than white always resulted in failure ("at the end of the day I was still a white kid").

In contrast to Regan, for Candace, the multicultural curriculum led to the opening up of discussions at home, which her family had not previously had. She reflected that through these types of days, a felt sense of belonging emerged:

I was probably in grade four, grade four/five split class, we had to bring home something – bring to school something of…where we're from. It's like "oh, bring something from where you're from" and talk about it, and I was like "I have no idea what I'm bringing to school", I had no idea what I was. And so I went home and I'm like almost in tears asking my mom, I'm like "what are we? We're nothing! What are we going to bring!" so she kind of talked a little bit more about – maybe just assumed that we knew that we're part Aboriginal, and that we're Trinidadian. And…'cause we didn't really grow up with a distinct cultural way of growing up, right? So, she helped me understand…she made me some bannock, and I took bannock, and we talked about – I had a picture of a map of Trinidad or something, and I took that. I was able to be proud of that. But it was also at that age where I pretty much realized some of the things that were happening to me, or said to me or to my parents – my mother. That's when I really started to pick up on racism.

Through the multicultural day Candace was able to "feel proud of what she was", but at the same time this was something that she was called into narrating and performing in order to participate

in the multicultural curriculum (and notably because Candace's family did not participate in "cultural practices", she assumed that they were "nothing" in comparison to multicultural Others with cultural practices). Additionally when Candace began to have a sense of connection to "what she was", this also led her to understand some of the racialized encounters she had begun to experience herself.

Growing up, respondents also recalled how multicultural celebratory spaces outside of school (also encouraged and supported by Canada's official multicultural policy) produced particular embodied lived experiences. I position celebratory multicultural spaces as another example of a space of encounter of subject (re)making for respondents, that produces the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze. Additionally, encounters in these spaces – spaces that respondents often attend with family members – are impacted by whether or not their kinship ties are recognizable to the gaze of others (Butler 2002), as introduced in Chapter Three. However, here I want to note the link between kinship and the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze.

Kara's kinship relations mapped on to simultaneous felt sense/making sense of belonging in her body in spaces of multicultural festivals, and felt sense/making sense of her body as out of place (not belonging but feeling belonging). She described her participation in Highland Dance competitions as a child in our interview:

> Interviewer: You had mentioned that growing up you had done…highland dancing and stuff like that. And I'm wondering, were there questions about "oh, why is someone who looks like you doing this" growing up…if you remember experiencing that? Or was it just like "no, of course everyone wants to do highland dancing!"
>
> Kara: Everyone loves highland dancing! [laughter]. My grandpa, my Scottish grandpa, was a lovely man…a lot of people knew who my grandfather was in our town, that he was very Scottish, and therefore knew why my brother and I were in highland. He used to cry when he would watch us dance 'cause he thought it was so cool. 'Cause in his eyes we weren't "Asian kids", we were his Grandkids. But…I think later perhaps, when people see photos of us doing it, they don't recognize that. And I think we probably did look a little odd being quite dark haired,

but wearing traditional Scottish costumes and stuff. So I think…I don't know. I think at that time – what's interesting for me is now when we go to Scottish highland gatherings, I love to go to the one in Canmore and in my heart I always kind of think that I'm Scottish, but because I don't look Scottish at all, you get sort of snubbed at the Scottish things, because…you're not Scottish enough. Which was kind of sad for me, and I realized that there's no self-identifier for me to be Scottish….'Cause you – you feel in your heart you have this thing and you're passionate about these activities, and you love the music and the bagpipes and they even wear Celtic jewelry and that kind of stuff, but no one will ever recognize that's what I am, which is interesting. I've always felt obliged to tell people when they ask, the – both pieces…so yeah, I guess growing up there wasn't ever any issues about it, but it is the people not recognizing it later that's sort of funny. You get snubbed!

While Kara does not recall as a child whether people questioned her participation in Scottish festivals and Highland dance activities, she reflected that looking back at photos her body was likely perceived as out of place. However, now at Scottish cultural celebrations, it is not her body that is necessarily out of place, but that the ethnicities are 'not in the right body', echoing George's earlier experience in the workplace of also not being perceived as in the right body. Here, Kara's bodily authenticity as Scottish is not just questioned, but it is not even recognized, despite a felt/embodied sense of deep connection, through both kinship lineage and a history of her participation in cultural practices and events. Her biography goes against the grain, and is incomputable to the gaze. Her kinship ties are unrecognizable, building on Butler's (2002) theorizing on recognizable kinship as discussed in Chapter Three. In Kara's narrative, we also see a move from memories of past experiences of moments, to how the felt sense in the body/making sense of repeats in various ways across the life course: it brings it into the present. Respondents' narrations of kinship, in other words, are also about continued iterations.

Other respondents recalled how felt sense of comfort and discomfort in their bodies in such celebratory multicultural spaces are produced. Regan reflected on her felt sense in such spaces – in particular at Heritage Days – Edmonton's flagship celebration of multicultural Canada:

In those spaces…I always…I feel comfortable, it's not like I don't feel – it's not like I feel uncomfortable. Especially when it is something when there's such a huge mix of different

cultures all happening in one place. And…plus you have the kind of people who…just there to…experience other cultures which is kind of – yeah, I don't know what that is either. But I tend to feel comfortable in spaces like that. And somehow feel like "oh, I fit in here, because it is a little bit of an opportunity for me…to feel – more…I don't know, whatever I am" and to be…like I am comfortable in – I'm not a white person and I can be multiple parts of myself, comfortably, in a space like that. I did always like being at those things with my Dad too, I think that's like…a bit of cultural fetishization. Like "look, my Dad's really a brown person" [laughter].…'cause he would be the one who would be approached by other people of other ethnicities, just being like "hey, how are you doing, you have a good day". So [I] always…really want to be connected to that in some way. Yeah, I'm comfortable in those spaces. But – and then I definitely am also aware that you – say, when I'm watching…Pakistani pavilion at Heritage Days, I remember doing that once…and just seeing the girls sing and stuff, and "wow, this is beautiful" [but] I have no experience. Or like…being at…say the Malaysian booth, someone at Heritage Days, and…the Indian – and seeing…two different cultures, but also kind of a little bit of confusion there. Like "oh, we're Malaysian, my Dad's Malaysian". And then it was quite a few years before I realized "oh, we're from India [slight laughter]too". So yeah. Those spaces they're…comfortable.

In this space of multicultural celebration Regan negotiates racial and cultural recognition and belonging. Regan asserts that such spaces are where she can experience multiple parts of herself and that she "feels comfortable" there (a turn of phrase that she used over and over again in her narrative). But, how her body gets read – and how she wants it to be read – is connected to her relation to her father's body, and how it is perceived and read by other "ethnic" (i.e. non-white) bodies. The wholeness of her fathers' experience (brown to brown) is juxtaposed with the wholeness of her experience in a perceived mixed place.

CONCLUSION

Through drawing on respondents' narratives I sought to explicate the everyday embodied lived experience of the multiracializing gaze, a lifelong experience that also tells us about the operation of the gaze. Throughout the interviews, respondents described their sense of/making sense of the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze on their bodies in practically every context they find themselves in (work, school, during social activities, and while travelling), and between them and any number of people in their lives (co-workers, customers, teachers, friends, and strangers). However, this sense of/making sense of is often coupled with a cycle of hesitation about naming race explicitly (Ahmed 2014c; Al-Saji 2014). Yet, respondents' narratives also

demonstrated how the lived experience of the gaze is iterative across the life course. I argue that the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze is centered through an iterative process between the *immediate* experience of multiracialization 'in the moment' of the gaze and the lifelong experience of *anticipating* the multiracializing gaze.

Respondents' childhood memories of encounters with the gaze signal past instances of the everyday embodied lived experience in the moment. Yet, respondents also recall these moments so well that 'they live', always anticipating future encounters with the multiracializing gaze. This anticipation is also evident through how respondents 'carry' their ready identity narratives with them at all times – so while anticipation is linked to future instances of the moment of being under the gaze (i.e. something that will be experienced 'later on') – it is also experienced 'as present'. The ready narrative is a sign of this anticipation: it is 'carried' around, or 'kept in the back pocket' for deployment when necessary (anticipation of the gaze as an everyday embodied lived experience) – signaling an iterative process.

The everyday embodied lived experience of the racial gaze is not particular to mixed race people; rather it is a racialized experience. Yet, there is something to be said about the lived experience of the gaze and the particularities of its operation on and through multiracialized bodies. I argue that the temporally iterative facet of the lived experience and respondents' ready identity narratives bring these particularities to the fore. The lived experience of being under the multiracializing gaze is bound up in the constant production of racial discourse that occurs on and through respondents' bodies, which are produced as mixed, again and again, across the life course (which works to solidify race categories as discrete), and as shaped by the histories and discourses of multiculturalism, race, and immigration in Canada. The lifelong experience of the

multiracializing gaze leads respondents to craft ready identity narratives, as the gaze desires to imagine and know the originary point of racial mixing (Haritaworn 2009).

The immediate and anticipatory aspects of the lived experience of the gaze overall leads us to the social of that gaze. In turn, I suggest that the multiracializing gaze can bring us to thinking about a kind of 'multiracialized affect'. Hemmings, drawing on Al-Saji, conceives that "an affect theory is all of our affective experiences to date that are remembered (or better, perhaps, registered) in the moment of responding to a new situation, such that we keep 'a trace, within [our] constitution' of those experiences (Al-Saji 2000, p.56)" (Hemmings 2005: 552). Drawing on Hemmings and Al-Saji, I posit that the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze connects 'in the moment' but traces the iterative process between 'in the moment' and anticipatory as an affective thing. While this chapter was not specifically focused on affect, it came through at times in how people talked about lived experience. The phenomenology of mixed race experience is a mix of anticipatory and immediate and how they interact in relation to the multiracializing gaze. Affect as a concept signals the 'carrying around' that emerged as part of the experience of being under the gaze. A concept of multiracialized affect, then is something to be further explored.

Additionally, the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze, and how it is iterative across the life course, can also tell us about the power of whiteness (in that for multiracialized bodies there is always the possibility of the gaze exerting itself over the body). The white gaze is a racial ideology: it is a systematic way of looking at the world; it is the gaze of white people, but it is not exclusive to white people. The white gaze seeks to reinforce the dominance of whiteness: one way in which it does this is through solely recognizing a linear racial discourse, however it also at times works by inviting multiracialized bodies into the folds of whiteness.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

My driving interest in this research project has been to find out what could be learned about race through mixed race experiences over the decades of official multiculturalism. I took up a life story and narrative approach, including a life course perspective, to conducting interviews with mixed race people whose lives spanned this time period in Canada. My participants' experiences and narratives gave concrete meaning and depth to the experience of navigating a singular gaze when one does not fit neatly within the confines of that gaze.

I have shown how respondents' life story narratives indicate that within the context of official multiculturalism, the multiracializing gaze operates in three particular ways. As I discussed in Chapter Three, the multiracializing gaze operates through the assumption of categorical identities of origin and belonging – an assumption deeply linked to the dominant imaginary of whiteness. On the one hand, mixed race confounds the pure categories of race and blood through which identity and kinship are recognized, unhinging the categorical gaze. On the other hand, that same categorical gaze is recuperated through the desire to imagine and know the originary point of mixing read off the multiracialized body. Four key learnings about race and mixed race absorbed by respondents across their life course emerged from their narratives, as well as how respondents re-make these lessons to give to their children. Respondents' learning's include: learning that they lack socially recognized belonging; learning that they are socially read as impure; learning serial-multiple forms of articulated difference; learning (how) to respond to the calling out of difference; and re-making these lessons in the context of parenting. I argue that mixed race raises how whiteness operates along with other categorical identities (there is an assumption that you will always be 'this particular origin'), but that mixed race families' kinships complicate this dominant order of racial categorization (the categorical gaze). Through

mixed race families' kinships, race and blood are undone, in that these kinship ties outside of 'a particular origin' are unrecognizable to the categorical gaze. Yet, race and blood are also recaptured through that same categorical gaze, in that the gaze produces the multiracialized body through the desire to imagine and know its originary point of racial mixing (for example through asking questions that require the ready identity narrative from respondents). Respondents' experiences of learning about race and the racial gaze across the life course demonstrate this two-way operation of categorical identity production, setting the stage for understanding how they navigate the social and discursive terrain of their identities.

In Chapter Four, I introduced how the multiracializing gaze produces a key problematic: a tension between mixed race's transformative possibilities and its concomitant potential to reproduce dominant discourses. What emerged from respondents' narratives is that the multiracializing gaze (re)produces linear or discrete racial imaginaries, while its production of bodies as mixed race simultaneously opens up spaces of transformative possibilities. This echoes ideas found in the literature on cultural hybridity: whether the politics of hybridity are transcendent or not (Werbner 2015). I have examined three key arenas where respondents provided insight into the complex social terrain of their identification: navigating 'mixed race', navigating national belonging ('Canadian' and 'multicultural') and navigating complex commonalities. The story of identity that respondents form through their navigations of the three key arenas of identification is intertwined with the narrative that respondents have ready to give to others when they are questioned about their identities [the workings of the external racial gaze trying to (re)produce race]. The story of identity that respondents form through their navigations of these three key arenas is evident in what I call the ready identity narrative: the narrative that respondents have ready to give to others when they are questioned about their identities.

The fifth chapter examined how the multiracializing gaze is lived not only in the immediate moment of the gaze on the body, but also in anticipation of it. I moved from considering respondents' social interactions and negotiations of the multiracializing gaze in the first two substantive chapters to respondents' lived experience of the multiracializing gaze in this final substantive chapter. I pointed to three key facets that enable us to examine the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze: firstly, drawing on Ahmed (2000, 2015) and narrative identity and life story perspectives, I positioned the everyday embodied lived experience of the gaze as made up of respondents' felt sense of as well as how they make sense of their encounters with the gaze; secondly, drawing on Hemmings (2005), I positioned the phenomenology of the everyday as iterative; and thirdly, I positioned that the lived experience has spatial and temporal facets.

Extending Haritaworn's concept of the process of multiracialization, I found that the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze is not only what happens in 'the moment' of the gaze (including the 'what are you?' question), but also what happens in between: how those moments speak to each other across the life course and iteratively (if not continuously) *anticipate* the moment of the gaze. In doing so, I found that the life course was important to understanding the relationship between the moment of the multiracializing gaze and the anticipation of it, especially within the particular socio-historical context of Canada (as shaped by the histories and discourses of multiculturalism, race, and immigration in Canada). Respondents had ready identity narratives that they 'carry' in anticipation of the questioning external gaze – they are responsive, in that the ready narratives have come from previous experiences. Yet, while this anticipation is a sort of reflexive armour, it is also one that is uncertain in part because there is always the real, somewhat untamable 'in the moment' work of the gaze. Put another way, the

ready identity narrative illuminates the link between the immediate experience of the gaze and the anticipation of it. The narrative is developed iteratively in response to and in anticipation of the gaze, including across the life course. Respondents' memories, and how they recall their memories, are an integral way to think through the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze. How interviewees talked about memories (I focused on their memories of school and at multicultural festivals as children in particular) signal earlier instances of the lived experience in the moment. Respondents recalled these moments so well and vividly that they 'live' in the present and also signal the anticipation of giving the ready identity narrative in the present. Yet, it is also subtler than this: both the vivid encounters with the gaze and the repeated experiences of the gaze (and the mundane knowledge that it will happen again, if not exactly in the same way) mean that there is an anticipation that lives there in respondents' bodies. Respondents' formative moments (and their memories of those moments) shape the ready identity narrative, as does moving through the world in a body that is produced as mixed race: all of these make up the 'luggage' of anticipation. Put another way, the immediate and the anticipatory are two-sided moments that feed off each other. In turn I suggested that the lived experience emerging from respondents' narratives may lead to thinking about multiracialized affect as kind of racialized affect.

Emerging from these key points are also possibilities for further research contributions. Three such contributions, which I discuss in more detail below, include: firstly, analyzing the operation of whiteness and the categorical gaze; secondly, further development of the concept of multiracialized affect; and thirdly, articulating a politics of mixed race.

FURTHER RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

Whiteness and the Gaze in the Canadian Context

I have argued in this dissertation that the multiracializing gaze operates through the assumption of categorical identities of origin and belonging – an assumption deeply linked to the dominant imaginary of whiteness. The white (categorical) gaze is a racial ideology: it is a systematic way of looking at the world that structures how people in the Canadian context (re)produce race (in other words this categorical gaze is the external gaze of white people, but it is not exclusive to white people). The categorical gaze is how race gets produced and (re)produced in the social world. The white categorical gaze exists in order to define (and confine) others through racialized processes, and it defines itself through what it is not (Haritaworn 2009; Kelly 1998; Razack 1998). Put another way, the white categorical gaze constructs racial categories, constructions through which power is produced and enacted. I have argued that through this white categorical gaze, white racialized ethnicities are produced through multiplicity in a way that non-white racialized ethnicities are not (Paragg Forthcoming). Yet, further research and theorizing is required on how whiteness, working through post-race discourses, attempts to attach itself to the Canadian nation and reproduce its dominance through its (re)production of multiracialized bodies. Through respondents' narratives, it was evident that at times the white categorical gaze invites such bodies into whiteness' fold – through their (re)production as white or as 'mixed but honorary white' – which also worked to produce the illusion of an inclusive multicultural nation. Yet, at other times, these same bodies were rejected from whiteness' fold. In other words, the multiracializing (white categorical) gaze operates in a contextual and temporal manner.

Future research could further consider how through the categorical gaze, whiteness includes and excludes who it needs to, in its construction of itself, from moment to moment in order to maintain its own dominance. In other words, future research needs to further consider how the multiracializing gaze produces certain bodies as 'mixed' to fold those same bodies into whiteness. Dominant racial imaginaries or race categories are always being already (re)produced on the bodies of all social subjects. Yet, multiracialized bodies are a particular site that provide a lens on this process of race production – that is (seemingly) otherwise invisible in the dominant imaginary – in that they complicate the dominant racial imaginary. While race is recognized as a social construction in both popular and academic discourses, as Haritaworn (2012) argues it is often positioned as existing in the world in a way that is pre-social, when in fact dominant notions of race are in constant (re)production. Multiracialized bodies are simultaneously produced through their inclusion within whiteness as well as through their exclusion from whiteness. While respondents in my study complicate this folding in, at times re-politicizing their bodies, the fluidity of their narratives and identities also simultaneously worked to reproduce dominant discourses (including post-race discourses). Who "gets to be white" (and when and where they get to be white) should be further interrogated to demonstrate the operation of whiteness and the national racial imaginary. Interrogating who is and who is not invited into whiteness through their multiracialization also works to place a lens on the fallacy of post-race discourse. Multiracialized bodies that are (re)produced as phenotypically closer to white are produced as mixed race by the gaze and are positioned as 'the future of Canada', whereas people who are produced phenotypically as non-white are reproduced as 'outside of the nation' by the gaze, unless their kin relations are in view. In this way, 'the future of Canada' is always still tied to whiteness and its construction of itself.

This operation can be further connected to official multiculturalism, in that the dynamics between whiteness and multiracialized bodies expose multiculturalism's relationship to whiteness – for example, in the various ways it reproduces distinct categories other – than-white. The acceptance of *some* mixed race people in the national imaginary works to produce the illusion of an inclusive multicultural nation, when in fact it is whiteness folding these subjects into its own definition of itself. The very notion of being invited into whiteness, or who can or cannot 'pass' as white, signals the hegemonic place of whiteness in the racial imaginary. What this means for what we can learn about how multiculturalism operates is an interesting question to consider. There exists a tension between the ease of enfolding into whiteness and the ease of enfolding into multiculturalism. Understandings of mixed race experiences and of the multiracializing gaze perhaps shows the tentative or contradictory relationship of whiteness to multiculturalism, or at least shows the limited/particular ways in which whiteness and multiculturalism are bound to each other in the Canadian context.

In this sense, the study participants' experiences can be positioned as distinctively Canadian, through multiculturalism's desire for origins and the relationship of whiteness to multiculturalism. Some people are folded in through their resemblance to what whiteness imagines and (re)produces itself as, while others are excluded and could never 'be white'. This process is also exemplified in who is and who is not 'invited' into whiteness, or who does or does not 'pass' as white. How the categorical gaze is structured is evident in how those who are produced phenotypically as 'closer' to whiteness – for example some of the interviewees in my study who were 'Asian/white mix' – have at times been read (produced) as white in their lives. For respondents who were 'black/white mix' or 'black/Métis mix', this has never been the

experience. Overall, how race discourse and multicultural discourse are operating in this production of bodies needs to be further considered.

Towards a Theorization of Multiracialized Affect

I have argued that for respondents, the multiracializing gaze is lived not only in the immediate 'moment' of the gaze on the body, but also in *anticipation* of it, and that the ready identity narrative illuminates the link between the immediate experience of the gaze and the anticipation of it. I drew on phenomenology, embodiment and race literature to understand the lived experience of the multiracializing gaze as described by my study respondents. Understanding the lived experience of the gaze on multiracialized bodies can lead to further theorizing about racialized affect. Although not the main focus of my study, bodily/visceral experiences or embodied affect did emerge at times out of my interview participants' narratives. In this dissertation I have begun the work of outlining the concept of multiracialized affect, but this project was not explicitly focused on theorizing affect and respondents' affectual responses to the multiracializing gaze. Yet, this process is a key way that power is enacted over bodies, through race. Further empirical research is required in order to further explicate multiracialized affect on mixed race bodies: how the gaze reproduces bodies as mixed race (by multiracialization) and the affective impact that this produces over, on, and through these bodies.

As I have suggested, the lived experience of being under the multiracializing gaze forms the basis of mixed race (un)collectivity. Working towards a conceptualization of multiracialized affect – further theorizing the commonality of lived experience of multiple multiplicities under the multiracializing gaze – and of how the operation of power is inherent in this process, can also move towards articulating a politics of mixed race. As work on the intersection of affect and

racialization processes argues, affect is also political (Berg and Ramos-Zayas 2015; Ramos-Zayas 2011).

Articulating a Politics of Mixed Race: (Un)collective Possibilities

Within critical mixed race studies circles, there have been calls for articulating what a politics of mixed race is, or what it could look like (Mahtani 2014; Sharma 2012, 2014). Nitasha Sharma (in talks given at the 2012 and 2014 Critical Mixed Race Studies conferences) has urged for the articulation of a politics of mixed race. Questions that emerge from these kinds of calls include how can mixed race explicitly take up a project of anti-racism and anti-colonialism. Mahtani (2014) calls for the division between anti-racist frameworks and anti-colonial or decolonial frameworks to be further interrogated in critical race and mixed race work in Canada, arguing that critical mixed race work in Canada must engage and draw on these frameworks. I have argued that the multiracializing gaze produces a key problematic: a tension between mixed race's transformative possibilities and its concomitant potential to reproduce dominant discourses. This tension is where both *complexity* and *possibility* in articulating a politics of mixed race, lie.

One possible avenue for articulating a politics of mixed race and/or of 'Canadian/multicultural' is that of multiracialized (un)collectives. I used the term (un)collective to capture a way that I found respondents claim *a common experience of difference*, as a collective of mixed race people (for example, negotiating across discourses of mixedness, having ready identity narratives and the experience of and anticipation of the multiracializing gaze)**,** while also recognizing differences amongst each other as mixed race people (again, recognizing how variance of mix/racialization can impact respondents' experiences, along with gender, sexualities and class identities). I have argued that (un)collective identities serve as a response

and potential challenge to post-race discourses by carving out a *different* space of identity in

regard to (white) Canadianness and (discrete categorical) multiculturalism. For example, feelings

of (un)collectivity were evident in the joint interview that I conducted with George and

Catherine. In our second interview, George worked to complicate his own initial assumption that

multiracialized people's experiences would be the same, recognizing complex commonalties

(Paragg 2014) between himself and other multiracialized people:

> George: It's kind of funny, thinking about [our first interview] after. I was telling some people at work what we were doing and…then I thought about it and I was like 'we always just think of *our* [emphasis] situation, in terms of being 'mixed race', 'culture' I always think of 'Chinese'. It's probably more than just Chinese people that you're talking too! [laughter].

> I: [Laughter] Yeah, it's true!

> George: It's kind of funny how you think about your own situation and it's like – pretty 'set' in your mind what it looks like and it's like 'well, it's really not what this is limited too! [slight laughter]. It's kind of funny, I was thinking, assuming I was – to be thinking that way.

Here, George recognized the specificity of his experiences due to his 'mix' while also

recognizing that other multiracialized people may not share the particularities of his

multiracialized experience. He recognized that there is a broader definition of people who would

have responded to my recruitment ad, and who would also see themselves as 'mixed' (perhaps

also due to the fact that I, the mixed race interviewer, did not share the same 'mix' as George). In

our interview, Candace similarly recognized the specificity of her 'mix' and how this likely

impacted her experiences of mixed race:

> My experiences…stem from that particular mix…'cause I'm sitting there thinking to myself, I know people who…have lots of different things going on for them, Asian and white, whatever. And possibly their experiences haven't been the same. However, I haven't necessarily been in a situation to kind of hear their stories either. Because you have to be in a position for someone to be willing to share that as well right. So…but yeah. It's been an interesting experience, it's been an interesting journey and [I] definitely [have] more self-awareness than [when I was younger]. And all my experiences haven't been…horrible, but [my experience has] definitely been more trying [then] maybe for some of my [non-mixed] peers.

Here, Candace notes the particularities of her experiences with an awareness that others' "mixed experiences" may differ from hers, while recognizing that mixed race people form a kind of (un)collective through their racialized experiences, namely the production of their bodies as multiracialized.

For Lanny, the specificity of his 'mix' impacted those with whom he chose to form relationships over the course of his life, but so did his recognition of complex commonalities between himself and other people of colour. Recollecting his friendships growing up, Lanny recognized how he tended to hang out with other mixed race young men, in particular other young men who had a white parent and a black parent, because they shared a common experience of difference:

> When I was in high school, I more or less hung with…other young half black guys. And of course other full – guys who were…you identify both of the parents as being black, but there is a small group of us who – because we were…all mixed, we were just maybe a little bit tighter. We were all related, but, there was a handful of us who were…actually – our fathers all came up mid-50s, married white women kind of in Edmonton, had the same kind of – type of heritage. And we all knew our heritage. We all knew about it. Even growing up as a child, I knew that my Dad grew up in kind of a…black settlement in Saskatchewan. And…we were different. So…yeah.

While early on in his life Lanny formed friendships with other 'black-white mixed' boys, over his life course, the forming of collectives and friendships through a common experience of difference did not end with others who had the same 'type of heritage'. Throughout his working life, Lanny formed strategic associations with other people of colour, banding together in order to provide support for each other in their predominantly white workplace:

> I met a lot of different people [at work]…a lot of different people from every [non-white] ethnic group. And that would always come up 'what are you?' and if the person was 'ethnic' I would want to know what they were all about and I would tell them my history, they would tell me – and it was really interesting that way, because they would always take me into their confidence 'cause then again, they…accepted me as black, they talked to me differently then they would talk to another white guy who was there. We could talk about…common experiences, racism, whatever, comfortably together. And…even if they're from [elsewhere]…that doesn't matter. If they were a person of colour, East Indians, people from Pakistan, Africans, whatever, all against the white man, right. We'd sit and talk, and we'd learn who everybody was. So. I [learned] a lot about people.

Lanny and his co-workers of colour formed a kind of (un)collective through their complex

commonalities, in order to carve out a space for themselves in their workplace where they faced

institutional barriers and discrimination from white bosses and co-workers. Tanya's workplace –

a dance studio that she owns – and hip-hop dance collectives also emerged as spaces of

collectivity where she's seen 'communities of brownness' form:

> I don't really think of myself I guess on the daily like that – of being mixed race – but I totally
> am. I'm half white, half brown [slight laughter]. I'm caramel coloured. A lot of people refer to me
> as a caramel coloured person. Now – I feel really happy because now…I feel like I'm – because I
> own this hip hop studio now, called [studio name], so there's a lot of…a lot of Filipino kids are
> into hip hop, and a lot of brown kids are into hip hop. And, so, the brown kids – I totally feel like
> 'they're my people' I feel like…I feel like 'I'm a brown person'. I can be brown – I'm brown.
> And I totally can be stoked on that, which – feels nice, and…even though brown is [Afghan], and
> Pakistani, Kazakhstani, and all these different things.

Here, hip-hop dance communities serve as a basis for the creation of social collectivity and

belonging for people of colour.

Echoing Lanny and Tanya's narratives above, other respondents talked of forming

strategic solidarities with other people of colour through other collectives outside of the

workplace. In multiple cases such strategic associations took the form of respondents taking part

in creative projects and endeavors, in a way that recognized complex commonalities and

challenged the taking up of mixed race people as transcending race or operating as multicultural

bridges. This came out in various ways, including as collectivity with other multiracialized

people and with other people of colour or 'communities of brownness' as discussed above. I

have suggested that respondents' narratives of their experiences and sense of belonging that they

find with other people of colour – including other mixed race people – complicate post-race

discourse. Creative collectives provide mixed race people with one way to create space for

people to share their stories and to hear each other's stories. As Candace notes above "you have

to be in a position for someone to be willing to share [their stories as mixed race people]." The

creation of such spaces is necessary in order to learn about the particularities (complex

commonalities) between mixed race people and their racializations. For Regan, the creative

endeavour of putting on a short theatre production worked to create a space of community

through complex commonalities or shared experiences with other people of mixed race. She

describes how this process unfolded, stating:

> I asked people I knew who were mixed and they either wrote in little stories about experiences they had, and then one woman we did go for a couple hour 'hang out' basically….Out of recording her, an hour, there were about ten stories or so I had, just from her. And…so that made up the bulk of it. And then there were about five other people who contributed stories. So the whole piece ran about 20 minutes. And then we had three performers, me and two other women and…we basically just read these stories off a piece of paper. And I introduced the piece. It was a very intimate, small venue….So…I was just like 'hey audience, my name's Regan, whatever, blah blah blah'. Explained what my project was, why it meant something to me, how I self-identified and the three of us took turns reading through these stories. And then at the end – we did say that they weren't our stories, but were quite open. Because people shared – I was actually surprised - really alienating experiences…. So…sharing that, it didn't surprise me that…people…received that very well. But what did surprise me was…all of a sudden, I'm putting all these stories out there, these really personal stories, and then I'm sharing one of my own and the other two people were [inaudible] and then we just realized "there's actually a community for us" or a space – like a needed community for us. I don't know. Because sometimes you feel a little bit alone in this 'mixed experience' because sometimes you're kind of like…the odd one out, or you're always like "oh, I'm too white for this space" or "I'm too coloured for this space" so I just – my experience has been a lot of…sitting on the fence. And a lot of living intersections.... So…to actually realize – "oh, there's other people out there who maybe don't look like me, maybe have different racial makeups than me, but have the same experience in that they never…quite fit in, or they never quite know, and they're always kind of confused [about how others are reading them]". So that – that's what kind of shocked me, that I wasn't alone in that.

Building creative collectives may be one way to challenge post-race discourse, as well as to

carve out a different space of identity in regard to (white) Canadianness and (discrete

categorical) multiculturalism. The nuances of producing and building such collectives could be

an avenue for future research that works towards articulating a politics of mixed race.

EXTENDING THEORIZING THE GAZE

To conclude, in this dissertation I have sought to extend understanding of the external

racial gaze through the narrative experiences of mixed race. Adding to existing literature on the

external racial gaze (Bannerji 2000; Fanon 1967; Haritaworn 2012), I theorize the gaze and in particular its multiracializing processes, but also focus on how it illuminates the effects and experiences of the multiracializing gaze on those who are under it, specifically in the Canadian context. We can learn about the racial gaze in the context of Canadian multiculturalism through foregrounding the experiences of mixed race people. But we also learn about mixed race experiences by foregrounding the context of race and ethnicity in Canada over the last number of decades. My project is about how each informs the other: understanding mixed race experiences and setting up the gaze in the context of official multiculturalism. In other words, understanding mixed race experiences in Canada leads to understanding how the gaze works in the officially multicultural context. Together, these two things give us the operation of the multiracializing gaze in Canada. We can consider the multicultural imaginary and how it is experienced or how it plays out in experience, plus we can learn about mixed race in how multiculturalism plays out on the body. Both show us how race discourse works. Put another way, I take up the gaze as both an analytic tool (we assume the gaze is happening/operating and want to refract it through mixed race) and an explanatory concept (it is a concept that can explain what is going on in the social world, and through it we can ask after the experiences of mixed race people).

Furthermore, through highlighting how respondents' racialized ethnicities contain multiple multiplicities and how they learn and narrate serial-multiple forms of articulated difference (often confounding the gaze), understandings of intersectionality can be extended. However, more theorizing to understand how gender, race, class and sexualities work in relation to mixed race identities is needed. For example, the majority of my interview participants defined themselves as middle class and would be socially recognized as such. In future research, if interviewees from a variety of class or socio-economic backgrounds shared their narratives,

there exists the possibility of even more identity experiences being brought to the fore,

illuminating further multiplicities at work within mixed race lived experiences.

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Appendix A: Recruitment Ad

Research Project on "Mixed Race" Identity: Call for Toronto, Edmonton and Calgary Area Participants

Are you of mixed racial background? Are your parents from different racial groups? Do you/have you identified as "mixed race", "multiracial", or with other "mixed" self-identifications (i.e. biracial, mulatto, eurasian, happa, creole etc.)? Do other people identify you as "mixed"?

I am looking for residents in the Toronto, Edmonton and Calgary areas to participate in life story interviews who:

- are 37 years of age or older
- are of mixed racial parentage
- were born in Canada OR have been in Canada since the 1970s

I am conducting a project on mixed race identity for my doctoral dissertation in the Department of Sociology at the University of Alberta. The purpose of the project is to explore respondents' experiences growing up and living as "mixed race" during the multicultural era in Canada.

Interviews will involve a minimum of two sittings, each taking at least 1 to 1.5 hours – for a total time commitment of 2 to 3 hours.

If you would like to be part of this study or have questions, please contact **paragg@ualberta.ca**. This project is supervised by Dr. Sara Dorow, who can be contacted at sara.dorow@ualberta.ca. Please feel free to pass this call for participants on to anyone in the Toronto, Edmonton and Calgary areas who may be interested in

Appendix B: Consent Form

INFORMATION LETTER AND CONSENT FORM

Study Title: Mixed Race Life Stories: Growing Up in Canada's Multicultural Era

Research Investigator: **Supervisor:**
Jillian Paragg   Dr. Sara Dorow
Department of Sociology   Department of Sociology
H.M. Tory Building 5-21   H.M. Tory Building 5-21
University of Alberta   University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB   Edmonton, AB
paragg@ualberta.ca   sdorow@ualberta.ca
780-802-7828   780-492-4301

Background
- You have been invited to participate in an interview for my research project on mixed race identity.
- The results of this study will be used in support of my doctoral dissertation in the Department of Sociology at the University of Alberta under the supervision of Dr. Sara Dorow, Associate Professor.

Purpose
- The purpose of the project is to explore respondents' experiences growing up as "mixed race" across the multicultural era in Canada.
- The general benefits of the project to scholarship and society will be to provide a better understanding or mixed race experiences in an officially multicultural Canada.

Study Procedures
- The interviews will draw from life story method, using a semi-structured format, and will involve two meetings, a minimum of an hour each and a maximum of two hours each, for a total of between two and four hours.
- With your consent, the interview will be recorded using a digital recorder and transcribed. If you do not wish to have the interview recorded, I will take notes.
- If desired, transcripts will be returned to you for verification.

Benefits
- Benefits to you from participating in the project include discussing and reflecting on your life experiences in a safe and non-judgmental environment.
- I hope that the information I get from doing this study will provide a better understanding of mixed race experiences in Canada.
- There are not costs involved in being in the research.

Risk

- The risks to being in this study are minimal. However, you may talk about sensitive issues such as family issues and experiences with racism.

Voluntary Participation

- You are under no obligation to participate in this study. Your participation is completely voluntary.
- You are not required to answer any specific questions even if participating in the study.
- Even if you agree to be in the study you can change your mind and withdraw at any time.
- If you wish to have the transcripts of your interview removed from the project, you have the right to do so up until May 1, 2014.

Confidentiality & Anonymity

- Information collected from this interview will be used for my dissertation, as well as for conference presentations and journal articles.
- The data will be kept confidential, and your anonymity protected. Only I will have access to the original data. The audio recording and transcript of the interview will be stored as password protected and encrypted files on my computer, and will not be seen in their original form by anyone but me. Any notes taken by me during the interview will be stored in a password protected and encrypted file on my computer, and will not be seen in their original form by anyone but me.
- You will not be identifiable in the dissemination of the research. You will be given a pseudonym for the purposes of data analysis and communication of results, if you wish to remain anonymous.
- Data are to be kept in a secure place for a minimum of 5 years following completion of the research project, and electronic data will be password protected and encrypted.
- If you so choose, you will be supplied with a copy of your interview transcript to review for accuracy and completeness. If you would like to clarify or expand on parts of the transcript, you are welcome to do so. Contact me by phone or email, or let me know at any time during the interview if you would like to do this.
- I may use the data I get from this study in future research, but if I do this it will have to be approved by a Research Ethics Board.

Further Information

- If you have questions or concerns about the interview or the research project, please do not hesitate to ask me during the interview, or contact me later at 780-802-7828 or at paragg@ualberta.ca. My supervisor, Dr. Sara Dorow, can also be contacted with any questions or concerns at 780-492-4301 or at sdorow@ualberta.ca.
- The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines by a Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding

participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Research Ethics Office at 780-492-2615.

Consent Statement

By signing below, I indicate that I have read and understood the above information, and that I consent to participate in this research project:

_____   _____
Participant's Name (printed) and Signature   Date

_____   _____
Name (printed) and Signature of Person   Date
Obtaining Consent

By signing below, I indicate that I consent to having the interview recorded:

_____   _____
Participant's Name (printed) and Signature   Date

Appendix C: Interview Guide

Interview Supplies Checklist:

| Digital recorder | Extra batteries | Note paper | Pens x2 |
| Consent forms x2 | Census forms | Interview guide | iPad for backup |

Interview Process & Questions[17]:
Can I get you a coffee or tea?
Go over consent form, give copy
Would you like me to provide you with a copy of the transcript?

Describe project:
I am conducting life story interviews with people of mixed race aged 40-60. I am interested in your experiences in Canada's officially multicultural era, and would be asking you open-ended questions about your life growing up as well as now (for example, family life growing up and now, school and work experiences). I am hoping that we will be able to meet for two sittings in order to complete the life story interview, which should take around an hour and a half each.

Would you like the interview to be anonymous, and if so, is there a particular pseudonym you would like to use?
What is your age and occupation?
Is it okay if I start the recorder? – start recorder(s)
Do you have any questions?

Interview Guide:

Probes:

Critical events probe: "Tell me about a time when this happened"

Chronological probe: "At what point in your life did this happen?"

Subjectivity probe: "Do you remember how you felt about that?"/"How do you feel about that?"

Events/figures from media searches to bring up/draw on as probes

Reminders:

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[17] Questions more of a way of framing the discussion, the conversation will flow how it wants to.

Shifting my language to talk about different periods, and the public spheres/private spheres that are part of the Canadian multicultural landscape

What stories do people want to tell me about identity and belonging?

Think about connections between discourses of multiculturalism and discourses/experiences of mixed race

Questions:

-What brought you to the study - to respond and agree to participate? What interested you in the project?

-Tell me about your family growing up
  *When did you come to Canada? (if applicable)
  *How would you describe your parents?
  *Do you ever remember asking your parents "what am I"? Or "how did you meet"? Did your parents talk to you about it?
  *Did you ever talk to your parents or family about racism?
  *Do you have siblings? What is your relationship with them like?
  *Relationships with extended (parents') families?

-Where did you grow up?
  *Tell me about the neighborhood(s)/community you grew up in
    *What was the population of the neighborhood(s)/community like?
  *Tell me about your experiences in that neighborhood(s)/community
  *How do you feel your family was perceived/treated in the community?
    *Family stories/being visibly different
  *What kind of ideas did/do people have about interracial families

-Where did you go to school growing up?
  *Tell me about the school(s) you went to growing up?
    *What was/were the population of the school(s) like?
  *Tell me about your experiences going to school
    *Are there any experiences that stand out for you in your memories?
    *Being 'visibly different'?

-Tell me about your racial identity/how you self-identify?
  *Do you identify as mixed race, biracial, multiracial?
    *Has this changed at different times/over the course of your life?
  *Do you identify as Canadian?

-How do people tend to racially categorize (racialize) you?
  *What do other people think about your parentage?
  *Does this depend on context?
  *Has this changed at different times/over the course of your life?

-Do you remember the first time you realized that you were 'mixed race/biracial/multiracial' or when you realized that these labels might be applicable to you/when
  *Do you remember the first time you realized that your family was "interracial"?
-What was your first experience with racism/the first time you heard a racial slur
  *Phenomenological experiences and memories (feelings in bodies)

-Do you remember when official multicultural policy was implemented in Canada (1971)?
  *Do you remember if/when your school started having "cultural" days? How did you feel about those days?
  *What are your memories and experiences of "cultural" festivals? (i.e. Heritage Days/Cari West in Edmonton)
  *What are your memories of Canada Day celebrations?
  *Social justice or anti-racist possibilities of multicultural policy?
  *Experiences of Canada as a mosaic, melting pot, or neither?

-Tell me about your experiences in secondary and post-secondary education

-[Show census questions from 1981-2011] How do you identify on the census/when asked to categorize self/check a box or write in response?
  *Did how you identify on the census change over the course of your life

-Have you ever identified as a "visible minority" for employment equity purposes?
  *Would you consider yourself to be a "visible minority"? How do you feel about the term?

-What types of experiences have you had in the workplace with regard to race?

-How do you feel about the term "race"?
  *Do you see a difference between race/culture/ethnicity?
  *How do you feel about the focus on ethnicity as opposed to race?

-Experiences around language/accent?

-Experiences with names/naming?

-Experiences with religious spaces?

-Thoughts/memories around Trudeau?

-Tell me about your experiences with dating and partnering
  *Has being "mixed" impacted these experiences?
  *How about in friendships?
  *Experiences with exoticization and mysticism?

-What kinds of stereotypes about mixed race people circulate?
　　*Do you have experiences relating to these?

-Tell me about your family now
　　*Tell me about your partner/children and your relationships with them
　　*Would you consider yourself to be in an interracial couple?

-Sense of belonging in Canada
　　*Sense of identity in Canada (within multicultural contexts)

-What are your thoughts on ideas (discourses) that circulate around multiculturalism? Has this impacted your sense of belonging?
　　*Canada as an "immigrant nation"
　　*Celebratory ideas about "culture"
　　*"Post-race" claims/ideas

-Notion that "multiculturalism is working" due to mixed race people's existence: thoughts?

-Public figures/current events (media coverage) involving mixed race people growing up and now?

-Is there anything else you would like to add?

-Do you know anyone who may also be interested in participating in this project? Is there anywhere you could put up posters? (Workplace)

Thank you for your time!

Interview Notes

Name:
Requested Pseudonym:
Gender:
Age:
Occupation:
Other:

General Notes	Analytical Reflections (ideas/questions that you have as you interview)	Methodological Reflections (reflections on the process of interviewing)

Appendix D: Respondent Life Story Sketches

Karen

Karen is 59 years old and is a teacher and writer living in Toronto. Karen immigrated to Canada at the age of 13 from South Africa in 1967, and she and her family moved in order to 'escape apartheid'. She states "we were classified as 'coloured', which means mixed race". Growing up in apartheid, Karen describes an awareness, yet also not a full awarenesss, of understanding about what being 'coloured' or 'mixed race' meant in that context, because she was more conscious and concerned of imminent physical dangers to her in apartheid spaces. Racial identity was also always present, but in the sense that there was a need to identify as either 'white' or 'non-white'. Upon coming to Canada, Karen describes a huge shift, in that she was comfortable with talking about race in the context of South Africa (i.e. everyone who was not 'very' or 'obviously' white, was 'black'). In Canada the context of the conversation was different. She describes her main struggle during this period of time as 'reconfiguring herself here' as opposed to questioning by others. In post-secondary in the early '70s, Karen studied African politics, and was often questioned as to her interest in the topic and 'whose side was she on' by African students which she describes as 'the politics of skin colour', this being the time of a growing African liberation movements and the anti-apartheid movements, which Karen and her family were apart of. Describing how others see her, Karen finds that she is perceived as racially ambiguous: others are unable to place her, or attempt to place her in various racial categories (and peoples of other racialized groups would ask her if she is 'one of them', and this has changed depending on how she has looked at different points in her life). She is currently in the process of writing a memoir on her early years in South Africa. Her white friends are often surprised when they find out she sees herself writing as a person of colour.

Yvonne

Yvonne is 45 years old and currently works as a university administrator in Toronto and is also a part-time PhD student. She came to Canada in 1974 from Hong Kong at the age of six and grew up in Toronto as part of a 'multigenerational' mixed race family (her mother was "Hong Kong Chinese" and her father was also 'mixed' "Hong Kong Chinese and Scottish"). Upon immigrating to Canada and going through the Canadian school system, Yvonne felt like an outsider, and saw this as more as a result of being seen as 'Chinese' rather than as being 'mixed'. However with newer waves of Chinese immigrants in the 1980s, Yvonne's status as an 'outsider' shifted, in that she was seen as 'more Canadian' than the newcomers. This may also be because as she grew older her appearance changed and she looked 'less Chinese'. In high school, Yvonne was highly involved in the 'multicultural week' part of the curriculum which was implemented in the 1980s, but felt that she had to be part of the 'Chinese table' and not the 'Scottish table'. Reflecting back on her involvement in multiculturalism week, Yvonne also perceived celebratory practices as a way of dealing with racism. Yvonne's experiences are also shaped through her family name, which is Scottish, did not 'match' other people's assumptions about her racial background. Yvonne's relationship with her mother, and her mother's gendered and racialized comments to Yvonne regarding her appearance growing up made Yvonne feel a lot of discomfort, as well as conflict between her and her mother about which men she should or should not date (i.e. anyone with 'darker' skin than Yvonne was unsuitable for her to date according to her mother). Ultimately Yvonne married a black man, and they have two children. Yvonne hopes that through her experiences as 'mixed' she has an understanding of what her children's experiences may be. However she also recognizes that her children's experiences may differ from hers, in that they are growing up in a different generation in a much more 'multicultural Toronto', but also how they may be racialized as black and must negotiate their blackness. Yvonne's current job as a university administrator, and as one of the only non-white racialized people in her department, Yvonne feels that she has to often represent racialized interests in the university, and challenge the predominantly white administrators assumptions about racialized students in the university.

However at the same time, because of her ambiguous appearance, some of her co-workers have told her that they did not realize that she was 'half-Chinese' (ie they read her as white) or have thought that she was 'Aboriginal' because she does work on Indigenous people's access to post-secondary. When people find out she's not Aboriginal, and that she's mixed, she has found that it is unclear for them what space she speaks from.

Korrie

Korrie is 50 years old and currently works as a spiritual care professional in Toronto. She heard about the project through being forwarded the recruitment that I sent to an academic list serv. She has had a strong sense of identity as mixed race throughout her life, although she has navigated her 'identity puzzle' throughout her life and has felt a continuous sense of belonging 'outside' throughout her life. She was born in Canada to a white "Scottish-Canadian" mother in Ottawa in 1953, and she describes her birth parents' story as a 'challenging story', albeit one that Korrie was interested in learning about. The identity of her father is not known other than that he was an "African" black man from Nigeria who her mother went out on a date with. Her birth mother does not remember what happened on the date, and she was sexually assaulted by the man. Korrie was put up for adoption by her birth mother, who had her in secret, and was adopted into a white immigrant family, which lived in an all white community in rural Ontario. Korrie describes her birth story as a painful legacy, but she does now have contact with her birth mother. Korrie always knew that she was adopted, one reason being that she was visibly racialized differently from her white adoptive family. It was always obvious to her that she was different in the spaces where she grew up. She described her family life growing up as difficult, and felt like an insider within her adoptive family, and in particular had a contentious relationship with her adoptive mother. She left her adoptive family as a teenager and returned to foster homes in her teen years, moving to Hamilton. As an adult, Korrie feels a sense of community with people of colour, a 'brown-skinned' community, and recognizes that this is how others see her (as a black woman, albeit light skinned). She also sees Toronto as a particular space of 'browning' yet she does recognize and continues to feel experiences of outsiderness. Her identity has somewhat shifted since she was younger to identifying more as a person of colour, away from 'mixed race', which was stronger when she was younger. She also has a strong sense of identity as 'culturally Canadian', which she sees as stemming from her upbringing in white rural spaces, as well as feelings she has from travelling in the States of people 'not knowing where to place her.' However, she also states that Toronto is made up of diverse, but 'discrete communities'. In her current relationship with a white woman, she step-parents her partner's two children (who are white), and she also has a child from a previous marriage, whose father is white. Korrie also discussed parenting her daughter, who she describes as brown, but someone who could 'pass' in that she looks 'mixed' but not of 'African descent'. She compares her daughter's experience to her identity as 'gay' in that people do not know 'automatically' that she's gay. Reflecting on parenting her daughter, Korrie stated that her daughter would likely identify as mixed race, and that she's always called her 'brown'. She described the tension of wanting to protect her daughter from racism, but also about realizing that her daughter needs to understand the reality of the world, especially haven grown up in a privileged environment. Korrie also reflected on her experiences working in various institutions (post-secondary, the hospital) and a sense of institutional exclusion or not feeling like 'part of the club'.

Ayesha

Ayesha is 58 years old and works as a consultant, and is also a part-time PhD Student in Toronto. Her family history is steeped in the history of colonization in the West Indies, specifically Jamaica. She describes her father's family as Ghanaian or Ashanti type people (West African), but that there are histories of the women on that side of the family being raped by white men, although she describes her father as being 'very black' (although he had aunts who you couldn't tell were black, they were 'just white'). On her mother's side, her grandmother was the child of a black woman and a 'Syrian' man, and

her mother was the product of her grandmother being raped by a white man, which she describes as 'being on the colonial tip'. She describes her mother as 'very fair'. She does not identify as 'mixed race' per se, but rather uses opportunities to challenge others' ideas of what 'race' means, what 'blackness' means, and what 'mixed' means and how it is part of a colonial project, as well as how such notions are depoliticized. She immigrated to Canada from Jamaica with her family in 1965 at the age of ten. Growing up in Jamaica in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Ayesha described that her experiences were shaped more by class than by race. However, upon coming to Canada, her raced experiences of being black came to define what opportunities were and were not available to her. She describes the migration process and transition process as abrupt, and as a painful experience. The family initially settled in small town Ontario, and then moved to Hamilton, Ontario. She was the only black child in school in the small town, and they were the only black family in the town, and Ayesha found it to be a very isolating experience, as well as facing racism from the school (being put in the special education class), and from the teachers (not being spoken to). In Hamilton there were other black families, but Ayesha found that those there was a hierarchy between her family and newer arrivals, the 'West Indians' and black families who had been in Canada since the days of the underground railroad the "black Canadians". This hierarchy became further evident as more newcomers arrived in the 1960s and 1970s (who were the new targets for and subject to structural racism). Class was also a dividing line in the town. However, because Hamilton is a university town, there was also an awareness of the black power movement and the US civil rights movement of the time. In their early teens Ayesha and her siblings where very aware of these movements, and were part of building spaces for black culture and sharing black culture in Hamilton, which she sees as the start of her community activism (and part of the movement at that time of ethnic groups to form cultural associations in order to let their presence be known and to lobby for their needs and interests). However, Ayesha reflected on how she saw a movement towards 'celebrating culture', while starting a conversation, is not enough, and resulted in a movement away from having inclusion and equity discussions. Throughout her post-secondary education experiences, Ayesha has faced barriers, including being told by university administrators to 're-think' getting her university education. Ayesha also described negotiating everyday instance of exclusion and finding spaces of inclusion in the everyday, but also how tiring this process can be. In turn, she believes it is her duty to as leave a legacy for her son and grandchildren: making them aware of their roots and the struggles that came before them, and that they are standing on the shoulders of those who came before them. Spirituality also plays an important role in Ayesha's life, as a Seventh Day Adventist, which seemed to greatly influence her world view and her sense of purpose in the world of being a 'change maker' (as a mentor, parent etc.).

Winston

Winston is 45 years old and is a social worker living in Toronto. He came to Canada in 1969 when he was six months old with his parents, from India. He describes his mother as 'Bengali', and his father as 'white Canadian' (and because of his fathers' Canadian citizenship he was a 'Canadian born abroad'). His parents separated very soon after their arrival, and he was raised by his mother in a single parent household (which he describes as difficult for his mother), and had little contact with his father, and still does not to this day. He and his mother moved around various neighborhoods in Toronto throughout his childhood, mainly living in subsidized housing. Winston described the differences in the neighborhood as ranging from white/homogenous to more racially diverse, depending on what area of the city, which also reflected the populations of the schools he attended. He stated that the prevalence of the 'what are you?' question has always and continues to be felt throughout his life. Winston's partner is Canadian, describing her as of 'Filipino descent', and their children have, in Winston's words, 'a lot more to navigate' than he did, because of the multiplicity of their origins. Winston also described how others read (and racialize) him a variety of ways, which is also complicated by his name (which is perceived as 'mainstream'). Winston identified the mid-80s as a starting point for when he began to notice (and experience) a shift in the population of Toronto, particularly the downtown area. Winston strongly identifies as a 'Torontonian' perhaps even moreso than as Canadian. This is in part due to the wide range of people and lack of

visibility that Winston feels in the Toronto context, compared to other Canadian cities. Winston identifies with the term 'biracial', a term that he took up in University, and found that it was not until university that race was a focus of analysis in his education. He also discussed how his identification as 'biracial' is more of a compromise, in that he does not particularly like the term, but it is truer to himself than solely claiming 'South Asian'. However at the same time he is wary of the stereotypes that come along with claiming 'mixedness'.Winston also discusses discourses and stereotypes of mixing, but when it comes to his children he does not perceive comments that people have made (such as that they are 'beautiful') as racialized comments, which he attributes to the increasing commonality of mixed race people, although describes how they are subject to questions like 'what are you?' and how their names may not 'match' people's perceptions of them. While in some cases Winston has found that others do not identify him as Canadian (he is racialized as non-white), he also has experiences, such as in the workplace, as not being seen as anything other than 'white', but he states that he would never identify himself as 'white'. At the same time in the workplace Winston also has experiences of other people of colour feeling more comfortable talking to him because they perceive him to be a 'person of colour'. Winston also stated that he has largely had positive experiences (compared to other people of colour), but attributes this to his being 'biracial' and being able to 'pass' in some contexts. He also described how he has held prejudices about other groups, and that being 'biracial' has not exempted him from holding certain ideas or making assumptions. Overall, Winston has found that multiculturalism 'works' in the Canadian context, and also suggests that the lives and experiences of 'biracial' people may speak to that. Winston described attempts to reach out to other mixed people in his adult life to find a sense of community, but he also recognized the tensions in this due to differences in people's experiences resulting from their visible appearances, which mark them.

Ram

Ram is 55 years old, works as a consulting Geologist, and is based in Toronto. Ram was born in England, and his family moved to India shortly after his birth. They then moved back to England and he came to Canada with his mother and father at the age of 8 in 1966, along with his older sister, two younger brothers and a younger sister. He describes his mother as "Scottish" and his father as "Indian, from India". Ram describes how his father decided to leave England in the mid-1960s because his career prospects were limited there, due to racial barriers. He and all of his siblings are very close in age, and when they settled in rural South Western Ontario (upon arriving in Canada due to his father's job as a university professor at a University). Ram spent his childhood in and around the University town, as well as his teenage years, but left to attend university in the US at the age of 17. Although living in a rural area, Ram described another family of children who he and his sibling 'paled around with'. Ram states of his parents' social acquaintances who were Indian professors, that he remembers a distinct 'Indianness' about their homes, which was not present in his family home. He also remembers not feeling 'Indian'. Ram's name (first and last) has been central to the questioning experiences he has had over his life. He described how his mother told him to pick a name to go by in school in Canada (in England he was sometimes known by his Scottish influenced first name, or his Indian influenced middle name, as well as various other nicknames). He went with 'Ram' because he liked the 'unusualness' of it, which he felt pride towards, and enjoyed the visibility of the name in a way. He notes that the majority of people in the community and school he grew up in were Mennonite, described as 'tolerant and accepting people' and does not remember having any incidents in school of being picked on for this 'Indianness'. Ram noted the first time he heard a racial slur 'Paki' directed to himself (or at all) was during a shift at a factory job he held in high school, and he discerned in that moment that it was a racialized comment, but it was not until he lived in Vancouver, when Ram perceived racism to be an issue in Canada. Overall he has found in Canada that he is not treated differently because he has an'Indian father'. In the States Ram noted that he is often 'treated' as black (particularly in the South) other times he is perceived as having 'hispanic roots'. Ram lived in the US to complete his schooling from the ages of 16-25. Despite this, Ram feels more comfortable in Canada, and self-identifies as Canadian. Ram stated that even though he was born in

England, he does not identify as 'English'. Ram states that almost everywhere he goes in the world he is seen as someone who is 'close to here' but 'not from here', which has earned him the nickname of 'the global foreigner'. Regarding his self-identification, Ram states 'I don't wake up in the morning thinking I'm "mixed race"'. Ram described his separated wife as having an interest in 'exotic' boyfriends. A white woman (whom he describes as 'Canadian-Canadian' as you can get'), tended to question why he did not claim his 'Indianness' more. Ram describes his children as comfortable with who they are, and as also having names that denote their 'Indianness'. In his various experiences of dating and partnering throughout his life (along with his current girlfriend), Ram relayed instances of family members racializing him through some jokes to do with his name or appearance, that Ram says he sometimes plays along with, but sometimes questions why they feel the need to do that, or where it is going.

Charles

Charles is 41 and is a lawyer living in Toronto. He describes his mother as 'from Jamaica' and his father as 'from Norway'. They met in London England in the early '60s. They tried living in Norway (where Charles's older brother was born) and in Jamaica, but ended up 'splitting the difference' by settling in Canada. Charles was born in Toronto, but during his early childhood the family lived in Sweden as well as New Jersey, where the family had difficult experiences and were not wanted by the neighborhood. Charles's earliest memories however, are when the family lived in a neighborhood in North York in what he describes as the most 'multicultural neighbourhood' where there were Portuguese, Mexican, Chinese, 'Canadian' and Jamaican families, who were Charles and his brother's playmates. Charles states between these playmates there was no concept of ethnic or racial divides. Charles reflects that this may be because all of the kids were newcomers or 'had just moved to Toronto in that generation…nobody had any roots'. The family moved to Cape Breton, and Charles recalls he and his brother were beat up everyday. They were the only non-white kids on 'that side' of the tracks, which led to 'automatic racism'. The family then moved back to Markham in the early 80s, which Charles recalls was not multicultural but 'monocultural', but expanded in the 80s and 90s. His best friend was also mixed, and Charles describes how 'people thought we were the same kid', but describes with how each year 'another kid showed up' who was not white, a 'steady progression of getting more diverse'. Charles described at that time how he had a group of white Canadian friends, and a group of black West Indian kids who he was friends with. He also talked about how conversations with his parents about how to deal racism were very different, and that while his mother could relate to Charles's experiences through his own, her approach was to 'kill them with kindness' something that Charles couldn't understand. Talking about his self-identification, Charles described an attachment to a sense of 'Jamaicanness'. Charles talked about how his parents, growing up, had different ideas of his identity – his father telling him he was black, whereas his mother said 'no you're not', but what was always consistent was a sense of being 'Jamaican'. Charles also described how growing up he had lots of friends who were Jamaican (and black or non-white), and how the experiences that he had were because he was racialized as black (both institutional level and individual level), therefore making him associate more with that part of his identity (although he does not always explicitly identify as 'black', and this is also due to how in the Jamaican context he is 'any number of things but black'. This is in contrast to the Canadian context where he is 'any number of things but white'). Charles lived in Jamaica for a year and a half in his twenties working for a film production company. That year shaped his connection with Jamaica, as well as his identity, in that in Jamaica he was not considered 'black' whereas in Toronto he was, it became more 'blurred'. Charles strongly identifies as a 'Torontonian', whereas his identification as 'Canadian' changes depending on where he is. Outside of Canada he says he is 'Canadian' first and foremost. However he finds that for a lot of people he doesn't look like how they imagine Canadians look. In the interview he challenged the assumption that 'Canadianness' should look and feel a certain way (that he described as 'Englishy'). Charles also described how he lives in a 'Toronto bubble', that of downtown Toronto, where diversity is the norm (although recognizing that there still are problems). Charles went to York University, which he found to be 'clique' on a 'cultural' basis, and described the various student associations, which he describes as not

being comfortable space for him. He described his experience in law school as still clique, but that there was a bit more of a mixing or blurring of lines. Charles's father is part of a well known political family in Norway and when Norwegians discover his last name, they do not believe that it is his actual last name (it is deemed to be 'impossible' that he holds that last name.) Charles stated that his wife's family is Lebanese, from the East coast, and that he considers their relationship to be 'interracial'. He noted that sometimes he and his wife are not 'visually' interracial and sometimes they are, depending on context.

Miranda

Miranda is 54 years old and is a support worker for adults with intellectual disabilities, living in Toronto. Miranda reflected that her biggest fear over her life has been a fear of rejection and it has hindered her relationships. Born to a white mother and a black father, she was adopted at the age of five by a white family, who were Unitarians, which played a big part in their politics and lives, in that they were heavily invested in social justice work. They had one biological son, as well as two other children who they adopted. Miranda has two biological brothers, but when they were put up for adoption they split them up, as it was thought that 'no one would want to adopt three black children'. Miranda states that she always knew the last name of her biological father, and that her adoptive mother encouraged her to look for her biological parents if she felt she needed. She never thought looking past her birth mother, but she actually ended up meeting her birth father first. Miranda reflected was a lot of fear about looking for her birth mother, in that to be rejected twice by a birth mother would be devastating. Miranda's biological brothers who were not adopted have had difficult lives and are drug addicts. She states that her oldest brother is worse off, in that he remembers more from being with their biological mother, as well as in foster care. She no longer has much to do with them, but did for a time because it was 'exciting', however she ended up having a very troubled relationship with her birth father, who was also an addict. Of her birth mother she states they had some contact, but that she was 'just not very educated' (both birth parents have now passed away). Miranda said she is the best off out of her biological siblings because she was adopted into a caring family that taught her how to 'behave'. Miranda grew up with her adoptive family in North York, which is near Jane and Finch, which at the time was majority white families (which has drastically shifted, Miranda notes, to predominantly people of colour). Miranda narrated that she was the only black child in her school until middle school, when another family of blacks came to the school. There were also few blacks in her parents' circle of Unitarian friends. She states that she grew up as an 'oreo', and that the racism she has experienced has mostly come from the black community, in that she has experienced personal attacks: people referring to her as 'uppity' and 'house nigger'. Although Miranda states she did not experience much racism or bullying growing up (from whites), she states that as a defense mechanism, she would make racist jokes in order to 'make her way in' and 'to put everyone at ease' in the various groups she hung out with. Reflecting back now, she states that she did not realize how much not knowing where she was from bothered her. The life that Miranda led with her adoptive family, as well as her adoptive parents who were always there for her, helped her through her issues with addiction, in that she always knew that there was a better way of life (this is compared to her biological brothers, who she stated never had that and therefore 'never had a fighting chance'). Miranda dropped out of school at the age of 15 and left home (her adoptive parents took in another child at this time who had an intellectual disability, and her parents could no longer deal with her issues with addiction), returning and dropping out again over her teen years. Later she was accepted into a community worker program which enabled her to go to college. Miranda also reflected that because of her adoptive parents and their politics, she was never concerned about coming out to them as gay. However, Miranda noted that they rarely spoke of racism in the family, and that they were in denial about how she might experience racism or that it would bother her. Her mother told her 'everyone likes chocolate better than vanilla'. Overall, Miranda found that she was different everywhere that she went, which also had to do with her sexuality and race. During her time with her ex-partner and her daughter (who Miranda still refers to as her 'kid' or 'step kid'), Miranda did attend Unitarian services, but she no longer does. She reflected that it is a very white space, as well as middle class. Miranda also reflected that she does not feel comfortable in all black

spaces, and she has had experiences with black people telling her 'she's not black enough'. Regarding her self-identification, Miranda stated that it has changed over her life. For many years she identified as biracial, but she now identifies as black, but states that that is other people's comfort. Miranda also reflected on how the terms of identification shifted regarding her sexual identity, and that she identified as 'gay' for most of her life, as well as 'dyke', which she prefers over 'lesbian' and 'queer' (which she notes is a 'newer' term). She also identifies as a 'black lesbian woman' when she has to 'fill things out'. She talked about a sense of isolation and aloneness, and that any groups who she has tried to establish relationships with, she has always ended up realizing that she 'does not belong there'. At cultural festivals like Caribana, Miranda reflected that she always feels that people are looking at her, and that this is likely due to her lighter skin, and the privilege which comes along that, which Miranda acknowledges. Miranda also sees her atheism as a barrier in forming relationships with other people of colour, stating that she 'doesn't know any other black-lesbian-atheists'. For Miranda, Pride celebrations are where she feels more comfortable. She's been out in the gay community in Toronto for a long time, and she stated she's also always been in jobs where she can be 'out', she just assumes that people know that about her. Miranda also strongly identifies as Canadian. There is some ambiguity for Miranda about the ancestries of her birthparents, so when someone asks Miranda says she's Canadian, and will sometimes talk about her adoption history. If people ask her where she is from, Miranda will say 'Toronto'. Miranda also noted that she asks others 'where they are from', or more specifically 'where is your family from' because she does not want to get it wrong. Miranda also spoke about her relationship with her ex-partner, who is also a woman of mixed race. noting that one of the reasons why she was attracted to her was because they looked alike, and could have their 'own little world', which is something Miranda dreamt of as a child, a planet where everyone was like her. Besides her ex-partner Miranda reflected that she has mostly dated solely white women, and when she was younger she would only date white women. Now Miranda would not say 'I would never date a woman of colour', instead it would be about being middle class, or having what she describes as a 'middle class philosophy', such as valuing education.

Natalie

Natalie is a 41 years old and works as a radiologist in Toronto. She stated that "my father is black and he's from Trinidad and Tobago, Tobago specifically, and my mother's white, she's from Northern Ontario". Natalie stated that in the past few years she's become 'more in touch with her ethnicity', as well as an interest in the experiences of non-white in Canada and so was interested to talk about some of her experiences. Natalie spent the majority of her childhood in a small Ontario city, which she describes as 'very white', which also translated into the population of the school: she could count the non-white children on two hands, which included her and her older sister. She states that she felt that as a child, and felt isolated. Growing up, there were a number of incidents where Natalie was made to feel 'visibly different', including by teachers, as well as being asked if she was adopted because her mother was a white woman. She did not recall that her parents ever had conversations with her about how to deal with racism. Although Natalie states she did not want to 'negate' her race growing up, she reflects that she did really want to be white, in order to 'fit in'. Natalie never had any questions about her identity, she states that it was always pretty clear about who she was, and this included at times, a feeling of a 'cache' due to being biracial (having 'light skin' and the exoticized associations), which was sometimes an outright interaction of people calling her 'exotic' or at times a 'feeling'. However, Natalie does feel that she has, overall, been treated 'better' due to her lighter skin. It was not until in her later school years (completing a semester abroad in England) as well as going to University, that Natalie began to feel more comfortable, in that there were more diverse people around her, or at least white people who had been exposed to non-white people. However, she found that she did not find belonging with the Afro-Caribbean diaspora, and overall did not feel comfortable around black people. Natalie reflected that she did not grow up culturally as a black person, that the only black person around was her father. She states that she grew up 'as a white person in a black person's body'. However, white people did not feel she was like them, and neither did black people. Natalie feels that her parents did not bring her up 'culturally' as black, her father did not

bring his 'culture' into the house, which she also feels has led to her being different from the rest of the Afro-Caribbean diaspora community. She states that she enjoys the food, music, but that it is not part of her social circle. Natalie stated of her family now, that they are more of a 'Canadian family' then a 'black family' and that race does not play a role in their everyday lives, except when the occasional problem arises. Reflecting on the questions she is subject to, Natalie stated that she has received such questions 'all through her life', and reflected on how she is perceived depends on the context she finds herself in. Her self-identification has gone through a number of phases: white, as a child, biracial as a post-secondary student in a more accepting environment, and black as she married a black man, as well as since having her children, who vary in skin colour between herself and her husband. She also reflects on how most of the people who she interacts with see her as black. Natalie identifies more as 'biracial' than as 'mixed', reflecting that her heritage is black and white, but recognizes that others may have a variety of heritages, for who may identify more as 'mixed'. Natalie also reflected on how her occupational status 'a doctor' may also shield her from negative racialized experiences, or assumptions about her blackness (which is also about class). Reflecting on her identity as a Torontonian, Natalie has found that although the city 'as a whole' is multicultural, neighborhoods for the most part exist in silos, and that her family is basically the only black family in their neighborhood (although it is a bit more multicultural than other neighborhoods, which is what the family was looking for when house hunting). She noted that her older children also attend schools outside of the neighborhood, which she describes as 'very multicultural'. Despite this, in some of her children's pre-school years as well as extra-curricular activities, Natalie has found that she feels excluded from the other parents' (primarily mothers') social circle. Natalie also reflected on how hair has been a major issue throughout her life. Growing up her mother did not know how to manage it, and did not have and resources, as well as how she wanted to have 'straight, silky' hair growing up, and talked about how she sees her daughter (6 years old) going through some of the same issues. However, Natalie hopes that herself (she wears her hair in locs now) and that her daughter goes to a multicultural school will help combat some of these negative notion around 'hair'. Her daughter has also expressed that she does not want to have 'darker skin' or 'to be fat'. Her son also has said that he does not want 'darker' skin. Natalie also noted that she and her husband (who is also a prominent doctor) are very cognizant of people's assumptions about their son, that he may be a bad student, or a bad influence. Growing up Natalie also never thought that she would marry a black man. However, all of her past relationships she would consider to be 'interracial' in that she had dated white, Chinese, and Indian men. One of the reasons why Natalie did not want to date black men was because she did not want to be 'pigeonholed' by that. Reflecting on her friendships, Natalie stated that she has a tendency to form friendships with non-whites, although not including blacks. However she reflected that this may also be because there are fewer blacks/West Indians in the medical community. However she states that as she's gotten older she feels less 'outside' so whether or not her friends are non-white is less relevant to her now.

Melissa

Melissa is 40 years old, and works as a hair stylist living in Edmonton. She was born in London, England, and was adopted into a white Canadian family who was living abroad there (her father was completing his PhD in the UK). She also has one brother, biological, to her adoptive parents. The family moved to Edmonton when Melissa was six in 1979, her father obtaining a job at the University, and she has lived in Canada since. Her parents separated soon after their arrival, with her and her brother living with their mother worked as a teacher, but she continued to have a relationship with her father. Melissa reflected that moving to Edmonton was a huge transition, and immigrating to Canada was an 'emotional disruption'. This may be due to differences in race discourse in the two contexts, but also due to her transitioning into her school years during that time. She found herself in white South Edmonton, and kids in her school pointed to her difference from them, as well as her difference from her own family. Melissa always new she was adopted, which she joked 'would be hard to hide'. She was around 16 when she found out some non-identifying information about her birthparents, her mother was a 'blonde haired blue-eyed English lady' and her father was 'West Indian'. Growing up, when Melissa would come home and

tell her parents' about incidents at school their response was to 'ignore it'. The bullying and racist treatment Melissa experienced led to her skipping school, and got sent to the 'bad' kids school. Melissa stated that the reason she acted out was because of how she was treated. She felt let down by her experience in the school system. During these difficult years there was some solace in that when Melissa was 12 or 13 she met her best friend, who she describes as 'also mixed', and they joke that they 'found each other' and that together they make up the 'one black girl at the rock concert'. Melissa dropped in and out of high school, and by the late 80s, as she finished her schooling, she found that her visual difference actually made her appear 'more interesting' and may have helped with her social standing. Melissa also reflected that this was a time when there were more newcomers to Edmonton and she noticed a shift in the climate of the school. During this time, Melissa decided that she wanted to take control of her life, which she felt had been controlled by others, which included her style of dress, and working in record stores. She also moved around to different cities (including Toronto and Vancouver). Now, Melissa expresses a general sense of belonging in Edmonton in that she is 'comfortable with her ethnicities'. However, in racially diverse cities (New York, Toronto), or in situations where she is in a black space, she stated that she does not necessarily feel comfortable, and that this is because she was raised in a white ('Caucasian') family. However, reflecting other Canadian contexts. Melissa also reflected that she identifies as 'British-Canadian' before anything else, and this is because she does not want to 'pigeon-hole people by colour', although she will tell people that she's 'mixed' especially if they identify her as black or mulatto. Melissa also talked about her experiences at different cultural celebrations, and how while she generally feels comfortable at Heritage Days in Edmonton, at Cariwest, she feels that people are looking and her and judging her, which she thinks could just be other mixed West Indians being interested in 'what she is' but also about people's judgments about her being 'lighter skinned'. However, she also enjoys partaking in Cariwest, because it reminds her that 'this is part of who she is'. Reflecting on her relationships with others, Melissa stated that she has severe trust issues resulting from being torn down by others because of 'who she was', and she noted that she was surprised at herself for participating in the interview project. Melissa also reflected that she tends to get asked 'do you consider yourself black or white' to which she wants to respond 'I consider myself Melissa'.

Karen

Karen is 39 years old and works as a recreational co-ordinator in Edmonton, and is the sister of Gordon, another participant. She grew up in a small town in Alberta. Karen narrated that her father immigrated to the town when he was 8 years old from China, and that her mother is English and Scottish, and her parents met in grade one: they were high school sweethearts. She described growing up in the town as on the one hand as restrictive in that there are very few people of colour there, and it can be 'redneck' but at the same time since it is a small town people do know you and 'take you for who you are'. Karen reflected that growing up her and her brother were always encouraged to take part in cultural celebrations and practices from both sides of their family (such as celebrating Chinese festivals and highland dance) and these activities, from Karen's standpoint, were a reflection of her parents instilling in her a sense of pride in who she was. Attending Scottish festivals now, Karen finds that she gets snubbed because 'she isn't Scottish enough', which she feels is likely because there's no visible identifier that marks her as 'Scottish' in her appearance. Reflecting on her family growing up, Karen stated that she was not raised in a 'traditionally Asian family', in that she did not feel pressure to pick a particular occupation, instead she felt comfortable following her interests and what made her happy. Due to her father's interest in the outdoors, Karen also developed an avid interest in recreating outside. Growing up, Karen found that while some kids were interested in calling her names and labeling her as 'chink' others 'didn't even recognize her difference'. Karen also talked about tensions in the town between First Nations and non-First Nations groups. Often growing up Karen and her brother would be mistaken for First Nation, and her mother would be asked 'where she got *those* kids from'. On how people perceive her now, Karen stated that it depends on context, as well as the person: First Nations people often think she's First Nations, whereas as Chinese people generally know that she's 'part' something. While travelling Karen said she thinks/hopes

people know she's Canadian and this is also due to how she presents herself in her dress and wearing 'Canadian gear' (and in China people 'knew' that she was 'not Chinese'). She also stated that visually, her appearance is so different from what people expect that people sometimes see her as a 'person' as opposed to associating her with a particular racial group. Regarding her response to the 'what are you?' question, Karen stated that her response to that question has varied over time: growing up her initial reaction was to make people as comfortable as possible and to respond with the information 'that they want to know'. However, as she's gotten older, she's responded as 'Canadian' as well as has reflected that she wants it to be more of an 'educational piece'. Discussing the shift of moving from her small town to Edmonton for University, Karen found that it was a very pronounced shift, in that she went from being one of three Chinese kids in her town to a multicultural university, which she enjoyed (being able to blend in more) but also found that she was no longer seen as 'special' in the same way that she was in her home town. Karen also reflected that it was not until leaving the town that she realized the 'weight' of racism that she had been living within. Karen's job and her interests reflect her love of the outdoors and recreating outside. However she has found that she find very few Asians (or people of colour) who share her interests and activities. Additionally, Karen sits on the board of a sporting event in the city, and she finds that because she's a woman, as well as because she's non-white, as well as because of her age she gets treated like a child. Discussing her workplace, Karen finds that she's one of the few 'visible minorities' and so gets pulled in to videos as well as gets called upon in diversity videos, as well as to be a spokesperson in the media. She wondered if this was because of her chatty personality, or if it also was because of her 'difference'. The terms Karen uses to describe herself and her self-identification, as well as how she thinks about her identity has shifted depending on the life stage she's found herself in. Regarding her self-identification, Karen states she used the term 'eurasian' growing up, but now she tends to identify as 'mixed race', but this didn't come about for Karen until she was in her thirties. Karen reflected that her thirties have also come with a greater acceptance of herself, whereas in her twenties she tended to focus a lot on what people thought about her because of her appearance. Now, instead of telling people 'exactly what she is' for fear of them pigeonholing her, or pigeonholing her incorrectly, Karen will also say she's Canadian, which she sees as a way of challenging dominant notions of who or what a Canadian looks like. Regarding dating and partnering, Karen has always had white [Caucasian] boyfriends. Karen also reflected that throughout her life she's gravitated towards forming friendships between people of difference, and that in the past this has been to find some support and common ground, however she does not feel as obligated to do this as she's gotten older. Karen also discussed that white people are more willing to 'give her a chance' when they 'find out' that she's mixed (and presumably mixed with white) than if she was '100% Chinese'. Karen also discussed her last name, and how she feels a hesitancy to go by her married name (which is French) in her everyday life (which she has legally changed her name to). She stated that she's attached to her last name in that it helps people to identify where she's from without having to tell them.

Alex

Alex is 45 years old and is a Pediatric Endrocronologist living in Edmonton. She narrates her identity stating she's 'Italian and Trinidadian'. Alex grew up in Vancouver, and described her family growing up as close-knit. She described the neighbourhood and schools she went to as predominantly white ('Caucasian'). During her high school years there were some shifts in that more Asian immigrant kids arrived, but other than that she recalls her surrounding to be very homogeneous. Alex describes herself as the most 'fair' of her siblings, in that her brother and sister are more 'Indian looking' and she is more 'Italian looking'. Growing up she states that she did not feel that she was visibly different, but was aware that others questioned whether her and her sister/brother were related, the joke being that she was adopted. However, she does strongly recall people's 'looks' and people who were trying to 'piece it all together', for example when she was out in public with her father. Alex attended medical school in the US, and that living in that context she found that she actually fit in more to the 'melting pot', in contrast to her experiences living in Canada the past five years. However, she reflected that his may because she

was in an academic setting during her time in the US and that outside of that setting her experiences likely would have been very different. In contrast Alex finds her experience working in the university community in Edmonton to be more homogeneous, as compared to the community outside. Alex also reflected on the Arabic connotation to her last name, which she said as an adult she has come to realize may have impacted others' perceptions or assumptions of her. She's realized in the past few years (and from living in Canada as opposed to the US) that this is something people are interested in, and she'll make a point to say 'and interestingly my background is Italian and Trinidadian' after she introduces herself to new people. She generally finds that people in Canada are more interested in putting a label on her, and in labeling. Regarding her own self-identification, Alex stated that if she has to identify herself on a form, she'll usually write 'other' or 'exception' and write Italian/Trinidadian. She does not have a particular affinity for the term 'mixed race' but rather as 'other'. Regarding how she narrates to others, Alex has found that especially post-9/11 she finds people 'want to know' her background – she can 'see the look in people's eyes' (which she thinks is mainly about her last name, as opposed to her appearance). Alex will also identify as 'Canadian first', but finds that people still want to know 'more'. Alex described her husband as white American, of German background. She describes her two kids, her son as blonde and blue eyed and her daughter as similar to Alex in 'colouring'.

Leanne

Leanne is 49 years old and works as a case manager at a community organization in Edmonton. Leanne describes her father as Métis but who could 'pass for white' (his mother was Métis and his father was First Nations), and he came from an era when Leanne said it was 'important to pass'. He also attended Residential school, and Leanne states that he carried the scars of that, including a drinking problem, in that he suffered abuse there. She describes her mother as a strong black woman', but who carried the scars of her 'darkness/blackness' with her. Leanne was born in Fort Churchill Manitoba, but spent most of her childhood in a small town in Alberta that she describes as 'mostly French and native'. Leanne stated that in this town she and her siblings 'did not fit in', and that she does not have pleasant memories of this time, and had traumatic experiences with classmates and teachers. She and her siblings were very close, growing up. They were all perceived as 'visibly different' from the two dominant groups in the town (white and Aboriginal) and had racialized encounters as children, but they dealt with it (and internalized it) differently. For example, Leanne describes how she and her older brothers used to physically fight other children in the school yard because they 'didn't want to take any crap', whereas she describes how one of her sisters internalized it by choosing to never date black men. The family left the town in 1978, at a time when the population of the town was beginning to shift. Since the age of 13, Leanne has lived in Edmonton, which she states is 'very diverse now' and that she feels very comfortable there. However, when the family moved to Edmonton in the late 70s, settling in the West end, Leanne described how she and her brothers were still some of the few black children in the school. She described how she was well liked by her peers in junior high and high school, but that she was not deemed 'dateable' by the boys: 'interracial dating' was just not done. In junior high there was a feeling that 'black kids can only achieve so high', but by the time she reached high school, the feeling 'changed'. The context of Edmonton changed in the '80s, as there were lots of black kids around, and that things were staring to 'culturally change'. Leanne entered the workforce right after high school, and noted that at that time was when employment discrimination legislation was being put in place (late 80s, early 90s), and that she never felt anything discriminatory in the workplace. She states that during this time people began to know their rights more. Regarding how she is read by others, Leanne reflected that she has been subject to questions over the course of her life. Many people insist on labelling her in a particular way (for example Spanish and Filipino people), and she states she knows that 'this doesn't happen to other people'. However, she reflected that the questioning she is subject to now doesn't 'feel' the same as it did when she was a kid. Regarding her self-identification, Leanne reflected that she likes the terms 'multiracial' and/or 'mixed race', because it denotes multiplicity. Leanne reflected that growing up her mother put a great emphasis on telling the female children that they were pretty, because this is something that her mother (Leanne's

grandmother) never told her, and this is something Leanne's mother carried with her. Leanne reflected on how black girls often struggle with how they look, and her mother was no exception to this, in that she always felt that she was 'less than' because of her darkness. Leanne reflected on how she generally does not identify herself on the census – she avoids labeling herself and does not understand the need for government to know 'what she is'. This is also a result of how Aboriginal populations are labeled negatively, and how Leanne feels resentful of all the problems that are associated with Aboriginality. Leanne also stated that being black has meant being 'cool' at certain points in time throughout her life, but that this has ebbed and flowed as well, and is also a result of her being 'lighter skinned'.. Discussing cultural celebrations like Heritage Days, Leanne stated that while it does not necessarily give her a sense or space of belonging, she thinks such celebrations are important because they show people who different groups live, which makes them less afraid of each other. However she was adamant that the notion that Canada is 'post-racial' and that 'multiculturalism is working' are untrue, that 'we haven't yet arrived'. Leanne described her relationship with her (white) husband and how she has tried to get across to him how it feels to be a racialized person of colour, and experiences of racialization. She notes that his family, although not often exposed to black people, have come to be accepting of her.

Gordon

Gordon is 38 years old and works as an engineer, living in Calgary, and is the brother of Karen, another participant. Gordon grew up in a small town in rural northern Alberta. He describes his mother as being of 'Scottish descent' and his father as 'from China'. In this context, Gordon experienced what he describes as 'hints of racism'. Gordon and his sister were some of the only 'Asian' kids in town (that's how they and their family was perceived, as 'Asian with a white mom'). He recalls words like 'chink' being used in school, but also how he and his sister were mistaken for First Nations - First Nations and whites (or 'Caucasians' in Gordan's words) being the two primary groups in the town. Gordon also noted that for the most part people now read him as 'Chinese' not as a 'Chinese person of mixed race'. Gordon recalled in Elementary school dressing up in 'Chinese' cultural dress and giving a presentation to his class. However, he described that to him, it was like a Canadian kid giving a presentation on Chinese culture, whereas he is sure others saw it as a Chinese kid giving a presentation on his own culture. Regarding the questioning that he is subject to in his life, Gordon described how as a child he does not recall being questioned in the same way that he is now. He thought that this might be because people 'only' read him as Asian, however at the same time most places where Gordon has travelled (from Mexico to Europe to China) people think that he is a 'local'. Reflecting on his name, Gordon described how his first name is a traditionally Scottish name, while his family name is Chinese. He describes how in his professional career he notes that because of his name, people have expectations about who he is, and are surprised about the way he looks or to find out that he is not 'truly Asian', or a 'Chinese first language speaker' (i.e. an immigrant). Moving to Edmonton for university from the town where he grew up, Gordon recalls that it was a big transition, but at the same time he just found that he blended in more in university. Gordon identifies strongly as Canadian, and finds that people are surprised to find that he is 'as Canadian as he is'. Gordon also reflected on the importance of taking part in family traditions, that the effort of getting family together for Chinese New Year is just as important as Christmas, for example. There is an importance in making time for these traditions and celebrations that Gordon has come to appreciate now that he is older and has a family. Growing up, Gordon would take part in different events, from Chinese New Year to participating in Robbie Burns night as a highland dancer. He describes it as the normal way that he grew up, and that in this sense the 'mosaic' metaphor is one way to characterize the way that he grew up, in that these different pieces were a part of his life. Regarding his children's experiences, Gordon, like how he was raised, describes the different cultural practices that they are exposed to as a 'normal part of their life', but at the same time (as their mother is white) they will have, in Gordon's words 'a lot harder time being identified as Chinese', as in appearance their features are 'not Chinese'. Gordon described how he's interested to see what his children's experiences will be, as they are growing up in a very different context than he did, as well as if they will be viewed as 'white'. Reflecting on

experiences with dating and partnering, Gordon discussed how he would describe his relationship with his wife as interracial, not only because of phenotypical differences, but because of her status as an immigrant. Gordon previously had dated mostly 'Asian-Canadian women' and he did not feel at the time that those relationships were interracial, because he was comfortable with all of the 'cultural' situations that they entered together.

Candace

Candace is 37 years old and works as a supervisor for a family intervention program in Edmonton. She describes her father as 'from Trinidad' and her mother as 'Métis '. Growing up, Candace described how she and her family moved around a lot, but primarily lived on the North side of Edmonton, which Candace states was becoming 'a little bit more multicultural' in the late 70s, early 80s, especially compared to other parts of Edmonton. Candace describes her affinity for the North side because there were other 'mixed' people around (like her), including Métis people, as well as just a 'mix' of cultures. Specifically in the Clairview area there was a mix of Black, Asian and Aboriginal groups, and also recalls more Latino people coming into the area throughout the 80s. Candace recalls in school (grade four or five) being asked to bring something to school that was related to 'where she was from'. Her mother had never explained to Candace 'what she was' so Candace felt like she didn't have anything to share, until she talked to her mom about it. Candace also recalled that this was around the time that she was becoming aware of things people were saying to her (and her family); an awareness of racialized experiences, which she reflects she was able to piece together once she and her mother talked about her family background. This discussion also created a sense of belonging for Candace. However, in school Candace had some overtly negative and devastating experiences with teachers, and she could 'feel their distain' for her. Candace also spent a year living and going to school in Trinidad, and felt to be an outsider there, because she was Canadian and 'lighter in skin colour' than everyone else. Candace reflected that from these experiences, instead of teaching her to love school it taught her to be afraid, and her reading skills suffered as a result. Regarding her identification, Candace described that growing up, due to the negative stereotypes Aboriginal peoples face, she and her brother decided they were going to tell people they were Latino/Spanish, as well as at times mulatto. However, Candace described becoming tired about pretending she was something she was not. She now describes her identification as 'part Métis and part Trinidadian', which is how she narrates her identity to others, as well as 'mixed' if she does not want to prolong the conversation. Candace stated that people largely identify her as 'black' because her predominant features are 'black', but at the same time, how others identify her depends on the context. She states that when people identify her as something she's not, she's 'happy to correct them', but that claiming the Aboriginal aspect of her identity has been a long journey for her. Additionally, she describes how being 'black and Aboriginal' also seemed like she had two strikes against her. Candace also states that she identifies as a 'proud Canadian' but that she doesn't identify herself 'firstly' as Canadian. Candace also recalled her and her family joining a church when she was around 12 years old, and through the church as a space of diversity and space that celebrated diversity, that Candace could feel a sense of belonging there at times, as well as pride in her Aboriginal ancestry. However, at the same time, in that space Candace encountered the idea that 'she was not black enough' from some of the other churchgoers, because she was 'not as black as them'. She stated that while on some occasions growing up she felt a sense of belonging, but that ultimately she didn't feel that she belonged in 'one or the other'. For Candace, the church was an important place of healing for her and her family, in the pastor guided and encouraged her mother to make connections between her spirituality and Indigeneity, and to validate her Aboriginal identity. Candace reflected that racism makes you feel like you are visibly marked, that you carry the stains of your life with you. The pastor encouraged her mother to 'wash that away'. Candace recalled one time that the pastor told her that she should walk with her head high and proud. To have that kind of support and encouragement for her, and that validation of her identity, was a major turning point for her in her life. Regarding her career path, Candace described that she started work at her Aboriginal agency employer in her early 20s. This was not necessarily a chosen path (she was more interested in

making money to care for her daughter), however she found that the space was so welcoming, and that the organization instilled in her a sense of wanting to work for justice for Aboriginal peoples. However, Candace reflected that she doesn't 'present' overtly as native, and she reflected that even though her staff knows she's Métis , they refer to her as 'Trinidadian', because she does not 'fit' perceptions of what 'Aboriginal' 'looks like' or 'acts like'. Regarding her self-identification on the census, Candace described how she generally identifies as Métis , but how this does not capture everything. Candace describes her relationship with her husband, who is white, to be interracial. She states that others also perceive it to be interracial. Her relationship with her daughter's father (who she describes as 'Ukrainian') was a relationship that Candace also considered to be interracial. Candace described her daughter as "Ukrainian, Norwegian, Métis and Trinidadian", but that she doesn't have a clear way of identifying herself. If anything she'll identify as Trinidadian, but she has a hard time with identifying as Aboriginal because of the negative stereotypes and things her friends say about the community.

Catherine and George

Catherine (41) and George (38) are a married couple who I interviewed together living in Edmonton. Catherine is self-employed, whereas George is a Project Co-ordinator with the City of Edmonton. George grew up in North East Edmonton, and describes his family as 'mixed Chinese and Canadian – or English'. George states that he was raised 'more Chinese than English or Canadian'. His mother was from rural Alberta and his father immigrated from Hong Kong in the late '60s to Edmonton. Catherine also grew up on the North East side of Edmonton, and she states "my mom is Portuguese and Chinese and my Dad is British, right from England". Catherine states that she grew up 'very English' and that she's learned a lot from George's family about her 'culture' (i.e. Chinese cultural practices). Her father immigrated to Canada from England due to the promise of jobs, and her mother came to Canada from Hong Kong also for a job (which Catherine didn't know until she asked her mother for clarification via text in the interview). Coincidentally, Catherine's mom and George's Dad knew each other, in that, in George's words they were part of the "same crew", and there is a photo of George's Dad holding Catherine as a baby, which Catherine brought to the second interview. This connection is also is how Catherine and George eventually met in their thirties. George described how growing up in his school, it was not uncommon for someone to be Chinese, as well as "half-Chinese', and his group of friends was from an array of non-white backgrounds. However, George also reflected that because people do not tend to read him as 'Chinese' other kids left him alone. In contrast, Catherine describes herself as the minority at her school, and that there were no other Asians/people she could relate to, however she only recalls one time that she was called 'chink' at school – which she does not describe as a prolonged or painful experience. In high school, Catherine described how she went to a school that was not in her neighborhood, and there were a lot of Asians at the school, but that they stayed within their own group and seemed to relate to practices/mindsets that Catherine associates as 'traditional Chinese'. They reflected that even though they have a similar 'racial' background, George was raised 'culturally' very different than Catherine. George described how he identifies as Chinese ('racially' and 'culturally'), he grew up 'culturally' as Chinese, but that others do not perceive him that way (they either perceive him as white or as racially ambiguous). Catherine is at times racialized as Asian, but at other time is read as racially ambiguous, depending on what context she finds herself in, and that people will try to 'guess' what she is. Regarding how they are perceived when they're together, Catherine finds that she is seen as 'more Asian' whereas George is perceived more ambiguously, which they both find funny, reflecting that George is the one who speaks the language and was raised within the cultural practices, and because Catherine's mom is also not 'fully Chinese', she is also 'mixed' (they talked about how 'George is 'more Chinese' than Catherine both culturally and racially). Catherine and George also described how when people find out George's last name, their reaction is usually 'George's Chinese?' but now that Catherine has taken on George's last name, no one ever questions her, which is ironic because her unmarried name is British. George described that this occurs particularly in professional environments, when people who he has talked to over the phone or emailed meet him in person, they say 'oh, I was expecting a Chinese

guy'. Catherine also reflected that people will just make assumptions (now that she is married to George) about her doing 'Chinese things', which did not happen before she was with him. Both Catherine and George reflected that they do not necessarily feel a sense of belonging on either the North or South side of the city. Instead, it's about their feelings of comfort. Reflecting on dating and partnering, Catherine mentioned that she swore that she would never date a Chinese guy, and George was the first 'Chinese-mix' (or Chinese at all) who she had dated. George mentioned that he would consider some of his relationships to be interracial, because he had only dated white ('Caucasian') girls before, however it was mainly because they had not previously experienced Chinese families or culture. George reflected that he does not know how people perceive him and Catherine walking down the street, but that sometimes he has a 'feeling' that people are perceiving him as the 'white guy' who 'likes Asian women'. George and Catherine also described how they are able to 'pick out' who they describe as other 'halfies', specifically 'Asian-halfies'.

Regan

Regan is 37 years old, an artist, who also works various day jobs, living in Edmonton. In the first interview sitting, she was in the process of developing a performance piece on mixed race identity, and in the second interview sitting she had just performed the performance piece the weekend before. She reflected in the first interview sitting about developing the performance piece, and reflected in the second sitting about how the piece went. Regan stated that her "Mom's from Jasper, so her family is of Irish/Scottish descent, but many generations Canadian." Of her father Regan stated "And my Dad is – he's from Malaysia." Regan grew up in the West end of Edmonton, in the Collingwood area, which she describes as 'not hugely racially diverse', and that she noticed population shifts in the 90s with more immigrants coming in, particularly to her high school. Growing up, Regan recalls silences around her father's background. Her father identified as Malaysian, and never mentioned that his parents were from India. Due to these silences, and due to black American culture as the predominant visible non-white culture in her home as well as in popular media, growing up Regan thought she was 'half-black', which she recalls with some embarrassment, in that she is concerned about how black people will perceive her when she tells that story. She also reflected that this story has become a performance in and of itself, since she's told it so many times (it's also the story that she shared in her performance piece, and she noted a sense of discomfort of telling the story when there were black people in the audience). Regan states that she finds identity to be fluid, in that some days she identifies as 'white' somedays she identifies as a woman of colour, however she notes that she is uncertain about the extent she can claim an identity as a woman of colour because she for the most part does not have experiences of being perceived as 'visibly different'. This is in contrast to her sister, who Regan notices will get treated differently (she tends to be perceived as First Nations), in an overtly negative way when they are in public together, whereas Regan will generally be perceived as white, but she'll be asked if she's 'Greek' or 'Turkish'. Regan reflected that it has only been since she's gotten older that she's noticed these types of interactions, and that growing up she was not as aware of them. However, she notes that at times she's felt that members of her mother's white family thinks that she is the voice for 'all East Indians'. Regan also notes that she has noticed a drop off in people's questioning of her (which happened a lot growing up), but that she's never perceived it as an instance of Othering in the same way that her friends of colour experience it. Regan also described never knowing how people are reading her. At times she's thought that people have been reading her as white, but then realizes that they are reading her as brown. She also reflected on coming into activist communities of colour, and having realizations about how 'oppressions' are propagated, and she sees her mother's side of the family as propagating some of these same oppressions (i.e. they make racist comments, as well as one overtly racist situation regarding her father and a threat to her father's life). Regan expressed concerns that her mother's side of the family will start to see her as an 'angry brown' person, whereas previously she has been perceived as 'a nice little white girl'. Regan noted that for her, in order to consider herself to be in an interracial relationship, she would have to be in a relationships with someone who was 'obviously of colour'. She stated that although she has some

experiences in dating interactions that were tinged with a kind of fetishization, this is not her predominant experience. At times, Regan has also had affective racialized experiences where she 'feels' that others are reading her as 'exotic' be it through body language or other words used to denote that notion (but not using that notion specifically). However, she has found that ambiguous productions and readings of her identity has a in a way worked to 'desexualize' her, so there are two extremes (which brown bodies experience): 'extreme sexual fetishization' and desexualization. Reflecting on her taking part in the theatre group, Regan questioned what it meant to be a person who is sometimes perceived as white and who has a lot of privilege, taking up space in a theatre group that is meant for people of colour, while negotiating that she herself is 'not a person of colour' but 'not a white person'. Putting on the performance piece with the theatre group, Regan reflected that it gave her a space and sense of community that she had not previously had, in that she realized that there were others who had similar experiences of in-betweeness as her.

Lanny

Lanny is 59 years old and is a retired Heavy Duty Mechanic. Lanny has held a key role in research on and restoration of black settlement communities in Saskatchewan, of whom he is descended from. He narrates his father's ancestry, describing them as part of the group that came up to Canada in 1910 from Oklahoma. He describes his mother as of 'Scots-Irish' descent. They met in the mid-50s, and Lanny reflected that interracial marriages were uncommon at the time, and that his parents 'took a big leap' when they got together. He describes how the family had difficult finding housing, but that they eventually settled in Calder, North of Edmonton. In this community, Lanny reflected that by looking at his class photos, you could see the makeup of the classroom: him, and if he was lucky, one other black kid who likely came from another black settlement. During this period Lanny reflected the Canadian immigration system was quite 'tight' in Lanny's words, so other groups were not yet in Edmonton. Lanny reflected that in his elementary school years, there were 'battles' between the black kids and the white kids, along with name calling. Lanny reflected that by the time he was in high school, the population of Edmonton was shifting; for example his sisters started going out with newly arrived West Indians. Lanny stated that he and his sisters all grew up 'believing they were black': although they knew they had 'white blood' in them, society viewed them as black. Lanny has strong memories of others looking at him and his sisters growing up, both black and white people, for example 'they stared' at them on the street. Lanny discussed his marriage with his first wife, who was Cree Indian. He states that he lived with her as a 'native' for 20 years, before she passed away. Lanny compares this to his experiences with his second wife, who he has been with for the past 20 years, who is white. He states that the racism he experienced with his first wife is unmatched to even the racism he experienced as a young black man. Lanny also reflected that he is racially read/produced as racially ambiguous, and that he has passed as Cree along with other non-white racialized identities. Living with his first wife in Calder, the same neighborhood Lanny grew up in, Lanny reflected that during those years there was a 'good mix' of people, including natives who were moving off reserve, as well as blacks. Lanny stated that when he and his second wife moved to a newer neighborhood, it's one of the only times he has felt that he hasn't fit in, he felt that he and his family were not well liked (although no one explicitly said anything to them). While talking about parenting his children (all from his first wife), Lanny described that throughout their lives (they are now grown) he has talked to them about how to prepare for how they will be perceived. Reflecting on how his identity has change over his life, Lanny stated that he used to say he was 'mulatto' but now he narrates his identity by saying 'my Mom's white and my Dad's black'. Lanny described how in the last ten years he's began to describe himself as 'mixed' as opposed to 'mulatto'. As he's become an expert in black settlement communities on the prairies, he not only had to think through how to describe himself (for example to reporters), but also about the history of 'mulatto' and the debates around the term. He also described that throughout his life he has learned to wear 'different caps' depending on which communities (Native, white, Black) he found himself in, and reflected that this is what most mixed people learn what to do, because if you try and claim you are more one than the other, it 'screws you all up'.

Reflecting on his 33 years at CN, Lanny described that while people questioned him as to his identity, he also found a space of acceptance and shared understanding between the other racialized employees. As people of colour, he describes how they came together. Lanny reflects that it was not until his late 40s that he got involved in researching black settlements on the praries, but he describes it as his life's purpose: documenting these histories for generations to come, and that he wouldn't have been able to fulfill this role if it was not who he was. Lanny also discussed that he often gets asked what he's more interested in the black side of his family than the white side. He states that while his white ancestors had to overcome obstacles, it was nothing in comparison to what his black ancestors who were freed from slavery had to overcome, and he was interested in recovering those histories and highlighting their accomplishments, as well as because he feels more black than he does white. Lanny described how the first 40 years of his life were preparation for the last 40 years of his life, in that he recalls hearing family stories and names from listening to his father and uncles' sitting around and talking about growing up on the settlement. Because of the lack of representations of black people in media, Lanny reflected that these are the people he most looked up to. In turn, he was able to connect the dots 40 years later due to these family stories and names that he had heard growing up, once he started looking in to the genealogy of the black settlement. He states that listening to his father and uncle's stories is in a way how he earned his blackness.

Tanya

Tanya is 46 years old and works as a dancer as well as owns a dance company, living in Calgary, and is the sister of Indira, another participant. Tanya described that although she was born in the UK (her mother was ill and was getting care in the UK), and only about ten years ago gained her citizenship, she always identified as 'Canadian', although she was also always a Permanent Resident of Canada. She describes her mom as from 'Montreal' and her father as from 'Kerala, India'. Tanya spent the early part of her childhood surrounded by 'the university community' as her father was a professor at the University of Calgary. She describes how she tended to feel different from the 'cultural brown people' in this community, as well as in the Malayali community of Calgary, as she didn't know anything about cultural practices, and to this day does not feel that she knows, as well as not knowing about her mother's Jewish roots. It was not until her family moved to a rural area, where Tanya really began to experience being racialized as brown. Tanya reflected that while she may have been subject to racialized experiences in Calgary, she was not aware of them. She was mercilessly bullied for three years in the rural area, which she attributes to others reading her as brown. This included death threats as well as being taunted with the term 'Paki'. When telling her father this, his reaction was 'well we're not Pakistani' which frustrated Tanya because she understood that that was not the point of the taunts. Tanya also described how she and her sister have had very different life experiences. Even though her sister has 'darker skin' than her, Tanya reflected that their personalities and ways of carrying themselves differed greatly, and her sister would stand up for herself, whereas Tanya often felt that she could not. Her father took her out of high school in the rural area (Tanya is not sure if this was because of the bullying, and likely thought it was more so because her father was worried about the quality of education she was getting). She was sent to an elite private boarding school in Boston where she finished out her high school education. Tanya described her realization that in Boston, people hated 'Black' people as opposed to brown people, and she was constantly told how beautiful and exotic she was, which she recognizes as another form of racism/racialization. This private school was also where 'the elite of the elite' went, and Tanya reflected that in this sense she does not feel she lived in the US in a way, in that it was a space of incredible privilege that is not what actually encompasses living in the US for the majority. Tanya now works as a dancer and owns a dance studio, as well as is involved in a number of social work programs and programs working with Indigenous and newcomer youth in the inner city. In these spaces she reflects that draws upon her brownness in a way, in that she tells students what her background is in order for them to be able to relate to her, as well as to let them know that if they are going through a hard time in their lives, things will get better. Tanya also reflected that dance has given her a sense of community, and an acceptance within that community through her brownness. Tanya's path to become a dancer is also a path about her

life, coming in to her own life and voice. In her early twenties Tanya became pregnant and had to give the child up for adoption, which she describes as feeling like 'walking through a fire'. After this experience, Tanya decided to take control of her own life (away from her parents who until up to that point had particular expectations about what career paths she pursued). Tanya reflected that she gets asked the question 'what are you?' at least once a day, including in her interactions with men who are trying to 'hit on' her. She also described how she has performed ambiguity in the past, by pretending she is something she is not. Regarding her relationships, Tanya stated that she did not ever feel that she was in an interracial relationship (this is also because she identifies as Catholic, so there haven't been religious differences), but her husband, now who is white/British, is very aware of differences between their families/how others are perceiving them. Her husband's family will use language like 'vibrant' and 'colourful' to describe her family, which she sees as them saying 'you're not white'. Talking about parenting her children, Tanya reflected that one of her older son's identifies strongly as 'brown' and that this may be because he has experiences of being visibly different, for example in hockey culture which he was involved in. Her other older son 'just isn't aware' as Tanya described, because he looks 'like a regular white kid'. Of her two younger sons, Tanya describes how their elementary school is very multicultural, and that the student body is made up of a diversity of backgrounds, and there is an awareness of the particularities of students' identities (cultural/ national/ religious), however Tanya states that the younger sons likely identify as white. Tanya reflected on her sense of belonging in the city of Calgary, and how growing up she was always very concerned for her father's safety in the city, as a brown man. Her brown son also had an experience of being beat up by a group of white men in the city. Tanya described that in areas of Calgary where there is a larger concentration of racialized people, that she feels more comfortable, for example in comparison to being in parts of the city that are mostly white (however she describes that in any context people do not know how to read her). Tanya also described the feeling of having to 'win white people over' in lots of situations that she finds herself in, by performing in a particular way, which reminds her of growing up in [town name].

Indira

Indira is 44 years old and works as a university teacher, living in Calgary, and is the sister of Tanya, another participant. Indira describes her mother as 'from Montreal' and her father as 'from Kerela'. She was born in Calgary, and spent the early part of her childhood in what she describes as the 'lefty university community'. Her parents then moved out to a rural area. Indira reflected that it was in this context where she felt the most visible or out of place, in comparison to all of the other places she has lived during her life. She states that this is for a number of reasons, including because her father was a professor, so her life and values were different than the other kids. However, during this time she tended to identify more with the native kids, who kept to themselves. Indira also described how her father imparted to her that she should be 'Canadian-first' and about being 'Western'. Indira described how in her university years she began to notice that other people would question her as to what she was, and that this kind of questioning leads you to 'develop a story'. How people perceive her has also depended on the different contexts she has lived in (Boston, Montreal, London, Denver) and she tends to be read ambiguously. When she was younger, Indira reflected that she would be 'more defensive' about it, and would respond to the question with 'I'm Canadian'. Indira also talked about her first and last names, her last name which is now hyphenated with her husband's last name. She states that people often use her name as the basis of questioning her. Reflecting on dating and partnering, Indira described that she has always thought of herself as 'barely Caucasian' and so in dating she never really thought of herself as involved in interracial partnerships, as she sees herself as 'culturally Canadian'. This is the case in her relationship with her husband as well, who is white. In this sense, Indira also does not necessarily see herself as 'mixed race'. Discussing parenting her children, Indira describes them as 'having some colouring' but that they likely benefit greatly from being a mixture of a number of things, including Welsh and English from her husband's side. She described that their school is incredibly multicultural, and that there is an ongoing discussion about students' cultural practices, foods and traditions, which her

children also take part in. Indira described her lifestyle as a big part of what defines her, and this includes being outdoorsy and spending lots of time in the mountains with her family. In this context, Indira does not feel that others perceive her differently, in that they all have the shared interest of the outdoors. Regarding her career path Indira described being at conferences as a graduate student and feeling that she was the odd one out, but reflected that this was more to do with being a young woman as opposed to anything else. She began to feel a sense of detachment from her chosen field and the topic of her dissertation, and did not feel the same sense of attachment, the living and breathing of the topic that she perceived from other academics. Now she finds lots of satisfaction teaching in an area that is related to her specialization, but that she does not feel boxed in by.