



8

Ethnic and Race Relations

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 8 focuses on a subject that is an integral part of Canadian society: race and ethnicity. As one of the most multicultural countries in the world, Canada is home to people of many different ethnicities. As sociologists, we are interested in analyzing the relationships that occur among these different groups and how those relationships affect our society. Although many people think that ethnicity and race are fixed attributes, they are in fact based upon social interactions.

Similar to the other chapters, you are presented with the basic views from some of the major theorists. For Durkheim, in order for a society to function, we establish a collective consciousness, leading to a mentality of collectivity, which allows us to work together. For Weber, ethnic markers determine which group(s) we belong to and subsequently guide our actions.

The author begins with the question of whether Canada was built as one nation or as two. The French and English, or “charter groups” have commonly been understood as having built this country. However, the author makes an important note that it is inaccurate to say that either of these nationalities “built” Canada, for the Aboriginal peoples were here many centuries ago. Rather, we can only say that French and English colonized Canada.

Next, the author highlights that Canada’s past record on immigration is not the rosy picture in which we have come to show our pride today. The Immigration Acts were heavily discriminatory towards certain ethnic groups. It was not until after the Second World War that we see a shift in policy and practice from the Canadian government.

In the next section, the author takes a closer examination of multiculturalism in Canada. He brings forth its early conceptions and similarities to the American “melting-pot” style of multiculturalism to

the image of the “vertical mosaic,” and to the “colour-coded mosaic” we have today. Along with that, he highlights how multiculturalism is understood by different races and ethnicities in Canada, along with those who promote the idea of multiculturalism, and the critics of it.

Lastly, the author looks at the current face of Canadian multiculturalism. He notes that while we have accepted multiculturalism as an official policy, many of our practices still are discriminatory. Prejudice and racism—albeit not as blatant—against one’s class, gender, and place of birth still greatly affect individuals and their groups. One of the most significant examples of prejudice and racism in Canada today is our hiring practices of immigrants whose foreign credentials are not recognized. Instead of having people who can contribute to our society, they are relegated to the low-end jobs.

KEY TERMS

Abocide	Ethnicity	Primordialism
Ascriptive characteristics	Ethnic groups	Race
Assimilation	Ethnocentrism	Racialization
Behavioural assimilation	Immigration Act of 1910	Racism
Blocked mobility thesis	Indigenous peoples	Reasonable accommodation
Charter groups	Institutional racism	Residential schools
Chinese head tax	Interculturalism	Selection criteria
Collective conscience	Islamophobia	Social class
Colour-coded vertical mosaic	Labour market	Split labour market
Culturalism	Melting-pot policies	Structural assimilation
Cultural relativism	Monopolistic closure	Systemic discrimination
Culture	Multiculturalism	Vertical mosaic
Democratic racism	Permanent residents	Visible minorities
Discrimination	Political economy	
Entrance groups	Prejudice	

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are some criticisms of multiculturalism? (p. 182)
2. How is the “two founding nations” thesis in part historically inaccurate? (p. 183)
3. What is the central argument of culturalism? (p. 180)
4. In what ways are the subjects of ethnicity and race central factors in power relations? (p. 174)
5. Into what four classes are immigrants divided? (p. 178)
6. What are the four interrelated meanings that we have come to understand multiculturalism as? (p. 180)

7. Interculturalism is based on which three important principles? (p. 184)
8. Why was the Chinese head tax increased significantly by the Canadian Government in the early 1900s? (p. 178)
9. What is the difference between “behavioural assimilation” and “structural assimilation”? (p. 180)
10. What are the six categories of the points systems used by the Canadian Government to evaluate skilled workers wanting to immigrate? (p. 181)

READINGS AND WEBSITES

Satzewich, Vic and Nikolaos Liodakis (2017). *“Race” and Ethnicity in Canada: A Critical Introduction* (4th ed.). Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

This introductory textbook is well suited for those beginning in the sociology of race and ethnic relations. The text begins with a comprehensive overview of the concepts of race and ethnicity. This is complimented by a historical analysis of these terms and the theories that led to this field of research in sociology. It also contains a section that focuses on the Canadian cases of ethnic relations.

Wilkinson, Lori (2008). “Labour Market Transitions of Immigrant-born, Refugee-born, and Canadian-born Youth” *Canadian Review of Sociology* 45(2): 151–176.

This article uses quantitative (statistical) methods to examine the differences between youth in Canada who were born either here or abroad. The main objective was to understand how the job experiences of these individuals are crucial to their integration and transition to adulthood. The study comprised of over 4,000 youth living in Canada. The study looked at males and females of those Canadian-born, immigrant-born, and refugee-born and their rates of employment.

Folklorama. (2017). [Website]. Retrieved from <https://www.folklorama.ca/>

Folklorama is an event that runs for two weeks in August of each year in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The event showcases various cultures from around the world. Visitors are encouraged to take in the different talents, foods and drinks, and displays that highlight different ethnicities.

Dresser, Julie, and Edin Martinez. (12 June 2012). The Scars of Stop and Frisk. [Online video episode]. In Op-Doc. New York, New York: *The New York Times*.

<https://www.nytimes.com/video/opinion/100000001601732/the-scars-of-stop-and-frisk.html>

This NYTimes Op-Doc shows the devastating impact of the “stop and frisk” policy in the United States on the lives of black youth.

The Canadian Race Relations Foundation

<http://www.crrf-fcrr.ca/en/>

The purpose of the CRRF, as defined by the Canadian Race Relations Foundation Act of 1991, is “to facilitate throughout Canada the development, sharing and application of knowledge and expertise in order to contribute to the elimination of racism and all forms of racial discrimination in Canadian society.” The Canadian Race Relations Foundation is the leading voice and agent of change in the advance towards the elimination of racism and all forms of racial discrimination, and the promotion of Canadian identity, belonging and the mutuality of citizenship rights and responsibilities for a more harmonious Canada.

Answers to Study Questions

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. **b** (p. 179)
2. **a** (p. 186)
3. **d** (p. 177)
4. **c** (p. 174)
5. **d** (p. 175)
6. **b** (p. 184)
7. **b** (p. 174)
8. **c** (p. 175)
9. **d** (p. 176)
10. **b** (p. 176)

TRUE OR FALSE

1. **F** (p. 186)
2. **T** (p. 178)
3. **F** (p. 182)
4. **T** (p. 181)
5. **F** (p. 175)
6. **F** (p. 182)
7. **T** (p. 189)
8. **T** (p. 174)
9. **T** (p. 175)
10. **T** (p. 175)

FILL IN THE BLANK

1. Discrimination (p. 185)
2. racialization (p. 175)
3. Immigration (p. 176)
4. charter (p. 175)
5. Prejudice (p. 185)
6. interculturalism (p. 184)
7. fifth century (p. 174)
8. primordialism (p. 175)
9. colonized (p. 175)
10. \$500 (p. 178)

SHORT ANSWER

1. See p. 182
2. See p. 183
3. See p. 180
4. See p. 174
5. See p. 178
6. See p. 180
7. See p. 184
8. See p. 178
9. See p. 180
10. See p. 181

